

SCOTT

What have you *done* to prepare for New York? For your move and stuff.

SAM

(Struggling)

...*Lots! Plenty!* I've done...yeah, *plenty!*

SCOTT

...O-kay, so "*nothing*" is clearly the answer to/*that*--

SAM

No, that's--

SCOTT

And *when* do classes start, again?

SAM

What does...why is that--

SCOTT

Just *answer* the question.

SAM

(Struggling)

...January Thirteenth.

SCOTT

January Thirteenth. Okay, so that's like...what...two months?

SAM

Fifty-six days.

SCOTT

Fifty-six days. *Fifty-six days.*

SAM

(Confused)

...Yes?

SCOTT

Aaannd...what airline are you flying up there with?

SAM

I...I don't know, yet. The rates are very competitive--

SCOTT

But you know where you're living, though, right?

SAM

No, not yet. Each borough has a variety of pros and cons that/I want to--

SCOTT

So you don't know *how* you're getting to New York or *where* you're living when you *do* get there.

SAM

...Well...*no*, but...

SCOTT leans in, slowly. His eyes getting wider as he does.

SAM

...What?

SCOTT

You-have-fifty-six-days-to-get-your-shit-together!

SAM

I *know*, and...I'm *going* to!

SCOTT

When?

SAM

I don't know! *Soon!*

SCOTT

What the *fuck* ya waiting for, an *invitation*?!

SAM

I *just*...I need time to figure all this out!

SCOTT

Figure *what* out?

SAM

Why this is happening with Gwen and-and-and...being with someone else. I just...need to figure this out first.

SCOTT

(Face in hands)

Jesus fu--this isn't a *math problem*, Sam! There's not gonna be some *logical* answer!

SAM

There's *always* a logical answer.

SCOTT

Not with *break-ups*, ya big-dumb-genius! There's nothing to understand here other than it's *over* and you need to move on!

SAM

It's not a *switch* I can just...flick or turn or--

SCOTT

I *know* it's not/a switch.

SAM

I can't just *be* okay all of a sudden. Be all *la-de-da* about Gwen being with someone new without...without any explanation! Just like, "oh, *sorry* Sam, I'd rather date this goofy lookin' *frat* guy with the-the-the...

(Wild, unclear arm gestures over body)

And-and-and the...

(More gestures)

SCOTT

I don't expect you to be okay *immediately*, but--

SAM

But you're saying that I should just *accept* it? Accept that Gwen and I are supposed to just be *strangers* all of a sudden?

SCOTT

(Sighs)

...*Yeah*, man...

SAM

(Shaking head quickly, continuously)

...*No*. No, that's...*no*. I don't, uh...*nu-uh*.

SCOTT

Sam--

SAM

Nope. That's...*mm-mm*.

SCOTT

Well...I don't know what else to tell you, Sam! I've watched you sit around for the last *two months* trying to "make sense" of all this and it's gotten you *nowhere*! So, it's either keep trying to do *that*...or you can at least *start* trying to get over this!

SAM

And that's what bringing me *here* is supposed to do? Make me start *trying*? 'Cause...

(Laughs nervously)

It *doesn't*. So, um...*thank you*, I guess? For the *attempt*? But, *uuuhh*...just...leave me alone, maybe. Yeah. Just...leave me alone.

SAM nods. He abruptly turns and exits.

SCOTT
 Sam, come...*Sam. Sam!*
 (Calling out)
 ...I'm proposing to Abby!

Small silence. SAM comes back in.
 Stops.

SAM
 ...Is this a trick?

SCOTT
 No, it's not a/trick.

SAM
 'Cause I'll be even *more* angry if it's/a trick.

SCOTT
 It's *not* a trick, man, I'm serious. I'm gonna propose.
 Tonight.
 (Beat)
Look.

SCOTT pulls a ring box out of his
 pocket.

SCOTT
 ...See?

SAM
 ...How do I know this isn't part of your...*plan* or
 whatever...

SCOTT sighs, opens the ring box and
 takes a step toward SAM, holding it
 out. SAM stares at SCOTT, unsure.
 He tries to glance in the box from
 across the stage.

