

"WEDNESDAYS"

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. STREET - DAY

It's a gray November day. Heavy clouds. Seedy neighborhood.

MAX (10) ambles along the street, knapsack on his back.

He passes ALFRED (70's), sitting on the steps of a run-down building.

MAX
Hey Alfred!

The old man doesn't react. Max stops in front of him.

MAX
Hey Alfred.

Alfred raises his heavy head, squints at Max.

He's totally wasted.

ALFRED
Oh, hey buddy! I almost didn't see you.

MAX
Hey Alfred... and bye!

Max smiles at the old man and walks on.

Alfred languidly waves after him for a while.

Max reaches a small cottage style house, wipes his shoes on the doormat.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Max places his knapsack on a chair and opens the fridge.

MAX
Hey mom!

MOLLY (O.S.)
Shhh! I'm concentrating!

Max takes the butter out of the fridge. Pickles. A tomato.

He mounts on a chair to open a cabinet above his head, looks for something.

MAX
No more peanut butter?

No answer.

Max descends, grabs two slices of toast and prepares a sandwich.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME

MOLLY (28) too pretty for this misery, kneels at an old coffee table.

A lit candle next to her. Books. Full ashtray. An empty peanut butter jar with a spoon in it.

Crumpled sheets of paper on the floor.

She lightly holds a pencil above a piece of paper, her eyes closed.

Max enters, plate in his hand.

MAX
I forgot. It's Wednesday.

MOLLY
(not opening her eyes)
Shhh! I got a really good connection right now.

She puts down numbers, letting the pencil write almost by itself.

Max throws himself next to her onto the sofa, chews on his sandwich and observes his mother's "trance".

Molly slides him a blank sheet.

MOLLY
Here. We gotta hurry.

MAX
Okay...

He trots off into the

KITCHEN

withdraws a pen from his knapsack and returns to the

LIVING ROOM

In between bites, he writes down numbers on the sheet in front of him.

A few moments pass in silence.

MOLLY
Okay, I'm done.
(turning to Max)
Hey there, prince...

She gives him a big kiss.

MOLLY
How was school?

MAX
Was okay. Hold on.

Molly curiously looks at the numbers he writes down.

MOLLY
What's this?

MAX
Well, um... it's a combination of
your birthday and... my birthday
and... Elvis' birthday.

MOLLY
Oh gee. Birthdays never work, you
know that! Everybody knows that.
Pick something else, will ya?

MAX
But I--

Molly softly grabs his face and looks at him, dead serious.

MOLLY
This is the chance of a lifetime,
Max. Let's not fuck this up, okay?
Not this time. Okay?
(tears fill her eyes)
Just think of it! Just think of
it...

She looks at him for a while, tenderly, suddenly jumps up.

MOLLY
We have to go now. Come on, lets
go!

MAX
But I thought I--

MOLLY (O.S.)
Come on. You can come up with it on
the way.

Max grabs his sheet, stumbles out of the room, back again to
blow out the candle.

MOLLY (O.S.)
Honey?

MAX
I'm coming!

EXT. STREET - DAY

Molly hustles down the street, dragging Max along.

MAX
Why are we in such a hurry?

MOLLY
I just feel we have to do it right
now, you know? Who knows, the
numbers might be worthless if we
wait any longer. Luck is a strange
thing. Gotta be very careful.

Alfred is still sitting on his steps. Hasn't moved much.

MOLLY
Hey Alfred.

MAX
(in passing)
Alfred! Pick a number! Between one
and fifty-nine!

The old man is confused.

ALFRED
Ninety-nine!

MAX
Nooooo! Between one and fifty-nine!

ALFRED
One! Yeah... one--

MAX
Nevermind...

ALFRED
--is a good number.

INT. CORNER STORE - DAY

As Molly and Max enter, the STORE OWNER, a friendly East Indian man in his 60's, gets up from the chair behind the counter, adjusts his shiny hair.

STORE OWNER
Ah, hello!

MOLLY
Hi!

The owner's granddaughter, a LITTLE GIRL (6) with short hair and dressed in boys' clothes, loiters by the candy shelf.

Molly smiles at the girl, grabs a play slip, starts marking the squares.

MOLLY
You guys ever play?

STORE OWNER
Play lottery?

MOLLY
Yeah.

STORE OWNER
Oh no. No, no. Too dangerous. Is like... the devil. You play once, you play and play and play and... all of a sudden, everything gone. No more food to eat. You know? -- So... we only play once a month.

