

Ralphie: A Love Story

By

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EXT. MASSIVE WAREHOUSE/FACTORY - DAY

A large, sprawling, Steam Punk style industrial complex in a futuristic city.

INT WAREHOUSE - DAY

Inside the factory is a busy, grungy environment with huge smelting machines and industrial grinders spewing sparks.

Stacks of shelves are filled with boxes and other goods.

Forklifts drive back and forth.

In the corner of the warehouse area is RALPHIE. He is a robot. He looks like an ordinary man in a spotless white suit, white shirt and white tie. He has a robotic hand and a mechanical appliance with a light that replaces his right eye. He is taking boxes from one stack and putting them on another stack. His movements are stiff and robot-like. In the middle of his chores he starts to slow down, then stops in mid box stack.

Approaching Ralphie is HARRY, one of the human warehouse workers. He is filthy and wears an smudged apron, black rubber gloves and a welding helmet with a clear plastic visor. He checks over Ralphie then calls across the warehouse.

HARRY

Bernie! Hey, Bernie!

Entering the scene is BERNIE, another human warehouse worker. He is tall and thin and wears a leather apron, industrial goggles and a scarf tied to his head.

BERNIE

What's up?

HARRY

Looks like Ralphie's run out of juice.

BERNIE

Again? I just recharged him yesterday.

Harry and Bernie lead Ralphie over to a wall socket.

HARRY

Yeah...his capacitor's been goin' for a while now. Gotta call downtown for a replacement part.

Bernie takes a thick electrical cord from Ralphie's jacket. One end of it has a large plug. The other is attached to Ralphie. Bernie plugs the socket end into the wall. There is a humming noise as Ralphie straightens up.

HARRY

That ought to do it. We'll be back  
in fifteen and unplug you,  
Ralphie-boy.

The two walk off and leave Ralphie staning, plugged into the wall and looking around, confused.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE BREAK ROOM - THAT DAY

Ralphie stands in the breakroom staring blankly into the candy machine. He hears crunching and sees Harry eating a bag of chips and reading a People Magazine. As Ralphie continues staring we cut to a close up of Harry's mouth crunching on the chips.

Ralphie turns and looks back into the candy machine. Bernie approaches him.

BERNIE

Hey, hey, Ralphie. I'm out of  
quarters. You think you can do that  
little thing you do?

Ralphie looks at his robot hand and extends his robotic index finger. He puts the tip of it against the machine. A slight charge of electricity comes out from the finger and hits the machine. A candy bar drops out of the machine. Bernie takes the candy bar from the slot.

BERNIE

Thanks, bud. You're a lifesaver.

Ralphie watches Bernie as he takes the candy bar STELLA, who is sitting at the table. He sits next to her and hands her the candy bar.

BERNIE

Here, baby. I got you a little  
something extra.

STELLA

Oh, how sweet!

She takes the candy bar and nuzzles him. They begin to kiss. Ralphie stares at them kissing. We cut close up to their mouths. He looks over at Harry again and we cut close to his mouth eating chips. Ralphie turns away, sadly.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE BREAKROOM - LATER

Ralphie is sweeping the floor with a broom. He pauses and looks down. There is a half eaten bag of chips on the floor. He picks it up and puts it in his pocket. He keeps sweeping. He stops by a table, looks down and sees the People Magazine. On it is a romantic, celebrity couple who are embracing. Ralphie stares at it, forlornly.

FLASH CUT TO:

Close up of Bernie and Stella kissing.

FLASH CUT TO:

Back in the breakroom. Ralphie looks around, then takes the magazine and tucks it in his jacket.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE -LATER

Ralphie continues to stack boxes. A whistle goes off. Bernie and Harry head past Ralphie to the exit door.

HARRY

Quitting time, Ralphie. See you tomorrow.

BERNIE

Yeah, don't do anything I wouldn't do.

Both men chuckle and turn out the lights as they head out the door. Ralphie stands in the darkness.

CUT TO:

INT. WARHOUSE - EVENING

Ralphie makes his way through the darkened warehouse and up to a door. He opens it and goes in.

CUT TO:

INT. RALPHIE'S ROOM

Ralphie enters his "room." It's more like a glorified broom closet. There is a bare bulb hanging from the ceiling that Ralphie switches on. The room has a chair and a small portable TV. Ralphie takes the magazine from his jacket. He stares at the cover, tears it off and walks to the wall where there is a poster that reads "Safety First."

Ralphie takes down the poster. Behind it is a montage of pictures taped on the wall. They are all images of human experience; couples in love, a man climbing a mountain, children singing in a choir, people hang gliding, children and kittens, etc. Ralphie takes a piece of tape from a dispenser built into his hand and tapes the magazine cover with the rest of the pictures. He stares at it with a look of longing on his face.

Ralphie sits in his chair watching an old movie on the TV, and old b&w classic romance movie. As he watches, he pulls the bag of chips from his pocket. He pulls a chip from the bag, examines it, then tries putting it in his mouth and chewing. It makes a mess as the chip flakes fall from his mouth.

He stops chewing as he sees a scene from the movie of a couple kissing and exchanging "I love you's." He stares at the TV.

We zoom in on the screen till the image becomes distorted

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. WAREHOUSE - THE NEXT DAY

Ralphie is stacking boxes when he drops one. Styrofoam packing peanuts fly everywhere. Bernie approaches him.

BERNIE

What the hell, Ralphie? You're making a mess.

Ralphie turns from side to side, not knowing what to do.

BERNIE  
Go get the vacuum.

Ralphie keeps turning in circles.

BERNIE  
Get the vacuum!

Harry approaches.

HARRY  
What's up?

BERNIE  
Ah, numb-nuts just blew out one of  
the boxes. He's gotta vacuum it up.  
(to Ralphie.)  
It's over there! Janitorial!

HARRY  
Wait a sec, he hasn't been over  
there yet. You have to program it  
in.

Harry takes Ralphie's robotic hand and taps on it a few  
times as if he's programming. Ralphie turns quickly and  
heads off across the warehouse.

BERNIE  
Been quicker if I cleaned it up.

HARRY  
Be my guest.

BERNIE  
Up yours.

Ralphie goes to a door with a sign on it reading  
"Janitorial." He opens the door and is stunned. Sitting in  
the room is an upright vacuum cleaner. Ralphie is  
transfixed. Transfixed and in love. Romantic music plays.

CUT TO:

INT WAREHOUSE

Ralphie gingerly vacuums up the peanuts. He finishes and  
turns it off. He looks lovingly at the vacuum. He bends down  
and strokes it, lightly. Bernie approaches. Ralphie  
straightens up.

BERNIE  
Well, that's that, huh? Let's get  
back at it.

Bernie starts to take the vacuum. Ralphie holds on to it.  
Bernie tugs. Ralphie holds fast.

BERNIE  
(Confused.)  
Ralphie...

He tugs again. Ralphie holds fast again.

BERNIE  
(Struggling.)  
Give me the...damn...let it...go!  
Ah!

Bernie wrenches the vacuum from Ralphie's grasp.

BERNIE  
Jesus, what's with you?! Gotta take  
you in for a re-greasing.

Bernie walks away in a huff with the vacuum. Ralphie looks  
after him, longingly.

CUT TO:

INT WAREHOUSE - QUITTING TIME

The warehouse whistle blows. The lights go out on Ralphie  
and the door closes.

Ralphie quickly shuffles across the warehouse to the  
Janitorial door. He opens it quickly. There is a zoom in on  
Ralphie's face and the vacuum cleaner as the romantic music  
plays.

CUT TO:

Ralphie vacuums the floor lovingly.

CUT TO:

Ralphie sits next to the vacuum cleaner in the breakroom. He  
has his arm around the vacuum as he hands it a candy bar.

CUT TO:

Ralphie digs in one of the warehouse boxes and pulls a  
female mannequin head from the box. He turns to the vacuum  
and forces a smile.

CUT TO:

Ralphie and the vacuum sit next to each other as they watch Ralphie's TV. The woman's mannequin head is perched on top of the vacuum's handle. Ralphie puts his arm around the vacuum, then leans in for a kiss. As his lips touch the mannequin head, it topples off the vacuum and on to the floor.

CUT TO:

Ralphie and the vacuum cleaner slow dance in the warehouse in a pool of light.

FADE OUT:

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Ralphie is stacking boxes. He looks around, then dumps one of the boxes on to the floor. Packing peanuts everywhere. he looks around as if to say, "Uh-oh, look what I did."

He smiles and hurries over to the Janitorial closet.

As he starts to open the door, we hear Harry and Bernie in the background.

HARRY

Hey, looks like Ralphie dumped another load!

BERNIE

He better be getting that vacuum!

Ralphie throws open the door and frowns, sadly. The closet is empty.

HARRY

No, the vacuum broke this morning. We had to throw it out. Central's ordering another one next week.

We zoom in on Ralphie's forlorn face.

BERNIE

Great! How are we gonna clean this up?

CUT TO:



INT. RALPHIE'S ROOM - EVENING

Ralphie sits sadly in his room looking in a magazine. He pouts as he looks at a vacuum cleaner ad.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Ralphie stands on the sidewalk looking sadly into the window of a vacuum cleaner repair store. He hangs his head and strolls away.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY ALLEY - DAY

A woman goes to a large dumpster with a bag of garbage. She opens the top of the dumpster.

CUT TO:

Inside the dumpster is Ralphie. He lays on his back, staring straight ahead. His battery has obviously run down. The bag of garbage falls on to him.

CUT TO BLACK:

THE END