



**TODAY YOU.  
TOMORROW ME.**

DIRECTED BY CHRIS A. NEAL

# LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

This **7-minute short film** communicates the modern day  
*'Good Samaritan.'*

This is a passion project about compassion in unlikely  
circumstances. It's showing a real experience while  
bringing perspective to deeper truths. It's a **simple story**  
that challenges **big ideas**.

**It's time to share** a story of regular people being decent  
to each other.



## BASED ON A TRUE STORY

This story is based on a **real experience** between a **young man** stuck on the highway and **a family of Mexican immigrants** that offer a helping hand. The true story was posted in a comment online, and it stands as one of the most popular stories on the internet.

The text has never been captured in a film format. Let's dive into the story...

An aerial, high-angle shot of a white jeep driving on a two-lane desert highway. The jeep is positioned in the center of the frame, moving away from the viewer. A long, dark shadow is cast to the right of the vehicle, indicating the sun is low in the sky. The surrounding landscape is a vast, flat desert with sparse, low-lying vegetation and tire tracks visible on the ground.

## STUCK IN THE DESERT

The film opens on **Mark** driving his jeep down a long stretch of desert highway. The car begins to shake as Mark steadies his jeep to the side of the lonely highway.

Mark gets out of the car and sees his back left tire is shredded...

# ALONE AND OUT OF LUCK

The damage to the tire is bad. As Mark inspects it, **a car appears** on the horizon. Mark starts to waive. The Lexus honks and **speeds past**.

Mark calls his dad on his old cell phone and leaves a message. He has a spare, but no car jack. He pulls out a map and runs his finger over the paper to find the closest town. Out of his side mirror, he sees **a service truck** coming towards him on the road. He waves his arms frantically. The truck shoots up dust and **passes by** without slowing down.

The cell phone starts ringing in the jeep. Mark picks it up. It's his father. The service is spotty and the phone cuts off. **The battery is dead**. Mark throw his phone onto his dashboard.

Mark digs around in his trunk more looking for a jack. Nothing. He puts his spare on the ground, looks both directions and sees **no help in sight**.

He climbs in the jeep and begins to scream and slam the horn. **An old pickup** pulls up in the blurry background.





## THE GOOD NEIGHBORS

Once Mike stops slamming his horn, he hears some faint music in the background. He checks the rearview mirror and sees the **pulled over truck**.

Mark jumps out of the car with a grin. He's greeted by a **hispanic man** in his 30's with a cowboy hat, his wife, and a little girl sitting in the middle of the pickup. The man steps out with a wave and an **'Hola.'**

Mike begins explaining the situation. But as he explains, it's clear **the man doesn't understand English** as he calls to his wife and young daughter in Spanish.

As the man approaches the tire, **the little girl begins to translate** the Spanish for Mike. The man goes to his truck and grabs a jack, a wrench, and a hand-saw while communicating to his daughter.

The daughter tells Mike that her dad says his jack is too small so he'll need to brace it. The man hands Mike the tire wrench and the girl communicates that he can start loosening the bolts. The man places the jack under the car to see how much brace he needs.



## SUFFERING TOGETHER

Mike starts loosening a bolt and the **tire wrench snaps in half**.

The father looks up half frustrated and half humored. He throws the keys to his wife and she's off. The father motions Mike to hold the log steady as he begins to saw. Mike begins talking to the little girl about their family and **why they're in America**.

They finish cutting the log and the wife pulls up. She holds a shiny **new tire wrench** and gives the men some water. The father hands the jug to Mike as he drinks first. They take off the bolts, and replace the tire as sweat drips down their faces.

As the father tightens the new tire on, Mike grabs a **\$20 bill** from his wallet and tries to hand it to him. He shakes his head and continues working. The wife won't take it either. Mike eventually forces it into her hand while putting his finger up to his lips.





## A GOODBYE GIFT

The mother prepares dinner for the little girl as Mike helps the father adjust the spare. The little girl offers Mike a **tamale** wrapped in foil as they finish up. Mike takes it as the father is dumping water on his head and putting items back in the truck.

The father tells his daughter they have to go. He shakes Mike's hand. The family starts up the truck and pulls up next to a smiling Mike. Mike repeats **gracias** over and over. The father pulls up parallel next to Mike.

