

GREASEMONKEY

adapted by

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Based on the stage play 'GreaseMonkey' by Miranda Jonté

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INT. MARA'S BEDROOM - DAYBREAK

A strong female hand grabs a fitted leather jacket off the end of the bed. A sleeve of tattoos peeks out from under her t-shirt sleeve. She (Mara, 30's) slides the jacket on quickly, short hair still damp from the shower.

MARA (VO)
Officially the heart is oblong,
muscular, and filled with
longing.

Mara, grabbing a book from off the night stand, moves quickly from the bedroom to-

INT. MARA'S KITCHEN - CONT.

The kitchen, where a well loved 'Cal Bears' mug is under the Melitta. She begins the pour process.

As she waits, she leans against the counter and reads the book. The title is obscured, but the cover suggests a world full of beauty.

MARA (VO)
But anyone who has painted the
heart knows that it is also
spiked, like a star, and
sometimes bedraggled like a stray
dog at night, and sometimes
powerful like an archangel's
drum.

As Mara raises the coffee cup to her lips, she takes a look out the kitchen window just as the sun begins to rise over the East Bay hills.

MARA (VO) (CONT'D)
It is true there is love that is
decided upon and love that
spreads like a stain of ink in
absorbent cloth...

She goes back to her book.

TITLE CARD: GREASEMONKEY - BASED ON THE PLAY BY MIRANDA JONTÉ

After a beat she looks at the clock casually. Her timing is perfect, as usual.

She sets the book down, open faced, and drains the coffee.

Mara grabs her worn leather satchel, leaving the warm embrace of her kitchen and heading out into the new day.

INT. - MARA'S PICK UP - DAWN

Mara drives through the still sleeping little town of Albany, CA. As her 1955 Chevy 3100 5-window pickup drives through the streets she sees the local diner flick the lights on.

She drives slowly, embracing the quiet atmosphere around her. The day has yet to start, and this is Mara's favorite time of day.

MARA (VO)

..there is love that makes sense
of your life, and love that makes
you senseless about life. Anyone
who has painted the heart
knows...

The Chevy rolls onto the freeway, driving toward the bustling college town of Berkley. The bay is gray in the morning light.

EXT. D & G SHOP - DAY

Mara parks the Chevy in the same old spot in an otherwise empty parking lot, and hustles through -

INT. GARAGE - CONT.

It's a small, boutique auto shop. Small but mighty. Passing beautiful car after beautiful car, Mara stops to ogle a 1969 Charger on the rack. This is going to be her first project of the day.

MARA (VO)

...that first he had to discard
his spectacles, throw away his
pencil and paper, and for a long
while, walk outside.

MONTAGE:

-Mara throws her leather jacket on the chair in her office.

-She swings around to the communal coffee pot, and starts it.

-She's popped the hood of the Charger and turns on the radio. A classic rock song blares in the empty garage. This is Mara's kingdom.

RADIO:

It's nine minutes to seven here on this foggy Tuesday morning, and you know the drill, folks. It'll burn off by ten, and we've got a beautiful day here in the East Bay, with clear views of the city.

-As she works the morning moves on quickly, with different employees filtering in but somehow missing the zen happening in Bay 3.

END MONTAGE

We follow an employee to the coffee center and run into DON (late 50's/early 60's), a man who's smiling even before his first cup of coffee. The employee (STEVE, late 20's) gestures to Bay 3 and the suspiciously small legs sticking out from under the Charger.

They both smirk. Steve stirs the sugar in his coffee and follows Don to Bay 3.

RADIO:

This is Nick Dylan on KFOG, and here's a little something for your morning commute.

Don and Steve's approach is masked by the classic rock song blasting out of the radio.

DON

You're early.

A yelp of pain emits from under the car as Mara has dropped a wrench on her face. She slides out from under the charger rubbing her forehead and notice their cheeky grins.

STEVE

(chuckling)

What are you doing here?

MARA

(to Steve)

What are you doing here?

STEVE
 (proudly)
 I work here.

DON
 What are you doing here-

MARA
 (to Steve)
 Yeah, you work for me now.

DON
 And you work for me.

Mara sits upright, giving nothing away. She removes her gloves and takes a sip of her now cold coffee.

DON (CONT)
 Mar, you're early.

MARA
 It's nine. We open at eight.

DON
 We open at nine.

(BEAT)
 It's Tuesday. We said next
Monday.

Mara gets to her feet and calmly walks to the coffee pot to pour herself more coffee. It is clear she's not going anywhere.

MARA
 Let's agree that I'm ten years
 early and go from there.

She sips her coffee and looks at the two men. Steve stands by wishing he could put money on this.

MARA (CONT'D)
 So.

DON
 So.

STEVE
 So...

It's a stand-off at the D & G Corral.

DON

(He says this with
deep appreciation
and no small amount
of amusement)

You are as stubborn as your
father.

Mara drinks her coffee, smiling. Don caves.

DON (CONT'D)

Whaddya got?

MARA

Guy in Santa Rosa wants us to
look at his 66 1/2 Mustang.

DON

What's he wanna do with it?

MARA

Wants me to put in power brakes.
Says it won't stop for shit.

DON

It's a 60's Mustang

STEVE

It's a 60's Mustang

DON

What else?

MARA

The guys are working on the
Biturbo, God it's a shitbox,
and... the roadster.

DON

Prettiest car on the lot right
now.

MARA

And John Aaronson called me. On
my cell. At 1am.

DON

What now.

Steve and Mara join together in a harmony of hatred.

MARA

He and his brother

STEVE
The village idiot

MARA
Want us to soup up a car for
Laguna Seca

STEVE
They did this last year!

MARA
They brought us

STEVE
1962 AC Cobra

MARA
For engine refresh and race prep.
They begged us to do it in a week

STEVE
So we did. And did they finish
the race? Not even close.

MARA
And why is that Steve?

STEVE
Because of the wall.

MARA
Because of the wall.

STEVE
Dude they murdered it.

MARA
So no, no way.

Don suppresses a knowing smile as Mara heads off to her office.

Steve changes the radio station and rolls under the Charger.

INT. MARA'S OFFICE - CONT.

Her office is a warm, inviting, place: file cabinets and bookshelves full of manuals and how-tos; a large, old map of the United States for all the out-of-town customers and cars this place has seen. The name on the door, however, reads 'Gene Frasier, General Manager.'

Mara sits at her desk, scanning backlogged emails from the week.

DON (OS)

They did pay us double.

MARA

Driving lessons first.

DON

Why? What did they do now?

MARA

Want to swap out a 289 for a 427 side oiler. The headers won't fit, the motormounts are in the wrong location, the exhaust needs to be fabricated, should I keep going?

DON

Don't. When -

MARA

Two days. It's insulting. They're morons from San Rafael with too much money and absolutely no business being behind the wheel of a car of that caliber. I'm not putting my guys through that bullshit.

DON

They are your guys now.

(BEAT)

Look, why don't you go home? We said next week is all.

MARA

I've got to go to Tiburon, see about a '33 Roadster.

Don searches for the words to convey his feelings.

DON

The guys - we're, uh, glad you're not leaving.

MARA

(Easing his
awkwardness)

Did you know that Tiburon means 'shark?'

DON

Huh. Well, shit, kiddo. Knock if you need anything.

As Don leaves, Mara lets his words sink in. A moment of peace as the garage roars to life.

EXT. D & G SHOP - DUSK

Mara gets in her pick-up truck and starts the engine. Suddenly a tapping on the window gets her attention. She rolls down the window to stop the tapping.

STEVE

Yo! The guys were wondering if you wanted to go to The Albatross tonight. We'll buy.

MARA

I can't.

STEVE

Oh I know you can, I've seen you drink! Speaking of... there's a little something in the top drawer of your desk. From the guys and me. Something comforting and Southern.

MARA

Thank you.

STEVE

Your dad was awesome, Mar.

MARA

Thanks.

Steve gently socks her on the shoulder, which causes Mara to smile despite herself.

STEVE

I'll see you tomorrow boss lady. You got some big-ass shoes to fill!

Steve runs back to the garage before she can utter a retort.

Mara rolls back up her windows and drives into the East Bay sunset.

EXT. BERKELEY SIDEWALK - AFTERNOON

Mara walks with library books to return, her satchel across her body. She is both focused and lost in thought, the rhythm of her strides fueling the creativity in her mind

MARA (VO)

You're a firecracker/he tells her
as they drive/along the 'frisco
bay/you think that/she
asks/sitting up/taller/you're a
firecracker/he tells her/this boy
from her youth...

INT. BERKELEY CAMPUS - DAY

Mara walks through the quiet library doors, puts her stack in the return slot and begins a practiced meander through the rows, her fingers brushing along each spine. The ear bud in her ear adds to the beauty of the moment.

Suddenly she comes to a dead stop - having almost stepped on half of a sandwich and a pair of legs.

There's a man sitting on the floor against the stacks, reading a book on his lap with his lunch at his side. No way around him, unfortunately.

Mara steps over his outstretched legs, realizes she has overshot, steps back over him, which makes him raise his eyes above his book. The books she needs is directly above his head.

MAN

Which one you need?

MARA

Huh?

Mara pops out an earbud as she finally locks eyes with the man - PATRICK - who is blocking her path.

PATRICK

Which book do you need?

Mara takes a moment to pick a title that will scare him into leaving her alone and getting out of her way.

MARA

Women and Sexuality in the
workplace.

Patrick tilts his head upward to scan the titles.

PATRICK

What's the call number on that?

MARA

HQ673.1.

Without standing, Patrick stretches and reaches his arm overhead to grab the book s from the third or fourth shelf. His gives it a cursory look to see if it's correct, then hands it to her and goes back to his book.

Patrick (28) is clean-cut and square-jawed, but not in an overly frat boy kind of way.

MARA

Thank you.

The minute the book hits her palm she walks away.

PATRICK

Don't mention it.

Mara goes through another few rows of books, adding to her stack. However there's one book she cannot find.

She returns to Patrick's aisle, where he has resumed lunch.

PATRICK

673.1 Welcome back.

MARA

I only ask because you seem very at home here, but do you know where American Chrome is?
HQ693.86.

PATRICK

A classic. Guy came by an hour ago and grabbed the last copy.

He notices the book under her arm.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

You reading Alcott?

MARA

Every fall.

PATRICK

Let's see...you're not a Beth.
Definitely not an Amy.

MARA

I'm a Jo. She was a writer, which
was a total no-go-

She pauses.

MARA (CONT'D)

I'm a Jo.

PATRICK

Wanna leave your list? I'll be
your moat.

Mara laughs a 'no' and cannot help herself.

MARA

Are you eating?

PATRICK

It's lunchtime.

MARA

You're eating in a library.

PATRICK

Best of both worlds. Want some?

Put off, she leaves. He trails after her, referring to her
shirt.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Hey, Gurney-ville. That's Russian
River, right?

MARA

Yes. But it's Guerneville.

PATRICK

Are you sure?

MARA

I've spent every 4th of July
there since I was six.

PATRICK

That's a lot of 4th of Julys.

Patrick realizes his mistake about two seconds after impact.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I just mean it would make you an expert. Wine's from there, Russian River Valley? Zinfinn-Jazz fest?

Patrick has dug himself a grave, which Mara watches with a smile in her eyes.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Can I help you find another book?

Mara gestures to Patrick's lunch.

MARA

You done with that?

Patrick gathers his napkins and sandwich paper and bag. Mara reaches her hand out to toss his refuse in the garbage.

MARA

Cafe Stradda? Across the street. Coffee. Sandwiches. They even let you read books there.

Patrick watches her leave He's heard her. He is also intrigued.

EXT. POINT ISABEL BAY TRAIL - LATE AFTERNOON

Mara runs.

The rhythmic thudding of her feet matches with the beating of her heart - matches with the rhythm of the poem in her heart.

MARA (VO).

I wonder if the FB people/check our message thread/check in every day like a soap opera/a show they watch/to see how we are doing/I wonder if they do this/ I wonder if they root for us/ she messages him/ I wonder this too he answers

Lost in thought - lost in steps - she finally reaches the start of the trail loop.

She gazes out over the water. The Golden Gate winks in the distance.

INT. MARA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A glass of wine is poured. A bottle is corked. A bowl of steaming pasta is grabbed.

Mara takes these three ingredients for a perfect night into the living room. She sits on her well-designed couch, in front of her top of the line television, while sliding off her well worn running sneakers.

Her living room is stocked with books, magazines, and the odd journal. Some are open to specific pages but none are gathering dust.

She takes a bite from her pasta, then adds a big scoop of parmesan and a generous pinch of salt to it.

On the TV, Michael Douglas and Karl Malden catch bad guys on the hilly streets of the city by the bay. Outside, a dog barks excitedly.

Just another Wednesday night.

INT. - MARA'S PICK UP - DAY

Heading to work, Mara's stuck in one of the Bay's notoriously endless traffic jams...but that's not what's phasing her.

MARA

Mr. Aaronson, look-- LISTEN to me
for a second-- yes, I know you
know a thing or two about cars,
and the Cobra -

The man on the other end of the phone is so loud we can hear him.

MARA (CONT'D)

John we're not doing it. Do you
hear me?

She looks over at the car next to her: two FRAT BOYS grin at her stupidly, slow-clapping and gesturing how much they appreciate the sight of a woman in a pickup.

Mara exaggerates her eye roll.

MARA (CONT'D)

Jesus, are all men fucking toddlers? Oh- no Mr. Aaronson- ...actually, yes you. We're not doing it. And parking that car in front of my garage hoping I'd cave in had the opposite effect. I can have it towed for you though.

She pauses, allowing the voice on the other end to begin yelling.

MARA (VO)

Cool.

She hangs up the phone.

INT. BERKELEY LIBRARY - DAY

Same stacks. PATRICK sits in his aisle, reading 20 Love Poems and a Song of Despair, with his brown paper lunch bag nearby. MARA passes his aisle, and at the last minute, checks to see if he's there. He catches her eye, grins. She rolls her eyes and goes into an adjacent aisle. She is intrigued, and maybe a little irritated with her intrigue.

MARA

(To herself)

Are you serious?

PATRICK (OS)

Sometimes.

This gets her attention. She turns and faces the stack of books he is on the other side of.

MARA

Don't you have class? Don't you have work?

PATRICK

Don't you have class? Don't you have work?

A stand-off. He pulls a book off the shelf to look through the stacks at her, grinning.

MARA

I build cars.

PATRICK

You are a Jo.

MARA

Do you work?

PATRICK

I do.

MARA

What kind of job lets you play
librarian - oh God, you're a
librarian.

Patrick appears at the end of her row.

PATRICK

Close. I bartend.

Mara references her list of titles.

MARA

A semi-literate bartender with a
library card. Congratulations.

PATRICK

Do you need help finding your
books?

MARA

I've got it.

She indeed finds her book...on the top shelf.

PATRICK

Do you need a boost?

She finally turns to look at him and concedes.

