Square Peg

written by

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Curtains closed for continuity. Narrator in yellow orange light. Narrator wearing green and red basic+ reading glasses. Narrator by fire on basic green sofa- warm soft light-minimalist. Large fairytale style book. Narrator breaks fourth wall like Fleabag.

SHOT OF NARRATOR BY FIRE STARTING FAR AND PANNING IN. LOOKING STRAIGHT INTO CAMERA ? GLASSES.

SILENCE IN BACKGROUND/ FIRE BLAZING FOR FIRST LINE...

NARRATOR:

Let me tell you a story. The story of a girl who was lost and has been found. The story of a girl who very nearly drowned.

TRANSITION: NARRATOR LOOKS LEFT TO WHERE GIRL AT PIANO WILL BE.

SHOT CHANGE-> LEFT TO EMPTY PIANO STOOL- SYMMETRICAL (CENTRAL)

Pause- suspense?

Girl enters screen left and sits at piano- Shot stays the same

GIRL PLAYS FIRST FEW BARS OF IGIORNI BY EINAUDI ON PIANO

NARRATOR: (CONT'D)
She didn't believe she was special,
she didn't believe she was loved,
she thought there wasnt space for
her in the world into which she'd
been shoved.

SHOT CHANGES TO HIGH ANGLE OVER PIANO+ HANDS NEXT FEW BARS OF SONG

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

I don't know if you have heard the phrase: square peg in a round hole, but this girl was battered and pounded until she had no soul.

SHOT CHANGES TO FEET ON PIANO PEDALS IGIORNI CONT'D

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
The moral of this story is that authenticity is key,

BACK ON NARRATOR BY FIRE BUT DIFFERENT ANGLE TO BEFORE- BOOK CLOSED LEANING IN.

you are perfect no matter what or who you want to be.

SCENE 2: SECTION ONE= INTRODUCTION OF CHARACTER/S AND EQUILIBRIUM. GRAPHICS/ GRAPHICS ROLL THROUGH SCENE.

TRANSITION: BLACK OUT INTO SIDE OF PIANO AND PAN UP AND ACROSS.

SHOT: CONTINUOUS PANNING OVER TOP CONTENTS OF PIANO.

Camera on pic of babies+ calendar with "38 weeks" ?arm leans into shot and circles date?

FADE IN: NEVER GROW UP- TAYLOR SWIFT OR CONT IGIORNI?

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
Our story starts when the girl was born with her twin at 38 weeks.
This seemingly normal girl with curls of brown and apple kissed cheeks.

Twins: two hospital bracelets, 1 brown 1 white bunny, picture/ video of young twins

The twins were non-identical but nevertheless two peas in a pod. Their fierce love was unstoppable by even the most powerful god.

Picture of cottage (? Giles cottage- Ask permission!)+ family + drawing/ video in frame of being silly.

SOUND EFFECTS: LAUGHTER

The girls grew up kind and strong. From a young age they both knew they belong

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

As they were shrouded by the love of their parents who were beyond compare. Living on the edge of a wood in a magical cottage overflowing with care.

Music stuff+ nativity pics;

Like any cliche fairy tale protagonist, the girl started to sing before she could speak. Music was special, it gave her an escape from the world into which she could sneak.

First day of school pics and childhood books/ props. Missing/hugging.

When the twins started school they were put in different classes, only a thin door away. But nevertheless they pined for each other and could not wait until the end of the day. They grew up as intellectual equals, bubbly and bright, But soon the girl fell behind when they learnt to read and write.

Pan over confusing words, analog clock making no senset dyslexia themed props.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Words would dance around the Girl's page like balls of blazing flames, Her letters were back to front- she could never tell an analogue clock despite her constant aims.

NEXT BIT OF PISNO ARRANGEMENT

She hid these struggles well as she had a photographic mind, but was diagnosed with dyslexia at 5,

Determined not to fail she listened to audiobooks instead of reading to further her strive.

Music+ videos/ pics

Her love for music deepened despite finding it hard to read the notes on the pages

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

she could do almost anything by ear and began to teach herself the piano in stages
She found a new best friend- her guitar and started to get good
Throughout her childhood she was picked for choirs, starred in many plays as her mum knew she would.

TRANSITION BACK TO PIANO

SHOT CHANGE: NARRATOR AT DIFFERENT ANGLE

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Now, she didn't believe she had superpowers like most characters in stories do,

SHOT CHANGE: COLOURS AND SOUND OF WORLD? - 2X SCREENS SPLIT-ONE NORMAL, ONE ENHANCED

Little did she know, her senses were ten times better than the average person and she experienced the world in a far brighter more magical hue.

SHOT CHANGE- GO INTO ENHANCED VIEW

GIRL WALKING THROUGH BUSY STREET- COMES TO DEAD END

She enjoyed her overstimulating view of the world throughout her childhood
But sadly, all good things come to an end as the girl soon understood.

AT DEAD END- GIRL LOOKS UP

SHOT LOOKS DOWN FROM HIGH ANGLE AT GIRL.

SCENE 3: SECTION 2: BOARDING SCHOOL, MASKING & ANXIETY.

SHOT BACK ON NARRATOR ...

NARRATOR

When the girls were 9 they were moved to a countryside boarding school far from home.

It was a beautiful place where They rode horses and chickens were free to roam.

SHOT CHANGE-

Girl gets out of car- car drives away with dog looking out of back. Camera pans around girl and from back goes black and white- reference/ mimicking scene from Belfast (Kennneth Braghner)

To battle homesickness new girls had to stay away from home and their parents for the first part of term.
Without her dog, mum or dad- the girl's world grew lonely, grey and infirm.

SHOT CHANGE- BACK IN COLOUR ON NARRATOR...

Her powers grew with age and
stress. It was something she
struggled to express.

Like Spider-man or Superman hiding
their true identities, The girl did
the same as she thought people
would frown upon her obscenities.

TRANSITION: AFTER TAKING BAG UPSTAIRS- GIRL FALLS ON BED - SAME SHOT TRANSITIONED TO NIGHT.

SHOT- BACK TO "HANFORD" IN BLACK AND WHITE- NIGHT. CAMERA MIMICS- "TOSSING AND TURNING" TRYING TO GET TO SLEEP.

Her hearing power ensured that noise at night meant no sleep. Her hearing was too powerful, she tried everything even counting sheep!

GIRL

I am so tired and want my Mum

NARRATOR

The girl would silently cry into her pillow- wishing the day she could go home would come.

SHOT CHANGE- BACK TO NARRATOR IN COLOUR

No one believed that her hearing
was that good, it was so boring.

BACK INTO BLACK AND WHITE- ? TIPTOEING OUT INTO CORRIDOR+ PEERING ROUND CORNER. ? PERSPECTIVE OF MATRON LOOKING DOWN AT GIRL DURING HER LINE ?0.5= DOMINATING. - MATRON LIT ONLY BY PHONE/IPAD SCREEN.

And so, after days of no sleep due to her room mates snoring...

The girl ventured out into the corridor looking for help in some shape or form:

MATRON

Go to sleep Girl. You are being overdramatic. Get out of my sight and back to your dorm.

NARRATOR

Her matron snapped unaware of the girls torment.

Girl back to bed... ? Close-up of tear down cheek?

The girl felt isolated— she had no idea where her powers had come from or what they all meant.

BACK TO NARRATOR AT DIFFERENT ANGLE IN COLOUR- NARRATOR HAS MASK AS PROP TO DEMONSTRATE "MASKING"

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

From this moment on she decided that it was better to suffer in silence. She created an invisible mask she wore to fit in and fake defiance.

SHOT CHANGE TO PICTURES/VIDEOS IN COLOUR
She won prizes, starred in plays
and for years lived through this
mask.

