

HAMARTIA

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. PEGASUS GAS STATION - MORNING

A clock ticks. A dead-eyed, 27 year old brunette sips her iced coffee. She wheels out a mop wringer to the front of the store, as her nametag shines under an overhead light.

INSERT: PHOENIX, Stock Attendant

Phoenix drags her feet as she mops. She reaches for her wet floor sign. Nothing. Its leaning against the cashier's desk.

As Phoenix walks over, she spots her shorter, raven-haired coworker, SHARICE, behind the counter talking to a CUSTOMER.

SHARICE

Thank you for visiting Pegasus,
where our fuel is like magic.

Customer exits, bottles in hand. Sharice pinches her nose.

SHARICE (CONT'D)

(sotto)

I do not get paid enough to say
that.

Phoenix ducks to grab her sign. Bumps her head coming up.

SHARICE (CONT'D)

Yikes, girl! You alright?

PHOENIX

Yeah, I'm ok. Just wasn't paying
attention.

SHARICE

You're not the only one. I totally
forgot to give that guy his change
back. I'll consider it a tiny
bonus.

PHOENIX

God knows Gerald won't give one.

The two snicker, as the customer steps on the wet floor.
CRASH! The customer falls. Bottles shatter on the floor.

An office door swings open. An older, fat man with stains and burns on his shirt enters. His nametag reads-

SHARICE
(annoyed)
Gerald, right on cue.

GERALD
(shouting)
What is up with all this damn racket?

The lobby goes quiet. He sees the big mess.

GERALD (CONT'D)
Where in the Sam Hill is the wet floor sign?

Phoenix shrinks under Gerald's gaze. He points at her.

GERALD (CONT'D)
(strained)
Phoenix, let's go out back. I think we need to have small chat about employee responsibilities.

He wraps his arm around her shoulder. Leads her out the back entrance. Customers cluster together and try to listen in.

SHARICE
Keep walking! Nothing to see here!

They return to their shopping. Sharice glances worriedly at backdoor. The clock ticks.

EXT. PEGASUS GAS STATION - NIGHT

The front door bell jingles. Sharice and Phoenix walk through. Phoenix ruffles around her bag.

SHARICE
Three hours?!

PHOENIX
(exhausted)
Yep.

SHARICE
Of just yelling? I'm sorry, girl.

PHOENIX
Yea, he started smoking right after too like it didn't even happen...
Ugh, where are my keys?

Gerald shoves past the two. Lit cigarette in hand.

GERALD

Hope I finally got through to you,
Phoenix. If not, I'm always open to
yelling at you again tomorrow!

He guffaws. Walks to his car. Sharice mean-mugs him.

PHOENIX

It's ok, Shar. He's always been
like that. I've learned to live
with it.

Phoenix looks down at the floor. Sharice's brow furrows.

SHARICE

Let me close for you.

PHOENIX

You sure?

SHARICE

Yea! Plus, I'm sure Gerald forgot
to lock the registers or something.

PHOENIX

Thank you.

Phoenix smiles and turns away. Her smile fades. Eyes closed.
Outside sounds mute. She walks to her car.

Muffled yells behind Phoenix alerts her. Eyes open. Sound
returns. HONK! A car zooms towards Phoenix. Sharice yanks her
back at the last second.

They tumble to the ground.

SHARICE

Girl! Did you not hear me calling
for you?!

Phoenix's heart beat intensifies. She grips her chest.

SHARICE (CONT'D)

(softer)

Are you ok?

Phoenix's eyes lift. Smirks.

PHOENIX

Yes... I am.

INT. PHOENIX'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Front door closes. The apartment is small and tidy. Phoenix drops her bag by the door and takes off her shoes. Looks at her diploma on the wall. Sighs. Grabs a water bottle from a pack on the floor. Walks into her-

BEDROOM

She pulls open her bedside cabinet. Takes out a small cardboard box. Lexapro, 10 mg.

She pops two tablets out of the tray. Downs them with water. Lifts her laptop off her coffee table. Opens it.

ANGLE ON: Google Search: "near-death experiences"

PHOENIX

Adrenaline... releases from adrenal gland... Causes changes in your body to help act in stressful situations.

ANGLE ON: Adrenaline rushes enhance cognitive function and provide a sense of excitement. They can be triggered by thrilling experiences, such as extreme sports.

Phoenix closes her laptop. Yawns and lies down.

PHOENIX (CONT'D)

Definitely not doing any extreme sports, but maybe I could go for a bit more excitement in my life.

Closes her eyes.

INT. PHOENIX'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Sunlight peeks through a window. An alarm goes off. Face down, Phoenix slams off the alarm.

EXT. PHOENIX'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Front door shuts. Phoenix walks downstairs. Pauses. Eyes the railing on the last set of stairs. She slides down. Falls backwards and laughs.

INT. PEGASUS GAS STATION - LATER

Phoenix opens a freezer. Reaches for her normal iced coffee, but spots an energy drink a few rows down. Her hand lingers.

BREAK ROOM

CLINK! The energy drink hits a tabletop.

SHARICE

Oh, this is new!

PHOENIX

Yea, I thought I'd give something else a try.

SHARICE

Look at you! Glad you're not letting Gerald's attitude yuck your yum.

They exchange smiles.

SHARICE (CONT'D)

I mean, variety's the spice of life! Within reason, of course. That's why I started actually reading the employee handbook recently.

PHOENIX

Find anything interesting?

SHARICE

Yea, actually! Apparently, spilled gasoline dries up after, like, an hour-

The door flings open.

GERALD

There you two are! I'm not paying you to canoodle in the back!

Sharice and Phoenix exchange looks. They exit.

MONTAGE: Phoenix splices up her life.

-- Phoenix takes different routes home. Drinks new beverages. Walks to work.

-- She glows at work with a more positive energy. Talks to CUSTOMERS. Sharice watches with a smile.

-- She comes home and walks past her Lexapro. It's untouched.

-- She talks to more customers, but her kindness turns into rudeness. Customers get uncomfortable. Sharice's smile fades.

-- Phoenix jaywalks with no cars around. Shoplifts candies from stores. Jeers at RANDOM PEOPLE on the street.

-- She tosses the Lexapro down the stairwell.

-- She acts hostile with customers. Dances through traffic. Attempts to steal larger items. Security chases her.

END MONTAGE.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - MIDNIGHT

Phoenix walks absentmindedly. TWO ROBBERS hold her at gunpoint. She grapples one of their weapons. The other robber punches her to the ground and steals her purse. They flee. Phoenix lies on the ground. She laughs.

INT. GAS STATION - THE NEXT DAY

Sharice sweeps the floor behind the cashier's counter. The door bell chimes. Phoenix enters, disheveled and tattered.

SHARICE

What happened to you?

PHOENIX

Oh, nothing much. I just robbed and couldn't get in my apartment. Had to sleep outside!

Sharice's face drops.

PHOENIX (CONT'D)

It's no big deal. The experience was truly invigorating.

SHARICE

No, it's a very big deal, Phoenix!
Look at yourself!

Sharice turns Phoenix to an empty freezer. Phoenix looks at her reflection. Her smile fades.

SHARICE (CONT'D)

I've watched you change a lot, but I refuse to watch you hurt yourself-

Sharice continues but Phoenix tunes it out. She stares at the clock. Its ticking intensifies.

INT. PHOENIX'S CAR - MIDNIGHT

Phoenix picks at her scabs, new and old. She scrolls through photos on her phone. Pauses.

ANGLE ON: Selfie at work of Phoenix and Sharice

She smiles softly. Looks closer.

ANGLE ON: Gerald in the background

Her smile leaves. Eyes narrow. She turns off her phone.

EXT. PEGASUS GAS STATION - MORNING

Sharice parks her motorcycle and takes off her helmet. She smells the air, recoils. Walks to the door and wiggles its handle. Locked. Phoenix, inside, notices and opens the door.

INT. PEGASUS GAS STATION - CONTINUOUS

Phoenix has prominent eyebags and reeks of gasoline. Sharice's eyes widen. The two walk behind the cashier's desk.

SHARICE

Girl, are you ok? You look and smell like roadkill.

PHOENIX

Oh, I was just busy setting up this morning.

SHARICE

What for?

PHOENIX

My final stunt! Our conversation yesterday got me thinking about what led me to this point. All signs point to Gerald so I'm doing something about it.

Sharice raises an eyebrow.

PHOENIX (CONT'D)

As we know, he loves smoking so I spent a few hours coating the parking lot in gasoline. When he goes out for his smoke...

A devilish smirk spreads across her face.

PHOENIX (CONT'D)
I'll give him something to *really*
yell about.

Sharice stands in shock. She opens her mouth to respond, but the front door bell jingles. Gerald enters. Before Sharice can turn to him, Phoenix steals Gerald's attention. Customers swarm Sharice, but her gaze remains focused on Phoenix.

INT./EXT. PEGASUS GAS STATION - EVENING

Sharice handles the last customer in line and rushes to Gerald's office. Empty. She sprints to a front window.

Gerald, against a gas pump, lights a cigarette. Phoenix jumps at him from behind. Gerald drops the cigarette. It hits the ground. Nothing.

SHARICE
(sotto)
The gas must have sat outside
longer than an hour. Its already
evaporated!

She takes a sigh of relief. Looks up. A glint from a half-empty fuel can catches her eye. Sharice gasps.

Phoenix is drenched in gas. With the fuel can in hand, she flings the rest of it at Gerald and steps on the lit cigarette. An inferno spirals around the two. It spreads to the pumps. A booming explosion coats the area in flames.

Windows shatter, shelves topple. Sharice flies back across the lobby. She hits her head against the wall. Vision blurs, ears ring. She sees the charred remains of Phoenix and Gerald from inside the lobby. Passes out.

Phoenix's phone lies surrounded by flames in the parking lot.

ANGLE ON: Phoenix and Sharice's selfie, Gerald in the back.

FADE TO BLACK.

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