He places the book he was reading in her hands.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Which one, this one?

Patrick towers over here. Gosh he smells good. Mara is more
flustered than annoyed.

MARA

Mhmm. Wait you're reading 'Twenty
Love Poems and a Song of
Despair'?

PATRICK

We do read other things besides
'Men's Health' and 'The
Economist.'

Patrick scans the shelf and grabs the book she requested. He reads the title with a smirk and swaps her book for his.

MARA

Thank you.

She walks away to complete her list- and he follows.

PATRICK

Can I see your list?

MARA

So you're a bartender reading
Neruda.

PATRICK

There's that word again. I
bartend. I also teach in the
Anthropology department. This is
my porn.

MARA

Don't you have class?

PATRICK

I'm done at two, my shift starts
at five, you're in my break room.

MARA

Do you work at the Reef?

PATRICK

Wilke's, across the street.

MARA

Why are you double fisting?

PATRICK

I'm a post doc, doing a
fellowship. Everything's paid
for, but there's not a lot extra.
I'll be a full time professor in
six months, and making a peanut
or two more in ten years, tenure
if I don't fuck it up.

MARA

Where'd you do your PhD?

PATRICK

Here.

MARA

And you've been asked on here?

PATRICK

Yep.

MARA

Huh.

PATRICK

Yep.

He knows it's a bit of a coup, and he knows he's smart and earned it. He's enjoying her realization.

MARA

Don't you have an office?

PATRICK

I prefer the floor. Can I please see your list?

She hands it to him. He reads it with growing amusement that he's unable to contain. She snatches the list back.

MARA

You have no idea why I'm reading these.

PATRICK

You've gotten trampled on by some jerks, or that's your story, and you're cementing your position by reading militant but intelligent writers who posit how women have been victimized by men, society, and the world.

He is very relaxed, and unattached to being right. She doesn't like it one bit.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

It's been done. And the car book's probably for your dad.

He is deliberately poking at her with this last statement. It lands harder than he thought.

MARA

Wow. Have fun serving drunk bros and sloppy co-eds who can't spell.

PATRICK

Here. Let's agree on Neruda

He gives her his own book as a peace offering.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Now if you'll excuse me, I've got drunks to serve.

He goes back to his aisle. Grabs his bag, walks toward the door. Tosses over his shoulder:

PATRICK

Friday's Ladies' Night. You should come. Bring your boyfriend.

Mara's left looking at the last book in her arms. His book.

INT. SCOTT & LEANN'S HOUSE - DUSK

It's a beautiful old house in Berkeley, white and wood interior, big comfy couch for cuddling by the fireplace. Toys for all ages litter the floor. This is the home of Mara's oldest, dearest friends, Scott and Leann.

Scott (30's, architect husband of Leann) lets Mara in and kisses her cheek. He is dressed nicely, as one does for a long-awaited dinner date with their wife. He holds a six month old in his arm like a football.

MARA

Hey! You look sharp. Who knew?

SCOTT

She's going all out and she'll make me change if I don't measure up.

MARA

Well yeah.

A little girl barrels into the room and begins to crawl around the floor in between the adults.

MARA (CONT'D)
Have you seen Scottie? I thought
I heard her but I only see a
dinosaur.

Scottie giggles and makes dinosaur sounds.

MARA (CONT'D)
Hello dinosaur, have you seen my
goddaughter? She's kind of little
and really smart.

SCOTTIE
I'm not little!

MARA
(To Scott)
Did you know dinosaurs could
talk?

SCOTT
They did not teach me that in
school.

Leann enters in a fabulous purple dress with a gold zipper, and heels to die for. She looks fantastic.

Scott and Mara wolf whistle in appreciation.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Holy Mama-

MARA
You look awesome.

LEANN
Thank you! Only took two Spanx to
get me into this. Ok! Dinner is
on the stove- you can reheat-

MARA
I'm good, we're good- go! Stay
out, go have fun!

Scott hands the baby to Mara, who takes and holds him like a pro.

Leann kisses the baby's head, then leans down to kiss Scottie.

LEANN

You have fun too, my sweet girl.
I love you.

SCOTTIE

(Highest praise)
You look like a hooker.

Leann stands up. She looks at her husband.

SCOTT

Um. Real Housewives was on last
night.

They say their goodbyes as Mara and the kids wave from the door.

MONTAGE:

-Mara and Scottie are having a tea party over dinner. They're both wearing tiaras, but Scottie's is the prettiest. She hands Mara a cup of air.

- The baby is in a high chair, wearing a paper crown. Mara does the airplane zoom with a spoonful of food toward the baby's mouth.

-Mara is reading to Scottie, who is nestled against Mara on the couch. It's a book on the history of the Indian Motorcycle. Scottie is paying attention to every word.

-Mara puts Scottie to bed

END MONTAGE

INT. SCOTT & LEANN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mara is relaxing with a glass of wine by the fire, the children long asleep.

BANG

Mara jumps. Alarmed, she sneaks to the front closet.

BANG

She slowly pulls out a baseball bat.

The door begins to rattle. Mara peaks through the stained glass by the door.

Scott and Leann are making out hardcore.

She presses hard against Scott, who has her mashed up against the front door. He's half focused on putting the keys in the lock. He keeps missing.

Mara, in one fell swoop, unlocks and swings the door open.

The couple tumbles in, surprised. Leann braces herself against Mara as Scott tumbles down.

MARA

Are you trying to wake your children up?

LEANN

Mara! We went to the place on Solano. I'm so drunk -

SCOTT

I met her in the bathroom-

MARA

Okay.

LEANN

Married sex is hot.

Scott very ungracefully gets to his feet, half running, half stumbling into the kitchen.

LEANN (CONT'D)

I mean, I thought we were hot at first, but after ten years, it's amazing.

The kitchen cabinets are flung open very loudly.

SCOTT (OS)

(Loud and drunk)

Are the kids good?

MARA

Little Miss T-Rex went down two hours ago. I taught her how to clean carburetors.

LEANN

Perfect.

SCOTT (OS)

Found them!

Scott returns with a basket of pastries from brunch. He silently offers one to Mara while trying to feed Leann.

Leann suddenly gets self conscious and irritated.

LEANN

Scott, you cannot keep feeding me bread. I get wide. I already had the baby.

SCOTT

You're gorgeous!

LEANN

I'm the Bay Bridge!

Scott looks her over like he would examine a blueprint. Architect brain.

SCOTT

New Bay Bridge or old Bay Bridge?

LEANN

I am going to punch you in the throat.

SCOTT

Baby. Bread makes you happy. Be happy.

Scott manages to get a pastry in Leann's mouth. They laugh. The scene is getting a little disgusting.

Scott and Leann remember they have company. Leann drags Mara to the couch to chat, Scott with pastries in tow.

LEANN

So, tomboy, when was the last time you went out?

SCOTT

Oh yeah, how's the thing going -

LEANN

It's over.

SCOTT

Over? That last one? Insurance guy?

LEANN

All of them.

MARA

Not everyone trips over their
soulmate at twenty-two. Let alone
one who extols the virtues of
bread.

Scott manages to land a pastry in Leann's mouth again.

LEANN

Don't get married.

SCOTT

Excuse me.

LEANN

Honey I love you-

Leann manages to slide a pastry in Scott's mouth and turns
back to Mara.

LEANN (CONT'D)

- but you will end up eating
cheetos in bed every night and
get a fat ass.

SCOTT

You love eating Cheetos in bed
with me.

LEANN

I do.

(To Mara)

Every night.

MARA

You're warped. I'm going home.

Mara waves a goodbye to the lovebirds as they fall into each
other at last.

INT. MARA'S PICK UP - CONTINUOUS

Cruising down the highway as the fog begins to roll in. Mara
keeps the window down.

As the streetlights glow, Mara's inner poet overtakes the
sounds of the world outside.

MARA (VO).
Bay bound west/third time
round/he picks her up again/they
hold hands/and are quiet

She stops at a light and sees the glowing neon sign of WILKE'S.

She taps her fingers against the steering wheel, trying not to make eye contact.

The light turns green.

The pick-up drives off.

EXT. WILKE'S BAR - DUSK

Wilke's sits exactly as Mara left it. We watch a rideshare car pull up.

Mara, dressed just a step above her personal uniform, gets out and walks into the bar.

We stay outside for a **while** until Patrick arrives.

He saunters into -

INT. WILKE'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

A darkened bar that was one a college hangout fifteen years ago, it now remains preserved in amber for alumni to watch college kids repeat the cycles of youth.

Mara sits alone at the bar, pint glass slightly empty, chatting with the bartender about his tattoos.

PATRICK
Hey! The library cop is at my
bar!

She gives him a nod and goes back to her beer.

He slides onto the stool next to her, clearly entertained.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
So, you work at a gas station?

MARA
I'm a restoration expert.

PATRICK

So you clean gas stations?

Mara continues to play it cool, which means making him work.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

An expert! Wow. Like according to your dad?

Mara sets her empty drink down and swings her entire focus to him. He smiles at her attention. He has no idea he's about to be bested.

MARA

Like, according to Popular Mechanics, MotorTrend, and my dad, I'm the best restoration engine specialist in the country. But you can say gas station if that's too many syllables for you.

PATRICK

(Beat)

Let's do shots.

Patrick sees the bartender has gone outside for a smoke. He hops over the bar with ease. Mara begins to protest.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

C'mon. You get a free drink.

He suddenly realizes he doesn't know her name. Mara comes to the realization at the same time.

He pours two shots, *and slides one towards her. Coming back around the bar, he extends his hand.*

PATRICK

Patrick.

MARA

Uh.Mara.

They toast. **Clink.** Down the hatch.

PATRICK

Don't worry. Me buying you a drink does not negate the contents of your library haul. Woman. Roar.

MARA

Bess Appleby is a fantastic writer!

PATRICK

I know. She's just over in Marin, too.

CUT TO: AN HOUR
LATER

The bar's picked up a bit, but they're still the center of the universe.

—

PATRICK

So. You still use the library even though you're not a student anymore?

MARA

Uh-huh.

PATRICK

How old are you?

MARA

You are a Philistine.

Patrick smiles and waits for an answer.

MARA (CONT'D)

I'm 32.

PATRICK

You sound worried about it.

MARA

I had a boyfriend who told me a woman's shelf life depreciated in her early thirties. As a fertile and attractive mate. He was in finance.

PATRICK

And you believed him?! Some asshole in finance tries to date-stamp you and you believed him?

MARA

I was in love with him.

(BEAT)

I turn 36 next week.

Mara takes a sip of water the bartender has given her.

PATRICK

Entering your late 30's can be a bit scary for women. Society has really got it backwards.

MARA

36 is not late 30's. It's the end of your mid 30's. 37 is the start of your late 30's. I'm 35 until next week. I'm still in the middle of my mid 30's.

Mara and Patrick dissolve into laughter. Patrick nods at the bartender for two more shots.

PATRICK

I'll be twenty-nine in three months.

MARA

Fuck me. You're twenty-eight and doing your post doc? Did you skip a grade?

PATRICK

Yep. So how is it you can still use the library?

MARA

My mom was kind of a big deal here.

PATRICK

A professor?

MARA

Yeah.

PATRICK

What'd she do?

MARA

She taught poetry.

PATRICK

She write it too? Would I know her? What's her name?

MARA

Ginny Temple.

PATRICK

Virginia Temple? Your mom was Virginia Temple? As in the library?

MARA

She liked Ginny.

Patrick's having a fanboy moment. It's slightly adorable.

PATRICK

I know her, I've read her work. She was young- wasn't she in her 40's when she-

MARA

What does your mom do?

PATRICK

She was a kindergarten teacher then she became a full-time mom when my brother and I came along.

The bartender places two more shots down. Mara declines it. Patrick waits to drink his.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

So why'd you dump the finance guy if you were in love with him?

MARA

I didn't. Wow. You're like a dog with bone. I came home drunk one night and picked a fight. Woke up at 7am with the worst hangover in my life, and he said it was over.

PATRICK

So you moved out?

MARA

Actually, he took everything of mine and put it into garbage bags, then put them on the street. Literally. Down to my last bobby pin. He erased me in front of my eyes.

PATRICK

Jesus Christ. And that was it?

MARA

That was it. We'd been together a year. I never saw him again.

PATRICK

Good riddance.

A young woman leans between them to grab a drink. It breaks the intimacy of the moment.

MARA

Oh God.

PATRICK

What?

MARA

I don't hate men. It's the beer. I tend to jabber when I drink. I- I just, I have a big mouth.

PATRICK

You have a nice mouth. I don't think you hate men. You're just a little bitter.

MARA

(decisively)

I don't want to talk about my ex-boyfriends.

PATRICK

Okay then.

They notice bartender has his back turned. He hops onto the other side of the bar, and gets them another beer.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I have never left a woman the way you, apparently, have been left.

MARA

Good. You think I'm bitter?

PATRICK

I think you're too young to be so pessimistic.

MARA

Pess-I'm pragmatic. You think I'm young? The concept of true, happy, incandescent and mutual love is hooley.

PATRICK

Did you just say 'hooley?'

MARA

Hooley.

PATRICK

You're funny when you're tipsy.

MARA

You're cute when I'm tipsy.

They both register the moment. She takes a gulp of her water.

PATRICK

Ok, what about Robert and Elizabeth Browning???

MARA

They never saw each other. They wrote. Total avoidance of intimacy.

PATRICK

Hepburn and Tracy? They were truly, madly, deeply in love with each other for decades.

MARA

He was married. She was his mistress for decades.

PATRICK

Touche. What about that guy who built the Taj Mahal for his wife?

MARA

It was her mausoleum. She was not enjoying it.

PATRICK

Richard Burton and Liz Taylor.

MARA

They beat each other.

PATRICK

Well, yeah, but if any love was
incandescent, theirs was.

MARA

I think you're confusing
incandescent with inflammatory.

PATRICK

You don't think you'll ever get
married.

MARA

I read once that 'women don't
marry the man they love, but they
love the man they marry.'

Patrick lets this sink in.

PATRICK

That's depressing. Okay. So what
you're saying is, all your true
loves have come and gone, there
are no more, no mas, you missed
your chance, only halvesies from
here on out.

MARA

Yeah.

PATRICK

No such thing as love?

MARA

Nope.

PATRICK

You'd declare this publicly?

MARA

Yep.

PATRICK

Okay.

Patrick gets to his feet and hits the music. The small crowd
at the bar bristles.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

My faithful regulars, -Hey John!
I have with me a visitor from -
the library - who says 'Down With
Love!' It is her birthday, and
she is going to entertain us-

MARA

It's not my birthday.

PATRICK

-with why love is a flaming crock
of shite.

MARA

You want me to lecture in a bar-

PATRICK

On a bar. Oh, don't be such a
scaredy cat. People have done
worse things on this bar. C'mon
Miss Havisham.

Patrick extend his hand to her.

Mara takes his hand and joins him.

