

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

Written by

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Based on, The Road Not Taken by Robert Frost

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FADE IN:

INT. RESTAURANT- MORNING

A couple appearing to be in their early thirties sits at a booth in a hometown-styled restaurant. They are both normal looking, no distinguishing features. Just everyday people.

The woman gazes out the window while the man takes a sip of his coffee, and then places his hand on hers.

Their eyes lock.

MAN

I've been meaning to ask you about something.

This startles the woman more than it should.

WOMAN

About what?

MAN

Aaron Clancy. You know him?

WOMAN

Yeah, he's a colleague.

MAN

You two have been chatting a lot though.

WOMAN

Yes, because we have a huge presentation at the end of the month. I've told you this.

The man laughs, clearly not pleased with her answer.

MAN

So how come he's always checking up on you and grabbing you Starbucks?

WOMAN

That's just what friends d- Wait, did you go through my fucking phone?

MAN

Not important right now. So is he a colleague or a friend? I don't even get why you need male friends, unless..

WOMAN

Babe, it's not like that. And you know it.

Just as the man is about to rebuttal, their waitress strolls up to the table.

WAITRESS

Sooo folks, are we ready to order?
Or do we need a few more minutes?

MAN

I'll take two eggs over easy,
bacon, rye. She'll just have
scrambled eggs and bacon. No toast.
Please and thank you.

The waitress jots down the order on her notepad, and looks up briefly to side-eye the woman concerningly.

The woman remains quiet and appears to be uncomfortable. She actively avoids eye contact with the waitress.

WAITRESS

Alrighty then, well I will put that
in for y'all.

She grabs their menus and walks away. The woman takes a deep breath, grabs her purse, and gets up from the booth.

WOMAN

I need to run to the bathroom.

CUT TO:

INT. WOMEN'S RESTROOM STALL- MORNING

The woman sits on the toilet in one of the bathroom stalls. She sifts through her bag trying to find something.

She pulls out a tube of vitamin K cream and lifts up one side of her shirt.

Her exposed ribs are painted with bruises. The marks range in color from light red, yellow, and purple. This could only happen from a physical blow.

The woman tenderly dresses the marks with the cream. She winces from the initial sting.

She gets up and exits the stall.

INT. WOMEN'S RESTROOM- CONTINUOUS

She approaches the sinks and begins to wash her hands.

The woman examines her own reflection in the mirror, looking disgusted with herself.

After a moment, she pulls herself together, putting on her best fake smile and leaving the bathroom.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT- MORNING

The woman sits back down in the booth. Her boyfriend gingerly takes her hand.

MAN

So, back to what we were chatting about before. I'm not mad.

WOMAN

It kinda seems like you are.

He squeezes her hand extra tight, to the point where it turns slightly red from lack of blood flow.

His kind demeanor doesn't change.

MAN

You're my woman. We made a commitment to each other. And I will find out if you don't honor that.

WOMAN

I do honor it.

The man lets her hand go and rants on about the importance of showing loyalty to your partner.

The woman appears to be listening, but she slowly loses focus and gazes off out the window.

The sound of the man's voice fades out as a flock of gulls in the sky overhead catches her attention, her eyes following them as they fly off.

MAN

Are you even listening? I'm trying to have a conversation with you.

The woman snaps back to reality.

WOMAN

Sorry, I'm a bit tired.

She rapidly grabs her coffee mug and takes a sip.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Still need to get my morning
caffeine in.

MAN

Did you get my point though?

WOMAN

Yes. I did. I understand.

MAN

I don't always mean to be an
asshole. I love you very much. I
don't know what I would do if I
ever lost you.

WOMAN

(meekly) I love you too.

They both awkwardly pause and take a sip of their coffee
together at the same time.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM- NIGHTTIME

The couple sit in bed, the boyfriend scrolling through his
phone and the woman reading a Robert Frost poetry book.

MAN

(still staring at his phone)
How are your ribs?

WOMAN

They're fine.

He puts his phone on the bedside table and rolls over to give
the woman a kiss.

MAN

I'm sorry, and I'll keep
apologizing. I promise it will
never happen again. I mean it.

The woman goes back to reading with a troubled look on her
face.

WOMAN

That's what you always say.

MAN

I know, I know. I need to work on it. But I also need you to not push me to that point.

WOMAN

(defeated)

I've asked you to go to counseling with me for a while.

MAN

We don't need to pay a shrink to fix stuff that's not a big deal. We can deal with this ourselves.

WOMAN

You're so angry. There's this pent up rage in you. And I don't know what to do to help you.

The man becomes aggravated.

MAN

I'm done talking about this, we can hash it out another time. I'm going to sleep. Goodnight.

He rolls over to aggressively turn off the lamp on his beside table. He settles into the covers facing away from the woman.

WOMAN

Goodnight.

She places her book on the nightstand and turns out the light.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM- DAWN

The room is barely illuminated, as the sun has only just broken the horizon.

The woman lays in bed awake, the clock next on her nightstand reading 5:00 AM.

She glances over at her boyfriend, who is out cold and snoring.

Getting up out of bed, she tip toes to the bedroom door.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN- CONTINUOUS

She opens the uppermost kitchen cabinet and grabs a canister of coffee grounds.

Sticking her hand in, she pulls out the bags of grounds and then removes a yellow envelope filled with cash.

Placing the can back, she goes to the table to grab her purse and put the envelope in it.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY- CONTINUOUS

The woman walks up to a closet door in the hallway, and proceeds to grab a duffle bag from it.

Briskly, she makes her way to the garage.

INT. GARAGE- CONTINUOUS

Upon entering the garage, she opens the door manually to keep it quiet.

She hops into her vehicle and inserts her keys into the ignition.

The car makes a loud rumble when it starts.

She cringes, and glances over at the house door to make sure no one is there.

She switches the gears into reverse and makes her exit.

EXT. FRONT YARD- CONTINUOUS

As the woman pulls onto the street, the front door to the house bursts open.

The man runs to the front yard, looking flustered and enraged.

MAN
(yelling)
Where the hell do you think you're
going?! Get the fuck back here right
now!

INT. WOMAN'S CAR- CONTINUOUS

The woman spots the man through her rear-view mirror and her face goes white.

WOMAN
(to herself)
Oh fuck.

She continues to speed up and drive down the street.

Checking her mirror again, she witnesses the man aggressively pull his vehicle out of the garage.

His car shoots like a bullet after her.

The woman begins hyperventilating and blows through a stop sign at the end of the road.

EXT. MAIN ROAD- SUNRISE

The woman is racing down the main drag, the man full on pursuing her.

As he begins to gain momentum, he starts edging closer to her car enough to tap the back of it.

INT. WOMAN'S CAR- CONTINUOUS

The woman lets out a shriek and steps even harder on the gas.

EXT. MAIN ROAD- CONTINUOUS

The man doesn't relent and makes another attempt to tap the back of her car.

With full force, he **SMASHES** his vehicle into the back of hers.

The woman swerves off to the side of the road, landing at a clearing right next to some woods.

The man's car swerves off about a hundred yards back.

INT. WOMAN'S CAR- CONTINUOUS

The airbags in her car, set off from the crash, begin to deflate.

The woman is shaking, and checks the rearview to be met a gash on her forehead dripping blood.

Somehow alive, she sees the busted-up man getting out of his car.

MAN
(livid)
I'LL KILL YOU BITCH!

He begins to walk towards her furiously.

EXT. WOMAN'S CAR- CONTINUOUS

Alarmed, she bursts out of her car and makes a b-line for the woods.

Tears stream down her face, and she sprints as fast as she can towards the open woods.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS- MORNING

The autumn trodden forest beams in its morning glory while the woman battles her way through the trees and brush.

Her clothes become slightly tattered and dirty from low hanging tree branches and the forest floor as she desperately tries to keep a consistent running pace.

The man can be heard from a distance calling for her.

MAN
(off screen)
Stop running! I just want to talk!

The woman's bottom lip begins to quiver, and tears stream down from her eyes.

She stops running.

Panting from exhaustion, she takes in her surroundings and releases a silent scream.

The woman holds her head in her hands, sobbing, but starts taking deep breaths to pull herself together.

She takes couple steps back towards the direction of her boyfriend and immediately stops herself.

WOMAN

No...no, I'm not going to do that.

She turns around and runs away.

EXT. WOODS- MIDMORNING

The woman slows down when she stumbles upon a crossroads in the forest.

One path is established and laid out, flattened by the many hikers who have travelled on it before.

The other path is more overgrown, but still remains enough to where a trail can be made out.

MAN

(Off screen)

You can't keep running!

She looks behind her, and then back and forth between the two paths.

A bead of sweat drips down her forehead as she contemplates her two options.

WOMAN

Screw it.

She darts down the overgrown path as fast as she can.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS- MIDMORNING

Exasperated and out of breath, the woman treks along the overgrown path as best as she can.

There only appears to be more woods ahead of her, no end to the path is in sight. It is almost engulfed by the thick brush.

She continues on.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEND IN THE WOODS- MIDDAY

Around a bend, the woman notices it leads to a clearing.

She sprints for it with hopeful anticipation, her smile saying it all.

EXT. CLEARING- CONTINUOUS

The clearing provides a gorgeous view of a summit, littered with trees and rock.

The woman takes this all in, then glances to her side.

Out of the corner of her eye is a ranger station, with a sign stating "Cedar Point National Park".

The woman squeals with excitement.

WOMAN

You're kidding me!

She laughs, but it gradually transitions to tears as she gets closer to her safe haven.

A ranger walks out of the station, looking confused and worried.

The woman walks over to them.

RANGER

Ma'am, where did you come from?

The woman sits down on the steps of the building, catching her breath and wiping away some of her tears.

WOMAN

I took the road less travelled. It made all the difference.

FADE OUT.

THE END.

