

THE EPIDEMIC

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FADE IN

EXT: RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

A MAN and his young DAUGHTER are running from something off-screen. Their footsteps against the concrete echo off of the houses in the neighborhood which are pitch black.

DAUGHTER

Dad, I'm tired...

FATHER

I know, Janie, I know, but we can't stop.

(He picks her up)

Is that better?

JANE

What about you?

FATHER

I'll be okay. Your dad's a tough guy.

WILL JACKSON and his daughter JANE were vacationing in SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA when the epidemic began to spread. They a thousand miles away from their home and have been running for an hour now. They are tired. Will decides to try one of the houses in the neighborhood.

WILL

(Beating on the door, Shouting)

Hello! Is anybody home? Please, help!

(He tries the door, it's locked)

We're from Denver. We're on vacation...

Please, I have a daughter!

INT. HOUSE POV - PEEPHOLE

Someone watches Will and Jane from INSIDE the house.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT

Jane hangs on to Will's shoulder as he tries to get into the house. She looks away from the door towards the direction they were running from.

JANE

Daddy, they're coming over here!

Will turns his head and resumes banging on the door.

WILL

Please! We have nowhere else to go.

INT: HOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE

A HAND reaches for the latch and turns the lock.

EXT: PORCH - NIGHT

The SNAP of the door unlocking turns Jane and Will's attention to the door. It swings open and a MAN opens the door quickly.

MAN

Hurry up. Get in.

WILL

Oh, God. Thank you...

CLOSE SHOT

The man looks out into the street. Sound of FOOTSTEPS SCRAPING on the concrete and raspy labored BREATHING before he shuts the door and locks it again.

INT: HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is pitch black except for the candle providing a dim flickering light. The curtains and drapes cover every window in the house. Will sets Jane down on her feet.

WILL

Thank you so much. We've been running
for so long. We were at the hotel. We
ran for miles...

The man looks at Will, calmly, then to Jane. He smiles.

MAN

Don't worry. You're safe now. You two
look like you could use a drink. Some
water?

JANE

(looks up to Will, nods)

WILL

Yeah, please... We could both use a
drink.

MAN

I'm sure. Follow me this way.

The man grabs the candle and leads them through the dark
house. Jane takes Will's hand. Will looks down to her and
smiles. It's an empty smile. One that offers no assurance
that things will be okay. Just okay for this singular moment.

CLOSE SHOT - MOVING

Will looks at the some family pictures lined up against the
wall. A woman and two kids. Boys. The man's family.

INT: KITCHEN - NIGHT

The man puts down the candle and gets two glasses from the
cupboard. He pours them water from the tap. He hands Will the
glasses.

Will takes them and gives one to Jane. She makes a face.

JANE

Tap water?

WILL

You'll live.

Jane reluctantly takes a drink. Will takes a sip and realizes they haven't introduced themselves. A custom that seems foreign with the way the world has changed.

WILL

Sorry, my name's will. This is Jane.
She's my daughter.

MAN

I know. I heard you yell it through my door.

(smiles)

I'm Roger. Sorry the house is a mess.
What with the world going crazy and all.

WILL

We're not complaining.

ROGER

Good. I don't really have a place for
you two to sleep. You'll have to hole
up downstairs. Wife and kids are
upstairs sleeping.

WILL

Are you kidding? That's more than we
could have asked for.

JANE

Dad, I need to go to the bathroom.

WILL

(looks to Roger)

Sorry, but can she...

ROGER

Of course. It's up the stairs on the
right.

Jane hands her father her empty glass. Will sets them down
and starts to walk with her.

JANE

I'm not a baby, Dad. I can find it.
It's not like we're outside anymore.

WILL

Alright then, big girl. Find the bathroom and come right back. If you're not here in five minutes, I'm going in after you.

Jane

Gross!

Jane leaves the kitchen. Roger hands her the candle. Will stays with Roger and the two continue to talk. Roger lights another candle and sets it on the counter.

WILL

Can you believe that?

ROGER

At least she's not a boy.

WILL

That's right. I saw your pictures...

ROGER

Did you?

WILL

Yeah, of your wife and two boys.
(beat)
They're upstairs?

ROGER

Yeah. They're sleeping.

INT: STAIRS - NIGHT

Jane slowly walks through the dark house up the stairs. She looks at the family photos along the wall and some toys strewn across the floor.

ANGLE

POV from the end of the second floor hallway as Jane reaches the landing. She looks around. The rooms are all shut except for the door on the right. The bathroom.

ANGLE

From outside the bathroom door. Jane steps inside. Shutting the door behind her.

INT: KITCHEN - NIGHT

The light flickers and bounces off the walls. The two men's
FACES contrast between light and darkness.

WILL

Sleeping... Hard to think.

(beat)

With everything that's happened.

CLOSE SHOT

Roger looks at him as if he's looking through him,
pinpointing his lingering doubts. His fear.

ROGER

I said I'd keep them safe.

(beat)

What about you, Will? You keeping your
daughter safe?

INT: SECOND FLOOR BATHROOM - NIGHT

Toilet flushes and the Jane washes her hands. She turns off
the light before going out into the dark hallway.

INT: SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jane exits the bathroom. She takes a moment for her eyes to
adjust. As she walks to the stairs, she catches a sliver of
moonlight shining through one of the doors. Curious, she
walks towards the door.

INT: KITCHEN - NIGHT

WILL

He tenses up.

What are you saying?

ROGER

I'm asking you, Will. Do you have what
it takes to keep your daughter safe?

WILL

(beat)

Where's your family, Roger?

ROGER
Upstairs. Sleeping.

WILL
Cut the crap, Roger. Where are they?

ROGER
(beat)
I did what I had to. I did what a
father should do.

INT: SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

ANGLE

From the crack in the doorway, we see Jane walking closer,
towards us. Her eye peers through the crack.

JANE'S POV

She traces across the room decorated with a sports motif
and reaches the foot of the bed. Slowly, panning to the
headrest. The body of one of Roger's sons lies there. A
hole in the forehead with a dried red stain creeping down
his face.

Jane screams.

INT: KITCHEN - NIGHT

Will looks to the doorway then at Roger. Roger's face loses
its calm demeanor and he lunges at Will.

ROGER
I had to!

Will struggles with the man, knocking over the two glasses.
They shatter on the tile floor. The two men fall to the
floor as well. Roger pulls out the gun he has hidden on his
waistline.

WILL
Roger, don't! Please, my daughter...

ROGER
Don't worry, Will. I'll protect her, too.

Roger pulls the hammer back on the gun, it clicks. Will reaches around the floor and finds a shard of glass. He picks it up and pierces Roger's throat.

Roger falls back, struggling to breathe. Will watches him take his last breaths, in shock. He can't believe what he

(cont)

just did. He shakes himself away from the brutal scene and runs to the stairs.

INT: STAIRS LANDING - NIGHT

Will runs into Jane, crying hysterically. He takes her into his arms and kisses her head.

JANE

Dad-the room-he's! Dad!

WILL

It's okay. It's okay. We have to go.

Will takes Jane's hand and leads her through the house, finding the back door.

WILL

Wait here. Don't move.

JANE

Dad, no, please...

WILL

I'll be right back, I promise.

INT: KITCHEN - NIGHT

Will stares at Rogers body. He crouches over him and takes the gun. He looks at Roger again for a while before he leaves.

FADE OUT