

LIL

By Nadine.

FADE IN:

A bright morning, not cold and not hot. The clouds shine over the Columbus skyline.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

RAQUEL, late 30s, white, pixie pompadour hairstyle, her flowery dress compliments her slightly overweightness. She is in the clothes section of the store, in the changing room, changing her baby's nappy.

LIL, A beautiful 3 month old, white, cute beyond words. Raquel finishes changing her nappy. She has a fresh change of clothes for Lil, a cream-colored pocket sweater with custom made letters 'LIL' on it, and matching color pants.

Raquel picks Lil up, Lil facing her mum directly.

RAQUEL

Even though you make messes, you are adorable more than words can describe.

RAQUEL

Muah.

She says as she kisses her baby on the cheek.
Lil lets out a cute little laugh.

RAQUEL

My little Lily flower.

Raquel puts Lil in the pram. They leave the changing room. Raquel looks at the clothes as she walks through the clothes section. They are now walking through the food aisles. Raquel puts some baby food and adult food into the basket that is attached underneath the pram. Raquel continues casually walking down the aisle, she looks at Lil to see if she is okay, Lil's cute face lights up with a lovely smile as she looks at her mother, Raquel smiles back at her baby.

Whatever situation financially Raquel is in...she is happy and content because she has Lily.

Raquel and Lil approach the checkout aisle. Confusion appears on Raquels face.

RAQUEL (To Herself)

I forgot something...what was it?

Raquel turns around...behind her, a few steps away is a rack of batteries and other small electronic things.

RAQUEL (To Lil)

We need batteries for your baby monitor, don't we?!

Raquel looks at the battery rack again. There is no one queuing up behind Raquel. We sense Raquel feels fine about just taking a few steps over to the rack to get the batteries. Lil will be fine...there's no need to push the pram over there just for that.

RAQUEL (To Lil)

You just wait there, sweetie.

Raquel leaves Lil at the aisle while she goes to get the batteries.

Raquel is at the rack of Batteries and other electronics. There are many different sizes of batteries. It's not as uncomplicated as it seemed. Raquel doesn't pick her batteries straight away. She looks at all the batteries. We get the sense that she doesn't know which one to get.

RAQUEL (To Herself)

Um...which ones?

Raquel finally sees a pack that may be what she needs...she stares at it for a couple of seconds, she picks up the pack, the back of the pack says 'suitable for baby monitors'. Raquel smiles. She turns around and walks back to the checkout counter, she puts the batteries and loads her other things on the counter, she has a content smile on her face, she looks into the pram at her precious child...

Raquel's smile completely and very quickly disappears from her face...Lil is NOT IN HER PRAM.

Raquel's mouth is open, her eyes wide, she swallows from shock and fear. There is an African-American lady (Lady At Checkout Queue) in front of her in the aisle...we didn't see her before...the African-American lady is in her 40s, overweight, long black wavy weave down to her shoulders, she has a pram...LIL IS IN THAT PRAM! Raquel sees her baby in this lady's pram.

RAQUEL (Out loud, to no one)

Oh my God!

Raquel walks right up to Lady at checkout queue.

RAQUEL (To Lady at checkout queue)

What the hell are you doing?! That is my baby!

The Lady at checkout queue, turns and looks at Raquel with a facial expression mixed with confusion and annoyance.

LADY AT CHECKOUT QUEUE (To Raquel)

I don't know what you're talking about.

Beautiful Lil is calm and relaxed sucking her fingers in the pram.

RAQUEL (To Lady At Checkout Queue)

YOU HAVE MY BABY IN YOUR PRAM!
GIVE HER BACK!
THAT IS MY BABY!

LADY AT CHECKOUT QUEUE (To Raquel)

This is my baby.

RAQUEL (To Lady At Checkout Queue)

HOW IS THAT YOUR BABY?!
THAT'S MY CHILD!
GIVE HER BACK NOW!

Lady at the checkout queue is nonchalant and too calm considering someone is accusing her.
We feel Raquel's frustration and anger. Why won't she hand over the baby to her mother?
Raquel walks around to attempt to physically take the baby out of this strange woman's pram.

LADY AT CHECKOUT QUEUE (To Raquel)

Excuse me?!

Lady At Checkout Queue is physically stronger than Raquel. She prevents Raquel from taking her own baby.
Lady At Checkout Queue physically pushes Raquel away.
Raquel can't get to Lil.

RAQUEL

SOMEBODY HELP ME!
SECURITY.
SOMEBODY HELP ME.
SHE WON'T GIVE ME BACK MY BABY.

Raquel asks The Cashier for help. The Cashier is in her 20s, African-American, slim build, long black straight weave past her shoulders.

RAQUEL (To Cashier)

Help me here! You see what's going on. She is trying to steal my child. Stop her. Get security. Where is security?

The Cashier laughs at Raquel.
The Cashier is not even attempting to help Raquel.
How can someone be so cruel as to just stand there and laugh at a lady when her child is being kidnapped?!

CROSSFADE:

The screen is black. We hear keys unlocking a door and a loud harsh sound of a steel door lock unbolting. We hear the sound of the door opening.

INT. ROOM - DAY

RAQUEL is sitting in a nearly empty ROOM. She sits on a bed, her pixie hairstyle slightly longer and unkempt. She is wearing a

gray sweater and gray jogging bottoms, a contrast to the patterned flower dress we have previously seen her in. She looks at someone who has clearly entered the room. Raquel stares at the person, her mouth slightly open, frowning.

RAQUEL

Who are you? Where am I? What is going on?

Raquel starts to cry while asking her third question.

NICE LADY (O.S.)

You're at St. James Psychiatric Hospital, Raquel.

The lady who we don't see has a feminine soft-spoken friendly voice.

(Beat)

RAQUEL

What??

Raquel asks. Clear despair in the one word question.

NICE LADY (O.S.)

It's time for your pills.

(Beat)

RAQUEL

I AM NOT TAKING ANY PILLS! WHAT IS GOING ON!

(Beat)

NICE LADY (O.S.)

I'm Nurse Williams...Abby.

(Beat)

NURSE WILLIAMS (O.S.)

You've been here for three months.

RAQUEL

No. What is going on here?! Where's my baby? Where's Lil?

(Beat)

NURSE WILLIAMS (O.S.)

Your baby passed away three months ago.

(Beat)

RAQUEL

What?

Raquel cries.

NURSE WILLIAMS (O.S.)

Lilith Katrina Green. She passed away in September 2023, three months ago.

Nurse Williams has a clipboard with some papers on it. She hands Raquel the papers.

As Raquel is reading the papers, Nurse Williams continues talking.

(Beat)

NURSE WILLIAMS (O.S.)

Lilith was born on June 10th 2023, she died on September 15th.

(Beat)

NURSE WILLIAMS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Infant death syndrome.

(Beat)

NURSE WILLIAMS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

She died in her sleep.

Raquel weeps. She covers her face with her hands as she cries.

NURSE WILLIAMS (O.S.)

Lilith...Lil...is in a better place. She didn't suffer.

(Beat)

NURSE WILLIAMS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry for your loss.

(Beat)

Raquel continues to weep.

NURSE WILLIAMS (O.S.)

You couldn't cope after Lilith died. You consented to being here. Your information is on the forms and on our computers. You have screaming / crying outbursts and you black out.

(Beat)

NURSE WILLIAMS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You have a psychiatrist that you see once a week. We are going to help you get better.

(Beat)

NURSE WILLIAMS (O.S.)

Here, please take your pills.

Nurse Williams comes into view. We only see the back of her. She is slim build, short height, medium length brown hair in a ponytail, wearing a nurses' uniform. She hands Raquel some pills with a small paper cup of water. Raquel pauses before she takes the pills and water. She finally takes the pills and water. She hands the empty paper cup back to Nurse Williams. She looks at the nurse with a small closed-mouth smile. We see that Raquel is starting to feel calm at the nurses' presence. Raquel is beginning to accept her current situation. Nurse Williams puts her hand on Raquel's shoulder to comfort her.

RAQUEL

She was a beautiful baby.

Nurse Williams smiles.

NURSE WILLIAMS

I know.

(Beat)

NURSE WILLIAMS

It's going to be okay.

Raquel nods her head in agreement.

FADE TO BLACK