

SOUP & BLANKET

Written by

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INT. SOUP KITCHEN - NIGHT

Is it a soup kitchen filled with homeless people shuffling to their seats with a warm bowl of soup securing their night? Or is it a cafeteria of prisoners, incarcerated within the city, under guard by the unforgiving eye of the citizens, corralled in by the harsh winter weather.

Icy cold cinder block, static stainless steel surfaces. Bolted benches, barricading the bums through this unwelcoming maze. Unrelenting, suppressive, and invisibly heavy fluorescent yellow light buzzes down on their cold necks.

An old wiry black man with hair made of cotton swabs glued to his head is dressed in the stained winter clothing pulled out of the recesses of a thrift store. He shivers as he leans forward across his plate of soup and over the table. This man is RANDY.

Randy's gossip buddy isn't so talkative. He keeps away at his soup as if he needs it, staring down at the bowl. This man looks like the kind of guy who would "know a guy," makes big pots of sauce on Sunday, and would have a closet of just polyester track suits. This man is LORENZO. Lorenzo's the kind of slime ball who isn't homeless, but while he's in the city he goes to soup kitchens for free food, because why not?

RANDY

Shit, man. C'mon. I ain't got no other way. Begging ain't my first choice.

Lorenzo continues tucking away every last drop of soup, pretending to be oblivious with an insultingly - and obviously intentional - shitty performance.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Please brother. Just one, only one. That's all I need. Remember that time in Pioneer Park? I hooked you up man. I've been there for you.

Lorenzo doesn't care. He keeps eating. Randy sees how he's not going to get anywhere. He sits back onto the cold bench, and hangs his heavy head. He is hit with a brutal wave of emotion even he wasn't expecting. He tries to cover his tears, but it's easy to tell he's crying.

Lorenzo lets go of his spoon and lets it sit in his bowl of soup. Thinking, weighing out his options, he wipes his greasy mouth with a napkin while he looks around the room, everywhere but Randy's direction.

RANDY (CONT'D)

(to himself)

I can't do one more. I just can't  
do one more.

Randy cries out, sympathy is apparently in short supply during the holidays.

Suddenly, Lorenzo SLAMS his hand down on the cold steel, jumping his tray of food off the table.

Randy is jerked out of his emotions as his shoulders jump and his spine stiffens.

LORENZO

Goddamnit Randy. This isn't the first fucking time. What about last year? What about last July. It's always some shit with you. It never fucking stops! Maybe the sweet and tender part of my heart might be so inclined, if I knew you were out there working! No! Instead, you're lazy! You're a bum!

So. Lorenzo was listening after all.

RANDY

Please man! I'll do whatever you need me to do!

LORENZO

Oh so we're cutting deals now? Me and you are making fucking deals? We're business partners now? I'm an entrepreneur. I make deals with other like minded individuals. I don't make deals with bums who smell like shit.

Randy is staring at his food as he takes these lashings, clenching in the tears.

RANDY

Please man! I'm begging. I can't do any more.

Lorenzo watches, and slowly, softens his posture. He's done attacking. No use in shooting a dead animal.

LORENZO

Jesus Christ Randy. What is it with you?

Lorenzo gazes down at Randy from up on high, self-righteous and full of ego. He reaches deep into his tiny little predatory grinch heart, and changes.

LORENZO (CONT'D)

Fine. One. That's all you get. But you're doing 10 more runs for me. Other than that I don't want to see you all winter. Got it?

RANDY

Yeah. I got it... Can I pick it out?

LORENZO

Sure, you can pick it out. But one! Ok? Just one.

RANDY

One blanket. That's all I need, is just one blanket.

LORENZO

Alright, meet me out back when I'm done.

RANDY

Thank you man. Thank you.

Without ever looking up Randy scrapes away tears, stands up, grabs his food, and wobbles away.

Lorenzo tosses his napkin, and shakes his head as he goes back to being a disgusting, selfish glutton.

FADE TO BLACK.