

LOST TOUCH

written by

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OVER BLACK:

An engine throbbing weakly, sputtering; a short sharp screech of tyres and a sigh of frustration.

WOMAN (V.O.)

Fuck.

A thud of hand on dashboard, followed by some rustling; we hear a faint ringtone.

WOMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Come on!

MAN (V.O.)

(through phone)

Y'ello?

WOMAN

Yeah I'm here.

INT. CAR - DAY

CLARE is sitting at the wheel with her head bowed towards it. She is looking at the car as if personally insulted by it. It's clearly quite an old model.

Clare tries to get it running again, turning the key to no avail. As she does this she turns to look out the passenger window at the house facing her: the front door is yet to budge.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Clare shoves the door open and moves to the front of the old banger.

CLARE

Piece of shite.

She props open the bonnet with the stand and looks at the engine for a moment.

CLARE (CONT'D)

(to herself)

...what are you doing?

She puts the bonnet back down and rubs her tired eyes. The front door of the house starts to open. Upon seeing this Clare rushes back to her seat. Just in time, too.

Her DAD lopes down the porch steps towards her.

DAD

What are you doing?

CLARE

What? Hi by the way.

DAD

You were wandering about the car  
just now.

CLARE

Did you read those pamphlets I  
sent you? The sooner you accept  
your brains melting away the  
easier it'll be for everyone.

DAD

(entering car)

That's very good...

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

They share a brief, awkward hug.

DAD

How are you, hun?

CLARE

I'm good.

DAD

Been a while.

CLARE

Yeah.

DAD

Seriously, what were you up to?

CLARE

Just, you know, this thing again.

DAD

Something wrong with the car?

CLARE

No, no it runs like a dream  
doesn't it? Sometimes I swear I'm  
driving in a cloud or a  
fucking... swan.

DAD

Well it was fine when we had it.  
If it's got any kinks -

CLARE

(pulls out phone)  
Kinks?!

DAD

What I mean is that if it's  
picked up any problems it may  
simply be due to reckless  
driving.

CLARE

(checking phone)  
Yeah I forgot to mention when I  
run low I fill it up with wasabi,  
d'you think that was a mistake?

DAD

Your sarcasm does not impress me.  
There are other ways to make your  
point.

Clare stares hard at her phone.

DAD (CONT'D)

What have you been up to anyway?

Clare stares hard at her phone.

CLARE

God, have you seen the news?  
Looks like that dick-end's gonna  
win by a landslide, what's got in  
people's brains lately..?

DAD

How's the job?

CLARE

Fine, why?

DAD

Conversation, Clare. You up for it?

CLARE

I have something for you.

Clare gets out of the car. Dad gazes ahead, fidgets. Clare returns with a small box wrapped in brown paper.

DAD

I told you not to, hun.

CLARE

I know, but it was already dispatched.

DAD

Oh... well, thanks very much.

He leans round his seat and plops the present down. As he turns back round Clare stares at him.

DAD (CONT'D)

What?

CLARE

You gonna open it?

DAD

I'll open it later. Are we setting off or not?

CLARE

...you're such a bastard.

DAD

Language, Clare.

CLARE

You don't like it. You already don't like it. You've not opened it yet and already you know I've got it wrong.

DAD

You're ridiculous.

CLARE

Am I?

DAD

You are. Thank you. I am very, very grateful for your gift. It was very thoughtful of you to still get me a gift after I said not to --

CLARE

It was already dispatched.

DAD

-- and I am sure it is a unique and lovely gift. I will open it when we get back.

CLARE

...open it.

DAD

Do you know what a neurotic is?

Dad gets out of the car and goes round to the bonnet.

CLARE

What d'you mean, what d'you mean by that? Come back. What are you doing? Leave it.

DAD (O.S.)

Turn the key.

CLARE

I'm not a neurotic, you're a bad... gift recipient, you always have been.

DAD (O.S.)

Turn the bloody key.

Clare starts the engine; it rasps and sputters and dies.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

The open car hood blocks Dad from view while he glances from the engine to the phone he holds down by his hip and fiddles one-handed with the engine.

CLARE (O.S.)

Do you remember Christmas '01?  
The first Christmas I was old  
enough to buy you a present  
without Mum's help and I got you  
a barbecue apron with like, a six  
pack and you looked at it funny  
and reminded me it was December  
so a barbecue would be foolhardy  
bordering on dangerously  
incongruous?

DAD

No, but I remember the formal  
inquiry set in motion by The  
Committee, namely you and your  
sister, into family etiquette,  
and the subsequent reform  
policies designed to enforce  
Mutually Assured Gratitude of All  
Gifts under Article 9 of the  
Holiday Treaty. One more time?

The car repeats its death rattle.

CLARE (O.S.)

It does that all the time. Think  
it might be the uh... carburetor.

Dad shoots a disdainful look at the hood.

DAD

Beg pardon?

CLARE

Or the uh... the piston. Might be  
flooded.

Dad comes round from behind the hood.

DAD

Stop it.

Clare gets out again.

DAD (CONT'D)

This isn't right. There's no  
reason it should be in any  
trouble...

CLARE

I'll call a garage.

DAD

No no, that's a forty quid call  
out charge.

CLARE

That's fine.

DAD

Is it now, Rockerfeller?

CLARE

Who?

DAD

It's a rip off, there can't be  
anything majorly wrong with it,  
this car's run like a Swiss watch  
for years.

CLARE

Yeah, more like Swiss... cheese.

DAD

What?

CLARE

I mean - I reckon it's kaput.

DAD

That right? You think I sold my  
daughter a pup?

CLARE

Did I say that? I don't believe I  
said that. Did I?

An awkward silence.

CLARE (CONT'D)

Well can you fix it?

DAD

No I can't fix it right here and  
now for you right? I'll need a  
day or two with it.

CLARE

Right well we can't stay here all  
day, fun though it is.

DAD

I'll call a taxi.



CLARE

Nah I'm getting an Uber now.  
Faster, cheaper, et cetera.

DAD

You know that Uber crowd are  
taking business from the taxi  
drivers don't you?

CLARE

Again - faster, cheaper et  
cetera...

DAD

Your Uncle Luke was a taxi driver  
for years.

CLARE

I didn't know Luke was a sex  
offender!

DAD

Wow... you young ones. So  
cynical, so dark and edgy, you're  
just like Bill Hicks...

Clare looks none the wiser.

DAD (CONT'D)

See I can be sarcastic too.

CLARE

Don't be starting with the "young  
'uns" chat. If we're playing the  
generation blame game you're not  
gonna win.

DAD

What do you mean by that? What,  
my generation is worse than yours  
is it? Eh?

Clare makes her way back to the door.

CLARE

Booked. "Faishal" will be here in  
a few minutes.

Dad follows suit.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

They both sit in the car.

DAD

Faishal eh?

Clare looks at her dad warily.

CLARE

Uh huh..?

DAD

Hm.

Dad looks ahead, twiddling his thumbs and staring ahead.  
Clare narrows her eyes.

CLARE

Why?

DAD

Hm? Nothing, nothing,,,

CLARE

Don't even -

DAD

Aha! I knew it! I knew you  
thought I was racist!

CLARE

What the f-

DAD

Look at you, you were so ready to  
leap up on your high horse of  
political correctness there. Well  
sorry to dissappoint you darling,  
I'm not as backwards as you think  
I am.

CLARE

I d-

DAD

Didn't get the chance, did you?  
You're gutted you couldn't call  
me out on my archaic views,  
aren't you? The favourite sport  
of a generation, telling people  
who grew up in the aftermath of  
the Second World War what racism  
actually is, like they know  
anything. About anything.

CLARE

Jesus Dad, I didn't-

DAD

Yes you did, yes you did. You  
think I'm one of them. I knew it.

CLARE

Now who's a neurotic?

Dad looks resolutely forward again.

CLARE (CONT'D)

And while we're at it don't try  
and feed me that "generation"  
line as if you know anything  
about what I or anyone else that  
has to go through their twenties  
in this -

DAD

Ohhh good grief you're right, I  
forgot. The struggles of being  
young and beautiful in the most  
prosperous age in one of the most  
prosperous societies the world  
has ever seen, how could I have  
been so glib, so unsympathetic to  
your strife.

CLARE

Don't be a dick.

DAD

I'm not a dick.

CLARE

You might not be a racist but you are a dick. A dick who gave me a balls car, that I'm now stuck in, listening to you argue with yourself. I didn't accuse you of anything! So don't get angry at me because you feel attacked by people who level legitimate charges against other people who happen to be born around the same time as you.

They both stare out the windy like pouty children.

DAD

You know, this car could mean a bit more to you.

CLARE

Just 'cause something's old doesn't mean it matters.

DAD

(beat)

Got me and your mother to the hospital when you were born.

Clare turns to face her dad. He continues staring through the passenger window.

DAD (CONT'D)

You were early. Very early actually, for the first and last time. I'd barely got in the door when your mum waddled through shouting "it's coming, it's coming". No mobiles back then so I'd no idea. She was scared. And me, I was terrified. But you know, put on a brave face; she probably saw right through it. Calmly took her out and we pelted it towards the hospital. Was a fast little motor in those days, even with your mum the size of the moon.

Clare laughs quietly.

DAD (CONT'D)

And the nurses grabbed her at the front and wheeled her off with plenty of time. Doctor said later it was just as well, you know; complications and all that... apparently if we hadn't got to the hospital in time... would've been a bad situation.

CLARE

I didn't know any of that.

DAD

Yep. Then we brought you home. In this car.

He looks round at her. They both glance away, feeling awkward.

CLARE

Where's Faishal?

DAD

Yeah this is taking a while.

Dad sticks his hand in his inner jacket pocket, removing a pack of fags and a lighter. He sticks one of the cigarettes in the corner of his mouth and flicks the lighter.

CLARE

What are you doing?

DAD

What?

CLARE

You're not doing that in here.

DAD

What, you gonna tell a teacher?

CLARE

No, I mean, you're not doing that in here.

Dad sighs, patience at an all time low.

DAD

What are you talking about? I'll crack a window shall I?

CLARE

First off you can't "crack" these windows, they're winders from the year three A.D.

DAD

Yes you can. Look.

Dad moves the winder handle about an inch.

CLARE

And second I don't care if you do, you're not stinking the place up with your smoke.

DAD

For God's sake you are insufferable.

CLARE

Yeah, sure, I'm insufferable, but CANCER'S fine, yeah?

DAD

...what?!

CLARE

You can't just sit here with me for two minutes waiting on an Uber, you'd rather risk a lung tumour or a potential stroke than suffer giving me your full attention.

DAD

Oh I won't have to worry about lung cancer, I'm off to Zurich to kill myself for being senile, remember? The implication being you would find it insufferable to look after me in that condition yourself right? And what the fuck is an AirBnB anyway?!

CLARE

Take your death lolly outside.

DAD

I smoked in this car for years, it already smells of smoke.

CLARE

Well that's when it was yours,  
and it was good. Now it's mine,  
and it's fucked. Thanks for that.  
Smoke outside.

Dad throws the door open and leaves the car. Clare sits back, exhaling loudly, and closes her eyes to collect herself. Upon opening them, she sees something through the windshield that causes her to frown. She gets halfway out the car.

CLARE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

We now see Dad walking off, taking long, angry draws from his cigarette.

DAD

I'm walking. See you there.

CLARE

Dad come on, stop it, it's like a  
mile away.

DAD

So?

CLARE

(following him)

Stop throwing a sulk, get back in  
the car.

DAD

No, no, that's not my car  
anymore, I am irrelevant to that  
car, the shitty broken car I  
purposely left to rot before  
giving to you to pick up your  
wasabi, whatever that is. It's  
yours you say, so use it, it's  
not for me anymore.

CLARE

Come on Dad, this is beneath you.  
What would Bill Hicks say, huh?

DAD

What are you talking about?!

CLARE

(struggling to keep  
up)

You said his name earlier, I  
don't know who he is. Anyway -  
Dad - listen, stop! You can't  
walk there you might hurt  
yourself!

Dad spins round in a fury.

DAD

I'M. NOT. DEAD YET!!!

MAN (O.S.)

Ehm, excuse me?

The pair of them spin round. The voice is coming from a car  
parked on the opposite pavement. The driver is leaning out  
his window, looking confused and slightly concerned.

MAN

Are you Clare?

CLARE

Uh... yeah... Faishal is it?

MAN

Are you um... you both ready to  
go?

Father and daughter look at each other, and slowly make their  
way to the Uber. Faishal eyes them both as they get in,  
looking uncomfortable. The car sets off.

FAISHAL

Where to?

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

We see the faces of Clare and Dad from behind a SLAB OF STONE  
that stretches across the bottom of the shot. They stand side  
by side, looking down, silent. Every now and again, Clare's  
eyes dart sideways to glance at her dad.



DAD

It was the one day a year she got up before me. Liked to make me breakfast in bed. The rest of the time a fire couldn't get her up before eight. She really was a lot like you.

CLARE

... so... should we say something?

DAD

I... I don't think I need to. I just like coming to see her.

CLARE

I do too.

DAD

Thanks for coming.

CLARE

S'fine.

DAD

Do you want to say anything?

Clare thinks for a moment, before leaning forward conspiratorially.

CLARE

(stage whisper)

Dad's smoking again.

They both smile.

DAD

Sorry for leaving you with a broken car.

CLARE

Meh, we'll get it sorted. Sorry I'm a dick to you sometimes.

DAD

Apple, tree et cetera.

Clare slips her arm through her dad's, and rests her head on his shoulder.

A wide shot of the cemetery as they slowly walk away.

CLARE

You gonna open your present when  
we get back?

DAD

We're not there yet.

FADE TO BLACK