

John Must Go
By Michael Cornetto

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INT. BATHROOM - DAY

JOHN(39,male), wearing a frown, rummages inside the medicine cabinet. He pulls out a white plastic pill jar. He squints at jar. He shakes it. It rattles. He nods.

Closing the medicine cabinet, he looks at himself in the mirror. Serious. Then he turns the cap on the jar but it doesn't open.

Curious. He looks at the cap.

JOHN
Push down and turn.

He pushes down and turns the cap but the jar doesn't open. He pushes harder, strain on his face.

JOHN
Push down...

Then slowly and with pressure he turns the cap.

JOHN
...and turn.

It doesn't open. Frustration.

JOHN
Dammit!

He slams the bottle down on the counter.

John leans forward against the counter. Sadness. Depression. He lowers his head then

An idea!

With renewed purpose he opens one of the drawers. Searching. He pulls out a very small box labelled RAZOR BLADES.

But the box is empty. Angrily he throws the box in the trash bin near the toilet.

His triple head electric shaver catches his attention. He grabs it off the counter and turns it on. It buzzes.

He puts the spinning heads of the electric shaver to his inner wrist. Then he raises an eyebrow.

He lifts the shaver and examines his wrist. Not a mark on it.

He returns the shaver to the counter then he turns toward the bathtub. One side of his frown smiles.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Steam issues from the half filled bathtub.

John turns off the tap.

He stands at the tub. Naked. Serious. He lifts his leg and steps into the tub. He winces.

JOHN

Ahhhhh! Ahhhhh! Too hot!

Quickly removing his foot from the tub, he hops around for a moment.

JOHN

Ahhhhh!

He hobbles back over to the tub and turns on the cold water full force.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

John swishes his hand around in the water. He nods. Then he turns off the tap.

He stands at the tub. Naked, Serious. He lifts his leg and carefully steps into the tub, testing the water with his toe first.

John leans back into the water, closing his eyes.

Sitting on the side of the tub, next to him, is a pink ladies disposable razor.

He grabs the razor then slowly, seriously, brings its small blade head to the inner side of this wrist.

A thin trickle of blood drips down his arm from under the blade head as he applies pressure to the razor. Then the blade head snaps off, falling into the water. A useless handle remains in his hand.

He sits up, angrily.

JOHN

Son of a bitch!

He punches the water and it splashes into his face causing his eyes to shut tightly. He grabs a nearby towel and wipes his eyes.

When he opens his eyes he sees it. The blow dryer on the counter. The bright red tag warning users to keep this dryer away from water.

John steps from the tub. He wraps the towel around the back of his neck and over his shoulders.

He plugs the dryer into a socket above the counter and turns it on. It whirs.

He turns toward the tub and the whirring stops. The dryer's plug has come out of the socket.

John plugs in the dryer. It whirs.

He pulls the dryer toward the tub, measuring by eye how far the dryer will reach. It extends over the edge of the tub but as he lowers the dryer toward the water, the length of its cord causes the dryer to move away from the tub in an arc. Instead of reaching the water the dryer nicks the edge of the tub.

He thinks for a moment. Then the whirring stops.

John glances at the plug. Still in. Then he looks at the dryer. He flips the on off switch. Nothing. On off. On off.

With an expression between a cry and a laugh, John lets the dryer fall from his hand.

The dryer arcs down. It bangs against the cabinet under the sink, catching John's attention. Again it bangs against the cabinet under the sink. Bang. Bang.

John grabs the dryer, stopping its movement. Then he opens the cabinet.

He rummages around inside and pulls out a bottle of shampoo.

No. He puts the bottle back.

He pulls out a bottle of hair-spray. Maybe?

No. He puts the bottle back.

He pulls out a bottle of drain cleaner. He nods.

He turns the cap on the drain cleaner and it doesn't open. He squints at the cap. Disgusted.

JOHN

Push down and turn!

Angrily, he throws the bottle at the bathroom door. It crashes against the door with a loud bang.

MARY(39,woman), is off-screen.

MARY (O.S.)

