
THE WALL IN THE GARDEN

written by Thorsten Loos

loos.thorsten@web.de

FADE IN:

INT. COZY FAMILY HOUSE, FOYER - DAY

Sunlight shines through large, inviting windows. It's reflected by the premium hardwood floor and wraps the large, open entrance hall in a pleasant play of colors.

We float over old wooden stairs which lead to an upper level and right into a --

BEDROOM

-- where we find HELEN, early thirties, nice build, perfectly made up, sleeping in a bed.

She lies there, a bewitching smile on her face. The beauty and happiness she radiates seems to compete with the perfect summer weather outside.

She blurts out a CONTENTED MOAN as she stretches herself on the bed and slowly opens her eyes. She turns to the window. Squinches her eyes as the sun hits her face.

HELEN

(sleepy)

Oh, what a wonderful day!

FOYER - MINUTES LATER

Helen stops half way downstairs and enjoys a set of old oil paintings, carefully aligned at the wall along the stairs. She smiles as she looks at them, one after another.

One painting shows a flower vase with roses. Helen touches the flowers. Leans forward to sniff them and giggles.

She spins a happy pirouette before she continues downstairs and glides through a door to the --

KITCHEN

-- where HAROLD, about forty, strong build, well-groomed appearance, sits at the kitchen table and sips his coffee.

He gets up from his chair. Happily smiles at Helen and catches her in his arms.

HAROLD

Good morning, darling. Did you sleep well?

Helen smiles like a Cheshire cat.

HELEN

You know, I always sleep well!

Harold gives her a kiss before they stand arm in arm and exchange a long caring look at each other.

HAROLD

Coffee?

HELEN

Yes, please.

He lifts his grip and prepares a cup while Helen sits down on the table and dreamily looks outside.

HELEN

This is such a wonderful place.
Almost like paradise.

HAROLD

It's perfect... You are perfect...
Our lives are perfect.

Helen nods.

HELEN

I want it to always stay like that.

She turns her head to Harold who hands her the coffee.

HELEN

Can you promise me that?

Harold strokes her hair.

HAROLD

I promise.

She reaches out for his hand which rests softly on her cheek and kisses it.

LIVING ROOM - LATER

Helen sits on an armchair and browses through a book about modern arts when the DOORBELL rings.

She lays down the book and steps into the --

FOYER - SAME

-- where she opens the door. An old man with a fisherman's cap and an old woman, both in their sixties stand at the door. They both laugh and hug her one after another. These are ROY and MARY, Helen's parents.

ROY

Hello my little sweetie, I'm so
glad to see you.

HELEN

Mom! Dad! What a nice surprise!

MARY

We wanted to visit our angel and
see how you're doing.

ROY

Mom made you an apple pie, the one
you like so much!

He hands her a cake plate.

HELEN

Oh great, I love it. Come in, I'm
sure Harold will be happy to see
you too!

Her parents enter the house, Helen shuts the door behind
them. Stops and takes a deep, jubilant breath.

FOYER - NIGHT

MARY

(happily)

Oh, that's great, you really need
to tell me more about it next time.

Helen laughs.

HELEN

You bet!

Roy opens the front door. Turns around to hug Helen, then
Harold. Mary does the same.

HAROLD

It was so nice to have you here.
You should visit us more often.

HELEN

(to Mary)

Yeah, and you really got to teach
me how you do that apple pie!

MARY

(ironical)

Ohh, you know, honey - a great mage
never shares his tricks.

They all laugh. Roy and Mary exit through the front door.

HAROLD

Have a safe trip home!

ROY

Thanks! And you take good care!

Helen shuts the door behind them. Turns to Harold, they
smile at each other and kiss.

ART STUDIO - DAY

Helen wears an old lumberjack shirt with dabs of paint on
it. She sits on a wooden stool in front of an easel.

She skews her head and examines the piece of art in front of her with a trained eye. The wrinkles on her forehead reveal she's not entirely pleased with it.

Harold enters the room. Steps behind her. She keeps fully focused on the painting as he lays a hand on her shoulder and pecks her on the head.

HAROLD

Hey, I like this one, what is it?

HELEN

(impishly)

If you can't see it's our garden, I guess I know what's wrong with it.

Harold frowns. Gives it a closer look.

HAROLD

Well, now that you say it, I recognize the weeping willow there. And the vine tendrils there at our pavilion.

A forgiving smile flashes over her face as she grabs his hand on her shoulder.

HELEN

You better do!

Harold isn't convinced yet.

HAROLD

But what is that?

We get to see the painting as he points at it. It shows a beautiful garden, the perfect storybook idyll. But instead of a landscape background, the garden ends at a large, at least sixty feet high, bricked wall.

HAROLD

There's no Chinese Wall in our garden, as far as I know.

Helen frowns. Turns around and eyes him in disbelief.

HELEN

What are you talking about?

Harold seems puzzled.

HAROLD

Are you joking or something? Why would there be a giant wall behind our house?

They eye each other with raised eyebrows.

Helen takes his hand and gets up. Leads him out of the room.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

Helen pulls Harold outside to the porch. Points at the horizon with a silly gesture.

HELEN
You wanna tell me, you've never
seen that before?

A giant wall, just like the one on her painting, surrounds the whole house. It's built in a circle around their property.

Harold is completely baffled. Can't believe his eyes.

HAROLD
My god... What's that? Where did
that come from?

Helen smiles.

HELEN
Silly you! It's always been there!

Harold turns to her. Takes her hands.

HAROLD
(shaking voice)
I swear to god it wasn't there a
few hours ago.

Helen's smile fades away.

HAROLD
Remember when your parents left
yesterday? There's been no wall.

Helen turns her head to the wall. Tries to remember --
-- but fails.

HELEN
You sure?

HAROLD
(confident)
Of course I am! I tell you, that
damn thing's new!

Helen eyes him. Catches his confusion and fear.

HAROLD
We need to take a closer look at
this thing. Come...

He grabs her arm and pulls her back inside the house.

EXT. PATHWAY IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE - MINUTES LATER

Harold and Helen step out through the front door. They stare right at the giant wall, just about a hundred yards away, in the middle of the landscape.

HAROLD

My god, this looks so unreal...

Helen is unsettled.

HELEN

Shouldn't we just go back inside
and forget about it?

Harold eyes her reproachfully.

HAROLD

Forget about it?! A giant wall just
emerged around our house, how could
we forget about it?

HELEN

I don't know, I just don't like it.

Harold shakes his head.

HAROLD

No. I need to know what's up with
this thing. Come...

He grabs her arm and pulls her towards the

EXT. WALL - MOMENTS LATER

Harold stops in front of the wall and stares at it with a doubtful expression. Helen stays a few steps behind him.

He puts a hand on it. Looks like he expected it to vanish as soon as he touches it. He looks up to the wall's edge.

HAROLD

Wait here, I've got an idea.

He rushes back to the house, Helen looks after him.

HELEN

(whiny)

Harold! What are you doing?

INT. TOOL SHED - MINUTES LATER

Harold enters the shed and switches the lights on.

He storms towards and old wooden shelf and climbs up a small ladder in order to reach the upper rack bays, where he finds what he was looking for.

With a bit of an effort, he pulls three about eight yards long intermateable ladder parts to the front and pushes them down to the shed's floor.

He climbs down again, connects them with each other and drags the combined ladder outside.

EXT. WALL - MINUTES LATER

Helen is horrified at the sight of Harold with the ladder.

HELEN

Oh no, please don't.

Harold ignores her as he struggles to raise the ladder against the wall. She grabs him from behind in a helpless attempt to stop him.

HELEN

(terrified)

Please... Harold... Don't do this.

He breaks loose from her.

HAROLD

I have to. I need to know what's on the other side.

He climbs up, Helen hides her face behind her hands.

EXT. UPPER END OF THE WALL - MINUTES LATER

Harold advances to the top. Nothing can stop him. His eyes widen as he realizes what is behind the wall.

EXT. WALL - MINUTES LATER

Helen sits on the ground and sobs, her face still covered behind her hands.

Harold slowly climbs down again. He's apathetic, just stands still and stares into the void as he reaches the ground.

HAROLD

You knew it?

HELEN

(whiny, through her hands)

No... Not until you climbed up.

Harold nods without an emotion. Seems to be a cold comfort. Helen drops her hands, carefully turns to Harold and stares at him through her wet eyes.

HELEN

We can still stay here, Harold. We just need to forget about it and continue with our life.

Harold shows no reaction. Helen gets up and grabs his arm. He shies back as she tries to hug him.

HELEN

Please Harold, you said it yourself, this is perfect. We live a perfect life! You promised it would stay like that forever!

HAROLD

(angry)

Yes, but it isn't real!

(beat)

I'm not real! This house isn't real! We aren't real!

She steps closer to him. Turns his head around to her with her hands. Kisses him on his lips while he stares at her in confusion.

HELEN

Tell me this wasn't real! We can live here, and make this our reality. Please don't destroy it!

Harold shoves her away. Tears his hair as he turns back to the wall.

Helen hugs him from behind. Kisses his neck.

HELEN

I love you, Harold... No matter what you saw up there. Just forget about it and come back. Back to me!

With a fierce move, Harold breaks loose from her.

HAROLD

(screams)

No! I can't! I can't forget it and act as if nothing happened! This has to end!

With these words, the ground they stand on begins to shake. Pieces of debris rain down from the wall, a long crack begins to form in it.

Harold and Helen anxiously step back from it as the shaking gains intensity. With a LOUD ROAR, the wall collapses into a giant cloud of smoke which covers the whole area.

EXT. SMOKE - LATER

As the mist is clearing away, Harold gets up from the ground. Knocks off the dust from his clothes. Helen crawls up behind him.

We get to see what's behind the wall: A GIANT BRAIN!

Harold's and Helen's house stands on a small platform, surrounded by brain tissue. Giant SYNAPSES flash up as they send electrical impulses to each other.

Harold turns around to Helen. A tear runs down her cheek.

HELEN

It was perfect. Why couldn't you
leave it at that?

Before Harold can answer, his body disappears. Helen turns back to their house. It disappears as well. Finally, Helen disappears.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Heavy rain patters against the windows. The weather outside is awful. A sign next to a door reads: DEPARTMENT FOR COMA PATIENT THERAPY

PATIENT ROOM - SAME

Behind the door, Helen lies on a hospital bed. She lies flat on her back, eyes shut, motionless. Her face is dotted with acne. Her body is fat and bloated. She's no comparison to the beauty we saw before.

A NURSE checks her infusion bag as Helen suddenly tears her eyes wide open and takes a long gasp for breath.

The nurse is startled as she realizes Helen woke up.

NURSE

Calm down! Try to breath slowly.
I'll call the doctor!

She storms out of the room.

Helen's eyes wander around hectically. She is boggled as the storm outside knocks a branch of a tree against the window.

Her eyes look down at her. She can see her fat body, a foot juts out under her blanket. It is extremely bloated, her toes are almost unrecognizable.

Horror is written in her face. She sounds a SOFT WHIMPER as she tries to sit up - and fails under her weight.

The door opens and DOCTOR HAROLD WALSH rushes in, followed by the nurse. The doctor grabs Helen's arm, feels her pulse. Takes out a small pocket lamp and tests Helen's pupillary light reflex.

HAROLD / DOCTOR WALSH

Helen? Can you hear me? This is
doctor Walsh.

Helen's eyes focus him. Her eyes widen.

HELEN

(weak)

Harold...

HAROLD / DOCTOR WALSH

Relax, don't overexert yourself.
You just woke up from a coma. You
need to take it slowly.

(to the nurse)

Please check if we can get a slot
for a CT today.

The nurse nods and turns around to leave.

HAROLD / DOCTOR WALSH

Oh, and...

He beckons her over.

HAROLD / DOCTOR WALSH

(whispering)

Try to get someone from the
pastoral care. She's a suicide
patient, I guess it's the best if
she's got someone to talk to.

NURSE

Okay. Any relatives we should
contact?

The doctor goes off to the side with her. Whispers even
softer.

HAROLD / DOCTOR WALSH

She's got no relatives. Her parents
are dead and she isn't married.

The nurse pitifully glances at Helen.

NURSE

(whispers)

Poor thing...

The nurse leaves, the doctor turns back to Helen. She tries
to speak, but she is too weak and no sound is to be heard.

The doctor frowns and bends over her, putting his ear right
over her mouth.

HELEN

(very soft)

I'll always love you, Harold...

FADE OUT

THE END