

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 of an office 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 FOR THIS?

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 "MEETING 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
Maddie, 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.
(beat)
We're all out of catnip! Can you
get some more?

INTERCUT BETWEEN LAURA AND MADELYN

LAURA
What? No! That cat is not getting
more catnip. She peed on my new
tennis shoes. She's lucky I let her
sleep in the house!

MADELYN
(whiningly)
But Mom!

LAURA
Maddie, I can't do this right now.
I have a big presentation. I have
to go. 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.

Madelyn drops the phone and glances towards the cat,
stretching.

5 INT. MEETING ROOM - DAY

5

Warren sits at the head of a long table in a dark, shadowy conference room, lit only by the brightly projected image of a company logo. Seated at the other end is the venerable Japanese businessman, MR. SAKAMOTO, waiting expressionlessly, flanked on his left by an ASSISTANT.

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..

MEETING 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 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.

MEETING 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.

MEETING 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
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.

MEETING 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

6 INT. CHILD ROOM - DAY

6

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 raises her arms, 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.

FADE TO BLACK

7 INT. CHILD ROOM - DAY

7

MONTAGE

- Madelyn turns and gently leaves her seat.
- 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.

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 all out of catnip! Can you
get some more?

FADE TO BLACK

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

FADE TO BLACK