

THE HOUSE IN THE WAY

written by

Christopher Corsello

READING selections for the character Frank

FADE IN:

TITLE CARD: 1962

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

TWO MEN sit in the living room of a working class home. One is wearing a suit just under 30 years old, but he'd never admit to being under 30, and has government employee 'written all over him' (MR. HARBINGER) and the other is a middle aged "every man". (FRANK LUNA) The men are silent but looking at each other with great intensity.

FRANK

I already served my country.
World War 2. What about you young
man? Ever serve your country in
battle?

Mr. Harbinger is uncomfortable, Clearly, he hasn't served.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Right. Serve my country. But
you're asking me to give up my
home because the government wants
to be able to roll tanks through
my backyard.

MR. HARBINGER

That's not quite right sir.

FRANK

Or land a plane in my driveway.

MR. HARBINGER

If there ever is a foreign
invasion, it is imperative that
military can mobilize effectively
throughout the country. It's a
matter of national security.

FRANK

There's plenty of room in
Sacramento to build freeways.
Without having to destroy my
home.

MR. HARBINGER

I realize...

FRANK

What do you realize, Young man?

MR. HARBINGER

The government...

FRANK

I don't want to hear one more thing about the government. Bunch of idiots looking at a map and making decisions about folks they don't even know.

MR. HARBINGER

The freeway is coming.

FRANK

Get out. You get out now, before I...

MR. HARBINGER

But sir, I can't leave without getting these papers signed.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

READING VERSION NOTE: This scene occurs after Mr. Harbinger and Louise have had a private discussion in the Kitchen.

Louise and Mr. Harbinger enter the room.

MR. HARBINGER

I have a few other property owners to see, I'll be back this evening.

FRANK

Don't bother.

Mr. Harbinger puts on his hat, picks up his briefcase and exits.

LOUISE

Honey, they are going to...

There is a knock at the front door, Frank opens the door. RAY, a neighbor stands at the door, Ray hands Frank an envelope.

RAY

I swear that mailman thinks you
live at my house.

FRANK

Hey Ray, come on in. Want a beer?

RAY

No thanks.

FRANK

Did you take the offer?

Ashamed, Ray drops his head, and slowly nods.

FRANK (CONT'D)

That surprises me, especially
after that statement you made at
the public hearing. Tell Louise
what you said.

Ray lets out a curt laugh. Looks toward Louise.

RAY

I said that the freeway is going
to be like a tapeworm running
through this neighborhood and
then I said that the real
parasites are- the freeway men
and the real estate managers.

FRANK

So what could have possibly
changed your mind?

RAY

Mildred.

FRANK

Mildred?

RAY

Yea, the widow that lives around
the corner on X.

FRANK

Don't know her.

RAY

Anyway, her house isn't being purchased, she's going to be stuck with that monstrosity right across the street from her home. We're the lucky ones, we get to escape.

LOUISE

But they're gonna...

FRANK

Don't worry about this dear, I'll handle this.

LOUISE

This is my home too.

FRANK

Don't upset yourself.

Louise clearly frustrated moves toward the front door.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

LOUISE

Anywhere but here.

FRANK

And when will you be back?

LOUISE

Maybe never.

Louise slams the door behind her as she exits. Frank does not appear to be terribly concerned.

RAY

Whoa. Never knew Louise was such a hot head.

FRANK

She'll take a walk and calm down.

Frank opens the envelope and gives it a quick look.

RAY

What's the letter say?

FRANK

If you don't respond to this
letter, an agent will be coming
to see you.

Ray's uneasiness has "oops sorry" written all over him.