

AFTER HOURS

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. - GAS STATION - NIGHT

DENISE, a girl in her early 20s, sits behind the gas station counter, rotating back and forth on a spinning stool. She has a landline propped between her shoulder and ear. She mindlessly fiddles with the phone cord and chews on a pen.

DENISE

Do you at least think it'll last
past 2? I mean, his parents aren't
home.

She rolls her eyes as she listens to the response on the other end.

DENISE (CONT'D)

You don't have to tell me twice
that it's a terrible shift.

Denise stands up from the stool and takes a few steps to look out the window to see a raging blizzard.

DENISE (CONT'D)

I would leave if I could, Annie.
Only one person on night shifts
though.

She plops back onto the stool in defeat.

DENISE (CONT'D)

Wait, he's there?! Do NOT talk to
him until I get there. I will
literally...

Suddenly, the entire store goes to pitch black.

DENISE

Annie, are you still there? Annie?

Denise clumsily flings the phone back onto its base and picks it back up to her ear only to hear no dial tone. She puts the phone down and looks around at the dark store.

DENISE (CONT'D)

Fuck this!

Denise ducks under the counter and digs around to find a flashlight.

She grabs a broom from behind the counter and goes to lock the door. She starts sloppily sweeping the station.

After, she rushes to the cash register and hastily counts the money in the drawer.

The counting is suddenly interrupted by a KNOCK at the door.

Denise shines her flashlight and looks over to see a middle-aged man, BUCK, bundled up in winter gear. He continues knocking and points at the locked door.

She almost immediately looks back to the money and continues counting.

DENISE (CONT'D)
(yelling to the door)
Store is closed, come back
tomorrow.

BUCK
Please let me in!

DENISE
Power's out so there's nothing I
can do, sorry.

Denise shuts the drawer of the register and locks it with a small key from a set of keys that is clipped on her belt.

BUCK
Just let me out of the cold, unlock
the door!

DENISE
Don't you get it? We're closed!
Leave!

The man begins ramming his body against the glass with extreme force. He rams his arms and head at the door. He runs and jumps at the door with both legs, breaking part of the glass and cutting up his legs in the process.

Denise sees Buck lying by the now broken glass door in a bloody mess. Snow is blowing into the station. He tries to prop himself back up but fails.

DENISE (CONT'D)
You asshole! What the fuck?!

BUCK
Please, I need help.

DENISE
I'm calling the cops!

Denise rushes to the FRONT COUNTER phone and frantically punches 911 on the keypad. She puts the receiver to her ear still to hear nothing.

DENISE (CONT'D)
Shit!

Denise unlocks the door and motions for the man to come in. He crawls in, bleeding quite heavily.

Buck crawls to the FRONT COUNTER. His arms slip in the blood and he flattens to the ground.

DENISE (CONT'D)
Listen jackass, if you try to pull anything I am not afraid of you.

BUCK
I'm not, I swear! You should know...

DENISE
(interrupting)
Oh, I should know?! A young, attractive girl like me should just be okay with some low life like you breaking in?

Buck sits up and props himself against the counter. Denise stares at his every move. She reluctantly starts making her way closer to Buck.

She hears a CRUNCH under her foot and slips.

She catches herself with her free hand.

As she stands up, she lifts her hand to reveal a few small shards of glass, blood, and melted snow covering the floor and her hand.

DENISE (CONT'D)
God dammit! Disgusting!

She rushes back behind the counter, grabbing a wad of paper napkins out of the holder on the counter.

She digs under the counter to find a first aid kit. She pulls it out and places it on the floor.

She opens the box and digs through the items and begins trying to repair her wounded hand.

As she is about to be done wrapping her hand with gauze, a THUNK on the counter and then on the ground makes her head shoot to look sideways.

She quickly hops to her feet to see Buck laying on the ground next to the counter. The pizza rotisserie on top of the counter has it's door open and half a pizza lays on the ground upside down.

DENISE (CONT'D)

I swear to fucking God! Ughhhhhh!

Denise angrily bends down to pick up the pizza. Buck slowly moves a hand over to try and help pick it up.

DENISE (CONT'D)

Oh no! I can clean up your mess on my own, thank you very much. I hope you know you're paying for this!

