

ORCHID

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INT. JEZZ'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

JEZZ, early 20s, wearing a festive dress, pours herself a soda. Music plays in the background as people chatter. It is New Year's Eve. Jezz's face is not shown yet. Her apartment is quaint and colorful.

INT. JEZZ'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jezz takes a sip of her soda.

INT. ASHER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ASHER, early 20s, takes whiskey shots. We do not see his face.

INT. OUTSIDE JEZZ'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

There is a KNOCK at the door. Jezz opens it. This is the first time we see the characters' faces. Mason is tall with floppy brown hair. Jezz's face lights up when she sees him and he reveals the orchids behind his back.

JEZZ
(happily)
Took you long enough!

Jezz turns around.

JEZZ (CONT'D)
Masons here!

People CHEER in the background.

Jezz's smile fades when she looks down at the pot of orchids in Mason's hands. She gives Mason a meaningful look and a soft smile appears on her face.

MASON
I figured it was time for fresh ones.

Jezz takes the pot carefully and brings it to the table. She replaces the older, more wilted orchids with her new ones. She adjusts them lovingly.

MASON (CONT'D)
You ready for tonight?

JEZZ
(jokingly)
Well considering I was peer
pressured into this by my lovely
friend...

MASON
Righhht. Right.

JEZZ
Want a drink?

MASON
You kidding? I'm your sober buddy
tonight, remember?

JEZZ
Righhht. Right...

Jezz smiles and walks to get the soda.

Mason grabs a glass and Jezz fills it with the soda she has
been drinking.

INT. ASHER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Asher grabs a bottle of whiskey in a paper bag and a pack of
cigarettes. He searches through scattered trash and bottles
until eventually grabbing his car keys. He walks out his
front door.

INT. JEZZ'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

There is an abrupt KNOCK on the back door. Jezz, who is
talking to a PARTY GUEST, excuses herself to answer the door.

JEZZ
S'cuse me one second.

Jezz opens the door. Her smile immediately drops. She closes
the door before Asher's hand harshly stops it.

ASHER
C'mon Jezz.

Asher opens up his arms, one hand grasping the whiskey
bottle. Jezz crosses her arms and glares back at him. The
silence is loud.

Mason walks over to the door.

MASON
Tonight? Really?

ASHER
C'mon. Just some old friends
catching up.

Asher winks. Silent beat as Jezz glares at Asher.

ASHER (CONT'D)
What do I have to do to get a drink
around here?

Asher pushes through the doorway.

JEZZ
(under her breath to
Mason)
Be invited, for starters.

MASON
I can get him to leave.

JEZZ
I'm fine.

Jezz turns to walk back to the party. She aggressively sits on the couch. A guest next to her lights a joint and we see the smoke waft to the ceiling. The PARTY MUSIC fades out.

BEGIN FLASHBACKS

INT. HAZY BEDROOM - GOLDEN HOUR

Younger Asher, attractive, and less haggard looking at 19, and Jezz, 18, are in bed with the comforter pulled up around their bare shoulders. Asher kisses Jezz lovingly and hands her a joint. She closes her eyes as a puff of smoke dances from her lips. The two are laughing together deliriously. "THEIR SONG" plays in the background.

YOUNGER JEZZ
I'm telling you Steve was sexy as
fuck.

YOUNGER ASHER
You can't corrupt Blue's Clues for
me like that.

YOUNGER JEZZ
I like an educated man what can I
say? And that striped shirt... I
mean come on.

Asher stares at her, obviously infatuated.

YOUNGER JEZZ (CONT'D)
(giggling)
What?

YOUNGER ASHER
(smirking)
Nothin.

END FLASHBACK

INT. JEZZ'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jezz stares at Asher as he snorts a line on her dining room table. Jezz gets up from the couch, obviously mad, and walks into the kitchen. Mason follows her into the kitchen, noticing she is mad.

JEZZ
He always finds his way back.

MASON
Don't let him get in your head
tonight, Jezz.

JEZZ
It's New Year's! Go have fun I'll
be fine.

Mason rolls his eyes and smiles softly.

MASON
You deserve to have fun too, Jezz.
That's what tonight was supposed to
be about.

He walks out of the kitchen. She adjusts her hair in the mirror, and glances at a faded deck of cards on the table.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. BASEMENT OF JEZZ'S OLD HOUSE - EVENING

Younger Jezz, Younger Asher, and Jezz's younger sister, LILLIAN, 15, are sitting around a table playing poker, beer cans crushed and collected near each players poker chips.

YOUNGER JEZZ

I fold.

Younger Jezz puts her cards down on the table. Younger Asher looks at his cards then looks to the left, as Lillian takes a long sip of beer and then smiles.

YOUNGER ASHER

Your sisters got a shit poker face
Jezz.

LILLIAN

Or maybe the best one you've ever
seen.

YOUNGER JEZZ

(to Asher)

Then why do you have the least
amount of chips?

LILLIAN

You don't have to play every hand
ya know.

YOUNGER JEZZ

Folding is an honorable option,
Asher.

YOUNGER ASHER

All right, show em.

LILLIAN

Read em and weep.

Lillian shows her cards, she has three of a kind all aces.

YOUNGER ASHER

Alrighty, Ace.

JEZZ

Ace, I like it.

Lillian pulls in the chips on the table and smiles.

YOUNGER ASHER

If your little sister is hustling
me this is the last time I'm
bringing over free beers.

JEZZ

I don't know what you're talking about...

Jezz winks at Lillian.

LILLIAN

You wouldn't deprive us like that now would you, Asher...

Lillian and Jezz giggle.

ASHER

Hold up.

Asher looks and feels under the table.

ASHER (CONT'D)

I knew you were a bunch of cheaters.

Asher pulls out a handful of aces from under the table. Lillian and Jezz giggle as they struggle to sweep away the cards before he can grab them.

ASHER (CONT'D)

You guys are dead.

Asher gets up and play tackles Jezz; they laugh together. Lillian forces a smile while watching the happy couple.

END FLASHBACK

INT. JEZZ'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The party guests loudly countdown with the ball drop on television.

PARTY GUESTS

10! 9! 8! 7!...

Asher drunkenly stumbles into the dining room table. The orchid vase falls to the ground and shatters.

The guests slowly go silent when they notice what happened. Asher continues the countdown drunkenly with the TV. Everyone stares at him in shock. Asher steps on the orchids, unaware they are on the ground.

ASHER

3! 2!...

Asher looks up finally and sees Jezz's devastated face. He finally goes silent.

INT. JEZZ'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

For the first time tonight, Jezz pours herself a shot of vodka and takes it quickly. She takes two more. She then begins to throw away the broken pot pieces as she tries to salvage the crushed orchids. Mason walks into the kitchen.

MASON

Can I help?

JEZZ

You've done enough Mason.

MASON

(irritated)

What are you talking about??

Mason looks suspiciously at Jezz and steps forwards to smell her breathe. Jezz steps back.

MASON (CONT'D)

You didn't.

JEZZ

I don't know what you're talking about.

MASON

You reek, Jezz!

JEZZ

(sarcastically)

Ouch.

MASON

I'm not an idiot, how much have you had?

JEZZ

(annoyed)

Mason, leave me alone. I didn't even want to have this party in the first place.

MASON

I'm just tryi-

JEZZ

You just push and push and now I
have to deal with *him* on this night
of all nights.

MASON

(getting angry)

I just want the best for you, Jezz.
I thought this would've gotten your
mind off things tonight. It's not
my fault you let him in. You always
let him in.

JEZZ

I didn't *let* him-

MASON

Well you didn't stop him either.

JEZZ

Oh so it's my fault now??

MASON

I never said that.

JEZZ

You of all people should understand
how he is.

MASON

Oh trust me, I do. But I know how
you are too, Jezz.

Mason abruptly puts the pieces he had picked up in the trash.

Asher stumbles in the kitchen, and bumps into Mason as he is
walking out.

MASON (CONT'D)

Watch it.

Mason looks at the two of them, and walks out, obviously
annoyed.

JEZZ

(to Asher)

You really haven't changed.

Jezz continues to pick out the flowers from the glass. Asher
grabs her hand to stop her.

ASHER
I didn't wanna be alone tonight,
okay?

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. AROUND A FIRE PIT - NIGHT

Younger Jezz and Younger Asher sit in chairs holding hands. Mason stands and laughs at Lillian who dances around the fire, making the smoke coil and waiver. Younger Asher teases kindly-

YOUNGER ASHER
You're gonna catch your coat on
fire, Ace.

Lillian shrugs off the joke and continues dancing, reaching her hand out expectantly.

Asher takes the fifth of Fireball from near his feet and realizes it's empty.

YOUNGER ASHER (CONT'D)
I'll be back.

Younger Asher kisses Younger Jezz on the lips before he leaves.

LILLIAN
Jesus Christ get a room.

Younger Asher gives Lillian the middle finger jokingly. Lillian throws an empty bottle at Asher and Jezz but misses.

JEZZ
Chill out, Lillian.

MASON
Stash is in the closet. I'll come.

Asher and Mason walk away. Lillian takes Asher's spot next to Jezz.

YOUNGER JEZZ
I miss when you were small.

LILLIAN
I don't.

YOUNGER JEZZ

Remember when you had that mini garden next to Mom's?

LILLIAN

And you tried to convince me I had successfully grown a full sized orchid overnight.

YOUNGER JEZZ

Hey that orchid cost me all my summer money.

LILLIAN

Some types of orchids live for a hundred years.

JEZZ

(sighs)

That's a really long time to live.

LILLIAN

Especially for a flower.

The sound of the fire crackling fills the brief silence.

YOUNGER JEZZ

You've always got so much energy, I'm sure that'll last a hundred years too.

Silent pause.

LILLIAN

Only if you last a hundred years with me.

END FLASHBACK

INT. JEZZ'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jezz and Asher are still standing over the broken vase and flowers. Asher's hand lingers on Jezz's hand.

JEZZ

Don't.

Jezz snatches her hand back.

She walks out aggressively back into the party, holding a bottle of vodka she'd grabbed.

INT. JEZZ'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The party blares on as Jezz returns to the living room. A specific SONG plays throughout the room.

BEGIN FLASHBACKS

INT. BASEMENT OF JEZZ'S OLD HOUSE - EVENING

Younger Jezz comes down the stairs but her face hardens as she sees Younger Asher snorting a line of coke, with Lillian laying back against the couch, looking high, with her thigh pressed against younger Asher's. The same specific SONG plays quietly in the back.

YOUNGER JEZZ

Fuck, I leave for an hour and come back to this? What did you give her?

YOUNGER ASHER

Just a little.

Younger Jezz hurries over, beginning to drag Lillian off the couch.

YOUNGER JEZZ

Jesus Christ. You need to go home Lillian, and get your own fucking boyfriend.

LILLIAN

Come on, it's fine. It's nothing.

YOUNGER JEZZ

No, it's not nothing. We're going home.

YOUNGER ASHER

Ya know Lillian's a lot more fun than you.

INT. JEZZ'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jezz sees Asher doing a line of coke from across the room, wearing New Year's Eve glasses.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. JEZZ'S OLD HOUSE, LIVINGROOM - EVENING

A HONK sounds from in front of the house. Younger Jezz and younger Asher sit on the couch watching the ball drop on television. Asher wears New Year's Eve glasses.

Rebel Lillian runs past them.

YOUNGER JEZZ
Woahhh where are you going?

REBEL LILLIAN
(sarcastically)
Bye mom!

Rebel Lillian opens the front door.

YOUNGER ASHER
(talking to Lillian)
Ace!

Lillian turns around.

YOUNGER ASHER (CONT'D)
Don't do anything I wouldn't do.

Rebel Lillian smirks then lifts up her shirt to flash Younger Asher. He covers his eyes in shock.

YOUNGER ASHER (CONT'D)
Jesus Christ!

YOUNGER JEZZ
Lillian!!

Lillian laughs and slams the door shut.

YOUNGER ASHER
You know that kid's better off with
us than them.

Younger Jezz is silent but fiddles with the remote.

YOUNGER JEZZ
Well, she listens to you more than
me nowadays.

YOUNGER ASHER
That's not true. You're just her
sister, it's different.

They sit in silence for a beat.

YOUNGER JEZZ
She's out of control, Asher. I
don't know what to do anymore.

END FLASHBACK

INT. JEZZ'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jezz cleans up streamers and empty champagne glasses. A pile of full trash bags sits in the corner. Mason, holding an open trash bag, helps Jezz clean.

JEZZ
Go home, Mason. It's been a long
night.

Mason sighs, and drops his trash bag near the rest of the bags.

MASON
How much did you drink?

JEZZ
Just a little.

MASON
I don't know why you let him do
this shit to you.

JEZZ
There you go again! I'm not *letting*
him do anything.

MASON
Well you're also not stopping him.

JEZZ
I think it's time for you to go.

MASON
How do you not see what he's doing
to you?? Look at you! This is first
night you've drank in months!

JEZZ
I thought you wanted me to have fun
tonight.

MASON
This is *not* what I wanted.

JEZZ

Well then what *do* you want, Mason?

MASON

For you to wake up and see how much better we've all been without him.

Jezz looks defeated. They stand in the silence.

MASON (CONT'D)

Every time-

Jezz sits down on the floor, obviously on the brink of tears. Mason cuts himself short when he sees Jezz's face, and sighs heavily.

MASON (CONT'D)

It's been a long night. I'll call you tomorrow.

Jezz smiles softly and nods at him in understanding. Mason walks out the front door.

INT. JEZZ'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jezz walks through her empty apartment to the bedroom to see Asher sitting on her bed drinking a beer.

ASHER

(smirking)

You want a line?

He pulls a small baggie out of his pocket and holds it up. Jezz scolds back at him.

ASHER (CONT'D)

You never did like that stuff, did you.

JEZZ

God, you're such an asshole.

ASHER

Come on, what's the matter?

JEZZ

You need to go. Now.

Jezz shakes her head angrily, and her voice comes out hard, and dead.

JEZZ (CONT'D)

You killed her.

Asher looks down at his hands.

JEZZ (CONT'D)

She looked up to you, she fucking loved you.

ASHER

Maybe you should take some fucking responsibility. You pushed her away from us and into that group of trash.

Tears begin to fill at the corner of Jezz's eyes and fall.

JEZZ

I pushed her away from you, not me.

Asher stares straight ahead and takes a swig of his beer.

JEZZ (CONT'D)

I read her journals.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. LILLIAN'S OLD BEDROOM - EVENING

Younger Jezz is hunched over reading Lillian's journal, and we hear Jezz's voice over the scene.

JEZZ (V.O.)

She wrote about you.

Rebel Lillian appears in the doorway.

REBEL LILLIAN

You bitch. That's mine!

YOUNGER JEZZ

You really love him?!

Younger Jezz and Rebel Lillian fight over the journal, tugging back and forth.

REBEL LILLIAN

I don't even know why he's with you.

The sisters stop tugging on the journal. Lillian falls backwards after Jezz lets go. Jezz picks up a pill bottle on Lillian's dresser.

YOUNGER JEZZ
You think *this*'ll make him love
you??

Younger Jezz throws the pill bottle at Rebel Lillian. Younger
Jezz begins to read from Lillian's journal.

YOUNGER JEZZ (CONT'D)
"Asher is gonna flip when he sees
what I got us for this weekend."

LILLIAN
(yelling)
STOP!

Lillian tries to tear the journal away from Jezz.

YOUNGER JEZZ
"Maybe he'll finally realize I'm
mature for my age."

LILLIAN
JEZZ!

YOUNGER JEZZ
"I want to feel his hands on my
body soooo bad..."

LILLIAN
God, I hate you!

Lillian leaves and SLAMS the door behind her.

END FLASHBACK

INT. JEZZ'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

JEZZ
Everything she did was to impress
you.

Asher brings a fist down hard over the nightstand.

ASHER
Fuck, well I- I never should have
given her anything, okay? I haven't
been the same since that night. I
can never get either of you out of
my fucking head.

JEZZ
I try not to think of you at all.

ASHER
How's that going?

JEZZ
It was going fine until tonight.

ASHER
(angry)
You think you're the only one who misses her?!

JEZZ
Oh fuck off, if you cared about what happened you would've changed by now.

Asher looks a little stunned. He looks down at his hands, in defeat. Jazz sighs and suddenly looks exhausted.

JEZZ (CONT'D)
Why did you come here tonight?

ASHER
I needed to see you.

There's a brief silence, and then their voices are quieter.

JEZZ
You were so alike. It scared me to see you two become so close.

Silent pause.

JEZZ (CONT'D)
But she wouldn't want you to blame yourself forever.

ASHER
I blame us, Jazz.

Asher breaks down crying. Jazz looks somewhat shocked. After a second, Jazz sits by Asher on the bed and sighs, obviously exhausted.

INT. JEZZ'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jezz grabs two large trash bags and heads out the door. When she opens the door, a pot of orchids lays on the doormat in front of her. There is an ace playing card in the pot. She looks at the pot for a moment and smiles softly. She drops the trash bags in her hands and picks up the pot. Jazz walks outside and stands with the pot.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Jezz stands with the pot at the graveyard. She lays down the same pot of orchids over Lillian's grave, and stands up. She looks at the orchids, satisfied.

JEZZ

These should last you a while.

The playing card sits in the pot of orchids (on the grave) as Jezz walks away.

FADE TO BLACK.