

ASSISTANCE

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. MYLES'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

The whole bedroom is a cluttered mess. Broken down cardboard boxes, piles of washed and unwashed clothes. No organisation, no care.

MYLES, (50's) wakes up. He rubs his eyes and rolls out of bed.

INT. MYLES'S HOUSE - STAIRCASE - DAY

The staircase is much like the rest of the house. Trash bags are placed here, there and everywhere else. Objects that need taking to the dump, but are still in the home.

Myles makes his way down the staircase, a thin line the only passage. Trash bags are blocking 90% of the staircase. He gingerly puts one foot in front of the other. A tightrope journey as he tries his best not to knock anything over.

INT. MYLES'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

This is the worst room of them all. This could be a literal dump. Tons of trash and recycling piled from the floor to the ceiling. Half or maybe more of the kitchen is simply inaccessible.

Myles sits down at the table, which too is littered with trash.

He looks miserable. Reaching under the table, he fetches out a plastic shopping bag and from this he pulls out a fresh unopened box of chocolate cereal. Ripping it open, he starts to eat it with his bare hands, and with no milk.

After a moment of silent, miserable, lonesome eating there's a knock on his door. Myles leaps up.

MYLES

Shit.

The handle to the back door that leads from the outside into the kitchen is starting to move.

Myles hurries over to it. Hand over his mouth.

The handle stops. Myles breathes a sigh of relief. But then the sound of a set of keys being used on the door is all too clear.

MYLES (CONT'D)
(shouting out)
Who's that?

LEAH
Dad?

MYLES
Now's not a good time.

The door is unlocked and LEAH, (20's) starts to push it open. Myles tries to keep it closed. Both of them pushing and shoving. One trying to keep it closed, the other trying to force it open.

Myles's slippers cause him to lose balance. Leah gets the upper hand and with one last hard ram of her shoulder she's able to get the door open.

She stumbles into the kitchen and looks around at all the mess.

LEAH
(horrificed)
Jesus Christ.

MYLES
I told you I wasn't ready.

LEAH
What the hell have you done to this place?

MYLES
I haven't been well the last couple of days.

LEAH
Days? This isn't a day. This is months of shit. What the hell are you doing?

She grabs one of the trash bags at random and throws it outside.

LEAH (CONT'D)
(to Myles)
Go on. Take it outside. Sort it out.

MYLES
I can't.

LEAH
Dad, I've thrown it outside, now
you take it around the corner.

MYLES
I can't.

LEAH
You can't?

He's close to tears.

MYLES
I can't leave. I haven't stepped a
foot outside in six months.

She needs a moment to compose herself. A few big deep calming
breaths.

LEAH
And what would you do if there was
a fire?

Lowers his head, confessing.

MYLES
I wouldn't move. Because I hate my
life.

LEAH
I'm putting you into a home. You
can't live like this.

He reaches out to touch her.

MYLES
Leah.

She backs away.

LEAH
Don't touch me.

MYLES
Leah, please.

LEAH
You disgust me.

He places a hand to his chest.

MYLES
Not anymore than I already disgust
myself.

LEAH

I'm not cleaning this up for you.

MYLES

I can't leave the house.

LEAH

Then I'll force you out.

He again tries to grab a hold of her but she backs out of the door, slamming it shut behind her.

She leaves.

Myles breaks out into a rage, attacking the kitchen table and throwing everything on top of it onto the floor.

INT. MYLES'S HOUSE - FRONT ROOM - DAY

Just like the rest of the house, trash bags, cardboard boxes and recycling is stacked and piled high everywhere it can.

Myles is laying out across the sofa, trying to take a nap. But the sound of a phone constantly ringing makes it impossible to sleep.

Myles covers his face with a pillow, trying to ignore it.

MYLES

(muttering)

You might as well hang up, because
I'm not answering.

The phone still rings. Myles punches the pillow covering his face in frustration.

MYLES (CONT'D)

(angrily)

Hang up for god's sake.

Still rings. Myles gives up, throwing the pillow down he jumps off the sofa and goes on the hunt.

Still ringing.

Myles goes digging and he finds it.

MYLES (CONT'D)

(answering)

Who the hell is this and what the
hell do you want?

BEN
(chuckling)
Just wanted to check that you were
home.

Click. The call is ended.

A second later there's a loud knock on the front door. Myles
snaps his head around to face it.

MYLES
What the hell is going on?

INT. MYLES'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Myles opens the door to see a BEN, (30's) the same person who
had called him only seconds before. Ben places a large
cardboard box on the doorstep.

Ben's car is parked just in front of the house, its engine
still running.

Myles has the door open just wide enough to stick his head
out, trying to hide the mess that's inside.

MYLES
(to Ben)
What the hell are you doing here?

BEN
I've got no one else. Just for a
few days.

MYLES
What are you talking about?

Ben then hands him a small bag of dog food. Myles takes it,
puzzled.

MYLES (CONT'D)
What am I supposed to do with this?

Ben heads to his car.

BEN
Three days.

Myles swings the door open, he goes to step out of the house,
but then stops, can't do it.

Ben climbs into his car and speeds away.

The box starts to move. Myles looks down at it.

