

Ghosting

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INT. KITCHEN - DUSK

ELISE GUEST, a twenty-something woman wearing somewhat hip work clothes, enters a beautiful kitchen that clearly does not belong to her.

She walks to the fridge, where a cutesy POST-IT NOTE tells her "Make yourself at home. Call us if you need anything. Heart, Mom."

Her PHONE buzzes. She pulls it out and looks at it.

It's *another* text from JAMAL. She scrolls with her thumb to reveal Jamal has sent her 15 texts, and she has yet to reply. She shakes her head and closes her messages before immediately scrolling through Instagram as she walks toward the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DUSK (CONTINUOUS)

As she rounds the corner into the living room, there's a ghost named TODD standing there checking out the place. How do we know he's a ghost? Great question.

Elise slows down to a stop and slowly looks up from her phone. She sees Todd. He doesn't look so hot, you know, because he's dead.

She takes 3 quick steps backwards. She squints to get a look at him, like she's having trouble actually seeing him.

ELISE

What is this? How the hell did you get in here? I'm calling the cops.

Elise starts to make the call.

TODD

It's Todd.

ELISE

I know who you are, Todd. Why are you here?

TODD

I don't really know. I was trying to cross over but I can't. I think I'm stuck.

ELISE

Cross over? Here. I'll order you a Lyft.

TODD
No, cross over to the *other side*.
Elise - I'm dead.

ELISE
WHAT? What happened?

She points to some RED on his shirt.

ELISE
Oh my god is that blood?

Todd looks down. He wipes the red from his shirt and puts it in his mouth.

TODD
Naw. Ketchup.

Elise is trying to process. Todd is a tad embarrassed.

TODD
I kinda choked on a hot dog while watching a hot dog eating contest.
(beat)
They make it look so easy.

ELISE
What? Why are you here, Todd? At my parent's house. Why?

TODD
Well, maybe I have unfinished business.
(does spooky fingers and laughs)
Naw I don't know. I mean, we clearly hit it off at the bar after that special screening of *Thelma and Louise* - what a couple goddesses, right? - but then you mustta lost my number. We had something special.

ELISE
We had one drink, and I regretted it instantly.

TODD
What?

ELISE
Yeah. You kept referring to the MeToo movement as PoundMeToo. It's hashtag.

TODD

I know what a pound symbol looks like, Elise.

ELISE

Todd - You kept squeezing my knee while trying to show me pics of you at the Women's March and then went into explicit detail about how you cheated on your ex but 'only because she was crazy.'

(OR)

You went on and on about how you volunteer at a Women's Health Clinic but you kept bringing up female anatomy and would only refer to vaginas as 'Wizard Sleeves.'

TODD

I don't get what that has to do with...

Todd suddenly gets it.

TODD

Ohhhh.

Todd disappears. A GUST OF WIND hits her face and blows her hair. Elise is clearly freaked out. She looks all around.

INT. FOYER - DUSK (CONTINUOUS)

She goes to the foyer closet and pulls out a BASEBALL BAT.

Beside her is the ghost of AQUAMARINE TANK TOP. She's wearing an aquamarine tank top. Elise jumps back. Aquamarine Tank Top looks like she was in a car wreck because she was.

ELISE

Oh fuck. What... are you ok?

Aquamarine Tank Top tries to look at herself.

AQUAMARINE TANK TOP

I... uhh... I don't think so.

Elise stares at her. She then decides she's going mad.

ELISE

Ok hold on hold on hold on. What is actually happening right now?

AQUAMARINE TANK TOP
 I guess I died texting
 while driving.
 (she hold up her phone)
 I may have been sending you a
 text, actually. Why didn't you
 ever respond to me? I sent you a
 few with no response. Not even the
 three little dots.

ELISE
 A few?

Elise quickly searches her phone and flips it toward her. She shows Aquamarine Tank Top the thread and begins to scroll down. And down. And down. And down. So many texts from her.

AQUAMARINE TANK TOP
 Why do you have me listed as
 Aquamarine Tank Top in your phone?
 We hung out like 5 or 6 times.
 Last week, even.

Elise lets out an uncomfortable chuckle.

ELISE
 Well, so, I'm better with faces
 and... clothing. It was a tad
 embarrassing to not know your
 name.

Elise gestures, trying to figure out how to say things.

ELISE
 So... Aquamarine Tank Top? That's
 what you were wearing when I first
 met you.
 (beat)
 Also, you talk a lot. *Talked*. A
 lot. This is strange, right?

Aquamarine Tank Top gives her a cold, hard stare. Then shrugs.

AQUAMARINE TANK TOP
 Hmm. I'm Kendra, by the way. I
 was Kendra.
 (MORE)

AQUAMARINE TANK TOP (CONT'D)

(beat)

So, when you didn't respond, I wanted to ask why and then there was this thing that happened at the mall that was really funny so I wanted to tell you it reminded me of that time we ate Thai food together with Ralph and Monique and that real handsy couple... I can't remember their names but remember how spicy it was? Yeah, so I saw this woman in the food court and she was screaming, like literally screaming, because something in her mouth was burning. I tried to take a video but my phone was acting strange so I typed it all up in that thread, I believe. You should just go back and read it. It's so funny. I wish I had been able to get video of it. And I'm sorry we didn't get to hang out more.

Aquamarine Tank Top fades as her words fade with her.

Elise is terrified. She puts her phone in her pocket.

Frozen, she tries to look left and right with only her eyes. She slowly turns around.

INT. LIBRARY - DUSK (CONTINUOUS)

Standing in the library is TIGER, a crunchy granola type female who is probably better than you because she hearts whales the most. Tiger's arms are crossed as she judges Elise. She's wearing a flowy skirt and a white blouse and necklaces. Maybe some bracelets. And she's covered in some BLUE LIQUID. A PLASTIC LID is stuck to her shoulder.

Elise jumps and yelps a tiny yelp.

TIGER

I drank too much kombucha on my way to a Greenpeace rally and had to stop at a Walmart to pee, which was super embarrassing, and some breeder's brat kid spilled some corn syrup blue monstrosity on the floor and I didn't see it because I had to get out of that place, and I slipped.

ELISE

God.

TIGER

I can't believe you didn't know I died. I showed you my super secret kombucha recipe and you just stopped coming to the yoga studio like it didn't even matter!

ELISE

I'm sorry. I don't remember that.

TIGER

I gave you my scoby.

ELISE

Uh, eww. I don't think so. I just got tested.

TIGER

Always making jokes. You totally dipped on me.

ELISE

This is insane! Where are you all coming from? Yeah I dipped. You told me the reason my dog died is because he wasn't vegan. I already told you he got hit by a car.

TIGER

You know, if more people rode bikes, your dog would still be alive today. You clearly don't get it.

(beat)

It's my time now, Namaste.

Tiger folds her hands into a prayer pose and descends into the abyss while fading away.

Elise is super freaked out. She moves quickly to the bookcase. She sets down the bat and searches for something. She finds a BOX.

Inside is a BUNDLE of sage and a super simple printed RECIPE for kombucha from Tiger. She pushes past the recipe and grabs the bundle.

ELISE
I need a lighter.

She looks for a moment longer and walks out of the room, back into the foyer and down the stairs.

INT. GARAGE - DUSK

Elise flips on the lights to the garage, and RALPH is standing there. Ralph is already talking. His body and face are red apart from small ovals around his eyes, which are crazy white. He is wearing only a towel around his waist. He starts walking toward her.

RALPH
Okay, tell me why I'm here so I can get out of here.

ELISE
I'm not quite sure, but I...

RALPH
Because here's the thing, I don't really get why you'd just stop talking to me. I think I'm pretty okay. I don't get it.

ELISE
Ralph, you...

RALPH
I'm always the one that gets broken up with but I mean, I GET women. I know how they think.

ELISE
Will you just let me...

RALPH
You and I were pretty good, all things considered. We both like Bon Iver, even though you totally pronounce it the wrong way. And

ELISE
YOU NEVER LET ME TALK. THE LAST
TIME WE WERE ON THE PHONE I
WATCHED 4 STRAIGHT EPISODES OF THE
GREAT BRITISH BAKING SHOW BEFORE
YOU ASKED ME HOW MY DAY WAS. AND
YOU CONSTANTLY INTERRUPT ME!

RALPH
Geez, take it easy. You could have
just told me.

Ralph disappears in a puff of air.

Elise looks at the sage in her hand. She turns around.

INT. STAIRCASE - DUSK (CONTINUOUS)

Elise takes a few steps toward the stairs and SMARMY KYLE appears. He's wearing a button up and pressed slacks. There's a KNIFE sticking out of his chest.

SMARMY KYLE
You know that sage won't do
anything, right.

ELISE
YOU WERE MARRIED!

Smarmy Kyle disappears. She's hit by the poof of air. She shakes her head. This is insane.

Elise runs up the staircase.

INT. BEDROOM - DUSK

Looking out the window as Elise enters is SAM. Sam is wearing parachuting clothes, whatever those are. He definitely has GOGGLES.

Elise stands in the doorway.

ELISE
Oh shit, Sam. I didn't know you...

Sam slightly turns and looks over his shoulder.

SAM
Died? Yeah. Skydiving.

ELISE
That sucks. I'm really sorry...
I... left like that.

Elise walks over and stands next to him without looking at him.

Elise looks over at him. Sam turns to face her.

SAM

Like that? I woke up one morning
in our apartment - the apartment
we literally shared - and you were
gone. No note. No text. Nothing. I
thought you were dead or abducted.

Elise turns to face him.

ELISE

Yeah, I mean, I
(beat)
I think I just didn't want to... I
don't know, hurt you?

SAM

Are you kidding me? Why would you
do that to me?

Elise gets defensive.

ELISE

I didn't ask for you to come here
tonight. Any of you.

Elise has an idea. She takes a step backward, creating space.

ELISE

Plus, you were a back-patter when
you hugged people.

Elise makes a disgusted face as if this is the most
condescending thing someone could do.

Nothing happens. Sam just looks at her.

She walks across the room and starts looking in her
parent's drawers.

ELISE

When you ordered food, you would
always say "I'll just have a..."
Why? Why do people say that? I
have even caught myself saying it.
Then I have to apologize. And...

She finds a LIGHTER. She holds them it in victory. She tries to
light the sage, but the lighter won't catch.

Sam is now beside her. She jumps a little. Her shoulders fall.

ELISE

Okay... You were so nice. But we didn't argue. We didn't even really talk about anything meaningful. We just kind of existed.

She looks at Sam, who doesn't really exist anymore and feels bad for her choice of words.

ELISE

Sorry.

She starts waving the unlit sage at Sam. He leans back, more annoyed than anything.

SAM

What are you doing?

ELISE

WHY WON'T YOU GO AWAY? I told you what you wanted to hear, so move on.

She holds the sage in front of his face. She lowers it after a moment.

SAM

Elise, we were really good for each other. I wasn't an asshole. I paid for dates and I left good tips. I didn't hurt you. Elise, I loved you. I've been trying to understand it for years. I didn't give you any reason to leave.

Elise's shoulders fall a little. She sighs.

ELISE

That must have sucked. You're right, you didn't give me any good reason to leave.

(beat)

But I didn't have a good reason to stay. That felt like enough.

(beat)

I shouldn't have left like that. I'm sorry. I'm not saying I should have stayed, but my method of leaving was shitty. Sorry.

Sam nods, resigned.

SAM

Alright. I... thanks for telling
me. I guess I'll...

He points to the door with his thumb and starts to leave.

ELISE

Sam? Do you still have my ceramic
fortune cat? The one with the...
paw... arm thing that waves at
you?

Sam stops and looks at her.

SAM

I kind of put it in the garbage
disposal after you left.

(beat)

Then I had to get a new garbage
disposal. So...

He shrugs and walks out of the room.

ELISE

You're not going to come back,
are you?

SAM (O.S.)

No.

ELISE

Ok.

The camera pulls back as Elise stands there alone. She pulls
out her phone, and we see the text thread from Jamal.

EXT. RIVER'S EDGE - DUSK

Elise is standing by the river, contemplating. Her phone is in
her hand. She still has Jamal's text thread open.

She types.