

# Lunar Window

by

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FADE IN:

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

CASS, 35 quintessential big titty trad goth, sits at a circular table, softly illuminated by the moonlight from the window. She holds a glass of wine and seems to contemplate it more than anything else.

At another table across from her, also seated alone, is the much more average-looking JOHN, 25, watching her.

CASS  
Can I help you?

JOHN  
Depends. Do you want company?

CASS  
Not really, no. Thanks, though.

JOHN  
That's a shame. You look at the wine like you're about to kiss it.

John changes seats so he's facing her.

CASS  
You're a poet, aren't you?

JOHN  
If that pleases you. I can certainly write a few lines about doomed romances with wine bottles, roses, anything you like.

Cass still looks at the glass of wine.

JOHN  
You're someone I would cross whole oceans of wine to find.

Now she snorts while laughing. But John isn't at all perturbed; he's entirely serious.

CASS  
Sounds like you've had enough already.

JOHN  
All I see before me is the truth.

CASS  
And what's that?

JOHN  
You're a nine, and I'm the one you need.

Cass shakes her head though she grins despite herself.

CASS

Sorry, but I'm not in the market.  
The only one I wanna be one with  
now is The Lord.

She smirks just a wee bit when John's smile fades.

CASS

You can call this my last supper.  
Then I'm laying myself to rest.

She sips her wine.

JOHN

I'm sorry to hear that. My horse  
kinda gave up on me a while back.  
Otherwise I would've reached you  
sooner.

CASS

That's sweet of you, but I'm not  
interested.

JOHN

Why not?

She pauses just before she takes another sip.

CASS

Because I'm not?

JOHN

I don't think that's all. Someone  
like you wouldn't come to that  
conclusion just because you felt  
like it.

CASS

Why, cuz I look like this?

JOHN

Not just that. I think I know what  
your prayer actually is.

CASS

And how would you know?

JOHN

I'll tell you tomorrow night at  
9:00. Here good?

She studies his face, still very much in doubt.

INT. CASS'S ROOM - DAY

SERA, 35, cabaret goth, runs a curling iron through Cass's  
hair. Cass's room has purple and black wallpaper with a  
canopy bed and black chandelier.

Cass herself wears a Bauhaus shirt.

SERA

That poor guy.

CASS

Nothing's gonna come of it.

SERA

That's what I'm saying. You better not break his heart into a million pieces. That's bad karma.

Sera finishes doing Cass's hair. Cass stands up, showing that she's a staggering six feet tall. She inspects her closet's designated shoe rack.

CASS

Do you think I should wear the platforms or the stompers?

SERA

Can't you give him a chance before you decide his fate?

CASS

Why? I really am gonna swear off after this. Get final confirmation of everything I'm not gonna deal with anymore, just in case.

Cass decides on the shoes.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The DINERS all stop what they're doing when Cass marches after the HOST, properly statuesque now having opted for platform boots complete with spikes and chains, arms and legs further accentuated with fishnets.

John stands from his seat and he's barely at the level of her breasts. Nonetheless he goes so far as to pull out her chair for her.

JOHN

You look amazing.

CASS

Thanks.

JOHN

I love those boots.

CASS

Me, too.

JOHN

I'm glad you wore them.

Cass raises an eyebrow.

CASS

So. You were gonna tell me what my actual prayer is.

JOHN

I already told you. You're a...

CASS

Nine and you're the one I need. I'm done here.

She moves to get up, but John reaches out to stop her.

JOHN

You're right, that was a bad line. Still, you're here, so it worked.

CASS

...True.

JOHN

Tell you what. To make it up to you, I'll do whatever you want. If I fail, I'll get out of your hair permanently.

CASS

What's "whatever I want"?

JOHN

Just like I said. Whatever you want.

CASS

And that can be anything.

JOHN

Yup.

CASS

Are you sure?

JOHN

Positive.

A slow smile creeps upon Cass's immaculate lips.

CASS

All right. Here's an easy one. I want you to get taller.

She waits for his smile to fade even a little bit, but it doesn't.

JOHN

How much taller?

Cass counts on her fingers, four for her platforms.

CASS  
One foot and six inches.

John pauses as if to think about how insane Cass is, but his expression doesn't change.

JOHN  
Okay, done.

CASS  
"Done"?

When John stands up, he's now actually that tall. To say Cass is gobsmacked is an understatement, even moreso when he offers her his hand.

JOHN  
Come on, see for yourself.

Cass is naturally hesitant but she nonetheless rises from her chair and finds that indeed she doesn't tower over him.

CASS  
What... The hell? You got stilts on or something?

JOHN  
Nope, these are my legs. Don't tell me you want to skip dinner?

CASS  
No, no, just...

JOHN  
Go ahead.

He once again goes to pull her chair out for her as she seats herself. She searches for a drink that isn't there.

JOHN  
Allow me.

He waves over the WAITER who comes over with two glasses of water and red wine for them.

CASS  
How did you do that?

JOHN  
I think everyone knows how to flag a waiter down.

CASS  
No, the height thing.

JOHN

Oh, that. I just grew up. Pretty sure everyone can do that, too.

Cass gets ready to retort, but it completely bails on her, and her brain even gets a dial-up modem noise.

CASS

What the hell, you're such a weird guy.

JOHN

Guilty as charged. But I can tell that's not enough to make it up to you. Lay in on me, I'll seriously do whatever you want.

CASS

Well... Put yourself back first, I feel bad now.

JOHN

Why? I can't talk to God and get Him to let you stay here among us mere mortals for a while if I'm short. Pretty sure that's bad manners.

CASS

Why are you arguing with me over your own rules? Change back.

John pauses, still smiling and looking the same.

JOHN

Done. Would you like to check?

CASS

I'll take your word for it.

JOHN

Sure thing. Hopefully you don't mind, but I already ordered everything ahead of time. Wanted to really sit down and talk with little to no interruptions.

The waiter comes back with bread.

JOHN

At the risk of sounding like a creep... Tell me about yourself. I don't even think we caught each other's names.

CASS

I know yours, John. I'm Cassandra Flynn, but everyone calls me Cass.

JOHN

Not Cassie?

CASS

No, definitely not Cassie. Cass.  
But that's not important. How did  
you do the height thing?

JOHN

I just made my bones and muscles  
grow.

CASS

...How?

JOHN

Mama always said I can do anything  
I put my mind to.

Cass's brain freezes, stuck on loading.

JOHN

You wanna see what else I can do,  
don't you?

Cass's mouth is caught between an awkward smile and a  
grimace, like she can't believe he read her mind.

JOHN

Don't worry, you can ask me  
anything. In fact, do your worst.  
Changing my height is kid's stuff.

Cass thinks about this, remembering what made her decide on  
nunhood, but then shakes her head.

CASS

Nah, I can't ask you to do that.

JOHN

Sure, you can. I told you, do your  
worst.

CASS

But this one's actually bad.

JOHN

Then all the more reason to ask me.

Cass regrets every decision that led her to this point.

JOHN

Actually, you don't have to say it  
out loud. I already know what it  
is.

CASS

Well, don't say it, okay? And  
definitely don't do it.

JOHN

But it'll benefit both of us.

CASS

No, it won't. Even if he was just that much of an idiot and I regret not doing it myself.

She covers her mouth at having revealed such a secret.

CASS

You didn't hear that.

JOHN

You didn't say anything for me to hear.

She downs her glass of wine, even looking up to where the Heavens would be through the ceiling for guidance.

CASS

I'm sorry. Thanks for this, but I think I should go.

JOHN

Sure, we can go somewhere more private, I'll ask the waiter to pack everything up.

CASS

No, just... Seriously, what's your deal? Of all the people you wanna do anything for... Why'd you pick me?

JOHN

Cuz you're worth it.

CASS

You don't know that, though.

JOHN

Then tell me why you're not.

Cass notices she doesn't have any wine left, so she opts for the glass of water.

JOHN

Okay, how about this. I'll do you one for free. I know it's bad practice to talk about exes on a date, but what's something he never did that you always wanted him to?

CASS

Well... I guess I always hated how he treated me like I was a prize to be won and not a human being.

JOHN

That's terrible. Definitely  
couldn't be me.

CASS

A whole year we dated. The longest  
stretch yet, after I don't even  
know how many breakups. That he  
always initiated and revoked. And  
like an idiot I fell for it every  
time.

JOHN

I'd never do that to you, either.

CASS

At some point I finally got a clue.  
I can't keep playing him like a  
broken record, hoping he'll stop  
skipping in the same spot and be  
like new.

JOHN

You're absolutely right.

CASS

So I decided I'd go ahead and be a  
nun as an apology to myself for not  
getting it sooner.

John processes this, brows furrowed.

JOHN

That's not really an apology,  
though, is it?

Cass is about to retort, but his words make a disturbing  
amount of sense. He gives her his glass of wine.

JOHN

What you're really after is  
salvation. And don't get me wrong,  
I want you to have it, more than  
anything else in the world.

Cass has no idea how to react to that, and he still holds  
his glass before her. Even though she knows she shouldn't,  
she takes it and drinks.

CASS

I've been meaning to ask, how old  
are you?

JOHN

25.

Cass stops herself from spitting out the wine.

CASS  
25?! You shouldn't be here!

JOHN  
Why not? I'm an adult.

CASS  
Dude, I'm an adult. I'm 35.

JOHN  
Would you like to see my ID? Or perhaps...

CASS  
Perhaps what?

JOHN  
What age would you rather I be?  
Would you rather I be 35?

CASS  
That would be a start, yeah.

John concentrates, and Cass remembers his height demonstration and scrambles to stop him.

CASS  
Dude, you really shouldn't take these kinds of things as a challenge.

JOHN  
But it's serious for you.

Cass is about to retort but can already see the trap lying in wait. She smirks.

CASS  
You're right, it is serious. At my age, we don't play around anymore. We don't have that kind of time, like younger people do.

JOHN  
Well, you're in luck. I can't speak on behalf of all younger people, but I'm definitely not playing. I meant what I said before.

The waiter returns with another bottle of wine, refilling Cass's glass.

JOHN  
Come hell or high water.

For good measure, John raises his glass of water.

EXT. BALDY'S BACKYARD - DAY

Cass sits with BALDY, a white-haired old man in his 80s-90s decked all out in steampunk clothes in his backyard garden on white wire furniture, having tea and crumpets.

BALDY

That's exactly how I met my wife.

CASS

Come on, Baldy. He's totally playing me, right?

BALDY

That's what life is all about, my dear. We all play each other like different instruments. Some we don't play well, others we make symphonies with.

CASS

That's not what I meant. Besides... I don't wanna be played like a fiddle.

BALDY

Fiddles take great skill to play, you know. I'd say let him work for it, my dear.

CASS

Let him work for it, huh...

She takes a sip of her tea.

Her sister AMY-BETH, mid-20s pastel goth, joins them on the third chair with a fresh pot of tea.

AMY-BETH

Hope Earl Grey is good, Baldy. You're out of orange pekoe.

BALDY

You're too kind, my dear.

He drinks the tea that Amy-Beth pours.

BALDY

You know, I've been tinkering with something off and on for a while now, maybe you girls can help me with it.

He gingerly gets up, both sisters grabbing either arm to help him stand and grab his cane.

He lead them to his shed where he takes out a still UNFINISHED MUSIC BOX.

BALDY

I can't seem to decide what I want the final product to look like. I'm rather partial to Fly Me to the Moon as the song.

Cass inspects it, turning it this way and that as if the different angles will let her see something.

CASS

I can see that. You open it up and it's the moon or something like that?

BALDY

Capital idea, Cassie!

Cass gives him the music box and now he sees infinite possibilities within it.

Baldy puts the music box back into the shed and leads them back towards the table.

BALDY

I have nothing but time these days, as you know. It's lovely to have visitors. Oh, but it's rather sinful to keep young ladies away from your boyfriends, isn't it?

AMY-BETH

No way, guys my age are so lame. I'm starting to think high school really doesn't end.

CASS

You're right, it doesn't.

BALDY

Oh, now, that's only half-true. Remember, what I used to say, "If you're not thinking, you're dead!" What does that mean?

AMY-BETH

As long as you're alive, you'll learn something?

BALDY

Precisely! The school of life isn't out until then.

AMY-BETH

If only more guys were like you, Baldy.

BALDY

I don't know about that. Everyone's special in his or her own way.

CASS  
You remind me of the guy.

AMY-BETH  
What guy?

CASS  
Just this guy.

AMY-BETH  
Come on! You'll tell our old  
teacher about a guy and not your  
little sister? That's cold.

CASS  
It's not like that, he's... Weird.

AMY-BETH  
How weird?

CASS  
He says he'll do anything for me.  
And he's actually serious.

AMY-BETH  
You're not making him up to cover  
for Craig again, are you?

CASS  
Hell no! Craig's over and done  
with.

AMY-BETH  
Wait, is this guy a normie?

CASS  
...Kinda.

AMY-BETH  
Oh ew, they're the weirdest. No  
wonder you didn't tell me.

BALDY  
Oh, blast! I really did it this  
time. This tea's gone cold because  
of me. I tell you, girls, don't  
ever get old.

CASS  
We'll try, Baldy.

AMY-BETH  
I'll make you another pot before we  
go, Baldy.

BALDY  
No, no, I'll do it. But do let me  
know when you'd like to visit  
(MORE)

BALDY (cont'd)  
 again, ladies. I'm rather partial  
 to the idea of a regular meeting,  
 where we discuss life, love, and  
 everything inbetween.

CASS  
 Thanks, Baldy. But I'm not really  
 one for group sessions. I'll try to  
 come hang out, though. See ya.

Before long the sisters leave, Baldy waving them goodbye.

EXT. SHOPPING STREET, NEAR CHURCH - SUNSET - CONTINUOUS

Cass, wearing a softer trad goth ensemble for her date,  
 walks with measured steps along the street, towering over  
 the crowd around her.

She pauses at a STORE WINDOW, where a mannequin wears a trad  
 goth dress reminiscent of a nun's habit.

She checks her phone for the time; 19:30. She shakes her  
 head and carries on.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

John sits opposite Cass at their usual table, filling her  
 wine glass.

JOHN  
 So do you have something you want  
 me to do for you yet?

CASS  
 Yes.

JOHN  
 Lay it on me.

CASS  
 I want you to change my mind about  
 you.

She waits, stunned that that came out of her mouth, even  
 silently cursing the wine for betraying her at this moment.

JOHN  
 How long do I have?

CASS  
 I'll give you two weeks.

JOHN  
 Two whole weeks...

Cass tries not to get blinded by how bright John's whole  
 being is at the thought.

JOHN  
Sorry, I was just--

CASS  
Predicting the future?

They both share a chuckle.

CASS  
What'd you see?

JOHN  
Your smile.

Cass isn't sure how to take this, but the more it sets in, the more tempted she actually is to smile.

