

A Toast, To Armageddon

(c)2017

FADE IN

INT. BLUE HONDA ACCORD (MOVING) - DAY

Isolated rain drops streak sideways across the passenger window. The Raveonettes "The Rains of May" blasts loud and clear, even though it's coming from the I-Pod earbuds of...

DANNY STILLMAN (10), brown hair, brown eyes, wearing a blue coat. He stairs out the side window at the forested scenery.

The music cuts out as an earbud is pulled away by...

JOHN STILLMAN (40s), brown hair, brown eyes, wearing a red plaid shirt and blue jeans. He's got a scraggly beard and seems perpetually stressed.

JOHN

Hey, Danny. I'm gonna need your help up here.

Danny nods.

EXT. TRAIL HEAD PARKING LOT - DAY

The Blue Honda is parked behind an SUV, blocking the view from the road of...

John, siphoning gas from the truck and into a gas can. Danny stands beside him, keeping watch on a footpath leading into the forest.

DANNY

Dad?

JOHN

Yeah, son?

DANNY

Is Mr Farber going to be okay? He wasn't moving after you hit him.

JOHN

I honestly don't know. Like I said, all I know is no one's got a lot of time left, including us. When the world ends we should be together.

DANNY

It's just that the Farber's were really nice. They used to take me to the zoo and stuff. They never told me the world was ending.

JOHN

They probably wanted to protect you from the truth. If I were in their situation I would've done the same thing. But I'm not in their situation, I'm in mine, and in my situation there were people standing between me and my boy during the only time we had left together.

Danny considers his dad for a moment, then looks back to the trail head.

JOHN

Look, I wanted to do this right. Serve my time so I could be with you without looking over my shoulder. But that's not the scenario that's presented itself.

DANNY

Are we going back to the farm?

JOHN

No. Government tore the farm down after they locked everyone up. We're going to the cabin where me and your mom spent our honeymoon.

The sound of a dog BARKING comes from the woods.

JOHN

Alright, back in the car.

John quickly caps the can, leaving the hose dangling from the SUV's tank. He grabs Danny, places him back in the Honda's passenger seat and runs to the driver's side.

INT. BLUE HONDA ACCORD - CONTINUOUS

John starts the car, shifts to drive-

DANNY

Did you kill mom?

John looks at his son in bewilderment.

JOHN

(defensive)

Who told you that? The Farbers? The Government? She had forty-five caliber rounds *in her back*. I

(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)

carried nine millimeter. That's all I ever carried. Everything at that farm was birdshot or slugs or nine millimeter. You know who had forty-fives? The police did. Care to explain that?

Danny, taken aback, just shakes his head.

JOHN

I don't want you to ever think that of me.

John hits the gas and the Honda peels away.

INT. BLUE HONDA ACCORD - LATER

Pulled off on a gravel road, Danny sits inside the car alone. Earbuds in. The Raveonettes blasting again.

RAVEONETTES

I miss the thrill of spring / Soft whispers in my ears / I'm waiting for you here you never come.

Danny turns to the backseat and opens the lid of a COOLER. He roots through it, pushing aside beer bottles and waters. His hand hits something... odd.

RAVEONETTES

Those crying eyes have seen / Young lives cut way short / They're waiting on the other side for you.

Danny pulls out a plastic baggie in his hand containing TWO RED PILLS. He examines it, curiously.

RAVEONETTES

Fireworks / Across the sky / A tender night / For you and I / Fireworks-

John opens the door and jumps in. Danny quickly drops the baggie, closes the cooler lid and pulls the earbuds out.

JOHN

Alright. Coast is clear. Cabin's deserted. But I want to walk from here. You take the gas can, I'll take the cooler.

Danny nods.

INT. RUSTIC LAKESIDE CABIN - DAY

Modestly sized with an outdated decor. The front door opens and John steps into the joint Kitchen/Dining/Living Area.

He sets the cooler down on the counter. Danny follows, looking down to wipe his feet on the welcome mat.

Something red squishes out from the sides of the mat as he steps down. Danny sees it. Leans over...

JOHN

Why don't you take a look around? I think you might like what you see downstairs.

INT. RUSTIC LAKESIDE CABIN/BASEMENT LEVEL - MOMENTS LATER

The light flicks on and Danny comes down the stairs to find an air hockey table.

DANNY

(loud to upstairs)

It works?

JOHN (O.S.)

It does. The puck is shaped like a triangle for some reason, but I think we can work with that.

Danny continues looking around the room. Passes the hockey table and a bed folded out from a couch to the back door.

He looks into the backyard and smiles for the first time.

EXT. RUSTIC LAKESIDE CABIN/BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Danny runs to the end of the yard where a dock juts out into the lake. On the ground next to the dock is a dirty overturned canoe.

