

KARATS

Written

by

Sam Quo Vadis
squovadis@shaw.ca

FADE IN:

EXT. CABLE VAN: MOVING - DAY

Crawling down an empty country road bordered by ornamental cherry, maple, and oak.

INT. CABLE VAN: MOVING

MARK EATON (late 20s), healthy, handsome, blue collar, is behind the wheel. There's a touch of rebel underneath his blue Unicom Cable uniform. Maybe it's just the way a lock of hair falls over his forehead.

He checks checks the time on his cell phone and dials.

LORI (FILTER)
I don't know what you're selling,
but I can't talk right now. I'm
having my feet resoled.

MARK
Tough day in the grease pit?

INT. COTTAGE: KITCHEN

This was a nice middle-class home 40 years ago. Now it's dated, peeling wallpaper and cracked Formica.

Mark's mom, LORI EATON (mid 50s), wearing a tacky pink waitresses' uniform, soaks her feet in a tub of steaming hot water. She sprinkles a herbal powder from a plastic tube.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION:

LORI
Yeah kid, and I haven't even
started yet.

MARK
I conned Colin into springing for
a little overtime. I'll free you
from suburban slavery yet, mom.

LORI
You're such a dreamer, Mark. The
only way out of this life is in a
box.

MARK

And my box is going to say
"Rainbow Lake Hideaway Resort."

LORI

Trolling for suckers, are you?

MARK

In ten years -

LORI

I'll be dead by the time you break
earth on that thing. Come by for
home made organic pie.

MARK

I've got a job to do.

LORI

It's your favourite. Green apple.

MARK

I won't be long.

He disconnects, stretches to reach a work order, which he futzes around with as he drives. Finally, he finds a name and address.

MARK

Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Stauffer.

INT. COUNTRY HOME - SAME DAY

A posh living room, conservatively appointed. There's a stuffed rainbow trout on a plaque above the fireplace.

EMALINE (EMMA, 20s), Caucasian, cute and petite, in conservative upper-class attire and with her hair in a bun looks like she could have stepped out of the Town & Country magazine she drops on the coffee table as she glances up at a mantle clock.

Emma paces, picks up a packet of cigarettes only to find it empty. She tosses it down, abruptly strides to the window and looks out over empty grounds and a deserted lane.

INT. CABLE VAN: STATIONARY

Mark idles the van at the end of the lane, checks the address against his work order: 4441 Cherry Blossom Lane.

INT. COUNTRY HOME: KITCHEN

Emma takes a set of keys from a hook on the wall, slips them into her pocket.

The doorbell RINGS. She bolts from the kitchen...

FOYER

...flings open the door. Mark is standing there with a duffle bag.

She's disappointed.

EMMA

Oh -

MARK

Hi. Unicom Cable.

EMMA

Yes?

She doesn't move to let him in. Mark checks his work order.

MARK

Mrs. Stauffer?

EMMA

Uh huh.

MARK

I know I'm early, but I was in the area and...

EMMA

Oh -

MARK

...I have the time.

EMMA

Right...so you?

MARK

Would like to come in.

Emma chews on her lip.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Mark follows Emma. She suddenly stops and turns, blocks his way.

EMMA

Do you have a cigarette?

MARK

I don't smoke.

EMMA

Oh -

(a beat)

I'm not sure what my husband...

MARK

Cable modem? For your computer?

She resumes walking.

EMMA

Of course. He's so busy I hardly see him. Are you married, Mr...

MARK

Eaton. Mark. No.

EMMA

Then I guess you wouldn't know about these things.

Emma LAUGHS nervously, stops at a door.

EMMA

Um...I believe it's in here.

CHILD'S BEDROOM

It's decorated for an adolescent girl - pink poodles and boy bands.

Mark boots the computer, lifts a cable modem from his bag.

MARK

I hope you don't mind my saying so, but you look too young to have a child who's...how old is your daughter? Twelve? Thirteen?

EMMA

Oh - Thank you. Will you be long?

MARK

I'll run the cable, connect the modem, install the software, and have you set up in ninety minutes.

EMMA

Oh - I'll just um...tidy up then.

Mark fishes a heavy drill from his bag.

Emma starts fishing around in the walk-in closet.

EMMA

I guess you have to take the truck back when you're done.

MARK

I take it home. Works out better for both me and the company.

Emma pulls a child's wooden baseball bat from the closet...

EMMA

Oh - Good. That's better for me, too.

...walks up behind Mark.

MARK

How is that?

Mark glances up at the computer monitor. He furrows his brow in puzzlement.

Emma swings the bat at his head. There's a dull thud as his limp body hits the floor.

Emma places the baseball bat on the computer desk next to the computer monitor. Alicia Stauffer's Windows' wallpaper is displayed - it's a picture of Alicia and parents standing in a stream on a fishing trip under a caption in a fancy font reading...

..."The Stauffer Family."

The Stauffers are black.