

IMPERMANENCE: THREE STORIES

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Silence. Over the darkness:

TITLE: III - Hazel

FADE IN:

INT. SMALL APARTMENT - NIGHT - 2000

A young man and woman are sitting at a wooden dining table near a dimly lit kitchen. Several notebooks and printed photos are laid out in front of them.

Directly behind them is a small living room with a couch and TV. At the very back is a window showing the cityscape outside.

The two of them are sitting in a tense silence. Both of them seem to be in their late 20s. The woman's name is HAZEL. In front of her is DAVID. They're wearing casual attire.

MEDIUM CLOSE-UP on Hazel. She's staring at David - and also right at us. David remains off-screen.

DAVID (O.S.)
Why didn't you tell me this sooner?

Pause. She stares at the photos, then back up at David.

HAZEL
I wanted to wait a while. Until
we... decided to commit to this.

Longer pause. David stammers slightly as he says:

DAVID (O.S.)
So you'll look exactly the same as
you are right now? No matter how
long--

Hazel nods. David doesn't respond for some time, completely taken aback.

DAVID (O.S.)
... How did - when did this start?

HAZEL
I don't remember. Some point in my
twenties, I just stopped getting
older. That's all I know.

Longer pause.

DAVID (O.S.)
(cautiously)
Do you have... any children? At all?

Hazel shakes her head.

HAZEL
No. I don't intend on having any.
(beat)
Never felt right. Still doesn't.

Another silence as David processes this, too.

DAVID (O.S.)
So, then - how old are you?
Actually?

Hazel hesitates to answer him.

HAZEL
Do you want to know?

Long silence. No response, again.

DAVID (O.S.)
I don't know what to say.

HAZEL
You don't have to say anything.
(beat)
If you still want to stay - even
after everything I've told you - you
can stay. But if you don't want
to... you don't have to.

Hazel tensely awaits his answer.

DAVID (O.S.)
It's just that...
(beat)
Never mind.
(deep inhale)
I can stay. I'll stay.

Beat. Hazel, slightly taken aback, reaches out her arm to him, holding his hand.

HAZEL
David. David, really think about
this. Okay? If you're not
comfortable with any part of this...
just tell me.

Silence. We look back at the two sitting together again.

For a moment, David seems completely lost in thought.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 2046

An old man is lying in a hospital bed. There's a large headband-shaped device attached to his forehead, connected to a few monitors. He's breathing heavily.

The outside view is obscured by the blinds. Green and purple-hued neon lights filter in through the gaps. Unnatural, bassy motors roar in the distance.

Someone knocks on the door. A young woman, guided by a nurse, steps inside and closes the door behind her.

Hazel. As described, she looks exactly the same as before. She walks over to the old man, pulls up a chair from the corner, and sits down beside him, being careful not to disturb him.

A moment later, she leans in towards the old man.

HAZEL
(whispering)
David. Hey.

A much older David (60s) stirs awake, strenuously turning his head to look at her. He smiles weakly.

DAVID
(groggily)
... Hey.

HAZEL
How you doing today? Feeling alright?

DAVID
(sighs)
Not sure. I don't feel any worse, at least.

HAZEL
That's good. You eat well today?

David nods slowly. Awkward silence. He doesn't look Hazel in the eye. She notices.

HAZEL (CONT'D)
Hey. Something wrong?

DAVID
Nothing, I'm just...

Beat. David sighs. Hazel waits.

DAVID

... I don't know. It's just - I've seen people come and go. But you're the only one who's stuck around. Who's going to stick around.

(beat)

I don't know what to make of it.

MEDIUM CLOSE-UP on only Hazel again. She hesitates to respond.

HAZEL

Did you... ever expect that we'd end up this way? When I first told you?

DAVID (O.S.)

(coughing)

Maybe. I guess I had some idea.

She glances down, then back at David, forcing a smile.

HAZEL

I still feel like I haven't thanked you enough. For saying you'd stay with me that day, and... and meaning it. For once.

(long pause)

It's been hard, though, hasn't it?

DAVID (O.S.)

... Yeah. Moving around all the time. Changing IDs. All that stuff.
(beat)

You got any plans? For after... you know. After I'm gone? Because we haven't talked about it - like, really talked about it.

HAZEL

Right. Yeah.

Hazel silently considers it.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

I'm not sure. I guess I've made a habit of... going wherever the world takes me. Maybe I'll stick to that.

DAVID (O.S.)

(lightly)

Sounds about right.

Hazel chuckles lightly. David starts coughing again.

Another pause. He coarsely clears his throat.

DAVID (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I hope someday you meet someone
who's... better at dealing with all
this than I ever was.

HAZEL
Oh, don't say that. Come on.

Pause.

DAVID (O.S.)
Thank you, though. For being
there...

Hazel doesn't say anything; she just nods. She puts her
hand on his shoulder and lays her head beside his.

They stay like this for a long time.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAWN - 2047

Hazel sits silently in front of a small gravestone,
wearing a black dress. Engraved on it is "David Wallace".

There are already a few flowers left behind. Gently, she
places two lilies on his grave.

INT. OLDER APARTMENT - LATER

Hazel, still in her black dress, sits down at a dining
table in a different apartment building, with a notebook
and pen in front of her.

She picks up the pen. Thinks about what to write.

A moment later, she starts jotting down notes. The first
thing she writes on the page - "2047." She hesitates
before continuing:

HAZEL (V.O.)
Went to his gravestone when no one
was around. Just like how he asked.
(beat)
This isn't getting any easier.

