"FRIENDS FOR LIFE"

Written By

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FADE IN:

EXT. TREE-HOUSE - DAY

The tree-house rises above a row of middle-class homes.

Dark clouds roll in, covering the sun.

INT. TREE-HOUSE - DAY

JAKE, 8, lies on his stomach, draws with crayons.

ROB, 8, with distinct, fire-red hair, stands over him.

ROB

Told ya it was cool up here.

JAKE

Yeah, I guess so.

ROB

I'm bored, let's do something.

JAKE

Wanna go swimming?

ROB

Nah, looks like it's gonna rain. Let's play baseball!

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Jake's mom, SUE, 30's, washes dishes, stares out the window.

It gives her a view of the tree-house.

Jake and Rob come bouncing in, each hold a bat and glove.

ROB

I hit first!

JAKE

C'mon, you hit first last time!

Sue turns her head, but the two are out the door in a flash.

EXT. JAKE'S FRONT YARD - DAY

Jake's stoic dad, FRANK, 30's, robotically waters the lawn.

The two boys dash past him, continue up the sidewalk.

DR. YOUNG, 60, carrying her paperwork, approaches the house.

A detached Frank barely acknowledges her.

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Dr. Young sits at the kitchen table.

Sue places a cup of tea in front of her, sits down herself.

SUE

Thanks for coming over.

DR. YOUNG

No problem, I'm just up the street.

She slides some crayon drawings across the table.

DR. YOUNG (CONT'D)

I brought by some drawings Jake did for me. Made me promise not to show you, said you'd be mad at him.

A withdrawn Frank enters drinking a beer, sees them talking.

He stares a few moments, then slowly trudges up the stairs.

DR. YOUNG (CONT'D)

I get the feeling Frank's against child-therapy.

SUE

It was my idea for Jake. Frank's more old-fashioned.

DR. YOUNG

A lot can be accomplished with it.

SUE

Frank feels guilty about moving here in the first place. Getting laid off, having to relocate.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Rob pitches a ball to Jake, who swings right through it.

SUE (V.O.)

Then soon as we moved here, Jake began to change. Maybe if there were more kids to play with.

ROB

Strike three! You're out!

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Dr. Young shuffles through Jake's drawings, searches...

DR. YOUNG

He did mention one friend...

She finds the picture, holds it up:

Jake and Rob, with his unique red hair, running in a green field under a blue sky with a bright yellow sun.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Jake pitches to Rob...

SUE (V.O.)

That's Rob, his imaginary friend.

Rob slowly fades away as he swings his bat.

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Sue holds the drawing now, stares down at it.

SUE

He began playing with him the first day we moved in here.

DR. YOUNG

You know, I remember years ago, when these streets were filled with children, a tragedy happened with one of them, a boy named Rob, and he had this same red hair.

EXT. TOWN POOL - DAY

Rob and Jake walk past the now dry and empty town pool.

Jake pays it no mind, but Rob gazes intently at the pool.

DR. YOUNG (V.O.)

He drowned in the town pool. It wasn't long after that, the neighborhood changed from families with children to what it is now.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Just up the street a bit, but within view of the tree-house.

A "SOLD" sign is planted in the front lawn.

A moving-truck pulls up, backs into the driveway.

DR. YOUNG (V.O.)

Like everything else in life, it's cyclical, families will return.

A FATHER, MOTHER and BOY, 8, with a sad face, pile out.

They begin moving into their new house.

EXT. TREE-HOUSE - DAY

Jake and Rob sprint up to the tree.

Rob races up the ladder to the tree-house platform.

Jake remains at the base of the tree, hesitant.

SUE (V.O.)

It's the tree-house that Frank will never recover from. That was his idea for Jake that I was against.

Rob notices Jake hasn't climbed up yet.

ROB

Whatcha waiting for? I ain't gonna scare ya again.

JAKE

You shouldn't have done that to me, I wasn't ready yet.

ROB

Oh, c'mon, I told you it would only hurt for a second. I had to trick you...I needed a friend up here.

Finally Jake begins to climb.

SUE (V.O.)

I told Frank he should never have built it up that high, just in case...

(starts to cry) ...Just in case he fell.

Jake slowly fades away as he climbs towards Rob.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Exiting the house, the tree-house catches the new Boy's eye.

He sees Jake and Rob inside it.

His Father approaches, also looks over at the tree-house.

Jake and Rob are invisible to him.

FATHER

Tree-house looks like a lotta fun.

INT. TREE-HOUSE - DAY

Jake returns to his drawing, this gains Rob's attention.

ROB

You're always doing those drawings. What's that one? Let me see.

JAKE

Only if you promise not to get mad.

He pauses, reluctantly holds the drawing up to Rob:

Jake, along with his Mom and Dad, running in a green field under a blue sky with a bright yellow sun.

Rob turns away disgusted, walks over to the edge.

Rain begins to fall from the dark clouds.

Rob spies the family moving in, particularly, the new Boy.

He smiles like the devil, whispers to himself:

ROB
I think I need a new friend.

FADE OUT.