

"Outside Chance"

Written By

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EXT. SKY - NIGHT

A frightened BAT struggles through a thunder storm. It lands under an overhang above the front of a house where a girl, ZOE, talks through a slightly ajar door to CHUCK, who's inside. ZOE holds a clear Tupperware bin of grocery bags. THE BAT huddles under the overhang, looking on.

ZOE

Here ya go Chuck - your, um, weekly goodies! Well... I'm wayyy behind today, still two more deliveries, so... always nice to see you... through a slightly ajar door...

CHUCK

(takes the bin and quickly narrows the door's opening again)  
Oh! Right! Thanks Zoe, yeah! I'll, uh, see you next week?

ZOE

Yep, through that... slightly ajar door! Unless -

CHUCK

Yeah?

THE BAT's face brightens.

ZOE

Well we could... go OUT, after my shift's over? Catch a movie...

CHUCK

Ohhhhh. Yeah... I can't really...

ZOE

Yeah.

CHUCK

...go outside....

ZOE

Yeah.

CHUCK

It's just my, you know...

ZOE

I know, I know, your irrational fear of all things NON-human...

THE BAT raises his eyebrows.

ZOE (CONT'D)

There's gotta be a name for this -  
Agoraphobia? Zoophobia? ZOE-phobia?  
Whaddaya have against the little  
buggers anyway?

CHUCK

(shudders)

Little buggers, like... spiders  
with their... s-spiny l-little legs  
and... germy worms... and...

ZOE

Pshh, that stuff's not so bad!

CHUCK just shivers.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Okay, well - how about up in the  
sky? The sky's got lots to offer,  
like a... a fluffy little bird,  
or...? Chuck? Chuck? You okay?

CHUCK

And their... droppings... and...  
diseases...? You never know when  
one might drop its payload...

CHUCK looks fearful. THE BAT snorts and snickers to itself.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Or bats! Aaaaaagh! What about BATS!

THE BAT stops mid-snickers.

THE BAT

Hmmph!

ZOE

Okay Chuck, here's what. My months  
of "weird grocery delivery girl  
flirting" are over... I'm gonna  
come back at eight - and if you're  
not outside, I'M taking a new  
delivery route.

CHUCK

But!

ZOE shrugs, heads for her delivery van, and drives off.

I/E LARGE FOYER/ROOF ABOVE FRONT LANDING - NIGHT

CHUCK shuts the door, the Tupperware in his arms. In the FOYER is a bookcase and a grand piano. On the piano, a clock ticks, its hands at seven.

CHUCK

You're a real charmer, Chuck!

A crack of lightning and a new blast of wind outside. THE BAT fearfully lifts its wing against the driving rain, and then flaps on up and into the chimney. CHUCK heads for the KITCHEN and begins unpacking groceries.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

How're ya ever gonna go OUT with this girl if you don't go OUTSIDE..! CAN'T go outside! Dangerous critters out there! Gotta be clever instead, gotta come up with a cute pick-up line!

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Hey, Zoe - heh heh - since I can't, uh, ask you to go OUT with me... because that usually involves, well, going OUT... Will you, uh, go IN with me sometime? Heh heh? Hmm. Okay no, that's just creepy.

Rain continues to drum the house. CHUCK plunks down in front of the LIVING ROOM T.V. The lights are low, and lightning lights up the drawn window shades. CHUCK flips the channels, tensing up repeatedly - everything seems to be man-versus-nature: Jaws, Arachnophobia, THEM! etc. Finally he flips to a movie scene of a guy in a house, shouting over his shoulder, "He's getting closer!" as scary music blares. A girl shakes a door knob and yells, "It won't open! We're trapped INSIDE!" CHUCK melts into the couch with a smile.

CHUCK

Ahhhhh... Inside...

CHUCK looks at his watch. Seven twenty-three. He sighs and looks back to the T.V. with a distressed face.

Suddenly a DARK BLUR FLAPS BY and slips behind one of the LIVING ROOM'S WINDOW SHADES! CHUCK goes wide-eyed and freezes. He stands, snaps up a fly swatter. Thunder cracks - and a lightning flash reveals THE BAT's silhouette!

CHUCK  
Holy... fudging ...shhhhhingles...

For a long pause, CHUCK is paralyzed. He reaches slowly for the bottom of the shade, swatter poised to strike. He yanks! The shade snaps up wildly - and out flies THE BAT!

CHUCK  
Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhgh!

