

HIGH FIDELITY

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MIDNIGHT  RADIO

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CLOSE ON A RECORD, spinning, glossy black -- the needle DROPS and a song starts, "*JUST*" by Mark Ronson. We CUT INTO:

1

INT. CASITA DEL CAMPO - NIGHT

1

A dark Mexican restaurant. Crowded, noisy. A girl and a guy on a Tinder date sit across from each other in a booth --

ALEX

Tell me you've at least heard "*THE BENDS*."

CLYDE

Sure, yeah, of course.

(then)

That's the one with "*CREEP*," right?

ALEX (31) is in her uniform of jeans, sneakers and a leather jacket. She is naturally appealing, inadvertently sincere -- the anti-Carrie Bradshaw. She looks at her date, genuinely AGHAST. This guy can't be for real... *Can he?*

ALEX

Okay, very funny, I get it.

He just looks at her. Oh my god. *He's serious.*

ALEX (CONT'D)

It's Radiohead. Everybody likes Radiohead. Old people... Republicans... Germans.

CLYDE

They're just a little, I don't know... ambient. Background noise.

CLYDE (30, very, very cute -- though Alex would be loathe to admit that -- not the coolest guy in the room, but not trying to be) finishes his beer, enjoying watching Alex squirm.

ALEX

Okay... Yeah. I mean, that album is widely considered a seminal contribution to the musical pantheon, but yeah... Sure. Maybe it's not for everyone.

(off his amusement)

What?

CLYDE

Nothing. I just... Never met a girl who took music so seriously.

(MORE)

CLYDE (CONT'D)
 Unless it was like, a teenager
 talking about Taylor Swift.
 (that came out wrong)
 Not that I date teenagers. I like
 older women. I mean, over thirty.
 (oh Jesus)
 Not that you... look...

The WAITRESS (50, been here forever) interrupts, thank god.

WAITRESS
 Another round?

Sure. CLYDE ALEX
 I'm good.

They look at each other. The waitress waits...

ALEX (CONT'D)
 (forcing a smile)
 Why not?

The waitress bails. A long, awkward BEAT of silence. Then:

CLYDE
 So. You're from Chicago, right?

ALEX
 (she hesitates, then)
 I'm just gonna run to the bathroom.

Alex gives Clyde a warm SMILE, grabs her purse, and scoots out of the booth, heading down the HALLWAY.

But as soon as she's out of Clyde's sight, Alex picks up the pace and WALKS RIGHT PAST THE BATHROOMS. Looking for an exit, she heads down a set of STAIRS into --

THE BASEMENT --

Where A DRAG SHOW is in progress, audience full of raucous gay guys roaring with laughter. Alex scoots past the back row, bumping into people. A guy gives her a DIRTY LOOK --

ALEX (CONT'D)
 Sorry. My bad. My date was a
 sociopath.

The guy nods, gets it. She heads out a back EXIT into --

THE KITCHEN --

Where cooks sling food, hot and sweaty. They stare at Alex.

ALEX (CONT'D)
The enchiladas were amazing, by the way. Thank you.

She passes through, ducking out a BACK DOOR, to --

2 EXT. CASITA DEL CAMPO - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS 2

Freedom. Finally. Alex takes a deep breath of fresh air. Then fishes in her purse for her phone. Opens Lyft -- but the closest carpool is 13 MINUTES AWAY. A beat, then --

Suddenly, Alex LOOKS TO THE CAMERA:

ALEX
What? You want me to go back in there and talk about "where we're from?" Trust me, I'm doing him a favor. This is obviously going nowhere.

Alex looks back to her phone, presses SET PICKUP. But a message flashes across her screen... PAYMENT DECLINED. Shit.

She looks up and sees -- the VALET stand, unoccupied, it's rows of KEYS there for the taking. As she considers...

3 INT. CASITA DEL CAMPO - SAME 3

Clyde is just on the verge of getting suspicious, when --

ALEX
Hey.

Alex slides right back into the booth like nothing happened. Sees her new margarita, and downs it in ONE GIANT GULP. Chokes on the salt. Wipes her mouth. He looks at her:

CLYDE
You wanna get out of here?

ALEX
Do I ever.

4 INT. CLYDE'S PRIUS - NIGHT 4

Clyde drives Alex home through the winding hills of Silverlake. The radio plays the SIRIUS XM Jam Band station.

ALEX
Take a right at the stop sign.

CLYDE
Can I ask you something?

ALEX
Sure...

CLYDE
Back there at the restaurant, for a second... I thought you might be ditching me. Is that insane?

ALEX
Yes. Totally.

She glances away... That was a close call.

CLYDE
Right, yeah. Of course it is.
That would be like, total sociopath behavior.

Alex looks out the window, willing this conversation to end.

CLYDE (CONT'D)
I'm glad, though, because... I actually had fun tonight.

ALEX
(surprised)
You did?

CLYDE
Yeah. You're funny. A little mean, but... funny.
(then)
Most of the girls I meet in tech are more like... polished.
Boring.

ALEX
Rich... Successful.

CLYDE
I feel like they're looking at me like a piece of meat. Trying to check something off their list.
(then)
With you it was like... a real conversation. I like that.

He turns down her street. She looks at him, feeling bad...

ALEX

I didn't mean to offend you, with the whole music thing.

CLYDE

Nah. I like arguing on the first date. I mean, who needs pleasantries anyway? No one ever wrote a love song about small talk.

A beat as this lands, Alex surprised at how insightful he is.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

My last relationship... she was just so *nice*. It was constant. Unrelenting. Vegetarian nice. You're not a vegetarian, are you?

ALEX

No.

CLYDE

Good.

ALEX

(a beat)

Are you always this... open?

CLYDE

Yeah. It's sort of a problem.

ALEX

It's this building on the left.

Clyde pulls into a parking space on the street.

CLYDE

(re: parking space)

Am I okay here?

ALEX

Yeah.

He gets out of the car. Alex goes to do the same, but Clyde is already opening her door for her. She gets out --

Outside Alex's ancient Spanish duplex. They stand on the sidewalk, neither of them exactly sure what to do next.

ALEX

Thank you. For the ride. That was nice of you.

No one moves. Despite everything, there's an undeniable chemistry. And a full moon, and jasmine in the air...

6 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

6

Alex and Clyde CRASH into the apartment together, KISSING, electric. They stumble in, past a HUGE RECORD COLLECTION.

CLYDE

Wow... I didn't really think you even liked me.

ALEX

Yeah, me neither.

Alex pulls Clyde into --

7 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

7

The BEDROOM, where she pulls him onto the bed, fully clothed. Clyde tries to kick his SHOES off, while still kissing Alex. It's clumsy, but hot --

Close on their faces as they kiss -- and it's not just lust, something undeniably ROMANTIC is happening here, as we --

FADE TO BLACK.

8 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

8

A hand fumbles for a phone in the dark. The phone blinks on, showing us it's 3AM. Alex is in bed, WIDE AWAKE. She looks at Clyde, asleep. Then slowly, gingerly, she gets up...

