

INSANITY CRIES

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Based on a concept by
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FADE IN:

BLACK

The sink faucet slowly drips into a glass. It's loud enough to be annoying, maddening if it continues for long. It's the only sound heard.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The moon is full and streams in the window, lighting a chair with an unconscious man, GERALD (40s-50s), tied to it. His arms and legs are tied with plastic cable ties to the legs of the chair. The chair is next to a matching table and three other chairs (like a card table or those 70s-style metal/vinyl kitchen table/chair sets). There are pieces of lumber on the floor, wedging the chair in place, so it can't be scooted or tipped over.

He's dressed, but missing his shoes.

The entire kitchen isn't flooded with light; there are plenty of shadows.

The faucet continues to drip, still the only sound heard.

Gerald slowly rouses. He's not quite aware of his situation yet.

GERALD

God! Shut the fuck up! The
dripping! Can't someone shut the
Goddamn sink off?

He picks his head up, woozy, and looks around. As far as he knows, he's alone.

GERALD (CONT'D)

Hey! Anyone there? Hey! Hey!

He tries to lift his arms, but discovers they're tied to the chair. He struggles.

GERALD (CONT'D)

What the? What the fuck? You drug
me? Was... Was I...? What the hell?
Where...

He looks down and sees the plastic ties. He sees the wood. His head lolls back and he stares at the ceiling.

GERALD (CONT'D)
Oh, God! Oh, God! Whatever you
want, man. You can... you can have
it. Wallet's got cards, I'll give
you the pin. Whatever you want.

He struggles again, to no avail, and grows increasingly
angry.

GERALD (CONT'D)
Motherfucker! Shit, Goddamn,
plastic ties, tied my shit up,
can't -- ow!

Exhausted, he slumps into the chair. His wrists are bleeding
now. He sounds like he might be starting to cry.

GERALD (CONT'D)
C'mon, man. I don't got nothing you
want. No drugs, no cash, no car. I
don't know you. Don't know where I
am, nothing about you. Just...
give me a knife to cut out and I'm
gone. C'mon, man.

He picks his head up, thinking he heard something.

GERALD (CONT'D)
Who's there? That you? Whoever you
are?

There is indeed the sound of someone moving in the shadows.
It's vague, but it's there.

He stares hard towards it, but can't see anything. He tries
leaning forward, craning as much as he can. Finally, he sits
back, wary.

An empty chair scrapes across the floor, away from him. It
turns so the back is to him and stops where the legs can
still be seen in the moonlight.

SHERRY straddles the chair. She rests her forearms on the
back of the chair and lets her hands dangle. Those and her
feet and lower legs are seen, but it's obvious she's a woman.

Gerald looks up and starts to smile, thinking he can make the
most of this situation.

GERALD (CONT'D)
Oh, well, now this might be
different. This part of your game,
girl? Shit, I'm tied up.
(MORE)

GERALD (CONT'D)

You gonna get down there and suck
me? Do your worst.

He looks like he might actually be looking forward to what's
coming.

Sherry says nothing. She scratches the back of the chair
lightly.

GERALD (CONT'D)

C'mon, girl. Get on down here and
make daddy happy. Don't be shy now.
Then we can undo me and go see what
you're really about.

He wiggles his crotch at her.

She still says nothing, just keeps scratching the back of the
chair.

He starts to get unnerved. He clears his throat, reassessing.

GERALD (CONT'D)

Look, uh, ok. Maybe we're not here
for that. We waitin' for someone?

She says nothing. He's searching for any reason he's here.

GERALD (CONT'D)

You know Tony? That it? Tony send
you? Look, I already paid that cat
back. We're square now, it's cool.

Still, nothing from her. He starts getting pissed.

GERALD (CONT'D)

C'mon, girl. Shit's not funny now.
You cut me the fuck loose and I
won't do nothin' to you. C'mon,
now! Cut me loose!

Still nothing from her. He searches for anything, any
possible reason.

GERALD (CONT'D)

You that girl from the other night?
Look, my phone died, that's why I
didn't hit you back. That you, baby
girl?

SHERRY

(quietly, calmly)
No, I'm not that girl.

GERALD

Well, then, who are you?

SHERRY

I'm the woman who's gonna fuck you up.

He chuckles, arrogant, but there's a hint of nervousness.

A whooshing sound is heard. A wooden broomstick flies out of the dark and connects with Gerald's face. He cries out in surprise and pain. His head slams to the side and blood flows from his mouth. He drools on the floor, then spits.

GERALD

Oh my God! What the hell?

He looks up, thoroughly confused.

The broomstick flies again, connecting with the other side of his face. His head doesn't go quite so far over/around this time. He cries out again and drools/spits again.

SHERRY

(quietly)

Yes, I know. I remember.

To the audience, they see and hear YOUNG SHERRY. Gerald, doesn't. Young Sherry exists only to Sherry as a memory she actively engages with. Gerald can hear only older Sherry, the one beating him up.

POV shifts to Sherry's looking at Gerald. Every time Sherry talks to Young Sherry, the POV shifts. We see a young girl, no older than 10 years old, that's Sherry's younger self. She looks older beyond her years, with a haunted expression. She's dressed in a nightgown that reaches to her knees. Her voice always sounds like it's far away, ethereal.

YOUNG SHERRY

Is that what it was? A broom?

SHERRY

(to Young Sherry)

That's what we thought it was at first. We didn't figure it out until later.

GERALD

Who you talkin' to?

SHERRY

(to Gerald)

Not you.

YOUNG SHERRY
Does it hurt?

SHERRY
(to Young Sherry)
Yeah, it hurts him.

YOUNG SHERRY
Do it again.

Sherry swings the broomstick at Gerald's knee this time. He howls in pain. He purses his lips and sputters through it.

GERALD
Ow, shit, motherfucker. Why why why? What... Ow, God!

YOUNG SHERRY
He has a naughty mouth. Mama would say that wasn't a pretty mouth. We have a pretty mouth.

SHERRY
(to Young Sherry)
Yeah, we do. We got a pretty mouth.

GERALD
You watch Deliverance much, you crazy bitch? What's this shit you talkin'? Talkin' to shit that's not there. Ow, ah, God! You don't let me go, I swear to --

YOUNG SHERRY
Dirty, dirty mouth.

SHERRY
(to Gerald)
You swear to what? God? You know, I used to think there was no God. He didn't help me, he didn't come to my aid, he didn't save or rescue me. But, I was wrong. He came in his own time. He is there, because he's put me on a mission to end you.

Sherry uses the end of the broomstick to pound on Gerald's toes. He howls and blubbers as she does so. He squirms to try and do something, anything, to no avail.

GERALD
Crazy crazy psycho bitch!

He starts sucking in breaths, trying to calm himself, mitigate his response.

GERALD (CONT'D)

Ok, Ok, Ok. Woo. Breathe. Look.

YOUNG SHERRY

Look, see. It's not so bad. You'll like it. It'll be your own piece of candy that no one else gets.

SHERRY

(to Young Sherry)

He did say that, didn't he?

Gerald tries to convince himself that he's not dealing with pure crazy. He's in obvious pain.

GERALD

Ear bud. Bluetooth. That's all. That's all it is. What... What'd I say?

SHERRY

(to Gerald)

Look, see. It's not so bad. You'll like it. It'll be your own piece of candy that no one else gets.

Gerald looks up slowly. He's confused, but there's a dawning of recognition somewhere back deep in his brain.

GERALD

What?

YOUNG SHERRY

You know, when you start off with regular gum, it's all hard. Then you chew it, and it goes all soft. It's like backwards gum.

SHERRY

(to Gerald)

You know, when you start off with regular gum, it's all hard. Then you chew it, and it goes all soft. It's like backwards gum.

GERALD

The hell you sayin'? Gum? Hard? What the hell's wrong with you?!

YOUNG SHERRY

Here. Hold this right here. That's the way. You can hold it just like a broom.

The broomstick swings again, connecting with Gerald's wrist, breaking it. He screams and urinates himself. The broomstick comes again and breaks his other wrist.

GERALD

Ah, oh God! My hands! I work with... oh God, oh God, oh God. Done pissed myself!

SHERRY

(to Young Sherry)

That's not all there was, was it?

YOUNG SHERRY

Just one finger. See? Feel how it moves, plucking the guitar.

SHERRY

(to Gerald)

You play guitar?

Wracked with pain, Gerald looks drunk.

GERALD

What?

SHERRY

Do you play guitar?

GERALD

Fuck you.

YOUNG SHERRY

Dirty, dirty mouth.

SHERRY

That doesn't answer my question. Do you play guitar.

GERALD

Fuck you, you fuckin' bitch.

SHERRY

If you don't play guitar, how do you know what plucking a guitar is like?

Sherry swings the broomstick again, twice more, breaking Gerald's fingers on both hands.

He screams and splutters and strains. He screams as loud as he can, as long as he can, desperate for someone to hear him.

YOUNG SHERRY

He's not using his inside voice.
We're not allowed to scream in the house. Especially at night. Don't want to wake everyone up.

SHERRY

(to Young Sherry)

No, we're not, are we? No screaming in the house. Especially at night. We don't want to wake everyone up.

GERALD

Oh, my God. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Please... just let me go. Please. I swear. I won't tell nobody. Nobody. Just let me go.

YOUNG SHERRY

Just let me go, just let me go, just let me go. Please. I swear. I won't tell nobody.

Sherry almost chuckles at that. She imitates it back mockingly to Gerald.

SHERRY

Oh, my God. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Please... just let me go. Please. I swear. I won't tell nobody. Nobody. Just let me go.
(back to normal voice)
How many times did you hear that?

GERALD

(sobbing)

Please, lady. Please...

YOUNG SHERRY

We have a secret, don't we? And only friends share secrets. I like sharing with you. Look how grown-up.

SHERRY

(to Gerald)

So, does that make us friends?

GERALD

Yeah. Sure. Friends. We're friends,
lady.

