

The Pond

FADE IN:

EXT. POND - DAY

Dark clouds and thunder not so far off. Water. Dark. Smooth.

There! A rippling of water. A STORM SPRITE, dark watery form, skitters along the surface.

HENRY PHELPS, thirties, in a wheelchair, watches from a path.

HENRY

Damn, Grandpa was right! Storm sprite.

Now how did that ditty go?

(struggles to recite)

Wish them well, do not tell, or their something-something will end in hell.

(pauses)

I wish you well.

The storm sprite hesitates, melds into the water. Henry follows the path to the sole house nearby.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Almost everything needs repairs: Roof, porch, steps, garage.

A van sits in the drive: Phelps Real Estate. A sedan drives up, parks. A couple exits. Henry waits.

JANE TOMPKINS, fifties, with a bird-like posture, walks over to Henry, squats beside him.

JANE

So brave dealing with your handicap.

My mother was handicapped and suffered for a long time.

HENRY

Must have been hard for both of you.

JANE

Oh, it was twenty years ago. Ancient history. What happened?

She nods at Henry's legs.

HENRY

My fault. Late at night and a tree jumped in front of me.

She pats his arm, stands.

JANE

Don't worry, you're a handicapper
among friends.

DON TOMPKINS, fifties, fit, strides over to Henry, hand out.
They shake. Don squeezes hard, Henry does too.

DON

Henry, a pleasure. And right on time.

Henry looks at the rain heavy clouds.

HENRY

Folks, unless you can run real fast,
we'll tour outside another day.

JANE

Too bad, the pond looks absolutely
beautiful.

HENRY

I have a camera in my van --

JANE

In the trunk. Don get it, will you?

DON

Get it yourself, you scrawny old bird.
(winks)
She's hard of hearing.

EXT. POND - DAY - SAME

The sprite peeks above the surface, spies the three intruders,
watches and submerges.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Don carries a camera bag. Nearby thunder reminds them a storm
approaches.

HENRY

Come on inside. I'm anxious to show
you the place.

DON

You get the lights on?

JANE

Give him some credit. He's handicapped
not stupid.

HENRY

Here we are, folks. After you.

The couple walks up the steps.

Henry takes a rope out of a pocket on the chair, strong arms up the steps. He then pulls the chair up with the rope.

DON

Say, that's very resourceful, did you see that, dear?

JANE

My eyes work fine.

As they enter, the rain drums the roof, the wind kicks up.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The interior looks as rundown as the exterior. Spacious with a wooden floor. A railed stairway leads to a second level.

Several large pieces of worn furniture sit in random places. A large window oversees the yard and pond.

Don puts the camera on a table.

HENRY

It sure would help if I knew your plans for the house are...

DON

We're checking out some properties for potential as a bed and breakfast.

HENRY

What would you like to see first?

DON

Mind if we just walk around?

HENRY

NO problem. I'm not going far.

He pats his unmoving legs.

HENRY

Oh, don't forget your camera.

Henry grabs a bag strap.

DON

We'll get it later, just let us look around the place first, okay?

Henry lets go of the strap.

HENRY
Okay, no problem.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Henry clears a path through the debris. He practices his moves:

- Spins the chair with expert ease.
- Hops the chair to an amazing height.
- Powers his way through the track.
- Whirls like a break dancer.

OUT THE WINDOW: A dark watery form, mimics Henry's shape, moves. When he hops, the look-a-like sprite hops. He whirls, the sprite whirls. A noise from O.S. The sprite disappears.

HENRY
Don? Jane? Everything all right?

DON (O.S.)
We're upstairs.

OUT THE WINDOW: The sprite reappears, howls.

The camera bag lies on a table. Henry scrutinizes it. He pulls it off the table onto his lap.

OUT THE WINDOW: More howls.

Henry unzips the bag, looks inside: Large digital camera, lens, extra batteries.

Bored, he assembles the camera, aims it. The memory is full.

He examines the first few photos.

- Jane next to a woman in a wheelchair.
- Don next to a man with a white cane.
- Don holds a knife to the man's throat.
- Jane cups something bloody in her hands

A flash of light blinds Henry.

HENRY
What the hell?

Jane holds a camera. Don and Jane each have a knife.

JANE

Took you long enough to find the pictures, cuddles.

DON

Most 'cappers pick up the camera first.

Alert, Henry shifts in his chair, holds on to the camera.

JANE

Don't have anything to say to your old friends?

HENRY

You killed those people! Why?

Don rushes him, slices Henry above the eye.

Henry bludgeons Don in the head with the camera. Don grunts, backs away.

Jane swipes her knife at Henry. He ducks, spins his chair into her. She stumbles. Henry speeds away, arms pumping hard.

DON

We knew you'd be a handful.

Don runs up behind Henry and pushes him toward the wall. Henry waits then grabs the wheels, skids to a stop.

Don flips over Henry, lands in front of the wheelchair.

HENRY

Ha! Prison rules apply!