The bar hoots and hollers at the impromptu show. From the
crowd comes claps and cheers, and:

VOICE IN THE CROWD

Show us your tits!

MARA

'True love. Is it normal, is it
serious, is it useful-what does
the world get out of two people
who don't see the world? Placed
on the same pedestal for no good
reason, drawn randomly from
millions but convinced it had to
be thus-as reward for what?

She has turned it into a sermon, the crowd laughing, getting
behind her.

MARA (CONT'D)

Nothing; Does this offend justice? Yes. Hear how they laugh-offensively. True love. Is it necessary? Perfectly healthy babies are born without its assistance. Never, never could it populate the earth, given its rare occurrence.

As Mara looks out into the audience with utmost confidence she realizes...Patrick is not standing by her side.

MARA (CONT'D)

Let people who haven't known true love insist it's nowhere to be found. With such faith it'll be easier for them to live and die.'

Finished, she curtsies. The crowd laughs and applauds her.

PATRICK

Traitors!

He now stands next to her on the bar. The crowd cheers in expectation. Someone again yells "show us your tits" at him.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Thanks, Sam. I'll see you in class.

Mara scoots down the bar to give him more room.

Patrick takes in his audience, his people, for a moment, then begins mixing the confidence of a teacher with the flourish of a rock star.

PATRICK

Nerves. 'The modern malady of love is nerves. Love, once a simple madness, now observes the stages of his passionate disease, and is twice sorrowful because he sees, inch by inch entering, the fatal knife. O health of simple minds, give me your life, and let me, for one midnight, cease to hear the clock for ever ticking in my ear, the clock that tells the minutes in my brain. It is not love, nor love's despair, this pain that shoots a witless, keener pang across the simple agony of love and loss. Nerves, Nerves! O folly of a child who dreams of heaven, and, waking in the darkness, screams.'

The crowd roars, his confidence having put his performance over the top.

Mara has lost this battle. She turns to him and mouths "nice work".

In that exact second he caps his victory by pulling her into a swift, passionate kiss, dipping her.

The crowd explodes. He breaks it.

She is stunned but not unhappy.

He hops down, and as he walks toward the door, he spins to face her with this, without stopping:

PATRICK (CONT'D)

See ya around, Jo March.

The bartender helps the stunned Mara off the bar. The crowd still buzzes with the excitement.

INT. A RIDE SHARE - NIGHT

Mara sits in the back of the strange car, head against the glass. WHAT just happened?

Her phone suddenly rings to life, the brightness startling her. She answers the phone without a second thought.

MARA

What's up?

LEANN (V.O.)

(hushed whisper)

Were you at Wilkes tonight?!

MARA (V.O.)

Jesus Christ.

As the conversation goes on Leann gets louder, she moves through her house quickly to rush by her friend's side.

LEANN (V.O.)

Wait are you still there? I can be there in like ten minutes once I get my shoes on.

MARA

Can we just talk in the morning?

LEANN (V.O.)

Not if you're still there. MARA.
ARE YOU STILL THERE. Where the fuck are my shoes?

MARA

No I'm heading home. I'm literally in a car right now.

LEANN (V.O.)

Fine. Okay then. Come for brunch tomorrow. I have something for you.

MARA

What-

LEANN (V.O.)

See you for brunch okay love you byeeeeee!

Leann hangs up.

INT. LEANN'S LAUNDRY ROOM - LATE MORNING

Leann and Mara are huddled together in a cramped laundry room taken up mostly by a washer and dryer. They have mimosas in plastic kid's cups covered in graphics. On the other side of the door, we hear Scott and the kids playing which involves a lot of ruckus of bumps and yells. Leann has pulled something up on her phone, and she and Mara watch @ONLYATBERKLEY's video. Patrick's victorious moment is on a thirty second loop.

MARA

(Horrorified)

Oh. My God.

LEANN

That looks like a fun night!

They watch the loop again.

LEANN (CONT'D)

He's rather attractive. Is he good kisser?

Mara is shell-shocked.

MARA

How-

LEANN

Someone uploaded it on @ONLYATBERKELEY. I'm so glad this shit did not exist when we were in college.

Reminding her

LEANN (CONT'D)

That night at LaVal's-

MARA

Oh god.

Mara drinks her mimosa. Watches the loop again. She's not as horrified as the first two times.

LEANN

(Calling to Scott)

Scott! Can you get the-

She is cut off as the door opens and Scott's hand extends the bottle of prosecco. Leann takes it and fills Mara's cup up.

LEANN (CONT'D)

So what's his name?

Mara watches again. By now, she is intrigued by her intrigue.

MARA

Patrick. His names's Patrick

They each drink from their mimosas, thinking. The ruckus continues outside the door.

INT. WILKE'S BAR - DUSK.

PATRICK is behind the bar. MARA walks in, plants her hands wide on the bar and looks at him.

MARA

Okay. So, what's the difference between archaeology and anthropology?

He gives her a bemused once over.

PATRICK

Hi.

MARA

Hi. When do you get off?

A slow grin spreads across his face. She clarifies.

MARA (CONT'D)

From work.

PATRICK

Eleven.

She gives a nod. Turns, and walks out.

INT./EXT. PATRICK'S CAR - NIGHT.

They are kissing- making out- and it is hot and heavy. The windows are steamed up. The car clock reads: 12AM

She is on top, and she pulls away. They stare at each other, flushed and breathing heavily.

PATRICK

What? What's wrong?

MARA

You hungry?

EXT. TACO TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

They are standing outside the taco truck that lives in the parking lot of the Hotsy Totsy Club on San Pablo Ave. They eat their tacos in companionable silence.

INT. MARA'S HOME - NIGHT

Mara returns home and begins her nightly routine.

MARA (VO)

Tacos, burritos, donuts oh
my/they drive/and talk/and
sometimes drive

EXT. WILKE'S PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Mara and Patrick kiss against her truck, prolonging their goodbye.

MARA (VO) (CONT'D)

With out talk/just shoulder to
neighboring shoulder/

INT. MARA'S HOME - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Mara brushes her teeth.

MARA (VO)

san francisco/berkeley/el cerrito
too/el sobrante/ pinole/
tooling...

INT. MARA'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Mara gets back into her truck, driving off. She spots Patrick watching her drive away.

INT. MARA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mara is in bed, almost asleep.

Until she isn't. She clicks on the light, grabs a pen and a notebook from the drawer, and writes.

MARA
Thrifting/ a favorite/
errands/spooning/she falls asleep
to the sound of his voice

She pauses, the poem jammed in some unknown place. She clicks the light off.

INT. MARA'S OFFICE - DAY

Mara sits at the desk in the office, drinking coffee. Don is talking to her but she is hyper focused on a car that doesn't have anyone working on it.

MARA
Who's working on the Shelby?

Don laughs. He gets it.

DON
It's yours.

Mara gets to her feet quickly, basically running out the door.

MARA (CONT'D)
If anyone calls, tell 'em I'm at
lunch!

INT. D & G SHOP - CONTINUOUS

MONTAGE:

SET TO: something' rockin'.

Mara turns the radio up - catching the eye of Steve. He's slowly learning this move - it's the master taking control of the room.

Mara arms deep in the guts of the car she's working on.

Mara leans back against the counter lining the inside of the garage, arms crossed, assessing the car in front of her. Steve joins her, adopting the same pose.

INT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

PATRICK opens his front door. MARA is there. She hands him wine. The table is set. He has cooked. He is good at many things.

INT. PATRICKS'S KITCHEN - DUSK

They sit across from one another, at his table, which has long benches instead of chairs. There are shadows on the walls from the trees and the setting sun outside the windows. They are drinking wine and talking nonstop while music plays

INT. PATRICKS KITCHEN - NIGHT

It's dark out. They sit next to each other on the wooden bench.

He reaches out and lightly traces the inked words on her forearm, with his fingers. The mood shifts.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Patrick carries Mara down the hallway as they kiss.

He sets her down onto his bed.

She takes the lead. He is into it.

It's the first time they're having sex. It shows, but it shows all the passion and care they have for each other.

END MONTAGE.

INT. MONTEREY BAY CAR SHOW

Mara and Don walk around talking to vendors and owners. It is so clearly their turf. They love what they do. They are well known and greeted warmly and given shit wherever they go.

CUT TO:

Mara and Don sitting on bleachers drinking beer and watching the cars being brought in. She checks her phone and sees a message from Patrick on the lock-screen. She smiles. She puts the phone away.

CUT TO:

Mara and Don in a circle of guys talking shop. She is respected in this world.

CUT TO:

Don and Mara driving along the coast, enjoying the quiet and ease of each other's company.

INT. WILKE'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

Patrick hands her a bourbon, neat, and wipes down the bar.

Mara watches Patrick close the bar. He spices up the mopping with a moment of a serenade.

He remembers something and slides her a bar napkin covered with titles - and their reference numbers.

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Mara using the napkin to grab from the stacks.

She notices the last title on the list and grabs Select Poems by Pablo Neruda.

INT. MARA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

She is cooking for Patrick and herself. He sits nearby, reading.

PATRICK

Are you sure I can't help?

She hands him a bottle of wine and two glasses.

MARA

Here. Here's how you can help.

He pours her wine and kisses her, and takes his glass back to his reading spot. He reopens her beloved copy of her mother's poetry. A few moments later she joins him. She sees the book he's reading.

MARA (CONT'D)

Did you get that from the bookshelf?

PATRICK

Is that ok?

MARA
(uncertain)
MMhmm.

PATRICK
Would you rather I-

MARA
No, it's ok.

He senses this is delicate. He shifts the conversation a bit.

PATRICK
Did your dad like poetry?

She laughs.

MARA
He was a hands-on mechanical guy
who liked classic rock.

(BEAT)
He loved everything she did.

Patrick watches her quietly, listening.

MARA
When I was little, where we
lived- my mom's desk- her study-
I called it her writing place,
here was the driveway- here's the
front door- here was her study-
it overlooked the driveway. Me
and my dad would be working on
cars in the driveway while she
wrote and watched us. We could
hear her typing away- she
preferred typewriters for some
reason, and there was this great
big window that swung out from
her study right in front of her
desk, and there was a flower box
underneath it, so whenever I
would look up I'd see my mom in
this picture frame of flowers and
a typewriter.

Mara finally makes eye contact with Patrick. A jolt back to
the life she leads now.

MARA (CONT'D)

Me and my dad would cook dinner so my mom could write. We spent almost all of our weekends like that. Hundreds.

Patrick looks at the photo on the back of the book jacket, and looks at Mara.

PATRICK

You look so much like her.

MARA

I've heard that.

She very gently puts the book back onto the shelf in its spot.

Patrick watches her.

INT. MARA'S OFFICE - DAY

Mara taps her pen against an old mug for the shop as she listens to yet another phone call.

MARA

We're customizing everything right now- if you want to come by and take a look, yeah, Tuesday noon is fine.

A knock at the door. It's Patrick. Mara mouths 'one sec'.

She writes down a few notes and hangs up. She kissing him in greeting, albeit cautiously.

MARA (CONT'D)

We're frenching a Chevy- don't ask. Hi!

PATRICK

I brought you lunch. I ran into Don on the way in - literally, I ran into him. He introduced himself, and asked me who I was-

Steve enters without knocking.

STEVE

We finished! It's the coolest one I've ever done- who's the new guy?

MARA

(to Patrick)

We put Porsche 924 running gear into a '32 Ford Vic. It's kinda cool. This is Steve. He's our engine specialist.

STEVE

Jeanine's still pissed at me.

MARA

Why? (to Patrick) Steve and his wife just had their first baby.

STEVE

Why do you think? She's stuck at home with the baby all day. She's climbing the walls and I get to go play. Do I bring her flowers?

MARA

Steve this is Patrick.

PATRICK

Her boyfriend.

This is like a record scratching for Mara. She does not like feeling exposed.

STEVE

What kind of car do you drive?
I'm just yankin' your chain. Hey Mar, you got some grease on your face.

She does. Steve leaves, opening the door to the sound of a loud BOW-CHICKA-WOW-WOW from the hallway.

MARA

Since when are you my boyfriend?

PATRICK

Since spending three nights a week together for the past two months? I'd say 'boyfriend' applies.

MARA

Yeah well, don't you know
assumption is the mother of all
fuck ups?

PATRICK is shocked and stung.

Don comes in with a photo in a frame, carryover from their
initial meet ten minutes earlier. He is eager to share.

DON

Did you know she played Little
League? She couldn't hit for
shit, but she'd steal a base if
you blinked. Yeah, we sponsor a
team every year. Her dad coached.

Patrick, despite being furious, can't help but get drawn into
this.

DON (CONT'D)

Oh, here's me and her dad with
one of his Packards. What kind of
car do you drive?

PATRICK

An old Saab, I've had it since
college. You guys are young here.

Don and Mara smirk at his old Saab. They can't help it.

DON

Oh yeah, younger and lighter,
more hair. Packards were his
thing. This one was his baby,
wasn't it, Mar? A twin six.

PATRICK

Twin six?

MARA

Twelve cylinder. A '32 twin six
Phaeton.

DON

Hey - you play ball as a kid?

PATRICK

No, my brother Nick played -
college ball.

DON

Where'd you grow up?

PATRICK

Michigan, near Elk Lake.

DON

You ever go back?

PATRICK

Oh yeah, every summer my family has a huge barbecue on the lake. We have a big softball game. Everyone comes and everyone plays.

DON

Well put her at second base. You put her in the outfield and she'll go off into la- la land. Used to drive her coaches nuts. Hey, am I'm holding you up?

Mara's phone rings, which she answers gladly.

MARA

Hey Latrice. Sure, put 'em through. This is Mara. Uh-huh. What? You want me to install fuel injectors into your 1971 Hemi Cuda.

Don balks at the suggestion. Patrick balks in imitation.

MARA (CONT'D)

You do know that Dodge was still using carburetors in their Hemis at this point- No, my breasts are not confusing me, STEVE, you ASSHOLE.

She hangs up and peaks out the door.

STEVE (O.S.)

You drive like a girl!

DON

Kids. You two headed to lunch?

PATRICK

I actually brought lunch and thought we'd eat here since I know you guys are slammed. And then I'll drive away in my old Saab.

He's pointed; he has missed nothing.

DON

Okay. Tell Jim the tuck and roll on the Chevelle needs to be done by Tuesday. Actually, help him on that.

Don goes to leave, but gives Mara a winning smile and a big thumbs up behind Patrick's back as he leaves.

Patrick tosses her lunch bag on the table casually, his anger bubbling to the surface.

PATRICK

You know, you can be ambivalent, but do not diminish me, or downplay what we've been doing. It's cheap, and we both know better.

He walks out. Mara doesn't bother to follow him.

EXT. D & G - DAY

Mara sits in the back of her truck, enjoying the sounds of the garage. She opens the bag of lunch Patrick made her.

Inside - in addition to the all around lovely but basic sandwich sits a napkin. Scrawled on it is the first few lines of 'In My Sky At Twilight' by Neruda.

The smile fades from her lips. She's lost her appetite.

INT. MARA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

She lies on the couch, watching TV. She cannot focus on it. She tries to ignore it, but she knows that she fucked up with Patrick.

EXT. CAMPUS- MID - MORNING, SEVERAL DAYS LATER

Patrick walks toward his classroom, encountering Mara holding two cups of coffee. Patrick is dressed super-sharp.

MARA

Hi.

PATRICK

Morning.

She offers him one of the cups. He takes it.

MARA

It's nice to see you.

PATRICK

It's nice to see you too.

MARA

How are you? You look really nice. What's the occasion?

PATRICK

I had a date last night.

This stings Mara, but she doesn't let it show. She's in full apology mode.

MARA

I don't want you to date other people.

PATRICK

Then act like it.

He makes sure she's heard him, then softens it by kissing her clearly and firmly, and going into his classroom.

She smiles.

EXT. D& G PARKING LOT - A WEEK LATER

Mara sits with Patrick in the bed of her truck - finally enjoying lunch. Just the two lovers and the sounds of the bay.

A mechanic passes, throws his hand up in greeting. A new normal.

INT./EXT. DON'S HOUSE - DAY

Don's house is big and open, and welcoming.

Mara leads Patrick through the unlocked front door. They are carrying food containers and a bottle of booze. They walk through the house, and the noise of people talking gets louder. It is coming from the kitchen, the heart of the house.

From the kitchen windows we see the backyard is alive with people: guys from the shop and their families.

DON

Hey kid! Ya made it! What are ya drinking? Patrick.

He shakes Patrick's hand.

Mara kisses Don's wife, JILL, in greeting. Jill is a sunny, warm woman with a twinkle in her eye.

MARA

Hi Jill.

Mara hands her the food she brought.

JILL

Is that your dad's cornbread?

MARA

Yes.

Jill uncovers it and begins to bring it outside.

JILL

This is going to be the first thing to disappear. Watch.

DON

It's the jalapenos.

INT. DON'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Don stands with Patrick in his hallway in front of all the photos on the wall, pointing out the ones with Mara, and her dad through the years.

DON

The kid was a freakin' prodigy. She was rebuilding engines at 12 by herself.

PATRICK

The other guys don't mind? That she got her dad's job?

DON

You kidding me? The guys love her. She grew up in that shop. It was practically her birthright.

Jill walks past them and through the patio.

MONTAGE:

-Chairs everywhere, occupied and not. People milling around and enjoying each other's company. Stories are being told, some exaggerated.

-Mara is playing tag with the kids, including Scottie. Scott and Leann talk to Don and Jill. Patrick is taking it all in - and gorging himself on cornbread.

-Mara and Steve captaining opposing teams of kids at cornhole.

-Patrick at the grill. He is expertly manning it. The guys from the shop stand nearby, chatting with him.

-Mara catches Patrick at the grill, the scene triggers an emotion in her and she misses the hole. Without moving, she searches for Leann and meets her eyes. Leann registers the moment and looks to Scott, who has just opened a beer. Leann cocks her head to Mara.

-Scott walks straight to her, placing the beer in her hand. Mara looks down at the beer, and up at Scott, who is there for her. She nods. So does he. Mara looks to Leann and nods that she's ok.

-Patrick looks up from the social circle and grins at Mara with that thousand watt smile.

- As the sun sets people begin thinning out and heading home. Kids sleep on their parents' shoulders. A wonderful time was had by all.

END MONTAGE

EXT. DON'S BACKYARD - NIGHT

A backyard campfire in a fire pit roars as Don, Jill, Patrick, Mara, Scott and Leann enjoy the discussion. Scottie sleeps on her mother's lap.

DON

(laughing)

So anyway, Mara would run around and tell everyone her dad was building tankards. It was a Packard. (to MARA) He never corrected you. He loved it.

Patrick nudges Mara a little.

PATRICK

Why didn't you tell me that Gene was your step-dad?

MARA

He was my dad. He married my mom when I was four. I took his name when I was fifteen. Was the least I could do.

DON

When this one was fifteen she went with a boy from her high school to the NATC- National Auto Tech Competition- all boys, she was the only girl there, and they won. My buddy teaches auto shop here at the high school, tells me a couple a girls have been poking around, asking questions, so I get Mara here to go talk to them, to the whole class. Two weeks later this guy calls me and says he's got a group of teenage girls who want to train for it! Now, her dad trained her and this other kid when they went. We're gonna train and sponsor the first girls-only team to go to this competition. Not this year, but in two years? And Wonder Woman here is gonna make it happen. Isn't that something?

JILL
(to Patrick)
He would have loved you.

PATRICK
Was he very tough on boyfriends?

LEANN
No, Mara just has crap taste in men.

MARA
He liked some of the guys-

SCOTT
Few. But you- you'd have been in like Flynn.

LEANN
And you cook.

PATRICK
Did Gene cook?

SCOTT
Oh yeah, he'd have us over when we were in college, like once a month. He was a great cook. Wouldn't let you near his grill, though.

DON
He was an excellent cook. Lousy fisherman.

LEANN
I miss your dad.

DON
He'd have to stop at the store every time we came back from the Bay 'cause he never caught anything. Ever.

LEANN

Know what I miss? I'd stay over almost every weekend since we were like 10, and after dinner her dad would always go into the garage and work on his cars. Summertime, he'd have the garage door open at night, blast the lights for us, we'd be playing down the street and you could hear him just tinkering away. I loved that. I grew up with that.

Mara gets up to put Scottie on the couch inside and grab another beer. From the kitchen she hears Patrick say something quietly, but can't quite make it out.

LEANN (O.S.)

Oh, Mara's not getting married.

JILL (O.S.)

Says who?

LEANN (O.S.)

All her mommy friends! She's not allowed on the Mommy team, she's our Rosie the Riveter.

PATRICK (O.S.)

People should get married because they love each other and want to form an army of two. How they go about it is case by case.

SCOTT (O.S.)

Can you picture Mara in a white dress?

JILL (O.S.)

I can.

DON (O.S.)

Please don't knock up my best mechanic.

A joke, but ouch. Mara returns on the scene and takes her place in the circle. She's pretending to be oblivious, but is obviously a little rattled.

SCOTT

Is your biological clock
ticking? You're thirty-six you
know. Your clock's ticking. Might
not be blaring but, you know,
it's probably like on vibrate.

Leann addresses Mara

LEANN

Would you like to punch him in
the throat?

Patrick steps in, standing up and offering a hand to Mara.
She accepts.

PATRICK

It's late.

Jill stands and heads toward the kitchen where she pulls two
huge foils tray of potato salad from the fridge. Only half is
eaten.

JILL

You're taking some. You're all
taking some.

They start to protest.

JILL (CONT'D)

Nope. I made five pounds of this
and I need it out of the house.

INT. MARA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

They are still in their bbq clothes. Mara is spooning the
potato salad into tupperware.

Patrick watches her.

Completely straightforward, no motivation other than to state
the facts.

PATRICK

I'm in love with you.

This catches her off guard but she says nothing.

She keeps spooning potato salad into containers.

He steps closer to her, into the kitchen.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I love-

Mara matter of factly wipes potato salad across his face.

She goes back to spooning potato salad into containers.

Unfazed, he takes both her wrists into his hands so she is forced to face him. A wooden spoon covered in potato salad stands upright in her right hand.

He speaks to her in her own language.

PATRICK

'Why paint your mouth that pillarbox red if you don't want my letters popped in- only mail can be expressed with any degree of certitude as to its delivery to another but I tell you I love you don't you understand I'm crazy about the way you lick stamps.'

MARA

Okay.

She accepts this. He knows not to push.

He kisses her, a clear, brief, 'seals the deal kiss,' and ignoring the potato salad smeared across his face, he grabs a beer from the fridge, opens it with the bottle opener magnet on the fridge, and walks out of the kitchen.

She stands there, spoon still in hand.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Mara runs.

She tries to clear her thoughts, but the thoughts don't stop.

All the words that were and weren't said run through her head.

She runs a few blocks to-

EXT. LEANN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Mara pounds on the door. Leann opens, baby in one arm and hairbrush in the other.

LEANN
Hi.

MARA
He loves me.

LEANN
Uh-huh.

MARA
I'm not ready.

LEANN
Yes you are.

MARA
No, I'm-

Leann doesn't have the bandwidth for this at the moment.

LEANN
Okay, so I've got lunch going and laundry to do, and the kids, and Scott to take care of, and you will be fine, you've got this, you'll be fine. Love you.

Leann closes the door. Mara turns out to the street.

INT. MARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.

The room is bathed in beautiful blue and silver light from the moon.

Patrick sleeps, chest bare, in sweatpants that read 'Michigan' down one leg.

She watches him. Sensing her, he wakes, rolls onto his back and looks at her.

PATRICK
What is going on in that massive, sexy brain of yours?

MARA
Roll cages.

PATRICK

You're this wound up over roll cages?

MARA

They keep the car from collapsing in a collision.

PATRICK

(chuckles)

I know what a roll cage is.

MARA

How do you know what a roll cage is?

PATRICK

Mara. What's going on?

MARA

I can't fall in love with you.

PATRICK

Oh that ship has sailed.

His knowing propels her away from him but he's not backing down.

She resorts to using poetry as a shield.

MARA

'I don't know when the boys began to walk away with parts of me in their sticky hands-'

PATRICK

No. Tell me yourself. In full.

MARA

Look- I have way too much on my plate right now and this really isn't serious anyway, and there are a million girls on campus-

PATRICK

I like women.

MARA

I've got a team of guys to run and our intern, Jim, was going to spray paint a car last week! Spray paint it! And then I've got a '63 Sting Ray coming in- split window- which I freaking adore- and- oh my God I am so in love with you.

PATRICK

I know.

She simply stands there, unsure what to do. He approaches her. He kisses her.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Mara. Open your eyes.

He kisses her cheekbone. Her brow, her jaw. He is tender, loving. He pulls back and they look at each other. It is like falling into the deepest ocean.

It is almost too much to bear, and, it is the most wonderful thing in the world.

MARA

I love you.

PATRICK

I love you too.

The light of the moon illuminates them. They are beautiful.

INT. MARA'S BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

Mara is preparing to leave for a week-long work trip.

PATRICK watches her from bed.

They are both drinking coffee.

PATRICK

What time do you land in Seattle?

MARA

Uh. Two.

PATRICK

I have something for you.

MARA

Is it brake cleaner?

PATRICK

It's not brake cleaner.

She walks over to him and frisks him, ending up with her hand between his legs.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

That is DEFINITELY yours, but that's not it.

He reaches under his pillow, pulls out a ring box

PATRICK (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

I picked this up yesterday while you were at work. Don't panic.

He is expectant and happy. Mara has gone very still and not in a good way.

MARA

What is it?

He opens the ring box carefully - no diamonds thank god.

PATRICK

It's a Claddagh ring. It's an Irish wedding ring.

MARA

A what?

PATRICK

It's a traditional thing. You've noticed mine?

She nods.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

My mother gave me this ring when I turned 21. You see how the heart is pointed toward me, on my right hand? This means I'm taken, I'm in a relationship, my heart is yours. If the heart points away from me, I'm available. Heart toward you on the left hand means you're married. Heart upside down on your left hand means you're engaged.

MARA

How long has the heart been pointed toward you?

PATRICK

I turned it around six months ago.

MARA

We've been dating for seven.

Everything clicks. Oh god.

PATRICK

Look, I know you get cranky when you get cornered. I'm going back to bed. If you want to try it on now, great. If not, that's also completely fine. I guessed on the size.

He goes into the bathroom.

She opens ring box, pulls it out and slides it onto her finger.

She sits, places her hands on her thighs, and waits for him.

He comes back into the bedroom. He sees she is wearing the ring.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Awesome.

Mara smiles. It's a completely open moment for her.

He adds a bit of levity to negate any pressure.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

And soon you'll be knocked up.

MARA

SONOFABITCH!

Patrick laughs hard and grabs her to keep her from fleeing the room. He's having way too much fun winding her up.

PATRICK

Are you going to show the all the other mechanics your tools when you get to Seattle?

With an athletic quickness, flips her and pins her.

PATRICK (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
C'mon baby, tell me you love me.

MARA
GODDAMMIT! Do you have a hard-on?

Pinning her arms over her head with one hand, he slips the other into her pants, letting it rest between her legs.

(BEAT)

PATRICK
I can feel your heartbeat.

MARA
You can?

PATRICK
No. Here.

He looks down at her, squeezes her hands in his.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
I love your hands. They're strong. Strong little hands.

MARA
They're not little.

PATRICK
Everything on you is little. Except your ego.

MARA
Everything on you is little.

PATRICK
(smirks)
No it's not.

He kisses her.

Your strong legs. And. The thing is-

A moment passes, as they gaze at each other and it sinks in. Then, unable to contain himself

PATRICK (CONT'D)
You would be so sexy pregnant.

MARA

Well, I'm not having kids.

PATRICK

But then you met me.

MARA

And suddenly, sterilization
seemed reasonable.

He keeps teasing her, unaware it is scaring her more than anything.

PATRICK

Just a big belly sticking out,
and your little stick arms. You'd
be adorable.

She looks horrified.

He is serious. Seriously in love with her, and seriously verbally vomiting all over her.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

A beautiful, bossy, brainy little
baby?

She pushes him away from her, and steps away from the bed. She is quietly and seriously freaking out.

PATRICK (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

What's really interesting is how
wet you got when I started
talking about getting you
pregnant.

He is cocky, happy, optimistic. He's got plans.

PATRICK

Hey, do you like lighthouses?

Mara plays along but very off guard. This seems a safe albeit odd, question.

MARA

Maybe...why?

PATRICK

Good. I'd like to take you to
Point Reyes when you get back.
Bed and Breakfast, lighthouse.

MARA

What for?

PATRICK

It's a surprise. That's just the
backdrop.

Patrick is completely oblivious to the slow car crash he's
just created.

MARA

Ok. Cool. Lighthouses are cool.

He kisses her cheek and goes to refill his coffee.

INT./EXT. RIDE SHARE TO OAKLAND AIRPORT - MORNING.

Mara sits there and stares at the window, shell shocked.

An 'Oakland Int'l Airport' sign. The skies are blue and
clear.

INT. OAKLAND AIRPORT BAR - MORNING.

Mara is walking toward her flight but makes a purposeful
detour and strides up to the bar. An OLDER MAN in a suit sits
there with a drink in hand.

She nods curtly at the bartender.

She needs a drink.

MARA

Double Maker's, neat. Thank you.

The Older Man in the suit is impressed, glances at her.

OLDER GUY

You don't strike me as the
nervous flier type.

MARA

I'm not.

Her drink is placed in front of her. She takes a gulp. He
watches.

OLDER GUY

I've got time.

She smiles into her glass, and finishes it. He watches her.

MARA

What kind of car did you drive
when you were 29?

