

TOO BROKE TO FAIL

written by

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EXT. LONG ISLAND SUBURB - NIGHT

Dark. Silent. Then--

Flash! Christmas lights explode to life across every house. Well...almost every house. The dark ones with **FORECLOSURE** signs in lawns stand out. Too many to ignore.

SUPER: LONG ISLAND, DECEMBER 30, 2008, 11:48 PM

KEIRA (V.O.)

I don't ask for much, god...

INT. KEIRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

KEIRA CORDOVA (17), eyeliner queen stocked with eternal sarcasm, clasps her hands in prayer.

KEIRA

...but spare me the whole pregnancy thing, okay? I mean I'm like only seventeen for god's sake. I can't raise a kid alone.

RORY (O.S.)

You ever gonna spin, Juno?

AARAV (O.S.)

Yeah, Keira. Spin already.

KEIRA

So impatient. How childish.

Her room's stripped bare: bed, moving boxes, *Twilight* poster. Keira sits cross-legged in a circle with her geeky brother RORY (15) and his equally nerdy friend AARAV (15).

They huddle over *THE GAME OF LIFE*. Keira spins. A five. She's now the proud parent of a new baby girl.

AARAV

Congrats! It's a girl!

RORY

I'm gonna make the coolest uncle.

KEIRA

Like hell you are.

Rory sticks a pink peg in Keira's car.

KEIRA (CONT'D)

Oh god. Are my boobs gonna sag now?

AARAV
I say embrace 'em.

KEIRA
Wow. Thanks for the girl advice,
Aarav.

Aarav gives her a thumbs-up. Keira rolls her eyes.

Knock! Knock! Knock!

KEIRA (CONT'D)
Hey, gimme a break, here! I'm on
maternity leave!

LEXI (O.S.)
It's me!

KEIRA
(brightens)
Oh.

Keira rushes to unlock the door for LEXI HOFFMAN (17), her
BFF since Pre-K. Lexi's Hot Topic personified. Emo chic.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
What we lookin' at?

Lexi fans a bundle of cash.

LEXI
Twenty flat.

KEIRA
That's it?

LEXI
What can I say? Girl scout cookies
ain't selling like they used to.

KEIRA
First AIG, now Thin Mints. Christ,
is anything recession-proof?

RORY
I'll trade jobs if you give me ten.

KEIRA
Five.

RORY
Deal.

LEXI
You're giving up five bucks to win
The Game of Life?

KEIRA
Real life's rigged enough, Lexi.

Keira and Rory trade job cards.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
Let me enjoy the fake one at least.

LEXI
Real life's calling, Keir.

Keira groans.

LEXI (CONT'D)
It's your going away party. You
might never see these people again.

KEIRA
(sarcastic)
Great. Nothing says "party time"
like a good, old-fashioned
foreclosure.

Lexi shoves a beer into her hand.

LEXI
You'll survive.

Keira takes a quick sip.

KEIRA
You're now a married mother of one
on a banker's salary. Go full
Madoff and win this for me.

Lexi salutes Keira. Keira raises the beer in mock salute and exits.

INT. KEIRA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A PARTY in full swing. Music blaring, kids everywhere. Keira slumps alone on the sofa, invisible.

Bored, she steals a beer off the sleeping kid next to her.

INT. KEIRA'S HOUSE - LATER

Drunk as hell, Keira teeters on a stack of boxes by a Christmas tree. She's wearing oversized "2009" glasses, the kind where the double zeros frame her eyes.

KEIRA
I love you all!

LEXI
(embarrassed)
Oh god.

RORY
(to Aarav)
Record this for me, will ya?

AARAV
Already on it.

Aarav already has the digital camera rolling.

KEIRA
So friend me on Facebook if you haven't! That's Keira Cordova, K-E-I-R-uh...you know the rest!

Keira jumps off and dances to something like "**Just Dance**" by Lady Gaga. It's pure euphoria. The whole world is beautiful!

INT. KEIRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

The party's over.

Keira and Lexi lie side by side on her bed, one earbud each, locked on Edward Cullen's smolder from the *Twilight* poster.

KEIRA
He's so hot.

Lexi sighs dreamily.

LEXI
I'd let him ruin my life.

KEIRA
It's so unfair. Movies give us this, and we get Danny Cohen instead.

LEXI
I don't know. Danny's kinda cute.

Keira mock gags.

LEXI (CONT'D)
I only said *kinda*.

KEIRA
Yeah. *Kinda*. Whatever.

Keira turns to Lexi, eyes heavy.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
So, what do you wanna do tomorrow?

Lexi flips open her cell.

LEXI
It's 2:48. Tomorrow's today now.

KEIRA
So, what do you wanna do today?

LEXI
How 'bout a movie? We could--

KEIRA
Screw that. Let's do something fun.

LEXI
"Fun?"

KEIRA
Yeah. One last hurrah before D-Day.

LEXI
Keira, we live in Bumblefuck, Long Island. It's where fun and the Islanders go to die.

KEIRA
Oh yeah. Good point...

Keira looks back up at Robert Pattinson's smoldering stare. She lets out a long, dramatic sigh.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
He's so hot...

They both laugh.

INT. KEIRA'S ROOM - DAY

Keira wakes up. She's sprawled alone on the bed. Hair frizzed. Eyes baggy. The whole world is one, ugly nightmare.

She drags herself up...**THUD!** Pieces from THE GAME OF LIFE scatter as she trips.

KEIRA
(sighs)
Figures.

INT. KEIRA'S HOUSE - DAY

Keira tiptoes downstairs. Beer cans everywhere. She picks one up. Empty. Useless.

CHRISTINA (O.S.)
Long night?

Keira's mom, CHRISTINA (mid-40s), stands in her 7-Eleven uniform, eyes weary from a loooooong night shift.

She hands Keira a trash bag.

KEIRA
Please. A practice run at best.

She tosses the can into the bag.

CHRISTINA
"At best," huh?

KEIRA
Well you know me...

CHRISTINA
Hmm. You know just 'cause--

KEIRA
Please, mom. What are they gonna do? Call the bank? Foreclose a second time?

Silence. That one hurt. Keira brushes by her mom. No eye contact. Nothing. A familial Cold War.

Crack! A Christmas ornament. Inside: an old family photo. Keira picks it up.

CHRISTINA
You gonna help or--?

Keira stares at the photo, lost in memory.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
Keira?

KEIRA

I gotta go.

She takes the ornament and slips out.

INT. LEXI'S ROOM - SAME

Lexi has one of the more angsty bedrooms you'll ever find. Purples, blacks, My Chemical Romance. It's all very MySpacey.

Lying in bed, she hammers at her keyboard. *Click, clack!*

LEXI (V.O.)

Edward watched from afar. Was this love or lust? Nay...

(overdramatic)

Nay! 'Twas both! A complex potion his soul has longed to--!

Buzz! Lexi flips open her cell.

LEXI

Hey.

INT. HOT TOPIC - SAME

Hot Topic bursts with all things emo. Keira drifts the aisles, phone to ear.

KEIRA

Yo, sexy. Whatcha up to?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

LEXI

Oh, you know...
(side-eyes fanfic)
...the usual.

KEIRA

Fanfic?

Lexi **SLAMS** the laptop shut.

LEXI

No!

Keira snickers.

LEXI (CONT'D)

Shut up.

KEIRA
Just give me a hot boyfriend this
time. Preferably a hot vampire.

LEXI
Too late, he's taken.

KEIRA
(playful)
Why you little harlot...

Lexi sighs, dramatically.

LEXI
Fine. Maybe his long-lost twin can
show up in the next chapter or
something...

KEIRA
I knew you'd cave.

Lexi smiles despite herself.

LEXI
Yeah, yeah. So what else you want?

KEIRA
I don't know...
(beat)
Still down for the movies tonight?

Lexi face lights up.

EXT. KEIRA'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Keira speeds past a **foreclosure sign** and **U-Haul**, rushing
inside.

LEXI (V.O.)
It's gonna be the best New Year's
ever! We'll have popcorn, candy...

KEIRA (V.O.)
What do you wanna see?

INT. KEIRA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

She barrels upstairs. Christina sleeps through the chaos.

LEXI (V.O.)
I don't know? That new Michael Cera
one looks pretty good...

KEIRA (V.O.)
Nick and Norah?

LEXI (V.O.)
 Yeah, that one.

KEIRA (V.O.)
 Okay. I guess he's cute enough in
 an awkward virgin sorta way.

INT. KEIRA'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

Keira tears open a box of clothes.

LEXI (V.O.)
 Should I wear black or purple?

INT. KEIRA'S BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

Keira checks herself out in the mirror. It's all very mall
 punk. Like a mix between Avril Lavigne and Hayley Williams.

KEIRA (V.O.)
 Black. You look hotter in black.

INT. LEXI'S BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

Lexi swipes the last bit of black eyeliner. Emphasis on
black.

LEXI (V.O.)
 You're right. You're always right.

KEIRA (V.O.)
 (sarcastic)
 Then why do I have a C in Science?

LEXI (V.O.)
 You know what I mean.

KEIRA (V.O.)
 I know. You're the best too.

INT. LEXI'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

Lexi lounges in bed, phone pressed to her ear.

LEXI
 Movie's at seven, so don't be late.
 You know how I--

INT. KEIRA'S ROOM - SAME

Keira mirrors her, flat on the bed.

KEIRA

Like to watch the trailers. I know.

Lexi smiles.

LEXI

Just remember--

KEIRA

No Rory. Trust me, he's not coming.

LEXI

All right. I'll see you in a few.

KEIRA

See ya, sexy.

LEXI

See ya, bestie.

They hang up. Beat.

RORY (O.S.)

Coming to what?

Keira freezes. Fuck.

EXT. CUL-DE-SAC - EVENING

Keira drives up to Lexi's suburban paradise. An "**Obama-Biden '08**" sign greets her as she parks against the curb.

INT. LEXI'S HOUSE - EVENING

Ding! Ding! Ding!

LEXI (O.S.)

I'm coming, I'm coming!

The door swings open and we see Rory standing there like an idiot. Behind him, Keira mouths "I'm sorry."

LEXI (CONT'D)

Ah, shit.

INT. CHRISTINA'S ROOM - EVENING

Beep! Beep! Beep! Christina's alarm pops off. She checks the time. **6:30pm**. Time for work. *Bleh...*

INT. KEIRA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Christina drifts down the stairs. It's unnervingly quiet.

CHRISTINA

Hello?

Nothing. The place is bare, boxes half-packed, like the family's already gone.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

Anyone here?

Again, nothing. At the front door, two neon post-its are glued on. Christina peels the first:

Borrowed car. Sleeping over Lexi's - Keira

She peels the second:

Me too :) - Rory

Christina sighs, crumpling both.

INT. MOVIE LOBBY - NIGHT

DANNY COHEN (17) mans the ticket booth. As Lexi would say, Danny's "kinda cute." *Kinda*.

FATHER

One adult, one child for *Bolt*.

DANNY

Great choice, sir. Next to *WALL-E*, it's--

FATHER

(dry, not amused)

Just give me the tickets, please.

DANNY

Uh...yeah, sure. That'll be twelve-thirty-five.

They quickly exchange money for tickets. Danny gives them the evil eye as they shuffle off.

DANNY (CONT'D)
 (under his breath)
 Douchebag...

KEIRA (O.S.)
 Careful, Danny. That could get you
 fired.

Keira, Lexi, and Rory step up.

DANNY
 Oh, god. *Twilight*, again?

LEXI
 (soft)
 Hi, Danny.

KEIRA
 Relax, dude. We're here for *Nick
 and Norah*.

DANNY
 Ooh, good choice. Next to *Superbad*,
 my favorite Cera performance.

