

Opal (Sample Scene)

by

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INT. MARNIE'S APARTMENT-NIGHT

Marnie lies awake in bed, flat on her back and hands folded stiffly across her chest. She keeps opening and closing her eyes, as if debating something. Finally, she gets up and heads for the hallway. She stops in the doorway, staring at the door at the end of the hall. She begins to walk in slow, measured steps towards it. When she reaches it, she pauses again with her hand on the doorknob. Taking one more breath, she opens it roughly.

EXT. OTHER WORLD STREET - NIGHT

Marnie steps out into what looks like the street outside of her apartment, a thick fog settling in. She looks around in confusion, glancing back into the room behind her. She takes a backward step back inside when she hears faint music coming from down the street. It's the same melody from before, but it sounds much more festive. Still in her pajamas and bare feet, she begins to follow the growing music down the street.

Out of the fog comes a massive parade. Acrobats and dancers spinning flaming staffs in the lead, brightly colored floats so giant they look as if they're about to topple over, an elaborate dragon's head, its neck disappearing into the fog, bobbing and blinking as it flows along with the parade.

Opal comes into view, sitting on a throne on the float just beneath the dragon. When she sees Marnie she waves and nimbly hops down from the float, running ahead of the parade to greet her.

OPAL

Hey! Glad you could make it.

MARNIE

Glad to be here. What's all this?

OPAL

This? I don't know. We just felt like doing something fun.

MARNIE

No occasion?

OPAL

*(shrugs)* We've never needed a reason to celebrate. Buuut it can be just for you if you want.

MARNIE

I'd like that.

OPAL

Come on, I'll show you the rest of it.

They go to rejoin the parade, Opal pointing out the various floats.

MARNIE

I feel like I've seen some of these before.

OPAL

You probably have.

Marnie looks quizzically at Opal, who just shrugs. They turn around and begin to walk with the parade. Opal grabs two kebabs from a food cart moving along with the crowd, offering one to Marnie.

OPAL

So. How have you been since I saw you last?

MARNIE

I've been okay. I got invited out for drinks with the people I work with.

OPAL

Yeah? How was that?

MARNIE

It was alright. I mean...it was fine.

Opal just blinks at her, slowly chewing her food.

MARNIE

I had to leave a little early. I felt weird there.

OPAL

Weird?

MARNIE

Just...awkward. Like they were judging me or something.

OPAL

They probably were. People can be assholes.

MARNIE

No, it wasn't their fault. I was being stupid.

OPAL

I'm sure that's not true.

MARNIE

No, it is. I just don't know how to talk to people sometimes. Or...a lot of the time, actually.

OPAL

Really? I think you talk to me just fine.

MARNIE

That's different. You're not-

She stops. "Real," she was about to say. Opal waits patiently for her to finish her thought.

OPAL

Not what?

MARNIE

You're just easier to talk to. And it's fine, I can't expect people to cater to me every time I fuck up.

OPAL

Still, I don't think a little respect is too much to ask.

MARNIE

I haven't done anything to earn it. Especially when I don't even want to be there half the time. I'd rather be here.

OPAL

You can be.

MARNIE

No, it's not--I can't just run away every time I don't want to deal with something.

OPAL

So learn to deal with it.

MARNIE

It's not that easy.

OPAL

Why not?

MARNIE

It just isn't.

OPAL

Maybe it could be.

MARNIE

Yeah. It could be. I'm just too dumb to do it.

OPAL

That's not what I mean. I've been thinking since last time, and I had an idea.

Marnie just looks at her.

OPAL

Well, okay. You always used to say that you were happier here, right? And that's still true?

Marnie nods.

OPAL

Well if you can't be here all the time, how about we just bring "here" out there?

MARNIE

Out--?

OPAL

There.

She waves vaguely to her left.

MARNIE

What, just let everyone loose onto the streets?

OPAL

Nah, they wouldn't be any help. Just me. And I wouldn't be let loose. I'll be here.

She taps Marnie's forehead.

OPAL

So if you ever want me to stop, just say the word.

MARNIE

How is that different from what we're doing now?

OPAL

You could always see in, but I can't see out. I've never seen what's out there, where you go when you leave. But I'd like to. You just have to let me.

MARNIE

*(smiling)* Oh. There's the catch.

OPAL

If you want to call it that, sure. So?

Marnie looks down in thought. She stops and realizes they're now alone on the street. The parade had moved ahead without her noticing. She thinks for a moment longer, and her response is weighed, carefully worded.

MARNIE

I know you're just trying to help, and I really appreciate it. But these are my problems. My mistakes. I don't want to make you--make anyone deal with them for me. And I'm fine on my own. I'm just whining is all.

OPAL

*(nods faintly)* Okay.

MARNIE

I'm sorry.

OPAL

Don't be. It was just a thought. And the offer stands if you ever change your mind.

MARNIE

Thank you...and I think I should wake up now.

OPAL

Of course. See you soon, hopefully.

The two exchange a smile before Marnie wakes up in her bed.

INT. MARNIE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Marnie reaches for her nightstand and looks at the time on her phone.

MARNIE

Shit!

She scrambles out of bed.

END