

WAKE UP, HOWARD

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INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

ELLA (early 30s) is sat in bed reading a book - a horror fiction. HOWARD appears from the bathroom, brushing his teeth.

HOWARD
(mumbling)
How's the book?

ELLA
(distracted)
Hmm?

HOWARD stops brushing.

HOWARD
(mumbling)
I said, how's the book?

ELLA stops reading and looks at HOWARD.

ELLA
What?

HOWARD
(mumbling)
Don't worry.

HOWARD carries on brushing and returns to the bathroom.

Distracted, ELLA decides to stop reading. She places the book on a side cabinet, turns off a side light, and lays down - pulling the duvet over her.

HOWARD joins her and kisses her goodnight. He too turns off a side light.

HOWARD (CONT'D)
Good night.

ELLA
Night.

A beat.

Silence.

Slowly, a deep, groaning noises begins to stir. It's hard to determine what the noise is.

HOWARD sits up. He waits. The noise has stopped. He lays back down.

The groaning noise returns, but this time it escalates and evolves into a darker growl.

HOWARD quickly sits up and turns the light back on. He looks down at ELLA who is fast asleep.

HOWARD
Did you say something?

Silence.

HOWARD looks around the room. Slowly, sheepishly, he lays back down - he goes to turn the light off, but this time he decides to keep it on.

INT. BEDROOM - THE NEXT NIGHT

ELLA is laying on top of HOWARD - under the covers. She kisses him on the forehead.

ELLA
That was great, thanks.

HOWARD
I'm glad I could've been of service.

ELLA gets out of bed and heads towards the BATHROOM - HOWARD watches, eventually checking his phone once she's out of eye line.

HOWARD (CONT'D)
...Did you hear any strange noises last night?

ELLA (O.S.)
What do you mean?

HOWARD
I don't know. Like a fox calling, or... dying, outside.

ELLA (O.S.)
No, I was out for the count as soon as my head hit the pillow.

HOWARD
(anxious)
Hmm. It was quite... *disturbing*.
Kept me awake for a while.

We hear the toilet being flushed and ELLA soon reappears - she turns the bathroom light off.

ELLA

It was just your imagination.

HOWARD

Yeah, maybe. But then again I haven't been scared of the dark, in say, oh, I don't know, twenty-odd years!

ELLA

(frustrated)

I'm just saying!

HOWARD

I know, but it felt *so* real.

ELLA climbs into bed, turns her light off, and lays down.

ELLA

Night.

HOWARD

...Good night.

HOWARD turns over - he goes to turn the light off but hesitates. Eventually deciding that he must.

A beat.

Silence.

We hear a car drive past outside and the distance sound of laughter.

We hear a voice, ELLA's voice.

ELLA

(dark)

Howard... Howard...

HOWARD

Hmm?

ELLA

(dark)

Wake up, Howard.

HOWARD

...What?

ELLA slowly sits up in bed - her hair fallen down to cover her face.

ELLA
I've got something important to
tell you.

HOWARD
Can it wait till morning?

ELLA
I've done something terrible,
Howard.

HOWARD reluctantly puts on his side light, but as he does so,
we see that ELLA is now laying down next to him - fast
asleep.

He looks at her - confused.

HOWARD
What have you done?... Ella?...
Ella?

He shakes her, but she is fast asleep.

HOWARD thinks for a moment - maybe he was dreaming again. He
turns away, eventually turning off the light and going back
to sleep.

INT. BEDROOM - THE THIRD NIGHT

ELLA is sat in bed - reading her book. She is noticeably
about half way through now.

HOWARD climbs into bed.

HOWARD
(whispering)
Sorry to interrupt.

ELLA
Hmm?

HOWARD
But...

ELLA stops reading and looks at HOWARD.

HOWARD (CONT'D)
(awkward)
Do you remember having a
conversation with me last night?

ELLA
When?

HOWARD
When we were asleep?

ELLA
(confused)
A conversation when we were asleep?

HOWARD nods.

ELLA looks worried - but decides to laugh it off.

ELLA (CONT'D)
Aww have you been dreaming about
me? That's cute.

HOWARD
So, we didn't?

ELLA
Not that I remember.

ELLA returns her attention back to the book.

CUT TO:

Both HOWARD and ELLA are fast asleep.

ELLA (CONT'D)
Stop... Stop! Howard stop!!!

HOWARD turns over.

HOWARD
...I'm not doing anything!

ELLA
Please, Howard! Please. I beg you-

HOWARD
Ella! Wake up!

ELLA
(panicked)
Howard... Howard..!

HOWARD
Ella?! You're having a nightmare,
wake up!... Ella?!

ELLA
(dark)
I'm going to hurt you for what
you've done to me.

HOWARD moves away - we see that ELLA's eyes are closed.

HOWARD
I haven't- Ella? Stop it- stop
messing around!

HOWARD shakes ELLA awake - who stirs.

ELLA
(groggy)
...Hmm? What's the matter?

HOWARD
What the fuck was that?

ELLA
(groggy)
What was what?

HOWARD
You just... you just said something-

ELLA
(groggy)
Howard, I was asleep.

