

NEW TABLES

Written by

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1

EXT. SMALL TOWN DINER - NIGHT

1

Rain comes down in sheets atop a small diner.

Outside, KACEY WILSON, 27, crouches, smoking. She wears headphones that are hooked up to a Walkman. A pen sits behind her ear.

Kacey stands and stretches. She takes one last drag off her cigarette. She throws it on the ground, grinds it out with her shoe.

Kacey takes her headphones off and wraps them quickly around the Walkman.

She blows out the smoke slowly but finally walks inside.

2

INT. DINER COUNTER - NIGHT

2

The diner, while not falling apart, shows no sign of repairs or upgrades from when it was first built.

50's music fills the diner. A clock reads 11:30 P.M.

At the counter sit FRANK and MARTY, late 60s-70s, talking to MAGGIE JOSEPH, mid-60's, the owner of the diner and cook, who stands behind the counter smoking.

MARTY

Let it go Frank.

FRANK

Just look at the goddamn swatches.

MAGGIE

No one wants your opinion Frank.

FRANK

This place doesn't make any sense.
You've already changed your menus
and your logo.

Kacey walks behind the counter and places the Walkman on the shelf.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You got Kacey wearing green in a
pink diner. Why won't you just let
me paint it.

(to Kacey)

I'm painting this diner the minute
you take over.

KACEY

This diner will always be Maggie's.
And I'll keep it five different
colors just to piss you off.

Kacey hops onto the counter.

KACEY (CONT'D)

Maggie you're allowed to sit down.
I won't tell the boss.

Kacey winks at her. Maggie swats her lovingly.

MAGGIE

You want me to throw something on
the grill for you?

Kacey looks at the couple sitting next to each other in the
booth. The couple gazes into each other's eyes over their
milkshakes.

KACEY

No. Thanks.

Frank pulls a pack of cigarettes out of his jacket pocket,
preps to light one.

Maggie hits a sign behind her that says "No Smoking."

MAGGIE

Not in my diner, Frankie.

FRANK

That's bullshit woman. Sexist
bullshit.

Frank slides off his stool and walks outside.

Kacey takes a glance her watch, wringing her hands.

Maggie places her hand on top of Kacey's watch.

MAGGIE

Maybe it won't be that bad.

KACEY

It's been ten years. It can only go
badly.

Kacey hops off the counter and busies herself with cleaning.

MARTY

I still think you should've gone
for what it's worth.

MAGGIE

She did not ask you.

Maggie walks into the kitchen. Marty shakes his head.

The front door bell RINGS. Kacey tenses but doesn't look up.

KACEY

Show time.

Kacey puts a fake smile on and looks up, her whole body tenses.

Standing in front of the door is, ALLISON WILLIAMS, 28, fiddling with her hands and smoothing out her dress.

ALLISON

Hey.

Kacey tries to speak but chokes.

ALLISON

I'll be over there.

Allison nods, walks to a table and sits down.

Kacey doesn't move from the counter, frozen. Frank walks in from outside and sit back at his counter stool.

FRANK

Gorgeous! You ready to take our order yet?

Maggie leans out the kitchen window.

MAGGIE

Talk like that to her again and I'll spit in your food.

KACEY

Are we sticking with the usual tonight guys?

Kacey's eyes wander to Allison. Frank snaps his fingers in her face.

FRANK

Sweetheart. Don't ignore us when you're taking our orders.

KACEY

I will bite your finger off.

MARTY

Leave her be. Yes hun, we'll be doing the usual.

FRANK

Are we in a drought? Let's be quicker topping these drinks off.

KACEY

I'm on it Frank.

Kacey grabs the coffee pot and tops off the nearly full mugs.

FRANK

We need more-

Before he can finish, Kacey drops more creamers in front of them.

Kacey reaches under the counter and grabs a menu and a set of silverware and walks to -

3 INT. ALLISON'S TABLE - NIGHT

3

Kacey places the menu and silverware on the table.

KACEY

Allison.

Allison looks painfully long at Kacey.

KACEY

Can I, uh, can I get you something to drink?

