

CAR TROUBLE

A dark comedy...about suicide

FADE IN:

EXT. WOODS - DAY

We open on a middle-aged MAN wearing a business suit as he sits in a gorgeous and immaculately maintained 1970s classic BRITISH CAR which is sitting in the middle of a secluded wooded area.

INT. CAR - DAY

The man looks despondent as he sits in the car. He's mentally preparing himself for his mission. After some tense moments he takes his leather bound note pad and pen and scribbles a message on it then places the note pad on the passenger's seat.

He puts both hands on the steering wheel and looks out the windshield, takes a couple of deep breaths to ready himself then opens the door and gets out of the car.

EXT. CAR/WOODS - DAY

The camera tracks the exterior of the car and finds the man at the trunk. He's getting out a long garden hose.

From the interior of the car we see the hose poke through the window which is only about half way up. Realizing the window needs to be closed more, he reaches into the car and turns the key to the on position. When he presses the switch to raise the window, the window starts to move but stops. He presses the window switch again but the window doesn't budge. He presses the button a few more times in succession but nothing.

MAN

Come on, come on.

As he presses the switch the window moves again but then stops then starts again then finally stops. The window is still not as high as it needs to be to hold the hose. He presses the switch a few more times but the window won't budge. Frustrated, he starts pushing on the window with both hands to get it to move upwards. He inches it further and further up til the window reaches a point where he can make it work.

The man goes back to the trunk and gets duct tape to seal the open area around the mostly closed window.

(CONTINUED)

As he slams the trunk closed we see a bumper sticker on the trunk lid that reads "Why do the British drink warm beer? Because they have Lucas refrigerators".

The man uses the duct tape to seal the hose inside the car.

INT. CAR - DAY

The man gets back in the car and takes a deep breath to prepare.

MAN
Come on, you can do this. Just turn
the car on.

Still a bit anxious, he turns the key to start the car...but the car won't start. The engine cranks but it won't fire.

MAN
Oh...come on. No, no, no. Not now!
What is it now?!

Frustrated, the man stops for a moment and sits there unsure what to do now, his frustration growing.

MAN
(shakes fists) Arghhhhhh!!!!

The man pops the hood release and gets out of the car.

EXT. CAR/WOODS - DAY

The man raises the hood, searching for the cause. Looking over the engine compartment he finds the problem, a loose distributor wire at the ignition coil. He puts the wire back in then grumbles and mumbles to himself as he gets back in the car, eager to carry on with his mission.

INT. CAR - DAY

He starts the car successfully this time and settles back into his seat, ready for the carbon monoxide to take him away.

SLOW FADE TO BLACK

SFX: ENGINE IDLING

SLOW FADE UP:

INT. CAR - DAY

The camera pans the car's interior. It's now full of exhaust smoke but it isn't long before the car starts sputtering and stalls out. Our man has been resting peacefully then suddenly wakes up, unhappy with the realization that he is still alive.

MAN

No, no, no. NO! NO! Fucking hell!
What the hell now?!

Frustrated once again, he pops the hood release and gets out of the car.

EXT. CAR/WOODS - DAY

The man opens the hood to inspect the problem. This time the throttle cable pin connecting the accelerator cable to the carburetors has become disconnected. He reconnects the pin and slams the hood down, showing even more frustration as he mumbles to himself.

INT. CAR - DAY

He gets back in the car, starts the engine and it's again pumping carbon monoxide into the car. Satisfied the problems are finally fixed, the man turns on the radio to relax to peaceful music but the first thing that comes on is the news.

RADIO NEWS ANCHOR

And here is the latest news update.
In Washington today, the Presid...

He changes the station. It's country music. He frantically changes the station again. This time it's rap. Frustrated, he turns the radio's power knob off with authority.

MAN

No, No, NOOOO! (beat).

As he shouts he slams his hand against the steering wheel, hurting his hand. He grabs his hand, wincing in pain.

He gets quiet and still for a second as his anger ferments then he thrashes about the car.

Feeling like a loser, even at suicide, he slowly lowers his head to the steering wheel, rests it there briefly then lightly bangs his head on the wheel.

(CONTINUED)

He takes a breath and tries to calm himself as he remembers a cassette of classical music and reaches into the glovebox. He opens the cassette case and the cassette falls onto the floor. He picks it up and fumbles with it as it nearly falls out of his hands again. Finally, he gains control of it and puts the cassette in the player. He is now bound and determined to carry out his mission come hell or high water.

Finally, the music is playing, the car is running and carbon monoxide is pumping into the car's interior. Our man closes his eyes and finally seems on his way to achieving his goal.

SLOW FADE TO BLACK:

(beat) (beat)

In black we hear a phone ring.

SLOW FADE UP:

INT. CAR - DAY

We see the man's cell phone ringing as it sits on the passenger's seat next to his suicide note. The camera slowly pans over to the man as he is laying, seemingly lifeless in the driver's seat, leaning against the driver's door, mouth open and carbon monoxide still pumping through the hose. The phone continues to ring.

Suddenly, his eyes open.

A bit dazed from being awakened and from lack of oxygen, he looks around, almost forgetting where he is and why he's there. Suddenly it hits him and realizes he has failed...yet again.

MAN
Son of a bitch. Son of a BITCH! SON
OF A BITCH!!

He resigns himself to the fact that he just isn't going to accomplish his goal. He shuts the engine off and reluctantly answers his phone. On the other end of this unfamiliar number is an unfamiliar voice.

MAN
(somber)
Hello.

MS POOLE (O.S.)
Hello, is this Robert Allen?

Robert is hesitant, not sure how to answer that question.

(CONTINUED)

ROBERT
(beat) Yeeeah. Who's...who's
this?

CALLER
Hello Robert. This is Donna Poole
with Paul Leonard and Associates.
You applied for the IT position a
little while ago, uh, about 8
months ago it looks like.

ROBERT
(slightly puzzled, trying to
remember) Yeah, uh, okay.

DONNA
Well, we are looking for someone
with your skills and and experience
and we think you look highly
qualified. I'd like to bring you in
for an interview...Well, I, I say
interview but...don't tell anyone I
told you this (talks softly) the
interview is just a formality but
if you want the position, it's
yours!

ROBERT
(in disbelief))
Really?

DONNA
Yeah really. How's tomorrow at 10
am sound?

ROBERT
(upbeat) Um, okay.

DONNA
Great. The address is 342 Eagerton
Street. We'll see you tomorrow at
10am.

ROBERT
Ok, see you then.

Robert sits there for a moment, taking stock of what just
occurred. A slight smile appears across his face as he
realized his luck has changed for the better and just in the
nick of time.

EXT. CAR/WOODS - DAY

In a succession of quick cuts we see the duct tape being pulled off the window, the hose being removed and the suicide note being crumpled up. Robert takes the items and chucks them as far into the woods as he can.

INT. CAR - DAY

Robert gets back into the car, opens the windows and bangs both fists on the steering wheel with a joyous triumph. He turns on some uptempo uplifting music then turns the ignition to start the car and drive away...but the car won't start. The engine cranks slowly then stops, ending in a series of rapidly sputtering clicks. The battery is dead. He slowly lowers his head to the steering wheel.

EXT. CAR/WOODS - DAY

A defeated Robert gets out of the car and walks towards the road just as another car is driving by.

EXT. WOODS/ROAD - DAY

Robert flags the car down and the car stops on the opposite side of the road.

ROBERT

Hey, my car broke down. Any chance
I could get a lift?

DRIVER

Sure, no problem. Hop in.

ROBERT

Thanks. (using his thumb to point
to his car) Damn British cars.

As Robert starts to cross the road we suddenly hear the sound of a large SUV's tires screech, it's land yacht horn blaring. We see Robert's horrified face in close up and then...

SMASH CUT TO BLACK

(beat) (beat)

FADE UP:

EXT. MIDDLE OF THE ROAD - DAY

From a low angle we see Robert laying in the middle of the road, rumpled and bloodied. As the camera pulls out the SUV is revealed to be a Land Rover, yep, another British car.

The Land Rover stops, two well dressed occupants, who are only seen from the waist down jump out, rushing to his side, and look down at Robert.

LAND ROVER DRIVER

He came out of nowhere.

LAND ROVER PASSENGER

Is he...?

The camera tilts up to reveal a Union Jack tire cover on the Land Rover and a bumper sticker which reads "Why do the British drink warm beer? Because they have Lucas refrigerators".

SMASH CUT TO BLACK

THE END