

POCUPINE .

SHORT FILM

BY MERRICK FOK

Character: He is a university student studying art, and he is getting lost at this stage of graduating soon.

Background: He is searching for a sense of belonging; home is never a safe place for him. (***Avoidant Personality Disorder***)

Both of his parents are perfectionists. His family is always blaming him, asking him to achieve higher goals, and is not satisfied with what he has done. He is strict with himself, and he feels like he didn't do enough. This experience also made him overly sensitive to tone, anxious, and guilt-prone. And strict with himself.

He never feels like he is someone who deserves to be loved. Love being pressured/conditional, not comfort. He craves connection, but when someone gets close, he panics—not because he doesn't care, but because he's afraid he'll disappoint them. Or they'll see he doesn't know what to do with love once he has it.

The inner, broken child is hidden deeply in his heart.

Home is a safe place, but not for him

He hated to be there, not at home.

The forest is a place for him to escape from that, but he doesn't remember why.

He just feels like he couldn't give her the things that she needs. He wants to break up because he feels like he doesn't know how to love and is not willing to give her the emotions she needs. Because he is lacking it as well, growing up in a broken family, he doesn't know how to love, how to give love.

Love → Loss → Questioning → Memory → Confrontation → Growth

Act 1

INT: HOUSE - DAY (SUNRISE)

(An early morning, with a silent morning)

House - dim, the house only has limited colours, black and white. Plain and tight

The house is full of paper boxes and closed curtains, but very clean, as if he is ready to leave.

RING. RING. RING.

He is listening to music loudly in his house. The loud sound of the phone ringing breaks through the music that he is

listening to. HIM (22) he go turns off the music and walks to pick up his phone.

HIM:

"Hey."

"喂？"

HER:

"Hey, babe, guess what?"

"喂 b啊 我有個*surprise*俾你㗎"

HIM:

"Huh?"

HER:

"You're having your first exhibition in a real gallery."

"你遲啲咪有你藝術家生涯第一個open exhibition既"

HIM (cold):

"Oh ya... "

"係呀"

HER:

"I've booked a restaurant—invited your friends, even called your parents. We're celebrating tonight!"

“我聽晚book咗間餐廳 不如叫埋你屋企人同朋友嚟邀請佢地去睇啦。”

HIM:

“You don't have to, it is not something that big, nothing worth celebrating...”

“唔洗啦，都唔係啲咩大件事，個exhibition又有咩特別”

HER:

“...Are you okay?”

“做咩阿？咁掃興。。。 ”

HIM:

“...”

“冇野。。。 ”

HIM:

“I'm sorry, I am just tired.”

“Sorry, 我今日有啲累”

HER:

“What's wrong?”

“你有野阿嘛？”

HIM:

"I just—I don't know."

"冇事"

HER:

"You're doing it again. Pushing me away."

"你又係甘，乜都唔同我講。"

HIM (Voice Cracking):

"Just.... " (He wanted to say something but he stepped back)

"唔係...係..."

HER:

"Just tell me what happened. I'm right here."

"I know we aren't together for long, but you have been acting weird since we got together, like ... more distant."

"所以係啲乜?"

"你究竟想點姐 我知我地唔係一齊好耐 但係你成日忽冷忽熱咁 你想我點"

HIM:

"It is just too much. I can't... "

“冇...”

HER:

“Then what do you want, huh? You make me feel like I’m asking too much for needing you.”

“你搞到好似我好chur咁 我都係鄧你開心慶祝吓啫”

HIM:

“... ”

(sigh)

HER:

“You know what? I’m done begging you to love me. ”

“夠啦，每次都係咁，我不如同面牆拍拖，都唔知點解我會同你一齊”

She hangs up.

HIM:

“No, I...”

“唔係呀...我...”

Silence.

The line goes dead. He's left standing there, phone still to his ear. The silence floods back in—louder than ever.

He is standing beside the window and having his last cigarette near the window, and looking out, It is very early in the morning.

The Sun is out, and the curtain is half closed.

He returns to the living room. He sits back on the sofa, unsettled, thinking about things that he said to his girlfriend. With guilt and disappointment, he doesn't know why he is pushing everything away from him again. He then leaned his head on the couch, looking straight with emptiness.

Then, a loud knock at the door. A brief pause. A letter slides underneath. He heard the knock on the door scared him a bit, slowly looked in the direction of the door, trying to see who was knocking. He then stepped slowly toward the door. Kneels. Picks up the postcard, the postcard is with a picture of a forest.

His name is written on the front—in childish handwriting

Then he flipped it over with some text written on it.

He kneeled with confusion, thinking whether he should leave the room or not. Then he heard the room next door where the mom is scolding her son, and he felt annoyed by it.

He unlocks the door and opens it, the sound gets louder as well. The hallway outside is empty, and the sun is shining brighter than in the room where he is staying.

He goes back to his room, gets his jacket and the backpack.

He hesitated at the door, but he still decided to take that step and walk out the door.

Act 2

BGM: 回復する傷 - Lily Chou Chou

EXT. Train - DAY

The train sound is coming in. Train scenes move differently, like how memories fly through our minds.

Sunset/sunrise in reverse through the window

"Title"

INT. ON THE TRAIN - DAY

He is looking outside the window, having his hand crossed on his arm, and his neck slightly distorted. It is a sunny day, but he still wraps himself in layers of clothes. He tried to sleep, but he couldn't.

Rubbing his hand and scratching himself nervously, He then looks around him.

Close-up of tear stains. People around him are looking at him in pity and whispering.

He wanted to go to the toilet to wash his face, He heard a weird noise from the toilet.

He is scared, he steps off a bit and go back to his seat. He took out the map from his pocket.

"Next Stop, Where will this train be terminated. "

The sudden announcement scared him a bit.

Act 3

EXT. Train Station - DAY

Getting off the train, the sun is brighter than it is in the urban area today

(pov map) Looking at a hand-drawn map

(start with a bit of confusion, but still looking forward as he can leave the house finally) His letters are folded over

and over again, edges bent from too much handling—he clings to them like a lifeline. *Getting off the train station*

EXT. ROAD - DAY

From a crowded area to fewer people, asking people how to get to that place, he doesn't remember this place, doesn't know how to get there, from an urban area to the forest, where no one is there, only himself. Walk through the forest

VO:

I don't remember when it started; I just like disappearing into the trees, where no one can ever find me.

Just me and the wind.

"我唔記得幾時開始，我開始鍾意消失係森林入面，一個冇人可以搵到我既地方"

He also plays around and wanders around the forest, as if this is his home, not an urban, flat home. He could feel. He is just interacting with the environment, with the plants, the trees, the animals, the insects.

(feeling lost in the forest but enjoying getting lost there)

He is getting deeper and deeper into the woods, with less sunlight leaking into the woods.

He arrived at the place, the tree that is mapped on the paper.

It is a weird-looking tree, a tree that looks very different from the other. He walked near the tree, looked up, he touched the tree like he had known the tree since he was a child. He deeply resonates with the tree.

Looking at the letter and the tree, then put the letter into his pocket.

He found the spot where he buried next to the tree, he kept digging and digging. He heard the clinking when the shovel hit the can. Breathing is getting more rapid. Slowly take the box out of the dirt.

It is covered with mud, he gently wipes the mud on the can. He opened the box.

However, it is empty. He is disappointed, it will be a mystery that will never be solved, and he wants to give up on it.

He is exhausted after everything that has happened to him that day, so he decides to sit by the tree for a break from the journey he has been on.

He saw something reflecting on the ground far away in the other direction.

He walks slowly toward the object, goes near it, and picks it up. It is the pack of crayons that he used to draw the letter he sent himself. T

Then he slowly sees the objects lying around the forest, he picks up the crayon and puts it into the box

He keeps walking, and tries to look for other objects in the forest.

like a sign, a pathway for him to follow.

