

House of Donn
by

Andy Coughlan

FADE IN:

1 INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY 1

A funerary urn sits on a table surrounded by mostly empty glasses of water.

On the wall a clock ticks, filling the room with its rhythmical sound.

An old man sits and stares a photo of an old woman in his hands.

Rain runs down the window.

Outside a figure approaches up the driveway.

2 EXT. FRONT GARDEN -- DAY 2

The figure, hunched in the rain, approaches the front door.

Fishing a set of keys out of his pocket, he puts them to the lock, but they don't fit.

3 INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY 3

The doorbell rings but the old man's eyes do not register the sound.

He strokes the photo gently. The seconds tick by.

At the sound of a second ring, the old man comes out of his reverie with a sharp intake of breath.

He places the photo down by the urn and struggles up.

4 INT. HALLWAY -- DAY 4

As he walks into the hallway, the old man pauses to catch his breath and rub his stomach.

The bell rings again. The old man heads to the door and peers through the spy hole.

HOODED FIGURE (O.S.)

Dad?

The old man stands at the door, realising who the man is and debating whether to let him in. His head hangs low.

SON (O.S.)

Dad, Please?

The old man takes off the safety catch and clicks the door open.

He walks away from the door, letting it drift open behind him.

The son peers into the empty hallway and takes a hesitant step forward over the threshold.

5 INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

5

The old man settles back down in his chair.

The son enters the living room and pulls back his hood.

The old man fixes his son a steady glare and waits to see what he has to say.

SON

I brought you a present.

The son ignores the look his father is giving him and steps forward, placing a neatly wrapped present on the coffee table.

The old man looks at it in contemplation.

OLD MAN

I need a drink.

SON

It's OK, I'll get it.

The old man watches the son leave the room, then leans forward and prods the present on the table. He picks it up and unwraps it.

SON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

What do you want? Tea or coffee?... Or something stronger?

OLD MAN

Something stronger.

6 INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

6

The kitchen is tidy, the work surfaces all clear. No food is visible.

The son starts opening cupboards.

SON

Where do you keep the glasses?

OLD MAN (O.S.)

By the sink.

The son opens a cupboard. There are a few cups and two glasses.

Beside them is a selection of pill bottles.

He takes one down and rattles it gently.

He examines the others.

OLD MAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Have you got them?

SON

Yes thanks.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

He puts the pill bottles back and grabs the two glasses.

7 INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

7

As the son enters the living room the Old Man has unwrapped the present. It appears to be a black case which he is holding open.

The old man drops the lid of the case and takes the tumbler of gin offered by his son with shaking hands and a grunt of gratitude.

Placing the glass to his lips he downs it in one, coughs and wipes his mouth with the back of his hand, spluttering.

SON

Steady there...

OLD MAN

I'm OK. Sit down, you're making the place untidy.

The son removes his coat and pulls up a chair opposite his father. He looks at the urn.

SON

Did mum, pass away peacefully?

OLD MAN

In her sleep. I just woke up and she... You know, she'd be mortified to know I was sat here talking to you now.

SON

I know.

OLD MAN

Do you?

SON

Yes.

OLD MAN

What am I meant to do with this?

SON

I don't know. I'm sorry, bit of a thoughtless present I suppose. I thought... You could always play against me. If you want.

OLD MAN

Come on, then.

The old man looks at his son and leans forward. He opens the black case to reveal that it's a backgammon set.

He lays the board out on the table and they start to set out the pieces.

(CONTINUED)

7

CONTINUED:

7

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

So why are you here?

SON

I wanted to know you were OK.

OLD MAN

I have food in the larder. The
bills are paid. The heating works
fine. You start.

The son rolls the dice and moves his pieces.

The old man does the same.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Didn't come round to collect your
inheritance then?

The son rolls again.

The old man looks at him.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

You don't have any.

The son pauses, thinks, makes his move.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

What did you expect?

SON

I don't know.

OLD MAN

Was it something you were banking
on?

SON

It would have been nice. Might
have got me out of... an
unresolved situation.

The old man continues to stare, his eyebrows twitch.

SON (CONT'D)

Nothing like that. We had an
extension on the house. We went
a little over budget and haven't
really cleared the debt.

OLD MAN

We?

SON

Lindsay. My partner.

He produces a photo in his wallet.

OLD MAN

Pretty. Any thoughts of kids?

(CONTINUED)

7

CONTINUED: (2)

7

SON
Lindsay can't have them. We have
considered adopting...

The father rolls again, considers his options and moves.

The son looks at the urn on the table.

SON (CONT'D)
So, are you going to scatter Mum's
ashes?

OLD MAN
Eventually...

SON
I could come with you if you want.

OLD MAN
Perhaps.

The son rolls and makes his move.

SON
So does all mum's money go to you
then?

OLD MAN
Yes. There was a provision for
you once. She removed it.

SON
Who'd want to leave their money
to a murderer eh?

The father says nothing and rolls again.

SON (CONT'D)
Is there anything I can do?

OLD MAN
No. It's taken care of. It's
all taken care of.

SON
Everything?

OLD MAN
Yes. Your turn.

The son rolls again. He contemplates his move.

A drop of blood drips down onto the table.

Looking up he see's the old man has a nosebleed.

SON
Dad!

He stands up and grabs a tissue out of his pocket and
wipes his father's face.

(CONTINUED)

OLD MAN

Thank you son. It's OK, nothing major.

He takes his own handkerchief out.

SON

You sure?

OLD MAN

Yes.

The old man turns his attention back to the game.

The son looks for somewhere to discard the tissue. He leans over and puts the tissue in the bin.

There is another empty tablet bottle in the bin.

He looks back at his dad, who is holding a handkerchief to his nose and trying to make his move on the board.

SON

Dad, listen. I really am sorry.
For what I did to you and Mum.

OLD MAN

You got caught.

He starts to cough, spraying his handkerchief in blood. He hides it away quickly.

SON

If there's... you know. Anything.

OLD MAN

This is enough.

He coughs again.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry too.

SON

For what?

OLD MAN

The way we treated you. I...
We... were embarrassed.

The son looks down, he understands.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

You know, your mother didn't hate you. She was proud and short tempered, but she still cared.

The son smiles, the hint of tears welling up in his eyes.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

A cup of tea wouldn't go amiss.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (4)

7

The son gets up and heads for the door.

Behind him the father winces in pain.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Son?

The son pauses at the door.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Thank you.

The son nods and leaves the room.

The old man doubles over in his chair, clutching his stomach.

Gasping for breath he leans back in his chair and closes his eyes.

8 INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

8

The kettle goes on.

Going back to the cupboard he takes the last two clean cups out of the cupboard.

He pauses to look at the tablet bottle again, and looks out towards the living room.

SON

You know, if you like, I could bring Lindsay round. Maybe at the weekend?

No response from the sitting room,

The kettle boils behind him so the son turns his attention to that.

Tea bags plop into the mugs and water splashes over them

The sun comes out, casting beams across the room.

The son looks out of the window, stirring the tea.

9 EXT. BACK GARDEN -- DAY

9

Two doves sit on a fence. They fly away.

10 INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

10

The son finishes making the tea and heads back to the front room.

11 INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

11

Sunlight streams in the room. The old man is collapsed back in the chair, his face pale and calm.

Small trickles of blood stream from his nose and mouth.

(CONTINUED)

11

CONTINUED:

11

The son stands for a moment then places the cups down on the table next to unfinished game.

He kisses his dad on the forehead.

He picks up the urn and his coat and walks out of the room.

FADE OUT.