ALLISON

Um. An iced tea I guess. Please.

Kacey nods and walks away.

4 INT. DINER COUNTER - NIGHT

4

Kacey rounds the counter. She fills two glasses with water and drops a lemon in each. She places each glass in front of the men.

Kacey turns around, looks to Allison's table. Her elbow clips Marty's glass, knocking it over.

KACEY

Shit. Sorry Marty.

She throws several napkins on the spilled water. She sops up the mess, refills a water, places it in front of Marty.

FRANK

You better get your act together girl. They're gonna rip you apart.

Kacey continues working, ignoring Frank.

Maggie pokes her head through the kitchen window.

MAGGIE

Frank, keep your goddamn mouth shut!

She pours iced tea into a glass, throws a lemon in haphazardly, and rushes away from the counter.

5

INT. ALLISON'S TABLE - NIGHT

5

Kacey sets the glass down and sits on the other side of the table. She looks directly at Allison.

Allison unwraps her straw, she plays with it.

ALLISON

So. How have you been?

KACEY

Why are you here?

ALLISON

I wanted to see if you were still working here. I thought you would be, but I hoped that you weren't.

Maggie hits a small bell in the window.

MAGGIE (O.S.)

Order up!

Kacey looks at Allison, admiring her dress. Allison looks down at dress.

KACEY

Same color as your prom dress.

FRANK (O.C.)

Hey honey! My coffee is getting pretty low here.

Kacey goes to walk away, but stops herself.

KACEY
I'll be right back.

6 INT. DINER COUNTER - NIGHT

6

Kacey half jogs back to the counter.

FRANK
My food's getting cold sitting in
that window.

Marty whacks Frank on the arm.

MAGGIE (O.S.)
That's enough out of you tonight!
Leave her the hell alone.

Kacey grabs the baskets off the window and turns around,
dishing them out in front of the men.

MAGGIE (O.S.)
The burgers will be up in a few.

Kacey scans around the diner as she walks back to -

7 INT. ALLISON'S TABLE - NIGHT

7

Kacey sits down. The women sit in silence for a few moments.

ALLISON
I know we haven't talked in awhile.

KACEY
Ten years. Give or take.

ALLISON
Right.

KACEY
Why are you here Allison?

ALLISON
I -

Allison doesn't finish her sentence.

KACEY
Allison. I have work to do. I don't
have time for this.

Kacey begins to get up from the booth.

Allison puts her hand on top of Kacey's to stop her. Kacey settles back into her seat.

ALLISON
I didn't think you'd get stuck here.

KACEY
Stuck. Sure.

Kacey pauses.

KACEY
There's a lot you don't know.

Maggie walks out of the kitchen, juggling plates, and passes them out to the men.

MAGGIE
I got their burgers, hon.

A bell RINGS from the front of the diner. Laughter and yelling echo in the diner.

Kacey looks up. Her eyes follow a GROUP OF LATE-20 YEAR-OLDS, all over dressed, walk to the back of the diner.

Kacey runs into the kitchen.

8 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

8

Kacey paces around the kitchen, mumbling to herself.

KACEY
I can't do it.

Maggie walks into the kitchen.

KACEY
It's all of them. It's the whole crew.

MAGGIE
Honey, we talked about this. You're an adult. You are not the same person you were 10 years ago.

Kacey starts laughing.

MAGGIE
You need to take a breath.

KACEY

I was really hoping they weren't gonna come.

MAGGIE

I know. But remember. It doesn't matter. They are going to eat and then leave.

She rubs Kacey's shoulder. Kacey switches between manic laughing and choking back tears.

KACEY

Can't you just -

Kacey looks at Maggie, pleading with her eyes. Maggie puts her hands onto Kacey's shoulders.

MAGGIE

I can't do this for you. You got this.

Kacey digs her hands into her apron.

KACEY

I don't even know where my pen went Maggie. I'm not ready.

Maggie plucks the pen out of Kacey's hair.

MAGGIE

Shoulders back. Stand tall girly. And I'm right back here if you need anything.

