

Screenplay

by

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1

STORAGE ROOM - DAY

1

A cat hurries past. MADELYN, a young girl dressed in pajamas, crawls hands and knees after her. The cat hurries past in the other direction. The girl again follows.

MADELYN

I'm gonna get you!

The cat races off to the next room, while the girl curbs her pursuit, distracted by a box topped with a dusty, pointy hat. Madelyn reaches into the shadows beneath, pulling out a wand and an ominous-looking book. Madelyn mouths the word "Wow".

2

INT. OFFICE - DAY

2

The walls boast brightly colored posters from past marketing campaigns. A spacious computer screen lists out bullet points in a crisp font. WARREN, a bald man wearing both a serious suit and face, stands in a squatted haka pose, legs wide apart, eyes staring past his raised, folded arms. LAURA, a smartly dressed, young woman knocks on the door frame then slips in behind him.

WARREN

Laura, your presentation looks great!

LAURA

Thank you. I've been working hard on it, Sir!

WARREN

I'm just getting started. Let's do some warm-ups.

Warren glances backward until Laura nervously assumes the same pose.

WARREN

I can't believe this is finally happening. Fighting tooth and nail for every opportunity.

(stomps his right foot)

That's how you land a client like Oshiro Corp!

Warren exaggerates his breathing with his lips and cheeks, slapping his left elbow. Laura is about to slap her right elbow, quickly correcting herself.

LAURA  
Proud to be on the team, Sir!

Warren again looks back at Laura.

WARREN  
Focus on your breathing, Laura.

Warren continues his powerful breathing. Laura tries to mimic him without hyperventilating. He lands on one knee, arm raised and back straight and stiff. She follows suit.

WARREN  
Are you ready for this?

LAURA  
I'm ready for this, Sir.

Warren leaps to his feet and stands over Laura.

WARREN  
ARE YOU READY?

Laura jumps up to meet his gaze.

LAURA  
I'M READY! I'M READY!

WARREN  
(patting Laura on the  
shoulder)  
I'll see you in five.

Warren slips out the door.

3 INT. HALLWAY - DAY

3

With her laptop and papers under her arm, Laura arrives at a closed door labeled "CONFERENCE ROOM", about to turn off her phone. The image of a girl and the name "Madelyn" appears on its screen. Laura calms herself, then takes the call.

LAURA  
Maddy, I'm really, totally,  
seriously super busy right now. Is  
everything okay?

4 INT. CHILD ROOM - DAY

4

MADELYN, a young girl, wearing pajamas in bed, but sporting a witch hat and a magic wand, holds another phone, sparkling with decoration.

MADELYN  
I'm fine, Mom, but ...  
(glances sideways)  
We're out of catnip! Do you think  
you can you get some more?

INTERCUT BETWEEN LAURA AND MADELYN

LAURA  
What? No! She peed on my new tennis  
shoes. She's lucky I let her sleep  
in the house!

MADELYN  
(whiningly)  
But Mom!

LAURA  
Maddy, I can't do this right now. I  
have a big presentation. Love you,  
kisses!  
(makes frantic kissing noises)  
Bye!

Laura pockets her phone and opens the door.

MADELYN  
(shrugging)  
Oh well. She never seems to care  
about karma. Time for plan B.

5 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

5

Warren sits at a long table in a dark, shadowy room, lit only by the brightly projected image of a company logo across the room. To his right sits the venerable Japanese businessman, MR. SAKAMOTO, waiting expressionlessly, with an ASSISTANT in between.

WARREN  
(checking his watch)  
Our presentation will begin in just  
a moment.

ASSISTANT  
Hey, nice watch.

The door is pushed open by a stumbling Laura as relief washes over Warren's face.

WARREN  
Ah, there she is...

Laura dumps her papers and laptop onto the table, looking apologetic.

LAURA  
Umm... Konnichiwa, Sakamoto-san.

Laura bows toward Mr. Sakamoto, while looking for his approval. Mr. Sakamoto's eyes float upward, then, after a blink, he reluctantly nods his head.

WARREN  
May I introduce our talented  
Creative Director, Laura Andrews.

Warren pauses as Mr. Sakamoto's assistant translates.

INTERCUT BETWEEN SCENES:

CHILD ROOM

Madelyn flips a page of the recently discovered book.

MADELYN  
(chin resting on her palm)  
Let's see... Burning Eyes with  
Tears of Fire...

Madelyn's finger rests above her upper lip.

MADELYN  
Nah..

CONFERENCE ROOM

WARREN  
She's been hard at work, developing  
a marketing strategy for your  
global product launch. I'm sure  
you'll be pleased.

Without further ado, Laura?

Laura briskly approaches the screen and uses a clicker to start her presentation, displaying four demographics of people each sporting serious cameras. She wheels around, flashing a smile.

CHILD ROOM

A few more pages flip by.

