

OBSESSION

FROM THE MIND OF CURRY BARKER

2 OVER BLACK

2

BEAR (v.o.)
Ever since... you're the only
person I've ever- God I don't talk
to people like this. I'm so sorry
this is so weird...

3 INT. DINER - AFTERNOON

3

The diner glows - rich, colorful, saturated. It feels like we're in Bear's world now. We're locked dead-center on him. In the foreground, just her shoulder - a woman sitting across from him.

WOMAN
No, It's ok.

BEAR
I feel like I'm coming apart. I
think about you all the time,
Nikki. Even when I try not to.
Especially when I try not to.
You're in every song I listen to.
You were the only person nice to me
when I moved here. And at first I
thought maybe you... Well I
realized who you are. And after
Nana passed, you were the one that
called. Even when I didn't have
anything to say and we just sat
there. So I kept telling myself
"Don't tell her. She's too good and
She'll leave." But maybe you should
know. Maybe you should know that
I'd choose you over everything...

We finally cut to her. She's as beautiful as the feelings demand. Her eyes shimmer - moved, almost overwhelmed.

BEAR (CONT'D)
And I just needed you to know
before I fell all the way apart.

WOMAN
Awww, that's everything.

IAN
NO! Ok stop! That was way too
much dude. That was cringy!

Ian sits at the end of the table, quietly judging. We realize the woman we thought was Nikki is just a waitress. The diner looks different now – colors drained.

BEAR (CONT'D)

Oh my god, I knew it! I'm so sorry.

WAITRESS

I thought it was sweet.

IAN

That was gross, Ok this time-

BEAR

I'm not doing it again! Dude this is so fucking embarrassing.

Bear buries his head.

IAN

Yeah! That would freak anyone- that freaked ME out. Nikki would vomit.

BEAR

You *told* me to pour my heart out!
You know how vulnerable I just
GOT?!

IAN

I underestimated you.

WAITRESS

Get her something nice.

IAN

What?! No! No don't get her
anything! Dude you gotta be way
less sappy with Nikki she won't
like that shit.

BEAR

So what should I say then.

IAN (v.o.)

Just, make it obvious there's
feelings.

WAITRESS

Flowers, a candy she said she
liked.

A beat.

IAN
(to waitress)
Ok, ok. Thank you.

WAITRESS
What?

IAN
Thank you.

WAITRESS
You want me to go?

IAN
If you want, yeah.

WAITRESS
Oh ok...

As the waitress gets up to leave.

BEAR
I am so sorry he called you
over here. I'm so-

WAITRESS
It's ok! You're ok! Fun break
honestly.

BEAR
Jesus dude that was so
uncomfortable, never make me- That
was so weird. Can we leave.

IAN
Well thank god I did it. That was
awful. Just- have you every
actually flirted with Nikki? Invite
romance.

BEAR
Invite romance?

IAN
Tease her. Girls like when you're
playfully mean to them.

BEAR
Be mean?

IAN
Playfully mean, yeah. Bring up,
Freaky Nikki!

BEAR

Freaky Nikki? She's sensitive about that?

IAN

It's been years. Say remember when you were bullied and everyone called you Freaky Nikki? She'll be like "Oh my gawd stop, that was so long ago."

BEAR

(skeptical)

And that will, like... take her breath away?

IAN

(understanding)

Just- Say Nikki, I think we should grab a drink sometime.

BEAR

We have "grabbed drinks sometime." Multiple times. *You knew* I was trying to do this tonight! I ask you guys *one time* not to come to trivia!

IAN

You can't ask her out at trivia dude! I won't let you!

BEAR

Its a good organic time to ask!

IAN

Dude, I love trivia night. It's all I have! I wake up every Wednesday rock-hard thinking about trivia night. You're gonna ruin it!

Bear still cant get over the embarrassment.

BEAR

God, I can't get over how dumb I just looked...

IAN (V.O.)

You can't turn our weekly gathering of camaraderie and skill into your 7-year late prom-posal.

BEAR

Then when could I do it!

IAN
Any other time!! All you have is
TIME! Dude, if she means this much
to you and I know she does, do it
right.

BEAR
Ok. I'll wait. I'll do it right.

Bear thinks about this.

IAN
Allllll you have is time.

4 **INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER**

4

Bear opens the front door and instantly recoils—something smells awful. He follows his nose through the house. The living room TV was left on.

An infomercial plays in the background, promising instant gratification.

A voice repeats: "Limited time only. Time is running out."

Under the coffee table is a dead cat. His dead cat. He checks the cats breath.

BEAR
Awww man. Noooo.

Bear drops to his knees. Tears slip down his face before he even notices.

BEAR
(pain)
Noooo noooo... Sandy...

5 **INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

5

Countertops cluttered with junk. On the tile floor: A straw basket has toppled over. A cracked pill bottle where some spilt pills have made its way into the cats food bowl. Bear scoops the pills back into their bottle reluctantly. ITS CLEAR THE CAT GOT INTO THE PILLS.

6 **INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

6

The coffee table's been shoved aside.

Bear, wearing rubber gloves and holding his shirt over his nose, opens a trash bag over the cat's body. He cries as he lifts the now-heavy bag and drops it into the trash can.

On his hands and knees, he scrubs grease and wax out of the carpet.

7 **INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS** 7

Bear opens the medicine cabinet. He puts a pill bottle inside. The label says Barbra. He shuts the mirror.

8 **INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER** 8

TITLE: OBSESSION on the bed. Illuminated only by a warm lamp behind him, sits on the edge of his bed, crying. His voice crying heavily.

CUT TO:

Bear sits on his bed, scrolling through Instagram. Sad.

It's dark in his room. Only the glow of his phone. Bear is ready for bed... or death. Photos of Nikki fill his feed - hot, confident, full of life. Working on her book, posing with crystals, volunteering at a homeless shelter.

Then his phone rings - Nikki. He flips on a lamp, brightening the room. Answers quickly, forcing a smile.

BEAR

Hey!

NIKKI

Oh my god, you are so lucky you weren't scheduled today!

BEAR

Oh yeah?

Her voice makes Bear smile.

NIKKI

Oh my god, I'll tell you about it tonight. It was soooo fucked. What time are you showing up?

A beat. Bear sits in the dim room, still wrecked.

BEAR

I don't know if I'm gonna make it tonight...

NIKKI
Awwwww noooooo! Bear! I wanted to
see you tonight!

Bear cheers up a-little. Wipes his face.

BEAR
Yeah... I mean, I guess I could
move some things around.

NIKKI
Move that shit around! You know
Ryan's moving *next week*? We gotta
beat these fuckers before they
leave.

Bear looks over at his dead cats Collar...

BEAR
That's next week?

NIKKI
Yeah! Running out of time Bear.
This is the week.

A beat. "Running out of time" hits Bear hard.

NIKKI
Hello?

BEAR
(snapping back)
Yeah. I'm in.

NIKKI
Oh Shit! Fuck! God damn it!

BEAR
Are you ok?

NIKKI
No, I just dropped my crystal
necklace down the fucking drain.

BEAR
Oh damn, I'm sorry.

NIKKI
Nooooooo. It's gone!

Bear thinks.

SMASH CUT TO:

9

INT. CRYSTAL SHOP - NIGHT

9

Crystals, witchcraft books, and incense. A thrifty "mom and pop" shop. Bear aimlessly shops, wearing an Oxford button-up and khakis. He cleans up nicely.

VIOLA (O.S.)
Wow, why would she say that?
We're closing soon. If you need
help with anything, let me know.

BEAR
Well actually, do you have crystal
necklaces?

Bear continues to peruse.

VIOLA (O.S.)
Yes, let me show you.

The hipster clerk walks over, VIOLA, 29, right out of Woodstock.

An awkward beat while they look at each other.

VIOLA
(at Bear)
No way! That's crazy!

BEAR
What!? What?

Viola motions she's on the phone. One AirPods in.

VIOLA
This is all we have. Each of these
stones kinda holds their own unique
energies and stuff. Like, this
amethyst is for calmness and
clarity, and the rose quartz
attracts love and shit.

BEAR
Wow, thanks. What's one that's
like, good energy or good vibes?

Bear tries to match the clerk's energy.

VIOLA
That would probably be the citrine.
It's like sunshine in a rock.

BEAR
Okay, cool... cool. Thanks.

The hipster walks off.

VIOLA (O.S.)
Let me know if there's anything
else.

Bear scans the crystals, grabbing a few. **We hear Viola ramble on the phone in the back.**

His eyes shift to a lonely shelf just over to the right. Its aged and out-of-place appearance stands out.

The sign reads: "Grab your One Wish Willow!" Only a few scattered boxes remain. They're the size of a toothpaste box, featuring a design reminiscent of a classic 1950s toy package.

Bear grabs one. *"THE ONE WISH WILLOW. SPARK THE MIDDLE AND BREAK IT IN HALF!"* He flips it over. *"You only get one wish, so make it count!"* Bear smiles; *Nikki's gonna love this.*

10

INT. CRYSTAL SHOP - CHECK OUT - MOMENTS LATER

10

Bear approaches Viola.

Viola
No crystal?

BEAR
I like this.

VIOLA
Yeah, those have been popular since we brought 'em out. *Everybody wants a wish.*

Bear waits for a laugh. Nothing.

BEAR
(uncomfortable laugh)
Yeah... Well, it's not for me.

VIOLA
Don't come back here complaining.

An awkward beat.

BEAR
Yeah, I wouldn't— what do you mean?
People complain about these?

VIOLA

Well, they're kind of a collectible. Some people don't open them. The people who open them complain.

Nothing more.

BEAR

Because it's a scam and-

VIOLA

Hey man, we're not a scam!

BEAR

(confused)

No, I mean, why're they mad? Because it doesn't work, and they're like... angry at you?

VIOLA

Or whatever.

A long beat. Bear doesn't get the joke.

BEAR

(teasing)

Or it works, and they ruin their lives?

VIOLA

(deadpan)

Or they die, or they wish they were dead.

Bear laughs.

BEAR

(nervous)

Wow, you're good.

The clerk laughs for the first time while she rings him up.

VIOLA

Write a review. That's ten seventy-six.

BEAR

And I'm guessing these "*just* came in this morning? Mysteriously?"

VIOLA

No, we've had them.

BEAR
(egging on)
They've "been here forever? No idea
who supplied them?"

Bear's having fun jabbing. The hipster is not having it.

VIOLA
Recalled in the 90's. Suppliers in
Denmark.

BEAR
(smug)
Right...

VIOLA
Do you want to buy two? There
aren't many left.

Bear picks up his bag, walking off.

BEAR
(teasing)
And there's the up-sale! No, I'm
good.

VIOLA
As you wish.

BEAR
She's on fire! Let me guess, "Be
careful what you wish"-

VIOLA
(playful)
That's no fun.

Bear turns around to look at the clerk. She smiles very
still; Eerie.

BEAR.
(nervous laughter)
Alrighty. You need a raise.

VIOLA
(no, but seriously)
You *could* write a review and
mention my name.

11 INT. TRIVIA BAR - NIGHT

11

An upbeat retro bar, buzzing with trivia nerds. Bear sits with his best friends – Nikki, IAN, and Sarah. The focus stays tightly on Bear, not yet revealing his friends.

NIKKI (O.S.)

Have you ever been into a guitar center?!

NIKKI

They aren't ALL tuned!

SARAH

No, It's not about the guitars and you know that!

NIKKI (o.s.)

Those fucking teenagers trying to slap it like it's a bass?! And the shitty demo strings don't stay tuned!

SARAH (o.s.)

He's not expecting them to always be tuned! But if your working on your book or whatever while your on the clock it means you need something to do!

IAN (O.S.)

Ladies please.

NIKKI (o.s.)

Or it means Im so good at my job I got all my work done early!

SARAH

I know, But I have to go home and hear my dad complain about my friends all night. Im just asking you to at least make it look like your working.

NIKKI (o.s.)

Easy for you to say when your leaving for tattoo school.

Bear locks eyes with IAN, nodding firmly; Go.

WE CUT TO IAN.

IAN meets his gaze, shaking his head; No.

SARAH
It's art School. And I haven't
gotten in yet.

A beat.

IAN
I thought you got Luther?

SARAH
No, I said that's the one I want.
It's kinda competitive.

NIKKI
Oh... I'm sorry.

SARAH
It's ok. I still have a shot...

NIKKI
Good.

SARAH
I'm sorry too. I just don't want
you getting in trouble.

BEAR MOUTHS: DUDE C'MON.

NIKKI
Aww I know...I love you Babe.

SARAH
I love you too.

IAN MOUTHS: NOT HERE!

NIKKI
(re: mouthing)
What the *fuck* are you guys *doing*?

WE FINALLY CUT TO NIKKI.

	IAN	BEAR
Oh uh.		(saving it)
		Ian was fucking with me.

NIKKI
I look over and all I see is these
two-

Nikki mocks the boys, mouthing like an idiot as she gets up
from the table. Everyone laughs.

NIKKI
You know what, I'm getting shots.

SARAH
Yes queen!

BEAR
I'll come with you.

Bear shoots a look at IAN: *Checkmate.*

NIKKI
Yes! pray come.

Ian makes a face: *Don't you dare.*

12

INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

12

Nikki and Bear walk up to the bar. It's lively but still has those small-town vibes.

BARTENDER
Whatcha drinkin'?

NIKKI
Four shots of tequila, please.
(to Bear)
Anything else?

BEAR
Uhh, a Moscow Mule.

NIKKI
(ew)
And that...

BEAR
Don't judge my drink.

Nikki laughs.

NIKKI
What did you do all day, Bear?

Bear doesn't want to mention the cat yet.

BEAR
I got a lot of work done, actually.
Important stuff.

NIKKI
You watched TV.

BEAR
That's *all I did*.

They both laugh.

BEAR
Hey, so I was thinking—

BARTENDER
Gotta card for the shots?

Bear gets frustrated by the interruption – until he hears the question. Then, he jumps in, eager.

BEAR
Oh, I got it.

NIKKI
No, don't be weird. I offered.

Nikki hands her card over.

BEAR
You sure?

NIKKI
(grossed out)
Stop. Yes, I'm sure.

A beat.

BEAR
Anyway, this—

BARTENDER
Open or closed?

Bear holds back his annoyance.

NIKKI
Open, babe.

BEAR
So this might be stupid, but I got—

Then Ian pops up in the middle of them.

IAN
Guys, Sarah just told me her dad
has a gun in the break room safe.

Bear shoots Ian a sharp look.

NIKKI
Are you serious?

Ian returns the look.

IAN
(to Bear)
Dead serious.

NIKKI
What the fuck?! Shouldn't he
announce that to us or something?

IAN
Not if it's locked away.

NIKKI
I'm so sorry, Bear, what were you
saying?

BEAR
Well-

As Bear is about to answer, Sarah pops up.

SARAH
I didn't know we were *all* taking a
field trip to the bar?

Bear throws his hands up, like what the fuck? Just then, the
bartender slams down the shots.

IAN
What are we cheers-ing?

Bear thinks.

BEAR
To Sandy.

SARAH
What about Sandy?

TRIVIA GUY (O.S.)
*THANKS FOR COMING OUT TONIGHT TO
TRIVIA-*

The trivia guy keeps announcing, talking right over Bear as
he tries to speak.

IAN
Oh shit! C'mon, let's crush these
fuckers!

Ian and Nikki race back to the booth. Sarah stays at the bar, waiting to hear Bear's response.

BEAR
My cat died today.

SARAH
Really?

BEAR
Yeah.

Sarah grabs Bear, holding him close. We push in on Bear, his sadness bleeding through.

SARAH
I'm so sorry, Bear.

A beat. Bear tries to hold it in. Then, he breaks. He cries on Sarah's shoulder.

CUT TO:

13

EXT. TRIVIA BAR - PARKING LOT - LATER

13

The Gang walks into the parking lot, passing a homeless man. IAN, 25, leads the group.

IAN
Come on! We're going to Greedo's.

NIKKI
No, please! I want to go home.

IAN
You're saying no to Karaoke?

NIKKI
I'm tired.

IAN
Who's gonna dance when I Slim Shady
the entire joint?

NIKKI
WhOs GoNnA DaNcE WhEn I Slim sHaDy
tHe EnTiRe JoInt!?

Bear bursts out laughing at Nikki. She turns and playfully gives him an eye roll meant for Ian. It's effortlessly charming, and Bear's heart melts.

NIKKI
Sarah will sing, give me a G.

SARAH
(chubakka noise)
UUUUUUuuuuUUUU!

IAN
What the fuck was that?

Nikki and Sarah start laughing.

IAN
(playful)
See, Sarah sucks!

SARAH
(taken aback)
Wow.

Bear laughs. We now stay on Bear.

IAN (O.S)
It's true.

The moment slows down.

NIKKI (O.S)
Ian, I want to go home... I had a
long day.

IAN (O.S)
My car is headed to Greedo's,
Nikki.

NIKKI (O.S)
Please drop me off first.

Bear leaps at the opportunity, unable to hide his eagerness.

BEAR
I can drive you home.

Sarah's eyes dart to Bear, filled with disappointment.

NIKKI
Thank you.

IAN
(knowing look at Bear)
There-

SARAH
(begging)
No. Bear, you have to come.

Sarah playfully grabs Bear's arm.

BEAR

Fuck that! I'm too tired.

SARAH

(kind of kidding)

Ugh! Fuck you!

NIKKI

Do you guys have cash?

IAN

No.

Sarah pulls a 20 out of her purse.

SARAH

I mean, I have a twenty-

Nikki snatches it.

NIKKI

I'll Venmo you.

SARAH (O.S)

But you can't have it...

Nikki walks over to a homeless man sitting outside the bar.
She kneels and speaks to the man. Genuine concern.

We cut to Bear, who is so in love with Nikki in this moment.

SARAH (O.S.)

Great, just bought a guy's heroin
for the week.

IAN (O.S)

You *would* know the street price.

Nikki finally hands the man the 20-dollar bill.

NIKKI

Alright, Bear, let's go.

Ian hugs Nikki, and Sarah hugs Bear, giving him a flirty
squeeze after the embrace.

BEAR

Bye, guys. See you tomorrow
morning. Ian.

Bear and Ian exchange a dap. Ian points at Bear as they part
ways.

IAN

(to Bear)

Get your girl home safely.

NIKKI

Ew, don't say it like *that*.

Ian shoots Bear a look of defeat. Bear hides his disappointment.

14

INT. CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

14

Inside the cramped car, Nikki's intoxication becomes more obvious. She slurs her words, her gaze distant, her movements jerky.

NIKKI

I'm sorry about your cat, Baron.

BEAR

It's okay... I mean, it's not.

NIKKI

(soft)

Wanna talk about it?

A beat.

BEAR

Honestly, I'd rather just be distracted.

NIKKI

You'll be plenty distracted tomorrow.

BEAR

That bad?

NIKKI

Oh you have no idea. When did marching become so fucking popular?

BEAR

As soon as we left.

They both laugh, but Nikki's smile drops.

A beat.

NIKKI

I might quit.

Bear's surprised.

BEAR

Really..? Why?

NIKKI

I don't know. I'm just sad most days. I want to finish my book.

BEAR

Aren't you?

NIKKI

Yeah, kinda. I'm just not feeling... For every day I don't write, I feel like I'm failing. But every time I sit down to type, I wonder if it's even worth finishing at all. And then I wonder if I'm even a writer.

BEAR

You are!

NIKKI

How do you know?

BEAR

Because I've read your stuff. It's so good, Nikki.

NIKKI

You mean it?

BEAR

Yes. I do. I really really do.

NIKKI

I'm just not supposed to be at castles. I'm just not supposed to be there.

BEAR

What do you mean?

NIKKI

You ever feel like you're stuck in the wrong world? Like... you know what feels right, but that's not the reality you're in...

BEAR

Yeah. Exactly that.

NIKKI

Wow, I am just pouring it all out.

BEAR

No, it's ok!

NIKKI

I'm so sorry! And you just lost
your cat!

BEAR

No, it's ok! Really!

NIKKI

You know... You're the only person
I can talk to about this stuff.

BEAR

You are too.

NIKKI

Especially at work... I don't feel
like I'm talking to a brick wall.

BEAR

I like talking to you.

Nikki shifts, feeling a little weird.

NIKKI

Hey, what were you gonna tell me
earlier?

BEAR

Oh, I uh, I got you something.

Nikki's mood shifts. She's cautious now.

NIKKI

(blunt)
What?

BEAR

You'll see.

NIKKI

Ew, no! Why does that make me
nervous?

BEAR

(disappointed)
I don't know. That's an odd
reaction.

The car pulls into Nikki's driveway. A long, uncomfortable
beat. Bear's in his head, trying to figure out what to say to
keep his good fortune going.

NIKKI
You know, Sarah was asking about
you all day today.

Bear doesn't like this subject change.

NIKKI
How do you feel about that?

BEAR
(disappointed, polite)
You want to know if I like Sarah?

NIKKI
I'm asking you how you *feel* about
Sarah. And if you *were* to have a
crush on her... then that would be
how you feel about her.

Bear doesn't respond.

BEAR
I like her as a friend.

NIKKI
I figured, god she's so obvious.

BEAR
Yeah, she is.

NIKKI
When I have a crush on a guy, no
one knows.

Nikki gives Bear a look. What is she saying? She gets out of
the car.

16 INT/EXT. PARKED CAR - CONTINUOUS

16

Before she shuts the door:

BEAR
(desperate)
Nikki wait.

She bends down, peering through the car door opening. Almost
bothered.

BEAR
I wanted to tell you, uhm...

Nikki waits. Bear loses his courage.

BEAR
I lost my train of thought.

NIKKI
Silly Bear.

Nikki shuts the door. Bear quickly rolls down the window.

BEAR
(talking fast)
Remember in Mr. Lando's class when I forgot my mouthpiece? And he was in a pissy mood that day, but during scales, you told me you had an extra, so you gave me yours. But that was a lie. You only had one. So... instead, you just got in huge trouble-

NIKKI
Yeah, I remember.

Bear senses Nikki's not as sappy about this memory as he is.

BEAR
I was the weird new kid, but you always went out of your way for me, and not just me, for everyone-

NIKKI
Bear, Lando liked me; you were on thin ice.

Bear's speech is interrupted. He sits back in his disappointment.

NIKKI
Goodnight.

Ian was right about the sappy stuff; one final attempt.

BEAR
Alright, goodnight... *Freaky Nikki*.

Nikki gives Bear a disgusted look.

NIKKI
Ew! Don't call me that.

BEAR
(chuckles nervously)
I'm just kidding.

Bear maintains a fake smile.

NIKKI
Bear, you know I don't like that.

BEAR
I know. I'm sorry.

Nikki thinks.

NIKKI
(blunt)
Do you like me?

BEAR
(shocked, scared)
What?

NIKKI
Do you have feelings for me?
Sometimes I feel like you like me.

BEAR
Nikki, no!

NIKKI
If you have feelings for me, now is
your chance to tell me.

Bear is uncomfortable. He has to lie.

BEAR
Nicky... we're *friends*?

A beat. Is she upset?

NIKKI
(cold)
Okay, good. Goodnight.

The car door shuts, and Bear's expression falls, shoulders slumping. He watches Nikki enter her house and close the door behind her, pain washing over him.

BEAR
Fuck. Fuck.

A long beat. Bear reaches into his backpack in the back seat and pulls out the ONE WISH WILLOW. Seeing it, he laughs, he feels so stupid for buying this.

Then he glances at Nikki's empty porch and opens the box – Pop! A spark lights the stick, and a musical jingle plays. The box drops into his backpack, prompting another laugh.

BEAR
(not serious)
I wish Nikki Freeman loved me more
than anyone in the fucking world.

He BREAKS THE BRANCH IN HALF, resting his head on the steering wheel.

Starting the car, Bear is startled by NIKKI on the porch, looking at him, lost. She looks back at her house, confused, as if not recognizing it, then turns to Bear, points at herself questioningly, and walks to the car with a wide, eerie smile.

BEAR
(under his breath)
What the fuck?

Bear glances at his broken stick, shoves it into his backpack, and hurriedly throws it to the back seat. He rolls down the window as Nikki approaches.

BEAR
(confused)
Hey, just had to pull up
directions.

NIKKI
You said you had something for me?

A beat. Bear nods, a mix of realization and relief crossing his face. He gets it now.

BEAR
Oh... yeah I- well- I- It's at my
house.

NIKKI
Oh, okay.

Silence stretches. Nikki's gaze on Bear is expectant, tapping her fingers on the window frame.

BEAR
I can bring it to work tomorrow.

NIKKI
Um ok...

BEAR
Okay, goodnight.

NIKKI

Actually, maybe you could use some company tonight? I mean, I did just lose my cat, Bear-

BEAR

You lost *your* cat?

NIKKI

Oh wait, I mean, you lost *your* cat. I'm sorry. I am so sorry for your loss. What should we- are you-
(shakes her head)
Do you wanna come inside or?

A beat. Bear looks over to the One Wish Willow in the back.

BEAR

Uhhh, Nikki, are you okay...?

NIKKI

Are you okay?

Silence.

BEAR

What- like, because of the cat?

NIKKI

Yeah.

BEAR

Yeah, I'm ok.

NIKKI

(genuine and slow)
Why don't you come inside, and we can have a few drinks? Talk about the cat, yeah... I'm so sorry... yeah.

The repeated "yeah" in the same tone is eerie and makes Bear a bit wary.

BEAR

Nikki, I'm a little confused. I think you're drunk.

NIKKI

No, I'm not, actually.
(Confused)
Wait, what the fuck!?
(back to happy)
(MORE)

NIKKI (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. Come inside. I'm acting
so weird, that's so weird.

Nicky's emotions subtly change, freaking Bear out.

BEAR

Nikki, what the fuck? Are you okay?

NIKKI

Yeah, I'm fine.

BEAR

Get some sleep; I'm gonna go. Ok?

Nicky snaps!

NIKKI

No no no no no!

Nicky walks around to the other side of the car.

BEAR

What?

She opens Bear's door and unbuckles his seatbelt. She grabs
his arm.

NIKKI

Come on! Come on!

Bear gives in.

BEAR

Okay?

NIKKI

Actually, no.

Nikki crosses her arms like a child who didn't get her way.
It's strange seeing her this way; her body language
contradicts her personality.

NIKKI

(like a child)

Actually, no, no, no.

BEAR

What?

Bear is thrown off.

NIKKI

(still childlike)

I know what you're trying to do.

BEAR

I uhh-

NIKKI

(annoyed)

Let's go to *your* place.

Nikki opens the passenger door, sliding into the vehicle.

BEAR

Nikki, you're honestly freaking me out.

Nikki's body language returns to normal.

NIKKI

(disappointed)

Oh my go no!

BEAR

I mean, I have never ever seen you act this way. What is going on?!

NIKKI

Oh, Jesus. I don't know.

Bear is relieved but confused.

NIKKI

I must be pretty fucked up.

BEAR

Yeah... I know. That's why I think... you should go home, ok? We can pick this up tomorrow.

Nikki rests her head on the dash and closes her eyes, arms dangling by her side. Her posture and silence are strange, unpredictable. Nikki takes a deep breath, unsure what to do next.

NIKKI

Can't do that.

BEAR

Uhh...

NIKKI

I just don't know if I can be alone right now.

BEAR

Why?

A beat. Nikki analyzes Bear, her eyes narrowing, almost as if she's planning her next move.

NIKKI
My dads dying.

BEAR
Nikki, no-

NIKKI
Leukemia. I don't know that much. Apparently, he hasn't been to work in weeks. My mom called *asking me to go see him*, so I know it's serious.

BEAR
I'm so sorry.

NIKKI
It's okay. Honesty, it's okay, I just... I'm actually fine with it. I just needed to...

Nikki starts to BAWL. It all makes sense now.

NIKKI
I took one step into my house and I couldn't...

BEAR
No... god, I'm so, so sorry...

Nikki falls into Bear's arms weeping!

NIKKI
(through the tears)
It still hurts, you know?

BEAR
No, I know. I'm sure it still hurts.

NIKKI
And I can't really afford a plane ticket over there right now.

BEAR
I could pay for that, Nikki.

NIKKI
No, it's like, I don't even want to be there, you know?

Bear holds Nikki.

BEAR
And that's okay, Nikki.

NIKKI
And I feel bad!

BEAR
It's not your fault.

NIKKI
No, I feel bad, but... I never saw him before, so why should I see him now? You know?

BEAR
No, that's okay! It's complicated.

She calms down a little. A long beat.

NIKKI
Can we go, please?

A beat.

BEAR
Where do you want to go?

NIKKI
I just can't sleep in my bed. I don't want to be alone.

BEAR
Uhm, okay, yeah.

Bear holds her a bit longer.

17

INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

17

Bear and Nikki walk through the front door. Nikki, looking around, wipes a tear and walks towards the kitchen.

NIKKI
(in awe)
Wow.

BEAR
Uh, so yeah. This is it...

18 INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

18

Bear follows.

NIKKI
Smaller than your last place...

BEAR
This place was my grandma's. I got
to keep it-

NIKKI
Oh my god...

Nikki stops as she is struck by something...

BEAR
What?

NIKKI
(profound)
It smells like you.

BEAR
What do you mean...? Does it smell
bad?

NIKKI
(in awe)
No. It's just you.
(welling up)
It's nice.

Nikki starts to cry. It's weird. Bear walks over and puts his
arm on her shoulder. Something feels off.

NIKKI
(through the tears)
I like it here.

BEAR
Nikki, you need some sleep. Okay?

19 INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

19

Nikki sits up in bed, fully clothed under the covers. Bear
lingers in the doorway, like a father saying goodnight.

NIKKI
I'm sorry I was so weird earlier. I-

BEAR

No need to explain. Take all the
space- or I mean, time that you
need, okay? Goodnight.

Bear turns off the light switch. The atmosphere turns dark
and moody as he starts to leave.

NIKKI (o.s)

Wait.

BEAR

Yeah?

NIKKI

Will you sleep with me?

Bear SO CONFUSED! WhAT THE FUCK!

BEAR

Uhhh.

NIKKI

Please, I get in my head. I'll
stare at the ceiling all night if
I'm in here by myself.

A beat.

BEAR

Yeah... I can do that.

WE CUT TO A SHOT OF BED. NIKKI IN BACKGROUND.

Bear starts to remove his shoes when Nikki begins undressing.
He quickly turns away.

Bear mouths: what the fuck....

WHAT THE FUCK IS HAPPING RIGHT NOW!!!!!!

She continues to remove her shirt and pants in the b.g.

This is BIZARRE, but he ain't complaining. Slowly turning
back, he sees Nikki giving him a sad smile. He approaches her
gently and softly touches her arm.

BEAR

Are you okay?

NIKKI

Given the circumstances...

BEAR HESITATES, THEN SITS BESIDE HER ON THE BED, cautious and uncertain of the limits. He's taken aback when she lays her head on his shoulder.

NIKKI
I needed this.

Bear thinks he is dreaming. This cant be real.

BEAR
(skeptical)
Really?

NIKKI
Yeah.

BEAR
(confused)
Why?

Bear builds the courage to put his arm around her.

NIKKI turns her body and LOOKS UP AT BEAR. WE GO INTO COVERAGE!!! This shot turns into Bear coverage.

NIKKI
I'm so sorry about your cat.

BEAR
(remembering)
Oh my god, are you kidding?

NIKKI
It still matters.

A TEAR ROLLING DOWN HER FACE, she softly takes Bear's chin and leans in for a kiss.

BEAR
(confused)
Wait.

Bear is uncertain if her feelings stem from grief or desperation. Yet, gazing into her eyes, he realizes his deep longing for this moment. He succumbs to her kisses, each one intensifying their shared passion.

Suddenly, Nikki opens her eyes to find herself kissing Bear.

She's in shock. Where is she? She looks around, startled. She recoils in shock, pushing him away with terror in her eyes.

NIKKI
What the fuck. What the fuck! WHAT
THE *FUCK*!

Bear, equally confused, is taken aback.

BEAR
What?! What?! What?!

Nikki very quickly composes herself.

NIKKI
(leaning back)
Oh my god, I'm so sorry.

BEAR
You kissed me!

NIKKI
I know. I'm so sorry. Can we just
sleep?

BEAR
What the *FUCK WAS THAT*?!

NIKKI
I don't know, I'm sorry!

BEAR
No no no, what the fuck was that,
Nikki!

NIKKI
I thought I saw something. I don't
know. I'm sorry!

BEAR
You don't have to be sorry. It
just... made me feel like... I was
doing something you didn't like.

NIKKI
I know, I'm sorry.

NIKKI	BEAR
I just got spooked. I think	Scared the shit out of me.
it was a panic attack...	What?

NIKKI
A panic attack, yeah.

BEAR
Really?

NIKKI
 (getting emotional)
 Yeah, I'm so... lost...

Bear studies Nikki as she starts to cry again. He's skeptical but extends his arm to comfort her from a distance.

SMASH CUT TO:

20 **INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER** 20

Bear lies on the floor with blankets and a pillow, eyes wide open. He gets up and exits frame.

21 **INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER** 21

Bear is on his laptop at the dining room table. He types:
Does a One Wish Willow actually work?

Onscreen: *No, a One Wish Willow is just an urban legend.*

At the same time, a YouTuber explains the lore of the One Wish Willow in vague detail.

Yes, a One Wish Willow really does grant you one wish!

One Wish Willows never existed. This is a result of the Mandela effect.

Click.

A large group of people remembering something that never existed is a phenomenon called the Mandela effect. If you find a One Wish Willow, stay away.

A fun theory is that in the 80s, one person used the One Wish Willow to wish that everyone forgot about the One Wish Willow, and now we're living in a timeline where the One Wish Willow never existed.

Does anyone remember an old 80s commercial about the One Wish Willow, or am I just tripping? I can still remember the jingle.

Related searches pop up: Big Foot, Skin-walkers, Fruit of the Loom logo.

We stay on Bear. He shuts his laptop, shaking his head.

THERE'S NO WAY IT'S A FUCKING MAGIC TOY.

Bear gets up and walks toward the-

22 INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

22

He sees NIKKI'S DARK SHADOW sitting up in bed, *staring at him.*

SHOT DIFFERENTLY!

NIKKI
(eerie)
What were you doing?

Scared half to death. A beat.

BeAR
I was just going to the bathroom.

NIKKI
Ok.

A prolonged, eerie silence. Then, Bear lies back on his pallet as the silent tension mounts.

NIKKI (O.S.)
Can you lay with me?

Bear is deeply disturbed.

BEAR
I don't know, Nikki.

A long beat.

NIKKI
Please.

Bear joins her in bed. She quickly wraps an arm around him. Frozen, Bear is uneasy.

23 INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING

23

The sun filters through the blinds as Bear wakes up to an empty bed, his mind racing. He chuckles at the notion of a wild dream until Nikki's bag by the door catches his eye, prompting him to get up.

24 INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - DINNING ROOM - MORNING

24

Breakfast is on the table and an odd smell lingers, but the house seems vacant. He walks to the kitchen, finding his cat's corpse on the ground, surrounded by flower petals. Bear approaches.

25 INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

25

The same shot. Flowers are scattered on the ground with a note: SORRY FOR YOUR LOST.

NIKKI (O.S.)
(so weird and whiny)
Awwwww. Reuuuunion...

BEAR
Nikki, I-

Bear turns to face Nikki.

BEAR
Nikki, what the fuck!?

NIKKI
(shy but offended)
...You're supposed to like it...

BEAR
No! It's fucked up!

A long, uncomfortable beat.

NIKKI
(shy)
Well, I don't know if it's fucked,
Bear.

BEAR
No, it is!

Another beat.

NIKKI
Is that good?

BEAR
Why would that be GOOD?!

Nikki quickly picks up the stiff, dead cat with one hand and tosses it in the garbage, a hint of attitude.

NIKKI
(defensive)
You threw him in the trash, Bear.
It's not cool.

Bear studies her.

26 **EXT. CASSELL'S MUSIC - PARKING LOT - DAY**

26

A wide shot shows CASSELL'S MUSIC, featuring a large "MARCHING SEASON DISCOUNT MATINÉE" sign. Only a handful of cars are parked out front.

Bear's car pulls up. Both in uniform, Bear and Nikki exit, Bear with a backpack. As they walk, Nikki grabs Bear's hand, but he gently pulls away.

BeaR
(shocked)
Woah... uh, let's not do that, just right now.

NIKKI
Yeah, gross.

Nikki takes a step away from him.

27 **INT. CASSELL'S MUSIC - CONTINUOUS**

27

Saxophones, drum sets, and guitars line the walls. We follow them as CARTER, 52, the overweight boss and Sarah's dad, quickly draws Nikki's attention.

CARTER
Nikki, thank god. Show me that piano outlet that's not working. It's about to get crazy, and I don't want a Karen saying no.

We continue to follow behind Bear.

NIKKI (O.S.)
(to Carter)
Nooo, that's not-

CARTER (O.S.)
(to Nikki)
You get me?

Nikki's voice, distant in the b.g.

NIKKI (O.S.)
(to Carter)
No, I'm not really getting you.

We move past the front desk, finding Ian by the computer, smiling broadly.

IAN
(high pitch, under breath)
Brooooooooo.

BEAR
(nonchalant)
Break room, break room, break room.

28 INT. CASSELL'S MUSIC - BREAK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

28

A breakfast table, surrounded by a microwave, fridge, and coffee machine. Bear places his backpack on the table and makes a beeline for the coffee.

IAN
Bro, what the FUCK happened last night?

BEAR
You wouldn't believe what a crazy night I had.

IAN
You fucked Nikki. You dog.

BEAR
No, dude.

IAN
What did you say to her?

BEAR
No, I didn't fuck her.

IAN
I *just* saw you come in together.

BEAR
Ian, listen to me.

IAN
(confused)
What?

Then, from across the store through the break room window, Bear sees Nikki watching him, a smile on her face.

IAN
Did you kiss? What are you scared of?! Sarah?

Bear's focused on Nikki, not listening anymore. Ian turns to see what captured his attention.

IAN
(off Nikki)
What the fuck...

Bear smiles at Nikki *genuinely* and then turns around to hide his face.

BEAR
(to Ian laughing)
Laugh. Laugh.

Ian laughs.

BEAR
Nikki's like... going through something.

IAN
What?

BEAR
And she's acting super fucking weird! Like she was...

Bear doesn't even know what he believes.

IAN
(concerned)
Like, what? Is she ok?

BEAR
No.

IAN
Did she tell you what's wrong?

BEAR
Well, yeah, kind of, but it seems like more...

IAN
Well, what is it?

BEAR
I'll let her tell you.

IAN
Dude, come on.

BEAR
Her dad has cancer.

This hits Ian ODDLY SPECIFIC.

IAN
Really? That's why she was crying yesterday...

Ian looks shocked, like he knows something.

BEAR
That's what she told me.

IAN
(confused)
Her Dad in Washington that she
doesn't care about?

BEAR
It still hurts, Ian.

IAN
(pondering)
Yeah, yeah.

BEAR
But it was more than that. I think
she's having a mental breakdown or
something. She would freak out...
and then act all happy... and she
was kissing me and then crying. It
was... weird.

Ian's face grows suspicious.

IAN
What the fuck? Are you joking?-

BEAR
No!

IAN
Was this after you told her how you
felt?

Bear hesitates.

BEAR
I didn't tell her.

A beat.

IAN
What?

BEAR
I didn't tell her.

Ian's confusion grows.

IAN
You didn't... She was kissing you?

BEAR
That's what I'm saying!

IAN
Then, how exactly-

BEAR
I seriously think she needs help,
Ian.

IAN
And she was crying?

BEAR
Yes! And then she would just snap
back to happy. It was terrifying,
psychotic... She wanted me to
cuddle and sleep with her.

IAN
Did you?!

BEAR
No, I-

IAN
Because if you did, that's fucked
up-

BEAR
No, I wouldn't.

IAN
Dude!

BEAR
I slept on the floor. She was
freaking me out.

IAN
Was she on molly again?

BEAR
No... Well, I don't know. I mean...

Bear's head tilts at the idea.

IAN
Yeah dude, sounds like she was on
molly.

BEAR
Yeah, maybe.

IAN
I'm going to go talk to her.

BEAR
Just... Is she still staring at me?

Ian darts *his* eyes to check.

IAN
Yes.

BEAR
Just don't be weird.

Ian leaves, and Bear pretends to make coffee. Through the window, we see Ian and Nikki talking. Bear turns around, avoiding eye contact.

THE CHAOS OF THE STORE INCREASES. HORNS PLAY OUT OF TUNE, STUDENTS CHATTER, AND LAUGHTER GROWING IN VOLUME

THE CHAOS OF THE STORE ACTS AS A SOUNDTRACK. HORNS, FEEDBACK, AND CHATTER BUILD THE INTENSITY.

SMASH CUT TO:

29

EXT. CASSELL'S MUSIC - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

29

The tranquility of the surroundings contrasts with the prior commotion. The gentle chirping of crickets fills the air. Bear exits the store, Nikki trailing closely behind. Sarah and Ian follow.

BEAR
That was insane.

NIKKI
Told you.

Nikki begins to open Bear's passenger side door.

BEAR
(hesitant)
Hey, actually... I don't know if I can take you home.

NIKKI
That's ok, I'm getting my purse.

BEAR
(thrown off)
Oh...Ok...

Ian approaches.

IAN
(to Nikki)
Ready?

NIKKI
Yeah.

BEAR
(a little disappointed)
Ok, you got her?

IAN
Yeah, I got it.

BEAR
Ok then, bye guys.

Nikki ignores Bear and gets into Ian's car.

IAN
(mouthing to Bear)
All good. Trust.

30

INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

30

Bear folds laundry in the living room, distracted. His laptop open with a "MOLLY SIDE EFFECTS" article tab visible. He's on speakerphone. If you look closely, Nikki is standing outside the window. CREEPY.

IAN (V.O)
(gentle)
Maybe dude, but I was just talking to her. She wasn't looking at you that much.

BEAR
She was staring at me.

IAN (V.O)
I mean, she was looking at both of us. You guys walked in together obviously we were talking about her.

BEAR
(sad)
I'm gonna call her.

IAN (V.O)
Please don't.

A knock at the door. Bear jerks his head.

BEAR

One sec.

Bear hangs up.

31 INT/EXT. BEAR'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS 31

Nikki stands at the door, wearing a lovely dress and full makeup. She is stunning.

NIKKI

Hey, Bear.

BEAR

Nikki? Hey!

NIKKI

I had to shower and I didn't know what to wear.

BEAR

What do you mean?

A beat.

NIKKI

Listen, I'm really sorry about last night. Ian told me you were freaked out-

BEAR

Oh, no Nikki, it's fine! Honestly, I was happy to be there...

NIKKI

(testing)

I probably shouldn't have taken anything.

A beat.

BEAR

Oh?

NIKKI

Yeah... So I was on MDMA.

Bear leans into the door frame, pain surging through him. It had been a wild night, but at least he felt her love.

BEAR
Right.

NIKKI
And wasted.

BEAR
Right... So, do you remember?

Nikki waits.

BEAR
Stuff.

NIKKI
I mean some of it. If I was weird,
that's why. My dad is making me a
mess. And I probably made choices I
wouldn't have made otherwise. And
I'm not saying you took advantage
of me.

BEAR
Woah, I didn't know you were on
drugs!

NIKKI
I know! That's why I'm saying, *I'm
not saying that.*

BEAR
Saying what?

NIKKI
You took advantage of me.

BEAR
Nikki, I don't feel like I did!

NIKKI
I'm saying you didn't!

BEAR
Ok good.

Bear's eyes narrow with disappointment. Nikki's gaze shifts,
a growing concern in her eyes.

BEAR
And what about this morning?-

NIKKI
(stern)
I just... I don't like to...
(MORE)

NIKKI (CONT'D)

And um... I want to be transparent with you about some things. I really love what we have, and It's so important to me that-

BEAR

You don't have to explain. I get it.

NIKKI

Actually, I feel like...

Nikki abruptly turns, now facing away. We see the back of her head, her shoulders shaking as she bursts into laughter – an extremely BIZARRE moment.

BEAR

Nikki, what the fuck?

Nikki turns back around to face Bear. Her face is flat. Serious. A long beat.

NIKKI

(taunting)

I know you like me, Bear.

Bear is thrown off.

BEAR

Well...no, I...no...why?

A long beat.

BEAR

Are you saying you like me?

NIKKI

Would it freak you out if I said yes?

A long beat. It's an oddly romantic moment. Bear stares at her. His smile becomes a laugh, somewhat shy and defensive.

BEAR

How long have you... felt like that?

NIKKI

I mean, it just sort of... happened over time. Last Christmas it started, I don't know.

BEAR IS IN SHOCK, suddenly hyperaware of his face, posture, and clothing. He even concentrates to breathe. This is real.

NIKKI

But I just get weird sometimes. And last night I kinda saw what we could... I just... Do you wanna go?

BEAR

Go?

NIKKI

Out? On a date?

Bear glances at the ground, then back up at her. He's dreamed of this moment his entire adult life.

BEAR

Yeah, I do.

32

INT. SMALL TOWN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

32

A cozy, somewhat upscale spot with checkered tablecloths and candles, it's the town's go-to for "fancy." Bear and Nikki share a bread and butter platter.

BEAR

No, it was homeroom.

NIKKI

Are you sure?

BEAR

No, I specifically remember we were doing busy work for Ms. Crawford. She wanted us to write down what career we wanted after school, and you said "writer," and I said "In a Band," and the teacher made me change it. You leaned over to me, and you said-

BEAR

I'll be in your band.

NIKKI

I'll be in your band.

They laugh.

BEAR

Those were the first words you ever said to me.

NIKKI

We never did start that band.

BEAR

Thank God.

Nikki folds over, laughing.

NIKKI

(teasing)

You don't want to start one now?

BEAR

No thanks.

NIKKI

(teasing)

Are you sure? I could call Ian. I know a drummer, too.

They laugh. After a beat, Bear switches gears.

BEAR

Hey... How's your dad doing?

NIKKI

Please. Let's not talk about that.

Bear gets a call from Ian and ignores it.

NIKKI

What do you really want to do? I've never asked.

BEAR

No, you haven't.

NIKKI

I've known you for so long, and I'm just now realizing I don't even know that much about you.

BEAR

That's not all your fault. I'm kind of private, I guess.

NIKKI

You guess?

BEAR

I've been told.

NIKKI

By who?

BEAR
 Ian... You actually... You told me
 that once.

NIKKI
 I did?

BEAR
 You said I was a "closed book."

NIKKI
 I did.
 (squinting in thought)
 Well, the best part about a closed
 book, is now I get to read it from
 the start. A book not many people
 have read, since it's private.

A long, intimate beat.

BEAR
 What do you want to know?

NIKKI
 (a smirk)
 What do you want to be when you
 grow up?

Bear looks at Nikki, love in his eyes.

BEAR
 Well, my dad works at the Toyota in
 Mobile, so once I-

NIKKI
 (playful)
 I didn't ask what you'll *most*
likely end up doing.

Bear laughs.

NIKKI
 I want to know what Baron Bailey
 would be the happiest doing for the
 rest of his life.

BEAR
 I really don't want or need much. I
 think I want a house... maybe in
 Fairhope? A few kids...

NIKKI
 How many?

Nikki smiles. She's a good listener.

BEAR

Not too many. Three. So they grow up together. I'd be a food critic or something.

NIKKI

(laughing)

A food critic? You put ketchup on your steak!

BEAR

I'd go in, and they're like, "Hey! You're that food guy! And I'm like, "Please call me *Three Bite Bailey*." They bring me a four-course meal. I pull out my wallet, and they say, "Oh no, tonight is on the house." And then get paid.

NIKKI

(teasing)

Is that how that works?

BEAR

I don't actually know.

NIKKI

Who pays the foodies?

BEAR

I'm not actually sure.

They laugh. The romance is palpable.

NIKKI

Okay, Mister Food Critic. What's the verdict of this bread?

Bear picks up a piece of bread, smells it, licks it, and holds it to his eye for inspection.

BEAR

It's slightly stale, but the butter makes up for that shit.

NIKKI

Profound.

BEAR

That'll be a hundred dollars.

Nikki laughs.

NIKKI

(flirty)

Oh no, I don't have that much. Is there something we can work out?

Nikki flips her hair. Bear smiles. Ian calls again.

BEAR

Hold on. It's the second time he's called.

Bear walks away from the table.

BEAR

What, dude, I'm busy.

IAN (V.O.)

Are you at dinner?

BEAR

What do you want?

IAN (V.O.)

Ok, so...

A beat.

BEAR

What is it?

IAN (v.o.)

Ok look, lets keep Sarah out of this until we figure out whats going on but- I looked into Nikki's Dad having cancer, and he's healthy as a baby. He's been at work every day.

BEAR

Why would she lie about that Ian?

IAN (v.o.)

I don't know!! It's fucking weird! She told me the same lie in the car! I called the hospital Nikki told me about, and they didn't even know who I was talking about.

Bear takes this in and looks back at Nikki in the distance.

IAN (V.O.)

Where are- Are you with here right now? Dude seriously?

(MORE)

IAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Bear you shouldn't be like,
entertaining this behavior. Look,
Sarah told me that... Nikki told
her... that Nikki friend zoned you
years ago... I'm sorry I never told
you, I just think people can change
there mind. And I didn't want to
hurt you you know? But now I feel
like I have to say something
because it seems like she might
have ill intentions or something
mental going on.

Ian's voice fades away as Bear drops into a state of
darkness. He slowly turns his head to Nikki as Ian talks.

IAN (V.O)

I mean thats fucked up to lie about
that.

Nikki is staring at Bear, smiling in an unnatural, creepy
way. Bear's mind goes to the ONE WISH WILLOW. He can't
believe it, but he does. He understands now.

RANDOM WORKER

Uhh, can you move? You literally
can't stand there.

IAN (V.O) (CONT'D)

Hello? Bear?

Bear hangs up and slowly walks over to the dinner table.
Total shock.

NIKKI

Everything ok?

BEAR

Nikki, do you...

NIKKI

What...?

BEAR

(deep in thought)
Nothing.

NIKKI

I have something.

Nikki pulls out a small, old-looking box. The shape of a One
Wish Willow.

BEAR
(skeptical)
What's this?

NIKKI
(eerie)
Open it.

Bear hesitates but opens it. It's a silky, reddish-brown stone.

NIKKI
It's a Chatoyant Quartz, a Tiger's Eye.

A beat.

BEAR
Wow.

NIKKI
It was my mom's, then it was mine.
It's supposed to bring you
confidence and willpower. So, now
you can be a food critic.

BEAR
Why're you giving it to *me*?

NIKKI
Bear, this stone's *important* to me.
Well, you know, after my dad
left...

A beat.

BEAR
So why are you giving it to *me*?

NIKKI
Because... *you're* important to me.

Bear thinks. He grabs the stone and holds it against his chest.

BEAR
(testing)
So, you love me?

NIKKI
Bear, I love you so so so much. I
don't think I could live without
you.

Nikki gives Bear an eerie, creepy smile. It could almost be interpreted as threatening.

BEAR
(testing)
You love me more than anyone in the
world...?

NIKKI
Yes. More than anyone.

They sit in silence. He turns the stone over in his hand.

BEAR
Nikki?

NIKKI
Yeah?

BEAR
Does your dad really have cancer?

NIKKI
(softly)
No, no, no, no, no, no.

Nikki abruptly gets up from the table.

BEAR
What?

NIKKI
(building)
Nooooooo NO NO NO NO NO! Don't do
that!

The restaurant slips into a hushed, uneasy silence, all eyes on them, the air charged with discomfort.

BEAR
(calm)
What? Sit down, please.

NIKKI
(angry)
Why does it matter, Bear?!

BEAR
What do you mean-

Bear looks around, embarrassed.

NIKKI

I thought we were having a nice date?

BEAR

We are! We are...

A pause. Nikki sits, and the restaurant buzz resumes. Playfully, she grabs Bear's leg under the table, her eerie smile returning.

NIKKI

Then why does it matter...?

Silence settles. Bear, lost in thought, realizes his yearning for her overshadows all. Her actions, her lies – it all fades, only her presence matters.

BEAR

(matter of fact)

Doesn't matter to me.

His response reveals a disregard for truth, showing a readiness to ignore darker realities for affection, hinting at a deeply flawed person.

33 **INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

33

THE MUSIC CONTINUES WITHIN THE FOLLOWING *MONTAGE-ESC* SCENES.

Nikki and Bear are together on the bed, the room bathed in warm colors and shadows. Nikki crawls above Bear, and they begin to kiss slowly, with intensity.

Nikki tenderly guides Bear's hand to caress her face, then down her chest to between her legs. She moans, and they kiss, reigniting their passion as they hurriedly shed their clothes.

34 **INT. BEARS HOUSE - NIGHT**

34

Nikki and Bear watch a movie together. Nikki keeps slowly glancing over at Bear, staring at him. Bear tells her to pay attention to the movie. Nikki does for a second but then stares at Bear again.

35 **INT. BeAR'S HOUSE - liVING ROOM**

35

Nikki gets Bear flowers awww so sweet.

36 **INT. KITCHEN - MORNING** 36

- Nikki and Bear make breakfast together.

37 **INT. DINNING ROOM - MORNING** 37

- Nikki and Bear eat at the table. Laughing, having a good time.

38 **INT. CASSELL'S MUSIC (BREAK ROOM) - DAY** 38

- Nikki and Bear in the break room making out.

- Ian sees this and thinks it's SO strange.

- Sarah is deeply hurt by this.

- Nikki and Bear play the piano together at work.

- Nikki and Bear laugh at a funny meme on the computer: the meme: I want to be in your skin.

- Carter has an uncomfortable look on his face.

39 **INT. NIKKI'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY** 39

Nikki's bedroom is pink with flower decals, marching band stickers, and bookshelves full of books.

- Nikki and Bear look at yearbook photos together on Nikki's Bed.

- Nikki and Bear Reminisce about when they met.

- Nikki works on her novel. Bear hands her a coffee and reads her story. He seems oddly weirded out.

40 **INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT** 40

Nikki and Bear make out on the bed. Things are heating up.

Mid-moan, Nikki's eyes snap open. She locks eyes with Bear, her expression shifting to sheer panic. With a frantic shove, she pushes him away and lets out a blood-curdling scream, her body trembling.

NIKKI
WHAT THE FUCK IS HAPPENING! Bear,
WHAT'S GOING ON!

Bear tenses up, more concerned and disappointed than scared. He lets it take its course.

Nikki snaps back to normal. From shaking to nothing. The switch is quick and creepy as hell. This was her longest outburst yet.

NIKKI
Sorry, baby.

BEAR
Maybe we should take a break.

But Nikki pulls him in for more. He lets her. BEAR AND NIKKI
HAVING SEX - SAME SHOT AS BEFORE

They finish. Bear rolls over to the side.

NIKKI
That was amazing, baby.

Bear smiles.

BEAR
Yeah... Yeah.

Bear's smile fades—a subtle acknowledgment of what he never thought he was.

