

(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

The Widow

written by

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(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

A Victorian character home sits set back from a quaint suburban street.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

A young woman, ELIZABETH, around 24 years old, is carrying a cardboard box labelled 'Rhys' stuff' in from the hallway. She has a slight build, flaming auburn hair and a fair complexion; she is wearing a pale pink, flowing dress with a big jacket over the top.

The room is minimalist, a king sized bed sits on one wall and a wooden sideboard lines the opposite one. Next to the sideboard is a pile of boxes. With her arms full, she dumps her phone and a stack of papers onto the side and takes the box over to the middle of the room. On the top of the pile of papers sits a memorial card, it reads 'IN LOVING MEMORY OF RHYS BLACKWELL'.

She quickly takes off the uncomfortable jacket and throws it on the bed, she pulls on a knitted cardigan that was lying on the sideboard and seems to relax a little.

Elizabeth sits down crossed legged on the white carpeted floor by the box. She rips the tape off; it is worn and dented, clearly not handled with care, and opening it reveals an assortment of possessions crammed in, as if in a rush.

ELIZABETH
(to the camera)
I haven't been through it all yet, I
just kind of piled it all up... I try
not to come in here since...

She trails off and looks around the room that was once the bedroom she shared with her husband; there's a sadness in her eyes.

Photos of the couple still hang on the walls aside his framed, signed football shirt, his watch is still sat neatly on the sideboard, the bed is perfectly made with his pyjamas folded on it, everything seems almost preserved.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
I've been sleeping in the other room.

She appears to snap out of her thoughts and starts busying herself unpacking things from the box.

She pulls out a large scrapbook that's at the top, a couple of personalised pint glasses wrapped in tissue paper, a jumper, a pair of knitting needles, various photos in frames of RHYS and a group of his friends that were hanging on the walls downstairs.

Something in the box makes her stop. Slowly she reaches in and pulls out a small old photograph; it shows her and Rhys when they were younger; maybe 17 years old. They are mid laughter holding onto each other. Rhys has piercing blue eyes and floppy curly brown hair. Elizabeth is clearly deep in thought but smiles fondly.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

We'd only just met when this photo was taken.

(to the camera)

We were the same year at school. I had only just lost my dad.

She gets up and goes over to her phone and pulls a tiny photograph out of her phone case to show the camera proudly; it's a photo of her and her father from when she was a little girl; he's lifting her up and she has the biggest grin across her face. She carefully places it back into her phone case.

She turns the photo of her and Rhys over in her hands now lost in thought.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

Sounds daft but I was completely smitten the first time I saw him. It all sounds so cliché but I was just a kid, of course I fell for him. He was the only thing I knew.

Her smile fades as she realises he's no longer here. She rummages around in the box for a second and pulls out another photo of her and Rhys, older now, it shows the two of them stood outside their house's front door, holding the keys proudly.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

He was so happy this day. We'd just bought our house.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY - FLASHBACK

It's a gorgeous sunny day; Elizabeth and Rhys are gathered in their new house's back garden hosting drinks for Rhys' parents and a few other people.

Elizabeth is stood with Rhys' mother who is admiring the beautiful plants that line the flowerbeds of this impressive garden.

Elizabeth is wearing a long sleeved top and a nice pair of jeans. She takes Rhys' mother's empty glass and walks over to Rhys who is stood by a table of drinks in a crowd of friends.

Elizabeth struggles to open the bottle of prosecco at the end of the table; Rhys notices and comes over; he takes the bottle and does it for her with a smile. He tops up the glass, leans in to kiss Elizabeth's forehead and takes it over to his mother.

END FLASHBACK

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

With a pained smile, she places the photo down and pulls a pack of photographs with an elastic band round them from the box that these two appear to have fallen out of; she sifts through them; we see the couple grow up together. She stops on one that she took of Rhys; he's grinning ear to ear at the camera. She looks up at the room and sighs seeing it filled with his belongings.

Elizabeth picks up the scrapbook that she had put aside earlier. It's a beautiful handmade one with a massive, carefully drawn 'happy birthday' in the center of the cover. With a deep breath, she slowly opens it to the first page; on the brown paper is a handwritten note that reads 'all my love, R xx'.

She flicks through slowly; there's photos of them as a couple, photos at Christmas, photos with pets, train tickets; she smiles.

Opening it to a double page spread she sees the writing at the top that reads 'our first holiday' and appears full of conflicting emotions; there's a photo of the two of them sat on a beach. They're looking into each others' eyes deeply.

ELIZABETH
(forlornly)
We were so in love.

She moves her fingers over the photos.

Elizabeth pulls her cardigan round her tighter and crosses her arms, as if suddenly cold.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
(looking down)
We had to leave that holiday early...
I hurt myself. Fell down the stairs.

She tries to laugh it off but it's awkward.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
It was my own fault really... He
always said what a klutz I was.

Something catches Elizabeth's eye on the bedside table, it's a photo of the two of them on their wedding day, they're both smiling ear to ear. A slight smile washes over Elizabeth's face.

Her eyes glaze over but she quickly sniffs and straightens up shaking her head.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
(to the camera)
Marriage is a choice you see. There's
no such thing as soulmates; you're
choosing that this is your person and
that they'll be your person forever
and nothing can change that. That's
what I thought at least...

EXT. GARDEN - DAY - FLASHBACK

People are still mingling; Elizabeth is stood with a group of people. She says something that makes everyone laugh. Rhys notices and comes over. He hugs her from behind and whispers in her ear.

RHYS
(patronising)
Someone's feeling confident today.

Elizabeth's smile fades from her face and she excuses herself. One of the girls in the group seems concerned about Elizabeth; Rhys notices and rolls his eyes. Elizabeth is walking away from them.

RHYS (O.S.)
Oh she's fine, she probably just
needs a minute... My wife can be a
bit dramatic sometimes.

The group all laugh understandingly.

END FLASHBACK

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

She rolls her eyes and gathers the photos up.

Turning a couple pages of the scrapbook, she suddenly breaks into a smile; it's a page of photos of the two of them and three other girls; her best friends; two brunettes and a blond, all grinning. Rhys is pushed off to the side of the girls in the photo.

ELIZABETH

God I haven't seen these girls in so long. We used to be inseparable, I'm not sure what happened...

Elizabeth's smile disappears quickly.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

Rhys didn't like them much.

She pulls her phone out and scrolls through her contacts until she gets to the name 'Mill <3'; her finger hovers over the call button, conflicted. After a minute, she shakes her head slightly and turns her phone off, throwing it on her bed defeated.

She quickly shuts the scrapbook, as if not wanting to think about it any longer.

She then goes over to the stack of boxes already piled high in the corner of the room and picks up an empty one.

She goes over to the sideboard, picks up his watch and places it in the box. She sets the box down and begins filling it with the items around the room that belonged to Rhys; a wallet, books, laptop, a jumper. She then reaches up and takes the football shirt off the wall.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

(to the camera)

I always hated this shirt.

She walks it over and leans it carelessly against the wall by the door.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

(to the camera)

He got it signed at one of the matches he went to with his mates.

Elizabeth's eyes have misted over, she's rubbing her arm subconsciously.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
They all came back here after to
celebrate. I didn't really like him
when he was drunk.

EXT. GARDEN - EVENING - FLASHBACK

Their guests have left; Elizabeth is clearing up the drinks
in the garden alone, placing all the empty bottles into a
bin bag.

Rhys comes stumbling out. Elizabeth seems nervous and tries
to avoid eye contact with him. She holds out the bin bag for
him to put his empty beer bottle in.

He looks at her with disgust and slams the bottle onto the
table with an aggressive thud instead of putting it in the
bag. Elizabeth flinches at the sudden noise and tries to
breathe deeply which only seems to anger him more. She stays
very still and looks down at her feet.

RHYS (O.S.)
I told you not to embarrass me
tonight.

He turns and stumbled back inside; she lets out a sigh of
relief and runs her hand through her hair.

Her hand is on one of the bottles sitting on the table, her
grip tightens.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Elizabeth runs her hand through her hair. Opening one of the
sideboard doors reveals a collection of bottles, gin,
whiskey etc. She takes them one by one and places them into
the box.

ELIZABETH
I learned quite quickly to just leave
when he was in those kinds of moods.

She pulls a series of knitted creations out of one of the
boxes, little plants in pots, tiny animals etc.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
(getting more
confident now)
When I started knitting he told me it
was a waste of time; that I always do
this; start things I won't finish...
(MORE)

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
(to the camera)
I didn't think it was a waste of
time.

She starts moving his things out the way so that she can display the things she made on the side proudly. She stands back to admire them, thinks for a second, then decisively walks over to where she's been sitting and retrieves the photo of her and her best friends from the scrapbook as well as one of the photo frames with a photo of Rhys in.

She takes his photo out of the frame. Grabbing the scissors from the box, she cuts Rhys off the edge of the photo of her and her best friends and puts it in the frame, tossing the photo of him into one of the boxes. She then straightens up and places it on the side next to her knitted creations. She steps back smiling at the part of her room that now feels like her own.

Elizabeth goes back to sorting through the box of his things. She pulls out a bundle of tissue paper and slowly unwraps it to reveal the broken pieces of a small china plate. She lays them out on the floor in front of her and pieces it together; the plate has two colourful handprints in the middle, one big with a smaller one over the top of it.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
Me and my father made this on my
tenth birthday. It used to sit over
there.

Her head nods in the direction of the bedside table that only has Rhys' things on it.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
(to the camera)
Rhys came back one night. Drunk of
course. I was in bed and he stumbled
in, falling into the walls.
(angrier thinking
about it)
He was a mess... I just told him to
be careful, that he was going to
knock something over. He didn't like
that. Started knocking things off the
side. Then he spotted my dad's plate.

Elizabeth takes some superglue out of the box and begins sticking it back together.

There was a moment when I thought it
was going to come flying at my head.
(MORE)

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
He chose the wall next to my head
instead...It's really hard, watching
the person you fell in love with,
turn into someone else. Someone who
you don't know.

Once the plate is all glued, Elizabeth places it back in its
rightful place on the bedside table.

She goes and sits back down.

Elizabeth is sitting running the knitting needles through
her hands; it's hard to gauge what emotion she is feeling.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
(looking down)
To tell you the truth, I don't think
he was very kind to me...
(looks up into the
camera)
Not at all.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

SLOW MOTION: A blood covered knitting needle falls from
Elizabeth's hand and hits the floor.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. GARDEN - NIGHT

Elizabeth looks over her garden and smiles to herself.

THE END.