



DAY LABOR

SHORT FILM | DRAMA
IN DEVELOPMENT

LOGLINE

When a physically worn day laborer is hired for several days of work, his teenage son secretly sacrifices his own wages to preserve his father's dignity.

SYNOPSIS

Hector and his teenage son gather each morning before dawn at a home improvement store parking lot where immigrant workers hope to find day labor.

When a ranch owner hires them for a five day job, Hector is relieved to finally have steady income for his family. But during the first day, Carlos watches his father struggle through the brutal labor, refusing help even as his body begins to fail him.

At the end of the day, the ranch owner quietly tells Carlos that Hector will not be asked back. Desperate to protect his father's role as provider, Carlos secretly cuts a deal with the man -- they both work but he'll only have to pay his father.

As Hector proudly tells the family they now have several days of income, without his father's knowledge, Carlos begins unsuccessfully searching the city alone each night for additional work to replace the wages he gave up, slowly collapsing beneath exhaustion and pressure.

When Hector later discovers that the money from the family jar does not add up, he believes Carlos has stolen from them and confronts him in anger. Only after Carlos's younger brother reveals the truth does Hector realize what his son has done to protect his dignity.

WHY THIS STORY

Day Labor explores the quiet sacrifices made within families living on the edge—where love shows up not in grand gestures, but in the everyday choices we make to protect one another and preserve dignity.

THEMES

- Dignity and work
- Parent–child role reversal
- Masculinity and providing
- Immigration, labor, and invisibility
- Quiet acts of love

TONE / COMPARABLE FILMS

Grounded, observational storytelling with restrained emotion.



Minari
(2020)



A Better Life
(2011)



The Rider
(2017)

STATUS

Short film in development

Seeking: collaborators / crew relationships / development support

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