

TIME AND AGAIN

Written by

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Based on his musical

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FADE IN:

INT. ATTIC BEDROOM - NIGHT

1936. A sad, haunting melody is being played quietly on a flute by LUKE, (18) wearing a dressing gown. He stands looking out of a small window, his tear stained face reflected in the black of night beyond the glass.

He stops playing and swallows hard, turns slowly and looks at two beds, one has messed up sheets, the other is unmade. Across the floor are scattered two public school uniforms, underwear included.

Luke is crying as he puts the flute down.

EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - NIGHT

Luke walks in the shadows of old school buildings; creeper covered stone walls, Gothic windows. From somewhere inside comes the sound of a radio quietly playing a Cole Porter number.

Luke passes a classic, 1936 car, and stops by part of the building that shows the unmistakable signs of a recent fire. Blackened window frames, scorch marks on the wall above. He glances at it and walks on in silence.

EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

A night bird screeches, clouds scud across the moon, Luke walks away from the building and out across a lawn. Ahead of him is a lake.

EXT. SCHOOL LAKE - CONTINUOUS

Luke stands on the edge of the lake and stares ahead. He slips the dressing gown from his shoulders and walks calmly into the water.

But he doesn't stop to swim, he keeps on walking until his head disappears beneath the black water. Bubbles break the surface. The water calms. Nothing moves.

A bell tolls once.

EXT. SCHOOL LAKE - DAY

1996. A fit and handsome public schoolboy, JAMES (18), stands on a jetty that wasn't there just now. His blazer lies on the jetty. He looks down into the lake thoughtfully, then crouches down and runs his fingers through the water.

The bell starts to chime the hour. James stands, puts on his blazer and hurries towards the buildings.

EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

As James crosses the lawn he sees and picks up a cricket ball. He bowls it perfectly as he hurries on.

EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

James passes the same creeper covered walls, he passes a Lexus parked outside the building that was previously burned; long since repaired. From somewhere inside comes the sound of Radio One playing a 1996 chart hit.

INT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

As James comes in, a tall, broad, powerful boy, BALLAD (18) is thundering down the stairs. He sees James and leaps on him playfully, nearly knocking him over.

BALLAD

Can you believe it, James? The last one.

JAMES

Ever.

They hurry down the hall.

INT. CORRIDOOR - CONTINUOUS

James and Ballard walk briskly along the corridor where a bespectacled, bookish looking boy, BJ (18) is meandering along reading 'The Time Machine.' James and Ballard grab him under the arms and pull him along.

BALLAD

Don't want to be late for Wiley's last rant.

BJ

Who's going to expel us now?

BALLAD

He'd still slipper us for being
late, even on our last day.

BJ

Pervert.

They are joined by a rather plain looking girl, with
pigtails, also in school uniform, LUCY (18).

LUCY

'Last day.' That's got a wonderful
ring to it.

A second girl better looking, sexy, with sweet but powerful
features, SOPHIE (18), comes out from a room carrying books
and joins what now looks like a gang on the march.

SOPHIE

Can't believe these were supposed
to be the best years of our lives.

Ballad makes a grab for Lucy.

BALLAD

Tonight could be the best night of
your life Lucy.

LUCY

Hands off.

SOPHIE

Ghost stories, dope and booze in
the attic?

BALLAD

Midnight. Don't be late.

SOPHIE

Maybe some other treats, eh Ben?

Sophie leers at BJ who moves away. The group round a
corner...

INT. CLOISTERS - CONTINUOUS

... into the cloisters where a silent procession of younger
students walks towards large doors. A MASTER watches them. He
suddenly grabs one BOY and pulls him out of the line by the
hair above his ear. The others shuffle on, heads down. The
master straightens the boy's tie, then cuffs him around the
head, hard, and pushes him back into the line.

The group pass the master, the boys touching their forelocks, the girls nodding, as they do.

Two other boys are lounging outside the assembly hall as the group approaches. Dick (18), has a 'rugby player' build, strong and chunky, while Mark (18), is mousey, skinny and nervously looking at his watch.

Sophie and Dick slap a high five and head straight into the hall.

MARK

Hi James. I was waiting for you.

BALLAD

Get over him will you?

JAMES

This is it then. Last assembly.
Last lesson, last day...

LUCY

No more Latin, no more French...

BALLAD

No more sitting on the old school
bench.

Mark taps his blazer, he has something under it.

MARK

And your last chance.

JAMES

You stole it?

MARK

Good lord no. That's your job.

The master and younger students arrive.

MASTER #1

Mister Allen, Mister Ballard, and
the usual suspects loitering. Some
things never change.

Everyone heads into the hall.

INT. SCHOOL ASSEMBLY HALL - DAY

The hall speaks of old traditions, past achievements, religion and learning. There are portraits, flags, WWI and WWII roll lists on the walls between stained glass windows.

The rows are filled with school children of all ages, obediently facing the platform, identically dressed. James hovers by an old portrait on the wall. The painting is of Luke, dressed in the same school uniform that James and the others now wear; he is 18, he looks sad. Ballard pulls James into his place just as a procession starts: older boys and girls dressed as prefects, and masters in gowns and mortar boards walk to the platform and take up their places. The procession is accompanied by organ music and led by an old, tall and white-haired man, OLD WILEY (78), the headmaster.

Old Wiley waits for his prefects and staff to take their places before he turns to face the assembly and leans on a lectern. He studies the children as if they were vermin.

OLD WILEY

For those who leave us tomorrow, we
send you off as we did your fathers
before you with your school motto
in your hearts: *Lorum cras
historia*. We are tomorrow's
history. And never forget: School
expects. Do your duties. Go into
the world richer for your time
here, disciplined. We will sing
together the old school hymn.

The organ plays. Along James' row, Mark passes a large book - to Dick, to Sophie, Lucy, BJ and finally to Ballard. Checking they are not being seen, Ballard hands it to James who puts it under his jacket.

BALLAD

Now's your chance. If the answer is
anywhere it's going to be in
Wiley's book.

James nods, ducks down and creeps, unnoticed, out of the hall.

INT. CLOISTERS - CONTINUOUS

As the sounds of the school hymn resounds from inside, James furtively sneaks along through the empty cloisters.

SINGING (V.O.)

He comes to guide me, saves me from
my sorrow.