

UNHOOKED

Written by

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FADE IN

EXT. ROAD - ILWACO, WASHINGTON - MORNING

Off a narrow road amidst acres of forest sits a home with fallen shutters, blue tarp over the roof and a yard littered with rusted lobster traps, buoys and a boat beyond repair.

It appears abandoned until MATTY RYAN (12), greasy hair, stained clothes, rides out of the carport on his bike.

His hair blows back revealing a serious face and determined eyes as he cuts through yards, woods, crowded parking lots.

EXT. J.J.'S CHARTERS

Commercial fishing businesses line this busy waterfront along with bait shops and a few grungy bars.

Matty dumps his bike behind J.J.'s then runs to the dock just as a fishing vessel, "Nightcrawler" approaches.

The boat engine rumbles as it pulls into a slip. BOSTON BOB (45), typical salty fisherman, full beard, knit cap, tosses Matty a line who like an expert, secures it to a cleat.

BOSTON BOB
(thick Boston accent)
You're alright Matty. I'll buy you
a beer later!

JASON (O.S.)
Only if it's root beer.

Matty's face lights up when he sees CAPTAIN JASON RYAN (25), full beard, good looking and not yet salty.

JASON
We ain't gettin' him started on any
of our bad habits this early Bobby.

MATTY
I hate root beer.

BOSTON BOB
Alright. A Shirley Temple. But only
if you run to Meg's and grab us
some smokes. We ran out two days
ago and I have a wicked headache.

Matty looks at Jason who nods in approval. Bob tosses a crumpled twenty. Matt picks it up and runs off.

BOSTON BOB
 Must feel good to have someone look
 up to you like that.
 (walks away)
 Lord knows I don't.

Jason chuckles as he watches Matt head to Meg's.

INT. McMASTER BAIT & STUFF - MOMENTS LATER

A bell rings over the door as Matty enters, startling MEG
 McMASTER (60) who sits on a beach chair behind the counter.

With shaky hands she caps the Whiskey bottle she was drinking
 from then struggles to stand up.

MEG
 Young Mister Ryan. What can I
 doodly doo for ya?

MATTY
 Camels and two coffees please.

MEG
 Ahh. Nighcrawler back in?

He smiles. She grabs the cigs, tosses them on the counter
 then turns, picks up a dirty coffee pot and pours two cups.

MATTY
 Misses McMasters? I was wondering
 if you've seen my Mother lately.

She stops mid pour. Her expression becomes grim.

MEG
 No. Can't say that I have.

Before she turns she pastes on a smile but it becomes hard to
 maintain when she sees his troubled eyes.

He hands her the crumpled twenty. He doesn't look at her,
 just takes his change and rushes out.

INT. DOCKSIDE LOUNGE - AFTERNOON

Loud, packed with fisherman and decorated with nautical
 items, taxidermy fish and pictures of people catching fish.

Nightcrawler's six man crew and Matty are seated at a large
 table, a bunch of empty mugs gathered in the middle.

A bit tipsy, Jason holds up his beer mug and toasts.

JASON

There are good ships, there are
wood ships, there are ships that
sail the sea but the best ships are
friendships, forever may they be.

Everyone clanks their mugs except Matty, whose mind is
elsewhere.

CHUMBUCKET (55), just about toothless, makes a toast.

CHUMBUCKET

Here's to virgins and lesbians...
thanks for nothing!

The rowdy crew laughs and toasts. Jason's smile fades when he
sees Matty and realizes something is wrong.

Next is BENJI (30), tattooed all over. He glares at an UGLY
GUY (40) seated at the bar. There's tension brewing.

BENJI

To the Nightcrawler crew. We may
not go down in history, but we'll
definitely go down on your sister!

As the crew toasts and drinks the guy walks over. Jason
quickly grabs Matty and pulls him to the door.

Matty glances back, sees the guy take a swing at Benji.

BOSTON BOB

You're a dead mother fucker!

The Nightcrawler crew charges the guy. His friends jump off
their bar stools and run to his defense. A brawl ensues.

EXT. DOCKSIDE LOUNGE

Jason has his arm around Matt as they head back to J.J.'s.

JASON

You know I love hanging with you
Matty. Today's just not the best
day. We been out three weeks. We
wanna let loose, ya know?

Matt struggles to keep it together but tears start to form.

MATTY

You guys are always like that.

Jason hesitates, the comment stings him momentarily.

JASON

Tell your Mom I said you can stay
with me some time next week.

MATTY

(explosive)

I can't fucking tell her cus she's
not there! I haven't seen her in
three weeks.

JASON

Holy shit. You serious?

MATTY

What the fuck am I supposed to do
Uncle Jason?

His buzz now killed, Jason collects himself.

JASON

Okay, first stop cussing. You're
twelve. Second, relax buddy. We'll
figure it out. Did you tell Wally?

MATTY

If I told Chief Banks he'd send me
to live with fosters. I don't want
to do that again. Can I stay with
you? Please let me stay with you.

