

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER - DAY

IRIS, 73, the type of sweet, cheerful grandma who passes out chocolate chip cookies to the neighborhood kids and does her best to always have a smile on her face, walks into the shelter holding a shopping bag.

The RECEPTIONIST, 16, a goth teenager who doesn't give a shit about anything, scrolls through TikTok on the reception desktop when Iris walks up to her.

RECEPTIONIST

Mrs. Doherty, it's you... again.

IRIS

Sweetheart, I told you, call me Iris. I accidentally picked up an extra bag of potatoes when I was grocery shopping-

RECEPTIONIST

Accidentally, I'm sure.

IRIS

And I thought I'd drop them off here.

RECEPTIONIST

The kitchen's in back.

Iris walks to the back.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Jesus, some old ladies need to get a life.

INT. IRIS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

PENNY, 65, Latina, perpetually clad in sweats and perpetually too old for this shit, cleans the floor when she hears the front door of the house open.

CHARLOTTE (O.S.)

Penny!

CHARLOTTE, 20, shows up at the door to the bathroom. She has a black eye.

Charlotte's a bombshell blonde with piercing blue eyes. She has curly locks and curves to envy.

Charlotte smiles at Penny, but Penny sighs.

PENNY  
Dios mio. Get in here.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER - KITCHEN - DAY

Iris places the bag of potatoes on the counter. She sniffs the air and turns around to see a CHEF, 40s, cooking soup.

IRIS  
Corn chowder?

The chef nods.

IRIS (CONT'D)  
Mind if I take a taste?

The chef hands her the ladle. Iris tastes it.

IRIS (CONT'D)  
Touch of paprika, splash of olive oil, you'll be right as rain.

Iris looks at her watch.

IRIS (CONT'D)  
Oh, I've gotta get going.

INT. IRIS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Penny rings out a washcloth and places it on Charlotte's eye. Charlotte winces.

CHARLOTTE  
Owe!

PENNY  
Hush! Eres una bebida!

INT. CEMETERY - DAY

Iris walks past rows of graves.

She has a basket of flowers in her hand. On one side of the basket are fresh flowers, and on the other side are old, wilted flowers.

She stops next to a grave- the grave of one "Jonathan Hopper"- with a wilted flower on it. She picks the flower up, puts it in her basket, and replaces it on the grave with a fresh one.

IRIS

This one's a lot nicer, John, don't you think?

EXT. CEMETERY - DR. CURTIS DOHERTY'S GRAVE - DAY

Iris now kneels in front of the grave, arranging something using the wilted flowers she's collected.

On the grave it reads, "Dr. Curtis Doherty: proud scholar, savior of the ill."

She finishes, steps away, and admires her handy work. The masterpiece she's created is a bunch of wilted flowers formed together into the shape of a dick and balls.

IRIS

Happy anniversary, Curt.

She flips off the grave.

Iris turns to the grave next door with the engraving reading "Anne Doherty: devoted mother of Charlotte, loving daughter of Iris and Curtis, faithful sister of Katie and Lara. RIP."

Iris puts a fresh flower from her basket on this grave, kisses the palm of her hand, and places her hand on the grave kiss side down.

IRIS (CONT'D)

Sorry you had to see that, sweetheart.

Her phone dings, and she looks at it. It's a message from Dr. Miller with an article link titled "The Miraculous Benefits of Chemo on Cancer Patients." She sighs and deletes it.

INT. IRIS' HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

The foyer has white walls, a high ceiling, and an elegant chandelier.

Iris enters.

IRIS

Charlie, I'm home!

INT. IRIS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Penny still nurses Charlotte's black eye. Charlotte puts her finger to her mouth, signaling for Penny to keep quiet.

PENNY

In here!

Charlotte mouths "what the hell?" to Penny as Penny smiles mischievously.

Iris enters.

IRIS

Charlie, what happened?

PENNY

What happened is a customer hit her, and her pimp did nothing.

CHARLOTTE

Hate to get technical, but pimps work with hookers. Hookers and strippers are different.

PENNY

Oh, my apologies, a customer hit her, and her strip pimp did nothing. Now, I'm off the clock.

Penny throws the washcloth at Iris.

PENNY (CONT'D)

You pay me to clean the house and water the plants, not to deal with-

Penny gestures to Charlotte.

PENNY (CONT'D)

-all this.

Penny leaves. Iris turns to Charlotte and crosses her arms. She sighs frustratedly.

CHARLOTTE

Don't you dare say it. We're not going over this again.

IRIS

I didn't say anything.

Iris puts Penny's washcloth back on Charlotte's eye.

IRIS (CONT'D)

But my friend Claudia's hiring a new assistant.

Charlotte sighs.

CHARLOTTE

All due respect, gran, but for the seven millionth time, I love dancing. There's no way in hell I'm quitting. This was a one-off thing.

IRIS

Black eye or not, I don't like you putting your bazongas out there for the world to see.

Iris sees a flyer on the counter next to the sink reading, "Ballers wanted: gentlemen's club for sale."

IRIS (CONT'D)

What's this?

CHARLOTTE

It's not a big deal. Reggie's moving to Florida, and if he can't sell the club- Well, my money's on it turning into a dental practice.

IRIS

What will you do then?

CHARLOTTE

Find another job at another club. Probably The Shop Club down the street.

IRIS

The one with a mural of a lady's fanny on the back.

CHARLOTTE

... Maybe.

Iris sighs.

IRIS

This time last year ago you wanted to go to business school.

CHARLOTTE

Remind me, was that before or after Stamford kicked me out.

Charlotte walks out of the room, saying as she goes:

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Don't forget to take your meds.  
Don't down them dry this time!

INT. IRIS' HOUSE - FOYER - DAY - (FLASHBACK)

TITLE CARD: ONE YEAR EARLIER

Charlotte enters wheeling her suitcase. She wears a Stamford University T-shirt. She looks exhausted and sad.

Iris enters shortly after. She hugs Charlotte.

IRIS

You were too good for those stuffy  
Stamford nerds anyway.

Charlotte can't help but chuckle.

IRIS (CONT'D)

If you need anything or want to  
talk, you know where to find me.

INT. IRIS' HOUSE - CHARLOTTE'S BEDROOM - DAY - (FLASHBACK)

Charlotte enters. Immediately, she's greeted the Stamford University flag on the wall. She starts balling and rips it down. She then looks over to her AP high school diploma and tears that down too, tears still in her eyes.

She then picks up a golden life-sized tennis racket trophy off her wall and smashes a bunch of debate team trophies off the top of her bookshelf. She shouts primally as she does so.

She takes off the Stamford T-shirt, throws it on the ground and stomps on it. When she's done, she looks at herself in the mirror and realizes she looks pretty damn good shirtless.

Iris enter the room holding a plate of cookies.

IRIS

I made cookies....

Charlotte doesn't acknowledge Iris and just keeps looking in the mirror.

IRIS (CONT'D)

I'll just leave these here.

Iris puts the cookies on the bed and scurries away.

INT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT - (PRESENT)

Iris parks her car on the side of the road. She gets out right in front of The Shop Club, a grimy, brick building with mold growing on the side of the walls. She enters-

INT. THE SHOP CLUB - NIGHT

-and is greeted by a room filled with 20 or so MEN who look like they are members of the mafia seated at tables facing the stage.

Fluorescent lights that are more fit to light a seedy operating room where organs are harvested give the stage an ominous glow as a dancer dances.

The BOUNCER, a muscly guy with a mustache that looks fit for either a porn actor or a performer in the Russian circus, sits behind a desk.

BOUNCER

Cover charge is \$20. Lap dances are \$50.

IRIS

Oh no, I'm just looking around.

BOUNCER

Oh... Well, you know, cougars are my thing.

IRIS

Oh, um, I'm flattered. I came to talk to the manager.

BOUNCER

Right this way.

The bouncer opens a door behind him.

INT. THE SHOP CLUB - BACK OFFICES - NIGHT

The bouncer leads Iris through a dingy and dimly lit hallway. He stops at a door.

BOUNCER

The boss is in a meeting with a dancer. He'll be out soon. And if you're interested after...

The bouncer growls seductively at Iris. Iris shudders.

The bouncer leaves.

Iris puts her ear to the door. The MANAGER, 45, has a thick Jersey accent.

MANAGER (O.S.)

Don't you ever talk to me like that again.

We hear the sound of a SLAP. The STRIPPER cries as she says her next line.

STRIPPER (O.S.)

I'm sorry, boss. I'm sorry.

Iris gets a nervous look on her face and spots an exit down the hall. She scurries towards the door.

EXT. THE SHOP CLUB - NIGHT

Iris exits the club. On the wall behind her is a giant mural of a lady with her legs spread to show off her cooch. Under the image is the caption, "The Shop Club: A classy joint."

INT. IRIS' HOUSE - IRIS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Iris looks at the dauntingly sized mole growing on her wrist. She then looks at the MBA from Stamford hanging on the wall.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY - (FLASHBACK)

YOUNG IRIS, 28, holds newborn ANNE while sitting up in the hospital bed. CURTIS, 30, a severe-looking, serious guy, stands next to her.

CURTIS

You'll get back to work someday, sweetheart. You'll continue your work climbing that corporate ladder like you were. Just, right now, Anne needs you.

Young Iris holds back tears.

IRIS

Mmhmm.

CURTIS

And really, we're in the perfect place right now. Now that I'm CMO, you never have to work another day in your life.

Young Iris looks at Anne.

INT. IRIS' HOUSE - IRIS' BEDROOM - NIGHT - (PRESENT)

Iris looks at a picture on 12-year-old Charlotte on her bedside table. She smiles sadly.

She then opens her phone, goes to the internet, and types in "How to run a strip club."

INT. IRIS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Iris sits at a desk with her phone in her hand. She opens a contact group labeled "Stamford roommates," selects a contact named "Miranda," and clicks the call button. She puts the phone to her ear.

It rings twice before MIRANDA, 72, picks up.

IRIS

Miranda?

EXT. MIRANDA'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Miranda wears way too skimpy a bikini for someone her age, and she gives exactly zero shits if you're offended by it. She sits in a chaise lounge by the pool in the back of a giant house, the kind you'd expect only the flyest of ballers to live in.

