

LA LA LAND

by

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FADE IN...

A sun-blasted sky. We HEAR radios -- one piece of music after another...

We're --

1 EXT. 101 FREEWAY - DAY

Cars are at a standstill. It's a horrific traffic jam.

Morning rush hour. Sun beating down, asphalt shimmering in the heat. The blown-out downtown L.A. skyline hovers in the distance.

We DRIFT past more CARS. Hear one snippet of audio after another...

One driver taps his steering wheel to PROG ROCK. Another sings to OPERA. A third raps along to a HIP-HOP track. We move from a RADIO INTERVIEW to a FRENCH BALLAD to TECHNO, until finally we begin to hear...

...a new, original piece of music... [ANOTHER DAY OF SUN]

We settle on the CAR from which this new tune is playing. The driver is a YOUNG WOMAN. She hums along to the riff on her radio -- then starts SINGING.

Then -- she EXITS her car. Then -- she starts MOVING down the lane.

One by one, more DRIVERS join her -- SINGING and DANCING along. Without a single cut, we've found ourselves in a FULL-FLEDGED MUSICAL NUMBER...

Drivers leap on car-tops, dance Jerome Robbins-style, making use of the road and the hot gleam of the automobiles. Arms swaying, feet banging, dancers darting, as the MUSIC blasts. We WEAVE and SWIRL and DART between and around the cars, taking the magic in...

Finally -- all the drivers swing back into their vehicles -- and the song comes to a dramatic stop.

Flash title card:

WINTER

A1 We settle on a new car. A 1983 Dodge Riviera. In it is SEBASTIAN, 32, L.A. native. He's listening to the radio. He's playing a track on his music system -- a tape of Thelonious Monk's "Japanese Folk Song". But he keeps stopping it, over and over and over -- always rewinding to the same exact spot.

B1 OMIT

C1 We DRIFT from his car to one further up ahead. A light-green 2005 Prius. Inside is MIA, 27, Nevada-raised. Six years of "no" in L.A. have toughened her, but she's still a dreamer. She seems to be on the phone, speaking into her car's system. Fast, fiery, full of energy --

MIA

...and I swear to God, she was wrecked.
It was pure insanity.

Mia stops. Thinks. Mutters to herself: "*Insanity*"... Then leans down and grabs a piece of paper from the passenger seat. It's a SCRIPT.

MIA (CONT'D)

(reading now)

Pure lunacy. Oh God, I know...

Just then -- the traffic around Mia starts to let up. She's too focused on her lines to notice.

Then -- a long, sustained honk behind her: *AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHT*.

Mia comes to. Jerked back to reality. The honking car behind her swerves into the next lane. It's Sebastian. Mia gives him the finger. We then FOLLOW her as she drives...

2 OMIT

3 OMIT

4 INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Mia works, photos of Hollywood icons on the wall behind her, as --

CUSTOMER #1

This doesn't taste like almond milk.

MIA

Don't worry, it is. I know sometimes it --

CUSTOMER #1

Can I see the carton?

Mia hands it over. The Customer looks.

CUSTOMER #1 (CONT'D)

I'll have a black coffee.

Mia gets the coffee. Quickly sneaks a look at a script hidden underneath her counter. The same one we saw in her car...

She hands the coffee to the Customer. We follow the Customer out through the door -- as a WOMAN walks into the shop. We don't see the Woman's face, but we see all the eyes in the shop turn immediately to her. We see one CUSTOMER whisper to another, discreetly pointing as the WOMAN passes by...

WOMAN
Cappuccino, please.

Mia nods. Gets it made. The Manager takes it from her.

MANAGER
On us.

WOMAN
No, I insist.

She pays. Then smiles at Mia and drops a bill in the tip jar. Mia watches as the Woman walks off, is joined by a STUDIO EMPLOYEE on a golf cart outside -- we realize this coffee shop is on a STUDIO LOT -- and is driven away...

Then -- Mia's phone rings. It reads: "MOM". Mia presses "IGNORE" and the time pops up on the phone's screen: 4:07.

MIA
Shit.

Removing her apron and hurrying out, turning back as --

MANAGER
Where do you think you're going?

MIA
It's -- five past...

MANAGER
You'd better be here early tomorrow.

MIA
Ok.

-- then realizes she doesn't have her script, runs back to grab it, hurries on and then -- CRASHES into a table. Coffee and food spill all over her shirt, and all at once we're --

5 INT. AUDITION ROOM - DAY

Mia's in a thick winter coat, covering her stained shirt. On her cell, loudly laughing while her adrenaline surges --

MIA (CONT'D)
And I swear to God, she was wrecked. It was pure lunacy. Oh God, I know...

Her nerves are practically visible. As she talks, we PULL BACK -- to see that she's auditioning for a CASTING DIRECTOR.

MIA (CONT'D)

No, no, Turner's fine. So you -- are you waiting 'til Denver to tell her...?

(as her smile contracts)

Oh. I see...

(silence; she clenches her jaw...)

No, you're right. I understand.

(...and a tear falls from her eye)

Ok... I just... Oh...

An ASSISTANT appears through the glass on the door behind Mia, waving to the Casting Director: *Yoohoo. Can I come in?*

MIA (CONT'D)

(crying now)

No, I'm happy for you... I -- I just --

CASTING DIRECTOR

One second.

Mia stops. The Casting Director waves the Assistant in. The Assistant scurries in, shows her boss a post-it. Mia stands there, trying to hold onto the tears, hold onto the emotion, as the Casting Director reads the post-it and thinks.

CASTING DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

...I'll call her back. Tell her I'm almost done in here.

The Assistant nods. Walks out. Mia waits, trying to maintain...

CASTING DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

You know what? I think we're good. Thanks for coming in.

Mia looks at her. A beat.

6 INT. LOBBY - DAY

Mia exits. Nerves still on edge. Passes one beautiful redhead after the next -- all getting ready to cry.

Enters the elevator with two other WOMEN -- tall, statuesque. Also redheads.

7 INT. MIA'S APARTMENT - EARLY EVENING

Mia enters. Exhausted. Heads to her ROOM.

Old movie posters hang on the walls, including a big Ingrid Bergman one over the bed. There's also a shelf filled with acting books -- Uta Hagen, Stella Adler. Various other trinkets: an old globe, an old blue-and-red suitcase. Mia takes off her shoe. A blister on her sole.

8 WE CUT TO: Mia in the BATHROOM. Just showered, wrapped in a towel. She hums to herself.

The mirror is fogged up. She turns off the vent. The mist on the glass thickens. She dabs some of it away. Dims the lights. Looks...

With the fog in place, her reflection looks like one of those soft-focus old Hollywood close-ups. She hums as she brushes her hair...

Then -- the door SWINGS open -- and the spell is broken.

TRACY
Holy Mother of God.

Mia snaps out of it. Turns. Fog is enveloping TRACY, 27.

TRACY (CONT'D)
Ever heard of a vent?

MIA
I wanted to give you an entrance.

ALEXIS
(appearing in the hall, 26,
eating Cheetos)
Mia! How'd it go?

MIA
Eh...

ALEXIS
Same here. Was Jen there? Or Rachel?

MIA
I don't know who Jen and Rachel are.

ALEXIS
They're the worst.

MIA
I don't know if they were there.

As Mia slips away --

ALEXIS
I bet they were.

CAITLIN

(appearing, 27)

Why is there a convention in the bathroom?

TRACY

Two minutes, people! Mia you're coming,
right?

WE PAN TO find Mia poking her head out of her bedroom --

MIA

Can't. Working.

TRACY (O.S.)

What?

(we PAN BACK to Tracy)

Did she say "working"?

A8 We follow Mia INSIDE her room. She closes the door. Takes a moment. You can tell in her eyes -- work or not, a night on the town is the last thing she wants to do now.

B8 WE CUT to the HALLWAY, to find Tracy POUNDING on Mia's door.

MIA

(opening up)

Yes?

TRACY

Look, I know things didn't go well today.
There are four things in my inbox that
you're perfect for and I will submit you.
But right now -- you're coming.

C8 With that -- she barges in and beelines to Mia's closet --

TRACY (CONT'D)

It'll be fun.

MIA

It'll be a bunch of social climbers packed
into one of those glass houses.

TRACY

Exactly. Fun.

She pulls out a blue dress. As Alexis hurries in --

TRACY (CONT'D)

This looks familiar.

MIA

I was going to give it
back!

Alexis moves from Mia's perfume to the dress, lighting up as she grabs it --

ALEXIS

Come on, Mia. When else do you get to see every Hollywood cliché crammed into a single home?

TRACY

(faux-offended)

Lex! I'm disappointed in you. There's nothing to make fun of. This party will be humanity at its finest.

Mia rolls her eyes -- and, with that --

Tracy BREAKS INTO SONG. [SOMEONE IN THE CROWD]

She play-acts the clichés this party will represent. Alexis and Caitlin join in, giddy and playful. Mia can't help but laugh. The roommates sing and dance, hoping to persuade Mia to join the night's revelry...

Mia remains reluctant. Stays behind in her room as her roommates head out the door. But she's starting to wonder: A night at home, feeling sorry for herself -- or a night out with her friends...?

9 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING / STREET - NIGHT

We're outside now, and BACK with Tracy, Alexis and Caitlin, marching across the courtyard and toward the street. They sing, dance, half-assuming Mia is a no-go --

-- until Mia APPEARS, blue-dress-clad. Her roommates look at her in surprise -- then delight. The energy swells and the four characters dance their way together down the street. They dive into a single CAR, and WE DISSOLVE TO...

10 OMIT.

A10 OMIT.

11 EXT. CITY - NIGHT

An old-fashioned MONTAGE of a night on the town: neon signs and overflowing champagne glasses. Soon enough, we're at...

12 EXT. MODERN HILLTOP HOUSE - NIGHT

Valet cars lined up. We FOLLOW Alexis, Tracy, Caitlin and Mia to the door...

13 INT./EXT. HILLTOP HOUSE - NIGHT

...and into a big-glass hilltop pad. We FOLLOW Mia as she takes in her surroundings.

A D.J. turning tables. A FAT OLD PRODUCER dancing with a TWENTY-SOMETHING. A trio of AGENTS glad-handing each other in rhythm by the bar. Yep -- every cliché is here...

Mia tries talking to a pair of WOMEN -- who promptly ditch her.

Seeing she's now alone, a YOUNG MAN swoops in to hit on her.

She makes a hasty exit toward the bar -- but the line's obscenely long.

She nears the BATHROOM door -- but a COUPLE stands in her way, making out.

She slips in behind them...

A13 Inside the BATHROOM, Mia takes a moment. The joy of seconds ago is gone from her eyes now. She gazes into the mirror -- -- and SINGS by herself.

This verse, sung in private, belongs to a new style: less brash, and far more vulnerable...

Once finished, Mia takes a breath, steels herself to once again face the world, opens the door -- and rejoins the crowd...

B13 We MOVE with her slowly now -- surrounded by the party, but everything set at a snail's pace, the crazed carousers moving in SLOW MOTION. It's the sadness underneath the revelry, the pain underneath the clichés...

Gradually we RAMP UP. Follow Mia OUTSIDE, where we see the splash of blue-green that is the POOL -- and a flurry of FAKE SNOW falling from above...

As we reach FULL-SPEED, a PARTY-GOER races to the edge, jumps -- -- and we PLUNGE WITH HIM INTO THE POOL.

This is the climax of the number. Everyone joins in, circling the pool -- a swath of color against the black sky. Everyone dances, everyone sings -- and the song concludes with a blast of fireworks.

C13 OMIT

A14 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Close on a sign: "NO PARKING ANYTIME: TOW-AWAY ZONE".

MIA (O.S.)

No...

We see Mia -- all alone, staring at the sign. No car in sight. She reaches into her purse, pulls out her cell phone to call Tracy. It's dead.

MIA (CONT'D)

No...

15 OMIT

16 OMIT

17 OMIT

A17 OMIT

B17 OMIT

18 OMIT

19 EXT. HILL / LOS ANGELES STREETS - NIGHT

Mia trudges down the steep hill in her unwieldy heels. She's an hour-and-a-half walk from her place. She crosses roads and lots, navigates stretches where the sidewalk stops and gives way to shrubbery.

A19 And then -- she hears something... Music. A piano, in the distance. And a MELODY -- one we will come to know very well...

Without being sure why, she FOLLOWS THE SOUND. Passes several doors. Then stops. Has found where it's coming from...

She reaches out -- and slowly opens a door...

AND WE CUT RIGHT BACK TO:

20 EXT. 101 FREEWAY - EARLIER THAT MORNING

AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHT. The same 101 traffic jam we began with. This time we're on Sebastian -- the honker.

He passes Mia's car. She gives him the finger. He drives on, shaking his head...

21 OMIT

22 EXT. RAYO'S - MOMENTS LATER

Sebastian sips a coffee as he gazes across the street -- at a 30's Deco building. A sign above the door: "VAN BEEK". A newer sub-heading below: "TAPAS & TUNES".

The door opens. Two EMPLOYEES step out, setting up a valet stand. Sebastian watches them -- and shakes his head. The employees notice him. Recognize him. *What is it with that guy...?*

23A OMIT

23 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Sebastian enters his apartment -- cramped, dingy, bare walls, no furniture or decoration, boxes filled with dusty black-and-white photographs and unused instruments on the floor, a black Steinway upright piano in the center of the living room -- and sees a WOMAN rummaging around.

SEBASTIAN

You gotta stop breaking into my home.

She looks up. She's 37 quickly going on 50, and dressed like she doesn't care. This is LAURA, Sebastian's older sister.

LAURA

You think Mom or Dad would call this a home?

Seeing that she's seated on a stained, decrepit stool --

SEBASTIAN

Please don't sit on that.

LAURA

Are you serious?

SEBASTIAN

Yes. Hoagy Carmichael sat on that stool. The Baked Potato was gonna throw it away.

LAURA

I wonder why.

(then, rising,)

I brought you this. It's a throw rug.

SEBASTIAN

Don't need it.

LAURA

Yeah? What if I told you Miles Davis pissed on it?

SEBASTIAN

That's almost insulting...

(then,)

Did he?

She shakes her head: *Unbelievable*. Tosses the rug to the side.

LAURA

When are you going to unpack these boxes?

SEBASTIAN

When I unpack them in my club.

LAURA

Oh my God. It's like a girl broke up with you and you're stalking her.

(then, looks at him --)

You're not still going by there, are you?

SEBASTIAN

No.

A beat. Then --

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

They've turned it into a tapas-samba place. You believe that?

LAURA

Seb --

SEBASTIAN

Who wants to tapas while they samba?

LAURA

I have someone I want you to meet.

SEBASTIAN

I don't want to meet anyone.

LAURA

You'll like her.

SEBASTIAN

Uh-huh. Does she like jazz?

LAURA

Probably not.

SEBASTIAN

Then what are we gonna talk about?

LAURA

You'll talk about the weather.

SEBASTIAN

Ok. Then I have someone I'd like you to meet. He's got a face tattoo, but a heart of gold.

LAURA

Sebastian --

SEBASTIAN

How long's it been?

LAURA

You need to get serious. You live like a hermit. You're driving without insurance.

SEBASTIAN

I am serious. I had a very serious plan for my future. It's not my fault I got Shanghai'ed.

LAURA

You did not get "Shanghai'ed", you got ripped off.

SEBASTIAN

What's the difference?

LAURA

It's not as romantic as that.

(she starts to walk off)

And everyone knew that guy was shady except for you.

SEBASTIAN

Why do you say romantic like it's a dirty word?

LAURA

Unpaid bills are not romantic. Call her.

She heads to the door. He follows her, won't give it up --

SEBASTIAN

You're acting like life's got me on the ropes -- what you don't understand is, I want to be on the ropes. I'm letting life hit me 'til it gets tired. Then I'm gonna make my move. It's a classic rope-a-dope.

Laura can't help but laugh. Stops by the door. Looks at him.

LAURA

I love you. Unpack your boxes.

SEBASTIAN

I'm changing the locks.

LAURA
(out the door with a smile --)
You can't afford it.

She's gone. Sebastian thinks for a beat, then calls out --

SEBASTIAN
I'm a phoenix rising from the ashes!

No reply to his triumphant declaration. He shuts the door.
Looks again at the napkin. Thinks. Tosses it in the trash.

A23 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - LATER

Moments later. Sebastian takes a slice of pizza from the fridge, pours himself some more coffee, places a Thelonious Monk LP onto a record player, and sits down at the piano.

"Japanese Folk Song" -- the piece we heard in his car -- plays...

Sebastian plays along. Stops. Moves the record back a few bars. Starts it again. Plays the same passage over. Stops. Moves the record back a second time. Plays the passage again. Stops. Over and over, just like in his car -- until, finally, he gets it right.

He keeps playing, louder now, and we're --

B23 OMIT

24 OMIT

25 OMIT

26 OMIT

27 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A red-booth bar-and-restaurant. Christmas decorations all over. Sebastian steps in. Immediately beelining over --

BOSS
Seb.

SEBASTIAN
(putting on a smile)
Bill. Thanks for having me back.

BOSS
Your welcome. Stick to the set list.

SEBASTIAN

Of course.

(under his breath as he heads
to the piano)

Though I don't think they care what I
play.

BOSS

I do, and I don't want to hear the free
jazz.

SEBASTIAN

How 'bout one for you, one for me? Or two
for you, one for me?

(the Boss just glares)

Or all for you, none for me? Ok, that
works. Good deal.

Sebastian sits down at the keys. A WAITRESS passes by.

WAITRESS

Well... Welcome back.

SEBASTIAN

There's a nice way to say that.

With that -- he starts playing "Jingle Bells".

28

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

The restaurant's demographic has changed. It's now younger stragglers wandering in. Sebastian looks beyond bored. He finishes "We Wish You a Merry Christmas". Zero applause.

He begins a new chart: "Deck the Halls". But something seems to come over him now. He's restless. Slowly, his playing drifts off -- his fingers charting their own path...

And then -- *we hear a melody. The one Mia heard outside. The one we'll refer to from now on as Mia and Sebastian's song...*

The door opens -- and Mia steps in. She sees Sebastian at the piano. Is instantly struck by his playing. [MIA AND SEBASTIAN'S THEME]

Gradually -- all sounds but the music drop out. We drift away from reality. Even the walls seem to go slightly darker -- as though Sebastian and Mia were all alone... He concludes his piece with a jumble of chords, his playing almost free jazz now, as we pull back to real life...

...and see the Boss looking on in scorn.

Sebastian finishes. Silence. Mia looks like the wind has been knocked out of her. Sebastian looks up for a second -- and sees her. They look at one another. Just a moment.

Then -- the Boss taps Sebastian on the shoulder. WE STAY ON Mia as she watches Sebastian rise with the Boss. We just see the Boss talking to Sebastian, can't hear what is said. Then, we get closer -- and realize:

BOSS

...every goddamned night.

Sebastian is silent. Then, doesn't want to have to beg but --

SEBASTIAN

I'll stick to the set list, I promise --

BOSS

Too late. You're done.

SEBASTIAN

You're not gonna find a better player. You know that.

BOSS

(leans in, and --)

Do you think anyone here gives a shit?

With that, the Boss walks off. We linger on Sebastian. Anger giving way -- to hurt. He starts hurrying toward the door.

BACK TO Mia -- who didn't hear what was said. She watches Sebastian -- takes a breath, so moved that she's about to lay it all out -- swoops in to corner him -- and --

MIA

I just wanted to say -- I saw your playing, and I --

-- but Sebastian just walks right by -- his shoulder bumping against Mia's for an added measure of disdain.

He heads out the door. Slams it shut. Mia is left standing on her own. She looks like she's just been slapped.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

SPRING

29 OMIT

30 INT. AUDITION ROOMS - DAY

Mia auditions. Pilot season cattle-call -- a series of soul-crushing try-outs. She's pandering to the hilt. Quick glimpses:

MIA (CONT'D)

I don't like the fissure on the GT scan.
Did you test for achromatopsia?

31 Then, a second audition --

MIA (CONT'D)

D.O.A. on 23rd, perp laughing his face off
at P.D. Damn Miranda Rights.

32 And finally, a third audition --

MIA (CONT'D)

This is my classroom. You don't like it,
the door's to my left.

READER (O.S.)

(a well-dressed forty-year-old
WOMAN reading from sides)

Lady why you be trippin' like that?

MIA

No, Jamal. You be trippin'.

34 EXT. PARTY - DAY

Mia wanders around another party. A BAD 80's COVER BAND plays.

TRACY

There you are! You need to meet someone!
Carlo, this is Mia. Mia, Carlo's a writer.

CARLO

Nice to meet you, Mia.

TRACY

He's got projects all over
town.

CARLO

(shrugs, faux-modest)
They say I have a knack for world-building.

MIA

(takes this in; then --)
Congratulations. I have to grab a drink...

She slips away. Presses toward the bar. The music gets louder, more obnoxious. She peers toward the band to get a look...

And then she sees him. Sebastian.

Playing keyboard-guitar for the band. Dressed up like his band-mates in a bright polyester outfit. And hating every second.

The band finishes, and the SINGER addresses the (thin) crowd.

SINGER

Alright, one more for y'all before we break. Do I hear any requests?

MIA

"I Ran".

Sebastian turns. Sees Mia, looking at him with a defiant grin, enjoying her power. He thinks -- then recognizes the face.

SINGER

"I Ran" it is.

(to Sebastian)

Wanna start us off, piano-man?

Sebastian stays silent. Mortified. Finally, so reluctant, he taps his keyboard to count the band in and begins playing.

On the keys, it's a single note, repeated measure after measure. Mia knew this. Sebastian looks at her. She smiles right back.

SINGER (CONT'D)

I walked along the avenue...

35 EXT. PARTY / INT. HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Set break. Sebastian hurries from the keys -- enters the house, looks both ways, finally spots Mia and --

SEBASTIAN

Ok. I remember you.

Mia looks at him. One eyebrow raised. *Yeah?*

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

And I'm sorry if I was curt that night.

MIA

"Curt"?

SEBASTIAN

Ok I was an asshole. I can admit that.

MIA

Ok.

SEBASTIAN

But requesting "I Ran" from a serious musician -- it's too far.

MIA

My God. Did you just call yourself "a serious musician"?

SEBASTIAN

(beat)

I don't think so.

MIA

Can I borrow what you're wearing?

SEBASTIAN

Why?

MIA

Because I have an audition next week. I'm playing a serious fire-fighter.

SEBASTIAN

(irritation building --)

So you're an actress. That makes sense. Have I seen you in anything?

MIA

Uh... The coffee shop on the Warner Brothers lot. That's a classic.

SEBASTIAN

Oh, you're a barista. Well now I see how you can look down on me from all the way up there.

SINGER

(popping in from nowhere)

Sebastian. Second set.

Sebastian looks at Mia. She smirks. Pleased. The Singer walks off.

SEBASTIAN

He doesn't tell me what to do.

MIA

He just told you what to do.

SEBASTIAN

I let him.

A beat.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

What's your name?

MIA

Mia.

SEBASTIAN

Mia. Guess I'll see you in the movies.

He heads back to the keys, and the band resumes:

SINGER

*Never seen you lookin' so lovely as you
did tonight...*

36

EXT. PARTY / STREET - NIGHT

The party's finished. Sebastian exits, pulling out his keys, as we DRIFT and see a long line to the VALET. Standing way in the back, waiting, is Mia. She's stuck once again with CARLO, who's regaling her --

CARLO

...Goldilocks from the point of view of the bears. Home-invasion thriller. Fox and Warners are going crazy for it.

Mia spots Sebastian, passing by the Valet with his keys.

CARLO (CONT'D)

...We're going after Charlize. For the bear. We're flipping it. Feels like a franchise. But the thing is it's grounded.

MIA

(to Sebastian)

George Michael!

Sebastian stops. Looks at her. Surprised.

SEBASTIAN

You again.

MIA

Did you just get your keys?

Sebastian thinks. Sees the Valet. Playing it off --

SEBASTIAN

...Yeah.

MIA
Can you grab mine?

SEBASTIAN
...Which one is it?

MIA
The Prius.

A beat. Sebastian turns to the Valet's box. Motions to the Valet: *Sorry. One second.* Looks. All the keys are Prius keys.

MIA (CONT'D)
The one with the green ribbon.

Another beat. Sebastian finds it. Grabs it.

37 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Mia and Sebastian trudge up a hill lined with cars. Mia aims her key fob. No beep. Sebastian points his own keys, also aiming for a beep. Silence. They've been at this for a while.

MIA (CONT'D)
(almost tripping in her heels)
Shit...

SEBASTIAN
Those look comfortable.

MIA
They are...n't.

A beat. She aims again. No beep.

MIA (CONT'D)
Thank you for saving the day back there.

SEBASTIAN
You didn't give me much of a choice.

MIA
Strange that we keep running into each other.

SEBASTIAN
It is strange. Maybe it means something.

MIA
I doubt it.

SEBASTIAN
Yeah I don't think so either.

On that, Mia aims again. As always -- no beep. Noticing --

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Put the clicker under your chin.

MIA

What?

Sebastian demonstrates with his fob. He looks idiotic.

SEBASTIAN

It turns your head into an antenna.
Probably gives you cancer, but you find
your car more quickly.

MIA

Uh-huh.

SEBASTIAN

You don't live as long, but you get
things done faster, so it all evens out.

MIA

Oh my God.

Just then, they reach a clearing -- AND THE CITY SKYLINE APPEARS BELOW. A ribbon of lights, stretching as far as you can see. It's the most romantic sight imaginable. They look at each other. A beat. And then --

MIA (CONT'D)

Eh.

They walk on, the lights shimmering behind.

SEBASTIAN

Not much to look at.

MIA

Agreed. I've seen better.

And on that -- *they SING.* [A LOVELY NIGHT]

Mia and Sebastian try to downplay the romanticism of this setting, this moment -- being lost here, at night, alone together, atop a hill, the city glittering before them. It's "no big deal", nothing they haven't seen or felt before -- because, after all, there's no chance for romance between them...

Of course, the music, swelling and building, suggests otherwise. Mia tires of her heels, finds a bench and fishes for flats in her handbag. Sebastian sits beside her as she slips the flats on. They look at each other, suspicious...

He moves his foot. She moves hers. They look at each other again. Still suspicious...

He moves again. She moves again. They seem to be moving in sync -- without their even wanting to...

And -- bit by bit -- before our eyes -- they've almost slipped into DANCE...

Sebastian rises. Mia rises as well. The two look at each other. Run back to the bench, hop atop it -- the lights stretch out like a magic carpet. They share a moment -- share a look -- jump off -- AND START REALLY DANCING NOW...

Mia does a move, Sebastian responds. Sebastian does a move, Mia shakes her head: "Nope". They make the road their own, growing more and more energized, as surprised as we are to find --

...that they can really dance together.

Just as this starts to look like a blossoming romance, real joy peeking through, our two heroes getting closer and closer and closer, looking at each other almost giddily...

...a sound cuts through. It's a CELL PHONE ring.

Mia and Sebastian turn -- to her handbag, back by the bench. Snapped out of it, Mia heads over and pulls out her cell.

MIA (CONT'D)

Hey... Greg...? Can you hear me...? Yeah, I'm just leaving now... K, see you soon...

She hangs up. Looks at Sebastian. An awkward silence. Finally -- she presses her fob again. Puts it under her chin this time. A BEEP can be heard. They see her Prius.

MIA (CONT'D)

Ah. Great... Well... Do you want a ride to your car?

SEBASTIAN

No, that's fine... Thanks...

MIA

...Ok...

Not sure what else to say, she heads to her vehicle. Waves.

MIA (CONT'D)

Night.

Sebastian waves back. Mia drives off. Fast. Silence...

Looking even more disappointed than he thought he'd be,
Sebastian walks on for a bit -- then retreats back down.

A37 Comes to a stop across from the party, and we see his Riviera --
right, it seems, where he knew it was all along. He pulls out
his keys -- they don't have a clicker after all.

38 OMIT

39 INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

CLOSE on --

CUSTOMER

Are these pastries gluten-free?

Mia's at work. A typically chaotic day.

MIA

No...

CUSTOMER

What?? I want a refund.

Mia nods, heads to the Manager --

MANAGER

You're closing up Friday.

MIA

I have an audition. Remember?

MANAGER

Do I look like I care? Reschedule it.

MIA

But you said --

MANAGER

And fix your apron.

With that, the Manager walks off. Mia is silent for a moment
-- wants to talk back but needs this job -- then turns -- and
sees Sebastian at the counter.

MIA

...Hi.

(then)

What are you doing here?

SEBASTIAN

Meetings. Studio heads.

MIA

Uh-huh. How'd you get on the lot?

SEBASTIAN

Piece of cake.

Mia looks at him. He's sweating through his shirt. A beat.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Actually it took me four hours and I ended up running. We probably have twenty minutes before the guy finds me. You got a break coming up?

Mia laughs. A moment.

MIA

I'm off in ten.

SEBASTIAN

Great. I'll hide in the bathroom.

40 EXT. COFFEE SHOP / STUDIO LOT - DAY

Mia exits, apron off. She and Sebastian start walking. She points across the street -- to the façade of a Parisian apartment.

MIA

That's the window Ingrid Bergman and Humphrey Bogart looked out of in *Casablanca*.

Sebastian nods. They start walking.

SEBASTIAN

What's your Bogart's name...?
(Mia looks at him)
Is it Greg?

MIA

Yeah. Greg.

SEBASTIAN

How long have...?

MIA

We've been seeing each other for a few months.

An awkward beat. They pass a wooden SALOON -- where a WESTERN is being shot. Extras in COWBOY costumes drink coffee on the steps.

MIA (CONT'D)

I love this stuff. Makes coming to work easier.

SEBASTIAN

I know what you mean. I get breakfast five miles out of the way just to sit outside a jazz club.

MIA

Oh yeah?

SEBASTIAN

It was called Van Beek. The swing bands played there. Count Basie. Chick Webb.
(then,)
It's a samba-tapas place now.

MIA

A what?

SEBASTIAN

Samba-tapas. It's... Exactly. The joke's on history.

Mia laughs.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Anyway, that's L.A. They worship everything and they value nothing.

They reach a patch of green. Another shoot. A P.A. yells out:

P.A.

Clear the frame!

MIA

(to Sebastian)

We need to wait here.

SEBASTIAN

I know. They shoot movies on my street. "C-stands." "Apple box." "Don't forget to sign out."

Mia laughs. A beat.

A.D. (O.S.)

Quiet on set!

Mia and Sebastian watch the cameras roll. Then, in a whisper --

SEBASTIAN

How'd you get into all this?

MIA

Into...? Oh -- I -- my aunt was an actress. She was in this traveling theater company... And there was this little library across the street from my house when I was growing up. This was Boulder City, Nevada -- every house looked exactly the same. I was ten and already I needed to get out. And one day, my aunt flew into town, and she showed me the library's old-movie section. We spent a whole day watching one after the other. *Bringing Up Baby*. *Notorious*. *Casablanca*.
(a beat; then,)
I never knew the world was so big.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)

Cut!

Mia and Sebastian resume walking. Now, at full volume --

MIA

I started putting on plays in my garage. I'd write the scripts and print up programs, and she'd give me props to use from wherever she'd just been -- New York, London, Paris. And then she'd jet off again and I wouldn't hear from her for another year.

SEBASTIAN

Who would you invite to watch? Your parents?

MIA

God no -- I didn't invite anyone. That would have been terrifying.

C40 CUT TO: The entrance to a giant soundstage.

MIA (CONT'D)

Honestly, I wish I loved something else. I've tried so hard to want other things.

She and Sebastian stop. Peer inside the stage.

MIA (CONT'D)

I left school after two years to come here, my fourth manager just dropped me, and my last audition was for a teen soap pitched as *Dangerous Minds* meets *The O.C.*

(a beat; then, deadpan --)

Should've been a lawyer.

They resume walking.

D40 CUT TO: A row of closed soundstages, sandy-tan against the bright blue sky.

SEBASTIAN

... 'Cause the world needs more lawyers.

MIA

Well it doesn't need more actresses.

SEBASTIAN

You're not just an actress.

MIA

What do you mean, "just an actress"?

SEBASTIAN

You said it yourself, you're a child-prodigy playwright.

MIA

That is not what I said.

SEBASTIAN

You're too modest to say it but it's true. So you could write your own roles. Write something that's as interesting as you are.

MIA

Last thing I wrote was a stand-up routine for an open-mic night. It was horrible.

SEBASTIAN

All I'm saying is -- Louis Armstrong could have played the marching-band charts he was given. What did he do instead? He made history.

MIA

Ok, I'll stop auditioning and make history instead.

Sebastian laughs.

MIA (CONT'D)

Anyway -- I'm getting a feeling there's something I should tell you...

SEBASTIAN

Yeah?

MIA

I hate jazz.

Sebastian stops. Turns to her.

SEBASTIAN

What does that mean? "I hate jazz"?

MIA

It means when I listen to it I don't like it.

SEBASTIAN

But it's such a blanket statement. It's like saying "I hate animals".

MIA

I do hate some animals.

SEBASTIAN

Do you need to be anywhere right now?

Mia looks at him. We hear DRUMS. A swinging ride pattern. And we're in --

41 INT. LIGHTHOUSE CAFE - DAY

-- an old-school JAZZ CLUB. It's almost empty, only aged JAZZ CATS here -- except for Mia and Sebastian, watching a QUARTET...

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Most people say they hate jazz because they don't have context. They don't get where it came from. All these people packed into flophouses in New Orleans, speaking five different languages, and jazz was how they talked to each other.

MIA

I thought it was just Kenny G.

SEBASTIAN

...What?

Mia looks at him. Already knows just how to get to him.

MIA

I associate it with facials. It's relaxing.

SEBASTIAN

It's not relaxing! Sid Bechet got into a gunfight 'cause somebody told him he played a wrong note!

MIA

(laying it on thick)
Right, but it's good to talk over. Where I grew up there's this jazz station they'd play at cocktail parties whenever they served the salami and cheese.

SEBASTIAN

Mia. These are things you can't unsay.

She bursts into laughter. Sebastian points to the band --

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

It's not cocktail music -- it's a high-wire act. These guys are performing and composing and rearranging all at once.

A beat. Mia looks at the band. We DRIFT over the instruments...

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

That's why you need to be in the space and see what's at stake. This whole thing -- it's dying. In twenty minutes they'll head off to cut commercial sessions or do pit at the Pantages 'cause they have to -- but when I have my own place -- my club -- they'll play whatever they want.

Mia looks at Sebastian. Her laughter has subsided. She can see something in him now -- the same passion he's speaking of...

MIA

Your club?

SEBASTIAN

...It's gonna be the old Van Beek. I'm getting the lease back. It'll be perfect.

He watches the band. Lost in the sound. Then -- sincere --

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

The world tells everyone to move on. Says the music's had its moment. But I love it too much. I'm not moving on.

The band finishes. The ride cymbal sizzles in the air...

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

So?

He looks at Mia. She's visibly moved.

Just then -- we hear a BEEP. Mia looks at her phone.

42 INT. SIDE CORRIDOR - LIGHTHOUSE CAFE - CONTINUOUS

MIA

Hi, I just missed a call...

43 INT. LIGHTHOUSE CAFE - MOMENTS LATER

Mia steps out, dazed. Sebastian's listening to a new tune. He spots Mia, turns to her -- as, shouting over the music --

MIA (CONT'D)

I got a call-back!

SEBASTIAN

Really? For what?

MIA

That show I told you about.

SEBASTIAN

Dangerous Minds meets *The O.C.*?

MIA

Right. It's -- actually more like *Rebel Without a Cause*.

SEBASTIAN

That's amazing! "*I got the bulletsssss!*"

Mia laughs. But Sebastian can tell something in her laugh...

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

You've seen it, right?

MIA

Obviously.

(a beat; then --)

No.

SEBASTIAN

What? You're the movie person.

MIA

It's the one I lie about.

SEBASTIAN

Come on. You can't do this audition and never see *Rebel*. The theater near me's playing it. If you want -- I can take you. For research.

MIA

(considering this)

...Ok.

SEBASTIAN

10pm Monday at the Rialto. Cool?

MIA

Ok.

(another nod, taking it in)
For research.

Mia looks at him -- he looks at her -- each of them suppressing a newfound giddiness... And on that --

44 EXT. LIGHTHOUSE CAFE - EVENING

Mia and Sebastian exit. Wave "good-bye". We FOLLOW Sebastian. He rounds the corner, nears the Hermosa Beach pier...

...and begins to SING. [CITY OF STARS] Lifted by a strange new feeling -- a feeling he wasn't expecting. The feeling that perhaps -- just perhaps -- he's falling in love...

He gazes out at the sea, the purple sky. Dances with an OLD COUPLE, then continues on his way, as though caught in a dream. There's an uncertainty in his singing -- he's not sure if this dream will sustain. But for now, it's a beautiful feeling...

The MUSIC simmers down -- and WE FADE OUT.

45 EXT. AUDITION BUILDING - DAY

A Pasadena building. As Mia approaches the door, another cell ring. It's her MOM. This time, Mia is happy to get the call:

MIA (CONT'D)

Hi, Mom!

MIA'S MOM (O.S.)

Hi, sweetie. How are you?

MIA

Great, actually: I got a call-back on a pilot.

MIA'S MOM (O.S.)

Oh my God! You're going to be on TV??

MIA

Well -- it's not picked up yet.

MIA'S MOM (O.S.)

Not picked up?

MIA

First they make the pilot, then if they like the pilot it goes on TV.

MIA'S MOM (O.S.)

And you're in the pilot?

MIA

Well, no, I have a call-back.

MIA'S MOM (O.S.)

I see... Didn't you audition for a TV thing last week?

MIA

It's another audition.

MIA'S MOM (O.S.)

I see... So you might get a role in a thing that might one day be put on TV...

MIA

...Well when you put it like that it sounds like a huge accomplishment.

