

PEDIOPHOBIA

FADE IN:

INT. UNDISCLOSED ATTIC

Dark. Eerie. Silent. The kind of place you would expect to be haunted.

A match suddenly ignites, piercing the blackness around it in a very short radius.

JASON WILLIAMS (25), a nice guy but unsure of himself, uses the match to light a candle in his other hand. He shakes the match to put it out.

Using the candle, he surveys his surroundings. Shelves upon shelves of dolls: creepy dolls, pretty dolls, realistic dolls, etc. Even the cutest dolls have an unnatural lifelike quality about them that would send shivers up your spine.

Fear reflects in Jason's eyes as they dart to various dolls. Each seems to LAUGH at him. The LAUGHTER builds into a monsoon of cackling.

Jason races to the closed door. Tries to open it. Locked. He tugs on the knob with both hands, as well as he can while still holding the candle.

SCUFFLING comes from behind him. He whirls around with a gasp, back against the door. Holds out the candle. A few of the dolls are missing from a shelf.

In a tizzy, Jason shines the light in a different direction. A few of the dolls are gone from there as well.

He urgently shifts his light down to his feet. One of the dolls has a grip on his pantleg. Her head slowly turns upward. The manic eyes glare at Jason.

Jason starts to scream. Numerous dolls launch an attack. They pile onto Jason until he drops the candle and topples to the floor. He fights them off, arms across his face to protect it, but they are relentless.

O.S. A phone RINGS.

TRANSITION:

INT. JASON'S HOUSE - MAIN BEDROOM - MORNING

MATCH DISSOLVE/MORPH to the same shot of Jason, only he lies in bed with his arms across his face.

O.S. A phone continues to RING.

ALLISON (O.S.)

Jason?

Jason reluctantly lowers his arms. Finds ALLISON HARPER (23), a bright light on a gloomy day, half lying next to him with concern on her face.

ALLISON

Are you all right?

Jason is too shaken to respond.

Allison answers the house phone on her nightstand.

ALLISON

(into phone)

Hello?...

Jason lies back and catches his breath.

ALLISON

Oh, Jennifer, hi...

(looks at Jason)

He isn't feeling well at the moment.

Sadness fills Allison's face, her focus still on Jason.

ALLISON

I'm sorry to hear that... Yeah,
I'll tell him. Bye.

Allison hangs up the phone. She sucks in her bottom lip as she struggles to find the right words.

ALLISON

Your grandmother died last night in
her sleep.

Jason snaps out of one shock, straight into another.

Allison slides down into bed and cuddles Jason.

ALLISON

She'll be in touch about the
funeral arrangements.

Jason holds Allison, but his mind is still on the dolls.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A grey sky lingers over a funeral as it concludes. Tearful MOURNERS drift away from the beautiful casket standing above the empty vault below.

Jason, his button-up plaid shirt and mismatched brown pants creating a big fashion no-no, walks to his car.

Arms adjoined with Jason, Allison, much better fashion sense on this tragic day, keeps pace.

AT THE ROAD

They arrive at their car. Jason opens the door for Allison. She offers a slight smile of appreciation as she slides into the passenger seat.

Jason gets in behind the wheel. The car drives away.

INT. JASON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jason sits on the couch, a laptop in his lap. On the screen are family photos - Jason, his parents, grandparents, a sister, cousins, etc. He browses through them.

Allison enters from the kitchen, holding two glasses of wine. She sits down next to Jason and holds out a glass. He studies it for a moment.

JASON

Isn't it a little early?

ALLISON

It's never too early for a good wine.

Allison smiles. Jason returns it as he accepts the glass. They savor their first sips. Allison notices the pictures on his screen.

ALLISON

Are those family photos? Let me see.

Allison sets her glass aside and takes the laptop from Jason. Scrolls the images. Stops on one of Jason as a boy.

ALLISON

You were so cute.

JASON

Cute?

Allison puts an arm around Jason's neck.

ALLISON

Boys are cute. Men are handsome.

JASON
You used to call me hot.

ALLISON
I still do.

They kiss. Allison returns to the photos. Finds one of an elderly woman with a friendly face.

ALLISON
I thought you didn't have any pictures of your grandma.

JASON
I didn't. My cousin Nathan put together a family album online to share with everyone.

