

SEPHONE - TREATMENT

Written by

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SEPHONE

ACT I

In a small touristy beach town in Prince Edward Island (Canada) a closeted trans girl, SEPHONE (15), is at a reception dinner for the wedding of her mother PAM (40s) and new stepfather BRIAN (40s). Sephone's grandma Q (70s) fusses over Pam, as Pam nitpicks at Sephone, but Q defends the girl.

Sephone leaves the table, stays out way past her curfew, then sneaks back into her bedroom. Late at night, Sephone plays dress up, then prepares to run away, until Q confronts her. Sephone chickens out, unpacks everything, then goes to sleep.

On her 16th birthday, Sephone wakes up to Pam threatening to ground her once her honeymoon is up. Brian is there. Sephone pretends to be ill to have them leave. This isn't over.

Q lets Sephone out to enjoy her birthday, but tells her to be back for dinner. While saying goodbye to her favourite places in PEI, Sephone finds a cove with a map of an underwater lunar system inscribed into the stone wall.

Sephone gets home late to a forgiving Q. At the back porch, Sephone asks Q to tell her that bedtime story from long ago. And notices that the details line up with the map she saw in the cove. Q decides she's old enough to learn that the fiction is fact: there is extraterrestrial life intra-the-Gulf of St. Lawrence.

She then shows Sephone the underwater space yacht that Pam made as a side project, parked at their local marina. The unauthorized two board it and blast off underwater.

ACT II

Q and Sephone disagree over how to handle Pam's toxicity on their way to Planet Moonset. When they land, Sephone, upset with Q, runs off to see a drag show at Cafe Eclipse, where she stays the night and then the next. Two weeks later, a friendly older lesbian couple point Q back to Sephone. They make amends, and also must refuel on oxygen immediately.

Back in the space yacht, Q remembers Sephone's belated birthday gift: a moonstone necklace, "yin" inscribed on it.

On a satellite of charcoal, they refuel. Sephone drifts off and has a nightmare about the way Pam acted on her 6th birthday. Meanwhile, Q speaks to the moon, who informs her that Pam sent an army of RED HATTED CANADIAN MEN their way.

Q, whose martial arts abilities have disarmed MMA champions, incapacitates one, but more are near. They rush to re-board.

On Planet Moonrise, Sephone and Q get separated at the crowded station. Moonrisian Police abduct Sephone to labour in the coal mines. A senior social worker sends Q to a nursing home, against her violent protest.

Back in PEI, Pam completes construction on her replacement space yacht. The energy she expended on it has greyed out the sky for the locals. Brian warns her of sirens and anglerfish. Pam laughs him off and submerges in her second yacht.

In the coal mines, Sephone meets HADE (16) who is cute and kind and has developed great upper body strength from wielding their pickaxe.

In the nursing home, Q dialogues with the moon, under secret surveillance by a nurse, who orders more powerful medication. Q overhears, takes offense, and breaks out.

The red hats find Sephone's whereabouts and throw explosives down the cave. As the walls collapse in, Hade saves Sephone under a minecart. They evacuate on a railway and ladder left intact.

Q, chased by Moonrisian police, reunites with Sephone and meets Hade, chased by red hats. They outrun them. The police and red hats attempt to join forces but reach too many impassioned disagreements on identity politics, leaving one cop alone, no longer employed, driving free into the sunset.

Aboard a coal freight train, Sephone, Q, and Hade get acquainted on their way back to the yacht. Hade, who has never left Planet Moonrise, makes efforts to win Q's approval once they're back aboard.

The space yacht bumps up against an invisible border. It's also here where Pam closes in on them. On a connecting gangway between yachts, Sephone meets Pam. Pam refuses to acknowledge a now feminized Sephone as a woman, takes her necklace, and leaves with Q.

ACT III

Hade comforts Sephone and they bypass the border together. They drift towards the final planet: Planet Poutine.

Back in PEI, Q comes clean to Pam and Brian about the real reason for Pam's divorce. On Q's cue, PERSEPHONE (40s), Pam's ex, emerges from the water to say hello.

On Planet Poutine, Sephone and Hade engage in romantic activities and promise to each other that their mutual acceptance is unconditional. Their helmets alert them that they have an hour of oxygen remaining.

They search store after store for refills to no luck, just poutine. Hade exhales in disbelief, then realizes they exhale oxygen. Sephone catches on, checks that they're ok with it, and de-helmets to kiss Hade continuously while rising to above sea level.

As they approach the shore, Hade must inhale water and can't accompany Sephone back on land. They reluctantly part ways.

It's dark. Sephone shrugs off her damp spacesuit. She sees the CN Tower in the distance, and walks its way all night.

In PEI, Brian and Persephone hit it off. Pam sulks to Q, who does not care and puts on an audio drama on her walk to the post office. Q seals her remaining life savings and the repaired necklace into an envelope and instructs the moon to make sure it ends up in Sephone's hands.

By morning, Sephone arrives in Toronto. She helps an elderly woman move a cart, then gets hired as a dishwasher at a small Chinese restaurant.

She sleeps in a public library. She makes friends at Crews and Tangos, and crashes on a friend's couch. She legally changes her name at ServiceOntario. She takes home leftovers. She amasses her savings for a tiny apartment in Cabbagetown. Q's envelope arrives at her door. She moves into a much nicer neighbourhood.

Closing image: Sephone at Cherry beach, white dress and sandals, skips a smooth stone along the waves.

EPILOGUE

SEPHONE (25) reads on a towel. From out the bushes in sunglasses sneaks Pam. Sephone sees her. And gets emotional.

Pam apologizes to Sephone, and refers to her by the correct name. She wipes Sephone's running eye makeup off her cheek with a tissue. And shows Sephone a blueprint for a half-above water half-underwater condo. Brian knows a developer.

Persephone and Hade swim over to wave hi from the water.

Q nods at her perfect granddaughter, in approval.

-THE END-