

CRUSHED

Story by

Jack Savige & Michelle Melky & George Hanna

Screenplay by

Jack Savige

Registered with WGAw

FADE IN:

EXT. DREAMY SKYSCAPE - NIGHT

SUPER CLOSE on the face of NOAH JONES, 26, African-American. He is HANDSOME. ALL CAPS. The human equivalent of an açai bowl. Noah is the type of guy who will ruin your life if he gives you more than five seconds of continuous eye contact.

SUPER CLOSE on ELI EHRLICH, 27. His life is ruined. He is cute. small caps. A mess who means well. A hopeless romantic, who's also hopeless. The human equivalent of chocolate chip pancakes. With syrup. And whipped cream. And extra sprinkles.

NOAH
Where have you been?

ELI
I'm here. I'm always here.

Eli looks around, thrown.

ELI (CONT'D)
Where exactly is "here"? Are we tripping?

NOAH
We're in your head.

ELI
No, we can't be in my head. It would be more depressing.

NOAH
We are on a floating garbage barge.

We REVEAL Eli and Noah are standing on a FLOATING GARBAGE BARGE.

ELI
Okay, that makes more sense.

RANDOM VOICE (V.O.)
HILLÆO?

NOAH
Eli. Don't leave me again.

ELI
Leave you? Noah, I would never leave you.

RANDOM VOICE (V.O.)
HILLÆO??

EXT. STREETS OF AUSTIN - DAY

Those hazy day-glo colors? Gone. Harsh daylight reigns supreme in Austin, Texas. The back to reality Eli walks with his bestie, MARCUS YALDA, 24, Assyrian-American, quick to judge, fiercely loyal. He's the no-nonsense to Eli's nonsense.

MARCUS
Where'd you go?

ELI
He's in my head.

MARCUS
He's always in your head.

ELI
I want to get back to him. Knock me out.

MARCUS
Ya messy.

ELI
That's my brand. Would you go to a McDonald's and actually expect the soft serve machine to work? No!

Marcus and Eli turn into the ELIZABETH STREET CAFE. The coolest cafe ever. Google that shiz. See? It's a look.

INT. ELIZABETH STREET CAFE - DAY

Eli and Marcus sit in their regular spot.

ELI
I am just shocked that my brain had the budget to do that. Anyway, how's your bf? As good as mine?

MARCUS
Better, because he's not imaginary.

ELI
Ah, Noah isn't imaginary. He's real.

MARCUS
And you need to get real.

ELI
What is this? A sitcom?

MARCUS
He's ruining your life.

ELI
I've been going with debilitating.
More pleasant. Like his face.

MARCUS
Don't.

ELI
What?

MARCUS
I know what you're going to do.

ELI
Huh?

MARCUS
You're going to show me a picture
of his face.

ELI
Again, my brand.

Eli opens up Instagram. Noah is instantly at the top of the
search bar. Little tragic, but go off.

ELI (CONT'D)
Now you go to the tagged photos,
because that's where the money's at
and also because he hasn't posted
anything in over a year. Ba-bam! 12
hours ago.

MARCUS
Oh yeah.

ELI
Now it's not just about his face.
As we know, Noah's multifaceted.
Face-eted.

MARCUS
I'm actually leaving.

Marcus gets up and walks out.

EXT. ELIZABETH STREET CAFE - MOMENTS LATER

Eli rushes up to Marcus, a little desp.

ELI
Wait! We still on for dinner
tomorrow?

MARCUS
If I don't decide to cancel you,
yes.

ELI
Please. I've been canceled for
months. Years even.

MARCUS
You're not wrong.

A beat on this wholesome friendship moment, then.

ELI
Bye bitch.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
Bye bitch.

Eli and Marcus head their separate ways.

BEGIN MAIN TITLE SEQUENCE:

CRUSHED

EXT. STREETS OF AUSTIN - DAY

Back to our favorite streets in our favorite Austin. Eli walks with a spring in his step and not just because of his rare foot condition. That's for another movie.

Eli stops outside a cute af BOOKSTORE. He takes a pic, POSTS it to Instagram. Captions it with: *Almost makes me want to read. ALMOST.* Instantly, a heart and comment from didinosurname: *Love this.* Eli replies with: *love you,* followed by an assortment of random pink colored emojis.

A beat as Eli checks out Noah's Instagram.

INT. ATX TELEVISION FESTIVAL OFFICES - DAY

Eli sits with SALLY SURNAME, 23. She's very work fun, friend boring. Both are rocking podcasting gear -- headphones, mics, the desperate need for validation.

SALLY

Welcome to another episode of
Tellin' Vision, the official ATX
Television Festival Podcast.

ELI

And we are coming at you live!
Actually not live, because we
record these weeks in advance.
Weeks.

SALLY

Eli! Don't unlock all our secrets.

ELI

Way past that. Now today's episode
is sponsored by Kit and Kafoodle.
Do I use them? No. Should you use
them? I mean, if you want to. Will
all of this be cut out in the final
edit? Absolutely.

SALLY

Also fair listeners, as of this
week, we are the number one TV
podcast on iTunes. Way to bury the
lead, dude.

ELI

At least we didn't bury that body.
Which we definitely didn't do. At
all.

INT. ATX TELEVISION FESTIVAL OFFICES - HALLWAY - LATER

Eli crosses paths with ORLANDO BROOM, 32, ATX'S Executive
Director AKA Eli's boss AKA constant career tension.

ORLANDO

Great episode.

ELI

Thanks. When will Marc Maron?

ORLANDO

When will Marc Maron what?

ELI

No, it's a thing people say online
and it probably works better
online. Like me.

ORLANDO

True. You're more GIF than human.

Eli makes a GIFable facial expression, which will be used as an actual GIF in our marketing campaign.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Exactly.

INT. ATX TELEVISION FESTIVAL OFFICES - BOARDROOM - LATER

Eli, Sally and RANDOMS sit around a table with Orlando rocking the captain's chair.

ORLANDO

Now let's talk festival panels.
Eli, are you up for another
interview with AJ Kapa this year?
Your last one was performance art
level weird.

ELI

Kind of what I was going for. Not
really. His jawline scared me.

ORLANDO

So are you doing it?

ELI

My head says yes, but my heart says
yes. So, yes.

EXT. ATX TELEVISION FESTIVAL OFFICES - DAY

Eli watches as an ATX INTERN places a POSTER up: ATX
TELEVISION FESTIVAL JULY 16 - 23.

ELI

Iconic.

INT. ELI'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

We PASS a lone magnet on the fridge that reads: Stay Weird.
Eli fills up a Slurpee cup with water as the DOORBELL RINGS.

INT. ELI'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

MASON BRIDGES, 22, Postmates-er and just a cool guy in
general, hands Eli his order. Impossible burger, fries...

MASON

And a Diet Coke with sugar on the side. Is it weird that I always read your order? It never changes.

ELI

No. It shows that you care. We're more than just Postmates, we're Postfriends.

Eli hands Mason a bountiful tip.

MASON

You're only meant to tip with the app now.

ELI

I go both ways.

Eli tips 20% off the app, winks at Mason, then closes the door. After a beat, Eli opens the door again.

ELI (CONT'D)

Sorry, that got weird, didn't it?

MASON

It did.

Eli hands Mason another fiver and closes the door.

INT. ELI'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

The soothing Netflix "DUH-DUN" as we FIND Eli splayed out on his couch. He's FaceTiming with Marcus, who's propped up on a bowl of popcorn.

MARCUS

This is boring.

ELI

It just started.

MARCUS

And it's boring.

ELI

Want to motorboat some popcorn?

MARCUS

Sure.

Eli nuzzles his iPhone into the bowl of popcorn.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
Loving this texture.

ELI
Thanks. Garnished them with
Cheetos.

MARCUS
Oh Henry's here. I've gotta go.

ELI
Okay, no probs.

Byeeeeeeeeee. ELI (CONT'D) Byeeeeeeeeee. MARCUS

Hold on Eli for a beat. Alone.

INT. ELI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER

Eli looks up at the ceiling from his bed and closes his eyes.

END MAIN TITLES.

EXT. DREAMY SKYSCAPE - NIGHT

Eli and Noah are back at it again.

ELI
Fancy seeing you here.

Eli offers Noah up a piece of garbage.

ELI (CONT'D)
Garbage?

Noah politely declines.

ELI (CONT'D)
Sorry, it's all we have on offer
right now.

NOAH
Do you know why I'm here?

ELI
Is it for like a quest? I'm getting
a quest vibe.

NOAH
When you wake up, it's going be a
year since we first met.

ELI
What? Subconscious, loving your
work.

NOAH
You want to go back to that night?

ELI
Always.

Noah produces a headset and passes it to Eli.

ELI (CONT'D)
VR?

NOAH
Yes, but your version, so it's
going to spark a little.

Eli puts on the headset. It SPARKS A LOT. Eli lifts up the headset -- his eyebrows have been singed off. Noah hides his slight repulsion.

ELI
I'm fine.

NOAH
Mmm-hmm.

Eli puts the headset back on.

EXT. PARAMOUNT THEATRE - COURTYARD - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

ELI (V.O.)
The vivid-ity this has.

SFX: SPARKS FLY.

ELI (V.O.)
Ow!

Flashback Eli and DIDI, 26, Asian-American, legally removed her surname for the aesthetic, stand near some heat lamps.

DIDI
Aww, second last night of the
festival. Are you sad face?

ELI
More relieved face. Because --

Noah, The Noah approaches the pair. Eli INSTANTLY locks eyes.

NOAH

Hey, I was at the panel last night for "Lakedale".

ELI

Were you --

NOAH

The guy who was laughing really loudly? No, he was next to me. Very annoying. It was really good. You're really good.

ELI

Thank you!

DIDI

His mind is so delicious.

Eli takes all of Noah in. 100% a case of the smits. 100%.

ELI

What are you? I mean... what are you?

Eli cringes a little at his word vom. Noah's cool with it.

NOAH

Well, I'm a human person, ah, right now I'm studying Screenwriting at NYU. This pilot I wrote had a table read here on Tuesday. Part of this New Voices lab.

ELI

Oh, I was going to go to that! Had a clash. You know, maybe one day, we'll do a panel here for one of your shows.

(jokey mean)

Get to writing!

Noah LAUGHS. Almost a giggle. V cute.

NOAH

What's your role here?

Eli reads off his official festival lanyard.

ELI

I'm the junior senior programmer. I am the festival! Not really.

