

JOHN FROM BACK HOME: EPISODE 5, "YOUR HOUSE"

*SFX: BEEP*

MACHINE VOICE

Tuesday, May 12. 12:15 A.M.

*SFX: BEEP*

JOHN

Hey, Wes! Guess where I am!

*SFX: FEEDBACK*

JOHN

Oh shit.

*SFX: BEEP*

MACHINE VOICE

Tuesday, May 12. 12:18 A.M.

*SFX: BEEP*

JOHN

OK, I guess if I'm gonna keep leaving these messages I have to be in another room from the answering machine, or else it gets, like, feedback. Anyway. Dude, it's wild being back here. This place hasn't changed at all. Well... maybe a couple things. The hospital bed in the living room is new. But other than that, it's like... a time capsule. So weird. Trippy. Doesn't seem like your dad was all that into renovating or repairs. Which is great for me. It means the screen on the back porch was still loose, no problems getting inside. No new alarms or anything, which I was a little worried about. But shit, this is so much better than sleeping in my car. I guess it's a good thing I kept leaving these messages, huh? Maybe you showing up for a night and dipping out without calling anybody wasn't the worst thing after all. Funny how stuff works out.

*SFX: BEEP*

MACHINE VOICE

Tuesday, May 12. 12:30 A.M.

*SFX: BEEP*

JOHN

Dude, I realize you haven't been home very much since you left town, but holy shit. Everything in your bedroom is exactly the same. Same posters on the wall, same CD player, same VHS collection. Dude, you left your 64 here. With a game in it. Uhh... dude. No fucking way. It's fucking Turok! Did I call that or what? It always comes back to Turok!

*SFX: BEEP*

MACHINE VOICE

Tuesday, May 12. 12:47 A.M.

*SFX: BEEP*

JOHN

You have like a shit ton of VHS tapes of stuff you recorded off TV. It's actually pretty cool. Old Conan episodes. The 2001 Video Music Awards for some reason. Right now I'm watching Celebrity Death Match. It's Eddie Vedder versus the guy from Creed. They replaced the ropes with barbed wire. And they've got, like, these bats that are also wrapped in barbed wire. They're swinging them at each other, cutting each other up pretty good. Oh shit, Eddie just grabbed the guy from Creed, and now he's kinda grating his abs against the barbed wire ropes. He's totally exposed all his intestines and shit. There's so much blood. It's fucking hilarious. I used to fucking hate Creed, man. I wonder what happened to them. Now Eddie Vedder is like, trying to pull the guy from Creed's tongue out of his mouth? I think? Oh, shit. Creed just bit Eddie Vedder's hand off. Haha, it shot out of his stomach, because it's all exposed. Fuck. Nice!

*SFX: BEEP*

MACHINE VOICE

Tuesday, May 12. 1:05 A.M.

*SFX: BEEP*

JOHN

Your dad is still the only person I've ever known who actually drank R.C. Cola. Like, seriously. I never saw it in real life until I came over to your house. And now I'm back for the first time in, like, decades, and the fridge is fully stocked with this shit. I'm actually kind of excited to try one. Wait, hold on.

*SFX: SODA CAN OPENING*

JOHN

Yup. That tastes... just OK. Fuck, man. That's wild.

*SFX: BEEP*

MACHINE VOICE

Tuesday, May 12. 1:19 A.M.

*SFX: BEEP*

JOHN

Alright, so, look. I realize that the fact that I'm looking through your stuff may feel kinda... I dunno, invasive? But, here's how I look at it. You left all of this. You left it all here. You left *me* here. And it doesn't really seem like you're coming back any time soon. So, what I'm saying is, it almost feels like you left everything here for someone to find it. And honestly dude, you're lucky I'm the one who's finding it. Because, I know how important it is. I care about it. And you wouldn't guess what I just found. Dude. It's the Minotaur. Our comic. But like... a different version than the one I have. I don't remember when we made this, if it came before or after the one I have. I thought we just made the one and then made a bunch of copies. But this is definitely different, I can tell. There are little changes in the story. Like, in my version the wizard lived on a mountain, but in this one it's like a desert. I don't know I need to look through it, see what all the changes are. But what's crazy, is if I hadn't pulled out mine a few nights ago, I never would have known there were any differences. Like, I haven't read this thing in decades and now there are two different versions. That's kinda crazy.

*SFX: BEEP*

MACHINE VOICE

Tuesday, May 12. 1:37 A.M.

*SFX: BEEP*

JOHN

Yo, where the fuck is your dad's booze? He definitely used to drink, I remember. He'd pass out on the recliner while you and I were playing video games or whatever in your room. It always made it really easy to sneak out at night. But I can't find anything, and I'm just about through the bottle I swiped from the Pump Room. Did he like... hide it? Not like there's anyone here to hide it from. *(Sigh)* Alright, I guess I'm going on a scavenger hunt.

*SFX: BEEP*

MACHINE VOICE

Tuesday, May 12. 1:55 A.M.

*SFX: BEEP*

JOHN

So. I just made a pretty interesting discovery. This actually kinda... changes things. I don't know how else to say this. OK, so I couldn't find any booze. Like, not a single bottle. I went into your dad's study, like maybe there was a bottle of whiskey in a wooden cabinet, or something. But no, nothing. And, that's when I started to wonder, like... maybe he stopped drinking? Or, I dunno, maybe he wasn't supposed to drink while he was sick? But, how can I figure that out? And then I see all his checkbooks and ledgers and shit on the desk. And I know old people sometimes like to balance their checkbooks or write down what they had spent. So, I figure, OK, I'll look through that and see if he was spending any money at a liquor store. And that should give me a pretty good idea of whether or not he had stopped drinking. So, I start edflipping through this checkbook, and it looks like your dad was really only spending money on one thing. You. Every month, thousands of dollars. It even looks like he was sending money directly to your landlord sometimes... I remember the name of the company from when I looked up your apartment in East Hollywood. Like, dude, your dad was barely even buying himself food, everything he had he was sending to you. Which doesn't make sense if you're some big shot L.A. screenwriter. But maybe it does make sense if you're... not that. If you were just broke this entire time. If you hadn't really made it. You just went out there with a dream, and got stuck working crappy assistant jobs. All this time, for decades after we graduated, I've been so jealous of you, and what you accomplished. I've wanted to be you, like, so bad. But none of that was real. You were lying to everyone. You were probably lying to yourself. I don't know why you felt like you had to keep that act up, all this time. That sounds exhausting. I don't know, man. It's surprising, but like... I also feel bad for you.

*SFX: BEEP*

MACHINE VOICE

Tuesday, May 12. 2:12 A.M.

*SFX: BEEP*

JOHN

Actually, fuck that. I don't feel bad for you. At all. Because you had every opportunity to go out there and make something of yourself, and you fucking wasted it. Do you have any idea how much I would have killed to be in your position? To have people who encouraged me to move across the country to pursue some fucking movie dream? And not only that, but to be bankrolled the entire time I was out there? I can guarantee that if I was in your shoes, I wouldn't have stayed somebody's assistant for almost twenty fucking years. If I had that chance, I'd never take it for granted. You would have heard of me, and you wouldn't need fucking social media to do it. You probably got to comfortable. You didn't really have to work, didn't have to struggle, so it stopped meaning anything to you. You forgot how to value what you had. You didn't have to worry about money, you didn't have family that you needed to take care of.

JOHN (cont'd)

No, no, no fuck that. Obviously you did have someone back home you should have taken care of, your own fucking father. You couldn't even be bothered to come back and look after the person who was paying all your bills. That's fucking wrong, dude. I'm sorry. Honestly, I've been pretty pissed off all this time that you couldn't be bothered to call me or check in on me, but now I see that you just treated everyone like they were disposable. You got yours, and you fucked off somewhere that you didn't have to think about anybody else. You probably just came into town to collect whatever money your dad had left so you can go back to Hollywood to be somebody's coffee bitch. You're pathetic.

*SFX: BEEP*

MACHINE VOICE

Tuesday, May 12. 4:07 A.M.

*SFX: BEEP*

JOHN

Um... OK, so. I'm still really mad at you. But. There's something fucking weird going on here. I tried to go to sleep, but after I turned out the lights and got in bed, I started hearing this noise. It sounds like... like someone crying? Hang on.

*SFX: Muffled crying*

JOHN

Do you hear that? At first I thought it was coming from outside the house... like somebody in the front yard, maybe. But I went out there and there's nothing. You can only hear it inside. It's like... it's like it's coming from somewhere inside the walls. I'm gonna try to figure out where it's coming from.

*SFX: BEEP*

MACHINE VOICE

Tuesday, May 12. 4:29 A.M.

*SFX: BEEP*

JOHN

OK, I've been all over the house a couple times now, and... it's like the sound is equally loud wherever I go. I can't find a source. It's just... everywhere. It's not stopping either. I'm thinking the only place left to check is the attic. It still doesn't make sense why the crying sounds like it's coming from everywhere in the house. But it's the only place left to check. I really don't wanna fucking go up there.

JOHN (cont'd)

Wes, what the hell did you get me into? What is going on in your house? Is this why you fucking left? Because if it is... yeah, I'm starting to get it.

*SFX: BEEP*