

MILLS LOOP

Written by

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EXT. HOUSE- DAY

A car sits in the graded driveway of a partially completed new home.

INT. RONNIES CAR - DAY

RONNIE, 23, cries. A flyer for a funeral, that begins soon is clenched in his right hand.

A loud Thud startles Ronnie as MIKE, 34, bangs on the windshield, motions to Ronnie to follow him, then turns and enters the house.

INT. HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

There is newly hung sheetrock on the walls. Mike examines a section of sheet rock as Ronnie comes in. Mike points at the wall.

MIKE

I really think this will work. I think we can get away with spraying it.

Ronnie looks from the wall to his watch, then back to the wall.

RONNIE

If we spray it now, you'll see this joint on sunny days. It's not ready.

Ronnie grabs a mud tray. He scoops a bit out of a mud bucket.

MIKE

I'm serious, I want to spray the texture.

Mike steps between the sheetrock wall and Ronnie.

RONNIE

Are you serious? I'm going to a funeral in a few minutes that you knew about. I've been nice because I feel bad for you, but I don't have time for this.

MIKE

Come on man. I have to get the bonus for completing it today.

Ronnie slides his hand down the wall.

RONNIE

Man it's rough. I get it, you need the money. But this is not ready and I gotta go.

Mike stands next to Ronnie.

MIKE

Looks good to me. Feels good too. I don't care. We are spraying.

Disgusted Ronnie drops his head briefly. He turns around placing the sheetrock tray on scaffolding. He looks at Mike, eye to eye.

RONNIE

You know Chris was my best friend. You know this.

Ronnie shakes his head, aghast.

Mike puts his hands up.

MIKE

I'm sorry, man I forgot. But we gotta job to do.

RONNIE

Piss on your job. Go to hell. I'm out of here.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Ronnie looks at his watch.

Mike bursts out of the house. A sheet rock tray ricochets off the ground. He closes the gap between him and Ronnie.

MIKE

Dude, you can't leave. We are finishing this.

RONNIE

Watch me.

Ronnie gets to his car. He turns around. He looks at Mike as he opens the car door.

Mike quickens his pace. He stops at the back of Ronnie's car. He places both hands on its spoiler.

MIKE

Please, dude. I need your help.

Ronnie drops his head, again. Then he walks towards Mike. He leans against the quarter panel.

RONNIE

It's a funeral, jackass. Even if it wasn't, the wall isn't ready to be sprayed. What is going on?

Mike breathes deeply.

MIKE

I know he was your friend. I'm sorry for all of this. I know the texture isn't ready to spray either.

RONNIE

Then why the big push to get it done?

Mike looks Ronnie square in the eyes.

MIKE

I owe the landlord and I lied to my wife about it.

Ronnie grimaces.

RONNIE

Whew, that's bad.

MIKE

Yeah.

RONNIE

Getting in trouble and potentially losing your job isn't the answer either. I have to go.

Mike squeezes the spoiler. An audible crack reverberates from the spoiler. Both men look at each other.

MIKE

If I don't get that bonus I'm going to lose my apartment. If I lose the apartment my wife will leave me.

RONNIE

Dude, get off my damn car, please.

MIKE

Screw you. If you leave, I'll fire you. Your friend is gone don't lose your job.

Mike glares at Ronnie briefly. Then he lets go of the spoiler and backs away from the car.

RONNIE

What the hell is wrong with you. Fire me then. We'll see what Mr Campbell thinks.

MIKE

All right.

Mike kicks dirt as he turns around, then inexplicably he rushes Ronnie. Ronnie's eyes grow as big.

Ronnie instinctively jukes at the last moment and Mike careens against the car and then the ground.

RONNIE

Seriously. What the fuck, Mike!

Ronnie stares dumbfounded at Mike. Mike slowly begins to get up. Ronnie reaches to help. Mike grabs his arm and quickly pulls Ronnie down.

MIKE

We are finishing the job.

Ronnie slips and falls as Mike yanks him down. Both men now on the ground scramble to get to their feet.

RONNIE

You are insane. I'm trying to help you and you assault me.

MIKE

We are finishing the job. I'm not losing my entire world so you can go to a funeral.

RONNIE

You're crazy.

The two men wrestle on the ground momentarily. Neither gain the upper hand. Finally Ronnie slams his elbow into Mike's face. Blood explodes from his nose.

MIKE

Oh shit. You broke my damn nose.

Ronnie stands up first. He extends his hand to Mike. Mike accepts without incident. Mike holds his nose.

RONNIE

Shit, my bad man but you were crazy. Let me get a rag for that.

Ronnie reaches into his car. He quickly pulls out an old t-shirt. He hands it to Mike.

MIKE

Thank you.

Mike holds the shirt to his nose. He turns his head back.

Ronnie nods, then he jumps in the car. He sits briefly and then gets back out.

RONNIE

Mike. How about I come back after the funeral and we can try to fix the sheet rock?

MIKE

That would be cool, thank you. In fact I'll go put another coat of mud on now.

Mike presses the shirt against his nose as he walks towards the house.

Ronnie smiles and then jumps back into his car. He turns the ignition once, nothing. He turns the ignition again, nothing.

Frantic Ronnie furiously shakes the key in the ignition back and forth.

RONNIE

Don't do this.

He tries three more times. The car is dead. He gets out and looks towards Mike. Mike looks at him.

MIKE

Is it dead?

RONNIE

Yeah.

Ronnie steps towards Mike as he looks at his watch. He shakes his head.

RONNIE

Do you have jumper cables?

MIKE

I do. But why don't you just take
my truck?

Ronnie looks at him. Then he stares at his car and back at
his watch.

RONNIE

Are you sure? You don't mind?

MIKE

No, not at all. I'll stay here and
float.

RONNIE

Ok. Thank you, I really appreciate
it. When I get back hopefully we
can spray texture.

Mike reaches into his pocket and pulls out a key ring. He
throws it to Ronnie. Ronnie catches it mid air.

MIKE

Here, watch third gear. It likes to
stick. You better hurry though.

Ronnie closes the gap to Mike's truck and leaps inside.

RONNIE

Thank you Mike.

MIKE

You're welcome. I'm sorry--

Ronnie could not hear. He starts the truck and quickly speeds
away towards the funeral.

Mike stares as his truck drives down the road. He heads into
the house and the sheet rock.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

A few hours later Ronnie pulls in. He crosses the parking lot
and enters the worksite.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

RONNIE

Hey Mike, where you at?

MIKE

Yeah I'm back here washing the
tools and mud trays up.

Ronnie crosses the living room. The wall has a fresh coat of mud on it. Ronnie smiles. He crosses into the kitchen where Mike washes the tools.

RONNIE

It looks good. I'm glad you decided
to float it one more time.

Mike turns around. He nods as he places the tools down.

MIKE

No, it was the right thing to do.
As soon as it had been painted it
would be noticeable. Those bubbles
had to go.

The men head into living room. They stand in front of the sheet rock wall.

RONNIE

Too bad they didn't let us do all
the walls in that ship lap.

Ronnie points to the three other walls in the living room. Rustic boards in various lengths are fastened to the wall with no matching seams.

MIKE

Yeah it turned out beautiful,
didn't it?

RONNIE

It really did. I want to do this to
my house. When I get a house.

MIKE

Hey, I don't think you heard me
earlier. I'm sorry, for everything.
I just get anxiety and I do stupid
shit.

Ronnie smiles and then looks Mike square in the eye.

RONNIE

No worries. How much is your
mortgage or rent?

Mikes head pops back. He looks funny at Ronnie.

MIKE

Why?

RONNIE

How much dude?

MIKE

We owe six hundred and fifty dollars by five or we will be legally evicted.

Ronnie digs into his pocket. He pulls out a wad of bills. He counts out eight and hands them to Mike.

RONNIE

Here.

Mike takes the wad of money. His fingers run through the stack of one hundred-dollar bills. He hands them back.

MIKE

Thank you but I can't take this.
Where did you get it?

Ronnie refuses the money.

RONNIE

Take it man. Say thank you.

Mike quickly shoves the money in his back pocket. He hugs Ronnie.

MIKE

Thank you.

Mike backs away from Ronnie. Mike wipes a tear from his face as he stares at Ronnie incredulously.

Ronnie pats his back.

RONNIE

You're welcome. Do you think you can jump my car off?

Mike laughs and clasps Ronnie's shoulder.

MIKE

Not to be a materialistic weasel,
but where did the money come from?

Ronnie smiles as they walk towards the vehicles.

RONNIE

Chris and I had been saving up for a camping trip for over a year. The trip was supposed to be this weekend. While I was at the funeral a little voice said you needed the money.