Henry hops a side wheel on Don's hand. Don sits up, yells. Henry punches him in the jaw.

HENRY

You're serial killers? My ass.

Jane comes at Henry. He rams her, she slides on her back.

HENRY

Come on, folks! You want me to call the retirement home? Get your medications take out?!

DON

Oh, Henry.

Henry turns. Don stabs him in the leg, pulls the knife out.

Don dumps him out of the chair, pulls it backwards up the stairs. Clunk. Clunk.

DON
 (from top of stairs)
 Try to get that.

Jane stands over Henry. He grabs her ankles, yanks her legs out from underneath her. Don hurries down the stairs.

JANE
 Get him! Get him!

Now Don stands above him, ready to kick. Henry does a sit-up, punches him in the balls.

DON
 Uff!

Don and Jane moan on the floor. Henry crawls on his elbows to the railing of the stairway.

INT. STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Henry drags his legs up the stairs.

He arm crawls to his chair, sets it upright. Blood flows from the slice above his eye.

JANE
 (applauds)
 Very nice. It doesn't matter to us
 which floor you're on.

OUT THE WINDOW: The night erupts into a wall of heavy rain.

Don heads up the stairs. He and Henry face off. Jane stands at the bottom of the stairs.

JANE
 Idiot. Just gut the bastard!

Don turns to retort...

Henry sits in the wheelchair, hands on the railing. His powerful arms slingshot him down the stairs into Don and Jane.

No one moves in the pile-up at the bottom.

EXT. POND - NIGHT

Lightning flashes followed by thunder. The storm sprite dances in the pond, stops and turns toward the house, and whines.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Henry wakes up on his back, arms tied with rope to pieces of heavy furniture. An old sheet binds his legs.

DON

Hope you don't mind, super man, but your rope came in very handy.

HENRY

Where's Jane?

JANE

Right behind you.

Henry looks over his shoulder. Jane kneels beside him, holds a knife to his neck. Flash. Don snaps a photo.

JANE

You'll look so handsome in our scrapbook.

She kisses him on the forehead. Flash. Another photo.

JANE

By the way, sweetie, the howling dog will have to go.

HENRY

Dog?

Don stomps on Henry's foot, bones crack. Jane laughs.

JANE

Didn't feel that one did you? My turn.

She stabs him in the same foot but her knife sticks deep into the old flooring. She wiggles the knife, it refuses to budge.

DON

You need to pull it straight out, dear. Here, let me do it.

JANE

Back off, I can do it.

While the knife has his foot pinned to the floor. Henry flexes his biceps, the furniture moves less than an inch.

He pulls the ropes. His biceps bulge. The two pieces of furniture move a foot. Enough slack to free his arms.

Don and Jane pull the blade out. The freed blade cuts the sheet which ties his feet.

HENRY

I am not going out like this!

Henry thrashes from the waist up.

JANE

Quick, hit him over the head!

Henry crawls on his elbows for the outside door. A trail of blood on the floor. He reaches up to the door knob, turns it, and cracks the door...

Jane grabs Henry's feet. Don puts his hand on her shoulders. She lets go, falls on her knees, breathes hard, smiles.

JANE

Don, damn 'capper got outside. Get the flashlights.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Henry's wheelchair sits on the porch.

Henry crawls out the door, grabs the wheelchair, attempts to pull it toward him.

He can't get in, army crawls off the porch, pulls himself under the house.

Don grabs Henry's feet, tugs on his legs.

A mud-covered Henry resists, fingers drag. He slides from underneath the porch, grabs the porch steps.

Don rips Henry away from the steps, kneels on his chest. The rain hits as hard drops.

DON

What? No bravado? No begging for death? You crippled piece of shit.

Henry glares at Don, relaxes. Rain hides the tears from Henry's eyes.

DON

No satisfaction from you?! No thank you for ending your suffering?

Don looks off to the side. Something catches his attention.

DON

I was wondering if I was going to do this myself.

A shiny blade floats in the night air. Lightning reveals Jane holds the knife as she bends down by Henry.

Henry squirms to get out from under Don.

Henry spies the sprite dancing Henry's dance. He smiles. The sprite keeps dancing.

JANE

Sweet dreams, mother.

Jane sticks the knife in Henry's ribs. The sprite collapses like a turned off fountain unseen by Don or Jane.

EXT. POND - NIGHT

A lull in the storm. Jane and Don struggle with Henry's body. They swing it into the pond.

The sprite forms in front of the couple into the shape of Henry, howls, makes a commanding motion with its arms.

The pond surface splashes as the wind kicks up.

JANE

Run for the car!

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Rain falls on the sedan. At first, it looks empty. A glimmer of lightning illuminates the sitting forms of the couple.

Their hair looks like it is moving.

The sedan is full of water. The dead bodies float forward. Don's eyes bulge in surprise, Jane's face looks mad as hell.

Two dark watery forms dance nearby doing Henry's dance.

A wheelchair stands outside the door.

FADE OUT.

THE END.