

AUDITION

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ALEX SMALL picks up his bag. His steps cautious though not timid.

In the background another actor slides over and takes Alex's seat.

The script in hand, the paper twitching from his shake.

Tom and the other judges tap their pens.

The clock ticks. The beat gathers.

7

**EXT. EMPTY ROAD - DAY**

7

The sounds of the run escalate.

CAMERA PANS UP FROM THE DAMP TARMAC.

TOM (V.O.)  
Name. Candidate number.

The voice of ALEX SMALL, strong as an actor's should be, but there's a degree of doubt in his tone.

ALEX (V.O.)  
Alex Small.

8

**INT. PRACTICE ROOM 1 - DAY**

8

ALEX'S FACE OCCUPIES THE FRAME.

ALEX  
Candidate number one-five-two.

Alex is a soft looking young man. He's a second- or third-year English student, just turned 20.

He's uneasy.

Soundtrack still building.

Door opens. Alex glances over. Camera pans, catching the door slamming then bringing ELLIOT into the shot.

Elliot is a slender, Machiavellian figure. He's older, perhaps 23 or 24.

The soundtrack collapses into an almost deafening chaos.





13H      **EXT. MARKET SQUARE - NIGHT**      13H

13I      OMITTED      13I

13J      **EXT. PREBENDS BRIDGE - NIGHT**      13J

            ZOOM SHOT, TRACKING ALEX OVER THE BRIDGE.

13K      **EXT. RAMP DOWN TO PREBEND'S BRIDGE - NIGHT**      13K

13L      **EXT. TOP OF ST. MARY'S DRIVE - NIGHT**      13L

            DISTANT SHOT FROM OTHER END OF THE DRIVE. NO ZOOM.

13M      **EXT. ST. MARY'S MAIN FOOTPATH APPROACH**      13M

13N      **EXT. UK MAP BY BILL BRYSON - NIGHT**      13N

            PAN UP FROM UK IN PAVEMENT.

14      **EXT. LIBRARY - NIGHT**      14

            Alex reaches his final destination, the University Library.

15A      **INT. LIBRARY LOCATION 1 - NIGHT**      15A

            Soundtrack fades.

            Study space is moderately busy.

            QUICK CUTS OF STUDENTS TURNING PAGES, WRITING NOTES, TYPING  
            ETC.

            Anxiety holds the room.

            Alex is returning books and he catches sight of a girl  
            sorting through and scanning books.

            He approaches.

ALEX

Is anyone sat here?

OLIVIA (LIV) WARING turns from her work, eyes him down subtly and cracks a slight smile, the kind that would show cheek dimples even after a tired day of work.

Liv is quietly attractive. Calm. Friendly. They know each other from around but this is the first time they speak.

LIV

No. No... No one's sat here.

Alex sits down, unpacking his stuff cautiously. After a few moments of starting his own work, Alex looks over at her books.

ALEX

Hey'd you do English, right?

LIV

Yeah, yeah I do...

ALEX

(smiles)

Liv smiles back at him but says nothing, continuing to scan her work.

Alex tries to peek over to Liv's work discreetly, or so he thinks. Liv can feel him doing this...

They both sit working in silence for a moment. There's an awkward tension in the air.

Liv spins her head toward Alex, resting it on the back of her knuckle. She opens her mouth but a moment passes before she talks.

LIV

Umm... hey... I'm gonna get going,  
gotta grab some food.

Alex, stumbled that Liv has taken the lead in the conversation.

ALEX

Yeah -- sure... okay.

Beat.

Alex realises the moment to ask her if he could join has vanished.



-----  
 Liv packs up her stuff and turns away to leave. Alex is trying his best not to look around, to see her leave but still glances around briefly, like an unshakable urge.

While Liv packs up Alex glances down at her notepad before she puts it away to see her name. It's about the most courageous thing he could manage.

Liv turns briefly, at this moment Alex notices she's left her pen on the table.

LIV  
 By the way I'm...

ALEX (CONT'D)  
 Liv.  
 (His voice peters,  
 realising what he's just  
 said)

LIV (CONT'D)  
 - (I'm) Liv.

