

The Inaudible Crimes of Jasper Pidgeon

by
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(fourth draft)

AN EAR.

TITLE: THE INAUDIBLE CRIMES OF JASPER PIDGEON

INT. OFFICE - DAY

The ear belongs to JASPER PIDGEON (30), polished for a days work. He stands behind a nice looking desk, staring down motionless at something. He is not waiting on anything, he is simply terrified. Something on the floor has taken the life right out him.

Something catches his eye and he glances up.

Outside his office made of glass, Jasper sees A YOUNG WOMAN quickly walking away pretending she wasn't gawking a moment earlier, certainly pretending not to have seen what she did.

Jasper returns to reality, and the great uncertainty on his floor. The phone. Jasper reaches for it.

EXT. ISLAND COTTAGE - DAY

WILLIAM CROFT (50) relaxes on his favorite chair in the back porch. A phone begins to ring directly to his left, but he does not answer it. He doesn't even seem to realize it's sounding-off. Chirp - Chirp - Chirp.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jasper is alarmed that no one picked up. His frighten state slowly returns, swelling within him.

EXT. COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

William smiles in the opposite direction as the mobile begins to ring again and MILLIE PIDGEON CROFT (40) stomps over in her well-worn wellies and chorded wool sweater. Seeing Millie mildly infuriated and winded, William becomes rustled and confused.

MILLIE

Pick it up, William! Good grief.

Millie finally arrives at the phone and picks it up.

WILLIAM

(innocently)

Who are you wanting to call in such a hurry?

Millie starts pressing the connection button like a telegram.

MILLIE
Unknown number.

WILLIAM
Is it broken?

Millie sets down the phone and exhales her frustration. Then the phone rings again.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jasper, already shocked, is on the phone when his eyes open up.

JASPER
Millie? Millie!
(beat)
Millie. It's me.
(pause)
I'm doing terribly. I need to talk to you. Everything's gone wrong. A building's fallen down.

CUT TO:

EXT. COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Millie holds the phone up close to her face. She relates intimately.

MILLIE
Oh my God. Is everyone alright? Are you hurt?
(beat)
Thank heavens.
(long pause)
Of course. Of course. But what do you mean 'hide'? Jasper? Are you in trouble? Jasper?...

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jasper looks out his window.

JASPER
I don't know yet, Millie. I just need somewhere else to go. Peace and quiet.

Below Jasper London streets beep and blur. Police sirens are heard in the distance.

EXT. COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

William squints up at his partner.

MILLIE (O.S.)
Okay, Jasper. We'll be here. Bye.

Millie sets down the phone.

WILLIAM
Was it someone asking for me?

MILLIE
What are we going to do with you?

William looks up and sees some exasperated eyes.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
That was my brother.

WILLIAM
(very long pause)
You're brother!

MILLIE
I think he's in some kind of trouble.
(thinking)
He says a building's fallen down.

William thinks for a moment then shakes his head.

WILLIAM
Didn't catch that one.

MILLIE
(big and wide)
He'll be here just tomorrow! Okay?

WILLIAM
Tomorrow? Tomorrow!

Millie kisses William and walks away, against the Scottish coast line.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
What's happening tomorrow?

A PHOTO

INT. OFFICE - DAY

The photo of Jasper is passed across a business desk.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
 Jasper Pidgeon. Disappeared yesterday.

A POLICE DETECTIVE (40) with visible cunning and a hat, picks it up. He speaks to the anonymous voice

POLICE DETECTIVE
 Pigeon, eh? Like the bird, huh? You don't say. *Columbiformes*. I used to be a bit of a Ornithologist, you know? Should come in handy.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
 It has a 'D' in it.

The same hand that passed the photo now spells the name on the back of the picture and hands it back. The Detective looks back seriously.

DETECTIVE
 Han-dee. I see. Of course. Well...
 (he pockets the photo)
 Right, I'm off.

EXT. FERRY - DAY

Jasper's smart looking shoes hang against the rail as we see the rocky shores of the Outer Hebrides pass by the passenger ferry.

EXT. FIELDS - CONTINUOUS

Millie walks beside some of her sheep. She wears a nice modern rain jacket and carries a walking staff.

She comes across a small, dilapidated work table in the middle of the field.

MILLIE
 Shit!

As she jostles the table, hopelessly, Millie sees:

A LAMB

From the middle of the field, the little fluffy thing 'Ba's at Millie.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
 Where'd you take the board I put here?
 Where is it? Don't act so innocent.
 You're so good at that.
 (to herself)
 You must know something.
 (back to the creature)
 (MORE)

MILLIE (CONT'D)

I'll eat you tonight if you don't tell me where it is. Think I'm bluffing?

