

Teddy

by

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After a young woman's life spirals out of control, she discovers  
there is one who has always been with her.

BLACK SCREEN

TEDDY (V.O.)  
Gracie and I were the bestest of  
friends growing up.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA -- MORNING

GRACIE (6) is sitting in a hospital waiting room. She is curled up in a ball. Her face is stained from crying.

TEDDY (V.O.)  
I remember the morning I met  
Gracie. She had just lost her  
mommy to disease and was really  
sad. It was my job to cheer her  
up.

Gracie's DAD comes from O.S, carrying a brand new teddy bear. This is TEDDY.

DAD  
Hey there baby girl. Look what I  
got for you.

Dad sits down next to Gracie, and puts his hand on her shoulder. She turns from him.

DAD (CONT'D)  
His name's Teddy. He's sad and I  
told him that maybe you'd be able  
to cheer him up.

GRACIE  
Why is he sad?

DAD  
He's sad because he recently lost  
his mommy too.

Gracie turns to face her father, looks skeptically at him for a moment, then at the bear, then back to her father. Suddenly, she grabs the bear out of her father's hands and hugs it tight.

GRACIE  
Don't cry Teddy. I'm here with  
you.

After a moment, Dad pats Gracie on her shoulder gently, stands up, and offers her his hand. Gracie takes it.

DAD  
Come on baby girl. Let's go home.

They walk out of the hospital. The camera goes up to the sky as the sun begins to rise. When it lowers the scene has shifted to...

EXT. GRACIE'S BACKYARD -- DAY

Gracie is running around in her backyard, Teddy in hand.

TEDDY (V.O.)  
It was love at first hug. Gracie  
and I stuck together like bees and  
honeycomb.

Gracie runs up into her tree house, pushes Teddy down the slide, and comes down after him--knocking him in the grass.

TEDDY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
We did everything together.

Gracie continues to play with Teddy in the yard.

TEDDY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
But one thing stood out above all  
the rest.

Scene fades to the parking lot outside a large, old-style church, furnished with a steeple and stained glass windows.

EXT. TRINITY CHURCH -- MORNING

Church is about to start. The greeters are just about to close the doors when a single dad comes rushing towards them. Gracie (10) is running close behind him, Teddy in tow. They quickly enter the church, saying hello to the greeters. As the doors close, the scene cuts to...

INT. CHILDREN'S CLASSROOM -- DAY

The children's classroom, where boys and girls--ages 6 to 10--are running around. There are two adult leaders. NOAH (19) and MR. TYLER (30's). Teddy is sitting in a chair against the back wall.

TEDDY (V.O.)  
My Gracie loved going to church,  
and Mr. Noah was her favorite  
teacher.

NOAH  
Alright, Miss Gracie. Where to  
today?

GRACIE  
Piggy Ville!

Gracie jumps up Noah's back, nearly knocking him over in the process.

NOAH  
Okay, let's see here. Now, Piggy Ville, that's this way, right?

GRACIE  
Yes!

Noah walks over to where a group of third-grade boys are huddled around a video game waiting, not so patiently, for their turn to play.

NOAH  
Here we are. Now where to?

Gracie doesn't have a chance to respond before Mr. Tyler calls for class to begin.

MR. TYLER  
Alright everyone we're ready to get started. Let me get all the girls over here and the boys over here.

Gracie runs and grabs Teddy, before joining the other girls. The lesson begins.

TEDDY (V.O.)  
Gracie loved church. She loved me too. She loved me, that is, until the day she didn't.

INT. GRACIE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Cut to Gracie's bedroom. Gracie now (12), and MAXINE (13) are sitting on Gracie's bed one day after school. Gracie is playing with Teddy--who is dirtier now with one button eye hanging out. Maxine is sitting, scrolling on her iPhone.

MAXINE  
I can't believe you're still playing with that stupid bear. You're twelve years old Gracie. Don't you think it's time you grew up a little?

GRACIE  
And where, oh wise Maxine, would you suggest I begin.

MAXINE

I'm so glad you asked.

Maxine turns to Gracie.

MAXINE (CONT'D)

First, change your name. Gracie makes you sound like a baby. From now on, you should go by Grace.

Gracie is not sure about changing her name, but just shrugs, deciding to go along with it.

MAXINE (CONT'D)

And second, put up that ugly bear and pick up...

Maxine reaches into her backpack, pulls out an issue of *Maximum Magazine*, and plops it down in Gracie's lap.

MAXINE (CONT'D)

This.

GRACIE

(Reading the cover)

Crazy hot sex. Ten commandments for being a freak in the sheets.

(To Maxine)

That's gross.

MAXINE

No, it's crazy hot. Here. Look at page thirteen.

Maxine opens up the magazine for her and begins to point things out and speak to her. Instead of Maxine's voice, however, Teddy's narration is heard.

TEDDY (V.O.)

What I saw that day made me want to pop out my other eye. At first, it appeared that Gracie wanted to pop out her eyes too, but she slowly became more captivated by the images. After that, my Gracie began to change.

The scene fades. Maxine is gone. Gracie is putting Teddy up on a high shelf.

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

Gracie wouldn't play with me again for a long time after that.

The image fades again. Gracie is wearing a black dress and posing in front of a full body mirror. She is attempting to make herself look like the women in the magazine. The doorbell dings from OS. Moments later, Maxine enters Gracie's room.

MAXINE

Oh, girl you look sexy today.

GRACIE

Yeah?

MAXINE

Absolutely. Now let's get going.  
We don't want to be late.

MONTAGE -- TIME LAPSE -- THREE YEARS

-- Gracie and Maxine leave Gracie's room.

-- Teddy is sitting high on the shelf, watching the montage. He too appears to be aging and collecting dust.

TEDDY (V.O.)

As the years sped by, Gracie  
seemed to have less and less time  
for me.

-- Gracie (13) reappears in her room, posing in another, more "sexy" outfit in her mirror. She leaves.

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

She found her time was better  
spent gossiping with Maxine,

-- Gracie reappears in her room, in another more "sexy" outfit. Maxine is with her. They are gossiping. The scene fades away.

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

Looking at magazines,

-- Gracie (14) reappears in her room, in another, more "sexy" outfit. Maxine is with her. They are looking at *Maximum*. The scene fades away.

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

Pushing away those closest to her,

-- Gracie is at Trinity church, wearing her Sunday dress. She walks by Noah. He smiles and waves at her. She ignores him.

TEDDY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 And trying to be someone she was  
 not.

-- Gracie reappears in her room, posing in another, more  
 "sexy" outfit in her mirror. Maxine is with her.

End Montage

INT. GRACIE'S BEDROOM -- EVENING

Maxine (16) sitting on Gracie's bed as Gracie finishes  
 getting ready for the evening. Gracie (15) is wearing a  
 short, black skirt and a near transparent, white, button-up  
 V-neck blouse. She is posing in the mirror.

MAXINE  
 Oh, enough already girl. You look  
 great.

GRACIE  
 You really think so?

MAXINE  
 Girl, momma knows so. After the  
 show tonight, that boy ain't gonna  
 be able to keep his hands off ya.

GRACIE  
 I hope you're right.

MAXINE  
 Honey, when you gonna learn?  
 Momma's always right.

Maxine gets up, lets out a squeal, and hugs Gracie tight.

MAXINE (CONT'D)  
 I'm so proud of you. After  
 tonight, my little baby'll be all  
 grown up.

Maxine squeezes Gracie one more time and the two walk out  
 the door. A car starts up and soon fades into the distance.  
 The sun slowly begins to set outside Gracie's window  
 until...

INT. GRACIE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Through Gracie's bedroom window, truck headlights are seen  
 puling into the driveway. The truck sits idle for a few  
 minutes before going dead. A truck door is heard, opening  
 and closing. Then, the other door opens and closes.

The shadows of two figures, one male and one female, are seen through the window. The shadows disappear and, after a moment, footsteps can be heard coming towards Gracie's room.

GRACIE (O.S.)  
My dad's out of town until  
tomorrow. So, we have the place  
all to ourselves for the night.

MILTON (O.S.)  
That's great. But we'll only need  
the bedroom.

From outside Gracie's bedroom, a kissing sound is heard. Gracie lets out a little squeal, followed by laughter.

GRACIE (O.S.)  
Milton, please. Let's at least get  
inside first.

Gracie opens her bedroom door and enters, followed by MILTON (19). He's tall, broad shouldered, and attractive.

MILTON  
Sorry babe, but you bring out the  
animal in me.

GRACIE  
(Laughs playfully)  
Down boy.

Gracie turns to him. Milton grabs her waist and pulls her to him. They begin kissing gently, but Milton soon becomes aggressive. He pulls off his shirt and throws it to the floor. Milton begins advancing on Gracie until her legs hit the runner of her bed.

GRACIE (CONT'D)  
Ow. Milton, that hurt.

Milton acts as though he didn't hear her and continues pushing her back until she is lying on the bed. Milton runs his hand down Gracie's side and slips it under her shirt. Gracie begins to appear uncomfortable.

GRACIE (CONT'D)  
Um, Milton, do you think we could  
maybe slow down a bit. We have all  
night after all.

MILTON  
What would be the point in that?



GRACIE

Well, I was sort of hoping my  
first time might be more...  
special.

MILTON

Oh, Grace. You're going to have so  
much un-special sex in your life.  
Now how about removing some of  
these walls, huh?

Milton begins to climb up on top of Gracie.

The camera quickly shifts to Teddy, who is watching from  
his spot on the shelf.

TEDDY (V.O.)

Please, Gracie. Please don't do  
something you might regret.

The sound of clothes coming off and hitting the floor is  
heard. The sound of the mattress shifting can be heard.  
After a moment, Milton whispers softly.

MILTON (O.S.)

You are the most gorgeous thing  
I've ever seen.

INT. GRACIE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

It is the morning after Gracie's sexual encounter. Milton  
is getting up from the bed, pulling on his shirt. Gracie is  
still under the covers, pulled up to her shoulders.

GRACIE

So, when can I see you again?

Milton only shrugs. Gracie is heartbroken, realizing that  
she was nothing more to him than a one night stand.

TEDDY (V.O.)

Gracie's belly started growing  
after that night.

Milton fades away. Gracie fades away and reappears standing  
in front of her bedroom mirror. She is wearing a floral  
dress, but it doesn't seem to fit quite right.

DAD (O.S.)

Come on Gracie. We're going to be  
late for church.

GRACIE

I'm coming dad!

Gracie takes one last look at herself in the mirror and smooths her dress over her belly.

GRACIE (CONT'D)  
 (To herself)  
 This dress fit a few weeks ago.

The scene fades again. Gracie is still in front of her mirror. Maxine is there too, waiting on her so they can leave together for school. Gracie is trying her best to squeeze into her jeans, but they are a little too tight.

GRACIE (CONT'D)  
 Maxine, do I look like I've put on weight to you?

MAXINE  
 How should I know? I don't pay that close of attention to you. Why don't you ask your boyfriend?

A look of terror comes across Gracie's face. She knows.

TEDDY (V.O.)  
 Soon, Gracie's belly started poking out from under her shirt. That's when I realized that she was making a little honey inside the hive.

The scene fades again. Gracie is alone sitting on her bed, holding a positive pregnancy test.

GRACIE  
 Oh, God. What have I done?

She stands, sets the pregnancy test on her bed, and exits.

INT. GRACIE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Time passes. It is now after school. Gracie storms into her room, black tears stained on her face. She is followed closely by Milton.

MILTON  
 Okay, I'm here. What was so important that you had to pull me out of practice?

GRACIE  
 Seriously Milton? Look at me.

MILTON

I know. You should really lay off  
the smarties.

GRACIE

I haven't been eating candy,  
Milton. I've been making a baby.

Milton looks unsure of what this has to do with him.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

Your baby.

MILTON

How do you know it's mine? Word on  
the street is you've shackled up  
with dozens of guys since you  
broke the garden walls for me.

GRACIE

That's not...

Gracie screams and hits the wall. Teddy shakes and falls  
from the shelf where he was sitting. Gracie and Milton  
stare at Teddy for a moment.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

You know that's not true, Milton.

MILTON

Of course. Silly me. You're still  
too busy playing with that stupid  
bear to even notice a real man.  
Enjoy your childhood Grace.

He disappears. Gracie starts to pick up Teddy, but stops  
suddenly. She can't do it. Gracie collapses on the floor,  
facing away from Teddy and the day fades into...

INT. GRACIE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

TEDDY (V.O.)

Many nights, my Gracie would cry  
herself to sleep. I desperately  
wanted to wrap her in my arms. But  
she had put me away, and I could  
not force her to love me.

INT. GRACIE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

The scene fades into day. Only Teddy--still on the  
floor--is in Gracie's bedroom.

TEDDY (V.O.)  
 Fortunately, there was one who  
 stepped in for me when I could  
 not.

GRACIE (O.S.)  
 Some days hurt so much. The looks.  
 The whispers.

Gracie enters her room and sits down on her bed. Noah (24)  
 enters in behind her.

GRACIE  
 (Laughs through tears)  
 The simple fact that there's a  
 bowling ball growing inside me. I  
 just wish the pain would go away.  
 (Crying)  
 How did I end up here Mr. Noah?  
 Where did I lose that little girl  
 you once gave piggyback rides to?

NOAH  
 I don't know Grace.

Noah walks over to where Teddy is lying on the floor.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
 But somewhere in your hurry to  
 grow up, you cast off Teddy.

He picks Teddy up, dusts him off, and walks back to Gracie.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
 And with him, you cast off your  
 child-like faith too. The question  
 now is: Are you going to pick it  
 back up again?

Noah holds Teddy out to Gracie. She looks at Teddy for a  
 moment, before grabbing him from Noah, and embracing him  
 [Teddy] tightly. After a moment, she speaks again.

GRACIE  
 I want to, Mr. Noah. I want to  
 pick it back up, but I don't know  
 how. I don't know where to begin.

NOAH  
 (Smiles)  
 You begin, on your knees.

Noah kneels down, next to Gracie, on the side of the bed.  
 Gracie smiles and slowly kneels down next to him, Teddy  
 still clutched tightly in her arms.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
 Our Father, we come to You as Your  
 children...

Noah's voice fades out as the scene zooms out. The view comes out the bedroom window and moves through the town until it finally comes to rest outside the same church from where the story began.

EXT. TRINITY CHURCH -- MORNING

Church is about to start. The greeters are just about to close the doors when a young mother--we cannot tell who she is--comes rushing up to the doors. She is pulling a little boy, just barely a year old, behind her. The little boy, is pulling along a teddy bear.

The mother reaches down and scoops up the boy in her arms, causing him to drop the teddy to the ground. They are almost at the door when the little boy begins to cry for the bear. The mother turns around and sees the bear lying on the pavement. She walks back to it.

GRACIE  
 Whoops. You don't want to lose  
 Teddy now Leland.

Gracie picks up Teddy and hands him to her son. We only now see that the young mother is Gracie (16).

GRACIE (CONT'D)  
 This little bear saved mommy's  
 life, not so long ago.

Leland stops crying and holds tightly to Teddy. Gracie just smiles.

GRACIE (CONT'D)  
 Okay then, time to return home.

Gracie looks up at the cross on the steeple of the church.

GRACIE (CONT'D)  
 (To Heaven)  
 Your daughter, Gracie, is coming  
 home.

Gracie turns and starts back for the entrance to the church. She greets the people at the doors and disappears into the church. As the doors close, the scene begins to...

FADE OUT