

**AN ACT OF KINDNESS**

(Short Feature)

**OVER BLACK:**

As we slowly pull back, back, back, we see more and more white pixels on the screen until we can make out what it is.

**FADE IN:**

A large CAT FACE stares at the camera. It MEOWS over and over.

**INT. BARBARA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING**

The cat, named AMORE, sits on the bed in a room filled with posters of Italy. He watches as thirtyish, plain-looking BARBARA WILSON tries to button her tight-fitting long-sleeved blouse.

She pulls up her pants, struggles to pull the zipper up. The snap keeps POPPING OPEN. She SIGHS.

BARBARA

That's it. I start my diet today.

She goes to the closet for a belt. She puts the bottom of her blouse in her mouth to hold the blouse up, then realizes there are no belt loops.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

(frustrated)

Why don't they make belt loops anymore?

She connects the belt over the pants hoping to keep them up. She looks at jewelry on the counter.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

What do you think, Amore? Should I wear jewelry?

Amore looks away. Barbara SIGHS.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

You're right. This'll have to do.

Amore MEOWS as she watches her hands shake.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
I'm okay. You know I'm always nervous on the first day. I hope I get good students this year.

She takes a last look in the mirror.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
Well Amore, wish me luck.

**FADE OUT.**

**OVER BLACK:**

A school bell RINGS.

**FADE IN:**

**INT. CLASSROOM - DAY**

"WORLD HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY" is printed nicely on the whiteboard. Barbara stands in front of her high school class. She INHALES, EXHALES slowly, puts on a happy face.

BARBARA  
Good morning! How is everyone?  
My name is Miss Wilson. Barbara  
Wilson.

A couple of STUDENTS yell out.

STUDENT  
Bra-bra-bra

ANOTHER STUDENT  
Miss Bra

Everyone laughs.

BARBARA  
(angrily)  
No, it's Miss Wilson. Okay?

She calls roll with each one answering "HERE", "PRESENT", or raising a hand, except for the last one.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
Adams... Alvarado... Brown... Davis...  
Donovan... Espinosa... Harris...

No answer.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
Jackson Harris...

Barbara looks up, sees a student lightly fist the upper arm of another boy, JACKSON HARRIS, good-looking in a boyish kind of way. Jackson wears earbuds, slaps the other boy back.

The other boy points with his chin at the teacher.

JACKSON  
What?

Barbara walks over to him.

BARBARA  
Please remove your earbuds.

No reaction.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
Give them to me.

JACKSON  
I ain't givin' you nothin'.

Class reacts with OOOHHHHH.

Barbara walks over, uses the emergency phone on the wall.

An overweight SECURITY GUARD arrives.

Jackson struts slowly to the door, high fives others as he walks.

SECURITY  
Again, Jackson? Geez. Give 'em  
to me. You know I'll give 'em  
back after school. Otherwise,  
we're gonna go to the office.

Jackson reluctantly gives them to Security, goes back to his desk, puts his feet up.

Barbara glares at him. He doesn't lower them. She decides to let it go, continues with roll call (inaudible).

Barbara puts her roll sheet on her desk. Looks down, sadly shakes her head. She smiles, turns around.

BARBARA

Okay... well, class. The next two weeks we're going to focus on Italy and the ancient Romans.

She pulls a movie screen down in front of the whiteboard, walks to her desk, presses the key on her laptop for a slide show.

Quick MONTAGE of modern Italy with a map, pictures of Rome, the Colosseum, Venice, Florence...

BARBARA (CONT'D)

It's my dream to visit Italy someday.

Jackson taunts her, keeps interrupting with mean remarks.

JACKSON

Not interested.

Barbara ignores him and continues. She walks down the rows of desks, smiles as she looks at the students while she speaks. As she walks by, students pass notes behind her back. The notes make fun of her.

BARBARA

They have beautiful fountains, grapes growing over trellises...

JACKSON

You like Italy so much, then go. We won't miss you.

Students LAUGH. Her smile dissipates. She walks back to the front of the room.

BARBARA

5.

They have Michelangelo and Da Vinci paintings, wonderful museums, great food..

JACKSON

Still not interested.

She turns around, darts seem to fly from her eyes. He struck a nerve. Any pride and self-esteem she had, flew out the door.

BARBARA

That's enough!

The startled students are quiet. Jackson? He's smiling ear to ear proudly. Got the reaction he wanted.

Barbara passes out an assignment paper to the person in front of each row.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

I'd like you to write your name on this paper and circle the subtopic that interests you.

She waits as a few obey. The others look at Jackson. Barbara notices, realizes he's the leader.

JACKSON

Hell no. We ain't doin' diddly squat.

Barbara is now livid. Face shows she's smoldering. The students are excited about the showdown. Some GIGGLE.

Barbara storms to the emergency phone. Security arrives quickly.

Barbara stares at Jackson as she talks.

BARBARA

Please take him to the principal for defiance.

Jackson slowly stands nodding to his classmates as he struts out with Security.

Barbara lets out a satisfied SIGH and half-smiles. For the moment, she won. She walks to the front of the class, continues as if unfazed.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Tomorrow I will put you in groups  
based on your...

The BELL RINGS drowning her out. The students can't get out fast enough.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - NEXT MORNING**

Barbara walks out from the Main Office and into the crowded hall alongside another teacher, Alice Brubaker (about the same age, shorter of the two, hair and makeup done perfectly).

BARBARA

I'm not looking forward to my first class, Alice. They're horrible, mainly because I've got this really obnoxious student who keeps interrupting with insults.

ALICE

Some kids today have no respect. We've all been there. Good and bad students, good and bad days. I spend more time disciplining than teaching.

Barbara nods her agreement.

ALICE (CONT'D)

It's too bad the misbehaving ones ruin it for the those who really want to learn.

They stop in front of Alice's Math class as students walk by. Alice looks seriously into Barbara's eyes.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Don't let him get to you, Barb. And, make sure that student doesn't see he's getting to you.

Barbara nods, walks on to her classroom.

**INT. CLASSROOM - MORNING**

Barbara stands in front of the class, smiles.

BARBARA

We owe a lot to the Romans.

In mid-conversation, she looks over at Jackson sitting at his desk with arms folded.

She presses a key to show a slide of a Roman street.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Did you know they invented streets with an underground sewer system?

JACKSON

Yeah, and it stunk the whole place up.

Everyone LAUGHS.

BARBARA

I was hoping we'd have a good day without you interrupting, Jackson.

JACKSON

Yeah. No.

BARBARA

Well, I'd appreciate it, if you'd let me teach to the students who are interested.

Jackson SCOFFS, looks around at the others, shrugs.

Barbara reaches for a marker from her desk. It falls on the floor. She bends over to fetch it.

Jackson makes a FARTING noise. Everyone LAUGHS.

Barbara storms to the emergency phone again.

Jackson knows the routine, struts to the door. He doesn't



have to wait long for Security to escort him out.

Happy again, Barbara continues teaching.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
The Romans also invented the  
aqueduct to bring water...

Jackson walks back into class.

Barbara looks astonished at the Security Officer standing  
by the door. Barbara walks over to her.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
Why is he back in class?

SECURITY  
Dunno. Ask the Principal.

**INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY**

Barbara KNOCKS lightly on PRINCIPAL BARNER's open door.

Fortyish Principal Barner rarely smiles. He has intense  
eyes, speaks with slow and distinct words, his way of  
showing he's the boss. He looks up at her.

BARBARA  
May I speak to you for a moment?

PRINCIPAL  
Concerning?

BARBARA  
Jackson Harris.

The Principal's expression goes cold.

PRINCIPAL  
Come in.

Barbara enters, doesn't close the door, sits down.

