

THE CURB

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD, CAMMIE'S HOUSE - DAY

An average looking suburban neighborhood- houses of moderate size, moderate upkeep, moderate green-ness in their moderate yards. In the distance a school bell rings. Kids (Elementary school ages) flood the street, talking and joking with each other, as they break off to their respective homes.

Trailing behind the crowd is CAMMIE JUNE(10-ish, hair pulled up in a messy ponytail, sporting many band aids and a pair of well-loved Sambas), juggling her soccer ball on her knees. She slows at the walkway to a tidy looking ranch-style house. She knocks the ball higher into the air and attempts to catch it on the back of her neck- it doesn't work, instead bouncing off her head.

Cammie glares at her ball where it's landed in the yard before scooping it up and heading into the house.

Not even a minute later she runs back out, divested of her backpack and now decked out in a red and blue Team USA soccer kit, #10. With her soccer ball under her arm, she takes off down the street.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD, THE FLAT SPOT ON THE STREET - DAY

Cammie passes the soccer ball to the curb. It bounces back to her and she takes a few touches before passing to the curb again. Rinse, repeat. She counts as she passes.

CAMMIE
...ninety seven...ninety
eight...ninety nine...a hundred!

Cammie receives the ball and turns. She dribbles a few paces, does a step over, cuts the ball back. She narrates the steps as she moves:

CAMMIE (CONT'D)
(to herself)
Control the ball...beat the
defender, don't slow down...touch
outside of the right and- SHOOT!

Cammie hits her shot and the ball sails into the bushes of a nearby house. MR WORTH (mid 60's, male, owner of said bushes) isn't phased, continuing to water his flowers as Cammie jogs over.

MR WORTH
How was your game last weekend,
superstar?

CAMMIE
(shrugs)
We won five to two but I didn't
score.

MR WORTH
You'll get the next one.

CAMMIE
(shrugging again)
Maybe, I guess.

MR WORTH
Keep working on that shot and it's
just a matter of time.

Cammie digs her ball out of the bushes. She waves to Mr Worth and heads back out to the street.

Cammie slows as she nears the curb- her spot has been overrun by a pack of neighborhood boys (5 or 6 boys, age range 8-13) playing basketball.

CAMMIE
(annoyed)
Hey, I'm playing here!

BOY #1
Move your feet, loose your seat!

BOY #2
(pretending to whisper)
Uh-oh, guys. The *weirdo* is back.

The boys pause their game and flank their leader, COLLIN (12-13ish, flips his Bieber hair, definitely *didn't* put on deodorant this morning). Cammie walks right up to Collin.

CAMMIE
I'm practicing here. Can't you guys
go somewhere else?

COLLIN
Well we're here now. You go
somewhere else.

CAMMIE
This is the flattest part of the
street. I always practice here.

COLLIN
 (shrugging)
 Yeah, and this is where Mark's hoop
 is.

CAMMIE
 There's like a hundred other hoops-
 you have a hoop in your driveway,
 go play there!

COLLIN
 (ignoring her)
 You know, if you were actually *good*
 at soccer you wouldn't need to
 practice so much.

BOY #1
 Sports are for boys, weirdo!

CAMMIE
 What?

COLLIN
 (waving her off)
 Don't you have Barbie's to go play
 with or something?

The posse snickers. Collin and the boys turn around and get
 back to their game. Cammie is frozen to her spot, fuming.

After a moment of letting her rage fester, Cammie pegs her
 soccer ball at the back of Collin's head. Collin stumbles and
 immediately whips around.

Collin steps towards her and Cammie immediately starts
 backing away.

CAMMIE
 I'm sorry, I- I shouldn't have-

Cammie trips over the curb as she backs up. Collin stands
 over her. He snaps his fingers and one of his minions tosses
 him Cammie's soccer ball.

COLLIN
 (cold)
 No, you shouldn't have.

Collin rears up and punts the soccer ball as hard as he can.
 Cammie watches, wide-eyed, as it sails over the nearby houses
 and deep into the surrounding woods.

COLLIN (CONT'D)
 Get lost, weirdo.

The boys, laughing, return to their game. Cammie sits frozen on the side of the road, trying not to cry.

EXT. EDGE OF THE WOODS - DAY

Cammie hesitates at the entrance to the woods. She wipes her eyes. Contrasting with the bright and sunny afternoon on the street, the woods are dark and creepy. Cammie takes a step forward. She steps on a stick and it snaps, the noise making her jump.

Behind her, the basketball game is in full swing. The boys are joking and laughing with each other. Cammie looks back once before squaring her shoulders and heading in.

EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

Cammie treks through the woods. As she walks, she talks to herself. Her muttering starts angry and pissed off, slowly gets more uncertain, desperate, like she is now trying to convince herself:

CAMMIE

(muttering to herself)

...he's NOT right, he's just a dumb boy...he doesn't even *play* soccer...stupid...they're all *stupid*...I'm NOT a weirdo, I just love soccer...it's not weird to love sports 'cause I'm a girl, girls like soccer...girls are good at soccer, they win like all the time!...Carli Lloyd probably never got picked on by stupid neighborhood bullies...but she's so good, maybe I'm a weirdo 'cause I'm not good...I could be good...I *could* be good, right?

The deeper she goes, the creepier the environment gets (weird noises, spider webs, bigger trees, less light) and the more obstacles she has to fight through. She gets caught in a thorn bush. She loses her shoe in a mud bank. She gets tripped up by some tree roots. At some point, she starts to cry.

Cammie pauses in a small clearing. She looks around the woods—she is totally lost.

CAMMIE (CONT'D)
(yelling into the void)
I'll just give up then, okay? I
give up!

She collapses on a tree stump. She pulls her socks up, reties her remaining shoe. She picks out the thorns stuck in her clothes and tries to clean the mud out of her skinned knees.

CAMMIE (CONT'D)
(quiet, sad)
I don't need it...I can love
something else

Cammie starts wiping at her face with the sleeve of her shirt. Suddenly furious, she rips off the jersey and throws it on the ground.

CAMMIE (CONT'D)
(angry)
I don't need you!

Cammie kicks the jersey into the brush. Her anger recedes—she is just a kid, standing in the middle of the woods in her sports bra and shorts, small and muddy and upset.

She looks around the clearing again before settling on a direction. She starts to trudge into the trees, but only makes it a few steps before something catches her eye.

Cammie pushes through the trees towards the shimmer. A small creek cuts through the woods, wide but not very deep.

Floating in water is her soccer ball.

Cammie stares at the ball. She doesn't need it anymore. She stares at the way back home. She stares at the ground.

She stares at the soccer ball again and takes a hesitant step closer. Maybe she does need it— maybe she just wants it, and that's enough.

She pulls herself together and drops to her knees, reaching for the ball. Not enough. She shimmies closer to the edge of the water and stretches as far as she can, she's almost got it, almost *almost*—

Cammie tips forward, falling towards the water.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. SOCCER STADIUM - NIGHT

ADULT CAMMIE (now in her early to mid twenties, sporting the same messy ponytail) sprawls out on the field with a thump. She slowly pushes herself up, spitting grass out of her mouth. Cammie blinks her eyes and freezes- where is she? She sits up and looks around.

The stadium is enormous and crammed full of people, lights and noise overwhelming. On a perfectly manicured soccer pitch, one team wears crisp white kits and the other in blue and red (similar, but not identical, to the jersey Kid-Cammie was wearing). Cammie herself is wearing the #10- she checks, confused and bewildered.

Nearby, the referee is talking to two players in matching jerseys. NUMBER 23 (mid to late twenties, female) finishes with the ref and jogs over to Cammie, leaning over her.

NUMBER 23

You good, superstar?

Cammie nods slowly, still trying to get her bearings.

CAMMIE

Yeah, I think so.

Number 23 reaches out a hand and pulls Cammie to her feet. NUMBER 9 (mid to late twenties, female) joins them.

CAMMIE (CONT'D)

Where- what's going on?

NUMBER 9

(huffing, annoyed)

What's going on is that should've been a card- they've been picking on you all night, is she *blind!*?

NUMBER 23

(concerned)

Are you sure you're okay? If you hit your head, they need to do concussion protocol-

CAMMIE

No, I'm good. I'm good, um-

Cammie realizes she doesn't know the woman's name and trails off. Number 23 gives Cammie a look, not quite believing her, but she squeezes Cammie's shoulder and jogs back to her position.

Number 9 sets up the ball for the free kick. She notices Cammie hasn't moved, still looking awkward and unsure.

NUMBER 9

These guys always push around the new players. Shake it off, Cam.

CAMMIE

But...what if I'm just not good-

Number 9 squares up to Cammie, hands on Cammie's shoulders and holding very serious eye contact.

NUMBER 9

Hey, don't get in your head about it. You deserve to be out here, superstar. You worked your ass off for this jersey. Let's remind them, yeah?

Cammie nods and jogs off to find her position.

The game restarts with the free kick, the ball sailing to the far corner. The ball goes out, the next goal kick sent back to Cammie's side of the field (left). Cammie moves awkwardly, intercepting the ball but turning it over immediately with a bad pass.

She shakes it off. The ball moves again to the other side of the field and Cammie takes the moment to find the rhythm of the game. Her next step to the ball is more confident, stealing it away from the opposing midfielder and sending a crisp pass towards Number 23.

The ball moves to a few more players before Cammie receives it wide on the wing and drops it to her supporting player. The ball moves across the back line. Cammie scans the field and notices the space in behind. She throws her hand up and starts her run. Number 9 gets the ball in the middle and chips it over the other team's defense, right to Cammie.

Cammie traps and turns with the ball, tearing down the field. She takes a few touches, beats the defender with a scissor. Just like when she was a kid, she narrates through her moves:

CAMMIE

(to herself)

Control the ball...beat the defender, don't slow down...touch outside of the right and- SHOOT!

Cammie slams her foot through the ball- it arcs beautifully, right towards to open side of the net, and Cammie watches in slow motion as the goal keeper dives, the ball sailing through her outstretched fingers-

The moment it hits the net, the stadium erupts. Fans are screaming, lights are flashing. Cammie is frozen in shock, her teammates swarming her to celebrate.

Cammie is smiling by the time they start to break apart, jogging back to take their places to for the restart. Number 9 and Cammie jog together, and Number 9 nudges Cammie until she throws her arms up to wave to the crowd.

Cammie takes her place at the edge of the circle. She is grinning, breathless and deliriously happy. She takes in the celebrating stadium as she catches her breath. Her picture is up on the screen as they replay the goal. The announcer is muffled through the noise, but clears up in time for Cammie to hear:

STADIUM ANNOUNCER
- your new number ten, Cammie June!

Cheering continues, chants of "CAM-MIE JUNE" echoing around the stadium. Cammie closes her eyes, laughing.

The ref blows the whistle.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

Cammie (back to being a kid) stands in the middle of the creek, her arms thrown up in celebration. She is soaking wet but grinning. She is flushed and her breathing is heavy, like she just ran a successful play in a professional soccer game and got her first professional goal.

She drops her arms and opens her eyes, blinking at the surrounding trees. The woods look different than earlier- brighter, friendlier, not nearly as scary. Birds chirp softly, and she can even see the houses of her neighborhood in the distance.

After a moment, Cammie scoops up her soccer ball and runs back to the clearing. She digs her shirt out of the leaves, lovingly brushes it off. Cammie holds the jersey up, looking at the #10 on the back.

CAMMIE
(in an announcer voice)
Number 10, Cammie June.

She pulls the jersey on, picks up her ball, and takes off back towards her street.

END.