

The path

By

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INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE- DAY

We see a group of glorifying patriotic American photos on a mantle of World War I. We also see a draft letter on the mantle. We are then introduced to BRIAN (19). He has no facial hair, dorky glasses and long hair. He is slouching in a chair listening to the radio.

We are then introduced to ABRAHAM (49), Brian's father. He has long gray hair in a poly tail and a trimmed gray beard.

ABRAHAM

Sit in your chair straight Brian.
The back of the chair is intended
for your support.

BRIAN

Is that really necessary father? I
wonder if the wooden back actually
gives me support, or if it puts my
back in more pain.

We are then introduced to Brian's brother SEBASTIAN (30). He has a classic military haircut, is missing a thumb, and jacked. He is wearing a wife beater while sipping on a beer. He has an intimidating tattoo on his arm.

ABRAHAM

Do not talk back to me. When I tell
you to do something, you do it.

SEBASTIAN

Just listen to dad stupid. He knows
what he is talking about.

BRIAN

But father, my back really hurts
from sitting upright. (mumbling)

ABRAHAM

If you have trouble listening to
me, how the hell are you going to
put up with your drill Sargent? I
pray to god you change your
attitude.

SEBASTIAN

Yeah Jesus, stop complaining about
sitting in a chair. You will
experience much more fucking
hardships than this pussy shit
before you know it.

(CONTINUED)

Brian sits in his chair straight. He puts his head down as a sign of defeat.

We then tune into the radio and hear a boxing match. The announcers assert that Joe Lewis is losing to Ezzard Charles.

SEBASTIAN

Lewis looks like an idiot right now. His right jab just isn't up to fucking speed. And I had 20 bucks on this fucking match!

ABRAHAM

I did as well. Let's not tell our mother about this. Okay boys?

SEBASTIAN AND BRIAN

Yes father

SEBASTIAN

Ever since Lewis took that faggy break from boxing and hung out with his family he has been playing like horse shit.

We hear the announcers assert that Lewis is knocked out cold and will lose the match. Sebastian stands up and and throws his beer bottle on the ground in frustration. His face is bright red.

SEBASTIAN

I'm going to kill that stupid pussy. I'd put a hole in his fuckin' face right now if I had the chance. After winning 20 straight, he decides to take a vacation with his family and now he sucks. Can't wait till the papers rip him a new asshole.

Brian opens his mouth for a second and mumbles something we can't hear.

SEBASTIAN

What did you just say?

BRIAN

Maybe he just wanted to do what he loves. Which is being with his family.

(CONTINUED)

SEBASTIAN

Shut the fuck up. You don't know
jack shit about boxing.

Brian opens his mouth for a split second and looks as if he is about to say something but instead just stares at the ground.

SEBASTIAN

Yeah that's right, don't say shit
to me until you actually do
something with your life.

ABRAHAM

Be nice Sebastian. Brian will learn
in due time.

SEBASTIAN

Thank god, Brian will finally turn
into a man. Its about god damn
time.

Brian slouches back into his chair.

BRIAN

I need to go to work. Sorry about
your guys' loss.

Brian quickly gets up and leaves the room without looking back.

INT. NURSING HOME-DAY

We see a room filled with all types of art on the wall. We then see a man lying in bed, ROBERT, (75). He is bald with very wrinkled skin, and has very noticeable ear and nose hair. He is also wearing thick glasses.

Brian walks in the room with a tray of food and sits in the chair next to Robert's bed.

BRIAN

Here's your food.

ROBERT

Oh, why thank you. And you brought
me the thick jam, just the kind I
like.

Brian is staring into the wall. It is noticeable Brian has something else on his mind.

(CONTINUED)

ROBERT

I brought you some new paintings.
There from the art fair we recently
had.

BRIAN

oh cool, I guess.

ROBERT

Go grab them, there on my desk over
there.

Brain walks over to grab them. While he walks there his head
is down and is showing almost no facial expression. He then
puts them next to Robert on his bed.

ROBERT

Here, look at this one, I think
you'll really like it.

Brian looks at it quickly then continues to stare into the
wall.

ROBERT

Brian, what's wrong?

BRIAN

N-nothing, I'm fine. Why?

ROBERT

Brian you have been helping me for
over 2 years now. I know when
something is bothering you.

BRIAN

Nothing is wrong. I swear.

ROBERT

Well I really don't believe you.
How's your own painting coming?

BRIAN

Okay.

ROBERT

Would you mind showing it to me?

BRIAN (TALKS SLOW AND DEFEATED)

Yeah, sure.

