

Reunited! (And I don't feel so good)

Written for the Screen By:

Rob McNeil

1500 Purdue Ave Apt 301 LA
309-532-1210
rob.mcneil27@gmail.com

OVER BLACK-

Commotion. Loud, overlapping chatter, glasses clinking.

OPEN ON:

INT. WELL LIT DIVE BAR - NIGHT.

We follow a MAN over the shoulder as he approaches the bar.

We track him as he weaves through the crowd and weasles his way into an empty space to order amid the organized chaos.

The BARTENDER spies him and moves to greet him--

He just points at him, expecting his order--

MAN

Tequila soda and a vodka soda,
splash of cran.

The Bartender nods and shows off some sleight of hand as he pours both drinks at one.

We move from over his shoulder to our man's profile.

Our man's name is RYAN (30s). He's tall, lanky, athletic, slicked over hair with a full, but trimmed beard.

The Bartender slides him his drinks--

BARTENDER

Have a tab open?

RYAN

Name should be under Ryan.

BARTENDER

It should be?

RYAN

It is Ryan. My name's Ryan.

BARTENDER

Okay, Ry-Guy, I'm sure I have plenty of Ryans in my Rolodex. You have a last name, Ryan?

RYAN

Schultz. Ryan Schultz. Sorry.

BARTENDER

Don't be sorry. Just be better.

Ryan raises his eyebrows to that as the Bartender turns his back to him. He aimlessly looks down the bar.

The bar is lined with your prototypical bar patrons. The DEPRESSED MAN, the OLD REGULAR, SORORITY GIRLS, the works.

Among the chaos, he spies--

A FAMILIAR FACE.

Our focus is on Ryan as he's STUNNED. Frozen in time.

We dazzle down the bar, the almost Christmas-esque lighting.

It's almost as if a SPOTLIGHT's on her.

Ryan ignores everything surrounding her. On his eye's journey down the bar to her.

We arrive at her. A pristine beauty. Almost too good to be true, but it is.

Our familiar face is ALIA (30s). We're entranced by her beauty, sure. But she carries the weight of the world on her heart.

There's a dreamlike aura around her, but her eyes combat a heaviness to them. Not only does sleep escape her, peace does too. She somehow always smiles through the pain.

Even her imperfections suit her.

Ryan quickly turns the other direction. Collects his thoughts.

He internally battles the desire to approach her. He lifts the glasses and turns towards the restaurant portion away from the bar.

Ryan turns, commences his march forth to--

Nearly collide with ALIA. He slams on the brakes of his heels.

She stands directly in his path.

ALIA

Ryan?

Ryan's jaw drops but a sound can barely escape.

RYAN

Alia?

Alia cracks a smile but it quickly fades away.

Ryan's stunned mouth remains open but nothing comes out.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Hey!

ALIA

Hey yourself.

Ryan's face is elated, but he can't make a move.

He's overcome with conflictedness.

We don't catch a glimpse of what he does next since we--

SMASH TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: REUNITED!

REMOVE ALL SOUND. We're in a vacuum.

FADE IN SUBTITLE: (And I don't feel so good)

FADE IN:

EXT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT.

A TALL BLONDE WOMAN (30s) stands outside, clearly chilly sporting a long overcoat and heels.

She's anxious, and shivering. She looks from side to side.

Checks her phone.

Finally, she spies--

RYAN come in out of seemingly nowhere. He doesn't have a coat.

RYAN

Hey!

WOMAN

Hi! You must be Ryan!

RYAN

And you're...

WOMAN

Grace!

RYAN
So nice to meet you, Grace.

GRACE
Likewise!

An awkward beat. She tries to telegraph her coldness to him.

RYAN
I'm not usually good with--

GRACE
Being set up? No, I'm not either.
But my friend told me that you're--

RYAN
Not a creeper, pedo, or homicidal
maniac?

GRACE
I was thinking decent and not
boring...

RYAN
Oh, yeah, that too.

She chuckles, but makes it even more obvious she's freezing.

RYAN (CONT'D)
You look like you're ready to get
inside.

GRACE
Yes, let's! Please...

Ryan opens the door for her.

RYAN
Of course. After you.

He guides her in.

GRACE
Thanks.

He follows in after her.

INT. DIVE BAR - CONT.

Ryan scans the bar for their options.

RYAN
You want a table or booth?

He helps her take off her coat.

GRACE

Oh, thanks. Either or is fine. I'm bad with deciding.

Ryan slides them into a booth.

RYAN

Booth it is.

She raises her eyebrows to that.

They settle in. Glance at one another but quickly avert their gaze.

An awkward beat before--

RYAN (CONT'D)

You want me to grab a drink for u--

GRACE

Yeah, please! Do that.

Ryan slides out of the booth.

RYAN

I gotcha.

She watches him strut away towards the bar. Her eyes linger down to his butt, then around the bar at the crowd.

Grace patiently awaits his return, but can't help but to check her phone.

She quickly taps away at her phone.

PHONE FACE: TEXT TO JORDYN: "he better be good"

REPLY: "wdym"

GRACE: "just not a prick. He seems fine but a little vanilla"

JORDYN: "Don't be rude. I thought you liked vanilla"

GRACE: "I just hate boring. And false advertisement"

JORDYN: "I wouldn't do you wrong. Just have fun. And stop texting!"

RYAN (CONT'D)

I'm not already boring you, am I, fire fingers?

Grace snaps out of it and tucks her phone away.

GRACE

Ugh, god. I'm so sorry.

RYAN

I'm just messin' with you. I wasn't sure what you wanted, so I got you a tequila soda, if that's okay.

GRACE

Oh, shit, I shoulda told you. I'm allergic to tequila.

RYAN

You're allergic?!

GRACE

Well, no-- not really. We just don't mesh well. It's like my kryptonite.

RYAN

Fuck, I'm sorry.

GRACE

No, it's okay. But-- can you get me a vodka soda with a splash of cran?

RYAN

Yeah, I got you. Sorry, I should've asked.

GRACE

You're good. Seriously. No worries. I would drink it, I just--

RYAN

No, I wouldn't want to make you have to drink something that you--

GRACE

Thanks, you're so thoughtful.

Ryan slides back out of the booth.

RYAN

I try to be. I'll be right back!

He marches right back to the bar.

She waits until he's out of view. Fishes back out her phone.

TEXT: "ugh, he got me tequila."

JORDYN REPLY: "get off his ass! He probably didn't know. He's a sweet guy, seriously. I swear. Also, get off your phone!"

GRACE: "K fine"

She turns her phone upside down and scans the bar around her.

Her face telegraphs unbearable boredom. But does her best to endure.

INT. DIVE BAR - CONT.

ALIA slips into a BOOTH on the opposite side of the restaurant. Opposite another MAN.

ALIA

Sorry, seems I've broken the seal.

This MAN sports a NICE POLO with SHORT CHUBBY SHORTS. He has a FADE HAIRCUT and shades on his backwards CAP.

Total FINANCE BRO energy.

Our finance bro's name is SLATER (late 20s).

SLATER

Nah, that's cool. That's always rough.

ALIA

Biology. Can't beat it.

SLATER

Yeah.

Awkward beat.

ALIA

So, what did you say you do again?

SLATER

I work in financial planning.

ALIA

Oh, okay. Cool. That's dope. What does that entail?

SLATER

I do all sorts of stuff ranging from private equity to managing hedge funds and all the way to handling investments and stock trading. Literally anything and everything.

ALIA

That's fun. I imagine there's good money in that.

SLATER

Oh, you know it. There's so much I can teach you.

ALIA

I look forward to it.

SLATER

Right on.

He nods and she forces a smile and nods back.

SLATER (CONT'D)

You said you're a doctor?

ALIA

I'm a nurse practitioner, yeah.

SLATER

So, like-- what does a nurse do. Exactly? You like, fix boo-boos and hand out medicine and shit?

ALIA

You could say that, yeah. Maybe an oversimplification. But, not far off. You're not wrong.

SLATER

You could get me some percs, right?

ALIA

Sure. If you needed them. Yeah.

He nods.

SLATER

Solid.

She nods back. Looking around her.

ALIA
I'll be right back. My drink is
looking a little light.

She downs the rest of her drink through her straw. Which was more than half the drink. Slater seems impressed.

SLATER
Could you grab me another IPA?

She slides out of the booth.

ALIA
Yeah, for sure. I got you.

SLATER
Appreciate ya.

She fake smiles to him but struts off to the bar.

Alia slips in at the corner of the bar, who all practically fight for their next drink. Vying for the attention of the already busy bartenders.

She accepts defeat and realizes it'll take an hour to get her next drink.

Alia, seemingly bored, but is ultimately taking in the chaos.

She glances on down the bar and recognizes--

RYAN. She spots him receive drinks in hand.

Alia swims through the crowd, almost in desperation.

But she's small enough to wiggle through in no time.

She appears behind Ryan, plants her feet down, like a statue.

Ryan spins around and nearly bumps into her, hands full of drink. They spill over just a tiny bit.

ALIA
Ryan?

ALIA POV: Ryan kinda towering over her, surprise filling his eyes--

RYAN
Alia?

They stare at each other in a trance for a beat.

WE MOVE TO:

INT. DIVE BAR - BATHROOM AREA - MOMENTS LATER.

They lean up against a wall near the WOMEN'S BATHROOM--

RYAN

It's so good to see you, but...
what are you doing here?

ALIA

You know, you don't have a monopoly
on our favorite bar. I can be here,
too. You can't expect to not see me
here.

RYAN

I was hoping that...

She looks on in anticipation of what he'll say next--

RYAN (CONT'D)

I would have the bar to myself,
actually.

ALIA

Well, that's too bad. It was mine
first, I hope you realize.

RYAN

I hope you realize that you don't
have a monopoly on it either, then.

ALIA

It's settled. We can both go to a
bar that neither of us own.

Ryan can't hold it in, he spits out a laugh.

RYAN

It's good to see that you haven't
lost your bite.

ALIA

I don't bite hard.

RYAN

Yes, you do.

She can't help but chuckle at that.

ALIA

What are you doing here, is the
question?

RYAN

I seem to recall that I asked you first.

ALIA

I'm having drinks. What are you up to?

Ryan raises the drinks he's double fisting.

ALIA (CONT'D)

One of these things is not like the others...

RYAN

I like to switch things up.

ALIA

No, you don't. You always order tequila soda like a basic bitch.

RYAN

What did you order? Tequila water?

ALIA

It's like you don't know me...

A beat as they gaze into each other's eyes. As if to search for long lost memories.

RYAN

I do know you, though...

ALIA

That's exactly my point.

She cocks an eyebrow to him. He contorts his face as if to be taken aback.

They return to normalcy.

RYAN

We can stop dancing around the issue. You're on a date.

ALIA

You're on a date.

RYAN

No, I like vodka soda splash of cran now, actually.

ALIA

Who's dancing around the truth,
now?

RYAN

Okay, you caught me. But, you're on
a date with a lawyer...no! An
accountant.

ALIA

Finance bro, actually.

RYAN

Aha! I was close...

ALIA

And you're on a date with a fashion
designer.

RYAN

How'd you know that?