Liv's slightly confused, possibly creeped out, but she doesn't mind.

Liv tracks back to collect her pen.

LIV (CONT'D)  
 You already knew my name?

Alex shrinks awkwardly and tries to compose himself.

ALEX  
 (Awkward laugh)  
 Ohhh... err... I just saw-

Points tentatively at his pad.

LIV  
 (laughs affectionately)  
 Don't worry. Maybe I knew your  
 name.

She says cheekily, maybe a wink.

LIV (CONT'D)  
 It's...

Liv tees up Alex.

ALEX  
 Alex.

LIV  
- Right, yeah, of course!

Liv smiles, takes a half step back, clutching her books to her chest.

LIV (CONT'D)  
Well Alex, nice to meet you.  
(warmly)  
See you around.

She turns before Alex can respond. Alex can't decide what to make of her, nor that encounter.

15B **INT. LIBRARY LOCATION 1 - LATER**

15B

Alex still working in the same spot. A hand presses on his shoulder, it's his sister, ABBIE SMALL.

Abbie has that sororal kindness, but she's quick witted and sharper than Alex. She's also more mature than her age suggests.

ABBIE  
Alexander.

Alex turns, familiar with the voice.

ALEX  
Oh... Errr... Hey sis.

ABBIE  
You forgot, didn't you?

ALEX  
(glances at time)  
Oh... err yeah.  
(beat)  
I lost track of time.

Abbie's unsurprised.

ABBIE  
Let's go.

She gestures to the exit.

ALEX  
But I barely-

Alex's response is futile. Abbie is already on her way out.

He reluctantly packs his things.

16

**EXT. RIVERSIDE - MOMENTS LATER**

16

Alex and Abbie are walking down the riverside.

ABBIE  
Mum phoned last night.

ALEX  
Oh yeah?

ABBIE  
Yeah. She was celebrating.

ALEX  
How come?

ABBIE  
Like ten of her students got into  
Cambridge this year.

ALEX  
Wow. And the rest?

ABBIE  
The rest got near perfect SAT  
scores-

ALEX  
I meant the rest of the  
conversation. ~~Besides the  
achievements of her students?~~

ABBIE  
She wanted to know about  
interviews, my grades.

ALEX  
They going ok?

ABBIE  
Yeah. Things are going good. I'm on  
track, got some interviews lined up  
at a few firms.

ALEX  
That's great.

ABBIE  
(Ponderous)  
I can't believe that class.

ALEX  
Yeah. Anything about me?

ABBIE  
(stutters  
uncharacteristically)  
...The usual.

ALEX  
Which is?

Alex, wearing his insecurity.

ABBIE  
(sighs)  
I mean, what do you want to hear?

ALEX  
What's that supposed to mean?

ABBIE  
You know exactly (what it means).

ALEX  
No... I don't. Wait, how are her  
all her students getting perfect-

ABBIE  
-Near perfect.

ALEX  
Near perfect SAT scores? Is Bill  
Gates in her class?

ABBIE  
Possibly -- or Ted Kaczynski.

ALEX  
Who?

ABBIE  
Doesn't matter.

ALEX  
So - she's making what?

ABBIE  
What'does it matter?  
(beat)  
What was I supposed to say to her?  
I never hear from you and when I  
do...  
(contemplates next word)

ALEX  
What?

ABBIE  
I don't hear from you.

ALEX  
You do.

ABBIE  
I don't.

ALEX  
I've been studying.

ABBIE  
Like just then?

ALEX  
That was one time.

ABBIE  
Really?

ALEX  
Yeah.

ABBIE  
There's not some half-lived dream  
brewing?

ALEX  
(beat)  
Half-lived?

ABBIE  
Yeah. ~~What's it this time?~~  
Musician? Politician?

ALEX  
Wait. No. Half-lived. What's that  
mean?

ABBIE  
Really?

ALEX  
Yeah, really.

ABBIE  
Just one of your... your dreams.

Alex, defensive.

ALEX  
... This isn't that.