Letting no one know how hard she was peddling for every single step of every single task.

SHOT ON NARRATOR - RANDOM PERSON NO.1 & NO.2- COME TORSO DOWN INTO VIEW WITH NARRATOR IN-BETWEEN PEOPLE- LEANING MORE INTO SHOT

Hands shake in shot and turn away and walk straight-(symmetry) out and camera focuses back into narrator who leans back into sofa.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

When people ask you

RANDOM PERSON NO. 1

Are you okay?

NARRATOR

Even if they are in living hell,

RANDOM PERSON NO.2

I am fine

NARRATOR

Is what they say. And that is what the girl was doing but, on a much more extreme scale.

NARRATOR LOOKS STRAIGHT AT CAMERA AND CAMERA MOVES TO FLOOR AND BLACK

SHOT OF GIRL COMES UP FROM FLOOR ONTO MIRROR. - SHE IS IN-FRONT OF MIRROR PRACTICING CONVERSATIONS/ EMOTIONS/ BODY LANGUAGE- MINIMALIST SET- VERY BRIGHT STERILE LIGHT ?LIGHT BLUE/GREY..

She would pretend to be someone she was not, polishing every detail. She liked the "perfect" person she was when she buried her anxiety. It made her feel more normal, like she had a place in society.

SHOT CHANGE?

The more she masked, the harder she was bashed into society's round hole. The pain was excruciating and soon took its toll.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

SHOT CHANGE- NARRATOR HOLDING BOOK

But before we continue with the story of the girls experience in school.

Something awful had happened at the girl's home, it was horrid and cruel.

Disaster had struck and sadly the girl's incredible Grandmother passed away from cancer, She left a gaping hole as

SHOT CHANGE- LOW ANGLE OF VICAR- LOOKING DOWN AT CAMERA AS IF DOWN A GRAVE.

VICAR

"it was too soon to lose her."

NARRATOR

From then on the fairytale life was flipped upside down and melted away,
They moved out of their beautiful home and a new anxiety started to prey.

NEW SHOT

This new anxiety made the girl fear for her and her families lives- all of the time She started having panic attacks but hid all this with the same fake-smile kind of mime.

SCENE 4: SECTION THREE: COVID AND SENIOR SCHOOL.

NEW SHOT

NARRATOR

Coronavirus hit in year eight and the twins had to evacuate the school, The disease engulfed the world and terrified everybody like some ghoul. NEW SHOT

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

As the girl's family now lived with her Grandpa they needed to be super strict.

And so the family hid away from the disease and all its conflict.

SHOT BACK ON NARRATOR

Coronavirus was distressing for all teens, For they spent some of their best years stuck behind screens.

NEW SHOT- HIGH SHOT OF TWINS AT 'NEW SCHOOL'- LOOKING UP

? 0.5- HEIGHTEN OVERWHELMING FEEL? DRONE?

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
Still in Covid the twins started
their new school
It was big and daunting with many a
new rule.

CLOSE UP OF HOLDING HANDS

With the pandemic blazing and the world in bits, Social mini- bubbles were created to stop the viral blitz.

TWINS HANDS/ BODIES PULLED APART FROM ONE ANOTHER- END SHOT WITH DOOR SLAMMING BETWEEN THEM -

The twins had shared a room at this point for many months
But were ripped apart, never allowed to see each other, not even once

Behind closed door- look through door window- wave/ bang through window.- girl turns and slides into sitting position on floor.

Lost without her only friend the girl was bullied and excluded. Girl: "I think my twin has protected me my whole life" she crestfallenly concluded.

SHOT CHANGE BACK TO NARRATOR

Because she was different the other girls started to circle like vultures

She was taken advantage of for not understanding their social cultures.

SHOT ONTO ABOVE/SIDE SHOT OF PHONE AND TOXIC SOCIAL MEDIA. ? SNAPCHAT BULLYING.

She had never understood social media,

Or the way in which it could generate mass hysteria.

