

CRUCIFIED

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. BAPTIST CHURCH - NIGHT

PARISHIONERS exit cars and walk towards the white-planked church set alongside a rural road. Nothing but plains and farm land to be seen for miles.

The skies are dark and forbidding. Lightning streaks pierce the night, followed by the BOOMS of distant thunder.

The visitors hurry past a large, heavily splintered wooden cross, and a greeting sign along the sidewalk:

WELCOME TO THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF PARIS, TEXAS

BINGO TONIGHT AT 7:00 PM!

The thunder grows louder as the storm closes in.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - NIGHT

Players huddle over their bingo cards, marking the numbers as they're called out by PASTOR RALPH COOPER, 50, balding, overweight and sweating profusely.

PASTOR COOPER

B 19.

A loud BOOM from nearby thunder shakes the building. People look up, anxious.

PASTOR COOPER (CONT'D)

B as in BOOM!! It's okay, folks.

This too, shall pass, right?

(reaches into bingo cage)

Next number... G... 32.

DENNIS MOORE, 35, slender and pre-maturely gray, and his wife ADELINE, 35, wavy-haired and plain, sit at a table with their son, JOEY, 11, a short mop-tossed mess.

Bingo cards are spread out in front of Dennis and Adeline, while Joey has a pack of football trading cards laid out before him. He intently studies each card.

Next to them, CARL, 60, a grizzled man in overalls, notices Joey looking over an Aaron Rodgers trading card.

CARL
Shouldn't be bringing an Aaron
Rogers card here into Dallas
Cowboys territory.

Joey is confused. Looks to his dad.

DENNIS
Everyone is welcome in the Lord's
house, Carl.

CARL
You ask me, ain't no place in a
Texas church for a Packer.

Thunder shakes the very walls. The storm is close.

Joey ignores Carl, and casually flips the cards, one by one,
reading the stats on the back with great interest.

One in particular he flips back and forth.

INSERT ON FRONT OF CARD:

A picture of RICKY BOSTON, a WR for the Houston Texans. His
arms are outstretched, celebrating a score.

RETURN TO SCENE

JOEY
Dad, ever heard of Ricky Boston?

DENNIS
Yeah. Wide receiver for Houston.
Why do you ask?

JOEY
He only played one season. Why?

Numerous BOOMS shake the ceiling above them. Each one
escalates in intensity.

Dennis stares at the ceiling, shakes his head.

DENNIS
Holy cow... Um, he was let go after
a year. Never played again.

JOEY
Why?

Carl lets out a groan at the mention of this Ricky Boston.

CARL

Why? Because he was a faggot,
that's why. Can't have queers
playing football.

DENNIS

Carl, knock it off.

JOEY

Why can't someone who's gay play in
the NFL?

CARL

Because you can't have gay guys
walking around naked in a locker
room trying to tempt the straight
players! It's an abomination!

ADELINE

He's a human being, Carl, not an
animal. Jesus told us to love all
our neighbors, not just the
straight, white conservative ones.

PASTOR COOPER (O.S.)

O 55!

CARL

Gays don't count! It says so in the
Bible! Homosexuality is an ugly sin
and we ought to stone them all!

Dennis slams his hands on the table, loud enough for everyone
to take notice. He's about to say something, when--

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

TORNADO COMING!! BIG ONE!!

Everyone looks up to see a MAN rushing through the door from
the top of the basement stairs. But the strong wind sucks him
right back out the door and out of sight.

PASTOR COOPER

Everyone take cover!

People scatter, diving under tables. SCREAMS as the basement
roof shakes violently.

Joey tries to collect his trading cards, but Dennis grabs his
son and pulls him and Adeline to a nearby wall. He yanks a
table over them.

A roaring sound like a massive train fills the basement. The
ceiling GROANS and starts to split apart.

DENNIS
KEEP YOUR HEADS DOWN!

They can barely hear him over the roar of the tornado.

Big chunks of ceiling begin to rip apart and disappear. A massive wind swirls through the basement.

Tables and chairs start sliding about the room. All the bingo cards are sucked out of the ceiling. One by one, Joey's trading cards zip off the table and fly away.

JOEY
My cards!!

DENNIS
Forget them! Keep down and hold on
to me tight!

The wind's suction is getting even stronger now. It takes a large table and sends it flying across the room, straight into the head of Pastor Cooper.

Unconscious, he loses his grip around a radiator and shoots like a projectile through a hole in the ceiling. Another elderly couple are pulled out right behind him.

Joey sees one trading card still on the floor. He wriggles free from his father and tries to reach for it.

The tornado has other plans for him. Just as he's about to reach the card, he's sucked along the floor.

ADELINE
JOEY!!

Dennis leaps up and snags Joey's hand just as he starts levitating towards the ceiling. Adeline wraps her arms around Dennis' legs to weight him down. After a great struggle, Dennis pulls Joey back down.

They hunker down next to an upright piano and hold tight to the legs.

Nearby, the wind tugs at Carl and he starts sliding on the floor towards the tornado's vertex. As he slides by, Dennis grabs his hand, trying to hold him in place.

DENNIS
Hang on, Carl!

Dennis strains to hold Carl's hand. The wind is almost too intense for him to manage holding both his son and Carl.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
I've got you! I've --

Suddenly a jagged piece of flooring comes hurtling across the room and straight in to Carl's neck. His eyes roll up in his head, and his hand goes limp.

Dennis lets go of Carl's hand and Carl sails away through the ceiling with a mass of other debris.

And as quickly as it came, the winds start to subside as the tornado passes. The turbulence inside the basement finally ceases to everyone's relief.

Sobbing people slowly gather themselves and head upstairs to take stock of the devastation.

EXT. CHURCH GROUNDS - NIGHT

The church is completely gone, ripped away and thrown across the plains. The steeple lies smashed a hundred yards away.

In the parking lot, cars are flipped. Smaller ones have been tossed down the road.

People walk around in a daze. The damage is overwhelming.

Amazingly, the only thing still standing is the cross.

Dennis walks by it, then pauses when he spots something interesting. He calls Joey over.

DENNIS
Would you look at that.

There on the cross is the Ricky Boston trading card.

His outstretched hands are pierced by the large splinters.

FADE OUT.