

Worst Case Scenario

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FADE IN:

INT. REECE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

REECE, a tall, skinny, 19 year old woman walks into the kitchen with a bag slung over her right arm. She has dark circles around her half-open eyes. She squints at the clock on the stove.

REECE

Jeez. 8am feels more like 5am to me.

Reece's MOM, a middle aged woman with a similarly slender build, looks up from her oatmeal and flashes an entertained smile.

MOM

Maybe if you didn't stay up 'till 3am with your boyfriend every night it wouldn't feel like that huh, Reece?

Reece rolls her eyes but nods in subtle agreement.

REECE

Normally it's fine 'cuz I don't have to be too awake for work since teaching assistants basically just set up and clean the studio... but today I'm *teaching*.

MOM

Teaching! Wow Reece that's amazing! Wait how?

REECE

Yeah. not sure, I just got a call from administration last night that they wouldn't be available and since the school is short-staffed right now, I've been asked to fill the position for today.

MOM

Wow then you definitely gotta be awake for that, hon!

REECE

(yawns)

I know. I'll wake up while I'm driving. I'll play some loud music or something...

[CONT.]

I think this could be a really good thing! Maybe it'll get me promoted... to an instructor! I've been working here long enough and if the project turns out well-

MOM

-which it absolutely will!

REECE

... Then maybe they'll consider me as more than just an assistant!

MOM

(in a loving voice)

My baby girl! An art Instructor at 19 years old.

Reece, embarrassed, avoids her mom's eyes.

REECE

Okay please stop. Listen... I'm gonna try and do an advanced project so I really stand out. I'm thinking of doing a Van Gogh-inspired piece with the kids.

MOM

Aren't they like 4 year old?

REECE

Yeah? so?

MOM

well don't you think maybe that's a little difficul-

REECE

Oh gosh it's 8:25 already! Sorry mom I can't keep chatting I gotta get there early to set up! I'll tell you how it goes after work!

Reece scrambles for her keys, shoves a bunch of prints of Van Gogh artworks into her bag, and dashes out the door.

INT. REECE'S CAR - DAY

DANCING QUEEN by ABBA is on full blast as Reece, a new driver, recklessly hurdles towards a red light. She halts to a jerky stop but is too busy mumbling to herself to care.

She recites her lesson plan as if she's in front of the students.

REECE

Alrighty everyone, lets put our sketchbooks away and have our eyes on me! Today we are going to try a painting style called *impressionism*... blah blah blah, big success, Reece, you're promoted!!! (beat) Okay priorities: 1. Keep the studio clean, 2. The project must look good, and 3. do this all within 45 minutes... I can do this. I. can. do. this.

She jolts the car into a parking lot, pulls perfectly into a tight spot, and stops the engine.

INT. ART STUDIO - DAY

Reece continues to mumble reassurances to herself as she fills paint containers and gathers brushes. She's so preoccupied that she doesn't notice someone now stands behind her...

LAUREN

Running out of white paint already, are we?

Reece lets out a YELP of surprise and nearly drops the container of white paint in her hands. She immediately turns around to face LAUREN, a short, stocky woman with an intimidating voice and dominant stance.

LAUREN

Whoops! didn't mean to scare ya, Reece! Just thought I'd keep you company is all.

REECE

(embarrassed)

haha.... ah Lauren you didn't scare me
haha just warming up my vocal-chords
is all... You're here to keep me
company?

LAUREN

Well yeah, no not really. I'm actually here to evaluate you haha! Artistic Directors don't spend our precious time keeping employees company. Basically I'll be here the whole time watching your every move and nitpicking every mistake you make along the way to determine your place here at Arts Corner.

REECE

(chuckles nervously)

Right. heh. Watching me.... my every move... great...

LAUREN

Don't sweat it, Reece I'm only half serious!

Reece nods and continues filling paint containers nonchalantly but her trembling hands are hard not to notice. She desperately looks at the clock and then the door for an escape.

REECE

Oh look at the time! 9:00! I... gotta go get the kids- I mean young artists. heh. Be right back!

Reece awkwardly skips to the door and struggles to get the doorstop to stay put. She disappears down the hall.

INT. ART STUDIO - DAY

One by one, TINY TODDLERS waddle into the studio looking dazed and confused as usual. Reece follows behind them. She impatiently matches their painfully slow pace.

REECE

Alrighty everybody! Find your sketchbooks! let's start warming up our art muscles by doodling anything we want!

Reece takes this opportunity to finish filling paint containers. She turns to put back a jug of blue paint in the cabinet and slams into a tall, lean MAN who holds his child's hand firmly.

REECE

Oop! uh sorry, sir heh didn't see you there... is there something I can help you with?

MAN

My daughter doesn't like how the paints smell. She came home last week and told me they made her sick. Can you explain that to me? I don't want my child being exposed to *harmful chemicals!*

Reece's eyes nervously shift to Lauren who attentively listens from across the room. Reece then looks at the clock that reads 9:15.

REECE

Um yes I mean no! I don't want that either, sir but I can assure you all the paints we use are child-safe and do not contain chemicals that would harm students - I mean young artists.

MAN

Are you calling me a liar? Are you calling my sweet daughter a liar?! We are not a family of liars!

REECE

No no no no I would never. I'm so sorry I came across that way. What would you have me do to ensure your daughter has a safer experience today?

MAN

Well you're using those dangerous paints again I see. I won't allow her to be exposed to them!

REECE

You want me to change the paints for today's project?

MAN

It's the least you could do.

REECE

Well it's just this class is only 45 minutes and theres only 30 minutes left and this project calls

specifically for-

MAN

Dear god you care more about
efficiency than the safety of the
students?!