MOLLY
Once a month?

STORE OWNER
Once a month. That's it.

Molly hands Max a play slip. He marks random numbers.

STORE OWNER
(pointing at his
granddaughter)
(MORE)

STORE OWNER (cont'd)
But she really good at it. She
won... seven bucks, one time.

MOLLY
(to the little girl)
Oh yeah? Seven bucks? That's pretty
good. What did you do with it?

The girl shrugs, timid smile.

STORE OWNER
Ah... she bought fish.

MOLLY
Fish? What kinda fish? To eat?

STORE OWNER
(laughing)
No, no, not to eat. Just to...
swim, you know. Colorful. Like...
yellow fish, and red fish... and
green, I think.

The girl makes a disapproving noise, resolutely shakes her
head.

STORE OWNER
(to the girl)
No? Not green? Blue?

The girl nods.

STORE OWNER
(to Molly)
Yeah... she like fish. She don't
talk much, fish don't talk much --
so, we have a lot of fish.

Molly smiles, turns to Max.

MOLLY
Are you done, Max?

The store owner accepts the play slip from Max and Molly,
enters them in the terminal.

Molly reaches for a couple of coins in her pants pocket,
lays them on the counter.

MOLLY
A dollar for a dream!

STORE OWNER
(handing out the tickets)
Now, good luck!

MOLLY
Thanks.

Exchange of friendly smiles.

EXT. THE CORNER STORE - DAY

Molly leaps out of the store, excited like a kid.

She grabs Max to waltz a little, twirls him around. Then she stops, places her hands on his shoulders and looks at him.

MOLLY
Now, let's go eat like kings!

EXT. BUS STOP - MOMENTS LATER

Max, sitting on the bus stop bench, watches his mother pace back and forth.

MAX
Are you sure we can afford this?

MOLLY
Hell yeah we can! Don't spoil it now. Please.

They're quiet for a while. Cars pass by.

MOLLY
You know, it really hurts me when you don't believe me. I just know we're gonna fuckin' win. What did I tell you about my intuition, huh? Plus we just... deserve better, don't we? So it's only logical that we'll win sometime. To-day!

MAX
But what if--

MOLLY
See, you're doing it again! There is no "if", okay? No ifs. Why can't you just trust me? I'm your mother, god damn.

Max hangs his head.

MOLLY

And here's the fuckin' bus...

She let's him get in first, pays for the ride.

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

They sit apart from each other, watch the night fall, the lights pass by from different sides of the bus.

There's just three or four more passengers in the bus.

As they approach the heart of the city, more people get in.

Max gets up, takes seat next to his mother.

They look at each other, smile placably.

MAX

I just wanted to say... that...
even if you were wrong, it would be
okay.

Molly pretends not to hear him, turns to the window again.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Molly and Max stroll through a friendly street with tempting dining options from all over the world.

They stop in front of every restaurant, skim over the illuminated menus, peek through the windows.

They all look pretty ritzy.

They come by a small Italian place and study the menu.

MOLLY

Wow, Portobello mushrooms! I
haven't had those in ages!

MAX

What is it? Is it good?

MOLLY

Yeah, they're delicious! It's these
big mushrooms, and they serve them
on top of a salad, and if you're
lucky they're still warm and just
soak up all that vinaigrette,
Jesus, it's a fuckin' orgy, really.

She throws him a conspiring look.

MOLLY
Wanna go in?

Max nods and heads for the door.

MOLLY
Wait! How do I look?

MAX
You look pretty, mom.

MOLLY
I don't look... like a bum or a
junkie or something? 'cause inside,
I feel fuckin' rich today, you
know?

MAX
No, you always look pretty.

MOLLY
(flattered)
Liar.

MAX
(opening the door)
Let's go, mom. I'm really, really
hungry.

MOLLY
Alright, alright!

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A warm, intimate spot. Candlelit.

A young WAITER approaches them with an inviting smile.

WAITER
Buonasera!

MAX
Buonasera!

MOLLY
Buonasera!

The waiter ushers them to a small table in the center of the room, hands them the menus.

WAITER

What would you like to drink?

MOLLY

Whew... a glass of your -- maybe not your most expensive wine, but one that's close. Special occasion, you know?

She winks at the waiter, turns to Max.

MOLLY

How about you, Max?

MAX

Just a coke, please.

The waiter leaves, Molly studies the menu.

Max just skims through his, fidgeting. He keeps looking up, scouts around the room.

MAX

Everybody's staring at us.

Not really.

MOLLY

(leaning in)

And you know why?

Max shakes his head.

MOLLY

Because you look so dashing.

Max starts to giggle. He likes that.

MOLLY

I'm serious. Or maybe they sense that we're soon-to-be millionaires. They can literally smell it. Money has a very distinctive smell, you know. So there you have it -- you're rich, you're hot, why shouldn't they stare?

The waiter is back with the coke, the wine.

WAITER

Have you decided yet?

MOLLY
(to Max)
Have you?

MAX
Um... maybe... spaghetti?

MOLLY
Well, for starters, we'd really
like to have those Portobello
mushrooms.

WAITER
You wanna share one?

MOLLY
Um... no? Two orders. Two plates.
For my son and me. Why, is there a
problem?

WAITER
Oh, no! No no!

MAX
(pretending to be Italian)
And... Penne all'Arrabiata!

MOLLY
But that's hot, Max.

MAX
Yeah? Cool.

MOLLY
Alright, I will have... something
heavy. Heavy heavy heavy. Something
with a lot of cheese.

WAITER
Tortellini alla Panna, maybe?

MOLLY
Sounds good.

She snaps the menu shut and hands it to the waiter.

MOLLY
Oh, and... waiter?

WAITER
Sì?

MOLLY
 Could you tell me what time it is?

WAITER
 (pulls up his shirtsleeve)
 Sure. It's a quarter to seven.

MOLLY
 Gee, four more hours.
 (to the Waiter)
 Thanks.

The waiter turns to leave.

MOLLY
 I hope I can eat at all! I'm so
 nervous!

She sips her wine, looks around the restaurant, locks eyes
 with a woman who gives her a disparaging look.

It affects Molly, but she doesn't let it show.

MOLLY
 It's a nice restaurant, isn't it?
 -- A little bit of Italy...

She smiles at Max.

MOLLY
 (raising her glass)
 Now, let's--

Max and Molly clink glasses.

MOLLY
 And you better get used to it, too!

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Completely stuffed, Max and Molly are trying to make it
 through two huge pieces of cream cake.

Molly reaches out and taps the back of Max' hand with her
 fork.

MOLLY
 Now, what are you gonna do with all
 that money?

MAX
(not looking up)
I don't know.

MOLLY
Oh, come on! You gotta want
something! You're a kid! Kids
always want... everything, right?

MAX
Um... I want...

MOLLY
Don't you want to go to Disneyland
or something? Have fun?

MAX
Mom, I'm way too old for
Disneyland.

MOLLY
Right. I forgot, grandpa. How about
a fancy walker, then?

Max bursts out laughing, covers his full mouth with his hand.

Molly watches him with delight.

MAX
I wanna... go to Memphis,
Tennessee. See Elvis.

MOLLY
See if he's really dead...

MAX
Yes, and then we drive all across
the country. Texas and... Alaska...
and... just everywhere! For a year.
And then we decide where we liked
it best and... that's where we'll
stay for good.

MOLLY
I already know where I like it
best. I even know the house.

MAX
One of those houses from the
internet?

MOLLY

Exactly.

MAX

The one where the bathroom looks like a church?

MOLLY

(pondering)

Which one do you mean?

MAX

The one that looks a bit like a castle and--

MOLLY

Oh, I know which one you mean. No, not that one. That one's too scary. Castles are scary. I mean the one with--

MAX

Oh, I know! I know! The desktop picture?

MOLLY

Yeah, that's the one.

MAX

It's nice. Let's get that one.

MOLLY

It won't be enough. The jackpot's not that high today. We'd have to hit it a couple more times or... become movie stars or bank robbers or something.

MAX

You could! You're pretty enough.

MOLLY

Yeah? Think I'd look good with stockings over my head?

She pretends to pull stockings over her head, makes a funny face, turns her head to the left, to the right.

They laugh.

Then she lowers her head, mashes a bit of cake with her fork.

MOLLY

Yeah...

She sighs, looks up.

MOLLY

Anyways... let's go grab that
dough.

EXT. BUS STOP - NIGHT

When Max and Molly get off the bus, it's pouring.

Molly tilts her head back, squints into the sky.

MOLLY

God, I hope that's a good sign.

MAX

(running off)

Let's go, mom!

MOLLY

But I'm so stuffed!

She starts to run through the empty street, laughing wildly.

MOLLY

Max! Wait! Max!

She runs faster, holding her belly.

