

THE PRESENT

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FADE IN

SUPER: May 2004

EXT. SUBURBAN BACK YARD - DAY

MUDDY HANDS paw through dirt, grass, and weeds, digging, scraping, finally revealing an old gray FLAGSTONE.

AMY OWENS (30) looks down at the stone and smiles. She wipes sweat from her forehead and calls over her shoulder.

AMY

I found another one!

Amy stands up and scans her surroundings: a long-neglected back yard, deeply shaded by mature oaks and maples. GARDENING TOOLS and some SHRUBS ready for planting sit nearby.

Behind her, an exhausted GREG OWENS (30) is scraping paint above a NEW KITCHEN WINDOW on a run-down POST-WAR HOUSE.

AMY (CONT'D)

There's another one!

GREG

Huh?

AMY

C'meer, c'meer, c'meer!

Amy runs up to Greg, drags him into the yard and points out the flagstone.

AMY (CONT'D)

Right here, see? Where I was gonna put the azalea.

GREG

It's too shady for the azalea.

AMY

Shut up! Right here! And that one... and there, and ... It's a circle! Babe, they're laid out in a circle!

GREG
So, uh... druids used to live here?

AMY
Oh shut up! It's just cool! Gives
our house some history. Some
mystery...

She sidles up to Greg: smooch.

AMY (CONT'D)
Our house. Our fireflies, our
snowman. Our family...

GREG
Gimme another one of those.

Smooch. Amy gets a strange look. She stares at Greg.

AMY
Dance with me.

GREG
There's no music.

AMY
No...?

Amy takes Greg's arms. They begin a slow, faux-ballroom sway.

AMY (CONT'D)
How's that old song go...? mmm mmm
mmm ... when we're out together...
out together, dancing cheek to
cheeeeeeeek.

GREG
It's starting to rain.

AMY
Screw the rain. Just dance with me.

EXT. SUBURBAN BACK YARD - NIGHT

SUPER: October 1992

Moonlight shines on a DIRTY, BROKEN KITCHEN WINDOW. The RUN-
DOWN POST-WAR HOUSE is dark, part of it covered by vines.
Under the trees, a breeze whispers over TALL GRASS AND WEEDS.
A DOG BARKS in the distance.

JASON
Oooooooooooooo...

JASON (14) turns on a FLASHLIGHT under his face, making a ghostly mask. His companions, ANNE (14) and WIL (14) are not amused. All three sit in the knee-high grass.

WIL

Be quiet!

ANNE

Wish I had a bone.

JASON

Calvin's got weed. Want me to--

WIL

--I want you to shut up! We came here to listen! And when did you turn into such a stoner?

ANNE

What else are we supposed to do out here? And when's this music gonna start?

WIL

We just have to wait!

JASON

You'd have better luck waiting for the Great Pumpkin, dude.

WIL

People have heard it! Johnny Sabatino heard it!

ANNE

You think Calvin's still up?

JASON

Sure.

ANNE

Let's do it.

WIL

Noooo!

Anne and Jason hop up and head off around the house. Wil stays put. He checks the tape in a small CASSETTE RECORDER.

He hears something.

He fumbles with the recorder, presses a button, then drops it. He begins groping in the tall grass. HE SNAPS UP, back straight, terrified.

WIL (CONT'D)
What? Who...?

There's no one there.

WIL (CONT'D)
I don't... I don't know how to
dance!

Wil runs toward the street as fast as he can.

In the grass, the CASSETTE RECORDER SPINDLES turn, but the only sound is the breeze ruffling the leaves.

EXT. SUBURBAN BACK YARD - DAY

SUPER: December 1983

SUSAN SUTHERLAND (40) peers from the DIRTY KITCHEN WINDOW on the SAD LOOKING POST-WAR HOUSE, peering into the back yard.

She steps out the back door and heads into the yard. The sky is gray, the trees bare. A GARDEN HOSE lies in random coils. The flower beds are full of DEAD LEAVES.

Susan approaches her brother, ART SUTHERLAND JR. (43). He's looking at something on the ground ahead of him, just out of sight. Next to him is an old LAWN CHAIR, and a 1940s VINTAGE RADIO on a small TABLE. The radio's wooden cabinet is weathered and split, the varnish peeling.

SUSAN
Been here long?

ART JR.
Half an hour. Flight was early.

SUSAN
Jimmy'll be here with the truck soon. We should start labeling things.

ART JR.
So he sat right here, didn't he.
Sat right here when he called you.

SUSAN
Yeah.

ART JR.
How do you suppose he knew?

SUSAN

He just said it was time. He said he couldn't stand being away from Mom any more. So he was going to sit here and listen to music until she came for him.

ART JR.

That radio hasn't worked since we were kids! It's not even plugged in!

SUSAN

I heard it that night, on the phone. Dance music, like they used to play out here.

ART JR.

Yeah, that thing.

Art Jr looks off into the yard again, past the lawn chair.

ART JR. (CONT'D)

I'm gonna bury it.

SUSAN

What!?

ART JR.

Susan, we have to sell the house! And this thing is hideous, it's an eyesore! Few yards of topsoil and some sod should take care of it.

SUSAN

How could you? Mom and dad loved it!

ART JR.

WHY DIDN'T HE CALL ME, HUH? I'm the oldest! Why didn't he call me?

SUSAN

What difference does it make?

ART JR.

Bastard's been blowing me off my whole life. He wants to freeze to death without a word, fine, hell with him.

Art Jr stalks off toward the house. Susan stares after him.

She squats next to the old radio and picks up the loose power cord. The PLUG is rusted, covered with dirt. She leans in close to the radio, listening. She hangs her head.

The sudden sound of a TRUCK HORN in the driveway startles her. She wipes her eyes and walks off toward the house.

EXT. SUBURBAN BACK YARD - DAY

SUPER: June 1951

TWO HANDS place a bright new FLAGSTONE into position next to several others.

ART SUTHERLAND SENIOR (30) stands, dusts off his hands and smiles. He surveys something on the ground.

REGINA SUTHERLAND (30) steps out of the back door of their BRAND NEW POST-WAR HOUSE. She holds up an EXTENSION CORD.

REGINA

Found it!

ART

Great! Just in time.

Regina walks across the yard, following a string of EXTENSION CORDS. She reaches a sparkling 1949 PHILCO RADIO on a small TABLE, connects the new extension and turns it on.

REGINA

Make-Believe Ballroom's on at seven. You ready to cut a rug?

ART

You tell me.

Art does an admirable Fred Astair move across a neat, round FLAGSTONE DANCE FLOOR, about 20 feet in diameter, bordered in FLOWERS. Regina smiles.

REGINA

Hey! Don't break it in without me!

Regina sashays up to Art. Smooch.

REGINA (CONT'D)

We really did it. Our own house...

ART

Our own yard...

REGINA
And our own dance floor!

Mellow Big Band DANCE MUSIC begins drifting from the radio.

ART
Happy anniversary, sugar.
(smooch)
We'll be the envy of the
neighborhood.

REGINA
Screw the neighborhood.

ART
Regina!

REGINA
Dance with me, sweetheart. Just
dance with me.

They begin a practiced foxtrot, but she quickly breaks form
and slides up against him.

ART
That's Irving Berlin.

REGINA
Mm Hm. One of my favorites,
especially right now.

ART
How come?

Regina looks into Art's eyes and sings along with the radio.

REGINA
"...Heaven... I'm in heaven..."

Art laughs, and Regina snuggles close to him. They dance, and
the music plays.

THE END