9 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

9

Alex, now wearing an old Clash t-shirt, looks in the fridge. Nothing but a few stray beers and leftover takeout.

CLYDE (O.C.)

Hey.

Alex turns around, totally FREAKED OUT --

CLYDE (CONT'D)
Can't sleep?
(re: the open fridge)
What are we cooking?

ALEX
Don't sneak up on me like that,
okay? I have a baseball bat under
my bed and I know how to use it.
(then)
I played softball in high school.
"Most Inspirational Player."

CLYDE
Okay. Copy that. Sorry.
(off her silence)
If there's something going on, you
can tell me. We are both standing
here in our underwear.

A beat. It's quiet, dark. She decides to tell the truth.

ALEX
I have trouble sleeping... when
someone else is here. It's been a
while since I've been in a
relationship. Long story.

CLYDE
(a beat, then)
Sleep is overrated. You wanna eat
ice cream and watch "*BLACK MIRROR*"?

ALEX
It's three in the morning.

CLYDE
You got somewhere better to be? I
mean, I heard there's an after-
hours in this house on Alvarado.
Or we could go on a sunrise hike.
I've never done that but I've seen
it on Instagram.

ALEX
You don't think I'm crazy.

CLYDE
No. Not crazy. An insomniac with
bad taste in men, maybe. But I'm
hoping I can turn that around.

He smiles. It's an offer of something more, something bigger
than a one-night stand, and they both know it.

He walks up to her. Pulls her into a HUG. Alex's instinct is to pull away. But instead, she gives in.

ON ALEX, her head on his shoulder --

ALEX
I was trying to sneak out. Before.
At the restaurant.

ON CLYDE, looking the other way --

CLYDE
Yeah, I know.

10 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - THE NEXT MORNING 10

Sun streams through the curtains. An empty pint of ICE CREAM sits on the night stand, two spoons. Alex stirs, waking...

She remembers what happened last night. A SMILE creeps across her face. A beat, then she rolls over to see --

NO ONE. The bed empty. Relieved, Alex jumps up and rushes over to a MIRROR, artfully mussing her hair. A beat, then she grabs a bottle of perfume from the desk and gives a quick spritz under each armpit. That'll do.

11 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS 11

She enters pseudo-casually, pretending to have just woken up - But Clyde is NOWHERE to be found.

ALEX
Hello?

Alex stomps over to the WINDOW, looks down to where Clyde's car was parked on the street -- But the parking space is EMPTY. He's gone.

She glances at the clock -- 7:30AM. This guy ghosted.

ALEX (CONT'D)
You've got to be kidding me.

She looks back INTO CAMERA --

ALEX (CONT'D)
*Of course it was the nice guy.
It's always the nice guys. That
whole opening the door for you
thing? Who falls for that?*

She slumps on the couch, feeling betrayed and hurt and pissed off all at once.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Now, sneaking out in the middle of the night after sleeping together on the first date... that's a new one. Not very creative, but bonus points for cruelty.

(then)

Don't get me wrong, I've been through worse. Trust me. This doesn't even crack the Top Five.

She stands up, goes over to the open window, CALLS OUT --

ALEX (CONT'D)

You hear that? So, you know, *nice try!* Close, but no cigar.

Alex sits back down, puts her feet up on the coffee table.

ALEX (CONT'D)

If you really wanted to mess me up, Mr. Phish-listening, Heineken drinking, I work at a meal replacement startup -- you should've gotten to me earlier.

(then)

My Desert Island, All Time, Top Five Most Memorable Break-Ups, in chronological order. Number One:

12 INT. ALEX'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - ILLINOIS - 1999 - **FLASHBACK** 2

TWELVE YEAR OLD ALEX (same jeans and sneakers) sits in her childhood bedroom, a PIXIES poster on the wall behind her.

She's pretending to do homework, listening to a DISCMAN. She sneaks a glance out the open window, at her NEIGHBOR --

ALEX (V.O.)

Dylan Reynolds.

DYLAN REYNOLDS (13, cute in a pre-teen way) is in his bedroom in the house next door, teaching himself how to play guitar.

A CHYRON appears typed across the screen: **1. Dylan Reynolds**

Dylan LOOKS UP, catches Alex blatantly STARING. She quickly TURNS to the other side of the room, blushing, humiliated.

A beat, then Alex glances back over her shoulder -- And there's Dylan, looking right at her. He opens his window...

DYLAN

What are you listening to?

TWELVE YEAR OLD ALEX

(takes the headphones off)

Weezer.

ALEX (V.O.)

I lied. It was Sleater-Kinney.

DYLAN

(a beat)

Cool.

ALEX (V.O.)

All men love Weezer.

13

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - A DIFFERENT DAY - FLASHBACK

13

Winter. Alex and Dylan walk home from school, down suburban sidewalks, wearing big puffy coats. Dylan has his guitar with him, talks to Alex as she nods her head, listening.

ALEX (V.O.)

I was the only girl in school who was really into music. Guys are expected to know something about rock and roll. Girls, not so much.

(then)

Of course, I had to pretend to know less than he did...

Dylan, enamored, turns to Alex, and suddenly KISSES HER --

ALEX (V.O.)

Top Five People I Had Seen Kissing by 1999: Xena: Warrior Princess. Justin Timberlake and Britney Spears. My cousin, Daryl. The cast of Friends. And Madison Shepherd, that eighth grade slut.

14

EXT. PARK BENCH - A DIFFERENT DAY - FLASHBACK

14

A different day. Still winter. Alex and Dylan sit on a bench together while other kids play in the park. Dylan reaches over and takes Alex's hand. It's sweet.

ALEX (V.O.)
*Our relationship lasted six hours.
 The two hours between the end of
 school and the start of the local
 news, when our moms started looking
 for us, for three straight days.*

15 INT. JUNIOR HIGH - HALLWAY - FLASHBACK

15

Twelve year old Alex, in an oversized sweater, walks down the crowded hallway, when DYLAN turns the corner -- HOLDING HANDS with a NEW GIRL -- sparkly lip gloss, midriff baring shirt.

Alex, stunned, stops. Forgets how to walk. How to breathe.

ALEX (V.O.)
*But somehow, on the fourth day,
 like magic, everyone just seemed to
 know that Dylan was with Madison
 Shepherd now.*

DYLAN
 (as he passes Alex, under
 his breath)
 Sorry.

TWELVE YEAR OLD ALEX
 (to camera)
 Everyone but me.

16 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - **BACK TO PRESENT**

16

Alex sits on the couch, lost in the memory...

ALEX
 I can hardly remember anything
 about Dylan now. I think he moved
 to the East Coast somewhere. But
 if we were doing this list in grief
 order, instead of chronological?
 I'd put him right up there at
 Number Two.

17 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER

17

Alex, post-shower, pulls on jeans, a clean t-shirt, and the ubiquitous leather jacket. Getting ready for the day.

