

FIND MYSELF AGAIN

Written by

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FADE IN.

EXT. HALLWAY (ALLISON'S APARTMENT) - NIGHT

XAVIER WAYNE, 20's, rim horn glasses and red bow tie, dances down the hall. Headphones in his ear. He's listening to an *R&B song*.

In his hand he holds a bouquet of RED ROSES, and a present expertly wrapped with a RED BOW.

He stops at a door. Number 9.

Slightly cracked. Knocks. It opens.

INT. LIVING ROOM (ALLISON'S APARTMENT) - CONTINUOUS

Xavier walks in. Looks down at the floor. High heels, sandals, pink Chuck Taylor's and... a pair of MEN'S BOOTS!

He turns on the light. On the dining room table is a bottle of wine. TWO glasses!

He looks at a closed door. Allison's room.

Slowly walks over.

Removes his headphones.

Touches the knob.

From inside he can hear her moans; YES! YES! OH BABY! DON'T STOP BABY, DON'T STOP! The man speaks, YOU LIKE THAT? She responds; YES! I LOVE IT! YES!

Xavier's had enough. He PUSHES THE DOOR in.

The man jumps up. Falls off the bed.

ALLISON MOON, 20's, hair all over the place, face dripping with sweat, covers up.

NAKED MAN

What the hell! I thought you didn't have a boyfriend?

ALLISON

I don't. Xavier what are you doing?

XAVIER

I was about to ask you the same thing.

ALLISON  
I was having sex.

XAVIER  
... I can see that.

Allison wraps herself in her blanket. Swiftly pushes Xavier out of the room.

EXT. HALLWAY (ALLISON'S APARTMENT) - CONTINUOUS

ALLISON  
What are you doing here?

XAVIER  
I just got off work. I came to bring you your birthday gift.

ALLISON  
Why did you burst in my door like that? You had to hear us.

XAVIER  
Because you're cheating on me. That's what people who get cheated on do. They burst through the door and say things like, "Ha! I knew it" or "I can't believe this".

ALLISON  
Dating?... Baby, we're not dating.

XAVIER  
What?

ALLISON  
When did we establish this? I don't remember.

XAVIER  
What about the dates?

ALLISON  
Dates? We were just hanging out. I hang out with all of my friends.

XAVIER  
Do you have sex with all of your friends?

ALLISON  
Some of them, yes.

Realization hits him.

XAVIER  
... Wow. I'm an idiot.

Xavier leans against the wall. Deflated.

ALLISON  
You're not an idiot. You're a nice  
guy.

XAVIER  
That's code for undatable.

ALLISON  
No, I'm undatable.

XAVIER  
Why don't women want me?

ALLISON  
They do. You just... haven't found  
the right one yet, because you're  
looking too hard. Slow down, take a  
breath and open your eyes.

XAVIER  
That was corny.

ALLISON  
... So, what's in the box?

He hands it to her.

She opens. Inside, a TEDDY BEAR.

Her eyes swell with tears.

ALLISON (CONT'D)  
Oh my God.

XAVIER  
It's the one your brother got you  
before he left for duty and...

ALLISON  
Thank you.

She goes in for a kiss.

Xavier dodges it.

XAVIER

Whoa. I don't know where those lips... if you were... you know.

ALLISON

Well, like I was saying, you'll find your girl eventually and --

XAVIER

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

He leaves.

A BEAT.

Naked man opens the door, still in his birthday suit.

NAKED MAN

So, are we done or...

ALLISON

Please leave.

NAKED MAN

Okay.

INT. LIVING ROOM (XAVIER'S APARTMENT) - LATER THAT NIGHT

Xavier enters the living room, head hanging low. Looks up.

A poster for the film 'HOUSE OF YUKAI' hangs on the wall. Written and directed by Xavier Wayne under the title along with praises such as '*one of the best films of 2013*' and '*first-rate thriller*'.

He shakes his head.

Xavier's ROOMMATES, DONNY, 20's, and SHAWN, 20's, are in the middle of an intense game.

DONNY

I told you, the splash sisters gets no buckets in Kwahi's house.

SHAWN

Okay. Remember I still got Draymond and KD and both about to tap that ass in the second half.

They speak without looking over.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

X.

DONNY  
What's up negro!

Xavier slumps down on the couch between them.

DONNY (CONT'D)  
The refs are cheating. They're not calling any fouls.

SHAWN  
Yo X, your agent called. Something about, only Tarantino gets to take three years off between films. Said to call him ASAP.

Xavier doesn't answer.

DONNY  
That was a foul! You see what I mean?!

Shawn pauses the game.

DONNY (CONT'D)  
What the hell? I was about to hit a three. Stop cheating!

A BEAT.

SHAWN  
X, what's wrong?

XAVIER  
... Did you know that Michelle moved on? She's already dating again.

DONNY  
Already? Nigga, you broke up three years ago.

SHAWN  
Shut up. You've moved on too, what about Allison, what do you call that?

XAVIER  
A friend with benefits.

SHAWN  
What?

DONNY

A friend with benefits is a friend  
that you can have sex with but  
still remain friends and not --

SHAWN

I know what it is idiot! I thought  
you guys were dating?

XAVIER

... Yeah. So did I. I just left her  
place... she was with another guy.

DONNY

Damn... But she was kind of a ho,  
so... this is your fault.

XAVIER

Wait, what? Since when was she a  
ho?

DONNY

High School.

SHAWN

Middle School.

DONNY

Middle School?

SHAWN

She gave me a hand job in seventh  
grade.

XAVIER

And you're just telling me this  
now.

SHAWN

I thought you knew.

DONNY

Everyone knows... except you. But  
you know now.

XAVIER

I was right in the middle of  
writing my next feature. Now what?

SHAWN

You finish it.

XAVIER

I can't... Not anymore.

Xavier goes to his room. Slams the door.

DONNY

... Are we going to finish? If not,  
I have the lead so --

Shawn leaves.

Donny unpauses the game.

DONNY (CONT'D)

I told you that three was going in.

INT. BEDROOM (CHARLIE'S APARTMENT) - DAY

Xavier lies on the bed next to CHARLOTTE "CHARLIE" EUBANKS, 20's, effortless beauty, seriously, she doesn't try and doesn't care.

Bodies are close, less lovers, more siblings.

They're watching a movie. Cliched dialogue and an overbearing sappy score blasts from the TV.

Xavier is completely engaged. Charlie's eyes are glued to his reactions.

He feels the burns of her eyes melting the side of his face.

Pauses the movie. Looks over.

XAVIER

What?

CHARLIE

You've got to be kidding me.

XAVIER

What?

CHARLIE

You're really enjoying this movie,  
aren't you?

XAVIER

Is that a problem?

CHARLIE

Umm... YES! I thought you were  
supposed to be some kind of  
sophisticated film geek snob.

XAVIER

I am, I mean I do have great taste  
in movies.

CHARLIE

Really?

XAVIER

Clearly this is a guilty pleasure.

CHARLIE

You're guilty alright. You should be locked up for liking this crap.

XAVIER

It's not *that* bad. And I just went through a breakup. I need this. It's therapeutic.

CHARLIE

You can't break up with someone you were never dating, and it really is that bad and it's slightly racist too.

XAVIER

WHAT!? I've heard many criticisms about this movie but never racist. Elaborate please.

CHARLIE

Okay, first off, the characters are unrealistic. The "super hot and cool best friend is the one" plot died in the nineties, maybe even the eighties.

XAVIER

Ouch.

CHARLIE

On to the subtextual racism. The woman that he chose to marry, that he got down on one knee and proposed to, is a complete bitch. And we never see why he even liked her in the first place, yes she's beautiful and has a great pair of tits, but is that it?

XAVIER

Of course not, he had... bad taste in women.

CHARLIE

But the movie made him out to be this super smart, sensitive, humble, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. He's pretty much the perfect guy. And he chooses her because of what, her looks? Was that his flaw? If so, it was never explained.

She stands to her feet. She's about to drop the hammer now.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Then, he has this best friend, the perfect girl, she likes sports, and video games, she gives him his space, is the voice of reason, and was the only one there when his dad died.

XAVIER

Wow... All of these are legit flaws and I'm actually quite impressed. You sound like a film critic. But where's the racism?

CHARLIE

You really need me to spell it out?

XAVIER

Yes.

CHARLIE

What color is the fiancée and what color is the best friend?

XAVIER

... Oh come on! You're reaching.

CHARLIE

Really? The bitchy, money hungry, fame seeking, fiancée just happens to be a dark-skinned black girl while the cool, down to earth, lovable best friend is white. That's a reach?

XAVIER

Yes. The director himself is a dark-skinned black man.

CHARLIE

My point exactly! The movie has an underlying message to indoctrinate black boys into believing that they should date white women.

XAVIER

Jesus!... You know who you sound like right now?

CHARLIE

If you say --

XAVIER

Lauren.

CHARLIE

There it goes.

XAVIER

She's always complaining about underlying racism against black women in movies, in music videos, commercials, billboards, magazines, and on and on and on.

CHARLIE

A white girl, complaining about injustices against black women... Just when you thought you heard it all.

XAVIER

I agree that black women get the short end of the stick a lot... but sometimes, like right now, people tend to reach and that just prevents progress.

CHARLIE

... What a nice observation Dr. Wayne. Where did you get your sociology degree from again?

XAVIER

Ha, ha. Okay, next time you choose the movie.

CHARLIE

Great idea. Let's watch a nineties classic. I just downloaded it.

XAVIER

Like what?

CHARLIE

Love Jones!

XAVIER

Is that a real movie or are you just messing with me?

CHARLIE

Some film geek you are. I'm sure Lauren has seen it.

XAVIER

I'm sensing hostility.

CHARLIE

Just a little bit.

Xavier turns off the movie.

XAVIER

Gotta deal with it later. I have to get going?

