

UNBEARABLE

Written by

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Based off the short story written by Donovan Russo.

A remorseful father copes and maneuvers with his depressed son's drug addiction, awaiting for him to be taken to rehab by a sly businessman.

Black screen.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK.

DAD (V.O.)

Tommy?

Door creaks open.

CUT TO:

INT. TOMMY'S HOUSE, BEDROOM-AFTERNOON (FLASHBACK)

TOMMY'S DAD, mid 40's, steps into the spacious room of his teenage son.

The room displays typical teenage disarray: clothes thrown into a corner, an unmade bed, and band posters.

Wandering with uncertainty, Dad notices that the window curtain notably blows out.

He makes his way over to the window to shut it but notices TOMMY, 16 and thin, running down his driveway.

DAD

Tommy!

Whether unheard deliberately or not, Tommy makes his way into the woods, sprinting away.

Surprised but not taken entirely off guard, Dad rushes out, leaving the window and door open.

DAD (V.O.)

No one ever plans for this.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODED LAKE- AFTERNOON (FLASHBACK)

Dad briskly follows Tommy's path, crunching over branches and plowing through bushes.

DAD (V.O.)

You're young, full of hope.

As the sun begins to set, he sees a silhouetted figure standing out by the edge of the lake.

Dad approaches.

DAD (V.O.)
But things...

He makes out the back of his son's head, carefully advancing toward him.

DAD (V.O.)
Things change. And I don't know...

Hesitant, Dad puts his hand on Tommy's shoulder. Tommy lowers his head, not turning around.

DAD (V.O.)
You just... you just have to figure
it out as you go...

The camera pans to the sky.

DAD (V.O.)
Nobody said it was easy.

TITLE CARD:
UNBEARABLE

CUT TO BLACK.

TOMMY (V.O.)
It started out... as a game.

"Dreamer" by No4h plays softly in the background.

CUT TO:

INT. TOMMY'S HOUSE, BEDROOM

A small crumbled bag of unlabeled powder rests on a nightstand.

Tommy, now in his mid 20's, lean and disheveled, sits on his bed, eagerly tapping his foot to the beat of the music.

TOMMY (V.O.)
A dare, if I remember.

Biting his nails, Tommy glances at the bag and then quickly looks in the other direction. Slowly, he gazes again at the substance.

TOMMY (V.O.)
A social thing... A talking
point... something to prove.

Accepting defeat by grabbing the bag, Tommy makes his way to the hallway bathroom.

BATHROOM

He opens a drawer and lifts up the organizational holder, revealing a lower compartment with a tucked away syringe.

TOMMY (V.O.)
But then it became something else
entirely... Both terrifying and
heavenly.

With the bag in one hand, he has a lighter and spoon in the other.

TOMMY
Blocking everything out...

LIVINGROOM

Slow pan around to reveal photographs of a happy little boy enjoying his childhood.

TOMMY (V.O.)
Parents, girls... bull shit
friends...

BATHROOM

Tommy is now spread out on the rug, intently surveying the blank ceiling.

TOMMY (V.O.)
Dreaded hours at school, learning
universal truths that didn't apply
to my universal truths.

Then, as if seeing through the house, the sun above fades into his view.

As the light shines brightly over Tommy, a smile creeps up on his face.

TOMMY (V.O.)
Love, sex, joy, fear... it's all
just pain, isn't it? A haunted
nightmare...

The light shines brighter.

TOMMY (V.O.)
 Just as sunlight ALWAYS leads to
 darkness.

The light then fades and dissolves into a MONTAGE. The music
 drowns out the last of Tommy's words.

"We light up, light up on the weekends."

Quick cuts to people engaging in everyday activities:
 smiling, walking, drinking, laughing, and eating...

"We light up, light up, me and my friends."

People fighting, crying, and smoking.

"We light up, we light up."

Music fades away.

FADE TO BLACK.

TOMMY (V.O.)
 Nothing else matters, and it never
 will.

FADE IN:

INT. TOMMY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN- EARLY MORNING

Dad, now in his 50's, is seated at the foot of the kitchen
 table. Drinking a glass of orange juice, he intently reads
 "Portrait of an Addict as a Young Man" by Bill Clegg.

A plate of ham and eggs is set on the other end of the table.

Making out the thumps of Tommy walking down the steps, Dad
 quickly folds the top of the page and slides the book under a
 newspaper.

Tommy sluggishly enters, shooting his father a dagger.

Dad keeps his eyes on the paper.

DAD
 Morning...

Tommy opens a cabinet.

DAD (O.C.) (CONT'D)
 Made you some eggs... Bread's in
 the toaster now, should be done in
 a minute or two.

Tommy pulls out a coffee pot.

TOMMY
Just gonna stick with coffee.

Dad's head pops up, like a deer in headlights.

Tommy returns the look of confusion.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
What?

Dad raises his eyebrows.

DAD
What? Mr. Franklin specifically
said you couldn't have any
coffee...

TOMMY
Caffeine. Said I couldn't have any
caffeine...

He fills the pot with water.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Making decaf.

Dad rises from the chair.

DAD
Caffeine triggers that side of the
mind... will make you crave... You
know... the other stuff more during
the detox.

Slowly, he approaches Tommy, full prepared to rip the coffee
pot out of his bare hands.

DAD (O.C.) (CONT'D)
Hey? You hear what I just said?

Tommy closes his eyes, holding back a fit of rage.

TOMMY
Just told you that it's decaf.

DAD (O.C.)
But it's the taste, Tommy.

Tommy tilts his head, opening his eyes.

DAD (O.C.) (CONT'D)
 You were told to avoid anything
 that could trigger an impulse.

TOMMY
 I am avoiding my impulses!

He hurls the pot.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
 Why the fuck do you think I'm going
 to this place for?

DAD
 You may not think that decaf is a
 threat. You may not think that
 it'll doing anything to you... But
 say you drink it? What happens
 then?

Tommy leans against the counter, rubbing the center of his
 forehead.

DAD (CONT'D)
 You start missing the taste of
 caffeine, figuring one cup of
 regular won't hurt. Then suddenly,
 all your impulses come back. But
 this time, stronger.

Tommy now rubs his eyes.

TOMMY
 (annoyed)
 Fine.

Dad takes a step forward, still having the floor.

DAD
 And remember what Mr. Franklin said
 about relapses? How easy it is for
 all your work to be thrown out the
 window? You need to protect
 yourself against that!

Aggressively, Tommy turns to his father again.

TOMMY
 All right!

The toast pops up.

Both startled from the abruptness of the toast, they glare
 into each other's eyes.

KITCHEN TABLE

Tommy, now sitting at the table, stares at the ham and eggs on his plate.

As his father pours him a glass of juice, he goes for the newspaper.

Dad notices this, swiftly putting the carton of juice down.

DAD

Wait...

Tommy lifts the paper and scans the book underneath, immediately recognizing the title.

Dad gives a loud exhale as Tommy puts the paper back down, losing the desire to glance at today's stories.

A few minutes later...

Tommy picks at his eggs. The orange juice is untouched.

Dad silently watches from across the table, then looking at his watch.

DAD (CONT'D)

Mr. Franklin should be here any moment.

Tommy keeps his eyes on his plate.

TOMMY

Can you please stop calling him that?

DAD (O.C.)

Well what should I call him then?

Tommy sighs as he puts down his fork, opting to rub his eyes.

TOMMY

Guy's like 5 years younger than me. He's not a "mister" of shit...

(Beat)

Besides, he's seriously ripping you off...

The door bell then rings and Dad gets up.

DAD

I told you not to worry about the cost...

As Dad leaves the kitchen, Tommy focuses on his utensils, putting his thumb against the blade of his knife. The door can then be heard opening.

DAD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Mr. Franklin, please come in.

MR.FRANKLIN (O.S.)
How's he doing? Ready to kick some
ass?

Tommy rolls his eyes.

DAD (O.S.)
We're just finishing breakfast.

Tommy continues to pick at his plate.

MR.FRANKLIN (O.C.)
(cheery)
Morning, Tommy...

Right behind Dad is MR. FRANKLIN, a peppy gentleman in his early 20's, who is wearing a Hugo boss suit and a pair of glasses. He nonchalantly runs his neat and organized suit through his hands.

MR.FRANKLIN (CONT'D)
How we feeling today? Excited?
Scared? Wildly cathartic?

Tommy remains silent.

MR.FRANKLIN (CONT'D)
I'm proud of you, you know. We all
are, right?

Franklin turns to Tommy's Dad, who tries to follow his lead--nodding in agreement.

DAD
He stopped himself from having
coffee this morning, Mr. Franklin.

Franklin's eyes widen as he smiles condescendingly.

MR.FRANKLIN
See! That's great. You're really
doing it.

He strolls over towards Tommy, putting his arms around him.

MR.FRANKLIN (CONT'D)
 You're living your life free of
 addiction. Embracing the next
 chapter of your great-big book of
 life...

Tommy keeps his eyes straight ahead, reaching his limit.

MR.FRANKLIN (O.C.) (CONT'D)
 The world's just waiting for you to
 conquer it. One stepping stone at a
 time.

Tommy eye line matches to his father, who simply adjusts his
 throat, trying to hold it all together.

TOMMY
 (quiet)
 Have to get something from my room
 real quick.

Tommy gets up, storming past them.

Dad looks out toward towards the hallway and then back at
 Franklin, who munches on the untouched toast.

DAD
 Can I offer you something to drink?

MR.FRANKLIN
 (thinks a moment)
 Coffee would be great.

DAD
 You want some left over ham?

Franklin smiles again.

MR.FRANKLIN
 Well how can I say no to that?

Franklin chuckles, sitting down on Tommy's seat.

As Dad retrieves the spatula, Franklin continues to eat the
 toast.

MR.FRANKLIN (CONT'D)
 (between munches)
 So, it will be \$2500 per week for
 the next four weeks.
 (adjusts throat)
 (MORE)

MR.FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

After those four weeks are up, our team of specialists will have to assess his condition.

He wipes his mouth with the napkin.

MR.FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

Though usually, we do find it necessary to keep patients longer than a month...

Dad comes over to the table, dropping the remaining pieces ham onto the plate.

DAD

Uh huh...

Dad leaves the frame.

MR.FRANKLIN

You see, at the Steven's Care Facility, it's all about ensuring that our loved ones make fast...

He puts his finger up.

MR.FRANKLIN

Yet full recoveries...

Tommy's father cleans the stove with a paper towel, trying to process everything.

MR.FRANKLIN (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Oh, may I have a knife?

Dad keeps his eyes on the stove, thinking nothing of the question.

DAD

There's one there already.

Franklin lifts up the plate, making a dramatic effort to search for the knife.

MR.FRANKLIN

I don't see one...

DAD

I put it there for Tom-

Dad looks at the plate, realizing that BOTH Tommy and the knife are gone. Franklin is clearly confused, not comprehending the situation.

DAD (CONT'D)
Oh Jesus...

BEDROOM

Dad storms in as Franklin casually follow's behind.

Tommy is no where to be seen, but the window's curtain blows heavily inward.

Dad's face utterly breaks at the sight of this.

Franklin pulls out his phone.

MR.FRANKLIN
I'll call the police...

Dad puts his hand on the phone, turning to Franklin with disgust.

DAD
He's not a fucking criminal!

Tommy's father then storms out and Franklin is left standing beat red with a tail in between his legs, adjusting his suit and glasses.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODED LAKE- EARLY MORNING

Eyes stained with tears, Tommy sits in his signature spot at the lake.

Carefully tucked in his hand is the jagged knife from the kitchen table.

He gazes at his already mutilated arm and then back at the knife.

Tommy then raises the knife lethally, but slowly begins to break down, unable to hold it in any longer.

DAD (O.C.)
Tommy...

He turns and sees his father, who looks at him with great fear and devastation.

Tommy shakes his head, dropping the knife into the dirt.

With hesitance, Dad embraces his son, wrapping his arm around him.

The sun begins to glow over them, over Tommy's face especially.

In the illumination, Tommy remains uncertain and scared, but now with a hint of hope for the future.

FADE OUT.

THE END