THE BAT swoops past CHUCK's head, into the FOYER, back to the LIVING ROOM, and around and around. CHUCK runs around, ducking and jumping! As THE BAT settles on flapping about the LIVING ROOM near the ceiling, CHUCK cowers in the corner. From the T.V.: "We gotta open that front door!"

CHUCK  
The front door!

CHUCK runs for the FOYER and hesitates, hand at the door knob. A grisly voice from the T.V.: "But open the door ...and there's no telling what you're letting INSIDE, either... Ahahaha..." Eyes squinched shut, CHUCK gulps some air and throws the door open. He peeks back into the LIVING ROOM and THE BAT swoops right at him -

CHUCK  
Blaggg!

Throwing himself clear, CHUCK scrambles to his feet and staggers back to the LIVING ROOM. He peers back into the FOYER, where THE BAT flits around in circles.

CHUCK  
Go OUT the FRONT DOOR, stupid!

CHUCK drops the fly swatter, runs to the KITCHEN and returns to the FOYER flailing a broom, crashing vases, banging various piano keys, toppling books, knocking a wall mirror askew, and whacking house keys from a wall hook onto the floor. THE BAT flaps back to the LIVING ROOM.

CHUCK  
No! No! That's the wrong way!

After a few chaotic laps, CHUCK shakes the broom vigorously.

CHUCK  
Okay! If I can't get you outta here, I'm gonna trap you IN here!

CHUCK runs to the KITCHEN, comes back into the LIVING ROOM

brandishing the clear Tupperware like a weapon ...and freezes. THE BAT is nowhere. A sweaty CHUCK creeps through the house, looking all around this way and that, eyes wild.

CHUCK  
(whispering)  
Where are you...

He skulks back to the FOYER and its open front door.

CHUCK  
(whispering)  
Did it leave...?

CHUCK starts to close the door, but then leaves it. The clock says five of eight. Shaking his head, he lowers the Tupperware and plops down at the piano, staring bug-eyed past the FOYER's now-crooked wall mirror, into the LIVING ROOM. Then he looks at the mirror - and bolts upright.

THE BAT hangs upside-down on the wall behind him between two crooked picture frames. CHUCK slowly takes up the Tupperware again - and then whirls around and claps it to the wall! THE BAT thrashes in its new prison as CHUCK espies a flattened cardboard box leaning under the FOYER WINDOW's sill. He shuffles along the wall, sliding Tupperware and BAT with him, until they're by the window. CHUCK grabs the cardboard and slips it between the wall and the clear Tupperware.

CHUCK  
HA HA! Time to send you BACK! To  
that PLACE full of creepy crawlies!  
Better-known as... "OUTSIDE!"

Lightning cracks and rain pummels the window. THE BAT looks toward the storm outside and recoils. CHUCK's face softens.

CHUCK  
You - you're scared of the rain?  
You're afraid to go outside too?

The trembling BAT nods its head. CHUCK is silent a moment, and then he shrugs it off.

CHUCK  
Meh! Sorry little guy, ya still  
creep me out!

Pressing Tupperware and cardboard together, CHUCK shuffles to the door, pitches it all out onto the front steps landing, and slams the door. Lightning cracks. Rain pours.

CHUCK  
Ahahahahaha! Andddd STAY out!

He leaps to a LIVING ROOM WINDOW and peeks out through the shade, chuckling. BAT, Tupperware and cardboard lie strewn on the front steps landing. THE BAT seems to be seeing stars as it tries to shield itself from the rain with one wing. CHUCK's smile fades into a downcast look.

CUT TO:

PREVIOUS MOMENT OF CHUCK WITH THE BAT TRAPPED AGAINST THE WALL, TREMBLING AT THE STORM OUTSIDE THE WINDOW.

CUT TO:

CHUCK FROWNING AS HE LOOKS OUT THE LIVING ROOM WINDOW AT THE HELPLESS BAT STRUGGLING ON THE FRONT LANDING. CHUCK SIGHS.

SFX: Rustle Rustle!

A CAT emerges from the bushes to stalk its way up the front steps toward THE BAT, who is fighting to regain his senses.

CHUCK  
...Oh no... Oh NO!

THE BAT, seeing its predator prowling ever-closer, thrashes to stand, but keeps flopping back on the pavement in a daze!

CHUCK (CONT'D)  
No no no no no no no!

CHUCK bangs on the window. THE CAT looks up, and then resumes its stalking. Lightning cracks. CHUCK paces, starts for the door knob, then backs off and continues pacing.

CUT TO:

LIGHTNING CRACKS - PREVIOUS SHOT AGAIN OF THE BAT TRAPPED IN THE TUPPERWARE, FEARFUL OF THE STORM.

