

A Quarter of an Hour

written by

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FADE IN:

INT. - A SMALL WHITE ROOM

ELIZA and PATRICK are seated on white chairs across from one another. They are in a room with no windows or doors, just a small clock on the wall reading 15:00, and an intercom directly beside it. Despite the unfamiliar setting, both are sitting as if they were in a waiting room.

Patrick is slouched down in his chair with his legs stretched out in front of him, bouncing his right leg up and down. He is a handsome thirty-year-old, wearing blue jeans, black boots, and a white t-shirt, his blonde hair brushed back with a few strands dangling over his forehead.

Across from him, Eliza is sitting upright with her legs crossed. She is also thirty, and she is strikingly beautiful with jet black hair styled in a messy pixie cut, electric blue eyes, and she is wearing an oversized purple t-shirt with black leggings and yellow high-tops.

The intercom beeps.

INTERCOM

(Voice is female, similar  
to a radio host)

Welcome to purgatory, the best place for a second chance. Due to the nature of your deaths, you have been given a choice: you can either return to the living world and resume your life as it was or stay in purgatory and continue your journey to the afterlife. There is no punishment for either choice, it is solely in your hands. You will be given fifteen minutes to decide your fate.

The intercom beeps again, and the clock begins to countdown.

Patrick looks at Eliza, who is looking at the clock. He leans forward in his chair, getting closer to Eliza. She meets his gaze.

ELIZA

What?

Patrick stares for a moment, then looks away.

PATRICK

Nothing.

ELIZA

I didn't picture you being this  
calm for...where we are.

PATRICK

(dryly)

I don't think there's anything left  
in me to be shocked.

Eliza glances at the decreasing time on the clock. She studies the red light. As she gazes, her memories flash; her and Patrick in the car, yelling, a loud screech, more yelling, and then a crash. Ambulance lights flash over the screen. Eliza snaps herself back into the present moment.

ELIZA

(cheeky)

Yeah I....I think a flipped car  
takes it all away.

Eliza chuckles, but Patrick becomes visibly upset.

ELIZA (CONT'D)

Patrick, I didn't mean- I promise  
you it wasn't your fault.

PATRICK

(annoyed)

That doesn't make me feel better.

ELIZA

I'm not angry.

PATRICK

You should be.

ELIZA

I'm not, and don't tell me what I  
should be feeling. Frankly, I'm  
better off here.

PATRICK

In purgatory?

ELIZA

No. Dead.

PATRICK

(frustrated)

Stop saying shit like that, man!  
You said that right before we  
spiraled off the fucking highway!

ELIZA

Boo fucking hoo. It's not news,  
Patrick. I've been suicidal since I  
was fourteen.

PATRICK

That's what your medication is for.

ELIZA

(Rolls eyes and laughs)  
The same fucking pills I've been  
taking since, big fucking surprise,  
I was fourteen. And I still feel  
like garbage.

Patrick leans forward, resting his elbows on his knees and  
his head in his hands.

PATRICK

(defeated)

I don't know what to do anymore  
Eliza. It's always the same fucking  
problem. You're miserable and I  
can't help you, you can't help  
yourself, I...

He lifts his head up, sitting upright.

PATRICK (CONT.) (CONT'D)

I've racked my brain for hours upon  
hours upon hours on how to help  
you, how to make you happy, how to  
alleviate some of the burdens, and  
I just.....I don't know how to help  
you.

Eliza is sitting up straight, her face emotionless.

ELIZA

No one does, no one ever has.

They sit in silence for a moment. Patrick runs his hand  
through his hair, messing it further, and Eliza remains  
motionless. She looks at the clock, which reads 12:04. She  
doesn't want to fight with Patrick, so she changes the  
subject.

ELIZA (CONT'D)

I remember the day I met you.

Eliza looks at Patrick, smiling.

ELIZA (CONT'D)

It was the first time I'd ever wanted to impress anyone. I didn't say a fucking word in that class until the day you switched into it. I thought, "he's in an English class, he definitely has high standards" and I answered every single question I knew the answer to.

Patrick smiles at Eliza as she speaks. He is captivated by her.

ELIZA (CONT'D)

You were the first person I genuinely wanted to be better for.

She looks down at her lap, unable to look at Patrick because she feels anxious.

PATRICK

I'm sorry for snapping.

ELIZA

It's okay. I mean, look at where we are. It only makes sense for me to be the sane one here.

Patrick looks at Eliza, who is staring at the clock again. Her eyebrows are furrowed, and Patrick studies her.

PATRICK

Hey...

Eliza looks at him. He starts to ask her a question but stops himself.

