

COPS AND ROBBERS

By

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FADE IN:

INT. GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The OFFICER, mid-20's with a dark uniform and black shoes, walks into the cluttered house with shattered glass CRUNCHING under his shoes. He pulls his shirt up to cover his mouth and nose. Pulling out his flashlight, he shines it around as he steps in. He moves the flashlight side to side, and then he pauses. Two rotting corpses lie on the floor.

OFFICER
(into radio)
Send the coroner's office.

The officer looks at the nearest coffee table, where pictures are scattered. His fingers carefully spread them out until he finds one, which has the deceased with two small children. The officer looks back at the bodies with the picture in his hand, and he SIGHS.

CUT TO:

INT. LIZZIE AND LIAM'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Todd, 47, walks into the living room, which has everything neatly placed. His head is bald. He removes his glasses and wipes his eyes.

TODD
Kids, come on downstairs.

LIAM (13) wears basketball shorts and a baseball t-shirt comes down the stairs. He chews on his fingernails. One of his nails is bleeding. He wipes it off on his pants. He stops at the bottom of the steps.

LIZZIE (15) saunters down the stairs with her hair newly dyed black. She has triple ear piercings and her nose dangles.

LIZZIE
Move, nerd.

She brings down a dark marker as she pushes Liam out of the way. She flops onto the couch, and Liam sits down quickly in an armchair.

LIZZIE
What the fuck are you wearing? You look like you're going to shoot up a convenience store. What, are all the cool kids who haven't hit puberty wearing this too?

(CONTINUED)

Liam looks down and bites on his fingernails again.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

Lizzie and Liam stand outside their grandparents' house with backpacks at their sides. Cardboard boxes lay at their feet. The BUZZING of the bugs continues.

Lizzie wears shorts, a tank top and sneakers. Her hair is pulled back into a pony tail, and she looks annoyed. She has drawn on herself with pen to make lines on either of her arms.

Liam wears short and a basketball t-shirt with sneakers as he looks scared. His baseball cap is lopsided on his head. He bites his fingernails.

LIZZIE

Ew. Stop.

TODD walks over with heavy broken down cardboard boxes. Sweat drips off his bald head, and he removes his glasses and cleans them off on a t-shirt with holes.

TODD

You kids, ready?

LIZZIE

Let's get this over with.

She breezes past him and walks over to the house. Lizzie goes inside the house. Liam helps Todd with the boxes.

Lizzie comes back outside, COUGHING, with her hand pressed to her nose. She stumbles down the stairs.

LIZZIE

It smells disgusting in there.

TODD

I'll get the house airing out.

Todd walks into the house, and Liam starts to make boxes. Lizzie reaches into a backpack and pulls out Vicks, which she applies under her nose.

LIAM

Do you think there are ghosts in there?

(CONTINUED)

LIZZIE

Don't be such a child.

LIAM

They died in there. Why if they
haunt us?

LIZZIE

Why would they do that?

LIAM

Because they haven't seen us in
forever.

A RINGING comes from inside the house as Lizzie and Liam
make boxes, and Todd comes out of the house. He looks at his
kids sadly.

TODD

I have to go into town, kiddos.
Your mom needs help with the
lawyer.

LIAM

I'll come with you.

TODD

Why don't you stay and help your
sister? You two haven't been here
since you kids were young.

Todd walks over to the car.

TODD

Remember, whatever you find, you
get to keep.

Todd gets into the car, and then he drives off. Gravel
CRUNCHES under his tires. Dust rises in the air and hovers
on a day without a breeze.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

The house is messy on the inside. Pictures lay out on the
table, and books are placed on the ground. Heavy dust covers
most of the surfaces. Paint chips off the walls.

Lizzie walks straight into the living room and already sweat
collects on her skin.

(CONTINUED)

LIZZIE

You think our grandparents could've invested in AC, especially in these hot summers.

Lizzie walks over to turn on the fans. With every step that she takes, the floor SQUEAKS. Lizzie walks over one floorboard, and it lets out a deep GROAN. Dusts picks up and flies around. Liam COUGHS. Lizzie hands a cardboard box to Liam.

LIZZIE

Have fun in the basement.

LIAM

Maybe we could switch?

LIZZIE

You scared, nerd?

