

TO THE EDGE WITH MR. PEMBRY

written by

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WGAE REGISTERED

OVER BLACK:

MRS. PEMBRY (V.O.)
Yes, nine-one-one? I need police at
my house right now.

Her BREATHS are quick.

MRS. PEMBRY (V.O.)
My husband's outside bashing the car
with a shovel.

SMASH TO:

INT. PEMBRY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The sweet MRS. JANET PEMBRY (40s) has a prepaid flip phone
to her ear. Stares out a front window.

EXT. FRONT YARD/DRIVEWAY

A shovel WHACKS a piece of shit car. MR. MICHAEL PEMBRY
(40s), wearing a mechanic's coverall and boots, rears the
shovel back. WHACKS the car again.

It's dented all over. The front windshield is cracked from
being hit.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Mrs. Pembry paces with jitters.

MRS. PEMBRY
(into phone)
We have this truck... It's in the
shop. It needs to have the engine
replaced. We can't afford it.
(then)
This morning when my husband got in
our other car to go to work, it
wouldn't start. He tried fixing it.

She looks back outside.

MRS. PEMBRY
(into phone)
I guess he couldn't fix it.

EXT. FRONT YARD/DRIVEWAY

Mr. Pembry WHACKS the car, huffing and puffing with a scowl. Then glares at the house. It's been a fixture on this wooded back road for many decades. Not too big, not too small.

Its complexion is dull. Mildew stains and peeling shingles can be seen from afar. Crab grass and weeds infest the lawn.

Mr. Pembry looks to a bed of flowers. Its reds, blues and yellows are an isolated source of lively colors.

He stomps to the bed. Digs up the flowers, heaving clumps of soil.

The front door swings open. Mrs. Pembry hurries out onto the steps. Lowers the phone and:

MRS. PEMBRY
Michael, stop!

He doesn't.

MRS. PEMBRY
I called the police.

He freezes. Weighs the gravity of what she just said. Then drops the shovel. Stomps toward her.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Mrs. Pembry retreats inside. Locks the door. Backs up and waits, keeping the phone lowered.

Eventually, the handle JANGLES from being grabbed on the other side. Followed by POUNDING as the door is hit.

Nothing for a couple of seconds until:

THUD! The wooden frame SPLINTERS as the door gets forced in by Mr. Pembry, who barrels in.

Mrs. Pembry stays out of his way.

He flips a table, scattering framed photographs. A pile of envelopes all read, "PAST DUE."

He RIPS couch cushions and throw pillows.

A TV's screen SHATTERS after he knocks it to the floor. He SMASHES its digital converter box against a wall.

INT. KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER

Mr. Pembry SNAPS cupboard doors off the main fixture. SNAPS them a second time over his knee.

Mrs. Pembry watches in the b.g.

A stack of plates SHATTER after he drops them.

He kicks a dent into the fridge.

Mrs. Pembry confronts him.

MRS. PEMBRY

You think you're the only one who's
pissed, you little coward!?

(then)

I want a divorce.

He slips the ring off his finger. Goes to the sink. Sends it down the drain. Flicks on the switch for the garbage disposal, which GRINDS the gold band into who knows how many pieces.

He passes Mrs. Pembry, who stares at the sink with her jaw dropped for several beats. Then rushes over and flicks off the switch. Blankly stares at the drain.

INT. BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

Mr. Pembry stomps in. He drops to his knees beside the bed. Pulls a lock box out from under it. Aligns the combination and opens it. Snatches a black pistol.

INT. LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN

Mrs. Pembry wanders the mess.

Mr. Pembry enters and heads for the front door. When she notices him, she insists:

MRS. PEMBRY

We were going to get through it.

She sees the pistol.

EXT. FRONT YARD/DRIVEWAY

Mr. Pembry hurries out as a:

POLICE CRUISER

Whips into the driveway.

MR. PEMBRY

Freezes. His eyes pop with shock.

He leaps onto the grass. Speed-walks toward the side of the house farthest from the driveway, keeping his back to the cruiser. Presses the gun flat against his chest to hide it.

MRS. PEMBRY

Comes out. She watches her husband take off running, dipping around the house. Then looks to the:

POLICE CRUISER

Where OFFICER CONRAD (20s) gets out. He's an athletic freak in his prime. If you run, he'll getcha.

EXT. WOODS - MINUTES LATER

Mr. Pembry runs, panting and sweating. Pistol in hand, he tries protecting his face. Branches SWAT him.

EXT. WOODS/ROAD - MINUTES LATER

Mr. Pembry bursts out of the wilderness and freezes. Peers around at an upscale neighborhood of big houses with expensive cars in every driveway.

EXT. ROAD - MINUTES LATER

Mr. Pembry catches his breath as he walks up the center of the street. Studies the properties.

The lawns all look as if they've been painted in alternating strokes -- the result of mowers that have followed perfect routes back-and-forth.

