

ONCE IN A BLEU MOON

Written by

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EXT. STREET - DAY

A dilapidated storefront. The sign reads "PAWN & TRADE", but the lettering is faded and near illegible.

INT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

Shelves falling apart. Glass casing cracked. An old man snores behind the counter.

In the dustiest corner of the back wall, a tiny mouse hole...

WILBUR the dark-furred mouse pokes his snout out of the hole, scraggly whiskers twitching before the rest of him emerges. The dirty bag slung over his shoulder is empty. He glances around the store, furtive. The owner is still asleep: the coast is clear.

Wilbur darts through the shop, snatching up every small scrap from the floor he can find: a button, a paper clip, an old cigarette butt.

Then he scurries back into his hole.

INT. MOUSE HOLE - DAY

It's a cramped living space, even by rodent standards. A lit match in the corner provides a hint of sputtering warmth. An empty thread spool makes a table in the middle, where Wilbur and his family sit.

Wilbur's wife, AMELIA, serves dinner. Each of his two tiny, shivering children gets a single button. Amelia sits down to the paper clip. Wilbur gets the cigarette butt.

When his children bite on the buttons, the plastic crunches painfully. Wilbur and Amelia try to smile at each other across the table. Amelia attempts to cut her paper clip with a tiny knife: the knife breaks. Wilbur breaks the cigarette butt in half like a loaf of bread, but all it does is throw an ash cloud into his face and make him cough.

Amelia crosses the table to wipe the ash off. She pats his shoulder and manages a smile: she knows he's doing his best. The children, unable to finish their dinner, wrap themselves in a frayed square of toilet paper and shudder, miserable. Amelia goes to comfort them.

Wilbur watches, broken-hearted.

INT. PAWN SHOP - NIGHT

Wilbur trudges out of the hole and throws the two halves of the cigarette butt away. He looks up as if seeking guidance, then starts to lower his head--then blinks and looks up once more.

Through the half-open, grimy skylight in the ceiling, the full moon shines bright yellow in the sky.

Wilbur stares up at it.

In his mind, the moon transforms into a giant sphere of cheese.

The yellow spheres reflect in Wilbur's widening eyes.

VISION - LIVING ON THE CHEESE PLANET

Wilbur prances through a field of cheese.

Amelia puts the last yellow paint stroke on a giant house made of cheese.

The family plays cheese baseball: his first child pitches, Wilbur hits a flyball, and his other child catches the ball in his mouth and eats it.

Wilbur and his children play in a swimming pool of melted cheese, while Amelia floats by on a cheese lounge.

END OF VISION.

INT. PAWN SHOP - NIGHT

Wilbur blinks and continues to stare up at the moon for a moment, mesmerized. Then he scurries back into the hole.

INT. MOUSE HOLE - NIGHT

Wilbur slams a blueprint down on the spool-table and unrolls it to reveal his plan: build a flying machine (reminiscent of Da Vinci's designs) that will take him to the moon.

INT. PAWN SHOP/MOUSE HOLE

Wilbur runs around the store, collecting more scraps as material to build his machine.

He sneaks under tables and around the feet of customers, scrambling for items including paper clips, thumb tacks, string, and old receipts.

In the mouse hole, he assembles the frame of the machine using straightened-out paper clips. He transforms the thumb tacks into wheels.

LATER

Wilbur emerges from the hole with an armful of discarded parts and looks back up at the moon--which is now only three-quarters full. He drops his armful.

WILBUR

Wahh!

MONTAGE - WILBUR SCRAMBLES TO FINISH HIS MACHINE

Wilbur runs back into the hole and ups the timetable, scrambling to get the wings together by cutting the receipts up and fitting the paper over the frames.

He runs back out to discard the leftover bits of paper: the moon is now only half-full.

WILBUR (CONT'D)

WAHH!

He dashes back in, frantic: desperately works to tie everything together with the string.

He ends up with a crude flying machine: pedals attached to the thumb tack wheels, paper wings with loops he can stick his arms through.

END MONTAGE.

And not a moment too soon! When he rolls the machine out of his hole, he looks up and sees the moon is only about a quarter full.

WILBUR (CONT'D)

WAHHHH!!!

He needs to get up there right now!

INT. PAWN SHOP - NIGHT

Atop a worn wooden table, Wilbur jumps into the machine, takes a deep breath, then pushes the machine forward and starts pedaling.

Faster...faster--

He drops off the edge of the table--

And he's in the air! Wilbur cheers as he rises toward the skylight, through the opening, into the night air, toward the moon...

A string snaps. The machine starts to fall apart in midair. Wilbur yells as parts fly all around him--he flaps the remaining wings attached to his arms desperately, trying to get one inch higher, reaching desperate fingers out toward his waning cheese-filled dream...

The wings fail. Wilbur plummets with a cry.

INT. OTHER SHOP - NIGHT

He crashes through the glass of another skylight--this one much cleaner--and lands in a heap of broken machine parts atop a polished marble counter.

Slowly, Wilbur rises to a seated position, shaking off the broken bits of his flying machine.

He looks back up at the moon, just in time to see the last yellow sliver disappear into nothing.

His dream is dead. Wilbur bows his head and wipes stubbornly at a tear.

He pushes the remains of his machine aside and gets up, turning back toward home--

And runs snout-first into a giant block of cheese.

He pulls back, spluttering. Tastes the cheese on his snout. Snaps to attention and stares in awe all around him.

He is surrounded by cheese. On the shelves, in the cases, pictured on the walls: everywhere, all sorts of cheese, a mouse's paradise. Wilbur's eyes almost bug right out of his head.

Eventually, the joy takes over. Wilbur scrambles to the top of a pile of cheese, throws his hands up to the sky, and bellows his triumph to the world.

The camera draws back from his celebration, through the window, back to the street to reveal...

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The pawn shop is still there, but that's not where Wilbur is. Instead, he's next door at a cleaner, fancier store: "LA CHEESE SHOPPE".

FADE OUT.