

GOODWILL

by
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FADE IN:

INT. '75 CAMERO - MORNING

Framed by the front windshield -- morning traffic. Bumper to bumper. Rush hour.

A horn BLOWS.

CARSON(mid twenties), chiseled, boyish handsome, could be Matt Damon's double, taps on the steering wheel.

He looks up at the red light. Scans the congestion.

Looks down at his watch: EIGHT FORTY FIVE.

A set of KNUCKLES RAP on the window. He jumps, startled.

Carson spins around, notices a DIRTY BEGGAR, cold blue eyes, face etched from years of weather and stress.

The car window descends.

The beggar holds out an empty Starbuck's CUP.

DIRTY BEGGAR
Spare some change?

Carson reaches down in his pocket. Sifts through folded greenbacks. A couple ones and a twenty.

Separates the bills, pushes the ones down in the stained cup.

The light up ahead turns green. Carson buries the twenty.

The car begins to roll. The beggar still steady, by the window, cup out. Walks along side.

Their eyes lock once more. The beggar says nothing but his face says it all.

Most would just speed off, but Carson digs down, retrieves the double sawback. It finds a new home in the stained Starbuck's cup.

A crinkled smile births across the dirty face. Nodding, the beggar backs out of traffic.

A horn BLOWS. Carson glances in the rearview. Ups his window.

The 75' chevy is swallowed up in the herd. The working class.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Buzzing with white collar workers. Tables full of friends, enemies -- coworkers.

It's an active place. The HUM of voices.

Starched shirts form a line. About halfway down, Carson stands patiently in queue. Then *she* walks in.

AMANDA (twenty-ish), blond hair, princess pretty, takes a place at the end of the human traffic jam.

She peers around. Looks for someone.

A smile finds her face, because she's found him.

Amanda strides past those waiting. Ignores their 'are you serious' looks as she breaks in line behind Carson.

A potbellied GUY rolls his eyes as if one person sliding in front of him is going to make him miss a meal.

AMANDA

Thanks for saving me a place.

Carson points at his selections. A Spanish LADY scoops green peas onto his tray.

The line slides. People and food move in conveyor belt fashion. Fast food in the workplace.

Both trays now sport a full course meal as they reach the CASHIER. Carson looks back at Amanda.

Amanda nudges Carson.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Your turn, right?

Carson looks like he forgot. The CASHIER looks at them impatiently, as do those in line.

His hand reaches in, pulls out an empty pocket.

Amanda looks. In his hand, a few balls of lint.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

I got it. Don't worry. I'll put it on your tab.

Embarrassed, he steps back. She monies up and follows him to a table where they both take a seat.

With a fork, he stabs the colorful English peas. Pauses and looks into Amanda's eyes.

CARSON

Ya know I knew it was my turn today. I was sitting in traffic this morning and out of the blue this guy appears at my window, holding out a cup.

AMANDA

Those guys are professionals ya know? Some make more than we do.

CARSON

Well, this guy...

AMANDA

I know Carson, you gave him everything, right? Everything in that empty pocket...except the lint.

She laughs. He blushes, takes a bite of readied veggies.

CARSON

He was different.

She shakes her head. Extends her hand for some charity.

CARSON (CONT'D)

You have to have a Starbuck's cup.

Laughing, she pulls her hand back.

AMANDA

A bum with a Starbuck's cup. Hmmm anyone who can afford a five dollar cup of joe, doesn't need a handout.

One last look from her, almost flirtatious.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Big hearted Carson. Good karma.

CARSON

Yeah, that karma didn't exactly pay for lunch.

They eat. Their voices drown out amongst steady chatter.

EXT. HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

The '75 camero barrels down the interstate, windows downed, radio cranked.

Exit sign: University Boulevard.

The car slows. Enters the off ramp.

INT. '75 CAMERO - CONTINUOUS

Carson turns the volume down on the radio. A horn catches his attention. He looks into the rearview mirror.

Then straight ahead. At the sight of the red light, he notices -- the problem.

An old CLUNKER stalled in the intersection. He contemplates.

Turns the steering wheel sharp. Heads into the median.

EXT. INTERSECTION - MOMENTS LATER

Carson looks into the window of the stranded clunker.

The stressed out face of an OLDER WOMAN eases when she sees that help has arrived.

CARSON

Just steer while I push you through
the light and into that station
over there.

He points over to a gas station caddy corner. She shakes her head in agreeance.

Carson takes his place behind the car. Leans into the push. Heaves the vehicle into motion.

It slowly rolls through the junction and into the...

EXT. STATION PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Out of breath, Carson walks to the driver's side window.

Before he can speak, she sticks her hand out holding a crisp ten dollar bill.

CARSON

Thanks but no thanks. Do you have
someone to come pick you up?

She holds up a cell phone.

WOMAN

My daughter's on the way. Thank you
so much.

Carson smiles. He jogs back towards the crossroads.

EXT. UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD - AFTERNOON

A road less congested. A stray DOG trots down the sidewalk.
Remnants of former business. Boarded up. Abandoned.

Two guys huddle close. Probably a drug deal. This is the part
of the city you don't want to be in after dark.

The '75 rolls down the street. Behind it, the afternoon sun
begins its descent.

A traffic light ahead turns orange. Then red. Those traffic
lights that make no sense. The intersection extinct except
for the '75 that makes a quick stop.

The wind carries an empty plastic BAG gracefully through the
wind. It catches Carson's attention as it drifts, almost
dancing through the air.

It nears the far corner. Lands near a motorized wheelchair.
Those things you see on late night infomercials -- mobility
scooters they call them.

Carson focuses in on the chair as it stalls in the crosswalk.

An OLD CRIPPLE, black trench coat, fedora hat, climbs off.
Shuffles around the failing scooter.

CARSON (O.S.)

Hey! You need some help!

The old cripple carries on around the chair. Ignores Carson's
attempted offer.

A car door SLAMS.

The cripple looks up, sees Carson striding over.

Paying no attention, the crippled climbs back on the non-
moving chair. His head steadied downward.

Carson nears the needy. The old cripple sits slumped over. We
can't see his face at all.

CARSON (CONT'D)
Battery dead? Here, I'll help you
push it across the street?

Carson moves to the back. He looks down. His hands find a grip. He readies to push. Glances up.

BAM! A shot rings out.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Stark white walls. No windows. Sterile.

The sound of a cardiac monitoring system.

ON THE SCREEN: Solid black followed by an animated neon green electrocardiogram bouncing across the screen in rhythm.

We see the patient. A combination of wires and tubes. A ventilator tube and tape covers his face. His eyes closed.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

Title: One Month Later

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

The buzz of traffic fills the air.

In the distance, we see a motorized scooter approaching.

The chair jars as it crosses the simultaneous cracks in the infinite sidewalk.

Sitting slumped, waist strapped, head cradled -- Carson.

He toggles a joystick sloppily bringing the mobile chair to a quick stop at the...

EXT. INTERSECTION - CONTINUOUS

The DO NOT WALK symbol blinks across the way. Carson waits.

His head still. His eyes move down. An empty Starbuck's cup blows into the chair wheels.

A HAND reaches down, grabs the cup. The old beggar stands up. Meets Carson eye to eye. The same cold blue eyes from not so long ago.

Like a dog marking his territory, the beggar leans in, stares a threat.

DIRTY BEGGAR

This corner here is mine. You best scoot on. Pick another intersection to work. This'ns taken.

The dirty old beggar limps out into the crowd of traffic held captive by the red light.

The WALK symbol flashes across the way. Carson fiddles the toggle. The scooter crosses.

The beggar goes about his daily ritual.

In the distance, from behind, the scooter carrying a broken Carson, travels until it fades away in the distance.

Karma no where around.

FADE OUT.