

Ruined

By

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FADE IN

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

It's fall and the sun is about to rise on a ranch style house and its patchy lawn and messy garden.

A pristine late model car pulls into the driveway.

HENRY, 40's, gets out. He's dressed conservatively in a plain woolen sweater and tidy jeans. His hair is short and neatly combed.

He straightens up his sweater, grabs an overnight bag from the backseat of the car and heads towards the...

...FRONT DOOR

The door opens and there stands JOAN, early 50's, shy, a little overweight and hunched. She's dressed in a stained oversized sweater and baggy track pants. Her hair seems to coincide with her attire, hanging off her, thick and messy. She smiles at Henry.

JOAN

(softly spoken)

Hey. You made it. How was the drive?

Henry walks in past her.

HENRY

Yeah it was okay. A bit long.

INT. HOUSE ENTRANCE/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

He stops, looks down the old dimly lit hallway then scratches at the back of his neck.

HENRY

God, I hate this place.

He heads down the hall and disappears into a room. Walks straight back out again.

HENRY

I told you to put the stuff for goodwill in the living room. I can't sleep in there.

JOAN

Sorry, I didn't think you'd mind using your old room. I thought you were over that closet thing.

HENRY

(sarcastically)

I know Joan, I'm an adult, there's no such thing as monsters.

He heads into his bedroom. Joan watches.

HENRY (O.S)

I just don't like sleeping in here.

JOAN

It's only junk.

Henry pokes his head around the door.

HENRY

Yeah, and why did it always end up Getting stuffed in my closet.

Joan shrugs. Henry disappears back into his room.

Joan looks towards the darkened end of the hallway. She stares at something in the blackness. A shadow quickly moves out of the dark and disappears into the wall. She doesn't react.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM

The room and furniture are dated but tidy. A single bed, bedside table and lamp, dresser and two-door standalone closet fill the space.

Darryl throws his bag on the bed, sits down and takes a nostalgic look around the room.

He gets up, heads to the dresser and pulls out the top drawer. A heart with the words 'I Love Lornie', are etched in the wood.

He gently caresses it.

His gaze turns towards the closet.

He tentatively heads towards it.

The closet's two doors are latched together. He stands in front of it, scratches at the back of his neck, takes a breath in, then out, reaches towards the latch and quickly flicks it up.

The doors fly open forcing Henry to jump back.

HENRY
God Damn it!

A large filled rubbish bag, some small boxes and a heavy bowling ball bag tumble out around his feet.

He kicks at the big rubbish bag in retaliation.

His eyes probe the contents of the closet. There's still more junk in there. It's a miracle the door shut in the first place.

He slams the doors then shoves and kicks the pile of junk to the corner of the room.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The kitchen is dated and a little cluttered. Joan is at the counter pouring milk into two coffee mugs. A kettle is heating up on the stove.

HENRY (O.S)
Nothing's changed with my closet.

He walks into the kitchen with a small gift-wrapped box in his hand.

HENRY
It's still full of crap.

He sits down at the table, puts the box down in front of him.

HENRY
Happy Belated Birthday sis, hope you like it.

Joan spoons instant coffee into the cups, her back to Henry.

Henry notices Joan's grubby pants. A long dribble of ketchup has dried on the side of the leg.

She turns and glances at the present.

JOAN

Thank you.

She turns back to the cups.

HENRY

I'm going to have to leave a day earlier, so we need to start boxing stuff straight away.

JOAN

Have you heard from them yet?

HENRY

What? The gas company? I thought that was fixed.

The kettle starts whistling loudly. Joan turns and gives Henry a stressed look.

JOAN

No! About Mum and Dad.

Henry leers at the kettle, then Joan. The whistling blares.

HENRY

No. I haven't Joan.

Henry gets up, his eyes fixed on the kettle. Joan finally picks it up, takes it off the stove.

JOAN

Do you think they'll find them?

Henry scoffs a laugh as he sits back down.

HENRY

I don't know. I'm not psychic.

Joan pours water into the cups.

JOAN

It's not funny.

HENRY

I'm not saying it's funny, I'm saying you can't expect me to know.

She stirs the coffee vigorously.

HENRY

They're NOT going to find them
Joan. If they haven't washed up
by now I don't think they're ever
going to.

