

Skitzo

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FADE IN:

INT. CAR - NIGHT

CHARLES, 35, squints at the windshield. The wipers CLUNK from side to side, but cannot keep up with the pounding rain.

The radio cuts between static and a news report.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

Along the entire coast of Florida...
extreme flooding in low-lying areas...
everyone should seek shelter... the
following counties... evacuation...

Charles leans forward. A red glare appears on the windshield.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The car pulls off the road and into an empty, flooded parking lot. It stops in front of an old, weathered motel.

The Vacancy sign blinks off and on. Then off.

Charles exits the car with his coat flapping over his head. He runs through ankle-deep water to the motel.

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - NIGHT

Charles opens the door, walks in, and closes the door. He shakes the water off his coat. Combs his hair back with his hand.

MAGGIE (O.S.)

Sorry, we're closed.

Charles looks up.

CHARLES

The door was open.

MAGGIE, 30, blonde pony-tail, bulky sweatshirt, yet pretty, stands behind the front desk. Candles light the room.

MAGGIE

I meant to lock it. I can't let you
stay. The electric keeps cutting
out. There's no hot water.

CHARLES

That's okay. I just need a place to sleep tonight. All the roads are flooded. I'll pay double.

Maggie stares at Charles as he drips onto the floor.

MAGGIE

That'll be one - uh - two hundred dollars.

Charles smiles and walks up to the desk. Maggie places a room key on the counter.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

It's right next door. I don't allow any smokin' in the room.

Charles hands Maggie a credit card.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

The lines are down. I'll get it tomorrow. You ain't goin' nowhere...Charles.

Charles takes his card and puts it back in his wallet.

CHARLES

Say, you wouldn't happen to know if there's a diner open somewhere?

MAGGIE

The diner's closed.

CHARLES

Already? It's not even seven.

MAGGIE

What part of evacuation do you want me to explain?

CHARLES

Right.

Charles picks up the room key and turns. Maggie watches him walk to the door and grab the doorknob.

MAGGIE

Listen...

Charles turns.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I have some left overs that are just gonna spoil anyway. Nothin' fancy.

CHARLES

Thank you.

MAGGIE

We have a small dining room next door. Why don't you put on some dry clothes. I'll meet you there in fifteen minutes.

Charles smiles.

CHARLES

Okay...Ma'am.

MAGGIE

It's Maggie.

Maggie returns the smile.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Rain pounds the window pane.

The room is almost empty except for a bed, small table, and a dresser. Charles stands at the table and lights a candle.

An open suitcase lies on the bed. Charles grabs a wrinkled shirt, puts it on, and buttons it. He rummages through the suitcase and retrieves a bottle of cologne. Splashes some on his face and neck.

INT. BATHROOM

Charles opens a bottle of prescription pills at the sink and pours the last two into his palm. He stares at the pills, then pops them into his mouth, and swallows a glass of water.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark except for the glow of a few candles. Ten tables decorate the room, each with chairs placed upside down upon them.

Charles and Maggie sit at a table in the middle of the room. They eat cold sandwiches and sip wine by candlelight.

The storm rages on outside.

CHARLES

When I was growing up I had a brown and white beagle named Howard.

MAGGIE

Me and my brother had a pitbull named Joe. He died when we were eight.

CHARLES

Sorry.

MAGGIE

He got hit by a truck out here on the interstate. I cried forever.

CHARLES

Okay, my turn. What was the weirdest thing that ever happened to you?

MAGGIE

What do you mean by weird? Like spooky weird?

CHARLES

Sure.

MAGGIE

I don't know. When I was a kid, I thought I saw a ghost in one of the rooms.

CHARLES

Really?

MAGGIE

Turned out it was just some guy jerkin' off under the sheets.

Charles laughs. Maggie smiles.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Well, it seemed weird at the time. What about you?

CHARLES

Actually, I did see something when I was about ten. It scared the shit out of me.

MAGGIE

You lie.

CHARLES

It really messed me up. I had to see a psychiatrist for years. I still have to take medication.

MAGGIE

What did you see?

CHARLES

I don't know. It was big. It stood at the foot of my bed and stared at me. I could hear it breathing. It just stood there looking down at me.

MAGGIE

What happened?

CHARLES

I screamed. My dad came in and turned on the light. It was gone. Vanished.

MAGGIE

Did it ever come back?

CHARLES

No. But I still have to sleep with the light on.

MAGGIE

Shit. That sure does beat my jack-off story.

Charles picks up a wine bottle and empties it into their glasses. Charles drinks.

CHARLES

I don't know why I told you that. Must be the wine. You probably think I'm a little odd.

MAGGIE

Odd? Maybe a little. What I do find you is interesting.

CHARLES

You think I'm interesting?

MAGGIE

Very. Hell, I wonder what you must think of me. All alone in the middle of nowhere runnin' some fleabag motel.

CHARLES

Well, now that you mention it. Why don't you just leave?

MAGGIE

I don't know. This and that. Mostly because of my brother Tom. I had to take care of him after our parents died. He has some metal problems. Nothing like you. No offense.

CHARLES

None taken.

MAGGIE

He's a skitzo. One of them multiple personality people.

CHARLES

Is he okay? I mean, is he dangerous?

MAGGIE

Nooo. As long as he takes his meds, he wouldn't harm a fly.

CHARLES

Does he live here?

