

Desperate & Dateless

Written By Jamie Campbell

www.jamiecampbell.com.au

FADE IN:

INT. WEDDING VENUE - DAY

An extravagant wedding reception is in full swing. The dance floor is full of couples dancing along to the classics. The BRIDE leads a round of the Macarena as everyone happily joins in.

Sitting at one of the many abandoned tables all by herself is MAKAYLA MORRISON, a late twenties, nerdy woman. Her evening dress is dull and boring, as is the rest of her. She watches the festivities, trying not to let her boredom show.

IRIS (60s), emerges from the crowd and takes a seat next to Makayla.

IRIS

You should get up and dance, Makayla. You'll never meet anyone here by yourself.

MAKAYLA

It's okay, I'm happy here Aunt Iris.

IRIS

I guess there aren't many single men here anyway. I should have made sure they invited some for you.

MAKAYLA

You make it sound like I'm a charity for unwanted men. Really, I'm okay.

IRIS

You'll get your chance to have a wedding one day. I'm sure Mr Right is out there just waiting for you. Stay strong.

Iris gives Makayla a reassuring pat on the arm before standing to leave. As she goes, Makayla mumbles to herself.

MAKAYLA

I'll try, you nosey old woman.

Just as Iris leaves, ROBERT (50s) approaches. He hands Makayla a fresh glass of CHAMPAGNE.

ROBERT

You look like you could use this.

Makayla accepts the drink with a smile as Robert sits down at the table. She braces herself.

ROBERT (Cont'd)

I don't know why you are still single. You must really scare men.

MAKAYLA

Gee, thanks Rob. You say the sweetest things.

ROBERT

No, I'm serious. You haven't had a relationship, in, I don't know, forever. Maybe you should tart yourself up a bit. Nobody's going to enter the store if the window isn't attractive.

MAKAYLA

Are you calling me ugly?

ROBERT

No, just... plain.

MAKAYLA

Oh, that's okay then. Thanks for the advice, I'll keep that in mind.

ROBERT

Good, glad I could help.

Robert stands and leaves as Makayla pretends to smile as a thank you for the helpful advice.

The music changes songs, as the Bride approaches and takes a seat at the table. She's flushed from dancing, and holding her BOUQUET.

BRIDE

Whew, it's hot in there.

MAKAYLA

It looks like you're having fun.
It's a great wedding.

BRIDE

You really think so? Ricky's mother said it was too flashy.

MAKAYLA

No, it's perfect. Congratulations.

The Bride hands the bouquet to Makayla who takes it with confusion.

BRIDE

I know it's tradition to throw this to all the single ladies at the end of the night. But I thought you could really use it.

MAKAYLA

Thanks. That's... thoughtful.

They stare at each other for a beat, trying to conjure up some conversation.

BRIDE

You'll get to have your own wedding some day, it'll happen eventually.

MAKAYLA

Oh yeah, of course. Any day now.

The Bride gives her a 'poor thing' look.

BRIDE

Better get back to it.

MAKAYLA

Have fun.

Makayla nods and takes a big swig of her drink as she watches the Bride return happily to the dance floor. She drinks her glass empty and looks around for the exit.

Giving up, Makayla takes her bouquet and purse and heads for the door.

INT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - LATER

Makayla stands in line waiting for her meal number to be called. She sticks out in her evening dress, still clutching the bouquet. She tries to blend in, pretending nothing is amiss.

SERVER

Forty-nine?

Makayla steps forward and exchanges her ticket for her meal. She picks up the tray, juggling it carefully with the bouquet, and makes her way to a table.

She starts eating, a look of misery on her face as she sits there alone. People that pass by give her strange looks, which she tries to ignore.

Two LITTLE GIRLS (4 and 10) sit at the table beside Makayla. They stare while waiting for their mother. Makayla smiles, pulls a FLOWER out of the bouquet and hands it to the youngest girl. She takes it happily.

OLDER GIRL

Don't take that, she's a runaway bride or something.

YOUNGER GIRL

It's pretty.

The older girl rolls her eyes 'whatever'. Makayla turns her attention the other way.

MAKAYLA

(to herself)

Maybe this wasn't the best idea.

She continues eating anyway.

INT. BUSY BOOKS INC OFFICE - LATER

The offices of the Accounting firm BUSY BOOKS INC is filled with the sounds of typing and telephone conversations. The rows of cubicles hide the workers as they concentrate on their assignments.

Makayla walks through the rows in her wedding finery, ignoring the curious looks she is receiving. Amongst the conservative crowd, she doesn't look as dull and boring as at the wedding. She heads for her CUBICLE and takes a seat, placing the bouquet on her desk.

PIPER, an equally nerdy and boring looking woman in her late twenties, pops her head over the cubicle partition - much like a meerkat.

PIPER

I thought you had the day off for your friend's wedding?

MAKAYLA

It was boring. I'd rather get through these files. At least no-one is judging me here.

PIPER

At least not to your face. You didn't Stop to change first?

MAKAYLA

Couldn't be bothered. I'd only get a lecture from my mother about trying harder to socialise. She thinks I'm not a people person.

PIPER

Who wants to be a people person?
Everyone scares me.

(beat)

You caught the bouquet? It's
beautiful.

MAKAYLA

I was given the bouquet out of pity.

Piper makes a face, 'ouch'.

PIPER

Oh well, maybe it will bring some
good luck.

MAKAYLA

I hope so. I could use it. I don't
want to go through another wedding
alone. Ever again.

PIPER

Was it really that bad?

MAKAYLA

Like torture. I would rather have
my eye balls set alight and then
be forced to eat them. I lost count
of the number of times I heard
people say that I would find someone.

PIPER

I hate the way everyone has an
opinion. Like everyone else knows
what's best for us.

MAKAYLA

Exactly! They don't know me, not the
real me.

PIPER

And what's wrong with being single?
It's like we're diseased or
something.

MAKAYLA

Diseased, desperate, and dateless.
What is to become of us?

PIPER

Die alone with fifty cats I suppose.
That's my retirement plan.

Piper smiles and goes back to her own desk. Makayla turns her attention to the paperwork and files on her desk. On the desk is a PHOTO of Makayla and her family. She picks up a few pieces of paper and heads towards the PHOTOCOPIER.

Walking down the rows, she looks out of place in her evening dress with everyone else wearing corporate suits. People stare as she walks.

As she photocopies the paper, a CO-WORKER (female, 40s) approaches, looking at her curiously.

MAKAYLA

What? You never saw an evening dress before? They can be worn to work too.

The woman just stares and keeps walking.

INT. MORRISON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Makayla arrives at the home she shares with her parents. Still in her evening dress, she enters the neatly kept average suburban house and collects the mail from the hall stand. She keeps walking, making her way to the LIVING ROOM, flicking through the envelopes.

Makayla stops in her steps as she comes across a RED ENVELOPE. She puts all the other mail on a nearby side table and stares at the envelope. Finally plucking up the courage, she carefully opens it as if it might bite.

Pulling out a single piece of PAPER, Makayla starts shaking her head.

MAKAYLA

No, no, no. This can't be happening.

She reads through, her shocked expression still plastered across her face.

MAKAYLA (Cont'd)

It can't be true. No, no, no.

(yelling)

Mom! Are you home?

SUSAN (O.S.)

In the kitchen.

MAKAYLA

I'm going to die.

Makayla hurries through into the KITCHEN, still gripping the piece of paper.

INT. MORRISON RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Makayla storms into the kitchen where mom SUSAN (60s) is busy cooking the dinner.

SUSAN

I see you got the invitation,
exciting isn't it?

MAKAYLA

Exciting? Are you kidding? How can
Lea be getting married? She's only
twenty-two. She's known the guy for
three months.

SUSAN

When you know he's the right one,
why wait? I think it's romantic.

MAKAYLA

She's so young. I feel so old. How
can my baby cousin be getting
married?

SUSAN

She's growing up. Everyone can't
stay babies forever.

MAKAYLA

I thought I'd be married first. I should be married first, I'm older.

(beat)

I can't go. It will be so humiliating.

SUSAN

You have to go, she's been like a sister to you.

MAKAYLA

Mom, today I sat through three hours of torture while people gave me sympathetic looks and advice on how to find a husband.

SUSAN

Was any of it useful?

Makayla looks incredulous, while Susan looks happy with herself for being able to annoy her daughter.

MAKAYLA

The best piece of advice I got was to 'show the twin girls more often, men dig boobs'. Real helpful.

SUSAN

Oh Makayla, don't worry about it. They all mean well. You have to go to your cousin's wedding, she'd be devastated if you didn't.

MAKAYLA

I'll come up with a really good excuse.

SUSAN

Just think about it before you return your RSVP card, okay?

MAKAYLA

Fine. But I'm not going to change my mind.

Makayla nods sadly and plunks down at the breakfast bar. She picks at the food on the bench.

EXT. LUCAS RESIDENCE - BACKYARD - DAY

Dozens of children ranging in age from toddlers to six year olds are running around the backyard. Various adults are chasing after them, trying to circumvent any mischief.

Makayla helps to fill chip bowls, along with her sister CARYS LUCAS (early 30s) and brother FLYNN MORRISON (mid 20s).

Carys has a child on her hip, baby girl PAIGE (1). Carys is the epitome of a great mother, always with a child or two around her. Flynn is ultra modern and stylish, a tres chic homosexual.

FLYNN

Hewitt is to die for in his little rock star shirt. I can't believe he's four already.

CARYS

Neither can I. Thanks for the shirt, by the way Flynn.

FLYNN

You're welcome. Hey, did you get your invitation from Lea?

MAKAYLA

Don't remind me.

CARYS

I can't wait. I saw this gorgeous dress at the mall the other day and I really wanted to buy it but didn't have a good excuse to. Now I do.

FLYNN

Don't buy it without obtaining written approval from me. I know your taste and it's scary. Lime green is out, you know that, right?