

THERE YOU ARE

Written by

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**EXT. ROME - NIGHT**

Euro dance music THUMPS against SHOTS OF Rome at night. The Fountain. The Forum. The Food.

We follow the music to a NIGHTCLUB. The CROWD spills outside into a beautiful piazza, smoking cigarettes, laughing.

A COUPLE walks away from the club together, making out, stumbling on cobblestones, flirting loudly in Italian.

*\*Throughout, anything italicized is in Italian.*

PAN UP:

**INT. AIRBNB - NIGHT**

**ELEANOR** (late 20s, English) listens to the flirting and the thump of the nightclub, staring at her ceiling.

She taps her phone. Her screen background is a cute picture of her with **NOAH**, her fiancé, who we will meet shortly. It's three AM. Ten PM New York time.

She props open up her iPad, opens Netflix, puts on a nature documentary, pops a melatonin and downs some Benadryl. She falls asleep to the dulcet tones of David Attenborough against the UNTZ UNTZ of EDM.

**INT. AIRBNB - MORNING**

The UNTZ UNTZ fades into BANG BANG construction noises from the apartment next door.

Eleanor wakes up looking at her iPad filled with the "are you still watching?" screen. It's seven AM.

She rolls over onto her back, exhausted from a shitty night's sleep. She closes her iPad and gets out of bed.

**INT. CAFE - LATER**

ITALIANS and TOURISTS wait at a bar for their espresso. Eleanor wedges her way in. She makes eye contact with the BARISTA.

ELEANOR  
(poor accent)  
*Un cafe per favore.*

BARISTA  
Two euros, please.

Nothing more dejecting than the English language response.

She fishes around for coins in her purse, pulling out a two euro piece.

ELEANOR  
Thank you.

Two older AMERICAN WOMEN clock the exchange and lean in.

AMERICAN WOMAN  
Hi, so sorry, but would you happen to know how to get to that fountain from here?

ELEANOR  
No, I'm sorry. I've seen loads of signs for it though.

The barista puts the espresso down in front of her. She grabs a napkin with her left hand.

AMERICAN WOMAN  
Are you traveling with your fiancé?  
(hint of melancholy)  
I always wanted to come with my husband but we were never able to make it happen...

ELEANOR  
(looking down at her ring)  
Oh, no, I'm just here for work.  
Research.

She sips her espresso.

AMERICAN WOMAN  
Research? You must have an amazing job!

ELEANOR  
(conspiratorially)  
I'm a spy. Don't tell anyone.  
(then)  
Good luck with the fountain.

She finishes her espresso and heads out of the cafe. She takes off her engagement ring and puts it in a tin of Altoids.

**EXT. PIAZZA NAVONA**

Eleanor leans against a bench making notes on butterfly-clipped script, reading *THE SPY WHO CAME IN FROM THE COLD* by John le Carré.

All around the piazza tourists take pictures, Italians walk quickly, and vendors sell souvenirs and caricature portraits. It feels vibrant and alive.

An AMERICAN BACKPACKER (20s/30s, goofy, University of Texas frat shirt, stupid sunglasses) walks up to Eleanor.

BACKPACKER

Sorry to bother you. I love those books. How far along are you?

She looks up at this guy, completely sure he's never met a book he wanted to read.

She thumbs her ring finger. No ring, no armor against morons.

ELEANOR

Oh, really. What are some of your favorites?

BACKPACKER

Oh, um, *Skyfall* is probably my favorite. *Goldeneye* was dope, though, too.

ELEANOR

(with a smirk)

The books are so much better than the movies, don't you think?

BACKPACKER

Oh, for sure, yeah. Hey, so, what are you doing tonight? Me and some buddies were gonna go out.

He gestures at aforementioned buddies, a group of dudes that look identical to him.

Then, a tour group lead by **LUCAS** (early 30s, English, intentionally disheveled, alluring) walks through her sight line toward the Fiumi Fountain.

LUCAS

This is the Fiumi Fountain, or Fontana dei Quattro Fiumi. It was sculpted for Pope Innocent the tenth representing the four continents of papal influence.

(MORE)

LUCAS (CONT'D)

The cost of it could have fed people on those continents, but what's hunger when you have the opportunity for an homage.

Eleanor giggles at the joke. The Backpacker looks over to see what she's laughing at. Eleanor puts her book in her bag and stands up.

She makes eye contact with Lucas, he smiles at her, and her stomach jumps. It's like the rest of the world disappears. She hasn't felt this viscerally attracted to someone in YEARS. Ever?

The Backpacker returns his attention to Eleanor much to her annoyance.

BACKPACKER

So, yeah, do you want to do something tonight?

ELEANOR

Not particularly. By the way, none of those movies were based on books and this is not an Ian Fleming novel.

BACKPACKER

Who's Ian Fleming?

She walks away from him, rolling her eyes, and joins the back of the tour group.

LUCAS

The River God representing the Americas sits on a pile of gold, a symbol of the riches there for the taking. A very Christ-like attitude, indeed.

Lucas looks at Eleanor again to check if she's joined the group. She grins at him. They hold eye contact for a little too long and he loses his place slightly.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Sorry, where were we? Aqueducts? The barbarian invasions?

She looks at the Fiumi Fountain, an awe-inspiring piece of sculpture. She zones out a little bit.

**INT. BLACK BOX THEATRE**

Eleanor stands on stage holding a script, across from Noah (early 30s, American, physically dissimilar to Lucas, we recognize him from her phone). They're both dressed down in rehearsal clothes.

When Eleanor writes something, she imagines the scenes in a black box theatre and works through story problems, and personal problems.

Eleanor sets the scene.

ELEANOR

At the end of the first sequence,  
should she meet her handler at a  
fountain? Loud and public?

NOAH

Instead of a conversation, they  
should be doing something.

She sits down and takes out a pen and starts writing on her script pages.

NOAH (CONT'D)

So, you're going to Italy?

ELEANOR

I have to go for research.

NOAH

You have to go to modern day Italy  
to research a movie about spies in  
the 1930s. A movie that you're  
doing a character pass on.

ELEANOR

I'm noting your sarcasm. And yes. I  
do.

NOAH

You don't think the timing is a  
little suspect? Why did you take  
your engagement ring off?

ELEANOR

Noah, I can't do this right now. I  
have to figure out this movie.

He gestures around the empty theatre.

NOAH

Isn't this exactly what this space is for? And isn't this a version of a fight we had before you left?

ELEANOR

I don't want to think about us right now, though. It's overwhelming.

NOAH

Can't we just talk about it?

ELEANOR

You know this is how I process things.

NOAH

Please just talk to me.

Lucas snaps her out of her mind.

**EXT. PIAZZA NAVONA**

Eleanor snaps back to the Piazza. Lucas stands in front of her. The tourists take photos of themselves in front of the fountain.

LUCAS

We're moving on to that fountain over there, interloper.

ELEANOR

An homage to a different pope?

LUCAS

Rome is a mosaic of pope homages.

He walks back to the head of the group, leaving her grinning.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

By the way, this restaurant is fantastic.

Eleanor makes note of the restaurant. He notices her writing it down. Right now, she's the only audience he cares about.

When they make eye contact again and her stomach drops again, Noah appears beside her.

NOAH

Did you go to Italy to do research  
or take off your engagement ring  
and flirt with tour guides?

She looks back at Lucas, at his hands, at his shoulders, at his everything, and, overcome, leaves quickly back toward her Airbnb.

**EXT. ROMAN APARTMENT BUILDING**

Lucas walks up to a classically beautiful Roman building, letting himself in the front door. SIGNORA RUSSO, an old Italian widow who loves Lucas, walks out carrying a bag of potting soil as big as her torso.

LUCAS

(lightly accented Italian)  
*Here, let me help you with that.*

He carries the soil over to a huge empty pot in front of the building.

SIGNORA RUSSO

*Thank you, Lucas.*

LUCAS

*Planting your Easter perennials?*

Lucas opens the bag of soil for her, while she readies the plants.

SIGNORA RUSSO

*I love this time of year. More than  
New Years, it's an opportunity to  
reckon with your year and face the  
year to come.*

Lucas nods as he helps her put the plants into the pot. She swats his hands away.

SIGNORA RUSSO (CONT'D)

*It's a beautiful evening. Go out  
with your friends.*

He puts his hands up and heads to the door.

SIGNORA RUSSO (CONT'D)

*Oh, before you go though, could you  
carry this up the stairs?*

With a smile, he picks up a terracotta pot full of gardening tools and takes it into the building.

**EXT. LA TAVERNA DEI FORI IMPERIALI - EVENING**

Eleanor stares at a menu at the restaurant Lucas pointed out on the tour.

She looks for some root words she might recognize. She looks up at the WAITER staring down at her and then reverts her gaze back to the menu.

Under pressure, she points to two things, one from two distinct sections.

ELEANOR  
*Questa e questa.*

WAITER  
(heavily accented English)  
Are you sure?

Eleanor hands him her menu, resolute.

ELEANOR  
*Si.*

She pulls a handful of script pages out of her bag. They're scribbled on. A mess.

Lucas walks past the restaurant, checking if the cute girl from the tour followed his recommendation.

She did.

Pausing a second, he considers crashing her one person party. She pushes hair out of her face. He decides to do it.

LUCAS  
You're the girl that stole a tour  
from me, right?

She looks up and her body immediately responds.

ELEANOR  
*Adult woman* that stole a tour from  
you. Couldn't possibly be  
considered more than eavesdropping,  
though?

LUCAS  
Theft is in the eye of the victim.  
I have been thusly robbed of a few  
dozen euros.

ELEANOR  
Who knew theft and beauty had so  
much in common.

LUCAS  
I'm Lucas Evans, by the way.

ELEANOR  
Eleanor Allen.

He looks at the script pages on her table and raises his  
eyebrows in recognition.

LUCAS  
The playwright?

ELEANOR  
Yes, how did you know that?

LUCAS  
I saw your play last year. The one  
about the nuns. It was quite  
moving. It won a few awards even,  
right?

ELEANOR  
(fidgeting)  
Everyone has bad taste and we had  
aggressive producers.  
(pivoting)  
Do you live around here?

LUCAS  
Not good at taking compliments?

ELEANOR  
You can take the girl out of  
England.

The waiter interrupts her with food. It's two soups, one with  
rice and one without. The waiter sets them down.

WAITER  
Here is your order, madam.

Eleanor stuffs down the humiliation.

ELEANOR  
Yes, wonderful. Thank you.

LUCAS  
(in Italian)  
*Can we get two martinis, please?*

Lucas sits down across from her. She looks at his hands, his shoulders, his everything.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
I'll take one of these as payment  
for the tour.

She leans across, whispering.

ELEANOR  
They were in two different  
sections.

LUCAS  
(leaning in)  
Happens all the time.

Their faces almost touch.

ELEANOR  
No, it doesn't.

LUCAS  
No, it doesn't.

She sits back.

ELEANOR  
So, how did you end up in Rome,  
helping flailing Englishwomen order  
dinner?

LUCAS  
I read art history with an emphasis  
on the Italian Renaissance. I  
always had a fantasy of living  
here. And with this job, I get to  
walk around, talk about art I've  
always loved, meet people who have  
been waiting their whole lives to  
make this trip. They're so grateful  
to be here and I get to play a role  
in that. It's rather dreamy, don't  
you think?

The waiter comes back with their drinks.

ELEANOR  
I think that's the fun of being an  
ex-pat. It's like cosplaying as a  
different nationality. Like, what  
if I had an American free-  
spiritedness today?

(MORE)

ELEANOR (CONT'D)  
(valley girl)  
What's your sign?

LUCAS  
Leo, obviously.

ELEANOR  
Obviously.

LUCAS  
I sometimes think ex-pats have a better read on a country than the people who grew up there.

ELEANOR  
Yes, when you grow up somewhere, you're too in the stew of it to see the comedy and drama.

LUCAS  
Exactly. Being foreign here is fun. People don't know if I speak Italian or not when they see me so I can decide in that moment who to be. It's like hiding in plain sight.

ELEANOR  
All the world's a stage.

LUCAS  
And all the men and women merely players.

ELEANOR  
You really are quite the romantic.

LUCAS  
Of course. Aren't you?

ELEANOR  
I aspire to be a romantic.

LUCAS  
Here's to aspirations.

They cheers, holding eye contact with a smile for a split second too long.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
And, what brought you all the way to Rome to order two soups?

ELEANOR

I'm working on a project that partially takes place here.

LUCAS

Is that the part you're working on now?

She looks down at her pages, full of notes and stickies.

ELEANOR

Yes. Basically it's about two spies one pretending to be a pilot, the other an actress, and this is their flashback meetcute. The scene right now seems to have been written by a man who's never met a woman.

LUCAS

Do you want to do the scene? I did a little acting in college.

ELEANOR

I only have the bad version.

