

LIFE OR DEATH

(c) Copyright 2017.

FADE IN:

INT. HARRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A spotless area with slick, modern furnishings.

HARRY (early 40s) sits at a table. In front of him, a bowl of untouched cereal, and a walkie talkie.

He taps his fingers on the table, stares at the walkie talkie. Waiting.

A sound comes from it. Eventually. Static, then a man's voice.

VOICE (V.O.)
Harry? You there?

Harry snatches the walkie talkie, presses the talk button.

HARRY
Jesus, Rich, you said nine.

VOICE (V.O.)
What time is it now?

HARRY
After ten.

VOICE (V.O.)
Oh. Battery's gone in the clock.

HARRY
I have plenty here.

VOICE (V.O.)
Clocks?

HARRY
No, batteries.

VOICE (V.O.)
Oh.

Harry rolls his eyes.

HARRY
You coming?

VOICE (V.O.)
Leaving in ten.

HARRY
Ok, be careful. Make sure she's ok.

VOICE (V.O.)
She's fine. See you in a bit.

Harry pushes the walkie talkie across the table, digs into the cereal.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

The doorbell rings.

Harry comes through the living room door, to the front door. He stops in front of it, feels a KNIFE at the back of his waistband, covers it with his shirt.

Deep breath.

He opens up. There stands RICH (mid 40s) with a beaming smile, behind a wheelchair. In the wheelchair sits MUM (70s), duct tape covering her mouth, arms fastened with belts to the arms of the wheelchair.

Her eyes fix on Harry, angrily. Her iris' a cloudy yellow colour. Her body shakes violently in the chair.

Harry looks at Rich, nods a welcome.

HARRY
Rich.

His eyes shift to Mum.

HARRY
Mum.

He stands back from the frame of the door.

HARRY
Please come in.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Rich wheels Mum through the doorway. Harry follows close behind.

RICH
Where's best to leave her then?

HARRY
Leave her?

RICH
Set her down? Park her?

HARRY
Oh. Anywhere.

Rich parks the chair in the middle of the room, Mum faces the widescreen TV, still convulsing.

HARRY
She always do that?

RICH
The shaking? Yeah, Think it's the smell.

HARRY
Smell?

RICH
Of us. You know? Wanting to eat us 'n' all.

Harry shoots him a scolding look.

HARRY
Don't say that.

RICH
What? Don't admit our mother's a zombie?

Harry covers his ears.

HARRY
Stop!

RICH
I know, cliché isn't it? Give me a week to come up with a reason for the apocalypse and I could come up with better than fucking zombies.

HARRY
Seriously, stop saying that word.

Harry rubs his fingers through his hair.

HARRY
What'll we do with her?

RICH
Put the telly on.

HARRY
Serious?

RICH
Yeah, it calms her.

Harry walks to the DVD player on the unit under the TV, bends down to it, looks back to his brother.

HARRY
Miss Congeniality Two?

Rich rolls his eyes, turns to the door into the kitchen.

RICH
You're lucky she's half dead.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Harry and Rich sit at the table. Rich looks around, observes the surroundings.

RICH
Still keeping the place nice and tidy.

Harry nods.

An awkward silence.

HARRY
What was so important then?

RICH
So important that I had to walk my mother half a mile to see my brother?

HARRY
You know what I mean. They said not to--

Rich slams a fist on the table.

RICH
We haven't heard from them in
weeks.

Harry looks to the floor, swallows a lump in his throat.

RICH
What I mean is, we don't really
know what's going on. Maybe we have
to take risks.

With a prolonged blink, Harry nods.

RICH
I had to talk to you about her.

Rich nods to the open door leading into the living room.

HARRY
She looks worse.

RICH
Yeah.

Rich scratches at his neck.

RICH
I can't let her keep living like
this.

Harry shoots him a stare.

HARRY
What do you mean?

RICH
You can see she's getting worse

HARRY
We can't.

Harry bolts up from his seat, goes to the kettle on the
counter. Flicks a switch.

HARRY
Tea?

Rich nods, stares through the open door to where Mum sits.

A BANG on the back door behind Rich.

He turns, sharpish.

Through the glass door, stand two half dead people. A MAN (50s) and WOMAN (50s), both showing their teeth, snarling. Both with the same cloudy, yellow eyes as Mum.

RICH
Jesus, when did John and Angie
turn?

Harry stands, stirring cups of tea.

HARRY
Oh, about a week ago now.

