



ECHO LAKE

ENTERTAINMENT

BLUR

Written by
Jacob Colman

Adam Riback
Echo Lake Entertainment
310.789.4790

OPEN ON:

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

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

We know this because he's NAKED.

He takes a step inside and stops in his tracks.

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

They lock eyes.

CUT TO BLACK.

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

BACK TO THE SCENE.

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

CUT TO BLACK.

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

BACK TO THE SCENE.

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

AFTERIMAGE

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

AFTERIMAGE

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

AFTERIMAGE

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

AFTERIMAGE

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

THIS IS UNLIKE ANY SEX YOU'VE EVER HAD.

And as her fingers grasp a BRAIDED COIL OF LEATHER ROPE--
CUT TO BLACK.

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

b l u R

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIAM & AMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

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

Like **LIAM (29)**

Hunched over the table, a portrait of focus, he agonizes over table decorations. Arranging candlesticks just so.

He's a *daydreamer*. A *tinkerer*. An obsessive. After years of sacrifice, he's on the cusp of achieving his dreams. It's maddening and inspiring all at once. To be that close...

As he toils away--

VOICE (O.S.)

What are you doing?

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

AMY

You seriously want to light
candles? You're a freak.

(kisses him on the cheek)

Relax.

She gently takes the lighter, putting it in a drawer. As she crosses off, Liam calls out:

LIAM

You almost ready?

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

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

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

INT. DINING ROOM / KITCHENETTE - NIGHT

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

BOBBY
This fucking guy.

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

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

LIAM
(laughing, untangling)
Alright. Alright. That's enough.
And this must be Lydia.

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

LYDIA
Liam. Great to finally meet you.

They hug. As they release we get our first good look at her:

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

LIAM
Lemme grab your coat.

INT. DINING ROOM / KITCHENETTE - NIGHT

RED WINE POOLS in glasses as Bobby pours for the table. Their apartment's been decorated with care. Succulents. Macramé. Pinterest was obviously consulted. Bobby raises his glass--

BOBBY

I wanna propose a toast. To all my people *finally* in the same place. There's a lot to celebrate tonight.

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

BOBBY (CONT'D)

What? You don't want?

AMY

No, I'm good.

BOBBY

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

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

AMY

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

LYDIA

(sincere)

Good for you.

BOBBY

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

LIAM

(laughing)

No. Definitely not.

BOBBY

No dude, I think I probably would--

LYDIA

(to Amy)

Well I think that's awesome, Amy. I'm already proud of you.

AMY

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

LYDIA

Oh come on. To Amy!

They all cheers. Good vibes flowing in the warm atmosphere. From here we JUMPCUT between several SNAPSHOTS OF THE NIGHT. Empty wine bottles and purple teeth accumulating throughout.

BOBBY

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

Liam winces, embarrassed, as we CUT TO another snapshot--
Excited, Amy flips through a FOOD MAGAZINE. Searching for--

AMY

*"A Sous Chef at the ever-popular
Ur, Liam Garces is quickly making a
name for himself, serving dishes as
playful as they are cerebral. A
restuarant seems to be in his
future. And the thought of it has
us salivating."*

BOBBY

Dude! You're a fucking rock star
and you don't even tell me about
it?! I need an autograph. Sign my
butt cheek?

LIAM

Hey -- anything for a fan.

As Bobby playfully drops trou, we CUT TO another snapshot:

LYDIA sways a bit, holding a large SKETCH-PAD above her head.
She tries to get their attention, but drunk giggles persist.

LYDIA

Now just imagine this says *round 2*.

She fixes them with her "pin-up girl" smile before sauntering
about, circling the coffee table like it was a boxing ring.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

This is how I put myself through
grad school. What do you think?
Still got it?

On cue, Lydia clips the side of the table, wobbling clumsily
before spilling onto the floor. She covers her face,
embarrassed, as the room erupts in DRUNKEN LAUGHTER. Then--

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

You're sure this isn't weird?

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

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

LIAM

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

BOBBY

(groaning)

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

LIAM

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

(then)

You got everything you need?

LYDIA

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

LIAM

Our pleasure.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

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

AMY

How is he?

LIAM

He'll be fine.

AMY

Is he gonna barf?

LIAM

Fifty-fifty.

(off her look)

Kidding. Kidding.

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

LIAM (CONT'D)

Did you have fun tonight?

AMY

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

(then)

I really like her.

LIAM

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

AMY

Unlike the last girl. Or the girl before that.

LIAM

Or the girl before that.

(cuddling closer, then)

God, I'm so lucky.

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

AMY

Me too.

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

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

LIAM

No...

AMY

They wouldn't, would they?

LIAM

(after a beat)

Are you fucking kidding me...

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

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

Amy appears, shaking Bobby awake.

AMY

Hey. Wake up.

INT. DELI - DAY

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

BOBBY

Oh fuck yeah.

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

Bobby glances up at it.

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

AMY (O.S.)

You ready?

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

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

BOBBY (O.S.)

What's it been now? Six years?

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

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

AMY

Seven.

BOBBY

Wow.

AMY

Yep.

BOBBY

That's crazy.

AMY

I know. We're getting older.

BOBBY

No.

AMY

What do you mean, 'no'?

BOBBY
I mean no. Not really.

AMY
It's how time works, Bobby.

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

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

AMY
What?

BOBBY
Nothing.

AMY
What?

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

AMY
Oh God, Bobby.

BOBBY
What?

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

BOBBY
What would you call it?

AMY
College.

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

(MORE)

BOBBY (CONT'D)

(then)

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

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

AMY

(re: Lydia)

You know she's great, right?

BOBBY

Yeah, I know.

AMY

Don't fuck it up, okay?

BOBBY

Right.

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

INT. DINING ROOM / KITCHENETTE - DAY

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

LIAM

Morning. How we feeling?

LYDIA

Like I got hit by a freight train. Would it be weird if I showered?

LIAM

Not at all. You can borrow whatever from Amy. She won't care.

LYDIA

Thanks. *Again.*

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

LIAM

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

LYDIA

Yeah of course.

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

LYDIA (CONT'D)

What?

LIAM

Camera's in selfie mode.

LYDIA

And?

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

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Don't take a lot of selfies, Liam?

LIAM

Just not my thing, I guess.

LYDIA

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

Liam shifts, uncomfortable.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Just cause you *can't*, doesn't mean
I shouldn't.

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

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Towels?

LIAM

They're in there.

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

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

CUT TO BLACK.

EST. KITCHEN - RESTAURANT - NIGHT

We're inside a FINE-DINING KITCHEN: the most elegant chaos you've ever seen. Fire flashes in the range behind us. Then-- our camera settles on LIAM. Bent over. Intensely focused.

A SOUS CHEF, he oversees two line cooks: **HECTOR & DAN (20s)** who hustle beside him, the trio working in lock-step.

ON LIAM, as he puts the finishing touches on his dish. A perfect blend of finesse and fire. He's fully in his ELEMENT. Poised. Confident. Alive. THIS IS WHAT HE WAS BORN TO DO...

Just as he's about to make "the pass" to the server--

VOICE (O.S.)

Wait. Don't run that out.

MARTIN (40s), the EXECUTIVE CHEF, stomps down the line--

MARTIN

What the fuck is this? Bucatini's not on the menu tonight.

LIAM

Special request. I figured--

MARTIN

Get out of your head, Liam. What we serve here is not your call...

Martin simmers. No time to fix the mistake. He lets go of the server who whisks it off into the dining room. Martin tosses us a contemptuous look before exiting, blood pressure spiked.

Liam reacts -- turning to Hector.

LIAM

What's up with him tonight?

HECTOR

Important table. Some VR tech guys celebrating a launch. I dunno.

Liam scowls. Puts his head down. Burying himself in his work.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Liam sips from a crumpled bag. A cherry sizzles as Hector and Dan pass a JOINT around, laughing. A SUBWAY CAR rattles above them. It's Saturday night and the CITY's teeming with life.

Just then, a GROUP OF WOMEN appear, dressed for a night-out. Hector spits game, unsuccessfully. LIAM locks eyes with a **BEAUTIFUL STRANGER**. She smiles at him. *Sexy. Curvy. Inviting.*

Liam returns it, temptation flickering, before dutifully looking away. But a moment later, he can't help himself. He glances back--

She's still staring as the women disappear down the street. The ghost of a smile lingering on her lips. We hold on her, a world full of possibilities in those WILD GREEN EYES...

PRELAP: HEAVY BREATHING.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A NAKED BACK arches, swirling atop sheets in this darkened bedroom. We push closer, the SHADOW MATERIALIZING into: **AMY**. We watch her make love. Slow. Quiet. Well-intentioned...

Then she rolls off, revealing LIAM, as he catches his breath. Looking happy, and slightly sad. Amy cuddles close, drifting. We stay on Liam, staring at the ceiling, face falling a bit.

AMY
(half-asleep)
I love you.

LIAM
I love you too...

And just as his mind begins to wander, we DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHOWER - DAY

Steam curls, hanging heavy in the atmosphere. A SHOWER HEAD blasts hot water, trickling its way down SMOOTH SKIN. We track a DROP cresting a female COLLARBONE, sliding down the center of a CHEST. We pass HIPS, slipping between THIGHS...

INT. BATHROOM - LYDIA'S PLACE - DAY

A fogged mirror wipes clean revealing: LYDIA, bare-faced. Lydia uses a makeup wipe. Then she applies FIRMING CREAM. Rubs MOISTURIZER into her cheeks. She musses her hair, letting it fall wildly. She smiles. Liking what she sees.

INT. LYDIA'S OFFICE - DAY

Lydia leafs through color coded note-cards. Preparing.

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

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

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

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

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

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

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

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

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

Off Lydia. Smarting. Trying her best to ignore Bobby's texts.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

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

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

EXT. SUBWAY STAIRS

Lydia arrives at her station. Descends the stairs.

PODCAST (V.O.)

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

INT. PLATFORM - NIGHT

Lydia waits for her train. The monologue relaxing her.

PODCAST (V.O.)

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

INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT

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

PODCAST (V.O.)