KEIRA
 Are you always this nerdy?

DANNY
Ha ha. They called Spielberg a nerd
 too.

KEIRA
 They still do.

Lexi tugs on Keira's arm.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
 Relax, we'll make it.
 (to Danny)
 Three for *Nick and Norah*. Two
 adults.
 (motions to Rory)
 One child.

RORY
 I'm fifteen...

DANNY
 Yeah, your brother's in woodshop
 with me.

KEIRA
 Well, tonight, he's twelve.

DANNY

Uh, I don't think I'm allowed to do that...

KEIRA

(seductive)

Come on, Danny. Do it for me.

LEXI

And me too.

Keira and Lexi hit him with their best puppy-dog eyes. Danny gulps. He doesn't stand a chance.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

Our three heroes sit wedged in the middle of a packed row, a bucket of popcorn drifting between them like a peace offering.

KEIRA

(whispers)

Hey, Rory.

Lexi elbows Rory, who's half-lost in the previews.

RORY

Huh?

KEIRA

Pass the Milk Duds.

RORY

(playing dumb)

What Milk Duds?

KEIRA

The ones I told you to sneak in.

Rory freezes, then sheepishly pats his empty pockets.

RORY

Uh...

Keira winces. Lexi tries to hide her laughter.

KEIRA

(to Lexi)

I'll be back in a few.

LEXI

Godspeed, soldier.

Lexi salutes Keira as she begins her shimmy toward the aisle.

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Keira hugs herself for warmth as she trudges toward her car.

A YUPPIE (late 20s) strides beside her, yammering into his Bluetooth like he's the King of Wall Street.

YUPPIE

Yeah.

(beat)

Yeah, I know.

(laughs)

No, no, no, dude. With the profits I pull in this shitshow of a market, they should be happy I'm coming at all.

Keira side-eyes him, mildly annoyed.

YUPPIE (CONT'D)

Oh, don't be a pussy, man. What else you doing? Watching Dick Clark?

Mildly annoyed? Nope. Keira *hates* him.

YUPPIE (CONT'D)

Trust me, bro, showing face goes a long way with these schmucks.

(beat)

Don't worry, we'll dip for Becca's after midnight.

(beat)

Yeah, just bring condoms. You know how she gets.

He laughs. Keira quickens her pace, fists clenched. Forget hates. She fucking **despises** him.

KEIRA

(under her breath)

Prick.

She ducks into her car, rummaging for the Milk Duds.

INT. FAMILY CAR - CONTINUOUS

Keira scours her car, searching for the ever-elusive candy. Hanging from the rearview mirror: the small Christmas ornament from earlier.

She leans down, eyes sweeping under the seats until...there!

KEIRA
Come on. Almost...

She reaches for the box, fingers just shy of grabbing it.

BAM! A violent jolt. The ornament snaps and breaks. Keira slams up, head snapping.

Her car **ALARM** shrieks. Through the window: the Yuppie's BMW peels out, tires **scrrreeeeching** across asphalt.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
Hey!

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Keira bursts out of the car, alarms blaring. She runs after the Yuppie.

KEIRA
Hey, hold up! Get back here,
asshole!

He's gone. She slows. It's futile.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
Fuck!

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - LATER

Keira, Lexi, and Rory sit Indian-style, staring at the rear of the car. It was already kinda beat-up before, but now...

Oof.

RORY
Wasn't it, like, Mom-Mom's from the
eighties or something?

KEIRA
Nineties. But close enough.

Keira pops a Milk Dud. Silence.

RORY
Well, it wasn't much of car to
begin with.

KEIRA

But it was our car. The only one we had. And now we have nothing.

LEXI

(softly)

Maybe--?

Keira cuts her off, heat rising.

KEIRA

Of course, none of that matters to this yuppie prick. He's just another mini-Madoff. Car crash, bank crash, market crash. They get bailouts. We get stranded in a fucking parking lot.

RORY

Isn't Madoff going to jail?

KEIRA

You're missing the point, Rory. One asshole in jail doesn't mean shit when we lose our home. So what if he got caught?

(sarcastic)

Hip-hip-fucking-hooray.

LEXI

Maybe Obama'll fix it? I mean, he said he would.

KEIRA

Yeah, maybe. But maybe not, too.

Just then, Keira notices a small card lying in the empty spot where the Yuppie's car had been.

Curious, she walks over and picks it up. Her eyes widen.

KEIRA (CONT'D)

Scott Manzi. Junior Analyst. Apollo Financial.

LEXI

(confused)

What?

Keira holds the small card up.

KEIRA

It's his business card.

Lexi and Rory pop up, hurrying over.

RORY
How do you know--?

LEXY
Could be anybody's.

KEIRA
No. It's his. It's gotta be.

RORY
Should we, like, call the cops or something?

KEIRA
(dismissive)
Please. What are they gonna do?

LEXI
They'll do *something*. Which is more than what we can do. Which is *nothing*.

KEIRA
We could do something.

LEXI
(defiant)
Oh come on. Be realistic.

KEIRA
No, you be realistic!

Keira confronts Lexi. Not threatening, but...close.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
We don't have time to wait for insurance to *hypothetically, maybe* pay us out. We're moving in four days and this is the only car we've got. Or, at least, the only one we *had*. It's now or never.

LEXI
You don't think I know that? I'm just trying to--

KEIRA
I know you're trying to help. But you don't know what it's like, Lexi. They haven't taken everything from you like they've done to us.

Keira walks over to the car, kneeling and running her hand over the damage. From her pocket, she pulls out the broken Christmas ornament, a crumpled family photo tucked behind it.

Beat.

KEIRA (CONT'D)

That bastard did this. He pays, tonight.

LEXI

(doubtful)

So, what's your plan? Ding-dong ditch his summer home in the Hamptons? Steal his wallet? Be realistic for once.

Keira stares at the phone number on the card. The idea sets.

EXT. LOWER MANHATTAN SKYLINE - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

Skyscrapers glitter. It's another universe from the half-empty parking lot.

Ring...ring...

INT. BATHROOM, APOLLO FINANCIAL - NIGHT

TESS and MELANIE (late 20s), secretary extraordinaires, lean into the mirror, readying their makeup in prep for the night ahead.

MELANIE

New Year's, and we spend half of it like your average nine-to-five drones.

TESS

I hate to break it to you, Mel, but--

MELANIE

Yeah, yeah. Point taken.

TESS

Relax. New Year's doesn't really start 'til the first drink anyways.

MELANIE

Half the office already bailed.

TESS
The rich half. And in case you forgot...

MELANIE
Ha ha. Thanks for the reminder.

TESS
Just be happy you got any job at all. My neighbor's been on unemployment since Lehman.

MELANIE
The cute one or the so-so one?

TESS
The cute one.

MELANIE
(deadpan)
Damn. That's tragic.

The door swings open.

APOLLO WORKER
Yo Tessie, Scott's phone won't stop ringing.

TESS
Seriously?

Her co-worker shrugs. Tess groans. *Ugh.*

TESS (CONT'D)
Christ, can this year just end already?

MELANIE
T-minus five hours.

Tess trudges for the exit.

TESS
Yeah. Five too many.

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Keira, Lexi, and Rory huddle around Keira's cell on speaker.
Ring...Ring...Ring...Ring...

LEXI
I don't think they're gonna--

TESS (V.O. PHONE)
 Apollo Financial, Scott's office,
 Tess speaking.

They all freeze. Holy shit.

INT. APOLLO FINANCIAL - SAME

Tess flips through *People* magazine, half-listening.

TESS
 Hello?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

Lexi nudges Keira, who quickly covers with a fake cough.

KEIRA
 (New "Yawk" accent)
 Uh-hi! Yeah, sorry. Just-uh...is
 Scott there?

TESS
 He's out. Can I take a--?

KEIRA
 That *dick!*

Lexi drops her head into her arms. Oy vey...

LEXI
 (muffled)
 Oh my god.

TESS
 (thrown)
 ...Excuse me?

KEIRA
 Can you believe this asshole? Hired
 me as his plus-one and didn't even
 bother to send the address? I mean,
 how the hell am I supposed to get
 there? Osmosis?

TESS
 Uh...

KEIRA
 I mean, shit, ideally I'd just say,
 "fuck it," and marathon *The*
Twilight Zone, but in this economy?

Tess blinks. *This can't be real.*

KEIRA (CONT'D)

Hey, you work with him, right? Any chance you know where this party's at?

TESS

Um...I don't know if I--

KEIRA

Come on, rent's due on the fourth. I need the money.

Tess hesitates...then cracks.

TESS

(wary)

I...I heard they were heading out to some place called "Aurora's."

KEIRA

Aurora's?

TESS

Yeah. Some place in the city. I don't know--

KEIRA

Wait, you're not goin'?

TESS

Well, let's just say it's a six-figure type of party, and I'm on a five-figure type of salary.

KEIRA

Ahh, say no more. The more zeroes in the paycheck, the bigger the asshole, right? Hey, you ever watch *The Apprentice*?

TESS

(amused)

Please. You should see the ones I work for.

KEIRA

That bad, huh?

TESS

Yeah. That bad.

KEIRA

Well, I'll make sure to tell 'em
off for ya.

TESS

Yeah, just...just don't get me
fired, 'kay? Rent's due on the
fourth for me too.

KEIRA

Don't worry, no name drops.

TESS

Thanks.

KEIRA

Anytime, Tessie. And Happy New
Year's.

TESS

Yeah, you--

KEIRA

Okay, bye!

Click! Tess stares at the phone, half-smiling.

TESS

(to herself)
Holy shit.

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - SAME

Keira storms toward the theater. Lexi and Rory hustle to keep
up.

RORY

Holy shit, what a performance!

LEXI

The fact you lost the lead in
Grease to Karly Casiani is
criminal.

KEIRA

Right? She totally bribed them!

RORY

Or, and hear me out, you can't
sing.

Keira spins on him, offended.

KEIRA
The hell you talking about?

RORY
Fifteen years under the same roof.
I've got receipts.

Keira scoffs, then belts it out--

KEIRA
Summer lovin' had me a blast!

She's not...*terrible*. Rory still winces.

RORY
(to Lexi)
See what I mean?

KEIRA
Who made you Simon Cowell?

RORY
(British accent)
*You're dreadful. Absolutely
dreadful.*

LEXI
Summer lovin' happened so fast...

RORY
(surprised)
Woah. Since when could you sing?

KEIRA
She always could. Just doesn't like
to show it.

LEXI
(dismissive)
Eh, it's whatever. Anyway,
shouldn't we call your mom?

Keira picks up the pace.

LEXI (CONT'D)
Keira?

Keira ignores her, shoving through the glass doors into--

INT. MOVIE LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Keira scans the lobby.

LEXI
Keir, c'mon. We--

KEIRA
(muttering)
Where the hell is he?

LEXI
What?

Without waiting, Keira pushes to the front of the ticket line, ignoring the protests against her.

KEIRA
Hi! Do you know where Danny is?

TICKET CLERK
Uh, I think he's cleaning one of
the--

That's all Keira needs. She's off like a bullet.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

Earbuds on, Danny slowly sweeps popcorn into a dustpan. He's zoned out, more into his iPod than his actual job.

Keira charges up the aisles and yanks out his earbuds.

DANNY
(startled)
The hell--?

KEIRA
I need your car.

DANNY
Hi to you, too...

LEXI (O.S.)
Car for what?

Lexi and Rory catch up.

KEIRA
Revenge. Eye for an eye. Car for a
car.

LEXI
Isn't a prank call enough?

KEIRA
Is one jailed banker enough?

DANNY
 (confused)
 What's going on?

They ignore him.

KEIRA
 It's our last night together. Don't
 you want it to actually mean
 something? To be something? "One
 last hurrah," remember? Like you
 said.

LEXI
 I never--

DANNY
 Okay, but why my car?

RORY
 Some Wall Street douche totaled
 ours and bailed GTA 4-style.

DANNY
 Damn...

KEIRA
 Listen, we just need a ride to the
 train. After that--

DANNY
 I'm in on one condition.

KEIRA
 This better not involve your dick.

Danny's face goes red, embarrassed.

DANNY
 What? No, I-I--!

KEIRA
 Relax, dude. What is it?

DANNY
 Can I come?

Keira winces. *Ugh.*

DANNY (CONT'D)
 Come on! *The Apartment. When Harry
 Met Sally. New Year's in Manhattan*
 just has this, like, romantic
 pastiche, y'know?

RORY

Yeah. Hey, remember that New Years' we went skating at Rockefeller?

KEIRA

What about it?

RORY

(nostalgic)

I dunno. I just...it was fun.

DANNY

See? *Romantic pastiche*. Even your brother agrees.

Keira studies him.

KEIRA

(sighs)

Fine. Just stop saying "*romantic pastiche*."

Danny throws a mini fist-pump in the air.

DANNY

Meet me out back in ten.

Keira rolls her eyes as Danny jogs off, still kinda red.

RORY

Hey, think we've got time to hit the rink while we're there?

KEIRA

No. We got no time for that BS.

RORY

Fine, whatever. I'm gonna grab some Milk Duds for the road.

KEIRA

Just make it fast.

RORY

(sarcastic)

Aye-aye, captain.

They flip each other off like only siblings can. More playful than hostile. Rory leaves. Keira exhales. Mission: go.

LEXI

Keira?

Keira turns.

LEXI (CONT'D)

Are you really sure about this? I mean, what's the endgame here?

KEIRA

Look, it's not just revenge. We're moving in four days. That car? It's my mom's ride to work, our only way to get food, our only way to do anything. We don't have time for insurance, cops, or...or fucking Batman to fix it. Tonight is it.

Lexi looks down.

KEIRA (CONT'D)

(soft)

And I just want tonight to mean something. Before everything changes. Before I go. One last hurrah, Lex. Together.

Lexi hesitates. And then--

She turns to Keira, saluting her. Keira smiles, saluting back. Something like "**Barely Legal**" by The Strokes starts up.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

Danny's car cuts through the quiet streets of Long Island.

INT. DANNY'S CAR - NIGHT

Keira and the gang look less like revolutionaries and more like the B-team from a canceled Disney Channel pilot.

Riding shotgun, Keira tosses her arm back without looking. Rory shakes a few Milk Duds into her open palm.

EXT. LYNBROOK STATION - NIGHT

The platform buzzes with New Year's energy as groups of tipsy partygoers pregame -- mostly cool looking twenty-somethings.

A high-pitched **squeal** slashes through the chaos as a train barrels toward the station.

EXT. PARKING, LYNBROOK STATION - NIGHT

Danny's car screeches into a parking space.

EXT. STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Keira, Lexi, Rory, and Danny charge up the stairs, racing toward the platform above.

EXT. LYNBROOK STATION - CONTINUOUS

The train rumbles to life. Keira and her friends sprint to the doors and slip inside just as they begin to close.

INT. TRAIN - CONTINUOUS

Keira pushes through the crowded train cars, scanning for any empty seats. Her friends trail behind as curious eyes follow, some amused, some laughing outright.

They're **by far** the youngest there.

RORY
Why are they laughing?

LEXI
Because we look like toddlers.

KEIRA
Yeah, well they look like assholes.

Keira stakes out a spot at the back of the train. Rory slides in beside her, Danny taking the seat on the adjacent side.

LEXI
(to Rory)
Can I sit there?

RORY
Why?

Lexi quickly side-eyes Danny. He's fully locked into his iPod, oblivious.

KEIRA
(playful)
Yeah, Lexi. Why?

LEXI
Just 'cause, okay!

Keira nudges her brother.

KEIRA
Move.

RORY

Jeez...

Rory gets up and squeezes in next to Danny, freeing the seat for Lexi. She sinks into it with a quiet sigh.

The train zooms away. Silence follows. Keira watches the window; Rory and Danny plug into their iPods.

LEXI

(soft)

Hey Keir?

KEIRA

(distracted)

Yeah?

LEXI

Do you...do you remember the first time we met?

KEIRA

Uh...Pre-K, right? Or maybe Kindergarten?

LEXI

It was Pre-K.

KEIRA

That's right. Ms. Jen's class. She hated me.

LEXI

Yeah...

(beat)

But do you actually remember? Like, how it happened?

Keira turns away from the window, trying to recall.

LEXI (CONT'D)

It's okay if not. I mean, we were like four or some shit. Who remembers anything when they're four?

KEIRA

Yeah, true...

(beat)

Do you?

LEXI

Kinda. A little.

KEIRA
 (surprised, ashamed)
 Really?

Lexi nods.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
 How'd it happen?

LEXI
 Katie Kashack stole one of my Pogs
 and you forced her to give it back.
 Told her, and I quote--
 (childish voice)
 "Stop being such a big meany,
 Katie! Those are Lexi's Pogs!"

KEIRA
 Oh my god, Katie Kashack. She was
 such a bitch.

LEXI
 Still is.

They laugh.

LEXI (CONT'D)
 Now, do you remember?

Keira thinks, really trying.

KEIRA
 Yeah...
 (beat)
 Yeah, I think I do.

Lexi smiles softly. Keira turns to the window, catching her own reflection as the train hums through Long Island.

Something super New Yorky like "**New York Groove**" by Ace Frehly starts up.

EXT. TRAIN - MONTAGE - NIGHT

Rosedale. Jamaica. Forest Hills.

With each stop, the skyline sharpens. Nassau fades into Queens. Queens bleeds into Brooklyn. And then, Manhattan.

INT. LIRR TERMINAL, PENN STATION - NIGHT

The train **screeeches** to a halt. Doors hiss open and a score of partygoers flood the platform. Caught in the chaos: Keira, Lexi, Rory, and Danny -- looking *painfully* suburban.

Shoulders slam. No eye contact. No apologies.

RORY

Jesus...

LEXI

God, is it always this...*intimate*?

DANNY

I have a feeling we're not in Garden City anymore.

KEIRA

(sarcastic)

You say that like it's a bad thing.

Keira pulls ahead. They snake their way through the horde, pushed and pulled, until they reach--

INT. ESCALATORS, PENN STATION - CONTINUOUS

They pile in line. It's a slow, shoulder-to-shoulder crawl. Keira flips open her cell -- **9:48pm**. She cranes her neck, eyeing the gridlock above.

DANNY

Damn. Even the Giants parade wasn't this packed.

KEIRA

Once we're off, we run.

LEXI

(confused)

What?

RORY

Oh, hell yeah.

DANNY

Off what?

KEIRA

Just keep up.

DANNY

"Keep up?"

LEXI

The hell are you talking about?

Too late for questions.

INT. CONCOURSE, PENN STATION - CONTINUOUS

Almost immediately, Keira takes off, Rory on her heels.

LEXI

Keira! The hell are you doing?!

KEIRA

Saving time!

Lexi hesitates, jostled by passengers.

DANNY

So-uh, just us then...

Lexi shoots him a nervous look, then bolts after the others. Danny sighs and follows, last one up.

They push through the madness, dodging tourists and bodegas alike. Overhead, announcements blare in a garbled mess of train numbers and track changes.

P.A. ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

...track twenty-three...now
boarding...next departure...

Keira barrels through like a local -- fearless, fast, not giving a shit.

RORY

(to Lexi)

Does she even know where she's
going?

Lexi shrugs, out of breath, as they all charge up--

INT. STAIRS TO 7TH AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

One by one, they run up the stairs, sirens and city noise growing louder with every step out to--

EXT. 7TH AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

Cabs swerve. Horns blare. People scream. Vendors bark. Welcome to Manhattan.

Keira sprints to the curb, arms flailing for a cab. None stop.

KEIRA
 Seriously?!

LEXI
 It's New Year's. What do you expect? A welcome parade?

Keira hikes up her pant leg, *It Happened One Night*-style.

LEXI (CONT'D)
 (mortified)
 Oh my god.

DANNY
 Woah...

Again, nothing. No cab.

KEIRA
 Christ! The hell does it take to get a cab in this city?

RORY
 Amateur. Try not skipping leg day next time.

KEIRA
 Ha ha. Let's see you do better.

Rory scoffs, playing it off.

DANNY
Oh, children. You two need to get out of the suburbs more.

KEIRA
 Oh, and who are you, John Gotti?

DANNY
 Yeah. Now, watch and learn.

Danny steps a little into the street.

DANNY (CONT'D)
 Yo, I--!

A cab **HONKS** violently.

TAXI DRIVER
 Get the fuck off the road, ya schmuck!

Danny flinches, retreating. Keira gives him a mock-consoling pat on the back.

KEIRA
Well hey, at least you got their attention.

DANNY
(dejected)
I guess...

RORY
Hey, there's a cab!

Rory points across the street where passengers spill out of a newly-empty cab.

KEIRA
Come on.

Keira bolts into traffic, Rory and Danny right behind.

LEXI
What are you--?!
(resigned; sighs)
Goddammit...

Lexi hesitates, then hurries after them. They zigzag between cars, swallowed by a symphony of honking.

NEW YORK DRIVERS
Get outta the road!...The fuck you doin'?!...Move! Move!

Just as the cab starts to drive off, Keira opens the door and slides into the--

INT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS

Without warning, Keira goes into her spiel.

KEIRA
Hi there!

CABBIE
(Russian; startled)
What the--?!

Before he can react, Danny and Rory pile in after her.

RORY
We good?

CABBIE
Where did--?!

Lexi squeezes in last, wedging herself next to Rory.

LEXI
Hey.

CABBIE
More of you?!

KEIRA
What took you so long?

LEXI
Oh nothing. Just a near-death
experience.

KEIRA
Cool.
(to cabbie)
Hey, you know where "Aurora's" is?

CABBIE
Aurora's? Which one?

KEIRA
(confused)
What do you mean "Which one?"

CABBIE
Yes. There's two Aurora's. Strip
club Aurora's and big-shot, Wall
Street Aurora's. Personally, I
prefer strip club one.

RORY
Who could blame ya?

KEIRA
Take us to the Wall Street one.

CABBIE
Of course, of course. Why not?
Maybe we pick up entire Yankees
team on the way too?

KEIRA
Like hell. We're Mets fans.

CABBIE
Oh. My condolences.

As the cabbie pulls away, they finally breathe...

EXT. 7TH AVENUE - SAME

The cab disappears into the swarm of taxis. Just another yellow blur in the madness of Manhattan.

MONTAGE - MIDTOWN MANHATTAN

Midtown glitters like a playground for the rich and famous.

LEXI (V.O.)
Everyone looks like they shop at Prada. It's kinda scary.

KEIRA (V.O.)
Well, it beats the bargain bin at Macy's.

DANNY (V.O.)
I'm gonna be rich one day.

Keira scoffs -- half-laugh, half-snort.

DANNY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
What?

KEIRA (V.O.)
C'mon, dude. They wouldn't be caught dead where we're from.

DANNY (V.O.)
Why not?

KEIRA (V.O.)
Please. We're just a rest stop on the way to the Hamptons.

DANNY (V.O.)
Yeah, well--

BEEP! BEEP!

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

The cabbie jams his hand on the horn, snapping everyone back to reality. Keira and the gang look over, startled, pulled away from the parade of the rich and even richer.

CABBIE
Twelve-forty.

Keira, Rory, and Danny fumble through their pockets, pulling out crumpled bills -- mostly ones.

KEIRA
How much you guys got?

DANNY
Two bucks.

KEIRA
I got three.

RORY
I got nothing.

KEIRA
Why'd you have to buy the Milk
Duds?

RORY
I was hungry...

KEIRA
Well, maybe it's time for a fast.
(to Lexi)
How much do you have?

Lexi hesitates, then pulls out a crisp fifty. It's so smooth
it might as well have been ironed.

RORY
(impressed)
Damn.

Danny whistles.

KEIRA
Look at you, Ms. Hilton.
(light)
Must be nice having a rich family.

LEXI
We're middle class.

KEIRA
Oh, right. "Middle class." That's
what they're calling it now.

LEXI
(semi-offended)
What's that supposed to mean?

KEIRA
Oh, relax. Consider it a
compliment.

Lexi gives her a dirty look. **BEEP! BEEP!**

CABBIE
Twelve-fifty now.

Lexi tosses the fifty to the cabbie.

CABBIE (CONT'D)
A fifty! What am I, the Federal Reserve?
(rummaging)
Hold on, I make change. Big moment.

The cabbie scrounges around for change.

RORY
So, what if he's really up there?
What are we gonna do?

KEIRA
Ask for money? I don't know...
(sarcastic)
Maybe I'll just punch him and demand a ransom.

Lexi laughs.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
You wanna tag-team it, Hardy Boyz-style?

Lexi gives her a look that says, *Seriously, dude?*

KEIRA (CONT'D)
I'll take that as a "yes, Keira.
We'll kick his ass together."

LEXI
(dry; sarcastic)
Yes, Keira. We'll kick his ass together.

KEIRA
I knew you'd come around.

Lexi softly smiles. Keira reciprocates.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
What about you, Danny? You got my back?

DANNY
I don't know. I'm sort of a semi-pacifist these days.

KEIRA
Semi-pacifist?

DANNY
Yeah. I'm against violence that
involves me.

KEIRA
Yeah, yeah I know. Thanks for the
back-up, Gandhi.

Lexi laughs.

BEEP! BEEP!

CABBIE
Here.

The cabbie hands over the change to Lexi.

LEXI
Just enough to get home.

CABBIE
Well, it was technically thirteen-
flat, but--
(beat)
New Year's discount. Just don't
tell my accountant.

KEIRA
Thanks, comrade.

CABBIE
No problem. And good luck on
revenge plot. I root for you.

The cabbie salutes as he pulls away. Keira and Lexi exchange
a look -- half conspiratorial, half "what the hell are we
doing."

KEIRA
Alright. Let's find this asshole.

EXT. DOORWAY, HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Keira marches up to the entrance, her friends trailing
behind. Just as she reaches for the door, a SECURITY GUARD
(50s) steps in front of her, blocking the way.

SECURITY GUARD
Can I help you?

KEIRA
 Uh...yeah! We're just-um-uh...

Oh boy. Keira's blanking out.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
 Uh...

LEXI
 (spoiled rich-girl)
 She's with me. My idiot dad forgot
 to give me his credit card and now
 we're stuck with jackshit to do.
 Like, how the hell else are we
 supposed to spend New Year's? Go to
 Queens?

Lexi fake gags.

KEIRA
 Lexi!

LEXI
 What?

KEIRA
 Don't say the "Q-word." Children
 are present.

LEXI
 Oh. Sorry, Rory.

RORY
 (oblivious)
 Huh?

LEXI
 (to Security Guard)
 Anyway, we won't take long. We just
 need--

Lexi steps forward, but the guard blocks her instantly.

SECURITY GUARD
 Yeah, I don't think so.

Welp.

EXT. SIDE ALLEY - NIGHT

A cluster of hotel workers snuff out their cigarettes and
 head back inside through a side door.

BELLHOP (CONT'D)
Do I know you?

KEIRA
(Spanish)
I...I don't speak English. Sorry.

Keira tries to keep rolling, but--

MAID
(Spanish)
I've never seen you before.

KEIRA
Uh...I'm new. First day. Training shift.

MAID
(suspicious)
I see, I see. And what's your name?

KEIRA
Uh...Sofia.

The maid studies her. Keira's heart pounds.

MAID
(softening)
Ah. Well, nice to meet you, Sofia. I'm Carmen.

HOUSEKEEPER
And I'm Lucia.

BELLHOP
Me llamo es Michael. Miguel.

MAID
She knows what Michael means.

Keira smiles awkwardly.

KEIRA
Nice to meet you all. Hey, um...do you know what floor Aurora's on? I'm still kinda lost here.

MAID
Twenty-two.

KEIRA
Twenty-two. Got it. Thanks.

Keira forces a polite smile and rolls past. The maid shakes her head.

MAID

They keep getting younger and younger.

HOUSEKEEPER

Anything to keep wages lower.

BELLHOP

Cheap bastards.

Keira quickens her pace, making a turn for the service elevator.

KEIRA

(under her breath)
Almost there.

LEXI (O.S.)

Thank god.

Keira presses the 'UP' button and waits. **DING!** The doors slide open. She pushes the cart inside.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Keira takes off the worker clothes as Lexi, Rory, and Danny climb out of the laundry cart.

DANNY

(sarcastic)
I'm getting too old for sneaking around in laundry carts...

KEIRA

Thank god I know Spanish.

LEXI

I know. You were like Puerto Rican Kristen Stewart out there.

KEIRA

Me? You were a goddamned savant with that Paris Hilton schtick you pulled. I mean if the doorman wasn't such a dick, we'd already have Manzi begging for mercy by now.

DANNY

Yeah, you surprised me Lexi.

LEXI
 (soft)
 Oh. Thanks.

DANNY
 You know, you kinda remind me of a
 young Audrey Tautou. Maybe I'll use
 you for one of my movies.

LEXI
 Really?

KEIRA
 Who the hell's "*Audrey Tautou*?"

DANNY
 She's French. Don't you watch any
 foreign films?

KEIRA
 Does *Naruto* count?

Danny overthinks this. **DING!** The doors slide open.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

They step out into a quiet hallway lined with a few
 stragglers taking calls away from the party. Muffled laughter
 and clinking glasses echo from the banquet hall ahead.

Keira leads the way, her pace quickening.

LEXI
 So what's the plan?

KEIRA
 Look for the biggest douche here.
 That'll be him.

INT. AURORA'S BANQUET HALL - CONTINUOUS

They enter. It's your usual corporate, New Year's fare.
 Yuppies, trophy wives, and endless trays of mini hot dogs.

DANNY
 You might wanna be more specific.

Keira scans the room, looking left and right for Manzi.

Eyes follow as they weave through the party. In this crowd,
 they stick out more than ever.

LEXI
Uh, Keira? Are you--?

Keira stops in her tracks, eyes locked on the bar ahead.

LEXI (CONT'D)
Keira?

KEIRA
That's him.

Sitting on a stool, back to them, is a young yuppie type, laughing and tossing back drinks with friends.

RORY
How do you know?

The yuppie lets out another laugh, louder and more obnoxious than before.

KEIRA
It's the fucking laugh. Come on.

Keira pushes forward, grabbing a champagne glass off a passing tray. The laughter swells until they're standing just a few feet away.

RORY
(whispers)
What now?

KEIRA
(unsure)
Uh...

LEXI
You don't have to--

Keira debates. Fuck it.

KEIRA
Yo, Manzi! You owe me a new car, asshole!

Keira hurls the drink at Manzi's back. The gaggle of yuppies turn around. Hell, everyone's looking now.

NOT MANZI
(confused)
What?

Keira freezes. It's not him.

RORY

You heard what she said, douchebag!
You smash into our car and think
you can just drive away? Who the
hell do you think you are, Dick
Cheney out for a hunt?

NOT MANZI

What the hell are you talking
about?

RORY

Don't "the hell you talkin' 'bout"
to me! What, you wanna drive back
to Long Island and take a look at
your dirty work first hand?

NOT MANZI

Long Island?

FEMALE YUPPE

Who are these kids?

NOT MANZI

I have no fucking clue.

RORY

Oh, you wanna play stupid, do ya?
Tell 'em, Keira!

Rory turns and points left -- no sign of Keira or Lexi.

RORY (CONT'D)

Uh...

(to Danny)

Where'd she go?

Danny shrugs. Rory turns back at Not Manzi, forcing an
awkward smile. Oops.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Keira looks out the window at the Manhattan skyline. Lexi's
reflection appears beside hers in the glass.

KEIRA

You think those Wall Street CEOs
whip their dicks out when they're
this high up?

LEXI

(confused)

What?

KEIRA

Like, I bet they just stare out at the city and whip it out.

LEXI

Why would they do that?

KEIRA

Because they know we can't do shit about it. It's like, "Hey peasants, thanks for the bailout. Mind if we cop another five hundred bill while we're at it? Oh, and here's our dicks too. Start sucking."

Keira looks down at the streets below. From up here, the people look more like worker ants than actual humans.

KEIRA (CONT'D)

Nothing's gonna change.

Lexi watches Keira, unsure of what to say. Beat.

RORY (O.S.)

Guys, guys!

Rory and Danny burst out of the banquet hall, out of breath.

DANNY

Okay, so--

RORY

So turns out that's not the guy.

KEIRA

No shit.

DANNY

But it's not just that.

LEXI

What are you talking about?

RORY

This ain't even Apollo's party.

KEIRA

What?

DANNY

It's for some marketing company.

KEIRA

Marketing?

RORY
In other words...

DANNY
Manzi's not here.

Keira looks out the window, scanning the skyline.

KEIRA
Of course...

She turns back to them, eyes sharp.

RORY
What?

KEIRA
Where's a twentysomething Wall
Street douche spending New Year's?
Polishing his tie at this Brooks
Brothers snooze-fest, or blowing
lines with Ginger, Jade, and Sky at
a strip club?

DANNY
Wait, you mean--?

RORY
Strip club Aurora's?

KEIRA
He's still out there.

Keira flips open her cell. **10:39pm.**

KEIRA (CONT'D)
And we still got time.

LEXI
But--

KEIRA
But what?

LEXI
"But what?" We have no money, no
clue where this club is, and in
case you forgot, we're all
underage! How the hell are we
supposed to pull this off?

KEIRA
By any means.

LEXI
By any *what*?

KEIRA
You heard me.

LEXI
The hell does that even mean?

KEIRA
Please. Don't play stupid, Lexi.
Not tonight.

LEXI
Then elaborate for me.

KEIRA
Maybe you just don't get it.

LEXI
Get what?

KEIRA
Oh, come on, dude. It's not *your*
house they're taking. It's not *your*
childhood. What are you losing?

LEXI
Does a best friend count?

Uh oh. Keira realizes her mistake.

KEIRA
You know what I meant. It's just
that...I-I can't let him get away
with this. Not like the others.
(beat)
I'm sorry...

Keira takes off, sprinting toward the elevators. Rory and
Danny scramble after her.

DANNY
Wait, Keira! Keira!

KEIRA
What?!

DANNY
There's one more thing!

KEIRA
What is it?!

DING! The elevator doors slide open and a group of security guards step out. Keira, Rory, and Danny freeze.

DANNY

That.

They retreat.

RORY

Where do we go?

Keira scans for an exit. There's nowhere to go. Just then...

THWEEP! Lexi whistles from across the hallway, standing by the door to the stairwell. Keira, Rory, and Danny run to her and all four escape just in time.

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

The four of them race down the stairs. Halfway down, Keira stops on a landing, gasping for air.

The others stop beside her, all panting.

KEIRA

Alright...

She glances up the stairwell. No one's following.

KEIRA (CONT'D)

I think we're good.

She starts to move again, but--

LEXI

Wait.

Keira turns back. The others are slumped against the wall, catching their breath.

LEXI (CONT'D)

Just...just give us a sec, okay?

Keira hesitates, glances at Lexi, who avoids eye contact, then sinks down to rest beside them, quieter now.

KEIRA

So...

(to Danny)

Is this how you imagined it?

DANNY

What do you mean?

KEIRA
 (Danny impression)
The Apartment. When Harry Met Sally. New Year's in Manhattan just has this, like, romantic pastiche, y'know?

DANNY
 Oh...
 (beat)
 Not exactly.

Silence...

Lexi lets out a soft chuckle. Keira smiles and joins in.

DANNY (CONT'D)
 (confused)
 What?

Their laughter grows.

DANNY (CONT'D)
 What's so funny?

He's not helping.

KEIRA
 Y'know, you're paranoia almost makes you cute, Danny.

DANNY
 (blushing)
 Really?

KEIRA
 Well...almost.

Keira and Lexi burst into harder laughter. Danny looks at Rory, confused. *The hell is so funny?*

RORY
 Almost is better than nothing, dude.

Danny thinks over Rory's point.

DANNY
 (hopeful)
 That's true...

Keira and Lexi keep laughing.

EXT. SUBURBAN LONG ISLAND - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

Eerie. Quiet. Dead.

INT. 7-ELEVEN - NIGHT

Lifeless. Soulless. Bland. Welcome to the suburban hell.

Behind the counter's Christina, just as drained and empty as the store itself. Life fucking sucks.

CUSTOMER
Pack of Reds. Thanks.

Christina grabs a pack of Marlboros from the shelf.

CHRISTINA
(tired)
Eight-fifty.

They go through the motions. Money exchanged. Cigarettes bagged. Yada, yada, yada...

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
Thanks. Have a great New Year's.

CUSTOMER
(dismissive)
Yeah, you too.

The customer leaves. Silence settles in.

Christina pulls out her phone and scrolls through her contacts, hovering over Keira's name.

INT. INTERNET CAFE - SAME

Gamers hunch over computers, fingers flying across keyboards like it's nothing. *Click, clack! Click, clack!*

GAMER 1
Tank's down! Pull back, pull back!

GAMER 2
Heal me, damn it! I'm about to die!

Nearby, another gamer smirks.

GAMER 3
D'you see that crit? Epic.

GAMER 4

I need more Mountain Dew! I'm
quota'd out!

Amidst the gaming chaos, Keira sits at a computer with her
friends huddled around her. She's on MapQuest.

RORY

Y'know, I think the iPhone has GPS
now.

KEIRA

Yeah, well, good for Steve Jobs.
I'll stick to MapQuest.

DANNY

My uncle has an iPhone.

RORY

Really? Is he rich?

DANNY

Yeah. He even let me play that fake
beer game once.

KEIRA

D'you get drunk off it?

DANNY

No.

Keira playfully scoffs.

KEIRA

Useless.

DANNY

No, it was cool. It looked like you
were drinking it when you tilted
the phone. Like this.

He mimes drinking with his flip-phone.

KEIRA

You're really pushing the concept
of "kinda cute," Danny.

DANNY

In a good way?

KEIRA

I don't know. Ask Lexi.

RORY
 (sarcastic)
 Touché.

They head for the exit.

Buzz! Keira pulls out her phone. It's her Mom. She hesitates.
 To answer or not answer...

LEXI
 Hey, you good?

KEIRA
 (disoriented)
 Huh?

LEXI
 You okay?

KEIRA
 Yeah, yeah. I'm fine.

Keira slips her phone back into her pocket. They exit.

INT. 7-ELEVEN - SAME

Christina closes her phone. Silence. She straightens as the door **ding** signals a new customer.

EXT. ICE RINK - NIGHT

Christmas lights glitter as skaters twirl and weave across the iconic ice rink. It's New York at its most idyllic.

STREET PREACHER (V.O.)
 Tick, tick, tick, America! The ball
 ain't just dropping on a new year,
 it's dropping on the American
 Dream! 9/11 was the warning. 2008
 is the reckoning. Obama won't save
 you. Your Blackberry won't save
 you. Not even Superman's flying in
 for this one!

Everyone is happy.

EXT. TIME'S SQUARE - NIGHT

The crowd thickens. Confetti cannons primed. The countdown clock glows: **11:00 PM.**

T-minus one hour to go.

STREET PREACHER (V.O.)
 They said if you worked hard, you'd
 make it. White picket fence, two-
 car garage, plasma TV, the whole
 nine yards. Then the banks ate your
 savings, and the bosses said,
 "Sorry, kid. Not this year." If not
 now, then when? If not here, then
 where?

EXT. ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

The STREET PREACHER (30s) stands off the curb, people flowing
 around him like water around a stone.

STREET PREACHER
 (forlorn)
 The party's over, folks. Enjoy the
 crumbs while you still can. Before
 they take over your life like they
 took over your homes. Before they
 take everything from you. It's
 over, folks. It's all over...

No one listens. No one cares. Everyone ignores him as they
 wait for the light to change. Everyone but Rory.

DANNY
 (jokey)
 Give it five years and that might
 be you someday.

KEIRA
 Who you talkin' to?

DANNY
 Who do you think?

KEIRA
 Please. In five years, I'll be long
 gone from this hell.

DANNY
 (dreaming)
 In five years, I'll be in LA.

KEIRA
 Okay, Spielberg...

The light changes, and the masses cross in sync. Rory lags,
 staring at Rockefeller Center instead.

DANNY

I'm not saying I'll be running the place, but maybe I could be like a P.A. or something.

KEIRA

P.A. as in Pennsylvania?

DANNY

No, genius. Production Assistant.

KEIRA

Oh. Right.

LEXI

What do they do?

DANNY

Entry-level shit. Coffee runs, grunt work, schlepping here, schlepping there...

KEIRA

Ah, yes, "schlepping." The modern American Dream.

EXT. SAKS FIFTH AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

Keira, Lexi, and Danny walk briskly down Fifth Avenue. Rory isn't there. The rest don't notice.

DANNY

What about you guys?

LEXI

What do you mean?

KEIRA

Please. We've had it figured out since fourth grade.

LEXI

We have?

KEIRA

Yeah, remember?

LEXI

(thinking)
Uh...

KEIRA

I'll be like one of those cool journalism chicks, y'know? The type who works for the Village Voice or one of those alt papers. Too avantgarde for the Times, but mainstream enough to rent a studio. Somewhere in Tribeca or SoHo or the Village. Big, but not too big.

LEXI

Oh, now I remember.

KEIRA

See?

LEXI

Yeah, and I'll be a writer, right?

KEIRA

Bingo.

LEXI

Half romance, half teen drama. *Twilight* vibes, but y'know...if Bella had a brain.

KEIRA

(like, duh)
Obviously.

LEXI

And we'll drink coffee at the same cafes. Like bohemians in Paris.

KEIRA

Yeah. And whine about our hot boyfriends.

LEXI

Super hot.

KEIRA

Like, *stupid* hot.

DANNY

Like me?

Keira playfully rolls her eyes.

KEIRA

Danny, we're talking reality here. Not fantasy.

DANNY

Harsh...

Lexi laughs.

DANNY (CONT'D)

You guys really mapped this out,
huh?

KEIRA

Fourth grade, dude. While everyone
else was trading Pokémon, we were
plotting world domination.

LEXI

We were visionaries.

KEIRA

Visionaries, dude.

Lexi glances at the Saks window.

LEXI

And I bet you we'll spend our
afternoons in stores like this.

She drifts toward a mannequin in a sleek dress, pressing her
hand against the glass. Keira follows. They reflect.

KEIRA

And museums too.

LEXI

Yeah. And art galleries.

KEIRA

And we'll talk like intellectuals.

DANNY

How do they talk?

KEIRA

(snobbish)
Don't blame me. I voted John Kerry.
Ha, ha, ha!

Lexi laughs. Keira grins. Danny watches, bemused.

LEXI

You think it'll really be like
that?

KEIRA

One day. After this shit's all over. The recession, high school, everything. You'll see.

Keira and Lexi stare at their "future" in silk and sequins. Danny looks over his shoulder. Hmmm...something's off.

DANNY

Hey-uh...where's Rory?

Keira turns. *Shit*. He's gone.

EXT. 5TH AVENUE - NIGHT

Keira, Lexi, and Danny push through the craziness, their voices trying to rise above the increasing chaos.

KEIRA, LEXI, DANNY

Rory! Rory! Rory!

Nothing. No reaction but indifferent shoulder bumps.

KEIRA

Where the hell is he?

DANNY

Does he have a phone?

Keira yanks her phone out and dials. Waits. Nothing.

KEIRA

Oh god.

She runs and climbs onto a nearby concrete planter, scanning the street like a lookout. Crowds, tourists, streetlights... but no Rory.

DANNY

He couldn't have gone far, right?

KEIRA

Oh god.

DANNY

Hey, maybe--?

KEIRA

Oh god.

LEXI

Keira.

KEIRA
 (panicking)
 Oh god, oh god, oh god...

LEXI
 (firm)
 Keira!

Keira looks down.

LEXI (CONT'D)
 (calm)
 Breathe.

She forces a deep breath.

LEXI (CONT'D)
 You know Rory. He's probably holed
 up in some GameStop watching people
 fight over Mario Kart or something.

Keira lets out a shaky half-laugh. She exhales again,
 steadying herself as she steps down from the planter.

KEIRA
 (still a little panicky)
 Yeah...yeah, you're probably right.

DANNY
 Hey, maybe we should split up?

LEXI
 That's a good idea.

KEIRA
 Alright.
 (calming down)
 Okay. Yeah. Let's do that.

LEXI
 First one to find him texts the
 rest. Cool?

Keira nods.

LEXI (CONT'D)
 Alright, let's go.

They scatter, Keira heading one way, Lexi and Danny the
 other, each swallowed by the ever-growing New Years mayhem.

EXT. ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

Keira frantically scans each passing face. Blank stares. Glazed eyes. Each one more indifferent than the next.

STREET PREACHER

They get the bailouts, we pay the bill. It's a class war and we've already lost. So tell me, what's left to fight for? For who? For what? It's all over, folks. It's all over...

The street preacher sinks to his knees, legs buckling like a puppet dropped mid-performance.

STREET PREACHER (CONT'D)

(rambling, unravelling)

There's no point...not anymore.

Keira glances at him, unnerved, but keeps moving. She has to.

EXT. 5TH AVENUE - NIGHT

Lexi and Danny slow near the edge of the crowd, searching in opposite directions.

DANNY

Hey, uh...do I have your number?

LEXI

(blinks)

Huh?

DANNY

For Rory. In case--

LEXI

Oh. Right. Yeah.

DANNY

Yeah...

LEXI

Hold on.

She pulls out her phone. So does he. They awkwardly exchange phones, standing a little too close, not quite looking at each other.

They type. Trade back.

LEXI (CONT'D)
I'll go this way.

DANNY
Cool. I'll go...the other way.

LEXI
Good idea.

DANNY
Yep...

They hesitate, just for a second.

LEXI
(suddenly)
Okay, bye!

DANNY
Bye!

They split, both sneaking a glance back before disappearing into the crowd.

EXT. 50TH STREET - NIGHT

Keira runs, scanning the crowd, eyes darting left-to-right. She yanks out her phone: **11:19pm**.

Everything around her blurs: faces, lights, motion. The world spins faster than she can keep up. Faster and faster until--

EXT. ROCKEFELLER PLAZA - CONTINUOUS

--it stops. Keira stands still, watching skaters glide across the ice. Smooth. Effortless. Like nothing's wrong.

Something in her shifts. She steps into the plaza. As if she suddenly knows where to go. She moves, cutting through the crowd with new purpose. Searching. Scanning. And then...

There he is. Rory, alone at the edge, watching the ice like he's somewhere else entirely. Keira hurries toward him.

KEIRA
(relieved, exacerbated)
Jesus Christ, dude! You can't just-
-!

Before she can finish, Rory wraps his arms around her. He's crying. Keira freezes, caught off guard. *He never does this.*

RORY
It's over, Keira. It's all over.

KEIRA
(confused)
What?

RORY
Everything. Like that guy said.

KEIRA
What guy?

RORY
It's all gonna change now. It's all
gonna change and there's no going
back.

Keira looks out at the rink. Skaters glide. Couples twirl.
Kids wobble. It's pure New York magic.

Without a word spoken, she pulls Rory in closer.

EXT. 5TH AVENUE - NIGHT

Lexi pushes through the chaos, looking anywhere and
everywhere for Rory.

Buzz! Her phone vibrates. She flips it open fast.

LEXI
(frantic)
Keira! Did you--?

KEIRA (V.O. PHONE)
I found him.

LEXI
(relieved)
Thank god! Where are you? I'll--

KEIRA (V.O. PHONE)
Can you give us a sec?

LEXI
Huh?

KEIRA (V.O. PHONE)
We just...we just need a moment.

LEXI
Uh...yeah. Of course.

KEIRA (V.O. PHONE)
Thanks.

LEXI
No prob. I'll call Danny and--

KEIRA (V.O. PHONE)
Wait...

LEXI
What?

Beat.

KEIRA (V.O. PHONE)
How'd you get his number?

Lexi freezes.

EXT. ROCKEFELLER PLAZA - SAME

Keira and Rory approach the skate rental booth.

LEXI (V.O. PHONE)
(stammering)
I-I...I mean, he just...I-I-I don't
know, it just kinda happened and--

Keira smiles, the emotional weight easing just slightly.

KEIRA
(teasing)
You little harlot.

LEXI (V.O. PHONE)
Okay, bye!

Click. Keira closes the phone, smiling.

KEIRA
Ah, young love.

RORY
So awkward. So doomed.

Keira laughs.

KEIRA
Come on. Let's get some skates.

They step up to the booth.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
Hi, can we--?

RENTAL WORKER
Twelve dollars.

KEIRA
Uh...

RENTAL WORKER
Each.

KEIRA
Right. Um...any chance you could
let it slide? Just this once?

RENTAL WORKER
(flat)
Nope. Twelve dollars.

KEIRA
But--

The worker shakes his head.

RORY
It's okay. We don't--

KEIRA
Look around, dude! You're really
charging twelve bucks just so some
hipster couple can play *Disney on
Ice* for half an hour?

RENTAL WORKER
Twelve dollars.

Keira clenches her fists. Dejected, she turns and walks off.
Rory follows.

RORY
A for effort I guess.

KEIRA
New plan. On the count of three, we
hop the rink.

RORY
What?

KEIRA
One. Two...

RORY (CONT'D)
Wait. Wait, Keira, I--!

KEIRA (CONT'D)

Three!

Keira grabs Rory's hand and bolts, dragging him past the rental booth.

KEIRA (CONT'D)

Twelve dollars, my ass!

RENTAL WORKER

Hey!

EXT. ICE RINK - CONTINUOUS

They vault the barrier and land on the ice, barely upright.

Skaters swerve to avoid them as they slip, slide, and stumble forward.

RORY

This is a lot easier with skates on!

KEIRA

(sarcastic)

For twelve dollars, who needs 'em?

They flail like baby deer, clutching each other, shrieking with laughter.

Behind them, a POLICE OFFICER jumps the rail and gives chase.

POLICE OFFICER

(shouting)

Off the ice, now!

He immediately wipes out, falling flat on his back.

POLICE OFFICER (CONT'D)

Ow!

KEIRA

Oh, shit!

RORY

Did he say "ow" or "now?"

KEIRA

Both, I think.

They break into laughter again, but Keira loses her footing and nearly eats it.

KEIRA (CONT'D)

Jesus!

The cop groans, clutching his back as he slides toward them like a busted Zamboni.

POLICE OFFICER
(gritting through it)
Off...the...ice!

KEIRA
Poor guy. I hope his insurance covers.

RORY
(dry)
Or at least knows a good chiropractor.

They try to keep moving, but it's more slipping than skating.

KEIRA
(sarcastic)
Okay, maybe there *is* a reason skates cost twelve dollars!

RORY
No, this is perfect as is.

Keira smiles. To Rory, this is *everything*.

POLICE OFFICER #2 (O.S.)
Get off the ice!

Shit. Another cop.

RORY
You know, we should probably go before the whole precinct shows up.

KEIRA
You sure? I bet we could take on the whole Rangers first line like this.

RORY
You think?

Keira almost slips.

KEIRA
Okay, maybe not the *first* line. But second line? Easy.

Rory smiles.

RORY
Yeah. Easy.

Keira and Rory slip and stumble across the ice, arms flailing like pinwheels.

At the edge, they climb over and take off running.

RORY (CONT'D)
Twelve dollars, my ass!

And onto the streets they go...

EXT. SAKS FIFTH AVENUE - NIGHT

Lexi turns toward the same Saks windows from before. Same mannequins. Same fake smiles.

She catches her own reflection in the glass. Just her. Alone.

DANNY (O.S.)
(out of breath)
Hey.

Lexi turns. Danny jogs up, winded.

LEXI
(shy)
Oh-uh, hi.

DANNY
Any updates?

LEXI
Um, they should be here in like a couple minutes.

DANNY
Damn. Never any time to rest...

LEXI
(amused)
Yeah, I guess not.

Danny leans against the window beside her. Takes out his flip phone. **11:31pm**. Closes it.

DANNY
Twenty-nine minutes 'til the big shebang.

LEXI
How did it go in *When Harry Met Sally*?

DANNY
Oh, I don't wanna spoil it.

LEXI
Oh come on, Danny.
(innocent)
For me.

Puppy eyes. Uh oh. Danny can't resist.

DANNY
Um-uh...well, Billy Crystal runs across Fifth Avenue, right? And as you know, Fifth Avenue can be quite the daunting trek. But *this* guy. Oh man. This guy turns into like the freakin' Flash or some shit. Dude goes from one end of the city to the other in like fifteen minutes.

Lexi smiles.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Anyway, just as the clock ticks midnight, he finds Meg Ryan and professes his love.

LEXI
And they live happily ever after?

DANNY
Pretty much.

LEXI
Huh.
(beat)
That sounds--

DANNY
More romantic than breaking into a strip club to beat up a guy you've never met before?

LEXI
Well, when you put it like that...

They laugh.

DANNY

Still more exciting than my average
New Year's.

LEXI

What do you mean?

DANNY

I mean usually I just spend mine
watching *Twilight Zone* with my dad,
but...I don't know? I guess that's
not so cool.

LEXI

I don't know. Sounds pretty cool to
me.

DANNY

(surprised)

Yeah?

Lexi nods. Danny smiles.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Yeah. Yeah, I guess it is pretty
cool.

Beat.

LEXI

(soft, realizing)

What are we even doing here?

DANNY

What?

LEXI

Tonight. Manzi. It's pointless.

DANNY

Then why bother coming?

LEXI

(doubting herself)

I...I don't know...

Beat. Lexi glances at the window. Her reflection wavers as
Keira and Rory burst into view.

KEIRA

Crisis averted!

Lexi turns to her best friend and smiles. *Keira's why.*

EXT. NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY - NIGHT

Keira and Lexi lead the way, Rory and Danny a few paces behind. Fifth Avenue is a bit quieter here.

LEXI
So what exactly happened back there?

KEIRA
(nonchalant)
Oh, nothing, really.

LEXI
"Nothing, really?"

KEIRA
Just-uh...you know, reminiscing over the good 'ole days.

Lexi laughs.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
What?

LEXI
It's just...I don't know? The way you said "good 'ole days."

KEIRA
What about it?

LEXI
Nothing. Just that you talk like we're ancient or some shit. Like that *Rugrats* spin-off, *All Grown Up*. Are we seventeen or seventy?

KEIRA
The point is we're not kids anymore.

LEXI
That's news to me.

KEIRA
Well, we aren't. Not anymore.

LEXI
According to the state of New York, we are.

KEIRA

I think you'll have better luck on
the escort pages.

Douche #2 grins like she just flirted with him.

WALL STREET DOUCHE #2

(to the others)

Let's go.

(to Keira)

See ya around.

He winks. They shuffle off. Keira's fists are even tighter
now.

LEXI

You good?

Keira stares down the block after them, her knuckles turning
white.

KEIRA

Yeah. Let's just find this bastard.

They push forward into the city.

EXT. TIME'S SQUARE - NIGHT

Time's Square buzzes with last-call euphoria. The clock
ticks...

11:45pm.

EXT. 5TH AVENUE - NIGHT

Crowds ripple down the sidewalks, drunk on countdown energy.
Drunk in other ways too...

DRUNK GUY

Fifteen minutes!

Keira barrels through it all, laser-focused. Obsessed. She's
farther down the street like it's her mission alone.

KEIRA

Come on! We're almost there!

Rory hurries after her. Keira doesn't slow.

RORY

Keira, wait!

Lexi and Danny lag behind, dodging buskers and stumbling drunks. It's harder than it looks.

LEXI
This is insane.

DANNY
(doubting)
Yeah...
(beat)
Hey, maybe you were right?

LEXI
What do you mean?

DANNY
What are we even doing here? Like, what's the point anymore? To get belittled by drunk assholes everywhere we go? Where's the "romantic pastiche" in that?

Good question. Lexi slows, then stops, thinking. *What is the point?*

The crowd erupts around her. A saxophone wails. Drums crash. People yell. People, people, people. *Too. Many. People.*

PSYCHIC (O.S.)
Give me your hand.

Right beneath Lexi, a PSYCHIC BUSKER (50s) sits cross-legged on a small blanket, crystals and tarot cards spread out.

LEXI
(confused)
What?

PSYCHIC
Your hand. Don't you wanna know your future?

Lexi looks down at her, unsettled.

EXT. CROSSWALK - SAME

Keira, Rory, and Danny linger at the curb, waiting for the light to change.

RORY
Hey, where's Lexi?

Keira turns. She counts: Rory. Danny. No Lexi.

KEIRA
 You can't be serious. Not now. Not
 again!

DANNY
 Relax.

Danny points down the block, toward Lexi with the psychic.

DANNY (CONT'D)
 She's there.

Keira stares, thrown.

EXT. 5TH AVENUE - NIGHT

The psychic flips a card for Lexi.

PSYCHIC
 Hmm...

LEXI
 (invested)
 What? What is it?

PSYCHIC
 The Tower.

LEXI
 What's that? What's "The Tower?"

PSYCHIC
 It means change. Sudden change.
 Chaos. Collapse. Something you
 thought was solid isn't anymore.

LEXI
 What do you mean?

PSYCHIC
 You tell me.

Lexi ponders over this.

KEIRA (O.S.)
 What are you doing?!

Lexi looks up as Keira, Rory, and Danny run over to her.

LEXI
 I--

KEIRA

I hope you didn't give her any money. These things are scams, you know.

LEXI

I--

KEIRA

Let's just go. This is pointless.

Pointless. The word hangs in the air.

PSYCHIC

(to Keira)

And for you.

The psychic flips over a card.

PSYCHIC (CONT'D)

Hmm. The Emperor reversed.

KEIRA

(confused)

What...?

PSYCHIC

Authority masks your fragility. Let it slip and all that you love could vanish into nothing.

The psychic **snaps** her fingers!

PSYCHIC (CONT'D)

Poof!

KEIRA

(annoyed)

Oh for god's sake...

Keira grabs Lexi's hand and pulls her up.

KEIRA (CONT'D)

Let's go.

LEXI

But--!

KEIRA

Come on!

Keira sprints back toward the crosswalk. The others linger.

DANNY
Lexi...

LEXI
(unsure)
I can't.

RORY
Can't what?

DANNY
Do you really wanna do this? Be honest.

RORY
(doubting)
I...

KEIRA
Let's go!

They hesitate.

LEXI
(authoritative)
Come on.

Lexi leads the way back to Keira.

EXT. CROSSWALK - CONTINUOUS

At the corner, Keira waits for the lights to change. Behind her, Lexi, Danny, and Rory exchange uneasy glances, like a conversation they're all afraid to start.

DANNY
(soft)
Hey, Keira?

She doesn't look back.

RORY
Keira?

Again, nothing.

LEXI
(authoritative)
Keira.

Keira finally turns.

KEIRA

What?

Lexi debates what to say. And then--

LEXI

We shouldn't--

CRASH! A black sedan **SLAMS** into a delivery truck at the intersection. Horns, screams, shattering glass. Chaos! The two drivers stumble out, shaken and furious.

DRIVER #1

The fuck were you doin'?!

DRIVER #2

The fuck was I doin'?! The fuck were you doin'?!

DRIVER #1

Me?! You ran the light, asshole!

DRIVER #2

Are you outta your goddamn mind?!

They close the distance, yelling louder, hands flying. Traffic snarls. Bystanders freeze. Sirens in the distance.

The lights change.

Ignoring the chaos, Keira darts into the street like it's now or never.

LEXI

Keira, wait!

She doesn't. Lexi, Rory, and Danny hesitate on the curb, caught between the wreckage and what lies ahead.

RORY

What do we do?

LEXI

We have to stop her.

EXT. 33RD STREET - NIGHT

Keira sprints down the block, weaving through late-night stragglers and dodging a delivery bike.

BIKER

Outta the way!

Keira ignores him. She slows as she reaches--

EXT. AURORA'S - CONTINUOUS

Finally.

Aurora's glows like a cheap, neon jewel. A cluster of men linger out front: ruffled suits with loosened ties, laughing too loud, reeking of stale beer. Everything Keira **hates**.

She hesitates, frozen on the curb. *Is this worth it?*

DANNY (O.S.)

Keira!

She glances back. Lexi, Rory, and Danny race toward her.

DANNY (CONT'D)

(out of breath)

Don't--

KEIRA

Don't what? This is why we came, Danny. You knew the deal when you latched on.

DANNY

And then what? Sneak in and punch him? That's the plan?

KEIRA

It's something.

DANNY

It's nothing.

KEIRA

Well, it's better than letting them skate off again! Bush tried that strategy. I won't.

DANNY

But--

KEIRA

But what? If you're bailing, fine. Go home. At least you got one to go to. In case you forgot, me and Rory don't.

Just as Keira turns to go--

RORY
Don't use me like that.

Keira freezes, caught off-guard.

KEIRA
(surprised)
What?

RORY
I'm your brother, not your prop.

KEIRA
I--

RORY
Keira.

She meets his eyes.

RORY (CONT'D)
We need to go home.

KEIRA
We don't *have* a home.

RORY
Yes, we do.

Rory takes Keira's hand. She stands there, torn.

KEIRA
No.

Keira pulls back.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
They took it from us. They took everything. Our home, our car, everything.

LEXI
No, they didn't.

Keira's eyes shift to Lexi.

LEXI (CONT'D)
Not everything.

KEIRA
No. Everything. Including you.

LEXI

What are you talking about? I'm not going anywhere!

KEIRA

Then come with me.

LEXI

No. I'm done feeding this.

KEIRA

What do you mean?

LEXI

I love you, Keira. You're the only real friend I've ever had. You're like the Sasuke to my Naruto and I'm terrified as hell to lose you. But this? Decking Manzi ain't gonna start your revolution.

KEIRA

How do you know? The American Dream's already turned into "work minimum wage and die broke." If anything, we're overdue.

LEXI

(flippant)

And you think this is gonna change that? You're wasting your time.

Keira steps closer, almost crowding her.

KEIRA

You were the one who said "one last hurrah." Well, this is it, Lexi. Now or never. One last hurrah.

LEXI

No, you said that! I just wanted to watch Michael Cera be awkward for two hours. You dragged me here!

Keira scoffs.

LEXI (CONT'D)

(annoyed)

What?

KEIRA

(dismissive)

You never understood. You never will.

LEXI

Don't start that shit again.

KEIRA

Well, it's true, no? Lexi versus Keira? Middle class versus poor? We're America's favorite pastime! Good entertainment while the rich rip off both sides.

LEXI

You know, sometimes you come off just as selfish as the rich douchebags you rail against.

KEIRA

Then why did I waste my life saving your ass all the time? What did I get outta that?

Lexi's fists clench. Keira flinches, instant regret. Rory and Danny hover, silent.

KEIRA (CONT'D)

(apologetic)

I--

LEXI

Don't bother. Apologies lose their luster after the first go around.
(to the others)
Let's go home.

She turns. Danny hesitates, then follows.

RORY

(soft)

I'm sorry.

He goes too. Keira watches them until they vanish. She turns back.

Aurora's waits for her. No one else will.

INT. VIP ROOMS, AURORA'S - NIGHT

A row of dancers grind under flashing lights, sweat and glitter as something like Nelly Furtado's "**Promiscuous**" thumps through the walls, bass rattling.

INT. AURORA'S - NIGHT

Keira slips between clusters of leering suits and glassy-eyed drunks, shoulder-checking anyone who gets too close. It's pure chaos here. Sweat, spilled drinks, drugs abound!

Keira's eyes dart from face to face. Hunting for Manzi.

She sidles up to JODIE (early 20s), mid-dance, as men throw cash like confetti around her.

KEIRA

Hi!

JODIE

(wary)

Uh...hi! Do I know you?

KEIRA

I'm-uh...I'm new here!

Jodie gives her a quick once-over. Definitely not dressed for the job.

KEIRA (CONT'D)

Just turned eighteen.

Jodie's expression softens, amused.

JODIE

That explains it...

KEIRA

Hey, are there any guys from Apollo Financial here tonight? My cousin works there, and I really don't wanna bump into him. He said his office party was--

JODIE

Yeah, big group! Table by the champagne bar.

Keira smiles. *Finally.*

JODIE (CONT'D)

Hey, word to the wise?

KEIRA

Huh?

JODIE

Maybe redo your makeup? You look like you passed through Baghdad to get here. No offense, of course.

Keira feels her face.

KEIRA

Oh. Mind if I--?

JODIE

Back room's that way. Grab some product from my locker if you want. I'm Jodie, by the way.

Keira flashes a grateful smile.

KEIRA

Keira.

Jodie winks, cash spinning through the air like confetti. Keira slips away, pushing past the crowd toward the--

INT. LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Chatter dims as heads spin toward the "newcomer." A few eyes narrow with suspicion, most just indifferent.

KEIRA

Uh, hi. Does anyone know where Jodie's locker is? She said I could--

A stripper, mid-bite off a microwave dinner, points across the room with her fork.

STRIPPER

Second-to-last on the left.

Keira follows the directions down the row.

The locker room is another world from the main club: harsh lights, the smell of takeout, girls reapplying makeup. In other words, reality.

Keira swings open Jodie's locker, grabbing her makeup bag. She walks to a nearby mirror and catches her reflection.

She looks like she's been through hell. In a way, she has.

KEIRA

(surprised)

Jesus.

Without missing a beat, she gets to work.

INT. AURORA'S - NIGHT

A cluster of leery Wall Street bros burst out laughing.

APOLLO BRO #1

Hell no, dude. Scotty's tried with Tess. No dice.

APPOLLO BRO #2

She's cold as ice. I've tried too.

APPOLLO BRO #3

What about Melanie?

APOLLO BRO #1

Different story. She'll give out as long as you can halfway convince you semi-like her.

APPOLLO BRO #3

Sounds like easy pickings.

APPOLLO BRO #2

Take it from me; don't go too hard.

APPOLLO BRO #3

Why not?

APPOLLO BRO #2

Mel's a very risky commodity.

APPOLLO BRO #4

Yeah. The CDO's of the female sex.

APPOLLO BRO #3

What do you mean?

APOLLO BRO #1

She's clingy. Too convincing and she might start thinking it's a real relationship.

APPOLLO BRO #3

With her body, I'll take the risk.

They all laugh.

KEIRA (O.S.)

Hey, boys.

The gaggle of Wall Street bros stare up at Keira, now radiating goth princess energy. Oh, the wonders of makeup...

KEIRA (CONT'D)

Whatcha up to?

They're enthralled.

APOLLO BRO #1

Hello, hello. And who are you?

KEIRA

Depends on who you want me to be.

The Apollo bros trade smirks, their laughter low and obnoxious. They like where this is going...

APPOLLO BRO #1

I like you just the way you are,
honey.

They laugh again. Keira's fists tighten, fighting the urge not to punch every single one of them.

KEIRA

(innocent)

Hey, do you boys know a Scott
Manzi?

APPOLLO BRO #4

Scotty?

APPOLLO BRO #3

Yeah, we know him. He's around here
somewhere.

APPOLLO BRO #1

(playful)

Why do you need Scotty? Ain't we
enough?

KEIRA

Oh, you're plenty. But Scott gave a
little extra gratitude, if you
catch my drift...

APPOLLO BRO #2

(joking)

Damn, that cheap bastard must've
really caught jailbait fever...

Apollo Bro #1 ogles over Keira.

APOLLO BRO #1
Can you blame him?

KEIRA
I'd hate to leave him hanging.

The Apollo bros laugh.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
If you see him, tell him I'll be in
curtain number two upstairs. And
hey, if he cowards out, maybe one
of you can come up instead?

APOLLO BRO #1
I like the sound of that.

KEIRA
(playful)
But it'll have to cost ya.

Keira winks, pivoting toward the stairs. She threads through
strippers and slack-jawed patrons, slipping behind--

INT. VIP ROOM, AURORA'S - CONTINUOUS

Keira sinks into a sagging faux-velvet couch. The curtain
sways faintly in the bass-heavy air. Flipping open her cell:
11:59pm. One minute to midnight.

Fingers curl into fists. Keira stares at that curtain like
she could punch right through it.

CROWD (O.S.)
Ten!

She exhales.

CROWD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Nine!

Her nails bite her palms.

CROWD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Eight! Seven!

A bead of sweat crawls down her head.

CROWD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Six!

A shadow slides across the curtain.

CROWD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Five! Four!

Her fists tighten, heartbeat racing.

CROWD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Three!

The shadow stops.

CROWD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Two!

A hand grips the curtain.

CROWD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
One!

The curtain opens. Keira surges forward and **cracks** SCOTT MANZI (30s) straight across the jaw.

SCOTT MANZI CROWD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Ow! Happy New Year!

SCOTT MANZI (CONT'D)
The hell?!

KEIRA
Who are you?!

Manzi stumbles back, rubbing his jaw. Definitely not the guy who totaled her car.

SCOTT MANZI
Is this a joke or some shit?!

KEIRA
You're not him. Where's Scott?

SCOTT MANZI
The hell you talkin' 'bout? I *am* Scott.

KEIRA
(thrown)
...Manzi?

SCOTT MANZI
How do you know my name? Did those idiots out there put you up to this? How much did they pay you?

KEIRA
 (unravelling)
 But the mall...Garden City...how--?

SCOTT MANZI
 Wait, how do you know where my
 parents live? Are you stalking me?

Keira just stares. It's not him. It never was. None of it
 mattered. Pointless. All pointless.

Keira pushes past him--

SCOTT MANZI (CONT'D)
 Hey, I could sue you for this!

INT. AURORA'S - CONTINUOUS

Keira barrels down the stairs, weaving through the crush of
 celebrating revelers. Glitter and champagne spray have never
 felt more repulsive.

APOLLO BRO #1
 Hey, where you goin'?

He steps in her path, reaching for her arm. Keira shoves him
 away, plowing through the crowd toward the door. *Fuck this!*

EXT. AURORA'S - CONTINUOUS

Keira storms outside. Fireworks rip across the sky, booming
 like distant bombs. She doesn't look up. *Who cares?*

To her, it's just noise. Empty. Pointless. All she can do is
 run. Run and run and run...

EXT. 5TH AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

And she runs until the weight of it all stops her cold.

She turns in place. The city spins around her: fireworks,
 shouting, horns, strangers. It's too much.

KEIRA
 Pointless.

Her knees buckle. She drops to the pavement, yanking out her
 phone.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
 All pointless.

Keira scrolls down her contacts. Two names: **LEXI...MOM**. She clicks Lexi. *Ring...ring...ring...*

LEXI (V.O. VOICEMAIL)
Hey, it's Lexi. If this is Keira, stop being so overdramatic and text me. If it's anyone else...leave a message, I guess.

KEIRA
Pointless, pointless, pointless.

She calls again. *Ring...ring...ring...*

LEXI (V.O. VOICEMAIL)
Hey, it's Lexi. If this is Keira, stop being so overdramatic and text me. If it's anyone else...leave a message, I guess.

KEIRA
(to herself)
You wasted it. You wasted it for nothing. For nobody.

Again. *Ring...ring...ring...*

LEXI (V.O. VOICEMAIL)
Hey, it's Lexi. If this is Keira, stop being so overdramatic and--

Fighting tears, Keira snaps the phone shut. No one stops. No one cares. She flips the phone open again. *Ring...ring...*

CHRISTINA (V.O. PHONE)
Hello?

Keira freezes.

CHRISTINA (V.O. PHONE) (CONT'D)
Hello? Keira?

KEIRA
(lost for words)
Mom, I-I...

CHRISTINA (V.O. PHONE)
(concerned)
Is everything alright?
(beat)
Keira?

EXT. LOWER MANHATTAN SKYLINE - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

The night sky bursts with color. Goodbye 2008. Hello 2009...

EXT. FOUNTAIN, BRYANT PARK - NIGHT

The park is quiet, save for a few drunken stragglers.

Keira's slumped against the Bryant Park Fountain, phone open in her lap: **2:39am**. She snaps it shut and pulls her coat tighter, burying herself in the fabric. Beat.

CHRISTINA (O.S.)

Keira.

She looks up. Christina stands a few feet away, her hand out. Keira springs to her feet and embraces her mom like the lost, little girl she's been pretending not to be.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

(soothing)

It's okay.

Keira clings, body trembling. Crying. In her hands, the family photo once tucked inside the Christmas ornament.

KEIRA

I'm scared.

CHRISTINA

I know. I am too.

Christina gently strokes her daughter's hair.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

But we'll get through this.

Keira meets her eyes. Christina smiles warmly.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

We just gotta stick together.

A small, hopeful smile breaks across Keira's face.

Something like "**New York, I Love You**" by LCD Soundsystem starts up.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

Keira leans against the back car window. She watches as the city lights fade into darkness. Her eyes flutter, barely able to stay open. And then...

BLACK.

EXT. KEIRA'S HOUSE - DAY

A lone moving truck sits parked outside. The quiet before the storm. Closer and closer to endgame.

SUPER: LONG ISLAND, JANUARY 3, 2009, 8:48 AM, MOVING DAY

INT. KEIRA'S HOUSE - MONTAGE - DAY

A slow, quiet montage unfolds:

- The empty living room, sunlight slanting across bare floors.
- The kitchen, still and silent, counters wiped clean.
- Rory's empty bedroom, the bed stripped bare, posters gone.
- Christina's bedroom, stripped down to walls and windows.
- Keira's room. Keira, Rory, and Christina hoist the last three boxes, carrying them in unison out the door.
- Rory struggles with a particularly large, heavy box. Keira looks over, then gently switches her smaller box for his.

EXT. KEIRA'S HOUSE - DAY

Together, they load the last boxes into the back of beat-up rental truck. Keira slams the door shut with finality.

They stand there, the weight of "done" settling over them.

RORY
(soft, a little lost)
So...what now?

Beat. Good question.

CHRISTINA
We still got a few hours. Maybe--?

KEIRA
No. Let's just get out of here
before they do it for us.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

The rental truck rumbles down the empty, morning streets.

INT. RENTAL TRUCK - SAME

Christina drives, steady but tired. Keira rides shotgun, hollow-eyed. Rory stares out the back window, watching house after house disappear. Beat.

BEEP! BEEP!

Christina looks into the rearview mirror.

BEEP! BEEP!

CHRISTINA
(confused)
The hell--?

BEEP! BEEP!

In the side mirror, a battered car weaves up behind them before darting into the next lane. Horns blaring.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
(under her breath)
Oh, perfect...

The driver leans across the seat, pounding the horn again.

RORY
Hey, is that--?

Keira squints.

KEIRA
Danny?

CHRISTINA
Wait, you *know* this maniac?

Danny waves wildly through his open window, mouthing "DOWN!" Keira hesitates, then cranks her window.

KEIRA
What the hell are you doing?!

DANNY
Pull over!

A delivery van blasts its horn as it zips past him.

KEIRA
What?!

DANNY
Pull over!

KEIRA
Why?!

Danny leans across the passenger seat, waving something out the window. It's a DVD case.

DANNY
I got a going-away present for ya!

Keira smiles softly.

EXT. SHOULDER, SUBURBAN STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Both vehicles ease onto the shoulder. Keira hops down from the truck and jogs to Danny's window.

KEIRA
This better be worth it, dude...

Danny hands her the DVD, sleeve scrawled in thick Sharpie: **NICK AND NORAH.**

KEIRA (CONT'D)
No way...

DANNY
High-quality bootleg. My specialty.

KEIRA
(sarcastic)
Since when did you turn to a life of crime?

DANNY
What can I say? I'm more than meets the eye.

Keira smiles.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Enjoy Michael Cera's awkwardness in full 240p glory. Oh, and maybe friend me back on Facebook? It's been pending for weeks now...

Keira grins, tucking the case under her arm.

KEIRA
 (sarcastic)
 Yeah. I'll think about it.

Danny smiles.

DANNY
 See ya, Keira. It's been fun.

KEIRA
 Yeah. See ya, Danny.

Danny winks, then pulls away into traffic. Keira watches him go, then heads back to the truck.

INT. RENTAL TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Christina fires up the engine. Keira drops into the seat, staring at the DVD.

RORY
 What is it?

KEIRA
 A movie.

RORY
 Of course it is. That dude's
 obsessed.

CHRISTINA
 Which movie?

KEIRA
Nick and Norah.

RORY
 The one we were gonna see with
 Lexi?

KEIRA
 Yeah...

Christina eyes her daughter. Keira just stares at the case, lost in her own world.

CHRISTINA
 Hey, you hungry, Rory?

RORY
 You kidding? Of course I am.

CHRISTINA

Cool. We just gotta make one stop first.

Christina swings the truck into a slow U-turn.

INT. LEXI'S ROOM - DAY

In bed, under her blanket, we hear Lexi type away. *Click, clack! Click, clack!*

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYM - NIGHT (FANFIC)

Teen boys and girls gracefully waltz inside a high school gym.

Secluded on the bleachers, Lexi watches like it's a ballet. She's alone, just watching.

Sighing, she closes her eyes.

EDWARD (O.S.)

Lexi?

Lexi opens her eyes to find EDWARD (17) standing below. He embodies her every imagination. Pale skin. Golden eyes. Bronze hair. In other words, perfect.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

Would you like to dance?

Lexi smiles. Like Cinderella descending the stairs, she lets him lead her down onto the dance floor.

The lights dim as they begin to dance. For the first time in her life, Lexi is the center of the universe.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

Is it everything you imagined it'd be?

LEXI

Everything and more.

EDWARD

Good. You deserve it.

Time stalls. He leans in for a kiss--

LEXI

Wait!

Edward stops just shy at Lexi's lips.

LEXI (CONT'D)
Smile for me.

EDWARD
What? Why?

LEXI
Because I'm the writer. That's why.

Can't argue with that! Edward obliges. And sure enough, two vampire fangs jut out. The glory of fanfic!

LEXI (CONT'D)
Perfect.

Kiss scene take two! Edward moves in. Lexi moves in. And just as their lips meet--

Knock! Knock! Knock!

INT. LEXI'S ROOM - DAY

Lexi pops up from her blanket fortress, knees tucked to her chest, laptop perched like a shield. Her eyes narrow at the sound of the knocking.

LEXI
Jesus, dad! Didn't I tell you not to--?!

The door opens with a slow, hesitant creak. Not Dad. It's Keira. Lexi freezes mid-keystroke.

KEIRA
Hi.

Lexi gives a non-committal hum, eyes back on her screen. She types. *Click, clack! Click, clack!*

KEIRA (CONT'D)
Fanfic?

LEXI
If you're expecting a vampire boyfriend, sorry, but you were killed off in the last chapter.

KEIRA
Fair enough.

LEXI
 (typing)
 What do you want?

KEIRA
 I want to give you something.

Lexi barely glances up.

LEXI
 (dismissive)
 Yeah, what?

Keira walks over and sets the DVD right on the keyboard. The screen blinks. Lexi stares at the case. Then at Keira.

KEIRA
 Figured you'd want to see it finally. Free of charge.

LEXI
 (surprised)
 How'd you--?

KEIRA
 Danny gave it to me.

LEXI
 Told you he was cute.

KEIRA
 Yeah.
 (beat)
Kinda.

That gets the faintest smile from Lexi.

KEIRA (CONT'D)
 He asked you out, didn't he?

Lexi shrugs. Keira shoots her a playful look. A beat, a smile. They both know...*this is it.*

KEIRA (CONT'D)
 Well...I guess I'll leave you to it.
 (melancholic)
 See ya around, Lex.

LEXI
 Yeah...
 (wistful)
 See you around.

Just as Keira turns to go--

LEXI (CONT'D)

Wait.

Keira turns back.

LEXI (CONT'D)

How much time you got?

KEIRA

A few hours. Why?

Lexi hesitates, fingers tightening around the edge of her blanket.

LEXI

You down for one last hurrah?

Keira smiles.

INT. BASEMENT, LEXI'S HOUSE - DAY

The curtains are drawn. Blankets are piled high on the couch. Popcorn bowl dead center, candy wrappers like confetti.

LEXI

Don't scratch it. Bootlegs are like cheap condoms. They break easy.

KEIRA

Relax, I've been handling discs since the Napster days.

Keira slides the DVD into the PS2 with surgeon-like care, then flops down beside Lexi.

Lexi tugs the blanket over both of them as the TV flickers to life, opening credits rolling.

KEIRA (CONT'D)

So...

LEXI

What?

KEIRA

Am I still dead in your fanfic?

LEXI

(considering)

Hmm...

Lexi rubs her chin, mocking Keira's question.

LEXI (CONT'D)

Maybe.

KEIRA

Oh, come on, dude.

LEXI

Well...

(beat)

I guess a vampire mage could bring you back to life in the next chapter or something...

KEIRA

You just want me back so you can kill me off again, don't ya?

LEXI

(sincere)

Hey, what are friends for?

Keira smiles. For the first time in days, Lexi smiles too. Two best friends. Side by side. Together. Forever. Always.

Something like "**Kids**" by MGMT kicks in as we smash to--

THE END.