DANNY

Hey, Dad! Can we go fishing?

Back at the cabin, John comes out onto the balcony.

JOHN

I do think I saw some poles in the mud room.

Danny goes to the upside down canoe.

JOHN

Not in that, though. It's not
seaworthy.

DANNY

Are you sure? Just looks dirty.

Danny knocks on it.

JOHN

Danny, cut it out now and come back
up here!

Danny looks up, confused by the outburst, but does what his father says.

INT. RUSTIC LAKESIDE CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Danny climbs up the stairs into the main room just in time to see John set a .45 Glock Pistol on the kitchen counter.

Danny stops at the stairs as John walks over to him.

JOHN

Alright, here's the deal. I don't want to lose time with you, but I've been up over twenty-four hours and if I don't take a nap now I'm afraid I'll doze off when it really counts. So I'm gonna set an alarm for a half-hour, maybe a full hour.

John puts a hand on his boy's shoulder and stoops down.

JOHN

Then I'm gonna cook up some hot dogs, and you and me are gonna sit out under the stars and have our first beer together. I don't think any father should miss the chance to have a beer with his son.

Danny nods. John stands and heads off.

JOHN

In the meantime, the cable's out but the TV works. There's a DVD player and some movies. I'd set it up, but you kids seem to have a better grasp on that sort of thing anyway. Just stay inside.

John disappears down a hall.

JOHN (O.S.)
And if anyone knocks on that door
you wake me first thing.

The sound of John landing on squeaky bedsprings comes from down the hall.

Danny goes to the TV, grabs the remote and starts messing with it. The TV turns ON.

ONSCREEN: "INPUT 1 - NO SIGNAL" flicks over to "INPUT 2 - NO SIGNAL" then back to "INPUT 1".

Danny pushes the TV aside a bit and looks behind it.

There's several colored A/V Wires behind the TV, but the only thing connected is the power cord.

Danny grabs wires at random and shoves them into the correct color coded inputs.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
(filtered)
...rains finally clearing up and
it's going to be a perfectly clear
night for sky watching. Now to
Dwayne with sports.

Danny backs up to see the local evening news show. He flips through the channels until he finds some cartoons. He watches for a moment, but something worrying itches at him.

Danny goes back to the kitchen. He looks down at the mat and the red oozing from under it.

Danny bends down, and places a finger on it. It's wet.
Tacky. He starts to lift the mat when--

ERRR. ERRR. ERRR.

Danny jumps. A loud computerized buzzing comes from the TV, followed by steady, high-pitched TEST TONE.

Back at the TV, cartoons have been replaced by a blue screen with plain white letters...

EMERGENCY ALERT
CIVIL AUTHORITIES ISSUED A CHILD
ABDUCTION ALERT FOR THE FOLLOWING
COUNTIES: State of New York

As various counties scroll the bottom of the page.

MALE VOICE
(heavily filtered)
This message is being transmitted
at the request of the New York
State Police. A child, Daniel
Stillman, was taken by his
non-custodial father, John
Stillman, today May tenth, twenty
seventeen and is believed to be in
extreme danger.

Danny walks slowly back toward the TV.

MALE VOICE
The child is ten years old. White.
Male. Four feet five inches tall,
weighing sixty five pounds. With
brown hair and brown eyes. Last
seen wearing a blue coat. The
non-custodial father, Paul Stillm-

Danny turns the TV off, then reaches behind it and rips the wires out. He backs away, staring at the blank screen as if staring into a black abyss.

Then he looks past the TV... out the window... to the overturned canoe by the lake.

EXT. RUSTIC LAKESIDE CABIN/BACKYARD - LATER

He stands over the canoe, hesitant. Then drops to his knees and digs his fingers under the boat. He pulls with all his might, struggling until...

The boat flips, revealing a BLOODED CORPSE. A man in his 70s lies face down, his white-haired skull caved in by some blunt force trauma.

Horrified, Danny runs back toward the house.

INT. RUSTIC LAKESIDE CABIN - CONTINUOUS

John comes walking from the hallway like a zombie.

JOHN
Screw it. I can't sleep no matter
how tired I am.

He notices Danny isn't in the living room.

JOHN
Danny?

Danny comes running up the stairs and stops dead upon seeing his dad.

JOHN
Danny. Danny are you-

KEYS JINGLE at the front door. The knob turns.

OWNER (O.S.)
You have car trouble, Pops? I saw
your jeep around the ben-

The OWNER of the cabin, male, 30s, enters and freezes at seeing John. John freezes too.

The Owner sees the Glock Pistol on the counter.

John sees him see it. They both jump for it.

The Glock scatters off into the living room as John slams the owner back into the kitchen.

DANNY
Stop!

They wrestle on the kitchen floor. Kneeing, gouging, punching, until-

BANG!

A shot rings out, and they both look up to see Danny training the gun on them.

JOHN
Danny, give me the gun.

DANNY
No.

OWNER
Thank fucking god.

The Owner moves to stand. Danny trains the gun on him too.

DANNY
Stop.

OWNER
Alright. Alright.

DANNY
(to John)
Why are you hurting people?

JOHN
I told you it doesn't matter
anymore.

DANNY
(freaking out)
Why are you lying?

JOHN
I'm not! By this time tomorrow this
planet will be nothing but ash.

OWNER
What the fuck are you on about?

DANNY
See? See? He doesn't know. The TV's
going like normal. People are
looking for me. If the world's
gonna end, how come no one is
acting like it?

John pauses, knowing how unconvincing his next words are.

JOHN
I'm the only one who knows.

OWNER
Bullshit. Kid, if the world was
going to end everyone would know.

DANNY
(to John)
How do you know it?

John just shrugs.

DANNY
Did you kill mom?

JOHN
No! I told you, the government
killed mom. They killed her and
they took you from me and they lied
about it to everyone and now
they're lying about this too.

The kid is teetering, not sure what to believe.

JOHN
Danny, you're never gonna have a
chance to take this decision back.
You leave me now and it's forever.

(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)
You have to trust me. I'm all you
have anymore.

Danny lowers the gun. The Owner lunges for it-

Danny yelps, jumps back and fires. A bullet rips through the Owner's neck dropping him to the ground.

Danny watches the guy grab at his bleeding neck. John moves to his son.

JOHN
Okay, you really have to give me
that now.

Danny, tears streaming, gives it up without a fight. John grabs Danny's chin and locks eyes with him.

JOHN
Where's your music?

DANNY
My coat.

JOHN
Okay good. Let's get your coat.

John grabs the boy's blue coat off the couch and fishes the I-Pod out. He leads him down the...

HALLWAY

To just outside a bedroom door. He presses play...

RAVEONETTES
I miss the thrill of spring...

...and shoves the earbuds into Danny's ears. The music rises in our ears as well.

JOHN
(loudly over music)
Just stay in this room for awhile.
(Danny nods)
Don't worry. You're gonna see I'm
right.

John kisses his boy on the forehead and hustles him into the room. Then he heads back to the...

LIVING ROOM

The music follows him. It's all we hear anymore and it plays in full to the end.

John points the gun at the Owner's head.

RAVEONETTES
Fireworks...

And squeezes the trigger.

EXT. RUSTIC LAKESIDE CABIN/BACKYARD - NIGHT

John pushes the Owner's body next to the dead old man and flips the canoe back over them. He heads back to the cabin.

LATER

He leads Danny out the door by the hand. Each of them hold a bottle of beer. Each of them have a pair of sunglasses on their head. Danny's is slightly oversized.

RAVEONETTES
A gentle night / For you and I

They walk to the edge of the lake where two plastic chairs have been set up on either side of a small plastic table.

They sit down. John opens each of their beers. He gives Danny a nod and they take a sip together.

John smiles as Danny makes a face at the taste.

John reaches into his pocket and pulls out the small plastic bag with two red pills. He takes them out and hands one to Danny. Danny looks uncertain.

John downs his red pill with a swig of beer. After a moments hesitation, Danny does the same.

RAVEONETTES
Summer days asleep / The thrill is gone

John leans back and looks at the stars... then points upward, motioning to Danny.

Danny looks up, not seeing what his Dad is seeing...

RAVEONETTES
Those frightened eyes / Once saw cruel love

...and then there it is

A SHOOTING STAR. A lonely meteor drawing a long steady streak of light across the sky.

It's soon followed by another, and another after that.

Dozens, no, HUNDREDS of meteors all streaking in the same direction. Coming from behind the duo, sailing over the lake and disappearing into the horizon.

John looks to Danny and sees him gazing up, mouth agape.

Then the Earth begins to shake and rumble. John slips his sunglasses over his eye, reaches over and does the same for his son.

The music lifts just as a MASSIVE ASTEROID soars out from behind the cabin and over the lake. Rocks and dust peel off of it and burn out of existence.

The Asteroid bursts briefly into a brilliant white light as it tears a hole in the atmosphere.

Now the meteors are landing in the distance. Glowing explosions dance across the horizon.

Danny looks at it with no fear, just sheer amazement.

John looks at it, satisfied. Justified.

They turn to each other and smile. John tilts his bottle towards his son, offering up a silent toast to Armageddon.

Danny tilts his bottle right back.

CLINK.