MIA'S MOM (O.S.)

No, I don't mean that, it's so exciting. What channel? ABC? HBO?

MIA

Oxygen.

MIA'S MOM (O.S.)

Oxygen?

MIA

You know what, I have to go. I love you.

She hangs up. Takes a deep breath. Enters the building.

46

INT. WAITING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mia sits, starts reviewing her script.

Looks around her -- the room is filled with ACTRESSES silently MOUTHING THEIR LINES. It's a bizarre sight: a dozen women moving their mouths, with no sound coming out at all.

What's more, they're all in variations of the same type of costume: Michelle Pfeiffer's leather jacket from *Dangerous Minds*.

A few stare at Mia, sizing her up. In the corner, another one of them GRUNTS while performing stretches. Then -- a DOOR to the side opens, and Mia can hear --

DIRECTOR (O.S.)

...We'll be seeing you very soon.

An ACTRESS exits. Absolutely beaming. And then, a bored voice --

ASSISTANT

Mia Dolan?

47 INT. AUDITION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mia steps in. The pilot's DIRECTOR is seated at a table, looking in his folder at Mia's head-shot. He looks up at Mia.

DIRECTOR

Whenever you're ready.

Mia breathes in. Heart pounding. Sweat percolating. Has been practicing this for days now.

Fighting her nerves, she begins --

MIA

Two options. Follow my rules, or follow my rules. Kapish? You want to bully, you'd best be ready to get bullied --

DIRECTOR

Thanks.

Mia is taken aback.

MIA

I can do it another way --

DIRECTOR

No, thanks, that was great.

We linger on Mia for a moment, and then --

48 EXT. PARKING LOT / INT. MIA'S CAR - DAY

Crestfallen, humiliated, Mia hurries to her car. Sees a voice-mail on her cell. Plays it --

MIA'S MOM (O.S.)

Dad just helped me find Oxygen on the guide! So exciting! So will you be getting health insurance now?

Mia switches her phone off and drives. Clenches her jaw. Turns left and sees a movie theater. The Rialto. Manages a smile.

Something she can remain upbeat about...

49 INT. MIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Mia in her room, sorting through outfits. Slips into jeans --

ALEXIS

Mia?

-- then spins around, startled. Alexis is at the door, eating Fritos. Has been crying.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

(with difficulty)

Greg's here...

Mia looks at Alexis -- completely confused. Then -- Greg steps out behind Alexis. Waves to her.

GREG

Hey... I'm parked out front. But we should hurry, my brother just landed.

Mia looks at him, still confused. Then remembers.

GREG (CONT'D)

Did you forget?

MIA

Shit. No. Yes. I'll change...

GREG

(smiles)

It's ok.

Mia closes her door -- turns -- and we see her face. She's crushed. She goes to call Sebastian -- then freezes. Remembers something else. *She never got his number...*

We linger on her face, as, on his phone outside her door --

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

Josh! Yep, just picking Mia up now. Will be there in twenty.

50 INT. LIGHTHOUSE CAFE - NIGHT

Sebastian's playing a jam session. Excited, distracted. 10pm can't come quickly enough.

51 INT. JAR - NIGHT

Mia, in a green dress, with Greg, his brother JOSH, and Josh's FIANCEE. The restaurant is posh, modern. Josh wears a Brooks Brothers suit: he seems better-off than his brother.

JOSH

That's right -- but now we've got a surround-sound set-up, so it's like --

FIANCEE

It's like being in a movie theater.

JOSH

It's better than going to a theater, really. You know theaters these days --

GREG

Oh, sure --

JOSH

-- they're so dirty, and they're either too hot or too cold, and there's always people talking, which is just --
(his phone buzzes)
-- just so annoying, I mean you're trying to watch a movie -- one second --
(opens phone)
Hello?...

His Fiancée smiles, looks at Greg and Mia, proud.

FIANCEE

Probably work.

JOSH

Yeah, I'll have to call you back.
(closes and pockets his phone)
So, yeah, we love it.

Awkward silence. Mia hasn't spoken a word.

52 EXT. RIALTO MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

Sebastian paces. People shuffle in. He looks. No sign of Mia.

53 INT. JAR - NIGHT

Midway through the meal.

Mia is bored, restless, uneasy.

JOSH (CONT'D)

One word for you. Nicaragua.

GREG

I've never heard anyone say that. Was it amazing?

JOSH

Oh my God. A five-star jungle eco-resort.
It was unbelievable.

Mia stays quiet, in her own thoughts, the voices around her fading away. And then she hears it -- coming from the restaurant speakers, peeking out subtly at first: the melody we now know so well... Her and Sebastian's song.

She FREEZES. The radio music seems to have morphed into the melody, and the tune stirs something deep within her...

A few seconds pass. And then she can't deny it any longer. It's clear as day to her now. She rises from her seat --

GREG

Mia?

-- looks at Greg --

MIA

I'm sorry.

-- and -- as the sounds of a FULL ORCHESTRA swoop in --

-- RUNS out of the restaurant as fast as she can.

54 EXT. JAR - NIGHT

The MUSIC SWELLS, strings carrying us through and lifting Mia's spirits as she runs down the street in her green dress, for once absolutely sure of what she's doing...

55 INT. RIALTO MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

Inside the Rialto, Sebastian settling into his seat, the show about to begin. He's visibly disappointed that he's alone. The lights dim. Projector light cuts through the darkness. And then, as the movie's credits start up, Sebastian spots, out of the corner of his eye, a figure in the aisle...

He looks. The figure turns. Looks at him. It's Mia.

And, caught like a freeze-frame in the projector light, her green dress incandescent, the giant movie screen behind her like a great piece of back-projection, she looks more beautiful than ever right now. A true old-fashioned screen siren.

Sebastian's eyes go wide. He's surprised. And thrilled. He waves. Mia hurries toward him. Takes the seat next to his, as *Rebel Without a Cause* begins...

56 INT. RIALTO MOVIE THEATER - LATER

Half an hour has passed. The movie plays, lights flickering on Mia and Sebastian's darkened faces.

He puts his arm on the armrest, she moves hers nervously.

He scoots to his right, she scoots back.

She edges her elbow onto the armrest, he moves his arm.

Inch by inch, their bodies grow closer. Hands approaching, breaths quickening, hearts pounding...

...until finally their hands touch...

And then, suddenly -- just as James Dean and Natalie Wood arrive at Griffith Observatory, and Mia and Sebastian seem about to kiss --

-- burn marks streak their way across the image.

The screen goes blank.

Silence. The lights go on. Mia and Sebastian turn around. AUDIENCE MEMBERS start murmuring. Sebastian can barely believe his bad luck.

But then Mia turns to him. Energized.

MIA (CONT'D)

I have an idea.

57 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Sebastian's car, traveling up a winding road, stars glittering above it, the lights of Los Angeles glittering below it. The sky is a deep, painted blue. Music plays... [PLANETARIUM]

The car is bending around the turns, making its way up to...

A57 *...the real Griffith Observatory. There, our MUSIC crests. Our two characters get out of the car and wander, searching for an open entrance. They find one -- and sneak in...*

58 INT. GRIFFITH OBSERVATORY - CONTINUOUS

They ascend a staircase. Make their way past the exhibits -- the Tesla coil shooting off electric bolts.

They reach the pendulum, gaze up at the mural above it, look at one another. Circle the pendulum, and then -- so tenderly, so nervously...

...they begin to DANCE.

This is a dance that fulfills all the promise in their earlier duet. They circle the floor, gently and gracefully. The music BUILDS, and they drift into...

A58

...the PLANETARIUM. It's darkened, empty. Mia removes her shoes, feels the soft carpet under her feet. Turns on the projector. The screen STARTS TO GLOW. She and Sebastian take in the sight -- the STARS and GALAXIES...

Enchanted, they look at one another, the lights from the screen reflected on their faces. They approach, as though about to kiss... When --

-- Mia's shoes LIFT UP. Float toward the ceiling -- toward the star-filled screen. She and Sebastian trade looks. Realize. And then they too begin to FLOAT...

...RISING from the floor, nothing stopping them. SOARING past the views of comets and moons and nebulae. Eyes wide, their emotions seized, as they HOLD EACH OTHER TIGHT...

And so unspools a gravity-free dance.

Mia and Sebastian SPIN and TWIRL through the planetarium as though they themselves were in outer space, flying through the cosmos. The music carries them higher and higher, and their spirits likewise soar -- JOYOUS, EXUBERANT -- until, finally...

...the music SOFTENS.

Mia and Sebastian drift back to the floor like feathers. They land on a pair of seats.

There, once again seated like audience members at a movie, they turn and look into each other's eyes. The music picks back up for the big finish, as the lovers lean in and -- in true movie-movie old-Hollywood big-musical fashion --

-- LOCK LIPS.

It's their first kiss, and it's a kiss to remember -- full of all the hope and yearning and terror and wonder of love's first blush. A swoon-worthy kiss, with the orchestra soaring and the camera swooping in to catch the embrace in all its glory.

On this triumphant moment...

...we IRIS FADE OUT.

59 OMIT

60 INT. MIA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mia's scribbling in a notebook. It's dialogue. We see character headings, scene headings. Seems to be some kind of a script...

TRACY (O.S.)

What's that?

Mia turns. Tracy has wandered in -- pajamas, eating cereal.

TRACY (CONT'D)

Is that a script?

MIA

It's a play. I'm going to put it on myself.

ALEXIS (O.S.)

(chiming in from her bedroom)

A play? You better give us roles!

MIA

Actually -- it's a -- it's a one-woman show...

A beat -- and then --

AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHT.

HONKING outside the nearest window. It's a honk we recognize:

TRACY

...Is that gonna happen every time?

MIA

(glowing)

I think so.

A60 OMIT

61 EXT. MIA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Mia dashes out -- and LEAPS into Sebastian's car and into his arms. They KISS -- giddy, emotional, as though they'd been separated for years. Sebastian drives off -- when --

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

It's one-way!!

The car SCREECHES to a stop in front of a TRUCK going the opposite direction. Sebastian goes into REVERSE as Mia cracks up laughing. A BURST OF MUSIC as a title card pops on:

SUMMER

The MUSIC carries us through the following series of GLIMPSES:

62 -- Mia and Sebastian ambling past weathered 30's bungalows in BUNKER HILL...

63 -- Mia guiding Sebastian down a street peppered with SILENT-ERA HOMES, past old gas-lamps and palms...

65 -- VAN BEEK. Sebastian gestures to the "TAPAS & TUNES" sign. Excitedly tries to deface it. Mia, aghast, pulls him back...

66 -- The HUNTINGTON GARDENS, where Mia and Sebastian gaze at the tiny forest...

A66 -- WATTS TOWERS, where the two lovers stroll and kiss...

67 OMIT

64 -- The GRAND CENTRAL MARKET, where they grab food...

68 -- ANGEL'S FLIGHT at night, where they stumble and slip into a tipsy, love-soaked dance...

69 OMIT

Interspersed throughout, WE SEE IMAGES OF LOS ANGELES:

1940's high-rises, green movie-movie lettering, ochre walls shaded by palm fronds, red flowers and Spanish missions, old lamps and Art Deco hotels. It's a gorgeous city, and the music only makes it more gorgeous -- building and carrying us to...

70 INT. LIGHTHOUSE CAFE - NIGHT

A Lighthouse JAM SESSION. Sebastian's at the keys, having a blast. The place is again mostly empty, but Mia is dancing her heart out. She shoots looks at Sebastian. He laughs, plays out for her. The two of them are in their own world -- one of pure, unadulterated JOY...

The song ends. Sebastian rises, joins Mia. They sit down as the band strikes up a new tune, and kiss.

KEITH (O.S.)

Sebastian?

Mia and Sebastian look up, startled. A YOUNG MAN, 35, is standing next to them. Tall, fierce eyes. This is KEITH.

SEBASTIAN

Keith?

KEITH

Holy shit. Come here, man.

Sebastian gets up. Gives him a hug. But Mia can sense an unease in Sebastian's eyes. It's a strained hug.

SEBASTIAN

This is Mia. Mia, Keith.
(explaining to Mia)
We used to play together.

KEITH

Hey, Mia.

MIA

Hey...

Sebastian sits back down. Wants to end the conversation.

KEITH

So how've you been?

SEBASTIAN

Great. You?

KEITH

Keeping busy. Got a new combo.

SEBASTIAN

Good for you.

KEITH

...Looking for keys.

SEBASTIAN

(after a beat)
I'm good.

KEITH

You sure? It pays.

Sebastian looks at Keith. A moment.

SEBASTIAN

I'm good.

Keith almost smiles. Expected this.

KEITH

Let's just grab a drink then. Call me.
It's been too long.

SEBASTIAN

You bet.

KEITH

Nice meeting you, Mia.

MIA
Nice meeting you.

Keith walks off. Mia and Sebastian look at each other. Then --

71 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON MIA. She looks anxious. CLOSE ON Sebastian. He looks head-over-heels in love.

SEBASTIAN
It's beautiful.

MIA
...You're just saying that.

SEBASTIAN
No... I'm not.

We PULL BACK -- and see a script on Mia's lap. She's just finished reading Sebastian her play.

MIA
I don't know... Is the whole thing too nostalgic?

SEBASTIAN
That's the point.

MIA
But do you think people will like it?

SEBASTIAN
Fuck 'em.

MIA
(laughs)
You always say that.

SEBASTIAN
I truly believe it.

MIA
Fine -- as long as you sit front-row 'cause I'll probably throw up on the middle of the stage otherwise.

SEBASTIAN
I'll be front-row.

Mia looks at him. Smiles. It genuinely means the world to her. Then, a glow in her eyes, wants to reciprocate --

MIA

I made something for you.

She hops off the bed, fishes through a bag. Pulls out a drawing.

SEBASTIAN

What's that?

MIA

It could be the name design. On the door.

SEBASTIAN

Why does it say "Seb's"?

MIA

That's what you should name it.

SEBASTIAN

Never.

MIA

Sebastian, no one's going to a club called "Chicken on a Stick".

SEBASTIAN

You don't get it. Charlie Parker got the name "Bird" because he loved chicken. So my club's gonna be old-school jazz and beer and chicken. "Chicken on a Stick".

MIA

No. Drop the chicken. Drinks and jazz.
(he rolls his eyes)
And it's time to start looking for other places.

SEBASTIAN

It's gotta be Van Beek. I can't let them samba all over its history.

MIA

Make your own history.

Sebastian looks at her. Appreciates that line. A beat. Then --

SEBASTIAN

Your play's incredible.

Mia smiles. He approaches her, sits by her side.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

The whole world from your bedroom? Who's doing that?

MIA
I'm doing that.

They laugh.

MIA (CONT'D)
So who was that guy at the Lighthouse?

SEBASTIAN
...Which guy?

MIA
The one who offered you a gig.

SEBASTIAN
You mean Keith? He's the worst.

MIA
Why was it weird between you two?

SEBASTIAN
It's always weird with him.

MIA
He did offer you a job.

SEBASTIAN
Right...

MIA
Are you going to call him?

SEBASTIAN
No.

A beat.

MIA
Ok...

A moment passes. They lie down, side by side.

SEBASTIAN
Here's what we know. It's definitely
Chicken on a Stick --
(Mia rolls her eyes)
-- and your play is going to be a
triumph.

She looks at him. He looks at her. A shared smile.

And on that --

72 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

The next morning. Sebastian is in bed. Hears snatches of Mia's voice -- she's on her phone in the other room:

MIA (O.S.)

...No, Mom, it's a one-woman show... No, I'm acting in it as well... No, I'm not getting paid, I'm paying to do it...

(then,)

He's great... He's going to open his own jazz club. It's going to be incredible...

(beat; then, softer --)

Well he has to get the money together first, and... He's figuring it out... Yeah, it's just been a little tricky lately...

Sebastian listens. Takes it in.

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

Look -- he's going to find a way to open it and you're going to love it. Ok? How's Dad?

On Sebastian. He thinks...

73 INT. REHEARSAL SPACE - DAY

Sebastian enters. Keith's combo is assembled.

It's a sign-up practice room in the West Valley. There's a drummer, electric bassist, and trumpeter: COLE, MALCOLM and TOM. They're more polished in their looks than Sebastian. Well-groomed beards, tighter jeans.

KEITH

Sebastian.

Sebastian approaches.

KEITH (CONT'D)

Didn't know if I'd see you today.

SEBASTIAN

(a bit awkward)

Well... Here I am.

A moment. Then --

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Where's the piano?

Keith gestures -- to an electronic keyboard. Sebastian winces.

KEITH

Here's the deal. We've got distribution with Universal, got our own imprint. We're about to go on the road. We can cut you in for 1K a week while we tour, plus an equal share of any merchandise or ticket revenue that comes in. Sound good?

We see Sebastian's face. Taken aback.

KEITH (CONT'D)

Sebastian?

SEBASTIAN

Yeah, that...that...
(beat)
...sounds good.

A moment. Keith smiles.

KEITH

Let's play, see how it feels.

He pulls out a guitar. Cole starts on drums. Keith joins in. Malcolm and Tom follow suit. Sebastian listens. It sounds like modern jazz -- electronic in feel, but still jazz...

Sebastian approaches the keyboard. Joins -- slowly, one step at a time. Then begins playing out a bit more, his fingers starting to race. Malcolm gives Keith a look: "*Damn*". Keith gives Malcolm a look back: "*I told you so.*" Bit by bit, Sebastian eases into the groove. This isn't so bad...

Then -- Keith moves to a LAPTOP. Introduces a DRUM-MACHINE SAMPLE.

Sebastian, into the music, is caught off-guard. Uneasy now. *This isn't him...*

Keith plays a riff on his guitar. Tom echoes it on bass, then Malcolm on trumpet. Now it's Sebastian's turn. He hesitates. And then -- finally -- he plays the riff...

It doesn't feel so bad. The guys build on the riff. Sebastian keeps up with them, trying to let go of his presuppositions.

After all -- these guys *can play...*

The music builds, the whole thing swelling and finally CARRYING US TO --

A73

LATER: Sebastian and Keith sit across from each other as the other players pack up. Sebastian looks pensive. Noticing --

KEITH (CONT'D)

I know. It's different.

Sebastian stays silent. Then, leaning in --

KEITH (CONT'D)

But you say you want to save jazz. How are you going to save jazz if no one's listening? Jazz wouldn't exist if people hadn't gotten tired of what they were listening to before.

(then,)

I mean, do you really think a bunch of ninety-year-olds in a basement is the future of the form? Traditionalists whined when Kenny Clarke started dropping bombs. If traditionalists had their way, we'd still be playing Dixieland.

Sebastian considers this. As much as he might make a play of resisting -- we can tell the words are getting to him...

SEBASTIAN

You're holding onto the past. But jazz is about the future.

A moment. Then --

KEITH

I get it. I got it wrong. Last guy wasn't as good as you. But you're a pain in the ass, man.

Sebastian nods. Knows he can't argue with that.

Another beat.

KEITH (CONT'D)

If it's not your thing, just let me know. I don't want you uncomfortable and trying to change this into something it's not. But if you want it -- the job's yours.

Sebastian looks at Keith. A moment. He's really weighing this. And on that -- his look of uncertainty -- we're --

74 OMIT
75 OMIT
76 OMIT
77 OMIT

77pt INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - DUSK

The door opens. Mia enters. Takes a deep breath. Hears piano. Steps forward and sees Sebastian at his piano -- *playing a melody we've heard before.* [**CITY OF STARS AS DUET**]

She smiles. Sebastian begins to SING. Mia sits down beside him and begins to SING as well. They share a duet -- simple, unaffected, hopeful -- the music just perhaps suggesting their uncertainty about what they might be about to do...

As the vocals give way to instrumentation, we're --

A77 OMIT

B77 OMIT

C77 OMIT

78 INT. DINER - DAY

Sebastian and Keith hunched over paperwork. Sebastian signs...

A78 INT. COFFEE SHOP / STUDIO LOT - DAY

Mia handing the Manager her apron. She's done with the job...

80 INT. PRACTICE SPACE - DAY

The band rehearsing in their new PRACTICE SPACE. We see Sebastian play, see Keith sing this time...

79 INT. CAFE - DAY

Mia hunched over her script, obsessively fine-tuning it...

81 OMIT

82 OMIT

83 INT. DESIGNER CLOTHING STORE - DAY

Sebastian gets dressed up in a new suit...

84 INT. BLACK-BOX THEATER - DAY

We follow Mia through a BLACK-BOX THEATER in North Hollywood. The space is small, simple -- but perfect. We see her haggle with the OWNER -- and then light up. They shake hands...

85 INT. GREEN ROOM - EVENING

Sebastian and the band in a green room, waiting. Sebastian's wearing the new suit. Looking sharper...

86 INT. VINTAGE SHOP - DAY

Mia looking for PROPS. Another wild assortment -- a TOP HAT, a CANE, a DIORAMA of London, rolled-up MAPS, an old GLOBE...

87 OMIT

88 INT. APARTMENT - DAY

We MOVE IN on a laptop. On it a YOUTUBE video plays -- an interview with Sebastian, Keith and the rest of the band...

89 EXT. RIALTO - DAY

Mia drives by the Rialto theater. It's now CLOSED...

90 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mia sits on the floor, penciling out drawings for her play. Costume and poster sketches scattered by her feet. She's tired. The clock on the wall reads: 10:54pm.

A90 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mia gets into bed. Checks her phone. Turns off the light.

B90 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAWN

Sebastian enters the apartment. Checks his reflection in the mirror -- a new addition. The clock reads: 4:57am.

C90 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAWN

Sebastian gets into bed, careful not to wake Mia.

D90 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Mia crosses through to the kitchen to get herself breakfast, careful not to wake Sebastian. The clock: 7:02am.

E90 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Sebastian in bed, fast asleep. And WE RETURN TO...

F90 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - DUSK

...Mia and Sebastian at the piano, before this latest journey began, finishing their song. The last lyrics resonating as they look into one another's eyes:

SEBASTIAN
City of stars...

MIA
You've never shined so
brightly.

On that -- this image of love, Sebastian playing out the final chords on his piano -- WE GO DARK.

All sound fades out. And then, we hear --

-- a CROWD CHEERING. [**START A FIRE**]

We see -- a white spotlight. It reveals Sebastian. We're --

91

INT. THE ECHO - NIGHT

Sebastian is on-stage. He's the only musician we can see. The floor beyond the stage is FILLED with people.

Among them, we spot Mia -- beaming with pride. Sebastian sees her, smiles to her as he plays a piano intro. Mia grins right back, heart swelling...

A SECOND SPOTLIGHT turns on, illuminating Keith. He SINGS. He has a beautiful voice. Mia bobs her head. It's just Keith and Sebastian right now, all acoustic, a simple, catchy tune...

And then -- suddenly -- a DRUM MACHINE SURGES IN -- and --

BOOM! The entire CLUB is lit up as the MUSIC EXPLODES. A full-fledged dance beat and a thick radio-ready electronic track.

Mia is taken aback. But she keeps bobbing her head -- as the crowd around her GOES CRAZY...

Keith owns the stage, as Sebastian plays out more -- now switched to an electronic keyboard, complete with synth sounds. We recognize fragments of melody from when Keith and Sebastian first rehearsed -- but the tune has been transformed beyond recognition. Not a hint of jazz...

Keith breaks into the CHORUS -- and a TRIO OF BACKUP SINGERS are revealed stage-left. The band surges into the song's bridge -- and BACKUP DANCERS appear stage-right, scantily-clad.

And then -- the lights go NUTS. It's a full-out LIGHT SHOW now, shafts of red, blue, green and orange cutting through the dark. The crowd starts CHEERING, pumping their fists...

Mia looks at Sebastian. He's not fighting any of this. He sees her. She smiles. But something is changing in her expression...

She looks at the lights, the singers, the dancers, Sebastian and his bandmates in matching magazine-cover-ready outfits. She looks at the crowd around her -- their hollers growing more and more frenzied as Sebastian launches into a prolonged SOLO...

Mia looks back at him, takes it all in: Is this really him...?

As the mass of people swells and moves, Mia finds herself PUSHED TO THE SIDE, bit by bit, away from the center...

She tries to hold her ground, but is edged FURTHER AND FURTHER AWAY. Sebastian, deep in his solo, doesn't notice. Mia tugs against the tide of the crowd, but to no avail. She's pushed to the back of the club, away from the lights and into shadow...

The final chorus begins -- floor-shaking, fist-pounding. We linger on Mia's face -- watching as the band feverishly tear into their climactic bars, the dancers on-stage and the crowd below busting out one last burst of CRAZED CHOREOGRAPHY -- ending the song just as we SMASH CUT TO A TITLE CARD OVER BLACK:

FALL

Silence.

We take a moment to collect ourselves before --

92 OMIT

93 EXT. / INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - LOS ANGELES - DAY

CLOSE on Mia. She looks tired. A bit weathered. She's nursing a green tea across from Laura. They've finished eating.

LAURA

Look at him -- watch --

Mia glances out the window. A MAN in his early 40's has just parked, is walking around his car, inspecting it.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Now he's going to check the other window. Yep, it's closed. Now he's going to check again. Yep, still closed.

Mia smiles. The MAN enters the restaurant -- greets Mia -- and kisses Laura. This is HARRY. Her new boyfriend.

HARRY

Hey. I'm grabbing some pastries, you two want anything?