Eli remembers Didi's standing right next to him. Awks.

ELI (CONT'D)
Oh, this is Didi. She's also at
NYU.

NOAH
Maybe we've met before.

DIDI
Probs not babe. I'm at NYU, but I'm
not at NYU. I'm just poaching
students for this app I'm
developing. It's gonna change the
world.

Noah LAUGHS.

ELI
Oh, she's not joking. I do the
joking, she does the toking. She
loves her illicit drugs. Just loves
'em!

DIDI
You have got to try brie-ing.

ELI
It's where you wrap MDMA in brie
cheese. Your next pilot, right
there!

Noah GIGGLES.

NOAH
Okay, this has been lovely. Lovely.
I've gotta go. We should catch up
again before I leave?

ELI
Oh, okay. Cool. Ah... How's this
gonna work? I could text, or?

DIDI
No, no, no. Just add each other on
Facebook and message.

Noah takes out his phone, opens Facebook and the search page.

NOAH
Let me just --

Noah grabs hold of Eli's lanyard, gets to writing.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Eli Ehrlich.

Eli's heart grows three sizes, Grinch style.

NOAH (CONT'D)
See you, Eli.

ELI
Bye.

Noah and Eli share a look. Noah turns off. Immediately out of earshot, Didi turns to Eli...

DIDI
He's down for a dicking.

ELI
Wait. Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait. You really think he wants to down my dick?

DIDI
Yes! And you want to down his dick?

ELI
I mean, yes. But, Didi --

DIDI
No. D --

Didi points at Eli's crotch.

DIDI (CONT'D)
D.

Didi points at the quickly disappearing Noah.

INT. CAR - MOVING - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Eli and Didi Lyft it back to their apts. Eli has entered the heart eyes emoji level of this crush.

ELI
I was lost in his eyes. His irises were like a hedge maze and the pupils were like the fake exits. Could you tell?

DIDI
No, it was cute. Very tween crush, but make it adorable.

ELI
And when he called me by my name?
Ugh. I could hear the Sufjan
Stevens.

VRR-VRR. Eli's iPhone lights up. He GASPS.

ELI (CONT'D)
It's Noah.

DIDI
Give me your phone.

Eli passes over his iPhone, Didi unlocks it.

DIDI (CONT'D)
No passcode?

ELI
What? I'm going to type in four
numbers every time I want to unlock
my phone? Way too much energy.

DIDI
Okay, he said --

ELI
You opened it? I should have waited
at least five minutes.

DIDI
Fuck that noise. He said, "*Hey, you
free tomorrow? Where's a good place
to eat?*" Let me write, "*my ass.*"

ELI
Let me message Marcus.

DIDI
Okay, fuck my advice.

Eli grabs his iPhone back, opens up his chat with Marcus, smash types: *ASDKJGFKGFSKSJGKJFDS* and inserts a screenshot of the DMs with Noah and a screenshot of his profile pic. *What do I do?* Marcus: *obviously you see him. bye.*

INT. SNOOZE, AN A.M. EATERY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Eli gets comfy in a booth. VRR-VRR. Noah: *Running late, be there in five!* Eli types back: *Same! Haha.* A SERVER approaches the booth.

SERVER

Water?

ELI

Yeah, thanks.

Eli waits for the Server to leave, then runs over to the other side of the booth. After a beat, he changes his mind and runs back over to the other side.

LATER

And womp, there he is. Noah enters, drenched in sunlight. He looks around, spots Eli. Eli gets up to hug Noah.

NOAH

Hey.

ELI

Hi!

As they turn mid-hug, they BUMP Eli's glass of water and it SMASHES onto the ground.

NOAH

Oh no!

Eli picks up his iPhone off the table. She's dripping.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Is your phone okay?

ELI

Sure. Can dump it in some rice.

LATER

Eli and Noah are boothed up in a new, non-glass shattered booth.

ELI

When do graduate?

NOAH

Three years.

ELI

Three years? Yuck. Sorry, the future scares me.

NOAH

It's really not that far away.

ELI

True. Time is ephemeral? Did that sentence make sense? I don't think that made sense.

NOAH

It didn't, but you owned it.

LATER

Eli and Noah place their orders.

ELI

Yes, I will get the chocolate chip pancakes.

NOAH

You know, I'm not feeling that hungry. I'll just go with the açai bowl.

LATER

Their brunch is served. Eli uses a fork to point between the meals.

ELI

Loving this meal discrepancy.

Noah GIGGLES.

NOAH

You wanted what you wanted.

ELI

Yes, thank you and it's seems like you genuinely wanted the açai bowl.

NOAH

I did. I really did. It wasn't a front to psychologically impress you with my healthy eating.

ELI

Wig, I feel that already.

NOAH

Wig?

ELI

You know what it is? This açai bowl thing? Your brand.

NOAH

I love that. Thank you. What's your brand?

ELI

My brand? Um, mostly falling over and not knowing how to open doors.

NOAH

I like our brands.

ELI

Honestly, same.

EXT. SNOOZE, AN A.M. EATERY - LATER (FLASHBACK)

Eli and Noah hug goodbye.

NOAH

Well, I'll see you. We'll stay in touch.

ELI

Please, yes. We will.

EXT. DREAMY SKYSCAPE - NIGHT

Noah pulls off the headset, Eli points to the side which reads: VR.

ELI

Does this stand for Very Romantic?

Noah LAUGHS, then, very serious.

NOAH

No.

ELI

I love how that was edited like a movie and the sparks made it a 4D experience.

NOAH

Are you ready for the sequel?

ELI

What are you saying?

NOAH

I don't know, what am I saying?

SFX: Eli's IRL alarm clock starts BEEPING.

INT. ELI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Eli hits the alarm on his Nickelodeon Time Blaster alarm clock. Fully awake and fully shook.

INT. TRADER JOE'S - NIGHT

A TRADER JOE'S EMPLOYEE has Eli's iPhone, while she scans.

TRADER JOE'S EMPLOYEE
Oh, he's cute.

ELI
Right? Thank you for making this worse.

TRADER JOE'S EMPLOYEE
Wait. You're not following him on Instagram?

ELI
No, that would be desperate.

TRADER JOE'S EMPLOYEE
Okay, that'll be \$6.95.

Eli inserts his card. Declined.

ELI
Weird. Let me call my bank.

Eli takes his iPhone out, hits up Marcus on Recents.

EXT. STREETS OF AUSTIN - LATER

Eli and Marcus walk and talk. Marcus carries the Trader Joe's bag because of course.

MARCUS
How have you survived 27 years on this earth?

ELI
Honestly? I kind of haven't.

MARCUS
Tea.

Simultaneously, Eli's and Marcus' iPhones VIBRATE. They take them out instantly like the true millennials they are.

What?! ELI What?! MARCUS (CONT'D)

ELI (CONT'D)
You go first. I'm holding for
suspense.

MARCUS
It's Didi. She's inviting us to New
York for her app launch.

ELI
It's Noah. He just posted on
Instagram after like two years.

INT. MARCUS AND HENRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Eli and Marcus walk in. Eli is simply stunned. Marcus is merely miffed.

ELI
I was already feeling some type of
way because of my morning roll and
scroll.

(a beat, then)
When your phone has enough charge that you can unplug and roll over to the other side of your bed and scroll through social media? Keep up. During my morning roll and scroll, I had one of those lame On This Day notifications on Facebook and it's been exactly a year since he added me slash we met. Signs!

MARCUS
Babe? Find the point and go there.

ELI
There are forces at work, wanting
me to go to NYC, see Noah and like
live happily ever after. I can't
just leave these forces on read,
that would be rude.

HENRY GOLD, 24, reasonable, rational, responsible, enters. He squeezes Marcus' shoulders, turns to Eli.

HENRY

Hey. I thought we were having nachos.

ELI

Here.

Eli opens the bag of tortilla chips, tries to open the salsa jar and fails. He hands it to Marcus who easily opens it. Eli pops open the bag of cheese. He pours the salsa and cheese directly into the tortilla chip bag and SHAKES it up. He TWISTS the bag to seal it and THROWS it in the oven. Turns on the oven to 350.

ELI (CONT'D)

Ready in five.

INT. MARCUS AND HENRY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Eli splits open the bag of nachos. They are somehow cooked to perfection. The Justice For Nachos Facebook group would be proud. Eli opens up Noah's Instagram pic: Noah stands in front of a radiant blue light.

ELI

Look at the caption, "wow". Let's break it down. W-O-W, When's Our Wedding? Flip it upside down, what does it say? M-O-M. Mulling On Marriage. Turn it sideways. E-O-E. Entering Our Engagement.

MARCUS

What the fuck.

ELI

I know. The signs are right there. Wild. And posted at the exact same time that Didi invites us to New York City, the home of Noah? That's some rom-com shiz right there. "Love, Simon" was found dead.

HENRY

That was more of a coming of age dramedy.

ELI

Well the only person who will be coming of age, will be me. Onto Noah.

HENRY
Okay, woah.

MARCUS
That's a lot.

ELI
I said what I said.

MARCUS
And it barely made sense. Eli, you
continue to do the most.

ELI
Well, I try.

MARCUS
I know. We all know.

ELI
Alexa, play "Meant to Be" by Bebe
Rexha and some random yee-yees.

Marcus eyes Eli wearily. He's defs cutting years from his
life due to this friendship.

MARCUS
That's a Voss water bottle.

ELI
Thought it was a budget Echo.
Could've fooled me and you did fool
me. Need I remind you I'm from a
Slurpee cup household?

MARCUS
No but I feel like you're going to.

Eli REVEALS a Slurpee cup and starts sipping from it smugly.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
And there it is.

Eli starts CHOKING on his Slurpee cup water.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
Just get out of our apartment. Go.
Leave.

INT. ELI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER

Eli's getting his pack on. Didi's on that FaceTime gig.

ELI
Right Didi, talk me into it.

DIDI
I don't feel like I have to.

ELI
I just know. You know?

DIDI
When you know, you know.

ELI
We're going to click again and then we're going to click... physically. My love for him is deep. Deeper than Elizabeth Holmes' voice, may she rest in jail.

DIDI
What about his love for you? Didn't he stop messaging you months ago and leave you on unread, not even read, unread?

ELI
(stunned blubbering)
Afshdhgahkahsd.

DIDI
I'm just laying out the points. It's what's made me a mogul like an Olsen twin. Anyway, you'll still get to see me.

ELI
Right. It's like 90% to see you, 10% to see Noah.

DIDI
You sure about that math?

ELI
88% to see you, 12% to see Noah.

Didi holds for the truth.

ELI (CONT'D)
3% to see you, 97% to see Noah.

DIDI
There we go.

INT. ATX TELEVISION FESTIVAL OFFICES - HALLWAY - DAY

Eli and Orlando walk and talk, West Winging it.

ELI

My friend, Didi. We used to work at Macy's with Marcus, you know Marcus, and now we've all glowed up together and --

ORLANDO

Okay, less exposition, more telling me what's what.

ELI

Okay, she's launching an app. She's flying us out to like celebrate? But also I'm going to talk to her about her app becoming a major festival sponsor for next year.

ORLANDO

You just made that up then, but great. Sounds good. What does her app do?

ELI

No one knows yet. But if I know Didi, and I do know Didi, it's going to like change things up, "leave the girls shook," as she would say.

Sally beelines towards Eli and Orlando.

SALLY

What's the haps, guys?

ORLANDO

Eli wants to go to New York, tomorrow.

SALLY

Hold on. Isn't that where Noah lives?

ELI

I'm sorry? What?

Eli's eyes scream, "please shut the fuck up, don't embarrass me like this."

SALLY

Noah Jones. We have to edit his name out of podcast episodes, because you'll just say it randomly. Noah Jones, Noah Jones, Noah Jones. Like Beetlejuice.

ELI
Sally, please.

SALLY
Obsessed. Ob. Sessed!

ORLANDO
I'm going to pretend I didn't hear that.

ELI
Thank you.

ORLANDO
Because it's very sad.

ELI
Oh.

Orlando holds for an anticipatory beat, then.

ORLANDO
You're going to be on call.

ELI
Yes, of course. On call, on email, on text, on beeper.

Eli pulls out a beeper.

ELI (CONT'D)
I miss the '90s.

ORLANDO
Okay, sure. Just be back Friday for opening night.

ELI
Of course. There is zero reason why I won't be back by Friday. Zero reason.

INT. AUSTIN-BERGSTROM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, GATE FORTY - DAY

Eli and Henry sit next to each other, sharing a bag of Twizzlers.

ELI
I cannot believe. New York City.
The home of everything bagels and everything Noah.
(MORE)

ELI (CONT'D)

If this was a movie, I'd twirl and we'd do some 360 transition to us being in New York.

Eli TWIRLS, hoping for a 360 camera transition that will transport us to New York City. Not in our budget.

HENRY

Were you expecting that to work?

ELI

A little.

HENRY

Eli, what's his appeal?

ELI

Great question. Finally, some support. You know how you get that rare pen that makes you write really well? He's like the person who makes me person really well. On top of that I feel like he doesn't know what a GIF is and I love that for him.

HENRY

Because he seems nothing like you.

ELI

That's the best part! You know what I always see on Instagram? Boyfriend twins. Do I want that for me? Absolutely not.

HENRY

Okay, when was the last time you guys messaged again?

ELI

Um, 11 months ago. Had to play it cool.

HENRY

That seems too cool. Like he's probably forgotten about you cool.

ELI

I mean, I would have messaged more, but he's legit off the grid.

Eli pulls out his dream journal and quickly sketches up a grid. He shows his "art" off to Henry.

ELI (CONT'D)
Here's the grid. Here's him.

Eli throws the pen across the room.

ELI (CONT'D)
Gone. You can't even see him.

Henry walks over to pick up then pen.

ELI (CONT'D)
Is he hurt?

Marcus steps into this haze of Eli madness, a little sour.

HENRY
Where have you been?

MARCUS
I've been in security because I'm not white.

ELI
That is disgusting! Let me do the bare minimum and tweet about it.

MARCUS
Don't worry, I filmed it. Gonna make my agent a meme. She'll be the next Permit Patty, BBQ Becky.

ELI
What are you going to name her?

MARCUS
Jurisdiction Judy.

ELI
Marcus, once again, your mind. Whew. Anyway Henry, back to my love quest. I also can't let down Natalie Portman. One of the few people I'd allow to step on my throat.

Marcus and Henry give Eli the blankest of stares.

ELI (CONT'D)

Right, context is everything. Okay, so she did this perfume commercial with this pop song blasting and then at the very end, she looks right into the camera slash your soul and says, actually let me pull it up.

Eli pulls up the YouTube app on his iPhone, cues up the VIDEO: Natalie Portman stares directly to camera/your soul.

NATALIE PORTMAN

And you? What would you do for love?

INT. COACH SECTION - DAY

Eli buckles up, turns to Marcus, who's in the middle.

ELI

Let's shoot! You like that? New catch phrase I've been working on.

MARCUS

I guess it can stay.

A FLIGHT ATTENDANT approaches our trio, to Marcus.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Sir? You're going to need to get off your phone.

MARCUS

Why?

Henry leans over.

HENRY

Is there a problem with my Assyrian boyfriend being on his phone?

MARCUS

My parents are Catholic!

Henry points to Eli.

HENRY

He's on his phone.

ELI

Wendy, circle back. Have a Twizzler.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
I am keto, but okay.

Wendy takes the Twizzler to go.

ELI
That was disgusting. Who's keto?

EXT. SOHO - DAY

Eli, Marcus and Henry roll their luggage away from a Lyft.
Didi rushes over to them from her apartment building.

DIDI
Hi my gay boys! Is that Henry?
Henry? King Henry?

HENRY
Hi Didi.

DIDI
So nice to finally meet you. Cuter
in person.

HENRY
That was my Tinder bio.

MARCUS
It worked.

DIDI
Here, Zivit merch.

Didi plasters a Zivit bumper sticker on Eli and a Zivit cap
on Marcus' noggin.

MARCUS
What's Zivit?

DIDI
My app. Rude. You know it's really
hard to come up with an app name
that hasn't been taken yet.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Didi hits the PH button and the gang level up.

HENRY	DIDI
Amazing Didi, right up to the penthouse.	Penis Hut.

HENRY (CONT'D)

What?

DIDI

You heard me.

ELI

And we loved hearing it.

INT. DIDI'S PENTHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The whole place is dripping with opulence. A true experience. Eli, Marcus and Henry's jaws? They're dropped, honey.

MARCUS

The talent this has! I'm gagged.

DIDI

My inspo was Ariana Grande's "7 rings", but make it a penthouse.

ELI

Didi and I mean this with the highest of compliments, what the fuck? What the fuck?!

DIDI

Babe, thank you. While you were chasing them dreams of being a TV boss, I was chasing them coins and the coins? They led me here.

Marcus stops and writhes against an exposed brick wall.

MARCUS

Can I please have a photoshoot against this wall?

DIDI

Why do you think I built it?

Marcus hands Henry his iPhone.

MARCUS

You know what do to.

INT. DIDI'S PENTHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Didi steps in the living room, Eli follows.

DIDI
Those are the pillows I scream
into.

Eli reacts. Odd.

DIDI (CONT'D)
Come sit, come sit.

Didi flings herself onto the couch. Eli joins her.

DIDI (CONT'D)
Isn't this nice? Ah! If those
fuckers from Macy's could see us
now. In New York. In a penis hut.
We've won.

ELI
Correction. You've won.

DIDI
Bitch, what the fuck are you
talking about? You have a hit
podcast, you basically run the ATX
Festival. Do you, or do you not run
that shit?

ELI
I do bring the action.

DIDI
You do! Now when are you fucking
Noah? Either move in or move on.
When are you seeing him? When,
when, when?

ELI
Don't know.

DIDI
Why?

ELI
Ah, haven't messaged him yet.

Eli CUTSEY GIGGLES and throws the peace sign to lessen the
blow.

DIDI
What?!

Marcus and Henry walk in, fresh from their photoshoot.

MARCUS

What's good?

DIDI

He hasn't even messaged Noah yet.

ELI

I got spooked.

DIDI

I'm seriously going to evict you if you don't message him right now.

ELI

Okay fuck, what should I write? I want it to be lowkey but also hey let's be boyfs.

DIDI

Eat my ass.

ELI

Really? Again Didi? No.

DIDI

What about suck my ass?

ELI

I feel like that's more of an insult and also no. Less BDE, more MDE.

MARCUS

How about, hey, been a while! I'm actually in New York with some friends for the week. We should so catch up!

ELI

Um, yes, perfect.

MARCUS

Great, 'cause I've sent it, sweetie.

REVEAL Marcus holding Eli's iPhone.

ELI

Sksksksksks. What?

DIDI

That was so tasty of you.
(a beat, to Eli)
Finessed!

MARCUS

That's what you get for not having a passcode. And a Spongebob phone case? What are you, 12?

Eli takes his iPhone back.

ELI

Still worth it. Well we did, well, you did it. I manifested it. Okay now can we not talk about Noah now? Can we do that challenge? Let's do that challenge.

INT. WESTLIGHT - NIGHT

Our young adults share a table and their feelings.

DIDI

So you know what I said?

ELI

No Didi, tell us.

DIDI

"You can choke", and that's how I got my seed money! I'm what the tech industry calls a Silicon Valley Girl.

MARCUS

Loving the concept!

DIDI

Thanks baby cakes. I gargled battery acid to help with my vocal fry.

Didi shrugs and takes a bite from her Kurobuta baby back ribs as the boys share looks of grave concern.

HENRY

Now Didi, what does your app do?

DIDI

You'll see.

Didi takes a sip from her cocktail.

MARCUS

Have you heard from fuccboi?

Eli takes out his iPhone, opens Messenger.

ELI

Last active two days ago. I'm sorry, who the fuck was last active two days ago? Who lives like that?

MARCUS

The more I learn about him, the more I don't like him.

ELI

Oh I can wait. I've waited like a year, I can wait for him to message back.

HENRY

But maybe he won't message back.

ELI

I should have listened to the mom in "Lady Bird" and just gone to city college. The boyfriend version of city college. Noah's like the NYU of boyfriends.

MARCUS

Is he?

ELI

You know, maybe --

VRR-VRR. It's Noah.

ELI (CONT'D)

Oh never mind he's hit me up. I stay winning.

Eli LAUGHS EVILLY and reads the message off his lock screen.

ELI (CONT'D)

"Hey! So good to hear from you! We'll so have to make something happen. Your friends --" Oh my god, I'm dry heaving. Dry heaving. *"they should come too."* They should come too? Ew! Ew, ew, ew. Yuck.

DIDI

Shoulda gone with, "eat my ass."

Didi, Marcus and Henry cheers to that.

INT. LYFT - MOVING - NIGHT

Eli stares out his window. The ultimate sad boy.

ELI
You know how I'm feeling? Like that
GIF of the rich white woman who
tears down the drapes in her house,
but internalized.

Eli pulls up said GIF to his friends.

ELI (CONT'D)
Internalized.

HENRY
Is that healthy?

ELI
Is anything about me healthy?

ELI (CONT'D)		MARCUS	
No.		No.	

INT. DIDI'S PENTHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Eli paces wildly. Marcus, Didi and Henry watch on like it's a wildly amusing one act play.

ELI
This is like the SATs of messages
to write back.

DIDI
You need to secure the dick.

ELI
I'm well aware, Didi! Where should
we go, where should we go?

DIDI
What's the vibe you want?

ELI
Like a gay diner. What am I doing?
Let me just google that.

Eli pulls up the results: MeMe's Diner.

ELI (CONT'D)
Ah, Meme's Diner. Perfect. Our
generation loves memes!
(MORE)

(MORE)

ELI (CONT'D)
And killing malls, the diamond
industry, toxic masculinity, and
slowly, but surely, boomers.

Eli points to his face and smiles.

ELI (CONT'D)
Me when I see a meme.

Henry looks at the site off Eli's iPhone.

HENRY
I think it's pronounced *Mimi's*. The
way the M's are capitalized.

ELI
Who has time for logic? Didi, will
you be there, are you coming?
Feeling brunchy, like 11-ish
tomozy?

DIDI
No. I'll be running my company.

ELI
Oh right, sorry.

INT. MEME'S DINER - DAY

Eli, Marcus and Henry look over menus.

HENRY
Are you sure it's okay we're here?

ELI
Yep, just try not to steal focus.
Now to help prevent that, I've
brought a ring light. I jimmied it
off the wall in Didi's ensuite.

Eli clumsily produces a ring light from his JanSport. He
turns to a WAITER. Marcus and Henry watch on like it's a
completely terrifying one act play.

ELI (CONT'D)
Garçon? Could you just?

MARCUS
Oh my god.

The Waiter comes closer to Eli, deeply confused.

ELI

Yes, hi. I've got a ring light,
could you just, um, like hide it in
that terrarium, point it on me?

WAITER

I'm sorry?

MARCUS

That was satire.

Marcus grabs the ring light and shoves it back in the
JanSport where it belongs.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Okay, you need to not. You're doing
the most right now and he's not
even here yet. Where is he?

ELI

Running late. Now if he asks, we're
running late too. Let's all flush
our faces a little to give the
illusion of us just running in.

MARCUS

No.

ELI

Fair point.

JULIAN MORTIMER, 24, disarmingly cute, obvs will come up in
the movie later if we're giving him a full name and character
description.

JULIAN

Hey guys, I'm Julian, I'll be your
server for today. Just waters for
now?

HENRY

Yeah, thank you.

Julian's eyes are LOCKED on Eli, who doesn't notice.

MARCUS

Be cool, yeah?

ELI

What are you talking about? I'll be
cool. I was cool last time, I'll be
cool this time. Know that.

Julian walks away with 100% a case of the smits. 100%.

MARCUS
I'm just saying because...

ELI
What? Pull up the receipts.

MARCUS
Girl, my receipts are stacked.
Number one, your phone autocorrects
No to Noah.

ELI
That's on Apple, not me.

MARCUS
Number two, you know his aunt's
name.

ELI
Claudette happens to be a wonderful
woman and I wish you wouldn't
disparage her this way. I'm just
prepping for Christmas and I --
oop.

Eli has frozen. Marcus and Henry turn around to see what the
fuck is going on. Noah has entered the chat/diner.

HENRY
Okay, I'm starting to get it.

NOAH
Eli?

ELI
Noah. Whoa. Hi.

Eli stands up and skitters like Bambi. They hug.

NOAH
Who do we have here?

ELI
This is...

Eli has fully blanked.

ELI (CONT'D)
Sorry, my iron deficiency won just
then. Shoulda stayed eating those
açaí bowls.

NOAH
Right!

ELI
This is Henry and Marcus.

NOAH
Okay, if you're sure.

MARCUS
He hired us off the street.

Noah LAUGHS.

NOAH
You're so funny! Eli, isn't your
friend funny?

ELI
You know, I think we're all funny.

Eli and Noah take their seats. The mood is very let the games
begin.

INT. MEME'S DINER - LATER

The gang look at their menus.

ELI
So.

NOAH
So.

HENRY
These specials, hey? That's...
something.

ELI
Look at the card stock on these
menus. Wow.

NOAH
Yeah... wow.

Eli CLEARS HIS THROAT, then inconspicuously PUSHES his glass
off the table. Julian LEAPS IN and grabs the glass before it
smashes.

JULIAN
Woah, that was a close one.

ELI
Oh, thank you. So much. For that.

Julian places the glass back on the table. Henry RAPS on the table.

HENRY

What do you think this is? Oak?

ELI

Yeah, probs. Have you tried that, Noah? Oak milk?

NOAH

Do you mean, oat milk?

ELI

Yes, I do. Yes, I do.

NOAH

I'm only into activated charcoal water right now.

MARCUS

Who isn't?

Noah LAUGHS again.

NOAH

Marcus, stop!

Noah gives Marcus a look. Eli hits peak spiral and BLATANTLY KNOCKS his glass off the booth again. Julian comes back to the rescue.

JULIAN

Ooh, it happened again. There we go, I fixed it.

Julian places the glass further into the booth and points at it like a disobedient puppy.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Stay right there.

Julian smiles at Eli cheekily and turns off.

NOAH

Eli, I think he likes you.

ELI

I think he likes a lot of people.

NOAH

Just gotta go the bathroom.

Noah excuses himself. Marcus openly CHUCKLES.

MARCUS

I stay doing the bare minimum and he's lapping it up, I can't. I can't.

ELI

Well I can. Bitch. What the fucking fuck? Stop stealing focus.

MARCUS

I'm just trying to keep things popping.

ELI

Our rhythms are off, I'll give you that. See last time, things got real once my glass smashed and smashed the tension with it, but Little Mr Sunshine over there keeps on saving the day! This is my rom-com movie moment. You're meant to be a background character, an extra. Like those people.

Eli points over to a COUPLE in a near-ish booth.

ELI (CONT'D)

Look at that person, they didn't even take a real sip! He probably likes this hipster bitch vibe you're giving off.

MARCUS

Well you're giving off major secondhand embarrassment. You need to not. You didn't drag my ass to New York to watch you embarrass yourself --

ELI

Or maybe I did...

MARCUS

Stop he's walking back. Just stop it all.

ELI

Ew! Fine.

INT. MEME'S DINER - LATER

Noah turns to Eli. Intimate. Eli's a flutter. Are we getting right back to where we started from?

NOAH

So Eli, what have you been doing the past year?

ELI

Oh, I do a podcast now. Real fun.

NOAH

Okay, dope. I've just been writing.

MARCUS

Oh yeah.

NOAH

I love that! "Oh yeah". Is that just something you say?

MARCUS

Oh yeah.

NOAH

I love meeting new people, ugh! So much material I can mine.

ELI

You know I fell down a mine. At summer camp, at least we thought it was a summer camp, it was... what do they call those things? A cult. It was a cult.

MARCUS

Eli, stop. You were in a cult for like five seconds, didn't the authorities show up like minutes later? I'm sick of the lies. You're a cult.

NOAH

Woah, steady on!

ELI

No, that's our thing.

NOAH

Love slash hate?

ELI

Don't know about love.

MARCUS

We never hug and we never learn.

ELI
We're an episode of "Seinfeld".

NOAH
"Seinfeld". Never watched that.
Very white people problems.

ELI
I guess eating too much of an old
cake is a very white person
problem.

MARCUS
That's you all the time.

ELI
You know how I like my cakes. We've
been through this.

Henry looks at Noah, little weary.

HENRY
I just kind of let them go. It's
easier that way.

NOAH
Henry, what's your thing? What do
you do?

HENRY
I'm an astrophysicist.

NOAH
What?! That's amazing. Be right
back.

Noah heads off to the bathroom again.

MARCUS
Why does he keep going to the
bathroom? What's he doing?

Eli turns to Henry.

ELI
Go and check. I feel like he hasn't
learnt your face yet.

HENRY
I'm not going to do that.

ELI
He was doing that last time too.
Maybe he's on coke.

(MORE)

ELI (CONT'D)

Hollywood runs on coke. You take the drugs for the career you want. Also, I think he's trying to unicorn you and Henry, which we don't want. Gotta cut that out. Maybe the ring light should make a comeback.

No.	MARCUS	No.	HENRY
-----	--------	-----	-------

Julian pops back in, because of course he does.

JULIAN

How's everything?

ELI

Great! Everything is good. We're good. It's cool. It's everything.

JULIAN

Okay, just checking.

Noah slides back into the booth as Julian moves off.

NOAH

Just checking you out! Is it just me? He seems to really like you.

ELI

Not seeing it. Not seeing it.

MARCUS

The mukbang of it all.

NOAH

Marcus, I don't know what that means, but I'm in.

EXT. MEME'S DINER - DAY

Noah faces Eli, Marcus and Henry.

NOAH

This was... fun!

Noah turns to Marcus and Henry.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Great meeting you two!

Noah turns to Eli.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Eli? That you even remembered me?
That really touched me. Thank you.

Noah hugs Eli, SQUEEZES him tight. What the fuckery?

NOAH (CONT'D)

See you!

Noah disappears into the city. Eli turns to Marcus and Henry.

ELI

Huh. Very huh. Probably like a B
minus overall. Last time was an A
plus with a Rachel Berry gold star.

MARCUS

Okay, at most a C plus and that's
being generous, girl.

HENRY

He seemed more into Marcus.

ELI

But last time --

MARCUS

What's not clicking? What's not
clicking? Last time was a year ago
and your vibes have shifted and you
didn't spend an actual year
overthinking it. You played
yourself.

ELI

No, I only do that at night.

Marcus and Henry share a look. Ew.

ELI (CONT'D)

That hug, though. That hug. Did he
give you that hug? Undeniable.
Anyway, we're gonna see him again
tonight.

MARCUS

What now?

ELI

You know how when you *really* follow
someone on Facebook, you also see
when they post on event pages
saying they've DM'd about tickets
for sale? That.

