

DESTITUTIONALIZED

Story idea by

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INT. LEE'S ORGANIC SHOP - DAY

A small size store in a nice area of South Philly.

Shelves and racks somewhat orderly yet the overall set up is simple and quaint.

AMY (25), athletic build and lots of energy.

She types a message on her phone. Then tends to a CLIENT.

A delivery man stands with three heavy boxes of products by the main entrance.

AMY makes a sign to the Delivery Man to hold.

She scans a jar and types on a register.

GWEN (45) a middle aged woman customer with a kind demeanor stands by.

GWEN

Do you think Lee would be
interested in an Agri-Hood project?

AMY

Oh. I'm sure he would.

She discretely grins. Amy checks her phone.

GWEN

Would you?

AMY

Me?... Why do you ask?

GWEN

Just curious.

Amy shifts uncomfortably while she types on her phone.

AMY

Oh... yes. Well, no. I mean... I
just have too much going on right
now.

GWEN lets her off the hook. Amy leaves her phone to the side.

GWEN

I understand.

AMY ably packs GWEN's goods and hands them to her.

AMY
Thank you so much.

DELIVERY GUY knocks on the front window. AMY makes a sign again for him to wait. Grabs her phone and makes a call.

AMY (CONT'D)
Lee?

AMY holds impatiently.

AMY (CONT'D)
The back door is stuck again. Roger says he can't fix it today.

Pause.

AMY (CONT'D)
Should I let them stack the boxes by the storage door?

AMY stares at her phone. Another incoming call. She freaks a little when she notices the number.

AMY (CONT'D)
(To herself)
Oh shoot.
(To Lee)
I'll have to call you back. I'll figure it out and call you back.
Ok?

She clicks over to take the other call.

AMY (CONT'D)
Mikey, sweetie. Why are you using this phone?

The DELIVERY GUY knocks on the front glass window. He still holds the boxes.

She waves for him to come in.

AMY (CONT'D)
(On the phone)
What? What ambulance? Is Mom okay?

DELIVERY GUY enters followed by two other helpers.

AMY (CONT'D)
Is Lilith near you? Let her have the phone.

DELIVERY GUY stands waiting for instructions.

AMY (CONT'D)
Stack them by the back room. Please
don't block the access.

AMY returns to MIKEY on the Phone.

AMY (CONT'D)
Mikey. Please give the phone to
Lillith. I need to speak to her.

Pause.

AMY (CONT'D)
Hello! Mikey. Are you there?

She checks the screen on the phone and scoffs.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - SAME TIME

A rundown Apartment complex in Chester.

This is South Philly but the east side of the tracks.

Pretty much like Compton, California with the added bonus of
temperatures dropping to minus fifteen in the winter.

With no ramp available, Two PARAMEDICS carry a stretcher down
the stairs of the main entrance.

Once on steady ground they roll over to the ambulance.

ROSE, AMY's mother (47) a tall but frail woman bounces in and
out of consciousness.

MIKEY (17) holds her hand doing his best not to be in the way
of the PARAMEDICS.

MIKEY
You ok Momma. You gonna be...
(Makes a shrieking noise)
You gonna be okay Momma.

ROSE looks the way of MIKEY's voice and whispers.

ROSE
My boy. My sweet boy.

MIKEY
I love you Momma. You are ok.

Before ROSE drifts off again she faintly utters some words.

ROSE
I love you...

As they get to the Ambulance, LILLITH (45) heavysset and a short fused, grabs MIKEY's hand.

LILLITH
Here Mikey. Let the Gentlemen do their job.

MIKEY complies. Steps away.

MIKEY
Let the gentlemen do their job.

ONE of the TWO PARAMEDICS seems the most relieved.

PARAMEDIC
Thank you Sir.

The PARAMEDICS raise the stretcher and rolls it in.

MIKEY retorts.

MIKEY
Thank you Sir.
(Pause)
Love you Momma.

INT. JEFFERSON FRANKFORD HOSPITAL - SHARED ROOM - LATER

Everything about this place is pretty much third world.

Linoleum floors, stench of a mix of chemicals and thin curtains dividing the six hospital beds.

ROSE's bed is the second one to the left.

She seems better and awake. She talks on the phone. Keeps a low tone of voice as if resenting the lack of privacy.

ROSE
Thank you Lee. I am glad he is with you. You're an angel.

AMY walks in. When she sees ROSE awake she calms down a little. ROSE end her call.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Have to go. Love you.

AMY stops three steps away from her. ROSE drops her hands to the sides.

PAUSE.

AMY
What the hell Rose?

ROSE
Am I sabotaging your plans?

AMY walks to her. Kisses her forehead and holds her hand.

AMY
You scared the beejeez out of me.

ROSE
These idiots have no idea what I've got. For all I know they left a scalpel in there.

AMY looks at her.

AMY
Be serious.

ROSE
Seriously. They have no idea. I'm back in the OR at midnight. Can you believe it? What's worse than an Idiot Doctor; A tired one.

AMY stays silent for a moment. ROSE waits for AMY to speak.

AMY
Should I change my ticket again?

ROSE
Of course not!

Both stay quiet for a moment.

ROSE (CONT'D)
This is yours and my little boy's ticket out of here. It may be your only chance.

They both let that sink in. AMY sighs uncomfortably.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Did you get the Basketball scholarship?

She shakes her head.

ROSE (CONT'D)
But Lee said it was a slam dunk.

AMY
Not for a white girl. Not in this
day and age.

AMY produces a stack of brochures from her backpack.

ROSE stares at her impatiently.

AMY (CONT'D)
They must have felt bad because
they help me get a mixed solution.
I'll have to stay and work for an
Institution in California after
graduation. A two year commitment.

ROSE thinks.

ROSE
Full scholarship?

AMY shakes her head.

AMY
Partial. They cleared a direct
subsidized loan.

ROSE
How much?

AMY
Twenty grand will get me through
graduation.

ROSE shakes he head. AMY stalls. Bites her lip and then:

AMY (CONT'D)
There is one full scholarship for
children of disabled veterans.

ROSE pauses. AMY looks down.

ROSE
Sweetheart... do you really want to
go there?

ROSE grabs her hand.

ROSE (CONT'D)
You don't need a coward to validate
your life. Neither should you have
to borrow twenty grand to buy a
piece of paper to prove your worth.

Both stay quiet for a moment.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Its just a means to an end, ok?
(Pause)
I wish I'd done a few things
differently...

AMY motions for her to stop.

AMY
It's OK Rose. We'll be fine.

ROSE
You have it all figured out. Now do
it.

AMY
Not all.

Both know what it is.

ROSE takes a deep breath and grabs a brochure from her
service table. Hands it to AMY.

ROSE
Talk to Lee. He will help us get it
done.

AMY
An Institution?... Are you sure?

ROSE
No I am not. But without you here I
am useless. I adore my baby boy but
I can't handle him alone.

AMY sighs and sits. Rests her head against ROSE's.

Both fall deep in thought.

INT. DEBAPTIST FUNERAL HOME - NIGHT

Pretty somber place. Two paint jobs and three flower
arrangements away from being just a warehouse.

ROSE's casket rests at the center surrounded by some very
simple flower arrangements.

At the corner AMY sits in a daze.

MIKEY is leaning on her. He whispers.

MIKEY

I love you Momma... I love... my
Momma.

We finally meet LEE (45). Full warrior on the outside, all heart on the inside.

LEE walks with a cane. He drops next to AMY. She slowly comes back out of her daze.

LEE gently touches her shoulder. No one speaks for a while.

LEE

I spoke to the people at
Devereux... I told them I had new
information.

This gets AMY's attention. She anxiously looks at LEE.

LEE (CONT'D)

They said they can file with social
security and get you settled. Oddly
enough it is easier to go through
them than deal directly with SS.

AMY

Do you think Mikey will be okay
there?

LEE breaths deep.

LEE

You know what I think. I just don't
want you to be bouncing off like a
pinball anymore.

AMY nods. Squeezes LEE's hand.

None of this has escaped MIKEY.

MIKEY

Mikey will be ok.

AMY holds MIKEY.

LEE

Of course Captain! Mikey is gonna
be all right.

They all go silent again. Something else bothers AMY.

AMY

Why would Mom hire a Lawyer?

LEE fidgets.

LEE
Recently?

AMY produces her phone and shows him a message:

"Hello Amy. Its Jeb Sommers, your Mom's lawyer. I am really sorry for your loss. There's something you should know. I'll call you tomorrow at 11 o'clock".

LEE shakes his head.

LEE (CONT'D)
Your Mom hired him a long time ago.
He was supposed to get damages for
Mikey's Vax injury.

He pauses for effect.

LEE (CONT'D)
That's not even his real name. He's
a crook!

MIKEY frowns and whispers something unintelligible. Then...

MIKEY
A crook!

INT. LEE'S ORGANIC SHOP - MORNING

AMY slides down a list on a tablet.

AMY
Please get familiar with these
vendors and tell me if you have any
questions.

AMY hands the tablet to MEGHAN (21), attentive and friendly.

AMY then picks a paper bag and packs two jars of honey and a carton of milk.

Tears off a receipt from the printer and hands it to MIKEY who is standing by.

The LADY CUSTOMER, who we saw at the beginning, gets the bag and receipt from MIKEY.

AMY (CONT'D)
Thank you Gwen.

MIKEY
Thank you Gwen.

GWEN
Thank you Mikey.
(pause)
Amy?

AMY looks back at GWEN.

AMY
Yes.

GWEN
Is Lee available? I'd like to talk
to him.

AMY stalls. Looks at the time and then back to the office.

AMY
Oh. The AGRI-HOOD project.

GWEN nods. AMY talks to MEGHAN.

AMY (CONT'D)
Any questions?

MEGHAN
Not really. I know many of them.
I'll make notes.

AMY
Good. I'll be a phone call away if
anything comes up.

AMY walks to the back office. LEE has his full attention on
his computer screen.

AMY (CONT'D)
Sorry Lee. Gwen wants to talk to
you.

LEE react slowly then...

LEE
Oh yeah!

He gets up and walks behind AMY.

AMY goes back to MEGHAN. A phone call gets AMY's attention.

Her heart misses a beat.

AMY

Lee?

LEE talks to GWEN. Didn't hear. AMY insists.

AMY (CONT'D)

Lee? Sorry to interrupt.

LEE looks at her. She motions to her phone. LEE gets it.

AMY answers.

AMY (CONT'D)

Hello?

(Pause)

Yes Jeb. Can you hold for a moment?

(Pause)

Thank you.

LEE walks past her back into the office. Amy in tow.

AMY sits and places her phone on the desk. Presses the hands free button.

AMY (CONT'D)

Jeb?

JEB (O.S.)

Amy. Hello. I am sure you must be busy so if you don't mind I'll shoot straight.

AMY

Go right ahead.

JEB (O.S.)

Your Mom had complications from a previous surgery. She went back in to the OR at midnight and Doctors say she didn't make it. This is preposterous.

AMY and LEE exchange looks. They don't realize MIKEY is standing at the office door.

JEB (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Obvious malpractice. More than two hundred thousand people die every year from malpractice. Did you know that?

AMY

So you want to sue the hospital?

JEB (O.S.)

You bet!

LEE holds his head in disapproval.

AMY

That would cost money.

JEB (O.S.)

You handle some of the expenses and I'll do the rest. We will get you a lot of money.

AMY

I don't know. Some expenses you say?

LEE is ready to explode.

JEB (O.S.)

I already checked. Your brother is eligible for benefits from the SS. You sign off those to me and I'll get you a quick settlement out of court.

LEE loses his marbles.

LEE

Friggin' parasite!

AMY goes pale.

JEB (O.S.)

Excuse me?

AMY

Sorry I am in a...

MIKEY's reaction throws AMY off the cliff.

MIKEY

Haaa!!! Friggin' Parasite!

AMY holds her breath.

JEB (O.S.)

Amy are you there?

AMY

(Agitated)

Sorry. I don't... I'll get back to you on that. Ok. Bye bye.

AMY hags up as she falls back on the chair.

PAUSE. AMY lets out a muffled laugh.

AMY (CONT'D)
Unreal.

LEE
(Calmly shaking his head)
I told you he was a crook.

EXT. DEVEREUX ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CLINIC - DAY

Clean yet sterile. Overall artificial.

A Female ADMIN person and a NURSE stand by the main entrance.

They see a car pull into the parking bay. AMY and MIKEY come out. MIKEY hauls a rolling suitcase.

MIKEY
Are we going to see the ocean?

AMY
Not today sweetie. In a week when I
come back I'll take you to the
river.

FEMALE ADMIN
Hello! Amy?

AMY
Hi.

INT. DEVEREUX ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CLINIC - LATER

The ADMIN PERSON leads AMY and MIKEY through a long corridor.
The NURSE stays behind next to MIKEY.

FEMALE ADMIN
We'll let Mikey settle in his room
and then we will walk around the
premises a bit.

AMY nods and looks back at MIKEY. The FEMALE ADMIN opens a
room door.

FEMALE ADMIN (CONT'D)
Go ahead Mikey.

MIKEY rushes in. A standard room but with a view of some
gardens.

MIKEY

Look Amy!!! I see the ocean!

MIKEY looks out the window. AMY is a bit anxious.

AMY

Settle in Mikey.

