

IT'S A SITUATION

Written by

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INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A warm, quiet Italian spot. Dim lighting. A half-empty bottle of red wine on the table, and a basket of bread no one touched.

CLAIRE (23), wearing from boho dress with her curly hair pinned back, sits across from JOHN (26), tall with chocolate brown hair wearing a nice button up.

JOHN

Wait, so you pitched that idea in front of everyone?

CLAIRE

Not *pitched* exactly. More like nervously word-vomited it into the room. But yeah, and somehow my evil boss loved it.

JOHN

That's incredible. I feel like most people our age are just trying to survive the group Slack channel.

Claire laughs.

CLAIRE

Don't worry, I still panic-heart everything my boss says.

JOHN

Healthy fear of authority. Very important.

She smiles and takes a sip of wine.

CLAIRE

What about you? What's a day in the life of a book editor?

JOHN

Right now? A lot of staring at manuscripts and reminding grown authors that deadlines are not optional.

CLAIRE

So babysitting, basically.

JOHN

Pretty much. But with more metaphors.

CLAIRE

You know, I thought book editors and writers were supposed to be jaded and sarcastic. You're weirdly optimistic.

JOHN

I fake it well. But also, I've always really loved books and what I do. Even the bad ones.

CLAIRE

That's kind of refreshing. Most people I meet are either bored or burnt out.

JOHN

Yeah. You don't seem like that either.

Claire smiles and finishes the last sip of her wine.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Do you want to go get some gelato? I know a great place down the street.

CLAIRE

Yes, that sounds great.

He subtly signs to the waiter for the check and pays for their meal.

EXT. NYC STREET - NIGHT

Spring is just starting after a cold winter. The Lower East Side buzzes with its usual, chaotic charm. Sidewalks are cluttered with café chairs and cigarette smoke. A bodega radio plays old hits from somewhere unseen.

Claire and John walk side by side eating gelato and laughing.

They round a corner and up ahead, we see her building. A walk-up with a chipped green door and ivy trying to survive on a fire escape.

JOHN

This was really nice. I'd love to do it again.

They stop in front of her building. Claire stiffens, crosses her arms and lets her eyes wander as she thinks of what to say.

CLAIRE
I've had a great time with you,
John. I just don't think I'm in the
right place for this right now.

John is slightly surprised but keeps his cool.

JOHN
Oh ok. Well, thanks for being
honest.

Claire exhales deeply.

CLAIRE
Goodnight, John.

JOHN
Goodnight, Claire.

He turns to walk away. Claire watches him go, then walks up her staircase and steps inside.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment is small and packed with impulse vintage finds and college memorabilia. A beige couch is shoved in the corner with mismatched throw pillows. The tiny square kitchen feels as though it is in the same room.

The door slams behind Claire as she collapses against it with a heavy sigh, eyes closed, drained and defeated. She groans at the sight of her blonde and bubbly roommate KRISTA (24) and her tall lengthy boyfriend MATT (23) cuddled up on the couch together.

KRISTA
Hey. How was it?.

Claire walks in and slumps down next to them on the couch.

CLAIRE
I ended it with John.

KRISTA
What why? I thought he was perfect!
He's bought you flowers twice. No
one does that anymore.

CLAIRE

I don't know, I just don't feel it.
Maybe he was too nice or too put
together? I don't know. Something
wasn't right for me.

MATT

So you dumped him... because he's
emotionally available?

Claire glares at Matt. Krista hits him on the arm.

KRISTA

I'll always support you, but you
can't keep throwing away every good
thing that comes your way.

Claire scoffs, offended.

CLAIRE

I don't do that.

She tries to think of something to say.

I just have high standards.

KRISTA

Mhm hmm.

Claire stomps over to the kitchen and pours herself a glass
of water and sifts through the mail on the counter.

Krista shifts forward on the couch looking over at Claire.

KRISTA (CONT'D)

Did you uh, see what came in the
mail today?

CLAIRE

No-

Claire puts her glass down abruptly and grabs the envelope.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Oh god.

Claire rips open the envelope and reads the invitation.

KRISTA

I know.

CLAIRE

Rebecca's getting married?

KRISTA
In April. Yeah. Real soon.

CLAIRE
I mean they've been dating forever
but I didn't think they'd get
married NOW.

KRISTA
I know. It's crazy. It's gonna be
quite the reunion.

Claire's smile fades. Her stomach drops.

CLAIRE
Oh no.

KRISTA
Shit, I'm sorry. I didn't wanna
bring it up.

MATT
That idiot Luke's gonna be there
isn't he. Tell me you don't talk to
him anymore.

KRISTA
Alright Matt-

CLAIRE
Don't grill me.

A PING! from her phone cuts through the moment.

Claire checks her phone and it's REBECCA.

REBECCA: Did you check the mail??
CLAIRE: Just did!!
Congratulations!!
REBECCA: I'm so happy you'll be a
part of it. I know you're probably
wondering... and yes, Luke's coming.
But we're all adults now, right?

Claire rolls her eyes and scoffs before aggressively tapping
her phone to respond.

Claire: Yeah no worries at all!!
Completely forgot about it. I'm
honestly in such a different place
now :)

Claire slams her phone on the counter.

KRISTA
Was that Bridezilla already?

CLAIRE
Be nice to her. She's one of our
best friends.

KRISTA
Uh yours. Never mine.

Claire sighs then picks up her water and walks to her room.

CLAIRE
Goodnight you two.

MATT
Night.

KRISTA
Sleep tight!

They both wave from the couch.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Early morning light slips in through Claire's blinds, lighting up her small bedroom with clothes thrown everywhere and makeup sprawled out on a desk.

Claire groans as she turns over to turn off her alarm. She grabs her phone and scrolls on Instagram. She searches Luke's handle in the Instagram search bar. She sees he has a new post and clicks on it. She immediately throws her phone to the other side of the bed..

She throws her covers off her, stands up, opens her small armoire and grabs the first business casual clothes she sees.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

An open-plan office with gray cubicles crammed together and horribly florescent lighting lights up the room. A printer whines in the background.

Claire sits at her cubical where her monitor takes up most of the space. It glows back at her, displaying charts and graphs.

She rubs her eyes trying to focus, her mind clearly elsewhere. She lets out a big sigh.

TESS (mid 30s), wearing an oatmeal cardigan and looks like she's been sitting at her cubical for 10 years, leans her head out from her cubicle next to Claire.

TESS

You ok?

Claire jolts at her voice.

CLAIRE

Yeah. Fine... Just a weird morning.

Tess nods then disappears back behind her monitor.

Claire attempts to get some work done then ends up going scrolling on her phone.

JANET (mid-40s), with short hair and a piercing voice, abruptly appears behind Claire, hovering over her shoulder.

JANET

Did you just push the 9AM numbers to the client folder?

CLAIRE

I did them earlier this morning. Why?

JANET

Because you pulled the wrong behavioral set. This is *February's* data. You sent outdated reports to a *six-figure* account.

Claire freezes.

CLAIRE

I - I'm sorry, I'll fix it right now.

JANET

No, you'll fix it ten minutes ago. We have a standing call with them in fifteen. Get your head on straight.

Janet storms off. Claire sinks further into her chair, red in the face. She quickly starts correcting the spreadsheet, fingers shaking as she drags columns and replaces figures.

INT. MATT'S APARTMENT - DAY

A clean, minimalist apartment. Neutral colors, a modern gray couch, and a TV mounted above a sterile, barely-used console. There are some photos of his friends and family, but none with Krista.

Krista stands in the kitchen, unloading groceries from a tote bag onto the counter. She hums quietly.

The door swings open suddenly. Matt bursts in wearing a suit, loosened tie, coat still on.

MATT

Krista? What are you—why are you here?

KRISTA

Hey! I just thought I'd bring over some groceries. I know this week's been crazy for you.

Matt barely acknowledges her gesture, frantically scanning the room.

MATT

I only came back to grab some papers. I have to be on a client call in twenty. God, where did I put—?

He rifles through a side table, muttering to himself.

KRISTA

Want help finding them?

MATT

No! Just — I know where they are.

Krista recoils slightly at his tone.

KRISTA

Sorry, I was just trying to help.

MATT

I appreciate it, but Krista—why are you always here? I mean, it's nice of you, but sometimes I just...

KRISTA

Got it. I'm sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt. I'll finish up and get out of your hair.

Matt finally spots the papers he needs on a side table and quickly grabs them, checking his watch anxiously.

MATT

Look, I don't mean to snap. Just, maybe take your groceries home, yeah? Before they go bad. I'll see you tonight, maybe?

KRISTA

Yeah, yeah. Totally. See you later.

Krista scoops up her groceries and heads towards the door. Matt leans in for a quick kiss on the cheek before slamming the door closed behind her.

INT. APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

The front door creaks open. Claire steps in, keys in hand, face blank from the day. She drops her bag by the door, kicks off her shoes, and stands there for a beat. Everything is quiet except for the hum of the fridge.

She walks toward her room.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Claire re-enters now in new-looking workout clothes. She pulls out random smoothie ingredients – frozen fruit, milk, protein powder – and tosses them into the blender.

Krista swings the apartment door open as Claire hits start on the blender.

KRISTA

I'm home and I got -

VRMMMM! The blender starts and the contents explode everywhere. Claire forgot to put the lid on.

KRISTA (CONT'D)

Oh my GOD what on earth?!

CLAIRE

Shit-ugh-no no no no no.

She scrambles to find the off button, slightly blinded by fruit spludge.

KRISTA

What is happening?! Are you okay?

Krista drops her grocery bags and rushes over. Claire just stands there, splattered.

CLAIRE

Yeah. I'm fine. Just had a bad day.
I've been so out of it.

Krista grabs paper towels and starts wiping.

KRISTA

Clearly. Were you... gonna work out?
Since when do you own workout
clothes?

CLAIRE

What a weird way to kick me when
I'm down.

KRISTA

So what's actually going on?

Krista looks at Claire

KRISTA (CONT'D)

Could you be distracted by... The
wedding party?

