

Infinite Wisdom from an Ageing Superhero

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1 INT. FAMILY HOME - HARRY'S BEDROOM - DAY

HARRY (25) fumbles around with his tie, he doesn't notice the entrance of his DAD (68), with his chin buried in his neck.

HARRY

Shit.

His Dad walks up to him. Pushes his hands out of the way and begins to tie his tie.

DAD

Useless things.

HARRY

Am I doing the right thing?

DAD

The real question is, is Claire?

He looks around the room. The room still looks as though it belongs to a 15 year old. Posters cover the walls, Lego models still built and various nerdy items litter the shelves.

HARRY

I'm going to mess this up aren't I?

DAD

Of course you'll fuck this up. I wouldn't trust you to do this perfectly. But you trust her... And after a rumble, tumble and a bit of a stumble you'll be ok. Look at me... your mum was, and is way too good for me, but when we met - and I'll save you the erotic details - I wasn't perfect. Hard to believe, I know, but we grew to be perfect for each other. And so will you. Except. I am way better looking than you could ever hope to be.

They look at each other and exchange a smile. His Dad poses in the mirror. Harry looks nervously at his watch.

DAD

Time for a game of chess?

2 INT. FAMILY HOME - HALLWAY - ONE YEAR LATER

Harry opens a cupboard. He flicks an old light switch. In it's age it hums, sparks and the light flickers on and off. Harry searches the cupboard when the light turns off again. He tries to wiggle the switch to turn it back on.

HARRY

Dad, why don't you fix this switch?

DAD

It's been there since we bought the house.

HARRY

I'll pick a new one up today if you like?

DAD

No. It works perfectly fine. I fitted that switch 30 years ago now. And when I did, I wished that I would be lucky enough to have children.

HARRY

(not listening)

I could probably fit the switch as well.

Harry's Dad moves in front of Harry, flicking the light switch and the light turns on.

DAD

And every time I flick the switch I am thankful. For you. Even if you turned out the way you did.

HARRY

What's that supposed to mean?

Harry's Dad just shrugs and smiles. He pulls out an old chessboard from one of the shelves.

HARRY

You are in so much trouble.

3 INT. FAMILY HOME - DAD'S STUDY

It's a big old fashioned study - books and records line the wall. Items forbidden by Harry's mum from being displayed elsewhere in the house. It is familiar and very much lived

in. Harry's Dad (78) stands to greet Harry.

DAD

Ah, Harry, come in... have a seat.

Harry (35) looks at him with red puffy eyes. But he obliges and sits on a tattered sofa, next to an old chessboard. Harry studies the board.

HARRY

How long?

DAD

Could be years.

HARRY

How long really?

DAD

Weeks.

HARRY

No.

DAD

When you turn a certain age, Harry, time changes. The Beatles made 'Please Please me' in a day. I've still got time to live my life as a rockstar.

(beat)

I can't slow it down, but I can take it slow. I have got all the time I need.

HARRY

And mum?

DAD

Stronger than you think.

HARRY

And me?

Harry moves a piece on the chess board.

DAD

The simple fact is, life is for the living. And if you spend the rest of your life a miserable sod, then you haven't really lived. And Claire will really have a reason to leave you.

4 EXT. FAMILY HOME - FRONT DOOR

Harry gives his Dad a hug. Claire then moves up to Harry's Dad.

DAD

Claire.

They hug - he whispers.

DAD

I've left it all to you. Don't give him a penny.

CLAIRE

(sarcastically)

The moment you die, I'm leaving him.

5 EXT. FAMILY HOME - FRONT DOOR - STARY NIGHT

A young Harry (10) and his Dad (52) lie on their backs staring at the stars. The chessboard between them. His Dad points. This is one of the happiest moments in both of their lives.

6 INT. FAMILY HOME - HALLWAY - FUNERAL DAY

Harry's mum (72) and Claire (33) walk through the hallway. They are dressed in all black. Elegant, but full of sorrow.

Harry follows. His tie undone. He opens the cupboard. Flicks the old light switch on taking a moment to think about it and does his tie, looking in the mirror. He spots the chessboard.

Instead of going the same way as his mum and Claire, he walks back upstairs.

7 INT. FAMILY HOME - DAD'S BEDROOM - ONE WEEK EARLIER

Harry sits opposite his Dad (78) in bed. They play chess. We meet them mid conversation. His Dad wears a smile as ever, although he looks weaker than before. He is content listening to Harry.

HARRY

How am I meant to know how to fix a fuse box? I said we should get an electrician in. But she just takes one look at the box and job done. With a child in her arms as well...

DAD
Harry... My son.

HARRY
Dad... my Dad.

DAD
You know I'm not proud of a lot of things in my life, and even though you are completely shit at chess and you're utterly hopeless sometimes, I am proud to be your Dad.

Harry is taken a back.

DAD
I'm tired. And, well, we all get old and wrinkle. I accepted that a long time ago. Thank god your mother still thinks I'm sexy. I wouldn't change much in my life - and I know this sounds all hooky kooky - but I wish I had said I love you twice as much as I did.

(beat)
I'm going to rather let my cool self down and ask you for a kiss. I know that--

Before he can continue. His son leans over and kisses him on the cheek.

CUT TO:

8 EXT. FOREST - DAY - THE PAST

The forest. Father and Son walk along together, away from us. We see Harry at 10 again. Harry holds tight to his Dads hand.

They reach a lake. Harry is being taught how to skim stones. He runs around, enthusiastically retelling an some epic tale whilst whirling around his Dad. His Dad hanging on to every word.

9 INT. FAMILY HOME - DAD'S BEDROOM

They release from embrace. The chess pieces disturbed.

DAD
Another game?

HARRY

Yeah.

Harry looks at his watch.

HARRY

Shit, Dad, I've got to go.

He stands up. Folds his Dad's clothes on the way out.

HARRY

I love you.

DAD

I love you too.

10 EXT. FAMILY HOME - FRONT DOOR - STARY NIGHT

It is the night of the funeral. Harry lies on the front steps in his black suit. Staring up at the stars.

Claire comes out with a duvet along with his 1 year old son. They both join Harry on the floor.

11 INT. FAMILY HOME - DAD'S BEDROOM

Harry enters to see his Dad. At peace. Not tired. Not weak. But in his mums arms.

Off the chess board. It is set for the next game. The first pawn has already been moved.