

"Takeover at the Toymart"

by
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INT. MILFORD POLICE STATION - EARLY EVENING

1

A busy police station decorated for Christmas. Officers are milling about, some with suspects in tow. Others are on the telephone or their computers.

We focus on SGT. CURRAN, a clean-cut officer in his late 30s. He is seated behind his desk, typing on his keyboard.

His phone rings. He stops typing and answers it. We hear, but do not see (yet), who he is talking to. Beeps are heard throughout the conversation.

CURRAN

Milford Police Department. Sgt.
Curran. This is a recorded line.

We hear muted Christmas carols over the line and REX speaks.

REX

(filtered in this
scene)

Recorded? Oh, I. . . I didn't know
that.

(sotto voce; aside)

I'm being *recorded*. Pretty neat,
huh?

CURRAN

(growing confused)

This is Sergeant Curran. May I
help you?

REX

I'm calling to. . . to let you
know that my friends and I have
taken over the Toymart at the
mall. We have hostages, but we
don't want to hurt anyone.

CURRAN

Good. We don't want you to hurt
anyone either.

(beat)

What's your name?

REX

(beat)

My name?

(CONTINUED)

CURRAN

Yes. I'd like to know what to call you.

REX

Oh, that makes sense.

(beat)

Uhm. . . hold on a minute.

Rex covers the mouthpiece of the telephone. The conversation becomes muffled, but we can still hear him talking with BOSCOE.

REX

He wants to know my *name*.

BOSCOE

(filtered in this scene)

So tell him.

REX

But I don't know what it is.

(beat)

Do you?

BOSCOE

We weren't on the same shelf. How should I know?

(beat)

You *really* don't know your name?

REX

Uh uh.

BOSCOE

Weren't you ever curious?

REX

Not really. It never came up in conversation with my shelfmates.

BOSCOE

Look at your *tag*.

REX

Oh yeah!

CURRAN

(confused)

Hello?

BOSCOE

Can you read it?

REX

(beat; straining a
bit)

Just. . . *barely*. They put it by
my bum for some reason.

(beat)

Why would they do that, Boscoe?

BOSCOE

Forget about *where* it is. What
does it say?

REX

(straining, at first)

R-e-x.

(beat)

Rex.

BOSCOE

Then *that's* your name.

(beat)

Tell the man.

REX

Rex? I don't feel like a Rex. Do I
look like a Rex?

BOSCOE

You're tying up the line.

Rex uncovers the phone's mouthpiece. We can hear the
conversation better.

REX

Sorry for the delay.

(beat)

My name is Rex.

CURRAN

Rex?

REX

That's what it says on my tag.

CURRAN

(confused)

Your. . . tag?

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (3)

1

REX

I'm also 60% rayon, if that's important.

CURRAN

(longish beat)
Rex, who are you?

REX

I told you: My name is Rex.

We slowly pull back to reveal Rex sitting on a chair at the Toymart's service desk. He is talking on the telephone.

REX

I'm a teddy bear.

FADE TO:

2 INT. TOYMART - MOMENTS LATER

2

Christmas carols are playing over the Toymart's speakers. Many holiday decorations are visible around the store.

Rex is seated behind the service desk, wearing a red vest and a bow tie. Boscoe, a toy owl with plastic glasses, flutters into the air and grabs the telephone receiver from Rex's curled paw with his talons. He angrily hangs it up and then lands on the service desk at Rex's eye level.

REX

Geez, don't take my paw off!

BOSCOE

Why'd you tell the officer that?

REX

Tell him what?

BOSCOE

About the rayon.

REX

It's printed on my tag. I thought it might be important.

BOSCOE

(sighs)
For a bear, you're not very smart.

(CONTINUED)

REX

Are bears *supposed* to be smart? I thought we were meant to be *cute*.

He fiddles with his bow tie.

REX

I look snazzy - *very* distinguished.

BOSCOE

Clothes don't make the bear.

REX

And what makes *you* so smart?

BOSCOE

I'm an owl. Owls are smart.

REX

Real owls are smart. You're not real. You're a stuffed animal, just like I am.

Insulted, Boscoe points at Rex with one of his talons.

BOSCOE

Don't even *think* of comparing us!

REX

Those plastic glasses don't make you intelligent. There's not even glass in them! If they weren't sewn onto the sides of your head, they'd fall off.

BOSCOE

I may be a stuffed animal like you, Rex, but that's where our similarities end. I am *much* smarter than you are.

REX

(defensively)
Like how?

BOSCOE

For one thing, *I* knew my own name before today.

REX

(beat; humbled)
OK. I'll give you that one.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

REX (CONT'D)

(beat)

Then why did *I* make the telephone call to the police?

BOSCOE

You were closer to the phone.

Boscoe starts pacing on the desk.

BOSCOE

(sighs)

There's no sense arguing. We're all in this together.

We hear an occasional ominous growl.

BOSCOE

Let's go see how the monsters are doing guarding the hostages.

Boscoe stops pacing.

REX

Do I *have* to go?

BOSCOE

Yes. By the vote everyone took, you and I are in charge.

REX

Those monsters scare me.

BOSCOE

They're *meant* to be scary. That's why they're guarding the doors.

REX

All those pointy teeth!

BOSCOE

They won't harm you. They're only around to keep the hostages from running away.

REX

Where'd they come from?

BOSCOE

Some kids' movie. It bombed, and there were a *lot* of stuffed monster toys left on the shelves.

(CONTINUED)

REX

They *still* scare me.

BOSCOE

Be grateful they're around. I don't think anyone would be too scared of a teddy bear and an owl.

Boscoe flutters into the air as Rex starts carefully descending from his chair.

FADE TO:

INT. TOYMART - MOMENTS LATER

The Christmas carols continue. A group of approximately 30 women and children are huddled together. We see the monsters guarding the door. There are four of them, each about 4 1/2 feet tall. They are black, covered in faux fur, and have large mouths with prominent pointy teeth.

Among the hostages are CHRISTINA COMPTON, 34, and her son, ANDY, 8.

ANDY

(frightened)

Mom, I. . . I don't like it here.

CHRISTINA

Neither do I, son.

ANDY

Why can't we go *home*?

CHRISTINA

The monsters won't let us leave the store.

ANDY

Maybe if we asked them *really* nice?

CHRISTINA

No, Andy. I don't want you near them.

ANDY

I saw the movie. The monster wasn't such a bad guy. His name was Speck.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINA

Their teeth look *awfully* sharp.

ANDY

But they're all only as tall as I am!

(beat)

What does Dad always say: "Nothing ventured, nothing pained?"

CHRISTINA

(correcting him)

Gained, dear.

(longish beat)

OK. It's worth a try. Stay close to me.

They slowly walk to the group of SPECKs. One of them speaks in a gravelly voice, while the others continue growling.

SPECK

Stop right there, humans!

ANDY

Hi, Speck. I saw your movie. You were *really* good in it.

SPECK

Thank you.

ANDY

Can my mom and I leave? We have to be heading home. It's almost time for dinner.

SPECK

No one leaves. Those are my orders.

ANDY

But my dad will be worried.

Christina's cell phone rings. Speck angrily grabs it from her.

SPECK

Give me that!

CHRISTINA

Hey!

Speck swallows the ringing phone and then loudly burps.

(CONTINUED)

SPECK

Excuse me.

CHRISTINA

That was *my* property!

SPECK

(giggles)

I think it switched over to vibrate. It's tickling my tummy.

(giggles for a bit)

Get back to where you were!

(giggles a little more)

Christina and Andy walk back to where they were.

ANDY

Do you think that was Dad on the phone?

CHRISTINA

I do.

ANDY

He won't be happy when he comes home and there's no dinner on the table.

CHRISTINA

Hopefully, he'll be worried that we're not home and call the police.

(sighs)

I wonder if my phone plan covers my cell being eaten by a toy monster.

FADE TO:

Darkness has fallen. A worried crowd has gathered outside. A few police cruisers are parked in front of the store, their flashing lights casting red shadows on the glass front doors. CAPTAIN ADLER, an older, white-haired officer, walks forward as Curran approaches.

ADLER

There you are, Curran.

(CONTINUED)

CURRAN

Captain Adler, sir.

ADLER

Curran, this is Fred Walsh. He's the manager of the Toymart.

(beat)

Since you took the call, I thought you could tell him what's going on.

CURRAN

Yes, Captain.

WALSH is a chubby, nervous man wearing too-small glasses.

WALSH

I only left for an hour to get some dinner. One hour!

(beat)

I came back to all *this*.

He gestures at the scene surrounding him.

ADLER

Who's running the store?

WALSH

Jenny Parks, the assistant manager.

A female OFFICER calls out to Adler.

OFFICER

We're about set, Captain.

Adler turns to her.

OFFICER

We have a line into the store. You'll be able to speak with the hostage takers over the squawk box. It shouldn't take more than another couple of minutes.

Adler turns to Curran.

ADLER

Tell Mr. Walsh about the call.

CURRAN

It was from someone named Rex. He mentioned a Boscoe, who was with him. Rex said that he and his friends had taken hostages in the Toymart. He mentioned they didn't want to hurt anyone.

ADLER

Did he say what group they represent?

CURRAN

No, he didn't.

ADLER

What are their demands?

CURRAN

(getting embarrassed)
He. . . uhm. . . didn't say.

ADLER

Did you *ask* him?

CURRAN

(embarrassed)
No, sir. I didn't.

ADLER

(sarcastically;
adamantly)
Don't you think that would have been a good question?

CURRAN

Yes, but there was something. . . odd about the conversation that threw me, and they *did* hang up rather quickly.

ADLER

What was it that "threw" you?

CURRAN

(stalling)
Rex told me that he's. . . that he's. . .

ADLER

Out with it!

(CONTINUED)

CURRAN

A. . . teddy bear.

ADLER

(beat; shocked)

A teddy bear?

CURRAN

Yes, sir.

ADLER

(beat; as though
talking to a child)

Like Winnie the Pooh?

CURRAN

Yes, Captain.

ADLER

And you *believed* him?

CURRAN

(chuckling nervously)

It *is* a toy store, after all.

OFFICER

We're all set, sir. We've made
initial contact with someone named
Boscoe.

ADLER

Good. Give me that thing.

Adler grabs the mike. The screen splits. We see Boscoe on the other side. He is standing on the service desk, holding the phone in one of his talons.

ADLER

This is Captain Adler. I'm talking
with Boscoe?

Christmas carols are heard faintly when the line is active.

BOSCOE

That's right.

ADLER

We're ready to negotiate.

WALSH

(anxiously)

Is Jenny OK?

(CONTINUED)

ADLER

Boscoe, could I speak with Jenny Parks, the assistant manager?

BOSCOE

Sure. Hold on.

(beat; aside)

He wants to talk with you.

PARKS, an attractive young lady in her late 20s, steps forward. She takes the offered phone from Boscoe, who flies off.

PARKS

(nervous)

Hello?

ADLER

Miss Parks, this is Captain Adler of the police. We're right outside.

PARKS

I can see the lights.

ADLER

Is everyone safe in there?

PARKS

Yes - no one's been hurt.

ADLER

How many hostages are in the store?

PARKS

Around. . . 30.

ADLER

Any kids?

PARKS

Maybe half a dozen.

ADLER

Have the hostage takers made any threatening moves?

PARKS

No, but, there's something you *should* know.

ADLER

What?

PARKS

They're all. . . toys.

ADLER

(beat)

Say again, please.

PARKS

They're *toys* - stuffed animals.

CURRAN

(sotto voce)

I told you so.

WALSH

May I speak with her?

ADLER

Certainly.

Adler passes the mike to Walsh.

WALSH

Jenny, it's Fred Walsh.

PARKS

I'm *so* glad to hear your voice. I don't know what happened. All the stuffed animals suddenly got up off of their shelves and gathered in the front of the store.

WALSH

But no one's been hurt.

PARKS

That's right. It sure is *creepy* in here though.

(beat)

Remember those monster toys - the Specks?

WALSH

(sighs)

How can I forget *them*? I don't think we've sold even *one*.

PARKS

They're guarding the exits, and, sir. . .

(CONTINUED)

WALSH

Yes?

PARKS

I think their teeth are *real* now.

WALSH

Oh, my!

ADLER

Mr. Walsh?

Walsh looks up and sees Adler motioning for the mike.

WALSH

Jenny, I'm putting Captain Adler
back on the line.

Walsh passes the mike back to Adler.

ADLER

Miss Parks, may I speak with
Boscoe again?

PARKS

I'm afraid he flew away.

ADLER

Flew?

PARKS

He's a toy owl.

ADLER

Who *else* can I speak with?

PARKS

Rex is here.

CURRAN

That's the teddy bear I spoke with
earlier.

ADLER

Put him on, please.

PARKS

(calling)
Rex, it's for you.

On one-half of the split screen, we see Rex climb the chair and take the phone from Jenny Parks, who walks away. He holds the receiver in a curled paw.

(CONTINUED)

REX

Hello?

ADLER

Rex, I'm Captain Adler of the police.

REX

You're the *second* policeman I've spoken with today. I talked to Sergeant Curran earlier.

ADLER

I know. He's out here with me.

REX

Could you put *him* on please?

ADLER

(confused)

Uhm. . . OK.

(beat)

Curran, you're up.

Adler passes the mike to Curran.

CURRAN

Hello, Rex.

(beat)

How are the hostages?

REX

Everyone's fine - just a little hungry. Andy Compton wants his dinner, but he can wait.

CURRAN

Andy Compton?

REX

He and his mom are in here.

CURRAN

Rex, can you hold the line for a minute?

REX

Sure.

Curran hands the mike back to the female officer. The split screen goes away briefly.

Curran addresses Adler.

(CONTINUED)

CURRAN

Captain, you *have* to let me go in there.

ADLER

(sarcastically)
Why do I *have* to do that?

CURRAN

Andy Compton goes to school with my son.

(beat)
Please, sir.

ADLER

You're not trained in hostage negotiations.

CURRAN

No, but this is no *ordinary* hostage situation. Rex seems to like me. I *was* the first person to talk with him.

(beat)
It all started with me, Captain. I'd like the chance to finish it.

ADLER

(beat; sighs)
Very well, but be *careful*. I've seen my grandson's toys. If any copies of what he has are alive in that store. . .

CURRAN

Understood.
(beat)
Mike please.

ADLER

(angrily)
What *do* they want?

The officer hands Curran the mike.

CURRAN

Let's find out.

The split screen returns: Curran on one side, Rex on the other.

(CONTINUED)

CURRAN

Rex, I'd like the chance to speak with you, Boscoe, and all the other stuffed animals in person.

(beat)

Would that be alright?

REX

Sure. I look forward to meeting you.

CURRAN

(beat)

Rex, what do you want?

REX

Excuse me?

CURRAN

To let the hostages go - what do you want?

REX

(longish beat)

That's a good question. I guess we didn't think that far ahead.

(beat)

See you soon.

The split screen goes away as Rex hangs up the phone.

FADE TO:

The Christmas carols are playing as Curran walks through the automatic glass doors. He is momentarily bathed in red from the police cruisers' lights. Curran looks at the group of hostages not far from him. All of them look nervous.

Rex is standing on the floor in front of Curran, while Boscoe flutters in the air beside him - just about at eye level. The four Specks growl, more or less in unison, as he enters.

BOSCOE

(to the Specks)

Knock it off, you Specks! We were *expecting* the Sergeant.

(CONTINUED)

SPECK
(embarrassed)
Sorry. Force of habit.

Curran looks at the owl flying in front of him.

CURRAN
You must be Boscoe.

BOSCOE
Yes.

Boscoe points a talon towards the floor.

BOSCOE
And this is Rex.

REX
(happily)
Hi, Sergeant.

Rex offers a paw to Curran, who bends at the waist and shakes it.

CURRAN
Would. . . Would either of you
mind if I speak with the hostages?

REX
(in time with Boscoe)
Go ahead.

BOSCOE
(in time with Rex)
Fine with me.

With Boscoe and Rex following him, Curran walks over to the hostages.

CURRAN
(calling)
Is everyone OK?

