

ROADSIDE ATTRACTION

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FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - AFTERNOON

An ominous gray day. Lightning. A steady rain.

A Range Rover moves down the winding road. Its windshield wipers furiously beat away the rain.

INT. RANGE ROVER - CONTINUOUS

KIP DONAHUE, 25, average-looking, in t-shirt and jeans, drives. A rock song BLARES from the radio.

Kip's cell phone, in the passenger seat, PINGS. He reaches over, picks the phone up, and tries to read the screen for a few brief moments.

He returns his attention to the road, just as--

A WOMAN in her early 20's appears in the road, waving at the quickly approaching Range Rover.

Kip SKIDS to a stop just short of the woman.

KIP
Son of a bitch!

Kip reaches into his back seat and pulls out an umbrella from the floor board, then exits the vehicle.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Kip approaches the drenched woman, who has a trickle of blood running down the side of her head. Despite that, she still maintains an attractive, almost sensual, appearance.

KIP
Hey! Are you nuts? I could've run
you over!

The woman doesn't speak, but turns her attention to the side of the road. Kip follows her gaze, and spots--

In a ditch, a vehicle turned UPSIDE DOWN along the side of the road, its frame crushed.

KIP (CONT'D)
Holy shit! Is anyone else in there?

WOMAN

No - just me. I... I took that turn too quickly and hydroplaned right off the road. Good thing I was wearing my seat belt, huh?

KIP

Jesus, lady, we need to call for help... here, take my umbrella. I'll get my phone.

Kip tries to go back to the car, but the woman stops him.

WOMAN

Please, don't.

KIP

What?

WOMAN

It's just... I was at a party, and I've had a few drinks. I might wind up getting arrested.

KIP

But you need medical attention. You have some blood coming from your head. Who knows what other injuries you might have sustained in an accident like that? You really ought to be checked out.

WOMAN

I feel fine. But if you'll get me home, I'll get cleaned up and go to an emergency clinic later. Promise.

Kip considers it, but isn't completely convinced.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Please...

Kip gives in to the moment. He rushes over to the passenger side of the Range Rover and opens the door for her. She smiles at Kip and slides into the seat.

INT. RANGE ROVER - LATER

The rain beats against the windshield. Kip tries to focus on the road, but is slightly distracted by his attractive passenger.

KIP

You sure you're okay?

HILLARY
Yes -- just shaken up, that's all.

KIP
No doubt. I'm Kip, by the way.

WOMAN
Hillary.

KIP
Huh. You look like a Hillary.

HILLARY
Really. In what way?

KIP
(thinks for a moment)
Attractive, fun-loving. A hot mess.

HILLARY
I'm sorry?

KIP
Well, you are a bit of a mess at
the moment. But still hot.

HILLARY
(laughs)
Thanks... I guess.

Kip tries to suppress a smile. He feels like the luckiest guy
in the world at the moment.

KIP
Where do you live?

HILLARY
West part of town. Ruston Street.

KIP
I know where that is. Live with
your parents?

HILLARY
I do. But only until I finish
college. I'm a senior at Union
State. Majoring in fashion design.

KIP
Really? I graduated from there
three years ago. Work with
Northwestern Insurance as an
actuary now.

HILLARY
 Sounds exciting.

KIP
 I know you're being sarcastic, and
 it is boring. You don't get to
 interact with a lot of people.
 Especially ones as attractive as
 you. But it pays well, so...

Hillary just nods, stares out the front window.

KIP (CONT'D)
 Listen, would it be presumptuous of
 me to ask if you'd be interested in
 dinner sometime?

Hillary smiles, with just a hint of teeth. Something flashes
 in her sky blue eyes that catches Kip off guard. It's hard to
 look away, except--

HONK!! HONK!!

Kip returns his attention to the road. He's veered slightly
 into the oncoming lane of traffic. A truck heads at his car,
 and Kip manages to maneuver his car safely back into his lane
 just in the nick of time. Hillary is unfazed.

HILLARY
 Better pay attention there, stud.

Kip takes deep breaths. Beads of sweat form on his forehead.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - LATER

Darkness prevails as the Range Rover moves down Ruston
 Street. A sleepy middle-class neighborhood full of white wood-
 frame homes.

KIP
 Which house is it?

HILLARY
 (points)
 328. Third house on the right.

Kip pulls into the driveway and turns off the car. He's about
 to open the door, when --

HILLARY (CONT'D)
 Kip. Thank you for getting me here.
 It was very kind of you.

KIP

My pleasure. Hate to think what--

Hillary suddenly leans over and kisses Kip. She moves her right hand onto his crotch and caresses it. Kip's eyes pop open and his hair stands on end. It's like a shock of electricity coursing through his body.

KIP (CONT'D)

Um, wow. That was... um, wow.

Kip leans back in for another kiss, but Hillary backs away.

HILLARY

I'd better go in before my dad comes outside to check on me.

Disappointed, Kip gets out and walks Hillary to the door. As they approach the house, Kip spots an elderly neighbor, CARL, 70, on the porch next door.

Carl says nothing, but just STARES at Kip as he walks to the porch. As they get there, Kip sees Carl pressing numbers into a cell phone.

On the porch, Hillary paws around in her purse, then shakes her head.

HILLARY (CONT'D)

I can't find my keys. Ring the doorbell.

Kip does as he's told, then waits. Nothing. He rings again.

CARL (V.O.)

Ain't no one gonna answer that door, mister.

Kip is startled. He turns to Carl, standing at the bottom of the steps.

KIP

What are you talking about?

CARL

Today is March first. Bob and Linda always leave the house on that date. It's the anniversary of their daughter's death.

Kip looks confused. He turns to Hillary, but she's vanished. Kip shudders, takes a step back.

CARL (CONT'D)

Let me ask ya -- did ya happen to pick up a young lady along County Road 12?

(off Kip's nod)

Girl's name Hillary? Been in an automobile accident?

KIP

How... how did you know?

Carl walks up the steps and faces Kip.

NEIGHBOR

Ten years ago on this date Hillary had been to a party with a young man. The story I hear is that the boy got her drunk, then tried to rape her, but she escaped and was drivin' home when she skidded off the road and crashed in a culvert. Had to use the jaws of life to pry her out of the car. Didn't matter, though. She was already dead.

Kip looks like he's been hit in the face with a brick.

KIP

Bullshit! I talked to her! She even kissed me!

Carl shakes his head sadly. In the distance, SIRENS wail.

CARL

'Fraid of that.

KIP

Afraid of what? What's going on here? She was just standing here with me a moment ago!

CARL

Every March first for the last ten years, a young man has shown up at this house, thinking they've brought Hillary home. At first, her parents tried to explain what had happened. There were arguments, fights...

The SIRENS grow louder now. At the end of the street, an ambulance appears.

CARL (CONT'D)

But in the end, the guy would find out he didn't bring anyone home after all. Maybe it's her ghost, maybe it's some sort of illusion. The parents got tired of it happenin', so they get as far away from here as possible.

(beat)

But that's not the worst of it.

KIP

There's something worse? What the hell could be worse?

CARL

Each and every one of those young men, all seemingly healthy types, dropped dead right here on the porch. No explanation why.

Kip GASPS, and backs away from Carl.

CARL (CONT'D)

Soon as I saw you pull up, I called 9-1-1. Maybe they'll be able to save you...

Carl steps down from the porch as the ambulance skids to a stop in front of the house.

CARL (CONT'D)

But I seriously doubt it.

Kip suddenly clutches his chest. His face contorts from the pain he experiences. He drops to his knees, then collapses face down on the porch.

Two EMT's rush to the porch with a stretcher. An oxygen mask is attached to Kip's face, and one EMT begins performing CPR as they wheel an unconscious Kip away.

Kip is loaded in the ambulance, and as the doors close, Hillary suddenly reappears beside the vehicle.

The ambulance races away, SIRENS wailing. As it reaches the end of the street, the sirens and flashing lights stop. The ambulance slows to normal speed.

Hillary turns and disappears into the darkness, laughing.

FADE OUT.