MADELYN

Curse to the Contrary. Interesting.

Madelyn sits cross-legged and reads to herself with concentration. Her eyes close, then shift about with REM-like activity. She takes a deep breath, grins, and her eyes suddenly wide. Thunder rumbles from the window.

CONFERENCE ROOM

LAURA

The capabilities of today's amateur photography enthusiast is unprecedented.

CHILD ROOM

MADELYN

(chanting)

Convey your thoughts with words you need, the opposite will be your creed.

CONFERENCE ROOM

LAURA

Like never before, Oshiro Digital's new product line empowers us to...

The sound of thunder rumbles, and the lights dim momentarily.

LAURA

...forget the moment!

WARREN

Excuse me?

LAURA

(motioning at the words as if in the air)

Forget the moment!

Laura's eyes make contact with bewildered expressions. She clears her throat and clicks to the next slide. A vivid image of an autumn day floods the screen.

LAURA

When we market your unreliable, unusable, clunky, shitty Oshiro cameras, your customers will see

LAURA  
the truly hideous, blurry photos  
they can produce!

Warren and Mr. Sakamoto's assistant stare, speechless,  
mouths agape. Laura's eyebrows twitch downward a tiny bit.

LAURA (V.O.)  
Oh god. What the hell am I saying?

She steels herself, clicks to the next slide and continues.

Mr. Sakamoto looks expectantly toward his assistant who  
dutifully leans in to explain. Warren's arm wrenches the  
assistant away into a private huddle.

WARREN  
How much will it cost me for you  
not to translate this?

The assistant looks down at Warren's watch.

LAURA  
... and your sales should plummet  
in the fourth quarter.

MR. SAKAMOTO  
(barking in Japanese)  
Why aren't you translating?

The assistant holds his hands up, with an attractive watch  
on his left wrist, as he tries to calm Mr. Sakamoto down.

Laura's words tail off as she notices Warren's icy stare.

WARREN  
I don't know what you were trying  
to accomplish here, but you are so  
fired.

Mr. Sakamoto rises indignantly and storms out the door.

WARREN  
Wait! I can fix this!

Warren chases after him.

LAURA  
I understand what's going on! I  
meant to say all of that!  
Abstinence! Father abstainer!

She notices the assistant waiting patiently and turns  
around, eyes drooping with sorrow.

ASSISTANT

(nervous)

Say, by chance would you... would you be interested in going on a date tonight?

LAURA

Yes!

ASSISTANT

(nervous and excited)

I've seen you American girls on TV. Girls Gone Wild!

LAURA

(shaking her head)

I'm exactly like that! We're going on a date!

The ASSISTANT turns around, heading out the door, his fists in the air.

ASSISTANT

Yes! Spring break!

CHILD ROOM

Madelyn finishes polishing one of her fingers. She casually picks up her cell phone.

MADELYN

Yup! Time's up...

Madelyn starts texting a message.

CONFERENCE ROOM

Laura stands alone as signs of despair contort her face. Her cell vibrates on the table. Without picking it up, she looks down to it. The screen shows an incoming message from Madelyn, "Next time, just get the catnip."

Laura's eyes go wide with disbelief. A chuckle surfaces from within. Then she laughs. On the projector screen, her silhouette arches back, laughing maniacally.

FADE TO BLACK



Madelyn, with neither hat nor magic wand, lies on her bed flipping through the book, a bored expression on her face.

The cat stands near, craning her neck toward a page. She taps some text with her paw, then looks up, expectantly.

MADELYN  
(giggling)  
My little kitty cat wants me to  
cast a spell?

Madelyn silently reads from the page. She nods her head and strokes her chin, bemusedly impressed.

MADELYN  
I wonder what trans-fer-rence  
means.

She looks at the cat.

MADELYN  
Sure, why not? Looks like fun!

Madelyn wears a hat and lifts a wand. She closes her eyes, then pauses. The cat sits and continues to observe patiently as the lights dim. Madelyn's eyes attack the book, her hands clamping down on its edges.

MADELYN  
I switch myself, my mind in whole,  
become the one whose soul I stole!

Thunder rumbles.

MONTAGE

- Madelyn turns and gently moves off the bed.
- Madelyn gracefully lands on all fours, then stretches, arching her back.
- Madelyn pads toward the cat.
- Madelyn grins while placing a cap on a glass jar, with the cat in it.

END OF MONTAGE

Madelyn picks-up her cell phone, looks through the numbers and dials. The ringing stops, replaced by noise that sounds like Laura.

MADELYN  
I'm fine, Mom, but ...

Madelyn looks to the side where the cat is stuck in the glass jar. The cat's name tag says "Karma".

MADELYN (O.S.)  
We're out of catnip! Do you think  
you can you get some more?

FADE TO BLACK

Karma walks around, carefree, then curls up and purrs as she falls asleep.

FADE TO BLACK