Exotic trees drape purple and white petals. Bushes are all trimmed. Even shadows don't seem to get in the way.

As Mr. Pembry glances around at what seems to be a surreal utopia, his face gradually tightens with rage.

EXT. BIG HOUSE - FRONT YARD - MINUTES LATER

Mr. Pembry wanders diagonally across the lawn toward a side of a random home.

EXT. BACK YARD/PATIO

A sun screen bottle is atop celebrity gossip magazines on a pool-side chair.

YOUNG WOMAN (late-teens), who wears a two-piece swim suit, poses as she gawks at her reflection on the sparkling water of the pool.

She goes to the chair. Picks up the magazines and sits with them on her lap. Opens the bottle of sun block and rubs on lotion until noticing:

MR. PEMBRY

Feet away with the pistol.

She flails her arms, gasping. The bottle goes flying. She scrambles up. The magazines fall.

Mr. Pembry stares at her as if she's guilty. She backpedals barefoot toward the house.

His expression gradually melts to appear numb. She enters the house. Closes a sliding glass door with a SLAM.

He's jolted out of his daze. Blinks repeatedly as he glances around. Seems dizzy as he starts-and-stops moving a couple of times.

EXT. FRONT YARD/ROAD - MINUTES LATER

Mr. Pembry scurries in retreat back across the lawn the way he came.

POLICE CRUISER

SKIDS to a stop on the street.

MR. PEMBRY

Sees it. Attempts an abrupt turn. Slips and falls on his ass just like a clown. But he grimaces.

BANG! His pistol accidentally fires.

The bullet ZIPS past the cruiser.

OFFICER CONRAD

Is in the car on his radio.

MRS. PEMBRY

Is in the passenger seat watching her husband.

MR. PEMBRY

Stares back at his wife, humiliated. Then scrambles up to his feet.

EXT. BACK YARD/PATIO - MINUTES LATER

Mr. Pembry leaps off the patio and runs away from the big house. Eventually stops. Peers back.

Officer Conrad and Mrs. Pembry race around from the side of the house. Proceed over and off the patio, chasing him.

OFFICER CONRAD

What's the connection to these folks?

MRS. PEMBRY

We don't know people like these.

EXT. WOODS - MINUTES LATER

Mr. Pembry bolts.

EXT. WOODS

Officer Conrad leads the way for Mrs. Pembry. They follow broken twigs and kicked-up patches of earth. He's got a pistol drawn. Gets farther and farther ahead of her.

OFFICER CONRAD

Keep up, ma'am.

MRS. PEMBRY

Collapses and cries.

OFFICER CONRAD

Stops and pities her for several beats. Then darts off on the hunt, leaving her alone.

MRS. PEMBRY

Slides off her wedding band and throws it.

EXT. WOODS

Mr. Pembry falls and drops the pistol. He grabs a knee and groans... Pushes himself up to his feet. Shrieks with a helpless yelp of despair... Snatches up the gun... Hobbles lower into a valley.

EXT. WOODS

Officer Conrad navigates the wilderness like it's an obstacle course, dodging low branches and hurdling down trees.

EXT. SWAMP - MINUTES LATER

Mr. Pembry has dropped in elevation to a rough and skunky landscape with stagnant water and patches of lilies.

He slips on mud. Falls to his hands and knees with a SLOP. Crawls and begins to weep. Wheezes as he struggles to get air. Stops and keels over with his face in the mud, on the doorstep of defeat.

OFFICER CONRAD

Creeps up with his gun aimed at Michael.

OFFICER CONRAD

Mr. Pembry... I'm a policeman. I need you to let go of the gun and put your hands on top of your head right now, sir.

Michael raises the pistol. Presses it against his temple. Stands and turns to Conrad with mud and tears covering his face. Both men have their finger on the trigger.

OFFICER CONRAD

Don't do it... Please, don't do it, Mr. Pembry. Don't kill yourself.

Michael's gaze wanders. He looks out over the swamp. Up at the canopy, where beams of sun penetrate and reach even this lowest of places. He thinks -- one can only imagine what.

OFFICER CONRAD

(repeats)

Don't do it.

Michael slouches and breathes heavy. Puts all of his energy into keeping raised his arm that holds the gun.

He closes his eyes... Forces his sobbing to end... Takes the deepest breath of his life and holds it.

Conrad is startled as Michael turns... Rears the pistol far back... Throws it out over the swamp with a final surge of strength before collapsing to his knees and exhaling with a full sigh.

The pistol SPLASHES into the water and disappears down to a murky bottom.

Conrad holsters his pistol. Readies a pair of handcuffs as he approaches Michael from behind.

OFFICER CONRAD

I'm sorry, Mr. Pembry, I'm going to
have to cuff you. But it'll be OK.

As Conrad takes Michael's hands and cuffs his wrists behind his back, Michael sees a white flower opening on one of the many lilies... His face lifts to create the slightest grin.

FADE OUT.

THE END