

Walkin' In Memphis

By

Daniel Custard

EXT. OPEN COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Two men are walking on the grass alongside a country road. BUDY (early 30s), sporting a crimson sweatshirt and white slacks, is walking alongside his friend SLIM(late 30s), who is wearing essentially the opposite in color, white shirt, crimson slacks.

They continue down a long stretch, both carrying suitcases and bags as the sun beats down.

BUDY

Ya know what this reminds me of?

SLIM

What?

BUDY

Walking with my Dad to go fishing by the river.

SLIM

That sounds awful.

Budy looks at him cross-eyed.

BUDY

Awful? catching fish with your Dad is awful?

SLIM

Uh-huh, especially when the fish ain't a commin'.

BUDY.

Well you just gotta sit long enough.

SLIM

(interrupting)

Aaaah I don't have time to wait on the fish. I prefer to just jump out there and catch 'em my own damn self.

BUDY

By golly that's not what fishing is about.

SLIM.

Oh really?

(CONTINUED)

BUDY

Really, it's about waitin' for the right time and then once you grab hold of him, ya reel 'em in.

SLIM

Is this your life philosophy?

BUDY

No, well yes, sort of. I'm just talkin' about fishin'.

SLIM

You never are just talkin' about fish.

BUDY

What the hell does that mean?

SLIM

You always say somethin' on the surface, but underneath you're swimmin' in the deep of slight handed commentary.

BUDY

You're shootin' at air.

SLIM

No buddy, my aim is dead on like always.

BUDY

Aah pigskins. You're makin' me hot with all this nonsense. It's hot enough in this 90 degree heat.

SLIM

Quit your whinin', talkin' about it don't make it no better.

A black 1950s Oldsmobile suddenly drives up and pulls over along side them.

A MAN in his early 40s, rolls down the window and begins talking to them.

MAN

Hey how you boys doin'?

They both look at him as they continue walking, the vehicle easing along to their pace.

(CONTINUED)

BUDY
Carryin' weight from one step to
the next I suppose.

MAN
Where ya headed to?

SLIM
A place called nowhere.

The Man chuckles.

(cont'd)
I've been there before.

Slim looks hard at the man.

SLIM
What do you want?

MAN
Just tryin' to be a good Samaritan
is all. Wanna give you boys a lift.

SLIM
No thanks.

BUDY
Aw come on Slim, we been walkin'
for hours.

SLIM
Wouldn't be the first time my legs
have done it, they're more than
capable of doin' it again.

BUDY
Slim..., I would sir but my partner
here is being a stubborn goat.

MAN
I see, well, you boys take it easy
now. Nowhere can't be comin' up any
time soon.

The man begins to pull off.

SLIM
(under his breath)
On the contrary.

He is finally off into the distance headed down the long
stretch of road, leaving Slim and Buddy still trudging
forth.

(CONTINUED)

BUDY

Damn Slim, you tryin' to kill us
ain't ya?

SLIM

Buddy, no I think just living will
do that job by itself. Besides,
whose to say that buck son of a gun
wasn't gonna kill us?

Buddy contemplates silently, his face mirroring his thoughts
as he tries to sort out.

BUDY

I don't think he would, well, we
are a couple of negroes walkin' out
in nowhere.

SLIM

Evenin' soon approachin'.

BUDDY

Yeeaah. But, lets say he was
genuine...

SLIM

(interrupting)
Couldn't have been.

BUDDY

What?

SLIM

He couldn't have been genuine.

BUDY

How?

SLIM

What color was his shirt?

BUDY

Black I think.

SLIM

Honky-tonks wear black on Sunday?

BUDY

I don't know.

SLIM

The answer to that question is no.

(CONTINUED)

BUDY

How do you know that?

SLIM

I knew when I saw him. I never seen a white man where a black shirt on Sunday. He certainly didn't wear it to service in the morning. Only person to wear black is the Reverend and his robe. And he sure is hell wasn't no Reverend.

BUDY

What you gettin' at Slim? He the devil or somethin'?

Slim shoots a look over at Buddy as if to confirm his suspicion.

A raven suddenly flies directly over head the two of them, cawing into the air, the sound screeching.

BUDY

Slim for someone who calls me out on being outlandish, if you are sayin' what I think you're sayin' then you may be takin' my place.

SLIM

I mean he was wearing a black shirt, inside of a black car.

BUDY

What of it? Why does black always have to be a negative?

SLIM

I don't know, just is I suppose.

BUDY

Well look at us Slim. We're black and the white man says we're evil.

SLIM

Nope, when you die, they carry you in the black Hurst, people come dress in all black.

BUDY

I mean what do you see with your eyes closed?

(CONTINUED)

SLIM
What?

BUDY
Black.

Slim looks at him funny.

SLIM
Okaaaay, what does that have to do
with anything?

BUDY
Um...

SLIM
I ain't lookin' to go to no
funeral. Especially not my own, no
sir.

BUDY
So...

Budy stops and begins to sniff for a smell. He turns his
head to notice slightly a body of smoke emerging eastward
from where they stand.

BUDY
Hey Slim you see that?

SLIM
What.

Slim looks in the direction of the smoke.

SLIM
Yeah I see it.

BUDY
I wonder what happened?

SLIM
Probably somebody just burning
wood.

BUDY
Naaaw that don't look that kind of
smoke.

SLIM
You goin to get the fish or you
gon' wait for it?

Budy appears puzzled for a moment, then seeming to realize.

(CONTINUED)

BUDY
I think I'm goin' to get it.

Budy begins to walk over in the direction of the smoke, hidden behind a fence of tall trees.

BUDY
You commin'?

SLIM
You go ahead, I'll be here.

Budy descends into the forest of trees.

Slim stands waiting a few moments, glancing at his watch, a car passing by here and there.

He puts down his suitcase, opens it and begins to move his hand around the bottom of it.

After a while Budy emerges from the trees again.

SLIM
What's the news?

BUDY
Somebody was burning a fox?

SLIM
A fox?

Budy makes his way back over to the side of the grass where Slim is on, him closing the suitcase now and getting up.

BUDY
It was dag' on disgustin'.

SLIM
What were they gonna do, eat it?

BUDY
Maybe the devil'll eat it.

Slim chuckles.

SLIM
(Sarcastically)
Right.

BUDY
I didn't see anybody though which was strange.

(CONTINUED)

SLIM
Alright, let's go.

Slim and Buddy begin to go on for a few steps when they suddenly hear footsteps coming in the direction of the fire.

SLIM
I knew somebody was comin'

Slim reaches behind himself, letting his arm rest.

An OLD MAN (60s) dressed in all white from head to toe emerges with a shotgun.

OLD MAN
Was one of you niggers just on my property?

Slim whispers to Buddy.

SLIM
Stay cool.

BUDY
He has a shotgun pointed at us.

OLD MAN
(yelling)
Hey I'm talkin' to you.

BUDY
No sir, we just passin' by.

A car begins to emerge out of the distance from behind them. It is drawing near quickly.

The Old Man begins to point the gun at them, finger on the trigger.

Slim reaches from behind him to pull out his pistol and quickly points back at the Old Man.

The Old Man fires, but hitting the black car as it stops right in front of Buddy and Slim.

They both duck behind it.

Suddenly a man in all black emerges from the driver's seat and falls out onto the ground.

A pool of blood emerging from his body and his head as Buddy and Slim sit there, noticing a cross around his neck.

They both look at each other.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

9.

CUT TO BLACK.