Maggie swipes her fingers over Kacey's face, clearing it of tears. Kacey straightens herself, checks her reflection in a dirty spoon laying on the counter.

She looks at Maggie again for reassurance.

Kacey takes a deep breath and walks out of the kitchen.

9

INT. DINER COUNTER - NIGHT

9

The counter is a mess from the men.

Kacey counts menus and silverware and heads to -

MARTY

You got this girl. Chin up!

The men all turn around to watch.

10

INT. HIGH SCHOOL TABLE - NIGHT

10

At the table sit MIA, JACK, MORGAN, ADAM, and SARAH.

MIA

Where is our server? It's not like
it's busy.

Kacey's customer service voice fades as she speaks.

KACEY

Hi, I'm Kacey and I'll be your
server for tonight.

MIA

Oh my god. Kacey Wilson!

The women stare. Jack ogles.

JACK

(seductively)
Kacey Wilson.

MORGAN

How are you?

SARAH

How's life?

KACEY

Fine. I'm fine.

MIA

You weren't at the reunion tonight.

KACEY

No, I wasn't.

SARAH

So what's new? How have you been?
You were saving up to go to
business school right?

Kacey clears her throat.

KACEY

Law school.

MIA

(snidely)
But, you're still working here?

JACK

Don't be like that Mia.

MIA

Be like what? I'm just trying to catch up with our old friend Kacey here.

Kacey's face tightens.

JACK

You look good Kace.

KACEY

How you been Jack? It's been awhile.

JACK

I'm good. It's been since what, senior prom?

Kacey hesitates but decides to go for it.

KACEY

Well, technically the morning after. But yeah, senior prom.

Adam chokes back a laugh. Mia glares. She elbows Sarah.

SARAH

Well we missed you at the reunion. We saw Allison Williams there, all alone, poor thing.

Kacey passes out the menus.

KACEY

Here are your menus. Can I get you started with any drinks?

MIA

Three waters.

JACK

And two sodas.

Mia places her hand on the back of Jack's neck, rubbing it.

MIA

This will all be on one check. Jack just got a big promotion at work.

The table congratulates Mia and Jack.

KACEY

Okay, I'll be right back.

Kacey takes a long breath as she walks to -

11 INT. YOUNG COUPLE'S TABLE - NIGHT 11

Kacey clears her throat. The young couple comes up for air.

KACEY

How are we doing? Need anything?

The girl half-turns her body to look at Kacey. She shakes her head.

She turns her attention back to the boy before Kacey leaves. Kacey has been dismissed.

12 INT. DINER COUNTER - NIGHT 12

Kacey runs to the corner of the counter. Maggie leans against the counter talking to the men, smoking.

FRANK

Attagirl Kace.

KACEY

Maggie, can you fill me three waters and two sodas real quick please?

MAGGIE

You okay honey?

KACEY

(sarcastic)

Oh, definitely. Haven't had this much fun in a long time.

Maggie starts filling drinks.

13 INT. ALLISON'S TABLE - NIGHT 13

Kacey walks over toward Allison and stops.

KACEY

Did you see Mia and her crew walk in?

Allison's tilts her chair back to look at the large table.

ALLISON

Glad to see nothing's changed.

KACEY

Right.
(beat)

KACEY

I'll be back after I get their
orders.

14 INT. DINER COUNTER - NIGHT 14

Kacey grabs the tray of drinks.

15 INT. HIGH SCHOOL TABLE - NIGHT 15

Kacey hands each glass to the appropriate person.

Jack flashes a big, charming smile at Kacey.

JACK

Alright. Food.

MIA

We'll order our appetizers and our
meals now.

Kacey readies herself. They order rapid-fire.

MIA

We're gonna do three of those build-
your-own app things.

JACK

First one is gonna be onion rings,
cheese sticks, and double chips.

ADAM

Then we're gonna do pretzel sticks,
zucchini, and tots.

MORGAN

And the last one we're gonna do
double cheese sticks and zucchini.

MIA

And make sure you bring those
little plates for each of us.

JACK

And lots of ranch.

ADAM

Alright, then I'm gonna order the Italian hoagie and an order of loaded fries.

JACK

Two cheeseburgers and fries.

MIA

I'll have the grilled chicken wrap, without any tomatoes and ranch on the side.

SARAH

You know what, that sounds great. I'll have the same.

MORGAN

Ooh I haven't had their breakfast in so long. I'm gonna get the Mag's special with the blueberry pancakes, hash-browns, and sausage.

Mia snatches the menus out of everyone's hands. Kacey writes furiously as Mia thrusts the menus into her hands.

MIA

Hope you got all that.

Kacey directs her eyes to her notepad.

KACEY

Three apps. First one, onion rings, cheese sticks, and double chips. Second, pretzel sticks, zucchini, and tots. Last one is double cheese sticks and zucchini. Italian hoagie, loaded fries. Two cheeseburgers, American cheese, regular fries. Two chicken wraps, no tomatoes, ranch on the side. And a Mag's special, with blueberry cakes, hash-browns, and sausage.

Kacey places her notepad back in her apron, takes a small breath.

KACEY

I'll get that right in for you.

Kacey hands the forms to Maggie.

MAGGIE

I hate them.

Maggie walks into the kitchen. Kacey chuckles, her resolve fading as she walks back to -

17

INT. ALLISON'S TABLE - NIGHT

17

Kacey stands awkwardly at the table.

KACEY

Did you want to order food or something?

ALLISON

No. The iced tea is fine.

Kacey sits down and folds her hands on the table.

ALLISON

You didn't come to the reunion.

KACEY

Well you can see I'm very busy.

ALLISON

Right. So what don't I know? Tell me.

KACEY

You don't know anything. Like I said it's been ten years.

Allison flinches at Kacey's directness.

KACEY

Alright. Well. I never ended up going to school. My best friend didn't call me back after I called to tell her that my mother had passed away. Drank a little too much here and there. Maggie had to drag me to a few AA meetings before it stuck. But I'm all the better for it and all that crap. I'll spare you the nasty details. But. Enough about me. You came here to talk.

Allison takes a sip of her iced tea and then a long breath.

KACEY

Allison. I really, really don't have the patience for this tug-of-war.

ALLISON

Well...I'm back home for good. Or for awhile at least.

KACEY

What happened?

ALLISON

Moved to the city, graduated college. Found a decent job working for a big fancy law firm. Until last year when I got laid off.

Maggie hits the service bell hard.

MAGGIE (O.S.)

Apps are done!

KACEY

You know I have to get that to Mia and them right. Like now.

ALLISON

I hope you're not banking on a big tip.

Kacey snorts as she slides out of the booth.

18 INT. DINER COUNTER - NIGHT 18

Kacey loads the appetizers and small plates onto her tray and walks them over to -

19 INT. HIGH SCHOOL TABLE - NIGHT 19

She places each appetizer in the middle of the tables.

JACK

This looks great Kace.

KACEY

Glad you like it Jack. Can I get anyone else anything?

MIA

I need more water.

KACEY

I'll get that right away. Does anyone else need a refill?

ADAM

Might as well bring more sodas too.

KACEY

Two sodas coming right up.

Mia clinks her nail on her empty glass.

KACEY

And water.

20 INT. DINER COUNTER - NIGHT 20

Kacey walks back to the counter, grabs a water pitcher and fills two sodas.

KACEY

You guys alright?

Their mouths full, they nod.

21 INT. HIGH SCHOOL TABLE - NIGHT 21

The men are throwing fries across the table, creating a mess. The rest of the table devours their apps.

Kacey sets the drinks down and fills Mia's cup.

KACEY

How is everything?

JACK

Really great, thanks.

MIA

It's fine for diner food.

KACEY

Good. Your meals shouldn't be far behind.

22 INT. ALLISON'S TABLE - NIGHT 22

Kacey slides into the booth. She gestures to the larger table.

KACEY

They're acting like they're back in the cafeteria.

Allison only nods. She fiddles with her straw wrapper.

KACEY
(gently)
So you got laid off.

Allison struggles to look at Kacey.

ALLISON
I couldn't find another job, got
kicked out of my apartment. Not too
different, you and me. So, now I'm
back here, trying to find
something, *anything* to do.

KACEY
I can maybe try... Yeah...Yes. Yes.
I can get you an application here.

Allison tenses. Kacey doesn't notice.

KACEY
I know it's not super fancy. But
like you said, you're looking for
anything to do.

Allison turns her attention to the window.

KACEY
That will work. I'll ask tonight.
Now.

FRANK (O.S.)
Oh shut the fuck up Marty. You
don't know what you're talking
about!

Allison jerks her head to the counter and then looks back to
Kacey.

Kacey looks around the diner, eyeing each table briefly.

23 INT. YOUNG COUPLE'S TABLE - NIGHT 23

The couple continue to stare into each other's eyes.

24 INT. HIGH SCHOOL TABLE - NIGHT 24

The larger table sits, reminiscing.

25 INT. DINER COUNTER - NIGHT 25

The old men cuss up a storm at the counter, finished with their meals.

26 INT. ALLISON'S TABLE - NIGHT 26

Kacey stands up.

KACEY

Alright I have to go check on my tables but stay. We can talk more.

Allison doesn't say anything, avoiding eye contact.

KACEY

I'll be back. Stay.

27 INT. YOUNG COUPLE'S TABLE - NIGHT 27

Kacey walks over to the couple's table. She grabs the dirty dishes off the edge of the table.

KACEY

I'll be back with your check.

Kacey walks back into the kitchen.

28 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT 28

Kacey places the plates on the dish station.

MAGGIE

About three more minutes on the table from hells food.

Kacey lets out a long breath, turns to Maggie, hopeful.

MAGGIE

Are they being awful to you? I might look old but I can kick their asses if you want me to?

KACEY

Can I get an application for my friend? I can train her. She'll be good. I'll take full responsibility of her. I promise.

MAGGIE

Are you planning on leaving me?

KACEY

No, never! She's just in a tough spot. I just want to help her out.

Maggie takes her time looking at Kacey.

MAGGIE

Okay. Uh, we probably have one in the office somewhere.

KACEY

Yeah?

Kacey hugs Maggie from behind.

KACEY

Thank you.

Kacey walks backward out of the kitchen into -

29 INT. DINER COUNTER - NIGHT

29

The men lean back on their stools, stuffed.

FRANK

Hey! Hey gorgeous.

KACEY

More coffee? I don't know how you guys do it seriously.

MARTY

The check dear.

FRANK

And smile babe. It'll help your tip.

Kacey walks over to the cash register and prints four receipts.

30 INT. YOUNG COUPLE'S TABLE - NIGHT

30

She sets a receipt down.

KACEY

Here's your check. Whenever you're ready, I'll meet you at the counter.

Kacey looks to the booth where Allison was sitting and finds it empty. All that is left is an empty glass and a few dollar bills.

Kacey does a quick once-over of the diner. Allison is gone.

31 INT. DINER COUNTER - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER 31

Kacey stands at the counter, in front of the register.

The young couple walks over and pays.

KACEY
Have a good night.

They exit the diner.

TIME LAPSE

Kacey stands in the same place at the register as her surroundings change.

- Frank and Marty set money down on the counter.

- Frank and Marty walk out of the door.

- Jack smiles, with his hand on top of Kacey's, hands her a wad of cash.

- The high school reunion crew files out of Maggie's.

32 INT. DINER COUNTER - LATER 32

Kacey looks around the now empty diner.

She takes a moment to breathe placing her elbows on the counter and her head in her hands.

After a minute, Kacey collects herself. She grabs the Walkman and headphones from the counter shelf.

Kacey walks out of Maggie's.

33 EXT. SMALL TOWN DINER - NIGHT 33

She leans on the railing, thinking.

Kacey puts on her headphones and rewinds her cassette.

She takes the cigarettes out of her apron and lights one.

After a few quiet moments, a car pulls into the parking lot.
TWO WOMEN run from the car and into the diner.

Kacey takes one last long drag of her cigarette, throws it on
the ground and walks back inside.

CUT TO BLACK.