

YOUTH

Written by

Edith D. Rodriguez

EXT. BURBANK APARTMENT, CARPORT - DAY

The trunk of a faded Honda Civic slams shut. LEAH RIVERA (early 20s) bends down and hastily stuffs clothes into her backpack.

She separates a black dress and throws it over her shoulder, grabs her phone, purse, shoes, and-- shit. Drops her keys.

A pair of HANDS tries to help.

LEAH

I got it.

She does not.

Leah straightens up and we see JOSEPH (20s), beach blonde, model-like features, concerned expression. He looks down at Leah, who currently resembles a disheveled pack mule.

Her dick appointment hoodie, leggings and "cute" messy hair have quickly lost their late night appeal in broad daylight.

LEAH

Thanks for doing this by the way.

Leah motions over to her car, snugly parked in the furthest corner of the apartment carport. Joseph's eyes scan the car interior: a Puerto Rican flag hangs from the rearview mirror. Boxes, a sleeping bag, books, and belongings fill the seats.

JOSEPH

How long are you gonna be gone?

LEAH

Just the weekend.

Her phone buzzes: a flight notification.

LEAH

Hey, umm... I know you've already done way more than I could ask but uh... is there any chance you can drive me to the airport?

JOSEPH

Seriously?

LEAH

I mean it is life or death. Or, I guess just death technically.

JOSEPH

I'll get you an Uber.

LEAH

Thanks.

(then)

Could I also get your number? It's just that you only messaged through the app. So--

JOSEPH

I'll DM you.

LEAH

Okay, yeah. Cool.

They stand in uncomfortable silence. Joseph checks his phone.

JOSEPH

Five minutes.

Leah takes the black dress in her hand and drapes it over her forearm, tries to smooth out the wrinkles.

LEAH

Five minutes.

INT. LAX AIRPORT, BATHROOM - DAY

Leah steps out of the airport bathroom stall in the black dress and walks up to the mirror. Stares in disappointment.

She takes some ibuprofen out of her purse and pops a couple.

Then, does her best to pull the dress down to her knees. Wipes off her smudged eyeliner. Smooths her hair into a tight bun.

She looks down at her glittery heels. Frowns. Behind her, a TEEN GOTH walks up to the sink. Leah stares, the teen notices.

TEEN GOTH

What?

INT. LAX AIRPORT, TERMINAL - DAY

Leah's face lit up with a new air of confidence. As she cuts through the crowd, we see why. No leather choker, but she's now rocking the teen goth's black shirt, pants, and old boots. Heavy metal music soars as the terminal becomes her runway.

GATE AGENT (V.O.)

Passenger Leah Rivera...

The music comes to a halt. Leah snaps back to reality.

GATE AGENT (V.O.)
Passenger Leah Rivera please
approach the gate.

INT. LAX AIRPORT, DEPARTURE GATE - MOMENTS LATER

The busy GATE AGENT (50s) talks and types, no eye contact.

GATE AGENT
It looks like you're traveling
alone today. Is that correct?

LEAH
Yeah. I'm not a kid.

The agent looks at her, frowns. No nonsense.

GATE AGENT
We have a family that's traveling
together with a child. Would you
be okay with taking a middle seat?

LEAH
Can I get a free drink?

INT. AIRPLANE, BACK ROW - DAY

Leah squeezed in her middle seat, arms crossed. No drink.

She stares at the destination on the small airplane tablet
screen in front of her: Chicago.

And the life drains from her face, as if another and much
bigger and worse reality is about to hit. She closes her eyes.

A baby cries.

TITLE CARD: YOUTH