

The Favorite Ring
by Dave McClain

While visiting the city, a country boy risks his life to retrieve his wife's ring from an unpredictable mugger.

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

JOSH, a burly, 30-something country boy squats down to tie his boot lace outside a store front. He's wearing a red flannel shirt, blue jeans and a faded green cap with a fish hook clipped to the brim. A slender FIGURE emerges from the shadows and rips off Josh's hat. Josh quickly stands up.

CINDY

You really oughta pay more attention to your surroundings when you're in the big city, boy. You just might lose something important to ya.

JOSH

Gimmie that back!

CINDY

Come and get it.

Cindy runs down the block, with Josh not far behind, but Cindy's long legs keep Josh from catching her. At the next street corner, Cindy suddenly stops running and turns around, facing Josh, who also stops running. He's winded.

JOSH

Just give me the hat.

CINDY

Fine. Here.

Cindy, holding the brim of the cap, tosses it toward Josh with a flick of her wrist. Josh catches it and puts it on.

CINDY (cont'd)

Check that out! It flew just like a frisbee! That fish hook must make it aerodynamic or something.

JOSH

You take a big risk, snatching a man's hat like that.

CINDY

Yeah, well YOU took a big risk leaving me alone in that store.

JOSH

I was right outside! I hardly had room to move in that place, let alone be able to bend over and tie my shoe.

CINDY

Well, I forgive you.

JOSH

Like I'd ever let anyone hurt you. Hey, were they able to fix your ring?

CINDY

Yeah, they did. But they asked me not to wear it for an hour while it sets.

Cindy takes a cloth out of her pocket and unfolds it, revealing an ornate engagement ring and plain wedding band.

CINDY (cont'd)

Oooh! Look how it shines under the street light!

A teenage BOY suddenly appears between Josh and Cindy and grabs the rings. One of the rings falls to the ground with a klink sound, which no one hears as the boy runs away.

CINDY (cont'd)

MY RINGS!

Josh instinctively runs after the boy.

CINDY (cont'd)

JOSH! NO! JOSH! NO!

Cindy hears the sound of a circular piece of metal spinning and coming to rest on a steel plate in the pavement. She quickly bends down, picks up her wedding and stands again.

CINDY (cont'd)

JOSH!

At the end of the block, the boy sees a POLICE OFFICER across the street. The boy quickly changes course and runs in an apartment building security door past an OLD LADY who was coming out. Josh follows the boy into the building.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

The boy runs up a flight of stairs. Josh has trouble keeping up and falls behind. After climbing five sets of stairs, the boy reaches a locked door.

A sign says "Roof Access - Authorized Personnel Only!" The boy kicks and then throws his body into the door until it opens. He falls through the doorway and onto the roof.

Josh reaches the broken door a couple seconds later and walks through the doorway. He looks around, but only sees a cell phone lying near the doorway. He picks it up and starts walking around the roof looking for the boy. Josh calls out.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

JOSH

Hey, kid! I think I got your phone!
Wanna work out a trade? The ring for
the phone? Kid? You want me to go
back downstairs and get that cop?

The boy emerges from beside an air conditioning unit and tackles Josh from behind. The two fight on the rooftop. They trade punches and wrestle around for a few minutes. The boy is able to push Josh away and both of them manage to stand.

The boy pulls a knife out of his boot. Josh sees this, steps back and hears the cell phone crunch under his boot. The boy looks down, yells out in anger and charges Josh. Josh picks up a broken piece of brick and throws it at the boy. It hits the boy in the head, making him stumble. Josh runs away.

Josh ducks behind an HVAC unit and peeks around the corner, looking for the boy. He sees him. When the boy looks away, Josh darts over behind another unit, trying to get back to the stairway. The boy hears Josh move and runs to the door.

BOY

Where you gonna go now, you damned
stupid hick? There's no other way off
this roof - unless you jump!

The boy hears some running and a shout not far from where he's standing. He runs toward the noise and looks around. Then he sees Josh's hat on the roof of the next building, which is one floor shorter than the one where he is standing. He looks at the building and at the alley below.

The boy backs up as far as he can and takes a running leap towards the roof of the next building, but all he is able to do is grab the edge of the roof and hang on, trying not to fall. He uses his legs and arms, but can't pull himself up.

JOSH

Stupid hick, huh?

The boy looks over his shoulder and sees Josh.

JOSH (cont'd)

At least I wasn't stupid enough to
try to jump over that alley just
because I was pissed off at somebody.

BOY

Fuck you!

JOSH

Fuck me? From where I'm standing, it
looks like you're the one who's
fucked!

BOY

Help me!

JOSH

Help you? You tried to kill me!

BOY

I'm sorry! I'm sorry! Now, help me!

JOSH

I'll see what I can do.

The police officer runs through the door to the roof with
his gun drawn. He quickly checks out the roof and makes his
way over to where Josh is standing. He sees the boy hanging
from the other roof and starts speaking into his radio mic.

POLICE OFFICER

I'm going to need back-up. And a net.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT - AND HOUR LATER

Josh and Cindy stand on the street in front of the original
apartment building security door. There are two police cars
nearby with their lights flashing. Cindy is hugging Josh.

JOSH

I'm fine. And that kid will be fine
too. He fell before the other police
could get here, but that first cop
and I were able to push a dumpster
underneath him before he fell. It
looks like he'll have a broken leg -
and smell like our pig sty for a
little while... but he'll be okay.

CINDY

I'm just glad you're okay. You could've been killed!

JOSH

I just couldn't let him get away with that. You're engagement ring? Hell, no! That's yours - and I saved for two whole years to buy that thing! Unfortunately, the cops says they're gonna need it for awhile. Evidence.

CINDY

That's fine. I still have my favorite ring.

JOSH

Favorite? You know that wedding ring only cost me a hundred bucks!

CINDY

My engagement ring is beautiful and I'll be excited to have it back, but that one only made me your fiance...

Cindy holds up her left hand.

CINDY (cont'd)

This one made me your wife.

JOSH

Aw, that's sweet. I guess I never thought of it that way.

Josh and Cindy exchange a kiss. They hug for a moment.

JOSH (cont'd)

But there's just one problem.

CINDY

Problem?

JOSH

Yeah! I lost my fish hook hat!

CINDY

My hero.

Josh and Cindy laugh and then they embrace.

FADE OUT