

The Secret.

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1 INT. SMALL SPARE BEDROOM. NIGHT. 1

The quiet, creaky opening of a door in darkness. We creep in. TOM, late 30's, sleeps. CHARLOTTE, late 20's, hovers.

CHARLOTTE

Tom.

Charlotte stares at him.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

(Louder)

Tom.

TOM wakes up with a fright. Seeing CHARLOTTE he smiles, settles back down.

TOM

You shouldn't be in here.

CHARLOTTE

Why not?

TOM

Bad luck. Seeing each other the day before. Or the night before. Something like that.

CHARLOTTE climbs in and puts her feet on TOM.

TOM (CONT'D)

Cold! Feet!

He squeals. CHARLOTTE stares ahead. She sighs, heavily.

CHARLOTTE

Oh God what if Dad gets out his ukelélé?

TOM

(eyes closed)

He won't.

CHARLOTTE

He will. He'll get all Irish.

TOM

... well ...

CHARLOTTE

What if Matt gets too drunk?

TOM

He won't.

CHARLOTTE

He might. He might get naked. He does that.

TOM

He might get naked. That might happen.

CHARLOTTE

What if you hate my hair? I am trying something different.

TOM

I won't. I'll love it.

CHARLOTTE

Might not. Might not work at all. Might make me look like a prison warden. Or a dog breeder. Or a monk. Not a thin one. A friar? Friar.

TOM

Oh Char. Please. It's such a big day tomorrow.

CHARLOTTE sighs in exhaustion. She turns over and tries to get to sleep. The sound of a ticking clock. The sound of a lone car passing outside. CHARLOTTE turns over again. She lies on her back.

CHARLOTTE

Tom. I'm worried I haven't told you everything.

TOM

S'okay. We've got the rest of our lives. Shhh.

CHARLOTTE

But I've kept a secret from you. Something that happened. In France. A bad thing. A bad sex thing.

TOM sits up. He turns on the light. Definitely awake now.

CHARLOTTE

TOM

I've know what a cattery is Char.

CHARLOTTE

Oh. Sorry. Erm .. So yeah, one night we were at his apartment and his friend came over. We played a game. We were drinking and being stupid. And ...

CHARLOTTE winces. Covers her head in her hands.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Oh God. Oh, it's bad.

TOM

(concerned)

It's OK. It's Ok. What happened?

CHARLOTTE

Erm ... we played this thing ... a bit like strip poker, I can't really remember, the rules were weird. I kept losing. And this guy, the one I was seeing, he asked me to kiss his friend.

TOM

Right?

CHARLOTTE

So I did. I told you! He was -

TOM

Yeah.

CHARLOTTEE

So I kissed his friend. And I guess that turned him on.

TOM

I'm assuming this 'friend' was another bloke.

CHARLOTTE

Yeah. He worked for a tiling firm. It was supposed to be a works drinks.

TOM

... Ok.

CHARLOTTE

And erm ... we took our clothes off, because of the game. All of us sort of lost... And we ... we kind of ... did it.

TOM  
So you had a threesome?

CHARLOTTE  
Yeah. Yes. But. . . it went on quite a while . . . a whole weekend in fact. And a bit of Monday morning slash early afternoon. Until they had to go to work. Tiling.

A moment. They both sit up, facing ahead.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
What are you thinking?

TOM stares.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
I'm so sorry. Shit, I'm sorry. Oh God - I think I'm overwhelmed. I'm completely overtired. What have I just done? Now you hate me.

TOM  
I don't. I love you. I'm marrying you.

CHARLOTTE  
Really?

TOM nods.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
(quietly)  
Thank you.

TOM  
Were you careful?

CHARLOTTE  
Yes.

TOM  
Did you have a nice time?

CHARLOTTE  
I don't wanna -

TOM  
You can tell me. Be honest. Was it a pleasurable experience?

CHARLOTTE  
Well . . . I mean, yeah. Yeah it was.