EXT. ABANDONED STREETS - EVENING - 2054

Hazel walks down desolate, fog-covered village streets,
wandering aimlessly. Buildings have been abandoned and
obliterated, bombed to the ground.

Hazel gazes at the village's remains, all while stepping through bullet shells scattered on the ground.

EXT. DESERTS - DUSK - 2076

Hazel stands with a young woman in the middle of the desert, watching the sunset with her as a light breeze blows.

HAZEL (V.O.)

2076. She chose to stay.

MEDIUM CLOSE-UP on Hazel again as she glances at the woman beside her, a faint smile on her face.

HAZEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

She seems hesitant. But I feel good about this.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT - 2164

Hazel sits beside the woman - who's aged decades - in a hospital corridor with glossy white walls and a glass ceiling. The woman has an empty, resigned look in her eyes.

Hazel puts her hand on the woman's shoulder. No response.

INT. COLUMBARIUM - DAWN - 2165

Hazel quietly walks inside the halls of an entirely wooden, minimalist columbarium, and patiently searches for a certain niche. Only one or two other people are inside.

She soon finds the niche she's looking for. It's for the woman from the previous two scenes. There are photos of her by her urn inside.

MEDIUM CLOSE-UP - Hazel stares at it wistfully, but expresses nothing outright.

EXT. CABIN - DAWN - 2183

Hazel walks through flower-laden, thick forests, carrying a large bag of things with her. She's wearing boots, gloves, and a grey jacket.

HAZEL (V.O.)

2183. Made a place to stay in the woods. Found the right spot for it.

Far ahead of her, in the middle of an open space, is an incomplete wooden cabin. Visible in the distant sky is the moon, with man-made structures built on it.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT - 2196

Hazel and another woman, who's wearing some kind of military uniform, are sitting at a small dining table in her cabin.

Like with David, Hazel's pulled out old notebooks and photos, this time in greater abundance.

HAZEL (V.O.)
2196. She couldn't stay. She doesn't
have much time left until she
leaves.

MC-U on Hazel again. She looks up forlornly at the woman in front of her (O.S.), and slowly reaches her hand out.

Gently, she takes it. Their hands grasp tightly.

EXT. SHORES - DUSK - 2203

Hazel, wearing a black dress and a translucent veil, stands nearby a crowd of people with similar attire - one of them is holding another monochrome, cylindrical urn, releasing ashes into the sea.

HAZEL (V.O.)
2203. She never made it out.

Pause. She watches them forlornly from a distance.

HAZEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Her family thinks I was an
acquaintance.

EXT. ABANDONED TOWN - DAWN - 2213

Once again, Hazel finds herself walking past a smaller house that's been completely razed to the ground.

Beside it are three dead bodies, sitting side-by-side, leaning on the rubble behind them, lifelessly slumped over with blood-stained bags on their heads. A flag with a crossed, angular emblem hangs above them.

Hazel stands there, terrified by the sight. She can't take her eyes off it.

EXT. TUNDRAS - NIGHT - 2226

Hazel stares up at the star-lit sky, holding a man's hand. Both of them are wearing grey suits for the cold.

HAZEL (V.O.)
2226. He chose to stay.

MC-U on Hazel as the two of them glance at each other. She smiles slightly. It soon fades.

HAZEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I don't think he means it this time.

She turns away, blankly looking back up at the sky.

HAZEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
... They've all become soldiers now.

EXT. HOUSE - MORNING - 2230

Hazel (still in MC-U) waits quietly at the front entrance of a small, isolated, brutalist house.

The man from the previous scene, wearing a military uniform and carrying a small case, leaves the house. He passes by Hazel without so much as a glance. The crossed, angular emblem from earlier is on one of his shoulder pads.

Moments later, something vibrates loudly off-screen before humming away into the distance. The gust that emerges blows sand and dust in Hazel's face, forcing her to turn away.

As the sound disappears, Hazel walks away from the house, her expression resolute:

HAZEL (V.O.)
2230. I can't do this anymore.

EXT. CABIN - AFTERNOON - 2231

Hazel walks through the woods and approaches her cabin from decades ago.

The open space around the cabin is now filled with large trees. Several large vines have grown right up the walls - moss is emerging from cracks in the wood.

She walks over to the front door and steps inside.

INT. CABIN - SAME

Everything inside is covered in leaves and other kinds of growth, from the dining table in front of her to the bed far at the back.

Hazel walks over to a hole in the floor - inside it is a kind of nest with a family of squirrel-rabbit hybrids.

Hazel stares at them for a while, not quite sure what to do with them. They instantly dash out of the cabin.

MOMENTS LATER

Right outside the cabin, Hazel's dug a hole in the ground.

She's brought with her a large box containing dozens of notebooks, where she's also placed the photos and memorabilia from earlier scenes. The photos are all of men and women she's loved before - many with her in them, many without.

HAZEL (V.O.)

2231.

Before she does anything with the box, she looks through a notebook one last time, flipping through its pages. On the inside of the notebook's front cover is where her name is written in cursive.

HAZEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

This is my final record.

Gently, she closes it and sets it back inside the box. She pushes the box into the hole, and buries it slowly.

Without looking back, she leaves it all behind.

CUT TO BLACK.**EXT. EMPTY FIELDS - DUSK - 2454****SUPER: 223 years later**

Hazel sits alone in the middle of a vast plain filled with bizarrely shaped crops, completely apart from the rest of the world. The skies are littered with stars and blinking guide lights from various spacecraft.

Sitting completely still, she takes a deep breath. Behind her is a forest, with flowers growing on trees.

LATER - FORESTS