HOWARD
You just said that... You were
going to *hurt* me!

ELLA
Aww sweetie, you must have dreamt
it. Come back to bed-

ELLA grabs HOWARD by the hand and forces him to cuddle her.

HOWARD
It was quite scary!

ELLA
Nawh, it's okay now, I'll protect
you. Come on, lay down, that's it-

HOWARD reluctantly cuddles ELLA - unsure that he wants to be
that close to her.

INT. BEDROOM - THE FORTH NIGHT

HOWARD is stood by the book shelf - positioning a small
camera towards the bed.

ELLA is watching - her book in hand.

HOWARD turns and looks at her. He smiles, triumphantly.

ELLA shakes her head and goes back to reading her book - almost to the end now.

HOWARD

This way, we can *both* see it!

ELLA

Mhmm.

HOWARD

I know you don't believe me, but last night I was definitely not dreaming!

ELLA is noticeably annoyed - HOWARD goes to kiss her goodnight, but ELLA turns away slightly.

HOWARD pulls away. He reluctantly turns away - switching off his side light.

CUT TO:

The room is dark, but we can see ELLA slowly getting up out of bed - her hair fallen down to hide her face again.

She walks towards the camera - slowly, as though gliding across the floor. HOWARD remains fast asleep.

We see from the recording of the SMALL CAMERA, ELLA walk towards it. She stands in front of it. Her eyes darkened. She does not look like the ELLA we've seen before.

INT. BEDROOM - THE FIFTH NIGHT

HOWARD is looking at the SMALL CAMERA - confused, and noticeably agitated.

ELLA (O.S.)

Anything?

HOWARD

(disappointed)

...No. Nothing.

ELLA comes in from the bathroom wearing a facemask. HOWARD continues to be fixated on the camera.

ELLA

See! You *must* have been dreaming.

HOWARD

Or maybe nothing happened last night!

ELLA

Maybe.

ELLA carefully gets into bed - she lays down facing upwards.

HOWARD

You still don't believe me?

ELLA

I didn't say that.

HOWARD

You didn't have to.

ELLA switches off her light.

HOWARD switches his off in turn - but with some aggression.

CUT TO:

We hear a deep groaning, followed by some disturbing chitter-chatter.

ELLA

(deep)

Okay. Okay! I will. I will do it now.

Some more chitter-chatter.

ELLA slides out of bed - disappearing from view.

The CAMERA slowly tracks in to HOWARD - fast asleep - finishing on a CLOSE UP.

We hear a child-like laughter coming from OFF SCREEN.

ELLA (CONT'D)

I'm going to do it. I'm going to do it now.

ELLA (CONT'D)

(deep)

He deserves it. For what he's done to you.

ELLA (CONT'D)

I know. I know he does. I'm going to give him what he *deserves*.

SLOWLY the figure walks into frame - hovering over HOWARD.

HOWARD stirs. He abruptly wakes, knowing quickly that something bad is happening.

We CUT to see ELLA's facemasked face directly in front of him - staring back.

ELLA leans back and pulls a large blade into view. HOWARD immediately starts to scream. He jumps out of bed - flinging his arms around in self defence.

HOWARD
ARRGH!! Get off! Get off me! Ella,
no!

HOWARD runs around the room, eventually falling against the wall on the far side of the room.

A light switches on.

ELLA is looking down at HOWARD from the bed - she sees HOWARD cowering in the corner. She looks panicked.

ELLA
What's going on?

HOWARD
You! You... You were just-

HOWARD points to where he say ELLA - but she is no longer there. HOWARD cannot explain.

HOWARD (CONT'D)
You had a knife. You were about
to...

ELLA
...I think you need to see a
doctor, Howard. This can't go on.

HOWARD
But... But you were just-

HOWARD thinks for a moment - he can see how worried ELLA is. He nods gently.

INT. BEDROOM/BATHROOM - THE LAST NIGHT

HOWARD is in the BATHROOM - he is staring down at a handful of pills.

ELLA
Don't look so worried. They're
prescribed by a doctor. They'll
help you sleep.

HOWARD

It says a side effect could include momentary, and sometimes prolonged, paralysis.

ELLA

But you'll be asleep, so what does it matter?

HOWARD

(worried)

You're right... No harm in trying, is there?

HOWARD hesitates, but eventually throws all the pills into his mouth - he pours himself a glass of water and takes a gulp.

He turns and smiles at ELLA - before leaving the bathroom. We briefly see ELLA's expression change as he walks out of view. She switches the bathroom light off.

CUT TO:

They both switch off their side lights and settle down.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP on HOWARD's face, we see that he is peacefully asleep.

After a moment, the bed begins to shake, and then more aggressively, violently - which eventually wakes HOWARD.

Suddenly everything stops.

His eyes open, and instantly realises that he cannot move - he is totally paralysed. He tries to say something, but can't. He tries to move, but can't. He looks around, but it is too dark to see anything.

ELLA (O.S.)

(dark)

...Wake up, Howard.

HOWARD locks eyes with something moving towards him - they widen as he looks DIRECTLY INTO CAMERA - this *something* instantly scares him more than he's ever been before.

He desperately wants to scream. But can't.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END