

ROUNDAABOUT

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. THE TOP OF THE TALLEST BRIDGE - MOONLESS NIGHT

Here wobbles the haggard eyes of a dented, not-quite-perfect circle, CIRCLE. The wind blows around him.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - THE DAY BEFORE - FLASHBACK

Circle rolls alone along the sidewalk. He passes shape after shape. All with purpose. All smiling. Passing a moving van, Circle is dealt the final straw.

TIRE 1

Hey! Circ-

TIRE 2

That ain't no circle! That ain't even an honest to goodness oval!

TIRE 1

So you are correct.

TIRE 2

Look at that dent!

TIRE 1

Couldn't look like that in the tire corp.

TIRE 2

That is for shore!

Circle moves past the van, the tires still bicker in the background. He reaches the back of the van as one of the boxes fall.

TIRE 1 (O.C.)

Sure.

TIRE 2 (O.C.)

Right. Shore. Just what I done said.

Falling, the box hits Circle, sending him careening down the sloped sidewalk.

BOX (O.C.)

Watch it wobbles.

Wobbling down the slope, building speed, he's launched up the first incline only to land where he sits at present.

EXT. THE TOP OF THE TALLEST BRIDGE - HIGH NOON

CIRCLE  
 (to himself)  
 Can't even be a box  
 (beat)  
 I mean - a tire.  
 (beat)  
 Not that I could be a box either.

Disgusted with himself, his imperfection, his life, our not-so-perfect Circle hurls himself off the bridge. As he falls, he thinks:

CIRCLE (CONT'D)  
 I wonder if I bounce.  
 (beat)  
 Not that I would bounce straight  
 anyway.

His demise is imminent, but Circle notices that below him does not lie the rocky spikes he'd imagined, but instead a soft, grassy slope.

Circle catches that slope, which sends him speeding straight ahead, very much alive.

Circle is whirring past his surroundings down the middle of a street. He begins to slow up, but still wobbles past STOP SIGN guarding his corner.

STOP SIGN  
 Whoa there little fella.

Startled, Circle screeches to a halt and moves back to talk with the stop sign.

CIRCLE  
 Umm, sorry?

STOP SIGN  
 As well you should be mister 'I'm  
 to-good-to-stop-at-a-red-octagon-on-  
 a-pole-that-says-S-T-O-P.'

CIRCLE  
 I jumped off the bridge. I  
 couldn't stop.

STOP SIGN

Why you go and do something like that? Jumpin' off a bridge! That's just craziness.

CIRCLE

I guess 'cause I'm not a real circle. I'm not round. And I'm not even an oval. I'm just  
(beat)  
Nothing.

STOP SIGN

All because of a little imperfection. Little man, you are some kinda sad. We may not always know the reasons, but we can never know the outcomes if we don't try.

CIRCLE

Uhh...

STOP SIGN

And look at you. All I can see is right in front of me. You can move! And pretty fast from what I could see.

(beat)

Which you need to keep under control.

CIRCLE

(to himself)

I didn't even know I could move that fast.

STOP SIGN

You want to take a risk, little man?

CIRCLE

Not really.

STOP SIGN

What did I just say to you?!

CIRCLE

Fine. What?

STOP SIGN

You're going to Italy. There you'll learn about imperfection.

(MORE)

STOP SIGN (CONT'D)  
 Heard o' some pretty classy chick  
 who's turned it into quite a  
 business.

Just then, Stop Sign realizes he needs to be on his best  
 guard. A car is approaching.

CIRCLE  
 How'm I supposed to get there?

STOP SIGN  
 Roll, son. Roll. Hang on, your  
 car has arrived.

Just as the car pulls to a screeching halt, having apparently  
 just seen the stop sign, Circle is struck and sent flying  
 forward.

STOP SIGN (CONT'D)  
 That's right! You betta stop for  
 me. S-T-O-P.

EXT. MONTAGE

Circle, rolling through towns, cities, fields, and across  
 oceans, he's still unsure of the task in front of him. But it  
 is a task. Better than nothing.

EXT. PISA, ITALY - DAY

Circle rolls past the Leaning Tower of Pisa, TOWER, paying no  
 attention. He looks over his shoulder, thinking maybe, when  
 Tower yells.

TOWER  
 Bonjourno! You looka like you a  
 little lost.

CIRCLE  
 Uhh... I'm looking for some tower.  
 Leaning tower of pizza or  
 something.

TOWER  
 That'sa me! I'ma the leaning tower  
 of PISA! You looka hungry!

CIRCLE  
 Umm... So, this Stop Sign sent me-

TOWER  
 Ah that crazy kook!

