

HOME SICK

Written by

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OVER BLACK:

Footsteps laboriously climb stairs, with the occasional break of a switch-back landing, before ascending yet another creaky flight.

They shuffle to a stop.

PICTURE:

INT. THIRD FLOOR WALKUP - NIGHT

We emerge behind LANDYN as he stands stoically before a door marked simply, "4". He lingers here -- I mean really lingers.

A single key twirls between his fingers as his hand hangs at his hip.

He stops fidgeting with the key now firm between his fingers.

He takes a breath -- not tremendously deliberate, but we notice.

The key flips the lock.

INT. APARTMENT 4 - NIGHT

The door swings open. Landyn's stands backlit by the hallway light.

He flicks the lights on.

We see his face as his eyes absorb the newly illuminated space before him. From just a step or two inside he slowly scans the area.

Finally we see the modest, attic level walk-up apartment. Old sneakers, next to new sneakers, next to a pair of hiking boots, next to dress shoes line the head rest of the sofa that sits flush against the wall. It's odd but organized -- familiar and lived-in.

A small tube television perches on a particle-board TV stand in front of a single, worn recliner.

A flash of recognition crosses Landyn's face. He walks slowly further into the living space. He takes specific notice of the small windows, which are covered each with a black trash bag.

He reaches out and touches one of the trash bags without a trace of confusion.

On the way over to the kitchen, he flips the bathroom light on -- pretty standard stuff -- he flicks it back off without breaking stride.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Landyn scans the small kitchen table, littered with mail, prescription medications, a checkbook, ink pens and a coffee tin.

Over to the sink.

He places a dirty spoon from the counter into the sink next to the remnants of a bowl of chili and a thin, skinned-over bit of chocolate milk resting at the bottom of a glass. The spoon's delicate CLANK cuts the silence of the space we've been moving through.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT 4 - MOMENTS LATER

Back in the living room, Landyn stands before another doorway. He flicks the light on. Again, he lingers.

The bedroom. Yep. There it is. The only thing we see is his face absorbing the scene.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUDGET HOTEL - NIGHT

Landyn drags a roll-behind suitcase and backpack in through the automatic sliding doors.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

PRE-LAP: Bar Noise.

Landyn's bags rest on one of the two beds as they are swallowed by darkness with the already closing hotel room door.

CLICK.

CUT TO:

INT. LOCAL BAR & GRILL - NIGHT

It isn't hard to see that it's a small-town joint.

Landyn sits bellied up to the bar with a pint of beer and a pile of ravaged hot wings he laid waste to some time earlier.

A SERIES OF CUTS:

He watches football on the bar TV.

Another beer - the wings now gone.

Scrolls through his phone.

Back to eyeing football on TV.

A neighbor at the bar, let's call him WILL, chimes up.

WILL

You a Hawkeye's fan?

Landyn snaps to from his trance on the tube.

LANDYN

Nah. My dad was, though.

Will nods.

WILL

He play ball there?

LANDYN

Louisville, actually.

Will takes a pull off of a Busch Light longneck.

WILL

Didn't peg you as a local. That where you live?

LANDYN

Not anymore. I'm in LA now.

Will's eyebrows raise a bit.

WILL

Damn, son. What are you doing in Iowa?

LANDYN

My dad died. I'm here for a few days, clearing out his place.

Will cheeks flush with embarrassment.

WILL
Aw, hell. Sorry man.

Landyn shakes it off as he takes a swig of his IPA.

WILL (CONT'D)
The Cardinals, huh? What position?

LANDYN
Wide receiver. Still holds a
record. Yards per catch -- 23.5 on
the season.

Will smiles.

WILL
That's certainly nothing to shake a
stick at.

The bartender, LINDA, swings past as Will flags her down.

WILL (CONT'D)
Linda, hon. Two Fireballs.
(to Landyn)
We'll do one for your pop.

Landyn balks.

LANDYN
I appreciate that, but I can't do
cinnamon in my whiskey. Louisville,
remember.

Landyn chuckles.

WILL
Gotcha. One Fireball, one bourbon.

Landyn smiles, unable to avoid the impending libation.

The shots arrive. Will raises his glass. Landyn follows suit.

WILL (CONT'D)
To your pop.

They clink glasses, tap the bar then shoot the whiskey.

The empty shooter lands on the bartop as --

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Landyn's Chuck Taylor's beat the street through the cold winter air and warm-buzziness of the liquor.

We pass rows of modest brick houses, an old elementary school walking track behind a fence and eventually into the fluorescent lighting of the hotel sign hovering over the parking lot.

INT. BUDGET HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Landyn enters his room. The door swings shut.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. BUDGET HOTEL HALLWAY - MORNING

As the morning light begins to feed the hallway, Landyn's door swings open.

A newly showered Landyn steps out with his backpack over one shoulder.

CUT TO:

INT. THIRD FLOOR WALKUP - DAY

Landyn unlocks the door and steps into apartment 4.

INT. APARTMENT 4 - CONTINUOUS

Landyn moves into the kitchen and plops his bag onto the table.

He picks up a receipt next to a bottle of NyQuill.

A COUGH emits from the living room. Landyn pays no mind.

The receipt reads January 7th.

