

Changes
By
J.E. Clarke

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Janetgoodman@yahoo.com

FADE IN ON:

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

A woman oriented bathroom; stocked with toiletries of every shape and size. Perfumes, hair widgets, makeup.

CLARE (51) leans into the mirror.

Dressed in a sleeveless camisole, she stares at her reflection. Oh, she's still attractive. But her face betrays signs of age.

She tilts her head side to side. Jowls wiggle. Clare squints, dismayed.

Sudden POUNDING on the door. Clare jumps.

CLARE

Just a minute. I'm in here!

She pulls skin on her cheeks back, towards her ears. Instant facelift! Clare smiles.

Another WHOMP on the door. A plaintive teen girl's voice whines through wood.

RACHEL (O.S.)

Mooooooooom! You've been in there 20 minutes. Are you constipated? I gotta go!

Clare lets go of her face. Skin droops. She sighs.

CLARE

Rachel, *darling*. I told you not to drink so much Pepsi. A two liter in one morning? If you have to pee, that's your fault!

Clare grabs a bottle of foundation, slathers it on. Starts with eyeshadow next...

But hesitates when she spies wiggle in her upper arms. She pokes flab with an index finger.

CLARE

Old lady chicken wings? I'm only 51. For christ-sake!

Another knock from Rachel. Filled with sudden volcanic fury, Clare swings towards the door. Growls.

CLARE

Rachel Dunlap, stop this instant. My needs matter now. Yours don't!

RACHEL (O.S.)

...excuse me? Privileged much?

CLARE

If you have to pee that bad, we've got a backyard.

RACHEL (O.S.)

Mom, that's soooo gross.

CLARE

No, it's not. We have a fence!

Awkward silence from Rachel. Followed by a cell phone dial. Someone picks up. Rachel groans.

RACHEL (O.S.)

Tanisha? Can I come over and use your bathroom?

(beat)

Yeah. Now. Mom's barricaded in ours. She's acting weird again.

(whispers)

I think she's going through "the change."

Unseen Rachel stomps off. Clare starts to call after her, but stops. Tears of regret glimmer in half-mascara'ed eyes.

INT. SUPERMARKET - AFTERNOON

Clare navigates a rusty cart through the narrow aisle.

A box of cookies beckon. Clare reaches on tiptoes for them. Reconsiders and grabs Wheat Thins instead.

Middle aged minions MAUDE and ELISE (50s) follow. Maude elbows her hungry friend:

MAUDE

Admit it, girl. Chocolate chips are calling. Don't fight it. Embrace carby, gooey sin!

CLARE

No, my diet starts today.

ELISE

The diet you started last year? Again?

MAUDE

Last year - what about the one she began last month? You know, after watching that Youtube "juicing" video.

CLARE

Guys, stop! I ran into... pitfalls with both. You know; emotional eating and all.

Clare's face falls. And fills with self-loathing.

CLARE

Today in the bathroom, I noticed -

ELISE

(suddenly attentive)

What?

CLARE

My upper arms. They just... flopped.

MAUDE

Whatever. Don't beat yourself up for *eating*, honey. No humanly woman can resist that primal urge. What matters is finding a diet that satisfies your needs, deep down.

Maude snatches BEEF-JERKY off the shelves.

MAUDE

Mmmmmmm, look. Yummy Keto snacks. Eat all you desire, but lose pounds!

Clare shoves her cart towards the "coffee" section.

CLARE

All the meat I want? Yuck. No thanks.

She reaches for espresso. Swerves. Grabs decaf instead.

ELISE

Giving up Starbucks? Isn't it a tad early for Lent?

CLARE

I... I've been kind of "snappish", too. I'm hoping decaf might smooth the edge.

Elise and Maude exchange world-wise looks.

ELISE

Snappish?

MAUDE

How *exactly*? Give us an example.

CLARE

Today, I screamed at Rachel. Not in a parental way. The crazy kind.

MAUDE

Bless your heart. And hers. What did Rachel do?

CLARE

Nothing! It was my fault. I was hogging the bathroom. All Rachel wanted to do was pee! All of a sudden, I went ballistic!

Clare sobs. Elisa and Maude close in for a group hug. In the center, distraught Clare howls.

CLARE

Am I a bad mother?!?

ELISE

Never in a million years! Rachel's a teen. That breed is notoriously hard to handle properly. And you? Well, you're...

CLARE

(beat)

I'm what?

ELISE

No offense. Just - older?

Maude dabs Clare's eyes with a tissue from her purse.

MAUDE

A wonderful single mother, raising a late-in-life miracle child. As a teen, Rachel's going through changes. You too, obviously. It's your time.

(chuckles)

Give nature a few more months, and the hormones flying in that house will resemble a war zone, for sure!