LUCAS

The bad version sounds pretty fun.

ELEANOR

Do the scene right here?

LUCAS

That's what piazzas are for! Let's finish the soup and then do the bad scene.

ELEANOR

To be honest, I hate soup.

They down the rest of their martinis, gather the pages, and leave cash on the table.

WAITER

(to Lucas)

*What the fuck, man? I was going to ask her out!*

LUCAS

Sorry, don't speak Italian.

Eleanor laughs and they walk briskly to the far side of the piazza.

**EXT. PIAZZA - NIGHT**

They walk toward a statue with a sitting ledge around it.

ELEANOR

Oh, look! A statue celebrating a man who conquered something! How novel!

LUCAS

No, he's actually the saint of something. Probably conquering.

(then)

Okay, do you want to read scene directions?

ELEANOR

Yes...

Eleanor organizes her script pages, leafing through to find the scene.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Thomas Binder, thirties, Austrian, sits alone nursing a scotch.

Lucas does the scene work following the script.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Then, Rita Reynolds walks into the bar. Twenty-six, American, thick red hair, long legs. She sits next to Thomas.

Eleanor sits next to Lucas on the Piazza bench. Lucas leans over her to look at the pages.

LUCAS

(doing Arnold Schwarzenegger)

What's a girl like you doing in a place like this?

ELEANOR

(doing Katherine Hepburn)

I'm shooting a picture here.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

As she's switching the cross of her legs, she stumbles out of her chair and right into his arms.

Eleanor does the same. Lucas catches her. Their faces are extremely close. She desperately wants to kiss him.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)  
Um, and then he says:

Lucas gets even closer to her face to read the script.

ARNOLD  
You could have just asked me to  
dance.

They stay there for another beat, faces close, bodies entwined.

LUCAS  
It will be brilliant. You're  
brilliant.

She wiggles out of his hold. He clears his throat.

ELEANOR  
It will be a lot of work.

LUCAS  
There's a gelato place down the  
road here that's incredible.

ELEANOR  
My AirBnb is right there. I've had  
gelato every day. It's the only  
place my Italian is remotely  
passable.

He stands up and then offers his hand to help her up as well. They hold hands for a second until she finds an excuse to break and play with her hair.

They walk down a cobblestone road to the gelato promised land.

LUCAS  
Have you been to that club that's  
right there?

ELEANOR  
No, I haven't. Going to a nightclub  
alone is a level of loneliness into  
which I'm not ready to descend.

LUCAS  
Lonely? Going places alone is how  
you meet people.

ELEANOR

That's never been me. Even at a party where I know everyone I find a way to talk to no one.

LUCAS

I think we have to go to the club, Eleanor Allen.

ELEANOR

Absolutely not.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Dressed like this? I look like a punchline of a playwright.

LUCAS

Definitely dressed like that.

Eleanor waffles for a second. He's just so hot.

ELEANOR

Only for a little while. I really need my brain tomorrow.

LUCAS

Sure, only for a little while.

#### **INT. NIGHTCLUB**

They have stayed for longer than a little while.

Pulsating Italian discotech. Everyone dressed up to be Out On The Town. Oozing with sexuality.

Eleanor and Lucas dance, take shots, and have the time of their lives.

In the middle of the dance floor, overtaken by the music and the booze, they kiss. It's electric. It stops the music and the people around them.

ELEANOR

Do you want to --

LUCAS

Yes.

#### **EXT. AIRBNB BUILDING**

They're making out as she fumbles to find her keys.

And then flushed and excited, struggles with the door.

ELEANOR

These fucking European doors.

She finally gets it open and they practically run up the stairs.

**INT. AIRBNB - NIGHT**

Eleanor opens the door to her Airbnb while making out with Lucas. They walk through the small apartment peeling their own, and each other's, clothes off.

Outside, the noise of the club. But, they're too wrapped up in each other to notice.

He has the gentleness of someone who's been with the same woman for a very long time, but with an awakened lust. And, she hasn't actively wanted to fuck someone in years.

Their chemistry is undeniable.

It's clumsy but fun and exhilarating.

Off on their noises blending into the cacophony of the piazza.

**INT. AIRBNB - DAY**

In the sober light of day, the guilt washes over her. She looks over at the sleeping man, the first non-Noah sleeping man she's woken up next to in ten years.

QUICK FLASHES of Noah in their bed, Noah bringing her coffee in bed, the sounds of him brushing his teeth, washing his face. Their morning routine, the same thing for so, so long. The comfort and boredom of it.

The construction noises start, waking Lucas up, pulling her back to her body and out of her head.

LUCAS

Is it like this every morning?

ELEANOR

Yes, it's a nightmare.

Talking about Noah or the construction? Both?

They lie there in silence for a minute, both processing for a second that they cheated on their partners and are now in bed with a relative stranger.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

I have to make a train to Milan in about an hour.

LUCAS

What's in Milan?

ELEANOR

My closest friend from Erasmus is in town for a few days.

LUCAS

Do you know how to get to the train station from here?

ELEANOR

I can figure it out.

LUCAS

Like you figured out restaurants?

He gets out of bed and walks to the desk, strewn with pages from Eleanor's script. He finds a pen in a drawer.

She watches him get out of bed and pull on his jeans. That feeling of a one night stand ending, knowing you'll probably never touch that body again.

He walks over to the desk and draws a little map. He includes a key with the basic Italian she'll see. Entrance, Exit, that sort of thing.

She watches him draw a map for her, so thoughtful, when Noah appears in the room.

NOAH

You're a terrible, terrible person.

She puts a pillow over her face.

He walks over with the map, taking the pillow off her face.

LUCAS

Phone?

She hands it to him. He calls himself from her phone.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

There. In case you get lost, call me.

She looks at the map. It's sickeningly charming.

He kisses her forehead.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
*Buona fortuna, bellissima.*

**INT. LUCAS APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM**

Lucas lets himself into his apartment where his girlfriend (gasp) **CHIARA** (30, striking) rushes around packing.

He's surprised, and a little panicked, to see her.

Between the two of them, they speak a kind of Italian-English mix.

LUCAS  
Chiara? I thought you were going straight from Naples to Como?

CHIARA  
I was but I stopped in to grab some things before heading up there. Have you seen that floral dress?

She disappears into another room.

LUCAS  
I went out with Mateo last night. I slept over there.

CHIARA (O.C.)  
How is he?

LUCAS  
He's fine, I'm going to take a shower.

He heads into the bathroom as she comes back into the living room holding her dress.

LUCAS (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Oh, and maybe on the way back from Como, we could go to that show that's opening in Venice? There's a Titian I would really like to see.

CHIARA  
You know I hate Venice. But you should go. You'll be in Como by Sunday right? Are you sure you don't want to come now?

(MORE)

CHIARA (CONT'D)

You could get someone to cover your little tours.

Dripping with disdain. Hates Tourism.

**INT. LUCAS APARTMENT - BATHROOM**

He rolls his eyes as he undresses. He turns the shower on.

LUCAS

I'll just take the train up on Saturday.

CHIARA (O.S.)

I'll never understand why you like the train so much.

She rushes into the bathroom as Lucas steps into the shower.

CHIARA (CONT'D)

You know, maybe you could talk to dad again about that position?

The fight they've had one hundred times. He doesn't respond.

CHIARA (CONT'D)

Lucas?

LUCAS

Yeah. Sure. I'll talk to him.

He pauses for a second. Do I want to have this fight again? Right now? Sure. Why not.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

You know I like my job, Kiki.

Now she doesn't respond. She packs up her toiletries.

CHIARA

We don't have to talk about this now.

(talking about it now)

You're so smart and could do so much.

LUCAS

You mean I could make more money.

CHIARA

You say money like it's poisoned. You need money to survive, Lucas.

LUCAS

I make enough money.

She zips up her toiletries bag and grabs it, ready to go. Conversation is done.

CHIARA

Love you. See you soon.

LUCAS

Love you.

She walks out of the bathroom.

In the shower, he hangs his head. The adrenaline of almost getting caught leaving his body as his own guilt rushes in.

**INT. TRAIN - LATER**

Eleanor stares out the window, watching Tuscany speed past her.

**INT. BLACK BOX THEATRE**

Eleanor and Noah stand opposing each other, reading from scripts.

ELEANOR

Would she be suspicious here? Maybe it's--

Noah puts his script down.

NOAH

I'm not working on this scene. How could you do this to me? To us? Run away to Italy and then immediately fuck an actor? Like some kind of cliché?

ELEANOR

He's not actively an actor. He acted in college.

NOAH

Are you fucking kidding me?

ELEANOR

I know. I know. It's awful. It's so stupid. I feel sick to my stomach. My head hurts. I don't know what's going on.

NOAH

You're self-sabotaging. That's what's going on. We have a good thing. And because of whatever the fuck from your childhood, you're trying to destroy it.

ELEANOR

Do you think that's what it is? Am I so fucked up that happiness makes me squeamish?

NOAH

Jesus. This is just... and where's your ring?

ELEANOR

I... I don't know... I didn't want to answer questions about it.

NOAH

Questions? How deep are questions getting about an engagement ring?

ELEANOR

I don't know. I don't know. I don't know. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

He tosses his script aside and walks up to her, taking both of her hands in his.

NOAH

It's okay, no worries. We don't have to get married and I won't be mad at you at all and you can still depend on me as much as you currently do and it will be absolutely fine. I don't care at all.

ELEANOR

Sounds like you do care.

NOAH

Well, I'm you. At least this internalized Catholic guilt version of me is. Didn't you already do a play about your Catholic hang ups?

#### **INT. TRAIN**

Eleanor buries her head in her hands. Fuck.

**EXT. MILAN TRAIN STATION - DAY**

Eleanor gets off the train, surrounded by bustle, looking for her friend. On Lucas' map, she searches for Exit. She finds her way out and there's her friend **MARINA** (29, Italian).

They rush at each other, like no time has passed.

You look the same. No, you look the same.

**EXT. SEMPIONE PARK - DAY**

They're eating panini on a bench in a beautiful park and reminiscing.

ELEANOR

It was my sluttiest year by far.

MARINA

Oh, me too. I wasn't out yet and over compensating.

ELEANOR

You slept with some very good looking men.

MARINA

Making beautiful men work that hard and still fail did *kind of* get me off. It was confusing. Didn't you hook up with some French guy who didn't speak English?

ELEANOR

They don't teach you how to say, "go down on me," in French classes.

MARINA

Misogyny.

ELEANOR

All around us.

Eleanor takes a bite of her sandwich, looking more contemplative than she should.

MARINA

What's going on with you? You seem kind of down?

ELEANOR

I'm a little hungover.

MARINA

Having a good time in Rome?

With a deep sigh, Eleanor tells the truth.

ELEANOR

I went out with someone last night and we got really drunk and had sex so now not only do I feel a bit of guilt that could swallow me whole but I also have a nasty head ache.

MARINA

Guilt serves no one.

ELEANOR

But, I cheated on Noah.

MARINA

Sexual morality isn't a binary. Straight people are too rigid.

ELEANOR

It's objectively shitty to cheat on someone.

MARINA

Sure, but it's not the most interesting question, is it? I mean, yes, if Noah finds out, he will be hurt. But, there are a lot of questions before that. First and foremost, how was the sex?

More guilt.

ELEANOR

It was kind of great.

MARINA

Okay, why? What was great about it? Was it great in a pornographic way or did it highlight something about your relationship with Noah?

ELEANOR

I thought your PhD was in Comparative Literature.

MARINA

Babes, this isn't that tough to figure out.

ELEANOR

Last night was the first time I've had fun with someone in years. Lucas is playful and funny and adventurous and he understands my work in a totally different way.

MARINA

Oh, we're naming the boy?

ELEANOR

I'm so fucked. Noah is afraid of roller coasters. Noah eats the same thing for breakfast and lunch every single day and has since I met him. I told him that I wanted to go on a big American-style road trip. See all of that weird stuff, like pink hotels and dinosaur sculptures and the world's biggest whatever.

MARINA

The best parts of America.

ELEANOR

Truly. No one does camp better than them. And he came back with a spreadsheet of how it wouldn't be financially prudent, the crime stats of every state we would cross, how each tourist attraction I mentioned is built adjacent to a site of indigenous genocide.

MARINA

That's what you loved about him.

ELEANOR

I do love that about him. And I also hate it about him. He's a great person and would be a great husband but --

MARINA

Husband?

ELEANOR

Oh... yeah... he got a promotion, he turned thirty, and then he asked me to marry him.

MARINA

What?! Where's the ring?

Eleanor reaches for her bag and it's GONE.

ELEANOR

Oh my god. My purse. My phone. My train tickets. My ring. My Altoids!

MARINA

Altoids?

**EXT. MILAN TRAIN STATION**

Marina punches in her pin at the ATM while Eleanor uses Marina's phone to reach out to her Airbnb host.