You ok in there?

Surprise. John looks toward the door.

MARY (O.S.)

John?

Guilt. Shaky with emotion he clears his throat. He summons the most pleasant voice he can, but it wavers as he shakes.

JOHN

Yes, dear.

MARY (O.S.)

I thought I heard a crash.

JOHN

Just, uh, the toilet seat dropping, dear.

MARY (O.S.)

Ok. Well if you're going to pee, don't forget to lift it again.

JOHN

I won't, dear.

MARY (O.S.)

Nothing worse than pee on the seat.

JOHN

Yes, dear.

MARY (O.S.)

Or having your favourite TV show interrupted by noises in the bathroom.

JOHN

I'll be quiet, dear.

MARY (O.S.)

And while you're in there can you take a look at that broken towel rack.

JOHN

I will, dear.

MARY (O.S.)

And hurry it up. I think I have to go.

John wipes his face with his hand. He looks around the room, confused, like he's waking up from a bad dream. He sighs.

He crawls over to the bottle of drain cleaner. He lifts the bottle and stares at it. Serious. Then quietly to himself.

JOHN

What was I thinking?!

He stands then he puts the bottle of drain cleaner away, under the sink.

He gathers up the hair dryer, putting it back in it's proper place, leaving it plugged in.

He pulls the stopper from the drain in the tub. The water makes a loud sucking noise as it begins its spiral down the drain.

He grabs his boxers off the floor and pulls them on. Then he grabs his shirt.

He pulls his shirt on but leaves the towel beneath it. Amused by his mistake, he pulls the towel from around his shoulders out of the neck of his shirt.

He folds the towel and places it on the towel rack.

The towel rack falls.

JOHN

Shit!

He reflexively catches the rack before it hits the floor. He balances the rack with one hand, as he lifts it up the wall toward the holder.

Not losing a towel, he sticks the rack back on the holder, begging it to stay, and it does. He smiles proudly.

Then he turns toward the counter. The white pill jar sits quietly. It stares at him. Slowly, trembling, he reaches for the jar.

A whirring startles him, the hair dryer. He hits the pill jar with his hand in his race toward the dryer.

The pill jar rocks forward then back then forward again, tipping, falling to its side on the counter. The cap flies off. A few yellow pills spill out.

John turns off the dryer. The whirring stops.

As he moves away he notices the open jar of pills on the counter. His mouth drops open in amazement. He lifts the cap and examines it with awe. Then he places the cap back on the counter and picks up one of the fallen yellow pills.

He looks at himself in the mirror. Serious.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

John swallows the last drop of a glass of water. Then with a serene smile, he grabs the white pills bottle off of the counter and throws it into the trash bin next to the toilet.

His head held high, he walks out of the bathroom. As he closes the bathroom door the towel rack falls to the floor.

INT. BEDROOM

John sits on the bed.

He opens his bed stand drawer and pulls out a sheet of paper. He squints at it.

He pulls a pair of glasses from the drawer and puts them on. He looks again at the piece of paper.

JOHN (V.O.)

Dearest Mary, I wasn't able to bring myself to tell you this but I have lost my job. You needn't worry about money as I have decided to end my life so that you may collect a sizeable benefit from my insurance policy. I am sorry I had to go so soon. I will love you always, John.

He sighs. Then he places the note on his bed stand. He takes off his glasses, folds them up and neatly places them in the bed stand drawer. He closes the drawer.

He lies back on the bed, above the covers. He crosses his arms over his chest then, with a smile on his face, he closes his eyes.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

John lies serenely on the bed, his arms are crossed over his chest. His eyes are closed.

MARY (O.S.)

Awww shit John! I told you to fix the rack, not break it. Can't you do anything right?

John doesn't move. He doesn't answer. He isn't startled by the sound of the medicine cabinet opening or the sound of pill bottles being shifted around.

MARY (O.S.)

Christ, where is it?! I could of sworn I put it in here this morning. John? Did you see the laxative the doctor prescribed for my constipation?

John's stomach gurgles. His eyes open wide.