Silence Speaks for Me

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CHARACTER LIST
DAUGHTER: A young girl. A victim of abuse who is haunted by pain she hasn’t resolved.
MOTHER: A mother who mourns the loss of her child.
JESSIE: The abuser.
LITTLE GIRL: The embodiment of the DAUGHTER’s pain.

SETTING
Present day after a funeral.
A graveyard.

SYNOPSIS
A guided goodbye to poisonous love, pain, and innocence as explored by a grieving mother, a regretful abuser, and a dead daughter.
(the scene opens with the lights going up on the stage slowly. A group of people dressed in black stand surrounding a gravestone hidden from view. The group slowly exits the stage one by one, leaving the daughter and the mother on opposite sides of the gravestone. The daughter is curled up next to the gravestone, almost as if for comfort, clutching a singular white flower.)

DAUGHTER:

Oh momma, I remember the day it all began. Like any fall day in New England, the leaves painted the ground in vivid reds and oranges. Sunlight streamed through the barren trees and warmed my face as I enjoyed a stroll through town on the way to my favorite coffee shop.

College, as any student knows, is nearly impossible to cope with without the abuse of some substance. My vice just happened to be the sweet mistress that is caffeine.

Not sex, not alcohol. Love came to me in the form of a warm hazelnut vanilla bean latte with a double shot of espresso every morning and afternoon. Oh, that sweetened bitter beverage helped me cope with the impending doom of a life filled with debt from student loans.

I was having the time of my life. Classes, homework, friends, clubs, everything was stressful and fast paced and made me feel so goddamn alive. What was one more distraction? Jessie came into my life slowly but resolutely.

In that coffee shop on that chilly Fall day we met with a smile over shared coffee and conversation. The weather got colder as we got closer. Life was a wonderfully disgusting cliché that deserved its own romance novel.

But as with life, nothing was totally perfect. Things got a little strange. Jessie and I were a little off at the time. We were busy. College, friends, everything was just piling up and we tended to get a bit snappy at each other. That wasn’t the weird part. I remember the first time we fought. Jessie was screaming. I was yelling right back.

I turned to storm out the door, but I froze in my tracks. Clinging to the doorframe was a girl. Her bones protruded from her skin and if they were clawing their way to freedom, her hair was darkened from sweat. She looked close to death. I stared and stared, unblinking. Jessie was still yelling as if she couldn’t see the girl with the dead sunken eyes staring into my soul. I blinked….

And she was gone.

As Jessie and I went downhill she appeared more frequently, every time more broken and lifeless than the last. She haunted my dreams and my reality. Everywhere I looked, there she was, but, as soon as I looked away, she would disappear. I thought I was going mad.

My life that was once so beautiful and exciting became a burden to bear. The girl wouldn’t leave. Every time a harsh word would leave Jessie’s lips she would appear as if she was trying to save me but all she did was bring a crushing terror into my heart whenever I looked into her eyes.
I wasn’t afraid of her, though. Bruises blossomed on my heart over time like roses from a garden, thorns digging into my soul and twisting my guts until I had no breath to give the world every time I looked into Jessie’s cold heart.

The screaming became white noise to me; it meant I still had someone who wanted me. It meant I wasn’t completely worthless. The girl became my constant companion, a friend that mirrored how my heart was dying and who gave me some companionship when it felt like I was abandoned by the world.

“You made me not Love you”

With those words from my love’s lips I crumbled. The bruise on my face and the welts on my arms served as the only reminders that Jessie felt something for me. The pain on my skin felt like the burn of a twisted and dead love. Eyes dead on both parts we stared at each other. I finally broke away to search for my companion. That’s how we got here.

Momma, oh momma, I don’t know what to do. How do you cope when you realize the girl… is you? I look in the mirror and she’s all that I see. Momma oh momma, why can’t I be free?

MOMMA:
Oh sweet baby, I wish I could take it all away. All that pain.

DAUGHTER:
I have nothing left for you to take momma. I have no sadness, no innocence. All I have is a vessel that used to carry the weight and the beauty of life, a life so poignant that it carved out a cavity in my soul so large that all I feel is echoes now that it is buried.

There’s a strange beauty in this emptiness, Momma. There’s a quiet peace in the darkness.

MOMMA:
Isn’t it strange how when one’s innocence leaves, one is no longer scared of the dark?
We see the shadows and demons for what they are, simply cowards fearful of the light.

The second that hand caressed your face with hatred you were no longer my little girl, baby. You grew up, and you grew up in a moment of violence. I’m so sorry…

DAUGHTER:
Momma, it wasn’t your fault.

MOMMA:
I wish I could be there for you, I wish I could hold you…

DAUGHTER:
I know…

MOMMA:

I can’t say goodbye, baby. Not like this.

DAUGHTER:

You have to. Momma you have to go.

MOMMA:

I love you…

DAUGHTER:

I love you…

(The light fades from the mother, leaving only the daughter and the gravestone illuminated. Mother Exits. Jessie enters)

JESSIE:

I came as soon as I heard…

I’m so sorry…

(Silence)

I know I’m the last person you would want here. I saw the service though, it was beautiful…

God…

I don’t…

I don’t know what to say. I don’t know what I should do. Saying I’m sorry seems pointless…

DAUGHTER:

Jessie, it’s only pointless because you still don’t understand…

JESSIE:

(cuts her off)

I do regret it, you know. I regret everything about that day. We both made mistakes, yes, but you loved me. I know you loved me. You loved me in a way that made you burn from the inside. I could see it in your eyes, I could see the fire.
I was afraid.
I was angry.
I was a coward, so I destroyed what I couldn’t understand.

DAUGHTER:
You left me hollow Jessie, but you didn’t destroy me.
I may be broken, but I’m healing.

I used to dream of you coming back to me, of being with you (looks at flower thoughtfully) I used to dream that you’d bring me a flower. A silly thing really, but I remember the first flower you ever gave me. A beautiful red rose. I thought you were so in love with me, maybe another flower would convince me…

A flower withers. . .

JESSIE:
I wish you could forgive me…

(Silence hangs in the air. Light footsteps are heard as LITTLE GIRL approaches and sits lightly next to DAUGHTER. The LITTLE GIRL is exactly as DAUGHTER describe. She looks dead. The little girl plucks the flower from DAUGHTER’S hand )

JESSIE
I miss you… (voice breaks)

DAUGHTER
Why can’t I hate her?

(The little girl starts plucking the petals slowly from the flower in her hand)

I should.

It should make me angry that she’s here. It should make me feel sick to see her, but all I feel is pity.

(The little girl pauses in plucking the petals, stares at DAUGHTER)

I feel like I should want to see her suffer. I feel like I should want her to experience life and all its wonders, to finally fall into a selfless love that washes over you like an entire ocean only to have it ripped away… for her heart to bleed until the color oozes from her soul…

… But I don’t.
(JESSIE EXITS)

(the LITTLE GIRL reaches out and gently touches DAUGHTER’S face, a deep sadness is clear in both their eyes as they meet for the first time)

I want her to explore her life, I want her to cry and love and feel.

She needs the comfort of humanity, not the touch of cruelty.

Pain like that teaches nothing but bitter and empty hatred without a focus.

I feel like I’m screaming, It’s like my voice is trying to claw its way out of my throat, but they can’t hear me can they?

(The LITTLE GIRL shakes her head slightly)

…I’ll just have to let the silence speak for me.

LITTLE GIRL

You’re look so tired…

DAUGHTER

We both do.

LITTLE GIRL

Can we rest now?

DAUGHTER

(Kisses LITTLE GIRL’S forehead and holds her close)

Forever…

(The lights fade to black)

THE END