BARBARA  
I sent him out for being  
(MORE)

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
disrespectful and cussing. He  
came right back to class. Why  
wasn't he suspended?

PRINCIPAL  
We can't suspend any more.

BARBARA  
You've got to be kidding.

Long hesitation.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
What about detention?

PRINCIPAL  
Can't' do that either.

BARBARA  
What? When did that happen?

PRINCIPAL  
Parents complained and the Board  
agreed. Our job is to educate  
them, not punish them. Now we  
talk to them explaining how their  
behavior is inappropriate, and  
hopefully, they will decide to  
change.

Barbara shakes her head.

BARBARA  
But, what if they don't think  
they're doing anything wrong?

PRINCIPAL  
We keep trying to convince them.

Barbara is annoyed by his nonchalant attitude.

BARBARA  
I feel so helpless. If there are  
no consequences, and the kids  
know that...

She stalls hoping for a resolution. Gets none.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
We're talking about Jackson Harris.

PRINCIPAL  
Yes, I know who he is. He's not  
the best student, I grant you that.

Barbara SCOFFS.

He looks at Barbara staring down sadly.

PRINCIPAL (CONT'D)  
Now if there's nothing else, I  
have work to do.

BARBARA  
Yes, of course. Thank you for  
your time.

She walks into the adjoining Main Office.

**INT. MAIN OFFICE - DAY**

As Alice signs out, she takes note of Barbara coming from the Principal's office. She waits as Barbara signs her time card. They walk out together.

**EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY**

Alice and Barbara walk out of the brick-and-mortar school building, head for the parking lot.

BARBARA  
Why don't they punish students  
anymore? Remember, when they made  
us write a hundred sentences?  
That's considered abuse now.

ALICE  
I remember when a student got  
swatted with the board of  
education. Today, the teacher  
and the principal would both  
be arrested for doing that.

In the parking lot Alice beeps her remote to unlock her car door. She looks at Barbara.

ALICE (CONT'D)

He's been acting out since his mother died. Have you called his father?

BARBARA

I think I'm going to try and reason with Jackson first.

**INT. CLASSROOM - NEXT MORNING**

Students quietly work on a written assignment. Barbara is happy that Jackson is absent. She walks around class helping students, passes his empty desk.

The door opens. Jackson walks in, struts to his desk.

SECURITY

Look who I found cutting class.

Barbara's whole demeanor becomes depressed. She walks over, hands him the assignment and a textbook, walks back to her desk.

All is quiet. And then... Jackson SLAMS his book on the floor. Everyone is startled, including Barbara.

The BELL RINGS ending class. As the students rush out, Barbara looks over at Jackson.

BARBARA

Jackson, would you stay a moment?

Other students hear this, tease him.

STUDENTS

Teacher's Pet!

Jackson sits at a desk near the door. Barbara walks over.

BARBARA

Every day it's the same thing.  
(MORE)

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
I try to teach, and you keep  
interrupting. Why?

Jackson folds his arms over his chest. He's clearly  
annoyed.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
I've always wanted to be a teacher.

Jackson's face shows his anger is about to burst. Barbara  
looks down, sees his foot tapping.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
I love giving my knowledge to  
students. It's like giving them  
a gift. History's my passion.  
Can you image yourself living as  
a Roman and seeing..

Jackson can't hold his anger in any more. He interrupts her  
in mid-sentence.

JACKSON  
I don't give a flyin' fig about  
the Romans. That was all in the  
past.

BARBARA  
Yes, but we learn from the past.  
It helps us prevent mistakes for  
the future.

Barbara looks away as she thinks, then looks back at him.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
Okay, I get it. History's not  
your thing. I felt the same way  
when I had to take a class on  
Shakespeare. I couldn't  
understand the way he..

Jackson quickly stands.

JACKSON  
Blah, blah, blah. Don't care.

He walks out. Barbara SIGHS DEEPLY, shakes her head.

