

Red-Handed

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Red-Handed

FADE IN:

INT. FARNSWORTH ESTATE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

It's literally pitch black. But from the blackness we hear the blissful voices of GEORGE AND CLAIRE PARRISH, husband and wife.

GEORGE

Oh, yes.

CLAIRE

Double yes.

GEORGE

You always know just the right amount of pressure to use. And where to apply it.

CLAIRE

Mmmmmmmmmmm.

GEORGE

God, you're good.

CLAIRE

(playfully)

You got that right.

GEORGE

Move just a little bit left.

CLAIRE

Like that?

GEORGE

That is so perfect. I'm really at a loss for words.

CLAIRE

Not again?!

Out of the blackness we now see George and Claire. The only illumination comes from some strategically placed mini-flashlights. Mid-thirties and attractive, they're both garbed in black, standing before an open wall safe. As Claire removes jewelry, she hands it to George. Using a jeweler's loupe, he examines each piece.

GEORGE

Very nice.

CLAIRE
Clarity?

GEORGE
Like the water off Montserrat.

CLAIRE
Cut?

GEORGE
The work of a master.

CLAIRE
Color?

GEORGE
Not even a hint of it.

He deposits the gems in Claire's fanny-pack then stops abruptly at the sound of a beep from his cell. He checks it. His police scanner app shows a patrol car in the area.

CLAIRE
Trouble?

GEORGE
(touching his earpiece)
My mistake...thought the Police
dispatcher said 302 instead of 203.

CLAIRE
That would be a problem.
(beat)
I still don't know how you designed
that app.

GEORGE
I'll take that compliment and raise
you.

CLAIRE
Anything else look good?

GEORGE
(showing her one piece)
Our first decent job in months and
we run into this.

CLAIRE
Cubic Zirconium?

GEORGE
(tossing it back in
safe)
How stupid do they think we are?

CLAIRE

She probably tossed it in with the real stuff after a party.

GEORGE

For crissake, they sell this crap in infomercials.

CLAIRE

Honey, you're getting upset. Let me finish up here. How're we doing?

GEORGE

Three minutes and forty-seven seconds...ahead of schedule.

George gives Claire a kiss and starts off but she grabs him and kisses him back, more passionately.

CLAIRE

There's more where that came from.

GEORGE

Hold my place.

INT. MANSION STUDY - NIGHT

Searching through drawers, George finally locates the item he is seeking - a handgun. He methodically empties all six bullets from the chamber. Then lines them up symmetrically atop the dresser. And smiles.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The lights remain off. With the mini-flashlight, George flips through the phone book. He circles the phone number of the police and writes CALL THIS NUMBER. Claire enters.

GEORGE

Just once, I wish I could see their faces when they find this!

CLAIRE

Gloating?

GEORGE

Maybe a little.

CLAIRE

(embracing him)

Don't let it get out of control.

She kisses him. George reassembles the Master control panel, reattaching a wire here, reconfiguring a setting there via a schematic on his smartphone.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

We must be the most considerate
thieves around.

GEORGE

Who else would reconnect an alarm
system so these people aren't
burglarized all over again?

(beat)

Was it good for you?

CLAIRE

The best. For sixteen years. Always
the best.

GEORGE

You got everything?

CLAIRE

(pointing to her fanny
pack)

Everything of value.

GEORGE

Then I believe we're free to go.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Quiet and peaceful. A neighborhood of stately older homes. A
MAN walks his dog. An attractive female JOGGER runs by. The
Man exchanges smiles with the JOGGER. It's Claire.

At a corner, she jogs in place to let a car drive through.
The passenger side window glides down.

DRIVER

Excuse me, I seem to be lost. Can
you point me towards 908 Sheffield
Road?

CLAIRE

I can do better than that. I can
take you there.

Claire opens the passenger side door and hops in, where we
see GEORGE, in street clothes, behind the wheel.

GEORGE

This is very thoughtful of you.

CLAIRE

Oh I'm sure you'd do the same for
me.

Claire shuts her door and they drive off into the night.

EXT. GEORGE AND CLAIRE PARRISH'S HOME - LATER

Chicago suburb of Evanston. 908 Sheffield Road to be exact. Middle-class. Nothing extravagant. Their car pulls into the driveway.

George double-checks his smartphone app to see if the police have been alerted to the theft they just committed. All quiet.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

George looks over at Claire, who's fallen asleep. But with a smile on her face. He brushes her nose with his fingertip, gently waking her.

CLAIRE

That tickles.

GEORGE

I could carry you in if you'd like.

CLAIRE

You're being so attentive. Even more than usual.

(beat)

It's the meetings, isn't it?

GEORGE

They are working. Slowly but surely. Remember what the counselor said? Every day is a challenge. One day at a time and all that.

CLAIRE

As long as you're trying.

George carries in a gym bag.

The rustle of the NEIGHBOR'S curtain does not go unnoticed with mutual eye rolls and "not again" head-shaking from George and Claire.

INT. PARRISH HOME - NIGHT

While Claire goes upstairs, George goes down the hall.

INT. PARRISH HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

George unlocks the door and enters. Moving aside a file cabinet, he opens a floor safe. Removing the goods from Claire's fanny-pack, George catalogs each piece in its own envelope, on which he writes a date one month from the present. Then he deposits everything into the safe.

INT. PARRISH HOME UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Claire closes the door to their daughter RORY'S bedroom as George comes up the stairs. She chuckles to herself.

GEORGE

Let me guess. She fell asleep With
the earbuds in, laptop on and still
in her clothes.

CLAIRE

Surrounded by her homework.

GEORGE

Finished of course.

CLAIRE

She is our daughter.

GEORGE

Speaking of bed...

CLAIRE

I'm way ahead of you.

