

THE HITCHHIKER

written by

Jason Mogle

812-631-7051
jasonmogle@gmail.com

THE HITCHHIKER - MOGLE

EXT. Wooded Road - DAY

CHERYL is driving her car down the road and HAROLD hitchhiking.

CHERYL
Well, well, well. What do we have here?

CHERYL chuckles and smiles menacingly to herself. She slows down and lowers her window as she rolls to a stop next to the HAROLD. CHERYL smiles warmly.

CHERYL (CONT'D)
Need a ride?

HAROLD smiles back.

HAROLD
Gee ma'am, thanks!

As HAROLD walks around to the passenger side, he smiles menacingly to himself and chuckles an evil chuckle. HAROLD opens the door and pauses, furtively glancing around before pulling a ski mask on over his head. CHERYL has her back turned to the passenger door and is hunched over, sneakily putting on her own ski mask. Both people produce a weapon (tire iron, crow bar, gun, etc.) as HAROLD slides into the car, his back facing CHERYL. Both people quickly whip around, brandishing their weapons and holding out their free hands expectantly.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
Aaaaa-HA!

CHERYL
Aaaaa-HA!

Beat.

A wave of realization and subsequent exasperation wash over their faces.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
Are you kidding me?

CHERYL (CONT'D)
Oh, come ON!

They both lower their weapons and reluctantly slap their wallets into the other's hand.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
You're not supposed to offer rides to strangers!

CHERYL
You're not supposed to ACCEPT rides from strangers!

They shake their heads in frustration as they each turn to look out their windows, contemplating the situation and how this could have happened.

Beat.

HAROLD

So... what now...?

CHERYL sighs, shaking her head and shrugging.

Beat.

They slowly start to turn towards each other as upbeat, earnest, nostalgic music fades in (something like "Winters Love" by Animal Collective starting at 2:26).

CHERYL

Hey...

CHERYL and HAROLD lock eyes and grin. The music grows a little louder. During the montage, no other audio is heard, and HAROLD and CHERYL are sporting ski masks throughout.

EXT. CARNIVAL - NIGHT

CHERYL is playing a carnival game and totally wins! CHERYL and HAROLD jump up and down and dance around. CARNY hands CHERYL a big bear, and CHERYL gives it to HAROLD, who puts a ski mask on it.

EXT. RIVER BANK - DAY

HAROLD reels in a fish as CHERYL cheers him on. HAROLD pulls the fish out of the water and removes it from the hook. CHERYL puts a little ski mask on the fish and HAROLD releases it into the river. The couple holds hands as they wave goodbye to the fish.

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

HAROLD and CHERYL are in wedding clothes, standing in front of MINISTER. MINISTER pronounces them man and wife, and gestures to them that they may now kiss. HAROLD dips CHERYL for a kiss, and when they come up, CHERYL puts a ski mask on the minister.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

CHERYL's having a baby! HAROLD nervously wrings his hands as CHERYL lies in a hospital bed, mostly covered by a sheet. DOCTOR produces a baby from beneath the sheet! It's wearing a ski mask and holding a small crowbar. HAROLD, the proud father, moves to put a ski mask on the baby and pauses, realizing the baby is already wearing a ski mask. HAROLD looks down at the ski mask in his hand, unsure what to do with it. HAROLD shrugs and puts it on DOCTOR. As DOCTOR starts to walk off, HAROLD springs into action as he realizes DOCTOR is still Holding the baby. HAROLD grabs DOCTOR's arm, retrieves the baby, and takes it over to CHERYL. The couple take a moment to adore their baby before smiling at each other.

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

The montage is over. The music changes to funeral music. CHERYL is old, and JUNIOR is all grown up. Both are still in ski masks. JUNIOR stands at a pulpit in front of a bunch of chairs, mostly empty. CHERYL is seated in the front row, and we see CARNY, MINISTER, DOCTOR, and the fish scattered throughout, all wearing ski masks. PERSON 1 and PERSON 2 are sitting next to each other near the front, not wearing ski masks.

JUNIOR

Dad lived a full, wonderful life.
He told all his friends and family
to offer and accept rides from
strangers, because it worked out so
well for him and Mom! And... it
looks like a lot of people took
that advice, judging by how empty
the room is.

PERSON 1

(Whispering)

So did everyone get kidnapped? Or
arrested...?

JUNIOR

You know, the room's pretty empty,
I can hear you. They weren't
kidnapped OR arrested, they just
offered strangers rides so they're
all late.

PERSON 2

Where's the casket?

CHERYL stands, and JUNIOR moves to help her up.

CHERYL

It slid out of the hearse and
landed on someone's car. He
hitchhiked to the very end.

CHERYL produces her tire iron.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

Now everybody hand me your wallets,
or I'll threaten you.

BLACKOUT

SHOESTRINGING ME ALONG

written by

Jason Mogle

812-631-7051
jasonmogle@gmail.com

SHOESTRINGING ME ALONG - MOGLE

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

JAMIE stands next to a chair in his socks. His untied shoes are on the chair. JAMIE slides his feet into his shoes one at a time, using the chair to prop them up as he does so. JAMIE produces a roll of packing tape and pulls some out with a SKKKRRRAAAAATCCCH. JAMIE tapes his shoe to his foot, wrapping the tape around and around his foot and winding it all the way up to his knee before cutting the tape. JAMIE puts his taped-up foot on the ground and then slides his other foot into his shoe. JAMIE places this foot onto the chair and pulls out a second length of tape with a SKKKKKRRRAAAAATCCCH as SAM walks in.

SAM

Whoa.

JAMIE pauses, tape stretched between hands, and makes eye contact with SAM.

SAM (CONT'D)

Whatcha doin'?

JAMIE looks down at his shoes and back up at SAM.

JAMIE

I'm putting my shoes on, what's it look like?

SAM

Are you seriously taping your shoes to your feet?

JAMIE looks down at his feet again, and back up at SAM.

JAMIE

Is that a trick question?

SAM

How have you made it this far in life without learning to tie your shoes?

JAMIE

I mean the tape works fine...

SAM

No, I will not stand for this.

JAMIE puts the tape on the ground as SAM walks over to the chair. SAM takes a knee and begins to tie JAMIE'S shoe.

SAM (CONT'D)

So, we pretend the laces are a rabbit, okay? First the rabbit hops around the tree... And then he... he uh...

SAM mumbles under his breath, his motions and mutterings becoming more and more frantic. He looks up past the camera, trying to stifle his rising panic.

JAMIE:

Want some tape?

SAM

Wha- NO! Of course not, I... it's hard to do on someone else's shoe. Here, I'll tie my shoe, and you can follow along on your shoe.

SAM unties one of his shoes.

SAM (CONT'D)

You ready?

JAMIE readies himself to follow along and nods.

SAM (CONT'D)

Alright, so first the rabbit runs around the tree.

JAMIE

Mm-hmm.

SAM is slowly moving the laces around as he speaks. As he continues, he starts talking faster and faster, and his movements become more frenzied.

SAM

And then he weaves through the roots... and he comes back out of the hole and runs around the trunk two more times... and then he gets DIZZY and CRASHES into the tree, and a mama bird FALLS out of her nest, and baby bird starts WAILING "MOMMY, MOMMY, WHERE DID YOU GO?" AND THE POLICE HEAR THE COMMOTION, THEY RUN OVER TO THE TREE AND CHASE THE RABBIT AROUND AND AROUND AND THEY FINALLY GRAB HIM BY THE EARS AND THEY SHAKE HIM UP AND-

SAM kinda comes to his senses.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
CATCH the bunny!

In the same motion as pulling out the tape, JAMIE lunges at SAM's shoe with the tape and begins to wrap it around his foot.

SAM
NOOOO WHAT ARE YOU DOING???

TAYLOR pauses.

TAYLOR
Do you have a better idea?

JAMIE
No he does not.

SAM
I... don't.
(Sigh)
Fine, just finish.

TAYLOR finishes taping SAM'S shoe, winding it up to his knee, as JAMIE tapes up their own remaining shoe in like manner. SAM looks down at his leg, disgusted and defeated.

Beat.

TAYLOR
Do you want me to get your other shoe--even it out?

SAM
NO! I don't want you to get my other shoe. I want to go get lunch.

SAM begins putting on a jacket

TAYLOR
Ooh, can I come too?

SAM
Sure, hurry and grab your shoes.

SAM is struggling with the zipper.

TAYLOR
Oh, I don't wear shoes. They just hold me back.

SAM shakes their head, still struggling with the zipper as TAYLOR and JAMIE head towards the door. JAMIE notices Sam.

JAMIE

Oh, Sam, is your zipper broken?

SAM looks up, eyes widening.

SAM

N-no, guys, no, I-...

TAYLOR pulls out a length of tape with a SKKKRRRAAAAATCCCH

TAYLOR

GRAB 'EM!

JAMIE and TAYLOR lunge towards SAM, who tries to hurdle over the couch, all three screaming as the lights go out.

BLACKOUT

WORD SEARCH

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WORD SEARCH - MOGLE

STUDENT 1 and COUNSELOR are standing near the door to COUNSELOR's office. STUDENT looks very shocked and dismayed.

COUNSELOR

This is your final warning, if you leave your lunch tray on the table again, you will fail lunch and won't be able to walk at graduation.

STUDENT 1 storms off.

STUDENT 1

(muttering)

It's literally the last day of school.

COUNSELOR shakes their head to themselves. COUNSELOR pokes their head out the door as ROWDY RANDY sprints by.

COUNSELOR

RANDY!! IF YOU DON'T WALK IN THE HALLS, YOU DON'T WALK AT GRADUATION.

COUNSELOR glares after him. COUNSELOR looks over at SKIP and TAZ. COUNSELOR rubs the bridge of their nose.

COUNSELOR (CONT'D)

Alright.

COUNSELOR points to TAZ and SKIP and beckons them into the office with two fingers, like a coach.

SKIP

Did you want to see us both at the same time?

COUNSELOR

(sighing)

Yes, please come in, take a seat.

TAZ

Oh, word.

SKIP and TAZ bump fists and head in. As they take their seats, COUNSELOR paces around the office a bit, unsure of how to break the news. COUNSELOR stops pacing and stands behind their desk. They lean over it dramatically.

COUNSELOR

Kids, I got bad news. Neither of you are on track to walk at graduation.

SKIP and TAZ look at each other in shock.

SKIP

But I've had straight "A minuses"
all year!

TAZ

And my juvenile parole officer said
I'm almost someone else's problem.

COUNSELOR

I'm sorry, but academic standing
aside, you both have an incomplete
class on your transcript. You can't
graduate without finishing it.

TAZ

Kinda like how my mom said I
couldn't leave the table without
finishing my broccoli so I lit the
curtain on fire and ran outside and
hid in my neighbor's boat.

SKIP

Which class?

COUNSELOR holds holds up a piece of paper and scans it.

COUNSELOR

Let's see... you two didn't finish
a class with Mr. Jones last
semester.

TAZ

Oh, word.

SKIP

What?! That's AP Literature, I got
a perfect score on the AP test!

TAZ

I aced my breathalyzer this
morning.

TAZ and SKIP bump fists, but SKIP is still horrified and is
still paying full attention to COUNSELOR.

COUNSELOR

There's a note here--looks like
it's from a substitute teacher.
Says that says the two of you
worked together on an assignment
and never turned it in.

SKIP

How is this possible??

TAZ

Maybe you gave it to me to turn in?

SKIP

No offense, but I would never do that.

TAZ

Ah-ha-ha, word.

They bump fists.

COUNSELOR

It looks like it was an assignment from the day Mr. Jones mistook antifreeze for Gatorade and had to get his stomach pumped.

TAZ

Lightweight.

SKIP

Wait, I remember that day. it was Halloween! There weren't any assignments, we just goofed off and... and... oh no...

COUNSELOR

It says here clear as day: "Skip Murphy, Halloween Word Search, Zero." Same for you, Taz.

TAZ

Oh, word. ...search?

SKIP

Why did you wait until the last 5 minutes of the school year to tell us?!

COUNSELOR seems to ignore this and slides two worksheets and pencils across the desk.

COUNSELOR

Now, according to the universal rules of high school, if you can complete this word search before the final bell of your senior year, you may graduate.

SKIP and TAZ look at COUNSELOR incredulously.

Beat.

COUNSELOR waves their hands wildly in the air.

COUNSELOR (CONT'D)
Well, gOoO! GO GO GO GO GO GO!!!

Intense music begins playing. SKIP and TAZ and COUNSELOR burst into a frenzy. Everyone screams their lines and overlap each other.

TAZ
YO, THIS IS CRAZY!

SKIP
WHERE'S "CAULDRON?!?!"

COUNSELOR
C'MON YOU TWO, YOU HAVE 90 SECONDS!

TAZ
MY PENCIL'S OUT OF INK!

SKIP
I FOUND "CANDY," I FOUND "CANDY!!!"

TAZ
YO, PASS ME SOME!

COUNSELOR
YOU CAN'T WALK AT GRADUATION IF YOU
DON'T FINISH THIS WORD SEARCH!

SKIP
WAIT ARE ANY OF THE WORDS
BACKWARDS?

TAZ
YOU HAVE TO TELL US!!!

COUNSELOR
YOU'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME!!

SKIP
I SEE SO MANY WORDS THAT AREN'T
PART OF THE PUZZLE!

TAZ
OH DIP I CAN'T READ??

COUNSELOR
THINK SPOOKY THOUGHTS! THINK SPOOKY
THOUGHTS!

SKIP
YES TAZ YOU CAN READ, REMEMBER?

TAZ
YO TEACH COULD I GET A BATHROOM
PASS? FINNA WHIZZ MY BOARD SHORTS.

COUNSELOR
I'M MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN SOCIETY!

SKIP
THERE ARE WORDS IN THE PUZZLE THAT
AREN'T IN THE WORD BANK!!!!

TAZ
MY WORD BANK IS BROKE, I THINK
SOMEONE ROBBED IT.

COUNSELOR
CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE!

SKIP
AAAAAAAH MY HAND IS CRAMPING!

TAZ
SEE MA, I KNEW I COULD AMOUNT TO
SOMETHING!

COUNSELOR
I DON'T ACTUALLY WORK HERE!

ALL scream for several seconds. The bell rings.

COUNSELOR (CONT'D)
PENCILS DOWN!

TAZ and SKIP drop their pencils and put their hands up in the
air like they're being held at gunpoint.

TAZ
(softly)
You don't work here?

COUNSELOR picks up the word searches, looks at them, and
furrows their brow.

COUNSELOR
Now-...

ROWDY RANDY bursts into the room.

ROWDY RANDY
ROWDY RANDY DOESN'T WALK AT
GRADUATION! ROWDY RANDY RUNS AT
GRADUATION!

ROWDY RANDY snatches the word searches and dashes out of the room. SKIP, TAZ, and students in the hallway all begin chanting.

ALL STUDENTS
RAN-DY! RAN-DY! RAN-DY!

COUNSELOR
CURSE YOU, ROWDY RANDY!!!

BLACKOUT