

CAN'T WE JUST BE FRIENDS

Written by

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Original Screenplay

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INT. RESTAURANT/BAR- NIGHT

SUPER TITLE: NEW YORK: 2007

We open on a lounge area of a NEW YORK bar/restaurant. We focus in on a group of six 20-somethings. Loud and jovial. EMILY (23-well dressed, black haired beauty) sits on love seat with her legs across MARK (25- slightly balding already, ill fitting suit)

MARK

I mean.. This may be the last time we all are together in the same room. (Stammering) Maybe someone should say something... you know... profound.

BRAD (24- god looking, tailored suit, tie loosened) smirks as Mark talks. CASSIE (23-Bblonde-haired, well dressed) snuggles into him on another couch.

BRAD

Well I guess that leaves you out then doesn't it?

They all laugh.

MARK

Shut up. Seriously though... NYU is behind us now. NOW we can begin our lives.

EMILY

What the hell were we just doing the past four years then?

CASSIE

Preparation?

BRAD

Material?

Mark raises his glass.

MARK

Memories.

Brad stands.

BRAD

Ok, ok... Leave it to me... once again.

Brad clears his throat.

BRAD (CONT'D)

The great poet Robert Frost wrote-

Cassie rolls her eyes as the rest groan.

CASSIE

Here we go again with fuckin'
Robert Frost.

Brad ignores her comment.

BRAD

"Two roads diverged in a yellow
wood, And sorry I could not travel
both. I shall be telling this with
a sigh. Somewhere ages and ages
hence: Two roads diverged a wood,
and I- I took the one less traveled
by, And that has made all the
difference."

Brad raises his drink and the rest follow suit.

BRAD (CONT'D)

To the roads laid before us... may
they bend to our wills.

They all toast heartily in agreement. Emily looks long into
Mark's eyes.

EMILY

Here-here.

CUT TO:

OPENING CREDIT SEQUENCE ("JUST FRIENDS" BY BOBBY DARIN)

Stills, highlights of short sequences between the two
couples. Wedding videos, trips. Then moments of tension and
heartbreak. Brad and Cassie grow apart. Mark and Emily ignore
each other. He is apathetic. She is promiscuous. Culminates
with Cassie leaving Brad behind in their apartment. Door
slams and DISSOLVES to Brad and Carl in the Coffee shop.

INT. COFFEE SHOP-DAY - DAY

BRAD (now 38, older and more haggard-looking) and CARL (40,
balding, slightly graying Black man) wait in line at
Starbucks.

SUPER TITLE: Present Day.

BRAD
And then she left.

CARL
Wow... just like that.

BRAD
Well no... it wasn't just like that.
It- it wasn't a surprise.

They make their way to the front, ordering and standing off to the side.

CARL
So you hadn't been good for a while?

BRAD
A few months ago I told her that I thought we should move.

CARL
Move?

BRAD
Yeah... back to New Hampshire.

CARL
(INSULTED) Thanks for telling me.

BRAD
Well it was kind of a half hearted thought, I still have my parents' place. but she totally freaked. Saying "I didn't understand her, wanted to squash her creative spirit- blah blah blah..."

CARL
That's funny... that sounds just like her.

BRAD
I said I could still write from there- that we didn't need to be in New York anymore to do the things that we were doing.

CARL
And she didn't see it that way?

BRAD

She said she'd rather die in New York than live in New Hampshire. New York was where it was at. The fashion- the night life. I knew that she was vain and money hungry, but I thought she would grow out of it.

CARL

And she didn't...

They get their order and sit at a table by the window.

BRAD

She has been screwing this interior decorator. William something or other...

CARL

William Pepper?

Brad is surprised.

BRAD

Yeah... you know him?

CARL

Yeah... we used him for our apartment. I thought he was gay?

BRAD

Yeah, me too...

CARL

I guess not.

BRAD

Well since she said she's fucking him, I think maybe not.

Brad takes a BEAT as he looks out the window to the busy New York streets. Couples pass, love is in the air.

BRAD (CONT'D)

I just thought it would be us you know? Those stories that old people tell when they're in their twilight years and look longingly at the person they've loved for a half century.

CARL

Well don't they say that 50% of marriages end in divorce?

BRAD

Yeah, well is it just me or do you find more and more that the 50% that get divorced are in New York? I mean, where is this island of happy marriages?

Carl nods in agreement.

CARL

Staten Island.

Brad chuckles.

BRAD

Precisely... Staten Island.

CARL

Well, look at the bright side... if yours failed then that leaves a better chance that mine will survive.

Brad ignores his comment.

BRAD

I dunno man. I mean, who wants to get thrown back into the dating world in their 30's? I have no idea what that world is like anymore. Maybe there comes a time where it's too late to start over.

CARL

It's a known fact that physiological changes don't start happening till your 40's. So you have like 5 years to still be attractive.

Carl realizes Brad is not himself.

CARL (CONT'D)

Do you need anything?

BRAD

She took everything from the apartment... how are you at putting furniture together?

EXT. STREETS OF NEW YORK- DAY

MONTAGE set to "That's Life" by Sinatra

Brad is learning to live alone. He is shown apartments, getting his groceries, buying furniture. He sees couples shopping together, in love.

INT. NEW YORK STUDIO APARTMENT- DAY

The apartment is mostly empty. IKEA boxes are everywhere. A mattress lays on the floor in the corner. Brad is trying to read instructions, Carl is holding a piece that has no conceivable use.

CARL

What the hell is this thing?

BRAD

Are you sure it came in the box?

CARL

Are you saying I brought it with me?

Brad drops the instructions and starts opening another box.

BRAD

Moving on...

Carl tosses the piece into the trash. He notices what looks like an invitation on the counter.

CARL

What's this?

BRAD

Oh, it's a reunion for my class at NYU.

CARL

You going?

BRAD

No.

CARL

Why not?

BRAD

Because I don't want to have to explain to 75 people why Cassie isn't with me.

CARL

Hmm.

Brad can feel the look.

BRAD

What?

CARL

Oh nothing... I just wondered why you are continuing to let her dictate what you will or will not do. I thought you were getting divorced?

BRAD

We are. It's... more complicated than that.

CARL

And yet it isn't.

Brad starts mulling it over in his head.

BRAD

I dunno... I don't want to go alone. And the thought of trying to find someone to go with...

CARL

So, I'll go with you.

BRAD

I'm not going with a dude.

CARL

You should be so lucky to go with someone like me.

BRAD

Well, you know I think you're a catch.

CARL

That's right- I AM a catch.

BRAD

Anna will be jealous.

CARL

You can keep making excuses or you can tell me when you are picking me up.

Brad takes the invitation and collapses into the couch and surveys the apartment. It's cluttered and disheveled. He tosses the invitation onto the floor and sighs.

BRAD
Wear something nice.

INT. HOTEL FUNCTION ROOM- NIGHT

The reunion. The room is full of 30-somethings. You can tell the years haven't been kind to many of them. They're trying to look good. Most have added pounds with the years. Brad and Carl are standing by the bar with a drink in hand. Another guy approaches.

GUY
Brad? Hey man!

Brad clearly doesn't remember him. He fakes interest.

BRAD
Hey... man. Long time no see!

GUY
Definitely... so what have you been doing these years? I heard you've been writing?

BRAD
Yeah... still trying to get that big break I guess. I'm writing for an online paper here in Manhattan.

GUY
Oh? Anything I would have read?

Carl interrupts.

CARL
Probably not. Hey, I'm Carl.

GUY
Hi Carl. Andrew.

BRAD
Andrew!

Brad finally remembers him.

ANDREW
So, you guys are... together?

BRAD

NO!

Carl looks offended.

BRAD (CONT'D)

I mean... no.

Carl shakes Andrew's hand.

CARL

He wishes. Good to meet you Andrew.

ANDREW

Did you see who's here?

BRAD

What do you mean?

ANDREW

Emily Andrews?

BRAD

Emily? Really?

ANDREW

Yeah, over there.

Brad's eyes survey the room and sees EMILY (mid-30'S, beautiful. Long black hair, confident, a little stuck on herself but kind) She is talking jovially with some other guys who are obviously into her. Brad notices she has a lop-sided smile. Brad is starstruck, staring at her. Carl notices.

CARL

Who is she?

BRAD

She was one of the group of friends I hung around with in college.

CARL

She's pretty. You should go talk to her.

Brad is still staring.

BRAD

Huh? What?

CARL

Go talk to her.

BRAD
She was engaged to another guy...
Mark.

CARL
So just say hi.

BRAD
Hi? I dunno.

CARL
Isn't that why we're here? Saying
hello to people you once knew?

BRAD
I had a major crush on her in
college. But she started dating
Mark and I had Cassie. To tell you
the truth I haven't thought of her
till now.

Carl grabs him by the arm and starts walking over to Emily.
She is mid conversation when they arrive. She sees Brad and
keeps talking and then realizes who it is.

EMILY
Holy shit! Brad!

She throws her arms around Brad. He is awkward.

EMILY (CONT'D)
How are you? I can't believe it's
you!

BRAD
It is me. I am doing ok.

The other guys have left now. She is stunningly beautiful and
Brad is hypnotized.

EMILY
How is Cassie? Where is she?

She looks around the room for her. Brad's eyes drop.

BRAD
She... I don't know where she is.

EMILY
Oh?

BRAD
We are getting divorced.

EMILY

Ohh... oh Brad I'm so sorry.

She touches Brad's arm tenderly. His heart jumps.

BRAD

It's still pretty raw, yeah. This is Carl, by the way.

He turns to Carl who has slid away and is jumping around on the dance floor with some random people.

BRAD (CONT'D)

Well, that's Carl.

Emily smiles. She's got a friendly way about her.

BRAD (CONT'D)

So you and Mark got married?

Emily's face changes slightly.

EMILY

We did. We are in Queens.

BRAD

That's great! So things are going well?

Her face says "No, they are not good."

CUT TO

INT. TABLE IN CORNER- NIGHT

It's somewhat loud. Carl is still on the dance floor. Brad and Emily sit at a small table off to the side.

EMILY

I think that we just became very different people. You know? He got into finance- I wanted to be an actress.

BRAD

Have you done anything I would have seen?

EMILY

No. A thousand auditions and the only thing I ever got was a commercial that never aired.

BRAD

I guess that's all part of it. And Mark is happy with his job?

EMILY

To be honest I don't even know what he does. I think he thinks that we are happy.

BRAD

Why?

EMILY

Because we don't ever fight.

BRAD

And you want to fight?

EMILY

I'm Italian... I want some passion, you know?

Brad smiles, then realizes he doesn't know.

BRAD

Actually, no I don't.

EMILY

I thought all writers were passionate.

BRAD

Broke. Broke is the word you're looking for.

Emily laughs. She's comfortable with Brad. He notices her smile again.

EMILY

What?

BRAD

Oh, nothing. I just forgot about your crooked smile.

EMILY

Yeah, my stroke smile. So, Cassie didn't like being broke?

BRAD

I think that she wanted things I couldn't give her.

EMILY

Exactly. That's exactly it. And Mark wants me to be something I don't think I can give him.

BRAD

But it's not too late though. People can change, right?

EMILY

Would you?

Her words penetrate Brad's heart.

BRAD

I- I think I would have liked the chance to try.

Emily shrinks back a bit and looks around at the room full of people.

EMILY

And yet somehow I envy you- being free. All the possibilities in the world in front of you.

She looks at her watch.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Oh man... I have to go.

BRAD

Oh- ok, yeah I should probably get going too.

She writes down her number on a napkin and hands it to Brad.

EMILY

I'd love to keep in touch. It's been fun to catch up.

Brad takes the napkin and gives her a business card.

BRAD

Completely. It's been a pleasure.

They hug and Emily leaves quickly. Carl notices she's left and comes back from the dance floor.

CARL

You ready to go?

BRAD

Yeah... Definitely.

Carl notices he seems different. They head for the door.

CARL
Everything alright?

Brad tucks the napkin into his pocket.

BRAD
Yeah... I've got the whole world
before me.

INT. BRAD'S NEW APARTMENT-EVENING

The boxes are put away, furniture is put together and Brad is trying to read a recipe on Pinterest... unsuccessfully. He is whisking something together in a pan on the stove.

BRAD
(reading) Butterfly the chicken
breast and season with salt and
pepper. Butterfly... what the hell
does that mean? What's a butterfly
chicken?

He starts looking up "butterfly chicken" on google and his phone's FaceTime pops up with Carl's face. He answers it, leaving it on the counter.

BRAD (CONT'D)
Hey, I'm kind of busy. What's up?

CARL
Too busy for me?

Carl's wife ANNA, (White. Late-30'S, Outgoing and jovial)
Brad's sister, pushes Carl out of the way.

ANNA
Or me?

BRAD
For you Sis, I have time. Hey, what
the hell is a butterfly chicken?

ANNA
What?

BRAD
This recipe says I need butterfly
chicken.

Anna laughs.

ANNA

Butterfly the chicken... not A
butterfly chicken. You have to
slice it in half so it's not as
thick.

BRAD

Oh.

He looks at the chicken on the counter and the large knife in
his hand.

BRAD (CONT'D)

This isn't going to work.

Brad's phone dings like there is a message. He looks at it
and doesn't recognize the number.

ANNA

Who's that?

BRAD

I don't know. I don't know the
number. So what do I do?

ANNA

Well first get a different knife.
But before you do that you might
want to put out the fire on the
stove behind you.

Brad turns to see the pan on the stove now billowing smoke.

BRAD

Shit!

He grabs the pan and throws it in the sink. Simultaneously
the smoke alarm starts going off and his phone dings again.

BRAD (CONT'D)

I- I gotta go.

He ends the call and grabs a towel and frantically tries to
blow the smoke away from the smoke detector. It finally stops
and he stands there for a BEAT. He is defeated.

CUT TO

INT- BRAD'S LIVING ROOM- EVENING

Brad is now sitting on the couch with Chinese food containers
in front of him while watching TV. The kitchen is in shambles
behind him.

He is intent on what's on tv and hears his phone ding again on the counter. He sets his food down and walks into the kitchen and picks up his phone.

TEXT

Hey Brad! It's Emily. Just wanted to touch base and say hi. It was great catching up last week. Hope you're doing well.

Brad is surprised to hear from her. He's not sure how to respond. He starts texting a few different responses only to erase them before sending. He finally responds:

TEXT (CONT'D)

It was great seeing you too!

He hits "send" and gets back to his tv show, content with this interaction. A few seconds later she responds.

TEXT (CONT'D)

Are you busy right now? How bout some coffee?

Brad is very confused now.

BRAD

(To himself) What about Mark?

He texts back.

TEXT

The three of us?

He anxiously awaits her response.

TEXT (CONT'D)

Meet me at Parliment Coffee? At the corner of West 76th and Central Park West. In a half hour?

Brad mulls it over and responds.

TEXT (CONT'D)

Ok, sounds good. See you soon.

Brad shuts the TV off and gets his coat from the closet. He's deep in thought. What does this mean? Why is she contacting him. He's excited but unsure. He gets his keys and closes the door behind him.

INT. COFFEE SHOP- NIGHT

Emily and Brad sit at a small table together. It's a dark, romantic setting. A few people at tables. Emily is dressed casually, her hair up in a messy bun.

EMILY

So tell me what kind of stuff you are writing. Are you happy with it?

BRAD

Happy? No I wouldn't say happy. Online articles and copywriting pays the bills.

EMILY

What are you passionate about then?

BRAD

Passionate?

EMILY

What do you write when you aren't working?

BRAD

Well, I'm writing a play.

This perks Emily's interest.

EMILY

Tell me about that! What's it about?

BRAD

It's a love story. It's kind of in the beginning stages right now.

EMILY

You should work on that some more.

Brad is embarrassed.

BRAD

Yeah I probably should.

EMILY

Yes, you should. Do what makes you feel alive.

BRAD

So what makes you feel alive?

EMILY
I'm doing a play right now.

BRAD
A play? Broadway?

EMILY
Off-off Broadway.

BRAD
And you love it?

EMILY
I do. It's a lot of fun. You should
come sometime.

BRAD
I could do that- some time.

There is an uncomfortable pause.

EMILY
So... when did you know your marriage
was over?

Her words surprise Brad. They hit like a bucket of ice water.

BRAD
Wow. There it is.

Emily laughs it off.

BRAD (CONT'D)
Well, when Cass told me she was
leaving me for an interior
decorator was a good indicator.

EMILY
Wow. Just like that? You had no
idea?

BRAD
None. I mean I could tell that we'd
become... comfortable. Like really
good roommates. (BEAT) Is that why
we are talking?

Emily is shifting in her seat, like she's ready to admit something.

EMILY
I think our marriage has been over
for a long time. We just won't
admit it.

BRAD
"We" or "he"?

EMILY
He.

Emily's eyes are getting teared up.

BRAD
When did you know?

EMILY
When I saw him talking to a girl at
his company Christmas party.

BRAD
Uh-oh. Was he cheating on you?

EMILY
No. But when I thought that maybe
he was... I- I didn't care. That's
when I knew.

Brad is listening. Letting her get it all out. Tears are
falling now.

EMILY (CONT'D)
I just don't think he ever loved
me. At least not in the way I ever
wanted. It's like he didn't know
how. Or wasn't willing to figure it
out.

BRAD
So what now? Have you tried
counselling?

EMILY
He won't go.

BRAD
Oh. Separation?

EMILY
He said he doesn't believe in it.

BRAD
Hmm...

EMILY
He said he won't file for divorce.
He said I'm just being unrealistic.
That this is how marriages go.

(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)

And that I should just accept it
and learn to live with it.

BRAD

But you want more?

EMILY

Shouldn't I? Shouldn't we all?

BRAD

I think so.

Emily is wiping the tears away and trying to gather herself.

EMILY

I don't know... maybe I am being
unrealistic. How would I even
survive? I can't live on my own.
How would I support myself? Where
would I live?

BRAD

And that's why you stay?

EMILY

I'm too scared to move. I'd rather
stay with the discomfort I know
than one I don't.

BRAD

Even if that unknown could bring
you more happiness or contentment?

EMILY

What can I say? I'm a coward.

Brad leans forward and puts his hand on hers.

BRAD

I think you are stronger than you
think.

Emily starts tearing up again.

EMILY

Yeah, but you don't know me at all.

Brad is irritated by her comment but doesn't show it to her.

BRAD

Maybe. But maybe you don't know
yourself either. Maybe you only
know what Mark wanted you to be.

His words are making sense to her.

BRAD (CONT'D)

Maybe, once you stop trying to be what someone else wants you to be then you'll find your courage- whatever that might look like.

Emily's heart is consoled. She wipes her tears and laughs.

EMILY

Thank you Brad. I hope I can repay you for your kindness.

Brad smiles and leans back in his chair and sips his coffee.

BRAD

Do you know how to cook?

FADE OUT

INT. BRAD'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

Carl and Anna are over for supper. Brad is cooking. We see it's been a while and he's become competent at it. They are impressed. He seems to be getting used to the single life. They sit around a new table. Brad starts clearing the table. Wine flows.

ANNA

Well Bradley, I must say- I am impressed.

Brad is beaming with pride.

BRAD

You know, I am pretty impressed with myself too.

ANNA

So the real question begs to be asked.

CARL

C'mon Anna.

ANNA

Have you been on any dates?

Brad is embarrassed and hesitant.

BRAD

No. No I have not.

ANNA

And why not? I think 2 years has been...

CARL

Two months.

ANNA

Right. Two months has been long enough.

CARL

Anna- mind your business.

ANNA

Umm this IS my business.

Brad is smiling.

BRAD

Apparently it is. No- I think I'll know when I'm ready.

ANNA

So what have you been doing?

Brad's phone dings. A text from Emily.

TEXT

Have you written any more of your play-script?

He looks at it and sets it back down.

BRAD

I've been doing some writing. Or... thinking about writing.

CARL

Any hotties where you work?

BRAD

I work at home, dummy.

Brad and Carl laugh at themselves. Anna is annoyed.

ANNA

You two are idiots.

Brad and Carl slap at each other playfully. Brad's phone dings again.

TEXT

Seriously though. Let me read what you've got. I can pass it on to our director.

Anna grabs Brad's phone.

ANNA

Who are you messaging with?

BRAD

Hey! Give me that.

Anna reads through their conversation before Brad can grab the phone back.

ANNA

Who's Emily?

CARL

(To Brad) You dog!

BRAD

It's not what you think. We are... just friends.

ANNA

Well, does *she* have any friends?

BRAD

I'm sure she does. I've never asked.

CARL

What about like... online dating?

BRAD

You mean like Match.com?

ANNA

Yes! We should sign you up.

Anna opens his lap top and starts typing.

BRAD

Hey, c'mon. I don't want to do that. Carl- control your woman.

CARL

Hey, I have to live with her. You do it.

BRAD

Anna, I'm fine. And there is no point in me looking right now. Maybe when I am in the right place I might entertain the idea but right now even if I DID meet someone- I can guarantee it won't work out.

ANNA

Easy Romeo, I'm not talking about love. Forget miss Right. You need miss Right-Now.

CARL

Classy.

Brad is smirking.

BRAD

I'll think about it, ok?

Anna reluctantly backs off and closes the computer.

ANNA

Alright. Fine.

Carl starts to grab his jacket to leave.

ANNA (CONT'D)

You want us to help clean up?

BRAD

Nope. Leave it. Get yourselves home.

Anna kisses Brad on the cheek and heads out the door.

ANNA

I love you.

Carl slaps him on the ass as he walks by.

BRAD

I love you guys.

Brad closes and locks the door. *A Sunday Kind Of Love* by Etta James starts playing. He starts cleaning up and sees the computer sitting on the table. He goes over and sits at the table and opens the computer. He sips wine as he starts filling out the match.com profile.

His phone dings. He's forgotten about Emily. He picks it up.

TEXT

You must be too busy to respond.
You'd better be working on that
script. Stop what you're doing and
get to work!

He smiles and closes the browser and opens up his play script. He sits for a few beats and then starts typing. Slowly at first. He starts getting some inspiration and types faster- with passion.

EXT. RUN DOWN OFF BROADWAY THEATRE- NIGHT

Brad, Carl and Anna wait to enter an old run-down theatre. There are a smattering of people in line.

ANNA

And what is this play about again?

BRAD

Em said that it was an original story. Some sort of crime drama I think.

ANNA

I just don't understand this relationship.

BRAD

Yeah me neither.

ANNA

Carl, you don't have any women friends do you?

Carl has a dazed, deer in the headlights look.

CARL

No. And I don't want one.

Brad smiles.

BRAD

Good save. No, she is still trying to make things work with Mark. I don't want to get in the way of that.

ANNA

You gotta let me set you up with someone. I have some ideas.

They enter through the doors of the theatre.

INT. SMALL, OLD THEATRE- NIGHT.

Brad, Anna and Carl are watching the play a few rows back from the front. There are a smattering of people in the crowd. The play is not great. Anna is not letting it go.

ANNA
What's your type?

BRAD
Blood type?

ANNA
Very funny. Seriously though-

BRAD
I dunno Anna...

Emily comes on stage for a scene. She's actually not bad. Brad is fixed on her.

BRAD (CONT'D)
I'd say probably- Dark hair,
pretty... easy to talk to. Someone
who's every move isn't lead by a
need for money or prestige.

He's watching her every move. Anna looks at him watching her.

ANNA
Like her?

Brad is caught and tries to back-pedal.

BRAD
Well... LIKE her yes. But not her.

Carl gives him a look.

BRAD (CONT'D)
Definitely not her.

"My Ideal" by Tony Bennett plays as we continue to watch her. Brad is crushing hard.

INT. THEATRE LOBBY- NIGHT.

The play has ended. As the three get their coats and are about to leave Emily runs up to them, still in costume.

EMILY
Hey, you came!

Brad's face lights up when he sees her.

BRAD

We did. Emily, This is my sister
Anna and you remember her husband
Carl.

They exchange pleasantries.

CARL

Nice job with the play!

EMILY

Yeah, I know it wasn't a great play
but thank you.

ANNA

You definitely stood out. Right
Brad?

Brad glares at her.

BRAD

Definitely.

EMILY

Well I gotta get cleaned up but I
saw you in the crowd and I wanted
to just say hi before you left.

BRAD

Is Mark here?

Emily's expression changes.

EMILY

No, he doesn't usually come.

BRAD

Oh. Ok, tell him "hi" for me. I
would've liked to have caught up
with him.

EMILY

I'll mention it when I see him
tonight. It was great to meet you
guys.

Brad watches her as she walks away back to the dressing
rooms. Anna sees him. He finally realizes Anna is watching
and snaps out of it.

BRAD

You guys ready?

Anna laughs.

ANNA
Just friends, eh?

BRAD
Shut it.

INT. BRAD'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

Brad is working at his computer with a glass of wine. He is obviously stuck. He takes his glasses off and leans back in his chair, rubbing his face. He goes over to the book shelf and chooses a book of Robert Frost poetry.

His computer chimes. It's Emily trying to FaceTime with him. He looks over at the clock which reads 12:15am. He clicks the "answer" button.

BRAD
Hey Em, what's going on?

Emily is visibly upset.

EMILY
I'm so sorry to call you this late.

BRAD
Uh oh... what's going on?

EMILY
It's over.

BRAD
What is?

EMILY
We had a huge fight and he left.

BRAD
Oh Em, I'm so sorry.

EMILY
I mean, it was only a matter of time right?

BRAD
What happened? I mean- what finally pushed it over the edge?

EMILY
I asked him if he was going to come see my play. He said "no".

BRAD

What was his reasoning?

EMILY

He said "why do I have to pretend to be interested in the things you are interested in?" I was so angry that I told him he didn't need to pretend about anything anymore. I said I wanted a divorce.

BRAD

Ouch. How did he take it?

EMILY

He didn't even seem upset. He is like an emotionless robot. It's like he was waiting for me to do it... so I could look like the bad guy.

BRAD

Of course. Make it miserable enough for long enough so you can't take it anymore and finally give up and he can say it was your fault for ending it. What an ass.

Emily is trying to compose herself.

EMILY

I just couldn't get over the fact that I don't think he ever loved me, you know? He always seemed like he was waiting for me to change in some way into the person he wanted to love. I don't think he ever loved me- for me.

BRAD

Like he loved the idea of what he wanted you to be.

EMILY

Exactly. I just don't think that I will ever find someone who loves me for me, not what they WANT me to be.

BRAD

Well I kinda sorta love you for you.

EMILY
That's sweet of you.

BRAD
Em, you've got a whole life ahead
of you. Just because Mark couldn't
see you for you doesn't mean that
we will all be like that.

EMILY
I just feel like I wasted 13 years
of my life.

BRAD
Or- These 13 years have been
preparing you for the next stage of
your life.

Emily chuckles a little and sighs.

EMILY
You always have a way of putting
things in perspective.

BRAD
You going to be ok?

Emily is silent for a few beats.

EMILY
You know, I think that I will be.
Thanks for being up.

BRAD
The life of a writer. Bouts of
inspiration followed by nights of
writer's block.

EMILY
I'll talk to you soon.

Emily disconnects and Brad sits in front of the blank screen
smiling. He closes the computer and shuts lights off.

EXT. STREETS OF NEW YORK- DAY

Brad is walking on the street, weaving in and out of crowds
of people. He has a bouquet of flowers. He has a spring in
his step and a smile on his face. He sprints up the steps to
an apartment building and enters.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY- DAY

Brad approaches a door and knocks. The door opens to Emily, dressed in sweat pants and hair disheveled. She is shocked to see him there.

EMILY

Oh, Brad. Wha- why are you here?

Brad pulls the flowers out from behind his back. She is taken aback.

BRAD

These are for you.

EMILY

Oh- I umm... I appreciate it.

BRAD

I just wanted you to know that you are a beautiful woman. And any man would be honoured to be with you.

EMILY

Oh, Brad. I- I'm not even close to being in that frame of mind right now to even entertain-

Brad is crushed. He is realizing just how out of place this is.

BRAD

No, I understand. I just wanted to help you see... you know, when you're ready to-

EMILY

I'm sorry if I led you to believe- to misunderstand my feelings for you.

BRAD

Oh- no don't worry about it. You didn't...

EMILY

I mean- can't we be just friends?

The words are like a knife in his chest.

BRAD

No, totally. I completely understand.

There is an awkward silence. Neither knowing what to say or do.

EMILY

I can take them..

Brad is embarrassed and starts walking away.

BRAD

No, don't worry about it. I'm sorry. I shouldn't have...

EMILY

I'll talk to you soon though ok?

Brad is halfway down the hall already.

BRAD

Yeah, of course.

Emily slowly closes the door. Brad tosses the flowers into a trash chute and enters the stairway.

END OF ACT 1

ACT 2

EXT. NEW YORK BROADWAY THEATRE- DAY

SUPER TITLE: 6 months later

We see the Broadway Theatre on West 53rd st. There are a small amount of people outside as Emily enters the glass doors to the front of the theatre.

INT. THEATRE LOBBY- DAY

The lobby is crowded with actor hopefuls. Emily is sitting with a group of women that all look similar to her. She's intently looking at a script trying to memorize lines. The heavy doors to the auditorium open and we hear a voice.

VOICE

Ok, Mary Elizabeth Smith?

The woman next to Emily gets up and walks towards the door. As she moves, Emily looks up and realizes it is Brad. Their eyes meet. They are both surprised.

BRAD

Emily?

EMILY

Brad? You're casting now?

There is an awkward beat as they remember the last time they saw each other.

BRAD

I am- among other things. It's nice to see you again. Good luck!

The woman enters past Brad and he disappears into the room. Emily looks at the cover page to the script she has in her hands. She sees it reads 'Courage.' Written by B. Page."

EMILY

(To herself) B. Page. No way...

CUT TO

EXT. NEW YORK BROADWAY THEATRE- EVENING

Emily has exited the theatre and is walking down the sidewalk. Brad appears behind her.

BRAD

Em!

She turns around to see Brad walking towards her.

BRAD (CONT'D)

How'd it go?

EMILY

Haha... you tell me. You wrote this?

She holds the play script up. He blushes a little.

BRAD

Well... it took while but I finally got the motivation to finish it. Then it all just poured out.

Emily seems embarrassed about it.

EMILY

Yeah, I have to apologize about that. I-

BRAD

No- don't worry about it. I was... a mess. It was the slap in the face I needed.

It's much more comfortable between them. She holds the script in her hand.

EMILY

B. Page?

BRAD

My publicist's idea.

EMILY

No, it's great. I'm so proud of you! I'd love to hear your thoughts on my audition.

Brad smiles.

CUT TO

INT. COFFEE SHOP- NIGHT.

Brad and Emily sit across from each other. It's relaxing and easy. Like two old friends catching up. No tension, no ulterior motives. They are laughing.

EMILY

So no more online articles?

BRAD

No, I gave it up. Once Cass and I finished the divorce- I just couldn't go back to it. I figured if this is what I wanted to do then I had better just go all in.

EMILY

Wow. That is amazing. I don't think I could do that. I'd be homeless and hungry.

Brad laughs.

BRAD

Well it's amazing how much money I had when I didn't have Cass spending it all.

Emily laughs too.

EMILY

Have you been dating much?

BRAD

Ugh... what happened to the world?

EMILY

What do you mean?

BRAD

It's been over a decade since I dated. It's a whole new world.

EMILY

Yeah, tell me about it.

BRAD

I will. I signed up for match.com.

EMILY

Oh boy, how'd that go?

BRAD

So I went on my first date. I was so nervous. We agreed to meet for coffee. Nothing big, right?

EMILY

Sure.

BRAD

So we met and she scolded me for not being more proactive about planning the date.

Emily laughs again.

BRAD (CONT'D)

Right? So I leave thinking "what a disaster". And then she starts sending me naked pictures of her.

EMILY

Score! You dog you...

BRAD

Is this a thing now?

EMILY

I think it is.

BRAD

So I see this other girl- just a dinner date and a movie. She seems pleasant enough.

EMILY

Sounds promising.

BRAD

She offered to go down on me on the way home.

EMILY

Dude!

Brad's phone dings. He picks it up and shows it to Emily.

BRAD

See! What the hell?

There is a picture of a half naked woman.

BRAD (CONT'D)

Every day- Every. Day. Have you sent pictures like that?

A sly smile creeps to her lips.

BRAD (CONT'D)

Oh! Who's the dog now?

They share a laugh as they stand.

CUT TO

EXT. CENTRAL PARK- DAY

Brad and Emily walk slowly through the park. It is Autumn and sunny.

EMILY

I gotta say... I'm glad we bumped into each other. It's been a while.

BRAD

Yeah. I think we could actually be friends now.

EMILY

Yeah, the pressure's off.

BRAD

So, what do these guys do when you send pictures like that?

EMILY

They do the same.

BRAD

Really?

They keep walking.

EMILY

What?

BRAD

Nothing.

EMILY

You have something to say?

BRAD

I don't.

EMILY

You look like you do? You don't approve?

She's getting defensive.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Forgive me if I've spent over a decade in a loveless, passionless marriage and want to let loose a little bit..

BRAD

Hey- hey... I don't care what you do. I was just trying to understand the logistics of taking a picture like that.

He takes his phone and pretends to comically try and take pictures of his junk.

BRAD (CONT'D)

I just don't think I could physically do it.

Emily laughs and takes his arm and they continue through the park.

EMILY

I'll give you pointers.

BRAD

I don't think so.

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE SCENE SET TO "I WANNA BE AROUND" BY TONY BENNETT

INT. NICE RESTAURANT- NIGHT

Brad is sitting at a table when his date shows up. They exchange pleasantries and she removes her jacket to reveal GIANT fake boobs spilling out of her dress. He looks around, embarrassed and sits down. Women glare at them, guys nod in approval.

INT. NIGHT CLUB- NIGHT

Emily is having a drink with a good-looking but arrogant guy. You can tell he is more into himself than she is into him. She's annoyed but leaves with him.

INT. RESTAURANT- NIGHT

Brad is sitting at a restaurant table with a woman. She won't stop talking. He is bored to tears.

He tries to talk but only to be cut off by her. He downs an entire drink and orders another.

INT. GUY'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

Emily is eating at another guy's house. You can tell by the decor that he is a health nut. He fixes her a supper that is almost inedible. She has brought wine but he doesn't drink. She puts it away, feeling stupid.

CUT TO

INT. EMILY'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

She walks through the door and pulls open the wine and starts downing the bottle.

EXT. ROCKEFELLER CENTER- NIGHT

Beautiful late November night. Brad and Emily are bundled up and drinking hot chocolate and waiting for the tree to light.

EMILY

Wow. So who are you seeing now?
Still the Match thing?

BRAD

No I've put that on hold for a
while.

EMILY

Probably a wise choice.

BRAD

Did you have someone as a teenager
that was like "unattainable"?

EMILY

Yeah...

She doesn't continue. She seems to be lost in a memory.

BRAD

And?

EMILY

Paul. He was... the guy. And the
thing is... I thought he was as you
said- "Unattainable". Turns out he
just needed someone to ask him out.
And I did.

BRAD

I hate you. For me it was Tammy Mason. She was going out with another guy in my class. But wow she was beautiful. I'd see her around town... all my friends wanted a shot at her.

The tree lights up. The crowd cheers and people start to disperse.

EMILY

So, what happened? Did you ever nail her?

BRAD

One weekend I got a call at 1am. She said her parents were out of town and her and her boyfriend had broken up. I went over for a few hours.

EMILY

Promising.

BRAD

We just sat on her couch and watched TV. And I went home.

Emily is waiting for him to say something else. He doesn't.

BRAD (CONT'D)

What?

EMILY

You idiot.

BRAD

Yeah... Well I got a Facebook message from her last week. She's in town.

EMILY

Is she still hot?

BRAD

Oh yeah.

EMILY

Nice!

BRAD

We are going out this weekend. I really think this could be it. Like in a movie or something.

EMILY

Maybe you can write a story about it sometime. I should go.

Emily starts looking for a cab.

BRAD

That's right... Bruce right? The flower guy.

EMILY

Well, he delivers flour to the bakery, yes. We are going to Niagra for the weekend.

BRAD

The whole weekend? Big step. Is this Mr. Right?

EMILY

He's hot and he seems into me so...

Brad seems unsettled by this.

BRAD

Is that your only two criteria?

Emily is about to get in the cab and turns to Brad.

EMILY

Good luck with Tammy.

She gets in the cab and it drives away. Brad shakes his head and walks away.

INT. RESTAURANT BAR- NIGHT

Brad is seated, sipping a drink, waiting for his date to get there.

BARTENDER

So, blind date?

BRAD

Kind of. I'm meeting a girl I knew from high school here for dinner and drinks.

The bartender gives a half smile. Brad notices.

BRAD (CONT'D)

What?

BARTENDER

Oh nothing... you just run into this a lot in my line of work.

BRAD

Oh?

Brad is starting to worry.

BARTENDER

Yeah. The whole rekindling of old flames- people looking to make up for past regrets.

BRAD

How does it usually work out?

BARTENDER

Well, I don't usually get to see that part.

Brad chuckles a bit.

BRAD

Yeah, I guess not.

BARTENDER

From what I have seen though I guess it can go two ways.

Brad is supremely interested now.

BRAD

Do tell.

BARTENDER

Well, remember this is just a bartender's observations, so take it for what it's worth.

BRAD

Noted.

BARTENDER

Well, it can be that the other person is exactly as you remembered but older. And all the things that you remembered liking about them has stayed in tact.

BRAD

Please let that be the case.

BARTENDER

OR... they are nothing like what you remembered. And the person that you remember all this time was not an accurate assumption about who they may be now.

Brad is in deep thought.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

And you are just remembering who they were when you knew them. But we aren't usually the same person as we were back when- so don't be surprised if they aren't either.

Brad is taken back by his wisdom. He sits for a beat and sees her walk in the restaurant. She see him and comes over. Brad takes a bill out and puts it in his tip jar.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

Good luck.

Brad greets Tammy at the door and they exchange hellos and hugs.

INT. RESTAURANT TABLE- NIGHT

Brad and TAMMY (Thirty-something, raspy voice, loud voice) sit at their table. She is still beautiful. He is giddy.

BRAD

It's so good to see you again!

TAMMY

Yeah! Ha! I can't believe it's been what... 20 years?

She is LOUD. So much that it startles Brad.

BRAD

Umm... I think so.

He glances over towards the bar. He was right.

BRAD (CONT'D)

How long are you in town?

TAMMY

Oh, not long. Just visiting friends. We're all at the Hilton. Oh you probably remember them!

The waitress has come over and is waiting for her to stop talking. Brad looks at her for help.

WAITRESS

Welcome, can I get you some drinks to start?

BRAD

I still have my drink from the bar but maybe she-

TAMMY

Yes! I'll have the half pitcher of Margaritas.

A look of dread comes over Brad's face.

CUT TO

INT. RESTAURANT TABLE

Dinner is coming to a close. Tammy is laughing LOUDLY. People are looking at them. The waitress approaches again.

WAITRESS

Is there anything else I can get for you guys?

BRAD

No, I think we'll take the-

TAMMY

Yeah I'll take another half-pitcher.

The waitress side glances to Brad who looks like he got punched in the stomach.

WAITRESS

Coming right up.

Tammy goes back into a story Brad had no interest in.

TAMMY

So Leanne and Penny are screaming at me to pull my dress up and get back in the cab. HAHAHA!!

Brad is horribly embarrassed.

BRAD

And that was last night?

TAMMY

Yeah, You remember them right?

BRAD

Yeah... you had gone out with them
that night that I came to your
house.

TAMMY

You came to my house?

Brad is stung that she didn't even remember.

BRAD

Never mind. It's not that
important.

Tammy stands.

TAMMY

I gotta take a leak.

As she stands she loses her balance and falls forward,
hitting into the people at the next table. Drinks are
spilled, people are angry. The bartender comes over and helps
Brad help her up. They grab her jacket.

BARTENDER

I've taken the liberty of calling
you a cab.

Brad gives him a "thanks for bailing me out" look.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF RESTAURANT- NIGHT

They pour her into a cab and close the door.

BRAD

Take her to the Hilton.

He gives him some cash and closes the door. Brad and the
bartender watch it drive away. He puts his hand on Brad's
shoulder.

BARTENDER

C'mon- next one's on me.

They turn and go back in the restaurant.

INT. RESTAURANT BAR- NIGHT

Brad is sitting at the bar nursing his drink. He is discouraged. His phone starts vibrating on the counter in front of him. He picks it up and looks at it. It's Carl.

INTERCUT BETWEEN THE TWO LOCATIONS

BRAD

Hey Carl.

CARL

Dude! How'd the date go?

BRAD

Well, I'm sitting alone at a bar and talking to you on the phone.

CARL

Oh- ouch.

BRAD

Maybe you let Anna set you up then.

Brad hesitates for a beat.

BRAD (CONT'D)

Yeah, maybe I will. I'll talk to you tomorrow.

He hangs up and sets his phone on the bar.

BARTENDER

One more?

Brad is looking a bit tipsy. He starts trying to get a card out of his wallet.

BRAD

No. I'll settle up.

BARTENDER

No, man. This is on me.

Brad nods thankfully and sticks another bill in the tip jar. He stumbles a bit when he gets up.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

Can I get you a cab?

BRAD

No sir, I'll walk. It's just a few blocks. I need the air anyway.

He turns and walks out. The bartender takes his glass and looks empathetically at him walk away.

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS- NIGHT

"Fool That I Am" by Etta James plays.

Brad lazily walks the streets of New York. A little tipsy, he is not in a rush at all. Couples all around him, seemingly in love. He watches them and feels more alone than ever. His phone vibrates again.

He looks at it. It's Emily

INTERCUT SCENES BETWEEN BRAD AND EMILY

BRAD

Hey Em. It's late... why are you still awake?

EMILY

Are you still up?

She is visibly upset.

BRAD

Yeah, I'm not even home yet. Wait, what happened to Niagara?

EMILY

He stood me up.

BRAD

Oh boy. Did you talk to him?

EMILY

He said he wasn't sure that he wanted a relationship.

Brad seems a little annoyed, like he's tired of hearing the same thing from her.

BRAD

Oh dude, that sucks. I'm sorry.

EMILY

That's it? I'm freaking out here. What if this is all I'm going to get from here on out?

BRAD

Well, what did you expect?

EMILY

Why doesn't anyone seem to want to stay with me?

Brad's slight intoxication leads to unfiltered honesty.

BRAD

Well maybe it's because you pick all these losers to date.

EMILY

Why are you so mad?

BRAD

Why? Because I sit here watching you give yourself away to these people who obviously only want you for one thing. And you give it up to them right away. When the fucking is done they are left with the rest. And maybe these guys just don't want what's left.

EMILY

Hey, fuck you!

BRAD

I'm tired of you allowing yourself to be used and thrown aside by these emotionally bereft children. Look, you are amazing- and I kinda-sorta love you... but you have to put on your big girl panties and stop being a mattress for them.

Brad has stopped walking. There is a long silence between them. Emily's face has changed from shock to admiration.

EMILY

Wow. I am speechless. That was amazing... and kind of hot.

Brad laughs.

BRAD

You're a hot mess.

EMILY

Right back at you. (BEAT) And so I assume Tammy was not what you expected?

BRAD

No... she was not. Then again- I'm not sure what I was expecting.

EMILY

True love.

BRAD

If there is such a thing.

EMILY

Look at us... what a bunch of losers.

INT. BRAD'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

Brad has come in his door, still talking to Emily.

BRAD

Speak for yourself.

EMILY

I gotta ask: How did you end up getting your play produced?

BRAD

Pure luck.

EMILY

Don't be modest.

BRAD

I'm not- it was total luck. I sent it off to a few agents and one of them loved it. They passed it on to Marcus, who I guess was an old friend or something, and he happened to be looking for something just like it. They bought it, I helped them with casting and now it's going to production.

EMILY

That's incredible. I guess I didn't get the part.

BRAD

I just read lines... I'm not in charge of anything. But you never know. I think the cast list goes out soon. I think you'd be perfect- but I don't have the final say.

Emily has gotten into bed. Brad has plopped onto the couch.

EMILY
Will you be ok?

BRAD
Yeah. You?

EMILY
Yeah. I really do.

BRAD
Then we're both ok. Well, good
night.

EMILY
Good night dude. Hey-

BRAD
What?

EMILY
I kinda-sorta love you... not in THAT
way but I'm glad we're friends.

This makes Brad smile.

BRAD
I kinda-sorta love you too. Night.

EMILY
Night.

FADE OUT

EXT. CARL AND ANNA'S NEW HOUSE- EVENING

Brad stands at the door and knocks. It's a modest townhouse
in a quiet neighbourhood. Carl answers the door.

CARL
Welcome! Get in here, I'm starving.

He yanks Brad into the house and closes the door.

INT. CARL AND ANNA'S HOUSE-EVENING

Brad enters the living room and hands Anna a gift box.

BRAD
Happy housewarming.

ANNA
Aww.. thanks bro.

She opens it, quickly ripping off the wrapping paper. Carl sits on the couch with another woman (MAGGIE- 30-something, plainly beautiful, pleasant and unassuming)

ANNA (CONT'D)
Surprise, surprise- a book of
Robert Frost poems.

BRAD
Every home should have one.

She puts it on an empty shelf.

ANNA
There. Our first book on the
bookshelf.

MAGGIE
Looks good. Good choice.

ANNA
Brad, this is our friend Maggie
Plummer.

Brad extends his hand.

BRAD
Pleased to meet you.

MAGGIE
Likewise. Anna talks very highly of
you.

BRAD
Well, I pay her well.

Brad is charming and confident.

CARL
Good... let's eat.

Anna rolls her eyes.

CUT TO

INT. DINING ROOM- EVENING

The four are in mid-conversation. It's all very light and easy. Lot's of laughter.

MAGGIE
So, you two are from-

BRAD
New Hampshire... originally.

MAGGIE
That would explain the Robert
Frost.

Brad is impressed with her literary knowledge.

BRAD
That's right. Are you an avid
reader?

MAGGIE
Writer, actually.

BRAD
Really? What are you interested in?

MAGGIE
Novels, mostly. I have my first one
coming out in the new year.

ANNA
Really? That's great!

MAGGIE
I hear you have a play starting?
That must be very exciting.

BRAD
Yes, it is. I like the writing
part. All the other stuff is just-
beyond me.

MAGGIE
I'd love to see it sometime.

BRAD
We can go next week. I have opening
night tickets. They cast a friend
of mine in the lead. The buzz is
pretty good so far.

Anna and Carl look at each other candidly. They seem to be
hitting it off.

ANNA
Well Maggie, why don't you help me
with dessert in the kitchen. That
way we can talk about you guys
behind your backs.

CARL
Knock yourselves out, Hun.

The two ladies exit into the kitchen and out of sight. Brad's phone buzzes on the table. He sees it is from Emily.

EMILY
Hey, loser. Which one do you think
Barry will like more?

It is followed by two pictures. One of her wearing a sheer nightgown and the other with a see-through teddy. Brad snickers and responds.

BRAD
Umm... I think I see a nipple.

EMILY
So that's a yes?

BRAD
Yes.

Carl yanks his phone away and looks at it.

BRAD (CONT'D)
Hey!

CARL
If Anna said I can't have my phone
when we have company that means you
too. Woah that's a nipple.

Brad takes his phone back.

BRAD
She sends me things to see if I
think it's hot enough to send her
male suitors.

Carl gives him a blank stare.

CARL
Wow... could you be any more in the
friend zone? (BEAT) So- what do you
think of Maggie?

Brad seems unsure of how to answer.

BRAD
She's- very pleasant.

Carl shakes his head, smiling.

CARL
Pleasant.

BRAD
I just met the woman. What do you
want me to say?

Carl thinks about it for a beat.

CARL
I guess pleasant is about as
passionate as we can expect from
you.

The women return from the kitchen laughing and holding
dessert. Carl stands to help.

CARL (CONT'D)
Now that's what I'm talking about.

He takes bowl from Anna and slaps her on the ass. Brad
watches them for a beat. Their relationship is what he wants.

BRAD
Looks great you guys.

They continue with their evening.

FADE OUT

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE- NIGHT

Carl and Anna sit together with Brad and Maggie at the
opening night of Emily's play. It's a modern looking love-
story. The patrons are all dressed up for the theatre. It's a
big night both for Emily and for Brad.

Emily is onstage and in the middle of a scene with a man.
It's an intense scene. He is pouring out his love for Emily's
character.

EMILY
What? What do you want me to say?
I'm just tired-

MAN
I'm tired too!

Anna leans over to Brad and whispers.

ANNA
It's really great. Emily is so
good!

BRAD

Yeah... she is good.

Brad is in love. He watches her perform with intensity. She sees him and gives an ever so slight smile and catches herself and gets back in character.

EMILY

So what are you saying?

MAN

I miss your crooked smile. Your "stroke smile".

Emily catches what he said. She realizes that's what Brad said to her. She's trying to place it.

MAN (CONT'D)

I'm tired of pretending. Pretending that you aren't everything to me. I'm tired of explaining to people why it that you are the one person I look forward to just hearing your voice.

She looks at him pouring out his heart and glances over to Brad. This is her. He wrote this about her. She is starting to realize it.

MAN (CONT'D)

I'm tired... of pretending like you aren't the person that I want to talk to and tell about my day before I go to sleep. I'm tired of just being friends. You are my best friend... and I am through pretending.

She darts her eyes from the actor to Brad and back. Brad knows she knows. She is in shock. He stares back at her. The play ends and she kisses her costar. She drops her eyes, giving Brad a look that lets him know that she does not reciprocate. He sees it... and understands it. The crowd applauds as the play ends.

INT. HOTEL FUNCTION HALL-NIGHT

The room is full of the cast of the play. It's late, the drinks have been flowing. They are celebrating Christmas/opening night. Emily talks with a woman ELIZABETH. (30-ish, sweet-looking, soft spoken) They have had a few drinks.

ELIZABETH
He's so cute though.

They are looking at the leading man actor EDDIE. (30, rugged and handsome, charismatic but a douche) He sees them looking at him and saunters over. Emily is acting shy.

EDDIE
Hey ladies. So, what are you doing after this, Emily?

Emily is blushing. She's into him.

ELIZABETH
She's not busy.

EMILY
Beth!

From across the room Brad and Maggie enter. Emily is watching them. They look like they're getting along, shaking hands with people. Emily starts to excuse herself.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Hey, I'll be right back in a...

The director MARCUS (Mid 40's, wild hair, flamboyant) has walked up to a microphone holding a phone.

MARCUS
Hey everyone! The first review is in!

The room is raucous.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
Emily, get up here!

Emily and Brad have locked eyes. She reluctantly turns and heads up to Marcus who is reading from his phone.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
The Observer writes: It's been a long time since we got any good, romantic drama out of Broadway. This has all changed with the opening of "Courage".

Everyone cheers.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
From the impeccable dialogue to the graceful elegance of newcomer Emily Andrews...

They cheer as Emily looks embarrassed. Brad smiles at her. She catches his gaze for a second.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

A new favourite has now firmly established itself on the Broadway landscape.

Marcus takes Emily's hand and raises it triumphantly. As he does, Eddie rushes over and hugs her and plants a huge kiss on her lips. Everyone applauds louder.

Brad is crushed. He catches himself as Maggie laughs and applauds. He fakes it, slowly backing away and motioning he'd like to leave.

Emily sees them leave. She looks disconcerted but puts up a good front.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. SNOWY NEW ENGLAND TOWN

MONTAGE OF CLIPS set to "IT'S SO PEACEFUL IN THE COUNTRY" by Rosemary Clooney

Brad has moved back to NH. It's winter and majestic.

We see him living in an old farmhouse. With a huge yard and paddock area with a couple of horses. It looks like something out of a Robert Frost poem. His desk is beside a fireplace, a Labrador lays on a dog bed pillow beside it. He sits at the desk writing by the light of the fire. He is alone.

Intercut with that, Emily is making strides in her career. She is getting rave reviews, publicity. Male suitors. She is dating Eddie. We see them on red carpets. She seems happy and enjoying herself.

Emily sits at a restaurant with Eddie. He's talking on and on. She looks bored and has noticed it has started snowing out the window.

Brad sits at his desk looking like he has writer's block. He stands and goes to the window. He stares out as it begins to snow. The music ends.

FADE OUT

EXT. NEW HAMPSHIRE- DAY

SUPER TITLE: New Hampshire- 2 months later.

Brad is driving down his driveway. It's covered in snow. His Lab is in the passenger seat.

INT. BRAD'S HOUSE- DAY

Brad has poured some hot tea. The dog sits by the fire as Brad sits at his desk. There is a knock at the door. Brad reluctantly gets up and opens it. Emily is standing at the door.

BRAD

Em? Wha- what are you doing here?

She instantly breaks down.

EMILY

Can I come in?

Brad moves out of the way.

BRAD

Of course.

He takes her jacket and leads her to a seat on the couch by the fire. He gives her the tea he had just made.

BRAD (CONT'D)

What's happening? I don't see very much... not on social media very much.

Emily is visibly upset.

EMILY

I- I am so embarrassed.

Emily takes her phone out and pull up a website and shows him. There are raunchy pictures of her.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Eddie leaked all these pictures online.

BRAD

Oh shit.

She is weeping now.

EMILY

Dude, those are going to be out there... FOREVER!

Brad sits closer and puts his hand on her shoulder.

BRAD

What happened? Why would he do that?

EMILY

We broke up... we had a fight and split up and he was probably angry.

BRAD

Oh. Well maybe no one has seen them?

EMILY

My parents called me asking why there were naked pictures of me being sent to them. My Parents!

BRAD

Oh... Oh man. I'm so sorry Em. I- I don't know what to say.

He brushes her hair away from her tear soaked cheek.

BRAD (CONT'D)

Except- I'll need to bring you before the church elders.

Emily lets out a strained laugh. The tension is relieved. She looks at him for help.

BRAD (CONT'D)

But really Em, I think in a little while everyone will forget about it. I mean this stuff happens all the time.

This comforts her.

EMILY

You're probably right. Ugh... What a mess. I can't even. I mean I don't even want to go back.

She looks longingly at Brad who is very close now. They lock eyes.

EMILY (CONT'D)

You always know just how to put things- how to make me feel... safe.

She stares into his eyes and then moves in to kiss him. He backs away and stands up. She's mortified.

BRAD

Um- ok so here's the thing. I- I'm so glad you are here and that you feel like this is a safe space.

EMILY

Oh dude.. I'm so sorry.

BRAD

No, it's really fine. I- I just think that would be a mistake. I wouldn't want to umm... take advantage of you in a vulnerable state.

The tension lifts.

EMILY

Yeah... you're probably right- again.

BRAD

Listen- you are welcome to stay- as long as you want. Take your time. Work stuff out. (to the dog) Oshie and I aren't going anywhere.

Oshie plops on Emily's lap. Her heart is eased. As she turns to look at the snowy landscape out the window, Brad lays a blanket across her. She feels relaxed, at home.

EMILY

Thanks Brad.

EXT. NEW HAMPSHIRE SMALL TOWN LANDSCAPE- DAY

MONTAGE SET TO "I Wanna Be Around" by Tony Bennett.

Brad and Emily walk around Exeter NH. The town is decorated for Christmas. It's all very majestic. Perfectly calm and quiet. They go sledding together, drinking hot chocolate by the fire.

Brad helps push a car out of a snowbank in downtown Exeter. Shops seem like spots in The Village in New York. Picturesque. Time seems to have passed. She teaches him how to cook. After supper they retire by the fire. Oshie plops on their lap. She falls asleep on his shoulder. He looks lovingly at her. She's perfect.

She opens her eyes. He is looking at her.

BRAD

Tell me about your worst dates.

EMILY

Really?

BRAD

Yeah. Like rapid fire round.

She sits up a bit and faces Brad.

EMILY

Ok. I was 15...

BRAD

No, loser. Lets say- in the past year.

EMILY

I don't like this game.

BRAD

Chicken.

EMILY

Ok let's go. Doug- He had sausage fingers.

BRAD

Alright- first up. Doug. Wait what?

EMILY

A Me-monster. Everything was about him. It was annoying.

BRAD

No doubt. Promising. Go.

EMILY

The Persian- I wasn't feeling it.

BRAD

The Persian.

EMILY

Yes. Super hot. In his own mind.

BRAD

Shallow. Got it. Next.

EMILY

James Taylor. Old family friend.

BRAD

You were friends with James Taylor???

EMILY
Different James Taylor.

Brad seems sad at the news.

BRAD
Bummer. What happened?

EMILY
He broke my heart. (BEAT) He broke
my heart.

BRAD
Fuck you James Taylor.

EMILY
Exactly.

BRAD
Is that it?

EMILY
Eddie- Lots of sex. Lot's of booze.
Lot's of fun. I broke up with him
the same week his dad died.

BRAD
Ouch.

EMILY
Yeah. I was two timing. Dating two
guys. I broke both their hearts.
Then Dave.

BRAD
Dave? I'm losing count.

EMILY
Totally vibing. Very masculine
dude. But a total pothead. So I
dumped him too. He had kids. I
hated them. Demon children. He said
he loved me in 3 weeks. Wanted to
marry me at 6 weeks. I wasn't
attracted to him.

BRAD
I think I regret this exercise.

EMILY

Oh man, poor Dave. I literally broke up with him as he was about to propose... like he pulled out the box in front of all my friends and family.

BRAD

Holy shit. This was the last year?

EMILY

I realized something that day.

BRAD

Just that day?

EMILY

Bite me. I realized that the only person for me... was not there. I realized my brother would not like them.

BRAD

You'r brother?

EMILY

Yeah. I had to have that moment where my brother, who means the world to me, would approve. And I realized- all these guys meant absolutely nothing to me if he didn't approve.

BRAD

Wow.

EMILY

You're judging.

BRAD

No. I'm just... wow. I feel like i'm so far behind.

EMILY

Hey. You asked.

BRAD

Yeah and now I know.

EMILY

You think I'm a slut.

BRAD

No.

Emily is taken by his non-judgemental vibe.

BRAD (CONT'D)
No, I think you're great.

She believes him- and closes her eyes and leans her head into his chest. And falls asleep.

EXT. OLD NEW HAMPSHIRE FARMHOUSE- DAY

The snow has melted and it's a beautiful early Spring day. Brad helps Emily exit his truck and they walk up to an old white New England farm house. She clearly doesn't know where they are.

EMILY
So what's the big secret? What is this place?

BRAD
THIS- is the farmhouse that Robert Frost lived in from 1900 to 1911.

EMILY
Oh? Really? That's wonderful.

Brad is very excited. You can tell he has been here before and loves it. They stand by the historic marker and take a tour of the house.

BRAD
This is the place... all that great poetry. All written right here.

They wander through a very rustic home. Emily is touched by the simplicity of it all. They look at the desk where Frost wrote. They stand side by side, taking it all in.

EMILY
It's so- peaceful.

BRAD
It's funny.

EMILY
What's that?

BRAD
All those beautiful words he wrote- all to describe something as seemingly insignificant as- a simple life.

EMILY

Sometimes I think that I was meant
for a small town.

Brad is being torn up by something. He looks at her as she
looks at the room.

BRAD

Then don't go back.

The words fall like a thud. Emily isn't sure what to say.

EMILY

I- I don't know what to say. I- I
don't know that I- At least not in
THAT way.

BRAD

You love who you love... I can't
control it.

EMILY

I- umm. I have to think about it? I
mean the play is starting back up
again. I can't let them all down,
you know?

Brad is hurt. He tries to be brave.

BRAD

Totally. Yeah.

They turn to leave. She knows she just hurt him. They walk
back to the truck.

INT. BRAD'S TRUCK- DAY

They drive back through town and up his driveway. She is
torn, looking out the window. They don't speak.

INT. BRAD'S HOUSE- DAY

They enter the house and Brad puts the kettle on. Emily is
struggling to find the words.

EMILY

I can't- I can't stay.

He is wounded. Angry.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Brad, I'm so sorry I... misled you.
You mean so much to me but I just
don't know if-

BRAD

Em, I'm tired of being the
understudy to your love life-

His words hurt her. She doesn't respond. Brad leaves the room. Emily takes her jacket and stops to pet Oshie. He looks at her confused.

EMILY

Good-bye, Osh-meister.

Oshie watches her leave and the door clicks behind her.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE- DAY

The play company has come back from hiatus. People are seeing each other for the first time in a while. Emily enters the dressing room area of the theatre. She sees Elizabeth and the two exchange friendly greetings.

ELIZABETH

Em! How was your break? Did you
just get back?

EMILY

No, I- I've been back for a couple
of weeks.

ELIZABETH

Where did you go?

Emily is thinking about Brad. She's not sure how to answer.

EMILY

I spent some time in New Hampshire,
with- a friend. I needed to get
away for a while after-

ELIZABETH

OH! Yeah, what an asshole! I can't
believe he shared those pictures.
I'm so glad Marcus replaced him.

EMILY

Oh? He did?

ELIZABETH

Yeah- none of us liked him anyway.

She laughs. Emily is relieved. Marcus has come in and starts gathering people.

MARCUS
Gather, gather everyone!

He is more bubbly than usual.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
Welcome back everyone. As you know we've made some personnel changes. (To Emily) Fuck that asinine prima donna.

Everyone shouts their support for Emily.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
Yes! Hold your applause for a moment, though. As you know the academy announces their Tony awards nominees this evening. I have some information a little birdie whispered to me.

Everyone shushes and becomes quiet.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
Everyone congratulate our nominee for outstanding actress in a lead role- Miss Emily Andrews!

They all explode with excitement, mobbing Emily.

ELIZABETH
Get up there! Speech! Speech!

Emily joins Marcus.

EMILY
I don't know what to say! I'm so excited... (BEAT) I just want to thank all of you. You've been so supportive and wonderful. This is for all of us!

They erupt in cheers and start getting back to their tasks. Elizabeth joins Emily and Marcus.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Hey Marcus, do you know if Brad was nominated too?

Elizabeth gives her a look. Emily notices but is focussed on Marcus.

MARCUS

No, you were the only one from our production. A shame really. He really wrote a great play.

Emily is discouraged at the news.

EMILY

Yeah. He is pretty great.

Elizabeth gives her a look again as Marcus leaves.

EMILY (CONT'D)

What?

ELIZABETH

What, what?

EMILY

What's the look for?

ELIZABETH

I have no look.

She smirks as she walks away, leaving Emily to field congratulations from the others. Emily takes out her phone and starts texting Brad.

TEXT

Hey. I got some great news. Call me.

She hesitates and presses "send" before returning to the rest of the cast.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE- DAY

SUPER TITLE: 4 Weeks later

They are in full dress rehearsal. Emily is on stage doing a scene. In the back of the theatre Brad has entered with a bunch of other industry looking people. She hesitates her lines at the sight of him. Excitement, fear.

She continues rehearsal.

INT. THEATRE DRESSING ROOM- DAY

The dressing area is busy. Chaotic. Emily is in normal clothes and about to leave with Elizabeth. A man (Late 30's, dark hair, looks like ex-military, civilian clothes) approaches her.

RICH
So this is what you've been doing
with your time? What a waste.

Emily whips around at the sound of her brother's voice. She lunges at him, throwing her arms around him.

EMILY
You made it!

She lets go of him and turns to Elizabeth.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Beth, this is my brother Rich.

ELIZABETH
Wow. Finally, I get to meet the
only man in her life that can do no
wrong.

RICH
Harsh... I can tell we'll get
along!

Brad enters from the side door. Emily notices right away. Her heart leaps. She heads right for him.

EMILY
Brad!

She goes in for a hug. Brad recoils and holds his hand up to wave "hi" instead. Emily stops short, unsure of what to do.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Hi.

BRAD
Hi Emily.

It is a very awkward moment.

EMILY
So, what are you doing in New York?
Are you here for the Tonys?

BRAD
No. I've been meeting with Marcus
and some other folks about another
play.

EMILY
Yours?

BRAD

Yes. It's all very preliminary.

Brad seems to be trying to end the conversation and get away. Rich joins them.

EMILY

Brad, this is my brother Rich.

BRAD

Oh! Great to finally meet you. I've heard just a ton about you.

Brad and Rich shake hands. It's a strong firm shake. They hold it a moment. Rich is impressed. He gives a glance to Emily.

RICH

Nice to meet you, Brad. Great handshake. (To Emily) Handshake like that is a man you can trust.

BRAD

I have a farm. Inherited it from my old man... along with his hands too I guess.

EMILY

I tried getting in touch with you a few times. I got nominated for a Tony and-

BRAD

Yeah, sorry I've been... busy.

Emily pulls Brad off away from Rich and lowers her voice.

EMILY

Oh. Ok. I was going to see if, you know-

Brad isn't getting it.

EMILY (CONT'D)

If you maybe wanted to go with me tomorrow?

There is an awkward beat as Brad thinks about what to say.

BRAD

I've been seeing someone. I have a date tomorrow. I'm sorry.

The words are a knife to her heart.

EMILY

Oh, ok. Yeah No worries. I just thought it was a shame you weren't nominated, you know?

BRAD

Yeah, totally. Thanks though.
(BEAT) Well I should get going. I have to stop and see Carl and Anna before I head back to New Hampshire.

EMILY

Absolutely. Yeah...

Brad turns and walks away.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Give Oshie a hug for me.

Brad doesn't turn around. He disappears out of the theatre. Elizabeth looks at Emily.

RICH

That was brutal to watch.

Emily is shaken.

EMILY

Yeah, it was.

RICH

I don't understand this relationship. You spend time together?

EMILY

Yes. I mean, we used to.

RICH

You say "I love you" to him?

EMILY

Yes. Sort of.

RICH

But you don't want to date him.

EMILY

No.

RICH

Why not?

EMILY

What if we date? What if we try and it doesn't work out? Then I've lost one of my best friends. (BEAT) My best friend. He knows more about me than I know about myself. I talk to him before I go to bed. It's- it's not an effort when I'm with him.

RICH

Well by all means then don't pursue that. That sounds terrible.

EMILY

That's mean.

RICH

You love him- yet you waste your time with all of these other losers.

EMILY

They're not ALL losers.

RICH

So, LOVE is the very reason you're going to forgo a chance at LOVE. You make no sense.

EMILY

I don't want to risk losing the friendship.

RICH

Well from my perspective you seem to have lost that already.

Rich takes Emily by the arm and pulls her close as they exit the theatre.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK- DAY

Anna and Carl sit on a park bench. It's a beautiful sunny day, many people out enjoying the weather. Brad sees them and quickly jogs up to them. They rise and Anna throws her arms around Brad.

BRAD

Ohhh I've missed you!

They linger in their hug.

BRAD (CONT'D)
I've missed you too.

Carl tries to join them. Brad playfully pushes him away.

BRAD (CONT'D)
Go away.

CARL
Hey, hey- that's my wife.

BRAD
Yeah but when she finally realizes
you're an idiot and ditches you
she'll still be my sister.

CARL
Hey, fuck you.

BRAD
Fuck you more.

They try not to laugh but finally give in and throw their
arms around each other.

CARL
I've missed you, man.

BRAD
Ditto.

ANNA
Now that you're here I'm going to
grab a fried dough. You two want
one?

BRAD
Nah.

CARL
I'll just have some of yours.

Anna walks towards the fried dough carts, leaving them alone.

ANNA
No you won't.

Carl smiles at her as she walks away.

CARL
(to Brad) So... how'd your meetings
go?

BRAD
Good- I think. I mean they seemed
pretty interested.

CARL
Did you see Em?

(BEAT)

BRAD
Wow... jump right in.

CARL
So that's a yes.

BRAD
Yeah.

CARL
And?

BRAD
And? And nothing.

CARL
Hmm.

BRAD
Subtle... did she put you up to this?

CARL
Anna? Of course. But it doesn't
take a genius to see the obvious.

BRAD
That leaves you out.

CARL
Listen. You may be able to live and
work from New Hampshire... but you
can't run away from her. She loves
you... I can see it. We both can.

BRAD
Let's remember, she turned me down-
repeatedly. I don't need-

CARL
Brad there are times in life where
it comes down to a single moment.
I'm afraid- that if you let this
pass you by...

(MORE)

CARL (CONT'D)

You will never get it back. And you will live the rest of your life wondering.

BRAD

Wondering what?

Carl sees Anna paying for her fried dough and she turns and sees him looking at her. She smiles at him. He smiles back.

CARL

Whether or not you had what it takes to fall in love with your best friend.

The words sink in.

BRAD

But you're my best friend.

CARL

And I couldn't call myself that if I didn't warn you... that you're about to make the worst mistake of your life.

Brad thinks about it for a moment. Sometimes we just don't get what we want. Anna has come back to them. Carl gives him a look of pity.

ANNA

You ready to walk?

She hands Carl his own fried dough.

CARL

Absolutely.

The three start walking the path away.

ANNA

So, tell me about this girl you've been seeing.

BRAD

We are having lunch tomorrow. It's good- so far.

They walk off into the distance.

INT. FANCY NEW HAMPSHIRE RESTAURANT- DAY

Brad and his date Nathalie (mid 30's, beautiful, pleasant, quiet) come to their table. They are comfortable together. It's pleasant. They sit and the waiter leaves them.

NATHALIE

So the meeting went well?

BRAD

It did.

NATHALIE

Wow... I really envy you.

Brad seems distracted, not entirely present.

BRAD

How do you mean?

NATHALIE

I dunno... I wish I was as-passionate as you.

BRAD

What's that? Oh, passionate? I wouldn't say it's so much passion as...

NATHALIE

Knowing what you want?

The words hit him like a slap.

BRAD

You don't know what you want?

NATHALIE

I guess not. I had the same boyfriend in high school for 3 years. I dated the same guy for 2 more and then married him for 10. I have had the same meaningless job for that whole time.

BRAD

And that's not what you want?

NATHALIE

Who knows what anyone really wants.

BRAD

You wouldn't say you're passionate about your job?

NATHALIE

Passionate? No. I mean maybe some people just don't have that same kind of passion.

Brad is drifting again.

NATHALIE (CONT'D)

I mean, do you know anyone that lives their lives with that same passion?

Brad's attention is caught. He does know someone like that.

BRAD

I- I think there are those out there.

NATHALIE

You're probably right. I just don't know that it's in me. Maybe not everyone is meant for a passionate life.

These words are discouraging Brad.

BRAD

So you've never had anyone that gave you those feelings?

Nathalie thinks about it for a beat.

NATHALIE

No. Not that I can think of anyway.

Brad looks out the window. He suddenly feels trapped.

NATHALIE (CONT'D)

And you?

BRAD

I'm sorry?

NATHALIE

I asked- have you ever known anyone like that? Someone that brings out your passion?

BEAT. Brad doesn't answer right away. Then a content smile comes across his face.

BRAD

I do.

INT. LARGE AWARDS AUDITORIUM- NIGHT

It's packed full of entertainment people. Black-tie, evening gowns. The epitome of class and fashion. Emily has entered from the red carpet and is approached by a show producer.

PRODUCER

Miss Andrews? Has your date arrived?

Emily is overwhelmed by the whole scene.

EMILY

Umm- no. No he isn't coming.

PRODUCER

Alright.

She quickly motions for a man to come over. He's dressed in a tux- ridiculously attractive.

PRODUCER (CONT'D)

Ok, this is Paul. He will be filling the seat next to you.

Emily is unnerved by it but pretends to be ok. She takes him by the arm and he leads her to their seats a few rows from the front.

CUT TO

INT. CARL AND ANNA'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

Brad stands in front of a door. The door opens to Anna.

ANNA

Brad! You're here in New York?

CARL

(O.S) Who is it?

ANNA

It's Brad!

CARL

Well, get in here, it's starting!

Brad enters and kisses Anna on his way by. He sits on the couch next to Carl. The Tony's are on tv.

BRAD

You're watching?

ANNA
I can't believe you're not.

CARL
Why are you here, Brad?

Brad is acting aloof.

BRAD
I don't know why I'm here.

ANNA
Aren't you happy for her? This is a big night for her.

BRAD
Of course.

ANNA
Again- why are you sitting here with us?

BRAD
I- she doesn't want to see me. We- I think it's best for us to stay just friends.

Anna give him a look of pity.

ANNA
Call me crazy but... I think you know what you should do.

BRAD
I can't.

CARL
So- Take courage. Isn't what you told her?

BRAD
I just don't know if- what if we aren't meant to be together?

Anna takes the Robert Frost book that Brad had given her. As she does we catch a glimpse of Emily on the TV. She is beautiful. Brad is smitten.

ANNA
"We love the things we love for what they are."

Anna sets the book down and puts her hand on Brad's face tenderly.

ANNA (CONT'D)

You love her for her. And I don't know anyone who could ever love her better than you. You've known it all along. She knows it too.

CARL

And I think you won't be able to live with yourself if you don't leave right now.

Brad looks at them and at the tv. This is the moment. He realizes he needs to go to her. He stands and runs to the door, pulling it open and runs out. The door slams behind him.

INT. LARGE AWARDS AUDITORIUM- NIGHT

The host is standing on stage. They have just come back from commercial.

HOST

Our next presenter has had a long career in both film as well as stage. You knew him as your favourite high school student Ferris Bueller. Please welcome Matthew Broderick.

The crowd erupts.

MATTHEW BRODERICK

I have loved seeing each of this year's nominees in person this year. Just a great class of talent with this year's ladies.

CUT TO

EXT. OUTSIDE ANNA AND CARL'S APARTMENT

Brad bursts out of the doors to the apartment building. He tries hailing a taxi to no avail. He takes off running down the street.

INT. LARGE AWARDS AUDITORIUM- NIGHT

MATTHEW BRODERICK

Here are the nominees. Lynette Bosely for That's Life: A Sinatra Story.

The crowd applauds

CUT TO

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS.

Brad comes running around the corner. He is winded. He stops to catch his breath and continues to try hailing a cab- unsuccessfully. He looks at his watch. He is running out of time.

A car screeches to a stop behind him. It startles him as he turns to see it is Carl driving an old Chevy Nova.

CARL
Get in, numb-nuts!

Brad smiles and jumps in and they take off into the distance.

INT. LARGE AWARDS AUDITORIUM- NIGHT

They are applauding the nominees.

MATTHEW BRODERICK
And finally, Emily Andrew's for
"Courage."

The audience applauds.

MATTHEW BRODERICK (CONT'D)
And the Tony goes to... Emily Andrews
for "Courage."

The place erupts. Emily is shocked. Those around her start congratulating her. Her "date" leads her to the stage and she walks up the stairs to the podium. She is handed her award and the crowd settles down. She's shaking and speechless.

EMILY
I- I don't know what to say.

She looks around the room for Brad. He isn't there.

EMILY (CONT'D)
I want to thank our director Marcus-
you are such a genius. My co-
workers. You make my job so much
easier because of your talents.

She pauses and starts to get choked up.

EXT. AWARDS AUDITORIUM- NIGHT

Carl and Brad arrive at the auditorium. They both exit the car and leave it double parked in the street. They run up the steps to the doors.

CARL

Wait, what's our play here?

BRAD

I- I don't know. I'll tell them to go get her from the audience or something.

CARL

That's not going to work.

BRAD

I don't know, I'll think of something.

They enter the outside doors.

INT. LARGE AWARDS AUDITORIUM- NIGHT

They are stopped by security right away. It starts getting physical.

SECURITY

Sir, you cannot get in unless you are on the list.

He is holding Brad back. Another security guard comes to help.

BRAD

I told you- I was supposed to be here with Emily Andrews.

SECURITY

And I told you-

Carl looks around and assesses the situation.

CARL

Alright, now this is happening.

He starts disrobing, shoves one of the security guard and takes off down a hallway. The two guards take off after him. Brad is left alone. He takes a quick look around and slides in unnoticed.

INT. LARGE AWARDS AUDITORIUM- NIGHT

EMILY

And finally-to Brad, for writing such a beautiful story. A story about loss and the strength to continue on- with courage. A story about the beauty of life- and savouring those moments of beauty with those whom you love.

Tears have started falling.

EMILY (CONT'D)

But I cannot enjoy this, as much as I want to- because I lost my best friend. You said that I gave you the courage to write this story. But it is you who gave me the will to continue and the strength to take control of my life. I want to share this with the one that I love.

Brad busts through the doors and has made his way to stage. She sees him. She talks through the tears.

EMILY (CONT'D)

And I do Brad... I don't just kinda sorta love you. I- I just love you. I'm sorry that I was such a coward. I don't know why I screwed this up so bad, but I hope you can give me a chance... and let me love you. It feels like I lost my best friend. I- I never even got to kiss you.

She breaks down. The whole room is silent. They all look at Brad. He can't let her stand there crying and walks the stairs and joins her on stage. They stand face to face. He slowly brushes away her tears and they kiss for the first time. The crowd erupts in applause.

We stay on them kissing for a few beats. They are oblivious to everything around them.

FADE OUT.

EXT. NEW HAMPSHIRE TOWN SQUARE- NIGHT

MY IDEAL by Tony Bennett plays. Lightly snowing, picturesque New England town square.

Bandstand with Christmas lights, people window-shopping. Brad and Emily walk the streets, arm in arm.

BRAD (V.O.)
Life is... unpredictable.

EMILY (V.O.)
But things don't work out. Because
we just-get in the way.

BRAD (V.O.)
But then- we figure things out in
time. Sometimes, people CAN just be
friends. But sometimes, people just
kinda...

EMILY (V.O.)
Sorta-

BRAD (V.O.)
Fall in love.

CUT TO

EXT. BRAD'S HOME- NIGHT

Brad and Emily spend a beautiful evening on the porch by the light of a fire. The sun is setting and they are laughing and talking, under a blanket on the porch swing. Happy.

FADE OUT