ELIZA

What?

PATRICK

(He swallows hard, feeling nervous)

What do you miss most about...school?

ELIZA

(smiles softly)

Probably the simplicity of it.

PATRICK

Like, the workload?

ELIZA

No, the simplicity of the lifestyle. The workload was a lot, and it was difficult at times, but life was so...formulaic. It was school, work, and partying. The perfect combination of mental stimulation. It was the greatest distraction.

PATRICK

I miss those nights when we'd end up staying out till three am after we said we'd be asleep by eleven.

ELIZA

Hangovers were non-existent.

PATRICK

We could do a three-day bender and bounce back Monday as if nothing happened.

Patrick and Eliza both chuckle, making eye contact for a moment before Eliza looks down.

ELIZA

(sadly)

Aging is depressing.

PATRICK

You're only as old as you let yourself be.

ELIZA

Tell that to the hangovers that caught up to us.

Patrick is quiet for a moment. His gaze remains fixated on Eliza.

ELIZA (CONT'D)

I think it's me that makes it depressing.

Eliza is fixated on the floor. Patrick wants to physically comfort her, but he stays in his seat.

ELIZA (CONT'D)

Aging is inevitable, I know this, but it makes my skin crawl. I can't pinpoint the exact reason but waking up, day by day, and seeing yourself decay, it's horrifying.

(MORE)

ELIZA (CONT'D)

I try to tell myself it's natural  
but it feels like I'm losing  
control. Though, I don't think I've  
ever truly had it.

PATRICK

I think you do.

Eliza shrugs.

ELIZA

I'm my own setback. I'm not as  
miserable as I used to be, but I  
don't think I've made any  
groundbreaking progress.

PATRICK

I think you have.

ELIZA

Of course you do, you're my  
boyfriend. You want to believe I've  
progressed forward.

PATRICK

(firmly)

It doesn't matter what I am to you.  
I see you every day of my life,  
talk to you every day of my life.  
You're not who you used to be.

ELIZA

You always think better of me.

PATRICK

And you always think worse of  
everyone, including yourself.

ELIZA

(sarcastically)

It's called pessimism, Patrick.

PATRICK

And I'm being optimistic, Eliza.

Tension is clear between the two. Eliza narrows her eyes at  
Patrick, uncrossing her legs and leaning forward in her  
chair.

ELIZA

Aren't you gonna ask me what I've  
decided to do?

Patrick's straight face turns into a frown. He looks visibly upset.

PATRICK  
I'm scared to.

ELIZA  
More scared than dying?

PATRICK  
Death is inevitable. Whether I like it or not, it's coming one day. Losing you is petrifying because it's preventable.

Eliza doesn't respond. She waits for Patrick to continue.

PATRICK (CONT'D)  
I do everything I can every day to keep you by my side and happy. The only thing I would allow to take you from me is death.

ELIZA  
How Shakespearean of you.

Patrick breathes a chuckle. He looks at Eliza who is staring at him. He feels uneasy.

ELIZA (CONT'D)  
You sure sounded like you wanted to dump me in the car.

PATRICK  
That was just a fight.

ELIZA  
We've been having those a lot lately.

Patrick sighs.

PATRICK  
I'm not unhappy with you. It's a tough time for both of us right now.

ELIZA  
It's always a tough time. I make it a tough time.

PATRICK  
You make it a tough time when you deflect kindness.



ELIZA

I don't care about kindness.  
Kindness barely gets me anywhere.

PATRICK

It would if you let it.

ELIZA

(Her voice raises as she  
speaks)

Is this a fucking therapy session?  
Christ Patrick, I am never going to  
be what you want me to be. Have you  
not figured it out yet?

PATRICK

I have figured it out, Eliza. I  
don't want you to change, I just  
want you to be happy.

ELIZA

(Shaking her head)  
I'm not going back, Patrick.

Eliza is still like a statue in her chair. Patrick's face  
drops and he has one hand gripping his knee. He tries to  
speak but can't find the words.

PATRICK

Eliza-

ELIZA

(cutting Patrick off, her  
voice firm)  
I'm not going back.

PATRICK

(angrily)  
What the hell do you mean?

Eliza says nothing. Patrick laughs with disbelief.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

This isn't how you're supposed to  
go, Eliza. Not like this.

ELIZA

(angrily)  
How else am I supposed to go? With  
a noose? A bottle of pills?

PATRICK

My god, who says you have to kill  
yourself?

Eliza is angry. She sits upright.

