

“An Afternoon with Joey”

An Original Screenplay

Written by John Foley

Revised October 26, 2003

foleyfdb@earthlink.net

PATHWAY. FISHING PIER.

It is a warm, sunny day.

An EDERLEY MAN (GRANDPA) is walking up the path. He is carrying two fishing poles and a tackle box.

He stops and turns to look behind him.

A YOUNG BOY (JOEY) about five years old comes bouncing up the path. He is carrying a white container.

GRANDPA

I thought you went fishing with out me.

JOEY

I can't do that. You got the fishing poles.
But I've got the worms (as he holds up the container)

GRANDPA smiles. They continue on the path to the pier by the water.

JOEY looks out at the water.

GRANDPA is sitting on a nearby bench rigging a fishing pole

JOEY comes over.

JOEY

Do you think we'll catch any today?

GRANDPA

We will for sure with those worms.

JOEY

I know fish eat the worms. But...Yuck! If I was a fish.
I would wait for pizza.

GRANDPA

What about your grandma's special chocolate chip cookie
you like so much?

JOEY

OK! Those too.

GRANDPA
Only those?

JOEY
Yep!

GRANDPA
So if you were a fish then you wouldn't bite the hook
even if it had a cheeseburger on it?

JOEY
Grandpa... OK... I would go for the food I like.
That means no broccoli.

GRANDPA chuckles. He finishes setting a fishing pole.
He then walks towards the pier. JOEY follows behind.

JOEY
Grandpa can you cast it out for me?

GRANDPA
I sure can. (Pause) You remember what I taught you the last time
we went fishing.

JOEY
Yep! Be patient and the fish will come. (Pause)
But I really don't want to wait all day for them.

GRANDPA
Hot date at the park later?

JOEY
Noooo! (Pause) What's that?

GRANDPA (chuckling)
Never mind.

GRANDPA casts the pole. He then hands it off to JOEY.

JOEY trying to be as patient as he can stands there waiting for a bite.

GRANDPA is setting his pole.

JOEY
Nothing yet.

GRANDPA

They'll be by soon. Give your pole a shake so they know that there's a worm for them.

JOEY shakes the pole.

JOEY

Hey fishees! Worm time! They're yummy!

GRANDPA

Thought you didn't like worms.

JOEY

I'm fooling them. Just like mom does for my baby sister.

GRANDPA smiles.

GRANDPA

Give it some time.

GRANDPA walks over and casts his pole.

GRANDPA

Another worm for the fishees.

Time passes as they go about fishing.

They have yet to catch a fish.

GRANDPA

Joey reel it in and we'll try again.

JOEY reels in his line.

JOEY

This time get it out farther. I think the fish are out there.

GRANDPA takes JOEY'S pole and casts it again. This time it goes out farther. He hands it back to JOEY

JOEY

Wow! You got it out there.

GRANDPA

One day you will do that too.

JOEY

Do I have to be as old as you to do it?

GRANDPA

No you don't have to be. But it doesn't hurt.

JOEY shakes the pole again. He reels in the line a little.

GRANDPA

Don't reel it in too much. You said the fish were farther out there.

JOEY

Maybe they moved closer too us. They're trying to be sneaky.

GRANDPA

You sure know a lot about fish.

JOEY

I'm just guessing Grandpa.

GRANDPA smiles as he is focusing on his own fishing. He reels in his line.

Time passes.

JOEY gets a tug on his line.

JOEY

Grandpa! I got one!

GRANDPA puts down his pole and goes to help JOEY.

GRANDPA

Well. Reel him in.

JOEY reels the line in as fast as he can.

GRANDPA

Careful. You don't need to be that fast.

JOEY

But I don't want him to get away!

GRANDPA

Be patient. You'll get him.

JOEY continues to reel in the line. GRANDPA helps to hold the pole for him. The line comes up with a fish that is about 5 inches long on it.

JOEY
I got a big one.

GRANDPA
You sure did. Reel him in.

JOEY reels the fish in. GRANDPA takes a hold of the line and the fish.

GRANDPA
Look at him.

JOEY
Are we keeping this one?

GRANDPA is taking the fish off the hook.

GRANDPA
Well. You know this one looks like it needs to go back to his family.

JOEY
But why?

GRANDPA
He just looks like he needs to go back to his family. They maybe missing him.

JOEY (a bit solemn)
OK then.

GRANDPA throws the fish back in the water.

GRANDPA
Give me a moment. And we'll see if another one of those worms there will catch us another fish.

GRANDPA goes to the bench with JOEY'S pole. He then goes about setting it.

JOEY is looking down at the water. He is searching for the fish that was just put back.

JOEY turns to GRANDPA.

JOEY

So if someone may miss you then you get to go back?

GRANDPA looks up. He appears bewildered.

GRANDPA

Why do you think that?

JOEY

Because that's why you threw the fish back.

GRANDPA

There's more to it. I mean-

JOEY

Don't you miss Daddy too?

GRANDPA gives a sigh.

GRANDPA

Everyday.

JOEY

So why can't he be put back? We both miss him.

GRANDPA

That's a tough one.

GRANDPA waves his hand for JOEY to join him on the bench.

JOEY walks over and sits next him.

GRANDPA

You see. (Pause). I put that fish back because he really wasn't ready for us to keep him.

JOEY

Did I catch the wrong one?

GRANDPA

Oh. No. No. You got the right one. You see sometimes you got to let the smaller one goes back.

JOEY

But why?

GRANDPA

Joey, sometimes the small ones need to go back so they can get a little bigger. And it was the right thing to do.

JOEY

Putting Daddy back would be the right thing to do.

GRANDPA puts his arm around JOEY.

GRANDPA

You see I put that fish back because I have the power to. I wish I could put Daddy back but it was a power that I wasn't given. In fact, no one in this world can do that.

JOEY

No one?

GRANDPA

No one.

JOEY

Then why do I miss him?

GRANDPA

Well. He may be gone. But he is still right here in your head because you have memories of him. And you still feel him your heart because you still have love for him.

JOEY

I sure do.

GRANDPA

And I have you with me to see that my son, your Daddy did something right. He along with Mommy had you

JOEY

And my sister too.

GRANDPA

Her too.

JOEY

Can we pretend then?

GRANDPA
Pretend what?

JOEY
That in putting that fish back. In some way we are
doing the same thing for Daddy.

GRANDPA
We sure can. It's a nice thing to do.

JOEY
Does that make me a hero?

GRANDPA
I'm not sure. But it's a good way to go about being one.

JOEY
Daddy was hero too. (Pause). Right?

GRANDPA
He was.

JOEY
I'm not sure if I want to be a hero though.

GRANDPA
Why's that?

JOEY
Because sometimes bad things happen to heroes.

GRANDPA
That is sometimes true. (Pause) But if we don't have heroes
then all the bad things in this world wouldn't be stopped.

JOEY
So when do the bad things stop?

GRANDPA
I wish I knew the answer to that question. I really do.
If I could answer just one thing. That would be the one.
(Pause) But I know this. No matter what you do when you grow
up it's the one thing you can always try to be. That's a hero.

JOEY
How's that?

GRANDPA

No matter what happens or where you are. It may be tough but you just have to be willing to do the right thing. That's what it takes to be a "Superman".

JOEY

Do I need to wear a cape?

GRANDPA (smiling)

Only if you want to. But you don't have to have one.

JOEY

Do you really think I can be one?

GRANDPA

I think you got it in you.

JOEY

Like Daddy did?

GRANDPA

Especially like Daddy.

(Pause)

JOEY

Maybe I will think it over about being a hero.

GRANDPA

I'm glad.

GRANDPA stands up. He then picks up the fishing poles.

GRANDPA

How about we go back to trying our luck at fishing?

GRANDPA walks towards the pier. JOEY comes running up behind him.

JOEY

O.K. Can I throw the next fish we catch back?

GRANDPA

You sure can. Ready?

JOEY
Yep!

GRANDPA casts out the first fishing pole. He then hands it over to JOEY.
He then casts his fishing pole. They stand there quietly fishing for several moments.

JOEY
Grandpa. Maybe I can be a hero someday.

GRANDPA
I know you will.

They continue fishing.

CAMERA pans towards the water. Then pans up. The New York City Manhattan skyline is revealed across the water.

FADE OUT

THE END