MYLES
Oh please god no.

The top of the box opens and a DOGS head pops out.

INT. MYLES'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Myles sits at the table, watching the dog as it moves around the trash sniffing, investigating. Dragging its lead that's attached to its collar behind it.

Myles still has hold of the dog food. Hugging it to his chest.

MYLES
I haven't spoken to that man, your owner in maybe six months and this is how he turns up? I've never even owned a dog before. Not even when I was a kid.

The dog now moves to the back door and starts slapping a paw against it.

MYLES (CONT'D)
What?

The dog now starts moaning. Still slapping the glass of the door. Over and over again.

MYLES (CONT'D)
Alright, alright, shut up.

Myles stands up, goes over and pushes the door all the way open.

MYLES (CONT'D)
Out you go.

The dog looks up at him.

MYLES (CONT'D)
What?

The dog sits, still looking at Myles.

MYLES (CONT'D)
(after a moment)
You want me to walk you?
(laughs)
I can't. You're crazy.

The dog exits the kitchen. Now sitting outside it looks back at Myles. Now starts whimpering loudly.

Myles stands on the edge of the doorstep.

MYLES (CONT'D)
This is it. I can't go any further
than this. I'm sorry.

Still whimpering.

MYLES (CONT'D)
I can't.

The dog now starts barking.

MYLES (CONT'D)
Knock it off.

Louder and louder.

Angry, Myles steps out of the house in a huff.

MYLES (CONT'D)
Here. Happy? Now, will you please
knock it off?

He scoops up the dog lead.

MYLES (CONT'D)
Where do you want to walk, master?
Go on. Bossing me around. Go on,
tell me?

Now it dawns on Myles, he's outside.

EXT. MYLES'S HOUSE - DAY

Myles, dressed in a long coat and heavy boots is walking the dog around the side of his house. Holding onto the lead with one hand, he's also carrying two large trash bags in the other.

MYLES
(to the dog)
Stay close to me. I can't do this
on my own.

He comes around a corner to where his garage cans are kept, opening one up, he throws the trash bags inside it.

MYLES (CONT'D)
(to the dog)
Alright. Not much of a walk I know,
but we're going to be doing this
about a hundred more times. Are you
ready for that?

The dog wags his tail.

INT. MYLES'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

The kitchen is now clean and tidy. The dog sits patiently by the back door that's been left wide open.

Myles collects up what little trash is remaining. Filling up two more trash bags.

Leah appears in the doorway. Startled by the dog.

LEAH
What the hell is that doing here?

Myles spins around to face her.

MYLES
You're back?

She takes out her phone. Shows it to Myles.

LEAH
I'm here to take pictures.

MYLES
(surprised)
Of?

LEAH
I rang around, looking to get you
put into some kind of assisted
living. But I need to prove that
you can't look after yourself.

She peers around the tidy kitchen. Shocked.

LEAH (CONT'D)
So, what the hell happened?

Myles gestures to the dog.

MYLES
I got myself some help.

LEAH
He cleans?

MYLES
He tires, but he's not very good at it.

LEAH
So, what does he do?

Myles takes a few seconds to think about this.

MYLES
He guides. I guess you could call him a guide dog.

LEAH
Is this real?

MYLES
(nodding)
Just don't go into any of the other rooms yet. You get any pictures of those, and you will get me locked away.

Leah considers, then puts her phone away.

Myles breaths a sigh of relief. He walks over to the dog, picking up the lead he then takes a step outside.

MYLES (CONT'D)
(to Leah)
You want to come for a walk? Don't worry, it'll be quick.

LEAH
Outside?

MYLES
Yeah.

LEAH
You can go outside now?

MYLES
It's been a funny old day.
(a beat)
So, how about that walk?

LEAH
(nodding)
Alright.

EXT. MYLES'S HOUSE - DAY

Myles, walking the dog and carrying the trash bags, heads around the corner to his garage cans. Leah walks along with him.

Myles puts the trash bags away. Turns to Leah.

MYLES

I've been living like a pig. And
I've been acting like a pig.

LEAH

I actually like pigs.

MYLES

Then, some other kind of animal. An
animal you don't like. And I'm
sorry for that.

LEAH

Dad...

MYLES

Let me finish. I felt sorry for
myself. But I shouldn't have.

LEAH

When mom died...

MYLES

No. It's not good enough. I haven't
been good enough.

LEAH

You guys, you've been together for
years.

MYLES

She was your mother. That's more
than a wife. I should have been
there for you and I wasn't.

(he starts to cry)

I love you and I'm sorry.

LEAH

Dad.

MYLES

I was in so much self pity, I
couldn't even leave the house. I
got drunk off it. Drunk off of self
pity. How embarrassing is that. But
not anymore.

(MORE)

MYLES (CONT'D)
I'm out, if your mom could see what
I've done to the house that she
loved, she'd kill me.

LEAH
(smiling)
I was pretty close to doing it
myself.

MYLES
I'm sorry Leah.

Leah steps into him, wrapping her arms around him. They share
a loving hug.

LEAH
I just want my dad back.

MYLES
(shedding a few more
tears)
He's back.

The dog watches them hugging. Wagging his tail happily.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END