

12 Steps

by  
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FADE IN:

**INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT**

Against a dirty wall of peeling paint, sits a worn out couch, dingy, torn armrests, cushions almost flat.

A broken window lets in the only light. Tattered curtains wave, fluctuating the amount of darkness in the room.

LAUGHTER can be heard. In walks HANK(28), thin, tall, baggy pants, carrying a half empty bottle of rum.

Right on his heels, ANGIE(22), pale, skinny, long thin hair, drunkenly grabs the bottle out of Hank's hands.

HANK

Welcome home, honey.

He swings her up in his arms, carrying her, the rum bottle dangles from her hand.

ANGIE

You're supposed to carry me OVER the threshold, baby.

HANK

That's after marriage, my sweet.

He places her down on the couch and takes a seat beside her.

In seconds, he pulls out the tools of the trade. She leans toward him and anxiously, smiles.

ANGIE

Ladies first! Do me first!

She flops her arm across his lap as his lighter torches the bottom of a silver spoon.

She ties rubber tubing around her arm tight. He thumps the syringe and pushes the plunger. The needle shines in the low light.

Her welcoming vein, eagerly exposed, waits. The needle enters.

She lays back. Her eyes roll up and her bottom lip quivers.

HANK

Oh baby. Here I come!

He injects himself, his veins drinking the warm opiate. They lay on the couch together, consumed, in another world, high.

**INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - LATER**

Sunlight shines through the broken window. Angie and Hank are still passed out from a long night with ole "H".

THE EAGLES, "HOTEL CALIFORNIA" blasts from a cell phone. Hank jumps up, pulls out a phone, and answers it.

HANK

Yeah?

SPONSOR (O.C.)

Hank. You didn't show last night.

HANK

Umm, who's this?

SPONSOR (O.C.)

Your sponsor! Ugh God Hank, did you go and...

Angie, gagging, gets up and runs to the corner of the room. She bends over and vomits violently.

HANK

I gotta go man.

Hank runs to her side, holding her hair back while she hurls.

**INT. APARTMENT/BATHROOM - NIGHT**

She sits down on the toilet, her face washed out. Her hands tremble as she unwraps a pregnancy test kit.

Angie stands in front of the sink. She picks up the strip and stares in disbelief. She starts to cry.

KNOCK at the door.

HANK (O.C.)

Honey, you ok in there?

He walks in. She shows him the test strip. He puts it down and takes her in his arms. Her head twitches and her muscles jerking.

ANGIE

I don't know what to do. I gotta get off this stuff.

Their eyes meet, Hank nods, and kisses her on the cheek.

**INT. BEDROOM - MORNING**

Hank holds a trash bag under Angie. She regurgitates yellowish bile followed by a series of dry heaves.

He wipes her face with a damp wash cloth. She lays on the bed shaking, sweating and freezing all at the same time.

**INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Hank walks in with hot coffee and helps her lean forward to sip it. Putting the cup down, he reaches for her hand.

He sits next to her and looks at her suffering eyes. He reaches in his pocket and pulls out a small, black box.

He hands it to her. Her hands tremble so bad she nearly drops it. A shiny, gold ring sits inside.

She looks up. Tears of happiness stream down her face. He kisses her. His hand rests on her belly.

**INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY**

Hank, Angie and justice of the peace, stand in the court room. Their dress is less than casual.

He puts the ring on her hand and moments later they kiss.

**INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY**

Angie lays on a hospital bed. Her belly swollen. She pants. A DOCTOR stands near the end of the bed, orchestrating the birth.

DOCTOR

Ok. Push!

Seconds later, a bloody, little, whining, baby boy is laid upon a joyful but tired Angie. Hank holds the baby's fingers.

HANK

I'm so proud of your mother.

He bends over and kisses Angie on the forehead.

**EXT. AA BUILDING - NIGHT**

Hank and Angie hold hands as they enter through the door of an unmarked building.

**INT. MEETING ROOM**

They walk into a smoky room. People sit, drinking coffee, in chairs lined up facing a podium. A big sign on the wall reads: THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS.

Hank's sponsor, RAY(39), red faced, blond, thinning hair, beady eyes, walks to the podium.

RAY

Hi, I'm Ray, and I'm an alcoholic.

CROWD (V.O.)

Hi Ray!

RAY

Tonight's a special night. We have a three year celebration.

CLAPPING in the audience.

RAY (CONT'D)

Angie, come to the front, please.

Angie blushes, walks up front, and stands beside Ray.

ANGIE

Hi, I'm Angie and I'm a meth addict.

CROWD (V.O.)

Hi, Angie!

RAY

This is Angie's third year clean.

WHISTLING and CLAPPING can be heard from the audience.

Ray pulls out a copper colored medallion and holds it up. Angie leans down. Ray puts the medal around her neck.

She wipes a tear and finds her seat back by Hank. They kiss.

ANGIE

Thank you for saving me, honey.

HANK

You're worth it baby. You and my  
lil' man. I'll always be there for  
ya.

**INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

A Christmas tree sits in the corner, covered in blinking lights and an over abundance of shiny icicles.

A camera FLASHES. Angie takes photos as EDDIE(3), dirty, blond hair, big blue eyes, dives into a pile of presents.

Hank walks in and sits on the couch watching.

ANGIE

Hard to believe, our Eddie's  
already three!

HANK

Time flies. I remember how happy I  
was the day I found out.

ANGIE

Aww, honey, you've been a saint to  
us. You saved me from that crap.  
You married me, and even helped me  
in the delivery room.

She smiles and snuggles up close to him on the couch.

ANGIE (CONT'D)

You're like my knight in shining  
armor.

HANK

Coming to your emotional rescue.

They laugh.

**INT. APARTMENT/KITCHEN - MORNING**

Eggs, bacon, and toast, sit on a plate next to a steaming cup of coffee. Angie stands at the sink washing dishes.

Hank walks in and takes a seat in front of the breakfast.

HANK

Mmmm. Looks good.

From the sink, Angie, turns toward her husband.

ANGIE

Honey. I'm thinking about lookin'  
for a job.

HANK

What do you mean? I make enough.  
You don't have to work.

ANGIE

I just get depressed sitting here  
all alone. I need to get out.

HANK

We'll talk about it tonight, baby.

Little Eddie walks in the kitchen. Angie sets him in a high chair. She places a bowl of cereal on the tray.

He reaches in the bowl, pulls some cheerios out, and eats them. After a few bites, he starts tossing them on the floor.

Angie turns around and picks up the littered cereal. As she stands back up, he knocks the whole bowl off.

ANGIE

Edward Jay Owens! Quit it!

Angie drags the trash can over next to the new mess and gets down on her knees.

HANK

Gotta get to work, I'm late.

He kisses the top of Angie's head and leaves.

As Angie pushes the trash can back under the sink, something stops it. She reaches in the cabinet and pulls out a new bottle of vodka.

Eddie, cries and waves his arms in the air. She loosens the cap on the bottle. Then stops, twisting it back on tight.

Angie's hands tremble as she stares at the squealing youngster. She spins the cap and turns the bottle up, taking a huge gulp.

He screams. She guzzles.

**INT. EDDIE'S BEDROOM - LATER**

Angie carries Eddie, asleep, to his bed. She places him down.

On her way out, she stumbles, drunkenly, but catches herself. She looks back at Eddie, still fast asleep.

**INT. FRONT DOOR**

Angie shoves a handful of money in her jeans pocket. She opens the door, and disappears.

**EXT. ALLEY - DAY**

A damp, alley lined with bums and dumpsters. Angie walks up to a red door and leans beside it.

Out of the door comes a DEALER. They make an exchange.

**INT. APARTMENT/BATHROOM - AFTERNOON**

It's like deja vu as Angie sits on the toilet. Tubing squeezes her arm. Veins swell welcoming an old friend.

The needle penetrates and in seconds, almost instantly, she's lost in a warm and fuzzy world. High. Again.

She lays back on the toilet seat. A pseudo-ecstasy consumes her body. Her eyelids flutter. Her facial muscles twitch.

CRIES can be heard from the other room. The sounds don't phase her. She sits unresponsive in her own dark world.

Her eyes open and the crave pushes forward like a locomotive. She refills the syringe with more of the clear poison.

It's like an instant replay, except this time, the needle doesn't retreat. Her vein takes in half the dose. The plunger stops.

Cries from the bedroom turn into screams. They echo through the house.

She convulses. Her hand slips off the needle. She thrashes around and falls from the toilet seat to the floor.

Angie lays on the tile floor, bent out of shape, trembling. The needle hangs, half in her arm, unattended.

As the baby bawls relentlessly, the sound of the door opening and closing breaks the status quo.

HANK (O.C.)  
Honey! Angie?!

**INT. KITCHEN**

Lying on the floor, an empty bottle catches Hank's attention. He picks it up. Eddie's screams ring through the house.

Running to Eddie's room he stops, facing the bathroom.

**INT. BATHROOM**

He runs to Angie and pulls the needle out of her arm. It slides across the tile floor.

HANK

Honey! Wake up! Don't do this!

The baby screams in the background.

Hank scrambles to pull her away from the toilet. He shakes her. Tears soak his face.

He pulls out his cell phone and punches nine one one but his finger hesitates, hovering over the SEND button.

HANK (CONT'D)

Oh my god! You can't do this to me!  
To us!

Hank, sobbing, kneels over Angie. He flips the cell phone closed. Rage fills him, as he lets out an animal-like scream.

Angie lays limp in his arms. Eddie's screams are deafening now. A look of madness comes over Hank as he springs up.

**INT. EDDIE'S BEDROOM**

Eddie stands holding the rails of his crib. His face, red, swollen, soaked with tears, as he screams.

Hank runs to the crib and slams his hands down on the railing, crushing Eddie's fingers. Eddie falls back on his mattress. Eddie's little fingers are bright purple.

HANK

Now look what you made me do! Stop  
screaming!

Hank picks up Eddie and shakes him wildly. Suddenly, the screaming stops. Eddie's eyes close.

HANK (CONT'D)

Oh my God! What have I done!?

Hank sobs. He pulls a blanket up over Eddie and runs out.

**INT. BATHROOM**

Silently, she lays there. His eyes land on the syringe across the floor. He pulls his cell phone out.

He starts to dial a number and then puts the phone down on the floor as he shuffles over retrieving the syringe, half full.

In the inner bend of his arm, he slaps his veins furiously. He starts to push it in, but stops, dropping the needle to the floor.

He reaches for his phone and dials a number.

RAY (O.C.)

Hello?

HANK

Oh my God Ray! You gotta get over here! I don't know what to do!

RAY (O.C.)

Hank, have you went and bought the horse again?

HANK

No Ray! This is much worse! Fuck! Get over here! They're dead! They're both dead!

RAY (O.C.)

On my way! Stay there! Call nine one one!

**INT. GARAGE**

Hank rummages through a cabinet and pulls out some rope. He ties a noose knot at one end and throws the other end up over the garage door opener, tying it off.

He pulls a chair up under the rope. He bites his bottom lip. His temper wins as he slams his fist into the wall.

HANK

GOD! Why give it and then take it all away? I've done everything right!

He slips the noose around his neck and tightens the knot.

HANK (CONT'D)  
We've worked the twelve steps.  
We've gone to the meetings.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out his cell phone.  
Holding it near his face, he presses nine one one.

OPERATOR (V.O.)  
State your emergency.

SCREECH! Brakes sound just outside of the garage.

Hank looks up, eyes full of fear and guilt. He steps off the chair. The rope snaps his neck. His face swells.

His body jerks and convulses. His eyes roll up in his head.

**INT. FOYER**

Ray runs through the front door, continues toward the sound.  
CRYING.

**INT. EDDIE'S BEDROOM**

Little Eddie, lays in his crib crying. Ray picks him up and holds him tight. He backtracks through the house.

RAY  
Hank!

**INT. KITCHEN**

Ray dashes into the kitchen. A door across the kitchen, leading into the garage is open. He runs for it.

**INT. GARAGE**

Ray steps down into the garage to find Hank limp, hanging. Still. Dead. Sirens can be heard outside.

He turns to leave, baby still in his arms. Angie, drugged up, groggy, confused, looks at Ray holding Eddie.

He tries to hold her back, but she pushes through. Her mouth drops open in shock. There hangs Hank, bluish, limp. Dead.

FADE OUT.