

For Reasons Unknown

By

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Final Draft

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1 EXT. FIELD - DAY

1922. Dismal, quiet, overcast. ROBERT, 18, trimmed yet rugged, and his brother SAM, 4, stand together, alone, Robert's hands resting on Sam's shoulders. Two coffins are wheeled up and placed before them. The two boys stare at the coffins, unable to move.

2 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

A bed sits in the middle of the room, still disheveled from a hasty exit. Two robes hang on the wall on either side of the bed, accompanied by two pairs of slippers on the floor.

3 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

On the other side, drawings line the walls around the bed. Little stick figures holding hands and standing next to a farmhouse. "Mom, Dad, Brother and Me" are labeled across the top of most of them.

There are two twin beds on either side of the room. A shelf on one side is filled with books, literary, mathematical, textbooks, everything. Above the shelf is a line of scholarly awards and a recently opened ring case with a congratulation note from "Mom and Dad."

4 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Sam sits at the kitchen table, eating out of a bowl while Robert sits across the room, thumbing through papers. Sam finishes his food.

SAM
More, please?

Robert, distracted, doesn't answer right away.

ROBERT
Not right now, Sam.

He looks at Sam for a moment, pondering, as the boy looks down at his empty bowl. Robert goes back to looking at the papers, then back at Sam, then again at the papers, coming to a bitter realization.

Sam gets out of his chair and walks over to Robert, gently tugging on his shirt.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Please, can I have some more?

Robert, frustrated, gets up.

ROBERT

No, no more.

SAM

Mother lets me-

He knocks over his chair, crumples the papers in his hands, hurls them against the wall. He grabs Sam by the arm and drags him into his bedroom.

5 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

He tosses him on the bed. Tears begin to form in Sam's eyes.

ROBERT

Stay here.

SAM

But Robert-

ROBERT

NO! Just shut up! You are costing me everything I ever worked for! Even Aunt Ruth won't take you in! Dad should have left you inside.

Robert furiously grabs all of his books and academic items from his shelf and storms back into the kitchen.

6 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

He walks directly to the fireplace and hurls everything into it. He opens a drawer and grabs a box of matches. He strikes one. He stops.

He looks down at the match in his hand and stares at it. He begins to hear sounds. A raging fire. A structure collapsing.

DAD (V.O.)

Stay here with your brother! I'm going back for your mom!

ROBERT (V.O.)

But Dad-

(CONTINUED)

DAD (V.O.)
(trailing off)
STAY THERE!

ROBERT (V.O.)
It's alright, Sam, it's alright.

A thunderous collapse.

He drops the match and watches it fall to the ground. He falls back against the kitchen island. He holds his head in his hands and tears stream down his face. He clasps tightly to the graduation ring around his finger.

7 EXT. FRONT YARD - DAY

ELLA, early 20s, dainty, walks up to the front door carrying a bowl of food and knocks, the door opens on its own.

ELLA
Hello?

8 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

She pokes her head in and looks around. No one is there. She enters and walks toward the kitchen.

9 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

She finds papers scattered on the floor and a chair toppled over. She sets her bowl down on the floor as she reaches for the papers.

She picks them up and looks at them. They are a letter stating that "Sam will not be able to come and live with us... it is not financially possible... we are very sorry... love, Aunt Ruth".

Meanwhile, on the floor behind the kitchen island, Robert begins to get up.

Robert and Ella both freeze, startled by the others presence.

ELLA
I'm sorry! I didn't mean to startle you.

Robert is uneasy, he wants her to leave.

Ella reaches down and picks up her bowl of food. She takes a step toward the island and sets it down.

ELLA (cont'd)
I just moved in down the road... I
heard about the fire-

Robert stiffens up and shows some anger.

ELLA (cont'd)
I brought you something...

She points to the bowl.

ROBERT
Take it to Sam.

Ella is inquisitive.

ELLA
Sam?

ROBERT
Yeah, the boy who let you in.

ELLA
I let myself in, I didn't see
anyone until you.

Robert walks into the other room, doubting her.

10 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

He sees the empty bed and turns to go out the front door.

11 EXT. FRONT YARD - DAY

He starts walking through the yard and into the field next to it.

ROBERT
(shouting)
Sam?! SAM?!

Robert sees Sam's hat over by the field, he rushes over and picks it up.

ROBERT
Dammit!

Robert is visibly worried as he looks at the sky and the woods. He wants to follow but knows the risks.

(CONTINUED)

ELLA

Should we not go after him?

Robert looks at her.

ROBERT

I should.

Ella walks over and places a hand on his shoulder as he is kneeling down to decide what to do. He brushes her hand off.

Finally, he gets up.

He starts to walk in the direction Sam went. Ella waits, not knowing whether to follow or stay back.

12 EXT. WOODS - EVENING

Robert trudges through the forest.

ROBERT

SAM! SAM!

He continues on.

ROBERT

SAM!

He hears something move and spins to see what it is.

Ella emerges through the thick underbrush. Robert is not happy.

ELLA

Have you come across any signs yet?

ROBERT

No.

ELLA

Well let's keep going. SAM!

Ella begins leading the way. Robert doesn't move.

It takes Ella a moment to realize Robert's absence. She turns and sees him staring at her.

ROBERT

What are you doing?

(CONTINUED)

ELLA
I'm coming too.

Ella pauses while Robert stares her down. She is deciding her next move.

ELLA
Listen...

She looks at him inquisitively.

ROBERT
Robert.

ELLA
I'm Ella. Listen, Robert, I am only trying to help you.

Robert just looks at her and starts walking through the forest.

She is bewildered and frustrated.

ELLA
I understand that you have suffered a loss-

Robert stops and turns.

ROBERT
What do you know about loss, Ella?
You don't have a clue as to what you are talking about. So just leave me alone.

Ella, shocked and angry, tries to find the words to reply.

Robert walks off with a glaring look.

Ella fiddles with her wedding ring on her right hand, conflicted. She turns and starts to walk away. She gets a few steps through the trees and looks up to see a storm rolling in.

She looks down at her ring, then again at the clouds. She turns back around and follows Robert.

13 EXT. CREEK BED - NIGHT

Robert is still furiously stomping through the woods, one hand rubbing the ring around his finger, until he comes to a clearing and pauses to look around. Ella is just now catching up to Robert.

ELLA

You know there's a storm coming.

A little startled, Robert turns around and is immediately annoyed.

ROBERT

Are you serious?

ELLA

Yeah.

ROBERT

No, are you really still following me? What is wrong with you?

ELLA

What makes you think there's something wrong with me?

ROBERT

You're still here, aren't you?

ELLA

Maybe that's a good thing.

Robert is over it. He turns and starts walking away.

ELLA (cont'd)

I saw the letters.

Robert stops. He refuses to turn around.

ELLA

Please, Robert, let me help you.

Robert turns and takes a couple steps toward her.

ROBERT

Can you bring back my old life? Can you make things the way they were only a week ago? My parents weren't the only thing that I lost in that fire. My future burned with it. So don't stand there with promises of help and comfort as though you can change *anything*.

(CONTINUED)

Ella doesn't know what to say. It begins to rain.

ROBERT
Go home, Ella.

Robert turns to walk away. Ella transforms from speechless to a controlled rage, a warning in her tone.

ELLA
NO! No, you are right. I don't know you, but I do know pain. I do understand what you are going through. It's not easy, but you must try to see things clearly, for Sam's sake.

She has stormed up, his back still toward her.

ROBERT
Yeah, Sam, he's the whole problem!

She is furious.

ELLA
I'm serious, you need to grow up, Robert. You are acting like a child, what do you think your parents would say?!

His eyes are enraged. He whirls around, grabs her and shakes her violently.

ROBERT
They're not here, are they?! NOW
GET THE HELL AWAY FROM ME!!

Ella stumbles back onto the ground. Robert is terrified. What has he done? Ella is trying to come out of her shock. Robert turns in shame, stupefied and in a daze. He trips.

Ella comes to. Robert slips in the rain and falls from the log they stand on.

His head hits a rock, he is knocked out cold.

14 EXT. FOREST - DITCH - NIGHT - LATER

Robert slowly opens his eyes. He looks up. Ella, dressed in pure white, looks down upon him. He jolts out of his grogginess.

Without a word she turns and walks down the path in front of them. He gets up slowly and follows, warily. They come to a clearing.

15 EXT. BARN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Robert approaches a ghostly, empty barn in a clearing in the woods, still following Ella, his eyes fixated on her.

She stops in front of the barn. He moves closer and stands next to her, curiously looking at her.

She looks up. He follows her eyes and looks up.

Sam. Hanging from the roof of the barn.

Robert is terrified. He tries to yell, but nothing comes out.

Sam clutches to the side, holding on for dear life.

Robert tries to run into the barn, but cannot move his feet.

He looks up at Sam. Then at Ella, she is gone.

Robert looks back up.

Sam falls. Robert watches in terror.

Sam is limp on the ground. Robert still can't move but he falls to the ground.

He reaches for Sam but can not make it.

Robert is SCREAMING for help. Unparalleled agony plagues his face.

16 EXT. CREEK BED - MORNING

Robert wakes up in a panic. Dizzy. He tries to take in his surroundings but his head is throbbing. Ella tries to calm him down.

ELLA

It's alright, it's alright.

Robert clings to her, drenched in a cold sweat. He slowly calms down.

(CONTINUED)

She releases him. As her hand glides down his arm, he stops her. He grabs her left hand and looks at her wedding ring, then her right, then at her with a strong look of regret and remorse.

She forces a smile.

ROBERT

When?

ELLA

Two years ago.

Robert is embarrassed.

ELLA (cont'd)

You're not expected to get over it right away. I wasn't able to move my ring over for more than a year. It takes time. Time and help.

He stands. She looks up at him. He reaches out to help her up. She looks at his hand and smiles, genuinely. He pulls her up.

17

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The two of them walk through the woods, their comfort in each other has turned to near desperation in their screams.

ROBERT

SAM?! SAM?!

ELLA

SAM?! SAM?!

They continue walking.

ROBERT

SAM?!

ELLA

SA-

Ella stops and listens.

ROBERT

SAM?!

ELLA

Sh.

Robert looks over and stops walking. They both listen.

(CONTINUED)

Moments later... They hear the coughing of a young child. Their faces dart at each other. They bolt off on a dead sprint through the trees.

18 EXT. CLIFF - DAY

Robert nearly runs off the edge of a thirty foot cliff. At the bottom of the cliff lies Sam, covered in rocks and debris, clearly from a fall off the ledge.

Robert is there in an instant, sliding straight down the face of the cliff. Ella watches from above.

ROBERT

Go get the doctor! Go to the house!

Ella runs. Robert is digging Sam out from under the rubble. He is in bad shape, bleeding and covered with rocks and mud. He can barely move.

Robert looks up and realizes he can't scale the cliff. He picks up Sam and runs.

19 EXT. FOREST - DAY

Robert sprints with Sam in his arms.

20 EXT. CLEARING - DAY

Robert's pace has not slowed, he still runs.

FADE OUT.

21 EXT. FIELD - DAY

It is sunny. Birds are chirping.

Robert is holding flowers. He looks down at a gravestone, tears in his eyes. He kneels and places the flowers. He walks down the hillside.

22 EXT. FOREST - DAY

Robert slides through the forest, a bittersweet grin on his face. He approaches the house.

23 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Robert is packing a small bag with books. He puts the last one in and walks into the bedroom.

24 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Sam is sitting on the bed, adjusting a sling that his arm is in. Robert walks up to him and kneels down to put the bag over Sam's good shoulder.

He looks at him lovingly.

He kisses the top of Sam's head and Sam walks to the door and exits. Robert follows him to the door.

25 EXT. FRONT YARD - DAY

Ella and Sam are in the front yard talking. Robert watches them until finally Ella notices Robert. She stands up.

Ella smiles to Robert. He smiles back.

He looks down at his high school graduation ring. He fiddles with it, turning it, slowly pulling it off. He looks back up at Ella and smiles. His ring barely clings to the tip of his fingers.

FADE TO BLACK.