Matt fights tears as Jason comforts him.

INT. JASON'S APARTMENT - MORNING

As Matty sleeps on the couch, Jason cleans.

It's a wreck, like there was a big party but layers of filth
show the mess was built up over time.

With a dirty napkin, Jason dusts around a few framed photos.

He stares at one of himself (18) and his brother JIM RYAN
(25) in front of "J.J.'s Charter's".

Saddened he picks up a photo of Jim (27), his wife LILY RYAN
(25) and Matty (7) in between.

With a deep, composing breath he continues to clean. He
attempts to quietly place numerous empty whiskey bottles into
a garbage bag but the clank wakes Matty up.

Groggy, Matty wipes his eyes. He looks a lot better, hair no
longer greasy and he's in clean clothes.

MATTY

You don't have to clean cus I'm here.

Startled, Jason quickly ties the bag, tosses it out the door.

JASON

Nah. It was time. I'm gonna jump in the shower. You get dressed. We're going hiking on Pine Island today.

With a flash of excitement, Matty jumps off the couch.

EXT. PINE ISLAND - MORNING

"HOOKED", a small recreational fishing boat, approaches a rickety dock at the edge of a Pine tree filled island.

EXT. PINE ISLAND - AFTERNOON

Out of breath, covered in dirt and sweat, Jason plops down under the shade of a giant tree. Matty joins him.

Matty drinks water from a canteen, offers some to Jason.

Jason refuses, pulls out a flask and takes a huge gulp. He then lights a cigarette and lays back on a bed of needles.

JASON

Me and your Dad used to come here all the time.

Matty watches in quiet disapproval as Jason takes another swig from the flask.

JASON

Pop never let us, but after he died we'd camp here every summer.

MATTY

Why wouldn't he let you?

JASON

(another swig)
He was just mean. A mean drunk.

MATTY

If your Dad was a drunk, why did my Dad drink so much? Why do you...

Angered, Jason sits up, throws the canteen. The water spills out. Then the whiskey hits him. He slurs.

JASON
I'm nothing like that son of a
bitch!

Eyelids heavy, he lays back down.

JASON
Neither was your Dad. Your Dad was
good. It was just an accident.

He mumbles incoherently, his voice trails off then he's out.

Jason snores loudly. Matty grabs the cigarette, puts it out
on his shoe, empties the flask then hurls it into the woods.

He picks up the canteen, shakes it. Empty.

EXT. PINE ISLAND - LATER

Pine needles crunch under his feet as Matty walks toward a
small rock hill.

Suddenly he stops, listens intently. Dripping water.

He runs over, climbs the rocks, looks around. Nothing. No
water anywhere but the dripping continues.

He moves a few of the smaller rocks and finds a small pool,
no bigger than a cereal bowl, filled with crystal clear
water. The source of the water is unknown.

Matty dips his finger in, tastes it. Seems fine. He fills
the canteen.

About to walk back down he turns, runs back over and puts the
rocks back where they were.

EXT. PINE ISLAND - NIGHT

A small flashlight illuminates the area where Jason sleeps.

Eyes closed, Matty sits against a tree. Jason wakes, quickly
sits up, confused by his surroundings. Matty runs over.

MATTY
I'm here Uncle Jason.

JASON
Shit. I screwed up. We're stuck
here till morning.

He looks around, eyes searching. Not finding.

JASON

God dammit I'm thirsty. Where's my flask?

He looks at Matty who at twelve has no poker face.

JASON

Where's my flask Matty?!

Several emotions come over Matty. Angrily he stands up.

MATTY

I threw it in the woods! Go get it you fucking alcoholic! You, my Mom, my Dad...everyone in that fucking town! You're all fucked up! It was no accident that killed my Dad! He was drunk and he drowned, just like your Dad did! Probably just like you will. Fuck you! I hope you die!

Matty throws the water canteen to Jason, takes the flashlight and storms away.

Stunned, Jason sits in darkness. Tormented, he puts his head in his hands and rocks back and forth.

With his hand he searches the ground around him, finds his cigarettes. Opens the pack. No lighter. He throws them.

Exasperated, he holds up the canteen, lets the water trickle into his mouth.

Suddenly he gasps for air then passes out.

EXT. BOAT - MORNING

Still tied to the dock, "HOOKED" rocks back and forth, Matty asleep on the deck.

From out of the woods walks Jason, canteen over his shoulder. Something is different. He's unshaven, clothing disheveled but his eyes are brighter, he seems lighter somehow.

As he jumps onto the boat, Matty wakes up. He notices a change almost immediately. He jumps up and sprints over.

They hold each other tight.

JASON

Thank you Matty.

Matty lets go, looks at Jason who holds up the canteen.

EXT. J.J.'S FISHING CHARTERS - DAY

Boston Bob and Chumbucket, both sporting brawl wounds, spray down the dock.

They both stop when they see Jason, now not only brighter but clean shaven.

