

An Authentic Life

By

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An open window gently blows soft white curtains as JANE sits on her bed, wearing a yellow dress and reading a book. On the cover there is a symbol of a black obelisk engraved with a the silhouette of a tree. The book is titled "An Authentic Life."

A creak comes from somewhere. Jane quickly hides the book under the covers, and stares at the closed bedroom door.

Jane stares at the doorknob for a moment, and then reaches for the book under the covers. TOM swiftly opens the door and his presence fills the room.

TOM

Hey, your cars fixed.

Jane sits back trying to appear relaxed. Tom tosses her the keys and she catches them. Jane responds coldly and buries herself in her phone.

JANE

Thanks.

Tom stares at Jane.

TOM

Want to take it for a spin?

JANE

No, thanks.

Tom walks in and looks around the room.

TOM

Your mother could use some help with the dishes.

Jane avoids eye contact.

JANE

I didn't eat here today.

TOM

Jane, come on...

Jane looks up.

JANE

What?

Tom gives up and sits on the bed, and sees something under the covers.

(CONTINUED)

TOM
What's that?

Jane grabs the book and steps toward the window. Tom grabs the book and they struggle for it. Jane lets go and walks over to the door.

Tom looks through the book, and instantly turns colder.

TOM
What is this?

JANE
Why do you care?

Tom walks toward Jane and she takes a step back.

TOM
Do you know what this is?

Tom slams the book shut. CLAIRE walks into the room and steps in front of Jane.

CLAIRE
What's wrong?

Tom shows Claire the book.

TOM
Did you know about this?

CLAIRE
It's just a book, Tom. It's a harmless book.

TOM
As long as she lives under my roof,
I will not have this in my house!

CLAIRE
Honey, come on, let her-

Claire takes a step forward and Tom throws the book down.

TOM
No!

Tom slowly walks toward Claire who's confidence drains with fear. Tom gestures for Jane to leave.

TOM
Get out.

Jane gets out of the room, Claire looks at Jane with a worried glance, and Tom slams the door shut. Claire screams and the sound of something breaks.

2 INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 2

Jane waits at the door for a moment, and then storms down the hallway.

3 INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 3

Jane walks into the living room and opens a wooden drawer. Inside is a pistol. Jane takes the gun out and walks back to the hallway.

4 INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 4

Jane marches up to the door, but then slows down and listens to the soft conversation of her parents voice.

TOM (O.S.)

I'm so sorry.

CLAIRE (O.S.)

It's okay. She's an adult now. We need to trust her.

TOM (O.S.)

I know... I know... How can she just throw her life away? Where did we go wrong?

Jane takes a step back, and then looks at the gun in her hand.

5 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - EVENING 5

Jane drives down the road and keeps changing the station on the radio looking for the right one.

6 INT. GREENHOUSE - EVENING 6

Jane focuses on a green leaf deep in thought. The kind voice of CHRISTOPHER rings in from somewhere.

CHRISTOPHER (O.S.)

Jane?

Jane looks around the warm looking greenhouse filled with lush vegetables and intricate flowers. Jane notices Christopher's concerned look.

(CONTINUED)

JANE

Yeah, what's wrong?

Several people harvest tomatoes and joke from across the room. Everyone is wearing a black obelisk necklace, except for Jane.

CHRISTOPHER

You looked deep in thought. What were you fantasizing about?

Jane leans over to kiss Christopher, but he holds her back.

CHRISTOPHER

No, just tell me.

Jane picks up a bucket full of weeds.

JANE

It was more of a bad dream.

CHRISTOPHER

You look tired. Are you alright?

JANE

It's okay. I'm fine. I love the smell in here.

Christopher takes the bucket of weeds from her and sets it back on the ground. He gently takes her hands, pulls her closer, and prepares to say something important.

CHRISTOPHER

We need to talk.

Jane freezes.

CHRISTOPHER

I...

JANE

Not right now, okay?

Jane takes a step back. A pleasant sounding bell rings from the distance. The people in the room put down their tools and begin to step out.

Jane starts to walk away, but Christopher doesn't move.

CHRISTOPHER

Jane.

Jane looks back at Christopher. He stares for a moment, wanting to say something. Jane breaks eye contact and walks out the door.

7 EXT. STONE MANSION - MOMENTS LATER 7

Jane walks toward the mansion at a fast pace. Christopher jogs to catch up.

8 INT. RELIGIOUS SANCTUARY - EVENING 8

Jane and Christopher walk into a warm looking room with a dark stone floor. Many shoes lay at the entrance.

Jane and Christopher take off their shoes and walk inside.

The room is large and unusually quiet. There is a tree centered in the middle with lush plants scattered all around.

Many people sit around the tree on floor mats.

RODRICK gets up from sitting with the group, and stands by the tree. He raises his hands to everyone's applause. The room quiets down as he lowers his hands.

Evening light leaks into the room. Rodrick begins to speak with a calm and motivating tone.

RODRICK

No more lies. To live authentically, means opening your heart and letting the darkest, most hidden areas of our soul see the glaring light of truth.

The room is quiet. Jane looks at the tree and notices Rodrick looking at her with a piercing gaze.

RODRICK

Jane is it?

Jane timidly nods her head.

RODRICK

Please come up.

Jane nervously steps up and joins Rodrick in the center of the room. Rodrick walks behind her and they face the tree together.

Jane can't make herself say a word.

Rodrick turns her around gently and holds her shoulders.

(CONTINUED)

RODRICK
Why are you upset?

Jane begins to speak with a hushed voice.

JANE
I'm okay.

Rodrnick shakes his head with disbelief.

RODRICK
No more lies, Jane.

JANE
I don't know what you want me to say.

Jane leans in closer and Rodrick holds her tighter.

RODRICK
Say the first word that comes to your mind that describes how you feel.

Jane looks around the room at everyone watching and replies with a whisper.

JANE
I can't.

Rodrnick holds her gaze.

RODRICK
Trust me. Close your eyes.

Rodrnick places his hand over her eyes and slowly spins with her in a circle.

RODRICK
Forget those watching, and tell me what you feel.

Jane tries to force herself to talk.

JANE
It's so stupid.

RODRICK
Your feelings are never stupid, Jane. What you feel is real and matters deeply.

Jane shakes her head.

RODRICK
Live honestly. Tell me how you
feel.

Jane hesitates as they spin around slowly.

JANE
I-

Rodrnick raises his voice.

RODRICK
Louder.

Jane tries to raise her voice.

JANE
I feel-

RODRICK
Jane!

Jane pushes Rodrick away. Everyone waits in silence.

RODRICK
That's it. That look in your eyes
right now.

Jane takes a breath and sees the concerning look of everyone
in the room.

RODRICK
Jane. Sometimes you have to start
your own life, as painful as that
might be for you, and those you
leave behind.

Rodrnick motions for everyone to join. Various people in the
room stand up and surround her in a loving circle.

RODRICK
This is a safe place, Jane. You are
always welcome here. I want you to
know that.

JANE
Thank you, Rodrick.

Rodrnick takes a step back from the group. Rodrick sees
Christopher still sitting at the edge of the room and stares
with a look of concern.

9 INT. YELLOW FARM HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER 9

Jane opens the creaky screen door and walks inside. The house is dark.

10 INT. YELLOW FARM HOUSE BATHROOM - NIGHT 10

Jane slips under the water of a steaming bathtub, shutting herself off from the world. Her yellow dress lays on the bathroom floor. She comes back up and gathers her thoughts. Jane closes her eyes.

11 INT. YELLOW FARM HOUSE BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING 11

Jane wakes up and grabs her suitcase from under the bed. A lamp lays broken on the floor. Jane steps over the pieces and flings her suitcase open. She grabs random clothes from various drawers, and places them inside the suitcase.

Jane throws open her closet and looks through her hanging clothes. Her hand falls on a long green dress.

12 INT. YELLOW FARM HOUSE - MORNING 12

Tom and Claire eat at the kitchen table in the next room.

Jane walks into the living room wearing the long green dress and looks nostalgically at all the family photos around the room. Jane sets the suitcase just out of sight and walks into the kitchen.

CLAIRE

Hey! Sweetie, you look beautiful this morning.

JANE

Thanks, I need to talk with you guys.

Tom takes control of the conversation.

TOM

I am so sorry for yesterday. I got out of hand, and what I did was-

Jane sharply cuts him off.

JANE

Dad.

Tom sits back.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

What?

Jane takes a deep breath and stands a little jittery.

JANE

You said as long as I lived here, I
couldn't be apart of Healing
Lights, but they are apart of me
now. So I'm leaving.

Claire pushes away her food.

CLAIRE

Oh no-

Jane cuts Claire off loudly.

JANE

I'm leaving... Now. This is my
decision, and it's final.

The rooms rings quiet.

TOM

After everything I've--

JANE

Dad. It's not about you.

Tom quietly and calmly stands up and opens a wooden drawer,
taking out a box of ammo and shuts it.

CLAIRE

Why now?

Jane thinks for a moment. Tom opens another drawer and takes
out the pistol.

JANE

Because... Sometimes you have to
start your own life, as painful as
that might be. It's time for me to
start my own life.

Tom begins loading the gun.

CLAIRE

Is this about a boy?

Jane notices Tom loading the pistol.

(CONTINUED)

JANE

No, it's not. Dad, what are you doing?

Tom keeps loading the pistol. Claire gets up from the table and approaches Tom.

CLAIRE

What are you doing with that? Put that away.

Claire reaches for the gun, but Tom pushes her away and keeps loading the pistol.

CLAIRE

Tom, look at me!

Tom just stares at her like a cornered bull, finishes loading the gun, and cocks it.

CLAIRE

Honey, stop it. This isn't funny.

Tom just holds the gun and looks at her.

JANE

Dad, come on!

Jane yells at the top of her voice.

JANE

Dad!

CLAIRE

Put that away, right now!

Tom puts the pistol in his mouth.

Jane takes a step forward and hesitates.

JANE

Whatever, do it.

Jane grabs her suitcase, and walks out the door.

13

EXT. YELLOW FARM HOUSE - DAY

13

Jane walks off the front porch to her car. She listens but no shot rings. The front door opens and Claire runs after her carrying the pistol.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE
Jane! Jane! Stop! What was that?

Claire runs up and grabs Jane's arm.

JANE
Let go of me.

CLAIRE
Are you that cold?

JANE
I'm leaving, just leave me alone.

Claire looks down at her hand holding Jane and lets her go.

CLAIRE
We need you.

JANE
You don't see it, do you? You don't
see how this is abuse?

Claire steps back for a moment and gathers herself together.

CLAIRE
He's not a bad man, he's your
father.

JANE
He's both.

Jane gets in the car and slams the door shut, driving away
in a rush.

14 INT. CAR - DAY 14

Jane drives in the quiet car and stares down the road. She
sees someone walking along the road in the distance. Driving
closer she sees it's Christopher wearing a backpack.

Jane breaks hard as she passes him and stops the car
sideways in the middle of the road.

15 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MOMENTS LATER 15

Jane opens the car door and runs to Christopher.

JANE
Christopher. What are you doing?

Christopher throws up his hands and ambivalently replies.

CHRISTOPHER

This is what I wanted to talk to you about. But you wouldn't listen to me.

JANE

So you're leaving? Just like that?

Christopher nods his head. Jane paces back and forth. A semi truck drives up and is blocked by Jane's car.

CHRISTOPHER

It doesn't feel right anymore. Living there.... with him.

JANE

Why?

The truck honks loudly.

CHRISTOPHER

Rodrnick made promises he couldn't keep. It's really not that complicated.

JANE

What about us?

Christopher looks down the empty road.

CHRISTOPHER

You can leave everything and come with me.

Jane takes a step back.

JANE

Where are you going?

The truck honks again, and Jane raises her hand to him.

JANE

Shut up!

Christopher takes a step back.

CHRISTOPHER

I don't know, that's kind of the amazing part isn't it?

Jane stares for a moment.

(CONTINUED)

JANE

That's not good enough for me.

Christopher takes off his necklace and hands it to Jane.

JANE

We're safe there. We have a family
that cares about us. No man is an
island.

The truck honks again... longer.

CHRISTOPHER

Life is more complicated than that.
Looks like you need to move.

Christopher points to the truck and walks away. Jane watches
him for a moment and holds the necklace.

16

INT. GREENHOUSE - DAY

16

Jane walks inside and sees Rodrick alone in the greenhouse.
Jane touches the necklace around her neck and watches as
water sprays a mist in the room. Rodrick notices Jane and
she walks up to him.

JANE

I'm here to stay.

Rodrick smiles and gives her a warm hug.

RODRICK

Welcome home.