

Floyd entered the stairwell first, carrying his dad's tool belt. Will followed, carrying their dad's toolbox. He opened the door slightly, then stopped.

"You sure you're up to this?" Floyd asked Will.

"Fuck no," Will said. "Would anyone in Alpena be prepared for a hurricane?"

Floyd shook the broken doorknob. "There's your preview."

"Let's do this," Will said, pushing past Floyd and entering. Floyd sighed, did the sign of the cross, and opened the door.

Between the television and couch were three garbage bags. The floor was littered with dirt, cigarette butts, and pieces of ripped paper. Floyd walked up to the pile and noticed a piece of wood jutting out. He lifted it and the bags rolled to the side, revealing half a coffee table.

"Goddamn, were Donovan and his friends practicing suplexes or something?" Floyd asked.

"He wrecked everything," Floyd's dad Henry said. He kneeled beside Kurt, Floyd's grandpa, as they worked on the pipes underneath the sink. "Punched holes in the wall, destroyed furniture, and the sinks are clogged."

"What do you want me to do?"

"Go ahead and vacuum. We're going to be digging out whatever shit he stuffed down here."

"Gotcha."

Floyd went to the closet. The top shelf was filled with clothing. The vacuum still had the sales tag on it. Floyd took it out and closed the door. The middle of the door's surface was violently cracked. Next to the closet there were three holes in the wall. He opened his cell phone and shone it inside the middle hole. He made a fist and put it inside the hole. He leaned in, wanting to see how far his arm could go. He got up to his armpit.

He noticed Will standing next to him, a garbage bag in each hand. Floyd winked. Will grunted, then went outside. Floyd plugged in the vacuum and sucked up the plaster.

Floyd found a basket filled with oversized t-shirts and Southpole jeans. Something rattled when he picked it up. He sat it on the washer and took out the clothes. He found four spray paint cans. Figures, he thought as he put the clothes back in the basket. He searched for the switch to the basement light. He flipped it, and the words "BLOOD GANG" and a star appeared on the wall.

"Really, you fucking cracker?" Floyd said, clenching his fists. He saw the boxes for Donovan's Xbox 360 and Guitar Hero: Warriors of Rock Super Bundle and kicked them. "Wish you would go downstate and try this shit."

He went outside and tossed the basket into the dumpster. A car tried to pull into the driveway. Mabel, in the passenger seat, rolled down the window.

"Hey, can one of you guys move your car?" she asked.

"Move our cars? We're the ones fixing up the apartment your shithead brother trashed! Go park in the fucking street!"

The man driving the car, whom Floyd recognized as Mabel's boyfriend Ted, nodded and pulled out. He parked, Mabel told him something, and she got out.

"Sorry Floyd, I didn't mean to make you angry."

Floyd took a deep breath. "Yeah, I'm sorry too. It's been a frustrating day. How are you holding up?"

"I'm alright. I got out before he freaked his shit. I'm here for my clothes."

"I didn't expect you to stick around. I'm actually hoping this incident will make Grandma want to sell this place."

"Ted has a brother in Philadelphia that'll let us stay with him until we find jobs and settle down."

"Getting out of Michigan is a pretty good idea. I'd do the same thing if I had the cash."

"I have everything I need except my clothes."

Mabel starting walking toward the stairs. Floyd put his arm out in front of her.

"Very bad idea," he said, shaking his head. "Will and Dad are pissed enough to take it out on you."

"I'll be in and out."

"Just let me get them for you. Where they at?"

"The living room closet, top shelf."

Floyd walked back to the dumpster and retrieved the basket. "Be back in a sec," he said, passing her.

Floyd heard his dad swearing as we walked up the stairs. Will was looking out the window when Floyd entered.

"Is Donovan with her in the car?" Will asked as Floyd started stuffing the clothes in the basket.

"No, that's her boyfriend. They're heading to Philly after this."

Floyd realized that the basket wouldn't hold all the clothes. He asked Will to hand him the garbage bags. Will tossed the box to him and looked back out the window.

"I'd like to knock her teeth in too, stupid cunt," Will said.

"Hey, they're leaving town," Floyd said, stuffing the rest of the clothes into a garbage bag. "Be grateful for that."

Floyd put the basket under his arm and flung the bag over his shoulder.

"Seriously, let me handle this. Your methods will only stir shit up."

Floyd went outside. Mabel stood against her car, texting. The trunk was open. Ted was still in the car, talking on his phone.

"My brother's curious about the whereabouts of your brother," Floyd said, nodding towards the apartment window. "Got any info to share?"

"I have no idea where he went," Mabel said, closing her phone. "He hasn't answered my calls or texts, and the only person that I know he's tight with is pissed at him."

Floyd put the clothes in and closed the trunk. "Where's that guy live?"
"The trailer park next to the bowling alley."

"Yeah, we'll just wait for him to show up again or get arrested. Whichever happens first."

Ted honked the horn.

"Well, I'm off," Mabel said. "Thanks for getting my clothes."

Mabel hugged Floyd. Floyd patted her back. "Best of luck in Philly."

Mabel and Ted turned right at the stop sign. Floyd looked up at the window. Will passed by, tool belt in hand.

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Floyd couldn't find any clean glasses. He quickly washed a coffee cup and filled it with water. He ran to the couch where his grandpa was lying down.

"Hold it," Henry said, standing over Kurt, "your brother hasn't found the pills yet."

"I'll help him," Floyd said, handing Henry the cup. "Where did you stash them, Grandpa?"

"In one of those compartments," Kurt said, trying to sit up.

Henry put his hand on Kurt's shoulder, pushing him back down. "I told you to relax. You're gonna make yourself feel worse."

Floyd headed down the stairs. Will appeared at the entrance. "You got 'em?"

Will shook the bottle as he came up. "Hope so. Get out of the way."

Floyd flattened himself against the rail as Will passed. He relaxed and pulled out his phone. He listened to Henry yell at Kurt as he checked his messages. He received a trailer for a horror movie that was being released at the end of the month. He turned up the volume and watched it.

The stairway rattled. Floyd looked down and saw four guys at the base. He stopped the video.

"Hi there," Floyd said, putting his phone back in his pocket. "Can I help you?"

"Yeah, is Donovan home?" the biggest guy, who led the group, said, stuffing his hands in his sweatshirt pockets. "He has something we need."

"Donovan moved out just yesterday."

"We were here yesterday chilling with him," the guy to the left said.

Floyd bent his head to the side to get a better look. "Sheldon? You know Donovan?"

The big guy started ascending the staircase. "We'll just take what we came here for ..."

"He took all his junk with him," Floyd said, blocking the way. "All he left behind was trash for us to

clean up.”

“I’m not gonna argue with you. Get the fuck outta the way.”

“YO, WILL!” Floyd shouted. “WE GOT COMPANY!”

“What, you scared?”

“No, but I’d prefer not to not worry about your friends jumping me.”

Will came to the door.

“Is Donovan with you?” he asked, arms crossed.

“He’s not,” Floyd said. “Lock the door.”

“We’ll bust this bitch down if we have to,” the big guy said.

“If you get through us, you’ll have to face our dad,” Floyd said, thumbing towards the apartment, “and he’s fucking nuts. In the driveway, now.”

The four guys stood on one side while Floyd and Will stood on the other. Will cracked his knuckles, and Floyd stared at Sheldon.

“What do they want?” Will asked Floyd.

“Something that Don apparently possesses,” Floyd answered.

“It’s our shit,” Sheldon said.

“What’s this ‘shit’ that you speak of? How do you even know Donovan?”

Sheldon didn’t say anything.

“Faggot-ass neighbor kid,” Will said. “I can see why you’re friends with Don—a bunch of tough guy crackers.”

“I’m straight outta Flint,” the big guy said. “You really wanna run your mouth like that?”

“You’re from Flint, yet you’re here thugging it up in Alpena?” Will stepped forward. “Yeah, okay.”

“What does Don have that you want?” Floyd asked. “Like I said, he took all his personal shit with him. We’ve been cleaning and doing repairs all day. Whatever it was, he probably has it on him.”

“Or it’s in the dumpster,” Will said. “Go take a look for yourselves.”

“He probably stashed it somewhere,” Sheldon said. “We’re going up there.”

Will got in Sheldon’s face.

“Like hell you are! You’re leaving, right the fuck now!”

Floyd pressed the volume on his phone, making it ring. Everyone looked at him as he pulled it out. “Text from Mom,” he said, opening it up.

"You better tell mommy that your bitch brother's about to get fucked up," the big guy said.

Floyd selected the video camera and hit record.

"Leave, or the cops will have to yank your heads out of the ground," Will said.

"Hey guys," Floyd said. "We know Sheldon, but what are your names?"

"Nigga, that's none of your business!" the big guy said.

"I guess it's a good thing then that I got this camera running," Floyd said, pointing at his phone. "Anything you want to say to the cops who I'm gonna show this to?"

The big guy turned around and threw his hoodie up. The others did the same.

"Let's go," he said. Floyd kept the camera on them as they walked away.

"We'll be paying you a visit later, Sheldon!" Will yelled. Neither Sheldon nor anyone else turned around.

Floyd shut off the camera. "The cops will really dig that remark."

"I'm still gonna pay his house a visit. If he won't come out, then I'll talk to his fucking parents."

"I'll inform Dad of what happened and call the cops. Can you stand guard for a few?"

"Yeah, I'm good."

Floyd ran up the stairs. Will walked to the end of the driveway and stood against his truck, arms crossed, watching the group walk down the street.

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