

TATUM AND THE ART OF GRIEVING

Written by

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"After a young girl's favorite T.V. show character dies, she must endure the five stages of grief."

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FADE IN:

INT. TATUM'S BEDROOM - DAY

TATUM REED, 16, naturally blonde, rather small in stature for her age, sits on her bed watching a show on her laptop. She looks completely entranced.

We hear the show:

VILLAIN (O.S.)  
Damien.

DAMIEN LANCASTER (O.S.)  
And you are?

POSTERS of a handsome man line her walls. This man is DAMIEN LANCASTER, a character on her favorite T.V. show, "The Lancaster Chronicles".

The off-screen sound continues:

VILLAIN (O.S.)  
Ha. You really think I'd give it up that easily?

DAMIEN LANCASTER (O.S.)  
Who sent you?

VILLAIN (O.S.)  
You're really not one for mystery, eh?

DAMIEN LANCASTER (O.S.)  
You don't want to push me.

Off-screen, we hear the sound of FIGHTING ensue.

We look back to Tatum whose face is growing more concerned.

SFX: Off-screen gun shot.

She violently flinches.

VILLAIN (O.S.)  
How does it feel to be DEAD, Damien Lancaster.

She looks shocked. Her eyes widen.

Damien has just been killed.

Tatum sits frozen, staring at the screen.

She takes a deep breath in, and right before she is about to let out a wail, the screen goes black.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: **CHAPTER I - DENIAL**

INT. TATUM'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

She rewinds and watches the scene again.

And again.

And again.

TATUM

No...

Tatum frantically reaches for her PHONE.

INSERT: Group message titled "Lancaster Wives"

She writes:

WHAT JUST HAPPENED?!?!?!?!?!?

DID HE JUST DIE

I THINK HE JUST DIED

NO

WHY DID NOBODY TELL ME THIS

HE'S GOTTA COME BACK... RIGHT? LIKE FAKE DEATH SORTA THING?!?!?

She stares at the messages waiting for a response.

Nothing.

She throws her phone by her side and stares blankly ahead. Then, she lifelessly flops back on her bed.

TATUM (CONT'D)

Oh my God.

CUT TO:

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HOME - LATER

Tatum's mother, GRACE REED, 42, is doing dishes in the kitchen.

Tatum walks into the kitchen to grab a drink from the fridge.

GRACE  
Hey, T. How are ya?

TATUM  
I'm good! I'm great actually.

Grace looks confused at her daughters response.

GRACE  
Well-- that's good to hear.

Tatum walks to the fridge. She pulls, but it doesn't open. She pulls harder. Still nothing. She starts YANKING.

TATUM  
YOU KNOW I'D BE A LOT BETTER IF  
THIS STUPID DOOR WOULD OPEN AND I  
COULD JUST GET A FREAKING SODA FROM  
THIS GODFORSAKEN REFRIGERATOR!

Grace whips her head towards Tatum.

GRACE  
Tatum!

TATUM  
AND MAYBE AFTERWARDS, I COULD SIP  
MY DELICIOUS AND REFRESHING  
BEVERAGE WHILE WATCHING MY FAVORITE  
T.V. SHOW. BUT NO! EVERYTHING IS  
RUINED AND MY LIFE IS OVER!  
AHHHHHHH!

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: **CHAPTER II - ANGER**

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HOME - CONTINUOUS

Tatum stomps away from the fridge and up the stairs, groaning loudly.

INT. TATUM'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

She enters her room and slams the door behind her. She begins tearing down the posters of Damien.

She then jumps face-first on the bed and screams into her pillow.

Grace enters the room.

GRACE  
WHAT are you doing?!

She doesn't respond.

GRACE (CONT'D)  
Tatum!

TATUM  
(Into her pillow)  
He's dead, Mom!

GRACE  
Who? Wh-- Who's dead?

Tatum looks up at her mother.

TATUM  
Damien!

Her mother's face turns serious. She takes a breath in and nods.

GRACE  
I see.

She walks up to Tatum and sits in bed next to her.

Tatum falls into her arms, sobbing.

Grace strokes her hair as she holds her.

GRACE (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry, baby. I'm so sorry.

Tatum wails in her arms. She sniffles grossly loud. Her mom makes a "blech" face, but continues holding her.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: **CHAPTER III - BARGAINING**

INT. TATUM'S BEDROOM - LATER

Tatum is sitting cross-legged on the ground. She's holding her phone up to her ear.

SFX: Phone line ringing

SECRETARY (O.S.)

Hello. You've reached the Netflix Help Center. How may I assist you?

TATUM

Hi! Um.. Can I speak with the producers of "The Lancaster Chronicles" please?

SECRETARY (O.S.)

I'm sorry?

TATUM

I need to get in touch with the producers.

SECRETARY (O.S.)

I'm sorry, I can't help you with that. This number is only for technological assistance.

TATUM

Look, I have \$53 saved up in allowance money. I can transfer it through Venmo if you give me your username or--

SECRETARY (O.S.)

Ma'am I'm going to have to hang up now--

TATUM

NO! No. Please. *Damien* just died. He was killed. I need the producers to bring him back. I just need to speak with the producers.

SECRETARY (O.S.)

I'm... I'm sorry? I can't... really do that.

TATUM

UGH!

Tatum hangs up and slams the phone down.

**TITLE CARD: CHAPTER IV - DEPRESSION**

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

The room is dimly lit. Tatum sits in the bathtub with her legs hugged to her chest. Her head rests on her knees.

She looks like a mess.

She snuffles, then lifts her head up and looks at the ceiling.

She takes a deep breath in and out, then begins to sob.

She sinks lower in to the tub as she wails.

CUT TO:

**TITLE CARD: CHAPTER V - ~~ACCEPTANCE~~...****BUT REALLY JUST DENIAL**

INT. TATUM'S BEDROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Tatum looks more put-together.

She's pulling out new posters to put up on her wall.

CUT TO:

INT. TATUM'S BEDROOM - LATER

The posters are now all hung up on the wall in the same spaces they once were.

Tatum sits on the bed with her legs crossed and the open laptop in front of her.

INSERT - LAPTOP SCREEN

"The Lancaster Chronicles"

Episode 1

We look back to her face as she settles down to watch the show.

Her head rests in her hand as a gentle smile sweeps across her face.

DAMIEN LANCASTER (O.S.)  
Damien Lancaster...

DAMIEN LANCASTER (O.S.)

reporting for duty

TATUM

reporting for duty.

FADE TO BLACK.