EXT. DEVEREUX ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CLINIC - LATER

The Four of the them walk along a paved path in the garden.

FEMALE ADMIN

This week is payed for with your advanced deposit. If and when SS comes through you'll be credited for this week's stay.

AMY produces two small booklets.

AMY

Ok. My concern now is what I told you about his Nutrition.

She hands her the booklets. She takes them but doesn't seem to be interested.

FEMALE ADMIN

Well as much as we'd like to accommodate you, we have to stick to protocol.

AMY

Well I know but look at him. He does very well. We accomplished that with absolutely no meds just sticking to strict diet. It's been many years now.

FEMALE ADMIN

Experts know better. Don't worry.

AMY can't hide her discomfort.

MIKEY senses AMY being upset.

MIKEY

Amy, Mikey will be all right.

AMY sighs.

AMY

I know sweetie.

FEMALE ADMIN does her best to fake that she cares.

FEMALE ADMIN
We'll see what we can do. Ok?

AMY purses her lips.

INT. CAR - LATER

AMY sits in the back. The Driver starts to move the car.
MIKEY jogs along for a short while saying goodbye.

MIKEY
Mikey will be ok. Love you Amy.

AMY is torn apart but does her best to hide the storm inside of her.

MIKEY becomes smaller and smaller as they drive away.

AMY looks into her backpack and produces her passport and plane ticket.

JOHN the Driver breaks the silence.

JOHN
Lee told me your off to UC Santa Barbara.

AMY welcomes the distraction.

AMY
Yep.

JOHN
Good for you... Scholarship?

AMY
Partial.

JOHN
Loan?

AMY just nods. She gets a little agitated.

JOHN (CONT'D)
When I was your age I got seventy two thousand dollars in debt to get a higher education.

AMY discretely massages her head.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I'm 54. Three more years to go.

AMY frowns.

AMY
What was your major?

JOHN
Psychology.

PAUSE.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I know what you're thinking...
(pause)
I drive a cab and I am also a
barber. Both Psychology related!

He laughs. AMY holds her stomach.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Psychology jobs wouldn't pay enough
you know.

AMY reacts.

AMY
Stop the car!

He slows down.

JOHN
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to upset
you.

AMY
Please stop!

EXT. STREET - SAME TIME

AMY rushes out. She finds a tree lean on.

Delivers her breakfast right at the root of the tree.

INT. DEVEREUX ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CLINIC - DAY

PANDEMONIUM. Two NURSES hold MIKEY down. A Soulless Doctor
and another NURSE stand by.

They are forcing pills on MIKEY. He spits them out.

NURSE 1
Mikey! Please. You said we're going
to be friends.

MIKEY
Yes friends! Meds NO!

NURSE 1 holds MIKEY'S mouth.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
No!!!! Lee said Mikey all right.

Soulless Doctor reacts.

SOULLESS DOCTOR
Hold on!

BOTH NURSES reincorporate. ONE picks up a fallen chair.

NURSE 2
Sit here Mikey.

SOULLESS DOCTOR
Mikey, I'm going to say it once. We
will keep meds to a low but you
need to take them. If you do, we
are all going to be friends. You
understand?

MIKEY
No Meds... They make me sick!

SOULLESS DOCTOR takes a moment. Then speaks to the NURSE by
him.

SOULLESS DOCTOR
Sedate him.

Before the NURSE can turn, we hear AMY'S voice OFF SCREEN.

AMY (O.S.)
No you wont!

They all look back and see AMY. Calm but standing firm.

EXT. SASSAFRASS MOUNTAIN, SC - DAWN

Several feet move along the grass. Dew damps their shoes. We
hear hums and muffled voices.

As the CAMERA tilts up we slowly reveal GWEN. A few teenage
KIDS and several ADULTS.

They all walk up a hill. Its a beautiful morning.

LEE walks at the same pace as most, despite his cane.

AMY and MIKEY walk by LEE.

MIKEY is anxious.

AMY

Hold on sweetie. Almost there.

MIKEY

What is it?

AMY

I can't tell you. You'll see in a moment.

MIKEY

What is it Amy?!

As they get to the top of the hill MIKEY finally sees the Ocean. Still miles away but a gorgeous sight.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

Ahhhh!!! Amy!!

MIKEY breaks out running. He screams and hollers. Too excited.

LEE stops.

AMY

You ok?

LEE calmly nods. Enjoys the view.

AMY pats his back. LEE wraps his arm around her.

The camera travels up to reveal more of the beautiful dawn.

Up and up and up.

THE END.