

SCARECROW

Written by
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FADE IN:

INT. WELL - DAY

Darkness.

Water splashes.

A CHILD whimpers.

EXT. CORN FIELD - DAY

Neglected corn stalks blow in the breeze. Storm clouds build.

CARLY (11), in a worn sundress, sits at the base of a SCARECROW. The scarecrow sits in the center of the field.

CARLY
You're my best friend.

The scarecrow's tattered clothes rustle in the wind as its only response.

Carly peeks over the corn and watches her father, JIM (35).

Jim, in his Sunday best and hair slicked back, talks to a WOMAN (30) in a shiny '48 Chevy.

CARLY
Do you know who she is?

Carly laughs.

CARLY
Of course you don't, you're just a silly scarecrow.

Jim stands up, all smiles, and waves to the woman as she drives off.

He bends down and puts upright a "SOLD" sign.

Carly looks up at the scarecrow.

CARLY
What does so-old mean?

Jim takes off his coat, adjusts his suspenders and heads for the small homestead.

He stops and glances at the clouds.

JIM
You can come out, Carly. And you
best be gettin' dinner on.

Carly bolts for the homestead.

INT. HOMESTEAD - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A lone light bulb illuminates a rundown twenties era kitchen.
Jim and Carly eat stew at a small table.

CARLY
Pa, who was that pretty lady?

JIM
Never you mind.

Carly eats in silence for a moment.

CARLY
Miss McGregor says there's gonna be
a solar e-clipse tomarra.

JIM
I don't know nuttin' about that.

He gives her a stern look jabbing his spoon in her direction.

JIM
And you best be stayin' away from
that busy-body.

Carly keeps her nose down.

CARLY
Yes, Pa.

INT. CARLY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Carly climbs out of her sunken mattress. She creeps across
the bare wooden floor.

The floor creaks and she stops.

Through her window a flash of lightning illuminates the
scarecrow standing in the middle of the cornfield.

Carly cracks her door open.

Jim's laughter echoes down the hall.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Carly peeks down the hall and watches Jim talking on a phone.

JIM
...Yes, baby. I can't wait either.
(beat)
No, nothin' tying me here. San
Francisco is awaiten'.

Jim glances over his shoulder.

Carly ducks back into her room.

LATER

The storm outside Carly's window has passed. She's asleep soundly.

Jim's feet causes the floor to creak.

He stands framed in the doorway.

Carly bolts up.

JIM
You know it's wrong to be
eavesdroppin'.

Carly shakes her head.

JIM
It's also a sin to lie.

Carly pulls her blanket up to her chin.

Jim undoes his belt.

Terror crosses Carly's eyes.

CARLY
No, Pa. I won't do it again, ever.
I promise.

Jim closes the door locking them in together.

EXT. CORN FIELD - DAY

A partial solar eclipse darkens the field.

Carly sits at the base of the scarecrow. Light bruises color her cheek and arms. Tears shine in her eyes.

She lays her head against the scarecrow's post.

CARLY

Miss McGreggor says this suppose'
to be a magic time.

She cries.

EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY

Jim walks out of the homestead with a hammer in one hand and suitcase in the other.

He sets the suitcase next to the door and glances at the impending eclipse.

JIM

Huh. Well, I'll be.

Jim carries the hammer toward a pile of debris.

He pulls weeds and junk away from the pile until he uncovers a derelict well.

A plate of steel covers the opening. A rusty lock seals it shut.

He gives the lock three blows of the hammer and it gives.

Jim swings the lid open.

JIM

Girl! Git here now!

MOMENTS LATER

Carly stumbles out of the cornfield, eyes red.

Jim hides the hammer behind his back.

CARLY

Yes, Pa?

Jim beckons her with his free hand and gives her a smile.

Carly creeps forward.

Jim tightens his grip on the hammer.

As step away from Jim, Carly sees the hammer.

She turns to run, but he grabs her by the hair.

CARLY

No!

Jim throws her over the well's lip.

He swings the hammer, but he loses his grip on her, and the hammer just grazes her head.

She falls.

Carly screams for a brief moment, but a sickening crack silences her.

Satisfied, Jim throws the lid shut.

INT. WELL - DAY

Darkness.

Water splashes.

Carly whimpers.

CARLY

(yells)

Help! Help!

(beat)

I'll be good, Pa. Please, let me out.

EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY

MISS. MCGREGOR (50s), a jolly woman dressed in a flower patterned dress, walks behind the homestead with a pitcher of lemonade and a plate of cookies.

The solar eclipse reaches totality.

MISS MCGREGOR

Mister Smith? Carly?

(beat)

I've brought cookies. Lemonade.

Miss McGregor looks confused.

The wind picks up and blows her hair into her face.

She moves the hair out of her eyes and spots the scarecrow that now lies over the well.

MISS MCGREGOR

Carly?

The scarecrow rocks incessantly in the breeze.

MISS MCGREGOR

Hmm?

She sets the lemonade and cookies on the doorstep and walks over to the scarecrow.

Carly's screams are faint whispers.

MISS MCGREGOR

Carly?

She listens closer.

MISS MCGREGOR

Carly!

INT. WELL - DAY

Carly shivers in the water.

The well lid flies open. The ring of the full solar eclipse beams over Miss Mcgregor's head like a halo.

MISS MCGREGOR

Hold on, Carly. I'm getting help.

EXT. MISS MCGREGOR'S HOMESTEAD - DAY

Jim, black eye and fat lip, sits handcuffed in the back of a '45 black and white police car.

EXT. MISS MCGREGOR'S HOMESTEAD - BACK PORCH - DAY

Through the back, a POLICE OFFICER can be seen speaking to Miss Mcgregor.

The officer curls the edge of his hat in his hands as he talks.

Miss Mcgregor doesn't really listen. She watches Carly through the back door.

Carly sits on the back porch with something lying on her lap.

POLICE OFFICER (O.S.)

Found 'em out on route forty. Looks like he was running off with a new wife.

Carly pats the scarecrow's head in her lap.

She picks at the scarecrow's loose straw.

POLICE OFFICER (O.S.)
She didn't even know he had a kid.

MISS MCGREGOR (O.S.)
I just can't believe he did that.
(beat)
If it wasn't for that scarecrow,
I'm afraid I may have never heard
her.

Carly smiles.

FADE TO BLACK.