

TIME TO GO

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INT. BEDROOM. FIRST LIGHT.

A suburban bedroom, a man, somewhere in his late 30s, has just woken up. He looks over at the 30-something woman lying with him. Her eyes are closed. Carefully, quietly, he lifts the covers, sets his feet down on the floor without a sound. In the bed, the woman wakes. She watches the man finish pulling up a pair of white y-fronts. He on pulls a starched white vest, tucks it into his pants. As he turns, she giggles at the sight of him. Looking down, he realises he looks like he's forgotten his PE kit and had to make do.

CUT TO

A title card: 'On The Virtues of Calisthenics for a Healthy Constitution'

CUT TO

A 60s public information film, a jaunty soundtrack plays. The man strikes a pose: a fairground weightlifter, puffing out his cheeks and bowing his legs. He segues into a couple of star jumps, then strikes up a Bruce bonus. From there, a burst of running on the spot. His tummy sags a little, his legs are bandy. He's an ordinary man, nothing wrong with that

CUT TO:

Normal screen. Laughing, the woman sits up, pulls the sheets around her, as if it's very cold out there. The man laughs as he pulls on his jeans, buttons his shirt. He sits on the edge of the bed. He holds out his hand and she slides a gold ring onto the third finger of his left hand

FREEZE FRAME

Their hands outstretched. On the screen, a fat white circle is drawn around his ring, the words "Wedding Ring" appear. An arrow trails across the screen. A white circle around her finger... The drawing stops. She doesn't have a ring to match

NORMAL TIME

On the bed, she curls into him, like a cat seeking warmth.

MAN

Happy Valentine's day

He kisses her on the lips - a light brush, an affectionate affectation - before getting up

MAN

Time to go...

She looks like she wants him to stay. But he goes anyway. We sit with her a moment as she pulls her sheet tighter to her

WOMAN (V.O.)

I need to walk away now

EXT. STREET. EARLY MORNING

Through the window, we see the man on the street. He turns, his hand in a wave. He stops, there's no one there.

WOMAN (V.O.)

Walk away before my knees buckle  
and I fall...

He goes to walk off. Hesitates. Hovers. Turns back

INT. BEDROOM. MORNING.

Tucked behind the curtain, phone in hand, the woman watches

WOMAN (V.O.)

Fall and scrape my hands. Before  
gravel enters the wounds and makes  
its way up to my heart

EXT. STREET. MORNING

The man's phone rings. He looks at the screen, a note of hope chiming on his face. 'Home'. Hope fades. He answers

MAN

Hi love. Yes, all done...

He walks away. It's to his credit he only looks back once.

INT. BEDROOM. MORNING

The woman looks down at her phone. Looks up, out the window, as the man goes on his way. She hits 'Delete'. He's gone

WOMAN

Time to go...

Ella turns and goes about starting her day