

House Eighteen

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

A bright sunny day, not a cloud in the sky.

Quaint houses either side of a narrow, quiet road.

The houses are all identical. White brick, four windows, one door. Every one with a car parked on the driveway.

An OLD MAN walks his dog. He WHISTLES a cheery tune.

A YOUNG BOY on a bike delivers papers. He tosses them onto each lawn in turn as he passes.

On one of the driveways a MIDDLE AGED MAN washes his car with a hose.

The soapy water runs from the car to the drain. It turns dirty brown as it runs along the curb.

A RED DOOR ahead. A badge on the door proclaims this to be house number 'EIGHTEEN'.

INT. HOUSE EIGHTEEN, LIVING ROOM

A bottle of scotch, unopened, stands on a table.

BRIAN HARRISON, mid-thirties, sits on the sofa. His balding head adds a few years onto him. He wears a jumper and jeans, both have seen better days.

He stares at the bottle in front of him.

The walls are decorated by photographs of Brian and what looks to be his wife...

...yes, must be his wife, there's a WEDDING PHOTOGRAPH too.

Brian leans forward and holds his head in his hands.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. HOUSE EIGHTEEN, DOORWAY - NIGHT

The door is closed, a woman GIGGLES from behind.

A key turns in the lock and it opens.

Brian(20s) stands with his wife, MARY(20s), in his arms. Brian wears a tuxedo with a flower in the jacket. Mary wears a white wedding dress.

Brian carries her inside and back heels the door shut.

He takes her up the stairs.

INT. HOUSE EIGHTEEN, BEDROOM - NIGHT

A large TEDDY BEAR sits on a wicker chair.

He faces the bed as Brian and Mary walk inside, tangled in each others arms.

The Teddy Bear watches them fall to the bed. MOANS and WHIMPERS come from that direction.

The Teddy Bear turns to face US with a smile.

TEDDY BEAR
This is how it started.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. HOUSE EIGHTEEN, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Brian SOBS quietly. Wipes his hands over his face and sits back up.

He reaches out and grabs the bottle of scotch. Inspects the label closely. A look of desperation in his eyes.

He leans back in the sofa and holds the bottle to his chest with both arms. Almost nurses it.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. HOUSE EIGHTEEN, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mary sits still on the sofa. She eyes the large clock in the corner ruefully.

Keys JINGLE in the door and it opens.

Brian stumbles in, blatantly drunk. He holds something behind his back.

BRIAN
Honey, I'm home!

He LAUGHS and walks over to her. He pulls a bunch of flowers from behind his back.

BRIAN
For the one I love.

Mary pouts. She tries to stay angry but a smile melts onto her face.

She stands up and takes the flowers.

MARY
What are you wasting good money on
flowers for Brian? Here, let me
find a vase for them.

Brian smiles and takes her in his arms. They fall to the sofa in an embrace. Mary GIGGLES.

Across the flowery carpet, the Teddy Bear lies on his side. His eyes face the couple.

He turns his gaze to US.

TEDDY BEAR
The warning signs were there,
alright.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. HOUSE EIGHTEEN, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Brian wipes his eyes and puts the bottle back on the table.

His red eyes stare blindly out. Every now and then they dart back to the bottle on the table.

His hand reaches out for it suddenly.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

SMASH TO:

INT. HOUSE EIGHTEEN, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mary sits at the table. She CRIES loud and wild.

Brian, hunched over, hunts through all the cupboards. He SLAMS doors and CURSES loudly.

He stands back up, unsteady on his feet. His eyes red and angry.

He slurs his words badly.

BRIAN

Where have you fucking put it,
bitch?

Mary lowers her head into her hands. She WEEPS more. Tears flow down her cheeks.

Brian lowers his eyebrows and strides towards her, raises his hand.

HALLWAY

Pale carpet and walls. Photographs of a happy Brian and Mary hang all the way along.

BRIAN(O.S)

I said, where the fuck have you put
it bitch!?

A LOUD SLAP and Mary's SCREAM comes from the kitchen.

Up ahead, the Teddy Bear sits by the front door. His head hangs down.

Brian strides along the hallway and out the front door. SLAMS it shut. The wind knocks the Teddy Bear over.

He rolls his eyes and looks to US.

TEDDY BEAR

I'd have changed the locks there
and then.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. HOUSE EIGHTEEN, KITCHEN - DAY

A window above the sink shows a GARDEN out the back. MARY, mid-thirties, paces up and down the grass in the background. She smokes a cigarette.

Brian walks in and rips the cellophane from the bottle of scotch. He uncaps it and takes one final look...

...he turns it upside down and pours the scotch into the sink.

He stares at the brown liquid as it spirals down the plug.

GLUG. GLUG. GLUG.

He holds up the empty bottle and allows a smile to creep over his face.

He turns and walks out into the -

EXT. GARDEN

Mary turns to face him. A dark purple ring around one of her eyes. Her expression gives nothing away.

Brian walks towards her, holding the empty bottle aloft.

BRIAN

I did it Mary, I did it for you. No more, I swear it to you.

Mary takes a final draw of her cigarette and tosses it away.

MARY

Think it's that easy, Brian?

Brian tosses the bottle away. It SMASHES on the path.

BRIAN

I didn't say it was going to be easy, darling. This is just the first step...but I've made that step.

He stands in front of her. His arms hang limply by his side.

BRIAN

Please...please, help me carry it on. I love you so much.

Mary shakes her head, looking to the ground.

She looks back to him, a determination in her eyes. She points to her blackened eye.

MARY

This -- If this happens again I'm off Brian, I'm serious.

Brian nods, a familiar desperation in his eyes.

BRIAN

It won't. I swear to you.

Mary just stands there for a moment. She looks to Brian then takes a deep breath. Shakes her head.

MARY

I must be crazy.

Brian smiles and tentatively holds out his hand for her. She takes it and they walk back inside.

Two trash cans sit at the bottom of the garden. The Teddy Bear is stuffed into one of them.

He is silent.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET

All the gardens identical.

WOMEN hang washing in some.

CHILDREN play in others.

A single cloud floats in the sky, it slowly covers the sun.

FADE OUT.