

Break

written by

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FADE IN:

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The cozy New England home is quiet, but looks like a tornado ripped through it. Christmas decorations are up, but a most of them are part of the carnage. JOHN pushes the mess into piles with his feet.

John (30's) is a typical, disheveled stay-at-home dad. Covered in assorted food stains and possibly body fluids.

The phone in his pocket RINGS. He lets it ring two, three, four times before he finally lets out a deep sigh and answers the goddamn phone.

JOHN
Checking in on Frankie...should be
asleep by now...please, stop
calling and go enjoy yourself. Love
you, too. Bye.

STAIRWAY

He drags himself up the stairs.

INT. FRANKIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

John sits at FRANKIE'S (toddler) bedside while he sings a soft lullaby. She dreams under the dark blue moonlight as it creeps through the window shutters.

John soaks it all in. The room is quiet once John stops singing.

Behind him, in the doorway of Frankie's bedroom, is an INTRUDER--with a knife held firm in his hands.

The tip pointing right at John.

BEGIN MAIN TITLES

BEDROOM DOORWAY

John wrestles with the Intruder for control of the knife. John slams the Intruder's wrist against the corner of the door frame.

The knife drops to the ground with a resounding CLANK THUNK. John mouths the word "DUDE! WHAT THE FUCK?" and shoos him into the hallway.

BATHROOM

They burst through the door of the bathroom in a tangled bear hug.

The Intruder grabs a bar of soap from the sink and forces it into John's face.

STAIRWAY

John and the Intruder tip-toe down the stairs.

HALLWAY

John throws a slipper at the Intruder's face. It bounces off with no effect.

KITCHEN

The Intruder strangles John with a string of Christmas lights. They spin round the room until the Intruder loses his footing and bounces his head off the floor.

LIVING ROOM

John reaches for one of the Christmas villages up on the mantle, but stops short. On the wall is a FAMILY PHOTO, and he senses his wife's eyes glaring at him through the photo.

So, he grabs the modem behind the TV instead.

He almost forgets to unplug it, but before he runs off he tries to gently take out the connections in the back. Forget this, let's try something simpler.

KITCHEN

The intruder starts to get back to his feet.

John pops out from around the corner with a rolling pin and brings it down on the Intruder's head.

END MAIN TITLES

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

John's face is beat red and shaking. Blood dribbles from his nose. He GRUNTS and bares his teeth. The intruder's blood soaked hand comes from below and slaps at John's face-- pushing away with little effect.

John pushes harder on the Intruder's throat. He uses all his weight to drive down with his arms on the throat of the Intruder.

Blood spritzes from the Intruder's mouth into John's face as he coughs. John reels back, but then doubles back with even more force.

The Intruder hacks up a glob of blood into John's mouth. He wants to retch, but muscles his way through the moment of disgust.

John grabs the knife off the ground beside them and plunges it down into the throat of the Intruder.

Blood sprays into John's face.

John falls off of his assailant in shock. On the ground, he spits out blood and scurries back to his feet.

He shoots a look at the paper towel rack by the sink--no paper towels. To the hand-towel rack on the fridge, nada.

He wipes blood from his eyes, but it only makes his vision more muddled. Blind and frantic, he makes a beeline for the bathroom, but hits his crotch on the kitchen counter first.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

John sticks his head in the sink as the water runs. He struggles to fit his head under the stream of water. He tries to rinse his hands with the extra run-off.

John pulls his head out of the sink to see his progress. Virtually no change...

Watery thin blood drips, drops, and runs over everything around the sink.

He looks for a towel on the towel rack--instead he finds a hole in the wall where the rack once was.

He grabs a roll of toilet paper, pulls out an arms length, and tears it off. He wipes his arms and face with the thin paper, but it turns to shreds on contact.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

John scrubs the blood on the floor with the entire roll of toilet paper.

He tries to dab up the blood on the corpse with another roll.

He tries to roll a third roll through the blood. His mess is worse than ever.

Across the kitchen, by the washer and dryer, he sees a crumpled towel hiding behind the machine.

He jumps at the towel and wipes the remaining mess off his face and neck.

The towel is crisp. He stops and examines it, he remembers something...

QUICK FLASHBACK - IN BED

A puddle of cum sits on a woman's stomach. The towel picks up the entirety of the mess in one fell swoop.

END OF FLASHBACK

In total repulsion, he sniffs the towel.

Egad! He throws the towel, and it lands on top of the dead intruders face.

FOOTSTEPS tap, tap, tap through the ceiling.

FRANKIE (O.S.)
Daddy? Where are you?...

JOHN
Be right there, honey. Hold on,
don't move, just hold on.

John rips off his clothes and uses his shirt to wipe off the last bits of bloody mess. He turns his pants upside down to empty his pockets.

His phone plops out of his pants and into a puddle of blood. He picks the phone back up and frantically dials a number.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(nonchalant)
Hey Max, what's up? Oh it is?
Didn't even realize it was so late,
but was wonderin' if you wanted to
come over and help me fix...my
oven?

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - STAIRWAY - NIGHT

MAX (20's) is in the doorway, he looks a lot like John if he was younger and more professional. His fist knocks and thumps against the door.

He puts his face to the glass to try and see inside.

John tip toes down the stairs until he sees Max turn and start to walk away. John tries to quicken his pace.

He trips at the last step. He yanks the door open while using it as a crutch to pull himself back to his feet. He leans up against the doorframe, cool as a cucumber.

IN THE DOORWAY

JOHN
Hey, nice night, right?

MAX
Yeah...

JOHN
Wanna come in for a bit?

MAX
...yeah.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Max and John stand over the body of the intruder. John looks at the corpse--sizing it up--trying to figure out the puzzle of how to dispose of a corpse without his wife finding out.

Max keeps his eyes locked on John. He holds back a look of disbelief, and waits for his brother to explain.

JOHN
Any ideas?

MAX
Yeah, call the police.

JOHN
Can't do that.

MAX
What are you talking about?

JOHN
Kait can't find out about this--
Frankie can't find out about this.
It'll traumatize both of them...and
Kait would never let me hear the
end of this.

MAX
What is wrong with you?

EXT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Max and John carry the body stuffed inside a black contractor's trash bag. The body sags in the middle, and the brothers awkwardly bump into everything including themselves as they walk.

Max drops his end on the stairs leading into the yard.

JOHN

You alright?

MAX

No, yeah, I'm good. Just carrying a fucking dead body through your house in the middle of the night got me a little on edge.

JOHN

Wanna pick that back up? My ends getting heavy.

Max's face scrunches up as every ounce of his being struggles to hold back a tidal wave of anger. Instead, he picks up his end of the body bag.

EXT. FIRE PIT - CONTINUOUS

The dead body sits in the fire pit. His arms, legs, and head dangle outside of it.

MAX

This is so wrong.

JOHN

You're right.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

John and Max stand under a halo of light in the basement. The lone bulb shines bright in the dark cellar. John grips an antique, rusted bow saw.

The Intruder's body is laid out on a crumpled blue tarp.

John takes a knee next to the body. He measures up the job before him, clearly unsure of what he's doing, by practicing strong swift strokes of his saw.

He picks out a limb carefully. He lifts it on to his knee. Without hesitation, he plops the saw on the arm. With one brave stroke he begins to saw at the base.

Blood sprays everywhere.

INT. BASEMENT STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

John and Max carry the condensed black bag with ease.

JOHN
Much better.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The duo navigates round the kitchen with surgical precision until John, without warning, places one end of the bag on the kitchen island counter top.

MAX
Don't put that on your counter.

JOHN
Hold on, I'm thirsty.

John pulls open the fridge doors and scans the contents of the empty fridge. Either milk or...

Max is numb with disbelief. Unable to even speak. He watches John pour a glass. Then drink. Then pour another glass.

Enough of this shit. Max reaches for the opposite end of the body on his own.

With one slip of the hand, the body tumbles like a brick to the floor.

JOHN (CONT'D)
What the fuck, dude?

MAX
What the fuck? What the fuck? What the fuck, fuck you. I'm not just going to sit in your kitchen holding a chopped up dead body while you drink a glass of fucking juice.

JOHN
It's milk.

FOOTSTEPS trickle into John and Max's conversation. Light at first. They both freeze.

They follow the sound above them until they can hear the creak of the top stair in the adjacent hallway.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Frankie...

John panics and jumps around the room. Christmas tree, fridge, silver bells, fireplace, Santa hat--he's got it.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Frankie rubs her eyes. Her tiny feet take soft, hushed steps in-between hard blinks as tries to wake up.

She fumbles with the door handle until, with a slow turn, she eases the door open.

KITCHEN

Max is dressed up in a Santa suit with the black bag slung over his shoulder.

His face is beat red. Perspiration builds by the second. Holy hell this dead body is heavy.

MAX

Ho, ho, ho. What are you doing up at this hour little girl?

FRANKIE

Uncle Max?

MAX

No, no. It's me Santa Claus.

FRANKIE

Uncle Max, why you dressed like Santa?

MAX

I'm not Uncle Max, I'm Santa, it's really me. And it's very late and you should really get back to sleep little Frankie.

FRANKIE

Why you carrying that big bag, Uncle Max?

Frankie's innocent little hand reaches out and pokes the bag. She pulls her hand back, and looks at her finger.

Red sticky stuff?

John explodes out from around the corner. He scoops her up in his arms and rushes her out of the room.

HALLWAY

He uses his shirt to wipe her finger clean.

JOHN
Hunny, what are you doing up?

FRANKIE
I got scared, daddy.

JOHN
Let's lay back down, hun.

FRANKIE
Daddy, why's Uncle Max dressed like Santa Claus?

BEDROOM

Frankie cuddles up in her bed. John pulls the covers up over her shoulders and tucks them gently under her.

JOHN
Good night, Frankie.

FRANKIE
He was in the kitchen, dressed like Santa Claus. It's kinda weird.

JOHN
That's one funny dream you were having.

FRANKIE
It wasn't a dream.

JOHN
Love you, too.

EXT. FIRE PIT - DAWN

The fire crackles in the morning air. The calm of the dawn almost makes everything seem normal...except for the dismembered hand in the fire.

JOHN
Kinda wish we had some marshmallows or something. Pass the time.

DARCY (O.S.)
What are you boys doin' up so
early?

Darcy stands in the porch doorway for a moment before making her way over to John and Max.

She inspects the yard with every step. As she gets closer to the boys she can smell something rotten in the air. Could be the fear in John and Max's sweat. Could be the burning flesh in the campfire.

MAX
Hey Darcy.

JOHN
Howdy darlin'.

DARCY
Hi Max.

She almost walks right through John. She gets right up in his face. She inspects every minuscule muscle twitch and reaction, and then looks down at the fire.

In the flames, a full human hand.

DARCY (CONT'D)
The house looks nice.

She looks back at John. That "I'm gonna pretend this isn't a human hand in our fire pit" look in her eyes.

DARCY (CONT'D)
I'm gonna go inside and lay down a
bit. The girls kept me out pretty
late.

JOHN
Good idea, get some sleep. If
Frankie wakes up, come get me.

She purses her lips, is there anything left to say at this point? No, so she heads back to the house.

DARCY (O.S.)
That fire smells like shit, John.

JOHN
Sorry, Darce.

Max's face is crinkled up like the plastic bag they used to carry around the dead body. What the fuck is going on here?

MAX
This is so fucked up.

JOHN
Yeah.

MAX
She is totally enabling this kind
of behavior.

JOHN
You too.

Defeat. Max turns back to the fire, and let's it go.

John watches his wife disappear back into the house. A smile
on his face.

All is well in suburbia.

FADE OUT.