(back to herself)

So what if I am? You can't hear what I'm saying anyway. You're just like William.

(pause)

Jasper's coming up today. He'll fix it for us. He'll fix your mess. You'll see.

EXT. FARM GATE - DAY

It swings open and we see a well dressed Jasper, wearing an ivy cap and carrying a hastily-packed suitcase, his belongings sticking out the closed sides. He looks dead tired.

His smart-looking shoes await a minefield of sheep's dung.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Jasper has walked into his sister's home.

JASPER

Millie?...Millie?...William?

Jasper sees William in his chair watching a film.

JASPER (CONT'D)

Ah... William.

(waiting for a reply)

William?

William casually looks in Jaspers direction and is caught by surprise.

WILLIAM

AH!!!

Jasper looks behind him to see the problem, when Millie walks in from the back door.

MILLIE

Jasper!!!

JASPER

What's going on?

Millie hugs Jasper, who is busy looking confused at William.

WILLIAM

Oh, hello, Jasper. It's good to see you.

MILLIE
William's gone deaf.

JASPER
Deaf?

WILLIAM
(smiles)
What?

Millie nods her head.

JASPER
How did this happen?

Millie shrugs.

WILLIAM
Jasper, I've gone deaf. Can you
believe it?

JASPER
How awful.
(turning to Millie)
I'm so sorry.

MILLIE
It's just some sense, Jasper. You look
terrible. Sit down.

WILLIAM
What brings you all the way up here,
eh? We haven't seen you for
nearly...hm...

JASPER
I've decided to make the world a safer
place, William. I've left my job.
That's a big start.

WILLIAM (O.S.)
...must have been...two years now.

MILLIE
He's just pretending to understand
you.

JASPER
I forgot. They always looked good,
Millie. But they can fall down any
second.

MILLIE
Are you in some kind of trouble?

JASPER

Probably. I want to be a sheep farmer.
Like you and William.

MILLIE

What about architecture?

JASPER

The buildings don't stand up, Millie.

MILLIE

What building Jasper? I haven't heard
anything about a building in London
that's -

JASPER

It's not a real building. It's worse.
It was a model building.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - BEFORE

A scaled model building collapses. Jasper looks on,
horrified.

BACK TO:

INT. COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Millie looks distraught from this new information.

WILLIAM

So, what should we do to celebrate?

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

On a motorbike, the Police Officer speeds across the
highway. He smiles in a treacherous way.

EXT: COAST - DAY

Jasper walks out in the rocks. He looks uncomfortable.

As the tide come in, Jasper runs away, then approaches
the sea more when the water rushes out. He exhausts
himself doing this.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Millie's washing dishes by hand as Jasper walk in, exhausted.

MILLIE

Good morning.

JASPER

That sea's trying to take off with my shoes.

MILLIE

Did you have your hat on when you went out this morning?

Jasper thinks then grabs his head.

CUT TO:

EXT. COAST - DAY

Jasper marches out to the shore.

His hat is not there.

Jasper fumes, picks up a rock and throws it into the ocean, but manages to hit the rocks instead. He throws another rock against a large boulder on the beach. He throws another, and another, until...

One of the rocks ricochets off the boulder and hits Jasper square in the head.

Jasper is knocked flat on his back, his head hitting the rocks. He sees stars.

Jasper pushes himself to sitting position, where he places his hand upon the gash in his head. There is a considerable amount of blood.

As he puts his hat back on, Jasper notices a meticulously constructed mound of rocks - about a meter in height - appears behind him. This is no ordinary pile of rocks.

He walks away. But the piles of rocks follows him. He throws his hat at them.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Jasper sits at the kitchen table with a large WWI-like bandage tied around his head.

JASPER

Do you have any ghosts on this island?

Millie laughs, unsure if it is a joke:

MILLIE

What?

JASPER

Ghosts?

MILLIE

They're sheep.

(pours tea)

That rock hit you harder than I thought.

JASPER

No. It's just that...there are some rocks and...well, they're making fun of me.

Millie doesn't understand.

WILLIAM

Jasper, do you want to watch a film that's just arrived in the post?

(looks at Jasper)

You look like you've seen a ghost.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

William is smiling at the television screen. Millie and Jasper sit together.

MILLIE

They make him feel better.

Jasper gazes wearily at the screen and sees slapstick routines where buildings fall down, and simple structures are easily crushed by their user's tomfoolery.

JASPER

This isn't funny.

MILLIE

I need some help with a worktable.

(turning to William)

Some of us do actually work around here.

(turning back)

Out in the fields. The sheep keep unhinging the thing. It's very old you know. I can't get any work done.

JASPER
Can't William fix it?

MILLIE
No. He's stopped working.

JASPER
Why?

MILLIE
Well...He can't hear anything.

Jasper looks very confused as William bursts a seam laughing at the screen.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
You wanted to be a sheep farmer.

Jasper smiles, resigned.

EXT. FERRY - EVENING

The Police Detective is now on the ferry, approaching the island.

EXT. FIELDS

Millie and Jasper stand in a wind and look down at the twisted table. Jasper moves it up and doubt with regret and suspicion.

MILLIE
We've got some spare wood back at the house. What do you think?

JASPER
Um...?

Jasper shivers. He looks behind him and the pile of rocks has returned. Millie looks at what her little brother is looking at and sees nothing.

Jasper leaves Millie by herself.

INT. BATHROOM

Millie is brushing her teeth in her night gown when she notices something approaching her. She turns suddenly:

MILLIE
AH!!!

Jasper looks and her.

JASPER
I scared you.

Millie can see that Jasper is distraught at his realization.

MILLIE
Not really.

JASPER
Did you think I would hurt you?

MILLIE
No. You forget I frighten easily.

Jasper holds up a piece of paper with a design on it.

JASPER
It's another table.

MILLIE
Oh.

INSERT: PAPER DESIGN

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COAST

Jasper and William stand looking at the sea. Jasper turns to William.

JASPER
Have you seen a hat out here? I dropped it yesterday.

WILLIAM
Can't say I enjoy being deaf. I can not hear anything. Not even...a hmm sound.

JASPER
Yeah, well...

WILLIAM
It's very confusing to see the waves turn over and not hear it. And it's very strange to stand next to someone talking to you and not know what they've said.

JASPER
Well if you find my hat, just tell me. I can still hear fine.

William eyes squint suddenly, fixed on something:

WILLIAM

What on earth is that?

Jasper's ugly hat surfs on the water.

Jasper jumps in the waves, and William looks on, impressed. He's gets in waist deep, until:

JASPER

AH!!!

He goes down in pain.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Millie stands looking at Jasper.

MILLIE

You're falling apart, Jasper.

Jasper seems as though he's doing alright for himself. Jasper has a bandage on his foot. He notices Millie looking in disbelief at his new bandage.

JASPER

All of this peace and quiet is a just goddamned nightmare.

EXT. FIELDS - DAY

Millie and Jasper stand in front a brand new table. It look far less complicated than any structure we've seen thus far. Jasper looks behind him. No rocks.

JASPER

I think I made a mistake.

MILLIE

Really? I think it looks great. Thank you.

Millie hugs Jasper.

JASPER

Maybe I should head back down south.

MILLIE

Well, you can hide out here as long as you need to.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Jasper, without the cover of his hat, leaves out the front door with his expensive shoes and hastily-packed suitcase.

Millie and William wave goodbye.

Jasper looks out at the road ahead and sees the Detective.

The Detective looks down at the photo of Jasper, and looks back up to meet Jasper's eye.

Jasper looks wearily at Millie. Millie looks down the road. Nothing is there. She smiles at her younger brother.

MILLIE

Goodbye, Jasper.

Millie and William shut the door, waving still. Jasper swallows hard.

EXT. ROAD - A LITTLE LATER

Jasper walks up to the Detective, very nervously, shaking somewhat. The detective holds out the picture.

DETECTIVE

Is this you?

Jasper takes an earnest look.

JASPER

It looks like me. What did he do?

DETECTIVE

(reading)

Pidgeon?

JASPER

Oh. Yes. That's me.

DETECTIVE

Well, your employer just wanted to make sure where you were. Make sure you're alright. You just took off.

(beat)

They were worried about you.

(beat)

You can keep the picture.

The Detective begins wheeling his bike back down the hill he came.

Jasper waits until the detective is out of sight, then throws the picture and then flees down the opposite path.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Millie walks up to the new table. Suddenly, a table leg breaks in two and the table becomes lopsided again.

Millie, after registering this tiny mishap, looks behind her. There's a rock.

She holds the rock in her hand.

She lifts up the lopsided end of the table and places the rock underneath it to hold it in place.

END