

RUBY; OR
THE INCALCULABLE SCIENCE OF FINDING LOVE

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY

It's raining. A college campus soaked with wet, rain filling the gutters of class buildings and pouring over walkways as college students mill about.

Raindrops patter as they hit the ground, roll off umbrellas and splash into puddles. "Hold the Line" by Toto plays in the background as cartoonish opening titles play.

We settle on a large puddle at the base of a staircase. A few pairs of feet try to avoid stepping in it. Some jump over it, others go around it.

SUPER: "September."

A pair of burgundy, tattered Converse high tops come down the stairs, they pause on the last step. Beat. They jump into the puddle, splashing water everywhere.

The shoes belong to a girl, RUBY (20, short, small, short brown hair with rose-gold ends) she wears an oversized brown leather jacket and headphones.

She has a hood on, but doesn't seem to care she's getting rained on.

Her expression is neutral. She nears the entrance to the campus bookstore. As she approaches the door, a couple stops in front of it to share a kiss. She rolls her eyes and waits for them to finish.

Their kiss turns into a full on make out, she frowns uncomfortably and tries to go around them. They shift, blocking the door further.

She uncomfortably keeps trying to get by, they slam into her.

SUPER: "Ruby"

INT. BOOKSTORE - MOMENTS LATER

The bookstore is filled with school merchandise.

Ruby walks around the store, still listening to music, she feels a t-shirt, rubbing the fabric between her fingers.

She goes to the back of the store, she finds a notebook on the shelf.

She flips through it, looks over both her shoulders to see if anyone is watching. She takes a deep sniff of the pages then quickly puts it back on the shelf.

INT. THE KORE

The Kore is a cafeteria that has several different eating options in it.

Ruby gets on line for a sandwich place, headphones still on. She bops along to her music, completely content with the fact that she's alone.

INT. THE KORE DINING ROOM

The dining room of the Kore is a large room with massive windows and art all over the walls. The room is filled with tables, people sit at them, eating with friends.

Ruby sits alone at a table in the back corner, munches on her sandwich, bops to her music.

Across the Kore Ruby notices a COUPLE cuddling on a couch. She watches them.

The guy kisses the girl on the nose, she smiles and hits him playfully. They both giggle and continue to cuddle.

Ruby glares at them and makes a loud, fake gagging noise.

The guy at the table next to her gives her a concerned and grossed-out look. She looks around awkwardly, continues eating her sandwich.

The song is still playing.

INT. ART GALLERY

A small on-campus art gallery houses abstract paintings and sculptures.

Ruby stands with her hands in her pockets and stares up at a large, dark abstract painting with strokes of white and grey intertwined with darkness.

Her eyes are wide as she looks at it, takes it in.

INT. RUBY'S BEDROOM - LATER

Ruby lives in an apartment on campus, her room is a double. Her decor is odd, such as classic rock posters, fairy lights, and curse words made of pipe cleaners hanging on the walls.

She enters her room and puts down her bag. On her desk sits a 3.5 Gallon fish tank, which houses a red betta fish. As she goes to remove her headphones she notices the tank is dirty.

INT. CAMPUS CONVENIENCE STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby stands at the counter of the campus convenience store with three gallons of water sitting in front of her. The CASHIER eyes her confusedly.

She smiles awkwardly and holds out her card.

EXT. WEIT PATH - DUSK

Weit is a small apartment complex on campus where Ruby lives, it's quaint and tucked into the woods.

It's no longer raining and the sun is beginning to set, Ruby trudges along lugging the heavy water containers with her. Her backpack suddenly busts open, one of the waters falls out of it and explodes when it hits the ground.

Ruby stares at it blankly. Beat. She lets out a high pitched, frustrated screech.

The song is still playing.

INT. WALTER'S APARTMENT COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Walter's apartment is extremely cramped and messy. Ruby sits with a small group of four other college students there, all laughing and having a good time.

Ruby sits between WALTER (20, tall, bearded, glasses, Star Wars t-shirt) and Alice (20, short, black hair, bangs) on a couch. SAFIYA (19, short, confident, Indo-Caribbean) sits on the floor holding a cup of tea.

They all laugh as RYAN (20, squirrely, crazy hair, flannel shirt) stands at the front of the room playing guitar and seemingly improvising a song, although we can't hear what he's saying.

EXT. WALTER'S APARTMENT - LATER

Alice, Safiya, and Ruby leave the apartment, it's clearly pretty late at night. They part ways, wave goodbye. Ruby puts her headphones on and heads for the woods.

EXT. WOODS

The woods are dark and thick with trees, leaves coat the ground as it's the beginning of fall.

Ruby sits on the ground in a small clearing, she's made a small campfire. She rummages through her bag and pulls out a few loose pieces of paper, she sticks them in the fire, watches them burn.

There's satisfaction in her eyes as the flames slowly creep over the surface of the pages, turning them to ash.

Flames reflect in her irises as she watches it go up. She sighs.

INT. THE STACKS - LATER

The Stacks is a section of the college library. White walls and white carpeting, there are large bookcases filled with books lined up in rows up and down the space. There are "Silent Zone" signs everywhere.

Ruby walks slowly down the rows of bookshelves, hands in the pockets of her jacket.

The music playing in the background slowly fades out.

She takes a hand out of her pocket and feels the books as she passes them. Stops to look at one of them. She pulls a lighter out of her pocket, examines it, looks at the book. She puts the lighter back into her pocket.

RUBY (V.O.)

Sometimes when I'm walking around
the library, I think about how easy
it'd be to just burn the whole
place down.

INT. THE KORE DINING ROOM - DAY

It's the next day, Safiya sits across from Ruby at a table in the Kore, a sandwich in her hand and her mouth agape.

SAFIYA
Dude, what?!

Ruby puts her hands up defensively.

RUBY
Hey, I'd never actually do it. It's just... I don't know with all the books and stuff, it'd go up like a Molotov Cocktail, that's all I'm sayin.

Safiya is amused, she looks around, wondering if anyone else is hearing this shit. No one notices them.

SAFIYA
Bro!

Ruby shakes her head and raises her eyebrows.

RUBY
I'm just kidding.

Safiya shakes her head.

RUBY
(to herself)
Mostly...

Safiya puts down her sandwich and looks around.

SAFIYA
You are something else.

RUBY
Yeah, I get that a lot.

Walter and Alice, who are a couple, enter the Kore. They wave to Safiya and Ruby, then stop to talk to some friends by the entrance. They hold hands and act cute, Walter kisses Alice on the head.

SAFIYA
Walter and Alice are here.

RUBY
Ugh.

SAFIYA
Hey!

RUBY
Don't get me wrong, I love them to pieces.

She glances at them, arms wrapped around each other.

RUBY
I just hate couples.

SAFIYA
You're just bitter because you're
not in one.

RUBY
That is correct!

Ruby stabs her fork aggressively into her salad.

SAFIYA
I don't understand why you don't
just join Tinder, man.

RUBY
Because, it scares me.

Safiya scrolls through her Tinder matches, looking them over
as she speaks.

SAFIYA
It's really not that bad, I mean
like yeah I get disgusting messages
from dudes sometimes, but like you
just gotta sift.

Ruby is skeptical.

RUBY
(deadpan)
Sounds like a hoot.

SAFIYA
You complain all the time that
you're single, dude, but you never
want to do anything about it.

RUBY
I know exactly what I'm doing about
it.

SAFIYA
And what's that?

RUBY
Waiting for Prince Charming to show
up with my glass sneaker.

SAFIYA
I'm pretty sure it's a slipper,
dude.

RUBY
Slippers are, like, super
impractical.

SAFIYA
Is a glass shoe not inherently
impractical?

RUBY
No, exactly. If the shoe's made of
glass, it better at least have arch
support.

Safiya considers this. Ryan plops down in the seat next to
Ruby, a take out box of food in his hands.

RYAN
What's up dudes?!

SAFIYA
Hey Ryan.

RYAN
What are we talking about over
here?

Safiya puts her phone down on the table, Tinder still open on
the screen. Ruby stares at the phone, her expression still
neutral.

SAFIYA
We're talking about Tinder.

RYAN
Oh. I fuckin' hate Tinder, it
fuckin' sucks.

SAFIYA
Thank you for that.

INT. SOCIOLOGY CLASS - LATER

Students are straggling into the small sociology classroom at
the back of the library.

Ruby makes her way into the room, chooses a desk at the front
of the room. She settles into her seat, puts out her notebook
and scrolls through social media on her phone.

EVAN (20, ginger, bearded, stalky) walks into the room and passes Ruby's desk. Ruby notices him, watches as he goes to the other side of the room and sits down.

The PROFESSOR (40, tall, jet black hair, covered in tattoos) enters the room, her heels clacking intimidatingly on the ground. The energy of the room shifts as she enters, students quiet down, lend her their attention.

Ruby removes her earbuds and puts her phone away.

PROFESSOR
Good afternoon, everyone.

She puts her stuff down and stands at the front, she's intimidating and serious.

PROFESSOR
Let's just jump right into it,
shall we? Who can summarize this
week's textbook reading for me?

No one raises their hand, she scans over the room.

PROFESSOR
Oh come on, you're gonna make me
pick on someone?

Ruby sinks down in her seat, tries to disappear. The professor taps Evan's desk, he looks up at her, nervous.

PROFESSOR
Let's hear it.

Evan swallows hard.

EVAN
I um... I didn't do the reading.

The room is silent, everyone is either afraid for this boy or happy they're not him. Ruby watches nervously.

PROFESSOR
And why not?

EVAN
Uuuuuuh, I didn't buy the textbook
yet.

Ruby looks on nervously, still trying to disappear.

PROFESSOR
And why would you not have the
textbook yet?
(MORE)

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

We're three weeks into the semester. Did I not make it clear that you'd be required to do all readings for this class?

EVAN

I mean--

PROFESSOR

This is not a class that you can bullshit.

She turns to the entire class.

PROFESSOR

Readings for this class are mandatory. If you cannot handle that, then I suggest you withdraw from this course.

She turns back to Evan.

PROFESSOR

Purchase the textbook directly after class ends today, or withdraw. Your choice.

Ruby's eyes are wide as she silently freaks out.

EXT. LIBRARY - LATER

Ruby races down the steps of the library, fearful.

RUBY

(under her breath)

Shit. Shit. Shit. Shit. Shit. Shit.

INT. BOOKSTORE

Ruby tears into the bookstore and heads straight for the textbook section. She looks around frantically, scanning the signs for the word "Sociology." She finds it in the back and heads straight for it.

The shelf is empty. She pulls at her hair, looking all around for a book but there are none in sight.

At the front of the store, the doors open with a DING as Evan stumbles into the building.

Ruby notices him, returns to looking for the book.

Evan approaches the Sociology section, he's just as frantic as she is. He's distraught when he realizes there are no books left.

EVAN
What the fuuuuuck??

Ruby looks at him for a second, contemplates speaking.

RUBY
If they don't have this sociology textbook I'm dropping out of college.

Evan laughs.

EVAN
I know right?? That bitch is terrifying!

RUBY
I felt so bad for you while she was chewing your out.

EVAN
I almost shat my pants, I'm not even kidding.

Ruby laughs, avoids eye contact as she continues searching. Evan watches her.

RUBY
I almost did too and she wasn't even yelling at me. I'm honestly surprised you didn't.

Evan leans on the empty shelf, still watching Ruby.

EVAN
I honestly wanna drop this class because she's terrifying, but I can't because it's my major.

The shelf creaks, Evan jumps back. Ruby smirks.

RUBY
Yeah, that's kind of important then.

A store EMPLOYEE walks passed, Evan stops him.

EVAN
Aye, do you guys have a uh Sociology textbook?

The guy thinks for a moment.

EMPLOYEE
(monotonous)
It's not right here?

EVAN
Nope, as you can see this shelf is significantly empty.

The employee sighs and turns on his heel.

EMPLOYEE
I'll go check the back.

Ruby and Evan stand in silence, Ruby clearly wants to talk to him and doesn't know what to say.

EVAN
So, are you a soc major too?

Ruby shakes her head.

RUBY
Creative writing.

EVAN
Whaaaat? That's awesome! What are you doing in sociology?

RUBY
It's a gen ed, I'm not terribly excited about it but I mean it could be worse.

EVAN
Yeah no it sucks.

RUBY
Then why is it your major?

EVAN
Guess I enjoy putting myself through torture.

Ruby nods.

RUBY
Sounds like fun.

The employee returns with a box of sociology text books. He hands one to Evan.

EVAN
Thank you, my good man.

He turns to Ruby.

EVAN
I'm Evan by the way.

He extends his hand for a shake. Ruby looks at it, but doesn't shake it.

RUBY
Ruby. I don't shake.

Evan smirks and wipes the back of his head.

EVAN
It was nice to meet you, Ruby who doesn't shake.

He looks down at the book.

EVAN
Let's hope this thing isn't too expensive.

He walks to the front and goes to pay for the book.

Ruby watches him go, raises an eyebrow with intrigue.

The employee is putting the books on the shelf.

EMPLOYEE
You need one of these?

Ruby snaps out of her trance.

RUBY
Yes please.

The employee hands her one. Evan yells at her from the front of the store.

EVAN
It's really fuckin' expensive!

Ruby smiles, the sound of the front door CLOSING is heard.

INT. SAFIYA'S COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Safiya lives in an on campus apartment. The floors are carpeted and the furniture is worn, embellished with the college's logo.

Safiya and Ruby sit on the couches on their laptops under strings of fairy lights. They're both on their laptops, working quietly on homework.

Safiya scrunches her face. Ruby looks up from her screen.

RUBY

You good?

Safiya tilts her head back and groans.

SAFIYA

I don't wanna do this!

RUBY

Yo me either!

SAFIYA

I want a cookie.

RUBY

You should get a cookie.

Safiya stares at her computer screen for a beat. She looks up at Ruby.

EXT. WEIT - MOMENTS LATER

Safiya and Ruby make their way down the path, both wearing coats.

SAFIYA

It's cold.

RUBY

I know.

They walk quickly, nod hello to a group of people as they pass them and head across the quad.

INT. SCIENCE BUILDING

The science building is empty and dim, a few motion sensor lights snap on as the girls make their way down the hallway and stop at a vending machine.

Safiya inserts a couple dollars into the vending machine and a chocolate chip cookie dispenses from the machine.

INT. SCIENCE BUILDING SEATING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

The girls sit in a small couch area under tremendous windows. They eat their cookies.

RUBY
I met a cute boy today.

Safiya looks over at her, cocks her eyebrow.

SAFIYA
Oh?

Ruby nods.

SAFIYA
Go on.

RUBY
It's nothing big, we talked for a couple minutes in the bookstore.

SAFIYA
Does he have a name?

RUBY
Evan.

SAFIYA
Where's he live?

RUBY
I don't know.

SAFIYA
Tell me what happened.

Ruby crumbles up the rapper of her cookie and places it on the seat next to her.

RUBY
He's in my sociology class, we bonded in the bookstore over being scared of the professor.

Safiya nods.

SAFIYA
Alright. He have a last name? Because I could get you his whole life story by tomorrow morning.

Ruby shakes her head.

RUBY

Nah, I don't know it. But I wouldn't wanna stalk his whole life just yet even if I did.

SAFIYA

But you said he was cute, right?

Ruby shrugs.

RUBY

Yeah. He smelled like a pine tree.

Safiya raises an eyebrow at Ruby.

RUBY

I like pine trees.

SAFIYA

When did you smell him?

RUBY

He was standing next to me. I have strong nostrils.

SAFIYA

You're so weird.

RUBY

Yes.

They sit in silence, eat their cookies. Beat.

SAFIYA

I give it a week before you have a crush on him.

INT. SOCIOLOGY CLASS - DAY

A week has passed. Students stream into the sociology class, most look tired or bored.

The Professor stands at the front of the room, checking names off in the attendance book.

Ruby enters wearing her signature burgundy high tops and headphones. She takes a seat in the front row near the door.

She rifles through her things, setting a notebook and pen on her desk.

Evan enters, wearing headphones and sunglasses. He takes a seat behind Ruby, she pretends not to notice him.

He takes off his headphones and smirks at her, taps her on the shoulder with his pen.

Ruby turns around, removing her headphones.

RUBY
Oh, hey.

EVAN
Do the reading?

Ruby's eyes shift to the professor, then back to Evan. She smirks and shakes her head "no." Evan grins.

EVAN
Yeah, me neither.

Ruby grins.

EVAN
I don't really know why I bothered buying the textbook.

RUBY
Procrastinating just isn't the same when you don't have the book.

Evan raises a brow, amused.

PROFESSOR (O.S.)
Good afternoon class.

EVAN
That is extremely true.

The professor frowns at Evan.

PROFESSOR
If I could have EVERYONE'S attention please.

Ruby snickers, Evan mimes zipping his mouth shut.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE SOCIOLOGY CLASS - LATER

Ruby and Evan exit the sociology class amongst other students.

They make their way slowly down the hall.

EVAN
That lecture actually wasn't so bad. I think I learned some stuff.

RUBY

That's good, considering it's your major you should probably be learning stuff.

EVAN

You just keep being right about things.

RUBY

Yeah I do that sometimes.

Evan answers a text on his phone, Ruby stares at him, waiting for him to finish.

EVAN

Are you ready for this 10 page paper though?

Ruby rolls her eyes.

RUBY

I'm ready to bullshit the entire thing the night before it's due.

EVAN

What better way is there to do it?

INT. LIBRARY COMPUTER AREA - CONTINUOUS

The hallway opens up to a larger room filled with computers and couches where students do homework and print papers.

Evan's face lights up as he notices a girl sitting at one of the computers. GWEN (19, slim, long blond hair) waves at him, smiling sweetly. Evan waves back. Ruby doesn't notice at first.

RUBY

Actually, I was thinking maybe we could--

GWEN

Evan!

Gwen waves Evan over, he smiles at her.

EVAN

Sorry, that's my girlfriend over there.

Ruby's face falls, she tries to hide her disappointment.

Evan starts towards Gwen, walking backwards.

EVAN

Oh! My buddy's taking a different section of this class and he's starting up a study group. Do you want in?

Ruby looks around awkwardly.

RUBY

Um, maybe. I don't know, I'm not really a study group kinda person.

EVAN

Oh, alright. Well, good luck with the paper then.

RUBY

Thanks. You too.

Ruby walks away, putting on her headphones as she goes. She furrows her brow, looking at her phone as she walks.

EXT. LIBRARY

Ruby walks down the stairs of the library, she holds a lighter in her hand which she flicks repeatedly.

EXT. SAFIYA'S APARTMENT

The outside of Safiya's apartment is a cinderblock stoop with a row of identical green doors. Ruby knocks on the door to A-5-3. Safiya opens it.

RUBY

Help me make a Tinder.

Safiya smirks.

SAFIYA

Step into my office.

INT. RUBY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ruby's roommate sleeps under a pile of blankets.

Ruby sits at her desk, her head resting on her folded arms as she stares at her, now clean, fish tank. She sits back, pulls out her lighter and flicks it a couple times. Puts it down.

She reaches to the side and retrieves her phone. She unlocks it and presses the Tinder icon.

The app displays a pink loading screen with a tiny white flame logo at the center. After a second, it loads a profile.

Ruby cocks an eyebrow.

THE PROFILE:

We see a picture of an overweight redneck with his shirt off shotgunning a beer. Written at the bottom in white text is "SKYNN, 24."

ANOTHER ANGLE:

Ruby cringes.

RUBY
Holy fuck, no.

She clicks on his profile, the second picture is of Skynn laying, covered in mud, across the hood of a pick up truck.

His bio just reads: "SKYNN" Followed by several eggplant emojis.

Ruby frowns and swipes left. His picture is virtually stamped with the word "Nope" and disappears, revealing a new profile.

Ruby swipes through a few more profiles, swiping left on most but right on a few.

She comes to a profile of a good looking, preppy guy. The bottom reads: "Chad, 21" she swipes right. It matches.

Her brows raise and she smirks. She shakes her head around playfully.

RUBY
(whispers)
I got a match.

She gets up and moves to her bed, gets under the covers.

Her phone buzzes, a message from Chad. She opens it, it reads: "Sit on my face." Ruby groans, disgusted and drops her phone. She looks around, not knowing what to do.

She picks the phone back up. She clicks a little red flag in the top right corner of the screen and presses "unmatch."

She looks around, her face scrunched up with disgust. Beat.

She keeps swiping, gets a new match. The profile displays a photo of NATE (20, thin, short hair, generic looking) laying on the floor with a small dog.

Ruby cocks an eyebrow.

INT. RUBY'S BEDROOM - DAY

A week has passed. Ruby sits at her desk in her pjs applying makeup. Safiya lays on her bed swiping through Tinder on her own phone.

SAFIYA
How long have you been talking to
this guy again?

Ruby's eyes are wide and her mouth agape as she applies mascara. Her hands shake and it's difficult for her to apply it.

RUBY
Like a week.

SAFIYA
Damn, look at you go.

RUBY
Yeah I'm a pro.

SAFIYA
He's coming over to watch a movie?

Ruby nods.

SAFIYA
Are you nervous?

RUBY
Naaaah.

Ruby tries to put the mascara back on the desk, her hands shake too much and she drops it.

SAFIYA
Right.

Safiya gets up and retrieves the mascara for her.

RUBY
Thanks. Maybe I'm a little nervous.

SAFIYA

It's gonna be fine, trust me. Take some deep breaths.

Ruby nods, doing so as she crosses to her closet.

RUBY

Do you think it's too late for me to cancel?

SAFIYA

Yes.

RUBY

I don't wanna do this.

SAFIYA

It's gonna be fine, dude. What are you so worried about?

Ruby shrugs, going through her things.

RUBY

I don't know, I just... I don't know what to expect... or how to act... I've never done this before.

Safiya nods, starts pawing through Ruby's wardrobe along side her.

SAFIYA

Just talk to him like you'd talk to any new person.

Ruby nods.

RUBY

So not at all?

Safiya rolls her eyes.

SAFIYA

Girl!

Ruby puts her hands up defensively.

RUBY

I'm kidding!

Safiya holds a shirt up to Ruby's body. Looks at it for a moment, shakes her head no and puts it back.

RUBY

What if he tries to kiss me?

SAFIYA

Do you want him to kiss you?

Ruby shrugs.

RUBY

I... I don't know... I've never kissed anyone before... Like how does that even work?

Safiya shrugs, holds another shirt up to Ruby then puts it back.

SAFIYA

I don't think that's something I can really help you with, dude.

Ruby nods.

RUBY

I think that's what I'm most scared of. The physical stuff... The second he tries to kiss me or anything he's gonna know I've never done it before.

SAFIYA

There's nothing wrong with that.

Ruby furrows her brow.

RUBY

I'm 20 and I've never been kissed, Saf.

SAFIYA

So? I had my first kiss when I was 19, you're not that weird.

RUBY

I feel weird.

Safiya pulls out a floral top and holds it up to Ruby. She nods and pushes it into her hands.

SAFIYA

Trust me, it's not that weird, and you don't have to do anything you don't wanna do...

Safiya thinks for a second, her face growing more serious.

SAFIYA

I'm assuming you definitely don't
wanna have sex with him right?

Ruby's eyes widen.

RUBY

I don't even know if I wanna kiss
him so yeah I think I'll save that
one for a later time.

SAFIYA

It's just... I'm not gonna lie he
probably thinks that's gonna
happen, since you invited him over
to watch a movie.

Ruby nods.

RUBY

Yeah I know, I checked with my
roommates and Charlie's gonna be
home. So, you know, God forbid...
I'm not completely alone with him.

Safiya nods, going back to sit on the bed. Ruby starts to
change her outfit.

SAFIYA

That's good. And you can send me a
text or something if you need me to
get you out of there.

RUBY

Ah, thanks man, that's a good idea.

SAFIYA

Something inconspicuous...

Safiya thinks for a moment.

SAFIYA

The turtle emoji.

They both nod.

INT. RUBY'S COMMON ROOM - LATER

Ruby's common room is large. Warm lighting, old dollar store
birthday decorations, cracked off-white walls and filthy
outdoor carpets that are, for some reason, inside.

The space is comprised of a dining area, a kitchen, and a seating area with three couches facing a TV. On the far wall are three bedroom doors and two bathrooms.

Ruby steps out of her room, now fully dressed, and shuts the door.

Checks her appearance in a mirror on the wall. She runs her shaky fingers over her chocker and adjusts her hair. Studies her own face.

CHARLIE (20, short, athletic, big eyes) steps out of the kitchen holding a hot pocket.

CHARLIE
Oo you look cute!

Ruby snaps out of her trance and offers her a nervous smile.

RUBY
Thanks.

CHARLIE
That boy's coming over soon right?

Ruby nods, adjusts her chocker.

CHARLIE
Ooooo! First date! Are you excited?

RUBY
I'm mad nervous.

Charlie shrugs, bites her hot pocket.

CHARLIE
It'll be fine. Just don't have high expectations, it could suck, it could be great. Either way, it's just a tinder date it's not that huge a deal.

RUBY
Yeah I guess you're right.

CHARLIE
I just have to pop over to Ryan's for a second to get my stapler back, but I'll be back in like 10 minutes.

Ruby nods, Charlie walks to the front door, opens it.

CHARLIE

If he's creepy just yell and I'll
punch him in the throat.

Charlie exits and shuts the door.

RUBY

Thanks!

Ruby looks around anxiously, crosses to the couch and starts
straightening the cushions.

Her phone buzzes, she jumps a little and pulls it out of her
pocket.

A tinder message from Nate. She opens it, it reads: "Be there
soon ;)"

Ruby puts her phone away and lets out a deep breath.

RUBY

(under her breath)

It's gonna be fine. It's gonna be
fine. It's gonna be fine.

There's a set of fairy lights on the wall, she plugs them in.
Looks around the room. Shakes her head. Unplugs the lights.
Thinks for a moment. Plugs them back in.

There's a knock on the door, she jumps again. Checks her
breath and crosses to the front door. She gets on her tip
toes to look through the peep hole.

P.O.V. - PEEP HOLE

Nate stands outside, looking around aimlessly.

BACK TO SCENE.

Ruby takes a deep breath and opens the door. She offers Nate
an awkward smile.

RUBY

Hey!

Nate speaks with a slight lisp.

NATE

Hi!

Nate walks in and waves awkwardly at Ruby, not sure if he
should hug her or not.

Ruby shuts the door, Nate looks around.

NATE
You've got a nice place.

RUBY
Thanks... None of the outlets work.

Nate shakes his head, not sure what to do with that.

NATE
That... sucks?

Ruby looks around, scratches her arm. Nate takes off his jacket.

NATE
So, uh--

Ruby points at the couch.

RUBY
You can sit there if you want.

Nate nods and heads for the couch in front of the TV.

Ruby takes a deep breath and then sits next to him, enough space between them for another person. Her voice shakes a little as she tries to force cheerfulness.

RUBY
So, um... How was your weekend?

Nate nods over enthusiastically.

NATE
It was, uh, it was decent. Smoked a bunch of weed.

He laughs, Ruby nods.

RUBY
Oh, that's... that's nice.

She laughs awkwardly.

NATE
You know, actually, I have some stuff if you wanna... ya know.

Ruby raises an eyebrow.

RUBY
You want me to smoke with you?

Nate nods.

NATE
Only if you want.

Ruby nods.

RUBY
Oh, um, no thanks. Last time I
smoked I started hallucinating...
it was not good...

Nate scrunches his face in confusion.

NATE
Really?! Sounds like your weed was
laced with something. This stuff
isn't, I've been smoking it all
weekend. It's good stuff.

Ruby shrugs.

RUBY
Yeaaaah but I'm good for a while
after that experience.

Nate nods.

NATE
Alright.

They sit there in silence. Ruby goes to push her hair behind her ear with a shaky hand.

RUBY
Yeeeeep.

Nate looks at her hand, she becomes aware of its shaking and tucks it into her lap.

RUBY
So, Netflix.

NATE
Yeah Netflix.

The front door opens and Charlie reenters. She throws an awkward peace sign and scurries off to she and Ruby's bedroom.

RUBY
That's my roommate, Charlie.

Nate cocks an eyebrow.

NATE

Oh? Like your roommate that you share a room with, not just your apartment mate?

Ruby nods.

RUBY

Yep.

Ruby fiddles with the remote, Nate frowns, starts texting someone.

The TV doesn't turn on. Ruby frowns, pressing the on button repeatedly. The TV does nothing.

NATE

Problem?

RUBY

It's not turning on.

Nate stares at her, sucks his teeth.

Ruby gets up and fiddles with the TV itself, she taps the corner where a red light should be on.

RUBY

It's not even getting power...

She looks to the outlet where the TV is plugged in.

NATE

Didn't you just say none of the outlets worked in this apartment?

Ruby unplugs the tv and examines the outlet.

RUBY

I mean, yeah but I didn't mean this one. We have four that actually work.

Nate rolls his eyes.

NATE

Three.

Ruby laughs uncomfortably.

RUBY

Yeah I guess.

She blows in the outlet and plugs the TV back in with a SPARK. The red light snaps on, Ruby grins.

RUBY
Okay, it should work now.

Nate presses the "On" button on the remote. The TV lights up.

RUBY
Ay! It's working!

She sits back down on the couch, reaches for the remote.

NATE
Could I actually get something to
drink?

Ruby is surprised by the question and at first doesn't know how to answer it.

RUBY
Uh, yeah, like... Like water?

NATE
Water is good.

Ruby gets up and goes to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Ruby's kitchen is insanely messy with bowls and food everywhere, the sink piled high with dirty dishes.

Ruby opens the fridge and pulls out a brita filter, then grabs a glass from the cabinet and fills it.

INT. RUBY'S COMMON ROOM

Nate looks around aimlessly, his leg is shaking. He sends another text. The TV loads and gives a list of different streaming services.

INT. KITCHEN

Ruby struggles to angle the brita under the faucet around all the dirty dishes.

NATE (O.S.)
Hey, should I select Netflix?

RUBY
Um, yes please.

Ruby adds water to the brita and then puts it back into the fridge and heads back into the common room.

INT. RUBY'S COMMON ROOM

Ruby hands Nate the glass and sits beside him, again there's plenty of room between them.

RUBY
Sooo, what should we watch?

Nate looks down at his phone.

NATE
I'm good with the Office or something.

Ruby nods, choosing "The Office" and hitting play.

The episode loads and the cold open with Jim dressed as Dwight begins.

Ruby and Nate sit there, watching with slight discomfort.

NATE
This is definitely the best opening in the whole show.

Ruby nods.

RUBY
Def my favorite.

They sit there in silence. Beat.

The theme song for the show plays. Nate drums along on his lap.

RUBY
You're a musician right?

NATE
Hm?

RUBY
You make music, right? It said that in your bio.

NATE
Oh yeah, I, uh, I play bass.

RUBY
That's cool.

NATE
Yeah, it's fun.

RUBY
I heard bassists are supposed to
have big hands.

Nate holds his hands up.

NATE
I think mine are probably average.

Ruby shrugs.

RUBY
Huh...

They both nod. Laugh uncomfortably.

Nate's phone lights up, he feigns urgency.

NATE
Oh, man! You know what? I
completely forgot!

Ruby looks at him, confused, and pauses the show.

NATE
IIIII have to got to work, I
completely forgot about it.

RUBY
Oh? Um, okay.

NATE
So sorry, this was great. Great...

He points to the glass.

NATE
Water... I'll see you around!

RUBY
We barely even started the episode.

Nate pauses at the door.

NATE
I've seen it before.

He darts out before Ruby can react, leaving the door ajar. Ruby gets up and goes to the door just in time to see him fly down the stairs.

She hangs in stares out, dumbfounded. Beat.

RUBY

This is gonna be harder than I thought.

INT. THE KORE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Ruby, Walter, Alice, Ryan and Safiya sit around a table in the Kore. Walter and Ruby work on greasy slices of pizza while Safiya eats a salad and Alice has cereal with almond milk. Ryan just has a cup of coffee.

WALTER

So, he just ran out?

Ruby nods.

RUBY

Yeah he was there for like 15 minutes and then he just booked it like I was chasing him trying to kill him or something.

ALICE

That's really weird. Did he, like, even come near you?

Ruby shakes her head. Beside her, a fly start buzzing around Ryan. He's the only one who notices it. He watches it.

RUBY

Nope, not even like a hello hug, which I've heard are pretty standard for first dates.

ALICE

What a douche.

RUBY

I was just really confused.

Ryan swats at the fly, he misses.

WALTER

That literally makes no sense.

ALICE

At least you broke the seal.

Everyone looks at Alice.

SAFIYA

The seal?

Alice nods.

ALICE

The dating seal. It's really hard to go on your first date, but once you do it, then getting dates becomes more frequent.

Everyone considers this. Ryan tries swatting at the fly again.

ALICE

It's just like when you pee for the first time when you're drunk, you're gonna have to pee every five minutes for the rest of the night.

SAFIYA

Yeaaah I'm not 100% sure about the accuracy of... any of that but, I mean she's got a point at least you went on your first date.

WALTER

Yeah, you'll be less nervous now.

RUBY

Should I even consider that catastrophe my first date?

Her friends all nod, except Ryan who's attention is still consumed by the fly.

SAFIYA

Considering the emotional labor you put into it beforehand, yeah.

Ruby nods, they all go back to eating. The fly lands on the table, Ryan smacks it.

RYAN

Got it!

INT. RUBY'S BATHROOM - LATER

Ruby's bathroom is filled with steam, which pours out from behind a closed shower curtain.

A speaker sits on the counter playing a song by Queen.

The shower stops and Ruby's arm pokes out of the curtain, she feels around on the wall until her hand finds a towel. She pulls it into the shower and emerges moments later with it wrapped around her body.

She walks to the mirror and wipes some steam away with her hand, examines her face in the reflection.

She grabs a hair brush from a small basket on the counter with a red "R" painted on it haphazardly.

She brushes her hair out gently, keeping eye contact with her reflection.

Once her hair is detangled she sticks the brush back in the basket.

Ruby's phone sits on the counter, it lights up. She dries her hands on her towel and picks it up.

The screen displays a Tinder notification: "Someone Super Liked You! Find out who."

Ruby raises an eyebrow incredulously. She opens up the app and swipes around a bit. She swipes left through most of the profiles, right on a few. No matches.

She comes across the profile that Super Liked her.

INSERT:

The profile displays a picture of ROBBY (22, chubby, good hair) smiling in a selfie that's way too close up.

BACK TO SCENE.

Ruby clicks through his profile, she seems unimpressed. She swipes left.

The next profile to load just displays a picture of a Goose, the name reading "Gooze."

Ruby rolls her eyes and swipes left, she locks her phone and places it back on the counter.

She rubs her face and looks around. Beat.

She takes her phone again and opens Tinder back up, she clicks on her own profile this time, looks through it.

The first photo is a selfie that shows Ruby's face and neck, she's in a tank-top with thick eye makeup. She clicks to the next photo, a picture of her in her signature jacket, standing in the woods.

She clicks through the rest of the photos, in most she displays her usual stoic look and vacant stare.

She slides down to her bio, it reads: "Weirdo searching for something. Tell me dad jokes, they'll be appreciated. Where the fuck did Ryan Seacrest go? I like classic rock music. Best grilled cheese maker on this side of the Hudson."

Ruby rolls her eyes again and closes her phone.

She gets up and collects her things and yells to nobody in particular:

RUBY
I'm fucking doing this!

She opens the bathroom door with her elbow.

RUBY
I'm doing it.

BEGIN DATING SEQUENCE:

A DATE - Ruby sits in a coffee shop across from GUY 1 (21, tall, thin, nice hair.) He sips a bottle of Powerade while Ruby works on a hot chocolate.

RUBY
You don't wanna get a coffee or something?

GUY 1
Nah, I don't like putting caffeine in my body.

Ruby furrows her brow and eyes his energy drink.

RUBY
But... Never mind.

ANOTHER DATE - Ruby sits in an Olive Garden across from GUY 2 (22, nerdy, big glasses.) A bowl of breadsticks sits between them.

GUY 2
Do you like Star Trek?

RUBY
I've never seen it.

GUY 2
What?!

RUBY
I've never seen it.

Guy 2 rolls his eyes, stuffs the breadsticks into his pockets and leaves.

DATE 3 - Ruby sits on a park bench beside GUY 3 (21, messy hair, mis-buttoned shirt.)

RUBY
So what's your favorite book?

Guy 3 just stares back at her. Beat.

RUBY
Do you have a favorite book?

The guy shifts in his seat.

GUY 3
Nah.

DATE 4 - Ruby sits at a table in a coffee shop across from RAYMOND (21, tall, muscular, terrible hair, dead eyes.)

Raymond is barely awake, struggling to keep his eyes open as he holds a cup of tea with two hands.

RAYMOND
Sorry, I'm really sick.

RUBY
Uh, it's alright.

RAYMOND
I'm gonna try as hard as I can to be a good conversationalist... But I'm sick.

RUBY
A-Alright.

They stare at each other, or at least Ruby stares at him, his eyes are barely open.

RUBY
So, like, where are you from?

RAYMOND
Far from here.

There's silence. Beat.

RUBY
Okay. Where's far from here?

Raymond takes a few moments to respond.

RAYMOND
Brooklyn.

Ruby nods.

RUBY
That's cool.

RAYMOND
Yeah.

They stare at each other.

DATE 5 - Ruby sits at a bar beside GUY 5 (22, lanky, patchy beard, beanie.) They've both got small baskets of chicken tenders and fries in front of them.

Guy 5 has one chicken tender left, Ruby has 3.

RUBY
So, what kind of music do you like?

Guy 5 works on his last chicken tender.

GUY 5
All kinds.

Ruby nods.

RUBY
Any examples?

Guy 5 nods.

GUY 5
Like, Zeppelin is cool. And Sinatra.

RUBY
Those are two very different artists.

Guy 5 nods.

GUY 5

Yeah.

He pops the last bite of his chicken tender in his mouth. He eyes Ruby's plate.

GUY 5

Hey are you gonna eat that?

Ruby looks down at her food, surprised.

RUBY

Um, yeah I was planning on it, but you can have one if you want.

GUY 5

Schweet.

Guy 5 takes one of her chicken tenders and a hand full of her fries. He eats it ravenously.

RUBY

Do you have any pets?

He nods, mouth full of food.

GUY 5

Yeah.

He takes another one of her tenders. She frowns. He checks his watch.

GUY 5

Fuck! I gotta get to band practice.

He flags down the bartender.

GUY 5

Hey, can we have separate checks please?

DATE 6 - Ruby sits in a seat in a movie theater next to GUY 6 (23, chubby, sandy blond hair, turtle neck.) The theater is relatively empty.

Guy 6 stares unabashedly at Ruby. She tries to pretend not to notice. He slings his arm around her chair at a very uncomfortable looking angle.

GUY 6

Is it okay if I put my arm here?

Ruby looks at where his arm is placed.

RUBY

Sure.

He looks at the screen for a second, then back to her.

GUY 6

Uuuh, can I, like, kiss you?

Ruby stiffens, looks around uncomfortably.

RUBY

Um, okay.

He leans in and kisses her on the cheek. Ruby looks around, unsure of what to do with that. She gets up and leaves.

END OF SEQUENCE

EXT. RUBY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby steps out of her apartment and locks the door behind her, she wears her signature coat, shoes, and headphones with her hair pulled back.

A huge pile of vomit sits at the top of the stairs, it's red and the pile is maybe two feet in diameter.

Ruby turns to head downstairs, stopping in horror when she sees the puke. She groans.

SUPER: "October."

She goes around it, gagging at the smell. She lets out a loud groan.

INT. THE KORE - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby stands on line for the pizza counter, there are many people in front of her waiting for food.

RUBY

I just don't get how people do it.
I've been on like 14 dates in the
past month and I've yet to actually
connect with anyone.

To her side, Walter stands squinting at the menu.

WALTER

Where are you finding these guys?

RUBY

Tinder. I haven't been on it long
but from what I can tell so far
it's a dumpster fire full of trash
men.

EXT. THE KORE - MOMENTS LATER

Walter and Ruby sit on a wall outside the Kore, both pick at
slices of pepperoni pizza.

WALTER

If all the guys on Tinder are trash
why don't you just delete it?

Ruby shrugs, looking at the ground.

RUBY

I'm not so good at meeting people
in real life. I get all nervous and
I can't tell if we're flirting or
just having a conversation.

Walter nods, taking a bite of his pizza.

RUBY

Plus it's easier to talk to someone
through a screen.

WALTER

That makes sense. But, starting a
conversation with someone is the
same no matter what your goal is.
You just say hi, start talking.
It'll take whichever direction you
steer it in after.

RUBY

Yeah, but I don't know HOW to steer
it, Walter!

Walter rolls his eyes, realizing he's not going to get
anywhere with this argument.

WALTER

Maybe you'd be better at dating if
you made more friends first.

RUBY

You are my friends!

Walter looks around, feigning discomfort.

WALTER
Oh, fuck. Did you think we're
friends?

Ruby rolls her eyes.

WALTER
This is really awkward. I actually
don't know who you are.

Ruby glares at him and picks a piece of pepperoni off her
pizza.

RUBY
(sardonic)
Ha ha.

WALTER
It's okay to be alone, you know.

Ruby rolls her eyes, waving the piece of pepperoni around as
she speaks.

RUBY
I know that, but I don't WANT to be
alone anymore.

Walter scratches his head, thinking.

WALTER
Are you positive ALL of those dudes
were garbage?

RUBY
We're calling them garbage men for
a reason, Walter.

WALTER
What about the sick one?

Ruby licks pepperoni grease off of her fingers.

RUBY
Raymond? He was barely conscious
for most of our date.

WALTER
I mean, He was ill! And he still
came to meet you when he should
have been in bed. You should give
him a second chance, maybe he'll be
more...

RUBY

Alive?

WALTER

INTERESTING, when he's healthy.

Ruby considers this.

INT. RUBY'S COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

It's a Saturday night and the muted sounds of partying college students can be heard through the cracked off-white walls of Ruby's apartment.

Ruby and Raymond sit on the couch watching TV. Ruby sits with her hands folded neatly in her lap while Raymond keeps his arm slung around the armrest of the couch.

They sit closer, this time, than Ruby and Nate did, but still they don't touch each other.

The movie playing on the screen is *Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls*. They're about halfway through the film.

Raymond laughs hysterically at the screen, slapping his knee and wiping a tear from his eye.

Ruby watches him, trying to force laughter but not doing a very good job. Raymond looks from her to the TV and scratches his head. He looks at her again.

RAYMOND

H-Hey... Uh, is it okay if I put my arm... around you?

Ruby's eyes go wide, she tries to play it cool.

RUBY

Um, yeah, yeah totally.

Raymond grins and slings his arm around Ruby's shoulders. She scoots over, awkwardly leaning on his shoulder.

They're silent for a beat.

RAYMOND

This movie's pretty funny.

Ruby tries her best to feign sincerity, but she just can't get herself all the way there.

RUBY

Gut busting.

She cringes, he doesn't notice. He looks around the room.

RAYMOND

I like your apartment, it's nice.

Ruby looks from the TV to a pile of cardboard boxes in the corner. Then to the trash, which is overflowing.

RUBY

Thanks... I uh, I like living here
a lot it's a nice location.

She cringes again. Raymond scratches his neck, glancing at her, then at a Leonardo DiCaprio poster that has a large print out of a bear taped to it.

RAYMOND

I like the poster.

RUBY

Thanks, I, uh, I taped the bear on
there as a joke.

Raymond nods.

RAYMOND

It's funny.

RUBY

Do you get the joke?

He doesn't.

RAYMOND

Yep! Yeah, totally. Leo loves bears
so...

Ruby furrows her brow as if to say "What the fuck?" Raymond still doesn't notice.

Raymond laughs at the TV, again Ruby forces laughter. Raymond looks at her for a beat.

RAYMOND

Uh, so this might be random but...
would you like to kiss?

Ruby's eyes go wide, she blinks, looking at his lips like they're a shark and she's in the water.

RUBY

Um... sure.

Raymond grins. He leans in slowly, his eyes already closed. Ruby furrows her brow, staring at his face. She's not sure which way to tilt her head, she tries a couple angles before squeezing her eyes shut and letting him kiss her.

There's a lot of tongue, all on his side. It's excessive, and wet sounding.

Ruby's eyes shoot open wide as he licks the inside of her mouth. She grimaces and pulls away. She's panicking. She can't make eye contact.

RUBY

Sorry... I wasn't gonna tell you
this but I feel the need to
explain... I've never actually
kissed anyone before... so... um...
I don't really know what I'm doing.

Raymond grins, looks her face over and leans back in without saying anything.

They kiss again, this time Ruby tries to reciprocate but it's awkward. Raymond puts his hand on the side of her face and pulls her in closer, her face is beat red, her eyes squeezed shut tight.

There's tongue again, her eyes squeeze tighter and he accidentally puts her nose in his mouth. She cringes.

Raymond bites her, he's trying to be smooth but he's clumsy and he chomps down, hard.

Ruby jumps back, surprised.

RAYMOND

Sorry about that.

He leans back in, taking her head in both hands and holding it like a basketball and he goes to town on her face.

She's barely even trying to reciprocate anymore, and she can't figure out where to put her hands. After a few moments of trying to position them she gives up and leaves them in her lap.

He pulls her in closer. The discomfort on her face grows as he bends her spine at a strange angle.

He's making out with her cheek now, she opens her eyes, horrified by the sight of someone sucking on her face.

He tries to return to her lips, gets her nose again. This time his tongue goes into her nose. Twice. He returns to her lips.

They pull away. Raymond chuckles and sits back, slinging his arm back around her. Ruby rests her head on his chest. He strokes her arm, looking proud of himself.

