

HOUSE DIVIDED

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SMALL HOUSE - DAY

An ordinary, moderately-cared-for house in the country.

A car swings into the driveway, pulls to a stop left of another.

RICHARD, 78, steps from the car, grabs a bag of groceries from the back seat, heads for the house.

He steps onto the front porch where two welcome mats lie side-by-side. He wipes his feet on the left mat, reaches for the door.

INT. SMALL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Two of everything. TVs. Recliners. Side tables.

In fact, the room is split right down the middle, as marked with faded SPRAY PAINT across the aging carpet.

Richard pushes the front door closed. He heads for the

KITCHEN

Richard sets the groceries on the counter.

The kitchen, just like the living room, is divided--there are lines everywhere.

The aging stove--split--two burners on each side of a line. The table. The counter. Everything divided by faded paint, weathered tape, whatever else was handy in the moment a long time ago.

Richard, standing left of a line on the floor, empties the bag, setting some of the food left of a line on the counter, some on the right.

He pulls out two cartons of milk, opens the fridge, where, yes--there's a line down the middle. He places one carton left, one right.

He peeks around a corner, looks down the divided hallway.

RICHARD

They didn't have your pretzels.

Receiving no reply, he turns, drops his car keys into one of two bowls on a shelf.

INT. SMALL HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Richard places a can of shaving cream on the left side of a shelf in the medicine cabinet.

Even the toilet lid is divided by a once brightly colored stripe of paint.

Richard pops the lid, sprinkles a bit of cleaner on the left side, gives it a good swish with a toilet brush and--using only his half of the toilet handle--flushes.

Biased to his side of the sink, he washes his hands, turns off the water using only half the striped handle.

INT. SMALL HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Richard removes his jacket as he ambles down the left side of the hallway.

RICHARD

I was thinking of going to the  
tavern tonight. Play some poker  
with the guys.

He turns into the

BEDROOM

Divided. Like everything in this house.

RICHARD

Honey? Did you hear me?

The room appears empty.

RICHARD

Honey?

A voice calls out. Weak.

LIZZY (O.S.)

Down here.

Richard peers over the bed to see: LIZZY, 79, frail, lying on the floor...right of a line.

RICHARD

What happened? Are you okay?

LIZZY

No. My heart...I think this might  
be it.

He panics, but he can't reach her--not without crossing a line. Finally, he rotates the bed cover so that the stripe on it runs sideways.

Staying left of the line, he scrambles across the bed, looks down at her.

LIZZY  
Maybe call for help?

Richard hurriedly pulls a cell phone from his pocket. His hands shake as he tries to dial. In fact, they shake so badly, he drops the phone.

The phone bounces off the bed, lands at Lizzy's feet--on the wrong side of the line.

His shoulders slump: This is bad.

She looks up. Her phone sits on a table, right of the bed. It's not an option.

LIZZY  
Stay with me?

RICHARD  
Of course.

INT. SMALL HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT - HOURS LATER

Both lie where they were.

RICHARD  
You wanna try and get up?

She shakes her head, the movement weak.

LIZZY  
I don't think it's long now.

RICHARD  
You're everything to me, you know?

LIZZY  
I know. And, you to me.

He rolls over, stares at the ceiling. After a few long moments...

RICHARD  
You wanna talk about it?

LIZZY  
Talk about what?

RICHARD  
It.

Silence fills the room. Until...

LIZZY  
Are you going to apologize?

RICHARD  
For what? I didn't do anything  
wrong.

LIZZY  
Then, no.

LATER

Richard lies on his back. Eyes closed.

He hears: a GROAN. Low. Final.

He opens his eyes. Doesn't blink. Doesn't dare look.

EXT. SMALL HOUSE - DAY

Richard stands on the porch, watches a hearse pull away.

He turns for the house, looks at the two welcome mats.

He wipes his feet on the left mat.

INT. SMALL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Richard toes the line.

He extends his foot. Just a little.

A little more.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

He pulls his foot back.

INT./EXT. SMALL HOUSE - ENTRANCE - DAY

Richard stands in the doorway. On the porch, MELVIN, 50s,  
fancy suit, stands tall.

MELVIN

Richard?

Melvin extends a stack of papers.

MELVIN

I was Lizzy's lawyer.

Richard reads, hands the papers back. Nods.

Melvin turns...WHISTLES. Motions: LET'S GO.

INT. SMALL HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Richard sits at the table, finishes a sandwich.

The line on the table is gone. Only remnants remain. In fact, all of the lines are gone, best as they can be erased.

He pushes from the table, shuffles to the

LIVING ROOM

Again, no lines.

Only one TV. One chair. One side table.

He slips on a jacket and a pair of mittens.

Richard settles into the chair.

He closes his eyes, ready to nap.

Behind him (this is the first time we see it) large sheets of plastic ripple in the wind--covering a large, gaping hole--where the rest of the house used to be.

EXT. SMALL HOUSE - DAY

Only the left half of the house remains.

The right side is gone. Torn away. The dirt smoothed over.

FADE OUT.