

THE FINAL PUSH

Written by

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INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

In a small, middle-class living room in Sussex, UK, a family is having an after-dinner conversation. We hear pouring rain in the b.g.

Sisters JENNY (16) and JOANNE (18), and their parents MICHAEL (47) and ANNA (45) are sitting around the table. The sisters are both wearing hoodies, the mother is in a nice yellow dress with daisies on it, and the father is wearing a polo shirt with jeans.

MICHAEL

So I told her to leave me the hell alone, obviously. I can't deal with women like that in the workplace, can I?

Michael laughs and looks around the table for a reaction. He looks at the girls. Jenny is picking at the food left on her plate with her fork, her head down. Joanne puts some of her own food on Jenny's plate, and Jenny looks up, annoyed. She elbows Joanne lightly.

Michael sighs and looks towards his wife. Anna puts on a quick smile for him.

ANNA

She sounds like a bore, darling.

Michael chuckles at the acknowledgment.

MICHAEL

Yeah, that she is.

He gives her a kiss on the forehead before pulling back quickly and giving a bigger, performative sigh.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Alright! Who's gonna pour us another cup?

He looks over at the girls again. Joanne is looking towards him now but Jenny is still looking down, silent.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Jenny.

JENNY

(looking up)

Hmm?

MICHAEL

A cuppa, please?

JENNY

Oh, sure.

We follow Jenny into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Jenny stands in front of the kitchen stove, staring at a yellow tea kettle, the same shade as her mother's dress.

A few moments pass. She is statuesque.

Then, a dreadful, screechy sound builds up as the kettle begins to whistle. We see Jenny start mouthing numbers under her breath at the start of the sound. Once she gets to seven, she quickly takes the kettle off the stove. She pours the boiling water in a cup, and dips a tea bag in a few times before letting it rest in the water.

We follow her as she returns to the living room, cup in hand.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Anna turns to look at Jenny as she comes out of the kitchen.

ANNA

Jenny, darling, I was just asking
Jo how classes are going.

Jenny continues to approach as she answers, but her steps are hesitant.

JENNY

Oh. It's going ok. We still have a few weeks until final projects so it's not too bad.

JOANNE

See, mum? I told you you don't have to worry about her.

Joanne smirks at Jenny playfully.

As Jenny approaches her dad with the cup...

She purposefully POURS the contents on his head!!! He screams from the pain of the burn.

Jenny stares at her father blankly. Joanne and Anna don't appear to see what's going on in front of them.

ANNA
Of course I worry about you both.
But I trust you with classes. I was
just asking, that's all.

She stares down at the cup in her hand. It's empty now.

MICHAEL (O.S.)
I'm getting thirsty here...

Jenny's gaze snaps to her father. He is looking at her expectedly, and is completely dry and unburned. He nods at the cup in her hand.

JENNY
Oh.

She looks at the cup as she gives it to him. It's still full of water.

Jenny returns to her seat, and as she passes by her sister, Joanne gives her a playful pinch in the side.

INT. JENNY'S ROOM - NOON

Jenny is sleeping in her bed. There is a knock at the bedroom door. When she doesn't respond, the door creaks open and Anna peeks inside. Then, she sits down next to Jenny on the bed.

Anna is wearing a yellow dress shirt and black, well-tailored pants.

She strokes Jenny's hair out of her face as she sleeps.

ANNA
Jenny? Sweetheart...

A beat. Silence from Jenny.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Jenny?

A sleepy groan.

ANNA (CONT'D)
You have to go to your appointment
in two hours. You want to make a
good first impression, right?

EXT. TRAIN STATION PLATFORM - AFTERNOON

Jenny is standing on the platform of a small, outdoor railway station. She is wearing a yellow dress shirt and tailored black pants, very much like a copy of her mother. She is clearly out of her element.

There are a few other people nearby, including a TEENAGE BOY (17) in a wheelchair and a MAN (40s) who is standing close to the platform's edge.

Jenny looks back at the clock on the wall. 14:03. We hear a train approaching O.S.

As it comes closer from the distance, Jenny's breathing picks up and becomes frantic. She looks at the man once, then twice, then rushes forward and pushes him onto the tracks. We hear a crunch as the train speeds past. Jenny stares at the tracks where she pushed the man.

Once the train is past the station, we hear a squeaking O.S.. Jenny's head snaps to the sound behind her. It's the boy in his squeaky wheelchair. He calmly moves forward towards the tracks.

As Jenny looks back at the tracks now, we can see that she is back where she was waiting before-

- and the man she pushed is still there-
- and there is a train that has stopped at the station-
- and the teenage boy is now moving through the open doors of the train.