ALEX

It would be nice to think that as I've gotten older, things have changed. But there's still an element of that day in everything that has happened to me since.

18 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 18

She heads out the door, picking her purse up off the floor - a reminder of last night.

ALEX

You'd think I'd see it coming by now.

19 EXT. ALEX'S STREET - SILVERLAKE - MOMENTS LATER 19

Alex walks to her car, parked on the palm tree lined street - a broken down, champagne colored "vintage" 1987 Porsche 944.

ALEX

Even as a kid, I wanted out of the Midwest. There's something romantic about the seasons changing, the snow crunching beneath your feet.

She climbs in and starts the car. The engine WHINES, she HITS the dashboard... it stops.

ALEX (CONT'D)

That was exactly the kind of stuff I wanted to leave behind.

As she drives away, a SONG BEGINS, "*NOBODY REALLY CARES IF YOU DON'T GO TO THE PARTY*" by Courtney Barnett.

20 EXT. YORK BLVD - HIGHLAND PARK - LATER 20

Alex's Porsche drives down York Blvd, a grungy part of East LA where gentrification is slowly creeping in. She parks...

Gets out of the car, stepping over a pile of trash. She passes a gangster Tattoo Shop, then a fancy Juice Bar.

ALEX

It's not the LA you see in the movies. But sure enough, the juice bars have crept into this side of town too. Things are changing.

(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)
 Some people are mad, others just
 want their cold-pressed turmeric
 tonic.
 (then)
 All Time Most Memorable Break-Ups,
 Number Two:

21 INT. NIGHT CLUB - HOLLYWOOD - 2008 - **FLASHBACK** 21

A big room filled with young hipsters dancing to some Steve Aoki-esque DJ. 21-year-old Alex orders a drink at the bar.

ALEX (V.O.)
Pete Miller.

Across the bar, a guy glances at her -- this is PETE (25, bleached blonde hair, skinny, effortlessly sexy).

A CHYRON appears, adding a name to the list: **2. Pete Miller**

LATER THAT NIGHT -- Alex and Pete dance together, sweaty, into each other.

ALEX (V.O.)
*It was the first time I was really
 on my own. At home, everyone knew
 who I was, or knew my parents, or
 knew someone who knew someone who
 did. But here...*

Alex leans in and KISSES Pete...

ALEX (V.O.)
I could be anyone I wanted.

22 INT. WAREHOUSE PARTY - DOWNTOWN LA - NIGHT - FLASHBACK 22

A warehouse where a huge illegal PARTY is happening. Pete leans against a wall, Alex by his side, eyeing the crowd.

Pete watches a hipster girl with cropped hair dancing alone. The girl looks at ALEX, and smiles. Pete looks to Alex...

PETE
She's cute.

23 INT. PETE'S LOFT - DOWNTOWN LA - NIGHT - FLASHBACK 23

Exposed brick, a "FIGHT CLUB" poster. Alex sits down next to the hipster girl from the party (HAZEL, 22) on the couch. Hazel leans over and KISSES Alex. Pete looks on approvingly.

ALEX (V.O.)
*Now, there's nothing wrong with a
 little bi-sexual dabbling. Times
 have changed, sexuality is fluid
 and all that...*

As things progress, Hazel totally into it...

24 INT. SHOWER - THE NEXT MORNING - FLASHBACK 24

Alex steps out of the shower, wrapping herself in a towel --

ALEX (V.O.)
*I was curious, and Pete was
 supportive of that. He said our
 relationship didn't have to be
 defined by traditional boundaries.*

She pauses, hearing GIGGLING from the other room...

25 INT. PETE'S LOFT - CONTINUOUS - FLASHBACK 25

Alex (now dressed) walks out to see Pete and Hazel on the bed. Pete's wearing jeans, Hazel's wearing Pete's t shirt from last night, sitting on top of Pete, KISSING HIM --

ALEX (V.O.)
*In retrospect, maybe a little too
 supportive.*

They don't notice Alex has entered. Finally, Pete realizes...

Pete jumps up from the bed, shirtless, and runs to the door, trying to stop Alex from leaving. Hazel looks on, pissed.

PETE
 Hey, Alex, come on! We were just
 getting started!

26 EXT. YORK BLVD - HIGHLAND PARK - **BACK TO PRESENT** 26

Alex walks down the street, speaking to the camera:

ALEX
 That's when I realized there's no
 way to fake being "edgy." You
 either like warehouse parties and
 open relationships, or you don't.

Alex approaches a steel roll up door, covered with graffiti. Right in the middle, in fresh paint: *Kale Yourself.*

ALEX (CONT'D)

Funny.

She leans down and UNLOCKS the door, rolling it up to REVEAL -

27 EXT./INT. CHAMPIONSHIP VINYL - CONTINUOUS

27

Alex walks in to Championship Vinyl, a low rent record store that was here before this block started to get "cool."

ALEX

Turns out staying out till 4AM for a year can kinda screw up your life. I stopped showing up to my marketing internship, started working part-time at a record store, and basically lost the plot for a while there.

(then)

Seven years later, I'm still here. Only now I own the place.

Alex walks through the musty racks of records to a COUNTER.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Pete and I, we never really... matched. But Number Three on the list? Simon Arnold.

28 INT. ECHOPLEX - 2011 - **FLASHBACK**

28

A dance club full of hipsters. Manning the DJ equipment is ALEX - now 24 and comfortable in her own skin.

The LIST appears on the screen: **3. Simon Arnold**

ALEX (V.O.)

Simon and I matched.

Find SIMON (26, sarcastic, cranky, attractive in a quirky way) in the crowd, looking slightly uncomfortable.

ALEX (V.O.)

I liked DJ'ing because it meant I didn't have to talk to anyone. And I could play whatever I wanted, even if no one knew who it was.

Simon comes up to Alex at the DJ booth. She takes off her headphones, annoyed, until he asks:

SIMON
Is this Jonathan Fire Eater?

Alex smiles, impressed.

29 EXT. SUNSET BLVD - THAT NIGHT

29

After the club. Simon helps Alex carry her crates of records to her car, puts them in the trunk. A beat, then:

ALEX
So... Were you there with anyone?
Tonight?

SIMON
Actually... I just broke up with
someone.

ALEX
Yeah? Me too.

They look at each other, a beat of connection...

ALEX (V.O.)
*We were both alone in the city, and
we felt that way. Lonely. Only
people of a certain disposition are
frightened of being alone for the
rest of their lives at twenty-four.
We were of that disposition.*

30 INT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

30

Alex and Simon sit in a nearly empty theater watching "EXIT THROUGH THE GIFT SHOP" and eating popcorn and candy.