HOSTAGES
(various
affirmatives)

He notices a worried Andy in the front of the pack. He kneels before him.

CURRAN
I'll bet *you're* Andy Compton.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

(uneasily)

Yes, sir.

(beat)

Can we leave now? I'm getting kind of hungry.

CURRAN

Let's see what we can do about *that*.

Curran rises to his feet. He speaks to Boscoe, who is fluttering near his face.

CURRAN

How about we order some pizzas?

BOSCOE

We don't have any money.

CURRAN

You can put it on the police department's tab. Get back on the line with Captain Adler, and tell him what you want.

Rex wipes his right paw across his brow.

REX

What a day! I've never ordered pizza before. I've never even *eaten* before!

BOSCOE

(surprised)

You're *hungry*? Toys aren't supposed to get hungry.

REX

(proudly)

I guess I'm becoming a little more than a toy then, huh?

BOSCOE

I don't want a delivery guy at the door.

CURRAN

Tell the Captain to have the pizzas left outside.

(beat)

I'm sure the Specks can bring them into the store.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (3)

5

SPECK

We can lift *anything*.

The other Specks growl in affirmation.

CURRAN

Rex, are you in charge?

REX

Boscoe and I are.

CURRAN

We need to end this.

(beat)

Is there a place where the three
of us can talk?

BOSCOE

There's a break room in the back
of the store.

CURRAN

That'll do. Order the pizzas and
then meet me back there.

FADE TO:

6 INT. BREAK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

6

The break room door is closed. Along a wall, vending machines offer drinks and snacks. Curran and Rex sit down at one of the wooden tables in the center of the room. Boscoe perches on the same table.

REX

What does pizza taste like?

CURRAN

Really good.

BOSCOE

Are you *honestly* going to try
some?

REX

I *might*.

CURRAN

OK, one more time: What do you
want in exchange for the hostages?

(CONTINUED)

Boscoe starts pacing on the break room table, his head down.

BOSCOE

(longish beat)

Well. . . uhm. . . this is kind of embarrassing.

REX

Very embarrassing actually.

Boscoe stops pacing and looks at Curran.

BOSCOE

We never really thought about that.

CURRAN

(surprised)

You never -

REX

We just wanted attention.

CURRAN

You got it.

(beat)

How did all of you come alive anyway?

REX

I'm not really sure. I think it was because we had finally *had* it.

CURRAN

Had what?

BOSCOE

He means we were fed up with our lives as stuffed animals - our plight.

(beat)

Do you know what it's like to sit in the same position on a dusty shelf day after day?

CURRAN

I can't say I do.

REX

No one buys us anymore. Everything is video games - this Box this and that Box that.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

REX (CONT'D)

We can see the customers paying for them while we sit on our shelves, watch the world go by, and get dustier and dustier.

BOSCOE

And *lonelier* and *lonelier*.

REX

We weren't *meant* to gather dust on a shelf.

Rex holds out an arm to Curran.

REX

Feel my fur.

Curran does.

CURRAN

Very soft.

REX

I was on my shelf for *so* long. No one so much as straightened my bow tie in months!

(beat)

Deep down in our tiny, soft hearts, we need love too.

BOSCOE

No one is taking us home to the kids. Our little hearts are breaking!

REX

I haven't gotten any hugs in a *long* time. It's reciprocal, you know: Kids feel good from hugging us, and we feel good from getting hugged.

(beat)

I *long* to see the parking lot and go for a ride in one of those car thingies.

(sniffs)

BOSCOE

Me too.

(sniffs)

CURRAN

Is *that* what you want?

(CONTINUED)

BOSCOE

(confused)

What?

CURRAN

If I could arrange to find loving kids for all of you, would you let the hostages go?

REX

Hmmm?

(beat)

What do you think, Boscoe?

Boscoe looks at Curran.

BOSCOE

I've *dreamt* of just that many nights after the doors are locked and the store lights are turned off.

(beat)

It sounds good to me.

REX

I'd let the hostages go in exchange for a kid to hug me.

(beat)

Can you arrange that?

CURRAN

If it will bring an end to this - definitely.

(beat)

You'd all *stay* as toys, right - no more coming to life?

