

Two Ghosts

By

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1 INT. BALLET ROOM - DAY

A delicate melody plays faintly from a Ballerina Box on the side - Julie's Theme. The Ballerina dances, YOUNG JULIE, 9 dances in the background.

Suddenly, the door opens. CINDY, 38 marches towards the box.

CINDY
Julie, what did we say?

Her hand lands on the box-

2 INT. JULIE'S PARENTS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Flash forward 12 years...

The ballerina box is closed again by CINDY, 50 in a sparkling dress.

CINDY
Did you hear me? Stop playing
with your toys.

The other woman is JULIE, 21 in more casual clothing, a big puffy sweater. She doesn't take her eyes off the box, while Cindy fills bowls of food by a table in front of the two, smile on her face.

ROBERT, 56, Julie's Father, approaches. He eats from the bowls, looking Julie up and down.

ROBERT
Fix your hair honey.
(Turning Julie around)
C'mon, let's make the rounds.

Robert puts his arm around Julie and leads her to some old family friends. It's her 21st birthday, and there's a large party celebrating the event.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
Smile, pretend it's your
birthday.
(Squeezing her playfully)
Do you hear me?

Julie nods.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
Good girl.

CUT TO

The trio in mid conversation with an older couple, FEMALE FAMILY FRIEND, 54 & MALE FAMILY FRIEND, 58.

(CONTINUED)

FEMALE FAMILY FRIEND

I remember when you were just this big, so cute. And what a dancer too, not anymore I imagine.

JULIE

(Smiling through her teeth)
Haha god no, not anymore. Too competitive, far too risky.

MALE FAMILY FRIEND

Smart choice. What do you do now?

FEMALE FAMILY FRIEND

"Mum to be" I hope?

JULIE

(Pause)
We'll see.

FEMALE FAMILY FRIEND

Time moves faster than you think.
Is there a boyfriend in the mix?

Julie tries to respond but Cindy interrupts, going into a long winded explanation of Stephen. Julie's stopped listening, she's thinking again, daydreaming.

She zones back in when she hears...

STEPHEN O.S.

Hello everybody! Could I have your attention!?

Cindy leads Julie to the circle forming around STEPHEN, 22 in the centre.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

I just want to thank you all so much for making this such a special night. Now, please give a big hand for the birthday girl.

Cindy pushes Julie forward. She slowly approaches the centre of the room, greeted by Stephen taking her by both hands, she laughs, blushing.

Everyone around claps, one of her close friends wolf whistles.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Oi! Now, I remember when we met. We were seventeen, Robert was throwing a little get together. Dad dragged me along...That's when Robert introduced me to his daughter.

(CONTINUED)

Stephen kisses her hand.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

She was so different to all the other girls: A great listener; She was the most incredible dancer; And she was the most beautiful girl I had ever met. Four years later, here we are. I love you Julie, always have, always will.

Stephen lowers himself to one knee. The smile on Julie's face fades. Stephen takes out a tiny box, similar to the ballerina box. He opens it, the whole audience gasps.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Julie Violet Rosemary, will you marry me?

Julie's doesn't react.

SONG 1 STARTS:

She gazes around the circle, everyone having frozen in spot. The looks of excitement on their faces don't fill her with confidence.

The small engagement box plays the sound of the ballerina box, a tune that fills her with fear.

She wanders around the circle, looking at everyone so happy. Julie sings about her doing this for them, that this is what's expected of her, to cage herself permanently.

People cut in as she passes them, saying how happy they are for her, that she'll remember this day for the rest of her life.

She stops at her parents, really looking closely at their smiles.

SONG 1 ENDS

Arriving back to Stephen, she places her hand back in his. Time becomes unfrozen.

Julie nods, everyone cheers. Stephen puts the ring on her finger. He gets up, hugging her tightly.

3 INT. PHONEBOX - SUNSET

A phonebox lone in the street, street lights illuminate the area, one shines above the box with an interior light inside.

Julie in a large wedding dress stands anxiously inside, holding the phone close to her, surprisingly not upset, looking more justified.

The phone goes to voicemail.

VOICEMAIL

This is Cindy, please leave a message after the tone.

JULIE

(Cold, distant)

Hi mum, it's me...surprise.
Listen, I know you're mad but I'm going away, and I probably won't see you for a long time. Give my best to Dad. I hope one day...forget it.

Julie hangs up, proud. Laughter can be heard. Julie looks out the box to spot a pair of Male Teens filming her, snickering amongst themselves.

Julie strides out the phonebox. Cocky, she flips the teens off, much to her and their amusement.

4 INT. CHURCH ENTRANCE - SAME TIME

The chapel is quiet, sombre.