ELIZA

(yelling)

Me! I do! And I am so sick of being told that life is this beautiful experience filled with highs and lows, cause guess what, the highs are not enough compared to the lows! Every day of my life is a new low, a new feeling of shame, guilt, or agony for being at war with my brain every waking hour of every fucking day. I am exhausted, Patrick, I live off pills and therapy, and I'm exhausted from acting like it's helping, or I'm feeling better because guess what? I don't. I feel the exact same way I did when I was a kid. I feel like a nuisance to my parents for all the money they spent on therapy for me, and mind you they sure as hell like to remind me of it. I feel like a nuisance to my friends because I can never be anything other than negative and painfully realistic.

Eliza begins to break down. Patrick stares at her blankly.

ELIZA (CONT'D)

And every day, I look at you, this beautiful, loving, warm person, the only person I feel close to, who has done way too much for me, and I feel guilty. Guilty because I want to give you everything, the whole universe wrapped up with blue ribbon, your favourite colour, but I can't. I can barely look at myself in the mirror, let alone give you what you truly deserve.

PATRICK

Eliza-

Eliza cuts him off. Tears are streaming down her face as she speaks.

ELIZA

(crying)

I love you more than I have ever loved anyone in this world, more than the stars in the sky, more than my stuffed purple bear that I sleep with every night, more than any cheesy, heart-felt speech could ever capture. But you deserve someone who allows you to thrive. Who makes you better. That is not me. That will never be me. But you love me too much to leave. So I'm making this decision for you. I'm choosing to die.

Patrick begins to cry. Eliza reaches for his hand and squeezes it.

ELIZA (CONT'D)

And if you choose to die with me, I will hate you forever. I don't know where we'd end up, but what I do know is if I see you, I won't speak to you. I will hate you because I know what's right for you. You need to go back, and you need to do it without me. I don't want to drag you down with me anymore.

PATRICK

(crying)

I don't wanna do this without you.

ELIZA

Neither do I. But you deserve to be happy. You shouldn't have to miss out because of me.

PATRICK

I love you. I love helping you.

ELIZA

(Shaking her head)

You are so selfless, and it amazes me, but it's not fair to you to have to miss out because I can't cope.

Patrick looks at Eliza who is already looking at him. She pulls her hand back.

PATRICK  
 (crying)  
 All the things of the future...

ELIZA  
 You can still have them with  
 someone else.

PATRICK  
 I know. But I want them with you.  
 Please Eliza, I'm begging you to  
 reconsider. The house...the pets...

Eliza doesn't speak. Patrick continues to cry.

PATRICK (CONT'D)  
 The kids...we were gonna do all the  
 things our parents didn't.

Eliza moves closer, wiping his tears with her hands. Patrick  
 grabs her hand, holding it to his cheek. He lowers his head.

ELIZA  
 It'll all be there for you.

Patrick lifts his head up, taking Eliza's hand off his cheek  
 and bringing it to his lips, kissing it.

PATRICK  
 Once you make a decision...

ELIZA  
 I stick to it.

Patrick places Eliza's hand in her lap. He wipes under his  
 eyes and snuffles. He looks at the clock, which reads 5  
 minutes and 22 seconds

PATRICK  
 You're my best friend.

ELIZA  
 You're my soulmate, and I love you.

Patrick smiles.

ELIZA (CONT'D)  
 But that's not enough.

PATRICK  
 What do you mean?

ELIZA

I love you but that's all I can give you. I'm not warm, I'm not kind or selfless or organized, I'm very angry and spiteful, and I can't give you everything that you deserve. I'm unstable, like a time bomb, and I wouldn't allow you to clean up that mess. Love can only go so far.

The intercom beeps.

INTERCOM

5 minutes remaining. Please be conscious of your decision.

Eliza stands from her chair and walks to Patrick. He stands and they embrace. Neither speaks, both begin to cry as they hold each other. Patrick clutches the back of Eliza's head, and Eliza fists the back of his shirt as she hugs him.

PATRICK

(crying)

I promise you, even though this is what you want, I'm still going to take you with me, every day. I'll always think of you, miss you, and I will always love you.

ELIZA

It's okay to move on from me, Patrick. As I said, I want you to have those things.

Eliza lifts her head up to look at Patrick. She reaches up and caresses his cheek.

ELIZA (CONT'D)

Whether I'm gone or not, the sun still rises.

PATRICK

I'll be looking for you in it every morning.

They kiss passionately. Patrick clutches onto Eliza as their kiss deepens.

The intercom beeps. The room goes pitch black.

CUT TO:

INT. A HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

The camera is close up to Patrick's bruised and cut face. He has a black eye and multiple stitches. There are tubes in his nostrils and a thick layer of gauze around his head. His eyes slowly open. He looks around the room which is full of equipment. The walls are grey, and so are the curtains, which are pulled apart to reveal a dark sky with the sun beginning to show. The clock on the wall reads 7:20 am. The nurse enters the room, gasping slightly when she sees Patrick is awake.