CHARLIE

Oh... What do you have to do?

XAVIER

One of my former classmates from film school wants my help co-writing a TV show, apparently, they have a contact at HBO. We're having a sort of team meeting.

CHARLIE

That's great! But how are you going to write for a TV show and finish your script?

XAVIER

... I'll tell you later.

Xavier kisses her on the cheek and races out the door.

CHARLIE

(yelling)

This better not be one of your stupid ideas.

INT. A BAR AND A RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A bar and a restaurant, the actual name of the place, is nearly empty, with only one customer. He sits at the bar, barely able to keep his eyes open.

Charlie is next to him.

Xavier walks in. Looks around. Shakes his head, he's not surprised by this.

He walks to the bar. The BARTENDER has a huge smile when he sees him.

BARTENDER  
Black Woody Allen. My man.

XAVIER  
What's up brotha?

BARTENDER  
Nothing much. So, what happened at your big meeting? Do I have to finally subscribe to HBO... legally?

XAVIER  
No.

BARTENDER  
What? Talk to me. What did you do wrong?

XAVIER  
Nothing.

CHARLIE  
You had to do something.

XAVIER  
I did nothing and that was the problem.

BARTENDER  
Explain.

XAVIER  
Okay. What I'm about to say will make you laugh, or get upset or tease me or tell other guys and they'll tease me or question my sexuality and --

BARTENDER  
Just tell me what you did.

XAVIER  
... I turned down sex.

BARTENDER

Wait! You mean to tell me the whole  
gay sex ritual, sell your soul,  
sacrifice your first born child  
thing is real?

XAVIER

No... maybe, I don't know, but  
there was no meeting with HBO. It  
was at this chick's house.

BARTENDER

Oh. So you think you're the first  
guy to turn down sex? What was  
wrong? Too big, too skinny, too  
ugly, didn't smell right?

XAVIER

No.

BARTENDER

Who was it?

XAVIER

Natasha.

CHARLIE

With a nickname like Nasty Natasha,  
what did you expect?

BARTENDER

Nasty Natasha, I like the sound of  
that.

XAVIER

I brought her here last week.

The Bartender's eyes widen.

BARTENDER

And you turned her down. What the  
hell is wrong with you?

XAVIER

I don't like her... not like that  
at least.

BARTENDER

How did it happen? She asks and you  
just said no?

XAVIER

Something like that...

## FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

INT. LIVING ROOM (NATASHA'S APARTMENT) - DAY

Xavier sits on a couch. He looks around. Confused.

NATASHA, 20's, walks in, nothing in her eyes say brainstorm. She's dressed in yoga pants and a tank top, no bra... For a meeting.

XAVIER (V.O.)

I got to her place on time. No one else was there. No biggie. I did show up thirty minutes early. But half an hour after everyone else was supposed to show up. She tells me...

NATASHA

No one else is coming. They just text me. Half an hour late. Can you believe that?

BARTENDER (V.O.)

What did you say?

XAVIER (V.O.)

I was like, Okay. We can still discuss, right? She said...

NATASHA

Sure. Let's go to my room though. The AC's broken down here.

BARTENDER (V.O.)

You're really bad at reading signs.

XAVIER (V.O.)

I know. So anyway, we go to her room.

INT. BEDROOM (NATASHA'S APARTMENT) - CONTINUOUS

Xavier sits on the bed. No notebooks, laptops, or dry erase boards in sight. He again looks confused.

Natasha enters the room, wearing the shortest shorts you've ever seen.

She sits next to him.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
 So, she walks in and sits next to me, wearing panties, you know, the kind they sell in the shorts department and call shorts.

BARTENDER (V.O.)  
 Get to the good stuff!

XAVIER (V.O.)  
 So, we discussed the show for five minutes, maybe less. Then...

Natasha turns on some music from her laptop.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
 She finally cracks open her laptop, but to play the "Isley Brothers" 'For the Love of You'. Says to me...

NATASHA  
 I feel like dancing. Dance with me.

Natasha pulls Xavier close to her. Very, very close.

They dance.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
 So we dance. Then...

Natasha puts his hands on her butt.

Xavier's eyes widen.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
 She's putting my hands all over her. And of course I'm a man so... you know.

INT. A BAR AND A RESTAURANT - SAME

Still at the bar.

BARTENDER  
 What?

XAVIER  
 You know. I got a... you know.

BARTENDER  
 You got an erection. A boner. A hard di --

XAVIER

Yes!

BARTENDER

Then what?

BACK TO FLASHBACK

Natasha's hand slides down to Xavier's crotch. She squeezes softly.

XAVIER (V.O.)

She grabbed it.

Xavier backs away. Guards it with his hands.

BARTENDER (V.O.)

And you pushed her away. Tell me you didn't push her?

XAVIER (V.O.)

I didn't. But she was still mad. She was like...

NATASHA

What's wrong with you? I thought you knew what was happening.

XAVIER (V.O.)

So I said... I just can't do it. She was like...

NATASHA

Why? I know you're not gay, you slept with Allison Moon, and she said you were surprisingly good.

XAVIER (V.O.)

And I was like, wait a minute, what do you mean, surprisingly? And she was like --

BARTENDER (V.O.)

Get to the end. What was your excuse... or reason?

XAVIER

(Charlie V.O.)

I'm afraid of black women.

FLASHBACK ENDS.

Xavier sits next to the drunk.

He turns.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

I told her that I didn't want to have sex with anyone else except the one.

BARTENDER

Which one?

XAVIER

The "one".

BARTENDER

... Oh, the "one" like in those stupid movies you like.

CHARLIE

Exactly.

XAVIER

Whatever, cynics.

CHARLIE

I'm not a cynic. I'm a realist. And I know that those relationships in the movies don't exist in real life.

XAVIER

What about Love Jones?

CHARLIE

Of course those exist in real life, that wasn't a typical cheesy... you still haven't seen it, have you?

XAVIER

... No.

BARTENDER

You've never seen Love Jones?

The bartender shakes his head.

XAVIER

To make matters worse. She said that the only reason she wanted me on the project was to have sex with me. She thinks *House of Yukai* was a fluke.

A BEAT.

XAVIER (CONT'D)  
Maybe she's right.

CHARLIE  
Don't say that. You're a great  
filmmaker.

XAVIER  
I still have to prove that... And I  
know exactly what I'm missing.

BARTENDER  
What? A great script?

XAVIER  
No... well yes, but No. I'm missing  
her.

BARTENDER  
Natasha?

XAVIER  
No. The one.

BARTENDER  
Who?

XAVIER  
I don't know yet. But I will and  
soon. And Charlie's gonna help me.

CHARLIE  
I am?

XAVIER  
Yes. I don't trust anyone else.  
Clearly I have bad taste in women.

CHARLIE  
Horrible.

XAVIER  
And that's why I need you to help  
me pick one.

CHARLIE  
Pick one from what? Are you going  
to use some stupid dating app? Or  
are we talking a nationwide  
competition, with rounds, and  
winners and losers?

Charlie laughs.

XAVIER  
Something like the latter.

CHARLIE  
I will stab you right now.

BARTENDER  
Shhh... I wanna hear the plan.

Xavier takes out his phone. Opens up Instagram.

XAVIER  
So, the first three choices are  
Esmeralda, a writer and comic book  
artist. Tall, beautiful, super  
geek. Mia, a dancer... nuff said.

BARTENDER  
Why these three?

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Xavier, 20's, longer hair, walks into a classroom. Only one other student is there. At the front of the class.

She turns. Smiles. She's **ESMERALDA TORRES**, dark eyes, cinnamon skin, and black hair that hangs down her back like a mink coat.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
I met Esmeralda on the first day of  
class.

Xavier walks up to her.

XAVIER  
I guess I'm not the only one who  
believes the early bird gets the  
worm.

Esmeralda gives him a pity laugh.

ESMERALDA  
Hi, I'm Esmeralda.

XAVIER  
Xavier.

MONTAGE

Xavier and Esmeralda hang out.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
She's a writer, but her passion is  
comics and Sci-fi.

A. Esmeralda shows Xavier her collection of comic books and  
Sci-fi movie posters.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
She's a gamer... like a serious  
gamer.

B. Esmeralda screams at the TV while playing videos games  
with Xavier.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
And she's a talented artist.

C. Esmeralda draws a life-like portrait of Xavier.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. A BAR AND A RESTAURANT - NIGHT

He swipes to the next page.

XAVIER  
Then, there's Mia.

CHARLIE  
The dancer, right?

XAVIER  
Yeah.

CHARLIE  
I'm curious about how you met her  
because I know it wasn't at a club.

XAVIER  
No.

CHARLIE  
Because you can't dance.

XAVIER  
Yes I can.

CHARLIE  
No you can't.

XAVIER

Yes I... ah forget it. So, anyway,  
I met Mia, not at a club, but on  
the street.

CHARLIE

You just walked up to her and said  
Hi? That's bold.

XAVIER

No.

CHARLIE

She walked up to you?

XAVIER

No. Her body called me to her.

CHARLIE

Don't make me slap you.

XAVIER

No, I'm being serious.

#### FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

#### EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Xavier walks alone on the street.

XAVIER (V.O.)

I had just left the train station.  
I was on my way to Winchell's to  
get a cream filled donut and large  
coffee like I always do when I'm  
writing. That's when I saw her.

#### SALSA MUSIC PLAYS

A woman, in a black skirt with red ruffles, spins around  
gracefully.

She dances like both no one is watching and everyone is  
watching at the same time.

XAVIER (V.O.)

She was so graceful... and sensual.

She turns. Makes eye contact. This is MIA CHANG, short and  
slender, like a firecracker, but inside is the power of a  
nuclear bomb.

CHARLIE (V.O.)  
What did you do?

XAVIER (V.O.)  
I did what any man would've done...  
I danced.