CUT TO:

LIGHTNING CRACKS - CHUCK'S FACE, FEARFUL TOO, AS HE WATCHES THE CAT CLOSING IN ON THE BAT.

CUT TO:

LIGHTNING CRACKS - EARLIER SHOT OF CHUCK SHUDDERING IN FEAR AS HE TALKS TO ZOE THROUGH THE SLIGHTLY AJAR DOOR.

CUT TO:

LIGHTNING CRACKS - CLOSE-UP OF THE BAT'S FEARFUL FACE AS HE STRUGGLES ON THE LANDING, THE CAT LOOMING IN THE BACKGROUND.

CUT TO:

CHUCK DASHING BACK TO THE LOOK OUT THE LIVING ROOM WINDOW, WIDE-EYED! THE BAT THRASHES ON THE LANDING AS THE CAT READIES TO POUNCE! LIGHTNING CRASHES!

CHUCK

Okay! I can't stand it!!!

CHUCK braces himself, throws the door open and charges into the downpour! THE CAT darts away, turns back to hiss, and vanishes into the bushes. His face screwed up tight, CHUCK fumbles with the cardboard to sweep THE BAT back in the bin.

With THE BAT safe in the bin, and the bin clamped shut with the cardboard between CHUCK's hands, CHUCK races back inside. He sets the bin down on the piano, and himself down on the piano bench, gasping for breath.

CHUCK

That's - that's all I've got...  
can't... go out... again... no  
more... no more...

The clock chimes eight. CHUCK looks sad and frustrated. THE BAT watches CHUCK through the Tupperware wall.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Being afraid! It ruins everything.  
Zoe's gonna be here any minute now,  
and if I don't go out there and go  
with her, I'll lose my chance with  
her forever... but... I'm not  
ready! I'm just not ready.

CHUCK puts his face in his hands. THE BAT looks on, frowning. Then THE BAT brightens. It starts to jump up and down inside the Tupperware, bumping it around on the piano.

CHUCK

What are you -- what's going on?

THE BAT just keeps jumping up and down, eyes excited, all smiles. The Tupperware jumps around more and more, until it pops off the piano - and THE BAT is free! CHUCK flinches, leaps up, and runs from behind the piano.

CHUCK

Ahhhhh! What're you doing??



THE BAT flaps around CHUCK's head, forcing him backwards. CHUCK shields himself with his arms as he backs away from THE BAT's furious flaps.

CHUCK

I-I thought we understood each other! Why are you doing this! Stop! Stop! Stoppppppppppppppppppppp!

Suddenly the flap noises stop. CHUCK is frozen with his head wrapped in his arms. Rain is falling on him. He peers over his arms and then his eyes pop wide - he's back outside!

CHUCK

Whuh - huh?? Oh God!!

THE BAT hovers in the doorway, eyes excited. CHUCK lunges, but THE BAT lifts a wing and slams the door in CHUCK's face.

CHUCK

Hey!! Lemme back in! I said once was enough! Heyyy! You can't do this to me! My keys are inside!

INT. FOYER MAIL SLOT - NIGHT

THE BAT lifts the mail slot with its wing and sees CHUCK's pacing legs. CHUCK intermittently stops to pound the door.

CHUCK

Lemme in! Oh God I'm outside! I'm stuck outside and I'm talking to a BAT! Oh God oh God oh -

SFX: A vehicle pulling up. A car door. Footsteps.

ZOE (O.S.)

Hey -

EXT. FRONT WALK - NIGHT

ZOE

Wow, you're, uh - you're outside.

CHUCK

(shaking like a leaf)  
Y-yeah... I'mmm owwww... outside...

ZOE

I'm... kinda impressed. So... what do you wanna to do...?

CHUCK & ZOE  
(in unison)  
Go back inside...

They pause. The rain stops. A SCREAM from the horror movie.

ZOE  
You know what? It's a start - you  
just won a date with me. Whatcha  
watching in there - anything good?

The house keys pop through the mail slot onto the welcome mat. CHUCK glances down at them and then back up at ZOE. CHUCK opens the door and they head inside.

CHUCK  
It's just some thing about some  
people stuck inside a house... but  
there's lots of other stuff on.

As the door closes, THE BAT flies out and flaps to the window, looking in at CHUCK and ZOE with a smile that then fades to a slight frown. The front door opens again.

CHUCK (O.S.)  
Oh, come on in...

THE BAT smiles big and swoops back inside. The door closes.

ZOE (O.S.)  
Eeeeeeeek!

THE END