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

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

PODCAST (V.O.)

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

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

PODCAST (V.O.)

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

The sound abruptly cuts out. She's paused it. Across the train a **CREEP (40's)** stares at her with strange intensity. Bodies pass in the foreground, but the man's gaze stays constant. Shameless. Predatory.

Lydia shifts her focus. Forcing herself to look elsewhere.

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

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

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

Then she feels the brush of someone else's hand on the pole. THE CREEP IS DIRECTLY BEHIND HER NOW. OFF HER, ANGUISHED--

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

LYDIA's sour face glows soft blue, illuminated by a TABLET. She taps around. Trying to decompress. Forget a shitty day. Just then, Bobby climbs into bed next to her. After a beat--

BOBBY

Oh, how'd that presentation go?

LYDIA

(sharp)

Fine.

Oblivious, Bobby begins squirming. Shifting. Pressing into her. That loaded, thrusting cuddle women are all too familiar with. Lydia tries to ride it out, but he keeps pushing it--

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

We watch as her face TIGHTENS.

And as his fingers walk further down her leg--

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

BOBBY

Where are you going?

LYDIA

Bathroom.

She marches off. We hear a door slam.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

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

CUT TO BLACK

VOICE (OVER BLACK)

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

INT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY

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

JEWELER

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

LIAM

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

JEWELER

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

She offers the ring to Liam. He plucks it delicately. As he holds it, considering the implications, we PRELAP:

BOBBY (O.S.)

I dunno man.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

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

BOBBY

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

LIAM

But.

BOBBY

Yeah. *But.*

(then)

My question is why? Why now?

LIAM

Because this is how it goes, man.

BOBBY

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

LIAM

Before Amy? Geez, I dunno. *One?*

(then)

But it was your mom, so--

Bobby withers. *Very funny.* He presses the issue--

BOBBY

Humor me, will you? How many women?
Five? Ten? Is that a number you're
gonna be happy with on your
deathbed? Or when your dick stops
working?

(off Liam's dismissive
gesture)

You're laughing. But I'm serious.

LIAM

Bobby -- I love her.

BOBBY

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

As Bobby rises to retrieve their drinks we PRELAP:

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

Does she do all the sex stuff you
want?

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

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

LIAM

Dude...

BOBBY

Alright. Clearly that's a 'no.'
 (off Liam's look)
 You know what: let's take the sex
 part out of it. Let's pretend for a
 moment that it's not important at
 all. By doing this you're
 essentially saying: I'm totally
 ready to never be surprised, in my
 life, ever again.

LIAM

That's stupid.

BOBBY

It's true.

LIAM

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

BOBBY

That's not what I'm saying. I'm
 talking about a *feeling* bro.
 Like...
 (thinking)
 Being in love -- it's like getting
 drunk in a jacuzzi. Sliding deeper
 into this warm, comfortable stupor.
 But that first look? First touch?
 That's *electricity*. That's cold
 water in the face. And if you're
 telling me I gotta choose one of
 those feelings for the rest of my
 life? I dunno. It's a tough call.

As they cross the street towards a park we PRELAP:

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

Do you even want a kid right now?

LIAM (O.S.)

Of course not.

EXT. PARK BENCH - DAY

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

LIAM

I couldn't even handle a goldfish
right now.

BOBBY

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

LIAM

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

BOBBY

Yeah? I always thought renting made
more sense.

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

LIAM

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

BOBBY

Do I believe in it?

(beat)

I believe it *sounds* good.

They sit in silence. We favor Liam, looking less and less
confident by the moment. After a beat, Bobby remembers:

BOBBY (CONT'D)

You're not bailing on me tonight,
are you?

LIAM

Bro, you know how expensive it is
to even *think* about opening a
restuarant? There's no way I'm
throwing down money on this bottle.

BOBBY

Don't worry about it. It's all
taken care of.

(then)

Please? For me?

Off Liam. Nauseous. Hating this already. PRELAP: A SIREN--

INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

STROBE LIGHTS POP IN THE DARK. A SNOWSTORM OF JITTERY LIGHT.

A STRIPPER smirks at us. Fingernails raking skin before disappearing into her PANTIES. Her breathing quickens, pleasure gripping. And as she throws her head back, CUT TO:

LIAM -- looking out of place. Stuck between Bobby's friends: a crew of FUCK BOYS and TRUST FUND KIDS. They order bottles, sprinkling coke all over the TOPLESS WOMEN surrounding them.

On cue, BOBBY re-appears. A devilish smile on his face:

BOBBY

Liam, I got you something.

Bobby glances over at a PRIVATE ROOM -- roped off in velvet.

INT. VIP - NIGHT

STILETTOS SCISSOR IN THE AIR. WE FOLLOW THEM DOWNWARDS TO -- **THE STRIPPER**, dancing privately for Liam. Giving it her all.

Liam exhales unevenly. Eye-lids rimming. Despite his best efforts *he's starting to lose himself*. Scruples dissolving.

STRIPPER (O.S.)

What's wrong?

The STRIPPER turns. Narrow-eyed. A predator toying with food. She slinks towards him. Her breath tingling his neck. Lips inches away...

STRIPPER (CONT'D)

Afraid you might like it?

Her hand slips into Liam's pants. And as he quivers, CUT TO:

EXT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

Liam BURSTS outside, doubled over, gulping down the cold night air. He heaves in and out, trying to regain his balance. *Sanity*. Breathe away the thought of her.

He looks back over his shoulder. FEAR ROILING IN HIS EYES. COMING THIS CLOSE TO RISKING IT ALL. And as shame floods...

CUT TO BLACK

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

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

TEXT (MOM)
 Did you hear the news?!?
 (...)
 Your little cousin is PREGNANT!
 (...)
 Can you believe it?
 (...)
 So EXCITING.

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

PRELAP: "heyyy."

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Amy approaches Lydia who stands outside of a trendy CYCLING STUDIO. The two of them hug. Excited to see one another.

AMY
 Thanks so much for the invite.

LYDIA
 Yeah girl. So happy you came.

AMY
 I'm like *really* nervous.

LYDIA
 (escorting her in)
 Oh stop. You'll be fine.

AMY
 I'm like already sweating.

INT. CYCLING STUDIO - DAY

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

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

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Amy slowly pulls a sweater on over her drenched top. Across the way two COLLEGE STUDENTS pack up. Perfect outfits. Better bodies. One effortlessly touches her toes while the other complains about finals, dorm drama, *how old* they're getting.

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

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

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

INSTRUCTOR
Hey. Good job in there.

LYDIA
Thanks.

INSTRUCTOR
I'm Corey.

LYDIA
Lydia.

INSTRUCTOR
Great. Hope to see you around.

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

She blinks away the thought of him as we PRELAP:

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

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

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

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

(MORE)

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Cause he makes me try things. And surprises me. But like on a Tuesday night...

She trails off. Feeling self-conscious.

AMY

No. Go on.

LYDIA

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

(then)

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

AMY

No. Not at all.

LYDIA

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

AMY

It's not equitable.

LYDIA

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

(then)

You and Liam deal with shit like this?

AMY

We have the opposite problem. Ever since that profile came out, everyone wants a piece of him. He's so obsessed with this restaurant idea, I hardly see him anymore. I want to be supportive and all, but-- sometimes I wish he just wanted to be an accountant, you know?

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

AMY (CONT'D)

That Bobby?

LYDIA
Speak of the devil.

Lydia reads the text. And immediately her face softens.

AMY
What?

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

AMY
(stops walking)
That's cute as shit.

LYDIA
I know.

AMY
(teasing)
You're such a bitch

LYDIA
I know! God what's wrong with me.

AMY
You should totally go.

LYDIA
No. Really?

AMY
It's fine.

LYDIA
What are you gonna do?

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

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

LYDIA
Thank you. Seriously.

INT. KITCHEN - WALK-IN REFRIGERATOR - NIGHT

Liam rips saran wrap, consolidating two buckets of garnish. It's already past closing time and things are winding down.

Just then, MARTIN pokes his head in--

MARTIN

You're on inventory again, Liam.
And while you're at it: *clean that spot off the ceiling there.*

Liam looks at the tiny speck. Exhaling. He's being PUNISHED.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

A SILHOUETTE is visible through the shower's frosted glass.

INT. SHOWER - NIGHT

LYDIA breathes humid air. Fingers running through her hair.

INT. MIRROR - NIGHT

LIPSTICK traces along her lower lip, a crimson shade of red.

INT. KITCHEN - WALK-IN REFRIGERATOR - NIGHT

Liam teeters on an unsteady STEP-LADDER, reaching for that tiny speck on the ceiling. He stretches for it, inches away--

Just then, THE LADDER TIPS--

Liam's EYES BULGE. Bailing just before the ladder smacks hard against the tile floor, his failure echoing in the empty room. OFF LIAM, frustrated, as he re-sets the shitty ladder--

INT. BACK OF THE HOUSE - VARIOUS -- NIGHT

Liam drifts from PANTRY, to STOCK ROOM, to WINE CELLAR. Jotting notes. He massages his stiff neck. Trying to relax.

Just then, he rounds the corner--

Outside the OFFICE, a stack of UN-OPENED ELECTRONICS are spotlit by a single bulb. Boxing on the side reads: **TRYST**.

Liam stops. Looks around. Considering them for a beat.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

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

TEXT (LYDIA)

On my way to yours. Be there in 10.

The three dot bubble immediately appears before:

TEXT (BOBBY) (CONT'D)

**Shit. I got stuck uptown at my
buddy's thing.**

(...)

I won't be home for another 45.

(...)

Prolly too late for the lamb.

(...)

**Might just grab us Thai on the way
home?**

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

A SEX SHOP across the street.

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

The **TRYST VR HEADSET**.

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

INT. OFFICE - BACK OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Hands rip open a box revealing the TRYST VR HEADSET.

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

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

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

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

CUT TO BLACK

INSERT: TEXT on a BLACK SCREEN.

Welcome

You've selected: AVATAR CREATION

Please answer the following:

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

1. You find it difficult to introduce yourself to new people
[Agree O X O O O Disagree]

2. When you sleep your dreams tend to focus on the real world
[Agree O O O O X Disagree]

3. In rooms, you stay close to the walls, avoiding the center
[Agree X O O O O Disagree]

4. Forgiveness has never been your strong suit
[Agree O O X O O Disagree]

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

6. You secretly desire a surprise birthday party

8. People in wheelchairs make you uncomfortable

9. Righting injustice is the responsibility of the collective

13. You feel burdened by your mother

19. You're often stymied by endless options

29. You have a healthy relationship with your body

34. You would rather see the Middle East than Europe

52. You often think about your childhood

71. Dessert is only for special occasions

105. You resist homoerotic thoughts

111. Self satisfaction is increasingly important to you

149. Above all else, you yearn for control

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

You've been matched.

INT. HOTEL - FOYER - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

EYELIDS POP OPEN. A SHARP INHALE. WILD PUPILS DART ABOUT.

A FIGURE rises from a chez lounge. We recognize him from our opening scene. This is LIAM'S AVATAR. We'll call him **ADAM**.

He stands, totally disoriented, taking in his surroundings:

We're inside a BOUTIQUE hotel. Minimal. Trendy. Dimly lit. The place throbs with DREAM STRANGENESS. M.C. Escher-esque. Something about it feels tilted. Unbalancing. Otherworldly.

He looks down--

His NAKED LEGS sleepwalk forward. His BARE FEET leave shadows on the cold marble floor. *It's all so fucking real...*

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

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

He passes a MIRROR and stops in his tracks. Jaw DROPPING...

A HANDSOME STRANGER stares back. Perfect face. Perfect body. Perfect *everything*. ADAM slowly touches his face, practically pinching himself. Mind bending in this moment.

*ALL YOUR LIFE YOU'VE BEEN TRAPPED INSIDE YOUR BODY... **BUT NOW YOU'RE SOMEONE ELSE.***

Just then, movement in his peripheral. He turns slowly...

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

A YOUNG WOMAN STANDS. SPOTLIT FROM ABOVE. ALMOST DIVINE.

ADAM reacts: *she's the most beautiful woman he's ever seen.*

In this moment she turns. Noticing him. We'll call her **EVE**.

ADAM approaches her cautiously, unable to believe his eyes. He raises a finger, delicately tracing an "X" on her clavicle. Her skin responds. Goosebumps prickling.

He looks up at her, choked up, he wasn't prepared for this--

ADAM

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

Her eyes finally meet his. *An instant, powerful connection.*

EVE

It's okay. We don't have to talk.

Her hand delicately brushes his chin. She KISSES HIM **HARD**.
It's a FORK IN A LIGHT SOCKET. BREATHLESS. ELECTRIC. HOT.
Adam's eyelids rim closed. Surrendering himself. CUT TO:

AFTERIMAGE

They kiss passionately. Roiling. Ravenous. We're so close we can feel the slip of saliva. Taste the tumble of tongues...

AFTERIMAGE

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

AFTERIMAGE

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

AFTERIMAGE

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

AFTERIMAGE

The imagery speeds up... legs intertwine... Hips thrusting...

AFTERIMAGE

And as their screams rise to a FEVER PITCH we-- CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - BACK OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

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

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

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

Matched with: [4BLUEYEZ88]

Would you like to meet again ?

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

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

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

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Liam stares out the window. Lost in the memory of that night.
Bobby leans across the aisle, hanging on every word.

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

BOBBY
Are you gonna see her again?

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

We PRELAP:

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

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

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

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

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

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

As Bobby hurries to catch up we PRELAP:

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

EXT. PARK LAWN - DAY

Liam and Bobby kick the soccer ball back and forth.

BOBBY

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

LIAM

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

BOBBY

But not to you?

LIAM

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

BOBBY

Do you feel guilty?

LIAM

Wouldn't you?

BOBBY

It's not like you're buying digital
dinner beforehand. It's algorithms,
man. A *video game*. It just so
happens you play this one with your
dick.

LIAM

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

BOBBY

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

(then)

Maybe this is what you need right
now?

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

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

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

AMY

How was it? How's Bobby?

LIAM

He's good.

AMY

Anything new going on with him?

LIAM

Uhhh. Not really.

(then)

We did talk a little about this new Tryst VR thing.

AMY

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

LIAM

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

AMY

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

LIAM

(beat)

Just what you said.

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

INT. LYDIA'S WORK - DAY

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

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

LYDIA

(taking one out)

Yes Rod.

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

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

ROD
Okay. Sure.

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

LYDIA
So what's the idea?

ROD
What if it's less about the old
flow and more about *customizing*
experience?
(off her blank look)
I know it's a little different but,
just think on it for a little.

Rod exits. Lydia watches him go.

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

As he exits we PRELAP:

PODCAST (V.O.)
Where it gets really complicated,
and perhaps problematic is--

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

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

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

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

PODCAST (V.O.)

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

She hits the sidewalk and rounds a corner...

PODCAST (V.O.)

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

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

BOBBY

Sorry to show up like this.

LYDIA

(brushing past him)
You should be.

BOBBY

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

LYDIA

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

She slides inside her building--

INT. LYDIA'S BUILDING - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

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

BOBBY

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

LYDIA

You're an asshole.

BOBBY
Yes. See I knew I forgot one.
(re: purse)
Can I give you a hand or something?

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

INT. LYDIA'S BUILDING - UPSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Bobby trails after Lydia down the hall.

BOBBY
You're seriously not even gonna let me explain?

LYDIA
How many chances do you think you deserve Bobby?

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

LYDIA
(arriving at her door)
Uh-huh.

BOBBY
You're working nonstop. You're by yourself in this big apartment. Who you gonna talk to? Huh? Who's gonna keep you warm at night?

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

LYDIA
You really think I need you for that?

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

BOBBY
Well can I at least see you this weekend?!

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

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

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

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

LIAM

How was your day?

AMY

You know. Pretty normal.

LIAM

Anything fun happen?

AMY

No. Not really.

Amy forks in more food. Never looking up.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

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

AMY

What are you in the mood for?

LIAM

Whatever.

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

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Liam lays awake. Brow furrowed. Unable to sleep.

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

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

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

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

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

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

Welcome Back...

You've selected: RANDOM ENCOUNTER

Enjoy!

INT. HOTEL - FOYER - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

ADAM'S EYES OPEN. AWAKENING ON AN OVERSTUFFED LEATHER SOFA.

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

Adam walks towards it--

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT

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

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

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

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

One of them is missing its candle...

VOICE (O.S.)

You're late. I had to get started without you.

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

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

RANDOM AVATAR

Lemme ask you. And be honest.
(arriving)

Ever had your asshole eaten, baby?

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

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

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

Match Request: Still Pending

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

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. TAXI CAB - NIGHT

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

LIAM
43rd and Lex, please.

AMY
I'm excited to see her place. I bet
it's cute as fuck. You excited?

LIAM
Yeah. Should be fun.

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

PRELAP: "Heyyy"

INT. LYDIA'S PLACE - NIGHT

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

LYDIA (O.S.)
So we have white and we have red...

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Lydia rummages through the fridge, playing hostess as Amy and Liam survey the apartment. Just then, the door bell rings.

Lydia excuses herself as she walks towards the door--

INT. DOORWAY - NIGHT

The DOOR opens revealing Bobby. Flowers in one hand. Wine in the other. Lydia folds her arms. Cocking an eyebrow.

BOBBY

It's your favorite. The wine, I mean. Not me. See I'm an idiot. A very *lucky* idiot. And I'm terribly sorry for, you know -- *Everything*. So... may I enter?

Lydia stands behind the door. Unable to stop the smile from creasing her face. She moves aside, finally allowing him in.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Hey you.

LYDIA

Hey yourself.

She grins. Flushed with chemistry. And as they kiss, PRELAP:

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

So this guy shows up outside my place. Uninvited. Wearing a black fucking hoodie of all things.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

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

AMY

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

LIAM

Which is a felony, I think.

BOBBY

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

LYDIA

I'm just hoping this is a one-time thing and not like a continued pattern of behavior.

(to Liam)

It *is* an isolated incident, right?

LIAM

Yeah... Mostly.

AMY

Except for that one girl with the nose ring.

BOBBY

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

LYDIA

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

AMY

Duh.

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

BOBBY

I'm gonna call the uber in five minutes.

LYDIA (O.S.)

Ten minutes.

BOBBY

I'm gonna call the uber in *ten minutes*.
(to Liam, re: cocktail)
You want another one?

LIAM

Sure.

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

LIAM (CONT'D)

You know the password to the wifi?

BOBBY (O.S.)

Should be in that box on the coffee table.

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

4BLUEYEZ88

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

It's her.

Just then--

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

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

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Cheers.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

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

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

INT. BAR - NIGHT

MUSIC THUMPS. A laser arcs over the sweaty basement party.

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

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

OFF LIAM. At war with his urges. Desire and loyalty pulling him in opposite directions. Then finally he makes a *CHOICE*--

HARD CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - RESTAURANT - THE FOLLOWING DAY

THE TRYST BOX lands atop the stack of samples. It's been hastily taped-up. *Returned*. LIAM exhales, resolute. Determined to put this whole thing behind him. He turns now--

He marches off with purpose. His face hard with RESOLVE...

CUT TO BLACK

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

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

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

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

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

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

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

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

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

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

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

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

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

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

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

AFTER SCHOOL. Amy tidies up. Her PHONE BUZZES nearby.

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

Amy smirks, despite herself. Replying:

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

The typing bubble quickly reappears before:

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

Amy looks down at this. Straining. Unsure how to respond.

EXT. FARMER'S MARKET - DAY

Amy navigates food stands, snaking through the Co-op crowd.
 Just then, LYDIA appears holding fresh produce.

LYDIA
 Are these ripe? I can't tell.
 Honestly I didn't know what a
 sunchoke was until today...

AMY
 They're perfect. They better be
 fucking delicious at this price.

Amy puts them in her bag, checking it off her shopping list.

LYDIA
 How's Liam feeling about tonight?

AMY
 Well he's only changed the menu 50
 times. But, if things go well, this
 investor has the money Liam needs.
 He could finally open a restaurant.

LYDIA
 Seems like a lot of pressure.

AMY
Tell me about it...
 (re: list)
 Alright. Can you grab serranos?

LYDIA
 Ooh, I actually know those...

Lydia exits. Amy rounds a corner and suddenly her face DROPS.
 A **YOUNG WOMAN** (20s) peruses a nearby fruit stand. Amy reacts.
 A look of TOTAL PANIC on her face. Just then--

LYDIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
How gorgeous are these?

Lydia returns, holding the chiles. She reacts, seeing Amy--

LYDIA (CONT'D)
Jesus, Amy. Are you alright? You're white as sheet.

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

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

LYDIA
Who was that?

INT. CAR - DAY

Fingers SQUEEZE a steering wheel -- *white-knuckling it*.

AMY'S FACE IS TIGHT. Upset. Thoughts pulled in a million directions as she navigates the gridlock. She pulls over--

Just then, HECTOR and DAN appear. Unloading groceries like a NASCAR pit crew. LIAM appears in her window. He's so preoccupied he doesn't even notice the strain on her face.

LIAM
You get everything on that list?

AMY
Yes.

LIAM
You're positive, right?

AMY
Yes. It's all there. Liam I--

But he's already gone. Back turned to her. Amy reacts as he hurries off into the building. She calls out after him--

AMY (CONT'D)
Where am I supposed to park?!

On cue, a CAR HORN BLARES behind her. Tense, Amy veers back into traffic. Completely overwhelmed.

INT. TEST KITCHEN - NIGHT

A stainless steel kitchen. Brand new. Unfamiliar. Just then--

LIAM JERKS INTO VIEW -- brow furrowed. Dripping with sweat. He looks like a wild animal. Cornered. Desperate. We're mid-dinner service and right now: THINGS AREN'T GOING WELL.

HECTOR and DAN hustle, trying to keep up. They're all out of rhythm. Second-guessing. Adrenaline getting the best of them.

A grill HISSSES, puffing steam as LIAM sears off his protein. Over his shoulder, he shouts:

LIAM
Where are we on that taramasalata?

HECTOR (O.S.)
5 minutes chef.

Liam grimaces. *This is taking too long.* He glances over at DAN, moving a bit too casually as he garnishes his appetizer. And in this moment Liam snaps--

He pushes DAN off the station--

DAN
Yo man, what are you doing?!

LIAM
You're dragging dude, we gotta get this out. Go prep the filo dough.

DAN
That wasn't the plan. We gotta stick to the script.

LIAM
Bro just fucking do it--

The words have hardly escaped his mouth when--

HECTOR (O.S.)
Smoke. We got smoke.

Liam's stomach drops, he whirls around just in time to see: HECTOR tugging Liam's meat off the flame. So CHARRED it's sticking to the grill. HIS BEEF IS TOTALLY FUCKING RUINED.

Just then, the SERVER whisks the appetizer into the dining room. We're on Liam, stealing a glimpse of--

THE INVESTOR (50), sitting alone at a table, just visible through the open doorway. We see him check his watch impatiently, before the closing door erases his image.

OFF LIAM. HORRIFIED. SOBERED. *He's just blown his chance...*

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

Amy sits alone at the table, dejected, pushing cold food around. Just then, the door opens and Liam enters the room.

AMY
(halfheartedly)
How'd it go?

No answer. Liam just crosses to the fridge. Pops open a beer. Amy snorts, shaking her head -- *"that good, huh?"*

AMY (CONT'D)
You're not gonna offer me one?

LIAM
You sure you need it, Aim?

Liam turns away as he slugs from the bottle. *History there.* Amy bristles. After a beat, she finally comes out with it.

AMY
Why do you keep doing this to yourself, Liam?

LIAM
Doing what?

AMY
This restaurant fantasy. Maybe it's time you let it go...

Liam slowly faces her. Almost unable to believe what he's heard. Amy continues. Long buried feelings pouring out.

AMY (CONT'D)
I mean, all the time you sacrifice. The energy. The stress. The *humiliation*. For what? For *this*? I just wonder if you wouldn't be happier doing something else.

LIAM

How could say that to me, Amy? Huh?
After all this, you're seriously
gonna ask me that?

Liam's eyes shimmer. Hurting. Utterly blind-sided by this.
She's given words to it: The insecurity he's always felt.

Amy's face hardens. It's painful, but he needs to hear this:

AMY

I love you Liam. But not everybody
gets a Michelin Star. Sooner or
later, we all gotta wake up.

Liam puckers. Backing away. He can hardly recognize her in
this moment. But after a beat, his sadness TRANSFORMS...

He races to the door, exiting with a SLAM. We stay behind as
Amy goes limp. Stuck in this awful silence...

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

STEAM POURS off Liam as he plunges into the cold. All of his
frustration, anger, sexual angst -- it all BOILS OVER NOW.
The hard work. Loyalty. Patience. It's gotten him NOWHERE.

Just then, his PHONE BUZZES--

Match Request: Accepted

Meet Tonight?

OFF LIAM. Reacting. Self-destruction roiling in his eyes...

INT. OFFICE - BACK OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

A HAND SNATCHES the taped-up TRYST BOX off of the stack...

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - [VR SCAPE]

BARE FEET echo against the black marble floor...

ADAM has the eyes of a hunter. Uninterested in the scenery.

INT. ELEVATOR BANK - [VR SCAPE]

He spots EVE by the elevators. A game of cat and mouse.

INT. ELEVATOR - [VR SCAPE]

Adam appears at the mouth of the elevator.

Eve waits for him inside. Intense, fiery eye contact. Then--

She turns her back. Offering herself. Feet spreading apart.

She glances back over her shoulder. Sultry.

What are you waiting for?

Adam takes a step inside. And as the DOORS SLIDE SHUT, we--

CUT TO BLACK

INT. BOBBY'S STUDIO - DAY

Bobby comes to in a tangle of sheets. The DIGITAL CLOCK at the bedside reads 10:26 AM. He straightens ungracefully. Coughing and scratching as he walks towards the bathroom of his unkempt studio apartment.

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

Bobby re-enters. Dressing extra quietly.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

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

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

Finally his fingers touch the keys.

WORDS

Our goal is to inspire and empower
millennials through the acquisition
of basic financial skills--

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

WORDS (CONT'D)

MISSION: To promote stronger fiscal
responsibility. Fusing the power of
personal wealth management with the
broad reach of social med--

Again the buzzwords disappear.

WORDS (CONT'D)

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

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

JUMPCUT TO:

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

JUMPCUT TO:

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

Frustrated, he glances up at the clock: It's only 1:13 PM. As we hold on the clock, PRELAP the sound of CLANGING METAL.

INT. GYM - DAY

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

BOBBY (O.S.)

Yooo bud. What's up? I'm in your
neighborhood.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

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

BOBBY

Yeah man. Happy hour starts at
three for a reason.

(beat)

Word. I'm just walkin' out of the
gym. Lemme see if I can get cleaned
up at my girlfriend's place. I'll
hit you in a sec.

Bobby ends the call and texts Lydia:

TEXT (BOBBY)

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

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

EXT. LYDIA'S BUILDING - DAY

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

INT. LYDIA'S BUILDING - FOYER - DAY

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

INT. LYDIA'S PLACE - BATHROOM - DAY

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

INT. LYDIA'S PLACE - BEDROOM - DAY

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

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

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

And out of the hat box rolls the **TRYST VR HEADSET**. Bobby stares down at it -- totally caught off guard.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

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

LYDIA

Sorry. Sorry. Today was absolutely crazy.

BOBBY

(he shrugs)
It's fine.

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

LYDIA
Something up? You okay?

BOBBY
Yeah. Fine.

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

INT. KITCHENETTE - DAY

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

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

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

INT. KITCHENETTE - DAY

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

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

AMY
Hey you.

LIAM
Hi.

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

LIAM (CONT'D)
Babe, I gotta--

Liam shakes free. Sidestepping her.

He exits the room without noticing the sparkling counter-tops. The flowers set out. Her small acts of kindness.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

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

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

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

LIAM
Amy. C'mon.

AMY
(re: tablet)
What is that anyway?

LIAM
Some new show.

AMY
Is it any good?

LIAM
Not really.

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

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

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

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

LIAM (CONT'D)
You should know: I'm gonna be
really late this week.

AMY
(stopping)
Why?

LIAM
We're testing out longer hours. I'm
gonna be closing up most nights.

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

AMY
Okay. Fine.

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

INT. LYDIA'S WORK - DAY

LYDIA focuses, bleary eyed, fine-tuning her big presentation. She's been at this for hours. Just then, a PUSH NOTIFICATION buzzes. She dips down low. Inspecting her phone--

Meet Tonight?

Lydia bites her lip. Considering it.

INT. BAR - LATER

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

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

BEGIN SEQUENCE: An OFF-CAMERA CONVERSATION plays throughout as we cut between SNAPSHOTS of the Happy Hour. Starting with: LYDIA shmoozing. A natural. She cracks up a circle of peers.

VOICE (O.S.)

Lydia, my name's Ryan Caldwell.

LYDIA (O.S.)

Yes. Ryan. Hi. Nice to finally meet you.

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

VOICE (O.S.)

I loved the presentation you just gave on customizing experience.

LYDIA (O.S.)

Really? You saw it?

VOICE (O.S.)

Yeah. They sent us the Powerpoint. For the record, I totally agree.

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

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

If we want the default option to be 'share everything' we need to prioritize in-stream options, instead of building out the app.

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

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

A SINGLE DUDE sidles up to a GIRL, smiling wide. She hardly notices him. Swiping through TINDER instead. **END SEQUENCE.**

INT. BAR - LATER

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

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

RYAN
So how long have you been with the company?

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

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

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

RYAN
You wanna see bullshit? Wait 'til our meeting next week. They call me the brown-eyed king of fuckery.
(then)
Engineers aren't the best with nicknames.

