

THE QUANDARY OF HARRY BARSTOCK

by

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FADE IN

EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY - BERM - NIGHT

Previously 47 year old HARRY BARSTOCK's spirit floats above the rain soaked roadside, where a rescue crew works frantically with the jaws of life trying to free him from his car that is now shaped like a horseshoe around a light pole.

Harry holds up his hand and looks through it at the people struggling below him.

HARRY

I wonder if they'd be trying so
hard if they knew?

As he watches the scene below, a beam of light shines on his face.

Harry turns to see what can only be described as a luminous tunnel in the sky.

HARRY

What?

Like a moth to a flame, Harry floats toward the shimmering site.

As he gets closer, faint images flutter inside.

HARRY

(squinting)
It couldn't be...

Harry floats inside...

INT. TUNNEL OF LIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The screen is flooded with white light as Harry floats forward. Ghostly shapes swirling in circles slowly coalesce into solid form.

EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Harry looks down on his car as it speeds down the highway in the rain.

He floats down alongside the passenger window to see himself, bathed in the dashboard lights. Harry in the car starts looking down at the dashboard.

HARRY

Uh oh.

Harry looks down the road at the pristine light pole standing proudly in the rain by the road. He screams at the car...

HARRY
No, no! The windshield wiper button
is on the other side of the...

...as Harry in the car leans to the right, his hand rolls over the top of the steering wheel, causing the car to jerk suddenly.

The front left tire catches on the tarmac and the car tilts heavily...

HARRY
(wailing)
God...no...

...and the momentum carries the car over into a violent, bouncing roll.

HARRY
(sobbing)
Can't. I just can't.

Harry squeezes his eyes shut and flies away from the impending carnage.

FADE TO BLACK

HARRY (V.O.)
How can this be happening? I don't
understand. Don't wanna see. Don't
wanna hear...
(beat)
Nothing. I don't hear anything.
It's like some horrible dream. It
must be. I'll just open my eyes and
be back in the...

INT. HIGHRISE APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Harry floats near the ceiling as roughly MID-20s HARRY sits on the sofa next to roughly the same age JULIA. Slender and beautiful, with shoulder-length red hair, she has obviously been crying.

Mid-20s Harry looks just as miserable.

HARRY (V.O.)

(moans)

My God, this could be worse.

JULIA

I don't understand, Harry. I
thought you felt the same...I
though we, felt the same. I know I
feel...

Her sad eyes implore him as she tries to hold his hand.

Mid-20s Harry deftly pulls his hand out from under hers and
stands up awkwardly.

MID-20S HARRY

(ready to bolt)

I, I do care for you, Julia. I care
for you deeply.

Harry floats down beside his younger self.

HARRY

Say it, man. Just say it!

Harry reaches out reflexively to touch Mid-20s Harry's arm
and there is a large CRACK of static.

MID-20S HARRY/HARRY

(at the same time)

Oww!

Julia jumps up from the sofa and reaches out for Harry.

JULIA

What happened? Are you okay?

Mid-20s Harry walks swiftly away from Julia as Harry floats
away from Julia.

MID-20S HARRY/HARRY

(at the same time)

I'm just not ready for a
commitment.

FADE TO WHITE

JULIA (V.O.)

Harry? Harry! Please don't go!

EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Harry floats by the highway. The still-unencumbered light post stands in the distance.

The REV of an engine makes Harry look to see his car coming down the rain-soaked road.

He looks down at his hands and rubs his fingers together that caused the spark.

HARRY
(determined)
I can do this!

He floats down swiftly, into the car, then into Harry in the car's body.

HARRY (V.O.)
Now, if I just turn my wrist, like
this...

Harry in the car's left hand flies involuntarily to the left.

HARRY IN THE CAR
What the hell?

Harry rockets out of the body, back into the air by the road.

HARRY
That was insane! I can do this, I
can make things right?

Just then the car on the road lurches as Harry floats away and the screen...

FADES TO WHITE

EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY - BERM - NIGHT

Harry floats above the scene of his accident. The rescue crew is closer to removing the door.

A team of paramedics stand by with a stretcher.

Harry looks over at the tunnel still glowing like a beacon.

HARRY

I can do it. I can go back in the past and change this forever. I wonder if I can go all the way back? All the way back to second grade when I tried to kiss Mindy Clark on the playground. She kicked me in the ankle and ran away. Kind of set the ball rolling right there for my future confidence with women. You know, I wonder if I can only go to the past?

Harry looks around him, then flies in all directions. Nothing but wilderness, farmland and pouring rain.

He floats back to the accident and looks over at the tunnel.

HARRY

Apparently not. It's now...
(looks at the accident)
...or then.
(looks at the tunnel)

Only the two options. I could go back, make myself say what Julia wanted to hear...what I really wanted to say but was afraid, and maybe we'd get married. Be together forever? Perhaps. Then again, maybe after two years she'd grow tired of me. Maybe kick me in the ankle then run away. Then what would happen to my life? Perhaps I'd still wind dying a stupid death on some God forsaken back road because I didn't take the time to learn where the wiper controls were on my rental car.

Harry floats down closer to the action of the rescue attempt and lingers for a moment, then he floats back up and away, looking wistfully at the tunnel.

He stares at the tunnel with resolve.

HARRY

No. This is where I belong. Free from pain, doubt and self-loathing. Free to go where I wish when I wish with no fear. I choose to stay right where I am.

The tunnel fades to a pinpoint, then winks out of existence.
Harry's back is suddenly bathed in a warm, golden glow.

HARRY
Ahh, that feels good.

He turns to see an even bigger tunnel, filled light like a beautiful morning sunrise.

HARRY
Perhaps this is my future.

Harry floats toward the new tunnel.

HARRY
Goodbye, Harry. Sorry for all your
wasted effort, guys.

Harry disappears into the tunnel and the screen...

FADES TO BLACK

THE END