CLAIRE

Maybe. I guess.

There's a beat of silence while they continue cleaning.

KRISTA

Do you think Luke is bringing a
date?

Claire abruptly stops cleaning

CLAIRE

I didn't even think about that.

Beat.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

He so has a date! Oh this is going
to be so awful. I can't go.

KRISTA

Sorry! Sorry. I didn't mean to make
you stress out more. But calm down
its ok don't freak out yet.

Claire slows her breath.

KRISTA (CONT'D)

Do you want me to try and find out?

CLAIRE

No, no no. I don't want to go back to this stress and drama. I'm fine. I'm so fine. That ship has sailed and I can be in the same room as him and be FINE. Totally and utterly fine.

KRISTA

That was a lot of "fines" in one sentence.

CLAIRE

Yeah well I am.

Claire walks away towards her room.

KRISTA

Uhh, are you gonna finish cleaning this?

Claire holds herself up on the doorframe of her room.

CLAIRE

Yeah, one sec.

KRISTA

Come on. We both know you're not going to work-out. Let's go dress shopping.

INT. BOUTIQUE - EVENING

A chic boutique, neatly arranged with colorful dresses, vibrant fabrics, and minimalistic decor.

Claire trails behind Krista, visibly distracted and unenthused. Krista sifts through and picks out dresses as she goes.

KRISTA

Look at how many dresses I found you. You're going to look so good at this party.

CLAIRE

Uh-huh thanks, yeah.

KRISTA

Come on. Let's go try on.

INT. BOUTIQUE FITTING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Three fitting rooms in a row with light pink curtains draped in front of them are facing a large full body mirror.

Claire stands in front of the mirror, adjusting the final dress - a flattering deep green gown. Krista, perched excitedly nearby, beams.

KRISTA

I think we found the one!

Claire looks at herself, finally smiling a little.

CLAIRE

Yeah, I like this one actually.

Matt walks in casually, holding two coffees. Claire's smile immediately drops.

MATT

Oh, sorry. Didn't mean to barge in.

KRISTA

Babe! What are you doing, I thought you were slammed?

MATT

I had a window between meetings. Figured I could multitask being a good boyfriend.

KRISTA

You brought coffee?

MATT

I thought you girls could use a little afternoon pick me up.

Matt hands them each a coffee. Krista kisses him on the cheek, smiling.

CLAIRE

Didn't know you were joining.

Claire goes back to looking at herself in the mirror.

MATT

Yeah, sorry. Krista texted that you were here and my office is close, so...

KRISTA
No, you're fine. Doesn't Claire
look great?.

MATT
Yeah, that color really brings out
your eyes.

Claire shifts awkwardly.

CLAIRE
Uh, thank you.

MATT
Hope you're not trying to dress
this good for that asshole of
yours.

KRISTA
Matt! Don't be mean. I think it'd
be cute for a little re-kindling.

CLAIRE
You might be the only one who
thinks so. Rebecca would literally
kill me.

KRISTA
Yeah well who cares what she
thinks.

CLAIRE
I do -

KRISTA
Anyway, thanks for the coffee,
Matt! Back to girl time now, bye
bye!

MATT
Alright, I get it.

Matt waves casually, walking out. Claire watches him go.

KRISTA
Sorry if he annoyed you. I just
thought it'd be nice to have some
coffee brought right to us.

CLAIRE
Oh, no. It's ok. That was nice of
him. You guys really are perfect.

KRISTA
Yeah, we are.

An awkward silence settles.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Well! I think this is definitely
the one, don't you!

CLAIRE
Yeah, it's pretty perfect actually.

KRISTA
Matt was right, you know. It really
does bring out your eyes.

Claire looks uneasy, not sure how to respond.

CLAIRE
Yeah...

KRISTA
See? Every guy in the room is going
to fall in love with you. Just like
usual. This is going to be a great
night

INT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Claire and Krista walk into their apartment, both tired from
the day.

CLAIRE
I'm exhausted. Should we order
pizza tonight?

KRISTA
No, not pizza. I can't be bloated
and puffy for the party.

CLAIRE
True. At least you have a date that
you know will love you bloated and
puffy or not.

KRISTA
Yeah! He's the best.

Krista walks down the hall towards her room.

CLAIRE
I'll order Health Bar?

Krista doesn't stop walking.

KRISTA
Yeah, sure sounds good.

INT. CLAIRE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Claire picks up her messy room a bit. Then throws herself on her bed and picks up her phone. She opens Instagram and starts scrolling.

She comes across a story from Rebecca. It's a photo of her, Luke, and another girl.

The post reads "Reunited with my longest and best friends!".

Claire holds on the story for a while. Then she puts her phone down, rubs her face, and stands up. She grabs her towel and heads for the bathroom.

INT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Mid morning light slips into Claire's room. Claire jolts awake and catches her breathe.

KRISTA
(O.S. Yelling)
I'm going on a run!

Claire groans and rubs her eyes.

CLAIRE
Okay!

SLAM of the door.