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

RYAN (CONT'D)
This is me. Anytime you wanna talk shop. Suss out office politics.
(MORE)

RYAN (CONT'D)
Who slept with who five years ago.
Give me a ring. Seriously.
Anything. Anytime.

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

LYDIA
Very generous. I will.

RYAN
So you got any plans for after?

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

RYAN
No I mean tonight. After this.

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

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

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

RYAN (CONT'D)
Looking forward to working with you
Lydia.

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

BOBBY (O.S.)
Wait, wait, wait. So who is this
guy?

INT. LYDIA'S PLACE - NIGHT

Bobby anxiously paces around the apartment as Lydia downloads the events of the night. She looks worn out. Preoccupied.

LYDIA

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

BOBBY

What's Ryan's last name?

LYDIA

(white lie)

I don't know.

BOBBY

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

LYDIA

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

BOBBY

Oh my ears are wide open, Lydia.

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

LYDIA

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

(pivot)

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

BOBBY

What is that supposed to mean?

LYDIA

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

BOBBY

How the hell did we get onto this?

LYDIA

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

BOBBY

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

LYDIA

Grow up, dude.

BOBBY

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

LYDIA

Oh yeah? How's that going for you?

BOBBY

(stung)

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

LYDIA

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

BOBBY

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

LYDIA

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

They glare at each other. Battle lines drawn. A tense beat.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

I'm gonna go shower.

She stomps off towards the hallway. But before she goes--

LYDIA (CONT'D)
Feel free to leave.

With that she's gone. Bobby reacts. Stewing. Grinding teeth. Just then we hear the CHIME of a notification. It's coming from Lydia's open LAPTOP.

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

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

Bobby seethes. Slaps the laptop shut. But after a beat he reconsiders. Looking over his shoulder.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lydia paces. Muttering to herself. Re-living the argument. Angrily, she snatches a pillow off her bed, whipping it across the room--

It bounces off her CLOSET DOORS. We hold here, as Lydia suddenly gets an idea--

INT. CLOSET - NIGHT

The DOUBLE DOORS snap open. Lydia stands, totally BACKLIT, rifling through her closet. She retrieves the HAT BOX, popping the top off, revealing the **TRYST VR HEADSET**.

A cruel smile creases her lips--

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

INTENSE EYES reflect the screen's chilly glow as Bobby searches through RYAN CALDWELL's PAGE. Sifting through pics. Ryan sailing in Connecticut. Him and his bros in Vegas.

Bobby switches to LYDIA's PAGE now--

Clicking between private messages. Searching for a smoking gun. Frustrated, he changes tack. Opening a GOOGLE SEARCH.

He stares at the search bar:

WORDS
Find Tryst match...

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

WORDS (CONT'D)

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

Another post--

WORDS (CONT'D)

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

Another post--

WORDS (CONT'D)

This is driving me crazy! What if
this is my soulmate?!

Bobby scowls. Hitting another dead-end.

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

Bobby's eyes narrow...

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

The SHOWER HEAD sprays hot water. Steam rising instantly. A
HAND turns the bathroom door-lock with a *click*. A dress
slides down BARE LEGS, falling to a heap on the floor.

LYDIA wraps a bath towel around her naked body. She considers
the PUSH NOTIFICATION on her phone:

Meet Tonight?

Her finger hovers. She clicks "YES." Then she sets the phone
down. We watch as she slowly unwinds her towel...

Fingers sliding down her stomach towards her groin...

Her head lolls backward. Eyes rimming closed. We watch as she
reconnects with herself. Reasserting control of her night.
Her body. Her life.

And as things speed up--

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

AN ONLINE BANKING WEBSITE glows on the laptop screen. Bobby
highlights Lydia's AUTO-STORED PASSWORD. He clicks back over
to the TRYST WEBSITE. Pasting in her stolen information.

The mouse floats down to the SUBMIT button...

Bobby's EYES BULGE as he gains access to her TRYST ACCOUNT. He filters through different options: Activity, Settings, Backgrounds. Finally he lands on a tab marked 'MY MATCHES.'

He clicks it. A USERNAME is revealed to us:

REARWINDOW12

And as BOBBY boils, standing to leave, we PRELAP: *moaning...*

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Lydia's shoulders tremble and quake. Approaching her climax. And just then, the TRYST HEADSET purrs: **HER MATCH IS ACTIVE.** Lydia smiles breathlessly. *Right on time...*

She dawns the headgear, blocking out the entire world--

Welcome Back

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

Lights strobe along EVE's face. The ghost of satisfied smile.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Heavy door's slide open. NAKED FEET paw out of the elevator.

A LONG HALL stretches in both directions -- vertigo inducing. EVE's attention is grabbed by a LARGE GLASS MIRROR positioned behind a chic accent table, covered in potted succulents.

She looks at it. Strange intensity on her face. Just then--

ADAM appears at the other end of the hall. He falls in and out of shadow as he walks towards her, passing uneven lights.

She hardens. Something defiant in her posture. And as he gets closer, her fingers curl around a POTTED SUCCULENT--

And just then--

GLASS SHATTERS. AN EXPLOSION OF REFRACTED LIGHT AND BROKEN IMAGERY. SHARDS TINKLE DOWN ALL AROUND THEM LIKE SNOW-DUST. Eve has hurled the plant at the MIRROR -- OBLITERATING IT.

ADAM uncovers himself, stupefied, taking stock of things...

In front of him a JAGGED PATHWAY of BROKEN GLASS lines the floor between them. She's ostensibly created a BED OF NAILS.

Adam looks up at her -- Eve coolly raises an eyebrow:

You want it? Come get it...

A beat as ADAM swallows hard. He takes a cautious step--

GLASS POPS and CRUNCHES under his foot. But he continues. Gutting through it. His face knotted in pain.

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

Finally he collapses onto a knee, practically bowing to her. Adam's head hangs as he tries to catch his breath. Just then--

HER FINGERS TOUCH HIM. Raising his chin. She TOWERS OVER HIM. Expression stoic. Wooden. Impossible to read. Her fingers slide gently through his hair. Almost comforting. BUT THEN--

SHE GRIPS TIGHTLY, TUGGING HIS FACE INTO HER CROTCH. Eve's head snaps backward. Breathless. Face to the ceiling now.

One thing is clear: *She's in control tonight...*

Adam reacts as EVE'S FOOT pushes against his chest, laying him down on the BROKEN GLASS. He growls as she lowers herself on top of him. Swirling her hips. Inflicting pain. *Pleasure.*

Fingers interlace as she grinds his palms into the glass--

And as we pull back, Eve riding Adam in the spiderweb of broken glass, we PRELAP: A LOUD BANGING SOUND--

INT. OFFICE - RESTAURANT - BACK OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

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

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

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

LIAM

What?!

DAN

What the hell? We're locking doors now? What are you doing in there?

LIAM
What do you want, man?

DAN
We're splitting tips up. I wanted
to make sure you got yours--

LIAM
Bro just leave it in my locker...

DAN
I did. Hours ago. It's dumb to
leave that kinda cash laying
around. Bus boys will steal your
shit.
(then)
Jesus man, get a grip.

Dan exits. Liam chews his lip, paranoid. He shuts the door--

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

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

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

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

AMY
Martin. Hi.
(off his look)
Amy. I'm Liam's girlfriend.

MARTIN
Amy. Right. How are you?

AMY
Good. How are the new hours going?

MARTIN
I'm sorry?

AMY
Liam told me that you guys were
staying open later these days...

MARTIN
Huh. No. Same old, same sold.

AMY

You sure it couldn't be something else? Menu-testing or whatever?

MARTIN

(squirming, at a loss)

Uhhh. I really couldn't say off-hand. Listen Amy, I have to get back inside.

AMY

Right. Yeah. Enjoy your dinner.

Martin exits into the restaurant. Amy leans against the wall. Gut-punched. Struggling to reconcile it. Her eyes drift to a LIQUOR STORE. She stares. Conflicted. PRELAP: JANGLING KEYS.

INT. KITCHENETTE - NIGHT

Liam enters the darkened apartment. He flicks on the lights:

The space is EMPTY.

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

It's really early to be asleep.

He walks back into the kitchen. Pops open the refrigerator. He sifts through tupperware. Selecting one. Sniffing at it. He takes a bite and his face SOURS.

He pulls out the TRASH CAN, about to toss the food when something catches his eye. He pulls out an **EMPTY WINE BOTTLE**, turning it over in his hands. Piecing things together.

OFF LIAM -- darkening.

CUT TO BLACK

BOBBY (OVER BLACK)

So you're gonna get a kick outta this.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

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

BOBBY

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

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

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Your little VR headset. Turns out she's got one too. Can you believe that shit?

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

LIAM

Shit.

BOBBY

Yeah. Shit is right.

LIAM

(a beat, recomposing)

Well, it's like you said. It's just a game. No big deal right?

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

EXT. PARK BENCH - DAY

They're sitting now. Drinking coffees in their familiar spot. The uncomfortable silence has carried over to the park bench. Bobby gazes at the jagged skyline. Liam stares at his shoes.

After a long time--

BOBBY

You think your parents were faithful?

LIAM

I guess so. My dad's too sweaty to pull off an affair. What about you?

BOBBY

I dunno. I know my grandparents weren't. It was different for them. You see the girl from the neighborhood. She seems nice. Fertile. That was all you needed. It was more of a transaction back then. He did his thing. She did hers.

(MORE)

BOBBY (CONT'D)

And then they'd sit down and have dinner together. There wasn't any pressure to find your *soulmate*. Honestly, I think that's why all our parents got divorced. Because what the fuck do you do with that? Tell you the truth, I don't think either approach works.

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

BOBBY (CONT'D)

What do you think I should do?

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

LIAM

Sleep on it.

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

BOBBY

Thanks for listening, man.

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

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Amy presides over the chaos of her classroom. Her eyes are glazed over, face in her hands as she lazily scans the room.

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

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

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

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

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Lydia and Amy hug on a heavily trafficked street corner.

AMY

Thanks for doing this with me.

LYDIA

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

AMY

My cousin's. She's pregnant.

LYDIA

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

AMY

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

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

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

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

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

TEXT (MOM)

**WOW. So pretty! I can't believe how
gorgeous you look.**

This elicits a tiny smile from Amy.

TEXT (MOM) (CONT'D)

**It'll be your turn soon, honey.
You're going to make an absolutely
beautiful bride.**

Amy stares down at the text. Her face puckering. She jams a
hand to her mouth. Muzzling herself. But it's too late. She's
unable to stop it. She begins crying. Trying hard to keep
silent. Just then:

LYDIA (O.S.)

Well? How is it?!

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

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Oh. Amy.

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

AMY (O.S.)

We've just been in a really weird
place for a long time.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - LATER

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

AMY

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

LYDIA

Amy. Of course you haven't.

AMY

I've just been so awful to him
recently.

LYDIA

You couldn't be if you tried.

AMY

You don't get it. Something
happened.

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

LYDIA

What?

AMY

(hesitant)

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

(correcting herself)

Didn't drink anymore.

She strains slightly before continuing:

AMY (CONT'D)

I had been leaning on Liam pretty hard to get engaged. You know a *shit or get off the pot* kinda thing. One night we were out drinking with friends and Liam got called into work. I stayed out. And I got really drunk. That night, Liam came home and found me in our bed, making out with someone I met at the bar. A *girl*. A total stranger.

Lydia reacts to this.

LYDIA

Whoa.

AMY

Yeah.

LYDIA

Has this kind of thing ever happened before?

AMY

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

(then)

The whole thing's such a blur.

Amy frowns, fidgeting ever so slightly as we PRELAP:

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

I guess I had just been feeling really insecure.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

They're walking now.

AMY

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

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

LYDIA

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

AMY

What do you mean?

LYDIA

You don't strike me as the vindictive type. *I'm mad at you so I'm gonna fuck somebody?* That's not you. Plus, when I'm drunk? I'm not rationalizing things. Or thinking about my life in capital letters. I just do what I want.

(then)

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

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

LYDIA (CONT'D)

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

Lydia takes her hand. Giving it a squeeze. Amy cracks a half-hearted smile before dodging eye contact. Mulling things...

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

Amy leans on the counter. Drumming her fingers on the tile. Feeling alone. Vulnerable. She grabs her phone. Texting Liam:

TEXT (AMY)

When do you think you'll be home tonight--

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

She texts Bobby:

TEXT (AMY) (CONT'D)

You got any plans tonight?

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Bobby tap-dances outside of a 2nd story walk-up. He cinches his drawstring hoodie, bracing himself against the wind.

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

BOBBY

Yo!

Amy appears nearby. Jogging over. Her skin flushed with cold. Bobby's clearly tickled by her presence.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Look at you, all spontaneous and shit.

AMY

(teeth chattering)
Can we please go inside.

BOBBY

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

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

AMY

Funny. Can we go now?

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

BOBBY

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

AMY

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

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

INT. LOFT - NIGHT

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

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

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

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

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

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

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

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

Finally, Amy grabs it. Taking a big swig.

INT. APARTMENT - LATER

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

STRANGER

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

Amy cracks up. Looking lighter. Finally enjoying herself.

INT. LOFT - LATER

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

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

AMY

(yelling over music)
Thank you.

BOBBY

For what?

AMY

For this. I really needed it.

BOBBY

Don't mention it
(re: solo cup)
Want more?

AMY

Sure.

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

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

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

Just then, Bobby returns.

BOBBY

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

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

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

PRELAP keys JANGLING in a door.

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

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

BOBBY

Seriously?

AMY

Yep.

BOBBY

Where the hell is he?

AMY

Work. Maybe.

BOBBY

That's brutal.

AMY

Tell me about it.

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

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

BOBBY

What?

She shakes her head. Kicking off her own heels.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

It's nice, right?

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

AMY

Uhhh. What?

BOBBY

They're not just gonna massage themselves, Amy.

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

AMY

Your feet literally could not smell any worse.

BOBBY

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

AMY

Well thank God that's not in my purview.

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

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

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

AMY (CONT'D)

What's Lydia up to tonight?

BOBBY

Uch. Who knows.

AMY
You guy's okay?

BOBBY
Can we not talk about it, maybe?

AMY
Sorry.

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

AMY
Yeah. I do.

Amy puts a comforting hand on top of his.

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

Amy settles down deeper into the crook of his arm.

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

BOBBY
I dunno. Not all of them do.

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

We hold here for a beat in TENSE SILENCE.

Finally--

BOBBY (CONT'D)
If we're gonna watch this thing we
should probably put it on now.

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

AMY
Yeah. Lemme just throw on some
comfy pants.

Amy disappears into the bedroom.

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

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

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

Bobby blinks at this.

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

Bobby sours at this.

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

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

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

He types:

WORDS

Find Tryst match.

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

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

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

BOBBY

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

AMY

Oh my God. He hasn't recruited you too, has he? It's Liam's gamer tag.
He thinks it's cool. I think it's
fucking creepy to be honest. Boys
and your video games...

(then)

Why do you ask?

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

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

INT. WINE CELLAR - RESTAURANT - BACK OF THE HOUSE - DAY

Liam slumps in a chair, face consumed by his TRYST HEADSET. His mouth dangles wide open, breathing soft and even. Suddenly an OFF-CAMERA THUD jolts him awake--

Liam rips the headset off. Pupils normalizing. He stuffs the headset into his BACKPACK just in time before--

MARTIN rounds the corner, shocked to find him sitting there.

MARTIN

Liam. What are you doing here?
Did you sleep here last night?

Liam swallows. Eyes darting about. Still shaking the cobwebs.

LIAM

Yeah, I dunno. Must've dozed off...

Just then, Martin notices Liam's BACKPACK, leaning against an expensive box of wine. He looks up. Suspicion flickering --

MARTIN

What's in the backpack, Liam?

Liam stands up, kind of wobbly, as he shoulders his backpack. He opens his mouth, but the words clot in his throat. Martin can't believe it--

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Are you serious right now? Jesus Christ. You're fired, Liam. Grab your shit and get outta here.
Fuckin' hell.

Nauseous, Martin exits. Liam collapses back onto the chair. Staggered by that. Then his phone buzzes. Liam's blood runs cold. Hardly able to look. He glances down:

Meet Today?

He reacts. Sullen. Puckering. Consequences beginning to pile up. He glances at the TRYST DEVICE half-visible in his open backpack. An angry beat before he roughly zips it shut.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

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

LYDIA

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

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

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

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

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

But just then, the smile vanishes from her face. Overhearing:

VOICE #1 (O.S.)

What'd you think of her presentation?

VOICE #2 (O.S.)

Eh. Typical UX bullshit. Another dog and pony show.

Lydia creeps towards the railing, looking over the edge:

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

VOICE #1 (O.S.)

What do you mean?

VOICE #2 (O.S.)

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

VOICE #1

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

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

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

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

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

INT. ELEVATOR BANK - DAY

Elevator doors slide open. The lunch crowd spilling out.

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

We spot Lydia in wash of people. She's totally hollowed out.

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

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

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

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

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

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

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

EXT. SHOPPING DISTRICT - DAY

Lydia continues. Back-dropped by a mosaic of ADVERTISEMENTS.
Drive this car. Wear this watch. Ads quietly tempting...

We hear a NEW VOICE now:

PODCAST (V.O.)

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

We pass tourists marveling at the TV boards towering above.

PODCAST (V.O.)

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

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

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

PODCAST (V.O.)

Recently I suffered an accident
 that left me paralyzed from the
 waist down.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Lydia gazes out the scuffed window of a subway car.

PODCAST (V.O.)

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

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

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

PODCAST (V.O.)

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

EXT. HIGH LINE - DAY

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

PODCAST (V.O.)

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

She passes statuary. Digital silhouettes projected on walls.

PODCAST (V.O.)

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

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

PODCAST (V.O.)

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

Lydia plucks the earbuds from her ears.

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

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

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

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Bobby glares out the window of his coffee shop. The buzz and whir of the fancy machines fail to provide him any solace. He glances at his laptop. Sneering. Like *that's* gonna calm him.

He quickly slaps it shut, worrying his lips with his fingers. Then an idea slowly takes shape. He glances down at his PHONE. Thinking for a beat.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

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

TEXT (BOBBY)
Stop by my place after work?

INT. BOBBY'S STUDIO - DAY

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

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

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

BOBBY
You're gonna want it. Trust me.

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

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

AMY
Okay...

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

AMY (CONT'D)
What?

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

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

AMY
Uhhh... Excuse me?

BOBBY

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

AMY

(resistant)

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

BOBBY

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

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

AMY

(dawning)

You're serious...

He nods. Allowing her a silent moment before continuing.

BOBBY

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

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

BOBBY (CONT'D)

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

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

BOBBY (CONT'D)

We deserve to feel good again.

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

AMY

Are you fucking kidding me?

BOBBY

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

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

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Amy--

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

AMY

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

(then)

Jesus Christ, Bobby. How could you?

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

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

AMY (CONT'D)

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

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

BOBBY (O.S.)

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

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

BOBBY (CONT'D)

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

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

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Amy fast-walks. Head spinning. Horns honk. Taxis streak by. Confusion and noise reign supreme. Totally OVERWHELMING us. Amy ducks into an alley. Slumping against the brick wall.

HER EYES PINCH. HYPERVENTILATING. DESPERATE FOR AIR. *RELIEF*. And as she slowly calms herself down, PRELAP: A DOOR HINGE--

INT. LIAM AND AMY'S APARTMENT - DAY

The DOOR CREAKS as AMY enters slowly, already on-guard... She's surprised to hear the SHOWER HISSING in the b.g.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

A hand pushes the bathroom door open just a crack. Inside, LIAM showers behind an opaque curtain. Unaware of her.

Amy stealthily closes the door shut--

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Amy enters the room. Sitting down on the edge of the bed. That's when she notices Liam's BACKPACK leaned against the nightstand. Amy blinks at it. Looking at it with skepticism.

She pulls it over. Unzips it.

Her face turns as she pulls out the **TRYST VR HEADSET**. She rotates it in her hands. Staring down at the source of so much pain. Her face contorts. Unsure how to feel about it.

She tosses it on the bed -- almost like it's filthy.

But a beat later, her eyes drift back. Her expression changing now. Suddenly she has the look of a cliff diver, peaking over the ledge...

And as her face hardens. Growing resolute. We SMASH TO:

Welcome BackINT. HOTEL - FOYER - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

EYES SNAP OPEN. PUPILS DILATING. WILDNESS SLOWLY SUBSIDING. ADAM tiptoes into the HOTEL. His eyes are like saucers. Mouth totally agape. It's more real than he could've ever imagined.

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

He runs his fingers along the wall. It's cool to the touch.

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

He loiters behind the counter. Pressing the phone to his ear.

INT. HOTEL - MIRROR - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

He looks at himself in the mirror. Awestruck by his dangling manhood. He wiggles his hips. Testing its flop.

INT. HOTEL - HALLWAY - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

Elevator doors slide open. A LONG CORRIDOR lined with rooms stretches out in front of us. All of them are shut except a single **OPEN DOOR** looming at the end of the hall.

We're on Adam -- considering it.

He takes a step toward it... Then another... And another...

Just then, he notices SHADOWS moving beneath the row of doors. Other guests. God knows what they're up to.

Unsettled, Adam shifts his focus back to the door. Getting closer now. And as he takes a deep breath we CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL - ROOM - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

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

After a few seconds ADAM emerges from the open door. We've arrived back at the film's opening moment. From here the imagery plays out the same:

Eve stands in middle of the room, waiting for him...

She slowly extends her hand, taking him by the wrist...

Fingers roll around in her mouth, saliva popping...

His hand migrates downwards, passing her belly button...

She reacts as his fingers slide inside of her...

And as ADAM's eyes slowly rim closed --

WE BREAK NEW GROUND:

Adam falls weightlessly onto the bed...

Eve crawls on top of him...

His fingertips slide along her hips...

Her skin is impossibly smooth...

Eve's face disappears, drifting down into his crotch...

Adam reacts, jaw dropping at this new sensation...

Eve reappears, straddling him now...

She grabs the **COIL OF LEATHER ROPE** from the nightstand...

Adam's eyes **BULGE** as she wraps it around his throat...

Eve begins to ride him now...

Tightening the rope with every thrust...

We watch Adam react, breathing intensifying...

Eyes glazing with ecstasy...

He's never been choked before...

AND HE FUCKING LOVES IT...

But just then, something strange happens--

Eve's features begin to **BLUR**--

Pixelating slightly--

Adam reacts, breathing incredibly labored now...

Approaching the edge...

And before the **GLITCHED** image rights itself...

Adam's eyes **BULGE**...

Instead of seeing Eve's face, WE CATCH A GLIMPSE OF LYDIA...

EYES BURNING, FACE SMILING, SHE LETS OUT A WILD SCREAM...

ADAM REACTS. HYPOXIC. VEINS BULGING. SKIN TURNING BLUE...

AND AS ORGASM GRIPS, THE ROPE FINALLY GOING SLACK, WE CUT TO--

INT. HOTEL - ROOM - LATER [VR SCAPE]

ADAM LAYS ON THE BED, STARING OFF INTO ANOTHER DIMENSION.

Body frozen. Mind floored. All but REBORN in this moment.

EVE lays there next to him. (*Her face normal again*) The two of them stare up at the ceiling. A long beat passes before:

ADAM

Why did you start doing this?

Eve reacts. His voice surprising her. She reflects on the question. Fingers delicately tracing circles in the sheets.

EVE

Freedom I guess. The freedom to do what I wanted. To figure out what I wanted. What I like.

ADAM

But it's not real.

EVE

I dunno.

(then)

I think people are their truest selves when they're wearing a mask

The room falls silent. Adam mulls that. Eve lets out a deep, satisfied sigh. Luxuriating in it. Almost to herself:

EVE (CONT'D)

God I needed this today.

ADAM

(beat)

Why?

Eve's eyes SNAP OPEN. Turning slowly. Suddenly vulnerable. The moment hangs dangerous between them. Then--

Adam's hand floats towards hers. Taking it tenderly in his. They stare at each other for a long beat. On the cusp of something new. *Are we really gonna cross that line?* CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Amy gasps. Lowering the TRYST HEADSET. Completely awestruck. Just then, we hear the SHOWER CUT OUT. Amy hides the evidence, stuffing the headset back into Liam's backpack.

INT. LIAM AND AMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Liam shakes the water from his ear as he exits the bathroom. He stops in his tracks, surprised to see--

LIAM

Amy...

Amy stands there sheepishly. Still reeling. Confused. A long beat passes before Liam offers:

LIAM (CONT'D)

How was your day?

AMY

Okay. Yours?

LIAM

Yeah -- yeah it was okay.

They stand. The silence cluttered with secrets. We HOLD here as a chasm opens up between them.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

AMY sits beside LIAM. The TV flashes and flickers. Shadows moving like a storm cloud across their faces. Our camera angles on AMY, as she retreats somewhere inside her mind--

EVE (V.O.)

What's your deepest fantasy...

And as Amy stiffens a grin--

BEGIN MONTAGE:**IN THE APARTMENT**

THAT NIGHT. Liam rouses from bed, tip-toeing towards their closet. We watch him HIDE HIS BACKPACK, DELETE THE TRYST APP FROM HIS PHONE. We go off of his face -- *enough is enough.*

ADAM (V.O.)

I don't know. For a long time I've ignored that. Avoided the dark corners of my mind. Sex was maintenance. Like going to the gym. Paying rent. But not anymore...

DISSOLVE TO:

THE NEXT MORNING

LIAM grabs his coat, exiting the room. Just as he disappears, AMY'S EYES POP OPEN. *She was only pretending to be asleep...*

ADAM (V.O.)

It's like I jumped from black and white to technicolor. I feel like Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz. You think you know yourself and then this happens. *You happened.*

DISSOLVE TO:

OUTSIDE A SEX SHOP

AMY exits, a **TRYST VR HEADSET** tucked beneath her arm. She can hardly contain her excitement as she hurries off--

ADAM (V.O.)

When I talk to you I just feel brand new. *Unafraid.* I don't have to be anyone else but me.
(fishing)
Do you feel that way too?

DISSOLVE TO:

INSIDE THE VR WORLD

Adam and Eve make love in front of an UPSIDE DOWN WATERFALL. A TREE SPROUTS FROM GLASS FLOORING. *Modern, Classic, Dada:* Styles blend/clash as the rooms become more and more SURREAL.

EVE (V.O.)

You have no idea. I feel like I'm *sleepwalking* out there. It's like I'm one of those costumed people in Times Square, dancing for tips.

DISSOLVE TO:

IN A RESTAURANT

Amy fakes her way through a double-date with Liam and Hector. Smiling polite, half-interested. It's clear her mind is somewhere else. *Somewhere better.*

EVE (V.O.)

Posing. Pretending. Just so people I hate will clap their hands.

DISSOLVE TO:

IN THE VR WORLD

A VICTORIAN ROOM. White-walls. Wainscoting. Period antiques. THE WHOLE THING IS COMPLETELY SUBMERGED. Electric blue water wobbles. Like the Penthouse aboard the Titanic. Just then--

EVE
Being with you -- it's like I can
breathe again.

ADAM AND EVE CANNONBALL INTO VIEW -- AN EXPLOSION OF BUBBLES

EVE (CONT'D)
It's funny: you know more about me
than anyone, and I don't even know
your name. What should I call you?

They swim to each other. Souls connecting on a higher plane.

ADAM
Call me Adam -- and you?

Adam reaches out for her -- his fingers caressing her cheek.

EVE
I want you to call me Eve...

She smiles. We leave the duo here, suspended together in a weightless dream. And as their bodies tumble -- **END MONTAGE.**

CUT TO BLACK

INT. BOBBY'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Stubble shadows BOBBY'S chin. His eyes are bloodshot and raw. His eyelids droop heavily, under the influence of *something*.

He squints as he brings his phone to his face -- texting:

TEXT (BOBBY)
WTF Lydia?
(...)
You're seriously ghosting me???
(...)
PLEASE. WE NEED TO TALK!!!

HE SCOFFS. PAIN CONTORTING HIS FACE. HE'S A WRECK RIGHT NOW. Just then, his EYES BULGE--

The three dot bubble appears then disappears. NO TEXT COMES. Bobby squeezes his phone, trying to will it into existence. But silence reigns. His arms falls slack. OFF HIM, HOLLOWED.

INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

A SLICE OF PINK PANTIES WIGGLE IN OUR FACE -- TOUCHING TOES. Bobby sours at the view. Not even this can bring him joy right now. He crumples bills, tossing them. Shooing her away.

BOBBY CHUGS HIS BEER. Glassy eyed. Ignoring a STRIPPER as she tries to make conversation with him, sit in his lap. As she talks, his attention drifts towards--

A DARKENED CORNER. The saddest merch stand you've ever seen. Beer koozies and trucker hats hang there, collecting dust. But in front of them a new display figures prominently:

A stack of **TRYST VR HEADSETS** for sale.

OFF BOBBY. SNORTING. SARDONIC. *What the fuck, right?*

Welcome

New Features Available for Download

You've selected: FETISH BASEMENT.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

BOBBY'S AVATAR stands alone in the elevator. Light strobes across his blank expression as the lift hurtles downwards.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT [VR SCAPE]

ELEVATOR DOORS SLIDE OPEN. BARE FEET STEP OUT. THEN STOP.

BOBBY'S AVATAR blinks. On guard. Not sure what to make of it: Ahead of him is an EMPTY ROOM. Darkened. MIRRORED WALLS. A black box theater crossed with a trippy fun-house.

Reflections CONVERGE as he steps into the inner sanctum. He looks around. Over his shoulder. *Where is everybody...?*

Then-- SPLAT

Bobby reacts, disgusted, wiping fluid off his forehead. *SOMETHING HAS DRIPPED ON HIM.* Slowly his eyes migrate up...

Above him, A GROUP 50 PEOPLE HANG WEIGHTLESSLY IN THE AIR. Their writhing bodies refracting infinitely in the mirrored atrium. It's CIRQUE DU SOLEIL meets the SISTINE CHAPEL.

Except they're fucking.

MOUTHS SUCKING. HIPS PUMPING. FINGERS PULLING. SCREAMING.

BOBBY'S AVATAR reacts. Overwhelmed. Maybe even frightened. And just then-- his FEET LOSE CONTACT WITH THE FLOOR...

HE IS NOW AIRBORNE. DRIFTING UPWARDS LIKE A LOST BALLOON. THE SOUNDS INTENSIFY. GRUNTING. CACKLING. CRIES FOR HELP.

NAILS SCRATCH AT HIM AS HE FLOATS BY. TOTALLY RUDDERLESS. AT THE MERCY OF THIS STRANGE GRAVITY. WE GO OFF HIM, RESISTING, ON THE EDGE OF TEARS AS HE DISAPPEARS INTO THE TANGLED MASS--

CUT TO BLACK

INT. DIFFERENT RESTUARANT - DAY

We're TIGHT on LIAM. Forcing a smile. Dimples tweaking as--

VOICE (O.S.)

Look Liam -- you know I'm a fan of your cooking. But we're pretty set right now staff-wise. I'm sorry, but it's not gonna work out here.

OFF LIAM -- Sweaty now. His desperation blistering through.

EXT. RESTAURANTS - (VARIOUS) - DAY

Liam exits several restaurants. Unsuccessful at all of them.

INT. LIAM & AMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Liam sits at the table. Cutlery clinks in the awful silence. Elbow propped, chin in his hands: he looks totally DEFEATED. On cue, AMY chimes in--

AMY

Maybe you should look for something temporary? Doesn't even have to be in a kitchen. You know, something steady. Just for now.

Liam boils. No response. He doesn't even look up at her...

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

LIAM STARES AT THE CEILING. MOUTH SOUR. HIS FACE TIGHT. Amy's nasal-y breathing bleeds in from O.S. His expression knots. Bothered by the snoring. *By her. By everything...*

His eyes drift to the CLOSET DOORS. ON HIM -- TEETH GRITTING. Trying to ride this out. Resist the temptation. His eyes begin to shimmer with desperation. Expression crumbling.

OFF LIAM -- *shrinking. Powerless. Weak.*

Welcome back...

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT - [VR SCAPE]

EYES FLUTTER OPEN. BREATHING DEEPLY. LIPS CURL INTO A SMILE. ADAM rises to his feet. Standing tall. Looking happy. Loose.

God it's good to be back.

EXT. HOTEL - BALCONY - NIGHT - [VR SCAPE]

Adam brushes past flowing drapes. EVE sits on the ledge of a BALCONY. The CITY twinkling below. She turns to face him, offering her hand. He takes it. About to help her down when--

EVE

I was thinking about you today.

Adam's EYES BULGE. *Shocked to hear her voice.* She continues:

EVE (CONT'D)

You were right. They tried to saddle me with extra work again. So I took your advice--

ADAM'S YANKED FORWARD-- *EVE LEANS RECKLESSLY OVER THE EDGE.* His grip is the only thing keeping her from going over...

Eve smiles at him. Devilishly.

EVE (CONT'D)

I told them to fuck off.

She leans back even further. One leg toying over the ledge. ON ADAM, COMPLETELY FREAKED OUT. *What the fuck is going on??*

Eve smiles, closing her eyes, leaning her head back further.

EVE (CONT'D)

You can't imagine how good it felt...

And just then-- ADAM YANKS HER ARM. PULLING HER TO SAFETY.

EVE (CONT'D)
Jesus. What's gotten into you?

Eve lands on solid ground, searching his face, still cheery and playful. Slowly, the excitement drains from her face.

EVE (CONT'D)
 Adam. What's wrong?

We go off ADAM, stammering. *He looks like he's seen a ghost.*

EXT. PARK BENCH - DAY

A LEG BOUNCES WITH NERVOUS ENERGY, the scuffed sole of a shoe jack-hammering soggy ground. LIAM looks wired. Chewing on his chapped lips. It doesn't look like he slept much...

His eyes dart around the park. Weekend bikers ride by. Ten-year-olds play freeze tag. Life unfolds like normal.

Yet Liam blinks. Hardly recognizing it. Totally alienated. And just then--

BOBBY (O.S.)
Jesus, man.

Liam startles. Shocked to find BOBBY standing over him.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
 (blunt)
 You look like shit.

Liam loosens. Shoulders relaxing a bit. He offers a coffee. Bobby raises an eyebrow. *You're fucking kidding me, right?*

BOBBY (CONT'D)
 (impatient)
 What do you want, Liam?

LIAM
 I just wanna have a coffee. I feel like I haven't seen you forever.

Bobby snorts a bitter laugh. Shaking his head in disbelief.

BOBBY
 You got some balls, man.

LIAM
Bro, what are you talking about?

BOBBY
 (exploding)
 What am I talking about?? I know, Liam! I know about you. And Lydia. And Tryst. You think I'm fuckin' stupid? You ruined my life, man.

Liam takes a step back. Caught. Staggered. In survival-mode.

LIAM
 Bobby -- you gotta know -- I never would've done it if I knew it was her on the other end.

BOBBY
Save it.
 (then)
 Don't text me again, alright?

Bobby walks off. But before he goes, he turns around:

BOBBY (CONT'D)
 Oh and by the way: I told Amy.
 Good luck with that.

And with that, Bobby exits. Disappearing into leafless trees. Our camera stays with Liam, circling as his face contorts.

He just lost his best friend. His peace of mind. HIS SANITY.
 And then, his expression drops. HIT NOW WITH THE REALIZATION:

LIAM
 (sotto)
Amy...

And as his eyes BULGE. Hardly able to reconcile it, we--

PRELAP: "Heyyy."

EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Amy scoops Lydia into a tight hug on a street-corner. Her eyes close. Breathing deep. Practically melting into it.

LYDIA (O.S.)
 Honestly, it's been a long time coming.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Amy listens to Lydia. Totally rapt. Hardly touching the BRUNCH SPREAD laid out before them.

LYDIA,
 I feel like I was just giving, and
 giving, and giving. And I wasn't
 getting anything back.
 (pausing)
 It sucks. Going out with a whimper.
 I know it sounds awful to say, but:
 I'm just so fucking *relieved*.

Amy nods. Her face sympathetic. She lets a pause float by.

AMY
 (careful)
 So you guys are like *done*, done?

LYDIA
 As far as I'm concerned, it's over.
 I've moved on.

Lydia takes a deep breath. Broaching a delicate subject.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
 Look, Amy -- I know how close you
 and Bobby are. And I know it always
 gets weird when friends break up.
 But I'm hoping that -- well --
 You're important to me, Amy. I just
 hope we can stay close.

Amy reacts. Genuinely touched. Tears welling in her eyes.

AMY
 Lydia. *Jesus*. You're gonna make me
 cry all over my french toast.

They laugh together. Cutting the tension. Amy leans close--

AMY (CONT'D)
 (sincere)
 You did the right thing, Lydia. I'm
 proud of you. And if you're worried
 that I'm gonna choose sides in
 this, *don't be*. Because the truth
 is: I choose you.

Lydia's face puckers at that. Feeling loved. Supported. Seen.

LYDIA
 Thanks, Amy. That means a lot.

Lydia reaches across the table. Giving Amy's hand a SQUEEZE.
 Amy reacts. Thrilling a bit. Her heart doing somersaults.

Lydia lets go. Taking a sip of her mimosa. Starting in on the untouched food. Amy eyes her furtively. Choosing her moment.

AMY

Hold on. Back up a second for me.
You said you've 'moved on?' Does
that mean what I think it means?
(then)
Is there someone else?

Lydia blushes. Hiding her face in her hands. Amy relishes it.

AMY (CONT'D)

For real?

LYDIA

Ummm. I dunno. Kinda? It's early
stages, but, yeah. It's exciting.

AMY

Tell me.

A beat. Lydia looks off. Trying to find the right words.

LYDIA

I'll just say...
(beat)
It's really different.

She smiles. Picking up cutlery. Content to leave it at that.

We hold on Amy, averting her eyes. She tries to corral her excitement. Stiff a grin. But it's no use. She can't help herself. We go OFF HER, a lovesick smile breaking through...

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

TIGHT ON LIAM. EYES STARING VACANTLY AHEAD. TV DRONING ALONG.
Just then--

AMY (O.S.)

Heyyy.

The door shuts as Amy enters the apartment. Liam shifts in his seat. Tightening up a bit as she sinks down next to him. He tries to act natural--

LIAM

How was your morning?

AMY

Fine. Just had brunch with Lydia.

LIAM
Oh yeah? How is she?

AMY
Good. Really good actually.

LIAM
What'd you guys talk about?

AMY
You know. Girl stuff.

Liam nods. "*Figures.*" He starts fiddling with a ring on her finger. In pain now. Flooded with memories. *Little things. All the plans they had...*

He clears his throat--

LIAM
(quiet)
Is this your favorite ring?

AMY
I dunno. Probably.

LIAM
I was gonna get you one, you know.

Amy's face DROPS. *We watch her knee-jerk reaction as--*

HER HAND SLIPS OUT OF HIS. Liam reacts. DEVASTATED. *If he wasn't sure before, he is now.* With that a CHILL falls over the room. Liam looks at her. *Desperate. Pleading. Ashamed.*

All he can think to say is--

LIAM (CONT'D)
We're not okay. Are we?

Slowly Amy meets his gaze. *A mix of guilt. Sadness. Anger.* But before she can speak--

THEIR PHONES BUZZ IN UNISON -- visible on the nearby coffee table. Their screens pulse with the same PUSH NOTIFICATION--

Meet Tonight?

And as Liam and Amy look up at each other -- VULNERABLE, NAKED, RUINED, ARRIVING AT THE POINT OF NO RETURN, WE--

CUT TO BLACK

ROLL CREDITS.