

MODEL WARFARE

Written by

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EXT. MARKET - FLOWER STALL - DAY

EMILY, 17, stands beside her market stall, full of flowers for sale. With her blue apron wrapped tightly around her waist she sells a bouquet of roses to an elderly man. He pays her in cash and she hands over his change.

Emily watches on as passing crowds of people walk by. She paces up and down in front of her small stall, calling out at the top of her voice.

EMILY

Flowers for sale. Come and have a look. Beautiful flowers for sale. The real thing. Cheap. Plucked them myself from my grannies garden this morning. Come and have a look. Flowers for sale.

POLLY, 55, in large designer sunglasses, dressed smartly with a designer handbag slung over her arm is watching Emily with a slight grin.

Emily catches sight of her, frowns.

Polly is obviously staring at Emily. Emily falls silent. She stares back.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Hello?

Polly continues to simply stare.

Emily takes a couple of steps closer to her.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Can I help you?

POLLY

You have perfect bone structure.

EMILY

What? I sell flowers. Not bones. But I'm sure there's a butchers someplace around here.

Polly moves forwards, almost stepping on Emily's toes as she peers in for a close inspection.

POLLY

You're face. It's almost perfect.

EMILY

Are you trying to chat me up?

Polly smiles.

POLLY  
Potentially. Is it working?

EMILY  
I'd rather you just buy some  
flowers from me and then kindly  
piss off someplace else. I don't  
very much like being stared at.

POLLY  
That's a shame. I'm looking for a  
girl like you for a show I'm  
putting together. Pays two thousand  
for the day.

EMILY  
What?

POLLY  
Models dear. I'm looking for  
models. The ones I have on my books  
now just aren't cutting it. I'm out  
looking for fresh blood and I think  
you might be it.

Polly reaches into her handbag and pulls out a business card  
and to this she wraps a fifty pound note around it.

POLLY (CONT'D)  
This is my card. Tomorrow at one.  
Come down and join the mad circus  
we call the fashion industry. And  
the money, that's for cab fair, if  
you don't have a ride that is.

EMILY  
You must be joking?

POLLY  
I'm not known for my sense of  
humour. I'll see you tomorrow.

Polly then turns and leaves.

Emily pockets the cash, takes a closer look at the card. A  
fashion agency. Contact numbers and an email address. Emily  
laughs.

EMILY  
A fashion model. What a joke.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARKET - FLOWER STALL - DAY

Emily sits leaning against her stall, holding onto the money in one hand and the business card in the other.

DAVE, 45, turns up, a matching apron around his massive stomach, he carries two take out cups in his hands.

He comes over to Emily, curious about what she's got in her hand.

DAVE

What you got there?

She beams, shows him the business card and the money.

EMILY

Somebody thinks I'm beautiful.

DAVE

It's a scam.

EMILY

(hurt)

Dad?

DAVE

You're just like your mother, one complement and you turn all goofy. Well I've got news for you, the world is full of con artists.

She frowns.

EMILY

I want tomorrow off.

Dave places the two to go cups onto the floor.

DAVE

Why? Let me see.

He reaches out and snatches the money and the business card from her.

EMILY

Dad!

She snatches the cash back from him. Pockets it.

EMILY (CONT'D)

It's my money.

DAVE

What is this, somebody paying you to take your clothes off? That's what you're life is now. Porn?

EMILY

Jesus Dad. It was a proper fashion person.

DAVE

And I'm sure your the fiftieth person she's given a card to today.

EMILY

And the money? She's just handing out that out too?

DAVE

You're working here tomorrow. Don't be stupid, I thought I'd raised you to see a scam like this?

Emily tries to take the business card back from him.

EMILY

Well, that's mine.

He stops her from taking it from him. Then rips it up in half. Lets these two pieces fall to the ground.

DAVE

It's my job to protect you.

Emily quickly picks up the two pieces and puts them into her pocket with the money.

EMILY

Why do you have to be so nasty?

DAVE

Your responsibility is here, not to go to some dirty warehouse to take your clothes off for pennies so that millions of pervert around the world to stare at you.

Emily takes her apron off and throws it at Dave.

EMILY

I'm not listening to this.

She storms off, upset.

DAVE

If you go there instead of coming  
to work you can find yourself  
somewhere else to live.

Emily continues to walk away. Keeping her back to Dave she gives him the finger.

INT. SALON - DAY

Emily is sat in a salon chair, reclined back relaxed. One woman does her hair, whilst a second does her nails and a third is knelt down in front of her giving her toes a pedicure.

She's getting the full pampered treatment.

Polly stands at the side, arms crossed and watching with a big smile.

EMILY

This is so strange.

POLLY

I'm going to make you realise how  
beautiful you are.

Emily can't help but laugh.

EMILY

I've never had anything like this  
done to me before.

POLLY

It's nice?

EMILY

Yeah.

POLLY

You think you could get use to it?

EMILY

I don't know about that.

POLLY

This is the life of a model, to be  
beautiful so that you can make the  
clothes you're wearing appear  
beautiful too. There's something  
special about you Emily. Inside  
beauty and outside beauty.

(MORE)

POLLY (CONT'D)

You're going to make me rich and in return I'm going to make you famous.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Polly walks with a transformed Emily, now in full makeup, her hair done up and wearing expensive looking top fashion clothes.

POLLY

I've got a show tonight that I want you to be in.

Emily looks nervous.

EMILY

That's so soon. Considering I've never done anything like this before.

POLLY

You'll do great. But first I want you to meet the other girls.

Emily rolls her eyes.

EMILY

I probably should have told you this about myself already, but I don't get on with other girl. And I went to an all girl school. It was hell.

Polly rolls her eyes straight back at Emily, making sure she does it as over the top as possible.

POLLY

You don't have to stay, you can leave. But I warn you, you do this with me and only me or I'll blacklist you. You'll never work as a model again. It'll all be over for you before it's even begun.

EMILY

Shit, you're pretty ruthless.

POLLY

I'm cutthroat dear. In this industry you've got to be.

(MORE)

POLLY (CONT'D)

I can either be your best friend or your worst nightmare ready to pound you into the dirt until there is nothing left but dust.

EMILY

Damn.

POLLY

Now, are you going to be a good girl or should I just go ahead and throw you back out into the street where I found you?

Emily thinks for a moment, she seems deeply trouble by this new side to Polly that's now on full display.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Emily enters a small waiting room with Polly. Three other girls with their makeup and hair done and dressed in fabulous clothing sit and wait.

The three girls sitting all turn to face Emily and Polly. Polly gestures to Emily.

POLLY

This is Emily, she's going to be the star of the show.

Emily beams. She smiles nervously at the other models.

EMILY

Hi.

KATE, 21, steps forwards, smiling back.

KATE

I'm Kate. Not Katie. Kate.

She gestures to the other two now on either side of her.

KATE (CONT'D)

This is Tracy and Libby.

The other two, both 20, wave at Emily.

EMILY

Hi.

KATE

Are you nervous?

Emily nods.

EMILY

Yeah.

Kate smiles, she comes over and wraps an arm around Emily.

KATE

Don't be. We're all one big happy family here. I'll look after you.

Emily breathes a sigh of relief.

Kate glances at the other models.

KATE (CONT'D)

By the way, this is a group hug.

They laugh, now all four models come together all smiling laughing and excited.

INT. PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - DAY

Polly sits away in a corner, watching as a professional photoshoot is underway. The four models pose together as a PHOTOGRAPHER, 40, down on his knees takes seemingly hundreds of photographs of them.

A small team of assistants play around with the large lights, reflection disks and even a smoke machine.

The girls are all having a blast, looking like old friends as they pose for the camera.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Alright girls, you're just four friends out on the town having a blast. Old friends reunited. Super excited and happy to see each other.

The four models do their best.

Polly now stands. She approaches.

POLLY

Alright. Now lets see them with the product.

The photographer and his team all come to a sudden halt. When Polly speaks, they listen.

Polly unlocks a small wooden box on a table with a key that she had concealed inside her pocket.

She glances across at the models.

POLLY (CONT'D)  
Ladies, if you wouldn't mind coming  
on over.

The models all rush across.

Polly opens the box, it's filled with diamond encrusted jewellery, all of it the very best quality. Necklace. Tiara. Earrings and a bracelet.

POLLY (CONT'D)  
These are the pieces you'll be  
modelling for the show. I'd like  
you to get comfortable with them  
now. Go on. Pick something out.

Emily reaches in first. Snatches up the necklace, Polly helps her to put it on.

EMILY  
Wow.

Libby then grabs the tiara. Tracy grabs the earrings. Leaving Kate with the bracelet.

Polly retakes her seat in the corner, sitting down. But watching.

The four models go to return to the waiting photographer and his team.

Kate looks very uneasy. She watches the other three as they start to return.

KATE  
Wait.

The three stop, turn to face her.

KATE (CONT'D)  
Let me try something out.

Kate makes sure that her bracelet is on before walking up to Tracy first. She very roughly takes the earrings out of Tracy's ears and puts them onto her own.

Tracy winches.

TRACY

Ouch.

KATE

Oh please, don't be a baby.

Kate then approaches Libby.

KATE (CONT'D)

I think the photos will be better  
if all the jewellery is kept  
together.

From Libby Kate again very roughly snatches the tiara,  
messing up Libby's once perfectly made up hair.

Kate now approaches Emily. She goes to take the necklace from  
her. Emily nervously backs away out of reach.

EMILY

Hold on. What are you doing?

KATE

Give me the necklace.

Emily looks across at Polly who stays seated, her face blank.  
Emily returns to Kate.

EMILY

And why do you get to wear  
everything? How is that fair?

KATE

Listen here, you're just some  
little skinny rat that got found  
literally on the street. This is a  
professional photoshoot, I'm the  
only professional model here. Play  
time is over. So give me the  
necklace. And if you watch closely  
you'll see how this is all done.

Emily is stunned.

EMILY

Excuse me? Who do you think you  
are?

KATE

Give me the necklace. I'm warning  
you. I won't tell you again. Hand  
it over.

Kate reaches up and attempts to snatch the necklace off from around Emily's neck. Emily manages to slap Katie's hands away.

EMILY

I'm not giving it to you. So knock  
it off. It's not happening.

Kate, enraged slaps Emily hard across the face.

KATE

Give me the necklace.

Kate tries again but Emily manages to stop her. The two get involved in a messy looking wrestling match.

Polly stands up.

POLLY

(shouting)

Enough. The photoshoot is  
cancelled. Both of you, get out of  
my sight.

Kate and Emily separate, Emily breaks down into tears and rushes off.

INT. CHANGING ROOM - DAY

Emily is sat in front of a makeup table, sobbing into her hands.

Polly enters. She appears behind Emily.

POLLY

Please stop crying.

Emily looks up at her, her makeup now ruined from her tears.

EMILY

I want to go home.

Polly nods.

POLLY

But after the show.

EMILY

What show?

POLLY

I want you to be the star of the show. Weren't you listening to me before?

EMILY

What?

POLLY

You're beautiful, anyone with eyes can see that. But the way you stood up to Kate out there, shows me you've got fight and fire in your belly. Believe me, she's a grade A bitch.

EMILY

I don't want this.

POLLY

Once this show is over, you'll be on the front page of every major fashion magazine around the world. You'll be famous. I'm going to make you a star.

EMILY

I don't care.

POLLY

Well if you don't do it I'll have to give the job to Kate? Do you want her to be rich and famous instead of you?

EMILY

No.

Polly now places down the jewellery box with all the jewellery once again inside it in front of Emily.

POLLY

Now get yourself ready and put all these on. The show can't begin without you.

EMILY

And Kate?

POLLY

I've told her and the other two to go home. They're not needed as long as I have you.

Emily smiles, happy to hear it.

EMILY  
And how did she handle it?

Polly smiles with her.

POLLY  
She was furious.

EMILY  
Good.

Emily takes hold of the jewellery pieces and starts to put them on.

POLLY  
I'll take that as you're ready to  
be my bright shining star?

Emily nods. Polly turns and leaves.

POLLY (CONT'D)  
I'll be waiting for you outside.  
Don't leave me waiting too long.

CUT TO:

INT. CHANGING ROOM - DAY

Emily, her makeup fixed and looking proud stands in front of the makeup tables long mirror, she's wearing all the jewellery pieces and she looks stunning.

She composes herself.

EMILY  
OK, I'm ready.

With a huge grin Emily heads for her changing room door.

As Emily reaches for it's handle, the door swings violently open.

Kate with the help of Tracy and Libby burst inside to meet a shocked looking Emily.

All three hold Emily down to the floor. Armed with a pair of rusty scissors Kate starts to chop off Emily's hair.

KATE

Lets see who wants to take your  
photograph after I'm through with  
you.

Emily screams out in agony, tears streaming down her face.  
But there's no one around to recuse her.

She kicks out her legs and tries to wriggle free, but it's  
three against one and she's go no chance of getting herself  
free.

Kate continues cutting, her aim to leave Emily completely  
bald.

**FADE TO BLACK**

**THE ENDA**