

INT. THE WATERHOLE - NIGHT

CHLOE, PIERCE(G)

CHLOE IS IMPRESSED BY PIERCE

Pierce delivers a cocktail to Chloe.

PIERCE

I won't tell you the name of this cocktail. It's enough to make a sailor blush.

CHLOE

(casual)

The best ones always have colourful names.

She sips her drink.

PIERCE

You're clearly a hard woman to shock.

CHLOE

Please - I've seen it all. Unlike you, who's spent too much of your life in boardrooms.

PIERCE

Guilty as charged. And I regret that sometimes - wasting my younger days working when I could have been having fun.

CHLOE

Well, now's your chance to make up for it.

PIERCE

I hope so...

CHLOE

Do you have any other regrets?

Pierce thinks for a moment.

PIERCE

I was on the verge of sealing a lucrative deal with a ski resort in Japan last year, and at the last minute --

Chloe loudly feigns yawning.

CHLOE

Please, you're putting me to sleep. Surely you've got a more juicy story than that.

Pierce just laughs, charmed at her cheek.

PIERCE

How about you? What are your deep dark regrets?

CHLOE

(growing pensive)

Actually, I do have one. About my brother, Tyler.

PIERCE

Bad blood?

CHLOE

I don't know... I wasn't there for him when he needed me.

PIERCE

Is that how you operate? When things get difficult you run the other way?

CHLOE

Maybe.

They gaze at each other. Mutually drawn in.

CHLOE

You're pretty perceptive.

Pierce makes light of the compliment.

PIERCE

Gives me the edge when I'm dealing with morally ambiguous tycoons.

Chloe checks the time.

CHLOE

Well, I suppose I should go and check in with my boss. He keeps messaging to make sure I'm keeping you happy.

PIERCE

Well, you can tell him that as far as I'm concerned,
you're doing a stellar job.

On the spark.

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CHLOE, PIERCE(G)

PIERCE SHOCKS CHLOE WITH A PROPOSITION

Chloe is giving Pierce a personal tour of the bar.

CHLOE

Would you like a drink? We've got some great Riesling
from Eden Valley...

PIERCE

Wine expert, are you?

CHLOE

My mum works at a cellar door in the Barossa.

Pierce is intrigued.

PIERCE

I own vineyards there.

CHLOE

Excellent pinot noir and Grenache.

PIERCE

Anything that could be improved?

Chloe hesitates - but decides to be honest.

CHLOE

Last year you pushed back your harvest dates.
Consumers felt ripped off.

PIERCE

You've done your research.

CHLOE

Terese asked me to attend your every need.

Pierce pulls a business card out of his pocket.

PIERCE

Then maybe you can tell me about this?

Chloe sees it – it's a card for her paid dating service. She freaks - but tries to hide it.

CHLOE

Where did you find that?

PIERCE

On the floor of the lift.

CHLOE

It's not associated with the hotel.

PIERCE

So you don't know anything about it?

CHLOE

(deflecting)

Why don't we go back to the hotel to see the ballroom...?

Pierce regards her for a minute.

PIERCE

Do you know how I made my money?

CHLOE

You're really smart and you work hard?

PIERCE

And I'm good at reading people. I get hunches about them. You noticed that yourself, at dinner last night.

CHLOE

(nervous)

I did...

Pierce calmly takes his phone and dials the number on the card.

CHLOE

What are you doing?

PIERCE

Following a hunch...

SFX: her phone starts ringing.

PIERCE

(re: phone call)

Still claiming you know nothing about this business?

There's an awkward silence as Pierce stares Chloe down. Busted.

CHLOE

Okay, I'm the one dating for money. But please don't hold this against Lassiters.

Pierce smiles.

PIERCE

Don't be silly. This doesn't upset me.

Chloe's relief.

PIERCE

There is one thing I would like to do however.

CHLOE

What's that?

PIERCE

Hire you.

He gazes at her. Wanting her.

CHLOE

I've promised not to date hotel guests.

PIERCE

That's a shame. Because I was hoping for more than a date. In fact, I'd like you to join me in my suite.

Chloe is momentarily hypnotised by him, but breaks his gaze.

CHLOE

It would complicate things.

PIERCE

I don't think it has to be complicated...

CHLOE

Pierce. Behave.

He fixes her with his gaze.

PIERCE

I'll make it well worth your while if you accept.

Chloe is stunned as she processes the implication of his words.

PIERCE

If you do decide to join me, I'm in 702. I'm a night owl,
I'll be awake for a few more hours at least.

He smiles - cool, calm and confident.

PIERCE

Hopefully I'll see you later.

He exits, leaving Chloe alone - spinning out as she contemplates the astonishing proposal.