

HIGH DEMAND

written by

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FADE IN:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

A den of five GIRL SCOUTS, all approximately 12 years old, dressed in GSA uniforms, sit on the floor.

MARGARET, a mousy girl scout with flat hair, taped glasses, sits apart from the others.

They stare up at their DEN MOTHER, 30, attractive, professional, as she conducts a power point presentation on a screen.

DEN MOTHER

As you can see, girls, we're up against some stiff competition from Dens Forty-eight, Three Twenty-seven, and Eight Nineteen respectively.

SHAREE, a scout with blonde hair raises her hand.

DEN MOTHER

Hold onto that thought until after the presentation, Sharee. I'll be conducting a brief Q and A during snack time.

Sharee lowers her hand slowly. Den Mother clicks up a new graph on the screen.

DEN MOTHER

Last year's sales were sluggish at best despite a valiant effort from most of you.

Sharee and the other girls scowl across at Margaret until she lowers her head.

DEN MOTHER

But, this year, I predict victory. Scratch that. Not just victory. I predict total annihilation. It won't be easy. We're not the only den with a Super Walmart down the street. However, this year, I have added a bonus incentive plan.

Den Mother points her clicker at the screen.

DEN MOTHER

The girl who sells the most cookies will be getting one of these.

CLICK.

Sharee's eyes widen. Salivates.

Margaret lifts her head. A smile slowly forms as she sees--

SCREEN

A shiny, state of the art, girl's bicycle.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Margaret stares up at the screen.

Margaret rides an old, rusted, wobbly bicycle.

Margaret stares up at the screen, her eyes glazed over with bike lust.

Sharee and the girls surround Margaret on her bike.

Margaret stares up at the screen, her tongue sticks out of her mouth sideways.

Sharee and the girls kick at Margaret's bike, stomp it into the ground. Margaret sits on the ground, watches, cries. Her glasses lie broken in the dirt.

Margaret stares up at the screen. Blinks. Reality.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

Margaret glares over at Sharee and the girls, their eyes locked on the bike.

Sharee feels Margaret's eyes on her, looks over at her. Margaret returns her gaze to the floor.

INT. FRONT DOOR - DAY

Den Mother stands at the open door, holds her smart phone. Sharee walks up to her. Margaret lags behind.

DEN MOTHER

Okay, Sharee, how many can I put you down for?

SHAREE

I'll take fifty cases.

DEN MOTHER

Outstanding. Aggressive. I like that.

Den Mother enters the info on the smart phone.

SHAREE

Does the bike come in cranberry red?

DEN MOTHER

If you sell fifty cases, you can have any color you want.

SHAREE

Awesome.

DEN MOTHER

Good luck, Sharee. See you next week.

Sharee leaves. Margaret steps up.

DEN MOTHER

Margaret. Hello. Should I put you down for your usual two cases?

MARGARET

No. I'd like one hundred cases, please.

Den Mother laughs.

DEN MOTHER

You're not serious.

MARGARET

Yes, I am.

DEN MOTHER

You do realize there's twelve boxes in a case.

MARGARET

Really? Oh.

Den Mother enters info on the smart phone.

MARGARET

In that case, you better make it two hundred.

DEN MOTHER

Listen, I admire you wanting to keep up with the other girls to compensate for your... life. But, there's no way I'm ordering you two hundred cases of cookies.

MARGARET

I really want that bike.

DEN MOTHER

Margaret, let me be blunt. You're our worst salesgirl. Who's going to reimburse me for all the cookies you can't sell? Maybe your parents can afford to buy you a second or fifth hand bike at a yard sale.

MARGARET

I need *that* bike.

Den Mother sighs.

DEN MOTHER

Sharee only ordered fifty cases, and she's our top girl.

MARGARET

Fine. I'll take fifty-one.

DEN MOTHER

I can only spot you for five cases. Not one box more.

MARGARET

Okay, let *me* be blunt. Sharee and her goons don't like me. You don't like me. Nobody wants me here. I don't fit in with you and your perfect den of Stepford girls. Don't even ask me what that means.

DEN MOTHER

No, that was rather good.

MARGARET

I'll make you a deal. If I can't sell more cookies than Sharee, I'll drop out of your stupid den.

Den Mother eyeballs her. Margaret eyeballs her back.

Den Mother taps the info on the smart phone.

DEN MOTHER

Margaret Jones. Fifty-one cases.

She shuts off her smart phone.

DEN MOTHER

You have four weeks. Good luck. You're going to need it.

THE GREAT COOKIE SEQUENCE**EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY**

A mini van parks along the front of Walmart. Sharee and her goons get out, The hatch opens, and they unload boxes.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Margaret pulls a rusty red wagon loaded with boxes down the sidewalk.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Sharee and her goons stand before a huge, fancy display of Girl Scout cookies. A CROWD gathers.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Margaret stands next to a small display of Girl Scout cookies on a stack of old crates. A CROWD passes by.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Sharee and her goons hand out boxes of cookies to the CROWD in exchange for cash.

A CLOWN makes balloon animals and hands them out.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

A HOMELESS MAN approaches Margaret, hands her a quarter. She hands him a box of cookies, then hands him back the quarter.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Sharee stands at the empty display. She hands an OLD WOMAN the last box of cookies.

After the Old Woman leaves, Sharee and her goons jump into a group hug and cheer.

The Clown throws confetti into the air.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Margaret packs the last unopened case of cookies into her wagon, then pulls it down the sidewalk.

END THE GREAT COOKIE SEQUENCE

EXT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Margaret sits at the kitchen table, defeated, eats from a box of Girl Scout cookies.

BUD, 20s, unshaven, wasted, shuffles into the kitchen wearing his pajamas. He plops down in the chair next to Margaret.

BUD

What's up?

MARGARET

Hey, Bud.

BUD

How come you're not at school?

MARGARET

It's Saturday.

BUD

Oh. What's for breakfast?

MARGARET

It's night.

BUD

Oh. I'm starving. Did Mom get my special corn chips?

MARGARET

I don't think so. Here.

Margaret slides the box of cookies to Bud.

BUD

What are you so bummed out about?

Bud looks inside the box, sniffs.

MARGARET

Nothing. There's this girl who thinks she's better than me. She's pretty. She's popular. She has friends. I guess she is better than me. I got nothing.

BUD

You got me.

Bud pops a cookie into his mouth.

MARGARET

Thanks. I know you mean well, but you're a bigger loser than I am.

BUD

See, things are never as bad as they seem. Unless you're me.

Bud pops another cookie into his mouth.

MARGARET

It just gets me so mad. There has to be something I'm better at. There has to be some way I can beat her at her own game.

BUD

Listen, Mags, I used to be like you. Always worried what people thought about me.

Bud shovels a handful of cookies into his mouth. Barely audible through the chewing, Bud continues his inspirational speech.

BUD

I didn't have any friends. No one liked me in school. I was so depressed I was actually thinking about moving someplace where no one knew me. Start fresh.

Bud shoves another handful of cookies into his mouth.

BUD

But, then I was afraid that after they got to know me, they wouldn't like me. Then I would just have to move again. But, then a miracle happened. I got glaucoma. And thanks to the wonders of natural medicine, I've never felt better.

Bud turns the box upside down, pours the remaining cookies into his mouth.

BUD

I still don't have any friends. Nobody likes me. But, do I care?

Bud puts the empty box on the table. His face covered with chocolate.

BUD

Hey, these are pretty good. Do we have any more of these?

A smile forms on Margaret's face.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Margaret and Bud stand on the sidewalk outside a medical clinic. Next to them, a display of Girl Scout cookies.

MARGARET

Thanks for doing this, Bud. I really appreciate it.

BUD

No problem. It feels good to be out of the house. You know, fresh air and sunshine. Plus, it's nice to have a job again. I can use some extra cash.

MARGARET

We don't get paid for this.

Bud looks at her, perplexed.

MARGARET

Oh, here comes someone. Get ready.

BUD

We'll talk about this later.

JOE, a businessman, 40s, dressed in suit, carries a briefcase, approaches the cookie stand.

MARGARET

Thank you very much, sir.

Margaret hands Bud a bag full of cookies.

BUD

You're welcome, little girl.

Bud stops Joe from entering the clinic.

BUD

Hey, Joe. How you doing, man?

JOE

Oh, Bud. I didn't see you.

BUD

Oh, right, with the glaucoma. How's that going?

JOE

Good. As a matter of fact, I was just on my way in.

BUD

Oh, my bad.

JOE

It was good to see you. I have to--

BUD

Hold on a second. I just bought the best cookies I ever ate. I'm serious. You know how after a treatment you're craving something and nothing seems to satisfy that feeling. Not candy, not cheese curls, not corn curls, nothing...I'm telling you, these cookies are the best. I just bought five boxes from this little girl. Joe, trust me, you got to try these.

JOE

What are you kidding me? Is this some sort of scam? Who is this, your little sister or something?

BUD

Come on, Joe. I'm just trying to--

JOE

I know what you're trying to do, and frankly, I'm insulted that you're willing to take advantage of a handicapped person just to sell some Girl Scout cookies. You're lucky I don't call the police.

Joe turns toward the clinic in a huff. Bud places his arm around him, guides him down the street away from Margaret.

BUD

Wait a minute. Come here a second. Look, I know what's up.

JOE

You do?

BUD

Yeah. I know about eighty percent of the people who come to this clinic have glaucoma.

Bud motions air quotes.

JOE

It's a tragedy.

BUD

It is a tragedy. I agree with you.
But, you know what else is tragic?

JOE

What's that?

BUD

Liars. I can't stand liars.
Especially people who lie just so
they can get something that really
doesn't belong to them. Nice tie,
Joe. Is that a clip-on?

Bud tightens Joe's tie around his Adam's apple.

BUD

So, don't you accuse *me* of taking
advantage of the handicapped. It's
insulting.

Joe gags as the tie cuts off his oxygen.

BUD

Now, do you want to call the police?
Or do you want to make a little girl
very happy?

Joe gasps for air. Bud loosens the tie.

BUD

Nope, that's a real one.

Margaret looks on as Bud and Joe walk towards her like two
old friends. Joe holds out his wallet.

JOE

I'd like to buy some cookies.

MARGARET

Really? I mean, how many would you
like, sir?

JOE

Five boxes.

Bud nudges Joe in the ribs.

JOE

No, wait. Ten boxes?

Bud nods, smiles his bad ass smile.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Bud holds boxes of cookies in the air. He summons PATIENTS to the cookie stand as they exit the clinic.

A CROWD of PATIENTS gather at the stand.

Margaret collects money as Bud passes out cookies.

Bud opens up more cases of cookies.

Margaret collects more money.

Bud passes out the last boxes of cookies.

Margaret raises her hand for the high five, but Bud lifts her, twirls her around in circles.

Margaret beams.

END SERIES OF SHOTS**INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY**

The Den Mother stands before the girls with Margaret on her right and Sharee on her left. She reads from a card.

DEN MOTHER

Sharee Harrison. Six hundred boxes.

Sharee squeaks with joy, jumps up and down. The other girls cheer and applaud.

DEN MOTHER

Margaret Jones.

The Den Mother lowers the card, mutters.

DEN MOTHER

Six hundred and twelve boxes.

The girls' eyes widen, their mouths open.

Sharee squeaks with joy, jumps up and down.

The Den Mother holds her back from celebrating.

DEN MOTHER

Sharee, no.

The reality of the situation hits Sharee like a train. Her face turns red as she glares at Margaret.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Bud walks along the path, smiles, breathes in the fresh air. In the distance, he waves to--

MARGARET

All smiles, pushes her new state of the art bike, waves back.

SHAREE (O.S.)

Hello, Margaret.

Margaret turns, Sharee pushes her to the ground and grabs the bike.

BUD stops short, then races to Margaret's rescue.

Sharee and her goons surround Margaret.

SHAREE

Thanks for taking care of my bike, Jones. I can handle it from here.

Bud rushes to the scene, out of shape, winded.

BUD

Hey, Mags, are you okay? What the hell is going on?

MARGARET

It's okay, Bud.

SHAREE

You must be Jones' stoner brother.

BUD

And you must be that spoiled bitch with the stick up her ass.

SHAREE

Let's go, girls. I want to show my Mom my new bike.

Bud places his hands on the handlebars, stops Sharee.

BUD

Woa, woa, woa. This is Margaret's bike. She won this fair and square. If you have a problem with that, then you have a problem with me.

Bud stares down Sharee. She slowly lets go of the bike.

SHAREE

Okay, mister. It was just a joke.
We don't want any trouble.

Bud nods, smiles his bad ass smile.

Sharee whistles. Like a pack of dogs, her goons tackle Bud to the ground, commence kicking at him.

MARGARET

Bud!

SHAREE

Oh, sorry. I guess you didn't see that coming.

Margaret stands, her anger builds.

Margaret shoves Sharee to the ground along with the bike.

The goons stop beating on Bud, stand there in shock.

SHAREE

Well, that was really stupid of you.

Sharee struggles to her feet just to be shoved to the ground by Margaret again.

MARGARET

No, Sharee, you're the one who's stupid.

Sharee and her goons stare at Margaret, flabbergasted.

Bud looks up at his sister, impressed.

MARGARET

I'm tired of you treating me like I'm a loser. You've been picking on me and making fun of me since second grade. All I ever wanted was for us to be friends. But, I guess you could never be friends with someone like me because I'm not good enough. But, you know what I finally realized? You're the one who's not good enough.

Bud sits up, enjoys the show.

MARGARET

You're mean, you're spoiled, you're arrogant - you're the loser.

Sharee stands up, brushes herself off. Steps up to Margaret, who holds her ground.

SHAREE

Let's go, girls.

Sharee nods to Margaret.

SHAREE

See you later, Jones.

Sharee turns and walks off with her goons.

Bud gets to his feet, limps over to Margaret.

BUD

Hey, Mags, I'm so proud of you.

MARGARET

I can't believe I said those things.

BUD

Believe it. I heard it when I was lying on the ground over there.

MARGARET

Are you okay? Are you hurt?

BUD

Who, me? They're just little girls. I'm like all muscle and iron. Besides, in a few hours, I won't be feeling nothing.

Margaret walks over, picks up her bike.

BUD

I got to admit, you got yourself some sharp wheels.

Margaret admires the bike, smiles.

MARGARET

Yeah, I guess so. Let's go home.

Margaret pushes the bike along the path, Bud limps along.

BUD

So, how many boxes of those cookies do we have left?

MARGARET

None. We sold them all.

BUD

Yeah, but we can get more, right?

MARGARET

Not until next year.

BUD

What do you mean?

MARGARET

I mean, you have to wait until next year. You didn't know that?

BUD

Don't be messin' with me, Mags. I need those cookies.

MARGARET

Sorry, Bud.

BUD

No, you don't seem to understand the seriousness of the situation. I really need those cookies. They're magical cookies.

MARGARET

I'll buy you some Oreos.

BUD

(beat)
They better be double stuffed.

MARGARET

Okay, okay.

BUD

(beat)
And chocolate milk.

Margaret sighs.

FADE OUT

