

Kisses of Death

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

A night of partying for RUBY and JORDAN (20s) has extended to daybreak. The tipsy couple sways arm in arm down a sidewalk.

At random they stop and kiss, stumbling in drunken passion against a knotty old tree, never once breaking their embrace.

If Ruby and Jordan were more aware of their surroundings they would see that they're on the weedy lawn of an eyesore house.

They would also realize that they are being watched.

Spying on the couple through a dirty window is the property owner, ECKHARD SAUER (60s).

As Ruby and Jordan make out in silly bliss, Eckhard plods out his front door, shambles down the rickety steps, and stops inches from the occupied young lovers.

Ruby sniffs and scowls from the stench wafting from Eckhard.

RUBY
Something reeks.

She gasps when she spots Eckhard and recoils at his ugliness.

On his face are a dozen moles that are as plump and lumpy as caterpillars.

Sprouting from his bald head are countless pink-gray warts.

His lips: chapped, blistered, curled downward. The bushy, crazy hair that grows from his ears is long enough to comb.

ECKHARD
Get off my lawn!

His voice has the shrillness of a dentist's drill.

ECKHARD
Fornicators!

The kissing is definitely over now. The giddy-tipsy feeling for Ruby and Jordan has been replaced by shock.

Jordan sputters.

JORDAN
Sorry, dude. Our bad.

It takes Ruby a moment to get her bearings. Anger takes over.

RUBY
Don't apologize.

She takes one small step toward Eckhard.

RUBY
Mind your own business, asshole.

Her flawless skin and glossy hair are the complete antithesis of his putrid features. They couldn't be more opposite.

JORDAN
(defensively)
Yeah, we were kissing, bro. That's it.

RUBY
He grabbed my ass. I grabbed his.

ECKHARD
Trespassers!

RUBY
Hold on. You were watching us,
which makes you the trespasser.

ECKHARD
I witnessed your disgrace!

Ruby shouts out so everyone on the block can hear her.

RUBY
Hey, everyone! You've got a pervert
in your shitty little neighborhood!
We watches people make out!

Eckhard's gaze upon Ruby is fierce.

ECKHARD
Do you want perversion?

He plants his fingertips on his lips as if he's going to blow Ruby a kiss.

ECKHARD
I'll show you perversion.

He bounds close to Ruby and touches her cheek with his hand.

He has planted his "kiss" upon her.

Ruby jumps back. Jordan steps in.

JORDAN
Don't touch her!

Ruby wipes the spot on her cheek where Eckhard made contact.
A fresh pink splotch sprouts on her skin.

JORDAN
Back off, man! Seriously!

Jordan turns to her.

JORDAN
Are you okay, Ruby?

She nods. Stunned.

Eckhard trudges back to his creepy house, never looking back.

Ruby's voice is hollow.

RUBY
Let's get out of here, Jordan.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jordan and Ruby sleep. He rolls over toward her, just a few inches away.

He sniffs, coughs, and wakes up.

JORDAN
God, something stinks.

Ruby wakes up.

JORDAN
Do you smell that?

Jordan snaps on the light.

JORDAN
Something died, I think.

His eyes widen when he catches sight of Ruby.

JORDAN
Damn. What's that on your face?

A three-inch mole protrudes on Ruby's face--precisely on the spot where Eckhard touched her skin.

Ruby gingerly touches it and rushes to the bathroom for a closer look.

INT. - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Tears fill Ruby's eyes as she looks at the monstrosity growing on her cheek.

More bad news: A few warts are sprouting atop her forehead.

Jordan pokes his head into the room. He has his T-shirt pulled over his nose to deal with the smell Ruby emits.

JORDAN

You need to see a dermatologist.

RUBY

That creepy dick face gave me some kind of skin disease.

JORDAN

I can smell it. Something's rotting.

RUBY

You should've kept him away from me.

JORDAN

I tried.

RUBY

You didn't really defend me, did you? You didn't have my back.

Ruby rubs her hair in frustration and a handful of it falls out into the sink.

She cries out. Jordan staggers back.

RUBY

Shit.

JORDAN

You need to see a doctor, Ruby.

She reaches out to him for a comforting hug, her hand full of her own hair.

Jordan stays far away.

JORDAN

I should go back to my place.

RUBY

Are you serious? You can't go.

JORDAN
What if you're contagious?

Ruby approaches him, but he dodges her.

Her close proximity and the odor she emits causes him to gag.

JORDAN
I'm sorry...I...

He rushes out.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jordan heads straight for the door.

JORDAN
I'm sorry. I'll call you later.

Out he goes, leaving Ruby all alone.

RUBY
Jordan?

Her voice is just a whisper.

RUBY
Don't go.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Littered across the counter are dozens of prescription skin creams and pills.

Clearly, Ruby has made several visits to the dermatologist.

She has a towel draped over her head. Light sobs from underneath.

Slowly, hesitantly, she removes the coverings and gazes into the mirror. Her transformation is shocking.

The fat mole on her cheek has grown and replicated. A half dozen plump ones have planted themselves on her cheeks, chin, and forehead.

