

WORKING FROM HOME

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. FARMHOUSE IN WEST VIRGINIA - EVENING

The sun is setting as COOPER pulls his truck into the driveway. Cooper steps out of the truck, walks to the front porch and takes his boots off.

INT. DINNER TABLE

LUKE sets the table for dinner. Cooper walks in the front door and is greeted by CAROLINE. A small television set plays in the background.

NEWS ANCHOR

Governor Jim Justice announced today that West Virginians would not see any restrictions on movement during the COVID-19 pandemic. West Virginia remains the last state with no confirmed coronavirus cases.

GOVERNOR JIM JUSTICE

Go to the grocery stores. If you want to go to Bob Evans and eat, go to Bob Evans and eat.

Cooper, Caroline, and Luke sit down at the dinner table.

COOPER

Turn that damn thing off, Luke. Come say grace so we can eat.

Luke turns the TV off, comes back to the dinner table, and lowers his head to pray.

LUKE

(praying)

Dear Lord, thank you for your daily blessings - steady work for Dad and Mom, warm food every night, and your grace. Please bless this food and please keep us in good health and protect our family from the Wu-Flu -

CAROLINE

(interrupting)

Luke, don't joke about that.

(MORE)

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

We've had some folks come in recently looking like death. For all we know they have it. We can't know for sure until they give us the tests, but I've got a bad feeling.

COOPER

Y'all, let's just focus on what we've got here. Hopefully the Governor is right, and it won't spread here, but either way we've got to keep going to work.

Silence passes over the table. Luke shifts in his seat.

LUKE

Some of my friends said their parents are working from home now.

COOPER

Those folks don't have real jobs. Not real like your mama's or mine, anyway.

CAROLINE

Oh honey, stop that. They work hard, too.

COOPER

Work hard at what? Staring at a computer screen? We work - no, you work - twice as hard as them and get half the pay, it just ain't right.

There is another moment of silence. Caroline stands up from the table.

CAROLINE

Well, speaking of work, it's about time I got ready for my shift tonight.

Luke and Cooper clean up the dinner table as Caroline leaves the room.

FADE OUT.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM - LATE EVENING

Caroline clocks in. Another nurse on shift, Debbie sees Caroline and walks towards her.

DEBBIE

Bad News, Caroline. The patient we worked with the other day just tested positive for coronavirus. First confirmed case in the whole state. Luckily none of us were exposed that we know of. The nurses on that shift were sent home until we can get them tested.

CAROLINE

Oh, thank God y'all caught it quickly. All this stuff is so scary, what are we going to do if it spreads?

DEBBIE

I don't know, sister. Pray that we're able to catch it before it can get too far. And that people do what they're supposed to do, and stay home.

CAROLINE

Can you believe that people still don't believe this thing is real? Makes me want to bring them here, and show them what it really does.

DEBBIE

You and me both.

Debbie and Caroline head back to work.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

Cooper is on his construction site. As he is working, several of his co-workers come over and start talking.

MARK

Hey Coop, what do you think about this Chinese virus thing? Pretty wild, right? Some people are saying a Harvard professor made it a lab.

TRAVIS

Wouldn't surprise me. Them snobs are always up to something.

COOPER

Give it a break, y'all. This is serious stuff. My wife thinks she saw a case of it at the hospital. She's really scared.

TRAVIS

What? Did someone come in with a runny nose or something? It only kills old people anyway, why is she worried?

Cooper, visibly frustrated, walks away from Mark and Travis and continues working. Mark and Travis return to work as well and turn on a radio. Distant laughter is heard as a radio voice delivers coronavirus updates.

FADE OUT.

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON

Caroline comes home in the early afternoon following her shift. Exhausted, she passes out on the couch.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LATER

Cooper comes home from work to find Caroline asleep on the couch. He gently wakes her.

COOPER

Hey, how are you feeling?

Caroline is visibly confused as she wakes.

CAROLINE

I'm okay, but I have a killer headache. Probably just from work last night. The ER was crazy, you wouldn't believe how many patients we had come in. Everyone thinks they have coronavirus.

COOPER

I can't imagine, I'm glad you're home though. Here, I'll get you some Tylenol. And why don't you let me take your temperature, too? Just in case?

Caroline nods and falls back asleep. Cooper stumbles into the kitchen looking for the Tylenol, A few minutes later, he returns with the Tylenol and thermometer in hand.

COOPER (CONT'D)

Hey Caroline, let's wake up so I can take your temperature.

Caroline wakes up and puts the thermometer in her mouth. Cooper takes it out and reads the dial.

COOPER (CONT'D)

100 degrees. Are you sure you're feeling alright?

Caroline sits up, startled.

CAROLINE

Are you sure? Let me read it!

Caroline reads the thermometer and takes her temperature again.
She gets the same reading.

COOPER

Maybe it's just something you ate?
Y'all didn't confirm any cases at the
hospital yet, did you?

Caroline sits down, her head in her hands.

CAROLINE

Well... we confirmed our first case last
night. I was never near the patient,
but who knows, maybe another nurse
spread it before we caught it. Let's
pray that's not what happened. Either
way, we need to make sure.

Caroline grabs her things and Cooper helps her out to the car.
They drive towards the hospital.

FADE OUT.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM - EVENING

Cooper rushes in with Caroline. The nursing staff, recognizing Caroline, ask what's wrong.

CAROLINE

I don't want to scare y'all, but I came down with a pretty high fever. I think it may be related to the case of corona we saw last night.

ATTENDING NURSE

Let's get you checked in. Mr. Murphy, unfortunately you'll have to leave.

Cooper begins to say goodbye to Caroline.

ATTENDING NURSE (CONT'D)

And one last thing, Mr. Murphy. If you have start feeling any symptoms yourself, come back immediately.

Cooper nods. Before Cooper leaves, Caroline reaches into her purse and pulls out a piece of paper.

CAROLINE

Baby, I'm going to be okay. But here are few verses I want you to read, if you ever get worried. We're stronger than whatever might come our way - don't forget that. I love you.

COOPER

I love you too.

Cooper leaves the hospital and gets back into his truck. He gets home, checks on Luke, then goes to his room. Before getting into bed, he starts praying.

FADE OUT.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COOPER'S BEDROOM - AFTER MIDNIGHT

Cooper wakes in a start. The phone is ringing.

VOICE ON PHONE

Mr. Murphy, this is Debbie with
Huntington Hospital. Your wife is in
critical condition, please co-

Cooper jumps up, leaving the phone hanging off the bed. He wakes
Luke and they both get in the truck.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Cooper and Luke run into the hospital looking for Caroline's
room. A nurse directs them towards the room. They try to open the
door.

ATTENDING NURSE

Mr. Murphy, I'm sorry but we can't let
you in there.

COOPER

My wife is dying, I'm going in there.

ATTENDING NURSE

Mr. Murphy, I'm really sorry but we
can't allow that. Sit with me, let's
talk about it.

Cooper and the Nurse sit down on a nearby bench. Luke continues
standing, at a distance.

ATTENDING NURSE (CONT'D)

Your wife fell into a coma a few
minutes ago. We're doing everything we
can-

Emergency monitors begin beeping inside Caroline's room. A team
of nurses rushes in as the Attending Nurse attempts to guide
Cooper and Luke away, to the waiting room. After a brief struggle
she succeeds.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Cooper and Luke are sitting in the waiting room, visibly exhausted. A Doctor comes in.

DR. VANCE

Mr. Murphy? My name is Dr. Vance.

Dr. Vance joins Cooper and Luke. Cooper and Luke are now visibly hazed as Dr. Vance begins talking.

LUKE

What's going on? Is my mama okay? Tell us what's going on!

DR. VANCE

I'm sorry.

Dr. Vance takes a moment to gather his composure.

DR. VANCE (CONT'D)

She just passed away. She's gone.

This is unimaginably difficult, I-

Dr. Vance trails off as Luke and Cooper break down on the floor, holding each other and sobbing.

SLOW FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - MORNING

Mourners gather at the local funeral home. Cooper and Luke greet family and friends.

INT. SMALL CHAPEL - MOMENTS LATER

Everyone is shuffled into a small chapel in the funeral home. A CHAPLAIN makes a few brief comments, then Cooper is brought to the front to give a eulogy.

COOPER

Caroline and I always joked that I should pass away first, because that way no one would have to watch me put on a suit and talk about her, all sad-like. I've never been comfortable wearing a suit and Caroline... she, she was always better with words.

Caroline spent most of her life working the night shift at Huntington Hospital. She went to work when I came home from the job site. In the mornings, I'd head out as she came in. Some days we'd only see each other long enough to kiss right before work.

But we had to work. That's just what life is here. Caroline, she was no stranger to work. She worked every day of her life. Caroline, she died doing what she did every day of her life - caring for others. She died a hero.

These past few months have been tough for everyone. The government, they tell us to work from home like we have a choice. Like we want to get sick. But... we're given no choice - stay home, and starve, or keep working and risk getting sick. And my wife, she really was the best of us.

(MORE)

COOPER (CONT'D)

Working late nights, working when she knew she was risking death, working so that the rest of us didn't have too. I - I'm sorry... I knew I couldn't keep it together. I'm just so...

Cooper lowers his head and cries, quietly. The chaplain puts his hand on Cooper's shoulder.

COOPER (CONT'D)

Caroline, she wasn't someone who could work from home. It's not that she had to work - I begged her to stay home, and let me work double shifts - but she didn't want to. She told me working at the hospital was what she had been called to do, and she couldn't abandon that.

I'd like to leave y'all with a verse that Caroline gave me the last time we talked.

Matthew 11:28: Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Caroline is gone, but she is at rest. May the Lord watch over her - and all of us - and may the Lord grant us all rest. Amen.

Cooper steps down.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING AFTER FUNERAL

It's early, before sunrise. Cooper walks outside and pulls his boots on. He gets in the truck.

INT. COOPER'S TRUCK

Cooper drives away from the house, towards work. The radio is heard in the background.

RADIO HOST

President Trump said today in a press conference that he would not be following newly-issued CDC guidelines that recommend all Americans wear cloth masks when going out in public.

PRESIDENT TRUMP (V.O.)

... I've said it from the beginning: The cure cannot be worse than the problem itself ... And there'll be a lot of death, unfortunately, but a lot less death than if this wasn't done. But there will be death.

END.