

EXT. A SAVANNAH STREET - DAY (1981)

A **feather** floats through the air. The falling **feather**.

A **city, Savannah**, is revealed in the background. The **feather** floats down toward the **city** below. The **feather** drops down toward the **street** below, as **people** walk past and **cars** drive by, and nearly lands on a **man's** shoulder.

He walks across the **street**, causing the **feather** to be whisked back on its journey. The **feather** floats above a **stopped car**. The **car** drives off right as the **feather** floats down toward the **street**.

The **feather** floats under a passing **car**, then is sent flying back up in the air. A **MAN** sits on a **bus bench**. The **feather** floats above the ground and finally lands on the **man's mudsoaked shoe**.

The **man** reached down and picks up the **feather**. His name is **FORREST GUMP**. He looks at the **feather** oddly, moves aside a **box of chocolates** from an **old suitcase**, then opens the **case**.

Inside the **old suitcase** are an assortment of **clothes**, a **pingpong paddle**, **toothpaste** and **other personal items**.

Forrest pulls out a **book** titled "Curious George," then places the **feather** inside the **book**. **Forrest** closes the **suitcase**.

Something in his eyes reveals that **Forrest** may not be all there.

Forrest looks right as the **sound of an arriving bus** is heard.

A **bus** pulls up. **Forrest** remains on the **bus bench** as the **bus** continues on.

A **BLACK WOMAN** in a **nurse's outfit** steps up and sits down at the **bus bench** next to **Forrest**. The **nurse** begins to read a **magazine** as **Forrest** looks at her.

FORREST

Hello. My name's Forrest Gump.

He opens a **box of chocolates** and holds it out for the **nurse**.

FORREST (CONT'D)

You want a chocolate?

The **nurse** shakes her head, a bit apprehensive about this strange man next to her.

FORREST (CONT'D)

I could eat about a million and a half of these. My momma always said, "Life was like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get."

Forrest eats a chocolate as he looks down at the nurse's shoes.

FORREST (CONT'D)

Those must be comfortable shoes. I'll bet you could walk all day in shoes like that and not feel a thing. I wish I had shoes like that.

BLACK WOMAN

My feet hurt.

FORREST

Momma always says there's an awful lot you could tell about a person by their shoes. Where they're going. Where they've been.

The black woman stares at Forrest as he looks down at his own shoes.

FORREST (CONT'D)

I've worn lots of shoes. I bet if I think about it real hard I could remember my first pair of shoes.

Forrest closes his eyes tightly.

FORREST (CONT'D)

Momma said they'd take my anywhere.

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INT. COUNTRY DOCTOR'S OFFICE - GREENBOW, ALABAMA - DAY

(1951) A little boy closes his eyes tightly. It is young Forrest as he sits in a doctor's office.

FORREST (V.O.)

She said they was my magic shoes.

Forrest has been fitted with orthopedic shoes and metal leg braces.

DOCTOR

All right, Forrest, you can open your eyes now. Let's take a little walk around.

The doctor sets Forrest down on its feet. Forrest walks around stiffly. Forrest's mother, MRS. GUMP, watches him as he clanks around the room awkwardly.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

How do those feel? His legs are strong, Mrs. Gump. As strong as I've ever seen. But his back is as crooked as a politician.

Forrest walks foreground past the doctor and Mrs. Gump.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

But we're gonna straighten him right up

now, won't we, Forrest?

A **loud thud** is heard as, outside, **Forrest** falls.

MRS. GUMP

Forrest!

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EXT. GREENBOW, ALABAMA

Mrs. Gump and **young Forrest** walk across the **street**.
Forrest walks stiffly next to his **mother**.

FORREST (V.O.)

Now, when I was a baby, Momma named me
after the great Civil War hero, General
Nathan Bedford Forrest...

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EXT. RURAL ALABAMA

A **black and white photo of General Nathan Bedford
Forrest**.

The **photo** turns into live action as the **General** dons a
hooded sheet over his head.

The **General** is in full **Ku Klux Klan garb**, including his
horse.

The **General** rides off, followed by a large **group of Klan
members** dressed in **full uniform**.

FORREST (V.O.)

She said we was related to him in some
way. And, what he did was, he started up
this club called the Ku Klux Klan. They'd
all dress up in their robes and their
bedsheets and act like a bunch of ghosts
or spooks or something. They'd even put
bedsheets on their horses and ride around.
And anyway, that's how I got my name.
Forrest Gump.

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EXT. GREENBOW

Mrs. Gump and **Forrest** walk across the **street**.

FORREST (V.O.)

Momma said that the Forrest part was to
remind me that sometimes we all do things
that, well, just don't make no sense.

Forrest stops suddenly as his **brace** gets stuck.
Forrest's brace is caught in a **gutter grate**. **Mrs. Gump**
bends down and tries to free **Forrest**. **Two old cronies**
sit in front of a **barber shop** and watch.

MRS. GUMP

Just wait, let me get it.

Mrs. Gump struggles to pull the stuck brace from the grate.

MRS. GUMP (CONT'D)

Let me get it. Wait, get it this way. Hold on.

Forrest pulls his foot out of the grate.

MRS. GUMP (CONT'D)

All right.

Mrs. Gump helps Forrest up onto the sidewalk. She looks up and notices the two old man.

MRS. GUMP (CONT'D)

Oooh. All right. What are you all staring at? Haven't you ever seen a little boy with braces on his legs before?

Mrs. Gump and Forrest walk along the sidewalk past the two old men. Mrs. Gump holds tightly onto Forrest's hand.

MRS. GUMP (CONT'D)

Don't ever let anybody tell you they're better than you, Forrest. If God intended everybody to be the same, he'd have given us all braces on our legs.

FORREST (V.O.)

Momma always had a way of explaining things so I could understand them.

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EXT. OAK ALLEY/THE GUMP BOARDING HOUSE

Mrs. Gump and Forrest walk along a dirt road. A row of mailboxes stands left.

FORREST (V.O.)

We lived about a quarter mile of Route 17, about a half mile from the town of Greenbow, Alabama. That's in the county of Greenbow. Our house had been in Momma's family since her grandpa's grandpa's grandpa had come across the ocean about a thousand years ago. Something like that.

Mrs. Gump and Forrest walk along the Gump Boarding House driveway.

FORREST (V.O.)

Since it was just me and Momma and we had all these empty rooms, Momma decided to let those rooms out. Mostly to people passing through. Like from, oh, Mobile, Montgomery, place like that. That's how me

and Mommy got money. Mommy was a real smart lady.

MRS. GUMP

Remember what I told you, Forrest. You're no different than anybody else is.

Mrs. Gump heads **Forrest** to the **porch**. She bends down to look **Forrest** in the eye.

MRS. GUMP (CONT'D)

Did you hear what I said, Forrest? You're the same as everybody else. You are no different.

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INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL / PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

PRINCIPAL

Your boy's... different, Mrs. Gump. Now, his I.Q. is seventy-five.

MRS. GUMP

Well, we're all different, Mr. Hancock.

The **principal** sighs, then stands up.

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INT. HALLWAY

Forrest sits outside the **principal's office** and waits.

FORREST (V.O.)

She wanted me to have the finest education, so she took me to the Greenbow County Central School. I met the principal and all.

The **principal** stands in front of **Mrs. Gump. Forrest**, sitting left, listens.

PRINCIPAL

I want to show you something, Mrs. Gump. Now, this is normal.

The **principal** holds up a **chart** with a designations according to I.Q. and points to the center of the **graph**, labeled "Normal." A red line below the normal area is labeled "State Acceptance." The **principal** points to the section below the acceptance line labeled "Below."

PRINCIPAL (CONT'D)

Forrest is right here. The state requires a minimum I.Q. of eighty to attend public school, Mrs. Gump. He's gonna have to go to a special school. Now, he'll be just fine.

MRS. GUMP

What does normal mean, anyway? He might be a bit on the slow side, but my boy Forrest is going to get the same opportunities as everyone else. He's not going to some special school to learn to how to re-tread tires. We're talking about five little points here. There must be something can be done.

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INT. HALLWAY

Forrest sits outside the **principal's office**.

PRINCIPAL

We're a progressive school system. We don't want to see anybody left behind.

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INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

PRINCIPAL

Is there a Mr. Gump, Mrs. Gump?

MRS. GUMP

He's on vacation.

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EXT. GUMP BOARDING HOUSE - NIGHT

Forrest sits on a **swing** outside the **house**. **Loud organic male grunts** are heard coming from inside the **house**. **Forrest** sits on the **swing** as the **grunts** continue. The **principal** steps out of the **Gump House** and wipes the sweat from his face.

Forrest is sitting on the **porch**.

PRINCIPAL

Well, your momma sure does care about your schooling, son. Mm-mm- mm.

The **principal** wipes the sweat from his neck, then looks back at **Forrest**.

PRINCIPAL (CONT'D)

You don't say much, do you?

Forrest grunts, imitating him. The **principal**, embarrassed, turns and walks away.

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INT. GUMP BOARDING HOUSE/FORREST'S BEDROOM

Mrs. Gump reads from the **book** "Curious George" as **Forrest** sits on the **bed** and listens.

MRS. GUMP

Finally, he had to try it. It looked easy, but, oh, what happened. First there...

FORREST

Momma, what's vacation mean?

MRS. GUMP

Vacation?

FORREST

Where Daddy went?

MRS. GUMP

Vacation's when you go somewhere, and you don't ever come back.

Forrest lies down on his bed and looks up.

FORREST (V.O.)

Anyway, I guess you could say me and Momma was on our own.

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EXT. GUMP BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

A cab driver closes the trunk of the car as two women walk toward the house. A milkman steps down from the porch.

FORREST (V.O.)

But we didn't mind. Our house was never empty. There was always folks comin' and goin'.

MRS. GUMP (V.O.)

Suppa.