ALLISON
That was nice of him.
(re: photo)
I wish I had been given the chance to meet her.

JASON
Yeah. Me, too. I always meant to take you to the home but it was so far.

Allison squeezes Jason's shoulder.

ALLISON
Are you doing okay? I know you two drifted apart, but it sounds like you were really close when you were a boy.

Jason gazes fondly at the picture. He touches the image. A tear leaks from his eye.

JASON
I would spend a couple of weeks with my grandparents during the summer. All of the grandkids would. They had this old farmhouse by a lake. I have a lot of fond memories of those days, except for one thing.

ALLISON
Let me guess. Dolls.

JASON
How did you know?

ALLISON

Sweetie, you have nightmares about them at least twice a week. Then there was the time my niece opened her birthday Barbie and you ran out of the restaurant.

Jason smirks.

ALLISON

I'm still explaining that one to my family.

JASON

It's not funny.

Jason looks through more pictures. Allison strokes his hair.

ALLISON

It's a little weird, but nothing to be ashamed of. Superman has kryptonite. You have dolls.

JASON

There's just something creepy about a piece of plastic that stares back at you. I can't tell you how many times I got in trouble for hiding my grandma's doll collection in the closet.

ALLISON

What a naughty boy.

They kiss.

The doorbell RINGS. Allison sets aside the laptop. Goes to the door and opens it.

A delivery truck drives away. Standing at her feet is a good-sized box. She picks it up. Looks at the label.

ALLISON

It's for you, from a law office in Nevada.

Jason moves to her side and takes the box. Glances at the label.

JASON

My grandmother's attorney.

ALLISON
Must be something she willed to
you. Open it!

JASON
Since you're the excited one, you
open it.

Jason hands the box back to Allison. She tears into it. Illuminates with delight once she shoves the tissue paper inside out of the way.

ALLISON
Oh, my.

From the box, Allison removes a doll the size of an infant, wearing a black velvet dress with black ribbons in her hair.

Jason's eyes widen in fear.

JASON
(pointing)
That... that's Molly.

ALLISON
Molly?

JASON
That doll used to torment me. I
think it was Grandma's favorite
because I loathed it the most.

ALLISON
Torment you? In your dreams, you
mean.

Jason backs away. Bumps into the sofa and falls onto it.

JASON
No. I would put her in the closet
with the others but she'd be in bed
with me during the night. She's
like a female Chuckie.

ALLISON
(laughs)
Seriously, Jason? Your grandpa was
playing tricks on you.

JASON
No, that little monster had this
evil laugh.

Allison plays along, admiring the doll in her hands.

ALLISON
Well, I think she's adorable. I
know just the right spot for her.

Allison bounces up the steps.

Jason finds himself very worried.

JASON
Alli--

Too late. Jason jumps up and follows after Allison.

MAIN BEDROOM

Allison places the doll upright on Jason's pillow.

Jason arrives in the doorway. Stops there when he sees the
doll on his bed.

JASON
Now I can't sleep there tonight.

Sulking, Jason disappears around the corner.

ALLISON
(amused)
Come on now, you big baby.

Allison hurries after Jason.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A lamp is on. Jason, wearing pajamas, makes a bed on the
couch with a pillow and blanket.

Also in pajamas, Allison comes down the stairs. She grins
upon seeing Jason.

ALLISON
Seriously?

JASON
You can sleep with that sinister
thing if you want but count me out.

Jason lies down under the blanket and crosses his arms.

Allison slinks over to the couch and nudges Jason over so she
can sit. She runs a finger down his chest, seductive.

ALLISON
What if I offer to do that one
thing you've always wanted?

JASON
I'd happily accept.

Jason grabs Allison and playfully pulls her down to the sofa with him. They laugh, followed by a kiss.

JASON
But I'm still not sleeping in that bed.

They come together in a passionate kiss.

INT. MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Allison slips into bed. Her eyes go straight to Molly sitting where Jason's missing pillow had been. She studies the doll. It starts to give her the willies.

She turns away and pulls up her covers. Eyes close.

INT. JASON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jason sleeps peacefully.

O.S. A child's GIGGLE.

Jason stirs.

INT. MAIN BEDROOM - SAME

Allison sleeps. She changes position. Her arm drops down onto the spot where Mollie had been.

