

ADVENTURE FOR A LIFETIME

Written by

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The sound of PANTING and footsteps THUMPING.

FADE IN:

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

JAY (17), disheveled, and BEN (7), innocent and energetic, run together at lightning speed as their BACKPACKS bounce.

Far off in the distance, a SERVER is chasing them down. Jay glances down at Ben, who's smiling.

JAY
Keep going, commander! The mission
is almost complete!

BEN
Aye, aye captain!

Ben's smile widens as he picks up speed. Jay continues, now heavily panting. He looks behind him again. The server's gone.

He slows to a jog and eventually comes to a stop. Puts his hands on his knees, trying to catch his breath.

Jay shuts his eyes, hard exhale. Looks up to see Ben rounding the corner.

JAY
Hey, wait up!

Ben giggles, running faster. Jay stands back up and lets out a short breath, before running again.

EXT. AQUARIUM - CONTINUOUS

Jay finally catches up to Ben and finds him stopped still in front of a building.

JAY
(breathless)
Jeez, Ben. When'd you get so fast?

But Ben doesn't reply. He's too busy admiring the aquarium poster.

INSERT: AQUARIUM POSTER

Jay glances at the poster. As he studies Ben, Jay's casual smile fades. Ben points up at the poster.

BEN

Can we go on an adventure in there?

JAY

We're done with all our missions today, buddy. Maybe tomorrow, okay?

BEN

But I wanna go now!

Jay makes a dramatic gesture of fatigue.

JAY

The captain needs all his commanders to return to homebase and rest after today's mission.

A look of defeat from Ben. But a mischevious grin quickly appears.

BEN

Race you there, captain!

He dashes away, leaving Jay in front of the aquarium.

JAY

Oh, come on, Ben!

Jay reluctantly breaks into a jog again.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK - EVENING

Jay and Ben laugh, breathless as they walk. They're carrying their backpacks which look fuller than before.

Out of nowhere, Jay starts coughing. As the coughing continues, his smile falters.

BEN

Tired already?

Ben sticks out his tongue, but Jay's still coughing.

Jay stops walking and drops his backpack as his coughing becomes gagging. He rushes over to the street and vomits.

Jay steps back and wipes his mouth. He pales when he notices there's blood in the vomit. Any traces of joy are drained from Ben as he watches from a few feet away...

BEN (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

Nothing.

BEN (CONT'D)
Jay?

Jay glances between the vomit and Ben. There's a moment of uncertainty.

Then, Jay makes a sound like he's been shot. He fully acts this out – knees going weak, crumpling to the ground. He clutches his chest.

JAY
The captain...has been...attacked.
Help me...commander Ben.

Ben slightly relaxes and rushes to his side. Jay ruffles Ben's hair, and soon, they're laughing again.

INT. JAY'S CAR - NIGHT

PILLOWS and BLANKETS occupy dirt-stained seats. Plastic TOYS and half-empty trash bags fill the remaining space.

Jay lies in the reclined driver's seat, while Ben plays with his toys. He makes ROCKETSHIP SOUNDS.

Jay tosses and turns, then reaches into his backpack. He takes out a half-eaten, browning apple.

JAY
Want some?

Ben continues playing with his toys.

BEN
No thanks.
(beat)
Can you tell me a story?

JAY
Sure. What kind of story?

BEN
An animal story. Like the ones on the wall.

JAY
(chewing)
Okay.

(MORE)

JAY (CONT'D)

So, there was this really fat animal called a *whale*, and when it saw its friends, it would use something called a blowhole to-

Suddenly, he coughs. It soon becomes a loud fit of coughs, and he's gasping for air. His face is red as bits of apple spray out all over the car.

BEN

Ewww! Ja-ayyy!

After a moment, Jay recovers. Still a bit red, he tosses the remaining apple out of his car and then spins around with renewed energy.

JAY

Who's Jay? I'm a whale! And I use my blowhole to attack my FRIENDS!

He lunges towards Ben, who squirms and laughs hysterically.

When they both catch their breath, Jay moves back. Ben shoves his toys to the side, settling down under his blanket.

BEN

What are we doing tomorrow?

Jay stretches his arms, slinking down in his seat. They're both laying down now as they stare up at the car's roof.

JAY

Tomorrow...we're going to find water on the new planet!

BEN

Oooh, like the ocean?

JAY

(shakes his head)
Water for the captain and his commanders!

Ben's eyes flutter closed with a smile. Jay's wide-awake, biting his lip with his brows knit in worry.

BEN

Good night, captain.

Jay's face twists into a half-smile.

JAY
Night, Ben.

FADE TO:

INT./EXT. JAY'S CAR - MORNING

Ben's bouncing up and down, shaking the whole car. A pocket of sunlight hits Jay's face.

BEN
Wake up, Jay! It's time for our new
adventure! Wake up!

Jay grumbles. He rubs his eyes and turns to his side. Ben continues bouncing and Jay tries to get up, disoriented.

Something's not right. His lips are blue, eyelids heavy, breathing ragged. Realization dawns on him.

JAY
Alright, buddy. Today you're going
on a special adventure instead.

He's coughing in between words. Ben frowns, confused.

BEN
What kind of special adventure?

JAY
Remember that poster you saw?
You're going there. It's called an
aquarium.

BEN
Really?! We get to see the whale
and the fish and the-

Jay closes his eyes. Deep breath.

JAY
It's just you today, okay bud?
You're ready.

Ben's face falls.

BEN
But I don't wanna go without you.

JAY
It's the captain's orders! This
mission will prove that you can
become the new captain.

Ben lights up at this.

JAY (CONT'D)
Come on, pack up! You've got a big
day ahead of you!

As Ben quickly packs up, Jay discreetly pulls out a NAPKIN and pen from his backpack. He scribbles a note as he blinks back tears.

INSERT: JAY'S NOTE: "DONT BE SCARED - THERES SO MUCH
ADVENTURE WAITING FOR YOU. ILL ALWAYS BE YOUR CAPTAIN - JAY"

Jay jots down something else at the bottom of the note before folding the napkin in half. He hands it to Ben.

JAY (CONT'D)
Okay, commander. When you get to
the aquarium, you're gonna see a
big guy at the front. That's your
pilot. You show him this and he'll
help you complete your special
mission. Got it?

Ben's a little skeptical, but nods.

JAY (CONT'D)
Alright, put it in your backpack
and don't open it 'til you get
there, 'kay?

Ben nods again and slips it into his backpack. He's about to open the door, but Jay stops him.

JAY (CONT'D)
You're not gonna give your captain
a hug before you go?

Ben giggles and leans forward. They embrace tightly.

When Jay finally releases, Ben steps out of the car. He goes on his tiptoes to see into the passenger side window.

BEN
What are you gonna be doing?

Jay shakes his head and forces a smile.

JAY
I'll be right here waiting for you
when you complete your mission.
(and)
Go! They're waiting for you!

Ben's face breaks into a huge grin. He finally runs off. Just as he's about to round the corner, he turns back to Jay and waves.

FADE TO BLACK.