BOSTON BOB

What the hell happened to you?

JASON

I couldn't really tell you. I guess I had some kind of epiphany.

CHUMBUCKET

Epiphany? Ain't she the stripper from the Porthole?

BOSTON BOB

That's Tiffany you moron.

Bob studies Jason.

BOSTON BOB

So what's going on?

JASON

I really don't know. Me and Matty went to Pine Island, I got drunk, he yelled at me, made me feel like shit, I drank some water he found and woke up a different man.

BOSTON BOB

Guilt did this?

JASON

All I know is I woke up, didn't want no cigarettes, no alcohol, not even coffee.

BOSTON BOB

Holy shit. Hope it sticks. Hey, I heard where Lily is by the way.

INT. APARTMENT - LATER

Topless, sprawled on the couch, track marks on her arms is LILY RYAN (30). Someone knocks on the door. She doesn't move.

CARL McMASTER (40), fat hanging over dirty boxers exits the bedroom, looks through the peephole.

CARL

Oh shit.

The knocking gets louder.

JASON (O.S.)

Open the door Carl or I'll kick it
in!

CARL

Fuck you pussy! You ain't got...

The chain breaks and the door flies open. Jason charges in, Bob stands just outside, amazed.

Jason attends to Lily, wraps her in a blanket, picks her up and walks out. Bob looks at Carl who stands there in shock.

BOSTON BOB

Have a nice day, chubtard.

INT. JASON'S BEDROOM - DAY

Lily sleeps on Jason's bed. She's been cleaned and dressed but is now starting to withdrawal.

Matty sits in a chair helplessly watching her writhe in pain.

He gets up and leaves the room but returns seconds later with the canteen.

She looks right through him as he opens her mouth and lets some of the water trickle in.

Suddenly she gasps for air. He panics.

MATTY

Mom! Mom!

She can't breathe and passes out. He runs out of the room, seconds later the front door slams.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Monitors beep steadily, an I.V. drips clear fluid to Lily who sits upright in bed.

She doesn't look sick at all. Matty sits on the bed next to her. They both look so happy.

Just outside the curtain, Jason and DOCTOR NELSON (50) watch them.

DOCTOR NELSON
Other than dehydration she's fine.
Just make sure she drinks plenty of
fluids.

Jason stares at her in disbelief.

INT. JASON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jason quickly rummages through the room, his night stand, looks under the bed. He takes a breath, thinks a moment then lift the blankets. The canteen.

He grabs it and runs out.

INT. DOCKSIDE LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

The Nightcrawler crew sits at their regular table. A sea of empty mugs in the middle.

Jason approaches, they're excited to see him.

BOSTON BOB
You jumpin' off the wagon Captain?

JASON
Nah. Just came to hang with you
guys. Is that okay?

CHUMBUCKET
(calls out)
Bring the Captain a glass of milk!

JASON
I did bring along a little
something special for my crew.

Jason produces the canteen. The crew is intrigued.

INT. DOCKSIDE LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

Canteen in hand, Jason calmly exits the front door.

Customers and staff panic as the Nightcrawler crew gasps for air. One by one they pass out.

INT. McMASTER'S BAIT & STUFF - MOMENTS LATER

The bell rings as the door closes. Meg is slumped over the front counter.

EXT. WATERFRONT - MOMENTS LATER

Ambulance sirens approach and police cars rush past as Jason heads home.

EXT. PINE ISLAND - MORNING

"HOOKED" is tied to the dock. Matty, Jason and Lily head into the woods.

EXT. PINE ISLAND - LATER

Jason and Lily watch as Matty climbs the hill where he found the water.

He moves the rocks aside and smiles.

EXT. WATERFRONT - DAY

It's quiet. Not nearly as many people or cars around.

INT. DOCKSIDE LOUNGE - DAY

A few customers sit at tables and eat. No one sits at the bar.

INT. McMASTER'S BAIT & STUFF - DAY

The bell rings over the door as a DELIVERY MAN (40), pushes in a hand truck filled with cigarette cartons.

Behind the counter stands Meg, no longer shaky.

MEG

Might as well turn right back around. Haven't sold a pack of cigarettes in a couple weeks.

INT. JASON'S APARTMENT - DAY

Empty.

EXT. PINE ISLAND - DAY

Helicopters hover over head as some branch of Government Force pull up in boats, disembark and head into the woods.

EXT. BOAT "HOOKED" - DAY

On the deck, seated next to his Mom, Matty smiles as the wind blows back his hair.

Above them, behind the wheel, Jason talks on the radio.

JASON

Course set for Vancouver? Over.

EXT. "NIGHTCRAWLER"

Behind the wheel, Boston Bob keeps a safe distance from "Hooked" in front of him.

BOSTON BOB

What do you think they do to Bruins fans in fucking Vancouver? Over.

INT. "NIGHTCRAWLER"

Below deck, in a bay usually packed with fish is a boulder. A few rocks sit on top, dripping sounds underneath.

FADE OUT.