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Quiet as a Church Rat

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Quiet as a Church Rat

CHURCH RAT by Joseph Fromer

Directed by Daniel Jameson

Starring: AJ Roskam & Alexsia Patton

Location: Lower Landing

JOE

As I crept down the stairs, I was trying my hardest not to make any noise. I made it my mission to do everything like a mouse. In this predicament that I was in though, I didn't feel close to a mouse. I wanted to be as sneaky as a rat looking for it's cheese. Rats do what ever they can to stay alive. What's wrong with that? I see mice everyday. Their 9 to 5 jobs and quality taste in Vineyard Vines clothing made me sick. Maybe this was my time to just be different.

As I reached the basement, I sniffed as rats do looking for their food. The lights were off as my nocturnal instincts were in motion. I didn't even want to breath that heavily in this time of night. I wanted to be mute as a church rat. With the darkness looming in on me, I made my way past the couch and found my target. My rat senses were tingling and I knew this was my only shot. I reached my hand out as if I was asking God for guidance, assisting me in my acts. I reached out my hand. I felt it. The handbag was there.

[the scene shifts; we go back in time to earlier in the day; BOY and MOTHER are having a conversation]

JOE

Hey mom.

MOM

Hi Joe, what's up.

JOE

Listen, um. I know you probably won't give it to me, but I do need some cash right now if that's ok.

MOM

Are you fucking kidding me?

JOE

You know what, sorry I even asked.

MOM

Yeah, not the best idea Joe. You think if I said that to my parents they would say yes?

JOE *[has an idea]*

You're right , mom, your parents wouldn't tolerate that. *[pause]* You think grandma and grandpa are around tonight? I kind of want to see them.

[the scene shifts back to the basement]

JOE

I opened my eyes to the world of darkness and I felt my hand grace the edge of the Louis Vuitton bag. The zipper was open and my target was just millimeters away. I slowly grabbed my grandmother's wallet I so desired. I was the man. The man who was willing to put it all on the line. "Rat Man".

GRANDMA

JOSEPH!

JOE

Oh shit. All of a sudden, I could see everything. I could see the purse, the wallet and even my guilt.

Grandma, wh- wh- what are you doing up?

GRANDMA

I can't believe you, why are you in my purse?

JOE

I knew lying would make it worse. I can't dig myself another hole. In addition, rats hate holes.

I'm sorry. I'm sorry, I just needed a couple of bucks.

GRANDMA

Shut up! Give that to me right now.

JOE

I sadly placed the wallet on her hand. I looked up at what use to be a loving face and I saw nothing but hatred. I've never seen her this fuming. It was like looking at a chimney who had an Italian accent. I couldn't take it.

I'm an idiot, I should have never done it. I don't know what I was thinking.

[pause]

GRANDMA

Come up stairs, lets talk.

JOE

I can see why people hate rats now. The rat life maybe isn't for me. I'd rather be a nice little pet mouse with a nice home, good family, and good attitude. I knew I fucked up. I fucking hate rats.