Xavier moves like a seasoned vet with Michael Jacksonesque spins and Latin shimmies.

CHARLIE (V.O.)  
Stop!

FLASHBACK ENDS

Back at Bar

CHARLIE  
Just stop it! You can't move like that.

BARTENDER  
I agree brotha, I've seen you sober and drunk... you're terrible.

XAVIER  
Okay, whatever. Anyway, I danced...

BACK TO FLASHBACK

Xavier now moves awkwardly and completely without grace or rhythm.

She inches closer to him.

They embrace. Dance.

Mia laughs as she tries to help the uncoordinated Xavier.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
It was a weird but cool night.

MONTAGE

Xavier and Mia hang out.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
Mia is a professional. She can do it all.

A. Mia gives Xavier a short demonstration of her variety of moves.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
 She's unpredictable too... maybe  
 too much.

B. Mia pulls the fire alarm in Xavier's apartment. Runs off.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
 And she is not a fan of authority.  
 At all.

C. Mia yells at cops, who are just sitting and eating donuts, while Xavier stands to the side with his head down. The cops get up, politely walk past Mia, and beat Xavier with their batons.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. A BAR AND A RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Xavier and Charlie are sitting next to each other now. The drunk is asleep... and snoring pretty loudly.

XAVIER  
 I guess he doesn't like my plan.

CHARLIE  
 Well it is pretty ridiculous.

XAVIER  
 There's one more.

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

INT. LAUREN'S GARAGE - DAY

Xavier sits in a homemade studio, across from LAUREN MATTHEWS, 20's, beach blonde hair and ocean blue eyes you'd be happy to drown in.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
 I was a fan of her podcast and  
 agreed to do it at the height of  
 the House of Yukai hype. The whole  
 time she was talking I kept  
 thinking to myself, Jesus she's  
 gorgeous... and so smart.

A.) Xavier and Lauren hang out in the library.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
She is a voracious reader. She  
could talk about books for hours  
upon hours.

B.) Lauren walks the streets holding up signs demanding  
equality for women.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
There's no cause she's afraid to  
stand up for.

C.) Lauren's room is filled with posters of black culture.

XAVIER (V.O.)  
And her knowledge of black culture.  
She --

CHARLIE (V.O.)  
I think I get the point.

MONTAGE ENDS.

XAVIER  
You really don't like Lauren, do  
you?

CHARLIE  
Not really. No.

XAVIER  
I'm scared to ask this but...

CHARLIE  
No. It has absolutely nothing to do  
with the fact that she's white...  
Or is she black? I forget  
sometimes.

XAVIER  
What happened between you two?

CHARLIE  
We have a history. Let's just leave  
it at that.

XAVIER  
She's really cool. I think you two  
should bury this hatchet. What if  
she's the one? I can't have my best  
friend and my girlfriend hating  
each other... I'm pretty sure  
there's a movie about that.

CHARLIE

You have terrible taste in women.  
Except for Michelle. She was cool.

XAVIER

But?

CHARLIE

But this idea is really, really,  
really, dumb. Your problem is that  
ever since Michelle left you,  
you've dated down because you don't  
think you're good enough. Raise  
your standards. Open your eyes.

XAVIER

Allison told me to open my eyes.

CHARLIE

That's great advice... and by the  
way, Allison, really? You thought  
you were dating Allison Moon.  
Really?

XAVIER

I know, I'm a idiot.

CHARLIE

Yes. You are.

XAVIER

Are you helping me or what?

CHARLIE

... I shouldn't. I'm sure my  
feminist card is going to get  
revoked... hell, my woman card  
too... But I know I have to be  
there when this crashes and  
burns... and this will crash and  
burn.

Xavier kisses her on the forehead.

XAVIER

You're the best.

INT. LIVING ROOM (XAVIER'S APARTMENT) - NIGHT

Xavier and Charlie enter the living room.

Donny and Shawn are battling it out again.

XAVIER  
Fellas. How much longer?

DONNY  
Game one. Best of seven.

SHAWN  
I'm sweeping this nigga. Won't be long.

XAVIER  
What's quarter time?

DONNY  
You already know, twelve minutes. Real time.

Xavier looks to Charlie. Mouths 'sorry'.

CHARLIE  
Well, I'm going for the Spurs.

SHAWN  
Damn C-Murder. And I liked you.

DONNY  
You're rolling with a winner, C.

CHARLIE  
I'll catch you guys later.

SHAWN  
Later.

DONNY  
Peace and love girl.

CHARLIE  
Last chance to back of this and save yourself the disappointment.

XAVIER  
... Well... nope. Still doing it.

CHARLIE  
Okay. I'll see you tomorrow.

Charlie exits.

Shawn presses pause.

DONNY  
You always press pause when I got the ball!

A BEAT.

SHAWN

I'm giving her time to leave so  
that she won't hear me.

DONNY

Ooooh. Right. You about to say some  
foul shit, huh?

SHAWN

No.

XAVIER

You better not.

SHAWN

Look at this negro getting all  
defensive. I just wanted to know...  
is she single?

XAVIER

... Yeah. Why?

SHAWN

Well, let me see, she's fine as  
hell, she's talented, she's smart,  
she's a smart ass, she's got a  
job... she's damn near perfect.  
Only flaw I see is being best  
friends with you.

DONNY

(singing)  
Cold blooded.

They pound fists.

XAVIER

You couldn't get her.

SHAWN

And how would you know?

XAVIER

Because of everything that you just  
listed. When was the last time you  
dated a girl like that? I'll wait.

DONNY

Daaaaaaaaaaaaamn.

SHAWN  
That's hurtful asshole. I thought  
we were supposed to be kind of  
friends?

XAVIER  
We are... kind of.

They all laugh.

Xavier joins them on the couch.

SHAWN  
I have a question. Be real with me.

XAVIER  
I'm always real. Ask.

SHAWN  
... Are you not dating Charlie  
because you're afraid of her  
leaving you like Michelle did?

A BEAT.

XAVIER  
No. She's my friend... just like  
you two. Simple as that.

SHAWN  
Okay.

A BEAT.

DONNY  
What happened with Michelle?

XAVIER  
She cheated.

DONNY  
... Damn... damn.

Shawn unpauses the game.

SHAWN  
Let's finish --

Xavier takes a deep breath.

XAVIER  
We used to work together at bargain  
city.

SHAWN  
(sarcastically)  
Oh great, story time.

DONNY  
What the hell is a bargain city?

XAVIER  
Big dollar store chain, only on the east coast. She was the last cashier, the one at the end of the line, that meant she could do returns and purchases.

DONNY  
Right.

XAVIER  
She was so gorgeous. Big beautiful brown eyes hidden behind a pair of gazelle frames.

BARTENDER  
Gazelle frames?

XAVIER  
Yeah. She was retro.

DONNY  
Dope.

XAVIER  
Tall, slender body. Beautiful lips, dimples. Natural hair. Her smile... man, her smile. And that's not the best part.

DONNY  
There's more?

XAVIER  
She was smart. She read books in days, and by days I mean, she could read a book in one day. We'd have arguments and debates about world history, politics, sports, movies... she loved movies. She thinks Manhattan is better than Annie Hall but I didn't hold it against her. And she was nice, genuinely nice.

DONNY  
I'm sorry.

XAVIER  
I'm over it.

DONNY  
Really?

XAVIER  
... No.

INT. XAVIER'S ROOM (XAVIER'S APARTMENT) - NIGHT

Xavier sits at his laptop. Stares at a blank final draft page.

Looks over at his phone.

XAVIER  
This doesn't mean I'm crazy... or  
obsessed. I just... I just need to  
know. That's normal.

He grabs his phone. Paces back and forth.

Stops.

A BEAT.

Dials a number... HANGS UP.

He grabs a hoodie and leaves.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF MICHELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Xavier paces back and forth outside an apartment complex.  
He's looking at a particular door.

Suddenly, an OLDER WOMAN exits her apartment. Walks over.

OLDER WOMAN  
Good evening young man.

Xavier turns. Surprised.

XAVIER  
Oh. Hi. Good evening.

OLDER WOMAN  
Nice night, huh?

XAVIER

Umm... yeah... I'm not a criminal or anything. I'm not here to rob anybody or sell drugs.

OLDER WOMAN

(laughing)

Oh I know that. You're a nice young man. I can tell... plus I've seen you here before.

XAVIER

What? Me? You sure? I don't think so.

OLDER WOMAN

Yeah. You were... doing the same exact thing. Pacing back and forth like you were trying to make a decision. If I'm not mistaken you've been here about four times.

XAVIER

I think you're mistaken.

OLDER WOMAN

No. I don't forget faces. Never have. I'm not complaining. I just thought you were considering getting one of these apartments. They're nice. I've been here fifteen years, when they first opened up. Love it.

XAVIER

... Okay. Busted. I've been thinking of moving lately. I've got these two wild roommates. I think it's time to be on my own.

OLDER WOMAN

I understand. Problem is, the apartment you're always looking at. Someone already stays there. Pretty girl. About your age.

XAVIER

Really?

OLDER WOMAN

Yep.

XAVIER  
Oh well. I guess I'll get going.  
Nice talking to you.

Xavier turns, and for a moment, loses his breath. Standing in front of him is MICHELLE MITCHELL, 30's, the one that got away. She's everything he described and more.

XAVIER (CONT'D)  
... Umm... Hi.

MICHELLE  
... Hi.

XAVIER  
I... I was Umm...

OLDER WOMAN  
He was just in the neighborhood.  
Right Xavier?

Xavier turns to the old woman, his look screams '*How the hell do you know my name?*'.

XAVIER  
Right.

OLDER WOMAN  
Well, I gotta get going. You two  
have a nice talk. Michelle.

MICHELLE  
Ms. Lewis.

