

Offsides

By

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INT. LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - NIGHT

The top row of bright pearly whites bite down on the bottom lip of ruby reds, almost looking to draw blood.

GISELA, 23, watches the football game on the television, her facial features contorted and raised with anxiety.

The fast-paced commentary echoes off the walls from the surround sound.

Her fingers, nails painted blue and white, wring and tug at the bottom of her Argentina replica jersey. She sits curled up in one of the corners of the couch.

MARTIN

Fuck! How the hell do you miss that?

MARTIN, 23, jumps up from the other side of the couch. He sports a Mexico replica football jersey. He puts his hands on his temple and exaggerates the looking-to-the-heavens-for-answers gesture common among players.

Gisela just observes him with the same expression as before, even slightly more. Martin doesn't look at her, he just sits back down and continues to suffer.

MARTIN

¡No mames! Stop wasting time!
Fucking bullshit *portero argentino!*

Gisela starts to move to stand up but hesitates and stares at the screen for a few seconds more. However, she feels decisive this time and gets up.

Gisela's swaying hips block Martin's view on her walk to the bathroom. She turns her head to look at him.

GISELA

Sorry, Martín.

But Martin doesn't acknowledge her, his eyes super-glued to the flat screen.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

The sink faucet's damaged aerator shoots out water in multiple directions. Gisela grabs what is left of the bar of soap. She squeezes the soft glop tight in her hands, adhering it to the curvature of her palms and fingers.

(CONTINUED)

She lets go and examines the new shape. She has enough of goo left behind to lather both hands, so she puts the soap back, next to a cup. A cup containing two toothbrushes.

Gisela continues the arbitrary task of washing her hands. She rinses the soap under the faucet and scrubs out the "dirt" This light scrubbing soon becomes harder until it becomes scratching. Her skin irritates into an agitated pink.

She then splashes water onto her face. Her mascara begins to drip down her checks as the rest of her make-up dissolves.

The water swirling in the sink is a putrid dark mess, leaving a residue on the porcelain.

MARTIN
(o.s.)
Fuck!

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Gisela free all the caked product, analyzes her reflection. Every wrinkle, every pore, every perfect imperfection.

She takes a deep breath and closes her eyes. Upon opening them, she begins to reapply the mascara again.

INT. LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - NIGHT

The two ice cubes smack against each other in the sea of rum contained in Martin's drinking glass. He takes a drink from it.

The bathroom door is heard open and out come Gisela from the small hallway, all dolled up. She smiles at Martin.

GISELA
Is the game over?

Martin takes another sip from his cup, causing the ice to move around more violently. His Adam's Apple constricts and contracts with every gulp.

MARTIN
Yeah. You guys won. 2-1.

Martin sets the glass back on the wooden coffee table in front of him. Gisela grabs a coaster from the counter and gives it to Martin.

(CONTINUED)

GISELA
Use a coaster.

MARTIN
The table is old.

Gisela ignores the comment and sits back down in her corner on her legs, feet pointed away from Martin.

MARTIN
The analysis is coming on soon.

Gisela nods like she cares. She doesn't.

On the same coffee table, is a margarita in a tacky glass with the shaft in the shape of a cactus. She grabs it.

MARTIN
Mexico played like always. Outplays their opponent, but misses chance after chance after chance. And I mean against Argentina?

Gisela just swirls the ice around the cup, half listening to Martin's rant.

MARTIN
Either way, the game was bullshit.

GISELA
Because you didn't win?

MARTIN
No, because that offside call was bullshit. *No estaba en fuera de lugar. Pinches* referees always out to make Mexico look bad.

Gisela sticks her finger in the ice, causing it to disperse back into the mix.

GISELA
But he was offside.

She pulls out her finger and sucks the liquor off it.

MARTIN
What do you mean he was offside?

GISELA
He was offside. You can clearly see it in the replay.

Martin looks stunned Gisela is trying to challenge him.

MARTIN

There's no way he was offside. I looked at that replay like six times and every time I saw him in line with the defenders.

Gisela smirks, but it's not from enjoyment.

GISELA

How can you say that? You're arguing what is on video! Just admit that he was offside.

Martin stands up tall to look intimidating. He tries to form words, but falters. He regains his momentum and then speaks.

MARTIN

But he's not fucking offside! It's just so *Argentina* of you to say that bullshit just because you think *Argentina* is so better than the rest of the world!

GISELA

It has nothing to do with me thinking I'm better than everyone else! It has more to do with Mexico cheating and not thinking they're going to get caught!

A beat.

Gisela's matching painted toes press against her foot hard, causing her clinched sole to whiten.

MARTIN

Mexico cheats?

GISELA

Yes, Mexico cheats. And you cheat too by trying to excuse the play. And you're a damn liar.

She stands up to match Martin. Martin slightly shrinks, but puffs out his chest to compensate.

MARTIN

¿Soy un tramposo?

Gisela's eyes water and her nose runs, but her body is nothing but affirmative.

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INT. LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gisela keeps her march all the way to the door. Martin chases her like a confused dog.

MARTIN
But what about your stuff?

GISELA
I'll have my brother pick it up. If not, keep the shit. I don't care.

Martin grabs Gisela by the hand to stop her from opening the apartment door.

MARTIN
Gisela, Cálmate. We can talk about this.

GISELA
Let go of my hand, Martín. We have nothing to talk about.

Gisela glares straight into Martin's eyes with the ferocity to melt them out of their sockets. But instantly, Gisela is left with nothing but dolefulness.

Martin lets go.

Gisela slides the chain off the door and unbolts it. She opens the door and exits the apartment without hesitation.

MARTIN
(o.s.)
This was never about the game was it?

Gisela turns around to look at the defeated man in the door frame.

GISELA
You're going to be very alone, Martín.

She walks down the landing and out of his life.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

Without hesitation, Gisela leaves the complex in her car.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

There is a photo of Gisela and Martin on her driver's visor. She rips the photo down and throws it out the window.

There is a single lone tear glistening on her face. No more, no less. And with a wipe of hand, it's gone.

She takes the deepest sigh of relief she can. A little smile peeks out of the accomplishment.

Gisela turns on the car radio and raises the volume. Slow tempo flamenco music plays.

She focuses on her driving for a couple of beats until the music pulls out the raw emotions. She quickly changes the station to change the background noise.

COMMENTATOR #1

(in Spanish)

Overall, El Tri can take the fact that they look extremely fluid at creating chances, even if their key striker seems out of form.

COMMENTATOR #2

And let's not forget that offside.

COMMENTATOR #1

Yes, that offside call would have completely changed the course of the game if the linesman would have gotten the call right.

Suddenly, Gisela's focus is on nothing but the radio.

COMMENTATOR #2

He was definitely onside and was robbed of a goal.

COMMENTATOR #1

(sound fading)

Yes, but they also missed a lot of chances and need to fix that.

There is a ringing in Gisela's ear that blocks the broadcast. She breaks down into a mixture of laughing and crying.

THE END