

MY BABY YOU'LL BE

Written by

Alexander M. Fortin

FortinA4@gmail.com
(343)551-7314

Charles: Charles is a 26 year old living in a small duplex with his daughter. A single father who manages the local grocery store is a reality far from the glory days of high school football and college prospects, and it's even further from his dreams of being a big time video game developer. All he wants in life is the freedom to do the things he loves and the means to provide for his family. Unfortunately however the bills are piling up and he has no time for himself let alone his hobbies. But right now none of that matters, as long as his daughter Anita is safe, happy, and healthy he'll be okay.

Anita: Anita is a precious 7 year old girl. Full of wonder she spends most of her time in the yard looking at bugs, leaves, or anything else she can find laying around. She has a big heart and wants to make everyone around her smile, and she does a pretty good job. She's outgoing and eager to help her parents, her teachers, or anyone who will let her lend a hand.

Neighbor: The nameless neighbor is the person Charles imagines he would be had he made all the right choices. He is the fruit and water to Charles' Tantalus, so close but ever out of reach.

FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBS - DAY

CHARLES (26), a shabby but handsome young man, is raking leaves in front of his small duplex. The other half of the property, and the rest of the street have tidy lawns and carefully sculpted shrubbery.

Charles has mostly cleared one strip of leaves and his adorable little daughter ANITA (7) is raking up the few that are left.

A clean new Tesla pulls into the driveway on the other side of the duplex. The NEIGHBOR (20s) climbs out holding a bag from the local video game store.

NEIGHBOR

Howdy howdy! Looks like the two of you are working hard.

Charles puts down his rake and walks over to his neighbor.

CHARLES

Yes sir. It seems to be never ending these days.

(Pointing at Anita.)

Between this one, work, laundry, cooking, cleaning, fixing the car, raking the leaves, and the other billion things I have to do I don't think I'll ever have free time again.

NEIGHBOR

I feel you. Adulting is not all that it's cracked up to be. Remember when things were that simple?

The neighbor gestures towards Anita who is fascinated with an ant she's found in the grass.

NEIGHBOR (CONT'D)

No responsibilities, no regrets, not a single care in the world.

CHARLES

No bills!

NEIGHBOR

Can you imagine? Things are getting expensive dude.

(MORE)

NEIGHBOR (CONT'D)

And our parents never had to deal with shit like this. Quarter mill on the mortgage, fifty K for the car, the cell phone bills, the subscription services, hell even these video games are almost a hundred bucks a piece these days!

CHARLES

Tell me about it. Try doing all that with a kid! At least you had the hundred bucks for the game. I'm pretty sure I'll be playing the same five outdated, trash games until Anita's in college.

(Gesturing to the bag.)

Is that the new Rogue warrior?

NEIGHBOR

Yeah, you bet! It just came out.

Anita runs up to her dad and squeezes him around the waist.

ANITA

Daddy, can we go inside yet?

CHARLES

Not yet sweet heart. We've got to rake the whole lawn first. But when we are all done, I'll make us some hot chocolate. How's that sound?

Anita makes a sour face and crosses her arms.

ANITA

Well if we've got the whole lawn to do, then quit chit chattin' with your gal pals and get back to work!

Charles and the neighbor laugh at Anita's sassy response.

CHARLES

Well, you heard the boss. I guess I've got some work to do. Have fun with the new game bro!

NEIGHBOR

Will do homie! Maybe you can come over and play some time.

The neighbor turns and heads back towards his house while Charles and Anita hold hands and walk back towards their rakes.

CHARLES

Chit chattin' with your gal
pals... Where did you learn that
one kid?

Anita looks up at her dad and giggles mischievously.

EXT. SUBURBS - DAY (LATER)

Charles is still raking and Anita is using a stick to dig around the small, baron, garden near the front door.

Charles rakes the last of the leaves and notices a brown hundred dollar bill camouflaged into the pile. He carefully picks out the bill and examines it before raising his gaze inquisitively to the sky.

CHARLES

What in the f...

Bewildered he places the money in his jacket pocket and walks towards the edge of the lawn.

He leans forward to peer up and down the empty street then turns and walks back towards the entrance of the duplex.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Hey bug, how about that hot
chocolate?

Charles messes up Anita's hair before taking her hand and leading her into the house.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Anita's sitting on the kitchen floor atop a paint splattered tarp. She's surrounded by drawings and paintings.

She's trying to paint with an old hard brush but gets frustrated and begins to use her fingers.

Charles walks up with two cups of hot chocolate. He sets one down next to the tarp.

CHARLES

Here you go Picasso, your hot
chocolate. What are you working on
there cutie?

ANITA

I'm just painting. I like making
portraits.

CHARLES
These are pretty good.

ANITA
You think so? Could I sell them?

CHARLES
Tell you what, I'll be your first customer.

Charles reaches into his pocket and pulls out a LOONIE, kisses Anita on the head and admires his new painting.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
There, now you're a paid artist.

Charles walks to his computer desk, pushes aside a pile of ENVELOPES WITH PAST DUE STAMPS, and puts down his mug with a heavy sigh.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Bills, bills, bills.

He quickly taps at the keyboard before the sounds of violent game-play and a YouTube streamer's voice come pouring out of the computer speakers.

YOUTUBER (O.S.)
My god. This new Rogue Warrior might be one of the greatest games I've ever played! I'm not exaggerating. Hurricane productions has really outdone them selves on this one!

The glow from the computer highlights the smile that slithers across Charles' face while he raises his new found cash into view.

YOUTUBER (CONT'D)
Look at the detail on these graphics. (Gunfire, screams, and gory sound effects can be heard)

Charles' eyes dart cheerfully back and forth as he attempts to watch the video and admire his treasure at the same time.

YOUTUBER (CONT'D)
Oh! Look at that! These gross giant spider things just like... explode when you shoot them! Hahaha what a game! Okay, okay let's see what happens when we go into this cave...

Charles stares hypnotically into the glow of the computer screen.

YOUTUBER (CONT'D)
Ahh! (more gunfire, and sound effects.) Hahahahah oh my god this game is too good! It's too good.

Charles is startled out of his hypnotic state by Anita sheepishly pushing a small stack of papers against his hand.

CHARLES
Woah. Hey sweetie, didn't see you there.

Charles examines the pile.

On top are a few paintings that appear to be mostly smudges of old paint done with stiff brushes.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Wow, these are really good.

Anita answers without looking up.

ANITA
Thanks daddy.

Charles gets to the bottom of the pile and finds a flyer for an art store. There is a children's paint set and easel circled in red. The price reads \$49.99.

Charles' eyes now dart between his computer, the cash, and the flyer. The smile on his face disappears.

ANITA (CONT'D)
Can I get a new art set daddy?

Charles' smile flashes back as quickly as it left.

CHARLES
Of course you can sweet heart.
Let's go to the mall.

INT. MALL - DAY

Charles leads Anita down the hallway of the mall. They stop in front of the video game store. Charles looks solemnly inside before Anita tugs at his arm.

ANITA
Come on daddy it's this way!

CHARLES

Coming.

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

Anita gallops triumphantly as she struggles to hold a large easel.

Charles lags behind, drearily carrying a large drawing pad under one arm and several bags filled with art supplies.

CHARLES

Slow down honey, parking lots are dangerous.

Anita gets to the car and pirouettes back towards her father, who straightens his posture and smiles brightly.

ANITA

Well then hurry up slow poke! I have important work to do!

CHARLES

Coming. I'm coming.

Charles speeds up as he makes his way to the car where he loads in his daughter and her new art supplies.

ANITA

Daddy?

CHARLES

Yeah sweet heart?

ANITA

Thank you. I love you!

Charles smiles a very real smile.

CHARLES

I love you too bug.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Charles sits on the couch playing video games talking into his headset.

CHARLES

Yeah man it looks insane! My neighbor just picked up a copy too... No... No...

(MORE)

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I wish man, I had a little spare cash this week but the kid needed some supplies... nah it looks like they're cutting back on over time... one day we'll win the lottery.

ANITA (O.C.)

Daddy?

CHARLES

One sec.

Charles covers the mouth piece of his headset.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Yeah pumpkin, what is it?

ANITA

Here.

Anita stretches a clenched fist out in front of her while she sways back and forth staring at her feet.

Charles obediently stretches out his hand. A pile of change falls out of Anita's tiny fist.

ANITA (CONT'D)

I heard you say you couldn't afford your new games. So I made you some money.

Anita points to the window that over looks the front lawn.

Bewildered, Charles' gaze follows Anita's outstretched finger until it reaches her new easel. Next to the easel is a small sign that reads "PORTRAITS \$1".

FIN.