

Hand-Rolled

By

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EXT. NIGHT IN LOS ANGELES CALIFORNIA. PANORAMA CITY, PREDOMINANTLY HISPANIC POPULATION. A POLICE HELICOPTER IS CIRCLING A NEARBY APARTMENT COMPLEX. SIRENS ARE IN THE DISTANCE. GEOFF, 26 YEAR OLD, SITS OUTSIDE ON A LOW RICKETY FENCE THAT SECTIONS OFF THE "LANDSCAPING" ACROSS FROM HIS APARTMENT. HE IS WEARING JEANS, A WHITE T-SHIRT AND A BLACK FEDORA. AN UNLIT CIGARETTE IS IN HIS MOUTH

GOD'S EYE SHOT OF COMPLEX GEOFF SITTING ON FENCE. A FEW PEOPLE WALK DOWN THE SIDEWALK. SLOW ZOOM IN TO MEDIUM SHOT AS GEOFF LIGHTS THE CIGARETTE AND TAKES A DRAG. THE SMOKE WAFTS UP TO CAMERA.

GEOFF V.O.

I only smoke one cigarette a day, hand rolled, unfiltered. My wife says it's unhealthy but I tell her breathing the air in this city is unhealthy. A smoke a day keeps the doctor away.

Geoff takes another drag. Exhales slowly.

GEOFF V.O.

Yeah I know it's apples that are supposed to keep the doctor away but they don't seem to have helped Steve Jobs much so I keep on smoking.

CLOSE UP: EYES ARE STARING INTO DISTANCE LOST IN THOUGHT.

GEOFF V.O.

I never used to smoke but it seems like a man thing to do. Clint Eastwood in Gran Torino showed me a real man. I don't want to be so emotionally disconnected from my family though. To call me unsentimental is probably an understatement. 6 months ago, I would have told you I didn't give a shit about traditions or remembering times past. But it's been 7 years since I have spent a holiday at home and it's done something to me.

IMAGES FLASH ACROSS GEOFF'S EYES AS HE RECALLS MEMORIES.

GEOFF V.O.

Last year, Grandpa, one of my favorite people in the world, died

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GEOFF V.O. (cont'd)
and I didn't get to say goodbye.
Fucking plane tickets.

CUT TO PARENT'S HOUSE.

INT. GEOFF'S MOTHER, 50 SOMETHING WOMAN WITH SALT AND PEPPER HAIR, VISIBLY UPSET POINTS AT HIS TATTOOS AND HOLDS A BIBLE TO HIS FACE.

GEOFF V.O.
Me, the wife and three kids are making the trek back east this year but I have mixed feelings about it all. I want things to be just how I left them but I know they aren't. My parents and old family friends don't agree with many of my choices in life - hopefully the kids will relieve some of the tension.

CUT TO GRANDPA'S MONTAGE

INT. GEOFF STANDING ALONE IN DIMLY LIT HOUSE THAT IS COMPLETELY QUIET. THE WALLS ARE COVERED WITH OLD WALL PAPER FROM THE 70'S. THE WOOD TRIM IS STAINED A DARK BROWN.

GEOFF V.O.
Grandma's will be weird; quiet without Grandpa's radios or TV playing -

INT. TRUCK DRIVING UP SNOWY MOUNTAIN IN NEW ENGLAND. CLASSICAL MUSIC IS PLAYING. GEOFF AGE 15 IS SITTING IN CAB WITH GRANDPA, 70 SOMETHING IN GOOD SHAPE WITH WHITE HAIR, NICE SMILE.

EXT. SEVERAL INCHES OF SNOW COVER THE GROUND WE SEE QUICK CUTS OF GEOFF AND GRANDPA WALKING AROUND CHRISTMAS TREE FARM: CHECKING TREES, KNOCKING SNOW OFF, LOADING A TREE ON THE TRUCK.

GEOFF V.O.
no more going up Florida Mountain to check on Christmas Tree sales, or having him ask me to go get some wood for the stove. It fucking sucks.

INT. CHRISTMAS TREE WITH OLD STYLE LIGHTBULBS, ORANGE, BLUE, RED, GREEN.

GEOFF V.O.

It's the little things that I miss most. The old burn your house down Christmas lights with the big bulbs for instance. Now it's all goddamn strings of LED lights. Christmas used to be a season, but now it just seems like a one day affair that we just have to get through so we can hit January 1st and be depressed for a couple weeks. Hell, it's November, 30th and it's 70 degrees here. What the Fuck?

CUT TO CLOSE UP.

EXT. GEOFF SITTING ON RAILING SMOKING.

CLOSE UP: GEOFF'S EYES WITH REFLECTION OF OLD STYLE CHRISTMAS TREE VISIBLE. ZOOM OUT TO WIDE SHOT.

Geoff adjusts fedora to sit low on forehead.

GEOFF V.O.

I don't really have a special place anymore. They've all been dicked over by life. I guess it's time to just try and make life be what I want;

Geoff takes final drag and drops the cigarette on the ground. Grinds out butt with shoe.

CLOSE UP: SHOE EXTINGUISHING EMBERS.

GEOFF V.O.

I'll never recreate the few good memories I had as a child. I guess that's why people become sentimental: it's a drug to ease the pain of what life has ripped away from you.

Geoff spits and then leans back and looks up at the moon.

GEOFF V.O.

So why do I smoke? I guess it's just something I want to do. I make a memory each night when I sit

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GEOFF V.O. (cont'd)
outside and I remember times past -
the good and the bad. I want to
live life like I smoke my
cigarettes - unfiltered and hand
rolled.

FADE OUT