

GIRL CLUB

Written by

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INT. HIGH SCHOOL CARPENTRY - FLASHBACK

A group of TEENS work on the frame of a small house. One of them, with broad shoulders and shaggy hair, cuts a beam on a table saw with the ease of practice. She hefts the beam to the house. A classmate hands her a drill.

CARPENTRY STUDENT

Here you go, Lyn.

She smiles, takes the drill, and wields it with confidence.

PREP 1 (O.S.)

Lin's a weird name for a guy.

Another girl is getting a tour of the carpentry room. A knot of girls overdressed for this hang at the back of the group.

PREP 2

All the guys here have weird names.  
I bet one of them's named Truck.

The two girls giggle. Their third, the redheaded definition of prep, keeps looking at Lyn.

ASHLEIGH

I don't know. Lin's kind of a nice name.

Lyn looks content as she works.

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

MARILYN WILLIS (35), all grown up with uniform coveralls and a mullet, looks content as she lays roof tiles. Then her phone rings. Her face pinches, she groans, and then she walks along the roof as she answers.

MARILYN

Hi, Mom.

GLORIA (O.S.)

Where are you? I told you to take today off.

MARILYN

I can't just take off work whenever I want.

GLORIA (O.S.)

You can take off for the Women's Society interview, I'm sure your boss would understand.

MARILYN

I'm the boss today, Mom. Walker's halfway retired.

The other roofers keep working as Marilyn paces the roof.

GLORIA (O.S.)

Even more reason for you to take the day off. I have a uniform for you!

MARILYN

It's just the interview, I don't need--I have to stay at work! I have responsibilities--

GLORIA (O.S.)

Everyone will be in uniform. If they're not, they'll be wearing nicer clothes than anything you have.

MARILYN

I have nice clothes. That outfit for Emma's wedding.

A ROOFER mouths "Mom?" Marilyn nods to him.

GLORIA (O.S.)

Mary, honey, that outfit's just... Well, you'll need the uniform when you get in anyways.

MARILYN

My clothes are masculine, I know. I like--

GLORIA (O.S.)

I know you like women, but I wish you'd dress like one sometimes.

Marilyn stops pacing.

GLORIA (CONT'D)

The Women's Society is the one thing I can't put on my will. Can't you do this for me?

Marilyn sighs. She walks toward the ladder. The roofer notices and shooter her a thumbs up. Marilyn nods in acknowledgement.

MARILYN

Alright. Fine. Just this once.

GLORIA  
Thank you, honey. I'll leave your  
clothes out on your bed. Love you!

Gloria hangs up. Marilyn shoves her phone in her pocket.

INT. MARILYN'S ROOM - DAY

A white tennis outfit lays on the bed. Collared tank top and short, pleated skirt

Marilyn wrinkles her nose at it.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Marilyn avoids her own gaze in the mirror. She keeps her eyes up as she tugs her skirt down. She fiddles with the polo collar of her sleeveless shirt. Her raised arm reveals armpit hair.

Marilyn pins her arm to her side. She slowly moves her arm to test what will hide the hair. When she has the range of motion to open the door, she exits the bathroom.

INT. STAIRCASE/KITCHEN - DAY

Marilyn walks downstairs. GLORIA (70s) watches from her seat in the kitchen, coffee cup in hand. Family portraits spanning decades hang on the wall behind her. All are of women in white, in front of the same church.

GLORIA  
I got the skort version of the  
uniform. I know you, sweetheart.

Marilyn doesn't look at her as she looks for her car keys.

MARILYN  
Yes. Thank you, Mom.

GLORIA  
You look lovely.

Marilyn marches to the front door.

INT/EXT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

Marilyn slams the driver side door of a muddy pickup truck. She rests her forehead on the steering wheel.

The backseat is filled with roofing supplies: a tub of flashing cement, a long hammer, a caulk gun, and the like. The truck's upholstery is dark. Marilyn's uniform looks out of place.

She shoves the key in the ignition. Misses. Metal grinds and she huffs. She gets the key in and cranks the engine.

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - DAY

Marilyn scurries out of her truck towards the building. The only sign that it's a church is behind her-- "SERVICE SUNDAY 10 AM, WOMEN'S SOCIETY MEETING WEDNESDAY"

INT. CHURCH HALLWAY - DAY (CONT.)

Marilyn walks briskly, but slows down until she stops in the middle of the hall. She looks to the side. She looks ahead, at a pair of double doors.

She turns and enters the women's restroom.

INT. CHURCH BATHROOM - DAY

Marilyn leans against the back wall and presses her hands to her face.

She pats her thigh--no pockets. Disappointment.

Marilyn startles when the door opens. In walks EMMA (30), bottle blonde in Sunday best.

EMMA

Marilyn? So Mom finally convinced you to give this a shot.

Emma stands in front of the mirrors and pulls out a tube of lipstick.

MARILYN

Yeah. What about you? Are you... one of the judges.

Emma scoffs. She corrects her makeup with a nail.

EMMA

No. I'm not a member yet.

MARILYN

Really?

EMMA

Of course not! The Society isn't a Sorority. It's for accomplished, adult women. I only just turned thirty.

MARILYN

Oh. Mom didn't bring it up.

Emma mutters:

EMMA

Of course she didn't.

Then she huffs as she caps her lipstick.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Just go home and say you got rejected, Mary. Save everyone the time.

MARILYN

I--

Emma's heels click-clack out before Marilyn can say more.

Marilyn pushes off the wall. She squares her shoulders in the mirror and heads out.

INT. BANQUET HALL - DAY

Marilyn pushes the doors open quietly, surveys the room. Round tables are laid out with a simple brunch, seating five each. A projector puts the word "COOKING" in bold on the far wall.

The women at these tables are dressed like Emma: nice, feminine, non-uniform clothes. All-white is reserved for the judges: they hold tablets and take notes on the potential members around them.

One of the uniformed women catches Marilyn loitering.

SOCIETY WOMAN

Marilyn Willis, I presume?

MARILYN

Uh, yeah. Yes. That's me.

The woman makes a mark with her stylus pen.

SOCIETY WOMAN

Follow me.

Marilyn trails after her to the last open seat. The women there are mid-conversation.

EMMA

--so it's really great to whip up right after work.

EMMA (CONT'D)

So lovely of you to join us! Go on then, introduce yourself. Are you still working at that... what, construction company?

MARILYN

Roofing. I'm in charge of some of our contracts now that the boss is getting older.

The other women at the table show interest. Emma rolls her eyes.

VALERIE

That sounds exciting! I just work in marketing. Is it scary climbing up on roofs?

MARILYN

You get used to it after the first couple weeks.

ISABELLA

I kinda get that. I'm a chemical engineer. I learned my lesson about lab safety pretty early on.

MARILYN

That's cool.

ISABELLA

It's cooler now that I remember to put on gloves.

Emma squirms in her seat. EVE (30s) notices and leans in towards the other three women.

EVE

I'm a programmer. Freelance. Nice to have my own schedule, but taxes are a headache.

VALERIE

They really are. I--

EMMA

We should get back on topic.

Emma looks pointedly at Marilyn. "COOKING" is still on the wall.

MARILYN

Uh. So. What's on the menu this morning?

The brunch options are readily apparent on the table.

VALERIE

It's... It's pretty good!

EVE

Nearly worth getting up this early.

ISABELLA

If I didn't have to drive myself back, I'd be thinking about the mimosas a little harder, y'know?

EMMA

Oh, lucky me, my husband's picking me up.

Emma sips her mimosa.

A chime rings through the room. Every head turns to watch the projector swap over to "PHYSICAL EXAMINATION." ASHLEIGH ROWAN (32) struts to the front of the room, uniform styled with pearls and white pumps. The redheaded definition of prep, all grown up.

Marilyn goes still in her seat.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - FLASHBACK

Teen Ashleigh and Marilyn kiss against the school wall. Marilyn barely touches her, like she'll break something if she's rough. Ashleigh has no such qualms.

Things heat up. The redhead runs a hand up her partner's chest--And jerks away like it burns.

ASHLEIGH

What? I thought you were--



INT. BANQUET HALL - DAY

Marilyn has missed some announcements. Ashleigh finishes with:

ASHLEIGH

If you'll stand for the physical examination, we can get through everyone and start handing out decisions. Everyone in rows, please, one column per table.

Eve gets out of her chair and walks towards the exit. As Marilyn watches, she throws a peace sign over her shoulder.

The candidates stand and get into lines. Emma pushes her way to the front. Marilyn ends up behind her.

Emma glances over her shoulder at Marilyn. Disdain.

Four of the Society members go down the rows, inspecting each candidate. Ashleigh herself inspects the front row. Armed with measuring tapes, they make note of every candidate's hands, arms, legs, waists, chests.

The Society woman grimaces at Marilyn when she reaches her. Marilyn knows what she looks like: A short mullet, an outfit she can't figure out how to move in, unshaved legs and sneakers. The Society woman moves on without touching her.

Emma whispers with Ashleigh as she inspects her. Only Marilyn is close enough to hear:

EMMA

Why'd you put me at that table?

ASHLEIGH

Because you're getting in anyways. An actual candidate deserves a chance away from them.

They titter.

ASHLEIGH (CONT'D)

You were right about your sister.

Marilyn shoves Emma into Ashleigh.

When she regains her footing, Emma watches Marilyn storm out of the room. There is no time for her to think of something to say before the door slams shut.

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - DAY

Marilyn tears off the uniform shirt as she marches to her truck. She opens the driver's side and throws it hard against the other door. She yanks the door shut.

EXT. WILLIS HOUSEHOLD - DAY

The truck door slams shut behind Marilyn. The shirt is in her fist.

INT. MARILYN'S ROOM - DAY

Marilyn gets dressed in her own clothes: A t-shirt that hugs her biceps. Dark jeans. Big buckled belt.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY (CONT.)

Marilyn wets a rag and wipes mud off a pair of Docs Martens. She slicks back her bangs.

INT. MARILYN'S ROOM - DAY (CONT.)

She accessorizes with a key laden carabiner on her beltloop and a red handkerchief in her left back pocket.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Gloria hears Marilyn as she comes down the stairs.

GLORIA

So? How did it go? Going out to celebrate.

Marilyn speeds through the kitchen.

MARILYN

Return these.

Marilyn shoves the bag into her hands.

GLORIA

What? Why? Didn't you get in?

MARILYN

Emma got in.

GLORIA  
Emma-- That's right, her birthday  
was a while back.

MARILYN  
Look. She's the daughter you want,  
not me.

Gloria drops the bag.

GLORIA  
Sweetheart, what do you--?

MARILYN  
I'm goddamn thirty-five, Mom. I'm  
an adult, and I like the adult I  
grew up to be. I'm never gonna be  
the child you want me to be.

GLORIA  
No, sweetheart, you can--

MARILYN  
I know I can, I don't WANT to.

Beat.

GLORIA  
I did my best for you.

MARILYN  
I need space. I'll be back late.  
Have some leftovers, or order out.  
I'll call when it's time for your  
meds.

Marilyn turns toward the door.

GLORIA  
I love you, Mary. I'll always love  
you, you know that?

Marilyn stops with her hand halfway to the doorknob.

MARILYN  
I know, Mom. I love you too. Talk  
to Emma more.

Marilyn leaves the house.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Marilyn rolls her shoulders. She breathes in deep. Then, she cranks the engine and puts on some music. (early/mid aughts rock, a la Electric Six's *Gay Bar*)

Music carries over to:

INT. GAY BAR - DAY

Marilyn is the first customer to sit at the bar today. She nurses a whiskey, neat.

She startles slightly when a hand strokes the handkerchief on her backside.

EVE

Didn't know you were that adventurous. Can't say it's what I'm up for today.

Eve settles in beside Marilyn.

MARILYN

How long have you been here?

EVE

Less time than you. Took me longer to get dressed up.

She looks Marilyn over.

EVE (CONT'D)

You clean up nice, though.

MARILYN

I try to, when I get to pick my own clothes.

EVE

So someone made you go.

MARILYN

My mom.

EVE

I see.

MARILYN

Why'd you go, if you were just gonna leave?

EVE

I already fought my way outta the boy's club. Wanted to see if I was missing much on the other side.

MARILYN

Got your answer, then?

EVE

Yup.

MARILYN

You did wonders with that extra time getting ready, by the way.

Eve is in a leather skirt over tights, crop top under a holographic jacket, bubble gum lipstick to match her hair. Big earrings shaped like strawberry slices.

EVE

Thank you. It's an artform.

She reaches for the hanky again.

EVE (CONT'D)

Did you have your heart set on this?

MARILYN

Not really. It'd be a bonus, not a requirement. I could be convinced on just about anything right now, though.

EVE

Good to hear.

They lean in.

**THE END**