

SASHA

No no no -

NAN

(to SHAWN,)

Why wouldn't you let him in?

SHAWN

He slapped that girl earlier.

NAN

The one who was just here?

SHAWN

Yeah.

NAN

Oh my / god.

SASHA

He slapped her?

(off SHAWN's nod,)

She didn't seem like she'd been slapped!

(NAN has a moment,)

Nan, are you okay?

NAN

What do I do, Sasha?

SASHA

This is my fault. Do you want to go somewhere else? I should have known we would run into everybody here. Or do you want to reschedule?

NAN

No, no. I just need a minute.

(beat,)

I mean, he's right. I've been ignoring his e-mails but I just haven't had room in my life for - for that! I'm pregnant, for crying out loud. I have a family on the way. But it was also five years we spent together. He knows some of my habits and quirks better than David does and I also feel like I've... watched him grow up somehow - like I was supposed to be protecting him, but from what? I just feel so guilty.

(beat,)

It's so hard to watch - when something like this comes out of nowhere and just derails your... derails everything. I just wish things could go back - to the way they were.

(MORE)

NAN (cont'd)

And not just for him. But for me too. I mean, I was on the other side of the glass when the woman blew her brains out!

SASHA

Oh God - I didn't know - !

NAN

Yes! And I'd just been talking to our intern, who she shot like five minutes after he left my office - Did you ever hear anything about him?

SASHA

What? No?

NAN

Oh, it's actually the saddest story. Somehow he's been, like, completely written out of the whole thing. His name was Mark. One of Richard Morrison's students? He was this incredibly bright kid. Black. Harvard. Anyway, it was going to be his last day working with us -

SASHA

Oh my god.

NAN

I know. And he did that thing, where he asked to meet with me before he left, which was so sweet -

SASHA

Oh I love when interns do that.

NAN

Me, too, but you know, sometimes it can backfire. And I wasn't completely expecting him to be a suck up, but I did brace myself. But then he came in and sat down, I asked him how he had enjoyed his experience, and then he told me that it had just been, "Okay."

SASHA

What?

NAN

And, of course, I was like, "Tell me more?" And what I realized is that Richard Morris has filled this poor boy's head with all these stories about how fun this office was, how crazy it was back in the day and he'd been disappointed.

(MORE)

NAN (cont'd)

Of course, he was talking about the time back when they had martini carts making rounds every day at four and there were always these illicit affairs happening all over the office and coke being done in bathrooms and other hijinks, and yes, I guess that exact historical time did sort of... produce... the most interesting work - or at least the work the magazine was known for - but it was also -

SASHA

Pre-internet.

NAN

Yes, well, I was going to say a disaster, but, yes, pre-internet, too, I suppose.

SASHA

There was no internet. When you sat at your desk, you had no choice but to work. And then when you were done working, you went crazy.

NAN

Right, but that time was also a financial disaster - mostly because everyone was walking around with these substance abuse problems - and that's half the reason why we went corporate the way we did - got bought out - We were so in the red. But Mark was saying, basically, that he thought he was going to be somewhere that was... more vibrant... and he started telling me some story Richard had told him about his days there and it was a funny story - God what was it? It was a story I actually knew, because I was there - in fact, it was during my early days there - and now I can't remember - it'll come to me - but, anyway, it was a funny story for him but a memory for me - and it was strange to feel your experience come back to you in that way - as anecdote in the mouth of some young person - and we both found ourselves laughing over this thing that he'd only heard about and this thing that I'd actually lived through and we got so swept up in the laughter and then, almost as suddenly, we realized we were just laughing and then the laughing stopped and - it was like he was reading my mind when he asked me, "What happened?" And I paused for a second and I didn't know what else to say except, "Things were different then." And he says, "Different how?" And I said, "Everyone was young and didn't know what they were doing. Everything was new and exciting and always discovery. And then it got old. We got old. And now things are different." And it was quiet for a moment and we talked about a few more things, all the while I'm thinking, "Did I really just say that?" And when he got up, I found myself blurting out, "Let me know if you're ever thinking about a career in publishing..." Just like that. And I knew that it was me like doing that last ditch pitch things - basically trying to convince myself that he was young and naïve and that I was wise and the one with all the power - as if I hadn't just told this boy that he had the power, that youth was... a weapon - and he just looked at me with the saddest, most knowing look on his face, and just thanked me and left. Then, five minutes later, Gloria happened. Heard those gunshots and those screams and before I even knew what was happening, I was underneath that desk. He was dead. All that youth was gone.