

THE TAGALONG

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. DORM ROOM, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY - NIGHT

SUPER: "2005, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY"

JO BALDWIN, a short, cherub-faced young lady of 22, studies with her best friend, NOAH RYAN, a handsome, charming gentleman, also 22. Jo sits at Noah's desk, taking the studying way more seriously than Noah, who lays in his bed. It's as if there are almost in two different worlds.

NOAH

...and she told me that she just needed help dismantling her TV stand. And when I walked into the room, she was naked.

JO

Tell me you didn't.

NOAH

I didn't want to be rude.

JO

I can't believe you came out of your lovely mother.

NOAH

We should be out right now taking shots of tequila and making bad decisions.

JO

Don't you think I would rather be watching the Cardinals-Cubs game? But this Art History final ain't gonna study itself.

NOAH

Come on Jo...let's end our run here at ASU with some a big old bang.

JO

(straight faced)
Bang.

NOAH

Have I told you lately that you're real funny?

JO

Why don't you tell me three techniques that define Impressionism?

NOAH

1. The play of natural light is emphasized. 2. Colors are applied side-by-side with as little mixing as possible. 3. Short, thick strokes of paint quickly capture the essence of the subject, rather than its details.

JO

UGH. How do you always land on your feet?

NOAH

You mean like a cat? Meow.

JO

I'm gonna miss you.

NOAH

(Emotions? NO!)

Do you know what's crazy? Biggie Smalls died ten years ago.

JO

An "I miss you too" would have been a little more apropos.

NOAH

Hear me out. Wouldn't a greeting card with a cartoon of Biggie that says "Biggie Thanks" be hilarious?

JO

You know I want to strangle you, but not before I give you this.

Jo reaches in to her bag and pulls out a box. She sits with Noah on the bed.

NOAH

What is that? Are you proposing to me?

JO

Noah, can you just shut your trap for once?

Noah respectfully nods.

JO (CONT'D)
 (she gets a little teary)
 You mean a lot to me and I just
 can't believe we'll be on opposite
 ends of the country and I just want
 you know that because of you, I
 have been changed for good.

Jo hands Noah the box.

NOAH
 You've got to stop listening to
Wicked.

JO
 (wiping away her tears)
 Will you just open the damn thing?

Noah opens the box to find a beautiful watch. He turns it
 over. The engraving it reads, "FRIENDS 'TIL THE END OF TIME.
 N & J." Noah is visibly moved, but keeps it wrangled in.

NOAH
 Thank you.

JO
 I don't want you wasting one of
 those New York minutes.

NOAH
 Can you believe I'm moving to New
 York City? It's gonna be crazy...
 I'm probably going to get wrapped
 up in sex, drugs and alcohol. Party
 too hard. BAM! Dead of a heart
 attack way too young. But then
 thousands will mourn...

JO
 Why would you say that?

He looks at her blankly.

JO (CONT'D)
 My dad, Noah?

Nothing from Noah.

JO (CONT'D)
 Had a heart attack.

NOAH
 You're too sensitive.

JO
And you're a dick.

She gets up and begins to pack up.

NOAH
C'mon Jo. I love it.

He pulls her back on to the bed.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Relax, ok? Nothing is going to happen to me and there are planes that take people from LA to New York and New York to LA. This is the beginning of our lives! Not the end.

He pokes her.

JO
You're right.

He begins to poke her repeatedly.

NOAH
Are you sure you're fine? Huh? Huh?

Jo pokes/tickles back.

JO
Two can play at this game.

They begin to tickle each other, wrestle, horseplay. Jo winds up pinning him. There is a beat. Their eyes lock. He flips her over, so that he is in the dominant position. He kisses her. He takes off his shirt and then hers. They continue to make out passionately. Noah moves to undo his pants and reaches for a condom from his night stand.

NOAH
Are you sure?

JO
Yes.

He continues and the two friends have sex.

INT. DORM ROOM, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY - MORNING

Jo and Noah are dead asleep. The alarm goes off. Jo wakes up. Noah hits snooze. Jo looks at her watch...

JO

Shit!

Noah wakes up. Jo leaps out of bed, frantically gathering her things.

JO (CONT'D)

Shit. Shit. Shit.

NOAH

What are you shitting about?

JO

The final is in...13 minutes!

NOAH

Plenty of time.

JO

No it's not!

NOAH

Three minutes to get dressed, comb my hair, and brush my teeth. Four, if I floss. Another minute for the shoes. Two minutes to get my shit together. That leaves what? 6 whole minutes to get to class.

JO

Across campus?! Ugh. I don't even have time to change my underwear.

She is packed up.

JO (CONT'D)

Are you coming?

NOAH

I'll be right behind you.

Jo flies out the door.

JO (O.S.)

Hi Kevin. By Kevin.

KEVIN RICHARDSON, Noah's other best friend walks in.

KEVIN

Dude, get your shit and let's go.

NOAH

I'm coming.

Noah begins to throw on clothes. Kevin spots a condom wrapper on the ground.

KEVIN
Wait, did you and Jo...?

NOAH
We did.

KEVIN
Are you two like a thing now?

NOAH
It meant nothing.

KEVIN
Does she know that?

NOAH
Yeah.

KEVIN
Are you sure? You know she has a thing for you.

NOAH
No she doesn't. Does she?

KEVIN
Men and women can't be friends.
Haven't you've ever seen *When Harry Met Sally*?

NOAH
Nah. I'm sure it's fine.

EXT. ART HISTORY LECTURE HALL, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY -
MOMENTS LATER

Jo runs up to the classroom door, where her other best friend, ANNIE WILLIS, is waiting.

ANNIE
Where have you been? I went to meet you for coffee and you weren't-

JO
(she can't hold it in)
Noah and I had sex.

ANNIE
When?

JO
Last night.

ANNIE
What?

JO
It was hot.

ANNIE
I can't even fucking believe it.

JO
Annie - you know how long I've been
wanting this.

ANNIE
You think this means that you two
are like a thing now?

JO
I think so-

Before Jo can finish her thought, Kevin walks up. Noah is trailing behind.

KEVIN
Hey babe.

Annie plants a smooch on Kevin that only gets slightly out of control. Jo rolls her eyes.

NOAH
Get a room.

JO
Hey.

Jo goes to give Noah a kiss, but he backs away quickly.

NOAH
(looking down at his feet)
Hi.

You can take juice and make popsicles with how cold it is between them. Kevin and Annie break their lips apart.

KEVIN
Let's do this!

He high fives Noah and walks hand-in-hand with Annie into the classroom. Noah stares at Jo, speechless.

JO
I'm going to find a seat.

She enters the classroom. Noah has proverbial shit all over his face.

INT. ART HISTORY LECTURE HALL, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY -
LATER

Jo finishes her final and races out of class. Noah watches her leave. He isn't done. He doesn't care. He rushes out.

INT. HALLWAY, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY - CONTINUOUS

Noah rushes to catch Jo.

NOAH
Jo! Wait up.

She speeds up. He breaks out into a sprint and catches her.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Are we ok?

JO
Everything is fine.

NOAH
Last night was fun. Like really.
Wow...Jo, I didn't know you had it
in you.

There is a pause where Jo stares at him "What the fuck does that mean?".

NOAH (CONT'D)
But I can't be tied down right now.
And you and me - we're just
friends.

JO
Not anymore.

Jo tries to step around him, but he stops her yet again.

NOAH
C'mon. I know you feel like we'll
never see each other again, but
there's MySpace and this.

Noah holds up his sweet Nokia phone. There is a silence.

JO

Bye Noah.

Jo walks away and Noah is left alone. He shouts in one last attempt to make her smile.

NOAH

I did say I wanted to go out on a
"Bang"!

He tries to muster up laughter as he watches her until she is out of sight.

ROLL CREDITS

AS THE OPENING CREDITS ROLL, WE FADE OUT FROM THE ASU CAMPUS INTO A SERIES OF PHOTOS OF NOAH AND JO LEADING THEIR SEPARATE LIVES OVER THE LAST DOZEN OR SO YEARS. NOAH IN NEW YORK, DATING LOADS OF WOMEN, POSING WITH CLEVER, HIPSTER GREETING CARDS THAT HE HAS WRITTEN. JO IS IN LOS ANGELES, COVERING SPORTS GAMES, PENNING SPORTS ARTICLES. EVENTUALLY, WE LAND IN LOS ANGELES, PRESENT DAY. THE PALMS TREES, BEACH, HOLLYWOOD... ALL THAT CRAP YOU THINK OF WHEN YOU THINK OF LOS ANGELES.

CUT TO:

INT. SCARECROW & BEAR OFFICES, LOS ANGELES - DAY

SUPER: "2018, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA"

Noah, now 35, is getting acquainted with his new office in Los Angeles from his new boss, TODD.

TODD

I gotta say, I was a little surprised when we finally got you to sign the dotted line. What made you change your mind?

NOAH

I was bored with New York and thought, why not take the leap to sunny Los Angeles.

TODD

Very cool bro. Scarecrow & Bear- A Lifestyle Brand could not be more thrilled to have THE Noah Ryan.... I mean you're the guy who thought up the thank you card with Biggie on the front. Inspired.

JULIE FAY approaches.

JULIE

Sorry to interrupt. Todd, are you joining the 11am conference call with Urban?

TODD

You can handle it on your own. I want to make sure Noah gets everything he needs. By the way, Julie, this is Noah Ryan, our new Creative Director, and Noah this is Julie Fay, Vice President of Sales.

Julie and Noah shake hands.

JULIE

Nice to meet you. We've all heard wonderful things.

NOAH

Same here.

TODD

Julie here drove up sales 150% last quarter.

NOAH

Impressive, but I'm not surprised. A Master's from Harvard Business, and a feature in the Forbes 30 Under 30 issue....

JULIE

(She is charmed)
Someone did their homework.

Todd's phone rings.

TODD

Sorry, I gotta get this. Julie, can you show Noah to his office?

She nods as Todd walks away.

JULIE

So, Noah, what brings you to LA?

NOAH

My mom.

JULIE

Your mom?

NOAH

She isn't getting any younger. She recently moved to Pasadena. And I couldn't bear the thought of her becoming the little old lady from Pasadena.

Julie giggles.

NOAH (CONT'D)

No, but really. She's the best.

JULIE

That's incredibly sweet.

NOAH

She raised me as a single mother. It's the least I can do.

They arrive at Noah's office that has a beautiful view.

JULIE

Not bad, huh?

NOAH

(staring at Julie, not the view)
Incredible.

She blushes.

JULIE

I should run. I've got that call.

NOAH

Thank you for your help, Julie. I'm looking forward to working with you.

JULIE

Likewise. Let me know if you need anything.

She gives a smile to Noah that screams "I am down to f*&\$."

NOAH

I think I'm gonna like LA.

INT. SCARECROW & BEAR, NOAH'S OFFICE, LOS ANGELES - LITTLE LATER

Noah is on his cell phone, dilly dallying around with his computer; the kind of futzing you do when start a new job.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ANNIE AND KEVIN'S HOME, KITCHEN - SAME

Kevin is cleaning the kitchen. His phone rings.

KEVIN

Dude!!

NOAH

Bro!!

KEVIN

How are you?

NOAH

Already have a few dates lined up, but nothing tonight. Let's grab a beer.

KEVIN

Oh man. Annie and I have our engagement party tonight.

NOAH

Oh yah. I think I saw that on Facebook.

CLOSE IN ON NOAH'S COMPUTER: Kevin's Facebook page. His status reads "Stoked for our super rad engagement party tonight!"

NOAH (CONT'D)

Another time then.

KEVIN

You should totally come tonight!

