

NOTHING LEFT TO LOSE

Written by

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EXT. VIDEO RENTAL STORE-MORNING

SUPER: 2010

A giant neon OPEN sign shines brightly on the storefront window. A few people pass by, but no one goes inside.

INT. VIDEO RENTAL STORE-CONTINUOUS

Fully stocked aisles of DVDs line the store that is a well kept image of perfection. Around the store are signs promoting very generous discounts on rentals and memberships.

There's a shelf full of personal pictures of the owner, George, and his wife with the video store including newspaper clippings and awards.

The only person in the store is EMERY (19), an intelligent and rebellious employee sporting a bright vest. She's slouched over the counter, texting on her IPHONE 4.

Emery yawns and looks down at the wide selection of retail CANDY placed right beneath her counter. She reaches over and pulls out a pack of TWIZZLERS which she starts snacking on before returning to her textbook.

The door opens and the CHIMES ring but Emery doesn't bother looking up from the counter.

EMERY

Sorry, no public restrooms. Go to Subway.

GEORGE (O.S.)

It's me. Thanks for opening, I'm still getting used to having to pick up my own medication.

GEORGE (40s) is the worn down but optimistic manager of the video store. He carefully straightens out a DVD display before approaching the counter where he notices the opened package of candy.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Is that from the display case?

Emery holds up the bag to offer some candy to George but he shakes his head. She lifts it even higher so it's inches from his face as if to say "You sure?". He pushes it away.

EMERY

Suit yourself. Sorry, I needed the sugar.

GEORGE

Keep this up and I'll just start paying you in candy.

EMERY

I know you're joking but that's not a bad idea. I mean, I need the energy and the store *could* use some extra dough.

George's mood shifts. This is a touchy subject.

GEORGE

I've told you. The store's fine.

Emery looks around at the ghost town of her workplace.

EMERY

Right...

Before George can respond the door opens and the CHIMES ring again. Emery puts her phone away.

STACY (25) has stepped inside of the store. She's a beautiful, southern woman haunted by stress and sadness.

George turns around to greet her and his face lights up with recognition.

GEORGE

Well if it isn't Ms. Stacy.

Stacy fidgets with her PURSE and averts her gaze.

STACY

Hi George. Hey Emery. How's business been?

GEORGE

Business is business. What about you, how have you been? It's been a while since you've been around.

STACY

I've been a little occupied.

Stacy eyes the CASH REGISTER. Her movements are stiff.

STACY (CONT'D)

You still keep some VHS tapes handy in the back room, right? I need a copy of...um, *It's a Wonderful Life*. But it has to be VHS. Do you have that?

GEORGE

Ah, what a classic movie. One of my favorites. We definitely have that in the back. Emery, think you can manage?

Emery is already heading towards the back of the store.

EMERY

Already a head of you.

Emery disappears in the back room and George looks over to Stacy who has made her way closer to the counter.

Stacy's eyes wander from the register to the set of KEYS dangling from George's waistband.

GEORGE

So, what's the occasion this time?  
Another date night with the fiancee?

Stacy starts to nervously rub her left hand. There's a noticeable tan line on her finger where a ring used to be.

STACY

No. No uh...Tyler and I uh...well,  
let's just say it isn't such a  
wonderful life at the moment.

GEORGE

Oh. I'm so sorry to hear that.

STACY

It's okay. Some things just aren't  
meant to last.

A heavy silence hangs in the air. George studies Stacy as she starts to walk down one of the aisles.

INT. BACK ROOM-CONTINUOUS

It's a very cluttered back room. In the center of the room is a mini OFFICE. There are two DESKS pushed up against one another and the CHAIRS are facing each other.

One desk belongs to George. It's cluttered and filled with tax documents, bills, and mail.

The other desk belonged to George's Wife, Reah Fredrickson. It's clean but dusty, like it hasn't been touched in years.

Every single detail down to her PURPLE SWEATER draped over the chair is exactly how she left it.

Next to the nameplate are faded picture frames covered in dust featuring wedding pictures and photos of them in front of the store. They're right next to a mug that says "World's Greatest Actress" filled to the brim with TICKET STUBS.

Along the walls are shelves filled with additional boxes all labeled "Reah's Movies-Don't Throw Away".

Emery walks past the two desks, glancing briefly at Reah's shrine of a desk, and continues onwards to the far back where there are boxes full of VHS tapes.

Emery starts to go through old boxes filled with tapes.

EMERY

Who the hell still watches VHS  
tapes?

She takes out her I-POD and starts playing POP PUNK music at its highest volume.

She starts head banging and getting really into the music as she continues to look for the movie.

INT. VIDEO STORE-CONTINUOUS

Stacy is at the end of an aisle and puts herself out of view from George. She brings her purse closer to her chest and rummages through it until she finds some PEPPER SPRAY.

Stacy slips the pepper spray into her pocket.

George looks at an old photograph hung up on the wall. It features a younger looking George standing outside of the video store arm and arm with his WIFE. The caption says "Opening Day-1985"

GEORGE

You know, Stacy, I know a few  
things about dealing with loss. So  
if you ever need to talk to anyone,  
I'm all ears.

Stacy starts to make her way back up the aisle towards where George is. She has her right hand in her pocket, gripped tightly around the pepper spray.

