

THEIR LAST FRIEND

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BLACK: We hear the DEATH RATTLE of an old man, the quiet SOBBING of a young woman, we're-

1 INT. OLD FOLKS HOME - HALLWAY - NIGHT 1

Tired and emotionless, EMILY (early sixties), stares blankly. Her pink scrubs a stark contrast to her battle hardened face.

CLAIRE (O.S.)
Emily? Emily?

2 INT. ST. MICHAEL'S - ORIENTATION ROOM - EVENING 2

A young-woman finishes writing something in her notebook. This is EMILY (now early twenties), her pink scrubs are the only thing this bubbly eyed optimistic girl shares with her future self. A few other nurses walk past her and out of the room.

CLAIRE
Emily?!

Emily glances up and spots CLAIRE, (late 20's, grey scrubs), standing in the doorway.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
It's Emily right?

EMILY
You got it.

CLAIRE
Which room did you get assigned to?

EMILY
Room 120.
(off Claire's look)
What?

CLAIRE
You seem nice, I hope you last longer than the last nurse.

Claire walks away. Room 120 is just opposite the orientation. Emily walks up, stares down the entrance and opens the door.

3 INT. CHERYL'S ROOM - EVENING

3

We see CHERYL (late 70's, proud), hands clutching her throat, choking.

EMILY

Oh my god?!

Emily, hesitating for a split second, rushes over. She tries to wrap her arms around Cheryl but gets pushed away. Cheryl's eyes are strained, she's not making a sound... Emily forces her arms around Cheryl's waist and TUGS.

A chewed piece of steak LAUNCHES across the room, away from Emily and Cheryl, who are now both panting heavily.

EMILY (CONT'D)

(out of breath)

Are you okay?

Emily's hands tremble, the gravity of the situation sinking in. Cheryl, still gasping for air, SWATS at Emily.

CHERYL

I was fine.

EMILY

I was just trying to-

CHERYL

-I don't need your help.

Emily grabs Cheryl's water and food moving it across the room.

EMILY

Wait thirty minutes before you drink or eat again.

Emily exits, leaving the room in silence. Cheryl, processing the events, slowly lifts herself from her walker chair. She turns the chair around and shuffles out of the room.

4 INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

4

Emily sits on a bench outside the room. She sees Cheryl slowly approaching and pulls out her notepad, an attempt to look busy.

Cheryl parks herself next to Emily. Both waiting for the other to speak, both stubborn.

EMILY
Are you okay?

CHERYL
I'm fine.

Cheryl places a hand on Emily's knee and gently pats it.

EMILY
Do you need me to... Can I help at all?

CHERYL
That's fine.

Emily eyes Claire walking out the door.

EMILY
I've gotta go...

CHERYL
I'm guessing I'll see you tomorrow?

Emily gets up and starts to walk away.

EMILY
Yeah, see you tomorrow.

5 INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

5

Cheryl's hands are placed on the exam table. She's shifting her weight from one foot to the other.

EMILY
Now, gently shift your weight to your right leg. And when you're ready, try lifting your left foot just a bit off the ground.

CHERYL
I'm old, not daft.

Cheryl lifts her leg off the ground and WINCES

EMILY
Let's call it a day.

CHERYL
I can do more.

EMILY
We'll do more tomorrow.

6 INT. CHERYL'S ROOM - SUNSET

6

Cheryl, seated with Emily, carefully presents a polaroid of a young boy.

CHERYL

That's my grandson Marcus. Seems every time I see him he's a foot taller.

EMILY

He's very handsome.

CHERYL

He's a little young for you.

They laugh, Cheryl notices something outside her window...

EMILY

You okay?

Emily moves to see what's brought her down. Outside, a young couple - full of life - embrace and leave holding hands.

CHERYL

Oh don't look so sad my family still visits.

(That sinks in)

Well... they used to come once a month, which is more than most people here can say. I've been living here for a year now... but those few days with them are the only days I'm alive.

EMILY

I'm Sorry.

CHERYL

You don't have to be sorry dear. Besides you should be getting home too.

Cheryl starts to stand, Emily quickly stops her.

EMILY

I'll grab your walker.

CHERYL

I can do it on my own.

EMILY

I know... but let's stick with the program for now. Okay?

11 INT. CHERYL'S ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

11

The bed and chair are both empty we PAN over to see Cheryl in a nice dress, she puts the finishing touches of her makeup on. Emily steps into frame.

EMILY

You look beautiful, they're gonna love it.

CHERYL

(Witty)

They better.

EMILY

I'm just gonna-

RING RING RING!

They turn to face the phone. Cheryl's smile disappears. Emily rushes back to the landline in Cheryl's room. She answers.

EMILY (CONT'D)

(Into the phone)

Yes she's here. I'll bring the phone to her.

Emily takes a step forward but the cord doesn't reach... Cheryl locks eyes with Emily and raises her hand "stay". She takes a step toward her. No cane. Like a rocket launching each step is a victory, her legs shake, she almost losses balance, just barely catching herself. She takes the phone out of Emily's hand and leans against the wall.

CHERYL

(Into the phone)

Hello dear... Oh I see... Stop it, that's very important, there's no need to apologize. I'll see you all soon enough. Okay... Bye bye.

She hangs the phone up, retreating back to her bed with Emily's help. They hold hands. Cheryl holding back tears-

CHERYL (CONT'D)

Thank you for the extra days.

INSERT: Their hands in a tight grip, slowly loosening as days turn to night, back to day, until finally she lets go...

We PULL BACK to reveal her family surrounding her. Emily stands next to a middle aged man.

EMILY

You should have a moment alone with
her, I'll be outside if you need
anything.

Emily, stoic, walks past the family out into the hall and
freezes. Consumed, the world around her muffled. Her entire
weight collapses against the wall, the only shoulder she can
lean on. Alone, she CRIES.

Two nurses rush past her.

NURSE

(muffled)

Emily, we need you in room 124.

The nurse turns back to grab her.

NURSE (CONT'D)

(now clear)

C'mon, this is urgent!

They rush into the room next door. The door closes and we
TRACK down the hall. Past the first door, a loud cry echoes
out. Past the second...

OLD MAN (O.S.)

Goodbye my dear, I'll see you soon.

Past the third...

EMILY (O.S.)

I'm so sorry for your loss.

And then finally... The fourth door opens. We hear the DEATH
RATTLE of an old man, the quiet SOBBING of a YOUNG NURSE as
she walks out into the hall...

EMILY (early sixties) walks out behind her, they sit on a
bench outside the room.

YOUNG NURSE

How could you not cry?

The question hangs in the air. Emily's gaze is steady, her
face a portrait of someone who has seen this moment countless
times. She looks to her right, past the empty chair beside
her, then to the young nurse... she pats her leg.

THE END.