MIA

Thanks Harry, I'm good.

LAURA

Same here but I think someone's trying to break into your car.

Harry rolls his eyes, heads to the front. Laura looks at Mia.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Don't stress about the play. Where's Seb now?

MIA

I think today's San Diego. I'm not sure...

A moment passes.

LAURA

You should come over tonight. Harry's cooking, but don't let that stop you.

(Mia manages a smile; a beat)

What's the matter?

MIA

Nothing...

LAURA

You miss him.

MIA

I guess. I'm adapting.

LAURA

(nods; then,)

I got used to being alone. Growing up it was just me and Seb. We only had each other.

MIA

He told me.

LAURA

I wasn't looking for anybody. Then I met Harry and -- we just fit...

(Mia smiles)

You've changed Seb. You know that?

Laura means it positively -- but Mia seems concerned...

MIA

Do you think he's happy?

LAURA

Is he happy?

MIA

I mean with the band, the travel, all of it.

Laura shrugs.

LAURA

Our dad never got to do what he wanted.
We were always treading water, he took a
job running a washer-dryer store. But
every night at home he'd play his
clarinet along to a Benny Goodman record.

(a beat)

So I look at Sebastian... Playing music,
getting paid for it. I'm happy for him.

She notices Harry through the window, returning. Her thoughts drift.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Dreams change.

A beat. She looks back at Mia. Sees her worry.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Don't overthink it. He'll be home soon.

Harry rejoins the table. Hands Laura a sponge cake.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I told you not to get me anything!

HARRY

Oh, right -- I'll eat it I guess.

LAURA

No -- I changed my mind.

They laugh. Kiss. Tender. Loving. Mia watches...

94

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Mia eats, her laptop next to her meal. She takes a bite, types. We see her screen -- an e-mail draft, glimpses of words: "one-woman show", "one night only", "7pm", "I would be thrilled..."

She thinks. Picks up her phone. Dials Sebastian. Waits. No answer.

MIA

Hey it's me... Not sure where you are --
maybe Boston? Or Dallas? Anyway... I
haven't heard from you in a while... I
miss you...

(a beat)

Ok... Bye...

She hangs up. Resumes typing.

95 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT COMPLEX / APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mia walks through the courtyard. Reaches the door. Then hears something... Music -- LOUD, FAST JAZZ...

She enters -- has to jostle the door handle to do so --

-- and then freezes in place. Sebastian is sashaying around a fully-decked table, lighting candles as he moves. He looks up, sees her -- and grins.

SEBASTIAN

Surprise.

She lights up. He lifts up silver serving trays, revealing what he's cooked. Roast chicken. Pasta.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

And...

(he hurries to the kitchen --
and holds up a big apple pie)
There's twenty-five pounds of apples in
it. It probably destroyed an ecosystem
but it tastes good.

Mia laughs. Can't believe it. Sebastian looks at her -- sincere now.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

I have to head back in the morning but I
needed to see you.

Mia's eyes seem almost on the brink of tears. Beyond moved, she runs into Sebastian's arms. A LONG, HEARTFELT KISS...

96 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - EVENING

CLOSE ON: The record player. An old jazz track. We see Mia and Sebastian seated at the table -- eating, drinking, laughing.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Feels so good to be home.

MIA

Stay.

He smiles.

SEBASTIAN

How's the play going?

MIA

I'm nervous.

SEBASTIAN

Why?

MIA

Because...

(a beat)

What if people show up?

SEBASTIAN

Fuck 'em!

Laughter. Then --

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

You're nervous about what they think?

MIA

I'm nervous to be up on a stage and perform in front of people. I'm terrified.

SEBASTIAN

They should be so lucky to see it.

(then,)

It's going to be incredible. I can't wait.

MIA

I can.

A smile. Beat.

MIA (CONT'D)

What time do you leave in the morning?

SEBASTIAN

6:45.

MIA

Ugh.

SEBASTIAN

Yep. Boise.

MIA

Boise?

SEBASTIAN

(nods)

You should come.

MIA

To Boise?

SEBASTIAN

Yeah, you could knock that off your bucket list.

Mia laughs.

MIA

Wish I could.

A beat.

SEBASTIAN

Why can't you?

MIA

Come to Boise?

SEBASTIAN

Yeah.

MIA

Because I have to rehearse.

SEBASTIAN

Can't you rehearse anywhere?

She looks at him.

MIA

You mean anywhere you are?

SEBASTIAN

...I -- I guess...

MIA

Well, all my stuff is here and my show's in a few weeks and -- I don't know, it doesn't seem practical...

SEBASTIAN

Right... I just -- we're going to have to do things so we can see each other. We never see each other.

MIA

I know, but when are you done?

SEBASTIAN

...What do you mean?

MIA

When are you done with the tour?

SEBASTIAN

But -- as soon as we're done with the tour we go back and record, and then we go back on tour.

Mia looks at him. Doesn't seem to understand.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

We tour so we can make the record, and then we go back on tour to sell the record.

Beat. Mia takes this in.

MIA

So it's...the long haul?

SEBASTIAN

...What does that mean?

MIA

I mean the long haul -- like, you're going to be in this band for a long time.

SEBASTIAN

What did you think I was going to do?

MIA

I don't know, I didn't think the band would --

SEBASTIAN

You didn't think we'd be successful.

MIA

No, that's not what I meant. What I meant was -- this band -- you're going to be on the road for -- what, years now?

SEBASTIAN

Yeah, feasibly -- I could be on the road for years with just this record.

Beat.

MIA

Do you like the music you're playing?

SEBASTIAN

I don't know how that matters.

MIA

It matters if you're going to give up your dream to be on the road for years.

SEBASTIAN

Do you like the music I'm playing?

MIA

Yes. I do.

(beat)

I just didn't think you did.

SEBASTIAN

Yeah, well, I --

MIA

And now I hear you're going to be on the road for years, and I'm --

SEBASTIAN

What are you doing? Why are you doing this?

MIA

What do you mean why am I doing this?

SEBASTIAN

This is what you wanted from me.

MIA

To be in this band?

SEBASTIAN

To have a steady job.

MIA

Yes, I wanted you to have a job so you could take care of yourself and start your club.

SEBASTIAN

So I'm doing that. So why aren't we celebrating?

MIA

Why aren't you starting your club?

SEBASTIAN

You said yourself no one wants to go to that club! No one wants to go to a club called Chicken on a Stick --

MIA

Change the name!

SEBASTIAN

-- and no one likes jazz. Not even you.

MIA

I do like jazz now, because of you.

SEBASTIAN

(not listening to her)

What am I supposed to do? Go back to playing "Jingle Bells" so I can save money for some Shangri-La club no one wants to go to?

MIA

People will want to go to it! People love what other people are passionate about.

SEBASTIAN

Not in my experience.

A beat. Mia realizes she's getting nowhere. A moment of quiet. Then --

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Anyway -- it's time to grow up. You know? This is what I'm doing. If you had a problem, I wish you would've said something earlier, before I signed on the dotted line.

MIA

(trying again)

You had a dream that you were sticking to, that --

SEBASTIAN

This is the dream!

MIA

This is not your dream.

SEBASTIAN

Guys like me go their whole lives and never do anything that's liked. I'm finally doing something that people enjoy. What is wrong with that?

MIA

Why do you care so much about being liked -- ?

SEBASTIAN

(finally bursting--)

You're an actress, who are you to talk??

Silence. We suddenly realize --

-- the LP has finished. You can hear the needle scratch against it now -- back and forth, back and forth. Sebastian looks at Mia.

A moment. Finally --

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Maybe you liked me more when I was a failure because it made you feel better about yourself.

Mia looks back at him. Can't believe he said that. Tears starting to well in her eyes. She tries to suppress them.

MIA

Are you kidding?

SEBASTIAN

No.

They stare at each other.

Then -- all of a sudden -- the FIRE ALARM blares.

Sebastian turns and sees smoke billowing from the KITCHEN. A dish in the oven has started to burn.

Sebastian rises, springs toward the kitchen -- then sees Mia grabbing her things.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Wait --

But she's out the door. It slams shut, as Sebastian pulls the burnt apple pie from the oven.

And on that -- WE SMASH CUT TO --

97 OMIT

98 EXT. THEATER - DAY

A poster, placed on the front of the theater we saw before. A title. A name below it: "MIA DOLAN." And a word: "TONIGHT."

We spot Mia, carrying a box of props. She enters the theater. And we're --

99 INT. THEATER - DAY

The empty theater. Dark. Silent. Then -- a light turns on. Mia steps in. We stay WIDE. She seems small from this vantage point, surrounded by her props and backdrops. She takes a moment. Looks at all the empty seats.

You can hear the murmurs beyond the curtain. The audience, expecting. Mia tries to get her nerves under control. *She can do this...* Sets her phone aside -- one last breath --

-- and walks out.

104 OMIT

105 OMIT

106 INT. PHOTO STUDIO - NIGHT

LOUD MUSIC. It's the band's song, blaring from a speaker. They're pantomiming -- the musicians styled and ready for their close-ups. A PHOTOGRAPHER grabs shots.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Put a light on the drums... I need more fill in this corner...

We ZERO IN on Sebastian. His hair sticks out at various angles. An artfully-undone tie hangs from his neck. He fake-plays, as Keith pretends to lay in sampled beats...

Keith, Tom, Malcolm, Cole -- they all grin, as excited as kids. Sebastian looks at them -- then down at his elaborate outfit, then back up at the Photographer running around, then at his watch...

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

Bass, head up. Piano, look down at the keys.

Sebastian does as told, but his thoughts are elsewhere. The Photographer moves in close, SNAPPING shots of just him --

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

Cut the music. Turn the keyboard live. Piano look up, play.

The track stops. Sebastian stops as well. The CLICKS of the Photographer's camera loud now.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

No -- piano -- actually play something.

Sebastian is still. Then he starts to play a single melody on the keys. We recognize it. The first notes of his and Mia's song...

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)
Good, now bite your lip like you're
concentrating on a solo.

Beat. Sebastian stops. Silence. He stares ahead.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)
That was good. Don't stop.

We PUSH IN on Sebastian...

107 INT. THEATER - NIGHT

We're CLOSE on Mia. In ordinary clothes now.

Behind her is a wallpapered wall, and a small window. By her side are the globe we saw in her room, and other little trinkets: a pearl necklace, an old suitcase, a roll of maps. Outside the window, projection of a starlit Parisian night sky. Completely silent, Mia moves to a lamp, turns it off.

We go BLACK.

Then -- the house lights go on. White, fluorescent. Thin applause can be heard. Mia manages a smile, as we finally see --
-- that the theater is less than a quarter full.

Mia takes a bow. Peers out. One seat, in the front row, has a "RESERVED" sign on it. The seat is empty.

108 OMIT

109 INT. THEATER - DRESSING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mia slips inside, holding in her hurt. Starts collecting a few outfits -- then overhears two AUDIENCE MEMBERS outside --

AUDIENCE MEMBER #1 (O.S.)
I swear to God, if I have to hear one
more hipster waxing nostalgic I'm gonna
slit my wrists.

AUDIENCE MEMBER #2 (O.S.)
Seriously.

AUDIENCE MEMBER #1 (O.S.)
She's not even good. That window
thing...?

AUDIENCE MEMBER #2 (O.S.)
Christ... Don't quit your day job...

Laughter.

Mia freezes. The nail in the coffin. The voices fade. She slides into a chair.

110 EXT. THEATER - NIGHT

Sebastian SPEEDING. Screeching to a stop. He's at Mia's THEATER. He dashes out and runs to the door.

But it's locked. No one's in sight. *Fuck.*

He spins around, frantic -- when Mia appears from an adjacent doorway, alone and carrying her box of props to her car.

SEBASTIAN

Mia!

She turns. Sees him. He runs to her. WRAPS his arms around --

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry --

-- and KISSES her. The kind of kiss that might once have swept her off her feet. He starts to move with her...

...starts to DANCE -- but --

MIA

Stop --

She pulls away. Steps back. Sebastian looks at her. Unmoored.

SEBASTIAN

I'm -- I'm sorry I missed it -- and I'm sorry I was a dick and I -- I promise I'll make it up to you --

MIA

It's over.

She doesn't say the words with any anger. Just acceptance.

SEBASTIAN

(a beat; then --)
...What do you mean?

MIA

I'm done embarrassing myself.

SEBASTIAN

You didn't embarrass yourself...

MIA

No one showed up. I can't even pay back
the theater.

She says this as though just realizing it. Sebastian looks
at her. A moment passes. He doesn't know what to say now.

MIA (CONT'D)

I'm gonna go home for a while.

SEBASTIAN

...This is home.

MIA

Not anymore.

Sebastian is silent now. A tear in his eye. He clenches his
jaw. Mia looks at him one more time, steps into her car, and
drives off.

Sebastian lingers. Doesn't move. Silence. Then, music. Soft,
melancholy, just piano, as...

111 OMIT

A111 OMIT

...WE DISSOLVE TO:

112 OMIT

113 EXT. MIA'S CAR - DAY

Mia drives, boxes stacked in the back.

A113 She gets on the 405... Heading out of the city...

114 EXT. / INT. MIA'S HOUSE - NEVADA - DUSK

Mia steps inside a modest house. Her MOM is by the door. Hugs
her. Her DAD stands by the hallway.

115 INT. MIA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DUSK

Mia enters her old bedroom. Slides in a suitcase. Moves a couple
of boxes from the hall. Looks around. Old photos. Old soccer
trophies. She sits down on the bed. Takes a breath. And,
finally, we're...

116 EXT. ORANGE GROVE - DAY

Laura and Harry's ENGAGEMENT PARTY. We're outside, in a sun-
dappled grove. A small gathering.

Sebastian plays a baby grand piano -- the source, we realize, of the music we've been hearing...

As he watches Laura dance with her new fiancé -- this woman he has known for so many years as a romantic cynic, now once again full of all the youthful innocence of first love -- his thoughts seem to drift. The music comes to a close and...

117 LATER: Sebastian with Laura, by the orange trees...

LAURA

You remember the McKenzies?

SEBASTIAN

Oh God, I didn't see them.

LAURA

Yeah. They kept going, "oh Sebastian's so handsome".

Sebastian smiles. Then --

SEBASTIAN

You look beautiful.

(beat)

I hope it was ok. I haven't played in a while.

LAURA

You were great

(pause)

You're always great when you play.

Sebastian is silent. Then --

LAURA (CONT'D)

Now -- listen to me. I want you to save for a down payment. You understand? You need a home.

SEBASTIAN

Yes ma'am.

LAURA

I'm not gonna be hovering anymore.

SEBASTIAN

...You still think New York?

LAURA

I think so. Maybe Boston. I don't know, it's exciting...

Sebastian smiles again. Some calls from the distance --

LAURA (CONT'D)

Ah I gotta -- the future in-laws...

She lights up. Likes the sound of that.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Is my...my hair...?

Sebastian, without a word, pulls a strand back. Laura smiles, kisses him on the cheek. A quiet, tender moment. Then she hurries off. Sebastian stands there. Watches...

WE FADE OUT.

118

INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

RINGING. Sebastian is awoken. Groaning, he rolls over. Lets the phone ring. It keeps going. Endless... Finally, fed up, he reaches for it. Answers --

SEBASTIAN

What...?

WOMAN #2 (O.S.)

Hi, I'm trying to reach Mia Dolan.

Sebastian is taken aback. He goes to hang up, saying just --

SEBASTIAN

Wrong number.

WOMAN #2 (O.S.)

-- She's not answering her cell and I was told I might find her here.

Sebastian pauses. Hurt by the mere mention of Mia's name --

SEBASTIAN

Yeah, well...not anymore.

WOMAN #2 (O.S.)

Ok. If you do talk to her --

SEBASTIAN

I won't.

WOMAN #2 (O.S.)

-- please tell her Jane at Amy Brandt Casting is trying to reach her.

A beat. Sebastian sits up. Suddenly wide-eyed.

SEBASTIAN

"Casting"...?

119 INT. MIA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dinner has just finished. Mia's Mom gives her a kiss --

MIA'S MOM Night, sweetie. MIA Night, Mom.

-- and heads off, as Mia and her Dad stay behind. Getting up to scrape the dish --

MIA'S DAD
You want some more rice?

MIA
I'm ok.

MIA'S DAD
You look hungry.

MIA
I'm good...

A moment. Mia's Dad puts a few more dishes away, then sits back down across from her.

MIA'S DAD
It's fun having you back. Your mom ditches me at ten.

Mia laughs. A moment.

MIA
You took down the swing.

MIA'S DAD
She made me.

A smile.

MIA'S DAD (CONT'D)
I've still got all your old tapes.

MIA
Oh God. Throw those away.

MIA'S DAD
Never.

Just then -- a loud, persistent HONK. Mia's Dad looks up, eyebrow raised. Mia turns, hearing it as well. The HONKING is nearby -- just outside...

Mia's thoughts suddenly sharpen. Ears perk up. She's heard the honking before:

SEBASTIAN

So you're happy here?

MIA

I'm happier.

SEBASTIAN

Why won't you come?

MIA

I told you.

SEBASTIAN

I don't buy it.

MIA

(finally letting it out, fed up --)
Because it's another audition!

(a beat; then --)

I've been to hundreds of auditions. Do you want to know what happens? Either they interrupt me because someone ordered a sandwich, or they cut me off after two seconds, or I'm crying and they start laughing, or I'm one of a hundred lookalikes in the waiting room who never has a chance, because --

(beat)

-- because --

SEBASTIAN

Because what?

MIA

Because I'm probably not good enough.

SEBASTIAN

Yes you are.

MIA

No. Maybe I'm not.

A beat.

MIA (CONT'D)

Maybe I'm one of those people who's always wanted to do it but never had a chance. It's a pipe dream. Maybe it's like you said. Maybe I need to grow up.

She hesitates. Continues --

MIA (CONT'D)

I can go back to school. I can find something else that I'm supposed to do. I left school to give it a shot, and it didn't work out, and it took six years, and I don't want to do it anymore.

Beat. But Sebastian isn't giving up.

SEBASTIAN

Why?

MIA

Why what?

SEBASTIAN

Why don't you want to do it anymore?

Mia thinks about this one for a moment.

MIA

...Because it hurts a little bit too much.

Sebastian shakes his head. Nope. Won't accept this.

SEBASTIAN

I told them you'd be there at five-thirty tomorrow. I'll swing by here before I drive back at eight. Either you'll be outside or you won't.

With that, he gets back into his car. Mia is silent. Then --

MIA

How did you find me?

Sebastian turns. Points. Matter-of-fact --

SEBASTIAN

The house across from the library.

He drives off. Mia looks up. There, sure enough, is the LIBRARY, crouched on the corner. The library that once helped set her on her path to acting.

She looks at it. Thinks...

121

EXT. MIA'S STREET - NIGHT/DAY

Wide on the street. All is quiet. Night becomes morning...

122 EXT. MIA'S HOME - DAY

Sebastian's car pulls over. He sits there. Sips a coffee, a second coffee in the holder. The time: 8:02.

A moment passes. He taps the wheel. Looks at the house. The front door remains closed. No Mia. He leans back. Seems worried. Closes his eyes, breathes out. We MOVE CLOSE on him. He breathes in and out again...

He opens his eyes. 8:10. The door's still closed. Resigned, he starts his car up, BEGINS TO PULL AWAY, when --

-- BAM! A KNOCK on the opposite window. He jumps.

It's Mia. She's just arrived at the car from the other side, two just-bought cups of coffee and a bag of pastries in her hands. A beat. Sebastian smiles. Then OPENS the door for her.

123 OMIT

124 EXT. PARAMOUNT STUDIO LOT - DAY

A cloudy late afternoon. Mia and Sebastian slowly walk through the lot together. They pass the New York street, the murals and posters of classic Hollywood, the old Art Deco ornaments and the big soundstages and backdrops. Neither says a word...

125 INT. WAITING LOBBY - DAY

Mia and Sebastian are seated. Waiting. The DOOR opens. An ACTRESS exits. A second later --

ASSISTANT #2

Mia?

Mia gathers her nerves. Gets up. And steps in.

126 INT. AUDITION ROOM / INT. LOBBY - DAY

In the room is AMY BRANDT -- mid-forties. Seated behind her is the director, FRANK.

AMY BRANDT
Hi, Mia.

MIA
Hi.

AMY BRANDT
I'm Amy, this is Frank. Glad we found you.

Mia nods. Smiles. A moment.

AMY BRANDT (CONT'D)
The movie shoots in Paris. There's no script.

FRANK

We want to build the character with you.
It's a process. Three-month rehearsal,
four-month shoot.

MIA

...Ok.

AMY BRANDT

So why don't you just tell us a story?

MIA

...About...?

AMY BRANDT

About anything.

Mia nods again. A moment.

AMY BRANDT (CONT'D)

Whenever you're ready.

Mia thinks. She takes a breath -- then goes silent again. It seems she might be unsure what to do, might even be about to choke the audition. We fear she may botch this completely...

A126 WE CUT TO THE LOBBY -- to Sebastian, hearing Mia's silence. On edge... Worried...

B126 WE RETURN to the AUDITION ROOM... Brandt and Frank waiting...

MIA

My aunt lived in Paris for a bit... She used to tell me these stories, when I was growing up, about living abroad...

(beat)

I remember -- she told me she jumped into the Seine once...

She pauses, and then continues -- *in SONG*. [TRACK: AUDITION]

Yes, this audition is different than the rest, and the switch to song signals just that. Mia's nerves fade away -- all the accents and fakery of earlier auditions a distant memory. This is Mia undisguised -- pure and stark and beautiful...

She uses the story of her aunt jumping into the river to paint a portrait of all the dreamers in the world -- all the people who are told they're nuts for pursuing their passion -- all the so-called "fools" who take the plunge. She sings about them and for them. This is why Mia does what she does -- why she simply has no choice...

The song ends, and we linger on her for a moment. Then...

...WE DISSOLVE TO:

127

EXT. GRIFFITH PARK - DAY

Mia and Sebastian sit on a bench, the Observatory perched behind them. The clouds have parted, and it's now a gorgeous Los Angeles afternoon, minutes before dusk.

Sebastian looks at Mia. A moment passes.

SEBASTIAN

When do you find out?

MIA

They said the next couple of days... But I'm not expecting to find anything out.

SEBASTIAN

You're going to get it.

MIA

No, I'm not.

SEBASTIAN

You are. I know these things.

A beat.

MIA

Where are we?

Sebastian looks at her.

SEBASTIAN

Griffith Park.

MIA

I mean -- where are we?

SEBASTIAN

I know...

(beat)

I don't know.

MIA

What do we do?

SEBASTIAN

I don't think we can do anything. Because when you get this --

MIA

If I get this --

SEBASTIAN

When you get this -- you've got to give it everything you've got.

Beat.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

It's your dream.

MIA

What are you going to do?

SEBASTIAN

I've got to follow my own plan. Stay here. Get my own thing going. You know...

A moment. Mia nods. Sebastian looks at her again.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

You're going to be in Paris. Good jazz there. And you love jazz now.

Mia smiles.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Right?

MIA

Right.

Another moment. And then, finally --

SEBASTIAN

I guess we're just going to have to wait and see.

Mia's eyes well up, just slightly, as she hears this. She nods.

MIA

You know I'm always going to love you.

SEBASTIAN

I'm always going to love you too.

Beat. Sebastian looks up at the Observatory.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Look at this view.

MIA

(playfully)
I've seen better.

SEBASTIAN

Agreed.

They laugh.

Then, almost to herself --

MIA

I've never been here during the day.

Sebastian smiles. A moment.

We CUT TO WIDE. Sebastian and Mia sit side by side. We linger here, our two characters framed by the white-and-green Observatory, the rest of L.A. stretching out beyond.

And then, ever so slowly...

...we FADE TO:

WINTER

A palm tree, a cloudless sky. We PULL BACK -- to reveal it's all painted...

128 EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

We're on a studio lot, looking at one of the old painted backdrops, of a palm tree and sky. A new title card:

Five years later...

We TILT down to the studio's entryway. A CAR enters.

A WOMAN steps out. We don't see her face. We FOLLOW her from behind. She walks elegantly, poised. The wind picks up a strand of her hair. She makes her way down side-streets we've seen before, past Parisian-style façades. Then enters a COFFEE SHOP we recognize...

129 INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

The eyes inside all look the WOMAN's way. She reaches the counter -- and we finally SEE HER FACE:

MIA

Hi... Iced coffee, please.

MIA looks different. Different haircut, different way of handling herself.

The BARISTA hurries to get Mia's order. We recognize this as the shop where Mia used to work. A man who appears to be the NEW MANAGER gives Mia the coffee --

NEW MANAGER

On us.

MIA

No, no, that's fine.

Mia hands over a few dollar bills. Then drops another bill into the tip jar. The Barista smiles.

130 EXT. COFFEE SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Mia exits the coffee shop...and is met by a CREW MEMBER on a GOLF CART. She gets on the cart -- and is driven away...

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON hands on piano keys, fluttering across the ivories. We PULL BACK: it's SEBASTIAN. We're in...

131 INT. JAZZ CLUB - DAY

...a small jazz club. Simple, tasteful, cool. Stone arches in 1940's style. The seats close to the band, the piano in the center. The club has the same old-school character as the Lighthouse -- but it's not run-down. It's polished, inviting.