ELISE

Which means... maybe you *should* cut back on the jet fuel. Switch to water. Even with just that one bathroom, you've got to hydrate well!

Elise trots over the bottled water, grabs a FIVE GALLON JUG. Despite her thin frame, she lifts it effortlessly!

ELISE
Enough talk show gossip. Come on, gals.
Let's check out and head for home!

CLARE
Elise - don't you want a cart for that?

ELISE
Nah. I've been hitting the gym. Compared
50 pound kettlebell swings, this is fine.

Elise cradles the five gallon, eyes Clare up and down.

ELISE
If you're serious about that diet, come
pump iron with me. I could use a workout
partner now.

INT. BATHROOM - EVENING

Another grooming session. This time, the door's ajar.

Dressed in gym clothes, Clare's again riveted to the
mirror.

RACHEL (16) wanders by - all teen style and defiant
attitude. She throws the stink eye at Clare, keeps going.

Clare flicks on the mirror's lights. Her magnified
reflection reveals:

THICK DARK HAIRS on her chin.

Clare grabs tweezers, plucks as fast as she can. A moment
of fearful suspicion gives her pause.

She gingerly touches the collar of her t-shirt. Pulling
it open, she blinks down at her cleavage. GULPS.

CLARE
Oh, fuck sticks. There, too?

Movement nearby. Clare jumps. In the doorway, an amused
Rachel rolls her eyes.

RACHEL
Karma.

Snickering, the teen walks off.

INT. GYM EVENING

Clare performs hesitant bicep curls with five pound dumbbells. Every inch of her screams "lame."

On the next bench, an energetic Elise cranks out skull crushers. For a middle aged chick, she's a dynamo.

ELISE

So you found a few hairs? Big whoop!

CLARE

(whispers)

It's like they sprung up overnight! And it wasn't just my chin. There were more. On my chest, too!

ELISE

(snorts)

So what? That's what Nair is for. You should see my upper thigh!

A nearby STEROID PUMPED BODYBUILDER stops his military presses. Stares. Elise notices his reaction. Howls.

ELISE

Men. They think they're so rugged. Let one of *them* bleed out of their dick for a week. One drop, and they'd pass out!

Clare chews her lip. Reps some more.

CLARE

It's been eight months since I last... well, you know. But I can't be pregnant.

ELISE

Are you totally sure?

CLARE

You think I have time to date while raising Rachel? So -

Hearing Clare, the bodybuilder shudders. Ambles off.

Elise drops her bar to the rubber floor. THUD. Grabbing 25lb dumbbells off the rack, she extends them to Clare.

ELISE

So... that means you've reached the next stage of your storied life. Embrace it, Clare. Chrome and all!

Clare stares at the dumbbells.

CLARE
Twenty-five pounds? Each? You're kidding!

ELISE
Come on, Clare. No limits.
(leans close and whispers)
Just a few reps. *They* won't bite.

Tentatively, Clare tries. And - shockingly - pulls one rep off. Smiling, she duplicates the feat with her other arm. Triumph floods her face.

CLARE
This is fun!

START MONTAGE

Many exercises follow.

A SUPER shows passing time, too. FOUR MONTHS.

Clare grows bolder, stronger. Chows down on beef jerky between sets.

The Roided Bodybuilder hogs a bench. Clare snarls, grabs his Olympic bar.

The jock jumps up - backs away, shocked. Clare tosses metal and plates aside. That weight's easy now, too!

END MONTAGE

INT. BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

A sweaty Clare enters. Looking around to confirm privacy, she steps on a scale. Weigh-in time!

As she looks down, her face falls.

CLARE
Gained ten pounds? No way. Impossible!

Desperate, she pulls MEASURING TAPE from the cabinet. Fingers tremble as she wraps it around her waist.

CLARE
Don't panic, Clare. Remember what Elise told you. Muscle weighs more than fat. Check your measurements. You'll be fine!

Clare reads the tape. Horror fills her eyes.

CLARE
Five extra inches? With Keto, I'm
supposed to shred!

Snarling, Clare punches the mirror. CRACK.

Rachel peeks into the bathroom. Teen defiance melted,
she's wide eyed.

RACHEL
Mom, you ok in there?

Clare wheels on her daughter.

CLARE
Not with you in my face. Get out!!

Rachel scampers off, terrified.

Consumed with sudden guilt, Clare stares at the blood on
her knuckles.

CLARE
What have I become?

Sniffs the blood. Licks it. Shudders.

CLARE
Huh. That tastes... good!

INT. MAUDE'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

More old lady furnishings. Wallpaper. Frilly curtains.

A plate of razor thin cuts of STEAK marinate on the
coffee table. BOX WINE at its side.

On a plastic covered sofa, Maude and Elise click glasses.

MAUDE
To a marvelous meal for the ages?

ELISE
And the company of old friends, too!
(chuckles)
Not too old, of course!

Panicked KNOCKS at the front door. Maude grimaces.

MAUDE
Political canvassers. Now?

ELISE
Or Jehovah's Witnesses? Are you expecting
more guests, Maude?

MAUDE
No. Just the one. Plus you.

Maude wanders over to the door, flings it open.

MAUDE
If you're selling -

Clare stands on the porch. Wild eyed. Wild-haired, too.
Before either friend can react, she storms inside.

And paces the living room.

ELISE
Honey, settle down. What's the matter?

CLARE
Everything! I yelled at Rachel again.

Maude glances towards the kitchen. Sighs.

MAUDE
More teen troubles. Just wonderful.

CLARE
No. More "Me" troubles. They don't stop!

ELISE
You looked so... happy and empowered at
the gym. What happened now?

CLARE
(sobs)
I found MORE hairs. Along my jaw. Both
sides.

Clare extends her neck. Elise peeks. Smiles.

ELISE
Sweetie, you're blowing this all out of
proportion. In this light, that's a
pretty color. Soft.

CLARE
(sniffles)
I've been working out constantly. No
cheating. No days off. But I weigh more
than I did before. And the fat's getting
worse!

MAUDE

Don't be silly.

CLARE

Look!

Hiking up her shirt, Clare flashes - LOVE HANDLES.

MAUDE

Darling, don't body shame yourself.
Things are just redistributing, is all.

Spotting the steak, Clare lunges. Out of control, she grabs handfuls, stuffs her face. Blood drips down her chin to the floor. Maude frowns at blossoming rug stains.

MAUDE

Great. Oxy-Clean it is, I guess.
(to Clare)
Sweetie, I'm not sure how to put this question delicately -

ELISE

How long's it been since your last...
well, you know?

CLARE

(mouth full, muffled)
A year now. Almost to the day, in fact.

ELISE

That's it! You're iron deprived. And -

Maude and Elise exchange looks.

MAUDE

It's time.

The two circle their confused friend. Almost like a moving group hug carousel. Clare's world spins.

Maude and Elise seem a blur of old friend comfort, and smiling, white teeth. Or dentures. Who really knows?

Elise caresses Clare's shoulder, keeps circling.

ELISE

Your body's changing. Bottom line, that's good.

CLARE

I don't wanna get old!
(stares at blood on her
hands)
Or go nuts!

MAUDE

Sweetie, Menopause... isn't exactly what
it's advertised to be.

CLARE

No shit, Sherlock!

ELISE

Honey, there are a few "inner circle"
secrets it's time you knew.

MAUDE

About that weight you've been piling on?

CLARE

(winces)
Now who's body shaming who?

MAUDE

No shame, dear. That's just your bones
gaining density. Not losing it, like
those calcium pill hawkers - and Youtube
"juicers" - claim.

ELISE

And all that extra fat? Your waist is
just where it grows... at first. You'll
be shifting it elsewhere, soon enough!

The two keep moving, faces morph. Bones CRACK and shift
into... WEREWOLVES!

Werewolf Elisa and Maude stop circling. Smile at a
horrified, frozen Clare.

ELISE

You look drained, my dear. Would you like
some wine to smooth your nerves?

MAUDE

I guess going decaf wasn't enough, after
all!

CLARE

(gulps)
You're both...

ELISE
Werewolves. As you'll soon be, too.

MAUDE
(laughs)
All those fairy tales, with women of a
"certain age" being witches? Bah! Time to
run wild and enjoy your life. Welcome to
the pack, Clare!

Clare DOES run.

For the exit. But as she reaches for the doorknob, she
realizes...

Her hands have sprouted into TALONS!

She shrieks. Which morphs into a tortured howl.

In a flash, Elise and Maude flank their BFF.

ELISE
Clare, don't take the news so hard.

Maude holds out a claw, leads Clare towards the kitchen.

MAUDE
We were about to enjoy dinner. Greedy you
gobbled up our appetizer.

ELISE
But there's more to come. Relax. Consider
this your cheat day. We'll fill you up,
fill you in. We'll just eat. And talk.

Stepping into...

INT. KITCHEN

...a slightly fuzzier Clare takes one look and screams.

At the sight of the bodybuilder from the gym. He's tied
up on the floor, duct tape across his mouth. Bug-eyed.

CLARE
That's?

MAUDE
Our meal. Enough for three, but no left
overs.

Elisa turns to Clare, smiles with dainty, sharp fangs.

ELISE

Darling, don't turn away. This is a right
of passage. Your first meal as a were.
Watch how this works. And learn.

Elise and Maude dive on their victim. The bodybuilder
screams.

Clare watches, transfixed. The hair on her cheeks grows.

FINAL FADE OUT: