

CROSS ROADS

Written by

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EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

BEEP BEEP!

Backed-up cars line the road. Horns Blare. Cars inch forward.

A "Detour" sign points straight into the traffic. A barrier and "Road Closed" sign block the entrance of "Oak Avenue."

A marked construction truck veers right into the shoulder to maneuver around the stand-still. It turns right on Oak Ave, ignoring the sign.

Marilyn Manson's "The Beautiful People" blasts from the truck.

MARK (25), a rugged and unamused man in navy overalls steps out of his vehicle. He moves the "Road Closed" sign to the side.

Mark gets back in his truck, drives onto Oak Ave, and parks behind the barrier. He moves the "Road Closed" sign back to its original position.

Mark turns to his truck and opens the back. He shakes his head and sighs.

He reaches for two buckets and swings them out of the car.

Yellow Paint spills over the lid, splashing on Mark's overalls. He slams the two buckets down on the road. He rubs the spilled paint into his clothes, further staining them.

MARK

Now where did I put those rollers?

Mark digs through the various boxes and tools in the bed of his truck. Nothing is organized. He throws about empty candy wrappers and paint brushes stuck together.

Finally, he pulls a paint roller out of the depths of a box.

MARK (CONT'D)

Ah ha!

Mark dips the roller in yellow paint. He begins rolling lines down the center of the street.

Traffic continues to slowly inch down the perpendicular street.

A tiny, white city car turns down Oak Avenue. The high beams are on accidentally in broad daylight. The lights meet Mark's eyes.

Mark squints. He looks up at the approaching vehicle.

MARK (CONT'D)

Ugh. Not a city employee.

The car attempts to maneuver around the "Road Closed" sign. It pulls up on the curve. Backs up. Inches forward. Two wheels on the road, two wheels on the sidewalk.

The car pulls forward. Jolts to a stop. Pulls forward. Jolts to a stop. The back wheel crushes a traffic cone.

MARK (CONT'D)

What in God's name...

Mark stands up. He places his roller in a paint tray.

He approaches the car.

CHLOE (23), the driver of the car gives up and parks it slanted, half up on the curb. She steps out of her car in a bright yellow blouse.

MARK (CONT'D)

Can I help you with something
ma'am?

Chloe opens up the car's trunk. She pulls out a colorful smock and pulls it over her head. She ties the strings in the back.

CHLOE

No. I'm good.

Mark walks closer.

Chloe pulls out a wheeled crate holding her supplies: two cans of white paint, rulers, protractors, and paint brushes.

She places the crate on the road. A string is attached to it. She pulls the string. The crate rolls with her.

MARK

They never mentioned having a city
worker on paint duty today.

CHLOE

Ok. Well here I am.

Chloe continues to roll her crate toward the middle of the street. Mark stops in front of her.

MARK

Yes. I can see that. But what I'm saying is you can go home ma'am. This road is under state jurisdiction.

Mark gestures to his state truck.

Chloe rolls her crate right passed Mark.

Mark turns to watch her pass. He squints his eyes in confusion.

MARK (CONT'D)

Um. Excuse me. I represent the state and I have this under control.

Chloe steps down the middle of the road as if walking a tight rope. She approaches where Mark started painting.

CHLOE

And I represent this city ordinance.

Chloe pulls out a slip of paper. Mark's eyes bug.

MARK

I'm sorry, could you repeat that?

Chloe pivots 180 degrees mid step to face Mark. She shakes the slip for emphasis.

CHLOE

A city ordinance. Looks like the state's gonna have a little company.

Mark paces towards Chloe, hand stretched outward. He snatches the written ordinance from her hands.

Chloe pivots back around in one motion. She drags her supply crate. One foot after the other, she tight rope walks directly on top of the yellow paint.

Mark concentrates upon the ordinance.

Chloe leaves footprints in the lines with every step she takes. Mark continues to read. The wheels of her crate begin to mark up the painted lines as well.

MARK

The city's gone soft. One neighborhood complaint and they think a crosswalk is necessary?

Chloe continues to walk through Mark's undried paint.

CHLOE

Should've been at the council meeting if you had an opposition.

MARK

I mean-

Mark begins to fold the note, looking up for the first time.

MARK (CONT'D)

Hey. What the hell do you think you're doing. Now you've most definitely crossed the line.

CHLOE

I crossed nothing. Only stepped in it.

MARK

Oh you've really stepped in it all right.

Mark tears up the ordinance. He sprinkles the torn up pieces in the road.

CHLOE

That was a legal document I'm pretty sure that constitutes a federal offense or something.

Chloe sets her supplies down at the end of Mark's double yellow line.

MARK

Federal offense? Are you kidding? It's a document from a small, insignificant city. I'm a fucking state official.

Mark stares in anger waiting for Chloe to respond. Chloe sits unconcerned on the pavement. She begins painting white lines perpendicular to the yellow.