ABBIE

Ok. Fine.  
(resigned from the point)  
What is it?

ALEX

Theatre -- well, acting.

ABBIE

I thought you stopped that at school.

ALEX

I did.

ABBIE

I thought...

ALEX

I know, I got over it.

ABBIE

You sure?  
(beat)  
But why now?

ALEX

What'does it matter?

ABBIE

It doesn't, I guess.

ALEX

Maybe I just decided to.  
(beat)  
Sure mum would love to hear that.

ABBIE

Are you in anything?

ALEX

I should be. Auditioned for Dr  
Faustus today.

ABBIE

For student theatre?

ALEX

Yeah.

ABBIE

Mum won't mind -- she'll think  
you're distracted again. What part  
did you go for?

ALEX  
(frustrated)  
Again.  
(beat)  
Faustus or Mephistopheles. -  
(defensive)  
I'm going to be a main role.

ABBIE  
Yeah. Yeah. I know the parts.  
(pause)  
Who's directing?

ALEX  
Tom Sutton. He's done-

ABBIE  
I know who he is.

ALEX  
It's being viewed by an agency in  
London.

Abbie takes this in.

ABBIE  
Oh really?

ALEX  
I can handle it.

ABBIE  
(tired)  
I know...

They slow down. They've reached their departing point.

ABBIE (CONT'D)  
You'll be fine.

Abbie steps away.

ABBIE (CONT'D)  
Just maybe don't tell mum yet. Wait  
until Easter.

ALEX  
That's after the play?

ABBIE  
(empathetic)  
Just... wait until then.

17A      **EXT. ALEX'S HOUSE - NIGHT**      17A

Alex walks up the empty street to his student home and unlocks the door.

17B      **INT. ALEX'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**      17B

The house is empty.

It's a typical student house: messy, poorly furnished but well lived in. He feels empty inside, moving with a slight lethargy. He's tired and without company.

Soundtrack plays - it's slow, meditative.

17C      **INT. ALEX'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT**      17C

Alex sits alone eating a bland meal.

17D      **INT. ALEX'S KITCHEN - NIGHT**      17D

SHOT FROM BEHIND OF ALEX WASHING UP. SLOW PAN.

17E      **INT. ALEX'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**      17E

Alex is taking notes on a lecture capture on his laptop. It's boring, he's disinterested.

17F      **INT. ALEX'S BATHROOM - NIGHT**      17F

He goes into the bathroom and brushes his teeth. We get a shot of him looking blankly into the mirror.

17G      **INT. ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**      17G

Alex has changed into shorts and a T for bed.

On his bedside table there's a 35mm film camera.

Alex walks into his room, puts his bag down and opens the laptop. A video interview with an actor, say Benedict Cumberbatch or Marlon Brando, is playing on his laptop. He places it on the far side of his bed and lies on the near side.

HE LIES, WATCHING IT ON HIS SIDE FROM A WIDE SHOT.



A CLOSE UP SHOT REVEALS HE'S NOT REALLY WATCHING THE VIDEO - HIS GAZE IS DISTRACTED.

The light from the laptop, flickering on his face: it's a lucid image.

The room is still.

The audio from the video playing distantly in the background.

He reaches across and closes the laptop.

CUT TO BLACK.

18

**INT. PRACTICE ROOM 1 - DAY**

18

It's casual. There are about eight to ten actors sitting around. They're exchanging banter.

OLLIE

Can you believe he did that?

DAVID

What a prick.

CHARLIE

She cheated on him anyway.

DAVID

Yeah. But that's Josie, you know what she's like.

OLLIE

All too well.

DAVID

I mean, he's not much better.

Alex is sat there nervous. He's not really listening to the background conversation. The sound of a clock ticking is building in the background and the dialogue is becoming more muffled.

The other actors continue to chat.

David turns to Alex. His voice grounds Alex's detached state.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Hey, who'd you reckon will get the part?

Alex turns, shaken a little.

ALEX  
Ummm... I'm not sure.

David assess Alex.

DAVID  
You're new, aren't you?

ALEX  
No.