Brain takes out a painting from his backpack. The painting
is of a forest fire. Many trees are falling down.

(CONTINUED)

ROBERT

Wow, this is unique. What was your motive behind this one?

BRIAN

Umm, I'm not sure if I really have one.

ROBERT

It's very dark, and not like your usual fairy-tale paintings. What happened to the other one you were working on?

BRIAN

I haven't been able to finish that one yet. It's been sitting in my backpack for a while now.

ROBERT

Why?

BRIAN

I don't know. For some reason, whenever I try to finish this painting, I just can't visualize a good ending to it. I feel like my mind is telling me one thing to do, but my heart is telling me another.

Brian slowly grabs a painting from his backpack. It is half-way done, with a sunset at the bottom half of the piece of paper. It is clear that half of it is not finished. Robert then slowly grabs the paintbrush out of Brian's hand and starts to sketch out a sunset above the water.

ROBERT

You need to trust your instincts. If you ask me this piece of part has the potential to be more exquisite than your other dark one.

Brian grabs the paintbrush back from Robert's hand and starts going over the sketch of the sunset. It finally starts to look good. He starts adding birds, and shades the ocean as a dark purple.

ROBERT

See what you just did there?

BRIAN

No, what?

(CONTINUED)

ROBERT

You added your own dimensions. The best artists always listen to their original ideas when composing art. If you don't, you fall in the trap of copying others and not painting your real emotions. And when your real emotions are not shown in any type of art, the art becomes dull.

BRIAN

It felt great doing it too.

ROBERT

Exactly, this is when art becomes fun.

For the first time in a while we see a smile wipe across Brian's face.

ROBERT

Brian, I know I may seem old but there is something I really want to go to one more time at my old age.

BRIAN

What is it?

ROBERT

A carnival. Just to bring me back to my youthful days.

BRIAN

Well I am supposed to be with you for a couple of hours tomorrow. I suppose I could take you then.

ROBERT

It would mean a lot to me.

BRIAN

Okay then. Tomorrow we will go.

Brian packs up his things and leaves his room. After Brian leaves the room we see Robert shake his head as if he knows something is wrong with Brian

INT. BRIAN'S KITCHEN

Sebastian, Abraham, and Brian all sit at the kitchen table. We are then introduced to Brian's mom, BETSY, (55). She has short gray hair, and is wearing a classic conservative woman's dress from this time period.

BETSY

Can you please go get the peas from the stove Brian?

BRIAN

Yes mom.

Brian slowly walks to get the peas.

ABRAHAM

So Brian, I was talking to Mr. Phillips, my old colleague and he told me you will most likely receive your training at Fort Knox. Now I can't guarantee that, but you should feel lucky. That place is like heaven compared to most other training facilities

Brian nods his head and starts chewing his peas noticeably fast.

SEBASTIAN

Can't wait to hear the stories you come back with. More importantly though, you'll finally get rid of that faggot haircut and get your vagina removed.

BETSY

Brian, Can you go grab me some salt? I really could use some for my peas.

Brian goes to grab the salt. He then looks over at the table and see's everyone laughing. We notice that their dog had eaten some of Brian's food of off his plate. Brian shuts his eyes for a second and starts mumbling things to himself that we can't understand. He then goes and sits back down at the table.

ABRAHAM (WHILE LAUGHING)

Hey Brian we all are really sorry, but Butterscotch (their German Shepard) ate your steak.

(CONTINUED)

Brian starts eating his peas even faster and we can see some sweat dripping down the side of his head.

BRIAN

Father, can I please ask you something?

ABRAHAM

Yes I guess.

Brian clears his throat and his face becomes red.

BRIAN

Is there any chance I could stay and just continue my job instead of going to the army?

ABRAHAM

Surely you can't be serious?

BRIAN

Father please just consider it. If you want I'll even work for you.

ABRAHAM

Brian, please don't embarrass our family and be the only one to not enlist.

SEBASTIAN

Its probably because he wants to work on his gay paintings!

ABRAHAM

Settle down Sebastian. Brian will be going. He doesn't even have a choice as it is a draft.

BRIAN

Father, please! If you tell them that I am not mentally stable they will surely make an exception.

ABRAHAM

I will not do such a thing. Lying to my country, what a sin.

BRIAN

Well, I guess there is nothing I can do then.

Brian slowly gets up with a very sad face and walks out of the kitchen. Everyone is silent.

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE

Brian slowly walks out of the room. We see tears dripping down his face. We then see Brian go grab his keys and starts driving to pick up Robert for their fun adventure that awaits them.

EXT. ROBERT'S NURSING HOME

We then see Robert waiting outside the nursing home. Brian gets out of the car and helps Robert into the car.

BRIAN'S CAR

ROBERT

Thanks for the help Brian.
Sometimes I don't know what I would
do without you.

BRIAN

Don't worry about it.

Brian then starts driving noticeably fast.

ROBERT

What's the big rush? Slow down
please.

BRIAN

Nothing, I'm sorry.

Brian puts puts his head down and closes his eyes at a stop sign.

INT. CARNIVAL- EVENING

They then continue to drive and arrive at the carnival. The sight in front of them is magnificent. There are tons of roller coasters, a giant Ferris wheel and the normal ambiance any carnival would have.

ROBERT

How about we go on the Ferris Wheel
first?

BRIAN

Sure. The Ferris Wheel is actually
my favorite ride.

We see them both at the top of the Ferris Wheel. It almost looks like a romantic scene.

(CONTINUED)

ROBERT

You know the first Ferris Wheel ever was at the first world fair. My father had claimed he had once ridden it.

BRIAN

Oh that's swell.

Brian is now looking down at the top of the Ferris Wheel. He puts his hands down and it looks like he is trying to grab something at the bottom.

ROBERT

What is wrong? Brian tell me, you can't keep lying to me.

BRIAN

Nothing serious. I'm just an idiot

ROBERT

How so?

BRIAN

I don't know why I can't just be like the rest of my family.

ROBERT

How are you not like the rest of your family?

BRIAN

I'm just not. They always seem to love one thing and I seem to love the exact opposite.

ROBERT

I know you hate getting personal so I won't even ask what you are referring too. But I'm gona' tell you a story about myself as a kid. When I was 9, my mother left my father. My father was devastated. He relied on liquor to solve his problems. I was often on my own a lot of the time. I thought I was cool that I didn't really have parents. I tried to impress people all the time and show how tough I was. I got involved with a lot of bad people.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN (INTERRUPTING)

Wow, I never knew that about you, Robert.

ROBERT

A day came along when I knew I needed to change my life. What I did saved my life.

Robert pauses. He takes off his glasses and starts rubbing his eyes.

BRIAN

What did you do?

ROBERT

I simply started doing what made me happy in life. I stopped caring what other people thought about me. And whatever your problems you encounter, I hope you do the same and I promise good fortune will be upon you.

BRIAN

I'll tell you what my problem is. My family loves the military and the whole idea of supporting one's country, and I simply don't.

ROBERT

You need to tell them that.

BRIAN

I have tried, but they simply don't listen.

ROBERT

Brian listen to me. You need to keep trying.

BRIAN

Well what should I do?

ROBERT

Claim that you are a pacifist.

BRIAN

Can you actually do that?

ROBERT

Yes, they make exceptions for people like that. You would only be telling the truth.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

Wow, if only I had thought of that earlier.

ROBERT

Well it is always my pleasure to help you.

MONTAGE- THE DIFFERENT CARNIVAL ATTRACTIONS

-We see Brian and Robert playing Skee-ball. At first Brian can't roll it into the best target. After several attempts though he makes it.

-We see Brian and Robert playing pin the tail on the donkey. They are both laughing the entire time.

-We See Brian and Robert eating corn dogs together. Robert drops his on the floor by accident, and Brian splits his in half to share with Robert.

-We see Brian and Robert walking back to the parking lot with the carnival lights in the background.

EXT. ROBERT'S NURSING HOME-NIGHT

We then see Brian ready to drop off Robert at his nursing home.

ROBERT

Thank you Brian, I had a wonderful day.

BRIAN

As did I. Thanks for the advice, it means everything to me.

ROBERT

Of course Brian.

EXT. MILITARY OFFICE- NIGHT

We see Brian walking into the office.

INT. MILITARY OFFICE

We see Brian filling out a form that says he is claiming pacifism. He hands it to an officer.

ARMY OFFICER

As a heads up, tomorrow at 0 10000 hours we will be going to your house to interview your immediate family. Is that understood?

BRIAN

Yes.

EXT. BRIAN'S HOUSE-NIGHT

We see Brian walk in.

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE

We see Brian go upstairs, brush his teeth then go to bed.

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE- DAY

We see Brian wake up and get dressed. He at first puts two non-matching socks on before he fixes it. He goes downstairs to eat breakfast. As he is pouring milk into a bowl of cereal he spills it.

We hear a loud knock on the door. Brian looks over and is about to go answer the door but Abraham beats him too it. We are then introduced to SARGENT MICHAELS. He has a mustache, is in full uniform, and looks as if he could kill someone with his right pinky.

SARGENT MICHAELS

Is this the the stonewall residence?

ABRAHAM

Yes, and who are you?

SARGENT MICHAELS

I'm Sargent Michaels. Brian Michaels filed a pacifist claim on his recruitment form. Procedure requires that we then interview family members to see the validity in his claim. Do you mind if I ask you some questions?

(CONTINUED)

ABRAHAM

Your telling me that my son is claiming that he is a pacifist?

SARGENT MICHAELS

If your son is Brian Michaels, then yes I am sir.

ABRAHAM

I'll tell you right now that I fought in the war back in 96. And I fought along the side of Roosevelt in Platoon B7. And no way in god damn hell, am I going to let my son not serve our country like the rest of my family.

Sargent Michaels puts his arm on Abraham. He then starts to speak very softly with a friendly voice. We see Brian peaking through the kitchen door.

SARGENT MICHAELS

Look, just let me ask you a couple of procedural questions. So at least then when I get back to the office I can say I interviewed the kid's father and that will be that.

Abraham nods his head in approval.

SARGENT MICHAELS

Has your son been involved in any violent games such as violent sports?

ABRAHAM

Yes.

SARGENT MICHAELS

Does he engage in aggressive activity?

ABRAHAM

Yes.

SARGENT MICHAELS

Would you consider your son a pacifist?

ABRAHAM

No.

Brian pops out of the door.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

Father, please you know I never really ask for anything. But this means a lot to me.

ABRAHAM

As I've said it once I'll say it again, you will not be the first one in our family to not join the army.

BRIAN

Father, if there is anything at all I can do to change your mind, I will do so delightfully.

ABRAHAM

Sebastian, you will go to the army and be like everyone else. And that is final. Sargent Michaels there is nothing else needed to be said here. My son will honor his country like he should and was born to do.

BRIAN

I guess you really have your mind set on this.

SEBASTIAN

That is right I do.

BRIAN

But look father, I have one final idea. I know an old military officer who said he would support my claim for pacifism.

SARGENT MICHAELS

Who do you know?

BRIAN

Have you ever heard of general Robert Fidler?

SARGENT MICHAEL

Yes Brian, I'm pretty sure the entire world does.

BRIAN

Well if I could tell you, that you could talk to him right now, is that something you might be interested in?

(CONTINUED)

SARGENT MICHAEL

If that was possible I would say yes. Rumor has it he can't even talk and is in a nursing home these days.

BRIAN

Rumor is wrong. Benjamin Fidler is the one who will vouch for me.

Abraham and Sargent Michaels both burst into laughter.

SARGENT MICHAELS

You surely can't be serious boy.

BRIAN

But I am. He is waiting in his nursing home for you right now. I told him you were coming.

SARGENT MICHAELS

Brian please stop lying.

ABRAHAM

He does work at a nursing home.

Brian smiles.

ABRAHAM

You're telling me that all this time you were going to this nursing home, you were taking care of the famous Robert Fidler.

BRIAN

Yep.

ABRAHAM

Why didn't you say anything?

BRIAN

Some things are better off without saying.

Abraham looks as if he is about to throw up.

BRIAN

So what do you guys say?

ABRAHAM

Fine. But if this is some joke, just no you will regret it.

(CONTINUED)

SARGENT MICHAELS

I can't believe were agreeing to
this.

They walk outside and the car is running.

ABRAHAM

Why is the car running Brian?

BRIAN

Because I knew you would say yes.

EXT. ROBERT'S NURSING HOME-DAY

They arrive at the nursing home.

INT. ROBERT'S NURSING HOME

They walk in. All of the employees are very nice to Brian
and greet him.

INT. ELEVATOR

They take the elevator to Robert's room.

INT. ROBERT'S ROOM

They walk in and see Robert lying in bed with his eyes shut.

BRIAN

Were here, Robert.

No response. Brian starts shaking him. Still no response.

BRIAN

Robert wake up!

Brian starts shaking him even harder and still no response.
Brian starts breathing very heavily.

BRIAN

ROBERT!ROBERT! PLEASE WAKE UP!

There is a look on all three of their faces as if they have
just realized that Robert is dead. Brian lays on Robert's
chest with tears rolling down his face. Brian notices a note
in Robert's hand. He reads it. It clearly was meant for
Brian, as Brian looks as if he may throw up. He lays on
Robert's chest for another 10 seconds or so. Brian then gets

(CONTINUED)

up and gets the paint supplies out of his closet and takes his unfinished ocean painting out. He then proceeds to finish the painting with a beautiful sunset.

Fade to black.