MARINA

I'll talk to the conductor. If they have your name on their passenger list, they'll let you on.

ELEANOR

Okay. Should I tell Noah about this? What do I do?

MARINA

Sometimes the universe forces us to face things we're scared of.

Marina takes the cash out and hands it to Eleanor. They look at the big clock in the station. Eleanor hands Marina back her phone.

MARINA (CONT'D)

Break ups aren't as scary as they seem. It's far scarier to be tethered to someone you find ridiculous.

Marina points at a gelato place.

MARINA (CONT'D)

You have a few minutes before your train.

They walk toward the gelato place.

ELEANOR

I don't think Noah is ridiculous. He's genuinely kind and sweet and patient. Things are not exciting but maybe they're not supposed to be.

MARINA

Do you want to see Lucas again?

ELEANOR

No. It would only make things more complicated.

MARINA

My darling friend, life only exists in complications.

They approach the case. The VENDOR waits for the order.

ELEANOR

What do you want? My gelato Italian is genuinely good.

MARINA

Pistachio.

ELEANOR

*Hi, my friend would like pistachio and I would like rose, please.*

Eleanor looks at Marina, pleased with herself.

MARINA

There's a case to be made that the only Italian one needs is gelato Italian.

ELEANOR

I will take a win where I can find one.

The vendor hands over the gelato.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

The nicest thing about an engagement ring is it wards off idiots from approaching you. It's like moron armor.

MARINA

You could also just tell idiots to fuck off.

ELEANOR

But, Marina, that would require a confrontation!

MARINA

Right, of course, how silly of me.

**INT. LUCAS APARTMENT - LATER**

Lucas sketches in a book propped up on something approaching a drafting table.

His working area is surrounded by art books and sketches. He's an almost obsessively creative person.

His phone rings. Caller ID says "POLICIA."

LUCAS

*Hello?*

POLICEMAN

*Hello, can I speak to Lucas? This is Lieutenant Silvestre in Milan.*

LUCAS

*How can I help you?*

POLICEMAN

*We found a bag that had a strange map in it with your name and number. It seems there's an American drivers' license for Eleanor Allen? Would you know how to reach her?*

God damn it. This was supposed to be a one time thing. He lets out a sigh.

LUCAS

*Yes, I can reach her.*

POLICEMAN

*Do you have a pen?*

He grabs a pen and starts writing.

**EXT. ELEANOR'S ROMAN BUILDING - SAME DAY**

Eleanor digs around a potted plant outside the building. Passing Italians scoff at the obvious tourist.

She finds the key and lets herself into the building.

**INT. AIRBNB - BATHROOM**

She rinses her hands off in the bathroom and sees the disposed of condom wrapper in the trash. A wash of guilt takes over.

**INT. AIRBNB - BEDROOM**

She opens up her iPad, clearing the Netflix screen. She has an iMessage from an unknown number: "The Milanese police called me. They have your purse."

Holy shit. She can get her purse back?!

She FaceTimes the number. It's Lucas.

ELEANOR

Sorry for the FaceTime. It's all iPad has. Wait, where are you?

She can see his beautiful apartment behind him.

LUCAS

I'm at home.

ELEANOR

You *live* in a place that looks like that? It's not some premium Zoom background?

Lucas changes the subject.

LUCAS

The police told me where to go. Do you think you'll be able to find your way from the train? Is your Erasmus friend there?

ELEANOR

No, she's flying to Naples this evening. I'll be fine. What's the address?

LUCAS

I'll text it to you.

She inputs it into Google Maps. It's walking to a metro and then walking to a tram and then walking again etc. It's complicated.

There's no way she won't get lost.

ELEANOR

(assessing)

Yeah... I can definitely... I'll be okay.

Lucas pauses. He doesn't want to hang out with her again because it's too tempting, but he feels like this girl could get completely lost if she goes by herself.

And, let's be real, these two want to see each other again.

LUCAS

I have to go north anyway. I can go to Milan with you and help you get your bag back.

ELEANOR

No. Really. I can handle it.

She looks at the highlighted map. It's daunting. He can see her face, betraying her anxiety.

LUCAS

Let's take the train up tomorrow and then I'll continue up to Lake Como from there. No big deal at all.

ELEANOR

Lake Como? You live in this apartment and vacation with George and Amal, do you?

LUCAS

An international man of mystery, what can I say. And tomorrow, I'll be your knight in shining speed train.

She can't help but grin. She's insanely charmed by this guy. And hates herself for it.

ELEANOR

Meet you tomorrow.

They hang up.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

I'm not going to sleep with him again.

#### **INT. LUCAS APARTMENT**

He packs up his stuff for his trip to Como. He takes a look around their apartment, his life with Chiara. A life he increasingly feels out of place in.

Chiara decided not to pack the floral dress. He runs his fingers over the fabric.

He zips up his bag.

LUCAS

I'm not going to sleep with her again.

**INT. AIRBNB**

Eleanor puts some things in a tote bag for the trip to Milan. Keys, a notebook, a pen, and her passport. She has no other things.

She checks her iPad and sees a subjectless email from Noah.

Everything that email could be flashes through her head.

"i heard about Lucas from Marina"

"i don't think we should get married"

"could you send me a pic of the ring on your finger?!"

She closes her iPad without reading it. And decides to leave her iPad.

**EXT. ROME TRAIN STATION - MORNING**

Eleanor walks up to the train station and sees him standing at the front, holding coffee and pastry for her. He waves with his other hand. She waves and doesn't know what to do with her face. Smile? Not smile? Nothing?

In her distraction, almost gets hit by a bicyclist who then yells at her in Italian.

ELEANOR

I'm so sorry. *Pardon. Mi dispiace.*

Lucas walks up to her, and puts his hand on her back.

LUCAS

You okay?

ELEANOR

You didn't have to get me pastry.

LUCAS

Would be a weird world if I *had* to get you pastry.

She smiles but avoids eye contact.

ELEANOR

Where is our train?

He leads the way.

LUCAS

Let's try not to get hit by another  
bicycle. Would be wildly  
inconvenient.

ELEANOR

I'll do my best.

**INT. TRAIN**

They settle in. She immediately pulls out a notepad and pen.

He pulls out his sketchbook and pencils.

They can do this.

She turns back to her blank page. Nothing more intimidating  
than a blank page.

She looks up and they catch each other's eyes and look away  
again.

She writes across the top of it, "I have no ideas."

She looks out the window and catches Lucas looking at her.  
They both put their stuff down.

LUCAS

We should acknowledge that we've  
had sex.

ELEANOR

It's very early in the morning for  
acknowledgements.

LUCAS

Awkwardness is a choice. I'm a boy  
helping a girl get her purse back  
from a police station in Milan  
because her Italian is offensive  
and she would definitely get lost.  
That's it.

She takes a big sigh and puts her notepad into her bag.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Let's play a game.

ELEANOR

Game?

LUCAS

Yeah. Two truths and a lie. I'll go first.

(thinks for a beat)

I had my first kiss on New Years Eve, I lost my virginity the same day as the Diamond Jubilee, and my first girlfriend broke up with me on April Fool's Day.

ELEANOR

Going right for the sex, are we?

LUCAS

Not intentionally. First thing that came to mind.

She looks at him for a bit as we see her imagining him in those scenarios.

Kissing in front of fireworks.

An April Fool's break up. I'm breaking up with you. Seriously.

Fucking with Queen Elizabeth II on the screen.

ELEANOR

I think the Diamond Jubilee is a lie. I can't see it.

LUCAS

Royal ceremony doesn't do it for you?

ELEANOR

Not especially. Am I right though?

LUCAS

You're wrong. I only remember it was the Jubilee because my parents were watching the news downstairs.

ELEANOR

You could literally hear the Queen? That seems tantamount to sacrilege.

LUCAS

I believe it is. High treason.

ELEANOR

So, which one is the lie?

LUCAS

You didn't guess, so I don't have to tell you. Your turn.

ELEANOR

Seems unfair. Okay. Let me think for a second.

(then, pointing at elbows, knees, and knuckles)

I got this scar from falling off my bike as a child, I got this scar in a fist fight, I got this scar hiking in the Himalayas.

He looks her in the eyes for a moment, sussing it out.

Hiking in the Himalayas.

Punching someone in the face.

As a child falling off a bike.

LUCAS

There's no way you've been hiking in the Himalayas.

ELEANOR

You think it's more likely that I was in a fight so bad I scarred from it?

LUCAS

Based on very little, I get the sense you're the kind of person that processes almost everything internally but sometimes you explode and maybe, once or twice, that resulted in a scarring punch.

She feels naked. He pulls his sketchbook back out and starts drawing.

ELEANOR

You're right. I read that book *Into Thin Air* and he described how much human and yak fecal matter litters the trail. Turned me off forever.

LUCAS

It's the little things you don't consider. So, under what circumstances did you get into a fist fight?

ELEANOR  
Do I have to tell you?

LUCAS  
Only if you want to.

ELEANOR  
It was in France when I was on  
Erasmus.

LUCAS  
Oh, with your Milan friend, right?

Eleanor, a little surprised he remembered.

ELEANOR  
Yes, actually.

LUCAS  
How is she?

ELEANOR  
Eternally unbothered. Anyway, one  
of our friends lied to me about  
something dumb, I don't really  
remember but I know she lied. And  
she wouldn't own up to it. Everyone  
lies. But if you get caught, you  
have to admit it. Those are my  
rules.

LUCAS  
Tough but fair.

ELEANOR  
We were at this club in the 20th,  
drunk, and I got so angry about the  
whole thing, and hurt, betrayed, et  
cetera, I shoved her moderately  
hard and she fell down.

LUCAS  
Moderately?

ELEANOR  
I'm not a monster. She was wearing  
unstable shoes. Immediately, I felt  
terrible, so when I went to help  
her up, I was kind of shaking and  
scraped my knuckle on the rough  
concrete floor. When the security  
guard came over, it looked like I  
had a bloody hand from punching my  
friend and they made me leave.

LUCAS

Eleanor Allen, introspective, mannered, English playwright of stories of women in troubling circumstances grappling with their sexuality was once removed from a bar.

ELEANOR

Still waters and all that.

(then)

Okay, your turn. You got a whole story out of me.

LUCAS

I don't know how I'm going to top that.

ELEANOR

Have you ever hit anyone?

LUCAS

Never. I'm a lover, not a fighter Eleanor.

ELEANOR

Okay, okay. It was only that one time and I blame France.

LUCAS

Fair. They deserve it for the Vichy Regime.

ELEANOR

Exactly.

LUCAS

Okay, I have one. I've cheated on girlfriends, I'm afraid I'll die alone, and I've only ever eaten one banana.

ELEANOR

You're really not one for small talk, are you?

LUCAS

We've had sex. Small talk is a thing of the past, Eleanor.

ELEANOR

You have to stop talking about it. Jesus Christ.

LUCAS  
On Holy Saturday?

ELEANOR  
I'm a fallen Catholic. I'm allowed.

She assesses him. Eating a banana. A sad old man. Getting caught cheating.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)  
I think the banana thing is true.  
It's too specific.

Lucas gives nothing away.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)  
You're too romantic to think you'll die alone. I don't think you have trouble falling in love. I think you have trouble staying in love. The hard, boring part where you can see the other person's faults more clearly than they see them themselves and you fall into patterns and predictability and you can have whole fights with the person in your head because you know EXACTLY how they feel about everything.

LUCAS  
Are you still talking about me?

ELEANOR  
Of course. And, I absolutely believe you've cheated for all the reasons mentioned above. So, I'm gonna say the lie is that you're afraid of dying alone.

LUCAS  
Damn. I thought the radical vulnerability would throw you off. We're tied.

ELEANOR  
It's a competition?

LUCAS  
Of course it's a competition.

A pause.

ELEANOR

How many times have you cheated on girlfriends?

LUCAS

I really thought you were gonna pick the banana thing.

ELEANOR

Well I didn't. And we're stuck on this train and I told you about my most embarrassing moment.

LUCAS

I have cheated one and a half times.

ELEANOR

What is a half time?

LUCAS

My first girlfriend at uni accused me of having an "emotional affair" with my ex-girlfriend from school because we stayed in touch. I don't know how much of a dirtbag it makes me.

ELEANOR

That's a bit on your girlfriend, I think. Jealousy and possession doesn't look good on anyone. What was the one time cheating, then?

LUCAS

The actual full cheating was during my last serious girlfriend. We fell out of love but our lives were so intertwined that it was hard to get out of. A kind of golden handcuffs situation.

A brief flash to happier more romantic times with Chiara. A mirror to the Eleanor flash to her morning routine with Noah. The monotony of long term monogamy.

Lucas and Chiara in bed naked, Lucas making her cum with ease, then sex getting more boring, both of them beginning to check out, then no sex at all. Phones in bed, kiss goodnight.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

I had sex one time outside the bounds of our relationship.

ELEANOR

Full dirtbag, I'm afraid. Did you tell her?

LUCAS

No. It would only absolve my guilt and hurt her. It wasn't about her. I don't think anyway.

(then)

What about you?

ELEANOR

I've only cheated one time and I think it killed a piece of my soul.

Lucas laughs.

LUCAS

A bit dramatic, don't you think?

ELEANOR

I am a dramaturg, Lucas.

LUCAS

Ooh la la. Dramaturg.

Lucas shakes off the conversation and resets, closing his sketchbook.

ELEANOR

What were you drawing over there?

LUCAS

Just a dumb thing.

He opens up his sketchbook and she looks at it. It's Eleanor as a hot anime character on a bike with a bloody knee, holding up a fist, as a girl in platform stripper shoes lies beside her, x's for eyes, with Everest in the background.

ELEANOR

Wow, should we write a series of graphic novels?

LUCAS

Without a doubt, yes. First, let's get something to eat in the cafe car?

ELEANOR

Let's shall.

**INT. CAFE CAR**

Eleanor and Lucas sit next to a couple having a whisper fight in Italian.

ELEANOR

New York is fine. I don't want to be there forever.

LUCAS

I've loved it when I visited.

ELEANOR

That's when it's the best. It's not even really the city I mind. It's the American attitude about the city.

LUCAS

What do you mean?

ELEANOR

A friend of mine there was talking about how New York City is the center of the universe and then, gesturing to me as Exhibit A, said see, everyone in the world wants to live here. I think part of me decided to never love New York at that moment.

LUCAS

That's kind of the problem with America in general, don't you think?

ELEANOR

It's obnoxious but also kind of quaint.

A couple next to them is having a whisper fight in Italian.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

What are they saying?

LUCAS

She's asking him what's wrong and he's refusing to answer. Making something up about work.

ELEANOR

He's a bad liar.

LUCAS

(nodding)

Can't meet her eyes. That's my actor pet peeve. Eye lock. When an actor is struggling with a scene and holds eye contact in this super intense way with their scene partner.

ELEANOR

I've never noticed that.

LUCAS

Once you see it, you can't unsee it. Kids play staring contests for a reason. It's an unnatural thing to do for long conversations. I'll show you.

ELEANOR

I'm not doing a staring contest.

LUCAS

Why not. What else is going on?  
OK... go

They stare at each other.

At first it's silly.

The couple nearby starts raising their voices.

Then their staring contest gets a little intimate.

The couple nearby is also sitting in silence, not looking at each other.

Then it gets way too intimate for Eleanor and she breaks away.

ELEANOR

You win, I give.

LUCAS

See?

The man of the other couple says something to his girlfriend. She throws her drink in his face and walks away.

Lucas starts to translate.

ELEANOR

No, I understood that. Universal sign of go fuck yourself.

Then, the conductor comes on.

CONDUCTOR

*There's an issue in Milan. No trains can come or go. This train will terminate in Florence. Sorry for the inconvenience.*

A cacophony of Italian fluster. People start gathering their stuff.

ELEANOR

What? What was that?

LUCAS

Something happened in Milan. The train is stopping in Florence.

ELEANOR

What?! They can do that?

LUCAS

Sure.

The train comes to a stop. Everyone begrudgingly gathers their stuff and readies to get off.

ELEANOR

Should we rent a car, or...?

LUCAS

There's no way there are any available cars.

#### **EXT. FLORENCE TRAIN STATION**

Eleanor and Lucas walk through vendors selling various "local goods." Leather wallets made in China and plastic figurines.

ELEANOR

This is a nightmare. Are there even any Airbnbs available?

Lucas zooms out... and out... and out... on the map. Nothing.

LUCAS

Um...

ELEANOR

Lovely. What are we gonna do?

LUCAS

Maybe we could walk around? Sleep in a park? There are trains running to Milan tomorrow all day.

ELEANOR

That's the kind of thing that only sounds fun in theory but is in reality a complete disaster. Maybe a hotel?

LUCAS

Booked. Everyone is in town to go to Easter mass at the Duomo.

ELEANOR

Don't you have any friends up here? Some kind of tour guide network?

He really doesn't want to call his girlfriend about this. He doesn't respond immediately.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

A hesitation from the man who has an answer for everything.

She looks exhausted. He caves and decides to call Chiara.

LUCAS

I might. Hang on.

He walks away from Eleanor to call Chiara

Eleanor picks up a neon pink statue of David.

He calls Chiara.

INTERCUT WITH:

**EXT. LAKE COMO - SAME TIME**

Chiara walks away from a lakeside table at a restaurant with her FAMILY.

CHIARA

What's up?

Lucas

The train stopped in Florence because of some issue in Milan. Should be cleared up tomorrow but I was wondering if the apartment here is free?

CHIARA  
(annoyed)  
Let me check with dad.

Lucas watches Eleanor wander around the stalls. He catches himself gazing while on the phone with his girlfriend.

CHIARA (CONT'D)  
Hello?

LUCAS  
Yes, sorry.

CHIARA  
The apartment is free. The key's with Signora Bianchi. I'll let her know you're picking it up.

LUCAS  
Right... Signora Bianchi.

If Signora sees him with another woman, she'll call Chiara immediately.

CHIARA  
You'll be up tomorrow?

LUCAS  
Yeah, the train leaves in the morning. I should be in Milan a little before noon and then the bus is about an hour to the lake.

CHIARA  
Perfect. Dad's been asking about you.

Lucas turns his face away from Eleanor.

LUCAS  
Tell him I love him too. See you soon.

He turns around and there's Eleanor. He's unsure if she heard him or not.

ELEANOR  
Did you find a place?

LUCAS  
I did.

ELEANOR

Dirtbags get shit done. Could we go to a pharmacy or something? I don't have anything.

**INT. PHARMACY**

While Eleanor shops around for toothbrushes and face wash, Lucas finds the condom section and pockets some.

She comes up behind him.

ELEANOR

Ready? I need to go to Zara, too.

**INT. ZARA**

While Lucas shops around for boxer briefs, Eleanor pockets some pretty black underwear.

She meets him at the check out aisle holding something to wear that night and a shirt for the next day.

LUCAS

Did you find everything you needed?

ELEANOR

Everything and more.

They move forward in line.

LUCAS

After this, should we go take a nap?

ELEANOR

Yes, please. I haven't had proper rest without a club or construction in weeks.

**EXT. FLORENTINE APARTMENT BUILDING**

They walk up to a perfectly maintained building from the Renaissance era. A fucking postcard of a Florentine building.

LUCAS

There's a cool perfume store over there, if you want to check it out while I get the keys.

ELEANOR

I'm so tired, Lucas. I can't go into another store.

LUCAS

No, I promise it's worth a pop in. They've been making fragrance since the conquest or something.

ELEANOR

Oh wow. You had me at conquest.

LUCAS

I'll meet you back here in a few minutes.

She heads towards a tiny wooden door as he punches in the code for the building.

But, as he walks through, she comes in behind him.

ELEANOR

It was closed. Holy Saturday.

LUCAS

The gift that keeps on giving.

ELEANOR

You can feel that so many DeMedici's died of gout in this building.

LUCAS

The ghosts are pleasant and well fed. Not to fret, little Ellie.

They walk into a courtyard that feels like the Secret Garden.

ELEANOR

This is the Italy I was promised.

Lucas gestures to a bench.

LUCAS

Do you want to absorb it all there while I get the keys?

She takes a seat and Lucas walks across the courtyard to the resident manager, **SIGNORA BIANCHI**, another old Italian woman who loves Lucas and calls him Luca.

SIGNORA BIANCHI

*Luca! You're too skinny.*

LUCAS  
*I've been told that. You look  
 fantastic as always.*

SIGNORA BIANCHI  
*Oh stop, stop. Chiara called. I  
 have the key for you.*

Then, she notices Eleanor.

SIGNORA BIANCHI (CONT'D)  
*Who is that?*

LUCAS  
*Oh, my cousin. She's in town from  
 New York. Easter in Italy.*

Signora looks between them deciding if she believes it or not. She disappears into her apartment and he hangs his head.

He looks at Eleanor taking in the courtyard. She catches him watching her and gets self-conscious.

Signora re-emerges with the key.

She pats his face.

SIGNORA BIANCHI  
*Be good, Luca. Chiara is a very  
 special girl.*

LUCAS  
*Thank you, Signora, I know.*

He turns back to Eleanor holding up the key. Signora shakes her head at Eleanor and goes back into her apartment.

Lucas walks back to her.

ELEANOR  
*This country fucking hates me. I've  
 never felt so universally reviled.*

LUCAS  
*Don't take it personally. They  
 invented fascism.*

**INT. FLORENTINE APARTMENT**

It's incredible. Less modern than the Roman apartment but charming, stunning, dreamy, classic.

ELEANOR

Am I allowed to breathe in here?  
Who is your friend that you have  
access to this?

LUCAS

I may or may not know the richest  
family in Italy.

She looks at him to assess if he's lying or not. He's not.

ELEANOR

The class system is so different in  
the States. I forgot what it was  
like here. When people there talk  
about "old money," they mean like  
1912.

He nods while looking around. It's overwhelming to him too.  
Hence staying in the relationship forever.

LUCAS

No matter where rich people are  
from, they make you sing for your  
supper.

(then)

Going to Cambridge with people  
who'd spent their whole lives in  
public schools was strange.

ELEANOR

You're not someone that spent his  
whole life in public school?

LUCAS

No, certainly not. Just familiar  
with their ways. I think my accent  
changed a bit at university.

ELEANOR

No one in the states can clock mine  
as a class signifier. It's the one  
thing I like about New York.

She delicately puts her hand on a side table with an  
intricate top.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

I love this.

LUCAS

I made that.

ELEANOR

No you didn't.

LUCAS

Yes, I did. I took this woodworking class when I moved here and was really into it for a while.

ELEANOR

This is so beautiful. And you gave it to your friend's family?

LUCAS

Yeah, they really liked it and asked for it and I knew they would take care of it.

ELEANOR

How long have they had this apartment?

LUCAS

Centuries maybe. Multiple wars at the very least.

ELEANOR

My apartment in New York was built in 1986.

LUCAS

When did you move to the states?

ELEANOR

When I was twenty-two, my mum died and my dad kind of fell apart. I applied to a creative writing MFA and got in. England was just too... I don't know how to explain it. Haunted. Steeped in middling memories.

LUCAS

Are you the oldest?

ELEANOR

Did my stubbornness give me away?

LUCAS

(touching her arm)

That must have been hard. To be the oldest daughter losing your mum. I'm sorry you had to go through that.

She's a little dumbstruck by the insightfulness.

ELEANOR

Yeah, it really was.

It hangs in the air for a minute. He wants to hold her but doesn't know if it's appropriate. Before he can make the move, she backs away.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

You know, as much as I would love to dig into my mother's death with you right now, I feel like I'm going to fall over. Where can I nap?

He gestures down the hall.

**INT. FLORENTINE APARTMENT - BEDROOM**

Eleanor walks into an exquisite bedroom, and immediately collapses on the bed.

**INT. BLACK BOX THEATRE**

Eleanor stands on a stage with Noah.

NOAH

You think this guy could make you happy? Anyone can be a good guy for twenty-four hours.

ELEANOR

That's so cynical.

NOAH

Cynicism is just realism re-branded by dreamers.

ELEANOR

Oh my god. I hate myself.

NOAH

His schtick will get boring. Exciting at first, grating long term.

ELEANOR

Maybe he's here to show me that I'm just not happy with you.

Lucas swaps in for Noah.

LUCAS

The notion of commitment in general is a little silly, don't you think? This isn't the medieval times.

ELEANOR

What if our relationship was cosplaying the medieval times?

LUCAS

And I really get to be a knight in shining armor?

ELEANOR

And you can really rescue me from a castle?

They both kind of giggle.

LUCAS

We get along so easily.

ELEANOR

We don't know each other. There's no baggage behind literally any of it. After my mum died, you didn't have to pick up the pieces of my entire family. We're just having fun.

LUCAS

Again, what else is the point of life if not to have fun? You don't get some kind of merit badge for enduring a boring relationship.

**INT. FLORENTINE APARTMENT - BEDROOM**

She wakes up to the sound of a shower. She rolls over onto her back. The shower stops.

Lucas knocks on her door.

ELEANOR

Yeah?

LUCAS

I was thinking dinner in an hour? There's a restaurant I love that's not too far from here.

ELEANOR  
It's not some insanelly expensive  
Michelin thing, right?

LUCAS  
No, no. I'm not a millionaire. I  
only know them.

ELEANOR  
I'll get ready.

**INT. FLORENTINE APARTMENT - SALON**

Eleanor walks into the room in a dress, hair managed, self  
rested. Like the reveal of Kathleen Turner in Romancing the  
Stone when they dance in the courtyard.

LUCAS  
You look...

ELEANOR  
No, no, no if you say something  
nice my face will get so red it  
won't calm down for an hour.

LUCAS  
Terrible. You look absolutely  
horrendous. Embarrassing even.

ELEANOR  
Thank you, I tried.

**EXT. FLORENCE**

They walk down the streets past a million couples on  
honeymoons, study abroad students making out or crying,  
foodies waiting in line for The Sandwich at Procobrado.

Eleanor and Lucas try to check the other person out without  
them noticing. They're falling in love a little bit and  
feeling odd about it.

A bit of a Graduate moment of two people silently walking  
together.

He's asking himself if he should take her hand.

She's asking herself if she should run the other direction  
before she falls head over heels.

**INT. CLUB CULINARIO TOSCANO**

This restaurant is fucking dope, by the way.

Eleanor and Lucas sit at a table. Eleanor scrutinizes the mostly Italian menu. A WAITER comes by.

FLORENTINE WAITER

Welcome to Club Culinario. Do you know what you would like?

ELEANOR

*Vorrei --*

Lucas puts his hand up to her.

LUCAS

*She doesn't speak Italian. Can we get the polpette and the tortelli please? And the salumi to start. Whatever you think we should pair with. A light red of some kind.*

FLORENTINE WAITER

*We have a Grignolino that I think would work well.*

LUCAS

*Fantastic.*

The waiter nods and leaves.

ELEANOR

What did you get?

LUCAS

A few soups for you and actual dinner for me.

ELEANOR

I'm never going to live that down, am I?

They notice a table near them with two American couples, ALEX, LUCY, TYLER, AMELIA, watching them order.

AMELIA

Sorry for eavesdropping. You ordered with so much confidence.

LUCAS

You should get the *polpette di bollito* and the *tortelli*, at least. Let the guy pick your wine.

TYLER  
 (defiantly)  
 I'll pick the wine.

Lucy rolls her eyes. Amelia puts her hand on Tyler's. The constant managing of his fragile ego. Lucy hates him.

LUCY  
 Are you guys on vacation, I mean  
*holiday*, too?

Eleanor puts her hand on Lucas' hand.

ELEANOR  
 Yes, we love it here. Lucas is a  
 pilot, so we get to travel  
 constantly.

LUCAS  
 The dream job.

AMELIA  
 Like big commercial planes?

LUCAS  
 I fly with Delta.

LUCY  
 That's amazing!

The men are not happy with how glamorized their girlfriends are.

AMELIA  
 And, what do you do?

ELEANOR  
 I'm an actress.

LUCY  
 Would we have seen you in anything?

ELEANOR  
 Probably not. Mostly plays and some  
 microscopic independent films.

The women are dazzled.

LUCY  
 Wow, that sounds...

AMELIA  
 Incredible.

Alex and Tyler quickly make eye contact and try to show their prowess to their girlfriends.

TYLER

Well, working as a pilot is tough though, right? Out of town a lot?

ALEX

And acting is so unreliable.

Lucas sits back in his chair, delighted that this guy is threatened by his imaginary life.

LUCAS

We've made it work.

She picks up his hand and kisses it, gazing at him.

ELEANOR

It's been pretty fluid.

LUCAS

It's perfect.

They hold eye contact for a little too long.

AMELIA

Married?

ELEANOR

Don't believe in it.

She surprises herself and Lucas with the quickness, and honesty of the answer.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Anyway, enough about us. What about you guys?

LUCY

Our friend is getting married to an Italian, so we're here for the wedding.

LUCAS

Beautiful. And what do you all do?

TYLER

Finance.

ALEX

Finance.

And then the women:

AMELIA

Marketing.

LUCY

Marketing.

The waiter gives Eleanor and Lucas their wine and takes their new friends' orders, giving them a second.

LUCAS  
(quietly)  
Is this scene going in your movie?

ELEANOR  
(quietly)  
Throw in a few "gals" and "old sports" and I think we're set.

Lucas holds up his glass.

LUCAS  
Cin cin!

ELEANOR  
Cin cin!

LUCAS  
You know, you're a pretty good liar.

ELEANOR  
Takes one to know one.

They both sip their champagne.

UPCUT TO:

Lucas and Eleanor finish their meal around the same time as their neighbors. They stand up to leave. Lucas can't help himself but guide these people.

LUCAS  
By the way, I don't know how much longer you're in town, but you should look into a guided tour of the Uffizi. There's incredible work there, but it can be daunting.

Amelia immediately pulls out her phone and starts googling.

LUCY  
Thank you! We will!

Eleanor and Lucas start to walk away as Amelia and Lucy whisper amongst themselves.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
Would you guys want to come back to our house? It's kind of unreal.

AMELIA

You should! We went wine tasting earlier and have so many bottles.

LUCY

Alex is a great DJ. We've been having wine and dance parties every night.

LUCAS

That sounds fun.

ELEANOR

(hand on his arm)

We have that train tomorrow.

The men do not seem as interested in hanging out with this couple that their girlfriends want to be. Eleanor likes that they're bothered.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

But I'm sure we'll catch it.

The girls excitedly clap.

**INT. VILLA - NIGHT**

At the villa, a decadent Sally Rooney novel villa, Eleanor and Lucas sit at a big table with everyone playing spoons.

Alex scrolls through his iPhone to control the music.

Tyler discards to his left to Lucy, who discards to Amelia and so on.

AMELIA

I've lived in New York for about twelve years. I went to NYU and then stayed.

LUCY

Same. We met in college.

AMELIA

I think I'm ready for a change, though.

Eleanor, drinking, losing the facade a bit.

ELEANOR

I know what you mean. Staring down a New York winter...

TYLER  
You lived in New York?

Oh shit.

ELEANOR  
Oh, yeah, I went to Barnard.

ALEX  
So you've been in plays in New  
York? I'm sure we've seen you in  
something.

ELEANOR  
Oh, no no. Only in England. I moved  
back after college.

TYLER  
Right...

Lucas takes a spoon, which compels everyone to leap forward  
to get a spoon. Tyler, distracted, is the odd man out.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
God damn it.

The game resets.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
What have you been in recently?

ELEANOR  
Oh, um...

AMELIA  
Tyler, can you just chill?

TYLER  
What? I'm getting to know our new  
friends.  
(back to Eleanor)  
What have you been in?

ELEANOR  
I was in Much Ado About Nothing  
last year.

LUCAS  
(genuinely)  
I loved her in Much Ado. Do you  
still remember Beatrice? I think I  
still have Benedict memorized.

ELEANOR  
I think so, actually.

LUCY  
Can you do it?

ALEX  
Lucy, that would be so annoying for  
them. This is what she's paid to  
do.

LUCY  
You're right.

AMELIA  
Would be cool though...

Lucas takes Eleanor's hand and they stand up.

LUCAS  
Lady Beatrice, have you wept all  
this while?

ELEANOR  
Yea, and I will weep a while  
longer.

LUCAS  
I will not desire that.

ELEANOR  
You have no reason. I do it freely.

LUCAS  
Surely I do believe your fair  
cousin is wronged.

ELEANOR  
Ah, how much might the man deserve  
of me that would right her!

LUCAS  
Is there any way to show such  
friendship?

ELEANOR  
A very even way, but no such  
friend.

LUCAS  
May a man do it?

ELEANOR

It is a man's office, but not yours.

LUCAS

I do love nothing in the world so well as you. Is not that strange?

ELEANOR

As strange as the thing I know not. It were as possible for me to say I loved nothing so well as you, but believe me not, and yet I lie not; I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing. I am sorry for my cousin.

LUCAS

By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me!

ELEANOR

Do not swear and eat it.

LUCAS

I will swear by it that you love me, and I will make him eat it that says I love not you.

Lucas as Benedict pulls her into him and they show-kiss. And then Lucas pulls back and they take a bow to applause.

ELEANOR

We must have run that one hundred times.

Tyler can't think of another prodding question.

Eleanor yawns.

LUCAS

With that, ready go to?

Lucy and Amelia, drunk and enamored with this cool, beautiful English couple, urge them to stay. No! Not yet!

TYLER

You guys, if they want to go, you should let them.

AMELIA

We have an extra bedroom if you guys want to crash here.

LUCY

Yeah! Our friends are in Venice for the night. You can take their room!

ELEANOR

Are you sure it wouldn't be an imposition?

AMELIA

It's not like it's their house or something. We'll wash the sheets in the morning. They'll never know you stayed.

LUCAS

That's really generous of you. Thank you.

AMELIA

Here, I'll show you.

**INT. VILLA - BEDROOM**

Amelia opens the door to a somewhat disheveled room with suitcases open etc.

AMELIA

Sorry for the mess. They've only spent, like, two nights in the bed.

ELEANOR

This is great. Thank you.

AMELIA

See you in the morning!

She closes the door behind them.

Downstairs, someone has put on a record. They can hear the song through the centuries old bricks.

Lucas takes her hand and leads her in a showy waltz. Starting as a joke but then, because of exhaustion and attraction and wine, they slow down into a slow swaying.

She breathes in his chest, his face is in her hair.

He tilts her face up and kisses her.

They slowly make their way to the bed. He takes her clothes off.

LUCAS  
Those are some fancy knickers.

ELEANOR  
Pinched from Zara.

LUCAS  
On Holy Saturday.

ELEANOR  
I'll have to go to confession  
immediately.

It's more connected and meaningful now. It's not sex for sex's sake, but sex because they want to feel the other person. Everything about it is softer and more vulnerable. Even though they've had sex before, it's like it's a new partner.

UPCUT TO:

After. They're lying in bed next to each other in the darkness.

LUCAS  
The April Fool's day breakup was the truth. I thought she was joking and then she very much was not joking but it was in school and Facebook was still a thing so she wanted us to stay together on Facebook until after midnight so none of her friends would comment.

ELEANOR  
Hilarious. I do not miss being fifteen.

LUCAS  
Never again. The most disorienting time.

ELEANOR  
My late twenties have proven to be rather disorienting too.

LUCAS  
How so?

ELEANOR  
Losing my mother changed a lot of things. Relationships have been more intense and trickier to navigate.

(MORE)

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

I think I also worry about staying in love.

(then)

How do you know when things are boring in a good way or boring in a way that means you need to leave?

LUCAS

I wish I knew. I have to believe that when it's right, you know it's right and there isn't the question of good or bad boring.

A moment of silence, both feeling that they know that this is right and different than anything they've felt before.

ELEANOR

Why did you stop acting? You still love it, clearly.

LUCAS

I never stopped because I never started. It wasn't something I ever pursued. It was just a fun thing I did at uni. I thought I wanted to be a professor so I applied to graduate programs in art history here but then I absolutely hated grad school and found this interesting tour company that gives me a lot of leeway and a lot of free time for my little crafts and art and whatever I want. It wasn't the initial goal but I enjoy it so much more than I thought I would.

ELEANOR

Do you like it here? Genuinely?

LUCAS

I do and I don't. But, I don't know that I would be happier anywhere else.

ELEANOR

Everything is kind of shit everywhere.

LUCAS

What about you? What are you going to do?

ELEANOR

With what?

LUCAS

It seems like you don't like New York, you don't like talking about yourself, you're writing something you don't love. A bit of a crossroads, isn't it?

ELEANOR

I had these different benchmarks for myself after my MFA program. Get a play produced at this theatre by this age, work with this person, with that person, meet this kind of man, have this kind of life, live in this kind of city or this kind of apartment. And I think, you know, I've hit some of those. Which is great, obviously. This working class girl from Manchester getting her plays produced in New York City and winning different things. It's exactly what I dreamt of. But I don't feel as settled as I thought I would? I thought with certain rungs of success my brain would calm down but instead I'm worried about things I didn't even consider.

LUCAS

Like what?

She pauses for a second.

ELEANOR

This might sound... I don't know how this will sound. I thought if I achieved all of that, I wouldn't still be so crushingly sad that my mother died. And now, I know, I'll always be devastated that my mother is dead and there's very little I can do about it. And, with every rung I've hit, she's the only person in the world I want to tell so it makes me feel progressively worse, not better. The stupid bloody Tony's were practically funereal.

(then)

I've never said that out loud before.

LUCAS

That sounds completely and totally reasonable.

He leans over and pulls her into a hug and kisses her face. This time, she doesn't pull away. She folds into him and they both drift off to sleep.

**INT. VILLA - BEDROOM - MORNING**

Eleanor wakes up to Lucas' back. He's still fast asleep.

She lies back, looking at the ceiling.

**INT. BLACK BOX THEATRE**

Eleanor stands on the stage opposite Lucas.

LUCAS

You're working for the Americans?

ELEANOR

You're working for the Spanish?

LUCAS

Someone must have fucked up.

(then)

Did people say "fucked up" in the 30s?