INTERCUT IRIS/ MIRANDA

MIRANDA

Iris, sweetheart, I love you, but why are you interrupting my Monday morning margarita?

Miranda picks up a margarita from the table beside her and takes a sip.

IRIS

Sorry to bother you. Do you still own that casino in Vegas?

MIRANDA

You know it.

IRIS

So, you know a thing or two about running a slightly... less than decent business?

MIRANDA

Excuse me? My casino is the classiest in the strip.

(to herself)

Especially since we stopped running that heroin ring out of the basement.

IRIS

I'm just gonna cut to the chase. I wanna buy a club-

(like she's uncomfortable saying it)

A strip club.

Miranda laughs.

IRIS (CONT'D)

I'm serious. My granddaughter's a, uh, dancer, and I just want to make sure she's safe. Her last boss was an anything goes kind of guy for the scumbags who came into the club, leading Charlotte to come home bruised and beaten. I can't let another sleaze-ball John take over her club.

MIRANDA

That's adorable. Now, not to be frank, darling, but why exactly should I give a crap?

IRIS

I need your help. I have no idea what I'm doing.

MIRANDA

Yeah, no shit. If you're really that worried, don't buy the club. Your granddaughter's an adult- I hope- she can handle her-

IRIS

I have cancer!

Beat.

MIRANDA

Are you getting treated?

IRIS

No.

MIRANDA

Why not?

IRIS

Not important. You're the first person I've told about the diagnosis. You've gotta keep tight lips about it.

MIRANDA

Jesus...

IRIS

I have maybe a year to live at best. I've never done anything with my life. My MBA has gone to waste. Plus, saving Charlotte from scumbags seems like a worthwhile way to spend my final days.

MIRANDA

Alright, I can help out with your little strip club debacle. I can't drop all my things and move to Long Island for some elderly Make a Wish type situation, but tell you what: I've got an associate who now lives in New York who might be able to help you out. He used to own a souvenir shop out here on the strip, but he left and settled on Long island. You'll love Cobra. I'll fill him in on everything.

IRIS

Did you say his name is Cobra?

INT. CAFE - DAY

Iris sits at a table when she hears the door chime and turns.

Weird Al's "White and Nerdy" begins playing in the background. A pack of Tic Tacs in the pocket of a pair of cargo pants rattles to the beat.

COBRA, 45, chunky, 4-eyed, picture a stock image that comes up when you search "white suburban man," has entered the building. He has a Canadian accent.

Cobra takes off his jacket and puts it on the back of the chair across the table from Iris and sits down.

IRIS

Cobra?

COBRA

That's my name, don't wear it out.

IRIS

You're Miranda's business contact from Vegas?

COBRA

Yup. I was part of her small business owners' club. I was the proud owner of Vegas Knick-knacks Unlimited.

IRIS

And your name is Cobra?

COBRA

You betchya.

Cobra pulls out his driver's license and shows it to Iris. It indeed says "Cobra McDonald."

COBRA (CONT'D)

Mom was a herpetologist.

IRIS

If you had a business in Vegas, why did you move to New York?

COBRA

Uh, so you were interested in owning a strip shop, eh?

IRIS

Yeah... I think. Is "shop" Canadian for "club?"

COBRA

Do you have any experience running a business?

IRIS

Well, I went to business school ages ago.

COBRA

Do you have a business plan?

IRIS

What's that?

COBRA

Have you ever been to a strip shop?

Iris doesn't answer.

COBRA (CONT'D)

Alright.

Cobra picks up his jacket.

COBRA (CONT'D)

Have a nice day.

Cobra starts to walk out when Iris yells:

IRIS

Wait!

Cobra turns around.

IRIS (CONT'D)

Do you know what it's like to love someone and see that loved one get hurt, and you're able to do nothing about it?

COBRA

My son died in a Zamboni accident.

IRIS

A Zamboni accident?

Cobra starts crying.

COBRA

I couldn't do anything. Once his scarf was stuck, it was over.

Iris hugs Cobra.

IRIS

Uh, yeah, sure. That's the same thing- essentially.

Iris releases the hug and looks Cobra in the eye.

IRIS (CONT'D)

My granddaughter dances at this club. I've had to sit back and watch helplessly as her boss treats her like garbage. This is my chance to do something. So please, I need your help.

COBRA

Okay.

IRIS

Okay?

Cobra wipes a tear away.

COBRA

Let's do this.

INT. BLISS BEACH GENTLEMEN'S CLUB - DAY

The main-stage is up at the front of the room, and thirty or so small tables with chairs surrounding them line the floor.

Iris and Cobra enter the building. REGGIE, 45, Black, fat, and proud of it, sits at a table in front of the main-stage with a phone to his ear. Reggie looks up at Iris and Cobra.

REGGIE

Yeah, tell you what brother, we'll table this for now. I've got some, uh, guests.

Reggie hangs up.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

May I help you?

IRIS

My granddaughter told me this, uh, gentlemen's club was up for sale.

REGGIE

Yeah, so if any of the ladies in your book club have grandkids who are rolling in it-

IRIS

We'd like to buy the club.

Reggie laughs.

REGGIE

You're cute.

IRIS

I know I'm cute. I'm also serious.

REGGIE

I'm not selling my club to two people who look like their favorite hobby is crocheting.

COBRA

I'm actually more into baking sourdough recently.

Iris gives Cobra a dirty look.

REGGIE

Get lost.

Cobra and Iris turn towards the door looking defeated, but then Iris gets a determined look on her face.

She turns around, takes out a checkbook from her purse, writes something on a check, and then shows it to Reggie.

IRIS

You were saying?

REGGIE

I've gotta go look up how much a yacht costs.

IRIS

So the place is ours?

Reggie looks at the check again and smiles.

REGGIE

I ain't never seen a club run by Mr. Rogers and his mom, but there's a first for everything.

Iris excitedly shakes Reggie's hand. Cobra hugs Iris, and Iris' smile turns to a nervous frown.

EXT. STRIP CLUB - DAY

Iris and Cobra leave the club through the main entrance.

The leaves have all fallen at this point, and we can see Iris and Cobra's breath when they speak.

IRIS

Did I really just spend my entire life savings on buying a strip club?

COBRA  
Yeah, woohoo! Team-

Cobra looks at the entrance to the club to see the name of it.

COBRA (CONT'D)  
Team Bliss Beach! Booyah!

IRIS  
What the hell is wrong with me? I  
have no idea how to run a business!

COBRA  
Didn't you say you went to business  
school?

IRIS  
Yeah, in 1970. God, I'm such a  
dunce! That was my whole  
inheritance from Curtis. Do you  
think he'll give me my check back  
if I just-

Iris turns towards the door, but Cobra holds her back.

COBRA  
Don't worry, with my business  
experience and your... impulsivity,  
we can do this. All the best  
businesses have a team like us.

IRIS  
Really?

COBRA  
... Probably? I mean, my business  
went under, but that's gotta be  
just because I wasn't a part of  
this crack team.

Cobra holds up his hand for a high five, and Iris starts crying.

INT. IRIS' HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Iris looks at herself in the mirror.

IRIS  
It's okay, everything's gonna be  
alright.

(MORE)

IRIS (CONT'D)

Sure, you just spent all the money you have on a club you have no idea how to run, and you partnered up with a guy who definitely hosted a failed public access kids show at some point in his life-

CHARLOTTE (O.S.)

Gran!

Iris gets a determined look on her face.

IRIS

But you're doing this for Charlotte.

Iris exits out of the bathroom to the

HALLWAY

Iris exhales out her anxiety and prepares to call for Charlotte. Before she can Charlotte comes around the corner holding a foot bath.

CHARLOTTE

There you are. Time for your pedicure. We've gotta get those nasties washed.

IRIS

Oh, alright.

CHARLOTTE

You look like you wanna tell me something.

Iris sighs.

IRIS

It can wait.

Charlotte holds up a bottle of green nail polish.

CHARLOTTE

I know it's a bit bold, but I'm thinking green this time. Go big or go home, you know.

IRIS

Go big or go home.

CHARLOTTE

You sure there's nothing you want to tell me?

IRIS

Oh, um, I'm thinking of getting hair extensions. What do you think?

CHARLOTTE

For your head hair or your back hair? Come on, I'll heat the water up.

Charlotte goes into the bathroom and Iris gets a nervous look on her face.

INT. SUBURBAN STREET NEAR FANCY RESTAURANT - DAY

Cobra and Iris walk on the sidewalk.

COBRA

Remember, the most important thing when you meet new employees is gaining their respect. Show them you're the alpha-beaver.

IRIS

Right... How do I do that?

COBRA

You'll figure it out.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - DAY

TITLE CARD: 15 MINUTES LATER

KIKI, 29, Black, chunky figure, fiery eyes to match her fiery personality, enters.

Kiki has boobs big enough to double as flotation devices and a face that has seen it all.

WAITERS walk around in white suits holding sterling silver trays. There's a VIOLINIST playing classical music in the corner. A MAITRE-D' stands by the entrance. Kiki looks extremely confused by her surroundings.

KIKI

Toto, I think we're not in Hicksville anymore.

MAITRE-D'

You must be with Bliss Beach. Let me show you to your table.

The maitre-d' leads Kiki towards a table with four women already sitting there:

Seven DANCERS sit at the table, some of whom include DIXON, 19, with perky boobs and a perkier personality, NIKE, 24, sharp, intelligent eyes and a pretty face, and EMERALD, 35, short, busty Latina woman with a caring face but untrusting eyes.

Iris and Cobra are at the table too.

All the girls look weirded out and confused.

A waiter finishes up filling everyone's glass with water.

WAITER

Nice to see you again, Mrs.  
Doherty.

IRIS

You as well, Stephen.

The waiter leaves as Kiki and the maitre-d' get to the table.

IRIS (CONT'D)

Oh good, you must be Kiki. Have a  
seat.

The maitre-d' leaves. Kiki sits.

Cobra takes a piece of bread from the basket in the center of the table.

COBRA

You've gotta try the French rolls,  
they're to die for.

The girls all just stare at Cobra.

COBRA (CONT'D)

Alright, more for me.

Cobra stands up, revealing his fanny pack. He picks out three rolls and puts them in the pack. Kiki whispers to Emerald:

KIKI

What the fuck is going on?

Iris notices business casually dressed patrons staring at the very casually dressed girls at her table. She gets a nervous look on her face.

Charlotte runs up to the table.

CHARLOTTE

Sorry I'm-

She sees Iris. Her face falls.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

-late.

IRIS

Charlie, I-

Charlotte puts her hand up to stop Iris.

CHARLOTTE

The name's Sapphire.

Charlotte's rage seethes, but for now she just pulls out a chair and sits down next to Nike. The two of them hold hands under the table.

Iris is hurt but just sits back down as if nothing happened.

IRIS

Alright, let's get down to business, ladies. My name is Iris Doherty, and I'm the new owner of Bliss Beach. This is my associate.

Cobra says with a mouth full of French roll:

COBRA

I'm Cobra McDonald.

IRIS

With our combined experience, we have spent a a countless number of years reading Entrepreneur Magazine.

Kiki whispers snarkily to Emerald:

KIKI

This is gonna be good.

IRIS

Young lady, do you have something to say?

KIKI

Uh, no. Sorry.

Dixon passes Cobra a napkin. Cobra opens up the napkin and sees Dixon has drawn a set of boobs on there with the caption "DD." Cobra starts scribbling something on the napkin.

IRIS

Now, we want to know who all of you are off the stage as well as on, so I thought it would be fun if we played a little getting-to-know-you game.

Iris takes a heavily sequined talking stick out of her purse. Kiki can't hold in a giggle.

IRIS (CONT'D)

Excuse me?

Kiki says while still laughing:

KIKI

Sorry.

Iris frowns. She puffs out her chest.

IRIS

Young lady, you can get out of here right now!

Cobra passes the note back to Dixon. He has turned the boob doodles into sunflowers and the Ds into bumblebees. Dixon is confused.

KIKI

What?

IRIS

I've had enough of your disrespect. You're fired!

KIKI

I'm sorry. I'll shut up.

IRIS

No, too late. Get out of here.

Kiki is shocked. So is everyone else.

KIKI

You know what, fine. It's for the best 'cause there's no way I'm letting some bitch ass, Better Home and Gardens ass hoe tell me what to do.

Kiki lifts her middle finger and leaves. Iris crosses her arms proudly.

EMERALD

You cannot frigging do that!

IRIS

Well, I just did.

EMERALD

Kiki's got a baby girl to feed, and she was already on food stamps!

IRIS

... Oh.

EMERALD

Yeah, "oh" is right.

Iris looks around the table. All the dancers are pissed.

Cobra whispers to Iris:

COBRA

That might not've been the best way to show you're the alpha beaver.

EXT. FANCY RESTAURANT - DAY

Iris leans against the wall of the restaurant looking defeated while all the dancers leave.

Nike exits the restaurant holding Charlotte's hand. Nike looks at Iris.

CHARLOTTE

Come on, we're gonna be late.

NIKE

I think I need a smoke. Meet you there?

Charlotte and Nike kiss, and Charlotte leaves. Nike walks over to Iris, pulls out a box of cigarettes from her purse, and offers one to Iris.

IRIS

Oh no, I haven't smoked in years... Are those menthols?

NIKE

Mmhmm.

IRIS

Give one here.

Nike gives Iris a cigarette and lights it up.

NIKE  
Tough crowd, huh.

Iris sighs.

Emerald leaves the restaurant and approaches Iris.

EMERALD  
Hey perra, what the hell gives you  
the right to fire Kiki like that?

Nike whispers in Iris' ear:

NIKE  
Perra means "bitch."

IRIS  
I got that, thank you.

EMERALD  
Who the hell do you think you are?

Iris doesn't answer. Emerald sighs angrily and walks away.

NIKE  
Don't worry about Emerald. She's  
our mama-bear.

IRIS  
Don't poke the mama-bear. Noted.

INT. IRIS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Iris sits eating lunch.

She hears the front door open. Charlotte walks into the kitchen, takes the tissue stuffed in the left breast cup out of her bra, balls it up, and throws the ball at Iris.

Charlotte is seething.

CHARLOTTE  
How could you do this to me?

IRIS  
Maybe I didn't buy the club for  
you. I've always had a closeted  
interest in-  
(like she's uncomfortable  
saying it)  
-strip clubs.

CHARLOTTE

You always do things like this!

IRIS

Things like what?

CHARLOTTE

You volunteered to direct my sixth grade school play because the girl who got the lead role was teasing me.

IRIS

That was ages ago.

CHARLOTTE

Or last week when I asked for my burrito bowl with guac on the side, and it came on top, and you threatened to sue Chipotle.

IRIS

You know I have a simmering feud with Chipotle!

CHARLOTTE

You've always been a bit over-protective, but you've gone way over the line this time! You need to get it through your head that I'm a grown-up now. I can handle myself.

IRIS

I just love you and want to make sure you're safe. You're all I have left, Charlie.

CHARLOTTE

If you really loved me, you'd trust me to take care of myself.

IRIS

If I did that, you'd be a bimbo for the rest of your life.

Iris covers her mouth, immediately regretting what she just said.

Charlotte sighs angrily.

CHARLOTTE

Let's get one thing straight: when we're at the club, I'm your employee. We act like we don't have any relationship outside of work. No special treatment, none of the kiddie gloves. If the other dancers find out my grandma bought the club 'cause Reggie was being mean to me...

Charlotte takes the tissue stuffed in the right breast cup of her bra out and throws it at Iris. She leaves the room. As she walks away, she mutters:

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

You forgot to take your morning meds.

Iris looks down and sees six pills on a napkin beside a glass of water. On the napkin next to the pills, Charlotte has drawn a doodle of a heart.

Iris puts her face in her hands. She knows she's screwed up royally this time.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Iris peruses the dairy aisle when she sees Kiki shopping with ELLIE, 3, an utterly adorable kid with pigtails and a Dora backpack, next to her.

Iris moves passed, trying hard not to be seen, but Kiki still clocks her.

Ellie starts crying.

ELLIE

But I want it, mommy!

KIKI

No sweetie, we need to cut back right now. Mommy lost her job.

Kiki gives Iris some serious side eye.

The bouncer from earlier passes with his shopping cart. He smiles seductively at Iris. Iris shudders.

INT. NIKE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Charlotte paces around angrily.

CHARLOTTE

Some people just want to control your entire life. You know what I'm saying?

NIKE

Being that you haven't told me any of the circumstances leading to you angrily pacing around my apartment, I really I don't.

Charlotte sighs and collapses on the couch.

NIKE (CONT'D)

I do have some good news.

Nike holds up a five dollar bill. She puts it in a jar on a coffee table labeled "Move out west." Nike sits on the couch.

NIKE (CONT'D)

Only like \$100,000 more, and we'll be in LA in no time.

CHARLOTTE

Think about it: you'll be a famous movie star, and I'll be dancing on the laps of the rich and famous.

NIKE

Mmm.

CHARLOTTE

Mmm what?

NIKE

Just, I'd prefer if my girlfriend's life plan consisted of a bit more than dancing on laps and/or poles. Ya know, this whole "I can never succeed so why try?" act isn't as cute as you think it is.

CHARLOTTE

You don't have to like dancing but I love it. Is that really do hard for you to believe?

NIKE

Twerking naked is not typically involved in the aspirations of a former valedictorian.

Charlotte shouts angrily:

CHARLOTTE  
Well I'm not the valedictorian  
anymore, am I?!

Nike backs off.

INT. KIKI'S APARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - DAY

The apartment is small and cramped but clean. Children's toys are scattered around the floor.

Ellie digs through Kiki's purse as Kiki reads a book on the couch. Ellie finds Kiki's lipstick and uncaps it.

KIKI  
No sweetie, that's mommy's.

Kiki tries to take the lipstick from Ellie, but before she can, Ellie smears a line of lipstick on Kiki's cheek. Ellie and Kiki both laugh.

There's a KNOCK at the door. Kiki gets up to answer it. It's Iris. She holds a shopping bag.

Kiki begins to close the door, but Iris puts her hand on it so she can't.

IRIS  
I think the two of us got off on  
the wrong foot.

KIKI  
Yeah, no shit.

IRIS  
Can I come in?

Kiki sighs.

KIKI  
Fine.

Iris enters.

IRIS  
I love your lipstick, by the way.

INT. KIKI'S HOUSE - KIKI'S BEDROOM - DAY

Kiki sits on the bed cleaning off the lipstick from her cheek with a makeup wipe. Iris stands next to the bed. Kiki gestures to a mole on Iris' wrist.

KIKI  
What's that on your wrist?

IRIS  
Nothing.

Iris pulls her sleeve further down to cover up the mole.

Iris tries to sit down.

KIKI  
You can stand.

IRIS  
Alright.

The sound of Ellie's laughter comes from the other room.

IRIS (CONT'D)  
You seem like a good mom.

KIKI  
I am a good mom.

IRIS  
I'm sorry about what happened. I think the two of us need to start over. I want you to come back and dance. You deserve a second chance.

KIKI  
I don't work for old bitches who tell me what to do. Have you ever stepped foot in a strip club before you bought Bliss Beach?

IRIS  
Well, no, but-

KIKI  
Yeah, you don't seem like the type. Why did you buy it then?

IRIS  
Uh...

KIKI  
What? Did you get all hot and heavy while watching *Magic Mike* and thought, "hey, Matthew McConaughey's job looks easy enough."

IRIS

No.

KIKI

Then why did you buy it?

Iris doesn't answer.

KIKI (CONT'D)

Get the fuck out of my house.

IRIS

Fine.

She gives the shopping bag to Kiki and leaves. Kiki opens the bag. In it is the box of ice cream Ellie wanted.

INT. BLISS BEACH GENTLEMEN'S CLUB - BACK OFFICES - DAY

Cobra makes out with Dixon while sitting on the office desk. Iris enters.

IRIS

What's going on here?!

Dixon gets in one last squeeze of Cobra's ass before Iris pries her away from Cobra.

DIXON

Meet me tonight? I'll show you around my dungeon.

COBRA

Yes ma'am.

Dixon slaps Cobra's ass and leaves. Iris glares at Cobra.

IRIS

Shouldn't you be working on balancing the books?

Cobra regains his bearings and hands her a binder full of papers.

COBRA

Already did.

Iris skims through the binder. She's pleasantly surprised as she flips through pages.

IRIS

You did all of this in an hour?

COBRA

All this and a bit of... ya know  
with my D-girl.

Iris rolls her eyes and continues looking through the binder.

IRIS

Alright, all is forgiven. How did  
you get so good at accounting?

COBRA

Graduated with a BA in accounting  
Suma Cum Laude.

IRIS

Hmm. You know, you could've told me  
that while I was crying on the  
curb.

The door to the room bursts open, and Charlotte enters with  
her phone in her hand.

CHARLOTTE

The hell is this? Why do I not have  
a main-stage dance opening night?

IRIS

I put Cobra in charge of the  
opening night line-up.

CHARLOTTE

A likely story.

COBRA

It's true. I chose the line-up  
based on the, uh, boobie sizes of  
all the dancers. Unfortunately, I  
could only fit in C-cups and higher  
on the main-stage.

CHARLOTTE

It's disgusting that you know my  
tit size.

COBRA

Reggie left me a neat little chart.

Cobra shows Charlotte a chart with the girls names written  
next to crude-to-scale doodles of the girls boobs and butts.

CHARLOTTE

Gross. I've been working on my  
routine for weeks. I deserve a main-  
stage dance.

COBRA  
Sawry about that.

IRIS  
Charlotte, can we talk?

Without saying a word, Charlotte grunts and leaves the office.

INT. BLISS BEACH GENTLEMEN'S CLUB - BATHROOM - NIGHT

TITLE CARD: 2 DAYS LATER

Iris' washes her hands with her sleeves rolled up. The bare skin on her arm is discolored and covered in moles indicative of skin cancer

The door opens. Iris quickly rolls her sleeves back down and looks to see who just entered.

A dancer enters the bathroom wearing lingerie. She glares at Iris as she goes into a stall.

Iris opens a cabinet door beneath the sink and pushes back the various cleaning products to reveal a bottle of whiskey and shot glasses. She quickly pours herself a glass and downs it.

She hears the toilet flush, rushes to put the whiskey back in place, and leaves.

INT. BLISS BEACH STRIP CLUB - HALL - CONTINUOUS

Iris exhales heavily, smiles, and begins walking down the hall.

Cobra passes by and sees Iris.

COBRA  
Hey! Somebody's looking a bit more confident.

IRIS  
Let's just say I'm glad Reggie told me where he keeps his secret stash of whiskey.

INT. BLISS BEACH GENTLEMEN'S CLUB - DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

All the dancers are applying makeup and hanging out while dressed like sexy cops, nurses, etc.

Kiki enters the room.

DIXON  
Hey girl. Long time no see.

KIKI  
No shit. Hand me my fishnets.

Emerald passes Kiki a pair of fishnet stockings.

KNOCK KNOCK.

Iris' voice comes from behind the door.

IRIS (O.S.)  
It's Iris. Can I come in?

EMERALD  
Door's open.

Iris enters. She sees Kiki and smiles.

IRIS  
Glad to have you back.

KIKI  
Whatever.

IRIS  
Now ladies, I know I'm not the most conventional strip club owner, and we've gotten off to a bit of a rocky start. But that doesn't matter tonight. What matters is that you all are beautiful and talented and you're gonna kill it.

There's a heavy silence for a beat. Iris looks nervous.

EMERALD  
That was almost impressively sappy.

Iris frowns.

Cobra enters the room with a clipboard in his hand as he shields his eyes from the half dressed ladies.

COBRA  
10 minutes till we open. Everyone get in your places.

INT. BLISS BEACH GENTLEMEN'S CLUB - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Iris does final checks to make sure everything is ready backstage. She walks past where the dancers except Atasha and Emerald are lined up and preparing to go on. Iris stops at Charlotte and whispers:

IRIS  
Break a leg.

Charlotte doesn't even acknowledge Iris.

DIXON  
Hey, where are Atasha and Emerald?

INT. BLISS BEACH GENTLEMEN'S CLUB - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Iris walks through the hallway backstage when she hears CRYING through the bathroom door.

She opens it-

INT. BLISS BEACH GENTLEMEN'S CLUB - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

-To find a dancer crying and Emerald hugging her.

EMERALD  
I know, baby, I know it h-

Emerald notices Iris.

EMERALD (CONT'D)  
What the hell, man?

IRIS  
Sorry!

Iris leaves.

INT. BLISS BEACH GENTLEMEN'S CLUB - CLUB FLOOR - NIGHT

The club is in full swing. Men hoot and holler as Dixon does her dance on stage to Marilyn Monroe's "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend." Dixon makes a meal out of her performance and clearly has a blast on stage as the crowd showers her with tips.

The rest of the dancers except Emerald walk around offering clients lap dances.

Iris walks around the club observing the activity taking place on the club floor.

The DJ says from the booth next to the stage:

DJ  
 And coming up next we have Emerald  
 dancing to... "Mr. Sandman?"  
 (to himself)  
 Why's the whole soundtrack tonight  
 from the 50s?

Nike dances on a MAN's, 28, lap. The man's hands are near Nike's breast.

Iris sees this while walking by, takes the man's wrist, and moves his hands down to Nike's waist. The man is pissed, but Nike smiles in Iris' direction as she walks away.

Charlotte shouts from a table near the bar:

CHARLOTTE  
 Hey!

Iris walks over to where Charlotte stands next to a table of four men. MAN 1, 45, stands next to her, rubbing his wrist.

IRIS  
 What's going on here?

CHARLOTTE  
 Nothing.

MAN 1  
 This bitch slapped me.

Iris turns to Charlotte.

IRIS  
 What happened?

CHARLOTTE  
 It was nothing, gr- uh, Iris.

IRIS  
 Tell me what happened.

CHARLOTTE  
 No.

IRIS  
 Tell me, or I'll have to assume it  
 was your fault, and there will be  
 consequences.

Charlotte crosses her arms and sighs exasperatedly.

CHARLOTTE  
He tried to touch my crotch.

Iris turns to Man 1 with a face that says she means business.

IRIS  
Apologize to her.

MAN 1  
You're not gonna ask my side of the story?

IRIS  
Apologize to my, uh, dancer, or I'll have you escorted out.

MAN 1  
Fine, I'm sorry.

IRIS  
Thank you.

MAN 1  
Slut.

Iris slaps Man 1 across the cheek. He recovers and tries to grab Iris' arm. Before he can, Charlotte lands a swift kick in the balls.

The man's table-mates get up. They're all huge and very scary looking.

CHARLOTTE  
Shit. Iris, go!

Iris runs as a huge fight starts breaking out. One of the big guys throws a chair at Charlotte, but Charlotte ducks, and it narrowly misses her and hits a DUDE sitting behind her.

That dude and his 5 table-mates get up and start beating on the guy who threw the chair. Soon enough, it's a club-wide fight with 20 or so men all going down.

EXT. BLISS BEACH GENTLEMEN'S CLUB - NIGHT

Iris runs out of the club and turns to the bouncer standing outside. This is GREG, 26, skinny kid picking at his nails and not giving a shit about what's going on in the club.

IRIS  
What are you doing? Mayhem's  
breaking out in there!

Greg turns towards the glass door and sees the fight.

GREG  
Ooh, yeah... Those guys look pretty  
intense.

Iris' face says "unbelievable."

IRIS  
Yeah.

GREG  
Damn sis, sucks to be you.

All the dancers, staff, and Cobra run out of the club through  
the back exit. Iris walks towards them. She turns to Cobra.

IRIS  
Didn't I put you in charge of  
hiring the new bouncer?

COBRA  
You like Greg? Nicest guy who came  
in to interview.

Iris sighs.

IRIS  
Has anyone called the cops yet?

COBRA  
I'm on it.

Cobra takes his phone out of his pocket. Emerald puts her  
hand on Cobra's wrist to stop him from making the call.

EMERALD  
You call the cops, there'll be an  
investigation. They might shut this  
whole place down. I've seen it  
happen before. My last club got  
nixted that way.

IRIS  
Well, then what do you suggest we  
do?

Emerald starts walking away from the club.

IRIS (CONT'D)  
What's that supposed to mean?

EMERALD  
Figure it out!

It takes a second, but gradually, everyone disperses and walks away.

INT. IRIS' HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Iris and Charlotte enter the house.

IRIS  
Okay, a couple take aways from this experience: 1. Men are pigs, and running a safe strip club is damn near impossible, 2. I have no idea how to make the club safer to begin with, and 3. You and all your coworkers hate me when I'm just trying to help you guys.

Charlotte crosses her arms.

Iris sits on the couch and puts her hands over her face.

IRIS (CONT'D)  
I shouldn't have done this. I have no idea what I'm doing.

CHARLOTTE  
Yeah, now you're getting it.

Charlotte leaves the room.

The doorbell RINGS.

IRIS  
No one's home!

KIKI (O.S.)  
Bitch, I see the lights on. Either you're home or your energy bill's through the roof.

Iris opens the door.

KIKI (CONT'D)  
Hey.

IRIS  
What are you doing here?

KIKI

I came here to tell you not to give up.

IRIS

Tonight was a disaster. I'm not cut out for this.

KIKI

I know, but you can't quit. All the girls are relying on you.

IRIS

The club will get a new owner.

KIKI

I've been a stripper my entire adult life. I've had a ton of douche bosses. Not one has ever apologized to me. Not one has ever called me and my coworkers beautiful. Not one has ever bought my baby girl her favorite ice cream. You have to keep fighting. If you throw the towel in now, you're telling all the girls at the club that they don't deserve to have a manager who gives a shit about them.

A heavy silence before Iris says:

IRIS

Okay.

KIKI

Okay?

IRIS

I have to keep fighting. For you, for Emerald, for everyone.

KIKI

I have faith in you.

IRIS

I have faith in me.

KIKI

Bitch, bring it in.

Kiki opens her arms for a hug. Iris wraps her arms around Kiki.

IRIS  
Can you please stop calling me  
bitch?

KIKI  
I'll think about it.

Kiki releases from the embrace.

KIKI (CONT'D)  
You've got this, girl.

She leaves, and Iris closes the door. She reaches into her  
purse and pulls out a pair of sunglasses.

IRIS  
Enough crying. It's badass boss-  
lady time.

Iris puts the sunglasses on, crosses her arms, and smiles.

THE END