Shot on younger girl riding horse.

At the place before they had had one rule;

Shot change to poster being stuck up with a phone crossed out.

No electronics were to be allowed in school.

Colour change to grey- more dull+lonely. Girl hiding in loo stall? Listening to other girls/ idk

Suddenly in a toxic environment of comparison, gossip and blue screens Her world grew lonely and grey, controlled by a bunch of immature teens.

SHOT BACK TO NARRATOR

When she had started the school she was confident in her own skin,

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

But disastrously all that changed, less than one week in.

Shot onto mirror where girl puts on makeup wrong and redoes it- shot changes to bin full of used cotton pads- idea of perfectionism.

However, unlike the other girls, she did not worry about her appearance or size. She hated makeup and fashion, but soon created a disquise.

Girl lifts mask to cover her tears and smiles (fake) then tries to take it of but it is sticky. /on narrator if too difficult...

With each day her sparkle faded more and more, The mask she had created to fit in grew stronger than ever before.

Close-up shot of eye and tears.

People stopped noticing her as she became invisible, For who could make friends or learn to love someone so miserable.

Back to narrator

The world was out of her control, she felt so lost, it wasn't right.

SHOT ABOVE PLATE OF FOOD- KNIFE AND FORK PUSHED TOGETHER AND PUSHED AWAY.

Anxiety started pouring in, her world went dark and she lost her appetite.

Cont. Shot, noise floods in sound effect plate dropping/ chatter

> The despondent, sterile canteen at the school was overflowing with piercing noise and smells

Girl exits canteen in panic- goes into bathroom stall slamming door behind. Hyperventilating sitting on floor.

Despite the threatening panic attacks which rose, she tried to eat with all her might ignoring the yells.

? People walk past her not knowing her struggle.

Being so far away from home, there was no-one to check she was okay Apart from her twin, but she felt worlds away.

Twin opens loo door and brings the girl toast/ cookie-breakers in half and shares.

SHOT ON HANDS SORTING FOOD- MID SHOT OF HEADS LEANING BACK/ RESTING ON EACH OTHER.

Occasionally her twin found time to bring the girl food to eat in peace and quiet away from the chaotic kitchen.

In that temporary serenity the girl refuelled her wilting body and basked in the kindness her twin was so rich in.

SHOT BACK ON NARRATOR

Despite these infrequent meetings, the girl quickly grew feeble and grey. Still, nobody noticed and her struggle became real, she faded away.

SHOT CHANGE- SUNNY OUTSIDE WINDOW- BRUSHING TEETH- MAKEUP-LOOKING DARK AND FEEBLE. SIDE SHOT.

She brushes her teeth- spits in sink and collapses- shot changes to above and hyperventilating again.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

One day in the summer term she collapsed whilst brushing her teeth, barely able to breathe, She was pushing herself far too hard to survive and her chest began to heave

GIRL

"Will I ever be enough"

NARRATOR

She cried

SHOT BACK TO NARRATOR.

And then she very nearly died.

(break)

Mum comes in and picks up girl exiting screen right.

At rock bottom the girl's Mum scooped her up and brought her home.

SHOT BACK ON NARRATOR.

She had lost over 10 kilos in half a term and looked like death- all skin and bone.

SHOT ON NARRATOR CHANGES- LOOKING STRAIGHT INTO CAMERA TO THE LEFT.

From then on, it was obvious she had developed an eating disorder in order to cope with anxiety.

Jarring and discordant her world was bleak and bitter.

SHOT CHANGE TO HOSPITAL DOOR? OLD FOOTAGE? WHEELCHAIR WHEELS?

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The girl was taken to hospital whilst fading fast, Doctors checked on her and left with their expressions aghast. For how had the girl's school not realised she was drowning and that she had almost passed.

SHOT BACK ON NARRATOR

One morning alone-the girl had a visitor- it was the lady who was in charge of her care
She was worried for her job as the girl had given the system a real scare

TO HOSPITAL BED SIDE

PAULA

You are going to die and no one can save you

NARRATOR

She bitterly spat- leaving the girl sobbing feeling desperately blue.

SHOT CHANGE

Yet the woman in the next door bay heard it all and despite not believing her ears- knew exactly what to say.

She swept in like a fairy godmother and proceeded to drill into the girl that it was all going to be okay.

From then on the girl battled to stay alive- taking the world literally one minute at a time. It felt like she was pushing a boulder up a mountain- a long and gruelling climb.

BACK TO NARRATOR:

From then the girl would float in and out of happy dreams where she was little.

And For four long months the girl fought for life in hospital.

SECTION 4: RETURN TO LIFE-

SHOT CHANGE

Healthy but far from anything resembling happyThe girl went home to her family where life would never be the sameit was broken and scrappy.

NARRATOR SHOT CHANGE

For the girl had lost her sparkle and her suffereing had left her with PTSD.

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

And to top it all off- the girls support was dropped despite her mums plea-

SHOT CHANGE

Her Anxiety was high -yet back at school the girl was pushing through.

She continued to win prizes and mask a smile despite how aggressively her depression grew.

She was bullied again and started to distance herself from the world. And so in order to hide- under her mask she curled.

SHOT CHANGE

Ν

NARRATOR

Masking her true identity clearly was not new—
It enabled her to bury her darkest emotions without anyone having a clue
She liked how easy it was to pretend to be someone she was not, Hiding her passions and sparkle by blending in: it seemed a clever plot

Sadly only "seemed" as soon it all became too hard
You see, masking this heavily has damaging effects leaving its victims scarred
Soon the girl burnt out and stopped eating completely

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

For Not even superhero's can suffer that discreetly-

HIGH ANGLE SHOTS OF PARENTS?

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Her mum and dad took the girl to hospital in order to save her life. They wanted answers as to why her life was still so full of strife.

DAD

Why has she been suffering so long

NARRATOR

The girls father paced the floordesperately trying to figure out what they had done wrong

MUM

Life is so cruel and I do not know what we can do to make it right. All I know is that she isn't going anywhere without a fight.

SHOT CONT TO FOLLOW PARENTS

NARRATOR

And so to do everything they could to save her they got to work to find a solution.

For it had become clear that the girl could not keep surviving without a resolution.

SHOT CHANGE- BACK ON NARRATOR

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

It had been obvious for her whole life that the girl was different to her peers.

As whilst they enjoyed their childhoods and took risks, she developed anxiety and fears,

SHOT CHANGE- BACK TO MUM SITTING ON BED LOOKING THROUGH FILES AND PICS OF GIRL WHEN SHE WAS YOUNGER...

She had so much unused energy buzzing within her that she hadn't been taught to control Yet, like any hero turned villain, the negative energy had chosen it's role But the girl had made sure that this pessimism had no place in her personality but this was no mean feat and required a rock hard mentality As the darkness had fought from within leaving her weak-When she went into hospital she had mostly shut down, she was broken and couldn't even speak.

SHOT CHANGE TO HOSPITAL

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The girl was in hospital for Halloween, Mum's birthday, bonfire night, Christmas and new year She saw and experienced traumatic events in this time and soon she lived in fear.

SHOT CHANGE AGAIN USING HOSPITAL FOOTAGE

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The girl and her family continued to do endless research looking into what had made life go so wrong And after what must have been the millionth hour of working-something familiar came along.

SHOT CHANGE

It was the girl who stumbled across a potential source of her own suffering-

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

And from that moment onwards the record of her life stopped buffering.
yes, it was still scratched and out of tune,

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

But specks of light started to seep in where she thought she had become immune.

