It’s like the changing of the seasons And the tides of the sea

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by Melancholia

Summary

Drabble and one shot collection.

Chapter 1: Somewhere Far Away

Chapter Summary

He hears it, Del always hears it. One day he'll get his mum far away from it all.

Del hears the thud of her body hitting the ground. His dad doesn't care that he can overhear him beating the shit out of his mum. When morning comes, she'll lie to him how it happened. They'll both know he knows it a lie, but Del playing along and faking that he believes makes her happy.

One day, he swears he'll become a millionaire and take his mum far. France, he thinks. Del saw Paris in a film with her once, and his mum had said she'd love to one day go there. He forces himself to think about all the things he'll buy when his rich. Because it's easier than listening to what's going on outside his bedroom doo

Chapter 2: Lemonade

Chapter Summary

Ted can't even convince himself everything is fine let alone Rodney

Rodney might be a little kid but he wasn't a stupid one. Ted knew no matter how hard he tried to convince his grandson this was all a fun game he wasn't buying it.

Del was in trouble. Some dodgy deal with the wrong person. He'd sort it. Del always sorted everything, but until then he didn't want them near the flat. He'd dropped them off at the cemetery.

“Sit by mum, she'll look after you,” Del had said that morning, it was now getting dark, they'd lock the gates soon. He didn't like the idea of being in this type of place all night, it was eerie enough in the daytime.

The sandwiches he'd brought had long been eaten, Rodney nursed the last of flat lemonade like it might have to last days. Ted didn't know what to do for the best, leave here or stay.

“What happened Del?” Ted asked, carrying Rodney who was half asleep and hungry to the van. Del had promised to grab fish and chips before going home.

“Later Granddad,” Del said keeping his voice cheerful, he winced with every step. Ted could see the bruises on his face in the dying daylight. “I sorted it, that's what is important.”

Ted knew better than to press the issue, he highly doubted they'd talk about it later. Del had a knack for finding a way out of conversations he didn't want to have.

Chapter 3: Changeling

Chapter Summary

> Of course he knew that Rodney wasn't his grandson by blood, but it didn't matter in the end

He saw it early on. Rodney looked nothing like the rest of the Trotter family. He doesn't say anything. At first because by the time it is noticeable Joan was sick. Dying, he didn't have the heart to speak it not then. It wasn't as if Reg was faithful to Joan or even treated her well. He understood why she looked for love and comfort elsewhere.

After she dies, he doesn't say anything because Reg has run off. His son has left him, Del and little Rodney to fend for themselves. Violet is dead. He doesn't speak to his only living brother. All he has is Del and Rodney.

Del is too young to be playing parent, but he does. The way he stepped up, Ted was so proud. If Del noticed the older Rodney got the more he looked like Freddie The Frog, he doesn't speak it out loud. So Ted doesn't either.

In the end it doesn't matter. The blood part. Blood may be thicker than water but love was thicker than anything. He loved Rodney as much as he did Del.

Chapter 4: What Are Blood & Bones

Chapter Summary

> Albert knew. Of course he did. The moment he laid eyes on Rodney it was like looking Freddie the Frog's clone.

Rodney doesn't look like a Trotter. That doesn't mean anything outright. He could take after Joan's side of the family. That's what the family said when he was young.

Albert guessed it's probably why the older he got, the more he looked like Freddie the Frog's spitting image was why Ted and Del stopped bringing Rodney to family events.

Because people would no longer be able to come up with a comforting lie to why he looked so different. He's sure Del knows, but doesn't want to.

Albert wished Ted were alive, he'd love to ask his thoughts about it. Not that Ted would speak to him. Even when they were at the same family events Ted had acted like he hadn't existed.

In his youth Ada had been worth the loss of his brother, love and lust can really blind a man. Now, he was older and Ted was gone he'd give anything to make up.

He and Ada never had children. Either he couldn't or she couldn't, they never found out. Maybe if they had they'd still be together. Then again they might have had a child like Reggie. He was a horror as a child. A lazy, drunken thug as an adult. Albert understood perfectly why Joan would fall for someone like Freddie.

No, Albert will never get to be a father or a grandfather. But he could be an Uncle to Del and Rodney now. So Rodney wasn't a Trotter. What did it matter?

Chapter 5: Come Morning Light

Chapter Summary

> Reenie wished they could run away. Anywhere she didn't mind. She didn't even care if Joan loved her back or not as long as she knew Joan was safe

Reenie wished Joan had never met Reg. It killed her to see the woman she secretly loved, her best friend covered in bruises. In their youth they had kissed and messed around. That stopped when Joan got pregnant with Del. Reenie loved that boy. He had a heart of gold. It was hard to believe that Reg was his father.

But he was. Joan wouldn't leave Reg. Because a bad father was better than none in her opinion. Reenie didn't agree. More than once she offered to run away with Joan. They could take Del with them. They could live near the sea side. Del would like it.

Reenie wouldn't care if Joan never loved her back. At least she would be safe. Reenie wouldn't have to worry about what if Reg went too far.

Chapter 6: Eyes Wide Open

Chapter Summary

Violet Trotter isn't blind, she knew exactly what her son was.

Reg Trotter was a bully. He had been even as a boy. If he didn't get own way he'd thump someone smaller than him. Never anyone that was able to fight back.

Ted refused to see it. His only boy being a bullying little weasel. Violet wasn't much better when he was a boy. She saw it when he got older but it was too late then.

But she loved him nonetheless. A mother's love, if it's true, never switched off. She had hoped he would come back. Be a dad to Del and Rodney. At least be there when she was dying, yet he hadn't.

Violet hoped when people remembered her they'd think of her grandchildren and not her son. Because she got it wrong somewhere for him to be this way.

Chapter 7: Til you're at the end, the end of your rope

Chapter Summary

Rachel Slater had become nothing more than a shell of a person during her marriage.

She sat at the bus stop with nothing more than the coat on her back and a pound in her purse the night she left her husband. That was the night Rachel Slater died and was reborn Raquel Turner.

Roy had been at work when she left a scribbled note on the kitchen table. It had been her chance, one chance of being free from him. On paper he had seemed everything a woman could want. A good job, ambitious, offer of a comfortable life.

She not been like the other wives of coppers she had been glad that he worked a lot. Because when Roy was home he was cruel and a bully. He never hit her. Sometimes she had wished he would because people understood a woman leaving a man who hit her.

They less understanding of the damage they can't see. Roy had destroyed her confidence that was the first thing he wore down to nothing. He made sure she had no friends, no money.

In their home he was God. If she cooked a meal he didn't like he'd punish her by putting so much salt on hers that each mouthful would make her want to throw up. Raquel had accidentally burnt his shirt with an iron once and he had cut up all her clothes. He wouldn't buy her more for weeks.

Roy Slater demanded perfection and when she failed to deliver that he made it sound so reasonable when he dished out punishment. It clicked in her head it wasn't normal when she lying in bed wishing not to wake up

Chapter 8: Soup Dip

Chapter Summary

He wanted to make them being broke sound like something fun

He dipped his hamburger into a bowl of tomato soup. “Soup dip is the in thing right now,” Del declared, before taking a bite of his burger. It wasn't, they were just broke but he didn't want Rodney or Grandad worrying. So he made it fun.

He'd managed to get a tin of soup from the corner shop on the slate. All be it a bit begrudgingly on the shopkeeper end. Trigger had given him some hamburgers as a thank you for helping him out.

They were eating today, that was what was important. Del would deal with tomorrow, well tomorrow.

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