CIRCLE  
How do you know-

TOWER  
It's a long story... You musta be a  
little worried about that wobble a  
yours. And'a that cute little  
dimple!

CIRCLE  
So, you noticed that...

TOWER  
Who couldn't!

CIRCLE  
This doesn't seem very helpful-

TOWER  
Forget about it! Look at me! I'ma  
leaning and I'ma one a the wonders  
a the world!

CIRCLE  
I guess...

TOWER  
I know! You need some confidence my  
little cannoli! You know where  
China is?

CIRCLE  
Not really.

TOWER  
Just roll that way and go seea the  
great wall!

She motions with her eyes to the east.

TOWER (CONT'D)  
Roll on up here to get yourselfa  
going.

Circle rolls up the slope of the tower and then reverses  
direction, building speed as he does. He's off again.  
Silently happy to meet such another imperfect shape, but  
still not convinced of his life's worth.

EXT. MONTAGE - TRAVELING

CIRCLE  
 (to himself)  
 A great wall? What does a great  
 wall know? What makes him so great?

EXT. CHINA'S GREAT WALL - DAY

Circle begins to roll alongside The Great Wall for many miles. Finally, Circle comes upon an area of worn ground basked in sunlight. This is where GREAT WALL holds his audience.

GREAT WALL  
 So, you've made it.

CIRCLE  
 Uh, hi. You knew I was-

GREAT WALL  
 I know of all things that the sun  
 has seen.

CIRCLE  
 Oh. That must be distract-

GREAT WALL  
 You seek guidance my wobbly  
 grasshopper. How have you  
 travelled so far to see me?

CIRCLE  
 I dunno. Rolled here, I guess.

GREAT WALL  
 AH HA! You rolled, taking advantage  
 of your gift in this world. I can  
 not roll! I have known many things  
 in this life, but have only seen  
 what is right in front of me.  
 Never have I seen beyond that  
 ridge. Never have I seen what lay  
 behind me. Never have I rolled!

CIRCLE  
 You're not missing much.

GREAT WALL  
 Or maybe it is you who is missing  
 everything.

CIRCLE

I can roll. Great. But I'm no wheel. I'm not even perfectly round.

GREAT WALL

You think to have purpose you must be perfect? You have one more journey to make my young friend. Then your earthly journey will be complete.

With this Great Wall slyly squints his eyes, whispering inaudibly Circle's next journey.

GREAT WALL (CONT'D)

You must arrive with much speed. Do not slow down.

(beat)

Much speed!

EXT. MONTAGE - TRAVELING

Circle is off again. His surroundings become colder and more blurred. His speed is growing with each slope downward.

EXT. MOUNT EVEREST - DAY

Circle sees his target, still weary, but determined to meet this mountain with as much speed as he can muster. As he hits the slope his momentum carries him upward to the top of the mountain then launching him into the air, through the clouds, and into space.

EXT. SPACE

Floating toward the stars, Circle gazes at his new surroundings. He hears EARTH behind him.

EARTH

Hi.

He sees Earth. She, like him, is just slightly imperfect.

CIRCLE

Hi.

EARTH

They said you might be coming, but  
I wasn't sure, I mean, I didn't  
want to get too excited or anyth-

Cutting her off.

CIRCLE

Yeah, I mean, I didn't really know  
what to expect.

As they stare at each other, there's a short, but awkward  
pause. Breaking it.

CIRCLE (CONT'D)

So, what do you do up here all day?

EARTH

Float mostly.

CIRCLE

Huh. Doesn't it get lonely?

EARTH

Yeah.

Another pause.

CIRCLE

I kinda like up here.

EARTH

Really?

CIRCLE

It's nice. Quiet. I feel like I  
belong... here... with you.

Both of them blushing, they meekly smile across the  
blackness.

A star shoots between them and says, ever so softly

SHOOTING STAR

Awww...

We see Circle, who's color is more pale in the vacuum of  
space, orbiting around Earth. Earth, in turn, orbits around  
the Sun.

From across the blackness, amongst the stars, we here Circle.

CIRCLE  
So, just float, huh?

Credits begin to roll.

EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

Stop Sign is looking up at the moon. A car begins to roll past him.

STOP SIGN  
Whoah there! You betta stop for me!  
S-T-O-P!

EXT. PISA, ITALY - NIGHT

Tower gazes moonward, her eyes aflutter.

EXT. CHINA'S GREAT WALL - NIGHT

Great Wall stares straight ahead at the moon.

GREAT WALL  
A purpose he has found, for now he  
can see everyting.

CUT TO BLACK:

EXT. CHINA'S GREAT WALL - NIGHT

Enraged.

GREAT WALL  
Much speed!

CUT TO BLACK.