Joan takes the coffees over to the table. Her face
dead-pan. She doesn't make eye contact.

HENRY

Anyway, they loved the sea. Think
of them as buried at sea.

Joan sits. Henry awkwardly puts his hand on her arm.

Suddenly a door SLAMS.

They both jerk with fright. Henry looks towards the
door, scratches at his neck. His eyes anxious and alert.

HENRY

Have you got the windows open?

JOAN

They are here in the house.

HENRY

(getting up)
Hang on.

JOAN

Their ghosts are here.

He listens for noise and not to Joan. He heads out of
the kitchen.

JOAN

(loud voice)
I've seen Mum. And I hear lots of
noises I never use to.

INT. JOAN'S BEDROOM

Henry walks in, flicks on the light. The furniture is
old and worn. Curtains are closed. Drawings of roses
hang all around the room. Each picture is so well drawn
they look like photos. Henry looks at them, annoyed.

JOAN (O.S)
(yelling out)
And the lights are always on in the
morning.

Henry heads for the windows. Checks them, they're
closed.

INT. PARENT'S BEDROOM

The door flies open, Henry walks in, flicks on the
light. The room is tidy. The curtains are drawn. He
checks the windows. They're closed.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

JOAN
(yelling out)
Dad's fishing rods are all neatly
put back against the wall. Last time
I saw them they were on the floor.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Henry checks the windows, closed.

JOAN (O.S)
(loud voice)
They still slam the doors. You know,
like when they'd always fight.

He hears Joan's last comment, stops, shakes his head
and storms out of the room into the..

...KITCHEN

He storms in. Looks hard at Joan.

HENRY
Are you off your meds?

He goes to the cupboard and gets a couple of pill
bottles out. Reads the labels. Takes some out. Puts
them on the table in front of Joan.

HENRY
The rose's are a little over the
top don't you think?

Joan looks at the pills like they are going to get up and eat her.

Henry gets a glass of water and bangs it down next to the tablets.

HENRY

Take them or I'm going to ring the hospital.

She stares at the pills. Henry pushes them closer to her.

JOAN

Those are mums. I don't take those.

HENRY

Nice try, they have your name on them.

Joan picks up the pills puts them in her mouth takes a drink and swallows.

HENRY

Show me.

Joan opens her mouth, Henry checks.

HENRY

Good.

Henry picks up his coffee. Joan looks down at her coffee.

JOAN

Why are you sad all the time? Is it because of Lornie? She wouldn't want you to be sad. I miss her.

HENRY

I'm going in to rest.

He heads out.

JOAN

(loud)

Did you want breakfast?

HENRY (O.S)

No.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The lamp on the bedside table illuminates the room. A small plate of cheese and crackers lay next to it.

The wind outside is wild. A branch scratches furiously against the window.

Henry sits up in bed and reads his phone. A glass of milk in one hand. Phone in the other.

He puts the milk down. Takes a couple of crackers off the plate, stuffs them in his mouth, takes a drink then slowly chews.

His eyes look up from the phone toward the closet.

He chews faster, puts his phone down, throws the covers off, flings himself out of bed and heads over to it.

He opens the doors and aggressively shoves the left-over junk as far back into the closet as he can, shuts the doors then heads back to bed.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM - LATER

Street lights illuminate the room. Henry is now fast asleep. The wind has died down. All is quiet.

A door SLAMS. Henry bolts upright. Switches the lamp on. It's as if he's done this many times before. He looks at the closet, the doors are open.

He gets out of bed, grabs his blanket and pillow and leaves the room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The curtains are closed. It's dark. Joan walks in and opens them. She has a different sweater on but is wearing the same ketchup stained pants. Her hair's a mess.

The morning light streams in on Henry who's sound asleep on his back on the couch.

Joan sees him and yelps. Henry's eyelids pop open. Joan starts to laugh.

JOAN

So the closet monster is back?

She heads out while a disheveled Henry wonders what's going on.

INT. JOAN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The curtains are closed and candles are lit around the room.

Joan sits at her duchess. Paper and pencil in front of her. She starts to draw. A few lines appear on the page, she rubs them out with an erasure and starts again. She draws some more, rubs it out. She starts again, draws some more, then throws the pencil down.

JOAN

NO!

She stares in the mirror.

JOAN

I'm not taking them. I'm not taking them!

A hair-brush lies to the side. She picks it up and starts to calmly brush her hair. She rocks in her chair a little.

Past her, in the dark corner of the room, the withered face of an OLD MAN, 70's, slowly appears. His white hair is drenched. Water drips off it onto the floor.

IN MIRROR

Joan continues to brush her hair, her eyes focused on her reflection. The Old Man creeps up behind her. His face full of rage.

JOAN

Hi, Dad.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Henry, still in his pajama's, stands at the counter and pours milk into a bowl of cereal, his back to the kitchen door.

An OLD WOMAN, 70's, drenched from head to toe, wearing track pants and a jersey slowly walks in.

OLD WOMAN

I'm so glad you're here Henry.

HENRY

Hey, God you sounded just like...

He turns with the bowl of cereal in his hand to find no one's there.

HENRY

...Mom.

The bowl slowly tips, milk dribbles onto the floor.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Henry's head peers out from the kitchen and scans the hall.

HENRY

Joan?

He moves down the hall to the living room door. Pokes his head in. It's empty.

A finger taps him on the shoulder. He jumps and turns. Joan stands behind him. She grins like a child.

JOAN

Watch ya doing? See a ghost?

Henry stands there, clearly annoyed as Joan heads off to the...

...KITCHEN

Joan is at the sink filling the kettle. Henry comes in, leans on the counter next to her and attempts to look relaxed and calm.

She walks around Henry and puts the kettle on the stove.
Turns on the gas.

Henry turns his body around to face her, still trying
to look relaxed.

HENRY

I'm sorry about being such an ass.
It's this stupid place. I'll try
and snap out of it. But please take
your meds. You're seeing things again.
I know that was you in the kitchen
before. And look...

Henry tugs at her dirty pants.

HENRY

You're not taking very good
care of yourself either.

JOAN

Don't.

Joan moves away from him.

Suddenly the power goes off. The morning sun barely
lights up the room.

Henry scratches at the back of his neck.

JOAN

That's Dad. He still does it.

HENRY

But we weren't fighting.

He pauses and realizes what he just said.

HENRY

Why am I even saying this? They
are dead!

He gets his phone out, turns on its flashlight.

HENRY

I'll go down. Can you just PLEASE
quit with the ghost talk.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM - LATER

The clock on the bedside table reads 2am. The wind has
picked up. It hums through a gap in the window.

A shadowy human figure moves across the front of the closet. Then disappears.

The closet doors SLAM. Henry springs up right.

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

A boney old hand flicks the main power switch to OFF.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM

The clock by the bed flicks off. Henry hears junk from the closet getting thrown onto the floor.

Frantically, he tries to turn on the light. Rustling and clanking noises continue. Then a THUD, then another THUD. Then SILENCE.

Henry looks towards the closet. Inside the Old Man stands there with a bowling ball bag in hand.

Henry screams. The power comes back on. The lamp comes on. The bedroom lights up.

His father disappears and the bag falls to the floor with a loud THUD.

Terrified, Henry jumps out of the bed and runs out of the room.

INT. JOAN'S BEDROOM

The door flies open, Henry runs in.

HENRY

Joan, Joan, get up.

He frantically gets her out of the bed and pulls her by the arm out of the room and down the...

...HALLWAY

To...

EXT. HENRY'S BEDROOM

They stand at the doorway.

HENRY

I saw dad, he was right there. I knew there was something wrong with that closet. I knew it was evil.

Joan yawns and rubs her eyes. She takes a long look at her scared brother. Her expression changes to one of concern.

JOAN

Yeah, you probably did. But it's not your closet. Come in the kitchen. I think your going to need on of my hot chocolates.

INT. KITCHEN

Henry sits at the table. With a trembling hand he scratches at the back of his neck.

HENRY

He was there. Clear as day.

Joan puts the kettle on then heads over to the cupboard.

JOAN

I always remember how much you loved my hot chocolates.

She gets out a box of hot chocolate. Then a smaller unlabeled white box from the back of the cupboard. She spoons the chocolate into the cup and shakes a small amount of powder from the white box in with it.