Cindy, in a long dress, stands at the entrance, silent. Robert stands by her side, thanking the guests as they slowly leave. They give their sympathetic looks, the last of the lot walking out.

After they've left, Cindy lets out a long sigh, not mad, just disappointed.

5 EXT. SHOP WINDOW - NIGHT

Julie stands outside a shop, gazing at her reflection, stroking the place where a ring would've been.

She takes a breath, places one foot in front of the other, trying to remember how to dance again. All the while, her eyes are locked on her reflection.

She spots a group of Giggling Girls approaching. Julie steps well out of their way, letting them past. The girls all go silent, snickering after they've passed.

(CONTINUED)

Julie tries to say something but doesn't. She attempts a few complicated moves but stumbles on her dress, getting frustrated with herself.

A car then passes by, honking at Julie, much to her dismay.

SONG 2 STARTS

Julie parades through the streets, singing of how people do what they have always done, tell her what to do.

Tell her who she actually is, how everyone knows the real her. She is their canvas.

She rips off the skirt part of her dress.

SONG 2 ENDS

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INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Everyone gone, all that's left is Robert stood next to Stephen, Cindy sat on the stalls, fiddling with the ballerina box.

ROBERT

(To Stephen)

You know what, I'm not even mad!
Honestly, this is just like her!
She'd skip school, job
interviews, but "Oh, it's never
her fault!". She just "Wasn't
feeling it". Give it a week and
she'll be crawling back.

Cindy doesn't say a chime in, leaving the silence to be unnerving.

She opens the ballerina box, the sound echoing in the church. Cindy notices the actual ballerina is gone.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

(To Cindy)

Will you stop that bloody
racket!?

Cindy closes the box. Robert goes to comfort her, but she gets up, marching out of the church. Robert doesn't follow.

Until, he hears the car starting. Robert sprints outside.

7 EXT. CHURCH - SAME TIME

Robert exits the church, just as Cindy accelerates by, driving off without him.

He can't believe what he's seeing.

ROBERT
Cindy! Get back here!

8 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Church bells can be heard in the distance. Julie tries dancing down the street, but can't get the moves right, not like she used to.

A large crowd approaches, full of a variety of people. She stops dancing, just trying to pass through. Several people knock into her, throwing her from person to person.

JULIE
(Knocked around)
Sorry... 'scuse me... sorry.

Julie looks into their faces, scorn, judgement. The abuse gets harder, until she's knocked to the floor, falling against a wall.

The crowd continues to wander past. Julie lies on the floor, emotions welling inside.

The crowd freezes in place, surrounding Julie. She looks up dramatically, a song plays from a nearby house.

DANCE SCENE

Julie gets up, going into a ballerina dance with all the people on the street. She passes by each, unfreezing them when she does, they then join in.

A highly energetic dance scene takes place, full of large amounts of movement between her and the Crowd who once blocked her.

The dance then becomes intense, with the crowd trapping her, unable to escape. They take out their phones, the flashing lights from their cameras confusing her.

She then rises above it, breaking through.

DANCE SCENE ENDS

Julie's back on the floor, the crowd has passed. She stands back up, willing to give it another go. She pulls off some delicate dance moves, but still fails a fair few.

Angry, she begins to run down the street, attempting dance moves as she does.

9 INT. SILVER CAR - SAME TIME

A brand new polished Silver Car cruises down the street, the street lights shining inside.

Cindy seems worried, trying to keep herself calm, unsure of what will happen.

10 EXT. STREETS - SAME TIME

Julie dances through the street, still failing, confused as to why she can't do it anymore. She keeps falling to the floor, but everytime she gets up again.

11 INT. BALLET ROOM - SAME TIME

Suddenly, Young Julie is in her Ballerina's outfit, dancing alone. Every move she fails in real life, she pulls off here.

12 INTERCUT BETWEEN STREET, SILVER CAR AND BALLET ROOM

The music becomes more and more intense, cutting off as-

13 EXT. LONG AND WINDING ROAD - NIGHT

Julie jumps into the street, only for headlights approaching to bathe her in light, the car stops at the last second. She recognizes it very easily, the Silver Car.

The doors open. Julie can't make out the figure due to the blinding light. But she soon realises. The figure walks out, revealing it to be Cindy. She jogs up to Julie, embracing her tightly.

CINDY

Oh my god, my baby!

Julie doesn't react, she just seems uncomfortable at the mere touch. Julie pushes Cindy off her and tries to walk away.

CINDY (CONT'D)

What are you doing? Come back here!

Cindy grabs Julie by the arm, holding her back.

SONG 3 STARTS:

Julie and Cindy have a verbal back and forth, on the ethics of what Julie's doing.

Julie tells of how her mum only ever cared about her when she was doing well for herself, how she was bullied but her mum was never there for her.

(CONTINUED)

Cindy tells of how she's her little girl, yet she left without saying anything, how is that supposed to make her feel, knowing her daughter can't talk to her. How she only ever wanted what was best for her - but to Julie that meant growing unhappy with a man she didn't love.

The song suddenly changes pace when Julie admits Cindy and Robert are the reason she ran from the wedding.

SONG 3 ENDS

14 INT. BALLET ROOM - NIGHT

Flashback...

A practise room, one wall covered in mirrors. A classical piece plays from the speakers.

Young Julie is in her ballet outfit, dancing in the centre of the room. Her DANCE TUTOR watches from the side.

DANCE TUTOR

Watch that left foot Julie.

She stops very suddenly when she sees Cindy arguing through the door, half open with Robert. They whisper but the two grow more hostile, till Robert walks away. Cindy closes the door.

Young Julie looks away. Cindy walks next to the Dance Tutor.

DANCE TUTOR

Julie? Julie?

Julie doesn't dance, looking to the floor. The Dance Tutor stops the song, Cindy notices. She approaches Young Julie, lowering to her height.

CINDY

Hey, what's wrong?

Young Julie wipes a tear from Cindy's face. She hugs her mum, tightly.

CINDY (CONT'D)

Thank you...you know, my mum used to always say "Cindy, you can be so much more than what they want you to be".

The two split apart. Cindy stands back up, she walks across the room and gets the Ballerina Box out of her bag. They share a nod.

(CONTINUED)

Cindy opens the Ballerina Box. Young Julie begins to dance again, more energetic and expressive than before. She does a dance full of energy, completely against the nature of the song.

Robert then barges back in, Young Julie continues. He walks to the Ballerina Box, closing it.

ROBERT

Come on honey, time to go.

Young Julie continues to dance, more expressive with every second, much to Cindy's worry. Robert walks over to Young Julie, crouching down.

ROBERT

If you don't come right now, this
will be your last dance lesson.
Do you hear me?

Young Julie stops, looking to her Mother. Robert walks to the door, waiting for Julie to follow. She doesn't.

ROBERT

Fine.

Robert leaves the room. Cindy approaches Young Julie.

CINDY

Just do as he says...it's better.

Cindy leaves the room. Young Julie looks into the mirror.

15

EXT. LONG AND WINDING ROAD - PRESENT

Cindy is in shock, so hurt that Robert's words could cause all this.

CINDY

Baby...I'm so sorry.

JULIE

I don't want to get married, mum.
I don't wanna wake up at fifty
and realise I've wasted my life.

CINDY

And that's what you think of me.

JULIE

Dad is horrible to you mum.

CINDY

You're just nervous-

(CONTINUED)

JULIE
(Interrupting)
This is what I mean! You and Dad
don't listen, you never listen!

Cindy takes a second, taking a breath.

CINDY
Ok, I'm listening.

JULIE
(Struggling for the words)
I dunno what I want to say.

The two go silent, until Cindy gets an idea. Begrudgingly, she takes out the ballerina box, opening it - Julie's theme plays.

Julie wanders backwards. She pulls off an incredibly energetic and lively dance, showing her mother exactly what she's been practising her entire life.

Julie dances more and more, till she's crying from everything. Cindy rushes forward and embraces her, the two holding each other.

CINDY
(Sobbing)
I'm scared.

JULIE
I am too.

The two look at each other.

JULIE
Goodbye mum.

Cindy struggles to let go, but does so. Julie breaks away, walking off into the distance.

With a heavy heart, Cindy walks back to the car.

JULIE O.S.
Wait!

Julie runs up to Cindy. She takes the Ballerina out of her bra, putting it in Cindy's hand.

JULIE
Mum, you can be so much more than
what they want you to be.

Julie strokes Cindy's cheek, wiping away a tear. Julie heads off, leaving the light.

16 EXT. EMPTY CARRIAGEWAY - MORNING

Julie, now in her everyday clothing, struts alongside the open road. She smiles, confidently.

A car passes by, she sticks her thumb in the air, but it ignores her.

SONG 4 STARTS

A modern day folk song, Julie sings about chasing your dreams, despite what everyone tells you. Julie dances down the carriageway.

17 INT. JULIE'S PARENTS HOUSE - HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Arriving home, Cindy enters, Robert rushing to the door.

18 EXT. EMPTY CARRIAGEWAY - SAME TIME

A car pulls up. Julie gets in and drives into the distance.

19 INT. JULIE'S PARENTS HOUSE - HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Cindy puts the Ballerina Box on the side, with the Ballerina. She then takes off her ring, putting it next to the box.

SONG 4 ENDS