

A BRIDE WALKS INTO A BAR...

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Neon Nights Bar and Grill is sandwiched between a GNC store and a local grocery store. It hasn't been updated since the early 2000s, we can tell by the pictures on the wall, the pop-culture references on the drink menu, and the choice of uniforms.

The place is upkept, but needs major renovations. The bar is crumbling at some parts, stool seating are peeling, and the menus are smudged.

MASON, 27, average height, vanilla-looking, brown hair, brown eyes. He is a kind but quiet individual who's whole personality revolves around owning Neon Nights.

Mason is tending the bar while long time friend XAVIER makes more of a mess.

Xavier, mid-thirties, wears a different rock n roll shirt everyday, is balding in the back of his head but refuses to acknowledge it, and is slightly over-weight.

Xavier is trying to throw bar nuts into his mouth. He is very unsuccessful in doing so, Mason throws away every single nut he misses.

The bar only has a few others beside Mason and Xavier, ONE MAN, and TWO COLLEGE GIRLS.

Xavier throws another nut in the air.

He catches!

Mason rolls his eyes. The other man in the bar claps.

XAVIER

At least someone is rooting for me.

MASON

He hasn't had to clean up all the other failed attempts.

Xavier smugly throws another one up, but he misses. Mason takes the cup of peanuts away.

The door SLAMS open. A sobbing woman in a wedding dress swiftly follows the opened door.

Xavier and Mason's head turn immediately to the door.

BRIELLE, 23, small and blonde. She is absorbed by tool and lace, her wedding dress looks like one huge doily.

Brielle looks around the empty bar and starts hushing her tears. Xavier without even thinking...

XAVIER

Hey, blondie! Come sit over here.

Mason's eyes get huge and he lightly smacks Xavier. Brielle looks to Xavier offended by the comment.

BRIELLE

Hey, baldie! I'll sit wherever I want.

Xavier a little hurt by the bald comment, decides to move past it. He pulls out the stool.

XAVIER

Drinks on me.

Brielle takes a moment to think about her choices. Free drinks or sit away from weird man. She looks around the room, and gives a huge shrug. She walks over to Xavier.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

(to Mason.)

I'm gonna choose to be nice and not acknowledge the bald comment.

Mason gives him a sarcastic thumbs up and wink. Mason walks to the other end of the bar to refill the other girls drinks.

Brielle sits on the stool like a small child, spinning, and not staying still.

BRIELLE

I wouldn't have pictured myself in a place like this... on a night like this.

XAVIER

Who has their wedding on a Tuesday night, anyway?

Brielle gives a small smile.

BRIELLE

His parents choice.

XAVIER

I have always ran into strange people here. I've met a man who was on the top ten most wanted, a man who ran his own zoo, but never a runaway bride.

Brielle yawns. Xavier looks at her with intrigue.

BRIELLE

I was baited over to this seat with free drinks.

XAVIER

You'll get a drink when I hear why you're in a wedding dress sitting next to me.

BRIELLE

(to Mason.)

I'll take a Moscow Mule.

Mason gives her a stare and shakes his head into a hesitant agreement. Brielle turns her head back to Xavier.

BRIELLE (CONT'D)

I woke up this morning thinking about my family dog Lulu.

Xavier's face becomes perplexed.

BRIELLE (CONT'D)

As a kid I would do everything with Lulu. We would go on walks around the neighborhood, we would go to the local lake, I'd sit and paint portraits of her. I really want to be an artist as a kid.

XAVIER

Are you an artist?

BRIELLE

I wanted to be. I do graphic design now, but that's beside the point. Lulu represented unconditional love. Lulu didn't care if I failed a biology quiz, she was still going to follow me around the house and sleep at my feet.

XAVIER

What kind of dog was she?

Brielle starts to tear up, she runs her hands through her hair.

BRIELLE

She was a black lab. She has one spot of white on her tail.

(MORE)

BRIELLE (CONT'D)

Lulu could've been a show dog, she was that beautiful.

Mason slides Brielle her drink, and goes to tend on the older man on the opposite side of the bar. Xavier who look captured by the story of the dog, shakes his head in confusion.

XAVIER

How does this have anything to do with the white dress?

Brielle takes a huge gulp of her drink.

BRIELLE

I'm getting there! I realized nothing has ever loved me like Lulu and I have never loved anything as much as I loved her. When I thought about going down the isle to Borris all I felt was, w-was complacent. I loved my family pet more than I would ever love my husband.

Xavier looks to Mason for help. Mason isn't paying attention, but is trying to check if the older man has a pulse at the end of the bar. Brielle starts choking up, but reins it back in.

BRIELLE (CONT'D)

I sat and really thought about how I wanted to find that unconditional love. Borris didn't even know about the story of Lulu. Borris didn't know one of my most pivotal childhood memories.

Brielle takes another huge swig of her drink. Xavier starts to think he follows, he rubs her back while she sniffles. Mason comes closer to the two of them, eavesdropping, he pretends to not be paying attention.

BRIELLE (CONT'D)

That's when I realized Borris didn't know me. I didn't know Borris! How can you marry someone you don't know? You know?

Xavier shakes his head in agreement, Mason rolls his eyes at the interaction.

BRIELLE (CONT'D)

I tried talking myself down from the figurative ledge all day, but when I got into the church's recreation room to change I KNEW I wasn't making it down the isle. SO, I bolted. When I was alone, I looked in the mirror and told myself I will find love. Which is why I'm leaving tomorrow to go on our honeymoon alone.

XAVIER

(genuine.)

Wow.

MASON

(disgust.)

Wow.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

That is such an empowering story.

Brielle finishes off her drink.

BRIELLE

I want to find myself before I try to find love. I'm just scared to go away like this. My parents went complete batshit on me, and I know his mom was CRUSHED. But, I couldn't do it.

Xavier is in awe over Brielle. Brielle goes for another sip and realizes her glass is empty.

BRIELLE (CONT'D)

(to Mason.)

Another one of these, and two shots of whatever.

Mason gives her a look of disgust, and pulls the glass away aggressively. Brielle notices and shifts in her seat.

XAVIER

What do you think you need to discover about yourself? It seems like you discovered a lot this morning.

BRIELLE

As much as I want love, I need to love myself too. I think Hawaii will really heal my soul.

Brielle reaches for Xavier's hand and they share a moment.

Mason slams the glass on the bar top. Both Brielle and Xavier are thrown off.

MASON
(grits teeth)
I'll be back with the shots.

Brielle shakes her head at his nonsense, Xavier looks at his friend concerned.

XAVIER
Mason is a bit bitter.

Brielle takes a sip of her new drink. She cocks her head.

BRIELLE
Why would *the bartender* be bitter?

Mason walks by with the shots. He looks like he is about to say something and doesn't.

BRIELLE (CONT'D)
If you have something to say just say it.

Mason violently turns around.

MASON
You are one of the most selfish people I've ever met.

Brielle's jaw drops. She also adds a dramatic gasp.

BRIELLE
Loving yourself isn't selfish.

MASON
Leaving someone without an explanation is.

BRIELLE
I did what was best for both Borris and I!

MASON
Borris is sitting around wondering what the hell he did wrong today. When in fact, it is your fault you can't have an adult conversation.

Xavier's head is on a constant swivel seeing who is going to speak next.

BRIELLE
I can have an adult conversation,
but I needed space to gather my
thoughts.

This triggers Mason.

MASON
THEN COMMUNICATE THAT.

Brielle is taken aback. Xavier's eyes widen.

XAVIER
Mason, she isn't her.

Mason takes a sharp inhale.

MASON
(whispers.)
Might as well be.

Brielle's eyebrows furrow in confusion.

BRIELLE
Who is her?

MASON
Madison.

XAVIER
Maddie.

BRIELLE
And who is that?

Mason looks numb, Xavier looks sympathetic.

MASON
The woman who left me at the altar.

Brielle cannot contain a gasp. Brielle seems less dramatic
and more sincere.

BRIELLE
I'm sorry.

MASON
Yeah.

Mason walks away to go tend to one of the other bar people.

BRIELLE
(to Xavier.)
You couldn't have hinted that to
me.

XAVIER

Its been years, he really doesn't get worked up about it. But, who thought there would be a runaway bride in his bar.

Brielle takes both of her shots back to back. Mason comes back over.

BRIELLE

Did she ever give you closure?

MASON

No.

Mason grabs Brielle's drink and chugs the whole thing.

XAVIER

She ran off with his brother.

BRIELLE

YOUR BROTHER.

MASON

Thanksgiving has been messy.

Xavier snorts at Mason's joke. Brielle's mouth is wide open.

MASON (CONT'D)

I'm just kidding I haven't seen my family in five years.

BRIELLE

Five years!

XAVIER

(to Mason.)

You are better off.

BRIELLE

I'm so sorry, Mason.

MASON

Yeah, I appreciate it. Side note, what's your name?

She laughs.

BRIELLE

Brielle.

XAVIER

Xavier.

CUT TO:

2 INT. NEIGHBORHOOD BAR - LATER

2

Brielle, Xavier, and Mason are the only people in the bar and are super drunk.

MASON

Don't you miss being a kid.

XAVIER

Every time I pay a bill.

Mason laughs hard. Brielle gives Xavier a playful punch.

BRIELLE

I miss not having any responsibility. I miss dressing up and doing shows around the house.

MASON

Before I hated my brother, we used to go to the arcade everyday as kids. And it use to make me feel so alive.

Brielle takes a moment to digest this. She looks like she has a lightbulb moment.

XAVIER

I hate my kids.

Mason looks confused.

MASON

Xavier, you don't have kids.

XAVIER

I know.

Xavier breaks into sobs. Mason pats his back.

BRIELLE

We should go.

MASON

I'm sorry-where would we go at one in the morning?

BRIELLE
You need some adventure in your
life.

MASON
I don't want to leave my bar.

Mason looks around. Nobody is there. Xavier is drifting into
a tear filled sleep.

BRIELLE
Xavier will keep guard.

XAVIER
(slurs)
I do my best.

Xavier passes out and falls off the stool. Mason goes around
the bar and checks if he's ok. Brielle just sits there
shocked.

BRIELLE
Is he always like this?

MASON
Yeah this happens about once a
week.

BRIELLE
Well, if he's ok... let's go!

MASON
I don't usually go to unknown
locations with women who run out on
their fiancé.

BRIELLE
I don't usually hangout with
bartenders who were left at the
altar.

MASON
Correction... Bar Owners.

CUT TO BLACK.

3 INT. AQUARIUM- 2:30 AM

3

Mason and Brielle stand in front of a Great White shark in a
tank, gathered with other fishes.

Mason takes a huge yawn.

MASON

Should I be concerned how you got us into a locked Aquarium.

BRIELLE

Don't worry about it.

She gives him a smirk.

MASON

(to Himself.)

I'm putting my complete and utter trust into a stranger.

The shark swims back and forth in front of them.

BRIELLE

As a kid I wanted to be a marine biologist.

MASON

I thought you wanted to be an artist.

BRIELLE

(hesitates)

Art was a second love. My first was sea life.

MASON

Why didn't you become a marine biologist?

BRIELLE

Everyone around me said it was a waste of time and wouldn't make any money.

Brielle starts to walk away from the shark exhibit and go to another tank filled with tons of colorful fish. Mason trails behind her.

MASON

From my limited knowledge of knowing you, I can make one assessment, You can do anything.

Brielle is caught off by this, Mason is still looking forward, but Brielle is looking at him with this new appreciation.

BRIELLE

I wish you told me that when I was eleven.

MASON
I wish I had too.

There is a pause.

MASON (CONT'D)
Why didn't you love Borris?

Brielle blinks hard.

BRIELLE
We weren't compatible.

MASON
What did he do for a living?

BRIELLE
He was an accountant.

Mason does a little chuckle.

MASON
An accountant and an artist.
Doesn't sound like a great match.

BRIELLE
We want different lives. I've come
to terms with it I hope he does
too.

Mason nods in agreement. They go to staring at the fishes again.

Brielle keeps sneaking looks at Mason. When Brielle looks away Mason sneaks looks at her.

BRIELLE (CONT'D)
Do you still love Maddison?

This catches Mason off guard. He starts to walk over to an exhibit that has eels. Brielle trails behind him.

MASON
No. We wanted different lives. And
I came to terms with that.

BRIELLE
Touché.

They are both mesmerized by the tank.

MASON
What are you doing tomorrow?

Brielle gives a huge smile to Mason, and before she can say the word nothin-

MASON (CONT'D)
Fuck- Hawaii.

BRIELLE
Y-yeah.

MASON
Another time then.

Mason gives her a reassuring smile and then turns to face the tank.

Mason grabs her hand. Brielle looks at it and thinks this is her move.

Brielle pulls Mason into a kiss. Mason pulls away.

BRIELLE
I-I'm sorry.

Mason pulls her into a kiss.

CUT TO BLACK.

4 INT. BRIELLE'S APARTMENT - 6 AM.

4

Brielle almost floats into the apartment. Her hair is a wreck, her makeup is smudged, she is holding her heels.

The place is small and rundown. The dishes are stacked and there is trash everywhere.

KATIE, pops out of her room in an aquarium uniform. She is 19, and is wearing heavy eyeliner, she is shorter than Brielle which makes her seem very childlike.

KATIE
(sarcastic.)
How was tonight's escapade? Did you make sure he knew all about the patriarchy?

BRIELLE
(says dreamlike)
He was different.

Brielle strips out of the wedding dress and goes to hang up her dress in this closet filled with other wedding dresses. She puts on the robe hanging over the closet door.

KATIE
Which speech did you use tonight?

BRIELLE
(quietly)
Lulu.

KATIE
You haven't used that one in
awhile.

BRIELLE
Well that will be the last time.

Katie looks not phased. She's about to head out the door.

KATIE
Whoever the schmuck is he wouldn't
forgive you for lying to him.

BRIELLE
The plan went off track, I was just
going to use this drunk bar loser
for drinks and maybe get a twenty
off him, but then I met Mason, and
Mason is a beautiful soul-

KATIE
You can't be this delusional. Mark
wouldn't-

BRIELLE
Mason.

KATIE
Mason wouldn't get your weird
"sticking it to the man" thing. He
would just think of you as a bitch
with a lot of problems.

BRIELLE
He is a very accepting man.

KATIE
No man is that accepting. You know
that Brielle, you are just a
fantasy to him, and I'm starting to
think he is just a fantasy to you.

BRIELLE
I don't need this. You know jack
shit about life, you're nineteen.

KATIE

Whatever. I'm going to work... To
take YOUR shift.

Brielle feels bad for lashing out.

BRIELLE

(overly sweet.)
I appreciate it.

Brielle gives her roommate a huge hug of gratitude, Katie
looks incredibly uncomfortable.

Katie slams the door on her way out. Brielle stares at the
closet full of dresses and just shuts the door.

FADE TO BLACK.