

**NO PROBLEM**

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

RAY (30s) -- construction worker -- rugged -- blue collar -- Caucasian, works hard laying brick along side a bunch of other hard workers.

LATER THAT EVENING

It's been a hard day as the workers make their way off the site.

ENRIQUE (40s) the Foreman, waits at his truck by the exit. Ray and a few other workers walk by.

ENRIQUE

Manuel, John, and Ray. I need you for a second.

Worried looks on their faces.

ENRIQUE

Good work today guys... but I've got some bad news. The company issued some layoffs today because of the economy. I'm sorry, but today's your last day here. It was completely random, I swear. You guys have all been good workers over the years and I'm really sorry I have to do this, but that's just the way it is. You'll get your final checks in the mail.

He repeats the news in Spanish for Manuel, but Ray can't hear anything. He's devastated.

Ray stumbles off into the dusk.

INT. RAY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ray sits with his WIFE (20s) and two young kids (5 and 7) at their small dinner table. It's a very humble home. His wife looks at him across the table -- worry in her eyes. The kids don't seem to notice as they fuss with their food.

Ray looks back at his wife. He's not hungry anymore.

5 YEAR-OLD BOY

Look daddy, I'm a monster.

He has two french fries for fangs. Ray can't help but smile.

His wife breaks down in tears and runs to the other room.

INT. UNEMPLOYMENT OFFICE - DAY

Ray sits in an endless sea of the unemployed. Ray's NUMBER gets CALLED.

AT THE WINDOW

The UNEMPLOYMENT LADY gives him the run-down.

UNEMPLOYMENT LADY  
We've got your record on file.  
We'll let you know if anything  
matching your skill-set comes up.

RAY  
It doesn't matter if it matches my  
skill-set, I'll take anything --

UNEMPLOYMENT LADY  
-- We've got your record on file.  
We'll let you know if anything  
matching your skill-set comes up.

Ray's not getting anywhere.

INT. RAY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Ray sits at the table circling want-ads. His wife's on the phone.

WIFE  
Ok, yeah, a check is fine. We can  
wait a few days...

Ray can hardly take it.

WIFE  
... we'll pay you back next month.  
I'm sure he'll have a job by  
then... love you too Dad, and  
thanks again. Bye.

Ray folds his paper violently and storms out.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Ray's having trouble working the internet at the free computer table.

INSERT - COMPUTER SCREEN

Job listings scroll past: Registered Nurse, IT Professional, Customer Service.

BACK TO SCENE

Ray writes down a number.

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Ray's dressed in his best shirt and tie. Looks more like a Sunday School outfit than a business suit.

He sits across a desk from the MANAGER (40s) who looks over Ray's application. Flips it over -- looking for something.

MANAGER

You have a resume?

RAY

Uh, no sir. I just filled out the application.

The Manger puts the application down and rubs his face.

MANAGER

Look, Mr. Connell. I know this is only a credit card call center, but we still need people with a certain skill-set. Basic computer skills, phone training, that kind of thing.

RAY

I can use a computer, and I can learn anything else on the job.

MANAGER

That's just the thing, we don't really do the kind of on-the-job training you'd require. You see, I've got laid-off CPAs, real-estate agents, you name it. They're all bangin' down my door for a job. The economy sucks for them, but business is booming for us.

RAY

I'm sure if you could just try me out for a few days --

MANAGER

-- I'm sorry, Mr. Connell, I really am, but we just can't take you on at this time.

Ray sinks a little lower.

MANAGER

Of course, we'll keep your application on file if anything opens up.

Ray fakes a courteous smile and gets up to leave.

EXT. FREEWAY EXIT - DAY

Ray talks with an IMMIGRANT WORKER (50s) selling oranges on the side of the road in broken English, Spanish, and hand gestures.

RAY

Half? I get half of what I sell?

IMMIGRANT WORKER

(in Spanish)

<Si. We'll cover more ground if you go on that side and we hit 'em from both sides.>

Ray understands... sort-of.

RAY

I'll go over there? Oh, ok. I'll sell on that side, and you'll sell on this side?

IMMIGRANT WORKER

Si. Si.

RAY

Ok.

LATER

Ray does his best to hock his oranges, but nobody's buying.

LATER THAT EVENING

Ray's still out there. Still got a full load of oranges. He's trying to be enthusiastic... but he just gives up.

EXT. RAY'S HOUSE - PORCH - NIGHT

Ray sits on the porch steps with a beer.

The PHONE RINGS.

His wife comes out with the phone.

WIFE

Ray --

RAY

-- Please, honey, not now.

WIFE

(excited)

It's the credit card place.

That changes everything. Ray jumps up and snatches the phone.

RAY

Hello? This is Ray.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Ray drives along a lonely road. Not much traffic this time of night.

INT. RAY'S CAR - SAME

Ray fights the zipper on his workman jumpsuit.

MANAGER (V.O.)

It's only for a week until the regular janitor gets better. I know it's not what you applied for, but I figured you'd be interested. Be here at ten p.m. sharp, or I'm giving it to another guy. Ok?

Ray drives by MARGARET (20s), a Latina woman with two young kids on the side of the road. Looks like she's trying to fix a flat.

Ray keeps driving. Looks back in his mirror. She's having a lot of trouble. He checks his watch. 9:20.

RAY

Dammit.

Drives a little more... looks at his watch again... sighs... then does a hard u-turn on that dark and lonely road.

EXT. ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Ray does his best to jack the car up with the pathetic car jack. Looks at his watch periodically.

Margaret seems extremely grateful as she does her best to wrangle her restless young kids (boy and girl) -- the girl holding a stuffed giraffe. Margaret doesn't speak any English.

MARGARET

(in Spanish)

<Thank you so much. I just couldn't  
get the car to go up.>

Ray catches some of what she's saying and just keeps working.  
He checks his watch. Picks up the pace.

RAY

No hay problema. De nada.

He finally gets the tire off. Checks his watch: 9:30. Picks  
up the pace as he goes to the trunk for the spare.

IN THE TRUNK

He digs out the spare from under a pile of junk. THE SPARE  
TIRE HAS A GAPING HOLE IN IT. Ray tries to keep his cool, but  
he's obviously about to freak out.

INT. RAY'S CAR - LATER

Ray drives -- too fast. Margaret rides shotgun. The kids in  
back. He's not happy at all. Checks his watch: 9:45. He gives  
it a little more gas.

EXT. MARGARET'S HOUSE - LATER

Margaret and the kids get out. She pleads with him to come  
inside -- miming "eat" with her hands.

MARGARET

(in Spanish - subtitles)

<Please, come inside. I'll make you  
something to eat. Please. Come in.>

RAY

(trying to be civil, but  
trying to get out of  
there)

No, gracias. It's ok.

Ray's already pulling out of the driveway. He checks his  
watch: 10:01.

RAY

(to himself)

Dammit!

Ray punches the dash then hits the gas.

EXT. CREDIT CARD CENTER - NIGHT

Ray pulls in to the parking lot as fast as he can.

As he's getting out, the Manager comes out the door on his way home for the night. He crosses paths with Ray. Checks his watch.

MANAGER  
It's almost thirty minutes after ten, Mr. Connell.

RAY  
I'm really sorry. I had to help this --

MANAGER  
-- I'm sorry Ray, I already called in a guy that lives just down the street. I thought you could use this job more than he could, but I guess I was wrong.

He walks off. Ray calls after him.

RAY  
But I'm here now. I can still get to work --

MANAGER  
-- I'm sorry.

The Manager hustles off to his car, leaving Ray alone.

INT./EXT. RAY'S CAR - SAME

As Ray gets in his car, he spots a stuffed, toy giraffe wedged in his back seat -- the little girl's giraffe.

EXT. MARGARET'S HOUSE - LATER

Ray pulls up and gets out with giraffe in hand.

INT. MARGARET'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

JOSE (30s) -- blue collar -- gruff -- and Ray sit around a table as Margaret whips something up at the stove in their cramped house. Their son plays with a toy nearby. Their daughter plays with the giraffe at the table.

JOSE  
Go play with that in the other room, mija.

She happily runs off with the giraffe.

RAY  
You did that just today?

Ray points to the CAST on Jose's arm.

JOSE  
Yeah, did it on the job this  
afternoon. Hurt like hell.

Margaret serves the men some food.

RAY  
(to Margaret)  
Thank you. Gracias.

JOSE  
I should be thanking you, Mr... ?

RAY  
Ray's fine.

JOSE  
Ray. I didn't know that spare had a  
hole in it.  
(to his son - in Spanish)  
<Go get daddy's wallet, mijo.>  
(back to Ray)  
Haven't had that car for too long  
and haven't had time to look it  
over like I should. You know how it  
is.

RAY  
Sure. It's no problem.

The little boy brings the wallet then runs off. Jose digs for  
some cash.

JOSE  
So, how much do I owe you?

RAY  
Owe me? Oh. Nothing. It's ok,  
really.

JOSE  
Come on. I'll pay for your gas at  
least.

He tries to give Ray some cash.

RAY  
No really, it's ok.

Jose puts the money away.

JOSE

Well, I have to repay you somehow. You need any work done on your house? I know a couple guys.

RAY

(re: the food)  
This is payment enough. Really.

He takes a bite of his food.

RAY

Besides, I do all my own home repair.

JOSE

Oh yeah? You pretty handy, huh?

RAY

I'm in construction... or was in construction.

JOSE

Serious? What do you do?

RAY

Bricklayer.

Jose's face lights up.

JOSE

(to Margaret - in Spanish)  
<You brought me home a bricklayer, honey!>

(to Ray)

That's what I do. That's how I broke my arm today.

Ray stops eating.

JOSE

You do terra cotta, cinder-block, face-brick?

RAY

Yep, yep, and yep. I can even cut stone when I need to.

JOSE

Listen. I can't do anything for six weeks until this heals, and my brother owns the business I work for. We need a bricklayer tomorrow morning.

(MORE)

JOSE (CONT'D)

We've been scramblin' to find someone all day, but nobody's got the right skills. If we don't get somebody by tomorrow, he'll lose the contract. I can't let my brother down like that.

Ray just stares at him not knowing what to say.

JOSE

So, can you be there tomorrow or what?

Now Ray's face lights up.

RAY

Yeah, absolutely!

They shake hands -- opposite hands because of Jose's cast.

JOSE

Ok, great! But don't get too attached. That's my job and I need it back, ok?

RAY

Of course.

JOSE

But if things work out, I think my brother can squeeze you in somewhere.

RAY

(sincere)

Thank you.

(to Margaret)

Thank you, so much. Muchas gracias.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

Ray works his ass off laying brick -- but he's got a smile on his face brighter than the hot sun above him.

A guy hands him a brick, but drops it by accident.

RAY

It's ok. No problem.

FADE OUT.