SCOTT
 (Annoyed)
 Just come *look!*

Hesitantly, SAM goes to SCOTT. When
 he's close enough, he looks into
 the ring box.

SAM
 ...Whoa...

SCOTT
 ...Yeah.

SAM

...This is *real*.

SCOTT

Pff, I freakin' *hope* so for the amount I *paid* for it.

SAM reaches for the box, looks at SCOTT, who nods. SAM takes the box and sits on the fountain, staring at the ring.

SCOTT

Not, uh...not too bad, huh?

SAM

(Absently)

No...not too bad...

Silence. SCOTT sits next to SAM on the fountain.

SCOTT

Listen, man...I've been dying to tell you about this for...a *while*. But every time I've come over to show you, you've been in this *horrible* place. Which is totally understandable! I mean...I know what it's like to have someone be all *positive* when you feel like a walking *shit*-bucket. You just wanna...punch 'em in the sternum or something. But...you're my best friend. I couldn't propose without telling you first. And I figured telling you while you felt like this would only make you *worse*, so...I wanted to wait 'till you felt better. But nothing's really *changed* in the last two months. And at *this* point, it wasn't just about the engagement, I was worried about New York and you letting this slip through your fingers, again. So...I had to do *something*. Granted...not the *best* something, but...something.

Small silence.

SAM

You really thought telling me would make me feel worse?

SCOTT

(Shrugs)

...Yeah.

SAM

That's...

(Beat)

Maybe it would've. I don't know...

Small silence.

SAM

I am trying. It may not be obvious, but...

(Beat)

...I don't want to lose out on Columbia, I don't. But every time I go to book a flight or call someone about an apartment...I can't. 'Cause that feels like I'm giving up. And I know that if I don't accept that it's over...I'll lose my chance at Columbia.

SCOTT

I mean...that relationship is over, Sam. She's moved on. So...I don't think it's as much of a *Sophie's Choice* as you think it is.

(Beat)

Look...maybe you're right, maybe it's not a switch you can just...turn off. But...I don't know...maybe it's a choice? Like...you have to choose that you're gonna feel better, first. And from there, you can start making your way out of this shit-hole you feel like you're in.

SAM

...Maybe.

SCOTT

"Maybe's" good, I'll take "maybe".

(Beat)

So...maybe...make that choice.

SAM thinks about this. Silence.

SCOTT

(Sheepishly)

...You, uh...you still pissed at me?

SAM

...Yes. Of/course.

SCOTT

Okay! I was just/checking!

SAM

This was an awful thing to do/to someone.

SCOTT

You're right! You're...yes, it was.

SAM glances at SCOTT. They laugh, lightly. Small silence. SCOTT stands.

SCOTT

Well, uh...I gotta start getting you home. This restaurant apparently charges you if you're late for your reservation. I mean...who does that?

SAM

You, uh...you go ahead. I think I'm...gonna stay here for a bit.

SCOTT

You sure?

SAM

Yeah. I'll get a cab home or...yeah.

SCOTT

Okay...

(Beat)

Can, uh...can we get a drink tomorrow or...something? So I can kiss your ass a bit *and* girl-out about tonight? Two birds, ya know?

SAM

...Yeah.

SCOTT

Cool.

Small silence.

SCOTT

Alright. I, uh...

(Pointing behind him)

I guess I'm gonna...

SAM

Yeah. Okay.

SCOTT nods, begins to leave in the opposite direction from which they entered.

SAM

(Realizing)

Scott.

SCOTT stops and turns backs to SAM. SAM holds up the ring box.

SCOTT

Oh, *shit!* That's...

(Laughs)

That'd would've *suuuucked.*

SCOTT takes the box.

Thanks. SCOTT

Yeah. SAM

Small silence.

Alright. SCOTT

SCOTT turns to leave.

Scott. SAM

SCOTT turns back.

...Congratulations. SAM

(Smiling)
Yeah, well...she's gotta say yes first, right? SCOTT

...She will. SAM

Almost realizing this to be true for the first time, SCOTT smiles. A moment. He exits. SAM looks around him, taking in every detail of his surroundings. He looks up at the sky, the sun almost gone now. He closes his eyes and takes a deep breath.

BLACK OUT.

ABBY

Lights up. ABBY stands Center Stage.

ABBY
My mother told me once, "Abigail..." That's my full name, but don't ever call me that. "Abigail...the perfect man will love you more than you love him."
(Laughs)
Some fuckin' advice, huh? I was *nine*! And even at nine I remember thinking, "What? No, that's...that's not right. *Can't* be right." Cause that's what you're made to believe when you're a little girl with all the, uh...the *Disney*

(MORE)

ABBY (cont'd)

movies and the *fairy tales* and shit. "I love *him* as much as he loves *me*, and then we'll live happily ever fucking after." Right? Isn't that how it's supposed to go? Well...life's no fairytale, *that's* for fucking sure. When you've dated as many shit-heads as *I* have, it's hard to believe I was ever that delusional. By the time I met Scott, I was convinced that Mr. Perfect was either a figment of my imagination or he was gay. Those were the options. I mean...I started dating when I was really young, so by the time I got to college I was so *jaded* and worn down. If someone said *hello* to me, it was like "What do you want?" or "Oh, that's nice...now fuck off." Scott was no different. I didn't see him for the first time and hear a chorus of angels or any of that shit. Nope. Not even close. I was like "Fat chance, dude."

(Smiling)

But he was so funny...and sweet...and took all the abuse I threw at him, and *trust* me, there was plenty. But he was persistent. And I thought..."what the hell," ya know? I've had worse. A *lot* worse. But...here was this guy...this funny, polite, and romantic guy. And...he made me happy.

(Her smile fades)

And then...after about a year...something started gnawing at me. I started to feel so...*uncomfortable*? Like...I started resenting him every time he complimented me or did something nice. I felt like saying, "Okay! Stop! I'm really not that great, *alright*?!" I've spent my whole life with these *dickheads*, hoping that there would be one decent guy out there. And here he is...and I'm over here getting *pissed off* that he's complimenting me. I kept *thinking* about it and *thinking* about it to the point that I didn't know how to act around him.

(Beat)

And then it hit me.

(Beat)

My mother was right. *God*, that leaves such a bad fucking taste in my mouth.

(Beat)

But she was. Scott loved me more than I loved him. And the worst part was, the *most* I was capable of loving Scott wasn't anywhere *near* what he was giving me.

ABBY looks at her feet, the memory breaking her heart all over again.

ABBY

I broke up with him because I thought he deserved better. That's...yeah, I know.

(Beat)

I went out basically every night...*partied*...spent most of my time with guys who treated me like *shit* because, *hey*, that's what *I* deserved, right?

(Beat)

I'm at this party one night, *totally* shit-faced...and I start fooling around with this *complete* tool of a guy and I just...I start crying. Just...bawling my eyes out with him on top of me. I've never seen someone put pants on so fast.

(Beat)

I don't really remember how I got to Scott's place...which is kinda scary. When he answered the door I was just a sweaty, weepy mess. I told him how I felt...that I didn't want him to resent me later on down the road because I was so broken. That I wanted to love him as much as he loved me but I didn't know if I could. And...he just...he looked at me...with his adorable fucking face...and he said, "I just want you to love me as much as you can."

(Beat)

And that was it. Something just *clicked* in my head...or my heart, I don't really know. But now I had this...*permission*. To love as much as I *could*.

(Beat)

Look, I still don't really know what I'm doing when it comes to relationships. I'm making this shit up as I go, so...don't go thinking I'm some *expert* now on all this shit or anything, cause...

(Laughs)

That, I most certainly am *not*.

She plays with the engagement ring on her finger.

ABBY

So...as far as my mother's "advice" goes? *No*...I *don't* think the perfect man should love you more than you love him. I think the perfect man will let you love them as much as you can. Who will be okay with the damage you *do* have. So, find someone who can accept your baggage and help you get rid of it, while you help them get rid of theirs, ya know? *Compromise*. I mean...that's a fair trade off, right?