

STEVIE & NICK

Written by

Nelda De La Paz

ON BLACK:

The sound of feet shuffling...

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - MORNING

The morning rush-hour is in full swing as feet shuffle along snow-covered streets.

INTERCUT: A MASS OF FEET

- A swarm of feet moves along the sidewalk.
- Feet rush through a busy intersection.
- Feet pour down a subway entrance.
- Feet cram into an elevator.
- Feet wait in line at Starbucks.
- Feet jump into a bus.
- Feet enter revolving doors.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING ENTRANCE - MORNING

A WOMAN's camel suede boots collide with a MAN's black Converse, causing a cup to fall to the floor and coffee to spill over the black Converse.

MAN (O.S.)
Jesus!

WOMAN (O.S.)
I'm sorry! I didn't see you!

The entrance door swings open.

WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
My car!

The camel suede boots race out, while the black Converse head in the opposite direction.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING

Brown snow piles on the curb. The camel suede boots chase a towed white VW Beetle Convertible, then rush toward a POLICE OFFICER'S BOOTS.

WOMAN (O.S.)
Stop! Stop!

POLICE OFFICER (O.S.)
Read the sign: No Parking.

WOMAN (O.S.)
What are you talking about?

POLICE OFFICER (O.S.)
Look at the sign.

WOMAN (O.S.)
What? I-- I didn't see it. It must
be a new.

The Police Officer's boots walk off.

WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Fuck. Shit!

INT. SUBWAY - MORNING

The camel suede boots charge down the stairs through a crowd
of feet (in various shoes) moving in the opposite direction.

INT. SUBWAY - SECONDS LATER

The camel suede boots trip over a sleeping HOMELESS MAN and
tumble to the ground. Dazed by the fall, STEVIE, 20s, blonde,
dressed in a Stevie Nicks-style flowing black dress and a
wool black cape, looks up.

STEVIE
Goddamn it. Fuck.

PEDESTRIANS step over Stevie, annoyed that she is in their
way.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

The black Converse stride along the street, then stop at:

INSERT - A DISCARDED NEWSPAPER

Headline: "Life in the Time of a Madman."

Several feet trample over the newspaper.

EXT. HOSPITAL - MORNING

The black Converse head past an ambulance and into the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL - MORNING

The black Converse, along with other feet, cram into a crowded elevator.

INT. HOSPITAL - MORNING

The black Converse step out of the elevator.

INT. HOSPITAL RECEPTION - MORNING

The black Converse passes a BOY, 4, sitting on the floor, spinning a wooden top.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
Hi, Nick.

NICK (O.S.)
Hi.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
He's waiting for you...

The wooden top spins across the floor and hits the black Converse.

NICK, 20s, his cheeks are sunken, a crucifix dangles over his shirt, dark Botticelli curls hang down over his eyes, scoops up the wooden top and hands it back to the boy. They share a smile.

INT. DR. BECKETT'S OFFICE - MORNING

DR. BECKETT, 40s, likable with thick glasses, sits behind his desk, on which are several glass-framed photos of his family. Nick sits opposite.

DR. BECKETT
The surgery was a success but...

Dr. Beckett clears his throat.

DR. BECKETT (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Nick. We found a
malignant growth. It's
metastasized. You're very sick.

Nick takes a moment to process the news and grabs a cigarette
from his pocket.

DR. BECKETT (CONT'D)
You can't smoke here.

Nick puts the cigarette away.

DR. BECKETT (CONT'D)
You should stop smoking, and--

NICK
This is my cancer, right? Why do
you care?

A hint of compassion crosses Dr. Beckett's face.

DR. BECKETT
You need to start radiation soon,
Nick.

Nick stares at a large photograph on the desk.

INSERT - PHOTO

A happy portrait of Dr. Beckett's family.

NICK
If I start treatment right away,
will I live?

Dr. Beckett doesn't know how to answer that. They sit in
silence for a moment.

DR. BECKETT
I don't know.

Nick stares out the window, his eyes fixated on the icicles
hanging from a nearby tree. His breathing becomes labored,
and his heart starts beating rapidly, like a drum.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Buried in snow, trees encased in ice, Nick cuts through the
park. He stops to remove two icicles hanging from a tree
branch, crushing them in his palms.

INT. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART - DAY

Nick, in a guard uniform, stands near Rothko's Red-on-Red Color Field, while a group of visitors listens to the CURATOR.

CURATOR (O.S.)

Rothko once said: "Art is an adventure into an unknown world, which can be explored only by those willing to take the risk." See how the multiforms swell, breathe, luring you into that world...

Commotion in the background interrupts Nick's concentration. He turns to see Stevie arguing with an OLDER MAN.

Nick leans against the wall, observing them.

OLDER MAN

We're doing this again?

STEVIE

Yeah.

OLDER MAN

So it's over?

STEVIE

Uh-huh.

The Older Man turns and looks at a painting.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

What do you see?

OLDER MAN

Nothing.

STEVIE

(almost to herself)

Of course.

OLDER MAN

What do you want?

STEVIE

For you to leave me alone.

OLDER MAN

I'm not doing this again.

STEVIE

I am.

The Older Man laughs.

OLDER MAN

How will you pay your rent?

STEVIE

You're so conceited. You're so fucking important, right? What a pathetic sense of entitlement. Fuck you.

OLDER MAN

I love you.

Stevie bursts out laughing.

STEVIE

I-- I know you think it's love, but it's not.

OLDER MAN

You're embarrassing me.

STEVIE

I really, really don't give a shit.

Stevie's laughter intensifies.

OLDER MAN

Stop it. You're crazy.

STEVIE

Yeah, I know.

OLDER MAN

You have so much potential.

STEVIE

To be your mistress?

OLDER MAN

You know-- you're a self-absorbed cunt that can't connect with reality. You're living on the fucking moon!

STEVIE

Don't be a dick about it. I rather live with the stars.

OLDER MAN
You sure you want to do this?

STEVIE
Jesus, just go.

OLDER MAN
You can't make it on your own. You
need me.

STEVIE
Oooh, testosteronism.

The Older Man walks off, enraged.

OLDER MAN
(to himself)
Bitch.

Unperturbed, Stevie turns around to find Rothko's Red-on-Red
Color Field in front of her. A look of wonder on her face.

STEVIE
(talking to the painting)
It's just you and me now, Red.

She turns around to find Nick watching her.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Mind your own fucking business.

Nick looks away, feeling embarrassed. Stevie studies him and
realizes she recognizes him.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Wait... I know you.

NICK
This-- this morning, you spilled my
coffee.

STEVIE
That's right, man.

NICK
I live next door to you.

Stevie's eyes widen, piqued.

STEVIE
We're neighbors?

NICK
Yes.

STEVIE
That's strange. I don't remember
seeing you before. Did you just
move in?

Nick shakes his head.

NICK
I-- I've been there a couple of
years.

STEVIE
Oh. Wow.

She turns back to the painting.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
What am I looking at?

NICK
Rothko... the painter of silence.

They share a brief moment of silence before she introduces herself.

STEVIE
Hi. I'm Stevie.

NICK
I'm Nick.

Her eyes light up with excitement. A long silence follows. The museum darkens, framing them against the vibrant red of the Rothko painting, as if they are inside a pulsating heart. She hugs him.

STEVIE
I found you.

Nick pulls away from the hug, obviously uncomfortable and confused.

NICK
Wha-- What?

STEVIE
You know, Stevie Nicks.

NICK
Uh, that's-- that's just a
coincidence.

STEVIE
No, I don't think so. We belong
together.

They look at each other for a moment. Nick turns away,
nervous.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Hey! Where you going?

Nick stops, turns back.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Wanna grab a drink? I'm having a
really terrible day. Everything's
so blurry at the moment.

NICK
Right now?

STEVIE
Yes, why not?

NICK
I can't.

STEVIE
I see. You don't care about making
new friends.

NICK
No, I-- I want friends. I do-- I'm
working.

Stevie looks at his uniform and laughs.

STEVIE
Oh, yeah. Right. I'm sorry. I don't
mean to be...

NICK
Uhh... I... I gotta go back to work
now.

STEVIE
Okay, sure.

She heads away, then turns back to catch Nick watching her
again. He tries not to look at her, but can't help himself.
Their eyes meet for a moment.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
See you soon.

Stevie gives Nick a quick smile as she walks away. He flushes from yet another embarrassment.

INT. CASTING DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

CASTING DIRECTOR, 40s, small, thin, a little weasel of a man, sits behind a messy desk piled with scripts and headshots. Stevie, sits opposite, fidgeting with a retractable ballpoint pen, trying to hide her distaste.

STEVIE
I need an advance.

CASTING DIRECTOR
For what? You haven't been in anything.

STEVIE
I'm going to be a big star.

CASTING DIRECTOR
Of course you are.

STEVIE
Listen my car got towed away. I really need to get her out.

He moves from the desk toward Stevie. She sighs, frustrated.

CASTING DIRECTOR
I see... And what's in it for me?

He strokes her hair.

CASTING DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
I like your hair like that. It's nice.

He places his hand on her knee and leans closer.

CASTING DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
Should I lock the door?

Whack! Stevie stabs him in the hand with the pen. He screams in pain.

STEVIE
Gross.

She heads for the door.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
You're dumber than I thought. You
sick fuck!

INT. THAI RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The restaurant is crowded. Stevie rushes inside, passing the stringy, pale MANAGER, 30s, who hastily follows her.

MANAGER
You're late!

STEVIE
I know, I'm sorry.

MANAGER
Almost an hour late!

STEVIE
You don't think I know that.

MANAGER
Get out there now before I fire
you!

Stevie swiftly puts on her apron and approaches her first table, where a potbellied, sweaty, bald-as-an-egg MAN, 40s, sits dining alone.

STEVIE
What can I get for you?

The Man leers at Stevie, and she can feel his eyes upon her. She lets out a sigh, knowing all too well what it means.

MAN
Uh, what does the Pad Thai taste
like?

Stevie rolls her eyes.

STEVIE
It tastes like Pad Thai.

MAN
What's in it?

STEVIE
Do I look like the chef?

He eyes her breasts, making her uncomfortable.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Hey, cut it out.

She feels a hand on her backside, causing her to react immediately. She forcefully yanks his hand backward.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
What the--

He topples to the floor, stunned.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Asshole!

The Manager rushes over.

MANAGER
(to the man)
I'm so sorry, sir. I'm so sorry.
(to Stevie)
You're fired!

Stevie angrily rips off her apron.

STEVIE
Yeah, no shit.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Darkness fills the room. There are posters of Rothko's Chapel on the wall. Nick cowers beneath a white sheet on the couch, consumed by depression.

INT. STEVIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Stevie slams the door.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nick pulls the sheet off his head.

INT. STEVIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The living room is filled with an eclectic mix of art and knick-knacks. Photographs of old women hang on the walls. Hand-painted stars decorate the ceiling. Stevie heads over to the record player and puts on Fleetwood Mac's "Rhiannon." She pours herself a drink and downs it.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The music seeps through the thin walls, and Nick slides a cigarette between his lips.

INT. STEVIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Stevie dances around the room, singing along with the music.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nick leans his head against the wall, singing the lyrics under his breath.

INT. STEVIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Stevie spins around until she crashes to her knees.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nick stubs out his cigarette and throws the sheet back over his head.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Nick sits on the couch, dazed. His cell rings, and in a fit of frustration, he grabs it and hurls it at the mirror, shattering the glass.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Nick stares at his gold cross in the mirror.

NICK
(to himself)
"They pierced my hands and my feet.
They look and stare upon me."

He takes a handful of prescription pills.

INT. STEVIE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Stevie reclines in the bathtub, reading: "A Transatlantic Love Affair: Letters to Nelson Algren."

STEVIE

"I like missing you so hard because it makes me feel strongly that you are not a dream, you are real, you are living, and I'll meet you again..."

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Nick reclines in the tub until he is completely submerged.

INT. STEVIE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Stevie playfully slips under the water until she is submerged.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Nick bursts out of the water, gasping for air, coughing.

INT. STEVIE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Stevie rises out of the water, laughing.

INT. STEVIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Stevie slips on her coat and reaches for her cell as it rings. She glances at the screen, rolls her eyes, and promptly turns the cell off.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A cold, howling wind cuts through the air. Nick turns up his collar to shield himself from the cold. Stevie steps out of the building and spots Nick struggling to light a cigarette.

STEVIE

There you are...

She looks at him with a flirty smile.

STEVIE(CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Fuck, it's freezing. We should be cuddled up in bed with a whiskey.

Nick, visibly nervous, starts to walk away.

NICK
I got-- I've gotta go.

STEVIE
Hey, where you going?

NICK
I... I'm going for a walk.

Stevie looks up.

STEVIE
It's gonna snow tonight. I can feel
it in my bones.

Nick swallows.

NICK
I-- I like snow.

STEVIE
Because Santa is coming?

They share a bittersweet, quiet laugh.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
You know, there's something magical
about snow... I love how it sticks
together.

Nervous, he attempts a second escape.

NICK
Uh, bye. Good night.

STEVIE
Wait, don't go.

NICK
I'm sorry. I...

STEVIE
Please, wait a moment. Ju-- just
wait.

NICK
What is it?

Stevie pauses before replying.

STEVIE
I'm going to kill myself.

This immediately grabs his attention.

NICK

How?

Stevie looks surprised, slightly weirded-out.

STEVIE

What do you mean?

NICK

How do you intend to kill yourself?

STEVIE

You're not gonna try to stop me,
right?

There's a long pause while he thinks.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

I was joking.

NICK

Oh. I-- Of course.

STEVIE

What's wrong with you, man?

Nick's face turns red, and he nervously rubs his neck.

NICK

You don't want to know.

Stevie sees the crucifix dangling down from his neck.

STEVIE

You're not one of those off-the-
wall Evangies, are you? All
righteous and morally superior. I
can't stand them.

NICK

No, no, no, no. I'm not.

STEVIE

Then, what's up with the cross?

NICK

It-- it was my mother's.

STEVIE

Do you believe in Him?

Nick doesn't say anything.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
What is God, really? Ugh. Who
fucking cares. He's never been
there.

She observes him a moment, noting the sadness in his eyes.
Then she brightens up and flashes him a vibrant smile.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Time to drink!

NICK
I-- I don't really drink.

STEVIE
You'll sleep better.

NICK
I... I have to get up early. I've
got an appointment.

STEVIE
I don't believe you.

NICK
Wh-- what?

STEVIE
You're lying.

NICK
I'm not.

STEVIE
It's okay, I tell lots of lies too.
I forgive you.

NICK
It's just-- I-- I'm not easy to be
with. I... I think I'm just not
meant to be around people. I live
in my head.

STEVIE
I can be difficult to be with too.
You know, I... I don't mean to, but
I can be... a lot. I'm a fuck-up. I
wear people down. Nobody ever stops
me. I can't stick to anything. But
I can't be alone. I get headaches.
I'm terrified of being alone.

Nick looks at her a moment, and she looks at him. He sees the
sudden desperation in her eyes.

NICK
Are you all right?

STEVIE
Please, don't go...

INT. HEATHERS BAR - NIGHT

The bar is packed with people singing and having a good time. Stevie and Nick sit at the bar. He notices a flyer on the bar and picks it up.

NICK
(reading to himself)
Karaoke night, featuring Stevie
Nicks' greatest hits.

He looks at her.

NICK (CONT'D)
Do you come here a lot?

She twirls in her Stevie Nicks-style flowing black dress.

STEVIE
Obviously.

The YOUNG BARTENDER pours two whiskeys. Stevie downs hers and gestures for another. Nick stares at his glass.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Oh, come on, man.

Nick takes a sip.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Tell me something.

NICK
What?

STEVIE
Do you like working at the museum?

NICK
Yeah.

STEVIE
Why?

NICK
I watch their eyes... I see what
they see.

STEVIE

Wow, I knew it. You're a stalker.

Nick's face reddens.

NICK

No, no, I'm not. It's not like that.

Stevie laughs.

STEVIE

Relax, I'm just kidding, man.

Nick finishes his drink in one gulp and coughs.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

And their eyes show...?

Nick pauses several seconds before replying.

NICK

Sadness, disgust, anger, confusion... fear.

She sadly looks at him.

STEVIE

No happiness? Hope? What about love?

NICK

Sometimes, not too often.

STEVIE

That's depressing. What else do you see?

NICK

Nothing.

STEVIE

Nothing?

NICK

Some just stand there.

STEVIE

No reaction?

NICK

Zero.

STEVIE
Eyes filled with holes...

They look at each other a moment.

NICK
Uh, what do you do?

Stevie laughs.

STEVIE
Nothing anymore. I'm free! I have
all the time in the world.

NICK
(to himself)
There's never enough time.

Nick looks off, deep in thought. Stevie observes him a moment, and can see he's in a bleak place. She downs her second drink.

STEVIE
You know, I know what we need...

She grabs his arm.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Let's sing.

NICK
No, no, no, no, no, no.

STEVIE
Why not?

NICK
I-- I can't sing.

STEVIE
Everyone can sing.

She drags him onto the stage.

NICK
Wh-- what are you doing?

Stevie grabs the microphone.

NICK (CONT'D)
No, no--

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A few flurries of snow start to fall. Stevie and Nick stand face-to-face. She softly sings:

STEVIE
*Lightning strikes maybe once, maybe
twice, Oh and it lights up the
night...*

He joins in:

NICK
*And you see you're a gypsy, You see
you're a gypsy.*

A moment between them.

STEVIE
It's a great song, isn't it?

NICK
Yeah.

STEVIE
Glad you came tonight?

Nick smiles for the first time in a long time, amazed by this unexpected night.

NICK
Yeah.

STEVIE
I knew you'd love it.

They quietly look at each other.

INT. HOSPITAL - CANCER WARD - DAY

Nick, with a worried expression, takes a seat in the waiting area. His anxiety is palpable as he observes the surroundings, including patients receiving treatment. Among them is a YOUNG MAN, confined to a wheelchair, grimacing in evident pain.

Suddenly, Nick makes a decision. He abruptly stands up and heads toward the elevator.

INT. HOSPITAL - ELEVATOR - DAY

Nick steps into the elevator, deep in thought, and sees a little GIRL, holding a blue balloon, with her messy ponytail and a muddled dress. Her DAD, 30s, tries to clean her up with his tie, but ends up making it worse. The Girl's eyes well up with tears. The Dad's cell rings.

DAD
(into phone)
It's a boy! He's perfect!

The elevator doors open, and the Dad yanks the Girl out, causing her to lose her grip on the balloon. As the doors close, Nick watches sadly as the Girl disappears down the hallway.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Nick walks down the street with the blue balloon, his head bowed. At a stoplight, he looks up at the towering, lifeless skyscrapers, feeling desperate, trapped, lost.

INT. STEVIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Stevie stares up at the painted stars on the ceiling, deep in thought. Suddenly, there's a knock at the door, and she rushes to answer it. Through the peephole, she sees the Older Man from the museum and sighs: What a pain in my ass.

STEVIE
I'm not here.

OLDER MAN
Can we please talk?

STEVIE
I'm not here!

OLDER MAN
Please, just open the door.

STEVIE
What do you want?

OLDER MAN
I miss you.

STEVIE
How cruel.

He bangs on the door in frustration.

OLDER MAN
I'm not paying for anything
anymore!

Stevie considers opening the door, but stops herself.

STEVIE
Fuck off!

OLDER MAN
I will not come back. I swear!

Stevie leans her back against the door and slides down to the floor.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN - DAY

The train is crowded. Nick, visibly broken, occupies a seat, clutching the balloon. Two teenage BOYS engage in horseplay nearby. BOY #1 grabs BOY #2's fedora.

BOY #1
You're a faggot now?

Boy #2 takes the fedora back.

BOY #2
Give it back, asshole. No one says
that shit anymore.

BOY #1
Faggot, faggot, faggot, faggot...

Boy #1 spots Nick.

BOY #1 (CONT'D)
What the fuck you looking at?

NICK
Wha-- I-- I--

BOY #1
What the fuck did you say?

Nick doesn't respond.

BOY #1 (CONT'D)
Hey! I'm talking to you!

Boy #1 starts laughing.

BOY #1 (CONT'D)
Just fucking with you, man.

BOY #2
It's okay, bro. Don't wet yourself.

The doors swing open, and the Boys burst into laughter as they exit the train.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nick, still bleak, walks down the hallway with the balloon.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - SECONDS LATER

Nick stands at his door, fumbling for his keys. Just as he does, Stevie opens her own door.

STEVIE
I've been waiting for you...

Nick looks startled.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
I missed you.

NICK
You missed me?

STEVIE
Yes.

INT. STEVIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Almost empty bottle of wine on the coffee table. Stevie and Nick on the couch. He eyes the photos of old women on the walls.

NICK
Did you take all those?

Stevie shakes her head.

STEVIE
I collect them.

NICK
Why?

Stevie looks at the photos.

STEVIE
Maybe they have the answers.

NICK

What if there are no answers?

She laughs, almost to herself.

STEVIE

Then the world just keeps spinning
and spinning... until we all fall
down.

She points to the photos.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

What do you see?

Nick stares at the photos for a long moment.

NICK

Time. Death...

He spots the painted stars on the ceiling, and she follows
his gaze.

STEVIE

Took me months to paint them.
(laughs)
Kept getting paint in my eyes.
Thought I'd go blind.

She thinks for a moment.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

Lie down.

NICK

No. I'm-- I'm okay, right here.

STEVIE

Don't be afraid.

Nick hesitates, uncertain.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

Trust me.

Reluctantly, Nick lies down on the rug.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

Close your eyes.

Again, he hesitates.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

Come on, close your eyes.

He closes his eyes.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Keep them closed, okay?

She switches off the light and lies down beside him.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Open your eyes...

He opens his eyes, and the painted stars glow in the darkness.

NICK
They're perfect.

STEVIE
I wish I could live up there.

There's a silence.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Have you ever been to the ocean at night?

NICK
No.

STEVIE
The stars are so close, you feel like you could touch them.

Silence reigns again as they both gaze at the stars.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Do you ever get what you want, Nick?

NICK
No. Never.

STEVIE
Make a wish.

Nick stares at the stars, his eyes filled with longing and melancholy. After a moment, he closes his eyes and makes a wish.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
It's going to come true. You'll see.

NICK
Can I ask you something?

STEVIE
Sure.

NICK
All this time we've been neighbors,
I saw you, but you never saw me.
Why now?

Stevie turns to face him.

STEVIE
Some things take time to see.

Nick leans forward slightly, as if about to kiss her.

NICK
Thank you for the stars.

He stands up and heads toward the door. She looks disappointed.

STEVIE
Wait, you forgot something.

Nick looks at her, confused. She jumps up and hands him the balloon.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Your balloon.

Her fingers brush against his hand.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Dream about me...

INT. BANK - DAY

Stevie stares, shocked, at the BANK TELLER.

STEVIE
He can do that?

BANK TELLER
The account was solely in his name.

Stevie's face turns grave, a silent alarm flashing in her eyes.

STEVIE

Uh, look-- I'm kind of in the middle of an emergency. Please, is there anything you can do? I really need this money.

BANK TELLER

I'm sorry, the account is closed.

STEVIE

Please, just hear me out--

BANK TELLER

Hey, look, I'm not a therapist. I'm just a bank teller. I'm sorry.

With that, the Bank Teller steps away.

STEVIE

(to herself)

Fuck, fuck, fuck.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Nick sits by the window, observing children playing; his hands press against the window guard, invoking the imagery of a man trapped in a prison cell.

In an unexpected move, he lets go of the blue balloon. A burst of joy electrifies the children as they leap and reach for the ascending balloon.

As he watches the balloon drift away, a spark of resolve ignites in his eyes. He has made a pivotal decision!

INT. STEVIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Stevie clings to her cell.

STEVIE

(into cell)

I'm sorry I-- I do want to see her before-- I do care...

Feeling a wave of helplessness, she ends the call. She looks up at the photos of the old women on the walls. She draws her legs up to her chest, hugging them tightly.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

I'll be there...

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Several people exit the apartment with Nick's television set, couch, table, posters, and a chair. Stevie heads inside and finds Nick counting money.

STEVIE

Hey, what's going on? Having a party?

Startled, Nick looks up.

NICK

No, I, uh-- I'm just selling everything.

She picks up a black El Topo-style hat and tries it on.

STEVIE

How much for the hat?

NICK

It's not for sale.

Stevie spots a broken mirror.

STEVIE

How much for the mirror?

NICK

It's shattered.

STEVIE

I like broken things.

NICK

You can have it.

STEVIE

Thanks.

She takes a shard of mirror glass and slips it into her pocket.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

Wait, why are you selling everything?

NICK

I'm buying a car.

STEVIE

What for?

NICK
Uh, I'm going on a road trip.

STEVIE
Where you going?

Nick pauses for a moment, deep in thought.

NICK
I... I don't know.

STEVIE
For how long?

NICK
I don't know.

STEVIE
"I don't know." I like it.

A wind twister dangling in front of the window captures her attention. She spins it absentmindedly, lost in thought.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
(to herself)
I need to leave too...

Her eyes light up with a flicker of realization as she looks at him.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Today's your lucky day. I happen to
be free. I'll drive.

NICK
Wh-- what?

STEVIE
I have a car. She's locked up
somewhere.

She swipes the money from his hand.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
We have to break her free.

NICK
You and me? Together?

STEVIE
Uh-huh.

NICK
Bu-- but-- we just met.

STEVIE

Well, technically, you've been next door to me for years. We're practically married.

NICK

I-- I've always done everything alone.

STEVIE

Not anymore.

NICK

This is a bad idea.

STEVIE

Why?

NICK

You know nothing about me.

STEVIE

It doesn't matter.

NICK

Aren't you scared?

STEVIE

No. Not really.

NICK

I could be a serial killer.

Stevie shakes her head dismissively. Unlikely.

NICK (CONT'D)

A lunatic?

STEVIE

We're about to find out.

NICK

Why are you doing this?

STEVIE

To get the fuck outta here. Isn't that your plan too?

She places the black hat on his head.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

It's a good deal. Trust me. You won't regret it.

NICK
What's the catch?

STEVIE
Are you always this cynical?

NICK
This doesn't happen in real life.
It's crazy.

STEVIE
It happens in movies all the time.

NICK
Life is not a movie.

STEVIE
We'll see about that.

EXT. NEW YORK - MORNING

The sun rises over the Manhattan skyline.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING

Nick steps out of the apartment building wearing the black hat and carrying a backpack. A white, dirty VW Beetle pulls up, honking its horn. Stevie swings the door open.

STEVIE
Come on, let's go.

Nick climbs inside.

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - MORNING

The car is packed and ready to go. Nick's wind twister hangs from the rearview mirror. Nick checks a map.

STEVIE
We don't need that.

NICK
I want to see everything.

STEVIE
We will.

NICK
What if we get lost?

STEVIE
So what? That's part of the
adventure.

NICK
Where are we going?

STEVIE
We're doing the triangle.

NICK
Triangle?

Stevie draws a triangle on the map with her finger, starting from New York, moving up to North Dakota, down to Arizona, and ending in Texas.

STEVIE
North Dakota, Arizona, Texas.

Nick cracks a slight smile.

NICK
Texas...

STEVIE
Yup.

Stevie guns the engine and they are off!

EXT. NEW YORK - MORNING

The Beetle leaves the gleaming Manhattan skyline behind.

NICK (O.S.)
Bye New York.

STEVIE (O.S.)
Fuck you New York.

NICK (O.S.)
You still love it.

STEVIE (O.S.)
I'll be back.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

The Beetle stops at the pump. A GAS ATTENDANT, 60s, approaches.

GAS ATTENDANT
Fill'er up?

STEVIE
Yes, sir!

Stevie glances across the road and spots a neon sign reading "The Starlight Lounge" with a group of elegantly dressed old people entering.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
What's happening over there?

GAS ATTENDANT
Uh, senior citizen monthly dance party.

Nick pays for the gas. Stevie turns to him.

STEVIE
Let's have a party!

Nick shakes his head.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Okay, let's go to a party!

Before he can respond, Stevie swiftly pulls a U-turn, heading toward the club.

INT. DANCE HALL - NIGHT

Stevie and Nick watch old couples dance cheek to cheek.

NICK
What are we doing here?

STEVIE
Let's dance.

NICK
No, I don't think so.

STEVIE
No? Just no? Is it always gonna be "no?"

Nick looks down, embarrassed.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
What is it now?

NICK
I don't know how.

STEVIE
Everyone can dance a little.

NICK
They're looking at us.

STEVIE
No, they're not. I promise you.

NICK
You're not embarrassed?

STEVIE
Never.

Nick rubs his neck.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Um, just pretend you're at a school
dance.

NICK
I never went to dance parties. I
hated school. They hated me.

Stevie holds out her hand.

STEVIE
You'll regret it if you don't
try...

Nick hesitates for a moment before finally taking her hand.
She smiles and gently pulls him toward her. The band plays
Ella Fitzgerald's "Blue Moon."

STEVIE (CONT'D)
How do you feel?

NICK
Dizzy.

Stevie pulls him closer to her.

STEVIE
Just hold on to me.

They dance cheek to cheek, slowly and easily. A perfect fit.

INT. MOTEL'S LOBBY - NIGHT

Stevie and Nick approach the MOTEL CLERK, a plump, jolly clerk munching on heart-shaped cookies.

MOTEL CLERK

The honeymoon suite is available...

Stevie looks at Nick, who appears panicked.

NICK

Uh, no, no, no. Two rooms, please.

The Motel Clerk smiles dreamily as she stares at them.

MOTEL CLERK

Are you sure? It has a heart-shaped bed and mirrored ceilings.

NICK

We-- we're just friends.

Stevie covers her disappointment.

INT. NICK'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Nick pops a pill and reaches for a pack of cigarettes. It's empty.

EXT. STEVIE'S MOTEL ROOM - BALCONY - NIGHT

Stevie leans on the balcony ledge, smoking. She sees Nick walk by.

STEVIE

Hey!

Nick looks up.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

Where you going?

NICK

Uh, outta cigarettes.

Stevie holds out her pack.

STEVIE

Come up.

Effortlessly, he climbs up to her balcony, just like in "Romeo and Juliet."

EXT. STEVIE'S MOTEL ROOM - BALCONY - NIGHT

Stevie and Nick smoke, watching drunk people stumble out of the bar.

STEVIE
Lonely people drink a lot.

NICK
All you need is love, huh?

STEVIE
Love hurts.

NICK
Why do it then?

STEVIE
Because we all need it.

She touches a small scar on the side of his face.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
What happened?

NICK
I got my head smashed in.

STEVIE
Who did it?

NICK
My father.

STEVIE
When?

NICK
I was thirteen.

STEVIE
Why?

Nick looks off.

NICK
I disappointed him... I was a mistake.

STEVIE
What happened after?

NICK
He kicked me out.

STEVIE
Where was your mom?

NICK
She died when I was five.

STEVIE
You've been alone ever since?

NICK
Yes.

STEVIE
That's a long time... to be on your own.

There's a silence.

NICK
What about your parents?

Stevie looks at the stars.

STEVIE
They're somewhere. Nowhere.

NICK
Do you see them often?

STEVIE
My mother can't open her eyes anymore.

NICK
Your father?

STEVIE
He hates me.

She looks off.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
I miss them.

NICK
Me too.

STEVIE
I hate memories.

Nick nods, agreeing.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
How do we move on when the past
clings to us?

NICK
We're trapped.

They look out at the night sky.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

Stevie and Nick sit at a table in silence. She squirms in her seat, feeling uneasy in the silence. Her fingers tap on the table while Nick seems at ease with the silence.

STEVIE
Don't mind me. I'm just sitting
here.

NICK
Let's just sit here in silence.

STEVIE
For how long?

NICK
Uh, until our waitress returns.
Starting now...

STEVIE
That's an eternity. Did you know it
took less than fifty seconds to
blow up Hiroshima? A lot can
happen.

Nick doesn't say anything.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
You're joking, right?

She contorts her face into several different expressions in an attempt to elicit some sort of reaction from him.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Are you trying to impress me?

Nick doesn't respond.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Is this really necessary?

Nick nods.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
This is stupid.

In the silence, ordinary sounds are magnified, such as CHATTER, COFFEE POURING, Stevie's BREATHING, a baby CRYING, and a fly BUZZING against the window. She tries to swat the fly, but Nick stops her.

NICK
No!

They lock eyes.

STEVIE
What's your deal, man?

Nick shrugs, almost embarrassed. The Waitress returns with their order.

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - DAY

The silence continues. Stevie observes Nick a moment.

STEVIE
Hey.

Nick's huddled up against the passenger side window, deep in thought.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Hey!

She turns to Nick and puts two fingers near her mouth.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Got one?

Nick lights a cigarette and passes it to her.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
You okay?

NICK
Yeah.

STEVIE
What's wrong?

NICK
You ask a lot of questions.

STEVIE
Can we just cut the shit?

Nick doesn't respond.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Hey... I'm sorry. I just wanna know
stuff about you.

She looks at Nick, intrigued.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
You have a secret...

Nick doesn't say anything. She laughs.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
I knew it. That's it, right? I can
keep a secret. You can tell me
anything. I swear.

NICK
It's-- it's complicated.

STEVIE
You don't trust me? You think I
won't understand?

NICK
Uh, let's-- let's not talk about it
right now, okay?

STEVIE
Okay. Sure.

She looks at him.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
I'm fascinated by the things people
hide...

Nick sinks back into his seat, worried. He's clearly not
ready to share his secret with her.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Gray, cloudy skies. The Beetle speeds along an ugly road,
lined with a Walmart, a Mega mall, and fast-food restaurants.

EXT. MEGA MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

Packed with minivans and SUVs. The Beetle pulls in.

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - DAY

Nick looks out at the bustling mall, taken aback by its amusement park-like appearance. Stevie, on the other hand, looks disgusted.

STEVIE
What a shithole.

NICK
I've never been to one.

STEVIE
You're lucky. Malls are a cesspool.
All they play is Barry Manilow
songs.

NICK
You think they'll have a bathroom?

Stevie gives him a look of disbelief.

STEVIE
Of course.

Nick look out the window.

NICK
We'll never find parking.

Stevie points out a spot next to a red SUV.

STEVIE
I bet I can squeeze in there.

Nick looks.

NICK
Please don't. It's too narrow.

As she squeezes in, there's a loud metallic scratch.

STEVIE
Oh, fuck.

NICK
Jesus.

EXT. MEGA MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

Stevie inspects the damage. She spits on the scratch, rubs, but it won't disappear.

STEVIE

Shit.

INT. RED SUV - DAY

Amid stuffing her face with fast-food, a GIRL, 10, pudgy, dials a number on her cell.

GIRL

(into phone)

Dad! Dad! She scratched the SUV!

EXT. MEGA MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

Stevie bangs on the door of the SUV.

STEVIE

Shhh! Be quiet.

Stevie sees a rifle and other hunting paraphernalia in the backseat.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Fuck.

GIRL

(into phone)

Dad, she's hitting the car now!

Nick gets out of the car.

NICK

We should report it.

STEVIE

What for?

NICK

It's illegal. We can get in trouble.

STEVIE

Don't be silly. They only care about themselves. It's time to take action. They have to be stopped!

Nick looks confused.

NICK
What are you talking about?

Stevie points to all the SUVs.

STEVIE
A world full of SUVs, choking the planet. They don't give a fuck about us. Selfish bastards.

NICK
For Chrissakes.

Stevie jumps back into the car.

STEVIE
Just get in.

Nick hesitates.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Get in the fucking car, Nick!

NICK
No, It's wrong.

STEVIE
Who gives a shit!

She looks up at him.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Just get in the car. Please, we have to go. Now!

Nick tentatively gets back in the car, and she quickly pulls out.

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - DAY

Stevie stops at a stop sign.

NICK
I still need to pee.

STEVIE
Go in the bushes.

NICK
That's disgusting.

STEVIE
Then, we'll go to a gas station.

EXT. MEGA MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

A MAN, 40s, potbellied, wearing a red hat, rushes toward the red SUV to examine the scratch.

MAN
Fuck!

The girl points out the white Beetle.

GIRL
Dad, they're taking off!

He sees the New York license plate on the Beetle and becomes furious. In his anger, he grabs his hunting rifle.

MAN
Wokies!

Bang! He fires at the Beetle.

MAN (CONT'D)
Fuck you!

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - DAY

Shocked, Nick leans over and covers his head.

NICK
Oh my God!

Stevie screams out the window.

STEVIE
You piece of shit!

NICK
Stop it! We just got shot at!

STEVIE
I know, over a goddamn car!

Stevie laughs.

NICK
It isn't funny.

STEVIE
No, it's really fucking sad.

She quickly wipes away a tear before he notices.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
It's the American way. Lock and
load.

INT. GAS STATION - WOMEN'S BATHROOM - DAY

Stevie washes her hands, and as she looks in the mirror, she notices a SENILE BALD WOMAN combing out her wig in the sink.

SENILE BALD WOMAN
This is why the aliens won't talk
to us. We're disgusting.

Stevie smiles with compassion.

STEVIE
I don't think they're that
judgmental.

SENILE BALD WOMAN
They're coming, you know. They are!

STEVIE
I hope so.

The both smile at each other.

INT. GAS STATION - MEN'S BATHROOM - DAY

Nick walks in, looks around, it's empty. Relieved, he walks into a stall.

EXT. SMALL TOWN - DAY

Deserted storefronts, broken windows, howling dogs, overgrown grass, and boarded-up houses dominate the landscape, with foreclosure signs on every corner. A dog scrounges for food amidst the rubble.

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - DAY

Stevie and Nick look out at the dying town. A haunting melody drifts in from somewhere, breaking the silence.

It's harmonica music, being played by a withered BLACK MAN, 70s, sitting on his dilapidated porch; eyes damp with tears as movers and sheriff deputies dump his belongings on the street.

NICK
Greed reigns supreme.

STEVIE
The land of opportunity and
equality, right?

NICK
It's much sadder than I imagined.

STEVIE
It's hard to believe people still
have faith in this country.

EXT. MANISTEE NATIONAL FOREST - DAY

Stevie and Nick amble through an endless expanse of birch
trees.

STEVIE
Turn-ons?

He points to his hearing aid.

NICK
Noise. I feel like I'm not alone.

STEVIE
Like?

NICK
Crashing, smashing, laughing,
crying, barking.

STEVIE
Meowing, too?

NICK
Meow!

Stevie smiles. He jumps on a long log and tries to balance
himself.

NICK (CONT'D)
Turn-offs?

STEVIE
Actors.

NICK
Actors?

STEVIE
They're so phony.

NICK
Why do you say that?

STEVIE
They're always pretending.

NICK
They have to.

STEVIE
They talk like books, always
quoting writers and using big
words.

NICK
Maybe they just read a lot.

STEVIE
They need to be the center of
attention. All they want is to be
adored.

Nick jumps off the log.

NICK
But everybody wants to be adored.

STEVIE
You know what I want?

NICK
What, Stevie?

STEVIE
I want to be a fucking bird.

NICK
What color?

STEVIE
Black!

NICK
Of course.

STEVIE
Fly away with me, Nick!

Stevie stretches out her arms and takes off like an eagle. He
takes off after her.

EXT. MANISTEE NATIONAL FOREST - MINUTES LATER

Stevie and Nick come across a dying horse. Shot, abandoned, taking its last breaths. He lies down next to the horse and looks deep into its eyes, and she lies next to him.

STEVIE

They say all the wisdom of the
world can be found in the eyes of
the horse.

Nick closes the horse's eyes.

NICK

I don't get it. Why is the world
like this?

His frustration mounting, his anger intensifies.

NICK (CONT'D)

Where is fucking God?

STEVIE

Same place as the Easter Bunny,
Tooth Fairy, Santa Claus, except I
have more faith in them.

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Nick is behind the wheel while Stevie sleeps. Something ahead catches his attention.

EXT. ABANDONED DRIVE-IN THEATRE - NIGHT

Nick parks in front of the crumbling white screen. Stevie wakes up, sees the screen, and looks at him curiously.

STEVIE

What's playing?

She winks at the camera playfully.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

A love story?

Stevie smiles at him.

EXT. ABANDONED DRIVE-IN THEATRE - NIGHT

STEVIE (O.S.)

Action.

They stand in front of the screen, pretending to be actors in a movie. Stevie simulates bleeding from a gunshot wound.

NICK
Why did you do it?

STEVIE
I can't live without you.

She falls into his arms, and he catches her.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
"Kiss me. Kiss me as if it were the
last time."

Stevie closes her eyes, anticipating a kiss. Instead, he lets her go and slips a cigarette into his mouth. She looks disappointed.

NICK
Nothing like a cigarette after--

She notices the cigarette is backwards. She pulls it out of his mouth and inserts it correctly.

STEVIE
Sex. That's when it tastes best,
right?

She lights his cigarette.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
"Do you love me?"

NICK
Wh-- what?

STEVIE
The title of our movie.

NICK
Oh, right.

Stevie looks at him for a moment, and he looks back at her.

STEVIE
"Do you love me?"

NICK
It's a good title.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The Beetle glides along the empty road. Up ahead, the glow of Detroit industrial skyline.

INT. MOTEL - HALLWAY - MORNING

Stevie knocks on Nick's door several times.

STEVIE
Hey, it's me.

Stevie puts her ear to the door and hears the shower running. She tries the door, it's open.

INT. MOTEL - NICK'S ROOM - DAY

Stevie enters the room, her demeanor akin to that of an investigator. She picks up Nick's neatly folded shirt and smells it. She spots a pill-box filled with assorted pills, which she picks up. In a sudden move, Nick snatches the pill-box out of her hand.

STEVIE
What's wrong, Nick?

NICK
Get out! Get out!

STEVIE
What's this?

NICK
Get out! Leave me alone!

STEVIE
No, talk to me!

NICK
Get the hell outta my life! Get the fuck out! I don't need you! I don't need anyone!

Nick shrinks, as she looks at him shocked and maybe horrified. Stevie runs out.

INT. MOTEL - HALLWAY - MORNING

Nick stalks down the hallway searching for Stevie, desperate and guilt-ridden.

EXT. MOTEL - MORNING

Nick runs down the entire length of the motel, panicked.

EXT. MOTEL - SWIMMING POOL - MORNING

Nick finds Stevie sitting at the bottom of the empty pool, smoking.

EXT. MOTEL - SWIMMING POOL - SECONDS LATER

Nick jumps into the pool and sits next to Stevie. He leans his back against hers.

NICK

Stevie, I didn't mean it. I'm-- I'm so sorry.

STEVIE

It's okay.

NICK

I'm really sorry. I'm so embarrassed. I'm a fucking asshole!

STEVIE

If we didn't make mistakes... how would we learn?

NICK

I-- I thought you left. I thought I'd never see you again.

STEVIE

You still don't get it, do you?

She turns to face him.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

I'm not going anywhere. I'm not going to leave you. I'm going to stay with you no matter what.

She moves the curly hair hanging down over his eyes.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

Don't you see that?

They lock eyes.

EXT. FACTORY PLANT - DAY

A factory plant pumps dirty smoke into the air.

EXT. STREAM - DAY

The sky is gray and overcast. Stevie and Nick sit by a polluted stream, the factory looming above them. She cuts his hair.

STEVIE
Say something.

NICK
I... I don't know what to say.

STEVIE
Ask questions. We don't need the answers...

Nick pauses for a moment.

NICK
Are you scared of anything?

STEVIE
Do you ever worry about not making a difference in the world... about being insignificant?

NICK
What happens after we die?

STEVIE
Do you believe in ghosts?

There's a pause, the weight of their unanswered questions palpable.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Are you romantic?

NICK
Do you like poetry?

STEVIE
"What is that you express in your eyes?"

NICK

"Do you remember still the falling stars that like swift horses through the heavens raced and suddenly leaped across the hurdles of our wishes - do you recall?"

Stevie smiles.

STEVIE

Have you seen the Eiffel Tower?

NICK

Where's the Uffizi Gallery?

STEVIE

How do you write a love letter?

NICK

Can you live without movies?

Stevie smiles.

STEVIE

How do you write a love letter?

Nick smiles. Then gets serious.

NICK

Did you know there is a Nazi trying to take over the world again?

STEVIE

Why is there so much greed?

Nick stares at his reflection in the dirty stream.

NICK

What's clean water like?

Stevie looks at the barren land before them.

STEVIE

How long will it take before all the trees disappear?

NICK

Does anyone care?

STEVIE

Why are people so afraid of each other?

NICK

Are you searching for something,
but you don't know what it is yet?

STEVIE

Why does nothing ever last?

NICK

Do you see me?

STEVIE

Do you believe in love at first
sight?

EXT. ROAD - TWILIGHT

A radiant dusk, pink and aqua. Stevie's car passes a sign:
"Welcome to North Dakota."

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - TWILIGHT

Stevie drives. Nick sleeps in the backseat.

EXT. STANDING ROCK - NIGHT

A group of WATER PROTECTORS and LAND DEFENDERS hold a
candlelight vigil. Various signs read:

-- "No Pipelines."
-- "Defend the Sacred."
-- "Stop Poisoning Our People."
-- "Oil Equals Death."
-- "Protect Our Water."

A group of VETERANS have a different banner: "Veterans For
Standing Rock."

A NATIVE AMERICAN MAN, 40s, dressed in Native American
attire, approaches the microphone.

NATIVE AMERICAN MAN

"I see a time of seven generations,
when all the colors of mankind will
gather under the sacred tree of
life and the whole earth will
become one circle again."

A NATIVE AMERICAN WOMAN, 80s, motions for Nick to come over.
He complies and kneels before her. She puts a necklace around
his neck.

INSERT - NECKLACE

A scene depicting the connection between the inner and outer layers of the Earth.

NATIVE AMERICAN WOMAN
Water is the most powerful gift
given to us. Respect water. Respect
life.

Stevie watches Nick.

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Stevie drives. Nick reaches for a pack of cigarettes on the dash.

NICK
Want one?

STEVIE
I'm quitting.

NICK
Really?

STEVIE
I'm serious.

NICK
Why now?

Stevie looks at his new necklace.

STEVIE
A fresh start. You should quit too.

NICK
It's going to hurt.

Stevie looks at him.

STEVIE
We'll do it together.

Nick puts the cigarettes away.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Let's celebrate...

INT. JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT

Stevie and Nick sit at a table in a smoky, dimly lit jazz club. A drunk WAITRESS, 60s, thin, haggard, her thinning gray hair pulled into a ponytail, shuffles toward them.

Stevie notices the wrinkles on the Waitress's veiny hands and the dark circles under her glazed eyes.

WAITRESS
What'll it be, kids?

STEVIE
What are the specials tonight?

The Waitress laughs.

WAITRESS
Everyone just drinks here. I
recommend the bourbon. It's good.
Very good.

STEVIE
Bourbon it is.

The Waitress shuffles away.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
I don't want to get old.

NICK
We all do eventually.

STEVIE
So that's it? We get old and die?

Nick's expression turns solemn.

NICK
Some people never get the chance to
grow old. They just die, and life
keeps moving.

Stevie sighs.

STEVIE
Time's is either running out or
against us.

The Waitress returns and pours the bourbon.

WAITRESS
Drink up and forget your troubles
for a while.

The Waitress leaves the bottle and shuffles away.

STEVIE
Let's get drunk and...

NICK
...Throw up.

Stevie raises her glass to him, then downs the bourbon.

Nick takes a swig, reddens and coughs.

Chet Baker's "I Fall In Love Too Easily" starts playing.

STEVIE
What's the name of that song?

NICK
I don't know.

STEVIE
I like it...

EXT. JAZZ CLUB - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Stevie and Nick stumble into the parking lot with their eyes closed.

STEVIE
Don't open your eyes.

NICK
How are we going to find the car?

STEVIE
Just trust me.

NICK
But--

STEVIE
We'll find her.

They make their way around the lot with closed eyes. Stevie starts spinning, loses balance, and falls to her knees, laughing.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Ow!

NICK
Are you okay?

STEVIE
I think so.

Stevie crawls on the ground until she bumps into her car.

NICK
Where are you?

STEVIE
Follow my voice...
(sings)
*I fall in love too easily, I fall
in love too fast.*

Nick follows her voice.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
*I fall in love too terribly hard,
For love to ever last.*

Nick reaches her side, sits down beside her, and touches her hand. She smiles.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Open your eyes...

They open their eyes and see her car in front of them.

NICK
How did you know?

STEVIE
I can smell her.

NICK
She could use a wash.

They both laugh.

INT. MOTEL'S LOBBY - NIGHT

Nick carries Stevie on his back. The MOTEL CLERK watches a political rant on Fox News.

NICK
(whispers)
Two rooms, please.

Stevie whispers into his ear.

STEVIE
I can hear you.

NICK

Shhh.

STEVIE

Shhhhhhhhhhh.

NICK

(to motel clerk)

Sorry, she had the bourbon.

MOTEL CLERK

Only one room left. Two beds. You want it or not?

STEVIE

Yes!

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Stevie is on Nick's back, and they look at the two double beds in the room.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

These beds are so far apart. Let's push them together.

NICK

No.

He gently sets Stevie down on the bed and notices a cut on her knee.

NICK (CONT'D)

You're bleeding.

STEVIE

It's just a scratch.

Nick walks into the bathroom.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Nick grabs the first aid kit.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Nick cleans the bloodied scrape.

STEVIE

Ouch.

Nick softly blows.

NICK
Better?

STEVIE
Uh-huh.

They look at each other and share an intimate moment. He retreats to the wall and flips off the lights. She undresses down to her underwear.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
You and me...

NICK
What?

STEVIE
It's just you and me now.

She climbs into bed and slides under the covers. Still dressed, Nick lies down and wraps a blanket around his body. She laughs.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
You're afraid I'm gonna peek?

NICK
Go to sleep.

STEVIE
You know what's happening?

NICK
What?

STEVIE
You want me. You really do.

NICK
You're drunk.

Stevie smiles.

STEVIE
You know, Nick, sooner or later,
you're gonna have to kiss me.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Sun streams through the blinds. Nick watches Stevie sleep. She looks so peaceful in the morning light.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The Beetle is stuck in a traffic jam. Horns blare endlessly.

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - DAY

Nick is at the wheel. Stevie sits in the passenger seat, visibly hungover. She clutches her head and groans.

STEVIE

It hurts.

NICK

Go to sleep.

STEVIE

Sleep? Do you hear that?

Annoyed, she rolls down the window and sticks her head out.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

(at truck driver)

Shut the fuck up!

She flops back in her seat.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

I'm gonna kill the son-of-a-bitch!

Come on, pass him. Pass him!

NICK

I can't.

The honking intensifies. She leans out the window again.

STEVIE

Shut up, shut up, shut up!

She rolls up the window and covers her ears with her hands.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

I feel like screaming!

NICK

You're making a scene.

STEVIE

You know what drives me crazy? What

I hate the most?

Nick doesn't engage.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Suffering in silence.

She looks at him.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Why be silent?

NICK
You want me to express myself? Is
that it?

STEVIE
Yes! You wake up every day, but
you're not really living, Nick!

Nick takes this in, then suddenly jumps out of the car. She
laughs.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Fuck, yeah.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Nick screams at the honking cars, vibrating with anger.

NICK
I see bullshit everywhere! It's all
bullshit! Cut the fucking
bullshit!!!

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - DAY

Stevie claps and laughs. She quickly jumps out of the car.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Stevie climbs on the truck in front of them and screams.

STEVIE
Fucking bullshit!

TRUCK DRIVER (O.S.)
Get off my fucking truck!

STEVIE AND NICK
(together)
Bullshit!!!!!!

Screaming and honking in unison, like some strange symphony.

EXT. GRAND CANYON - NIGHT

The Beetle speeds through a dust storm. As the dust slowly lifts, the moon and glorious canyons are revealed.

EXT. GRAND CANYON - NIGHT

Stevie and Nick stand on the edge of the canyon, looking like the face of God just appeared. Dust swirls around them like fairy dust.

EXT. GRAND CANYON - MINUTES LATER

Nick slumps down on a rock and covers his face with his hands.

STEVIE

Why so sad?

Stevie scooches in beside him and lays her head on his slumped shoulder.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

Even your shoulder is sad.

Nick takes off his black hat and puts it on her head.

NICK

It's yours.

STEVIE

Why?

NICK

So you don't forget me.

Stevie puts the hat back on his head.

STEVIE

I don't need a souvenir. I have you.

NICK

We can't stay here forever, Stevie. You know that, right? We're gonna have to go back.

STEVIE

No, we don't. There's nothing back there for us.

Nick stares at her for a long moment.

NICK
Why are you really here, Stevie?

STEVIE
It doesn't matter.

NICK
What are you running away from?

Stevie jumps up and heads back toward the car. He follows her.

STEVIE
You sure you're not projecting,
Nick? It's you who's always fucking
running away.

NICK
You too.

STEVIE
So what if I am? We're all running
from something.

Nick seizes her arm.

NICK
Stop!

Stevie turns sharply, agitated.

STEVIE
What is it you think you know about
me, Nick?

Nick pauses before replying.

NICK
You're a phony.

STEVIE
Don't talk unless you know what
you're talking about.

NICK
This whole Stevie Nicks thing is a
cover. It's bullshit. You can't
live your whole life to a fucking
soundtrack.

This hurts.

STEVIE

You don't know anything about me.
Shut the fuck up!

NICK

Now you want me to shut up? You've
been begging me to talk for weeks!

STEVIE

Well, now I don't. So shut the fuck
up, okay?

NICK

No.

STEVIE

What do you want from me, Nick?

Nick pauses.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

Come on, man. If you're gonna ask
me something, then ask. For God's
sake!

NICK

Who are you?

STEVIE

Nobody.

NICK

Who are you?

STEVIE

This is me. This is it.

NICK

Who are you?!

STEVIE

I don't know who the fuck I am.

NICK

Why are you here, Stevie?

Tears roll down her cheek.

STEVIE

I came to say goodbye. Okay?

NICK

To whom?

STEVIE
My fucking past!

Nick wraps his arms around her.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Did you have to do that?

NICK
It was your turn.

The sun rises over the canyon, bathing everything in a burnished orange glow. Stevie smiles through the tears.

STEVIE
It's time to go home.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The Beetle passes a sign: "Welcome to Texas."

STEVIE (O.S.)
Welcome to Tex-ass.

NICK (O.S.)
Kennedy got shot in Texas.

STEVIE (O.S.)
Well, I had zero luck with my shooting.

EXT. HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - DAY

The Beetle pulls into the parking lot.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Stevie and Nick at the bedside of a WOMAN, 50s, blond like Stevie, attached to a life support machine.

STEVIE
She's been in a coma for ten years.

NICK
Who is she?

STEVIE
My mother.

NICK
What happened to her?

Stevie pauses several seconds before replying.

STEVIE

I begged her to take me to the
mall. I wanted this stupid dress.

Tears well up in her eyes.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

A man stepped out of the elevator
and opened fire. She threw her body
over mine.

NICK

I'm sorry, Stevie.

STEVIE

My dad hates me. It's all my fault.

NICK

It's not your fault.

STEVIE

Her life is over because of me.

She smooths her Mother's hair.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

They met at a Stevie Nicks concert.
They were so in love. Played her
records over and over.

NICK

What's going to happen to her?

STEVIE

He's going to disconnect her.

Stevie lies down next to her Mother.

INT. MOTEL - STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Stevie and Nick climb. He stops for a moment to catch his
breath.

INT. MOTEL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

They reach Nick's door.

STEVIE

Thank you.

NICK
For what?

STEVIE
For being here.

She kisses him on the cheek.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
You're burning up.

She looks into his eyes.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Let me take care of you, Nick.

Without really looking at her.

NICK
I'm just tired, that's all.

STEVIE
Why do you keep pushing me away?

NICK
I can't do this right now.

STEVIE
I just want to know why.

He closes the door.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Why, Nick?

INT. NICK'S MOTEL ROOM - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Nick kneels, throwing up into the toilet. Afterward, he curls into a ball on the bathroom floor, tears streaming down his face. His fingers grip the cross around his neck

NICK
I don't know what to do. Please...
please, help me. I... I don't want
to die. I don't want to die. Help
me. Please help me.

INT. ROTHKO CHAPEL - DAY

Stevie and Nick descend into semi-darkness as if entering a radiant abyss. Each has a personal moment of silence, as if in prayer.

STEVIE

I've never seen anything like it.

Nick looks at her.

NICK

This is the end.

He looks lost, desperate. The paintings grow in intensity, the black swallowing him.

NICK (CONT'D)

I'm scared, Stevie.

Stevie takes his hand.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

The diner is empty. Stevie and Nick sit in a booth, staring out of the window in deep thought. The untouched sundae on the table is melting. She rests her head on his shoulder.

A crack of thunder, then rain starts to fall. It's soft at first, but quickly starts to hammer down.

STEVIE

Nick...

NICK

What?

STEVIE

Look... You know what it is, don't you?

NICK

A storm.

STEVIE

No.

Nick looks at her with sad, hopeless eyes.

NICK

What, then?

STEVIE

Look, Nick, look. See?

Nick looks out of the window.

NICK

Rain... Water.

STEVIE
It's beautiful! Truly, absolutely
beautiful!

Stevie jumps up, excited.

NICK
Where are you going?

EXT. DINER - NIGHT

Stevie runs out into the storm and spins around, laughing like a child who just discovered something magical.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Nick watches her. Inspired, he touches the Standing Rock necklace around his neck, then hurries out after her.

EXT. DINER - NIGHT

Nick races into the rain and raises his arms to the sky. He closes his eyes and tilts his head up, letting the rain wash over his face and body like a cleansing shower.

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Stevie in the backseat changing. Nick looks away.

STEVIE
I'm so cold.

Nick turns on the heat.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Your turn.

Stevie scrambles over to the passenger seat.

NICK
I'm okay.

STEVIE
You'll catch pneumonia.

NICK
I'll be fine.

Stevie wraps a blanket around him.

STEVIE
It's completely out of the question
for you to get sick on me now.

INT. STEVIE'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Stevie soaking in the bathtub, deep in thought.

INT. NICK'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

There's a loud knock on the door. Nick drags himself out of bed and opens the door to find Stevie standing there.

STEVIE
What are you doing?

NICK
Sleeping.

STEVIE
You sleep a lot.

NICK
Just tired.

STEVIE
Let's have a cigarette. Got one?

NICK
We quit.

STEVIE
Oh, right. Fuck.

She playfully shakes her wet hair, splashing him.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Can I stay here... with you
tonight? I don't want to be alone.

Nick drops his eyes to the floor, a definite no.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
You don't like me, Nick.

NICK
It's not that, Stevie.

STEVIE
Then, what is it?

NICK
I... I'm sorry.

Nick closes the door.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Frustrated, Stevie lingers at the door.

INT. NICK'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Nick leans his head against the closed door.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Stevie kicks the door in anger.

STEVIE
I give up!

INT. NICK'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Nick opens the door, but Stevie is gone.

INT. STEVIE'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Stevie paces and screams. There's a knock at the door. She opens the door and finds Nick standing there, frightened and unable to speak.

INT. STEVIE'S MOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Stevie hands Nick a bottle of whiskey.

STEVIE
Courage.

Nick takes a slug.

NICK
I-- I have something really
important to tell you.

STEVIE
I know.

Nick paces and agonizes, takes another swig.

NICK
I-- I don't know how to say it.

STEVIE
There's only one solution, then.

NICK
What?

STEVIE
"A Transatlantic Love Affair."

Nick looks confused.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Simone de Beauvoir and Nelson
Algren love letters.

NICK
I don't understand.

STEVIE
Why don't you write me?

Stevie hands him a pen and paper and heads into the bathroom,
closing the door behind her.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Stevie sits down by the door and waits.

INT. STEVIE'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Nick sits against the bathroom door, takes a breath, and
writes something down, then slips the note under the door.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Stevie reads the note and sadly realizes the seriousness of
the situation.

STEVIE
(through the door)
Pen.

INT. STEVIE'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Nick slips the pen under the door.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Stevie takes the pen and writes on the same paper, then slips it back under the door.

INT. STEVIE'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Nick reads the note. He taps the door, and Stevie slides the pen back under. He writes something down, then slides the paper back under the door.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Stevie reads the note and her eyes well up with tears. She taps the door gently, then picks up the pen and begins to write again. She slides the paper back under the door.

INT. STEVIE'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Nick reads the note and closes his eyes in relief. Silence but for the sound of falling rain.

EXT. STEVIE'S MOTEL WINDOW - NIGHT

The rain lashes the window. Through the rain-smeared window, we see Stevie cradling Nick in her arms.

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - DAY

Stevie and Nick share an intimate, trusting glance.

NICK

What happens next?

She caresses his face.

STEVIE

The stars.

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

Under the clear blue sky, Stevie and Nick splash through the waves, hand-in-hand.

STEVIE

Shall we...?

Stevie begins unbuttoning Nick's shirt, revealing the scars on his chest.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
We're done hiding. We're gonna be
ourselves from now on.

She looks deep into his eyes. The moment is intense.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
I love you.

NICK
I love you.

Nick spins her around until they both fall into the water.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Stevie and Nick lie in the sand, their hands clasped, radiating happiness. They gaze up at the stars, captivated by their beauty. She turns to him, and they look deeply into each other's eyes. She reaches out for him, they kiss. She pulls him closer, they linger now, mouth on mouth.

EXT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Two MEN, 20s, white, angry ne'er-do-wells, covered in tattoos, sit in the back of the truck, chugging beers.

MAN #1
How's your old man?

MAN #2
Still outta work. Drunk all the
time. We've got nothing. Everything
is gone.

MAN #1
Extinction! They're replacing us
one by one.

MAN #2
Who would've dreamed, the greatest
country in the world infested with
roaches!

MAN #1
Trump's back! Things are about to
change, you'll see.

They toast and drink.

MAN #2
Let's drive to the border.

MAN #1
What for?

MAN #2
Stop those job-stealing Mexicans
from coming here!

They look out and see Stevie and Nick kissing. Man #1 notes
the scars on Nick's chest.

MAN #1
What the fuck is that?

MAN #2
Fucking disgusting.

MAN #1
Damn, they really think they're
something special.

Man #1 flares his nostrils and crushes his beer can.

MAN #1 (CONT'D)
I'm sick of this shit!

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Man #1 throws his crushed can at Stevie and Nick.

MAN #1
Look what we got here.

STEVIE
Fuck you. Asshole.

MAN #1
What are doing here? It's fucking
Texas!

STEVIE
Is there a law in Texas against
kissing on the beach?

MAN #1
You don't belong here.

MAN #2
Go back to where you fucking came
from!

STEVIE

This is a free country. We're not doing anything wrong. Fuck off.

MAN #1

Is that right?

STEVIE

We don't have to explain anything to you. Asshole.

Man #1 glares at Nick's scars.

MAN #1

No one wants to look at that shit!

MAN #2

Do you have a death wish?

MAN #1

Are you a groomer?

STEVIE

(to Man #1)

Are you fucking stupid?

Nick doesn't say anything.

MAN #1

(to Nick)

Don't play deaf with me.

STEVIE

Were you dropped on your head as a baby, or are you just a total fucking idiot?

Nick pulls on his shirt.

MAN #2

It's all your fault, you know?

STEVIE

What the fuck?

MAN #2

Why God has turned his back on us!

Stevie laughs.

STEVIE

Some joke. It's always about fucking God. We're going to hell, right?

MAN #2
You better stop laughing.

STEVIE
You're so incredibly brainwashed.
You better pray for an alien
takeover to save your ass!

MAN #1
What's a pretty girl like you doing
with that? Really?

Man #1 reaches out to touch Stevie's hair, but she knocks his
hand away.

NICK
Leave her alone.

Man #1 laughs.

MAN #1
It speaks.

STEVIE
Enough!
(to Nick)
Let's go.

They try to walk away, but Man #1 stops them.

MAN #1
What are you anyway? Are you a real
man or just a freak?

STEVIE
Don't call him that! You jealous,
small-dicked pig!

Man #1 hammers Nick a crushing blow, dropping him with one
punch. Stevie reacts quickly, charging toward Man #1. But
before she can reach him, he grabs her and holds her back,
preventing her from intervening.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Take your fucking hands off me!

MAN #1
(to Man #2)
Get him!

STEVIE
No! Stop it! Stop it!

Man #2 kicks Nick.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Leave him alone!

MAN #2
Come on, get up! Come on!

STEVIE
Stop it! Stop it!

MAN #2
Can you fight?

Nick zones out and curls up in a ball.

MAN #2 (CONT'D)
Oh, come on. Get up, get up!

STEVIE
Fight, Nick! Fight back!

Man #2 delivers another brutal kick to Nick.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
No! Leave him alone! Don't hurt him!

MAN #2
You think you're a fucking man? You can't even protect your girlfriend!

STEVIE
Get away from him! Just leave him alone!

MAN #2
Why don't you hurry up and commit suicide, like the rest of them? There's a hole waiting for you to die in!

Man #1 releases Stevie, who quickly rushes over to Nick's side.

MAN #1
Go! And don't fucking come back!

Both Men run off, laughing.

STEVIE
Are you okay? Are you hurt?

Nick doesn't respond.

STEVIE (CONT'D)

Nick, talk to me! Tell me where you're hurt.

NICK

I'm fine.

She carefully checks him for any signs of broken bones.

STEVIE

Anything broken? Do you need a doctor? Let me take you to the hospital--

NICK

It's nothing. I'm okay.

Nick pulls himself up, struggling to his feet, and heads toward the car. She follows closely behind.

STEVIE

I didn't mean for this to happen. I really wanted it to be nice.

NICK

You can't change the world.

STEVIE

Stop the fucking programming, Nick. You deserve love. We both deserve it. It's why we get out of bed in the morning. It's why--

NICK

No, just stop it! Stop it! I'm so fucking tired!

They reach the car, and he opens the car door.

STEVIE

Nick, wait. Just wait.

NICK

I wish I was fucking dead already.

Nick climbs into the car, leaving her standing there.

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - NIGHT

A tense silence fills the car. Nick leans his head against the window. Stevie's eyes well up. Suddenly, she floors the gas.

STEVIE

Fuck it! We all gotta go sometime,
right?

NICK

Wh-- what are you doing?

STEVIE

Suicide, man.

NICK

Stevie, slow down!

STEVIE

No!

NICK

Are you outta your fucking mind?

STEVIE

You want to end it, right? Isn't
that what you want?

NICK

Slow down! Please, slow down!

STEVIE

You're gonna blow your fucking
brains out, right?

NICK

What-- No!

STEVIE

This way is easier. Crash and burn,
baby!

NICK

Stop the car! Stop the fucking car!

He fights to maintain control of the wheel as she continues
to speed down the road.

NICK (CONT'D)

Jesus! You're gonna get us fucking
killed!

STEVIE

You want to live or die?

NICK

Live.

STEVIE
I can't hear you!

NICK
I want to live!

STEVIE
Say it, like you fucking mean it!
Because if you don't--

Tears stream down Nick's cheeks, his eyes clench shut.

NICK
I WANT TO LIVE!

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The Beetle screeches to a halt.

INT. STEVIE'S CAR - NIGHT

There's a long silence. Stevie and Nick look at each other in shock, then laugh.

STEVIE
I've always wanted to do that. I
saw it in a movie.

NICK
You're nuts, you know that? Fucking
nuts!

Stevie gently touches his face.

STEVIE
Those fucking jerks.

She kisses him.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Is that better? Are you hurt? Want
to rest?

NICK
I'm okay.

Stevie looks at him.

STEVIE
We don't quit. Not now, not ever.
Okay?

NICK

Okay.

They stare at one another. Then... Bang! The engine blows, shutting off the lights. Stevie tries to restart it, but it's dead. She looks at him with a mischievous glint in her eyes.

STEVIE

We're stranded...

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Bathed in moonlight, the countryside looks miraculous, vivid, glowing with life. Stevie and Nick stroll hand-in-hand, taking in the beauty around them.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Stevie and Nick walk through golden fields of wheat until they stumble upon an abandoned old church.

A secret place.

Stevie presses her palms together.

STEVIE

Let's pray...

Stevie runs for the church. Nick runs after her.

EXT. OLD CHURCH - NIGHT

Stevie tugs at the door handle, but it won't budge. She slinks around back and spots a broken window pane.

NICK

What if we get caught?

STEVIE

We'll just say we're looking for God.

Stevie picks up a rock.

NICK

Stevie, wait--

Crash! She hurls the rock through the broken window.

NICK (CONT'D)
That's no way to get into church,
Stevie.

Stevie raises her eyes to the heavens.

STEVIE
He locked the doors.

Nick carefully clears the opening with his hat.

STEVIE (CONT'D)
Give me a boost.

Nick lifts her up, and she tumbles inside.

STEVIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Ow!

NICK
You all right?

STEVIE (O.S.)
Come inside...

INT. OLD CHURCH - NIGHT

Moonlight streams through the old stained glass windows,
casting a magical glow inside the vast space. Stevie looks up
and lets out a scream.

STEVIE
Where were you? Fucking coward!

There's a long silence. Nick looks up at a large cross.

NICK
They beat him and nailed him to a
cross.

Stevie takes his hand and leads him away.

STEVIE
We're done suffering.

INT. OLD CHURCH - NIGHT

They roam through the church like children exploring. Stevie
spots the tabernacle and heads straight for it.

STEVIE
I'm so thirsty.

NICK
It's a sin.

She gives him a look.

STEVIE
Who cares?

Stevie slugs the wine down, then passes it to him. Nick takes a slug.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Stevie and Nick walk through the box pews, each in their own separate row.

NICK
I like old churches. In the old days, during wars, people would hide in them for sanctuary.

STEVIE
They still do.

NICK
We never learn from history, do we?

STEVIE
I don't think so.

Stevie spots the confessional booth and runs toward it.

INT. CONFESSIONAL BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER

Stevie kneels and crosses herself. Nick is on the other side.

STEVIE
Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It's been an eternity since my last confession. I desperately need your help.

NICK
How can I help you?

Stevie leans in closer, pressing her face against the screen. Nick reciprocates. They share a passionate kiss. She suddenly breaks away and runs out of the booth.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Nick searches for Stevie.

NICK
Where are you?

STEVIE (O.S.)
Waiting for you...

INT. OLD CHURCH - ROOM - NIGHT

Nick enters the room and his eyes are drawn to a beautiful piano, illuminated by the moonlight. He runs his fingers over it. With a heavy heart, he sits down and strikes a single key, the sound echoing through the room.

NICK
I wish I had tried harder.

Stevie's voice echoes from somewhere in the room.

STEVIE (O.S.)
Why didn't you?

NICK
I was always so scared of
everything.

Stevie emerges from her hiding place.

STEVIE
And now?

NICK
Not anymore.

Stevie smiles, understanding the change in him.

NICK (CONT'D)
So much wasted time...

Nick pretends to play, and Stevie begins to dance around him.

INT. CHURCH - ALTAR - NIGHT

Stevie and Nick kneel before the altar, facing each other. Their hearts open and vulnerable.

STEVIE

I promise I will tell you the truth. Only the truth. Do you accept me as I am, Nick?

NICK

I do... I promise I will open up to you. I will share everything. Do you accept me as I am, Stevie?

STEVIE

I do.

They share a tender kiss, sealing their commitment to each other.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Stevie and Nick, hand-in-hand, walk dreamily toward the motel.

INT. MOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Stevie and Nick stand before the motel reception desk, where the MOTEL CLERK, 50s, her hair neatly tied in a bun, enjoys a butterscotch sundae. She looks up and greets them with a warm smile.

MOTEL CLERK

Well, what'll it be?

Stevie and Nick exchange a playful glance. Stevie's smile brightens.

STEVIE

The honeymoon suite.

The Motel Clerk's eyes twinkle, and she gives a sly wink.

INT. MOTEL - HONEYMOON SUITE - DAWN

Stevie wakes up and sees Nick standing at the window.

NICK

Stevie...

STEVIE

Nick...

NICK

What if--

STEVIE

Stop.

NICK

The worst is coming.

STEVIE

The best is coming.

Stevie and Nick entwine in each other's arms.

FADE TO BLACK.