

Skid Row
Written by Elizabeth Sapp

HARRIS - DEXTER

NICOLE - NATALIE

JASON - WILL MANNING

ROB - WILL DEVARY

LAURA - KAYLA

[WOMAN - DANAYA
-SD -

INT. OFFICE BUILDING-DAY

A tall man, HARRIS, walks through the halls of a sunlit lobby. He hands a small slip of paper to the woman at the front desk. They nod to each other. He slowly walks down the open hallway, and passes many cubicles. He stops to view a white board plastered high in front of the office desks. The board marked many different names and a number in ranking, A bold name JASON-58 at the top, and his own HARRIS-0 all the way at the bottom. Harris sighs as he continues walking and stops at another man's desk, JASON. JASON is slouching in his seat and looking through papers.

HARRIS

Have you gotten yours yet?

JASON

Yeah, just some old couple, they said they're gonna be late.

JASON rolls his eyes, and puts his feet on his desk, looking through a file.

JASON

But hey, I think I saw a family head into your office.

HARRIS

A- *family*?

Harris's face drops..

JASON

Yeah, I was lookin through your file. Honestly I was surprised. I mean a *kid* involved? Worst case man.

Jason chuckles to himself. Harris swipes the file from Jason's hands and pats Jason goodbye.

INT. OFFICE- DAY

Harris walks into his office and closes the door. Inside sits a family of three: a mother, a father, and a young girl. Harris sits down to greet them.

HARRIS

Hi, welcome. It's so great to meet you. I'm Harris, I'll be on your case for the moment.

He shuffles through files until he finds one.

HARRIS

Okay, uh the Osman family.. I have your current location as Central City East. Is that correct?

The daughter, NICOLE, around 7-8 years old sits up in her seat.

NICOLE

Yes, that's correct.

Harris is surprised to see the little girl speak up for her parents.

HARRIS

Great, okay. And we are looking for a new housing situation and maybe some health benefits to get you guys going.

The small girl interrupts.

NICOLE

I like your tie!

Nicole points at Harris's dark blue tie with green geometric shapes on it. The parents attempt to shush the girl and Harris smiles before he continues.

HARRIS

Thanks. Uh, anyways, I think the best we can do right now, is visit your current location and evaluate how to proceed from there-

NICOLE

Are those your favorite colors.. Green and blue?

Harris chuckles awkwardly while the parents try to shush Nicole again. She sits back in her seat.

HARRIS

(beat)

Okay, I can come over today around 5 o'clock. Does that work for you all?

NICOLE

Yeah, perfect! Thanks!

The family says goodbye and leaves the office. NICOLE waves to Harris, and Jason smiles at them as they walk out while leaning against the doorway. He slips into the office.

JASON
So... How bad was it?

Harris looks at him confused.

JASON
Harris. The housing, the health, the kid? I mean that is just-

Harris still looks confused and shakes his head while packing up his bags. Jason begins to chuckle.

JASON
You know what, I think, you are too... good for this job buddy. Too... pure really!

Jason laughs to himself, taunting Harris.

HARRIS
Yeah? No need to worry about me, buddy. I can do it... I'll finish this... Maybe even better than you.

Harris laughs, taunting Jason as Harris closes the file, grabs his bag and walks out of the room leaving Jason still snickering in the doorway.

CUT TO: HARRIS DRIVING AT DUSK

EXT. STREET- EVENING

Harris drives down a city street looking out the window at street signs and then viewing his paper with an address. As his car turns a couple corners, he begins to see tents and forts made up on the sides of the street with smaller houses in between. He pulls over after a while and gets out of the car.

Harris is wearing a clean bright suit and shiny dress shoes. He sees small groups of people hanging around each settlement. He

tries to smile at them, but they walk away from him or go back inside. He becomes confused. He walks more, searching for the family. Nicole runs up behind him from a green tent in the distance.

NICOLE
Harris!

Nicole runs up behind him. She takes his hand and leads him to where her parents were. Harris greets the parents again.

NICOLE
Oh, mom and dad went to help out our friends for a sec. Don't worry though, I'll show you which one's ours.

Nicole leads Harris to a fort near a smaller house. The tent was bright green and fairly wide with one big mattress and a small table and storage container holding food and various items. Harris holds his clipboard marking numerous different written statements.

HARRIS
So how long have you been situated here?

NICOLE
Hmm maybe like 4 years. I think.

Harris begins to write on his clipboard more.

NICOLE
What are you writing?

HARRIS
Just notes- for the case.

Nicole nods.

NICOLE
Oh my god I have the best idea. You should come to dinner with us! Its at Laura's house and its gonna be-

HARRIS

Yeah, I dont think thats- Lets just finish this okay. Uhm, and do you know how much you parents are-

NICOLE

Wow! I still love that tie! You have to come to dinner and show it to everyone. They'll like it too.

HARRIS

Lets just continue this-

NICOLE

So when will this be over? Because I'm really hungry and Rob is making some of his mac and cheese and its SOOO GOOD. You have to try some!

HARRIS

I dont know Im sorry-

Nicole pulls at Harris's jacket.

NICOLE

Pleaseeeee! Please! It will be fun I promiseee!

Harris sighs and looks at his watch.

CUT TO: BACKYARD EVENING

EXT. BACKYARD-EVENING

Tables are set up where people are sitting and eating numerous different foods, buffet style. Lights hang from the roof of the house. Some of the people whisper when they see Harris walking with Nicole. The parents are seen setting up dishes while talking with others. Nicole stays with Harris and shows him where to get the food.

They sit down at one of the tables and begin to eat. He looks around at the different people laughing, talking, and dancing together with music playing in the background. Suddenly, LAURA, an older blonde woman with a southern accent stops the commotion of chatter.

LAURA

Me and Rob just wanted to thank you all for hangin with us tonight. We are here to celebrate a wonderful 20 years together
Everyone yells, claps, and cheers.

We moved here about 2 years ago from the south and knew we wanted to be together forever. Thank you all for letting us into this community..

Yall are gonna make me tear up, but you guys have made this feel like a forever home!
And, Rob, I can't wait to love you for the next years to come. Now everyone go eat!

Everyone laughs and cheers. Harris smiles and they eat for a little, before a loud, cheery song begins to play and echoes in the backyard.

NICOLE

Oh my gosh! This is my favorite! Let's go!

Nicole pulls Harris off of his seat and begins to dance with him in the middle of the area. Nicole tries to make Harris dance certain moves. Harris laughs.

NICOLE

Hey, did you always know you wanted to become a social worker person? ... Or did it kind of just happen?

Harris hesitates and stares back at her.

HARRIS

I- I didn't know what I wanted to be. I started recently, just this past year. I was desperate to do anything- Whatever it took.

Harris looks sadder and slows his dancing.

NICOLE

That late? Jeez! I already know what I am gonna be. I am gonna become a dancer. A famous one too. When I'm older, I wanna move to Paris or maybe New York and dance for hundreds of people. Anyone who wants to see me.

HARRIS

I hope you follow that dream, Nicole.

The parents join them and then soon more of the community gets up to dance with them. Nicole begins to separate and dance with her friends. ROB approaches Harris.

ROB

Harris, right? Hey, I don't think we've fully met yet but I'm really glad you came.

HARRIS

Oh yeah, and I mean congratulations. 20 years is amazing!

ROB

Thank you! And truly thank you for all your hard work in helping us. It has been really tough these past years, but I mean Jason has been such a help with all of it- He really seems like the best of the best, a blessing, truly.

HARRIS

Yeah.

Laura calls Rob over.

ROB

Well, sorry to ramble, but it just means the world to us, and to Nicole and her family too. So I just wanted to come and say thank you.

HARRIS

Yeah... thanks.

Rob leaves and Harris looks back at the family, Nicole smiles at him and the mom mouths thank you. Harris has a sad expression.

CUT TO: HARRIS BURST THROUGH OFFICE DOORS

INT. OFFICE- NIGHT

Harris busts through the door of the vacant office where Jason is sitting alone on the phone. Jason gets up in confusion.

JASON

Yeah I gotta call you back. Yo what the hell is goin' on?

Jason gets up from his desk

JASON

What? Harris, what did you do? What did you tell them?

HARRIS

Nothing. I didn't do anything. I just feel like... This is wrong. They are just... They are just like us. They are people. They are a family... All of them. Yours too!

Harris breathes heavily. Jason scoffs.

HARRIS

They have a child. She has a life ahead of her, she deserves to gro-

JASON

They deserve nothing.

Jason shakes his head.

Harris... it's done. You can't go back now.

HARRIS

What if we just don't do it?

Harris tears up.

JASON

Harris.

HARRIS

I mean it's fine right?

JASON

Harris.

HARRIS

I can help them!

JASON

Harris!

HARRIS

How could you do this? All these years...?
Helping them and-

JASON

Harris shut up.

(Beat)

You knew the kind of work we did when you
signed up for this damn thing. And you KNOW
what they'll do to you-

Jason sighs, and softens his tone. He puts his hand on Harris's
shoulder.

JASON

Harris... I don't want you to get hurt. It'll
be okay. I had the same feelings my first
time, but c'mon.

(Beat)

Do you see that board, Harris?

Jason pulls Harris up and walks him to the rankings on the whiteboard. Looking at JASON-58 and HARRIS- 0

JASON

You know why I'm on top? Because I worked hard. That could be you one day. Don't you see how much you can have.

(beat)

Harris if you want to survive in this world you gotta get yourself together.

Harris sighs looking at the rankings.

CUT TO:OFFICE A FEW DAYS LATER

INT. OFFICE-DAY

The family sits in the lobby of the office building, as Harris walks up to them, smiling.

HARRIS

Hey, Great news guys! We finally found you a housing unit. It is absolutely wonderful. Small but lovely.

Harris says enthusiastically.

HARRIS (CONT'D)

All you guys have to do is just sign the paperwork to finalize it and we can take you there as early as today!

The family becomes excited. Harris leads them to the front desk. He runs back to hand Nicole a bag and takes out a small ballerina jewelry box. When it opens it plays a tune.

HARRIS

I wanted to give you this, not much but just a little gift... for when you become a dancer.

Nicole's face lights up, and traces the designs on the box. Her face becomes more solemn. Harris looks confused.

NICOLE

Harris nods.

You know, Rob and Laura. From the party

NICOLE CONT'D

Well we haven't seen them recently, and no one knows where they went. They said they were going to get a bigger house from your friend, or colleague, but-

HARRIS

I have to go.

NICOLE

What?

HARRIS (VOICE SHAKING)

I just have to finish something, Nicole. I- I'll be back soon. Stay here.

Harris runs angrily out towards the cubicles where he finds Jason relaxing at his desk.

JASON

Woah Woah Woah, Hey cmon man. We're on the same team here. Don't get all angry at me. I did what I had to do.

HARRIS

How could you do this? You killed them. That innocent couple.

JASON

I did not kill them. I mean I sent them somewhere, where someone else may do god knows what but--Harris, buddy. This kinda stuff needs to be done. They don't belong here.

HARRIS

They do belong here. They are human.

JASON

They contaminate our land, our city. Don't you want to be higher on the ranks! Don't you want the money! I'm sorry Harris, really, but there is nothing you can do... I'm not the villain here-

HARRIS

YOU ARE THE VILLAIN. You are hurting these innocent people!

JASON

Harris! Are you that vain? Are you forgetting that YOU signed up for this too? Look where you just sent those people. That house that you're giving them, It's not real! NONE OF THIS IS REAL. **You know that.** Our crew is probably already driving that family to their death at any moment now. Don't think that you can be the hero in this situation when you are just like anyone else. You wanted money, you wanted status, and you got it. Don't blame me for anything.

Harris cries. Jason begins to pack up his things and begins to exit the room. Harris falls to the floor, and when he opens his eyes, Nicole is standing there, grasping her music box. Harris gasps.

NICOLE

Are you going to kill... me?

Beat.

Did we do something wrong?

Can I just say sorry to them? Will they forgive us? I'm sorry Harris. I'm sorry.

Harris begins to shake his head.

HARRIS

I'm sorry too.

NICOLE

Because you have to kill us?

HARRIS

I don't want to.

NICOLE

But you'll get in trouble if you don't.

Harris nods his head, crying.

FLASHBACK:

CUT TO: VIDEO OF WOMAN SMILING.

WOMAN

Welcome to the expulsion project! We are finally celebrating a whopping 35 years in progress to remove pollution across America! Here we work for the true virtues of life, liberty, and happiness. As you all probably know, we have one of you brave souls, remove one group off of our streets to help clean up our cities. Once you have them under your wing, you will send them to our expulsion unit where they can live eternal happiness with God himself. And remember, when you sign our contract, you must obey to completing our task, if not there will be severe consequences on your behalf. We don't like people who don't obey our rules! We've had a wonderful outcome for the past years and of course we hope you will keep with our program for the future. And once again we are just so glad you are here to join us!

She smiles happily and the video fades out.

END OF FLASHBACK.

CUT TO:CLOSE UP OF NICOLE

CUT TO: CLOSE UP OF HARRIS

Harris looks back up at the rankings on the board. Jasons's ranking went from JASON-58 to JASON 60

HARRIS

I- I need to survive.

CUT TO:CLOSE UP OF NICOLE

CUT TO: RANKING BOARD

The board switches from HARRIS- 0 to now HARRIS- 3 and the name has moved up in the ranking.

CUT TO:BLACK

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