TOM digests all this.

TOM  
Well then. I guess ... that's all that matters, that you were safe and, you know .. it was a positive thing.

CHARLOTTE  
God you're amazing. God I love you.

CHARLOTTE hugs him.

TOM  
I love you too. Now, please go to sleep.

TOM turns off the light. They settle in the darkness.

CHARLOTTE  
Is there anything you want to tell me?

TOM remains motionless.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
Tom? ... Do you have any dirty secrets? Anything you're really, really ashamed of?

Nothing from TOM.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
Tom?

TOM  
(irritated)  
No.

CHARLOTTE  
Ok.

TOM  
Why?

CHARLOTTE  
I don't know. It's cathartic. I feel better telling you.

TOM  
Good.

CHARLOTTE  
So there's nothing shady you've done that you want to share with me? In thirty nine years of life. Nothing that haunts you? That you regret? That -

TOM sits up. He turns on the light. He's annoyed.

TOM



TOM  
So I can explain properly.

CHARLOTTE

TOM (CONT' D)  
I was on antidepressants, lost weight, yeah... terrible. Don't like to think about it.

For the first time in the whole piece, CHARLOTTE is quiet.

CHARLOTTE  
Oh my God.

TOM  
I told you.

CHARLOTTE  
Oh my God.

TOM  
Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE  
That's ... that is just ... I can't believe that.

TOM  
I know. It's crazy. It's ridiculous.

CHARLOTTE  
I mean ... that's big, that's a big thing to happen to someone.

TOM  
Yeah.

CHARLOTTE starts to heavy breath.

TOM (CONT' D)  
Char? You OK? Charlotte?

CHARLOTTE  
I can't ... erm ... breathe.

CHARLOTTE sits on the floor, head in legs. TOM rubs her back.

TOM  
Charlotte. Please don't get upset. Not tonight. Please.

CHARLOTTE  
You should have told me. You should have told me something like that.

TOM  
When? When exactly? I couldn't just casually mention during X-factor oh by the way I was arrested for being a rapist.

CHARLOTTE starts laughing.

CHARLOTTE  
I'm not laughing. I'm not. I mean I  
am, but I'm not finding this funny.  
I feel sick. I feel totally sick.

TOM  
Charlotte. I promise you. She was  
not a well person. And she  
developed some sort of infatuation  
and to keep me in her life she lied  
and ... And I've moved on now.

CHARLOTTE  
Ok.

TOM  
Ok.

CHARLOTTE  
Ok... How could someone do that to  
you? As if you were capable of ...  
it's just so ridiculous.

TOM looks at her intently. Full of love, and sorrow and fear.

TOM  
It's in the past. It's over.

A genuine moment of love between them.

CHARLOTTE  
I better go back to my room.

TOM  
No. Really?

CHARLOTTE  
It's OK. I'm OK. I'm a slag and  
you're a -

TOM  
Don't.

CHARLOTTE  
Too soon?

TOM nods.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
Sorry. Ok. I'm going to go. Night.  
If you hear my Dad snoring I'm  
sorry.



CHARLOTTE nods, smiling. He wraps his arms closer around her.

7

INT. HOUSE. DAY.

7

The house has gone into full operation, people finishing getting ready, deliveries arriving. LYNN, in rollers, is in the kitchen washing up the breakfast things, on the phone.

LYNN

You have to turn left at the roundabout, Jean and then it's straight up - no, left at the roundabout - yes and then straight up til you get to the Chur- Call me when you - Yeah. Good luck.

During the above CHARLOTTE, still in her dressing gown, comes in and gets a yogurt out the fridge.

LYNN (CONT'D)

(alarmed)  
Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE sits down and peels off the yogurt lid.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Come on.

She eats.

LYNN (CONT'D)

It's nearly eleven.

CHARLOTTE

There's not much cherry in this.

CHARLOTTE examines the pot label.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

For a cherry yogurt. Hardly any cherry at all.

