

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 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.

She studies his face, still very much in doubt.

JOHN
I think I know what your prayer
actually is.

Cass turns her attention back to her wine and smiles softly.

CASS
You do, huh... Even before knowing
my name?

JOHN
Darn!

She chuckles and extends her hand.

CASS
Cassandra Flynn. But everyone calls
me Cass.

JOHN

John van Nuys. It's a pleasure.

He takes her hand.

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, Cass. It'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.

SERA

You and your nunhood...

At that moment, Cass's little sister AMY-BETH, 25, pastel goth, enters the room.

AMY-BETH

I didn't know you had a shoot today.

SERA

She doesn't, it's a date.

AMY-BETH

A date?! You tell Sera about a date and not me?

CASS
I dunno why it would concern you,
Amy-Beth.

AMY-BETH
What? I've been hoping you'd
finally get over Craig.

SERA
And she will, won't you?

Cass decides on the shoes.

EXT. ROSARIUM - EVENING

Cass, properly statuesque now having opted for platform boots complete with spikes and chains, pauses in the beginning of the rosarium, surrounded by crimson roses.

John, barely tall enough to reach her shoulders, turns around to receive her. Cass holds the underside of a rose like a wine glass.

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 turns to leave, only for John to grab her hand.

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.

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 he closes his eyes and breathes, sure enough rising in height. When he opens his eyes, he's as tall as Cass.

CASS
How did you do that?

JOHN
I grew up.

Cass gets ready to retort, but it completely bails on her, and her brain even gets a dial-up modem noise. For good measure, John shows off his calves; he's not bluffing.

Cass, meanwhile, somehow swallows this.

CASS
Okay, you win.

John bows, his new height makes him stagger like a newborn fawn. Cass catches and directs him to a nearby white wire bench.

CASS
I think you should change back, though.

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

CASS
Putting God on the spot is even worse manners.

Despite saying this, her cheeks are almost as red as the roses around her, and her lips want very much to curl.

Nonetheless, John obliges, and then gestures for Cass to sit as he picks a rose off the bush.

CASS
You bring a lot of girls here?

JOHN
No, I've just always wanted to.

Cass searches the Heavens for guidance, only to be eclipsed by John holding a makeshift bouquet of fresh roses.

She notices the thorns.

CASS

Thanks, but you didn't have to do that. Doesn't it hurt?

JOHN

Wouldn't make much sense for roses to not have thorns.

CASS

I suppose you're right, but I dunno about you hurting yourself like this.

Nonetheless, she accepts the roses, doing her best to position them as thorn-free as possible... Then notices the stalks are smooth.

CASS

Did you...?

JOHN

I couldn't have you hurting yourself.

He takes his seat beside her. Cass contemplates the roses, tracing where the thorns are now absent.

JOHN

In fact... I know it's bad practice to ask this on a date, but the one before 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

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

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 an apology, that's a
punishment.

Cass is about to retort, but his words make a disturbing
amount of sense.

CASS
Nonetheless... It's what I wanna
do. It feels right.

She doesn't meet his eyes as she says this. John, meanwhile,
regards her profile.

JOHN
Well... My offer stands no matter
what. Until the heat death of the
universe.

When he looks away as if lost in thought, Cass finally
regards him, twirling a rose between her long fingers.

EXT. BALDY'S BACKYARD - DAY

Cass sits with BALDY, a white-haired old man in his 80s-90s
decked all out in steampunk clothes. They're 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.

CASS

Let him work for it, huh...

She takes a sip of her tea. Amy-Beth 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 before leading them back to 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 now looks at the music box, not even entirely sure what she's seeing or searching for. She gets a text message on her phone.

Amy-Beth leans over to see it, and Cass hides it, especially when Amy-Beth's grin is even wider than the Cheshire Cat's.

AMY-BETH
Oooh, texting stage!

CASS
It's not that serious. I just don't
mind him, is all.

AMY-BETH
That sounds pretty serious coming
from you.

Baldy gently laughs as he sips his tea.

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.

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 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

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.

EXT. POND - WOODEN BOAT - EVENING

John sits opposite Cass inside a wooden boat, the classic date, manning the oars. They're the only ones there.

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
First of all, I saw you smiling.

Even though she knows full well it's a line, she still cracks one.

CASS
What else?

John reads the stars peeking out above them.

JOHN
Honestly?

CASS
Yeah, honestly.

JOHN
I see me moving Heaven and Earth
for you.

This time she hides her expression behind a cough.

JOHN
I could change my whole life just
to better suit your mood.

CASS
If you're gonna do all 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.

He rows the boat back to shore as Cass searches the Heavens for her good sense.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

The town library is old, complete with gothic architecture most prevalent in the windows. The silence is holy.

Cass pushes the book trolley, the only one there. She stops at a shelf to put some tomes back.

The remaining book is a collection of fairy tales complete with illustrations, and it's probably older than she is. Nonetheless she finds a place to sit and opens it.

CASS
(reading)
"And so the Princess saw herself in
the looking-glass, reached out to
touch her own face..."

She tries to hide even from herself how this happenstance is affecting her. She looks around, not sure if she's relieved or disappointed that no one is there but books.

She flips to another page.

CASS
(reading)
"Quoth the Prince: 'By this sword,
I swear to thee my undying
fealty...'"

She shakes her head at herself and is about to shut the book when she decides to read a third for the hell of it.

CASS
(reading)
"'Bring me a newborn star, a dragon
seed, and a stalk of goldenwheat,
so that I may know your devotion
true.'"

Now she definitely closes the book and chuckles to herself. She looks at the grandfather clock's face: it's 16:55.

The rhythmic ticking seems to match her heartbeat, or maybe vice versa. She puts the book away.

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.

She's not entirely sure if she's disappointed or relieved to hear this, but either way she isn't surprised.

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
Cosmonaut.

CASS
A what-not?

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

CASS
No kidding... Is she away a lot?

JOHN

She is. Mainly likes being on the moon, though.

CASS

That's gotta be rough.

JOHN

It was when I was younger and living with my Grampa. But then she'd be back with pure red diamonds and rhodium crystals. Speaking of which.

He gets up to fetch something from the coffee table. When he returns, it's a RED FOX NECKLACE seemingly made of those materials.

CASS

No way... This is for me?

JOHN

From Mama herself.

He then gets behind her and Cass holds her hair up so he can put it on her, and Cass isn't sure how she feels about his finger not even touching the back of her neck.

He pours himself some wine when he sits back down, 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.

JOHN

Salut.

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."

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

CASS

You're different today.

JOHN

Really? I'm the same as always. 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.

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

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?

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

JOHN

You know... I wasn't sure if I should say this, but aren't you trying awfully hard to be a good girl?

Cass nearly trips over herself despite being seated.

CASS

Excuse me?

JOHN

I'm not saying you're not, but also I can tell the last thing you want is to be bad.

Cass regains her composure as best she can.

CASS
Kind of a black and white way to
view women, isn't it?

JOHN
They still make up who you are, so
it makes no difference to me.

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, wondering 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.

A gift bottle of ROMANÉE-CONTI GRAND CRU WINE stands between them on the coffee table.

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 Romanée-Conti Grand Cru, but John stops her to pour it himself.

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.

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.

CASS

No, I've had enough for tonight.

Every couple seconds her eyes dart to her own bedroom door. Sera clues in.

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; next time, your place? Or
mine?

Cass shakes her head, suppressing a laugh.

CASS
How long have you been waiting to
use that one?

JOHN
No comment.

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.

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 finishes tinkering with the unfinished music box, eyes magnified by coke-bottle glasses. His back cracks something impressive when he stretches.

John brings him a cup of coffee.

JOHN
Here, Gramps.

Baldy accepts, and John goes to sit on a chair furthest away from Amy-Beth and slightly closer to KILLIAN, a 25-year-old cybergoth with big hair and mask.

BALDY
Alas, our society might have to do
without a fifth member.
(MORE)

BALDY (cont'd)

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. I'm a freelance consultant, so I'm actually the reason we couldn't do this earlier.

All eyes fall to Killian, who still hasn't even doffed his mask, let alone touched his coffee.

KILLIAN

Killian Pierce. Mr Archibald was my homeschool tutor.

BALDY

Wonderful, wonderful. The first step is always the most difficult. Now, then, let's discuss a classic subject, love. My dear?

Amy-Beth searches John's face for her courage. He simply smiles politely.

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.

Baldy raises both hands to gently simmer the pair down.

BALDY

Such passions really are only possible when you're still young. Now tell me, Johnny, what's your position?

JOHN

Well... Love is both a chemical reaction and it's a force, the same way you can't scientifically break down what a "soul" is.

BALDY

Well put. Now then, let me field you another question, are we souls or do we simply have them?

John smiles softly as Amy-Beth and Killian silently contemplate him literally connecting them.

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 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 you should talk to Craig and hash things out. 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.

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 take
responsibility. Otherwise it's not
fair to you.

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.

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. CLOTHING STORE - SAME TIME

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.

CASSIUS

Please, follow me.

He leads the way to the fitting room where Cass closes the door. Cassius is about to leave her when she speaks.

CASS

Hey... You're still there, right?

CASSIUS

Yes, can I get you anything else?

CASS

Kinda... Have a bit of a weird question. When you find yourself caught between two paths... Which one should you take?

From inside the fitting room, Cass curses herself for saying too much.

CASSIUS

(clearing his throat)

I think following your heart is your best bet, Miss.

Cass's shoulders relax, but more in defeat than validation.

CASS

Right, yeah, of course. Thanks.

CASSIUS
You're welcome, Miss.

Cass comes out of the fitting room, holding the frock

CASS
Let me think about this one a bit.

CASSIUS
Of course, Miss.

She's almost hesitant to give him the frock but ultimately she does.

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
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 readies himself for a kamakazi.

CRAIG

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

He has no choice but to go for a double 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. 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.

She then 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.

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.

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 a little 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.

AMY-BETH

Hey, 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

Sorry, I didn't mean that. 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 through it, this music box has just been keeping me up rather consistently.

He heads towards the living room aided by John, 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, retracting 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
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
You know what Mr Archibald says.
"Ladies first."

Amy-Beth waits for Killian to finish drawing and break first, then 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.

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

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 frigidness was 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. It's gotta be the karma you talked about.

She pauses, and Sera can see exactly where her mind is going.

SERA
Aw, Cass--

The front door opens and a series of stomps leads to Cass's room, from Amy-Beth.

CASS
Hey, ever heard of knocking?

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

CASS
What's got you in a wad?

AMY-BETH
That stupid guy Baldy invited, Killian. What was he thinking?

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 as if in search of something.

AMY-BETH

Ugh! I don't get it! Why does it have to be you? I knew him first.

Cass exchanges a look with Sera, who shrugs.

AMY-BETH

So unfair.

CASS

I dunno what you're on about, but life's unfair, in case you haven't noticed.

AMY-BETH

As usual, you don't get it.

CASS

How the hell could I?

AMY-BETH

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. Were you 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
(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)
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.

JOHN
Gramps?

When Baldy doesn't react, John grabs his phone.

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.

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

Why're you here all by yourself?

KILLIAN

You 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.

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 pieces of bread and glasses of wine before them.

CRAIG

Classic Cass. Getting so caught up
in little things that you can't
move forward. I actually think you
got worse.

CASS

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

CRAIG

Only because you make it serious.
You'd lose your mind without
something to freak out over.

He can see Cass BSOD-ing in real time.

CRAIG

Don't tell me you're still
confused.

Cass tries to parse his words as he waits.

SERA

You see what I have to deal with?
Getting her to understand is
like...

CRAIG

Way harder than lawyering? Clearly.

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 shakes his head 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

You're both 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 "When She Breathes" 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 his 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...
(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. Craig, meanwhile, hugs Amy-Beth.

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)
I was gonna give you that dress for
your birthday, but you beat me to
it.

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

CRAIG
Classic Cass.

AMY-BETH
Told ya.

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

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.

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.

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - ROOF - NIGHT

Meanwhile, back at John's, the sky itself may as well be falling. John's hands shake, white-knuckled as he struggles to hold the laser gun straight.

JOHN

Goddammit...

Killian, meanwhile, keeps his phone glued to his ear.

KILLIAN

Why am I not surprised it's
straight from the Arctic?

John tries to concentrate even though it's not at all clear where the moon is and even if the laser is visible in the snowfall. His finger grips the trigger tight and the laser gun fries in the component Baldy warned him about.

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. End flashback.

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - ROOF - DAWN

John tries to fix the burnt module, his fingers dotted with
little cuts from wires. Killian keeps trying to see through
the telescope.

Both of their eyes are lined with shadows, their breaths
visible.

KILLIAN

I think you better listen when the
universe is telling you something,
man.

JOHN

What do you think I'm doing?

He figures out the burnt module.

JOHN

Restart the generator.

Though he'd rather be inside, Killian obliges. It takes
several tries, but the generator roars to life and John aims
it like the moon personally slighted him.

He pulls the trigger.

INT. CHURCH - MORNING

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. She went back to work.

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.

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. 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. Her 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.

Meanwhile John is the same as always, even humming along to the song.

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, comes the sound of "When She Breathes" from her phone.

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.
(MORE)

CASS (cont'd)
(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.

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
Sure, we can. C'mon.

He gets up and opens the back door, Cass following behind.

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Cass's breath is also visible outside, the snow coming midway up her shins.

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 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, who
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 John 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
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