

RED FLAG

Written by

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FADE IN

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY

We are in a very clean apartment, filled with gallons of natural light. A man is sitting on a couch dressed like something out of a therapists closet.

JOHN WHITE, 30 years old. Dark hair and glasses on his face. John always looks like he is fresh out of the shower. He is always impeccably clean and well groomed, even the little bit of skin underneath his finger nails is spotless. His buttoned down shirt is tucked in neatly too his khakis, it's the weekend.

We see him sitting a stool at a desk, meticulously painting what appear to be miniature figurines. Looking closer at the figurines, it is clear that he is painting a mailbox that will sit in front of a miniature white picket fence and picture perfect home. The grass used for the front lawn is miniature turf that John clearly went to great lengths to purchase. On the desk a variety of paint brushes, tools, and rejected figurines lie amongst his most current project.

The phone rings, by John's reaction it is clear he was not expecting a call. We watch John let it ring through to voicemail - anxiously awaiting to see if a message is left. It's almost as if he is holding his breath.

JOHN'S MOTHER (V.O.)

John! Hi, I guess you must be out..? Anyway, I just wanted to call and let you know that Dad and I landed safely in Florida. Okay! Call me back when you get this. Ok love you!

John lets out a sigh of relief, oh Mother, and returns to his work. Before he goes to paint the tiny little red flag for the mailbox he turns his radio down to focus. The radio was playing classical Bach, ah the good stuff.

He scans the desk searching for the right brush. There it is. He slowly dips his brush in red paint, like a brain surgeon grabbing his scalpel. He touches the brush to the small little unpainted flag -

We suddenly hear a loud knock on the door. KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

John drops the paint brush in surprise. Clearly not expecting company. The brush leaves a stroke of paint on his hand. He quickly puts down his tools and looks at his hand, and then the door, and then back to his hand.

Clutching his hand as if it were hanging by a thread he furiously walks to his sink and begins to scrub the paint away.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The Kitchen is attached to the main living room and there is an open arched entryway to the Kitchen. Above the sink where John begins to wash his hand there is a viewing window in the wall to the living room so he has a direct view of the door. As the streak of paint begins to fade on his hand we hear another loud series of door knocks.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

Confused as he thought the visitor must've gotten the wrong apartment number the first time. He looks up at the door.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

Now who could possibly be visiting?

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

John grabs a rag to dry his now clean hand and slowly makes his way from the kitchen, through his living room and towards his front door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

John slowly peers through his peep hole, hoping whoever is on the other end can not see him. He discovers a short woman wearing overalls on the other end.

WOMAN

Hey! Listen this my third time here this week, and I know you have ignored me in the past because I can here you moving around in there. Ya these walls are thin! Listen just open up so I can complete your Landlord's inspection and then I will be gone!

John jumps back from the peep hole. Let her in?

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Yah I heard you move just now. Please just open up and make my life a little bit easier.

Silence. John is standing so still as to not flinch at all.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Okay well I actually need to check the carbon monoxide detector so I mean if you don't open up.. that could end up being your loss..I mean that stuff usually is pretty fatal and -

John knows now he must open the door. He is the last person that would enjoy dying from a carbon monoxide leak. Reluctantly he takes a deep breath and tries to yell as if from the other room.

JOHN

Uh, coming!

He pulls open the front door.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Hi! Sorry about that I was just washing up.

WOMAN

Sure you were. I'm Lily.

LILY, mid 20s, a short and confident woman. She exudes energy from every fiber of her being and has a witty sense of humor about her. She is wearing overalls with classic Chuck Taylors and soft white v neck tee. She is carrying a toolbox covered in stickers almost as colorful as Lily is. Just from looking at their postures and energy we can tell that these two people were born opposites.

Lily sticks out her hand to shake hands with John.

JOHN

John. Nice to meet you, uh come in please. So what is it exactly that you have to do today?

LILY

I just need to do a few fire hazard checks and then check your carbon monoxide detector. Pretty simple stuff. Like I said, I should be out of here pretty soon.

JOHN

I thought Dave was the handyman for this building?

Lily waltzes into the center of the living room getting right to work. John stiffens in his dance, a wee bit uncomfortable with the strangers presence.

LILY

Oh my god, c'mon! Dave retired like 6 months ago. Yah moved to Boca Raton with wife. There was a whole going away party and everything! Great cake.

Lily begins to scan the walls and check the furnace in the living room. She walks to the kitchen and takes out a few tools, then enters back into the living room. Simply working down her check list.

LILY (CONT'D)

So yah. Dave is gone. And Mr.Landlord Calvin hired me!

JOHN

Got it. Okay so your the new handyman for all 3 of Calvin's buildings?

LILY

Um, that is "handy-woman" to you sir. And yes I am! What a great little community you have here. Like Ms.Henderson in 15C, what a character!

John confesses.

JOHN

Oh, I am afraid I don't know Ms.Henderson.

LILY

Oh wow! She has only lived in this building for like 30 years. Raised both her kids here too, what a woman! Hey what are these little guys.

Lily reaches for the paperboy miniature.

JOHN

Ah! No please don't touch.

John removes the paperboy from her hands and rubs it into his shirt, attempting to polish at dirt off of it. He sets it down on the work table.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Sorry about that, they are just  
fragile that's all.

LILY  
No worries. So what are they?

JOHN  
Uh.. Miniatures. Like little small,  
delicate figurines. Yah some of  
them are even like collectors  
items. It's just my hobby.

Lily kneels down to the same level as the work table to  
examine from a distance John's meticulous work.

LILY  
Well they are really cool. You hand  
make these all yourself? You're  
good! Have you ever considered  
selling them or anything.

JOHN  
Oh god no haha. Who would even buy  
them? I think I'm the only one who  
even cares.

John is flattered. Does she really think that other people  
would want them?

LILY  
Well, hey I would buy one.

A beat of silence.

LILY (CONT'D)  
Okay, looks like I am all finished  
up in here. You mind if I take a  
look in the bedroom now to finish  
up?

JOHN  
Uh, no not at all. After you.

Lily leads the way. Most apartments in the complex have very  
similar layouts so she knows exactly where everything is.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Lily walks in and immediately begins working with the carbon  
monoxide detector on the wall that is parallel to John's king  
sized bed. John leans against the door frame.

JOHN

Oh, is there anything I can get you? A glass of water or -

LILY

No I'm fine. Thanks for asking.

Lily continues to unscrew and check wires on the detector.

LILY (CONT'D)

This is a cute place, does your girlfriend live with you?

John begins to fidget and nervously laugh.

JOHN

Girlfriend? Oh no no, it's just me here. Classic 1 Bedroom.

His joke doesn't land.

LILY

Yah. I actually live in a studio. I love having all the open space.

JOHN

Oh nice. Are you in the complex?

LILY

Yeah building 2, the studio comes with the job which is nice.

JOHN

Oh yeah. I mean you can you imagine not living in these lavish buildings.

Again John's joke falls flat. He nervously laughs at his own humor... wait.. Is John trying to flirt?

LILY

I mean hey, things could be worse.

JOHN

Touche!

As Lily picks up her tool box, she moves toward the door. She grabs John by the neck and plants a big kiss on his lips. John, shocked and overcome with emotions and confidence, clearly leans into the kiss.

They pull out of the kiss. John smiles at her. Somewhat surprised and astonished. She waits for a few seconds before speaking. John is grinning from ear to ear.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Wow that was great.

Silence.

LILY  
John... I am married.

John's eyes widen in disbelief.

There are a few moments of silence. As the two of them awkwardly stand silently.

JOHN  
What, Wha - Then why did YOU kiss me?

Lily tilts her head up and locks eyes with John. Slowly a grin appears over her face.

LILY  
I'M KIDDING!

John even more confused now then ever.

LILY (CONT'D)  
You're face was priceless.

Lily is kneeled over laughing. Some joke? She picks up her things and walks toward the front door. John is truly confused and speechless. He is the last person whose emotions deserve to be toyed with.

LILY (CONT'D)  
I'm all finished here. I sincerely hope to see you around the building more John.

And just as quickly as she arrived, she was gone.

John still standing in the doorway of his bedroom. Shocked and confused by the overflow of human interaction that just occurred.

He stiffens his posture and attempts to shake off all means of Lily off of him. What a peculiar day.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY (STORM CLOUDS BREWING OUTSIDE)

He walks back into the living room and sits back down at his work bench and attempts to resume his painting. By his facial expressions, we can tell he still has a lot on his mind.



He diligently picks up his paint brush, attempting to wipe the nervous sweat from his hands.

The phone rings again. And just like before, John allows it to go straight to voicemail.

JOHN'S MOTHER (V.O.)

John! It's mom again. I had to call and tell you that the hotel had the nicest display set up in our room for our anniversary, how nice of them! I emailed you some pictures. Champagne, flowers, its so nice here! Okay miss you! Call me when you get this.

As he raises his paint brush we notice his hands are now shaking, they lack the still and careful precision that he had before. Pinching the small mailbox flag between his thumb and forefinger as the paint brush approaches, his nerves take over and he crushes the flag in his fingers.

John lets out an audible sound of frustration.

INT. KITCHEN

He rushes to the kitchen sink to wash his hands, and takes the cold water and rubs it on his face.

As he grabs the rag and pats his face dry he looks up and see a wrench sitting on the kitchen counter. Obviously Lily missed it when packing up her things. He thinks about what he should do. His eyes look up and scan the open living room, his miniatures, his voicemail where his mom lives, and his empty apartment. He realizes its just him again.

With this realization he picks up the wrench, takes a deep breath, and walks with purpose to his front door - touching the doorknob in who knows how long. He calls for the elevator. He notices an out of order sign on the elevator, but the handy woman was just here! He turns and runs down the hallway running down the seven flights of stairs. As he runs down the stairs the soundtrack of some motivational music begins to play as we cheer on John for simply leaving his apartment.

INT. APARTMENT LOBBY

Johns exits the stairs and stands in the lobby searching for Lily. He spots her through the glass doors, loading up her car across the street.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF APARTMENT BUILDING

Johns exits the building and is met with a gust of wind at the door.

JOHN

Lily!!

Lily turns around from loading things into her car.

John runs over to meet her at her trunk.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You left this in my kitchen.

He hands her the wrench.

LILY

Aw thank you. You ran all the way out here to give me back my wrench? Hey too bad its not a miniature wrench, right?

Lily laughs to herself.

For the first time ever John joins in on the joke and laughs along.

JOHN

Yeah yeah, too bad it's not a miniature. That might have to be my next project.

LILY

Well I would love to see the finished product.

JOHN

Yeah, maybe you can come over and help me paint it? And we can grab dinner after.

LILY

Who me? Well i'm flattered Mr.John. I feel like it could be a conflict of interest though, since I am the complex's handy woman. But I think we can let it slide this time. Give me a call when you want to get together.

Now getting in her car she turns on the car and is ready to pull away from the building.

JOHN

Well wait, I need your number, how  
else am I going to call you?

LILY

Just press 4 on your phone for  
maintenance.

Lily drives away.

John is left standing in the middle of the street watching Lily drive away. It is now golden hour and we see John laughing to himself over Lily's last little joke on him, he is excited to see where this goes. He looks back at his apartment building and for the first time, instead of just going back inside, he makes a conscious decision to take a walk instead.

FADE TO BLACK AS JOHN WALKS DOWN THE STREET CONTENTLY.

THE END.