

WEST SIDE MARKETS

Written

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. STRIP MALL - PARKING LOT - DAWN

Bare trees and brownstones surround the L-shaped layout of retail stores. Food markets bookend the lot.

OLD EMILY (V.O.)
When I was a little girl, my father
opened the Demoulas family market.

DEMOULAS

Red neon letters over brick spell out the family moniker. The windows are full of hand painted sale notices.

A small bell dangles from the top of the door frame. A gentle wind gust makes the bell jingle.

OLD EMILY (V.O.)
On a breezy day, I swear I could
smell my mother's fresh cinnamon
buns in the parking lot.

A store flyer jukes around a bike rack and across the lot.

OLD EMILY (V.O.)
The Almacs family moved to our town
and opened a supermarket my
sophomore year of high school.

ALMACS

A light box sign presides over industrial tinted glass and prefab masonry. Angular ice blue text glows and hums.

OLD EMILY (V.O.)
Father petitioned the town council
to put up a big road side sign to
attract customers.

DEMOULAS STREET SIGN

The three story backlit sign towers over the lot. A ladder hangs down the side, necessary to change the lettering.

OLD EMILY (V.O.)
The Almacs were furious when the
town denied them the same permit,
sparking hatred between the stores.

Letters spell: Demoula is a family name you can trust.
Valentine's Week Special. Dozen farm fresh eggs 50¢.

MORNING

The lot bustles with activity. Customers push Almacs blue and Demoula red shopping carts from the stores to their cars.

OLD EMILY (V.O.)

Then one day, the rivalry ended.
The town gossiped for decades, but
neither family ever breathed a word
about what happened on that fateful
February night.

DEMOULAS STORE FRONT

The golden bell heralds EMILY, 16, brunette and brown eyes to match. She exits through the door marked entrance.

Emily covers her hair with a kerchief and ties it under her chin. She pauses at the bike rack.

Emily looks back over her shoulder at the store. She walks across the parking lot, eyes averted, towards...

ALMACS STORE FRONT

Emily studies her dim reflection in the tinted glass. She checks her appearance from many angles.

Sunlight reflects off her name tag: Emily Demoula. She unfastens the tag and stuffs it in a pocket.

INT. ALMACS - STOCK ROOM - MORNING

Emily knocks on an office door. The placard on the door reads: Matthew Almacs, Sr., Store Manager.

The door opens. Emily slips inside and the door closes.

INT. ALMACS - MANAGER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

MATT, 17, sandy blonde with strong chin, locks the door.

Emily and Matt embrace and close their eyes. The pair cradle each other. Emily's kerchief falls to the floor.

MATT

We can't keep meeting in my dad's
office.

EMILY

Why not?

MATT

This is your third job interview
this week.

Emily dons a blue Almacs apron hanging on a coat rack.

EMILY

Well, then hire me.

Emily twirls and models the apron.

EMILY

Don't I look good in blue?

Matt holds Emily by the shoulders and touches her hair.

MATT

You're beautiful in any color.

Emily hangs the Almacs apron on the rack and sighs.

EMILY

We could go away, together.

MATT

President's Day is next week. The
stores are closed for the parade.
We could take the Silvercup Flyer
down to the coast.

Emily cups her hands around Matt's wrist and looks up at him.

EMILY

And walk down a street together,
where no one knows us.

MATT

I want to, more than anything.

Matt looks down at his feet.

EMILY

Matt, we made a promise to each
other. Don't you remember?

FADE TO:

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. DEMOULAS STREET SIGN - DUSK

Emily kneels on the catwalk and arranges black letters. An
ornate pink template spelling "Valentine" stands out.

Emily looks down through the catwalk at the...

PARKING LOT

Matt gathers errant Almacs carts and aligns them in a row.

The valentine placard flutters down and lands on the carts. Matt collects the "valentine" and looks up at Emily.

The boy climbs the ladder. Emily watches his ascent.

EXT. DEMOULAS - DUMPSTER - CONTINUOUS

RAY DEMOULA, 22, lean and unshaven, wears a white apron and a butcher knife with sharpening rod in a belted holster.

He tosses thick stripped bones into the open dumpster. As Ray turns to leave, the street sign catches his attention.

EXT. DEMOULAS STREET SIGN - CONTINUOUS

Matt stands on the catwalk.

MATT

I think you lost something.

The egg shell glow of the sign illuminates Emily's coy smile.

EMILY

What is it?

MATT

It's, letters.

Matt extends the "valentine" to Emily, but she demures.

EMILY

I'm sorry but I don't accept letters from strangers.

Matt smiles.

MATT

Matt Almacs.

Emily touches the other end of the valentine.

EMILY

Emily Demoula.

The pair use the valentine placard to "shake hands".

MATT
That's a nice first name.

EMILY
I like your first name too.

INT. DEMOULAS - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ray enters and plunges the butcher knife into the wall near the fuse box. He reaches for the control panel.

EXT. DEMOULAS STREET SIGN - CONTINUOUS

Emily and Matt hold the valentine and smile at each other.

MATT
I'll forget your last name, if
you'll forget mine. Deal?

EMILY
I don't make deals, but I do make
promises.

MATT
Then, it's a promise?

EMILY
It's a promise.

The sign goes dark.

END FLASHBACK

FADE TO:

INT. ALMACS - MANAGER'S OFFICE - MORNING

Emily steps away from Matt.

EMILY
We made a promise to never let our
names get in the way of us.

Matt steps towards her. The lovers embrace, long and silent.

MATT
Emily, there's something I've been
meaning to ask you. But things have
happened so fast...

EMILY
What is it?

MATT
Emily, would you--

A knock at the door. Matt and Emily stare at each other.

Another knock. Matt breaks the embrace. Emily puts on her kerchief and nods to Matt.

Matt opens the door. Emily exits.

SEAN, 16, freckles and glasses, watches Emily leave.

SEAN
Matt, you better come out here.

MATT
What is it?

INT. ALMACS - DAIRY AISLE - CONTINUOUS

Emily stares, frozen in place by what she sees.

Matt enters and pauses by Emily for a moment.

Sean and other Almacs boys, all wearing blue aprons, gather.

Matt walks past Emily and faces Ray. Behind Ray are a dozen Demoula boys, all of them in red aprons.

RAY
Go home, Emily.

Emily looks at Ray, fresh blood on his white apron.

RAY
Now!

Emily looks down at the floor and leaves.

MATT
Don't talk to her like that.

The Demoula boys parrot Matt.

RAY
I will talk to my baby sister any way I please.

Ray opens a carton of milk and pours it on the floor.

RAY

And if you ever speak to her again,
I'll hang you up in my meat locker,
you Almacs pretty boy.

The Demoula boys snicker. Matt bristles.

MATT

Who do you think you are
disrespecting my father's store
like that, you Demoula thug.

The Almacs boys rally behind Matt. Ray grins and nods.

RAY

Then we settle it, with a rumble.
Your boys against mine. Tonight.
Winner takes over the parking lot.

Hushed murmurs on both sides.

Matt blanches. Ray chuckles.

RAY

What's the matter? You have to ask
Papa Almacs for permission to stay
up past your store hours?

Demoula boys laugh.

MATT

You're on. Tonight, we rumble.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A fat man walks across the lot and whistles an upbeat tune,
grocery bag in hand.

Overhead lights turn off, one by one. Darkness closes in on
the customer and he stops whistling.

The fat man breaks into a run and fumbles for his keys. He
opens the door and dumps the groceries on the back seat.

Tires squeal as the vehicle exits the lot.

DEMOULA/ALMACS STORES INTERCUT

- Almacs boy pulls bread torpedoes out of an industrial oven.
- Demoula boys gather commercial jugs of cooking oil.
- Red and blue pricing guns are loaded with sticker rolls.

- Demoula and Almacs boys tie their apron strings tight.
- Matt holsters a pair of price guns.
- Ray buttons up a long white bloodied butcher coat.
- Almacs and Demoula boys storm the parking lot.
- Ray locks the Demoulas front door behind him.
- Emily looks through the glass and pounds on the pane.

EMILY

Open the door! Don't hurt him!

- Demoula and Almacs boys line up on their respective sides.
- Matt anchors the Almacs.
- Ray leads the Demoulas.
- Itchy trigger fingers hover over price guns.
- Clouds gather and the wind gusts.
- A brown paper bag drifts across the lot.
- Matt looks up at the Demoula street sign and gulps.

RAY

Closing time.

END INTERCUT

INT. DEMOULAS - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A timer near the fuse box ticks. The dial clicks to 10 p.m.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

The Demoula street sign display clicks off.

No one moves or speaks. A single bread torpedo launches from the Almacs rear flank.

All watch the bread fly high. Demoula boys mock the attack.

A chubby Demoula boy takes the bread upside the head. He grimaces and falls, out cold.

Ray leans over the fallen comrade. He rips the dough in half and sniffs the insides. He tests a piece and spits it out.

Ray rises and turns to his troops.

RAY
Sourdough! Take cover!

Almacs boys launch a massive barrage of sourdough missiles.

Demoula boys flip carts and use them for cover. The bread pounds exposed boys, gut shots, back stabs and leg wounds.

Almacs boys cheer. Matt high fives with Sean.

Demoula boys regroup. Shopping cart clatter fills the air.

The Almacs cheers fade.

Demoula ranks part. A trio of carts surge forward, each powered by a pair of boys. Large jugs jostle in the carts.

The boys loose the carts towards the Almacs front line.

MATT
Cooking oil!

The rumbling carts hit a speed bump and topple.

Industrial sized jugs of cooking oil pour their slippery contents out all over the pavement. Almacs boys scatter.

Ray holds the crimson price gun above his head.

RAY
Attack!

Demoula troops rush into battle.

Almacs boys draw their blue price guns. Matt leads the Demoulas infantry charge.

All boys clash on the asphalt battlefield.

Price guns slash across victims like straight razors, leaving trails of sticker wounds in their wake.

Almacs bodies fall, dotted with red stickers.

Demoula troops collapse, blotched with blue price tags.

Both sides retreat and tend to the "injured". Matt and Ray step forward. They snap their fingers and extend their palms.

A "squire" from each store hands the leaders filthy mops.

DEMOULA & ALMACS BOYS
Joust. Joust. Joust. Joust. Joust.

Ray climbs into a red cart. Matt hops into a blue cart.

"Horse pairs" push each cart in opposite directions.

INT. DEMOULAS - PRODUCE AISLE - CONTINUOUS

Emily freight trains a half dozen shopping carts together and aims the docked carts at the locked front door.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Sean stands between the opponents, crumpled apron held high.

SEAN
Ready.

The knights, standing in the carts, point their mops skyward.

SEAN
Charge!

Sean waves the blue apron and runs off the joust field.

PARKING LOT/DEMOULAS INTERCUT

- Ray gathers speed and levels the mop at Matt.
- Matt advances and aims the mop at Ray.
- Emily surges towards the door, pushing the cart train.
- Almacs and Demoula boys cheer on their leaders.
- The horses push the knights at each other, forty feet.
- The knights brace for impact, mops steady, thirty feet.
- Emily gains speed and bears down on the door, twenty feet.
- Ray screams. Matt screams. Emily screams.
- Matt thumps Ray hard and dismounts the Demoula knight.
- Emily crashes the cart train through the door.
- Almacs boys cheer for their champion.
- Matt jumps out of the cart and celebrates.

- Ray scorns help from his boys and gets to his feet.
- Emily climbs through the wreckage and runs towards the mob.

END INTERCUT

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Ray unbuttons his coat, knife and sharpening rod gleam. Ray draws the pristine blade. A thunderclap rumbles.

The Demoula butcher closes on Matt.

SEAN

Matt! Behind you!

Ray slashes as Matt sidesteps the attack. The butcher knife trembles in Ray's grip as he grits his teeth and hisses.

RAY

Death to all Almacs.

Ray charges, butcher knife held high. Matt tucks and rolls past Ray, unsheathing the sharpening rod from Ray's belt.

The Demoula butcher slashes as he pivots to face Matt. The blade clangs against the thick rod. The metal grinds.

Matt and Ray glare at each other, face to face.

MATT

My name, is Matt.

Ray repels and thrusts. Matt parries with the rod and backpedals. Ray charges and disarms Matt. The butcher lunges.

Emily breaks through the crowd and intercepts her brother.

All the market boys gasp. Emily's eyes bulge.

Ray shudders, mouth agape. Dark droplets fall to the asphalt.

Emily's bloody hands grip the blade. The steel tip trembles a millimeter shy of piercing her stomach.

Ray releases the hilt. The butcher knife drops to the ground.

RAY

Why him?

Emily cradles Ray's cheeks in her hands and sheds a tear.

EMILY
Why not him?

Emily smiles. Ray slumps into his sister's arms, she strokes his neck.

Emily breaks the embrace and turns. Matt takes off his Almacs apron. The lovers touch and nuzzle.

MATT
There's something I've been meaning
to ask you.

Emily wipes away a tear.

EMILY
What is it?

Ray picks up the butcher knife.

MATT
Emily, will you be my valentine?

Ray hurls the knife at the red neon Demoulas sign.

EMILY
Yes, I will be your valentine.

The blade pierces the neon tube and the sign goes dark. The wind blows and it starts to rain.

Matt and Emily kiss each other, long and slow.

The exposed neon tube arcs. Rain pours down hard. The Demoulas store sign showers the parking lot with sparks.

Ray takes off his bloody coat. Almacs and Demoula boys drop their price guns.

All lights and signs flicker in the downpour. Rain and sparks pepper the asphalt as Emily and Matt kiss.

Sean blushes at the lovers and takes off his apron. All Demoula and Almacs boys drop their aprons.

The lovers kiss as sparks and rain dance around their feet.

OLD EMILY (V.O.)
A kiss is but one moment in time.

FADE TO:

INT. BAKERY COUNTER - DAY

Two fresh homemade cinnamon buns glisten on a counter. A bell jingles as a door creaks open, a wave crests in the distance.

Wrinkled female hands squeeze icing from a nozzle tip bag onto one bun in the shape of half a heart.

OLD EMILY (V.O.)
But we learned that night...

Geriatric male hands take the icing bag and squeeze the other half of the heart shape onto the adjacent bun.

OLD MATT (V.O.)
...that the truth of one kiss...

Female and male hands push the two buns together.

OLD EMILY & OLD MATT (V.O.)
...can last a lifetime.

They hold hands, wedding bands showing.

OLD EMILY & OLD MATT (V.O.)
Happy Valentine's Day.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END