Even worse, most of her hair is gone. A few strands hang limply like the last dead leaves on a fall tree.

Everywhere on the top of her head are flaring warts.

She is, in essence, almost the spitting image of Eckhard.

Ruby clutches her phone. She makes a call, which goes straight to message.

RUBY
Jordan, it's me.

She wipes a tear.

RUBY
Nothing seems to be working. None
of the doctors are any help.

Grits her teeth.

RUBY
I know you don't want to be around
me, but it would really help me to
hear your voice right now.

She pokes one of her moles.

RUBY
Don't abandon me.

Her phone goes dead. Ruby sits alone in the forlorn bathroom.

RUBY
I've got to do something.

EXT. ECKHARD'S FRONT PORCH - DAY

A scarf draped over her head, Ruby knocks hesitantly on the front door.

She checks her coat pocket. A sharp knife is in there--just in case things get serious.

After an agonizing wait, Eckhard opens his door. His face invokes full-on dread.

RUBY
You remember me don't you?

A grim smirk from Eckhard. He shuts the door in her face.

Ruby won't be denied. She pounds and pushes.

RUBY
Open up! I need to talk with you!

Eckhard swings the door open again.

RUBY

My skin. My hair. I came down with something. I was hoping that you could help me get over it.

Amusement on Eckhard's face.

ECKHARD

Remove the coverings from you head.

Wincing with embarrassment, Ruby removes her scarf.

Warts, moles, dead skin, baldness. Eckhard takes it all in.

ECKHARD

You look...

A slight smile.

ECKHARD

Stunning. Beautiful.

RUBY

No.

A tear rolls down her cheek.

RUBY

I was hoping that you could help me. You're the one who did this to me, right?

Eckhard stares.

RUBY

So I thought maybe if I apologized, you could help make me the way I used to be. Something tells me that you can do that.

A deep swallow.

RUBY

So I apologize for being on your property. For kissing. For yelling at you. For calling you a pervert. That was wrong.

ECKHARD

Indeed it was.

He grins.

ECKHARD

Are you admitting that you are a trespasser and a fornicator?

Ruby hesitates. Nods. Yes.

RUBY

So is there a way you could...you know...undo what you've done?

ECKHARD

Undo?

RUBY

My skin. My hair.

ECKHARD

But you've never been more radiant.

RUBY

Please. Fix this.

Eckhard lightly strokes one of her moles.

ECKHARD

No.

He starts to close the door, but Ruby blocks it.

RUBY

Stop!

He pushes. She pushes back.

She pulls out her knife.

RUBY

I'll kill you! Don't you dare shut the door on me!

There's an opening. Ruby swings her arm quickly and plunges the knife into Eckhard's chest.

Shock. Her eyes widen. Eckhard sways...

But he does not fall to the ground. After several long moments, he pulls the knife out of his chest.

Not a drop of blood spills. He's completely unharmed.

He tosses the knife to the ground and grabs Ruby's hand.

ECKHARD

Join me inside.

Ruby stammers, overcome with disbelief.

Eckhard comes closer and sniffs her. The scent of her warts intoxicates him.

ECKHARD

I insist.

Ruby is unable to resist. Some sort of trance has taken hold.

She steps into the dark hallway with Eckhard and he shuts the door. It sounds somewhat like the closing of a tomb.

EXT. ECKHARD'S FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Jordan stands warily at Eckhard's front door before he knocks.

JORDAN

Hello?

No answer. Jordan calls out loudly.

JORDAN

I'm here because my girlfriend is missing. Nobody can get in contact with her. Not her mother or her friends. Her name is Ruby.

He shuffles nervously.

JORDAN

I'm taking a shot in the dark here. There's a chance she might have come by here because we had a little conflict a few nights ago. Do you remember that?

He knocks again.

JORDAN

Are you in there? Is anybody there?

He moves around to the side of the house.

One of the windows is open. A dark curtain sways in the night breeze.

Jordan spots a large stone planter and drags it over so he can get a look inside the house.

After a bit of a struggle, he pulls himself up to the window and peers.

The interior is completely dark, but there is some shuffling inside.

A shrill voice sounds in the room's darkness.

RUBY
You found me, Jordan.

It hardly sounds like Ruby at all.

JORDAN
Is that you baby?

All at once, Ruby thrusts at Jordan, basically coming nose to nose with him in the open window.

He screams at her gruesome appearance.

RUBY
Kiss me, Jordan!

He gasps. Stammers. Ruby's blistering lips are a fraction of an inch away.

She pulls Jordan close and gives him the deepest kiss imaginable, so intense that some of her warts rupture onto his face.

He topples and falls to the ground. His legs are already pumping, even though they aren't in contact with the ground. The desire to flee is that intense.

INT. ECKHARD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

As Ruby watches Jordan dash away, Eckhard approaches her, standing by her side.

They don't say anything for a long time.

Very gradually, Eckhard places his arm around Ruby.

Slowly she leans into him and kisses him the same way she kissed Jordan on that drunken night not so long ago.

Her transformation is sadly complete.

FADE OUT: