

This Road of Worth

By

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FADE IN:

A man (Victor Westerman) enters center stage and speaks directly to the audience.

VICTOR

Hello. My name is Dr. Victor Westerman. I couldn't really think of another way to start this thing off but by telling you I am a very happy man. I'm married to the most beautiful woman in the world. I'm an extremely successful biologist. And I have two wonderful children; Joseph and Diana. Here look here. (shows wallet photos to audience as if they can all see) And all of this. All of my success and worth is due to one experience, with one man, one spring, many years ago.

1 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD, DUSK

A man (Tyler) is driving down a country road at dusk. He is very concentrated on something. The audience has no clue why but he is steadily increasing his speed from 40 to 45 to 50 to 55. At the same time, a crying man (Victor) walking the side of the road notices the truck's headlights curving the bend. Just as the truck comes around the bend the crying man steps in front of it.

VICTOR

(crying) I'm sorry

TYLER

Oh Shit!

Tyler jerks the truck to the right and dodges Victor just in time. His truck swerves off the road and slams into a tree. Victor looks at the morphed metal in terror then pulls out his (very early model) cell phone and dials 911.

VICTOR

A truck just drove off the road. It hit a fucking tree. Hurry up! Oh God, I think I killed him!

A few moments pass then police, fire and ambulances begin to appear. A few reporters show up on the scene.

REPORTER

I'm standing here on Yankee Road where a tragic car crash has taken place. A man has been taken to the hospital tonight after driving his truck into a tree. At approximately 11:00pm Mr. Victor Westerman was crossing the road next to me here. What he had not noticed was Mr. Tyler Davis driving down the same road just around the bend. Before hitting the pedestrian Mr. Davis noticed the man crossing and drove off of the road and into the tree behind me. Although the severity of the wreck leads first responders to believe that Mr. Davis was driving well over the speed limit, he was wearing his seatbelt which is probably what saved his life tonight.

2 INT. OUTSIDE TYLER DAVIS' HOSPITAL ROOM

Victor stands outside of Tyler's hospital room waiting for the nurse (male or female) to exit so he can see Tyler.

VICTOR

Is he ok? Can I see him? (At nurse)

NURSE

He is awake. He'll be ok, but he's tired so keep the conversation short. He needs to get some sleep.

VICTOR

Ok, thank you.

NURSE

You're lucky that you walked away from all of this, you know.

VICTOR

Some might think so.

Walks into Tyler's room.

VICTOR

Hi. I'm sorry. "Hi" shouldn't be the first thing out of my mouth to you. Do you know who I am?

TYLER

(a little disoriented) You're the asshole I almost killed... Well, that almost killed me.

VICTOR

I'm so sorry. (getting very emotional) I never meant for anyone to get hurt.

TYLER

Take it easy man. Doctor said I'll be fine. Hit my head pretty hard. I have some temporary memory loss, but it should all come back to me. All you need to worry about is my truck. I loved that truck.

VICTOR

(angry with himself) God, I can't even do this right!

TYLER

Seriously, I was just kidding about the truck man. Look, let's calm down a bit. I'm Tyler. What's your name?

VICTOR

(calming down) Victor. Victor Westerman.

TYLER

Ok, it's nice to meet you, Victor Westerman. Is that Russian?

VICTOR

Yeah. Yeah it is.

NURSE

It's time to go. You can see him tomorrow.

VICTOR

I'll come back in the morning. We should talk about you're truck and stuff.

TYLER

Ok. See you tomorrow, Victor Westerman.

3 EXT. HOSPITAL COURTYARD

Tyler is still bandaged around the head, but much less disoriented. The two men walk around and talk. Victor is still in the same clothing as the night before.

TYLER

Victor Westerman! Glad to see you came back. My wife was furious she didn't make it to the hospital until after you left. She

wanted to fucking kill you. But she had to go to work, so you'll live for another day.

VICTOR

That's a shame.

TYLER

Now what the hell is that supposed to mean?

VICTOR

I need to tell you something. Last night I wasn't trying to cross the street.

TYLER

Well if you weren't trying to cross the street then what were you trying to do?

VICTOR

I saw you driving up the road. I jumped in front of your truck. I'm so sorry. I never meant to hurt you.

TYLER

Jesus Christ, Victor. Are you telling me you wanted me to hit you? What the fuck, man? I could have killed you!

VICTOR

You think I don't know that?! I wanted you to hit me because I have no use here!

TYLER

What? What are you talking about?

VICTOR

Look my parents died when I was young. I never knew them. My grandparents raised me from a child. Four years ago my grandfather died of a heart attack. The man was practically my father. I dropped out of college to take care of my grandmother. After a while things went back to normal. I was going back to school to be a biologist. Life was looking up. (flashback occurs while Victor is still talking. Another Victor is reenacting everything he explains) Then I wake up last week and go to see my grandmother before class, and she's sleeping in her favorite chair. So I try to wake her up. But she won't move. And so I

scream at her, but she still just lies there. I snapped. I didn't know what to. (flashback ends) I have no other family! No sister, uncles, aunts, not even a fucking dog! I have nothing to live for! No one cares for me! My life is worthless! I almost slit my god damn wrists this morning!

TYLER

Victor.

VICTOR

I couldn't even do that right!

TYLER

What do you mean?

VICTOR

"What do I mean!?" I mean I couldn't slit my own fucking wrists. What kind of coward can't even kill himself?!

TYLER

Victor, that doesn't make you a coward. That just means you want to live. You're young. You still a lot of life to experience. You still have to fall in love, get married, and raise a family.

VICTOR

Why? Everyone that matters to me dies. I mean look at you, I'm poison to those around me. You wouldn't understand. You've already lived. You're married and happy.