**EXT. LUNCH COURT - DAY**

Barbara walks through the lunch court. She sees Jackson sitting on top of a picnic table with his buddies. He drinks soda, then snatches a bag of potato chips from another student.

As Barbara walks by, Jackson BARKS like a dog three times. She slows down, bites her lip as she thinks.

BARBARA  
(mumbles to self)  
Should I turn around and confront  
him, or ignore him?

She walks on, continues through a doorway with a SIGN on top, "FACULTY LOUNGE".

**INT. FACULTY LOUNGE - DAY**

Barbara sits down next to Alice. They talk as they eat lunch. Barbara looks forlorn.

ALICE  
Problems with Jackson again?

BARBARA  
Every day. No one's born a bully.  
I wonder how he got that way?

ALICE  
His father, Jamal Harris, owns  
Superior Hardware. I saw him  
once at Back-to-School Night.  
Bossy, Type A personality.

**INT. JACKSON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Jackson and his three friends, JOEY, SAM, and ANDRES smoke WEED.

JACKSON  
I'm sick and tired of that ugly  
hag, Wilson. Let's do somethin'.

SAM  
Whatta ya wanna do?

**EXT. BARBARA'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Andres' car pulls up, parks in front. Jackson exits the car. The others follow, stand next to him.

Jackson's eyes pan across a dead lawn to a quaint 1950's style house fallen into disrepair. Paint peeling, broken shutter, roof damaged, weeds.

JACKSON  
Her house is as dumpy as she is.

They light FIRECRACKERS.

**INT. BARBARA'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Amore is scared, MEOWS ANGRILY, runs, hides.

Barbara sits up in bed, startled. She rushes to the window.

**EXT. HARRIS' HOME - MORNING**

The POLICE speak to Jamal and Jackson at the front door.

POLICE  
Where was your son between one  
and two AM?

JAMAL  
Asleep in bed. Why?

POLICE  
We got a report that four boys  
were shooting fireworks at a  
teacher's house.  
(looks at his notepad)  
A Ms. Wilson.

JAMAL  
What proof do you have that my  
son did it?

POLICE

Ms. Wilson stated it was dark,  
and she didn't get a good look  
at the boys, but she's sure one  
of them was Jackson.

JAMAL

So, she thinks it was him. I'm  
not a lawyer, but I'm pretty sure  
you can't arrest my son because  
she thinks he did it.

POLICE

You're right, sir. That's why  
we're not taking him in. We just  
wanted to make you aware that he  
may have perpetrated this.

Jamal's face is livid, but he's not angry with Jackson.

**INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY**

Principal Barner talks on the school phone.

PRINCIPAL (INTO PHONE)

Yes, Mr. Harris.

(listens)

No, I don't think she would...

(listens)

Yes, sir, I totally agree. She  
had no right to accuse your son.

(listens)

Yes, I promise you I will speak  
to her.

**INT. MAIN OFFICE - DAY**

Principal Barner walks over to the teacher timecards. He  
stuffs a "COME SEE ME NOTE" on top of Barbara's sign-out  
card, then walks back to his office.

**INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY**

Barbara sits fidgeting with her hands.



PRINCIPAL

I got a very distressing call  
from Mr. Harris, Jackson's father.

BARBARA

Yes, I thought you would.

PRINCIPAL

You had no right to accuse his  
son when you didn't get a good  
look at him.

BARBARA

But I know it was him.

PRINCIPAL

You should have spoken to me  
instead of calling the police.  
You had no proof, Ms. Wilson.  
I think you wanted it to be  
Jackson.

Barbara shakes her head in disbelief, feels she can't win.

**EXT. STREET - DAY**

Barbara and Alice jog slowly.

BARBARA

Alice, what do you see yourself  
doing in five or ten years?

ALICE

Teaching, I guess. Why?

BARBARA

I don't know if it's worth all  
the aggravation... you know... If  
it's not the students, it's the  
parents, or other teachers, and  
even the principal.

ALICE

They say most teachers quit after  
three years.

BARBARA

Really?

Alice looks at her, nods.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

I'm wondering if I want to teach the rest of my life. This is not what I signed up for. I always wanted to be a nurse, but I'm afraid of needles.

Alice stops, looks at Barbara empathetically.

ALICE

You're letting that kid get to you.

**INT. HARRIS' HOME - NIGHT**

Jackson shows his mid-term report card to Jamal.

JAMAL

She gave you a fail? She's gonna hear from me! Don't worry. I'll take care of this.

**INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT**

Jamal walks in, sits in the back of the crowded room with the other parents.

Principal Barner speaks on the P.A.

PRINCIPAL (V.O.)

Welcome to Back-to-School Night. Everyone should be in their child's first class. The bell will ring in ten minutes to leave for your child's second class.

Barbara speaks in front of the class (inaudible). The BELL RINGS to end the session.

Jamal waits until all the parents have left the room. He quickly walks to the door, closes it, locks it.

Barbara starts to freak out. She looks for an escape route-- maybe the windows?

JAMAL

You've been harassing Jackson, called the cops on my son accusing him of something he didn't do, and now you've given him a fail. In my book, that sounds like a racist.

BARBARA

I'm not.

JAMAL

He's a good boy. I don't know why you hate him.

BARBARA

I admit I don't like him, but I don't hate him. Deep down I feel there's some good in him, and he's just putting on a show, probably because he misses his mother.

Bam! That hit Jamal's nerve. His face is now smoldering. His fists clench. He moves in close to her.

Barbara looks terrified, backs up slowly. Is he going to hit her?

JAMAL

You bother my son again, and I'll make that ugly face of yours is even uglier!

They stare quietly, Barbara with a gaping mouth, visibly shaking.

He unlocks the door and leaves as parents enter for the next session.

Barbara's hands shake. She INHALES, EXHALES a long, deep breath, composes herself, and smiles at the new group of parents.

**INT. CLASSROOM - MORNING**

19.

As Barbara passes out the day's assignment to the first student in each row to pass back, Jackson keeps MOANING.

Barbara glares at him.

BARBARA

Jackson, can you please stop making that noise?

JACKSON

No can do. My back hurts.

Jackson stands.

BARBARA

Please be seated.

JACKSON

I gotta take a piss.

He runs out the door.

Barbara shakes her head.

**INT. BOY'S RESTROOM - MORNING**

Jackson runs to the urinal, relieves himself. He stares at it as it flushes.

He walks to the sink, uses his cell phone.

JACKSON (INTO PHONE)

Dad, something's wrong. I just pissed blood.

**INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY**

Jamal and Jackson sit in front of the doctor's desk. NAMEPLATE reads, DOCTOR NELSON. They wait for the test results as the Doctor thumbs through Jackson's file.

DOCTOR NELSON

(not looking up)

Jackson's potassium level is  
(MORE)

DOCTOR NELSON (CONT'D)  
quite high. Looks like he has a  
kidney infection.

He looks seriously at Jamal.

DOCTOR NELSON (CONT'D)  
I'm concerned about the blood in  
his urine. We'll do some more  
tests to rule out renal failure.

JAMAL  
If it is renal failure?

DOCTOR NELSON  
Then he'll need renal replacement  
therapy... dialysis four times a  
week.

Jamal looks with empathy at his son, eyes well with tears.

Jackson stares out the window, keeps his emotions locked  
inside. His knee shakes.

The Doctor hands a brochure to Jamal.

DOCTOR NELSON (CONT'D)  
Here's a brochure from the  
National Kidney Foundation. It  
lists foods he needs to avoid  
like potato chips, soda, and  
processed food like TV dinners.

JACKSON  
That's everything I eat. I ain't  
eatin' rabbit food.

DOCTOR NELSON  
Jackson, do you understand how  
serious this is? You could lose  
your kidney.

Jackson scoffs.

JAMAL  
You'll do as the doctor says!

Jackson folds his arms angrily.

**INT. CLASSROOM - MORNING**

While the students read silently, Barbara glances at Jackson fast asleep at this desk. She prefers him sleeping to being disruptive, so she doesn't bother him.

The BELL RINGS.

Barbara watches him awaken groggy. He shuffles out slowly.

**EXT. LUNCH COURT - DAY**

Jackson sits on the outdoor table with his buddies as usual.

Barbara walks by on her way to the Faculty Lounge.

Jackson takes a bite of a bologna sandwich, then VOMITS.

The guys in his group back away from the table with "EW!", and "DISGUSTING" heard.

Barbara thinks they're saying that to her. She turns around.

BARBARA

That's enough! You're being  
very rude.

The boys look at each other, a couple shrug, dumbfounded.

**INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY**

Doctor Nelson gestures for Jamal to sit. Jamal sits, looks worried, suspects this is bad news.

DOCTOR NELSON

Well, I'm sorry to say, he's in  
stage four of kidney failure.

JAMAL

Meaning?

DOCTOR NELSON

Jackson needs at least one new kidney.

JAMAL

Let him have one of mine.

DOCTOR NELSON

Unfortunately, your blood, Mr. Harris, is not a match.

JAMAL

What do you mean? He's of my blood.

DOCTOR NELSON

A child gets genetics from two parents, so it's unlikely that one parent would have the same genetic makeup as their child, as in your case.

Jamal looks sadly down at the floor, then at the Doctor.

JAMAL

Jackson looks more like his mother. She probably would've been a match.

DOCTOR NELSON

I'm going to get him on the transplant waiting list. In the meantime, we need to start the dialysis.

**INT. DIALYSIS CENTER - DAY**

Jackson lies on a hospital-type bed with a catheter in his arm. Blood flows out, filtered by a nearby machine. Jamal sits in a chair next to him. There are several infusion patients also in the room.

An Attendant, PHILLIPE, walks over.

PHILLIPE

How you doin', Jackson?

JAMAL

He's okay. Aren't you, son?

No answer. He's depressed. Phillipe takes note.

PHILLIPE

I know just the thing to cheer  
you up.

He walks over to a cupboard, whips out an ACCORDIAN,  
plays ITALIAN MUSIC, sings.

**INT. JIMMY'S APARTMENT - DAY**

Jamal sits at his brother JIMMY'S dining table. Jimmy's  
WIFE brings them pie and coffee. She joins them.

JAMAL

Jackson needs a kidney. He's  
gonna need dialysis four times  
a week until he gets one. I'm  
not a match.

He looks at Jimmy's wife, then back at Jimmy.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

If you're a match, will you  
donate yours?

JIMMY

Gosh. I don't know, Jamal.

Jimmy looks at his wife, shrugs questioning what to do.

Jamal looks at her. She shakes her head no.

WIFE

What if one of our children needs  
one?

She looks at Jimmy.

JIMMY

Sorry, Bro. She's right.

Jamal SIGHS, looks disappointed, but nods.



JAMAL  
I understand.

**INT. CLASSROOM - MORNING**

Barbara watches the clock on the wall. TICK, TICK, TICK.  
3 o'clock. The BELL RINGS. She smiles broadly.

BARBARA  
See you all tomorrow.

Barbara notices Jackson's face looks puffier. She stops  
Jackson before he leaves.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
You don't look so good. Are you  
okay?

She tries to put her hand on his shoulder, but he pulls  
back.

JACKSON  
Why don't you do somethin' 'bout  
the way you look?

BARBARA  
That wasn't very nice. I was  
just concerned because you might  
be sick.

JACKSON  
I don't want your concern. Mind  
your own business!

