

FRANK

by

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FADE IN:

INT. HENRYS APARTMENT - DAWN

A cold morning, HENRY (35), a school teacher, divorced and exiled from an estranged family gazes outside his fogged window. A weathered STATION WAGON cruises along the damp road, stopping outside the apartment block.

UNCLE (60s) and FRANK (80s) hobble out of the car into the bottom floor of the complex.

Henry lights the oven element with a match, he pours water in a metal jug, placing it on the element.

The apartment is scarcely EMPTY, as though someone has moved hurriedly and forgotten the basics. School TEXT BOOKS and ENCYCLOPEDIA are delicately placed on a shelf. The room is separated by TWO COUCHES.

Henry sits down, the kettle begins to warm up. A KNOCKING at the door, Henry stands, readjusting his jersey. He opens the door.

Uncle leans against the doorway, as though he had been waiting for a long time impatiently. Frank idles behind, exhausted and cold.

UNCLE

Henry.

HENRY

Uncle.

UNCLE

Are you going to invite us in?

HENRY

Yes. I just put the kettle on.

Uncle strolls in, ahead of Henry and Frank. He inspects the room and the vacancy of it.

UNCLE

Did your cousin say I was coming down?

HENRY

No.

Uncle sits down on a couch, exhaling deeply as he does. Henry and Frank stay standing.

UNCLE

Thats okay...I see Nicole has moved out.

This irks Henry, he shuffles to the window.

HENRY

She's living up north now.

Uncle sees that Henry is still wearing his WEDDING RING.

HENRY (CONT'D)

How come you're down here?

UNCLE

Well, you remember Frank here?
Your daddy's cousin?

Henry eyes Frank with caution, he looks miserable.

HENRY

Yes, I know of him.

UNCLE

Well Frank is a bit sick...His step-daughter wants to take care of him.

HENRY

Are you taking him there now?

UNCLE

Yes...Well no...You are.

Henry goes to sit down, confused by the request.

HENRY

Me? Whats the matter with him?

UNCLE

Doctor said dementia and something with his liver...He doesn't want a hospital trip, so here we are.

The kettle reaches its boil and screams, Henry quickly moves Frank to sit down. He paces to the kitchen making the tea, Uncle raises his voice over the kettle.

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UNCLE (CONT'D)

We can't look after him no more.

Frank stares at Uncle with a tired envy.

Henry returning puts the cups on the small table. Uncle gently picks it up and sips while it steams. Henry sits again.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

As hospitable as ever Henry.

HENRY

So why am I taking him over? Who said I have to?

UNCLE

No one...I did.

HENRY

But I don't even know...

Henry planks the tea back down.

UNCLE

(interrupting)

Alright Henry. I just drove 8 hours to get here...I'm not going to try negotiate with you what's going to happen.

HENRY

This isn't my responsibility.

UNCLE

While I do appreciate you are busy...You're doing this. Today.

Henry starts to twist and squeeze his wedding ring, he isn't a busy man anymore. Frank vacantly observes the carpet amidst the conversation.

UNCLE

Look, I'm trying to make this easy.

Uncle signals Henry into the kitchen, they stand and whisper in the tiny space.

(CONTINUED)

UNCLE

He's on his last legs...Just take him over there, make everyone happy.

HENRY

I don't even know him...Why don't you take him? It's just down the road.

UNCLE

Henry, I'm leaving here in...

Uncle pulls his leather coat back and checks his watch.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

Five minutes...I know you're living rough, so don't make this difficult.

Henry looks out toward Frank rubbing his hands together.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

You don't need the extra stress do you? Being so lonely at the moment, the kids up north...Just be a good boy and get on with it.

Uncle goes back to the couch, and sips his tea. Frustrated, Henry scratches his head idling in the the kitchen.

UNCLE

Frank.

Frank nods vacantly.

UNCLE

Henry here is going to take you out for the day.

HENRY

Where's his stuff?

UNCLE

They have everything over there for him.

FRANK

In that apartment? It's freezing out.

(CONTINUED)

UNCLE

I said they have everything for
him.

Uncle gulps the last of the tea, and stands with a moan.
He opens the door nodding his head.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

Always such a joy Henry...Frank,
enjoy.

The door closes. Henry sits down blankly staring at Frank
in front of him.

HENRY

Can you hear me?

Frank nods.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Are you hungry?

Frank nods. Henry goes into the kitchen, returning with a
jam scone. Frank starts to eat it.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Can you walk?

Frank nods again, Henry helps him stand. He leads Frank
out the door.

INT. PUBLIC BUS - MORNING

Henry and Frank sit next to each-other on a BUSY BUS,
Frank gazes out the window, he wipes the condensation off
to see the swift moving streets, cars and people wash
past.

Henry sees an ATTRACTIVE WOMAN (20s) on the bus, he
smiles at her awkwardly, she moves elsewhere on the bus.

EXT. DERELICT APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING

Henry leads Frank outside the complex, its a dingy place,
a HOMELESS MAN sleeps in the door entry. Bottles of beer
and decomposing rubbish scatter the area.

A group of YOUTHS huddle by the stairs, one of them
passes around a GLUE BAG as they huff from it.

Frank stops, Henry waves for him to come in.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY

Come on, we're here.

Frank looks skyward at the stacked floors of the building. He steps back, daunted by it. Henry takes Frank's arm.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I don't know why you're coming here, but this is where your apparently wanted.

Frank stops completely, Henry lets go. Watched by the youths, he ushers Henry away from them.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Alright, just wait here.

He walks into the building, the glue sniffers WHISTLE loudly as warning to their drug dealing colleague at the entrance.

EXT. DERELICT APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Henry reaches the door and KNOCKS. A TRASHY MAN dives his head out of the neighbours door frame, he SLAMS it seeing the unknown Henry.

Some whispering behind the door, a female answers.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Who's that?

HENRY

Henry. Your cousin.

More whispering, Henry can here a male behind the door.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Henry? What the fuck?

A volley of locks come undone. The door opens, MICKY (40s), a hardened faded rose stands there.

MICKY

What the heck you doing here?

HENRY

I'm here with...

Micky's boyfriend, SNAKE (40s) walks to the door, a

(CONTINUED)

shirtless man of tattoos and gold. Henry glances at his scars of violence.

SNAKE
(interrupting)
Is it showtime already?

Snake eyeballs Henry, his mouth twitches.

MICKY
Go back inside...Go clean that
shit up.

SNAKE
What shit?

Micky eyeballs Snake to go inside, it's awkward.

SNAKE (CONT'D)
Oh yeah.

Snake rummages back in, collecting a PLASTIC BAG on the floor as he does. Micky observes Snakes movements, waving him to keep moving inside.

MICKY
Henry, jesus...Come in for a
cuppa?

HENRY
Yeah okay.

INT. MICKY'S UNIT - CONTINUOUS

Henry walks behind Micky as she kicks a roll of DUCT-TAPE underneath a couch. She goes into the kitchen, dishes are piled to the sinks brim.

MICKY
Tea? Coffee?

HENRY
Coffee.

Henry sits down on the couch, he moves an ASH TRAY from the couch to a table thats littered with more ash-trays overflowing with butts. Gothic statues of DRAGONS sit around the empty room. The focus of the room is the 55inch TELEVISION and a large poster of BOULEVARD OF BROKEN DREAMS hangs on the wall.

The television simultaneously plays a dated action film

(CONTINUED)

as the radio blares. Its a damp, ugly and stale place to live.

Micky returns with the coffee, she sits opposite Henry taking a sip. Henry barrels touches his cup, its filthy..

MICKY

That fucking bitch eh.

HENRY

What?

MICKY

The bitch left you I heard.

HENRY

Yeah, she's taken the...

Snake pulsates from the room dressed in CHEMICAL PROTECTIVE OVERALLS. He sees Henry.

SNAKE

Who the fuck is that?

Micky turns to see Snake's outfit, she gets up ushering him back in the room.

MICKY

What the heck are you doing? Take that crap off man.

Micky comes back to sit.

MICKY (CONT'D)

Rehab's fucking with him, sees weird shit all the time now...So she left eh? Where are the kids?

HENRY

Up north...I don't really want to talk about it...

MICKY

Well yeah, It's like a...It's a you know...A shitty thing...

An awkward pause, Micky quickly finishes her coffee.

MICKY (CONT'D)

Is that why you came over here?
To score?

(CONTINUED)

HENRY

Score what?

MICKY

Miss emma.

Snake comes back out of the room, shirtless. His hands and mouth twitch as he sits uncomfortably close to Henry.

MICKY (CONT'D)

You want miss emma?

HENRY

Miss emma? I don't know what it is...

SNAKE

Morphine.

HENRY

No thanks, I'm okay.

MICKY

Sweet...So what are you doing here then?

SNAKE

Yeah, what are you doing here? A witness to the kangaroo court eh?

Micky eyeballs Snake ferociously, telling him to 'shut the fuck up'. Henry looks around the room, a METAL PIPE and CABLE TIES are tucked into a corner, GARDENING GLOVES dangle from the pipe, DUCT-TAPE sits underneath the couch. Henry realises there is a sinister plot unfolding. The television's channel turns to an awful horror scene.

INT. DERELICT APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER

Henry scampers out of the building holding Frank by the arm. Snake and Micky watch as he makes the escape.

MICKY

Fuck. Don't just wait here...Go get them!

Snake runs down the stairs in pursuit.