Ms. Lewis goes back inside.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)  
... Been a while.

XAVIER  
Yeah... how's everything?

MICHELLE  
Good, good... you?

XAVIER  
Good.

MICHELLE  
That's good.

XAVIER  
Yeah.

A BEAT.

MICHELLE (O.S.)

So...

XAVIER

Why am I really here?

MICHELLE (O.S.)

Yes... well not like that but...  
yeah.

XAVIER

Well, I wanted to ask you... I  
needed some clarification.

MICHELLE

On?

XAVIER

Me. Us. You know, why... you dumped  
me.

A BEAT.

MICHELLE

Did you just get done watching High  
Fidelity?

XAVIER

No... I love that movie though, but  
I need to know what my flaws are.  
What to work on so that I don't  
make the same mistake with... so  
that I don't make the same mistakes  
again.

MICHELLE

Is there someone special?

XAVIER

Yes... Kind of, maybe. I'm about to  
enter a relationship again... the  
first serious one since...

MICHELLE (O.S.)

Oh.

XAVIER

I need to know. Please.

MICHELLE

It wasn't you Xavier, it was --

XAVIER

Don't say that! Every girl says that. Don't be nice. I mean, I know you can't help it but... be objective.

MICHELLE

Objectively speaking... it was me. I wasn't in love Xavier. Not like you were. I didn't believe in staying faithful to someone. That was a stupid --

XAVIER

Fairy tale.

MICHELLE

I wish I had your optimism. Your idealism. It's not a flaw.

XAVIER

You still haven't said what I did wrong.

MICHELLE

Because you didn't do anything wrong.

XAVIER

Nothing. Nothing at all?

MICHELLE

If anything... you made it harder for me to break up with you.

XAVIER

How?

MICHELLE

Because you didn't see the signs. They were everywhere.

XAVIER

I've been told I need work in that department.

MICHELLE

You're a good guy Xavier. And your future girlfriend, whoever she is... she's a pretty lucky lady.

XAVIER

You're the second person to say that.

(MORE)

XAVIER (CONT'D)

The first person who said it was my... well, I thought she was my girlfriend until I caught her in bed with another guy.

MICHELLE

I'm sorry... but it's true, that girl doesn't know what she's missing.

XAVIER

... Still cooking?

MICHELLE

Yeah. I'm a sous chef at the new Japanese restaurant Downtown called Duck, Duck, Goose.

XAVIER

That's great!

MICHELLE (O.S.)

What about you? I figured you'd be a multiple Oscar winner by now.

XAVIER

Oh me... I'm... still writing. As a matter of fact, I was writing before I left.

MICHELLE

Really? What is it about?

XAVIER

It... Umm... It's hard to explain. I've never been good at pitching and --

MICHELLE

You have nothing?

XAVIER

Absolutely no clue what to write.

MICHELLE

(laughing)

Get out of your head Xavier. Put it on the page. Whatever it is I'm sure it'll be brilliant like House of Yukai.

XAVIER

... I love you.

MICHELLE (O.S.)

I know.

A BEAT.

XAVIER/MICHELLE (O.S.)

(in unison)

Empire Strikes Back.

XAVIER

... Thanks.

They hug.

MICHELLE

Whenever you're in the neighborhood. Stop by the restaurant.

XAVIER

Definitely.

Michelle goes inside.

Off his look.

EXT. COMIC BOOK STORE - DAY

TITLE CARD - DATE #1 (ESMERALDA)

Xavier waits outside a comic book store. He looks down the street.

Esmeralda, wearing a YELLOW Batman T-shirt and cape, walks up, huge smile on her face.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

Remember, the initial interaction is very important. Watch the hug.

Esmeralda greets him, giant bear hug. Kiss on the cheek.

XAVIER

Good to see you too.

ESMERALDA

I'm really excited about this first issue. A lot of people think it's a mistake to reboot Batman, it's sacrilegious and all. I think it's cool. I mean, it could even lead to DC hiring new writers for new stories.

XAVIER

And you're one of those writers.

ESMERALDA

Exactly! I showed you my Batman stuff?

XAVIER

Yeah. I love it. Especially the villain, "Boy". Great name by the way. How do you kill a kid? Even if he is a mass murdering psychopathic genius.

ESMERALDA

I know, right!

Xavier looks at the entrance.

XAVIER

Well, shall we?

They hold hands.

Enter.

INT. COMIC BOOK STORE - DAY

Xavier and Esmeralda lie on the floor staring up at the ceiling. Comics surround them.

ESMERALDA

That was a brilliant first issue.

XAVIER

Yeah. I still can't believe you read it so fast.

ESMERALDA

I was excited.

XAVIER

I know. I was there.

ESMERALDA

... This is fun.

XAVIER

Yeah.

ESMERALDA

So, do you remember what you were going to ask me, before my phone call rudely interrupted you?

XAVIER

... Umm... yeah! I wanted to know... what was the best date you've ever been on?

ESMERALDA

Wow... well, I'd have to say comic-con, 2011.

XAVIER

Who took you to comic-con?

ESMERALDA

Victoria, my ex.

XAVIER

Oh.

ESMERALDA

What do you mean by Oh?

XAVIER

I mean, that's cool. Absolutely nothing wrong with that.

A BEAT.

ESMERALDA

I'm teasing. I know what you meant. Anyway, we went dressed as Poison Ivy and Harley Quinn.

XAVIER

Nice.

ESMERALDA

We had an amazing time.

XAVIER

I believe you date who you want to date.

ESMERALDA

Exactly! I don't fall in love with genders, I fall in love with --

XAVIER

People.

ESMERALDA

Right! What about you?

XAVIER

I like girls. I mean I've only fallen in love with girls... so far. There was this one time in High School, I had a friend name Aiden, pretty boy, soccer player. We used to hang out a lot and everyone thought we were gay but we weren't. But if --

ESMERALDA

I was talking about your best date.

XAVIER

Oh. Right. That's easy. Midnight in Paris, New York premiere.

ESMERALDA

You were at that premiere?

XAVIER

Yep. My ex took me. I almost broke up with her when she said that Manhattan was better than Annie Hall but --

ESMERALDA

I've never seen Annie Hall.

XAVIER

What?

ESMERALDA

Is that a crime?

XAVIER

Felony. I sentence you to watching it with me.

ESMERALDA

Fair enough.

XAVIER

So, anyway, she made up for it by getting us tickets to that premiere. I rewarded her that night with slightly above average sex.

ESMERALDA

My favorite kind.

XAVIER

I saw Woody in person. One of my all time favorite memories.

ESMERALDA

Why did you and your girlfriend break up? Is Annie Hall that much better than Manhattan?

XAVIER

She cheated.

ESMERALDA

Oh. Sorry.

XAVIER

You?

ESMERALDA

She thinks Superman is a better character than Batman.

Xavier laughs.

Esmeralda isn't joking.

XAVIER

He's not. Never will be.

ESMERALDA

... Plus the sex was way above average.

They both laugh.

XAVIER

So, other than a love of everything Batman, what else are you looking for in a boyfrie --, I mean, a... partner?

ESMERALDA

Partner? Like business wise?

XAVIER

A person you're dating.

ESMERALDA

Lover is fine.

XAVIER

What are you looking for in a lover?

ESMERALDA

Let's see, I like people who...  
aren't afraid to laugh at  
themselves. People who haven't  
outgrown their childhoods. And  
people who are just real. Be  
yourself. That's my favorite motto.

XAVIER

Cool.

EXT. COMIC BOOK STORE - NIGHT

Xavier playfully drags Esmeralda away as the comic book store manager locks up for the night.

XAVIER

That was fun.

ESMERALDA

Yeah. We haven't been out like that  
in a while. To what do I owe this  
occasion?

XAVIER

... Nothing special. I just wanted  
to spend time with a cool person.

ESMERALDA

And you settled for me.

XAVIER

Cool people are overrated.

ESMERALDA

Extremely.

A car pulls up.

ESMERALDA (CONT'D)

That's my uber. Thanks for the  
fun... what do we call this?

XAVIER

Hang out session.

ESMERALDA

Thanks for the fun hang out  
session.

She kisses him on the cheek.

Off his look.

INT. XAVIER'S ROOM - NIGHT

Xavier lies on his bed staring at the ceiling. Charlie sits in a chair, staring at him. Confused.

CHARLIE

So, was it fun, horrible, unexplainable? You haven't said a word.

XAVIER

I'm trying to soak it in... it was great.

CHARLIE

Okay. How was the greeting?

XAVIER

Firm hug. Kiss on the cheek.

CHARLIE

Oh.

XAVIER

Is that a good oh?

CHARLIE

Yes. Kissing is good. What did you learn?

XAVIER

She dated a girl once. She doesn't believe in falling in love with genders. She --

CHARLIE

Falls in love with people.

XAVIER

Yeah.

CHARLIE

So, other than the fact that she'll probably cheat on you with a woman, it was nothing bad at all?

XAVIER

Well...

CHARLIE

Well what? Spill it.

XAVIER

Her schedule is always full. Online gaming tournaments almost every month. She spends a lot of money on comic books... a lot.

Charlie walks to a DRY ERASE BOARD on the wall.

The three names of the girls written on it. Underneath each name, PROS/CONS.

Charlie writes Time, Money Spending in the cons section under Esmeralda's name. In the pros section, she writes 'everything else'.

CHARLIE

Tough act to follow.

XAVIER

I'm sure Mia and Lauren are up to the challenge.

CHARLIE

We'll see.

XAVIER

I see you're having fun with this.

CHARLIE

Yeah... so much fun. Can I leave now?

XAVIER

You're not staying the night?

CHARLIE

Donny and Shawn have girls in their rooms. And they're all coked out of their minds.

XAVIER

Fuck!

CHARLIE

You're not sleeping if you stay here tonight. Come with me if you want to sleep.