Claire rolls over and groans at the sunlight. She rubs her eyes more and takes a deep breath. She sighs and steps out of bed. Dressed in little pajama shorts and a big tee shirt falling off one shoulder. Hair in disarray.

She grabs her glasses and walks out of her room towards the kitchen

INT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT KITCHEN- DAY

Claire grabs the coffee pot and fills it up. Yawning as she goes.

As she fills her cup with coffee she hears the door open.

She turns her head and sees Matt walk into her apartment.

MATT
Oh. Hi, sorry.

CLAIRE
Uh hi. It's ok.

Claire looks down at what she's wearing and cross one leg over another and pulls her shirt on her shoulders.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
What are you -

MATT
I'm just dropping some makeup
Krista left at my place. Is she
here?

CLAIRE
No, she just left to go on a run.

Matt places the makeup bag on the counter.

MATT
Gotcha. Figured I'd drop it off on
my way to work.

Claire nods and takes a slow sip of coffee. Silence.

MATT (CONT'D)
Can I get some coffee? The coffee
at work takes like gasoline.

CLAIRE
Yeah sure.

Claire grabs a mug, walks to the pot and pours him a mug of coffee.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Here you go. I'm sure it's not much
better than whatever they have at
your office.

MATT
Thanks. And you'd be surprised.

Matt glances around the kitchen, like he doesn't want to leave yet.

MATT (CONT'D)
You guys all set for tonight?

CLAIRE
Mentally? No.

MATT

At least you get to dress up and put on a dress, right? Isn't that what girls love to do.

CLAIRE

Hmm. Oh, totally.

Claire half-smiles. Matt watches her over the rim of his coffee mug. She notices.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

What?

MATT

Nothing. You just... seem quiet lately.

CLAIRE

I'm always quiet in the mornings.

MATT

Not like this.

Claire shifts her weight, very aware of what she's wearing and obviously uncomfortable wearing it in front of Matt.

CLAIRE

I'm going to get dressed. And prepare myself for toinight.

MATT

Right. Sorry. I'll get out of your hair.

He takes a step toward the door, then hesitates.

MATT (CONT'D)

You'll look really good tonight, by the way. Krista picked out a great dress.

Claire stares at him. Unsure what to say.

CLAIRE

Thanks. I'll try not to embarrass Krista.

Matt opens his mouth like he wants to say something else, but stops.

MATT

Tell her I dropped the bag. I'll see you both later.

He leaves. Claire stays frozen. The door clicks shut. She exhales hard and grips the edge of the counter.

INT. CLAIRE'S ROOM - EVENING

Claire sits at her desk with her vanity mirror lights on. Her makeup is sprawled out over her desk. She applies mascara.

Krista runs up to her doorway in her long light pink gown.

KRISTA

Claire!

Claire jolts, surprised, and smudges her mascara.

KRISTA (CONT'D)

Ope. Sorry. Pink or nude lip?

CLAIRE

Hmmm the light pink.

KRISTA

Ok, perfect. That's what I thought.

Krista storms out of the room. Claire leans into the mirror and fixes her mascara smudge.

KRISTA (CONT'D)

(O.S. Yelling)

We should go soon!

Claire jolts again and wipes off more makeup on accident.

CLAIRE

(Yelling)

Okay!

Claire finishes her makeup. Then she looks at herself in the mirror, takes a deep breath and sighs.

She stands up and grabs her purse, throws the rest of her belongings in it and walks out her door.

INT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Claire stands near the kitchen, leaning against the bar.

Krista comes clicking down the hallway towards the kitchen in her heels.

KRISTA

Alright. Let's get this show on the road.

CLAIRE
Ready when you are.

KRISTA
(gasps)
You look amazing Claire.

CLAIRE
Thank you. You look stunning.

KRISTA
Aw thank you. We're going to be the
hottest in the room.

CLAIRE
Can't out-do Rebecca though.

KRISTA
I think we'd be in physical danger.

They both laugh.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Ok, where is Matt. He was supposed
to be here 2 minutes ago.

The girls' heads turn at a knock at the door.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Ah, finally.

Krista walks over and opens the door to reveal Matt wearing
a jet black suit, holding a bouquet of white flowers.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Hi honey. Aw thank you for the
flowers!

Matt kisses her on the cheek.

MATT
Your charriot has arrived for the
prettiest girls at the party.

Claire smiles but cringes a bit.

KRISTA
Whoo hoo!

They start heading towards the door. Krista stops and turns
around to face Claire behind her.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Are you ready?

CLAIRE
As ready as I'll ever be.

Krista gives her a warm smile. All three of them head out the door.

INT. HOTEL BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

A lavishly decorated hotel banquet hall. Elegant chandeliers, round tables draped in white linens, and floral centerpieces. GUESTS mingle, music softly playing, servers moving gracefully.

Claire stands near the entrance in the green dress with her hair done and makeup on. Her eyes scan the room with visible tension.

Krista joins her in a long light pink dress and hooks her arm with Claire's.

KRISTA
Wow this is extravagant. Very
Rebecca.

Claire smiles, snapping out of her worried gaze. She nods her head towards a gigantic tower of glasses of champagne.

