

Cleansed
by
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FADE IN:

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT

The storm rages across the valley.

Wind and rain lash a derelict farmhouse. Straggly pines line a raging river.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Blackness. The HOWL of the wind.

THEN

Lightning flashes. The walls have been smashed down, forming one big room. Rain swirls down from holes in the roof.

A wheelchair in the centre of the room. A large man, FRASER(50) is securely tied to the 'chair, eyes closed. A steel bar under his chin keeps his head locked.

Fraser's eyes flicker as he stirs. A frown forms on his lips.

WILLIAM(O.S)
Wakey, wakey, mister real
estate man.

Fraser stiffens, peers into the gloom.

FRASER
Who's there? How did...

A match flares at the other end of the room. The lamp is lit. WILLIAM(55), a gaunt man in grimy overalls, sits against the remains of a wall.

Next to him, wearing a soiled nightgown, lies his wife RACHEL(52). She is very pale, drool on her lips.

WILLIAM
How was your little sleep?

FRASER
I...my head...yeah, I remember
now...
(beat)
You son of a bitch...you jumped
me. I'll__

WILLIAM
(hisses)
Quiet! My wife is sleeping...

He tenderly caresses Rachel's stringy hair. Outside, the storm INTENSIFIES.

FRASER

Is this a kidnapping? Is that it?

He LAUGHS, strains to move his limbs. But he's completely immobilised.

FRASER(CONT'D)

Who the fuck are you, anyway?

A hobo?

William continues to stroke his wife's hair. He doesn't look at Fraser...

WILLIAM

You really don't remember me,
do you?

He waves a liver-spotted hand.

WILLIAM(CONT'D)

Or this house...our house.

FRASER

Why would I? It's a shithole.

(beat)

Look, this has gone on long
enough. Untie me, give me my
wallet back, I'll pay you some
money and forget you ever
existed. Ok?

WILLIAM

I don't have your wallet. I
didn't touch it.

Fraser doesn't reply. He tests his bindings, tries to rock the wheelchair.

WILLIAM(CONT'D)

I wouldn't bother. I smashed
holes in the floor under the
chair. It's wedged fast.

FRASER

Who's fucking chair is this?
It smells like shit.

WILLIAM

It's my wife's here...she has
no control over her bowels.

FRASER

Oh, that's great, isn't it?
What sort of man lets his wife
grovel on the floor, when she...

He trails off as the lamp blinks out. The dark is almost impenetrable. Over the storm, he hears a faint SCRABBLING sound.

FRASER(CONT'D)

What are you__

He SCREAMS as a lightning flash reveals William's face close to his! Fetid breath makes him wince. A feeling of panic is trying to break through...

WILLIAM

(whispers)

What sort of man puts a woman in a wheelchair in the first place? Think hard for your answer...

Blackness again but Fraser senses William in his space. Another sound in the gloom - Rachel MOANS.

FRASER

I don't know wh...please, put the light on. I don't like the...dark.

Another lightning bolt sees William's visage impassive. He crawls back to the lamp, lights it. Fraser breathes a SIGH of relief.

William slowly gets to his feet, limps to the shattered front door. He stops, listens for a moment. Rachel MOANS again.

FRASER

Your wife is sick, she needs help. Release me and we can get her to a hospital.

WILLIAM

It's too late for that. She's been in the wheelchair since she was fifteen. Brain damage and no use of her limbs.

Fraser shudders.

FRASER

What happened to her?

William makes his way back to Rachel, comforts her. Painfully walks back to Fraser, crouches.

WILLIAM

She was in a car accident. Vehicle went into the river. Driver was drunk.

(MORE)

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

He got out of the car safely.
She was under for two minutes.
Oxygen deprivation...

He gazes at Fraser, his eyes lifeless. Like a shark's eye.
Like a doll's eye...

Fraser stares back, then across to Rachel's limp form. He
frowns. struggles with the 'chair. Slumps back.

FRASER

Rachel? I didn't...it was an
accident. You said it yourself.
I was just a kid.

WILLIAM

No, you were a drunken fuck who
took no responsibility. A
spoiled rich brat...whose
parents made sure there were
no charges laid.

