

A YEAR MINUS A DAY

by
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TIME REFERENCE. BLACK SCREEN BOLD WHITE FONTS - SEPTEMBER

INT. CLAIRE'S CAR - DAY

CLAIRE is a 35 year old woman, charming, critical, clever, uses words funnily but sharply, very witty, pretty demanding (mainly to herself) but sensitive and passionate. Middle class, she's working as an art journalist for local magazines. She has been living with STEPHEN for 8 years now.

STEPHEN is a 42 year old man, screenplay writer and director for television, teacher, self learner and very experienced; too experienced actually. He often seems above everything, rarely transmits emotions through speech, as he claims to keep them for her or himself.

Their relationship is bearing on a slightly insane turn: STEPHEN is too controlling, too demanding, even for CLAIRE. CLAIRE starts to release the anger she's keeping inside for few months.

The camera is constantly shooting at CLAIRE, who is driving the car and talking to her common law partner STEPHEN, who sits next to her at the passenger seat. The camera will only show CLAIRE during the entire scene. We will only hear STEPHEN off camera, as the camera is "in STEPHEN's eyes" or at STEPHEN's place.

CLAIRE is driving at normal city speed, she's tense and looking straight at the road. The camera is shooting at her right profile.

Note: The dialogue has to feel like the two persons are speaking with two complete different tones: CLAIRE's is getting slowly angry and passionate, as opposed to STEPHEN's, low and monotone.

STEPHEN

(Background voice)

Make a right here, it's quicker.

CLAIRE

Oh yeah... Right... Mister "I don't have a driving license but I know the short cuts". I'll do it my way for once...

STEPHEN

Fine.

CLAIRE

I'm tired...

THIS is typical. You're directing me like you're directing one of your show.

STEPHEN

What do you mean?

CLAIRE

(Confused)

You seduced me with your confidence, your life-guard look and this little thing... What is it?... Your deviant sensitivity! Now, the only thing you worry about is if your little puppet is doing what master is asking for... Where is the romance?

She starts getting mad and raises her trembling voice.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Where is OUR romance?

STEPHEN

Clearly not here. Not now.

CLAIRE

No kidding!

Like, say, last night... Cuddling?

She turns her face to the right, facing STEPHEN - the camera, using an irritated mocking smile.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

It's not a brand of chips, you know!?

She turns back, facing the road again.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

I'm not your Sex Poodle, damn it! Why do our nights ALWAYS have to be like Japanese Porn movies?

STEPHEN

I've seen ordinary love - it doesn't attract me anymore. Same for conflicts my dear.

She turns her face to the right, facing STEPHEN - the camera, using the same irritated mocking smile.

CLAIRE

What? Too wise for that maybe?

STEPHEN

Careful...

CLAIRE turns back to the road, sees a guy finishing to cross the street from right to left, quickly avoids him, turns her face to the left trying to look for the crossing guy (back at STEPHEN - the camera).

CLAIRE

Yeah, right! Cross in the middle of the street, chump!

We hear a huge honk, CLAIRE turns back at the road, sees a car coming on the right, breaks strongly, grabbing the wheel, bending over it.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

(Yelling)

OOOH GOD!

The camera shakes violently and falls down to simulate a crash car.

Note: A real - low - car crash sound will be used on top, later on.

FADE TO BLACK.

OPENING CREDITS. BLACK SCREEN BOLD WHITE FONTS - TITLE

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

[Potential establishing shot]

Close-up on CLAIRE, two thirds on the right, sitting on a chair at STEPHEN's funerals. Two people are standing behind her (Leaving barely any room for background). Everybody wear black clothes, CLAIRE wears a hat and holds her crutches with her left hand, looking down.

CLAIRE

(Voice over, very ironic)

I guess he successfully avoided our confrontations til the end! Although, colliding with a car, for someone who refuses conflicts: Ironic isn't it?

PAUSE. CLAIRE's voice gets more serious. Exhausted.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
 (Voice over)
 8 years to dig our own hole, to finally
 end up in there.
 (Ironically)
 Glad I stepped over at the last minute!

PAUSE.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
 (Voice over)
 My STEPHEN, you were smart enough to see
 that coming, weren't you?
 (Confused)
 These last months... Each others' lives
 were going such different routes... You
 tried so hard bringing me into yours...
 (Angry)
 Why so much energy spent on manipulating
 me?
 You knew I'd back out!

PAUSE. CLAIRE'S voice is trembling, getting a very
 melancholic tone.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
 (Voice over)
 I loved you so much.

PAUSE. Her voice gets happier, self-confident and mocking
 again.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
 (Voice over)
 I'm such a bad driver!

FADE TO BLACK.

