

1 INT. PARKED S.U.V. IN THE DRIVEWAY - NIGHT**1**

Clouds have covered the sky so that the moon doesn't shine through. The stars aren't shining, the only thing seen or heard tonight is the heavy winds blowing off the mountains as the storm rolls in.

In the front seat of the car sits a young woman with dirty blonde hair pulled in a low ponytail on the back of her neck. She has an oversized sweatshirt on and glasses on top of her head.

Arabella (26) leans her head against the window with tears streaming down her face. Her face is red from the heavy crying and her SCREAMS are becoming weaker as she loses her voice.

The MUSIC goes off as an incoming phone call rings through the car.

BEGIN INSERT

The touch screen on the stereo now reads Incoming Call Sis.

END INSERT

Arabella hesitates before answering the call.

ARABELLA
(choked up)
What?

LEIGHTON
I saw your story.
(with annoyance)
Are you going to sit in your car and ball your eyes out or come inside and talk about it?

ARABELLA
What is there to talk about?

LEIGHTON
Well people who post stories of them crying on social media, mean they want someone to notice them.

ARABELLA
I don't understand why people pretend to care, and then leave once they have taken what they want from me.

LEIGHTON

(with an attitude)

Well then stop trusting people at the drop of a hat. You let them in, so get rid of them. It's not like you are required to be nice to anyone.

ARABELLA

Why are you being such an ass right now? He left me for his ex, I could be pregnant right now, and all you want to do is be a bitch?

LEIGHTON

(forcefully)

Well, who's fault is that? You saw the red flags and chose to ignore them.

The tears start to stream down Arabella's face again as her sister continues to degrade her.

LEIGHTON

And, for your information, no one forced you to sleep with him after the first date. That's on you. Don't cry because you didn't listen when everyone warned you he was a dick.

ARABELLA

You know what Leighton, you have no idea what is going on. You always assume you know but you don't. So I am going to hang up the phone. Don't expect me to come home anytime soon.

LEIGHTON

Whatever, bitc...

Arabella ends the phone call and the music starts playing through the car speakers once more.

The tears continue falling as she holds her arms tightly against her stomach. The whimpers are heard over the heavy instrumental music playing.

She sniffs and wipes her tears away. She puts the car in reverse and turns out of the driveway.

CUT TO:

Arabella looks to her right as she crosses into South Carolina.

BEGIN INSERT

Her gas tank is almost empty and her phone is at 10%.

END INSERT

So she pulls into a rest stop and digs for her charger in her purse. She finds it and plugs it into the car.

She pulls up her maps and finds the nearest gas station. She hits go on the directions and takes a deep breath.

She buckles her seat belt and drives off.

Her car is empty of anything except her and her purse. But she continues to drive off as the sun continues to rise out on the horizon.

We see the car continue down the highway as the sun brings on a new day.

FADE OUT.

3 INT. UPSCALE BAR- NIGHT

3

TITLE OVER SCREEN: 1 YEAR LATER

Arabella walks through the door in a crimson red, low-cut top and short, black, leather skirt.

Her heels are wrapped up her calves. Her dirty blonde hair is teased out and her make-up is heavy and drawn out with a bold burgundy lip.

She walks up to the main bar and pulls up a seat next to one of the middle-aged gentlemen sitting by himself.

The camera shows the man's left hand wrapped around a glass. There is a gold wedding band on his left finger.

ARABELLA

If you are drinking this early,
there must be a reason.

The man looks up at her and smirks.

KEITH

Something like that. What's a
beautiful woman like you doing by
yourself?

Arabella brushes her hair behind her ear.

ARABELLA
Escaping the real world, same as
yourself I suppose.

KEITH
Is it that obvious?

She lightly throws her head back in mock laughter,

ARABELLA
You could say that.

The camera pans to see a bartender in a black, button-down shirt and a towel over his shoulder, walk over to the couple.

Matthew (30) has rugged brown hair that is pulled back in a ponytail. He has two gages in his ears and a lip piercing. He also has tattoos on his hand and up his arm.

MATTHEW
Can I get you guys anything?

Arabella looks up at him with knowing eyes as she grabs the drink menu and pretends to glance over it.

ARABELLA
A vodka tonic, please.

KEITH
I'll just have another Macallan 18,
thanks.

Matthew nods his head in agreement and walks off.

Arabella looks away before noticing Matthew looking over his shoulder at her, shaking his head.

He fixes their drinks simultaneously and brings them back to where they are sitting.

We see Arabella has her hand on Keith's arm and he has his hand on top of hers. They are both laughing at the conversation and don't notice him putting the drinks in front of them.

He begins to walk off.

KEITH
Sir, actually I'm sorry could we
have the check, please?

MATTHEW

Yes of course. I will be right back.

We see him ring up the drinks and pull the tab for both Arabella and Keith.

He writes a note on hers and then gives the checks to them both.

MATTHEW

Here you are.

He hands Arabella hers separately. They make eye contact quickly but then she looks down at the note.

BEGIN INSERT

Bella,

You left your card here last night. Drinks have already been paid for as well as for yesterday.

Matthew

END INSERT

She quickly swipes her card from under the note and throws it in her purse. She crumples the note and shoves it in her purse as well.

Keith throws some bills on the table and grabs her hand.

KEITH

So your place or mine?

ARABELLA

Hmmm... yours?

She smirks at him and he grabs her by the waist and walks her out of the bar.

MATCH CUT TO:

4 INT. UPSCALE BAR - A FEW MINUTES LATER

4

Matthew shakes his head as he watches Arabella leave with another man.

Cason, an African-American (21) walks behind the bar in his black button-down and slacks. His black hair is twisted and pulled back and his sleeves are rolled up to reveal a tribal band tattoo on his left forearm. He looks at where Matthew is looking and sees Arabella leaving.

CASON

There's a reason everyone calls her
the town's whore.

MATTHEW

(sighs)

Maybe she will learn something one
of these days.

CASON

Why do you care?

MATTHEW

Nevermind. Get the table that just
came in. I need to finish a few
things in the back.

CASON

Sure boss.

Cason walks off as Matthew grabs his phone from behind the
counter and looks at the missed messages from his mother.

He looks worn down but dials her number as he heads to his
back office.

5 INT/EXT. KEITH'S HOUSE - MIDNIGHT

5

Arabella is pulling on her skirt as Keith lies knocked out
over the side of the bed.

She stands up and zips her skirt up slowly until it's back in
place.

She pulls her long hair into a ponytail on the top of her
head and grabs the cash off the side of the nightstand.

She counts the 1000 dollars and stuffs it in her purse before
heading out the door.

She closes the front door and gets her keys from her purse.

DING

She pulls her phone out to have a text from Tati.

BEGIN INSERT

The text reads, 3585 Robin's Spring Dr. Seneca, SC. Be there
in 45 minutes. Pay is 1500!

END INSERT

Arabella opens the door to the SUV and climbs in.

She pulls her hair down and runs her fingers through the messy curls. She gets her red lipstick out and reapplies as well as fixes her eyeliner and mascara.

The camera sees her eyes in the rearview mirror as she pulls off. The music playing over the bass-heavy speakers drowns out the tears that she lets fall slowly down her cheeks; the waterproof mascara and eyeliner staying in place.

6 INT. UPSCALE BAR - EVENING (NEXT DAY)

6

Matthew walks out the back door to drop some of the trash off from the earlier shifts.

He walks out to see an argument between Arabella and some new guy he has never seen before. He looks to be twice her age. Tall, African-American, with a designer black suit on. He has his hand tightly wrapped around Arabella's arm.

Matthew drops the trash at the door and walks to both of them.

MATTHEW

Excuse me! Is there something I can help you with?

NICK

This is none of your business. So leave.

Arabella looks over at him and mouths at him to leave.

MATTHEW

Not going to happen. This is my bar and you are trespassing on private property. Again I ask, do you need something?

Nick takes his hands off Arabella and then straightens out his sports coat.

NICK

Keep messing in Tati's business and she will make sure this bar goes under. You have messed with her girls for the last time.

Matthew takes a more menacing step forward and his hands ball into fists.

MATTHEW

And you can tell Tati I'd like to see her fucking try. Now get the hell off my property before I call the cops and make sure they know who the hell you work for.

(smirking)

I am sure they would love to pick your brains about her.

Nick scoffs but there is worry on his face. He grabs his keys from his pocket and then turns around to walk off.

He looks back at Arabella.

NICK

Don't forget what you owe her. And if she doesn't get it by tomorrow, well you know what will happen.

She nods her head in agreement and crosses her arms as he walks away.

Matthew walks up behind her and she turns to look at him with anger in her eyes.

ARABELLA

(Through gritted teeth)

Do you have any idea what you have done?

MATTHEW

From the looks of it, making sure that asshole didn't hurt you.

ARABELLA

(yelling)

He never would hurt me! He just wants the money for Tati and I almost got him to give me more time!

MATTHEW

At what cost Arabella? When does it stop?

She looks at him with anger and frustration.

ARABELLA

And why do you care? I don't know you and you sure as hell don't know me.

MATTHEW

I know you better than you think.

ARABELLA

Well, then you should know I don't
ask for help.

She brushes past him and walks around the building out of sight.

He shakes his head and rolls his eyes in frustration.

He walks back to the door and goes back inside into the busy bar atmosphere.

The camera tilts down to show the trash still left behind that Matthew had meant to take out.

7 INT. UPSCALE BAR - CLOSING TIME

7

The last call has been made and Arabella is still sitting at the bar holding the last shot she ordered in her hand.

Matthew has already taken her keys and put them in his pocket.

Andrea (35) has her long brown hair braided against her back. She is wearing a black button-down and black slacks uniform. She has a silver cross charm bracelet on her right wrist and a wedding ring on a chain around her neck. She finishes finalizing the deposit and bussing tables when she heads to Matthew.

ANDREA

You want me to talk to her Matty?

Matthew sighs and shakes his head no.

MATTHEW

It's fine Andrea. Go home. I'll deal with the deposit in the morning.

ANDREA

Alright.

She walks toward him and puts her hand on his arm.

ANDREA

Just remember she isn't your sister.

MATTHEW

I know.

She smiles softly at him and leaves the bar, locking the door behind her.

He looks over his shoulder to see Arabella finishing off her final shot. She looks a wreck with her hand in her tousled curls, her mascara is smudged, and her lipstick is barely visible.

He comes up behind her and places a hand on her shoulder startling her.

MATTHEW

I'm sorry, but I need to close up.
Please let me call you a cab this
time Bella.

ARABELLA

I told you to never call me that.
Why you insist on it is beyond me.

ARABELLA

Alright.
(emphasis)
Arabella, please can I call you a
cab.

ARABELLA

No. I am tired of you trying to fix
things for me.

She digs through her purse looking for her keys and phone.

He pulls them out of his pocket in front of her.

MATTHEW

If you are looking for these you
won't get them back until I know you
are sober.

ARABELLA

What are you, my father?! Give me
back my keys and phone!

MATTHEW

Scream all you want, but you are
drunk, and leaving my bar wasted, is
not something I want on my
conscious.

ARABELLA

I don't give a shit about your
conscious. Give me my keys damn it!

She gets up and turns around. She grabs onto the bar to
stable herself. When she reaches for the keys in his hand,
she slips and loses her center of gravity.

He grabs onto her arm before she falls to the ground.

ARABELLA
Get your hands off of me.

MATTHEW
ENOUGH! Damn it, I'm only trying to
help you!

She hits his chest trying to get him to let go but he grabs both of her arms stopping her.

ARABELLA
I don't want your pity, I don't want
your money, and I don't want your
help.

Arabella has tears streaming down her face, her body is shaking from the heavy tears and cries racking her body.

ARABELLA
Please I'll give you whatever you
want, just let me go!

She collapses on the ground as her sobs turn into whimpers and quiet pleas to just let her be. Her head leans against one of the bar stools as her cries slowly fade out to just tears falling softly.

He puts her keys and phone on the counter.

She doesn't fight him this time as he picks her up in his arms.

He walks her to his back office and sets her down gently on the couch.

She turns her face away from him and falls asleep quickly from exhaustion.

He takes her heels off her feet and places them beside the couch. He grabs the blanket off the back of the couch and drapes it over her.

He leaves a small trash can next to her on the floor before heading out.

The camera sees Matthew looking over his shoulder at Arabella once more before leaving. The door is cracked open.

The camera is focused on the glass of water, a bottle of aspirin, a phone, and a set of keys.

The focus shifts to Arabella slowly stirring awake on the couch. She turns over slowly and we see her open her eyes softly.

She slightly smiles when she notices the water and aspirin on the side table next to her.

Her phone buzzes and she sees 5 missed calls and a dozen messages that were never answered.

She puts her hand against the back of the couch and slowly sits up.

The nausea is noticeable on her face as she pulls in a DEEP BREATH.

She grabs the water and bottle of aspirin, takes two, and sips on the water slowly.

Her eyes cut to the door as Matthew walks into the office with a plate of toast and scrambled eggs.

MATTHEW

Good Morning.

ARABELLA

Hey.

MATTHEW

I brought you something to eat.
Should help you with the hangover.

He sets it next to her on the side table and then sits in the desk chair across from her.

MATTHEW

Are you okay, Arabella?

She sits up a little taller, her eyes harden and her shoulders tense up.

ARABELLA

I'll be fine.

MATTHEW

I am not casting judgment. Heaven only knows what I have done. But, breaking down on my bar floor, having a man threaten you because of money, none of this is sitting right to me.

ARABELLA

It's not your concern. If need be, I won't come back again.

Matthew sighs in frustration as he turns in the chair. He rests his arms on his legs.

MATTHEW

That's not what I am saying. God, Arabella, I know you are in trouble and you won't let me help. It's killing me.

Arabella gives him a strange look as she raises her eyebrows in distrust.

ARABELLA

You don't even know me. And I told you before, I don't want your pity. Just forget I was ever here.

He chuckles to himself. She gets irritated and grabs her heels. She grabs her phone and keys, not touching the breakfast Matthew sat down for her.

MATTHEW

I know you are only saying that because you don't trust me.

ARABELLA

You know nothing.

MATTHEW

Actually, I do. Do you think you are the only person who knows what it's like to run?

ARABELLA

Why do you assume I am running?

MATTHEW

As I said, I know what running looks like.

He stands up from his chair and put his hands in his pockets.

MATTHEW

And if it's any consolation, I don't think any less of you.

ARABELLA

(mumbling)
You don't know what I have done.

MATTHEW

And you don't know what I've done.
But if I can help then I want to.
Because I know what it is like to
feel like the world has turned its
back on you.

Arabella turns back to face him; her eyes glistening with
tears. She holds them back and wipes at her eyes.

ARABELLA

I don't know what to say. No one can
really help me. I got myself into
this. It's my mess to fix, not
yours.

Matthew goes to the desk and pulls out the key from the top
drawer.

He then goes to the bottom drawer and unlocks it. He pulls
out 3 stacks of hundred-dollar bills.

MATTHEW

How much do you owe her?

ARABELLA

(confused)

Why does it matter? I will always
owe Tati.

MATTHEW

I lost my sister to that woman's
greed and manipulation. I won't let
that happen to you too.

Arabella's eyes open wide.

ARABELLA

Lily? She was your sister?

MATTHEW

Yeah. If it's all the same to you
I'd rather not bring it up again
after today.

ARABELLA

I'm so sorry Matthew.

MATTHEW

It's not your fault.
(clears his throat)
Now, how much?

ARABELLA

I can't take any money from you. I already owe Tati, I can't owe you too.

Matthew just puts the stacks of bills in her hand and closes her hand around the bills.

MATTHEW

Want to pay me back? Then get the hell away from Tati and that life before it's too late.

ARABELLA

I won't have anywhere to go. She knows that. If I pay her and leave then I will be homeless, with no job, no money, and no family.

(softly)

Matthew, I can't.

She has finally let a tear slip from her eye. She lightly kisses his cheek before putting the money back in his hand.

As she turns and leaves out the door, Matthew quickly follows.

MATTHEW

What if you stay here?

She turns around quickly.

ARABELLA

What are you talking about?

MATTHEW

There is a small studio above the bar. I lived there when I moved out of my mom's house.

He stands in front of her again. She lifts her chin up to find his gaze.

MATTHEW

You can stay there and work as one of our servers until you save up enough for a place of your own. I need an extra hand on the weekdays.

ARABELLA

Why are you offering me this?

MATTHEW

(softly)

Everyone deserves a second chance,
even you.

(clears throat)

Anyways, you need a place to stay
and I need some extra help around
here. As long as you work then you
won't feel like some kept woman.
Lily would have wanted this too.

Arabella smiles softly and looks off like she is lost in a
memory.

MATTHEW

So... do we have a deal?

Arabella puts her stuff down on the chair next to her and
looks at Matthew's outstretched hand.

ARABELLA

I will shake your hand on two
conditions.

MATTHEW

Name them.

ARABELLA

One, I am not doing this to clear
your conscious and I am not doing
this because I want your pity.

(speaking quietly)

Lily was my friend when I had no one
in my corner. I promised her I would
take care of myself.

Matthew crosses his arms tightly against his chest. The worry
lines on his forehead are prominent. He looks like he is
holding back tears.

MATTHEW

What's the second?

ARABELLA

(smirking)

Stop calling me Bella. Do I look
like I should be in Twilight?

Matthew laughs wholeheartedly and she joins in with her
laughing so hard her eyes are watering. They look relaxed and
Arabella has a genuine smile on her face.

MATTHEW

You have a deal, Arabella.

She shakes her head in acknowledgment and the camera inserts to show the two hands coming together in a handshake.

MATCH CUT TO:

9 INT. UPSCALE BAR - CLOSING TIME - NIGHT

9

Arabella and Matthew are doing their handshake in front of Cason and Andrea. However, Matthew continuously screws up the backhand part.

ANDREA

(laughing)

Y'all have been working on this for six months. I am convinced you do this on purpose Matty.

MATTHEW

I don't I swear. I am just too old for this!

ARABELLA

I am only 3 years younger than you!

CASON

So does that mean y'all are both old? Because I am only 21.

ARABELLA/MATTHEW/ANDREA

Shut up Cason!

They all laugh together as they go back to cleaning up the rest of the bar.

Andrea, Matthew, and Arabella are behind the bar restocking the liquor and cleaning glasses while Cason is wiping all the tables down.

ANDREA

Oh, Matty, my son has a performance for school next Friday night. I am going to be leaving an hour early.

MATTHEW

Cool. We hired a few more hands that start Monday night so Cason and I should be able to handle it by then.

Arabella looks at him with mock offense.

ARABELLA

Hey! What about me?

MATTHEW

You have class Friday, remember?

She rolls her eyes at him.

ARABELLA

I can skip it.

CASON

Skip what?

ARABELLA

This class Matty is forcing me to take. I told him I don't need it but he's being a dad again.

ANDREA

Ari, you need it. You want to work with the kids, don't you?

ARABELLA

I haven't made up my mind yet.

Matthew clears his throat and the three look at him.

MATTHEW

Whether you make up your mind or not, having CPR and First Aid training is good for anyone to know. Cason and Andrea will have to take it soon as well.

CASON

Wait for what?

ANDREA

Matty and I agreed that it's good for all our staff to have their licenses in case an emergency arises.

Cason rolls his eyes and Arabella laughs at him.

ARABELLA

Gotta love having helicopter parents as your manager and CEO!

MATTHEW

Yes, love the fact we care about y'all.

She smiles up at him and he lightly pats her back in reassurance.

MATTHEW

Alright, let's lock up. I am sure we have better things to do on a Sunday night.

Andrea looks over at Matthew when he says that to see him giving Arabella a knowing look in his eyes.

He catches her staring and she raises her eyebrow in question.

He leans against the bar and shakes his head at her.

She nods in understanding as she walks behind Cason to the front door to lock up.

CASON

Goodnight y'all!

ARABELLA

Night!

As the door closes and the ALARM IS SET the camera cuts back to see Arabella sitting at the main bar opening up her notebook and laptop.

Matthew is sitting next to her helping her work through the math questions in her Calculus One textbook.

BEGIN INSERT

A.) A calculus problem is written out on graph paper. There is also a graphing calculator and protractor.

B.) Matthew's hand is drawing out the problem.

C.) Arabella is putting the formula in the calculator.

END INSERT

CUT TO:

10 INT/EXT. PARKING LOT/UPSCALE BAR - NOON

10

Matthew pulls into the parking lot of the bar.

He grabs his phone to see a missed call from Arabella as well as an SOS text message.

He texts her back: I'm out front. Be in, in a sec.

The DING as she texts him back is heard as he exits the car and walks to the front door.

He puts the key into the door only to turn it and see it has been unlocked.

Going inside, he locks the door behind him and goes to the back office.

Arabella is sitting on the couch with her head in her hands.

She lifts her head up when he enters. She is in an oversized Niagra Falls T-shirt and shorts. Her long hair has fallen softly down her back. Her eyes are red from crying and she looks like she hasn't slept.

MATTHEW

What happened?

Arabella opens up her phone to show a text message from her mother. "Memaw passed away in hospice care last night."

ARABELLA

She's gone. The only person who truly believed in me is dead.

MATTHEW

I am so sorry.

Matthew sits next to her on the couch. She curls into his side as he holds her and cries into his shoulder.

Her cries are silent, but he holds her tightly as he feels her grip on his shirt tightened.

MATTHEW

Do you need anything?

She turns her head away from his shoulder and tries to pull herself together. She pulls her hair on top of her head and wipes the tears and sleep from her eyes.

ARABELLA

(sniffing and coughing
back tears)

I don't know how I will do it, but I need to go to her funeral. It's on Friday. Could you reschedule my test for me?

MATTHEW

Yeah. But you know that's not what I meant. Do you need me, Arabella?

ARABELLA

You have done more than enough.

She turns around to face him and cuts him off before he can counter her argument.

ARABELLA

Don't let Cason or Andrea know either. Promise you will keep this to yourself.

MATTHEW

I promise. But know they love you and will want to make sure you are okay too.

ARABELLA

(slightly smiling)

I know. But I have to do this on my own.

Matthew stands up and gives her a tight hug that she accepts gratefully.

MATTHEW

When do you need to leave?

ARABELLA

In a few hours. It's an 8-hour drive.

Matthew pulls the keys out of his pocket and hands them to Arabella.

MATTHEW

Take the truck. I'll feel better if you are making the drive with a four-wheel drive.

She smiles at him and grabs her keys from the desk.

ARABELLA

I guess that means you get to keep my baby for a few days. Just don't crash her okay?

Matthew rolls his eyes as she drops the keys into his open palm.

MATTHEW

So just run her through the mud and scatch up the paint? Got it!

She smacks his shoulder hard.

ARABELLA

You are such an ass sometimes.

He just laughs as she leaves and heads upstairs.

He checks his phone and pulls up Arabella's contact.

BEGIN INSERT

Her contact reads Bella.

END INSERT

Clicking on her profile he sees that they are still sharing locations with each other.

With that in mind, Matthew texts Andrea and lets her know that they will be short this weekend before going to his desk and starting his work for the day.

11 EXT. PARKING LOT OUTSIDE OF THE BAR - DAY

11

Arabella is putting her suitcase in the back of the truck while Matthew brings out a case of water and some food for her drive.

He sets the food and water in the back seat and then walks around to see her before she climbs in and leaves.

He hugs her tightly.

MATTHEW

Text me when you get to the hotel,
okay?

ARABELLA

I will. Thanks for getting the hotel
for me.

(pauses)

I don't know if I am ready to face
everyone. They all know what I
became.

MATTHEW

Arabella look at me, please.

He pulls away from her so they can make eye contact.

MATTHEW

Your going back already shows how
strong you are.

ARABELLA

I am going for Memaw. She was my
everything; no matter how much I
disappointed her.

MATTHEW

Did she ever say that to you?

ARABELLA

Well no but I can just tell.

He grabs her hand with his.

MATTHEW

I think your Memaw would be so proud
of how far you have come. I also
think your family misses you more
than you realize.

She smiles softly but looks away at the open road. Her mind
is elsewhere.

He pulls her in for one more hug.

MATTHEW

I'll let you leave with this: "You
are braver than you believe,
stronger than you seem, and smarter
than you think."

Arabella laughs out loud and so does Matthew.

ARABELLA

No, you did not just quote Pooh
Bear.

MATTHEW

For your information, it was
Christopher Robin!

She hops in the truck and he shuts the door behind her.

She rolls down the window and starts blasting the music.

MATTHEW

Be safe!

ARABELLA

Always!

She pulls out of the parking lot and he watches until she
hits the main road.

He checks his phone and pulls up her location and sees it is
still sharing.

His shoulders relax and he turns to head inside the bar.

12 INT. BACK OFFICE - MIDNIGHT**12**

Andrea walks in to see Matthew sitting at his desk texting away while not realizing she came into the room.

She knocks on the door and he looks up to see her raising an eyebrow at him.

ANDREA

Did she make it?

MATTHEW

A few hours ago. She said she will be back in a few days.

Andrea hums before going to the safe and dropping the money and deposit in.

She goes to the couch and sits down.

ANDREA

So when are you going to admit you are in love with Ari?

His eyes go wide and Andrea just smirks.

MATTHEW

You can't be serious.

ANDREA

We have known each other for how long? You don't think I know you better than you know yourself.

MATTHEW

Whether you know me or not, I didn't ask for a therapist nor did I ask for your opinion.

ANDREA

And last time I checked, I never wait for you to ask for my opinion, I just give it.

He side-eyes her and she leans back and places her hands in her lap.

The silence is deafening and Andrea just keeps looking at him until he relents.

MATTHEW

Alright fine! Yes, I love her. But that doesn't matter. I'd never cross that line.

ANDREA

(sighs)

I get that. But I think she may love you back.

He looks confused and Andrea chuckles at him being oblivious.

ANDREA

For someone who is so successful, you can be so clueless about what is in front of you.

MATTHEW

Even if you were right, she doesn't need me like that. She needs a big brother and best friend, she doesn't need me to love her in that way.

ANDREA

One, who are you to say what she needs? And two, that may be true but if you aren't honest with yourself soon, Ari isn't going to be the one that ends up getting hurt.

Matthew leans back in his chair and runs his hands over his face with anxiety written all over his face.

MATTHEW

Hasn't she been hurt enough?

ANDREA

(with no hesitation)

Haven't you?

He looks back at her and she softly smiles at him.

ANDREA

If you choose to go check on her, I can run the bar for a few days. I have done it before.

MATTHEW

She said she needs to do this on her own.

ANDREA

Well, I don't know what happened, but no one should have to go through life's curveballs alone.

MATTHEW

No, especially not Bella.

She places a hand on his shoulder and he looks up at her.

ANDREA

The fact you call her Bella says it all.

She goes to the office door and opens it up and nods her head towards the entrance.

ANDREA

Matty, go. You will regret it if you don't.

He gets up and hugs her tight before kissing the top of her head.

MATTHEW

What would I do without you?

ANDREA

(laughing)

This bar wouldn't run, you wouldn't have your driver's license, Cason wouldn't work for us...

MATTHEW

(rolls his eyes)

Ok, forget I asked.

She laughs as he grabs his keys and wallet off the counter.

MATTHEW

Thanks, Drea!

ANDREA

You're Welcome! Now be safe and text me when you get there!

MATTHEW

I will. I'll stop when I get tired and I'll pick up an energy shot before I hit the state line.

He checks his silver wristwatch. It's 2 am.

MATTHEW

I should make it there around 11.

ANDREA

I'll lock up behind you.

He hugs her again quickly before leaving.

CUT TO:

13 INT. PARKED SUV - MOMENTS LATER**13**

Matthew pulls up the location services and sees Arabella's location still being shared with him.

He opens up the GPS and turns on the radio. He is surprised to hear Jazz music coming through the speakers.

The radio is showing that the CD player is running.

Instead of changing it he presses go on the GPS and pulls out of the parking lot. His face is relaxed but his knuckles are grasped tightly around the steering wheel.

His nerves are obvious as he drives away.

Once the Georgia border comes into view, worry is evident on his face.

BEGIN INSERT

Welcome to Georgia Sign.

END INSERT

The camera pans from the sign to show the SUV crossing the state line.

14 EXT. GRAVEYARD - SUNSET**14**

Matthew pulls into the parking lot dressed in his suit. He has his coat slung over his arm and his sunglasses on top of his head. He has a bouquet of yellow tulips in his other arm.

He reads the message from Arabella from earlier.

The funeral visitation pamphlet has the address of where her Memaw would be buried.

He sees her standing with her arms crossed against her chest. She is alone as the funeral ended over an hour ago. Her curls are falling softly down her back. The black dress is flowing gently with the slight breeze. She has sunglasses on hiding her eyes.

He takes a deep breath before heading over to her.

He walks up to her without acknowledging her and places the flowers on the top of the dirt where she was laid to rest. There is not a tombstone present yet.

ARABELLA

What are you doing here?

MATTHEW

I had a feeling you would need
someone.

He looks back at her and she has pulled her sunglasses on top
of her head. Her face is void of makeup and her eyes are red
from crying.

ARABELLA

You brought her tulips.

MATTHEW

You said they were her favorite.

ARABELLA

Yeah.

She closes her eyes and a tear slips down her cheek.

Matthew takes her hand in his and she squeezes tightly in
thanks.

MATTHEW

I know this may be stupid to ask,
but are you okay?

ARABELLA

(breathes deeply)
Honestly, I don't know.

He waits as she tries to find the words to say to him.

ARABELLA

She's gone and isn't coming back. I
just want to hear her laugh one more
time.

MATTHEW

When Lily died all I wanted was to
see her smile again.

She lays her head on his shoulder. They stand hand in hand
for a few minutes, silently leaning on the other for support.

MATTHEW

Is everything okay with your family?

She nods softly.

ARABELLA

You were right, they aren't angry or
disappointed in me.
(she wipes her eyes
softly)

I told them I wasn't staying for long. My mom invited me for Christmas and said I was welcome anytime.

MATTHEW

That's good, right?

She shrugs her shoulders in response.

ARABELLA

I think so. I just don't consider this home anymore and I don't want my mom to convince me to come back. I left for a reason. I don't want to stay here.

MATTHEW

Then tell her that. I am sure she will understand that you have grown up and found a fresh start.

ARABELLA

You don't know my mother.

MATTHEW

True. How about taking it one day at a time? First, start with Christmas and go from there.

She hugs him tightly.

MATTHEW

I am so proud of you. Your memaw would be proud of you too.

ARABELLA

Thanks for always knowing what to say.

She lets him go and leans down to kiss her hand and place it on top of the flowers left in her Memaw's place.

ARABELLA

I need to get back to the hotel. I have a long drive back.

She raises her eyebrow at him.

ARABELLA

Speaking of the long drive, when did you get here?

MATTHEW

I got here around 11 this morning.

ARABELLA

I didn't send you her pamphlet with the address on it until 12 or 1 today?

MATTHEW

We have been sharing locations for a while now.

ARABELLA

(smiling)

I forgot about that.

Matthew starts walking with Arabella back to the cars. They get to the truck and she turns to face him.

ARABELLA

Thank you for coming.

MATTHEW

Anytime.

ARABELLA

Want your truck back?

MATTHEW

Nah, I said you could drive it till you got back!

She laughs softly and grabs his hand in her own.

ARABELLA

Did I mention your the best?

MATTHEW

What are friends for?

ARABELLA

Stop stealing my lines!

MATTHEW

(rolls his eyes)

Whatever. Wanna grab some food?

ARABELLA

As long as it's not fast food then yes!

He laughs before opening the truck door for her and closing it behind her.

He walks to the SUV and hops in.

They drive off as the camera focuses on some yellow tulips sitting atop a headstone while the truck and SUV fade off.

FADE TO BLACK:

15 INT. ARABELLA AND MATTHEW'S HOUSE - CHRISTMAS MORNING 15

TITLE OVER SCREEN: 2 YEARS LATER

Matthew, Arabella, Cason, Andrea, Andrea's son Oliver, Leighton, Arabella's mom and dad, and Matthew's mom are sitting around the Christmas tree.

Little Raven is sitting on Matthew's lap opening presents while the rest of the family cheers as she gets happy ripping open the wrapping paper.

Arabella kisses Matthew softly and kisses Raven's cheek before heading to the kitchen.

As she passes the Christmas tree the lights start blinking from white to colored lights spontaneously.

ARABELLA
(whispers)
Merry Christmas Memaw and Lily.

Arabella looks back at her family as they laugh at the tree lights changing colors.

She lets a tear slide down her cheek as she feels a warmth wash over her.

BEGIN INSERT

The camera focuses above the fireplace to the mantle where there is a photograph of Lily and Matthew as well as Arabella and her Memaw.

END INSERT

The lights continue flashing as everyone goes back to opening presents.

Matthew looks at Arabella and smiles softly.

ARABELLA
(mouthing)
I love you.

MATTHEW
(mouthing)
I love you too.

The camera follows Arabella into the kitchen and fades out as the yellow tulips on the counter come into focus.

ROLLING CREDITS AS THE TULIPS STAY IN FOCUS. IN THE BACKGROUND WE SEE ARABELLA COOKING IN THE KITCHEN.

FADE OUT

