

NIGHTLIFE

Written by

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INT. NIGHTCRAWLERS - BAR - NIGHT

The nightclub is in full swing, flashing lights, and loud music. Ad-lib words of conversation are heard around the club.

CHRISTINA, 23, stands next to a cocktail table. She looks around, then grabs a bottle of tequila with a pour spout and fills two more shots.

STEVE, 23, socializes near the bar and spots her stealing.

STEVE
Hey, you can't steal that. I'll report you.

CHRISTINA
The hell you will, Rob Lowe wannabe.

Christina drinks the shots quickly, punches him in the face, and runs out of the club.

INT. CHRISTINA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

A phone RINGS. Christina shoots up from her slumber. She sees clothes all over the floor and a stranger sleeping next to her. She conveys confusion.

INT. CHRISTINA'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

A phone RINGS. She clutches her head as she searches for it. She lifts a blanket off the couch and the phone tumbles out.

CHRISTINA
Yes, hello? I'm alive.

STEVE (V.O.)
Good to hear that. My name is Steve Goodman. Is this Christina Richman?

CHRISTINA
Yes, I'm present. I mean, yeah, that's me.

STEVE (V.O.)
I'm with the Child Services Department of Chicago. I'm afraid I have stressing news about your aunt and uncle.

Christina bangs her head against the wall lightly.

STEVE

They died in a horrific car accident. We dug up their will and, well, they've appointed you their child's legal guardian.

CHRISTINA

Oh wow, that's sounds... wait, what?

STEVE (V.O.)

It's mandatory that you come down to our offices so we can begin the evaluation process to determine eligibility.

CHRISTINA

Wait, wait, wait... you're telling me I'm a mom now? Fuck.

STEVE

Excuse me?

CHRISTINA

Sorry, sorry, I meant... fuck!

*

Christina kicks the wall in front of her.

*

STEVE (V.O.)

I know this is a lot, so take a moment to collect yourself. I hope to see you soon. Goodbye.

INT. STEVE'S OFFICE - CHILD SERVICES DEPARTMENT - DAY

Christina waits for Steve in his office. Her hair is unbrushed and messy, makeup smeared, and still in her club clothes. She clutches her head and grimaces.

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Steve walks in wearing the professional suit and tie number, then shakes Christina's hand. Steve reveals of look of recognition.

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STEVE

So, you're Miss Richman?

*

CHRISTINA

God, that sounds old. My name is Christina, I'm not fifty-seven.

*

*

Steve sits behind his desk.

*

STEVE
How's that hangover?

Christina shoots a confused look. *

CHRISTINA
What? *

STEVE
Let's get down to business. I'm going to ask you a few routine questions, just to make sure you are indeed fit to take care of the child.

Christina searches through her purse for a tissue.

STEVE (CONT'D)
If you are deemed fit, we'll move on to assessing your home according to regulations.

CHRISTINA
Okay, hold on. Let's say, hypothetically, I don't want the kid. What happens then?

STEVE
If you refuse to be legal guardian, she will be assigned to a foster home until she is adopted by a family.

Christina reaches for his trash can and pukes. *

STEVE (CONT'D)
Had too many stolen shots at the bar last night, huh. *

Christina shoots up. The look on her face shows she knows who he is. *

CHRISTINA
You're that guy from the bar! *

STEVE
And you're that thief that punched me. *

CHRISTINA
Well, you shouldn't have killed my vibe. *

STEVE

I'm going to be honest with you. I
don't think it's in the best
interests of the child that you're
her guardian.

CHRISTINA

(grumbles)

That makes both of us

STEVE

With you being a thief, and the
party-scene being your lifestyle of
choice, a child would ruin that for
you...

Christina covers her mouth, appearing sickly.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You're two strikes in. To top it
off, you ran away. It's obviously
you can't handle or deal with
problems or situations.

CHRISTINA

Just give me a few minutes.

Christina darts into the hall.

INT. HALLWAY - CHILD SERVICES DEPARTMENT - DAY

Christina pukes into the trash can next to several chairs.
ABIGAIL, 4, sits one over from her. She kicks her feet
quietly as she stares at Christina.

Christina walks to a vending machine. She puts quarters in
and stares at the different snacks. She looks over at the
girl, who is still staring.

CHRISTINA

What are you looking at?

Abigail continues to stare.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

Well? Are you mute? I mean...
what's your name kid?

ABIGAIL

Abigail. Why do you look like that?

Christina turns to Abigail.

CHRISTINA

Like what, exactly?

*

ABIGAIL

Your hair looks funny. My mommy
would never let me out of the house
with my hair not brushed.

*

*

CHRISTINA

Well, when you're a big girl, you
get to do whatever you want.

ABIGAIL

If big girls look like that, then I
don't want to be one.

Christina shoots Abigail a middle finger when she looks away. *
She keys A6 and Poptarts fall to the bottom of the machine. *
She retrieves them and sits next to Abigail.

*

*

CHRISTINA

God, I have a killer headache.
(to Abigail)
So, what're you in for?

*

*

ABIGAIL

My parents got squashed in a car
crash.

*

CHRISTINA

Oh... yeah, you win.

Christina looks at her poptarts and offers one to Abigail.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

Here. I think you've earned
yourself one.

*

*

*

ABIGAIL

No, thank you. I itch when I eat
strawberries.

Christina bites into the two poptarts and aggressively rips
it off.

*

*

CHRISTINA

So did my mom... that's how she
died.

*

*

*

ABIGAIL

So did my aunt.

*

*

CHRISTINA

Huh, that's funny. It sucks though.
You don't have parents, I never
really did either. I've been in
foster care my whole life.

ABIGAIL

(whimpers)

Is that where I'm going?

Christina looks at Abigail with sympathy.

CHRISTINA

Nah, you'll be just fine, kid.
Whoever your caretaker is supposed
to be would be nuts not to take you
in.

They sit in silence for a moment.

ABIGAIL

My Uncle Ed went to heaven because
he choked on a poptart.

Christina pauses in shock, the poptarts inches from her
mouth.

CHRISTINA

My dad's name was Ed and he died
choking on a poptart...

Christina looks at Abigail, then at the poptarts.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

Ohhh, shiiit...

She tosses them into the trash.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

Seems like we don't have the best
of luck with poptarts, huh?

Abigail shakes her head.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

We should sue.

ABIGAIL

What's sue?

CHRISTINA

It's where you take people's money
for doing harm to you... or not.

(MORE)

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
(whispers)
If they can't prove it.

ABIGAIL
That doesn't sound very nice.

Christina stares at Abigail, like she can't believe she's
meeting her only living relative.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)
It's not polite to stare.

CHRISTINA
Right, sorry... Abby.

Christina notices Steve standing in the doorway of his
office.

STEVE
Come inside, let's start on those
questions.