The father rolls down the window with the engine still running, and in broken english says, "**Today you, tomorrow me.**"

The family drives off spitting up a dust cloud in the gravel. The music in the truck can be heard faint in the distance.

Mike gets in his jeep, tamale in hand. He turns on the engine, and begins to open the foil. A **\$20 bill** falls onto his lap. He looks up and smiles into the distance. He repeats to himself, "**Today you, tomorrow me.**"



# GRITTY | BEAUTIFUL

The feeling is **Americana** and captures both the **fascination** and **isolation** of the road and American West.

The goal is to strike a sense of grittiness and natural beauty. I want to show a sense of hopelessness in the **beautiful isolated desert** and isolated shots.

A balance of handheld and smoother cinematic shots will capture the beauty and grit balance.

I want the film to drive a connection with the main character Mike, and be **from his perspective**. This can be accomplished through a subtle focus on Mike's frustration / connection reactions. This is an honest interaction, based on a true story. I want the film to reflect that.

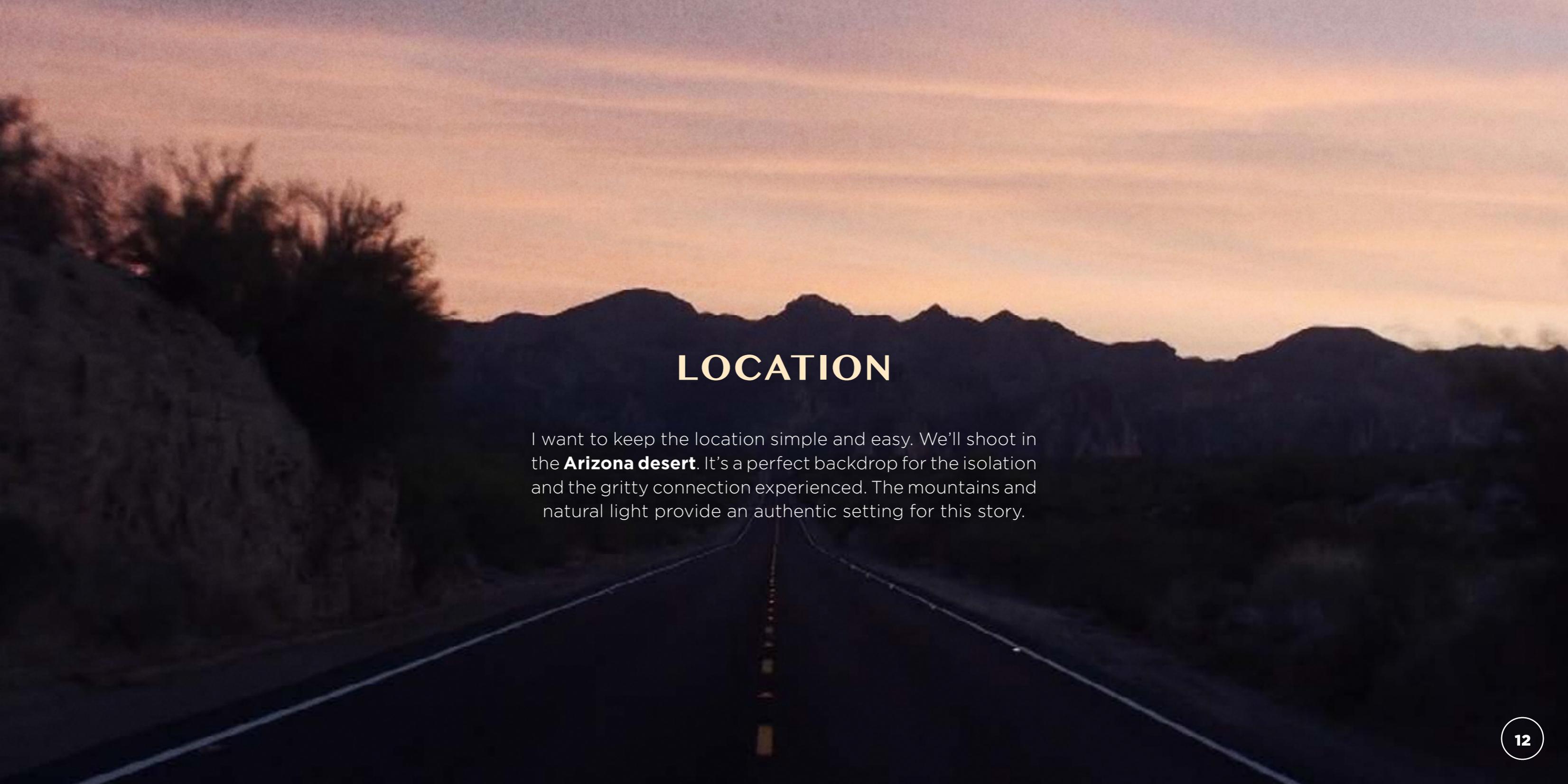
A lack of subtitles will also help drive home the **beauty and grit** of the situation driving home this confusing, but intimate connection.