CLAIRE
As long as there's a champagne
tower, I'm not complaining.

KRISTA
I like where your heads at. I'm
going to need at least three
glasses before I talk to Rebecca.

Claire laughs and Krista turns back, looking at the entrance.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Matt can find us later. Let's go.

They walk towards the champagne tower on the other side of the dance floor.

INT. HOTEL BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

Krista and Claire are standing at a high table drinking champagne, giggling and people watching.

CLAIRE
I feel like there could be a
jumpscare around every corner with
the attendance here.

KRISTA

You're not wrong. I just made eye contact with a guy who used to hit his juul in the back of lecture.

CLAIRE

I already ran into a girl who asked if I "still do that ad thing." Do you mean a real job instead of posting videos doing my makeup and call it influencing? Yes!

KRISTA

That champagne kicking in fast?

CLAIRE

I'm just saying - half this room is pretending they don't still live off their parents' credit cards.

Krista takes a big swig of her champagne and her eyes catch two girls heading towards her and Claire.

KRISTA

Dear god. Incoming -

Claire's head turns where Krista is looking and doesn't even get a chance to respond before JENNY (24), wearing a black dress with a plunging neckline, and CHARLOTTE (23), wearing a flowy floor length dress come rushing over.

JENNY AND CHARLOTTE

Claire!!!

CLAIRE

Oh! Hi!

They both embrace Claire in a hug and Krista smiles from behind Claire.

CHARLOTTE

And Krista, hi!

KRISTA

Hey!

JENNY

Wow, it's so good to see you girls! How are you?

CLAIRE

Oh great, we're great. How are you? What's new?

JENNY

Oh, ya know. Just this -

Jenny whips up her hand up revealing an enormous wedding ring.

CLAIRE

Oh wow, congrats!

KRISTA

That's beautiful.

JENNY

Thank you, I know! It's two carats. Vintage. He proposed - Chris our class president - at the Eiffel Tower. At sunset. With champagne.

CHARLOTTE

You should see the photos.

CLAIRE

That sounds... Perfect!

JENNY

It was. He should be around here somewhere.

Jenny looks over at Charlotte and grabs her shoulder.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Ah and you need to meet Charlotte's new man. He's so charming. They're perfect for each other.

CHARLOTTE

Aw, you're too sweet. Oh look! There he is!

All the girls turn their head towards the dance floor as Richard (late 70s), a stout man approaches wearing a dull grey suit and missing all of his hair.

RICHARD

Well hello ladies.

Charlotte gives him a big kiss on the cheek. Claire squeezes Krista's arm so hard they almost break their fake smiles.

CHARLOTTE

Richard, this is Claire and Krista. We all went to school together.

RICHARD

Ah, Charlotte's told me all about you.

CLAIRE

Aww.

KRISTA

Nice to meet you.

RICHARD

Likewise. Don't let me keep you - I'm on strict orders to find her another glass of wine.

CHARLOTTE

Chardonnay, please. Cold as possible.

Richard gives a small nod and shuffles off toward the bar.

CLAIRE

Well, I think it's time we continue making our rounds.

KRISTA

It was great to see you guys!

JENNY AND CHARLOTTE

Bye!

Krista and Claire swiftly walk away arm in arm, barely holding in their laughter.

INT. HOTEL BANQUET HALL BAR - NIGHT

Claire and Krista hover near the bar with a new drink in hand.

KRISTA

I seriously thought you were gonna snap when he said "ladies".

CLAIRE

I'm shocked we both held it in.

KRISTA

Same.

They clink glasses.

CLAIRE

Honestly, I feel great.

KRISTA
And you look great too.

CLAIRE
I don't even know what I was so
worried about.

Krista laughs.

KRISTA
Ok, I'm gonna go find Matt before
he gets caught in a conversation
like we just had. You good here?

CLAIRE
I'm great here.

Claire leans over the bar searching for the bartender.
Krista gives her a suspicious look and walks off.

Claire turns back to the crowd, gently swaying to the music,
sipping her drink.

Then she hears it. A very familiar voice. Close. Her body
goes still and her face goes blank. She doesn't look. She
starts profusely sweating and breathing heavily.

She tries to focus and keep her cool, stepping into a nearby
conversation with two people she vaguely remembers from
college.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
No yeah, I'm still in the city.
Same apartment, actually.

They nod, say something back – she's not listening.

Then she feels a tap on the shoulder. She turns. Luke (23),
stands tall behind her wearing a dark blue suit, flaunting
his dark brown hair, with crystal blue eyes staring back at
her. He walks up to her with confidence.

LUKE
Hey, Pilot.

CLAIRE
Hi.

LUKE
You look great. Green really brings
out your eyes.

CLAIRE
Appreciate it. You look - wedding appropriate.

LUKE
I try. Figured I'd at least wear something you couldn't roast.

CLAIRE
Bold of you to assume I've lost that skill.

LUKE
Still sharp. I missed that. I wasn't sure if you would actually come.

CLAIRE
Why wouldn't I? It's Rebecca's wedding. I'm not a monster.

LUKE
Didn't say you were.

CLAIRE
You implied it.

She sips her drink. He laughs again, she does too. Her guard dips. Just a bit.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Still funny, huh?

LUKE
You tell me.

She's about to respond when a TALL BLONDE WOMAN (20), appears, placing a hand on Luke's arm.

BLONDE WOMAN
Babe, I think the first dance is about to start.

Claire freezes.

LUKE
Right. Uh-yeah. Just give me a sec.

The blonde smiles politely, then walks off.

CLAIRE
Wow. She's cute! Did she come straight from cheer practice?

LUKE

She's just— It's not serious. She needed a plus-one.

CLAIRE

You brought your not-serious date to a wedding?

LUKE

It's complicated.

CLAIRE

Isn't it always.

Luke shifts uncomfortably.

LUKE

I'll catch you later?

CLAIRE

Don't rush.

He walks off. Claire stands there, blinking. Her breathing speeds, even more. He tries to calm herself down. She smooths her dress, lifts her chin.

INT. HOTEL BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

Krista grabs Claire's arm as she slowly walks away from the bar.

KRISTA

Claire. What was that?

CLAIRE

Nothing, I'm ok.

KRISTA

Are you sure?

CLAIRE

Yes.

Krista strokes her arm.

KRISTA

You don't have to pretend.

CLAIRE

I'm not.

KRISTA

You don't have to be ok right now.

Claire yanks her arm away from Krista's hold.

CLAIRE

I don't want to be pitied anymore!

Krista's face goes blank and they get interrupted by Rebecca (23), running towards them in an extravagant wedding dress.

REBECCA

Can you believe it?! I'm getting married!

Claire and Krista whip their heads towards Rebecca.

CLAIRE

Rebecca! Hi!

REBECCA

Hello girls!

She wraps her arms around both of their necks in a big hug.

Krista cringes and looks like she can't breathe.

KRISTA

Hi. Rebecca.

Rebecca lets go of the embrace.

REBECCA

I'm just so happy you girls are here.

CLAIRE

Aw, us too! You look... stunning.

REBECCA

Ah, thank you so much.

She looks down and twirls her dress.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

It's vintage Dolce and Gabbana.
Isn't it amazing.

CLAIRE

Wow. So amazing.

REBECCA

And you guys look great too!

She glances down at Claire's dress.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Oh my. Claire. This dress is stunning. You almost out dressed me!

CLAIRE

Ohh, no.

REBECCA

And Krista. That dress. Very you.

KRISTA

Thanks.

REBECCA

I'm really glad you girls are here. Isn't it crazy some of us are all grown up?

Claire and Krista hmm and nod yes as Rebecca rambles on.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

And Claire. You seem really grounded lately. Like you've finally made peace with how everything worked out. I'm so proud of you. It's better this way. Now you can finally move on from Luke.

CLAIRE

Mhm hm. Yea-

KRISTA

You're glowing, Rebecca. Go bask in it.

REBECCA

I plan to. I'll see you two on the dance floor. Love you!!

She rushes off, already shouting at someone else across the room.

Claire exhales.

KRISTA

That had to end.

CLAIRE

Yeah, thank you.

KRISTA

Don't listen to her. She has no idea what she's talking about.

(MORE)

KRISTA (CONT'D)
I don't even know she pretends to
care so much when everyone knows
all she cares about is herself.

CLAIRE
That's a little aggressive.

KRISTA
Regardless, you handled that better
than I would've.

CLAIRE
It's just classic Rebecca.

KRISTA
Don't let her get to you. Or anyone
for that matter. Let's go back to
drinking and judging everyone from
our past.

INT. HOTEL BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

The music quiets. Guests turn their attention as Rebecca
stands near the head table, mic in one hand and champagne in
another.

REBECCA
Hi everyone! I promise I'll keep
this short because I know the open
bar is the real star of the night.

The crowd chuckles.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
But seriously, thank you all for
being here. It means so much to
have people from so many parts of
our lives all in one room.

She scans the crowd, eyes landing on her Maid of Honor.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
To my Maid of Honor Mindy. Thank
you for organizing everything,
including the unhinged bachelorette
weekend I'm still recovering from.
I love you so much.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Thank you to my parents who have
always had my back.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Thank you to my friends who have
stuck with me since we were in
diapers.

She grins and cheers her glass towards Luke.

Slight laughter and awes. She then locks eyes with Claire.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
And Claire!

Claire's freezes widen while all the guests turn towards her.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
We met the first day of college
moving into our dorm. You've seen
every version of me since then, and
you're still here. I'll never
forget that.

A beat. Claire offers a tight, polite smile. Krista side-eyes Rebecca. Matt's eyes are locked on Claire.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
And lastly. My loving soon-to-be
husband. Joe, I love you more than
you will ever know. Thanks for
putting up with me.

JOE (23), same height as Rebecca wearing a nice tux stands up and kisses her on the cheek.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Okay. Cheers to love, and
friendships, and the best night
ever!

Applause breaks out. Claire sips her drink.

