

PAPERCLIP

Written by

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INT. SIMON'S CUBICLE - DAY

On the generic desk of a generic cubicle of a generic office space, surrounded by various office supplies including a mug full of highlighters, sits a single PAPERCLIP. There is nothing special about this paperclip, nor its surroundings.

Into the cubicle walks SIMON, a plump redhead obviously bursting with excitement, carrying a burlap sack bulging with some unknown material. He unceremoniously plops the burlap sack on his desk before dumping out the mugful of highlighters.

Paperclip's POV: the burlap sack has words on it --

"Exotic Coffee Blend! Partially Digested, Completely Delightful\*!"

On the bottom of the bag next to an asterisk is some fine print that can't be made out.

The paperclip continues to sit silently.

Satisfied with his newly empty mug, Simon picks the sack up again and walks out of the cubicle.

GRIND

CLANK

HUM

The sounds of an espresso machine can be heard in the near distance, soon followed by a YELP.

Simon rushes back into the cubicle carrying his steaming mug, trying to switch it between both hands, clearly struggling not to burn himself. He finally gets close enough to the desk to set the mug full of coffee down roughly. The coffee SPLASHES onto the solitary paperclip.

A beat.

The paperclip wiggles once. Simon looks down at his desk, eyebrows raised. The paperclip doesn't move again.

Simon begins sipping on his coffee, but it's still too hot.

AARGH!

Simon burns his fingers and drops the mug on his desk. The coffee comes crashing down, brown liquid fully immersing the paperclip.

Simon GROANS and looks at his coated desk, then his soaked pants. One of these problems needs to be solved first, and Simon chooses the latter. Disappointment all over his face, Simon gingerly sets the mug upright and leaves the cubicle.

Paperclip wiggles, first raising the outside end of his metal makeup, then the inside. Its movements are tentative, abrupt, unrhythmic.

After a little bit of practice, dramatic music starts swelling as Paperclip seems to get closer and closer to a drastic shift from its position.

Finally, Paperclip flips-

CLACK

But like a coin toss, Paperclip has flipped over... and remained in the same spot. It appears as if nothing has changed.

Paperclip's tense wire formation droops in a dejected manner, as if the Paperclip has given up on whatever it was trying to accomplish. But what is it trying to accomplish? The answer is unclear, until -

- Paperclip's POV: The camera zooms onto a pristine stack of office papers across the atrium full of cubicles. Orchestral music swells. Paperclip's primal purpose is beginning to sing. Paperclip needs to get to those papers.

Immediately, Paperclip presses its outside end against the table like a pushup, and hops into a seemingly upright position to get a better look. Paperclip scans the room, apparently searching for a way to get to those predestined papers.

The rolling desk chair!

Paperclip bends part of its wire to latch onto the table in front of it and drags itself closer to the edge of the desk where the chair is sitting. It's slow-going at first, but Paperclip begins to get the hang of it.

Before too long, Paperclip has reached the edge of the desk, and the distance between the chair and the table appears fathomless. Paperclip begins shivering, before backtracking a few "steps". Then, Paperclip leaps into the air over the edge and...

BOUNCES

Right off the chair and right into the trashcan right below it.

CUT TO:

INT. TRASH CAN - DAY

Paperclip furiously wiggles in the invisible abyss, its surroundings obscured by the shadow of the desk.

Above, human legs sit down on the desk chair. The trash can is pulled out from under the shadow and a paper towel soaked with magical coffee is dropped into it. The other tenants of Paperclip's temporary residence are revealed.

A broken RUBBER BAND, now furiously SNAPPING. A crinkled up SNICKERS WRAPPER, stretching out leisurely. A folded up CARDBOARD BOX, unfolding rapidly. A BROKEN PENCIL, scratching against the side of the trash can. A BIC pen, out of ink, rolling from side to side slowly.

Paperclip vibrates violently, apparently desperate to get out of its situation. Looking from side to side at all of its peers, Paperclip hops up, an idea forming. Paperclip rapidly hops from side to side of the trash bin, organizing the trash into one row, standing at attention.

The pieces of trash all wilt slightly when Paperclip heads back to the front of the trash can, but they all perk up immediately when Paperclip gazes at them individually. With everyone organized, Paperclip starts arranging itself in a complex series of unintelligible shapes.

The actions fade into each other in a montage, inspiring music playing over it, with shots of the observing trash mixed in. The Paperclip is communicating something, but what?

CUT TO:

INT. TRASH CAN - DAY

A makeshift slingshot has been built out of the trash. The Pen and Pencil make up the beams between which the Rubber Band has been wrapped. The Snickers Wrapper has become a makeshift pocket for holding a projectile, and the Cardboard Box is carefully pulling the slingshot taut.

Paperclip is standing stalwartly in front of the entire company. It gives a brief nod of approval, before hopping into the pocket of the slingshot. Paperclip raises its wire, visible above the pocket, and motions forward like a hand gesture.

ZING

CUT TO:

INT. ATRIUM - DAY

Paperclip flies out of the trash can, out of one cubicle and past another, soaring farther than anyone ever could've imagined. Against all odds, Paperclip will make it to its goal- that beautiful stack of papers just waiting to be combined.

SMACK

Paperclip smacks into a pair of baggy khaki pants. Simon again. Simon reaches down and rubs his legs, confused by the stinging pain he's just experience. He looks down and picks up the contorted paperclip, placing it into his pocket...

As Paperclip is placed once again into a seemingly endless abyss, he sees Simon pass mere inches away from the stack of papers Paperclip so yearned for. Paperclip resists full immersion into the pocket, catching on the side multiple times, but it is inevitable.

CUT TO:

INT. SIMON'S CUBICLE - DAY

Paperclip is clearly clipped to something, but to what? Paperclip begins wriggling, it's position not at first visible until a hand comes down and grasps around Paperclip. The camera ZOOMS OUT, showing Paperclip pinning together a makeshift mug sleeve made of cardboard and other office materials from earlier.

Paperclip stops struggling, and obviously freezes into the position it's found itself in. Paperclip has a purpose now. That's all there is to it.

FADE OUT.

**THE END**

During the credits, the burlap sack's fine print is shown --

"\*Caution advised: some inanimate objects may be affected by prolonged exposure"