Her eyes remain wide, her face completely shocked. A piece of hair hangs in front of her eyes. She blinks a few times as Raymond continues to stroke her shoulder.

On screen, Jim Carrey comes out of a rhino's butthole.

RAYMOND

So... That was your first time?

Ruby cringes.

RUBY

Mhm.

Raymond grins.

Ruby's face grows redder. She looks like she wants to die.

RAYMOND

How was I for a first kiss?

Ruby stares straight ahead for a second, her eyes dilating. Something inside her snaps, she springs to her feet.

RUBY

GET OUT.

Raymond is confused.

RAYMOND

Whoa what?

Ruby's voice is urgent.

RUBY

GET OUT. GET OUT OF MY APARTMENT.

Raymond gets up, grabbing his jacket. Ruby shuffles him to the door.

RAYMOND

What'd I do?

Ruby tries to respond but only gibberish comes out. She pushes Raymond into the door way. All she can get out is:

RUBY
GO TO SCHOOL.

She slams the door and locks it.

EXT. RUBY'S APARTMENT

Raymond stands on the doorstep, jacket still in hand, completely confused. He walks away, steps in the vomit pool by the stairs.

INT. RUBY'S COMMON ROOM

Ruby leans against the door, dazed and trying to figure out what just happened.

EXT. QUAD - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby's apartment complex is built in a circle around a grass quad.

Ruby speed walks across it, mumbling frantically to herself.

RUBY
HOLY SHIT HOLY SHIT HOLY SHIT HOLY
SHIT.

INT. SAFIYA'S COMMON ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Safiya sits in her common room, reading and sipping tea. There's a harsh bang on the door.

SAFIYA
It's open!

Ruby bursts in the room, flustered and frantic.

RUBY
Dude! I'm freaking the fuck out!

Ruby removes her jacket and throws it on the floor, Safiya puts her book down and stands.

SAFIYA
What happened?!

Ruby furrows her brow and sighs. She looks down at the ground and shakes her head, starts pacing and pulling her hair.

SAFIYA
Dude, what happened?!

Ruby looks around frantically.

RUBY
I kissed him.

Safiya's eyes widen.

SAFIYA
And?!

Ruby frowns.

RUBY
It was TERRIBLE!

Ruby sits on the couch and starts removing her boots.

SAFIYA
Why?

RUBY
H-He like... kept shoving his
tongue... in my mouth, like
excessively and unpleasantly.

SAFIYA
Yeah they do that sometimes.

Ruby looks around frantically.

RUBY
He bit me.

SAFIYA
He bit you?

RUBY
Yes.

SAFIYA
Biting can be nice sometimes.

RUBY
No, dude, it wasn't like a sexy
nibble it was like a full blown
chomp on my lower lip.

Safiya tries to stifle laughter, she nods.

SAFIYA
Okay... go on.

RUBY

He...

She doesn't want to admit this next part.

RUBY

He licked my nose.

Safiya nearly loses control of her laughter.

SAFIYA

Your nose?

Ruby nods, looking miserable.

Safiya bursts out laughing, pointing at Ruby.

SAFIYA

Oh man, I'm sorry this is
hilarious.

RUBY

No it's okay it is... and the worst
part, we were watching Ace Ventura:
2.

Safiya laughs harder.

SAFIYA

Dude are you serious? You let him
pick the movie?

RUBY

I didn't know he had horrible
taste!

SAFIYA

Dude! You never let them pick the
movie!

Safiya keeps laughing.

RUBY

I KNOW THAT NOW! AS SOON AS IT WAS
OVER JIM CARREY WAS SHAT OUT BY A
RHINOCEROS!

Ruby puts her head in her hands.

Safiya falls onto the couch, laughing hard. Ruby just watches
her laugh. After a moment Safiya wipes a tear from her eye,
settling down.

SAFIYA

I'm sorry that happened to you, but
it's really fucking funny.

RUBY

I just can't wait to get drunk
tonight.

INT. SAFIYA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Safiya's bathroom is small, filled with toiletries enough for 6 people. A soccer ball sits on the counter. Muffled party music can be heard through the walls.

Ruby stands at the sink looking in the mirror, she's dressed as Juno MacGuff from the movie "Juno" in a striped shirt, skirt, jeans, and sweatshirt.

She applies some chapstick, stares at herself a beat. She rubs under her eyes, takes a deep breath.

She takes a lighter out of her pocket, flicks it a few times. Looks at herself in the mirror again, studies her lips.

RUBY

(whispers)

What am I even doing?

Her phone buzzes, a text from Raymond. The time on her phone reads 12:08 am.

She frowns, puts her lighter away.

She opens the message, it reads: "Did you enjoy Ace Ventura?" Ruby looks up in surrender and shoves her phone into her pocket.

She shakes her head, grabs the soccer ball from the counter and shoves it under her shirt to make herself look pregnant.

INT. SAFIYA'S COMMON ROOM

The common room is filled with around 25 college students in Halloween costumes, all drinking and dancing to music. It's the beginning of the night, things aren't too crazy yet.

Safiya's kitchen has a counter that opens up to the dining room, it's been turned into a bar.

Safiya, dressed as a mermaid, stands behind it with her laptop on the counter connected to speakers, she's DJing.

Beside her, Ryan stands behind the bar working on a beer and dressed as Adam Sandler in "The Wedding Singer."

Ruby approaches the counter.

RUBY

Hey guys.

Safiya nods, Ryan leans on the counter. They yell over the music.

RYAN

I heard you had an interesting night!

RUBY

I don't wanna talk, I just wanna get drunk!

RYAN

You can't get drunk, you're pregnant!

Ruby rolls her eyes.

RUBY

Yeah, I'm about to be the very proud mother of a soccer ball. Give me a drink.

Ryan laughs and grabs a cup from a stack next to the fridge.

RYAN

What do you want?

RUBY

Lots of vodka.

RYAN

What do you want it mixed with?

RUBY

Anything but cranberry juice, I'm allergic.

Ryan nods and pours her a drink, which she accepts gratefully.

Walter and Alice stand in the common room chatting with some friends, Walter is dressed as Obi-Wan Kenobi and Alice is dressed as Ms. Frizzle from "The Magic School Bus."

There's a knock at the door, Walter opens it and a few people enter wearing various costumes, two of those people are Evan and his girlfriend, Gwen.

Ruby's eyes bug out of her head and she turns abruptly to Safiya, who's distracted by the entering guests.

Gwen smiles and waves at Safiya.

GWEN

Safiya!!

Ruby looks around for a way to escape but she's cornered by party goers. She turns to the bar, trying to be inconspicuous while Evan and Gwen, hand in hand, make their way to the bar. Gwen is dressed as a fairy and Evan is a leprechaun.

With them is Evan's friend, GABE (19, bearded, optimistic, happy-go-lucky) dressed as a generic superhero. He starts toward the bar with them but is distracted by someone he knows.

GWEN

How are you doing, my love?!

Gwen hugs Safiya over the bar while Evan stands aimlessly beside her, not having noticed Ruby yet. The only thing between Ruby and Evan is Gwen.

SAFIYA

Hey! Pretty good, you?

Ruby notices a glittery pumpkin on the counter, she starts playing with it, trying to keep from being noticed.

GWEN

Reeeeeally drunk! This is my boyfriend, Evan, have you guys met?

Evan shakes Ryan and Safiya's hands.

SAFIYA

No we haven't, nice to meet you.

Ruby cringes, glancing shortly at Evan and then back at the pumpkin.

EVAN

Great party! How much to drink?

RYAN

Five bucks!

Evan nods and digs into his pocket, throws a five on the counter.

EVAN
Can I get a strong rum and coke?

Ryan nods and makes the drink.

SAFIYA
Ruby!

Ruby grits her teeth.

RUBY
(under her breath)
Fuck.

She looks up from the pumpkin. Evan finally notices her, smirking when he sees her.

RUBY
Huh?

SAFIYA
Have you met Gwen and Evan?

Evan comes around Gwen's side, slinging his arm around her waist.

EVAN
We have met.

Gwen smiles.

GWEN
WE haven't though, I'm Gwen!

Gwen holds her hand out for a shake. Ruby stares at her hand, she cups the pumpkin with both hands.

RUBY
Nice to meet you too.

Gwen keeps her hand extended.

RUBY
My hands are full.

Even grins, looking at Ruby knowingly. Gwen puts her hand down awkwardly, Safiya glares at Ruby.

Ryan puts Evan's drink down on the counter, Evan takes it.

GWEN

Alright, well we're gonna go talk
to some people!

Gwen nods awkwardly at Ruby and walks away, Evan following.
He waves at Ruby as he goes.

RYAN

I've met that guy four times, he
definitely still doesn't know my
name.

Safiya's forced smile falls, she turns to Ruby.

SAFIYA

Dude! What was that?

RYAN

A rum and coke, damn!

Safiya sucks her teeth.

SAFIYA

Not you, her!

Ruby goes around the corner into the kitchen.

INT. SAFIYA'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

SAFIYA

I know, you
(airquotes)
"Don't shake." Dude sometimes I
swear.

Ruby stands between Safiya and Ryan, Ryan has no idea what's
going on.

RUBY

(to Safiya)
Saf, do you know who that was?

SAFIYA

It was my friend and her boyfriend,
who you were rude to.

Ruby shakes her head.

RUBY

That was Evan. EVAN. The dude in my
class I had a crush on.

Safiya thinks as Ruby talks, starting to recall.

RUBY

The dude in my class who I thought
I was starting to get along with.
THE DUDE WHO HAD A GIRLFRIEND AND
DROVE ME TO DOWNLOAD TINDER.

Safiya's jaw drops.

SAFIYA

Ooooooooooh.

Ryan is confused in the background.

RYAN

What the fuck are you guys even
talking about.

They ignore him.

SAFIYA

I'm sorry dude, I didn't realize.

RUBY

It's fine, I'm just trying to avoid
talking to him.

SAFIYA

Maybe you should try talking to
someone else?

Safiya looks around the room, her eyes land on Gabe, who's
standing in the corner working on a bottle of soda.

SAFIYA

What about the superhero? He's
cute.

Ruby looks him over, she shakes her head.

RUBY

I think I had enough of these
dating escapades for one night,
dude. Have you already forgotten
what happened tonight?

SAFIYA

Oh no, I remember, and I'm gonna
remember forever. That was
hilarious.

Ruby rolls her eyes.

RUBY

I'm glad my pain is amusing.

SAFIYA

It's more than amusing. But maybe you can turn it around by meeting someone actually cool.

Ruby takes another look at Gabe, who's chugging his drink while awkwardly fist pumping.

RUBY

I think I'm okay.

SAFIYA

Come on.

Ryan slings his arm around Ruby's shoulder, he's starting to get a little tipsy.

RYAN

Just talk to 'em, what's the big deal? Just let words come out of your mouth.

Ruby shakes her head.

RUBY

Guys, I appreciate you caring. I do. But I'm just not in the mood for this tonight.

Safiya nods, relenting.

SAFIYA

Okay, fine. But if you change your mind, let me know.

INT. SAFIYA'S COMMON ROOM - LATER

A couple hours have passed and the apartment is now packed to the brim with drunk college students in costumes.

Ruby sits crosslegged on the couch across from Walter, who sits on the coffee table. They're deep in drunk conversation.

WALTER

(slurred)

Rubyyyyyy

Walter pokes Ruby's face, she laughs.

RUBY

Whaaaaaaaaaaaaat?

Walter's eyes are wide, a drink in his hands.

WALTER
You're one of my best friends.

He continues poking her face, she doesn't seem to notice.

RUBY
You're one of my best friends too!

Walter throws his hands in the air.

WALTER
Yeeeeeees!

Ruby nods, staring at his beard.

WALTER
Ruby, I'm so drunk!

RUBY
Can I touch your beard?

WALTER
Sure.

Ruby pets the side of Walter's face with a single finger.

RUBY
It's so soft!

WALTER
Thanks!

Alice comes from the other side of the room and plops into Walter's lap. They immediately begin to make out.

Ruby cringes.

RUBY
Agh! Ugh!

She gets up, stumbling around them.

RUBY
(slurring)
Get a room you animals!

Ruby crosses to the bar, puts her empty cup down on the counter. Ryan is standing behind the bar in heated conversation with a guy dressed as one of the Spice Girls.

RUBY
Ryan!

He doesn't hear her.

RUBY

Ryyyyyyan!

He still doesn't notice. She looks around the bar for a beat. Grabs the bottle of vodka and pours some into her cup. Then grabs a mixer and pours that in as well.

She messily returns the mixer, takes her drink and stands against the wall by the windows. She looks around, observing the party.

On the other side of the room, Evan and Gwen stand in conversation with a few other party goers. They're all clearly drunk, having a good time. Ruby watches them. She watches Evan.

Gabe walks up in front of her, blocking her view of Evan. His eyes are bright red and he grips a wax pen in his left hand.

GABE

Hey there!

Ruby glances at him, then back at Evan. She yells over the music.

RUBY

Hi!

She glances over his shoulder at Evan, then back to him. She notices his beard, stares at it.

GABE

What's your name?

RUBY

(slurred)

Can I touch your beard?

Gabe isn't even phased.

GABE

Um, sure!

Ruby strokes the side of his face with her pointer finger.

RUBY

Nice.

GABE

Do you always touch strangers' beards at parties?

Ruby nods, taking a sip of her drink.

RUBY

It's a thing I do. I like beards.

Gabe smirks, amused and slightly dumbfounded. Ruby glances over his shoulder, on the other side of the room Gwen is now in conversation with Safiya.

Evan is talking to a girl dressed as Kim Possible. The girl touches his arm and he grins.

GABE

You do anything else unusual?

Her attention's back to Gabe. She thinks, then laughs, knowing what she's about to say will probably freak him out.

RUBY

I set shit on fire a lot!

Gabe laughs.

GABE

Wait are you being serious?!

She nods, taking a big gulp of her drink and grimacing a bit at the sting of the alcohol.

RUBY

Yeah, I fuckin' love burnin' shit.

Gabe is thoroughly entertained.

GABE

Isn't that dangerous?!

RUBY

Probably!

They both laugh.

GABE

Why?!

RUBY

(completely serious)
It's mesmerizing.

GABE

Man, you're funny!

RUBY

I know!

Gabe takes a hit off his wax pen, waving the smoke away with his hand.

Ruby glances back at Evan, the girl he was talking to is gone. Gwen seems to be yelling at him but we can't hear what she's saying.

GABE
So what's your major?

Evan's girlfriend storms off to the bathroom. Evan rolls his eyes and heads towards Ruby and Gabe. Her eyes go wide.

RUBY
Tits.

GABE
What?

Evan drapes his arm around Gabe's shoulder, reaching for his wax pen.

EVAN
My man, may I please have some of this.

Gabe hands it over.

GABE
Yeah of course, dude!

Evan takes a deep hit, clearly angry but trying to hide it. He makes eye contact with Ruby, lets out a big puff of smoke and hands the pen back to Gabe.

EVAN
Ruby who doesn't shake! How are you doing tonight?

Ruby raises her eyebrows awkwardly, unsure of what to say.

RUBY
Uuuuuuh I am peachy.

She takes a sip of her drink.

RUBY
You?

Evan takes another long drag off the pen. He and Gabe pass it back and forth throughout the conversation.

EVAN
I am... very, very intoxicated.

Ruby nods, laughing.

RUBY

Aaas am I.