Eli SMUGLY GIGGLES as he takes out his iPhone.

ELI (CONT'D)
 What you need to know is that I
 also DM'd Eloise Chao about her
 tickets for sale and we'll also be
 going to Wave Funk.

MARCUS
 This is just like "You".

ELI
 I know.

MARCUS
 No, I mean, "You". That show on
 Netflix about the hot psychopathic
 stalker.

ELI
 And taking away from that you think
 I'm hot.

MARCUS
 When is this going to end?

ELI
 Tonight. At the club. Promise.
 Alexa, play "Last Hurrah" by Bebe
 Rexha. Wow, Bebe Rexha really is
 the soundtrack to my life.

WE BEGIN MONTAGE SEQUENCE, BUT MAKE IT SLIGHTLY META AND
 IRONIC TO BEBE REXHA'S LAST HURRAH.

- Eli pushes open the doors to Didi's walk in wardrobe. Gazes around for some threads.
- Eli, Marcus and Henry get themselves glowed up.
- Our boys trying to coax Didi to come along.
- Our boys taking the subway.
- They exit the subway and step into Brooklyn, bish.
- They walk down a street. Bright lights inspiring them, making them feel brand new.
- The trio stepping into the club like total baddies.

END MONTAGE

INT. ANALOG BROOKLYN - NIGHT

Industrial, fluorescent, grimy. Very Costco but make it a club. Eli turns to Marcus and Henry as they look around the club.

ELI

Now I should warn you, my only knowledge of clubs comes from the lyrics of Britney Spears songs. A lot of stuff happens on the floor and... actually that's all I've got.

MARCUS

Okay, now what we're not going to do this time is make a fool of ourselves.

ELI

Yeah, I can't promise that.

INT. ANALOG BROOKLYN - BAR AREA - LATER

A BARTENDER hands Eli a White Russian. He takes a sip.

ELI

Mmm, like bitter milk.

Marcus and Henry share some White Claws.

MARCUS

You're lucky this place is kind of bumping.

HENRY

Now Eli, how are you going to explain to Noah why you're here too?

ELI

Very good question. Solid question. I will --

Eli yeets out and RUNS deeper into the club, away from logic.

INT. ANALOG BROOKLYN - MOMENTS LATER

Eli pushes past bodies. Like alive bodies, chill. Then, it happens.

NOAH

Eli?

Eli gets in the zone, walks up to Noah.

ELI

Noah? Wow. It's like I knew you'd be here, which I didn't. How would I know that?

NOAH

Maybe if you stalked my events on Facebook.

ELI

Welp, you got me!

Eli and Noah share a HEARTY LAUGH.

NOAH

You're also into emerging gutter PC pop artists?

ELI

Yes. My brand encompasses a lot of areas. I'm a lasso. Just lassoing up the culture is what I'm doing.

NOAH

Is Marcus here?

ELI

Um, he might be, he might be. But you know who else is here? Me! Aren't I fun? Aren't I enough?

Eli LAUGHS as Noah kind of MIDLY CHUCKLES, then points to Eli's White Russian.

NOAH

How many of those have you had?

ELI

Three... sips.

Noah LAUGHS. Back in.

ELI (CONT'D)

Well now that I'm three...

Eli takes a sip.

ELI (CONT'D)
Four sips in. I just want to say,
sorry if I was kind of off at
brunch. I can get too in my head,
kind of get stuck in there and --

Noah puts a hand on Eli's shoulder.

NOAH
Hey, it's cool. You're cool.

Eli and Noah share a warm smile.

INT. ANALOG BROOKLYN - BAR AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Eli walks up to Marcus and Henry, tiger blood coursing
through his veins.

ELI
We're vibing again!

MARCUS
Then why are you back here?

ELI
Well I need to let my fans know. He
said I was cool, then he said he
had to go work the room, has a lot
of friends here or something.

MARCUS
Eli, you do have taste, but you
don't have standards.

ELI
Okay, again. My brand.

Eli looks around for Noah.

ELI (CONT'D)
Where is he? Where's the cute
little guy?

HENRY
I think he's over --

Henry spots MeMe's Diner's very own Julian. He's moving with
the music. It's a mood. A vibe.

HENRY (CONT'D)
No way. It's that guy from the
diner. The guy who likes you.

ELI

Yes Henry, his name's Noah. Where have you been?

HENRY

No, the other guy.

Marcus spots Julian too.

MARCUS

Oh, fuck. It is! Go see him, go see him.

ELI

Him again? What's up with that? Am I trapped in a "Truman Show" type experience and they're low on actors, so they have to repeat them?

MARCUS

How come when it's with Noah, this would be a sign, but when it's with this bitch, it's not a sign, it's an elaborate conspiracy?

ELI

Well, the answer to that is...

Eli attempts to yeet again and like INSTANTLY STACKS IT. He's on the floor and not in the way Miss Britney Jean Spears intended.

ELI (CONT'D)

Ow! Fuck. Goddamn it. Ow.

JULIAN (O.S.)

Are you okay?

Eli looks up. It's Julian. The club lights give him an otherworldly glow. Feels are def's being caught right now. What even?

ELI

Oh. Uh, yeah.

Julian takes Eli's hand, pulls him up.

JULIAN

Let's get out of this town.

Eli tilts his head. A true "huh" moment.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
Kidding. Out of this club.

ELI
Um...

Eli looks around for Noah. Gone. Can't even see him.

ELI (CONT'D)
Okay, sure.

INT. ANALOG BROOKLYN - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Eli and Julian work through clubbers. We catch a QUICK GLIMPSE of Noah, or do we? Too quick to tell. Out of sight, not out of Eli's mind.

JULIAN
What's up? You good?

ELI
I thought I... doesn't matter. It's fine. Where are we going?

JULIAN
I know a place.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Julian PUSHES open a rusty door and a stunning city skyline greets our new romantics. Julian walks over to the edge. Taking in the views.

Eli waits in the doorway. Torn. He takes a look back at the stairwell, then over to Julian.

JULIAN
Are you in?

Julian shots Eli a killer smile. That helps. Eli lets go of the door and everything else. He walks over to Julian.

ELI
And look at that, not a star in the sky due to light pollution. Is that the term? Light pollution?

JULIAN
Let's just go with it.

Julian takes a whiff of the air.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
And also very bad air quality due
to "pollution" pollution.

ELI
Okay, well don't look at me. I own
a metal straw.

Eli and Julian share a playful look. The vibery! They step
closer.

A SECURITY GUARD, brute like, puts a pin in it. He STOMPS up
to them out of seemingly nowhere. Very dark-sided.

SECURITY
Yes, hello? You're not allowed up
here. Go. Get off.

JULIAN
Oh, we're just --

SECURITY
Yeah, I get it. Cute date moment.
Not on this roof.

ELI
(muttering, to himself)
Date moment?

Julian grabs Eli's hand.

JULIAN
I know another place.

Julian turns to the Security Guard.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
And you're not invited.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

STEAM HISSES out of a janky pipe. FIND Eli and Julian sitting
on crates. Eli pulls up a picture of the New York City
skyline on his iPhone, holds it up.

ELI
Almost the same.

After a beat, Eli's iPhone SLIPS and FALLS on his forehead.
Yikers.

JULIAN
Oh shit. Are you okay?

ELI
Fine. Think I cleared my sinuses. I
can do a great Squidward. Wanna
hear it?

JULIAN
No, because I want you to stay
cute.

ELI
That's fair.

A comfortable silence, then Julian looks over to a corner.

JULIAN
Is that a rat?

ELI
That's two rats. Having sex.

EXT. SECOND AVENUE - NIGHT

Eli and Julian hit the streets.

ELI
Okay, well I was happening to be
enjoying that.

Julian shoots Eli a look. Is he for real?

ELI (CONT'D)
No, I'm not into that. Not into
animals bonking.

JULIAN
Me either, although what about that
one tiger from "Zootopia", that one
who you know would treat you right?

ELI
I'm sorry, did you just? That's my
favorite meme. That's my favorite
meme.

EXT. SIXTH STREET - NIGHT

Julian and Eli continue their riff on *Before Sunrise*. Don't
sue.

JULIAN
The "Half-Blood Prince"?

ELI

That's the best one. It's right before shit gets real. I hate shit getting real. Give me teen romance over fights to death any day. I seriously got into an email fight with a journalist who gave it a bad review.

JULIAN

Oh, I believe you.

EXT. THIRD AVENUE - LATER

Eli and Julian continue their walk date. Fitbit would be proud.

ELI

Let's see, what else? In high school, I got "Most Likely To Fall Over" and were they wrong with that? No. Anyway, what's your dealio? What else do you do apart from saving glasses of water?

JULIAN

Ah, I'm also in flight school.

ELI

Flight school? You're like a witch! They fly. Oh my god, I love witches. How much do you love Hermione?

JULIAN

So much. Remember when she punched Draco?

ELI

Um, yes. And then after, when she said, "That felt good"? Iconic. It's on a constant loop in my head, along with Noah.

JULIAN

Noah?

Whoopsy. Eli quickly gets it together.

ELI

"Noah's Ark". My other favorite work of fiction. All them animals, together like that?

(MORE)

ELI (CONT'D)

That was a classic, that was a classic. Anyway, back to you. Tell me everything about flight school.

JULIAN

Well...

INT. MEME'S DINER - NIGHT

Eli and Julian are all cozy in a booth. Julian's mapping his education out on some napkins.

JULIAN

So, now I'm up to training to get my commercial license, because I already have my private license instrument rating. Next, I'll go through certified flight instructor school. After that, I'll become a flight instructor for my first job, for like a year, year and a half, to get my 1500 hours and then I'll be allowed to go to the major airlines. I'm thinking Delta.

Julian takes a sip from his Coke. Eli laps it all up.

ELI

Alright, understood about none of that, but what I did understand? The ambition and drive. Wish I had that.

JULIAN

I think you do have that. Don't you basically run a TV festival in Austin and have a really popular podcast?

ELI

How did you --

JULIAN

Lowkey might have sneaked your name on your credit card when I served you and then searched up your details on Ecosia, the woke Google.

Eli stops. Fuming.

ELI

What?

Julian eeks away a little. Is Eli about to snap?

ELI (CONT'D)

That is a gross invasion of my privacy and... Something I used to do all the time when I worked at Macy's! Okay, I did it once and the guilt still follows me, but still, I feel that.

JULIAN

I'm sorry! I just couldn't not. Do you ever feel that way? I knew I was going to regret it if I didn't and then we just meet again, so easily? What's the universe saying?

ELI

I don't know, but it's saying something.

EXT. DIDI'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Eli and Julian stop outside the penis hut.

ELI

Well, this is my stop. I'm up in the penis hut. My friend's a baller.

JULIAN

Okay, this has been a sheer delight. This has been Hermione punching Draco.

ELI

It did feel good.

Eli looks at Julian, vulnerable.

ELI (CONT'D)

I felt like I already knew you. Is that weird?

JULIAN

No. I felt the same way.

ELI

So I guess I'll see you again, right?

JULIAN

Not a universe where that doesn't happen. I'll beep you.

Eli takes out his beeper.

ELI

I'll be ready.

INT. DIDI'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Eli creeps in. He turns on a light, revealing Marcus sitting in an egg shaped chair.

MARCUS

And where have you been? No, I actually knew where you've been.

Marcus takes out his iPhone.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Been tracking you on Find My iPhone.

ELI

Creepy, but also I respect you and your artistic choices.

MARCUS

Thank you. So, what's tea?

ELI

I don't know. It was different. It was like we've met before, in a past life, at Hogwarts. Both Ravensclaws, actually no, he's a Hufflepuff.

MARCUS

J.K. Rowling is a TERF.

A beat while that fact drop settles, then.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Have you compared wands yet?

ELI

No, because my wand has like unicorn hair in it and I feel like his might have... Oh those wands. Our flesh wands.

MARCUS
Ew. Messynwfnkln.

ELI
We don't run that hot... yet. It
was like talking to you. Is that
how it's supposed to feel? Easy?

MARCUS
Yeah bitch, it is.

ELI
It was like I knew all the answers.
Unlike with He Who Must Not Be
Named, and I'm not talking about
Voldemort.

MARCUS
Maybe this is something better.

ELI
Maybe so. Okay, I'm gonna go hit
the sack.

MARCUS
Please mean your bed.

Marcus smiles as Eli heads into his room.

EXT. DREAMY SKYSCAPE - NIGHT

Noah and Eli stand face to face. Noah is livid.

NOAH
I thought we were end game.

ELI
Noah, of course we're end game.
Also the title of my fourth
favorite Taylor --

NOAH
Swift song. See? I knew that. I
knew that.

ELI
Then why are you bugging?

NOAH
Oh am I bugging? Why am I bugging?
Who's this? Hmm?

Julian POPS into view, looks around.

JULIAN
Are we standing on a garbage barge?

ELI
You'll get used to it.

NOAH
No, he won't get used to it. This
is our special place. For us.

JULIAN
Okay, but why is this "special
place" built on garbage? Isn't that
a warning sign? Oh look, there's
actually a warning sign.

REVEAL a busted WARNING SIGN amongst the garbage.

NOAH
He probably planted that.

JULIAN
I just got here.

NOAH
Exactly, he just got here. Eli,
we've been going steady for a year
now.

JULIAN
Going steady? Who talks like that?

NOAH
You're forgetting the most
important thing. Who's pretty?

ELI
You.

NOAH
This one dangly earring? I got it
just for you.

ELI
I do like the way it dangles.

NOAH
You know what else dangles?

JULIAN
Okay, stop. Doesn't he have some
charcoal to activate in water?

ELI

Solid burn, but Julian, I need you to get out of here. I don't want to mess this up with you. You have to get out of my head while you still can.

NOAH

Yeah, you heard him, scram!

Noah takes a heated step towards Julian.

ELI

Hey, hey, hey. Don't start swinging. We can work this out. There is some crossover in the Eli Love Interest Universe. Noah, you write pilots, Julian, you're going to be a pilot.

NOAH

But who's the flyest?

JULIAN

Wow, that was bad.

ELI

Right? Even I'm like, uh-uh. Noah, do better.

Noah scowls at the pair.

ELI (CONT'D)

Do you guys just wanna pivot this to a sex dream? I mean, while we're all here.

NOAH

Okay, sure.

The trio gets to sensual unclothing as "Bloom" by Troye Sivan FADES IN. Right before anything gets too frisky, Eli's real life iPhone VIBRATES.

INT. DIDI'S PENTHOUSE - ELI'S ROOM - MORNING

VRR-VRR. VRR-VRR. Eli feels around for his iPhone.

ELI

Hello?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ATX TELEVISION FESTIVAL OFFICES - BOARDROOM - SAME TIME

Orlando paces, little frenetic energy going on.

ORLANDO

Yeah, it's me. Friday, we've got the "Lakedale" panel. Locked in, just confirmed. Round two, with you and AJ.

ELI

Great and I'm ready this year. I've learnt to not look directly at his jawline. It's the source of his powers.

ORLANDO

I don't think that's at all true, but sure. See you Friday.

ELI

Of course. See you Friday.

INT. ZIVIT - NIGHT

Eli, Marcus and Henry step in, all suited up. It feels like an Apple Store on kombucha. A SIGN reads: *ZIVIT WELCOMES YOU TO YOU*. VSCO GIRLS and E-BOYS are everywhere. A WAITER approaches our trio.

WAITER

Aperol spritz?

ELI

Sure.

MARCUS

Okay, Didi has really stunted on them hoes. Bumble could never.

HENRY

Is that what her app's like? Bumble.

MARCUS

Don't know.

HENRY

I just. I need answers. I need it to make sense.

MARCUS
Where's Julian? I thought he was coming.

ELI
Ah, nope.

MARCUS
Why? What did he say?

ELI
Work.

MARCUS
Eli, you can't just say a gay phrase when you don't want to answer a question.

ELI
No, like actually work. Not werk.

MARCUS
Oh.

Didi CLINKS a shot glass with a teaspoon. The crowd shuts the fuck up. It is Didi after all. GIANT OLED SCREENS RISE from the ground. Didi steps onto a cement box.

DIDI
Zivit. Everyone's been so busy asking what is Zivit, they haven't bothered asking, how's Zivit?

Henry squirms at the vagueness.

DIDI (CONT'D)
An empathy based platform, where our users, spelt Y-O-U-sers can --

JULIAN (O.S.)
Hey.

Eli spins around. It's Julian, up close and personal.

ELI
Julian?

JULIAN
Surprise! I bailed on work.

ELI
You really did that?

JULIAN

Yes! I know you're leaving soon --

ELI

Yep, tomorrow morning. Friday in the AM.

JULIAN

-- and I just had to see you. Had to. Wasn't a universe where I couldn't see you again.

Marcus and Henry watch on, completely living.

ELI

A Hufflepuff through and through.

JULIAN

So... are you ready for the sequel?

ELI

Yes. I love sequels. "Shrek 2", "Toy Story 2", "Rugrats in Paris".

JULIAN

"22 Jump Street".

ELI

I was getting to that!

Eli and Julian make a move and Irish exit this shiz.

MARCUS

Loves it.

"Doin' It Right" by Daft Punk feat. Panda Bear PULSES IN as Eli and Julian dip out.

EXT. NYU - NIGHT

Eli and Julian walk it out and talk it out.

JULIAN

You drink water out of a Slurpee cup?

ELI

Makes it feels less healthy. Also, why are we in NYU?

JULIAN

I just like walking around here. Isn't it pretty?

They turn a corner to find a RANDOM PIANO on the campus.
Julian GASPS.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
I love pianos! It's almost as if I
knew this was here and planned it.

Julian dashes over and takes a seat on the piano bench. He
plays a CHORD.

ELI
To quote Cardi B, "How convenient
is that? Wow. How convenient is
fucking that?" Are we in a Netflix
rom-com? Be honest.

JULIAN
Take a seat.

Eli sits next Julian. V intimate. V cozy.

ELI
This is too romantic. What's
happening?

JULIAN
I'm about to make it worse.

Julian plays the opening notes of "Malibu" by Miley Cyrus. He
starts singing. Eli is experiencing all of the feels. He
closes his eyes.

EXT. DREAMY SKYSCAPE - NIGHT

We go for a fantasy trip inside Eli's head. FIND Eli and
Julian holding hands on the garbage barge. The garbage barge
CRUMBLES. Eli and Julian FALL INTO the water, now garbage
water.

They SWIM through the water, almost losing sight of each
other.

They come out the other side of the water, stepping into an
UPSIDE DOWN WORLD, like *Stranger Things* meets the *no tears
left to cry* music video.

They walk around this quaint little upside down TOWN. Very
French provincial. They DROP together into the window of a
cozy little house.

EXT. NYU - MOMENTS LATER

Eli opens his eyes, turns to Julian.

Julian stops singing. Holds for a reaction.

ELI

Okay, so you can sing, you can fly
and you're still going with the
story that you're not from the cast
of "Hocus Pocus"?

JULIAN

Yes, I'm not a witch.

ELI

Still not convinced.

JULIAN

Eli?

ELI

Yeah?

JULIAN

Do you wanna come over?

INT. JULIAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Eli and Julian are all comfy on the couch. Julian hits PAY on his Postmates app.

JULIAN

Pad Thai? Ordered. Now let's do
nothing and sleep 'till noon.

ELI

Plot hole, I'll be on a plane at
noon.

JULIAN

Shit, I forgot. Do you have to?

ELI

Yep, I've got to. AJ Kapa will be
waiting. But there is nothing more
I'm feeling like then sleeping with
you. Not "with" you, just with you.
I mean, we could bonk, but --

JULIAN

Let's just see what happens.

ELI
I can go for that.

LATER

KNOCKEDY KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK. Julian looks over to his door.

JULIAN
Oh, it's our Pad Thai! Can you get
it? I'm all comfy.

ELI
But social interaction.

JULIAN
Please.

ELI
Okay, fine.

Eli gets up and walks over.

JULIAN
Hate to see you go, but I love to
watch you leave.

ELI
And thank you for pretending I have
an ass and ignoring my scoliosis.

INT./EXT. JULIAN'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Eli opens the door, smirky and smitten, then his face drops.
Fucking Noah is the Postmates guy. Wtf. How convenient is
that? Wow. How convenient is fucking that.

NOAH
Eli?

ELI
Noah. Noah. You Postmates?

NOAH
Yeah and I do events and I hire my
place out as an illegal WeWork.
This is where you're staying?

ELI
No! This is just a friend's house.
Place. Apartment. From high school.

NOAH

Dope. Hey, sorry about last night.
Had all these other friends there
and then I saw my ex and it was not
fun. Not fun.

ELI

No it's fine. Fine.

NOAH

This is so weird, seeing you again.
Like a sign!

ELI

Yes.

NOAH

Wig, you feel that already? I put
that in one of my scripts.

ELI

You did?

NOAH

Oh sure. How could I not?

ELI

Okay, I better get back in. High
school friend.

NOAH

Oh cool. To be continued.

Noah hands Eli the order.

ELI

Yep. Bye.

Eli and Noah share a look. Fuck. Fuck, fuck, fuck.

INT. JULIAN'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Eli walks back in with the Pad Thai. Mood completely shifted.

JULIAN

Eli?

ELI

I have to go. Ah, yeah. Gotta go.

JULIAN

What?

ELI

Ah, Marcus just called. Flights have changed. Getting a red-eye like now.

JULIAN

Oh, bummer. Really bummer. But if you've gotta go, you've gotta go.

ELI

Yeah.

Eli heads for the door.

ELI (CONT'D)

Just so you know, this was really nice.

Eli has one last look, almost tearing up.

ELI (CONT'D)

Bye Julian.

Eli shuts the door on Julian.

EXT. JULIAN'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Eli opens up his Music app, hits PLAY and Bebe Rexha's "Don't Get Any Closer" FILLS THE SOUNDTRACK.

INT. SUBWAY - NIGHT

Eli rides back to Didi's. He looks out the window, we PUSH IN ON his REFLECTION.

EXT. STREETS OF NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

Eli lives out a sad walking montage moment.

INT. DIDI'S PENTHOUSE - ELI'S ROOM - NIGHT

Eli shuts the door and lies down on his bed. He OPENS up Messenger, scrolls to his chat with Noah. Types: *Hey, so random seeing you like that! What are you doing tomorrow?*

Eli holds for a beat, then HITS SEND.

INT. DIDI'S PENTHOUSE - DAY

Marcus and Henry roll their luggage towards the front door.
All business.

HENRY

I just have this weight lifted off
me now. Zivit! What an app! Wow.

MARCUS

A true concept. Didi didn't have to
snap that hard, but she did.

Eli steps out of his room, still rocking his jammies.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Bitch, are you not ready?

ELI

Um, story time.

Eli GIGGLES to offset the news.

MARCUS

Oh no. This sounds bad.

VRR-VRR. Henry looks down at his phone.

HENRY

Okay, I'm going to our Lyft,
because it's there and it's waiting
for us.

Henry heads out. Good choice.

MARCUS

So? What's this fuckery?

ELI

Funny story. You know how I was at
Julian's last night after Didi's?
Yeah. Ah, Noah, the Noah, was the
Postmates guy!

MARCUS

Oh god.

ELI

Turns out he has like three jobs
and a WeWork out of his living room
or something. But he was there and
it just felt, I don't know --

KNOCKEDY KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

ELI (CONT'D)
Oh, that's me.

Eli heads over the front door, SIGNS for a package. He unboxes it on the way back to Marcus.

ELI (CONT'D)
Got a skateboard. Thought it'd look cute, skating up to Noah.

MARCUS
Do you even know how to skate?

ELI
Um, I played "Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2", so you tell me.

MARCUS
Am I disappointed? Yes. Am I surprised? No.

ELI
Am I over him? Of course not. Absolutely not. Never. Never, never, never. He could only do between three and four. He's jam packed. He's writing a new pilot and --

MARCUS
Honestly? This is the worst decision you've ever made. Including when you and that Facebook group tried to raid Area 51.

ELI
I wanted an alien. Marcus, you know I have to stay. My brand.

MARCUS
Your brand. Your brand, your brand, your brand. Maybe your brand should have some checks and balances.

ELI
I'm staying, I'm staying. Noah hit me up at 4am. You don't do that if you don't care. And Delta's been dealt with. Flying out tomorrow.

MARCUS
Do I even ask what happened with Julian?

ELI
He's not Noah.

MARCUS
Noah's not Noah! The Noah that you want doesn't exist. He's in your head. He's not your boyfriend.

ELI
Pfft, okay. Let's talk about the boyfriend. What you don't want out.

MARCUS
What? Excuse me?

ELI
At least I'm trying to strive for like boyfriend excellence. Henry? He's boring. Boring? Party of Henry.

MARCUS
Okay, whatever.

Marcus brushes off that dig, grabs his luggage.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
You know what it is? You don't want to be happy.

Marcus walks out. Damn. Eli marines in Marcus' truth, then heads for his room. Didi crosses paths with him.

ELI
Oh, you're here?

DIDI
Yes, this is where I live! Don't worry, I heard everything.

Eli takes a step back. Oopsy.

DIDI (CONT'D)
You know at the start of this week, I thought this would be nice. Getting the gang back together, but then it really wasn't. You didn't even stay for my launch. I mean, I'm running a Fortune 500 company, but whatever!

ELI
What? You are?

DIDI

Do you think I have time to wrapped up in fucking boy drama? I don't. And do you have time to be wrapped up in boy drama? I don't think you do, baby. It's ruining your life.

ELI

No, *debilitating* my life.

DIDI

That sounds worse.

Eli considers it and nods.

DIDI (CONT'D)

But you know what I've realized? It doesn't matter what I say or what Marcus says, you're going to do it anyway. So, go and do it anyway.

Didi walks out on Eli. After a beat, she walks back in.

DIDI (CONT'D)

And why the fuck do you have a skateboard?!

EXT. DIDI'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - MOMENTS LATER

Eli steps out onto the sidewalk, skateboard in tow. He DROPS it on the ground. VRR-VRR. Eli takes out his iPhone. It's Orlando.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ATX TELEVISION FESTIVAL OFFICES - BOARDROOM - DAY

Orlando rises from his chair, antsy.

ORLANDO

Why aren't you on airplane mode? You should be on airplane mode.

ELI

Ah, okay. So, I can't get to Austin today because of personal reasons. So... yeah? So, yeah.

ORLANDO

Well obviously you're fired. Bye.

Orlando HANGS UP.

EXT. WEST BROADWAY - DAY

Eli stops outside CUTLER SALON. Sees his reflection. Goes in.

INT. CUTLER SALON - DAY

STACEY RUTGER, 40, an organic hipster with a heart and locks of gold, spins Eli around to face the mirror.

STACEY

What are we thinking? What's the concept?

ELI

All blonde. Why not? Got some hours to burn.

STACEY

Great, a modern gay classic. The "Call Me By Your Name" of hairstyles.

ELI

"Moonlight" is better. Now, I know, usually when a gay guy in his mid to late twenties asks to go blonde, it's the beginning of a complete breakdown, or a call for help, that's not what this is. Just so we both know that, that's not what this is. At all. Mmm-mmm. No, no, no.

STACEY

Okay, sure.

ELI

My self-aware levels are right there with you. And also, my Co-Star notification said "Change your hair today".

Eli takes out his iPhone, swipes up the Notification Centre.

ELI (CONT'D)

See? Look, 10:54am.

Stacey stops and looks at Eli through the mirror, studying him.

STACEY

Are you okay?

Eli nods eagerly, convincing absolutely no one.

INT. CUTLER SALON - LATER

Stacey's getting that bleach on as Eli gets his bitch on.

ELI

What do they know anyway? Is Didi running a Fortune 500 company? Sure. Is Marcus in a long term relationship? Maybe so. But I know what my heart wants.

STACEY

You know your heart, the same way I know how to work a switch blade.

ELI

Okay. Is this unrealistic? Sure. But to counter that, I say, what if? What if this is it? What if this is the time when everything just works out?

STACEY

And if you don't go now, the FOMO would be real.

ELI

The realest. I love this. Why can I tell you everything?

STACEY

Because we don't know each other.

Eli nods. Points.

LATER

Eli word vomits some more to Stacey, who's still all in.

ELI

Today's all about going back to the date from last year. I need to return to that Eli. It can't not work. I don't have that option. I've lost maybe two friends and at least one job. It's going to work, because it has to work.

STACEY

I am just, yes. Yes. Just repeat
yes in your head, I think that will
help.

LATER

The big reveal. Eli is rocking the blonde look. It seriously
looks good. Stacey is in actual shock at the results.

STACEY

No, you're not listening to me.
This never looks good. Never.

Stacey turns to another HAIRSTYLIST.

STACEY (CONT'D)

What the fuck? How good does it
look?

HAIRSTYLIST

God's plan.

EXT. CUTLER SALON - DAY

Eli and Stacey hug. It's been a journey.

STACEY

Here's my card, I'm weirdly
invested.

Eli pockets Stacey's card, then they nod. It's time.

STACEY (CONT'D)

Are you going to skate with that?

ELI

No, it's just a prop. I don't think
I can skate.

STACEY

I think you can. If you can rock
this blonde, you can do anything.
Period.

Eli DROPS the skateboard and hops on. He KICKS OFF. He's for
real skating and surprisingly good at it.

We FOLLOW ELI as he takes out his iPhone, hits PLAY ON "On a
Roll" by Ashley O. The true queen of pop. Facts.

EXT. STREETS OF NEW YORK CITY - DAY

Eli, in full sk8er boi mode, effortlessly SKATES around TRAFFIC and PEDESTRIANS. It's like his face has been deepfaked onto a stunt double.

His hair perfectly coifed and perfectly blonde. We've reached peak Eli.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - DAY

An exhilarated Eli SKATES into the square. His BDE has been activated.

He starts taking some DEEP BREATHS, as he waits for Noah. He sits on the edge of the iconic fountain. He hits PAUSE on Ashley O and scrolls to "pete davidson" by Ariana Grande, hits PLAY.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - LATER

Eli's still smiling, has another look around the park.

Eli types in Noah's chat: *hey, where are you?* Then DELETES.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - LATER

Eli has one last look around, then calls it. He gets up. Noah's not coming.

Eli jumps onto his skateboard and KICKS OFF.

He skates faster and faster and CRASH. Eli has been KNOCKED OUT.

EXT. DREAMY SKYSCAPE - NIGHT

Our chaotic duo. Face to face.

ELI

Oh. Of course. Of course!

NOAH

Eli. You have to listen to me. I was really --

ELI

I don't care. Okay, wrong. I do care. I can't hide anything, especially on my face.

(MORE)

ELI (CONT'D)

I think it was pretty obvious that I liked you. And I think you knew that. And then this whole week, you just kept on dropping these little breadcrumbs at me. Breadcrumbs! What was it for huh? You wanted to use my clout at the festival? Trying to keep me hanging on for your career? That was pretty fucking messed up. I should have swerved you. But none of what I'm saying right now even matters, because really, I'm in my head, so this whole time, this whole year, I've just been talking to myself!

Noah SNAPS into ANOTHER ELI. We're now entering some fucked up version of *The Parent Trap*.

ANOTHER ELI

Damn it!

ELI

So, how does it feel? Wasting my time? And all this... I'm sorry, cut. Um, Subconscious? Can we go back to Myself being Noah?

Another Eli SNAPS back to Noah.

ELI (CONT'D)

Sorry. It doesn't have the same impact if I was talking to myself. You're still myself, but --

NOAH

No, I get it. No biggie. Was just in my trailer.

ELI

You have a trailer? Where's my trailer? It's my head! Okay, back to me. I'm done with you.

NOAH

Are you really though?

ELI

Subconscious, quick!

Noah SNAPS back to Another Eli. They both take a breath.

ELI (CONT'D)

What happened before? Am I dead?

ANOTHER ELI

Dead? You wish you were dead! No, you're going to be alive until what? Like 103? Just like Grandpa. Probably longer because the future and shit. So when you wake up, it's going to hurt.

ELI

Because I hit the ground real bad?

ANOTHER ELI

No it's going to hurt mentally. Physically? Pfft. I think you fell onto some grass, you'll be fine.

Eli nods, trying to hype himself up, holding back some tears.

ANOTHER ELI (CONT'D)

You're going to play "Soulmate" by Lizzo a lot. A lot. And Eli?

ELI

Yes, Eli?

ANOTHER ELI

You're going to be okay.

ELI

Yeah, 'cause I'm the special sauce.

ANOTHER ELI

Say that again.

Eli takes a step closer to Another Eli, epiphanizing.

ELI

I'm the special sauce.

Eli basks in his epiphany, then...

ELI (CONT'D)

I bring the action. It's all in me, Noah's not going to complete me. I'm going to complete me.

ANOTHER ELI

Okay, a little on the nose there with that last one.

ELI

Wow. Um, I'm sorry, Me. Couldn't just have my back while I was having several epiphanies?

(MORE)

ELI (CONT'D)

Sorry I couldn't have worked in a little more subtext, I'm pretty sure most of my brain capacity is going towards rendering this expansive skyscape in real time.

ANOTHER ELI

Technically, I do have your back.
'cause we're the same and --

ELI

Okay, can someone wake me up?
Subconscious?

Those ER paddle thingies drop into view. Another Eli rubs them together, charging them. He gets ready to blast them on Eli's chest.

ANOTHER ELI

Queer! Get it? Usually you'd say "clear", but because we're gay, I did wordplay. Wordgay.

ELI

You really are the worst version of me. Give me those. I'll clear myself out.

Eli "clears" himself and is thrown back into a VORTEX OF RAINBOWS.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - DAY

Eli sits up. He cradles the skateboard and his feels.

NEW YORKER

Do you want to get out of the
fucking way?

Eli scoots over to the right. He looks around at everything, everyone. Smiles.

TITLE CARD OVER WHITE: two months and eleven days later

INT. ELI'S APARTMENT - DAY

DING DONG. Eli walks to his front door. Eli's roots are starting to show, giving him a grunge-y look. Flannel on flannel. It's weirdly a look. A serve, if you will.

Eli opens the front door to find Mason, holding an order.

MASON
Okay. We have... An impossible
burger combo, no fries...

Mason hands Eli his new and improved Postmates order.

MASON (CONT'D)
And a salad? With Apple Cider
Vinegar on the side?

ELI
I saw Orlando Bloom drinking it on
Instagram and was like, me next.

Mason does not know how to react, then.

ELI (CONT'D)
You've earned this.

Eli hands Mason a twenty.

INT. ELI'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Eli sets down his meal. VRR-VRR. Eli looks down at his iPhone
on the counter. It's Noah. Eli reads it.

NOAH (V.O.)
Hey Eli! So sorry about missing
you. I was busy writing and I just
kind of thought you'd get it.
Anyway, look. I'm going to be in
Austin for the Austin Film
Festival. Got a script in. We
should definitely catch up. Just us
this time.

Eli soaks in the message, then types: No and it AUTOCORRECTS
to Noah. Eli stares at the name for a beat, then DELETES the
h and the a. Hits SEND. Eli puts his iPhone down and EXHALES.

INT. MARCUS' APARTMENT - LATER

Eli BURSTS through Marcus' front door like he's a beloved
sitcom character who gets applause on every entrance.

ELI
I said no!

FIND Marcus at his counter.

MARCUS
Gonna need some context.

ELI

Right. Noah? The Noah? He hit me up. Something about being in Austin for the Austin Film Festival.

Eli walks over to Marcus.

ELI (CONT'D)

You were right, Didi was right. Stacey was wrong. Very wrong. I think she just wanted tips. Tips for giving me tips.

MARCUS

Who's Stacey?

ELI

The woman who blonded me. I think I'm done with him. I want to celebrate that. Can we celebrate that?

MARCUS

You want nugs?

ELI

Always.

INT. MARCUS' CAR - DAY

Marcus starts his car up, turns to Eli.

MARCUS

Let's shoot!

Eli smiles. Marcus clocks him.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

What?

ELI

Nothing.

Marcus turns onto the road.

LATER

Marcus hits the highway. Eli scrolls his iPhone, doing the most as per usual.

ELI

Also, post nugs, we're going to make a pitstop. Might have seen I brought my duffel bag.

MARCUS

Why?

ELI

Julian. I've been checking his stories, but he doesn't know that. There's this extension you can get on Chrome, called IG Story, that lets you watch stories incognito.

(off Marcus' look)

I know, find the point and go there. Here's the mukbang of it all. Julian is right now at the airport for some flight school thing? I don't know the science.

MARCUS

I don't think anything of what you said had science in it.

ELI

Okay sure. Work. Werk. Anyways, I'm gonna go to him and like admit my love for him. I feel like that's the thing to do. Right?

MARCUS

Sure.

INT./EXT. MARCUS' CAR/MCDONALD'S - DAY

Marcus is pulled up at the speaker.

MARCUS

And two Oreo McFlurries, if the machine's not broken.

MCDONALD'S TEAM MEMBER (V.O.)

Okay, not a problem, it's working. Next window.

ELI

It's working?

MARCUS

It's working.

ELI
How off brand.

LATER

Eli and Marcus continue on their road trip. Eli struggles to open a ketchup packet. Marcus LAUGHS.

ELI
What?

MARCUS
Nothing. Just how you perpetually struggle with everything.

ELI
It is kind of funny. You know, I'm feeling hyped. Eli and Julian. Just like Miley foretold in her "Malibu" song prophecy.

MARCUS
What now?

ELI
He sang "Malibu" to me on a random piano at NYU. Ugh! Why did I have to fuck it up?

Eli finally opens the ketchup packet and it SPILLS on him.

ELI (CONT'D)
And no napkins. I stay losing.

Marcus reaches into the backseat, brings back a shirt.

MARCUS
Here, use Henry's shirt.

ELI
Okay, can we talk about it? Henry choosing NASA over you? Boring.

MARCUS
All I'm going to say is choices.

ELI
I only like NASA when it's their logo on clothing.

MARCUS
Or the Ariana song.

ELI
Taste. Yes.

LATER

Eli finishes off the last of his nuggs.

ELI
I'm just going to tell him,
straight up, gay up, hey I'd be a
shit boyf. I wrote it all down on
the Notes app, like a celebrity
apologizing on Instagram.

Eli finds the note.

ELI (CONT'D)
For starters, I like saying boyf
instead of boyfriend, which is
already a lot, then --

Marcus looks at Eli. A smile washes over him.

ELI (CONT'D)
-- there's the fact that I never
can turn my mind off ever. I never
skip intro on Netflix. What else?
My parents never showed affection
growing up, so I feel I'm very
behind in that area. I get too in
my head and freeze. I become
Disney's "Frozen", but not as
annoying. Don't know how to cook.
Is it ice tea or is it iced tea?

Eli catches Marcus staring at him. Huh.

ELI (CONT'D)
You know, I think forgot my
charger. Can I check my duffel?

Marcus pulls over.

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Marcus opens the trunk. Eli reaches for his duffel. Their
hands touch. They turn and make eye contact. It's deep, it's
different. What are these feels right now? SUPER CLOSE on
Marcus. SUPER CLOSE on Eli.

ELI
Stop.

MARCUS
Absolutely not.

EXT. AUSTIN-BERGSTROM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Marcus is getting his freak on. Shoutout to Missy.

MARCUS
I can't park here, I can't park
here!

ELI
Then don't. You know, I've always
wanted to barrel roll out of a car,
just like that shy nun did near the
end of "Sister Act". Now's my
chance.

Eli nods then barrel rolls out of Marcus' car.

MOMENTS LATER

Eli recreates that running through the terminal moment from
"Home Alone". Don't sue. He speed dials a number and we --

SPLIT SCREEN WITH:

INT. ZIVIT HQ - SAME TIME

We catch Didi between rounds of brie-ing.

ELI
Didi, I'm doing it.

DIDI
Finally downloading the Zivit app?
You know, I can see you haven't
done it yet.

ELI
Okay, I will and that feels a
little cyber police-y. No. I'm at
the airport, seeing Julian. I'm
about to do what you've always
wanted me to do. Secure the dick.
Oh, and the rest of his body too,
obvs.

DIDI
Okay, but lead with the dick.
Promise me you'll lead with the
dick.

ELI
I'm starting to think you should
just invest in a Sean Cody account.

DIDI
And you'd be right. How are you
gonna find him? He's got a Zivit
account. Want me to hack his
coordinates from the backend?

ELI
No. That's cheating. I've gotta
find him on my own.

DIDI
Okay, fuck my advice. Again.

ELI
He reminds me of a pretzel, so
let's lead with that. Warm and --

Eli sees the sign for an Auntie Anne's.

ELI (CONT'D)
I know where he is.

Eli HANGS UP and heads for the sign.

INT. AUNTIE ANNE'S - MOMENTS LATER

Eli spots Julian. He walks over to him. Julian looks up.

ELI
Hey.

JULIAN
Hey.

SUPER CLOSE on Julian. SUPER CLOSE on Eli. "Meant to Be" by
Bebe Rexha and some random yee-yees TAKES US OUT as we...

SMASH TO BLACK.

THE END