NURSE

Patrick, can you hear me? Nod if you can.

Patrick nods slowly.

NURSE (CONT'D)

(smiling softly)

I'm going to get the doctor and he's going to check on you, he'll update you on your condition, as well as-

She hesitates.

NURSE (CON'T) (CONT'D)

-your partner's state.

Patrick nods again. The nurse smiles softly and leaves.

Patrick twists his head to face the window. He sees the clouds are a lovely shade of purple and the sun is resting between them. He smiles, then begins to cry.

CUT TO:

EXT. - DAY - NEIGHBOURHOOD

A house made of red brick with two large windows is in view. The porch is a set of concrete stairs that lead to a black door with the number 49 in white on it. The camera pans to the garden, which is full of flowers that appear as if they could bloom at any moment.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Patrick is seen sitting on a large leather armchair. He is reading a book, and a pair of glasses adorned his face. A black french bulldog is laying at his feet, asleep. His phone begins to vibrate.

PATRICK

Hello?

GWEN (O.S.)

Hey, hon! Just checking in. Is Chase home?

PATRICK

Yeah, he got back about an hour ago. He caught a ride with Henry's parents so it saved me the trip.

GWEN (O.S.)

God bless that couple. We're gonna have to start pooling gas money for them.

Patrick laughs.

PATRICK

Thoughtful but still humorous.

GWEN (O.S.)

The only way I do it. Plus, works hectic, it's nice to hear you laugh.

PATRICK

Did you call just to flatter me?

GWEN (O.S.)

The sun, the moon, the stars, they can all be found in your eyes.

PATRICK

(laughing)

Okay, too much. You okay though? Define hectic.

GWEN (O.S.)

I'm okay, just busy as all hell. We're short a makeup artist so I've been picking up the slack. This is the first time today I've been able to stop and take a second. You'd think for a show with such a large cast they'd hire more than four makeup artists.

PATRICK

That's showbiz, baby.

GWEN (O.S.)

Showbiz will be the death of me.

PATRICK

At least it'll be glamorous.

GWEN (O.S.)

I'll go up in perfectly contoured flames.

They both laugh.

GWEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Okay, I gotta head back now. Might be an hour later than usual.

PATRICK

No worries. Don't work too hard though! I love you.

GWEN (O.S.)

I always do baby, you know me. Tell the kids I miss them! and I love them! and you! Bye!

Patrick smiles, putting his phone down. He stands up, petting the dog who is now awake, and walks out of the living room and to the stairs. Photos line the walls but aren't clear enough to be seen. Patrick walks by Chase's room, glancing in to see his son sitting at his desk, drawing. His back is facing Patrick, and a multitude of drawings line the walls of his room, ranging from scenery to animals to people.

Patrick continues to walk, reaching a door at the end of the hall. He slowly pushes it open. The camera shifts to first person perspective. The walls are a soft lilac, with a few photos of cartoon animals framed for decoration. The window is shrouded with a white curtain, making the room glow with a dewy hue. The furniture is white; a white side table, a small dresser, a table for diaper changing, and a crib. The camera shot switches to Patrick, who is standing over the crib, smiling tenderly as he looks down.

PATRICK

Hey girl.

The camera points into the crib, revealing a baby. She coos, waving her little arms and legs. Patrick picks her up, cradling her. He lightly rocks back and forth. She giggles. Footsteps can be heard coming down the hall, and Chase runs into the room.



CHASE

I heard Eliza giggle! I wanna play!

PATRICK

Tell you what, bud.

Patrick puts Eliza back into her crib.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

You grab Freddie and his leash,  
I'll get Eliza in some warmer  
clothes, and we'll go for a walk.

CHASE

Can we go to the park too? I wanna  
play fetch with Freddie!

PATRICK

Sure buddy. Make sure you wear your  
coat!

Chase runs out of the room, calling for the family dog, Freddie. Patrick grabs warmer clothes for Eliza and begins to dress her. She coos happily, grabbing hold of Patrick's hand as he pulls her shirt over her head. Patrick smiles at his daughter, and then glances out the window.

Chase opens the front door of the house, holding a leash that Freddie's collar is attached to. He walks through, with Patrick behind him, pushing a small grey stroller where Eliza sits. He locks the door, beginning to walk down the street with the stroller, his son, and Freddie.

The wind rustles the flowers, revealing that one has bloomed with bright purple petals.

CUT TO BLACK.