DAVID  
Oh yeah?

ALEX  
Yeah. I've been in a couple of productions.

DAVID  
Oh sorry. Which company have you acted for?

ALEX  
(embarrassed)  
... Errr... Well, they were at school.

DAVID  
Oh right...  
(pause)  
I wouldn't worry. I remember my first play last year, No Exit. It was so much fun, I was the devil...  
(Alex zones out)  
the whole thing was a nice joke around.

Alex is displeased at the mention of low-quality work.

ALEX  
Ok. With Tom it'll be different though?

DAVID  
How'd you mean?

ALEX  
More serious.

DAVID  
(chuckles)  
Yeah. You'll see.

OLLIE  
 (enters conversation)  
 I'd be amazed if Charlie and  
 Camille aren't our leads.

DAVID  
 Camille's already got into Rada.

OLLIE  
 Yeah and Charlie was on Channel  
 Four when he was younger.

Charlie re-engages with the conversation, saying confidently.

CHARLIE  
 It was only a small role in a three-  
 time series.

OLLIE  
 (quips)  
 Yeah. That aired on Sunday's at  
 eight.

ALEX  
 Right...

The conversation peters out in anticipation of 10am. Alex  
 looks on nervously. The clock-ticking louder and somehow  
 slower as the hand turns towards the hour.

Door slams open exactly at 10:01. (Count to three as actors  
 wait)

Tom enters with notepad in hand.

TOM  
 Good morning.

Actors sit unmoved.

Tom opens his notepad and looks down the list. Then shuts it  
 again.

TOM (CONT'D)  
 Well done on making it this far.  
 It's high stakes from now on, if  
 you can't take it, go do some  
 amateur production yeah?  
 (flicks hand dismissively)

The actors nod like school children to a teacher.

TOM (CONT'D)  
 Right. Here's the list.

Tom holds up a list on a sheet of paper. Too small to read, he brings it back down to his pad and reads...

TOM (CONT'D)  
Ollie, you're scholar two.

Ollie smiles.

Alex sat focused on the ground, listening intensely.

TOM (CONT'D)  
David you're Scholar one, the  
Chorus and Robin.

David takes this in.

Alex remains unmoved. Maybe, just maybe he's made the cut for a main role.

TOM (CONT'D)  
And Camille, you're Wagner and the  
Emperor, well done on your  
audition... You got yourself two  
big parts.

Camille accepts smugly.

Alex is burning to know. The anticipation is killing him.

TOM (CONT'D)  
But we're gonna do call backs for  
the leads.

Alex perks up, his reason overpowered by his hope.

Elliot walks through the door.

Tom doesn't stop talking and no one turns but Alex who's intimidated by his arrival. He shrinks in his chair.

ELLIOT POSITIONS HIMSELF IN THE BACKGROUND OF A SIDE-PROFILE SHOT OF ALEX.

TOM (CONT'D)  
For Alex and Charlie.

The room stunned. Elliot wipes his chin with his hand with concern. A deceptively humble smile overcomes Alex.

OLLIE  
Who?

TOM

Alex Small, he's here at the front.

Tom points at him, Alex is too nervous to properly turn and face the judgement.

TOM (CONT'D)

He was good. He earned a second viewing.

CHARLIE

Yeah. Not good enough to close it.

Elliot smiles.

TOM

No. Auditions for you two will be on Monday. Charlie at four. Alex at four thirty, learn pages one-nine-four to seven.

ALEX

Ok.

(notes down keenly in his book)

Tom turns to Charlie, who responds reluctantly.

CHARLIE

Alright.

TOM

Thanks guys.

Tom leaves.

Focus on Alex, who sinks into his chair looking both happy and worried. As others leave, they look at him critically in the background.

**Elliot doesn't move.**

19

**ELVET 2 SMOKING AREA- DAY**

19

Elliot's leant against the wall outside the doors to Elvet. He's on his phone, busily typing out emails.

Alex steps out the doors, cooling off from the intensity of the announcements. He clocks Elliot, assesses him and approaches.

Alex tries to play it cool.

ALEX

Y'alright?

Elliot acknowledges him, but only puts his index finger up, signalling he'll be a minute.

Alex perches himself next to Elliot. He ruminates momentarily, before becoming intrigued by Elliot's business.

He draws a cigarette and loads it into his mouth.

He reaches over and offers one to Elliot.

ELLIOT

No. I don't.

Elliot goes back to typing.

Alex starts lighting.

Elliot interjects.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

You know doing that'll kill you.

Alex stops trying to light, momentarily. Elliot turns his head to him.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

The cigarettes will kill you one day. But the habit. That's really what kills you. You see, when you go to a doctor with the symptoms of cancer or lung disease, they'll treat you differently. In their eyes you deserve to die for smoking. It's not the tobacco or the nicotine... it's the people (who are meant to treat you). They're the killers.

Alex looks at him unassured, then cracks a smile like a, 'oh yeah?'

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Go on. Light it. The damage is already done.

Alex lights the cigarette, nervously. Elliot continues on his phone, briefly.

A beat.

Elliot stops using his phone and turns to Alex.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
Sorry, how rude of me. I'm Elliot.

ALEX  
Alex.

ELLIOT  
Had so many of these stupid emails to get through. This guy, Michael, one of our agents signed this girl, Grace - she couldn't rip her way out of a paper bag. Her application said she could speak Italian, so what'd I do? Get her out to Milan for an audition. Michael, the idiot, cared more about her bra size than her CV.

ALEX  
Oh... damn. What d'you do?

ELLIOT  
I'm a producer, mostly. Scout, actor, agent, whatever the company requires.

ALEX  
That's cool. Who do you work with?

ELLIOT  
Not Michael anymore.

ALEX  
Ohh.

ELLIOT  
I'm joking.

Elliot laughs. Alex smiles.

He goes deadpan.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
Or am I.  
(beat)  
What d'you do Alex?

ALEX  
I'm an actor.

ELLIOT  
No shit. What's your next show?

ALEX  
Ummm... Dr Faustus-

ELLIOT  
Oh yeah. I think I remember you...  
The Dr Faustus guy? That's you  
right. The sweaty one?

ALEX  
(uncertain)  
Sweaty?

ELLIOT  
How'd you think it went?

ALEX  
I got a call back.

Elliot leans around and inspects him. He approves of his look.

ELLIOT  
Done much acting before?

ALEX  
Yeah. I actually-

Passer-by leans into shot and asks for a light.

PASSER-BY  
Could I get a light?

Alex rummages in his pocket, pulls out a lighter and, after a moment of fiddling, lights their cigarette.

Elliot looks on, taking it all in.

PASSER-BY (CONT'D)  
Is everything ok?

Elliot stares at Alex. Alex looks out of the corner of his eye to Elliot.

A beat.

ALEX  
Yeah. Yeah. Fine.

The passer-by leaves.

ELLIOT  
Moron, asking if you're alright...  
They're asking a stranger for  
ignited butane.



Elliot's distaste dissolves. Alex is intimidated and doesn't want to presume anything.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
You were saying.

ALEX  
Yeah. I actually thought about going to acting school.

ELLIOT  
That's a nice thought.

ALEX  
I mean yeah. It's just my teachers and parents didn't back me.

ELLIOT  
And you believed them?

ALEX  
It's not that simple.

ELLIOT  
Sure it isn't. Not like I know anything.

ALEX  
I'm sorry... I wasn't-

ELLIOT  
-I get it. You're either the director's type or the son of someone.

ALEX  
I know.

ELLIOT  
Doesn't that bother you?

ALEX  
A bit.

ELLIOT  
You know Tom's already made his mind up.

Alex wears his insecurity. Elliot clocks it.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
(mockingly)  
Not about you. About Camille. He loves her.  
(MORE)

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

She makes Italian Grace look like Emma Stone... Have you thought about what you're gonna do on Monday?

ALEX

... No.

ELLIOT

Don't you have a plan?

ALEX

Yeah. I mean I'm not really used to competing.

ELLIOT

Ok... So what're you going to do?

