

## **JATHIA'S WAGER**

Final - Love Story Envisioning  
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FADE IN:

EXT. SMALL VILLAGE

on the outskirts of a large grass field. A man stands in the door frame of a small one-story building watching a small group venture into the grass.

MALE VILLAGER

(yells)

Make sure he doesn't come back. We don't want him here, old man.

The group continues moving forward into the sea of grass. CLOSE-UP on the man as he shifts to allow a woman to look out as well.

MALE VILLAGER

About time that old man gets rid of the boy. He's been nothing but trouble since she left.

FEMALE VILLAGER

Come back to bed. It's five in the morning.

MALE VILLAGER

Those type of people make me sick, him and that girl. What's wrong with what we have here? What's wrong with our quiet life? Why would one want to run off to some...

FEMALE VILLAGER

(grabs the man's arm)

Come to bed.

The woman pulls the man back into the house as the door shuts. PULL BACK to show the quiet village just starting to come alive in the early morning.

CROSS FADE:

EXT. TWO-STORY STEEL BUILDING

sits on the edge of a large prairie field and an old forest. A sign waves slightly in the breeze on a post outside the door with "Above and Beyond, Inc" carved into it.

CRANE SHOT

shows a small group in the field walking towards the building lead by an old man and Jathia. The old man holds his fist up and the group halts.

OLD MAN

We can go no farther. You must continue alone. There is still time to return, or to venture forth to an other village.

Jathia looks behind him at the group of friends and family and shakes his head. CLOSE SHOT on Jathia as he faces the building ten yards away. He takes a step forward only to feel his arm caught on something. He turns and looks down to see his little sister.

LITTLE SISTER

Stay with us, please.

JATHIA

(bends down to be eye-to-eye)

I have to go.

LITTLE SISTER

Why?

YOUNG WOMAN

(voice over)

Silly little boy.

JATHIA

(flinches slightly)

Because I am ready.

Jathia hugs his little sister and stands. He turns to face the building as he takes a deep breath.

CUT TO

Jathia approaching the sign. He runs his fingers over the carved letters before taking a step beyond it. A SOUND of a high pitch screeching drives him to his knees and forces him to covering his ears. The SOUND ceases suddenly.

MAN

Please state your purpose.

Jathia slowly looks up to see a man in a light brown pants, dark brown jacket, dark brown waistcoat, white shirt, a cravat with light brown spots and a brown bowler hat.

JATHIA

I-I wish to evolve.

The man looks beyond Jathia out to the plains.

MAN

You have many friends still here. Once on the path you may never return to them.

JATHIA

The elder already said that.

MAN

A wise man.  
(mumbles)  
Too wise.

Jathia stands and camera PANS to focus on the small group as he glances back at the them.

MAN  
Did he also tell you that you will see and experience things  
“beyond your wildest dreams”?

JATHIA  
(distracted)  
He told me it would be different.

Camera PANS back to the man as he smiles at Jathia and motions him towards the building.

MAN  
Different? That can hardly explain the beauty and wonder. Nor  
can words do it justice in general. And sadly, I may not deploy  
more than words. Thus is the primary rule.

JATHIA  
(shoulders slump in frustration)  
More rules, I want to escape rules...

MAN  
(chuckles)  
You may have misunderstood...

JATHIA  
(looks up with hope in his eyes)  
So there are no other rules?

MAN  
(shakes his head)  
Humans are such simple creatures. The rules I speak bind my  
actions, but you'll understand such things once you've stripped  
away your biological forms.

JATHIA  
My biological forms?

The two stop at the doorway to the building and camera PANS back to the group in the field. This time the old man is crouched down looking down at the ground.

MAN  
Humans evolved into its current form, but to get to this state he  
held other forms. Less evolved ones, less refined ones. And so  
you must shed your current shell to advance.

Jathia looks back at his friends and family one last time. He sees a hazy image of a young woman in a flowing peasant dancing as if floating on air around the old man.

YOUNG WOMAN

(voice over)

You can't go where I'm going.

JATHIA

If being more advanced is so much better then why do you allow us to remain as we are.

MAN

(looks down at Jathia)

Have you ever forced an chicken to hatch? How about a butterfly to leave its cocoon? No of course you haven't. If you did, the result would be a slow and painful death.

CUT TO

INT. INSIDE THE HOUSE

as the door opens the man ushers Jathia through the door and into the house. He leaves the door open behind him.

MAN

Like with all things, time must not be rushed. Even now you may be forcing yourself.

JATHIA

What will I become?

MAN

I cannot say.

JATHIA

But you must know. You have advanced.

MAN

I have advanced yes, but I cannot see what will happen. Just what may. However, there are some above me that may know your path.

JATHIA

Above you?

MAN

Others have continued evolving. You can stop at any time to grow old and die.

JATHIA

Why did you stop?

The man pauses at the foot of the staircase. CUT TO a view up a long stairs with a door at the top.

MAN

(shakes his head)

My reasons are my own. I don't regret my choice. As you shouldn't regret your.

JATHIA

What are my choices?

MAN

Too many to even begin to speak, but your first choice is never fully under your control. However, once there others may describe their own experiences. This could help you to understand how to proceed.

JATHIA

So... There are differences in how one progresses?

MAN

(nod)

Everyone has their own path, and they must not stray. Speaking of paths we must continue down yours.

They start up the steps with the SOUND of their feet echoing up the stairs with the random squeaks of boards.

JATHIA

How much farther?

MAN

That is up to you. If you wish it could be over right now.

JATHIA

(frowns)

No, I still have more questions. If I decide not to continue can I return to my family now?

MAN

What is behind you is death, and what is in front of you is life.

JATHIA

(utterly confused look)

Oh. Why are you here?

MAN

I am but a mere teacher. One to help those who can't find their path. With that being said I can never leave the boundaries of this place.

JATHIA

Can I end up like that?

MAN

(shakes his head)

Only a few can hold a gate between the primitive worlds and the higher ones, and when I become tired of my life this place will be forever closed.

JATHIA

What about those left?

MAN

They'll find other ways to advance. They did it before, and they'll do it again. In fact, most come to us without our aid.

JATHIA

(voice over)

Like she did.

JATHIA

What was your experience like?

MAN

Lonely. I moved from form to form never seeing another soul. I missed the company of my fellow humans. Until I felt the others.

JATHIA

Felt?

MAN

It was as if they were part of me. As if we merged into a single being.

JATHIA

Are-Are they still with you?

MAN

Them and many more.

Jathia halts on the stairs trembling slightly as he sees the young woman sitting a few steps above him. The SOUND of her giggling floats down.

JATHIA

I don't want others in my head. What about my privacy? What about my personal thoughts? I don't wish to lose myself within everyone...

MAN

(holds up a hand)

Do you wish to return to your finite life?

The man moves to reveal a door behind him drawing Jathia's attention away from the young woman.

JATHIA

(touches the door with his finger tips and whispers)

Back to...

(shakes his head)

No, I have to...want to progress.

MAN

You aren't doing this under some misguided belief you can follow after another?

JATHIA

(shakes his head)

No. No. I really want to expand my understand and progress beyond my current state.

MAN

So be it. Shall we continue?

Jathia turns back and sees the stairs empty again and the door still looming out of reach. He hesitates for a moment.

CROSS FADE to LONG SHOT of a

EXT. TREE IN MIDDLE OF THE PRAIRIE

where a six year old boy and an eight year old girl are playing under the tree. PULLING IN the boy catches the girl and the two come tumbling down to the ground. Both are laughing.

BOY

I'll follow you anywhere.

GIRL

Silly boy, you can't.

BOY

Why not?

GIRL

Because you can't go to the bathroom with me, or come into my room or...

BOY

(exasperated)

That's not what I mean.

GIRL

(serious tone)

Because you're not ready.

BOY

(whines)

Ready for what?

GIRL

(puts her finger to his lips)

Ready to understand. Ready to know about other worlds.

BOY

(confused look)

Another world?

He looks up beyond the tree as the camera PANS up to show a blue sky between the branches.

BOY

(points up into the air)

Out there? Through the tell-e-scope?

GIRL

No, here.

BOY

I don't understand.

GIRL

(quietly to herself)

Nor do I.

(louder)

It's your birthday tomorrow. What do you want?

BOY

Don't change the subject. I promise you I will go where you go.

GIRL

(frustrated)

I told you that you can't.

BOY

(muted tone)

I just want to be with you for my birthday.

CROSS FADES

INT. STAIR CASE INSIDE THE HOUSE

Jathia continues up the stairs lost in his memory of an old moment.

MAN

If you have no more questions then I need to attend to others that wish to progress.

JATHIA

When do most choose to stop?