B-roll: Animals looking at him (deer, sheep) as a guardian angel for him in his memory.

He then sees a sweater snagged on a tree branch—his, from long ago. Then he kept walking, he found a postcard with some handwriting on it. His childhood friends wrote that to him.

He walked past a road with thorns and accidentally hurt himself.

"Ah, Sorry."

(like he did something wrong)

The branches were dripping blood on them using tissue like someone cleaning a wound he caused.

A diary that he wrote when he was young. The objects slowly guide him towards a wide field of hay. A kid is standing in the field with a mask.

The kid is just standing there. He is a bit scared, but he feels that he looks familiar. He tries to get close to have a

look. He doesn't know what to do and tries to look through the hay

HIM:

"Are you lost in the fields? Where are your parents?"

“小朋友，你係米走失左阿？你嘅屋企人呢？”

The kid is not responding, standing still and silent. The kid suddenly ran towards him and took away the can that he was holding in his hand.

HIM:

"Hey, Hey, Give it back to me. "

“喂，比返我啊”

He then starts chasing him in the fields. The kid is running a bit too fast, so he can barely catch up.

HIM (PANTING) :

"WAIT..."

“等陣”

The kid stopped and waited for him to catch up.

HIM (PANTING) :

"Where are you going?"

The kid wants to bring him somewhere. They keep walking through the forest and other places. He slowly follows up.

HIM (PANTING) :

"Where are you bringing me to? I don't think there is anything here. "

"你想帶我去邊度？ 我冇力跑啦。"

They stopped in front of a house inside the woods. He had no idea what this place was. The kid just walked into the house with the box. The kid looked back at him before he went into the house. He also followed him with confusion.

Act 4

再怎麼哭鬧, 也得不到父母的關心, 沒人關心我的需求

*silence in the house and the emotional neglect from the parents

INT. HOUSE - DAY

He looks into the house and slowly walks into the flat. Seeing the interior of the house. Slowly realises that it is the place where he grew up (touching the walls and looking around the house); He hesitated, he doesn't want to remember his own childhood. Surroundings look so small, so packed, coming back as an adult feels different.

Start with confusion and avoidant

Looking from the entrance of the living room. It is messy, filled with takeaway bags, coffee cups, and wine glasses. The TV is on, but on a really low volume. Looking more of the living room, the kid is finishing a drawing and he walked to the clothing rack to fold and hang the clothes on the clothing rack on his own.

HIM slowly walked close to the table, sitting at the opposite side of the table, looking at the kid gently, with what he was doing.

Him:

"Ai...I..." (he tried to say something, but he couldn't)

The kid is just concentrating on folding clothes.

After folding and drying all the clothes, he grabs a paper from the desk and goes and knocks on the door of the parents' room.

Mom is working in the room.

" I got an A . "

"Um... good job. ... Which subject?" (emotionlessly)

"Art!"

"...good" (emotionlessly, keep typing and working)

Waiting. Hoping. She never looks up.

He stands there and then slowly closes the door.

Walk back to the living room and start scribbling in the diary.

Mom

"I have to go out to work now, make yourself dinner."

The kid looks out of the window, his mom leaves the house. It is him alone in the flat, the house is silent again, not even the typing sound anymore.

Get back on the table, pack all the stuff on the table into the tin box, and leave the room immediately.

HE grabbed the kid's wrist

HIM:

"I am sorry."

And he let go of it after saying that. The kid felt someone grab him and looked back, but the house was empty, and he left the house through the hallway.

Act 5

EXT. FOREST DAY

Someone is wearing the porcupine mask, standing next to the river.

Slowly take off the mask, and it is HIM.

He sat down, thinking about the childhood memories that had affected him and facing his inner child, who is fragile and fragmented. He feels relieved, but still has that scar in his heart. He starts tearing up, not a big cry, but tears fill up his eyes. Trying to control his tears, he picked up his phone and called his girlfriend.

End