41 **INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER**

41

Bear wakes up and checks the clock: 3:32 AM. He turns to find Nikki missing from the bed. Sitting up, he scans the room. In a very dark corner, a figure is barely visible — so faint, it might be nothing.

Bear leans forward, squinting intently. Suddenly, the figure steps forward. It's clear SOMEONE is there.

BEAR
(finding the words)
Nikki?

NIKKI
(whisper)
Go back to sleep, Bear.

She is naked except for a long trench coat.

BEAR
What're you doing?

NIKKI
(strained whisper)
Watching you sleep. You're cute
when you sleep.

Nikki slowly steps back into her dark corner, morphing into a shadow.

BEAR
Wearing my coat, huh?

NIKKI
(blunt)
Smells like you.

BEAR
Can you come back to bed?

NIKKI
(whisper)
No.

BEAR
Nikki-

NIKKI
(whisper)
No.

A long beat.

NIKKI
(whiny)
I don't like my dreams.

ON A NEW, SLIGHTLY CLOSER SHOT.

Nikki begins to weep. Her cries are deep and disturbing. We can't see her face - just a shadow.

Bear watches, terrified. Nikki's shoulders begin to gyrate.

Nikki
I feel like you don't love me as
much - like its not mutual.

She looks up at Bear. We finally see her - still very, very dark. But through the shadows, her face looks inhuman.
(UNCANNY VALLEY MAKEUP ON FULL BLAST).

BEAR
I do love you Nikki. Can you please
come back to bed?

A beat.

NIKKI

Go back to sleeeeeeeeep...

Bear leans against the headboard and slides onto his back. The presence of her watchful eyes prevents him from going back to sleep, yet his unease prevents him from doing anything about it.

AFTER A LONG BEAT.

NIKKI

WHY DON'T YOU LOVE ME!!!

Nikki's scream is so terrifying and violent, it rattles Bear. He jolts up.

Nikki is GONE.

Bear's breath catches. He scans the room, panic rising. The air feels thick and heavy.

BEAR

NIKKI! WHERE ARE YOU?

Then, NIKKI enters through the bedroom door, her face hidden behind a huge bundle of flowers from the cat memorial.

She moves sideways, crossing her legs over each other as she drifts toward her side of the bed.

But her legs don't quite match the pace of her movement - as if she's gliding through the room, floating, rather than walking.

BEAR

Nikki what the fuck!

It's the most chilling thing you've ever seen. Then she lands on her side of the bed, holding the flowers. She stays like that for a long, tense beat.

Finally, she sets the vase on the bedside table.

NIKKI

For Sandy. Ok?

She drops back onto the bed, kisses his cheek, and shuts her eyes. Bear, terrified, lingers for a moment before cautiously standing.

NIKKI
 (without moving)
 STAAAAAAAAYYYYY!

He quickly lies back, staring at the ceiling, heart racing. Bear doesn't dare move. From a bird's-eye view, we stay with him as he eventually drifts off to sleep. The moment he does, Nikki quietly gets up.

42 **INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT/MORNING** 42

We see the window, a perfect shot as the sun rises, filtering through the blinds.

43 **INT. BATHROOM - MORNING** 43

A shot in the mirror captures Bear walking down the hall until he enters the bathroom, searching for something. He glances into the mirror and notices a chunk of his hair is chopped off.

BEAR
 Ahh, what the fuck!

He combs his hair to the side so you can't tell.

44 **INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING** 44

Bear enters the living room from the hallway, wearing his backpack and work uniform. He sees Nikki sitting in the chair next to the fireplace. She's reading a book called *The Art of Seduction* by Robert Greene.

Bear is facing away from the front door.

BEAR
 Nikki?

NIKKI (O.S.)
 Yeah?

BEAR
 (blunt)
 Did you cut my hair?

Nikki contemplates how to answer... a long beat.

NIKKI
 Yes.

BEAR
Ok, let's not do that...

NIKKI
I packed you a lunch.

Nikki gets up to hand Bear the lunch box, but Bear grabs Nikki's hand and sits her down at the table by the fireplace.

Bear faces away from the door.

BEAR
Ok, can we talk about last night?

NIKKI
I know! I know I know I know I know.
know.

Bear wants to be gentle.

BEAR
It was kinda weird...

NIKKI
(genuine)
Right?! I know. I'm so sorry.

Bear is a little surprised. A beat.

BEAR
Yeah..! Ok good! Well, if I'm being honest, it was terrifying, Nikki.

Nikki buries her head.

NIKKI
(genuine)
Oh my god. I'm so embarrassed. I'm so sorry. I think I had a bad dream and I was just...

BEAR
Just what?

Nikki quickly stops looking concerned, and starts smiling. It looks like she could kill him right there.

NIKKI
Better now?

Bear's expression shifts to concern. He thinks. Then he has an idea. He can fix this.

BEAR
No, Nikki... No.

NIKKI
What?

BEAR
Ok... Listen...

Bear leans in and gives Nikki an anxious kiss. She bites his lip—dominating, sexy, but threatening. Bear manages to pull away.

BEAR
I love you, and—

NIKKI
I love you too. So so so mu—

BEAR
Ok! Ok. But can you promise me something?

NIKKI
Yes!

BEAR
Promise me you won't watch me sleep or...
(a beat)
...Move like that anymore, or any weird shit.

NIKKI
Oh my god, I super promise and I'm so sorry it even happened.

Bear looks surprised and happy. He glances around like there's an audience. He throws his hands up like he's solved everything.

BEAR
(it's fixed then)
Ok!

NIKKI
OK!

BEAR
So we're good then!

NIKKI
(matching his energy)
We're good baby! More than good.

BEAR
Great!

NIKKI
Great.

Bear gets up and turns toward the door - and freezes.
Whatever he sees is hidden from view, but his shock is clear.

Nikki
I'm gonna miss you. I wish I were
scheduled today.

BEAR
(still looking at door)
No... Enjoy your day off...

NIKKI
Maybe I'll pop by?

BEAR
No! No no please stay. Enjoy
yourself.

NIKKI
(thinking)
Is that what you want?

BEAR
Of course.

We cut to reveal what Bear was staring at: the door, covered
in duct tape from top to bottom, completely sealed. Bear
awkwardly tugs at the handle.

NIKKI
Ok, bye, baby. Love you.

BEAR
(uncomfortable)
Okay...love...you.

After a tense silence, the door barely cracks open. He keeps
pulling, avoiding eye contact with Nikki. Finally-

NIKKI
If you're having trouble with the
door, you should stay.

BEAR
No, I got it.

We focus on Nikki as Bear exits. She stays still, an awkward
smile frozen on her face.

WE COULD STAY ON HER FOR AN ENTIRE MINUTE.

Despite the sound of the door closing, she doesn't move. Nikki begins to pee, the liquid running down her leg, staining the floor yellowish-red.

45

INT. CASSELL'S MUSIC (INVENTORY) - DAY

45

Bear and Sarah sit in the inventory room, eating lunch. Sarah folds boxes while eating. Bear opens his lunch box and finds a Polaroid of himself getting dressed this morning, taken from a disturbingly high angle.

How the hell did she get that picture? His head is circled with a heart. It's labeled: "You."

Then, another Polaroid—Nikki smiling while Bear sleeps. It's labeled: "Not me."

Bear is visibly disturbed. He glances down at the contents of the lunch box: Rice and Chicken. A sticky note: "My little food critic."

Finally, something that makes Bear smile. Looks good. He takes out the food.

SARAH

What the fuck is that?

Bear shuts the lunch box quickly. But he begins eating the chicken.

BEAR

Inside joke.

He stands and joins Sarah, helping fold boxes. Silence.

SARAH

Are you going to Ian's tonight?

BEAR

First I've heard.

Sarah scoffs.

SARAH

(I wonder why)
Well...

BEAR

Well, what?

Nothing more. Bear struggles with the chicken. It's a hard piece.

BEAR
I heard what you told Ian.

SARAH
About what?

BEAR
About Nikki. Said she friend-zoned me.

A long beat.

BEAR
Look, I don't know what Nikki has said in the past-

SARAH
I mean, we literally talked about it once. I just think it's weird how you two are dating all of a sudden. Like, super dating.

Bear is hit by this blatant remark.

BEAR
(angry)
I don't know, Sarah.

This is awkward.

SARAH
I mean honestly, I couldn't care less about whatever game Nikki is playing. I just don't want you to get hurt. And-

BEAR
What's your problem with Nikki-

SARAH
And also if Ian's gonna spread my shit, then you should know Ian and Nikki-

Carter enters, interrupting them.

CARTER
Sarah, honey. We got one.

Carter pulls out a letter.

SARAH

Oh my god.

Sarah and Carter leave the room. Bear puts his chicken and rice down, stealthily glancing through the window. He watches their reactions to the letter—Sarah's face crumbles; Carter remains unmoved.

As Sarah's gaze lifts, Bear ducks his head, avoiding detection. Sarah returns and sits on a nearby tuba case. Her eyes puffy from crying.

SARAH

I guess that's what I get for being
such a fucker in high school, huh?

Bear cautiously sits beside Sarah as she starts to cry.

BEAR

Was that the last one?

Sarah shakes her head no.

SARAH

One more. Luther.

Sarah rests her head on Bear's shoulder. Hesitant, he allows it.

BEAR

You can give me a tattoo without
school.

Sarah smiles.

SARAH

Thanks...

BEAR

(playful jab)
But it's got to be very small. And
hidden.

Sarah laughs and playfully hits Bear.

SARAH

(jab back)
Your lunch smells weird.

Sarah grabs the note off the Tupperware.

SARAH

Awww, "My little food critic."

BEAR

Jesus.

He tries to snatch the paper, but Sarah stands up.

SARAH

Well, what's the verdict on "Cat,"
Bear?

Bear slows down.

BEAR

What?

Sarah turns the note to show Bear. On the back, it reads:
"What's the verdict: Cat?"

SARAH

(still laughing)
What does that mean? What's the
verdict, Cat?

Bear turns white. He can't breathe. Sarah's voice fades.

SARAH

What does that mean?

Bear gets up, looking for the office trash can. He drops to
his knees and vomits.

SARAH

Jesus! Are you okay?

He vomits more.

SARAH

Bear...What does that mean?

BEAR

(weak)
Inside joke.

46

EXT. CASSELL'S MUSIC (PARKING LOT) - NIGHT

46

Bear walks to his car, Ian follows behind him.

IAN

Hey man, can I get a ride home?

BEAR

Where's *your* car?

IAN
I had to Uber today. Check engine
light.

BEAR
Well, I was gonna-

IAN
(not going to work on me)
Run some errands? Come on, we're
neighbors.

BEAR
Fine.

IAN
Yes.

47 **INT. CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT**

47

IAN
So, are we going to talk about you
and Nikki?

BEAR
(reluctant)
What about it?

IAN
Uhh, are you serious?

BEAR
Dude, you know I've liked her.

IAN
I *really* think you should stay away
from her for a bit-

BEAR
I am the happiest I've probably
ever been.

IAN
Just for a little-

BEAR
And you're trying to give me
reasons not to be.

IAN

Dude, you come to me, saying that you think Nikki is having a mental break down and we need to find help for her and now youre acting like "oh she loves me everything is perfect."

BEAR

She was on drugs! Nikki is literally fine!

IAN

Can you just please break this down for me?

BEAR

I don't want to break it down for you.

IAN

She lied about cancer?! Why?-

BEAR

I'm not breaking down our relationship-

IAN

And now, she's sleeping over all the time?

BEAR

I heard you're having a shindig tonight-

IAN

Lying about her dad?

BEAR

Were you going to invite us?

IAN

You have to admit that's CRAZY- Oh, so now you're an "US?"

BEAR

Why didn't you invite me to the party?

IAN

Don't change the subject. I'm not going to invite you two to my place.

BEAR

Why not?

Bear's car stops in front of Ian's house.

IAN

Because it *kind of* looks like Nikki is going through something... And it *kind of* looks like you're taking advantage of the situation-

BEAR

Oh, fuck you man! She's all over me! Are you fucking kidding me?

IAN

I say it with love, Bro! I'm saying it with love. I'm on your side, but it's a bad look. It's a bad look man.

BEAR

Why are you trying to ruin something good?-

IAN

What's it gonna look like to other people? Carter even said something. It's a bad look.

BEAR

That's not fair. She's the one who won't leave me alone!

A beat.

IAN

Fine, you want to come over tonight?

BEAR

Yeah, I do.

IAN

Nikki can't come.

A beat.

BEAR

Dude.

IAN

No. Nikki can't come, it's a boy's night. I'll tell Sarah not to come too, and that should be totally fine.

BEAR

She'll be fine with it.

IAN

Because if the relationship is healthy. And it's not built on some weird codependency, dad dying or not dying- what the-fuck ever... then she should have no problem with you doing a boy's night.

BEAR

Fine. Fine with me.

EXT. BEAR'S HOUSE - LATER

Bear pulls into the driveway.

48

INT. BEAR'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

48

Bear sits there for a moment, talking to himself. He looks at the house, dread on his face.

Bear takes a deep breath.

BEAR

(under his breath)

Nikki, I'm very upset. You can't cook the cat. OK? I'm gonna hang out with Ian tonight.

Bear picks up his backpack to go inside-

Suddenly, the One Wish Willow jingle plays from his backpack.

But this time, the jingle is different. He freezes, then slowly pulls out the box, reading the warnings.

CUSTOMER SERVICE: 1(800)555-3243.

THIS HAS TO BE A JOKE.

Bear stares at the box, debating whether to even call it.

(NEED A MACRO LENS SHOT HERE, OR A BIGGER PRINTED BOX JUST FOR THE INSERT.)

He pulls out his phone and skeptically types in the number.

AUTOMATED VOICE: Thank you for calling Tabi Cat Curiosities. For English, press 1. Para español, presione 2.

Bear's eyes widen - he's shocked it even works. (should be funny)

He presses 1. Ring. Ring.

MAN (V.O.)

Hello.

The voice is sheepish, shy. In the background, faint moaning, screaming, and crying can be heard, as if his office is shared with hell.

BEAR

Uhh. Hello?

MAN (V.O.)

Hey, what's up?

A beat.

BEAR

Um hi, is this One Wish Willow?

MAN (V.O.)

Yeah...

BEAR

Ok... Uh... Ok so... Is there Any way I can alter a wish?

MAN

You'd like to cancel you're wish?

BEAR

NO no no no no. I can- we're good. I just want to like alter it. If I could.

MAN (V.O.)

No, not really.

BEAR

No?

MAN

We don't do that.

Bear thinks for a while.

BEAR

I mean is it even real?

MAN

Yes it's a real.

BEAR

No! like- what does it- Is her love real?

MAN

Just because you chose this for her
doesn't make it less real.

Bear thinks, becoming guilty.

BEAR

Ok... Then I'd like to cancel the
wish.

MAN

You'd like to file a cancel
request?

BEAR

Yes. YES! A cancel request.

MAN

We don't really do that.

BEAR

You don't do cancels?

MAN

No.

BEAR

It sounded like you were saying I
could put in a request?!

MAN

I was guessing your intention.

BEAR

What the fuck! So what can I do?!

MAN (V.O.)

Nothing really. The wish will
follow you the rest of your life.

Bear's head hits the steering wheel.

BEAR

So she's just fucked forever.

MAN (V.O.)

Well, yeah, I mean as long as you
live.

BEAR

As long as I live?

MAN (V.O.)
I mean, when you die the wish will
go away.

Bear thinks about this.

BEAR
And there's nothing else I can do?

MAN (V.O.)
Sounds to me like you have a moral
obligation to be there for her.

Bear is full of guilt.

BEAR
Ok... Wait, and she does this thing
where she... Freaks out! What is
that?!

Some inaudible screaming grows clearer.

MAN (V.O.)
Do you wanna talk to her?

Nikki's screaming becomes audible in the background.

BEAR
Who? Who is that?

MAN (V.O.)
Nikki.

Nikki wails in the background.

NIKKI (V.O.)
Bear, PLEASE! PLEASE KILL ME!
PLEASE! PLEASEEEEEEE!

MAN (V.O.)
Do you want to speak to her?

Bear quickly hangs up the phone. His breathing intensifies.

Bear pushes the door open and flicks on the lights.

Stepping inside, he's greeted by Nikki, soaked in sweat and vomit, standing in a sickening pool of bodily fluids. She is in the same spot where he left her, with urine staining her clothes and vomit still dribbling from her mouth.

NIKKI
(happy)
Bear!

Nikki springs at Bear, hugging him eagerly like an excited dog. Bear protests, arms raised.

BEAR
Ugh! Nikki, what the fuck?! Are you okay?

NIKKI
What? WHAT?

Realizing her condition, Nikki steps back, embarrassed.

NIKKI
God, I should shower!

BEAR
(concerned, confused)
What the fuck happened?

NIKKI
I think I ate a bug... I mean, got a stomach bug... or both.

Nikki gives an uneasy laugh amid the terrible smell. Bear's eyes WIDE with confusion and fear.

BEAR
Did you have a seizure or something?

NIKKI
I was waiting for you to come home. Thank you for the Chocolates. Thats sooo sweet.

Nikki looks at herself again and shivers with revulsion.

NIKKI
Oh god, I'm disgusting. Let me shower, and I'll clean this all up.

Nikki walks off-screen.

BEAR
Nikki, I don't understand.

We hear the water turn on. The bathroom door SLAMS.

NIKKI (O.S.)
I'll clean it, Baby

50 INT. BEARS HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

50

Bear moves to the bathroom door, speaking through it, his voice raised above the water's noise.

BEAR
Nikki?

NIKKI (O.S.)
Yeah?

WE CUT TO BEAR IN THE HALLWAY!!! MICHEAL NEEDS TO BE BACK AGAINST THE WALL SO IT CUTS WELL FROM HIS OTHER COVRAGE WE AR KEEPING.

BEAR
...We talked about this?

BEAR LOOKS DOWN AT THE PISS, SHIT, AND VOMIT ON THE LIVING ROOM FLOOR. It takes him a second to speak again.

BEAR
Did you cook the cat?

A long beat.

BEAR
Nikki I'm very upset about that.
You can't do that.

Tension.

NIKKI
I'm sorry.

BEAR
(defeated, unsure)
Hey, listen, Ian invited me to
boy's night, tonight.

The shower water STOPS, plunging everything into eerie quiet. Bear's eyes widen.

NIKKI (O.S.)
(hurt)
Okay.

BEAR
So... I think I'm gonna go to that,
if it's okay with you.

NIKKI (O.S.)
A boy's night?

BEAR

Yeah.

NIKKI (O.S.)

I can get dressed and go with you.

BEAR

Oh man, that... that would be awesome.

NIKKI (O.S.)

Okay, let me freshen up.

BEAR

Yeah, it's just that Ian was saying it's a boy's night. So I think... I should just go.

Suddenly, Nikki unleashes an INHUMAN SCREAM, terrifying Bear.

BEAR

You okay?!

A LONG beat.

NIKKI (O.S.)

That's so weird because Sarah was telling me *she's* going.

BEAR

Really?

NIKKI (O.S.)

Ok, well... I'll just stay here. Bear, you can go.

BEAR

No I mean, if Sarah's going-

NIKKI (O.S.)

No, it's okay. You can go without me.

BEAR

No, you should come.

Nikki burst out of the bathroom in just a towel.

NIKKI

Nooo, I think I'll stay.

51 INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

51

Nikki stumbles back into the living room. She lets out a sound - half-sob, half-wail.

Then collapses onto the floor, right next to the piss and shit.

BEAR

Nikki, I'm sorry! You can come!

NIKKI

(crying)

I'm not worth anything to yooooouuu!

Bear stumbles back into the hallway, horrified. Nikki slams her head into the mess rubbing it in.

She lifts her face, smeared and sobbing.

BEAR

Nikki! what the fuck!!!

NIKKI

Im not worth anything any
moooooooooore!

BEAR

You can come!! You can come
to boys night!

52 INT. IAN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

52

The house is modest yet aged, filled with booming music. Bear fixes himself a drink as Ian approaches.

IAN

Sup, Co-dipshit.

BEAR

Don't call me that.

Bear looks into the living room; Nikki laughs at a joke.

IAN

That's your new nickname, Co-dip-
shit.

BEAR

Wow. Creative.

IAN

I knew you were going to bring her.
She guilt you?

BEAR
She didn't guilt me. Shut the fuck
up.

IAN
(egging on)
You couldn't be without her for
three hours?

Bear finishes his drink.

BEAR
Sarah invited her. What was I
supposed to do?

IAN
Sure-

BEAR
You told me you weren't *inviting*
Sarah.

The two walk into the-

53 INT. IAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

53

They join the party: Sarah, REGGIE, 27, tall and lanky; JOE,
22, the younger brother type; CHRIS, 24, happy-go-lucky.

IAN
Sarah did nothing wrong.

BEAR
(under his breath)
Well, neither did we.

IAN
(sternly to Bear)
No weird shit.

Ian sits beside Sarah, the room alive with DRUNK JENGA.

IAN (O.S.)
Don't touch my moms china bro!

Nikki, looking HOT, signals Bear. Hopeful, Bear joins her,
craving a hint of normality.

Reggie pulls a block out from the Jenga tower and reads it
aloud.

REGGIE

Choose someone to drink every time
you do for the next three rounds,
starting now.

(to Ian)

Your house, you're going down with
the ship!

IAN

Fine.

They drink. Everyone laughs. Joe pulls a block.

JOE

(reading)

Switch seats with someone.

(to the group)

Hmm. Nice dress Sarah.

SARAH

Thanks.

JOE

Baron, I want to sit next to Nikki.

Everyone laughs as if they're in on the joke.

NIKKI

(pleading)

Noooo.

Bear laughs, stands, and Nikki catches his hand.

NIKKI

(childish)

No, don't leave me.

BEAR

It's fine.

He moves over to Sarah, and Joe sits next to Nikki.

REGGIE

Jesus Bear, what kinda spell did
you put on her?

Everyone laughs. But Nikki's laughter erupts, loud and
forced, catching everyone's attention. As she laughs, she
forms a finger gun, points it at her head, and mimics
shooting herself.

She halts, stares directly at the ceiling in silence, then
turns her gaze back to the crowd.

NIKKI

So true.

The room, in uncertain silence. Ian, shaking his head, pulls a block, attempting to reclaim the mood.

IAN

(blunt)

Take a shot.

Ian downs a shot. Setting the glass down, its clink echoes deafeningly in the room's sudden silence.

SARAH

(awkward)

Nikki, it's your turn.

NIKKI

Yay!

Nikki pulls a brick, doesn't read it aloud, stands, grabs her phone, and starts reading.

NIKKI

The air was charged by the distant call of a nightbird. His face was obscured, but I knew he was looking at my chest, each side stretching, recently matured to different sizes.

Nikki, EERILY STILL, uses her voice to embody the characters.

NIKKI

"Hansel, come lie with me, like the Old Woman taught us when we were children," I said. He closed the door and leaned against it. "You're not my wife, Gretel," he said. "I am more than your wife. I'm your sister."

Some people chuckle, but Nikki is impassioned by the words.

NIKKI

Hansel flinched and reached for the door handle. I knew he would not leave this place. He would relent and choose to be inside me like he had many nights before. If not, I would have fileted his meaty forearm, rolled it like a stick of licorice, and inserted his flesh between my legs.

Laughter turns to unease. Nikki sets her phone down, reciting the remainder from memory.

NIKKI

Hansel is my soul, A love only the
branch of a willow tree could
conjure.

Nikki looks at Bear. We cut to Bear. Wait, The One Wish Willow? Bear's eyes flood with thought. It's magic?

NIKKI

"Brother, you will be inside me
tonight." I went to him at the wall
and reached for his sharp
shoulders. His eyes were on the
door, but his hands grabbed my
hips.

She sits.

NIKKI

New book I'm working on. I don't
have to drink now.

The room remains SILENT. Finally, Chris speaks up.

CHRIS

(awkward)
It's your turn, Joe.

JOE

Well, that means it's Bear's turn
because we switched spots.

BEAR

Oh shit. Okay.

Bear reads a brick, his face pales. He glances at Nikki, who leans forward with anticipation. Then, he looks at Ian.

BEAR

Kiss the person to your left.

It's Sarah. "Oohs" and "wows" ripple through the crowd as Nikki swiftly rises, capturing everyone's attention. Moving deliberately, she stops behind Sarah, who sits in a metal fold-up chair.

Discomfort thickens as Nikki grabs Sarah's chair, pausing tensely before dragging it back, the creak echoing through the room. Settling into Sarah's place, she puckers up childishly, eyes tightly shut.

Bear scans the shocked faces before leaning in to kiss Nikki. Tears stream down her closed eyes as she sobs heavily, the rhythm like a broken record. Her head sways until she composes herself enough to speak.

NIKKI

No one on this earth will ever
comprehend what it feels like to
love someone as much as I love you.

Nikki rises, words catching in her throat.

NIKKI

(now to the crowd)
And everyone in this room will
die...
(looking at Ian)
never feeling the strength of
connection I have felt with my
Bear.

Ian shoots Nikki an almost hurt look. She returns to her original seat in silence.

IAN

(somber, nearly a whisper)
Nikki, are you okay?

NIKKI

I'm just kidding, guys.

Some relief in the room, but still quiet.

NIKKI

(defiant)
Okay, fine, I'm not kidding. Live
with it.

Speechless and uncomfortable, no one stirs. The focus shifts to Bear, visibly shaken, his gaze fixed on Nikki.

IAN (O.S.)

Uhm, who wants Jell-O shots?

No one.

REGGIE (O.S.)

I'll take one.

IAN (O.S.)

Okay. Thank you, Reggie.

We hear Ian stand up. His voice sounds distant.

IAN (O.S.)
Any other takers?

Nikki locks eyes with Bear, guilt washing over her. Suddenly, she JOLTS back into her body, the TRUE NIKKI emerging.

She moves abruptly, frantically searching for ANYTHING that could hurt her. A vodka bottle. She SMASHES it on the table. Everyone jerks back in fear.

NIKKI
(begging)
IT'S NOT ME! PLEASE!

After several attempts, the glass shatters. She grabs the broken end of the bottle and stabs it into her face.

IAN (O.S.)
STOP!! STOP!!

The blunt glass FAILS to puncture, causing damage nonetheless. She manages one more stab before switching back to HAPPY NIKKI.

She drops the glass. Everyone is up, some cower in the corners.

NIKKI
Oh my god. Ian, I'm so sorry.

Blood drips from various wounds on her face.

IAN (O.S.)
Bear, she needs help.

IAN (O.S.)
You need to take her to a hospital, Bear.

SARAH (O.S.)
Nikki you need to go to the hospital.

Bear is horrified, a deep worry settling in. He knows exactly what that was.

NIKKI (O.S.)
Okay, I'm Ok. I am so sorry guys.
Oh my god. It's ok. It was a joke.
I'm leaving. I'm sorry.

Nikki's voice is distant.

NIKKI (O.S.)
Come on, babe.

Everyone looks at Bear. His tail between his legs, he can't make eye contact.

54 INT. CAR (MOVING) - LATER 54

Nikki rests her broken face on Bear's shoulder as he drives. She looks desperate, clinging on for dear life. Then her face morphs to pure affection, then panic again. Bear is frightened and miserable.

55 EXT. HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER 55

From afar we see Bear and a NURSE try to get a reluctant Nikki out of his car. Nikki pushes Bear off of her, refusing to go. A wheel chair off to the side.

Bear pulls the Nurse off to the side.

While they talk, Nikki gets out of the car and begins to do a little *dance*.

The Nurse ultimately refuses to take Nikki *because of the principle of informed consent.*

56 INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 56

Bear and Nikki sit at opposite ends of the dinner table.
Frustrated, Bear bows his head.

After a moment, Nikki approaches, sitting beside Bear. She gently places her hand on his. He tolerates it briefly before standing up abruptly.

NIKKI
Where ya going?

BEAR
I'm just going to the bathroom,
Nikki.

NIKKI
Can I stand outside?

A beat.

BEAR
Nikki... why did you do that? Why
did you act that way tonight?

NIKKI
I know. I said I'm sorry.

BEAR
You're scaring everyone. And you
hurt yourself. Look at your face.

NIKKI
Bear, I don't know... I just get
nervous. I'm sorry. And I know
Sarah likes you.

Bear quickly turns around not facing her. Frustration wins.

BEAR
(yelling to himself)
FUCK! EVERYTHING WAS WORKING!
EVERYTHING WAS GOOD!

NIKKI
Bear?

BEAR
You're so normal! And so beautiful!
And then you...

NIKKI
What?

A long beat.

BEAR
Do you like me?

NIKKI
What do you mean? I love you, Bear.

BEAR
No, like... Do you even like me?

Bear's guilt and frustrations fuel his questions.

BEAR
Are you happy? Is *Nikki* happy?

Nikki, confused, looks as if she has an idea. She then turns
and gives a charming downward smile.

NIKKI
(childish)
I'm your Freaky Nikki.

Bear recoils, overwhelmed by guilt, and walks away.

57 INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 57

NIKKI
Where're you going?

BEAR
NIKKI! I'm going to the bathroom!
Can I do that?

NIKKI
Can you tell me you love me?

A beat.

BEAR
This is all I've ever wanted.

NIKKI
Me too.

BEAR
No it's not!

NIKKI
Yes, it is! It's always been you
Bear.

Convincing. Bear begins to tear up.

BEAR
I want this to work so bad.

NIKKI
It can! It can!

BEAR
But you can't act like this
anymore.

NIKKI
I promise I won't. I swear.

BEAR
Maybe you should go home tonight.

NIKKI
Nooooooooo, please don't make me go
home, please!

BEAR
We just need a little space Nikki.
It's not crazy for couples to have
space!

NIKKI

But I don't want space. What can I
do? Tell me what I should do!
Please!

Bear's eyes well up. What happened to his friend? Nikki
cries, tears streaking pink over dried blood.

BEAR

Just be normal! Please!

Nikki straightens up. A desperate attempt to be "normal."

NIKKI

(desperate)
I can be normal!

BEAR

Just be Nikki!

Nikki collapses, sobbing. But like a little child. Her words
sound SO GENUINE, making it hard not to comfort her.

NIKKI

Ok, I'm sorry! I *can* be! I *can* be!

NIKKI

(through the tears)
I can be anything you want me to
be.

Bear walks over and holds her now both on the ground.

BEAR

No! Don't say that.

NIKKI

I'll be anything you want.

BEAR

No... See! Nikki wouldn't- I just
want you to be Nikki!

NIKKI

Okay! Okay, let me be Nikki.

BEAR

You're not being like Nikki.

NIKKI

I can be Nikki, I'm sorry. I love
you, I'm sorry. I love you.

A beat. Nikki rests her head on Bear's shoulder.

BEAR
But it's not real.

NIKKI
What do you mean?!

BEAR
You didn't- It's not, real...

Nikki looks at Bear, her face a mess.

NIKKI
(genuine)
I love you in every reality, Bear.

She's CONVINCING. A tear falls from Bear's eye, overwhelmed with guilt. A meaningful beat.

BEAR
I love you too. So much.

Then **Nikki hops up walking backwards in slow motion** unsettling and inhumane. *Her lips don't match her words. Bear tumbles back.*

BEAR
What the fuck! Nikki Don't!

Nikki lands in the dining room, shifting in place—her movements strange and unsettling.

BEAR
(scared)
Nikki stop!

NIKKI
Rail my guts like Hansel fucks his sister!

BEAR
Nikki... please, please. You're scaring me!

NIKKI
(childish)
Don't be scared baby I would never hurt you. I love you... You showed me that.

BEAR
Hey, hey... Why don't you take the bed all for yourself tonight, and I'll go sleep at Ian's.

Nikki is so still—her next move, unpredictable. She fakes a run towards Bear, stops, and then—

NIKKI
(content)
Ok.

Nikki quickly exits the frame, heading into the kitchen. We hear rummaging off-screen.

BEAR
What are you doing!?

Nikki comes back with a small knife.

BEAR
Nikki what are you doing?

NIKKI
Well... if I have the bed all to myself tonight, I'll lay there warm. Until slowly, I feel cold. Like I walked into a freezer. My hands will start to feel like they're full of sand, like when you lay on them wrong. And that feeling will spread to my entire body. Moving my legs would be impossible. And you're still in my heart, but you're slipping. Any thoughts of regret or pain slip away like a chemical switch. And even though it's quiet in the room, somehow it gets quieter. It's not painful. You just let go of everything you were. Nothing's important and strangely it's okay. And then there's nothing. It's not dark, because dark's a color. It's just nothing. Or you could stay.

A long beat. Nikki lingers. Bear's guilt builds.

Nikki suddenly walks out of frame and into the bedroom. Bear, too scared to move, stays frozen.

Then, Nikki's body suddenly appears in the doorway, completely sideways. It's quick and silent, like a shadowy silhouette. A long, tense beat follows.

NIKKI
Come on.

Her body unnaturally slides out of frame, fast. The camera lingers on the empty doorway for too long, adding to the unease.

58 INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

58

Bear, wide awake, is cradled by Nikki who is fast asleep.

DING! Bear's phone blares. He quickly silences it and dims the brightness. A text from Sarah: *How is she?*

Bear checks Nikki's eyes. It's too dark to tell if she's awake.

A beat.

BEAR
(whisper)
Nikki...

No response.

Bear cautiously replies: *She's okay. Sleeping now.*

Sarah: *How are you?*

Bear ponders.

Bear: *pretty good actually. We worked things out.*

Sarah: *I need to tell you something.*

Sarah: *Multiple things...*

Sarah: *I'm at the park.*

Bear: I can't.

Sarah: It's important.

Bear carefully eyes Nikki, still sleeping.

Bear: just text me dude.

Sarah: If you don't come to me. I'm coming over.

He gently removes her arm from his shoulder and untangles her leg. Sneaking toward the hallway, he moves one foot at a time.

NIKKI(O.S.)
(a faint whisper)
Bear.

Bear freezes. He's fucked.

BEAR
(matching her volume)
I was getting water.

NIKKI (O.S.)
(whispering)
Kill me, Bear. Please.

Bear's entire face shifts as he slowly turns to face her. She lies in the same position. Her eyes seem closed, but it's too dark to tell.

BEAR
What?

NIKKI
She's sleeping... It's me.

Bear's eyes widen as the *friend he once knew* speaks.

BEAR
(normal volume)
You are you, Nikki?

NIKKI
(whisper)
Shh! *Please*, don't wake her.

Bear looks at her, then looks to the ground.

NIKKI
(whisper)
Kill me, Bear.

Too ashamed to look at her. his voice quivers as he talks.

BEAR
What would be so bad... What's so
bad about being with me?

A long beat.

NIKKI
I've never been with you, Bear.

Bear contemplates his actions. Slowly, he turns and exits the room. Despite her pleas, Bear shows no empathy.

NIKKI (O.S.)
(quietly begging)
Bear, please, please...

59 INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 59

Bear moves CAUTIOUSLY through the house, slipping his shoes on silently. He does *not* want to wake her.

60 EXT. FRANKLIN PARK - PARKING LOT - LATER 60

In an empty parking lot, only one SUV sits parked. Bear approaches and slides into the passenger seat.

61 INT. SARAH'S SUV - NIGHT 61

Sarah and Bear sit in the car. Sarah, in a purple flower dress, her tattoos accentuated by the soft lighting. The car is slightly filled with smoke, enhancing the intimate vibe.

BEAR

I didn't know you still did this.

SARAH

Did what?

BEAR

Parked at Franklin and chilled.

SARAH

Well, I don't really do this anymore... So what the fuck is up with Nikki?

Sarah takes a drag.

BEAR

Well...

Bear's stumped.

BEAR

She hasn't told many people this... but her dad's dying. So... I think she just is going through a lot.

SARAH

Jesus Christ. Isn't she like not close with him at all?

BEAR

No, they're close now... So, it's painful...

SARAH

I thought she hated her dad.

BEAR
Nope... She doesn't.

Lying through his teeth.

SARAH
Well, look, I know she and I aren't close anymore, but I *do* hope she figures it out. She seems pretty fucked up. I also don't think it's right that she's leaning on you.

A beat.

BEAR
What do you mean?

SARAH
Well, she's going through something very heavy, and she's totally relying on you. That's not healthy at all. Especially because her and-

BEAR
I don't mind being there for her-

SARAH
But that's not your responsibility. She needs therapy. And it's not okay for her to take advantage of you.

A beat.

BEAR
(confused)
She's not taking advantage of me.

Sarah's eyes have a secret.

SARAH
(changing the subject)
Hey, so I um, I got my letter.

BEAR
You got your letter from Luther?

Bear picks up a letter on the dash of the car.

SARAH
Yep. My last chance. I figured we could open it together?

BEAR

Oh shit!

SARAH

If I get in, I can work on my sketches, make 'em better. Open up my own shop. Maybe my dad will let me tattoo "successful daughter" where his hair is supposed to start.

Bear laughs.

BEAR

Can I pay you to do that?

Sarah laughs.

SARAH

We'll take him in his sleep.

BEAR

(playful)

I got sleeping pills in my pocket. We could do this tonight.

They laugh until it dies down.

BEAR

So, do you wanna open this thing or?

SARAH

I do.

Bear hands it to Sarah.

SARAH

I just, I need to tell you some things.

BEAR

Ok.

She fidgets and sighs, working up the nerve.

SARAH

I don't think you should be with Nikki.

Bear sits with this.

BEAR

Ok... why?

SARAH
I promised Ian I wouldn't tell you
this.

BEAR
What are you talking about?

SARAH
(ashamed)
Nikki and Ian have been hooking up
on and off for like 2 years.

Bear takes this in.

SARAH
It's super chill, and not romantic,
and Ian really does care about you,
Bear. But a few weeks ago, Ian cut
things off with Nikki, and she was
so... weird about it, Ian thinks
she's dating you to get back at
him.

Bear shakes his head in disapproval.

SARAH
And even if she's not. It's kind of
a shame, you know? I think you need
someone... more chill.

BEAR
Like you?

Bear sees Sarah differently now. He could've been with her,
genuinely. Maybe it's not too late?

SARAH
Well... you know, I was to your
left.

BEAR
What?

SARAH
In the game, I was to your left.

BEAR
(smiling)
Oh.

SARAH
You were supposed to kiss me.

Not far behind Sarah, we see NIKKI running head-first into the driver-side window. Glass shatters. Nikki wedges a BRICK against the steering wheel, then grabs Sarah by the hair, relentlessly smashing her face in. Each blow triggers the horn, caving Sarah's SKULL deeper inside out.

Bear, in TOTAL SHOCK, presses himself against the passenger door. Nikki, without looking up, STOPS. Her hair, covered in brain matter, obscures her face as she breathes deeply.

NIKKI

I'm sorry you had to see that, but
it's kinda your fault.

Bear dares not speak. Nikki keeps her head down.

NIKKI

My heart took a path I never chose.
Just remember that.

BLOOD runs down her forehead from the window's impact.

NIKKI

(crying)
You wanted this, but I'm so glad
you did. I'm so glad you did, baby.
Thank you.

Bear, paralyzed by shock, incapable of a retort. She advances to his side of the car, wrenches the door open. Bear recoils, instinctively bracing for a imminent burst of violence.

NIKKI

No, no, no, no. It's okay. I'm so
glad you did, baby. I'm so happy
I'm yours.

Bear breaks down, crying. Nikki holds him.

NIKKI

(consoling)
Oh, no no no baby. It's okay, baby.
I've got you, that's all that
matters. We need each other... We
need each other and there is an
after, Sarah is fine. I know
baby... I'm sorry. And you know
what? I'm going to help you.

Bear shakes his head no, unable to speak.

NIKKI

Yes baby, you're gonna have to help
me get rid of her, baby-

BEAR
(groaning)
No no no no no.

NIKKI
Honey, this is your fault. I'm
sorry but Sarah is your fault, but
I'm gonna- you know what? I'm gonna
help you fix this. Okay? I'm here
for you. We can fix this, baby. I
forgive you, I won't hold it
against you, but we have to get rid
of her, okay?

Nikki pulls back from Bear, locking eyes. Bear, drenched in
Sarah's blood.

NIKKI
Shake your head "Yes."

Bear cries and shakes his head "No."

NIKKI
We have to get rid of this tiny,
gross body. Yes, yes, yes.

Bear continues to shake his head.

NIKKI
Nod your head "Yes."

Bear, realizing he has no choice, nods yes.

62 **EXT. CASSELL'S MUSIC - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT**

62

Nikki exits the store with a giant tuba case. Bear and Nikki
fold Sarah's naked body into it, adding sandbags. They place
her in the trunk of her SUV.

Bear re-enters the store, leaving Nikki alone with the body.
She glances inside to confirm Bear's distraction, then back
at the body; up to something.

63 **INT. CASSELL'S MUSIC - BREAK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

63

Bear sits at the table, dark and quiet. The sound of tape
being wrapped around a tuba case fills the air, then stops
abruptly as Nikki enters.

NIKKI

She's ready, baby. Why don't you go home? I'll take care of it from here.

Bear doesn't look up.

64 **EXT. VIEWPOINT - SUNRISE**

64

A breathtaking sunrise illuminates the foothills. Bear sits in his car, solitary. He retrieves SARAH'S LETTER from his pocket, hesitates, then unfolds it.

Dear Sarah Harper, Congratulations! On behalf of the Admissions Committee, it is with great pleasure, I extend to you an offer of admission to the Luther Art School for the upcoming academic year.

Bear's tears flow silently. Regret consumes him. After a moment, he lifts his head, resolute, ready to fix his mistakes. He lets out a scream.

65 **EXT. CRYSTAL SHOP - PARKING LOT - SUNRISE**

65

Bear hops out of his car and storms into the shop.

66 **INT. CRYSTAL SHOP - MORNING**

66

Bear heads straight for the One Wish Willow section. It's empty.

BEAR

No. No. No.

Bear storms over to the clerk, noticing it's a different worker.

BEAR

Where are they?! The One Wish Willow's!

HARRY

The what?

BEAR

Please! Please, tell me you have them! Where are they? THE ONE WISH WILLOWS?

HARRY

What's a One Wish Willow?

BEAR

NOOOO!

Harry, 34, oddball, points behind the counter.

HARRY

I'm fucking you. Sir, don't come in here with this. It's too early. We moved them. They're right here.

BEAR

Oh.

Three One Wish Willows left.

HARRY

Yeah, Yeah. You made a shitty wish, and you want to reverse it. You don't have to storm in here with this energy. Have you called the number on the back?

BEAR

(frantic)

What the fuck! What the fuck is *wrong* with you?!

HARRY

Me?

BEAR

How can you sell this to people?

HARRY

The box is *full* of warnings, man.

BEAR

Fuck YOU!

HARRY

(scolding)

Hey, fuck you man!

Bear catches his reflection in an aged, dirty mirror behind the front desk. Bloodied, dirt-streaked, his eyes blaze with madness.

BEAR

Nobody would- how... I'm sorry...

Bear, overwhelmed by emotion, collapsing to the ground.

BEAR
(balling)
I'm sorry. I'm so so so so sorry.

HARRY
Oh god... What did you do?

Bear can't speak.

HARRY
(checking the store to
make sure they're alone)
Oh, god.

BEAR
(through the tears)
She's obsessed with me.

HARRY
(comforting)
Oh... Well, that's not so bad.

It gets a lot worse...

BEAR
(breathing hard)
Help me reverse it.

HARRY
Noooo.

BEAR
I'm gonna make another wish.

HARRY	BEAR
(comforting)	
You know you can't do that.	No no no Please.
You knew that going in, man.	
You knew you couldn't-	I didn't know-

HARRY
You knew. Even if you didn't know,
you knew.

BEAR
No, this isn't right.

HARRY
At this point, I mean if you want
to make it right, sounds to me like
you have a moral obligation to be
there for her.

This hits Bear.

BEAR
But she doesn't really want me.

HARRY
Right... But she really does. And
she would be miserable if you left
her.

BEAR
Right...

HARRY
As looong as you live.

Bear slowly looks up.

BEAR
As long as I live?

HARRY
I mean, one day when you die the
wish will go away.

Bear thinks about this. No no no.

BEAR
And there's nothing else I can do?

HARRY
Maybe if someone else made a wish
that contradicted your wish?

Bear snaps into a realization. He's not listening to the man anymore, breathing hard.

HARRY
Could ask her to do it? If it's for
you, she might? You could die? You
could kill
yourself?

67 **EXT. CRYSTAL SHOP (PARKING LOT) - LATER**

67

Bear leaves the shop, three One Wish Willow boxes in his shirt, eyes burning with determination and anger.

68 **INT. BEAR'S CAR - CONTINUOUS**

68

Bear gets into his car, taking a deep breath. He opens one of the One Wish Willows.

BEAR
I wish, Nikki Freeman... Only liked
me as a friend.

Bear tugs at the stick. It won't break. He pulls harder,
straining, until he hurts himself. The stick remains
unbroken.

69 **EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - DAY**

69

Bear knocks on Ian's door. Ian finally answers.

IAN
Hi Baron, Texted you fifty times.

He lets himself in.

70 **INT. IAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

70

IAN
(sarcastically)
Come on in.

BEAR
Ok, so you know how Nikki-

IAN
Oh god. Is she ok?

BEAR
She's fucked-

IAN
Why is Sarah- She's fucked? Why is
Sarah texting me to come to your
house over and over?

BEAR
What! FUCK FUCK!

Bear turns around to leave.

IAN
What the fuck is happening? Is
Nikki okay? Sarah's texting all
this weird shit! Look at these
texts!

BEAR
UGH! Just... NO don't come over.

Bear attempts to leave again.

IAN
(worried)
Bear TELL ME What the fuck is going
on!

Bear, frustrated, looks down at his One Wish Willow. It's his only chance. Ian is bracing himself for bad news.

BEAR
(declaring)
Okay, Nikki all of a sudden started
liking me out of nowhere and acting
all weird.

Ian waits for more.

BEAR
Yes or no.

IAN
(terrified)
Uhh yeah? Bear what are you about
to tell me. Oh god. Is she ok?

BEAR
I made a wish... I broke this piece
of wood. And at first, I was really
confused, but it's real.

IAN
(confused)
Uh, what?

Bear rubs his face and sighs.

BEAR
You can make a wish. YOU! You can
make *one* wish. And it's REAL! And
it'll work. I wished Nikki loved
me, and I didn't think it was *real*
or that it was gonna work! But
dude, that is why she's acting
insane. Like think about how
drastically she changed.

Ian takes this in.

IAN
Okay, what did you take her *to*? A
psychic, what?

BEAR
Huh?

Ian tries to make sense of the nonsense.

IAN
What did you- what's this program?

BEAR
No! It's not a program, Ian. It's
god fuckin magic.

IAN BEAR
Is this a joke to you? It's fucking real dude!

Ian grabs the box. Intrigued.

IAN
This?

BEAR
YES! Yes! I made a wish. And it's
horrible. And I need it-

IAN
(playing along)
Make another wish-

BEAR
No, you *can't*! You can't. You only
get one wish. But it's real.

A long beat.

BEAR
It's real, Ian.

Ian doesn't know what to say.

BEAR
So, I need you to wish... that *I*
never made a wish. And you can be
with Nikki, okay?!

IAN
So that's what this is about?

BEAR
No! NO!

IAN
I was gonna tell you, but dude-

BEAR
I don't CARE! I don't fucking care
about that!

(MORE)

BEAR (CONT'D)

Just open the box- but you gotta be careful how you word it... Maybe say-

Ian opens up the package. Sparks Fly!

BEAR

Woah. WOAHH! Okay, okay! Say, I wish my friend Baron never made-

IAN

(mocking)

I wish for a billion dollars.

Ian pops the stick!

BEAR

NOOOO!

Stacks of hundred-dollar bills RAIN FROM THE CEILING, covering Bear and Ian. Bear drops to his knees, defeated.

Ian's jaw drops in DISBELIEF. Bear, teeth clenched, endures the barrage of bills, flinching yet maintaining eye contact with Ian.

Bear stands, a switch flips. Wiping away tears, angry and determined, he leaves the house.

71 **EXT. IAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

71

The door remains open as Bear walks away, money still falling inside the house.

72 **INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

72

Bear, cautious but determined, enters with the One Wish Willow in hand. The room is stark and unsettling.

BEAR

NIKKI! Nikki! I need you to do something for me!

The table is set up like a shrine in his memory - flowers, a prominent photo of Bear and Nikki. Ian and Sarah are CUT from the pictures. A collection of Bear's life - personal items, childhood photos. Bear's gaze sweeps over the eerie homage.

BEAR

(freaked out)

You'll do anything for me, right...

Bear opens a One Wish Willow. In the background, a dark figure subtly appears—she was there all along. The shape dances closer, moving with an eerie, joyful rhythm, its unsettling presence creeping nearer.

BEAR
I need you to...

Bear finally looks up to see, right in the corner ottoman, SARAH'S LIFELESS AND NAKED BODY sitting upright, eerily stiff.

NIKKI
I'll do everything for you baby.

He freezes at the sight, then slowly turns around. Nikki stands there, holding the brick she used to kill Sarah.

NIKKI
She had to see us...

Nikki's head, covered in dried blood, has a brownish tint. She's in Sarah's floral dress, with Sarah's tattoos crudely copied onto her arm and chest. Casually, she takes a drag from a joint.

BEAR
Nikki.

She inhales over and over again, aggressively sucking the smoke into her lungs. Suddenly, a knock on the door.

IAN (O.S.)
Bear what the fuck is happening!

She starts to cough. Instead of putting it out, she slides the lit joint into her mouth, wincing at the brief pain and swallowing the joint.

NIKKI
You like me better now?

BEAR
No.

NIKKI
You love me better now, Bear?

BEAR
NO, NIKKI!

NIKKI
 (desperate whine)
 Why don't you love me?
 (Whining child)
 WHY CAN'T YOU LOVE ME?!

Nikki takes the brick and SMASHES HER HEAD in the same way she killed Sarah.

BEAR
 STOP! NIKKI STOP! YOU DON'T LOVE ME!

She throws the brick on the ground and *walks towards Bear*. Her face is a grotesque mosaic of blood and viscera. As she walk toward Bear she falls in and out of consciousness like she's falling asleep and then waking back up.

NIKKI
 (Whining)
 God I wanna eat you up. I want to be just like you.
 (yelling)
 STOP STOP!
 (suddenly nervous and worried)
 I want to smell like you. Bear, I wanna wear your skin.

Ian opens the front door, *letting himself in*.

NIKKI
 I'll shoot myself, Bear! I'll kill myself right in front of you!

Nikki draws a tiny silver revolver from her underwear – the same one from the music shop.

IAN (O.S.)
 What the fuck!

BEAR
 No, I love you Nikki!

Nikki SHOOTS IAN IN THE HEAD and gets right in Bear's face. So close she could kiss him.

NIKKI
 I'll rip my FUCKING EYES OUT OF MY SKULL and stick the BARREL IN MY PUSSY, BEAR!

Bear falls back onto the couch. Nikki VOMITS ON BEAR, mostly stomach acid from the lack of food.

BEAR
I love you. I love you, Nikki. I
love you.

Nikki SCREAMS in Bear's face, blood and spit flying from her mouth.

NIKKI
SCREAM IT!

BEAR
I LOVE YOU! I LOVE YOU!

Nikki falls on top of Bear, crying.

NIKKI
(through the tears)
I knew you did... I knew you did,
baby. You owe me that. You owe me
that.

We stay close up on Bear.

BEAR
(playing along)
We can make it work baby.

NIKKI
Yes, I know we can. I'm gonna heal.

BEAR
I'll make it work. I'll make it
work. I'll have to. I'll make it
work.

NIKKI
You have to baby, and I'm sorry for
the theatrics... Don't know why I
do that. I know you love me and I'm
gonna heal.

Bear looks at Nikki. He knows she is his only choice.

BEAR
(to himself)
I'll make this work.

NIKKI
I'll be pretty again, I promise.

BEAR
(up to something)
I know Nikki.

NIKKI
I'm sorry-

BEAR
You're beautiful-

NIKKI
We can be together forever and ever
and ever and ever.

Bear then realizes these words. No, he can't do it. He shakes his head no.

NIKKI
What?

BEAR
Let's take a shower. Freshen up.
Okay?

NIKKI
Okay, yeah, why did you shake your
head?

Bear heads to the bathroom, with Nikki closely following.

NIKKI
Say you love me!

BEAR
I love you.

73 INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

73

He *quickly* shuts the bathroom door behind him, *locking Nikki out*.

NIKKI (O.S.)
NO. Fuck you, Bear. Let me in!

BEAR
I'll only be a second!

Nikki hammers on the door, relentless and fierce. Bear slumps over the sink, a picture of defeat, staring down.

BEAR
Babe! Just give me a second to
freshen up. I'm embarrassed.

Nikki continues to bang through out the scene.

NIKKI (O.S.)

NOOOOO!

Bear lacks the energy to cry. He stares at his reflection; a stranger. Digging into his pocket, he retrieves Nikki's tiger's eye, gripping it as guilt engulfs him.

A second reach finds Nikki's gun. He points it at his chest, pondering the pain. His fingers search for bone; something feels wrong.

NIKKI

Bear! What are you doing?!

He lowers the weapon, yet despair remains. He places it in his mouth, checking his aim by touching the back of his head, then tilts the gun upward, aiming for the brain.

NO.

He places the gun on the cabinet, eyes the door, then, with a thought, slips it back into his pocket—just in case.

He glances at his reflection and opens the medicine cabinet.

A note on the pill bottle that says: kill yourself. Please.

NIKKI

Bear! Don't do it!

He grabs the pills. He swallows as many as he can, then one more for good measure. Sitting on the toilet, he realizes there's no turning back.

NIKKI

(screaming)

NOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!NOOOOOOOOOOOO!

Suddenly, a spark ignites within him, the world snapping into focus. It's as if a SPELL has been cast. His eyes widen, and he rises from the toilet, staring at the bathroom door with fierce determination, desperate to reach something beyond it.

74

INT. BEAR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

74

Bear slowly walks out into the hallway with vigor and desperation. He sees Nikki from across the house smiling at him. He smiles back. They laugh together.

It's a total "Rom-Com" moment... minus the blood, wounds, and terrifying undertones.

He slowly approaches and she extends her arms like a child. He leans in and kisses her. *A longing for togetherness. His face becomes covered in blood as he kisses her broken jaw.*

We slowly pan over to reveal, on the table, a freshly used ONE WISH WILLOW. We can tell by its placement that NIKKI used it. Bear collapses onto the couch.

NIKKI

No, no, no, no.

(whining)

What did you do? Bear?

Music starts to play, offering a creepy *optimistic* feel in juxtaposition to the terror in front of us. Nikki, now clutching Bear's lifeless form, cradles him with profound sorrow.

NIKKI

(whispers)

Bear no! No no no no no no no!

What did you do? Baby no!

She quickly puts the gun in her mouth. Right before pulling the trigger, her eyes widen - as if the real Nikki is free!

She starts hyperventilating, looking around at her surroundings. The real Nikki is free. She pushes Bear's dead body off her. She notices the pistol in her hand and throws it to the ground.

Now what..?

The camera slowly tilts down to Bear's lifeless body. It continues down, upside down on the TV. The camera stays fixed on the screen as the credits roll.

THE END