MAGGIE

Usually. He helps me with the motel. He's real good at fixin' things.

CHARLES

Where is he now?

MAGGIE

I'm not sure. Sometimes I wake up and he's just gone. He could be gone for months at a time. And then, just as fast, he comes back. No explanations. Nothing. Like he never left.

CHARLES

Don't take this the wrong way. Did you ever think of selling the motel? You know. Get married. Have a life.

MAGGIE

You don't understand. He's my twin brother. If somethin' ever happened to him... All we have is each other. Besides, I could never leave. I was raised here. This is the only life I know.

Charles lifts his glass.

CHARLES

Here's to two odd, but very interesting people.

Maggie raises her glass. They clink glasses and sip.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The hurricane rages outside. The candle burns bright next to Charles' bed. Casts shadows on the wall.

Charles sleeps. A drop of water falls onto his forehead. Another. Then another. The water runs down his cheek.

Charles opens one eye. Another drop lands on his face. He wipes the water with his hand and sits up in bed.

At the foot of the bed stands a figure. It looks down at Charles. It breathes heavily.

Charles eyes widen. Lets out a startled scream.

The figure moves toward Charles. As it nears the candlelight, Charles sees it is Maggie.

Maggie wears a rain-soaked, thin, white nightgown which clings to her breasts and hips. She moves closer. Her hair is down. Long. Wet.

Charles straightens his posture and stares at Maggie.

MAGGIE

I couldn't sleep.

Maggie sits down on the edge of the bed. She brings her lips to Charles' face.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I thought maybe you might need some company.

Maggie kisses Charles lightly.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

It's alright. There's nothing to be afraid of.

Maggie takes her finger and puts it in Charles' mouth. She removes it slowly, then pinches out the candle flame.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - LATER

Maggie and Charles lie naked under the sheets.

Maggie strikes a match and lights a cigarette. Blows out the match.

CHARLES

The manager here has strict rules about smoking in the rooms.

Maggie exhales smoke.

MAGGIE

I got insurance.

CHARLES

I was thinking. The roads probably won't be any better tomorrow. I don't have to be anywhere until Monday.

MAGGIE

You're gonna rack up a hell of a bill. What happens if my brother comes back? He doesn't take kindly to strangers bangin' his sister.

CHARLES

I'll deal with that when and if the time comes.

Maggie takes a long drag and exhales.

MAGGIE

Ain't you the brave one.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Charles lies in bed asleep.

Muffled voices argue O.S.

MAGGIE (O.S.)

Tom, calm down.

TOM (O.S.)

Who is he?

MAGGIE (O.S.)

He needed a room.

TOM (O.S.)

Don't lie to me!

Charles opens his eyes. Maggie screams O.S. followed by a loud THUD. Charles jumps out of bed.

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - NIGHT

Charles stands outside in the storm. He opens the door and walks in. The office is dark. No candles.

CHARLES

Shit.

Charles feels his way over to the front desk. He runs his hands along the counter and walks to the back wall. He reaches out until he finds the door.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

The door squeaks open. Charles stands still in the doorway.

FOOTSTEPS on the wood floor. The boards CREAK.

TOM (O.S.)

You're not allowed back here.

CHARLES

Where's Maggie?

TOM (O.S.)

You two plannin' on goin' somewhere?

CHARLES

Your sister deserves better than this. She's not happy here.

TOM (O.S.)

You know her what? Almost six hours? Now you want to take her away? Looks like I came back just in time.

CHARLES

No one's trying to take your sister from you. I just want to talk to her. Where is she?

A chair slides across the floor. Charles looks toward the noise. He makes out a dark figure across the room. It sits down.

TOM

What makes you think you can make her happy?

CHARLES

I don't know. I'd like to try.

A match ignites across the room and lights a candle.

Maggie sits across the room at a table. She blows out the match. Maggie holds a large butcher knife. Carves into the table. She speaks in Tom's voice.

TOM

Charles, right? Let me tell you somethin'. Maggie doesn't know what she wants. Guys like you come here and fill her head with these big hopes. Get her all excited. It's up to me to bring her back to reality.

Charles takes a step forward.

CHARLES

I want to help her.

TOM

You want to help her?

Maggie takes the knife and runs the tip along her arm.

CHARLES

Don't.

TOM

I'm gonna level with you, Charles. Man to man. She really likes you. Don't ask me why.

Maggie places the knife under her chin.

CHARLES

No.

Maggie glides the tip down her neck.

TOM

Maybe, I'm just bein' selfish. Why shouldn't Maggie be happy? I mean, all these years she had to put up with me. Like you said. She deserves better.

Maggie takes the knife and holds the blade at her throat.

CHARLES

Tom, don't. Please.

Charles takes another step forward.

TOM

Tell Maggie she won't have to worry about me anymore.

Maggie slices her throat. Blood squirts from her neck onto her nightgown.

CHARLES

Maggie!

Maggie slumps over. The knife falls to the floor. Charles runs to Maggie and catches her before she slides off the chair.

Charles sits on the floor and cradles Maggie. Blood covers Charles' T-shirt. He whispers to her.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

It's okay. It's okay.

Maggie's blood-soaked hand reaches up and touches Charles' face. He turns his head and kisses it.

Maggie's hand drops on Charles' chest.

Charles kisses her forehead and embraces her.

The storm rages on.

FADE OUT

