

FILTER

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. INTERSECTION DOWNTOWN - DAY

A MAN in his thirties holding a paper map flapping in the wind, looking repeatedly up at a street sign, then down each street and back at the map. A late-aged WOMAN standing nearby in a lab coat looks up at him and takes one step, but then stops and just stares, eventually looking away.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A young MAN and WOMAN cuddles together on a sofa, in an intimately lit room. The woman kisses the man affectionately.

MAN

I think I... I love you.

The woman smiles widely. The man waits with an intense gaze. The woman's smile begins to falter as she says nothing.

EXT. SIDEWALK OUTSIDE SHOP - DAY

A disheveled STREET PERFORMER with oily skin is playing the guitar so beautifully, lost in his world. A BUSINESS MAN listens, surreptitiously glancing over with admiration. He looks at the open guitar case, then checks his wallet, finding only twenties. The performer finishes his song with gusto. The businessman remains silent.

INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - DAY

In a store aisle, a FATHER scolds his SON under his breath.

FATHER

You good for nothing embarrassment.
You think you like boys now? Is
that why you want dance lessons,
like some sort of goddamn fairy?

A WOMAN spies from a distance.

FATHER (CONT'D)

Got something to say to me, runt?

The father takes a football off the shelf and smacks it into his son's chest. The son spots the woman, his eyes pleading to hers. She freezes, then feigns distraction.

EXT. CAR - DAY

KYLE, a burly man in his 30's, sits in the driver seat with a coworker, PETE, riding shotgun. Kyle shouts out the door.

KYLE
Hey new guy! We're goin' for
Chinese. Hop in.

Brian Goldberg, a slender man in his 20's wearing a yarmulke, jogs up, and tries to open the door. Kyle and Pete share a laugh, then the door unlocks and he gets in, laughing awkwardly with them.

BRIAN
Funny prank. I'm starved, and I
love Chinese.

KYLE
Hey, is that beanie of yours
covering a bald spot? You'll like
this place. It's cheap!

Brian's face falls as Pete and Kyle share a laugh. Brian folds his arms and leans back, staring out the window.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

RHIANNE and FRANK, in their 40's and dressed formally, sit across from the younger, overweight LAURA who shifts anxiously.

FRANK
We've decided we're letting you go.
Immediately.

Laura goes white.

RHIANNE
Your belongings will be sent home
to your address, and you'll be
escorted to your car by our
security.

LAURA
But, why? I thought I was doing
such great work here. You gave me a
raise last month!

Rhianne swallows, but sees Frank stoic and remains silent as well.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Rhianne? Can I at least use you as
a reference?

Rhianne lowers her eyes. Laura stares in disbelief between her and Frank.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

MICHAEL, a formally dressed, slick-haired man lifts his attaché on the table and opens it. Next to him is EILEEN, an older stern-faced woman in a wheel chair. Settling down on the other side of the table is SAMUEL, a stocky man with five o'clock shadow and a suit one size too small, and DEBRA, a middle-aged woman in a cashmere sweater and ruby earrings.

MICHAEL
My client has gone on disability
and will be unable to work for at
least the next six months to a
year. She also asks for
compensation for the agonizing,
life-altering pain she has suffered
as a result of your client's
recklessness.

Debra's head pivots to Samuel, who only takes notes, then to Eileen, and then back to Michael.

DEBRA
I barely tapped her after she
slammed on the brakes!

Debra stares at Eileen in disbelief.

DEBRA (CONT'D)
You said you were fine. Right there
after the accident!

Eileen remains silent. Samuel leans in to Debra.

SAMUEL
Don't worry. We'll discuss this
later.

Debra ignores him and faces Eileen again.

DEBRA
This isn't right, what you're
doing. It's fraud and you know it!

Eileen looks away as Michael starts laying evidence on the table.

INT. MEDICAL OFFICE - DAY

PIERRE, in his 50's wearing a white lab coat and stethoscope, stands next to the bed occupied by his teenage patient AMANDA, with a beautiful face and bald scalp.

AMANDA

It's not that bad, right? I still want to go scuba-diving in Belize, and, would you believe I've been studying archaeology for this long and I haven't seen the pyramids in Egypt yet? Have you been there?

Pierre grimaces, holding emotion back.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

I'd definitely want to take my little brother with me.

Pierre sheds a tear, and looks away to wipe it, then turns back with his weakly forced smile.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

A REPORTER and CAMERAMAN, sporting the logo of a local news station, leap out from behind a van and catch up with the power-walking JANE TRENT.

REPORTER

Senator! Senator! Why did you vote against the emergency aid bill?

Jane eyes the camera and breaks her stride, brandishing her smile.

JANE

I am loyal to my party, and they think we can get a fairer deal with further negotiation.

Jane clicks with her key fob at cars around the parking lot.

REPORTER

But how do you explain your vote to the countless survivors suffering ...

A car beeps and Jane's face relaxes, almost smiling, and starts quickstepping away and the reporter shouts after her.

REPORTER (CONT'D)
... without food or shelter, and
might not survive without immediate
medical aid?

A car door slams shut and the car starts.

EXT. INTERSECTION DOWNTOWN - DAY

The man is still unsure about his map, as people walk by. He
hears a voice.

KATIE (O.S.)
Mister, are you lost?

The man looks down and sees six year old child, cute as a
button.

KATIE (CONT'D)
I don't know where we are either
but I can ask Mommy. Hey, are you
from here? We're going for ice
cream. Do you like ice cream?

JENNIFER (O.S.)
Katie! Katie, come over here!

Katie's mother, JENNIFER, grabs Katie's hand and catches her
breath.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
I'm sorry if she disturbed you.

KATIE
But Mommy, this man is lost and
everyone is ignoring him! Why does
everyone ignore him?

Jennifer looks up hesitantly and notices the map. The man
smiles sheepishly.

MAN
I can't for the life of me find
where Wharton Street is. I was
supposed to meet my wife there, and
she's not answering their phone.

JENNIFER
Oh. OH!

Jennifer points.

(MORE)

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Wharton Street is half a block that way. It doesn't have a street sign. We're heading that way if you want to come with us.

MAN

Ya know, my wife happens to like ice cream.

FADE OUT.