

The Quarter Life Crisis

Written by Jamie Campbell

www.jamiecampbell.com.au

FADE IN:

INT. PIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

A cluttered open-plan apartment showing all signs of single life, empty frozen dinner packets, one wine glass, and stray stiletto shoes. Red Envelopes cover the table, past due notices.

The peace is broken by PIA WOODS, a mid-twenties corporate woman. She hops into the living room, still putting on clothes and straitening her hair

The sound of a slightly muffled mobile telephone RINGS. Pia groans and hurries towards her handbag, answering the call.

PIA
Kenzie, I'm on my way.

KENZIE (V.O.)
No you're not. You're probably not even ready yet.

Pia rolls her eyes, finishes putting on shoes and hurries to the door.

PIA
Well, I will be soon. My alarm didn't go off.

KENZIE (V.O.)
Honey, it never goes off. I don't think that is your problem. You have time management issues. You better not be late tonight.

PIA
I won't be, I promise.

Pia makes it through the door and it slams closed behind her.

EXT. OUTSIDE APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

Pia steps onto the street from the apartment stoop, still holding the phone to her ear. She turns and starts walking along the sidewalk. Bustling people in corporate wear hurry along in all different directions.

KENZIE (V.O.)

Everybody is going to be there.

PIA

It sounds more like an intervention.

KENZIE (V.O.)

The only thing you are addicted to is coffee and, trust me, with the way you run late for everything that is a good thing.

Pia arrives at a coffee stand, the serving MAN nods in acknowledgment and prepares a coffee in a take away cup.

PIA

I'll be there. I have to go. I'll see you tonight.

KENZIE (V.O.)

Don't be late!

Pia closes her phone and slips it into her handbag.

PIA

(quietly)

Happy Birthday to me.

The man hands over the coffee, Pia smiles, pays, and hurries along the street. We follow her as she crosses the road and disappears into a HIGH RISE OFFICE BUILDING.

INT. BUSY OFFICE FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Pia steps out of the elevator and hurries through the reception of a modern office. People are darting everywhere, on their own personal mission. She is greeted by JESSICA, a perky blonde in her early twenties. She hurries after Pia.

JESSICA

You're late, your clients are already waiting in your office.

PIA

Already? Why does everyone have to be so early?

Catching a look of disbelief on her assistant's face, Pia doesn't allow time for her to answer.

PIA (Cont'd)

Don't answer that. The world is full of clock watchers.

INT. PIA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Pia hurries into her office, only slightly tidier than her apartment. The sleek furniture is simple, with two visitor's chairs looking out towards the large window.

Sitting in one of the chairs is GWEN HART (40s), she angrily taps her fingers on the desk. It is clear she isn't happy with the wait.

Jessica closes the door and leaves the two alone, mouthing a "Good Luck" as she does.

PIA

Sorry to keep you waiting Mrs Hart.
But I think you'll like what I have to say.

GWEN

I could do with some good news. This divorce has just about sucked the life out of me.

PIA

Your ex-husband has agreed to a mediation.

GWEN

Mediation? Are you kidding? That good for nothing should just hand over everything for what he's put me through. What good will mediation do? I'm not settling for anything.

PIA

Well, the idea of mediation is to talk through all the issues. He may end up agreeing to your terms.

(beat)

It's a step in the right direction.

Pia waits expectantly for an answer, however Gwen has a look of shock on her face. She points at the WINDOW behind Pia.

PIA (Cont'd)

What? What did you see?

GWEN

A man just fell.

Confused, Gwen stands and races to the window. Pia reluctantly follows, dreading what she is about to see. On the sidewalk below is the BODY of a man, broken and splayed on the ground. A crowd is starting to gather.

PIA

Oh no.

GWEN

Does this happen often?

PIA

Nope, that's the first. That's gotta hurt.

Gwen gives her a horrified look and shakes her head in disbelief. Pia returns to her desk in shock. They stare at each other for few moments.

PIA (Cont'd)

(flustered, shaking)

Now, the mediation has been scheduled for tomorrow. I will need you here around four o'clock.

Gwen, still in shock, returns to her seat nodding.

GWEN

Four o'clock then.

Pia plasters on a fake smile, trying to pretend like nothing is wrong. Her shaking hands betray how much the jumper has got to her.

EXT. OUTSIDE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Pia is hurrying inside a crowded open air restaurant. Tables are lining the streets with people eating, drinking, and talking loudly.

Looking around the restaurant, Pia spots a table with TWO MEN and a WOMAN. They wave her over and she hurries to join them.

PIA

Sorry I'm late, my meeting ran over.

HUNTER (male, 20s) immediately stands and holds a chair back for Pia. She smiles and sits down, joining the others.

HUNTER

I should have given you a watch.

Happy Birthday!

(beat)

Drinks anyone?

They all nod and he leaves the table, heading for the bar.

PIA

I wish people would stop saying that.
I think I'm going to stop having
birthdays, I'm getting too old.

KENZIE, a gorgeous woman in her mid-twenties dressed all for business in a tailored suit with her hair neatly pulled back, rolls her eyes.

KENZIE

Yeah, like twenty-five is real old.
What's got you so negatory tonight?

PIA

I just imagined life would be a lot different by this age. I should be married with a kid by now. And look at me, I argue for a living and my last boyfriend cheated on me. Life is too short.

KENZIE

You're better off. Who needs a screaming baby and possessive husband to weigh them down? You're one of the best young divorce attorneys in the city. You should be proud of yourself.

PIA

If I can keep my job.

KENZIE

They're still laying people off?

PIA

Every day there's someone else that hasn't 'met expectations'.

KENZIE

You'll be fine. You're so going to survive the culling season.

PIA

I hope so. They cut Richard Blake last week and nobody saw that coming. His success rate was the highest in the whole firm.

(beat)

Urgh. I feel like a real grown up. All I do is worry about work and listen to my mother telling me I'm not getting any younger.

KENZIE

She's old fashion. Just wait until we start our own law firm one day. Then they'll realize you're the smart one.

PIA

I don't know Kenzie, they'll probably still ask why nobody loves me. I'm the only single one in my entire family! I'm sure that damn biological clock has started ticking louder.

PERRY, the other man at the table, also in his mid-twenties and dressed in a business suit, leans forwards.

PERRY

If you insist, I'll be your baby-daddy.

Pia, laughing, playfully pushes him.

PIA

Never going to happen Perry, trust me.

PERRY

Give it a few years, you'll come around. When the big 3-0 looms, you'll be begging me. Just wait and see.

Perry leans back into his chair, satisfied he got the reaction he was after.

Hunter returns, he is carrying a tray containing two colourful cocktails, two beers, and a cupcake with a lit candle. He passes the drinks around the table before placing the cupcake in front of Pia and then sitting again.

HUNTER

I propose a toast. To our lovely Pia on her birthday. May there be many more to come.

KENZIE

Cheers to that!

They clink glasses, spilling some of the liquid. They start laughing.

KENZIE (Cont'd)

Blow your candle out. What are you going to wish for?

Pia thinks it over for a beat.

PIA

How about a new life?

While she laughs, there is a hint of truth to her wish. She blows out the candle and they all clap.

Perry stands and puts his hand out for Pia to take. She stares at it for a few moments.

PERRY

Come dance with me Pia, party like it's your birthday.

PIA

I guess I could, just this once. You make sure to keep your hands to yourself.

PERRY

Sounds like a dare.

Pia stands and takes Perry's hand. They disappear onto the crowded dance floor and start dancing with exaggerated daggy moves in the background.

Hunter and Kenzie, still seated at the table, exchange a knowing glance. They casually move closer together.

HUNTER

So I take it you haven't told anyone yet?

KENZIE

I can't. How can I admit I've been lying to my best friend?

HUNTER

We're going to have to eventually.

KENZIE

I know, just not yet. I'm not ready.

HUNTER

Soon then.

KENZIE

(sighing)

Soon.

Kenzie and Hunter sadly clink glasses and watch their friends on the dance floor.

INT. PIA'S APARTMENT - LATER

Pia enters her apartment, throwing her handbag on the floor. Shoes are kicked off, hitting a stack of magazines which tumble down. She tries to hang up her keys on a hook, misses, and they crash to the floor.

Mumbling to herself, Pia walks through her apartment reeling off clothing. She is more than a little tipsy which is causing every moment to be clumsy. Nothing is going right, her arm is caught in her sleeve and her skirt trips her over. She crashes to the floor, cursing her life.

Standing, she eventually gets free of her outer clothing.

PIA

Damn it! Happy Birthday Pia, happy
freakin' birthday.

She recovers her footing and stumbles down the hall, making her way to the open KITCHEN.

Pia opens cupboard doors, one after the other, seemingly looking for something in particular.

Growing more and more frustrated, she reaches for the top cupboard and pulls the door open. A box full of various memorabilia tumbles right down on top of her.

PIA (Cont'd)

Ouch! What the hell?

Cursing under her breath, she clumsily attempts to restore the contents back into the box. She picks up a PIECE OF PAPER and stops in her tracks, staring.

The paper shows a work of art, a painting of a field of sunflowers. She holds it in both hands as she sits on the floor and leans against the wall.

PIA (Cont'd)

(in awe)

This is so beautiful.

After a moment, she struggles to stand again, still holding the paper. Trudging along to the refrigerator, she picks up a magnet and sticks the paper to the refrigerator with more force than needed.

As Pia walks away, we see the artist signature on the painting - PIA WOODS.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING FOYER - DAY