

Obligate Symbiosis

By

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FADE IN:

1. INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM -- DAY (JUNE)

CU: Man's hands open the wooden doors of a wardrobe. The wardrobe is a mess, he takes out all clothes. He sits on the floor and starts folding t-shirts. A yellow scarf captivates his attention.

2. INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - MORNING (MAY)

CU: Calendar displaying 2022. Pen crossing a note reading 'Doctor.'

3. FLASHBACK EXT. STREET -- MORNING (FEBRUARY)

DANIEL, 31 years old, walks on the pavement of a quiet street. On one side of the pavement a tall brick wall and on the other side, trees. He looks healthy but he is dressed modestly, his clothes are of pale colors and around his neck hangs a yellow scarf. His hands are in his pockets, his sight on the pavement and he appears happy but also thoughtful. He takes the corner entering a busier street.

4. INT. TRAIN STATION -- DAY (MAY)

Train arriving at the station. Daniel is about to get in the train when a woman gestures asking for help with her pram.

5. INT. LOCAL GP OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

The office is artificially lit and the wooden furniture is old. Daniel appears to have lost weight, looking ill and tired.

DANIEL

It's nothing wrong, I feel good but
I lost some weight and I don't know
why because I eat well. I'm not
worried but, just a check you
know...

The doctor's bright colored hair and jewelries make her look modern and sophisticated and she does not seem to belong to the space.

(CONTINUED)

DOCTOR
(nodding head)
No that's fine, I mean, you look
all right. We'll take some blood,
will do few tests, nothing to worry
about. (fakes a smile)

The doctor pushes herself on the wheeled chair closer to the table, from where she grabs a blood test pack with a form attached and starts writing on it.

DOCTOR
Room 8 to give blood. (handing him
the form)

6. INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR

Daniel going to room 8 to give blood.

7. INT. ROOM 8

NURSE
Do you have a sex partner?

DANIEL
I've been seeing a girl for almost
two months.

NURSE
Do you use condoms?

DANIEL
We've always used condoms and I got
checked before that so...

CU: Nurse taking notes.

NURSE
Please roll up your sleeve.

ECU: Daniel's vein is perforated by a sterile needle.

8. INT. TRAIN -- DAY (MAY)

Daniel takes a seat next to an old woman. We see the abdomen of a pregnant woman sat down in front of him. She is of Asiatic origins and she is wearing a real flower on the side of her head. We cannot see how the flower attaches to her skin.

(CONTINUED)

CU: Daniel scans the woman's body with an expression of disapproval.

The pregnant woman observes (feels/doesn't see her) another woman who is wearing small plants and flowers on her face and head. She stands up, and smiling, moves next to her, two benches behind on the other side. They both smile, shake hands and start a conversation.

Daniel looking at the window while the train passes by a cemetery. On most graves flowers are displayed.

WOMAN 2 (O.S)

That is beautiful, how do you feel?

WOMAN 1 (O.S)

Yes, it's amazing, I couldn't understand before I had it... you have this one as well?

WOMAN 2 (O.S)

Yes, I got it two months ago, still growing...Do you still sleep? Do you move in your sleep?

WOMAN 1 (O.S)

I don't move, still in that lucid dreaming state...

9. INT. GP HOSPITAL ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Suited man, early 50's, addresses the female doctor.

SUITED MAN 2

First time informing of a terminal disease...?

Doctor nodding head.

10. INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Daniel approaching the door.

11. INT. GP HOSPITAL ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

SUITED MAN

(low tone)

Yes, of course you can try and be optimistic, positive, but if he is devastated, which he will be, don't

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SUITED MAN (cont'd)
push it too far. Match his
reaction(s)!

12. INT. GP HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Daniel knocking on the door.

13. INT. GP HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

DOCTOR
(visibly nervous)
Come on in!

Daniel enters a large room predominantly white. The doctor sat down at the desk, invites him to take a seat by pointing at the opposite empty chair.

14. FLASHBACK EXT. STREET - MORNING (FEBRUARY)

Daniel after entering the busy street. The noise accentuates. Waiting at the traffic lights

ECU: he bites his dry lower lip removing dead dry skin. Blood comes out. He uses a white tissue to remove the blood and applies lip balm while crossing the road.

15. BACK TO INT. GP HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY (MAY)

Daniel is now seated.

DANIEL
So why am I here? What's the
situation?

DOCTOR
We called you back in because we
received the results for the second
test from the lab

(In the background we can see the suited man accompanied by another. One is holding his arms crossed while the other is taking notes, both seem to supervise the dialogue from the corner of the room.)

DOCTOR
and, we have some bad news.

Suited man has a subtle reaction as if she said what she shouldn't have.

(CONTINUED)

DOCTOR
...we found HIV in your blood.

ECU: Goose bumps on Daniel's neck.

His heart beats faster for a moment and then skips two beats.

DANIEL
Are you sure?

DOCTOR
I'm afraid so. But let me tell
you...

DANIEL
(interrupting)
HOW? I only had protected sex since
I was last tested. ARE YOU SURE?

DOCTOR
Daniel! Is not as bad as you
might...

Pushing his palms on his face.

DANIEL
(interrupting)
HOW? Aaaaa! neaaahh

Daniel stands up and looks up at the ceiling.

DOCTOR
Daniel, please sit down.

Daniel ignores her and continues to make noises in disbelief. The doctor looks back towards the suited men as if unsure of what to do.

16. EXT. HOSPITAL COURTYARD / PARK -- MOMENTS LATER

A bright sunny day. Daniel is sat on the bench. His eyes are red. He is holding the piece of paper but looks into the void. He is consciously breathing deeper as if he tries to encourage himself. The sound fades away while we surround him slowly three times. Around the green park we see children wearing bright colored clothes who play with colorful balloons. Dogs running, adults laughing while playing frisbee. Daniel cries again.

17. INT. OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

ECU: Mobile phone vibrates.

KERRY, 33 years old, sat on a chair in a busy office environment answers the phone.

KERRY
(whisper)
Hey! What's up? Jane is around I
can't talk much.

DANIEL (V.O)
I need to see you.

KERRY
I'll come over tonight!

DANIEL (V.O.)
I need to see you now.

Kerry looks through the glass window to see Daniel downstairs on the pavement outside the building.

18. EXT. STREET -- MOMENTS LATER

Kerry exits the building with her arms crossed and holding her mobile phone in her right hand.

KERRY
Uuh! You don't look good. What
happened?

Daniel looks devastated. He pulls out of his pocket the folded piece of paper from the hospital and hands it to Kerry in silence.

A shock expression installs on Kerry's face. Her eyes become wet instantly and she starts shaking.

DANIEL
I don't know how...

KERRY
You don't know how? Pfu.. Do you
know how I feel now..?

DANIEL
We used condoms... you should be
fine.

(CONTINUED)

KERRY

I have to go back. I'll call you
later ok..? (stepping back)

DANIEL (O.S.)

Kerry...

Daniel appears calm but after 3 seconds he bends his knees and takes a seat in the middle of the pavement. His head rests on his arms, he cries. (One of the passers by picks up the broken mobile phone.)

19. INT. OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Kerry takes the sim card out of her phone and breaks it. She rests her face in her palms.

20. INT. DANIEL'S PARENT'S HOUSE -- DAY

Daniel is sat on a chair. Opposite, on the sofa his dad. His mother brings a hot pie and rests it on the table which separates them.

DANIEL

Mum, I'm not hungry. Take a seat I
need to tell you something.

His mother takes a seat and listens with curiosity.

Dark screen.

DANIEL(O.S.)

I don't know how. I just don't want
you to be upset...

His parents are shocked.

Daniel's mother stands and walks towards him with her hands open.

DANIEL'S MOTHER

My son!

Simultaneously, his father stands up and throws his right hand into his hair breathing heavily. He leaves the room. We follow him into the kitchen. He opens the wooden doors of a cupboard. He takes a stack of plates out of the cupboard and places it onto the table calmly. He picks one up and sends it violently to the floor. He cries.

In the living room, Daniel's mother strongly cuddles Daniel while crying. Daniel has no reaction, he looks into the void. The noise from the kitchen continues and now the plate breaking sound is accompanied by screams.

21. FLASHBACK EXT. STREET -- MORNING (FEBRUARY)

Daniel exits the busy street and enters a residential area. A noise followed by screams stops him. He looks towards the street and starts running.

22.(1) INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - DAY (JUNE)

Man hands open the wooden door of a wardrobe. Daniel's hands opening the wooden door of the wardrobe. He picks up the yellow scarf. He looks at it closely.

CU: Small washed blood dots on the scarf.

23. FLASHBACK EXT. STREET -- DAY (FEBRUARY)

Daniel running. On the ground, a bended bicycle, pieces of glass, broken plant pots, soil and plants. The driver is frozen inside the car. Two old women, a child and a dog are sat around the accidented woman, OLIVIA (late 20's), who is lying still.

Old woman on the phone.

OLD WOMAN(O.S.)
Hello! With the ambulance services
please, there's been an accident.

Daniel drops on his knees and checks Olivia's pulse. Blood comes out of her nose. A beautiful blue flower is growing out of her skin behind her ear.

OLD WOMAN(O.S.)
Newburn Street...

Daniel takes her helmet off, listens to her breath, and tries to resuscitates her by executing mouth to mouth respiration. She starts breathing.

ECU: Blood on Daniel's cracked lips and on his yellow scarf.

24. (1,22) BACK TO PRESENT INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM (JUNE)

Daniel looks closely at the scarf and stops breathing.

