

BURNT GRASS

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FADE IN:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

FELIX (46) is standing in front of an open grave. He's casually dressed, arms crossed in front of him.

FELIX (V.O.)
I could've said something.
Anything would've been better. Or
not. Does it matter? Not really.
It wasn't the place. Or the time.
(Break) She didn't have much to
say either. But she said
something. She'll get to sleep
tonight. Or not. It's not what
you say more than the action of
opening your mouth. Either way.
Good or bad.

The frame widens to show CLARA (39) standing not too far from Felix, staring down at the same casket.

FELIX (V.O.)
You think she had better shut up?
Not go up there? You think she'll
sleep better tonight? Because she
said two words?
(break)
Yeah, true. I had nothing to say.
I wanted to say... I wanted to
have something to say... I guess
even if I had, I wouldn't have...
(break)
I don't know why I'm here.

WOMAN (V.O.)
Me neither.

FELIX (V.O.)
I spoke with him once... twice
maybe.

WOMAN (V.O.)
I took one of his classes. 5
years ago.

FELIX (V.O.)
Me too!

WOMAN (~~OFF~~)
I was in love with him.

FELIX (V.O.)
Oh. You were one of those...

WOMAN (V.O.)
What do you mean?

FELIX (V.O.)
Those girls who had a massive
crush on him, who were so
impressed by the dreamy
professor, so intelligent, so
witty! But you never took the
time to really...

WOMAN (V.O.)
Get him? Right. And you were one
of those!

Felix starts acting up the whole dialog in his head, in
silence.

FELIX (V.O.)
Those what?

WOMAN (V.O.)
Those boys who wanted to be like
him, started dressing up with
tweed vests, smoking the pipe...
You even tried to speak like him,
recreating his intonations, his
small twitches.

FELIX (V.O.)
Yes... yes I was one of those.

WOMAN (V.O.)
And why are you here today?

FELIX (V.O.)
... Pay my respect.

Felix is agitated. His breathing gets heavier. He's looking
for an escape in the vast space.

WOMAN (V.O.)
Bullshit! You just want to have
an excuse to feel lousy about
yourself.

FELIX (V.O.)
Maybe. So what?

WOMAN (V.O.)
Be real man! It's not maybe. It's
a big fat ugly yes! The man has
been dead for 5 years.

Felix sits on the ground. The woman looks at him.

CLARA
Are you good?

FELIX
Oh. Yes. Sorry... I didn't mean
to...

CLARA
It's all good.

FELIX
Ok.

CLARA
Who is she? To you.

FELIX
Oh no. It's not a woman.

CLARA
How would you know?

FELIX
Everybody knows. I mean... Right?

CLARA
I feel guilty coming here.

FELIX
That's silly.

CLARA
She was my neighbor. A very nice
woman. But we never spoke.

FELIX
You think she was nice.

CLARA
Well... she seemed nice.

FELIX
Why are you mourning a neighbor
you never spoke to?

FELIX (V.O.)
Why are you so judgemental...

CLARA
I don't know. And it's been 2
years.

FELIX (V.O.)
Not that bad.

FELIX

Oh well... you shouldn't feel guilty. It's natural. It's a natural process.

CLARA

You've been coming here a lot?

FELIX

Bah...

CLARA

I just feel... It's a shame her relatives don't have the appropriate... setting for their mourning. She can only collect the thoughts of strangers who...

FELIX

Don't have the appropriate setting for their mourning.

CLARA

Right.

FELIX

I'm pretty sure it's a man.

CLARA

Yes. You're probably right. I should get going. I make a point of not staying too long.

FELIX

Smart.(break) Goodbye.

Felix brings back his attention to the tomb.

FELIX (V.O.)

I just wish I had been able to...

WOMAN (V.O.)

Can I offer you a cup of coffee or... something?

He turns to her. She's walking away. He glances at the tomb one last time. It is closed. The grass is burnt. A bouquet of old daisies is resting next to it. "Unknown" is engraved in the stone.

Clara is walking away, staring at her feet moving. Felix, far behind, starts to walk towards her. She's acting up her own dialogue.

CLARA (V.O.)

Why do you ask? Why do you care?
He clearly didn't want to talk

(MORE)

CLARA (V.O.) [CONT'D]
with you. So let them be. Just
leave them alone. Silence doesn't
have to be uncomfortable! Right?
Let him in his silence next time!
Like there will be a next time.
Pff. You're so dumb. You could've
gone anywhere else today! The
whole day for yourself and
what... bad choices. Idiot.

FELIX
Excuse me. Sorry. Miss... huh...
Misses?

She freezes on the spot. He catches up to her.

FELIX [CONT'D]
I could go for coffee.

CLARA
Oh. I mean... Oh, right...
Well... Ok. Yes. Why not.

They walk away. They exchange a quick look then both look
straight ahead. They go through the gate and leave the
cemetery.

THE END.