ALEX (V.O.)
*We liked all the same things:
pretentious documentaries, whiskey
neat, criticizing other people...*

31 EXT. ARTS DISTRICT - ALLEY - FLASHBACK

31

Alex and Simon stand in line for a show. As they roll their eyes at a dude in cargo shorts and a Wilco t shirt --

ALEX (V.O.)
*But most importantly, music. Simon
had a theory:*

SIMON

What really matters is what you like, not what you are like. Music, TV, films... These things matter, and it's no good pretending that any relationship has a future if you're not on the same page.

32 INT. THE DRAWING ROOM - FLASHBACK

32

A dark dive bar. Simon waiting at a table as Alex picks up two identical Old Fashioned's from the bar --

ALEX (V.O.)

Unfortunately it turned out there was one other thing Simon and I both liked...

As she carries the drinks, a HOT GUY smiles at her. She smiles back. Then, guiltily, Alex turns to look at Simon... Only to realize that he's *also smiling at the Hot Guy*.

SIMON

(sheepish)

I think we, uh, need to talk...

LATER -- Simon's nervously giving Alex "the talk." *So, it turns out I'm gay...* Alex nods understandingly, swallowing her pride. Hugs Simon. He walks off with the Hot Guy.

ALEX

(looks at the camera)

And that was the end of that.

Alex finishes her drink. And then Simon's, for good measure.

33 INT. CHAMPIONSHIP VINYL - DAY - **BACK TO PRESENT**

33

Alex flips on the AC and lights, getting the store ready.

ALEX

We've got a bit of everything... Punk, electronic, hip hop, rock. To quote our lone Yelp review, "Decently curated cuts, unpretentious location, owner's a little rude." Two and a half stars.

The bell above the door JINGLES and in walks...

SIMON. Wireless headphones around his neck, he looks nearly the same as seven years ago. Alex LOOKS TO THE CAMERA --

ALEX (CONT'D)

What?

(then, explaining)

I hired him a few years back, when he needed the cash. It was supposed to be part-time, but he just started turning up, every day.

SIMON

Hey, Alex.

ALEX

Good weekend?

SIMON

Made a new mix. It's got a track from Yaeji's new EP. Import only. Remember, you really liked her first single?

ALEX

Oh. Yeah.

(to camera)

I have no idea what he's talking about.

Simon puts on the mix. The moody, melancholy opening of "*NO DISTANCE LEFT TO RUN*" by Blur.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Upbeat.

SIMON

Yeah...

They wallow in the music for a beat. Alex looks at camera:

ALEX

What came first -- the music or the misery? People worry about kids playing video games, or watching YouTube, that some sort of culture of violence will take them over. Nobody worries about kids listening to thousands, *literally thousands* of songs about heartbreak, rejection, pain, misery and loss.

(then)

Did I listen to pop music because I was miserable? Or was I miserable because I listened to pop music? Do all those records turn you into a melancholy person?

The door JINGLES. In walks CHERISE (25, African American) loud, likable, young enough to think she knows everything.

CHERISE

What is this sad bastard music?

She unplugs Simon's phone and plugs her own in. "PONY" by Ginuwine blasts. Simon looks appalled.

SIMON

How can you even like this crap?

CHERISE

This *crap* was in "MAGIC MIKE."

(holds up her hand)

Don't. It's Soderbergh.

SIMON

Right. It's an art film. It has nothing to do with Channing Tatum's abs. My mistake.

CHERISE

Damn it, Simon, the man can *dance*. He has a god-given talent. Can't I appreciate that without you making it sexual?

ALEX

Okay, we all want to have sex with Channing Tatum. Can we just agree on that?

But Cherise ignores her, listening to the music --

CHERISE

Top Five Greatest Vocoder Songs of All Time. I'll start. Beastie Boys, "INTERGALACTIC."

ALEX

"IN THE AIR TONIGHT," Phil Collins.

As they talk, this LIST appears on the screen in CHYRON too.

CHERISE

Jesus, Alex. Really? How do they let you own this place?

(then, an idea)

Subquestion... Could having a frontman who can't sing be a blessing in disguise? Would LCD Soundsystem be worse if James Murphy had a good voice?

SIMON
For Christ's sake, turn it off.

CHERISE
(screaming)
What's that? Turn it up?

She turns it WAY up. She starts to dance, about to climb onto the COUNTER, when --

Alex unplugs Cherise's phone and puts on "LA FORET" by Lescop. French pop, a totally different, chill vibe.

SIMON
I haven't heard this before.

CHERISE
I don't *hate* it.

Just then, a customer walks in, a TWENTY-SOMETHING GUY carrying an artisanal cold brew. He listens, intrigued.

TWENTY-SOMETHING GUY
Who is this?

ALEX
Lescop? They're French. We have the album, if you like it.

He HOLDS UP HIS PHONE to the speaker --

TWENTY-SOMETHING GUY
Never mind. Shazammed and added to my Spotify. Thanks.

CHERISE
Hey, yo, you can't do that in here!

She's about to go after the guy, but Simon gets in her way --

SIMON
I hate it when you make me be the authority figure.

CHERISE
You know "assistant manager" is just a made-up promotion, right?
(off his look)
Did you get a raise? Did you?

The Guy is oblivious to them -- sips his drink, flips through some albums. Talks to Alex:

TWENTY-SOMETHING GUY
Have you tried the coffee place
next door? Pretty amazing.

ALEX
No, I haven't. Since they charge
seven dollars. But you obviously
have a lot of spare income since
you clearly don't spend it on
things, like, you know... music.

The guy gives her a LOOK, super offended. Walks out.

ALEX (CONT'D)
(to camera)
Millennials.

SIMON
Oh, wow, way to go. You scared
away our only customer.

ALEX
Please. He was just like all the
rest. They hear something once,
play it again at a party to look
cool, then it's over. They never
listen to the song again, or get to
know the artist, or even hold the
actual album in their hands.

SIMON
The one-night stand of music...

ALEX
That kid was an asshole. His
entire stupid generation is going
to be the death of the industry.

CHERISE
Aren't you a Millennial? Oh yeah,
you're probably just on the cusp of
being too old...

As Alex SLAMS the door to the back room behind her --

CHERISE (CONT'D)
(looks to Simon)
You're definitely too old.

SIMON
Generation X invented grunge. What
did you invent? Flume? Molly?

CHERISE
You can't play that Nirvana card
forever.

SIMON
Our ecstasy was cut with speed and
baby laxatives. And we still did
it.

34 INT. CHAMPIONSHIP VINYL - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS 34

An old couch, boxes of records, a few vintage concert
posters. Alex sits at a crappy desk --

ALEX
Speaking of assholes.

35 INT. DRAGONFLY - HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT - 2012 - **FLASHBACK** 35

A CUTE GUY (30, beard, witty, charismatic) does stand up to a
sparse crowd, Alex (25) and her friend MEGAN (28) among them.

JUSTIN
Good looking crowd.
(then)
You guys know the burlesque show
starts at 10, right? Sorry. Just,
a lot of people in here that look
like they pay for sex.
(to one guy in particular)
Might be the goatee.

ALEX (V.O.)
Number Four. Justin Sharpe.

The LIST appears with the latest addition: **4. Justin Sharpe**

Alex watches Justin on stage, into him. Justin makes EYE
CONTACT with Alex, and smiles - it's MAGNETIC, she's smitten.

ALEX (V.O.)
*He looked at everyone that way. I
just didn't know it yet.*

36 INT. HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK 36

A big, run down house where half a dozen comics live. Alex
is in the kitchen, grabbing a beer. Justin's in the living
room, telling a long, involved story to an ENRAPPED CROWD.

ALEX (V.O.)
*None of my friends could figure out
 what I saw in Justin.*

Megan comes into the kitchen to join Alex.

MEGAN
 All he does is sit there, get
 drunk, and talk about himself. Can
 we please get out of here?

ALEX (V.O.)
*But there was something about
 Justin that made people want to be
 in his orbit. They were drawn to
 him.*

ON ALEX, watching Justin from the kitchen...

ALEX (V.O.)
*No one had ever looked at me that
 way. Maybe I just wanted to be a
 part of it.*

37 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK 37

ALEX (V.O.)
*We moved in together. Well,
 technically, he got evicted.*

Alex is on the couch. Justin is pacing, trying out some
 material. Alex talks to the camera, Justin oblivious.

ALEX
 But at some point I realized Justin
 didn't really want a girlfriend.
 He just wanted an audience. And
 that's all I ever was.

Alex gets up, heads to the bedroom. Justin doesn't notice.

38 INT. DRAGONFLY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK 38

Alex stands at the bar, a different night...

ALEX (V.O.)
*So I broke up with him. And it was
 painful, and horrible. But not as
 painful and horrible as three days
 later...*

Alex sees JUSTIN entering the bar... with her friend, Megan.

ALEX (V.O.)
*When I saw him at the same bar
 where we met, now dating my "best
 friend" Megan. Guess she finally
 figured out what I saw in him.*

39 INT. CHAMPIONSHIP VINYL - **BACK TO PRESENT**

39

There's a difference in Alex's demeanor now. This story wasn't just a joke like the others. This one hurt.

ALEX
 That's when I realized, everything
 in life is temporary. Especially
 relationships. The closest people
 in the world to you could be
 strangers in a second.

Alex looks at her laptop, sees an EMAIL... from CLYDE.
 She's surprised. The first few words appear in the Gmail
 window:

Hey, I had a really good time last night... FLASH TO:

40 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - LAST NIGHT - **FLASHBACK** 40

Alex and Clyde locked in an embrace -- that HUG, Alex's head
 on his shoulder, totally vulnerable...

41 INT. CHAMPIONSHIP VINYL - **BACK TO PRESENT**

41

Alex shakes off the memory. DELETES the email without
 opening it. Slams the lap top SHUT.

ALEX
 That's what you get for starting to
 like someone.

42 EXT. YORK BLVD - HIGHLAND PARK - TWILIGHT

42

Alex locks up the shop. Walks to her car, past a DIVE BAR
 that's now open for the night. A bouncer, TORRANCE (60,
 worked here for 30 years) sits on a stool out front.

TORRANCE
 No drink tonight?

ALEX
 Not tonight, Torrance.

TORRANCE
Boy trouble?
(then)
What? Educated guess.

43 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT 43

Alex sits on the floor, HUNDREDS OF RECORDS spread out around her. A bottle of red wine open next to her, glass empty. Her PHONE buzzes next to her, she answers --

ALEX
Yo.

44 INT. LOFT - ARTS DISTRICT - SAME (INTERCUT) 44

DENTON (35, surfer vibe, dad bod) is folding BABY CLOTHES and watching the Dodger game, a PBR in his hand.

DENTON
What's up?

ALEX
I'm not going out with you. Don't even try.

DENTON
Come on! Just a quick drink with your older brother? Leigh Ann's at a Mommy and Me and I've got two free hours.

ALEX
I'm busy.

DENTON
With what?

ALEX
Re-organizing my record collection.

A beat. He knows exactly what that means...

DENTON
What happened?

ALEX
Nothing happened. Why do you think something happened?

DENTON
Who is he? I'll kill him.

ALEX
Stop it. You're being nuts.

DENTON
You're a terrible liar.
(then)
Fine, be boring. Stay home. Waste
your youth.

On Alex, as she rolls her eyes. Considers another record...

DENTON (CONT'D)
Chronological? Not alphabetical...

ALEX
Autobiographical. To find an
album, first I'll have to remember
who I bought it for, or when I
first heard it, or how old I was
when it came out.

DENTON
(a beat, then)
Okay, I'm gonna go out on a limb
here and say: maybe sitting around
your apartment, alone, obsessively
dissecting your past isn't the best
way to spend a Thursday night.

ALEX
Goodbye, Denton.

She hangs up on him. Picks up an album: Hall & Oates,
"PRIVATE EYES." She looks at it, remembering...

ALEX (CONT'D)
So, that means to find Hall & Oates
I'll have to remember that Mac
played it for me on our first date.

"I CAN'T GO FOR THAT" by Hall & Oates starts to play, as the
LIST appears on the screen, now with: **5. Cormac Russell.**

45 EXT. BEACH - VENICE - SUNSET - **FLASHBACK**

45

One of those perfect, gorgeous moments. CORMAC "MAC" RUSSELL
(35, tan, worldly, equally at home in a tuxedo or sweatpants)
walks down the beach with Alex, who feels out of place.

ALEX (V.O.)
I hate Hall & Oates.

Mac turns off the path and walks toward the ocean. Alex hesitates, then follows, getting sand in her sneakers...

ALEX (V.O.)
*My All Time, Number One, Worst
 Break-Up -- the winner, by knock
 out... Cormac Russell. AKA Mac.*

CLOSE ON Alex as she SMILES at Mac, the sun glinting through the frame. Magic hour, in more ways than one.

46 INT. DIVE BAR - YORK BLVD - NIGHT - FLASHBACK 46

MAC sits with DENTON (a few years younger, pre-baby) in a classic dive bar. Red leather booths, tattooed waitresses.

ALEX (V.O.)
*Denton wasn't trying to set us up.
 He hated it when we got together.*

Alex (27) walks up to them. Mac turns to see her... The connection is INSTANT, palpable. Kismet.

Mac accidentally spills his DRINK on Alex's leg. Grabs a napkin and starts wiping Alex's leg awkwardly, apologizing...

MAC
 I'm so sorry... I don't know why I
 did that.

47 INT. 71 ABOVE - DOWNTOWN LA - NIGHT - FLASHBACK 47

A fancy restaurant in a skyscraper high above the city.

Alex, in a nice dress, sits with Mac at a table full of interesting, successful people.

ALEX (V.O.)
*Mac was a journalist. He had
 traveled the world. He was smart,
 and cultured, and intimidating.
 When I was with him... the world
 felt like a bigger place.*

LATER -- on the OBSERVATION DECK, Alex and Mac look out at the city. The wind blows, the lights glitter.

