

SURRENDER

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

DAVE (30's), lies asleep in bed. His arm covers most of his face.

DAVE (V.O.)

I look through the mirror, what do I see? I see the one who prevents me from being all that I can be, the one who says yes when he should say no; my ultimate adversary, my one true foe.

Turning over he falls out of bed wearing just a pair of boxer shorts and a nipple tassle stuck to one nipple.

The shock wakes him up. He leaps to his feet groaning.

Dave is medium build but with an advancing case of mid-life spread. He's unshaven, pale, his eyes bloodshot; the aftermath of a heavy night.

A framed photo of a beautiful blonde woman is on a dressing table. Dave picks it up, he whistles in admiration.

Frowning he checks out the bed.

Amongst his clothes on the floor he spots a sexy pair of knickers and a bra. He pulls the duvet off the bed to reveal a large wet stain where he was sleeping.

It stinks, he winces in disgust.

The nipple tassle is flicked off, he quickly dresses.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Dave cautiously enters the empty room.

The silence is eerie. Dave shivers.

EXT. HOUSE

Dave exits the house. The street is deserted. A faint mist permeates the air.

HIGH STREET

With his hands in his pockets and his head down, Dave wanders down the road.

He glances up; there's no sign of life. He peers into a window as he walks past a house. The curtains are drawn.

It's the same with all the houses on the street.

EXT. DAVE'S HOUSE

He uses a key to open the front door and enters the house.

INT. DINING ROOM

Dave is fixated on a photo on the wall which depicts him stood with his wife JULIE (31), alongside his two children, BEN (10), and KIMBERLEY (3).

All are smiling, happy; the perfect family photo.

He spots a plastic bottle on the table filled with clear liquid. A hand written label reads 'DRINK ME'.

Frowning he raises it to his lips, takes a sip.

There is a loud RUMBLING, the world around Dave SHIMMERS, the ground SHAKES. He panics, unsteady on his feet.

The world stabilizes. His family SUDDENLY appear. They are sat around the table eating dinner.

Smiling, Dave scoops up Kimberly and hugs her. He ruffles Ben's hair, kisses his wife on the cheek.

He places the bottle next to his plate, takes his seat and tucks eagerly into his food.

LIVING ROOM - LATER

Dave and Julie are sat on the sofa watching TV. An ENGLISH SPRINGER SPANIEL lies asleep next to them.

Dave says something to Julie, she burst out laughing. He joins in.

LIVING ROOM - LATER

The TV is off, Julie has gone. Dave lies on the couch, strokes the dog fondly.

The dog yawns, unimpressed. Dave passes out.

LIVING ROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

Dave wakes up alone on the couch. The room is a mess.

The phone is off the hook, the base unit smashed against the wall, DVD's are strewn all over the floor.

Dave frowns. He glances at his watch and gasps; late for work! He throws on a suit jacket and rushes out of the house.

INT. DAVE'S CAR

Dave rubs his bloodshot eyes. The roads are devoid of traffic.

He prods at the radio but there is no clear signal.

INT. OFFICE CORRIDOR

Dave swipes a plastic card through a security reader. A light blinks red. He wipes the card and tries again but the door stubbornly refuses to open.

He glances up and down the deserted corridor.

The bottle is on the floor.

Frowning he starts to swipe his card again but stops mid flow, his eyes stray back to the bottle.

Giving in to temptation he takes another a sip. There is a loud RUMBLING, the world around Dave SHIMMERS, the ground SHAKES.

Dave is unsteady on his feet but smiles, enjoys the ride this time.

The world stabilizes. He tries the access card again, this time the light turns green, Dave walks into a--

BUSY OFFICE

Time appears to slow down as he struts towards his desk. He high-fives a GUY as he walks past. He sits at his desk winking at a WOMAN.

MEETING ROOM - LATER

Dave is giving a PowerPoint presentation. He spins and points at the screen, a graph appears.

He claps his hands together, the graph is replaced by a pie-chart. His captive audience applaud.

A fiery RED HEAD (21), in the corner catches Dave's eye. She smiles. He returns it with interest.

His focus returns to the presentation. He frowns.

On the screen is the word 'YET' in large bold letters.

He smiles nervously and clicks on a mouse; the word remains on screen.

Switching to the laptop keyboard he attempts to fix the problem. Each TAP corresponds with the word YET flashing on the screen.

Flustered and sweating Dave stutters an apology and leaves the room.

INT. RESTROOM

Dave splashes water onto his face. He stares at his reflection in the mirror; notes the bags under his eyes.

With shaking hands he takes the bottle out of his jacket. This time he takes a swig.

MONTAGE - DAVE'S EVENING - VARIOUS

A) PRINTER ROOM - Dave is locked in a passionate embrace with the Red Head. The ground is SHAKING.

B) BAR - Arm-in-arm with some FRIENDS. They are red faced and sweating as they sing a rowdy song. Lights are FLASHING all around him.

C) EXT. BAR - Dave is on his cellphone. He shouts at it then flings it against the wall, it smashes. The ground is SHAKING, lights are FLASHING.

Dave loses his balance. He leans against the wall for support. He blacks out.

END OF MONTAGE

POLICE HOLDING CELL - THE NEXT MORNING

Dave wakes up squinting. He groans, rubs his head. Blood stains are splattered all over his shirt.

He stumbles, groggy and confused to the door.

Dave bangs on the metal surface. The door swings open. Cautiously Dave peeks out.

He slips out of the cell into a--

CORRIDOR

Not a soul lingers. Dave wanders alone.

He slips out the exit.

EXT. POLICE STATION

Dave buttons up his jackets, glances around. The world around him is devoid of life, a faint mist permeates the air.

OFFICE CORRIDOR

Back at the office Dave's swipes his card into the reader, the light blinks red.

Extracting the bottle he takes a sip then pauses expectantly.

No earthquake just silence.

He swipes the card into the reader. The light blinks red. Dave takes a swig and tries again. The light turns red, stays red.

Furious, he kicks the door. Then again harder. He curls his hand into a fist.

A solid punch against the door, the shock causes him to gasp in pain.

He slides to the floor holding his bloody knuckles.

Suddenly a realization. His eyes go wide, what about home? He scrambles to his feet and runs down the corridor.

DESERTED HIGH STREET

Dave runs until he is out of breath.

He pauses, taking deep gulps of air.

Recovered enough, he breaks into a run.

DAVE'S FRONT LAWN

His car is half parked on his lawn. Dave glances at it briefly as he fumbles for his key. Part of his wall has been destroyed, the front end of the car is crushed.

He enters his house shouting for his family.

DAVE'S LIVING ROOM

The house is empty. In the living room he pauses at the family photo.

His wife and children appear sick; they are covered in a rash. Dave is smiling, full of health.

He takes a sip out of the bottle, nothing happens. He wanders into the--

DINING ROOM

The table is empty. Dave takes a swig. He looks around expectantly.

He chugs a large gulp. The world SHIMMERS slightly. There is a low RUMBLE sound.

Dave glimpses a ghostly image of his family sat at the table eating a meal. They disappear.

He screams out in anguish.

In desperation he gulps the rest of the bottle.

The room remains empty. Dave falls to his knees

In his hand, the bottle is full again.

Seeking oblivion he takes a long drink. The effect hits him hard, he drops to the floor.

The world goes black.

EXT. RAILWAY BRIDGE

Waking up, Dave finds himself on a bridge overlooking a churning river.

He roars in rage, flings the bottle. Liquid sprays everywhere as it falls. He watches until it hits the water.

Dave turns to leave. On the ground before him is another full bottle. Dave's shoulders slump, he bursts into tears.

He returns to the edge of the bridge; his bridge, his jumping off place.

His eyes closed, Dave takes a deep breath. He prepares to jump.

There is a TAP on his shoulder. Dave nearly falls in surprise but STEVE (40), grabs his arm.

Dave gasps. There is a chain of people linked to Steve for as far as the eye can see.

Steve points behind Dave. Behind him is another chain of people which ends in a young woman, EMILY (25). She smiles and waves.

The chain of people must go around the entire globe!

Emily says something but Dave misses it.

DAVE
I'm sorry, what did you say?

INT. HOSPITAL WARD

Dave is propped up in a hospital bed hooked up to several life support machines, his skin is yellow, his eyes green and bloodshot.

A worried Julie sits next to the bed, rubs her face.

Emily and Steve stand before him.

EMILY
I said my name is Emily and this is Steve. We're alcoholics.

Dave is transfixed by their faces.

DAVE
But you look so good. Your eyes, they are so white!

EMILY
(smiling)
Yes they are, and yours can be too.

DAVE
I'd do anything to have eyes like that again.

EMILY
Maybe you can?

DAVE

How? How can I possibly come back from this?

EMILY

One step at a time.

Dave frowns.

STEVE

Why don't we start by telling you our story and take it from there?

Dave looks over at Julie. She nods in encouragement.

DAVE

OK, why not.

Julie bursts into grateful tears.

They begin their story.

Behind Emily, Dave notices the bottle on a cabinet. He focuses on it.

DAVE (V.O.)

There is a monster who lives in my head. He tells me softly he wants me dead. That this time I'll stay in control and if I take my medicine, it will make me feel whole. Yet when the pain is too much to bear, he gently whispers "No-one cares."

Enthralled by Emily's tale, Julie reaches over and grabs Dave's hand. He glances at her and smiles reassuringly.

When he looks back the bottle is gone. His focus returns to on Emily.

DAVE (V.O.)

I need to surrender, accept who I am. No longer a prisoner in a dream or the frail husk of a man. I'm a husband, a father, in need of forgiving.

Tears stream down Dave's cheek but he nods and smiles at what he is hearing.

DAVE (V.O.)

Because falling down is a part of life, getting back up is living."

FADE OUT.