

STILL AND SMILING

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. EMPTY LOT - DAY

It is quiet. We just hear the blow of the wind on the bushes. The teens, ROSS SPENCER and JEFFREY WOOD crawl under a fence that separates the empty lot from an abandoned old house.

They head towards the house that has a big for sale sign.

ROSS

I love my girl Jeff!

JEFFREY

I know.

ROSS

Would you die for someone?

JEFFREY

I don't know, man.

ROSS

I would.

(getting a stone throwing it far)

Do you know, Jef, she is my life!

JEFFREY

Hey, forget her for a while, uh? Maybe she is with a boy now...

ROSS

(grabbing Jeffrey by his collar)
Shut up, stupid! Don't say that again!

JEFFREY

Okay, calm down man! Look, (pointing)
People say it's a haunted house...

ROSS

Bullshit!

JEFFREY

The family that used to live here disappeared, one by one. All of them except a boy...Did you know the family?

ROSS

No, I didn't.

Suddenly, Ross runs to the old house.

JEFFREY

Hey, Ross! Don't go inside, man.
It can be dangerous!

No answer.

Ross disappears inside the old house.

Jeffrey stays still thinking for a while and runs after him

INT. OLD HOUSE - DAY

It is wrecked with some holes in the roof, which allow the sunlight in.

Ross heads on. A lot of pigeons fly up scaring him.

He looks for a place to hide.

Ross notices a misplaced plank on the wooden floor. It covers a cavity where he fits in well.

He slips into it.

INT. THE CAVITY IN THE FLOOR - DAY

Ross puts the wood back into place. Just a beam of light comes in from the crack.

INT. OLD HOUSE - DAY

Jeffrey heads in.

JEFFREY

Hey Ross, I'm going to find you,
man! Here we go!

He walks around carefully.

Jeffrey looks for Ross behind a door. It falls down rising a large dusty cloud in front of Jeffrey, scaring him.

INT. THE CAVITY IN THE FLOOR - DAY

Ross is quiet.

POV of Ross through the crack reveals Jeffrey coming in his direction

Now Jeffrey is on the top of Ross. Jeffrey turns to look around and moves away.

Relieved, Ross stays quiet.

Ross notices a small box near him. He grabs it and puts it under the beam in order to see it clearly.

Ross opens the box and inside there's something like a

instant camera.

An old sepia picture, maybe from the fifties falls out. Ross doesn't notice it. He is amazed with the camera.

INSERT: A FRIGHTENED COUPLE APPEARS IN THE PICTURE

INT. OLD HOUSE - DAY

Jeffrey continues looking for Ross in the house. Jeffrey is tired, sweating a lot. He sits down on the stair steps.

JEFFREY

Hey Ross! I give up, man! I'm leaving now, okay?

Jeffrey looks around. Silence.

Jeffrey stands up and heads towards the front door.

JEFFREY (CONTINUING)

Off I go, man!

EXT. OLD HOUSE - DAY

Jeffrey leaves the house. He looks very upset.

As he walks, he looks back in order to see whether Ross appears.

Ross leaves the house running towards Jeffrey.

ROSS

Hey, Jeff. Look at this!

JEFFREY

What?

ROSS

Look what I found in there.

JEFFREY

Cool, man! A Camera!

ROSS

Yeah! A camera, man! It was a good find, wasn't it Jeff?

JEFFREY

Yeah, does it work?

ROSS

I don't know! Let's try?

JEFFREY

Yeah!

Ross looks through the camera's viewfinder as Jeffrey walks back.

ROSS
Stay there, Jeff. Don't move,
okay?

Jeffrey puts both his hands on his waist, like a super-hero.

ROSS
One...Two...Three! Here it goes!

Ross' finger clicks the button.

The camera makes a mechanical noise and throws out a picture.

Ross doesn't get his eyes off the picture as he removes the black paper from the picture. He smiles as the image comes.

Ross raises his head to look at his friend but Jeffrey has vanished.

ROSS
Jeff? JEFFREY!

Ross looks around.

INSERT: JEFFREY LOOKS SCARED IN IT LIKE THE COUPLE ON THE OLD SEPIA PICTURE THAT WE SAW BEFORE INSIDE THE CAVITY.

ROSS
(muttering to himself)
Hey guy look at this. You look
like a super-man or maybe an
idiot!

ROSS
JEFFREY!!

Silence.

Ross enters the house again.

EXT. OLD HOUSE - MINUTES LATER- DAY

Ross looks around once more and leaves the house. He goes through the fence.

EXT. ROSS' HOME - GARDEN - DAY

It's a middle class home.

Ross plays basketball in front of the garage.

Phone ringing inside the house.

WOMAN VOICE (OS)
Ross! Telephone call for you.
It's FIONA FRASER...

Ross throws the ball into the basket, runs and yells back.

ROSS
 (stops playing)
 Okay mom, I'm coming...

Ross goes in the door.

INT. ROSS' HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ross rushes to the telephone.

ROSS
 Hi, how are you doing? I'm
 fine...I was playing
 basketball... How about you? Are
 you at the beach? Good. I still
 have to ask JOHN if I can go,
 but I promise you I will...
 Okay, bye.

He hangs up.

EMILE SPENCER, late 30's, approaches him.

EMILY
 She is at the beach, isn't she?

ROSS
 (in a hurry)
 Uh-huh.

EMILY
 Wait Ross...I need to talk to
 you, son...

ROSS
 (standing at the door)
 After, mom.

EMILY
 But, son it's important...Your
 stepfather...

Ross doesn't let her finish and leaves as the door closes
 behind him. Emily leans against it.

EMILE
 Oh god! How am I going to tell
 him?

INT. ROSS' HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Emily is in the kitchen.

Ross walks in.

EMILY
 Ross, we need to talk...

ROSS

What about?

EMILY

About our holidays...

The phone rings.

EMILY (CONT.)

Just a second.

She goes to answer it.

EMILY

Hello. Oh is it you. How are you?

(looking at Ross)

Yes, he is here...

Oh my god!

ROSS (OS)

What mom?

EMILY

It's JUDY WOOD. Jeffrey still hasn't come home... She wants to talk with you.

ROSS

(on the telephone)

Hi, Mrs. Wood... No, I've told you... I don't know where he is. We were playing and he just disappeared... At the haunted old house, you know? No...just Jef and I...I didn't see anybody...

Emily looks at Ross apprehensively.

ROSS

Okay, Mrs. Wood... Please let us know when he comes back... We are worried too. See you.

Ross hangs up.

Emily looks through the window wondering.

ROSS

Mom?

EMILY

(distracted)

What?

ROSS

Mom, who was my father?

EMILY

What do you mean?

ROSS

Why was he raised in an orphanage? What happened to his parents?

EMILY

Look, don't think about it, okay? Forget it. They were good people... and your father was too, that's it.

ROSS

I heard his parents disappeared, is that true?

The telephone rings again. Emily rushes over to it, relieved.

EMILY

Hello...Oh, okay Judy we going right now.

She hangs up

EMILY

Let's go to Judy's. The police want to talk with you.

EXT. JEFFREY'S HOME - GARDEN - NIGHT

The police car is parked in front of it.

INT. JEFFREY'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Judy, late 30's, is crying. She is sitting on a sofa. Her husband KARL WOOD, early 40's, is beside her.

Standing in the middle of the room PAUL BROWN, a homicide detective is writing in a little notebook.

Emily and Ross sit down as Karl is trying to console his wife. He gives her a tissue.

KARL

It's going to be all right...
Don't cry darling. Our Jeffrey will appear soon. He is a very smart boy... Come on Judy...
Don't worry honey. The detective Brown from the homicide office will take care of it, won't you, Mr. Brown?

DETECTIVE BROWN

Oh yes, I will, Mr. Wood...I mean your boy is okay... Look, don't worry Mrs. Wood I know how you are feeling. Our people will soon get some information about your little Jeffrey.

JUDY

(crying)
I want my son... my baby...
Please, Karl, do something.

Emily and Ross look at him with pity.

KARL

Take it easy Judy. Just relax honey.

The Detective Brown goes to Ross.

DETECTIVE BROWN

Son, where were you this morning?

ROSS

We were at the old house. Near by here.

DETECTIVE BROWN

Hmm... What did you do there?

ROSS

We were playing...

DETECTIVE BROWN

Did you see anything strange. Anything suspicious?

ROSS

No Sir. I didn't. Jef disappeared in front of my eyes. I took a picture of him right before... Here it is.

The detective Brown takes the picture and looks at it carefully.

DETECTIVE BROWN

He looks scared... What happened?

ROSS

I don't know... When I saw he just wasn't there anymore.

Detective Brown looks at everyone worried.

DETECTIVE BROWN
You aren't hiding something from
me, are you?

ROSS
(tense) No, I swear. Jeffrey is
my friend.

Emily approaches detective Brown.

EMILY
Excuse me, detective, may I talk
to you in private?

DETECTIVE BROWN
Of course, madam.

The detective leaves the picture on the sofa to talk as Ross
takes the picture back.

EMILY
It's about something that
happened in that old house, a
long time ago...

INT. ROSS' HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Ross is having breakfast at the table.

John Spencer, early 50's, looks like a puffy fighter comes
into the kitchen holding a newspaper

Emily comes to the table holding a jar of juice and pours it
into the glass.

John sits down and opens the newspaper.

Emily starts to serve Ross some cereal. Her hands are
shaking. She looks apprehensive.

ROSS
Hey, mom. Something's wrong?

She tries to hide that she is worried and shows him a pale
smile.

EMILY
(to Ross)
Oh, no... nothing is wrong,
really!

John is hidden behind his reading.

ROSS
(stops eating)
No, you are lying. I know you,
mom.

Emily seems more nervous than she was before.

EMILY

John?

He doesn't answer.

EMILY (CONTINUING)

Hey, John, come on!

No answer.

EMILY (CONTINUING)

(yelling)

JOHN!

(desperate)

Please John, answer me!

John moves the newspaper away from his face, slowly. He looks at her then he looks at Ross.

JOHN

(quietly)

Look, both of you. I hate when someone interrupts my reading, uh?

ROSS

What?

John takes a long sip of juice and goes back to his reading.

EMILY

Okay, okay! I'll tell him.

ROSS

What happened with you?

EMILY

I'm sorry son, I tried to tell you this morning...Ross we aren't going to the beach anymore. Do you hear me?

ROSS

WHAT?

EMILY

That's it! We'll stay at home in order to redecorate the house. No holidays for us this year!

ROSS

It isn't fair! Nobody told me that...

EMILY

We've already decided, Ross.

ROSS

(to John)
Why? Why are you buying her with
this shit?

EMILY

(worried)
Stop son!

ROSS

No! It is true! He is buying
you, mom. Just to stay here to
redecorate this shit house...

John lowers the newspaper and faces Ross impassively.

JOHN

I didn't hear you, asshole! What
did you say?

EMILY

Oh, my god! Easy John! Ross
didn't say anything
(to Ross)
Right, son?

ROSS

No, mom I did!

EMILY

Oh God!

JOHN

Look at me, boy.
(approaches Ross)
You are just a kid and kids
don't stick their noses in
adult's business.
(back to the newspaper)
Stop acting like a foolish
sissy, uh?

ROSS

I don't care! I can't understand
what my mother saw in you, man!
You aren't half of what my
father was!

EMILY

ROSS!

John HITS the table.

JOHN

Out of here, NOW! You, bloody
boy! You aren't going anywhere
do you hear me? NOWHERE!

ROSS

I hate you John! I hate you!

Ross runs away.

EMILY

Hey, Ross, come here son!

Ross leaves the kitchen, slamming the door behind him

INT. ROSS' HOME- GARAGE -DAY

John opens lots of boxes with things to do the renovation. He gets ready to work.

Emily comes into the garage. She holds a tray, with a glass of oranges juice.

EMILY

Hey, darling, here you are. I brought you some orange juice.

John stops what he is doing and drinks it with pleasure.

JOHN

Hmm, that was delicious!

John approaches Emily and hugs her from behind.

EMILY

Stop John!

JOHN

(disappointed)
What?!

EMILY

Ross is furious. He wants to go to the beach anyway...

JOHN

Forget it. That boy wants to be punished...

EMILY

I think he misses his father. I'm afraid he might run away. I think that's what Jeff did...
What do you think John?

JOHN

I don't think so. Oh! I almost forgot. My sister Lucy is coming tomorrow...

Emily looks surprised and disappointed. Emily gets the juice jar and walks away.

JOHN

What I said?... Women!

EXT. ROSS' HOME - BACK YARD - DAY

It is a beautiful sunny day. John is preparing some stuff for a barbecue and Ross helps him with the hamburgers and some hotdogs.

Emily gets things ready for John's sister and her family.

John walks away from the barbecue and walks into his house.

Seconds after, he comes back with a portable hi-fi that is playing THE PLATTERS' MY PRAYER.

Emily goes in and comes back carrying lots things for the barbecue.

Suddenly, a car horn.

John and Emily look at each other

JOHN AND EMILY

It is them!

John goes to meet the guests.

EXT. ROSS' HOME - GARDEN - DAY

LUCY, in a 30's and her family gets out of the car.

Her husband MARVIN, 40's, fat guy, is going to open the trunk of the car. There, he keeps a box of Buds and some chips.

CHRISTINE is holding a cake and Lucy takes it from her.

MARVIN, JR. holds a ball in his right arm and his dog in his left. Ross stays at his side observing them.

John hugs his sister LUCY.

JOHN

So, how are things?

John shakes hands with Marvin.

LUCY

Where is Emily?

JOHN

She is in the back yard.

He pats Christine and Marvin Jr.'s heads.

JOHN

What's up with you guys?

The Marvin Jr.'s pet dog barks at John.

JOHN

Hey, what is that?

John starts to smile when he sees the little dog

MARVIN, JR.

Stop MONSTER. Be quiet. Shut up!

JOHN

What is his name?... You said
Monster?... Oh, my God, I'm
afraid...

Marvin Jr.'s pet barks a lot and tries to bite John's leg.

Ross bursts out laughing.

Finally, all of them go into the house.

BACK YARD

They arrive in the back yard.

Marvin takes a Bud from the box and opens it. He offers it to John.

MARVIN

Hey, buddy, this for you, take it... Wait,
wait... Hmm... smells good... What is it?

Marvin walks to the grill.

MARVIN

What's this here?

Emily looks at Marvin and whispers to John.

EMILY

Look at that. When it comes to
food he goes crazy!

Marvin smells the barbecue. He licks his lips.

MARVIN

Hmm, it looks good. Is it ready to eat?

JOHN

Not yet, when it's ready, I tell you.

MY PRAYER stops playing.

Christine approaches the hi-fi. She takes a tape from her pocket and changes the music.

When the new song starts, JOHN looks at Christine puzzled.

A classic music starts to play as Christine starts to dance Ballet.

Lucy looks at her with pride.

Emily and John look at each other and start laughing.

EXT. ROSS' HOME - BACK YARD - LATER - DAY

Ross and Marvin Jr. play soccer, as Monster smells something near the fence.

Suddenly, Monster starts to bark a lot.

MARVIN JR.

Hey, Monster what's wrong?

Something bites his snout and he runs into the house.

All people look at Monster and laugh.

Marvin Jr. stops playing soccer.

MARVIN JR.

Monster! Wait for me...

ROSS

Hey man, come on... Idiot!

Marvin Jr. goes after his dog.

INT. ROSS' HOME - STAIRS/ROSS'S BEDROOM - DAY

Monster runs upstairs and enters Ross' bedroom.

INT. ROSS'S HOME - LIVINGROOM/ CORRIDOR - DAY

Marvin Jr. is looking for Monster.

MARVIN JR.

Monster!

We hear Monster growling upstairs. Marvin Jr. runs to Ross' bedroom.

INT. ROSS' HOME - ROSS'S BEDROOM - DAY

Marvin Jr. looks under the bed.

MARVIN, JR.

Monster...Where are you? Come on boy.

UNDER ROSS' BED

Monster barks frightened.

INT. ROSS' HOME - ROSS' BEDROOM

Marvin gets Monster and sits on the bed. He puts Monster on his lap.

Marvin Jr. tries calming his dog. He looks around and...

POV of Marvin, Jr. shows a lot of pictures of a pretty teenage girl and a big poster of her at school, the beach and in the snow with Ross stuck on the wall. There are phrases like I LOVE YOU written everywhere. Her name is stuck on the wall in colours with different sizes. Her name is FIONA FRASER.

Marvin becomes astonished.

MARVIN JR.

Oh shit! This guy is crazy!

Monster is fidgety. He jumps off his lap.

Marvin Jr. opens Ross' wardrobe. There, he messes around with everything.

He finds the camera that Ross had found inside the old house.

MARVIN JR

Huh, it is an instant camera!

Will it work?

Marvin Jr. decides to take a picture of his pet. He prepares the camera.

MARVIN JR.

Sit down Monster. Sit, down...

Monster obeys him.

Marvin Jr. gets the camera and takes his picture. He sits on the bed and waits for the picture paper to come out.

While Marvin Jr. waits for the picture he looks around. But he doesn't see his pet anymore

Finally, the picture comes out.

INSERT PICTURE: MONSTER IS VERY ANGRY IN IT. HIS FANGS ARE OUT.

Marvin Jr. doesn't believe this. He decides to look for Monster around the bedroom. He leaves the picture and the camera on Ross' bed.

MARVIN JR.

Monster. Where are you?

Marvin Jr. doesn't find him under the bed. Then he decides to go downstairs.

CUTS OF DIFERENT PLACES THAT MARVIN HAS BEEN LOOKING FOR HIS PET: COUPLE'S BEDROOM; LIVING ROOM, KITCHEN AND STUDIO.

Tired and disappointed, Marvin Jr. finally gives up. He doesn't find Monster.

INT. ROSS' HOME - BACK YARD - LATER AFTERNOON

Ross' relatives prepare to leave.

Marvin is drinking a can of Bud. He goes to get a piece of cake.

Lucy looks at him with disappointment.

Christine decides to switch off the hi-fi.

JOHN

Good God! Finally!... I thought
this shit would never stop!

Christine hears his comment.

John and Emily smiles at her but she doesn't think it's funny.

Marvin Jr. decides to look for his pet one more time.

MARVIN JR.

Monster, Come on boy...Monster
where are you?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ROSS' HOME - LIVING ROOM - EARLY NIGHT

Marvin Jr. is sitting on the sofa. He is sad.

Lucy comes near and tries to persuade him.

LUCY

Hey, hey. Come on, Junior...
Look, if that stupid dog shows
up we will tell you, okay? Now,
we are tired and is late!

Christine approaches them.

CRISTINE

Hey, I won't lose my favorite
program because of this stupid
dog. I'm going to watch TV...

Christine walks over to the TV and switches it on. John pets Marvin Jr.'s head.

JOHN

Hey, Junior, come on, if the
Monster appears, let us take
care of him, okay? I believe
that he is around. When you come
back for Ross' birthday Monster
will be here.

Emily comes between them.

EMILY

Come on Jr. John is right.

MARVIN JR.

I can't believe it... my
Monster...has gone!

JOHN

See you at Ross' birthday party,
okay guys?

As John and Emily follow them out, Ross goes to his bedroom.

INT. ROSS' HOME - ROSS' BEDROOM - DAY

Ross arrives at his bedroom.

He looks around and he notices that all of his things are a mess.

ROSS

That stupid boy!

Ross sees that the camera and Monster's picture are on his bed.

Ross looks at the picture carefully. For a while he thinks about what happened.

For a second Jeffrey's picture, which was shown before, appears in his mind.

INSERT PICTURE: JEFFREY SCARED

ROSS

OH MY GOD!

He keeps Monster's picture and goes to his wardrobe.

Ross keeps Jeffrey's picture and compares both of them. They seem terrified.

ROSS reflectively looks at the pictures and the camera and...

ROSS

That's it!

INT. ROSS' HOME - ROSS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ross is brushing his hair in front of the mirror.

INSERT: DAYS LATER

EMILY (OS)

Ross!

ROSS

Coming mom...!

Through the mirror he sees a reflection of Fiona's poster hanging on the wall.

ROSS

(talking to his reflection in the mirror)
Ross Spencer you are going to the beach this year. Believe me... You are!

INT. ROSS' HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The house has a new look, all decorated and a lot of colored balloons hanging on the chandelier.

Marvin walks over to the table, where the tarts and cookies are. He eats some cookies with pleasure.

EMILY

(whispers to John) He looks like a pig. Doesn't he?

JOHN

Come on Emily, shut up. Leave Marvin alone.

INT. ROSS' HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lucy moves around. She observes the new wallpaper.

LUCY

Emily, this is beautiful wallpaper. It matches your new furniture. I like it, indeed.

Emily approaches her and touches the wallpaper proudly.

EMILY

You don't know how much it cost me!

LUCY

Hey, what happened with your neighbors' son?

EMILY

Who, Judy's boy?

LUCY

That's him...

EMILY

Nobody knows. Jeffrey disappeared like magic.

LUCY

Like Ross' father's family? Does

Ross know about his father's
parents?

EMILY

NO! Don't talk about this here,
okay?

LUCY

Okay, okay.
(looking around)
I don't see the Woods here...

EMILY

They moved.

LUCY

Heartbreaking!

John and Marvin get together.

MARVIN

So, did you sell that house?

JOHN

Yes, finally. We needed that
money to renovate this shitty
house!

MARVIN

Emily had really wanted her
husband's house to be sold.

Ross appears in the living room calling everyone's attention.
Marvin Jr. joins the others holding his new pet: a Kitty.
Emily goes to the kitchen.

INT. ROSS' HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Emily finds Marvin eating a piece of the birthday cake.

EMILY

Excuse me!

She lights the candles and holds the cake.

INT. ROSS' HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

They start singing " Jolly Good Fellow" enthusiastically.

ALL TOGETHER

"Ross is a jolly good fellow, Ross is a
jolly good fellow...

They continue singing as Emily gets the cake from the
kitchen. Marvin comes in after her.

ROSS

Hey guys, before I blow out the candles...

Ross is holding the camera!

ROSS (CONT.)

Let me take a picture of everyone.

EMILY

Of course son...

ROSS

Could you stay close together,
please?

They all move around the table where the cake is. They smile.

ROSS

(looking through the camera's
viewfinder)

OK! Now, everyone say cheers.

THROUGH THE VIEWFINDER: THEY ARE HAPPY TOGETHER

ALL TOGETHER

CHEERS!

The flash lights their faces.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Ross lies on the beach with his eyes closed. Ross is enjoying himself as a pretty girl is beside him. She is Fiona Fraser.

Close to him is his backpack. Part of the camera can be seen.

Ross hits the backpack, accidentally and the camera pops out on the sand. He doesn't notice it.

Fiona wakes up and goes to the water.

EXT. BEACH -DAY

A family is enjoying the sunny day near by Ross and Fiona. The man is drinking as the woman is reading a women's magazine. Near by, a 10-year old boy throws sand on them and runs.

THE WOMAN

Denny! Come here, now! You
bastard!

DENNY

No.

We follow Denny until he approaches Ross. Ross has his eyes closed.

Denny picks up Ross' camera. He looks, curiously at it and points it at Ross.

ROSS notices that.

ROSS

Oh my! Give it to me now, you asshole!!

Ross tries to get it back. Denny refuses to give it back. They fight over it and...

FLASH!

ROSS

Nooooooooo!

EXT. BEACH - DAY

A picture lies on the sand where Ross was lying down before.

INSERT PICTURE: ROSS APPEARS SCARED

Fiona finds Ross' absence weird. She decides to leave as the sand blows on the picture covering it.

INT. DENNY FAMILY'S CAR - LATER

Denny's father is driving drunk and his mother is kissing his chest, drunk too. Denny is sitting behind.

DENNY

Mom, I'd like a new bike...You promised me!

DENNY'S MOTHER

Shut up!

DENNY

Mom...

DENNY'S FATHER

Be quiet or I'll hit on you!

Denny holds Ross' camera. He looks at it then looks out side in deep thoughts.

FADE OUT