He motions to the bartender for two more. He thinks a moment.

OLDER GUY

That would have been the year my
pop died and left me his
Studebaker. A '66. Ugly as sin.

MARA

That was the last year they made
them. Do you still have it?

OLDER GUY

I sold it to cover the down
payment on my second wife's ring.
I guess I would probably change
that.

LOUDSPEAKER (O.S.)

Alaska Flight 621 to Seattle now
boarding at Gate 36.

Mara looks up just as the drinks are set down.

OLDER GUY

That you?

MARA

Yeah.

She reaches into her pocket for her wallet. He speaks,
brooking no argument. Friendly, knowing.

OLDER GUY

These are on me.

They toast with the new glasses. She smiles and gives him a
nod of thanks. She downs it quickly and heads to her gate.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY, SEATTLE - DAY.

The lobby is spacious, totally hip, and well-decorated.

Mara approaches the desk.

CLERK

Hello, may I help you?

MARA

Hi, I'm checking in.

CLERK

Last name?

MARA

Frasier.

She hands him the credit card.

A MAN in the lobby on his phone notices her. He ends his phone call.

CLERK

Here you are. Frasier. Six nights?

MARA

Yes.

The Man steps closer.

The Man is well dressed, suit without a tie, shirt open at collar. He is tall, bearded, handsome...

He is DANIEL.

DANIEL

Mara?

Mara, surprised, turns toward her name being called.

She stops breathing.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

(Delighted)

Mara!

He steps toward her.

She slaps him HARD across the face.

The clerk, who has seen everything happen in his lobby, watches impassively.

Before Daniel can say or do anything else, she spins a 180, and grabs her suitcase.

MARA

Cancel my reservation.

She bolts out of the hotel, leaving a stunned Daniel, and the clerk behind.

CLERK

Miss! Your card! You left your card!

DANIEL

Give it to me.

CLERK

I have to charge it, there's a 24hr cancellation policy--

DANIEL

Use mine! Just give it to me.

He thrusts his black AMEX at the clerk, takes her card in hand, and runs for the door.

She is gone.

INT. SEATTLE HOTEL ROOM - DUSK

Mara sits on the edge of her bed. It's fancy. Old money fancy. Absolutely not her taste.

Mara looks dazed, and drawn. Her coat is off. She is focused on simply breathing in, and out.

She realizes she forgot to call Patrick. She gets her phone from her jacket pocket and dials.

EXT. WILKE'S BAR - DUSK

Patrick answers.

PATRICK

Mara? Hey- where are you?

MARA

Hi.

PATRICK

Are you okay?

MARA
(slightly off)
I'm okay. Yeah, I'm fine.

PATRICK
Where are you? Your phone was
off. I called your hotel but they
said you cancelled your
reservation.

MARA
Yeah, I did. I wanted a hotel
with a pool. Where are you?

PATRICK
Picked up a shift at the bar. Are
you sure you're alright? I know
your mom's birthday is tomorrow.
Is that it?

MARA
No, no. You remembered.

PATRICK
Of course.

MARA
Patrick-

She stops, unsure what to say, until it just all comes
pouring out.

MARA (CONT'D)
What if you're at the bar this
weekend and you get hit on by
someone?

PATRICK
I'll hit'em back.

MARA
I'm serious.

This is so not like her.

PATRICK
You miss me.

MARA
I miss you.

PATRICK

You have excellent taste, you really do.
Everyone says so.

MARA

Patrick-

PATRICK

Okay. I wouldn't be in the bar because I've returned to my apartment, which is in appallingly bad shape since I've spent every night with you for the last several months. And until -

He gets interrupted. Mara waits, still pale but feeling lighter.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

All of fraternity row just walked in. I have to go-

MARA

Okay.

PATRICK

(quickly)

Which hotel are you in?

MARA

The Albertine.

PATRICK

Okay, great. Sleep well, enjoy the pool, do some laps. I'm so excited to go away with you. I love you.

MARA

Me too. See you Sunday.

PATRICK

Sunday. Check your suitcase. I left you something.

He hangs up and gets to work, and she, strengthened, puts her suitcase on the bed.

She finds an envelope with a note in her suitcase.

The room phone rings. She smiles and, thinking it's Patrick, answers like a sex kitten.

MARA

Why yes, I am all alone in this big hotel room with a big empty bed.

(BEAT)

MARA

Daniel?

DANIEL

Oh thank-

Shaken, she hangs up.

There is a pause and it rings again. She lets it ring once, twice - and then picks up halfway through the third.

MARA (CONT'D)

What. Just leave it with the front- what? The hotel bar?

The silence around her is claustrophobic.

MARA

I'll see you in fifteen minutes.

She is still for a moment as she hangs up the receiver.

She dazedly places the envelope from Patrick back into her bag.

Mara slides her coat back on, her face not betraying the anxiety she feels. She goes into the bathroom, splashes water on her face. Looks at herself. Zips her coat. Armor. Takes off her ring. More armor. Give nothing away.

Her hand reaches the doorknob and as she turns the knob

INT. HOTEL BAR - CONT.

The bar is classy, old school wood with Tiffany Style lamps and polished hardwood floors.

The bar is about one third full, and everyone is dressed as if they're about to head to a gala.

Daniel spots Mara first - he rises to his feet to greet her.

MARA

You have my-

He acts as if nothing has happened; this is a pleasant, friendly get together.

It is not what she expected.

DANIEL

I ordered us drinks. Gin gimlet
with extra lime juice, no lime.

Daniel takes a seat, gesturing to the open seat at the bar.

Mara stays standing.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I called every hotel starting
with 'A.' I got lucky.

MARA

And if I'd refused to come down?

DANIEL

I'd have knocked on every door
till I found you.

MARA

What Daniel wants, Daniel gets.
You'd have gotten lucky again.

Laughs at the irony of ease with which he can find her.

MARA (CONT'D)

I'm on the second floor.

She sits, ignoring the drink he ordered her.

She orders her own. She's graduated from gimlets, and fuck him.

MARA (CONT'D)

Double Maker's, neat. Thank you.

She nods at his drink and identifies it. Some things stay the same.

MARA (CONT'D)

Macallan, neat.

He raises his glass to her, but she begins without him.

DANIEL

You look well. You look great.

MARA

You look the same.

DANIEL

Are you still in Berkeley?

MARA

Yes.

DANIEL

You must have gotten your PhD by now. Are you teaching? Post Doc?

MARA

No.

She will not make this easy.

He is trying.

DANIEL

What are you doing in Seattle?

MARA

I have a meeting.

DANIEL

For?

MARA

Business.

He is genuinely friendly and interested.

DANIEL

Me too- I was meeting an investor who'd flown in. I'm with GreenForce.

She offers him a blank, disinterested stare. He'll have to work for it.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

We're new; I founded it two years ago. I'm based here, in Seattle.

MARA

You ended up in Seattle, then.
Not Togo.

Mara has squarely called out the elephant in the room.

DANIEL

Not Togo. Mara-

MARA

What do you want from me?

DANIEL

I don't want anything from you.

MARA

Great. Can I have my card?

DANIEL

I want to tell you I'm sorry.

MARA

For what, Daniel? For joining the
circus?

DANIEL

Peace Corps.

MARA

I know it was the goddamn Peace
Corps.

Mara losing her temper in a bar of this quality is bringing
unwanted eyes.

DANIEL

I'm sorry I didn't tell you.

MARA

You told everyone but me.

DANIEL

I know.

MARA

You told me when you got to the
goddamn airport.

Maybe she doesn't care about making a scene.

DANIEL

I'm sorry.

MARA

I would have gone with you.

DANIEL

Really? You would have left your work and your studies? Right.

MARA

I would have followed you anywhere.

DANIEL

You spent more time in the library than with me.

MARA

I was a PhD student! You didn't even ask! We were living together! You know, I'm just glad you weren't saving the world all by your lonesome. Melody, right? Melody.

DANIEL

She left me a month into the trip.

MARA

For a tall tribesman with a spear and integrity?

DANIEL

She left me for a strapping Texan with a ten gallon hat...

MARA

And a ten gallon ding dong?

She is laughing at the irony. He sees the humor in this, too.

DANIEL

Yes.

MARA

Well, I'm sure she was much happier with him.

He laughs. He deserved that.

She finishes her drink.

Daniel proceeds carefully.

DANIEL

I heard about Gene. My mom told me when I visited her. Mara, I am so sorry. He was a really wonderful man.

Mara was not prepared for this. Her rage is mixing with the genuine love she felt for her father. It's a dangerous cocktail.

MARA

I took over for him at the shop. I manage it.

DANIEL

Mara, that's wonderful! No more poetry?

MARA

No. I began working for him full time when you left, and that was that. He worked until he couldn't.

DANIEL

You run the place.

MARA

Yeah.

DANIEL

When did he get sick?

MARA

Eight years ago.

Daniel starts to put the pieces together as Mara starts drinking the drink he ordered for her.

DANIEL

When?

MARA

Spring.

DANIEL

When?

MARA

May 1st.

DANIEL

This happened the week after I left for Togo? Christ, Mara, why didn't you tell me?

MARA

Why would I?

DANIEL

Why wouldn't you?

MARA

I wanted to punish you. Even if you didn't know it.

Her level of hurt at his hands truly sinks in.

DANIEL

You hated me. Do you still hate me?

MARA

I don't think about you.

The bartender checks on them - Daniel nod for two more without a word.

There is a pause as Daniel decides to go down memory road with her.

DANIEL

Do you remember the first time I met your dad? You brought me home for a Saturday dinner. Gene's infamous barbecue chicken nights. He shook my hand and said, 'Here you are.' Then he led me out to the backyard to his massive grill.

MARA

He loved that grill.

DANIEL

It was huge! I thought it was a car. And he handed me tongs and the barbecue brush, and about fifty pounds of marinated chicken.

MARA / DANIEL
(Simultaneously)
Secret marinade.

DANIEL
He looked me up and down and said
'OK. Let's see what you've got.'
God I was nervous. And the
chicken came out great.

MARA
He practically adopted you after
that.

DANIEL
Did he know we'd broken up?

She cocks her head at him. He amends his question.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Did you tell him I'd left you?

MARA
Not at first. I told him about a
month later.

Daniel sits with this.

DANIEL
He was angry, wasn't he?

MARA
He said 'I'm going to cut off his
dick and make him eat it.' But
you were in Africa, so... lucky.

Mara, for the first time, truly makes eye contact with
Daniel.

MARA (CONT'D)
He loved you. You broke his
heart.

This stings. Daniel takes a moment to reflect on that.

DANIEL
Who did you think was calling
when I phoned your room?

Mara finishes her drink and stands.

MARA

Goodnight.

She has to leave. Now.

DANIEL

It is lovely to see you again,
Mara.

Neither one moves for a moment.

She leaves, and he sits back down and slugs his scotch. He realizes he still has her card.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - CONT.

Mara is just entering her room. We hear the stairwell door open and Daniel's voice calling behind her.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Mara!

She turns to see him approaching.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Your card.

He offers it to her.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

They didn't charge you.

It registers to Mara that Daniel took care of it. A kind gesture, even after all this time,

MARA

Thank you.

She takes the card from him.

He stands just outside her door, hand on frame.

She does not quite look at him.

MARA (CONT'D)

Did you really think my studies
were more important to me than
you were? Did I give you that
impression?

DANIEL

Yes. I thought so.

MARA

What a catastrophic
miscommunication.

DANIEL

I made a huge fucking mistake.

MARA

I slept on Leann's couch for a
year.

She looks at the man who was her first true love - and the
adult he's become. And he looks at her.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They fall into each other.

They are so very familiar with each other, knowing each
other's rhythms; bodies. Everything.

This was, and is, something special.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING.

The room is bright and sun-filled. Windows face the city and
sky.

He is getting dressed. She drinks coffee in bed and they grin
at each other.

He leans in and kisses her. Heads for the door. Turns back.

He wants more time with her.

DANIEL

I'm starving.

She stands up on the bed facing him. She is naked.

MARA

I could go for the Lumberjack.

DANIEL

Oh my God.

He laughs and laughs and laughs, and pulls her feet out from
under her. She hits the mattress, laughing.

INT. DOWNTOWN BREAKFAST SPOT - MORNING.

Mara is inhaling, indeed, a Lumberjack platter. Daniel eats Eggs Benedict.

They chatter throughout.

DANIEL

The...Skyscraper Burger!

MARA

With the onion rings on it- They closed.

DANIEL

What?

MARA

They closed.

DANIEL

I'm going to take you to the best burger place in Seattle- I swear to God. My presentation is done at 5- you've got a meeting in Ballard?

MARA

I don't even know what time it is.

He extends his wrist to her while they eat.

DANIEL

I'll be back by 6.

EXT. SEATTLE HOTEL - EVENING.

Mara checks her phone, seeing an alert from Daniel. Her eyes miss a notification from Patrick.

Mara exits the hotel and Daniel catches her in his arms.

He takes her hand and off they go, exhilarated to be together.

EXT. SEATTLE PIER - EVENING.

They are on the pier, getting burgers from a colorful shack of a place where you know they salt their fries just right.

DANIEL

Remember Trivial Pursuit nights??

MARA

It was Strip trivial Pursuit.

DANIEL

You were compliant.

They walk along the pier, eating burgers and enjoying the company.

MARA

Jesus Christ this is amazing.

A sudden memory hits Daniel like a freight train.

DANIEL

Spontaneous Combustion!

MARA

The map! Fred! We named the map!

They grin at each other and he kisses her, burger and all.

INT. SEATTLE HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT.

Mara and Daniel sit cross legged on the bed facing each other.

MARA

Why did we name the map?

DANIEL

I don't know. but you'd close your eyes and point.

Her fingers trace the distance between locations on his arm gently.

MARA

We got to Santa Barbara that way.

DANIEL

And Reno. Fucking Reno.

MARA

Fuck me.

Them making love eyes locked. This is not a fling.

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - DAY

Daniel drives Mara along the coast of Seattle in his well-used Range Rover.

EXT. LAKE WASHINGTON - EVENING.

The outside of a house on a hill overlooking Lake Washington. It is beautiful but not ostentatious.

Daniel has his keys in hand, he is opening his front door.

He carries her travel bag.

He looks back at her. They smile and share a look of anticipation and something more: something right.

He opens the door, they go inside.

INT. DANIEL'S KITCHEN - EVENING.

Huge windows runs along the adjacent living room; open concept. A large brown leather couch is in shadow, as is the stone fireplace opposite it.

It is evening out, and the blues and purples of the lake, and sky, outside, create a beautiful, intimate setting for Mara and Daniel.

They are making dinner and talking, laughing. The only light on in the house is the kitchen light. They are illuminated.

They are the only people in the world.

INT. VINTAGE CAR SHOP - DAY

Mara coasts along the car shop. She's completely enamored with everything - like a kid in a candy store.

INT. VINTAGE CAR SHOP - AFTERNOON.