The man's voice is raised and his irate attitude makes the class go silent. Reece sees Lauren step towards her and the man.

REECE

no no no! I will absolutely change the
paints I will! It's okay! look, see?

Reece proceeds to dump the containers of paint into the sink. The man smugly nods and lets go of his child's hand. The little girl runs to her seat.

Lauren settles back into her place as a silent watcher.

REECE

Alrighty everybody, today we're
looking at an artist called Van Gogh-

With all the commotion caused by the parent, a LITTLE GIRL who sits in the middle of the class lets out an ear-piercing cry.

REECE

Oh hey no no it's okay! Look look at
the beautiful sunflowers Van Gogh
painted!

The little girl pauses for a moment to study the faded photocopy that Reece is holding but quickly returns to her tears.

LITTLE GIRL

(sobs)

I... I want my moooooooooommmmy. I want
my mommmmy! mommmmmmy moommmmmmyyyyyy!!!

Her face is red and she's at the snotty stage of crying.

Lauren does not look impressed.

REECE

(under breath)

Yeah well you'll be seeing her when
the class ends in 20 minutes.

(comforting)
Hey c'mon do you wanna sit next to me
while I explain our project? You can
be my special helper!

The little girl nods and wipes her nose, smearing the snot
across her face.

Reece shudders, reluctantly holds the girl's wet hand and
guides her to the front of the class to resume the lesson.

INT. ART STUDIO - DAY

Reece is pacing anxiously. Her eyes are fixed on the clock.

REECE
(anxiously)
c'mon artists some of you aren't even
half done and we only have 8 minutes!
Let's work fast!
(under her breath)
okay remember what you said in the
car...."The project must look good"...

Reece looks around and scans the students' work.

Alright I can skip that one.... what
was the second thing.....

Suddenly, she whips her head towards the enormous stack of
paints in the sink. Then her eyes dart to the pastel-covered
work tables.

REECE
(under her breath)
Right. Keep the studio clean. (beat)
shit.

She darts to the sink and grabs the paint-soaked brushes,
almost knocking over a student in the process.

A tiny hand tugs at her apron but she doesn't turn her head.

REECE
We're not quite done yet... keep goin'

The student continues to urgently tug on her apron and then
mumbles something unintelligible.

Reece continues washing brushes, focussed on her task.

REECE

Sorry bud, you gotta speak up.

LITTLE BOY

I said.... NOSE BLEED!

Reece's face goes white and her eyes widen. She turns to see a little boy standing at her feet with blood covering his whole face and shirt.

Reece's eyes shift to Lauren who at this point heads for the exit to get first aid help.

Reece looks at the students working on their half-finished projects. She looks at the bloody scene in front of her. She looks at the paint brushes and containers that fill sink, and lets out a panicked WHIMPER.

REECE

Here, take this paper towel and hold it on your nose, bud. I'm.... just gonna clean these palettes and ummm you can just sit there and uhhh....

LITTLE BOY

But I'm scared. I- I didn't mean to.... I put a pastel up my nose and I didn't know it would....

Reece sighs, puts down her cleaning brush and turns off the tap-water. She takes one last defeated look at the messy studio and the unfinished projects.

She turns to the scared student and gives him a comforting smile.

REECE

Hey! Don't even worry about it! I used to put weird things up my nose all the time when I was small. That's how we learn right?

LITTLE BOY

Right.

Reece cleans up the little boy's bloody nose and rubs his back until he's calm. She glances at the clock with a pained look on her face.

REECE

(hopeless)

Alrighty everybody! Time's up today so
let's get our coats on and line up at
the door.

Lauren re-enters the room with a big white first-aid kit and
looks surprised to find the little boy lined up and ready to
go with rest.

She glances around at the disaster of a studio and then looks
at Reece.

The kids exit with their parents, leaving Reece and Lauren
alone in the studio.

REECE

I am so s-

LAUREN

Amazing!!!!!! You are so amazing,
Reece! You just dealt with every
worse-case-scenario in the book!

Reece looks at Lauren with shock and disbelief.

LAUREN

God when that parent started hassling
you I was SO close to stepping in and
telling him to back off! And THEN with
that snotty little kid...

(cringes)

Yuck! Did you see my face?

Reece gives a stunned nod.

LAUREN

I was so disgusted but you totally
comforted her and held her gross
little hand! (beat) But the best part
was how you handled that nosebleed
like a pro and THAT'S NOT EVEN IN YOUR
JOB DESCRIPTION! I left to go get
qualified help and they sent me back
with a first aid kit in the meantime
but there wasn't even a meantime! But
then I'm back and the kid is fine and
they're lined up ready to go at 9:45
on the dot!

REECE

Well thank you Lauren but the project isn't even finished and the studio...

LAUREN

The studio looks like every other art studio after 4 year olds have been there! And that project was ambitious! Advanced projects like that take AT LEAST two classes to complete! Reece! I think you should be very very proud.

Reece is now beaming and lets out a sigh of relief.

LAUREN

And after all this? I think you definitely have a future as an Instructor... in a few years!

REECE

Oh my god, Lauren. Thank you so much! I can't believe it! Please consider me if you ever need a substitute instructor again! Please!

LAUREN

(mocking the rude parent)
It's the *least* I could do!

INT. REECE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Reece walks in to find her mom cooking dinner. She smiles proudly at her mom who looks up and returns the expression.

MOM

Oh my goodness! My baby girl got promoted?!!! AHHHHHH!

REECE

(proudly)
Nope! (beat) But I *definitely have a future as an Instructor in a few years.*