STACY

Your wife *died*, George. She didn't  
leave you with a maxed out credit  
card and no family for thousands of  
miles.

George and Stacy are both equally surprised by her burst of anger. Stacy approaches him and begins to lift the pepper spray out of her pocket.

GEORGE

No, you're right. She just left me with a burnt out video store.

Stacy puts her hand back in her pocket and pauses.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Are you alright? You're sweating a lot.

Stacy puts her hand to her forehead and pulls back a hand practically dripping with sweat.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I'm going to get you some water.

STACY

No wait, you really don't have to.

Stacy watches as George goes to a mini fridge in the corner of the store where they sell WATER. He grabs one and goes behind the counter to ring it up.

George pulls some cash out of his wallet and rings the bottle of water up properly before handing it to Stacy.

STACY (CONT'D)

Thanks.

Stacy drinks some water as George tries to shut the register but it won't close all the way. He huffs, trying to shove it in, but it won't budge.

GEORGE

Stupid, old register. Emery is the only one these days who can actually get it to close.

At the mention of Emery, George glances to the back room.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I'll be right back. I should go check in on her.

Stacy watches as George disappears into the back room. When the door shuts, she looks to the half-open register.

INT. BACK ROOM-CONTINUOUS

George enters the back room to find Emery rocking out to her music. She's really into it, too, as she mouths along to the lyrics. She doesn't notice George at all.

George walks straight up to Emery who has her back turned to him and swiftly pulls out one of her earbuds. She jumps.

EMERY

Whoa! George. Jesus, you scared me.

GEORGE

I'm here for back up.

She smiles and the two of them rifle through boxes together.

INT. VIDEO STORE-CONTINUOUS

Stacy is behind the counter, quietly shoving money into her purse. When the register is basically cleared, she looks at Emery's iPhone placed besides it.

Stacy hesitates only briefly before taking it and also shoving it in her purse.

INT. BACK ROOM-CONTINUOUS

Emery stops to watch George as he looks around for the video tape and hesitates only briefly before speaking up.

EMERY

Hey, George? I um, I don't mean to upset you whenever I try to talk business.

GEORGE

I know, Emery. It's okay.

EMERY

I get why the store means a lot to you. Really, I do. I just don't understand why you insist on keeping it when it makes so much more sense to sell the facility and-

George stops and turns to Emery, annoyed.

GEORGE

Enough.

EMERY

-But if you just let go of the store it would benefit you so much more in the long run.

GEORGE

You're just too young to understand that some things are worth more than money.

George yanks a VHS copy of "It's a Wonderful Life" from a box and without another word, walks back into the main room.

Emery watches him leave.

INT. VIDEO STORE-CONTINUOUS

Stacy is just seconds away from leaving the store. Her hand is on the handle and she's shaking.

GEORGE (O.S.)

Hey! Where are you going?

Stacy stops. She turns around slowly and her voice is shaky.

STACY

George I-

She looks to see that George is holding up the movie. He goes behind the counter, followed by Emery.

GEORGE

You know the drill. \$5.00 a week.

STACY

I just realized, I forgot my wallet in my car.

George smiles and holds up his own wallet.

GEORGE

Say no more. My treat.

Emery's cellphone begins to RING. Stacy looks down at her purse in horror. It's a very poppy ringtone-clearly not Stacy's.

Emery realizes her phone isn't on the register.

EMERY

Where's my phone?

George looks down and notices for the first time the half open register is empty. His face is expressionless.

George looks over to Stacy and their eyes meet. Stacy is frightened as she meets his gaze.

GEORGE

Stacy Davison...don't move.

Stacy stands there, scared, as George moves from behind the counter to approach her. He looks into her teary eyes.

EMERY

George? What's going on?

STACY

I'm so sorry, George. I just...I didn't know what I was thinking. I need the money to get home to Tennessee I just can't live here anymore. I'll give it all back. Just please don't call the cops.

George holds out his hand and Stacy immediately begins to dig through her purse, quietly sobbing. She's about to pull out a wad of bills but George shakes his head.

GEORGE

I just want the phone.

Stacy looks at George incredulously but doesn't question him. She takes out the phone and gives it to him.

George just turns around and heads back to the counter. Stacy looks after him gratefully, taking the hint before running out of the store.

EMERY

What the hell was that?? Why did you let her get away?!

George says nothing as he heads back to Emery.

EMERY (CONT'D)

I'm calling the police.

GEORGE

No, don't. Just let it be.

George gives Emery back her phone who just stares at George with confusion.

Emery watches as he reaches for one of the Twizzlers on the counter and eats it.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

We still have all the movies.  
That's all that matters, anyway.

Emery looks at George as he stares at that same photograph on the wall of him and his wife. She looks around at the video store as if she's truly seeing it for the first time.

Emery grabs the VHS on the counter and goes to unplug the neon Open sign.

George watches as Emery takes the tape and pops it into the old VHS PLAYER that they have in the corner of the room. She turns the TV on and sits down on the counter.

Stacy gestures to George to sit in the chair besides her.

George smiles as he sits down in the chair near Emery, taking the pack of Twizzlers with him. He offers her one from the package and she takes one, smiling.

The two share the candy as they sit back and watch *It's a Wonderful Life*, enjoying each other's company.

CUT TO BLACK.