THE CANDY MACHINE

by

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FADE IN:

INT. CAR - NIGHT

A radio dial spins back and forth -- jumbled cuts of static -- nothing on.

A YOUNG MAN (20s) punches the “off” button and leans back in the bucket seat, a slight breeze whipping through his air from the open window.

Silence.

He peers up and reads a passing blue sign.

INSERT - SIGN

Bold, white type: “REST AREA 1 MILE”

BACK TO SCENE

The young man takes a deep breath and steers the car up the ramp.

EXT. REST AREA - NIGHT

The car pulls up and parks in a handicap spot. The young man exits and stretches - he is NOT handicapped.

He then looks around - he is the only car there at this late hour. He smiles.

INT. REST AREA - NIGHT

The young man exits the bathroom, the WHOOSH of a TOILET the only sound.

He starts back to his car when he glances down the hall.

WHAT HE SEES: the glowing blue lights inside a vending machine at the opposite end.

The young man reaches into his pockets and pulls out a handful of change. He shakes his fist, hearing the CLINKING of coins.

He starts down towards the machines.
INT. VENDING ROOM

He stands before all the colored-wrappers and multitudes of confections: chocolate, taffy, caramel, sweet, sour, salty.

He makes his decision and begins depositing the change. Each coin slides in with slow-motion accuracy: CHING, CHING, CHING.

He inputs his decision: C4.

The mechanism turns slowly, pushing his reward forward when --

It stops.

His candy hangs by a thread.

The young man’s eyes pop wide in shocked surprise.

He punches the machine once, twice, harder.

Nothing.

He shakes it violently.

YOung Man
Come on! You son of a...

He leans against one side and tips the machine.

KA-CHUNK -- its feet slam to the floor.

Nothing.

He runs at it and slams his body into the glass.

He shakes it violently for several seconds.

The candy dangles -- threatening to fall -- it doesn’t.

The young man stands and stares at the machine -- taunting him with his purchase.

He is breathing harder as sweat forms on his brow.

He opens the slot in the machine and peers up towards the candy.

He tries reaching it -- no luck.

He then spots a coat tree with one wire hanger dangling.
YOUNG MAN
Ha! Think you’re so clever! I got you this time!

The young man retrieves the hanger and unbends it.

He inserts the wire through the slot and begins fishing around.

The wire gets closer, closer, and closer still.

The young man’s tongue laps the outside of his lip in heated concentration.

YOUNG MAN
Almost... there...

He reaches up and --

The wire lodges in the coils, just short of his goal.

The young man jiggles it... still stuck.

YOUNG MAN
Oh, for the love of...

He yanks it hard -- the machine’s back legs jump off the floor and SLAM back -- he yanks again -- the legs jump a little higher and SLAM back once more -- the young man puts all his muscle into it -- the back legs jump off and reach the point of no return -- the machine tips forward --

In slow-motion, the machine leans further and further over him like a monolith.

YOUNG MAN
Oh crap!

Quickly, the young man rolls out of the way as the machine CRASHES to the floor.

The young man stands and looks at it. He pants. He takes a deep breath and --

YOUNG MAN
(anger)
FU --

EXT. REST AREA - AT THE SAME TIME

Silence and crickets.
The young man strains and then lifts the machine back to its proper position -- up.

The front glass is cracked -- the light bulb blinks -- the keys are smashed -- his candy remains stuck.

INT. VENDING ROOM - SOME TIME LATER

The young man sits and stares at the machine. His eye twitches.

YOUNG MAN
Why do you mock me?

He finally gets up and brushes himself off.

YOUNG MAN
Fine. You win. Happy? I am going to get in my car, drive off, and you will never, ever see me again.

He turns and leaves the room.

YOUNG MAN (O.S.)
(fading up)
Ahhhhhhhhhhhh!

The young man storms back as he hits the machine, shakes it, kicks it, and jostles it.

YOUNG MAN
Give me my candy you...!

The candy remains stuck.

He turns to leave again -- the coils turn once -- he turns -- they stop -- he turns again -- the coils turn -- he turns back -- they stop -- the candy is closer now.

YOUNG MAN
What are you?!

He rests his forehead against the glass. He then sees something -- a reflection -- he turns --

WHAT HE SEES: the emergency fire cabinet just down the hall. Complete with fire extinguisher, hose and faucet... and an axe.
His eyes narrow.

His head spins around to look at the machine as his face cracks a wicked smile.

He starts laughing.

It grows louder as he retrieves the axe -- he's definitely lost it.

The axe DRAGS along the floor as he walks back to the vending machine - still laughing.

YOUNG MAN
("Scarface" impression)
You wanna play? Huh? You wanna play? Well, say hello to my little friend!

He reaches back with the axe.

A POLICE RADIO CRACKLES in the b.g.

The young man stops and slowly turns his head, axe still above his head.

A COP stands, looking at him calmly, with his arms folded in front.

The young man smiles.

The cop smiles.

EXT./INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

The young man is handcuffed and placed in the back seat. He stares through the window as a few cops inspect the carnage of the vending room.

First cop talks to a SECOND COP. They point to the machine. The first cop wraps his knuckle on the vending machine glass.

The candy drops.

He reaches in and takes it. Both men smile as they give each other a high five.

THROUGH GLASS:

The young man SILENTLY weeps to himself.
INT. VENDING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

In one of the corners of the room, the red light of a security camera glows.

THROUGH CAMERA to --

INT. SECURITY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Two men sit and watch an assortment of black and white security cameras all pointed at vending machines all around the country.

FIRST MAN turns to the SECOND MAN.

FIRST MAN
He was the best one yet. Who’s next?

SECOND MAN
How about...

He then points to the CAMERA.

SECOND MAN
... that one.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END