INT. HOTEL BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

The party is in full swing now. Lights dimmed to a soft golden hue. A live band plays a jazzy cover of a pop song, and the dance floor is full.

Claire and Krista weave through the crowd with fresh drinks in hand. Claire smiles as she clinks her glass with old classmates, poses for blurry iPhone selfies. She laughs at a story she's only half-listening to.

Claire throws her head back, spinning dramatically, tipsy and carefree for a second.

MATT

Alright, you're showing off now.

Krista grabs Matt and leads the move for him to spin her around.

Claire feels a tap on the shoulder and turns around to reveal BEN (24), a handsome guy from college she recognizes but can't quite place.

BEN

Hey - Claire, right?

CLAIRE

Depends who's asking.

BEN

Ben. We had psych together junior year. You sat in the row in front of me. Very active in class.

CLAIRE

Ohhh yeah. Ben! It's great to see you. I'm sure I was just aggressively opinionated and not actually saying anything smart.

BEN

You had a lot of feelings about Freud. Definitely memorable though.

CLAIRE

Arguable that that's an upside.

BEN

It is. Want to dance?

Claire glances at Krista, who shrugs with a half-smile and nudges her forward.

CLAIRE

Sure.

Claire grabs Ben's hand and he pulls her deeper into the crowd.

He's a good dancer. Nothing flashy, but confident. Claire follows his lead easily.

They fall into a rhythm. Claire starts smiling again. Not performative, but real.

Just past Ben Claire's eyes fall on Luke across the room. He's standing by the wall, holding two drinks.

His date-polished, radiant—laughs at something he says. He leans in, close.

Claire's feet stumble slightly.

BEN

You good?

CLAIRE

Yeah, I—

She steps back.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Actually I need to check on my friend. But thank you. That was fun.

BEN

Of course.

He nods politely, not pressing, and blends back into the crowd.

Claire stands there for a beat. Then turns toward the bar.

INT. HOTEL BANQUET HALL BAR - NIGHT

Claire orders a tequila soda. Krista comes stumbling up behind her and stands next to Claire, obviously tipsy.

KRISTA

What, is that one not good enough for you either? Stand here for 5 seconds and another one will waltz right up.

CLAIRE

It's not like that.

Krista cuts Claire off as the bartender walks closer to them.

KRISTA

Hi bartender, more tequila for me and my best friend here.

MATT

And one for me too, please.

The bartender pours three shots and slides them across the bar.

KRISTA

To my favorite people and...
Tequilla!

Claire and Matt laugh and go along with it. They all three cheers and knock back their shots.

MATT

Not into that nerd you were dancing
with?

CLAIRE

He's not a nerd. He was fine. Maybe
I'll go find him again.

Matt rolls his eyes and Krista pulls them both back towards the dance floor.

The music swells. People are dancing harder now. Some girls have taken off their heels. Guests are full-blown drunk and the energy is high.

Claire trails closely behind Krista and Matt towards the dance floor.

Claire stops in her tracks when she sees Luke just past the dance floor standing against the wall, laughing. His date leans in, brushing her hand over his chest. He says something. She smiles. Then she kisses him. It's confident. Not new.

Matt and Krista notice. Krista's smile drops and she looks back at Claire. Matt holds his gaze on Luke

KRISTA

Claire -

CLAIRE

I'll be right back.

She walks swiftly towards the doors to the side of the dance floor and bursts through the doors to the outside patio.

EXT. HOTEL BANQUET PATIO - NIGHT

A wide wooden deck stretches out from the back of the banquet hall, slightly elevated, wrapped in a railing that overlooks a sprawling, perfectly manicured golf course. Twinkly string lights hang overhead in loose, glowing arcs, casting soft pools of gold across the wood.

Beyond the railing, the course fades into dark green hills. It's quiet - just the murmur of the party through the glass doors and the low buzz of crickets in the trees.

Krista and Matt come storming through the doors to find Claire leaning against the railing.

CLAIRE

I just don't understand why he wants to just show off his new shiny toy right in front of me. Who even is she and why would he bring a random girl to his childhood best friends wedding?

KRISTA

I'm sorry honey-

MATT

(Interrupting)

Because he never really loved you.

CLAIRE

What's that supposed to mean?

MATT

It's... Nothing. It's nothing.

CLAIRE

You've always hated him, but you never told me why. Why does he get under your skin so much?

MATT

Because he cheated on you Claire. He was hooking up with another girl while he was still stringing you on after like 2 years and I confronted him... You deserve better. We fought... I punched him... And he punched me back.

Claire and Krista both gasp in shock.

CLAIRE

What are you talking about? When?

MATT

Junior year. That week you thought he was pulling away? He was. Because he was seeing someone else and didn't have the balls to tell you.

Rebecca comes storming up to them.

REBECCA
What the hell is going on?

MATT
You want your perfect wedding
night, Rebecca? Maybe you shouldn't
have invited him.

He gestures toward Luke who is now approaching.

MATT (CONT'D)
The guy who wrecked Claire and
walked away without a scratch.

CLAIRE
Oh my god.

LUKE
Jesus, Matt, are we really doing
this right now?

