

STEPSISTER (THE MEETING)

IRIS OPEN -- MORNING

We open on a young couple in bed. GONZALO slowly awakes, not shocked to be next to the girl, but clearly he doesn't know her, and tries to remember what happened the night before. He quietly makes the post-coital escape.

INT. GONZALO'S APARTMENT -- LATER

An apartment living room, beer bottles strewn about along with cigarette butts, chips and cards. Gonzalo walks in, looking around, unfazed by the mess. His roommate walks by.

ROOMMATE
(drowsily)
Hey.

GONZALO
Hey. Late night?

ROOMMATE
You could say that.

Roommate DAVE walks into the bathroom. Gonzalo walks over to the desk, kicks off his shoes and lights a cigarette, then turns on the computer, his weekend morning routine. He pulls out a notebook and pencil and flings himself on the couch. He then gets up and grabs a drink out of the mini-fridge and starts pacing. Roommate emerges.]

DAVE
Did you finish your story?

GONZALO
(taking a drag)
I can't figure out the ending.

DAVE
I'm making some eggs. Want some?

GONZALO
No thanks, I'm already having
breakfast.
(motions to his cigarette)
Gonzalo returns to the couch,
hoping that if he sits long enough
with the pencil and book in his
hand, the ending will write itself.
The phone rings.

GONZALO (CONT'D)
Hello?

SOPHIA

Hey slacker.

GONZALO

Hey little sister, what's up?

SOPHIA

Nothing, enjoying the beautiful morning. How are things on the east coast?

GONZALO

You know, the same shit, went out last night, got home a bit ago. Trying to figure out how to end another story. You know I've written so many stories and I don't think I've written an ending to any of them.

SOPHIA

Just like a guy, can't commit to an ending. Probably why Angela left you.

GONZALO

She just couldn't handle me.

Sophia laughs.

GONZALO (CONT'D)

How are you feeling?

SOPHIA

Good to be alive, but the chemo is wearing me down a bit.

GONZALO

I'm sorry. Did you talk to your dad?

SOPHIA

What's the point, he's only going to say no again.

GONZALO

It's been a year since my dad married your mom and left me to fend for myself. You should at least come to visit me. You owe me. I'd like to see you before...you know.

SOPHIA

I know, but he's afraid. He wants me to rest. And he thinks you'll be a bad influence.

GONZALO

Ha. He would. You need to come anyway.

SOPHIA

We'll see. I have to work on him some more. What else is new?

GONZALO

I need an ending.

SOPHIA

You want me to bail you out again, huh? You have to learn to finish your stories, you love leaving things undone.

GONZALO

I know, I know. Easy for you to say Miss I-wrote-a-book-at-16. Just keep working on your dad.

SOPHIA

I will.

GONZALO

(looking at his watch)
Later than I thought. I gotta get ready for work. Later kid.

SOPHIA

Love you.

GONZALO

Love you too. Bye.

INT. GONZALO'S ROOM -- LATER

Gonzalo wears a black shirt, and caps his head with a hat that say "Charlie's Cafe."

INT. CHARLIE'S CAFE -- AFTERNOON

As Gonzalo takes an order and walks over to pick one up, he locks eyes with a beautiful girl who keeps writing as she looks at him, then looks away.

He delivers two cups of coffee to another table, and is about to walk over to the literary beauty when he sees a girl walk into the shop. He looks at her, hoping she won't blow his cover of being potentially single.

GONZALO

Hey Angela, what are you doing here?

ANGELA

I need to talk to you, can we go outside?

EXT. CHARLIE'S CAFE -- CONTINUOUS

Gonzalo lights a cigarette, looks around.

ANGELA

I'm late.

GONZALO

Late for what? Were we supposed to meet up?

ANGELA

No you idiot, i'm late. I haven't gotten my period.

GONZALO

What?
(lowering his voice)
You're pregnant?

ANGELA

I don't know yet, but I'm freaking out.

A beat.

GONZALO

I can't support a kid on coffee shop tips Angela.

ANGELA

My dad's not gonna care when he finds out.

GONZALO

(taking another drag)
Listen, why don't we wait a bit and take a test and see what happens.

She looks at him, still concerned and unconvinced. Reluctantly, he gives her a friendly but unromantic hug.

INT. GONZALO'S APARTMENT -- EVENING

Gonzalo comes in, throws his keys on the table and throws himself on the couch. After a few seconds, he opens his notebook, grabs the cordless and dials.

GONZALO
Hey little sister.

SOPHIA
Hi.
(she grunts a little,
sitting up in her bed.)

GONZALO
You okay?

SOPHIA
Yeah, just a little groggy. How
are you?

GONZALO
I'm fine, stressed the fuck out.

SOPHIA
What's wrong?

GONZALO
Just work shit. And I still
haven't found a an ending for my
story.

SOPHIA
What's your story about?

GONZALO
It's about this guy who goes on a
road trip with his friends, and in
each state they stop in, he meets a
girl and promises each one he'll
come back. When he gets to
California, he feels bad that he
made so many promises, so he
decides he has to choose the one he
likes the most.

SOPHIA
So what's the problem?

GONZALO

I don't know which girl he chooses. Maybe I need to experience the story. I'm thinking of going for a trip with Dave and his friends for a few weeks. Get away from things.

SOPHIA

Get away? From what? You hardly have an responsibilities, why do you want to run away?

GONZALO

(defensive)

I'm not running away. And it'll be good for the story, right? Something I've experienced.

SOPHIA

I guess. You should go. I would if I could.

GONZALO

Any luck with your dad?

SOPHIA

Actually yeah, I think he's coming around. Him and mom were talking about it, I overheard them. They're looking at flight prices.

GONZALO

(repressing happiness)

You're coming?

SOPHIA

I don't know yet, but hopefully.

Beat.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

There's something I've been thinking about.

GONZALO

Yeah?

SOPHIA

I've just been thinking...I don't have much time left, so I'm trying to do everything I want.

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