SHERRY

You said you wouldn't tell nobody.
Isn't that a secret then? Isn't
that what friends do? Grown-ups?
Keep secrets?

The broomstick swooshes through the air, connecting with
Gerald's collarbone. The shriek is high-pitched, then ragged.
He's openly crying.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

(to Young Sherry)

No more secrets, right, baby girl?

YOUNG SHERRY

Tell them all. If we're friends, we
can tell each other our secrets.
That's what friends do. Ain't no
closer friends than family.

SHERRY

(to Young Sherry)

Yeah, family share secrets. But we
never shared this one, did we?

YOUNG SHERRY

No. No one else was our family. But
sometimes family leaves.

SHERRY

(to Young Sherry)

Yeah. Sometimes they do. What do we
do then?

YOUNG SHERRY

We cry and wonder why we were sent
away. Why they didn't love us
enough to keep us.

SHERRY

(to Young Sherry)

This ain't about love, pumpkin.

YOUNG SHERRY

It's not about love.

SHERRY

(to Gerald, slightly
mocking)

Don't you remember?

(MORE)

SHERRY (CONT'D)

It's about love, showing love. It's what two people who care for each other do. And I care for you. So, so much. I can love you like no other can. You'll always remember me.

Gerald looks at Sherry with horrifying, sickening awareness. Now he gets it. Now he's clued in.

GERALD

Oh, God.

SHERRY

There it is. There. You said I'd remember you. And I did. I always have. You remember the nights, don't you?

Gerald nods slowly.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

The nights is when you would come.

YOUNG SHERRY

Every night. And he had peppermint syrup.

SHERRY

Every night, you'd visit me in my room. Used to share your peppermint schnapps with me.

Gerald starts to shake his head, then nods slowly.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

You said I'd grow up nice. Well, whatchu think? Did I grow up nice, Daddy?

The lighting shifts a bit as the moon moves. Sherry becomes more illuminated and we can see her face for the first time.

Gerald's eyes widen. He doesn't dare look her up and down, but he does look rapidly between her face and the broomstick. He starts crying again.

YOUNG SHERRY

There, there. Don't cry. It's OK. Don't cry. It's just because you're not used to it. It'll get better. Don't cry, and please don't tell, OK? You don't want anyone mad at you.

GERALD

Sherry? Oh, God. What... whatchu been... why are you...?

SHERRY

Why am I doing this? I'm doing to you exactly what you did to me. Remember how you said how good it made you feel, what you did? How good, so good, you said. Felt soooooo goooooood. This feels good to me. This. And This. And this. This feels good. So good. This feels soooooo goooooood.

Each time she says "this", she swings the broomstick again, connecting with his elbows, knees, and ears (6 this-es, 6 swings, 6 body parts).

Gerald screams and moans uncontrollably. He's really a blubbering mess by this point. Not really able to talk, wracked with pain.

YOUNG SHERRY

I'm tired. I just want to go to sleep. Can I go take a nap?

Sherry chuckles and nods, agreeing.

SHERRY

(to Young Sherry)

Yeah. A nap sounds good, doesn't it?

YOUNG SHERRY

I wonder if he has any gum.

Sherry appraises Gerald. She stands, holding the broomstick vertically. She moves the chair out of the way and takes the step or two needed to put her nearly over him. She takes the broomstick and slams it into his crotch with all her might.

The sound Gerald makes is unearthly. He vomits all over himself.

She smiles, slowly.

YOUNG SHERRY (CONT'D)

Oh, he's sick. He puked. I've thrown up like that. It's not fun.

SHERRY

(to Young Sherry)

No, it's not fun. Especially when you have to clean it up.

YOUNG SHERRY

Yep. You know when you're sick, naps help. We should take a nap.

SHERRY

(to Young Sherry)

OK, baby. Nap time.

Sherry looks back to Gerald. His breathing is off, his pallor has changed as his body goes into full shock.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

(to Gerald)

Nap time, motherfucker.

She picks up a knife from the kitchen table (still in the shadows). She lifts his head up, showing no sympathy for his condition. She shoves the knife into his throat. Blood gushes. He gurgles for a moment, twitches, then goes limp. A cloud settles in his eyes. Blood pools on the floor.

She pulls the knife out. It drips and she doesn't wipe it off. She lets his head fall. She looks back to Young Sherry, her eyes filled with tears. The girl's not there anymore. She looks genuinely happy about her absence.

She takes a step back from Gerald and sits in the chair, her back to him, still holding the knife. She looks out of the window, hopeful. She wipes her eyes and chuckles quietly.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

Oh, baby girl. It's finally quiet.
We have earned our nap today.

She looks at her forearms, then the knife. Slowly, she raises the knife and makes long, deep cuts up her arms. The blood rises quickly and streams onto the floor. She's still smiling as she slumps to the floor.

YOUNG SHERRY

(singing, super innocent,
super creepy)

Hush little baby, don't say a word.
Papa's gonna buy you a mockingbird.
And if that mockingbird won't sing,
Papa's gonna buy you a diamond
ring.

FADE OUT