Liam doesn't answer, but instead he heads down to the dark and cold basement.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE BEDROOM - DAY

Lizzie walks into her grandparents' bedroom, and it is tiny. The queen size bed barely fits into the room with only one nightstand and one dresser. Lizzie opens the doors and colorful clothes come tumbling out. Immediately, she tries to kick them back in until one old dress catches her eye. Picking up the dress, it looks like it came straight out of the 1960's. Quickly, she dresses in the dress, which is emerald and shimmery.

Lizzie walks over to the dresser, where a jewelry box stands, and she starts going through it. She pulls open the old jewelry box. In the bottom drawer is a beautiful necklace made of old and emeralds, matching her dress.

Lizzie takes it carefully in her hands and holds up to the sunlight that castes in through the windows. Looking in the mirror, Lizzie puts it on, feeling the weight of the massive necklace. Lizzie admires herself in the mirror.

Lizzie goes into the first drawer of the dresser, which happens to be her grandmother's underwear. A silver Derringer revolver is at the bottom of the drawer.

Slowly reaching into the drawer, Lizzie timidly takes out the handgun and holds it in her hand, weighing and examining it. Lizzie glances at the silver handle to find an engraving under the bottom.

(CONTINUED)

SUDDENLY

Liam's SCREAM can be heard through the walls from the basement, and Lizzie runs toward the basement, taking the gun with her.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE BASEMENT - DAY

The basement is filled with more old things. Tool boxes are on shelves, all locked up, and a 1920's radio sits next to them. TV's from the 1960's through the early 2000's litter the floor.

Liam's teeth work on his fingernails. He hovers at the bottom of the stairs, and Lizzie stands on the step above him. He turns to her, and he jumps back. Liam SCREAMS, staring at Lizzie, the dress, the necklace and the gun.

LIZZIE

Why did you scream?

LIAM

It was a loud, manly grunt. Why do you have a gun?

LIZZIE

I found it in grandma's underwear drawer. Why did you scream?

LIAM

There was a rat. Where did you get the dress and the necklace?

Lizzie rolls her eyes and passes Liam. She walks around the basement, glancing at all the old things. A refrigerator sits in the corner, and she pauses. The door handle is broken off. Lizzie peers at it.

LIAM

I couldn't get it open.

Lizzie pulls on a copper wire, and the fridge door pops open. She turns to Liam and gives him a look. Turning back, she opens the fridge door more. She sets the gun down on top. Old newspapers from the 1950's through the 1960's are stacked inside.

LIAM

Maybe we should wait for Dad to get back.

(CONTINUED)

Rolling her eyes, Lizzie closes the newspaper filled fridge and walks around the basement. Her fingers go over the dust covered items.

Lizzie pauses at the 1920's radio and bends down. Her fingers run along the smooth wood. On the side, a silver circle with a hole awaits.

LIZZIE

Did you find any keys?

LIAM

I found these earlier.

Liam walks over to three shelves with small compartment and pulls out some keys. He tossed them to her, and Lizzie began to try to the keys in the small lock. Eventually it falls into place, and the door clicks open. Lizzie opens the door as Liam bends down beside her.

Old faded green money sits in the unlocked radio. All the electronic parts have been taken out to have shelves of nicely stacked money. Lizzie reaches in and grabs it.

Lizzie fans through the crisp banknotes that are more tan than green. The smell whiffs into the air, and Lizzie starts to count it.

LIZZIE

There has to be at least \$50,000 in here. I call dibs.

LIAM

What? No. We should tell Dad.

LIZZIE

He did say we could have what we wanted. I want this money.

LIAM

Why do they have this money? How do they have this money? You've seen the rest of their house. Why not use the money to fix it up?

LIZZIE

I don't know, but I do know this will pay for a nice vacation.

LIAM

I'm calling Dad.

Liam starts to rush upstairs before Lizzie can stop him, and with her long dress, she trips and falls to the ground. Lizzie lets out a GROAN, and she tries to collect the ends of her dress.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Liam has the phone pressed to his ear by the time Lizzie gets up the stairs. He doesn't even glance at her, and Lizzie rolls her eyes.

LIAM
(into phone)
Dad, when you get this, call me
back immediately.

LIZZIE
You're such a child.