SECTION 5: SOLUTION AND OPEN ENDING

POSITIVE SHOT OF GIRL- COLOURS HIGH

NARRATOR

The girl left hospital a week before her birthday she had made it through the year! She had been given the best gift possible- life and its potential to change was clear. The children's ward had been beyond amazing saving her life and keeping her going, For five months they had kept smiling and glowing

SHOT CHANGE

Nevertheless terrifying moments in hospital left the family wounded and scarred And to this day the girl experiences traumatising flashbacks the second she lets down her quard.

SHOT CHANGE TO DOCUMENTS?

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Finally, after a lifetime of struggling in silence
The girl embarked on the long journey of seeking some guidance
You see she knew what was wrong, she ticked almost every single box
Like how she had over sensitivities or "powers" and struggled to read clocks-

A diagnosis was made and the girl came out as autistic She had covered this up her whole life- masking every trait and characteristic.

BACK TO NARRATOR-

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
The difficult thing with diagnosing girls is that nobody is to know-Autism and neurodiversity differences are powers that few women are comfortable to show.

They are not problems that can be fixed or treated
But are features to be cherished and can be dangerous if kept secreted.

And that danger had raised its ugly head into the girls life- it had forced her to change shape, But with support and love this danger was something the girl could now escape. Although she still masks now from time to time, She has a square hole into which she can mould comfortably and not feel like it's a crime.

SHOT CHANGE...

It would not surprise me if you thought up until now that only boys could be autistic
This is an equality issue and myth that has been proved wrong by many a statistic.

Growing up in a society where everything needs to fit
Makes life near impossible for those who do not carry a permit—
This permit which all neuro—typical people are born with which gives them a free pass to understanding Leaves people like the girl peddling hard finding life demanding.

(CONT'D)

SHOT CHANGE

Undiagnosed neurodiversity is disastrous, yet the world is so blind
Two in ten people have to survive on this planet feeling misaligned.

Autism, ADHD and many other conditions are diagnosed in boys from a much younger age, This is because a-lot of the time girls develop a mask to fit in, seeing the world as a stage.

SHOT CHANGE- NOISE CANCELLING SCENE

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

So now that it is out, the girl is free to protect herself from what was harm,
She can now wear noise- cancelling headphones in public allowing her mask to disarm

SHOT CHANGE

She can now be open about her powers and they can start to do good,
She can now find passion in her special interests- not hide them in fear of being misunderstood.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Although she still fights anxiety and flashbacks to this day, She is having trauma therapy which is starting to make her suffering fade away.

TWINS COOKING - MIRROR+ CONTRAST SCENE FROM EARLIER WITH BRIGHT COLOURS AND HAPPINESS.

She can now eat again and bake cookies for her twin and her to enjoy

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Not hidden away, but together strengthening their bond that nothing can destroy

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

SHOT OF MUM SLEEPING

Her mum can now sleep at night knowing her child is alive,

SHOT OF DAD ON TRAIN TO WORK

Her Dad can now go to work his head free of how his little girl is to survive.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

FLORENCE FOOTAGE

The family even flew away to Italy together for Mum's birthday this year,

CRYING- CONTINUITY OUTFIT FROM FLORENCE ...

The October before she had been in hospital and this was overwhelming-away from the Duomo she allowed herself a tear.

SHOT CHANGE

You see this is not the end but simply the beginning, As life has so much in store for the girl now it has stopped spinning.

SHOT CHANGE GIRL LOOKING STRAIGHT INTO CAMERA

GIRL

I hope that people in the same position as me a while ago, dying or killing themselves slowly for not fitting in and feeling low, Will know one day that THEY ARE ENOUGH JUST THE WAY THEY ARE—

(MORE)

GIRL (CONT'D)

They deserve to find peace with the world and that peace not far. Peace is just beyond where you learn to unmask, It is somewhere you feel able to be yourself- is the world ready for that? you may ask And the answer you're looking for is yes but with time- but do not be dettered,

For we can make that change faster by making are stories heard.

BACK ON NARRATOR.

Looks into camera and closes book.

Titles with Dad and girl dancing in kitchen/ bts :)