She's gone.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Something darts past the couch, masked by the darkness.

O.S. A child's GIGGLE.

Molly pulls herself up over the arm of the couch, by Jason's head. Her adoring face now looks sinister. A small hand reaches out to Jason. Takes a handful of his hair and yanks.

Jason startles awake. Instantly, his head pivots to look all around him. Nothing there.

O.S. The GIGGLE is somewhere behind him.

Jason throws the blanket off and springs to his feet like a track star. Back pedals away from the couch, straight into the front door.

Something sprints across the room.

Jason throws the door open and steps out. Freezes. Slowly turns to look back. His eyes settle on the stairs.

INT. MAIN BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jason appears in the doorway, carrying a baseball bat. His eyes on full alert.

JASON

Allison?

Jason walks further in. Stops by Allison and shakes her.

JASON

Wake up.

Allison awakens. Sees Jason standing over with the bat and sits up.

ALLISON

What are you doing?

Allison attempts to turn on the bedside light. Empty CLICKS.

JASON

She's trying to kill me.

ALLISON

Who?

JASON

Who do you think?

Allison looks to Jason's side of the bed. Seeing Molly is missing worries her, just a little.

ALLISON

What did you do with her?

JASON

Do you really think I would touch that thing?

ALLISON

My mistake.

Allison slips out of bed. Scans the dark room. Goes to Jason's side of the bed.

ALLISON

She must have fallen off.

JASON
(tenses)
No, don't!

Allison already kneels by the bed and lowers herself. Feels around underneath.

ALLISON
There's something under here.

JASON
It's her!

ALLISON
Ow!

Jason looks to be on the verge of a breakdown.

Allison pulls her hand back. She holds a pocketknife in it with the blade out.

ALLISON
(standing)
Care to tell me why there's a knife under the bed?

JASON
A doll is trying to kill us and you're worried about a knife?

Allison closes the knife and sticks it in Jason's bedside drawer.

ALLISON
You remember what tomorrow is, right?

JASON
(thinks)
Tuesday?

ALLISON
And?

Jason appears lost. Allison storms up to him.

ALLISON
I have the biggest meeting of my career at 9 AM sharp and I won't be able to focus on no sleep.

Allison turns Jason for the door.

ALLISON

I say this with the utmost love:
Get out.

Allison pushes Jason into the hall. Starts to close the door but opens it all the way and snatches the bat from Jason's hands. Closes and locks the door.

She looks at the bat and shakes her head.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - CONTINUOUS

Now unarmed, Jason is stunned. He charges to the stairs, ready to descend them.

Molly is at the very top. Jason fails to see her in time and trips. Tumbles violently down the stairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jason crashes into the wall at the bottom. His body lies contorted. Completely still.

O.S. A child's LAUGHTER seems even more menacing than ever.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Another gloomy day. A funeral concludes. The casket stands over an open vault. ATTENDEES disperse, many in tears.

The casket begins its descent into the small abyss.

Both dressed in black, Allison speaks with JENNIFER MASON (31), sophisticated and arrogant. Each holds tissue to dry their faces.

JENNIFER

I can't believe my little brother is gone. First, our grandmother, now this.

ALLISON

I've never had anyone close to me die. It sickens me to think of Jason all alone in there.

JENNIFER

He hated being alone, even as a boy. That's why I slipped a companion into the casket.

Allison looks at her with both intrigue and concern.

ALLISON

A companion?

JENNIFER

I thought, maybe, to feel an eternal bond with our dearly departed grandmother that he should have her most cherished doll with him for comfort.

ALLISON

You DO understand he had this unrelenting fear of dolls.

JENNIFER

Of course I know, but his phobia doesn't really matter now, does it?

Allison looks back to the casket lowering out of their sight.

INT. JASON'S CASKET - CONTINUOUS

Jason is well-dressed in a suit. His face clean-shaven. The casket jerks as it comes to a stop at the bottom of the vault.

PULL BACK to reveal Molly lying next to his head. She slowly sits up. Her head turns to Jason.

EXT. CEMETERY - CONTINUOUS

Jason's casket rests at the bottom of the vault. A bobcat begins shoveling dirt on top of it.

O.S. A girl's evil LAUGHTER compliments the grim visual.

FADE OUT.