

Red Card Ransom

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. DIMLY LIT ROOM - DAY

The room is small, barely enough space for a single bed. The walls are grimy, and the air smells of dampness. The only light comes from a flickering bulb hanging from the ceiling. There are no windows, the air is stale.

ANDREW SMITH, 35, a famous football player, lies on the floor, still wearing his sweaty and dirty football strip. His football boots still muddy with grass still on the bottom of them.

His eyes flutter open.

ANDREW
(groaning)
Where am I? What the hell happened?

He tries to sit up, but his head spins. He touches his temple, feeling a lump.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
(muttering)
Must've been smacked on the head.

He glances around the room. The door is solid, no handle on his side. He looks up and sees that there are no windows. Panic sets in.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
(shouting)
Hey! Is anyone out there? Let me out!

Silence.

He examines the room. The walls are rough concrete, no cracks or openings. He pounds on the door.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
(yelling)
Hey! What the fuck is going on? Do you know who I am? I'm Andrew Smith! You can't keep me here!

No response.

He runs his hands along the walls, searching for hidden switches or panels. But there's nothing.

He falls to the floor, sitting down he feels something in the back pocket of his shorts.

He reaches for it, taking out an outdated, beaten up mobile phone. As basic as you can get.

He frowns at it, inspecting it.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
Why the hell do I have this?

The phone suddenly vibrates in his hand. Startled. He's getting a call. But the caller ID is unknown. Andrew takes down a deep breath then answers it.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
(nervous)
Hello?

KIDNAPPER (V.O.)
(sinister voice)
Mr. Smith, how do you like you're new room?

ANDREW
Who are you?

KIDNAPPER (V.O.)
You signed a four year deal with my football club, a team I've supported since I was a child. A team that I love with all of my heart. You've not scored once all season. You're overweight and arrogant. You don't run. You don't try. And you don't care. You think my club is just one more easy paycheque in your shit career. You cost us 15 million pounds. A club record fee. And you know what, you're going to pay all that money back. And I expect payment within the hour. Please, don't test me on this.

Andrew's heart races. He scans the room, desperate for an escape route.

ANDREW
15 million?

KIDNAPPER
Your fee.

ANDREW

I don't have that kind of money.
It's not possible. You could give
me sixty years, and I couldn't get
it. Let alone sixty minutes.

KIDNAPPER (V.O.)

That's your problem not mine. My
focus is the club that I love. A
club that signed you to score us
goals. I won't let you take
advantage any longer.

Andrew's mind races. He thinks of his teammates, his manager,
anyone who might help him. But fifteen million pounds? It's
an impossible sum.

ANDREW

(pleading)

Look. Give me until the end of the
season. I'll play better, I'll
score, I'll...

The phone disconnects. Andrew stares at it, trembling.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Fifteen million...

FADE OUT.

INT. DIMLY LIT ROOM - DAY

The room is even smaller now, the walls closing in on Andrew.
He still has the phone in his hands.

ANDREW

(frantically dialling)

Come on, come on...

The phone, battered and barely functional, connects to the
POLICE DISPATCH.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

(voice trembling)

Help! I'm Andrew Smith. I've been
kidnapped. I was playing today, the
match was on TV. Someone must have
reported me missing by now. They
want fifteen million pounds. They
want me to repay a transfer fee.
You have to—

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
(disinterested)
Sir, this line is for emergencies only. Please refrain from making calls like this, as it is an arrestable offence.

ANDREW
(desperate)
It's not a joke! I'm a professional football player. Google me. Someone at the club must have noticed that I never got back to the changing room. Please. I'm locked in a room. I don't know where. I've still got my boots on. If you help me I'll make sure the whole team signs a shirt for you. Listen, they'll kill me if I don't pay up. You have to—

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Sir...

ANDREW
(shouting)
I'm famous for god sake. You're dealing with a fucking celebrity now help me.

The dispatcher hangs up. Andrew slumps against the cold wall. He looks at the phone, it's battery is running very low.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
(to himself)
I'm not going to be able to make too many more calls on this. Think. I need to think.

His phone buzzes. He looks down at it, hoping.

UNKNOWN NUMBER: (text message) Tick-tock, dead weight. Time's running out.

Andrew types in a new number.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
(voice trembling)
I hope I've remember this right.

The phone rings.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
Come on, Mark. Pick up. Pick up.

AGENT (MARK) (V.O.)
(irritated)
Hello?

ANDREW
(smiling)
Thank God. It's me Andrew. You've got to help me.

AGENT (MARK) (V.O.)
(sighing)
Jesus, where the fuck have you gone? The club thinks you've done another runner. They're not happy. In fact they're fucking furious. They're seriously talking about terminating your contract.

ANDREW
(frustrated))
Just fucking listen to me. I've been kidnapped. They want fifteen million pounds - my transfer fee. I-

AGENT (MARK) (V.O.)
(laughs)
Kidnapped? Seriously, Andrew? You've outdone yourself this time. You're so full of shit I should loan you out to farmers to fertilise their fields for them.

ANDREW
(desperate)
Mark, listen! They're going to kill me if I don't pay. I need-

AGENT (MARK) (V.O.)
(exasperated)
You need to grow up, Andrew. Stop making excuses. Your career is hanging on by a thread. You've wasted your talent with these ridiculous stunts. No other half decent club is going to come near you after this.

Andrew's anger flares.

ANDREW
(shouting)
This isn't a stunt! I'm-

AGENT (MARK) (V.O.)
(cutting him off)
You're always playing games. Faking injuries, just so you can go off on a stupid holiday. This isn't the first time you've done this. This isn't the first time you've just run off. Always going missing. I'm not going to lie for you anymore. Maybe it's time you retire from the game?

ANDREW
I've been kidnapped!

AGENT (MARK) (V.O.)
And I'm telling you, I don't believe you.

Andrew's mind races. His agent doesn't believe him. The room feels even smaller.

ANDREW
(voice breaking)
Mark, please. I'm trapped. I-

AGENT (MARK) (V.O.)
(sighs)
Maybe it's time you found yourself a new agent. I don't think I'm the right guy for you anymore.

Andrew clings to the phone, tears welling.

ANDREW
(whispering)
I haven't got time for this.

He hangs up, defeated.

Andrew dials in a new number. His girlfriend, Lucy. As the phone rings, he offers up a silent prayer to the heavens.

The call is answered.

LUCY (V.O.)
Hello?

ANDREW
(voice shaky)
Lucy, it's Andrew. I need your help. I'm in serious trouble.

LUCY (V.O.)

(cold)

Andrew? You've got some balls calling me. I blocked you on everything for a reason. No wonder you're using another number.

ANDREW

(yelling)

I've been kidnapped. No one is listening to me.

LUCY (V.O.)

(laughs bitterly)

Kidnapped? Good.

He's shocked, can't believe she's saying this.

ANDREW

Good?

LUCY (V.O.)

You're a lying cheating pig. You've screwed over everyone close to you. Wasted your fortune. Drugs, gambling. It's about time something bad happened to you. It's called karma.

ANDREW

Lucy, this is real. I love you.

LUCY (V.O.)

No you don't.

ANDREW

I do!

LUCY (V.O.)

I don't care. You're the worst thing that's ever happened to me.

ANDREW

Lucy, please. I-

LUCY (V.O.)

Goodbye, Andrew. Don't bother calling again.

ANDREW

I'm begging you.

LUCY (V.O.)
You've got family, you've got
friends. Call them.

A sad realisation washes over him.

ANDREW
(tearful)
But, I really don't.

She hangs up. Andrew stares at the phone, tears blurring his vision.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Is this real? I really don't have
anyone?

FADE OUT.

INT. DIMLY LIT ROOM - NIGHT

Andrew still clutches the phone, heart pounding. It vibrates
- the UNKNOWN NUMBER.

Andrew slowly answers.

ANDREW
(voice trembling)
I haven't got the money.

KIDNAPPER (V.O.)
You're time is up.

ANDREW
Everything you said about me was
right. I've been lazy. Selfish. A
bastard. But I can change. Really I
can, you've just got to give me a
chance.

KIDNAPPER (V.O.)
(amused)
Check your phone, Andrew. Battery
at 1%. Goodbye.

The line goes dead. Andrew stares at the lifeless screen.

ANDREW
(desperate)
No! Wait! Please!

He screams, pounding the walls. But the room remains silent.
He's trapped and he's not getting out.

FADE OUT.