TIME REFERENCE. BLACK SCREEN BOLD WHITE FONTS - NOVEMBER

INT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The camera is shooting from above the sofa, where CLAIRE
 is lying, filling up the entire height of the screen.
 Still shot at two thirds on the right. She wears interior
 clothes, "comfy but ugly". We see a table on the left
 with a wireless phone, art magazines, half eaten snacks
 and an half full ash-tray. The camera slowly zooms in on
 a chest/face shot.

CLAIRE turns to the camera, releases an heavy breath, looking sadly bored.

The phone starts ringing. CLAIRE slowly turns and grabs the phone, bending to rest her hand holding the phone on the left arm of the sofa. The camera cuts to a shot behind the table, facing CLAIRE on the sofa, filling up the width of the screen. She picks up the communication: It's her friend SARAH who tries to invite her to a dinner party.

CLAIRE

'llo...

SARAH

CLAIRE! It's SARAH, how ARE you?

CLAIRE

Maaah! O.K.

SARAH

Working a bit?

CLAIRE

Yeah. Enough to keep me focused on "reality"?

She uses her left hand to do the double quote move.

SARAH

Look, you have to get back to the outside world, talk to people - I mean out of the work clan. MARTIN FISHER's newest prodigy is having an opening, you should come: There'll be food, music, cheap wine, art to spit on, all the stuff we like!

CLAIRE

Who's this MARTIN anyway?

SARAH

MARTIN FISCHER! The curator who's coming from New York, he's representing young photographers and will bring a collection to MONTREAL at the end of the year. You mentioned him in an article... Remember?

CLAIRE

Right! Well... Not sure if it's a good idea for this MERRY WIDOW.

(MORE)

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Once I've depressed a couple of celebrities with some of my CARMEN covers about the crappy art over there, you'll start praying you'd never invited me.

SARAH

Oh come on! I know how you feel, but staring at the ceiling all day long is not a bright future, sweetheart!

CLAIRE

I'm not ready to mingle SARAH, and especially not with autistic, dandy looking, arty people.

SARAH

O.K. Then...

(Hesitating)

I'll let you go back to...

(More self-confident and cheerful)

You call me if you need anything!

CLAIRE raises her eyes on SARAH's hesitation, but needs to be polite and send back a cheerful note.

CLAIRE

Yeah yeah... Bye SARAH, thank you.

SARAH

(With a fake Italian accent)

Ciao Bella.

CLAIRE hangs up the phone and puts it back on the table, without moving her legs. Gets back to a lying position. The camera cuts back to the shot above her (same chest/face shot), she releases a heavy breath while looking sadly bored. The camera zooms out to original shot.

FADE TO BLACK.

TIME REFERENCE. BLACK SCREEN BOLD WHITE FONTS - FEBRUARY

INT. CLAIRE'S CAR - DAY

CLAIRE arrives at the spot of her date. She decided that a random online date would give her some fun, potentially some loving moments.

The camera is shooting at CLAIRE parking her car. Looking at her right profile, same as the original car shot.

It's a bright day, CLAIRE is wearing bright clothes.
She's looking back, rearing the car into the spot.

CLAIRE
(To herself, voice over)
What have you done, CLAIRE?

EXT. STREET ALONG THE CAFE - DAY

CLAIRE is parked, it's the last metres before the Cafe.

Outside still shot, CLAIRE is far up the street on the first right quarter of the screen, locking her car and walking to the sidewalk, she lights up a cigarette and starts walking down the street.

CLAIRE
(To herself, voice over)
O.K. You have to go through this!
Everybody do that nowadays... Everybody
meet someone on Internet...

She stops.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
(To herself, voice over)
What if this guy is a child rapper or an
axe murderer?

She turns back, and starts walking back to her car.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
(To herself, voice over)
No way I'll end up drying up in his
basement!

She stops again.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
(To herself, voice over
making fun of herself)
Yeah right... DAVYDAVEDAVE the axe
murderer! Of course!

She turns back again and continues to walk towards the entrance.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
(To herself, voice over)
Well, if this guy turns out to be a geek
or a dick, I run away. No doubt.
(Doubting)
I don't even remember how to do that?
(MORE)

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
 (Reassuring herself, voice
 over)
 Well, I'd better keep my big mouth shut
 or my balanced plates will all come
 crashing down again.

CLAIRE stops, stubbing her cigarette under her foot a few steps before walking in front of the glass cafe entrance. She gazes at the camera (while the camera zooms in to a tighter shot of her), releases a heavy breath, then forces a wide smile while looking motivated.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
 (To the camera)
 O.K. Let's go!

EXT. CAFE PATIO - A TABLE - DAY

CLAIRE and her improvised online date DAVE are sitting at a table of the cafe patio. The table: A long nice white table cloth, with a little flower pot and two drinks that a waiter brings during the first seconds of the scene.

DAVE is a pretty conservative 32 year old attorney who is clearly too busy to hang out and meet someone randomly. He's exclusively organizing his love life through online dating, mainly trying to get laid. He's wearing a formal suit, as he probably came straight from work.

DAVE's cell-phone is on the table.

CLAIRE
 (To the waiter, embarrassed)
 Thanks.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
 (To DAVE)
 So, you're a lawyer?

DAVE
 Not really, an attorney... A lawyer's secretary. In my case, without a skirt.

CLAIRE
 (Faking to be amused)
 Right!

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
 (Trying to change subject)
 One question though, why DAVYDAVEDAVE?
 You're trying to hide this formal suit
 behind some cute high-school tag name?

DAVE
 (Smiling politely)
 Naaah! That's what my uncle called me as
 a kid - when we were playing hockey.

CLAIRE starts rolling her eyes, but stops immediately
 before DAVE notices her reaction.

CLAIRE
 (With her sarcastic tone)
 A rich and strong hockey player, how can
 a girl resist?!

CLAIRE is getting awkward, and try to make a break by
 taking a sip of her drink.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
 (Conscious of her
 awkwardness)
 Besides providing justice in this unfair
 world and hitting on desperate ladies
 over the Internet, how do you fill up
 your spare time?

DAVE
 Well, I just moved from TORONTO, so...
 Pretty busy looking to settle down in the
 PLATEAU. I found this huge penthouse
 looking at the fountain... But, can't
 really decide yet...

CLAIRE
 Decide what? Not big enough to play
 Hockey with your uncle in it, or too big
 for your cyber-conquests?

CLAIRE is tiring herself with the sarcastic tone she
 can't help using.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
 Sorry... I'm a little hard on you.

DAVE
 That's fine.
 (Trying to warm up the mood)
 You seem really nervous, is everything
 O.K.?

CLAIRE realizes this date will end absolutely nowhere.
 She just wants to be honest with this guy, close off the
 conversation and go home.

CLAIRE

Look, I thought someone who'd use DAVYDAVEDAVE as a pseudonym on an online website should be either stupid or have a good sense of humor. I realized that you're none of these two... It's not a big deal.

(Liberated)

I just wanted to have a nice date, get seduced if possible, and was even speculating about a little som'thin' som'thin'. I'm not disappointed, you seem to be a very nice guy.

CLAIRE stands up.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

I'm sure you'll find a CUTIECUTECUTE to have some drinks with.

DAVE

Maybe I can call you, sometime...

CLAIRE

(Very surprise, but polite)
Yeah. If you want.

FADE TO BLACK.

TIME REFERENCE. BLACK SCREEN BOLD WHITE FONTS - AUGUST

INT. GALLERY - PHOTOGRAPHERS COLLECTION SHOW - DAY

CLAIRE is going to a professional event to review a collection show that will open in a couple of days. MARTIN FISCHER is the curator. CLAIRE has never met him in person before.

The camera opens on a wall where a huge photograph is hanging, next to it the little panel with the piece's details.

CLAIRE enters the left of the screen walking. She stops facing the photograph, back to the camera. She releases a heavy breath.

PAUSE. MARTIN FISCHER enters the left of the screen, walking. He stops next to CLAIRE, at reasonable distance. He's a 30 year old charming guy, fit and distinguished.

He's wearing a flashy T-shirt under a light blazer, and a pair of jeans. He's guessing she's a journalist, he tried to get her opinion.

MARTIN

(Looking straight at the picture, talking gently to CLAIRE)

What do you think?

CLAIRE

(Looking straight at the picture)

If you're still interested by looking at ANOTHER Brooklyn picture with nothing else than ANOTHER seventies used chair against a wall, then you might enjoy this.

(With her sarcastic tone)

Kids these days...

PAUSE.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

(Feeling extremely embarrassed, looking straight down)

You didn't take that picture by the way? That would be typical of me...

MARTIN

(Surprised, amused by the circumstances)

You're safe: I'm not the artist...

They slowly turn their faces to each other. The camera cuts to a full shot chest/face of CLAIRE blushing and shyly smiling.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Thanks for the feedback. MARTIN FISCHER...

MARTIN steps first for a handshake. CLAIRE grabs his hand delicately.

CLAIRE

(Emotive)

CLAIRE.

FADE TO BLACK.

TIME REFERENCE. BLACK SCREEN BOLD WHITE FONTS - SEPTEMBER

INT. MARTIN FISCHER'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

The camera opens at the end of the bed, filling up the majority of the screen. We see CLAIRE and MARTIN lying on the bed, under the big cover, sleeping.

The camera cuts to CLAIRE's side revealing the furniture next to the bed. CLAIRE slowly opens her eyes: She's waking up. She looks at the camera, starting a little smile.

The camera cuts to a wider shot of CLAIRE's side, the bed occupying the width of the screen. She slowly sits up on the bed and turns to the camera, staring at the viewer, smiling genuinely.

FADE TO BLACK.

END CREDITS. BLACK SCREEN WHITE FONTS - PANELS