

SCENE 1 INT LUCIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

FX: SARAH CRANKS A BABY MOBILE AND A SIMPLE MECHANICAL TUNE PLAYS. IT SLOWS TO A STOP ON "I NEED TO STOP GROWING."

(LUCIA, OUR NARRATOR, SPEAKS IN A CALM EVEN TONE THROUGHOUT THE PIECE. SHE KNOWS WHAT IS GOING ON AND LITTLE PHASES HER FROM REALITY)

When my mother turns on the baby mobile over my head, I know that it means that she does not want me to hear her crying in the next room. The plastic horses chase each other above my head in a spectrum of blues and green, the song repeating itself without end until the gears run down. But the music does not hide the sobs through the wall, and I twist my neck at odd angles to listen better.

My mother is crying because of me. But there is little I can do to stop her

I know this. Even in the body of a small girl, I'm more aware than most adults of what's going on around me. I use their language in my head to explain what I am seeing, the reactions of the people around me, the things I notice as I get older.

Recently, I hurt in more places. My back, my neck, even the growing pains in my legs, that is normal. But now, it's the top of my chest that has been aching. A sort of stretching out in the skin.

I know what that means.

FX: LUCIA STRUGGLES IN HER BED, GRUNTING.

Sometimes I spend hours thrusting my weight in my bed, trying to turn over onto my stomach. I keep thinking that pressing against the mattress will stop the growing in my chest. For years it was a goal in physio, Sarah and the therapist holding a toy above my head, keeping it just out of reach in hopes I would want the stuffed animal enough to flip over.

I wanted to. Just like I want to stop growing now. I wanted to do something that would make Sarah smile, show her I can still make improvements and make life better for both of us.

But if I keep growing, I'm afraid nothing will get better, only more difficult.

MUSIC: 1:22-1:43

SCENE 2: LUCIA'S ROOM - MORNING

FX: SARAH STRUGGLES TO GET LUCIA OUT OF BED.

I knew it would happen. Even after trying to stop my growth every hour when everyone else thinks I'm just laying in bed, the worst still comes.

Nobody sees how much I'm trying to make bad things stop happening, and even with all my effort, they happen anyway.

SCENE 3: KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

FX: SARAH PUSHES THE WHEELCHAIR. IT STOPS ON "IT HADN'T HAPPENED BEFORE."

By the time Sarah had rolled me into the kitchen this morning she had become out of breath twice, first when she got me dressed, and again when she lifted me into my wheelchair. The back of my ankle was caught on the footrest causing my skin to scrape off. It hadn't happened before.

When Sarah fed me breakfast, it wasn't enough. I could have eaten a second jar at least, but I had no way of telling her.

She pulled at my shirt once while I was eating. It doesn't go over my belly anymore.

SCENE 4: DRIVEWAY - LATER

FX: SARAH OPENS THE CAR DOOR LIFTS LUCIA, AND CRASHES TO THE GROUND

Then she rolled me out to the car to go to physio like we do every Tuesday. The car door opens Sarah swings her back to lift me into the car, but instead we end up on the ground.

FX: LUCIA WAILS

The back of my left hand starts to feel like there's a liquid running out of it from where it scraped on the ground. I can't see the damage, but I start to cry.

Sarah folds the upper half of her body over me and makes the same noises she usually saves for the other room.

SCENE 10: KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

FX: SARAH GOES TO THE FRIDGE AND OPENS A JAR

In the kitchen the woman offers to put the kettle on. But I can tell it's a ploy because she keeps herself flat against the kitchen counter. She looks away quickly as Sarah opens a jar of sweet potato puree.

"She's going to have the body of a woman soon Sarah. Aren't you afraid that men... that people will... you know... take advantage... just because they can get away with it?"

I've thought of what the woman is saying before, but I had hoped my mother would have never thought of it. Even if it was going to happen someday, I wanted to bare that on my own.

Why did the woman have to say that out loud?

Sarah says nothing, but puts the jar of food on my tray, inhaling as she stands.

By the time Sarah takes a step forward towards the woman, if she is panicked there is no sign of it.

She asks the woman to leave our home.

FX: THE WOMAN WALKS TO THE DOOR, GATHERS HER THINGS, AND LEAVES.

She does not help the woman with her bags, or show her to the door. Instead she keeps her hand on my shoulder as if staying by my side was exactly the support I needed.

As if I could hear and understand what was going on around me.

As if everything that happened to me mattered.

Because I am her daughter, it is true.

MUSIC: 6:29 - 6:59

SCENE 11: LUCIA'S ROOM - 6 AM

FX: SARAH CRANKS THE MOBILE AND IT PLAYS

FX: SARH STRUGGLES TO FLIP OVER LUCIA

Most mornings Sarah lays down next to me, after flipping me over so I don't get sores. It's getting to be more and more of an effort and by the time Sarah lays down, she is winded.

FX: SARAH SIGHS AND SHE STARTS TO BREATHE RHYTHMICALLY

Her breath slowed.

The crying stopped.

And we stayed like that until the sun came through the window.

Tomorrow I hope I will grow a bit more. Then I might be able to reach a bit further.

MUSIC: 6:51-7:18