REX

As long as we're being loved regularly, toys are happy as toys.

BOSCOE

But you can't *make* people buy us.

CURRAN

What I have in mind will get all of you good homes and it won't cost the kids a cent.

FADE TO:

7 EXT. TOYMART - MOMENTS LATER 7

The crowd is still gathered. The lights of the police cruisers are still flashing.

Walsh looks at Curran, surprised.

WALSH

(aghast)

You want me to do *what*?

CURRAN

The toys will release the hostages if they can go to kids who will love them.

WALSH

That's all well and good, Sergeant, but people simply *aren't* buying stuffed animals anymore. I've put a lot of the plush toys on clearance, and they're *still* not selling.

CURRAN

I was thinking you could. . . *give* them away.

WALSH

(shocked)

Give?

(beat)

We're talking about thousands of dollars in inventory! How would I enter the loss in my books?

CURRAN

Charity.

ADLER

What are you getting at, Sergeant?

CURRAN

You know about The St. Mary's Center?

ADLER

Sure: Sick kids stay there while they get care at area hospitals.

CURRAN

Exactly.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CURRAN (CONT'D)

Mr. Walsh, I propose that you donate all the animals - which *aren't* selling anyway - to the Center.

WALSH

That's a *lot* to ask.

CURRAN

It will end the hostage situation. Think of that.

WALSH

Well. . .

CURRAN

Think of how good you'll feel making sick kids happy.

WALSH

Yes, but -

CURRAN

Think of the *publicity*.

WALSH

Publicity?

CURRAN

Only a fool would make such a magnanimous gesture without the proper publicity.

WALSH

(eagerly)

What do you propose?

CURRAN

I was thinking that you and Miss Parks could bring the stuffed animals to St. Mary's. The local news would eat it up as a Christmastime, feel-good, warm-and-fuzzy, human interest story.

(beat)

Imagine the video of you two presenting sick kids with stuffed animals to love while they're at the Center, and maybe to take home with them when they're well again.

Walsh starts fidgeting, imagining the possibilities.

(CONTINUED)

WALSH

(getting excited)

Yes. . . Yes!

CURRAN

You could even put tags around the necks of the donated animals:
"Presented to you by the Milford Toymart - Fred Walsh, Manager. Get well soon."

ADLER

(longish beat)

Well, Mr. Walsh?

WALSH

It definitely has possibilities.

(beat)

We'll do it!

CURRAN

Great! That will make *everyone* happy.

WALSH

That's what the Milford Toymart is all about, gentlemen: Making everyone happy. We are the store with a heart, the store that cares about all children - *particularly* sick children.

CURRAN

Since that's settled, why don't you two come into the store, meet the animals, and have some pizza?

ADLER

Point of fact, Curran: Since when does the police department have a tab at Famous Pizza?

CURRAN

Since tonight.

ADLER

(getting angry)

Sergeant. . .

7 CONTINUED: (3)

7

CURRAN

Are you going to let the cost of
some pizzas stand in the way of
making sick kids happy?

FADE TO:

8 INT. ST. MARY'S HOME - DAYS LATER

8

Walsh and Parks, dressed as Santa and Mrs. Claus, pass out stuffed animals to *many* children, several of them showing obvious signs of medical problems. Each of the stuffed animals has a tag around its neck. We zoom in on one: "Presented to you by the Milford Toymart - Fred Walsh, Manager. Get well soon."

FADE TO:

9 INT. CURRAN HOME - THAT NIGHT

9

Curran, smiling broadly, kneels before his five-year-old daughter. He is coyly holding something behind his back. He suddenly shows her what's in his hands - Rex! She runs to her dad, throws her arms around him, and then snuggles Rex to her cheek.

FADE TO:

10 INT. DAUGHTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

10

Curran walks into his daughter's pink bedroom. She is asleep in her single bed, Rex held closely to her.

Curran pulls the covers up tighter around both of them. He briefly touches Rex's soft fur. He pauses, remembering all they have been through.

He smiles and begins leaving the room. He pauses at the threshold and looks back at his little girl in the glow of her nightlight.

Rex winks at him.

FADE OUT.