REBECCA
This is MY wedding! Are you really
making it about yourselves right
now?

LUKE
I didn't fucking cheat. I just-

KRISTA
(Interrupting)
Matt why did you care so much?

REBECCA
Ohh your precious little Matt isn't
so precious huh.

LUKE
Rebecca-

KRISTA
(Interrupting)
What the fuck do you have to say?

CLAIRE
Everyone, please!

REBECCA
Oh come onnnn. Matt's in love with
Claire! Since day one!

KRISTA

What?!

MATT

Are you kidding me?!

REBECCA

That's why he lost his little temper when Luke was talking to a girl when him and Claire were not even exclusive by the way.

Krista storms off and Matt follows calling after her.

CLAIRE

Krista, wait!

REBECCA

Now can we get back to my night?!

She storms off back inside.

CLAIRE

Jesus Christ.

Claire takes a breathe and collects herself.

LUKE

It's pretty obvious he's always wanted you Claire.

CLAIRE

No. Nothing from you.

She steps toward him pointing at him.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

I have to go find Krista.

Claire storms off in the direction Krista went.

EXT. HOTEL GROUNDS - NIGHT

Claire hurries along the edge of the patio around the corner, the twinkly lights behind her growing faint. She spots them sitting on the steps to the golf course. Krista sitting on the bottom stair, knees pulled to her chest, mascara streaked. Matt crouched beside her, speaking low.

KRISTA

(sobbing)

I just feel so fucking stupid.

MATT

You're not. You're not stupid,
Krista.

Claire sees them and slows, hesitant.

CLAIRE

Krista—

Krista's head jerks up.

KRISTA

Don't.

CLAIRE

I didn't know. I swear I didn't
know.

KRISTA

But you didn't stop it either.

CLAIRE

There was nothing to stop! I didn't
do anything.

KRISTA

Exactly. You never do. You just...
wait for things to fall apart and
then act shocked when they do. Or!
Better yet, you don't even wait
long enough for them to fall apart.
You just end anything good that
comes your way just so you can
complain about it later.

Claire blinks, jaw slightly open.

MATT

Krista.

KRISTA

Just—go back to your tragic love
triangle. I don't want to be part
of it.

Krista pushes herself up and walks quickly toward the side
path to the front of the hotel. Matt hesitates a beat, looks
at Claire, then follows after her.

Claire stands there for a moment, completely alone.

Then she turns and walks back towards the inside of the
venue.

INT. HOTEL BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

Claire steps back inside. The music has picked up.

A WAITER walks by with a tray of champagne flutes. Claire grabs one and knocks it back in a single go.

She wipes her mouth and tosses the empty glass back onto the tray.

She scans the room. Luke stands in the corner, whispering something to his date, who giggles and touches his shoulder. Claire winces and turns away.

Across the dance floor, Rebecca is spinning in a circle with her sorority friends, singing in unison.

Claire watches for a beat. Then blinks hard, sets her jaw, and walks to the door.

She exhales sharply, steadies herself, then walks toward the door.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - NIGHT

Claire walks down a quiet, residential street, her heels swinging from her hand.

The buzz of the city hums around her - distant sirens, the occasional rumble of a subway beneath the pavement, cabs honking.

She passes bodegas and bars filled with groups of people laughing and drinking.

Nobody looks at her.

She crosses an empty intersection without waiting for the light. A biker whizzes closely past, not even glancing at her.

Claire hugs herself tighter and keeps walking.

She passes a neon deli sign flickers overhead. A garbage bag tips into the gutter beside her.

She passes a row of parked cars, her reflection flashing and warping in the windows.

She looks up. Her apartment building glows dimly at the end of the block.

Claire picks up her pace.

INT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Claire pushes the door open quietly and steps inside. The apartment is dark except for the soft blue glow of a streetlight leaking through the windows.

She kicks off her shoes and drops her purse by the door without looking.

Claire walks into the living room and sinks onto the couch, elbows on her knees, face buried in her hands.

At first, she's silent. Just breathing heavy.

Then the first sob escapes.

She presses her palms harder against her face. Tears spill over as her shoulders start to shake. Claire pulls her knees to her chest, curling into herself.

The city moves outside her window.

Claire cries harder, muffling the sound into her sleeves.

Claire stays curled up for a long moment, sniffing quietly into the silence.

Finally, she lifts her head. Her cheeks are streaked with tears, her eyes swollen and raw.

She takes a long, shaky breath and sits up straighter, planting her feet firmly on the floor.

Her hands rest on her knees, gripping tightly for a second like she's steadying herself.

She stands up and walks to her room.

INT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Claire walks back into the kitchen, makeup and hair in disarray, wearing a pajama set covered in little planes flying through clouds.

She fills up a glass of water and walks back past the door towards her room.

Just as she passes the door she hears knocking and stops in her tracks.

Without thinking she rushes to open the door.

She flings open the door and Luke is standing there with a worried look on his face.

LUKE
We need to talk.

She stands there staring at him with wide eyes. Hand
trembling on the doorway.

CUT TO BLACK.