

A FISTFUL OF RINGS

Written by

Simon K. Parker

simonkyleparker@hotmail.co.uk
Copyright 2025

Fade in:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE PATH - DAY

JOSH, LIAM, CHLOE, and MAYA all in their early 20's, walk along a narrow dirt path, surrounded by rolling hills and tall trees. JOSH and LIAM are animated, gesturing wildly. CHLOE and MAYA trail a few steps behind, looking less convinced. They share knowing glances, arms folded, they'd rather be anywhere else but here right now.

JOSH

(Eyes wide with
excitement)

Right, so hear me out. A week-long trek through the Appalachian mountains. Just us, the mountains, and who knows what. Dinosaurs bones. Alien crash sites. They've got everything over there. We might make a huge discovery.

LIAM

And we could film the whole thing. Start our own Youtube channel. Just need a title, four friends and the mountains. Something like that.

CHLOE

(Scoffs)

How about four friends and the week long spa. But filming. Just silence.

MAYA

And matching robes, cucumber water and deep tissue massages.

The two girls high-five each other.

JOSH

(Groans)

Go big, or don't go at all.

They continue bickering until they round a bend in the path and stop dead. A MAN, grey hair and overweight lies face down in the grass. His posture is unnatural, still. On his right hand, a collection of gold rings and a heavy gold bracelet glint in the sunlight.

LIAM

Oh, shit. Look out!

They approach cautiously. Chloe nudges the man's foot with her boot. He doesn't stir.

CHLOE
Please tell me he's just really
drunk and passed out?

Josh kneels down and puts his fingers to the man's neck. He feels for a pulse. Nothing.

JOSH
I'm not finding anything.

CHLOE
Are you even a doctor?

JOSH
(glancing back at Chloe)
Do you want to have a go.

CHLOE
I'm not touching a dead body.

JOSH
Then we agree he's dead.

Liam stares at the man's bejewelled hand.

LIAM
Look at all those rings. And that
bracelet. He's got more money on
his hand than I've got in my bank
account.

The others now lock onto the jewels.

MAYA
I'd change that to, more than all
four of us put together have in the
bank. Must be fifty thousand, just
on his fingers.

JOSH
(grinning)
Yeah, and he doesn't need them
anymore.

Josh reaches for one of the rings. Chloe slaps his hand away.

CHLOE
Are you out of your mind?

JOSH

What? You think he needs them where he's going.

MAYA

You can't take them.

JOSH

Why not? I'm broke, your broke. We're all broke. This way we all get to take our dream hoilday and have change.

Maya's eyes are wide. She looks at the man, then at Josh.

MAYA

Shit.

JOSH

Yeah, we can't give a chance like this up.

MAYA

Alright, but if you take them, you have to promise to bury him first. Give him some dignity. It's only right. If you're going to take, you've also got to give.

The guys share a look, and then nod.

JOSH

Deal. We'll give him a proper burial.

LIAM

First the rings.

Josh and Liam move closer, reaching out and taking hold, straining to pull a large signet ring from his swollen finger.

LIAM (CONT'D)

(Frustrated)

Oh come on, this is such bullshit!

JOSH

Ugh, we're not going to get them off like this.

Josh looks at the girls, who are watching with concerned expressions.

JOSH (CONT'D)

Go back to the car. We need something to get these off. Bring back grease, oil, hand lotion, whatever you can find. Anything.

Chloe and Maya exchange a reluctant glance, then turn and head back down the path.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE PATH - LATER

Josh and Liam are still wrestling with the rings. Suddenly, the "dead" man's hand twitches. Then, slowly, he pushes himself up. Josh and Liam scramble backward, terrified.

JOSH

Oh shit, he's supposed to be fucking dead!

LIAM

I thought you said he was dead!

The man glares at them, rubbing his head. His eyes bloodshot red. He might be alive but he looks like he's in terrible shape.

THE MAN

What the hell are you doing? Where am I.

JOSH

I think you need to sit back down.

THE MAN

Get the hell away from me.

The man tries to stand, swinging out a fist first at Liam then at Josh. He misses both times.

Liam instinctively grabs his swinging arm, and Josh grabs the other, but the man is heavier than they expected. They wrestle with him, and in the struggle, the back of the man's head smacks hard against a tree. A sickening thud. The man goes limp and slides to the ground. A dark pool of blood begins to form on the grass.

Josh and Liam stare at each other, their faces pale.

LIAM

Oh fuck.

JOSH
Well, now I really do think he's
fucking dead.

FADE TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE PATH - LATER

Chloe and Maya reappear, Maya carrying a small metal toolbox. They stop when they see the scene before them: the two guys staring down at the now truly dead man, blood soaking into the dirt.

MAYA
He's moved?

The two guys nod.

CHLOE
What happened?

JOSH
(Shaking his head)
I don't know. But you know when I
said he was dead before?

Now it's the two girls who nod.

LIAM
He's for sure dead now.

Maya sets the toolbox down. Josh opens it. Inside, along with a bottle of motor oil and some hand lotion, is a pair of heavy-duty bolt cutters. Chloe and Maya stare at them.

MAYA
You can't go through with this now.

CHLOE
We have to call someone?

Josh looks from the bolt cutters to the man's hand. He takes a deep breath, grabs the tool, and with a terrible scraping sound, clamps the cutters around the man's finger.

LIAM
(Horrified)
Dude, no! What are you doing?!

JOSH
(Eyes wide, almost manic)
It's the only way.
(MORE)

JOSH (CONT'D)
These rings are worth a fortune. I
can't let this slide. I can't.

Liam and Chloe lunge for him, trying to stop him, but Josh holds the bolt cutters up, threatening them.

JOSH (CONT'D)
Don't. These are mine. All of them.

He looks at Maya, she holds up her hands in surrender.

JOSH (CONT'D)
I need this.

He turns back to the body, a singular focus in his eyes. He snips off another finger. And another. He collects all the rings and puts them in his pocket.

INT. JOSH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Josh sits in front of his laptop, the glow of the screen illuminating his face. He's on a travel website. He clicks on a photo of a stunning, five-star resort in the Maldives. He types in his details, confirming a flight and a week-long stay. For one person.

He closes his laptop and smiles, putting on his jacket to leave. As he reaches the front door, he stops. Standing outside in the hallway are Liam, Chloe, and Maya. All three of them are silent. In Liam's hand is a large wrench, Chloe clutches a hammer, and Maya is holding screwdriver.

A tense silence hangs in the air. It's a standoff.

JOSH
You're not stopping me.

They're silent. But staring at him with murderous eyes.

Josh looks at the three of them, then back at his door, and finally down at his pocket. The rings feel heavy.

FADE TO BLACK.