

THE HOUSE THAT NEVER WAS

Written by

Dreamland

OVER BLACK

The SOUNDS of a MOVING VEHICLE. A CAR RADIO plays.

ANNOUNCER (O.C.)
You're with the voice of the High
Sierras - DJ Rockman. For all you
snow bums out there, there's
considerable snow moving into the
higher elevations, so grab those
boards and let's go slidin'!

A sudden SOUND of BRAKES SQUEALING, the vehicle SKIDDING. A
WOMAN'S SCREAM as we...

FADE INTO:

SOMEONE'S POV. A blurred visual coming into focus, blurring
again.

MAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
It's okay. Can you open your eyes?

Back to POV. Blurred vision begins to clear, focusing on the
MAN, 30s, face close, concerned.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
Who are you?

MAN
I'm Michael. Can you see me?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
Yes. I'm Anna. What happened?

The YOUNG WOMAN, ANNA, 20s, lays on a WORN SOFA. The man,
whom we now know as MICHAEL, responds.

MICHAEL
Your car skidded off the highway.
You've got quite a bump on your
head.

ANNA
Where am I?

MICHAEL
You're in my house. You're safe.

ANNA
How did you find me?

A DOG, an angelic GOLDEN RETRIEVER, saunters up, tail wagging and places his paw on Anna's hand.

MICHAEL

This is Gabe. He was barking and going on like crazy. I knew something was up. The minute I let him out the door he went bounding down the drive to the road. I followed him to see what the trouble was and that's when I found you. Seems you got out of your vehicle and passed out in the snow. I carried you inside.

Anna smiles weakly as she pats the dog's head.

ANNA

Kind of like my guardian angel, huh? I might have frozen to death if you hadn't come.

Michael smiles in return.

MICHAEL

Yeah, he's been called that before. He definitely has a gift for rescuing people in need.

Anna raises her head a bit and takes in the room around her. A FIRE blazes in an OLD STONE FIREPLACE. The WALLS are rough hewn TIMBER, faded with age.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Where were you heading?

ANNA

I was going up to meet with friends to ski for the weekend.

MICHAEL

I see.

A thought occurs to Anna.

ANNA

My car! Is it okay?

MICHAEL

Yes, it seems to be. Just stuck in a snow bank for now. The plows will be around tomorrow and get it back up on the road for you.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

If you're feeling alright, you can be on your way then.

Anna nods, but then shivers with cold, wrapping her arms around herself.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Your clothes are wet, you need to get out of them and into something warm. I have towels and fresh clothes in the bathroom.

Anna nods, and starts to sit up. She winces and reaches up to touch her forehead.

ANNA

I come up this way to ski fairly often. I don't remember seeing a house on this stretch of road. It's pretty desolate up here.

Michael smiles.

MICHAEL

The house sits a way from the roadway. Most people don't know it's here, but I like it that way, just me and Gabe. We're a couple of loners I guess.

Anna nods understanding, but then a look of concern crosses her face. Michael gets the meaning.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Don't worry. You're perfectly safe here. Gabe and I promise not to harm you.

Anna breathes a small sigh of relief as she pats Gabe's head.

ANNA

I love dogs. I had one that looked just like this when I was a child. He was my best friend.

Michael nods knowingly.

MICHAEL

Come on, let's get you into something warm and dry.

He helps her rise and assists her across the bare wood floor, which CREAKS with age as they walk. He opens the door to the bath.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

There's dry towels and some clothes on the shelf. They may be too large, but they're clean and warm.

Anna nods as Michael closes the door leaving her alone. She shucks off her wet clothing and reaches for a towel to dry her hair and body. She then dons a FLANNEL SHIRT, stopping to breathe in its fragrance as she slips it on. She smiles.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Anna emerges from the bath with her too big clothing clenched tightly around her. She lays her wet clothing near the fire.

MICHAEL

I've warmed some soup for you. Now that we've got the outside warm, you can have something to warm the inside.

Anna smiles, reclines again on the old sofa and takes the soup gratefully. Gabe, never leaving her side, curls up to keep watch overnight.

ANNA

You must dry your laundry in the fresh air.

She sniffs the shirt again.

ANNA (CONT'D)

My grandma used to do that. She said it made them smell like sunshine.

MICHAEL

Your grandmother was right. Now finish your soup and get some rest. Gabe and I will be here if you need anything.

INT. HOUSE - MORNING

Anna stirs on the couch. The fire continues to blaze warmly in the fireplace.

MICHAEL

You're awake.

Anna yawns.

ANNA

Wow, I can't believe I slept so well.

MICHAEL

Gabe and I were up early to take a walk. The plows have already come around. Looks like your car is out of the snow bank.

Michael looks toward Anna's clothing still by the fire.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Your clothes are dry.

ANNA

Oh yes, thank you, I'll just change and be on my way.

Michael hands her a steaming cup.

MICHAEL

Have something warm before you go.

Anna nods and accepts the cup.

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

Anna, Michael and Gabe stand by her car. She's dressed now in her original clothing, prepared to be on her way. She smiles at them, reaches down to hug Gabe and then Michael in turn.

ANNA

Thank you...I mean, I don't know how to thank you enough.

MICHAEL

No thanks necessary. I'm glad Gabe and I were able to help.

He hands her a SLIP OF PAPER from his pocket. Then reaches up and gently pushes her hair away revealing the lump on her forehead.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I wrote down the address of the medical clinic in town. It's just a couple miles up the road. I think you need to stop by and let them check you out - just to make sure everything's okay.

Anna takes the paper, smiles and nods and gets into the car and drives slowly away. From Anna's POV in the REAR VIEW MIRROR Michael waves, Gabe at his side.

INT. MEDICAL CLINIC - DAY

Anna walks into the clinic and approaches a NURSE.

ANNA

Good morning, I had a little accident last night and a very kind man who lives just a short way down the road rescued me and told me to come by and let the doctor check me out.

The Nurse looks concerned for a moment.

NURSE

You came up the mountain road?

ANNA

Yes. A man who lives in an old house there helped me.

NURSE

I'm sorry, I've lived here my entire life. I know that road like the back of my hand. There's no house for more than ten miles down the mountain.

ANNA

That can't be. I was there. A man named Michael helped me.

Anna shuffles in her purse, becoming frustrated. She looks up bewildered.

ANNA (CONT'D)

He gave me this slip of paper with your address on it...but it's gone.

NURSE

You've obviously been injured, and I don't know what you think you saw, but there is no house on that road. There never has been.

CLOSE on Anna's face as we...

FADE OUT.