CASS  
That doesn't count.

JOHN  
Of course not. At the very least I should give you something first.

CASS  
Like what?

JOHN  
Something just for you. I'm gonna need you to close your eyes.

She does.

JOHN  
Pick a number between 1 and 10.

CASS  
Nine.

JOHN  
Now pick your favourite material.

CASS  
Silver.

JOHN  
Your favourite colour.

CASS  
Red.

JOHN  
Now your favourite animal.

CASS  
Ooh... Fox.

JOHN  
Now open your eyes.

She does, and she notices that around her neck is a .999 fine silver necklace adorned with a ruby fox charm.

CASS  
How'd you do that?

JOHN  
I followed your lead. Anything else you want me to do?

Cass thinks about this, touching the fox necklace. She notices the PIANO in the corner.

CASS  
Play me a song on the piano.

JOHN  
Of course. What song?

CASS  
"Clair de Lune."

JOHN  
Right away.

He heads over to the piano and begins playing the song with practiced grace.

Maybe it's the wine colouring her face, but Cass is clearly affected, arrested by his gesture.

When he's done, everyone at the restaurant cheers. He takes his seat back at the table.

JOHN  
Any more requests?

CASS  
Mm-mm.

JOHN  
I was thinking I could play more.

Cass notices how everyone keeps looking their way and she hides her face behind the menu.

JOHN  
I see... It bothers you to have everyone else listen in.

CASS  
Having an audience is rather awkward.

JOHN  
If you want, I can get all of them to go home for the night.

CASS

What, you mean reserve the whole restaurant for just us?

JOHN

It is a bit late for that, isn't it? Maybe tomorrow I can.

CASS

If you're gonna do that, you should just invite me over to your place.

As soon as she says this, she tries in vain to unsay it.

JOHN

That's a great idea. I don't mean to brag, but I make the best carré d'agneau.

Cass downs another glass of wine.

INT. CASS'S ROOM - DAY

Sera gushes alongside Amy-Beth as they paint Cass's nails.

AMY-BETH

Sis, I can't believe you said that!

SERA

I still can't believe it took you this long.

CASS

Nothing's gonna happen.

SERA

Sure, it won't.

CASS

I'm serious! It was a slip of the tongue. Think I should cut back on the wine.

AMY-BETH

Next date, you better bring him our way so we can meet him.

CASS

No way, that's too serious.

Cass's eyes linger on her DRESSER, topped with several different photos of her modelling. Sera catches her look.

SERA

You really should just go for it. That set won't wear itself.

CASS  
It's time, eh? Guess I should  
before I outgrow it.

Amy-Beth tries to not notice her own flatness in comparison as Cass blows on her nails. She then goes to Cass's closet and fishes through her many black outfits.

AMY-BETH  
Sis, you never wear this one  
anymore. Can I have it?

She presents a purple dress with black waist cincher, the kind that would give Jessica Rabbit a run for her money.

SERA  
Oh, man, you haven't worn that one  
since prom!

AMY-BETH  
You got a bunch more you haven't  
worn since your last photoshoot.

CASS  
Oof, that long, eh?

She gets up and rifles through her closet as best she can with her still-wet nails. She happens upon a similar red dress with black details that she's long since outgrown.

AMY-BETH  
So can I have this one?

CASS  
Sure. Looks like I should go  
shopping anyway.

She avoids their ever-widening grins.

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE - EVENING

Cass, now decked out in black and red, takes in John's house; big and warm, still echoing with love and laughter however long gone.

He closes the door behind her.

CASS  
You have a nice house.

JOHN  
I'm glad you think so. Even moreso  
that this was your idea.

Cass straightens her shoulders as she follows John to the dining room. He pulls her chair out for her and then goes to the oven to take out the carré d'agneau.

Cass takes a drink as he cuts her two pieces.

CASS  
I realised I never asked you. What  
do you do for work?

JOHN  
Consultant.

CASS  
At your age? That's kinda  
unexpected.

JOHN  
I like helping people.

CASS  
And you live here by yourself on a  
consultant's salary?

JOHN  
Not entirely. Mama owns it.

CASS  
Oh, you live with your mother.

JOHN  
More or less. When she's not  
working.

He cuts a couple pieces for himself as she gets some salad.

CASS  
What does she do?

JOHN  
She's a cosmonaut.

CASS  
A what?

JOHN  
It's the same as an astronaut, but  
she says it sounds better.

CASS  
No kidding...

He pours himself some wine, and Cass notices hers is empty.

CASS  
Oh geez, I'm sorry. I already had  
mine.

JOHN  
Not at all. Allow me.

Rather than refilling her glass, he switches his with hers,  
and fills that one, Cass's lipstick mark facing him.

He picks it up.

JOHN

Salut.

Cass picks hers up, too.

CASS

Salut.

They clink their glasses, and Cass only brings her lips to hers as she sees John drinking from his, and she notices she can't see her lipstick mark at all.

Then, seemingly on its own, the sound system plays "Claire de Lune."

JOHN

You don't like carré d'agneau?

CASS

No, it's just... Nevermind.

She starts eating, and he follows suit. She watches him in quick glances, all the while he's not looking in her direction at all, even incidentally.

Cass's brows furrow, she doesn't even touch her wine glass.

CASS

You're different today.

JOHN

Am I? I'm the same as I always am.  
You don't like it?

CASS

It's not that, but it's, how do you  
say...

She really doesn't know how she was going to finish that sentence.

CASS

Aren't you nervous?

Yet again, she's too late to stop her mouth from running, and it sets her face ablaze.

JOHN

Maybe I'm meant to be your anchor.

She downs her glass of wine, and he doesn't refill his own.

JOHN

The more you shake, the stiller  
I'll be.

CASS

You say that like it's easy.

JOHN

It is easy. Besides, I told you to do your worst, and you still haven't told me what you want other than changing your mind.

CASS

Well, for starters... Change the song.

The song changes to Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata."

JOHN

Anything else?

CASS

Look at me.

He does. Her breath catches, like he's looking through her instead.

He keeps doing so, and she looks away.

CASS

You took my glass before.

JOHN

I did.

CASS

"You look at the wine like you're about to kiss it." You said that when we first met. Were you that jealous of a wine glass?

The song changes to Bach's "Toccatina and Fugue in D minor."

CASS

When I become a nun... I won't have this anymore.

JOHN

You won't.

CASS

I won't be able to talk to you anymore.

JOHN

Probably not.

Cass undresses John with her eyes, shaking her head at herself shortly after.

The song changes to Edith Piaf's "La Vie En Rose."

CASS

This is great lamb, by the way.  
I'll pretend it's just a  
coincidence.

JOHN

You're right, next time I'll make  
some coq-au-vin, maybe a hare  
royale.

CASS

Oh wait, I just remembered. I can't  
come here tomorrow.

Cass shoots her wine a dirty look, as if it's forcing her to  
say more things she totally doesn't mean.

CASS

I mean... Sera and Amy-Beth want to  
meet you. My best friend and my  
sister.

Cass accepts the imminent kamakazi, not meeting John's eyes.

CASS

So next time... My place.

Now it's John's turn to blush, but only for a second.

JOHN

Your place. Wonderful. Would you  
still like for me to cook?

CASS

I can't ask you to do that.

JOHN

Why not?

CASS

Because it's my house. I can't let  
a guest cook. Even if I myself  
can't.

JOHN

Don't worry about that, I insist.  
If you ask me, you shouldn't lift a  
single finger, ever.

John beams, totally blissed out, meanwhile Cass does her  
best not to catch it herself as she wonders why she's doing  
this to herself.

INT. CASS'S HOUSE - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

Title card: one week later

John sits on one end of the couch, hair slicked back and  
even wearing a suit.

Sera sits at the loveseat, dressed more corporate goth, even with a clipboard and librarian glasses.

SERA

So you're the illustrious John. We meet at last.

JOHN

We do. Thank you for convincing Cass to give me a chance. Were it not for you, I'm sure we wouldn't all be here right now.

SERA

Very good. This is your fourth date now, right?

JOHN

Yes, it is.

SERA

Be honest; are you one of those "I can fix her" types?

Cass enters wearing an off-the-shoulder red romantic goth gown, even with rose details. John immediately stands at attention.

Sera shoots Cass a knowing look. Amy-Beth peeks out of the kitchen.

AMY-BETH

Dinner's ready!

They make their way to the table where a somewhat simple spread of food awaits. John naturally pulls Cass's chair out for her.

SERA

I haven't seen a guy do that in ages. Might have to give hubs a hint.

JOHN

It's how I was raised. Mama told me my father didn't do a single one of those things and I knew right then that I wouldn't want my future daughters growing up thinking that's right.

Cass is about to reach over for the wine, but John stops her to pour it himself.

SERA

Sounds like you were raised right.

JOHN

Yes, ma'am.

Amy-Beth snorts in laughter.

CASS

What?

AMY-BETH

Oh, my God. This guy... I bet he doesn't even see it.

CASS

See what?

AMY-BETH

You don't see it, either. That's bonkers.

Sera, despite herself, gets the joke, meanwhile Cass looks over at them and finally clues in herself.

CASS

You really thought you cooked there, didn't you? Or ate, or whatever the hell your generation says.

John, meanwhile, calmly eats, completely oblivious to the scene happening before him, ever the gentleman. The girls silently decide it's for the best.

JOHN

Mama said, too, once that girls are like the moon. The same things they love now, they can hate the next day. So no matter what, I have to be like water.

SERA

Go Mom. She really did raise you right.

Cass hides her own face behind her wine glass as Sera nudges her under the table.

Meanwhile Amy-Beth looks intently at John, the same way he wishes Cass would.

JOHN

It's always been my dream to become someone's ocean.

He reaches over to refill Cass's glass, and she does her best to not remember his crossing oceans of wine line.

Meanwhile both Sera and Amy-Beth melt.

AMY-BETH

I gotta say, I wasn't sure about you at first, but you're changing my mind about normies.

John raises his glass and clinks it with hers. He then notices that Cass is studying her empty glass and reaches to refill it.

CASS

No, I've had enough for tonight.

JOHN

Far be it from me to speak ill of the house wine, but if you like, I did bring you a present.

SERA

Fourth date present, eh? Very nice.

John pulls up a bag holding a bottle of Romanée-Conti Grand Cru.

CASS

No way, that's... How'd you even get that?

JOHN

I bought it.

CASS

You bought a wine that costs that much?

JOHN

Yes. Do you not like it?

Amy-Beth meanwhile googles it on her phone and nearly has a heart attack.

JOHN

Because if you'd rather I get you a better one...

AMY-BETH

Does it exist?

CASS

No, it doesn't.

JOHN

Are you sure? Because I'm certain I can find it.

CASS

Come on, you can't.

JOHN

Sounds like a challenge, and you know our deal about challenges. Excuse me.

He takes his phone out and steps away for a bit. Meanwhile Sera turns her attention on Cass.

SERA

I stand corrected. I thought he was gonna fold, but I guess it's true, you can only be this brave when you're young.

CASS

He's not brave, he's crazy.

AMY-BETH

To be fair, Baldy would say there's a fine line between them.

CASS

He would.

AMY-BETH

But sis... This is bad.

SERA

How?

Amy-Beth's face is pinker than the finest pastels she could wear. She tries in vain to cover it with her hands. Sera's eyes dart between the sisters as John returns.

JOHN

Sorry to take the wind from your sails, Cass, but I found one better.

CASS

Really?

JOHN

Uh-huh. Really, I should've done more research, this one is right up your alley. It's made by a small order of nuns.

Sera nods, once again noticing the sisters' similar yet distinct reactions at this information.

CASS

(clearing her throat)

That's quite the coincidence.

JOHN

We can go visit them in person, if you want. They're in Italy.

CASS

Is that your suggestion for a fifth date? A trip to Italy?

JOHN

Why not? We only live once, and I know you don't like to waste time.

(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)  
 Besides, what's all my time,  
 energy, and money for?

SERA  
 Exactly, you're a man, and Cass  
 desperately needs one.

CASS  
 Oi!

But by now the atmosphere is buzzing with joy, completely  
 against her protests. John looks right at her, and Cass does  
 her best not to look away.

JOHN  
 So do you want to go Italy and have  
 the nuns' wine?

CASS  
 Eventually, sure. But don't get  
 ahead of yourself. We're still not  
 official or anything.

AMY-BETH  
 You're not?

The gears turn in Amy-Beth's head, and Cass naturally is  
 much too late to unsay anything. Sera facepalms. John,  
 meanwhile, is entirely unperturbed by her words.

JOHN  
 I guess I got a bit too excited  
 there. I'm sorry, I shouldn't put  
 you on the spot like that.

Silence descends upon them, and the calmer John remains, the  
 more flustered Cass gets.

CASS  
 No, I'm sorry. I didn't mean it  
 like that.

The girls both lean towards Cass, scrutinising her like  
 hawks.

CASS  
 I'll think about it, okay?

John then breaks out into a smile from the bottom of his  
 heart, a weight as heavy as Cass herself lifted from his  
 chest.

Amy-Beth gazes at John with rapidly softening eyes as Cass  
 absorbs her own words.

JOHN  
 Maybe I really am changing your  
 mind about me.

He raises his glass of wine, and Cass is a bit slower to raise hers as well as they clink.

Cass doesn't drink from her glass but rather inspects it, like it'll reveal her thoughts in due time. Every couple seconds her eyes dart to her own bedroom door.

Sera's nudging her breaks her out of her reverie.

SERA

Hey, Amy-Beth... I just remembered, we don't have any dessert. Wanna go pick some up with me?

Amy-Beth frowns but nonetheless nods and the two of them leave. Cass stiffens her shoulders, knowing full well what's next when the door closes.

She shoots her own bedroom door a dirty look, but then John begins stacking the dishes to take to the kitchen.

CASS

Wait, what're you doing?

JOHN

Cleaning up.

CASS

You don't have to do that.

JOHN

But we're done eating, aren't we? And besides, I told you you shouldn't have to lift a finger.

Cass gets up to do her part, but John is already at the sink beginning to wash. She takes the dish towel and dries what John washes.

JOHN

I was thinking, dinner at home really is better than at the restaurant.

CASS

It is, eh.

JOHN

Forgive me for this one, but I have to ask; for the next one, your place? Or mine?

Cass shakes her head, suppressing a laugh.

CASS

How long have you been waiting to use that one?

JOHN  
I'd rather not say.

CASS  
Of course.

John then finds another dish towel and switches to drying. Cass sees that they're already almost finished, so she looks inside the fridge and freezer.

CASS  
What do you know, we really don't have dessert.

John then looks inside the fridge as well.

JOHN  
I can work with this. Do you like panna cotta?

CASS  
You know how to make panna cotta?

JOHN  
Of course, it's super easy. Where do you keep your mixing bowls?

CASS  
Over there.

John sets to prepping the tools as Cass stands there, lost in her own kitchen.

CASS  
Anything I can do?

JOHN  
Nah, leave it to me. I'd say make yourself at home, but, y'know.

CASS  
Ah-huh.

She watches John work, simultaneously not even really seeing him. Sera and Amy-Beth don't come back, and John is already placing four ramekins of panna cotta in the fridge.

JOHN  
Now we wait two hours to overnight.  
It's up to you.

Cass notices the time: 22:00.

CASS  
Whatever you think is better.

JOHN  
Overnight is always better.

She shuts her eyes as if to calm herself, because of course overnight is better.

CASS

Well... I'm guessing you don't work tomorrow, either.

JOHN

Nope. The office knows I don't exist for all of tomorrow, so any chaos they get into, they're on their own.

CASS

That's nice. But you're not staying the night.

JOHN

That's okay. I'm just happy you invited me over, and I hope you like the panna cotta.

CASS

You're not gonna have some?

JOHN

Nah, I should actually get going. Do let me know, though, where we're going next time.

He then heads over the door with Cass following behind, noticing the missing spark in her own eye before shaking her head in denial. John opens the door.

JOHN

Good night, Cass. Thanks again for having me.

CASS

Good night.

He leaves, closing the door behind him. Meanwhile Cass stares at where he was.

BATHROOM - CANDLELIT

Cass, now wearing a bathrobe with her hair in a shower cap, scatters fresh RED ROSE PETALS into her tub as it fills with steaming water.

Several SCENTED CANDLES burn almost like a mosaic. She pours herself a glass of the Romanée-Conti Grand Cru.

CASS

"I've always wanted to be someone's ocean," eh...

She takes a slow sip of the wine, then her bathrobe hits the floor.

Her phone plays "1000 Years" by SWANS as she steps inside the tub.

She cups some bathwater in her hands as if to check her reflection, then lets it slip through her fingers as she dunks her head backwards into it as if in surrender.

When she comes back up her hair is free, and she reaches for her wine glass.

INT. BALDY'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Baldy's workshop in his house is full of gadgets in various stages of completion, a gramophone plays 1920s jazz.

Baldy himself tinkers with the unfinished music box, eyes magnified by coke-bottle glasses. He drinks coffee from a fluted cup.

Amy-Beth tops it up shortly after as he stretches, his back cracking something impressive.

BALDY

Thank you, my dear. It's too bad  
Cassie couldn't join us.

Right then, the doorbell rings, and Baldy gets up, refusing Amy-Beth's help.

BALDY

You sit right there, my dear. I  
shan't be long. There's someone I'd  
love for you to meet.

Amy-Beth does, sitting with her knees together like a good girl. Baldy then returns with KILLIAN, a 25-year-old cybergoth complete with mask and big hair.

BALDY

Sit down, sit down. Get to know  
each other. I still need to get  
this one bit just right, and I know  
I was boring her to death.

Killian nods, and Amy-Beth motions for him to sit on the other side of the bench.

AMY-BETH

I'm Amy-Beth, one of Baldy's old  
students.

Killian simply nods, not even looking at her. Amy-Beth swallows her distaste, then gets up.

AMY-BETH

Coffee? I just made some.

Killian shrugs.

AMY-BETH

Not much of a talker, huh?

Killian shakes his head and Baldy joins them, checking his pocket watch.

The doorbell doesn't ring this time, but the door opens, followed by footsteps. It's John.

JOHN

Hello again.

AMY-BETH

Hi. What're you doing here?

JOHN

Paying my grandpa a visit. Hey, Killian. Long time.

Killian nods as John takes a seat beside Baldy.

BALDY

Alas, our society might have to do without a fifth member. Nonetheless, I'm glad you're all here to spend time with an old man when you've no doubt better things to do.

Amy-Beth's eyes dart between her fellow "society" members and linger on John, and for the most part Killian looks down.

BALDY

I hope you all still long for the philosophical discussions we just never had time for in class. Let's start with introductions in the spirit of newfound friendship. Ladies first.

AMY-BETH

Well... I'm Amy-Beth Flynn. I had English 11 with Baldy over at Fabian, right now I work at Earthly Delights.

BALDY

And how blessed we are that you keep bringing me such choice coffees, teas, and snacks, my dear. Now, it's your turn, Johnny.

JOHN

John van Nuys, grandson. I'm a freelance consultant, so I'm actually the reason we couldn't do this earlier, Gramps. Sorry about that.

BALDY

Well, you finally got some time away, so cheers to that. Last but not least...

He nods to Killian, who still hasn't even doffed his mask, let alone touched his coffee.

BALDY

No need to be shy, Killian. You're already halfway there.

KILLIAN

Killian Pierce. Mr Archibald was my homeschool tutor.

He still looks down, and by now Amy-Beth is much more tuned into John.

BALDY

Wonderful, wonderful. The first step is always the most difficult. Now, then, let's discuss a classic subject, why don't we? Tell me your views on love. My dear?

Amy-Beth searches John's face for her courage.

AMY-BETH

Love makes people happy. Gives them life, and a purpose.

BALDY

Very good, classical view. Let's open the floor, would either of you like to challenge her view?

KILLIAN

Love isn't real. It's just a chemical reaction that we've convinced ourselves is significant.

AMY-BETH

How can you say that? Love is totally real.

KILLIAN

Can you prove it?

Amy-Beth looks to John for help, and he simply grins. She decides to take courage from it regardless.

AMY-BETH

Yeah. I can. John. You love my sister.

BALDY

Oh my, how wonderful.

AMY-BETH

You'd do anything for her, right?

JOHN

I would.

AMY-BETH

What wouldn't you do for her?

John raises his eyebrows at the question.

JOHN

Anything that would hurt her.

AMY-BETH

Well, let's say you did one day.  
What would you do?

JOHN

I'd atone. However she would want  
me to.

KILLIAN

That's still not proof of love.

Amy-Beth takes this harder than John does.

JOHN

True, it's just words I can say  
from my own position. The only  
person who can truly see it is her,  
through my actions.

KILLIAN

But action alone doesn't prove love  
is real.

AMY-BETH

Yes, it does. What do you call  
"acts of service" as a love  
language?

KILLIAN

Acts of service. Do you serve your  
customers because you love them?

AMY-BETH

Well, I don't do it because I hate  
them, if that's what you mean.

Baldy raises both hands to gently simmer the pair down.

BALDY

Such passions really are only  
possible when you're still young.  
Now let me field you another  
question...

But only John is listening; Amy-Beth absorbs his answers while gazing at him and unbeknownst to her, so is Killian.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Cass takes her usual seat at the restaurant, once again contemplating her glass of wine, engaging in a silent soliloquy.

From the other seat, Sera chuckles.

SERA

I can see why he got hooked.  
Looking like this, you scream "give yourself to me."

CASS

I was just minding my business.  
Can't help that not everyone gets the hint.

SERA

Still, that was some damn good panna cotta he made. He's just checking all the boxes, eh?

Cass looks away.

SERA

What, all that and nothing still?

Sera then notices someone a ways off behind Cass. It's difficult to make him out, but it's CRAIG, 37, a tall trad goth with long flowing black hair.

SERA

Oh, dayum.

CASS

What?

SERA

There's this really hot guy at the bar.

CASS

You're happily married, Sera Beale.

SERA

I can still appreciate a hot guy, Cass. Doesn't mean I wanna jump him.

Cass finishes the rest of her wine.

SERA

Oh, shit! He's coming this way!

Cass then turns around as Craig approaches their table, smile spreading across his face at the sight of Sera.

CRAIG  
Sera! Long time!

SERA  
How do you--wait a minute, Craig?

CASS  
Craig?!

CRAIG  
Cass! Hi!

He leans over to hug her as she gets up.

CRAIG  
Ah, man, I didn't recognise you!

CASS  
Speak for yourself! I didn't know you could actually grow hair, or look half decent!

CRAIG  
Yeah, well. The rivethead look is full of bad memories now. Figured a do-over was in order, especially with the new job.

SERA  
Well, it definitely suits you.

CRAIG  
Thanks. I gotta run, but let's hang out, all three of us. Here's my number.

He takes out two business cards from his wallet, reading CRAIG HONARD, ESQ.

CRAIG  
Call me anytime. Till then.

He marches off, and meanwhile Cass reads over the card like even the grains of paper are personal insults.

CASS  
What a jerk. Can't believe he had the nerve to come here and talk to us like we're still cool after all that.

SERA  
Why not? We're not strangers. That breakup was already a year ago, too. Why're you still salty?

Sera clues in.

SERA

Wait... Is that why you're not sure about John?

CASS

I don't know. God... Why can't the universe get a clue when I've decided to swear off men? Why do I suddenly get two?

She wants to drink, but naturally her wine is empty and no waiter is anywhere to be found.

SERA

Well, not to be That Guy, but maybe this is one of those trials before nunhood, you know? To make sure you really do want it and not just because you say you do.

The waiter returns with more wine for Cass.

SERA

And not only that, but maybe you should talk to Craig and hash things out, you know? Maybe they're both in your life right now for a reason.

CASS

You think so too, eh...

She contemplates her wine again.

SERA

But let's put Craig aside for a second. John really didn't spend the night last night?

CASS

No.

SERA

Did you want him to?

CASS

...No.

SERA

Uh-huh. You totally didn't keep him around until midnight just to shoo him home like Cinderella.

Cass now downs her wine in one gulp.

CASS

I really didn't! But!

SERA

But?

CASS

I wish I did. I wish he wasn't such a gentleman who does everything right.

SERA

There it is.

Sera now drinks her own wine.

SERA

Have you reached out to him at all today? Or vice versa?

CASS

Nah. I can't be one of those types who texts him every single day. I'm not that bad.

SERA

True... But he's waiting on you to make the next plan. You shouldn't keep him waiting, even if you really do wanna let him go.

CASS

I know... God. He's so young, too, I can't help wanting to be nice to him.

SERA

Are you sure it's just because he's young?

CASS

100%. If he were Craig's age, I'd tell him to get bent. But he's 25, Sera. Hasn't experienced a single goddamn thing, it's not fair that he can still afford optimism.

She contemplates whether or not she wants another glass of wine.

SERA

I guess my plan worked a little too well in the end.

CASS

Yeah, well. Now I dunno what to say to him next. I don't even know what I want.

SERA

Not even nunhood?

The question pierces through Cass, and Sera can hear the cogs turning in her brain.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Cass and John sit at their usual table, Cass with a glass of mimosa.

JOHN

I like this change of pace. Somehow it hit me that we didn't hang out in the daytime.

CASS

What are you implying?

JOHN

Nothing, just that in the sunlight you look different.

Cass contemplates her mimosa now.

JOHN

The sun as your crown suits you.

She puts her mimosa down.

CASS

Where do you even get these lines?

JOHN

English was one of my best subjects in school.

CASS

You don't say.

JOHN

Not to brag, but I always got straight As in composition. If you want, I can write you a sonnet.

CASS

You don't have to do that.

JOHN

But I want to. Just like how I want to cook for you again.

CASS

You don't have to do that, either.

JOHN

Sounds like you're tired of the usual date stuff. In fact, pardon me for this, but your neck and shoulders look awfully tense.

Cass becomes very aware then that her dress is showing a lot of cleavage.

JOHN

Not to brag, again, but I've been told I give pretty good massages.

Cass covers her décolletage with her hands.

CASS

You shouldn't say things like that in public. People will get the wrong idea.

JOHN

Then would it be better if we were alone?

Cass blusters, and puts her hands down.

CASS

Maybe. But it's too late for that now.

JOHN

Is it? I have the whole day free. We could go to my place, if you want.

He eats his food while Cass remains as she is, contemplating her mimosa again.

CASS

Look, John... I wanted to talk to you about something important.

John puts his utensils down and sits up straight.

JOHN

What's on your mind?

CASS

What we have... What would you call it?

JOHN

I think the general term is relationship.

CASS

Yeah, it is, but it's just a general term, like you said. We're not, like, in a relationship.

JOHN

True. But we have gone out several times.

She looks to her mimosa for help.

JOHN

You can call me your boyfriend if you want.

CASS

Boyfriend... I guess that's what you should be by now, all things considered.

JOHN

Cass... You don't seem too happy right now. Did I do something wrong?

Cass steels herself, shutting her eyes for courage.

CASS

No, John. That's the problem. You didn't do a single thing wrong.

She half-expects John's brain to implode from the inherent contradiction, and she can't bring herself to see if it actually does.

CASS

You're a wonderful guy. I'll be the first to say that. But you and I both know this can't go on.

She hesitates as she gives him the fox necklace he gave her from her purse in a gauze pouch.

CASS

I wouldn't want you to put all this time and effort into a relationship with someone who can't do it for you, you know?

The waiter, about to come refill their glasses, turns right around when he feels the heavy air between them.

CASS

I'm the elder. I have to think of what's best for you. It's not fair to you otherwise.

Both of them are frozen in that moment, the other diners a million miles away. John is especially arrested by the little gauze pouch holding the necklace in his hand.

JOHN

I see. If that's how you feel, that's how you feel.

He smiles sadly.

JOHN

I'm glad I had these two weeks with you. That alone was worth it.

Cass knows all too well that now she definitely can't unsay her words.

JOHN

I'm sorry I didn't change your mind  
about me like you asked.

Every single word Cass wants to say dies before reaching her tongue, and it doesn't help at all that John isn't falling apart.

JOHN

Don't worry about the bill. I'll  
take care of it.

He gets up and leaves her, and all the while Cass sits there, frozen, feeling the weight of her action on not just her shoulders, but her back.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY - IMMEDIATELY AFTER

John's steps forward are sure and propulsive, but each one makes his stoicism wither just a little bit. Sera happens to spot him from the crowd.

SERA

John?

He looks up and they come together, the church in the background. He puts on his best smile, and Sera sees through it.

SERA

Weren't you just with--ohhh no.

She grabs him by the wrist and leads him to a bench.

BENCH

Sera joins him at the bench bearing two steaming cups of coffee. John reaches for his wallet but Sera stops him as she sits down.

JOHN

You didn't have to do this.

SERA

It's the least I could do.

JOHN

Thank you.

He drinks, more out of politeness than anything else. Sera is about to drink when he speaks.

JOHN

In a way I wonder if maybe you were  
right.

SERA

About what?

JOHN

When we first met, and you asked if I'm "one of those 'I can fix her' types."

Sera's heart sinks.

SERA

I didn't mean it like that. I know you're not like... other guys she's had run-ins with before.

JOHN

You're just saying that.

SERA

I'm not. Even if I did doubt you at first.

John smiles as he drinks his coffee down to the last drop, and he gets his wallet out after all.

JOHN

Thanks, Sera. But you know I can't just let you.

Before she can object, he places a crisp bill in her hand and folds it.

SERA

Wait, but this is way too much!

JOHN

Thanks for everything. Take care on your way home.

He gets up and leaves her, and Sera puts the bill in her purse, facepalming.

SERA

Dammit, Cass...

She drinks her coffee as John disappears in the crowd.

INT. CASS'S ROOM - NIGHT

That night, Cass tosses and turns in bed. Finally, she sits up and reaches for her phone on the nightstand and punches in Craig's number.

SPLIT SCREEN - INT. CASS'S ROOM/CRAIG'S ROOM

Cass waits for the line to connect. Craig rouses awake as his cellphone vibrates beside him.

CRAIG

Hello?

Cass pauses, as if realising what time it is and what she's doing.

CRAIG

Hello?

She decides to be brave.

CASS

I'm sorry to call you so late.

Craig sits up on his bed.

CRAIG

Cass? That you?

CASS

Yeah. You said I could call you whenever.

CRAIG

Right, I did say that. What's up?

CASS

I'm sorry about last time.

CRAIG

It's all right. I should've known it would be awkward.

CASS

Well, that, and I got a whole bunch of stuff I wanted to say. I just couldn't in person.

CRAIG

Well, lay it on me. I don't think I'm going back to sleep.

CASS

Lucky you, getting to sleep.

She shuts her eyes in frustration.

CASS

Sorry, no, I didn't mean that.

CRAIG

You did, Cass. Stop with the verbal backspace. It's not like you.

CASS

I can't help it, okay? Especially since I'm not drunk.

She rubs the bridge of her nose.

CASS

Why'd you have to come back now?  
Especially all put together with  
everything working out for you?

Craig sighs, laying on his back and pinching the bridge of his nose.

CRAIG

You're really gonna make me say it,  
aren't you? All right. If you can  
believe it, I needed to be this  
way. Otherwise I'd've left you  
alone like you asked.

The words shoot Cass right through the heart.

CRAIG

Back when we were dating, everyone  
kept telling me I didn't deserve  
you, like I didn't already know  
that. I tried to end it all those  
times BECAUSE I knew that.

Cass freezes, while Craig can feel the weight lifting from his chest.

CRAIG

Remember when I was coming onto you  
like never before, and you said it  
was weirding you out? And we kept  
fighting over how you, or I, just  
didn't get it?

Cass can only nod as Craig laughs bitterly, like he can't believe he's about to finally tell her.

CRAIG

Well... Take a wild guess what his  
name was.

Craig shakes his head before she can even feign a response; he really has no choice but to go full kamakazi.

CRAIG

Cassius. And I swear to God, he was  
just like you if you were a man.

When Cass's brain parses this, she starts with a scoff, which then becomes a full-blown cackle, the likes of which she has to use her pillow to stifle.

Amy-Beth bangs on the neighbouring wall to shut her up.

CASS

Oh my God, Craig!

She rolls in laughter on her bed, and though Craig is still feeling the expense, he smiles softly.

CRAIG

I always liked your laugh, you know.

Cass gradually stops laughing, even wiping her eyes.

CRAIG

I'm glad I got to hear it again.

Cass composes herself.

CRAIG

I'm really sorry about back then. To tell you the truth, meeting Cassius was a sign. Everything made sense, and the first thing I knew I had to do was raid my closet.

CASS

...I see.

CRAIG

Of course, by that time, you already had enough of me and ended it. So it was too little, too late.

CASS

...Huh.

CRAIG

I guess what I'm trying to say, Cass... Is that I haven't been able to stop thinking about you since. You've been haunting me nonstop.

CASS

I hope so, because you've been haunting me nonstop.

CRAIG

In any case, Cass... Thanks for calling. If you're up for it, maybe we can get some coffee sometime.

CASS

Coffee, huh. I'll think about it. Goodnight, Craig.

CRAIG

Good night.

She cuts the call, holding her phone close to her heart, shutting her eyes.

Meanwhile, on Craig's side of the screen beside him, Cassius sleeps. Craig pulls the blanket over both of them.

INT. CLOTHING STORE

Most of the clothes on the racks are black, with the odd splash of colour. Cass both does and doesn't want to check them up.

CASSIUS, a 38-year-old romantic goth who looks rather like a male version of Cass, looks up.

CASSIUS

Welcome.

Cass nods, not looking his way. She inspects the backside of the nun-like frock, even checking her waist size in relation to it.

CASSIUS

May I help you find anything?

Cass shakes her head as she looks around a bit more. No matter what, her eyes keep finding the nun-like frock.

CASSIUS

Do you like that one?

Cass nods ever-so-slightly.

CASSIUS

I might have your size. Just give me a quick second.

He excuses himself and Cass meanwhile takes her phone out and finds John's contact info.

She hesitates as the option to delete his info comes up. As she deliberates, Cassius returns with the dress.

INT. BALDY'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Amy-Beth pours two cups of tea. Killian sits on the bench reading a book, Baldy is hard at work at his desk. She takes one cup for Baldy.

BALDY

Thank you, my dear. I must say, you really don't have to keep doing this for me.

AMY-BETH

I don't mind, Baldy. You need to focus.

Baldy drinks. Amy-Beth turns to go fill the other one and sees that Killian is doing it, still wearing his mask. He offers it to her.

AMY-BETH

You can have it.

Killian responds by pushing it towards her.

AMY-BETH

Thanks.

He nods, going back to his seat and book. The silence is already loud between the three of them, so much so that even a slightly loud slurp disturbs Amy-Beth.

She perks up hearing the familiar turning of the knob offscreen as well as footsteps. She scurries to get another mug but stops upon seeing John.

AMY-BETH

John... What happened?

Sure enough, John's skin is pale, eyes red with noticeable circles. He plunks himself down, and this catches Killian's attention, too.

AMY-BETH

John?

JOHN

Sorry, I didn't really sleep last night.

AMY-BETH

What happened? Wait, don't tell me...

JOHN

I had to concede. It was my own rule.

She reaches out to hug him, and he doesn't return the gesture right away. Even here, he's polite, barely touching her.

Baldy gets up himself.

BALDY

Johnny! Good gravy, but you look like a ghost!

JOHN

Maybe I should be one.

AMY-BETH

Oh my God, no! Don't even joke about that!

John laughs weakly.

AMY-BETH

You just sit right there, I'll get you a cup.

She scurries towards the kitchen. John then notices the music box on Baldy's desk as well as other half-finished projects.

Amy-Beth returns with a fresh cup of tea, making him take it.

He looks at his reflection inside it, and laughs less weakly.

JOHN

I'm turning into her. But I don't  
wanna kiss this tea.

Amy-Beth swallows the sting of that comment, and John himself decides to drink. Amy-Beth sits beside him on the bench, Killian to her other side.

Baldy fishes out a small painting kit and a wooden panel.

BALDY

I was in your exact shoes once upon  
a time. When you have a moment, do  
try it.

He gives them to John.

JOHN

Thanks, Gramps.

BALDY

I'll leave you now. I think you'd  
best be with your peers, Johnny.

Baldy ambles back to his desk. Amy-Beth steels herself.

AMY-BETH

You wanna paint together?

JOHN

Sure.

She clears the workspace for them, and Killian is already getting the water and spare aprons.

AMY-BETH

You wanna paint, too?

Killian nods, taking out a sketchbook from his bag and ripping out sheets for him and Amy-Beth.

AMY-BETH

Thanks.

He nods again and sits down, taking out a pencil now and beginning to draw.

Amy-Beth herself gets a pencil, but can't start even a simple line. John himself is arrested by his thoughts.

AMY-BETH

So, uh... I didn't mention before, but I really liked the panna cotta you made. Can you show me how to make it?

JOHN

Sure.

AMY-BETH

When are you free? And, uh... Is it okay if we go to your house? Just... Y'know.

JOHN

Of course. I'd be glad to have you over. I'll have to check my schedule.

AMY-BETH

Okay, great. And, uh, I dunno if you're interested, but I got the latest Florida Man movie on my phone. Wanna watch it together?

KILLIAN

You like Florida Man?

AMY-BETH

Who doesn't?

KILLIAN

It's so trite.

AMY-BETH

Okay? I wasn't inviting you anyway.

She immediately hisses in regret, and Killian turns his attention back to his drawing.

AMY-BETH

I'm sorry, I didn't mean it like that.

KILLIAN

But you did mean it.

AMY-BETH

No, I didn't. Maybe if Baldy's down, we can watch it here, all of us.

(to Baldy)

Baldy? Is it okay if we watch a movie here?

BALDY

Of course! What a great idea! Forgive me though if I fall asleep

(MORE)

BALDY (cont'd)  
 through it, this music box has just  
 been keeping me up rather  
 consistently.

AMY-BETH  
 Oh, no, then, some other time.

BALDY  
 No, no, I insist. In fact I  
 should've offered some  
 entertainment myself. Goodness, but  
 I'm an awful host.

John gets up.

JOHN  
 I'll help you set up.

He heads towards the living room, and Amy-Beth follows,  
 Baldy close behind. Killian, meanwhile, closes his  
 sketchbook on his drawing of Amy-Beth.

LIVING ROOM

Baldy sits in a recliner, already conked out.

John and Amy-Beth are the only ones laughing at the antics  
 on TV seated on the couch, while Killian, seated on the  
 floor, continues his drawing even in the meagre light.

Amy-Beth looks at John's profile, softly illuminated in the  
 TV light. She gingerly reaches for his hand.

She immediately retracts when a particularly loud snore  
 wakes Baldy up.

BALDY  
 Goodness gracious! How long was I  
 asleep?

KILLIAN  
 Half an hour.

JOHN  
 I'll take you to bed, Gramps.

BALDY  
 Now, now, don't be silly. I can  
 take myself there. You enjoy your  
 time with your friends.

He hobbles away, and Amy-Beth clearly wonders if she should  
 aid him after all but then decides against it.

She then catches a glance of Killian's drawing from the  
 corner of her eye.

AMY-BETH

Hey, what're you drawing?

Killian holds the book closer to his chest.

AMY-BETH

C'mon, let me see.

He shakes his head.

AMY-BETH

It looked so good.

She tries to reach over, but John stops her.

AMY-BETH

Oh... Okay. Sorry.

But she notices that John's hand is on her wrist, and she's naturally crushed when he removes it.

Killian resumes drawing.

When the movie is over, John gets up first.

JOHN

I should be off. I'll have to miss these society meetings for a while because I have the whole next week dedicated to work.

AMY-BETH

You do, eh... But listen, I'll give you my number. You can at least let me know when you have time, okay?

He takes his phone out of his pocket and gives it to her to input her number. Her own phone buzzes.

AMY-BETH

Good stuff. Get home safe.

JOHN

You as well. Talk to you later, Killian.

Killian simply waves goodbye, and John is gone. Amy-Beth, meanwhile, smiles looking at the text she sent herself with John's phone.

KILLIAN

You're really something.

AMY-BETH

What d'you mean?

KILLIAN

You know what they say about bright colours. Natural indicators of danger. It's definitely true in your case.

AMY-BETH

Excuse me?

KILLIAN

You're the type to swoop in when a man's at his lowest and seduce him.

AMY-BETH

I think you're lost. The internet's that way.

Killian shakes his head and turns the page in his sketchbook. Meanwhile Amy-Beth pouts in her seat.

KILLIAN

You're just gonna sit there?

AMY-BETH

Are you gonna go?

KILLIAN

Wanna finish this first. But you know what Mr Archibald says, "Ladies first."

Amy-Beth grunts, taking out her phone and scrolling, waiting for Killian to finish drawing and break first. But he's much too focused, and she naturally sneaks a peek at his work.

AMY-BETH

Hey... Who's that?

For once he doesn't hide his sketchbook from view. She gets closer and sees that it's her he drew, and quite well.

AMY-BETH

That's really good.

KILLIAN

Anyone can do it.

AMY-BETH

I sure can't.

KILLIAN

If you spent more time doing something rather than nothing, you could.

He gets up, and rips the page from his sketchbook and gives it to her.

KILLIAN

It's dark right now. I can give you  
a ride home if you want.

AMY-BETH

Thanks, but no thanks.

KILLIAN

Suit yourself. Later.

He leaves, Amy-Beth holding his drawing of her.

EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT

John walks along the sidewalk, stopping at the church. Even  
with his overcoat and scarf, he shivers, his breath coming  
out in puffs.

The moon up above is waxing crescent. John looks up at it as  
if it holds answers.

His reverie is broken by his phone ringing to the tune of  
America's "Ventura Highway."

JOHN

Hey, Mama. Yeah, I'm all right. I  
think. It's just getting colder  
here.

He smiles weakly.

JOHN

You're right, it's nothing compared  
to a normal day for you. Where are  
you going next?

He leans against the church's outer wall, little gauze pouch  
with the fox necklace in his hand.

JOHN

I bet we all look really small down  
here.

He tucks it back inside his coat pocket.

JOHN

No, really, Mama, don't worry about  
me. Yeah, Gramps is all right.  
Staying up all night, though.

His mother talks a while on the other end of the line.  
John's smile gets weaker as his eyes lose a bit of light.

JOHN

I'm just on my way home. No, you  
don't have to come down. I'm taking  
care of everything.

He looks up at the crescent moon and feigns a bit more of a smile.

JOHN  
Have fun up there. Love you.

He slowly puts his phone back into his pocket, and is spotted by Killian in his car, honking.

JOHN  
Amy-Beth already left?

KILLIAN  
Maybe. I dunno. You need a ride?

John's face darkens.

JOHN  
Go back and take her home. Right now.

KILLIAN  
And subject myself to more of her frigidness? Not a chance.

Now John full-on glares at Killian, who flinches in his seat. He may as well be electric.

JOHN  
If something ever happens to her, you're gonna wish that's all you had to deal with.

Killian shudders behind his mask, then finally grunts before driving back.

INT. CASS'S ROOM - NIGHT

Cass and Sera both lay on the former's bed. On Cass's nightstand is the bottle of Romanée-Conti Grand Cru and two glasses, though only one has had wine in it.

CASS  
I'm going to hell for this.

SERA  
No, you're not.

CASS  
I am. This whole thing was a sin. You should've seen his face, Sera. Here I was trying to avoid making him make it. I'm cursed.

SERA  
You're not cursed, you just broke up with someone. And believe it or not, breakups are supposed to suck.  
(MORE)

SERA (cont'd)

That's how you know you had a good thing going.

CASS

A good thing going... Yeah, I guess I did.

SERA

And you still decided to end things.

CASS

Hence, I'm the worst. Now for sure I need to cloister myself from the world. I gotta repent for real.

Sera simply shakes her head in lieu of a reply. Meanwhile the front door opens and a series of stomps leads to Cass's room, from Amy-Beth.

CASS

Hey, you ever heard of knocking?

AMY-BETH

Oh, please. Like you ever have a reason to be all secretive.

CASS

What's got you all pissy?

AMY-BETH

That stupid guy Baldy invited, Killian. I always heard about homeschooled kids being weird, but he's even worse than a normie. I love Baldy, but what was he thinking, having him come over?

She then opens Cass's closet, this time not a sea of black but rather punctuated with the odd blue, red, and purple. She turns each outfit like in search of something, and naturally Cass gets up.

CASS

Well, I dunno about all that, but how does my wardrobe factor into all this?

AMY-BETH

You factor into it pretty freaking well.

CASS

How?

Amy-Beth pauses, partly to ask herself what she's doing and partly to give herself permission to say it as she turns to face Cass.

AMY-BETH

I saw John today. At Baldy's.  
Looked awful, said he didn't sleep  
at all last night. Take a wild  
guess who could've made him like  
that.

Naturally that stings, but then Cass grabs hold of sense.

CASS

So what does that have to do with  
that Killian guy lighting the fuse  
on your tampon?

AMY-BETH

It has EVERYTHING to do with that  
Killian guy lighting the fuse on my  
tampon!

Cass looks to Sera for help, naturally she shrugs. Amy-Beth  
stomps out of the room and slams the door. For good measure  
she slams her own bedroom door next door, too.

CASS

What the hell was that?

Sera shrugs, and Cass exits her room.

AMY-BETH'S ROOM

A knock sounds on Amy-Beth's door. Her room is the exact  
opposite of Cass's, full of pinks and whites and frills, not  
to mention stuffed animals. She's buried under her covers.

Cass knocks again when she doesn't answer. Finally, she lets  
herself in and sits at the end of the bed.

AMY-BETH

Get out of my room.

CASS

You can't barge into my room and  
then cry about your own boundaries  
being broken. Besides, you owe me  
an explanation.

When Amy-Beth doesn't get out from under it, Cass yanks the  
blanket off.

CASS

What's your problem?

Amy-Beth shakes her head.

CASS

Amy-Beth.

AMY-BETH

It's so unfair.

CASS

What? Life? You're just learning that now?

AMY-BETH

I don't wanna hear that from you. As if you'd know anything about life being unfair.

CASS

I think I have an idea.

AMY-BETH

No, you don't. You got everything and everyone first, the whole world wrapped around your finger while I just got scraps.

Cass's brain buffers.

AMY-BETH

And that's if I'm lucky.

Amy-Beth buries her face in her pillow.

CASS

The entire time we've been alive, you have a problem with that NOW?

Amy-Beth then sits up, meanwhile Sera approaches the doorway.

CASS

You're 25, right? When are you gonna grow up?

AMY-BETH

See? Told you you don't get it.

CASS

What's there to get? You're complaining about shit you should've gotten over like 10 years ago.

AMY-BETH

Typical. Thinking is real hard when it's with your brain rather than something else, huh?

The next thing you know, the sisters are locked in a chase around the room. Sera tries to both stop them and keep out of their way.

SERA

You guys! Stop!

Cass stops the chase first. Sera holds her back for good measure, Amy-Beth also panting.

SERA

Amy-Beth, you were way out of line.  
And Cass, seriously? So were you.

The sisters glare at each other from their spots in the room, still out of breath.

AMY-BETH

Okay... Fine. I'm sorry I said that. And broke into your room. And slammed your door.

SERA

Good. Cass?

AMY-BETH

But I really don't wanna see you right now.

CASS

Good, cuz I don't wanna see you right now, either.

AMY-BETH

Fine!

CASS

Fine!

Cass marches out of the room, grabbing Sera by the wrist as she does so and kicks the door shut.

INT. CASS'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Cass plates waffles for two and carries them to the table.

She then knocks on Amy-Beth's door.

CASS

I made breakfast.

Amy-Beth opens the door and presents her with a knit ugly Christmas sweater, her eyes red and lined with dark circles.

AMY-BETH

Happy early birthday.

When Cass's brain finishes buffering, she snorts and ruffles Amy-Beth's hair.

CASS

Get over here.

As they sit down, she takes off the apron and pulls the sweater on, "LE TITS NOW" prominently visible. Amy-Beth also snorts.

CASS

It's perfect. Thanks.

AMY-BETH

I'm sorry about what I said.  
Really.

CASS

No big. Were you seriously up all  
night working on this?

AMY-BETH

Uh-huh. I couldn't sleep. All that  
running spiked my adrenaline way  
up.

CASS

To be that young. I conked right  
out. Nevermind that I forgot how  
much running hurts.

Amy-Beth chuckles, and so does Cass.

AMY-BETH

You wanna watch the new Florida Man  
movie with me?

CASS

It's already out?

AMY-BETH

Yeah. We watched it at Baldy's but  
he snored through it, so I wanna  
watch it for real.

CASS

Poor guy. Must be real tired to  
sleep through Florida Man.

They finish their meal, and Amy-Beth opts not to tell her  
about her empty place at the society meetings.

CASS

Oh wait... Is it all right to watch  
it later with you? There's  
something I need to do.

Though disappointed to hear this, Amy-Beth nods.

INT. FITTING ROOM - DAY

Cass's new sweater and pencil skirt hang on one hanger while  
several other goth gowns and outfits hang on the other.

She turns, checking all the angles of a nun-like frock,  
mostly black with white lace accents.

CASS

God freaking dammit.

She really studies her reflection in the mirror.

CASS  
Everything about it is perfect.

Sure enough, the dress does a fantastic job of hiding her natural shape without looking matronly. She eyes the matching veil.

CASS  
All right... Here goes.

She gathers her hair and dons the veil as best she can, even using it to cover her eyes as she faces the mirror. Slowly she lowers it to see her face, a thousand emotions within.

EXT. BALDY'S BACKYARD - EVENING

John rakes leaves in Baldy's yard. A breeze blows, and he looks up to where the moon is, currently half-empty.

He remembers telling Cass, Sera, and Amy-Beth about his mother's moon metaphor for women. He continues raking and notices some snowflakes falling.

Baldy peeks out from a window.

BALDY  
I've made some tea, Johnny.

JOHN  
I'm almost done, Gramps.

BALDY  
Don't stay too long, they're saying  
snow's coming.

Baldy goes back inside as John puts the rest of the leaves into the bag and ties it off. When finished, he goes inside.

INT. BALDY'S HOUSE - EVENING

He drinks from a big teacup, more energised than before as Baldy takes off his glasses.

BALDY  
At last! It's done! Couldn't have  
done with without you, Johnny.

JOHN  
No worries, Gramps. Congrats on  
finishing it.

BALDY  
Your mother loved the moon as a  
child. Wanted very much to go there  
herself one day.

JOHN  
She used to tell me all sorts of  
stories about it.

BALDY

She did that back then, too, God  
bless her. I know she's up there  
herself finally, playing among the  
stars as we speak.

Baldy turns the key on the music box and it plays "Fly Me to  
the Moon," complete with a miniature painted moon inside the  
lid.

BALDY

Maybe she's even seen your Gran.  
Wouldn't that be nice, Johnny?

John watches the moon inside the box, letting the orgel  
notes wash over him.

Meanwhile Baldy yawns something impressive, and lays his  
arms and head down on the table.

JOHN

Yeah, it would. Say, Gramps, what  
do you wanna do for dinner? I kind  
of want some chicken pot pie with  
how cold it's getting.

He then notices that Baldy is deeply asleep. He gets ready  
to hoist him up.

JOHN

You shouldn't sleep out here,  
Gramps. Come on.

He shakes Baldy's shoulder, and sure enough he doesn't stir  
awake.

JOHN

Gramps?

He quickly grabs his phone to call his mother.

INT. BALDY'S WORKSHOP - DAY

The next day, everyone barring Craig is present in the  
workshop. Cass, wearing a more trad-punk outfit with fishnet  
top, holds Amy-Beth. Sera approaches John and hugs him.

SERA

I'm sorry you're going through  
this.

JOHN

Thank you. And thank you for  
coming.

SERA

Of course.

He then makes his way to Cass, and Amy-Beth lets go of her to go hug Sera, Killian meanwhile waiting close by to be noticed.

Cass hugs John.

CASS

Look, you need anything at all,  
tell me, okay?

JOHN

Thanks.

She gently lets him go, then notices Killian watching Amy-Beth.

CASS

Excuse me a second.

She strides over to him, and naturally he's tiny compared to her.

CASS

I don't believe we've met. I'm  
Amy-Beth's sister Cass.

She extends her hand, and Killian very tentatively takes it.

CASS

Amy-Beth mentioned you. You're  
Killian.

He nods, and she smirks.

CASS

I'd ask if a cat's got your tongue,  
but you look like you're silencing  
yourself. Why is that?

She smirks again when Killian's brain trips over itself.

CASS

I won't say too much because of  
where we are, but if you ever make  
my sister cry again, I'll be sure  
to pick some nice boots out just  
for you. Do you understand?

Killian hurriedly nods and Cass smiles, patting him on the shoulder.

CASS

Good boy.

She leaves him and once she reaches Sera, she releases a breath she didn't know she was holding.

CASS

Oh, my God. I went too far there,  
didn't I?

Sera looks over at Killian, standing there awestruck.

SERA

Nah, he'll live.

She sees John and Amy-Beth talking.

AMY-BETH

I can help you clean up.

JOHN

You don't have to. I'd rather do it  
alone.

Amy-Beth then notices Killian off in a corner on his own.

AMY-BETH

Sorry, excuse me a second.

She leaves him and goes over to Killian.

AMY-BETH

How are you holding up?

Killian shrugs.

AMY-BETH

Why're you here all by yourself,  
anyway?

KILLIAN

You really didn't notice? I'm the  
odd one out.

AMY-BETH

Well, that doesn't mean you have to  
actually be by yourself. C'mon.  
You're being creepy anyway.

She grabs hold of his wrist and makes to return to John, but  
Killian remains where he is.

KILLIAN

I wanted to talk to you, actually.  
I'm--

He stops himself, letting go of Amy-Beth's wrist to take off  
his mask.

AMY-BETH

Killian?

KILLIAN

I'm sorry for what I said last time. I didn't mean to make you cry.

AMY-BETH

But I didn't--

She immediately clues in, then nods.

AMY-BETH

Well, as long as you understand, it's water under the bridge.

KILLIAN

So we're cool?

AMY-BETH

Yeah, we're cool. Now c'mon.

They make their way over to John, who is now in a conversation with Cass again.

CASS

Are you sure you're gonna be okay by yourself?

JOHN

I won't be alone. Mama's coming over. She's finally done her work.

CASS

Oh yeah? That's good.

She hesitates, and John smiles. Amy-Beth, meanwhile, is joined by Sera, and Killian in turn pays attention to Amy-Beth.

CASS

I'm sorry. Even now I'm selfish. Thinking about when we broke up.

JOHN

I think about it a lot, too.

Cass nods, silently going "Yeah, of course you would." John takes her hand.

JOHN

I've been going about it all wrong. I realise that now. I put a lot of pressure on you, it's no wonder you dumped me.

Amy-Beth softly gasps while Sera solemnly nods.

CASS

John--

John gently brushes his fingertips against her lips to shush her.

JOHN

Nevertheless, I know what to do now. Your birthday's coming up soon, right?

CASS

The 23rd, yeah.

JOHN

(mostly to himself)

It's gonna be hard with Gramps out of commission... But surely with Mama's help....

Cass looks to her friends for help, but naturally Sera and Amy-Beth have no clue what he's cooking up. Meanwhile, Killian bristles as John's eyes lock onto his for a moment.

JOHN

Even though I said I'll get out of your hair permanently if I failed... Will you let me try again just one more time?

The air around them is as fragile as overblown glass, and it's hard to tell whose heart is beating louder.

INT. CASS'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - EVENING

Craig laughs, seated between Cass and Sera at the table, each of them with a simple meal and glasses of wine before them.

CRAIG

Now that's a line! Congrats, Cass, you're living in a movie.

CASS

I don't wanna live in a goddamn movie. Who knows how long he's gonna keep me waiting?

SERA

To be fair, you kept him waiting a while, too.

CRAIG

Yeah, you're so caught up in not wanting to make mistakes that you're still the type to wait forever. I actually think you got worse.

CASS

And whose fault was that, pray tell?

Craig responds by drinking his wine.

CASS  
Speaking of... When are you gonna  
show us his picture?

SERA  
Yeah, I wanna see Cass's male  
doppelganger.

CRAIG  
Alright, fine. I guess I deserved  
that one.

He opens his phone case to show him and Cassius as his  
lockscreen. Cass squints, almost like she recognises him.

SERA  
Woah! Sorry, Cass, but he's built!

CASS  
This just depresses me more. How  
the hell did I not clue in all that  
time?

CRAIG  
That's just life, Cass. It's not  
known for being fair.

CASS  
You're telling me. I couldn't have  
competed with that.

CRAIG  
Luckily because he's just like you,  
I knew what not to do when I went  
for him for real.

Now Cass responds by drinking her wine and rolling her eyes.

CRAIG  
Still. Sucks that I'm the reason  
you wanted to check out entirely.

CASS  
You're not the reason anymore. I  
forgive you. Then again...

CRAIG  
Then again, what?

She pours herself another glass and drinks.

CASS  
Maybe all of this is a sign. You  
and Cassius... You're happy, right?

CRAIG  
Yeah.

CASS  
And he's just like me?

CRAIG  
Pretty much.

The wine washes over her, bringing clarity with it. And with that clarity, naturally, comes doubt the more it sinks in.

CASS  
Ah, but maybe it won't work out like that. You're nothing like him. Dammit, sounded like the perfect plan until I actually thought about it.

All the while, Craig regards the both of them before clearing his throat.

CRAIG  
Not to be That Guy, but the absence of this is probably why it's going so well with Cassius. We don't get hung up on little things.

CASS  
This is hardly "little things."  
This is serious.

CRAIG  
Only because you make it serious. You're not comfortable without something to freak out over.

CASS  
So then why would John still go for me?

CRAIG  
Because he's a man. He'll wade through any and all manner of crap you throw at him if he wants you badly enough.

He can see Cass BSOD-ing in real time.

CRAIG  
Don't tell me you're still confused.

CASS  
I kinda am, yeah.

Craig rakes a hand through his hair, exhaling through his nose.

SERA

I think what he's saying is that men and women are naturally attracted to each other despite the mismatch.

CASS

I don't understand.

CRAIG

It's much simpler than that. You're both overcomplicating it.

CASS

Wait... Is that it? Do I just...  
Not want to understand?

She sees complicated math equations and formulae before her eyes as she searches for the answer within.

CASS

But why wouldn't I want to? Or...  
Why would I want to not want to...  
Argh!

She now claws her hands through her hair.

CASS

Dammit, Craig! This is all your fault!

Craig just scoffs as he drinks his wine.

SERA

We're getting nowhere real fast,  
aren't we...

CASS

I think I get why you went for Cassius after all. He's me if I didn't think about it.

SERA

That would make it easier, yeah.

CRAIG

Still overcomplicating it. Now stop before you hurt yourselves.

CASS

Way ahead of ya. I don't think I'll ever understand men.

SERA

Me neither.

Craig just shakes his head and his cellphone rings.

CRAIG  
Sorry, gotta take this.  
(accepts the call)  
Hey, hon. Yeah, I'm still here.

He steps off to a quieter corner as he continues talking, meanwhile Cass and Sera are still puzzling over the conversation until Cass groans.

CASS  
Oh, God... I just realised that  
John mentioned my birthday.

SERA  
What's wrong with that?

CASS  
Knowing him, he's probably gonna do  
something totally crazy and  
embarrassing and I'm gonna fall for  
it.

SERA  
Again, what's wrong with that?

CASS  
Like that time he changed his  
height on our first date. I  
challenged him to get taller, and  
he did.

SERA  
Cass, I think we're both drunk. You  
make him sound like he's magical.

CASS  
Maybe he's an alien. His mom's a  
cosmopolinaut, or whatever he said.

SERA  
That's your future mother-in-law  
you're talking about, y'know. Don't  
call her something weird.

Craig returns to the table.

CRAIG  
I gotta go, you guys. Cassius said  
he made dinner, too.

CASS  
Lucky you, getting spoiled by your  
ex and current.

CRAIG  
I'm lucky, I know. But still,  
thanks for having me.

CASS  
Thanks for coming.

CRAIG  
And sorry I gotta miss your actual  
birthday. Take care, and merry  
Christmas if I don't see you then,  
either.

SERA  
Bye, merry Christmas.

CASS  
Merry Christmas.

He hugs both of them and sees himself out.

CASS  
Dammit, Craig!

SERA  
What'd he do now?

CASS  
I fell for his bullshit again, in  
real time. Says something that  
doesn't make sense and then  
conveniently leaves. God!

SERA  
Y'know, though... I think he had a  
point. If you're this chaotic and  
John still wants you, then clearly  
you're doing something right. Which  
means!

She points straight at Cass, just like Phoenix Wright.

SERA  
You're stacked for a reason. You  
gotta let go and stop running away.

Cass's face screams "are you serious right now?" but  
nonetheless looks down as if they do, in fact, hold all the  
answers.

INT. FITTING ROOM - DAY

Once again Cass is in the fitting room, trying on the  
nun-style frock. It still fits her perfectly, and like  
before, she has the veil on as well.

CASS  
Dammit... Why do you have to be  
perfect?

She gives her reflection a look, like "who are you kidding?"  
She then drapes another dress over herself, a romantic one  
with deep red and black, like wine.

She eyes another article hanging on the wall; a matching black and red lace veil. With her free hand she takes off the nun-style veil and puts on the lace one.

CASS

Dammit, you're perfect, too. Why are you both perfect?

She remembers all the times she dressed provocatively when with John and how he never once seemed to notice.

She's distracted by her phone ringing to the tune of "Mind/Body/Light/Sound" by SWANS.

CASS

Hey, Amy-Beth. Just shopping. Oh? Is that right?

She releases a deep sigh of relief.

CASS

That's excellent. Yeah, of course, I'll be right there.

She cuts the call and gives both dresses and veils a discerning last look.

INT. BALDY'S HOUSE - DAY

Cass, Sera, and Amy-Beth are now in Baldy's house with the latter covered in a blanket on his chair. Sera is even wearing what looks similar to a goth maid outfit as she sweeps the floor.

BALDY

Ladies, please, won't you let me work?

SERA

Not a chance, Baldy. You scared all of us half to death.

Amy-Beth brings out a tray of tea and box of biscuits as Cass finishes wiping the windows.

BALDY

I do apologise.

CASS

Stop it, we're just glad you're all right. But no more late nights, okay? You have to rest.

BALDY

Very well, Cassie, Serafina. Let's stop this and have some tea.

Cass and Sera stop their tasks and join him and Amy-Beth at the couches for tea.

BALDY

You know, being in the company of such lovely ladies really does make me want to get up and dance.

AMY-BETH

Save your strength, Baldy. We don't want you hurting yourself.

BALDY

Three against one. That's hardly fair, ladies.

Nonetheless he drinks is tea and gains more colour in his face as he does so.

BALDY

This house is so much better with young people in it.

The girls all exchange looks and giggle behind their teacups.

BALDY

In fact... Why don't we have a society meeting of our own? I have a good question for you; what does Heaven look like?

CASS

Heaven? Um... Clouds and sunlight, eternal blue.

SERA

Probably a garden.

AMY-BETH

Heaven... I think it would look like an ocean, only not an ocean. Somehow.

BALDY

What if I told you I saw it?

The girls exchange looks.

BALDY

In Heaven there's a pie that's been baking for 20 years. That smell, oh! I'll never forget it. That alone gave me wings. There was a time when this house smelled only of pies.

He inhales as if smelling them right now.

BALDY

When I got there, though, it wasn't cooling on the windowsill. Milly--my wife--said she'd baked it the day she moved in. Said it was going to be the best pie she ever made. You remember how rotund I was back when I was teaching.

The girls nod.

BALDY

But alas... Just like back then, she wouldn't let me sneak a bite. Was quite stern about it, even had the rolling pin still in her hand. Told me it would still take another ten years for it to be ready, maybe more.

AMY-BETH

Awww that's so sweet.

CASS

Well, there you have it. Proof that you'll outlive us all, Baldy.

BALDY

Ahhh but I really wanted some of that pie...

SERA

I'll make you some. Won't take twenty years, though.

BALDY

You're too kind, Serafina. But do let me help you, it really is boring being infirm. I'd really rather--

He shuts up the instant all three glare at him.

BALDY

My, you all looked like Milly just now. I daresay she won't let me up there at all if I displease you.

Satisfied, the girls all get up and make their way to the kitchen, pushing Baldy along.

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - ROOF - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

John wields a telescope, shifting the trajectory bit by bit. The moon is new.

Meanwhile, inside, Killian draws Amy-Beth in the meagre light, seated against the wall on the floor. He's not wearing his mask.

KILLIAN

You're not gonna see it tonight.

JOHN

No.

He climbs back inside and closes the window. Killian wraps up his drawing and John gets a call on his cellphone.

JOHN

Hey, Mama. We're almost done cleaning up the house... I'm glad you like the music box.

As his mother talks on the other line, John nods.

JOHN

That's good. We're almost done phase two. Killian? One sec.

He gives him his phone.

KILLIAN

Hey. Yeah, I'm done. Is it okay if I send it to you on John's phone? Okay, one sec.

He puts the phone down as he flips to a sketchbook page we can't see and takes a flash photo with John's phone. He sends it.

KILLIAN

Did you get it? If you want, I can ink it again... Okay, sure, yeah, in that case I'll do it tonight... It's fine, I can't sleep anyway.  
(chuckles)  
Nah, nothing like that. Okay, good night.

He gives John his phone back as the latter sits on the floor, too, looking up at the new moon through the window, remembering.

INT. BALDY'S WORKSHOP - EVENING (FLASHBACK)

Title card: Yesterday

Baldy's on his old-school rotary phone. The gramophone plays baroque music for concentration.

BALDY

You know how it is when inspiration comes knocking, you must answer. I assure you, I never felt more alive. Well, then, I'll leave you to it. Take care, now, Jenny.

When he hangs up, Baldy draws up schematics and markups we wouldn't understand on a series of giant sheets of paper, looking just like a teacher. John studies every detail.

BALDY

So we take this here, and make sure it's measured exactly, and connect it to this piece...

John nods, taking notes. Baldy taps a spot on the paper with a wooden pointer stick.

BALDY

This one you have to be especially careful with. If you overheat it, you're in for a bad time.

John nods, and Baldy taps on another spot.

BALDY

And this one, oh, you're going to love this one. Will give you peerless zoom.

JOHN

Good. I'm going to need all the zoom I can get. What about lighting?

BALDY

Ah, that's what this lovely little part is for.

John nods as Baldy goes into his technobabble.

INT. CASS'S ROOM - MIDNIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT DAY)

A waxing crescent moon shines in Cass's bedroom window. She's wide-awake, staring at the TWO DRESS BOXES stacked on her chair, shaking her head at herself.

A gentle knock sounds on her door. Amy-Beth opens the door and climbs into the bed.

CASS

What's up?

AMY-BETH

Killian asked me out.

CASS

When?

AMY-BETH

Just now.

CASS

It's like 3:00 a.m.

AMY-BETH

I know.

CASS

No good ever comes out of a guy calling you this late, especially if he asks you out. I really am gonna have to pick out some good boots.

AMY-BETH

What?

CASS

Nothing. What'd you tell him?

AMY-BETH

That I'd think about it. I'm so used to him being tactless, and then he does something like draw my picture and let me have it.

CASS

So he's an artist. They are weird.

AMY-BETH

Yeah, but like... For once I'm thinking I don't mind it so much. I think I can see why Baldy wanted us to get friendly.

CASS

Well, no matter what, keep your wits about you.

AMY-BETH

I can handle myself. It's you I'm worried about, waffling about John.

CASS

I'm not waffling. I'm trusting The Plan.

AMY-BETH

And what's The Plan?

Cass draws a blank, meanwhile Amy-Beth shoots her a look.

CASS

The Divine Plan. Or whatever the hell. I dunno. I'm still figuring it out.

AMY-BETH

Sure you don't want some indecision with those waffles?

CASS

Whatever, go to bed.

AMY-BETH

I'm just saying, you might wanna consider taking Baldy up on his offer. G'night, though.

CASS

'Night.

Amy-Beth then leaves the room, and Cass turns to face her window, the moon being the last thing she sees before falling asleep.

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - ROOF - NIGHT

Once again John is perched on his rooftop, bundled up. Each breath he takes is visible.

The moon is now half-full, first quarter. He frames it in his hands.

Killian pokes his head out from inside the house.

KILLIAN

Are you seriously gonna do it?

JOHN

Yeah. I promised her.

Killian shakes his head, looking at his sketched picture of Amy-Beth while John studies the moon like an artist would measure his subject in relation to his thumb.

His concentration is momentarily broken by his phone vibrating. He's annoyed until he sees who's calling.

KILLIAN

Hey. You're not asleep yet?...All right, all right, my bad... Oh. Really? Great! Well, I'll call you. At a normal hour. Yeah. Night.

He cuts the call, filled with renewed vigour as he studies the moon again.

INT. CHURCH - AFTERNOON

Cass wheels Baldy in his chair down the church aisle.

BALDY

Here is fine, Cassie.

But she keeps going to the front where the stage is, with the statues of Jesus and The Virgin Mary. She activates the brakes and practically hoists Baldy.

BALDY

Any more forceful and I'll meet The Lord after all.

Even though she scowls something impressive, Baldy snickers like he knows they're on holy ground. For good measure, Cass practically wraps him in his lap blanket.

BALDY

It's awfully kind of you to spend so much of your birthday with me, Cassie.

CASS

No problem, Baldy. Besides... I've been thinking a lot about how you want me to join your meetings.

BALDY

Only if you wish to. My door is open regardless. In the meantime, let's pray, shall we?

CASS

Right, right.

They clasp hands in prayer, Baldy looking more at peace than Cass, like she can't stand The Virgin Mary's loving eyes.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Cass sits at the head of the table, joined by Sera and Amy-Beth, all of them clinking their wine glasses.

SERA

Happy birthday, old lady.

AMY-BETH

Happy birthday!

CASS

Gee, thanks.

Nonetheless, they drink. Cass keeps eyeing the empty seat where John would otherwise be. The would-be waxing gibbous moon in the restaurant window is covered by clouds.

SERA

So 36 laps around the sun. How's it feel?

CASS

Fine, I guess.

The lights at the restaurant all turn off and John comes in with a candlelit cake.

JOHN

Happy birthday to you...

(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)  
 (together with Sera and  
 Amy-Beth)  
 Happy birthday to you. Happy  
 birthday, dear Cassandra, happy  
 birthday...

He sets the cake down before Cass.

JOHN  
 To you.

Cass's breath catches as the moon even acts as a spotlight  
 for John.

SERA  
 Cass?

Cass shakes her head; that entire bit was just her daydream.

SERA  
 It's like you went to the moon just  
 now.

CASS  
 Sorry, I didn't really sleep last  
 night.

SERA  
 Well, you did say you'd wait.

CASS  
 Should I have said no?

SERA  
 (simultaneously with  
 Amy-Beth)  
 No.

AMY-BETH  
 You're so bad at romance, Cass.

CASS  
 I'm not used to it, okay? Not like  
 him, with all his lines and  
 gestures and stuff.

SERA  
 They do say men are the real  
 romantics. We're just along for the  
 ride.

AMY-BETH  
 I can see that. Killian's already  
 got an entire sketchbook full of  
 drawings of me. And the colours he  
 uses! I didn't even know some of  
 them existed.

Cass studies her glass of wine, gently swishing it this way and that.

CASS

One of the first things John said was that he crossed oceans of wine to find me.

SERA

No way!

CASS

He's gotta be traversing an entire planet of it by now. Wonder if he'll be back by Christmas.

SERA

I'm sure he will. In the meantime, allow me.

She refills Cass's glass as Cass keeps looking up at the entranceway.

The cloud cover begins lifting. Sera then gasps as someone in a deep red jacket--Craig--creeps behind Cass and puts a present before her.

CRAIG

Surprise! I could make it after all!

CASS

Oh my gosh, hey!

They hug, and Cass notices Cassius with him, and she's frozen at the sight of him.

CRAIG

Hope it's okay I brought him.

CASS

Hell yeah! I've been wanting to meet you ever since I learned you exist.

CASSIUS

Same.

Sera gets another chair for Cassius and they all sit down.

CASS

But you look familiar. And not because of... Y'know...

It takes her a second, and she's about to react when Cassius gently winks and motions for her to get closer.

CASSIUS

(whispering)

No one's claimed that dress, by the way.

CASS

Oh my God, THAT'S where I know you from! Geez, of all the times for me to space out.

AMY-BETH

(to Craig)

So wait, who're you?

CRAIG

It's been a while, eh? It's Craig.

AMY-BETH

No way! You look so good now! And this is...?

CRAIG

My boyfriend, Cassius.

Amy-Beth immediately speedruns every possible memory through her head and seems to clue in. At that moment the waiter comes to offer them some wine and they accept.

Meanwhile, Cass tries not to drown in her thoughts.

CRAIG

You're doing it again, y'know. You're, what, 36 now? As of today, you should stop overthinking.

CASS

It's not that easy, okay? But fine, you're right.

(to Cassius)

Sorry. It's nice to finally meet you.

CASSIUS

Likewise. I've heard a lot about you. Like you work as a curator at the art gallery, are a Florida Man fan, and that you know the best wines. He was right, you are basically me.

CASS

What're the odds?

CASSIUS

But you're a lot prettier, and not just because it's your birthday.

CASS

Awww.

She clinks glasses with him and drinks.

CASS

A man after my own heart... Then again, maybe we're separated at birth.

CASSIUS

I thought that, too. My birthday's also today.

CASS

No way! Happy birthday!

She clinks glasses with him again.

CASS

Never thought I'd say this, Craig, but you win my birthday.

He smiles and raises his glass. Amy-Beth, meanwhile, stands with her phone in her hand.

AMY-BETH

Excuse me a second, guys.

She leaves them for a quieter corner and calls John.

AMY-BETH

Hey! You sure you can't come?... Seriously? What could be more important? Tell her you're sorry? Tell her yourself, jerk!

She cuts the call.

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - ROOF - NIGHT

John himself puts his phone away, sighing.

JOHN

That's it, then. We gotta do it now.

There's so many clouds in the sky that it's impossible to see the moon, and even worse, snow begins to fall.

Killian groans.

KILLIAN

I'll be damned if I get frostbite cuz of you. Or worse.

JOHN

Ready the scope. I'll make it up to you later, we gotta do this before morning.

KILLIAN

You better.

He readies the scope as John sits, doing his best not to shiver.

John nods as Killian flips a switch and the sound of a generator whirring on is heard.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Meanwhile, back at the restaurant, everyone but Amy-Beth is happily chattering away. She checks her phone, clearly waiting for John to call.

For just a moment in the window there's a flash of light like lightning, but it's not followed by thunder.

Sera then notices the snow falling through the windows.

SERA

Oh hey. Look at that. It's really coming down.

Cass and company notice it, too. Cass's expression softens.

CASS

Well, I wouldn't want him to come out in this weather.

Amy-Beth, though still pouting, nonetheless accepts it. Sera gives Cass a knowing grin.

CRAIG

I hate to say it, but we do have a long drive back. If you want, though, I can give you guys a ride home.

SERA

Would you? I'll take care of the bill.

CRAIG

No, no, what's lawyer money for?  
(to Cassius)  
Cass, hon, would you mind taking them to the car?

Cass looks at Craig, eyebrow raised, and he just grins sheepishly as he flags the waiter over. Privately, though, she giggles, especially as Cassius offers her his arm.

INT. CRAIG'S CAR - NIGHT

Craig sits in the driver's seat with Cassius riding shotgun, the girls all huddled in the back. Snow pours outside.

CRAIG

Great. As usual, everyone forgets how to drive the second they see a snowflake.

SERA

You'd think they'd remember where we are.

CRAIG

Right?

CASS

I'm still glad you came by, despite it.

CRAIG

Of course.

CASS

Especially in this car. It's new, isn't it?

CASSIUS

Only the best for the lady of the hour.

Cass giggles, and Craig shoots Cassius an exasperated look.

SERA

I guess you really do get more money than you know what to do with, don't you?

CRAIG

In a manner of speaking, yeah. You get all kinds of cases, that's for sure.

AMY-BETH

Like what?

CRAIG

I can't tell you that. Client confidentiality.

CASSIUS

Never a dull day at the office.

CASS

Gosh. I'm sorry, but I wonder now what it'd be like if you and I didn't break up.

CASSIUS

He wouldn't be this loaded, believe me.

CASS  
 Why, because he'd be dating a woman?

CASSIUS  
 Yes and no.

SERA  
 Hey, Cass, remember how you kept bringing my being married up? You got a guy, too.

Though Amy-Beth laughs, Cass freezes as if remembering she does, in fact, have a guy. Sera pats her shoulder.

AMY-BETH  
 Some guy. Wonder what he'd even be doing right now when he knows it's your birthday.

Cassius shushes Craig with a single finger, even though he wasn't about to say anything.

CASS  
 I'm sure he had stuff to do.

AMY-BETH  
 Like what? In fact, Killian hasn't been talking to me, either.

She then eyes both Craig and Cassius and gasps as both men clear their throats and momentarily look away.

SERA  
 I really don't think that's it.

CASS  
 Yeah, Killian, I can probably understand, but John...

CRAIG  
 Hey, Cass, here's your house.

He pulls over.

CASSIUS  
 Let's get together again soon, yeah? Just the two of us, if you'd prefer.

CASS  
 Hell yeah. Thanks for the ride, Craig.

CRAIG  
 Night, Cass. Happy birthday again.

CASSIUS  
 Hang on, I'll see you out.

Cass and the girls all giggle again as Cassius gives Craig a knowing look before getting out first.

INT. CRAIG'S OFFICE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Title card: Three days ago

Craig puts down his glasses, brows furrowed as he tents his fingers. Cassius, seated before him at his desk, smiles softly. A pile of papers with Baldy's scribbles and a laptop stand between them.

CRAIG

Hon... I dunno about this one.

CASSIUS

Where's your sense of romance? I think this is gonna be your moment to shine.

CRAIG

God... Sera's gotta be having a real good laugh right about now.

CASSIUS

What are we for but the amusement of the ladies?

CRAIG

I'd really rather not hear that from you, hon.

Cassius simply smiles as he gets up and goes to open the door.

CASSIUS

You can all come back in now.

He then ushers John, Killian, and Baldy into the room. Both John and Baldy carry suitcases.

CRAIG

This plan of yours... You do realise it's absolutely insane.

JOHN

That's why we came to you. You're the best possible match for it. That, and your partner and I go way back.

CASSIUS

I did tell him I owed him one for saving the company.

The air is heavy all around them, four hopefuls against one skeptic. Craig regards John, a whole history written all over his face. Cassius, meanwhile, holds up a sheet of Baldy's schematics.

CASSIUS

This is art masquerading as science.

BALDY

Oh, but what is science if not art by another name?

CRAIG

Yes, but your science is going to get all of us in trouble.

BALDY

My good man, don't you realise that's the entire point of life? It's all different flavours of trouble. Why... Your profession is all about trouble.

CASSIUS

He's got you there, hon.

CRAIG

Yes, quite. In any case, sir, you'd be best off talking to one of my partners at a neighbouring firm.

BALDY

Oh, tosh! You mean to tell me you don't want to see this in action?

CRAIG

That's entirely beside the point, sir.

Baldy's about to argue some more until John gently holds him back.

JOHN

With all due respect, Gramps, let me handle this one.

He lifts his suitcase onto the desk with a pronounced thud. When he opens it, it's not full of cash but a single 250kg Mitsubishi gold bar.

CASSIUS

Oh, my. What have we here?

JOHN

Collateral. Not just for your time, but any and all incidentals.

When Craig's soul returns to his body, he hands John the papers and Cassius also gives him a pen.

CRAIG

Sign here, here, here, initial  
here, here, and sign here. All of  
you.

John happily obliges while Craig looks to a smiling Cassius as if to ask what he's gotten roped into.

INT. CHURCH - MORNING (BACK TO PRESENT DAY)

Cass, clad with stompers, nonetheless walks down the aisle with slow steps, holding her long coat shut with both hands.

She ends her mini-pilgrimage at the statue of The Virgin Mary, who looks lovingly down at her as she takes off her coat to reveal the nun-themed dress.

What little natural light flows inside via the stained glass windows, though Cass keeps to the shadow of The Virgin.

"Mind/Body/Light/Sound" by SWANS pierces the solemn air of the church, forcing her to scurry off to the side to answer it.

CASS

Hello?

JOHN

(on the phone)

Good morning.

She straightens up as if hit with a nun's paddle.

SPLIT SCREEN - INT. CHURCH/JOHN'S ROOM

We now see John's side. He's bundled up in his blanket, shuddering like he's in the Arctic. The wall closest to him has a calendar nailed to it, the moon phases highlighted.

CASS

John?

JOHN

I'm sorry I missed your birthday.

CASS

That's okay, but more to the point,  
you sound awful! You okay?

JOHN

I'm fine. I finished it. Will still  
be a bit before you can see it with  
this snow.

CASS

What did you do?

JOHN

You'll just have to wait until the next full moon to see it.

CASS

The next full moon?

JOHN

That's the best time to see it. Has to be a clear night.

He coughs. Cass's eyes well up but she sniffs the tears back.

CASS

So... Are you saying that's when I have to see you?

JOHN

I wanna be there when you see it.

CASS

But the next full moon... Isn't that next month?

John coughs again, and Cass sighs, pinching her temples with her thumb and index finger.

CASS

John... I'm seriously confused. Why do you want me to wait that long?

JOHN

Because it won't be as good any other night.

CASS

You sound really sick. Maybe that's why you're not making any sense. Is your mom there?

JOHN

No. Mama went back to work. Will be a while until she comes back.

CASS

Are you at Baldy's?

JOHN

No, I'm home.

She then clues in, and groans.

CASS

Dammit, I'm such an idiot. I could've just come and seen you myself this whole time.

JOHN

No.

CASS

What d'you mean, "no"?

JOHN

It would ruin the surprise.

Cass's brain straight up gets an error message, and she shakes her head.

CASS

Don't go anywhere.

She cuts the call.

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE - FOYER - NOON - CONTINUOUS

Several knocks are made on John's door, and he answers wearing a plush house coat and slippers, even a nightcap.

Cass enters with a full bag of groceries, closing the door behind her.

JOHN

I could've done that.

CASS

No.

JOHN

At least let me get your coat.  
You're still my guest.

She hesitates, somehow even meeker than usual. She peels off her coat like she's revealing way more than the romantic dress.

John takes her coat and puts it in the closet. Before her face gets any redder, she turns to check his forehead.

She nearly yanks her hand away after feeling it, but John keeps it pressed there, totally blissed out.

CASS

Come on, I gotta make you some soup.

JOHN

This is enough right now.

CASS

No, it's not. You're gonna need a bath, too.

She once again curses herself for saying too much, especially when John seems to actually imagine her giving him one.

CASS

C'mon. You can go lay down.

She lugs him forward as best she can towards the kitchen and living room.

She searches for a saucepan and can opener.

CASS

Seriously, what were you even doing? You're literally hotter than hell right now.

JOHN

Shoveling snow.

CASS

Well, you're gonna have to not do that for a bit. This snow is gonna go on for a while.

She turns on the stove and takes out a carton of orange juice and cold medicine alongside a soup can from her shopping bag.

JOHN

I'm sorry I missed your birthday.

CASS

That's fine. When you get older, birthdays aren't really that big of a deal.

JOHN

Still. I was gonna surprise you with cake.

Cass gives him a glass of juice.

CASS

Well, I'm here now, so it's fine.

John downs the juice, but even that makes him dizzy so he has to lie down. Cass tends to the soup.

JOHN

Did you at least have fun?

CASS

Yeah. We left early, though, cuz of the snow. So ultimately it's not like you missed much.

JOHN

Even a second is missing too much.

Cass pauses, then remembers the soup and takes it off the heat and plates it.

CASS

You wanna eat over there if you can't make it to the table? I got ham and swiss croissants, too. And some oranges.

John tries to get up, but his immune system kicks in and sends him right back to the couch.

Cass comes with a tray of the aforementioned foodstuffs. She tries not to notice how John's chest rises and falls, or how his mouth doesn't fully close as he lays on his back.

CASS

Sorry I don't know how to make actual soup. But this is what we have in our house every winter.

John nearly dives into the soup, his immune system is working so hard. Cass sighs, already asking herself what she's doing as she does it.

She takes the spoon from him and makes him sit back as she holds the bowl and feeds him.

CASS

That's it. You're looking better already.

When he's done, even that exhausts him so he's back on his back as Cass washes the dishes and puts everything away.

She hears him snore. She looks furtively around after sitting beside him, gently guiding him towards using her lap as a pillow.

John cuddles her legs just like he would a pillow, still not touching her inappropriately.

JOHN

You're so warm, Cass...

When she's done being flustered, she pats his head. Next thing she knows, she also falls asleep.

EVENING

Cass finds herself waking up on the couch, alone and covered with a blanket. She hears a gramophone playing "Moon River."

She gets up, then remembers where she is. Meanwhile, John is back to his usual self in the kitchen, cooking, even wearing a "KISS THE COOK" APRON.

JOHN

Good, you're up.

CASS

How long was I asleep?

JOHN

Couple hours. Dinner'll be ready soon.

CASS

But you shouldn't be cooking.

JOHN

Why not? You're my guest.

Cass tilts her head as she gets up to go to the kitchen, looking John over and putting her hand on his forehead. She puts her other hand on her own forehead to compare.

CASS

Either you faked being sick, or you really are an alien.

JOHN

Nah, I can't stay sick for long when you're with me. That's definitely bad manners.

Cass clearly wants to say more but her stomach growls.

CASS

Right, I didn't eat anything today.

JOHN

That's no good. It's how you get sick.

CASS

Oh, ha ha.

She goes to the living room and finds a photo album on the coffee table. Looking around furtively again, she picks it up.

She flips through the pages, all of them of John as a baby. John finishes setting the table and a timer goes off.

JOHN

I know I told you to relax, but it's ready now. Hope you don't mind some hotpot.

Cass goes to the table and John puts a pot of sukiyaki on the portable stove, still wearing his apron. Cass's reverie is only broken when John pulls her chair out for her.

CASS

Thanks.

She still eyes it when John serves her first, her reverie this time broken by her stomach.

CASS

Mmm! Good call! But still, are you sure you should be cooking?

JOHN

Positive. I got noodles for after, too.

They eat, Cass still stealing the odd glance at his apron.

She remembers him saying she looks like she wants to kiss her wine.

And also the indirect kiss last time at his house.

And finally when he touched her lips at Baldy's.

That last one makes her replenish her bowl. Meanwhile John is the same as always, even humming along to the song.

CASS

I didn't know you liked this song.

JOHN

It's one of my favourites. Mama would play it all the time.

CASS

That's nice. Too bad I missed her.

JOHN

You'll meet her one day.

CASS

One day...

She shifts in her seat before clearing her throat.

CASS

Listen, John... I know you just got better, but I still don't understand what you said. Why'd you want me to wait to see you? I mean... Should I even be here right now?

JOHN

I'm glad you came. The waiting is only for your birthday present. I'll still get you something for Christmas.

CASS

You don't have to do that.

JOHN

It's a bit late for that now. But if you don't like it when you see it, I'll give you something else.

Cass is about to retort when John fishes a box out of his pocket.

JOHN

On that note... I did have something I wanted to give you, as an apology for missing your birthday.

CASS

You didn't have to do that either, though.

She takes it.

CASS

Is it okay if I open it?

JOHN

Of course.

She gingerly opens it and inside is not only the fox necklace she returned, but with matching earrings and bracelet.

CASS

Thanks, John.

JOHN

You're most welcome.

She hesitates, once again eyeing his apron. Though she hasn't had a single drop of it, her old friend wine encourages her to go for it.

She places a hand on the side of his face and leans forward. But just before she does, her phone rings.

She shoots it a look as she takes it out, even noticing several missed calls from Amy-Beth.

CASS

Hey. Well, clearly I'm alive...Sorry for making you worry. I'm just at John's place...shut up! It's not like that!...oh, you're at Killian's. Okay, if you know what you're doing. Oh, yeah, right, now YOU'RE telling ME it's not like that?

(laughing)

All right, well, take care. I'll see you tomorrow.

She ends the call.

CASS

Sorry about that.

John shakes his head as Cass continues eating, still regarding his apron.

JOHN  
You like this?

CASS  
I've never seen one in real life.

JOHN  
Then I'm glad I have it.

CASS  
How do you even do that?

JOHN  
Anyone can buy an apron.

CASS  
No, like... How do you always know what to say?

JOHN  
I just don't say things I shouldn't. For the most part, it works.

She turns her attention back to her bowl, and John puts the udon noodles into the soup. He swishes the noodles to help break them apart, and somehow it also works on Cass.

CASS  
John... I wanted to tell you I'm sorry.

JOHN  
For what?

CASS  
Everything. You're this amazing guy and I'm just... me.

JOHN  
I like just you.

CASS  
Why, though?

JOHN  
Do I need a reason?

CASS  
...Touché.  
(to herself)  
Dammit, Craig!

John, meanwhile, takes her bowl to give her some noodle soup. Cass eats slowly, drowning in her thoughts like the noodles in the soup.

JOHN

I have a feeling if I explain myself, you'll want to know it all right down to the atoms.

CASS

You make it sound like I'll never believe you.

JOHN

I'm down to sate your mental appetite as much as your physical.

Cass nearly chokes on the soup. She clears her throat behind a napkin, and it doesn't help that John clearly, 100% meant that.

They hold each other's eyes, and Cass searches his face for any and all chinks and gaps, and she leans forward until she remembers she just ate. She pulls back, feigning a smile.

CASS

You are a good cook.

JOHN

I try. Life's too short to eat bad food. On that note, I've made dessert if you're done.

CASS

Yeah. I'll clean up.

JOHN

No, no, just give me a second.

They get up at the same time but John gently pushes her back to her seat by her shoulders and collects everything. Cass touches where he touched on her shoulders.

She listens softly to "Claire de Lune" playing in the background and turns to look at the window.

CASS

Oh hey, looks like the snow is letting up. If you weren't sick, I'd say let's go make snow angels.

JOHN

Would you like to do it now?

CASS

We can't do it now. You just got better.

JOHN

If I get sick again, then you'll just have to nurse me back to health, won't you?

Cass pauses, and once again John is entirely serious, not a single doubt anywhere about him.

She nods and they both get up.

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Cass's breath is also visible outside, the snow coming midway up her shins. She shivers but nonetheless it's a beautiful winter scene.

John, meanwhile, stands knee-deep in snow. The clouds are dispersing and the moon is just beginning to become visible.

CASS

I dunno, John. It's deeper than I thought.

JOHN

All the more reason. Come on.

He lays down on his back.

CASS

John!

He moves his arms and legs, smiling just like a kid.

JOHN

Come on, Cass! You're gonna love this view!

Her snow angel naturally dwarfs his and she can't stop laughing. The clouds part and the moon becomes visible, coinciding with John's smile.

JOHN

Hey, good news.

CASS

What?

He points up to the moon, bright and full, with a new addition; a drawing of Cass as the Mona Lisa, in Killian's style.

Cass rubs her eyes, in total disbelief that she's not drunk right now.

JOHN

Happy birthday, Cass.

She looks to John and back at the moon, and still back again.

Finally, the switch in her flips and she simultaneously leans forward and pulls him in for a kiss.

INT. JOHN'S ROOM - NIGHT

The lights are off in John's room except for his nightstand lamp. Their clothes litter the floor.

John and Cass cuddle under the blanket, the moon visible in the window. Cass keeps stealing glances its way as if to remind herself that everything about this moment is real.

JOHN

How are you feeling?

CASS

Good... Still coming down from it.

JOHN

Take your time. We have all night,  
and I'm off tomorrow, too.

CASS

You wanna keep going until  
tomorrow?

JOHN

Why not? It'd be rude of me to let  
you go home unsatisfied.

He takes her arm and holds it like Gomez would Morticia's, peppering it with kisses. Cass tries to resist her switch getting flipped again, focusing on his shelf of textbooks.

CASS

Is that even possible?

She remembers him saying he wants to sate both her mental and physical appetites.

JOHN

Should we find out?

He positions himself over her and one of the bed's slats breaks. Cass cringes at the sound.

CASS

John...

He kisses her, and she remembers him saying she was trying too hard to be a good girl.

CASS

Your bed...

JOHN

I'll get a new one.

She remembers him saying the last thing she wanted was to be a bad girl.

CASS  
And after that one?

JOHN  
I'll get another one.

Finally, Cass grabs hold of his wrist and sits up, making it so he's the one on his back, breaking another slat in the process.

CASS  
If we fall?

JOHN  
I'll catch you.

CASS  
We could go to Hell, you know.

JOHN  
That's not possible. Not while  
you're Heaven and I'm Earth.

After a pause, they both crack up as Cass reaches over to turn the lamp off.

The actual bed frame breaks in the dark.

INT. CASS'S ROOM - DAY

Cass and Sera are in her room as the former discerns which dress to wear. Sera lays on her bed on her stomach, chin on her palms and feet moving to and fro like a young girl.

SERA  
Congratulations, Cass. You  
officially beat nunhood.

CASS  
I don't think either of us are  
going to Heaven after that.

SERA  
Definitely not. I heard you all the  
way from my house.

CASS  
Oh, shut up.

Sera laughs as Cass gets much redder than the deep red dress she pulls up.

SERA  
Oh, that one's perfect.

CASS  
No... I think I'm gonna need  
something nunny after all.

SERA

Why, though? It's way too late for that.

Cass hates that Sera is right, and she gives the wine red dress a dirty look.

CASS

This one's definitely too much, though.

SERA

What d'you mean, it's too much? It's red, you of all people have gotta wear red on Christmas.

Cass looks over the rest of her wardrobe and decides Sera is right. She gets changed behind her stand-up screen.

SERA

Sooo have you given much thought on what to give him for Christmas?

Cass freezes.

SERA

Blew your mind in more ways than one, eh?

CASS

What'm I gonna do, Sera? I can't not give him something for Christmas!

Sera thinks about this, and sure enough she comes up with an answer.

INT. BALDY'S HOUSE - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

Amy-Beth and Killian, the latter dressed more haute goth, set up the steampunk Christmas decorations. Killian sneezes behind his matching mask.

AMY-BETH

I'll get you something hot to drink.

Right on cue, John comes with a steaming mug of coffee.

KILLIAN

Thanks.

He almost tries to drink it with his mask still on.

KILLIAN

Can you do me a favour the next time you ask me a favour? Don't ask me for favours?

JOHN

No promises.

The doorbell rings and John rushes to answer. It's Cass and Sera.

JOHN

You made it. Welcome.

He ushers them in, taking Cass's coat first. Sera gives them a knowing look and takes her own off.

JOHN

Oh, hey. Look at that.

CASS

What?

John gestures with his face for her to look up, and it's a steampunk missile toad hanging directly above her.

JOHN

Close your eyes, and give me your hand.

Cass obliges.

JOHN

Now open.

She obliges again, noticing a little fox ring matching her earrings, necklace, and bracelet, on her right ring finger.

JOHN

Can you believe I forgot? It was bugging me all morning.

Cass smiles and shakes her head as John puts her coat away.

JOHN

Come on. I'm just about to brew up some spiced apple toddy.

He leads the way, though Cass and Sera hang back, gasping.

CASS

I think he knows!

SERA

How would he know? Besides, you could always break out that teddy you never actually wore. That's a present in and of itself.

CASS

It's way too small for me now.

SERA

So he'll just rip it off of you  
with a clear conscience. Problem  
solved.

CASS

Jesus Christ, Sera.

The gramophone plays Bing Crosby's "God Rest Ye Merry,  
Gentlemen" as they join everyone in the living room.

AMY-BETH

Hey, you made it.

CASS

Yeah. And wow, Killian, that you?

AMY-BETH

I told him he needed a new look.  
He's got some really good fashion  
design ideas.

KILLIAN

We're thinking we might work on a  
couple projects in the future.

CASS

Well, there you go. Dream team over  
here.

AMY-BETH

Can't wait for the society meeting.

CASS

What do you even do at these  
meetings? Some kinda ritual?

KILLIAN

We mainly have discussions.

AMY-BETH

Kinda like an after-school club.

KILLIAN

Hence "society."

Meanwhile John starts ladling the spiced apple toddy into  
cups. The doorbell rings.

KILLIAN

I'll get it.

He runs off.

SERA

He cleaned up real nice, didn't he?

CASS

Yeah, he almost reminds me of someone.

SERA

Speak of the devil.

Killian ushers in both Craig and Cassius, the latter even matching Cass's red with his accessories. They all, barring Killian, hug each other.

CASSIUS

You're even prettier than your image right now.

CASS

Oh, stop.

Craig shakes his head as John gives each of them a mug of toddy.

CRAIG

Where's Mr Archibald?

Right on cue, Baldy enters dressed as a steampunk Santa Claus, complete with a sack full of gifts.

BALDY

Ho ho ho! Merry Christmas!

CASS

Baldy! Hey!

John takes her mug as she bends down to hug the old man.

CASS

How're you doing? You sure you should be up?

BALDY

Don't worry about me, my dear, one can't stay sedentary on Christmas. Here, I'll give you your presents. Serafina, my dear...

He rifles through his bag and gives her a steampunk hair clip shaped like a bird.

SERA

Aw, Baldy. Thanks.

BALDY

And for you, my dear.

He gives Cass a handmade parasol.

CASS

Oh my gosh, thank you.

BALDY

And of course, for you, as thanks  
for spending all your time with me.

He gives Amy-Beth a miniature hat with a coloured gear  
aesthetic.

AMY-BETH

Thanks so much.

BALDY

You're most welcome. And for you,  
gentlemen...

He takes out a wooden box, and inside it are five pocket  
watches. The boys all take one. John especially seems to  
weigh his in his hand.

BALDY

Now then, we can begin our meeting  
if you'd like. I'm rather excited  
to see what our resident firebrand  
lawyer has to say. Everyone, have a  
seat.

They all take their seats where they can, John getting the  
remaining chairs from the kitchen. Cass notices all the  
mistletoes and missile toads hanging from the ceiling.

Sure enough, she is underneath one alongside John to brings  
her a chair.

CASS

Thanks.

She looks up at the missile toad hovering above them, but  
John takes no notice.

CASS

(to Sera beside her)

What do you think's up with him?

Sera shrugs. They both eye him as he even sits opposite  
them, where Baldy is. For good measure, John doesn't look  
anywhere near Cass.

BALDY

Now then... Allow me to field you  
all this question: why are we all  
here today? Mr Honard?

CRAIG

Like... Here, in this room, or..?

BALDY

Either or.

CRAIG

Well... I don't really believe in  
fate--

Both Cass and Cassius snicker, and then once again when they realise they shared the same brain cell after all.

CRAIG

--but, I do believe in consequence.  
We're all here right now because we  
chose to be.

BALDY

Ah, so for you it's a question of  
free will. Mr Flynn?

Now Cass snorts, especially when Amy-Beth also clues in.

CASSIUS

I do believe in fate. I think we  
were all meant to be here.

John shifts in his seat, which naturally Cass catches.

BALDY

And I'm glad you all are. I was  
telling the ladies the other day  
about when I saw Heaven, and truth  
be told, it's been kicking around  
in my head all the while. I'm sure  
you all saw Cassie's visage  
adorning the moon?

Cass hides her face behind the parasol as everyone barring  
throws her a knowing look.

BALDY

I said then that Heaven is a pie  
that's been baking for twenty  
years... Well, I decided that since  
I've been given the gift of time...  
Why don't I get into it myself?

John, meanwhile, comes out with a tray of pie and forks and  
plates.

BALDY

Now don't scold me, ladies, I will  
confess that I didn't sleep at all  
since yesterday.

Obviously the girls all rise to their feet in disapproval,  
and Baldy laughs gently.

BALDY

But you must understand, I know  
you're all going to say I took some  
years off of your lives when I fell  
(MORE)

BALDY (cont'd)  
 ill. Well... Consider this  
 renumeration.

John gives Cass a slice first, and Cass keeps eyeing the  
 missile toad above them as she takes it.

AMY-BETH  
 Aw, Baldy.

BALDY  
 Now, now, don't be all modest. I  
 worked very hard, you know.

Cass eats a bite, and it's enough for her to tear up and  
 cover her mouth.

CASS  
 Woah. Baldy, I think you just sent  
 us all to Heaven.

She remembers John calling her Heaven, and an ocean of wine  
 colours her face.

SERA  
 Good job, Baldy.

BALDY  
 I had a good teacher.

Killian even sniffs like the pie cleared his sinuses. Cass,  
 meanwhile, regards John who's simply enjoying his slice, no  
 overwhelming emotions in sight.

Sera nudges her forward.

CASS  
 Hey, John... Is it all right if I  
 talk to you for a sec?

JOHN  
 Of course.

He gets up and even offers her his arm, and she takes it as  
 he leads her to Baldy's Workshop.

BALDY'S WORKSHOP

John closes the door behind him. Cass, back turned to him,  
 tries to literally calm her tits.

JOHN  
 So what's up?

Cass takes a breath and turns to face him.

CASS  
 Well, first of all, I wanted to  
 give you something for Christmas.

She takes out a small BOX OF CHOCOLATES from her bag.

CASS

I'm sorry, I didn't know what you liked, so they're all different.

JOHN

Thank you. I like all of these.

Cass swallows her doubt.

CASS

Okay... Now for what I actually wanted to tell you. Keep in mind... I've never done this before, not with Craig or anybody.

She grabs John's hand to keep from getting tangled up in her own nerves. John even readies himself for it.

CASS

Okay, here goes. John...

She tries to keep the words from running away from her.

CASS

I...

She clears her throat and decides to go full kamakazi.

CASS

I'd rather drown in the oceans of wine you crossed than to spend even a moment without you.

As soon as she says this, she almost wants to cringe, but then she finds herself catching John falling forward. Even worse, he's quaking with laughter.

JOHN

I'm sorry. It's just that I was thinking there's no way I could fall for you any harder, and then...

It takes Cass a second to clue in on the joke.

CASS

You get any smoother, you'll hurt yourself.

JOHN

Well, I have been getting swept off my feet more and more lately, but in my defence, that's not my fault.

CASS

You're right, it's high time I took responsibility.

She props his chin up and their lips meet. She grins when John's knees nearly give out again.

CASS

I guess we'd better get back before  
you melt.

JOHN

Not yet.

CASS

Oh?

John points up, and sure enough, there's a real mistletoe hanging directly above her. Cass snorts as she kisses him again.

They make their way back to the society meeting hand in hand.

FADE OUT