LYNN

Hello?! Earth to bride. There's a schedule, there's masses to do, have you even had a shower?

CHARLOTTE takes another spoonful and sets the yogurt down.

CHARLOTTE

Mum. I need to talk to you about something really serious. But you need to stay calm.

TOM walks into the kitchen. He looks dapper in his suit. CHARLOTTE bristles. Sensing this, so does LYNN. TOM stops, pretending not to notice the tension.

TOM  
I'm missing a cuff link.

LYNN  
Spare room mantel piece, by the  
clock.

TOM  
(smiles)  
Matt's here.

CHARLOTTE nods.

TOM (CONT'D)  
See you there, then.

CHARLOTTE smiles. TOM leaves.

8 CAMERA FOLLOWS TOM AS HE RETRIEVES HIS CUFF LINK FROM THE SPARE ROOM. WE CAN SEE HE IS TROUBLED BUT A CAR HORN OUTSIDE BEEPS, GIVING HIM NO TIME TO DWELL ON IT. 8

9 EXT. HOUSE. DAY.

9

TOM is greeted by three friends, ushers, waiting for him in a posh car. TOM climbs in and looks back to see CHARLOTTE and

LYNN  
You can, you can. Of course you  
can. You have to.

CHARLOTTE  
I have to?

LYNN  
Yes.

CHARLOTTE  
Why?

LYNN  
Because... No, because you love him  
and he loves you and that's all  
that matters.

CHARLOTTE  
But -

LYNN  
He's never hurt you has he? Never  
done ... that to you has he?

CHARLOTTE  
No, but -

LYNN  
Well then. Poor chap. There are  
some fruit loops about Charlotte,  
things like this can happen. Tom  
got involved with the wrong person.  
Poor guy.

CHARLOTTE  
Yeah. Yeah, you're right, I can't

LYNN stops. She puts down the rollers and sits back down, after a quick flick of the watch.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Ok. Ok. I'm listening.

CHARLOTTE

Right. So.. after my Birthday last year we came home. I was drunk. And so was he. And he wanted to ... you know. But I was just too ... I felt sick. I wanted to be sick

LYNN

(quietly)

Didn't drink enough water as usual.

CHARLOTTE

Mum.

LYNN

I'm listening!

CHARLOTTE

And he wanted to ...

LYNN

Ok Charlotte -

CHARLOTTE

I didn't feel like it.

LYNN

Do I have to hear this? Today of all days.

CHARLOTTE

He held me, quite tightly. And I think... he sort of shook me. I think he shook me.

LYNN

You think?

CHARLOTTE

Maybe. I don't know, I was drunk.

LYNN

Well either he shook you or he didn't shake you. What are you saying?

CHARLOTTE

I don't know what I'm saying. I just remember one night it was a bit weird. Because I think I was afraid of him. Not for long but ...

(MORE)



CHARLOTTE (CONT' D)  
if I'm honest with myself ... for a moment, I was scared.

LYNN  
Ok.

CHARLOTTE  
So what does that mean?

LYNN  
Well, I wasn't there, was I?

CHARLOTTE  
No, I know you weren't actually there Mum, but ... knowing what we know now. .. what are your thoughts? What do you think?

LYNN  
You know what I really think, Charlotte? I think you're twenty nine. I think all your friends are married. I think you've been single pretty much your whole adult life because you always find problems with decent men. And you couldn't find a problem with this one. So you've made one up.

LYNN holds CHARLOTTE's stare. LYNN smiles.

LYNN (CONT' D)  
Silly. It's Tom. Tom, for God's sake. Your lovely Tom who cooks you dinner and arranges fireworks for your birthday

LYNN rummages in her handbag.

God I'd love to have all that.

She finds her lipstick. She begins applying it.

It's fine, everything's totally fine.

WOMAN'S VOICE  
Hello Mum. Hello Bridey.

LYNN and CHARLOTTE look up to see BEE, Charlotte's older sister. Late 30's, rucksacked, tanned, knotted hair. She has obviously been away for a long time. Emotional, group hug.

LYNN  
Talk about cutting it fine! Bloody hell.

They hold each other. We take our time with this.



13 EXT. STREETS. DAY. 13

Exterior shots of the car whizzing through London and we hear their raucous singing, until they pull up with a church in the distance.

14 INT. CAR. DAY. 14

DOUG turns the engine off. He turns to CHARLOTTE who smiles at him.

DOUG  
This is the happiest day of my life.

CHARLOTTE  
Oh Dad.

BEE  
What about your own wedding?

DOUG  
Happier than that.

CHARLOTTE  
When we were born?

DOUG  
Hmmm... Nope. This is definitely happier.

BEE and CHARLOTTE share a smirk in the mirror.

DOUG (CONT'D)  
This is your life, Charlotte. Your real life, about to start. Being a child, school, uni... that's not it. It's getting married, having children, filling a house with nice things, that's really *living*. That's what it's all about.

BEE  
Whoops.

DOUG  
(Laughs)  
Well if you stayed in the country for five minutes...

CHARLOTTE  
I don't know, Dad. There was life before.



CHARLOTTE laughs. So does BEE. CHARLOTTE turns to her.

CHARLOTTE  
How do you feel about me marrying  
him?

BEE  
Erm ... great, I feel great! He's  
great.

CHARLOTTE  
How do you really feel?

BEE  
What is this? If he makes you happy  
I'm happy.

CHARLOTTE  
Do you think he's capable of stuff?

BEE looks confused.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
Bad stuff.

BEE  
Erm... I'm not following.

CHARLOTTE  
Bad stuff. Like raping someone he  
was on a date with?

CHARLOTTE looks at BEE intently waiting for her response.

BEE  
Jesus.

CHARLOTTE  
Tell me. Be honest.

BEE  
Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE  
(anger rising)  
You have to tell me. Bee, did you  
hear anything about him -

BEE  
No, no. I don't know. I mean, there  
were rumours -

CHARLOTTE  
Well why the hell didn't you say  
anything? How could you not mention  
it?

BEE

I don't know -

CHARLOTTE

You didn't think to let me know? Or warn me? Or something?

BEE

As soon as you got together I was off, wasn't I?

CHARLOTTE

You had email! You found time to post photos of you with the fucking Masai Mara!

BEE

I just ... how would I have put it?

CHARLOTTE

Bee. Are you kidding? You didn't think you should bring it up and let me know so that I am not sitting here outside my own fucking wedding wondering who the man waiting for me inside actually is.

SILENCE.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Did something happen between you two?

BEE

God, no. No.

CHARLOTTE

Did you... oh my god did you ever...?

BEE

No.

CHARLOTTE

He was your friend.

BEE

He wasn't, that's the thing, he wasn't my friend.

CHARLOTTE

He was in the pub with you when I first met him.

BEE

We went to the same Uni, Charlotte he was in my circle. But he wasn't my friend.

CHARLOTTE

Swear.

BEE

Charlotte -

CHARLOTTE

Swear nothing happened between you.

BEE

I swear nothing happened. Oh my God, what the hell is wrong with you?

CHARLOTTE

(panicking)

Sorry, I don't know what's happening to me. I'm sorry. I feel like I'm losing my mind.

BEE

There were just stupid rumours, Charlotte, I don't think you need to worry.

CHARLOTTE

She was a crackpot?

BEE

Yes. I don't know. Probably.

CHARLOTTE

She must have been, mustn't she? He'd never dream of... She was insane, right? Some insane girl with a mental problem. Right?

BEE

Yeah. I guess.

CHARLOTTE

Because the thing is Bee ... I remember meeting her. At a party. In Old Street. On the roof. She was wearing doc martens. Phil made a joke about them. She walked around asking people for cigarettes and then she left. I can see her. On that roof. And I remember thinking, why do they call her 'Psycho Jo'? She doesn't look mad. She looks sad. I remember thinking that Bee, I remember thinking she had a sad face. Like something bad had happened to her.

Silence.

BEE

I don't know what to say.

CHARLOTTE

Try. Try to think. Help me. What do I do?

Silence.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Bee?

Silence.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

What do I do? Tell me.

BEE

Drive.

CHARLOTTE

Drive?

BEE

Drive. Drive away. Drive the car now. Let's go.

CHARLOTTE

Where would we go?

BEE

Anywhere. Doesn't matter.

BEE leans forward in the car in earnestness.

BEE (CONT'D)

If you want to. We can. Everyone will get over it. Even Tom, eventually.

CHARLOTTE

We'll just .. Drive?

BEE

We'll figure it out. Doesn't matter.

CHARLOTTE

I can't. I can't do that, can I?

BEE

This is your life. You're not sure. You need to sure, Char.

CHARLOTTE

What will happen?



BEE  
You won't marry him. You'll move  
on. You'll be OK.

CHARLOTTE  
I'll be OK won't I?

BEE  
You'll feel bad for a bit and then  
you'll feel OK.

CHARLOTTE  
Let's go.

BEE  
Really?

CHARLOTTE  
Let's do it.

BEE  
OK.

CHARLOTTE  
Let's drive.

CHARLOTTE gets out the car. She gets into the driving seat. She starts the engine. She sees DOUG come down the hill. He waves at her. He mouths 'it's time.' He looks so happy. CHARLOTTE looks at him.

FADE TO BLACK.

15 INT. HOUSE. NIGHT.

15

Blackness. The sound of a woman screaming. Faintly we hear 'Let me go.' Slowly light fades in and laughter is heard through the screams, removing the menace. TOM is carrying CHARLOTTE over the threshold of the house. Her family, DOUG, LYNN, BEE and a man in just his boxers, presumably MATT and a few other guests, follow her. Euphoric, tipsy, exhausted.

DOUG  
Nightcap in the kitchen! Lynn I'm  
getting out that whiskey from my  
retirement and you can't stop me.

LYNN  
Well I'll have a dribble.

TOM heads up the stairs, carrying CHARLOTTE.

TOM  
Good night everyone.

Cheers and wolf whistles from the crowd from the bottom of the stairs before they pile in to the kitchen.

CHARLOTTE  
Wait. Wait a sec.

TOM  
What? I've made an honest woman of  
you haven't I?

CHARLOTTE  
Let's have a nightcap.

TOM  
Really?

CHARLOTTE  
Yeah. A small one. Please.

TOM  
Oh. Ok.

Trying not to think anything of it, TOM puts CHARLOTTE down  
and they go into the kitchen.

16

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT.

16

Round the table. Shot glasses. Fire. Chatter. LYNN, pissed,  
has her arms draped over TOM. She pats his head. CHARLOTTE  
puts down the remains of the wedding cake and some spoons.  
Some of the guests pick at the cake and down shots. Camera  
roves taking in this late night, relaxed, family vibe.

DOUG  
Hard work, mi nd.

LYNN  
You' ll gi ve me Grandchi ldren, won' t  
you? Won' t you.

TOM l augh s.

LYNN (CONT' D)  
Lots and l ots of them.

TOM  
I wi ll. I promi se. In fact . . .

TOM raises from the table, expecting CHARLOTTE to follow.

DOUG  
Your husbands wai ti ng, Char.

LYNN  
Ahhhh.

CHARLOTTE  
Thi s i s so del i ci ous.

She takes a mouthfull of cake but spills a shot glass of whiskey. She jumps up.

CHARLOTTE (CONT' D)  
Ooops. I' ll just clean thi s up.  
Won' t be a sec. You go.

CHARLOTTE goes to the sink. The drunk wedding party keep singing, BEE watches as CHARLOTTE wipes herself down by the sink. Slowly, she folds the tea towel. She busies herself straightening out some crockery then, eventually, slips out the door.

17 INT. STAIRS. NIGHT.

17

CHARLOTTE wal ks up the stai rs.

BEE  
Char.

CHAR l ooks around to see BEE standi ng at the foot of the stai rs.

CHARLOTTE  
(pretendi ng)  
Yeah.

BEE  
(pretendi ng)  
You goi ng up then?

Yeah. CHARLOTTE

BEE nods.

Why? CHARLOTTE (CONT' D)

TOM (CONT'D)  
I'd rather die than let anything  
bad happen to you. You've got to...

TOM chokes. Looks like he might cry. Vulnerable and afraid.

TOM (CONT'D)  
You've got to believe me, Char. I'd  
rather die.

CHARLOTTE holds his face. She smiles.

CHARLOTTE  
Silly. I just wanted to see your  
face because ... I'm so happy.

They kiss and fall on the bed.

19

INT. BEDROOM. DAY.

19

The next morning. BEE is awake. It's obvious she hasn't  
slept. She stares dead ahead. There's a knock on the door.

BEE  
Come in.

It's TOM, dressed, with his hair wet. BEE pulls the duvet  
slightly around her.

TOM  
I just wanted to say goodbye. I  
feel like I barely spoke to you  
yesterday.

BEE  
Oh. Yeah. You off then?

TOM  
Yeah. Taxi's here. Got the  
passports. She has no idea where  
we're going.

BEE  
Ahh. That's nice.

TOM comes into the room. He hovers a moment before sitting on  
BEE's bed. It feels like a strange move. BEE sits up,  
awkwardly.

TOM  
Did you have fun?

BEE  
Yeah. It was great.

TOM  
Great?

BEE  
Wonderful. It was wonderful.

TOM  
Did you stay up late?

BEE  
Really late, yeah. Too late, really.

They smile.

TOM  
You're alright, aren't you?

BEE  
Hungover, but...

TOM  
No I mean... Last night, you were quite quiet, I don't know. Not yourself.

BEE  
Well it's a lot, isn't it? Seeing everyone and ... catching up.

TOM holds her gaze. BEE can't look him in the eye until L

BEE (CONT'D)  
I had a lovely time, Tom. She seemed really happy.

TOM  
Well I'm part of the family now, so...

BEE  
I know.

CHARLOTTE comes in the room, excited. TOM jumps up.

CHARLOTTE  
They're all waiting to send us off!

BEE smiles.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
I think Dad's still pissed.

TOM  
(Laughing)  
Oh really?

CHARLOTTE  
You coming Bee?

BEE  
I'm so hungover, Char, I can't face  
anyone - sorry.

CHARLOTTE  
Fair enough. Bye then.

BEE  
Bye. Bon Voyage. Have a wonderful  
time. Bye!

BEE's all big grins, waves, and kisses. As the BEE's face changes. She turns over and puts the covers over her head.

20 INT. HALL. DAY. 20

Bleary eyed guests that have stayed are lingering amidst DOUG and LYNN. MATT's still in his boxers. TOM and CHARLOTTE come down the stairs with suitcases. Cheers, claps and goodbyes.

21 EXT. DRIVE. DAY. 21

TOM and CHARLOTTE walk down the drive to waiting taxi. The driver takes their bags into the boot. TOM climbs into the cab, leaving the door open. CHARLOTTE pauses on the drive.

TOM  
Charlotte?

Charlotte doesn't move.

TOM (CONT'D)  
Char? Get in.

She stares at him. Who is he?

TOM (CONT'D)  
Charlotte, get in the cab. Come on.

She's frozen to the spot. We take our time over this.

TOM (CONT'D)  
What are you doing? Get in. Get in  
the car.

We see her family wondering what's going on.

TOM (CONT'D)  
You're being insane. Get in. Come  
on, baby. Please.

The word 'insane' strikes her. She doesn't know him at all. She remains exactly where she is, motionless.

CUT TO BLACK.  
CREDITS ROLL