Her face isn't shocked but she pauses for a moment, looking at the open doors. Then, she walks in.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

The THERAPIST (40s) sits comfortable but alert, across from Jenny, legs crossed, wearing nice high heels. She has a thin frame, with angular features and her hair in a tight bun. She has thin lips that are held in a smile.

Jenny shifts in her seat and fidgets with her hands as she looks at the therapist. She soon mirrors the woman's posture, crossing her legs.

THERAPIST

I'm really glad you've decided to come today.

Her voice is light and delicate. A beat.

THERAPIST (CONT'D)

I must say, it's bravery whenever someone acknowledges that there is a problem.

A beat. The therapist smiles.

THERAPIST (CONT'D)

And, of course, when they make a change if treatment isn't working.

Jenny nods hesitantly, avoiding her gaze.

JENNY

(mumbling)

Thanks.

THERAPIST

Now, before we get to talking...
Would you like a nice hot cuppa tea? Hmm?

Jenny's gaze shifts back to her suddenly at the mention of tea, but it's subtle. She shrugs.

JENNY

Sure.

The therapist smiles.

THERAPIST

Ok. Ok, good.

CUT TO:

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

The therapist is standing by a wall, watching as Jenny ambles slowly around the room. She maneuvers around couches and other objects, looking mainly at the floor. Their mugs of tea lie empty by a table.

JENNY

I know I won't do it. I'd never do it... But then sometimes I forget that. And I just feel like- like-

Jenny gestures in the air as if she is about to push something.

JENNY (CONT'D)
It just feels so easy. And scary.

THERAPIST
Ok. But there are so many things
that are easy that I don't think
you would consider doing. Can you
name one of those?

Jenny shakes her head and scrunches up her eyes.

JENNY
(agitated)
No. No. If I think about it, it'll
just give my brain more ideas about
how to fuck me over every day.

A quick beat.

JENNY (CONT'D)
Sorry.

THERAPIST
That's ok, Jenny. I want you to
feel comfortable expressing
yourself here. See? You're opening
up just by moving your body a
little.

Jenny's scrunches her eyes up again. The therapist studies
her.

THERAPIST POV - Jenny is picking at her cuticles. One of them
is bleeding.

THERAPIST (CONT'D)
What are you thinking about now?

Jenny shakes her head.

THERAPIST (CONT'D)
Does it feel easier when you're up
and moving?

JENNY
Yeah.

THERAPIST
Did your previous therapists ever
have you do session like this?

JENNY
No.

THERAPIST

See? I know what I'm doing. Don't be scared to tell me what you're thinking about, please. We need to push through the discomfort.

She gestures with her hands like Jenny did as she says push. Jenny doesn't comment on it, but she is looking at the woman.

The therapist hands Jenny a fidget toy and nods in encouragement.

JENNY

I just- I have this thought that keeps coming back. It won't leave. It's about HIV.

THERAPIST

Go on.

JENNY

I'm worried I'll sit on a discarded needle or something. I'll open a door and I'll have to check again and again that there wasn't any blood on the handle...

Jenny's speech gets more frantic as she goes on.

JENNY (CONT'D)

I'll check once, but then I feel like- like every time I check, the memory's more blurry, so I have to check again. And it's in a loop... Until I find something else to be anxious about, and then that crowds out everything else.

She is starting to have chest spasms in her anxiety.

JENNY (CONT'D)

And I'm so sick of it. I- I-

THERAPIST

Shhh. It's ok darling.

Jenny tears up upon hearing that familiar term of endearment.

THERAPIST (CONT'D)

(pulling Jenny to a seat)

I'm going to have you sit down for a moment.

She takes the fidget toy from her hand and puts some tissues in its place.

CUT TO:

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

The therapist hands Jenny another cup of tea. The girl looks calmer now. Her eyes are red and puffy and she's sniffling. They're sitting across from each other once again.

THERAPIST

So, I've given it some thought, and
I really think the best course of
action now would be exposure.
Exposure to what you fear.

The therapist chuckles to herself. It's too lighthearted for the situation...

THERAPIST (CONT'D)

Perhaps not the best choice of
words.

A beat. She clears her throat.

THERAPIST (CONT'D)

I'll give you some homework. Do you
think you could stand by the train
platform more often?

Jenny's head whips up to look at her.

JENNY

What?

THERAPIST

The more you expose yourself to an
uncomfortable situation- something
that you have these premonitions
about- and learn that nothing bad
will actually happen... The lighter
you will feel the next time. How
many times can you stand there this
week?

JENNY

I don't know.

THERAPIST

Let's plan to do three, ok?

No response from Jenny.

The therapist glances at a clock on the wall.

Therapist POV - Clock says 16:30.

She gets up from her seat in one sudden, fluid motion.

THERAPIST (CONT'D)

That's all we have time for today,
I'm afraid. But let's do that.

EXT. TRAIN STATION PLATFORM - DAY

Jenny is back at the same platform. It is day but there is a downpour and the sky is grey. She is breathing heavily as she stands still and observes the movement of people at the station.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Jenny is hunched over, writing in a notebook at the table. The house is silent.

Then, we hear the front door quickly open and close in the b.g.

ANNA

Whew! It's pouring out.

Anna enters the living room, soaking wet in her raincoat. She is holding a bouquet of yellow St. John's Wort flowers that are soggy and drooping.

ANNA (CONT'D)

I bought flowers.

She stuffs them in an empty vase on the table and pushes them nearer to where Jenny's sitting. She comes up behind Jenny and strokes her daughter's head before leaning down and muttering into her hair:

ANNA (CONT'D)

They're good for depression.

She kisses her head and smiles as she gets up to leave.

ANNA (CONT'D)

(calling out)

Are you doing your school work?

JENNY

(popping the p)

Yep.

ANNA

And what about your therapy
homework? Has that woman given you
any assignments? What's her name,
again?

Jenny thinks for an embarrassing moment.

JENNY

I- I'm not sure. I forgot.
(beat)
And no. She didn't yet.

ANNA

Ah. Ok.

Anna leaves the living room.

ANNA (CONT'D)

(O.S. calling)

Make sure you remember her name
next time, darling. It would be
embarrassing to forget twice.

Anna sighs and leans back on her chair, and pulls her hoodie
strings to close the hood around her face.

EXT. TRAIN STATION PLATFORM - DAY

There are fewer people on the platform this time. She looks
around.

She looks to the right, where the platform ends and the train
tracks blend in with the grass. She wanders slowly over
there, off the station. We follow from behind her as she
walks.

Once she's by the grass a little distance away from the
station, she stops. She looks around. No one is looking at
her. She waits.

After a few moments of silence, we hear a train in the
distance. We don't see it yet. Jenny only looks ahead.

Then, suddenly, the train rushes past like a jump scare.
Jenny jumps back slightly, but generally keeps her cool.
She's so close to the train.

EXT. HOUSE ROOFTOP - DUSK

Jenny opens the door to their house's rooftop and steps outside. The dusk is clear, the breeze slightly playing with her hair.

Jenny's P.O.V. - Her sister Joanne is standing behind a railing, looking at the horizon, smoking a joint.

Jenny approaches. Once she is next to Joanne, her sister realizes and turns to look at her. She has tear tracks under her eyes.

Jenny takes a disheveled St. John's Wort out of her pocket.

JENNY

Mom said they're good for depression.

JOANNE

Cheers.

They both laugh. Joanne takes the flower and pushes it behind her ear. It sags. Jenny chuckles.

Joanne offers her the joint. Jenny looks at it and hesitates.

JOANNE (CONT'D)

It's your lucky day.

She takes out a fresh, uncontaminated joint and lighter from her pocket.

Jenny lights her joint. The sound of the clicking of the lighter penetrates the air as they look to the horizon.

INT. JENNY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jenny is in bed, propped up on her elbow as she takes out a bottle of pills from her nightstand. The label says: "Take 1 tablet my mouth at bedtime as needed for insomnia."

Once she swallows two pills, she lies on her side and stares at the wall.

EXT. TRAIN STATION PLATFORM - DUSK

Jenny is walking on the train tracks now. She jumps out and back in, several times. She sees a fluffy white BUNNY resting near the tracks.

JENNY
(surprised)
Hello.

She walks up to it. In the b.g., we can see that a train has arrived. It seems that Jenny has walked a good distance away from the station platform.

She crouches down and begins stroking the bunny. When it doesn't hop away, she takes it in her arms and strokes it some more between the ears, too close to the tracks.

We hear the train begin to move again.

She backs away from the tracks.

We suddenly see the train whooshing past her.

She throws the bunny at the train.

Splatter of blood. The bunny's mangled body drops to the ground with a THUD a short distance in front of her. It's more red than white now.

She stares at the corpse for a moment, then down to her hands, then back at the corpse. It's still there.

She turns around to walk back to the station. Her movements are stiff and robotic.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jenny enters through the front door. There are blood splatters on her shirt. She walks stiffly through the living room towards her bedroom. We can hear a TV football match from behind one of the closed doors, but no one is in the living room. It's raining outside again.

INT. JENNY'S ROOM

Jenny quickly pulls the shirt off her body and places it, bundled up, in the trash can under her desk. She is left in her bra. Without doing anything else, she lies in bed, on her side again, staring at the wall. She looks blank.

We hear the bedroom door creak open. We only see Jenny's face. There's a squeak and a movement of Jenny's body as the bed dips behind her. Someone's in the bed.

A bigger arm pushes in under her arm from behind her. It rests on her chest and pulls once on her bra strap.

MICHAEL

This is nice for a change.

END.