She cocks one eyebrow at him.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Okay, touche. You're good. I've
always known that you're good.

ALIA

I'll never tire of hearing that.

RYAN

I thought you wouldn't.

That stings a little. They let it sit a moment.

RYAN (CONT'D)

What do you see in this guy?

ALIA

What do you see in her?

RYAN

Stop deflecting.

ALIA

I'm not. I'm curious.

RYAN

So am I.

ALIA

He's got money.

RYAN

Stop it. So do you. You don't care about that shit. You never have.

ALIA

Times can change.

RYAN

So he's safe. Stable. Secure.

ALIA

I do like that shit.

RYAN

I know. So, what gives?

Alia shrugs.

ALIA

So, what about her? What do you like about fashionista?

RYAN

Her sense of style.

ALIA

Shut up. What else?

RYAN

She's attractive, and into me.

ALIA

Figures. Anything besides the shallow and predictable?

RYAN

Eh. I don't know. We just sat down.

ALIA

Is there anything you don't like about her?

RYAN

She's not you.

She bites her lip. Does anything she can with her eyes to avert his gaze.

ALIA

Stop.

He tries to regain her eye contact--

RYAN
Stop what?

ALIA
You know what.

He does everything in his power to enter her line of sight.
She avoids it at all costs.

RYAN
I don't understand what you mean.

ALIA
You do.

RYAN
No, I don't.

She does her level best not to smile. It's not working very well...

RYAN (CONT'D)
What?!

She finally re-meets his eye level.
There's vague tears welling up her eyes.

RYAN (CONT'D)
Hey, you okay?

ALIA
We should get back to our dates,
don't you think?

Ryan rests on that a moment. The gears start turning.

RYAN
You should probably return with a
drink, shouldn't you?

This does the trick. Her eyes look back up at his. She nods.

INT. DIVE BAR - MOMENTS LATER.

Alia slips back into the booth with RYAN's tequila soda.

She wipes her eyes quickly, hoping he wouldn't notice.

He doesn't.

ALIA
Sorry that took so long.

His face is buried in his phone, GRAPHS and NUMBERS fill the screen.

SLATER
Nah, you're all good. No worries.
It's busy. I get it.

He doesn't even look up from his phone.

ALIA
Yeah, you're tellin' me.
(beat)
So, is the DOW down or...?

Slater realizes, slams his phone down.

SLATER
Sorry, sorry. I'm here.

ALIA
No, you're fine. I'm sure it's
important.

Beat.

SLATER
What'd ya get?

ALIA
Oh, shit. I forgot your IPA.

She slides back out of the booth. He raises himself up--

SLATER
No, no. Please, sit. I'll grab it.
It's okay.

ALIA
Ugh, I'm so sorry. I completely
forgot.

SLATER
For real, it's chill. You stay.
I'll go. Be right back.

ALIA
(sighs)
Okay. Again, I'm really sorry, I--

Slater is about to leave when--

SLATER

Don't mention it. For real. It's cool. Just relax.

She smiles at him.

Slater mosies on over towards the bar.

Alia buries her face in her hands. She's tempted to grab her phone, but holds back.

She looks over towards--

THE BATHROOM AREA.

She ponders going back over, leans out of her booth to try to catch a better glimpse, angle on who might be over there...

WE MOVE BACK OVER TO:

INT. DIVE BAR - CONT.

Ryan slipping back into the booth with Grace. He hands her the proper drink.

GRACE

Thank you. Where's yours?

RYAN

You know? I forgot to grab it, but it's fine. It's all good.

Grace looks him over with confusion, which turns to suspicion.

RYAN (CONT'D)

I already have one, anyway.

(beat)

But you're right, I should've grabbed another one with how crazy it is over there.

GRACE

It's okay, I can get the next round.

RYAN

Thanks, that's so nice of you to do. Very thoughtful.

GRACE

A couple of thoughtful people.

Ryan smiles, raises his glass--

RYAN
Cheers to a couple of thoughtful
people.

GRACE
Empaths, right?

RYAN
Yeah, we love an empath.

GRACE
We do.

They clink glasses and raise them to their mouths. They both
take a big sip.

GRACE (CONT'D)
You know, I'm so sorry, we haven't
even dug into the important stuff
yet, but I have to hit the
bathroom. I've practically been
holding it the entire time.

RYAN
Oh no, you're good! Do your thing.

GRACE
I feel like it's everybody's thing.

RYAN
Yeah, I suppose it'd be a little
weird if it was just your thing.

GRACE
Not gonna lie, it'd be weird if it
wasn't your thing either.

They both share in a laugh.

GRACE (CONT'D)
Okay, be back in a bit.

RYAN
Be careful.

Grace lets out a forced, confused laugh.

GRACE
Okay, I will.

She struts away, doing her best balancing act on her tall heels.

Ryan watches her all the way down, but tries to see past her--

--he searches around the bathroom area. He doesn't see anyone other than her arriving, and a couple of LADIES leaving. And a FRAT BRO entering the Men's.

Ryan looks away, disappointed.

He returns to his drink.

WE MOVE BACK OVER TO:

INT. DIVE BAR - OTHER SIDE - CONT.

Alia looks over and sees Grace enter the bathroom. Looks over around to where Ryan MIGHT BE. She finds nothing.

She looks over to the bar--

Doesn't find SLATER.

She looks down, fidgeting with her fingers. Hand tempted to slide over to her PHONE.

Alia slides out of the booth and raises herself up to find--
Slater's back.

SLATER

Hey, I got it. You need something?

ALIA

Oh, no. I just-- I was about to go looking for you.

SLATER

I was just at the bar. You know how it is.

ALIA

Yeah, sorry.

She slips back into the booth.

SLATER

No worries. So, what's up?

ALIA

No, nothing. Just wanted to make sure you got your drink.

SLATER

Yeah, it's all good.

(beat)

Now, where were we again?

ALIA

Um, I think we were talking about--

Alia looks up and finds--

RYAN going to the bathroom.

She hesitates a moment.

Slater leans in, trying to have her eyes meet his--

SLATER

You being a doctor, right?

ALIA

Yeah, and you needing percs.

SLATER

Heh. Yeah, that's right. So, you think you can?

ALIA

Sorry, excuse me a moment.

SLATER

Ah, the seal again.

ALIA

Heh. Yeah. Sorry, 'scuse me.

She slides out of the booth, glides towards the bathroom--

SLATER

Yeah, no-- I get it. It's cool. Happens to me all the time.

She huffs, fake smiles at him--

ALIA

Yeah, right.

She rounds the corner--

BUMPS into Grace.

ALIA (CONT'D)
Oops, I'm so sorry.

GRACE
No, I'm sorry!

ALIA
No, it's me. I need to watch where I'm going.

GRACE
No, you're good. No worries. This bar can be such a--

ALIA
Clusterfuck, I know.

GRACE
Yeah, that's the word.

They share in a laugh together.

ALIA
What's your name?

GRACE
I'm Grace. And you?

Ryan emerges from the bathroom.

ALIA
I'm--

RYAN
You guys know each other?

All three are frozen in the moment.

ALIA
Um, no-- we were just--

GRACE
We just met each other.

ALIA
Yeah, I bumped into--

GRACE (CONT'D)
We bumped into--

ALIA (CONT'D)
Yeah.

RYAN
Huh, no way. That's funny.

Ryan and Alia lock eyes with each other, then to Grace who eyes them both--

GRACE

Wait, do you two know each other?

RYAN

Oh, no-- we-- we're--

ALIA

We, uh-- we're--

RYAN (CONT'D)

Old high school friends.

GRACE

Oh! Cool. So... you guys go--

RYAN

Yeah, me and Miss Dolphin go way back. Yep.

ALIA

Heh, yep. Mister Stingray.

Ryan matches her gaze. Alia's eyes speak volumes. Grace catches on.

GRACE

What's all that? Dolphin and stingray?

RYAN

Oh, that was always our spirit animals.

GRACE

That's so cool. You just never know who you might run into.

ALIA

Yeah... this bar will do that to ya.

Memories flood Ryan's mind. He tries not to let the water works get the better of him.

Alia's eyes gloss up. She tries to avert her eyes from Grace.

Ryan sees this, tries to divert--

RYAN

Yeah, it sure does.

An uncomfortable air fills the space.

Grace wants to deflate the tension--

GRACE

Well, it was great meeting you.

ALIA

Yeah, nice to meet you, as well.
But, um-- I'd better get back.

Ryan catches himself staring--

RYAN

Yeah, us too.

Ryan places his hand on Grace's back. Alia spies this--

She does a double take before turning on her heel and heading back towards her table--

Grace catches her going towards her booth, not the bathroom.

Her face telegraphs suspicion.

Ryan guides her away towards their booth.

INT. DIVE BAR - MOMENTS LATER.

Grace and Ryan slide back into their booth.

GRACE

That was weird.

RYAN

Yeah, I know. Crazy seeing her here. Talk about a blast from the past.

GRACE

No, I mean-- she was going to the bathroom but then headed back to her seat.

A shot of pang hits Ryan in the heart. He recovers--

RYAN

Maybe she didn't have to go anymore.

GRACE

That's just odd.

RYAN

You probably made her piss her pants.

GRACE
 (bursts out laughing)
 What do you mean?!

RYAN
 Well, you said you bumped into each other, right?

GRACE
 Yeah... she rounded the corner and didn't even look out for me.

RYAN
 Could've scared the piss out of her. She's always had anxiety.

Grace studies Ryan as he takes a drink.

GRACE
 What was that thing with the dolphin and stingray?

RYAN
 Oh, my spirit animal is a stingray since people say I'm chill like a stingray.

GRACE
 I guess that tracks with you. But, aren't they dangerous?

RYAN
 (playfully)
 They can be! Just don't cross me, and you won't find out!

She scoffs, chuckles.

GRACE
 What about her dolphin thing?

RYAN
 What, you don't see it?

GRACE
 No, I'm sorry-- I'm not sure I do.

RYAN
 Oh, well I mean-- I guess she just embodies the mannerisms and sunny disposition like a dolphin. I don't know, just seemed right for her.

Grace thinks on that a beat.

GRACE

You sure do know a lot about her.

RYAN

I told you. We're long time friends.

GRACE

She's very pretty...

RYAN

I'm not allowed to have pretty friends?

GRACE

That's not what I said...

RYAN

Well, I surround myself with beautiful people. What of it?

GRACE

Nothing, it's just-- I don't know.

Ryan offers an olive branch--

RYAN

I imagine you have lots of beautiful people all around you in your profession. You're inundated with em.

GRACE

That's not the same thing...

RYAN

I know, I'm just saying--

GRACE

What are you saying?

RYAN

Well, maybe I want to emulate your experience by doing the same.

GRACE

You're weird. You just met me.

RYAN

I'm trying to banter with you.

Grace hangs on what he said. Remorse comes over her--

GRACE

Sorry. Sorry. I just-- Nevermind.
Let's just forget I said anything.

RYAN

No, I'm sorry. I just-- I won't
have any beautiful women for
friends. Except you.

She scoffs. Shakes her head. Lets laughter slip through.

GRACE

Okay, I know how ridiculous that
sounds. I'm not a jealous person,
but...

RYAN

But, what?

GRACE

She just-- I feel like... you're
telling me you guys never...?

Ryan hesitates--

RYAN

No, no... we never... no. We were
too good of friends. We never
wanted to ruin that. You know how
that can be, right? Besides, a
dolphin and a stingray don't mesh
very well, do they?

Grace really thinks on it. Digs into the depths of her mind--

GRACE

Yeah, no-- no. I get it.

She turns to her drink for help. Ryan does, too.

WE MOVE BACK OVER TO:

INT. DIVE BAR - OTHER SIDE - CONT.

Alia downs the rest of her drink.

ALIA

Hey, I'm gonna buy us another
drink. I still owe you an IPA. I'll
go snag you one.

SLATER

We haven't even really dived deep into our conversation. Can't we just talk a bit more? I feel like you've been drinking a lot.

ALIA

The night's just getting started! What do you mean?

SLATER

Nah, just-- okay. Yeah. For sure. I could use another. I'm just saying, maybe we should slow it down a bit, y'know? Get to know each other better.

ALIA

We will. Don't worry. I won't be long.

Alia slips out of the booth.

SLATER

Yeah, right. Sure.

She struts on over to the bar--

He watches her ass move in her MOM JEANS as she does.

His eyes dart away back to his glass as he DOWNS the rest of his IPA. Then he glues himself back to his phone...

WE MOVE TO:

Alia standing at the bar. She waits for a bartender to notice her.

Ryan slips in right next to her. He has to wiggle his way between AN ANNOYED BAR PATRON who looks displeased with him.

RYAN

You need to be more careful.

ALIA

We needed to come up with a better story.

RYAN

High school classmates wasn't so bad.

ALIA

You almost blew it.

RYAN

No, I didn't! You're the one who couldn't look where she was going.

ALIA

You need to relax.

RYAN

I can't relax with you around.

ALIA

This is exactly my point. You need to be an adult.

RYAN

What, I'm not being an adult?

ALIA

You're acting like an excited school boy.

RYAN

Wouldn't you say that's in character for me?

ALIA

That's what I'm worried about.

RYAN

Maybe you're the one who needs to chill out.

ALIA

You're so toxic.

RYAN

You loved it.

ALIA

I wouldn't say that.

RYAN

What would you say?

ALIA

That you're toxic.

Ryan looks deeply into her eyes. She turns away from him.

RYAN

That's why we didn't work together, wouldn't you say?

This brings her attention back--

ALIA
Your toxicity, yes. My desire to
leave my toxic habits behind. Yeah,
didn't mix well. Wouldn't you say?

Ryan suppresses, his face clearly says he doesn't want a
fight.

RYAN
How's your date going?

ALIA
It's just fine and dandy, how's
yours?

RYAN
It's certainly taken a turn.

Alia accepts her drink and the IPA in her hands.

ALIA
Hmm. How so?

She turns towards him--

RYAN
I think you know.

She takes that in a beat.

ALIA
I'm afraid this is where we part
ways.

RYAN
We've said that before.

ALIA
And look at us now.

RYAN
Yeah, what a nice surprise.

A heavy beat.

ALIA
Well... enjoy your date.

She turns her back on him--

RYAN
Yeah, you too...

Alia carves her way through the crowd.

Ryan watches her go a beat before returning his attention to the bar.

WE MOVE BACK OVER TO:

INT. DIVE BAR - OTHER SIDE - MOMENTS LATER.

Alia slips back into the booth. She hands him his IPA. She sips hers.

SLATER

Thank ya, I appreciate ya.

ALIA

Sure thing.

He looks up from his phone, finally--

SLATER

So, where were we?

ALIA

I don't remember. You tell me.

SLATER

What's your goals in life?

ALIA

What do you mean?

SLATER

What do you mean, what do I mean? I mean like, what do you wanna achieve?

ALIA

I want to be happy in life and I want someone to share in that happiness with me. Like double happiness.

SLATER

Doesn't everyone?

ALIA

Well, yeah-- but... I guess I mean that I'm already secure in who I am and what I'm doing. I know how to be happy on my own. My friends say my spirit animal is a dolphin since I'm always smiling.

SLATER

Heh. That's cute.

ALIA

The rest, I want to discover and explore. And I want someone to be at my side while I do it.

SLATER

What does discover and explore mean to you?

ALIA

I want to find out what living life truly means, beyond just doing what we do for a check. Vegging out on the couch, binging what we clearly do not need, and giving in to a society's demands that we do not want, but have to do.

SLATER

You sound so rebellious. I dig it.

ALIA

Thanks.

Ruminative beat.

SLATER

So, what does that all mean to you, then? You want to explore the world?

ALIA

That's part of it.

SLATER

What's the other part of it?

ALIA

Like I said, I have my shit figured out. I want someone to help me out with the rest.

SLATER

Maybe I can be that guy for you.

ALIA

Maybe.

He looks into her eyes. He smiles. He really does like her. She has that kind of effect on people...

SLATER

Well, Alia. I'd like to see you again.

ALIA

What, you're ending the date already?

SLATER

No, I'd just like to be penciled in for a second date with you. I'd like to just lock that in, y'know?

ALIA

You seem very sure that I want a second date with you.

SLATER

I am. You'll like me.

ALIA

I can respect the confidence.

SLATER

Yeah, I just wanna get that in ahead of time. You know, before someone else does?

ALIA

And what if someone else does?

SLATER

Well, I'd be greatly disappointed.

ALIA

Well, like you said-- why don't we just get to know each other a little better before we start looking too far out towards the future.

SLATER

I can get down with that.

Alia forces a smile, but it quickly fades as she looks into her drink.

Slater raises his glass to her--

SLATER (CONT'D)

Hey--

She looks up, she matches his energy. Raises her glass to his--

SLATER (CONT'D)
Cheers to that.

ALIA
Cheers.

They clink glasses and he takes a sip. She downs the rest of hers.

Alia is overcome with a healthy bit of pang, but she fights through. Tries to present her best poker face to him.

WE MOVE BACK OVER TO:

INT. DIVE BAR - MOMENTS LATER.

Grace, looking a tad disinterested, stirring her drink with her straw. Ryan takes a sip of his, looks to her--

RYAN
What does a fulfilled life look like to you?

GRACE
Wow, not afraid to get deep on the first date, huh?

RYAN
I've been known to get deep from time to time.

Grace chuckles at that.

GRACE
I can appreciate that.

Ryan shrugs, takes another healthy sip.

GRACE (CONT'D)
Well...

Contemplative beat.

GRACE (CONT'D)
I want to start my own fashion line. And if that's successful and I can raise my kids to chase after their own goals and dreams, then I'll say I've done good.

RYAN
Is that all?

GRACE

What do you mean, is that all? Is that not enough for you?

RYAN

No, I was kidding. I was being sarcastic. I think that's great.

GRACE

You're hard to read.

Ryan raises his eyebrows to that.

RYAN

Hmm.

He grins.

GRACE

Well then, what about you, mister hotshot? You think you got it all figured out?

RYAN

Heh. No, far from it. I'd say I've led a fulfilling life if I can look back on the world and say that I left a lasting impact. If I could say that I've done some good. If I even positively affected one person. I did something right.

GRACE

Is that all?

RYAN

No, no. Of course not. I want to create things in this world that haven't been there before.

GRACE

What do you want to create?

RYAN

Inspiring stories. Ones that leave smiles on faces. Cause people to think and do good for others. I will be happy if I can make people happy.

GRACE

That's... very... wholesome.

This gets Ryan thinking...

RYAN

Yeah, that shit. Wholesome shit.

Grace giggles at that. Ryan smiles back at her.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Would you excuse me for a moment?

GRACE

Yeah, sure.

Ryan forces a smile through and makes for the bathroom.

Grace watches him go but quickly becomes disinterested and buries her face in her phone. Vigorously tapping buttons.

INT. BAR - BATHROOMS - MOMENTS LATER.

Ryan stands outside the bathroom, looking around.

He peeks around the corner and spies--

ALIA still at the booth across from Slater.

He peeks his head back at impatiently stands waiting.

Ryan swings his arms back and forth, fidgeting with his hands.

Alia comes around the corner--

ALIA

Oh, hey--

RYAN

Hey yourself.

ALIA

How's your date going?

RYAN

It's-- great. It's fine. It's great!

ALIA

That sounds... lovely.

RYAN

Oh, it's definitely that. Yeah. And, how's yours?

ALIA

It's just going swimmingly. Yeah.

RYAN

That's... so good to hear!

ALIA

What are you doing around the
bathrooms?

RYAN

Oh, I don't know. I was just--
peeing, y'know. Bodily functions.

ALIA

Oh, yeah. That good ole breaking
the seal.

RYAN

Yeah, always fun...

ALIA

Sure. Yeah...

An awkward beat.

RYAN

You remember when we--?

ALIA

No. Nope. No. I don't. No.

RYAN

What? You didn't even let me--

ALIA

No, I don't remember anything from
our...

Ryan looks incredulous, inquisitive--

RYAN

Why not?

ALIA

I've tried to block all that out.

RYAN

That hurts.

ALIA

No, what hurts the most is holding
onto it. It's better to just-- push
it from your mind.

RYAN

And why would you do that?

ALIA

Ryan... it's just-- too.. painful.

That one hurts the heart.

RYAN

I like to think back on all the good times. It's all I have of us.

ALIA

Rye-- I loved our time together. But, I'm trying to move on. You should too.

RYAN

I can't, Alia. I've tried. And... I don't think I can. I'm not sure I ever will.

ALIA

You have to.

RYAN

Who says?

ALIA

I do, but-- if not for me... do it for yourself. You'll thank me later.

RYAN

How could I let go of some of the happiest moments of my life?

ALIA

Well, then... you're gonna be holding on to that pain for too long. That's not good for your heart. Trust me.

Ryan digs deep--

RYAN

Why can't we just try again? Why can't we work on this together?

ALIA

Ryan... you know we're not good together.

RYAN

Two people who love each other this much should be able to make this work. There's no reason we should've given up on us so quick.

Alia purses her lips and cracks a no-teeth smile to fight off the impending tears. She grabs his hand and squeezes it tight.

ALIA

I've gotta get back. And you'd better too before she thinks you drowned in that urinal.

Ryan huffs, forces a smile through the hurt.

Alia turns the corner and struts on back to the booth.

Ryan shuffles away.

INT. BAR - BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER.

Ryan slips back in his booth.

INT. BAR - OTHER SIDE - CONT.

Alia slides into her booth.

SPLIT SCREEN:

INT. BAR - BOTH BOOTHS - CONT.

Slater and Grace fold their arms, lean back--

SLATER

Who was that you were talking to?

GRACE

Who were you just talking with?

Ryan and Alia simultaneously hesitate to answer...

RYAN

An old friend...

ALIA

Some guy that I used to know...

Grace and Slater hang on that response.

GRACE

It's not that same girl, was it?

SLATER

Some guy?!

RYAN

Yeah, she's a friend. Remember, I told you.

ALIA

Yeah, I knew him back in high school. It's not a big deal.

GRACE

I'd prefer it if you didn't keep going to the bathroom to talk to her...

SLATER

Don't talk to some guy while we're on a date. That's disrespectful.

RYAN

That's not what I... I just--

GRACE

So happened to run into her again, yeah.

ALIA

There's no reason to get jealous, he and I aren't--

SLATER

What-- dating?! fucking?! I knew it, you have a fucking boyfriend, don't you?!

ALIA

What is wrong with you?!

GRACE

Yeah, I don't buy it.

RYAN

I don't need you to buy anything. We're just friends and I just think that it's crazy that--

GRACE

That, what-- that you both happen to be here tonight? While you're on a date? How serendipitous for you both. Yeah. Come back to reality anytime you want, dude.

Grace grabs her stuff and slides out of the booth.

GRACE (CONT'D)
I'm outta here.

RYAN
Wait, Grace-- hold on. Wait--

GRACE
Look, Ryan-- it's fine. Go back to
your ex if you really want. I don't
care. But, I won't be a part of it.

She shrugs him off and struts out the door.

Alia stares Slater down.

ALIA
You're pathetic.

Alia slides out of the booth and marches off.

SLATER
Least I'm not going on dates while
I'm fucking other dudes!

BYSTANDERS all stare at Slater as he looks around--

SLATER (CONT'D)
I don't fuck dudes, by the way.

The Bystanders shake their heads and go back to their
business.

Alia marches on down towards Ryan's booth.

Ryan slides back in the booth after his feeble attempt to
chase Grace down.

He mopes over his mostly gone drink. He looks across at hers.
It's barely touched. He moves it over towards himself.

Alia almost zooms right past his booth, but realizes it's
him.

She does a double take, then slips right in across from him.

ALIA
Hey, mopey.

He looks up from his drink. Instant 180. He smiles big.

RYAN
Hey yourself.

He slides the drink back over.

RYAN (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

ALIA
I should be asking you the same thing.

RYAN
I'm not doing anything now. My plans are cleared for the evening.

ALIA
Same here.

RYAN
No shit? Do tell...

ALIA
Well, I think you can guess.

RYAN
Your date got jealous and--

ALIA
Threw a fit and left, yeah.

RYAN
Or was it...the other way around?

ALIA
Might've been the other way around.

They chuckle to each other a beat.

RYAN
Yeah, she... she, uh-- yeah she didn't like that we were talking.

ALIA
She caught on, huh?

RYAN
Well I guess I made it obvious.

ALIA
Oh, did you? That doesn't sound like you.

RYAN
Do you know me at all?

ALIA
I do know you.

Ryan smiles, plays with his drink for a beat.

RYAN
What was wrong with your guy?

ALIA
He said I was fucking someone while
on our date.

RYAN
Oh, really? We were fucking, were
we?

ALIA
Yeah, apparently we made quick work
of it in the bathroom.

Ryan laughs out loud.

RYAN
Yeah, now that does sound like me.

Alia chuckles at that.

ALIA
You know, maybe we weren't so bad
after all.

RYAN
That's what I've been trying to
tell you!

Alia smiles but tries to hide it.

RYAN (CONT'D)
What's stopping us from trying
again?

ALIA
Life... fate...

RYAN
Fuck all that.

Pensive beat.

RYAN (CONT'D)
Doesn't being reunited feel so
good?

ALIA
I don't feel great about it.

Ryan studies her.

ALIA (CONT'D)
It's bringing up old feelings.

RYAN
Good ones?

ALIA
Mostly bad.

RYAN
Yeah...

They both drink.

RYAN (CONT'D)
We had some good ones though,
didn't we?

ALIA
Yeah, of course we did.
(beat)
But were the high highs worth all
the lowest of the lows?

RYAN
I don't know. Sure was to me at the
time.

ALIA
At the time.

Ryan nods, drinks.

Alia looks away.

A beat.

RYAN
What did we do that was so wrong?

ALIA
We were so nasty to each other.

RYAN
I think that's because we cared so
much.

Alia perks up.

ALIA
Cared?

RYAN
I still care.

Alia nods, thinks and drinks a moment.

ALIA
I don't even like this shit.

RYAN
She was so basic.

Alia looks at her drink--

ALIA
Why did we do this to ourselves?

Ryan looks deeply into her eyes--

RYAN
I'm trying to forget that I'm not
with you.

Alia averts her gaze--

RYAN (CONT'D)
And you're trying to move on,
remember?

ALIA
I don't forget.

RYAN
Apparently you do. It's mighty
convenient what you do and don't
forget.

ALIA
I'm a bad liar.

RYAN
Yeah, I know.

Ruminative beat.

ALIA
Boy, we're a sad bunch, huh?

RYAN
Let's go get sadder.

Alia smiles, he smirks. They both slide out of the booth--

MOVE TO:

INT. BAR - MOMENTS LATER.

Ryan and Alia wait at the bar for the tender and their drinks.

RYAN

You ever think about if it as different with us? If we had worked out.

ALIA

Not really.

RYAN

What? You don't?

ALIA

I'm more of an "it is what it is" kind of person.

RYAN

That makes me feel real good.

ALIA

What about you? Do you?

RYAN

Only all the time. You're all I think about.

ALIA

You need to start getting your priorities checked and in order.

Ryan scoffs, smirks, chuckles.

RYAN

I think they're in the right order.

ALIA

No, I mean stop putting other people who are not you up on a pedestal. You'll thank me later.

RYAN

You deserve to be up there.

ALIA

You know I love to hear it, but please do yourself a favor and start loving yourself more. I can't do it for you.

RYAN

Touche, saleswoman.

Alia side glances him with a stink-eye.

Ryan can't wipe the grin off his face if he tried.

They look back to the bar and eagerly await their drinks.

The bartender finally brings them over.

Alia hands him a card.

RYAN (CONT'D)

I want this one.

ALIA

Well, that's too bad.

RYAN

Let me get the next one.

ALIA

I want to buy us drinks.

RYAN

I know, but I want to buy you a round.

ALIA

You know I hate that.

RYAN

I know, but I still want to treat you.

ALIA

I don't want treating.

RYAN

You can't always be my sugar momma.

ALIA

Which is why you get to enjoy the benefits now. You won't later.

That stings Ryan's heart. The implication. The realization.

ALIA (CONT'D)
Stop looking like that.

RYAN
Stop looking like what?

ALIA
You know.

Ryan ruminates on that.

RYAN
I just can't help but--

ALIA
Just-- enjoy the moment, okay?
Let's just please enjoy the moment
that we're in.

Ryan shuts his mouth and obeys.

They both bring their drinks off to a booth in a more reserved, tucked away area.

INT. BAR - BOOTH - CONT.

They slip into the booth carrying their drinks and a couple of SHOTS.

RYAN
Cheers.

ALIA
Cheers.

They clink their shots. Down the hatch. They barely flinch. It's like they've been here before. Experienced veterans.

ALIA (CONT'D)
So what was it? Blind date? Matched
on the apps? Tell me everything.

RYAN
Friend of hers set us up. I
normally hate when that happens,
but-- Grace seemed promising.

ALIA
I thought she was basic.

RYAN
I learned that later on.

Alia smirks as she sips her drink.

RYAN (CONT'D)

What about you? How did you meet yours?

ALIA

I hate to admit it, but I'm still on the apps.

RYAN

You really think you'll meet your one that way?

ALIA

Can't be any worse than what I'm already doing.

Ryan turns to his drink for solace. Touche.

RYAN

What are we doing here, Alia? Can't you see we're just going through the motions? We don't need to do this dance any longer. We're meant for each other, let's just push all the bullshit aside and just be together.

ALIA

If only it were that simple.

RYAN

But it is that simple. We're overcomplicating things.

ALIA

Who says we aren't just going to encounter the same problems that we had when we were together down the road? I'd rather we just know now and nip that in the bud.

RYAN

Then we work through those problems together. That's what people who truly love each other do.

ALIA

People who love each other don't intentionally hurt each other like we did.

RYAN

I think we were just jealous of each other. We acted impulsively and emotionally.

ALIA

I don't think that's healthy.

RYAN

That's just being human.

Alia takes a drink.

ALIA

Why don't we just talk about something more fun? Let's not revisit the misery of past failed relationships and just have a nice night together. What do ya say to that?

Ryan thinks on it, raises his glass. She clinks it back. Cheers.

RYAN

You remember when we first met?

ALIA

You really think my memory is that bad?

RYAN

I always seem to have to remind you.

ALIA

Well, in the great words of Celine Dion, it'll all come back to me.

Ryan chuckles at that.

RYAN

Well, it was one of the best nights of my life.

Alia, sips her drink, looking amused--

INT. BAR - FLASHBACK.

We flash back to 2 YEARS AGO, the bar is emptier than usual.

Alia sits next to Ryan who sips away at his drink, watching some DRUNK KARAOKE.

Ryan wears a half smile on his face as he gazes upon the spectacle.

Alia jockeys for his attention.

ALIA

What's a song that you would sing
to get the women in the crowd to
want to have sex with you?

Ryan, spins around in his chair, slightly taken aback--

RYAN

That's a very forward question.

ALIA

No, it's not. It would be forward
if I asked you what you would sing
to me to make me want to have sex
with you. But, I'm talking about
the other lovely ladies in the bar.

RYAN

Ah, okay, so that makes it not
forward.

ALIA

Less forward.

RYAN

Less forward, right.

ALIA

So, what would you sing?

RYAN

Well, I don't know, but--

ALIA

Yes, you do.

RYAN

Okay, okay. My go-to song is 1985.
By, uh... I can't believe I don't
remember the--

ALIA

Bowling for Soup?

RYAN

That's the one.

ALIA

So, you're telling me that would be the panty dropper. THAT'S the one?!

RYAN

I'm just saying, if I can't think of anything else, that's what I would sing.

ALIA

Then, you didn't answer my question properly.

RYAN

(bursts out laughing)
Okay, okay, you caught me. Um, I guess I would have to say... at the risk of being a saccharine, Grey's Anatomy watcher or something--

ALIA

Oh, no-- don't tell me...

RYAN

Chasing Cars by--

ALIA

Snow Patrol. I knew it.

RYAN

What's so wrong with that?!

ALIA

No, no! It's great song, just--

RYAN

What, it's lame. Isn't it?

ALIA

I didn't say that! I didn't say that.

RYAN

You can tell me. I'm being cliché.

ALIA

No, I think that's sweet.

RYAN

But, it's not dropping any panties, is it?

ALIA

It could. It could. I'm not questioning nor doubting the panty dropping powers of Chasing Cars.

RYAN

It's a good choice, right?

ALIA

It's a very solid choice.

RYAN

I guess the question is, would it work on you?

ALIA

One way to find out.

Ryan looks over to the SIGN UP SHEET at the DJ BOOTH.

ALIA (CONT'D)

You'd better go sign up, huh?

Ryan half rises out of his seat--

RYAN

I'll be right back.

He's about to jet off when--

RYAN (CONT'D)

Wait, I'm sorry-- what was your name?

ALIA

Alia. My name's Alia. What's yours?

RYAN

I'm Ryan. It's a pleasure to meet you.

ALIA

Likewise.

RYAN

That's a pretty name, by the way.

ALIA

Thanks. I'm sorry, but-- Ryan's not.

Ryan can't help but let out a laugh at that.

RYAN

No, I wouldn't expect you to think one of the most basic ass white guy names would be.

ALIA

Well, go. Before someone else gets to it. You wouldn't want another guy to steal your thunder.

Ryan leans in--

RYAN

We wouldn't want that.

Ryan bolts off towards the stage, to the sign-in.

ALIA

No, we wouldn't.

Alia takes another sip of her drink. Eyeing him up and down.

Ryan signs in and looks up at Alia who gives him the patented eyebrow move. He smiles at that and continues penning his name down.

INT. BAR - PRESENT.

We morph back into the bar at the present, returning to the now.

ALIA

To be fair, you did kill it at that song.

RYAN

And it did work on you.

ALIA

Eh, it was premeditated. We were always going to fuck that night.

RYAN

Ah, so you stalked your prey. I was mince meat.

ALIA

You never stood a chance.

RYAN

I was here for it.

Alia raises her eyebrows as she downs the rest of her drink.

ALIA
I'm gonna grab another, you want
one?

RYAN
Is that a real question?

ALIA
How silly of me.

Alia slips out of the booth and struts to the bar for more.

Ryan sits there a moment spacing off when--

ALLIE (30s) bursts onto the scene. Appearing from seemingly
nowhere--

ALLIE
What the fuck is wrong with you?

RYAN
What? Allie, what are you doing
here?

ALLIE
Did you stand her up?

RYAN
Wha-- what do you mean? She walked
out on me, I'm still here!

ALLIE
She said you fucked up your date.

RYAN
Look, Allie-- I didn't mean to-- I
didn't expect to run into--

ALLIE
Who, your ex?

RYAN
Actually yeah--

ALLIE
How could you do this to her?
You're a fuckin' idiot.

ALIA (O.S.)
Well, we all knew that.

Allie spins around to find Alia standing right behind her
with fresh drinks.

ALLIE
Alia, hey...

Allie hugs her, Alia wraps her arms around her, trying not to spill her drinks.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
How are you, babe?

ALIA
I'm great. I'm good. I'm really good.

ALLIE
You sound really good.

ALIA
I am. How have you been?

ALLIE
I'm... you know. Hangin' in. Trying not to kill Ryan.

ALIA
Well, that seems to be a common theme around here.

Ryan could crawl into a hole right now...

ALIA (CONT'D)
Mind if I...

ALLIE
Oh, please. Sorry, don't let me--

Alia slips around her and into the booth.

She looks to Ryan whose eyes dart from hers to Allie's.

Not holding a glance for more than a second.

Alia notices the tension...

ALIA
You wanna join us for a drink?

ALLIE
I... oh, no... I really shouldn't.

An awkward beat as Alia looks from Ryan to Allie.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
Well, Ryan... I'm disappointed in you.

RYAN
What else is new?

ALLIE
Unless you two are getting back together... in which case, I'm not pissed at you anymore.

Alia looks to Ryan, then to Allie--

ALIA
Oh, no. We're not getting back together.

Ryan's heart sinks.

ALLIE
Well, then, fuck you, Ryan! I'm never setting you up with any of my friends ever again. Don't waste my time or my friend's time if you're just gonna pull shit like this.

RYAN
Allie, I'm sorry-- I didn't expect to--

ALLIE
Yeah, I know. You said that already. Audacity doesn't look good on you, Ry. Have fun, you two. But stop hurting each other while you're at it...

Alia and Ryan's eyes meet, but quickly dart away.

RYAN
Bye Allie, I still love you.

Allie storms away.

ALLIE
Oh, come off it, Ryan. Text me later.

RYAN
Okay!

Ryan rolls his eyes, shakes his head. And sips his drink.

Alia reaches across the table and rubs his arm and squeezes his hand.

ALIA
Chin up, Rye guy. You didn't mean
to fuck over Grace.

Ryan reaches across the booth and playfully "fights" with
her.

RYAN
Shut the fuck up, you!

Alia laughs at him.

RYAN (CONT'D)
You're such a--

ALIA
A what? A what? Oh, I'm the bad
person, here?

RYAN
Hey, you left your date, too.

ALIA
My date was toxic.

RYAN
Your new date is toxic.

ALIA
Who said you're a date?

Ryan looks back and points out the door.

RYAN
Oh, she did.

ALIA
Oh, we're going on the word of
Allie who is such a dating expert
herself, huh?

RYAN
I never said she knew better than
us--

ALIA
Oh, oh, okay. Yeah, the gal who
dates multiple men at once.

RYAN
I recall somebody who did that to
me not terribly long ago...

ALIA

Oh, you're one to talk. You'd fuck all those women at the bar and tell me about it the next day.

RYAN

Only because you wouldn't let me date you.

This shuts Alia up. Her response is in the form of ingesting more alcohol.

Ryan gives a "yeah, I thought so" look as he drinks too.

ALIA

Maybe you should've made your intentions clearer from the start--

RYAN

Maybe you shouldn't have played games and dangled yourself out there like a--

Alia SLAMS the table--

ALIA

You said you wouldn't do this!

Ryan stops himself, mouth agape, in shock--

ALIA (CONT'D)

You said you wouldn't do this here and now. Not tonight.

RYAN

Then, when? When would be a good time for us to--

ALIA

I told you, we're not doing this.

Ryan shuts up, starts downing his drink.

Alia drinks hers as well, matches the energy.

RYAN

I'll go grab us the next--

ALIA

Don't even bother.

Alia slips out of the booth and towards the bathrooms--

RYAN
Can we please, just-- Where are you
going--?

ALIA
Does it matter?

Ryan watches her strut her stuff to the LADIES ROOM.

He does his level best not to have an outburst. He holds it
inside, much as he can.

RYAN
Fuck.

Ryan stifles a freak-out as he buries his face in his hands
and reflects.

He slides out of the booth and marches towards the bar.

INT. BAR - CONT.

Ryan waits at the bar for the BARTENDER's attention.

He reflects...

MORPH INTO:

INT. BAR - FLASHBACK.

Ryan sits at the bar, as if waiting on someone.

After a brief beat, Alia slides in next to him.

RYAN
Weren't you just on a date?

ALIA
Yeah, but... I wanted to see you.

RYAN
Was the date so horrible that you
had to come and see me?

ALIA
Why can't I just want to come see
you?

Ryan shrugs and drinks.

RYAN
 I'm glad, but...
 (stops himself)
 It's good to see you.

ALIA
 You, too.

Ryan slides a shot of tequila over to her.

RYAN
 I got you something.

ALIA
 Oh, for me? You should have.

RYAN
 I know.

They clink their shot glasses together.

ALIA
 Cheers.

RYAN
 Cheers.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BAR - LATER THAT NIGHT.

Ryan and Alia have moved from the bar to a table now.

They're clearly drunker than before.

ALIA
 I wasn't hitting on you, by the way.

RYAN
 You weren't? Well, then, what was that?

ALIA
 Just moral support for you to get your ass on up there and sing for us!

RYAN
 So, that wasn't for me to serenade you?

ALIA

No, it was for all the beautiful women in the bar. I'm trying to help you out.

RYAN

Oh, of course. I see. These seem like diversionary tactics to me.

ALIA

You can think what you want, but I don't feel like girls say these things to hit on you. I wouldn't even know the first thing about flirting.

RYAN

(laughing)

That's such a crock of shit and you know it!

ALIA

I would think if I were to be dropping hints, I would be a bit more subtle about it.

RYAN

But, instead, you weren't. But, I was here for it! It's possible I'm misinterpreting things, but I--

ALIA

I think you are. I think you're reading into this too much. You needed to sing your ass off for me and that's what I was--

RYAN

Aha! You said me! You said it--

ALIA (CONT'D)

No, no, nooooo--

RYAN (CONT'D)

Was that a Freudian slip or what?!

ALIA

No. No way. Nope. That's the tequila talking.

RYAN

So, that's what I have to read through. Is it Alia or is it the tequila?

ALIA

The world may never know.

RYAN

No, we DO know. And it's you. We just found out.

ALIA

No, the tequila just made me do it. You fed me all these tequila shots and--

RYAN

I didn't feed you. You would've done them without my help.

ALIA

Yeah, okay, that's fair. That's one true thing you've said all night.

Ryan is sent into a laughter fit.

His hand searches for hers under the table.

He can't find it until his pinky interlocks with hers.

Their hands clasp together.

She looks up, locks eyes with him, and smiles. She tries to hide it but it slips through.

He smiles in return.

ALIA (CONT'D)

I'm gonna go FEED the jukebox. The only thing that needs feeding tonight.

She slides out of the table, squeezes his hand and lets go.

RYAN

What, you aren't appreciating the dad rock here?

ALIA

I can appreciate some good dad rock. It's just not the vibe tonight.

RYAN

Oh, it's not the VIBE? That's so Cali girl of you.

ALIA
(scoffs, shakes her head)
Shut up!

She can't help but smile at that either.

Alia can't wipe the grin off her face as she arrives at the jukebox.

She puts some quarters in and browses.

Ryan smiles and twiddles his thumbs. He looks over at her and sees some HORNY MEN ogling her.

He slips out of his seat and mosies on toward her.

Ryan leans his shoulder against the wall while she peruses her options.

RYAN
What do you want? Can I get you anything?

ALIA
You know what I want.

RYAN
I do?

ALIA
Yeah, I think you do.

She seemingly pays him no mind. Her eyes don't leave the jukebox, but she has a sultry face on.

RYAN
Can you clue me in on what it might be?

ALIA
You're a smart boy. I think you can figure it out.

RYAN
This is a time when it's okay not to be subtle.

ALIA
You. Know. What. I.
(finally turns to him)
Want.

Ryan looks deeply into her eyes--

RYAN

(with a Southern twang)
Those guys over there have been
staring at you ever since you
walked your fine ass over to this
here music box.

ALIA

I don't care about those guys. I
care about what's in front of me.

Ryan redirects his attention to what's in front of him.

Alia gets on her tiptoes to rise up to Ryan's level, best she
can.

Ryan goes in for the kill. He caresses her face as he moves
in for the kiss.

It's passionate, sensual, and slightly aggressive.

HORNY GUYS POV: they see him pointedly grab her ass. Makes
sure they see.

They look visibly upset as they look away in disgust and
return to their pool game.

Ryan pulls away for a second.

RYAN

So, what about that guy?

ALIA

What guy?

RYAN

The other guy. The date guy?

ALIA

I'm here now. Isn't that what
matters?

Ryan sees stars in her eyes. He's entranced.

RYAN

I think I like you.

Alia looks from his eyes, to his mouth, touches his chest.

ALIA

I kinda like you.

Time to move in for another kiss. Ryan does, Alia accepts.

ALIA (CONT'D)

Come with me and my friends to
karaoke night.

RYAN

This feels like a graduation.

ALIA

Well, feel special, because guys
simply don't get to meet my
friends.

RYAN

I'm honored.

They smile to one another.

RYAN (CONT'D)

I'm gonna get you something.

They resume slow dancing with one another.

ALIA

What is it gonna be, flowers?

RYAN

Am I really that predictable?

ALIA

You don't want me to answer that.

RYAN

I'll make sure they're your
favorite.

ALIA

Do you even know what my favorite
flower is?

RYAN

No, but... I'm gonna get it right.
It can't be that hard.

ALIA

You'd be surprised. If you guess
wrong, I'm not gonna let you hear
the end of it.

RYAN

I'll allow it.

ALIA

Oh, you'll allow me to make fun of
you? My knight in shining armor...

RYAN

I would expect no less.

ALIA

You're on, it's a deal.

RYAN

I'm gonna grab you a bottle of your favorite tequila, too.

ALIA

Oh, and you know that one, too, huh?

RYAN

That's an easy one.

ALIA

Yeah, that one should be easier than my favorite flower. I won't be as impressed with this one.

RYAN

With their powers combined...

ALIA

You're so stupid...

RYAN

Stupidly...

ALIA

Don't-- don't even say it.

She chuckles and shakes her head. Puts her head on his chest.

He caresses her as they rock in each others' arms.

ALIA (CONT'D)

(sighs)

Flowers and tequila... such a romantic.

RY

What can I say?

ALIA

Hopefully not what you were GOING to say...

RY

Not to worry, something just even more cheesy, probably.

ALIA
Probably.

They lock eyes. It's on.

Alia and Ryan unabashedly make-out in front of everyone against the jukebox as we...

FADE INTO:

INT. CAR - PARKING GARAGE - LATER THAT NIGHT.

Ryan softly kisses Alia and leans back into his seat. Leaving her wanting more. She opens her eyes...

RYAN
I think this might be too soon for me to say, but... I-- I really think I might--

ALIA
Whatever you're about to say... just-- don't say it.

RYAN
I want to.

ALIA
You don't have to say what you think I need to hear just to get laid.

RYAN
No, I-- I really do think I love you.

Alia doesn't want to show that she's blushing.

ALIA
I think I might love you, too.

Ryan goes in for another kiss.

RYAN
Can we do this thing for real?

Alia turns her hesitation into an emphatic nod.

The two go back in for a passionate make-out before we--

SNAP CUT TO:

INT. CAR - MORNING.

--wake up with them. It's brighter now.

Alia cracks her eyes open and adjusts. She finds her bearings. Realizes where she is.

A wave of regret washes over her...

ALIA

Ryan...

Ryan stirs--

RYAN

Good morning, my love.

ALIA

Yeah, about that...

RYAN

Oh, no... don't--

ALIA

Listen, I know drunk me seemed to have no reservations about diving right in, but--

RYAN

You think we're moving too fast.

ALIA

Sober me is just-- not so sure...

RYAN

No, I get it. I shouldn't have--

ALIA

It was really sweet, but... we barely know each other. I like you, and I think that's why I don't want to rush in.

A defeated Ryan turns away, looks away--

RYAN

Yeah... I knew I shouldn't have said anything.

ALIA

I'm sorry. But, let's just keep having fun. Like we've been doing.

RYAN
Yeah, of course. I'm having fun.

ALIA
I'm glad.

Ryan forces a smile to her, it fades as quickly as it came.
She smiles back, but looks forlorn out the window...

FADE BACK INTO:

INT. BAR - PRESENT.

We return to the present, Ryan's mopey face a clear antithesis to what we just saw.

The bartender serves him a fresh glass of tequila.

BARTENDER
Want another?

RYAN
Why the fuck not?

The bartender replaces his empty glass with a new one.
Ryan downs it without hesitation.

BARTENDER
Attaboy.

He snatches it as quickly as it came.

Alia approaches the bar like a woman on a mission.

ALIA
I think I'm gonna go.

RY
You remember that one night?

ALIA
You're gonna have to be more specific.

RY
The night you PDA'd with me in front of the jukebox.

ALIA
I don't know, I was probably really drunk.

RY
Why can't it just be like that all
the time?

ALIA
Because that's not how it works.
You can't live in the Honeymoon
phase forever. That's why it's a
phase. It fades. It's not meant to
last.

RY
I wish it could be like that
forever.

Alia turns before her eyes can show her true reaction.

ALIA
I have to go.

Ryan turns to his drink.

RY
Fine, go.

Alia turns slightly to him--

ALIA
Goodbye, Ryan.

Alia marches towards the door.

RY
It was nice to see you after all
this time.

She freezes.

ALIA
I wish I could say the same.

Alia resumes her march out the door.

Ryan throws another shot down the hatch.

He sits with his thoughts a moment.

Ryan tries not to let others around him see that he's on the
verge of tears.

He cannot look up from his drink.

Maybe his tears will fill the glass so his next drink is on
the house.

As he stares deeper into the glass, we...

FADE INTO:

INT. BAR - FLASHBACK.

Alia, up against the wall, awaiting a kiss from Ryan.

He moves in and kisses her long and deep.

She takes in the moment before--

ALIA

Look at you being all cute,
escorting me to the bathroom.

RYAN

I'll even wait for you outside.
Your escort awaits, to take you
back.

ALIA

How did I get so lucky?

RYAN

Don't be so sure you're the lucky
one.

ALIA

I hope I don't see a different guy
when I get back.

RYAN

I'm not going anywhere.

Alia kisses him one last time before turning the corner into the restroom.

Ryan stands outside the bathroom, patiently waiting.

After his patience clearly wears thin, he meanders back to the bar area.

Ryan sits back at a TABLE with ALIA'S FRIENDS all around.

Alia stumbles over from the bathroom to the bar. She's joined by her friend AMELIA (30s). She's short, sharp, and sports a HUGE NOSERING.

Alia rips a shot while Amelia guides her back to the table.

AMELIA

I'm gonna take her home.

RYAN
No, wait-- I'll go with.

AMELIA
Ryan. She needs to go.

RYAN
No, wait, hold on.

AMELIA
Rye...

RYAN
I have something for her.

AMELIA
Fine.

Amelia guides her towards the front door. Gestures for Ryan to follow.

Alia can barely walk as they push through the front door.

EXT. BAR - CONT.

They arrive at the parking structure and Alia leans on Amelia as Ryan rushes to his car, grabs a LARGE ORCHID and a BOTTLE OF TEQUILA. Careful with the FLOWER especially, Ryan hustles back over--

RYAN
I got these for you.

AMELIA
Thanks, but I really have to get her back.

ALIA
Thank you, Rye Rye. She's really pretty.

RYAN
Amelia, it's okay, I can take her home.

AMELIA
I think it's better if I do.

RYAN
Alia, I thought we-- I thought we were going to--

AMELIA

Ryan, it's fine. I'll take her from here.

ALIA

We never agreed to anything, Rye Rye.

Amelia guides her away from Ryan.

RYAN

But... whatever happened to--

ALIA

You left me at the bathroom, asshole! You left without me!

RYAN

Alia-- I didn't mean--

ALIA

Relationships aren't transactional! You can't just buy me with flowers!

AMELIA

Come on... this is why I-- ugh...

Amelia shields her from Ryan as they disappear into the night.

RYAN

What the-- ugh, god... fuckin' really?

Ryan fast walks towards them and finally catches up to them.

RY

Can I please just talk to her for one second?

Amelia hangs on that. She carefully deliberates, gives in.

She nods and takes a few paces away. Folds her arms, but watches silently.

RYAN

Alia...

ALIA

What.

RYAN

I just-- I really don't feel like I...

(MORE)

RYAN (CONT'D)

I do all this shit for you-- and I just don't feel like I really get anything in return.

ALIA

Relationships aren't a transaction, you fucking asshole! That's shit! That's pure fucking shit. You don't get to say that to me. That's completely unfair and you know it. You do things for people because it's nice. You shouldn't expect anything in return. I don't think YOU realize all the things I do for you and I don't say shit about it! You can't throw that in my face because I never asked you to do those things for me or buy things for me. THAT is why I hate it when people buy shit for me. They want something in return and I don't wanna feel indebted to people. Don't fucking do that, Ryan. I thought you were better than that. Go buy something for one of your hoes. Maybe she'll fuck you over flowers and a bottle of liquor. We're done.

Alia lets that sit with Ryan and nods to Amelia--

ALIA (CONT'D)

Come on, Amelia. Let's go.

Alia stomps off but nearly trips and stumbles over.

Amelia goes in for her rescue, saves her before a fall.

She helps guide her towards her car.

Ryan stands in bewilderment as she trails off into the dark.

WE FADE BACK INTO:

INT. BAR - PRESENT.

Ryan blankly stares into his glass. Tears didn't fill it after all.

The Bartender waltzes over, sees the state Ryan's in, slides him another glass.

Ryan looks at the new drink, then up at the Bartender--

BARTENDER

It's on me.

Ryan nods, raises his glass to him. Down the hatch again.

He winces at that one. Didn't go down like the rest.

Ryan wallows in self-pity as a chipper WOMAN and her more reserved FRIEND meander on by. They post up next to him.

Await their turn for a drink--

WOMAN

That guy was weird. I don't get it,
why do they have to be like that?

FRIEND

So weird...

The chipper WOMAN looks down at Ryan in his miserable state.

Her friend pays him no mind as she tries to flag down the bartender--

WOMAN

You're not one of those weird guys,
right?

RYAN

Define weird.

WOMAN

Well, you know-- like... creepy.

RYAN

Well, if I was creepy, I wouldn't
admit it to you. And if I said I
wasn't creepy, that's exactly what
a creepy guy would say to you.

WOMAN

Are you a writer?

RYAN

Yeah... how'd you know?

WOMAN

Because that's such a writer
answer.

RYAN

Takes one to know one. Are you a
writer?

WOMAN
I'm a comedienne. Stand-up.

RYAN
Of course you are.

WOMAN
What's your name?

RYAN
I'm Ryan. And you are...?

WOMAN
Rachel.

RYAN
And your friend?

FRIEND
Leaving.

RYAN
Oh...

RACHEL
She's... okay.

RYAN
Are we sure?

RACHEL
Yeah, oh yeah. She'll be fine.

Rachel watches her friend as she leaves. She's satisfied she's safe. Ryan gains interest from her interest...

RYAN
So... somebody was being creepy to you?

RACHEL
Oh, you know... nothing out of the ordinary.

RYAN
That shouldn't be the case.

Rachel studies him.

RACHEL
What are you doing all by your lonesome?

RYAN

You could say I had two dates fall through tonight.

RACHEL

Now that should not be ordinary.

RYAN

Far from it.

RACHEL

How does one not only land one, but two dates in one night... and blow them both?

RYAN

(laughs)

Well, let's just say one was impromptu. The other was blind so it was destined to fail.

RACHEL

Don't say that. Ours was impromptu, no?

RYAN

So, you would call this a date?

RACHEL

Let's call it that. I can't have creepy guy knowing that I'm not spoken for already.

RYAN

And where is this creepy man you speak of? Is he in the room now with us?

RACHEL

Creepy guy. He doesn't deserve the title of man.

RYAN

Guy. My apologies.

RACHEL

Don't apologize for him.

RYAN

How dare I?

RACHEL

How dare you, indeed.

They smile to one another. There's a chemistry. Almost blushes across the board.

RYAN
So, where is he?

RACHEL
You seem very preoccupied with him.
Why don't we focus on us?

RYAN
A better idea. You do stand-up?
How's your tight five?

RACHEL
Oh. Tight. It's tight.

RYAN
I'd love to see your tight five.

RACHEL
I bet you would.

Tense beat.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
I don't know if you ever properly
answered my question.

RYAN
I thought I did.

RACHEL
I said properly.

RYAN
Ah... well-- I think I struck a
chord with my blind date. She ran
out on me.

RACHEL
Struck a chord? Did you mean,
ruffle her feathers?

RYAN
Maybe that's more appropriate.

RACHEL
Mmm. Maybe. So-- how'd you do it?

RYAN
I ran into my ex.

RACHEL
That would do it.

RYAN
She didn't take too kindly to it.

RACHEL
Poor thing.

RYAN
Who? Me or her?

RACHEL
Yes.

RYAN
Ha! Well... I'll survive somehow.

RACHEL
And she won't?

RYAN
That, I don't know. I know me more
than I do her.

RACHEL
I can't imagine you got to do her.

RYAN
I didn't, no.

RACHEL
Poor thing.

RYAN
(laughs)
You are funny.

RACHEL
No kidding? Tell me more.

RYAN
So the other one I ruined was the
one with my ex.

RACHEL
And that was a date?

RYAN
No, not really. We just kinda...
reconnected.

RACHEL

And you're oh so hopelessly,
desperately getting back together,
aren't you?

RYAN

No, I wouldn't say that.

RACHEL

Oh, yeah. That's right. You fucked
it up somehow.

RYAN

She just stormed off right before
you got here.

RACHEL

Oh, I got here just in the nick of
time, didn't I?

RYAN

One could say that.

RACHEL

Would you say that?

RY

I could.

RACHEL

Would you?

Ryan raises his eyebrows to her. She takes a sip of her drink
as her response.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

What'd you do to make her storm
off?

RYAN

I'm too romantic. And reasonable.

RACHEL

Oh, isn't that always the way?

RYAN

You're very sarcastic.

RACHEL

You noticed?

RYAN

That's a good indicator of high
intelligence.

RACHEL
Oh, please mansplain to me more.

RYAN
Do you really want me to?

RACHEL
I'd prefer the intellectuals do the talking.

RYAN
Ouch.

RACHEL
Oh, Ryan, it hurts so good, baby.

RYAN
You can keep talking.

RACHEL
No, you. I like the pain.

RYAN
A masochist in my midst?

RACHEL
Something like that.

RYAN
Humor is a form of pain, isn't it?

RACHEL
So I've been told. Laugh the pain away.

RYAN
I like it.

Rachel downs her drink.

RACHEL
Refill this glass, and I can make that pain go away.

RYAN
That sounds appealing.

RACHEL
You don't know the half of it.

Ryan flags down the Bartender.

RYAN
Another round, please.

The bartender gives Ryan a knowing nod. As if Karma worked its magic in an instant.

He slides two glasses, seemingly of tequila, to Ryan.

He hands one to Rachel. They cheers glasses.

They lift their glasses to their mouths and gulp.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Salud.

RACHEL

Nostrovia.

Ryan smiles to that.

She does too.

INT. BAR - BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER.

Ryan and Rachel have since moved to a booth. Seemingly drunker. They laugh as they chat indistinctly.

We move over to them--

RACHEL

Dreams are powerful tools. They tell us where we've been and what's to come.

RYAN

So dreams can tell the future, in your eyes?

RACHEL

Haven't you ever had premonitious dreams?

RYAN

Is that a real word you just used?

RACHEL

You know what I mean, though, right?

RYAN

I suppose so.

RACHEL

Anxiety dreams are our fears of the future, and ones of natural disaster warn us of potential dangers in our paths.

RYAN

You have them often?

RACHEL

I have them more than I'd like.

RYAN

We seem to be on similar planes of existence.

RACHEL

See, you have them, too.

RYAN

What's yours like?

RACHEL

I have this one, recurring... it's of this big wave of dark clouds chasing after me. I'm driving away and it's like a lightning storm or a hailstorm and I don't know where I'm driving off to, but each place I'm driving by is something from my childhood. But I don't want to stop there out of fear of the storms destroying the places I grew up. But the thing that stands out most to me is that I don't know where I'm heading. It chills me to my core.

Ryan reflects on that a beat.

RYAN

I've had this one of five tornadoes surrounding me, and they're like... about to attack the city that I'm from. And it's like... the clouds and shit behind them are this blood red. I don't know what it's trying to tell me.

RACHEL

Seems ominous.

RYAN

And I had this one where it's this crazy hurricane that's destroying all sorts of shit. I was at this music festival on an island and then the hurricane wipes it all out. I somehow survive though.

RACHEL

That's telling. You can weather the storm.

RYAN

Thank you, captain obvious.

RACHEL

Oh, now, who's got the sarcasm?

Rachel gestures mockingly to him. He laughs and waves her off.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

You look like you have another one.

RYAN

I do. There was this one of a nuke hitting the city that I live in now. I don't know how but I live through that too. Of course the city is wrecked, cracked roads and toppled buildings. The most vivid is that tornado one, though. I'll never forget the sight of it. It's like something I would see in a movie, but it's also somehow unimaginable. But, yet--

RACHEL

Your mind imagined it.

RYAN

Yeah...

Ryan reflects on it. She studies him.

RACHEL

Hey...

She reaches across the table, her palm open for his hand.

They interlock.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

You might be strong...

Ryan's eyes lock with hers--

RACHEL (CONT'D)
And I think your dreams are trying
to tell you that...

He feels a connection...

RACHEL (CONT'D)
But, I want you to know...

He looks deep into her soul.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
That I still think you're a pussy.

He bursts out laughing. He yanks his hand away.

RYAN
(gleefully grinning)
Oh, my-- you fuckin' suck!

She joins in on the laughing.

Ryan comes across the booth and starts play fighting and tickling her.

She's pushing him off, hands up in defense.

The play fighting turns intimate.

They freeze in time.

They gaze into each other's eyes.

Hands on hips...

Lips interlock.

Some tongue gets slipped in there.

They engage in making out in the booth.

An interruption from above--

They both freeze as they look up--

A SERIOUS LOOKING SERVER stands above them--

SERVER
Hey guys, we can't have that in
here.

RYAN
Oh, I'm sorry.

RACHEL
Sorry, we're sorry. It won't happen again.

SERVER
You're right, it won't. I'll have to kick you out if I see it again.

RYAN
Sorry, sir. We won't.

The server marches away.

They watch him leave and burst out laughing when he's gone.

RY
Wow, way to almost get us kicked out.

He playfully scoots her with a soft stiff-arm.

RACHEL
Shut up! Takes two to tango.

RY
Yeah, it does.

He leans in for another kiss.

RACHEL
Okay, stop, no. For real.

RY
Yeah, for real. Yeah.

He leans in again. She playfully shoves him off.

RACHEL
Seriously! You're bad...

She touches his nose.

This only makes him want her more.

RYAN
I don't wanna be too forward, but...

RACHEL
Yeah, you do.

They gaze deeply into each others' ravenous eyes...

EXT. DIVE BAR - MOMENTS LATER.

They pin each other against the wall just outside the door and vigorously make-out.

They really should get a room...

PEDESTRIANS walk by, but do a double take at them as they do.

They soldier on as they shamelessly PDA in front of everyone, including the BOUNCER.

Who does nothing except fold his arms in disgust.

Our focus is entirely on them as they can't keep their hands or lips off one another.

But then, the focus slowly goes over their shoulder--

ALIA stands off in the distance. Our focus of her slowly becomes clearer...

She watches in annoyance, jealousy, bitterness...

Alia wants to jet off in the other direction...

...curiosity wins that battle.

She marches on over towards them. Our view of her becoming ever clearer.

She fully enters the picture.

Alia acts like she's going to enter the bar, but taps Ryan on the shoulder--

ALIA

Didn't take you long.

Ryan looks up in true surprise--

RYAN

Ali-- what are you doing here?

ALIA

Looks like I don't need to ask you the same.

RACHEL

This isn't the generational fumble, is it?

ALIA
You move fast.

RACHEL
Who, me or him?

RYAN
Alia, what are you doing here?
Seriously?

ALIA
I was gonna come back, but clearly
that was a mistake.

Alia turns on her heel and marches back the way she came.

RACHEL
I mean, you did come back, hun...

Ryan looks like he's at a fork in the road. Like his feet are
stuck or don't work--

RACHEL (CONT'D)
Are you really gonna go after her?
Are you really about to be THAT
cliche? Fuck me, I guess, for
thinking you'd be different.

RY
I don't know-- God-- don't do that.
(to Alia)
Alia, can you come back, please?

RACHEL
I don't think I need to be a part
of this.

Rachel steps back, Ryan reaches out after her--

RYAN
Wait-- wait, no, wait-- don't go.
Come back! Please.

RACHEL
Go get her, Genghis.

Rachel slides her hand over his chest as she struts off in
the opposite direction--

RYAN
Ugh, god... fucking really?

Ryan takes off after Alia.

RY

Alia! Wait. Please...

Alia ignores as she marches off towards the dark of night.

Ryan drunkenly jaunts after her.

RYAN

Alia. Please, just-- wait up.

ALIA

You can go back to your hookup. I didn't mean to interrupt.

RYAN

That's not what was--

ALIA

Well, it's not like it was any of my business... it's what I get for being nosy.

She comes upon a crosswalk. She forces herself to stop.

RYAN

You weren't being... nosy.

Ryan finally catches up with her.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Please, just-- hold up. Would you?

She finally turns to him--

ALIA

What do you want?

RYAN

I just-- you came back.

ALIA

Of course I came back. That's what's wrong with me. I always come back.

RYAN

Well... same with me.

ALIA

Look at us.

Ryan smiles.

RYAN

Look at us.

Alia wants to smile but it's quickly destroyed by melancholy.

ALIA

You just sent that poor girl on her way.

RYAN

Nobody will have what we had.

ALIA

Ryan... we're never gonna move on if we don't give others a chance.

RYAN

How many can I give a chance before I realize it's just us?

Alia sighs.

ALIA

I don't know, Ry... this is just-- too much. We can't keep doing this to ourselves. And we can't do this to others. It isn't right.

RYAN

It isn't right that we didn't give us a legitimate chance.

ALIA

But what about...

RYAN

What about who? What about what?

ALIA

She seemed nice.

RYAN

You barely talked to her.

Alia throws her arms up in defeat.

ALIA

Maybe YOU barely talked to her.

RYAN

I'm hopeless. I keep on defaulting back to you.

ALIA

You wouldn't have if I hadn't shown up. I'm out of sight, out of mind.

RYAN

I'm just using these women to forget about you. It isn't working.

ALIA

Maybe that's our problem. We aren't giving the world a proper chance.

RYAN

The world isn't good enough, without you in it.

Alia's sadness takes over her face. She paces backwards and throws her arms up in disgust. She leans over, face in hands.

Ryan slowly paces towards her, throws his arms around her.

She raises herself up, allows herself to snuggle up to him.

He holds her tight. They look up to the night sky.

It's drowned out by light. No stars.

She looks up, the night sky looks to have stars, but only because it's through her tears.

ALIA

I wish there were stars in the sky.

RYAN

There are.

ALIA

It's like that night. We talked in the car.

RYAN

You let me down easy.

ALIA

I don't remember it that way.

RYAN

Conveniently. And you made us lay in the street.

ALIA

I didn't make you.

RYAN
You put us in the middle of danger.

ALIA
You did it of your own will.

RYAN
I wanted to. Because you did.

ALIA
We couldn't see shit because of
that street lamp.

RYAN
I saw stars.

ALIA
You see what you wanna see.

Ryan looks in her eyes.

RYAN
I did.

Alia wants to smile but is overcome by the moment.

She tosses his arms off her and marches off.

RYAN (CONT'D)
Where are you going?

ALIA
I need to find my car.

RYAN
You're not seriously driving, are
you?

ALIA
I can't leave my car here.

RYAN
No, Alia, let's not-- ugh...

He fast walks after her.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER.

They come upon a parking garage and she searches confusedly
for her car.

He chases after her in her curious hunt.

Alia wears confusion on her face like a lost puppy.

She struts from side to side and pivots like an unsure ballet dancer.

RYAN

Alia... what's wrong?

ALIA

I can't remember where I parked my car.

RYAN

You want me to help you find it?

ALIA

No, I want you to watch me as I struggle-- yes, help me search for my long, lost car.

RYAN

Sorry, sorry. I'll-- you want to split up?

ALIA

I-- no. Where am I supposed to-- if-- I don't know. Just-- go.

Ryan sees her distress, he touches her arms--

RYAN

Okay, okay. I'll-- I'm gonna--

Ryan moves to hug her--

ALIA

Yeah.

She moves him to the side--

RYAN

Yeah.

Ryan pivots towards the stairs and marches up--

Alia looks back at him as he bounds up the stairs, and she redirects her attention to the search.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - CONT.

Ryan looks up and down the parking structure, to no avail.

He has a sudden realization and shuffles back down the stairs.

Ryan marches back down the stairs to find--

Alia is gone.

He searches up and down the ramps to find nothing.

Ryan, in his mini panic, speeds up his pace and jaunts up and down the ramps, desperately searching for Alia.

The car be damned, his search for her becoming increasingly frantic.

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE - MOMENTS LATER.

Ryan bolts back up the stairs. Barren.

He scuffles down the stairs, back out into the open area--

--spins around to the elevators to--

--BUMP into Alia.

RYAN

Whoa-- hey-- I've been looking for
you all ov--

Alia pulls him into the DINGING ELEVATOR. Going nowhere.

She forces him to slam her against the wall and she pulls his face in--

They passionately kiss.

It's like they haven't seen each other in ages.

Because they haven't.

They dig into each other as if no one's watching.

Ryan is still a little taken aback, but he's here for it.

Alia can't keep her hands off him.

A CONFUSED MAN and ANXIOUS WOMAN enter the elevator and interrupt their furious make-out session.

Alia grabs his hand and pulls him from the elevator.

She increases her speed to a jaunt and she drags him out into the parking structure.

RYAN (CONT'D)
(laughing)
Alia, where are we goi--

ALIA
Shhh-- just shut your-- follow me.

She pulls him towards a LONE BLACK TESLA which sits in the middle of the parking area, barren. Nothing around it.

RYAN
Do you remember our first night in here? The two of us, in your car.

ALIA
Yeah, you dropped the L bomb.

RYAN
You dropped it first.

ALIA
Now who's remembering things wrong?

Ryan ponders...

RYAN
Oh, yeah. Right.

Alia's prying eyes pry right into his soul. She yanks him--

ALIA
Just get over here.

Ryan wants to protest--

RY
Whose car is this?

ALIA
It's my friend's. Just-- shut up,
and get in.

She clicks the back door and it SOMEHOW OPENS. Alia dives in.

Much to his surprise, he gets in after her.

INT. CAR - CONT.

She climbs on top of him and clothes start flying off.

She rips off his belt, reaches inside, and slips him in.

Alia rides him smooth at first to ease him in, but then rides him hard.

Ryan can't handle it as he can only give TEN SECONDS before he busts--

RYAN

I'm sorry, I'm... sorry...

An annoyed, frustrated, and disappointed Alia slides off him and she makes it known as she clothes herself.

ALIA

Maybe this is all we were.

RYAN

Don't say that.

ALIA

I should've known from the start.

RYAN

That's not fair, and you know it.
Don't be dismissive.

Alia falls silent in a moment of reflection.

ALIA

Drunk Alia had no reservations, but
sober Alia realized that it was all
just a fairytale. We had our fun.
It was a good run. But, that's all
it was.

Ryan's heart sinks.

Alia climbs around him to flip open the door and weasels her way out.

Ryan hurriedly hitches his pants back up and chases after her.

EXT. CAR - PARKING GARAGE - CONT.

Ryan jogs after her in the BG and Alia frustratedly struts away.

RYAN

Alia, just-- wait... please...

ALIA

What, Ryan? What could you possibly
say right now that's going to--

RYAN

Alia! Just-- stop! For one second,
would you?!

Alia, taken aback, gives him the floor.

He sharply, heavily sighs.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Thank you.

She stops, folds her arms, ready for his soap box.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Why do we always have to do this?
At the sign of first trouble, you
just run away?

ALIA

All we ever were was trouble.

RYAN

People who care about each other as
much as we do, always make it work.
No matter what. Didn't you always
tell me that relationships are a
lot of hard work? This wouldn't be
worth it if it was just simply
easy.

ALIA

But, this is too difficult. It
shouldn't be obstacle after
obstacle. And we put them in front
of ourselves. For no good reason. I
hoped it would be effortless. Not
met with such ridiculous
opposition.

RYAN

You told me it would be work, and
that it would be worth it. I'm
willing to put the work in,. Are
you?

ALIA

I don't know, Ryan. I feel like all
we ever were was just purely
physical. Nothing more.

RYAN

No. We had something deeper. I felt
it, and I know you did too. And I
think we were just afraid.

(MORE)

RYAN (CONT'D)

We scared each other off. We fell too hard and too fast. We moved like we were together for years, but it was only weeks. Months went by, and--

ALIA

And then we dragged even that on for too long.

RYAN

Nothing reveals your truest desires quite like being given what you wanted before you're ready.

This strikes a chord with Alia.

He can see that.

RYAN (CONT'D)

All we ever did was hurt each other. Try to make each other jealous. And make each other feel like shit whenever we didn't get our way. Why did we do this to each other? People who truly love each other don't do this to one another.

ALIA

Maybe it was never really healthy to begin with.

Ryan looks defeated as Alia makes him hang on that a beat.

ALIA (CONT'D)

Love is only a feeling. It'll go away eventually. You'll see.

RYAN

I haven't stopped feeling it. It hasn't gone away in the years and years we spent apart.

ALIA

If you're away from me long enough, it'll fade.

RYAN

You're out of my sight but you haven't been out of my mind for two whole years. I haven't stopped thinking about you. I can't possibly push you from my mind. No matter how many women I--

ALIA

I knew your random hookups would keep you going.

Alia gives him a coy smile. He doesn't want to smile, but looks away, tries to conceal it.

RYAN

This is just some sick game to you, isn't it? I only fucked other women since you would date other guys. What the fuck else was I supposed to do? Stay celibate until you were done having your fun?

ALIA

You don't know how I feel. You could you possibly? Don't act like you think you know. It's awful rich and high and mighty of you to talk about games.

RYAN

I'm sorry. Alia, I--

ALIA

All these apologies...

Alia breaks eye contact. She hopes that looking away will rid her of the tears...

ALIA (CONT'D)

When will you ever... when is enough, enough?

Ryan wants to approach her, she sharply steps back. Message received.

ALIA (CONT'D)

God... I left you for five minutes... and you already...

Alia finally re-initiates eye-contact.

She sarcastically laughs.

ALIA (CONT'D)

You already got yourself someone to warm your bed tonight.

RYAN

But, she's not you.

ALIA

Yeah, she's not me... and maybe there's a reason for that.

RYAN

You came back.

ALIA

I always do. And that's the problem.

Beat.

ALIA

I want to believe in love again, but-- all anyone ever does is make me fall out of it and never want to start all over again.

RYAN

But, we can change that. We have an opportunity to do it right this time.

ALIA

There is no this time. Our time has passed. We can't-- I can't put myself through this again. I do it every time. I need to break the cycle.

RYAN

But, the fact that we keep on finding our way back to each other has to be a sign of something.

ALIA

You can't keep on finding meaning in coincidence. You need to see that we're not compatible.

RYAN

But... how do you know that?

ALIA

I know enough to know.

RYAN

But, we never gave us a fair shot.

ALIA

You had your shot. You had it. You showed me your true colors and you blew your shot. And don't tell me you believe in second chances, I don't want to hear that because it's crap. It's crap.

She scoffs, laughs, shakes her head.

ALIA (CONT'D)

Her audacity, told me I was the fumble. No. You fumbled me. You did and you may not want to admit it. You may not be able to come to terms with it, but you had your chance to make us a thing and you showed me who you really are. I think you are, or you can be, a great person deep down in there somewhere. And someone will probably make you very happy someday, but we are not it. So, you need to stop trying every time you see me. Just because we both happen to be single at the same time does not mean that we should give this another go around. Because quite frankly, I'm tired of this vicious, exhausting carousel. I'm sorry. I think we do love each other and we do work in some fluffy parallel universe, but not in this one. Not in the one that matters. You cannot keep romanticizing this idea of me in your head amid this fantasy world we find ourselves in whenever we're together, because, ultimately, we always end the same. We do not work, and you know this to be true. So, it's time we stop it here. And maybe you're right, we should work. But, we don't. And that's what's so frustrating about us. But, I cannot think about what could've been. I can only think about what we are. The truth always rears its ugly head in the end. And what we are, is ugly. Let's not let it get to that point. It just is what it is. And let's just-- let it lie. Now, help me find my car so I can go home and sleep off how pissed off you make me feel.

Ryan takes this in for a long, drawn-out, contemplative beat.

RYAN

Well, I'm not gonna stop going to
that bar.

Alia licks her lips to cover up her smile.

ALIA

I'm not gonna stop going, either.

RYAN

Maybe you'll see me there.

ALIA

Maybe I will.

A healthy beat before Ryan paces to her and places his hand on her back, leading her further towards the shadows of the parking structure.

RYAN

I don't know if I'll ever stop
loving you. But, I have to stop
missing you.

Alia looks like she wants to keep it inside, but--

ALIA

Never stop being you. Don't let
your love die out. Carry that into
your next one.

Ryan smiles, but it quickly fades into bittersweetness.

The two wander into the abyss of the parking structure.

They half-assedly search the parking spots, but mostly focus on each other. They chat indistinctly as they wander further away from us.

Ryan and Alia fade from view, as we...

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: REUNITED! (AND I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD)

CREDITS.