

Audition

A One-Shot Short by

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"AUDITION"

FADE IN:

INT. WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

SARAH'S eyes are closed.

She takes a slow deep breath and opens them. She's ready.

A talented actress, Sarah (30's), sits on a couch clutching her headshot and resume.

KELLY (O.S.)
I like your headshot.

SARAH
I'm sorry?

Kelly (30's), sits next to Sarah, holding her own photograph.

KELLY
I said, I really like your
headshot. You have a nice smile.

SARAH
Oh, thanks.

KELLY
I need to get a new one. I look so
serious - like my underwear's too
tight.

Sarah laughs a little and looks at Kelly's picture.

SARAH
I think you look great.

KELLY
You're kind.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
Sarah Taylor, he's ready for you.

SARAH
Well, that's me.

KELLY
Go get 'em.

Sarah rises and heads down the long hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

At the end of the hall, a red light glows above the door. Sarah pauses, one last deep breath, a confident smile, and then she opens the door and marches in.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - NIGHT

The cavernous room is mostly dark and, at the far side, the director, JACK (50), sits behind an imposing table covered in resumes and headshots.

A camera and lights shine upon a folding chair in front of him.

Sarah walks over to Jack and offers her hand.

SARAH
Hi, I'm Sarah Taylor.

They shake.

JACK
Jack. Thanks for coming in today.

SARAH
Of course.

Jack gestures to the empty chair.

JACK
Please, have a seat.

Sarah does and it takes her a moment to adjust to the harsh light.

JACK
I hope you haven't been waiting too long.

SARAH
No, not at all.

JACK
Good. Good. I know some directors treat casting like it's a race, you know, how many actors can they see in a day, but not me. I like to take my time. Get to know the actor, give them a chance.

SARAH
I appreciate that.

Jack glances down at the headshot and resume.

JACK
(to himself)
Interesting.

He looks back up at Sarah.

JACK
How long have you been acting?

SARAH
My whole life.

JACK
Your *whole* life?

SARAH
Professionally, for the last 12 years or so, but I've been a performer for as long as I can remember. My mother used to say I did impressions in my crib.

JACK
Anyone I would know?

SARAH
I did a killer version of my Uncle Bernie.

The director smiles at this.

JACK
You've had a chance to read the script?

SARAH
I have and, honestly, I love it. I mean, I bet everyone says that, but I really do.

JACK
What about the monologue?

SARAH
I memorized it.

JACK
Really? Alright, well, why don't you show me what you've got?

SARAH
Okay.

JACK
Whenever you're ready.

Once again, Sarah closes her eyes, takes a slow deep breath, and when she opens them, she's someone else - a wounded mother confessing.

SARAH
He took my child. I didn't get to hold him. I didn't get to say good-bye. He was just gone. And, I couldn't stop thinking about him... alone and scared. He needed me, his mother. And, I wasn't there for him. There was nothing I could do. Not then. Not now. Not ever. But...

Sarah rises out of her seat, standing tall as the words flow through her.

SARAH
I could stop him. Stop him from doing it again to someone else. So no one else would have to feel what I feel. I put an end to it... to him. So, no, I don't have any regrets. What I did to him, he had coming. He took my child.

Sarah sits back down.

JACK
Wow. Seriously, wow. That was impressive.

SARAH
Thanks.

JACK
I'm at a bit of a loss for words. That was really special. I don't know that I can picture anyone else doing the part now.

SARAH
I really connected with her.

JACK
I can tell.

Sarah smiles.

JACK

This part needs an actress who can commit - do what it takes. You have to be fearless. Can you do that?

SARAH

I think so.

JACK

Good. Good. Do you have any tattoos?

SARAH

I'm sorry, what?

JACK

Tattoos?

SARAH

One, on my ankle.

JACK

That's cool. Nothing on your chest?

SARAH

No.

JACK

Good. That's good. Show me.

SARAH

What?

JACK

Look, I need an actress with the courage and fire to play this part. If you're too scared to...

SARAH

No, I just...

JACK

Do you want the part?

SARAH

(weakly)

Yes.

JACK

Show me.

Sarah's trembling fingers begin to unbutton her shirt.

Jack stares at her for too long.

NOTE: Nothing is seen on camera or by the cast and crew, as the camera is on the director at this point.

JACK

Nice.

Sarah fumbles with the buttons as she closes up her shirt.

JACK

Thanks for coming in today. We'll
be in touch.

Sarah doesn't move.

JACK

You can go.

SARAH

Okay. Thanks for seeing me.

Sarah, dismissed, stands and wanders to the door, closing it behind her.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Shaken, Sarah leans up against the door, trying to gather herself.

What just happened?

Her breath catches and she wipes at her face, attempting to hold back tears.

She steadies herself.

What the hell just happened?

The sadness and embarrassment give way to anger and outrage.

Sarah turns around, throws the door open, and storms back in.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - NIGHT

Sarah summons all her strength and courage.

SARAH

Who the hell do you think you are?

JACK

What?

SARAH

You can't treat someone like that.

JACK

Look, the audition is over.

SARAH

I'm not auditioning for you. This isn't some audition. I didn't come back in here to get the part. I'm not a prop. I'm a person - a real live person. I'm not here for your amusement. This isn't a game. I came here for a job. Not to be treated like a whore.

Sarah stands back in the light, breathing heavily.

JACK

That was good. That was really good.

Jack smiles in spite of himself.

JACK

You got the part.

Sarah walks up to the director and leans across the table.

SARAH

Fuck you.

She slaps him hard across the face.

SARAH

I don't want it.

The director is finally stunned into silence, and can only watch, as Sarah strides triumphantly out of the room.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

And slams the door shut.

What the hell did she just do?

But the thought of what happened only brings a satisfied smile to her face.

She saunters back down towards the lobby.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

Back at the couch, Sarah sees Kelly again.

KELLY
So, how'd it go?

Sarah thinks for a moment.

SARAH
Nailed it.

FADE OUT.