

## Home

On the verge of repeating the past, a performance-oriented mother must go home to face her demons before she loses those she loves.

18-DE03-W18

FADE IN:

EXT. BACKYARD OF AN UPPER CLASS MODERN HOME - DAY

EMPTY SWING swaying to and fro.

The view widens to see RENEE, a 30ish woman, dressed for an upscale tea party with her hair in a french twist, sitting on the porch, mesmerized by the swing. Lost in thought, she taps her finger on a PADDED ENVELOPE that is addressed to Mrs. Renee Whitmore. The return address is from a law firm: James Ziglar Law Firm. A tea cup sits on the table.

DILLAN, a 30ish man, handsomely decked out in golf clothes, approaches Renee.

DILLAN  
Hey Beautiful, I'm heading out to  
play with the boys.

Still caught up in her thoughts and unfazed by her husband's entrance, Renee doesn't respond. He puts his hands on her shoulder.

DILLAN (CONT'D)  
Renee?

Renee is startled.

DILLAN (CONT'D)  
Are you ok? What's wrong?

She hands him the package.

DILLAN (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry Sweetheart.

RENEE  
She's finally gone. You'd think I  
would be throwing a party.  
(beat)  
Never thought it would actually  
hurt.

DILLAN  
She was still your mom.

RENEE  
The 16 years I had to endure with  
her does not qualify her for  
motherhood.

Dillan sits down next to her and takes her hand.

DILLAN

Hey, I get it. But the question  
lying on the table  
(grabbing the package)  
is what are you going to do with  
this?

Renee stands up tall.

RENEE

Absolutely nothing. I have a Prayer  
Circle tea to go to with our  
daughter.

She walks away.

INT. LIVING ROOM OF AN UPPER CLASS MODERN HOME - AFTERNOON

The front door slams. CATE, a cute, 8 year old, pig-tailed  
girl, dressed in her Sunday best, tries to run to her room,  
but is pulled back by Renee.

RENEE

I am speaking to you young lady!  
You are not going anywhere!

She spins Cate around.

CATE

I'm sorry Mommy! It was an  
accident!

RENEE

You embarrassed me by spilling your  
tea all over the beautiful table! I  
worked really hard to make this tea  
party a success and my own daughter  
ruins it!

CATE

I'm sor..

RENEE

I don't want to hear it! That is  
the last time I take you to one of  
our parties!

CATE

I hate your stupid tea parties  
anyway, and I hate you!

Renee pulls back her hand to slap Cate, but is grabbed from  
behind by Dillan. He spins her around.

DILLAN  
What are you doing?! Cate,  
sweetheart, please go to your room.

Cate nods her head and runs out. Renee pulls her hand out of his grasp and rubs her wrist where Dillan's firm grip held on to her.

RENEE  
(in a child-like voice)  
I'm sorry. I don't know what I was  
thinking.

Dillan gently reaches out to bring her into a hug. He pulls her away to look at her face.

DILLAN  
Do you want history to repeat  
itself?

She shudders.

RENEE  
No.

DILLAN  
Then you need to go home and face  
your demons before you lose  
everything that is precious to you.

EXT. BACKYARD OF AN UPPER CLASS MODERN HOME - DUSK

Renee picks up the packet from the table and walks over to the swing. She sits down and begins to rock herself in the swing, trying to soothe the hurt. Looking at the packet, she stops rocking and opens it. She pulls out a HOUSE KEY.

DILLAN (V.O.)  
Go home.

She looks up and with resignation, closes her hand around the key.

EXT. FRONT OF AN OLD VICTORIAN HOUSE - NEXT DAY

Renee pulls up in front of an old Victorian house. The lawn has not been mowed in awhile. She gets out and hesitates on the sidewalk, contemplating whether to go in or not.

RENEE  
I can't do this.

She is about to turn around and go to her car when,

TOVA (O.S.)

I always admired the regalness of  
this ole house. Is that even a  
word?

Renee is startled by TOVA, a spunky, yet slightly ditzy,  
elderly Jewish New Yorker woman. She is dressed in billowy,  
bright clothes with her long white hair hanging below her  
shoulders. She is wearing a cross necklace.

RENEE

Excuse me?

TOVA

Regalness. It must not be a real  
word. I can tell by the way you're  
looking at me.

RENEE

I uh.. I was just caught off guard.

TOVA

I tend to do that to a lot of  
people. Not really sure why. It  
must be my mouth. It tends to run  
amuck. My dead Jewish mother would  
probably agree. May she rest in  
peace.

RENEE

My mother just died.

TOVA

I'm sorry Lovey.

RENEE

No, I'm sorry. I don't normally  
talk about her, especially with  
someone I just met, but there's  
something familiar about you.

TOVA

I get that all the time too! I  
personally believe it is my  
gorgeous movie star looks. What do  
ya think?

She poses with kissy lips. Renee laughs.

RENEE

It must be. Thank you...I'm sorry.  
I don't even know your name. I'm  
Renee.

She reaches out her hand. Tova grabs it in both of her hands.

TOVA

It's my pleasure.

Renee waits awkwardly for Tova to say her name, but Tova just smiles at her and pats her hand.

RENEE

Well, thank you for the pleasant  
distraction, but I'm on a mission  
and if I don't get to it, I'm going  
to turn around and get into my car.

Renee turns around expecting her car to be right there, but she finds herself mysteriously closer to the door of the house.

TOVA

Good thing the door is right there.  
Go ahead dear.

Renee hesitates. Anxiety starts to build.

TOVA (CONT'D)

Visiting our past...never easy, but  
essential. Go on dear. Do it for  
the people you love.

Renee's confidence builds as she pulls out the key, puts it in the lock and opens the door.

RENEE

I can do this. I can.

She turns around to smile at Tova but she is nowhere to be seen. After a moment of confusion, she turns and walks into the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM OF OLD VICTORIAN HOUSE - DAY

Renee enters the home and looks around, touching various items around the living room. She comes upon a table with framed pictures and notices a particular picture. She picks up a picture that shows her as a little girl with her parents in front of a church. They are dressed in proper Sunday church clothes. She rubs her finger over her dad. She starts hearing voices from the past.

DAD (V.O.)  
Lillith leave that girl alone!

MOM (LILLITH) (V.O.)  
Shut up and go back to your  
drinking!

She tosses the picture onto the table and turns around, seeing the coat closet across the room. As she walks towards the closet the yelling and screaming in her head gets louder and louder. She reaches the closet door and opens it...

Flashback: The closet door opens and LITTLE RENEE, an 8 year version of Renee, hair in disarray, struggles with MOM (Lillith), a 30ish woman, dressed in her Sunday best, hair and makeup perfectly done.

MOM (LILLITH)  
Get in there you little brat! I  
will not tolerate your  
disobedience!

LITTLE RENEE  
No Mama! Please don't make me go in  
there again! It's scary! Please!

MOM  
Oh stop your sniveling! This is  
what happens to evil little girls  
who disobey their mothers. Now get  
in there and don't you dare open  
that door to come out or I'll give  
you another whipping you will never  
forget!

Mom pushes Little Renee into the closet and closes the door.

End Flashback.

Renee backs up into the back of a chair. She spins around like a scared rabbit, ready to pounce away. Breathing heavily, she backs herself towards the door as the flashbacks of abuse, flailing arms, screams and taunting voices bombard her mind. She turns to the door, struggling to get out. She opens the door to see Tova, standing in the doorway, tea tray full of tea and cookies in her hands.

TOVA  
Perfect timing Lovey!

RENEE  
I'm...

Tova walks around a reluctant Renee who is trying to leave.

TOVA

Ready for tea. Of course you are dear. Come sit with me. It's been forever since I had tea with someone. Please indulge a crazy old woman.

Tova begins pouring tea.

RENEE

I really need to leave now.

TOVA

Sugar in your tea? I made some rugalah. It's the best. Well at least I think so. Sit Lovey. You look like you could use some of my special tea.

Renee reluctantly sits down. Tova hands her the tea and encourages her to take a sip. Renee sips the tea but immediately spits it back in her cup.

RENEE

Uh..I think you accidentally grabbed the salt, not the sugar.

TOVA

Oye! I'm a silly old woman. Can you be a dear and get some sugar? Oh! And can you get those cute little sugar cubes? I do so love those.

RENEE

Sure.

INT. KITCHEN OF OLD VICTORIAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Renee enters the kitchen and begins opening the cupboards to find the sugar but then suddenly stops as if remembering something. She turns around and looks at the glass hutch. Inside is a display of all kinds of tea sets. She walks over to the hutch, opens the door and reaches for the sugar cube bowl, but suddenly has a flashback...

Flashback: Little Renee's hands reach in to take the sugar bowl. She quietly closes the door and runs away.

Little Renee sits at a small table in her room. The table is set up for a tea party with stuffed animals as the guests. She gives her animals a sugar cube from the bowl.

LITTLE RENEE  
One for you and one for..

Mom enters smacking a wooden spoon against her hand.

MOM  
You got into my tea sets again.

LITTLE RENEE  
I'm sorry Mama. Please don't hurt  
me. I just wanted to be like you.

Mom grabs Little Renee by the arm and yanks her up.

MOM  
You will never be like me because  
you are a disobedient, ungrateful  
little brat!

Mom starts to swat Little Renee with the wooden spoon over  
and over.

LITTLE RENEE  
Stop Mama Stop! Please.

End flashback.

Renee grabs the sugar bowl and throws it across the room.

In a fit of rage, she grabs cups and plates and throws them  
out of the hutch, shattering them to pieces on the floor.

She empties the hutch of every last piece and slowly sinks to  
the ground in tears.

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An aged hand reaches over and lays on her arm. Renee looks at  
the hand on her arm and then over to see Tova sitting on the  
floor in front of her.

RENEE  
I'm sorry.

Renee wipes away the tears and tries to get up, but Tova  
grabs onto her hand.

TOVA  
I don't think this glorious bod of  
mine can get back up at this  
moment.

Renee settles back down.

TOVA (CONT'D)  
Ya know, this white hair has been  
through a lot, seen a lot and  
definitely learned a lot.  
(beat)  
Do you trust me?

RENEE  
Oddly enough, yes.

TOVA  
Ok. Are you a believer?

Tova points to the CROSS NECKLACE that Renee is wearing.

RENEE  
I am.

TOVA  
Do you trust him?

RENEE  
Yes.

TOVA  
Then I want you to close your eyes  
and go back to the memory you just  
had.

RENEE  
No!

She starts to get up.

TOVA  
Renee Brianne sit down!

Renee sits down and looks at Tova, stunned and confused.

TOVA (CONT'D)  
Do you want to be free?

She reaches her hand out and places it on Renee's heart.

TOVA (CONT'D)  
Do you want shalom?

RENEE  
What's shalom?

TOVA  
Peace...heaven on earth.

RENEE

Yes.

TOVA

Then close your eyes.

Renee closes her eyes.

TOVA (CONT'D)

Replay the memory you just had, but  
this time I want you to see Jesus  
there with you.

Flashback: (MOS) Mom is swatting Little Renee with the spoon.

TOVA (CONT'D)

Do you see him there?

Flashback: (MOS) Little Renee sees JESUS standing there next  
to her, tears of compassion and deep sadness sliding down his  
face.

RENEE

Yes.

TOVA

What is he doing?

RENEE

Crying.

Flashback: (MOS) Mom drags Little Renee to the closet and  
Jesus is holding her hand on the way.

RENEE (CONT'D)

He's holding my hand.

Flashback: (MOS) Mom shuts her in the closet.

TOVA

Jesus wants to comfort you. Will  
you let him?

RENEE

Yes.

TOVA

What does he do?

Flashback: (MOS) Jesus opens the closet to see a scared  
Little Renee. He gets in the closet with Renee, puts her in  
his lap and wraps his arms around her.

RENEE

He gets in the closet with me and  
just holds me.

Renee opens her eyes. Tears streaming down her smiling face.

RENEE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

TOVA

From now on, when your past is  
triggered, put Jesus in the picture  
and let that hurt little girl go to  
him for comfort.

Renee nods her head and smiles. Tova grabs her hands.

TOVA (CONT'D)

Your journey to shalom has begun.

INT. KITCHEN OF UPPER CLASS MODERN HOME - DAYS LATER

Renee smiles as she looks out the window. She is doing the  
dishes with Cate. Cate is drying a glass and gets excited as  
she talks.

CATE

I had so much fun!

RENEE

Sounds like you had a great day.

The sound of a glass shattering on the floor pierces the air.  
Renee's eyes widen. She's about to verbally lash out, but  
turns and sees her daughter's fearful eyes.

CATE

I'm sorry Mama. Please don't hurt  
me.

Renee closes her eyes for a moment, breathes deeply and the  
hurt little girl inside of her feels the comfort of her  
Savior's embrace. She opens her eyes and sees Jesus standing  
beside Cate with his hand on her shoulder. Renee kneels down  
and takes Cate's face in her hands.

RENEE

No baby. I'm sorry.

She looks up at Jesus.

RENEE (CONT'D)

Will you help me pick up the broken pieces?

Cate nods her head. She hugs her daughter.

EXT. BACKYARD OF AN UPPER CLASS MODERN HOME - LATER

Renee gently rocks in a swing as Dillan enters the porch area with a box. He sets it down on the table and starts to look through the box.

DILLAN

I packed up all the pictures I could find in the house...and cleaned up the broken dishes.

RENEE

What would I do without you?

DILLAN

Clean up your own messes.

RENEE

I know. I'm working on it. Or I should say..God is working on me.

Dillan pulls out a framed picture and walks over to Renee.

DILLAN

This picture stood out to me for some reason. Maybe because you looked so happy. Who is with you?

Renee takes the picture and sees Little Renee and an elderly woman, who looks exactly like Tova, but dressed simply with her hair back. They are on swings.

Flashback: Little Renee and Tova swing on the swings singing Jesus Loves Me.

End flashback.

RENEE

That's GG, my great-grandmother. I only spent time with her once.

(beat)

Actually...twice.

Renee smiles with sweet recognition. Laughing with joy, she begins to swing like a child.

FADE OUT: