

BURGLARS

Written by

Alisa Vysotina

FADE IN:

INT - SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM - NIGHT

An empty bedroom on the second floor of a small colonial house. It is furnished in an old-fashioned way. The lights are turned off.

We see a small dark WINDOW in the middle of a scene. An empty made double bed by the right wall. Two bedside tables bed are covered with lacy tablecloth. A VASE and an ENVELOPE on the right bedside table. A dresser to the left of the window. Everything in the room is in a perfect order. It is clear that nobody lives in that room.

We're approaching closer and closer to the WINDOW. Nothing can be seen in it beside branches that are moving in the wind in the dark of the night with RUSTLING.

Suddenly appears a dark figure of a FIRST MAN, moving behind the window.

First Man produces some indistinctive CLICKING SOUNDS. He is obviously trying to open the window from the outside. We hear MUTED WHISPERING of two men.

First Man manages to half open the window and slips inside the room quietly. He steps aside from the window and looks around the room. We can see him more clearly now. He is a tall thin man with straight light hair of middle length. He looks determined and serious.

The SECOND MAN tries to squeeze through the window, but he not as thin as his companion. He decides to open the window wider, but it doesn't give up. He adds a bit more force to it.

The window opens fully with a loud BANGING SOUND.

We see the face of the Second Man, with a grimace of pain and guilt on his face.

The First Man raises his hands, opens his mouth in terror and freezes in that pose, terrified.

The Second Man is still half inside and half outside, holding the window frame with his hand.

We see two men, frozen motionless, listening and not breathing. They know that the house is empty, but they feel diffident. The men are nervous and afraid of making any noise.

OLD LADY

(voice from downstairs)

Hello? Who is there? Who made that noise?

We see a dark and empty doorway with the steps, leading downstairs.

FIRST MAN
(whispering to the Second Man)

What the hell, Larry?! You said the house was empty!

LARRY
It was supposed to be! I had no clue someone was in the house! Here a family of three lives and they were expected to be away on vacation. I checked! I must have mixed up the houses. I'm really sorry about that, mate!

LARRY climbs in through the window. We move down to his feet, and taking his last step he accidentally pushes the LADDER with his foot and it falls down on the ground.

EXT - OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - NIGHT

We see two faces of the burglars leaning out from the window and looking down on the ground.

The ladder lies on the fluffy lawn next to the tree.

INT - SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM - NIGHT

LARRY
Damn! Bob, I'm really sorry about that, mate!

BOB
Stop sayin' that "really sorry" tripe! I shouldn't have trusted you with the job, Larry. What house number is this?

LARRY
It has to be 21...

BOB looks around the room and sees an envelope on the bedside table. He walks around the bed, and takes the letter from the table. He looks at it for a moment and then holds it out to his friend, shaking it angrily.

BOB
It's number 12, you moron! Look at the goddamn envelope!

Larry comes up to his furious partner to take a look at the address on the envelope. He takes it in his hand, and brings it closer to his face to see the letters in the dark.

LARRY

Stop yelling at me! It hurts me so much! I tried to do my best to...

While saying that, Larry reaches to the bedside table without looking at it to put the envelope back and his hand BRUSHES against the vase on the table.

The VASE falls down on the floor and crushes with a loud SOUND OF BREAKING GLASS.

INT - OLD LADY'S BEDROOM ON THE FIRST FLOOR - NIGHT

We see a hand, that turns on the light in a bedside lamp.

We can see the part of a small room, dimly lit by the lamp. A single bed, with one bedside table is squeezed between a massive bookcase on the left and a wardrobe on the right. Old-fashioned glasses on a chain are right next to the lamp on the bedside table.

We see an OLD LADY about eighty years old half-risen on her bed. She is covered with a blanket up to her waist. Old Lady's frizzy hair is absolutely white, she is dressed in a light-violet sleeping gown with long sleeves.

The Old Lady puts on her glasses and looks at the ceiling, figuring the source of noise.

OLD LADY

(yelling)

I can hear you! Get out of my house! I have a gun here and I am going to get it, mister, you'd better leave immediately!

INT - SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM

LARRY

Bob, I'm so clumsy! I'm so sorry!

BOB

She heard ya' stupid ass! Anyway, it doesn't matter now. Ain't you heard what the old dame says? We need to get outta here.

INT - OLD LADY'S BEDROOM ON THE FIRST FLOOR

Old lady throws off the blanket. She takes a sitting posture on the bed with quite an effort and puts her feet into cosy blue slippers. She leans on the bed to the bedside table.

OLD LADY

Where did I put the gun for mercy's sake! Perhaps, in that drawer...

INT - SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM

Larry comes up to the bed, and flops down on it. The bed's thick splendid feather presses significantly in under his weight.

LARRY

I can't believe I mixed up the houses. I am so messed up. I'm a failure, mate.

BOB

It's not the time for pityin' yourself, Larry! Come on, take a grip on yourself!

LARRY

You were right. I am an idiot. You know what, Bob? Just leave me here. I will distract her and stop the bullet, so as to give you a chance to get away...

INT - OLD LADY'S BEDROOM ON THE FIRST FLOOR

The old lady is struck with another idea. She remembers something.

OLD LADY

Oh my!

She goes to the wardrobe shuffling her feet and opens it. She looks inside.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)

It must be here, in the wardrobe!
In one of these boxes... Let's see.

INT - SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM

Bob comes up to Larry and puts his hand on his pal's shoulder to calm him down. He gives a quick glance at the doorway.

The doorway is still empty, but from Bob's POV we can see a dim light from the Old Lady's room. We hear TAPPING and RUSTLUNG from downstairs, as she's looking for a gun in her room.

Bob has to knock some sense into his friend so as not to be arrested, or simply shot.

BOB

Hey, Larry, mate! Look at me. I shouldn't have lost my temper, okay? Everyone can make a mistake, right? I'm sorry for callin' you a moron, that's not true. Well, not completely true. But now, Larry, 'cause we ain't got no ladder to climb outta here safely, we gonna' get down to the first floor and sneak by the damn hag unnoticed before she finds a gun. Understand?

Larry looks up at his friend silently with a misery and desperation on his face.

INT - OLD LADY'S BEDROOM ON THE FIRST FLOOR

The old lady is bent beside the wardrobe, its doors wide opened. She looks for the gun, making RUSTLING noise. Then she finally finds what she was looking for and with a satisfactory look on her face she straightens herself up and raises her hand with shiny 44 MAGNUM REVOLVER up.

OLD LADY

(to herself)

Spiffy! Here it is, with all six bullets inside.

(shouting to the men)

Now, put your hands up and show yourself!

Old lady moves toward the room doorway, that leads to the hall and the stairs.

INT - SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM

Bob throws up his hands with irritation.

BOB

Shit! What we gonna do now?! Damn it, Larry, if it wasn't for ya' goin' in hysterics we could've slipped by. You've just volunteered to break ya' damn legs. Now we hafta' jump out of the window.

LARRY

Maybe she'll let us go. I think we can talk her into it.

BOB

Goddammit, Larry! Ain't you not right in your head? No, no, no, no, don't you dare...

LARRY
(shouting aloud)
Good evening, ma'am! Please, don't
shoot!

BOB
Here we go.

INT - FIRST FLOOR HALL

The hall is a small room of irregular shape that has no furniture in it, except a low sofa and a coffee table with some old newspapers on it. There are three doors leading to the Old Lady's bedroom, dining room and the front door.

Old lady is standing in the hall, raising the gun in her trembling arms. She points with the gun to the empty stairs.

OLD LADY
To whom have I the honor of
speaking? Introduce yourself, young
man!

INT - SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM

Bob is standing in the middle of the room with his hands spread widely, speechless. He doesn't think it was a good idea and he desperately trying to think of plan B.

Larry carefully comes closer to the doorway, and stops, hesitating. He leans on the door-post.

LARRY
Ahem, my name is Larry. And my
friend's name is Bob.

BOB
(murmuring to himself)
Smashin'! Son of a bitch sold me
out.

INT - FIRST FLOOR HALL

We see Old Lady's face. She readjusts the glasses on her nose and her eyes open wide. She looks puzzled. She lifts the shaking gun a bit up and makes a waving gesture with its barrel.

OLD LADY
Gosh! There are two of you.
Alright, Laurence, take your friend
Robert and get down there. With
your hands up, if you don't mind.

INT - SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM

LARRY

In a second, ma'am!

Larry turns back to Bob and shows him "thumbs up" gesture.

Bob closes his eyes and hits his forehead with his hand. He looks desperate.

Larry lifts his hands up and slowly goes down the stairs.

Bob follows him with irritation.

INT - FIRST FLOOR HALL

From behind the Old Lady's shoulder we see two unfortunate burglars going down the stairs one by one with hands risen above their heads.

Larry sees a gun and it gives him a fright. He stops on the landing and smiles to the Old Lady awkwardly.

Bob sees a gun too, and stops frightened behind his friend.

OLD LADY

Well, youths, how did you come to find yourself in my house at 2:30 a.m.?

LARRY

Well, you see... It's not that easy to explain, but, um...

While he is speaking we see Old Lady, who blinks as if she remembered something important. She lowers her gun a bit.

OLD LADY

Oh, I beg your pardon. I have not offered you tea. Would you like some?

LARRY

Please, if it is not inconvenient for you.

OLD LADY

No, not at all, my dear. Please, follow me.

Old Lady turns around and goes to the dining room.

Larry and Bob follow her still holding their hands above their heads.

INT - DINING ROOM

The doorway is situated in the left corner of the room. From the doorway POV we see a nice big room with peach wallpaper and dark shabby parquet. There is a rectangular table and four chairs in the middle of the room, and window with awful red chequered curtains on the right wall. A pine wood kitchen set and kitchen appliances at the distant wall. The set is quite simple, made in a country style. There is a narrow table at the left wall with some PHOTO FRAMES on it.

We follow Old Lady, who enters the room and puts the gun on the dining table while passing it on her way to the oven.

OLD LADY'S HAND
lights the burner.

OLD LADY
puts a kettle on the burner.

We see Larry and Bob entering the room. They stop at the entrance, confused, still holding their hands up.

Bob looks at the gun on the table, and then at Old Lady's back. He is estimating pros and cons of seizing the gun.

Old Lady turns back to the burglars and interrupts Bob's thinking process.

OLD LADY
Please, have a seat.

Larry and Bob take two chairs and sit side by side.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)
So, young men, I'm afraid I still must insist on an explanation from you.

LARRY
Of course ma'am. Ahem, well, Bob took me out with him for a burglary...

BOB
Lies! You were the one, who begged me for a good turn!

Old lady takes three cups from the cabinet and comes back to the table.

BOB (O.C.) (CONT'D)
You said you were short of money!

OLD LADY
Hush, son. Let him speak first.

LARRY

Right... I am really short of money.
You know, it is hard to find a job
these days. And the bills are so
expensive, and I have this fiance
of mine...

Old Lady comes up to the table with the teapot and pours tea
into the cups.

OLD LADY

Ah! You are going to be a married
man! Congratulations. Here is your
tea. Be careful, it is hot.

Larry and Bob move their cups closer to themselves.

Larry thanks the Old Lady by nodding his head.

Old Lady takes her seat on the top of the table. She looks at
the photo frames on the table by the opposite wall.

We see two pictures of a red-faced old man in his late
sixties who is apparently Old Lady's husband. On one picture
he is holding a big fish in his hands, on the other photo,
he's hugging a bit younger Old Lady by her shoulders and the
couple is smiling.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)

Oh, I was married once. What lovely
years we had together. But he
passed away.

LARRY

I am so sorry to hear that.

BOB

(murmuring at ease)
I'm sorry.

OLD LADY

Don't worry about it. It was long
time ago. On the other hand - no
mustard stains on my table-cloth
since then. Toast?

LARRY

Thank you, it is very kind of you.

BOB

(still murmuring)
Sure.

Old lady gets up and goes to the kitchen counter to fetch
some bread.

OLD LADY

So, what is that you need so desperately that you are breaking into decent people's houses?
Robert?

Bob takes a pause. He looks at his friend, reckoning if he should speak his mind. Then he surrenders, sighs and starts talking, looking in his cup and turning it nervously in his hands.

BOB

I just need some cash to keep me body and soul together. My wife left me and took me kids away, I'm cleaned out, flat broke. The judge says I hafta' pay her alimony money. But I ain't got no job for two months already, they laid me off.

Old lady comes back taking a plate with two square bread and butter toasts. She puts the plate between Larry and Bob.

OLD LADY

(taking her place at the table)

What is your story, Laurence?

LARRY

(looking more and more guilty with every word he says)

I just wanted to buy a wedding ring for my fiance. I am no burglar, ma'am. I mixed up the houses, I broke your vase, I got Bob into trouble. I didn't mean to spoil anything for both of you. I shouldn't have broken into anyone's house. I can't believe I did it, actually. I'm so sorry.

BOB

(to Larry)

Forget 'bout it. If anyone here owes someone an apology - it's me. Larry, mate, I'm sorry for draggin' you into all of this. To tell you the truth, I ain't no burglar either. You're a good friend, loyal. You always did the right thing, and I made you to leave the right way.

Larry is looking at his friend with his eyes moist with tears. He is so grateful for his friend's appreciation.

LARRY

Thank you, Bob. You are my best friend. I love you, buddy.

The Old Lady sips her tea, holding the cup in a posh manner, shifting her gaze from one man to another.

BOB

I apologize to you ma'am. For scaring you and for causing ya' trouble. I hope you can forgive us.

Old Lady puts her cup on the table.

OLD LADY

(with a hearty smile)
Who wants more tea?