Daniel is picking Mara up at a vintage car garage outside of town.

She is lively and animated, regaling the guys in the shop, including the owner, with war stories from the front. They love her. She is excellent at her job.

Daniel watches, outside. He swells with pride - and gratitude - that he's been afforded her again.

INT. LOBSTER PLACE - DAY.

Lunch. Mara tears into a lobster with gusto.

MARA

I thought I hated lobster.

DANIEL

You had your first lobster dinner at Circus Circus for 99 cents. What did you expect?

He feeds her a bite from his plate.

MARA

You won five grand at the slots- what did we spend that on again?

DANIEL

The clawfoot tub for our bathroom.

MARA

I loved that tub. We both fit in that tub.

They look at each other.

DANIEL

Stay.

MARA

I can't.

DANIEL

You can. Planes fly throughout the week, every day, every hour. Did you know, we even have cars that need repairing in Seattle?

She can't help but smile - it's a terrible argument. But she still stays.

INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - MORNING.

He is awake. He is across from her, watching her. She sleeps on her side, facing toward him.

After a few moments, she wakes. Her eyes open, and she sees him watching her.

They simply look at each other for a few moments as she fully comes out of sleep.

He speaks - and it is weighted with full responsibility and acknowledgement of what his abandonment of her carried.

DANIEL

I'm sorry.

She does not move. It is amazing what those two words can do.

She breathes.

And then: she begins to cry, which engulfs her in great wracking sobs.

He swiftly moves toward her and gathers her in his arms and simply holds her. He knows.

They stay there for a long time, even after she's quieted.

EXT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY.

There's a seriousness to them, as usually happens after a reckoning.

They sit in wooden chairs on his deck, curled up and bundled up. They drink coffee, quiet, and look out at the views.

DANIEL

What if I asked you to stay in
Seattle with me?

She does not follow.

MARA

When? Now?

DANIEL

Now. Yesterday. Eight years ago.

MARA

For the week?

DANIEL

No. Forever.

INT. DANIEL'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Mara's finishing her coffee. Daniel has left for work.

She takes a notebook from her carry-on, walks to her luggage in the entryway and slides it into the flat zippered compartment inside the bag.

She discovers something is already inside, and pulls it out.

It is the forgotten note from Patrick. She finally takes a minute to read it. As she reads it she's drawn slowly back into the life they share together.

One memory in particular is chopped and screwed - it's Patrick and Mara lying in the grass as the fog rolls in. It's a picturesque moment that isn't sitting quite right in her memory.

PATRICK (V.O.)

'The nearness of you is broken
summer grasses; The touch of you
the seeding of the air And our
sneezes making cornflowers
pollinate. A whole kitchen is in
your smell. It secretes its
ingredients in small places;
Busies itself in the clutter of
my tongue and hands. Your belly
is a steamed august pear warming
the soothed out cup of my palm,

Slowly, and bit by bit, the memory of Patrick and Mara is replaced with the memory of Daniel. The poetry slowly fades as Daniel consumes Mara entirely.

PATRICK (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Giving up the creased hub of its
stem to a fingertip. Your nipples
are blueberries ripening in my
mouth. My cheek coasts the raw
plantain of your sides; I play my
teeth in the freshly turned hay
of your ribcage. The neat walnut
halves of your buttocks and the
small open fruit of the small of
your back, are cultivating
suggestions in the coarse grass
of my groin.

Suddenly Mara and Patrick are thrust back together - in her bedroom - the lovers that were there just before her flight.

Mara can't even recognize who she was.

INT. DANIEL'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Mara stands with Patrick's note in her fingers, frozen in time.

After what feels like an eternity she runs to the kitchen garbage throws up.

The enormity of what she's done hits her, and she vomits again. She leans against the counter with both arms, vomit on her mouth, staring into the garbage, unseeing.

EXT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

She walks the kitchen garbage bag of vomit to the outdoor can and drops it in.

Mara in Daniel's driveway, gets in the car with her luggage, leaving Seattle like a bad dream.

INT. MARA'S LIVING ROOM - SUNSET

The sky has streaks of orange in it as the sun begins to set. The interior of the house is stunning in this light.

Mara enters with her things and flips on the lights. She sets the keys down on the kitchen counter.

Patrick sits at the kitchen table - clearly settled in, but not

PATRICK

Hi.

MARA

(startled)

Hi. What are you doing here?

PATRICK

I've been here since yesterday afternoon.

MARA

Oh. God. I'm sorry.

PATRICK

Do you know what it was like to have you not show up at the airport? I was going to drive to Seattle.

MARA

I'm so sorry.

PATRICK

No. I have been frantic.

MARA

I'm fine.

PATRICK

I had the hotel check your room, the bar, I even had them check the pool. They don't have a pool.

She freezes as her lies unfurl at her feet.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

What is going on?

She does not have an answer.

PATRICK

You were missing for 30 fucking hours. I called Don, I called Leann, I called-

MARA

You what.

PATRICK

You scared the shit out of me.

Mara puts her things down and enters full damage control mode.

MARA

I'm sorry. I did not mean to scare you. I was just-

PATRICK

You were what, Mar?

He notices her bare hand.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Mara. Where's your ring?

MARA

What?

She impulsively looks at her hand, the truth just falling from her lips.

MARA (CONT'D)

I left it in the hotel room.

PATRICK

Why did you take it off?

She will not look him in the eye.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I knew something was up when you called me last Monday begging for reassurance.

He is no one's fool.

PATRICK (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Who did you meet in Seattle?

MARA

What?

PATRICK

You heard me.

MARA

No one.

PATRICK

Who did you meet in Seattle?

MARA

I didn't.

PATRICK

Mara.

MARA

It was Daniel. I met Daniel.

That is literally the last name he expected.

PATRICK

Peace Corps Daniel?

MARA

Yes.

PATRICK

You planned a tryst with Daniel?

MARA

No.

PATRICK

This is not twenty fucking questions.

MARA

I ran into him at the first hotel. It was a total fluke. I got out of there, I left- I went to the Albertine.

PATRICK

And... he followed you?

MARA

Yes. He asked me to meet for a drink.

PATRICK

And you did.

MARA

I did.

PATRICK

You're having second thoughts because you met your ex for a drink?

Her silence tells him everything.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

When did you take off your ring?

(BEAT)

PATRICK (CONT'D)

When did you take off your ring?

Her best olive branch of defense.

MARA

I took it off before anything happened-before I even went down to meet him.

PATRICK

That is the most misguided,
fucked up consolation in the
history of the world.

His anger, and his fear, are now firmly in the driver's seat.

MARA

I didn't want him to know
anything about me.

PATRICK

No. You took it off because you
wanted the possibility.

Bullseye.

MARA

He was the love of my life!

PATRICK

You are the love of my life.

MARA

You're 29!

PATRICK

What the fuck does that mean?

The realization hits Patrick like a freight train.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

You're leaving me.

MARA

I'm going to Seattle.

PATRICK

Oh, he invited you this time.
What's he offering? Travel?
Adventure? True love? Who is this
guy?

MARA

He's based in Seattle. He has his
own company. His mom is still
alive-

PATRICK

So's my mom. So's my dad. So are Leann's. There's Don. There's Jill. So what? You're not going to replace your parents Mara. Cut the cord.

It would have hurt less if he'd hit her.

MARA

How dare you!

PATRICK

How dare you! You're going to leave me for a guy who broke your heart eight years ago by traipsing off to Africa and didn't even have the guts to tell you?! What the fuck are you doing?

MARA

He wants what I want.

PATRICK

Do you love me?

MARA

I do.

PATRICK

But I'm on the marriage and baby bandwagon.

MARA

It's not for me.

PATRICK

Does anyone else know how full of shit you are, Mara? What a charade.

Patrick finally calls her on her bullshit.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I've seen how you look at your married friends, at your goddaughter, I've seen how you bolt when I bring it up. You're so afraid of not getting it that you root for the opposition.

MARA

Oh, because I'm a female I must want to settle down and have kids and get fat because every woman's life isn't complete without that.

PATRICK

You know that's not what I meant. I'm not putting you in some gender- normic box.

Patrick hits her with the terrifying truth.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I know you.

He proves it.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Daniel doesn't want kids or marriage? Okay. I choose that too. No, if being with you means not having a family with you, or marrying you, I can do that. You are enough. If you want to get your tubes tied, I will take you and hold your hand.

She flinches against his raising of the stakes.

PATRICK (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

If you want me to get a vasectomy, I will do it. I want you.

He has completely called her bluff. She knows it.

MARA

We're done here.

PATRICK

You're having this conversation-

MARA

I'm exhausted.

PATRICK

Oh, I'm sure you're tapped out.

Her flight or fight has finally kicked in. She grabs her keys - but he grabs her arm first.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I love you! I am in love with you! And I know you feel the same way about me and it scares the shit out of you. Do you think I like that you slept with someone else?

She stone-walls him, refusing to let any part of her body betray her heart. And then, with great clarity on his part:

PATRICK

Then you deserve exactly as much as you think you do.

Mara, like a cornered feral dog, lashes out.

MARA

You pushed me into this relationship.

Patrick responds with the scariest, calmest sentence imaginable.

PATRICK

I'm 29. I know what I want. You're a fucking mess at 36.

Patrick grabs his coat as he storms out.

Mara remains perfectly still, as if staying her calm will stop the storm.

A moment later we hear a garbage can being kicked over.

Then she very slowly walks to the couch and sits on the floor, in the space between the couch and the coffee table.

She stays motionless as the sun sets on her.

INT. MARA'S HOUSE - DREAM

Mara as a little girl with her parents.

RING. RING.

INT. MARA'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mara cell phone blares to life. The blue glow illuminates her face to show every etch of sadness on her face.

She glances at the name LEANN.

Mara hangs it up.

EXT. EAST BAY - DAWN.

The sun coming up over the backroad from Orinda to Pinole; the Dam Road, runs along the reservoir. It is glorious both at sunset, and sunrise.

And Mara is already running. Her face betrays the rough night she had. She runs to hear her own heart beating, her own breath leaving her lungs.

She runs to escape last night. She can't.

EXT. MARA'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Mara returns home she sees a car in the driveway, and a figure pounding on the door.

As she gets closer the figure comes into sharp focus - Leann.

Leann is going in her purse to pull out her spare set of keys.

Mara goes to the door. Leann, stunned, lets her open it.

INT. MARA'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Mara heads inside. Leann is hot on her heels. She speaks calmly, firmly, but she is enraged with her friend.

LEANN

Are you out of your fucking mind?

The phone, still left where Mara slept, rings. The name DANIEL flashes across the screen.

Mara hesitates for just long enough.

LEANN (CONT'D)

Do not pick up that fucking phone.

Mara keeps moving from room to room trying to escape Leann. Mara picks up the phone and heads into the kitchen.

MARA

(into the phone)

Hi.

LEANN

Oh HeLLOOOOOO Daniel.

MARA

(into the phone)

Next weekend? Yes. Great. I can't wait to see you either. Me too. Bye.

She hangs up. She doesn't acknowledge Leann. She makes coffee instead.

LEANN

What the fuck are you doing? You don't come home and then- I had to pull it out of Patrick- Why? Why?

Mara continues making coffee.

LEANN (CONT'D)

You are going to end up with nothing.

MARA

I know what I'm doing.

LEANN

It gets a lot harder to find someone as you get older.

Mara throws the coffee pot down. She is angry. And guilty.

MARA

Oh, fuck you. You have been married since you were practically a child, and you have the temerity to lecture me on dating? Who the fuck do you think you are?

LEANN

I am your friend! I am your oldest friend!

Point goes to Leann.

LEANN (CONT'D)

I don't think you know what
you're doing.

MARA

Because I broke up with my
boyfriend? Do you know how
patronizing that is? Then you
marry him! Then you can have two
perfect husbands and two perfect
marriages and your perfect baby,
and be on your fucking perch with
your fucking fairy tale.

Leann registers that Mara has no idea about her friend's
life. Leann leaves the house, closing, but not slamming the
door behind her.

INT. LEANN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Leann opens her car door and gets in, throwing her purse in
the back seat. She silently sits in the betrayal.

The passenger door opens silently. Mara gets in alongside
her.

The two women don't say a word.

Then Leann speaks. It is a matter of fact reveal.

LEANN

I want to leave my family by the side of the road sometimes, just open the door as Scott's stopped at a light and just get out. I have a folder on my desktop that says 'chores' because I know he will never look in there. Bus tickets, train tickets, plane tickets, one-way. One-way. Unused, but it makes me feel better to buy them. Perfect? Scott cried last week- I made him cry. I took off my ring - -and I threw it at him. The look on his face- And he starts crawling around, looking for it on his hands and knees. I don't even know what we were fighting about. But I would never leave him, and he would never hurt me the way Daniel hurt you...and I want you to have the same thing.

Leann takes a moment breathe.

LEANN

What're you doin', Mar?

MARA

(truthfully)

He still smells the same.

Leann registers this with great understanding.

LEANN

Well, fuck.

They sit there for a moment, simply being with one another.

MARA

He cried?

LEANN

It was a great throw.

A dog barks down the street. The storm has passed.

EXT. WASHINGTON STATE HIKING TRAIL - DAY.

Daniel and Mara are both dressed for their hike, wearing backpacks.

They are midway through, and in mid-conversation. He is explaining his work to Mara.

DANIEL

So Marshall and I figured, what an untapped market this is, and off we went.

MARA

It's ALL military?

DANIEL

Any veteran - marines, navy, army - anything. And we integrate them back into the community agriculturally. The bulk of our troops come from these communities anyway.

MARA

-Why?

DANIEL

That's... just the value system of these societies. You grow up, you're taught serve your country, you come back. But coming back - I mean, post-9-11, veterans have such a hard time find employment. I don't know why, but employers don't always consider service skills comparable to civilian skills. Even if you've been a medic. People have this bizarre fear that veterans are going to crack, go crazy, you know, 'PTSD -shoot up the place.' It's bullshit. Now they're lucky to get a minimum wage job in a potato chip factory. So there are higher unemployment rates, more vets not seeking help for mental health- it's- it's so addressable- So this, what we're doing-

MARA

It's a perfect circle.

He's gleaming with pride - both for his work and for her.

DANIEL

Yeah. And now there are strong, young, able-bodied people working in farming instead of the average 57yr old farmer who's nearing retirement age.

MARA

What about the vets who aren't as able bodied?

DANIEL

We train them too. For managing, bookkeeping, purchasing. Everyone.

MARA

That's great.

DANIEL

Haiti is Marshall's brainchild. He's been working on it for a month and here we are. We're planting, building nurseries, grain storage-

MARA

You're amazing.

DANIEL

This one was all Marshall. I'm just going down as a laborer this time.

They've come to an overlook. Mara stops and looks at the scenic view. Daniel slides an arm around Mara's shoulder.

INT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY.

Mara and Daniel are changing out of their hiking clothes.

MARA

I want to go with you.

DANIEL

What?

MARA

I want to go with you.

DANIEL

We leave Monday-

MARA

Don wants me to take a break anyway.

DANIEL

You have an interview.

MARA

The Chronicle piece-

DANIEL

(emphatically)

By Bess Appleby-

MARA

It's another 'Woman Doing a Man's Job' piece. She does profiles like this every month. I'm already on her radar and I'll reschedule.

DANIEL

Are you sure?

MARA

I want to go with you.

DANIEL

I would love for you to come. You can wear my work clothes.

MARA

That's kind of hot.

Daniel suddenly pivots his focus away from work.

DANIEL

I think you should put on my Mariners shirt right now.

MARA

So yes?

DANIEL

Let's defile your passport, Miss Frasier.

He tosses her onto the couch, and climbs on top of her to make out.

MARA

For the record, I wouldn't be caught dead wearing that Seattle Jersey.

MONTAGE:

INT. D & G SHOP - DAY

Don and Mara are together interviewing a guy to be Mara's replacement;

INT. FACTION BREWERY, ALAMEDA - DAY

Mara is sipping craft beers with Leann and Scott on a clear but already chillier day; they've clearly picked up the regular pace of their friendship again

INT. DON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mara has a farewell dinner with Jill and Don.

END MONTAGE.

INT. D & G GARAGE - DUSK

The car shop has a new guy in Mara's office. The place is alive, but is clearly missing a spark.

Steve, who's working on a car, is chatting on the phone.

STEVE

You know, I've rebuilt plenty of Holley carbs, but that four barrel I put on the 351 Cleveland for that '69 Pony? THAT was hard as balls, man.

INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mara stands in a a body con dress and killer heels, getting ready for a night out. Daniel slides behind her and zips her dress, kissing her shoulder.

MARA
(into the phone)
Can you send me a photo?

The doorbell buzzes

DANIEL
I've got it.

INT. FRASIER-PHELPS CAR SHOP - CONTINUOUS

STEVE
Yeah I just did.

As he waits for her reaction, Don comes walking in.

STEVE (CONT'D)
It's Mar.

DON
You show her the Pony?

Don takes the phone from Steve.

DON
Hey kiddo. How's it up north? Got
enough rain for ya?

He laughs at his own joke. Steve gestures to have him put her
on speaker phone.

DON (CONT'D)
You will be happy to know that
John Aaronson and his idiot
brother have been banned from the
shop.

STEVE
Because they're twats!

MARA (O.S.)
What? Why? What did they do?

DON
They asked for LAMBO DOORS on
their Jag 'E' type.

STEVE
I offered to puke on it for free.

INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mara is ready, but soaking in all the everything of the garage, of Don, of Steve. She hears a click-clack of heels on the wooden floor in the distance.

Daniel greets Scott and Leann, kissing her cheek.

DANIEL

Leann. You look beautiful. Scott.
Hey man, how's it going?

LEANN (O.S.)

God you look the same.

MARA

(to the phone)
You are making this up.

Leann sneaks in, a glass of wine in her hands from Daniel. Mara greets her with an excited wave.

DON (O.S.)

Mar, I couldn't even think to
think to make that up. Okay kid,
gotta go, I'll talk to you soon.

MARA

Tell everyone I said 'hi.' And
good luck at Autorama!

She hangs up, pivoting her attention completely to Leann. Mara is clearly nervous, but hides it under her steely reserve.

MARA (CONT'D)

Hi.

LEANN

This place is amazing.

MARA

Thank you for coming.

LEANN

Of course. We've never been to
Seattle. It's kind of gorgeous.

Leann takes a moment to take it all in.

LEANN (CONT'D)

It's actually good to see him.
Scott asked me if he should punch
him, on the drive over from the
hotel. But Daniel gave him like
80 yr. old scotch, so- I get it.

Mara smiles - the hardest part is over.

Daniel knocks at the door before entering.

DANIEL

Hi.

He sees Mara fully dressed. She practically radiates love.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

You're stunning. Ready to go?

EXT. SWANKY, HIP EATERY - NIGHT.

The two couples sit at a round table, talking, eating,
drinking. There are bottles of wine on the table as well as
cocktails in front of the men

Leann hands Daniel her phone, beaming with pride.

Daniel looks through the photos of her kids.

A great time is being had by all.

More wine is consumed, more laughter and talking.

EXT. SWANKILY HIP EATERY - NIGHT.

The sidewalk outside the restaurant. It has rained,
naturally, and the streets are wet.

As Scott and Leann's car arrives, the two couples embrace
with well wishing for the evening.

MARA

This was-

Leann nods. Takes Mara's hands in hers. It's not simply an
approval, but a blessing.

LEANN

Yes.

Mara hugs her hard.

Scott and Leann get into their car, leaving Daniel and Mara alone on the rain-slicked street.

Mara catches Daniel staring at her earnestly.

DANIEL

I love you.

She closes the distance between them. He is full with emotion. She looks up at him and puts her hand on his chest.

MARA

I know.

Something shifts in him; there is a levity. A buoyancy.

They take each other's hand, and walk down the dark, wet street together. She leans her head on his shoulder.

INT. DANIEL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT.

Daniel and Mara walk in. They are still stuffed from dinner, and still a bit tipsy.

They sit on the couch, she lays her legs across Daniel's lap.

He massages her legs, her feet. It feels great.

MARA

Were you given a manual?

DANIEL

I've been around.

She chuckles.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I've got a few miles on you.

MARA

A few years.

DANIEL

That too.

MARA

You wear it well, Mr. Cooley.

DANIEL

How gracious of you to say, Mrs. Cooley.

MARA

What?

DANIEL

How gracious-

MARA

No-the other part.

DANIEL

Mrs. Cooley?

MARA

That part.

DANIEL

Has a nice ring to it. Mara Cooley.

Daniel's excitement is coming to the surface.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I originally wanted to wait to do this in Prague, but you looked so pretty and so happy slurping your bisque-who taught you to eat soup?- I couldn't wait.

He gently moves her and gets down on one knee.

DANIEL (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Mara Mara quite contrara, I like to think I'm older and wiser.

He pulls a ring out of his chest pocket.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Will you marry me?

Mara's trying to catch up to the conversation.

MARA

Prague?

DANIEL

God, let's get married.

She is dumbfounded. As he's never seen this side of her, he takes it as a 'yes'.

He slides the ring onto her finger. It fits perfectly. He stands, and kisses her.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Don't move.

He leaves the room. Mara just got engaged - shame she wasn't there for it.

She examines the ring - it's perfect.

She goes to the kitchen to get a glass of water in a daze.

His phone dings. She looks. It's a flight status update.

Daniel comes back in, beaming, a photo in his hands.

DANIEL

I found this last week. It's us
in front of our house on Euclid,
the day we moved in.

He kisses her.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

My beautiful fiancé. Let's go
have engaged sex.

He throws her over his shoulder and heads for the bedroom.

MARA

Daniel!

She smacks him on the butt, still playful as the world crashes around her.

DANIEL

Don't worry, it'll still be hot.

MARA

Daniel!!

He stops, and shifts her so she is upright in his arms.

MARA (CONT'D)

Prague?

DANIEL

Have you been? You'll love it,
it's gorgeous.

He puts her down so she is sitting on the counter. He goes to the fridge and pulls out a bottle of champagne. He opens it and pours it for them over the next exchanges.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

The beer is cheap, the
architecture is amazing-

MARA

You planned an engagement trip,
before you proposed?

DANIEL

No, no no no. I have a meeting
with the guy who coordinates
getting the machinery to the
farms in Eastern Europe. I
figured you would love to come,
and see Prague with me. And I
thought it would be the perfect
setting to get engaged.

MARA

How long?

DANIEL

We can be engaged for however
short or long you like.

MARA

No-how long is the Prague trip?

Mara looks at the love of her life - he is completely well-intentioned, and completely misguided and scatter shot.

DANIEL

It's only five days, but from
there, you can come to Serbia
with me. We launched two dairy
farms there last year, and we've
gotten more updated equipment-

MARA

Serbia.

DANIEL

Oh, I'm going to take you to Montenegro. It's called the Pearl of the Mediterranean.

MARA

The flight is in five days.

DANIEL

I'll take you shopping tomorrow. I know, it's a lot.

MARA

You didn't ask me.

Daniel misreads this - he asks her as if they're going to Disney World.

DANIEL

Would you like to come to Prague?

MARA

I have commitments. I have interviews here.

DANIEL

I know, I know, you can push them back. This'll be a great trip, it's three weeks, and we can figure it out when we get back.

MARA

I still have to pick my replacement.

DANIEL

That's really Don's job-

MARA

I really can't do that to him.

DANIEL

No, you're right, you're right.

Mara realizes, for the first time, that her fairy tale romance has come true.

MARA

I can't go with you.

She realizes in this moment, it's no big deal, I'll see you when you get back. Simple logistics.

DANIEL

I need you with me, Mara.

MARA

Why?

DANIEL

What do you mean, why? Because I love you. Because married couples travel together. How else am I going to save the world?

MARA

Okay. After Prague and Beijing, and the Trans-Siberian Express-

DANIEL

Wait- hey Mar? Why don't we get married in Serbia? I have a friend who can marry us. And we can take the train from Slovenia to Italy. Venice. It could be our honeymoon. And if we have time, in Italy, we can enjoy all that food.

Mara's true protest fall on deaf ears.

MARA

Do you remember, in Seattle, you said, 'come to Seattle, they have cars in Seattle?'

DANIEL

Yes.

MARA

You're never in Seattle.

Mara takes a moment to reconfigure her argument.

MARA (CONT'D)

When does it end?

DANIEL

When does what end?

MARA

The traveling, globe-trotting-

DANIEL

There are always going to be wars, there will always be vets, and there'll always be communities to sustain.

MARA

When will you be done? When will you be content to come home on a Tuesday night and have dinner on the patio?

DANIEL

Mara, I want us to build irrigation systems together. I want to explore the world with you.

MARA

But it's your work, and your world.

Mara's finally connected at the dots. Daniel is getting frustrated with this unnecessary impasse.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

You were pissed at me eight years ago because I didn't ask you to go to Africa with me, and now you're pissed because I want you to?

MARA

You want me to drop everything and follow you.

DANIEL

You said you would. You followed me to Haiti.

MARA

I went to Haiti to show you that I love you and support you and I think what you do is amazing.

DANIEL

Do you love me?

MARA

I have been in love with you for ten fucking years.

DANIEL

Babe, then why build a car when you can build a better world with me?

Daniel has pitched his dream to someone who has woken up.

MARA

You never said 'my home is in Seattle,' you said, 'I'm based in Seattle.' I should have listened harder.

DANIEL

You'd really be happy to just wrench on cars for the rest of your life?

MARA

I am good at what I do. I can do a frame off restoration of any car on the planet. I can take any car and bring it back to life- and I love it. I am good at what I do. And I'm continuing the legacy of one of the best men I have ever known. What I do may be smaller than what you do, but it is not less.

Mara sees now that he's never truly seen her. She states the truth, kindly, and calmly:

MARA (CONT'D)

This is not going to work.

DANIEL

What do you mean, it's not going to work? Because our schedules don't match up?

He senses she is slipping away, and it is fast. He means this sincerely:

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I will buy you a garage. Your own garage. To run. Here.

MARA

You're amazing, do you know that? You are such a decent man. But I am not what you need.

DANIEL

Don't say that.

MARA

What you need-

DANIEL

You are what I want- You are-
Mara. You're the one.

She gently removes the beautiful ring. He stays still.

She places the ring on the kitchen table.

She goes to the living room and picks up her shoes. He watches.

She goes into the bedroom. He stands in the living room, unable to move. He is uncomprehending at what has just occurred but he knows it's not good.

She comes back out with her travel bag.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Please don't go.

But the cards are on the table. It is heartbreaking for them both. She cannot answer him. Some of the truth of the situation has sunk in for him. He knows.

DANIEL (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You didn't say yes to marrying
me.

MARA

You didn't let me answer.

Both of them are forced to suffer for their blindness.

MARA (CONT'D)

I'm going to stay with Scott and
Leann tonight, and go home in the
morning.

DANIEL

Would you at least stay with me
tonight?

There's nothing she wants more, but it won't change the fact they want different things.

MARA

I can't.

A horn honks outside. Her car is here. She is crying. This is awful.

Daniel goes to the sofa and sits down, leaning forward on his knees, hands clasped. He looks straight ahead.

She puts on her coat.

She walks out of the front door, closing it behind her.

Daniel sits there in his now-empty living room; his empty house. He weeps.

INT./EXT. MARA'S RENTAL CAR - MORNING

Mara drives down the coast in a rental car.

She has opted to travel home to the Bay Area via Pacific Coast Hwy 101. Of course she has.

Her rental is a standard sports car: a Dodge Challenger.

Suddenly she sees a young woman on the side of the road - a flat tire. The young woman is on the verge of tears.

Mara pulls over.

INT. THE IVY ROOM, A BAR - CONTINUOUS

PATRICK is onstage. He recites a poem

PATRICK

'I phoned from time to time, to see if she's changed the music on her answerphone. "Tell me in two words," goes the recording, what you were going to tell in a thousand.'

EXT. EXT. HIGHWAY 101 - CONTINUOUS

Mara jacks up the car. The rain starts to come down, but Mara's got this.

PATRICK (VO)

'I peer into that thought, like peering out to sea at night, hearing the sound of waves breaking on rocks, knowing she is there, listening, waiting for me to speak.'

A pickup slows down and stops alongside her. The passenger window rolls down.

There's a young guy in the driver's seat.

DRIVER

You ladies need a hand?

Mara finally snaps, and targets her rage at the guy in the truck.

MARA

I know how to change a fucking tire!

The truck drives off as Mara has a moment of regret.

PATRICK (VO)

'Once in a while she'll pick up the phone and her voice sings to me out of the past. The hair on the back of my neck stands up as I catch her smell for a second.'

Mara finishes changing the tire. The young overwhelmed girl in the car tries to hand Mara some money. Mara waves it off. The girl drives off.

INT. THE IVY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

There's scattered clapping as Patrick steps offstage. The bartender has a drink waiting for him.

PATRICK

Thanks Bobby.

He takes a drink. There's a chick there, at the end of the bar. She's watching him. She's attractive. She's interested.

He looks back at his drink. Makes a decision.

He walks over to her.

EXT. HIGHWAY 101 - CONTINUOUS

As she sits on the shoulder of the coastal highway overlooking the Pacific Ocean, in this gray, miserable weather, she has a giant, ugly, soul-and-body-wracking cry.

At last.

INT. D & G GARAGE - THE NEXT DAY

The garage is springing to life as various mechanics return to their projects.

Mara walks in with a cup of coffee and sunglasses, surprising them.

Steve is behind the wheel of a new project they're just acquired. He's trying to turn the engine over.

DON

(to Mara)

When did you get back?

MARA

Last night. Steve you're gonna flood it.

The engine catches and roars to life.

Steve looks very pleased with himself and gets out of the car. He gives her the eye.

MARA (CONT'D)

Tri-tip, extra onions?

STEVE

On a roll.

MARA

Kill it, will ya?

He nods, killing the engine.

MARA (CONT'D)

Don, you want the usual?

DON

You know it.

MARA

I got the rest of you.

She goes into her office, the office lighting up around her.

EXT. MARA'S HOME - DUSK

Mara pulls up in the truck, not registering the rental car parked on the street.

She grabs her satchel and her phone -

DANIEL. On her porch. Next to her damn packages.

MARA

Hey I'll call you back.

DANIEL

Hey there.

MARA

What are you doing here?

DANIEL

Don't panic, I'm not going to throw myself at you. Unless you want me to.

She doesn't. This is mildly disappointing, but understood.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

(Diving in)

-I called Bess Appleby this morning and told her you did me a huge favor, stepping in when one of my colleagues fell through, helping with the Haiti project. I told her I commissioned you as my old friend and feminist example, that the grain mill you were literally constructing with your bare hands, will enable the women of the community to mill their corn and millet close by, rather than traveling long distances on foot, and that's why you missed the appointment with her last month.

Daniel takes a breath, noticing Mara's confused expression.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

(Explaining)

Haiti's a matriarchal society,
so... she'll be calling you to
reschedule the interview.

MARA

You just...made a call?

DANIEL

And I donated an obscene amount
to an anti-FGM group she
champions.

Mara is stunned at his generosity.

MARA

Why?

DANIEL

Because I love you, I'm going to
love you till I die, and I want
you to be doing what you love,
like I am. Okay! Okay, now just
point me in the direction of a
stiff drink, or five, and then I
have to fly to Prague tomorrow
night. Is Wilke's still open?

MARA

The Warehouse, in Port Costa.
Corner of Brever and Feldman.

The two of them stand in this moment, the beginning of a
beautiful new adventure for the both of them.

DANIEL

Kick ass, Frasier.

He steps off the porch. Mara watches him go.

INT. MARA'S KITCHEN TABLE - EVENING

Mara drinks whiskey and writes. She watches the sun go down.

INT. MARA'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

She wakes, the room bathed in morning sun. She feels good.
Sure.

EXT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - MORNING

There is a knock at Patrick's door.

After a moment, Patrick opens the door, very, very hungover. His shirt is marked with a huge stain. He looks rough. So does his apartment.

Of course it's Mara at the door.

PATRICK

So, what? Did he dump you?

MARA

No. He proposed.

PATRICK

Did you lose that ring, too?

MARA

I said 'no.' It's over.

PATRICK

Too bad. From your description, he seemed like a catch.

MARA

He is. Just not for me.

PATRICK

Maybe I'll call him.

MARA

Good luck. He's in Prague.

Patrick recalls his night in the bar with "Danny", makes a connection, and realizes the man she left him for is actually... pretty damn decent.

PATRICK

Great.

MARA

How's teaching? You're an assistant professor now.

PATRICK

It's great, too. I gave a lecture on Collective Cultural Responses to Disaster.

MARA

I know. I caught it.

PATRICK

You were there?

MARA

And they streamed it. You're practically famous.

PATRICK

I mixed up two images.

MARA

You were electric.

PATRICK

Why did you come?

MARA

I wanted to see you. Doing what you're good at—and you're so good at it. See you doing what you're passionate about. You make it interesting.

PATRICK

Thank you. I actually meant why did you come here?

MARA

You were right. I bolted. I would have left no matter what. But Daniel was convenient, and less threatening.

PATRICK

Threatening? You felt threatened?

MARA

It was an imaginary threat.

PATRICK

Got it.

He is unimpressed, and wants to go back inside. She waits.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Sounds like you figured out what you want.

MARA

I always knew. I finally admitted it. The sky's still intact.

She waits for him to ask what it is she wants.

He does not.

MARA (CONT'D)

I want a family.

PATRICK

I know. I think the work you've done is commendable. Good. I hope you take this honesty into your next relationship. Take care of yourself, Mara.

He closes the door.

She stands there a moment, disbelieving. She begins to walk away and stops. She is eviscerated.

She has, as predicted, been left with nothing.

MONTAGE:

-Mara curls up on the couch, watching television.

-Leann comes over with the kids. Mara comes alive again, if only as an act. Leann sits with her on the couch. She knows.

-Mara riding the Steam Train at Tilden Park with Scottie next to her. She is still gray. Scott and Leann are in the car behind them, with the baby.

-Mara takes a stool and sits next to Steve, who's working on a car. He notices her. He knows she's not OK. He keeps working. She takes solace simply being in his space. They're like family.

-Mara working on her own writing, intent and happy, with her mom's book in the foreground;

-Mara talking to a group of girls at the shop, from the local high school. She's showing them how to change the oil in their car;

-Mara at the library, watching the dean reveal her mom's signed book of poetry in a display. He turns and shakes her hand, thanking her. She has donated it to the university.

-Mara climbing off of a car, sweaty, dirty, and good;

END MONTAGE

INT. D & G GARAGE - DAY.

A Friday. Mara is finishing up the day with Steve.

MARA

So the TDI Cup-

STEVE

Pitchford Volkswagen, pick up the
Jettas on Monday.

MARA

You got it. Oh, and Steve, stop
telling Latrice to order a drum
of brake light fluid.

STEVE

(devilish)

Was she mad?

Mara reads from a post-it.

MARA

'I will cut you another asshole,
asshole.'

Don comes into the garage, his arms stacked to his chin with
magazines.

DON

You're on the cover! You're on
the cover!

MARA

I know, I was there.

DON

I had to go to six different
places to get this many!

He puts them down on the counter and opens one, then looks at
her. He is so proud.

DON (CONT'D)

The spread is amazing, it's like
four pages! That's a great little
Corvette they got-

MARA

You know they sent me a box of them.

DON

Bring'em in! Let's send them to a few other shops - in case they didn't get theirs.

Mara gives him a look.

DON (CONT'D)

(clarifying)

What? It's not gloating.

STEVE

You need anything from me?

MARA

Nope. Tell Jeanine I said hi.

Steve looks at a magazine on the way out.

STEVE

You look good, boss.

He takes one, and leaves Don and Mara as the only two left in the shop.

DON

You ready?

She grabs her coat in her office and reappears.

INT. DON'S CAR ON THE ROAD - DAY.

Don is driving.

Mara is leaned back, her head against the seat, watching the blue sky, and rolling green hills of the back roads of Orinda.

Don's radio plays Tower of Power's 'So Very Hard To Go.' They listen and drive.

DON

It was nice you gave the guys an early day.

She looks to him and smiles, and resumes gazing out the window.

After a few moments, Don pulls over.

DON (CONT'D)

Mara. What happened?

Mara sits up fully. She simply does not know where to start.

Mara turns her head towards the windshield, avoiding his eyes.

I know you thought you wanted Seattle, you wanted that guy, but I gotta tell you, you nearly gave me a heart attack. And I'm sorry you're sad but... Jesus, it's like your dad died all over again. What happened to Patrick? I liked him. I thought you were gonna marry that guy. Have a couple of kids. I was hoping we'd have more munchkins running around here again.

They let this sit for a moment.

He gets out of the car. She follows.

EXT. LAFAYETTE CEMETERY - CONT.

They are at the cemetery where her parents are buried. Don walks around the car and before they can walk onto the grass, she speaks.

MARA

I went to his house and I said I was sorry, and I told him why I did what I did.

DON

And?

MARA

It doesn't matter. He's done.

They walk through the cemetery on this brilliant day, coming to a stop on a lush green hill, with views of the Bay Area. It's beautiful.

They look down at the side by side plaques of her mom and dad; of Don's best friend and his wife.

DON

You broke his heart, kiddo.

MARA

Yeah.

DON

You really broke his heart.

MARA

I don't know what to do.

DON

Did you tell him that?

Beat. He looks out at the view.

DON (CONT'D)

Did I ever tell you that your mom
and dad saved my marriage?

She gingerly shakes her head no.

DON (CONT'D)

When Jill and I first married,
she worked at the phone company
and her boss, Sheila, invited us
over to her place for this swanky
dinner party. We were young, 24,
25. After dinner we're outside
around the pool having champagne,
and I hear on the radio that the
Cowboys had won. I got so
excited, I picked Jill up and
tossed her in the pool.

Mara is horrified.

DON (CONT'D)

Yep. I wasn't even drunk, I just
thought it would be funny.

MARA

That's not funny.

DON

No. I tried to help her out of the pool, but no. Sheila went upstairs with her to give her dry clothes, and Jill took the car, left me there. Wouldn't talk to me for a week; I was sleeping in your dad's garage on that ratty old couch. I apologized, begged her to forgive me. When she finally did speak to me she said she didn't trust me, and wondered if she'd made a mistake in marrying me. I was shocked. Thank God for your mom and dad. They sat me down at their kitchen table and talked to me.

Mara can practically picture this moment.

DON (CONT'D)

I'd undermined and humiliated my wife. That made me sick. With your mom's help, I wrote Jill a letter. I told her I understood. It took awhile for her to trust me again. She needed proof I wouldn't ever do anything so careless to hurt her again. At least, not on a regular basis. I stopped apologizing for myself; I took care of her.

Mara is staring at him with a mix of love, consternation, and genuine awe.

MARA

I had-

Mara falls silent on her own. Words have failed her.

DON

Look at how he was affected by what you did, not just what you learned from it.

MARA

Who are you?

DON

Not bad for an old fat guy, huh?

MARA

You're vintage.

They laugh a little. It's a beautiful moment.

DON

What are your plans this weekend?

She side-eyes him, looks forward again. Nods. She's heard him.

Don's smile could power the entire city.

EXT. WILDCAT CANYON - DAYBREAK

Mara runs the path of the trail. It is gray and windy, with billows of fog blowing by-- the perfect Bay Area morning.

She runs past cows, and cottontail rabbits hop across the path.

MARA (VO)

Sometimes they spat across the
country/makes you cranky/sad/and
lone/ and the space behind you/as
you lie on your side/is filled
with nothing/phantom limb/phantom
everything.

She slows her pace as she approaches her truck. She stretches against the truck, sweaty, peaceful, and ready.

She opens the door and climbs in, her mom's book of poetry on the seat next to her. The back of the book faces up, and the author photograph is visible. The resemblance is uncanny.

MARA (VO) (CONT'D)

How do I get/ from here to there/
I am not rich/ and do I even
belong there/ Should I/Supposed
to/She wonders a lot/ her
brilliant friend Mia said once
and it just stuck/ life is just
what you do to kill the time
before yo die/so how do you want
to spend it.

EXT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - MORNING

Mara knocks on his front door - book under her arm.

A moment passes, then Patrick answers the door, a coffee mug in his hand. He looks different from last time. He's brighter, put together, and his house beyond the open door reflects this. It is clean, neat and in order.

Patrick goes to say something, but pauses for a minute.

PATRICK

Good morning.

MARA

It finally registered how much pain and heartache I caused you. I'm so sorry. And I'm sorry it took me so long to get it. You would never have treated me with so little care. I really hope this won't sour you on future romantic endeavors.

Mara takes a breath, fully cleansed.

MARA (CONT'D)

Go, drink your coffee. Thank you for listening.

She hands him the book he was always reading of her mom's poetry. It is the most loving parting gift she can imagine giving him, and it feels right.

She turns, and walks away.

EXT. D & G GARAGE - DUSK

Patrick drives his old Saab, his normal route that carries him past Frasier-Phelps. Mara's truck is the only car there. On impulse, Patrick swings his car into an empty parking spot and gets out.

He sees her then, closing up. She brings the garage doors down, turns off the lights in the offices and finally, arms the very expensive security alarm before exiting the front door.

She sees Patrick.

PATRICK

I saw your truck-

MARA

Hi.

PATRICK

(Genuinely curious)

What was it? I dropped you off at the airport, and you changed your mind.

She takes a breath and walks toward her truck, and him.

MARA

You asked me to go away with you and were cryptic - because you wanted to surprise me. The ring, talk of babies; I thought you were going to propose which is actually not so terrifying and judging by your expression, not what you were going to ask me.

PATRICK

Did you think I was so blinded by you I lost my faculties? A week in Michigan. Barbecue and softball. My parents. That doesn't seem very scary.

MARA

That sounds like a nice time.

PATRICK

I was miserable.

MARA

I'm sorry.

They lean against the side of her pickup, not looking at each other, but rather at the pink and purpling sky.

PATRICK

I knew you were skittish. I thought I knew what you wanted, and what was best for you, but that's pretty patronizing. I should have backed off.

They stand there with that, just them listening to each other and the sounds of evening rolling in.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Have you ever missed someone so much, you physically ached?

MARA

Yes.

PATRICK

'Since that day, I have not moved
the pieces on the board.'

She was not expecting this. She goes very still and listens.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

You know you have one of the
biggest egos I have ever
encountered. It's not good.

MARA

I know.

He steadies himself. Takes a deep breath.

PATRICK

Would you-

MARA

Yes.

PATRICK

What about-

MARA

Yes.

PATRICK

But you don't-

MARA

Yes.

PATRICK

Are you serious?

MARA

Sometimes.

They stare at each other, then at the sky. The promise of
this beginning is so golden, and more importantly, very real.

FADE TO:

INT. THE ALBATROSS PUB - NIGHT

Mara and Steve and the other guys from the garage drink beers, tell stories and play darts. A ridiculous time is being had by all.

EXT. INDIAN ROCK, BERKELEY - DAY

Patrick and Mara sit atop the popular lookout point, eating burritos from Gordo's. They can see clear to San Francisco.

FADE TO:

EXT. TILDEN PARK LITTLE FARM - AFTERNOON

Mara and Scottie pet and feed the goats. They are both delighted.

CUT TO:

INT. DON'S OFFICE - DAY

Mara enters Don's office and leans on the door frame. Don sits at his desk, glasses on. He looks up.

DON

What's up kiddo?

MARA

So you gonna give me away or what?

A moment of silence. Don gets up, knocking over everything he was working on. He is crying, but it is comical and endearing more than anything else.

He bear hugs her.

FADE TO:

EXT. AN OUTDOOR BUILD UNDER BLAZING SUN - DAY

Daniel and his team (of professionals and locals) are erecting a greenhouse. As it grows later, people begin to drift off in pairs, done for the day.

Daniel is the only one left. He puts his hands on his hips and gazes at the in-progress handiwork. The sky around him is brilliant.

Daniel is alone, and his heart tugs a bit. He knows what he has given up. But he is fulfilled.

INT. D & G GARAGE - MORNING

Mara turns on the coffee pot.

She turns on the radio.

She works. She is perfectly content.

RADIO:

It's a chilly morning in the Bay Area today, some rain expected around noon- wouldn't that be nice?

This is Nick Dylan on K-Fog, making your morning commute a little more bearable.

THE END.