

Lock-down

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INT. WAYNE'S HOUSE - DAY

WAYNE, 40, and BEN, 9, sit on the sofa together and watch the television. A breaking news report. A female news reporter reads a government statement.

Ordering that all households stay under lock-down. No one must go outside for at least fourteen days. Under penalty of arrest and fines.

They're both captivated, unable to look away.

INT. WAYNE'S HOUSE - FRONT ROOM - DAY

Wayne and Ben now sit in chairs, on opposite ends of the room.

The television continues to show the news. Rolling updates. Though the volume is now on low.

WAYNE

This really is ridiculous, isn't it?

Ben shrugs, obviously doesn't agree.

BEN

It's OK. It's not like we haven't spent time at home before. Two weeks will fly by.

WAYNE

I can't go to work. You can't go to school. What are we going to do?

Ben smiles.

BEN

Well I can entertain myself.

WAYNE

This isn't supposed to be fun. The world is on its knees. I could lose my job. Then the house. Food runs out. Water. Electricity. You're not thinking about any of this but I have to. And no schooling for you. Are you going to be able to compete in the world if this is ever over with, not knowing how to read or write?

Ben rolls his eyes.

BEN

I can read and write dad, just fine. I read more books than you do.

WAYNE

Children's books?

BEN

Reading one children's book is still more impressive than reading zero adult books.

WAYNE

You just don't understand. Everything has gone to hell.

Ben stands up. He finds the television remote.

BEN

Everyone is in the same boat as us. How is the bank going to replace you when there is no one to replace you with? Who's going to take our house from us when no one is allowed out on the streets? We've got enough food to last us two months let alone two weeks. And you've got more than enough bottles water to last us. And if that does run out we'll just ration the fizzy drinks.

WAYNE

How lucky you are to always be able to think like a child.

Ben turns the volume up on the television. Throws the remote to Wayne. He catches it.

BEN

Just sit and watch the depressing news. You're favourite show.

Ben exits.

Wayne watches him go, unhappy.

WAYNE

Where are you going?

Ben doesn't answer.

INT. WAYNE'S HOUSE - BEN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Ben kneels on the floor, playing with a bunch of his toys. Lost in his own world and having a blast.

Wayne opens the door. Flings open a trash bag. He hurriedly starts collecting up all the toys he comes across. Snatches the ones in Ben's hands.

BEN

Hey!

WAYNE

You're not spending this whole lock-down in here simply playing.

Ben jumps up, tries to take the trash bag back from Wayne.

BEN

I like playing.

WAYNE

Its a waste of time.

Wayne keeps a hold of it. All the toys collected up, the bag is bulging.

BEN

Why are you doing this?

Wayne heads towards the window. Opens it and drops the bag outside onto the grass.

WAYNE

You'll thank me later.

Ben tries to climb out of the window after it.

BEN

They're mine, it's not fair.

WAYNE

Are you crazy? You'll break your ankles if you jump down there.

BEN

I don't care.

WAYNE

We'll the whole country is under lock-down, so I do.

Wayne drags Ben back inside. Slamming the window closed.

INT. WAYNE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Across the kitchen table, there's schoolbooks, notepads and pens. Wayne sits on one side with Ben on the other. Facing each other.

WAYNE

You're going to study. You're going to be smart. You're going to work hard. And you're going to be like me.

Ben turns away, gazes dreamily out of the window.

BEN

So what, I'm reading books for two weeks?

Wayne shakes his head, dejected.

WAYNE

I'll have to be your teacher won't I? No other choice. Which is going to take up all of my time. Won't have none left for myself.

INT. WAYNE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

More schoolbooks are laid out across the table. Piled high. Wayne and Ben both reading. Both bored out of their minds.

Ben opens up his notebook. On the first couple of pages, it's all notes. He flips to a blank page. Starts drawing pictures of monsters, tanks and aeroplanes. A battle scene. Playing.

Wayne holds both hands to his head, reading through the kid's schoolbook.

WAYNE

I can't make any sense of this.

BEN

Yeah, school sucks.

WAYNE

And I already had to go through it once. And now you're making me do it all over again.

Ben continues to draw and play, smiles.

BEN

None of this was my idea.

INT. WAYNE'S HOUSE - FRONT ROOM - DAY

Ben is laying upside down on the sofa, a milkshake in hand. He drinks it through a straw. He's watching television, cartoons. Kicking his legs, he's happy.

Wayne then come charging into the room, a cup of coffee in hand. He turns the television off.

BEN

Dad!

Wayne now stands in front of the television, looks at Ben unimpressed. Sips at the coffee.

WAYNE

Breaks over. Back to work.

Ben flips himself around, places the milkshake onto the floor. Crosses his arms, in a huff.

BEN

You've got to be kidding me.

Wayne can see the anger in Ben's face. It's plain for all to see.

WAYNE

Why do you think I'm doing this?

BEN

Because you don't love me.

Wayne is stunned. Shocked. Never heard this from Ben before.

WAYNE

Of course I love you.

Ben doesn't believe him. Marches out of the room.

WAYNE

Ben!

Wayne chases after him. Can't let him say something like that and just leave. Wayne's heart is in his mouth.

INT. WAYNE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Ben goes to return to the table, where there now appears to be even more schoolbooks and notepad piled up. The table is completely covered.

Wayne races and catches up to him. He grabs a hold of Ben, forces him to turn around, forces Ben to look at him.

WAYNE

Now, why would you say a thing like that?

BEN

You hate the idea of spending two weeks alone with me. So you're punishing me with all of this.

WAYNE

I don't know what to do alright. I'm just trying my best.

BEN

You could do a lot better.

WAYNE

I love you OK. I don't want to hear you say any different.

BEN

You don't love me.

WAYNE

Yes, I do. Let me prove it to you.

BEN

How?

WAYNE

You're the one with all the doubt. You come up with something. I shouldn't have to, and I'm not going to.

Ben looks down at the floor, his eyes scan back and forth. thinking.

BEN

Play something with me.

WAYNE

What?

Ben looks back up at Wayne, now smiling.

BEN
Play with me.

Wayne shakes his head.

WAYNE
Can't you be serious?

BEN
I am, you don't even have an
imagination do you? You couldn't play
if your life depended on it. If my
life depended on it.

INT. WAYNE'S HOUSE - FRONT ROOM - DAY

Wayne holds onto a broom. He pushes it out of the open window that's above the sofa. The bag of Ben's toys on the grass outside.

He hooks the broom through the handles of the bag and is able to lift it up.

Ben bounces up and down with excitement, watching on.

Wayne brings the bag of toys back inside.

WAYNE
There. Happy?

BEN
Not yet.

INT. WAYNE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Wayne brings the bag over to the kitchen table.

He knocks off all the schoolbooks onto the floor.

Empties the toys out across the table in their place.

Ben stays close beside him, smiling.

He turns to Ben.

WAYNE
I'm sorry for the way I've been. I
didn't use to always be this unhappy.

BEN
I remember.

WAYNE
I used to be more like you.

BEN
Like me?

WAYNE
Plucky. Brave.

Ben laughs.

BEN
Then let's see what you've got.

Ben picks up a toy plane. He passes another to Wayne. Wayne smiles, studies the plane in his hand.

After a pause. They play together. Acting out a dog flight between the two planes.

Wayne chases Ben around the kitchen.

Both of them enjoying it, making the sound effects too.

Just playing.

INT. WAYNE'S HOUSE - FRONT ROOM - DAY

The game carries on into the front room.

Wayne and Ben, just enjoying each other and their play.

Wayne is a kid again.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END