MAN

Half after their first transformation, another half on their second, and so on. Even those that continue will still lag behind those that came before.

JATHIA

Oh.

(falls silent for a few steps)

How long does one stay human?

MAN

It depends on the person. Some always retain a vestige of their human form. As humans retain evidence of their lower existences.

JATHIA

Where do they go when they change?

MAN

Some stay and watch over their friends and family for a while.

Some move to new places, and others...

(pauses)

JATHIA

Others?

MAN

(shrugs)

Just vanish.

JATHIA

You said to watch over friends and family just now, but before you said I couldn't return.

MAN

You can watch them, but you no longer will be able to interact with them. It can be an extremely painful thing, and those that choose to do so feel they must atone for wrongs they committed before moving continuing forward.

CUT TO

EXT. FOREST LINE

where Jathia at the age of ten and the old man are making their rounds of the forest line.

JATHIA

Are there other places?

OLD MAN

There is an other village four days ride south of here deeper in the prairie. And other...

JATHIA

No. I mean right where we are standing. Something that we can't see.

OLD MAN

Some say there are, and some say it's just blasphemy.

JATHIA

And you?

OLD MAN

The creator has produced many things, and even after science had explained all of them it still didn't change everyone's beliefs. However, what I believe isn't important.

(turns to Jathia and places his hand on Jathia's heart)

It's what you believe.

The two stand there in silence before the old man turns back and continues walking. Jathia remains motionless for TWO BEATS and then breaks into a fast walk to catch up.

JATHIA

Umm... Those that do... umm... find their way to the other place. Do we see them again?

OLD MAN

Only in our dreams. Only when we aren't looking for them.

JATHIA

Is going there like dying?

OLD MAN

Only in the sense that you leave loved ones. Now, what has caused this to come up?

JATHIA

(scuffs at the ground with his foot)

Nothing really.

(walks in silents for another few steps)

Do they meet the creator when they...

OLD MAN

Only way is to pass beyond this world, this universe, and enter into the spiritual world.

CUT TO

INT. STAIRCASE

Jathia pauses again as he stares down at the floor, and the man takes a few steps farther up before turning to face Jathia.

JATHIA

Will it hurt?

MAN

Growing beyond one's self is always painful, but becoming stagnate can be just as dire.

JATHIA

I think I'm ready.

(looking up to see the door right behind the man)

MAN

You are ready to step beyond. If you are ready to evolve is a matter I can't speak to. This door is for you, and you alone. You will not walk in other's path and no one will walk in yours. Once used it will never open again.

CUT TO a behind the shoulder shot of the man looking down at Jathia. There are only ten steps visible to the main floor.

MAN

You still have two choices, and the final decision is yours.

Jathia watches as the man fades out of view leaving Jathia alone to stare at the door. He reaches out and touches the door.

CUT TO a shot from the bottom of the staircase looking up. He grasps the knob, gives it a turn, and pushes the door open. Inky blackness awaits inside.

CROSS FADE to

EXT. TOWN SQUARE

where Jathia, at the age of thirteen, is being restrained by the old man. As the young woman in a simple peasant dress is standing in the middle of an unruly mob.

MOB MALE 1

She's destroying our way of life and she is a disruptive influence.  
Kill her.

JATHIA

(struggles to break free)

No! Leave her alone.

MOB MALE2

Leave her to corrupt others as she has corrupted you? She needs to be made an example of. What she is doing is immoral, unholy...

Other mob members break in and start an uproar with their comments.

YOUNG WOMAN

Jathia it's time. I've stayed here as long as I can. I've stayed with you as long as I can. I told you there would come a time you wouldn't be able to follow me.

JATHIA

I want to go with you.

YOUNG WOMAN

(smiles weakly)

I told you already, silly boy.

The young woman starts to glow and become transparent.

JATHIA

I promised. I will find a way. I...

Crowd starts to close in on the young woman as Jathia breaks free of the old man, and he rushes forward only to find nothing but empty space where she stood. He falls to his knees.

JATHIA

(whispers)

I swore I would. Even if I must give up my soul in exchange to follow you, Mahan. I will gladly wager it.

CUT TO

EXT. OUT IN THE FIELD

where the old man rocks on his feet singing softly to himself. He looks up as he sees the door shut to the two-story building.

OLD MAN

It's over.

The old man looks skyward as the camera PANS up into the darkening sky.

MAN

(voice over)

Some progress even when they are not ready. Those that do risk it all on something they can't understand.