MAC
 There's this rooftop bar in
 Bangkok, feels like a strong wind
 could take the whole thing down,
 but when you're up there...

ALEX

What?

MAC

You'll see.

On Alex, wanting to believe this...

ALEX (V.O.)

*He was going to show me Thailand,
and Sydney, and when we had enough
money we were going to move to New
York.*

48 EXT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

48

A hot summer night. From the street, looking up at Alex's apartment, the bedroom window lit with a WARM GLOW.

49 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

49

Inside, Mac and Alex lay in bed, her head on his chest, post-coital. Candles are lit, the windows open.

MAC

I'm not trying to brag, but I think we're getting better at that.

ALEX

(smiles)

You can have all the future girls thank me.

MAC

What future girls?

ALEX

You know... whatever. It's not like I'm the last person you're going to sleep with for the rest of your life.

MAC

Who knows. You might be.

ALEX

(laughs)

Are you serious? I mean... Life is long. Like, really long.

Mac pulls her to him, amused:

MAC
Relax... It'll be fun. We'll get
old together.

He kisses her, smiling -- that kind of tenderness that
everyone wants.

ALEX (V.O.)
So, what went wrong? Nothing.

50 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK 50

The sound of keys unlocking the front door. It opens to
reveal Alex, back from a trip, carrying a duffle bag.

ALEX (V.O.)
And everything.

ALEX
Babe? You home?

But no one answers. Then, she notices something... All
Mac's stuff is GONE. A LETTER sits on the coffee table.

ALEX (V.O.)
*He moved to New York after all.
Just not with me.*

Alex goes to the couch, sits down, and picks up the letter...

ALEX (V.O.)
*Some people never got over high
school, or Burning Man, or the
night their band opened for The
Strokes. I never got over Mac.*

Off Alex, as she realizes it's over, DEVASTATED...

51 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - **BACK TO PRESENT**

Alex sits on the floor, the records forgotten.

ALEX
I was out of my depth, and after
that, I was determined to never get
out of my depth again. So for the
last three years, I've just been
paddling around in the shallow end.

She looks around at the stacks of records crowding the living
room, the empty wine glass. It's a mess. What is she doing?

ALEX (CONT'D)
 You know what? Maybe this whole
 thing was a mistake.

Alex starts to clean up, when her phone BUZZES. She looks at it, an EMAIL FROM CLYDE. Subject line: *READ ME!!!*

Reluctantly, Alex opens it. Whatever she reads, sends her to -

52 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 52

Alex looks around the room for something... Then THROWS the sheets off of the bed. There, buried, is an IPHONE.

Alex picks it up, presses the button. A photo of CLYDE with a Golden Retriever is the home screen. She looks at us:

ALEX
 What's worse than sleeping with a
 guy, he bails, and then tries to
 sleep with you again? Sleeping
 with a guy, he bails, and he
doesn't try to sleep with you
 again. He just wants his phone
 back.

53 EXT. YORK BLVD - HIGHLAND PARK - THE NEXT MORNING 53

Alex, cranky, walks to work. Gets to the steel roll up door, new graffiti reads: *They called. You didn't get the part.*

54 INT. CHAMPIONSHIP VINYL - LATER THAT DAY 54

It's totally, utterly dead. Cherise unpacks boxes of records, Simon straightens a display. Trying to make themselves useful. Alex sits at the counter, bored.

ALEX
 (to camera)
 Some days are busier than others.
 This isn't a job for the wildly
 ambitious.

Simon walks over to the counter, plugs his phone in, plays a song - "*GHOST TOWN*" by The Specials. Cherise SMIRKS.

ALEX (CONT'D)
 Point made. Let's close early.

55 INT. DIVE BAR - YORK BLVD - LATER

55

The same bar that Alex met Mac in, right next to the record store. Alex, Simon and Cherise walk through the bar, to --

EXT. DIVE BAR - YORK BLVD - CONTINUOUS

Out back there's a big PATIO with a shuffle board court and a TACO TRUCK. Twinkly lights. Trying to class the place up.

Cherise glances at two girls holding a cell phone at a flattering angle, filming themselves for their Snapchat.

CHERISE

Okay, I'm going to call it. This bar is over. Time to move on.

They take a seat at a picnic table, set down their beers.

ALEX

This is *our* bar.

SIMON

By default. Proximity.

Suddenly Simon DUCKS under the table...

ALEX

What are you doing?

SIMON

I went out with that guy last week.

A cute, nerdy GAY GUY has walked onto the patio.

ALEX

You're right. I got you.

Cherise shakes her head at Alex and Simon.

CHERISE

You two are ridiculous.

(then)

Do you ever wonder why you're not in a relationship?

ALEX

Excuse me? How would you know?

CHERISE

Maybe *I'm* in a relationship. You don't know everything about me. I'm a very private person.

ALEX

I date all the time.

Simon is still under the table.

CHERISE

You meet guys. But you don't *date* them. You find some excuse to reject them and move on to the next one.

SIMON

(from below)

Yeah, and? It's working out fine.

The Gay Guy leaves. Simon returns to a seated position.

CHERISE

You treat men like they're disposable. Remind you of anything?

(silence)

Maybe your despised Millennials?

The Shazammers who never give a song a second listen?

(then)

All I'm saying is, maybe you should take your own advice. Get to know someone... See if there's something there.

ALEX

Whatever hypothetical happiness might be waiting out there with some mystery guy... It's not worth getting my heart broken again. Besides, I like my life, just the way it is.

SIMON

Yeah, we're *happy*. Can't you tell?

CHERISE

So you failed once, and you're just going to give up? Is that it?

ALEX

(to camera)

That's exactly it.

CHERISE

What was the last date you went on? Did you ever think about seeing him *again*?

ALEX

(avoiding)

He didn't even like *Radiohead*. Am I supposed to date someone who doesn't like *Radiohead*? What about someone who "doesn't read"? Or listens to Luke Bryan? Exactly where do you draw the line?

CHERISE

Okay. Have it your way. But this town's not that big. Someday you're going to run out of men.

ALEX

Someday. But not today.

Alex smirks, raising her drink in a toast. Simon clinks glasses with her, and we CUT TO:

56 INT. ALEX'S PORSCHE - THAT NIGHT

56

Alex drives over the Hyperion bridge into Silverlake, streetlights twinkling. Cherise rides shotgun, Simon in the back, everyone is having fun, mid-convo:

CHERISE

Top Five Movies Set In LA --

ALEX

"CHINATOWN."

SIMON

"SUNSET BOULEVARD."

CHERISE

"BOYZ N THE HOOD."

SIMON

"LA LA LAND."

CHERISE

"LA LA LAND"? Have you lost your mind, son? "LA LA LAND"?

(off Simon's look)

You know what, you're right. Let's get out of this car right now and go dance on a bridge. Because that makes sense. That's what people do. Burst into song.

A LIST appears on screen. 1. **Chinatown**, 2. **Sunset Boulevard**, 3. **Boyz n the Hood**, 4. **The Big Lebowski**, 5. **Boogie Nights**

57 INT. SATELLITE - TEN MINUTES LATER

57

Alex, Simon and Cherise walk in to the small music venue, an institution -- medium sized crowd, all focused on the BAND.

SIMON

The blogs are blowing up about these guys... Supposed to be the next Tame Impala.

ON STAGE, the band -- four young guys, a retro feel -- perform an original song (think *"AT NIGHT IN DREAMS"* by White Denim).

The singer, LEVI (20's, Australian, long hair, equal parts swagger, sex, and dumb youth) is straight out of the 70's.

Alex can't help but be intrigued by him. As is everyone else in the place. The song ends, Levi shakes off the sweat --

LEVI

So, we're gonna do a cover...

The opening chords of Hall & Oates, *"I CAN'T GO FOR THAT"* fill the room. ON ALEX... No, it can't be... But it is.

SIMON

(leans over to Alex)
Don't you hate this song?

58 EXT. CHAMPIONSHIP VINYL - SAME TIME

58

TWO STREET PUNKS saunter up to the record store, hoodies on. They pull SPRAY PAINT out of their bags. These are the GRAFFITI culprits! A new song starts -- *"FREAKING OUT"* by Juiceboxxx. Then, someone else approaches...

It's CLYDE. He checks the address. Yup this is it. CLOSED.

CLYDE

Is this Championship Vinyl?

The punks look at him -- what do we care? Clyde can't believe this. Goes up to the door, BANGS ON IT.

STREET PUNK

Hey, man. Chill out.

59 INT. SATELLITE - LATER

59

The band's done. Simon and Cherise approach the lead singer LEVI in the Merch Line, Alex reluctantly behind them...

SIMON

Amazing set. Has anyone told you
you're better than Greta Van Fleet?

CHERISE

He tries to impress people with his
musical knowledge.

(to Simon)

It's working. Keep going.

Simon turns red. Cherise plows on.

CHERISE (CONT'D)

I'm a singer, too. Just looking
for the right project.

LEVI

(amused)

You guys are cool.

But he looks at ALEX when he says it. He might be sweaty and
long haired and too young, but there's something about him...

ALEX

I don't know... I kinda heard
Junior Kimbrough in there.

LEVI

Huh. Not many people pick up on
that.

SIMON

So, uh, we have a shop, over on
York, lots of hard to find imports,
things like that. If you want to
stop by sometime.

LEVI

Sure. Yeah. I'll check it out.

ALEX

You don't have to, really. It's
just a record store.

Levi smiles, finds Alex's embarrassment endearing...

60

EXT. DIVE BAR - YORK BLVD - SAME TIME

60

Clyde, pissed, walks past the dive bar, TORRANCE now seated
on his stool out front. Clyde hesitates, then...

CLYDE
You don't happen to know the girl
who owns the record store, do you?

TORRANCE
Alex? Sure.

CLYDE
Any idea where she went?

TORRANCE
Let me guess. You're the boy
trouble.

As Clyde looks at him, confused...

61 INT. SATELLITE - LATER

61

Alex stands at the bar with Simon and Cherise...

SIMON
Wouldn't it be cool if they really
hit it big, and we could all say,
"We saw them when..."

But Alex isn't listening. She's watching LEVI loading up
equipment near the door. He glances back. They LOCK EYES.

ALEX (V.O.)
*Don't do this, Alex. You know how
this goes. Guys in bands are all
the same...*

Levi SMILES at her. His eyes crinkle.

ALEX
(to herself)
Damn it.

Alex turns her back on Levi (and the club's entrance).

ALEX (CONT'D)
I'm going home.

SIMON
What? No. We're going to see Hot
Chip DJ downtown. I'm just about
to get the location...

Just then, BEHIND ALEX, unbeknownst to her, CLYDE WALKS IN.

ALEX
Nah. I'm tired. See you tomorrow.

Clyde makes his way through the crowd, looking for ALEX, just as she starts in the opposite direction, towards the EXIT...

62 EXT. SATELLITE/INT. PORSCHE - PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER 62

Alex gets in her car, puts the key in the ignition. But the car DOESN'T START. She tries again, and again. It's dead.

At that same moment, CLYDE crosses the parking lot, climbs into his PRIUS, parked right behind Alex. He doesn't see her, she doesn't see him. Ships passing in the night.

Clyde pulls out of the space, almost HITTING Alex's car. She lays on the HORN, no idea it's him.

As Clyde pulls away, Alex tries starting the car again. Finally, it CATCHES. But then the engine DIES.

Alex rests her forehead on the steering wheel. A SONG STARTS, "LIST OF PEOPLE (TO TRY AND FORGET ABOUT)" by Tame Impala.

63 EXT. SILVERLAKE - LATER 63

FROM ABOVE, as Alex walks all the way home, alone, down the winding residential streets, through the hills.

64 EXT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - LATER 64

Alex, exhausted, finally reaches her street. Looks up at her BEDROOM WINDOW -- the lights are off, the room dark, empty...

65 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER 65

Alex unlocks the front door. Takes off her shoes, her feet killing her from the walk. She continues to the bedroom. Stops at the doorway, looking in. Suddenly, we CUT TO:

66 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - **FLASHBACK** 66

Alex is putting away laundry, when she opens the top drawer and finds... A VELVET RING BOX. She's stunned.

Through the slightly open door, we see a GLIMPSE of MAC:

MAC (O.S.)

You ready? We're gonna be late...

Alex quickly closes the drawer, putting the ring away. Reeling. Mac none the wiser.

67 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - **BACK TO PRESENT** 67

We're back in reality. The room is dark. Alex's silhouette in the doorway. Wishing she could erase the memory.

A beat, then she turns on the light. Walks towards the bed, starts pulling off her clothes.

She gets into bed and pulls the covers up, revealing: CLYDE'S PHONE. Forgotten. Alex pushes the button, sees the PHOTO of Clyde and the Golden Retriever.

As she pulls the covers over her head, defeated, we CUT TO:

68 EXT. CHAMPIONSHIP VINYL - THE NEXT MORNING 68

A new day. Alex walks to work. Sees the new GRAFFITI...

I need my phone back!!! Obviously Clyde's handiwork.

Off Alex, as this lands... Shit.

69 INT. CHAMPIONSHIP VINYL - LATER THAT DAY 69

A few customers mill about. Simon and Cherise are playing Levi's band's ALBUM, when Alex enters from the BACK ROOM.

CHERISE

Do you think he'll actually come by the store?

ALEX

God, I hope not.
(then, listening)
Is this his *album*?

SIMON

What? It's good. Maybe we could carry it...

ALEX

You're embarrassing yourself.

Alex sits at the counter, noticing TWO TEENAGE GIRLS browsing in the back, something off about them...

Just as one of the girls stealthily puts a few records in her BACKPACK, Alex looks up -- CATCHING HER. She YELLS:

ALEX (CONT'D)

Simon!! Door!

The girls RUN OUT THE DOOR, Alex and Simon on their heels --

70

EXT. YORK BLVD - HIGHLAND PARK - CONTINUOUS

70

The girls run, but Alex is faster -- grabbing the strap of the backpack, knocking herself and the girl TO THE GROUND. Alex gets up, holding the backpack, dusts herself off...

ALEX

What the hell? Can't you steal
this online?

The girls -- CHLOE & SHANE (15, LA natives, all Wet & Wild eyeliner and thrift store chic) look at her, defiant...

CHLOE

We're vinyl purists.

Alex takes out the albums, looking through them...

ALEX

Parquet Courts, Beach House... You
guys have good taste.

SHANE

Of course we do. We're *artists*.
We have a band.

CHLOE

Look us up on Soundcloud.

Just then, down the block, Alex spots DENTON outside the dive bar, on his phone. What the hell..?

She looks to Simon -- *handle this* -- and walks over to him.

OUTSIDE THE DIVE BAR -- Denton is surprised to see Alex.

DENTON

(hanging up)

Dude. What are you doing here?

ALEX

I work here.

DENTON

I thought you'd be busy, you
know... middle of the day and all.

ALEX

Actually, I could use a drink.

DENTON
 (acting weird)
 Nah, you don't want a drink. It's
 like noon. Only pathetic people
 drink before noon.

ALEX
 You're drinking.

DENTON
 Exactly. Don't be like me.

Denton shifts a bit, strangely uncomfortable. A beat.

ALEX
 You make some interesting life
 choices, you know that?

DENTON
 Must run in the family.

Alex flips him off and heads back toward the record store.
 Denton makes sure she's gone, and heads back into --

71 INT. DIVE BAR - CONTINUOUS

71

Pretty empty in the middle of the day. Which makes it all
 that much easier to spot MAC, sitting at the bar. Denton
 sits next to him, reclaiming his half finished beer.

DENTON
 Sorry, just feeding the meter.
 (overcompensating)
 Hey, tequila shots? Whaddya say?

MAC
 Why does this bar always bring out
 the worst in you?

DENTON
 I don't know. It's like muscle
 memory.

Denton takes a sip, considering something... Then:

DENTON (CONT'D)
 Hey, so... you didn't want to meet
 here because Alex happens to work
 across the street... Did you?

This strikes a chord. Mac's demeanor hardens.

MAC

If it's all the same to you... I'd rather not talk about your sister.

DENTON

Yeah, sure. I just thought, maybe, now that you're back in town --

MAC

Look. You and I are friends. So maybe we could just... leave all that in the past. Where it belongs. Okay?

DENTON

Deal. Ancient history.

Mac grabs a menu. Subject closed.

MAC

You hungry?

72

INT. CHAMPIONSHIP VINYL - SAME TIME

72

Alex enters, unaware of what's happening down the street. Simon and Cherise sit, listening to a great song (think "*GET DOWN*" by Pillow Fight). Alex tries to place it, but can't...

ALEX

Who is this?

SIMON

This is those shoplifting girls. They're... good.

ALEX

Of course they are.

(then)

You guys go to lunch. I got this.

Simon and Cherise bail. Alex sits alone at the counter.

Just then, the bell on the door JINGLES. A beat, as we wonder who it could be. Then Alex looks up to see --

CLYDE.

CLYDE

Well, look at that. You guys are open. For a change.

Alex rolls her eyes, digs in her bag for Clyde's phone...

ALEX

Hey. Sorry, I just kind of spaced yesterday...

CLYDE

You just kind of spaced? Do you have any idea what it's like to be stuck for three days in one of the biggest metropolises on earth without a phone?

A beat. Alex looks at him.

ALEX

You're mad? You're not the one who gets to be mad.

CLYDE

What is that supposed to mean?

ALEX

You *snuck out* in the middle of the night like some freshman douchebag.

CLYDE

You think I snuck out.

(then, incensed)

I left at five AM because my car was getting towed! After *you* told me it was okay to park there! So, actually, you owe me three hundred dollars!

(then)

Good thing those were two for one margaritas.

As this lands on Alex... She had it *all wrong*.

ALEX

Yeah, well, honest mistake. Sorry.

CLYDE

You're sorry. Okay. Good. Great.

(a beat, then)

So, just to back track. You tried to sneak out of our date. You got my car towed. And then you held my phone hostage for three days.

ALEX

I told you, I'm not good at relationships.

CLYDE
I'll say. What did you do to the
last guy?

She looks at him. A beat. Then, honest:

ALEX
What I did to him... was a whole
lot worse.

It hangs there in the air. Clyde instantly regrets asking.

Then, Alex walks across the store. Sorts through some
records, brings one to Clyde.

ALEX (CONT'D)
Here. On the house. Consider it a
peace offering.

He looks at it... "*THE BENDS*." He gets the joke. Can't help
but like her, against all his better instincts.

CLYDE
Give me your phone.

ALEX
What? I'm not giving you my phone.

He takes it off the counter. Starts TYPING.

CLYDE
Now you have my number. In case
you ever wanna... do this again.
(then)
Not, *this*. Maybe like, a movie.

ALEX
(a beat)
I don't really think that's a good
idea.

CLYDE
Okay. Well... It was nice meeting
you, Alex. Sort of.

Alex watches him walk out, then heads to the back room --

73

EXT. YORK BLVD - CONTINUOUS

73

As Clyde exits the store, heading down the street, we see --

On the OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET, we see Mac and Denton exit
the bar, hug it out. Denton walks one way, Mac the other.

74 INT. CHAMPIONSHIP VINYL - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS 74

Alex sits at the desk, head in her hands, upset. Suddenly she looks up, directly into camera:

ALEX
Why did I just let him leave? I
have no idea. I guess I'm just...
scared.
(then, realizing)
If you think about it, I never
really committed to anyone.

75 INT. CHAMPIONSHIP VINYL - SAME TIME 75

The front of the store. Empty. Until the door opens, and...
MAC WALKS IN.

ALEX (V.O.)
I always had one foot out the door.

He looks around. This place obviously bringing up memories for him. He's much more emotional than he let on before.

76 INT. CHAMPIONSHIP VINYL - BACK ROOM - SAME 76

ALEX
I guess it made more sense to
commit to nothing. Keep my options
open. And that's suicide. By
tiny, tiny increments.

Alex makes a choice. Stands up. Walks back out to --

77 INT. CHAMPIONSHIP VINYL - CONTINUOUS 77

The front of the store. Looks at the COUNTER --

But NO ONE'S THERE. Mac's gone.

Alex goes to the counter, looking for something... her PHONE.
She finds CLYDE'S NUMBER. Hesitates... Then starts a TEXT.

As Alex sits down, smiling, for the first time in a long
time, ready to give someone a second chance...

A song takes us to CREDITS, "DRY THE RAIN" by The Beta Band,
and we...

END EPISODE