

Be Good

By

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INT. HALLWAY- MORNING

MAYA, 3, sleepy-eyed yet mischievous-looking, emerges from her room wearing pajamas. She checks if the coast is clear and tiptoes down the hallway.

INT. BATHROOM- MORNING

Maya enters the bathroom and turns on the light. She notices a BLACK CASE on top of the toilet. She scrambles onto the toilet and reaches for the case. She opens it to reveal multiple pairs of scissors, combs, brushes, and other hairstylist necessities.

Maya's eyes light up. She reaches for the shiniest pair of scissors and pulls them out of the case. She scrambles off the toilet and out of the bathroom.

INT. BEDROOM- MORNING

Maya slowly opens the door to her mother's bedroom. KIRA, 21, petite and attractive with a wild head of curls, is splayed across the bed, fast asleep and snoring.

Maya lifts herself onto her mom's bed. She picks up a strand of Kira's hair and cuts it with her scissors. The strand lands on Kira's pillow.

Maya begins cutting more of Kira's hair erratically. Huge chunks fall.

Suddenly, Kira stirs. Maya freezes mid-cut. Kira wakes up but doesn't open her eyes at first.

KIRA

Maya, is that you?

Maya hesitates to answer.

MAYA

Yes.

Kira opens her eyes and sits up. She notices strands of hair drifting off her arms and shoulders. She sees all the hair around her pillow. Kira immediately reaches up and feels the chunks of hair missing from her head. Panic spreads across her face. She turns to face Maya.

KIRA

Did you do this?

Maya hesitates again, sensing her mother's anger.

(CONTINUED)

MAYA

I made you pretty, mommy.

KIRA

No, no, no, no no.

Kira jumps from the bed and runs to the bathroom, leaving Maya in bed.

INT. BATHROOM- MORNING

Kira enters the bathroom and notices the open stylist case on the toilet. She angrily slams the bathroom door closed and faces the mirror. She stares in horror at her reflection and inspects the damage.

KIRA

This can't be happening.

Angry tears begin to well up in Kira's eyes. Her face burns red. In a moment of frustration, Kira bangs her fist against the counter.

She sits down on the toilet and cries, her head in her hands. There's a knock on the door.

Kira quickly wipes her eyes and nose, attempting to hide any evidence of tears.

KIRA

Come in.

Maya enters. She sheepishly looks at her mother.

MAYA

When's grandma gonna get here?

KIRA

I'm not sure. Sometime soon though.

MAYA

Can I watch tv?

Kira nods. Maya runs to the living room. Kira looks completely worn out. The stress is palpable on her face.

She braces herself before standing up. Maya looks in the mirror one last time before reaching for her stylist case. She places it on the sink counter and opens it.

-A quick series of shots-

(CONTINUED)

She retrieves a large brush and begins aggressively running it through her hair in an attempt to cover her patches but to no avail.

She takes a comb and tries a comb over, but that doesn't work.

Kira tries making a ponytail and a bun, but huge patches are still visible.

She tries pigtails too.

Kira tries various hairstyles and quick fixes in an attempt to cover up her botched haircut, but none seem to work.

-Back to scene-

Kira throws her hair accessories and stylist equipment into the sink in frustration.

KIRA

Fuck it!

We hear the house phone ring. Kira leaves to go answer it.

INT. KITCHEN- MORNING

Kira picks up the phone.

KIRA

Hello?

We faintly hear Grandma Louise on the other line. Kira listens. Her face grows more tense as Louise continues talking. Kira abruptly cuts her mother off.

KIRA

And you're serious right now, mom?

Louise continues talking, but whatever she is saying only seems to make Kira more angry. Kira cuts her mother off once more.

KIRA

Forget it. I've got it. Don't even bother.

Kira slams the phone down into its cradle. She rubs her eyes with the heels of her hands. She looks up at the ceiling pleadingly.

INT. LIVING ROOM- MORNING

Kira walks into the living room. She shuts the television off and sits on the coffee table across from Maya who sits on the couch.

KIRA
Grandma's not coming.

MAYA
Are you still going to your
interbew?

KIRA
Interview. And I am going.

MAYA
I'll stay here.

KIRA
No, you won't. You're going to come
with me. But you need to promise
mommy two things. Can you do that
for me?

Maya sits up straight and nods.

KIRA
I need you to promise mommy that
when we go to the interview, you'll
stay on your best behavior. You
have to be good for me.

MAYA
Okay.

KIRA
If you're bad, we won't be able to
go to Disney with Grandma.

MAYA
But I wanna go to Disney.

KIRA
Then you need to be good.

Maya nods.

KIRA
Second, I need you to promise that
you won't ever cut mommy's hair
again.

(CONTINUED)

MAYA

Okay.

KIRA

You made mommy really upset.

MAYA

I'm sorry.

KIRA

Pinky promise you won't do it again?

Maya nods. They intertwine their fingers and kiss their hands to seal the deal.

MAYA

Can I wear my pajamas to the interbew?

KIRA

No way. C'mon. Let's get you dressed in something nice.

MAYA

What about your hair?

KIRA

Mommy will figure it out.

Kira gets up and Maya follows.

INT. LIVING ROOM- MORNING

Kira rushes into the living room. She is dressed in a nice button-down shirt, a skirt, and a baseball hat on top of her head to cover her hair. She picks up her keys from the coffee table.

KIRA

Maya, come on. We need to go!

Maya runs into the living room. She's dressed in a sweater, a skirt, and tights. She's holding a coloring book and crayons.

MAYA

Here I am!

KIRA

Good. Come here.

(CONTINUED)

Kira motions for Maya to come closer. She licks her finger and wipes at the corner of Maya's mouth. Maya squirms away.

KIRA

Forget it. We're gonna be late.
Come on.

Kira grabs Maya's hand and they leave out the front door.

INT. CAR- MORNING

Kira pulls her car into a space in front of Anthony's Salon and Spa.

KIRA

We're here

MAYA

Can I take these off?

Maya begins pulling at her tights.

KIRA

Maya, c'mon. Let's just get inside.

MAYA

No! I want them off!

Kira turns around to face Maya in the backseat.

KIRA

I thought you promised your best
behavior.

Maya sinks down angrily into her car seat.

MAYA

I don't want these on.

She kicks her legs out.

Kira's frustration returns, despite her best attempt to stifle it.

KIRA

Do you want to go to Disney World?

Maya thinks about it.

MAYA

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

Then let's stop this and go inside.

She reaches back to unbuckle Maya from her carseat. Maya grabs her coloring book and crayons and exits as does Kira.

EXT. STRIP MALL PARKING LOT- DAY

KIRA

Come on.

She offers her hand to Maya to hold. Maya lifts her hands up to be carried.

KIRA

God, Maya.

Kira bends down and lifts up Maya. She holds her on her hip.

KIRA

No more of this after today.

Kira walks toward the front door of Anthony's Salon and Spa.

INT. ANTHONY'S SALON- DAY

Kira enters the salon, still holding Maya. The salon is lavishly decorated with marbled floors, ornate mirrors, and shiny equipment. The clientele is visibly ritzy. Maya and Kira stand out.

Kira notices the RECEPTIONIST sitting behind a large desk. She's young, sleek, and attractive, looking more like a model than anything. Kira heads towards her, still holding Maya.

KIRA

Hi, I'm here for an interview today.

The Receptionist looks up from her cellphone. She icily looks Kira over from head to toe and grimaces at the sight of her ratty baseball cap.

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sure you are.

She goes back to typing on her cell phone, ignoring Kira.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

I am. I'm here to see Anthony.

The Receptionist doesn't look up from her phone.

RECEPTIONIST

For what? To fix the plumbing?

Kira turns away from the desk and walks towards the waiting area with Maya still on her hip. She places Maya in a chair.

KIRA

Maya Grace, you're gonna stay in this chair. You hear me?

MAYA

Yes.

KIRA

You pinky-promised you wouldn't be bad today.

MAYA

I won't.

Kira kisses the top of Maya's head, and heads back to the Receptionist's desk with a determined look on her face. The receptionist is still typing on her phone.

KIRA

I'm still here for my interview with Anthony.

RECEPTIONIST

Yeah, bathroom's in the back. The sinks have been clogged for weeks

KIRA

I'm not a plumber. I'm a stylist. I have an interview with Anthony, so it would be great if you could help me out and direct me on where to go.

The Receptionist finally looks up from her phone. Her eyes narrow.

RECEPTIONIST

His office is the second door on the right in the back.

The Receptionist goes back to typing on her phone.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

I know this might be too much to ask of you, seeing as you're so busy, but I was wondering if you could just keep an eye on my daughter while I'm in the interview?

RECEPTIONIST

...I guess.

KIRA

Thank you so much.

Kira looks over her shoulder at Maya before heading to the back. Her daughter is busy coloring. Kira smiles and heads to Anthony's office.

INT. ANTHONY'S OFFICE- DAY

We see Kira in the doorframe of the office. ANTHONY, a paunchy, middle-aged man wearing a tight suit and a bowtie, sits at the desk. He's aggressively filling out paperwork. She knocks.

ANTHONY

Come in.

Kira enters and sits across from Anthony. He doesn't look up from his papers.

KIRA

Hi, sir. It's nice to meet you,
I'm-

Anthony holds up a hand to silence her. She stops talking. They sit in silence as Anthony writes. It's awkward.

Finally, Anthony finishes writing and looks at Kira.

ANTHONY

Who are you?

KIRA

I'm Kira Webber. It's nice to meet you.

Kira extends her hand in greeting. Anthony doesn't shake it.

ANTHONY

So do you have a resume with you?

Kira's cheeks burn red.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

No...I don't.

ANTHONY

So what you're telling me is that you don't have a copy of your resume with you right now?

KIRA

...Yes.

Anthony nods and scribbles something on a piece of paper in front of him. Kira begins to look uncomfortable.

ANTHONY

Well then. Do you have any professional experience working in the hair industry?

KIRA

I've never officially worked in a salon before, but I'm currently enrolled in Devane Hair Institute. I'm set to graduate this month.

ANTHONY

Devane? Never heard of it.

KIRA

Oh, it's in Hewitt two towns over.

ANTHONY

Thanks. I know where Hewitt is.

Anthony writes some more on a piece of paper.

ANTHONY

So do you have a portfolio of your work I can look at?

INT. ANTHONY'S SALON- DAY

Maya sits in the waiting area. She stops coloring momentarily and looks out the window just in time to see a woman approaching. She's walking a giant dog on a leash.

Maya's eyes light up at the sight of the dog. She gets up out of her chair and walks to the window to watch.

INT. ANTHONY'S OFFICE- DAY

ANTHONY

So no portfolio either. Great.

He once again writes something down on a piece of paper. He eventually leans back and crosses his arms. He looks Kira over from head to toe.

ANTHONY

Also, if you don't mind me asking, what possessed you to wear a baseball hat to our interview?

Kira laughs nervously.

KIRA

It's a long story, believe me, but please hear me out. I know it's unprofessional, but-

ANTHONY

Exactly. It's unprofessional. So far, your interview hasn't started off well so I'd suggest you take that hat off before you make things worse.

Kira turns red. She slowly reaches up to take her hat off and reveals her hair. Anthony guffaws.

ANTHONY

You've got to be kidding me. You do realize you're interviewing at a hair salon, right? And not just any hair salon, but Anthony's Salon and Spa. Is that what they teach you at Devane?

INT. ANTHONY'S SALON- DAY

Maya inches closer to the window to watch the woman and her dog walk by, but a large magazine rack blocks her path. She tries to maneuver over it by climbing the rungs. Her leg gets caught on one of the rungs in the rack, and everything comes tumbling down.

There's a loud crash as the rack falls. Maya falls too. There's magazines everywhere. The entire salon goes quiet and turns to look at Maya. She begins to cry.

INT. ANTHONY'S OFFICE- DAY

KIRA

Sir, I know it looks bad but it
wasn't my fault-

The Receptionist bursts into the office.

RECEPTIONIST

Anthony, I'm sorry to interrupt,
but we have an incident in the
lobby.

ANTHONY

What is it now?

The Receptionist motions towards Kira, but recoils when she
sees her hair.

RECEPTIONIST

Her daughter just knocked over two
magazine racks and now she's crying
in the waiting area.

ANTHONY

Unbelievable. You brought your kid
to the interview too? This just
keeps getting better.

Kira looks embarrassed.

KIRA

Excuse me a second.

Kira stands and follows the Receptionist out of the office.

INT. ANTHONY'S SALON- DAY

Maya is sitting in the middle of the waiting area, magazines
strewn around her. She's crying.

Kira walks toward her. All of the patrons gawk at Kira's
hair and begin to whisper.

RECEPTIONIST

I'm going to have to ask you to
remove her from the waiting area.
She's disturbing our other
customers.

Kira shoots the Receptionist an icy glare as she sweeps Maya
into her arms. She heads to the back of the salon with Maya.

INT. ANTHONY'S OFFICE- DAY

Kira enters the office again. She sits down across from Anthony and places Maya in her lap.

KIRA
I apologize for that.

ANTHONY
It blows my mind. It really does. I don't know what it is, but I feel like every person I interview turns out to be a complete waste of my time.

KIRA
I'm sorry.

ANTHONY
You know what. Apologies are garbage. You came in here with no resume or portfolio. You're dressed unprofessionally with half your hair missing, and you brought your goddamn kid. You expect me to hire you as a stylist at my salon? You've got to be kidding me.

Kira's cheeks burn red.

ANTHONY
Unbeliavble.

Anthony shakes his head and goes back to the papers on his desk, seeming to dismiss Kira.

KIRA
Well, thank you for your time and feedback. I appreciate it.

Kira stands up still holding Maya. She's on the verge of tears as she heads for the door.

ANTHONY
Not so fast. You're lucky I'm at my wits end.

Kira turns around.

ANTHONY
I need a floor assistant, and I'm offering you the job. No benefits, minimum wage, but you can move up
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANTHONY (cont'd)
in the ranks if you fix that shit
storm of a hairdo.

Kira sits down again with Maya. She pauses to process Anthony's proposal.

KIRA
If I say yes, when will I start?

ANTHONY
Tomorrow.

KIRA
How many hours?

ANTHONY
10 hours a day usually.

KIRA
Do you provide child care?

ANTHONY
We're not a day care.

The phone rings. Anthony picks it up.

ANTHONY
Hello?

Anthony angles his body away from Kira. We hear a female voice speaking on the other end. Anthony immediately becomes annoyed. He lowers his voice to a sharp whisper.

ANTHONY
Sharon, I swear to god if you screw
up one more time this week, you are
fired. Do you hear me?

He's silent while she speaks. Anthony's getting redder by the second. Finally, he snaps.

ANTHONY
Well fix it, Sharon! I don't pay
you to sit on your fat ass all day!

Anthony slams the phone down in the cradle. Both Maya and Kira are startled by his outburst. Anthony composes himself before he speaks.

ANTHONY
Sorry about that. Now where were
we?

KIRA

The job offer.

ANTHONY

Right, well, I'm sure you don't gave anywhere to go, so if you don't mind waiting I can have the new employee paperwork ready for you in a little bit.

KIRA

I'm not taking it.

ANTHONY

What?

KIRA

The job offer. I'm not taking it. I thought about it, and I appreciate the gesture, but I can't see myself working here.

Kira hugs Maya a little closer.

ANTHONY

You're joking.

KIRA

I'm not. I'm grateful that you even offerd me the position, even if I was your last resort, but I need to do what's best for me and my family.

Anthony cocks an eyebrow in disbelief.

ANTHONY

Well I guess we're done here.
Aren't we?

Kira nods and stands up, holding Maya.

KIRA

Thank you for the oppurtunity,
Anthony.

Anthony doesn't seem to hear her. He's already picked up his phone to talk to someone else. Kira and Maya exit.

EXT. STRIP MALL- DAY

As Kira and Maya are exiting the salon, a different WOMAN walking a dog approaches. Maya grows excited.

MAYA

Mommy, can I pet it?

Kira nods and lets Maya down. The woman comes closer.

KIRA

Excuse me, would it be alright if my daughter pets your dog?

WOMAN

Sure. Cooper's super sweet, but watch out. He likes to give kisses.

Maya bends down to play with the dog. It affectionately kisses her and she laughs. Kira and the Woman make small talk.

The Woman eventually looks down at her watch.

WOMAN

Sorry, but we've gotta go. Cooper's got an appointment.

Maya pets Cooper one more time. The Woman and Cooper head next door into what appears to be a pet salon. Dogs can be seen through the window in various stages of grooming. There's a large sign on the window that reads: DOGGY GROOMERS AND STYLISTS NEEDED!

Maya runs to the window and places her forehead against the glass to watch the dogs inside. Kira follows slowly behind, fixated by the sign. An idea suddenly dawns on her.

KIRA

Come on. We're going inside.

Kira swoops Maya up into her arms and heads inside the dog salon, a determined smile on her face.