GEORGE

I'm not sure that's possible.

And as they head inside their bedroom, we:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RORY'S BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

Ambiance: rock and movie star posters AND a picture of Bill Gates. Evidence of Rory's artistic talent abounds: drawings, sculptures, mobiles. Still in her previous day's clothing, Rory begins to stir. Even in this disheveled state, she's clearly a pretty sixteen-year-old. Eyes still closed she sniffs the air several times. She sits bolt upright, goes to her door and yells downstairs.

RORY

That better be French toast!!

GEORGE (O.S.)

And you'd better be ready in five
minutes.

She starts downstairs but is halted by:

GEORGE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Only those freshly showered and
clothed will be served.

She turns right around and races for the bathroom.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Showing the same precision from the previous evening's activities, George deftly removes several egg-soaked pieces of bread from the bowl they've been marinating in and delicately places them on the griddle.

GEORGE

Claire, the French toast has the little bubbles the way you like them.

CLAIRE (O.S.)

Be right there.

INT. PARRISH HOME OFFICE - DAY

Claire is at the desk with an open file folder labeled FARNSWORTH ESTATE. She feeds it through a shredder. Twice.

From a folder marked DEVELOPMENT, she removes the folder ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO. It contains blueprints and an ad for a recently opened exhibit of Central and South American art. The show's centerpiece is AXOLOTL, Mayan Goddess of fertility. On the desk sits a miniature ceramic Axolotl, about three inches tall.

GEORGE (O.S.)

The bubbles are all disappearing!

INT. KITCHEN DAY

Claire, George and Rory eat.

RORY

Dad, it's almost as good as your Christmas morning French toast.

GEORGE

Almost? I'm crushed. Was the bread not succulent enough? Was the powdered sugar not sweet enough?

CLAIRE

I think it's a tie. Christmas might have had something to do with it.

SFX: RORY'S CELL TEXT TONE

Rory reads the text message.

RORY
 Russ just invited me to baseball practice. Do I have to go to the museum?

GEORGE/CLAIRE
 Yes.

George snatches Rory's cell and texts back.

RORY
 Dad!

GEORGE
 Didn't you tell him 'no texting during breakfast?'

RORY
 What did you say?

GEORGE
 I told him that his text was very important to us and that it would be read as soon as our offices were open.

RORY
 What'd he say back?

GEORGE
 'Yes, Mr. Parrish.' He's a good kid. He just needs more training.

George returns the cell to Rory.

RORY
 But I've heard the story a million times. Seeing the Mayan Goddess of Fertility in person is not going to make me appreciate the miracle of my birth anymore than I already do.

GEORGE
 We're going as a family. No ifs, ands or bunts. Besides, it's Axolotl's only visit to Chicago.

EXT. ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO - ESTABLISHING - DAY

The Parrish's car stops at the parking lot booth.

INT. ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO - MAIN LOBBY - DAY

Claire gently taps George on the elbow as they pass a video console manned by a GUARD.

Displayed are live shots from each gallery. A sign advises "No photography."

Amidst a good-sized crowd, Claire and George wear walking tour headphones. Rory, however, is wearing her iPod, working on a good case of tinnitus. They make their way to

INT. MUSEUM - CENTRAL AMERICAN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Encased in glass, Axolotl sits on a platform ringed with velvet ropes. George and Claire stand temporarily speechless and moved before the 18" tall statue. They both remove their headphones, as if the prerecorded narrative is an intrusion.

CLAIRE

I'll be over here.

George nods as he continues to circle the Axolotl display. But his interest begins to focus less on Axolotl and more on the display case and the platform.

ANGLE ON CLAIRE

From a nearby bench, Claire scrolls through the exhibit catalog on her tablet. She makes cryptic notes as her eyes subtly scan the room. She hones in first on the closed-circuit cameras. Her gaze shifts to the baseboard around the room with its motion detector sensors.

RORY

Mom?

Claire instinctively switches her screen to Amazon.

CLAIRE

Hmm?

(beat; refocusing)

Oh, I'm sorry, honey. I was just taking it all in.

RORY

Wow, you were really gone there for a sec! You okay?

CLAIRE

It's a little overpowering to see the real thing. It takes me right back to the maternity ward...

RORY

...when Dad gave you the little Axolotl you keep on your desk, right?

CLAIRE

The doctors were just trying to keep me comfortable. We wanted you so much. And your dad didn't know where to turn.

RORY

That's when he found the herb guy--

CLAIRE

--Who gave us the tea and told him how Axolotl would look over me. And that we'd have a healthy, happy baby girl! And every time I look at you, I wonder where we went wrong!

Rory laughs out loud. George joins them.

RORY

So is there anything else here you want to drool over? Or can we go back to the twenty-first century?

George and Claire exchange did-we-see-everything-we-need-to-see looks. George gives Claire a nod. Rory recognizes this familiar exchange.

RORY (CONT'D)

How do you do that?

CLAIRE

Do what?

RORY

That silent communication thing. It's scary.

GEORGE

It is kinda scary. It's called marriage.

Claire shoots him a look.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

But it's a good kind of scary.

RORY

Good recovery, Dad.

GEORGE

We've got everything, right, dear?

Claire taps her tablet but says nothing.

RORY

Dad, was that a silent yes or a silent
no?

INT. PARRISH HOME OFFICE - LATER

George is busy mapping out certain museum reference points on their monster computer monitor. He looks over interactive blueprints and their notes then charts information, resulting in a series of overlays.

GEORGE

Claire, I need your help. This has
me stumped.

George gets up from the desk, carrying a printout.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I was thinking our entry to the museum
would have to be --

George stops at a note Claire left: "*Out running errands.
Back in about an hour. Keep up the good work! Love, Me.*"
George smiles and heads for the kitchen.