Barbara shakes her head, walks away in frustration.

**INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY**

Principal Barner picks up the ringing school phone.

PRINCIPAL (INTO PHONE)  
Hello?  
(listens)  
No, Mr. Harris. No need for that.  
I will speak to her. Our teachers  
(MORE)

PRINCIPAL (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)  
are not allowed to harass our  
students.

(listens)  
Yes, sir. I can assure you she  
will be disciplined.

Through his open door, Principal Barner sees Barbara and Alice about to check out in the adjoining office. He calls out to Barbara.

PRINCIPAL  
Ms. Wilson, come in here a  
minute, please.

Barbara rolls her eyes at Alice. Barbara enters, sits down.

PRINCIPAL (CONT'D)  
I got a very concerned parent  
threatening to take you before  
the Board for harassing his son  
resulting in the boy's depression.

BARBARA  
Let me guess, Mr. Harris?

PRINCIPAL  
Boy's got enough problems as it  
is waitin' on a kidney transplant.

BARBARA  
A transplant?

PRINCIPAL  
Seems your hearing is good. So,  
I expect you to remember this.  
One more complaint about you,  
and I'm going to give you an  
unsatisfactory notice.

Barbara is dejected. That's it. She wants to quit.

BARBARA  
Yes, Sir.

**INT. MAIN OFFICE - DAY**

Barbara is teary-eyed as she quickly passes Alice.

**INT. CLASSROOM - DAY**

Barbara eats lunch alone at her desk. She's depressed, eats slowly, stares at Jackson's empty desk.

**INT. BARBARA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Barbara has a fitful sleep. She tosses and turns while Amore is fast asleep on the pillow next to her head.

She DREAMS of a NURSE approaching her with her arm behind her back.

NURSE

This won't hurt a bit.

The Nurse displays a huge needle requiring both of her hands to hold it. The giant needle is headed for Barbara. Barbara SCREAMS.

BARBARA

No, don't touch me!

Amore is so frightened he darts off the bed, and hides under it.

Barbara gets up, awakens her laptop. She googles, then squints at the screen.

**INT. MEDICAL CLINIC - ROOM - DAY**

Barbara wears just a paper robe as she sits on an examining table. A FEMALE DOCTOR stands next to her.

FEMALE DOCTOR

After I examine you we're going to do several tests. We need an EKG, x-rays of your chest and back, urine and blood samples...

Barbara's eyes widen.

BARBARA  
I'm afraid of needles.

FEMALE DOCTOR  
We'll give you a sedative.

Barbara looks worried. She GULPS.

BARBARA  
Well... Okay. I guess, if it needs  
to be done.

**INT. BARBARA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Barbara is awakened by her RINGING PHONE.

BARBARA (INTO PHONE)  
Hello?  
(listens)  
Yes, that's me.  
(listens)  
You're kidding.

**INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY**

Barbara knocks lightly on Principal Barner's door. He's surprised to see her. From the looks of her forlorn face, he fears she's about to quit.

BARBARA  
I'm sorry to interrupt. I need  
to take a medical leave.

**INT. HARRIS' HOME - JAMAL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Jamal is awakened in the middle of the night by a PHONE CALL.

JAMAL  
A match? Oh, fantastic! Yes,  
we'll meet you at the hospital  
right away.

**SUPER: SIX WEEKS LATER**

**EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - MORNING**

Barbara parks her car. She exits, walks towards the school's front entrance.

Jackson stands with his group next to Andres' car. He sees Barbara. He abandons his buddies, rushes over to her.

JACKSON

Heard you was out sick while  
I was gone. Why don't you just  
leave? Nobody likes you.

Barbara is disappointed. She stops, confronts him.

BARBARA

Same ol' Jackson. Nothing's  
changed. It's too bad. I thought  
there was some good in you.

Jackson is unfazed. He scrunches his face, APES her.

Barbara spies Principal Barner nearby watching. She walks away.

Principal Barner quickly walks over to Jackson.

PRINCIPAL

So, that's your gratitude, huh?

JACKSON

Whatta ya talkin' about?

PRINCIPAL

She made me promise not to tell  
you, but... you've got a second  
chance at life, thanks to her.

JACKSON

Whatta ya mean?

PRINCIPAL

She's the one who donated the  
kidney and saved your life.

Jackson has a look of disbelief, looks back at Barbara entering the school.

**SUPER: FIVE DAYS LATER**

**EXT. BARBARA'S HOUSE - DAY**

Alice drives up. Barbara gets inside the car.

BARBARA

I've never had a 'me' day. Thanks for thinking of this, Alice.

ALICE

You deserve it, Barb. What you did was heroic.

BARBARA

It was just the right thing to do. I couldn't just let him die.

ALICE

Well, today you're going to treat yourself. A day at the spa. New makeup, new hair style, new clothes. The works.

Jackson sits in the passenger seat of Andres' car parked nearby. He watches Barbara drive away, then exits the car.

He stands in front of her house, picks up a small rock, looks at the large bay window. Is he going to break it?

He tosses the rock to the side, looks over his shoulder.

Behind him are his father, employees of the hardware store, Principal Barner, and other students, teachers all with garden tools, paint buckets, plants, etc.

JACKSON

Let's do this.

Everyone gets to work, painting, gardening, fixing the place up. Some go inside. Some go to the backyard.

**INT. DRIVING - DAY**

As Alice and Barbara drive up to Barbara's home, Barbara notices a lot of people going in and out of her house. She is amazed at the new paint, nice garden, white picket fence.

BARBARA

What's going on, Alice?

**EXT. BARBARA'S HOUSE - DAY**

Barbara exits the car, looks at her house with gaping mouth. As she walks towards the front door, everyone stops, and APPLAUDS.

**INT. BARBARA'S KITCHEN - DAY**

She watches many people busy cooking. She looks out the window at the backyard, walks out to it.

**EXT. BACKYARD - DAY**

Barbara holds Alice's elbow as they slowing walk around, take everything in.

There is a small version of an Italian fountain, a replica of the statue of David, picnic table with red and white checkered tablecloth, grapes growing over a trellis.

Amore wears a green, white, red scarf like the Italian flag. He sits on someone's lap as he's happily stroked.

Jackson stops talking to his father, rushes to Barbara.

BARBARA

What's all this, Jackson?

JACKSON

I heard you was the one who gave me the kidney.

She smiles, nods.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Why'd you do it?

BARBARA

You needed a kidney. We matched,  
so...

JACKSON

But, you didn't have to.

BARBARA

Why does there have to be a  
reason for an act of kindness?

Jackson starts to tear up.

JACKSON

I'm sorry for all the trouble  
I caused you, Miss Wilson.

She puts her arm around him.

BARBARA

It's alright.

Jackson looks past Barbara at an elderly woman walking with  
a cane having a hard time going down the porch steps.

He rushes over to help her.

Barbara watches his act of kindness, releases a satisfied  
SIGH, and smiles.

Jamal walks over grinning ear to ear.

JAMAL

This...

(pointing to all that was done)  
...is to show my appreciation  
for saving my boy's life. I'm  
sorry for misjudging you.

Barbara smiles.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Wait. That's not all.

Jamal pulls an envelope from his pocket.



JAMAL (CONT'D)

This is for you.

He hands it to her. Barbara opens it.

ALICE

What is it, Barb?

BARBARA

It's a roundtrip ticket to Italy!

Everyone APPLAUDS, let's out a WHOO-HOO!!

Barbara and Alice hold hands, jump up and down excitedly.

People bring out bowls of spaghetti and other Italian foods, place everything on the table. Everyone gets in line to eat buffet style.

Phillipe and other musicians play Italian music as everyone parties.

**FADE OUT.**