

FRIENDSHIP COMES WITH A PRICE TAG

by

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INT. HALLS OF RESIDENCE - KATE'S ROOM - NIGHT

A cramped room with a small desk drowning in open text books. Images flicker fuzzily on a muted television.

KATE, wearing plain clothes to match her looks, lies on her bed talking on her mobile.

KATE

(phone)

It's okay, there's a lot of reading but I'm getting through it.

Her free hand fiddles impatiently with the edge of her bedspread.

KATE (CONT'D)

(phone)

Yes, it's fine. Everyone's really nice. I was just--

(pause)

I know, mum. I'm just on my way out, that's all.

She closes her eyes. Nods.

KATE (CONT'D)

(phone)

Okay. Talk to you soon. Bye.

She hangs up and covers her eyes for a moment. She exhales deeply, composing herself.

Laughter is heard from the other side of the door. Kate wipes her eyes and moves for the door.

She stops. Turns back. Her eyes search the room, finding a used dinner plate at her bedside. She grabs it.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

A large communal space littered with half-eaten food and mountains of washing up. A laptop on the centre table plays upbeat music.

The door squeaks open. Kate enters hesitantly.

Sitting at the table are LIZ and MELISSA, both pretty, both wearing tight fitting white outfits and halos. They vaguely resemble angels.

On seeing Kate, their tipsy chattering and giggling trails off. They're uninterested. Giggly chatter resumes.

Kate moves to the sink at the far work top where ADAM, a good looking lad in a red t-shirt, finishes making a sandwich.

LIZ
You going with the boys, Adam?

ADAM
No. Running late. When's your taxi booked for?

He takes a bite of his sandwich and grabs a plastic Devil fork from the table.

MELISSA
Soon, so get a move on.

Kate steals a glance at Adam as she runs the taps. He doesn't notice.

The door opens and SADIE hurries in. She's intimidatingly attractive. She wears a short red dress and devil horns.

SADIE
Taxi's here.

Adam wolf whistles, spinning the fork in his hand.

SADIE (CONT'D)
Like it then?

ADAM
Where's the rest of it?

Sadie feints amazement.

SADIE
So you're funny now? When did that happen?

LIZ
Looks good, hun.

Melissa stands to give Sadie a better view of her outfit.

MELISSA
Is this okay?

Sadie grabs a glass of wine from the table and downs it.

SADIE
Ready?

Sadie turns to leave the room. Adam pokes her exposed thigh with his fork. She shrieks, slapping him away. Their laughter fades as they dash out.

Kate is left alone in the kitchen.

INT. KATE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kate is curled up in bed. A digital clock on the bedside table reads 3:17am.

Distant laughter rises from outside. Her eyes flutter as she rouses. She sits up and shuffles to the window, parting the curtains.

On the roadside below, Liz and Melissa stumble out of a parked taxi, giggling as they head towards the building.

Sadie exits the vehicle, followed by a MALE STUDENT. He's slightly older. She gives him a lingering kiss, then hurries after her friends.

Kate closes the curtain and lies back down. Her eyes remain open.

EXT. TOWN CENTRE - DAY

Kate makes her way down a busy street. She turns into a clothes shop.

INT. SHOP - DAY

Kate flicks through one of the racks. She pulls out a long skirt, similar to the one she's currently wearing. She examines it with a slight frown.

Her eyes drift to another section of the shop where skinny mannequins stand on platforms modelling items of a skimpier variety.

Kate puts the skirt back.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Liz, all dressed up, pours herself a glass of wine, moving to the music from her laptop.

Sadie sits at the table, texting on her mobile. She glances up at Liz's bottle.

SADIE

That the last of it?

LIZ

Sorry.

Kate enters, walking tentatively in a pair of high heels and a short dress that is slightly too small.

Sadie and Liz watch with curiosity as Kate rifles through a utensil drawer. They exchange amused glances.

SADIE'S mobile beeps. She sighs irritably.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Mel?

SADIE

Early lecture apparently...

LIZ

Boring cow.

SADIE

Whatever, she'd only sit in the fucking corner with an orange juice looking miserable anyway.

They laugh. Kate steps up to the table, eyeing the corkscrew in front of Sadie.

KATE

Can I borrow that?

Sadie looks up, surprised. She hands it over.

SADIE

Out tonight then?

KATE

Just meeting some girls from my course.

Sadie nods in approval.

SADIE

At least some people know how to enjoy themselves.

She looks back to her phone. Snaps it shut. A shirtless Adam bursts in, flustered.

ADAM

It was on the back of that chair.

SADIE

We haven't touched it!