TYLER

You'd be surprised what I can understand. Being married doesn't make your life perfect.

VICTOR

Oh poor you.

TYLER

Look, Victor. I can't tell you that life is perfect. I know you know that. But I want you to do me a favor. I'm getting out of here tomorrow. I want you visit me at my home. Have dinner with my family, every night for the next two weeks. Just give me two weeks to prove to you that your life means something. It means something to me.

VICTOR

Yeah and what if I go home tonight and blow my brains out instead?

TYLER

I'll put you on suicide watch if you don't promise me.

VICTOR

What if I lie?

TYLER

In these tragic times our word is all we have. I don't think you want to die a liar.

Older Victor addresses audience again.

VICTOR

So I did as he asked. Every day, for two weeks, I visited Mr. Davis at his home. I had dinner with him and his wife. Although Mr. Davis had a very rude wife, I liked being in his home. It was a large white house at the end a cull-da-sack, with a three car garage. It was magnificent. And Mr. Davis was wonderful. He liked to tell jokes. But not just any old jokes. His jokes were very on edge. They were on risky subjects. For example, Mr. Davis was a part of the civil rights movement as a young man. He always liked to tell his stories of the racism and hate he experienced, but with a comedic tone to them, almost as if they were fond memories. He talked about how he and his friends would get into all sorts of trouble, due to segregation laws, and how they would think of ways to get out of these "pickles" as he liked to call them.

Tyler joins in as and speaks as if he is still talking to Victor

TYLER

I remember one time my pals and I really had to go to the restroom. But the only one around was a white man's restroom. So we decided "Well it's better than using our own pants." As we were leaving after using the restroom a white store owner noticed us. Oh and he started yelling and screaming about how he was going to call the police. And so. We um.. We. I'm sorry, must be the memory loss. My head still isn't quite on right.

VICTOR

The stories were so interesting. Mr. Davis had been right. I was happier. When I was with him I forgot about the tragedies that had plagued my past.

4 INT. TYLER'S HOME, AT THE FRONT DOOR

VICTOR

You know, you really should go to the impound and see your truck. At least get your things from it.

TYLER

Oh there isn't anything there that I want. I never kept anything in that truck anyway.

VICTOR

Alright, well thanks again for dinner.

TYLER

It's been two weeks son. Do you plan to return tomorrow?

VICTOR

Yeah I do.

Tyler closes the door and Victor talks to himself.

VICTOR

Hmm... I need to find a way to thank Mr. Davis. The impound?

5 EXT. LOCAL IMPOUND

VICTOR

Excuse me, excuse me.

IMPOUND WORKER

(wakes up) What?!

VICTOR

Do have a truck here belonging to a Tyler Davis.

IMPOUND WORKER

Tyler Davis? Tyler Davis. Yeah. The fucker what smacked into that tree. Yeah I got his truck.

VICTOR

Great, can I go collect the personal items from it?

IMPOUND WORKER

Well first off, Mr. Davis, you don't look like a 62 year old black guy, and second we already collected and logged all the items.

VICTOR

Well can I have them for Mr. Davis?

IMPOUND WORKER

I can't give away his things to someone else. I'd get a fucking pink slip for my next paycheck. Besides, you don't look 21 to me.

VICTOR

What the hell does that have to do with anything?

IMPOUND WORKER

I logged the items in that truck. Tell Mr. Davis a bottle of liquor and a loaded gun don't mix well.

VICTOR

What?

6 INT. TYLER'S HOME, LATER THAT NIGHT

Victor knocks on the door. He is nervous.

TYLER

Victor? What are you doing here? It's 2:00 in the damn morning son.

VICTOR

Where were you going?

TYLER

What?

VICTOR

That night. The night you almost hit me. Where were you going?

TYLER

I don't honestly remember. (knocks on his head) Remember?

VICTOR

I need you to remember.

TYLER

Is it that important?

VICTOR

(begins to become angry) Yes. It's very fucking important. I need you to think. Think Tyler. Where were you going?!

TYLER

Victor lower your voice. I don't know.

VICTOR

Why did you have a gun? Why did you have a half empty bottle of liquor and loaded revolver in your truck the night you almost hit me?!

TYLER

Gun?

VICTOR

Where were you going?

TYLER

Debra...

VICTOR

What?

TYLER

My wife, Debra. She had been out late. Said she had to stay at the office late. She said that a lot, I remember. I remember. I called the office and asked to speak to her one night. The secretary said she had left hours ago. I asked Debra about it, but she just blew me off. So next time, I followed her. She left work, normal time. And she drove down Yankee Road. Finally she stopped at a house. My boss' house; Robert Barrett. I gave her everything, Victor.

VICTOR

Mr. Davis... What were you planning to do with that gun?

TYLER

What do you think, Victor? I wasn't in my right mind. I hadn't touched the bottle in 20 years before that night.

VICTOR

So what are you going to do?

TYLER

Victor. These last two weeks I thought I was molding you, by showing you that life can be good to you. But now I realize that you were teaching me. Teaching me that one can get through tragedy and come out clean. My marriage is over, Victor. But if you hadn't stepped in front of my truck that night, my life would be too. Thank you.

Older Victor steps out and addresses the crowd directly again.

VICTOR

Tyler divorced his wife and retired that spring. And though he died of heart disease eight years later, Tyler watched me receive my doctorate, fall in love, start a family and become the man I am today. I don't know if it was coincidence or fate that brought the two of us together that night on Yankee Road. But what I do know is that Tyler Davis had a gift. He wasn't a perfect worker, husband or person, but he influenced one life like very few can.