

FOOTPRINTS IN THE SNOW
by
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FADE IN:

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

A young EVELYN, twenty-two with flowing brown hair and bright blue eyes, and her fiancé dance slowly around the room in front of a Christmas tree; they look content. A delicate wedding ring on Evelyn's finger sparkles in the golden lights hung all around. Snow falls gently outside.

INT. BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Winter morning sunlight streams through thin white curtains floating across a large bay window, it softens the darkness of the room and falls across a clean white bedspread.

The curtains blow gently in the crisp breeze coming through the ajar window. Dawn birdsong can be heard outside.

One beam of light falls on the closed eye of an elderly lady, Evelyn, sleeping peacefully in the bed. Evelyn is in her late eighties, with white curly hair, her face is wrinkled but her eyes are youthful.

Evelyn stirs, yawns, stretches and sits up slowly. Her white nightdress, with little pink flowers covering it, hangs off her thin frame.

CARER (V.O)

Yeah, I think she's doing
alright... a bit better ... she
still gets up every day to look
at her photos...

Evelyn lets her feet hang over the edge of the bed before slowly slipping them into worn slippers that are lying ready on the bedroom floor.

She carefully stands up and shakily makes her way over to the window, ignoring the walking frame sat in the corner of the room gathering dust.

She reaches out and pulls the curtains from across the bay window revealing a beautiful, old, rocking chair looking out of the window to the wintery view.

CARER (PRE-LAP)

No, she hasn't been out...

INT. CARE HOME OFFICE - MORNING

The CARER (late 20s, pretty brunette, freckles and kind blue eyes), wearing smart lilac scrubs, is on the phone

in her office looking anxious. On the desk and the walls are framed photos of all the residents in and around the care home.

CARER

No... but how can they at the moment, they'll catch their death...

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

EVELYN closes the window, gently knocking the frost off the windowsill. She slowly moves over to her dressing table.

EVELYN (V.O)

When I moved in, I thought it might be lively; all the people.

A tired cardigan is draped over the back of the chair at the dressing table. Evelyn puts it on, wrapping it tightly around her frail body.

EVELYN (V.O)

But I forgot that the people who would live here are the sort that like to be in bed by nine at the latest. If they do speak, it's merely a croak of "Yes dear" or "No dear". You should see them, they're all so old.

Framed photographs are neatly arranged on Evelyn's dressing table. Her gaze pauses on a photo of her younger self and her husband on their wedding day.

EVELYN (V.O)

I married the kindest, most loving man in the world. We're both smirking. I think someone had told a rude joke.

Evelyn's eyes move to a portrait of the same young man smiling at the camera wearing a smart military uniform. She smiles at the photo and fondly twists her wedding ring that is still sat in pride of place, now loose around her bony finger.

There are also photos of new-borns and of cheerful family portraits. Evelyn casts her eyes fondly over all these memories.

EVELYN (V.O)

They're all so busy. They still visit now and again, with the promise of sweets if they behave, I'm sure. Their visits have been less and less lately. I sometimes regret coming here. It's eerie, thinking about all the people who lived in this room until they took their one-way ticket upstairs. Now I'm next in the queue.

Her eyes land on the ornate mirror sat in the middle of the dressing table. She studies her reflection, squinting uncomfortably as she examines herself.

A shaky hand comes up to run thin fingers over her face and to push and poke at her skin.

EVELYN (V.O)

The staff kindly placed a big mirror on my dressing table so that every morning I can stare at the old woman looking back at me.

She rubs her eyes, clearly tired, they are milky blue and shrouded by wrinkles but there is still a glimmer of energy in them.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

It still catches me by surprise, how many wrinkles there are and how deep they run now. Mind you, I can't see them clearly unless I put my glasses on.

A weary look comes over her and her eyes fall on the pair of old-fashioned glasses, on a beaded necklace, laying on the dresser.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

My daughter made me this beaded thing so they can hang round my neck when I'm not using them.

With a sigh, she picks them up and places them into the dresser drawer.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

It was a nice thought but having them there constantly at the ready felt like an admission of something. I don't wear them

anyway; I think this place is
better a little blurry.

The drawer is full of other discarded items; a hearing aid, some tablets and an emergency beeper.

In the centre of the dresser is a photo album, it is clearly old and well-loved; the beautiful gold binding on the spine is falling apart but has been repaired several times over the years.

EVELYN (V.O)

My parents bought it for me when
I was twenty-one so that I could
document the life in front of
me; I haven't wasted a page.

Evelyn moves her fingers over the faded cover, it's torn in a few places but has been patched up lovingly.

She picks it up and holds it tightly to her chest as she shuffles over to the window.

She sits down unsteadily in the rocking chair and tentatively opens the album to reveal photos of her youth.

INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

There's a gentle knock on the door to her room, Evelyn doesn't look up, it slowly opens and THE CARER comes in backwards, humming softly, pulling a trolley of meals into the doorway. She picks up a plate and takes a short step to place it on the dressing table.

CARER

You've got shepherd's pie this
evening.

Evelyn doesn't look up.

CARER

I'll just put just here on your
dressing table again.

The carer smiles at Evelyn lost in her reminiscing before pushing the trolley out and quietly pulling the door closed.

TIME LAPSE / MONTAGE

Evelyn stays seated in her rocking chair. The view out of the window in front of her shows the seasons change as time passes.

EVELYN (V.O)

I like to sit here; the sound of birds in the oak tree, it's a nice view, the rolling hills, and it means I don't have to look at the boring wallpaper, the pattern of which I now know by memory I'm ashamed to say.

- Snow melts and Spring flowers grow on the ground and trees.
- Bright, golden Summer sunlight comes through the windows, butterflies flutter around and birdsong is heard.
- The leaves outside turn brown and orange, drifting gently down as the sky changes.
- All is white as snow begins to fall; a robin comes to sit on the windowsill.

INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

The robin jumps off and flies away. It is dark outside now. Golden light emanates from lamps on her bedside and dressing table. Evelyn closes the photo album and shuffles back over to put it back in its place. She lays her cardigan back on the chair and switches the light off.

Evelyn goes back to the window and slowly closes the curtains, then shuffles over to sit on the edge of her bed. She slips her feet out of her slippers, leaving them in the same place ready for the morning.

She gets into bed and reaches, with difficulty, across to turn the lamp off. Darkness fills the room except for moonlight penetrating the thin curtains.

FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Winter light pierces through the curtains like before but now it is very overexposed and ethereal. There is lens flare as the light hits the camera.

The heavenly bright light fills the room as we see Evelyn sleeping in her bed. Her nightgown is now just white, the pink flowers have gone.

Evelyn stirs in her sleep, yawns and wakes. She sits up, slips her slippers on with ease and walks confidently over to the dressing table. She does not go to open the curtains.

She glances fondly over the photos in their frames like she does every morning, she looks away and we get a glimpse of a young Evelyn in the mirror.

She picks up her photo album and goes over to the rocking chair, she glides through where the curtains meet across the bay window and sits in her chair behind them. She starts looking through her photo album as usual. Outside is entirely bright, blinding white light.

INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

There is a knock at the door, it's the carer at the same time as usual, humming quietly.

The room is bright until we switch away from Evelyn's perspective to reveal that, in reality, it's in darkness. The carer comes walking in backwards pulling her trolley. Light from the corridor spills through the doorway. She picks up the plate to put it on the dressing table.

CARER

You've got casserole tonight.

Evelyn doesn't answer.

CARER

(now noticing the room is in darkness)

What are you doing sitting in
the dark?

There is still no answer. The carer sees the photo album is still on the dressing table.

With concern, she looks to the chair in the bay window and sees the curtains are closed. She walks over and pulls them aside, letting some moonlight into the room; Evelyn is not in her rocking chair.

The carer looks over to the bed, Evelyn is lying there.

CARER

(cautiously)

Evelyn?

Evelyn is lying motionless. We look back towards the rocking chair to see a young Evelyn sitting in it.

The light is ethereal again. Evelyn is now in her mid-twenties; her hair is brown and flows past her shoulders and her skin is smooth. She stares out of the window, happy and at peace.

A man's hand reaches out from behind her to rest on her shoulder and squeezes it gently. It is the young man from the photos.

She looks up at him, he smiles and she smiles back.

Evelyn gets up and walks out of frame with the man, leaving the camera looking at the window.

The bright light softens and we see two figures in the moonlight, walking away hand in hand, leaving footprints as the snow falls on the quiet landscape.

FADE OUT:

Word count: 1796