

AFTER LIVES (1ST 12 PGS)

Written by

David C. Velasco

davidcvelasco@aol.com  
417-848-7803

TEASER

FADE IN:

**INT. NICOLET'S APARTMENT - DAY**

NICOLET (early 20s) stands in front of a full-length mirror. Fit and attractive. Hair done up. In one hand a cell phone to her ear. The other holds up a nice blouse still on its hanger, seeing how it might look on her.

NICOLET  
You're coming, right?

ELLIE (V.O.)  
I don't know...

As Ellie goes on, Nicolet moves to a bed. Wears a tank top and short shorts. She lays down the blouse and picks up another shirt on a hanger among others scattered on the bed. Then back to the mirror.

ELLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I mean... gotta work. Told the guys  
I'd help cover. I should be off by  
then but...

**INT. ELLIE'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME**

ELLIE (early 20s). Flat, wet hair. Pear shaped body. No makeup. Towel around her neck covers her chest. Wears polka dot boy shorts.

ELLIE  
When I get there, God knows how  
many delivery orders we'll get.

As Nicolet goes on, Ellie eyes herself in a mirror over a chest of drawers.

NICOLET (V.O.)  
He's your friend too. And it's not  
every day he throws a dinner party  
for just his friends.

ELLIE  
I know. But... other than you and  
him, I won't know anyone else  
there.

**INTERCUT BETWEEN NICOLET AND ELLIE**

Nicolet goes back to the bed. Selects another garment. Back to the mirror. Does this several times as they speak.

NICOLET  
There's Albert. And me. Am I not  
enough!

She lets out a laugh.

ELLIE  
(half laughing)  
Yeah. But...

NICOLET  
He gave you an invite, right?

ELLIE  
Yeah, but he invited others too.  
He's always surrounded by other...  
people. Probably invited those one  
friends...

NICOLET  
Which friends?

ELLIE  
Those... always going to the best  
clubs... walking fashion show...

NICOLET  
You mean Breanna or Cam? Bet she  
got wind of it and invited herself.  
I know they're friends and all but  
he'd never hang around with her and  
the rest of the Chichi Posse.

ELLIE  
Good to know. Doesn't seem the  
type.

NICOLET  
Damn right. Like us he's got class.  
And you and me as his guest means  
we are dope on his list.

ELLIE  
Yeah. Nice to know he thinks  
about... us.

NICOLET  
Damn right! We're quite the pair.

ELLIE  
True but... I'll see how it goes.  
At work.

NICOLET

Don't make me come over and drag  
you there.

Ellie gets serious looking at her reflection.

ELLIE

I... I won't. I'll a... catch up  
with you latter.

NICOLET

At the party right? Sure he'd love  
to see you too.

ELLIE

We'll see. Take care.

Nicolet smacks a kiss into her phone.

Ellie hangs up. Steps back and eyes herself in the mirror.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

If he saw me in these he'd run  
away.

Nicolet holds up another garment. Grimaces.

NICOLET

Yew! He saw me in this he'd run  
away.

ACT 1

FADE IN:

**INT. HERÓN'S LOFT - NIGHT**

Modest sized loft full of well dressed-people. Most have drinks. CONVERSATIONS. LOW LAUGHS. Long table in the middle set for a dinner party.

Nicolet stands next to the table, wine glass in hand. Well dressed and groomed. Oozes fashion taste.

She stares at HERÓN (mid 20s), 6-foot, chiseled face, olive skin. The kind of man who turns heads. He's in the kitchen preparing food while she undresses him with her eyes. He chats with another guest.

PEARSON (O.S.)

Can I get you some?

Nicolet snaps out of her visual peccadilloes. Puts on a smile.

NICOLET

Scuse me?

PEARSON (late 20s) holds wine glass too. Tilts it towards her glass.

PEARSON

Wine?

NICOLET

Oh. No. I'm...

She stares into her EMPTY GLASS.

Puts on a smile to cover her gaff.

NICOLET (CONT'D)

Ready for another!

She lets out a small laugh then Pearson.

PEARSON

Our host keeps the good stuff near the stove. I'll get it.

He moves off.

NICOLET

I'll come with.

She follows behind. As they approach the kitchen Herón chops scallions as he listens to ALBERT (mid 20s). Not a bad looking guy. A little extra padding around his waist.

ALBERT  
...but she'll be back next week.

Nicolet's eyes lock onto Herón's as he speaks in a clear, strong voice.

HERÓN  
That's great. Surprised a sweet girl went for a guy like you.

He and Albert laugh. Herón notices Pearson and Nicolet.

HERÓN (CONT'D)  
Pearson. Nikki. Refills?

Pearson is about to answer when Nicolet steps between him and Herón.

NICOLET  
You bet! The Sangiovese you chose goes like water.

Her mile wide smile show off pearl white teeth.

HERÓN  
Thanks Nikki. You two help yourself. I have more on the way. Ellie's bringing it.

NICOLET  
Great! Had to convince her not to stay at work tonight so she could show up.

Shunned, Pearson gets more wine.

Herón turns to the stove and stirs a small pot.

HERÓN  
Like you she's a hard worker. But, my father always told me, all work and no play--

NICOLET  
Can make life boring!

Both laugh.

LOUD KNOCKING AT FRONT DOOR.

HERÓN

Can someone get that. Should be more wine.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

We're saved!

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Reinforcements!

One of the guests opens the front door. Ellie stands on the other side. Ball cap, oversized russet tee shirt, jeans. Little make up. Has that tomboy mystique radiating from her. A canvas grocery bag hangs from each hand.

She strides in and towards the kitchen weaving through the crowd.

Nicolet meets her half way. Takes one of the bags.

NICOLET

Hey girl! Glad you came.

ELLIE

Yeah. You're quite convincing. And he put in an order.

Both let out a laugh and enter the kitchen. Herón grabs the other bag.

As Nicolet and he set the bags down and pulls out bottles:

HERÓN

How's it down at the co-op tonight?

ELLIE

Not... too busy. Emilio and Crane got things covered and... this was the last delivery.

Albert says his hellos.

Ellie returns a hello then eyes the stove. Takes off her cap. Draws in a breath.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

That smells great!

Herón moves back to the stove.

HERÓN

Thank you. Cilantro sauce for the marinated steak tips.

(MORE)

HERÓN (CONT'D)  
And for the non-carnivores herb  
crusted cauliflower steaks.

Ellie stands in awe as Nicolet comes up.

NICOLET  
Told you he'd whip up something  
special.

HERÓN  
Only the best for my friends!

ALBERT  
That Cordon Bleu place really paid  
off.

HERÓN  
Yes. But must thank my mother for  
giving me that love of cooking.

NICOLET  
I'll have to thank her!

Everyone chuckles. Ellie looks around at how everyone's  
dressed.

ELLIE  
I guess I'm a... bit underdressed.

NICOLET  
(hugging her)  
No! You look fab!

HERÓN  
She's right. You look great.

His smile put a big one on her face.

BREANNA (O.S.)  
As does our host.

All look at BREANNA (mid 20), wearing a dress so tight and  
short as to leave little to the imagination. Has a glass of  
wine also.

BREANNA (CONT'D)  
Hello Nikki. And a...

ELLIE  
Ellie. Hi.

Nicolet gives Breanna a forced smile as her hello. Ellie  
gives her a half smile.



HERÓN

Thank you Bree. Nice outfit yourself.

BREANNA

This I got when me and Cam went with our friends to Cancun last summer. A Chanel, mind you. Great price.

HERÓN

You can get some nice stuff overseas.

Ellie and Nicolet give each other a look.

BREANNA

Oh, did I ever show you the pics from out trip.

HERÓN

No.

She set down her wine and produces a cell from a small, matching handbag hanging from her shoulder.

As she rubs up against Herón and speaks she shows him various pics. All of which show her in one skimpy bikini after another.

BREANNA (O.S.)

Gave me a chance to dust off some old swimsuits of mine. They have the most wonderful beaches there on the Yucatan.

Nicolet lets out a small huff as Ellies eyes go wide.

HERÓN

And Mayan ruins. Parents took me there on our way back from a summer in Argentina, visiting his folks. Did you get there? Fascinating civilization!

BREANNA

Ah... no. Was on our agenda but tell me about them...

Nicolet nods to Ellie, suggesting they move off. They drift away as Herón tells Breanna about the Mayans.

NICOLET

No. Effing. Shame.

ELLIE

Yeah. Tell me... about it.

NICOLET

That's a bull-Chanel if I ever saw one. And visible thong lines! Zero class.

Ellie looks back. Breanna's nodding and smiling as Herón goes on while he continues preparing dinner.

Ellie has sadness in her eyes.

**INT. HERÓN'S LOFT - LATER**

All are at the table. Herón sits at the head. Ellie and Nichole sit on one side next to him. Albert and Breanna sit on the other.

From down the table:

GUEST 1

Great meal there Herón. Outdid yourself again.

BREANNA

I'll second that! No wonder Napoli's always full.

HERÓN

We all work hard in the kitchen there. The wait staff, bartenders, meat cutters. Them too.

BREANNA

Suspect you'll be head chef soon.

Nicolet and Ellie exchange a glance.

HERÓN

(slight laugh)

We'll see. Have to make sous chef first.

ALBERT

Open your own place downtown here instead.

BREANNA

What a great idea!

HERÓN

That's my dream.

BREANNA

I'll have to reserve a permanent table then.

HERÓN

Ha ha. Someday. But, for now, let's take it one day at a time. Enjoy our youth.

Various people say "Here here!" or "I'll drink to that!"

He hoists his glass to toast, then takes a sip. Breanna does the same.

Nicolet cast her an envious glance.

NICOLET

Napoli's is a great place. Great sponsor of ours!

HERÓN

I heard that. And awesome job you do over at Simple Haute. Love your articles.

NICOLET

Thanks. Doing our best to promote great places downtown here. Restaurants. Shops. Clubs. Give advice on how to live one's best in style and taste and help people...  
(at Breanna)  
Avoid knockoff designer clothes.

Breanna gives her a cold stare.

ALBERT

Thank God we get people at the Deli who just want to fill up! We'd go out of business selling fifty dollar steaks.

Laughs from all around.

Ellie looks over at Herón.

He catches her stare. Smiles at her.

She returns one then goes back to eating.

HERÓN

About the only thing I don't like about cooking is cleaning all the dishes!

ALBERT  
Should a used paper plates!

HERÓN  
And cups? Wine like this would have  
jumped out of it!

Another wave of laughs.

ELLIE  
You know... I... I can stick around  
and help clean up. I mean... the  
least I... I can do after all this.

HERÓN  
That's sweet of you. And I accept!

NICOLET  
Well... not gonna let my bestie  
take on the whole thing. I can  
pitch in.

She and Ellie exchange wide smiles.

HERÓN  
Wow! How about you Albert?

ALBERT  
As much as I appreciate this feast,  
I spend way too much time at work  
cleaning up after other people, let  
alone myself.

More laughs.

NICOLET  
How about it Bree? Help up work off  
this feast?

BREANNA  
Ah... love too but meeting up Cam  
and some friends.

She turns to Herón, places a hand on his arm.

BREANNA (CONT'D)  
You understand, don't you?

HERÓN  
Of course. These two will be more  
than enough.

Nicolet and Breanna give each other that "you bitch" stare.