MOLLY

All that cake!

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

As Molly arrives, Max has already turned on the TV, taking
off his wet clothes in front of it.

Molly tries to catch her breath, soaking wet.

MOLLY

Whew, that was fun!

Max passes her in his underpants, disappears in the hallway.

MOLLY

I almost forgot how fun fun is.

She draws out a cigarette from the pack on the coffee table,
lights it, starts smoking with an absent stare.

Max returns, towel on his head.

MOLLY
What time is it?

MAX
Twenty more minutes.

Max sits up straight on the sofa, focused on the TV.

Molly's eyes wander over the room, the sparse furniture, all the stuff lying around -- clothes, candy wraps, a few CDs.

MOLLY
God, I really gotta clean tomorrow.

Molly nervously pushes her shirtsleeve back, as if wanting to look at a wristwatch that isn't there.

MOLLY
Man, what time is it?! First thing I do, I'll buy a decent watch. A Rolex or something.

She stretches out her arm, admires an imaginary Rolex.

MOLLY
Yeah, that'd look real nice.

She leans forward to stub out her cigarette in the ashtray.

She walks to the living room window. Back again. Nervously mumbling.

MAX
Mom, you're all wet.

MOLLY
Yeah, I know. I'll change in a sec.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

MOLLY
Now, let's set the right mood...

She lights the candle on the coffee table, sits down on the couch, intently fixed on the TV.

MOLLY
Got your ticket?

Max nods, waves his ticket.

They keep quiet for a while.

MAX

Mom?

MOLLY

What is it?

MAX

Don't get too mad if it doesn't
work out, okay?

She doesn't react, chews her nails.

From the sounds of it, the lottery drawing begins.

MOLLY

Finally.

TV HOST (V.O.)

You could win up to--

MOLLY

"Could" my ass. Will! You bet your
sweet ass we will!

(to Max)

Right, Max? -- Max!

MAX

Yeah! We r-r-r-rock!

TV HOST (V.O.)

And the first number is...
thirteen!

Molly squeaks, circles the number on her ticket.

MOLLY

Oh my God, I have it, I have it!
Thirteen! I told you!

TV HOST (V.O.)

... followed up by five...

MOLLY

Oh my God, I'm gonna have a stroke.
I have five! Max! I told you!
Didn't I tell you?

MAX

Shut up, mom! You're missing--

TV HOST (V.O.)
... twenty-six!

MOLLY
Twenty-six... twenty-six... where
are you, you sneaky bitch?

MAX
You have it?

MOLLY
No, fuck! Do you have it?

MAX
No. I don't have anything, mom.

She throws the books from the table, flings the burning
candle towards the TV, misses.

MOLLY
God dammit!

She gets up, stomps around the room.

Max jumps up to pick up the candle, one eye on the TV to get
the remaining numbers.

MOLLY
I was so sure! So sure!

Max turns the TV off, compassionately looks at his mother.

MOLLY
I don't understand it. I just don't
understand it!

MAX
Maybe next time... I mean, you
almost_won...

She lights a cigarette, shakes her head in disbelief, stares
out the window, into the night.

MOLLY
I don't even wanna know what kind
of people win that crap. I bet they
don't even need it. Or they do need
it but don't know how to handle it,
you know? Total idiots who blow it
on a bunch of hookers and Porsches.
Or maybe... maybe the whole lottery
thing is just a scam. Maybe no one
ever wins.

She sinks into a chair by the window.

MOLLY
I'm freezing...

She sighs, places her cigarette in the corner of her mouth and starts undressing.

Max comes to assist her, neatly hangs her wet socks and t-shirt over the chair.

MAX
You know, you got two right. That's seven bucks.

MOLLY
Great. Let's get some fish.

INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

They enter the bedroom, both in their underwear.

Molly falls onto the bed, exhausted.

Max sits down at the edge of the bed, in thought.

She reaches out, strokes his arm.

MOLLY
I just... always thought I'd end up filthy rich. Don't know why. Just a feeling. And we'd live in this huge house on the California coast and--

MAX
But I like it here.

MOLLY
But... why?

MAX
Don't know. I just like it.

MOLLY
But there's no pool!

She sighs, closes her eyes.

MOLLY
You're a weird little fellow, you know that?

She's drifting off.

MOLLY
I'll try harder next time. I
promise.

Max lies down, snuggles up to her.

MOLLY
And don't forget to brush your
teeth, okay?

MAX
Okay.

FADE OUT.