

The Porch Room presents

Mousetrap

A Screenplay

By

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THE
PORCH
ROOM

INT. SUPERMARKET - NIGHT.

RAFAEL wears a cashier's smock while attending the register.
JESS is leaving.

JESS
They put you on the night shift?

RAFAEL
Every night this week.

JESS
Ah ha ha!

RAFAEL
Shut up.

Black.

SUPER: MONDAY. (We'll shoot the schedule and check boxes.)

Rafael fills in the Monday crossword.

ZAK approaches the register. He sets down:

- a pack of nicotine patches
- and a mousetrap.

RAFAEL
Hi.

ZAK
Hey.

Rafael scans the patches and the mousetrap.

ZAK
You don't know if those work, do you?

RAFAEL
The patches? My friend quit with them.

Zak holds up the mousetrap.

ZAK
No, these.

RAFAEL
Oh, I don't know. I never needed one.

ZAK
Yeah, me neither. New apartment.

RAFAEL
Yeah. Nine-twelve.

Zak pays him.

RAFAEL
Have a nice night.

ZAK
You too.

Zak leaves. Rafael stares at the empty store.
Black.

SUPER: TUESDAY.

Rafael tries the Tuesday puzzle. Zak approaches again.

He is carrying a basket this time. He drops

- thirty mousetraps

on the counter.

Rafael studies the traps.

RAFAEL
I guess they work?

ZAK
Huh? Oh.

That seems to be that. Rafael scans one, punches 30 on the counter.

RAFAEL
Seventy one eighty.

Zak looks in his wallet. Four tens look back.

RAFAEL
Need me to take some off?

ZAK
No.

Zak slides his debit card through the reader. Rafael bags the traps.

RAFAEL
Take it easy.

Zak hurries out of the store. Rafael watches him go.
Black.

SUPER: WEDNESDAY.

The Wednesday crossword lies half-completed, abandoned.
Rafael leafs through a tabloid.

Zak marches up to the counter with a basket. He unloads:

- a vicious looking kitchen meat hook,
- an 8-pound eye round roast,
- and a large bottle of Drano.

He looks at Rafael, anxious, apprehensive.

Rafael studies him. Two nicotine patches are visible on his neck.

Rafael put down the magazine and scans the three items.

RAFAEL
Twenty three forty eight.

Zak doesn't seem to hear him. He is looking at the cover of the tabloid.

There is a poorly Photoshopped monster on the cover, a brutal cross between a ferret and a shark. The headline reads HYBRID CREATURE AT LARGE! SCIENTISTS ESTIMATE AT 200 POUNDS!

He picks up another copy of the tabloid from the shelf.

ZAK
Can I get this, too?

RAFAEL
Sure. Twenty seven seventy five.

Zak pays and hurries off with his bags. Rafael's brow furrows. He studies the creature on the tabloid.

Black.

SUPER: THURSDAY.

Rafael is looking down an aisle, watching. Two words are filled in on the Thursday crossword puzzle.

Zak wheels a shopping cart to the counter.

RAFAEL

Whoa!

ZAK

What?

RAFAEL

You OK?

Zak doesn't seem to understand the question. Rafael is staring at his face.

Zak has a large bandage on his forehead, and a gauze band wrapped around his arm. But the most disturbing sight are the three deep slices running down the left side of his face, like triple knife wounds.

ZAK

Oh. Yeah. I'm good.

He begins to pile his groceries onto the counter. Today he has

- ten boxes of frozen hamburgers,
- a bottle of rat poison,
- a bottle of roach killer,
- a gallon of charcoal lighter fluid,
- fifty feet of clothesline,
- and a bottle of extra strength aspirin.

ZAK

Is there a Sports Authority around here?

RAFAEL

Down the road.

ZAK

Do they. Uh. Carry hunting equipment?

RAFAEL

Not sure. What are you hunting?

ZAK

Um. Not sure. I mean.

He lets it drop.

RAFAEL

Forty two twelve.

Zak swipes his credit card through the reader. Zak hands him his receipt, and watches him tear out of the store.

Black.

SUPER: FRIDAY.

Rafael sits at the register, staring down at a blank Friday crossword puzzle.

Someone approaches the register. Rafael steadies himself, then looks up from the magazine.

Zak now sports an eyepatch, brimming with cotton underneath. His right arm is in a sling; the hand is under his coat, unseen. No less than seven nicotine patches are stuck to his neck.

He slowly moves the items from his basket to the conveyor:

- five pork tenderloins,
- a gallon of milk,
- a quart of motor oil,
- a bottle of lye,
- a bottle of rubbing alcohol,
- five jars of peanut butter,
- an electric meat carving knife,
- a gallon of antifreeze,
- a pack of rubber gloves,
- and a bottle of No-Doze.

Rafael slowly begins to scan each of the items, keying in duplicates. Zak's eyes are far-off, wandering, searching for some haven.

ZAK

WAIT.

He lunges forward, towards the glass cabinets at the front of the store. He nearly rips the door off of one and helps himself to a pack of cigarettes.

In his haste, he almost pulls his right hand out from under his coat, Rafael sees blackened skin on his wrist, then it is hidden again.

He furiously tries to open the cigarette pack, growing irate, desperate.

RAFAEL

Hey, hey man, here.

Rafael takes the pack and hastily pulls apart the wrapping, yanks open the top and slides out a cigarette. Zak chomps down on it and yanks it out.

Rafael grabs a lighter from the nearby stand and lights Zak's cigarette. Zak drags in deep, eyes closed, tasting nirvana. He holds in the smoke for a long moment, then breathes out. He takes another long drag.

He puts the cigarettes box on the conveyor belt.

ZAK
I'll take the lighter, too.

Zak silently rings both up.

RAFAEL
Sixty one eighty.

Zak lets the cigarette dangle from his mouth. He reaches across to his right pocket and withdraws his wallet. He manages to slide out his credit card.

ZAK
Could you help me out?

RAFAEL
Sure.

Rafael slides the card through the reader and punches the appropriate buttons.

He reaches to get the receipt, when he turns back, Zak is walking away with his items.

RAFAEL
Hey, man! Your card!

ZAK
I'll get it tomorrow night. I'm a survivor.

RAFAEL
Hey man!

But Zak is gone. Rafael looks down at the card in his hands. Black.

SUPER: SATURDAY.

Rafael clasps his hands around his nose and stares at Zak's credit card.

Past the card, he can see the entrance to the store. A sign reads OPEN 24 HOURS!

JESS

Hey!

Rafael leaps up at her voice.

RAFAEL

Jesus Christ.

JESS

Whoa, switch to decaf. You definitely need a break. I'm going to take the rest of your shift.

RAFAEL

What?

JESS

Happy birthday!

RAFAEL

My birthday was two months ago.

JESS

I'm making it up to you.

But Rafael is still preoccupied, becoming nervous, cagey.

RAFAEL

But what if he comes back? He's got to come back. He'll come back.

JESS

What are you talking about?

RAFAEL

Look, if you really want to do this, a guy is going to come back for this credit card. You have to tell me-

JESS

Blah blah blah, done and done. I'll give the guy his card.

RAFAEL

You have to tell me if he comes back! PLEASE!

JESS

Yes, Christ, fine!

RAFAEL

OK. Good. I'm sorry. Good.

Rafael takes one last look at the door.

JESS

Just do me a favor too, OK? Put
this in the break room before you
go.

Rafael turns back. Jess slaps down a mousetrap on the
counter.

JESS

We have a mouse.

Rafael looks from the mousetrap to Jess, horrified.

Black.