NOAH

I wouldn't want to impose.

KEVIN

Seriously. I was going to invite you, but wasn't sure when you were-

NOAH

You twisted my arm.

KEVIN

It'll be great to have the whole gang back together.

NOAH

Whole gang?

KEVIN

Shit. Jo's gonna be there tonight.

CLOSE IN ON NOAH'S COMPUTER: It is Jo's Facebook page. There is a picture of her, Annie, and Kevin. The status reads: "Can't wait to celebrate these two FINALLY getting engaged. #itsaboutdamntime #threemuskteers #happinessisthis"

NOAH

Oh. Her.

KEVIN

She hates your guts, dude.

NOAH

I'll say something cute. She'll be fine.

KEVIN

Still full of yourself.

NOAH

Hrm. Could I bring a date?

END INTERCUT.

INT. LOS ANGELES TIMES, JO'S OFFICE - SAME

Jo's office is covered with a few awards, including "Sports Journalist of the Year". She has articles pinned up of columns that she has written. She has a framed St. Louis Rams jersey hung in her office. There is even a framed picture of her and LeBron James together. Jo herself sits in her chair, behind her desk, looking out the window.

JO

(singing quietly to herself, Katy Perry's "Roar")

(MORE)

JO (CONT'D)
 YOU HELD ME DOWN, BUT I GOT UP/
 GET READY 'CAUSE I'VE HAD ENOUGH/
 I SEE IT ALL, I SEE IT NOW/
 I GOT THE EYE OF THE TIGER, A
 FIGHTER/
 DANCING THROUGH THE FIRE/
 'CAUSE I AM THE CHAMPION, AN YOU'RE
 GONNA HEAR ME ROAR/
 LOUDER, LOUDER THAN A LION-

Annie walks in with newspaper in hand, scaring Jo.

ANNIE
 (reading from the paper)
 "Frankly, Tom Brady is lucky that
 Giselle shares a bed with him. In
 short, his balls needed to be
 deflated."

JO
 Can you tell? I'm not a fan of Tom
 Brady.

ANNIE
 Brutal. Rumor has it that Brady is
 crying on his bathroom floor.

JO
 I really love Giselle though.

ANNIE
 Are you excited for the engagement
 party?

JO
 Is that tonight?

She smirks.

ANNIE
 Shut up. I've been waiting for this
 for 15 years. Fifteen years.

JO
 For your engagement party?

ANNIE
 The wedding. But the engagement
 party falls under the wedding
 umbrella.

JO

I can already foresee us shopping for wedding underwear and hearing, "I've been waiting for this moment for fifteen years..."

ANNIE

I'm taking your snark as excitement. Moving on. Can you bring a few extra bottles of champagne?

JO

It would be my honor as Maid of Honor. I just thought of that. Just now. Clever huh?

ANNIE

Oh and Noah will be there. So don't forget it starts at 7, but you should be there around 6:45. Unless the champagne isn't chilled, then you should-

JO

(as if she was punched in the face)
Whoa Whoa Whoa. Noah? Ryan?

ANNIE

I know! Kevin just texted me. Won't it be fun to have the whole gang back together?

JO

Remember how he shit all over our friendship in college?

ANNIE

Girl, it was over ten years ago. You knew exactly who Noah was when you let his peen inside you. Maybe it's time to let it go.

JO

I've let it go. I could care less about what he does.

ANNIE

Is that why you follow him on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn?

JO

You know what? It doesn't matter. I am your Maid of Honor and best friend. Therefore, I will suck. It. Up.

ANNIE

Thank you.

Annie kisses her on the forehead.

JO

Do I look okay?

She looks like she's been working all day: small stain on her shirt, hair flat, mascara under the eyes.

ANNIE

You always look beautiful to me.

JO

That's woman talk for "You look like shit."

ANNIE

6:45pm. With champagne. Don't be late.

Annie exits. Jo looks at her watch. It reads 4:53pm.

JO

Plenty of time.

Jo runs out of her office.

A WOMAN WHO WANTS TO LOOK GOOD BECAUSE SHE IS GOING TO SEE AN OLD FLAME - MONTAGE

- A) Jo runs into a store for a new outfit.
- B) Jo goes to DryBar for a blow out.
- C) Jo speeds into Sephora to get her make-up done.
- D) Jo drives past BevMo. Shit! She has to bring champagne.
- E) Jo sprints through BevMo.

END MONTAGE.

INT. ANNIE AND KEVIN'S HOME, KITCHEN - EVENING

Jo comes rushing in and immediately starts unpacking. Annie is making drinks for people.

ANNIE

Where have you been?

JO

I know you said 6:45 but I got stuck at work and then there was a line a BevMo and traffic, but at least I'm here before Noah.

Noah appears in the kitchen doorway.

NOAH

Nope. He was here at 7pm. On the dot.

Jo freezes as she looks up. She locks eyes with him.

ANNIE

I'll leave you two alone.

Annie backs out of the kitchen with drinks in hand.

NOAH

Jo Baldwin. It looks like you are about 40 New York Minutes late.

He is wearing the watch she gave him all those years ago. Jo notices and can't help but smile a little. Damn. He's good.

JO

I'm only twenty minutes late.

NOAH

New York minutes are twice as long.

JO

Then wouldn't that me only ten New York minutes late?

NOAH

Now, I'm just confused.

JO

Me too.

NOAH

Kevin was right.

JO

About what?

NOAH
You still hate my guts.

JO
No.

Noah looks at her, "C'mon..."

JO (CONT'D)
Only a little.

NOAH
You aren't still stuck on that one-
night stand thing are you?

JO
You were such a cocksucker about
it.

NOAH
I think you were the cocksucker
that night.

JO
(sarcastic as sarcastic
can be)
Clever.

NOAH
To clarify. You're not over it?

JO
You know what will make me over it?

NOAH
Do tell.

JO
An apology.

Noah looks her in the eye.

NOAH
I am sincerely sorry, Josephine
Grace Baldwin. For giving you the
best night of your life and then
leaving you wanting more-

Jo turns and begins to walk away.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Jo-

Jo stops. Turns back to Noah.

JO
You had me with that whole watch
bit.

She smiles.

NOAH
Truce?

JO
You really fucked our friendship,
you know that right?

NOAH
I fucked-up. Royally. I'm sorry.

She sticks her hand out and they shake.

JO
Truce.

NOAH
Now, I need to introduce you to my
date.

JO
Of course, here a whole 26 hours
and you've met someone.

Noah takes Jo by the hand and into the living room.

INT. ANNIE AND KEVIN'S HOME, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The party is commencing as Noah weaves around the PARTY GOERS
with Jo in tow. They approach a PETITE WOMAN from behind.
Noah taps her on the shoulder.

NOAH
Look who it is.

GERTIE RYAN, turns around. She's in her mid-sixties and
sprightly.

JO
Oh my God, Mrs. Ryan. You look
amazing. Haven't aged a bit.

Jo and Gertie embrace.

GERTIE
Call me Gertie. Mrs. Ryan makes me
feel old.

JO

What are you doing here?

GERTIE

(she indicates Noah)

I wanted to be closer to this one.
Plus, if you can believe it,
Phoenix is only getting hotter.
Damn global warming.

(sarcastically)

Yeah, Trump...it's something the
Chinese made up.

Jo laughs.

GERTIE (CONT'D)

It's good to see you. Now tell me
everything. I love opening the
paper up and seeing your name in
print. Are you dating anyone?

JO

Oh God no. I mean not seriously
dating anyone.

GERTIE

Did you hear that Noah, she isn't
dating anyone?

NOAH

Not happening.

JO

Yeah, no offense Mrs... Gertie, but
I don't think I'm your son's type.

GERTIE

True - you aren't some young
airhead.

Jo and Gertie laugh.

JO

I always did like you.

NOAH

I'm getting another drink. Anyone
want anything?

JO

I'm good thanks.

GERTIE

No thank you.

The two continue to jabber, while Noah walks away smiling.

INT. ANNIE AND KEVIN'S HOME, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Noah enters as Annie is cutting lemons and limes for drinks.

ANNIE
What do you need, sir?

NOAH
Just another beer.

ANNIE
They're in the fridge.

Noah grabs another. He looks out the kitchen door and catches a glimpse of Jo.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
She's a real ball buster now.

NOAH
Jo?

ANNIE
Who else? They say she's the perfect combination of Nora Ephron and Dave Anderson.

NOAH
She's always been a great writer.

ANNIE
She has a gorgeous apartment. A collection of designer shoes that Anna Wintour would kill for. And her dating life- she can't fight the men off fast enough.

NOAH
What you're getting at?

ANNIE
She's a strong, kick-ass woman. And if you fuck with her ever again, I will murder you.

Annie flashes her knife.

NOAH
Kevin is one lucky guy.

Annie crosses to Noah and he knows that she won't hurt him, will she?

ANNIE

It's good to have you back.

INT. ANNIE AND KEVIN'S HOME, KITCHEN - LATER

The party has dwindled down, and the four friends are left, along with Gertie. They shoot the shit.

GERTIE

I better get going. I'm too old for this shit.

JO

Someone wash that mouth out with soap.

Gertie starts to give hugs and such.

KEVIN

Mrs. R, it is so good to have you around.

GERTIE

It's good to see you kids. You're gonna keep me young.

NOAH

Are you sure you'll get home ok?

GERTIE

I'll be fine, son.

NOAH

Text me when you get in.

GERTIE

Will do. Bye y'all.

ALL

Bye/Love you/Etc.

Gertie exits.

ANNIE

I love your mom. She took such good care of us in college.

KEVIN

Thanksgiving at her house was dope.

NOAH
I cannot believe you still
"dope"...

ANNIE
Hey! That's my fiance you're
talking about.

Annie and Kevin kiss. Jo and Noah awkwardly look at each other.

NOAH
And that's my exit cue.

JO
Yep, time to go.

ANNIE
You guys! C'mon!

JO
(to Noah)
Did you drive?

NOAH
Nope. Lyft. You?

JO
Same. Where you headed?

NOAH
Los Feliz.

JO
Silver Lake. Wanna split one?

NOAH
Perfect.

JO
I'll get it.

Jo is quick on her phone.

JO (CONT'D)
Ok, it will be here in two. We
gotta to go.
(to Annie)
Give me a hug.

Jo and Annie hug.

NOAH
Wanna watch the ASU game tomorrow?

KEVIN

How about noon? The bar on the corner has great wings.

ANNIE

They have hot waitresses.

JO

Alan is pulling up right now in a black Prius.

NOAH

Hasta manana.

INT. LYFT ON THE EMPTY STREETS OF LOS ANGELES - A LITTLE LATER

Jo and Noah are laughing hysterically.

JO

...I can't believe that you actually shit your pants on the subway.

The dust settles on the laughter. There is that brief moment of silence.

NOAH

Can I tell you something?

JO

Please tell me you peed yourself in a cab.

He takes her hand.

NOAH

I'm sorry that I hurt you. Even more sorry that we lost a dozen years of friendship because I was a dick.

JO

Look who has turned into a big pile of mush. What have you done with Noah Ryan?

NOAH

He's here. Just older and wiser.

The Lyft stops.

JO
This is me.

NOAH
Thanks for the ride.

JO
Anytime.

She gets out of the car, but before she can shut the door.

JO (CONT'D)
I've missed you too.

Jo smiles and shuts the Lyft door.

NOAH
I knew she'd come around.

JO AND NOAH ARE FRIENDS AGAIN MONTAGE

A) INT. STAPLES CENTER - EVENING

Noah and Jo watch a Lakers game. Drinking beers, laughing, and having a grand 'ole time.

B) INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Noah and Jo are at an Italian restaurant laughing. A violinist comes up and starts to play. They indicate that they are not together, but the violinist doesn't get the hint. Noah finally kind of shoos him away.

C) INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Noah and Jo argue about how to put together an IKEA bookshelf.

D) INT. BAR - NIGHT

Noah is talking to a WOMAN at a bar, while Jo stares at her phone. Noah gives Jo a kiss on the cheek, and leaves with the WOMAN.

E) INT. MOVIE THEATRE - NIGHT

Noah has popcorn in hand and is waiting for Jo. His phone goes off. It is a text from Jo, "Sorry. Can't make it. HOT Tinder date! Wish me luck."

END MONTAGE.

INT. LOS ANGELES TIMES BUILDING, JO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Jo is at her office working late. She stares at a blank computer screen. There is a CHIME. Jo reaches for her phone. It's a text message.

"NOAH: Just got done with a date. Let's get some food."

Jo sighs.

"JO: Can't. Gotta meet a deadline. I'm almost there."

Jo takes a picture of her blank screen, sends to Noah. Oh and as an add-on:

"JO: And I'M STARVING."

She decides to give the writing a go. She talks as she types.

JO

"With a headline like 'The Raiders Raid Las Vegas', I have only one question: what is the over/under on the number of STDs that plague the team this season." Nope. Cannot write that. Shit.

Her phone CHIMES again.

"NOAH: You've got loads of time. How about sushi?"

JO (CONT'D)

Ughhhh.

Jo stands up and begins milling as she texts.

"JO: I don't have loads of time. This article is due on my boss's desk by 9am. It is lam!!!"

Almost an immediate response.

"NOAH: People don't care what you think anyway. Burgers?"

JO (CONT'D)

Idiot.

Her phone rings.

JO (CONT'D)

What?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - SAME

Noah is in bed, shirtless, talking on the phone.

NOAH

You've got to stop freaking out. This can't be the first time you've had writer's block. In fact, it isn't. I've witnessed the Jo Baldwin full meltdown before.

JO

Why did I call you again?

NOAH

I called you.

JO.

Oh. Well, why did you call me then?

NOAH

For encouragement. Support.

JO

You're doing a terrible job.

NOAH

If I was there, I grab you by the shoulders and tell you to put your big girl pants on. You are the best damn sports columnist out there. Stop crying and do your job.

Jo's office phone RINGS.

JO

Hold on. It's security.

Jo picks up.

JO (CONT'D)

Hi Al...Huh?...I didn't order anything...I'm starving so I'll take it...Send it up and if you don't hear from me in like 30 minutes, check on me. Maybe it was poisoned. Brady is still pretty pissed....Thanks.

She hangs up and is back to Noah. Meanwhile, she pulls out her purse.

JO (CONT'D)

I don't even remember what we were arguing about.

NOAH

I was telling you to stop whining.

JO

Ugh. You're one to talk... "Card sales are only up by 15%. One of my 1000 designs got shot down. I cracked my iPhone..."

NOAH

Those are real problems.

A DELIVERY GUY knocks on her window. She opens the door and mouths "Thanks." She tries to pay.

DELIVERY GUY

(whispering)

It's taken care of.

JO

They sound like problems of the privileged.

She opens the bag and takes out a large carton of delicious looking french fries.

JO (CONT'D)

Ok. This is weird.

NOAH

Did someone randomly send you your favorite french fries from your favorite greasy diner?

JO

(smiling)

Thank you.

NOAH

I know how hangry you get. And I know you're too lazy to go across the street and get them.

JO

Thank you.

NOAH
No problem. Now go get 'em tiger.

Jo hangs up.

END INTERCUT.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - MORNING

Noah sits at his kitchen table, drinking coffee and reading the LA Times. Jo barges in.

JO
Hey!

NOAH
(scared shitless)
Jesus! Jo! How did you get in here?

JO
I used my key. I texted you,
telling you that I was coming over.

Noah picks up his phone and sees the text.

NOAH
You sure did.

JO
Really?

NOAH
Why are you here?

JO
Guess who scored two tickets to the
ESPY Awards and access to the VIP
After-Party?

Jo flashes two VIP passes.

NOAH
Please tell me that you're taking
me. Please, please, please.

JO
Dance.

NOAH
What?

JO
Dance for the tickets. Dance
monkey, dance!

Noah busts out into ridiculous dance moves, including the Carlton. SCARLET, mid-twenties, walks in. She is mortified.

JO (CONT'D)
Oh, hi! I'm Jo.

SCARLET
Hi. Scarlet. I'm sorry who are you?

JO
Me? Oh, I'm Noah's cousin.
(she starts to
overexplain)
I don't live here. I mean
obviously, I don't live in this
apartment. But I don't live in LA.
I drove in from the OC. Because my
mother is sick. Very sick. My mom
is Noah's aunt and I came here to
tell him. That she is getting
better. And so that's why he was
dancing. And I could not be
happier. That my mom - his aunt -
will not be dying today and that-

Noah can't take it.

NOAH
Thanks cuz. Scarlet, ya know I
should tend to these family
matters.

SCARLET
Oh, of course. Bye, Jo. And, you-

Scarlet tries to kiss him on the lips, but he turns his head, so that it lands on the cheek.

SCARLET (CONT'D)
I really did love that Mike Tyson
birthday card you thought of. Pure
genius.

JO
Bye now.

Scarlet exits.

JO (CONT'D)
She looked a little young.

NOAH

Intern.

Jo gives a look of disgust.

NOAH (CONT'D)

She's one of the older ones.

Jo picks up Noah's newspaper and hits him on the head with it like he's dog.

INT. SWANKY LA RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Jo and Noah are at the after-party, having a drink at the bar.

NOAH

I'm just saying that Michael Jordan will always be the top athlete of all time. He set the bar high, and face it, no one has ever or will ever reach it.

JO

No way. LeBron. It's about LeBron. And he's a better actor.

NOAH

I will fight you on this until the day I die.

JO

Can we at least agree that Serena Williams is a badass?

NOAH

Agreed. Serena Williams is a badass.

JO

I'll drink to that.

They cheers.

JO (CONT'D)

We've got to settle down.

NOAH

Weird. Where did that come from?

JO

I've just been thinking about it lately.

(MORE)

JO (CONT'D)

At this rate, we are just going to be old, single, and alone, but with each other.

NOAH

That wouldn't be that bad.

JO

Please. I would end up murdering you.

NOAH

You're so violent. Okay. How about I marry her?

He points to a TALL BRUNETTE in a cheetah - print dress.

JO

God. Noah. No. How about-

Jo scans the room and spots AUGUST FOX, an attractive, young actor.

JO (CONT'D)

Shit, there's August Fox.

NOAH

Who?

JO

He's a hot young actor that has been all over our entertainment pages.

NOAH

Go talk to him.

JO

(laughs)

He's like twenty-five.

NOAH

You were just complaining about being single.

JO

I wasn't complaining, I-

NOAH

Yes you were. Now... Carpe Diem.

JO

I got this.

NOAH
You got this.

Jo walks towards August.

NOAH (CONT'D)
She doesn't got this.

Noah watches from a distance. She introduces herself. She must say something funny, because August laughs. August and Jo seem to have a spark. Noah finishes his drink.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Can I have another please?

August and Jo are laughing. August sweeps her hair back and whispers something in her ear. Jo glances at Noah and smiles big.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Shit. That's my cue.

He rushes over to August and Jo. He puts his arm around Jo.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Is everything okay-

JO
August, this is my *friend*, Noah.
Noah, this is August.

AUGUST
Nice to meet you, bro.

NOAH
Hey.

Noah still has his arm around her.

AUGUST
So look, I'm headed to another party in WeHo.
(he stares directly at Jo)
Do you wanna join?

JO
Yeah. That sounds-

NOAH
I would love to go.

JO
But he can't. You have that thing.
Early tomorrow morning.

NOAH
What thing?

JO
You know, that prostate doctor
thing.

She gives him that "YOU AREN'T COMING BECAUSE I WANT TO BE ALONE WITH THIS GUY" look.

NOAH
Oh yah. That prostate doctor thing.
But you two have fun.

AUGUST
Hold up, I gotta Snap this shiz.

Noah literally snaps. August pulls out his phone.

AUGUST (CONT'D)
Get in with me.

August pulls Jo into his selfie. They look like kittens.

AUGUST (CONT'D)
Aren't we two cute kittens?

He takes the Snapchat photo.

NOAH
I don't know what just happened.

Jo shrugs "Me either."

AUGUST
Let's roll.

He takes Jo's hand. Jo mouths "Thank you" to Noah.

AUGUST (CONT'D)
See ya.

Jo and August are out. Noah is left alone. He looks around and once again sees the Tall Brunette in the cheetah dress, whose name is LIZ. He approaches her.

NOAH
Hi. I jut had to say... you're the most beautiful woman I've ever seen. If you want, I'll be over there. If not, that's fine, but I would've kicked myself if I hadn't at least talked to you.

He walks back over to the bar. After a few beats, the Tall Brunette touches his shoulder.

INT. JO'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - EARLY HOURS OF THE MORN

Jo rolls off of August panting. He's panting too. They just ya know...did it.

JO
(still panting)
I'm going to go get some water. You want anything?

AUGUST
(trying to slow down his breathing)
Water. I need to hydrate for the next round.

He kisses her deeply and passionately. Jo then wraps herself in a sheet, slyly grabs her cell phone, and exits the bedroom.

INT. JO'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She grabs two bottles of water from the fridge and sets them gently on the counter. She stares at her cell phone and the stares back at the bedroom, trying to make a decision. She finally decides to dial.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - SAME

Noah is in bed making out with Liz. His phone RINGS. It's Jo.

NOAH
I'm, sorry. I gotta get this.

He answers it as he scurries to his bathroom.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Hold on.

Liz looks like a mix between shocked and irritated.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, BATHROOM - SAME

NOAH
Is everything okay?

JO
(in a whisper)
Yeah. Why?

NOAH
It is 3am and you're calling me.
People call at 3am when they're in
trouble.

JO
Or drunk.

NOAH
That too. Why are you whispering?

JO
August is here.

NOAH
Oh.

JO
We just ya know...

NOAH
(eyeroll)
Yeah. I know.

JO
He did this thing where he lifted
me up and-

LIZ (O.S.)
Is everything ok in there?

NOAH
I'll be right there!

JO
Who's that?

NOAH
I brought her home from the bar.

JO
Which one?

NOAH
The brunette.

JO
You're going to have to be more
specific.

NOAH
The one in the cheetah dress.

JO
Ughh. That one? She was so...so...

NOAH
I really have to go.

JO
Trashy.

NOAH
Goodbye.

END INTERCUT.

Noah hangs up the phone.

LIZ (O.S.)
Are you sure you're ok?

Noah stares in the mirror pensively, "Why am I bothered?".

NOAH
I'm coming right now. To make you
come.

Noah's face, "HUH?" Beat.

NOAH (CONT'D)
What's wrong with me?

INT. LOS ANGELES TIMES BUILDING, JO'S OFFICE - DAY

Jo types on her computer. She looks up at the picture of her and August which now adorns her desk and smiles. Her boss, BARRY RINK, comes in. He is Lou Grant-ish.

BARRY
You look...perky.

JO
Is perky bad?

BARRY
It doesn't suit you.

JO
You always keep me grounded. What
can I do for you, Barry?

BARRY

I want to talk to you about something.

JO

I know I was harsh on Tom Brady again, but-

BARRY

(unphased)

I'm not talking about that. Everyone in the world hates Brady, unless you live in Boston. It was that "Feminism on the Field" piece you wrote. It was really good.

JO

What?

BARRY

Not just good, it was great.

JO

Did Barry Rink just compliment me?

BARRY

Look, I just came in here to tell you that we have our eye on you for the Sports Deputy Editor.

JO

Are you serious?

BARRY

Do I ever joke?

JO

Good point.
(beat as it sets in)
Thank you.

BARRY

Don't thank me yet.

JO

(sarcastically)

You're such a softie.

BARRY

Also, I got my wife and I tickets to that romcom, "The Tagalong", but she's got shingles.

JO

I don't know what I'm more disturbed by- the fact that your wife has shingles or that you just used the term "romcom"?

BARRY

Do you want them or not?

JO

Sure. Maybe I can write up something about gender complacency: how I, as woman, am supposed to buy into these anti-feminist romantic comedies instead of stay home to watch the Blues annihilate the Kings.

BARRY

Blues annihilate the Kings? Ha. In you dreams. Enjoy.

Barry walks out. Jo waits until he is out of sight.

JO

Bam!

Jo happy dances. She picks up her phone.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. NOAH'S OFFICE - SAME

Noah answers his phone.

NOAH

What did August do this time?

JO

Guess who may be the next Sports Deputy Editor of the Los Angeles Times?

NOAH

That guy you hate who loves the Cubbies.

JO

Me, you son of a bitch.

NOAH
(sincere)
Congratulations. For real. I'm
proud of you.

JO
Thank you. Always means a lot
coming from you. I know feelings
don't come easy to you.

NOAH
Hey, I just wrote a "romance card"
that says "You're the one I text
when I'm drunk". That's digging
deep.

JO
What are you doing tonight?

NOAH
Probably washing my hair.

JO
How about dinner and then going to
see this stupid romcom with me?

NOAH
Me?

JO
Yes, you. I know I've been MIA
lately, so let me treat you to
dinner and a movie.

NOAH
Is it really a romcom?

JO
Yes. Gross. But we can make fun of
it together! I've already got the
tickets.

NOAH
I'll get the Red Vines.

JO
Thank you. How about Messhall? Say
7:30? The tickets are for 9pm just
down the street.

NOAH
Perfect.

JO
Bye.

NOAH
Bye.

They hang up.

END INTERCUT.

INT. MESSHALL - NIGHT

Jo and Noah dine together.

JO
...and I just would like my best friend to get to know my boyfriend.

NOAH
Do you know how insane work has been? I can't turn out product fast enough for Urban Outfitters and-

JO
August just bought the sickest suede jacket from there. You wouldn't think anyone could wear an orange suede jacket, but he can.

NOAH
Did you just say "sickest"?

JO
It's something August says all the time. How about you? Any special women in your life?

NOAH
A lot of relationships that last approximately one night.

JO
I want to slap you-

Jo grabs Noah's hand. She looks him in the eye.

JO (CONT'D)
-because you're worth so much more than you give yourself credit.

Noah looks at Jo's hand on his. It is like a jolt of electricity goes through his body. He flails his hand out from under hers and knocks over her wine glass.

NOAH

Fuck.

Jo can't help but laugh. Noah bends down and tries to clean it up with his napkin. A WAITRESS comes over.

JO

Sorry - my friend's a bit of a klutz.

WAITRESS

I'll get someone to clean that up.
Should I get you another glass?

NOAH

(from under the booth)
Yes, please.

JO

(re: cleaning)
You don't have to do that.

NOAH

(still from under the booth)
I know. I just feel bad.

August walks up out of nowhere.

JO

Babe! What are you doing here?

August hears this from under the booth.

NOAH

What the f-

Noah goes to stand and smacks his head on the table.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Fuck.

JO

Shit, are you ok?

NOAH

Fine.

Noah stands, face to face with August. They shake hands.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Good to see ya, buddy.

AUGUST

Same.

August snuggles up next to Jo in the booth.

NOAH

So what brings you here?

August flashes Jo's Instagram post of Jo and Noah tagged at the restaurant.

AUGUST

I saw this and thought I'd drop by to say what's up.

JO

Ah, my two favorite men.

August kisses her cheek.

NOAH

So how's the whole acting thing?

AUGUST

No complaints. Just signed on a for a Darren Aronofsky flick called "Father". I think it's the sequel to "Mother".

The Waitress brings the wine.

NOAH

Thank you.

WAITRESS

I'll leave you with the dessert menu.

NOAH

Do you ever find the acting thing unfulfilling?

AUGUST

It can be. But every Saturday, I go to a homeless shelter and read to the kids. That really gives me life, ya know?

NOAH

(genuine, but surprised that he is genuine)
That's actually pretty awesome.

JO

I told you he's pretty great.

The Waitress comes back.

WAITRESS

Can I get y'all some dessert?

NOAH

I'll just stick with this.

He indicates the wine. August looks at the menu.

AUGUST

We'll take the strawberry
shortcake.

NOAH

Jo's allergic to
strawberries.

JO

I'm allergic to strawberries.

AUGUST

We're fine then.

NOAH

We'll just take the check. We've
got to be going, anyway.

AUGUST

Me too. I've got a friend in this
sick sketch show tonight.

JO

Is that tonight? You've been raving
about it for weeks.

AUGUST

You should come. I hate not having
you by my side.

JO

You're sweet, you know that?

AUGUST

So you'll come? Both of you.

NOAH

I can't deal with improv. Sorry,
buddy.

JO

I would love to go babe, but I
promised Noah a night out.

NOAH
Go.

JO
What?

NOAH
I'll take a raincheck.

JO
Noah, that's really sweet, but-

AUGUST
Babe, we better bounce.

NOAH
You better get bouncing.

August stands. Jo reluctantly scoots out of the booth. She pulls the tickets out of her purse.

JO
I'm sorry that I stuck you with tickets to "The Tagalong".

She hands the tickets over.

NOAH
I always have date on call.

AUGUST
Good to see you, Noah.

NOAH
Yep. Same.

JO
(to Noah)
Thank you.

She kisses him on the cheek.

JO (CONT'D)
Love ya.

And then, as if in one fell swoop, Jo and August are out. Noah stares. The Waitress brings the check and snaps him out of it.

NOAH
Here.

Noah pulls his credit card of his wallet and pays. Tickets for "The Tagalong" stare at him in the face. He dials.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Hey, wanna see a movie?

INT. MOVIE THEATRE, LOBBY - A LITTLE LATER

Noah stands in the lobby with two tickets in hand. Kevin walks up.

KEVIN
What are we seeing?

NOAH
"The Tagalong".

KEVIN
Yes! I've been wanting to see this.
You know I love romcoms.

NOAH
I know. I know.

KEVIN
Why do you have these? Did Noah
Ryan get stood up?

NOAH
Kinda. I was supposed to go with
Jo, but August had this thing.
Popcorn?

Kevin nods and they get in the concessions line.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Ya know what I hate the most about
August? It's that I can't hate him.

KEVIN
He's pretty great.

NOAH
The thing is that he's not right
for her. She needs someone who
challenges her, someone she can
banter with, someone she can be
herself with. She needs someone who
can tell her to stop crying and
pull up her big girl pants. She is
undoubtedly the most amazing woman
I've ever known. She is-

GERTIE (O.S.)
It sounds like you're the right guy
for her.

Noah and Kevin turnaround.

NOAH
Mom?

Noah embraces his mother.

KEVIN
Mrs. R!

NOAH
What are you doing here?

GERTIE
It's a movie theatre. I'm seeing a
movie.

KEVIN
Which one?

GERTIE
"Fast and Furious 13".

They look at her, "Really?"

GERTIE (CONT'D)
What? I'm a sucker for Vin Diesel.
Now what are you gonna do about Jo?

NOAH
What about her?

KEVIN
Your mom's totally right. You love
Jo.

NOAH
You two are insane. She's stubborn.
She's antagonistic. She's got that
laugh that I can't get out of my
ears. And that smile- it's
blinding. And she does that thing
where she brushes her hair back
when she gets nervous. She's-

Noah is disarmed and stunned.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Holy. Fuck.

They have reached the front of the line. The MOVIE CASHIER
could not hate their job more.

MOVIE CASHIER

What can I get you?

KEVIN

Two large popcorns, one large Dr. Pepper, one large Coke. Two hot dogs. An order of nachos. A package of Reeses' Pieces and a pack of Red Vines.

MOVIE CASHIER

Butter on the popcorn?

KEVIN

Yes, please. Mrs. R - do you want anything?

GERTIE

I'll wait for my friend.

MOVIE CASHIER

Your total comes to \$87.75.

KEVIN

Noah, you did ask me to the movie. You should be a gentleman and pay.

NOAH

Yeah. Sure.

Noah pays. The Movie Cashier hands everything over.

GERTIE

There he is. I should get going.

Gertie waves to an OLDER GENT.

KEVIN

Get it, Mrs. R.

GERTIE

Thank you, Kevin. And Noah - good luck.

She kisses her son's cheek.

GERTIE (CONT'D)

Have a good night, boys.

Kevin and Noah walk away.

KEVIN

Dude, what are you gonna do now?

NOAH
I don't know.

INT. MOVIE THEATRE - A LITTLE LATER

Kevin and Noah watch the fictional romcom, "The Tagalong". The film seems to mirror Noah's situation, only the girl is the one pining for the guy. #GenderRoleReversal

KEVIN
(whisper)
Doesn't this seem familiar?

NOAH
(whisper)
Shut it.

INTERCUT WITH:

ON SCREEN - INT. BAR - "THE TAGALONG"

SALLY and JUNE are sitting at a bar. Sally is the Noah in this situation, and that would make June, Kevin. Got it?

SALLY
The thing is Mary's not right for him. He needs someone who challenges him, someone he can banter with, someone he can be himself with. He needs someone who can tell him to stop whining and pull up his big boy pants.

JUNE
Girl, I think you love this guy.

Kevin and Noah look at each other. They continue to whisper.

KEVIN
This is freaky.

NOAH
It's a little weird.

KEVIN
Dude, you should just tell her that you love her.

JUNE
Girl, you should just tell him that you love him.

NOAH
THAT NEVER WORKS.

SALLY
THAT NEVER WORKS.

KEVIN

Maybe you should take some notes.

JUNE

Okay Sally, you have to hear me out. You can't let them be alone. Like ever. You have to tagalong.

KEVIN

Bam! Movie title.

JUNE

I have three rules for you to follow Mary, and I'm sure you'll get Jared back in no time.

NOAH.

Genius. This is genius.

JUNE

First rule: Always invite yourself along. Duh.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - DAY

Noah walks up to a table where a few GUESTS are sitting. There are place cards for him, August, and Jo. August and Jo's are next to each other, and he switches his and August's. Jo and August walk up hand in hand.

JO

Hey there friend!

AUGUST

My man!

August does the handshake-dude-hug-thing.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

Glad to see you.

NOAH

I wouldn't want to miss the LA Times awards luncheon.

JO

I was surprised when Barry said I could bring another guest.

NOAH

I e-mailed him, asking if I could come. I knew you'd want me here.

JO
You're such an-

NOAH
-an amazing friend?

JO
Something like that.

Jo laughs as she sits down, and as August goes to sit-

NOAH
Oh, I think this is my seat.

Jo looks, and there is a GUEST sitting to her other side.

JO
There has to be a mistake.

NOAH
No, this looks like my seat. See?

He holds up the place card.

NOAH (CONT'D)
August, it looks like you are next
to me.

JO
Certainly you can switch.

AUGUST
Babe, it's cool. Noah doesn't get
to hang with you. All day.
Everyday. Like I do.

August kisses her forehead and takes a seat next to Noah.

JO
(to Noah)
Isn't he the best?

NOAH
(dryly)
Yep. The best.

CUT TO:

ON SCREEN - INT. BAR - "THE TAGALONG"

June continues with her next rule of sorts.

JUNE

Rule two: Put space between your man and his new girl. Literally, put space between them.

CUT TO:

EXT. RED CARPET - NIGHT

August and Jo walk the red carpet of the Heisman Awards. Noah walks next to them. He steps in between the couple as they take photos. Then a PHOTOGRAPHER shouts.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Can we get just the couple please?

NOAH

Which couple?

PHOTOGRAPHER

Can someone get this guy outta here?

NOAH

Jesus, just joking buddy.

Noah steps aside. He watches as bulbs flash and the beautiful couple smile.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Can't compete.

He walks away.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Just one of August now please.

Jo looks at August. He lets go of her hand. She watches gloomily as bulbs flash. She turns to look for her friend.

JO

Noah?

Her eyes search the crowd frantically for him. He isn't there.

CUT TO:

ON SCREEN - INT. BAR - "THE TAGALONG"

June continues with her final arbitrary rule.

JUNE

Rule three: Be better at
everything.

MARY

What does that even have to do with
tagging along?

JUNE

Um. Constantly one-upping the ex or
the ex's new girl is a basic
relationship rule.

MARY

Noted.

CUT TO:

EXT. MINIATURE GOLF COURSE - EVENING

August and Jo are miniature golfing. And Noah. Jo steps up to
the "tee".

JO

My goal this time is to get less
than 15 strokes.

NOAH

(genuinely supportive)
Take as many strokes as you need.

Jo giggles as August walks up behind her and puts his arms
around her.

AUGUST

Yeah babe. Take as many strokes as
you need.

He kisses her neck and she giggles.

NOAH

Get a room.

JO

Sorry.

August helps Jo with her swing.

AUGUST

Now you need to relax. And gently
pull back and-

Jo hits the ball and manages to get it near the hole.

JO

I did!

AUGUST

Ya got it now, babe.

Jo goes to kiss him.

NOAH

My turn!

Noah takes his stance and puts. He misses the hole by about...a lot.

JO

Tough break there.

NOAH

Okay. Let's keep the sarcasm to a minimum. It's one of the trickiest holes on this course.

JO

You're the king of tricky holes.

NOAH

Cute.

JO

Babe, you're up.

AUGUST

I have to warn you. I haven't done this in years.

August steps up and swings. The ball weaves gracefully through the obstacles. And. Bam! Hole in one.

JO

Oh my fucking God. That was extraordinary.

She jumps on August.

NOAH

Sweet Jesus. That was awesome.
Damn.

INT. JO'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - EVENING

Noah is drinking a beer at her table.

JO (O.S.)
 He should be arriving any minute.
 Can you let him in when he gets
 here?

NOAH
 Happy to.

JO (O.S.)
 Are you sure you don't wanna come?

NOAH
 You know I hate Halloween.

JO (O.S.)
 I know this is a crap day for you,
 But maybe instead of Halloween
 being the day your dad left, you
 can turn it into the most best day
 of year!

June from the movie rings in his ears.

JUNE (V.O.)
 Always invite yourself along. Duh.

NOAH
 You're right. This might be the
 night to get me over my Halloween
 hump.

JO (O.S.)
 We both have such daddy issues:
 Abandonment, commitment, intimacy-

NOAH
 We do?

JO (O.S.)
 Are you serious? The longest
 relationship you've had was with
 that flight attendant? And that's
 because you never had to see her.

NOAH
 I miss her layovers.

JO (O.S.)
 And me. August and I have been
 together for what - six months now?
 So that's something.

Noah takes a loooooong sip of his beer.

NOAH

Wow. It's been that long, huh?

Jo's phone rings. It's clearly August. Noah can't help himself, he gets up and puts his ear to her bedroom door.

JO (O.S.)

Are you serious...but babe...we've been planning this...I'll look...I know you can't but...no....it's fine...Love you.

"Love you" are like daggers to Noah's heart. He scrambles back to his seat. Jo's bedroom door opens and she reveals herself dressed as a sexy Dorothy (not from the *Golden Girls* but from *The Wizard of Oz*). Noah spits out his beer because she looks hot AF.

NOAH

Is Josephine Grace Baldwin dressed as a "sexy Dorothy"?

JO

Shut up.

NOAH

Whoa. Are you ok?

JO

August is stuck on set and he was supposed to come to this party. We even have coordinating costumes.

NOAH

That sucks. But Annie and Kevin will be there. And-

Jo gives him sad eyes.

JO

Please go with me.

NOAH

(pretending to hesitate)
Jo, you know I-

JO

Pretty please.

She is irresistible.

NOAH

You owe me. Big time.

INT. LOFT PARTY - A LITTLE LATER

Noah walks in as the Cowardly Lion and Jo as the sexy Dorothy. Kevin, dressed as a clown, sees them immediately. He walks up laughing.

KEVIN

I cannot believe that I am seeing
Noah Ryan at a Halloween Party in a
costume.

NOAH

Okay, chuckles.

KEVIN

(to Jo)
Where's August?

JO

Stuck on set. I see Annie, I'm
gonna go say hi.

Jo scurries away.

KEVIN

Dude, nice!

He high fives Noah.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

So, are you gonna make a big move
tonight?

NOAH

Nothing's worked. That movie is
garbage. I standing here in a LION
COSTUME and all she cares about is
the fact that August isn't here.

KEVIN

I'm sorry man.

NOAH

I waited too long. But ya know,
he's a good guy. She's happy.

KEVIN

Why don't we get you a drink?

INT. LOFT PARTY - A LOT LATER

It's the end of the night. You know this time: It is either throw-up, hook-up, or go home. Kevin and Annie are long gone. Noah is talking to TINKERBELL.

NOAH

I'm just really close with my mom.
In fact, my dad left us on
Halloween.

TINKERBELL

You poor thing.

NOAH

It was tough, but we managed-

Jo catches his eye. Well, it's not so much Jo, as the tall BANANA that Noah notices. Jo looks drunk and this Banana has her cornered. Never trust a banana.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Would you excuse me?

Noah crosses to Jo and Banana.

JO

Noah!

She throws her arms around him.

JO (CONT'D)

Noah this is Jim. Jim, this is my
best friend in the whole world,
Noah.

BANANA

Tim.

NOAH

(he doesn't care)
I think we should get going.

BANANA

(whispering, bro to bro)
Bro, I'm gonna take her back to my
place.

NOAH

Yeah. That's not happening. She's
got a boyfriend.

JO

Who didn't show up tonight.

NOAH
Not helping.

BANANA
She's going with me.

He puts his arm out so that Jo can't maneuver past him.

NOAH
I'm not sure you heard me. She
doesn't want anything to do with
your tiny banana.

Banana is heated now.

BANANA
Look at the cowardly lion. Trying
to grow some cowardly lion balls.

NOAH
This is ridiculous. Jo, c'mon.

BANANA
What are you, her dad?

Noah sticks out his hand. Banana shoves Noah hard enough that
he hits the ground.

JO
Noah!

Jo moves to Noah to help him.

NOAH
Why don't you go find some peanut
butter?!

Banana looks at him - very confused.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Bananas and peanut butter? They are
a beloved combination.

BANANA
(to Jo)
You're not that hot anyway.

Banana walks away.

NOAH
(to Jo)
You okay?

She shakes her head yes. Jo helps him up.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Let's get outta here.

INT. JO'S APARTMENT - LATER

Noah and Jo enter the apartment. They're laughing.

JO
Peanut butter and banana?

NOAH
I am more of a lover, not a
fighter.

Jo kisses him on the cheek.

JO
Thank you.

NOAH
For what?

JO
Coming to my rescue. Always. It's
why I love ya.

Noah is once again entranced, but stops himself.

NOAH
That banana. He was a dick.

JO
(guilty and tearing up)
I hope you know I wasn't going home
with him, I just was flirting and-

Noah hugs her.

NOAH
He. Was. A. Dick. Ok?

JO
Ok.

He lets go. There's that moment where you think that they
just might K-I-S-S.

NOAH
I should call a Lyft.

JO
 Would you mind staying here
 tonight? I just don't feel like
 being alone.

NOAH
 You know I love this couch.

Jo smiles.

JO
 Thanks.

NOAH
 No problem. G'night.

Jo goes to her bedroom. Noah falls to the couch.

NOAH (CONT'D)
 Rule four: Save the fucking day.

He smiles as he closes his eyes.

INT. JO'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Noah sleeps on the couch completely under a blanket. August tiptoes in with flowers in hand. He kneels down gently next to the couch and rubs Noah's back.

AUGUST
 I'm so sorry babe.

Noah pulls back the blanket, and he and August are face to face. August screams Noah screams. Jo comes running in.

AUGUST (CONT'D)
 (angry)
 What are you doing here?

JO
 I can explain. He took me to the
 party last night. We - I - drank
 too much and there was this piece
 of fruit and-

NOAH
 What Jo's trying to say is that I
 was too drunk to drive, so Jo
 brought me back here so that I
 could sleep it off.

A few beats go by where they all stare at each other. August then hugs Noah.

AUGUST

Thanks for not driving man. You're a responsible dude.

While Noah is in August's embrace, Jo mouths to Noah: "Thank you." He nods back.

INT. RAM'S GAME, SUITE - DAY

Jo and Annie are in a sweet suite at a Ram's game sipping cocktails. There are ROARS from the crowd.

JO

Nothing like being in a suite for the Rams-Bears game. God bless the perks of this job.

ANNIE

God bless all the champagne we can drink.

JO

Cheers to that!

They clink glasses.

ANNIE

So, you and August - totally in love, huh?

JO

Yeah. He's sweet and fun. And the sex. The sex.

ANNIE

How's Noah handling it?

JO

What does Noah have to do with it?

Jo's phone RINGS, but her ringtone is the *Lizzie McGuire* theme song.

ANNIE

What is that noise?

JO

August thought it would be cute if I had the *Lizzie McGuire* theme song as my ringtone.

She mutes it.

ANNIE
What the fuck is a *Lizzie McGuire*?

JO
Apparently, his favorite show as a kid?

ANNIE
Remember, "You Can't do That On Television"?

JO
That show was ahead of its time.

Jo's phone goes off with TEXT TONE.

ANNIE
August?

JO
(reading the text)
"Babe, hurry home. There's a problem."

ANNIE
You should go.

JO
Let's have another drink. I'm sure it's nothing.

TEXT TONE again from Jo's phone.

JO (CONT'D)
(reading)
"There's smoke."

ANNIE
Um, you should go.

JO
Yeah, I should go.

Annie hugs her. Jo rushes away. Annie sips her champagne.

ANNIE
I'm just gonna finish this glass.

Jo rushes away.

INT. KITCHEN, JO'S APARTMENT - LATER

Jo comes in frantically.

AUGUST
Surprise! I'm making you dinner.

JO
Aug, you can't say there is an
emergency and then-

AUGUST
I never said there was an emergency-

JO
You said there was a-

AUGUST
-a problem. And the problem was
that I wasn't with you. And the
smoke thing was real...at the time.

It's like you can't get mad at a sweet kid.

JO
What are you making?

AUGUST
Just a little pasta carbonara.

JO
My favorite.

AUGUST
I know.

Jo plops on the counter next to the stove. She munches on
some bacon.

JO
Where did you learn to cook?

AUGUST
My mom's a chef.

JO
I didn't know that.

AUGUST
I can't wait for you to try her
cooking. And she learned from my
grandmother. So. It runs in the
family.

JO
You're lucky. My mother cannot
cook.

AUGUST

What about your dad?

JO

He loved to cook when he was alive.

AUGUST

Sorry, babe. I totally forgot that he... wasn't with us.

JO

And you know, he is where I got my love of sports.

AUGUST

Really?

JO

We would watch every single Cardinals game, every Blues game, and once we got the Rams...never missed those games either. And when he had his heart attack and was in the hospital, I would put on the Cards game and-

AUGUST

I forgot to tell you that Tim Robbins is directing this edgy poker film and my agent got me an audition. Can you run the lines with me after dinner?

JO

Sure.

AUGUST

You're the best.

JO

I'm going to go shower.

AUGUST

Food'll be ready in about ten minutes.

Jo looks at him for the first time, disenchanted.

INT. LOS ANGELES TIMES BUILDING, CAFETERIA - DAY

Noah and Jo are having lunch together.

JO
...and so apparently Charles
Barkley was having dinner with-

Barry, Jo's boss, is suddenly standing over them.

BARRY
Jo.

JO
Oh, hi Barry. Noah, I believe you
remember my boss, Barry.

NOAH
Good to see you, sir.

BARRY
I just wanted to stop by with some
good news. That article you pitched
on the fall of Aaron Hernandez has
landed you a feature spread in the
Sunday Sports section.

JO
Oh my God, really?

BARRY
That drive and keen eye for what to
look for in a story is exactly what
we are looking for in that editor
position.

JO
Thank you.

BARRY
I'll have my assistant e-mail you
the details. Good to see you, Nate.

NOAH
Actually, it's-

Barry is already gone.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Congratulations. Cheers!

He holds up his water.

JO
This is huge. A whole spread? It's
incredible. August is going to be
so proud!

Jo takes out her phone to text August.

NOAH

Did I tell you - I'm dating someone new?

Jo stops cold with texting.

JO

Noah, that's great. What's she like?

JUNE (V.O.)

Be better at everything.

NOAH

She's no hot young actor, but she's this amazing lawyer. She does a lot of pro-bono work with sexual assault victims and has made it her personal mission to ensure that every single sexual predator is brought to justice. I think Time Magazine said something like, "Erin Brockovich has nothing on Amelia Horowitz."

JO

Erin Brockovich isn't actually a lawyer.

NOAH

Look at us. Both dating. It's nice that we've both found someone.

JO

(not as happy seeming)
Yeah. It's really wonderful. I'm going to get dessert. Want anything?

NOAH

Brownie. Just no-

JO

Nuts. I know. You hate nuts.

INT. GERTIE'S HOME, DINING ROOM - DAY

It is Thanksgiving Day (yum!). Gertie, Annie, Kevin, and a Noah are gathered, chatting, drinking, and munching. The DOORBELL rings.

NOAH
That's gotta be Jo.

GERTIE
I'll get it.

Gertie exits.

KEVIN
So bro, what's the latest on the Jo front?

NOAH
I'm seeing Amelia now.

KEVIN
Yeah dude I know, but you can't give up-

The table catches Noah's eye.

NOAH
Why are there place settings for six?

Gertie walks back in with Jo and August. Annie and Kevin warmly greet them, but Noah is taken aback and looks at Gertie, "What is he doing here?!"

ANNIE
August, we didn't know you'd be here.

AUGUST
I have to shoot tomorrow, so I couldn't head back home. Mrs. Ryan was nice enough to extend the invite.

NOAH
(grin and bear it)
That's my mom. She's the best.

Jo throws her arms around Noah. He melts into her.

JO
It's good to spend another Thanksgiving in the Ryan home.

GERTIE
Why doesn't everyone take a seat?

ANNIE

Mrs. R, that is one good looking turkey.

KEVIN

Can I get a breast?

ANNIE

You would.

Noah picks up the carving tools, but before he can make a cut:

GERTIE

I think you should say a few words, dear.

KEVIN

Speech!

NOAH

I was usually a little drunk when this part came around, but I guess I can give it a shot...

Noah gently sets the knife and fork down, and picks up his wine glass. He takes a deep breath.

NOAH (CONT'D)

First I'm grateful for seriously the best mom in the world. I'm grateful for this group of friends - Annie and Kevin who will be walking down the aisle in just a few short weeks. And my best friend back - for whom I am truly grateful that she's not only being back in my life, but that's she's so happy. And I'm grateful that August is also here. So everyone raise their glass.

Everyone takes their class.

NOAH (CONT'D)

To us.

ALL

To us.

They clink and cheers. But Jo stands and Jo kisses his cheek.

JO

You did good.

KEVIN
Now let's eat!

INT. GERTIES HOME, FOYER - LATER

Annie, Kevin, August, Jo, Gertie, and Noah are gathered to say good-byes.

KEVIN
Thank you Mrs. R.

ANNIE
You saved us from having to deal with our families right before the wedding.

GERTIE
You're always welcome here.

AUGUST
Thank you Mrs. Ryan.

GERTIE
I'm so thrilled that I finally got to meet the man who won over Jo. And you-

Gertie hugs Jo.

GERTIE (CONT'D)
I love you, dear.

JO
Thank you for everything.

NOAH
(to August)
Good to see you.

AUGUST
You too, man.
(to Jo)
Babe, we better go.

JO
(to Noah)
Remember back in the day, how, by this time, we would be drunkenly shoving cold stuffing into our mouths with our bare hands?

NOAH
Who says I won't do that once you
leave?

Jo throws her arms around Noah again.

JO
God, I love you.

NOAH
I love you, too.

After their extended embrace, there is a moment where Jo and Noah lock eyes. Does she feel it too?

ANNIE
Our Lyft is here.

NOAH
See you all soon.

Annie, Kevin, August, and Jo are out. Noah shuts the door.

GERTIE
She feels it too.

NOAH
What?

GERTIE
She loves you.

NOAH
You're crazy.

GERTIE
Son, I say this with all the love
a mother has for her child. Grow a
pair of balls and tell her how you
feel.

NOAH
Mom!

GERTIE
Come help clean up.

Gertie is out. Noah takes a beat, and follows her.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - EVENING

Annie and Kevin's wedding day... The two sit at a sweetheart table at the front of the ballroom.

DJ

Now, I'd like to have the Maid of Honor come up, Josephine Baldwin.

Jo stands and takes the microphone. She has a piece of paper she reads from. The tears well up from the get go, and it increasingly gets worse throughout.

JO

It feels like we were just in college, and now here we are. Together celebrating the soulmates that we all know as Annie and Kevin. What has brought the two of you here, are the moments you've shared. Every moment. Big ones like saying "I love you" and getting engaged. But mostly a million little ones that have come in between the big moments. Falling asleep next to one another on the couch, brewing beer together, having a big glass of wine at the ready when you get home from work, binge-watching Netflix...

Jo's stops because she's so emotional. Noah can't stand it. He gets up. Stands next to her. Takes her paper.

NOAH

These everyday moments have fused together to make the two of you, one...Annie and Kevin. I know that you will always find in each other, the funniest of moments. And that the crux of your love is just being best friends.

Noah looks at her, and Jo grabs his hand.

JO

To Annie and Kevin.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - LITTLE LATER

Noah is sitting alone, sipping on a glass of wine. When someone taps him on the shoulder.

JO (O.S.)
Wanna dance?

Noah smiles. Stands.

NOAH
Bold move asking a boy to dance.

JO
Funny, I don't see any boys here.

The friends slow dance.

JO (CONT'D)
Thank you for saving me up there.

NOAH
It was getting too painful to
endure.

JO
Are you ever serious?

NOAH
When it counts.

Jo notices Noah's watch.

JO
And do you ever take this watch
off?

NOAH
Nope.

JO
Seriously?

NOAH
I like having a little piece of you
with me at all times.

JO
You're always full of surprises,
Noah Ryan.

There are a few beats of silence between them that are along
that fine line of awkward and comfortable.

JO (CONT'D)
No date tonight? Not even, um,
what's her name - the Erin
Brockovich one?

NOAH
Amelia?

JO
Amelia, yes.

NOAH
Meh. It was a fleeting thing.

JO
That's the commitment-phobe I know
and love.

NOAH
And things are still going well
with August, I see.

She looks down and smirks.

NOAH (CONT'D)
What?

JO
What?

NOAH
There's something you want to say.

JO
How do you know that?

NOAH
You are looking down and you have
that ridiculous smirk on your face.

JO
I hate that you know me so well.

NOAH
'Fess up.

JO
I think he's is the one.

Noah is caught off guard for a moment

NOAH
Whoa. That's. It's great.

JO
It feels so silly to say out loud.
But I maybe see myself marry-

August walks up.

AUGUST
May I cut in?

He swoops between Noah and Jo.

NOAH
I'm just gonna go get some cake.

Noah walks away quickly. Jo watches him.

AUGUST
You ok?

JO
Me? Yeah. No. I mean yes. Sorry.
Long day, ya know.

Her eyes are locked on Noah until he is out of sight.

INT. FOYER OF THE HOTEL BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

Gertie finds Noah pacing back and forth.

GERTIE
What are you doing out here?

NOAH
I just can't be in there right now.

GERTIE
What's wrong?

NOAH
What's wrong? What's wrong?! The woman I am in love with just told me that her hot, young actor boyfriend is the "one". I hate feeling like this. And I've tried everything. But everyone loves the guy. Hell, I even love him. Jesus. I've tried, mom. I even followed the instructions of some stupid, fake ass romantic comedy to try to win her back.

GERTIE
What are you talking about?

NOAH
"The Tagalong". I used it as a guidebook and it all...all blew up in my face.

GERTIE

(she can't help but laugh)
That movie is so stupid, which
makes the whole thing even sweeter-

NOAH

This isn't funny.

GERTIE

I'm sorry.

NOAH

I just don't know what to do. I
can't stop being in love with her.

GERTIE

I hate to sound like a broken
record, but, just tell her. Have
you tried that?

NOAH

You wouldn't understand.

GERTIE

You have to start facing your
feelings. You have to be willing to
open up and -

NOAH

If you know so much, how come you
couldn't keep dad around?

GERTIE

Noah.

Gertie is speechless. Noah immediately regrets what is just
said.

NOAH

Mom, I am so sorry. I am just-

GERTIE

Come find me when you want to start
acting like a man.

Gertie goes back into the reception. Noah sinks down.

INT. HOTEL ELEVATOR - LATER

August and Jo are in the elevator, holding hands when Noah
hops on in the last possible moment.

JUNE (V.O.)

Rule two: Put space between your man and his new girl. Literally, put space between them.

He can't help it, Noah steps between them.

JO

Well, look who it is. We thought you had picked up one of the servers and were in for the night.

NOAH

I just needed some fresh air.

JO

All the feelings just too much for you?

NOAH

(he's just pissy now)
So when do you think we will be celebrating the two of you getting married?

AUGUST

(completely caught off-guard)
What?

NOAH

Jo told me that she thinks you're the "one", so you better start thinking about rings, buddy.

To describe this beat as awkward would be an understatement.

The elevator door opens and they all get off.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Noah smugly walks away.

NOAH

Goodnight, you two.

JO

(to August)
Go ahead. I'll be there in a minute.

August walks away. Jo speeds up to catch Noah and she grabs him by the arm.

JO (CONT'D)
(disbelief)
What was that?

NOAH
What was what?

JO
I told you that in confidence,
Noah.

NOAH
What?

JO
That I thought August was the one.

NOAH
(snaps back)
You didn't make that very clear.

JO
Shut up. You know that I hadn't
told him that, yet.

NOAH
Maybe you should've told him before
you told me. And why did you even
tell me?

JO
(concerned)
What has gotten into you? You've
been acting like a crazy person for
months.

NOAH
Because you've changed.

JO
(she's is pissed now)
That's a crock of shit. I think
you're jealous.

NOAH
Really? Jealous of what?

JO
I think you're jealous that I've
met someone. And you. You just keep
fucking your way through Los
Angeles. You are sad. And
miserable. And you know what?
You'll always be that way.

(MORE)

JO (CONT'D)
 You are incapable of love and
 happiness. You're pathetic.

Jo storms down the hallway. Noah follows.

NOAH
 Well, you know what? I think you
 are-

Jo opens her room door and slams it. Noah walks down the
 hallway to his room. He opens the door and glances down the
 hallway to Jo's room.

NOAH (CONT'D)
 Shit.

INT. NOAH'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Noah stares at the ceiling.

NOAH
 Fuck.

He gets up and slips on his shoes and is out the door.

INT. JO AND AUGUST'S HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jo is wide awake when she hears KNOCKING. August stirs. She
 gets up quickly because she knows that it's Noah. She opens
 the door and steps out into the hallway.

EXT. JO AND AUGUST'S HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

NOAH
 Hi.

JO
 Hi.

There is a pause.

NOAH
 Jo, I'm sorry. My mom and I got
 into a fight, and-

JO
 I couldn't sleep last night. I was
 thinking about this and us-

NOAH
 Me too. Jo, you know that you mean-

JO
I think that we need some time
apart.

NOAH
What?

JO
We need to take some time away from
one another. No texts, phone calls,
nothing.

NOAH
But, Jo-

JO
I gotta go. Bye Noah.

She steps back inside.

INT. JO AND AUGUST'S HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jo gently shuts the door. Tears stream down her face.

AUGUST (O.S.)
You ok babe?

JO
(wiping the tears away)
I'm fine. I'm gonna brush my teeth.

EXT. JO AND AUGUST'S HOTEL ROOM - SAME

Noah stares at the door.

NOAH
Fuck.

THE "I MISS MY BEST FRIEND" - MONTAGE

A) Noah is out with a WOMAN IN A RED DRESS. Dessert arrives
and he takes a bite, and spits it into his napkin because it
has nuts.

B) Jo gets the ASU alumni newsletter and Noah is on the
front.

C) Noah walks a REDHEAD to her door, and she clearly asks him
in, but he stares at the watch Jo gave him. He walks away.

D) Jo orders fries to her office. She almost texts Noah.

END MONTAGE.

INT. NOAH'S OFFICE - DAY

Noah sits at his desk, doodling when Kevin walks in with some In N' Out in hand.

NOAH
I thought I smelled that down the hallway.

KEVIN
We all need a little In N' Out sometimes. Warms the soul.

They begin to chow down.

NOAH
How's married life?

KEVIN
Eh. Not really that different. Except now we have nice plates that we can't ever use.

NOAH
And how's Jo?

KEVIN
Do you really wanna know?

NOAH
I asked, didn't I?

KEVIN
They're moving in together.

NOAH
That's really. Something.

Noah's cell phone RINGS. He looks. It's a number he doesn't recognize, so he ignores it.

KEVIN
I'm sorry, dude.

NOAH
I'd rather hear it from you.

KEVIN
What exactly do you do all day?

Noah's work phone RINGS.

NOAH
Come up with ideas for cards. Or
mugs. Or what not. Manage people.
Review work. Um-

Kevin doesn't get it.

NOAH (CONT'D)
I'm like the Don Draper for
greeting cards.

KEVIN
(it lands)
Gotcha.

Noah's cell RINGS again.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Someone really wants to talk to
you.

Noah finally picks up.

NOAH
Hello...yes this is Noah Ryan.
What...when...Jesus...Yes...I'll be
there right away.

KEVIN
What is it?

NOAH
It's my mom. She's in the hospital.
I gotta go.

KEVIN
Do you want me to come with you?

NOAH
No. I'm sure it's fine.

Noah grabs his stuff and books it out the office.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - LITTLE LATER

Noah arrives at the hospital to find Jo already there. She
has clearly been crying.

NOAH
(shocked)
What are you doing here?

JO
 She had me listed as her secondary
 contact.

Jo grabs him. They embrace for nearly an eternity. Tears
 stream down Noah's face.

NOAH
 You have no idea how glad I am to
 see you.

JO
 I'm so sorry for everything I said.
 I was just so mad at you.

They finally stop hugging.

NOAH
 Hey. Hey. It's fine. I'm sorry I
 was an asshole. I deserved it. I
 take all of my shit out on you. And
 that isn't fair.

A NURSE comes out.

NURSE
 Noah Ryan?

NOAH
 That's me.

NURSE
 Follow me.

Noah and Jo follow the nurse.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Jo is sitting reading a magazine next to a sleeping Gertie in
 a hospital bed. Gertie slowly opens her eyes.

GERTIE
 Noah?

JO
 No, Mrs. Ryan. It's me, Jo.

GERTIE
 Call me, Gertie. How many times
 must I say it?

JO
(laughs through almost
tears)
Gertie, yes. Um, Noah went to go
get some coffee. He should be back
any minute now.

GERTIE
I'm glad you're here.

JO
And I'm glad you're ok. You gave us
both quite the scare. I don't know
what we would do without you,
especially Noah.

GERTIE
Well, he has you.

JO
Yeah, but we both know that I make
him crazy.

Gertie takes Jo's hand.

GERTIE
He loves you more than anyone.

JO
He's my best friend.

They have a moment. Noah enters.

NOAH
Look who's finally awake.

He hugs his mother.

NOAH (CONT'D)
How are you feeling? What do you
need? We should tell the doctor
you're awake.

GERTIE
Calm down, son.

NOAH
I'm glad you're ok. And I'm sorry
for what I said the night of the
wedding. Ask Jo, I was being a real
dick to everyone.

Jo grabs her stuff.

JO

I can attest to that. And on that note, I should let you two be.

GERTIE

You don't have to rush out.

JO

I've got a deadline. Gertie-

Jo gives her a kiss on the cheek.

JO (CONT'D)

Don't scare us like that again.

She hugs Noah.

JO (CONT'D)

Let me know if you need anything.

NOAH

Thank you.

JO

Bye now.

Jo exits the room.

GERTIE

Noah, be a gentleman and walk her out.

NOAH

Mom.

GERTIE

Your mother is laying in a hospital bed. Humor her.

NOAH

Fine.

Noah follows after Jo.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Noah is scurrying to catch up with Jo.

NOAH

Jo, wait up.

Jo turns around. Tears stream down her face.

NOAH (CONT'D)

She's ok.

JO

I know. Hospitals just remind me of my dad and the thought of something happening to her or you-

Noah pulls her into him.

NOAH

Everything is fine.

He wipes her tears and he finally does it. He kisses her deeply and Jo kisses back...Until she pulls away.

JO

What are you doing?

NOAH

I've been wanting to do that for a long time. I love you, Jo. I'm in love with you.

JO

Stop.

NOAH

I've realize that I could lose you-

JO

That's it. You don't want me. You just don't want to lose me.

NOAH

That's not true.

JO

You've never wanted me, Noah. You've always kept me just at arm's length. To be at your beck and call.

NOAH

Jo, I want you. It's always been you.

JO

That's a great line for a greeting card.

NOAH

Jo.

JO
I'm with August. We're moving in together.

NOAH
He isn't right for you.

JO
And you are?

NOAH
(as if it's the only thing
in the world that makes
sense)
Yes.

Jo stares at him. She takes a deep breath.

JO
I'm glad Gertie's ok.

Jo is out.

EXT. JO'S OFFICE - EVENING

As Jo and August get out of the Lyft, Jo pulls him into her and kisses him.

AUGUST
I love you.

Jo pulls out a Tiffany's box from her purse.

JO
I wanted to give you an early
Christmas present.

AUGUST
Babe. You shouldn't have.

JO
I wanted to.

August opens the box to cufflinks with "AF" engraved on them.

AUGUST
I love them. Thank you.

JO
You're so welcome. Put them on.

Jo helps August with the cufflinks.

AUGUST

I don't have anything for you.

JO

I can think of a few things you can give me later.

She gives him a little smooch.

INT. LIVING ROOM, GERTIE'S HOUSE - SAME

Gertie is on her couch, while Noah frantically moves about helping make things comfortable for her

NOAH

Do you need more pillows?

GERTIE

This is just fine.

NOAH

Water? Ginger ale? Do you want some of that low cal ice cream? I can make you a sandwich. Or how about an apple? An apple a day, keeps the-

GERTIE

Noah. I'm fine.

NOAH

I just want to make sure you have everything you need.

GERTIE

Why don't you go home?

NOAH

I was gonna stay here a few days. To make sure everything is copacetic.

GERTIE

I just pulled a muscle in Zumba.

NOAH

We don't know that for sure.

GERTIE

We do. The scans showed nothing. Healthy has a horse.

NOAH

I'm staying. It's almost Christmas anyway.

GERTIE

Sounds like your heart is in far worse shape than mine.

NOAH

I don't know what you mean.

GERTIE

You can stay, but you have to calm the fuck down.

INT. JO'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The office holiday party is in full swing. Jo is at the bar, alone. August is working the room. Annie and Kevin are there as well. Annie is showing some COLLEAGUES wedding photos on her phone.

ANNIE

The space was just to die for. I was skeptical because it was in hotel ballroom, but the lighting just made the whole thing. And don't you just love my dress, it was handmade-

Jo watches August. He has a group of men laughing hysterically. She sips her drink. She watches as Kevin swoops in, and takes August to a group of FEMALE COWORKERS to introduce him. They swoon. Jo moves in.

JO

What's going on?

AUGUST

Hey babe. I'm just telling them the story of my first big audition.

(he nearly turns his back completely to Jo)

So, after I trip and nearly fall on my face, I start reading. And then I realize that I'm reading the lines for the female role. Then they asked me my height and I blanked and-

Jo feels a hand on her shoulder. It's Barry, her boss.

BARRY
Jo, a word?

JO
Of course.

They step away from the party scene.

BARRY
You got it.

JO
Got what?

BARRY
Congratulations, you are the new
Sports Deputy Editor for the LA
Times.

JO
Oh my God. Barry.

She goes to hug Barry, but realizes that this is a terrible idea.

BARRY
You'll start in the new year.

JO
Thank you. You won't regret it.

BARRY
Don't give me a reason to.

Barry gives her a pal punch on the shoulder and smiles to show he is proud. Then, he is swiftly off. Jo pulls out her phone. She goes to Noah's contact, but can't bring herself to call him.

Jo crosses over to August taps him on the shoulder.

AUGUST
There you are.

JO
Can I talk to you for a sec?

AUGUST
Can you give me a minute? I'm in
the middle of a series of IG
stories for my fans.

JO
Yeah, of course.

AUGUST

But, hey - can you grab me another
drink?

Jo walks to the bar. She takes a beat. She moves towards the
exit. Annie stops her.

ANNIE

Where do you think you're going?

JO

I don't feel well.

ANNIE

But I just heard the good news.

JO

What?

ANNIE

The promotion?

JO

Oh yeah. I'm thrilled.

ANNIE

I bet he was over-the-moon for you.

JO

Noah doesn't know yet.

ANNIE

I meant August.

JO

I should go.

ANNIE

Are you okay?

JO

I'll be fine. I think the booze and
the excitement...

ANNIE

Are you sure?

JO

Yes. Love ya.

They hug and Jo is out.

INT. BEDROOM, JO'S APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

August flips on the light. Jo sits up quickly.

JO

Where have you been?

AUGUST

I went to an after party with Kevin and Annie. For being married, they still like to party hard. I sent you a text.

Jo looks at her phone. There is nothing.

JO

No you didn't.

August looks.

AUGUST

It must have not gone through. It was at this sick basement speakeasy. I'm sorry, babe.

August rolls down his sleeves and Jo notices the lack of cufflinks.

JO

Where are your cufflinks?

AUGUST

Oh shit. I must have left them on the bar. The bartender thought it was hilarious that my initials stand for "as fuck". Get it?

JO

This isn't. Um. This isn't right.

AUGUST

I promise I'll go back first thing in the morning for them.

JO

You lost the first Christmas present I gave you in a matter of hours-

AUGUST

Babe. I'm really sorry. I'll get them back tomorrow.

JO

Ugh.

AUGUST

You're so cute when you're angry.
Now, come here.

August begins to kiss her neck. Jo stops him.

JO

We need to talk.

INT. LIVING ROOM, GERTIE'S HOME - SAME

Noah is sitting on the couch in sweatpants. Feet up on the coffee table, eating cereal and watching television. Gertie is dusting around him.

GERTIE

Move your feet, please.

Noah listens as he shovels cereal in his mouth. Gertie can't take it. She turns off the TV and rips the cereal bowl from his hands.

NOAH

What are you doing?

GERTIE

You are a grown ass man, and you
need to start acting like one.

NOAH

Geeze, I'll go home, ok?

GERTIE

What you need to do is make things
right with Jo.

NOAH

She has made is abundantly clear
that she doesn't want to see me.

GERTIE

You two. Just alike. Moody.
Emotional. Stubborn.

NOAH

I'm not stubborn.

Gertie looks at him, "Really?"

GERTIE

Make a Christmas peace offering.

NOAH

This isn't a freaking Hallmark movie.

GERTIE

Leave. Get out. Go see her. Go home. I don't care. I love you son, but you're driving me insane.

NOAH

Fine. You don't have HBO anyway.

Noah begins to exit.

GERTIE

I love you.

NOAH

Love you.

Noah is out.

INT. JO'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - MORNING

Annie bursts in with coffee in hand. There is a suitcase on the bed. Jo comes out of the bathroom.

ANNIE

What the fuck happened?

JO

August and I broke up.

ANNIE

You said that on the phone. But when?

JO

After the holiday party.

ANNIE

You waited that long to tell me!

JO

I didn't want to make a fuss.

ANNIE

What did he do? I'm going to kill that son of a bitch.

JO

Calm down. I broke up with him.

ANNIE

Wait? What? Why? He was perfect.

JO

He's young. And he is at a place where he wants to put his career first. I don't blame him.

ANNIE

Are you ok?

JO

It sucks. Big time.

ANNIE

Hey, you should stay in town for Christmas. We can binge watch "The West Wing", eat peppermint bark and drink red wine.

JO

I think St. Louis will be good for me. See my mom. Drink some Bud Light. Clear my head.

ANNIE

Have you told Noah?

JO

He's the last person I want to know.

ANNIE

He loves you.

JO

Because he can't have me.

ANNIE

I think you aren't giving him enough credit.

Jo begins to gather her stuff.

JO

I gotta get going. LAX is going to be a nightmare.

ANNIE

If you need anything, I'm here for ya.

JO
Thank you. Merry Christmas and give
Kev a hug for me.

ANNIE
Of course.

JO
Can you lock up?

ANNIE
No prob, bob.

JO
You're the best. Love you.

ANNIE
Love you.

Jo rushes out.

EXT. JO'S APARTMENT - A LITTLE LATER

Noah arrives at Jo's door.

NOAH
(to himself)
"I'm sorry. I truly just want you
to be happy." Ugh. "I know it's
Christmas, so I just wanted to say
that I am sorry and-" Nope. Ugh. I
should have just written this on
poster board.

Noah takes a deep breath. He knocks. Annie opens the door.

INT. JO'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Noah barges in.

ANNIE
Well, come on in.

NOAH
What are you doing here?

ANNIE
Jo has all of the Real Housewives
of New York on her DVR and it is
just nice to have some peace and-

NOAH
Where's Jo?

ANNIE
She left for St. Louis this morning. Wait, why are you here?

NOAH
I wanted to tell her that I'm happy for her and August.

ANNIE
They broke up.

NOAH
What did he do? I'll kill him.

ANNIE
Calm down, turbo. She broke up with him.

NOAH
Why?

ANNIE
She said he wasn't right for her.

NOAH
She said that?

ANNIE
Yes. Didn't I just say that she said that?

NOAH
Annie, I love you. I have to go.

Noah runs.

ANNIE
I hope they end up together. All this is making me tired.

Annie shuts the door.

INT. PLANE - LATER

Jo is on the plane, when "The Tagalong", the same fictional RomCom that Noah was taking pointers from, comes on the overhead screens.

JO
 (to herself)
 This is the in-flight movie?

Jo sips her wine. The TALL MALE PASSENGER is annoyed.

TALL MALE PASSENGER
 I'm stuck in the middle seat
 watching this garbage.

JO
 It's the same garbage on the aisle,
 my friend.

TALL MALE PASSENGER
 Wanna switch?

JO
 No.

INT. PLANE - A LITTLE LATER

Jo continues to watch. The "rules" of the movie begin.

INTERCUT WITH:

ON SCREEN - INT. RESTAURANT

Sally arrives at dinner where her crush, Jared and his girlfriend, Mary have also just arrived.

JUNE (V.O.)
 First rule: Always invite yourself
 along. Duh.

SALLY
 Oh, I think this is my seat.

Jared looks, and there is a GUEST sitting to her other side.

JARED
 There has to be a mistake.

SALLY
 No, this looks like my seat. See?

She holds up the place card.

SALLY (CONT'D)
 (to Mary)
 Looks like you are next to me.

Sally sits happily between Jared and Mary.

JO
Weird. So weird.

END INTERCUT.

INT. AIRPORT, LOS ANGELES - DAY

Noah is at the ticket counter.

NOAH
One ticket to St. Louis please.

INT. PLANE - A LITTLE LATER

Yep, Jo is still watching.

JUNE (V.O.)
Rule two: Put space between your
man and his new girl. Literally,
put space between them.

INTERCUT WITH:

ON SCREEN - INT. BANQUET HALL

It is a wedding scene. Jared and Mary are getting their
pictures taken. Mary hops in.

PHOTOGRAPHER
Can we get just the couple please?

SALLY
Which couple?

PHOTOGRAPHER
(to Sally)
Hey, sweetheart, I think the
bride's going to throw bouquet. Why
don't you try to get catch it, huh?

JO
Sexist.

Sally walks away as the photographer gets shots of Mary and
Jared.

PHOTOGRAPHER
How about one of just the Maid of
Honor there, huh?

Mary lets go of Jared's hand. Jared looks around.

JARED

Sally?

JO

(it hits her like a ton of
bricks)

Oh my God.

TALL MALE PASSENGER

Right? Jared is so oblivious that
Sally is totally in love with him.
Idiot.

JO

He was tagalong-ing me.

END INTERCUT.

INT. PLANE - LATER

Noah is on a plane now, and guess what he's watching?

JUNE (V.O.)

Um. Constantly one-upping the ex or
the ex's new girl is a basic
relationship rule.

INTERCUT WITH:

ON SCREEN - EXT. MOUNTAIN

Jared and Mary are rappelling down the side of a mountain. And
Sally, who is way ahead of both of them.

SALLY

(to Jared and Mary)
Tough break there.

JARED

Okay. Let's keep the sarcasm to a
minimum. It's one of the trickiest
mountains to navigate.

SALLY

I bet Mary there has turned a
coupla of tricks.

JARED

Adorable.

NOAH
(takes a deep breath)
It's a sign.

END INTERCUT.

INT. PLANE - LATER

Jo is enthralled at this point.

ON SCREEN - INT. SALLY'S HOUSE

Sally walks into her kitchen and flips on the lights. Jared is there. He has baked her cupcakes.

SALLY
What are you doing here?

JARED
Remember the first time we met? It was your first birthday party. And I'll never forget the pink frosted cupcakes with hearts. And how you shoved one right into my face.

Sally giggles.

JARED (CONT'D)
I knew then that I loved you. And I never stopped loving you. After all these years, you're it Sally Elaine Mae. You're the one.

Jared shoves a cupcake into her face and they kiss.

INT. PLANE - CONTINUOUS

Jo is crying. She turns to the Tall Male Passenger next to her, who is also crying.

JO
I love him. I have to tell him.

INT. AIRPORT, ST. LOUIS - NIGHT

Noah and Jo run past each other without even realizing it.
#Classic.

ON JO: Jo stops and looks behind her.

JO
 Couldn't be.

Beat.

JO (CONT'D)
 No.

Jo continues to run.

ON NOAH: Noah stops and looks behind him.

NOAH
 No way.

He stares.

NOAH (CONT'D)
 No.

He continues to run.

EXT. JO'S HOME IN ST. LOUIS - NIGHT

Snow covers the ground. A car pulls up, and Noah gets out.
 He's on the phone.

NOAH
 The number is 5515 S. Oak,
 right...Thanks Annie. Bye.

He hangs up. Noah walks up to the door and rings the doorbell. There is nothing. He tries again. Nothing. He tries to pound on the door. Nothing. Noah begins to peak through windows. The house is dark. He calls Jo.

JO (V.O.)
 Hi. You've reached Josephine..

Noah hangs up and begins to throw a hissy fit in the front yard.

NOAH
 Shit, shit, shit shit! Son of a
 bitch. Fuckety fuck fuck!

He stomps around. Throws some snow about. A cop car pulls up, and stops in front of the yard. A POLICEMAN gets out of the car.

POLICEMAN
 Everything okay here, son?

NOAH

Yes, Officer. I just was hoping to find someone.

POLICEMAN

And who is that?

NOAH

The person I thought I was meant to spend the rest of my life with.

POLICEMAN

I've been there. I once drove 20 hours straight to tell Kathy Crawford that I loved her.

NOAH

And what happened?

POLICEMAN

She had become a nun - Sister Kathy Crawford.

NOAH

Ha.

POLICEMAN

Hang in there son. If's it's meant to be, then it will be.

NOAH

Thank you, sir. And Merry Christmas.

The Policeman tips his hat, gets back in his car, and drives away. Noah falls back into the snow, staring up at the sky.

NOAH (CONT'D)

It's over.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT - LATER

Noah walks in. He looks pretty rough. And he looks defeated.

NOAH

I need a beer.

He walks into his kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN, NOAH'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

He flips on the light. Jo is there.

NOAH
What are you doing here?

JO
You've looked better.

NOAH
It's been a day.

He notices a cake on the table.

NOAH (CONT'D)
What's that?

JO
I made it.

Noah looks at the cake. It isn't pretty, but it kinda looks like a watch face. In very primitive looking writing it says "IN LOVE 'TIL THE END OF TIME. N & J.

NOAH
Are you tagalonging me?

JO
Remember the last night we spent together? It was our last night of college. And I will never forget the look on your face when I gave you that watch.

NOAH
I knew I loved you then. And Jo, I know I've-

JO
Would you shut up? This is my big romantic gesture.

NOAH
Sorry.

JO
I knew then that I loved you. And I never stopped loving you. After all these years, you're it Noah Jonathan Ryan. You're the one.

Jo takes frosting on the cake and smears it on Noah's face. She kisses him deeply and Noah kisses her right back.

JO (CONT'D)
Wait, I can't believe you tried to use "The Tagalong" on me.

NOAH

Well, in a round about way, it
worked didn't it?

JO

Ugh. I guess it did.

They laugh and kiss.

AND THEY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER