

Untitled
An Original Screenplay
By
Sean Halket

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sean_halket@hotmail.co.uk

FADE IN:

INT.MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Earnest lies on his back staring up at the ceiling.

Lying next to him reading a book is his wife LILITH, a beautiful woman in her mid 30's, carrying with her a comforting sense maternity, even as she simply lies there.

She rests her book down and looks at him.

EARNEST

What?

She touches his facial hair.

LILITH

We need to lose the beard.

EARNEST

I like it.

Beat.

LILITH

Are you glad to be home?

EARNEST

Yeah.

LILITH

Six years is a long time.

EARNEST

I know.

LILITH

What was it like? Being on a ship for so long, I mean.

EARNEST

I went a little mad out there, certainly.

LILITH

You didn't write much towards the end.

EARNEST

Things got pretty hectic.

(CONTINUED)

LILITH

I cant imagine. It's just, we were worried. I didn't say anything but I thought something awful might have happened.

Earnest says nothing.

LILITH

Does it feel different now that you're back?

EARNEST

It's hard to adjust. I mean, Ben was ten when I left. I left behind the sweetest little boy in the world and I've come back to a miserable little...

LILITH

You can't account for the time you've missed. It's fine.

EARNEST

I wish I loved him like I used to.

LILITH

He's still your son.

EARNEST

(Sighing)

Gimme a break.

Earnest gets out of bed and pulls a pack of cigarettes out of his trousers, causing change to scatter over the floor. He lights the cigarette.

LILITH

Can you open a window?

He gets up and sits by the window after opening it. He stares out into the darkness.

LILITH

Do you think we can get back to the way it was?

EARNEST

Is anything really *that* different?

LILITH

Of course it is.

(CONTINUED)

EARNEST

It just feels as though we've skipped over some things. Like I said, I'm re-adjusting.

LILITH

We've skipped a *massive* chunk of things. Your son's well on his way to adulthood.

EARNEST

I'm sure we'll be fine.

He turns away from her and into the foreground of the shot in close-up. Lilith gets off the bed to leave. In the background of the shot we see her stub her toe on the door frame and fall over. For a beat there is silence, then:

LILITH

(In agony)

Fuck!

Earnest takes a glance at her then turns back to the window trying to avoid the situation.

INT.LIVING ROOM - DAY

The camera pans around a messy living room. Beer bottles are strewn about the place, the air is smokey and the room is an overall state.

BEN (16) enters the living room, hungover and pulls his pet rat STEVEN out of his cage.

In the aftermath of his drunken escapade he loves his rat as it scuttles around on his lap, up onto his shoulder and into his palm. He pulls out a grape and feeds it to the creature.

The door opens.

The camera pans around to see Earnest and Lilith return home and see the state of their home.

Upset is smeared across Lilith's fragile face.

LILITH

(Upset)

Oh! Ben!

Ben, in the midst of making his escape, stops in the living room's doorway and turns around, Steven resting on his shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

BEN

Hey. You're home early.

EARNEST

(Angry)

Yes. We are. What's all this?

BEN

I threw a party.

LILITH

Look at the mess. Jesus, this is turning into a common occurrence. Ben, we can't be dealing with this.

BEN

Common occurrence? I did this one other time three weeks ago.

LILITH

That's not the point.

As his mother has a fit, Ben puts Steven back in his cage. His father grabs him by the collar of his cotton shirt.

EARNEST

Clean this up. Now.

Ben shoves his dad away.

BEN

Get off me. I'm gonna clean it.

Earnest retorts fast by grabbing Ben by the face and forcing him to the floor.

LILITH

Earnest, calm down!

EARNEST

Look what you've done. Do you think this is a game?

BEN

I'll get to it, okay?! It's no big deal.

EARNEST

Don't talk back!

BEN

I'm gonna clean it. I'm gonna clean it *all* up. A little mess never hurt anybody.

(CONTINUED)

EARNEST

Do as I say!

Ben stands up.

BEN

Fuck you! I'm no soldier! Stop treating me like I'm scum.

Something inside Earnest starts to change.

LILITH

Earnest, it's fine. We'll do it-

Seeing red, Earnest shoves Ben down again, turns to the Steven's cage and yanks the rat from his home.

BEN

(Scared)

What're you doing?!

Ben and Lilith follow him through to the kitchen.

INT.KITCHEN - DAY

In the kitchen, Earnest walks down to the end of the room, grabs a rolling pin then comes back to the counter as Lilith and Ben watch.

Before anything else can be done, in one quick motion, Earnest brings the rolling pin down on the rodent. The sound of a whack and a squeak echo through the room and there is silence. Then crying.

Lilith tries to calm her son as he mourns the loss of his pet at a near shriek. She shoots Earnest a look as though she does not know this man anymore.

Earnest escapes the madness as fast as he can by grabbing his whisky and heading for the bathroom.

INT.BATHROOM - DAY

He closes and locks the door behind him. Ben's shrieks start to fade away to a sob as Earnest sits on the toilet, takes a drink then starts to cry.

THE END.