# MOOD VIDEO



Watch this short mood film to get an idea of the aesthetic.

<https://vimeo.com/295703196/2eed8f9b80>

A wide-angle photograph of a desert landscape at sunset. A paved road with a dashed yellow center line leads from the bottom center towards a range of dark, silhouetted mountains in the distance. The sky is a gradient of warm colors, from a pale yellow near the horizon to a soft purple at the top. The foreground shows the dark, textured ground of the desert.

## LOCATION

I want to keep the location simple and easy. We'll shoot in the **Arizona desert**. It's a perfect backdrop for the isolation and the gritty connection experienced. The mountains and natural light provide an authentic setting for this story.

# CASTING



## **Mark - The Loner**

He's in his late-twenties and in the limbo of life. He's old enough to have all the responsibilities of life. But too young to have the respect of his own friends and family.



## **The Father**

The silent and humble type. He's a hard worker from Mexico, and a family man at heart. His deep virtue can be felt. He's humble to his core, and a little too hard on himself at times.

# CASTING



## **María - The Daughter**

The little girl is the mediator. She's the peacemaker of the family. Her parents deeply love her, while expecting a lot from her. She always has a book in her hand. She speaks English, while her parents do not.



## **The Mother**

She's a harder worker than her husband. She has high expectations for her daughter. She's protective of those she cares about and has a deep attitude of service for those around her.

A man with a beard is seen from the back, looking out of a car window. The view outside is a vast desert landscape at sunset, with the sun low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the scene. The car's interior, including the rearview mirror, is visible in the foreground.

## PERFORMANCE

The film will contain **little dialogue** because of the **language barrier**. It gives an opportunity to drive the communication through action and subtle body language.

Through the interaction, I want to show the affection the Mexican family has towards each other. I want this rooted family care extended to Mark throughout their time. Mark's hesitant to receive each moment of care that the family throws at him.

**Subtle cues** and **body language** are going to be key in the interaction between the family and Matt.

Mark begins **isolated and hesitant** to receive help from this family of 'foreigners.' At the end we see a sense of **trust and connection**. This is shown through a lot more eye contact and physical touch.

A person with their back to the camera, wearing a blue jacket, is looking out of a window. The window shows a sunset over a landscape with mountains and a body of water. The scene is dimly lit, with the warm colors of the sunset visible through the window.

## MARKETING

The story is one of the **highest voted comments** on the internet. It's been featured in the New York Times. And it's even been told on Jimmy Kimmel by Reddit's Co-Founder.

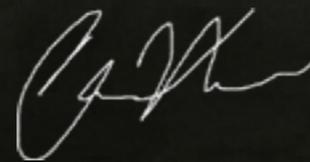
**The story has a built in audience.** It's proven to connect with individuals and the press.

The goal is to gain the help of folks who have connected with the text version of the story to help **spread the love.**

A vintage truck is parked in a field at sunset. The truck is silhouetted against the warm, orange glow of the setting sun. The background shows a field with some trees and hills in the distance.

## THANK YOU

Thanks for taking the time to look at this project. I'm excited about the idea of you being apart of it. If you have any questions please shoot me an email. Looking forward to working on this project with you.

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read "Chris Neal".

*Chris Neal*

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