

SWINGS AND MISSES
(Working Title)

Written by
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FADE IN:

EARTH AS SEEN FROM SPACE

A billion points of light dotting the continents.

SCOTT (V.O.)
Eight billion people over seven
continents.

Lines connecting multiple dots forms a world-wide spiderweb.

SCOTT (V.O.)
And we're all connected...

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

ESTABLISH intersecting streets as seen from the sky.

SCOTT (V.O.)
Over a million people in this city.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - DAY

Faceless masses on their way to work, shopping, pushing
strollers, making deliveries, jogging, waiting for buses.

SCOTT (V.O.)
A million destinies interlocked.

EXT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

Tired exterior. Posters in the window: "Store Closing" and
"Everything Must Go." Next to that a "For Sale" sign.

SCOTT BROWNE, 30, an average Joe with a smile and shaggy-dog
instantly likable face, exits with a bag of books.

SCOTT (V.O.)
All controlled by a single force.

EXT. SIDEWALK / NEWSTAND - DAY

Pedestrians zig and zag along the sidewalk. MAURA, late 20's,
pulled together with a smile and the same kind of likable
face, buys a Luck Buck lottery ticket.

Scott, stands, next in line, oblivious to her. She moves off.
Then, Scott buys a Luck Buck ticket. Kisses it for good luck.

SCOTT (V.O.)

Fate.

Maura disappears into a crowd. Scott lugs his bag of books to a spot beside the For Sale sign, scratches off his ticket.

SCOTT (V.O.)

My name is Scott Browne.

Maura returns to view, actually goes into the bookstore.

SCOTT (V.O.)

One day Fate brought me a winning
lottery ticket.

Scott's eyes bulge as he scratches. He squints, double-takes, bounces in place -- then leaps and punches the air. A winner!

He high-fives the news stand clerk, hugs a random passerby then runs off. He quickly doubles back and grabs his bag of books and dashes toward the intersection.

Moments after he passes the doors, Maura exits the bookstore.

SCOTT (V.O.)

When will it let me find The One?

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK / OUTSIDE THE BOOKSTORE - DAY

The Clearance Sale posters come down. The For Sale placard is removed. SID, 23, a rebel without a job title, dumps the sign in a trash can and brushes her hands. Calling it a day.

SCOTT (V.O.)

What would you do with two hundred
grand from a state lottery?

Scott looks at the last items to be taken down. He's about to game plan removal with Sid but she simply hands him the trash can as she passes and pulls out her phone.

SCOTT (V.O.)

Me? I bought a bookstore.

Outside the window, Maura passes.

She notices the Clearance Signage coming down and activity in the window as Sid passes the trash can to Scott.

Maura notes it like she's filing away a mental bookmark to go back and check it out. She hustles along, dry cleaning billowing behind her. She navigates the sidewalk until --

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Comfortable and cozy. Nothing extravagant but lots of organized items and things are neat. Nothing here is random.

A cat greets Maura as she hangs her dry cleaning on the hook outside a closet that was put there for days just like this.

Maura multi-tasks. She wipes 'pick up dry cleaning' from the white board on her fridg while filling her water flask.

Flask filled, Maura eyes the vacated space on the white board and clasps her marker.

She sips her water, eyes her desk and work station looming nearby. It's organized but clearly work is 'in progress.'

Maura sighs, jots 'check out new bookstore' on the white board and carries her water to her desk:

MAURA (V.O.)
Does this even qualify as a
Saturday if I'm working as much as
I did on Friday?

LATER

Maura waters plants and straightens up as she roams from area to area. She has MUSIC on and can't help but dance solo.

Her cat her only audience. Her smile grows as her mood lifts. Dancing takes her past the desk. She lifts the dry cleaning.

ANGLE ON

Maura removing the plastic and pins from her dress. With her bopping and clasping sleeves, it's almost like she's dancing with someone.

Realizing this, she plays into it, mimics a dance partner. Then, the perennial buzz-killer, her PHONE chimes and computer HUMS. A Teams Meeting invite sours her smile.

MAURA (V.O.)
So much for that. Robo-Duty-Calls.
Now I really regret working through
lunch all week. Bronte, you answer
it.

Maura's cat casually licks her immaculate paws. Clearly, unmotivated by Maura's plea.

Sighing with resignation, Maura shuffles to her desk, pops in ear buds and interacts with a Teams group on the screen.

MAURA (V.O.)
Some Saturday. Spending hours
working. On a vanity project I
could care less about. For a boss
who's probably, right at this
moment, playing golf. Sometimes, I
just wish I could win the lottery.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - DAY

Maura strides south, closer to the street.

Scott strides north, closer to the buildings, a low-end
coffee maker box under his arm. He fishes for his keys.

And just like that -- our two ships pass in the day.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - MOMENTS LATER

Maura picks up her pace to cross at a light. Scott carries in
the coffee maker and flips the sign from "Closed" to "Open."

Sid eyes his package as he pushes past her and winces like
she just sipped sour milk.

She turns, makes sure Scott is well past her and out of
sight, then grins mischievously.

She nonchalantly flips the sign back to "Closed" and flits
away, stifling a smile.

EXT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

ESTABLISH the freshened up location. Somewhere between Barnes
and Noble and Bohemian.

SCOTT (V.O.)
So, caution to the wind, I swung
for the fence with this. New and
used selections, great location. I
just wished I would've named it
something a little more inspired
than The Bookmark.

Maura strides south, angles toward the door but reacts to a
notification on her phone. She reads. Her shoulders sag, she
reverses.

MAURA (V.O.)
Seriously? When did the weekends
become the week?

INT. BREW PUB - NIGHT

Casual, crowded, a din of conversations. Scott sips a beer. ANNE, a walking hair commercial, approaches, barely pecks Scott's cheek and sits while insuring her hair falls just so.

SCOTT (V.O.)
Speaking of uninspired. That's
Anne. We've been dating for three
months.

She looks around, purses her lips at the crowd and din.

ANNE
Weren't we just here like four
months ago?

SCOTT (V.O.)
For four months.

ACROSS THE BREW PUB

Literally, at a table near the opposite wall, Maura sits at a table with a drink and seems to be working herself up.

She eyes a video on her phone, hits 'Play':

ON VIDEO

It's Maura self-taping, head tilted, poised expression.

MAURA (ON VIDEO)
(filtered; through phone)
Colin, where's this going?

BACK TO SCENE

As if called by digital spirits, COLIN appears at her table and Maura quickly and clumsily shuts off her phone and turns it upside down on the table. She conjures a smile.

MAURA
Colin, you're...early. I was..

But Colin is deep in his phone. Maura lets her voice trail off and Colin never notices.

Then, he sees his half of the table does not have a beverage. He holds up his hands:

COLIN
You didn't order for me?
(huffs; pushes to bar)
This'll take forever.

Maura retrieves her phone, deletes the video, gathers her purse and strides away. She doubles back and down a healthy gulp of her drink - after all, she ordered it, then leaves.

BACK ACROSS THE BREW PUB

Scott nods, feigns interest, as Anne is in mid-monologue, complete with hair adjustments.

If she were perceptive, she'd notice Scott's white-knuckled grip on his fork -- but she's blissfully pretty and unaware.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Scott turns the lock and slips inside. Tired and moving slow. He rubs his eyes. Long day. Then a BUMP straightens his back.

He peers toward the dark, back part of the store, clasps his phone. Whoever made that noise now mutters a barrage of curses as if they self-inflicted some pain.

It's hearing the voice that gives Scott the comfort to flick on the light switch, revealing --

Sid clutching her boot-clad ankle. Still cursing. A bookcase overturned beside her. Its contents spilled all around her.

Scott strolls to the back with a cat-ate-the-canary grin.

SCOTT

You know, for someone who seems so
pained to be here during the day,
you seem to relish the after hours.

SID

Don't you have a Clairol Clone to
placate or something.

SCOTT

Been there and done that.
(easy and light)
What-cha doin?

Sid leaves her ankle massage and tries in vain to hide the pillow near the book spillage. It doesn't escape Scott.

SID

You need to learn to stock the
bigger books on the bottom shelf.
Creates ballast, so these things
don't tip at the drop of a hat.

SCOTT

Or the prop of a pillow apparently.

Sid kicks the pillow to a corner of the store that doesn't quite match the structure of the rest. It's a work-in-progress.

SID

You were all about creating a book nook corner. Lounge area. Whatev. Don't worry, I won't put all this time in as overtime. Some is R & D.

SCOTT

Big of you.

Sid jams books on the shelf a little harder than needed, side-glances at Scott with venom in her eyes.

SID

Hilarious. If you wanna throw hands, let's do it. I'll show you who's the bigger man.

Scott puts up innocent hands, kneels and picks up the books by the diminutive Sid. He seems to ease into the comfort of his book cavern and speaks with soft, calming melancholy.

SCOTT

Well, I'll put myself on notice and do what I can here to help.

Scott resets the bookcase and makes a point of shelving the largest books on the bottom.

Sid restocks too, mutters more curses as she rubs her ankle. As they settle into a rhythm of replacing the books --

SID

So, Clairol Clone Number 13 wasn't The One? Imagine that. Stunner.

SCOTT

You know, my dating life seems remarkably like enjoyment to you.

SID

Enjoyment. Penance. Sentencing. It's the curse that keeps giving. Look at this way -- Falling in love is like falling down steps. If you do it enough, you've gotta break something.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT / BEDROOM - NIGHT

Maura's breaking something. Only the glow from her iPad illuminates her in the middle of Break Stuff With Coins game.

She plays absently. Bored. She tosses the iPad and her hopes for the night onto a noticeably vacant pillow beside her.

She sinks down, sighs, eerily sounds just like Scott did when he entered The Bookmark earlier. The sigh of longing. A pang.

She turns on her side, eyes the digital clock beside her bed.

MAURA (V.O.)

Have you ever just watched a minute pass? An hour? A day.... A life.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Light, warm weather. Smatterings of people but not bustling.

Scott wanders toward an area where there is a tiki ring toss set up. No one is playing.

SCOTT (V.O.)

There are no books about what to do if you win the lottery. Note to self: Better check. But maybe that's because it's random. Totally by incredibly astronomical odds.

Scott, drawn to a quiet distractive activity, strolls closer. Just as he's about to play, a couple stroll up, hand in hand.

They tease and challenge each other and Scott watches them. Pure bliss. They're enjoying each other, clearly connected.

He moves on. Only then does Maura wander into the same area. She's cooling down from a run, hands on hips, circles.

She watches that same couple laugh and take turns playing the tiki ring toss. Her eyes linger enough then she walks away.

MAURA (V.O.)

Clearly, there's a conspiracy in play. My garbage goes out more than me. And on those rare occasions, sights like that are not on tap.

The couple take a few swings and misses -- then move on themselves. A tiki ring sways in the air - awaits its next hopeful heart to play...

EXT. SIDEWALK / NEWSTAND - DAY

Sid takes a copy of The New Yorker and offers cash. The Clerk counts out the bills. Sid eyes the Luck Buck lottery tickets.

The Clerk waves a single back to Sid, who waves it off.

SID
I gave up change for Lent. Gimmie
one of those.

The Clerk pulls and hands her a ticket, tucks away the bill. Sid uses a pocket knife to scratch off against a light pole.

As her reveal becomes evident, she tears up the card.

SID
(mutters)
Friggin' Lent.

ANGLE ON - MEAN CUP FOOD TRUCK

Parked across the street. It'll never win Best In Show but has a line of pedestrians grabbing coffees.

Sid ditches her losings in a trash can and glimpses BOOK GIRL turn from the truck, blow on her coffee and look around.

To Sid, all the wind blows and the angels sing. To the rest of the world -- just traffic and the clatter of footsteps.

Book Girl sips her coffee, eyes The Bookmark and walks over. She shifts direction on seeing the 'Closed' sign on the door.

Sid hustles to get there but Book Girl disappears into a pack of pedestrians by the time she fishes out her keys, opens up.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - MINUTES LATER

Scott carries in a ray of sunshine smile that fades as soon as he sees Sid doing nothing. She looks out the window in the general direction of where Book Girl wandered.

SCOTT
Long time no see. And hey, look at
that, you started brewing a pot of
coffee.

He marches toward the coffee machine that is very much NOT brewing anything.

Sid might have heard him. Hard to tell.

SCOTT

It was good, thanks for asking. How was the rest of your night?

Crickets. Scott shakes his head, starts a pot of coffee.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT / KITCHEN - DAY

Maura, dressed for work, grabs the top mug from a five mug rack, clearly a day-of-the-week style, pours coffee.

She snags a quick sip from her Monday mug, pulls a bagel from the toaster oven - HOT! She drops it, blows on it, bites.

Purse and laptop bag ready. She knocks back another round of coffee. Maura sets her mug down on the edge of the counter --

It misses. A sharp GASP just before it SHATTERS on the floor.

MAURA

No! No! No! Not today!

She tosses aside her purse and laptop bag in favor of a paper towel. She picks up the broken mug pieces.

Maura tosses them into the sink. Sops up the coffee, aims for the sink and throws in the towel.

Hassled, she scoops up her purse and laptop bag, skips out.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT BUILDING / HALLWAY - SECONDS LATER

She hits the 'Down' button. Nothing. Again. Nothing. Frazzled, she scurries to the stairs, mutters to herself:

MAURA

Of course, today.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

Scott settles onto a stool behind the counter. No customers. Sid is engrossed in The New Yorker, oblivious to him.

When it's clear she's not acknowledging his presence, Scott rubs his face and attempts to set the tone:

SCOTT

I think we need to have The Conversation.

Sid's eyes never leave the page.

SID
That sounded like initial caps.
Don't do that.

SCOTT
What's initial caps?

SID
"The" conversation. Can we have "A"
conversation? Definitely. But "The"
implies epic-ness and life-changing
contents and I've talked to you --
You don't have conversations like
that.

Scott rubs his face again, frustrated and uncomfortable.

SCOTT
You don't want to be here.

SID
That's not true.

SCOTT
You don't like being here.

SID
That could be rephrased.

SCOTT
You don't like me.

SID
Warmer...

Scott pulls The New Yorker and her attention away. Sid GASPS
indignantlly like he just stole her lunch money.

SCOTT
Could we have "A" conversation?
(beat for emphasis)
Please?

SID
In a sec.

Sid clomps to a cubby under the counter by the register. She
extracts a stapled and highlighted document, walks it back
like she's modeling it on a runway. Look-What-I-Got smile.

SCOTT
Here we go.

Sid flips to a dogeared page, mega highlighted, mic-drops it.

SID

Section 10. Subsection B. For a period of six, paren, numeral 6, months from the date of Closing, Sid Presley shall enjoy the same rights and privileges of Buyer with or without compensation by Buyer, including but not limited to quiet enjoyment and the ability to participate in the day-to-day business operations of the store.

Scott buries his head in his hands. Sid gloats like a pro.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Maura rushes in. She's immediately aware -- The room has a pained vibe of this isn't going to be pretty.

Some of the faces from Maura's Teams Meeting Screen are on one conference room screen. On the other is the report that was being worked on.

Behind two empty Styrofoam coffee cups, frowns MAURA'S BOSS.

MAURA'S BOSS

Client flew in from Montana just to NOT hear you give this pitch. Could've been our biggest account in ten years.

MAURA

It wasn't my fault I was late!

MAURA'S BOSS

It wasn't my fault and my dog ate my homework don't work here, Maura.

MAURA

Let me talk to them, I'll explain..

MAURA'S BOSS

..they don't work here because YOU don't work here anymore, Maura. HR will send you a package.

MAURA

But.

(turns to her Team)

Guys, little help here?

The faces on the monitor look everywhere but at their cameras. No help at all. Maura's boss pushes out of the room.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Maura trudges home. Laptop bag slung on her shoulder. Downtrodden, she lowers her head eyes the sidewalk.

She walks right past the front entrance, mere seconds before Scott emerges from the building.

As soon as he does, his shoulders slump. SCOTT SENIOR, 50's, leans against the wall, puffs a cigarette, expecting Scott.

SENIOR

Well well. If it ain't my son,
Lucky.

Scott slinks down the steps like a kid caught breaking a rule. He tucks his hands in his pockets. No hand shake mode.

SCOTT

Congrats on finishing your 'To Do'
list before dark. Smoke a butt,
harass my son. Done. Guess you can
call it a day then. Good seein you.

Scott takes only one step away. Senior stops him cold with:

SENIOR

It's back.
(beat; off Scott's halt)
And it's worse.

Scott's already slumped shoulders cave. He turns. Senior meets his gaze with resigned, watery eyes. Serious and sad.

EXT. DIFFERENT APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Maura's trudge slows. Her sidewalk gaze leads her to a pair of pink rain boots. She lifts her gaze to find their owner.

RACHEL, 30's, free spirit personified. She has her arms wide open for an embrace and a box of chocolates in each hand.

She smiles at Maura as she approaches with a comforting hug.

RACHEL

Figured we would need some sweets
while we plan what to do with your
rainy day funds.

Maura melts into the water at the end of her desert, doesn't even flinch when Sid power-walks past and grazes her.

Sid motors by, descends concrete steps, hellbent on entering:

INT. LION'S DEN - MOMENTS LATER

Dark, old and quiet because it's empty. Prison cells have more ambiance. CUBBIE, ageless sage, sits behind the bar. He folds dollars into origami figures, ignore's Sid's arrival.

She takes a perch at the bar, accepts and downs a hefty pour. They each sit and seem to embrace the silence.

Cubbie concentrates on his origami. Sid nods as if they are having a deep discussion, then knocks back more of her drink.

SID
(as if responding)
I know, right? People!

THUD! The glass lands on the bar. Hard!

INT. BREW PUB - SAME TIME

THUD! Different glass but still lands on a table with force. Scott Senior gestures for another round after nailing the landing of his empty glass. Scott's beer nearly full.

SENIOR
Friggin' tests cost me more than my
last procedure. It's a friggin'
racket.

SCOTT
Dad, what do you want me to say? I
don't have a time machine. And even
if I did, what's done is done. We
are where we are.

SENIOR
Well, I guess you can sit around in
your empty bookstore and think up
all this zen stoic bullshit...

SCOTT
We've barely been open a month.
We're rebranding.

SENIOR
Who's this 'we' crap? 'Cause from
where I'm sitting, 'you' is
spending every dime you won.

Scott rubs his face. Hard. He fixes a glare on his father.

SCOTT
How much do you need?

Scott Senior lowers his eyes, can't seem to face his son. Whatever boldness he held moments ago left with the beer.

SENIOR
I hate this part.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Rachel looks over Maura's resume. Empty papers from chocolates they have eaten litter the table by the sofa.

RACHEL
Why do you hate this part?

Maura sinks back, lets the sofa wrap her in a warm embrace.

MAURA
'Cause it's a song and dance. It's like taking your driver's test -- you never drive like that again. You go on an interview and talk to people about what you do and how you do it, then you never really get to because...things change.

Rachel throws a chocolate paper wrapper at her face. Maura swats it away and stifles a chuckle.

RACHEL
Boo hoo. Poor you.

MAURA
Don't judge me. I don't like not knowing what I'm doing tomorrow.

RACHEL
You're going to be working on you. Finding the next thing. Whatever that is.

MAURA
Can I come work with you? I think I could be a good holistic massage specialist.

Now Rachel stifles a chuckle as she pulls on her pink boots.

RACHEL
Oh yeah. Maybe in the scheduling department.

Rachel nods at the plethora of sticky note reminders and detailed calendars that fill Maura's work and living space.

INT. LION'S DEN - SAME TIME

Cubbie works a crossword puzzle. A platoon of origami bills circle Sid's glass. She hangs her head over crinkled lined paper. Occasionally, she'll use a pencil, strike out a word.

CUBBIE
(absently; to himself)
Last call.

Sid looks up, checks her phone. Time escapes her.

SID
It's not even six.

CUBBIE
(gruff; trashes crossword)
My bar. My rules.

Sid makes a point of putting the lined pages in a folder. She hands it back to Cubbie. He places it under the bar. An unspoken ritual of to-be-continued.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - DAWN

Early commuters on their way to work. Buses, cabs and Ubers do their daily redistributions.

SCOTT (V.O.)
Remember that million destinies
intertwined bit?

EXT. SIDEWALK / NEWSTAND - DAY

Freshly displaced pedestrians zig and zag along the sidewalk. Maura buys a Luck Buck lottery ticket.

Scott stands, two people behind her in line, still oblivious to her. She moves off. Then, Scott buys a Luck Buck ticket. Kisses it for good luck.

SCOTT (V.O.)
That can lead to a lot of knots.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

Scott tears up his Luck Buck tickets, extends them to Sid to put into the trash. She doesn't see them -- she's fixated on--

Book Girl, one aisle over. Sipping coffee and reading. She eyes her with equal parts of attraction and fascination.

SCOTT
(extending trash)
Little help?

Prodded out of her dream-like state, Sid huffs, disposes of the tickets and scowls at Scott like he's just kicked her.

He scowls back upon finding the coffee maker sitting idle and empty. He lifts the pot and examines it to make a show of it but his antics are lost on Sid. She's fixated on Book Girl.

Then, Book Girl returns the book to the shelf and walks out of the store. Sid watches through the window. A true stalker.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - SAME TIME

Book Girl blends into the people heading south as Maura emerges in the crowd heading north. She's in interview dress.

MAURA (V.O.)
Where do I sign to petition to ban
the question, "Where do you see
yourself in five years?" How did
that get to be a thing? How 'bout I
keep showing up for the gig you
underpay and under appreciate me
for? That a win for you if I am?

Maura checks the address on her phone, eyes the building and powers inside for yet another --

INT. OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

-- Interview. Maura faces an EXECUTIVE. She forces a smile.

EXECUTIVE
Where do you see yourself in five
years?

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Scott Senior faces a DOCTOR. Anxious face tinged with worry.

DOCTOR
Five months to five years. But,
hey, it's the same for all of us.
Prognosis or not. No one knows...

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

Changes of clothes show the passage of days. One constant plays out. Scott works. Sid doesn't. Laser focused on --

Book Girl sips coffee and reads one aisle over. Sid pretends to turn the page on The New Yorker to seem busy reading.

Then, like clockwork, Book Girl replaces the book to the shelf and leaves, sips her coffee.

EXT. SIDEWALK / NEWSTAND - DAY

Pedestrians zig and zag along the sidewalk. Maura walks south. Scott walks north. They're both in the middle.

If they kept walking, they'd literally bump into each other -- But, Scott veers off, oblivious to her.

Maura heads to the coffee food truck. Scott buys two Luck Buck tickets. Seems to pray for good luck.

SCOTT (V.O.)

Fate. Luck? Destiny? Lots of people have pondered -- What would you rather have? Money? Fame? True Love? Bliss? Why does it have to be one or the other? My answer would be -- Yes. All of the above.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

Scott tears up his Luck Buck tickets, extends them to Sid to put into the trash. She doesn't see him offer them --

Sid sits, taffy in her mouth, heavy boot-clad feet on the counter, jabs at her phone.

SCOTT

Posting about our nonfiction sale?

SID

Mentally preparing for the noon rush.

SCOTT

Seriously, could you pretend to actually do something here? I don't know how you can literally do nothing all day. The boredom has got to be all-consuming.

SID

You'd be surprised.
 (she clutches her chest)
 Last night, I had a dream. If only
 I could restock swings and misses.
 That, fair Scott, would be my day.

SCOTT

It's ten o'clock. Pace yourself.
 Maybe ease into it and straighten
 up Poetry.

SID

Like it's been disrupted somehow?

SCOTT

Do Horror then.

SID

Done. All your little Clairol
 Clones lined up in a pretty gag-
 worthy row.

SCOTT

Yet I'm not the one that
 occasionally brings a pillow on
 late night visits.

Scott glances over to see if that punch landed but Sid has
 lapsed into stare/fascination mode. Scott looks perplexed.

SCOTT

What?

SID

Book Girl's here.

Scott arches his brow, plays the hand that's dealt.

SCOTT

And the rabbit's in the hole, what
 are we? Spies? Who's 'Book Girl?'

Sid waves a pound of anarchy buttons at Book Girl. She holds
 a coffee with one hand and an open paperback with the other.

SID

She comes in every morning, drinks
 coffee and reads. Never buys
 anything. She's my hero.

SCOTT

Still haven't opened the Tony
 Robbins podcasts, have you?

Sid waves Scott close. Conspiratorial. Looks at Book Girl while she whispers, takes three books from Scott as well.

SID
Anyone can read on their lunch break. She reads here because she wants to. I'll re-stock these.

Sid walks toward Book Girl. She randomly drops two books on a shelf, hones in on her target like a stealth missile.

SCOTT
Where are you..

SID
..to get coffee.

SCOTT
I just brewed some.

SID
Exactly.

Despite Sid's directness, Book Girl's missile defense must be stellar. She closes the book, returns it to the shelf and quick-steps to the exit. Scott watches. She is quite lovely.

She steps out into the street. Sid watches from the window, oblivious to the fact that at --

EXT. STREET / MEAN CUP TRUCK - SAME TIME

Maura and Rachel grip coffee, oblivious to Book Girl passing them or Scott and Sid in the window of the bookstore nearby.

MAURA
These interviews are the worst. I have better conversations with Bronte.

RACHEL
Hang on, wait for it...

Rachel cups her ear. Maura waits, cautiously curious. Then, as is inevitable and consistent as any city, a distant SIREN.

RACHEL
There it is. Your whambulance has arrived. Pity and poor-mes get on first, wouldn't want you to keep pouting about that too.

Maura smacks Rachel's arm. Rachel exudes confidence. Smiles.

MAURA

With friends like you, why would I
need interviews to bring me down?

RACHEL

Hey, you're the one opting for the
nine-to-five corporate slave trade.

MAURA

You work like four part-time jobs.

RACHEL

And do I complain? I'm not a cog in
the corporate moneymaking machine.
I'll live my life my rules, my way.
What else you got going today?

MAURA

I don't know.

RACHEL

Well, at least you have the rest of
the day to figure it out.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Maura tosses her purse onto the kitchen counter. Bronte rises
and stretches. She pets her arched back, then her eyes drift--

Maura's eyes land on -- her broken mug in the sink.

She scoops out the broken pieces, gathers them in a baggie.

INT. CARD SHOP - DAY

Maura spreads out the contents of the baggie to show the
fractured mug pieces. A CLERK examines the ceramic jigsaw
puzzle.

MAURA

I know I bought this in a shop
downtown. I just can't remember
which one. I'm hoping you can help.

The Clerk humors her, eyes the mug pieces.

CLERK

What did it look like before?

MAURA

It had a cat slumping against a
pillow.

CLERK
What kind of cat?

MAURA
A cat. It doesn't matter what kind.
It was slumping against a pillow
like this.

Maura strikes a pose then quickly recoils, feeling self-conscious. She looks around. No witnesses.

MAURA
It's... it's just important to me.

The Clerk levels a sincere, empathetic smile.

CLERK
A gift from your husband?

That smacks Maura like a needle to her gums.

MAURA
No.

CLERK
Boyfriend?

Like a kick to the shins.

MAURA
No.

CLERK
Sorry. Girlfriend?

MAURA
(grits teeth; gathers
pieces)
No.

CLERK
Right. Sorry. What's that phrase?
Life partner?

Last straw. Maura seals and snatches the baggie, huffs out.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE / COZY CORNER - DAY

Scott reads from the now developed cozy corner.

Pillows and lighting create a warm, welcoming book nook. As he turns a page, he sighs, part melancholy, part heartache.

He looks out at the store. The Captain of a ship without a map and no stars in the sky to guide him.

He returns the book to the shelf. After he leaves, we're able to see that he was reading: The Millionaire Next Door.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - MOMENTS LATER

Scott approaches the counter, notices Book Girl, in her usual spot. She sips coffee, reads a book.

He glances over at Sid behind the counter. She gazes at Book Girl from above her New Yorker - tries to conceal fixation.

Scott shakes his head, takes his time passing Book Girl. He makes eye contact with her but then she lowers her eyes, continues reading. Offers nothing.

Scott stands in the doorway, hands on hips. No customers pushing in or out. Plenty of people pass on the sidewalk.

SCOTT
(to let Sid know)
I'm gonna take ...

SID
(over and ahead of him)
..You do that. See ya.

Sid's eyes never leave Book Girl. Scott's shoulders cave in a bit. He's had better days. He sighs, pushes outside.

INT. ARCADE - DAY

Digits rapidly climb. Numbers escalate out of control on a pinball machine display. The BELLS and DOINKS accompany the soaring totals. The numbers, like costs, spiral upwards.

Scott's eyes glaze. He's playing but hardly enjoying. His eyes watch the numbers, then trace the ball. It hits random objects. A roll of luck. A chance meeting with a bonus bell.

Scott works his body english, trying to sway the twist of fate of the ball with experienced, supple wrists.

Still, the ball cascades past the bumpers, drains out of sight. Numbers stop rising and GAME OVER fills the screen.

INT. THE BOOKMARK / COUNTER - SAME TIME

Sid randomly tossing books onto the SPECIAL ORDER SHELF, ignores any alphabetization.

Maura storms up, mad. She slings her baggie with the broken mug pieces on the counter and teeters on her last nerve.

MAURA

This mug, I want it and don't tell me you don't have it because I've been to every other bookstore in the city and no one else has it.

SID

Whoa. Easy, Sybil --

MAURA

'Sybil?'

SID

What did it look like? Before?

MAURA

It had a cat slumped against a pillow.

SID

Are you sure it was a cat?

MAURA

Yes.

SID

Ok. Don't melt. It was a question.

MAURA

I drank from this mug everyday for five years. Plus, what other indoor animal could do that?

SID

Well, ferrets. Hedgehogs. I know a guy with a domesticated otter.

Maura stares at her. Sid blinks indifference. A standoff.

SID

Former owner carried mugs. Current owner does not. Sucks to be you.

Maura's eyes narrow. She looks like she may commit a felony.

MAURA

It does not. Suck to be me.

Sid rolls her eyes, returns to her random tossing of books. Incensed, Maura clutches her baggie, glares at Sid.

MAURA

I want to speak to your manager.

Sid stops sorting, braces on the counter, elbows extended in a challenge pose.

SID

Do ya now? My manager...hum...

She drums her fingers, looks around, makes her point that she's alone in the store. Maura's emotions are catching up and she clutches the baggie, prods the broken pieces.

MAURA

I loved that mug. Now it's broken.

SID

Some relationships just aren't forever.

Maura's anger gets a second wind.

MAURA

If you worked for the former owner, do you think you could find out how to order it?

SID

You might want to try a 12 step there, Syb. It's a mug. Sorry. Was.

Maura glares daggers at her, snatches her bag, storms off.

INT. LION'S DEN - NIGHT

Cubbie works a Word Search puzzle. A new squadron of origami bills circle Sid's glass. She hovers her head over the same crinkled lined paper. Occasionally, strikes an edit.

They may have been in a non-verbal huddle for hours. It's hard to tell. Then, without any visible halt to her editing:

SID

Remember those cat mugs we used to carry back in the day?

Cubbie's deeply engrossed in the puzzle, not conversation.

CUBBIE

I don't crimp your private time.

Sid looks up, checks that she's in his bar, makes the slightest tilt of her non-writing hand as if saying 'Really?'

CUBBIE

(gruff; trashes puzzle)

My bar. My rules.

Sid slides her lined pages into the folder, hands it to Cubbie who puts it under the bar. The to-be-continued ritual.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - DAY

Scott's eyes take in the stream of people as they approach from the opposite direction. All kinds of people. Potential.

SCOTT (V.O.)

Those million knotted destinies?

Poetic? Romanticized? Horseshit?

All true.

He ducks out of the street as if ducking out of his own head.

INT. GROCERY STORE / FRUIT SECTION - MOMENTS LATER

Maura pushes a small cart by bins of apples. She bags some.

Scott pushes an identical cart past her to the bananas. He settles next to the fruit, examines the choices.

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN (O.C.)

I wish someone would just pick the right one for me.

Scott turns to the voice, immediately taken with her looks, somewhat side glances as she twirls her voluptuous hair.

SCOTT

That's the dream, right?

Oblivious to their exchange, Maura pushes her cart behind them, roams from apples to oranges.

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN

Well, how about it? Are you about making dreams come true? Picking just the right one for me?

She smiles. Flirtatious. Scott laughs but her coy grin looms. Scott turns and pushes his cart half-a-step away then stops.

SCOTT
(sotto; to himself)
Fuck me.
(brightly; all charm)
Who am I to deny a girl her dream?

He plucks a bunch of bananas and lays them in her cart. They draw closer to continue a flirty conversation.

Maura pushes her cart out of the fruit section.

EXT. STREET / MEAN CUP TRUCK - DAY

Maura grabs a coffee, cradles her grocery bag with apples and oranges protruding from the top. Book Girl is next in line.

Scott passes the food truck, cradles his grocery bag with bananas protruding from the top. He spots Book Girl in line.

Maura buzzes off, disappears into passing pedestrians.

Scott's eyes narrow as Book Girl buys coffee from the truck.

ANGLE ON SCOTT

He lays his grocery bag down, keeps his eyes on Book Girl, while he digs a dollar bill from his wallet.

He opens a pack of Sharpies from his grocery bag and uncaps one. He spreads out the dollar, writes on the hood of a car.

INSERT - DOLLAR BILL

As Scott prints: GOOD FOR ONE FREE COFFEE AT THE BOOKMARK
BOOKSTORE - SCOTT

BACK TO SCENE

Scott scoops up his bag and hustles to meet Book Girl as she completes paying at the food truck.

SCOTT
S'cuse me. This is for you.

He extends the newly-minted coupon to her. She glances at it, then at him and nods appreciatively - then turns, walks away.

Scott watches her disappear into the faceless masses coming and going.

Then he collects his bag and marches across the street to the Bookmark Bookstore.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT / BEDROOM - NIGHT

Maura gently strokes Bronte. Her iPad illuminates a fresh round of her playing the Break Stuff With Coins game.

She tosses the iPad and her hopes for the night onto the still noticeably vacant pillow beside her.

She turns on her side, eyes the digital clock beside her bed.

MAURA (V.O.)
Some nights I'm up until midnight
but then I see it's only 6:30.

She smacks the bed, marches to her closet.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK / RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Maura, dressed and pulled together, eyes a casual dining room through the window. Some seats at the bar open. Tables too.

MAURA (V.O.)
Ever think that if you tell a
restaurant that you're a party of
one, they have some secret button
they push to cue a tumbleweed to
blow by to make it even more
awkward?

Maura shrugs, pulls on the door, goes inside.

INT. RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Maura examines her menu. Senses the presence of her server arrive and looks up. It's Book Girl, ready to take her order.

Maura half-points to the menu, offers lightly:

MAURA
Just a salad. And the Pinot.

Book Girl collects the place setting from the other side of the table, then, casual as if they're old friends, sits down.

BOOK GIRL
Excellent. This is my last table,
so, I'll get this in right away but
I was gonna have the same thing.
Mind if I join you?

Maura double-takes, unsure if she's being played.

MAURA

That's...okay? Can't say anyone's ever asked that before.

BOOK GIRL

Hey, if you're good with your alone time, I'm just grabbing my shift meal, I can just bring yours. It's no prob.

MAURA

..No, it's fine. I'd...It's fine.

Book Girl nods, shuffles toward the kitchen.

BOOK GIRL

Okay then. I'll be right back.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Pinot glasses remain -- refilled. The salads came and went. Maura and Book Girl relax with mild buzzes and comfort.

MAURA

It seems like finding the right guy is a lot like those Luck Buck lottery tickets. You take your chance and usually end of disappointed.

Maura swirls then downs a healthy portion of her Pinot. Book Girl follows suit, then:

BOOK GIRL

Get this. Some guys don't even wait for you to buy their lottery ticket.

She digs out Scott's dollar bill coupon, lays it for Maura to read. She glances at it.

MAURA

The Bookmark? Don't go there. Rudest staff ever.

Book Girl leans back. Clearly, information she wasn't expecting.

BOOK GIRL

Really? Wha..

COLIN (O.C.)

Well, look who it is.

Maura turns. Initially mortified to find Colin and his attractive date beside their table. Before she can speak:

COLIN
(to Book Girl)
If you're splitting checks, get a
beat on that early. She's a runner,
this one.

He winks at Maura. Her eyes flick over him but don't deliver the kind of slap her hands restrain themselves from.

Instead, Maura smiles at his date.

MAURA
I hope you plan on ordering for
him. He's challenged, this one.

Colin's date and Book Girl both squirm uncomfortably and Colin allows his date to gently pull him away from the table.

Book Girl raises her eyebrows to Maura, finishes her Pinot and gathers her things.

BOOK GIRL
Never played it but I'm guessing he
was one of those Luck Bucks.

Maura polishes off her Pinot, gathers her things.

MAURA
Thanks for joining me. Would you..

Maura shuffles awkwardly, can't seem to look her in the eye. When she finally looks up, Book Girl has her hand extended.

Maura motions hers forward toward a handshake then stops on:

BOOK GIRL
Your phone.

MAURA
What? Oh, sorry. Of course.

Maura hands her phone to Book Girl who rather casually enters her contact information then hands it back.

Maura's eyes glance over it before tucking it away.

MAURA
Thanks again.

But Book Girl is half-way past her on her way out already. She smiles and waves as she exits. An enigma.

INT. NEW AGE APARTMENT / MASSAGE TABLE AREA - DAY

Scott Senior on his stomach gets a massage from Rachel. A new age female singer DRONES. If we could smell -- there would be high octane incense.

RACHEL

So what's on tap for you after this?

SENIOR

Grabbin' a beer with my son, Lucky.

RACHEL

You named your son 'Lucky'?

SENIOR

Nah. Just call him that. Kid's dipped in it. Won a friggin' lottery.

Rachel's eyes perk. She switches to massage with one hand, grab a business card with the other. She plucks it down.

RACHEL

Sounds like he needs a massage.

Scott Senior rolls his eyes at the card. It never ends. He sighs, tries to relax. Rachel backs off the sales pitch tone, reverts to using both hands, muses aloud:

RACHEL

Still, getting to have a beer with your son at any age. Sounds like you're lucky too.

SENIOR

If you only knew.

Senior's voice trails off but not the sadness in it.

INT. BANK / LOAN OFFICER CUBICLE - DAY

Scott sits with Colin. They huddle over a folder with loan application papers visible. The air is heavy. Uncomfortable.

Scott lays a paper down, sighs.

SCOTT

What exactly does 'not enough revenue' mean? I could tell you we made ten grand last month.

Scott pushes the folder at Colin harder than necessary.

COLIN

Then you would ultimately have to
get me your monthly P & Ls and I'd
see otherwise.

SCOTT

If I make my payments, what's the
big deal? Everything's not always
black and white.

Colin collects the folder and rises. Meeting over.

COLIN

You obviously haven't met my ex. In
relationships. Always. But here, in
this world--
(waves folder)
It very much is.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Rachel and Maura dine, pocket their fortune cookies.

RACHEL

So, my client today told me he has
a son who won the lottery...

Rachel teases that with a grin that is lost on Maura.

MAURA

You know how symbolic that mug is?
It's my career. My relationships.

RACHEL

Oh good. We're back to you now? Did
I exceed my allotted time?

MAURA

You said I could vent to you.

RACHEL

I tease a single woman with a
lottery guy and I get cat mug? Vent
ok? Not 24/7. Look, I'll make it
into a neat, organized chart,
'cause I know and respect your love
language.

Rachel draws a line down the center of a paper table napkin
and draws arrows in each direction. One to Rachel. One to
Maura. Nice even spacing. Maura smirks as Rachel grins wide.

MAURA

You know I have other friends.

RACHEL

No you don't.

MAURA

And I'm sure your lottery guy story was all that but...I'm one-sided?

(beat; mild alarm)

You think I'm selfish?

(sputters to cover)

I...asked you about that thing you did once..and...I said I'd come work with you. Remember that?

Rachel presents Maura with a perfectly-balanced chart.

RACHEL

How could I forget? You reminded me the last time I went over my allotted time to speak. See, the chart will soothe you. Half Maura. Half Rachey-Rach. Take it home. It's a lot to take in at once.

Rachel digs into her food, pleased with herself and not the least bit pissed. Maura can't help herself. She neatly folds the napkin in half and places it in her purse.

Only after doing so does she bury her face in her hands. Why am I like this?

INT. MAURA'S CAR - (MOVING) - NIGHT

Maura drives.

RACHEL

Look, stop beating yourself up. You are right where you're supposed to be. Next time you hit a Colin or a job or a stoplight, if you go right, it's your choice.

MAURA

But, why are we at THAT stoplight in THAT city at THAT time? There is a reason. Fate is like the Man Behind the Curtain. We can't see how he works, but he's there, pulling levers and strings.

RACHEL

Look where this introspection has gotten you. You're jobless and currently in a relationship with a video game where you break things. Don't start a cult. All I'm saying.

They come to a stoplight. Maura stares at it, mulls it over.

MAURA

Give me my fortune cookie.

Rachel digs in her purse, hands it over.

MAURA

Whatever wisdom it imparts, I will follow.

Maura breaks it. Unravels the MESSAGE - Both sides are blank. Maura hands it to Rachel, looks puzzled.

RACHEL

Fill in your own destiny.

Rachel turns to her, curious for her reaction. Maura eyes her choices, grips the wheel like she's taking the reins, then --

As the light turns, so does Maura, decision made.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

Sid removes the lid of her Mean Cup coffee and blows to cool it while aimlessly straightening leaning books on a shelf.

Her body tenses as she sees Book Girl wander in carrying her usual, Mean Cup lidded coffee. Book Girl browses and, without crowding her space or being rude, stands beside Sid, reads.

Sid fights a million urges and tries to covertly shift her eyes to learn why Book Girl chose to read right next to her in a completely empty store with a vacant book nook.

After a protracted beat, Book Girl removes the lid of her coffee and blows to cool it while continuing to read.

Swallowing deep, Sid opens a book, doesn't look at Book Girl:

SID

I like it hot.

Book Girl looks up, sips, then --

BOOK GIRL
Excuse me..

SID
(covers quickly)
Coffee. Hot.
(blows awkwardly)
Hotter the better.

Book Girls offers a warm smile that could melt butter.

BOOK GIRL
Absolutely.

Book Girl sips and re-focuses on her book. Sid sips and shifts on her feet. Finally, she closes her book, turns--

SID
You know, if you're reading that
book, you might want to check out
this one. It's like the cool, under-
rated female version.

BOOK GIRL
Cool. Yes, thanks so much.

SID
Oh, yeah. No. Totally. Anytime.

Sid scurries away, certain to hide her reaction from Book Girl's view but practically levitates while trying to contain the white-hot energy from her Fan Girl encounter.

Scott frantically packs an order as she nears. He moves aside so she can assist him but her eyes are ablaze and gaze away from him - still on her high.

SCOTT
Glad you're back. I need help...

SID
I'm gonna need a minute.

SCOTT
You just took 10 for coffee.

SID
Bio Break.

SCOTT
But I need..

SID
Don't make me...

SCOTT
But I seriously ne..

SID
You're making me.

Sid skips to a cubby under the counter, extracts her highlighted entitlement document and throws the dog-eared pages at him, then disappears toward the bathroom sign.

Scott shakes his head then sees Book Girl holding a Mean Cup coffee, inspecting the book Sid handed her.

Scott wanders toward her.

SCOTT
Hey. Forget your coupon?

Book Girl smiles at him, blatantly drinks from a rival cup.

BOOK GIRL
Saving it for a special occasion.

She winks, nods and exits, pushing past him.

INT. LION'S DEN - NIGHT

Cubbie finishes a crossword puzzle. A village of origami bills circle Sid's glass. She taps her red pencil over those same crinkled lined papers. Some edits and circles visible.

SID
Even the way she said: 'Cool. Yes.
Thanks so much.' was like, so
classic Book Girl. Self-assured.
Comfortable. Friggin' Rock Star.

Even stoic Cubbie can only stomach so much hype. He collects his puzzle and shuffles away.

Sid reverts her eyes to the pages, taps her pencil as she reads, still stoked with energy from her Book Girl encounter.

INT. SCOTT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Scott and Senior square off. Pitcher against batter. A Nerf ball and whiffle ball bat. Scott pitches. Senior bats.

It would be casual and even fun if either of them was less competitive about it but they both dig in as if they are trying out for the majors.

SENIOR

Did the bank come through on a line
of credit for you?

SCOTT

For YOU. Let's be clear on that.
And no, Colin didn't see enough P
in my P & L.

Senior whacks one across the room. An unretrievable ball.
Scott plops onto the sofa. Senior grips and swings the bat.

SENIOR

There are other banks.

SCOTT

I'm aware.

SENIOR

You see, Lucky.

SCOTT

Dad, stop.

SENIOR

(never heard him)

You step up to the plate and swing
again. And again.

Senior mimes swings and follow-throughs. Conceding the point,
Scott lets it drop. He takes the bat from his father.

SCOTT

I have a whole section in my store.
First novels by authors that never
made much noise. Probably the best
written books I sell that nobody's
bought. It's called Swings and
Misses.

SENIOR

About as original as The Bookmark.

Senior pulls Rachel's card from his wallet, places it on the
table and slides it toward Scott.

SENIOR

Speaking of swings and misses. If
you feel like stepping up to life's
buffet and don't mind a little Joss
Stone vibe.

SCOTT

Who's Joss Stone?

SENIOR
Look her up. Edie Brickell?

SCOTT
How's her hair?

SENIOR
What? Why?

SCOTT
Nothing. Trend. Streak. Whatever.

SENIOR
Great hair, okay? She's single,
gave me her card to give to you.
You're not ducking out on me to go
see anyone, so...

Scott taps the card on the table, rises. He walks in circles,
like the life that swirls around him. He uses the bat like a
pointer -- like a professor in a college classroom.

SCOTT
Fate let me win the lottery, right?
I'm going to let it choose the next
woman I pursue.

Scott stops circling, points the bat.

SCOTT
What's today's date?

SENIOR
The tenth.

SCOTT
There it is. The tenth woman that
comes into the store tomorrow is
the one fate has chosen for me to
pursue.

SENIOR
Say what now?

Scott secures the bat through his belt loop like a warrior
girding his sword. Decision made.

SCOTT
Tomorrow. The tenth woman that
comes into the store will be the
one fate has chosen for me to ask
out next. Thanks, Dad.

Senior looks at Scott, can't quite believe how that went.

INT. OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Maura across from an HR EXEC. Mid-interview. Maura smiles until:

HR EXEC
Where do you see yourself in five
years?

Maura grips the armrests of her chair. Her knuckles whiten. If armrests breathed, she'd be choking them to death.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Sweatpants have replaced her professional skirt. From the waist up through, she is Zoom interview ready.

Maura eyes her neatly printed white board and the cleanly-aligned, color-coded post-its that surround it.

By her face we can see that the architecture of her days more saddens than inspires.

She removes a post-it, then another, then another. Inspired now, she literally removes them all.

Next, the white board -- with one swipe of a cloth -- an entire work week of reminders and to-dos simply disappears.

Looking more energetic and inspired, she digs in her purse, pulls out a small paper then grabs a pen --

INSERT - MAURA'S WALL

A blank canvas. She mounts the small paper on the white board. It's the blank fortune cookie slip. Hand-printed is:

FILL IN YOUR OWN DESTINY

BACK TO SCENE

Maura fixates on that - a firm resolve and confident grin.

INT. BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

Scott watches a Woman browse books. Finding nothing, she smiles as she leaves.

Scott nods, returns the smile, then puts a Bookmark with the number 1 written in Sharpie at the top into a Bookmark mug.

Sid watches this rudimentary system with clear disdain.

SCOTT
(to himself)
Okay, that's one.

Sid wanders near him, resumes her trademark taffy-suck scroll of her phone.

SID
One what?

SCOTT
Just...one. Is this a prank? You actually heard a word I said?

SID
The Tenth Woman today thing?

Scott clutches his heart, braces against the counter.

SCOTT
Wait. You heard words I said this morning too?

He fishes cash from his wallet.

SID
What?

SCOTT
I gotta buy a lottery ticket.

SID
(deadpan)
Hilarious.

He hands her dollar bills.

SCOTT
You take it. It's worth it. I can't believe you actually listened to me.

SID
Yeah and it's batshit crazy. And a cop out by the by. Way to give yourself a pass on your own choices there, Scooter.

SCOTT
You wanna go there? Okay, how's your roommate working out?

That rocks Sid and she almost visibly crumbles but dammit, not in front of him. She sniffs, musters her resolve.

Scott's shoulders slack. He knows he's over-stepped. He reverts to straightening shelves.

Divided now into neutral isles, they try to regain footing.

SCOTT

Look, if you wanna go grab a Mean Cup with the cash. Book Girl might be there. I'll cover the Noon rush.

SID

No friggin' way. I'm validating. I've gotta side bet with Cubbie that you only get to the tenth woman by Day Three.

SCOTT

(after a beat)

Might wanna re-think giving TED Talks. Tone down the optimism.

They re-stock in earnest now, going parallel down the aisle.

SID

Seriously though, this random thing. Isn't that actually anti-fate? Fate is supposed to work in our lives without us knowing or trying to understand. Lives just play out.

SCOTT

(resolute certainty)

The tenth woman that comes into the store in the one Fate has picked for me to pursue. End of story.

INT. BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - LATER THAT DAY

Sid muses by the coffee station. Different creamers. Flavors. Blends. There's unlimited possibilities. Scott adds sugar.

He watches a Woman come into the store briefly. She seems to change her mind right away and, just as quickly, leaves.

Scott drops a Bookmark with the number 6 into the Bookmark mug. The sun is low through the windows outside.

He checks his watch. Sid samples pedestrians passing by outside and props up her boots interrogation style:

SID

What if she's like 90?

SCOTT
Cougar XL? We'll live out her last years together.

SID
Crippled?

SCOTT
I do not discriminate.

SID
Republican?

SCOTT
C'mon. This is not a debate.

SID
Ooh, crap. What if it's Book Girl?

SCOTT
You'd hate that, wouldn't you?

SID
I still like my chances but yeah, I wouldn't love it. You're really gonna do this?

SCOTT
You better hope three women don't show up today before her or you'll find out.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT / BEDROOM - DAY

Bronte watches as Maura puts her phone on speaker and replaces the sweatpants / Zoom interview blouse combo with casual, comfortable clothes. On the second ring:

BOOK GIRL (O.C.)
(filtered)
Hello?

Maura switches clothes in sync with her expressions. Curious, then baffled, then maybe...then not, then maybe... then not.

MAURA
Hey, this is pretty embarrassing that I don't know it but you put your name into my phone as Pinot Girl. We had a few together...

Her voice trails off. Unsure of the outfit or the vibe on the other end of the call. Maura waits a long beat, then finally:

BOOK GIRL (O.C.)
Yeah, yeah. The Luck Buck jackass
came in. Gotcha. What's up?

MAURA
I've got to get out. If you're not
working, wanna meet up for a drink?

INT. NEW AGE APARTMENT - SECONDS LATER

Rachel on her phone.

RACHEL
Day drink? Who is this? And what
have you done with my friend,
Maura?

CLI---

INT. BISTRO - DAY

--NK. Three cocktails toast and Book Girl, Maura and Rachel
kick back with self-satisfied, hooky grins.

MAURA
Alright, full disclosure, I called
you both to get together because I
took down my 'to do' wall.

Rachel GASPS. Full-blown spit-take of her cocktail.

RACHEL
Fuck. She went Cat 5.

Book Girl, ever the stoic, eyes Maura who rolls her eyes,
leans to Book Girl for an explanation.

MAURA
I'm a bit of a planner. Not in the
best of ways but...

Rachel waves her off, tables her drink to avoid more spillage
as she goes on the offensive.

RACHEL
There is no way I'm letting you let
yourself off that easy. Sorry, I
know I just met you and you seem
nice, so know that I'm being
sincere when I say: Run. Save
yourself.

(MORE)

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Do not be a part of whatever comes next because it will be ugly. She came out of the womb with a day planner and bitched about the timing. Seriously, drinks on me. Just, don't...

Rachel buries her face in her hand. Maura placates her like a parent allowing a child's tantrum to dissipate.

Book Girl seems unfazed, sips her drink, glances at the menu.

BOOK GIRL

Anyone else up for some apps?

INT. BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DUSK

Sid sways in time by the 'Open/Closed' sign, making 'tick tock' sounds while watching a countdown clock on her phone.

Scott watches a Woman pass the store. Power forward down the sidewalk. The furthest thing from a potential customer.

Sid takes delight in her speed, briefly stops tick tocking:

SID

Wow. She's a hard pass. Dodged a bullet there, Scooter.

Scott sighs, glances at the Bookmarks in the Bookmark mug. Number 7 clearly visible. Sid's sway speed and enthusiasm build as the digits count down, single digits, then --

SID

It's a final.

(mocks Scott's tone)

The tenth woman that comes into the store in the one Fate has picked for me to pursue. End of story.

(beat)

Got yourself a pickle now.

Sid folds her arms, sways gleefully as she flips Open to Closed.

Scott grabs a book from Swings and Misses and marches out. Sid is all too happy to open the door for him. She pulls it closed after he's rounded the corner --

Only then does the glow of her gloat drop and she roams the aisles with a 'what now' look.

EXT. BISTRO - NIGHT

Maura, Rachel and Book Girl are deep into a table full of appetizers and drinks and laughter. A good time is evident.

If they looked outside the window by their table they would see Scott walk past. Eyes on the sidewalk. Unreadable face.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE / COZY CORNER - NIGHT

Sid props her pillow up, turns the page she just finished and lays the book across her chest. She blinks at the ceiling -- her face unreadable.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Maura eases in, strokes Bronte and seems to pause in quiet enjoyment of her task-less 'to do' wall and noticeably absent sets of lists, schedules and reminders.

She slips onto her bed and casually lifts her iPad. With an intentional stroke, she brings her screen to life and with the same touch of certainty, holds and deletes the "Breaking Things With Coins" game. BLIP.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Sid wanders toward the door. The dark windows above showing no signs of activity in any of the rooms. It's late.

She circles the steps, at a loss for direction. She's about to pull open the door and go inside but resists and walks down the street.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT / BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Maura settles in her bed, pulls her current reading material from the nightstand, opens Tim Tigner's, "The Price of Time."

INT. SCOTT'S APARTMENT / BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Scott reads in bed. The book he grabbed from Swings and Misses. It's Tim Tigner's, "The Price of Time."

INT. LION'S DEN - NIGHT

Cubbie hovers over the New York Times crossword. He absently twists stir straws into figurines with remarkable dexterity.

Sid drums her fingers over her tumbler. Once again, they've probably been not speaking for hours and she's at her limit.

She sighs, wipes the bar area in front of her with a napkin.

SID

Hit me.

Cubbie pulls the folder with the lined pages from under the bar. Serves it to Sid instead of a drink.

She pulls it in front of her, expecting nothing else. She pulls a pencil off the bar, opens the folder and stops --

She finds something she hadn't expected just inside the folder. She lifts it, examines:

INSERT - PAGE

It's an order form. A cat mug. The one Maura had described.

BACK TO SCENE

Cubbie's deeply engrossed in the puzzle and creating a village of non-speaking figurines.

Sid pockets the order form without any fanfare then smiles and shakes her head in heartfelt wonderment before digging into the text before her eyes.

She readies her pencil, lines an edit.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Senior eyes an x-ray. Somber. The Doctor sips coffee.

SENIOR

Not how I hoped to start my day.

DOCTOR

Actually, I'd encourage you to see it as freeing. Most of us never get to see how much sand is in the top of the hourglass. In a way, it's a gift. A chance to make choices on how you want to spend what's left.

Scott nods, looks out the window as the sun touts a new day.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Bronte and Maura eye the new sparse kitchen counter. Maura pulls a mug randomly and initiates a coffee kickstart.

She wanders to her immaculate white board while the coffee drips into the mug. She writes on the board: DAY ONE.

INT. SCOTT'S APARTMENT / BEDROOM - DAY

Only a few pages remain to be read in "The Price of Time." Scott does not seem to have slept. He's in the same clothes in the same position as he was last night.

He turns a page deeply engrossed.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Sid exits the door, clad in her anarchy uniform of boots, rock t-shirt and gratuitous layers of buttons and bangles.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

RANDOM intersecting, busy streets coming to life.

SCOTT (V.O.)
That million people in this city,
thing? That's context. White noise.
Tall odds. We get it.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - DAY

Faceless masses on their way somewhere.

SCOTT (V.O.)
A million destinies interlocked?
Well, not really. More like, we're
connected to others more than we'll
ever actually be aware of.

EXT. SIDEWALK / NEWSTAND - DAY

Pedestrians zig and zag along the sidewalk.

Maura buys a Luck Buck lottery ticket.

Scott, stands, two people behind her in line, oblivious to her. She moves off. Then, Scott buys a Luck Buck ticket.

SCOTT (V.O.)

The adage is that lightning never strikes the same place twice. Same odds, right? But it's not like the odds have changed from the first time, right? I mean, aren't we all up against incredible odds?

Maura disappears into a crowd.

SCOTT (V.O.)

One day Fate brought me a winning lottery ticket. Now I've got to figure out if she's a one-trick pony.

Scott's body language sags as he scratches. Nothing.

He trudges toward The Bookmark.

Moments after he crosses the sidewalk, Maura exits a store.

SCOTT (V.O.)

Maybe the prize isn't on the ticket. Maybe we're given what we're given as part of the plan that we only see come together when it is revealed in the end. Maybe the 'process' of trying to find The One shows you what you don't want, so The One isn't a thing -- it's a way of defining what you want most.

EXT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

Inside the store, Sid turns the sign over to 'Open.' She clutches the cat mug order form in her other hand.

As Scott nears the door, Maura nears it as well.

Their trajectory has them on a collision course.

An inevitable bump into meet cute. Until,

RECORD SCRATCH immediately followed by --

HONK. A random car BLASTS its horn at someone or something and Scott and Maura freeze and look up.

The cars resume their aggressive drives and Scott and Maura resume their paths, just altered enough that they miss each other as she passes the store and continues down the sidewalk and Scott pulls open the door and heads inside.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - SECONDS LATER

Sid tucks the cat mug order form under the counter with her get out of jail free document and scrolls her phone while Scott bee-lines for the coffee maker.

Her eyes shift to follow him as he passes. They stay on him when he starts making coffee without any snarky comments.

He's well-into waiting for his fresh brew when Sid, trying her best to sound like she's not interested, offers:

SID
So, what? You're not to talking to
me? It's National Mime day? What?

Scott turns, reacts as if seeing her for the first time and pulls his steaming mug from the coffee maker.

SCOTT
Oh? Hey.

Sid lowers her phone. Rattled.

SID
Hey? Did you seriously just Hey me?
No..
(mocks Scott's tone)
It was good, thanks for asking. How
was the rest of your night?
(back to Sid Snark)
Kind of banter that built this
empire. Who put you on mute?

Crickets.

Scott returns "The Price of Time" to the Swings and Misses stack and removes all seven bookmarks from their holding mug.

Sid pounces as he places them with the remaining bookmarks by the register. She hovers behind him in full gloat mode.

SID
I'm coming, Scott. Just working my
way through the crowd. 'Scuse me,
pardon me. Working here. 'Scuse me.
Be there in a jiff, Scoot. I'll
help ya.

Scott sips his coffee, zen-like. If he heard her, it doesn't show. Sid folds her arms -- no stranger to a challenge.

SID

Oh, that's how it's gonna be? You
wanna play it that way? Cool.

Sid, turns on her heel and reclines on her throne disguised
as a stool and folds her booted feet onto a comfy counter and
begins a scroll that she never sees because her eyes stay on--

Scott as he sips coffee and looks out the window at traffic.

DING. The bell above the door rings and a customer enters.
Quickly followed by another.

SCOTT

'Morning. Welcome to The Bookmark.

Sid mock barfs, watches her non-audience with disdain.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Maura sips coffee from a mug. She places the non-used Luck
Buck lottery ticket on the wall where the 'Fill In Your Own
Destiny" fortune cookie is pinned.

She lets the fortune cookie strip flutter to the floor for
Bronte to swat at as it flips and flutters to the carpet.

Maura suppresses a small grin as she resists picking it up,
keeps her eyes on Day One.

MINUTES LATER

Maura pulls books from the shelf. Gently used. She places
them in a canvas carry bag. One is "The Price of Time."

Bronte watches from a nearby chair with an air of judgment.
Maura feels the heat.

MAURA

What? Like you were going to read
them? Fresh start. Fresh shelves.

She pulls the last book, wipes down the now-empty shelf. A
clean slate of space awaits its next chapter.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

Scott turns Rachel's business card over in one hand. Cell
phone in the other. He eyes Sid -- across the store and out
of earshot.

She's looking at a paper. She dials her cell.

Scott reads the number on the card, punches it in.

INTERCUT HIS AND SID'S CALLS ACROSS THE STORE FROM EACH OTHER

SCOTT

Hi, is this Rachel? My name is...

SID

Well, what's your minimum?

SCOTT

..I could do five. Would that work?

SID

I can't do five. Three. I only want one. I'm pity-ordering two friends for it.

SCOTT

Do you take VenMo?

SID

You don't take VenMo? Ever notice how cancer and credit cards start with the same letter?

SCOTT

Well, thanks. My Dad said after your massage, it was the best he's felt in years. I'm glad it'll work out. I'll see you 5. Have a go--

SID

Well, you couldn't have made that more painful. Please, God, tell me there's a survey after this. I have notes.

She stabs the phone with venom.

Scott blissfully hangs up, nods, looks at this watch. Only 9:30. He arches his brow, sighs. Sid is obviously in a mood.

He pockets Rachel's card, hits his phone again.

SCOTT

Hey, Dad. Let's do something today.

Sid tucks the cat mug order form into the pages of the agreement under the counter. She continues to mutter angst.

SID

First, we kill all the people.

She looks over for Scott but he's nowhere to be found.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - DAY

Maura strides south, closer to the street, canvas bag filled with books in her hand.

Scott strides north, closer to the buildings. His eyes forward but his mind far, far away.

And once again -- our two ships pass in the day.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK / PARK BENCH - DAY

Scott slows as he nears and spots --

Senior sitting on the bench, leisurely puffing a cigarette. The same far-away gaze navigating the billows of smoke in front of him.

Scott tucks his hands in his pockets, approaches.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

Maura approaches the counter, lays her canvas bag of used books on the counter.

Her face runs through a series of reactions and shifts as Sid emerges from the book nook with a queen-like stride.

Maura swallows hard, clears her throat, a Day One reminder.

MAURA

Oh good. You're here.

Sid's eyes expand at the collection of insights sitting on the counter, like a patient on an operating room table.

SID

You're the one who went Def-Con
Five about the cat mug.

MAURA

That's...not why I'm here. I'd like
to trade these in for store credit.

SID

Would ya? I see. I see. I have to..
(clears throat)

..Examine the merchandise first.

(MORE)

SID (CONT'D)

A person's books says a lot about
who they are. You...okay with that?

Maura shuffles her feet, uncomfortable but that's growth,
right? She nods, feigns nonchalance.

SID

Goody.

(beat; Maura stands still)

You wanna look around? It'll take a
few.

Maura shrugs, wanders away.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Scott and Senior eat cart vendor hot dogs and sit in the
bleachers of a senior citizens softball game.

There's barely a dozen people there and the usual assortment
of senior-living aide: oxygen tanks, walkers and wheelchairs.
The players all have ailments. Rehab center vs rehab center.
Very few ESPN worthy plays and it seems to be in slow motion.

SCOTT

I'm seeing your massage girl at 5.

SENIOR

You'll like her. Free spirit.

SCOTT

I don't know how to...

SENIOR

.. you don't have to. So don't try.

SCOTT

Well, anything you want to do
today. Anything. I'm up for it.

They watch a SENIOR at bat. He swings and misses at a pitch.
Then, because it doesn't really matter anyway, carries his
connected oxygen tank down to first base to the razzing of
the opposing pitcher. Rules be damned. They grunt curses.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - SAME TIME

Maura browses books, has to double-take at the extremely warm
and friendly female voice that beckons her from the counter.

SID

Excuse me, Miss? I'm ready now.

Maura slows approaches the counter, senses a trap.

She eyes two neat stacks of books. Sid gets an A for presentation.

SID

I can offer 14 for these and 10 for those. Or, 20 for the whole batch.

Maura struggles with the math and it shows. Sid diverts -- not a numbers gal.

SID

Trying to become one of the Faceless Masses?

MAURA

Sorry?

SID

Clairol Clones. Better Beauties.

Maura lays her arms on the counter and speaks like she did not say this at least ten times to her mirror this morning:

MAURA

I'm becoming my best version of me.
I am in control.

SID

Well, in your control of your massive wealth of 20 bucks store credit, are you taking anything back to the land of the pretty pod people?

MAURA

Do you have a copy of 'Rude Sales Clerk'?

SID

Ouch. Witty. Open mic is Thursday.

Maura levels a you-can't-shake-me stare on her, draws on every ounce of reserve in her Day One commitment tank.

MAURA

I bet you get awfully lonely.

Sid, for maybe the third time in her life, is speechless. She blinks but words don't come.

Desperate to not seem hurt, she busies herself with writing: \$20 store credit on a bookmark, hands it to Maura.

EXT. SHUFFLEBOARD COURTS - SAME TIME

Scott hands a stack of quarters to Scott Senior. They are the entire audience of an elderly shuffleboard match.

SENIOR

Fifty Johnny Hot Pants wins the points.

Senior plucks down fifty cents as an elder man wearing blue shorts shuffles his quake toward the opposite end.

SCOTT

Can't believe I'm doing this.

He lays two quarters beside Seniors, matches the bet.

SENIOR

Don't say you're up for anything if you ain't up for anything.

SCOTT

I'm not complaining. It's just that gambling on senior citizens playing shuffleboard was not on my bingo card when I got up this morning.

SENIOR

Yeah, well, when you wake up and they tell you that you're number's just about up -- all the sudden, your bingo card beats the crap out of mine, know what I'm saying?

Scott nods, pained. The elderly man shuffles and wins the point. Senior pumps his fist, gathers all four quarters.

Scott watches him celebrate but can't mask the ache he feels.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Maura, changed into work out clothes, eyes an exercise chart. She tries to mimic the body position steps.

Her air Twister attempts show her inexperience with this.

MAURA (V.O.)

Day One feels like it's a week old already. Rude Sales Girl didn't help any but, did I cross a line there? We all have a struggle...

She pretzels herself, teeters, topples to the floor.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

Sid sighs, bored with scrolling her phone. She looks at Maura's trade-in stacks still piled neatly on the counter.

She picks off the top one, Todd Eden's self-help book, "Own Life."

Sid reclines, opens and reads.

EXT. SHUFFLEBOARD COURTS - DAY

Senior is winning big. Tall quarter stacks in his favor. Scott returns from the change machine with more quarters.

SCOTT

How 'bout we do a final winner-take
all then grab lunch. Anywhere you
want.

Senior nods, winces, rubs his eyes. The elderly folks stop playing and disperse, leaving Scott and Senior alone.

SENIOR

Okay, you get it all anyway.

Senior slides all of his stacks toward Scott.

SCOTT

C'mon, Dad. It's not the time to
talk like that.

SENIOR

When is? Tomorrow? Day after? I
can't exactly wait around.

SCOTT

Okay, you want me to have
everything. You have a Will then?

SENIOR

Your Mother would have killed me
herself if I didn't. I had to show
it to her before she passed. Ain't
much than that.

(nods to the quarters)

And after these last few tests?
Yeah, you'll be set, Luck.

Scott nods, pats Senior's shoulder.

SCOTT

Yeah, I'm all set.

But he looks and sounds anything but.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

Sid looks away from her book, distracted. Somehow, there's an actual DIN of activity and conversation in the store.

She folds the book down open on the counter and her eyes pan with razor sharp assessment. There's one -- two -- three women at least in the store. One of them was the tenth.

She grabs her phone, creepily finds and snaps shots of each woman. She looks around - finds others browsing books.

Sid lifts her book and closes it without a bookmark in it. She lays it next to Scott's supply, numbered and ready.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Scott and Senior talk. Lunch nearly over. To the server and the world, just two men sharing a meal.

To them, among the last times that they'll actually talk to each other. There's no tears or somberness but real and poignant conversation.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT - DAY

A KNOCK draws Maura to open her door. She's ditched the work out clothes in favor of yoga pants and a sweatshirt.

Maura opens the door, finds her food delivery in the doorway. She looks down the hall.

DELIVERY GUY stands by the elevator, checks his phone.

Maura clears her throat, a Day One prompt, then:

MAURA

Hey! Got a minute?

Delivery Guy looks up from his phone, on auto-response.

DELIVERY GUY

Receipts in the bag. They make it,
I just bring it. If you...

MAURA

..I'm sure it's fine. I meant, do
you have a few minutes? Just to
talk?

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Delivery Guy munches on fries. Maura sits across from him. Observes him like a scientist would a lab rat. Full evaluation mode.

MAURA
Ever get hit on?

DELIVERY GUY
Nah. That's the fantasy, right? Be the guy that brings you everything you want. On demand. Yeah, if I could bring that? I'd be...

MAURA
Busy.

DELIVERY GUY
Tired.

They share a light chuckle. It finally hits Delivery Guy.

DELIVERY GUY
Is that what this..

MAURA
No, it was just a question. Plus, I wanted to give you a little more of a tip.

Delivery Guy nods, then, turns, looks like he senses a play.

DELIVERY GUY
Wait up, that's usually the way it..
(looks around)
You filming me or something?

MAURA
I swear. I'm not. Just talking.

Maura fishes through her purse, fishes out some dollars.

Delivery Guy sees the big Day One announcement on the white board, stands, readies to leave. He gestures to the board.

DELIVERY GUY
Celebrating something?

Maura hands him the dollars, walks him to the door.

MAURA
You could say that.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

Sid, again alone with her book and phone. She gazes out the window. No Scott. Just life passing by.

She scrolls the three images of the women she took phone pics of earlier.

SID
(muses to the phone)
You're welcome. You ladies have no
idea what I saved you from.

CLICK. She snaps off her phone, pockets it, grabs her book and skits off to the cozy corner.

COZY CORNER - SECONDS LATER

Lounging on a bean bag, Sid sets her phone aside and returns her gaze to the window. Still no Scott. Still life passing by outside the glass.

She looks around at the empty store and she's alone on an island, like a ruder-less drifting raft.

If this were an early silent film, the lonely stroke of a single violin would play - but the BELL rings above the door.

Sid gathers her phone and climbs off the bean bag, determined to look bored and pissed.

Scott enters and bee-lines for the counter.

Sid slows her roll as she takes in his stoic and deliberate actions. He loads a pound of quarters into the register.

COUNTER

SID
Would've been nice to let me know
you were blowing out of here for
the day.

Scott is all in quarter-packing.

SID
Actually did some business today.

Sid looks perplexed that her statement didn't get a response.

SID
Applied to a beauty pageant over
lunch.

Nothing. Sid heaves a frustrated groan. Scott finally deposits the last of the quarters and turns to her.

SCOTT

I'll open tomorrow. If you don't feel like being here, close and leave. I really don't care.

He turns and leaves. Sid wanders next to the register to watch him walk away. She's vexed by his unusual behavior.

When he's out of sight and well out of earshot:

SID

Hey. You okay?

EXT. PARK - DAY

Again, a smattering of people relaxing and enjoying the day.

Scott wanders toward the tiki ring toss set up. No one plays.

SCOTT (V.O.)

What good is luck really if you can't enjoy it? There's millions of people that would change lives with me right now but does that make me feel lucky? It's all perspective.

Scott, drawn to the quiet activity, strolls closer.

He cocks the ring and swings. It misses the mark and sways slowly to a stop.

Scott shakes his head at the irony and wanders away as Maura wanders into the same area. She's still in her lounge clothes, journal in hand.

She sits on a bench by the tiki ring toss, journals:

MAURA (V.O.)

Day One is almost done and I'm closing it with closing this journal. It wasn't the perfect day but it's a step in the right direction. I'm losing the journal and Day Two and every day after will be about living and enjoying the process.

She closes the journal and swats a swing as she passes the tiki ring, not even looking at what happens. Sure enough, it sways in the air - and lands on the hook unbeknownst to her.

INT. NEW AGE APARTMENT / MASSAGE TABLE AREA - DAY

Scott, on his stomach, gets a massage from Rachel. A different but eerily similar new age female singer DRONES. The high octane incense is probably working overtime.

RACHEL

So, your Dad told me that you won a lottery?

Scott nods, not really relaxing or allowing her to relax him.

SCOTT

There's very few people he hasn't told. Kinda his thing.

RACHEL

Still, pretty cool.

Rachel works her massage. From her hair to her clothes, it does seem she put a little more effort into her presentation.

Scott's tense torso seems to present its own challenges and she rubs, adapts, tries different techniques.

SCOTT

He, eh, tell you anything...else?

RACHEL

Your social security number, where you keep your spare keys, when you're generally not home. Same old, ya know.

SCOTT

Good to know.

Scott blinks. Listens, but nothing's clicking.

RACHEL

Man, you are capital T tight.

She digs in deeper and harder.

SCOTT

Sorry. Kinda why I'm here.

RACHEL

No, I get it. I have a friend that's wound pretty tight too. Not her fault. She's a planner. Likes to know what's coming next and it gets the better of her sometimes.

SCOTT

So how do you steer her? She a regular?

RACHEL

Regular pain in my ass? Yes. Pardon my language but yeah, she kinda drives me crazy with the batshit, dammit, sorry, organization stuff.

Scott seems finally lulled. The massage seems to be working.

SCOTT

Plans make God laugh. I'm trying my own experiment with random choices.

RACHEL

Oh, yeah? How's it working out?

SCOTT

Terrible.

RACHEL

Not surprised. My control-addicted friend? She recently started hanging out with this mysterious girl. A real rando -- secretive type. Now, she's gone full psycho and is determined to re-set herself. Again, the control thing.

Scott lets his eyes wander, sees her child-like pink boots and new age environment. He listens again. Nothing clicking.

SCOTT

Well, I hope she finds whatever it is she's looking for.

RACHEL

Yeah. Not holding my breath. She has enough trouble finding a coffee mug. Life compass is a stretch.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Sid sits on the steps, keeps the sidewalk company. Then, as if gifted from the parting clouds -- a ray of sunshine appears and lights up the street --

Book Girl, in her server clothes, strides toward her, earbuds in. She's reading the book Sid had recommended to her.

Sid gapes at the wonder of this random encounter and fidgets.

She rises off the steps, paces in front of Book Girl's path to instigate some encounter.

It's an awkward dance to time their physical intersection but Sid watches, waits then makes a point to bump into Book Girl.

They immediately recognize each other.

BOOK GIRL
Oh, hey. It's you.

SID
Yeah. Out here in the wild, rather
than my natural habitat.

Sid rolls her eyes in disbelief that she uttered that and jams her hands into her back pockets. Struggles mightily.

BOOK GIRL
You...live around here, then?

SID
Yep.

Sid gestures to the apartment building.

BOOK GIRL
Cool.

SID
You?

BOOK GIRL
What?

SID
Live. Around here? I mean, I know
you shop around here.

Sid gestures to her book. Scott's Coupon Bookmark jutting proudly from the pages. Book Girl extracts her ear buds.

Sid tries to play it cool but sways nervously.

BOOK GIRL
I gotta thank you. You recommended
this book to me and I love it. I
mean...I can't put it down.
Obviously.

Book Girl gestures that she's here, walking and reading. Sid nods, smiles. Every fiber of her being totally electrified.

SID
Co..co..co..cool. Glad you like it.

BOOK GIRL
I've...gotta get to work.

SID
Yeah. Maybe I'll see you around...

Sid horribly fails nonchalance but then Book Girl sends visible chills up Sid's spine. She looks directly at her.

BOOK GIRL
Oh, you definitely will.

Book Girl smiles and walks on, leaving Sid in a puddle of bliss and wonderment. Every muscle seems to sing with glee. She resumes pacing. Faster now. Burns off overcharged energy.

Book Girl re-inserts her ear buds and turns the corner. Sid steps toward following her, then pulls up.

She starts again then stops. Her internal struggle physically playing out with steps. She blinks at the now empty street. Opportunity lost.

INT. PET RESCUE - DAY

Maura, in casual clothes, sits across from JESS. The animals and pet-centric items -- the furthest thing from an office,

Jess multi-tasks assorted pet care while glancing at a clipboard with Maura's application on it.

JESS
Never worked with animals.

MAURA
My cat's really possessive.

JESS
Sense of humor. Good for you.

MAURA
I pick things up quickly. I'm just looking for something...different.

Jess is pulled in several directions by the animals and the activity in the busy and obviously understaffed rescue.

JESS
Paycheck's a bit 'different' too.
You good with that?

MAURA
I'm... good with that.

JESS
Can you start in the morning?

MAURA
I've got the job?

JESS
Welcome aboard.

Maura rises, smiles looks around at the chaos she just chose.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - DUSK

Maura strides toward home. Her step a little lighter.

EXT. DIFFERENT CITY SIDEWALK - DUSK

Book Girl reads, walks toward the bistro where she serves.

EXT. DIFFERENT CITY SIDEWALK - DUSK

Scott walks toward home - alone, yet surrounded by people.

EXT. CITY INTERSECTION - DUSK

Commuters bustle and hustle, escaping for home. Remarkably, Scott crosses to the left as Maura crosses to the right and Book Girl dissects their path moving north to south.

Each oblivious to the other yet so very close to each other.

SCOTT (V.O.)
Well, that was...what it was. You know, there comes a time to stop thinking and start..

MAURA (V.O.)
..doing. I'm doing this. No idea how it's gonna work out but I'm hitting 'play.' We'll see..

AT THE CURB OF HER SIDEWALK - SECONDS LATER

A WOMAN with bags stacked precariously in her arms balances them against her car.

A gust kicks up, knocks a bag off the top.

JOEL (30's), classic handsome, is closest. He sets his own bags down in front of Maura's path, helps the Woman gather her things.

JOEL
There's always one that tries to
make a break for it.

WOMAN
Yeah. Not the good kind of breaks.

JOEL
When you least expect. They happen.

The Woman blinks. Who is this sage with a smile and kind act?

WOMAN
Thanks for the help.

He hands her the last bag and she packs it, climbs into her car and pulls away. Maura has seen this play out --

Joel's bag, filled with items, is right in front of her.

Joel watches the Woman pull away. Only when reaching for his bag does he realize that it was in Maura's path.

JOEL
Oh, jeez, I'm sorry.

MAURA
That was very sweet. Most people
would've just passed her by.

JOEL
Yes, but I got her wallet.

He winks. Maura laughs.

They both wait for the other to move on.

MAURA
Your stuff --

JOEL
Right, yes.

MAURA
Quite the blockade. U-Haul out of
trucks?

JOEL
Sorry. just picking up some things
for kids in my class.

He rearranges the top item from the top of his bag.

JOEL
You look familiar. I'm Joel. Joel
Paxton.

MAURA
Maura Watkins.

She looks at his top item. It's a COFFEE MUG BOX. A cat
slumped against a pillow. Her mug. She smiles.

MAURA
Where did you get that?

JOEL
I think it was that book store. A
few blocks over. The Bookbin?

MAURA
Book Mark? Rude girl dressed like
the 80's never ended?

JOEL
Maybe...I've been all over. We've
definitely met before..

FLASH CUT

INT. OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

-- Interview. Maura faces him with a forced smile.

JOEL
(as he did as Executive)
Where do you see yourself in five
years?

BACK TO SCENE

Joel snaps his fingers.

JOEL
You were my last interview before I
quit my job. Sorry, I had to figure
that out. Your path is now cleared.

He shifts his bag and sweeps his arm with a grand gesture of
waving her through. Maura, feeling emboldened, smiles, then --

MAURA
So, you've recently had a Day One.

JOEL

Yeah, you could say that. I quit corporate. Changed channels.

Maura nods. The bustle around their stagnancy only anchors them to each other. She looks from the mug to his smile.

MAURA

We all have our journeys.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING / ROOFTOP - NIGHT

A new moon fills the city night sky.

Scott Senior gazes at the moonlight, stares at its presence. A constant in a world of changes and surprises. Good and bad.

He lifts a cigarette and savors the smokey inhale. He sips wine and toasts the moon glow.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - DAWN

Early commuters, buses, cabs and Ubers do their daily grind.

SCOTT (V.O.)

That million destinies all
connected sounds different.
Sometimes it sounds like --

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

SCOTT

Can I help you?

A WOMAN steals a side glance at Sid perched on a stool nearby.

WOMAN

Yes, I was checking on a book I
ordered. It's been a week and..

Scott side glances at Sid as well. Her eyes dead scroll her phone. The Woman leans a little closer. Scott does as well.

WOMAN

I didn't get a receipt or anything.
She just told me to check back.

SCOTT

And you ordered it here. From..

(calls to her)

Sid. Could you come over here.

Sid slides off the stool, keeps her eyes on her phone, crabs steps to join Scott at the counter. She does not look up.

SCOTT

Did you place a book order for..

WOMAN

"Finding Him." It was a week ago.

SCOTT

A week ago. Remember the order?

SID

Yep.

SCOTT

And it's...?

Finally, Sid disengages from her phone, looks mystified.

SID

I'm guessing not here by the way
this line of questioning is going.
Check back in a bit.

She turns and aims for her stool throne. The Woman fixes a look on Scott. Her point and case made.

He offers her a bookmark.

SCOTT

Write down your address. I'll
personally deliver it to you within
48 hours. And there is no charge.
I'm sorry for the delay.

The Woman frowns at Sid's indifference, hands Scott back the Bookmark with her address.

Inadvertently, he had given her the bookmark labeled with the sharpie #10 from the mug by the register on the fateful day.

The Woman leaves. Sid misses the nasty look she casts on her way out. Her eyes glazed over her scroll.

SCOTT

That's notions of last straw for
Section 10. Subsection B.

(MORE)

SCOTT (CONT'D)

For a period of six, paren, numeral
6, months from the date of Closing.
Your time paren, numeral NOW is up.

SID

It was actually last week. I'm just
using up the rest of my PTO.

Sid shifts her eyes to take Scott's temperature on that then--

SID

Oh my God, you did it.

SCOTT

I...did it?

She brandishes the mug with only nine marked bookmarks and
the missing tenth bookmark. She gestures to Scott's hand.

He's holding a woman's name and address on the 10th bookmark.

SID

Fate has chosen your next pursuit.

Scott blinks. His anger totally defused and freshly-ground
bewilderment taking over his senses.

SID

Easy there, Killer. EE-say down.

She guides and lowers him onto her stool. Scott blinks again,
tries to wrap his head around this series of events.

Sid pockets her phone, clasps her hands as if she just
successfully rebuilt a transmission.

SID

Not all heroes wear capes.

INT. ANIMAL RESCUE - DAY

Maura winces and nervously reacts to a barrage of SOUNDS from
the cages. The entire room is chaotic, from its happenstance
aisles to its scattered array of toys and cleaning items.
Maura makes an attempt at an inventory list but its hopeless.

MAURA (V.O.)

What am I doing? Literally?
Different sure but is this MY path
or just another option? Like Joel.
How is it that I meet him on that
day? And he's got the one thing I
can't replace.

EXT. CITY INTERSECTION / CURB OF SIDEWALK - DUSK (FLASHBACK)

Resuming from:

MAURA

We all have our journeys.

That prompts Joel to check the time on his phone.

JOEL

Speaking of which, I've got to...

MAURA

...go steal some wallets. Got it.

Maura casts one last longing look at the cat mug in his bag and pushes off the sidewalk. She only makes it a step before:

JOEL

I didn't get yours.

She turns. He's still holding his phone up, offers it. Maura smiles, steps back to him and does her best Book Girl impression of entering her digits in his phone.

MAURA (V.O.)

..no matter how hard I try.

FLASH CUT

INT. OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

-- Interview. Maura faces Joel with a forced smile.

JOEL

(as he did as Executive)

Where do you see yourself in five years?

EXT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK CONTINUATION

Maura stabs the elevator button like her worst enemy.

MAURA

Never. A. Gain.

She looks back. Joel leaves the conference room, sees the tail end of her assault on the innocent illuminated button.

Mercifully, the escape door opens. Maura hurries in.

Joel watches the doors close and he looks soured. Like a man who's seen enough and needs a change.

EXT. CITY INTERSECTION / CURB OF SIDEWALK - DUSK (FLASHBACK)

Resuming from Maura handing Joel back her phone. He reads it. Smiles.

JOEL
I'll call you.

INT. ANIMAL RESCUE - DAY (PRESENT)

Maura checks her phone. No calls. No notifications. A wet nose SNARFS on her forearm and more animal disruptions spring Maura to pocket the phone and quell the uprising.

INT. LION'S DEN - NIGHT

Quiet and empty until Sid struts in like Grand Marshall of the "Super Me" parade. Arms outstretched like a champion.

SID
Best day ever, Cubbie! I'm cappin'
it off by finishing your
manuscript. Gotta have my portfolio
ready for the New Yorker interview.

Cubbie stays concentrated on an origami animal collection. Uninspired by her rally.

Sid slides onto her usual stool at the bar. Pats out an uptempo beat on the bar. The origami collection dances to the vibrations. One teeters and falls. Cubbie snarls at Sid.

SID
Sorry, Dude. Feeling stoked.

He gruffly shoves the folder with her crinkled lined edits in front of her.

Sid lifts her red pencil, fixes herself upon the stool, poised to commence great work.

She beams, can't settle herself, then finally blurts like a hormone supercharged middle schooler:

SID
Book Girl complimented me today.

Cubbie pours two generous shots but looks like he could literally care less. Sid downs hers, taps a fresh beat.

SID
Yep, yep, yep. King of the World.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Senior examines the menu. He's dressed nicer than usual but has a somber air. Book Girl readies to take his order.

Senior lowers the menu, tries to smile through:

SENIOR

Popular ice breaker at parties.
What would you order for your last
meal if you knew it would be your
last meal.

BOOK GIRL

Coffee and a good book.

Book Girl collects the place setting from the other side of the table, then, just as she did with Maura, sits down.

SENIOR

Definitely -- not that. Let's start
with the porterhouse, medium-well,
and we'll go from there.

Book Girl nods but pockets her order pad and clasps his hand.

BOOK GIRL

Go from there. See, your spinning
positive from that last meal
already. Listen, this is my last
table, so, I'm also gonna grab my
shift meal. You good with some
company?

Senior looks surprised and somewhat flustered.

SENIOR

Sure. Can't promise that I'm the
best company but, yeah, why not?

Book Girl taps his hand, shuffles toward the kitchen.

BOOK GIRL

Coolness. I'll be right back.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Wine glasses and steak bones on plates. Book Girl has her can't-put-down book on the table.

It's not prominent but Scott's coupon for coffee bookmark juts from the pages. Senior and Book Girl talk easily.

BOOK GIRL

I'm sure you appreciate the irony here -- but everyone in here, including me, could have just ordered their last meal. Tomorrow's not a given.

SENIOR

So, tip well, right?

BOOK GIRL

Not a pitch, just a reality. I do this every shift 'cause I realized that there's so many people out there, struggling with their journey for one reason or another and -- we're all human. Connected. We're here to help each other out.

Book Girl toasts Senior with her wine glass. Senior nods.

SENIOR

It's kind of you. Much appreciated.

BOOK GIRL

Don't go Full Monty Fantasy on me now, we're just sharing a table but seriously, do you have one of those bucket lists people make?

SENIOR

No. Had time with my son. Got to talk. We hadn't been real close past couple years. Felt like I had to make that right.

BOOK GIRL

Good man. Leave very few crumbs and regrets on the table. Last meal well spent.

She gathers her book and now Scott's dollar bill coupon juts like an arrow connecting them mid-table. Senior sees it.

SENIOR

The Bookmark? You go to that store?

BOOK GIRL

Yeah. That's my spot. There's somebody there pulls me in like a magnet.

SENIOR

That's my son's place.

Book Girl, bag and book in hand, takes that in and only offers a nod that she's heard and acknowledged him.

BOOK GIRL

Well, I have to get going. I'd only be making it awkward if I asked for your contact information but, know this, I really hope that you get to feel some peace. We all do the best we can to play the hand that we're dealt. After that...

She shrugs and leaves. Senior reels. Visibly confused.

INT. MAURA'S APARTMENT / BEDROOM - NIGHT

Maura reads. Bronte nearby. She checks her phone. Nothing.

INT. SCOTT'S APARTMENT / BEDROOM - - NIGHT

Scott reads. A framed picture of a younger Scott and a younger Senior now on the nightstand.

He checks his phone. Nothing.

INT. LION'S DEN - NIGHT

Sid taps her pencil, nods as she flips the last page of the manuscript and closes the folder with a celebratory slam.

SID

Well done, Cubbie. This is probably the best first novel I've ever read. Truly awesome work.

Cubbie, for the first time, shows a pang of emotion. He chews on his lip. Fights to hold back emotion.

CUBBIE

You're not just looking for a free drink?

SID

I am not. I said 'first.' Don't get crazy in the head.

CUBBIE

Means a lot. Coming from you.

SID

That and a few bucks might get you
a cup of coffee from Mean Cup.

Sid eases off her perch, slides the stool back.

CUBBIE

Heading out?

SID

Yeah, I gotta look for something.

CUBBIE

Anything I can help with?

SID

No. I don't even know what it is.

She fires air pistols at him and saunters out. Cubbie
collects the folder with her edits, smiles to himself.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - DAWN

Early commuters, buses, cabs and Ubers do their daily thing.

SCOTT (V.O.)

We never know when the big 'a-ha'
is gonna happen. That's something
we always realize after the fact.

EXT. SIDEWALK / NEWSTAND - DAY

Freshly displaced pedestrians zig and zag along the sidewalk.
People line up to buy Luck Buck lottery tickets.

Scott passes the line. Moments later, Maura does too.

MAURA (V.O.)

Am I shocked Joel didn't call? No.
Day 2 Maura might have been. Day 5
Maura? She's older and wiser. She
attracts. Never chases.

INT. THE BOOKMARK BOOKSTORE - DAY

Scott enters and immediately pauses. Sid and her dog-eared,
highlighted agreement sit by the register.

She makes sure he's watching as she makes a show of
depositing it in the trash.

He walks behind the register and sees her pulling the two cat mugs, in their boxes, from a shelf.

SID

Sold one of these the other day.

She throws a crumpled five dollar bill into the register.

SID

I'll take one as severance. The other one set aside for a prim and proper nightmare that cases the bookstores. Psycho had to have it and you'd probably get along great.

Sid opens the lone delivery behind the counter. It's a copy of "Finding Him." She hands it to Scott.

SID

Your delivery for today. The Tenth Woman. Good luck with that.

Scott accepts the book, lays the bookmark with the woman's address on top of it and faces Sid. She chews gum. Blows a bubble. Shrugs.

SID

Ok then.

She awkwardly tries to make a break for it. He stops her.

SCOTT

What are you gonna do?

Sid whirls, battles back emotion and forces a steady voice.

SID

I'm gonna be the best damn editor in the world and push Cubbie's book to be a best seller. 'Cause I'll tell you one thing, it ain't going into 'Swings and Misses.'

Scott eyes her. It's probably allergies but water fills both their eyes, so Sid leaves and Scott straightens the five before tucking it neatly in the register.

Neither look up.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Maura strides across the walkway. Animal Rescue polo on.

MAURA (V.O.)
Maybe Fate has plans for me. Maybe
my plan is for the plan to reveal
itself to me.

EXT. PARK - SAME TIME

Scott strides forward, reads walking directions off his
phone. He has the book tucked under his arm.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Sparse array of people enjoying warm sunshine.

Scott wanders toward the tiki ring toss set up. No one is
playing.

SCOTT (V.O.)
Somehow, I ended up making a pact
with myself that this Tenth Woman
is to be the one for me to pursue.
Well, it might yield better results
than anything I've tried yet.

Scott, drawn to a quiet distractive activity, strolls closer,
just as --

Maura wanders into the same area.

Her eyes on the familiar sight.

MAURA (V.O.)
Pure chance. The skill is just
showing up and taking a swing.
There's no way to get good at
something like that. Just like
relationships and love. It all
comes down to --

Scott and Maura both arrive and reach to take a random swing.

They each pull back as they realize the other's presence.

The tiki ring sways in the air, awaits a hopeful heart...

SCOTT
Sorry. Go ahead.

MAURA
No, you go ahead. I'm just..

SCOTT
Seriously, I've got a book to
deliver. Go ahead.

He waves it in earnest.

MAURA
I'm on my way to work. Go ahead.

SCOTT
You go. This might the one time it
catches. You don't want to miss
that.

MAURA
Oh yeah? You've done it?

SCOTT
Well, I've heard. It's not the kind
of thing anyone can be good at.

That tilts Maura's head. Wasn't that just what she thought?

MAURA
So you were gonna just swing it?
See what happens?

SCOTT
Yeah. Weren't you?

MAURA
I see couples here do it a lot.
Looks fun.

SCOTT
It's only fun when it works. When
it doesn't, it's just frustrating
and makes you crazy.

MAURA
Yeah. I get that. Like life.

SCOTT
Like life.

Scott lowers the book, compelled by Maura's whimsical air.
She stares at the ring, then back at him, grins a challenge:

MAURA
Let's both play. See what happens.

Scott sets the book aside, grins. Challenge accepted.

Maura and Scott each put fingers on the ring and let it fly
as we

CUT TO BLACK.

