

MMP VIDEO

MAY 31

TELEPLAY BY BOB FRANCIS

STORY BY BOB FRANCIS

AND

DAVID GRELYAK

CHARACTERS:

BUSINESSMAN
JOHN PARMAN
RIGBY
DETECTIVE 1
DETECTIVE 2

FADE IN. INT. OFFICE

Meet JOHN PARMAN. He's a high pressure salesman working in a little office, constantly on the phone introducing himself, marking down notes, scribbling on his calendar. CREDITS ROLL as he continues through his day on the phone through lunch until he's the only one left in the office. He dials one more time.

BUSINESSSMAN
(on phone)
Good afternoon, Jack Shoemaker.

PARMAN
(forced jocularity)
Jack! This is John!

BUSINESSSMAN
John...

PARMAN
John Parman... with Consolidated. We had lunch a couple of weeks back --
(aside)
on me --

BUSINESSSMAN
(remembers)
Consolidated... right. What can I do for you?

PARMAN
Well, when I talked to you last time, you liked what we could do for you in your plant in Arizona. I'm going to be down there later this week and wanted to stop by and check out the plant with you personally... say the thirty first?

BUSINESSSMAN
Thirty first? Of what?

PARMAN
I'm sorry?

BUSINESSSMAN
Did you say the thirty first?

PARMAN
Yeah. May thirty first... Thursday. I'm thinking around eleven and then we can go to lunch --

BUSINESSMAN

(laughing)

You better check your calendar. May only has thirty days.

PARMAN

(laughing as well while he checks his calendar)

No, I'm afraid you're mistaken... May has thirty one --

PARMAN stops as he flips through his calendar. The days go from May 30 to June 1. PARMAN flips it back and forth a few times and checks to see if the pages are stuck together. No. May 30 is a Wednesday, June 1 is a Thursday.

BUSINESSMAN

Remember that little rhyme "Thirty days hath September"?

PARMAN

(still distracted by the calendar)

Yeah, yeah. That's funny. I could have sworn... but I guess not... well, how about June first?

BUSINESSMAN

Well, I'll tell you... uh,

PARMAN

John.

BUSINESSMAN

This week's really not good for me. Plus it's the end of the fiscal year and we've got a shortfall...

PARMAN

Then we can set something up later in the month.

BUSINESSMAN

Well, why don't you give me a call in a few weeks when things have settled down a little.

PARMAN

Well --

BUSINESSMAN

Talk to you later. Good-bye.

The phone hangs up on the other end. PARMAN hangs up the phone -- mad that he didn't get a "foot in the door", but the calendar still bothers him. He flips through it a couple more times.

PARMAN

(to himself)

"Thirty days hath September... April, June and November...
all the others have thirty-one..."

He flips through the calendar one last time, but there is still no May 31.

INT. LIBRARY

PARMAN walks into the library. It's a small branch; older and more "library looking" with wood desks and dark wooden shelves full of books. A woman sits behind the reference desk with a nametag printed "RIGBY". PARMAN walks over to her.

RIGBY

(with a pleasant smile)

Well, hello again. You're getting to be one of my regulars.
What can I help you with today?

PARMAN

I want to find out about calendars.

RIGBY

You mean a history of calendars, that sort of thing?

PARMAN

Yeah... I've been trying to remember that old rhyme "Thirty
days hath September --"

RIGBY

(leading him through the aisles)

"Thirty days hath September. April, May, June, November.
All the others have thirty one --"

PARMAN

Except February.

RIGBY

Except February. Something wrong?

PARMAN

It doesn't sound quite right.

RIGBY

Let me see... April, May, June, September, November. I don't think I'm missing any.

PARMAN

What about May? Are you sure May has just thirty days?

RIGBY

I -- well, now that you mention it... no. I'm pretty sure May has just thirty days. We could check the calendar to make sure...

PARMAN

No, I've already checked.

RIGBY

(half surprised, half annoyed)

You've already checked? I guess you've lost me somewhere.

PARMAN

This might sound like a goofy question, but did it ever have thirty one days?

RIGBY

(stops and begins to scan the book titles)

Let me think. July had thirty days once until Julius Caesar gave it an extra day. Augustus Caesar did the same thing for August...

PARMAN

You're kidding.

RIGBY

Afraid not. That's the kind of thing you should expect when government starts fooling around with the time-space continuum...

