

PUNCHED

Written by

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INT. SCHOOL GYM - NIGHT

NATE, 13 and painfully white, stands alone in a gym full of people dancing to a live Band. Taps his feet to the music without regard to the beat. No one wants to dance with him.

He looks over at the CONCESSIONS TABLE where a very pretty girl, SOPHIA, is helping out. He stares at her in awe while she serves drinks with a big, genuine smile.

His friend, SAMMY, 13 and Asian-American, approaches with five empty glasses of punch and one filled to the top.

SAMMY

Lover boy!

Nate breaks his glance from Sophia.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

The sign says "NO REFILLS" but I've gotten six cups already. Wait for it...

He pulls out a few pairs of glasses from his pockets. Puts on a neon green pair.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

I'm a genius, I swear.

Nate shakes his head. Laughs. Sammy hands him the full glass.

NATE

That's for sure.

Distracted by Sophia, he holds drink up to his lips without taking a sip. Sammy sees Sophia and starts staring, too.

SAMMY

This has got to get creepy at some point.

NATE

Cut it out.

SAMMY

Jeez, lighten up.

NATE

Sorry. I just get nervous, you know?

SAMMY

What you gotta do in a situation
like this is claim what's
rightfully yours.

He hands Nate all the cups and extra glasses and runs to the DANCE FLOOR. Begins coughing, but then pulls himself together.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

Bazinga baby!

He starts free-styling. Dance floor clears around him.

Nate laughs while admiring Sammy's confidence. He looks over to Sophia, who is currently alone and swaying to the music.

Just as he's about to finally take a sip of his punch, he's stopped by two tall, dopey-looking boys. BULLY #1 grabs Nate's punch out of his hand.

BULLY #1

For me? You shouldn't have.

He downs the entire glass. Burps loudly. Nate winces. BULLY #2 grabs Nate by the collar of his tux.

BULLY #2

Going to a funeral or something?

BULLY #1

Probably preparing for his own
funeral after we beat the hell out
of him.

They laugh at each other. Fist bump. Their laughing turns into a coughing fit. Nate tries to avoid the coughing, but Bully #2 still has a grip on his coat.

One of the CHAPERONES approaches them, and the Bully #2 turns his grasp into a dance move with Nate.

CHAPERONE

What's going on here?

BULLY #2

Just teaching the freshmen some
dance moves.

Nate scoffs. Chaperone gives Bully #2 a suspicious warning glare as he walks away. Once Chaperone is out of hearing range...

BULLY #1
You're dead, kid.

Bullies walk off menacingly, but slightly tipsy. Nate shakes off the incident and walks toward...

CONCESSIONS TABLE

Sophia is still all alone, swaying to the music. Just as Nate's about to reach her, a line of around eight people jump in front of him.

He rolls his eyes. Waits for his turn. Anxiety grows the closer to the front of the line he gets.

When he finally reaches his destination, a second VOLUNTEER seamlessly takes over Sophia's position without Nate noticing. He stares at her in confusion and disappointment.

VOLUNTEER
Can I help you?

NATE
Uh...one please.

She hands him a glass. He walks away, disappointed.

ON STAGE: SINGER takes the mic.

SINGER
Now this song is for all our couples out there.

Band begins playing a cheesy slow-dance song.

DANCE FLOOR: Nate serpentine through the Dancers, staring at his feet. He still holds the untouched punch. Spots Sophia dancing in a crowd. Shows a spark of determination. Starts walking toward her with purpose.

When he reaches her, her back is turned. He taps her on the shoulder. She turns around and smiles.

SOPHIA
Hi, Nate.

NATE
Uh, hi. I didn't think you had the chance to have some of your own.

She obviously finds this an adorable act of kindness.

SOPHIA
Thank you.

She takes a large gulp of it.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

Share?

He smiles at this bold act of hers. Takes back the glass. Just then, the two bullies come up from behind Nate and shove him into Sophia, causing him to spill the rest of the punch on her pretty dress. Big stain.

Entire gym FREEZES. Band stops playing. Nate is mortified.

NATE

I..I'm...

Everyone's attention is on him. Nate runs away with tears in his eyes.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Nate frantically pulls paper towels out of the dispenser. He stops and looks in the mirror in shame. Realizes he shouldn't even bother to clean up the mess he's made.

After a few minutes of waiting, he goes back outside.

INT. GYM - MOMENTS LATER

Slowly, he walks back to the dance floor, staring at his feet. Something is off. No music is playing and everything is still.

He steps in a puddle of punch and looks up to find everyone in the entire gym laying down, dead, glasses of punch littering the ground. Hears violent coughing coming from the back.

Spots Sophia, having a fit, blood coming out of her mouth. They make eye contact. She falls dead. Her dress is black and smoking where the punch was spilled.

Nate stands there in total shock.

CREDITS ROLL
OVER LAST SHOT