Lizzie walks past him, and the floor SQUEAKS underneath her every step. She paces as she waits for Liam to face her. A floorboard GROANS.

LIAM
Aren't you at all curious about why
they have that much money? Or about
the necklace you're wearing? Or
about the gun?

LIZZIE
No.

LIAM
You're older. What were our
grandparents like?

LIZZIE
I didn't spend much time with them.
One day Mom decided we weren't
seeing them any more. She was
pissed.

LIAM
Why?

LIZZIE
I don't know.

The floor SQUEAKS. A floorboard GROANS again.

LIAM
Can you stop pacing? The sound is
so annoying.

(CONTINUED)

Lizzie stops, and a floorboard GROANS. She purposely moves up and down on it, until she pauses, looking down as her dress gets caught on the edge. She pulls at it, but it will not budge. Liam walks over and helps his sister by bending down and trying to get it out.

LIZZIE

Don't rip the dress, door knob.

Liam ignores her and gets the dress uncaught. However, he stays on the ground, running his fingers over the floorboard that GROANS again.

LIAM

Move.

Lizzie SCOFFS but moves anyway.

Liam gently lifts up the floorboard, and Lizzie's eyes go wide. Inside are old photographs and old documents. Lizzie drops to her knees and puts her hand inside to grab them. Liam opens his mouth, but Lizzie gives him a look. Bringing some things out, Lizzie hands over some to Liam.

In Lizzie's hands are old documents: marriage certificates, death certificates, house deeds, passports, drivers' licenses-- all under different names. Her eyes go wide as she opens the old passports to find all the same pictures with different names. All the same pictures are of their grandparents.

In Liam's hands are old photographs, torn around the edges, and they are faded. Taken in the 1950's and 1960's, some of the picture and faces are faded. One picture is of the grandparents outside a church in wedding attire. Lizzie glances over her younger brother's shoulder.

LIZZIE

This must be their wedding.

LIAM

Grandma is holding a gun.

LIZZIE

That's the same gun that was downstairs in the fridge.

Liam automatically gets up and goes toward the basement. Liam disappears down the stairs as Lizzie slowly gets up, careful not to fall into the hole or rip her dress.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE BASEMENT - DAY

Liam looks through the fridge as Lizzie makes her way down the old stairs. She is careful not to trip as he pulls out old newspapers from the fridge. The gun still sits on top. Liam shuffles through them; his eyes maneuver quickly. He stops biting on his fingernail and comes over to his sister, who awaits on the bottom step.

LIAM

Do you see this?

Lizzie looks at the documents that Liam hands her. The old photograph of their grandparents on a wedding day is held in one hand; in the other hand is a newspaper from 1954 when a couple wearing a wedding attire robbed a bank in Northfield.

Liam goes back into the fridge and looks through newspapers again. He MUTTERS incoherently to himself.

LIAM

All these newspapers have to deal with robbery, starting in 1951 and ending 1969. Dad was born in 1970.

LIZZIE

Your point?

LIAM

Grandma and grandpa were bank robbers. That's why they have all this money, and they have all the hidden stuff.

LIZZIE

But he talks about them so fondly. How can our grandparents be robbers? They barely left their house when they were alive.

LIAM

This is going to break Dad's heart.

From upstairs, the front door opens and slams shut. Both of the kids look at each other in the basement. In their hands, they still hold the pictures and newspapers. They go upstairs together.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Lizzie and Liam walk upstairs calmly, and Todd is pulling out things from a suitcase. He gives his children a smile.

TODD

Nice dress, Lizzie. And the necklace. Grandma got that one when she robbed a jewelry store in 1963.

LIAM

You know?

TODD

Of course. They're my parents. Did you guys find the birth certificates and the bank stuff?

Liam hands over the bank statements, along with some birth certificates and pictures.

LIAM

We found them in the floorboards.

TODD

They used to hide them in vents. Good job, kids.

Todd smiles at his kids and puts the stuff into the briefcase. Todd walks over to the open floor board and kneels. He starts to go through the floorboards.

TODD

Come on over, kids. This is only the beginning.

Lizzie and Liam walk over and kneel down beside their father. They help him pull up another floorboard and see that more hidden contents are below.

FADE OUT: