

A Favor for Addie

by

Kelsey Lee Tucker

Kelsey Lee Tucker  
kelseyttucker@comcast.net  
(503) 880-7978

FADE IN.

INT. TEENAGER'S BEDROOM IN AN OLD FARM HOUSE - EVENING.

A YOUNG GIRL, LEXI ALLEN, 13, lays on the bed of her older sister, ADDIE ALLEN, A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WOMAN, 17. Lexi admires her sister as she combs out her long dark hair. At Addie's feet is a suitcase, packed and ready to go.

ADDIE

You mind my words, Lexi Loo. You make your own history. There's nothing here for us but pig slop and horny boys. I'm destined for something greater. I know it.

LEXI

Where do you think your goin'? Ain't nothin' out there 'cept more kinds of slop and more horny boys.

Addie sighs and puts down her brush. She grabs a book off her night stand and gives it to Lexi.

ADDIE

You need to focus more on school or you'll be stuck here like Mama and Papa.

LEXI

(reading from the spine)  
"Great Expectations."

ADDIE

It's literature. It'll teach you.

They hear PEBBLES ON THE WINDOW. They rush to it and see a YOUNG MAN, 18, standing below. In the distance is his car, MOTOR RUNNING. Addie signals she'll be down in a second.

LEXI

That's your big escape plan? Hank the Tank and his junky ol' car?

Lexi is teasing, but Addie is determined, no time to play. She turns at the door.

ADDIE

Study hard. Maybe we'll be together again one day.

Lexi doesn't believe she's leaving. She waits at the window and is stunned when she sees Addie running across the yard with her suitcase.

LEXI  
ADDIE! WAIT!

Hank drives off and Addie glances back just once.

LEXI (CONT'D)  
Don't go.

INT. UNIQUE INNER-CITY SCHOOL - DAY

LEXI ALLEN, 28, grown up and pretty, but the ponytail and clunky shoes are making it hard to see. She follows on the heels of SHANA HANSON, an attractive black woman and no-nonsense type who's had it with do-gooder white people.

They walk the halls of a well-appointed school designed for inner-city youth. Colorful artwork from a variety of cultures cover the walls.

SHANA  
Take Charge Now is one of the premier youth development programs in the nation. We have a 98% graduation rate and an 85% college entrance rate. Those figures show you the kind of dedication we have here.

LEXI  
I've read all about it. It's the best at-risk school on the west coast, let alone L.A. I'm really honored to be a part it.

Shana stops abruptly.

SHANA  
This school is a youth development program.

LEXI  
Right.

SHANA  
Do you see any metal detectors at the doors here?

LEXI  
No.

SHANA

No. You know why? Because we trust our children here. We uplift them, make them believe they can do anything. Because they can. Why do people like you always want to call our children "at-risk?"

Lexi is dumbfounded.

LEXI

People like me?

SHANA

(to herself)

Out here trying to save the world.

Students ELI and TONY (11) pass in the hall at this moment. They both walk with attitude beyond their years.

ELI

(to Shana)

'Sup Miss Hanson?

SHANA

(correcting)

"Good morning Miss Hanson." Boys, this is Miss Allen, she's teaching creative writing. And these gentlemen are Eli Washington and Tony Hayes.

LEXI

Hey guys.

ELI

Damn girl, you fine.

Lexi is flattered, but tries not to show it.

LEXI

Oh! Thank you! I mean, that's not very...um, appropriate Mr. Washington.

TONY

What are you going to teach us in creative writing?

LEXI

Well all kinds of things, like prose, poetry -

TONY

- I hate poetry. People all trying  
to make things rhyme about trees  
and stuff. Who cares?

LEXI

Well you like rap don't you?

TONY

You kidding?

Tony and Eli look at each other like she's crazy and SLAP hands.

ELI

Shoot. Whatever.

LEXI

Well rap is just rhyming to music.  
It's poetry to music.

ELI

(in disbelief)

You gonna teach us rap?

She skips the opportunity to correct his grammar.

LEXI

Maybe. Just keep an open mind.  
There's a bunch of cool stuff out  
there. You're both too young to be  
so sardonic.

The boys are both unsure what this means, but they kind of like her. They continue down the hall, looking over their shoulders. Shana regards Lexi with some measure of respect.

SHANA

This way, Ms. Allen.

Shana continues down the hall, leaving Lexi to catch up.

INT. TAKE CHARGE NOW TEACHERS LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Shana and Lexi stop at the teacher's lounge. Shana swings the door open to reveal SEVERAL TEACHERS sharing morning coffee. They are a mix of cultures and ethnicity.

SHANA

This is our teacher's lounge.  
Coffee's free. Everybody, this is  
Lexi Allen, our new creative  
writing teacher.

LEXI

Hi.

Lexi receives a warm welcome in the form of nods and smiles, but Shana cuts it off by closing the door and moving on.

INT. EMPTY CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Shana opens the door to an empty classroom. The desks and chalkboards are new, there are computers along the far wall.

SHANA

This is you.

LEXI

Wow! Everything's so nice.

SHANA

You mean for an "at risk" school.

LEXI

Well, yeah. But it's also nicer than my last school, which was in the suburbs.

Shana smiles for the first time, at her school not at Lexi.

SHANA

It's taken us 20 years to build up to this. The kids really have a sense of pride here. It's working. I just hope we can keep it rolling.

LEXI

What are you talking about?  
Everything looks great.

SHANA

Yeah, well this school runs on donations. It's a private school for kids who can't afford private. We lost some big donors last year. If we don't make up the shortage, we'll have to start cutting programs.

LEXI

Like what?

SHANA

To start? Creative writing.

INT. LEXI'S CLASSROOM - LATER THAT DAY

The class is filled with students (10-11). Eli stands at his desk holding a piece of paper, hip cocked with attitude, but unable to hide a smile. He reads his color poem.

ELI

Black is the color of night. It  
feels like velvet. Tastes like  
licorice, and smells like mama's  
cigarettes on the porch after  
supper. Black sounds like a .38 -  
POP! POP! POP!

The kids jump in their seats and LAUGHTER erupts.

LEXI

Okay, okay. Let him finish.

ELI

Black is hard. Like me.

Eli sits down, proud of himself. Next to him, Tony offers up a fist and they touch knuckles. The BELL RINGS. The children start leaving while Lexi talks.

LEXI

Okay. That was great! I want to  
hear the rest of your color poems  
tomorrow, okay? Come prepared!

The class empties out and Eli approaches.

ELI

You really think I'm "disdainful  
and mocking?"

LEXI

You looked it up!

ELI

So?

She's proud.

LEXI

I think you're pretty talented. And  
yeah, a little sardonic.

He looks at her to see if she's telling the truth. She is. He smiles and leaves.

Lexi sighs. Her CELL PHONE RINGS and she answers.

INT. LIMOSINE - CONTINUOUS

ADDIE, now 32 and a ravishing beauty, rides in a limosine. She is expensively dressed, huge sunglasses block out the world, long painted nails hold a cell phone to her ear. Next to her sits EDWARD (4), a darkly beautiful but precocious boy, clearly adopted. Across from them is the nanny, DANIELLE, 21.

ADRIANNA

Lexi? Thank God! It's a matter of life and death!

Addie smooths out a worried brow in the reflection of her window.

INTERCUT AS NECESSARY BETWEEN.

Lexi is surprised by the call, but not concerned. It's clear they've talked since Addie's dramatic departure 15 years ago, but it hasn't been good. These women could not be more different.

LEXI

Addie. Wow. What an honor to hear from you.

ADDIE

Oh for God's sake, must you call me that? It's *Adrianna*. You know that.

LEXI

Funny, it says Adelle on your birth certificate.

ADDIE/ADRIANNA

Adelle, Addie - it's all just too horribly white trash. I can feel my manicure flaking.

LEXI

So why the call? Who's dying?

Adrianna GASPS again in despair. She snaps at Danielle and signals for a cigarette. Danielle scrambles to oblige.

ADRIANNA

Oh, it's simply awful! It's too terrible to say.

LEXI

OK then, well thanks for the call -

ADRIANNA

I'm barren if you must know! I  
waited too long to have children  
and now I'm barren!

Edward is worried about his Mommy. He takes her hand.  
Adrianna exhales a plume of blue smoke and waves it away from  
Edward's face, very maternal.

ADRIANNA (CONT'D)

(to Edward)

It's okay, honey. Mommy's womb is  
just dead.

Edward begins to CRY and Danielle brings him to her lap.

LEXI

Oh, Addie, don't say that, you'll  
scare him.

ADRIANNA

And now poor Edward will never have  
a brother! You know how screwed up  
children of the stars are. He'll  
have to face it all alone unless -

LEXI

Unless what?

ADRIANNA

I need you to carry my child.

This is too much, even for Addie.

LEXI

Are you insane?

ADRIANNA

Now, don't overreact. I just need  
to borrow your uterus for nine  
months. You can have it back.  
You're my sister, for God's sake.  
Don't be so selfish.

LEXI

Ha! Of all the - Addie, you are so  
- God! -

A BEEP indicates Adrianna has a call on the other line.

ADRIANNA

- I have to get that. I'll call  
you back.

The line goes dead. Lexi is flabbergasted.

INT. TAKE CHARGE NOW HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Lexi heads down the hall, shaking her head. The sound of a BASKETBALL BOUNCING distracts her. She comes to a gymnasium where a HANDSOME VERY FIT MAN (30) is playing basketball with a GROUP OF BOYS, (12-13). He blows a whistle and calls the kids over, taking a knee.

Behind Lexi, CRISTINA VIERRA (30) and TOBY KING (35) approach. They are two teachers from the lounge that morning.

CRISTINA

Not bad, eh?

LEXI

Huh? Oh, I was just -

CRISTINA

- just looking. Don't worry, we all do. He's pretty. I'm Cristina Vierra, Biology. This is Toby King, Social Studies.

LEXI

Lexi Allen.

They shake hands, friendly.

CRISTINA

(indicating to the gym)  
He's volunteer. Comes Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays to coach the kids.

TOBY

And he's a doctor.

LEXI

(wistful)  
Damn.

TOBY

Hi Dr. Tanner!

Toby's outburst is unexpected and Lexi ducks out of view. Toby waves enthusiastically into the gym.

TOBY (CONT'D)

Looking good today!

CRISTINA  
Jesus, Toby, do all of your sperm  
live in their own little closets?

TOBY  
I am not in the closet. I admire  
his athleticism, that's all.

CRISTINA  
Yeah right.

Cristina rolls her eyes at Lexi and they all begin walking  
toward the exit.

CRISTINA (CONT'D)  
(to Lexi)  
So you survived the first day? And  
Shana?

LEXI  
The kids were great. Shana kinda  
sucked.

CRISTINA  
Yeah, she doesn't like white  
people.

TOBY  
She really doesn't.

LEXI  
Is that legal? God, that's not  
fair. She already wants to cut my  
program.

EXT. TAKE CHARGE NOW PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS.

They walk to their cars.

CRISTINA  
Creative Writing is fringe, so  
cutting it is legal. But don't  
worry, the donors are good to us  
here. You're fine.

LEXI  
So I've been told.

Toby is glancing in the direction of a construction crew  
working across the street. He waves. Cristina gives him a  
look.

TOBY  
I have a girlfriend!

Lexi smiles and opens her car door.

LEXI  
See you guys tomorrow?

CRISTINA  
The coffee's shit, but it's free.

INT. DASH TANNER'S OFFICE - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

DR. DASH TANNER, the same man we saw coaching at Take Charge Now, approaches the receptionist desk looking at a chart. His assistant, BETH (22) is peering into the reception area, a devilish smile on her face.

DASH  
Who's next?

BETH  
(whispers)  
It's Adrianna Allen.

Dash looks up quickly, seeing Adrianna in the waiting area. She wears a white suit dress and fur with large sunglasses.

DASH  
Didn't I just see her last week?

BETH  
She's ba-ack.

INT. DASH TANNER'S OFFICE - MEDICAL OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER.

Adrianna reclines on the examining table, wearing nothing but a paper gown. Her eyes wander the ceiling. Dash's head pops up from between her legs.

DASH  
There's nothing medically wrong with you. Have you been taking the fertility pills?

ADRIANNA  
They make me fat and zitty. It's puberty all over again, without the sex.