

## **REMEMBER ME**

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I woke up to the unfamiliar sound of church bells echoing in the distance. As I turned over in my bed, I spotted a pair of tiny glasses that I had never seen before, yet I could barely see a thing. I picked them up and peeked through the lenses only to discover I could see. I put them on my round freckled face and walked towards the bedroom door.

Across the hallway, sat an older, frailer man, who seemed to resemble my husband, Jim, the love of my life. Jim and I met in seventh grade and have been dating ever since. We moved in together in this house, where we have been living for a few years now.

“Good morning love,” said the old man softly.

“Hello, and who might you be sir?” I asked anxiously.

“How was your sleep?” replied the man, cleverly avoiding my question.

“It was good, are you here for breakfast?” The fact that this old man just barged into my home made me furious, but something inside of me wanted me to like the man. It couldn’t be any harm to ask him to stay for breakfast.

“Sure!” said the man with glee. “What’s on the menu?”

“Eggs.”

“My favorite.”

“My husband’s favorite too, Sir.”

The man didn’t reply. Instead, he looked down at his left hand, which held a gold ring on the fourth finger. A look of disappointment came across his slim face as a tear slowly moved its way down his cheek.

“You don’t like eggs?” I asked confused, wondering why the man had suddenly saddened.

“Yep, my favorite,” replied the man as another tear trickled down his face. I ignored the tear because I figured it wasn’t any of my business; a strange man in my house, crying at the mention of eggs.

I had a great breakfast with the man. We spoke of things such as the weather and he talked politics. The conversation reminded me of my husband. Jim loved to talk

politics and try to weave it throughout any conversation. I thought about where Jim could have gone.

The man offered numerous times to help clean up, and me being tired, I let him as I went back to my bedroom to change. As I walked down the hall I looked at my tiny feet. They had more wrinkles than I remembered, what an ugly set of feet I thought.

As I entered my bedroom, I had an unusual feeling. There was something about my room that just wasn't right. It wasn't the same feeling I always got in my room. I felt as though I was missing that sense of protection I was so use to my bedroom offering. I opened my closet to discover some foreign clothing. A very nice red blouse stared me right in the eye, completed with several black flowers printed on it. I couldn't seem to find my black dress that I adored, or my grey skirt I wore almost every day, so I put on my newly discovered clothes. I added a pair of slippers to keep my cold feet warm, and then I made my way down the hallway to see what the old man was up to.

The phone rang loudly from the living room, so I began the strange breath taking adventure from the end of the hallway to pick it up. I couldn't understand why I walked so slowly and with such difficulty. When I finally got out there, the man had already picked the phone up.

"Hello?" spoke the man, in a soft, somber tone of voice. "Yes...no...it's not a great day...she doesn't know me...see you soon...love you..." and he hung up the phone in a panic.

What is he talking about? I thought to myself. There was something about his blue eyes that were so satisfying. The way he looked at me with his watery blue eyes made me sad, like I felt like apologizing, but what for?

"Do you know where my mother is?" I asked the old man, in hopes he knew. Every time I thought of my mother, I got this feeling in my stomach that I couldn't explain, I felt like I was constantly missing her.

"No, I'm sorry," he changed the subject quickly. "How did you enjoy breakfast?"

"You know, come to think of it, I don't think I ate breakfast." I questioned myself. Although, I didn't feel hungry, I'll grab something later I thought.

The man put that face on again, as if he wanted to cry. He stared off into the distance with a saddened look, water building up in his eyes but always stayed silent. I

finally mustered up the courage to say, “Are you feeling okay?” But he only gave me a little nod. He made me feel like I was responsible for his sadness, but I didn’t know what I could have done to make this man sad.

“You haven’t seen my mother have you?”

“No,” replied the man. “Shelly and David are coming to visit soon.”

“Shelly...” I spoke softly and slowly. I wasn’t going to ask the man any more questions. I didn’t want to bother him. He must think I’m nuts.

I walked in my bedroom and on the dresser sat an old, torn picture in a frame. It was mine and Jim’s wedding photo. I wondered why it looked so old. I didn’t recall it being so torn up. I always loved that picture, and the way his hair glistened under the light. Where in the world is he? I wondered. And mother?

“You can’t let him go anywhere!” As I spoke I stared at the picture. Jim was so handsome, with his dark brown shiny hair and deep blue eyes. He had a tiny freckle under his left eye, something that I always loved. It made him unique. “Oh my, I wish Jim would at least let me know where he is.” I mumbled as the man stood in my bedroom doorway, with that sad look on his face, again.

I crept over to my bed and laid down to take a nap. “Don’t sleep yet,” shivered the old man “just stay awake for another little while?”

Who is this old man to tell me what to do? He doesn’t even know me. I began to feel frustrated. The quiet sound of bells chiming sounded several times from the porch. I rushed towards the sound to discover for silhouettes through the door.

I could see a beautiful thin face through the glass door as the man walked toward to open it. The tall slim woman walked through. Attached to her hip, a baby girl, with bright blue eyes and her blonde hair pinned back into two pink barettes. Not far behind the woman was a young boy, holding another man’s hand that slightly resembled Jim.

“Hello Rose” spoke the beautiful woman with her small pink lips. She was beautiful.

“Hello darling.” I replied, confused.

“Hi grandma” said the little boy excitedly.

I just stared at the boy, and for the life of me I couldn’t think of anything to say,

so I just stood there looking in his hopeless eyes as they stared back in my direction. The boy looked like he was just old enough to begin school. He looked almost identical to the man holding his hand, must be his father I assumed.

“Go into the living room with your mother, Noah. We will be right in.” said the man to the little boy.

“Hey son, listen, it’s not a good day, and honestly David, I can’t see there being many more” the man said to the young man, who I discovered was named David. I always loved the name David.

“There haven’t been any good days lately, Dad. We have to appreciate the time we have left.” David sadly explained to the old man, turning his shoulder and smiling softly my way.

I didn’t know what they were talking about, nor did I really care. Usually I would have been nosey about this type of thing but I couldn’t think of anything to say, so I walked into the living room to have a rest. Sitting in my living room were three people. “Hello how are you?” I asked, wondering what they were doing in my house.

“Hello, how are you today?” said the woman. “It’s me, Shelly.” I don’t recall ever knowing a Shelly.

“Would you like something to eat?” I asked. I could not have strangers in my house without offering food.

“No thank you.” Muttered a few different voices.

“Nice day out there!” exclaimed Shelly.

“Oh yes, nice day.” I replied.

“How was your day?”

“Good.” I said confused. The day had gone so quickly I couldn’t remember what I had done. “Have you seen Mom anywhere?”

“Mother,” David said as he walked into the room slowly “your Ma died almost twenty years ago.”

I was confused for a minute but then I began to explain to this young man. “No my love... my mother, Sadie. She must have gone out this morning. Little bugger, didn’t tell me a thing, and never does.”

"Oh yes, what've you been up to all day?" asked the woman shifting the topic.

"Not much, would you like something to eat?"

"No." said Shelly, checking her rose gold wrist watch.

We sat in silence for a few minutes as I looked around at this family. I didn't want to be rude, but I really wanted them to leave because I had no clue who any of them were, what they wanted or why they were here. I had things to do and I needed to find Jim.

After a little while of sad silence, I decided to break the awkwardness. "So what grade are you kids doing?"

"Nana, I started kindergarten," said the little blonde boy excitedly, but with more sadness in his voice than before.

"It's time to say goodbye," said David sadly.

"Goodbye," I replied, bluntly. I had so much to do, I was glad they were leaving.

The family kissed me goodbye and left. I felt so much love in my heart for these people, though I had no idea who they were.

The rest of the day went by slowly, but the old man stuck around. I had no idea where Jim was, so I decided to take a nap in hopes he would be there when I woke, then he could help me find Mom.

As I approached my dresser, I spotted a tiny silver frame. Inside, a photograph of a very happy old couple. On the side of the frame, written in gold letters, read *50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*. As I took a closer look at the photo, I noticed the picture was of the old man who had been in my house all day. I adjusted my eyesight to look in the mirror and what I saw shocked me. I was an old woman, small and frail with grey hair and too many wrinkles to count. As I looked back at the frame, and back at the mirror, I realized the woman in the mirror appeared the same as the woman in the photo. A tear trickled down my cheek as the old man entered my bedroom. I crawled in my bed and the old man kissed me softly. I fell into a deep sleep, for I would never see the light of day again.