

SECOND CHANCE HERO

When a blizzard is the least of the problems faced by stranded passengers at J.F.K. Airport, a Vietnam vet gets a second chance to be a hero.

FADE IN:

INT. TERMINAL A - J.F.K. INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

A television monitor once mounted on the wall now hangs by its cord. It flickers between static and a list of flights; all cancelled.

The airport looks like a war zone. Windows broken, shattered glass everywhere, chairs and luggage thrown all over.

Amongst the disarray lay JOE MILLER (65), airport security uniform torn, face bloody, his eyes open but lifeless.

JOE MILLER (V.O.)

Not everyone gets the chance to be a hero.

INT. J.F.K. INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - TEN MINUTES EARLIER

The same television monitor hangs upright. It displays many flights, all of which are either delayed or cancelled. "New York to Chicago" switches from delayed to cancelled.

PEOPLE gathered in front of the monitor groan in frustration.

Through the large windows behind them is a lot of snow. Piles on the ground and more coming down; blizzard conditions.

With a pronounced limp, Joe Miller navigates through an obstacle course of miserable stranded passengers. Some have set up makeshift camps.

A BURLY MAN (40's), scowl on his face, approaches Joe.

BURLY MAN

Hey! I wanna know who's in charge here! These are unsatisfactory conditions!

Joe remains composed but speaks sternly.

JOE

First of all, don't yell at me. Second, you aren't the only person here. Take a look around. Everyone here is uncomfortable but they're making the best of it. I suggest you do the same.

The Burly Man doesn't like that answer.

BURLY MAN

I demand better accommodations! This
is ridiculous!

Burly Man tries to enlist the support of other passengers but
it doesn't work. They're all disgusted by his rant.

JOE

You need to calm down sir or I will have
to remove you from this building.

Not threatened, the Burly Man steps closer to Joe.

BURLY MAN

How you gonna do that? You ain't
a real cop. You even have a gun?

JOE

Believe me. . .I wouldn't need a gun.

Joe's tone and body language speak volumes. The Burly Man
slowly backs off.

JOE

Now go sit down and deal with it like
a man.

Several passengers clap in thanks as Joe walks off.

A LITTLE GIRL (6) smiles and waves to Joe from under a row of
seats. He stares at her with a strange look of recognition.

FLASHBACK

EXT. VILLAGE - NORTH VIETNAM - DAY - 1963

American planes drop bombs nearby as American soldiers
forcefully clear out panicked villagers.

Amidst the chaos Joe Miller (18), innocent and bewildered,
tries to communicate with a screaming MOTHER. Baby in her
arms, she points toward a hut about to be torched.

Suddenly Joe sees a VIETNAMESE GIRL (6) inside the hut.

BACK TO SCENE

The little girl under the seats smiles sweetly but Joe remains stoic and continues walking.

His radio crackles as a transmission comes through.

PAUL (V.O.)

Joe, we've got a situation.

He looks around and spots PAUL VACCARO (30), tall and skinny, also in an airport security uniform. Paul stands a few feet away from a backpack, no people nearby.

As Joe gets closer, he notices the look of alarm on Paul's face.

JOE

What's going on?

PAUL

It's ticking.

JOE

Did you open it?

PAUL

Hell no.

They both look at the backpack then back at each other.

PAUL

You gonna open it?

JOE

Well one of us has to. It's not like we can call in the bomb squad right now.

Joe approaches the bag. Paul nervously looks around and tries to act cool when he realizes several people are watching.

Joe slowly unzips the bag. He stops. Inside is a bundle of wires and an explosive device.

The timer is counting down and it's at 4:48, 4:47, 4:46. . .

JOE

Jesus.

He looks up at Paul whose face is white as a sheet.

JOE

We gotta get these people outta here.

Paul is frozen. Joe stands up.

JOE

Hey! Stringbean! Don't check out on me! We don't have much time!

With a calm but authoritative tone, Joe turns and addresses the waiting area.

JOE

EXCUSE ME! I need your attention! We need to quickly and calmly move everyone over to Terminal C!

Mumbles and groans come from the crowd.

JOE

Leave your belongings. We need to evacuate this area immediately.

Someone yells out.

FROM THE CROWD

They found a bomb!

It's immediate chaos. People scream, scramble to grab what they can and run toward the signs that point to Terminal A.

Joe looks to Paul.

JOE

I need you to help these people Paul. We need to get them out of here.

Paul is in shock. Joe takes control and attempts to calmly move people out but it's too late, they're already in a full panic.

As the last people leave, Joe follows but his limp slows him down. Suddenly a PANICKED WOMAN (30), runs toward him.

PANICKED MOTHER

MY DAUGHTER! JESSICA!!

Joe grabs her, stops her from running back in.

JOE

You can't go back in there!

He can barely hold on to her then suddenly Paul comes running up and grabs her.

PANICKED MOTHER

JESSICA! I CAN'T LEAVE WITHOUT HER!

Joe looks back, scans the area and spots JESSICA, the same little girl that waved to him earlier, still under the seats.

FLASHBACK

EXT. VILLAGE - NORTH VIETNAM - CONTINUOUS

Joe runs back toward the hut. He plows through villagers and soldiers, his eyes never leave the little girl inside. She is frozen in fear.

BACK TO SCENE

Joe tries to coax Jessica over.

JOE

Jessica! Your Mommy is here! Come on!

The little girl is frozen in fear. Her Mother cries in desperation.

PANICKED MOTHER

Please Jessica!

Paul holds on to the Mother and they watch as Joe runs toward Jessica as quickly as his limp will allow.

He finally reaches her and pulls her from under the seats.

Joe's limp worsens and he struggles to carry Jessica. He puts her down.

JOE

See your Mommy Jessica? Run to her.
Run very fast.

Jessica hesitates but then finally runs to her mother. Paul watches helplessly as Joe attempts to walk.

JOE

GO! I'll be right behind you! GO!

They do. The three of them sprint toward Terminal C. Their backs are turned as Joe trips over a suitcase. He grabs his thigh in agony.

FLASHBACK

EXT. VILLAGE - NORTH VIETNAM - CONTINUOUS

The hut catches fire. As Joe approaches a VIETNAMESE MAN runs toward him and stabs him in the leg. Joe falls to the ground.

He grabs his bloody thigh. Unable to move he makes eye contact with the little girl and within seconds she disappears behind a wall of flames as the hut is consumed with fire.

BACK TO SCENE

Joe struggles to get up. He can barely walk.

About twenty yards away the back pack ticks then. . .

BOOM!

INT. TERMINAL A - J.F.K. INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - MOMENTS LATER

A television monitor once mounted on the wall now hangs by its cord. It flickers between static and a list of flights; all cancelled.

The airport looks like a war zone. Windows broken, shattered glass everywhere, chairs and luggage thrown all over.

Amongst the disarray lay Joe Miller, airport security uniform torn, face bloody, his eyes open but lifeless.

JOE MILLER (V.O.)

Not everyone gets the chance to be a
hero. I got two.

From out of the smoke walks a beautiful translucent figure, the Vietnamese Girl.

She gracefully moves toward Joe, her hand extended.

The translucent figure of an eighteen year old, innocent faced Joe Miller arises from his body.

The Vietnamese Girl smiles sweetly, he takes her hand.
She guides him toward a beautiful light.

FADE OUT