FRASER

I couldn't...my father's
career...it was too important.

WILLIAM

And Rachel's future wasn't?

FRASER

We gave her family money.

WILLIAM

Hush money. To shut them up,
along with the threats. Poor
farmers who had fuck all.

William crawls back to Rachel. Mops her brow with a greasy
rag.

FRASER

Two thousand dollars was a fair
amount. Worth more back then...

WILLIAM

Bullshit. The farm was in debt
to the hilt. It only delayed
the inevitable. Looking after
Rachel cost them more in stress.

FRASER

Look, I'm sorry for it, ok...I
can't change what happened.

WILLIAM

Of course not. You just ignored it and went on with your privileged life. That's the way it fucking works.

(beat)

I married Rachel a few years later and have cared for her since then. Thirty years...

FRASER

What about her parents? Are they...

WILLIAM

Dead. Suicide ten years ago. I found them in this very room. He shot her then blew his own head off.

Fraser GASPS, makes a WHINING sound. He looks around the room again. Sweat breaks out on his face despite the moist wind.

FRASER

(whispers)

This was their place? Oh, sweet Jesus, no...

WILLIAM

Yes. You finally remembered. Funny, that. And you know what else is funny? They did it on October thirty first...the same day you took Rachel into the river.

FRASER

But this...we're in Colonial Valley.

WILLIAM

Yes?

Above the storm, a new sound emerges: a ROARING, CHURNING rumble...

FRASER

We, ah, have to get out of here.

WILLIAM

Why's that?

FRASER

Because the new dam...a month ago...this whole valley is going underwater.

WILLIAM

Shit...I didn't know that.

(sighs)

Damn shame. I liked this house,
the good fishin'.

(beat)

But that's progress for ya. I
guess that million dollar
resort on the new lake is worth
more than a few fucking memories.

He unzips a backpack. Takes out an old pistol.

FRASER

What the fuck...look, um,
mister...?

WILLIAM

William. William Darcy.

FRASER

I...William, look, let me go.
I have cash at home in a safe.
I'll give you the
combination...it's 5467__oh
fuck...

William cocks the weapon, points it at Fraser.

WILLIAM

I told you before. I don't want
your money. That's all your
type think is needed to solve
any problem.

FRASER

Please don't kill me, my wife__

WILLIAM

I don't want to hear about YOUR
wife, or YOUR family! You
wouldn't know hardship if it
crawled out your arse and
licked your balls.

(beat)

I went to a doctor last week.
I've got a brain tumour. He
gave me six months to live.

(laughs)

Rachel will have no one to care
for her then...

Suddenly, a stream of water flows into the room. The
ROARING grows louder. William puts the pistol in his belt,
hangs the lamp on the side of the wheelchair.

He lifts Rachel in his arms, faces Fraser.

FRASER

(yells)

Goddamn it. Untie me now. I can help you. Medicine, anything, private nurses...

He breaks into tears.

WILLIAM

Too late for that.

The water rises at an alarming rate. It swirls through the front door.

EXT. HOUSE -CONTINUOUS

Lightning flashes show the river boiling over its banks. The entire valley floor is awash. It creeps higher around the old house.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

William supports Rachel with one arm - her body is wasted, skin and bones. He holds the pistol aloft.

FRASER

(screams)

LET ME GO!!! PLEASE...

William looks at him, kisses Rachel tenderly. He puts the pistol to her head. Pulls the trigger.

BANG

WILLIAM

Rest now my sweet. Be at peace with your parents.

He releases her body, the water carries it away outside.

FRASER

Oh, jesus...no, you can't do this!

The water has reached William's thighs. For Fraser, though, it laps under his chin. He SCREAMS again, gulps water into his mouth. SPLUTTER, COUGHS...

FRASER(CONT'D)

You can't...I'm sorry...help...

The water covers his head, his eyes bulge. He struggles in the chair. The water covers the lamp, and it blinks out.

BLACKNESS

Lightning flash - William leans close to the wheelchair. Fraser stares back beneath the water, his eyes beseeching.

William puts the pistol to his own head.

WILLIAM
Happy Hallowe__

He pulls the trigger.

BANG

BLACKNESS

THE END