

THE PENDULUM
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FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAWN

SUPER CREDITS as JANE, 13 and determined, runs down the road. Her fiery red hair glistens in the sunlight.

We see the caption: June 10, 1998

The Pendulum bounces around her neck as she stops to breathe. She notices a woman off the path in the shadows, upset and crying. Jane steps closer as the woman gasps for breath.

JANE

Mother?

Mother steps into the light. Tears stream down her face.

JANE (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

Mother stares at her - she lunges and grabs Jane's arm.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE: THE PENDULUM

FADE IN:

We see the caption: June 5, 1998

EXT. FARM FIELD - DAY

Jane stands beside a shed, her arms crossed and eyes scanning the field. She looks down at her book, "Kites: From Building to Flying". She sighs and places the hammer back in the shed.

INT. GRANDFATHER'S SHED

Jane walks inside and gazes at all the kites along the wall. She stops by one particularly beautiful kite: shiny, colorful, with an intricate butterfly pattern. Jane stares at it then slouches and leaves the shed.

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Jane, MOTHER and FATHER are at the dinner table eating quietly. Jane picks at her food.

JANE

Where's grandfather?

Nothing but silence and the scraping of dinner plates.

JANE (CONT'D)
Where is he?

MOTHER
I'm sorry, honey. He'll be back soon.

JANE
(loudly)
He promised to build with me. He
promised and then just disappeared!

FATHER
Lower your voice, Jane.

JANE
How am I supposed to keep this going
when he won't even show up?

MOTHER
Honey, he'll come back. He always does.

JANE
Then he'll be gone again.

She looks down at her plate.

FATHER
If worse comes to worse, Jane, I know
how. I can teach you.

Jane places her fork down and gets up suddenly.

JANE
It's supposed to be Grandfather!

She storms out of the dining room, thundering up the stairs to
her room.

INT. JANE'S BEDROOM - LATER

GRANDFATHER, healthy yet fragile, shuffles into the room as Jane
lays silent. He sits on her bed and places a hand on her back.

GRANDFATHER
Jane, dear?

She lays in silence, barely opening an eye.

GRANDFATHER (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.

JANE
You're never here. I never get to see
you anymore.

GRANDFATHER

(pause)

I know. It's complicated, Jane.

She turns away, flopping her head on the pillow.

JANE

I need you to teach me.

GRANDFATHER

I can. I will. Tomorrow morning, we can start then. I promise.

Jane remains still and silent, turning to look at her Grandfather with wet eyes.

GRANDFATHER (CONT'D)

I promise.

He moves to hold her hand. The Pendulum dangles from his neck. Jane glances at it as Grandfather quickly tucks it away. He squeezes her hand, smiles and leaves the room.

EXT. FARM FIELD - MORNING

Jane walks through the field brushing the wheat with her hands. Across the field FREDDIE, in muddy overalls, waves from behind the fence. She waves back and walks over.

JANE

Hi.

FREDDIE

Hi.

Freddie picks at the bark on the fence, Jane kicks the dirt at her feet.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

Whatcha doing?

JANE

I'm supposed to be practicing. With Grandfather.

FREDDIE

Lucky.

JANE

Haven't you learned?

Freddie shifts awkwardly.

FREDDIE

No. Both mine are gone.

JANE
I'm sorry.

FREDDIE
It's okay. Mother's going to teach me instead.

JANE
That's not tradition.

Freddie shrugs, forcing a grin.

FREDDIE
Not much I can do about it.

JANE
I heard Margaret had to be taught by her Mother, and the council didn't give her the ribbon.

FREDDIE
That's not fair!

JANE
They say only the Grandparents can come to retrieve their own ribbon and pass it on. They keep it in boxes with passwords.

FREDDIE
How else am I supposed to get my ribbon then?

Jane shrugs. They both stand silent.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)
Well, I best get back to work. Father will have my neck in a noose if I don't get these stalls cleaned.

Jane smiles coyly.

JANE
Okay. See you, Freddie.

He nods and she walks away towards the shed.

INT. GRANDFATHER'S SHED

Jane sits at the table examining the many kites hung along the walls. She picks up a syringe off the table - full of clear liquid.

BANG. The door swings wide open in the wind. Grandfather walks in and grabs the syringe from her, placing it back in the drawer.

GRANDFATHER

We don't want you to hurt yourself, now
do we?

He hands her some gloves as he gets out his tools. His movements
are slow. Sweat drips from his forehead.

GRANDFATHER (CONT'D)
Jane, dear, please get me the wood
pieces in the corner.

Grandfather wipes his face, clutching the table as she returns
with the pieces.

GRANDFATHER (CONT'D)
When you are old enough, you may make
the pieces yourself. For now, your
first task will be to sand the wood
smooth.

He passes the sandpaper with shaking hands.

GRANDFATHER (CONT'D)
Now. This wood needs a particular
motion, circular and gentle towards
the centre.

She watches as he begins to show her. He can barely move his hand
- the wood drop to the floor.

JANE
Grandfather, are you okay?

GRANDFATHER
Yes, yes. Would you mind getting me my
water?

She grabs the water bottle. As she turns back he collapses to
the floor.

JANE
Grandfather!

He gulps the water in her hand.

GRANDFATHER
I'm - I'm fine, just tired that's all.

JANE
Do you want a chair?

GRANDFATHER
Yes, that would be wonderful.

She tries to help him onto the chair and he falls. He leans against
the cupboard, clutching his body in pain.

GRANDFATHER (CONT'D)
Go get your mother.