ELEANOR

Of course they did, we present such an anesthetized version of people who seem "old-timey."

LUCAS

What do we do now?

ELEANOR

I don't know, I think we have to figure out why they want us to kill each other.

LUCAS

What about us though? There's obviously something here, right?

ELEANOR

I need to rehearse telling you something.

LUCAS

Wow, you want to talk about something personal?

ELEANOR

No, I don't want to, but I should. Let me get it out.

LUCAS

The floor is yours.

She stands center stage, the spotlight on her.

ELEANOR

I'm engaged. I don't know if we're in love or if we've grown together like those trees that are too close and become one? Do you know what I mean? Those trees? And then it's impossible to break them apart because they share a root system? We're kind of like that. Anyway. You probably don't care because I don't live here and I'm not going to, so maybe it doesn't matter? But, it feels like it matters?

Lucas walks into her spotlight, holds her face and whispers:

LUCAS

You had me at hello.

ELEANOR

I didn't say hello.

LUCAS

I'm kidding.

ELEANOR

I'm not putting that in my play. I hated that line in that movie.

LUCAS

Yeah it didn't quite work, did it.

ELEANOR

Not at all.

LUCAS

Okay, in all seriousness, what do you want me to say?

ELEANOR

I don't know. I guess I feel like a bad person? And --

LUCAS

You're not a bad person.

ELEANOR

No, but it's not great to cheat on your fiancé, and then lose your engagement ring, and then go on a road trip with the guy you cheated with, is it.

LUCAS

Not great, no. But it does explain why you want that purse back so badly.

ELEANOR

Indeed. I'm also truly pained that we're never going to see each other again. But, this is not real life.

LUCAS

Of course, it is.

**INT. VILLA - BEDROOM**

There's a banging on the door. Lucas wakes up to it.

LUCAS

What was that?

ELEANOR

The door. I'm fated to never sleep well again.

Lucas pulls on pants and opens the door. Tyler stands there with fortitude next to an embarrassed Amelia.

TYLER

My ex-girlfriend went to Barnard and she's never heard of you.

ELEANOR

Oh, I...

TYLER

Did you go there?

ELEANOR

No, I didn't.

TYLER

I don't know who you guys are but you need to leave. Are you even a pilot, my guy?

LUCAS

Close. Tour guide.

ELEANOR

A really great one.

AMELIA

I'm so sorry, he's... I mean it *is* kind of weird you lied...

TYLER

And what do you do? Is the acting a lie too?

LUCAS

Well, to get technical, acting kind of *is* lying.

Tyler's face goes red.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

It's cool, it's cool. We'll go.

ELEANOR

Should we strip the beds or...?

AMELIA

Yeah, that would be really nice. So sorry about this.

Tyler fixes himself to the door frame.

LUCAS

If we could get some privacy to...

ELEANOR

Yeah, I'm a bit... I need a minute.

Amelia tugs on Tyler's arm.

AMELIA

Tyler...

TYLER

Okay. You have five minutes.

They close the door.

ELEANOR

That dude--

Lucas mimes at her to be quiet. He's obviously standing right there.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Really seems to love and protect his girlfriend.

LUCAS

Definitely.

She sits up.

ELEANOR

What time is it?

LUCAS

7:30.

ELEANOR

Well, it's thirty more than I normally get.

**EXT. VILLA - DRIVEWAY**

Tyler closes the door behind them, satisfied at his good work.

ELEANOR

Are we gonna make the train? I still have to grab stuff from that palace you call an apartment.

LUCAS

Oh, right. Yeah. I don't know where we are exactly but I don't think we went very far in the uber last night.

ELEANOR

Where's your phone?

LUCAS

It's dead.

ELEANOR

Lovely. What do we do?

Then Eleanor gets some inspiration.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)  
Wait. I think I saw some bikes by  
the side of their house...

LUCAS  
We're bicycle thieves now?

ELEANOR  
It's not like it's *their* bikes.  
It's whoever is renting them this  
house and besides, there are major  
ethical dilemmas with Airbnb and --

LUCAS  
No, no, I'm into the idea. Fuck  
that guy.

They look back at the house.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
Ok, let's go walk down the rest of  
the driveway until we're out of  
sight. Then we can sneak up along  
the side.

They run down the hill until they lose sight of the house

**EXT. VILLA - SIDEYARD**

Lucas and Eleanor come up the side. There's no movement in  
the house. It's still so early.

They see the bikes leaning against the exterior wall.

They walk really quietly and snatch the bikes.

As they're riding down the drive way, they hear yelling  
behind them.

ELEANOR  
We'll leave them at his apartment!  
I'll DM you the address!

LUCAS  
Thank you for your hospitality!

**EXT. FLORENTINE APARTMENT BUILDING**

Lucas and Eleanor ride up and see Signora Bianchi watering  
some plants.

Eleanor waves, Lucas greets her. Signora sizes Eleanor up.

SIGNORA BIANCHI

*Luca! Are you coming to mass at the Duomo?*

LUCAS

*No, we have to make a train to Milan in an hour.*

SIGNORA BIANCHI

*Oh they closed the station!*

LUCAS

*Why? What?*

SIGNORA BIANCHI

*I heard this morning on the news. Closed for the day.*

ELEANOR

*What? What is she saying?*

LUCAS

*The Florence station is closed.*

ELEANOR

*What?! I have to get to Milan today. I have a train to catch out of Rome to the airport tomorrow. I have to get that bag today.*

LUCAS

*She lost her purse and it's in Milan at a police station.*

SIGNORA BIANCHI

*Well, if you need to make it to Milan today, you can borrow my car.*

LUCAS

*Oh really? That would be fantastic.  
(to Eleanor)  
We can borrow her car.*

SIGNORA BIANCHI

*But, you have to go mass with me first.*

LUCAS

*We're in a bit of a rush though...*

She looks at Eleanor and then back at him.

SIGNORA BIANCHI

*It will be good for you. Come in, I  
bought pastries this morning.*

She turns toward her apartment.

LUCAS

(to Eleanor)

We have to go to Mass with her at  
the Duomo first and then we can  
borrow her car.

ELEANOR

I don't want to go to Mass.

LUCAS

I'm afraid we don't have a ton of  
options.

**INT. SIGNORA BIANCHI'S APARTMENT**

A classic old European home. Old furniture, pictures of  
family everywhere, the patina of a life well-lived and well  
fed.

Eleanor, Signora, and Lucas sit around Signora's table.  
There's a spread of pastries. Lucas pours Eleanor a cup of  
coffee out of a Bialetti Moka Pot from the 1960s. Eleanor  
wordlessly tears her pastry in half and puts it on his plate.

On a wall hangs a painting of the courtyard.

ELEANOR

(pointing)

That painting is beautiful.

SIGNORA BIANCHI

(broken)

Lucas painted it.

Lucas looks down at his plate.

ELEANOR

You really are a fond of secret  
skills, Lucas.

LUCAS

Oh, it's nothing. It's just a  
landscape.

ELEANOR

It's impressive. Really.

There's an intimacy to their interaction, that Signora, in her infinite Italian *nonna* wisdom instantly catches.

SIGNORA BIANCHI

*I was married to my husband for fifty-three years until his death.*

LUCAS

*I didn't know that.*

SIGNORA BIANCHI

*We met when I was in school and he was a bit older than me. He was the first man I had known and he gave me my first life outside of my mother's home. This was just after the war when Italy was --*

She gestures implying completely and utterly eviscerated. She picks up the coffee pot.

SIGNORA BIANCHI (CONT'D)

*My parents bought this for our first apartment together. We had children that I raised while he worked and then once they left and began their own lives, it was just us. And in the absence of our children we were left with just us, by then much older and set in our ways. My husband was a good man. But, perhaps not the man for me. I will never know. I spent my life with him. My parents are dead, my siblings are dead. I am the last and the next.*

She lets her story fall over them for a second.

SIGNORA BIANCHI (CONT'D)

*Life is long and also quite short. You should spend it with someone you find interesting. That, I have found, is the difference between a life well lived and a life wasted.*

She takes a break to finish her coffee. She stands up, picking up their plates with the swiftness of a lifer diner waitress.

SIGNORA BIANCHI (CONT'D)

*We need to make our way to the Duomo if we want to get seats.*

Everyone stands up, Eleanor and Lucas hang back a few steps to follow Signora out.

ELEANOR  
What was that?

LUCAS  
If you marry poorly you might feel  
as though your life was wasted.

ELEANOR  
Ah. Some light hearted banter.

LUCAS  
Nothing but.

**EXT. DUOMO**

On Easter Sunday, the big cathedrals in Italy set up what is, essentially, stadium seating. It really is like the World Cup or something.

Lucas and Eleanor sit with Signora, the same seats she's had since the 60s.

It's toward the end of the service which has been fully in Italian, but Catholic mass is the same everywhere. Whether or not you speak the language, if it's something you've gone to your whole life, you know it forever.

They come to the part where everyone in the audience gets on their knees.

**INT. BLACK BOX THEATRE**

Eleanor and Lucas sit on the stage together.

ELEANOR  
This is it.

LUCAS  
It doesn't have to be.

ELEANOR  
Lucas, yes it does. Not to be  
Notting Hill about it, but I'm an  
engaged playwright in New York, and  
you're a tour guide in Rome.

LUCAS  
You hate New York.

ELEANOR

My career is there. It's embarrassing but I don't know who I am without writing. It's completely tied up in how I navigate through the world. Look at us right now.

She gestures to her theatre, her mind palace.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

I can't write plays in Italian. I can't even order dinner in Italy.

Lucas doesn't say anything.

LUCAS

We wouldn't have to stay in Italy...

ELEANOR

And then you cheat on me when I get predictable and boring?

LUCAS

I would never cheat on you.

ELEANOR

You say that now. I'm not boring now. I'm an obvious mess which is intriguing to you.

LUCAS

Well I don't think you're close to cleaning up your act, so I'm sure you'll stay intriguing.

ELEANOR

(with a smile)

Stop.

(then)

I don't know how we end and I don't really know how to go back to my life.

#### **EXT. DUOMO**

The familiarity and pomp of the service, and the finality of this tryst, overwhelm Eleanor and she tears up. Lucas feels her emotion and grabs her hand, which only brings the tears hotter and faster.

**EXT. FLORENCE**

Signora leads them to her car. It's an old, old fiat. Stick shift. Comically small.

SIGNORA BIANCHI

*Luca, my son is in Milan and he's visiting later this week. Could you drop the car with him?*

LUCAS

*No problem at all.*

SIGNORA BIANCHI

*Maybe he can meet you at the train station? He lives not far from there.*

LUCAS

*That's perfect. Thank you so much for this. And for everything.*

Eleanor takes her hands.

ELEANOR

*Grazie mille.*

They all kiss cheeks and Signora leaves the key with Lucas.

After she walks away, he leans into Eleanor.

LUCAS

*I don't know how to drive a stick.*

ELEANOR

*My father would disown me if I didn't know how to drive a stick.*

She takes the keys from him and they drive off, in fits and starts.

**INT. CAR**

It's such a tiny car, they're basically sitting on top of each other.

LUCAS

*We'll get there in three hours it says. And then there's a train back to Rome at two and a bus up to Como around then as well.*

Lucas starts texting. One to FRANCESCO: *We'll be at the Milan train station with your mom's car at two*

And then one to Chiara: I'm catching a bus from Milan around two.

ELEANOR

Can you keep your eye out for a gas station?

LUCAS

Get off here.

**EXT. GAS STATION**

Lucas pumps the gas and Eleanor gets out of the car. She walks up next to him and leans against the car.

ELEANOR

It really is beautiful here. I feel like I've missed Italy because I've been so buried in the script.

Lucas takes a look around at the Tuscan countryside. It is beautiful. He never looks anymore.

LUCAS

How's the script going?

ELEANOR

I think it's terrible. But I always think it's terrible.

LUCAS

Where are you at in it?

ELEANOR

The ending. I like the set piece he wrote where they switch up the leverage and enable their escape. The question is do they leave together or is it more of a Casablanca thing.

LUCAS

What's your impulse?

ELEANOR

What's yours?

He takes a second to think about it.

LUCAS

You know I'm a dyed in the wool romantic, so I love a happy swooning ending, even if there's a little *The Graduate* aftermath.

ELEANOR

I don't know. Part of me loves realistic endings, where two people who probably shouldn't be together do the right thing and walk away. But, I don't know that people go to movies for realism. They have their own lives for that.

The nozzle clicks. Tank full. Lucas hangs it up.

LUCAS

Or theatre.

ELEANOR

Exactly.

LUCAS

I wouldn't get too tied up in what's the more intellectual choice.

ELEANOR

Me? Get out of my head? What?

LUCAS

This is a bit cheesy or actor-y but you should just let your characters tell you what they would do.

