

Going Away

written by

Kevin Jesse Kaskaske

Sound of children frolicking...

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

MICKEY, 70, grayed and grizzled, sits on the bench staring at the colorful playhouse for children... He stands up and walks over to the structure.

He GRIPS the monkey bars and starts dangling...

LATER -

He *tries* to ride one of the spring riders...

LATER -

He SLIDES down the slide.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Mickey walks up the sidewalk, gazing at the familiar place: STUDENTS with backpacks, hand-me-down cars; CHAPERONES here and there; school flags displayed prominently upfront.

INT. HALLWAYS - HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Mickey strolls the halls passing students and lockers... He comes to a classroom door. He peaks inside: it's empty.

He quietly opens the door and slithers inside.

INT. CLASSROOM - HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Mickey moves to a desk by the window. He sits down and squirms a little, settling in. The school bell rings!

INT. GYMNASIUM - HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Mickey stands alone in the center of the basketball court. He looks around: "RAMS" painted in white on the bleachers.

The JANITOR is passing through -

JANITOR

Excuse me, sir, can I help you?

Mickey faces him.

MICKEY

I used to go here.

JANITOR
Here at this school?

MICKEY
A long time ago. Played on varsity.

JANITOR
Uh-huh, *sure*... We're closing up here soon, so you'll need to leave.

MICKEY
Okay, no problem...

Mickey makes for the exit, but then he spots a BASKETBALL to the side... He walks over, picks it up - closes his eyes.

FLASHBACK -

INT. GYMNASIUM - HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Young Mickey's POV: Some flash closeups of a PRETTY GIRL, smiling and dancing. Prom night. Decorations all around.

JANITOR (V.O.)
Sir...!

FLASHBACK ENDS

Mickey's EYES OPEN. He's smiling. The Janitor grows impatient. Mickey looks up at the basketball hoop...

A beat.

Mickey AIMS and THROWS - HE SCORES! He exults victoriously!

INT. MICKEY'S APARTMENT - DAY

At his desktop, Mickey brings up a profile photo:

Shelly, 70's. Happy, bustling in nature.

Mickey types a message... He presses "Send" and leans back - sipping on his coffee.

INT. CAFE - DAY

SHELLY - opposite Mickey - in a booth, sips on her coffee:

MICKEY
What have you been up to?

SHELLY

(sets coffee down)

I've been a mother, a grandmother, a widower.... Then a divorcee. You?

MICKEY

One girl: Luan. She has her own now.

SHELLY

How many grandkids?

MICKEY

Two... *three* actually.

SHELLY

(understands)

I'm sorry.

Mickey takes a long sip from his cup.

MICKEY

That's life.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

Shelly and Mickey embrace one last time... They appear to exchange some cordial words... Then Shelly proceeds up the steps inside.

Mickey is left alone. He starts walking.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

At the bar, Mickey downs TWO SHOTS OF LIQUOR -

MICKEY

(gasps)

Bartender, more please!

A few beer bottles around him - he checks one: they're all empty.

Then Mickey notices TWO BEAUTIFUL LADIES looking at him. They all have to yell over the music:

MICKEY (CONT'D)

(to the Ladies)

How are ya doing?

BEAUTIFUL LADY

Aren't you a little old to be partying

(MORE)

BEAUTIFUL LADY (CONT'D)
it up like it's 2000?

HER FRIEND
Yeah, you're gonna get, like, a stroke
up in this bitch.

MICKEY
Please, I've been in way more
extravagant shindigs than this.

The Two Ladies look at each other - they burst out laughing.
The BARTENDER returns pouring into Mickey's glass...

MICKEY (CONT'D)
(to the Ladies)
Go ahead, laugh all you want, doesn't
change any of our fates.

BEAUTIFUL LADY
What are our fates?

The Bartender finishes pouring - they walk away. Mickey holds
the glass for a toast -

MICKEY
(burps)
Death.

He drinks. The ladies look at each other.

BEAUTIFUL LADY
Are you threatening us?

MICKEY
And if I was?

A TALL GUY, 20's, comes in between them:

TALL GUY
(to the Ladies)
Everything alright here?

MICKEY
Everything's good here.

TALL GUY
(to Mickey)
I think the retirement home is
calling, gramps, let's go -

The Tall Guy starts PUSHING Mickey away. Suddenly Mickey GRABS one of the bottles and BREAKS IT on the counter. He HOLDS IT LIKE A KNIFE to the Tall Guy who now stands back -

TALL GUY (CONT'D)
 (hands raised)
 Okay, take it easy old man!

Mickey calms down. He drops the glass, pulls out his wallet -

MICKEY
 (to himself)
 Don't be an idiot.

Mickey pulls out a few hundred dollar bills.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
 (to Bartender)
 Drinks for everyone, come on!

Some cheers and woos! Mickey places the cash on the counter.

TALL GUY
 I don't know what you're all about,
 gramps.

MICKEY
 I'm just having a good time.

TALL GUY
 Looks to me like an *old man* trying to
 recapture his youth.

Mickey says nothing...

A beat.

MOMENTS LATER -

To everyone's surprise and elation, Mickey BREAKDANCES in the middle of the floor. Cheers and hollers fill the room!

INT. BEDROOM - MICKEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

His bed is unmade. Clock time changes from 1:22am to 1:23am. Mickey stares out the window at the city lights...

Can't sleep.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

Bright. Sunny. A small sedan steers along a two-laner fenced in between two gigantic plains.

MICKEY (V.O.)

If I said I were sorry, would you forgive me...

INT. SMALL SEDAN - DAY

Mickey stares out the window as LUAN, 40's, drives...

MICKEY

... Luan?

He looks at her...

LUAN

Remember how scared I was when you took me to my first day of school?

MICKEY

(smiles)

You threw up in the truck.

LUAN

(laughs)

I forgot about that... Oh God, what I'd give to go back and do it all over again - differently.

MICKEY

Here's hoping.

Luan begins easing off the gas...

The car SLOWS DOWN... She PARKS it. They both stare forward:

EXT. CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

A solemn institution looms over the hill with high walls, watch towers, and barbed wire all around.

Luan's little sedan parked facing the prison.

INT. SMALL SEDAN - DAY

MICKEY

I'll probably die in there.

LUAN

You keep your head down and you'll be
alright.

MICKEY

That isn't what I meant.
(sighs)

Mickey closes his eyes.

INT. PROCESSING - CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

Mickey goes through the routine:

He's FINGERPRINTED...

LATER -

He's STRIPPED completely naked...

LATER -

He's forced to SQUAT AND COUGH...

LATER -

DRESSED in orange.

LATER -

He's given a phone call - but the phone wire is cut.

LATER -

He's handed linen, hygiene, and mattress. Then is ESCORTED by
a CORRECTIONAL OFFICER(CO)...

INT. PRISON CELL - CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

The door is SLAMMED SHUT by the CO. Mickey stands still,
settling in...

CELLMATE (O.S.)

It's the devil in your soul.

Mickey looks over his shoulder: His CELLMATE lying in the
bottom bunk - a big burly skinhead with a swastika tattooed
on the back of his neck.

His Cellmate rolls over, looking directly at him:

CELLMATE
It's the devil in your soul.

MICKEY
What?

Cellmate has that wide-eyed crazy look:

CELLMATE
(repeating)
It's the devil in your soul.

MICKEY
(frightened)
Okay...

Mickey faces forward again. He closes his eyes.

CELLMATE
The devil in your soul.

INT. SMALL SEDAN - DAY

Mickey's EYES OPEN. Luan still at the driver's seat. Car engine still running...

LUAN
... They'll look for you.

Mickey squirms a little.

MICKEY
How much gas we got?

LUAN
(checks fuel)
Not much.

A beat.

MICKEY
(shrugs)
More than enough.

EXT. CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

Luan's small sedan still parked on the hill...

Finally, it does a U-TURN and HEADS BACK down the way it came, away from the facility.