

THE LIFE COACH

BY

MICHAEL C. BRYAN

Michael C. Bryan
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Tel: 917-514-0758

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TEASER

INT. MIRANDA'S HOME - HALLWAY - 1977 - FLASHBACK

MIRANDA FLOWERS, adorable, cherub-cheeked 8-year-old, cautiously steals down the hallway.

She stops outside of the bathroom door.

LITTLE MIRANDA

Mom?

CATHY (O.S.)

One sec, honey.

A FUMBLING sound -- a MOAN -- then the door opens a tiny crack. CATHY FLOWERS, 45, Miranda's mother, pokes her head out.

Miranda's eyes WIDEN in fear -- Cathy looks like a ghost. Horrible. Terrifying. White as a sheet.

CATHY

I need you to go get your father,
okay Lovey?

Miranda NODS and her eyes fall to the bathroom floor behind her mother -- its covered in blood-drenched rags.

So much blood.

CATHY

He's over at Virginia's. He's
helping her fix her boiler. It's
always breaking down. Can you go
get him Lovey?

Miranda's eyes fix on the PEWTER NECKLACE swinging like a guillotine from her mother's sweaty neck, the inscription reading:

Faith Moves Mountains

EXT. SMALL TOWN STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Miranda RUNS like the wind past ranch-style houses under a grey, overcast sky -- past a mailbox: *V. DiCicco.*

(CONTINUED)

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EXT. VIRGINIA DICICCO'S HOUSE - BACKYARD

Miranda runs up to the back screen door, SWEAT ROLLING down her tiny terrified face.

Through the mesh she spies her father, DARREN FLOWERS (crew cut, Dad next door type) perched between the bare legs of VIRGINIA DICICCO (late-20's, Italian Goddess with long black hair).

Virginia's skirt is hiked past her knees. Her lips are parted and she whispers:

VIRGINIA

Oh, Darren. Yes. Yes.

INT. UCLA BATHROOM - MORNING - BACK TO THE PRESENT

Miranda SPLASHES cold water on her face. She looks at her 45-year-old reflection in the mirror. She SNEERS.

She's a pretty woman - pert nose, smooth skin - but right now? She looks like shit.

She reaches into her purse and pulls out a bottle.

INSERT: XANAX label with a happy face sticker that taunts her:

Are we having fun yet?

MIRANDA

Fuckin' blast Mr. Smiley Face.
Just a fuckin' blast.

She swallows three Xanax dry and GRIMACES.

FREEZE of Miranda popping the Xanax.

On the screen the TITLE CARD:

THE LIFE COACH

INT. UCLA CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Inside sit FOUR VERY STOIC PEOPLE at a large table.

In front of each is a MASSIVE DOCUMENT -- so big it could stop a bus.

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At the head of the table sits Darren Flowers, Miranda's father, now in his late-60s. His face is aged, lined -- guilt has done a number on him.

Miranda BLUSTERS in.

MIRANDA

Sorry I'm late. Traffic was a bitch. Swear the guy in front of me was doing drugs while driving. People are fucking insane I swear.

She PLOPS down into an empty chair and glances at Virginia across from her.

Virginia looks damn good for 74. Short grey hair, designer glasses, tight blouse.

VIRGINIA

(motions to giant manuscript)
Amazing work, Miranda.

MIRANDA

(brrr)
Thanks, Virginia.

Miranda is decidedly cold with Virginia. Clearly what happened in the past isn't entirely in the past.

VIRGINIA

You know I've always been a champion of your work.

Miranda raises her eyebrow -- "Really?"

VIRGINIA

(moving along)
I want you to meet Brittany, our newest staff member. As you know to get your Ph.D. it must be approved unanimously by all members of your committee. Brittany's a big fan of your lectures.

BRITTANY TOSSLE (20s) -- gorgeous, intense, Hispanic with eyes that could cut steel.

BRITTANY

Parts of this are brilliant.
Fucking brilliant.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIRANDA

Wow. Thank you.

BRITTANY

How you weave trauma research with your own battles with depression and anxiety -- it's a great dissertation.

MIRANDA

That's so nice of you. Can I clone you and put you in my pocket?

BRITTANY

(wary smile)

But it's up and down, isn't it? On the one hand it's brilliant, but on the other hand --

Brittany hesitates. Miranda EXHALES.

Miranda's a testy, anxious woman. Her manner is both 'love me' and 'fuck off'. It's jarring.

MIRANDA

What? Just say it.

BRITTANY

Do you really believe your mom's suicide was an accident?

MIRANDA

(firm)

Yes. She was crazy, but she wasn't that crazy.

BRITTANY

Even though she was confirmed as having borderline personality disorder and bipolar 2 traits? And tried to kill herself twice before the incident?

MIRANDA

Well, nobody's perfect, right?

Miranda LAUGHS LOUDLY. No one else does.

Brittany steals a glance at Darren who sits at the opposite end of the table. His face is unreadable.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BRITTANY

The fact you keep saying it was an accident worries me. She meant to kill herself. It's very clear. I mean, I'm sorry to say it like that but you have to face the facts Miranda. You can't save anyone unless you save yourself.

Miranda turns to her father.

MIRANDA

You're just gonna sit there, right? Like you always do? Or is this gonna be like one of those uncomfortable dinners where you and I stare at each other while Virginia picks at her salad?

VIRGINIA

Miranda, this isn't the time or the place for this.

MIRANDA

You didn't feel back about going there when my mother...

OFF of Virginia's dark, hurt look Miranda gains control.

MIRANDA

FINE. I won't cause a scene. God forbid we should get real.

(back to Brittany)

Can I see your notes? Hopefully it's not too many. As you can see it's time I graduated and left my happy little family here and moved on.

Miranda SNORTS a laugh. Brittany ignores her and slides the manuscript across the table her.

Miranda leafs through the dissertation.

There are RED MARKS on literally every. Single. Page. Miranda looks up at Brittany, tears in her eyes.

BRITTANY

I wanted to approve it. I did! It started off with a bang but then it became more and more detached.

(leans into Miranda)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

BRITTANY (CONT'D)

I really wanted you to bleed on the page, Miranda.

MIRANDA

You hear that, dad? She wanted me to bleed on the page. Speaking of bleeding...

(with a glance at
Darren)

You think Mom's suicide was an accident, right?

DARREN

There's no evidence it wasn't.

MIRANDA

There's no evidence it wasn't. That's all you ever say.

(back to Brit)

So what do you suggest, Brit?

BRITTANY

(leaning back)

I can't pass you. I wanted to but I can't. It's just not ready. I'm sorry but you're not ready.

MIRANDA

You do know I spent 11 years on this.

BRITTANY

(slap of a laugh)

Really?

(realizes Miranda is
serious)

No, I didn't. Well, the edit will only take you a few months. And then you can graduate!

Miranda perfectly mimics Brittany's slap of a LAUGH.

MIRANDA

Fuck it will. This is two years of edits. In case you haven't noticed I'm not a millennial like you.

(under her breath)

Fuckwad.

DARREN

(sharp as fuck)

Miranda.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

BRITTANY

It's okay. I've been called worse.
This sucks, Miranda. I know. But
I'm not out to get you, okay? I
seriously admire your work and
wanna help.

Miranda EXHALES loudly.

DARREN

Brittany has made some very good
points, Miranda. You need to get
control of your emotions and
listen to what she has to say
after you apologize for calling
her a -- what was it?

BRITTANY

Fuckwad, sir.

DARREN

Yes. That.

DEAD SILENCE in the room as Miranda puts her hands on
both sides of the manuscript.

MIRANDA

Know what? Since you and my father
seem to know so much --

And then she SHOVES it across the table straight at
Brittany.

MIRANDA

-- you change it.

The document HITS a small snag in the table and FLIES
through the air -- where it SLAMS Brittany *square* in the
chest.

MIRANDA

That enough blood for ya?

Miranda SNATCHES up her bag and RUNS out of the room.

Virginia jumps up and BOLTS after her.

VIRGINIA

(to Darren)
I told you she wasn't ready.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Miranda moves at a fast clip towards a stairwell. She POPS two more Xanax as she PUSHES open a door.

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Virginia is right behind her, followed by Darren.

DARREN

Miranda! Get back here and apologize to Brittany.

Miranda moves FAST down the stairs.

DARREN

If you don't I'll be forced to expel you. And cut you off.

Miranda stops -- turns and faces him. Her eyes are dark, hurt.

MIRANDA

You know I live off of that money...

(a taunt)

Daddy.

DARREN

What kind of choice do I have? You assaulted a faculty member.

MIRANDA

She assaulted me with that bleeding on the page crap.

DARREN

She didn't assault you.

MIRANDA

The ONLY thing I asked outta you before I enrolled in this precious fucking program of yours was that you protect me. And you fed me right to that bitch. Jung was right. History does repeats itself.

VIRGINIA

George Santayana said that actually. Not Carl Jung.

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MIRANDA

Oh, shut up Virginia. You handed my mother the razors just like he did. How do you live with yourself?

VIRGINIA

I've made my peace with my demons. But this isn't about me, is it?

MIRANDA

I'm outta here.

Miranda runs down the steps and is gone.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VENICE - AFTERNOON

Miranda rides on the back of a bright red motorcycle. It careens to a screeching HALT near a busy intersection in WeHo.

The driver is an OLDER SURFER DUDE with short grey hair and tats all over his muscles-on-muscles.

Miranda eases off of the motorcycle. Her hair is huge and unruly.

MIRANDA

Thanks, Snake.

SNAKE

Sure you don't want to come over for fish tacos?

MIRANDA

I'm sure your sister wives are lovely but I'm afraid the answer is still no. Even if they do make a mean guacamole.

They KISS. He stares into her eyes.

SNAKE

You really do have the saddest eyes.

MIRANDA

(deadpan)
Stop. Please. You're so sweet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SNAKE

What? You stood on the beach last night crying you felt alone and lost! You actually scared some people.

MIRANDA

It was the weed.

SNAKE

It wasn't the weed. It was this.

He touches her chest, her heart.

SNAKE (CONT'D)

(horribly earnest)

Let me fix your broken heart.

MIRANDA

Oh, Jesus. I'm still digging sand outta my vag. Plus that crap with my father happened over six months ago. It's done. Now go save some other failed middle-aged wannabe shrink, okay?

SNAKE

You're a complex woman, you know that?

MIRANDA

First time I've heard that in oh, lemme see - three hours?

SNAKE

(letting it go)

Call me sometime, Ms. Kerouac.

He PEELS off. Miranda watches him drive away.

SOCHAD™! (O.S.)

(booming)

Are you ready for a change?!

Miranda YELPS and nearly falls backwards.

SOCHAD™! (O.S.) (CONT'D)

My name's SoChad!™ and I'm a certified spiritual life coach in Orange County. I can help anyone find their true calling. Yes, I'm that gifted.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Miranda steps backwards and looks up. She sees a VIRTUAL BILLBOARD boasting the glowing face of SoChad™!

SoChad!™'s somewhere in his late-40s/early-60s (thank you Botox). His hair, face and tan are fake, fake, fake.

SOCHAD™!

I was just like you. Partying,
doing drugs, going to Burning Man.
Don't get me wrong. Burning Man
was awesome. But I wasn't happy.
Know what I lacked?

MIRANDA

A better haircut?

SOCHAD™!

Clarity. Focus. A new narrative.
My name is SoChad!™ and I'm a
certified spiritual life coach
with the Orange County board of
regionally certified spiritual
life coaches.

SoChad!™ LEANS back in his chair -- folds his hands over his chest.

SOCHAD™!

I know you're having a hard time.
I know you're feeling lost. But
listen to me. It's gonna be okay.
It is. Do you believe that?

MIRANDA

I want to.

SOCHAD™!

I know you want to.

Miranda frowns.

SOCHAD™!

Here's my email, Insta, Snapchat
and Twitter. The secret password
for my very private Facebook page
is "SoCHAD™!" Make sure to use the
exclamation point. And the
trademark. All you have to do is
submit a simple online application
and then meet me in person. If
you're selected, I promise to
change your life *foreverrrrr*.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

When SoChad™! says 'foreverrrrr' the screen turns psychedelic with PULSATING LIGHTS and 60s music.

SOCHAD™!

So cool.

All of his social media info FLASHES on the screen.

SOCHAD™!

You're taking a snap, right?

SoChad™! strikes a pose. Miranda takes a SNAP.