

EXT. BROADWAY CAFE - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

Charlotte enters.

INT. BROADWAY CAFE - NIGHT

The café is quiet, CUSTOMERS filling only a few tables.

Charlotte, the only waitress there, reads behind the counter, keeping an eye on her customers before getting back to a worn copy of *A Christmas Carol*. Manager GARY (40's) walks over.

GARY

Don't you read that same book every Christmas?

CHARLOTTE

Yes, that's how good it is.

Gary chuckles and moves on as SID (late 60's) enters. He's brawny, flannel-wearing, white-bearded and frankly, Santa-esque. Charlotte lights up.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

**START →**

Sid!

Sid crosses to the counter and sits.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

I didn't expect to see you all weekend. You said you had plans.

SID  
I do. I'm here to pick up a pie.

CHARLOTTE  
You're an old tease, you know that?

SID  
Nah, just old. But I have time for  
a cup of coffee if you'll have me.

CHARLOTTE  
Always.

Charlotte pours a cup as Gary walks over with a boxed pie.

GARY  
Chocolate Pecan, freshly baked.

SID  
Thank you, Gary.

GARY  
Good to see you, Sid.

Placing the pie down, Gary leaves. Charlotte leans into Sid.

CHARLOTTE  
So, are you really retiring?

SID  
(shrugs)  
Like I said, I'm old.

CHARLOTTE  
Who's going to come in here and  
tell me stories about being  
backstage on Broadway?

SID  
I'll still talk about it, I just  
won't have any new stories.

Charlotte chuckles.

SID (CONT'D)  
I'm actually volunteering to crew  
for this repertory group at a  
little theater nearby on Forty-  
third Street. Maybe there'll be  
some good gossip. But that's off  
Broadway.  
(then)  
What about you? What are you up to?

CHARLOTTE

Well, I'm also thinking of working off Broadway. Off, off, off Broadway.

SID

(hopeful)

Did you get a part?

CHARLOTTE

No, but I might have a lead on a job. In... Chicago.

Sid's face falls.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Don't look at me like that! It could be good for me. Something stable. Health insurance, a 401K. My best friend works at this big marketing company out there. She could help me get the gig.

SID

(wry)

I don't think you're supposed to call it a gig if you have a 401K.

CHARLOTTE

(laughs)

Fine.

Sid looks at her carefully.

SID

And is that what you want? To leave New York? To give up your dream?

Doubt and sadness flicker on Charlotte's face, but she collects herself and smiles.

CHARLOTTE

Most people aren't lucky enough to love their jobs or really live their dreams.

(beat)

I think it's time to grow up.

SID

I don't know. This city won't be the same without you.

(then)

Maybe what you need is a Christmas miracle.

←END