

INITIATION

By

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EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

A swanky building in a commercial district. Professional people come and go.

NICO BRIGGS (34) exits the building. A handsome black man in a sharp suit with a huge smile on his face. Phone to his ear.

NICO
(into phone)
Hey baby, guess what?

He's about to burst with excitement.

NICO
Guess who's the new national
marketing director?

A squeal can be heard from the other end of the phone. Nico laughs. He sticks his free hand in his jacket pocket, pulls out a small jewelry box, flips it open. An engagement ring.

NICO
(flirty)
How about you and I getting
together tonight? You know, a
romantic dinner. Some music and
maybe some...

Nico looks up into the clear blue sky with eager eyes.

NICO
(lowers his voice)
Hot...sweet...love.

Another squeal on the other end. Nico giggles.

NICO
Okay baby, I see you at six.

He ends the call, snaps close the jewelry box, pockets it along with the phone.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

With a basket in one hand, Nico strolls over to the "florist" area, browses the different bouquets, settles on red roses.

WINE AISLE

Nico peruses the huge wine selection. Picks a bottle of red. After a second thought, grabs another one.

CANDY AISLE

Nico passes a display with assorted chocolates, goes for the expensive gourmet box.

PHARMACY AREA

Nico strolls down one aisle, stops at the shelf with condoms. Intimate items. He grabs a box of condoms. No thinking needed. He knows which ones he likes.

He's about to leave when his eyes catch bottles of hot and a cool lubricants. Nico glances over his shoulders, no one's around. He grabs one of each, puts them in the basket.

EXT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Nico exits the store. Flowers in one hand, paper bag in the other. He hums a happy tune, smiles at people he passes.

He reaches his car, opens the door, gets in.

INT. CAR - DAY

Nico puts the flowers on the passenger seat. The bag on the floor. He grins wide, then puts the key in the ignition.

The passenger door opens. AMARA (14) shoves the roses down on the floor, then jumps in. She's got long stringy blonde hair, defiant eyes, wears short shorts and a tight top.

Nico stares at the scuffed roses on the floor. Anger grows. He glares at Amara who pops a gum bubble in his direction.

POP!

NICO

What the hell! Why did you do that for?

She chews a big wad of gum.

AMARA

Just drive.

Nico can't believe his ears.

NICO

I'm not driving anywhere with you!
Get the hell out of my car!

Amara pops another bubble of gum. POP!

AMARA
Just drive, all right.

Nico stares at her in disbelief.

NICO
How about, I give you five seconds
to get the fuck out of my car.

AMARA
Or what?

POP! More gum.

AMARA
You gonna throw me out of your car?

NICO
If I have to, yeah, I will.

AMARA
You throw me out of your car, I'm
gonna point at you and yell rape.
As loud as I can.

A hint of concern in Nico's eyes. He scoffs.

AMARA
Who do you think they will believe?
Me or you?

Dismayed, Nico realizes he does not have the upper hand.

NICO
What do you want? Money?

AMARA
Chill, all right. Just drive.

His jaw knots tight.

NICO
I got news for you kid. I'm not
driving you anywhere.

AMARA
I got news for you too...black man.
I wasn't kidding about yelling
rape.

Horrified, Nico stares at her.

NICO
Who are you?

Amara smiles.

AMARA
Just a thorn in your side.

Nico mulls over the situation.

NICO
Okay. Where is it you need to go??

Amara blows another bubble. Points down the street.

AMARA
That way.

Nico starts up the car.

INT. CAR - MOVING - DAY

A sour expression on Nico's face as he drives through town.

Amara chews gum, watches the scenery go by. Pissed off, Nico glances at her.

NICO
What's your deal?

Amara looks at him, exaggerates coy. Bats her eyes.

AMARA
I just like riding in cars with old men.

POP! Another gum bubble. She winks at him.

Amara notices the flowers on the floor.

AMARA
What did you do? Sleep around?

Nico stares at her.

AMARA
I mean, red roses, that's for when you need forgiveness, right.

NICO
No, it isn't.

He reaches down to grab the flowers. Amara moves her leg so his hand grazes her calf.

A sinister teasing smile on Amara.

AMARA
You touched me...

Angry, Nico grabs the bouquet, puts it in the back seat.

He ignores her, continues to drive, eyes focused on the road. Amara gives up on a response from him. Sees the paper bag.

AMARA
Got anything to eat in here?

She picks up the bag.

NICO
No. Put it down!

Amara opens the bag peers inside. She takes out one of the wine bottles.

AMARA
Why do old people always drink wine?

NICO
I'm not --

AMARA
What's wrong with vodka?

NICO
-- old.

AMARA
Yeah you are.

She studies him for a beat.

AMARA
You're like, what, fifty?

Insulted, he glowers at her.

NICO
I'm thirty-four!

Amara shrugs. She pulls a pocket knife out of her purse. Nico eyes the knife with concern. She works the knife into the cork. Breaks it into pieces. Nico cringes.

NICO

Can you please stop that? You're ruining a forty dollar bottle. Besides, it's illegal to drive with an open container.

Amara pushes the cork into the wine, takes a big gulp. She swallows hard, makes a face, then laughs.

AMARA

Dude, if you get stopped by the cops, I don't think an open container is going to be your biggest concern.

She takes another gulp, hands the bottle over.

AMARA

Here, have some.

Nico pushes the bottle away. She insists, pushes it back.

NICO

I don't want any!

AMARA

Of course you do. You bought it.

They continue to push the bottle back and forth. It gets rough. Wine splashes out, drenches Nico's shirt and tie.

NICO

Fuck! You just ruined my shirt and my tie.

He stomps on the brakes.

NICO

Get the hell out of my car! Now!

Amara chews her gum, calmly looks at him.

AMARA

I can see the news bulletin now. Wanted, black male, thirty-four, looks fifty, last seen driving a blue Chevy coupe with the license plate number FTR H20.

Nico stares at her. Anger mixed with horror.

AMARA

Wanted for kidnapping and attempted rape of a minor...

Amara, smug, POPS another gum bubble in his direction.

AMARA
Just drive on.

Defeated, Nico puts the car in gear, pulls back into traffic.

Amara caps the wine bottle with the wad of gum. She reaches into the bag, finds the chocolates. She tears the box open. Pops a couple of pieces into her mouth. Holds the box out.

AMARA
Want some?

Nico shakes his head no.

Amara eats some more chocolates, throws the wrappers on the floor. She reaches into the bag. Takes out the rubbers. She eyes Nico with a smug expression.

NICO
Please...put that back in the bag.

Amara opens up a pack, unrolls the condom. She studies the unimpressive piece of latex, then turns to Nico. Her eyes flit from condom to Nico's crotch to condom again. She gazes at Nico with a cocked brow.

NICO
They stretch, okay.

Amara blows it up into a balloon. She gets another one out of the pack, spills the others on the floor.

Nico sighs in despair.

Amara digs into the bag, finds the two lubes. She studies the labels.

AMARA
Which one do you like?

Nico avoids her. Amara smears huge amounts of cool lubricant on her left arm, hot on her right. It's a mess. She tosses the open bottles on the floor.

AMARA
Ew. The hot one feels like I'm getting a rash.

She scrapes some of the hot lube off her arm, smears it on Nico's cheek. Nico recoils, tries to wipe it off his face.

Amara laughs. Picks up the bottles from the floor, squirts the contents all over Nico.

NICO
 God damnit! Stop it! What the fuck
 is wrong with you?

Amara giggles, continues to squirt him. A fight breaks out.

EXT. CAR - DAY

Nico's car swerves.

A cruiser parked on a side street, pulls out after them. The light bar turns on. A short wail of the siren. Just to get the driver's attention.

INT. CAR - DAY

In the rearview mirror, Nico's eyes widen in terror.

NICO
 Shit!...Shit! Shit! Shit!

Amara peers over her shoulder, sees the cruiser. Leers at Nico.

AMARA
 Uh - oh...

Nico looks around the car's interior in horror. An open wine bottle, chocolate wrappers, a dozen condoms. Not to mention his wine stained clothes...and of course, the underage white girl next to him.

Nico swallows, grips the steering wheel tight, hyperventilates. He pulls to a stop.

AMARA
 Just when shit couldn't get any
 worse...

Nico stares at Amara as she pulls out a set of handcuffs from her purse. She cuffs herself to the passenger door.

Nico gasps. Emits a terrified squeal. Amara smiles. Teasing.

AMARA
 Can't wait to see how you're gonna
 handle this one.

OFFICER WHITE (40), as white as his name suggests in a starched crisp uniform, approaches the car.

Nico rolls down the window.

Officer White peers inside the car, notices the mess. He studies Amara for a beat. Her cuffed hand's blocked by her body. He looks back at Nico, places his hand on his gun.

OFFICER WHITE
License and registration, please.

NICO
(eager to please)
Yes, sir. I got it right here, sir.

Nico jumps into action. With shaky hands, he fumbles with his wallet, gets his license out. He drops the license on the floor. Amara picks it up, notices his info, hands it to him.

Nico passes it on to Officer White.

He reaches over to the glove compartment. His upper body in Amara's lap. He stares up at her with sorrow in his eyes. Amara discretely winks at him.

Nico hands the officer the registration.

OFFICER WHITE
Turn off your car and hand me the keys.

Nico does as told.

OFFICER WHITE
Keep your hands on the steering wheel where I can see them.

Desperate to steady his hands, Nico grabs on to the steering wheel. Officer White heads back to his car.

NICO
(sniffles)
Dear Lord, please help me out of this. All I wanted was to propose to Tressa and celebrate my promotion. I haven't done anything wrong. Please help me, amen.

Amara watches him.

AMARA
Boxers or briefs?

Nico stares at her, confused.

NICO
What?

AMARA
Boxers or briefs? Which ones do you wear?

NICO
It's none of your business what kind of underwear I use.

Amara checks the cop out the window.

AMARA
Last chance. He's coming back. I can get you out of this. Boxers or briefs?

Nico sees Officer White on his way back.

NICO
Boxers.

AMARA
Good. I want them.

NICO
What?

AMARA
I get rid of the cop and you give me your boxers. Is that a deal?

Officer White is almost there.

NICO
Yes. Yes, you can have them!

Amara quickly uncuffs herself, shoves them into her purse just as Officer White stops by the window. He hands the license and registration back to Nico.

OFFICER WHITE
What's the story? What are you two up to?

NICO
Officer, I know this doesn't look good, but --

OFFICER WHITE
No, it sure doesn't.

Amara stifles a laugh. Officer White notices.

OFFICER WHITE
You think this is funny?

AMARA
I'm sorry officer, but it is kinda funny.

OFFICER WHITE
How so?

AMARA
I know he looks like he's fifty --

Nico stares at her. WTF?

AMARA
-- but he's not. Nico is my brother.

Nico and Officer White both stare at her.

AMARA
Our parents couldn't have kids, so they adopted him and then twenty years later, surprise! There I was.

Officer White, doesn't look too convinced, but Nico likes it.

AMARA
He just got a big promotion and was going to propose to Tressa, his girlfriend today. I just wanted to razz him about it. That's all.

Officer White turns to Nico.

OFFICER WHITE
Is this true?

Nico gives Amara an appreciative glance.

NICO
Yes, sir. She's always been a thorn in my side, but that's just her way.

Officer White gives it a think, makes up his mind. He hands the car keys back to Nico.

OFFICER WHITE
All right. I'll let it go this time. Go on.

NICO
Thank you, officer.

AMARA
Thank you, officer.

Officer White heads back to his cruiser. Nico breathes a big sigh of relief. He starts up the car, pulls into traffic.

They ride in silence, until --

AMARA
Turn here.

Nico looks at her, then turns into a parking lot by a mall.

AMARA
Park over there, under that tree.

Nico does.

They look at each other in silence for a beat.

AMARA
We made a deal.

Nico scoffs.

NICO
Are you for real?

AMARA
Give me your boxers and I'm out of
your life forever.

She holds her hand out.

NICO
You're fucking insane!

AMARA
You have no idea.

She gestures with her hand for him to give them to her.

NICO
Forever?

She nods. Nico unbuckles his belt.

NICO
Look away, all right.

AMARA
You afraid I'm gonna see your cock?

NICO

I've already been pulled over once today. I'm not going to risk being arrested for exposing myself in a parking lot to a kid.

Amara looks away. Nico pulls his pants down.

AMARA

I'm not a kid.

NICO

You're fourteen...looks like ten.

Annoyed, Amara snaps her head around, can't avoid seeing his crotch. She quickly averts her eyes with a giggle.

Nico hands her his boxers, pulls his pants back on.

NICO

Now get the fuck out of my car.

Amara points to the entrance of one of the department stores. A handful of girls Amara's age, loiter outside.

AMARA

Drop me off there.

Nico starts the car, drives to the entrance. Parks outside.

Amara and Nico share a glance. Amara smiles.

AMARA

Lighten up. It was fun.

She winks at him, then gets out of the car. She struts towards the other girls, raises her hand with the boxers high over her head. Triumphant.

The other girls holler and cheer. They try to see who the guy in the car is.

Amara is greeted like a star. High fives. Low fives. Hugs.

Nico watches, dumbfounded.

FADE OUT: