

Simple Little Home

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EXT. ABANDONED LOT - DAY

A grand, mansion-like, two-story house complete with a two-car garage stands majestically surrounded by a vibrant green yard.

A WOMAN'S VOICE, muffled at first, gradually becomes audible.

WOMAN

It's got three bathrooms, five bedrooms, heated floors, and look at this...

A finger slides into view revealing we are only looking at a picture. It points at a paved driveway leading up to the garage.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

... a heated driveway as well. No need to go out and shovel anymore. So, what do you think?

The gruff sounding voice of RICHARD (60's), responds.

RICHARD

I think it's in my way.

The picture promptly moves revealing a simple single story house that appears to have been abandoned for some time. Door and windows have been removed.

Richard, frail looking, sits in a chair. He is outfitted in a baggy sweatshirt and sweat pants.

A plastic tube coming from the front of his pants runs off to his hip where a nearly full catheter bag hangs.

He smiles slightly as he gazes at his old house.

DENNIS (30's), kneels down beside him.

DENNIS

I know this must be tough, but from what I'm hearing the fire department really appreciates being able to do a live practice. You know, it's not everyday they can set a house on fire.

On the other side, standing upright with the picture in hand is MARIE (30's).

MARIE

Everything of value has been packaged up with care and is at the best storage unit we could find. Once the house is up we will find a place for everything. This is just a shell of a home now.

RICHARD

No, this will never be a shell of a home.

(points at picture)

That there, that is a shell of a home.

DENNIS

Dad, come on!

Richard arises from his chair.

RICHARD

All bedrooms, bathrooms, fancy gadgets and gizmos in the world won't make a home.

Richard hobbles off towards the house.

DENNIS

Where are you going?

RICHARD

Inside my damn house for the last time.

DENNIS

There's nothing in there. It's empty, has been for a year now.

Richard walks on ignoring him.

Dennis and Marie lock eyes, she nods in the direction of Richard telling Dennis to follow.

Richard agrees and hurries to catch up to his dad.

RICHARD

You two couldn't wait till I was dead?

DENNIS

We found some good deals, got some quotes and both agreed that it was time to build.

RICHARD

Hmm. Well your mother would be rolling in her grave if she saw that contraption.

They reach the front door. Richard pats the door frame fondly.

RICHARD

She preferred the simple things. As did I.

He goes to take a step in, but Dennis speaks, stopping him.

DENNIS

So what is it, prostate? Has it spread to the prostate now?

RICHARD

It's nothing, don't worry. Just old man problems.

Marie calls to Dennis. She is on the phone.

MARIE

Dennis, it's mister Leech. It's about the foundation.

RICHARD

Go on I'll be fine.

DENNIS

Okay, holler if you need me.

Dennis takes a few steps, then Richard speaks.

RICHARD

No matter how big or fancy you build it, it won't make it a home.

Richard is staring into the home down a hallway.

At one of the door jambs a ghostly image of a pretty brunette LUCIE (20's) marking the height of a four year old Dennis. The image changes as the young Dennis grows and gets taller over the years.

RICHARD

It's the people that make it a home. You two make sure to remember that, will ya?

Dennis studies his father for a moment.

DENNIS

Be honest. How long did they give you?

Richard looks avoids eye contact. He is unable to deliver the news.

Dennis breathes in sharply. Choked up.

DENNIS

Well alright then, we'll talk later. Okay?

Richards taps the door frame again and puts on a quick smile for his son.

RICHARD

Yeah, we'll talk later.

Richard enters the home.

INT. RICHARD'S HOME - DAY

Richard walks down the hallway taking it all in. He stops at a door way and peers in the room.

It's empty at first, but then a ghostly scene of a nursery appears. A cradle in the middle of the room with Lucie in a rocking chair lovingly rocking a baby Dennis.

RICHARD

(to himself)

Your first room.

The images fade away as Richard moves to the --

LIVING ROOM

It's an open concept living room with a kitchen next to it.

He looks straight down the hallway to the front door. Once again ghostly images appear. This time it's of a young Richard and Lucie. She is wearing a wedding dress as Richard carries her over the threshold. They kiss.

Richard sighs, digs into a pocket and retrieves a big cigar and lighter. After lighting it he takes a big drag, pauses, then begins tugging at the hose to the catheter.

It isn't attached to anything and comes out easily. He takes the bag and dumps its contents all over the floor. Then he takes off his sweatshirt revealing two more full bags of liquid. He takes each bag in turn and dumps them out.

His eyes meet the living room area. A image of Richard in his thirties appears in a chair smoking a cigar, an ash tray balancing on the arm rest.

Behind the real Richard an image of Lucie wearing a cooking apron walks out with hands on hips. She looks at the Richard in the chair.

LUCIE

There will be no smoking in this house mister, you go on and put that out.

BOTH RICHARDS

Yes, my love.

The past Richard stubs his cigar out, but the real Richard simply drops his.

At first there is silence, then the unmistakable WHOOSHING of flames spreading quickly.

EXT. ABANDONED LOT - DAY

Both Dennis and Marie spin to face the house.

Marie's hands fly to her mouth in horror. Dennis starts into a desperate run towards the house.

THE END