Gabe's eyes skirt down from Ruby's drink to her fake pregnancy belly. His jaw drops.

GABE

Wait are you pregnant for real?!

Ruby laughs.

RUBY

Nah, man! It's a basketball!

Ruby lifts her shirt to reveal the soccer ball.

Gabe and Evan start laughing, the kind of unadulterated, uncontrollable laughter only drunk people and babies watching someone rip paper can achieve.

EVAN

That's a soccer baaaaaaall!

Ruby waves her hand dismissively.

RUBY

Same thing!

Evan turns to Gabe.

EVAN

You thought she was actually pregnant! How high are you?!

Gabe takes a hit off the wax pen.

GABE

Fuckin' airplanes dude!

Gabe and Evan start laughing hysterically while Ruby watches them, dumbfounded.

Safiya, who's also drunk, dances up to Ruby and takes her by the hands. She pulls her out to the dance floor.

Ruby's dancing is incredibly bad and dorky, she does it unabashedly.

SAFIYA

(laughing)

Why are you white girl dancing to my music?

RUBY
This is how I moooooove!

They laugh and continue dancing.

SAFIYA
You were talking to that guy!

RUBY
He was talking to me!

They both glance over at Gabe and Evan who are now doing jello shots at the bar.

Safiya giggles drunkenly.

SAFIYA
His costume is kinda stupid!

Ruby laughs.

RUBY
Yeah it is!

They laugh and continue dancing.

INT. SAFIYA'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby stumbles into the bathroom, barely managing to shut and lock the door behind her. She drunkenly whispers to herself as she does things.

RUBY
Okay, the belly.

She removes the soccer ball from her shirt and places it clumsily on the counter. It rolls into the sink.

RUBY
Pants...

She pulls down her pants and sits on the toilet, pees. She takes out her phone, she has 7 tinder notifications. She opens up the app, the first is a message from a guy named "Jack." It reads: "Hey shortie"

She rolls her eyes, types back: "Hi tallie." She laughs to herself as she hits send.

RUBY
(giggling)
I'm so funny.

She opens another message from "Pat" it reads: "wyd?" She scowls at it for a second and then speaks as she types.

RUBY
"Eating cantaloupe."

She laughs and puts her phone away, wiping and flushing the toilet.

RUBY
(giggling again)
I'm not eating cantaloupe...

The song "What is Love" by Haddaway starts playing out in the party, it's muffled and we can barely hear it.

She pulls up her pants and washes her hands, staring at herself in the mirror.

RUBY
None of them can even tell how
insecure you are.

She points at her reflection.

RUBY
I know you don't believe me, but
you're good enough.

She stares at herself longer. Takes a deep breath.

RUBY
You got this, Rubester.

She chuckles.

RUBY
Sounds like Rooster.

She shoves the soccer ball back under her shirt crookedly and exits the bathroom.

EXT. SAFIYA'S COMMON ROOM

The music grows far louder as Ruby enters the common room, "What is Love" is still playing. Ruby is slipping now into a deeper drunkenness than even before.

The colorful lights in the common room blare bright blues and purples as costume clad partygoers jump up and down and dance in the center of the room, which is packed elbow to elbow.

Ruby stares at the scene, taking it in with slight awe.

On one side of the room, Gwen stands talking to Gabe while a few feet away Evan is talking to the girl dressed as Kim Possible from before. The girl touches his hair. Gwen glares at them.

In the crowd are Safiya, Ryan, Walter, and Alice. They all dance together, Ryan head-bangs and Safiya whines. They're all laughing and smiling.

Safiya sees Ruby across the room, her eyes light up and she walks to her, grabs her by the hands and leads her to the dance floor.

Ruby joins them in dancing, smiling wildly and having the time of her life.

The group migrates into the dining room near the bar and out of the thick crowd.

Ruby looks a bit dizzy, she stumbles a bit trying to stay up. Alice expresses some concern.

ALICE

Are you alright?!

Ruby nods, steadying herself on the wall.

RUBY

I just need to get some water!

She makes her way toward the kitchen. As she's about to round the corner into it, she stops again to lean on the wall, extremely dizzy.

She looks around the room, disoriented. By the door, she makes out Evan and Gwen standing by the door visibly arguing, although she can't hear what they're saying.

The door swings open and Gwen storms out, Evan follows closely behind, leaving the door ajar.

Ruby furrows her brow, stumbles after them.

EXT. SAFIYA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Evan follows Gwen down the stairs from Safiya's balcony still arguing.

GWEN

I literally can't believe you!

Ruby sneaks out onto the balcony and shuts the door behind her, ducks behind a wall in an attempt at hiding and eaves drop.

EVAN

She and I were literally just having a conversation! I didn't do anything!

GWEN

You were clearly flirting with her!

Ruby grimaces.

RUBY

(mouths)
Yikers.

EVAN

I was not!

GWEN

You always do this, Evan! You always fucking do this!

Gwen walks away, Evan following her.

EVAN

You always overreact!

They keep going, their argument growing quieter as they get out of ear shot. Ruby comes out from behind the wall, watching them go.

She leans out to look for them but they're gone.

The door to the apartment swings open and Gabe comes out, he looks concerned.

GABE

Hey, have you seen my friends?

Ruby turns to look at him, she's incoherent. She stares at him blankly. He frowns.

GABE

You alright?

Ruby leans over the balcony and vomits, it hits the path below and splatters everywhere.

She stares at it, mouth still agape and vomit dripping from her chin. Gabe's jaw drops.

GABE

Shit.

Ruby's horrified, still staring at the vomit. She wipes her chin a bit, points in the direction that Evan and Gwen went.

INT. TARGET PARKING GARAGE - DAY

Ruby's beat up, blue 2005 Toyota Camry zips into a parking spot in a packed parking garage.

SUPER: "December."

The parking garage is teeming with Holiday shoppers carrying loads of shopping bags.

The car shuts off and Ruby, Safiya, Alice, Ryan, and Walter emerge, heading for the Target entrance.

INT. TARGET - MOMENTS LATER

The five make their way into Target as CHRISTMAS MUSIC plays from the store's speakers. They enter the dollar section immediately.

Safiya examines some fake cactuses.

RYAN

Why would anybody buy a fake cactus?

SAFIYA

Because it's cute and it's only a dollar.

Ruby's phone buzzes, she takes it out. A tinder notification sits on the screen. She swipes it open and tinder opens up. The notification is for a new match.

RYAN

I feel like that's so counter intuitive though.

ALICE

What do you mean?

Ryan picks up one of the fake cactuses, examining it.

RYAN

I mean, cactuses are like the hardest plants to kill.

Everyone, except Ruby, looks at him now, waiting for him to get to the point. Ruby starts swiping through Tinder.

RYAN

Like just get a real one, I don't know. You gotta be pretty bad at growing plants if you need a fake one right?

Safiya rolls her eyes and puts back the cactus.

Ruby swipes through a few profiles, a few rights and a few lefts. She freezes, her eyes wide. On the screen is a tinder profile, the name reads: "Evan, 21" and displays a picture of Evan standing in front of a fountain.

RYAN

I'm just saying.

Ruby stares at the profile, unsure of what to do. She locks the phone and puts it away.

Safiya pushes their cart out of the dollar section.

SAFIYA

(to Ryan)

You ruin everything.

Ryan shrugs.

INT. TARGET CHRISTMAS SECTION - MOMENT LATER

The five are standing in the Christmas section, Safiya and Alice look through Christmas cards while Ruby, Walter, and Ryan stand around aimlessly.

Ruby takes her phone out again, stares at Evan's profile. Starts to swipe right but stops before it goes through.

Walter pokes her in the shoulder with a roll of wrapping paper. She looks up, he's holding it like a sword. He lowers his voice to be as deep as he can.

WALTER

On guard.

Ruby smirks, puts her phone away and grabs a roll of wrapping paper. They start sword fighting while Safiya and Alice continue to paw through Christmas cards.

RYAN

Do they have a Hanukkah section?

Ruby pretends to stab Walter through the heart. He falls to the ground, dramatically pretending to die.

ALICE

Yeah I think it's down there somewhere.

RYAN

Come on, let's go check it out.

Safiya is still sifting through packs of Christmas cards.

SAFIYA

You guys go, I'll catch up in a second.

Alice and Ryan start to walk away.

ALICE

Walter, come on.

Walter lays motionless on the ground.

ALICE

Dude, you're not really dead!

Walter stands.

WALTER

Wow, I've miraculously come back to life.

He chases after them. Ruby watches them go, then walks over to Safiya.

RUBY

Which ones are you getting.

Ruby takes out her phone and opens Tinder back up, Evan's profile still prominent on the screen.

Safiya stares intently between a box of Christmas cards with tiny glittery snowflakes on them and a box of cards with a decadent Christmas tree.

SAFIYA

I can't decide between these two.
Am I going for distinctly Christmas
or just general winter this year? I
can't decide...

Ruby nods, distracted by the phone.

RUBY
Sounds like a tough call...

Safiya nods.

SAFIYA
So tough...

Ruby bites her lip, swipes right. It matches. Her eyes go wide, she freaks out, grabs Safiya's arm

RUBY
Dude! Dude! Dude!

SAFIYA
What?! What's wrong?

Ruby holds the phone out.

RUBY
Look who I just matched with.

Safiya squints the screen.

SAFIYA
Who the hell is that?

Ruby rolls her eyes.

RUBY
It's Evan!

SAFIYA
Evan who?

RUBY
WE'VE BEEN THROUGH THIS, SAFIYA.
EVAN. GWEN'S EVAN.

Safiya processes this, her memory jogging.

SAFIYA
Ooooooooooooooh, did it match?

Ruby nods, her jaw hanging open.

RUBY
Are they broken up?

Safiya thinks.

SAFIYA

I don't know, I haven't really talked to Gwen since the party. She's kinda wack.

Ruby paces, her arms flailing.

RUBY

WHAT DO I DO?!

SAFIYA

I thought you didn't have a crush on him anymore.

RUBY

I don't but he's still hella cute and I'm still hella incapable of human interaction, SAFIYA.

Safiya thinks.

SAFIYA

Are you gonna message him?

RUBY

Hell no!

Her phone beeps. A Tinder notification sits on her screen, it reads, "Evan sent you a new message." Her eyes go wide.

RUBY

Tits.

SAFIYA

He messaged you?

Ruby nods. She slides it open, it's a message from Evan, it reads: "This is random but did I just see you walk passed the Kore?"

Ruby looks around wildly, confused.

SAFIYA

What'd he say?

RUBY

He asked me if I just walked passed the Kore.

SAFIYA

He even know what you look like?

Ruby shakes her head.

RUBY
Apparently not.

SAFIYA
Girl, there's pictures of you right
there!

Ruby replies to his message: "Umm nope, I'm at Target rn lol."

Safiya turns her attention back to the Christmas cards.

SAFIYA
I think I'm gonna go with the
snowflakes.

A little ellipsis bubble appears on Ruby's phone to show that Evan's typing. A message appears: "Welp, that explains why she didn't know who I was when I said hi."

Ruby grins slightly, amused.

SAFIYA
Yeah, definitely the snowflakes.

A second message comes through on Ruby's phone: "So how ya been?" She smiles wider.

INT. RUBY'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Ruby sits in her room putting on makeup. She's working on her eyeliner, meticulously and carefully dragging the line above her lid up into a wing.

She stares at herself in the mirror, examining both eyes. They're as symmetrical as they're going to get. She sighs, shakes her foot. Applies chapstick.

She gets up and looks in the mirror, she's wearing a crop sweater and a skirt with her signature red converse All-Stars.

She looks herself in the eyes. Smooths out her skirt.

CHARLIE (O.S.)
This is the boy you had a thing for
in like September, right?

Charlie lays on her bed in a sports bra and shorts playing video games on a Game Boy and eating cheese doodles.

Ruby adjusts her choker.

RUBY
A small thing. Very small. Very
tiny small.

CHARLIE
Small enough to make ya download
TINDER.

Charlie laughs, Ruby frowns, knows she's right.

RUBY
It's not weird is it?

Charlie shakes her head.

CHARLIE
Nah. I get crushes on dudes in my
program all the time.

Ruby nods. She puts on her jacket, takes one last look at
herself in the mirror.

RUBY
I'm gonna try to be normal...

Charlie furrows her brow.

CHARLIE
Why the heck would you wanna do
that.

Ruby just continues watching herself in the mirror. She
fishes her lighter out of her pocket, flicks it a few times.

CHARLIE
Just be yourself, Brochacho, it'll
be fine.

Ruby nods, takes a deep breath. She places the lighter on her
dresser.

RUBY
Wish me luck.

She leaves.

EXT. CAMPUS COFFEE SHOP - LATER

The sun is beginning to set now. The on campus coffee shop
sits built into the ground level of a dorm. A few students
hang out around it, while some rush in and out.

Ruby walks toward it from down the path. She's visibly nervous, her hands clench and unclench at her sides in absence of her lighter.

She approaches the door, hesitates, ducks behind a wall. She closes her eyes and takes a deep breath. Looks down at her hands, which are shaking.

RUBY
(to herself)
Get a grip, bitch.

She puts her hands in her pockets. She takes another deep breath and walks back around to the entrance of the coffee shop.

Evan sits at a table near the door and next to a window. He looks at his phone, his leg shakes. Two drinks sit in front of him.

Ruby swallows hard and pulls open the door.

INT. CAMPUS COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Ruby enters the coffee shop and approaches Evan, who smiles and stands when he sees her.

EVAN
Hey!

He gives her a hug, she's stiff, her eyes dart around over his shoulder. Beat. He releases her and looks down at the table.

EVAN
I wasn't sure if you liked coffee
or not, so I got you a hot
chocolate.

Ruby smiles, removing her jacket and taking a seat.

RUBY
Oh, thank you. I actually hate
coffee so that was a good call.

She smiles awkwardly. Evan punches the air.

EVAN
Yes! I knew it, I don't know how I
just had a feeling.

Evan takes a seat, Ruby awkwardly follows his lead, halfway sitting when she realizes she needs to remove her jacket.

Her bracelet gets stuck in the sleeve. She makes small sounds as she tries to free it.

RUBY

Eh... Eh... Eh...

She gets her arm out, sits down fully, clearly embarrassed.

RUBY

I'll just warn you now, in case you couldn't tell by that terrific display, I'm extremely smooth and incredibly suave. I don't know if you're gonna be able to handle all this.

Evan laughs, takes a sip of his coffee.

EVAN

I honestly would have believed you for a second if your hands weren't shaking while you said that.

Ruby blushes, tucks her hands under her thighs.

RUBY

That's... uh, that's clearly one of my moves.

Evan laughs, smiling at her.

INT. CAMPUS COFFEE SHOP - LATER

It's evening now, there are 6 empty coffee cups sitting on the table, Evan has moved his seat closer to Ruby's. It's getting late, the coffee shop isn't as crowded now as it was before.

EVAN

I mean you seemed pretty drunk at the Halloween party though.

RUBY

I don't drink too often, just every now and then when my friends do.

EVAN

What? No way, how do you deal with stress then?

RUBY

I'm not sure if you should be drinking to deal with your stress, Evan.

EVAN

We're not talking about me right now. Come on, how do you deal with stress.

Ruby rolls her eyes, looks away awkwardly.

EVAN

Oooh, you do something, I can see it in your eyes. What are you like a furry or something?

Ruby's eyes widen.

RUBY

No!

(beat)

I um... I sometimes... Maybe set fires... A little.

Evan laughs.

EVAN

You set fires?

RUBY

Like just a little.

Evan laughs harder.

EVAN

I do not believe you.

Ruby rolls her eyes.

RUBY

Why would I be telling you this if it wasn't true, this is weird as shit.

EVAN

What? No it's fucking awesome, what are you like a pyromaniac or something?

Ruby shakes her head.

RUBY

Nah, pyromaniacs set fires compulsively and can't really control themselves. For me it's just kind of a stress reliever and for fun.

Evan nods.

EVAN

I guess I can understand that.

Evan looks down at his watch, raises his eyebrows.

EVAN

Shit.

Ruby frowns.

RUBY

Everything okay?

EVAN

Yeah, yeah, um. Okay so, basically it's 8 right now, and I am having a fantastic time with you, but I was supposed to leave at 6 because I was supposed to drive home for the weekend.

Ruby is surprised.

RUBY

Oh, man then you should go.

Evan sits back.

EVAN

In a minute, I'm honestly having a really good time, and I do not like depriving myself of good conversation.

Ruby smiles.

EXT. PATH - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby and Evan make their way down the path away from the coffee shop. They walk slowly. They chat but we can't hear what they're saying.

Ruby laughs at something he's saying.

They stop at a fork in the path. Evan looks around. He furrows his brow, sticks his hands in his pockets.

EVAN

So here's the deal, Ruby who doesn't shake. I'm gonna give it to you flat out because I don't wanna lead you on.

Ruby frowns, confused.

RUBY

A-Alright?

EVAN

I think you're really cool, and I would definitely like to see you again. That being said, I just got out of a relationship.

Ruby nods.

RUBY

Okay.

EVAN

So, I'm not really looking for anything serious right now, I feel like you seem like you're looking for a relationship, am I wrong?

Ruby's caught off guard by the question. She puts her hands into her pockets.

RUBY

I mean, kind of. Like, I'm not really looking for anything super serious.

EVAN

But you want a relationship?

Ruby mulls it over for a second, nods.

RUBY

Yeah, I mean eventually that's where I'd hope to land.

Evan nods.

EVAN

Okay, well I can't promise you that I'm gonna be down for that, but if it's okay with you and we could take things slow, I could be down for that in the future.

Ruby smiles.

RUBY

Yeah, that's definitely okay with me.

Evan smiles.

EVAN

I'm glad.

He hugs her. Ruby smiles at him, he starts walking away backwards.

EVAN

I will text you.

He turns and walks away. She watches him a beat, then heads the other way.

EXT. SAFIYA'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby pounds on Safiya's door urgently. After a beat, Safiya swings it open.

RUBY

DUDE.

Ruby pushes into the common room, Safiya watches her.

SAFIYA

Sure, come in.

INT. SAFIYA'S COMMON ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ruby smiles stupidly and falls onto the couch. Safiya cocks an eyebrow.

SAFIYA

I take it the date went well?

Ruby squeals.

RUBY

It went SO well.

SAFIYA

Fuck yeah!

She plops down on the couch next to Ruby.

SAFIYA

What happened?

RUBY

We like... like talked for like
four hours... and it wasn't
awkward, everything just flowed!
That's never happened to me before!

Ruby sits up.

RUBY

You know how I am, I am not good at
talking.

SAFIYA

That's fantastic!

RUBY

Hoooooooo I'm not used to this...

Safiya sits on the coffee table.

RUBY

He didn't even care that I'm weird
and set fires.

Safiya smiles, raises her eyebrows.

SAFIYA

You told him you set fires?!

RUBY

Yeah! I shouldn't have, but I did
and he found it amusing and not
scary. Hopefully.

Ruby rolls off the couch and onto the floor. She lets out a
loud, excited groan.

SAFIYA

Where the fuck has this boy been
this whole time?

Ruby's face is in the floor, her voice muffled by the carpet.

RUBY

In my dreams.

SAFIYA

I'm happy for you, Ruby. It's about time you had a good date.

Ruby rolls over onto her back.

RUBY

There have been so many bad dates, my dude.

SAFIYA

I think this is cause for celebration.

Ruby laughs.

RUBY

I agree.

SAFIYA

We should get in our pjs, drink wine, and watch a Bollywood movie.

RUBY

That is exactly what we should do.

Safiya pulls a box full of DVDs out from under the TV, starts to sift through them.

SAFIYA

When are you gonna text him?

Ruby sits down beside her.

RUBY

He said he'd text me.

Safiya nods, still looking through the DVDs. Ruby looks down at her phone screen, which displays Evan's contact in her phone. She smiles to herself.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

The parking lot of the college's Performing Arts Center is relatively large, many cars parked towards the front but few parked in the back.

Ruby's Toyota Camry sits solitarily in the back of the lot. It snows slightly.

INT. RUBY'S CAR

The car is cluttered, fast food wrappers scattered across the passenger seat. An air freshener hangs from the rearview mirror.

The car is off, the keys sit in the empty driver's seat.

Ruby lays across the back seat. She holds her phone in her hand, staring at it with a dull expression. The screen is completely dark. Still her gaze is unrelenting.

She sighs, puts it down on the floor. She crosses her hands on her stomach, looks around the car. Stares at the window. Beat.

She reaches into the pocket on the back of the passenger seat and pulls out a lighter. Flicks it a few times, watches the flame dance around, then lets it go out.

She analyzes the lighter. Furrows her brow. Sighs.

Her phone buzzes, she drops the lighter and scrambles for her phone. The screen displays a message from Safiya. She frowns, disappointed. It reads: "Hey are you okay?"

She stares at it for a beat. She looks around, unsure of how to answer.

She lets the phone fall to the ground. Beat.

There's a TAPPING on Ruby's window. Ruby looks up, startled slightly.

Walter stands outside, peering at her through the window.

WALTER

Ruby?

Ruby stares at him, still laying there.

WALTER

What are you doing?

Ruby takes him in for a beat then sits up and unlocks the passenger door. He opens it and gets in, kneeling backwards in the seat so he can face her.

WALTER

Hi.

She gives him a half-assed salute.

WALTER
Are you alright?

Ruby looks at her fingers, then the ceiling.

RUBY
Kinda... Not really... Kinda...

WALTER
Saf said you're not answering
texts. She's worried.

Ruby sits up, looks at her hands.

RUBY
I was gonna leave a day early for
break... but it started snowing and
I'm scared to drive in the snow.

Walter furrows his brow.

WALTER
Why didn't you tell anyone you were
going?

Ruby shrugs.

RUBY
I guess I just needed a minute to
myself. Wanted to disappear for a
little.

Walter nods.

WALTER
He didn't text you?

Ruby shakes her head, looks out the window.

RUBY
Nope.

WALTER
Did you try texting him?

Ruby nods.

RUBY
Three days ago. He ignored me.

Walter nods, he looks down sadly.

WALTER
People suck. Guys suck. I don't
know why.

Ruby nods bitterly.

RUBY
Yeah.

WALTER
Maybe the next one will be better.

Ruby shakes her head.

RUBY
Doubtful honestly. I don't think
it's ever gonna work out.

Walter furrows his brow.

WALTER
Why do you think that?

Ruby looks around, picks the lighter off the ground.

RUBY
I don't know.

WALTER
I think you do.

Ruby sucks her teeth. Beat.

RUBY
I don't know I just... feel like
something's... wrong with me.

This upsets Walter.

WALTER
What are you talking about?

RUBY
It's just that... I'm 20 years old,
right? And... I'm the only person I
know at my age that's never been in
a relationship or something close.

WALTER
That doesn't mean anything.

Ruby shakes her head.

RUBY

But it does, though. I couldn't even date until I... downloaded an app. And I've been on so many dates and they never, ever pan out.

She lays back down. Walter is getting angry hearing this.

RUBY

I just think I'm... Like for some reason no one wants to be with me, I'm starting to feel like something must be wrong with ME.

Her eyes are tearing up.

RUBY

Like I'm too weird to love or just... somehow generally undesirable.

There's silence. Walter processes this, furrows his brow. He gets out of the car.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Walter leaves the passenger door open, presses the unlock button and whips open Ruby's door.

WALTER

Get out.

Ruby sits up, confused.

RUBY

What?

WALTER

Get out of the car.

Ruby stands slowly, unsure of what he's doing. Walter wraps her in a tight hug. She's stiff at first, but then softens and accepts it.

Walter let's her go. She sits down on the seat, the door still open, Walter paces in front of her.

WALTER

Ruby, I don't even know where to start.

He runs his fingers through his hair, Ruby wipes her eyes with her hands.

WALTER

You are not too weird to love, and it's not your fault that Tinder's not working out.

Ruby looks down, Walter stops pacing.

WALTER

Ruby, people suck, and dating is really hard. I mean, Alice is my first girlfriend. We started dating a year ago, I was only nineteen. That's not that different than you.

RUBY

Yeah but--

WALTER

Ruby, dating is hard. Being a person is hard, but you are one of the most perseverant people I've ever met.

Ruby looks around awkwardly, Walter leans on the car over her.

WALTER

You keep getting knocked down, but you keep trying and I admire that.

Ruby snuffles, Walter pokes her forehead, she cracks a smile.

WALTER

Do not give up. You'll find the right person eventually, love just isn't something you can force.

Ruby nods.

RUBY

Okay.

Walter sits beside her.

WALTER

And you're not too weird. I think your weirdness is your best quality. If someone can't accept that about you they're not worth your time to begin with.

Ruby nods, laughs weakly.

RUBY
I thought Saf was supposed to be
the wise friend.

Walter rubs her shoulder.

WALTER
Surprise, bitch, I know things.

They both laugh.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. RUBY'S COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Everything still completely black, we can't tell what location we're in. There's the sound of excited WHISPERS and clumsy scuffling.

WHISPER ONE
Sssssh she's coming!

WHISPER TWO
Get down more!

There's the CLANG of a chair tipping over followed by SHUHING.

WHISPER THREE
Quiet!

SAFIYA
(whispering)
She's gonna be here any minute!

The darkness is interrupted by the front door swinging open, allowing light from outside to spill into the apartment.

Ruby stands in the doorway with Charlie at her side. Charlie smiles from ear to ear, Ruby looks confused.

The lights in the apartment snap on, revealing a huge crowd of Ruby's friends and acquaintances.

CROWD
Surprise!

Ruby's jaw drops, she's completely shocked and disoriented.

SUPER: "March."

Charlie ushers her into the apartment while Safiya, Walter, Alice, and Ryan separate from the crowd to hug her.

RUBY
What the hell?!

People swarm her, all wishing her well.

INT. RUBY'S COMMON ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The room has transformed into a full on party, the lights are colorful and melt through the rainbow while loud music plays and college students mingle.

Ruby, now dressed in party clothes, stands at the bar while Safiya mixes her a drink.

RUBY
I can't believe you guys did this
for me!

Safiya looks for something on the counter.

SAFIYA
Dude, of course we did! We love
you! -- Did you see where I put the
Fireball?

Ruby points behind Safiya, where a large bottle of Fireball Whiskey sits on the counter by the sink. Safiya nods, grabs it and pours it into the cup in front of her.

SAFIYA
You know me, I'll take any chance I
can get to DJ.

Ruby smiles, Safiya hands her the cup.

RUBY
Thank you, really.

Safiya nods.

SAFIYA
Don't mention it, Girl!

Ruby looks at the drink.

RUBY
What's in it?

Safiya grins.

SAFIYA
Fireball, sparkling apple cider,
And an apple slice.
(MORE)

SAFIYA (CONT'D)
I call it the Match Stick, in honor
of you and your fire obsession.

Ruby smiles, takes a sip, winces.

RUBY
That is strong!

SAFIYA
It's your twenty-first, dude, drink
up.

INT. RUBY'S COMMON ROOM - LATER

Ruby stands in conversation with Ryan by the snack table,
both are a little drunk and laughing. Ruby holds a drink in
her hand.

Charlie runs up to Ruby, drink in hand.

CHARLIE
Ruby, as your friend and roommate
it is my official duty to get you
LIT off your ASS tonight! Chug
this!

Charlie holds her drink up to Ruby's face, forcing her to
drink it.

Ruby pulls back.

RUBY
What's in it?

CHARLIE
I don't know!

She pushes the drink back up to Ruby's mouth, she drinks
more. Charlie keeps the cup there, watching her drink.

CHARLIE
Keep going, keep going.

INT. RUBY'S COMMON ROOM - LATER

Ruby, Safiya, Charlie, and Alice are all sufficiently drunk.
They dance and sing along loudly to the song "Don't Stop Me
Now" by Queen.

Ryan sees her from across the room, cups his hands around his
mouth and starts chanting:

RYAN
Chug! Chug! Chug!

Pretty soon the whole room is chanting "Chug" at her. She looks around, laughing. She shrugs and chugs the drink, throws the cup on the ground. Everyone cheers.

EXT. RUBY'S BALCONY - LATER

Ruby stands on the balcony outside her apartment where dozens of people from the party have migrated outside to cool down and smoke.

Ruby and Alice stand in conversation. Alice has her hand on Ruby's shoulder.

ALICE
Ruby, you are so beautiful!

Ruby puts a hand over her heart.

RUBY
Thank you! So are you!

ALICE
You don't deserve all the bullshit these Tinder men are putting you through!

Ruby nods.

RUBY
Thank you, I don't think I do either!

Alice touches Ruby's face.

ALICE
You are a strong, confident woman and I know you're gonna find the right person soon!

Alice hugs Ruby. Charlie, swaying with intoxication, appears behind Alice. She makes direct eye contact with Ruby and grabs Alice's butt.

She runs off, Alice jumps up, startled.

ALICE
Did someone just grab my butt?!

INT. RUBY'S COMMON ROOM - LATER

Ruby stands in the Common Room talking to Walter. Walter is holding a drink, he's plastered.

The crowd starts chanting at Ruby again.

CROWD
Chug! Chug! Chug! Chug!

Ruby looks around, laughing confusedly.

RUBY
This is water!

They keep chanting, she shrugs and downs the drink. They all cheer.

INT. RUBY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Morning sun pours into Ruby's bedroom in between slats in the blinds, illuminating the pile of clothing and other belongings that currently constitutes her bed.

Beneath the pile, Ruby lays sleeping messily in a strangely contorted position.

Her makeup from the night before is only half removed, her hair is a mess. She wears only a Queen T-shirt and a pair of red panties.

The stillness of morning is interrupted by an ALARM screeching out of her phone, which awakens her with a snort.

Her eyes, bloodshot, shift around the room as she takes in her surroundings. She groans, pushes herself up to her elbows, then to her knees.

She digs around in her bed for her phone, finally finding it under her a blanket at the foot of the bed and silences the alarm.

She rubs her eyes, which squint at the light, and collapses back down onto her back with another groan.

After a beat, her feet sling over the side of the bed, she's only wearing one sock. She trudges towards the door, stopping for a second somewhere in the middle to dry heave before proceeding.

INT. RUBY'S BATHROOM

Ruby stumbles into the bathroom, eyes barely open, and locks the door behind her before flinging herself towards the counter.

She puts her phone down and examines herself in the mirror. She grim-ices at her own reflection, washes her face.

Face now clean, she puts the toilet lid down and sits on it, leans her head on her hands. She moans with discomfort. Beat.

She grabs her phone from the counter, unlocks it. It automatically opens to Tinder, she rolls her eyes. Scrolls through it, there are several new matches at the top.

RUBY
 (to herself)
 Guess Drunk Ruby got a little swipe
 happy...

She starts swiping through Tinder, swipes left on a few profiles. She lands on the profile of Nate, she jumps slightly and lets out a tiny scream. She looks around wildly, then swipes left.

She locks her phone and puts it down, puts her head in her hands. Let's out a tiny high pitched scream.

INT. ART GALLERY - ABSTRACT ART ROOM - EVENING

Ruby and Safiya stand in the college's Art Gallery, staring wide eyed at a large, abstract painting that we don't see. Safiya is up beat and in a good mood, Ruby still isn't completely herself.

Safiya squints, trying to figure the painting out.

SAFIYA
 I think the use of purple... is...
 a sign of... the Artist's internal
 struggle?

RUBY
 You thought that about the green
 and the yellow too.

Safiya squints.

SAFIYA
 Is it about sex?

Ruby stares at it harder, we finally see the painting. They both tilt their heads.

RUBY
It's probably about sex.

It's definitely about sex.

INT. ART GALLERY - SCULPTURE AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby and Safiya sit on a bench in the sculpture section of the school's art gallery.

Safiya has a journal in front of her where she jots down notes while Ruby munches on a cheese stick and looks around aimlessly.

SAFIYA
What's the difference between
contemporary and modern?

Ruby chews, somewhat removed from the conversation.

RUBY
Umm, they're um... they're not the
same.

She trails off. Safiya looks up at her, bewildered.

SAFIYA
That's the best answer you got?

Ruby nods, peeling off a little bit of her cheese stick and lowering it into her mouth from above.

RUBY
Yurt.

Safiya frowns, caps her pen.

SAFIYA
So are you not giving a shit about
studying because you're still
hungover or is it because
something's bothering you?

Ruby takes another bite of cheese.

RUBY
Yes.

Safiya rolls her eyes, closes the notebook.

SAFIYA

Talk to Saf.

Ruby thinks, shakes her head.

RUBY

There's nothing really to talk about, it's the same old shit.

Safiya nods.

SAFIYA

Tinder escapades still taking a toll on you?

Ruby thinks about this, nods.

RUBY

I'm taking a bit of a hiatus, I guess. Ever since what happened with Evan I've kind of been burned out.

Safiya nods.

SAFIYA

That's valid, that was hard.

Ruby pulls another cheese stick from her pocket.

RUBY

Also, Ghosts of Tinder's past keep popping up everywhere to remind me of my mistakes.

SAFIYA

In person or on Tinder?

RUBY

Both. I think I've cycled through every single man on this campus. And they all sucked.

SAFIYA

Sounds about right.

As Ruby goes to speak again, Raymond rounds the corner into the room. He's dressed in a flannel and khakis, and name tag associated with the gallery hanging around his neck.

RAYMOND

Excuse me guys.

The girls turn around to face him, Ruby's face goes white when she sees him.

Raymond's face contorts in discomfort. He avoids eye contact.

RAYMOND

Uuuuh, Gallery's closing in 5 minutes, please finish up and make your way out.

SAFIYA

Okay, no problem.

Raymond turns on his heel and leaves, his face shifting into a huge cringe as he goes. Ruby's face falls into her hands.

RUBY

(whispering)
Aaaaaaaaaaah!

Safiya stifles laughter.

EXT. WOODS - LATER THAT NIGHT

Ruby makes her way through the woods by herself. It snows gently, flakes falling gracefully and adding to the thin layer of snow already on the ground.

Ruby has traded her signature leather jacket, now, for a burgundy pea coat, and her converse all-stars for a pair of boots.

She plops down between two trees.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - MOMENTS LATER

A small fire now sits across from her, she prods it with a stick, trying to keep it from going out. She puts another log on, and then a piece of notebook paper. The fire perks up.

There's the sound of sticks CRACKING behind her.

She whips around to see Gabe making his way through the woods. She relaxes when she sees him.

GABE

Hey there.

She offers a passive wave, hoping he'll leave her alone.

GABE

What are you doing out here?

Ruby rolls her eyes, annoyed by his presence.

RUBY

What's it look like?

Gabe walks around in front of the fire, leans on a tree.

GABE

Looks like you're having a little
campfire out in the woods all by
yourself, which is pretty weird I'm
not gonna lie.

Ruby, deadpan, grabs a water bottle from her backpack, opens it up and dumps it onto the fire, sparks fly everywhere and the flames roar. This whole time she maintains eye contact with Gabe, who jumps back a little.

GABE

Holy shit! What the hell was that?

RUBY

Vodka.

GABE

Jeez!

RUBY

What do you want?

Gabe shrugs, looking around.

GABE

I'm just trying to be friendly, I
come out here to smoke all the time
but I don't run into people too
often.

Ruby pokes the fire.

GABE

Didn't we meet one time? You look
familiar.

RUBY

You were at my Halloween party.

Gabe squints, digging through his memories.

GABE

Were you, by any chance, pregnant?

Ruby rolls her eyes, pokes the fire again.

RUBY
With a soccer ball.

Gabe nods.

GABE
Right, right... I don't remember
much I was pretty gone that night.

Ruby nods, disinterested in his company. Gabe takes a pipe
and a lighter out of his pocket.

GABE
Do you mind if I smoke?

Ruby shakes her head.

RUBY
I don't give a fuck what you do.

GABE
(sarcastic)
You're very polite.

Ruby sighs, softening. The song "Take Me Home Tonight," by
Eddie Money starts softly.

RUBY
Sorry... I'm kinda going through
some shit. Came out here to blow
off steam.

Gabe sits.

GABE
Same, well not steam, smoke. I'm
blowing off smoke.

Ruby looks up at him, cocking an eyebrow cynically. Gabe
grins wryly.

GABE
Get it, cause like I'm blowing
smoke out of my lungs. Getting
high.

Ruby laughs slightly at this.

RUBY
That was not funny at all.

Gabe grins wider.

GABE
Nah it was great, I'm actually a
really funny guy.

Ruby rolls her eyes, amused. Gabe takes another hit.

GABE
You always--

He points at the fire and the woods, trying to find the words
to describe what she's doing.

GABE
Light fires by yourself in the
woods in the middle of the night?

RUBY
Sometimes.

Gabe nods, looking around.

GABE
Dope.

Ruby laughs slightly at this. Gabe takes another hit, coughs
slightly. He extends his free hand to her.

GABE
I'm Gabe, by the way.

Ruby stares at his hand for a beat.

SMASH CUT:

INT. RUBY'S COMMON ROOM - LATER

Ruby and Gabe crash through the door to Ruby's Apartment,
making out aggressively. They clumsily try to make out and
walk towards the bedroom at the same time. It's awkward.

INT. RUBY'S BEDROOM - Ruby and Gabe collapse onto Ruby's bed.

Hands everywhere.

Lips on lips.

Gabe kissing Ruby's neck.

Ruby's fingers running through Gabe's hair.

Gabe grabbing Ruby's ass.

Ruby kissing him harder.

Gabe's hands slides up Ruby's thigh.

Gabe kissing Ruby's ear.

Gabe kissing Ruby's lips.

Gabe trying to cuddle Ruby.

Ruby realizing, with dismay, what she's doing.

The song fades out, Ruby pushes Gabe off of her, flustered.

Ruby gets to her feet, begins pacing and mumbling to herself.

RUBY

(mumbling)

What am I doing? What am I doing?

What the fuck am I doing?

Gabe sits up, concerned.

GABE

Are you okay? Did I do something--

Ruby shakes her head.

RUBY

No, no... It's not you. I just don't know who the fuck I am right now and I think I'm about to have a mental breakdown.

GABE

What are you talking about?

Ruby's eyes dart around the floor, looking for an answer.

RUBY

I do not usually do shit like this.

GABE

Shit like what?

RUBY

Making out with random woodland potheads.

Gabe clutches his chest, feigning offense.

GABE

Ouch, my woodland pothead heart.

Ruby frowns, stops pacing.

RUBY

That's not what I meant. I'm sorry.

She climbs back onto the bed, sits beside Gabe.

GABE

Nope, nope, I understand. You usually make out with random potheads from the city. The woods is new territory and it's treacherous.

Ruby frowns at him, he backs off.

GABE

I'm sorry. Why does this upset you so much?

RUBY

If you couldn't already tell, I'm kind of super inexperienced. A few months ago I hadn't even kissed anyone and now I'm making out with a stranger.

Ruby rubs her neck.

RUBY

Who the fuck am I?

Gabe furrows his brow.

GABE

I'm really sorry if I went to far, I really didn't mean to--

Ruby shakes her head.

RUBY

No you're really fine, I'm just overwhelmed.

Gabe nods.

GABE

If it helps, I really couldn't tell you were inexperienced until you said so.

Ruby looks up at him in disbelief.

RUBY

Really?

GABE

To be honest, I'm not super experienced either, I was actually nervous you'd be able to tell. I've only done this, um, activity with one other person before.

Ruby looks down at her hands.

RUBY

Seriously?

Gabe nods. Ruby processes this.

INT. RUBY'S BEDROOM - DAWN

Ruby and Gabe sit cross legged and facing each other on Ruby's bed. Outside the window, the sun is just barely beginning to inch into the sky.

GABE

And she told me that I was too hairy and then she kicked me out of her house.

Ruby raises her brows.

RUBY

She broke up with you because of your body hair?

Gabe laughs.

GABE

Honestly I think it was just the beard.

RUBY

That's fucking insane.

GABE

I know.

RUBY

One time on a date, a guy ate all my chicken tenders and then had the audacity to make me pay for them.

Gabe's jaw drops over-dramatically.

GABE

No he didn't!

Ruby laughs.

RUBY

True shit, I'm not the type of person who thinks the man has to pay for everything, it's not like that. It's just, if you're gonna eat more of my dinner than me, you should pay for it.

Gabe nods.

GABE

That's completely valid.

They both laugh. Birds CHIRP outside.

GABE

Are the birds chirping already?!

Ruby yawns, looks out the window.

RUBY

I think the sun's rising.

Gabe gets up, flings himself to the window.

GABE

Damn it! I gotta stop doin' this shit.

RUBY

You stay up this late all the time?

Gabe nods.

GABE

It's a problem.

He grabs his shoes from the floor and starts to put them back on. He eyes Charlie's empty bed.

GABE

Is your roommate alive?

Ruby yawns, gets off the bed.

RUBY

She sleeps at her boyfriend's place sometimes.

Gabe nods, shoes now on. He grabs his jacket and walks to the door. Ruby follows him.

RUBY
This was definitely a unique
experience.

INT. RUBY'S COMMON ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They make their way to the front door. Gabe grins wryly,
turns around to face her.

GABE
Unique in a good way?

Ruby nods. She opens the door and he steps out onto the
balcony.

GABE
I'll... see you around I guess.

Ruby smiles.

RUBY
Yeah.

He goes to walk away. Ruby watches him, a question on her
lips she's hesitant to ask.

He nears the stairs, she breaks her silence.

RUBY
Hey, Gabe?

He looks back at her.

RUBY
Can I ask you a kind of random
question?

He nods.

RUBY
Am I, like, totally the weirdest
bitch you've ever met?

Gabe smiles confusedly, he thinks about this for a second.

GABE
Um, you're pretty... original. I
think it's cool though.

Ruby nods.

RUBY
Goodnight.

She shuts the door, leans against it. She looks around the room, brow furrowed in complete bewilderment. She cracks a smile.

INT. PUBLIC RESTROOM - DAY

The restroom in the Kore is dingy, dirty, and run down. There's graffiti everywhere and grime around every corner.

Ruby stands in front of the mirror, adjusting the collar of her shirt. On the side of her neck is a massive hickey that she's trying desperately to hide.

She stares at herself for a second, then exits the bathroom.

INT. THE KORE DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ruby makes her way across the Kore to a table in the corner where Alice, Safiya, and Charlie are sitting and chatting over food.

Ruby sits beside Charlie, a plate of cheese fries before her.

CHARLIE

I'm telling you, it doesn't matter
who he is.

Alice and Safiya both watch Charlie, Safiya is unamused while Alice is holding back laughter.

CHARLIE

He will always get scared the first
few times you touch his butt.

Ruby's eyebrows shoot up, Safiya rolls her eyes, Alice puts her face in her palm.

SAFIYA

I wasn't arguing that you were
wrong about that, I just don't
understand why you insisted on
grabbing every single person's ass
at Ruby's party.

Charlie waves a piece of pizza around as she speaks.

CHARLIE

It was scientific research.

Alice looks up at Charlie through frustrated laughter.

ALICE

Wait! Was it you that grabbed my
butt out on the balcony?

Charlie winks and clicks at Alice. Safiya and Alice laugh,
Ruby does too.

Ruby picks up one of her cheese fries, the cheese pulls and
drips. She cranes her neck to lower it into her mouth. As she
does this, her hickey comes into view.

Charlie's eyes go wide.

CHARLIE

Ruby, is that a hickey?!

Ruby blushes, nearly chokes on her french fries.

RUBY

(mouth full)

Shit.

Safiya and Alice both lean in, prepared to jeer her.

ALICE

Oooooo, Ruby has a hickey!

Ruby struggles to chew her food.

RUBY

Lower your voices!

SAFIYA

When did that happen?

Ruby swallows and wipes her hands on a napkin, embarrassed.

RUBY

I was gonna wait for it to come up
naturally but, um, I kind of made
out with someone last night.

The girls all lean in, waiting for more information.

ALICE

Was he from Tinder?

Ruby shakes her head.

RUBY

We, met, I guess, in the woods last
night while I was making a fire.

Charlie and Alice are shocked and amused.

SAFIYA

You brought home a random boy from
the woods?!

Ruby weighs this in her head.

RUBY

Kind of? We'd met once before.

CHARLIE

Yeeeeeeeeesssss! That's my girl.

Charlie holds her hand up. Ruby stares at it for a moment,
then rolls her eyes and gives her a high five, grinning.

SAFIYA

What happened?

RUBY

We made out, and then we talked a
lot... it was actually really nice
we were up until the sun rose.

Charlie and Alice smile.

ALICE

Aaw.

INT. THE KORE DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The girls have now finished eating. Ruby dumps the remains of
her meal into the trash while her friends wait for her by the
door.

When she's finished they all exit the Kore.

EXT. KORE - CONTINUOUS

The girls make their way down the path, talking while Ruby
looks up at the sky. There's a tap on Ruby's shoulder.

GABE (O.S.)

Ruby.

Ruby turns around, her friends stopping also. Gabe stands in
front of her, an awkward smile on his face.

GABE

Hey.

Ruby smiles, pleasantly surprised to see him.

RUBY

Hey.

Her friends look on, intrigued. She turns around to them.

RUBY

You guys go to Saf's, I'll meet you there.

Her friends all catch on, Safiya and Alice try overzealously to act natural while Charlie just stands there, nodding proudly.

ALICE

Sure, dude.

SAFIYA

See you in a few.

Alice and Safiya turn to walk away, Charlie holds her gaze another beat, winks, then follows them. Ruby turns back to Gabe.

RUBY

What's up?

Gabe gropes the back of his neck.

GABE

Uh, well, I saw you walking out of the Kore just now, thought I'd come say hi.

Ruby nods.

RUBY

Hi.

Gabe grins.

GABE

Hi.

Ruby looks at him expectantly.

GABE

I, uh, I had a really good time with you last night.

Ruby smiles, rubbing her arm.

RUBY

I had a good time too.

Gabe nods, momentarily hyped up before returning to his previous awkward state.

GABE

I'm actually glad I ran into you, I wasn't sure when I was gonna see you again. I don't wanna keep you from your friends but, uh, well, I really liked talking to you last night, I also enjoyed making out with you, um, but like I was wondering if you wanted to maybe at some point, like, hang out and talk more?

Ruby laughs, amused and flattered. Gabe looks around, already angry at himself.

RUBY

Do you mean a date?

Gabe nods, bites his lip anxiously.

GABE

Yeah, a date. That is what I was trying to say, but I'm an idiot and terrible at this.

Ruby laughs, blushing slightly.

GABE

Ruby will you go on a date with me?
Is that better.

Ruby puts a hand on his arm, looks into his eyes.

RUBY

I'd love that.

Gabe grins, touches her hand.

GABE

Cool.

They look at each other for a beat. Gabe starts to walk away backwards.

GABE

I'm gonna go punch myself in the face for being so not-suave and I will wait a grace period of one day to text you and confirm plans.

RUBY
How polite of you.

Gabe shrugs, he nearly backs into a person walking their dog but doesn't notice. Ruby giggles.

GABE
I'm just adhering to basic social norms.

He backs into a light pole, he looks at it, bewildered, for a moment, then turns back to Ruby, tries to play it off.

GABE
I'm really killing this suave thing.

RUBY
You know, by pointing out the social norms I'm pretty sure you're not following them anymore.

Gabe tucks his hands into the pockets of his sweatshirt.

GABE
Ah, well, where's the fun in that?

Ruby laughs at this.

EXT. LAWN - AFTERNOON

A large lawn sits at the edge of the college's campus beside the dorms and the academic buildings.

Ruby and Gabe lay beneath a tree side by side and staring up at the clouds, which are white and puffy.

They're close together but not touching. Both are laughing.

SUPER: "April."

GABE
That one looks like a giant eating an ice cream cone.

RUBY
Oh it does, the one next to it looks like a crocodile.

Gabe nods.

GABE
I fought a crocodile once.

Ruby grins wryly at him, cranes her neck to look at him.

RUBY
No you didn't.

Gabe smiles, still looking at the sky.

GABE
Okay yeah, I didn't. But my Uncle
did.

RUBY
Did it bite him?

Gabe shakes his head.

GABE
No, but it rolled on top of him and
he almost drowned. My Aunt pulled
it off of him. She's known as the
Crocodile Champion of Melbourne,
Florida.

Ruby stares at him, amused but feigning irritation.

RUBY
You're full of shit.

Gabe laughs.

GABE
I can't believe you even bought
part of that.

Ruby rips a little grass out of the lawn and drops it on
Gabe's face. They both laugh, then return to staring at the
sky.

RUBY
That one looks like a bear on a
bicycle.

GABE
No it does not!

RUBY
Yes it does! Look at it harder!

Gabe squints at the cloud which, in fact, does not look like
a bear on a bicycle. Gabe looks at Ruby, their faces are very
close together.

GABE
It really doesn't.

They stare at each other, their faces close. They maintain eye contact. Beat.

RUBY
So are you gonna kiss me or do I
have to do it?

Gabe smirks.

GABE
You can kiss yourself? I didn't
know that was possible.

RUBY
Shut the fuck up.

She crashes her lips onto his. He pulls her on top of her. They stay there for a beat.

As they kiss, an ant crawls across Gabe's forehead, his eyes shoot open and he stops kissing her.

GABE
I think there's something on my
face.

Ruby pulls away, her eyes widen when she realizes what it is.

RUBY
It's an ant!

GABE
Get it off!

She hesitantly brushes at it with her fingers, makes tiny squeaks as she does so.

RUBY
I don't like bugs. I don't like
bugs. I don't like bugs.

Gabe watches her, taken aback. She finally swats the ant away.

GABE
Did ya get it?

Ruby nods, laughing.

GABE
That was pathetic.

RUBY
I don't like bugs.

Gabe looks in her eyes.

GABE
You are absolutely adorable.

They kiss again.

EXT. WEIT PATH - LATER

Gabe and Ruby walk hand in hand up the path to Ruby's apartment. Gabe looks around, there's something he needs to say, he's not sure how to put it.

They stop outside Ruby's apartment, turn to face each other.

RUBY
I had a really nice time, today.

Gabe smiles.

GABE
I did too.

They kiss, when they pull away Gabe rests his forehead on hers, she looks at him with confusion, not sure what to do with this action except accept it. Gabe takes a deep breath.

GABE
There's something I think I should tell you.

Ruby pulls back, confused.

RUBY
What's up?

Gabe takes a deep breath, holds both her hands.

GABE
So we've been hanging out for a few weeks now, and I really like you, like a lot. Like a shitload, I think you're fucking rad.

Ruby nods. Gabe looks down.

RUBY
So what's the problem?

GABE
I just... I feel like I need to let you know, before this, you know, goes any further...
(MORE)

GABE (CONT'D)

I'm not gonna be able to commit to a relationship or anything.

Ruby frowns, pulls her hands away from him.

RUBY

What--

GABE

Not because I wouldn't want to!

Ruby scowls, confused.

RUBY

Why then?

Gabe sighs.

GABE

This is my last semester here.

Ruby watches him, waits for him to explain further.

GABE

I've transferred around a lot, and no matter where I go I never seem to find the right place.

Ruby's annoyance starts to fade into disappointment.

GABE

I'm starting to think college isn't for me.

RUBY

You're dropping out?

Gabe nods.

GABE

And moving to Florida to work for my uncle until I figure out what I wanna do with my life.

Ruby stares down at the ground, processing this.

GABE

Obviously, I made these plans before I met you. And I don't wanna stop hanging out with you, I just don't want to lead you on.

Ruby nods, sits down on the steps to her apartment. She stares out into space, trying to process all of that.

GABE
I'm really sorry.

RUBY
Florida? Like actually Florida?

Gabe nods. Ruby looks down at the ground.

RUBY
(under her breath)
Tits.

GABE
What?

Ruby sighs, looks up at him. Tries to gather her bearings.

RUBY
I appreciate your honesty.

Gabe looks down sadly, Ruby looks as though she's trying to solve a math equation. She stands.

RUBY
I don't think it's a good idea for us to keep dating if you're leaving. I think we just try to be friends.

Gabe nods, walking closer to her.

GABE
If that's what you want then it's okay with me. I just don't wanna stop spending time with you.

Ruby nods, getting closer to him.

RUBY
Even though we really like each other.

Gabe nods, getting closer still.

GABE
Even though we really like each other.

They move even closer.

RUBY
Just friends.

GABE

Friends.

They stare at each other. Beat. They kiss.

INT. RUBY'S BEDROOM

Ruby and Gabe crash into her bedroom, making out aggressively. They back their way up to the bed, kissing while leaning against it.

Gabe scoops Ruby up and plops her onto the bed. She giggles, he grins, removes his shoes and climbs up with her.

He gets on top of her, kissing her lips and then her neck. She lets out a small moan, strokes his hair.

He keeps going, his hands slide up and down her body. He runs his hand up her thigh, he's going fast.

She opens her eyes, looks around, her expression slightly discomfited.

His hand finds the waistband of her pants, he slides it towards the top button and stops kissing her for a moment.

GABE

Is it okay if I undo your pants?

Ruby's face becomes flushed, she looks around awkwardly.

RUBY

Um... Actually I'd prefer if we take things slow. I don't really wanna go that far yet.

Gabe nods and smiles reassuringly, moves his hand back to her hip.

GABE

That's fine with me, is it okay if I keep doing what I've been doing?

Ruby smiles and nods.

RUBY

Yeah, that's okay with me.

He goes back to kissing her neck, she smiles and closes her eyes.

EXT. RUBY'S APARTMENT - HOURS LATER

The door to Ruby's apartment opens, Ruby and Gabe stand in the door way, both look slightly disheveled but are grinning from ear to ear.

Gabe steps outside, turns around to face Ruby. He pulls her closer to him, gives her a long kiss.

INT. RUBY'S COMMON ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby shuts the door to the apartment, leans against it. She's smiling, but her face falls slowly, reality setting in.

Across the room, Charlie sits cross legged on the loveseat, a bowl of ramen in her hands and a few noodles still dangling out fo her mouth. She stares at Ruby.

Ruby stares at her, opens her mouth to speak but nothing comes out.

CHARLIE
(mouth full)
You good?

Ruby shakes her head, flabbergasted.

RUBY
I'm in fuckin' trouble.

INT. SAFIYA'S COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Ruby, Safiya, Walter, Alice, Ryan, Charlie, and Gabe sit in Safiya's common room. All of them drink either wine or beer and sit around a table playing Uno and eating pizza.

Safiya places a draw four onto the pile, Walter groans.

WALTER
DAMNIT SAF.

SAFIYA
Uno!

Super: "May."

Walter adds 4 more cards to his hand, which is already incredibly dense. Ryan points and laughs at Walter.

RYAN
Dude you have like ALL the fucking cards in your hand right now.

Walter rolls his eyes.

WALTER
(sardonic)
No way! I had no idea.

ALICE
What color is it now?

SAFIYA
Red.

Gabe is next, he only has one card in his hand. He frowns.

GABE
Damn it!

Safiya grins, Gabe frowns, looking at his card.

GABE
So close...

He places his card in the pile, it's a red 2.

GABE
But so far, Saf, good game.

Safiya's face falls while "oos" irrupt from the others.

CHARLIE
Shiiiiiiit.

Safiya starts collecting the cards.

SAFIYA
Whatever, it's just a game.

Ryan gets close to her face.

RYAN
That's what a loser would say.

SAFIYA
Boy, I will literally punch you
into next week.

Ruby sits beside Gabe, who has his arm slung around her shoulders. She finishes off her wine, gets up and goes to the counter.

RUBY
Anybody want a refill?

ALICE
I'll take one.

Ruby grabs the wine bottle from the counter and fills her glass and Alice's.

ALICE
When time are you guys all leaving for break tomorrow?

SAFIYA
I'm leaving in the morning.

WALTER
Same.

CHARLIE
I'm not going until tomorrow night.

RYAN
Ha, they're gonna have to drag me off this campus!

Everyone looks to Ruby, who's distracted, staring at Gabe.

ALICE
What about you Ruby?

Ruby snaps out of her trance.

RUBY
Hm? Oh, um, I'm leaving tomorrow night, Gabe's leaving first thing in the morning.

Gabe nods, looks at his phone.

GABE
Speaking of which, I should probably be getting back to my dorm to finish packing.

Everyone nods, the air is tense. Gabe gets up, puts on his jacket.

Ruby's friends look sadly to one another, then at her.

Ruby looks down, tries to pretend she's fine. Gabe goes around, gives hugs to all of Ruby's friends.

GABE
It was really great to meet you all, I'm sad it happened so late in the semester.

WALTER

You too, man.

SAFIYA

It's been good having you around.

Gabe turns to Ruby, his face is pale but he forces a smile. Ruby grabs her leather jacket from a chair.

RUBY

I'll walk you back to your dorm.

He smiles, takes her hand.

RUBY

(to her friends)

I'll be back in a bit.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - NIGHT

The campus of Ruby's school is relatively empty and quiet as most students have already headed home for summer.

Ruby and Gabe make their way across main campus, holding hands. They're quiet.

Ruby looks at though she wants to speak, but can't find the courage to break the silence.

Gabe looks up at the sky, takes in the stars.

RUBY

So, your Dad's getting here at,
like, 7 am, right?

Gabe looks down, he frowns, then forces himself to smile.

GABE

Yeah, it's hella early I don't know
how I'm gonna wake up for that.

Ruby glowers, her eyes a bit glossy, she stops and looks into Gabe's eyes.

RUBY

So... this is the last time I'm
ever gonna see you...

Gabe searches her eyes, his forced smiling fighting to remain on his face.

GABE

I... I mean...

He looks around, sees a bench a few feet away from them. He sits.

GABE

Let's not think about that right now, Um... Just... Just sit with me for a minute.

Ruby stares at him sadly. Gabe leans against the backrest, straddles the bench and pats the spot in front of him.

GABE

Come on, please?

Ruby sighs, joins him on the bench. She sits between his legs, her back leaning on his torso. He wraps his arms around her.

They're quiet. Beat. Birds begin CHIRPING somewhere in the night. Gabe looks around, puzzled.

GABE

Why are these birds chirping already? It's only, like, midnight!

Ruby doesn't respond, she stares ahead quietly.

GABE

I feel like they always do that this time of year. It's so annoying.

Ruby turns around to face him.

RUBY

Gabe what gives?

GABE

What do you mean?

Ruby stares at him, expectantly. He relents.

GABE

What? Am I not allowed to want to spend every last possible second with you before I go?

Ruby looks down, shakes her head.

RUBY

This is exactly why I thought it'd be a bad idea for us to keep dating.

Gabe's face falls, he furrows his brow.

GABE

Whoa, whoa, whoa, don't act like us
dating is my fault, you dated me
just as much as I dated you.

Ruby puts her head in her hands, exasperated.

RUBY

That's not what I mean.

GABE

What do you mean?

Ruby looks around.

RUBY

Goodbyes are just really hard,
okay?

Gabe nods, takes her hands.

GABE

What if it doesn't have to be a
goodbye?

Ruby looks up at him, confused.

RUBY

What do you mean?

Gabe looks around, trying to find the words.

GABE

I mean... What if we don't say
goodbye?

RUBY

What, so like you'd stay?

Gabe shakes his head.

GABE

We could keep things up when I
leave, long distance.

Ruby's eyes grow watery.

GABE

Ruby, I really, really care about
you. You're the most...

(MORE)

GABE (CONT'D)
awesome, beautiful, weird girl I've
ever met. Why should we throw that
away just because I'm moving?

Ruby looks around, takes her hands back from him. She shakes her head.

RUBY
Gabe... I can't do that.

He touches her cheek.

GABE
Sure you can--

RUBY
No, I can't. Gabe, I like you so
much, and you're the first guy
I've, like, even somewhat dated
or... whatever this was exactly...
But I've been looking for a
relationship for a really long
time, and that's still what I want.

GABE
But this would be a relationship.

Ruby shakes her head, swings her legs over the side of the bench.

RUBY
Not the kind that I'm looking for,
Gabe you're moving away, and I'm
not. That's not gonna change.

GABE
But--

RUBY
Can you tell me that there's a
possibility of that changing?

Gabe stares at her, he exhales. Beat.

GABE
No.

Ruby nods. They sit there in silence. Beat. Ruby stands, Gabe does too. They hug.

GABE
You're right. We should've just
been friends.

Ruby laughs sadly. They release the hug, Gabe starts to back away.

GABE

If you're ever in Florida... hit me
up.

She smiles.

RUBY

I will.

He takes one last long look at her.

GABE

I'll see you around.

RUBY

See you around.

They part ways, the song "Here I Go Again" by Whitesnake starts to play softly in the background.

Ruby stops a little ways down the path to tie her shoe, she's wearing her converse all-stars.

Once it's tied, she pulls her headphones from her pocket, places them on and tucks her hands into her pockets.

She sighs, looks around as if searching for something. Her eyes dart around, whatever it is, she finds it. She sighs, her face relaxing, her expression setting into something somewhat content.

She continues walking.

BLACK.

END OF
SCREENPLAY.