

REINDEER GAMES

By

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FADE IN:

INT. RESTAURANT BAR - NIGHT

Typical suburban family restaurant bar. One corner sits TIM (60s) dressed in a grey blazer and chinos and sensible shoes. He is hunched over the bar, half a martini in his left hand (up high, with a twist, flecks of ice. We know it was shaken.) and in his right hand a pen writing on a postcard. A black hair band sits on the countertop.

WOMAN (O.S.)

What's with the hair band?

SYBIL (30s) off the shoulder-long brown hair, round, curvy, and professional. She is dressed in a dark suit and requisite white blouse. She is tired. She sits down next to Tim.

TIM

It's a habit of mine.

Catching the eye of the bartender, Sybil motions to him.

SYBIL

Dos Equis, por favor.

Tim continues speaking, not looking up.

TIM

I'm a sex addict.

Sybil's eyes bug out slightly and she has that look on her face, lips clenched as if she were thinking to herself, "WTF did I just step into?!?" But she persists.

SYBIL

(beat)

Huh. A sex addict? A card carrying sex addict? That was remarkably honest of you.

Tim pauses his writing, sighs and looks straight ahead.

TIM

Thank you. The women I was with
appreciated my honesty.

Tim pauses and quickly adds...

TIM

...and my senses of humor. Radical
honesty is working for me. And,
both worst case and best case
scenario for me is I stay sober.

Sybil's eyes bug out, again as she takes her beer from the
bartender. Again, she persists, acting unfazed. Sybil nods
to the hairband.

SYBIL

May I borrow it?

Grinning in disbelief, Tim turns to Sybil, looks at the hair
band and then looks to Sybil, again.

TIM

That's never happened before.

Tim picks up the hairband and holds it out. Sybil takes the
hairband and uses it to deftly put her hair into a low
ponytail, ready to Girl Boss it. She then picks up her beer,
takes a long pull from it, and turns to Tim,

SYBIL

I, sir, appreciate the honesty of
card carrying sex addict.

And salutes him with her beer bottle.

TIM

Actually, chips. We carry chips.

Tim fishes out a large brass coin from his pocket and holds it up to Sybil. Sybil peers over to read the coin...

SYBIL

Eighteen months. Impressive.

TIM

Thank you. It's a lot of work.
Speaking of which, what brings you here.

Tim gestures at the "grandeur" of the cookie-cutter bar decor.

SYBIL

Background investigator. I do background checks on people applying for government jobs.

TIM

That must be interesting.

SYBIL

It is. And I get around. But, it's not what I want to be doing and it doesn't pay a lot. Still paying off graduate school.

TIM

Where you gradually learned the more you study...

SYBIL

...the more you learn you don't know anything. Right!

Sybil takes another pull at her beer and continues,

SYBIL (CONTNUED)

So, what kind of sex addict are
you? Trench coat in the park?
Binoculars through windows? Spent
too much time in the bathroom.

She gestures subtly with her right hand and smirks.

TIM

No. I, uh... I take advantage of
vulnerable woman.

He shrugs and takes another sip of his martini.

Sybil nonchalantly slides her beer away from Tim.

SYBIL

Like. You roofie unsuspecting women
in bars?

TIM

Oh, God no! I'm all about consent.
I prey... preyed. I preyed on women
who needed money or were sex
addicts. Or both.

SYBIL (O.S.)

Like prostitutes?

TIM

No, not prostitutes. Or at least
none of the women I was with
considered themselves prostitutes.
Escorts, maybe. Most were young
professionals.

Tim turns to face Sybil and leans an arm on the counter and
take another sip of his martini.

TIM (CONTINUED)

Just regular woman who needed money
to support their family or pay off
student debts. Or get through
school.

Tim takes a sip of his martini.

TIM (CONTINUED)

And spending an afternoon at an art
museum or a coffee shop chatting
with a nice, old man for a few
hundred dollars was easy money.

Tim talks almost to himself.

TIM (CONTINUED)

And for half a grand, spending some
"private time" with a safe, clean,
gentleman isn't prostitution. It's
"friends with benefits."

TIM (CONTINUED)

And they could always say, "No".
Some did. I paid them anyway.

(beat)

Enough about me. Why are you here?
Investigating someone here?

Sybil looks at Tim momentarily shocked.

SYBIL

No. I'm here for food and a beer.
I'm staying at the hotel across the
street.

The bar starts to get louder as the business men slowly get
stoned.

TIM

Speaking of food, would you like some? I'm starved and I don't want another one of these until I've had some food.

(beat)

My treat. No roofies. Just conversation.

SYBIL

Sure! Let's grab that table over there.

Tim finishes his martini and Sybil motions to the bartender the universal, "We are going to sit over there and not skip out," gesture.

FADE TO:

INT. RESTAURANT BAR - NIGHT

Tim and Sybil are seated at a table, talking and laughing and sharing a dessert. The place is lit and everyone is very drunk. The server swings by with the check.

TIM

Please let me get this. We're good. I'm going to slip off into the night. I have an early day.

SYBIL

Tim! You are so sweet! Thank you. I've really enjoyed talking to you.

Sybil looks around the bar warily and leans in conspiratorially and whispers,

SYBIL (CONTINUED)

Would you walk me to my hotel? It's just across the street. I'd feel safer.

TIM

I'd be delighted to. Though, if we
run into trouble, you hold off the
bad guys while I run for help.

Sybil winks at Tim,

SYBIL

You got it!

FADE TO:

INT. RESTAURANT BAR - MORNING

Sybil breezes in, smiling, her blazer over her arm holding a
to go cup of coffee trailing her suitcase. She parks her
suitcase next to a table and sits. She turns to the server,

SYBIL

May I have a cup of coffee and a
menu, please?

Sybil sets her purse on the table and accidentally upsets it,
dumping the contents on the floor. They clatter of coins
fills the air like a roll of half dollars broke on the
floor. Sybil and the server bend down to scoop up the
contents. The server holds one and asks,

SERVER

What are these?

SYBIL

These are just how I keep score.

THE END