(pulls out a book and hands it to PARMAN)

This is a good book on the history of the modern calendar...

I give it a thumbs up.

PARMAN

(begins walking back to check out desk)

You've convinced me. So, what did they pull all of these extra days out of?

RIGBY

February. That's why it only has twenty eight days instead of thirty.

PARMAN

Sometimes it has twenty nine.

RIGBY

Leap year. Right. Well, the world's not quite perfect. Hard to believe, I know. Anyway, a year is three hundred and sixty five days long plus some. That's why we get an extra day every four years unless it's a century year when we don't... except in millennial years when we do... I'm getting a headache. Maybe you should just read the book.

PARMAN

So there's this extra time just floating in limbo out there somewhere; just waiting until we use it up.

RIGBY

Well, not exactly.

PARMAN

(wistfully)

That's too bad. It would be kind of nice to just pull out that extra time when you really needed it. You know what I mean? There's just never enough time to do everything.

RIGBY

(sharing his emotion)

I know. It seems all I do is work and sleep... and then while I'm sleeping, half the time I dream about work...

PARMAN

We're defined by our jobs.

RIGBY

It's kind of depressing when you put it that way.

PARMAN

I'm sorry.

RIGBY

(back at the check out desk)

So, what else do you have?

(PARMAN hands her a few items)

The books are due back in two weeks, but the cassettes are due back in two days...

(smiling)

May 31st, depending on your point of view. Do you have your library card?

PARMAN

(frisks himself)

Um... no, I guess I don't.

RIGBY

That's all right, I can look you up by social security number.

(resigned at PARMAN's expression)

Don't tell me you don't have a social security card.

PARMAN

Can't you just look me up by name?

RIGBY

(sarcastically)

Come on. No one uses names anymore. Why don't you have a social security number?

PARMAN

I do. I just don't know it off the top of my head.

RIGBY

I don't know how anyone can get along without knowing their social security number. That's all you are, you know. Just a number somewhere in one of these...

PARMAN

Well, be careful you don't hit the wrong button.

RIGBY

(laughing)

Don't worry. I am an expert.

PARMAN

That's not funny.

RIGBY
Sorry.
(pauses)
Birthdays.

PARMAN
What?

RIGBY
Birthdays. You don't remember your social security number,
I bet you don't remember birthdays either.

PARMAN
No, I'm terrible with birthdays.
(realizes)
I can't even remember my own.

RIGBY
Well, I'll tell you what. I'm going to trust you and check
these out on my card, but make sure you bring them back on
time, okay?

PARMAN
(distracted)
What? Of course.
(genuinely touched)
Thanks. That's the nicest thing anyone's done for me in a
long time.

RIGBY
I guess I'm just a sucker for hard luck cases; you know,
lost puppies and lost souls.
(leans over the desk)
Maybe you can make it up to me. What do you say?

PARMAN
(still distracted)
Hmm?

RIGBY
Are you all right?

PARMAN
(looking a little worried)
Yeah... yeah. Um, can I get a rain check? I've got to get
home and check on something.
(walks towards the exit)
Maybe we can get together later.

RIGBY

Sure.

(mentally kicking herself)
I'm free on May thirty first.

INT. HOUSE

PARMAN rushes home, flipping the lights on in his closets, his attic, his basement. He pries open old boxes and cases. He rummages through files and papers. He looks for photographs and while he pauses to really look at a few here and there, none of them are what he's looking for. Through the night, through the next day and through the next night, he continues to sift through piles of memorabilia. PARMAN finally finds himself surrounded by boxes of stuff with his head in his hands.

INT. LIBRARY

The library is dark except for a few lights on here and there. RIGBY is busy putting books away. The front door opens and a silhouette fills the door.

RIGBY

(without looking up)

I'm sorry. I guess I didn't lock the door. We've been closed since --

She looks up and sees it's PARMAN. He's wet and pale with red rimmed eyes and shaking slightly. RIGBY runs over to him as he half steps / half stumbles into the library.

RIGBY

(concerned despite herself)

You look terrible. Are you sick?

PARMAN

(faintly smiling)

Yeah. I think I've got cancer of the self... and it's slowly eating me away.

RIGBY

What's that supposed to mean? I'm serious. Maybe I better call a doctor.

PARMAN

(gathering himself)

No... no... I'm sorry I ran out on you like that last night.

RIGBY

(brushing the apology away)

That's okay. I'm used to it. So what was the emergency?

PARMAN

When's your birthday?

RIGBY

What? You know you should never ask a woman about her age.

PARMAN

Did you know in the 1700's the calendar had to be switched over from the Julian to the Gregorian. Almost two weeks were displaced. Anniversaries and holidays, even the beginning of the seasons... everything that anyone remembered was changed. Even their own birthdays.

RIGBY

That's why we have traditional and observed holidays. So what?

PARMAN

You said the calendar's not quite perfect. Every once in awhile we have to add a day. Now scientists have to add in a few seconds here and there to keep the whole thing going. And somewhere -- somewhen -- May thirty first was just... lost.

RIGBY

Listen to me. It'll take four thousand years for the calendar to lose an entire day... There was never a May thirty first.

PARMAN

Yes, there was. I don't know when or how or when everything switched over, but there was a May thirty first. I was born on May thirty first.

RIGBY

That's impossible. You just think --

PARMAN

I know it's crazy. If it hadn't all come back to me, I would have agreed with you, but I was born on May thirty first.

RIGBY

You weren't. You're just... confused. If you really think you were born on May thirty first, just check it with someone, look at your driver's license.

PARMAN

I don't have a driver's license. I don't own a car. My parents died when I was very young and I lived with my grandparents... they're gone now too... I don't have many friends, mostly business associates. People I see at work, say hello to, but that's it. There's no one else in my life. No one who knows I'm here... no one who will miss me when I'm gone.

RIGBY

(pauses and then firmly)

Look. I have about as much of a life as you do, but I know you're here. You're a real person with a real birthday and a real social security card. Let me just finish closing up the library and we'll go drink in the new month.

PARMAN

(quietly)

No. It's too late.

Somewhere outside a clock tower has begun to chime midnight. PARMAN stands up and walks out. RIGBY turns at the noise of the door.

RIGBY

Where are you going?

(runs out of the door after him)

Come back!

(she remembers the library is still unlocked)

Wait! Please!

She can only watch as the figure of PARMAN slowly fades away as the clock tower finishes tolling twelve times.

INT. POLICE STATION

The newspaper is dated July 29th. RIGBY knocks it aside in disgust revealing DETECTIVE 1 behind it. DETECTIVE 2, a younger, more polite officer tries to calm her down.

DETECTIVE 2
Please have a seat, Ms...

RIGBY
(angrily pacing)
How many times do I have to come here and go through all of this? I want to know why you haven't done anything. A man has been missing for two months --

DETECTIVE 2
Ma'am...

DETECTIVE 1
Look. You come in here to report a missing person. You don't know his name, you don't know his address, you give us a description that narrows it down to everyone in the city -

DETECTIVE 2
(trying to mediate between the two)
Without more information, there's very little we can do for you, Ms...

RIGBY
What about the fingerprints? On the book I gave you. The fingerprints --

DETECTIVE 1
Are not on file in our system.

DETECTIVE 2
Please, Ms... ma'am. Sit down, please. Apparently your missing man never broke the law. We couldn't find a match for his prints. Now we've sent them to Washington to run against the national system --

DETECTIVE 1
(aside)
We don't normally do that for a case like this --

DETECTIVE 2
But the results aren't due until the end of the month.

RIGBY
(beginning to get a headache)
What about bills? Place of work? There must be something -

DETECTIVE 1

There's nothing. If this guy has disappeared, no one has missed him. We haven't got any missing persons cases that come close to yours.

DETECTIVE 2

Please, ma'am. The feds said they would have the fingerprints checked out by the end of the month. If you stop by tomorrow, we might have some news for you.

RIGBY

(rubbing her eyes)
You mean the day after tomorrow.

DETECTIVE 2

I'm sorry?

RIGBY

(off handedly)
You said the end of the month. That's the day after tomorrow.

DETECTIVE 1

That's August first.

RIGBY

No. It's the thirty first.

DETECTIVE 2

I'm sorry, ma'am, you're mistaken. There is no July thirty first.

RIGBY opens her eyes, headache forgotten. The two DETECTIVES are looking at her oddly. Her eyes pass them as she looks at the calendar hanging on the wall behind them. It shows July having thirty days. RIGBY's expression turns to horror as she realizes her mistake.

FADE OUT.