

#Charity

Written by

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INT. THRIFT SHOP, STORE ROOM - DAY

Overflowing boxes stacked everywhere, many threatening to topple over and spill their contents onto the dusty floor.

A sign on the wall reads "Helping Hands - Registered Charity 278593". Or it would if it weren't obscured by a rack of colorful men's shirts.

The entire place looks like a powerful tornado has delivered the unwanted contents of the 70s into one unlucky place.

EMILY, (very early 20s) well-dressed, meticulous make-up, sits at a little desk and taps away on her phone, oblivious to the chaos around her.

EMILY  
Hashtag, CHARITY. How about you?

INSERT: Phone Screen

A TikTok video replays, Emily tidying one very small box of donated books; grinning for the camera.

She edits the info and adds #makingacharitydifference  
#emilydoescharity

Typing pauses, then types #emilycharityqueen

BACK TO SCENE

Emily smiles at her handiwork and then presses send.

EMILY  
Socials, tick!

BEN, 50s, scruffy, bald and all round nondescript pushes through a door behind Emily.

He surveys the war zone; a frown spreading over his face.

BEN  
Have you done anything about...?

He spreads his arms wide.

EMILY  
Uh, yeah, course.

She picks up the box of books and offers it to Ben.

BEN  
That's it? You've been here hours!

She drops the box.

EMILY

I'm not having a good time right now,  
my charity work here is my only joy.

She puts her head in her hands and sobs.

Ben blushes; awkward as Emily cries.

BEN

Looks, I'm sorry, it's just we're  
busy out there and could do with an  
extra pair of hands.

EMILY

(hands still up)  
Help people in this state?

Ben blushes deeper.

BEN

Hmm, yeah, maybe not.

Emily's crying subsides a little.

BEN

Why don't you pick those books up and  
then iron that rack of shirts?

He points to the rack obscuring the sign.

EMILY

With these nails?

She flutters her brightly colored nails, not moving her  
hands from her face though.

BEN

Oh, yes, well maybe more books.

Emily nods. Crying almost stopped.

BEN

Good, sorry again, good job.

He swivels on his heel and makes a speedy exit.

Emily takes her hands down to reveal completely dry cheeks.

EMILY

Hashtag, OscarforEmily.

EXT. KOREAN GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Emily shuffles backwards, camera out in front, framing the shop and her own face as she records a clip.

EMILY

So here's Kang's, I come here all the time, more or less a regular.

She steps back a little further.

Onto a HOMELESS GUY's foot. He's too disheveled to age accurately, needs a bath, some food and general tlc.

EMILY

Ugh! Watch it, buddy!

HOMELESS GUY

Emily wipes her coat and walks away, leaving the Homeless Man bewildered and clutching his foot.

Emily pauses, glances back at him, shrugs.

She retraces her steps.

The Homeless Guy holds out his hand, thinking she's had a change of heart.

She takes a selfie, posting it with #charity4thehomeless.

The Homeless Guy watches, hand still outstretched, as she flounces into the store.

INT. KANG'S KOREAN GROCERY - CONTINUOUS

Emily shops while live-streaming herself, showcasing various products in exotic packaging.

EMILY

I love trying new things, and the staff here are so helpful.

She grabs a random KOREAN WOMAN by the arm.

EMILY

So what is this then?

She holds out a bag of what are clearly noodles.

KOREAN WOMAN

Noodles.

Emily lets her go and laughs into the camera.

EMILY  
See, super helpful staff.

Behind her, but in frame, the Korean Woman approaches the cash register to pay - clearly not a member of staff.

A ROBBER, balaclava and nervous twitch, bursts into the store, brandishing a shotgun.

The STAFF and the Korean Woman put their hands in the air.

ROBBER  
Empty it, now!

He waves the shotgun towards the register.

Emily, hiding behind a shelf aims the camera at the Robber.

EMILY  
(whispering)  
OMG, a robbery in progress.

The Robber looks over to her.

ROBBER  
I'm not deaf! Out here now!

Emily, does the opposite, all the time keeping the phone pointed forwards.

Distracted she trips, reaches for the nearest shelf to steady herself... Emily and the shelf come down in slo-mo.

Cans, bags, bottles, everything clatters and scatters across the floor.

The Robber advances towards Emily, his vision reduced a little by the balaclava, and trips on a rolling can.

The shotgun fires.

A swarm of pellets fly past Emily as she gets to her feet, a few grazing her arm.

She feints, falling again, but this time on top of the Robber, inadvertently ramming the shotgun into his head and knocking him out.

CUSTOMERS gasp, as MRS KANG (60s) the Korean store owner and her son, DAVID (30s) Korean-American in sweats rush over.

Emily briefly raises her head, and phone.

EMILY  
What happened?

MRS KANG  
You our hero.

EMILY  
Me?

David nods as Emily feints again.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Emily wakes up, disoriented.

In the seats by the bed are Mrs Kang, David and another woman in a tall hat and elaborate multi-colored robes.

EMILY  
Hashtag, who, what?

Mrs Kang pats her hand.

MRS KANG  
This is our Mudang.

The MUDANG, nods towards Emily.

DAVID  
She is a traditional Korean healer,  
and mystic.

Emily looks to her bandaged arm.

EMILY  
Do I need a healer?

Mrs Kang shakes her head.

DAVID  
No, she has other gifts.

With that the Mudang rises from her seat, literally as she floats in the air above Emily's bed.

EMILY  
Er, what's happening.

DAVID  
You are being rewarded for saving the  
store and helping our community.

The Mudang starts chanting, swaying above the bed.

EMILY

No, honestly I don't deserve...

She points at the flying shaman.

EMILY

Whatever this is.

MUDANG

Your humility is admirable.  
Nevertheless, I bestow upon you a  
gift; the power of telekinesis.

The lights in the room pulse as the chanting intensifies.

MUDANG

It is yours to use as you wish, but  
you may share with others at loss to  
yourself, if that is your wish.

One final pulse as every light burns as bright as the sun.

Then, all is normal again; except the Mudang has vanished.

EMILY

When, where, and what's telekenesis?

MRS KANG

Your gift.

DAVID

Now you can help more people.

EMILY

Me, well, but, I...

MRS KANG

Hero to many!

Emily looks skeptical and uneasy.

EXT. EMILY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Emily walks up to her door, fumbling with her keys. She drops them. Frustrated, she waves her hand, and the keys fly into her hand. Her eyes widen in shock.

EMILY

Hashtag, Superpowers.

INT. EMILY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Emily practices her new power, amazed. She telekinetically lifts her cat, MR. WHISKERS, who meows in protest.

Filming it all of course on her phone.

EMILY  
Okay, Mr. Whiskers, the flying cat,  
I'll put you down.

Mr Whiskers darts into hiding as soon as his paws hit the carpet.

EMILY  
I'm definitely gonna go viral!

She bounces down onto the sofa, scares the bejesus out of Mr Whiskers again who scoots off to safety of the kitchen.

Emily flicks on her TV. On the screen...

NEWS ANNOUNCER  
The asteroid will hit the eastern  
starboard in four hours.

EMILY  
Say what?

NEWS ANNOUNCER  
NASA report that it will likely kill  
everyone in the USA, Canada and most  
of South America. and usher in a new  
ice age for the rest of the world.

EMILY  
Hashtag, whattheactualfuck!

NEWS ANNOUNCER  
We will be going off air now so that  
we can spend our final hours with the  
ones we love. God bless you all.

The screen goes dead.

Outside the sound of car horns BLARING and people SCREAMING.

Emily looks out from her window and down to the street; utter chaos. Cars crashed into each other, fights breaking out, people running, screaming... bedlam.

Emily looks up.

In the sky, a dark ominous shape streaks towards the Earth.



EMILY

I wonder.

Mr. Whiskers pokes his head out from the kitchen as Emily levitates the TV, he shakes his heads and retreats.

EXT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Emily holds her phone up, livestreaming.

EMILY

To move the course of the asteroid  
you need to share my power, together  
we can save the planet.

For once, and despite the corny dialogue Emily seems genuinely serious, mature, driven.

EMILY

I'm going to post and share this  
message on every platform available;  
well apart from Truth Social.

She shudders at the thought.

EMILY

So please retweet, repost, share,  
tell your friends, tell everyone! I  
will share my gift at midnight... I  
don't know how yet, but be ready!

Emily stops the livestream, flicks from app to app, posting, uploading, messaging, sharing.

MONTAGE

- People receiving Emily's message, watching Mr Whiskers rise into the air.
- People forwarding the messages.
- Other people watching other clips of Emily levitating the TV.
- Levitating a car.
- Uri Geller posting his own message sharing Emily's

EXT. KANG'S KOREAN GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Emily bangs on the door.

EMILY  
Hey, you in there?

No answer. She bangs again.

DAVID (O.C.)  
We're closed.

EMILY  
It's me, Emily, your hero.

Locks and bolts slide and open.

The door opens a crack and David peers out.

DAVID  
Hi, sorry, but we're still closed.

He makes to shut the door again.

Emily jams her foot in before he can close it fully.

EMILY  
I need the Mudang. I need to share my  
power.

DAVID  
Why?

She points to the sky.

DAVID  
Oh, okay...

EXT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Emily has her phone set up on tripod, the Mudang, Mrs Kang and David flank her as she speaks into camera.

EMILY  
So, I'm going to transfer my power to  
everyone else tonight, so you can all  
use it on the asteroid.

The Mudang starts to chant.

EMILY  
Your combined power can stop that.

She points to the sky as the chanting intensifies.

EMILY  
Save us.

Street lights pulse and throb.

EMILY  
Save everyone.

The street lights explode, sparks fly.

EMILY  
Now!

Above their heads the dark shape slows, pauses above them,  
slowly moves backwards.

EMILY  
Keep going!

The asteroid goes into full reverse!

The night sky is full of the sounds of CHEERING.

INT. THRIFT SHOP - DAY

Emily, less makeup, mature clothes, irons some shirts.

Behind her, Ben moves boxes with his mind, making light work  
of tidying the store room.

EMILY  
Hey Ben, you okay I take a quick  
break, I've an errand to run.

BEN  
Sure, I've got things here.

EXT. KOREAN GROCERY STORE - DAY

Emily exits the store carrying a steaming bowl.

Hunkers down next to the Homeless Man.

EMILY  
This is Japchae, spicy noodles, it  
will warm you up.

She hands it to him.

EMILY  
I'm Emily.

HOMELESS MAN  
Thank you, Emily.