

GUM

By

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EXT - PHOENIX, AZ - AFTERNOON

The quiet neighborhood park consists of a merry-go-round, monkey bars, slide and saw horses.

The sound of children laughing and playing fill the air.

JOSH (27) sits on a bench, at the edge of the park. He's an average sized man with a full sleeve tattoo on his left arm. He has on Carhartt pants, T-shirt and a baseball cap. He's smoking a cigarette.

JOSH'S POV:

He watches as HAILEY (25) helps her daughter OAKLEY (3) go up and down the slide.

HAILEY (the love of JOSH's life) is an attractive woman about 5'11", blond hair and fair skin. She's wearing a summer dress and bare foot.

OAKLEY is a spitting image of her mother with big green eyes.

BACK TO SCENE

JOSH leans over to put the cigarette out, gets up, drops the butt into the nearby garbage can, then makes his way toward HAILEY and OAKLEY.

JOSH arrives at the slide and catches OAKLEY at the bottom (big smile on his face).

He swings her around and gives her a big hug.

OAKLEY
Daddy stink

JOSH
Yeah, I'm sorry baby girl

HAILEY
Maybe you should think about
quitting.

OAKLEY
I don't like you smoke

JOSH helps OAKLEY back around to go up the ladder.

JOSH
You're right, you keep hounding me
bout it but its not that easy

HAILEY
(irrationally)
Yeah, its been a year of hounding
and I think its about time you
showed some initiative.
We can't afford for you to smoke.
Not for yourself... for me... for
HAILEY, ahhh... you get one week or
its over between us.

This hits JOSH hard. He drops his head in deep thought.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT - KITCHEN - MORNING

Everything in the kitchen is squeaky clean. HAILEY is standing over the stove top cooking something in a pot, OAKLEY on hip.

INSERT:

Newspaper clipping on top a stack of bills.

There is a picture of a car crash, underneath we can read Samuel Arran Sanders dies at the age of 40. He is survived by his daughter HAILEY ANDREA BARRETT.

CUT TO:

JOSH coming through the door, HAILEY and OAKLEY are just waking up and getting some oatmeal.

JOSH
(Out of breath and
excited)
I thought really hard last night...
this morning I ran to the store and
bought a pack of gum...

HAILEY
So.

JOSH
Well... well I have a plan. Every
time I feel like smoking, I'm gonna
chew a piece of gum.

HAILEY
About time you tried something.
Hopefully you'll last more tha...

JOSH
Baby, I got this. Got it in the
bag.

OAKLEY
Daddy no smoke no more.

JOSH and OAKLEY share a fist pound and all sit down to enjoy
breakfast together.

INT - JOSH'S CAR - EVENING

SUPER: Three days later

JOSH's car is littered with all types of gum wrappers. You
can't even see where the passenger seat ends and the floor
begins.

SMACK, SMACK

JOSH vigorously smacks a wad of gum that fills his mouth as
he taps the steering wheel with his thumbs and nod's his
head.

He spits the wad out and rolls it into an empty wrapper as he
pulls up to the house. Right then he pops in three more
pieces and heads into the house.

INT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

HAILEY sits on the couch resting her eyes. She just put
OAKLEY down for the night. She's exhausted.

JOSH flops on the chair still smacking away. He puts in
three more pieces.

HAILEY
Could you go away, you know
smacking drives me up the fucking
wall. Please... I've had a long day

JOSH
Well fuck you too, so have I

JOSH storms upstairs as HAILEY blows it off and falls asleep.

INT - BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

JOSH wakes up choking on gum. He gets up, sticking to the
sheets with sweat, throws blanket on ground and walks to
window.

JOSH
Withdrawals are... a bitch.

He opens the window, spits gum out, pukes then passes out on the floor.

INT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

SUPER: Five days later

JOSH and HAILEY are arguing about money and how he has been buying 20 packs of gum a day.

HAILEY
We have no more money. You can't buy anymore gum.

JOSH
(angrily)
Fuck that, I need it... I need it

JOSH runs out of the house

HAILEY
You need fucking help.

At this point JOSH looks like he's been fighting a drug addiction. He is sweaty and dirty with bags under his eyes as dark as death.

EXT - GAS STATION - DAY

JOSH is in the ally behind the gas station, he has just been thrown out for trying to steal gum. A MAN is walking through the ally putting in a piece of gum.

JOSH
Hey man, you got some for me... I need it real bad.

MAN
Get away from me you fucking junkie.

JOSH
I will suck your dick.

Just then the MAN starts beating the shit out of JOSH.

FADE OUT.

INSERT MONTAGE

An ambulance comes and takes JOSH to the hospital.

HAILEY arrives in the hospital room. JOSH only has the energy to say hey, then passes out.

HAILEY drives JOSH home, he is bandaged up on the head and you can see a couple of blood spots bleeding through.

HAILEY helps lay JOSH on the couch as the sun beats through the window.

OAKLEY lays her favorite toy on JOSH's chest after she try's to wake him for dinner.

Both HAILEY and OAKLEY are there looking over JOSH. He comes to and admits he has a problem with gum and try's to eat the breakfast that been brought.

INT - KITCHEN - DAY

Looking at the garbage we see one and a half packs of gum being thrown away.

JOSH

I guess this is the first step to breaking any addiction.

HAILEY

Yes it is.

EXT - NEIGHBORHOOD PARK - DAY

SUPER: Six months later

JOSH is at the park with HAILEY and OAKLEY. He is pushing HAILEY on a swing.

JOSH's POV:

Looks at HAILEY who is sitting on the bench next to the swing set. She is smiling at the two of them. She lips I love you.

HAILEY's POV:

JOSH lips I love you back. He has a tooth pick in his mouth, it is well chewed.

FADE TO BLACK.