

Left or Right

By  
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FADE IN:

**INT. CAR - NIGHT**

MARK (42) short, balding and overweight, wears a suit, loosens his tie.

He drives a BMW along a dark deserted country road.

The rain pelts down on a partially fogged windscreen, the wiper blades struggle to clear the water.

The muffled sound of the radio is heard over the incessant rainfall.

A street sign appears SAN FRANCISCO 300 MILES, he rubs his tired eyes.

MARK  
Shit, four hours.

The radio music stops, Mark turns the volume up.

RADIO (V.O.)  
A severe high level weather warning  
is in place for California as  
hurricane Magdalen approaches.

MARK  
Christ, that's all I need.

RADIO (V.O.)  
Wind gusts of up to one hundred  
miles per hour are expected.

MARK  
Just my friggin' luck.

RADIO (V.O.)  
It is recommended that all  
travellers seek refuge indoors as  
the storm is expected to hit within  
the next hour.

Music plays on the radio, Mark turns the volume down.

MARK  
(angry)  
Jesus.

A pale faced WOMAN (70) dressed in Amish clothes, suddenly appears on the road ahead, he slams his foot on the brake pedal, stops short.

Her grey hair partially covered by a bonnet. She waves her index finger left to right.

MARK (CONT'D)  
Mom. Not again.

She vanishes, Mark rubs his eyes.

He takes a deep breath, removes a cigarette from a pack on the dash, puts it in his mouth, lights it.

Inhales deeply, blows smoke upwards.

Continues.

A street sign, TOWN OF PEARLY, THREE MILES.

He grabs the map from the passenger seat, juggles it above the steering wheel.

MARK (CONT'D)  
Never saw that on the map.

Frustrated he crumbles the map and tosses it back.

Takes another drag of his cigarette.

Continues.

A street sign --- WELCOME TO TOWN OF PEARLY.

Rain ceases.

He slows down as the town lights appear.

A number of motels and hotels line this deserted street.

A black cat stops on the road ahead of him, it turns, looks at Mark, continues across his path.

Mark shakes his head.

MARK (CONT'D)  
Just my luck.

He drives past several motels that displays a NO VACANCY neon signs.

MARK (CONT'D)  
Jesus, has to be one room vacant in  
this shit hole.

Towards the end of town a VACANCY neon sign flashes, he pulls into the car park, gets out of the car.

#### **EXT. CAR PARK - NIGHT**

Mark throws the cigarette butt onto the wet asphalt, stomps it out with his shiny black leather shoe.

Presses his key FOB, the BMW beeps as the indicator light flashes once. He pockets the keys.

Mark pauses, looks around, a rundown hotel in dire need of a coat of paint.

MARK

Great, another ten dollar a night joint.

A dilapidated sign PEARL ATE HOTEL, letters missing.

He laughs.

MARK (CONT'D)

Pearl must have been some hungry broad.

(laughs)

She should've finished it off.

A door is visible in the distance, RECEPTION sign prominent, he proceeds towards it.

Mark steps into a water filled pothole.

MARK (CONT'D)

Fuck.

He stops, shakes his wet leg.

Continues towards the door, water oozes from his shoe.

Damaged Christmas lights flash intermittently above the patchy door.

Mark opens the door, enters.

The hotel disappears.

**EXT. PADDOCK - NIGHT**

The BMW is parked in a bare paddock, crickets can be heard.

**INT. RECEPTION - NIGHT**

A few travel brochures, plastered on a pinup board. Above the board, a gold and red foil MERRY CHRISTMAS sign.

A caged window dominates the far wall, steel bars are decorated with Christmas tinsel.

Mark approaches the window, water oozes from his shoe, a wet trail behind him.

A sign above the bars --- PEARLY GATES RECEPTION, he looks up and smirks.

MARK  
(whispers)  
Shit. Where the hell am I?

A man JESS (37) stands behind the bars, long brown hair and piercing blue eyes, he looks holy.

MARK (CONT'D)  
I wanna room for the night.

Mark hands his business card through the steel bars, Jess grabs it, head down, he reads it.

JESS  
You're a lawyer.

MARK  
Yeah.  
(pause)  
Do you have deluxe rooms?

Jess smirks.

JESS  
We have two types, good or bad,  
kind or evil, Heaven or Hell.

Mark looks confused as he peers towards the door.

MARK  
(reluctantly)  
I'll take Heaven.

JESS  
That's for me to decide.

Mark laughs in disbelief.

MARK  
This must be some sort of joke.  
Where are the hidden cameras? Did  
my wife phone you?

Confused, Mark scratches his head.

JESS  
What do you mean?

The smirk is wiped of Marks face, he looks towards the door, takes one step back.

JESS (CONT'D)  
You can only have a Heaven room if  
you have something that symbolizes  
Christmas.

Mark thinks, reaches into his suit pocket, removes a pair of red lacy knickers and holds them high.

Jess looks shocked.

JESS (CONT'D)  
 (angry)  
 How does this symbolize Christmas?

MARK  
 It's Carol's.

A stamp hits a form --- HELL --- diagonally across the page in red.

**INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Mark walks along a dark hallway, reaches a T-Junction, a sign, HEAVEN arrow left, HELL arrow right.

He looks to the left, thinks, goes right.

MARK  
 (laughs)  
 At least this place will be warmer.

**INT. WAITING ROOM - NIGHT**

The room resembles a night club, colored flashing disco lights, fog, people crowded together dancing, music blaring.

Men in suits, prostitutes and drug dealers fill the room.

Mark stops, looks around.

A well dressed MATTHEW (46) stands nearby, they eyeball one another, smile.

MARK  
 Hi, I'm Mark.

Mark extends his hand, Matthew reciprocates.

MATTHEW  
 Matthew. How's it goin'?

MARK  
 Well, could be somewhere else.

MATTHEW  
 Why? This place is pumpin', look at the hot chicks.

They both turn their heads towards a group of girls in short skirts.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)  
 What do ya do for a crust?

MARK

I'm a Lawyer.

MATTHEW

Me too. So are those guys.

Matthew points in the direction of a group of balding, overweight well dressed men.

MARK

The guy at the front desk was a bit stiff.

MATTHEW

Yeah, he told me lawyers automatically came here.

MARK

Really?

MATTHEW

I scored the VIP treatment, my uncle runs this joint.

MARK

Lucky you.

A scantily clad cocktail WAITRESS (24) approaches, a tray of fancy cocktails in hand, they take one, she walks off.

Mark eyeballs her set of pins.

MARK (CONT'D)

How is this Hell? It's Heaven.

MATTHEW

I hear this room is to calm us down, the next room is suppose to be the real Hell.

Matthew laughs, they both smile and attempt uncoordinated dance moves.

#### **INT. BEDROOM - MORNING**

A solitary white decorates this angelic room, the softness of the bed resembles clouds.

Mark sleeps comfortably on a bed of shiny white satin, he hugs the pillow.

In a deep sleep, he smiles with pleasure.

A female LUCINDA (35) appears, she wears black tight jeans and a black blouse.

LUCINDA  
(yelling)  
Get up you lazy shit.

A startled Mark, eyes wide open, sits up.

LUCINDA (CONT'D)  
(yelling)  
Do you think you're going to sleep  
all fuck'n day.

Mark shakes his head side to side, fear in his eyes.

LUCINDA (CONT'D)  
(yelling)  
The house needs cleaning, the  
bathroom's a mess. You're useless.

Mark raises his eyebrows.

LUCINDA (CONT'D)  
(yelling)  
Serves you right for going out and  
gettin' hammered with your mates.

MARK  
Yes Dear.

FADE OUT: