

Sentimental Interlude

By

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FADE IN

INT. - GLORIA'S OFFICE AREA - DAY

GLORIA MORRISON, 23 years old petite with curly brown hair, sits at her rather drab, uneventful desk. The office is clinical and cold, the worst place to be for Gloria's mood.

Gloria sits facing her computer, her window to the world, while at work. She types unenthusiastically, mechanically almost before finishing her sentence and staring again at her computer. She pulls her phone from her purse and pulls up the contact screen for Mark.

WE BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

CUT TO

INT. - GLORIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Gloria is energetically pulling books, wiping shelves, and generally reorganizing her bookcase in her living room. The living room is cozy and warm. Her phone rings, she expects it to be Mark and sets her books down to answer it.

GLORIA

Hello.

BEN

(O.S.)

Gloria?

GLORIA

Oh hey Ben, what's up?

BEN

I- I have some bad news.

A sudden concerned look crosses Gloria's face.

GLORIA

What's is it Ben?

BEN

(O.S.)

Well the reason I'm calling is--

GLORIA

--Yes?

(CONTINUED)

BEN

Gloria, there was a fire at the plant Mark was visiting this evening.

Subdued hysteria gradually takes hold of Gloria.

GLORIA

Oh. Well was Mark hurt? Which hospital is he at? What the hell was he doing at a plant this late?

WE BEGIN FLASHBACK WITHIN FLASHBACK

INT. GLORIA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gloria stands in the kitchen wearing an apron and cutting vegetables. MARK FRANJU, tall, dark and handsome wearing an apron also, is at the stove making chicken.

BEN

(V.O.)

Well, the department was having a special training on handling some new lab chemicals, you know for the new science classes Mark was set to start teaching next semester.

GLORIA

(V.O.)

And then?!

BEN

(V.O.)

There was a spill and fire happened. Gloria--Mark's dead. I'm sorry.

Gloria sets down her knife and grabs the open bottle of wine sitting on the counter and drinks directly from it. Mark sees her and smiles while flipping the chicken on the stovetop. Gloria sets the wine bottle back down and grabs a lighter for the candle sitting behind her. She lights it.

END OF FLASHBACK WITHIN FLASHBACK

INT. - GLORIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

A sudden morose icy veneer has coated Gloria's face.

TOM

(O.S.)

Gloria? Gloria, his mom and I are handling everything, so please don't worry about a thing.

GLORIA

Thank you for calling Ben.

BEN

(O.S.)

Is there anything I can do for you?

GLORIA

No thank you. I'll be all right. Goodbye, Ben. Wait, can you give Sylvia a hug for me?

TOM

(O.S.)

Of course, goodnight Gloria.

Gloria hangs up her phone and sets it down. She continues tidying her bookcase with an emotionless face. While lifting a stack of books to their shelf, Gloria is overcome and drops the books and bursts into tears.

END OF FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

CUT TO

INT. - GLORIA'S OFFICE AREA - DAY

Gloria presses the message button to Mark and begins typing:

IT'S BEEN SIX MONTHS AND I STILL WAIT FOR YOU TO COME HOME

Gloria sends the text.

CUT TO

INT. GLORIA'S KITCHEN - DAY

In the kitchen, which is noticeably sparser and colder than the earlier flashback, Gloria pulls a measuring cup from the cupboard, eggs from the fridge, and places a pan on the burner. She cracks the eggs into the cup and begins stirring

(CONTINUED)

them. Right after, she grabs her phone and dials Yvette. She continues to cook the eggs.

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Yes.

GLORIA

What are you doing?

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Oh shit, how are you love? Sorry I didn't look to see who this was.

GLORIA

I'm good--

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Oh I'm at the bank, have to take out some money before vacation girl.

GLORIA

Where ya going?

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Back up to New York for the week. How's things with you?

GLORIA

Holding on I guess.

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Holding on? To what?

GLORIA

To my wits.

YVETTE

(O.S.)

That doesn't sound too promising. Are you sure you're okay?

GLORIA

I'm fine, some days are good, some not so much.

(CONTINUED)

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Oh my my my my my, Gloria. Why
don't you come see me next month.
You haven't been to Charlotte and
I'm dying to see you.

Gloria pulls the eggs from the pan and puts them on the
plates that were waiting. She continues speaking to Yvette
and places them on the table before sitting down to eat.

GLORIA

I don't know Yvette.

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Well I do know. The answer you're
looking for is yes. 'Yes Yvette,
I'm free the second weekend next
month to come have a ball with you,
my dear friend.'

GLORIA

Yes Yvette, I'm free the second
weekend of next month to come have
a ball with you, my dear friend.

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Oh goodie. I'm marking it right
now. Have to run into the bank now.

GLORIA

Well it was good to hear your
voice. I'll talk to you in a few
days.

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Bye bye love.

GLORIA

Bye.

Gloria hangs up the phone and picks up her fork. She almost
immediately notices her fluke with the extra plate.

GLORIA

(shouting)

Goddamn it!

Gloria thrusts the extra plate from the table, it smashes on the ground beside the table. After a second, Gloria rises and picks her own plate up and tossing it into the trash. She walks to the cabinet, opens it to reveal her medicine. She takes two pills and pops them.

CUT TO

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

In the uncharacteristically well-lit restaurant, Gloria sits with YVETTE MOORE, beautiful, statuesque, vapid. They have yet to be greeted by their server.

GLORIA
Where is the --

YVETTE
If that dude doesn't get over here
soon I'll scream.

Gloria is unaffected by this crass comment, as she has known Yvette's nature for years.

GLORIA
I'm sure he'll be right over.

YVETTE
Still so polite after all these
years... cute Gloria.

Yvette spots a server.

YVETTE
(loudly)
Are you our waiter?

Now Gloria becomes meekly embarrassed.

GLORIA
Yvette, don't be rude.

Yvette is unaffected by the weak demand of Gloria.

SERVER
Yes, ma'am. How are you two ladies
tonight?

YVETTE
Better once we get ahold of two
double seven and seven's.

(CONTINUED)

GLORIA

Oh, Yvette! I don't know--

Yvette shoots Gloria the dirtiest of looks.

YVETTE

Relax. And bring us each a shot,
straight up no chaser.

SERVER

Of seven?

GLORIA

(suddenly emboldened)
Of Tanqueray.

YVETTE

Welly welly well well well. Look
who knows how to drink. Sophomore
Gloria, it's been too too long.

GLORIA

I'm not as polite as it seems, it
would seem.

The waiter is still standing next to the table.

YVETTE

Well I guess it's the ladies
choice. And, um, bring us an order
of calamari.

SERVER

We don't have calamari, ma'am.

YVETTE

Oh well than I guess just the
drinks.

The server walks off to fetch the drinks.

GLORIA

You do bring out the worst in me.

YVETTE

Bitch, please. Don't act like
college didn't happen.

GLORIA

Things change Mama.

YVETTE

(semi-touched)

Oh, breaking out the pet names. How sweet. But seriously Bagel, how are things? You look good tonight.

Gloria laughs at her old pet-name.

GLORIA

Thanks. Things are ok. It's just hard ya know? Mark is really sweet.

YVETTE

I can see how it's hard, you're holding it together remarkably well... But Gloria, Mark was really sweet. In memory he is still, but Glo, baby he's gone.

GLORIA

Well obviously I know he's gone. I climb into the bed alone each night don't I?

YVETTE

Christ, that must be awful!

GLORIA

You can't even imagine.

YVETTE

I'm sorry Gloria. I know how hard it must be.

Suddenly, Gloria becomes aggitated and quickly wants the subject to change.

GLORIA

Look lets just change the subject.

The server returns with their shots and drinks. The two raise their shots for a toast.

YVETTE

To us.

GLORIA

To us.

They clink glasses and down their shots.

FADE TO

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Gloria and Yvette have finished their dinners and drinks. The drinks, heavier than the dinners are working on the petite women, when the previous conversation subject is brought back up.

YVETTE

So Bagel, any new interests on the horizon?

GLORIA

Oh, no works been kinda ehh lately.

YVETTE

Oh come on love, I'm not talking about work. It's been a few months, I'm talking about your masculine situation.

GLORIA

Like what do you mean? Sex?

YVETTE

(alarmingly loud)
Ding ding ding sister!

GLORIA

Oh Yvette! Nothing like that. I haven't even thought of it.

YVETTE

Well you should. Think of it, act on it. Thank me later.

GLORIA

Mark died.

YVETTE

Did you? I know Mark was special, but he's gone and you're here. In the immortal words of Elizabeth Taylor: 'He's dead and I'm alive. What do you expect me to do, sleep alone?' Only you in this case.

Now Gloria is mildly sobered up by her anger.

GLORIA

Are you serious?!? Mark was my life. Do you have any idea what it's like to build a life and then watch it literally fucking burn?!

(CONTINUED)

YVETTE

Look, Gloria, all I'm saying is you're alive. I'm not doubting your love for Mark. Everybody saw it, you two were soulmates. But his soul is... elsewhere. You're here, live a little, you don't have to forget him, but life goes on. You can meet someone else.

Gloria is now both shocked and angry.

GLORIA

Oh, like you? What's your number now? 25? 45? 100? What do you know about love and soulmates? All you do is sleep with men till you bleed them dry like a goddamned vampire! The meaning of love is lost on you without a diamond bracelet to seal the deal. Temporarily!

Yvette is triumphantly maintaining her composure.

YVETTE

I may not have had one true soulmate who would hoist me onto his white horse and ride off into the sunset with but at least I'm not a twenty-three year old little girl living in a Disney movie! Ok Snow White?

Gloria seizes up at this harsh appraisal, she throws some bills on the table and stands.

GLORIA

Enjoy your penthouse and furs. I hope they keep you warm during your dying days, which I'm sure you'll enjoy spending alone!

Gloria starts to walk away.

YVETTE

They sure will keep me warm. And I'll sparkle in my diamonds. Have a nice night Old Maid!

Gloria makes no response to this comment, she swiftly continues toward the door.

CUT TO

INT. GLORIA'S CAR - NIGHT

Gloria sits in her car, parked in front of her apartment building. She has her head in her hands, leaning on the steering wheel. She is crying when she pulls her head up and looks over to the passenger seat where Mark appears to be sitting looking over at her.

MARK

You know she's right.

GLORIA

Don't tell me that. I don't think about anyone else but you.

MARK

I know. But I'm gone. You need to move on. I hate that you make yourself a shrine to me.

Gloria begins to choke up at this estimation of herself, and puts her head back down on the steering wheel.

GLORIA

Christ! You're not even here. I'm going insane.

MARK

I'm always here.

Gloria lifts her head and looks back over to the passenger seat, which is now empty. She closes her eyes tightly.

CUT TO.

INT. GLORIA'S BATHROOM- DAY

Gloria is standing in front of her bathroom mirror brushing her hair.

YVETTE

(V.O.)

Live a little... You can meet someone else.

Gloria thinks about this for a moment before finishing her hair and moving on to her brushing her teeth.

YVETTE

(V.O.)

He's dead and I'm alive. Only you.

(CONTINUED)

Gloria continues brushing and spots Mark's black comb. She picks it up with her free hand and stares at it momentarily.

YVETTE

(V.O.)

Think on it, act on it. Thank me later.

Gloria tosses the comb in the trash and spits in the sink.

CUT TO

INT. GLORIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gloria is walking around her room in her bra and panties, black of course. She is going from closet to vanity table. Constantly checking herself in the mirror, then sifting through clothes, then adjusting her hair. After a few moments she grabs her phone and dials Yvette. After a beat Yvette answers snarkily.

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Sorry did you forget to call me a slore or something?

GLORIA

Hey. I'm sorry.

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Oh is it the apologetic episode now?

Gloria is now made to feel guilty.

GLORIA

Yvette! I'm sorry. You just really pissed me off. Let's move on.

YVETTE

Is that all you called me for, to apologize-- Bagel?

Sudden relief washes over Gloria's face and her tone shifts to bubbly.

GLORIA

Actually Mama, I think I'm taking your advice.

(CONTINUED)

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Oh you're going to relive your junior year, only with better outfits!

GLORIA

Well no, nothing that extreme. But I'm going out tonight.

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Congratulations! What are you wearing?

GLORIA

Well, uh- I was thinking about this little black dress. You know, keep it classy.

Gloria stands in front of the vanity table and pulls her sweating whiskey sour from it, taking a large sip.

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Owww and some red lipstick. A classy old-fashioned look. Be sure to wear ankle straps, you know what they mean.

Gloria chokes lightly on her drink and coughs.

GLORIA

Jesus. You sound like a misogynist girl!

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Be sure to leave that coy act at home tonight or the ankle straps will do nothing. The men like those.

GLORIA

You would know.

YVETTE

(O.S.)

Exactly. So take my advice, toss the hair up, skirt lightly above the knee, red lipstick, light on any other makeup.

(CONTINUED)

Gloria has now taken a sip directly from the whiskey bottle, she cringes at the taste.

GLORIA
Ok, well I'm gonna shower now.

YVETTE
(O.S.)
Call me tomorrow. If you go to call before noon, I'll know that there's no story to tell and won't answer love.

GLORIA
Bye Mama.

YVETTE
(O.S.)
Night Bagel.

Gloria hangs up the phone and decisively grabs a classy, yet sexy little black dress from her closet and lays it on the bed. She grabs her drink and walks into the bathroom.

CUT TO

INT. BAR ROOM - NIGHT

Into the seedy, almost empty, dim bar walks Gloria, her liquid courage concealing her unease. She walks over to the bar-top and takes a seat. The ragged bartender comes to take her order.

BARTENDER
What'll it be? Say you're new aren't ya?

GLORIA
(coily)
Why yes. I'll have a whiskey sour.

The bartender mixes her drink and sets it in front of her.

BARTENDER
Here ya go.

GLORIA
Thanks.

(CONTINUED)

The bartender departs to the other end of the bar where a twosome awaits. Gloria watches him walk down the line and stares for a second. She lifts her drink and begins to sip, placing it back on the counter and looking sporadically around the barroom.

FADE TO

INT. BAR ROOM - NIGHT

Gloria has finished her drink and placed it on the table with a disappointed look on her face. It appears she is about to cash-out when an attractive man, RYAN, walks up to her stool without her noticing until he is standing right next to her. She is lightly startled when he speaks.

RYAN
Hello pretty lady.

GLORIA
(mildly tipsy)
Hello tall, dark, and... handsome.

RYAN
You new here? I've never seen you before.

GLORIA
Oh are you here alot? Tsk, tsk, tsk!

RYAN
(taken aback)
Oh, I'm sorry if you though--

GLORIA
I'm only playing.

They share a laugh.

RYAN
Well, uh, can I take a seat?

GLORIA
Sure.

Ryan sits in the stool next to her.

RYAN
The name's Ryan.

(CONTINUED)

GLORIA
I'm Gloria.

RYAN
Nice to meet you Pretty Gloria.

GLORIA
Nicer to meet you Handsome Ryan.

The bartender has returned.

RYAN
I'll have-

GLORIA
Two whiskey sours. Use the Jameson.
He's paying.

Ryan is not in the least soured on this.

RYAN
What she said.

BARTENDER
Sure.

The bartender mixes their drinks and places them on the table.

GLORIA
So, Ryan, tell me all about
yourself?

RYAN
Oh no, I was raised proper. Ladies
first.

GLORIA
Oh, we'll get to that.

They both smile to each other at her double entendre.

FADE TO

INT. BAR ROOM - NIGHT

Some time has passed, the now more acquainted pair continue their chatter, and their drinks (several empty glasses are on the bartop), with much laughter throughout their conversation.

(CONTINUED)

GLORIA

--no, no, no. So I threw a book at her when she turned back to the chalk board.

RYAN

And then?

GLORIA

Oh she turned around and her short little ugly haircut was like stuck to the back of her sweaty neck and she like started barking 'Who threw that' and her hair was like shaking like it was attached at the bottom of her neck and like gross.

She uses her hands to demonstrate. Raucous laughter soon erupts from both of them. Gloria's eyes catch a glimpse of Mark at the end of the bar. She falls silent.

RYAN

Whoa, you ok?

GLORIA

Yea, could you excuse me a second. I have to pop over to the ladies room.

RYAN

Sure.

GLORIA

Be right back.

Gloria swiftly walks over to the ladies room at the other end of the barroom.

CUT TO

INT. LADIES ROOM - NIGHT

Gloria stands in front of the mirror of the squalid bathroom. The overhead light flickers mildly while Gloria pats her face with water and takes several deep breaths. After a few seconds, the surely VALERIE enters brandishing an unlit cigarette and a sweating mixed drink with a small umbrella and straw.

VALERIE

Hey!!!

(CONTINUED)

GLORIA

Oh Hi, I--

VALERIE

That guy Ryan, go home with him.

Her brazen nature, which could make Yvette blush, shocks the shaken Gloria.

GLORIA

(uncomfortably)

Excuse me.

VALERIE

Oh sorry, I'm Valerie.

She stretches out a hand to Gloria, who hesitantly shakes it.

GLORIA

(with unease)

I'm Gloria.

VALERIE

So that guy, how's that going, what's he told you. You gonna fuck him?

GLORIA

Well that's really none of your--

VALERIE

Oh sister, I noticed you when you came in. I said 'Check that dress, she's in the neighborhood for some fun.' Good choice, he's really hot.

Suddenly Gloria is mildly OK with this whole conversation, still apprehensive toward the stranger though.

GLORIA

He is really good looking isn't he? You sound like my friend Yvette.

VALERIE

Well whoever this Yvette is, she's probably got your best interests at heart. You're not like new at this are you?

GLORIA

What, sex? No.

(CONTINUED)

VALERIE

Then go out there, and plant a hot juicy kiss right on his mouth. Assert yourself girl. Just don't use any tongue... yet.

GLORIA

You really think so?

VALERIE

I don't think. I know.

Gloria is emboldened by this advice, and it shows in her face.

GLORIA

Alright. I'm doing it.

Valerie suddenly turns into a "Woohoo girl" and let's out a woohoo.

VALERIE

Get it!

VALERIE

Hey, do you have a lighter? I totally disconnected the smoke detector in here.

GLORIA

I don't smoke.

Gloria doesn't wait for a response before walking out.

CUT TO

INT. BAR ROOM - NIGHT

Gloria walks back toward her section of the bar, spotting another vision of Mark. She remains confident and strides right up to Ryan. He is startled when she speaks into his ear.

GLORIA

I have returned.

RYAN

Glad to see you made it back safely.

(CONTINUED)

GLORIA

Yea, it was pretty treacherous in there.

The bartender returns.

BARTENDER

Still doin' good over here guys?

RYAN

Yeah buddy---

GLORIA

Bring us each a shot of Maker's.

BARTENDER

Right away.

GLORIA

And the tab.

The bartender mixes the drinks.

RYAN

Oh are we finished?

GLORIA

Not till after these shots.

The bartender sits down the shots and goes to print the ticket. Ryan and Gloria pound their shots and slam them on the table. Swiftly, Gloria leans into Ryan and plants the most seductive and alcohol soaked kiss on his mouth. He is mildly taken aback, but he quickly composes himself.

GLORIA

Now we're finished.

CUT TO:

INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The drunken, heated, and stumbling pair burst through Gloria's front door in the heat of the moment. A hurricane of heavy petting and sloppy kisses making a beeline for the bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. GLORIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

They fall on the bed and continue their make-out with ferociousness. Gloria animalistically tears off Ryan's shirt, who in turn pulls down her zipper and lowers the top half of her dress. Gloria goes wild and the pair lay back on the bed again. Ryan begins kissing down Gloria's chest. She is enthralled but looks over to see Mark staring at her. She nearly leaps off the bed.

GLORIA
Oh my god!

RYAN
What the fuck?!

The neurotic Gloria barely attempts to contain herself.

GLORIA
You... You have to leave.

RYAN
Seriously.

GLORIA
I'm sorry.

RYAN
Save it.

Ryan grabs his shirt and pulls it back on while he walks out. Gloria stands there, disshevelled and shaking.

RYAN
(O.S.)
Next time don't drink so much. The
next guy might not be so
understanding. Bitch.

The door slams in the other room. Gloria begins shaking more. She rapidly makes her way into the kitchen.

CUT TO:

INT. GLORIA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gloria stumbles into the counter and opens her medicine cabinet pulling her medicine. She opens the bottle shakily, and takes a few deep breathes before popping a handful in her mouth. Several moments and more deep breathes later, she is calmer. She spots a picture of Mark on the counter and does both a smile and a sigh. Gloria walks back into her bedroom.

(CONTINUED)

CUT TO:

INT. GLORIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gloria, resigned to die, daintily peels off the rest of her dress and slips into a white nightgown. She climbs under her covers and puts her head on her pillow. She closes her eyes.

Sometime later, Mark arises from the bed and goes over to open the shades, flooding the room with light. The light awakens Gloria. Ungrogily, she looks over at Mark by the window.

MARK

Good morning, beautiful.

A beaming smile and warmth covers Gloria's face.

GLORIA

Good morning.

She continues to look at Mark and smile.

FADE OUT.

THE END