RICH
You know how?

HARRY
Just heard screams. I suppose one
of them things got to them.

Rich turns to his brother.

RICH
And you didn't do anything?

HARRY
You know we're not supposed to--

RICH
--leave our homes. I know.

Harry brings two cups of tea to the table, takes a seat, looks at JOHN and ANGIE as they bang on the glass.

HARRY
Everyday, they come over. Trying to
get in.

RICH
Some things never change, eh?

Harry releases an ever so slight chuckle.

They both take sips of tea.

Rich gets up, closes the curtains to shut out the sight of John and Angie.

He stands over Harry.

RICH
We have to do something.

HARRY
You closed the curtains. They'll go
away soon enough.

RICH
About Mum.

HARRY
Don't be silly. When they find a
cure--

RICH
--Who? It's been weeks.

HARRY
We'll hear something soon.

RICH
What if we don't?

Harry shrugs.

RICH
You haven't spent every day with
her, Harry. She's trapped. Alone.
And I know we can do something
about that.

Harry rubs his face.

HARRY
I can't.

Rich walks to the counter, leans against it, stares Harry
down.

RICH
Have you got any old photos?

Confusion washes over Harry.

HARRY
What?

RICH
Photos. From before this happened?

HARRY
They're all in the attic.

RICH
You don't look at them now that
it's all gone tits up?

Harry shakes his head.

RICH
Just locked yourself up 'til it all
blows over, eh?

Harry looks away, ashamed.

HARRY
The barbecue.

RICH
What?

HARRY
From last summer. I have the home
video on DVD. That's what I look
at.

RICH
Perfect.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Harry stands behind Mum, both face the TV. Harry with his arms folded, Mum, again, violently shakes.

Rich is at the DVD player, puts in a disk, presses play.

He jumps up and stands beside Harry.

RICH
This it?

Harry nods.

INSERT: TV

Happier times. People laugh, drink beer, eat food.

Harry flips burgers at a barbecue. A WOMAN (early 40s) whispers in his ear, laughs and kisses him on the cheek.

BACK TO SCENE

Harry's eyes fill with tears, he looks away.

Rich notices, puts a hand on his brother's shoulder.

RICH
Sorry, bro.

Mum stares at the screen, no longer shakes.

Rich creeps up behind her, undoes one of the belts, frees her right arm.

HARRY
What the fuck, Rich?

Rich gives Harry a shush gesture, gently takes the tape from Mum's mouth.

HARRY
Rich!

This time, Rich ignores his brother as he undoes the belt from Mum's left arm.

Now free, Mum gets up from her seat, walks to the TV.

She stands in front of the screen, almost smiles at the pictures being shown. She rubs the screen with her hand, lets out a low, sad groan.

Harry peels his gaze from his mother to Rich.

HARRY
(whispering)
What's happening?

RICH
The memories. They calm her, I think. Like she remembers.

Harry shakes his head, amazed.

HARRY
Shit. This is amazing.

Rich slowly brandishes a syringe full of cloudy liquid from his pocket.

RICH
Which is why we have to help her.

HARRY
What's that?

RICH
Our cure.

More confusion hits Harry.

HARRY
Our cure?

RICH
So we can help Mum. We can truly be
with her.

Harry continues to stare at his brother. Lost.

RICH
This whole thing spreads through
saliva, right?

He waves the syringe in the air, above his head.

HARRY
That's Mum's?

RICH
Look, I'm not proud of what I had
to do. You're not around her every
minute of every day though.

Harry shakes his head in disbelief.

HARRY
You've lost it, Rich.

RICH
No. I've thought about this for
weeks. We have to do this.

The DVD comes to an end. The screen turns black.

Mum turns to her sons, rage returns to her face, she
releases a shattering scream.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Through the open door, we see Rich hurry toward us.

RICH
This way we can finally be there
for our mother.

He slams the door shut, penning them in the living room.

Behind the doors; the sound of Mum's screams, a scuffle, a
man screaming in pain, a loud thud.

Then, silence.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Harry sits in the middle of the room.

Two bodies lie either side of him. Mum and Rich.

Blood spills from both of their heads, a knife sticking out of Rich's.

Shock and terror is etched all over Harry's face.

Blood seeps through his fingers as he clutches a wound on his wrist.

His eyes close. A tear rolls down his cheek. They open again. His sky blue iris' slowly turn cloudy yellow.

FADE OUT.