Mark storms towards Chloe. He kicks her opened bucket of paint. White paint spills out all around her. It puddles in the middle of the road.

CHLOE

Hey!

MARK

Don't hey me. You should've gone home when I told you to.

CHLOE

Listen I'm just trying to do a public service here.

MARK

A public service? Painting a crosswalk is hardly noble hon.

Chloe attempts to drag the puddled paint into a proper form.

CHLOE

A citizen requested a crosswalk and a plan on delivering a crosswalk.

MARK

Who would request a crosswalk?

Chloe points down the street on the left hand side.

CHLOE

House number 53 actually.

Mark marches down the street to investigate. He climbs the steps to the house's front door and knocks.

No answer or audible movement from inside the house.

Mark knocks harder. Still nothing. He turns around to leave.

The door swings open. Mark turns back around.

MRS. ROGERS, a short and frail older woman appears at the door. She yells a bit when speaking as she is hard of hearing.

MRS. ROGERS

Hello hon. What may I do for you?

Mark stares. Finally he answers.

MARK

Hello ma'am, I'm working on painting lines on this here street of yours and heard tale of a crosswalk request...

Mrs. Rogers's eyes light up. She reaches for Mark's hand.

MRS. ROGERS

Oh bless your soul. Thank you so much for getting that crosswalk painted for me.

Mrs. Rogers pulls Mark toward the door.

MRS. ROGERS (CONT'D)

You really must come in for some tea. Please, I insist. It's the least I could do.

INT. MRS. ROGERS'S HOUSE - DAY

The door opens into an elegant pink pastel themed house.

Mrs. Rogers leads Mark straight into her kitchen. She fills a kettle with water. Places the kettle on the stove and begins to boil water.

She waddles to an overhead cabinet. Standing on her tip toes she feels around for a box. She sets the box down on the countertop.

MRS. ROGERS

Fiddle sticks! It seems as if I've run out of tea bags. But don't you worry hon I'll be back in a jiffy with some more.

Mrs. Rogers leaves the kitchen. She grabs her car keys from a stand by the front door. Mark follows.

EXT. OAK AVENUE - DAY

Mrs. Rogers grips the railing as she treks down her front stairs. She boards her station wagon.

MRS. ROGERS

Would you be a doll and move those pesky construction signs out of my way? The store is just down the hill. I'll be back in no time.

Mark moves the signs and cones to the side of the street. Mrs. Rogers pulls past the signs, turning down Main Street. He waves as she leaves.

Mark moves the signs back. He turns back around, sauntering down Oak Ave. Chloe remains at the other end of the road sitting and painting.

MARK

Why did she have to be a sweet old lady?

Mark puts his hands in his overall pockets and continues walking. He looks down to see Chloe.

MARK (CONT'D)

And great. Now I have to apologize.
To a city worker.

Mark kicks at the road. He walks with his head to the sky. Chloe sits painting in front of him.

Mark continues to look up, too proud to look at Chloe directly.

MARK (CONT'D)

Hey so I know we were both in each other's way before, but let's settle our differences and paint some roads, huh?

Chloe remains concentrated upon her work.

CHLOE

Consider our differences settled.

Mark smiles. He looks down at Chloe. A white "paint angel" covers his yellow lines.

MARK

What did you do to my lines?

Chloe refuses to look up. She continues fixing the white spilled paint.

CHLOE

Like I said. Consider our differences settled.

MARK

How am I even supposed to fix this?
You turned the middle of the street
into what looks to be a body
outline of a crime scene.

Chloe looks up for a brief moment. Her eyes meet Mark's.

CHLOE

(unapologetically)
Oops.

MARK

And how did you even make this?
There is not a chance you rolled in
paint yourself.

Chloe gestures to TIMMY, a young boy playing across the street. He kicks a ball in his yard. He turns to run after it. His entire backside is covered in white paint.

MARK (CONT'D)

Oh just great. Not only does the
mysterious person-shaped stain
appear incriminating, but it belong
to a child. Just wonderful.

Mark snatches up his paint and rollers. He paces to the opposite end of the street. He begins painting.

Chloe, in the distance is bent over her work. Meticulously painting. Using rulers for accuracy.

Mark pushes his roller down the road. His face is stern. He glares at Chloe while he works. The yellow line becomes slightly zig-zagged.

EXT. ADJACENT STREET - DAY

A loud machine buzzes. A Street Cleaner drives down the road. A cloud of dust surrounds the vehicle. It's brushes at tire level ferociously spin.

A parking sign off Oak Ave reads "Street Sweeping Tuesdays at Noon."

The city hall clock tower denotes its 11:55.

EXT. OAK AVENUE - DAY

Mark and Chloe remain painting on opposite ends of the street.

Chloe looks up from her work. She catches a glimpse of the street cleaner through trees which separate the two adjacent roads.

Mark continues with his rough and inaccurate painting style. His glare is fixed on Chloe. He is oblivious to the street cleaner.

A familiar station wagon stops perpendicular to the road. Mark paints with his back turned to the street entrance.

Mrs. Rogers playfully beeps her horn. Mark jumps a bit from the unexpected sound. He unintentionally creates an out of place stroke of yellow paint on the road.

Mark turns. Mrs. Rogers waves from the driver's seat. He meanders to the end of the street. He moves the signs and cones to the side of the road once more.

Mrs. Rogers enters the street. She returns to her driveway. She waves a grocery bag in the air.

MRS. ROGERS

The tea has arrived. For both of you. Please do come and join me.

Mrs. Rogers retreats into her house.

Mark puts his paint aside. He begins walking to the other end of the street. Toward Chloe.

Across the street from Chloe, Timmy plays at the end of his driveway. He draws on his pavement with chalk. A large plastic box full of chalk lays beside him.

Mark walks down the middle of the unmarked road. Chloe looks up to see him approaching. Her eyes widen.

Chloe jolts up off the ground. She starts gathering her supplies.

Mark appears puzzled. He begins to pick up his pace. Reaching out a hand, seemingly expressing forgiveness.

Chloe doesn't respond to Mark. She rolls her crate and supplies toward the side of the road.

Timmy scribbles back and forth, coloring in a dragon's fiery breath on his sidewalk drawing.

Mark paces in the direction toward Chloe and Timmy.

A machine-like vehicle buzzes in the distance.

Chloe's ruler falls out of her rolling crate. She rolls the rest of her supplies to safety. She runs back to the middle of the street.

The buzzing machine noise increases in volume.

Mark turns around.

The Street Cleaner turns down Oak Avenue. The closure signs and cones remain pushed to the side.

The city's bell tower begins to chime. It's noon.

Chloe bends to pick up her ruler. She watches as the street cleaner approaches.

Mark jogs on a diagonal to avoid the cleaner's path.

Timmy exaggerates one of his drawing strokes. His hand slams into his container of chalk. The chalk rolls down his driveway and into the street.

The street cleaner approaches. It is three houses away. The dust from the vehicle clouds most of the street.

A piece of chalk rolls into Chloe's foot. She looks down at all the chalk now in the street.

Timmy gets up from his drawing. Through the dust, he runs into the street to collect his chalk.

Mark's eyes widen. He sprints toward Timmy.

Chloe also lunges toward Timmy.

HONK. The headlights of the street cleaner shine directly on Chloe and Timmy.

Chloe wraps herself around Timmy.

Mark rushes towards them. He grabs hold of both of them. He pushes them to the side.

All three of them fall into a patch of grass beside the sidewalk.

The street cleaner barrels passed them. The pieces of chalk all crushed in the process.

Mark, Chloe, and Timmy shield their eyes. A gust of wind and dirt hit them as the vehicle passes.

The street cleaner reaches the other end of the road. Road closure signs and traffic cones barricade this end.

The street cleaner plows through the signs. Traffic cones fly over the vehicle. It turns right on the next road and disappears in the distance.

Mark, Chloe, and Timmy all lay in shock. Paralyzed from the experience.

MARK
(murmurs under breath)
Those god damn city employees.

Mark finally leaps to his feet. He hoists Timmy up into his arms. Then reaches down and offers Chloe a hand.

Chloe grabs hold. Mark pulls her up.

MARK (CONT'D)
You okay kid?

Timmy nods like a bobble head.

The surrounding dust begins to settle.

The road becomes visible again. All the paint has been wiped off. The only markings are an array of colorful tire streaks left by crushed chalk.

Chloe stares at the road, regaining her breath.

CHLOE
Now that's my kind of art.

Chloe grabs a surviving piece of chalk left in Timmy's driveway. She wanders out into the road. She begins sketching.

Timmy looks at Mark.

Mark hesitates but kneels to release Timmy. Timmy leaps from his arms to go join Chloe. He crouches down next to her and begins doodling.

Mark stands alone at the edge of Timmy's driveway. He watches the two of them turn crushed chalk into an abstract masterpiece.

The door of Mrs. Rogers' house swings open. She backs out with a tray of tea cups.

MRS. ROGERS
Tea's ready!

Chloe and Timmy whip their heads around. Timmy jumps up and runs to the other side of the street to embrace Mrs. Rogers.

TIMMY
Grammy!

Timmy hugs around her legs.

Mark's eyes widen.

Chloe gets up from the road to join the tea party.

Mark grabs the white paint and rollers. He moves to the end of Mrs. Rogers' driveway.

Mrs. Rogers, Chloe and Timmy rock in rocking chairs on her front porch. They chat and sip tea.

Mark begins painting in front of them. He starts to paint the crosswalk for Mrs. Rogers and her grandson.

FADE TO BLACK.