BUCK

I'm sorry.

Buck pulls out his wallet but Denise snatches it out of his hands.

BUCK (CONT'D)

Hey, give that back!

DENISE

(observing Buck's license)

I need to know who you are in case you try and pull anything else...
Buck Harrison Jr.

Denise observes the license for a few more moments and then slides the wallet a good distance down the counter, far out of Buck's reach.

BUCK

If you would've just let me in we wouldn't be in this situation.

DENISE

If YOU would have just listened to me we wouldn't be in this mess. Do you do this to every closed store you come across?

BUCK

No, I was just trying to get to work on time but I hit an icy patch on the road.

DENISE

Why didn't you just tell me that in the first place?

BUCK

I was trying, you were just in such a rush...

DENISE

I was just trying to get out the door. I have things to do instead of being here.

BUCK

(sarcastically chuckling)
Don't we all.

The two stand in silence for a few moments. Buck puts his hand to his head and pulls it away to see his hand is even more red with blood than before.

Denise leans over the counter and grabs a roll of paper towels. She tosses the roll to Buck.

BUCK (CONT'D)

Thanks.

Denise reluctantly shuffles over to the trash can, keeping Buck and the wallet in the corner of her eye. She drags the can over next to Buck.

DENISE

I'll get you the first aid kit if you promise not to do any more crap while I'm getting it.

BUCK

I swear I won't.

Denise backs up along the counter and slides Buck's wallet farther down the counter with her as she walks.

She reaches the register and unlocks it and places Bucks wallet inside.

She reaches the first aid kit and swiftly swoops down to grab it. She shoots back up to see Buck who hasn't move an inch and gives him the kit.

Buck opens the kit and begins wrapping gauze around his head but runs out after a few wraps.

DENISE

Sorry, guess I must've used a lot.

BUCK

Don't you have some more?

DENISE

Maybe we do in the back but quite honestly I don't trust leaving you alone.

BUCK

You have my wallet so what good would it do me to leave.

DENISE

(sighing)

Alright, fine. But I swear to God...

BUCK

I promise I'm a good guy.

DENISE

Yeah right.

Denise stares at Buck sitting on the floor for a few moments and then turns around towards the stockroom door. She looks back at Buck a few times to make sure he isn't getting ready to run.

BUCK

Hey, try checking the back corner of the top shelf.

Denise stops in her tracks and turns around to Buck with an extremely confused look on her face. After a few moments she reluctantly turns back around and continues walking.

INT. - STOCK ROOM - NIGHT

Denise shines her flashlight into the stock room.

Before she goes around the corner the shelf she takes one last look at Buck through the door. He seems to be starting to lose consciousness, nodding his head a bit and having trouble keeping his eyes fully open.

She shines her light up the tall shelf and begins rummaging through a couple of the lower shelves, finding nothing.

She pulls a small ladder from a hook on the wall and unfolds it. She begins climbing and gets to the top to see the dusty highest shelf. She moves aside various boxes.

After a few boxes are moved, there in the corner is a box of gauze.

INT. - GAS STATION - NIGHT

Denise swings open the door and marches up to Buck, shining the flashlight onto him.

DENISE
How the fuck did you know the exact
place that...

Denise seems to forget what she is saying when she sees that Buck's condition has gotten worse. He can barely keep his eyes open and is slowly sliding down the counter, closer and closer to the ground.

DENISE (CONT'D)
Shit shit shit!

Denise grabs Buck by the shoulders and lays him flat on the ground.

DENISE (CONT'D)
Buck? Are you still there?

BUCK
I... I just need...

Denise unboxes the gauze and starts rapidly wrapping Buck's head.

Buck's eyes close all the way.

DENISE
(shaking Buck)
Come on man, you have to stay with
me. Just stay awake.

Buck's eyes shoot open for a few seconds but then his eyelids start to droop again.

BUCK
I'm... cold.

Denise looks around the store to see if there's anything that can help. She looks to a DISPLAY CASE NEAR SLUSHIE MACHINE to see hand warmers.

She rushes over and grabs an arm full of them. She runs back to buck and begins activating them.

Bucks eyes have fully closed and he is very still.

DENISE
(shaking Buck)
Buck, wake up. Buck!

Buck does not respond.

Denise puts a hand on Buck's chest.

No heartbeat.

DENISE (CONT'D)
Fuck! Oh fuck!

Denise jumps to her feet. She looks around the store. Her eyes catch gaze of the stockroom door. She runs to the door.

INT. - STOCK ROOM - NIGHT

Denise flies through the stock room door. She runs around the room.

She dashes around the room, ripping through boxes and hurling boxes to the side off the shelf.

She stands holding her head in defeat until her head shoots up suddenly and she races across the stock room.

She pushes aside old cleaning supplies next to a blank cork board to find a defibrillator latched to the wall.

She grabs the defibrillator and tugs.

It won't come off.

She picks at the latches and finally get them undone and grabs the device off the wall.

INT. - GAS STATION - NIGHT

The door from the stock room to the station explodes open. Denise comes skidding into the room. She suddenly freezes and drops the defibrillator.

Buck is gone.

Denise circles the store looking to see if Buck is still inside.

DENISE

Buck!

She sprints around to each corner of the store, searching high and low for anywhere Buck could be hiding. He is nowhere to be found.

DENISE (CONT'D)

You mother fucker! You lying
fucking bastard!

She runs over to inspect the spot where Buck was laying. Everything looks to be in the same broken manner as before, only no Buck is laying there now.

Denise looks up from the broken glass on the floor to the broken glass door. There is a trail of blood in the snow outside. She rushes over to her hanging coat and quickly puts it on.

EXT. - FRONT OF GAS STATION - NIGHT

Denise steps out the door into the storm. She squints her eyes and pulls her hood tighter to her head.

DENISE

Buck!

As she follows the trail of blood her foot hits an ice patch and she slips. She catches herself with her gauze wrapped hand.

When Denise goes to stand back up, she notices the gauze has become mostly unwrapped.

When she takes the rest of it off, her hand is fully healed.

She stares at her hand.

She snaps out of it, shoving her hand into her pocket.

EXT. - BACK OF GAS STATION - NIGHT

Denise rounds the corner to the sketchy back lot of the station.

The blood trail ends at a phone booth.

INT. - PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

Denise enters the phone booth but Buck is not inside.

She punches 911 into the phone.

When she puts the receiver to her ear she hears nothing until...

BUCK
(on phone)
Hey, try checking the back corner
of the top shelf.

DENISE
(screaming into the
receiver)
Buck! Where the fuck are you?!
Buck!

She listens some more only to hear nothing.

DENISE (CONT'D)
I'm out of my damn mind.

Denise slams the phone back onto its base and trudges away.

EXT. - FRONT OF GAS STATION - NIGHT

Denise rounds the corner back to the front of the station and approaches the door.

She is stopped dead in her tracks with a shocked look on her face.

The glass door of the station is back to normal, not a single crack in it.

Denise starts tugging on the handle but it is locked. She grabs the key from her belt and unlocks it.

INT. - GAS STATION - NIGHT

Denise walks into the gas station only to see it as it was before the whole Buck fiasco.

The floor is spotless.

The pizza is still in its rotisserie case.

None of the hand warmers are gone from the display.

Denise goes behind the counter and unlocks the drawer.

Buck's wallet is gone.

INT. - STOCK ROOM - NIGHT

Denise goes to the back of the stock room where she took the defibrillator from. It hangs there completely untouched.

Just as Denise is staring at the defibrillator a bit more, the power comes back on.

Denise can now see that the stock room is completely back to its usual.

Just as Denise is about to leave, she sees the old cork board hanging from the wall next to the defibrillator.

At a closer look, there is now a newspaper clipping on it.

BELOVED GAS STATION OWNER, BUCK HARRISON JR., DIES WHEN
LOCKED OUT OF GAS STATION

A shocked looking Denise dusts off the news paper so she can see the date it is from.

1987

Denise backs up from the board and looks around the stock room again. Everything is still in its place.

She climbs the ladder up to the top of the shelf once again. She pushes boxes around. Next to the box of gauze she finds a note.

"Thanks for letting me in. ~ Buck"

FADE OUT: