

THE MOST

Written by

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EXT. MUSEUM OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (MOST) - MONDAY MORNING

KEATON, mid-twenties, tall, dark, and handsome is in jeans a stained white T-shirt and a leather jacket thrown over his right shoulder as he struts inside the side door of the museum.

INT. MOST -MORNING

Keaton walks toward the office center. A clean, metallic hallway with glass doors and conference rooms. The space is very tidy and even the inside of the offices have minimal pictures and mostly modern art decorations.

ELIZA, late-twenties, fit, clearly cares about her body and has beautiful auburn hair, turns the corner. Eliza sees Keaton and changes direction toward him. She is wearing a formal business dress, nude pointed heels, and has her hair swept up in a professional bun.

ELIZA

Keaton. You made such good time this morning. The workday only started two hours ago.

KEATON

I am known for my punctuality.

ELIZA

Well lucky for you, you have a wonderful big sister that keeps spare suits at the office. And they just happen to be your size. Let's walk and talk on the way there.

Eliza gestures down the hall toward her office. She is done playing, and ready for business.

ELIZA

I want to go over our schedule tomorrow. As you know it is a big day. At 9:00 I will receive the final papers for my contract with the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry. I have one hour to confirm or ask for changes for accepting the job offer.

Keaton stops suddenly.

KEATON

Wait! You're still thinking about that job.

(MORE)

KEATON (CONT'D)

I thought we decided two weeks ago that this wasn't the right move for you, or for this museum. Remember? It was just a fun possibility, not a real undertaking. Besides your contract renewal is due tomorrow, you'd lose your current job for the possibility of that one?

ELIZA

This is very real to me. Last time we talked about this you decided it was best for me to stay at the museum, not me, and since then I have realized how much I want this. Did you know that I'm the final candidate? And if I go, best of all you will take over my job here. So entertaining this possibility is still real. And I know we have contract renewals, so I'll just have to figure it out by tomorrow. We can talk about it more later once I make my choice, okay?

Eliza switches back into business mode.

ELIZA

Aright, back to the schedule? Because I will most likely need the full hour past nine, I need you to conduct the first interview for our new Exhibit Coordinator position. It's at 9:30. Remember, this is the job for replacing Dan, the guy you fired yesterday.

Keaton puts his right arm to his side, places his left hand on the side of his neck, and slightly bites his lip.

ELIZA

You did fire him, right?

KEATON

Yeah. About that. I thought you were kidding. I don't really do that. It's more under your realm of expertise.

ELIZA

Keaton, this is part of your job. You are the co-owner with me, you are the Vice President, and you need to take your responsibilities as such more seriously, even if they aren't always fun.

KEATON

(Over dramatic)

I'm just not so much the firing type. Besides, poor Dan, why does he have to be fired? What about the children?

Keaton puts his hands to his chest pleading as both walk into Eliza's office.

INT. ELIZA'S OFFICE - MORNING

The office is immaculate. And very large. Dark navy armchairs reside across from a white wood desk. There is one three foot gold vase with a tight top and no plant in sight.

ELIZA

Dan will be fine. He needs to be fired because he spends more time working on the opening of his restaurant than he does here. He can be fired because he'll probably quit as soon as his business opens anyway. He and his children will be fine. And this pity act isn't working Keaton, this is the best situation to fire someone, take it.

Keaton pulls out the spare suit from Eliza's closet as Eliza sits at her desk, going on the computer.

ELIZA

You still have to attend the 9:30 meeting. And Dan better be fired before then, preferably by the end of today. Okay?

Keaton is switching his stained shirt for a button down. His face is deep in thought. He looks sadly at Eliza then to the suit.

ELIZA

Keaton?

Keaton spins around to look at Eliza.

KEATON
You can't leave!

ELIZA
Keaton. It will be fine if I do. I promise we will work all of that out if it comes to be. Just please go fire Dan. You'll definitely need to be able to do that on your own whether I leave next week or in 10 years. So can you do that?

Keaton finishes putting the top part of the suit on, grabs the pants and his leather jacket, and walks to the door, but turns before going out.

KEATON
(Almost comically dramatic)
Maybe. Maybe not.

Keaton slowly backs away from the door into the hall in reverse.

Eliza shakes her head smiling, then continues working.

INT. ELIZA'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Eliza walks into her office with her coat on and a white food bag in her hand.

The office is covered in flowers head to toe. Pink, red, violet, white, everywhere. Boxes upon boxes of expensive chocolates lay on her desk.

Next to all this is a neatly stacked array of papers. With a bright sticky note on top reading "ELIZA'S CONTRACT RENEWAL".

Eliza tries to get through the room to her desk but there's not even space to put down her food.

ELIZA
Keaton!

INT. ELIZA'S OFFICE - 20 MINUTES LATER.

Remnants of flowers remain across the floor and Eliza's desk. The corner has 3 foot chocolate stack.

Eliza is typing on her computer. The papers are still on her desk.

Keaton walks in.

KEATON

Hey sis, sorry again about all the flowers, I just decided to put in an order for you and everyone else insisted they send you flowers too. You're just so loved here.

Eliza doesn't look up from her screen and continues typing.

ELIZA

(happily sarcastic)
Umm hmm. Everyone loves me.
Everyone wants to buy me flowers.
Why wouldn't they?

Eliza points at Keaton without looking up and mouths the word "you".

KEATON

What me? I would never try buying stuff to get you to stay! What an awful thing to insinuate!
(Beat)
But if I were doing that, and you wanted me to stop, all you would have to do is sign a small piece of paper.

Keaton pushes the documents closer to Eliza.

Eliza looks up at Keaton unamused.

KEATON

Gosh sorry. Won't happen again. But I do have a better surprise for you.

ELIZA

(smiling but trying not to)
Of course you do.

KEATON

Two actually. One involving my friend Terrence.

Eliza perks up, looking more interested.

KEATON

But that one is second. The first is a presentation. Yay!

Eliza's excitement falls from her face.

Keaton goes to Eliza's desk, helps her out of her chair and begins walking her to the door while she pushes against him.

KEATON

Come on sour puss, it'll be fun,
maybe even educational.

Eliza rolls her eyes and lets out a grunt.

INT. MOST PRESENTATION ROOM - 2 MINUTES LATER

Keaton shuffles Eliza to the front chair.

The projector is already turned on and the first slide is up and ready to go.

Keaton walks to the front of the room, turns with a game face on, ready to give the presentation of his life.

KEATON

As shown by earlier today, I
clearly thought that the best way
to get you to stay was through
bribes and fancy things, because
God knows that's all it would take
for me. But now I see I was going
about it all wrong.

Keaton clicks to the first real slide.

It shows X-AXIS TIME and Y-AXIS ELIZA, with at least 10 different colored lines, each sloping straight up.

The lines read: museum profit, productivity, online rating, number of customers, attitude of employees, and so on.

KEATON

This is your legacy. And this is
why you have to stay. Do you know
how much better the museum has done
since you started working here?
Like millions of dollars better.
Every category that needed
improvement, and even those that
didn't, have improved.

Keaton clicks the next slide. Tons of pictures of the MOST exhibits are on screen.

KEATON

These are all the exhibits you added or fixed while working as our President. That's even more renovations than Dad did building this place!

Keaton clicks to the next slide again. It's blank.

KEATON

And do you know what the best part is about staying here? You get to have complete control. To add whatever exhibits you want. You could add an architecture wing explaining how our world's greatest structures were built using to scale replicas of the pyramids and the Eiffel Tower. You could add a planetarium, or a section all about natural disasters. Even an interactive floor that simulates the movement of the Earth through plate tectonics that people could actually walk on!

Keaton clicks through the images he's describing.

KEATON

But if you leave to become a Programs Director in Chicago, you'll have a boss, and no freedom to add your ideas as you want. You're not meant to report to a boss, you're supposed to be the boss.

Keaton closes out his presentation smiling, waiting for Eliza's approval.

KEATON

So what do you think? You ready to sign your contract renewal?

Keaton pulls the contract out and places it in front of Eliza with a pen, smiling excitedly.

Eliza looks at the paper a moment before pushing it away.

ELIZA

Keaton. That only showed me that you need me to leave so you can do as great of a job as you just described.

Keaton looks utterly defeated.

ELIZA

(trying to lighten the mood)

It was a great try, and I love you for caring so much, but I still really want this job. And you would clearly do fine without me. Maybe I'm holding you back?

Keaton looks a bit less dejected.

KEATON

Well, maybe if I can't convince you you're needed here, Terrence can?

Eliza blushes.

Keaton takes this as his ticket in.

KEATON

Well, I know you have a crush on him...

ELIZA

Do not!

Does too.

KEATON (CONT'D)

...well, it turns out, he fancies you a bit too. He even wants to meet you tonight.

ELIZA

Oh I don't know about that. I have a lot of work that...wait why couldn't you have set this up three months ago before...

KEATON

(heavily avoiding)

It's already set up. I'll pick you up at 7:30 for our double date.

Keaton walks toward to door.

ELIZA

Fine. But only if you fire Dan.

KEATON

I'll see you at 7:30.

ELIZA
 (playfully annoyed)
 Keaton?

Keaton winks at Eliza as he leaves. Eliza sticks her tongue out after him.

ELIZA
 (to herself)
 He's infuriating.

EXT. ELIZA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - 7:30

Eliza is wearing a fun flowered dress and a winter coat waiting outside her building.

A loud car purring is heard and Eliza turns her head toward it.

ELIZA
 Dear god.

Keaton screeches to a stop in a red 2015 Jaguar F-type Coupe in front of a jaw-dropped Eliza.

Keaton rolls down the window slowly.

KEATON
 This was the car you said you liked? Right?

ELIZA
 What are you doing?

KEATON
 (quickly)
 Driving you to our double date of course, as promised. Gosh, stop begging! Fine. I guess you can drive. Someone is great at arguing today. Such an important quality for a Museum President you know. Ready?

Keaton tosses Eliza the keys and she catches them, her face still confused from all of what Keaton said.

Eliza shakes her head smiling and climbs into the driver's seat.

ELIZA
 I'll accept this bribe for the night. Only because it's so pretty.
 (MORE)

ELIZA (CONT'D)
It's really pretty. But first thing
tomorrow it's going back. Okay?

KEATON
Whatever you say boss.

ELIZA
And this doesn't change anything
about the job offer. Okay?

KEATON
(innocently)
I know.

Eliza gives him a suspicious look, but quickly switches to a smile as she pulls out onto the street at full speed.

INT. JAGUAR - 7:40

KEATON
Turn right up here and then pull
into the parking lot.

Eliza follows his directions while talking.

ELIZA
So why did Terrence all of a sudden
express interest in me?

Eliza looks at Keaton questioningly.

ELIZA
Or was this another attempt to keep
me here?

Eliza parks the car and nudges Keaton with her shoulder for his answer.

Keaton ignores Eliza's question and jumps out of the car.

KEATON
Hurry up slow poke. Our dates are
waiting.

Keaton jogs to the elevator while Eliza locks the car and takes her time walking over.

Keaton hops in the elevator and holds the door open for Eliza as she goes in.

INT. ELEVATOR - 7:45

Keaton presses the 8th floor. They go up.

The elevator dings at each floor on the way up.

ELIZA

Let's just try to enjoy our night.
No more bribes or other not so
subtle ways for you trying to get
me to stay. I really need to relax
tonight, alright?

The elevator dings for the 8th floor and they get out.

Keaton looks away from Eliza. He pulls the collar of his
button down away from his neck and gives a light scratch.

Eliza looks around the hall, then to Keaton.

ELIZA

So which room is it?

Eliza sees Keaton avoiding eye contact.

ELIZA

Is everything okay?

KEATON

Um, yeah, why wouldn't it be? It's
that room, um 803.

Keaton walks to the door. Knocks. Then walks in next to
Eliza.

CROWD

Surprise!

Eliza is extremely taken aback.

ELIZA

Hi everyone. Um, you know it's not
my birthday for 3 months.

The crowd is full of 10 CO-WORKDERS, 5 OF ELIZA'S CLOSEST
FRIENDS as well as 3 FAMILY MEMBERS that live nearby,
including AUNT JUDY, 60's and wearing too much polyester.

AUNT JUDY

Of course we know silly! This is
our "we're so happy you're staying
here" party!

Eliza gives Keaton a death stare.

AUNT JUDY

You look so nice today honey, did you expect us?

Aunt Judy takes Eliza's coat while another guest hands her a glass of wine.

ELIZA

(While glaring at Keaton)
No I definitely did not expect this. At all.

Keaton gives Eliza a quick sideways smile.

KEATON

Aunt Judy, why don't you tell Eliza how excited you were to find out she was staying.

ELIZA

I'm...

AUNT JUDY

Oh honey, I was so unbelievably happy to hear it. You know I told my neighbor Hester, and she was so happy for me that she baked sugar cookies for the whole floor! There were so many left over that I took some to bingo and still had a bunch left for you tonight.

While Aunt Judy speaks, Eliza politely nods along. About halfway through she starts zoning out and looking around the room. Aunt Judy's voice becomes muffled.

We see only Eliza's Point of View, scanning the room.

Eliza lets out a low growl when her vision stops on an overweight man in the crowd. He's in his 30's, pulling off a dirty apron that reads DAN'S BAR & GRILL, it's DAN who's supposed to be fired.

ELIZA

(under her breath)
Keaton.

Eliza is scanning for Keaton and zooms in on him. He is smiling and laughing with a woman.

AUNT JUDY

You really must try them you know. It's like Christmas wrapped into one bite.

Eliza motions for Keaton to come to her as Aunt Judy wraps up her story.

Keaton heads over, but with LUCY by his side. LUCY, wearing business casual pants and a blazer with her MOST name tag still on reading "LUCY KELLY - ADVERTISING MANAGER". She is smiling incessantly while talking to Keaton.

AUNT JUDY

They remind me of the ones your grandmother used to...Oh Keaton my dear, keep your sister company while I grab you two some wonderful cookies.

KEATON

Thank you Aunt Judy.

ELIZA

Keaton I...

KEATON

Eliza, Lucy was just telling me about all the changes you've made to the museum's advertising campaign since you became President. It sounds like they've improved.

Keaton attempts to slip away but Eliza grabs his arm tightly before he can leave the conversation.

LUCY

Oh, your brother is being modest. I don't know how we would run the museum without you! Honestly you were our saving grace. The day you started at MOST was the day I knew the museum would turn around, Just look how great you've done. You doubled my advertising budget, you attracted completely new demographics, and still somehow had time to run everything else. I don't know what we would do without you!

Eliza scratches her forehead.

While Eliza speaks, Keaton is gesturing to a woman to come over.

Walking toward them is CINDY,. a loud, spunky girl wearing tight black pants and a red leather jacket

ELIZA

Thank you very much Lucy. That means quite a lot, you've always been so kind and honest to me so I feel I should be the same...

Before Eliza can get out her thought Cindy gives Eliza a huge hug, interrupting her speech.

CINDY

Hi babe! God we're all so happy to hear that you're not leaving!

Cindy plants a big, hard kiss on Eliza's face, leaving a red lipstick stain.

Keaton is smiling smugly.

ELIZA

(while Cindy is still hugging on her)
Keaton, I'm going to kill you.

Eliza shrugs Cindy off.

ELIZA

Excuse me everyone. Everyone, I have an announcement to make.

KEATON

Yes we do. I have a special treat for everyone.

Eliza pulls Keaton close.

ELIZA

(to only Keaton)
What the hell are you doing?

KEATON

(to everyone)
I just informed Eliza, as a gift for her staying, I put together a slide show of all her best moments. If everyone could move into the family room, it will be up in a moment. And I have to warn you, it's a tear-jerker.

Eliza's entire face is red, livid with anger at Keaton.

The crowd smiles and shuffles away from Keaton and Eliza toward the family room.

ELIZA

What is your problem? You won't let me get one word out while you lie through your teeth to all our friends and family!

KEATON

I'm sorry, but this is the only way I can get you to see how much everyone needs you here.

Keaton reaches to the nearest table and pulls out the contract renewal.

KEATON

Here. Sign these and all the lies will be true, and you can enjoy the night with the rest of us. It'll make everything better.

ELIZA

No it won't make everything better.

KEATON

Why wouldn't it? We'd all get what we need, you here, and you get to have a better job here anyway, where you get to make all the decisions and pick...

ELIZA

I already took the job in Chicago!

Keaton's face falls.

KEATON

What?

ELIZA

I didn't tell you because you were so in my face about staying all day, it was infuriating. So, I decided to contact The President at the museum and he said they wanted me so bad that he gave me the final papers early. And I took it.

Eliza puts her hand on Keaton's sunken shoulder.

ELIZA

I'm so sorry I didn't tell you. But this was my decision, my life. Not yours!

Eliza lets out a deep breath trying to calm down.

ELIZA

You didn't want me to stay for my sake, you wanted me to stay so you wouldn't have to grow up. You didn't consider what was best for me at all, and that, that was the most hurtful part.

Eliza turns to the now gathering crowd.

ELIZA

I'm sorry for ruining everyone's evening.

Eliza grabs her coat from Aunt Judy along with all the cookies in her hand and heads for the door.

She stops in front of Keaton.

ELIZA

(snide)

As much as I love that car, I'm taking a cab home.

Eliza pulls Keaton in so only he can hear.

ELIZA

I see Dan is still here with our co-workers. I'm so tired of relying on you and being disappointed.

Keaton looks even more depressed as Eliza turns back to the party.

ELIZA

(cookie in mouth)

Good night everyone.

Eliza stomps out while shoving sugar cookies into her mouth.

Keaton, severely deflated, stumbles toward the dessert table, eyes welling with tears.

EXT. DAN'S OFFICE - TUESDAY MORNING, 8:00

Keaton takes a deep breath in.

KEATON

You can do this.

INT. ELIZA'S OFFICE - 9:20

Eliza is doing work, quickly typing away at her computer and fully consumed in what she's doing.

Keaton knocks lightly on the door without coming in.

ELIZA

I am not ready to talk to you yet
Keaton, so please leave. I have a
lot to do.

Keaton comes in anyway and places a bouquet of yellow tulips on her desk.

ELIZA

If you think flowers will make me
less mad at you, you couldn't be
more wrong, you have some nerve...

KEATON

I know I messed up. And I will
never be able to take back how I've
acted. But I wanted to give you a
peace offering.

Keaton pulls out a pink piece of paper and places it in front of Eliza.

KEATON

As well as a going away present.

Keaton pulls a bag from behind his back with a Chicago flag on it.

KEATON

It's a wind breaker. For the windy
city.

Eliza smiles up at Keaton from her desk.

She stands up and pulls him in for big a hug.

ELIZA

I'm going to miss you Keaton.

FADE TO BLACK