

KRUEGER

Written by

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Adaptation of a Wes Craven Original

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FADE IN:

INT. ED'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

A bear-paw of a hand hangs over the arm of a living room couch. Fresh grime caked between the fingertips. Loud snores bellow from a well-built man, ED UNDERWOOD, 40's, slumbering comfortably within his soiled jumpsuit.

Open beer bottles riddle the living room floor; flies feast on piles of dirty, aluminum, TV-dinner trays.

A HEAVY KNOCK stirs Ed's sleep.

ED
Kyle, get the door!

The knocking continues.

ED
Kyle!

Ed stumbles off the couch and onto his feet; only to struggle with a stiff limp.

He opens Kyle's bedroom door.

ED
Boy, you deaf-

Ed sees an empty bed and wide open window. He walks in the room and shuts the window.

On his way back to the living room he puts on an old dingy baseball-cap and shoves a pack of cigarettes in his shirt pocket.

The front door swings open. JENNY, a caseworker (50s, short, nicely dressed) stands next to MR. ORVEL (tall, 50s) who is dressed in a clergy uniform.

Ed just stares in annoyance.

The petite lady reaches out to shake Ed's hand, but Ed doesn't return the gesture.

CASEWORKER JENNY
(raspy German accent)
Gooooood morning, Mr. Underwood. My name is Jenny.

Ed sizes up Mr. Orvel, then peers back at Jenny.

ED
This a joke.

The little lady's stone cold eyes begs otherwise; she scoffs at Ed's remark.

CASEWORKER JENNY
No sir, I'm a county caseworker,
and this gentlemen is Mr. Orvel;
he's here on behalf of the
Woodbridge Angels, a home for
unfortunate children.

She pauses as she realizes how filthy Ed looks.

CASEWORKER JENNY
We've sent you many letters
regarding this matter, and even
tried calling, but it seems—

ED
Not interested in what you're
selling.

Ed shuts the door, and locks the top bolt.

CASEWORKER JENNY
(knocking on the door)
Mr. Underwood... Mr. Underwood, I
hope you reconsider.
(beat)
It's regarding Amanda.

The front door swings back open.

ED
What about her?

Jenny looks over at his over-stuffed mailbox and recognizes the past letters they've sent to him. She turns back and hands him another envelope.

CASEWORKER JENNY
Read it this time.

ED
What's this?

Ed snatches the envelope from the caseworker's hands while Mr. Orvel looks on.

CASEWORKER JENNY
When's the last time you've been in
communication with your sister?

EXT. SPRINGWOOD PIER - DAY

Woodpeckers wake by a placid lake. A mirror reflection of the rising sky meets KYLE UNDERWOOD's face.

Drops of urine destroys the peaceful image.

Kyle waves back and forth, making "S-shapes" as he pees into the river. He puffs on a joint that sits at the corner of his mouth while his friend, BRIAN, 15, laughs.

KYLE

You know, one day, I'm going to leave this shit-hole. There's nothing for me here.

Spurts of remaining urine sends ripples over Kyle's reflection within the lake.

BRIAN

What do you mean Kyle? Springwood not enough for you?

Brian throws his arms out.

BRIAN

All this beauty could be yours!

KYLE

What, this piece of shit dump? No, I'm breaking off.

(zipping)

Just the thought of living in this town all my life would be a nightmare.

Kyle picks up a rock and chucks it far into the lake.

INT. ED'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ed reads the caseworker's letter as he grinds his cigarette dead into an ashtray. Smoke bellows away from his hand. Ed's eyes scan the letter. It states Ed's sister,

"AMANDA KRUEGER, COMMITTED SUICIDE, and is SURVIVED by her only son, FRED."

Ed wipes the corner of his eye with a quick swipe of his greasy finger; a light streak of grease smears on his cheek.

He crumples the letter into his pocket.

ED

Damn it.

Ed hobbles to his car keys and grabs his cane.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Ed leaves in his old beat up truck.

EXT. LOCAL BAR - DAY

Music plays from a jukebox as the staff prepares for a busy evening. A few senior citizens are having lunch. Ed limps to the bar table. The bartender drops his chin with a grin.

BARTENDER

Hey Ed. How yah doin'?

Ed slaps a dollar bill on the counter.

ED

Something heavy.

BARTENDER

That type of day, whatever you say boss.

The bartender plops a glass of cognac in front of him.

ED

You'd consider yourself a family man, Russ?

BARTENDER

Yeah, I guess, why you ask?

Ed downs the cold liquor like water.

ED

Ah, never-mind.

Ed grabs the change on the table and leaves. The bartender watches as Ed walks away; confused by what just transpired.

EXT. GROUP HOME - EVENING

Ed's truck pulls up to a sign: WOODBRIDGE ANGELS, HOME FOR UNFORTUNATE CHILDREN.

Ed sits in his truck with the engine on idle. The windshield wipers SCRAPE across as the rain PUMMELS the glass. Ed looks at the dreary building and shuts the engine off.

The heavy truck door creaks open. Ed's cane SPLATTERS against the pavement as he approaches the entry door to the group home.

INT. GROUP HOME - NIGHT

A heavy set woman, MS. MILLS, 50's, Woodbridge Angels Head Caretaker, stirs her tea while she watches a group of sleeping children. She slips a couple sugar cubes in and stirs while she reads.

Sound of rain echoes in the hallway as the Ms. Mills sits at her post. The phone RINGS.

MS. MILLS

(stern)

Woodbridge Angels.

(beat)

Name of the child?

She quickly rifles down the list. Passes a few last names that start with "J", and comes up on the only last name with a "K".

Ms. Mills sees the last name: "F. KRUEGER".

MS. MILLS

Krueger? Are you sure? Yah, okay,
bring him in.

The double doors open with a loud clanking noise. A rain-soaked man with a dingy baseball-cap is escorted in by a VOLUNTEER STUDENT.

Ed's water drenched boots squeak like mice as they walk between two rows of orphan children. The beds creak as a couple of youthful eyes peer from under their blankets.

Ed and the volunteer approach Ms. Mills. She looks up from her magazine.

VOLUNTEER STUDENT

Ms. Mills, this is Mr. Underwood.

Ed nods at Ms. Mills sitting at the desk. She frowns.

MS. MILLS

You're not at the ball-game Sir. No hats.

Ed takes his cap off.

MS. MILLS

I hope you know what you're getting into Mr. Underwood, he's a handful.

Ed holds his hat against his chest.

ED
Apologies, call me Ed please.

MS. MILLS
Well, Mr. Ed, let's see your
papers.

Ed reaches into his coat jacket and pulls out a folded-up piece of paper and hands it to her.

Mrs. Mills is unimpressed, she shoots him a look as she unfolds it. She pauses for a moment as she reads.

MS. MILLS
Okay, well, I just need you to sign
these release forms, and he's all
yours.

Ed hesitates for a moment before he signing his name. Ed turns around and peers at the cots.

ED
Which one is he?

MS. MILLS
Well, we had to separate him from
the rest of the children due to...
disciplinary reasons.
(beat)
You'll find him in that room over
there.

She points down the hallway behind her; opens a drawer and separates a silver key before handing it over to the volunteer.

MS. MILLS
(to the volunteer)
Use this key. And if he throws a
fit, come get me.

The volunteer and Ed walk further down to a room with no windows. The volunteer knocks on the door before wiggling the key into the keyhole. Ed looks at the intern with suspicion.

ED
Why's he all locked up like this?

The student avoids eye contact and doesn't answer; she continues to wiggle the key into the lock.

The door suddenly cracks open. Ed nudges her out the way and flicks the light switch on, but it's dead.

The volunteer CLICKS on her flashlight. She searches the dark room by waving it from one end to the other. Suddenly, the flashlight FLICKERS OUT.

She strikes it with the palm of her hand and sighs.

ED

Fred.

The two stare into the dark void; natural light from the hallway barely reaching into the crevices of the room.

ED

Fred, it's your uncle. . . I'm here to take you home. Come on out.

No response.

The volunteer taps on flashlight, and it flickers back on. She shines the light towards an empty bed, then leans down and shines it towards the floor.

Fred's eyes light up like a hyena. He stands in the corner of the room shivering with his bed sheets wrapped around him.

VOLUNTEER STUDENT

It's okay Fred, he's your family.

Fred doesn't move.

VOLUNTEER STUDENT

We're not going to hurt you.
(beat)

Fred steps forward cautiously.

VOLUNTEER STUDENT

Come on out sweetie. . .

Fred walks towards the volunteer rather than Ed. As Fred gets closer she stands and puts her hand on Fred's shoulder. Fred pops back a bit frightened.

VOLUNTEER STUDENT

Oh, don't worry, hon. You're safe.

She rubs Fred's shoulder.

VOLUNTEER STUDENT

Fred, this is Ed.

They both look at each other a bit unsettled.

INT. ED'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Rain patters against Ed's front window as they drive in silence. Fred sits with his blanket over him like a hooded sweater, holding a small duffle style bag on his lap.

The truck passes a sign: "WELCOME TO SPRINGWOOD".

Ed breaks the silence.

ED

Not sure where we go from here, but
two simple rules.

(beat)

One, my house; two, my rules.

Fred doesn't respond, but rather just stares out the window. Ed peers over at Fred with curiosity.

EXT. ED'S HOME - NIGHT

Ed's truck pulls up to his home. Rain drenches the two as they both walk to the front door.

Ed opens the door. Fred sees a mess of a home. Ed walks in and turns around. Fred stands by the threshold of the door.

LIVING ROOM

ED

Well, what are you waiting for?
Come on in.

Ed takes his coat off; tosses it on the couch. Fred walks in.

ED

Look, you have nothing to worry
about here; you'll be sleeping in
your cousin's room just down the
hall.

(beat)

Follow me.

Fred quietly follows Ed to Kyle's bedroom.

FRONT OF KYLE'S ROOM

Fred pauses just outside the doorway. Ed continues inside. We hear him rummage through the dresser.

ED (O.S.)

Shit, that's right you've never met
your cousin, Kyle.

(beat)

He's a little older than you, but I'm sure you two can find something in common.

Ed comes out the room with a handful of Kyle's clothes, and notices Fred shivering in his soaked blanket.

ED

Give me your blanket, you'll catch a cold in that son. I ain't got enough to be paying for medical bills too.

Fred allows Ed to take off the blanket but maintains a firm one-hand grip on his duffle bag. Ed grabs for the bag, but Fred resists to let it go. Ed insists and tugs on it.

Fred reaches in and pulls out a rolled up comic book before releasing his clutches. Ed hands Kyle's dry clothes to Fred in exchange for the bag.

ED

Here, it's better than those soaked clothes.

Ed takes Fred's tiny bag and places it against Kyle's bedroom door.

ED

It'll be here if you need it. I'll be right back.

Ed shuts the door behind him and hobbles down the hallway. A second or two later, the door slightly opens.

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Fred silently follows Ed as he passes through the living room. Ed continues into the kitchen as Fred stays far out of view.

He runs his tiny fingers across a dusty table and random picture frames; stops his finger at a random wedding photo.

Fred holds the picture up as he stares at it intently. Ed looks happy with an attractive bride.

The SOUND of Ed returning from the kitchen startles Fred. He sets the picture frame down and sprints back to Kyle's room.

KYLE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ed returns to Fred's side and sees him sitting on the bed, looking through his comic book.

ED

Plenty of time for that stuff
later. You should eat something,
it's getting late.

Ed places a glass of milk and sandwich on the bedside table.
Fred looks over at it but doesn't move.

ED

Money's gonna be tight around here,
wasn't expecting another mouth to
feed. But you need your own
clothes. I'll stop by the store
tomorrow.

(beat)

Kyle will watch you while I'm gone.

Ed closes the door. Fred continues reading his comic book.

INT. KYLE'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT MORNING

We hear Fred wolfing down his sandwich. Kyle's clock reads: 1
A.M., Fred sits in the center of Kyle's bed, wide-eyed with
the plate of full of crumbs on his lap.

Fred eyes scan the room:

A red baseball bat lays against the wall, a military
recruitment pamphlet on the floor, the vinyl album, Big Mama
Thorton leans against a record player, and finally, Kyle's
senior class jacket slung across a chair.

TWO HOURS LATER

Fred tosses and turns as he sleeps. He's dreaming of a
SHADOWY FIGURE standing by his bedside. . . Fred pulls the
sheets over his head in fright. KYLE, 17, rudely rips the
sheets off the bed.

KYLE

Who the fuck are you, and why are
you in my bed?

Fred squirms to his feet and hunkers against the wall like an
abused animal. Kyle grows annoyed at Fred's intrusion.

KYLE

You have one second to tell me why
you're in my room before I fuck you
up.

ED (O.S.)

Leave him alone Kyle.