

THE BALCONY

Written by

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EXT. BALCONY, 10TH FLOOR OF OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

A lame office Christmas party carries on inside as JOSH (30s) opens the glass doors. He walks up to the balcony and takes a breath.

CHLOE
This party blows, huh?.

JOSH
Fuck!

Josh jumps back in surprise and CHLOE (30s) laughs at his expense. She leans against the wall next to the door, smoking a cigarette.

JOSH (CONT'D)
What are you doing out here?

CHLOE
What are *you* doing here?

JOSH
I asked first.

CHLOE
Real mature.

JOSH
Karaoke isn't really my scene.

CHLOE
Yeah, me neither.

Chloe laughs again and joins Josh at the edge of the balcony. She exhales smoke.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
What a horrible architect, am I right?

JOSH
What's that?

CHLOE
Who would design a balcony for an office building? It's like they wanted people to jump.

JOSH
Yeah. Tempting.

Chloe offers a cigarette.

CHLOE
You want one?

JOSH
Chloe, I quit. Remember?

CHLOE
Yeah, sure.

JOSH
What's that supposed to mean?

CHLOE
Nothing, I swear.

JOSH
If you have something to say-

CHLOE
If you'd actually quit, you'd be
lecturing me by now. Drop the act,
I know you better.

Josh looks at the glass door behind him, still paranoid.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
There's no one else around.

He accepts the cigarette from Chloe and she lights it.

JOSH
City lights look nice tonight.

CHLOE
Yeah, I suppose.

JOSH
Yeah?

CHLOE
I love the city, but I do miss the
stars. Guess that's the trade off.

JOSH
There a lot of stars where you're
from?

CHLOE
Yuma, Arizona? Just a few, yeah.

JOSH
You're from Arizona?

CHLOE
Is that surprising?

JOSH
A little. I just mean, you never
told me that before.

CHLOE
Didn't mean to. I'm still a bit
drunk, slip of the tongue.

JOSH
Right. How long did you live there?

CHLOE
I grew up there. Stuck around for a
while after high school. Five years
ago, I left and never looked back.

JOSH
What made you leave?

CHLOE
Nothing for me there. Why the fuck
would I stay?

JOSH
Yeah, but-

CHLOE
Did you see Kate tonight?

Josh rolls his eyes.

JOSH
Don't start.

CHLOE
Well, of course you saw her. She's
wearing a highlighter for a dress.

JOSH
It's always like this with you! The
second we talk about anything real,
you deflect.

CHLOE
Oh come on, she looks like a fat
banana! Tell me you don't see it.

JOSH
Do you always have to be so mean?

CHLOE
Everyone else is.

JOSH
That's your opinion. Thanks, then.

Josh gestures to his cigarette and turns to leave. Chloe smirks.

CHLOE
You're angry with me.

JOSH
No, I'm not.

CHLOE
That's your angry face. I know it well.

JOSH
I'm just disappointed. That's nothing new, so-

CHLOE
Oh God, you are such a dad. Lighten up.

JOSH
This is why we broke up. You don't know how to have a serious conversation. It's not funny anymore.

Josh starts to open the door.

CHLOE
Come on, don't leave.

JOSH
Goodnight, Chloe.

CHLOE
I got divorced. That's why I left home.

Josh closes the door and turns around in shock. He walks back over to Chloe at the balcony.

JOSH
You were married?

CHLOE

He was awful. And I was trapped for so long. So I told myself I would never feel that way again.

Chloe pulls out an engagement ring.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

Still got this too.

JOSH

Do you just carry that everywhere?!

CHLOE

I haven't found the right way to get rid of it. I'm between throwing it in an active volcano or feeding to an alligator.

JOSH

Sounds like a healthy way of dealing with things.

CHLOE

Don't you judge me-

JOSH

All you're doing is holding onto the past.

CHLOE

Fuck you-

JOSH

Because you're scared of moving on! And afraid of letting yourself feel again.

CHLOE

I'm not afraid of anything.

JOSH

Prove it.

CHLOE

Fine!

Chloe chucks the ring over the balcony and starts laughing hysterically. Josh looks over the edge in horror.

JOSH

What the hell!

CHLOE
You wanted me to get rid of it!

JOSH
I meant sell it, or throw it in the
trash! You could hurt someone.

CHLOE
I feel great!

Chloe grabs Josh's hand and drags him through the door.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
Come on, I need a drink ASAP.