Eleanor nods, clearly a little lost in thought.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Ready?

ELEANOR

For what?

LUCAS

We should get back on the road.

ELEANOR

Oh right, of course.

**INT. CAR**

Lucas flips through radio stations until he finds the Italian oldies station. Jams from the 1960s.

ELEANOR

You're really so multi-talented.  
It's kind of wild.

LUCAS

I'm just fidgety. Love giving my  
hands something to do.

ELEANOR

People would spend a lot of money  
on your fidgets. I couldn't make a  
table if I tried.

LUCAS

I think if these things transcended  
hobbies, they would stop being fun.  
Money has never really mattered to  
me. I just wanted to do something  
that kept me outside, meeting new  
people, talking about things I  
love.

She can tell he's a little defensive about it.

ELEANOR

You should do whatever makes you  
happy. Truly. When I started  
writing plays I made nothing. I  
still don't make much from it which  
is why I took this screenplay job.  
I think life is too short to spend  
it doing something you hate doing.

LUCAS

Yeah.

ELEANOR

I didn't mean to imply that you  
could do "more" or something. I  
think it's kind of beautiful that  
you have passion for this. The  
Italian Tourism board is lucky to  
have you.

LUCAS

Maybe I need to start thinking  
about the future. I've always been  
a kind of in the moment person.

ELEANOR  
I live in the future. It's my  
entire problem.

Eleanor starts thinking about her own future a bit. She has  
to end things with Noah. She has to tell Lucas she's engaged.

Her face takes on the worry.

LUCAS  
Everything okay, soldier?

ELEANOR  
Sure, yeah, everything is fine.

LUCAS  
What are you thinking about? The  
script will figure itself out.

ELEANOR  
No, no, I was just thinking  
about...

Gearing up to, gasp, talk about her feelings!

ELEANOR (CONT'D)  
This... whatever this is... it's  
done in three hours?

LUCAS  
Eleanor...

Chiara texts back: Great. My family is driving me crazy.  
Can't wait to have your hand to hold <3

He puts his phone away. And starts flipping through the radio  
stations again.

ELEANOR  
No, no. It's okay.

He pauses for a second.

LUCAS  
It doesn't have to be done, done  
right? I mean, you hate New York?

ELEANOR  
I can't quit my life and move here  
on a whim.

LUCAS  
You can write anywhere though.  
Isn't that the nature of the beast?

ELEANOR  
Yes and no, not really.

A pause. He changes the station.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)  
There's something else I should  
tell you.

LUCAS  
You're not Eleanor Allen and you've  
been lying about being a  
playwright.

ELEANOR  
For better or for worse, no.

LUCAS  
What is it, then?

ELEANOR  
Well, the reason I need this bag  
back so badly is... my engagement  
ring is in my Altoids tin.

LUCAS  
Your Altoids?

ELEANOR  
Yeah, a drug dealer once told me  
it's the best place to hide things.

LUCAS  
Why were you hiding your engagement  
ring?

ELEANOR  
I think fundamentally I don't want  
to get married but the idea of  
breaking up with my fiancé feels  
gutting in a way I can't describe.  
But then this has been...

Lucas does not take this opportunity to fess up. And instead  
projects his own self-loathing. And changes the station  
again.

LUCAS  
Are you going to tell him about all  
of this?

ELEANOR  
I don't know. Probably not? I think  
it would only alleviate my guilt.

(MORE)

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

I don't know if it would serve him.  
(then)  
You're not mad?

LUCAS

So when you said on the train that  
the one time you cheated destroyed  
a piece of your soul, you were  
talking about sleeping with me? I  
killed a piece of your soul?

ELEANOR

Yes, in that moment that's what I  
meant, but I don't think you're a  
soul-killer. I think you're maybe  
exactly who I needed to meet?

He doesn't say anything. And changes the station again.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

You're asking a lot of questions  
but not really saying anything.

LUCAS

I don't know what to say.

ELEANOR

You always have a thing to say.

LUCAS

You had so many opportunities to  
fess up.

ELEANOR

I know. It felt like one of those  
things that happened in a vacuum  
that no one would ever need to know  
about. A blemish on an otherwise  
perfect record but we've moved  
beyond that. Obviously.

He changes the station again.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Can you please stop with the  
fucking radio?

LUCAS

You lied.

ELEANOR

I lied. I'm sorry.

LUCAS

You used me as some kind of experiment to work out your own relationship issues, which, in your own words, would feel gutting to end.

ELEANOR

We've been together since we were twenty-one. My whole adult life. Everything I've ever written, everything I've gone through with my family, my dad, he's been there. It's not just ending a relationship. It's closing the chapter on an entire period of my life. Can't you understand that?

LUCAS

All due respect, I think that's weak.

ELEANOR

Well, there's nothing we can do about it now, is there.

LUCAS

No, I guess not.

Silence.

**EXT. POLICE STATION**

They pull up to the police station. She parks the car and gets out. He doesn't follow her.

This should also be kind of heated. Maybe roll it into the last scene and make it more of a sequence.

ELEANOR

Are you coming?

LUCAS

I think you can handle it.

ELEANOR

I literally can't. That's why you're here.

LUCAS

Just show them your passport.

ELEANOR  
You're acting like a child.

LUCAS  
I'm acting like a child? You lead  
me on.

ELEANOR  
You're such a dick. We met three  
days ago. You haven't earned the  
right to be this angry with me.

She slams the door in his face and walks into the station.

### **INT. POLICE STATION**

A quiet, drab station. Much less hustle and bustle than an  
American police station. Feels almost like the DMV.

Eleanor walks up to the window.

ELEANOR  
Ciao, I'm so sorry, do you speak  
English?

POLICEWOMAN  
A little bit.

ELEANOR  
I got a call from a Lieutenant  
Silvestre... My purse... I'm  
Eleanor Allen.

She pulls out her passport.

POLICEWOMAN  
Ah yes. One moment.

She disappears into another room. Eleanor stands there for a  
minute by herself and then the policewoman comes back with  
Eleanor's purse!

POLICEWOMAN (CONT'D)  
Passport?

Eleanor slides over her passport. The woman matches her  
passport with the drivers' license inside.

POLICEWOMAN (CONT'D)  
Fill out these forms.

It's a European bureaucratic packet of nightmares. Eleanor  
sits down with a pen and fills it out.

POLICEWOMAN (CONT'D)  
They only take cash and phone.

ELEANOR  
That's great. Are there Altoids in there, by any chance?

POLICEWOMAN  
Altoids? What is...?

ELEANOR  
Mints? Breath mints? A little tin?

POLICEWOMAN  
Ah yes.

The policewoman pulls out the Altoids and rattles them.

POLICEWOMAN (CONT'D)  
Did you want?

Eleanor hands over her paperwork and immediately opens up the Altoids.

There's her ring. Coated with minty dust, but there. Also in the bag, Lucas' map. It's really so cute.

POLICEWOMAN (CONT'D)  
A ring?

ELEANOR  
Brilliant hiding place, don't you think?

POLICEWOMAN  
Americans.

ELEANOR  
I'm English.

She leaves the station, puts the map back in her purse, and puts the ring on her finger.

#### **INT. CAR**

Lucas looks at the ring on her hand but he doesn't say anything. Neither does she.

They pull away.

**EXT. MILAN TRAIN STATION**

They pull up to the police station.

ELEANOR

I'm going to leave the keys with you so you can handle her son. It's been really something, Lucas.

She gathers her stuff and starts out of the car.

He scans the front of the station and sees FRANCESCO talking to CHIARA.

LUCAS

Oh shit.

ELEANOR

What?

LUCAS

He's here and he's talking to my girlfriend.

ELEANOR

Your girlfriend.

LUCAS

Yes.

ELEANOR

After making me feeling like absolute pond scum, you had a girlfriend the whole time.

LUCAS

Yeah, I... yeah. I do. I feel quite shitty about everything.

ELEANOR

You give me this insane childish lecture and it was all projection.

LUCAS

We haven't been happy in such a long time but I only stayed here because of her and her family is so powerful here.

ELEANOR

Yes. I get it. But I actually owned up to it and you were going to hang me out to dry.

(MORE)

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

"you can write anywhere." What were you going to do? What if I decided to stay here for a while? Were you just going to keep lying to both of us? Would you really let me uproot my entire life like that? How can I ever fucking trust you again?

LUCAS

I am genuinely hurt you lied to me and I think I'm ashamed at how much I could hurt her, too.

ELEANOR

My friend told me that if I spent some time with you, a spell would be broken. Either with Noah or with you. And what I've realized is you're not the kind of person that one should hurt another person for. You are an experiment. You are a fun time. This is not the beginning of love. This is the not the answer to should life be boring. You are proof that if it feels too good it's probably fucking bad for you. You are a shitty person.

He doesn't say anything.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Yeah, I can be mean, too. Good luck dealing with this.

She gets out of the car.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Francesco!

He looks at her, no idea who she is.

LUCAS

What are you doing?

ELEANOR

Fuck you for making me feel bad when you were doing the exact same thing.

(to Francesco, pointing)

Your mom's car!

Chiara and Francesco walk toward the car. Chiara looks confused.

LUCAS  
 (covering)  
 Chiara! What are you doing here?

CHIARA  
 I needed a break from my family so  
 I thought I would pick you up. Who  
 is this?

ELEANOR  
 I'm Eleanor.

CHIARA  
 Wait, did you guys... come up  
 together?

ELEANOR  
 We did, and I have a train to  
 catch.

She tries to hand the keys over to Francesco but Chiara stops her.

CHIARA  
 You're not going anywhere. What is  
 going on?

LUCAS  
 She was on one of my tours and lost  
 her purse and they called me. It's  
 a long story.

CHIARA  
*Firenze...*

She puts the pieces together.

CHIARA (CONT'D)  
 You stayed in my family's apartment  
 with this... person?

ELEANOR  
 He did.  
 (to Francesco)  
 Your mother is a lovely woman.  
 (to Lucas)  
 Fuck you.  
 (to Chiara)  
 Good luck.

She hands the keys to Francesco and leaves this mess in her wake.

Chiara walks away from the car and Lucas follows her.

She walks toward a newish, fancy convertible. There's a basket of Lucas' favorite things in the front seat.

He catches up to her.

She wipes her face before she turns to look at him.

LUCAS

Kiki...

CHIARA

Don't call me that.

LUCAS

Chiara, it's not what it looks like.

CHIARA

Lucas, my family is waiting. Can we make it through the weekend with them and talk about it after?

He looks at the car, at the basket.

LUCAS

Is that all from that shop I love?

CHIARA

No. It's for me. You don't get any of it.

LUCAS

Chiara, I'm sorry, she needed my help. What was I supposed to do?

CHIARA

I told you, I don't want to talk about it right now. Can we go have Easter dinner with my family and pretend?

Lucas, resigned, gets in the car. He reaches into the basket. She grabs it and hands it to a woman on the sidewalk.

CHIARA (CONT'D)

*The best from Lake Como. Happy Easter.*

The woman looks confused and suspicious. Chiara and Lucas drive off.

**INT. TRAIN**

The thieves didn't take Eleanor's notebook.

She starts writing out the beginnings of a play on the train:  
interior train. Crossed out. Interior ship. Crossed out.  
Interior....

I have no ideas.

A two act relationship story?

It's been done. Who's going to beat Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

A modern Who's Afraid?

Derivative.

She puts down her notebook and falls asleep against the window.

**INT. LAKE COMO HOUSE**

Lucas and Chiara have dinner with her family. They're all laughing and talking. They all read as old European money, money acquired through serfdom.

Lucas is uncharacteristically sullen.

CHIARA'S DAD

*Lucas, you always have a good story. What have you been up to lately? Chiara mentioned you stayed in Florence last night.*

LUCAS

*I did, yes.*

CHIARA'S DAD

*How did you end up there?*

LUCAS

*An English friend needed help and we got waylaid.*

Chiara's dad seems like he's waiting for a story. But, instead, Lucas sips his wine.

CHIARA'S DAD

*You know, Chiara mentioned that you might be interested in looking for a new job.*

LUCAS

*Oh, she did?*

CHIARA'S DAD

*Yes. You know, you're such a bright young man, and bilingual, I'm sure we could find something stable for you here in Italy.*

LUCAS

*Yeah, I'm sure.*

He pushes his seat back from the table.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

*If you'll excuse me, I have to use the restroom.*

He leaves the room. Chiara follows him out.

**INT. AIRBNB**

Eleanor gets back to her apartment and checks her email.

The same panicked imaginings of what it could be flash through her head. But instead of panic at Noah ending things, she feels relief.

She opens the email.

It's just some bullshit, my mom and Steve want to have dinner with us next week -- are you going to feel up to it after your trip? I hope it went well, I hope it was what you needed. I miss you. I love you.

God damn it.

She pulls up her World War II script. She's on page 98. So close.

**INT. BLACK BOX THEATRE**

Eleanor and Noah stand on the stage.

ELEANOR

I think our only path forward is through.

NOAH

What do you mean?

ELEANOR

I mean, they're trying to hide their mistake by taking us both out. The only way we survive this is by outing them...

NOAH

Clearly they're both trying to decide if they should enter the war, right? Based on everything they've had us gather?

She puts down the script.

ELEANOR

Is any of this working?

NOAH

I'm back in play?

ELEANOR

I don't know. I just know I can trust you. I know you love me.

NOAH

That's not really fair to me, though, is it. Isn't that the point of the Signora's parable? That marrying for someone else's feelings is codependent?

ELEANOR

She would never say codependent.

NOAH

No, she wouldn't.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Eleanor, don't say yes to me and commit to me because you like that I'm always here for you.

ELEANOR

But what if my rejection of you means that I can't accept healthy love? What if it means I'm too broken for a good relationship?

NOAH

Don't pathologize yourself like that.

LUCAS

I'm just a symptom, Eleanor. We've known each other for less than a week.

ELEANOR

You're saying I shouldn't end things with Noah?

LUCAS

No. I'm saying that you have worked yourself up into an absolutely insane state and you just need to talk to him. You and I...

ELEANOR

We're nothing.

LUCAS

We're probably nothing. It seems like we both had similar things we needed to figure out and did that with each other.

ELEANOR

Seems a bit overwrought, don't you think?

LUCAS

Oh, definitely.

#### **INT. AIRBNB**

An email notification from Marina: I don't know if you have access to this yet but i ended up coming to rome to see my aunt and, if you're still here want to grab a drink?

Eleanor responds: i just got back and I can't think about this stupid movie anymore. just tell me when and where.

#### **INT. LAKE COMO**

Chiara catches up with Lucas outside of the house.

CHIARA

Can you please come back inside?

LUCAS

I don't think so.

CHIARA

How the fuck are you mad at me right now? You're the one that cheated on me?

LUCAS

I'm not mad at you.

She sits down next to him.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

When we met, I was in grad school and you were working at that small company and we were both living a somewhat bohemian lifestyle and I think now we both want wildly different things. I will never be the guy that wants to work for your dad doing whatever and making a ton of money. That's just not at all how I want to spend my life. And, I think that's exactly what you want. We're not happy. You can't tell me you're happy.

CHIARA

Lucas, I begged you to wait until after Easter.

LUCAS

We've been waiting to have this conversation for about three years. There's always something. There's always going to be a birthday or a wedding or a holiday or something that's inconvenient, but the bottom line is I'm not good to you. I cheat on you, which either you know about and don't care or you don't know about which means you aren't paying attention at all.

She doesn't say anything.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

You hate my job, you hate that I like my job. We don't like any of the same things. We don't like each other.

CHIARA

This is so fucked up, Lucas. I support you for eight years.

(MORE)

CHIARA (CONT'D)

We live at my family's apartment, I pay for every dinner, for every piece of clothing you're wearing right now.

LUCAS

Yeah, I know it's fucked up. Can you honestly tell me you're satisfied?

CHIARA

Of course, I'm not satisfied you completely self-involved child. You have an embarrassing job that's contributing to the Disney-fication of Italy. You don't seem to want to improve on yourself at all. You cheated on me with a fucking tourist. You think you're funnier and smarter than you are and over the past year I haven't had a single genuine orgasm with you. You're pathetic. I stayed with you because I felt bad for you but you couldn't even do that well. When we met, you were going to be a professor. What the fuck happened?

She takes a breath.

CHIARA (CONT'D)

You know what? Get the fuck out of my father's house. And give me that shirt. I bought that for you and it would fit my brother and frankly he deserves it more than you do.

LUCAS

Wait, really? You want me to give you my shirt.

CHIARA

Yes. Now.

He takes his shirt off. She takes it.

CHIARA (CONT'D)

Hitch hike to your beloved bus depot.

She stalks off back to the house.

**INT. ROMAN BAR - NIGHT**

Eleanor and Marina drink at a bar.

ELEANOR  
I'm just exhausted.

MARINA  
It sounds like it was the best time  
of your life.

ELEANOR  
God that's depressing. The best  
time of my life was hanging out on  
a train with some asshole cheating  
on his girlfriend.

MARINA  
He's an asshole for taking his own  
self-loathing out on you. He's not  
necessarily an asshole for  
cheating. You don't know anything  
about their relationship.

ELEANOR  
He lied to me. And he's probably  
lying to her. Whatever. I don't  
live here and he's clearly deeply  
involved.

MARINA  
At least you figured out what you  
want to do.

ELEANOR  
Have I?

MARINA  
You're ending your engagement,  
Eleanor. You can't marry someone  
when you're this tortured.

Eleanor sips her wine.

MARINA (CONT'D)  
I've known you for a long time. All  
of this guilt that you're feeling  
and torment is self-inflicted. You  
clearly don't want to marry Noah.  
You don't want to stay in New York.  
And, you just had the time of your  
life away from your work and your  
fiancé. Treading water is boring.

ELEANOR

Did you just call me boring?

MARINA

Yes. You're being boring. And retrograde. It's basic enough that you're under thirty-five and still identify as straight. At least be a little more evolved with how you deal with your relationships.

ELEANOR

This is all pretty retrograde, isn't it.

MARINA

The most. There's no such thing as ending up with someone, or a happy ending, or any of that. All of that was constructed so that women would enter into unpaid domestic labor situations and care for the working class for free. It's asinine capitalistic propaganda and I'm appalled you're caving to it. If you want to stay in Italy and fuck a hot mess for a while, you're absolutely allowed to. You're not giving up on some middle class dream of class transcendence by living your god damn life. The girl I knew in Paris who pushed Amanda down after that bitch lied to you about stealing your dress would never stand for this hemming and hawing over two men.

ELEANOR

Were you always this straightforward?

MARINA

Yes. My English is just better now.

ELEANOR

Maybe I won't go back to New York. I could stay with my sister in England.

MARINA

The nature of writing is that it's mobile. You can literally do your job anywhere.

ELEANOR  
Yeah. You're right.

MARINA  
Now, you just have to break up with Noah and start asking me questions about my life because talking about these two idiotic men is driving me insane.

**INT. AIRBNB**

Eleanor gets home after drinks with Marina and FaceTimes Noah. It's ten PM there.

NOAH  
Ellie! Are you okay? Is that a club in the background.

ELEANOR  
The EDM soundtrack of my trip.

NOAH  
I haven't heard from you in a few days... but I know how you get with writing. You get into such a hole of your own making.

ELEANOR  
I do, do that, don't I? Can we talk about something?

NOAH  
Oh no. How many times have you rehearsed this?

She sighs. He knows her so well.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
I was about to go to bed. Do we have to do this now?

ELEANOR  
Yeah, I think we do.

She rubs her face unsure where to start.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)  
I've been thinking about you and about us and... I don't know, Noah. Do you think we're in love? Like fully in love?

Noah sits upright in his bed, rubbing his face.

NOAH

That's what I've spent the last three weeks discussing with my therapist.

ELEANOR

What does Linda think?

NOAH

Linda thinks that love has many shapes.

ELEANOR

God damn it, Linda.

NOAH

Yeah. I do love you. I love you so much.

ELEANOR

I love you, too.

There's a silence while they both wait to formulate the next thought.

NOAH

Are you going to make me say it?

ELEANOR

No. I'll say it. I don't think I'm in love with you. Anymore.

NOAH

The last few weeks have been...

ELEANOR

Really nice.

NOAH

Yes.

They both look a bit relieved.

ELEANOR

When did you know?

NOAH

I think after I proposed. I don't think that was the feeling I was supposed to have. What about you?

Eleanor looks at the map that Lucas drew for her. Debates telling Noah the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help her God.

Decides not to. It would only hurt him to absolve her guilt and shame.

ELEANOR

Same. We've been together for so long and through so much. I don't know. We're like those trees in that Attenborough documentary.

NOAH

Yeah. Those trees. I didn't know how to broach it with you and then when I tried --

ELEANOR

I flew to Italy for a dumb reason.

She wipes a tear from her eye.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

I just want you to know that I don't think I would have gotten through everything with my family without you and I will always, always love you for that.

They both sit in silence for a bit, relieved.

NOAH

What time does your flight land tomorrow? I could pick you up and then we could go over logistics.

ELEANOR

I think I'm going to stay in England for a little bit.

NOAH

Your dad will appreciate that. Please send my love to him.

ELEANOR

I will. Noah, are we... friends now?

NOAH

I think we've always been friends.

She smiles. All of that grief and pain for literally nothing.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Could you send me a --

ELEANOR

Spreadsheet with all of my things  
outlining what I want to be done  
with them.

NOAH

You know me too well.

ELEANOR

You can just box everything and put  
it in storage. I'm not sure exactly  
where I'm going.

NOAH

Alright, well, sleep well.

ELEANOR

Yeah, talk soon.

She looks at her bags, mostly packed. The train map sitting  
on top. Unsure if she wants to keep it or not.

She lies down in her shitty Airbnb bed and listens to the  
club and people flirting outside her window for a bit until  
she falls asleep.

#### **INT. 1930s TRAIN STATION**

Eleanor stands on a platform in what looks like an early  
Hollywood movie set. She's holding a period traveling case,  
wearing a hat, seamed stockings, pumps, waits on a bench for  
her train to pull up. She's styled like Rita would be

Lucas, dressed like Cary Grant, rushes up to her.

LUCAS

You can't get on that train.

ELEANOR

Why ever not? I must return home!

LUCAS

Because I... I... I love you!

ELEANOR

You do?

LUCAS

I do. I was unkind. I said things to you that I meant to say to myself.

ELEANOR

I'm sorry, too. I don't see you as failed. I should have been more honest.

LUCAS

It's fine, darling. I understand.

ELEANOR

But, nothing has changed. I have work I need to do, and you're with the wealthiest woman in Italy. Who am I in this world?

LUCAS

Money doesn't buy happiness.

ELEANOR

We both know it does.

LUCAS

Well, I don't care about that. I want to be with you. I want to talk to you. I want to spend all the time with you, I want to go on adventures with you.

ELEANOR

Are you sure?

LUCAS

Without a doubt in my soul.

Eleanor touches his face with her delicately gloved hand.

ELEANOR

I love you too, you big lug!

He wraps her up and dips her. They kiss as a bunch of people on the train platform cheer!

**INT. AIRBNB**

Eleanor wakes up to an alarm. She's gonna miss her train.

**INT. ROME TRAIN STATION**

Eleanor rushes into the train station, looking up at the giant train station clock. Shit. She's running so, so close.

She races through the station, suitcase bouncing behind her.

She makes it to the train and...

Lucas stands up from a bench when he sees her. Huge smile on his face. It's the reverse of her fantasy.

ELEANOR

What are you doing here?

LUCAS

Oh, just warming the bench. They pay me.

She smiles.

ELEANOR

What was your plan? To sit here all day until I showed up? How did you know what time my train was? What time did you --

He cuts her off, pulling her into a kiss.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

You've been here all morning, haven't you?

LUCAS

Sadly, yes.

ELEANOR

You're such a loser.

A conductor walks alongside the train yelling out, All Aboard in Italian.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

My train is going to leave.

LUCAS

I broke up with Chiara.

ELEANOR

Not for me though, right?

LUCAS

Of course not. I'm not a complete lunatic.

ELEANOR  
I broke up with Noah.

LUCAS  
Poor guy.

ELEANOR  
No, he's absolutely fine. Glowing,  
in fact.

LUCAS  
I'm sorry for how I acted... It was  
wildly immature.

ELEANOR  
So am I. You're not failed.

LUCAS  
I am a bit. I think I need to face  
that.

ELEANOR  
I think you're wonderful.

LUCAS  
Did you just give me a compliment?

ELEANOR  
Don't you dare get used to it.

LUCAS  
So, what, do you want to walk  
around or something? Get lunch?

ELEANOR  
That's the big gesture? I'm not  
getting on the train and we're  
gonna get lunch?

LUCAS  
Yeah, I think so.

She looks at the train and then back at him. She smiles. He  
kisses her again. They walk out of the station, hand in  
hand, as her train pulls away.

ELEANOR  
Did we ever DM the address to those  
Americans?

LUCAS  
Fuck that guy. Signora deserves  
some new bikes.

ELEANOR  
Wait, how did you get down here  
from Lake Como, so quickly?

LUCAS  
It's a funny story.

ELEANOR  
I'm sure it is.

LUCAS  
So, I was hitchhiking from Chiara's  
house and a group of Estonian folk  
singers picked me up.

ELEANOR  
You're lying.

LUCAS  
I'm not!

They kiss again and we pull out as he tells her his story and  
their voice fade into the sounds of the train station.

FADE OUT.

**LA FINE.**