He sits on the side of the bed. He takes his mobile phone out searches for a number and dials.

DANIEL

Hi. Emergency please.

OPERATOR 1 (O.S.)

One moment please.

Phone ringing (O.S.)

OPERATOR 2 (O.S.)

Emergency!?

DANIEL

Hi. There was a bicycle accident in February on Newburn Street, I helped to resuscitate the victim. I was wondering if you could give me her name or any contact details.

OPERATOR 2

I am sorry sir but I can't do this.

Daniel interrupts the conversation and remembers that as he was listening to Olivia's breath he saw a logo and 'Lambeth Poly' on one of the broken plant pots.

25. INT. BOTANICAL GARDEN -- DAY

CU: Same label on plant pots. Beautiful flowers/plants being watered. Olivia turns her head to observe Daniel entering the glass garden. Daniel approaches.

CU: They shake hands. Olivia has a subtle reaction.

Daniel has taken a seat on a chair nearby and Olivia is sat in her wheelchair. She still wears her blue flower on the side of her head. They look into each other's eyes.

OLIVIA

I'm sorry...thank you! I didn't know how to find you.

A moment of silence.

(CONTINUED)

DANIEL

So how does the flower help you?

OLIVIA

I haven't slept in 4 months. I eat very little. It changed everything... We are afraid of the darkness of death and that is what causes all suffering. It's not easy to explain, you have to have it to understand.

DANIEL

So you recommend it!

OLIVIA

(smiling)

It's pure happiness.

26. INT. PLANT SALOON, WAITING ROOM -- DAY

Daniel looks through a symbiosis catalogue.

ECU: The magazine displays men and women wearing flowers and plants on different parts of their body.

BHASKER

Daniel!

Daniel stands up.

INT. PLANT SALOON BRIEFING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

DANIEL

I wanted to know more about this before if possible.

Saloon doctor/artist BHASKER (age 48) points at the poster on the wall.

BHASKER

Plants have the capacity to transform solar energy into leaves, fruits, vegetables, so, directly or indirectly, all animals depend on this energy for survival. We take it in through our digestive system. Having the plant growing on you means that you cut this step of taking in energy. The plant transfers the energy straight into your body. A symbiosis.

(CONTINUED)

DANIEL

And you eat less...yeah I've heard that.

DANIEL

And how does affect the mind? The guy from America killed his children and, if you...do you watch the news? Do you go online?

BHASKER

There are two categories of plants. Plants that in order to spread their seeds developed a method which rewards animals.

CU: Plants with fruits.

BHASKER (V.O.)

They wrap their seeds in a sugary texture loved by animals - the fruit. But other plants, developed thorns and poisons to keep animals away.

CU: Plants with thorns.

BHASKER

And that is what that guy from America had. It is illegal now but the classification is still debatable. However, the food corporations and hotel companies, besides advertising, they run negative campaigns against the symbiosis and that is what you see on the news. The economies are collapsing.

28. INT. PLANT SALOON, SURGERY ROOM -- DAY (JUNE)

ECU: Small seeds in small glass containers on a shiny surface.

CU: Seed being inserted under Daniel's skin.

29. FLASH FORWARD EXT. HORSE RIDING ARENA -- SUNRISE (LATE JUNE)

CU: Daniel ties a belt on Olivia's foot and under the horse's belly to reach the other foot. In the background an empty wheelchair.

30. BACK TO PRESENT INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM -- MORNING (JUNE)

CU: Olivia applies cream on Daniel's lump.

31. FLASH FORWARD EXT. COUNTRY SIDE ROAD -- SUNRISE

CU: Feet running fast on a (wet) road.

32. BACK TO PRESENT INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM -- MORNING

ECU: The plant has perforated Daniel's skin to come out.

ECU: Daniel opens his eyes.

33. FLASH FORWARD EXT. COUNTRY SIDE ROAD -- SUNRISE

Feet running fast on the wet road. Big trees on each side of the road.

34. BACK TO PRESENT INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM -- MORNING

Daniel stands up on the side of his bed. He is extremely amazed at his room. He stands up. He can hear and feel the air he breaths. He looks at his hands in amazement and then at Olivia. Gently touches his neck close to the plant.

DANIEL
We are all one.

35. EXT. COUNTRY SIDE ROAD -- SUNRISE

Daniel runs fast on the road. He holds a very wide smile, he is truly happy. He cries and looks at his left.

Olivia is riding a horse in parallel, on the side of the road.

DANIEL (V.O.)
As we face an uncertain future, we
look to memories for inspiration to
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

13.

DANIEL (V.O.) (cont'd)
help us remain hopeful. But I don't
have many good memories. I am about
to create some!

FADE OUT.

THE END - Title: Obligate Symbiosis

36. Credits. Long steadycam shot with all crew.

FULL CREDITS ON IMDB