JOAN

They always made you feel better after mum and dad beat on us. And it always made me feel good to make you feel better.

She turns and looks at Henry. Her eyes filled with sadness.

JOAN

I'm sorry I didn't stop them Henry. I was weak. It's okay now though. They can't hurt us anymore.

HENRY

No, I'm sorry. I should have got you out of here. They ruined you Joan, and I let it happen.

The kettle starts to whistle. Joan takes it off and pours the hot water into the cup.

JOAN

I'm not ruined Henry. As long as I can draw. I'm not ruined.

She stirs the hot chocolate and takes it over to Henry.

JOAN

Here you go. Drink up and there will be no more sadness.

HENRY

Yeah, I don't think so, but thanks Joan.

His hands still tremble as he takes a drink. Joan sits down and watches him with a calm smile as he takes more sips.

He smiles at her. She keeps looking at him. It's getting weird now.

HENRY

What?

JOAN

Nothing, just waiting for you to not be sad anymore.

HENRY

(laughing)

What? Did you put some whiskey in this? I hope so. I need something for my nerves.

He holds his hands up. They shake.

HENRY

Look, I'm still shaking.

JOAN

I'm use to seeing them now. I saw Dad this morning. He must have been in your room looking for his head.

Henry looks strangely at Joan.

JOAN

I hope they don't find them. I hope the fish ate them.

HENRY

What are you talking about Dad's head?

Henry scratches at his neck.

JOAN

When I poisoned them on the fishing trip I thought it would be good to get rid of their heads so the police wouldn't know who they were. I saw it on CSI.

Henry laughs at her.

HENRY

Stop. If you're trying to cheer me up it's not working.

He coughs.

JOAN

I'M NOT! I poisoned them because they made me take those pills. I can't draw when I'm on those pills. I need to draw.

HENRY

Stop messing with me. I know I've been a jerk. And I've apologized.

He coughs again.

HENRY

God dam dust in this house.

He looks hard at Joan. She isn't smiling.

HENRY

You are joking with me. Please?

JOAN

No Henry.

Henry coughs some more.

HENRY

You're serious?

Joan looks at him calmly again, a smile on her face.

JOAN

Yes.

Henry looks at her, his eyes drilling into hers, to find some kind of lie at least in her eyes.

He looks away. Stares down at the floor.

FLASHBACK

INT. HENRYS BEDROOM

The Old Man stands in the dark with the bowling ball bag in his arms.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO SCENE

Henry gets up, heads to the door.

INT. HENRYS BEDROOM

He runs in and heads straight to the bowling ball bag on the floor in the corner with all the other junk. Kneels down in front of them, pauses. He coughs some more.

HENRY

Please no, please no, please no.

He pulls it open and sees the blood soaked eyes of his mother staring back up at him.

He yells, falls backwards as he throws the bag away.

Joan walks in.

HENRY

You killed them!

Joan stands and watches him.

He coughs more.

HENRY

Jesus your insane. You cut their heads off. You're fucking insane!

JOAN

They made me take the pills. I need

to draw. You made me take them too.
And now I can't draw. I need to draw!

Henry starts coughing uncontrollably. He gets up. Blood sprays out of his mouth. He falls to the floor.

On all fours he gasps for air. Blood spews out of his mouth.

Joan sits down next to him and pulls up him into her lap. He starts to choke on the blood in his throat.

JOAN

It's okay. It will be good soon.
You'll get to see Lornie, and there
will be no more sadness, for either
of us.

Joan caresses his hair and rocks him gently as he slowly loses consciousness.

EXT. HOUSE - BACKYARD LAWN - DAY.

The morning sun shines down on weeds growing in a patch of dirt the size of a grave.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The walls are covered with drawings of roses.

INT. LIVING ROOM

One wall is covered with drawings of roses.

INT. JOAN'S BEDROOM

Joan sits at her desk drawing a rose. The Old Man and Old Woman appear in the mirror. The Old Woman looks scornfully at Joan while the Old Man reaches his hands out to grab Joan but can't seem to reach.

Joan looks up and sees them. She puts her pencil down, gets up and leaves the room. She comes back in with a towel and places it over the mirror. Sits back down, picks up her pencil, smiles to herself and continues on with her drawing.

FADE OUT