

The Interview

written by

Ksenia Naughton & Brian Naughton

INT. IMPACT MEDIA GROUP - WOMEN'S BATHROOM - DAY

ANNA (25), a classic beauty with immense strength behind her eyes, stands in front of the mirror taking long controlled breaths - in and out. She stares deeply at her reflection.

ANNA
(speaks with an accent)
You got this.

BEGIN FLASHBACK MONTAGE:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Anna sits at a cramped table typing away on her laptop. We see she is applying for jobs. She pauses to gaze out the window - it's a beautiful day, not a cloud in the sky.

She returns her attention to her computer and continues to type ever more quickly. She fills out the form. The last page asks if she will ever require visa sponsorship.

Anna's face dims. She answers "yes". She exhales deeply and hits APPLY on a Digital Content Writer position. She shuts her laptop and cradles her mug with both hands.

INT. OFFICE SPACE - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Anna is ushered into an office by the RECEPTIONIST (20's).

INT. OFFICE SPACE - RECEPTION AREA - LATER

Anna walks out of the office shaking her head.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

A new job application is open on her laptop with the same question about requiring sponsorship. She answers "yes" and hits APPLY for a Fashion Blogger position.

INT. FASHION MAGAZINE EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT - DAY

A MAGAZINE EDITOR (40's) shakes his head and hands Anna's resume back to her.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Anna aggressively clicks "yes" on the sponsorship question and hits APPLY on a Social Media Content Creator position.

INT. SHARED WORK SPACE - DAY

THREE MARKETING MANAGERS (20's) flash different social media platforms in front of Anna, one after the other in quick succession. Anna nods unconvincingly along with them.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Anna hits apply over and over again after replying "yes" to the same question about sponsorship in the end of each application.

She receives email after email from companies stating that they are moving forward with other candidates more suited for the positions.

END FLASHBACK MONTAGE.

INT. IMPACT MEDIA GROUP - WOMEN'S BATHROOM - DAY

Anna takes one last deep breath and marches out of the bathroom.

INT. IMPACT MEDIA GROUP - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

JOEL (40's), wearing a suit that has not been tailored to his short stature, looks over Anna's resume while two other interviewers, ALICE and OLIVIA, both in their 30's, sit idly.

Projected onto the 70-inch TV is Anna's resume. It's so large we can read it. There's a section of awards she's earned which goes on and on.

Anna smiles while, just out of view, she white-knuckles her armrests.

JOEL

Your education background is very impressive.

ANNA

Thank you. I received full scholarships to cover both of my degrees.

JOEL
Oh, really?

ANNA
Yes. I would never have been able
to afford them on my own.

Joel skims through her resume some more.

JOEL
Was studying in Paris different
from here?

ANNA
Each country is unique in its own
way.

JOEL
Your first degree is in management.
What made you decide to get your
masters in creative writing?

ANNA
Well, I am very passionate about
writing. I have always loved to
tell stories and found that writing
was the best way for me to do that.

JOEL
I see. So, are you thinking to stay
here? In the U.S. I mean?

ANNA
I hope to, yes.

JOEL
And will you need to get a sponsor
for your visa?

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

ERIN, (late 30's), buttoned up and well put together so as
not to be overlooked by her male counterparts, fingers
through a folder.

Anna looks around at the DIPLOMAS and ACCOLADES on the walls
while Erin finishes reading. Erin tosses the folder on the
desk.

ERIN

As for the majority of people who are on their student visas, your best bet to gaining employment and ultimately being able to stay in the country would be to find a company that would sponsor your visa.

Anna scribbles in a notebook.

ANNA

Okay.

ERIN

Your chances are not high. Things are complicated. Especially now, with the current administration.

ANNA

I see.

ERIN

I don't want to sound discouraging, I just want you to be realistic. You also don't have too much time left before your legal status expires. Have you already started job hunting?

END FLASHBACK.

INT. IMPACT MEDIA GROUP - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Anna clears her throat.

ANNA

Yes.

Everyone exchanges glances. Anna grabs a glass of water and gulps it till it's almost empty.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Maybe I just wasn't born in the right country. The stork made a mistake.

Anna chuckles nervously but no one else seems amused.

ANNA (CONT'D)

At least, this is how I've felt many times. And I certainly don't regret leaving.

(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

Although I am not going to lie, the immigration system in this country isn't too welcoming either.

JOEL

Right, right.

Joel motions to Alice.

ALICE

As the head of the marketing department here, I would be overseeing a lot of the day-to-day functions for this position. What would your previous employer say about you as a worker?

ANNA

They would say that I am hard-working, detail oriented and that I can be trusted with projects on a tight deadline.

ALICE

Can you talk a little bit about how you handle stressful situations?

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. ANNA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Anna's numerous bills are scattered across the floor: immigration lawyer bill, medical exam bill, electric bill.

She is curled up in bed, sobbing.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. IMPACT MEDIA GROUP - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

ANNA

Stressful situations are always going to pop up. What I usually try to do is take an objective step back to calmly assess the situation and devise a strategy to solve the problem to ensure it doesn't happen again.

Alice scribbles a note.

ALICE
Very concise.

Alice looks to Olivia.

OLIVIA
What would you say your biggest
weakness is?

Anna takes a moment to think. She smiles.

ANNA
I am a perfectionist and sometimes
it causes extra work for me because
I want things to be perfect. Also,
I am usually very honest when asked
about things and some people might
consider that rude.

Olivia jots something into a notebook.

Joel, Alice and Olivia exchange glances.

JOEL
I have one more question. If you
were an animal, what would it be?

Anna looks at all of them trying to understand if Joel
serious or not. Alice is in her phone, not reacting. Olivia
looks through her notes.

ANNA
A cat, I guess.

Joel smiles.

JOEL
Thank you for coming in, Anna.
We'll be letting people know our
decision in the next week or so.

Anna shakes Joel's hand.

ANNA
Thank you.

INT. IMPACT MEDIA GROUP - WOMEN'S BATHROOM - LATER

Anna rushes into the stall and starts VOMITING. She composes
herself and takes a couple of breathes. As she is about to
flush, she hears two familiar VOICES enter the bathroom.

ALICE

(O.S.)

Man, where do these people come from? Can we really not find one single person suitable for this job?

Anna listens intently from inside the stall.

OLIVIA

(O.S.)

I don't know, that last girl seemed to be qualified. You didn't think so?

ALICE

(O.S.)

She would need us to sponsor her. Besides, maybe her written English is good but her accent...

Alice giggles.

OLIVIA

(O.S.)

I suppose you're right. We should get back before this next interview starts.

ALICE

(O.S.)

Yeah, you're right. God I hate doing these things.

They laugh.

Before they can leave, Anna FLUSHES the toilet, alerting Alice and Olivia to her presence.

The stall unlocks and the door swings open. Anna steps out and proceeds to the sink. Alice and Olivia are frozen in the corner.

Anna finishes washing her hands and, before grabbing a towel, gives Alice and Olivia a knowing look.

Anna returns her attention to her reflection before exiting and leaving the two of them alone.

INT. IMPACT MEDIA GROUP - RECEPTION - DAY

Anna makes her way back into the reception area where BESS (20's), bored, sits at her desk, indifferently staring through her monitor.

ANNA
Sorry, I just forgot my bag.

BESS
I was wondering who's that was.

Bess notices Anna's eyes are red from crying.

Anna grabs her backpack from a nearby chair.

BESS (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Hey.

Anna turns to Bess.

BESS (CONT'D)
This place isn't anything special.
Don't be discouraged.

Anna makes an effort to smile, but her eyes fill with tears. Bess hands Anna a box of tissues and she promptly wipes her eyes.

ANNA
Thank you.

BESS
You know, I print all the applicants resumes and I happened to see yours. You're way too qualified for this position anyway.

Anna finishes drying her eyes and sniffles.

ANNA
Yeah, right.

BESS
Keep your head up.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Anna pushes through the doors and onto a city street. She waits for a break in the foot traffic before filing in line and moving with the crowd. She stops for a moment, closes her eyes and breathes. The sun shines bright on her face.

RINGTONE.

Anna reaches into her backpack and answers her cell phone.

ANNA

Hello?

(listens)

Oh hello! It's nice to hear from you.

(listens)

Yes, I am still interested in the position.

(listens)

Thursday at eleven works perfectly for me.

(listens)

Great, I'm looking forward to it.

(listens)

Thank you! See you Thursday!

Smiling ear to ear, Anna cuts through the passerby's and makes her way across the street.

THE END.