Kate stares at Adam. He notices.

ADAM

Alright?

Her eyes hit the floor. She manages a weak smile. Sadie watches knowingly.

ADAM (CONT'D)
If you see it....

SADIE
Okay! Calm down...

He makes a quick exit. The door closes behind him.

LIZ
So have you seen it?

SADIE
(blasé)
Back of the door.

Sure enough, Adam's shirt hangs on the back of the kitchen door, now in full view. Liz laughs.

SADIE (CONT'D)
(to Kate)
Do you like him or something?

Kate is stunned. She opens her mouth to speak.

SADIE (CONT'D)
(interrupting)
It's okay if you do, he's alright actually. Not really my type though.

LIZ
Been there, done that?

Liz flashes a mischievous grin. Sadie laughs.

LIZ (CONT'D)
(to Kate)
She practically sucked his face off on the first night. Check the fridge if you don't believe me.

Sadie looks to Kate for sympathy, embarrassed. Kate chuckles.

LIZ (CONT'D)
Tall lad from last night's on there too. Got them developed this afternoon.

Sadie buries her head in her hands.

SADIE
Why do you do this to me?

LIZ
It's funny! You know you love it.

Sadie sighs wearily. She glances at bottle of wine in Kate's hand.

SADIE
You gonna open that?

INT. SADIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sadie empties the last of the bottle into her glass. She leans by the open window smoking a cigarette. Liz is sprawled on the bed.

Kate perches on the end. She pulls on her dress, trying to cover more of her thighs.

LIZ
Going well so far?

KATE
Yeah, I mean I was surprised at the amount of work we've had already but yeah it's really interesting.

SADIE
Unlike this conversation... "So what course do you do?" Why does everyone ask that when nobody cares?

Kate laughs nervously.

SADIE (CONT'D)
Oh no offence or anything, it's just all that first day introduce yourself bollocks was so depressing. Everyone faking an interest in the first people they stumble across, crapping themselves no one better will come along.

She blows a cloud of smoke out the window.

LIZ
My friend from home hates where she is, right load of bible-hugging losers on her corridor. I was so glad when I met you Sadie, knew you'd be up for a laugh.

SADIE
Aw, cheers babe.

Sadie stubs out her cigarette on the sill. She looks down.

SADIE (CONT'D)
 Taxi! Oh, wait, are your friends
 in Paradise tonight? You need
 dropping off?

Kate looks confused at first. She catches on.

KATE
 Oh... no don't worry, that was
 nothing. I can skip it.

She drinks deeply from her glass of wine.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Strobe lighting flashes over a packed dancefloor. Sadie and
 Kate stand nearby, watching people dance.

SADIE
 (shouting over music)
 Like the look of anyone?

Kate laughs, shying away from the question.

SADIE (CONT'D)
 Only got eyes for Adam then.

KATE
 I don't! Really, I don't.

SADIE
 You're right actually, you don't,
 'cause you just stare at your
 feet the whole time!

Sadie laughs, tipsy. She spots a group of girls on the
 floor, dancing in a tight circle.

SADIE (CONT'D)
 Look at that. How is that going
 to impress anyone? Why get all
 dolled up to dance around your
 fucking handbag?

They keep watching them dance. Sadie scoffs.

SADIE (CONT'D)
 Too scared to encourage any
 interest. Like you with Adam. You
 need to be more direct. Make it
 clear you like him and he'll
 notice you.
 (pause)

Or, y'know, you could just be yourself or whatever, I'm sure that would get his attention.

She laughs. Kate looks wounded.

SADIE (CONT'D)
Joke, Kate. Know what one of those is?

She nudges her playfully. Kate manages a smile. Liz returns with drinks.

SADIE (CONT'D)
Finally!

Liz hands a glass to Kate. It slips in Kate's hand, spilling some of the drink.

LIZ
Careful! You have to down it now, that's the rule!

SADIE
Come on, Kate!

Kate reluctantly obliges. They cheer her on.

INT. TOILETS - CUBICLE - NIGHT

Kate sits on the toilet, head in her hands.

LIZ (O.S.)
Have you seen who's out tonight?
I think all your drunken mistakes
are having a reunion!

SADIE (O.S.)
They keep coming up to me and I'm
like, sorry, what's your name
again? How embarrassing is that?!
(pause)
Kate, you okay?

Kate sits straight, pushing her hair off her face.

KATE
(groggy)
I'm fine.

Liz giggles.

LIZ (O.S.)
Off your face more like. Can't
believe it.

To be honest we thought you were a bit tragic when we first saw you but you're actually alright!

SADIE (O.S.)
That's sweet Liz, almost bordering on flattery there...

LIZ (O.S.)
You know what I mean. Just glad you're up for a laugh.

Kate clutches her stomach, head drooping. There is a knock on the door.

SADIE (O.S.)
You alive in there?

Kate takes a deep breath and drags herself to her feet.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

The girls dance in the middle of the floor, music pounding.

Liz huddles close to Kate, holding out her camera. It flashes. She continues dancing, clearly enjoying herself.

Kate dances without excessive movement. She doesn't look well. She clasps her stomach. Swallows hard.

Sadie dances with a muscular YOUNG MAN. He holds her hips as they move together. Her sultry demeanor has his full attention.

He moves in for a kiss. She lets him.

LIZ
Go for it, Sadie!

It's full on. Kate watches in drunken awe. Liz takes a picture.

LIZ (CONT'D)
There's Adam!

Kate turns to see him some feet away with a group of friends. He sees her and waves.

Kate pushes herself to dance harder, throwing her hair back in an attempt at sexy. It's like a bad Sadie impersonation.

LIZ (CONT'D)
He's looking!

Kate turns around to see. Her ankle gives in her heels. She goes down like a ton of bricks. Liz and Sadie erupt into a fit of drunken giggles.

Liz produces her camera. It flashes. They help her to her feet. Her hair is stuck to her sweaty forehead.

LIZ (CONT'D)
Kate that was priceless!

Liz and Sadie are still in hysterics. Kate sees Adam through her mess of hair. He's laughing too.

INT. HALLS OF RESIDENCE - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Liz has Kate by the arm, helping her stumble to her room.

Up ahead, Sadie lets the young man from the club into her bedroom. Liz squeals with laughter.

LIZ
Sadie you legend! Love you!

Sadie flashes Liz a cheeky smile and slips inside her room, closing the door.

INT. KATE'S ROOM - NIGHT

The door swings open. Kate staggers to the bed and falls on to it. Liz places a bin at the bedside.

Adam appears in the doorway.

ADAM
She alright?

LIZ
She'll live.

Kate looks up at Adam. She smiles, drunkenly.

KATE
(slurred)
I'm wasn't staring at my feet.

ADAM
What?

Kate retches over the bedside and vomits, half missing the bin.

Liz howls with laughter. Adam just smiles, pitifully.

INT. KATE'S ROOM - DAY

Kate lies awake in bed, looking pale and fragile. She winces, moving the covers to reveal a badly bruised leg.

She sees the bin and groans.

Her mobile rings. She grabs it from her bedside table. 'HOME CALLING' flashes on the screen.

She doesn't answer. Just lies back down. Still for a moment. Then she cringes, mortified. Her eyes glisten.

Her phone continues to ring.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Kate hobbles into the kitchen. Liz and Melissa are with the open laptop, laughing away.

LIZ
Come and have a look at these.
You look a right state!

Kate slumps down beside her. On the laptop screen are the photos from the night before. Liz points to one of Kate sprawled on the floor.

LIZ (CONT'D)
This one is too good! You were
such a laugh last night.

MELISSA
Wish I'd joined you now! You want
some water, Kate?

Kate looks up at Melissa, surprised. She nods.

KATE
Thanks.

Melissa moves to the sink.

LIZ
It was brilliant, Kate was just
classic.

MELISSA
Sadie up yet?

LIZ
No, I think he's still in there!

MELISSA
Probably a record for her.

LIZ
(to Kate)
We're going shopping for costumes
later, there's a Doctors and
Nurses night at the union
tomorrow if you're up for it?

Kate hesitates. Then smiles.

KATE
Yeah, should be fun.

INT. SADIE'S ROOM - DAY

Sadie lies in bed asleep. Her eyes slowly open. She groans, squinting. She looks a mess.

She sits up, nursing her head, hair matted to her face. She looks over to see the young man from the night before sleeping next to her. She stares blankly at him.

She lies down, her back to him. Her eyes remain open.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Sadie vomits violently into the toilet bowl. She flushes and slumps against the wall, head buried in her hands.

She just sits there. Still.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Sadie enters, hair and make up immaculate.

LIZ
Here she is!

SADIE
Morning.

LIZ
Got a new addition to the album.

Liz grins, turning the laptop to reveal the photo on screen. It's of Sadie kissing the young man in the club.

SADIE
Please Liz, it's embarrassing!

LIZ
Come on, we love you for it! You
had me in fits all night.

Sadie laughs, flashing her winning smile. She moves to the work top, turning her back on them to prepare breakfast as they continue their giggly chatter.

Her smile fades ever so slightly.