

A SHOULDER TO CRY ON

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NYC Midnight Short Screenplay Challenge 2017  
Group 19 - Drama / A concrete plant / A box of crayons

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FADE IN:

**EXT. STREET - DAY**

Sunny day. MARIA (30), walks down the street. She counts pavement tiles with her feet.

MARIA  
(whispers)  
Three, two, one.

She stops and sees a BOY (10) drawing a house on the pavement with a piece of chalk.

**EXT. CONCRETE PLANT - DAY**

SUPER: "A few weeks ago"

A small concrete plant in the middle of nowhere. Depressing landscape with tall concrete containers overshadowing fields that probably used to be green.

Sound of heavy machinery echos in the surroundings. A few workers gather together and sit on a concrete block they use as a bench.

Maria walks by. She stands out not only because she's the only woman around, but she's dressed differently, more professional. You can smell who's the boss here.

JOHN (30), one of the workers sits down with his lunch box.

JOHN  
Hang out with us!

MARIA  
I'll be in my office. I've got--

JOHN  
Paper work, blah, blah. Does your husband have paper balls?

MARIA  
At least he has balls.

LAUGHTER. John laughs too. It's part of their drill. Maria walks into a metal container that works as her office.

**INT. MARIA'S OFFICE, CONCRETE PLANT - DAY**

The office is cold and dark. Maria turns on the light bulb hanging from the ceiling. Papers are everywhere.

She sits down at her desk. She open the drawer and pulls out her lunch box, a file and... a box of crayons.

She opens up the box. Only one, black crayon is left. She pulls a picture out from the box. It's ANNA (7) - girl with long curly blonde hair. She focuses on the picture.

**INT. LIVING ROOM, MARIA'S HOUSE - DAY - (FLASHBACK)**

Big and bright living room, in total contrast to Maria's office. Anna sits at a big wooden table and draws something. She is too short to reach the floor with her feet.

Maria enters the room. Comes closer and kisses Anna's head. She looks at what's she's doing. Anna draws a picture of herself and Maria. The same box of crayons, but full of crayons in different colours.

**INT. MARIA'S OFFICE, CONCRETE PLANT - DAY**

Maria draws the scene from the memory using the black crayon. She stops and looks at the crayon. She rubs it with her fingers.

The door opens and John storms in.

JOHN

The school trip is here.

Maria puts her stuff back to the drawer. She stands up and leaves the office without saying a word.

**EXT. CONCRETE PLANT - DAY**

Maria meets CHILDREN at the site. A group of dozen boys and one girl. They all wear uniforms and hard hats.

It feels like she doesn't belong to the group, she stands on the side. Her long curly blonde hair hypnotize Maria. A WORKER snaps his fingers suggesting they should start.

Maria claps her hands.

MARIA

Okay, kids! We're gonna have some fun now. You will see how concrete is made. Yay!

Kids don't seem to share the enthusiasm. It doesn't bother Maria. She's done it many time before.

MARIA

Okay, let's go!

**INT. MARIA'S OFFICE, CONCRETE PLANT - DAY**

John is still at Maria's office. He looks around. He comes closer to the drawer.

He opens up the drawer and laughs seeing a box of crayons. He looks inside the box and sees one, black crayon and Anna's photo.

He looks at the photo. The smile disappears from his face.

**EXT. CONCRETE PLANT - DAY**

Maria shows kids how concrete is made.

MARIA

Concrete is very important. Here, in concrete plant, we also make simple elements from it. For example this is a form to create pavement tiles you see every day.

Kids are bored to death.

MARIA

Who knows what else concrete is used for?

Kids are baffled. Maria sees that the girl scuffles with a boy at the back.

MARIA

Hey, stop that!

Maria comes closer but before she reaches them, the boy pulls girl's bag. It lands in a pool of concrete. All her stuff falls out from the bag. Kids finally start paying attention.

The girl starts crying. Maria comes closer.

MARIA

It's okay, don't cry. Hey, Ronnie - show them a bulldozer!  
(to the girl)  
Come with me.

**INT. MARIA'S OFFICE, CONCRETE PLANT - DAY**

John takes the file to his hands. He opens it up and sees picture that Maria was drawing. There's more pictures inside.

He looks at them one by one. They all show Maria and Anna together and all are drawn with they crayons. The further he goes the more colourful pictures are, with more colours. Pictures show a girl in a hospital bed, playing with Maria. At the bottom, John finds Anna's charming pictures.

Maria enters.

JOHN  
I'm sorry, I'm really really... I  
didn't--

MARIA  
Get out!

Maria grabs the pictures and puts it back to the drawer.

John doesn't know how to say he's sorry. He just leaves  
without saying a word.

Maria makes some space on a chair. The girl sits down. Her  
face is in tears. Maria smiles warmly and strokes her curly  
hair.

MARIA  
Everything is going to be alright.

WORKER #2 enters with girl's bag. It's completely ruined.

WORKER #2  
I'm sorry.

The girl starts crying.

MARIA  
Hey, hey, it's okay!

Maria hugs the girl spontaniulsy. But it feels so good to  
her. She sees her curly hair and feels her shaking body. She  
hugs her tightly.

A tear appears on her cheek. She doesn't want to let her go.  
Worker #2 doesn't know what to do.

MARIA  
Hey, you know what?

She looks at the girl.

MARIA  
Don't worry about your bag. You'll  
get a new one.

GIRL  
But all my books, pencils,  
crayons...

They both look at the table at the box of crayons.

Maria freezes. Thinks.

MARIA  
You know what?

Maria takes the crayon from the box.

MARIA

I know it's now much, but believe me. This is a magical crayon that belonged to someone really special. Everything you draw with it will become true.

The girl is amsumed. She wipes her tears and takes the crayon. She smiles. They hug each other again.

MARIA

(whispers)

Don't worry about your old bag.

**EXT. CONCRETE PLANT - DAY**

The form for making pavement tiles is filled up with concrete.

Maria drops file with pictures to the mixture. It's topped with concrete and the file dissapears.

John stands next to Maria and hugs her.

**EXT. STREET - DAY**

Maria observes how John and other workers assemble tiles on the pavement.

**EXT. STREET - DAY**

We are back to the first scene. The boy draws a house on Anna's tile. Next to the house he's drawn a boy with his parents.

MARIA

May I?

The boy gives her a piece of chalk. Maria draws a girl holding hands with the parents. She smiles and whispers silent "thank you".

FADE OUT.