The place is empty save for Sebastian and an EMPLOYEE. It's before-hours. Sebastian finishes playing. Feels out the lowest keys once more, then the highest. Then turns and --

SEBASTIAN

Alright, I'm done.

(gets up)

Harris did a nice job with it.

EMPLOYEE

Took him long enough.

Sebastian smiles.

SEBASTIAN

No one touches the instruments. Carson's coming an hour early to test levels.

EMPLOYEE

I got a check for you to sign.

SEBASTIAN

How'd we do last month?

EMPLOYEE

Not too bad.

SEBASTIAN

(as he signs the check)

Not too bad is great.

(taps the Employee on the
shoulder)

See you tonight.

EMPLOYEE

See you tonight.

132 EXT. CHATEAU MARMONT - DAY

Mia pulls into the driveway.

133 INT. ROOM - CHATEAU MARMONT - DAY

She steps inside. Flowers and cards. We glimpse cursive "CONGRATULATIONS" written on a few of them. A stack of scripts on a nearby table. Her name visible. She drops her things, spots someone, goes in to kiss him. A long, tender, loving embrace, as we pull back...

...and see that it's not Sebastian.

It's a MAN we haven't seen before: DAVID, mid-thirties. He and Mia kiss again. And, running over and grabbing Mia's leg, is a TWO-YEAR-OLD GIRL...

134 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Sebastian steps in. The place is more habitable than his old digs. Fully furnished, warm and welcoming. He heads to the kitchen, pulls out some pork cutlets he's been thawing. We see, sitting on the counter, a Christmas card with a photo attached: Laura, Harry, and a FOUR-YEAR-OLD BOY, all gathered on a couch and smiling at the camera.

135 INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT - LATER

Sebastian eats his meal, in a new shirt and pants. Checks his watch.

136 EXT. JAZZ CLUB - DAY

Sebastian pulls up outside the club. New car, same style. Gets out and passes by a movie poster as he walks. We can't see the title, but we can catch a glimpse of a face on it.

It's MIA...

137 INT. JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT

We're back in the club.

It's bustling now -- the BARTENDERS setting up, DOORMEN coming in, MUSICIANS sound-checking. Sebastian enters, the musicians greet him --

DRUMMER

King Seb!

SEBASTIAN

Hothouse Eddie -- miss me?

DRUMMER

Like the desert misses the rain.

And then -- we see a SAXOPHONIST we recognize. One of the old Lighthouse players.

SAXOPHONIST

Seb -- Edgar's bringing his horn tonight.

SEBASTIAN

Yeah? Tell him to tune it, huh?

SAXOPHONIST

That's not Edgar.

Laughs, pats on the back.

138 INT. ROOM - CHATEAU MARMONT - NIGHT

Mia, in a new outfit, crosses the living area and grabs her purse and jacket. David is by the door, jacket on as well. Mia bends back around a sofa, where the GIRL we saw before is seated next to a nineteen-year-old baby-sitter, CHELSEA.

MIA

Bye, sweetie. You be nice to Chelsea.

The Girl nods. Mia kisses her forehead. Heads to the door.

CHELSEA

Bye, Mrs. Dolan.

139 OMIT

140 INT. CAR - NIGHT

David drives, Mia seated beside him. They're on the 101. Gridlock traffic up ahead.

DAVID

What if we miss this? What do we tell Natalie?

MIA

We can just see it back in New York...

David nods. Looks at the time on the car. 8:06.

141 INT. CAR - LATER

Mia and David are seated. Still not moving. Mia looks at the clock again: 8:27.

MIA (CONT'D)

Do you want to just skip it...? Turn off here and get dinner?

David looks at her. Smiles.

DAVID

Alright...

142 EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Mia and David walk down a street. A few open restaurants and bars, a few other closed storefronts. A lot of old, weathered buildings: 1930's stucco, Art Deco signs.

Then -- David's ears perk up. He hears something. MUSIC...

He looks around. Doesn't see the source. Heads to the end of the block, then sees, just up ahead, a few people entering a building. Seems to be where the music's coming from...

Mia heads over, curious. The music grows louder -- sounds like a JAZZ COMBO. Mia peeks toward the door...

...and then FREEZES.

The sign on the door reads: "SEB'S". It's written the way she drew it for Sebastian, years ago...

Coming up to her side, oblivious --

DAVID (CONT'D)

This looks fun.

David edges past Mia. Glimpses the bar inside. Turns to her, inviting --

DAVID (CONT'D)

Come on...

Mia doesn't know what to say. She follows David...

143

INT. JAZZ CLUB - CONTINUOUS

Inside, a JAZZ COMBO is tearing through a fast bop chart. The seats around the band are almost all occupied. Young fans, older couples, passersby trickling in from outside. It's an excited crowd, far more varied than what we saw at the Lighthouse -- a real range of ages and styles.

Mia's eyes drift as David heads to the bar. She recognizes the images on the walls -- all Sebastian's. Recognizes a stool by the bar -- also Sebastian's, formerly Hoagy Carmichael's...

DAVID (CONT'D)

Mia?

She turns to David. Wavering, unsure what to do, she follows him as he manages to find two empty seats close to the bandstand...

The combo finishes. Hearty applause. A young PIANIST rises from the keys, waves "thanks".

And -- just then -- Sebastian appears. Mia looks at him, frozen.

SEBASTIAN

(taking the microphone)

Manny Halloran, ladies and gentlemen.

(more applause)

I don't know, I told him to play "Jingle Bells".

The crowd laughs. Sebastian smiles, looks at them --

-- and sees Mia.

Shock. The two LOCK EYES -- and you can tell it's the first time they've seen each other in years.

A prolonged silence. Sebastian is speechless.

Then -- forcing himself to keep on a face --

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Welcome to Seb's.

More applause. Sebastian sits at the piano. Looks at the keys.

He seems uncertain -- perhaps unsure what to play. He looks at Mia. Takes the sight in. Beat. Then looks at his fellow musicians. Murmurs to them. Then turns back to the keys --

-- and finally starts playing.

A quieter tune, just piano, soft and tender and melancholy. A melody we -- and Mia -- instantly recognize...

It's Mia and Sebastian's song.

Mia looks at Sebastian. He looks at her, then back at his keys. This is the most beautiful we've ever heard his playing. The most tender, and full of emotion, it has ever sounded.

We MOVE CLOSER on Sebastian. We recognize this image. It recalls the visualization of his dream, back at the RESTAURANT that night in winter, years ago. Gradually, as Sebastian plays, his surroundings seem to grow DARKER. Slowly, subtly at first, with just shifts in lighting, then a shift in perspective, the interior of the club changes, and soon...

144 ...we find ourselves back at that same RESTAURANT... Back when Mia laid eyes on Sebastian for the first time...

Within this fantasy-flashback, Sebastian finishes his piece. We stick on Mia, watching him as his Boss talks to him. All is as before, as we remember it... And sure enough, Mia approaches Sebastian as he walks near her, and --

MIA

I just wanted to say -- I saw your playing, and I --

-- but instead of brushing past her --

-- Sebastian decks her with a kiss for the ages.

A BURST OF ORCHESTRAL MUSIC. The DINERS in the restaurant spin around to face Mia and Sebastian -- and SNAP their fingers in time. Even the Boss starts to DANCE. Mia and Sebastian grin -- and then strut out together, hand in hand... [EPILOGUE]

145 INT. NEW APARTMENT - DAY

Mia and Sebastian push open a new door -- to their new place. It's a shabby one-bedroom -- but it's theirs...

146 INT. LIGHTHOUSE CAFE - NIGHT

Next, Keith approaches Sebastian at the Lighthouse -- but Sebastian immediately shakes his head "no".

147 INT. THEATER - NIGHT

Sebastian watches Mia perform -- it's the night of her play. He stands up to applaud -- and behind him, the entire theater, utterly packed, rises as well. A huge standing ovation. Mia's ROOMMATES are there, giddy with joy, as are LAURA and HARRY...

148 INT. STUDIO SOUNDSTAGE - DAY / NIGHT

Mia and Sebastian walk together outside -- but now that we're outside we realize this isn't the real L.A. at all..

This, in fact, is an L.A. that doesn't exist. A painted-backdrop L.A., just like the one we saw Mia pass by when parking on the lot...

The old orange groves and the gabled rooftops and the moss-covered bungalows and the ivy-decked lamps, the jacaranda trees and the giant hills and Griffith and the Santa Monica Pier -- all painted, all props, all figments of a studio-backdrop imagination. We've entered a fully fantastical realm, the realm of the old Hollywood ballets of the 40's and 50's...

A148 *Everyone DANCES -- the pedestrians and the street performers and the cops and the guards... AMY BRANDT races up to Mia -- seems to beckon her to audition... We see the audition silhouetted against a wall... We don't hear Mia sing, but the music takes on the melody of her song, carrying us to...*

B148 *PARIS... Sebastian travels there with Mia... We chart the journey through an OLD GLOBE -- the same one we saw Mia use for her play -- a miniature plane and dissolves, the old-Hollywood-movie way...*

Finally, we find ourselves looking at a PAINTED BACKDROP of Paris -- the same one Mia used for her play. The Sacré-Cœur and the Arc de Triomphe and the Eiffel Tower etched in bright colors, the ornate lampposts and the cobblestones stretching before us... And then a sign -- "CAVEAU DE LA HUCHETTE"...

C148 *We see a jam session at the Caveau -- a crypt-like jazz club. Sebastian plays, on cloud nine...*

C148pt *We see a MOVIE SHOOT, Mia surrounded by lights and cranes, decked in movie-movie glow.*

We're BACK to the Caveau. The lights go out -- except for the TRUMPETER, playing out a lovelorn solo, rim-lit. We MOVE in close on his horn -- DIVE into the bell --

D148 *-- and emerge into NIGHTTIME PARIS. All painted. Mia and Sebastian wander through this wonderland, pedestrians frozen around them... Finally, they stop and look at one another...*

And -- as the city lights behind them start to glitter like all the stars of the galaxy...

...they DANCE.

This is the last time we'll ever see them dance, and they seem to recognize that, so graceful and poised are their movements... Remember -- this is a romance more perfect than a real romance could ever be...

We DISSOLVE again -- to a projector beam...

16mm footage plays on a screen, full of scratches and pockets of light... Mia and Sebastian sit down to watch together -- and we see the following moments in brief, vivid GLIMPSES, as we move in closer on the imagery:

149 *The first home... (16mm)*

150 *Mia's pregnancy... (16mm)*

151 *The newborn child... (16mm)*

152 *The child's first birthday... (16mm)*

153 *The child's first day of pre-school, all dressed up... (16mm)*

Everything here glows with the warmth of old home movies... These are memories, fluttering by, grabbed at random -- and yet all concocted, dreamed up out of nothing... The SCORE continuing to sway and taking us right up to...

154 *Sebastian and Mia, husband and wife, father and mother, hiring a babysitter because they've decided to go out for a night at the movies... (We're back to 35mm now.) The look here is unaffected, just everyday. The MUSIC quiets slightly, everything goes more natural, as this happily married couple hit the road...*

155 *...then find themselves blocked by a traffic jam...then take a side route, winding up in another part of L.A...*

156 *...then walk down the street, then hear music -- a jazz combo playing somewhere...*

157 *...and step into a place that looks just like Sebastian's club... They sit down to listen...*

And then -- and this is how our imagined montage-musical number ends -- the combo's PIANIST, who of course is not Sebastian, launches into Mia and Sebastian's melody...

...and Mia and Sebastian look at each other, recognizing it.

The music goes full-circle, back to where it started, as Mia and Sebastian look into each other's eyes, lean in and, softly, but with all the love in the world...

...KISS.

158 WE CUT BACK TO THE PIANO: Sebastian has just finished his piece. We're back to reality. The audience in the club applauds.

Beat. Mia looks at Sebastian. Looks away. A moment passes.

DAVID

Do you want to stay for another?

She's silent for a second. Then she looks at David.

MIA

No... We should go.

He nods. They rise from their seats and head for the exit.

Just as they reach the door, and as David steps out, Mia turns and looks back at Sebastian. He looks at her. Their eyes lock. A hint of a tear in both...

And, ever so subtly, for just a fleeting second, Mia smiles.

It's the kind of smile you could miss if you blinked -- but it's enough to signal to Sebastian that she recognized the melody he played, and that she still remembers it, and still thinks of it to this day...

Then she walks out the door. Sebastian glances at his fellow musicians. Then, he nods, and they launch into a new chart.

159 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

It's silent outside. You can't hear the music. Mia and David reach their car. They get in. It pulls out.

Passing by Sebastian's club, the car continues on. We stay put, the jazz club on one side of the frame, the lights of the car on the other. Those lights growing smaller and smaller, before finally disappearing into the big L.A. night...

IRIS FADE OUT.

THE END