XAVIER

Done deal.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT

TITLE CARD: DATE #1 (MIA)

SALSA MUSIC PLAYS

Xavier and Mia, alone, both decked out in all black, her a short skirt, him black dress shirt, slacks.

They stand face to face. Hands together. Staring into each other's eyes.

A BEAT.

They dance.

Mia moves her body so naturally, you'd think she was born for this reason only.

Xavier is surprisingly good.

Mia is somewhat shocked.

MIA

What is happening right now? Did you practice?

Xavier spins her around.

XAVIER

Maybe.

MIA

I like it.

XAVIER

So... is being a good dancer part of your needs in a... lover?

MIA

Lover? Are you asking if good dancing equates to good sex?

XAVIER

No. I just meant your... significant other.

MIA

So why didn't you just say boyfriend?

The music slows down.

They adjust their dancing accordingly.

XAVIER

Well some people don't believe in labels.

MIA

Okay. Well, to answer your question. Yes. It's very important. It shows courage.

XAVIER

Courage?

MIA

People who say they can't dance are people that are afraid to let loose. Afraid to be teased. Afraid to truly not care what others think of them. That leads to a lot of bad decisions in their life.

XAVIER

... Damn. I never thought of it like that. I just presumed some people are more naturally gifted than others.

MIA

That too.

XAVIER

Have you ever dated a bad dancer?

MIA

Never. Good dancing doesn't necessarily mean good person. I've dated some jerks who were phenomenal. I mean, M.J., James Brown, Fred Astaire, you name him, they mastered it... but they were horrible boyfriends.

XAVIER

What are the other qualifications?

MIA

Good listener. Nice. Humble.

The song changes again. Slower song.

MIA (CONT'D)

But most importantly. He can't be boring.

XAVIER

And what do you consider to be boring?

MIA

A person who always does what's expected of them. By the book. Easy to read. Safe.

Mia's phone buzzes. She checks it.

Stops dancing.

MIA (CONT'D)

I'll be right back.

She dances off.

XAVIER

If I had a ring I might make a bad decision tonight.

Xavier dances alone to the slow song.

The song ends.

A BEAT.

No more music is playing.

Xavier walks over to the laptop. Searches for a new song to play.

He hears JINGLING KEYS. Voices, a male and a female.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

They've been improving each week. I really think it'll help their marriage... what's wrong?

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Someone is here.

Xavier walks to the entrance.

The door opens. MIDDLE AGED COUPLE stare at him.

MAN #1

Who are you and how the hell did you get in here?

WOMAN #1

I'm calling the police.

XAVIER

(quickly)

Wait! Wait! I'm here with Mia, she said it was okay. She's a student here.

MAN #1

Student?

XAVIER

Well, she comes here all the time to learn salsa and other Latin dances.

MAN #1

I don't know who Mia is and this is not a dance studio. This is our apartment. This space is used to dance but we don't have any *students*, we have clients, we're marriage counselors.

A BEAT.

XAVIER

(under his breath)

She's certainly not boring.

MAN #1

What?

XAVIER

Nothing. I'm so sorry. Please don't call the cops. It was an honest mistake.

The man looks to his wife, nods. She puts away her phone.

Xavier grabs the laptop.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

You guys have a great night.

EXT. XAVIER'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Xavier walks up to his car. Mia sits on the hood.

XAVIER

Dance studio she said. Come here all the time she said.

MIA

Did you get a rush?

XAVIER

A rush?

MIA

When you realized that you could be  
in big trouble.

XAVIER

Well...

He thinks about what his answer could lead to.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Maybe a little bit but --

MIA

I knew it! It's so exhilarating  
isn't it?

XAVIER

Yeah.

MIA

That was pretty mild for me.

XAVIER

I figured.

MIA

Maybe not for you though. Big black  
man in their apartment. You  
could've been shot.

XAVIER

(nervous laugh)  
... Yeah.

MIA

That felt good. Too bad we're going  
to have to cut this date short. I  
really got class in the morning. At  
a real dance studio.

XAVIER

Thank you for coming.

MIA

No. Thank you for inviting me. I  
like our little dates together.

She hugs him. Kisses him on the lips.

MIA (CONT'D)

We should do this more often.

XAVIER  
I have no problem with that.

INT. XAVIER'S ROOM - NIGHT

Charlie is asleep on the bed. Xavier enters.  
Jumps on top of the bed. Charlie wakes up.

CHARLIE  
You must've been a joy as a kid.

XAVIER  
My mom's favorite.

Charlie sits up.

CHARLIE  
So, lay it on me.

Xavier takes out his laptop. Plays *pop song*.  
Picks Charlie up from the bed.  
They dance.

XAVIER  
She was great. The things she can  
do with her body... as impressive  
as any athlete.

CHARLIE  
So you danced? You!

XAVIER  
Yes. I've been practicing.

CHARLIE  
I can tell.

XAVIER  
Her flaw though, it may be too  
difficult to deal with.

CHARLIE  
Which one?

XAVIER  
Her spontaneity. The place we were  
dancing at... not a studio.

CHARLIE  
What was it?

XAVIER  
Someone's apartment. They showed  
up.

CHARLIE  
What did she do?

XAVIER  
She left before they arrived. She  
knew they were coming.

CHARLIE  
And what did you tell her about  
that?

Laptop dies. The song ends.

XAVIER  
Nothing.

CHARLIE  
Xavier.

XAVIER  
I know, I know. I couldn't help  
myself.

CHARLIE  
So, is she off the list then?

XAVIER  
Absolutely not. I can help her work  
on that.

CHARLIE  
Sure you can.

They both fall on the bed.

XAVIER  
One more to go.

CHARLIE  
... Yep.

XAVIER  
You staying or going?

CHARLIE  
Staying.

XAVIER  
Cool. Can you do me a huge favor?

CHARLIE  
What's up?

XAVIER  
... Do you mind... getting the  
light? I'm exhausted.

A BEAT.

Charlie hits him with a pillow.

INT. A BAR AND A RESTAURANT - DAY

Xavier sits next to the drunk. The Bartender is telling a story.

BARTENDER  
The worst and best ten years of my  
life.

DRUNK  
Never get married.

Xavier is silent.

BARTENDER  
You haven't said a word since  
you've been here. What's up?

XAVIER  
... My agency dumped me.

BARTENDER  
Oh... sorry.

CUSTOMER  
Why?

XAVIER  
I haven't done anything since House  
of Yukai. Maybe Natasha is right.  
It was just a fluke.

BARTENDER  
Bullshit! That movie was great man.  
Flukes don't make movies that good.

CUSTOMER  
Question. Why haven't you made your  
second movie yet? I thought House  
of Yukai came out three years ago.

XAVIER

It did... I haven't written a script since.

CUSTOMER

Well write one.

XAVIER

I can't.

CUSTOMER

Why not?

XAVIER

Because... I haven't found her yet.

CUSTOMER

Your special girl.

XAVIER

Yeah. I know I'll be right again when I get her. I know it.

BARTENDER

Was your date good?

CUSTOMER

Yeah, how was the dancer?

XAVIER

Great. Amazing... but she's crazy.

CUSTOMER

Good crazy or bad?

XAVIER

I didn't know there was a difference.

BARTENDER

Oh there is. You see, bad crazy is like a girl who goes through all of your text messages.

CUSTOMER

Fights any girl that speaks to you.

BARTENDER

Wants you to check in with her every time you leave the house.

XAVIER

And what's good crazy?

BARTENDER  
... The same. The chick is just a  
lot better looking.

A BEAT.

They all laugh.

XAVIER  
Well, I guess she's good crazy.

BARTENDER  
Who's next?

XAVIER  
Lauren.

CUSTOMER  
Where are you taking her?

XAVIER  
I have no clue. I'm too broke to  
take her to any of the fun stuff  
she loves to do.

BARTENDER  
Sometimes simple is better. A walk  
through a park. Riding bikes.

XAVIER  
Yeah... those sound like great  
plans.

Xavier's phone buzzes. He checks it.

XAVIER (CONT'D)  
Gotta go. That's Charlie.

He leaves.

INT. LIVING ROOM (CHARLIE'S APARTMENT) - DAY

Xavier enters the room.

Charlie is on the phone. Huge smile on her face.

CHARLIE  
Yeah... Thanks... no problem, just  
make sure you're at the next one.  
Okay... bye.

XAVIER  
So, what's the big news?

CHARLIE  
I got a gig!

XAVIER  
What! That's amazing!

Charlie jumps in his arms. Xavier spins her around.

XAVIER (CONT'D)  
Where is it? When? How long?

CHARLIE  
Well, it's a small bar. They usually do karaoke there but this is going to be their first 'real singers' night.

XAVIER  
That's amazing.

CHARLIE  
It's this Friday. 9:00pm. So, can you --

XAVIER  
I'm there!

A BEAT.

CHARLIE  
You're the best... ever.

XAVIER  
Yeah, I know.

Charlie slumps down on the couch.

Xavier joins her.

XAVIER (CONT'D)  
I need your help.

CHARLIE  
Anything.

XAVIER  
I don't know where to take Lauren for our date.

CHARLIE  
Keep it simple. You're not proposing.

XAVIER

That's what I was thinking. A walk in the park is what I'm zeroing in on.

CHARLIE

Sounds good to me.

XAVIER

Wow. You're really in a good mood.

CHARLIE

I know. I didn't say anything bad about Lucy.

XAVIER

... Exactly.

They laugh.

INT. LIVING ROOM (XAVIER'S APARTMENT) - NIGHT

Shawn, Donny and the Bartender sit on the couch.

Xavier exits a room. He's wearing black dress pants, black shirt and a RED TIE.

SHAWN

Are you going to be parking cars as well?

DONNY

I was thinking he was going to be the piano player.

Xavier looks at the Bartender.

XAVIER

Anything from you?

BARTENDER

Lose the brown shoes.

XAVIER

This is nice.

SHAWN

Yeah, but... no it's bad.

DONNY

Very bad.

BARTENDER  
Lose the brown shoes.

Xavier goes back inside.

Moments later, he returns. Gray sweater, brown slacks, same shoes.

SHAWN  
Better.

DONNY  
Worse.

BARTENDER  
I told you already.

He goes back inside.

Moments later, he returns. Red plaid shirt, black jeans, black Chuck Taylor's.

SHAWN  
Hate the shirt.

DONNY  
Yeah... and the pants.

BARTENDER  
Question.

XAVIER  
Yes.

BARTENDER  
Why are you so concerned about what you're wearing to Charlie's gig?

XAVIER  
Because I'm taking Lauren. This is our date.

BARTENDER  
What?!

SHAWN  
Big mistake.

DONNY  
Makes sense.

SHAWN  
Stop talking Donny.

BARTENDER  
Dude, what happened to a walk in  
the park, a bike ride? Simple.

XAVIER  
This is simple.

BARTENDER  
No it's not.

SHAWN  
This is bad.

XAVIER  
Why?

BARTENDER  
You really need us to spell it out  
for you?

XAVIER  
... You know what? No. I don't  
care. I'm wearing this and I'm  
going to support my best friend and  
I'm taking Lauren. End of story.

Xavier grabs his cell phone. Exits.

DONNY  
I'm confused. Why is this a bad  
thing?

BARTENDER  
Because Charlie --

SHAWN  
Don't pay attention to him. He'll  
forget five minutes from now.

DONNY  
Hey man... ah, you're probably  
right. 2K16?

BARTENDER  
I'm down.

SHAWN  
Let's do it.

INT. KARAOKE BAR - NIGHT

Xavier enters the bar. It's empty.

Charlie is on stage in a red dress. She assists the crew in assembling the equipment. Looks up. Spots Xavier. Smiles.

Moments later, the smile leaves when Lauren enters.

They find a seat.

LAUREN

I'm so excited. This is a really cool place. I'm getting a 1960's vibe. Motown, Philly Soul.

XAVIER

I'm right there with you.

LAUREN

Where is everyone?

XAVIER

Don't know. This place is always packed like crazy, I'm sure it'll fill up soon.

LAUREN

I feel overdressed.

XAVIER

You're not. You look amazing.

LAUREN

Thanks. I'm so shocked that Charlie wanted me here.

XAVIER

What?

LAUREN

We have a little... history.

XAVIER

I didn't know. She said she has no problem with you. Trust me.

LAUREN

Cool. So, where have you been the last week or so?

XAVIER

Busy doing this and that.

LAUREN

Like?

XAVIER  
Like... writing.

LAUREN  
Really! That's awesome. Can you  
divulge any details or is it a top  
secret plot?

XAVIER  
Kind of top secret... but I can  
tell you the genre.

LAUREN  
Romantic comedy-drama.

XAVIER  
... Exactly.

Xavier looks up at the stage. The bar crew have left. Charlie  
stands with the bar OWNER.

LAUREN  
What do you think is happening?

XAVIER  
I don't know. I hope it's not  
cancelled.

Charlie nods to the owner. He leaves the stage.

She grabs a stool and sits. The lights dim. Only a spotlight  
remains on her.

She picks up her guitar. Plays a few notes.

CHARLIE  
I'd like to Thank you all for  
coming out tonight. You look like a  
wonderful crowd.

Xavier and Lauren clap.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
I'll be singing an original song.

Charlie sings and plays like the house is packed.

Xavier and Lauren are both into the song.

Realization hits Lauren. The lyrics of the song have a deeper  
meaning.

She looks over to Xavier. He's clueless.

Charlie ends her song.

Xavier and Lauren stand and applaud.

The lights come back on.

Charlie forces a smile. Walks over.

XAVIER

You were... I... there are no words.

LAUREN

I second everything he just tried to say.

CHARLIE

Thank you.

LAUREN

That song was so powerful. The lyrics really spoke to me. I had a similar experience in college.

XAVIER

Wait. Did I miss something?

CHARLIE

Of course you did.

LAUREN

You always do.

CHARLIE

Don't worry about it.

LAUREN

What's your plan? I know some people in the music industry. Mostly interns but they can slip your music to --

CHARLIE

I'm fine. I'm doing the social media Youtube thing.

LAUREN

That works. Let me know what I can do. I have close to a million followers because of my pod cast.

CHARLIE

That's nice. I appreciate it.

LAUREN  
I appreciate you inviting me.

CHARLIE  
... Well... you're welcome.

XAVIER  
So, what are your plans for the night?

CHARLIE  
Nothing special. You?

XAVIER  
Lauren and I are --

LAUREN  
Actually, I have to cancel. I forgot I can't stay out too late. Big interview tomorrow.

XAVIER  
Oh... well, let's reschedule.

LAUREN  
For sure. Just hit me up tomorrow evening.

Lauren and Charlie hug. Awkwardly.

LAUREN (CONT'D)  
You were fantastic. Thanks again for thinking of me. I never expected it.

CHARLIE  
... Neither did I.

LAUREN  
But I enjoyed it.

CHARLIE  
I'm glad you did.

A BEAT.

Lauren leaves.

XAVIER  
I couldn't think of where to take her and she's been so busy lately and --

Charlie walks away.

INT. XAVIER'S ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Xavier stands and stares at the dry erase wall. Charlie sits on the bed reading a book.

XAVIER  
Three good choices. Three good  
dates... still undecided for me.  
What about you?

Charlie is deep into her book. No response.

XAVIER (CONT'D)  
C?

Still nothing.

XAVIER (CONT'D)  
I think I'll choose Lauren. What do  
you think?

Xavier jumps on the bed.

XAVIER (CONT'D)  
Hey!

CHARLIE  
What the fuck is wrong with you?

Xavier is taken aback.

A BEAT.

XAVIER  
I'm sorry. I --

CHARLIE  
Why would you invite her? To my  
first fucking gig!

XAVIER  
I'm sorry. I --

CHARLIE  
You wanna know what she did?... She  
fucked my boyfriend. He left me for  
her and she didn't even want him.  
And you know what he did after she  
rejected him?... he tried to come  
back to me. And you invited her to  
my fucking show.

TENSE BEAT.

Charlie takes a breath. She needed that outburst.  
She gathers her things.

XAVIER  
Where are you going?

CHARLIE  
Home.

LONG BEAT.

XAVIER  
I'm sorry.

Charlie leaves. Slams the door.  
Off his look.

TITLE CARD: DATE #2 ESMERALDA

INT. LIVING ROOM (XAVIER'S APARTMENT) - NIGHT

Xavier and Esmeralda sit on the couch. They're watching *Woody Allen's 'Annie Hall'*.

It's the last scene of the movie.

Xavier watches Esmeralda's reaction. He smiles as he hears the dialogue for the hundredth time.

Esmeralda doesn't. No smile. No laughter. Nothing.

The credits roll. Xavier stops the movie.

XAVIER  
So... thoughts?

ESMERALDA  
It was okay.

XAVIER  
Okay? That's it?

ESMERALDA  
It didn't blow my mind.

XAVIER  
What was it missing? No, what did you like?

ESMERALDA  
I liked... Diane was good, I guess.

XAVIER  
You guess? What about Woody?

ESMERALDA  
He plays the same character in every movie.

XAVIER  
Yeah, himself. What's wrong with that?

ESMERALDA  
Nothing, if you're a fan.

XAVIER  
Okay, what else?

ESMERALDA  
... Umm... The music, the cinematography.

XAVIER  
And...

ESMERALDA  
That's it.

XAVIER  
Really?

ESMERALDA  
I've seen better romantic comedies.

XAVIER  
It's not a romantic comedy. It's a drama, with jokes.

ESMERALDA  
I'm sorry. I feel like I just offended you.

XAVIER  
Art is subjective. It's fine. You're fine. It's good. We're good.

ESMERALDA  
Okay.

A BEAT.

XAVIER  
So...

ESMERALDA  
I have to... you know, stuff.

XAVIER  
Yeah. Me too.

They hug awkwardly.

ESMERALDA  
Next time. We can watch something I  
pick. Like Spiderman 2.

XAVIER  
... Yeah.

ESMERALDA  
You're not thinking of Amazing  
Spider Man right?

XAVIER  
Of course not.

ESMERALDA  
Cool.

XAVIER  
Yeah.

A BEAT.

ESMERALDA  
Alright. Bye.

XAVIER  
Bye.

Esmeralda leaves.

Xavier shakes his head. Disappointed.

TITLE CARD: DATE #2 (MIA)

INT. LIVING ROOM (XAVIER'S APARTMENT) - NIGHT

Xavier and Mia sit on the couch. They watch *Spike Lee's*  
*'She's Gotta Have it'*.

Mia is smiling. Xavier is too.

The movie ends.

XAVIER  
So, what --

MIA

That was a great ending!

XAVIER

Really?

MIA

Yes. She ended up alone... but still free. I like that. Monogamy is a form of slavery. Never have truer words been spoken. Men are cool and smooth when they sleep around, women are sluts and whores. No more of that thinking. Wow. This movie should be remade today with all the slut shaming going on.

XAVIER

I... I did not expect that reaction.

MIA

Really? I love Spike Lee. Very courageous filmmaker.

XAVIER

Exactly.

MIA

The acting was cool.

XAVIER

Low budget. Looked great.

MIA

Black and white worked very well.

XAVIER

The musical number.

MIA

Brilliant.

XAVIER

And the decision to put it in color.

MIA

Genius.

XAVIER

Wow... I feel like watching another one.

MIA  
Mo betta blues?

XAVIER  
Read my mind.

Xavier changes the film on his laptop.

They sit back and enjoy.

TITLE CARD: DATE #2 (LAUREN)

INT. LIVING ROOM (XAVIER'S APARTMENT) - NIGHT

Xavier and Lauren are on the couch. They're both supposed to be watching *Kevin Smith's 'Clerks'*.

She's asleep.

He wakes her up.

LAUREN  
Shit, did I --

XAVIER  
Yes. You fell asleep.

LAUREN  
I'm so sorry. I've been working so much lately.

XAVIER  
I know.

LAUREN  
And this movie is too boring to keep me entertained.

XAVIER  
Boring?

LAUREN  
It's just a lot of talking. Nothing else.

XAVIER  
Just a lot of talking? Are you serious?

LAUREN  
I've never been a fan of Kevin Smith.

XAVIER  
I didn't know that.

LAUREN  
He's corny. I loved his Prince  
story though.

XAVIER  
The simplicity of the story is what  
makes it so great. The friendship,  
the banter, the decision making  
adults deal with that we never  
think about when we're teens.

LAUREN  
Boring.

A BEAT.

XAVIER  
Can I ask you a personal question?

LAUREN  
How personal?

XAVIER  
Relationship wise.

LAUREN  
Shoot.

XAVIER  
You slept with Charlie's boyfriend?

LAUREN  
Wow... Okay... Yes. Yes I did.

XAVIER  
That's why you were shocked she  
invited you.

LAUREN  
She didn't?

XAVIER  
No.

LAUREN  
And she was pissed?

XAVIER  
Extremely.

LAUREN

It wasn't like that. I know everyone says that, but it wasn't. He lied to me. And when I tried to tell her, it was too late. Damage was done. Does she hate you now?

Xavier hangs his head. Nods.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Sorry. I should've told you.

XAVIER

It's been a week.

LAUREN

I'll talk to her.

XAVIER

Good luck.

INT. LIVING ROOM (XAVIER'S APARTMENT) - DAY

Xavier is playing video games against Shawn and Donny.

XAVIER

How does your ass feel Shawn? The human body can only take so much punishment.

SHAWN

It's not over yet.

XAVIER

It was over when you put the game on son.

SHAWN

Back me up partner.

DONNY

... It's over.

SHAWN

You fucking suck.

The game ends.

Xavier celebrates.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

Next time.

XAVIER  
Yeah sure. You guys ready?

SHAWN  
I guess.

XAVIER  
Let's go.

INT. XAVIER'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Xavier, Shawn and Donny stare at the dry erase board.

SHAWN  
So, how does this work?

XAVIER  
Now, we compare.

SHAWN  
Okay. Umm... Pros.

XAVIER  
Esmeralda is a geek. I'm a geek.  
She's a writer. I'm a writer.

DONNY  
Pick her.

XAVIER  
I'm not done yet. Her cons are her  
time and what she does with her  
money.

SHAWN  
Her money?

XAVIER  
Yeah, she... it's about... stop  
making me sound sexist.

SHAWN  
Sexist?

XAVIER  
Or a whatever ist. Next, Mia. She's  
fun. She's exciting.

SHAWN  
That's a synonym of fun.

XAVIER  
She's... she's fun.

DONNY

Pick her.

XAVIER

Donny, I swear to God.

DONNY

Sorry. Continue.

XAVIER

Then there's Lauren. She's been really busy so I haven't much time with her... but she's smart, and worldly. And she speaks her mind.

SHAWN

But?

XAVIER

She didn't like Clerks. Hated it. Said it was boring.

DONNY

It was.

XAVIER

Mia loved She's Gotta Have it. She's a Spike fan.

SHAWN

Cool... But still crazy.

XAVIER

Esmeralda didn't like Annie Hall either.

SHAWN

More than his other movies or at all?

XAVIER

At all?

SHAWN

Wow. I liked it. It's not better than Midnight in Paris or Hannah and her Sisters but it --

XAVIER

Are you trolling me right now?

CHARLIE

No. And please don't ever use that word again. Annie Hall is good but Hannah and her Sisters is better.

XAVIER

Whatever.

SHAWN

So who's the lucky lady?

XAVIER

I don't know.

SHAWN

After six dates? Some people claim to know within the first fifteen minutes.

XAVIER

I'm not some people. There's a method to my madness.

DONNY

Just freaking pick somebody.

XAVIER

Mia.

SHAWN

Great.

XAVIER

No. You're right. She's nuts.

SHAWN

I didn't say any --

XAVIER

Esmeralda.

DONNY

Cool.

XAVIER

But she'd never have time for me.

SHAWN

Lauren.

XAVIER

... You think so?

SHAWN

Hating Clerks is not as bad as hating Annie Hall. And it's almost like you're dating a black girl.

XAVIER

Almost a black girl. My favorite kind.

A BEAT.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

That was a bad joke.

SHAWN

Horrible.

XAVIER

So Lauren it is.

SHAWN.

Cool.

DONNY

... I would've chosen Mia... she's a dancer... a dancer.

Xavier leaves.

INT. LIVING ROOM (LAUREN'S APARTMENT) - DAY

Lauren sits on her couch. A bowl of popcorn on her lap.

Xavier enters.

LAUREN

Have you ever seen Love Jones? It's a classic nineties movie starring Nia Long and Larenz Tate.

Xavier sits on the couch.

XAVIER

Lauren... I haven't written anything since Michelle dumped me. Nothing completed at least.

LAUREN

I already knew that.

XAVIER

I know.

LAUREN

So...

XAVIER

I think I know the key to my success. What I'm missing.

LAUREN

That's great. Was is it?

XAVIER

Not a what, a who.

LAUREN

Who is -- wait, it's me?

XAVIER

Wow. You got that pretty quickly.

LAUREN

That was a weak set up and lead into. You really need to stop watching those cheesy romantic movies.

XAVIER

Once you become my girlfriend I'll be writing my own cheesy romantic movies.

LAUREN

... Are you joking?

XAVIER

No.

LAUREN

You think I'm the key?

XAVIER

Yes.

LAUREN

That's stupid. Like really stupid.

XAVIER

I don't... not to me.

LAUREN

You are the key Xavier. Not some girl. What about Charlie? Why are you coming to me? What did she say about this?

XAVIER

Well...

LAUREN

You're still not talking?

Xavier shakes his head.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

You're like a brother to me. I never knew you even liked me.

XAVIER

The two dates. That's... that's why I --

LAUREN

I thought it was because we were friends Xavier. We always hang out.

XAVIER

... I'm so stupid. Allison said I wasn't an idiot but she was wrong.

He falls back on the couch.

LAUREN

What was your back-up plan?

XAVIER

Esmeralda or Mia.

LAUREN

Was this an experiment? A Test. You were testing us weren't you? You mother-fucker!

Xavier doesn't respond.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

This is too funny. Stupid but funny. Call them now. Right now. Get it over with.

Xavier takes out his phone. Dials a number.

Mia answers.

MIA (O.S.)

Hey!

XAVIER

... Umm... would... do you want to date?

MIA (O.S.)  
What? Like, date you?

XAVIER  
Yes, me.

MIA (O.S.)  
Sweetie, I'm not the dating type. I  
like my freedom, just like Nola  
Darling.

XAVIER  
Right. Stupid of me. I'm really,  
really drunk.

MIA (O.S.)  
No. I'm flattered but --

XAVIER  
Bye.

Xavier hangs up.

XAVIER (CONT'D)  
I don't want to call Esmeralda.

LAUREN  
Commit to this stupid idea.

Xavier dials another number.

Esmeralda answers.

ESMERALDA (O.S.)  
Hey X! Make it quick. In the middle  
of an intense battle... Shoot it!  
What the hell is wrong with you!?

XAVIER  
Okay... what do you think about  
dating?

ESMERALDA (O.S.)  
Like, you?

XAVIER  
Yes me!

ESMERALDA (O.S.)  
I never thought of it. I don't have  
time for a boyfriend X. You know  
this.

XAVIER  
Yes I do. Have fun.

Xavier hangs up.

A BEAT.

He throws his phone against the couch.

XAVIER (CONT'D)  
That saved me time and gas money.

LAUREN  
No one advised you against this?

XAVIER  
... Charlie.

LAUREN  
Of course she did.

XAVIER  
I blew it. I'm an idiot.

LAUREN  
Yes you are.

XAVIER  
I don't know what to do.

LAUREN  
Talk to Charlie.

Xavier leaves.

### **DREAM SEQUENCE**

INT. LIVING ROOM (CHARLIE'S APARTMENT) - DAY

Xavier sits on the couch. Fidgeting.

Charlie enters, wearing a brown Whitney Houston sweater.  
Sits.

CHARLIE  
What's up?

XAVIER  
Well... Umm...

CHARLIE  
Use your words.

XAVIER

Okay. Let's just get it over with.  
Shawn and Donny believe that...  
that you like me. I don't --

Charlie grabs Xavier and starts kissing him passionately. He returns the kisses. They are in full make out mode.

SUDDENLY, the door bursts open.

Lauren walks in.

LAUREN

What are you doing?

Xavier looks back.

XAVIER

Wait! It's not what it looks...  
okay it is but, I... I...

Lauren leaves the apartment in tears.

Xavier turns back. Charlie is pissed.

CHARLIE

What about me?

XAVIER

Charlie... I...

Charlie runs into her room and slams the door.

Shawn and Donny then enter the room. They laugh and point at Xavier.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Shut up! Shut up! Shut up! Shut up!

**DREAM SEQUENCE ENDS**

INT. BEDROOM (XAVIER'S APARTMENT) - DAY

Xavier jumps up from his sleep like he was falling off a cliff.

SHAWN (O.S.)

X, you okay in there?

XAVIER

... Yeah. I'm fine. Just a dream.

SHAWN (O.S.)  
Cool... now shut up!

DONNY (O.S.)  
Shut up!

SHAWN (O.S.)  
Shut up!

INT. LIVING ROOM (CHARLIE'S APARTMENT) - DAY

Xavier sits on the couch. Nervous.

Charlie enters with tea. Wearing the BROWN WHITNEY HOUSTON SWEATER from the dream!

Xavier's eyes widen.

CHARLIE  
What?

XAVIER  
Umm... nothing. Nothing.

CHARLIE  
So, who says sorry first?

XAVIER  
I'm sorry. I'm stupid.

CHARLIE  
Very.

XAVIER  
I was inconsiderate.

CHARLIE  
Extremely.

XAVIER  
And...

CHARLIE  
Stupid.

XAVIER  
Right. Forgot about that.

CHARLIE  
I know why you're here.

XAVIER  
You do?

Charlie takes a sip of tea.

CHARLIE  
You are so blind Xavier.

XAVIER  
Michelle said the same thing.

Charlie walks around her apartment.

CHARLIE  
I believed I was the right choice  
all along. But for some reason, I  
was scared. Scared that you would  
reject me. Pick Lauren, or Mia, or  
Esmeralda. Or anyone but me.

A BEAT.

XAVIER  
I was so stupid. But...

CHARLIE  
But what?

Xavier notices suit cases by the door for the first time.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
Oh. I'm going to New York.

XAVIER  
For what?

CHARLIE  
The Atoms.

XAVIER  
The what?

CHARLIE  
They're a rock and soul band.

XAVIER  
Oh. So, you're going to their  
concert?

CHARLIE  
No. I'm the newest member.

XAVIER  
Wow... how?

CHARLIE  
... Lauren.

XAVIER  
... That's great. It's pretty  
fucking awesome actually.

CHARLIE  
I know.

XAVIER  
Well, when are you leaving?

CHARLIE  
Saturday morning. So what were you  
going to say?

XAVIER  
That we should hang out before you  
leave.

CHARLIE  
Cool. What did you have in mind?

XAVIER  
A movie.

They hug.

Xavier leaves.

INT. MOVIE THEATRE - NIGHT

Xavier stands in the lobby of a movie theatre. Very few  
customers. Slow day.

A MANAGER walks out and greets him with a hug.

MANAGER  
Superstar. Long time no see.

XAVIER  
I need a favor. A huge favor.

MANAGER  
What?

XAVIER  
I fucked up... with a very special  
girl and I need to make it up to  
her.

MANAGER  
How can I help you?

XAVIER  
Have you ever seen Love Jones?

MANAGER  
Of course. You?

XAVIER  
Doesn't matter. I want to show it  
on the big screen. Just the two of  
us. It's her favorite movie.

MANAGER  
... Wow. Well...

XAVIER  
Please... this is my last chance.

A BEAT.

MANAGER  
Okay. I'll see what I can do.

XAVIER  
Thanks! You won't regret this.

INT. LIVING ROOM (XAVIER'S APARTMENT) - NIGHT

Xavier exits his room. Dressed quite dapper.

Shawn and Donny sit on the couch. Playing video games as usual.

SHAWN  
Where are you going looking so  
fancy?

XAVIER  
On a date.

SHAWN  
I thought you got triple rejected?

XAVIER  
I did.

SHAWN  
So are you taking yourself on a  
date?

XAVIER  
No. Charlie.

Donny drops his controller. Gets in Xavier's face.

A BEAT.

Slaps him.

Xavier slaps him back.

He slaps Xavier back.

Xavier slaps him again.

Shawn jumps in between them.

SHAWN

What the hell are you guys doing?

XAVIER

Why did you slap me?

DONNY

Why are you asking so late?

XAVIER

What?

DONNY

You were supposed to ask after the first slap, like in the movies. And I would've said, I --

XAVIER

WHY-DID-YOU SLAP ME?!

DONNY

Because you're stupid.

XAVIER

What?

DONNY

You don't see that it's too late?

XAVIER

What the hell are you talking about?

DONNY

You blew it. She liked you from the beginning. And you asked her, the girl that was in love with you, to help you find a girlfriend. Not just any girlfriend, 'the' girlfriend. You blew it.

XAVIER

Not exactly. Do you know where I'm taking her?

DONNY

Nowhere.

XAVIER

No. Somewhere. The movies. To watch her favorite love story. On the big screen.

DONNY

I'm sorry. That's cute... but it's too late. Let this be a lesson.

XAVIER

Whatever. What do you think Shawn?

Shawn is silent. He simply stares at Donny in shock.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

I'll see you guys in the morning.

DONNY

See you tonight.

XAVIER

Whatever.

Xavier leaves.

DONNY

Shawn, you okay?

SHAWN

... Did you smoke today?

DONNY

No.

SHAWN

Okay. Makes sense.

EXT. CHARLIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Xavier waits by Charlie's door. Checks his phone.

Knocks.

A BEAT. Nothing.

Knocks again.

A BEAT. Still no response.

Xavier takes out his phone. Sends a text.

A BEAT.

He gets a reply!

Checks.

INSERT ON REPLY (V.O. in Donny's voice) - FUCK! I am so SORRY. I completely forgot you had something planned. The photo shoot date got pushed up. Rain check? - Charlie

Xavier sighs.

INT. MOVIE THEATRE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Xavier sits ALONE in the theatre watching "Love Jones".

INT. LIVING ROOM (XAVIER'S APARTMENT) - NIGHT

Xavier walks into the apartment. Head down. Eyes to the floor.

Shawn and Donny are in their usual places.

He sits in between them.

Donny looks over.

XAVIER  
If you say anything, I swear to God  
I'll....

Donny nods.

They all sigh collectively.

A BEAT.

Xavier stands. Smiles. Goes to his room.

INT. XAVIER'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He sits at his desk. Takes out his laptop. Furiously types away.

TITLE CARD: ONE YEAR LATER

INT. THEATRE - DAY

Two ACTORS who resemble Xavier and Charlie, sit on a bed, they're on a STAGE.

XAVIER  
Let's watch a movie.

CHARLIE  
Has to be something good. No more  
corny romantic comedies.

XAVIER  
How about a nineties classic?

Charlie puts the movie on. Kisses him on the cheek.

They make out. Music plays.

Lights go out.

A BEAT.

The audience erupts in applause.

Lights come on. Xavier stands on the stage with the cast.  
They bow.

INT. BACKSTAGE - DAY

Xavier and the cast are taking selfies. Charlie enters.  
Xavier spots her.

They embrace with a hug.

CHARLIE  
That was so good.

XAVIER  
Thanks. I tried.

CHARLIE  
So... did they have sex at the end?  
I don't remember that happening. I  
mean, I know it's just an  
adaptation.

XAVIER  
It's called artistic license.

CHARLIE  
We loved it.

XAVIER

... We?

Charlie turns and points, a HANDSOME MAN, 30's, walks over.

HANDSOME MAN

Loved it.

Extends his hand. Xavier shakes it.

CHARLIE

This is my boyfriend Justin.

XAVIER

It's nice to meet you.

JUSTIN

Is it? It doesn't hurt, just a little bit?

XAVIER

... No. I --

CHARLIE

Don't pay him any mind.

JUSTIN

In all seriousness, the play was fantastic.

XAVIER

Thanks.

CHARLIE

So, how's everything?

XAVIER

Good. Great. I've written ten screenplays.

CHARLIE

Wow!

XAVIER

Yeah. I'm in a groove. What about you?

CHARLIE

Everything is great. Album is complete and has a release date. I met this great guy... then he moved to Europe, so I started dating Justin.

JUSTIN  
Nice. Hurts to laugh.

CHARLIE  
How's your... you know. Your...

JUSTIN  
You have a girlfriend?

XAVIER  
... No. Too focused on writing.

CHARLIE  
That's what I like to hear. Look,  
if you're not writing tonight, join  
us as the third wheel for dinner.  
We're going to Duck, Duck, Goose.

JUSTIN  
Please.

XAVIER  
... Sure.

Charlie BEAR HUGS him.

CHARLIE  
It's on us.

JUSTIN  
It is?

CHARLIE  
Well of course by us I mean you.

JUSTIN  
... Whatever you say sweetheart.

They leave.

Off Xavier's look.

INT. THEATRE - NIGHT

Xavier cleans up. He's alone, or so he thinks.

TRACY, 20's, the actress who plays Charlie, approaches him.

TRACY  
I took care of the back. Took out  
the trash too.

XAVIER  
Really? You didn't have to do that.

TRACY  
I know. I wanted to.

XAVIER  
Thanks.

TRACY  
Any plans for tonight?

XAVIER  
Just hanging out with an old  
friend. You?

TRACY  
Nothing.

A BEAT.

TRACY (CONT'D)  
Okay. Have fun.

Tracy walks towards the exit.

XAVIER  
(to himself)  
I could be wrong... fuck it. Tracy!

She turns.

XAVIER (CONT'D)  
... Would you like to go out with  
me? Tonight.

TRACY  
I thought you hanging with an old  
friend?

XAVIER  
I am. It's Charlie and her fiancée.  
I'm the third wheel. It's at Duck,  
Duck, Goose, cool restaurant.  
Michelle works there.

TRACY  
So, you want me to go out on a  
double date, with the real life  
person that I'm portraying in a  
play, who used to be in love with  
you, at the restaurant where your  
ex now works?

XAVIER  
... That does sound crazy. You know  
what, never --

TRACY  
I'd love to go.

XAVIER  
... Really?

TRACY  
Yes.

XAVIER  
Okay... I'll pick you up around  
7:00.

TRACY  
Great.

Tracy leaves.

XAVIER  
This should be a movie... no, a TV  
show. My life is a TV show. Wow.

Tracy walks back over.

TRACY  
Who are you talking to?

XAVIER  
Huh? Oh, no one. Let me walk you to  
your car.

They walk off.

FADE TO BLACK