

BLUR

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OPEN ON:

A **DOORWAY**. Total blackness beyond it. Everything's still.

After several seconds A YOUNG MAN (20s) emerges from the dark. He's STUNNING. The grace of a dancer. The body of adonis. The package of a porn star.

We know this because he's NAKED.

He takes a step inside and stops in his tracks.

A YOUNG WOMAN (20s), just as beautiful and just as naked, stands in the center of the room.

They lock eyes.

CUT TO BLACK.

The green acid burn of an **AFTERIMAGE** hangs in the air. Pulsing before our eyes. Strange and beautiful.

BACK TO THE SCENE.

The COUPLE have closed the distance. Standing before one another with perfect posture.

CUT TO BLACK.

Another **AFTERIMAGE** somersaults in the empty space. Their outlines popping and fizzing before the ghost recedes.

BACK TO THE SCENE.

The woman slowly extends her hand, taking him by the wrist.

AFTERIMAGE

She never breaks eye contact as she lifts his hand to her mouth. We hear the slick pop of saliva with INTENSE CLARITY AND VOLUME as she rolls his fingers in her mouth.

AFTERIMAGE

She guides his hand downwards. Slowly passing her breasts. Her perfect abdomen. Descending towards her pubic hair which rises up from the bottom of the frame.

AFTERIMAGE

A small exhale escapes her lips, yet we experience it like the RUSH OF A SUBWAY CAR. Her eyes bulge as she SLIDES HIS FINGERS INSIDE HER.

AFTERIMAGE

We're on the young man's eyes as they slowly rim closed. Surrendering to it. The shiver down his spine. The frisson.

THIS IS UNLIKE ANY SEX YOU'VE EVER HAD.

And as she covers his eyes with a BLINDFOLD, we--

CUT TO BLACK.

AFTERIMAGE. Her outline floats in the dark like an ink blot test. Then from the black, our title slowly resolves:

b l u R

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIAM & AMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

We find ourselves in the mundanity of an apartment. No rock hard bodies, or phantom imagery. We're in the REAL WORLD now. Filled with compromise, strange smells and imperfect people.

Like **LIAM (29)**.

He's hunched over, glasses slipping as he impotently clicks at a long-reach BBQ lighter. He's got a nervous demeanor about him. Real tight in the shoulders.

As he struggles--

VOICE (O.S.)
What are you doing?

AMY (29), his girlfriend, appears in the cramped kitchenette.

AMY
You seriously want to light
candles? You're a freak.
(kisses him on the cheek)
Relax.

She gently takes the lighter, puts it in a drawer and crosses off. Liam calls out after her--

LIAM
You almost ready?

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Amy does her makeup in the mirror. She's exceedingly cute. That wholesome look that emboldens shy guys in bars.

She puts down her brush. Stretching out a small tangle of wrinkles by her eyes. Minuscule to us. Not so to her. She lets out a dissatisfied sigh. PRELAP the BZZZZ of a DOORBELL.

INT. DINING ROOM / KITCHENETTE - NIGHT

The front door swings open revealing **BOBBY** (29), smiling big, standing with his arms wide open.

BOBBY
This fucking guy.

Bobby yanks Liam in for a hug. He's a fun guy. A great hang. But beneath the boyish grin there's a restlessness about him. Like he's always looking for a better party to go to.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Aren't you a sight for sore eyes.
Lemme just drink you in for sec--

LIAM
(laughing, untangling)
Alright. Alright. It's good to see
you too. And this must be Lydia.

From the doorway emerges **LYDIA** (29), Bobby's girlfriend.

LYDIA
Liam. Great to finally meet you.

Liam doesn't nail the greeting, fumbling through an awkward half-hug. As they release we get our first good look at her:

She's stunning. Graceful. Sleek. Radiating easy confidence. Like someone who's used to business lunches and shaking hands. Liam's practically stunned. Then, recovering--

LIAM
Lemme grab your coat.

INT. DINING ROOM / KITCHENETTE - NIGHT

Bobby searches for music on Liam's LAPTOP. Clicking through tab after tab on his messy internet browser. Meanwhile, Liam shuttles food to the kitchen table, where the ladies now sit.

Their apartment's been decorated with care. Pinterest stylings classing up cheap Ikea staples. An attempt to pull off an aesthetic they can't quite afford.

Lydia speaks. Recounting their story for the umpteenth time.

LYDIA

We had been on-again, off-again while I was in grad school in San Francisco, and when he moved back here, I think we both figured that was the end of it. But then this transfer opportunity came up at work, and we figured why not give it a shot?

BOBBY

You shoulda seen these texts I was sending her. They belong in a museum.

LIAM

The Museum of Desperate Men?

LYDIA

Exactly.

BOBBY

Dude, they would fill the walls.

They all laugh. Relaxing now. Opening nerves fading away.

INT. DINING ROOM / KITCHENETTE - NIGHT

MINUTES LATER. Twelve dollar RED WINE pools in mismatched wine stems. Bobby holds court, pouring for the table.

BOBBY

I wanna propose a toast. To all my people *finally* in the same place. For me, this is a dream come true.

Before he can pour the last stem, Amy blocks her glass.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

What? You don't want?

AMY

No, I'm good.

BOBBY

You sure? You don't want a beer or something for the toast?

A hint of panic flashes across Amy's face as Bobby pushes. Lydia bounces a look off Bobby's forehead. Amy notices it. Before things get awkward--

AMY
I'm fine. Really. It's nothing.
Nothing bad, I'm just trying this
thing out. Like a sober month type
of deal. But please, go, go, go--

LYDIA
That's awesome.

BOBBY
That's interesting to think about.
Like, if I didn't drink, would I
have abs? Would that be a thing?

LIAM
(laughing)
No. Definitely not.

BOBBY
No dude, I think I probably would--

LYDIA
(to Amy)
Well I think that's awesome, Amy.
Like kickass. And brave. I'm
already proud of you.

AMY
Well it's only been a few days so
don't celebrate me too hard.

LYDIA
(raising her glass)
Oh come on. To Amy!

They all cheers. Good vibes flowing in the warm atmosphere.
From here we JUMPCUT between several SNAPSHOTTS OF THE NIGHT:

[Empty wine bottles and purple teeth accumulating throughout]

BOBBY
It was our first week in the dorms.
I come home one night, and I catch
Liam, *hunched over like this*, pubes
everywhere. I almost transferred.

Liam winces, embarrassed, as we CUT TO another snapshot--

Liam and Amy's fingers are interlaced. Liam's mid-story--

LIAM
Sophomore year was "Wild Amy."
(to Bobby)
You remember wild Amy? When she was
on the dance floor no man, woman,
or child was safe. If you were in
the vicinity, you were getting
grinded.

Amy laughs. Grinding in her chair. *She's still got it.*

CUT TO another snapshot--

LYDIA
Honestly. We could've just eaten a
four course meal. Apps. Mains.
Lobster. Whatever. But if there's
like *anything* left on my plate --
the second I turn my head -- he
pops it in his mouth. Gone.
(she shakes her head,
exasperated)
What's wrong with you?

Bobby shrugs. Popping food into his mouth. Lydia eye-rolls.

CUT TO another snapshot--

Bobby is hunched over LIAM'S LAPTOP. Clicking away at it.

BOBBY
(drunk)
Jesus man, how many tabs do you
have open?? Okay -- here it is --

Bobby opens YOUTUBE. A hip-hop instructional video plays.
Liam, Amy, and Bobby crowd around the screen. Trying to learn
this dance. Bobby makes the first attempt. Drunk and clumsy.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Is it like this? Am I doing it?

Lydia covers her face. Ashamed. Amy laughs, hugging Lydia.
Then, Bobby trips and FALLS. The room erupts in laughter.

PRELAP the high-pitched wheeze of an AEROBED MOTOR.

LYDIA (O.S.)
You're sure this isn't weird?

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Liam blows up an inflatable mattress on the living room floor. Bobby's already laying on top of it. Half passed out.

LIAM

Are you kidding? Not at all. You're not gonna drag him all the way across town like this.

BOBBY

(groaning)

I can't go in a car right now...

LIAM

It's fine. We'll get food in the morning. It'll be fun.

(then)

You got everything you need?

LYDIA

Yes. Thank you guys. For everything. This was great.

LIAM

Our pleasure.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Liam enters and closes the door behind him. Amy is getting ready for bed, rubbing lotion on her arms. She whispers, so as not to be heard through paper-thin walls.

AMY

How is he?

LIAM

He'll be fine.

AMY

Is he gonna barf?

LIAM

Fifty-fifty.

(off her look)

Kidding. Kidding.

Liam climbs into bed next to her. Pulling her into his arms.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Did you have fun tonight?

AMY

Yeah. It was great. We did such a
good job.

(then)

I really like her.

LIAM

Yeah she's great. She seems to have
her shit together.

AMY

Unlike the last girl. Or the girl
before that.

LIAM

Or the girl before that.

(cuddling closer, then)

God, I'm so lucky.

She turns, touching his cheek. Looking him in the eyes.

AMY

Me too.

They kiss. We feel the warmth of their connection in the
shallow glow of the bedside lamp. Then she CLICKS IT OFF.

COMPLETE BLACKNESS for a beat before giggling, whispers and
clumsy plastic fumbling spill in through the thin walls.

LIAM

No...

AMY

They wouldn't, would they?

LIAM

(after a beat)

Are you fucking kidding me...

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

THE NEXT MORNING. The place is a wreck. Our characters look
even worse. Bobby and Lydia sleep on the floor. Clammy skin.
Puffy faces. Today already sucks and it isn't even 10 AM.

Amy appears, shaking Bobby awake.

AMY

Hey. Wake up.

INT. DELI - DAY

A disgusting amount of CREAM CHEESE slides across the counter top. Bobby stares at it like a heroin addict.

BOBBY
Oh fuck yeah.

Bobby stuffs the containers in a bag with napkins, Splenda. Over his shoulder, a TV plays a MORNING TALK SHOW on mute. Professional hosts laugh and shmooze. Fake tans. Big smiles.

Bobby glances up at it.

The crawl on the bottom reads: **TRYST VR SET FOR U.S. RELEASE.**

AMY (O.S.)
You ready?

Amy appears from behind him. She snaps up the sweating bag of bagels, and makes for the door.

After they exit, we linger on the TV. The host dons VR headgear, reacting wildly, swatting at the air. As her cohosts howl with laughter we PRELAP:

BOBBY (O.S.)
What's it been now? Six years?

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Amy and Bobby walk home, breath steaming in the morning cold.

AMY
Seven.

BOBBY
Wow.

AMY
Yep.

BOBBY
That's crazy.

AMY
I know. We're getting older.

BOBBY
No.

AMY
What do you mean, 'no'?

BOBBY
I mean no. Not really.

AMY
It's how time works, Bobby.

BOBBY
Ehh. You're not as old as you think
you are, Aim.

A pause. We realize they're walking slowly. Body geography suggesting a closeness we may not have picked up on before. Bobby cracks a smile. Amy side-eyes him.

AMY
What?

BOBBY
Nothing.

AMY
What?

BOBBY
If it's been seven years with you
and Liam, that means that our
little thing was--
(mental math)
Seven and a couple months ago?

AMY
Oh God, Bobby.

BOBBY
What?

AMY
To call that a '*thing*' is a gross
mischaracterization.

BOBBY
What would you call it?

AMY
College.

BOBBY
Okay fine. But whatever it was -- I
remember it being fun. You remember
different?
(off her silence)
Must be that old lady memory of
yours. Maybe you are as old as you
say.
(MORE)

BOBBY (CONT'D)

(then)

Anyway -- I'm happy we ended when we did. You and Liam are perfect together. I'm so happy for you two.

Amy glances up, searching his face, finding sincerity. She nods 'thanks.' They continue on for a couple steps before--

AMY

(re: Lydia)

You know she's great, right?

BOBBY

Yeah, I know.

AMY

Don't fuck it up, okay?

BOBBY

Right.

A beat. He throws his arm around her. She leans into him. They walk like this in comfortable quiet. Sharing a moment.

INT. DINING ROOM / KITCHENETTE - DAY

Liam exits the bedroom to find Lydia tidying up. She looks out of place and overdressed in last night's clothes.

LIAM

Morning. How we feeling?

LYDIA

Like I need to shower. Would it be--

LIAM

It wouldn't be weird. You can borrow whatever from Amy. She won't care.

LYDIA

Thanks. Again.

Liam waves her off, as she crosses over to her purse. Digging around in it. Liam notices her phone on the kitchen table.

LIAM

You mind if I use your phone? I need to call mine. Can't find it.

LYDIA

Yeah of course.

Liam unlocks the phone and reacts, seeing himself in the REVERSED CAMERA. He subtly shakes his head. Eyebrows arching. Lydia clocks the reaction from across the room.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
What?

LIAM
Camera's in selfie mode.

LYDIA
And?

Caught, Liam tries to play off his reaction. Acting casual. This only makes him look *more* condescending. Lydia considers him for a beat.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
Don't take a lot of selfies, Liam?

LIAM
Just not my thing, I guess.

LYDIA
No? Why's that you think? Lemme ask
you: do you dance much at parties?
Sing karaoke at the bar?
(intuiting)
No?

Liam shifts, uncomfortable.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
Just cause you *can't*, doesn't mean
I shouldn't.

Liam's DUMFOUNDED. He looks like a Middle-schooler who just got pantsed. Lydia collects the last couple things from her purse and approaches the table.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
Towels?

LIAM
They're in there.

Lydia walks off. The sound of feet disappearing down the hallway. Moments later a door shuts and the shower hisses on.

Liam stays seated. Collecting himself. Watching as steam whispers out from underneath the bathroom door.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. EDITING BAY - DAY

Liam's in the dark. Blue light reflected in his glasses as he sits in front of a LARGE MONITOR. Images jitter past as he scrubs through the timeline of his EDITING SOFTWARE.

His face is slack. He looks totally under-stimulated. He takes off his glasses, pinching the strain they left behind.

INT. POST PRODUCTION FACILITY - DAY

Liam exits his editing bay into the common area of a POST HOUSE. Coworkers mill about, chatting. Liam mumbles hello as he walks past them towards the water cooler.

As he fills his Nalgene, Liam notices a DELIVERY MAN wheeling in a hand truck filled with electronics. Boxing reads TRYST.

LIAM

What's that?

COWORKER

New VR. Lab got some demos.

LIAM

Is it that teleporter thing?

COWORKER

Nah. It's the sexy kind...

The coworkers giggle. Liam clearly has no idea what they're talking about. But before he can ask--

VOICE (O.S.)

Liam.

Liam's boss **MARTIN (30s)** appears impatiently in the doorway.

MARTIN

Can I talk to you?

INT. EDITING BAY - DAY

On a monitor we see footage of some reality TV show. REAL HOUSEWIVES of *Wherever-the-fuck*. Two pinched-up socialites clink their drinks before the image abruptly FREEZES.

MARTIN (O.S.)

What's that?

Martin jabs a finger towards the corner of the screen.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
That right there. What's that?

LIAM
A solarization effect.

MARTIN
(heavy sigh)
Why? You can go to an interview.
Cut to b-roll. Lose the scene
altogether. But *this*? Pretend like
someone opened the fucking blinds?!
(beat)
It's just lazy, Liam.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Liam walks home. Bundled up. Clutching himself in the cold.
In front of him, STREET KIDS loiter on a stoop. Getting high.

As he passes, the Street Kids bust up laughing. Probably not
at Liam. But somehow that's not how it feels. As Liam reacts
we PRELAP the sound of heavy breathing.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Liam and Amy are in the middle of having sex. Slow. Quiet.
Well-intentioned. We're witnessing their pattern play out.
This same position. Same pace.

Liam rolls off her.

They hold hands. Happy. And slightly sad.

After a beat--

LIAM
I love you.

AMY
I love you too.

INT. BATHROOM - LYDIA'S PLACE - DAY

A fogged mirror wipes clean revealing LYDIA, bare-faced,
still in her shower cap.

Lydia uses a makeup wipe. Then she applies a FIRMING CREAM to
the bags beneath her eyes. Next she rubs a GEL MOISTURIZER
into her cheeks.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Lydia sits cross-legged on the floor of her room in front of a tiny smudged-up vanity. She grabs a hair brush and works through the morning knots. We JUMPCUT through the remainder of her routine:

She dabs on FOUNDATION. Then CONCEALER. She traces her cheekbone with BRONZER. She blots EYE SHADOW along the inner crease. She applies MASCARA, eyelashes fluttering.

Finally she does her lips, rolling out a deep rich RED.

She tilts her head. Taking stock of the finished product. Her phone vibrates on the floor next to her. We see the screen. A text message from Bobby.

TEXT (BOBBY)
Cook dinner tonight?

INT. LYDIA'S WORK - DAY

Lydia leafs through color coded note-cards. Preparing.

The office decor is the new corporate America. Glass and natural light. Standing desks. Selfies of diverse young people hung as art. Posing in exotic locales.

Lydia's focus is interrupted by the BZZZZ of her phone.

A string of texts from BOBBY appear on her screen. He's sent over the funny meme of the day. She stares at it. Not quite laughing. We consider her strained expression as we PRELAP:

LYDIA (O.S.)
The goal of this research was to
better understand our quote-unquote
'Millenial' users.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Lydia's mid-presentation. Just then we hear the BZZZZ of her cell phone. No one else can hear it. But the distraction throws her. She takes the slightest pause before continuing:

LYDIA
Specifically, we wanted to take a
look at the way our 18-24 year old
affinity groups make travel plans.
Where these actions take place
across the platform, and--

Another BZZZZ. Her smile tweaks. She forces herself along.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
And whether or not these actions
were shared with friends.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

RUSH HOUR. A crush of people. A cacophony of sound. Lydia maneuvers through the crowd, twisting her EARBUDS into place. The soothing voice of a PODCAST host filters in.

PODCAST (V.O.)
Sex. Have I got your attention?
While sex is one of the more
complicated and vexing parts of the
human experience, the definition of
it -- mechanically speaking -- has
always been relatively simple.

EXT. SUBWAY STAIRS

Lydia arrives at her station. Descends the stairs.

PODCAST (V.O.)
Two individuals coming together in
physical space. It's contact.
Proximity. Closeness.
(then)
Not so anymore.

INT. PLATFORM - NIGHT

Lydia waits for her train. The monologue relaxing her.

PODCAST (V.O.)
This week marks the release of the
Tryst VR headset. An exponential
leap forward in VR technology,
Tryst matches users in digital
space, providing a totally
immersive erotic experience.
Virtual sex between real people.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT

Lydia gazes out the window, watching the city smear by.

PODCAST (V.O.)

There are hundreds of questions we could ask about the application of such technology, but perhaps the most pressing discussion is a philosophical one.

Lydia's eyes drift across the subway car. The collage of faces. Expressions. People from all different walks of life.

PODCAST (V.O.)

How will separating the experience of sex from the physical act change our reality? How will it affect our desire to meet new people? Connect with the ones we love?

Just then Lydia's face drops -- suddenly on high alert.

PODCAST (V.O.)

Where does escapism stop, and something else begin? Today we'll discuss with futurist Marc F--

The sound abruptly cuts out. She's paused it. Across the train a **CREEP (40's)** stares at her with strange intensity.

Bodies pass in the foreground, but the man's gaze stays constant. Shameless. Predatory.

Lydia shifts her focus. Forcing herself to look elsewhere.

Just then the train pulls into a station. The seat next to Lydia OPENS UP. Lydia glances back towards the Creep.

He's standing up now. Approaching her. Walking towards that empty chair.

Lydia shimmies out of the seat and moves down the aisle towards the other side of the train. She grabs the pole. Fixes her eyes forward. Praying for her stop to come.

Then she feels the brush of someone else's hand on the pole. THE CREEP IS DIRECTLY BEHIND HER NOW. Lydia anguishes as we hear his warm, unhealthy breathing. A torturous beat passes.

INT. KITCHEN - LYDIA'S PLACE

A flame prickles a pot as we hear the sound of SIMMERING.

BOBBY (O.S.)

The funny thing was, dude wasn't even aware of it!

Bobby and Lydia eat dinner. Lydia's only half listening, still shaken by her encounter. Oblivious, Bobby prattles on.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
It was happening right under his nose. Couldn't even see it.

Lydia stands, stopping the pot from boiling over. While she's up, Bobby steals a piece of food and pops it in his mouth. Lydia returns, sits, and notices the missing piece.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Some people, you know?

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lydia climbs into bed with Bobby and grabs a TABLET from the end table. A program plays quietly, illuminating their faces in cold sterile light.

Lydia's intent on paying attention. But Bobby squirms and shifts. Pressing into her. That loaded, thrusting cuddle women are all too familiar with.

Lydia tries to ride it out, but he keeps pushing. Trying to advance his position.

His hand begins to slide down her thigh beneath the blanket. He buries his face into the back of her neck.

We watch as her face TIGHTENS.

And as his fingers walk further down her leg--

She bolts upright, throws the covers off and hops out of bed.

BOBBY
Where are you going?

LYDIA
Bathroom.

She marches off. We hear a door slam.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Lydia stands alone. Eyes closed. Clinging to this one fucking second of air. We watch as she slowly breathes in and out.

CUT TO BLACK

VOICE (OVER BLACK)
So this is what's called a
solitaire mounting. Most are plain
and simple all the way around.

INT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY

Liam looks light-headed, staring down at a glass display filled with ENGAGEMENT RINGS. A JEWELER indicates one in particular.

JEWELER
But what I love about this one is
the detailing on the side right
here. That's milgrain. It's a very
pretty look. Do you like it?

LIAM
(nods dumbly, at a loss)
So how would it work? Like sizing-
wise?

JEWELER
Well most women are a size six,
size seven. A lot of times guys
will ask a mother, or a friend to
help them figure it out. Or you can
always borrow a ring of hers and we
can use that. Would you like to
hold it?

She offers the ring to Liam. He plucks it delicately. As he holds it, not looking super sure of himself, we PRELAP:

BOBBY (O.S.)
I dunno man.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Bobby and Liam sit at a coffee spot, waiting for their order. In the b.g. steamed milk hisses. Chrome machines whir.

BOBBY
Honestly. I don't know. I don't
know what you want me to say.
Amy's a great girl obviously but--

LIAM
But.

BOBBY

Yeah. *But.*

(then)

My question is why? Why now?

LIAM

Because this is how it goes.

BOBBY

Lemme ask you -- how many women have you slept with? Honestly.

LIAM

Seriously?

(looks around sheepishly)

Three.

Bobby reacts. He was expecting a low number. But that's like really low. Off Bobby's silence:

LIAM (CONT'D)

Jesus Bobby, we started dating when I was twenty two.

BOBBY

And you were a loser then too -- but fine -- three it is. Is that a number you're gonna be happy with on your deathbed? Or when your dick stops working?

(off Liam's dismissive gesture)

You're laughing. But I'm serious.

LIAM

Bobby -- I love her.

BOBBY

Yeah, but that's not what we're talking about.

As Bobby rises to retrieve their drinks we PRELAP:

BOBBY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Does she do all the sex stuff you want?

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

They're walking now. Liam shoots Bobby a look. *Seriously?*

LIAM

Dude...

BOBBY

Alright. Clearly that's a 'no.'

(off Liam's look)

You know what: let's take the sex part out of it. Let's pretend for a moment that it's not important at all. By doing this you're essentially saying: I'm totally ready to never be surprised, in my life, ever again.

LIAM

That's stupid.

BOBBY

It's true.

LIAM

No it's a stupid premise. Surprise equals being single? So that means being in a relationship equals what? Boredom? Why would anyone be in a relationship if that were true?

BOBBY

That's not what I'm saying. I'm talking about a *feeling* bro.

Like...

(thinking)

Being in love -- it's like getting drunk in a jacuzzi. Sliding deeper into this warm, comfortable stupor. But that first look? First touch? That's *electricity*. That's cold water in the face. And if you're telling me I gotta choose one of those feelings for the rest of my life? I dunno. It's a tough call.

As they cross the street towards a park we PRELAP:

BOBBY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Do you even want a kid right now?

LIAM (O.S.)

Of course not.

EXT. PARK BENCH - DAY

They're sitting on a park bench overlooking the central lawn.

LIAM

I can't even afford a new
comforter.

BOBBY

Then why do this? Why even
entertain this? Until you're ready.

LIAM

Because we're building something.
It's like building a house. You
gotta lay the foundation first.

BOBBY

Yeah? I always thought renting made
more sense.

Liam shakes his head. Genuinely surprised by Bobby's reaction. The two of them sit quietly, watching the languid weekend activity. After a beat:

LIAM

So a wife, kid, dog. It's all
bullshit to you? You don't believe
in any of it?

BOBBY

Do I believe in it?
(beat)
I believe it *sounds* good.

They sit in silence. We favor Liam, looking less and less confident by the moment.

INT. BEDROOM - LIAM AND AMY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Amy is packing a GYM BAG when her phone buzzes on the dresser. A string of texts come in from her **MOTHER**.

TEXT (MOM)

Did you hear the news?!?

(...)

Your little cousin is PREGNANT!

(...)

Can you believe it?

(...)

So EXCITING.

Amy stares at the texts. After a beat she begins to formulate a response. But midway through she stops, her expression straining. She locks the phone and shoves it in her bag.

As she collects her things and exits the room we PRELAP:

LYDIA (O.S.)

Heyyy!

AMY (O.S.)

Hey!

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Amy approaches Lydia who stands outside of a trendy CYCLING STUDIO. The two of them hug.

AMY

Thanks so much for the invite.

LYDIA

Yeah girl. So happy you came.

AMY

I'm like *really* nervous.

LYDIA

(escorting her in)

Oh stop. You'll be fine.

AMY

I'm like already sweating.

INT. CYCLING STUDIO - NIGHT

Dim lights. Hot, muggy air. Sixty people crammed in a tiny brick space, pumping inclines like their lives depended on it. A beautiful male INSTRUCTOR peppers the workout with words of encouragement. Platitudes.

We find AMY struggling to keep pace with the uber fit crowd.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Amy slowly pulls a sweater on over her drenched top.

Across the way two COLLEGE STUDENTS pack up. Perfect outfits. Better bodies. One effortlessly touches her toes while the other complains about finals, college drama, *how old they're getting.*

Amy watches them from behind. Affected by the inane chatter.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

MEANWHILE. Lydia waits for Amy outside the locker room. She's tapping at her phone when the gorgeous INSTRUCTOR approaches.

INSTRUCTOR
Hey. Good job in there.

LYDIA
Thanks.

INSTRUCTOR
I'm Corey.

LYDIA
Lydia.

INSTRUCTOR
Great. Hope to see you around.

Is he flirting? Just being polite? He smiles at her before turning and walking off. Lydia's eyes wander over his body as he disappears down the corridor. The moment CHARGED.

She blinks away the thought of him as we PRELAP:

LYDIA (O.S.)
Honestly it's a little hard right now.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Lydia and Amy walk together, huddling close in the cold.

LYDIA
I work a lot. And I like to work a lot. It makes me feel like me. And in that way, I'm very focused. And he's... not. He's a little more all over place, like -- 'what if we try this?' And, 'ooh what about that?' And honestly I love that about him. Cause he makes me try things. And surprises me. But like on a Tuesday night...

She trails off. Feeling self-conscious.

AMY
No. Go on.

LYDIA

I just wish there was something waiting for him on Wednesday that he gave a shit about. Instead of just me.

(then)

Is that like the meanest thing anyone's ever said?

AMY

No. Not at all.

LYDIA

I get home and he's like a puppy who's been cooped up all day. And I get it. That's tough. But just because you've been waiting around all day doesn't mean I have to cater to you every second we're together. You know?

AMY

It's not equitable.

LYDIA

Right! Like I've had a day too. Uch, it's just frustrating.

(then)

You and Liam deal with shit like this?

AMY

We have the opposite problem. He works too much. They're actually making him come in tonight. I don't think he stands up for himself enough.

Just then Lydia's phone buzzes. She fishes it out.

AMY (CONT'D)

That Bobby?

LYDIA

Speak of the devil.

Lydia reads the text. And immediately her face softens.

AMY

What?

LYDIA

(reading)

"Dunno if you're free tonight, but if you are I would love to cook you dinner. You've been working your butt off, and I want to pamper you. I was thinking I'd try and cook lamb? Lemme know. Kissy face."

AMY

(stops walking)

That's cute as shit.

LYDIA

I know.

AMY

(teasing)

You're such a bitch

LYDIA

I know! God what's wrong with me.

AMY

You should totally go.

LYDIA

No. Really?

AMY

It's fine.

LYDIA

What are you gonna do?

AMY

Girl, I don't need you to watch Netflix. It sounds like a perfect evening. Go enjoy it.

Lydia's touched. She hugs Amy. Brimming with appreciation.

LYDIA

Thank you. Seriously.

INT. EDITING BAY - DAY

Liam works quietly in the dark. A COWORKER pokes her head in.

COWORKER

How much longer you got?

LIAM

A ways.

COWORKER

Alright. Don't forget to lock up.

The coworker closes the door, throwing Liam back into darkness. Liam sighs, then resumes clicking away at his work.

INT. BATHROOM - LYDIA'S PLACE - NIGHT

Lydia luxuriates in the shower.

She wipes the mirror clean and begins her familiar routine. Applying FIRMING CREAM. Rubbing in GEL MOISTURIZER.

INT. EDITING BAY - NIGHT

Liam's face hovers inches from his monitor.

On the screen one of the HOUSEWIVES raises her glass, winking at camera. Another HOUSEWIFE cackles hysterically.

Liam toggles between the images.

Somehow it feels like they're MOCKING him. Flipping the bird with their mimosas. Their perfect lives.

Liam's face sours.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lydia's LIPS fill the frame as she rolls out RED LIPSTICK.

INT. POST PRODUCTION FACILITY - NIGHT

Liam shoves his Nalgene into the water cooler but it's empty. He shakes the jug. His frustration echoing in the empty room.

Liam massages his stiff neck. Trying to relax.

Just then he notices a stack of unopened electronics half-hidden in shadow. The **TRYST** boxes from earlier.

Liam considers them for a beat.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Lydia walks down the street. The whisper of a smile grazing her lips. She pulls out her phone and texts Bobby.

TEXT (LYDIA)
On my way to yours. Be there in 10.

The three dot bubble immediately appears before:

TEXT (BOBBY) (CONT'D)
Shit. I got stuck uptown at my
buddy's thing.
 (...)
I won't be home for another 45.
 (...)
Prolly too late for the lamb.
 (...)
Might just grab us Thai on the way
home?

Lydia stops. Staring down at her phone with naked disbelief. She stands there a beat. Furious. Breath clouding in the freezing cold. And in this moment something catches her eye:

A SEX SHOP across the street.

Lurid neons bathe mannequins in volcanic light. They stand in the display window, gesturing towards the store's new item:

The **TRYST VR HEADSET**.

Lydia approaches. Her skin turning red as she stands in front of the display case. She stares at it. Then up at her reflection in the glass.

INT. EDITING BAY - NIGHT

Hands rip open a box revealing the TRYST VR HEADSET.

Liam peers down at it. Marveling at its clean lines. Jet black body. The design slick and sexy.

He pulls a pair of GLOVES from the box. Scaled with haptic sensors, they glisten like snakeskin.

Liam picks up the headset, pressing the power button. The GLOVES wriggle to life. A BLUE LIGHT breathes in and out on the headset.

Liam contemplates it. The soft light pulsing across his face.

CUT TO BLACK

INSERT: TEXT on a BLACK SCREEN.

Welcome

You've selected: AVATAR CREATION

Please answer the following:

We watch Liam take the following TEST. X's denote answers:

1. You find it difficult to introduce yourself to new people
[Agree 0 X 0 0 0 Disagree]
2. When you sleep your dreams tend to focus on the real world
[Agree 0 0 0 0 X Disagree]
3. In rooms, you stay close to the walls, avoiding the center
[Agree X 0 0 0 0 Disagree]
4. Forgiveness has never been your strong suit
[Agree 0 0 X 0 0 Disagree]

The questions fly at us with INCREASING SPEED. We no longer see Liam's answers, barely keeping pace with STROBING TEXT:

6. You secretly desire a surprise birthday party
8. People in wheelchairs make you uncomfortable
9. Righting injustice is the responsibility of the collective
13. You feel burdened by your mother
19. You're often stymied by endless options
29. You have a healthy relationship with your body
34. You would rather see the Middle East than Europe
52. You often think about your childhood
71. Dessert is only for special occasions
105. Self satisfaction is increasingly important to you
117. You're often afraid to try new things
149. Above all else, you yearn for control

Abruptly, the questions stop. We hold here in the dark until--

You've been matched.

INT. HOTEL - FOYER - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

A **DOORWAY**. Total blackness beyond it. Everything still.

After a beat, the YOUNG MAN from our opening scene emerges. This is Liam's AVATAR. We will refer to him as **ADAM**.

His bare feet leave shadows on black marble as he walks into the entry of a BOUTIQUE HOTEL.

Starkly decorated. A minimal aesthetic. It's striking, yet it somehow feels INCOMPLETE. An architect's unfinished sketch.

Adam walks slowly. Unsettled.

The place throbs with DREAM STRANGENESS. Like at any moment something might jump out at us. Or creep in at the edges.

CUT TO:

An **AFTERIMAGE** flickers in the empty space.

INT. HOTEL - FRONT DESK - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

Adam floats past a deserted FRONT DESK. A bank of ELEVATORS.

He passes a MIRROR and stops. Shocked by his nakedness. His perfect face. Perfect body. Perfect everything.

Then MOVEMENT tugs at his peripheral vision. He turns slowly.

CUT TO:

Another **AFTERIMAGE** drifts like smoke.

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

The YOUNG WOMAN from our opening scene stands in the lobby. Even more beautiful than we remember. We'll call her **EVE**.

We watch Adam's expression CHANGE. It's like he's under a spell. The sight of her's like a needle in his arm.

He approaches her. Unable to believe it.

He raises his hand, delicately TRACING an "X" on her clavicle with his fingertip. Her skin responds. Goosebumps prickling.

He looks up at her. Eyes wide open now. Because in this moment, the real world has fallen away...

NOTHING ELSE MATTERS BUT THIS....

They kiss. Slowly at first. But quickly things intensify. Inhibitions melting away... tongues tumbling passionately...

AFTERIMAGE

Her hands slide over his ribs. Her fingertips practically sizzling as they glide over his lower abdomen. Moving down...

AFTERIMAGE

Her head arches backward. Her knuckles going white as she grips his hair. His face buried into her crotch...

AFTERIMAGE

They're on top of the front desk now. Coiled and heaving...

AFTERIMAGE

The imagery speeds up. Their legs intertwining...

AFTERIMAGE

Hips thrusting... Muscles tightening... Teeth gnashing... We're bombarded by the stimuli. Practically drowning in it.

AFTERIMAGE

And as their screams rise to a FEVER PITCH we--

CUT TO:

INT. EDITING BAY - NIGHT

Liam RIPS the headset off his face. Gasping for air. His eyes flutter, struggling to readjust to their surroundings.

Slowly he turns the headset around in his hands, looking at it like, '*what the fuck was that?*'

He presses the headset back to his face. The screen is BLACK save for the small white text in the bottom corner:

Matched with: [4BLUEYEZ88]

Would you like to meet again ?

Liam lowers the goggles. Trying to wrap his head around what just happened. That's when he looks down and notices:

A CUM STAIN on his jeans. As he stares at it we PRELAP:

BOBBY (O.S.)
So how does it work?

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Liam stares out the window. Bobby leans across the aisle, hanging on every word.

LIAM
The first time they 'match' you with another user. But from there you schedule your own rendezvous. You can either stay with your match. Or choose a 'random hookup.'

BOBBY
Are you gonna see her again?

LIAM
That's the catch: you both have to choose to see each other again.

We PRELAP:

BOBBY (O.S.)
So what? You're just jerking off with that thing on your face?

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

They walk together. Bobby's holding a SOCCER BALL.

LIAM
No man. It's like -- you're not pulling yourself off when you're having a wet dream, right? Your mind convinces your body it's real. That's how this works. Except in this -- it's not a dream.

Liam continues walking. Bobby stops. Confusion on his face.

BOBBY
Wait. Are you sure that's how wet dreams work?

As Bobby hurries to catch up we PRELAP:

BOBBY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
What I don't get--

EXT. PARK LAWN - DAY

Liam and Bobby kick the soccer ball back and forth.

BOBBY

Why go through the trouble of
matching real-life people? Why not
just sim the whole thing?

LIAM

I dunno. Why do politicians sext
random girls they've never met?
They do it *for* the danger. Not in
spite of it. I think not knowing
who's on the other end -- that's
sexy to a lot of people.

BOBBY

But not to you?

LIAM

I dunno man. I don't know what to
think.

BOBBY

Do you feel guilty?

LIAM

Wouldn't you?

BOBBY

It's not like you're buying digital
dinner beforehand. You're playing a
video game. You just play this one
with your dick.

LIAM

It doesn't feel like a game when
you're in it, Bobby.

BOBBY

Hey man -- nobody forced you to
pick up the headset. Maybe that
means something?

(then)

Maybe this is what you need right
now?

Liam kicks the ball over Bobby's head. Bobby chases after it.
We stay with Liam for a beat -- considering what Bobby said.

INT. KITCHENETTE - LIAM & AMY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Amy is doing dishes when Liam returns. He pecks her on the cheek, takes position next to her, hand-drying the glasses.

AMY
How was it? How's Bobby?

LIAM
He's good.

AMY
Anything new going on with him?

LIAM
Uhhh. Not really.
(then)
We did talk a little about this new
Tryst VR thing.

AMY
Oh God. He's not thinking about
getting one is he?

LIAM
I dunno. Maybe. Would that be the
worst thing in the world?

AMY
I mean it definitely sends a
message. I know I'd feel hurt if
you got one. What'd you tell him?

LIAM
(beat)
Just what you said.

Amy smiles. Liam reciprocates. Then he returns his attention to the sink. Staring at dishes. Nervously chewing his lip.

INT. LYDIA'S WORK - DAY

Lydia types with her earbuds in. **ROD** (a coworker) approaches. Lydia ignores him a beat before reluctantly glancing up.

He stands expectantly, motioning: '*take your earbuds out.*'

LYDIA
(taking one out)
Yes Rod.

ROD

I had an idea for our presentation.
Just a phrasing thing.

LYDIA

Great. I'm just trying to finish
this up.

ROD

Okay. Sure.

He stands there like, 'I'll wait.' Smiling polite. Oblivious. Lydia sighs, summoning composure as she pulls out her earbud.

LYDIA

So what's the idea?

ROD

What if it's less about the old
flow and more about *customizing
experience*?

(off her blank look)

I know it's a little different but,
just think on it for a little.

Rod exits. Lydia watches him go.

On his way out he stops off at a MALE PEER's desk. He's about to engage him when he notices the Male Peer has earbuds in. Rod stops himself, waves instead, and walks off.

As he exits we PRELAP:

PODCAST (V.O.)

Where it gets really complicated,
and perhaps problematic is--

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Lydia wades through the crash of people, lost in a podcast.

PODCAST (V.O.)

Sex is never just sex. It's
conquest. Control. Power. Pain
relief. It doesn't mean the same
thing to any two people.
So predicting how this will affect
us? It's impossible to know.

She crosses the street. Eyes sweeping across the cars. The drivers. Their features obscured behind the windshield glass.

PODCAST (V.O.)

How will it affect the addicts? The abstinent? The trauma survivors, or those who have sexual violence lurking in them somewhere? The question's not, 'how will it affect us?' Because surely, it will.

She hits the sidewalk and rounds a corner...

PODCAST (V.O.)

The real mystery is -- what does sex mean to me?

Lydia stops abruptly when she sees BOBBY waiting outside of her building. She stops the podcast, taking a second before approaching. Bobby straightens upon seeing her.

BOBBY

Sorry to show up like this.

LYDIA

(brushing past him)

You should be.

BOBBY

Jesus, Lydia. You're really this upset? Being mad is one thing, but I'm losing sleep worrying about you.

LYDIA

You wake up at eleven everyday, Bobby. I think you could stand to lose a little sleep.

She slides inside her building--

INT. LYDIA'S BUILDING - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Lydia makes for her mailbox. Bobby squeezes in after her. Lydia roots around in her purse, trying to find her keys.

BOBBY

I'm a shmuck. I'm under-employed. And I'm *sorry*. That most of all.

LYDIA

You're an asshole.

BOBBY

Yes. See I knew I forgot one.

(re: purse)

Can I give you a hand or something?

Irritated, she gives up. Retrieving a HIDE-A-KEY from beneath the mailboxes. She pops the cover, removing the spare key.

INT. LYDIA'S BUILDING - UPSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Bobby trails after Lydia down the hall.

BOBBY

You're seriously not even gonna let me explain?

LYDIA

How many chances do you think you deserve Bobby?

BOBBY

Babe. I'm worried about you. I care about you.

LYDIA

(arriving at her door)

Uh-huh.

BOBBY

You're new in the city. You're by yourself in this big apartment. Who you gonna talk to? Huh? Who's gonna keep you warm at night?

Lydia stops behind the half-opened door -- scoffing at this.

LYDIA

You really think I need you for that?

Bobby blinks. Only half understanding. Lydia shakes her head, neatly shutting the door in his face.

BOBBY

Well can I at least see you this weekend?!

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

MOMENTS LATER. Lydia opens her closet, retrieving a vintage HAT BOX from a high shelf. She pops the lid revealing a **TRYST VR headset**. She looks down on it. Considering her options.

INT. DINING ROOM - LIAM AND AMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Liam and Amy eat dinner. Silverware clinks in the stuffy room. It's quiet. Lifeless. Just another beige weeknight. Liam glances at Amy, scrolling absentmindedly on her phone.

LIAM

How was your day?

AMY

You know. Pretty normal.

LIAM

Anything fun happen?

AMY

No. Not really.

Amy forks in more food. Never looking up.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Liam sinks into the couch. Post-dinner autopilot kicking in. The TV's blue glow washes over him. Amy clicks the remote.

AMY

What are you in the mood for?

LIAM

Whatever.

Dutifully she scrolls through the endless options. Liam's eyes drift. Watching her furtively. Sadness in his eyes.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Liam lays awake. Brow furrowed. Unable to sleep.

He glances over at Amy, her shoulders rising and falling. Liam lets out a long sigh. Chewing his lip. Conflicted.

Carefully he slides out of the covers. Tiptoeing to the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

From behind we see Liam hunching over something in the dark.

We see Liam's PHONE SCREEN as he downloads the "TRYST APP." He looks over his shoulder, checking to see if the coast is still clear. He "HIDES" the app in a folder marked "WORK."

He sets down the phone. Picking up the TRYST VR HEADGEAR--

Welcome Back...

You've selected: RANDOM ENCOUNTER

Enjoy!

INT. HOTEL - FOYER - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

ADAM's eyes open. Awakening on an overstuffed leather sofa.

He stands, surveying the hotel. It looks just like last time. Yet somehow, the mood feels different. *Even more unsettling.* On cue, a noise wafts in from the lobby -- HEAVY BREATHING.

Adam walks towards it.

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT

Across the way, a FIGURE sits in a high-back chair. We can only see a piece of her, but what we see is JARRING.

Her arm and shoulder pump vigorously, as MOANING sounds echo in the empty hall. Adam reacts. *Is this lady masturbating??*

He takes a step forward, bumping into an end table. The furniture THUDS. Just then, the heavy breathing STOPS.

From behind the chair -- a GLISTENING CANDLE lands on a nearby coffee table. It rolls in a circle, trailing residue. Eventually it comes to a stop next to a pair of CANDLESTICKS.

One of them is missing its candle...

VOICE (O.S.)
You're late. I had to get started
without you.

Adam's eyes BULGE as the figure rises from her chair. This AVATAR looks different than Eve. *Much different.*

Where Eve was elegant. This woman's hot and damaged. Sneering a smile as she stalks closer. Adam backs up instinctively.

RANDOM AVATAR
Lemme ask you. And be honest.
(arriving now)
Ever had your asshole eaten, baby?

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Liam GASPS, ripping off the headset, scuttling away from it. He catches his breath. Pupils normalizing. Looking at the HEADGEAR with renewed respect. Just then, his phone BUZZES.

He looks down. On screen we see a TRYST PUSH NOTIFICATION:

Match Request: Still Pending

Liam stares at it. Looking like a ghost in the gauzy light of the screen. He locks his phone, falling away into darkness. Still unable to catch his breath.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. TAXI CAB - NIGHT

An empty cab. Amy and Liam pile in. Dressed for a night out.

LIAM
43rd and Lex, please.

AMY
I'm excited to see her place. She has good taste. You excited?

LIAM
Yeah. Should be fun.

They smile at each other then glance out their respective windows. We stay with Liam, his smile fading a bit. PRELAP:

LYDIA (O.S.)
Heyyy!

AMY (O.S.)
Hey!

INT. LYDIA'S PLACE - NIGHT

Lydia stands in the doorway, pulling Amy in for a big hug. She wears a sexy backless dress. Liam's eyes dart away from it, not allowing himself to linger on her bare skin.

LYDIA
Great to see you. Come in.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

MID-CONVERSATION. The doorbell rings. Lydia excuses herself.

INT. DOORWAY - NIGHT

Lydia opens the door, revealing BOBBY. He flashes his big smile, holding up a nice bottle of wine.

BOBBY
It's your favorite.
(then)
The wine, not me.
(sheepishly)
May I enter?

Lydia stands behind the door -- a slow smile creeping as she finally allows him in. He takes a step inside.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Hey you.

LYDIA
Hey yourself.

As they kiss in the doorway, we PRELAP:

LYDIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
So this guy shows up outside my place. Uninvited. Wearing a black fucking hoodie of all things.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

They sit around the room. Lounging. Laughing. Getting drunk.

AMY
The official stalker uniform.
That's the word for that behavior, by the way.

LIAM
Which is a felony, I think.

BOBBY
Right. Well thank you, *detective*.
Mr. Law Professor.

LYDIA
I'm just hoping this is a one-time thing and not like a continued pattern of behavior.
(to Liam)
It *is* an isolated incident, right?

LIAM
Yeah... Mostly.

AMY

Except for that one girl with the
nose ring.

BOBBY

Well -- as much fun as this is for
me, we should probably start
heading to the bar.

LYDIA

I need to do a quick touch-up.
(to Amy)
Drunk makeup party?

AMY

Duh.

The girls hop up and exit down the hall. Bobby calls out:

BOBBY

I'm gonna call the uber in five
minutes.

LYDIA (O.S.)

Ten minutes.

BOBBY

I'm gonna call the uber in *ten*
minutes.

(to Liam, re: cocktail)

You want another one?

LIAM

Sure.

Bobby grabs the empties and exits. Liam pulls out his phone.

LIAM (CONT'D)

You know the password to the wifi?

BOBBY (O.S.)

Should be in that box on the coffee
table.

Liam sorts through a mess of remotes and tangled technology,
pulling out an index card. The password's written in pen.

4BLUEYEZ88

We hold on Liam's face. Gears backfiring. Something's not
computing. Then his face DROPS as it finally dawns on him.

It's her.

Just then--

BOBBY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
It was her cat. Blue Eyes.

Dazed, Liam looks up. Bobby stands over him. A cold drink sweats in his outstretched arm. After a beat, Liam grabs it. Nodding a dumb thank you.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Cheers.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Liam sits in the front seat -- still as a statue. The rest of the group is in the back. Being loud. Enjoying themselves.

Liam's eyes flick between the road and the rearview. Stealing glimpses of her red lips. Perfect teeth. That big wild smile.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

MUSIC THUMPS. Strobes flash over the sweaty basement party.

Liam stands at the bar, a detached observer. He watches:

LYDIA dancing in the throng. Hair tousled, her features disappear and reappear in the 1-2 rhythm of the strobe. And in those downbeats, it's like she could be ANYBODY.

We hold on Liam. His expression darkening.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. BEDROOM - LIAM AND AMY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Amy wakes in the morning. She turns over. Liam isn't there. She reacts, considering the empty space. Sinking a bit.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Amy reads a TRASH MAGAZINE. Headlines designed to make you feel inadequate. Buy shit you don't need. The cover reads: **MONOGAMISH: How VR saved our marriage.**

As she reads, we PRELAP: Squealing. Activity. COMMOTION.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

We're in a 1st GRADE CLASSROOM during break. It's like the invasion of Normandy as kids buzz by in every direction.

AMY (O.S.)
Farmer Brown has a problem. His cows love to type.

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

Amy sits in front of her class, reading from a COLORFUL BOOK.

AMY
All day long he hears: click, clack, MOO. Click, clack moo. Clickety, clackety moo.

We move across the kids' faces. Some sleepy. Some bored. Others wonderstruck. Imaginations soaring. Lost in daydreams.

AMY (CONT'D)
At first, he couldn't believe his ears. Cows that type? Impossible! Click, clack, MOO. Click, clack MOO. Clickety, clackety MOOOO.

We land on one kid in particular. The most adorable smile, goofy and toothless. Amy notices him and practically melts.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Amy and Lydia grocery shop. LYDIA holds out a tub of hummus.

LYDIA
Is this the one?

AMY
No. The one we want has a little Middle Eastern guy on the lid.

Lydia grunts. Walking off. Just then, Amy's phone buzzes:

TEXT (MOM)
I talked to your cousin today.
(...)
She REALLY wants baby to be a girl.
(...)
I think she just wants to play with dolls again. LOL.

Amy smirks, despite herself. Replying:

TEXT (AMY) (CONT'D)
Lol. Good one, Mom.

The typing bubble quickly reappears before:

TEXT (MOM) (CONT'D)
**Me on the other hand, I'm not
 picky.**
 (...)
I'll take what I can get.
 (...)
[Winky Face Emoji]

Amy looks down at this. Unsure how to respond. Just then, she rounds a corner and her face DROPS. Nearby a YOUNG WOMAN (20s) sorts through produce.

Amy reacts. A look of TOTAL PANIC on her face. Just then, Lydia returns, holding the correct item.

LYDIA
 Found it. He's cute, this guy.
 (then)
 Jesus, Amy. Are you alright? You're
 white as sheet.

AMY
 (unconvincing)
 Yeah, no, I'm fine. Let's just get
 out of here.

Amy ushers Lydia away from the produce section. Lydia looks back over her shoulder, confused. Clocking the mysterious WOMAN. As they hurry off we can hear Lydia ask--

LYDIA
 Who was that?

INT. SUPPLY CLOSET - POST PRODUCTION FACILITY - DAY

Liam opens and shuts drawers. Rifles through closets. Finally he finds what he's looking for -- a TAPE GUN. PRELAP: the STICKY RIP of the tape dispenser.

INT. EDITING BAY - DAY

Liam rips long pieces of tape, resting them on his desk. He pulls out the **TRYST VR HEADSET** from behind a couch. Stuffing the goggles and gloves back into the box.

INT. POST PRODUCTION FACILITY - DAY

The taped-up box lands atop the stack in the break room. Liam checks to see if he's been seen before quickly retreating. We stay with him as he walks away -- his face one of RESOLVE.

INT. DINING ROOM - LIAM AND AMY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Amy enters, confused to find the table set for a nice dinner. Champagne flutes filled with bubbles. Liam greets her.

LIAM

Hey. *Surprise.*

AMY

What's all this? I thought you had
to work late?

LIAM

I did but... Fuck 'em, right?

Amy smiles. Gawking at the thoughtful spread.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Don't worry. It's sparkling apple
juice.

Liam grins, kisses her forehead, and walks off into the kitchen. Amy stands there quietly. Just about moved to tears.

CUT TO BLACK

AMY (OVER BLACK) (O.S.)

What's her name again?

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

We're at a swanky HOLIDAY PARTY. String-lights. An open bar. Everyone's got fresh hair cuts. Half the dudes wear the exact same jacket. Liam and Amy stand in line, surveying the crowd:

LIAM

That's Jillian. And that's Micah.

AMY

I don't think I met him before.

LIAM

I'm not sure. I don't even know
half these people.

AMY
 (handing him her purse)
 I'm gonna run to the bathroom. You
 okay?

LIAM
 Yeah.

Amy walks off. Liam exhales, scanning the sea of strange faces. Shoulders tightening just a little.

EXT. ROOFTOP - LATER

A group of people chat in a small circle. Liam approaches. But he doesn't really say hello. Just hovers tentatively on the edge of the conversation.

A COWORKER glances over at Liam but says nothing, quickly returning her attention to the center of the group. Liam fidgets. Lost and floating on the outer rim.

EXT. ROOFTOP - LATER

Liam and Amy approach MARTIN. His face flushed with alcohol as he stands in front of a portable heater, holding court.

MARTIN
 Liam! I didn't think you'd come.

LIAM
 Martin, you remember Amy?

Ignoring her, Martin turns to the **MAN** (30s) at his side.

MARTIN
 Liam here is one of my in-house
 editors. Liam -- this is Kendrick
 Mead. You familiar with his work?

LIAM
 Of course. I've seen everything.

KENDRICK
 Cool man. Thanks.

MARTIN
 Liam's cutting our *Real Housewives*
 show right now.

KENDRICK
 (eyebrows arching)
 Oh?

MARTIN

Nobody cuts a better cat-fight than Liam. Isn't that right?

LIAM

(insecure)

I don't know about that...

KENDRICK

Well I'm sure it's great.

LIAM

Clearly you're not caught up on season six.

It's supposed to be self-deprecating. Funny. But coming from Liam it just feels kinda *sad*. Martin laughs drunkenly.

We watch Amy react to this. Her party-smile disappearing. We hold on her, STRAINING, as the conversation drones along.

INT. KITCHENETTE - LIAM & AMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Liam breathes a sigh of relief as he uncoils his scarf. Clearly happy to be back home.

LIAM

You get enough to eat? Want me to cook some eggs? Amy?

Liam turns just in time to see Amy skulk off down the hall. We hear the bedroom door shut O.S.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Liam cautiously enters. Amy sits on the edge of the bed, wearing a worn expression. Her eyes glazed-over and faraway.

LIAM

Hey. You alright?

AMY

(hesitant)

Do you know what you looked like tonight, Liam? You looked *small*. You do this so much now, I don't even think you realize when you're doing it anymore.

LIAM

What are you talking about?

AMY

Cutting yourself down in front of
people. Hiding in the corner.

LIAM

Amy--

He tries to sit next to her. But she flinches. Scooting away.
A strange silence follows. This isn't some throwaway fight.

AMY

You may not care about how you
look. But how am I supposed to
feel? How can I believe that you're
gonna stand up for us, when you
won't even do it for yourself? How
am I supposed to feel secure?

LIAM

Amy. I don't understand--

AMY

I'm telling you to grow a pair,
Liam! Okay? If not for yourself,
then for me. But maybe that's too
much to ask.

(then)

Maybe that's just not you.

Liam reacts. Rocked by this. Utterly blind-sided. He stares
at the floor. Trying to get that down. Finally he whispers:

LIAM

This is how you see me?

Liam glances up. Her face puckers but she offers no response.
Liam sinks. Shaking his head. And as his pain turns to ANGER
he stands and exits. Leaving Amy behind in the awful silence.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Steam pours off Liam as he plunges into the freezing night.
His world totally upsidedown. Just then, his phone buzzes:

Match Request: Accepted

Meet Tonight?

Liam stares down at the message. His face transforming. A
wildness in his eyes we've never seen before. Just then--

INT. POST PRODUCTION FACILITY - NIGHT

Overhead lights flicker to life, catching the plastic edges of the TAPED-UP TRYST BOX. A hand suddenly snatches it up.

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - [VR SCAPE]

Bare feet slap against the black marble floor. ADAM strides through the deserted hotel, unconcerned with the scenery.

INT. ELEVATOR BANK / INT. ELEVATOR - [VR SCAPE]

EVE waits for him by the ELEVATORS. As he approaches, she slips down the shallow corridor. A game of cat and mouse.

AFTERIMAGE

He arrives at the mouth of the shallow corridor. Eve waits for him in front of an OPEN ELEVATOR. She ducks inside.

AFTERIMAGE

Adam steps inside the ELEVATOR. Entering her personal space. They stare at one another. Tranced. Lips inches apart.

AFTERIMAGE

Just then, Eve lets out a short gasp. Adam tugs the hair at the base of her skull. Eve SMOLTERS. Intense eye contact.

AFTERIMAGE

His finger traces an "X" below her abdomen. Eve's PUBIC HAIR is visible, teasing the bottom of our frame.

AFTERIMAGE

Just then, the elevator lurches to life. Light strobes across their faces as the lift hurdles upwards. And as Adam spins her around. Taking her from behind, we--

CUT TO BLACKINT. BOBBY'S STUDIO - DAY

Bobby comes to in a tangle of sheets.

The DIGITAL CLOCK at the bedside reads 10:26 AM.

He straightens ungracefully. Coughing and scratching as he walks towards the bathroom of his unkempt studio apartment.

That's when we notice a WOMAN still asleep in his bed. We hold on her as Bobby's piss stream echoes from faraway.

Bobby re-enters. Dressing extra quietly as we PRELAP:

BOBBY (O.S.)
Hi there, do you guys have a second
to talk about the young people of
Africa?

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Bobby stands on a street corner wearing a 'VOLUNTEER' penny. He tries unsuccessfully to solicit a passing couple.

He slowly exhales. Tap-dancing. Trying to keep his feet warm. We JUMP CUT between several more attempts:

BOBBY
Excuse me, ma'am? You have a second
to talk about the young people of
Africa?

Another attempt:

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Sir? Excuse me, sir?
(then)
Yeah you. You have a second to talk
about -- No? Okay. Have a good one.

Another attempt:

BOBBY (CONT'D)
If you give me your email we could--

And finally:

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Our goal is to electrify villages
in Southern Sudan. Provide internet
access. Get young people online.
Get them educated. Connected. You
know, make their lives a little
simpler.
(then)
So can I put you down for a ten
dollar donation?

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Bobby settles down into a chair. Pulls a laptop from his bag. He plugs his charger into the wall.

On his screen is a half-finished document -- **BUSINESS PLAN**. Bobby stares, apprehensive. Intimated by the blinking cursor.

Finally his fingers touch the keys.

WORDS

Our goal is to inspire discussion and empower millennials through the acquisition of basic cooking skill--

The words delete in a flurry of keystrokes. He tries again.

WORDS (CONT'D)

MISSION: To promote strong communities through weekly dinners. Fusing the power of ethnic cuisine with the broad reach of social med--

Again the buzzwords disappear.

WORDS (CONT'D)

To provide a tactile outlet for those seeking to reconnect with something--

The typing stops. The cursor blinking in cruel rhythm. Bobby strains. Struggling to articulate his nebulous ambition.

JUMPCUT TO:

His fingers fly across the screen of his phone as he scrolls through his rotation of apps, social media, etc. He fires off a couple texts to Lydia. Tagging her in the day's best memes.

JUMPCUT TO:

He shoves the phone across the table. *No more distractions.* He wrestles his focus back on the business plan. The *blinking fucking cursor*. Still waiting for inspiration to strike.

Frustrated, he glances up at the clock.

It's only 1:13 PM.

As we hold on the clock, PRELAP the sound of CLANGING METAL.

INT. GYM - DAY

Bobby grits, focusing his frustration on a LEG PRESS MACHINE. As he pushes with surprising determination we PRELAP:

BOBBY (O.S.)
Yooo bud. What's up? I'm in your neighborhood.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Bobby talks on the phone as he walks out of the gym and onto the midday street. We only hear his half of the conversation.

BOBBY
Yeah man. Happy hour starts at three for a reason.
(beat)
Word. I'm just walkin' out of the gym. Lemme see if I can get cleaned up at my girlfriend's place. I'll hit you in a sec.

Bobby ends the call and texts Lydia:

TEXT (BOBBY)
Is it cool if I take a quick shower at your place? I'm v stinky.

The typing bubble appears and then disappears. No text comes. Bobby looks down at his phone, shaking his head. *If that's how you wanna play it...*

EXT. LYDIA'S BUILDING - DAY

Bobby loiters on the walk-up. Someone exits the building. Bobby catches the door and slips inside.

INT. LYDIA'S BUILDING - FOYER - DAY

Bobby fishes a hand beneath the mailboxes, retrieving Lydia's HIDE-A-KEY. He smiles down at it.

INT. LYDIA'S PLACE - BATHROOM - DAY

Bobby emerges from her bathroom in a towel. His wet hair dripping carelessly as he walks down the hall.

INT. LYDIA'S PLACE - BEDROOM - DAY

Bobby pulls on a shirt from his bag -- dressed now. He holds the wet towel, considering how best to conceal the evidence.

Bobby opens the closet and begins pulling dirty clothes from her hamper. He stuffs the wet towel at the bottom of the bin.

He bumps into her hanging shoe-organizer, dislodging items from the high shelf -- causing an avalanche of knickknacks.

And out of the hat box rolls the **TRYST VR HEADSET**.

Bobby stares down at it -- totally caught off guard.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Bobby sits in low-light. His expression difficult to read. Lydia arrives. Taking a seat opposite him.

LYDIA

Sorry. Sorry. Today was absolutely
crazy.

BOBBY

(he shrugs)
It's fine.

She glances down at the menu. Then back up at Bobby.

LYDIA

(sensing)
Something up? You okay?

BOBBY

Yeah. Fine.

He gives her a thin smile. She smiles back before returning her attention to the menu. Bobby's eyes linger. Observing her with strange intensity as we PRELAP a harsh plastic SCRAPING.

INT. KITCHENETTE - DAY

Amy scrubs with a Swiffer mop. Blowing the hair from her eyes as she cleans the ground in long vigorous strokes.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Amy folds laundry. Making clean piles of Liam's underwear.

INT. KITCHENETTE - DAY

Amy stares out the window, nervously drumming the table with her fingertips. Just then we hear keys RATTLING in the door.

LIAM enters -- finding Amy in the freshly cleaned kitchen.

AMY

Hey you.

LIAM

Hi.

Amy approaches and gives Liam a long hug. He indulges her, but hardly matches her warmth. Then, before she even lets go:

LIAM (CONT'D)

Babe, I gotta--

Liam shakes free. Sidestepping her.

He walks off towards the bedroom without noticing the sparkling counter-tops. The flowers set out.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amy climbs into bed. Liam watches something on his tablet. His face bathed in cold, sterile light.

She cuddles into him.

AMY

It's freezing in here. You think you could spare a little warmth?

She playfully slides her feet up his legs. Liam squirms away.

LIAM

Amy. C'mon.

AMY

(re: tablet)

What is that anyway?

LIAM

Some new show.

AMY

Is it any good?

LIAM

Not really.

Liam puts away the tablet. Exhaling the stress of the day. Amy looks up at him. Sensing an opportunity.

She removes his glasses. Places them on the night-stand.

Her breathing changes as she slides a hand over his chest. She nuzzles into his neck. Kissing him delicately. Liam's eyes rim closed.

We watch her hand move below the sheet, slowly migrating down. But before she gets there--

LIAM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You should know -- I have to work
late again.

Amy stops.

AMY
Why?

LIAM
I have to sit with Martin. He wants
to be there when I implement the
notes on this big two-parter. He'll
probably keep me late the whole
week.

Amy reacts. Stung by this. She struggles to conceal it.

AMY
Okay. Fine.

An unpleasant beat follows. Amy slowly disentangles herself. Liam clicks off the bedside lamp. Amy rolls away from him. Feeling rejected. Insecure. Eyelashes fragile and flickering.

INT. LYDIA'S WORK - DAY

Lydia sits at her desk. We hear a PUSH NOTIFICATION buzz. Lydia glances around. Dipping down low. Inspecting her phone.

Meet Tonight?

Lydia bites her lip. Considering it.

INT. BAR - LATER

Lydia hurries into a bar. It's packed to the gills with young professionals. There's a last day of school vibe. Everyone's playing with house money. Expensing IPAs on the company card.

Lydia scans the crowd. Confident. Very much in her element.

BEGIN SEQUENCE: An OFF-CAMERA CONVERSATION plays throughout as we cut between SNAPSHOTS of the Happy Hour. Starting with:

LYDIA shmoozing. A natural. She cracks up a circle of peers.

VOICE (O.S.)
Lydia, my name's Ryan Caldwell.

LYDIA (O.S.)
Yes. Ryan. Hi. Nice to finally meet you.

A WAITRESS unloads a round of drinks. Appetizers. The kind of place that refuses to put out ketchup. Everyone celebrates. Cheersing. Knocking the foam heads off their expensive beers.

VOICE (O.S.)
I loved the presentation you just gave on customizing experience.

LYDIA (O.S.)
Really? You saw it?

VOICE (O.S.)
Yeah. They sent us the Powerpoint.
For the record, I totally agree.

ROD (the earbuds guy from earlier) knocks over a JENGA tower. He sways as people laugh. Clearly drunker than he should be.

VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
If we want the default option to be 'share everything' we need to prioritize in-stream options, instead of building out the app.

Later, Rod takes an unsteady step, barely catching himself on the edge of a table. Another coworker grabs his coat, herding Rod out the door -- *you've had enough, big guy.*

VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I've been trying to get them to understand that for three years.
But I never articulated it as well as you did. Really, great stuff.

A SINGLE DUDE sidles up to a GIRL at the bar, smiling wide. She hardly acknowledges him. Swiping through TINDER instead.

END SEQUENCE.

INT. BAR - LATER

Lydia sits at the bar, speaking to **RYAN (30s)**, the source of the VOICE. He's got perfect teeth. Ivy League genetics.

The place has thinned out quite a bit. But her glass is full. And he just ordered another Old Fashioned.

RYAN

So how long have you been with the company?

LYDIA

Let's see. I was a UX designer for three years. And they upped me to Project Manager in September.

RYAN

That's very impressive, Lydia. You're gonna put guys like me out of a job.

LYDIA

Well, that's very kind of you to say. Even if it's total bullshit.

RYAN

You wanna see bullshit? Wait 'til our meeting next week. They call me the brown-eyed king of fuckery.

(then)

Engineers aren't the best with nicknames.

She laughs. Warmed by the booze. The common language they share. Ryan looks over at her. A beat. He pulls out his card.

RYAN (CONT'D)

This is me. Anytime you wanna talk shop. Suss out office politics. Who slept with who five years ago. Give me a ring. Seriously. Anything. Anytime.

The offer is benign enough, but when he hands over the card something in his eyes gives Lydia a half-seconds pause. She tries to shake away the gut feeling -- stay in the moment.

LYDIA

Very generous. I will.

RYAN

So you got any plans for after?

LYDIA

The meeting? I'll probably sleep
for a couple days.

RYAN

No I mean tonight. After this.

Her face draws tight. Looks like that gut feeling was right. Ryan reads her reaction. Sipping his drink extra casually.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Hey, I'm just saying it's nice to
have friends. God knows I could've
used a few more seniors in my
corner when I was where you are.
Could've really sped things up for
me. Anyway--

He drains his glass. Drops a couple bills on the bar-top.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Looking forward to working with you
Lydia.

Lydia can only manage the weakest of smiles. He stands, pats her on the shoulder, and walks out. She remains at the rail, swirling her wine. Angered by what's transpired. We PRELAP:

BOBBY (O.S.)

Wait, wait, wait. So who is this
guy?

INT. LYDIA'S PLACE - NIGHT

Bobby anxiously paces around the apartment as Lydia downloads the events of the night.

LYDIA

His name's Ryan. His engineers are
gonna be the ones implementing my
changes.

BOBBY

What's Ryan's last name?

LYDIA

(white lie)

I don't know.

BOBBY

And this guy's your boss? How long
have you known him?

LYDIA

What does that have to do with anything? Are you even listening to me right now?

BOBBY

Oh my ears are wide open, Lydia.

Lydia is totally taken back. Appalled by this jiu-jitsu move Bobby's trying to pull.

LYDIA

No. Nuh-uh. You know what? I do know his last name. But I'm not telling you. Because you don't get to be upset here. This is me. This is my life. My career. I try and include you in it and you act like a fucking sixth grader?

BOBBY

This guy hits on you, you lie to me about it, and I'm not supposed to get upset?

LYDIA

Maybe if you had your own life, you wouldn't be so concerned about the people who pass through mine.

BOBBY

What is that supposed to mean?

LYDIA

You're smothering me, Bobby. I feel you sitting at home, obsessing over every little thing. Checking in. Texting me. Sending me fucking memes all day. Get a job! Do something with yourself. Instead of just making my life harder.

BOBBY

How the hell did we get onto this?

LYDIA

It's all I see when I look at you now.

BOBBY

Is that why you're giving Ryan a good, hard look?

LYDIA

Grow up, dude.

BOBBY

No, since we're on the topic. Lemme ask you -- project manager of everybody's fucking life -- What do you want me to do, huh? Sell drapes? Flip burgers? I am working. I'm putting together a *plan*. It takes *time*.

LYDIA

Oh yeah? How's that going for you?

BOBBY

(stung)

You'd rather me be fucking miserable, wouldn't you? So long as you can trot me out at your cocktail parties. Because God forbid I have to tell your friends that I'm in-between things right now.

LYDIA

There's no shame in not knowing what you wanna do, Bobby. But that doesn't mean you get to piss your life away.

BOBBY

So that's it? That's your big advice? Be like everybody else? You want me to be a fucking loser? Is that it?

LYDIA

No. I'm asking you not to be one.
For once.

They glare at one another. Hateful. A long beat passes.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

I'm taking a shower. I can't even look at you right now.

(on her way out)

And do me a favor, ask yourself if *this* is something you want to keep doing. I'll be asking myself that too.

Disdain flickers as Lydia stomps off down the hall--

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The bedroom door slams shut. Lydia paces. Muttering curses. Then, her eyes flick to the CLOSET DOORS.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

MEANWHILE. Bobby stews in the other room. Trying to wrap his head around what's just happened. Just then we hear the CHIME of a notification. It's coming from Lydia's open LAPTOP.

Bobby approaches. Sure enough, a RED ICON waits there.

Bobby clicks it: '**RYAN CALDWELL WANTS TO BE YOUR FRIEND.**'

Bobby seethes. Slaps the laptop shut.

But after a beat he re-considers. Looking over his shoulder.

INT. CLOSET - NIGHT

Lydia flings open the double-doors. Retrieving the HAT BOX. She pops off the top, revealing the **TRYST VR HEADSET**.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bobby sits at Lydia's laptop. He searches RYAN CALDWELL'S PAGE. Popping through pictures: Ryan sailing in Connecticut. Him and his bros in Vegas.

Bobby clicks over to LYDIA'S PAGE now. He sifts through private messages. Searching for a smoking gun.

Frustrated he changes tack, opening a GOOGLE SEARCH. He stares at the search bar.

WORDS

Find Tryst match...

He pushes enter. The results appear instantaneously. He clicks the first hyperlink. It takes him to a MESSAGE BOARD.

WORDS (CONT'D)

Is it a good idea to meet your
Tryst match irl?

Another post--

WORDS (CONT'D)

I know it's crazy, but I feel a
REAL connection with this person.

Another post--

WORDS (CONT'D)
This is driving me crazy! What if
this is my soulmate?!

Bobby scowls. Hitting another dead-end.

He re-directs to the official TRYST WEBSITE. It's simply a LOG-IN SCREEN. The cursor blinks in the **PASSWORD** text box.

Bobby's eyes narrow...

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lydia sneaks into the hallway. Lugging SOMETHING wrapped up in a bath towel. She slips inside the bathroom.

The lock CLICKS behind her.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tight on BOBBY, leaning in, his face inches from the screen.

In a new tab, he highlights and copies Lydia's AUTO-STORED PASSWORD from her online banking website. He clicks back over to the TRYST sign-in page, pasting in the stolen information.

The mouse floats down to the SUBMIT button...

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

The shower hisses on. Steam swirls overhead. Lydia stares down at the PUSH NOTIFICATION:

Meet Tonight?

Her finger hovers over the "YES" and "NO" buttons.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bobby reacts, gaining access to Lydia's TRYST ACCOUNT. He filters through different options: Activity, Settings, Rendezvous. Finally he lands on a tab marked 'MY MATCHES.'

He clicks it. A username is revealed to us:

REARWINDOW12

Bobby recoils. Practically dumbfounded. Seeing the culprit's name right there in black and white practically knocks him over. He jumps to his feet. Turning off the laptop.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Lydia reacts, hearing the front door slam O.S. She snorts. Shaking her head. *Good fucking riddance.*

She stares down at the **TRYST VR HEADSET**, turning it over in her hands. Frustration furrows her brow as she takes a deep breath, pulling the headset on. Blocking out the world.

Welcome Back

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT - [VR SCAPE]

EVE rides the elevator alone. Lights strobe on her expressionless face as the elevator climbs higher and higher.

INT. ANTEROOM - NIGHT - [VR SCAPE]

The elevator DINGS. The doors slide open. Eve steps out.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT - [VR SCAPE]

A hallway stretches out in both directions. Eve walks towards a LARGE GLASS WALL MIRROR positioned in front of a chic accent table. Potted succulents sit atop white marble.

She studies her reflection. Staring with strange intensity.

Just then, ADAM appears on the other end of the hallway. He walks towards her, falling in and out of shadow as he passes beneath the evenly spaced lights.

As he draws nearer, we watch EVE's lips curl mischievously.

She's got an idea...

Just then, she grabs a POTTED SUCCULENT off the accent table and hurls it at the WALL MIRROR. There's an EXPLOSION of glass. Adam shields himself, jagged shards tinkling down all around them.

Adam uncovers himself. Taking stock of things.

In front of him, a DANGEROUS PATHWAY of BROKEN GLASS lines the floor between. She's ostensibly created a bed of nails.

Adam looks up at Eve. She coolly raises an eyebrow. Making her intentions clear: *You want it... Come get it...*

An **AFTERIMAGE** flickers.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT - [VR SCAPE]

Adam takes a cautious step forward. GLASS POPS AND CRUNCHES. His breath catches. Face contorting.

He glances at Eve -- not even a trace of pity in her eyes.

He steps forward... AGAIN... AND AGAIN... AND AGAIN...

An **AFTERIMAGE** sizzles

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT - [VR SCAPE]

He arrives in front of her. Stumbling. Dropping to a knee. Eve slides her fingers through the hair on the back of his skull. For a moment it looks like she may *comfort* him...

Instead, she grips his hair PULLING HIS FACE INTO HER CROTCH. Eve throws her head backward. Moaning. Eyelashes fluttering.

An **AFTERIMAGE** warps.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT - [VR SCAPE]

Eve's FOOT presses into Adam's chest. Adam stares up at her, INTENSE EYE CONTACT, as she LAYS HIM DOWN on the bed of BROKEN GLASS. He growls as she pushes down, INFILCTING PAIN.

Then... SHE LOWERS HERSELF ON TOP OF HIM.

Their fingers interlace as she GRINDS the backs of his palms into the floor. Then she begins to RIDE HIM.

Adam grunts. Sharply inhaling. Enjoying it now.

And as we pull back, the avatars punishing each other in a spiderweb of broken glass, we PRELAP: a DOOR BANGING.

INT. EDITING BAY - NIGHT

The BLUE LIGHT of the **TRYST HEADSET** pulses softly in the dark. LIAM's mouth hangs open as he sits there, jacked in. Totally catatonic. Then we hear more KNOCKING on the door.

The door handle starts to jiggle. Followed by muffled calls. Soon the effort INTENSIFIES. The handle flapping up and down. Finally Liam's head turns. Sensing something. CUT TO:

LIAM throws opens the door. WILD EYED. Standing half-hidden behind it. This startles the COWORKER on the other side.

LIAM

What?!

COWORKER

What the hell, man? We're locking doors now?

LIAM

What do you want?

COWORKER

I converted those audio files for you. You said you wanted them tonight.

LIAM

So send them over.

COWORKER

I did. Hours ago. I wanted to make sure you got them before I left.

(then)

Jesus man, get a grip.

The Coworker walks off. Liam chews his lip, checks his surroundings, and shuts the door.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Amy walks down the street, carrying an armful of groceries. Suddenly her expression turns:

Across the street MARTIN nips at a cigarette outside of a Dumpling House. He takes a final drag before walking off, disappearing around the corner.

Amy's eyes FLASH. She jaywalks across the street, catching him before he enters the restaurant.

AMY

Martin. Hi.

(off his look)

Amy. I'm Liam's girlfriend.

MARTIN

Amy. Yes. How are you?

AMY

Good. Yeah. How's that big two-part episode coming?

MARTIN

Pardon?

AMY

Liam told me that you guys were gonna be working late this week. Putting together this big finale episode or something?

MARTIN

Huh. No. We finished that ages ago.

AMY

Really? Is there any other big project that would be keeping him this late? Maybe I got it confused.

MARTIN

(squirming, at a loss)
Uhhh. I really couldn't say off-hand. Listen Amy, I have to get back inside.

AMY

Right. Yeah. Enjoy your dinner.

Martin exits into the restaurant. Amy leans against the wall. Struggling to reconcile it. Gut-punched by the implications. After a beat she glances up, noticing a nearby LIQUOR STORE.

She stares at it -- conflicted.

We PRELAP the sound of JANGLING KEYS.

INT. KITCHENETTE - NIGHT

Liam enters the dark apartment. He flicks on the light.

The space is EMPTY.

Liam walks around the corner, glancing down the hallway. Through the open door we see Amy passed out on their bed. Liam looks down at his watch, confused.

It's really early to be asleep.

He walks back into the kitchen. Pops open the refrigerator. He sifts through tupperware. Selecting one. Sniffing at it.

He takes a bite and his face SOURS.

He pulls out the TRASH CAN, about to toss the food when something else catches his eye.

He pulls out an **EMPTY WINE BOTTLE** from the garbage. He turns it over in his hand. Darkening. Putting the pieces together.

CUT TO BLACK

BOBBY (OVER BLACK)
So you're gonna get a kick outta
this.

LIAM (OVER BLACK)
Oh yeah?

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Bobby stares out the window as the train hurtles down the track. The lights of the tunnel flash by at high velocity. He wears a strange grin. Like he's tonguing at a rotten tooth.

BOBBY
I was rooting around in Lydia's
closet. Guess what I found?

Liam coolly raises an eyebrow -- waiting for the punch line.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Your little VR headset. Turns out
she's got one too. Can you believe
that shit?

Liam's face drops -- this is the *opposite* of funny. He sits there. DUMB. Practically paralyzed. Just blinking for a bit. Finally he stammers:

LIAM
Shit.

BOBBY
Yeah. Shit is right.

LIAM
(a beat, recomposing)
Well, it's like you said. It's just
a game. No big deal right?

Bobby doesn't answer. He just stares out the window instead.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

The uncomfortable silence has carried over as Bobby and Liam walk down the street. We favor Liam, mind racing as he tries to cobble together some type of response. Advice. Anything.

He opens his mouth, but the words clot in his throat.

Just then, they arrive at the COFFEE SHOP. As they disappear through the door we PRELAP:

BOBBY (O.S.)
You think your parents were
faithful?

EXT. PARK BENCH - DAY

They're sitting now. Drinking coffees in their familiar spot. Bobby gazes at the jagged skyline. Liam stares at his shoes.

LIAM
I guess so. My dad's too sweaty to
pull off an affair. You?

BOBBY
I dunno. I know my grandparents
weren't. It was different for them.
You see the girl from the
neighborhood. She seems nice.
Fertile. That was all you needed.
It was more of a transaction back
then. He did his thing. She did
hers. And then they'd sit down and
have dinner together. There wasn't
any pressure to find your *soulmate*.
Honestly, I think that's why all
our parents got divorced. Because
what the fuck do you do with that?
Tell you the truth, I don't think
either approach works.

Bobby scoffs. Run aground in self-defeating thoughts. Liam sits there quietly. Anguished. Then after a long pause.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
What do you think I should do?

Liam glances over at Bobby -- hardly able to look at him.

LIAM
Sleep on it.

Bobby nods. Chuckles a little. Suddenly aware of how crazy he must seem. He looks over at Liam. Real gratitude in his eyes.

BOBBY

Thanks for listening, man.

Liam swallows his guilt. Mustering a supportive little grin. The two of them sip their coffees in the quiet that follows.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Amy presides over the chaos of her classroom. Her eyes are glazed over, face in her hands as she lazily scans the room. Watching the kids play during their break:

A bucket of Legos is poured out, inciting a feeding frenzy.

Another group plays DUCK, DUCK, GOOSE. The kids giggle, testing their tiny turning radiiuses.

Finally we see a BOY and GIRL off to the side, lost in their own world. They pantomime domestic duties. Playing a game of house.

The boy finishes his chore. The girl kisses him on the head. Amy watches them, affected. PRELAP:

LYDIA (O.S.)

Heyyyy girl.

AMY (O.S.)

Heyyy.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Lydia and Amy hug on a heavily trafficked street corner.

AMY

Thanks for doing this with me.

LYDIA

Are you kidding? I love this stuff.
Whose wedding is it?

AMY

My cousin's. She's pregnant.

LYDIA

Oh. Well good news is she'll be
glowing in all the wedding pics.
Pregnancy is like super good for
your hair.

AMY
 I just hope I don't strangle the
 fetus when I'm tying the bustle.

They laugh together as they spin through the revolving door
 of a large DEPARTMENT STORE.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Amy stands before a mirror, trying on her BRIDESMAID dress. It looks decent enough, but we get the feeling Amy doesn't think so. She stares at her reflection. A little saddened.

She takes out her phone and snaps a picture. We see her text it to her MOTHER. Quickly the three dot bubble appears.

TEXT (MOM)
**WOW. So pretty! I can't believe how
 gorgeous you look.**

This elicits a tiny smile from Amy.

TEXT (MOM) (CONT'D)
**It'll be your turn soon, honey.
 You're going to make an absolutely
 beautiful bride.**

Amy stares down at the text. Her face puckering. She jams a hand to her mouth. Muzzling herself. But it's too late. She's unable to stop it.

She begins crying. Trying hard to keep silent. Just then:

LYDIA (O.S.)
 Well? How is it?!

Lydia knocks on the door, poking her head in. Amy turns around, revealing her current state. Tears streaking through her makeup. Lydia's face turns.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
 Oh. Amy.

As Lydia approaches, bringing Amy into a hug we PRELAP:

AMY (O.S.)
 We've just been in a really weird
 place for a long time.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - LATER

They sit hunkered down in a quiet corner of the store. Amy's momentarily calmed. Her face still a bit puffy from crying.

AMY

Liam and I don't really fight. It's just not us. That's why this distance is so strange. Scary. I just hope I haven't ruined everything.

LYDIA

Amy. Of course you haven't.

AMY

I've just been so awful to him recently.

LYDIA

You couldn't be if you tried.

AMY

You don't get it. Something happened.

Thick silence. Amy tugs at her sweater. Self-comforting. Concern spreads across Lydia's face.

LYDIA

What?

AMY

(hesitant)

So my sobriety thing? It's not just a fun little -- whatever. A month or two before I met you, I did something really, really fucked up. That's why I don't drink anymore.

(correcting herself)

Didn't drink anymore.

She strains slightly before continuing:

AMY (CONT'D)

I had been leaning on Liam pretty hard to get engaged. You know a *shit or get off the pot* kinda thing. One night we were out drinking with friends and Liam got called into work. I stayed out. And I got really drunk.

(MORE)

AMY (CONT'D)

That night, Liam came home and found me in our bed, making out with someone I met at the bar. A girl. A total stranger.

Lydia reacts to this.

LYDIA

Whoa.

AMY

Yeah.

LYDIA

Has this kind of thing ever happened before?

AMY

God no. Not even in college. Honestly I didn't even remember what she looked like until we saw her at the grocery store.

(then)

The whole thing's such a blur.

Amy frowns, fidgeting ever so slightly as we PRELAP:

AMY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I guess I had just been feeling really insecure.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

They're walking now.

AMY

About us. The future. I think I just needed him to notice that.

Lydia side-eyes her -- debating whether or not to speak up.

LYDIA

Amy. Are you sure that's what this is? Cause I gotta be honest. I just don't see that.

AMY

What do you mean?

LYDIA

You don't strike me as the vindictive type. I'm mad at you so I'm gonna fuck somebody?

(MORE)

LYDIA (CONT'D)

That's not you. Plus, when I'm drunk? I'm not rationalizing things. Or thinking about my life in capital letters. I just do what I want.

(then)

Maybe this isn't a you and Liam thing? Maybe it's coming from somewhere else?

Amy's struck by this. It's a scary thought. One she's clearly never considered. She blinks at it. Processing for a beat.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Either way, you need to let yourself off the hook. Because crying in dressing rooms? You don't deserve that shit.

Lydia takes Amy's hand. Giving it a squeeze.

Amy cracks a half-hearted smile before dodging eye contact. Mulling things.

INT. BEDROOM - LIAM AND AMY'S APARTMENT - DAY

MORNING. Liam dresses for work. Doing up the final button of his shirt. He glances over his shoulder.

Amy lays asleep in bed.

Liam stares at her for a long beat. Shamefaced.

She's right there, but somehow she feels so far away.

For a moment it looks like he might wake her. But he thinks better of it, shouldering on his coat before exiting.

We hold on Amy as we hear the front door shut.

Just then her eyes pop open.

She was pretending to be asleep.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Liam stares off into another dimension as he walks down the street. We begin a **CROSS-CUT SEQUENCE**:

IN THE EDITING BAY:

Liam stares at his monitor. Totally numb.

He clicks through old PICTURES of him and Amy.

IN THE SHOWER:

The AVATARS make love in the shower.

Skin glistening. Pressing the glass.

Their figures half-obsured in rolling steam.

IN THE EDITING BAY:

Liam lands on a treasured photo of him and Amy.

They smile, looking like the PERFECT COUPLE.

IN THE SHOWER:

Adam kisses Eve.

Hungry. Unable to stop.

ON THE STREET:

Liam grimaces. Fighting off a migraine.

IN THE EDITING BAY:

The camera slowly pushes in on AMY.

Her image begins to FLATTEN OUT.

Her smile PIXELATING ever so slightly.

IN THE SHOWER:

Adam stares into Eve's big EYES.

A feeling of REAL INTIMACY.

ON THE STREET:

Liam THUDS shoulders with a passerby.

The passerby turns around. SHOUTING.

But Liam doesn't notice. Continuing on like a zombie.

IN THE EDITING BAY:

Liam toggles between the photo and a SIMILAR ONE.

The couple caught in-between smiles.

The artifice of the moment EXPOSED.

IN THE SHOWER:

Adam THRUSTS with all his might.

Burying his forehead into the glass wall.

He glances over.

WATER DROPLETS crawl up the glass like GRAVITY IN REVERSE.

Shocked, he blinks.

And the GLITCH corrects itself.

IN THE EDITING BAY:

Liam toggles between the two pictures.

The images FLASHING BY.

BLURRING TOGETHER.

IN THE SHOWER:

Adam reacts to this. HORRIFIED.

But it's too late now. His eyes PINCH SHUT.

He comes HARD.

Shoulders slumping. Catching his breath.

He picks his forehead off the glass.

And then his face drops in SHOCK.

It isn't Eve he's looking down at.

It's **LYDIA**.

Her eyes glazed in ECSTASY.

A satisfied smile curls her lips as we **END CROSSCUT SEQUENCE**.

INT. EDITING BAY - DAY

Liam jolts awake. Totally shaken by this nightmare. He blinks. Disoriented. Almost stuck between two realities.

His disembodied face floats in the air. Pulled from the blackness by the glow of his monitor.

Slowly he backs away from the screen.

Turning it off.

His **AFTERIMAGE** burns into the blackness. Lingering there.

INT. KITCHENETTE - LIAM & AMY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Amy leans on the counter. Drumming her fingers on the tile. She pulls out her phone. Texting Liam:

TEXT (AMY)
When do you think you'll be home
tonight--

She deletes the words before she finishes. Frustrated by the thought of another night spent waiting around. She stares off. Weighing her options.

She texts Bobby:

TEXT (AMY) (CONT'D)
You got any plans tonight?

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Bobby stands outside of a 2nd story walk-up. He cinches his drawstring hoodie, bracing himself against the freezing cold.

Just then, he smiles. A puff of warm air escapes his mouth.

BOBBY
Yo!

Amy appears nearby. Jogging over. Her skin flushed with cold. Bobby's clearly tickled by her presence. This isn't the norm.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Look at you, all spontaneous and
shit.

AMY
(teeth chattering)
Can we please go inside.

BOBBY
What do you mean? It's on the roof.

Amy gives him a DEATH GLARE. Bobby grins mischievously.
Having fun with her. She snorts a half smile. Exasperated.

AMY
Funny. Can we go now?

As Bobby pulls her in, ushering her up the building's stairs:

BOBBY
When's the last time you went out
on a school night? What are your
kids gonna say?

AMY
Yeah, well -- they ain't learning
shit tomorrow.

As they laugh together, we PRELAP a VIBE-Y BASELINE.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

We're in a HOUSE-PARTY. Artsy hipsters take Snapchats of each other, laughing drunkenly, putting on for the camera.

Their expensive clothes are designed to look like shit, burning through daddy's money at breakneck speed.

Bobby and Amy appear in the doorway. Amy takes one look inside and her eyes BULGE. *What have I gotten myself into?*

Bobby glances back. Reading her mind. *Just relax, okay?*

He walks off toward the KITCHEN. Snaking through the crowd. Amy takes a deep breath. Committing herself.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

KEG BEER froths as it splashes into a red solo cup. Music plays so loud we can't hear ourselves think. Amy watches Bobby fill two cups. Trying hard not to look squeamish.

He offers her the cup. Amy looks at it. Hesitating a beat. Bobby just shrugs like: *hey it's your call.*

Finally, Amy grabs it. Taking a big swig.

INT. APARTMENT - LATER

Amy LAUGHS hysterically. Listening to a stranger's story.

STRANGER

The poor kid, has a peanut allergy, and everyday his best friend gets a Reeses cup for lunch. For months my dawgs sitting there, watching this, lusting after these peanut butter cups. One day he snaps. He screams: *I can't take it anymore!* He eats one, stabs himself with an epi-pen and tells his friend to call 9-1-1. Obviously, dude's my hero.

Amy cracks up. Looking lighter. Finally enjoying herself.

INT. APARTMENT - LATER

Amy and Bobby dance in a throng of people. Amy's eyes are closed, bouncing with the music. Looking more and more free.

She opens her eyes. Bobby looks down at her. Smiling wide.

AMY

(yelling over music)

Thank you.

BOBBY

For what?

AMY

For this. I really needed it.

BOBBY

Don't mention it

(re: solo cup)

Want more?

AMY

Sure.

He grabs her cup. Sliding through the makeshift dance floor. Amy continues to dance, eyes open now, scanning the room.

Just then she notices a WOMAN, leaning on the opposite wall. She's handsome. Punky short hair. Lipstick. She makes no attempt to hide her interest. Eyes wandering all over Amy.

Amy quickly looks elsewhere. But a moment later, her eyes flick back. The WOMAN grins at her. Enjoying the view.

Just then, Bobby returns.

BOBBY
Keg's tapped.
(handing her a beer)
Enjoy it, okay?

Amy dances. Gulping down it down. Something's come over her now as she lets loose. Grinding on Bobby. Hair tousled. Sweaty. And every so often, she steals glimpses of the Woman.

People pass in the foreground but her gaze remains constant. Shameless. Sexy. And as the Woman smokes her cigarette, we--

PRELAP keys JANGLING in a door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LIAM & AMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Amy and Bobby spill into the dark apartment. Amy clops off in her heels, swaying slightly as she flicks on the lights. Bobby looks around the empty apartment.

BOBBY
Seriously?

AMY
Yep.

BOBBY
Where the hell is he?

AMY
Work. Maybe.

BOBBY
That's brutal.

AMY
Tell me about it.

Amy tosses her keys onto the counter. Plops onto the couch.

Bobby takes the seat next to her. He kicks off his shoes. Helping himself to a nearby blanket. He spreads it over their laps. A careful 50/50 split. Amy smiles at this.

BOBBY
What?

She shakes her head. Kicking off her own heels.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
It's nice, right?

Bobby reclines. Lifting his feet onto her lap. Amy side-eyes.

AMY
Uhhh. What?

BOBBY
They're not just gonna massage
themselves, Amy.

He pokes her in a soft spot with his toes. She reacts.
Playfully shucking his feet. Resisting the urge to laugh.

AMY
Your feet literally could not smell
any worse.

BOBBY
That's how you know they're ready
for a rub.

AMY
Well thank God that's not in my
purview.

She pushes his feet again. He raises his hands. Pacifying.

They readjust. Falling into a kind of half-cuddle. His arm
atop the couch as she eases down next to him. Head resting on
his shoulder.

Their faces glow blue as the TV turns on. They sit in silence
as Amy clicks the remote. Scrolling through endless options.

AMY (CONT'D)
What's Lydia up to tonight?

BOBBY
Uch. Who knows.

AMY
You guy's okay?

BOBBY
Can we not talk about it, maybe?

AMY

Sorry.

BOBBY

It's fine. It's just nice not to
think about it for once. You know?

AMY

Yeah. I do.

Amy puts a comforting hand on top of his.

Bobby stares down at it. His expression TIGHTENING. Suddenly aware of the warmth of her body. The graze of her breath.

Amy settles down deeper into the crook of his arm.

AMY (CONT'D)

Relationships are hard, aren't
they? If you're not careful, they
can turn you into a crazy person.

BOBBY

I dunno. Not all of them do.

Bobby runs his thumb along Amy's hand. Caressing it almost. Now it's Amy's turn to clam up. Heart pumping in her throat. Her eyes flick up at his lips. Feeling drunk. Spun around.

We hold here for a beat in TENSE SILENCE.

Finally--

BOBBY (CONT'D)

If we're gonna watch this thing we
should probably put it on now.

And just like that the spell is broken. Amy jumps to her feet. Her voice too loud as she quickly responds:

AMY

Yeah. Lemme just throw on some
comfy pants.

Amy disappears into the bedroom.

Bobby winces. Upset with himself. Immediately regretting it.

He sighs, grabbing the nearby LAPTOP off a couch cushion. Bobby opens it. The browser's filled with a MILLION TABS.

Bobby smirks. X-ing out of Liam's tabs. But then he stops--

On the screen we see LYDIA'S FACEBOOK PAGE. We're deep in her photo albums. A SELFIE is on the screen. She winks at camera.

Bobby blinks at this.

He pushes the 'BACK BUTTON.' A different picture pops up. Lydia and her girls painting the town red. They're striking poses. Nailing the skinny arm. He pushes the back button again. And now a BIKINI SHOT appears. Cleavage everywhere.

Bobby sours at this.

He clicks the button more rapidly. Pictures of Lydia fly by at high speed. Someone's looked through HUNDREDS of them.

Bobby closes the tab. He sits there quietly for a beat. Disoriented. Unable to shake this niggling thought.

He opens a GOOGLE SEARCH. He stares intensely at the cursor. Teetering on the edge of something.

He types:

WORDS
Find Tryst match.

He clicks. The familiar search results appear. But this time the HYPERLINK IS PURPLE. *Someone's been here already.*

Just then, we hear Amy re-emerging from the hall.

Bobby reacts, shutting the laptop. Trying to act normal. Amy takes a seat on the couch, a little further away this time.

BOBBY
Amy, do the words: Rearwindow12
mean anything to you?

AMY
Oh my God. He hasn't recruited you
too, has he?
(off Bobby's blank look)
It's Liam's gamer tag. He thinks
it's cool. I think it's fucking
creepy to be honest. You boys and
your video games.
(then)
Why do you ask?

Bobby shrugs. Staring straight ahead. "No reason." Amy thinks nothing of it. Clicking the TV REMOTE to life.

We hold here. Bobby brooding in the bluish haze of the TV.

INT. EDITING BAY - DAY

Liam sleeps on the ratty spare couch of his editing bay. His coat is draped across him like a makeshift blanket. Then he's roughly shaken awake.

MARTIN (O.S.)
Liam -- what are you doing here?

Liam jolts awake. Throwing off his coat. Frightening Martin. He looks ROUGH. Hair matted. Lips chapped. For a moment he struggles to place himself. Reality becoming more attenuated.

Martin stares down at him. Horrified.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
 What's going on with you, man?

LIAM
 (sobering)
 Just a late one. No big deal.

MARTIN
 I think you should go home.

LIAM
 I just need a coffee is all.

MARTIN
 No. *Go home.* Take the rest of the day. You need to clean yourself up, Liam. You're scaring people.

Martin exits.

Liam sits there. Chastised. Struggling to shake this off. He buries his face in his hands. Just now realizing the scope of his workplace fuck-up.

On cue, his phone BUZZES on the nearby coffee table.

Liam stops breathing. Blood running cold. He glances between his fingers. Hardly able to look.

Meet Today?

Liam glares at it. Sullen. Bucking against the urge. He grinds his teeth. Reasserting himself. Suddenly he stands--

Liam reaches behind the couch, pulling the **TRYST VR HEADSET** from its hiding spot. Roughly he shoves it in his backpack. Zipping it shut.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Lydia stands at the head of a long table. Finishing up her big presentation. Floor to ceiling windows provide a CEO's vantage of the city. SENIOR EXECUTIVES sit around the table.

LYDIA

So if we're really going to focus on product excellence, we need to integrate in-stream ads across all devices. And not just the app. Any questions?

She turns from her presentation and faces the room. Exuding confidence. Like a gymnast who just stuck the landing.

TOM (the big boss) stands, clapping enthusiastically. Nearby, **RYAN** (from the bar) follows suit. Looking far less amused.

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

Lydia blows into the stairwell. Pumped up. Allowing herself this private moment of victory. *She worked so hard for this.*

But just as fast, the smile vanishes from her face.

VOICE #1 (O.S.)
What'd you think of her presentation?

VOICE #2 (O.S.)
Eh. Typical UX bullshit. Another dog and pony show.

Lydia creeps towards the railing, looking over the edge:

Two floors below, a couple CO-WORKERS sit on concrete steps, passing a VAPORIZER between them. Smoke plumes as their voices carry throughout the stairwell.

VOICE #1 (O.S.)
What do you mean?

VOICE #2 (O.S.)
Bro. Tom's always pulling up the hot, young female managers. Why do you think she's been fast-tracked?
I mean, everybody knows Rod did most of the brain-work on her team.

VOICE #1
Shit man. I wouldn't mind riding her coattails to the top.

The two of them stand, disappearing from view. As they exit:

VOICE #2
That's not the only thing I'd like
to ride...

We hold on LYDIA as their laughter echoes off the walls.

PODCAST (V.O.)
So a bit of follow up.

INT. ELEVATOR BANK - DAY

Elevator doors slide open. The lunch crowd spilling out.

PODCAST (V.O.)
Several weeks ago we did a podcast
on the Tryst VR headset. Since then
we've been inundated with listener
comments. You've written. You've
called. You've sent us messages.

We spot Lydia in wash of people. Something's breaking in her.

PODCAST (V.O.)
So today we're going to play some
of your responses. Our first
message comes from Mariel in
Arlington, Texas.

Lydia floats through the crowded lobby. Numb to the world.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

Lydia exits the building. A WOMAN'S VOICE filters in now:

PODCAST (V.O.)
So I'm an attorney who works on
behalf of womens' advocacy groups.
And I have some serious ethical
issues with this technology.

Lydia walks past smoke-breakers. Coffee-talkers. Fountains.

PODCAST (V.O.)
The whole scheme feels tantamount
to sexual assault!

EXT. SHOPPING DISTRICT - DAY

Lydia continues. Back-dropped by a mosaic of ADVERTISEMENTS.
Buy this car. Wear this dress. Ads filtering seamlessly.

We hear a NEW VOICE now:

PODCAST (V.O.)

As a psychiatrist, what I'm dealing with is unprecedented. We're seeing patients show signs of physical dependency. Changes in mood. Weight loss.

We pass tourists marveling at the TV boards towering above.

PODCAST (V.O.)

I feel like we're on the cusp of a dangerous phase change here: reality is now optional.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

We follow Lydia as she dodges taxis. Crossing the street. A MALE VOICE filters in now. Tremulous. Slightly nervous.

PODCAST (V.O.)

Recently I suffered an accident that left me paralyzed from the waist down. I'll spare you the details, but adjusting's been hard.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Lydia gazes out the scuffed window of a subway car.

PODCAST (V.O.)

That's why this Tryst machine has been a godsend. To be able to experience sex again, its, uh--
 (voice quavering)
 It's meant everything to me.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Lydia enters the HIGH LINE, a city park built atop a suspended subway track. Our HOST's voice returns.

PODCAST (V.O.)

Our last listener comment comes from Shelby, a fourteen year old from Pittsburgh.

EXT. HIGH LINE - DAY

Lydia drifts through the park. Taking in all the artwork.

PODCAST (V.O.)

She writes: "A few weeks ago I stole my sister's Tryst headset. My boyfriend had been pressuring me to have sex. And, as a virgin, I thought it would be a good idea to practice. But now having done both, I find myself confused. Is it wrong that I prefer one over the other? What does that mean, exactly?"

She passes statuary. Digital silhouettes projected on walls.

PODCAST (V.O.)

These are just *some* of the many responses we've received. Having sifted through story after story, I still have more questions than answers. However a clear theme did emerge.

Then Lydia stops. Not struck by the words. Something else.

PODCAST (V.O.)

Whether virtual or physical, sex will always be a *human* endeavour. Remember that the next time you plug in. That's it for us today. We'll be back next--

Lydia plucks the earbuds from her ears.

Across the way, a group of TEENAGERS loiter, cutting class. The group of boys clown a GIRL. She clutches her bookbag. Body language making it clear she's not enjoying herself.

On Lydia, deeply affected. She anguishes for this girl. Her fate. *It doesn't change...*

We hold on her, overcome in this moment, as the honk and bustle of the city slowly washes back in. Enveloping her.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Bobby glares out the window of his coffee shop. The buzz and whir of the fancy machines fail to provide him any solace.

He glances back at his laptop. Sneering. Like *that's* gonna calm him. He quickly slaps it shut, worrying his lips with his fingers. Then an idea slowly takes shape. He glances down at his PHONE. Thinking for a beat.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Amy's phone sits face-up on her desk. Amy blurs by in the background, chasing seven-year-olds to and fro. Just then, her phone VIBRATES.

TEXT (BOBBY)
Stop by my place after work?

INT. BOBBY'S STUDIO - DAY

Amy fidgets impatiently, sitting on the edge of Bobby's ratty futon. She fiddles with jewelry. Unable to keep still.

Just then, Bobby emerges from the kitchen. Offering wine.

AMY
Oh, Bobby, I don't want any of
that. I can't stay long.

BOBBY
You're gonna want it. Trust me.

Bobby sinks down next to her. Amy reluctantly accepts it.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Look Amy, I don't know how to tell
you this. But what I have to say:
it's gonna suck.

AMY
Okay...

Bobby hesitates. Clinking the wineglass with his fingernail. Amy reacts. Growing impatient.

AMY (CONT'D)
What?

BOBBY
(softly)
Liam's cheating on you, Amy.

Amy reacts like Bobby told an off-color joke. Souring at it.

AMY
Uhhh... Excuse me?

BOBBY
It gets worse. He's cheating on you
with Lydia.

AMY
(almost leaving)
Okay. If this is some weird prank,
I gotta tell you, I'm not down for
it. Thanks for the wine, but--

BOBBY
They got matched on Tryst. I found
Lydia's headset. Broke into her
account. It's been happening for a
while now. I have *proof*, Amy.

With that, Amy sits back. Staggered. Hardly able to absorb it. Bobby considers his shoes. Unable to look her in the eye.

AMY
(dawning)
You're serious...

He nods. Allowing her a silent moment before continuing.

BOBBY
I think in the beginning I tried to
convince myself it wasn't a big
deal. That was until I saw the
change in her. *The sneaking around.*
The distance. The lying. It's clear
to me now that this isn't some fad.

He looks up at Amy. His words affecting her. Resonating.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
They took us for granted Amy.
Allowed us to feel like shit. I
don't know about you, but I'm
fucking tired of it.

He slides his hand onto her thigh, and immediately the mood in the room CHANGES. *Ulterior motives becoming clear...*

BOBBY (CONT'D)
We deserve to feel good again.

Amy peers down at her leg. Then up at Bobby. Dumbstruck.

AMY
Are you fucking kidding me?

BOBBY
Don't pretend like you don't want
it too.

Her face puckers with revulsion as she slaps his hand away, bolting to her feet. Bobby scrambles after her. Reaching out.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Amy--

He tries to grab her, but she flinches badly. Screaming out:

AMY
Don't fucking touch me, Bobby.
You think, because you're in pain --
you get to fuck me now? Is that it?
Because of this Tryst thing, you're
entitled to some revenge pussy? Is
that how it works??
(then)
Jesus Christ, Bobby. How could you?

Amy's face twists. Hurt. Betrayed. Let down by a friend. After all these years, he's finally shown his true colors.

Her eyes shimmer, staring down at him in disbelief. Then--

AMY (CONT'D)
Wanna know why none of your
relationships last? You're selfish,
Bobby. It's why I dumped you. And
it's why she's gonna dump you too.

Bobby reacts. Gut-punched. Amy grabs her things, walking off towards the door. But before she can exit, he calls out.

BOBBY (O.S.)
That's not why you dumped me, Amy.
I think we both know the *real*
reason.

Amy stops and turns. Bobby practically snarls. Lashing out.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
You two were cute together last
night. I hope you got her number.
(then)
I may be an asshole, Amy. But at
least I'm not pretending.

And as Amy's EYES WIDEN, totally knocked off balance, CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Amy fast-walks. Head spinning. Cheeks flushed. Horns honk. Taxis streak by. Confusion and noise surround us. Yet Amy moves through it all **TOTALLY NUMB. LOST IN HER OWN MIND.**

We PRELAP a DOOR SLAM.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LIAM & AMY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Amy leans against the door. Exhausted. The silence of the room providing us momentary relief. Then she opens her eyes:

Liam stands in the hall. He looks like shit. Red-rimmed. Bedraggled. He's so affected by the sight of her he can hardly speak. After a long pause, he manages to whisper:

LIAM

Hi.

AMY

Hey.

They stare at each other for a long time. Neither of them knowing what to say. How to feel.

AMY (CONT'D)

What are you doing home?

LIAM

They gave me the day off. I wanted to see you.

Amy gives him a thin-lipped smile. Liam closes the distance now. Scooping her up into a big hug. We watch as Liam melts into it. It's like water in the desert for him.

But Amy just stares off into the void. Indulging him, but feeling nothing.

LIAM (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I've been so off lately.
I just -- I miss you.

AMY

Liam.

Amy pulls out of the hug. Facing him. Looking into his eyes. About to start the bigger conversation. But she hesitates.

AMY (CONT'D)

I need to shower. How about you run out and grab us some food?

(MORE)

AMY (CONT'D)
We'll have dinner together. How's
that sound?

Liam smiles at her. Buoyed. He kisses the top of her head.

LIAM
Sounds great.

He pulls on a coat and exits the apartment. Amy exhales big.
Burying her face in her hands.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Amy enters the room. Sitting down on the edge of the bed.
That's when she notices Liam's BACKPACK leaned against the
nightstand. Amy blinks at it. Looking at it with skepticism.

She pulls it over. Unzips it.

Her face turns as she pulls out the **TRYST VR HEADSET**. She
rotates it in her hands. Staring down at the source of so
much pain. Disgusted, she tosses it on the bed.

But a beat later, her eyes drift back. Her expression
changing now. Suddenly she has the look of a cliff diver,
peaking over the ledge...

And as her face hardens. Growing resolute. We--

CUT TO BLACK

INT. HOTEL - FOYER - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

Bare feet leave shadows on the black marble floor as ADAM
tiptoes into the HOTEL. His eyes are like saucers. Mouth
totally agape. It's more real than he could've ever imagined.

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

He runs his fingers along the wall. It's cool to the touch.

INT. HOTEL - FRONT DESK - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

He loiters behind the counter. Pressing the phone to his ear.

INT. HOTEL - MIRROR - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

He looks at himself in the mirror. Awestruck by his dangling
manhood. He wiggles his hips. Testing its flop.

INT. HOTEL - HALLWAY - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

Elevator doors slide open. A LONG CORRIDOR lined with rooms stretches out in front of us. All of them are shut except a single **OPEN DOOR** looming at the end of the hall.

We're on Adam -- considering it.

He takes a step toward it. Then another. And another.

Just then, he notices SHADOWS moving beneath the row of doors. Other guests. God knows what they're up to.

Unsettled, Adam shifts his focus back to the door. Getting closer now. And as he takes a deep breath, ENTERING IT, we--

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOTEL - ROOM - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

A **DOORWAY**. Total blackness beyond it. Everything's still.

After a few seconds ADAM emerges from the open door. The audience will recognize the moment. IT'S THE FILM'S OPENING SHOT. Adam takes a step inside and stops in his tracks.

EVE stands naked in the center of the room. Waiting for him.

They lock eyes.

AFTERIMAGE

The COUPLE stand before one another with perfect posture...

AFTERIMAGE

Eve slowly extends her hand... taking him by the wrist...

AFTERIMAGE

She lifts his hand to her mouth. We hear the slick pop of saliva with INTENSE CLARITY AND VOLUME...

AFTERIMAGE

She guides his hand downwards. Slowly passing her breasts... Her perfect abdomen... Descending towards her pubic hair...

AFTERIMAGE

A small exhale escapes her lips, yet we experience it like the RUSH OF A SUBWAY CAR. Her eyes bulge as she SLIDES HIS FINGERS INSIDE HER...

AFTERIMAGE

Adam's eyes SLOWLY RIM CLOSED...

AFTERIMAGE

Eve secures the BLINDFOLD on him... Blocking out the world...

AFTERIMAGE

Adam tumbles backward onto the bed... falling WEIGHTLESSLY... We watch as Adam surrenders himself to her...

AFTERIMAGE

FINGERS crawl up his inner thighs... Adam shudders as she makes her way up his body... leaving nothing untouched...

AFTERIMAGE

Eve nibbles his ear... Climbing atop him... TAKING CONTROL... Adam reacts as EVE GUIDES HIM INSIDE HER...

AFTERIMAGE

His teeth gnash below his mask... ADAM LOSES HIMSELF IN IT... BREATHING RATCHETING UP... THRUSTING with all of his might...

AFTERIMAGE

Their pace quickens... Eve's eyes pinch shut... She lets out a SATISFIED SCREAM... HURTLING TOWARDS THE EDGE...

AFTERIMAGE

ADAM RIPS off THE BLINDFOLD... EXPRESSION ON FIRE, AS--

Eve's EYES SPARKLE down at him... ABSOLUTELY MESMERIZING... More BEAUTIFUL than anything he's ever seen before...

AFTERIMAGE

Adam REACTS... Blown away... the experience ROCKING him... We're witnessing something TRANSFORMATIONAL... SPIRITUAL...

ADAM SMILES NOW... FULLY PRESENT... CONNECTING WITH HER... THE FINAL PUSH... AND AS ORGASM GRIPS... ROILING HIS FACE...

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL - ROOM - LATER [VR SCAPE]

They lay in a heap. Totally spent. Staring up at the ceiling. Adam and Eve remain perfectly still. FROZEN IN TIME. Then--

ADAM
Why did you start doing this?

Eve reacts. His voice surprising her. It's the first time they've spoken. After a moment she returns her gaze to the ceiling. Reflecting. Fingers tracing circles in the sheets.

EVE
I dunno. Freedom I guess. The freedom to do what I wanted. To figure out what I wanted. What I like.

ADAM
But it's not real.

EVE
I dunno.
(then)
I think people are their truest selves when they're wearing a mask.

The room falls silent. Adam chews on that. Eve lets out a deep, post-coital sigh. Luxuriating. Almost to herself:

EVE (CONT'D)
God I needed this today.

ADAM
(beat)
Why?

Eve turns. Studying his face. Suddenly feeling VULNERABLE. Unsure how to feel about this stranger asking questions.

They stare at each other for a long beat. On the cusp of something new. *Are we really gonna cross that line?*

INT. KITCHEN - LIAM & AMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

AMY stares into space. WIDE-EYED. Slowly sipping tea. Attempting to wrap her head around what just happened.

LIAM (O.S.)
I got your favorite. Shrimp Pad Thai. Extra peanut goop.

Liam appears. Dropping the PAPER BAG onto the counter top.

Liam glances over at her as he unpacks the bag. Something about her posture is strange to him.

LIAM (CONT'D)
You okay?

Amy snaps out of it. Eyes fluttering. Slowly re-animating.

AMY
Yeah, no... I'm good.

Liam smiles. Softening. Breathing a sigh of relief.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Liam and Amy make love. Their first time in a while. A stark contrast to the VR sex. It's arrhythmic. Clumsy. *Normal*.

LIAM thrusts away. Eyes pinched shut. So engrossed he doesn't notice AMY, fully glazed, HER MIND SOMEWHERE ELSE ENTIRELY.

EVE (V.O.)
What's your deepest fantasy?

And as the ghost of a smile curls her lips, we **BEGIN MONTAGE:**

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Amy snores softly. Liam slowly rises. Slipping out of bed.

ADAM (V.O.)
Honestly? I don't think I have one.

Quietly, Liam opens the closet doors -- hiding his BACKPACK.

ADAM (V.O.)
I know that's super lame, but I've been so -- *nervous* -- to try new things. Too afraid to walk down the darkened corners of my mind.

He pulls out his phone. We watch him "DELETE" the TRYST APP.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

THE NEXT MORNING. Liam shoulders his coat, exiting the room. Just as the door closes, Amy's eyes POP OPEN--

ADAM (V.O.)
I think for fear of being judged.
Or looking foolish.

INT. SEX SHOP - DAY

A HAND snatches a brand-new **TRYST VR HEADSET** off a shelf.

ADAM (V.O.)

That's what's so special about this place: It takes the curse off not knowing. In fact, it's *fun* not to know. To see yourself as a mystery again. Full of possibilities.

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

A FIRE PLACE roars. Adam and Eve make love in the foreground. Their pace slow. Tender. Luxuriating in every minute of it.

ADAM (V.O.)

God, it feels like I can actually talk to you. I mean, could you say this stuff to anybody out there?

AFTERWARD, they lay together. Sprawled. In no hurry at all.

INT. BASEMENT PARTY - NIGHT

Strobes FLASH over Bobby's sweaty face. He dances alone in some shitty Brooklyn basement. Looking angry and heartsick.

EVE (V.O.)

No way. I've never said any of this stuff to anyone. It's too personal.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bobby has dispassionate sex with a stranger. Barely there.

EVE (V.O.)

Honestly, I kinda feel like I'm faking it out there.

LATER. He composes a TEXT to Lydia. Pushing the SEND BUTTON. We see a string of past attempts. All have gone unanswered.

INT. LYDIA'S WORK - DAY

Lydia works. Tom and Ryan chat nearby. Lydia scowls at them.

EVE (V.O.)

I say the right things not because
I want to, but because I know
that's what people want to hear.

INT. HOTEL - RESTAURANT - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

Adam gives Eve oral in the booth of an ABANDONED RESTAURANT. Her eyes pinch shut -- shoulders quaking with climax.

EVE (V.O.)

That's why in here -- it's like I
can fucking breathe again. There's
no bullshit rules. Or hoops to jump
through. For once I can just be me.
No compromises.

(then)

Can I ask you something?

INT. HOTEL - ROOM - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

Eve services Adam by a LARGE WINDOW. Through tinted glass we can just make out LIGHTS twinkling in the city beyond.

ADAM (V.O.)

What?

INT. HOTEL - BED - LATER [VR SCAPE]

Adam watches Eve sleep. He delicately strokes her hair. Completely enamored. Real tenderness in his eyes.

EVE (V.O.)

If you could do anything, totally
free of consequence, what would it
be?

INT. HOTEL - POOL - LATER [VR SCAPE]

UNDERWATER. The electric blue of the pool fills the frame. Then an EXPLOSION of bubbles as they cannonball into view.

ADAM (V.O.)

Honestly?

Adam and Eve swim towards each other. Free of the bounds of gravity. They stare deeply into each other's eyes.

ADAM (V.O.)

This.

As they kiss, bodies tumbling weightless, we **END MONTAGE.**

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. EDITING BAY - DAY

Liam hovers over his monitor. His eyes are bloodshot and raw. Stubble dots his chin, marking the passage of time.

He looks different now. Hollowed out. Reduced. Like a drunk who's forty days sober. White-knuckling his sobriety.

On cue, he leans back. Grimacing through a tension headache.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Liam nips at a cigarette. His shoulders tighter than ever. Frustrated he drops the butt. Grinding it underfoot.

INT. KITCHEN - LIAM & AMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Silverware clinks as Amy and Liam eat another wordless meal. Liam glances up at her. She's practically miles away.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Liam stares at the ceiling. Mouth sour. His face tight.

Amy's nasal-y breathing bleeds in from O.S. His expression tweaks. Clearly bothered by it.

He glances at the CLOSET DOOR, gritting his teeth. Trying his best to ride out this urge. We watch as his eyes shimmer with desperation. Expression crumbling.

OFF Liam, realizing it's no use--

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Liam's PHONE glows blue in the darkness. We watch as he re-downloads the TRYST APP. The familiar icon reappears. Taunting him. Liam stares at it. Letting out a weary sigh.

Meet Tonight?

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - [VR SCAPE]

Bare legs stride into view. Feet leave shadows on the marble as ADAM moves through the abandoned hotel. Eyelids heavy. A subtle grin ghosting his face -- *God, it's good to be back.*

INT. FRONT DESK - [VR SCAPE]

EVE stands at the front desk, her back turned. Adam watches her for a beat. Hungry-eyed. Transfixed. Wetting his lips.

He sidles up behind her. Entering her personal space. He lifts a finger to her lower back, tracing an 'X' across her skin. Her shoulders tremble in response.

Adam smirks at this, burying his face in the nape of her neck. But just then--

EVE (O.S.)
I thought we agreed we were done
playing games.

Adam stiffens. Practically FROZEN in place. Slowly, he lifts his head up. Eyes BULGING as takes a cautious step backward.

HE'S NEVER HEARD HER VOICE BEFORE. She turns. Facing him now.

EVE (CONT'D)
I thought maybe tonight you could
choke me? How does that sound?

OFF Adam, stammering -- looking like he's seen a ghost.

EXT. PARK BENCH - DAY

Liam chews his fingernails. Leg bouncing up and down. It doesn't look like he slept much. Jittery with nervous energy.

Liam's eyes dart around the park. Weekend bikers ride by. Groups of kids play freeze tag. Life unfolds like normal.

Liam blinks at this. Feeling lost. Alienated from it. Suddenly the tableau feels foreign to him. Just then--

BOBBY (O.S.)
Jesus, man.

Liam startles. Shocked to find BOBBY standing over him.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
(blunt)
You look like shit.

Liam snorts. Catching his breath. He offers Bobby a coffee. Bobby raises an eyebrow. *You're fucking kidding me, right?*

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Seriously?

(impatient)

What do you want, Liam?

LIAM

I just wanna have a coffee. I feel like I haven't seen you in months. How you been?

Bobby snorts a laugh. Bitter. Shaking his head in disbelief.

BOBBY

You got some balls, man...

LIAM

What are you talking about?

BOBBY

You're really gonna play dumb??
(exploding)

I know, Liam! I know about you. And Lydia. And Tryst. You think I'm fuckin' stupid? You ruined my life, man.

Liam takes a step back. Caught. Staggered. Blind-sided by it.

LIAM

(survival mode)

Bobby -- you gotta know -- I never would've done it if I knew it was her on the other end. By the time I realized it--

BOBBY

Save it.

Liam trails off. Shamed into silence. Bobby stares at the ground. A terrible beat passes. Finally Bobby looks up at him. His face twists. Pitying. Resigned to their broken fate.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

You're a coward, Liam. You deserve what happens next.

Bobby begins to exit. But moments later, he turns around:

BOBBY (CONT'D)
 Oh and by the way: I told Amy.
 She's known for months now.
 Don't text me again, alright?

Bobby walks off, disappearing through leafless trees.

We stay on Liam as his world comes un-done. Eyes BULGING as he puzzles it together. *The distance in Amy. The change in Eve.* It all points toward one inescapable fact: AMY HIJACKED HIS TRYST ACCOUNT! And as the sky falls atop of him, PRELAP:

LYDIA (O.S.)
 Heyyy!

AMY (O.S.)
 Hey!

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Amy waits on the sidewalk, heart-fluttering as LYDIA walks towards her. Amy scoops her into a tight hug. Closing her eyes. Practically melting into it.

LYDIA (O.S.)
 Honestly, it's been a long time coming.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Amy listens to Lydia. Totally rapt. She hangs on every word, hardly touching the BRUNCH SPREAD laid out before them.

LYDIA,
 I feel like I was just giving, and giving, and giving. And I wasn't getting anything back.
 (pausing)
 It sucks. Going out with a whimper. But honestly: I haven't had any second thoughts. I know it sounds awful to say, but -- I'm just so fucking relieved.

Amy nods. Her face sympathetic. She lets a pause float by.

AMY
 (careful)
 So you guys are like *done*, *done*?

LYDIA

I mean, yeah. He's been texting me but, as far as I'm concerned, it's over. I've moved on.

Lydia takes a deep breath. Broaching a delicate subject.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Look, Amy -- I know how close you and Bobby are. And I know it always gets weird when friends break up. But I'm hoping that -- well -- You're important to me, Amy. I just hope we can stay close.

Amy reacts. Genuinely touched. Tears welling in her eyes.

AMY

Lydia. Jesus. You're gonna make me cry all over my french toast.

They laugh together. Cutting the tension in the room. Then--

AMY (CONT'D)

(sincere)

You did the right thing, Lydia. I'm happy for you. *Seriously.* And if you're worried that I'm gonna choose sides in this -- *don't be.* Because the truth is: I choose you.

Lydia's face puckers at that. Feeling loved. Supported. Seen.

LYDIA

Thanks, Amy. That means a lot.

Lydia reaches across the table. Giving Amy's hand a SQUEEZE. Amy thrills. Her heart practically leaping out of her chest.

Lydia lets go. Taking a sip of her mimosa. Starting in on the untouched food. Amy eyes her furtively. Choosing her moment.

AMY

Hold on. Back up a second for me. You said you've '*moved on?*' Does that mean what I think it means?

(then)

Is there someone else?

Lydia blushes. Hiding her face in her hands. Amy relishes it.

AMY (CONT'D)

For real?

LYDIA

Ummmm. I dunno. Kinda? It's early stages, but, yeah. It's exciting.

AMY

Tell me.

A beat. Lydia looks off. Trying to put feelings into words.

LYDIA

I'll just say...

(beat)

It's really different.

She smiles. Picking up cutlery. Content to leave it at that.

We hold on Amy, averting her eyes. She tries to corral her excitement. Stiff a grin. But it's no use. She can't help herself. We go off her, a gorgeous smile breaking through.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LIAM & AMY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Liam sits on the couch, stupefied, staring off into space. The glow of the TV moves like a storm cloud across his face. Just then, KEYS RATTLE in the door O.S.

AMY (O.S.)

Heyyy.

Amy breezes inside. Liam shifts in his seat, as she unloads belongings. Dropping her PHONE on the kitchen counter top. Eventually she plops down beside him.

He tries to act normal--

LIAM

How was your morning?

AMY

Fine. Just had brunch with Lydia.

LIAM

(tightening)

Oh yeah? How is she?

AMY

Good. Really good actually.

LIAM

What'd you guys talk about?

AMY

You know. Girl stuff.

Liam nods -- *figures*. Lydia begins clicking through options on the streaming device. Liam begins fiddling with a ring on her finger. Wilting slightly. It's almost painful to look at.

LIAM

Would you say this is your favorite ring?

AMY

I dunno... Probably.

LIAM

What is it? Size six? Seven?

Amy stiffens a bit. Glancing over at Liam. He doesn't meet her eyes. Staring at the ring.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Probably something I should know.

(then)

Right?

Finally Liam looks at her. His eyes are desperate. Pleading. *Please tell me this is salvageable. Please tell me this isn't totally fucked up.* But in this moment, AMY PANICS.

She pulls away. Her hands slips out of his, as she stands abruptly, exiting to the kitchen. She clears her throat, trying to play it off. Trying her hardest to act natural.

AMY

You want some water? Food?

(then)

Liam?

But Liam doesn't respond. His eye lids droop. Lip trembling. His worst suspicions are now confirmed. Silence reigns until--

LIAM

(grave)

We're not okay, are we?

With that, a weird chill falls over the room. They've finally arrived at the brink. Given words to the unspeakable thing.

Slowly, Liam turns and faces Amy. Pain brimming in his eyes. Amy stares at the floor. Sagging. Putting all her weight on the counter. When she speaks, it's hardly above a whisper.

AMY

No... We're not...

Finally she meets his gaze. A mix of shame. Sadness. Anger. Liam suffers through the moment. Trying to keep himself together. Barely hanging on. *The laughter... The memories...*

LIAM
Was it ever even real?

And as Amy winces, struggling to answer, their phones BUZZZ in unison. Both of their expressions drop.

We see AMY'S PHONE, sitting there on the island between them. A TRYST PUSH NOTIFICATION pulses, like a harbinger. A eulogy.

Meet tonight?

And as Liam looks up at Amy, straining, in agony, we--

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HOTEL - FOYER - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

We're inside ADAM'S P.O.V. Moving through the dimly lit hotel. A feeling of weightlessness. It's like we're floating. We round a corner, revealing--

INT. HOTEL - FRONT DESK - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

EVE, her back turned to us, waiting there at the front desk. Her naked body. Porcelain skin. She's impossibly PERFECT. Just as we close the distance, she turns around...

Her eyes are sultry and wild. Seductive yet unknowable. When she speaks, her voice sends a shiver down our spine--

EVE
Hey you.

And as a MISCHIEVOUS SMILE curls her lips, we CUT TO BLACK. Our final **afterimage** trembles before burning away.

ROLL CREDITS.