EXT. MAIN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Snake sprints up the road. He sees a BUS leaving in the distance. They have gotten away. He runs back into the

(CONTINUED)

apartment complex.

INT. BUS - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

Breathing hard, Henry stands on the bus looking out the window as they drive off. He has his hand on Franks shoulder, sitting him down.

A YOUNG GIRL (9) watches on.

YOUNG GIRL

Is that your granddad?

Henry ignores the question - he keeps his eyes focused on the road behind them. Frank bends over in pain, his liver is cramping.

EXT. HENRYS APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

The bus stops, Henry gets out scanning up and down the street - they're not being followed. He helps Frank step down slowly.

Henry ushers Frank into Henrys apartment.

INT. HENRYS APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Henry shoves BREAD, CHEESE, a WATER BOTTLE and a JACKET into a SMALL SUITCASE. He moves with haste.

Frank rests on the couch.

Henry hears a CAR DOOR SLAM, he peeks out the window. A black sedan idles out the front.

HENRY

Come on lets go.

FRANK

I can't.

Henry tucks his arms around Frank and lifts him up.

HENRY

You can walk. Come, now.

Henry directs Frank out the door.

(CONTINUED)

EXT. BACK STREET - LATER

They walk down a tight alley, Henry strolls behind the staggering Frank.

Frank begins a coughing fit and stops, Henry impatiently grabs him by the collar, dragging his frail body. Frank collapses heavily.

HENRY

Shit. Come on, we gotta move.

A walker passes by, Henry yells as he tries standing Frank upright.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Hey! Can you help me?

The walker doesn't take any notice, she wears earphones.

Henry heaves Frank again with one arm and scoops the suitcase with the spare arm. He continues to carry him.

EXT. MOTORWAY UNDERPASS - LATER

Henry sweats lifting Frank's limp weight, he is struggling carrying both man and suitcase. Frank's shoes scrap against the concrete as he wheezes.

Two KIDS on skateboards cruise past.

KID #1

Hey where you going with that old man?

HENRY

Why? You want to help?

KID #1

I'm all good.

KID #2

Is that your dad?

HENRY

No.

KID #2

Why you carrying him then?

KID #1

Yeah why you carrying him?

HENRY

Because.

KID #2

Because why?

HENRY

Because its the right thing to do.

The kids gaze at each other, dumfounded.

KID #1

You're weird.

They both skate off. Henry's muscles give way, losing grip of Frank, dropping him. Frank doesn't fall, his feet find their balance suddenly.

HENRY

You can walk?

Frank lifts his head, and starts to walk himself, slowly.

FRANK

Yes.

Relieved Henry lets a deep breath out, and flexes his arms. The BLACK SEDAN from earlier drives through, slowing down as it passes both of them.

Henry focuses on the sedan as it continues down the road.

INT. TRAIN STATION - EVENING

Henry speaks with a ticket operator, Frank sits down looking at the swarming people move around the colourful hub.

Henry wipes sweat from his face and sits down with Frank.

HENRY

I heard the rumours when I was a kid, but I suppose it was true?

Frank has heard all this before, he nods his head.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY (CONT'D)

Well thats that then...I don't
have to like you, and I don't
like you.

Henry pulls TWO TICKETS from his pocket.

HENRY (CONT'D)

There's a train leaving in 30
minutes that will take you
south...Where you can check into
a hospital, have no one follow
you, and live well for however
long you have left.

Frank looks at the train schedule. It displays the
departing trains on a digital column.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Or you can go back north...Theres
enough food in here to keep you
going for a day...Either way,
you're on your own from here.

Henry slides the suitcase over to Frank, and hands FIFTY
DOLLARS from his wallet. Frank takes it without
hesitation.

FRANK

Why are you doing this?

HENRY

Isn't it obvious?

Henry walks off, leaving Frank lonely amidst the swarming
people moving in different directions. Frank stands,
going toward the trains, swallowed by the dense crowd
that grows.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Henry sits on a moving bus watching the city lights
stream past, a drunk YOUNG COUPLE in the front kiss each
other. He hears them sweet talk.

BOY

You know I love you.

GIRL

Yeah, I know you do.

(CONTINUED)

Henry gazes at them as they kiss. He leans his head against the cool window and touches his wedding ring, twirling it around his finger.

INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Walking up the dark stairs, the moon casts a stretching shadow of Henry. He reaches his door, its wide open. He flicks the light on.

The apartment has been destroyed, furniture has been RIPPED OPEN, HOLES smashed into the plaster walls, the ENCYCLOPEDIA have been RIPPED in half.

Large black GRAFFITI sprawled along the white walls spell out "You let a rapist go" and "Peodaphile Lover".

Henry moves to the window, he twists the golden wedding ring around his finger as he looks to the dim haze around an orange street lamp.

A solo MAN trudges up the road into the grey and fading light.

FADE TO BLACK.