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LONG ROAD
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FADE IN:

EXT. NYC - CENTRAL PARK - AFTERNOON

It's a beautiful spring day. The park is full with people doing typical activities. On one of the park benches sits ANDY McGOUGH, a refined gentleman in his 70s. Andy feeds the pigeons and occasionally reflects as he sits.

Young children, about the age of 10, play soccer near by and kick the ball toward Andy. It lands at his feet. He laughs and he attempts to kick it back to them. The ball careens off the side of his foot and he silently apologizes with surrendering hands. One of the 10 year old children, a cute little girl named SUSIE grabs the ball and approaches Andy.

SUSIE

Would you like to play?

Andy smiles appreciatively and pats Susie's head.

ANDY

No, thank you, dear, I'm waiting for a friend.

BOBBY THOMPSON(O.S.)

C'mon, Susie.

Susie looks to BOBBY THOMPSON, a small boy waiting for her. She waves to him for patience. Andy's smile broadens.

ANDY

(surprised delight)

Is your name Susan?

Susie smiles, quickly nods, then cast a rueful glance to Bobby.

SUSIE

But Bobby Thompson calls me Susie.

(the smile returns)

But I prefer Susan.

Andy looks up reflectively.

ANDY

Such a beautiful name.

BOBBY

C'mon, Susie!

Susie looks to Bobby, then back to Andy.

SUSIE
I've got to go. They're waiting for
me. I'll see you.

Susie waves goodbye. Andy returns the wave.

ANDY
Good-bye, Susan.

Andy looks down, almost sad.

FLASHBACK

To a sunny day in Beaverdale, Pa in the 1930s. It is a small coal mining town where Andy grew up. The town is surrounded by mountains. The SCHOOL BELL RINGS and school lets out.

A young Andy McGough of 11 years is first out through the door of the tiny school house. He hurries to the other end of the building and waits as children exit the other door.

10 year old SUSAN MYERS exits among a wave of other children. She looks very much like Susie in Central Park. Andy sees her and a smiles covers his face.

ANDY
Hi, Susan, you going up to green
hill?

Susan leaves the wave of children and walks to Andy.

SUSAN
You know I am, Andy McGough. I've
got to fetch Bessy.

Andy innocently rolls his eyes and looks to the ground as though his plan has been found out.

ANDY
(still looking down)
Mind if I tag along?

Susan smiles innocently and nods her head as she heads off.

SUSAN
Do I ever?

Andy's eyes widen as broad as his smile. He realizes Susan has left without him and he quickly follows.

EXT. BEAVERDALE - GREEN HILL

is a grassy hill on one side of Beaverdale were the town's people take their cows to graze. Throughout the hill are stone fences.

Andy and Susan climb the slope and head toward Bessy, the family's cow.

Susan hugs Bessy for a moment.

SUSAN

Did you have enough to eat, girl?

Andy studies the two for a second. A look of almost disgust covers his face.

ANDY

You wish you had that much to eat.

Susan gives Andy a dirty look as she pats Bessy's neck and starts to walk her down the hill.

Andy rolls his eyes, realizing he's said something wrong again as Susan and Bessy walk by him.

ANDY

I'm sorry, Susan.

Andy reluctantly follows. The look on his face says he knows he shouldn't say anything else but he just has to.

ANDY

You don't even drink the milk you get out of her.

Susan continues to walk, her head high and proud, continuing to ignore Andy.

Andy continues to follow, moping as he does.

ANDY

I know, you have to sell the milk to buy food and cloth.

A TRAIN WHISTLE BLOWS in the distance. Andy stops in his tracks and looks in that direction.

Andy studies the valley heading out of Beaverdale. All he sees is coal car after coal car, loaded and heading out.

ANDY

There's an awful lot of coal
leaving this place. You'd think
they'd be able to pay the miners
more.

Andy shakes his head and hurries to catch up to Susan heading
into the valley.

ANDY

At least enough so they could feed
their families.

Susan stops Bessy and turns defiantly to Andy.

SUSAN

My brothers and sisters and me eat
just fine, thank you.

Andy scowls and silently curses himself, knowing he stuck his
foot in his mouth again.

ANDY

I know, I just...

SUSAN

(interrupting)

You're lucky. It's just you and
your father.

Andy quickly stops in his tracks. He looks as though he's
searching deep inside himself.

ANDY

I never felt lucky about losing my
Mother.

The realization of what Susan said struck her. Her eyes
widened in horror as she walked to Andy.

SUSAN

Oh, I'm so sorry, Andy. I didn't
mean that.

Andy falls back on the seat of his pants. He looks up
reflectively.

ANDY

Why do you think she died? I know
Pop didn't have enough money to
take her to the doctor.

Andy looks to Susan hoping she could explain something.

ANDY

I saw him cry. He kept saying he failed her because he didn't have enough to offer her.

Susan continues to stare, not knowing what to say. Andy hints at a smile, looking at nothing, picturing his father.

ANDY

I told him God must've needed her more in heaven than we did. And who are we to argue with God? That made him smile.

SUSAN'S MOTHER (O.S.)

(calling out)

Susan!

Susan turns quickly to her mother's voice then back to Andy.

SUSAN

I've got to get going.

Susie heads off. Andy looks to her, slowly coming out of his daze.

ANDY

Huh, oh. Okay.
(calling to her)
Susan,

Susan turns to him.

ANDY

I'll always have enough to offer you.

Susan looks at him strangely for a second. She nods slowly, not knowing what to make of him.

SUSAN

(hesitantly)

You coming, Andy McGough?

Andy, still somewhat dazed, waves her on.

ANDY

No, you go on. I got some things to think over.

SUSAN
(still somewhat hesitant)
Alright then. I'll talk to you
later.

ANDY
Bye, Susan.

FLASHBACK ENDS

EXT. NYC - CENTRAL PARK

Andy sits on the bench half waving to Susie.

Susie is off in the distance running off to kick the ball to
her friends.

Andy's waving hand falls to his lap.

MICHAEL(O.S.)
Andy!

Andy turns to see MICHAEL RYAN, a wholesomely handsome man in
his early 20s, with a broad smile on his face, hurrying
toward Andy.

Andy befriended Michael years ago when he first started
college. Michael adopted Andy as his mentor.

Andy is delighted to see Michael.

ANDY
How did you do?

Michael leaps over the bench and lands seated next to Andy.

MICHAEL
One down and three to go.

Andy slightly lowers his head and raises his eyebrow as he
studies Michael suspiciously.

ANDY
Yes, but how did you do?

Michael waves off the question as though no problem.

MICHAEL
It was just as you said. Get out of
the way and let it happen.

ANDY
That only works if you know the
material.

Michael looks at Andy like he's a nut.

MICHAEL
Know it?! You drilled it into my
head until I lived it.

Andy nods, accepting the compliment.

ANDY
When is your next exam?

MICHAEL
Tonight. Business law. It's going
to be a tough one.

Andy holds up a profound finger.

ANDY
Remember, common sense and the law
have nothing to do with each other.

Michael HUFFS A LAUGH.

MICHAEL
Why do you think it's going to be
so tough.

Andy rises off the bench.

ANDY
Need some help studying?

MICHAEL
(smiling warmly)
You're always there for me, Andy.

Michael rises and puts a hand on Andy's shoulder.

MICHAEL
If I ever make it, you know I owe
it all to you.

ANDY
You'll make it. And you'll owe me
nothing.

The two of them walk away heading out of the park. As they
do, they are heard, faintly harmonizing.

ANDY AND MICHAEL
 "If you can make it here, you can
 make it anywhere."

CUT TO:

INT. NYC - CHURCH - MORNING

It's a crowded Catholic church. All the seats are taken except the last three rows. There are only a few people in those pews. Andy sits in the last row to the very left. Mass has just started.

The door in back opens and sunlight beams in. Michael enters, blesses himself with holy water and looks to the left and sees Andy.

Andy, without taking his eyes off the alter, slides over one space.

Michael smiles and walks to Andy. He genuflects and slides in the seat. Andy hands him a missal, eyes still forward.

EXT. NYC - CHURCH - STEPS - AFTER MASS

It's a beautiful day in New York. The CHURCH BELLS ARE RINGING as the priest stands on the steps greeting parishioners as they exit. Among the crowd are Andy and Michael. They shake hands with the priest, talk MOS a moment, then walk on.

EXT. NYC STREETS - SIDEWALK

Andy and Michael walk down the sidewalk.

MICHAEL
 I've got one more on Tuesday and
 I'm done.

ANDY
 You coming over after or did you
 make other plans?

Michael stops in his tracks and looks at Andy like he's a nut.

MICHAEL
 (incredulous)
 Tuesday is meatloaf and poppy seed
 bread.

Andy realizes he's walking alone and turns to Michael.

MICHAEL

You don't think I'd ever miss your
meatloaf or that bread, do you?

Andy smiles a heartfelt smile. Michael catches up with him.

ANDY

I just thought you might want to go
out and celebrate with your
friends.

Michael puts his arm around Andy and they continue to walk.

MICHAEL

I thought I'd celebrate with my
best friend.

Andy's smile broadens a bit and he turns away a bit hiding
the fact that he's wiping away a tear.

CUT TO:

INT. NYC - MICHAEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

is a little one room walk up. The light of a street lamp and
a flashing neon light comes in through the window. The room
is cluttered with papers and books. A Murphy bed is too
cluttered with clothes and papers to be pushed up into the
wall. Next to the bed is a desk, also a mess. On the desk
among the clutter is a photo of Andy and Michael sitting on a
park bench.

Michael sits on the edge of the bed, leaning on the desk,
exhausted from studying all night. He yawns, stretches, then
closes the book. He pushes the book away from himself toward
the photo. He sees the photo and studies it a moment then
picks it up.

PHOTO OF ANDY AND MICHAEL

In the photo Andy is explaining something to him.

INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT

Michael puts the photo back, takes a deep breath and opens
the book.

MICHAEL
(to himself)
If you can make it here.

CUT TO:

INT. NYC - ANDY'S APARTMENT

Very nice apartment. Modest with an air of dignity. A few pieces of artwork hang on the walls. The kitchen is efficient but small with a table just big enough against the wall. It is set for two.

The dining room is good-sized. In its middle is a large dinner table with a typewriter, papers, and files stacked high leaving no room to eat there.

On the stove are a couple pots cooking. The TIMER BUZZES. Andy walks down the hall to the kitchen, grabs an oven mitten and opens the oven. He takes out the meatloaf and sets it on the counter. He lifts the lid and takes a whiff.

The SECURITY DOOR BUZZER SOUNDS. Andy takes a look at the clock on the wall which reads 7 o'clock.

Andy tosses the mitt aside and heads for the door. He hits the button to buzz Michael in then unchains the door and cracks it open just a bit. He heads back to the kitchen.

Andy slices the meatloaf and places the slices on a plate. He slices the bread and serves it.

MICHAEL(O.S.)
(calling out)
I smell meatloaf!

Andy puts the plates on the table.

ANDY
You're right on time. How was your exam?

Michael enters the kitchen. He is excitedly happy as he takes the pots off the stove and strains the water out of the vegetables and pours them into bowls.

MICHAEL
It was like you were there talking me through it.

Andy smiles and opens the refrigerator.

ANDY

Juice?

Michael nods, not really caring about juice.

MICHAEL

If I got stuck on anything, there you were. You know, shaking your head at me when you know I know the answer but can't think of it.

Andy innocently points a finger to his chest and mouths, "Me?"

Michael cocks his brow at Andy.

MICHAEL

Yes, you.
(excitement is back)
I had to ace it.

Andy pours a glass of juice.

ANDY

Had to?

MICHAEL

Definitely had to.

Michael winks at Andy.

MICHAEL

I just couldn't bare to see that rueful stare as your head shakes, pitying my ignorance.

Andy smiles for a moment, then bows graciously.

ANDY

Whatever it takes, my friend.
Congratulations.

Andy hands Michael his glass of juice and they toast.

ANDY

Next we find you work.

Michael lets out a HEAVY SIGH.

MICHAEL

The job market's tough. I hope there's something out there.

ANDY

We'll work on your resume later.
Then maybe I can write some letters
or make some calls tomorrow. But
now, we eat.

They take their seats and bow their heads for a quiet prayer.

Andy looks up as though to heaven and winks a smile.

CUT TO:

INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY OUTSIDE - NIGHT

It's dreary and in bad need of a paint job. Michael climbs the stairs carrying the mail and a plate of food Andy prepared for him.

He keys the lock and enters his apartment.

INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT

It's still messy but his books and papers are piled into the corner.

Michael puts the chain lock on the door and dead bolts it.

He tosses the mail onto the bed and walks to the kitchen and stops at his antique fridge.

MICHAEL

(quietly to himself)
Let's see if there's any room for
this.

He opens his fridge.

The shelves are empty except for a half bottle of juice.

He puts the plate inside and walks back to his bed and sits heavily. He looks at the mail he tossed down earlier.

A few letters (overdue bills). One is from his college.

Michael picks up the one from college and studies it for a brief moment then flops back flat on the bed.

Michael stares at the ceiling.

MICHAEL
(somewhat worried)
I've got to get a job.

INTERCUT TO:

INT. ANDY'S APARTMENT

Andy takes a seat at the dining room table and puts a sheet of paper in the typewriter.

INT. ANDY'S APARTMENT - TYPEWRITER

The LETTER in the typewriter is addressed to the President of CHASE INVESTORS MANAGEMENT CORP.

The letter reads: DEAR RON,

ATTACHED IS THE RESUME OF THE YOUNG MAN I TALKED TO YOU ABOUT. HE IS BRIGHT, PRINCIPLES, AND WILL BE AN EXCELLENT ADDITION TO YOUR COMPANY SHOULD YOU DECIDE TO USE HIM. BESIDES, I TAUGHT HIM EVERYTHING HE KNOWS, EVEN THOUGH HE WILL DENY IT.

ALL THE BEST,

ANDY McGOUGH

INT. ANDY'S APARTMENT

Andy quickly scans over the letter, nods approvingly and yanks it from the typewriter carriage and folds it along with the resume.

Andy reaches for a box of envelopes on the table and finds it empty. He continues to search the table then looks to the floor.

On the floor in the corner of the dining room is a cardboard box. He opens the box and removes a few things looking for an envelope. He finds one at the bottom then starts to return the things he took out.

Andy comes to a framed photo and studies it for a moment. He smiles and sets it up on the table, then closes the cardboard box up again.

CUT TO:

EXT. NYC CENTRAL PARK - DAY

It's another sunny day with typical activities. The bench where Andy sits is empty. Michael runs toward it, pauses when he realizes Andy is not there, then searches the area.

After a moment he sees Andy walking down one of the many paths heading to the bench. As Andy passes people he nods and then stops and kneels to pet a dog.

MICHAEL
(calling)
Andy!

Andy looks up from the dog.

Andy smiles, stands, brushes the dirt from his knees and heads to Michael and the bench.

MICHAEL
You're usually here by now. You had me worried.

Andy shoots him a 'Don't be ridiculous!' look.

ANDY
I skipped the subway today. Doctor says I need more exercise.

MICHAEL
You been to the doctor? Are you all right?

Andy waves the concern off as he sits and ignores Michael. Andy continues to study the activities in the park.

ANDY
Just a check up.

Michael looks suspiciously at Andy.

Andy looks back at Michael and notices the look.

ANDY
(defensive)
What?

MICHAEL
What's your doctor's name?

Andy cocks a brow at him.