ALEX

I was actually ~~thinking about going to~~.

Elliot detaches from the wall and paces.

ELLIOT

(interrupts)

-The best guys I sign read scripts 100 times before auditions. Anyone less is a waste of time...

Elliot goes to pat him on the shoulder but stops, his hand poised, then clenches his lips and walks off, across frame and out of shot.

He turns.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

I don't waste my time.

Alex stands there taking it all in. You can see his expression change.

A spark is lit in him.

20

**INT. ALEX'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING**

20

Alex is sat on his sofa on his laptop, typing sporadically. Greg, his housemate, is lay on another sofa playing video games. We can hear the game in the background. They are sat there in silence, co-existing.

Thuds. Someone's coming down the stairs.

Camera is set straight-on at Alex with the other side of the sofa in frame.

Josh, his other housemate, crash lands onto that empty part of the sofa.

He lies next to Alex silently for a moment, taking in Greg's game.

Josh soon realises Alex isn't going to engage in conversation.

JOSH  
Hey Greg, d'you know Liv?

GREG  
Who?

JOSH  
Liv Waring.

GREG  
She plays hockey?

JOSH  
Yeah.

GREG  
Isn't she dating Liam Ryans?

JOSH  
Not anymore.

GREG  
Yeah but they're still hooking up.

Alex perks up from his laptop. Josh notices.

JOSH  
No, it's properly over.

GREG  
Damn. Doubt that'll last.

ALEX  
What won't?

GREG  
Her being single.

Josh smiles smugly.

JOSH  
Probably.

GREG

The guts she had to go to the Sudan  
and write that article.

JOSH

I know right.

GREG

As if she turned down the BBC. (The  
BBC)

JOSH

Maybe you should ask her out.  
(smiles)

GREG

Me? Yeah right.

ALEX

(bluntly)  
Back yourself.

Greg smiles, shakes his head.

JOSH

(to Alex)  
You missed the League Cup Final  
last night.

GREG

It was so dead.

JOSH

It wasn't that bad.

ALEX

Yeah sorry. I was working at the  
library.

JOSH

Uh huh.  
(taunting)  
And that's it?

ALEX

(uncertain)  
Yeah. What?

JOSH

So you didn't meet someone?

ALEX

My sister, yeah.

JOSH  
So you did see someone, why'd you  
just lie?

ALEX  
I didn't.

GREG  
(laughs)  
What are you on about?

JOSH  
You saw someone else didn't you?

ALEX  
No.

JOSH  
Alright. Never mind.

ALEX  
Why?

JOSH  
It doesn't matter.

Pause. Alex types. The room waits awkwardly.

ALEX  
You already know don't you?

JOSH  
Me? No. Well maybe.

ALEX  
How much?

JOSH  
Enough.

ALEX  
She does English. That's all I  
know.

JOSH  
That's all.  
(nods ironically)

ALEX  
What??  
(embarrassed)  
It was like a two second  
conversation.

JOSH

And?

ALEX

That's it!

GREG

You approached her?

Alex nods.

GREG (CONT'D)

No way.

Alex shrugs.

JOSH

You want to know what she told me?

GREG

Wait. This was last night?

ALEX

(tetchy)

No. I'm, I'm alright.

JOSH

Fine.

They sit in silence.

GREG

Oh just ask, Alex.

JOSH

Might be interesting.

Josh grins at him.

Pause. Alex tries to resume his work but the collective burden from Josh and Greg is too much.

JOSH (CONT'D)

(impulsively)

She thought you were cute.

ALEX

(surprised)

Really?

GREG

Really?

JOSH  
Yeah... Really.

ALEX  
It was literally a two second  
conversation.

JOSH  
You must've done something right.

Alex takes this in.

GREG  
You gonna message her?

ALEX  
What? No.

GREG  
You should.

ALEX  
It's not my kind of thing.

GREG  
(rolls his eyes)  
(mutters)  
Course it's not.

JOSH  
(calming)  
Greg's right. You should drop her a  
message.

GREG  
Yeah, definitely. Do it before it's  
too late.

ALEX  
Seeing as I don't have any details  
how should I do that?  
(sarcastic)  
University email?

GREG  
Wouldn't be the worst thing. Quite  
romantic.

JOSH  
Greg, it's definitely not.  
(turns to Alex)  
I can send you her number.

Alex takes this in.

GREG  
Since when did you get so close  
with Liv?

Ignored.

ALEX  
Umm... yeah... ok... no... I'll  
think about it.

Alex gets up and leaves.

Thuds of going upstairs.

Josh and Greg wait until he's definitely out of earshot.

GREG  
What does she see in him?

JOSH  
Well he doesn't spend his nights  
playing video games.

Greg chuckles and shrugs.

JOSH (CONT'D)  
He's into some acting stuff now,  
maybe she digs that?

GREG  
Is he?

Greg sits up to turn to JOSH.

GREG (CONT'D)  
He didn't mention that?

JOSH  
He seems pretty-

Noises from upstairs pause their conversation.

Josh continues in whisper.

JOSH (CONT'D)  
He seems pretty serious on this  
one.

Greg shrugs.

21A **INT. ALEX'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

21A

A tense, teetering track starts to play.



Alex sits at his desk. Opens his laptop and gets his copy of Dr Faustus out of his bag. He lines up a couple of pens and loads up Amazon. He buys an audio book version of Dr Faustus.

On his board he writes 'Read throughs' for tallying.

He opens the text for the first time, the pages confront him. Alex irons out the central binding; pulls the top off a pen with his teeth and starts writing.

There's a clock in the background. He starts making his way through the book, lip reading the pages.

21B      **INT. ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**      21B

Shot of Alex lying on his bed with his earphones in.

21C      **INT. ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**      21C

Alex pacing his room. Early hours displayed on the clock.

21D      **INT. ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**      21D

Alex asleep. Earphones still in; book lay next to him on the bed.

21E      **INT. COLLINGWOOD GYM - DAY**      21E

Alex running with earphones in on treadmill.

21F      **INT. ALEX'S BEDROOM - DAY**      21F

Alex watching a different YouTube video on acting.

21G      **INT. ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**      21G

Alex reloads the ink in his pen. His hand quaking from all the notes he's made. His face tired.

22      **INT. DURHAM STUDENT'S UNION - DAY**      22

Alex is sat on his laptop in a mildly busy study area. Draw attention to how decorated and worn out his copy of Dr Faustus now is. He's doing work but he picks up his phone, unlocks it and goes to messages. He starts to draft out a text to Liv.

It takes him several attempts to draft up, 'Hey, it's Alex from the library. How'd you fancy getting a drink some time?' But he locks his phone and dumps it back on the table.

He grates his hands down his face, looks back at the laptop. Then picks up the phone impetuously.

PASSER-BY 2 knocks past him.

ALEX  
Oh... sorry.

The passer-by is long gone.

Alex collects himself and sends the message. He sits back, reflecting.

SOPHIE MARCHLAND, his academic supervisor, enters. She's young, only a couple of years older than Alex. A laidback, caring girl.

SOPHIE  
Alex.

ALEX  
Oh hey.

SOPHIE  
What're you doing?

ALEX  
(closes DF hastily)  
Oh, err, my assignment.

SOPHIE  
Can we have a chat?

Alex looks back, concerned. He's unsure what to say.

Alex checks his phone - it's 3:50.

ALEX  
Yeah.

SOPHIE  
In my office.

ALEX  
I don't have (long)-

SOPHIE  
Come on.

Alex puts his laptop away, picks up his bag and leaves the table walking across frame. *Frame-block opportunity.*

23 INT. SOPHIE'S OFFICE - DAY

23

Sophie walks up to her desk, grabs the chair, pulls it around and sits down. She slouches, laid back fiddling with her pen.

SOPHIE

Take a seat.  
(points to seat)

It's casual, nothing too intense.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Great play.  
(points at Dr Faustus)  
I don't remember it being on the course.

ALEX

(caught out)  
Oh, it's just... background reading.

Sophie turns more serious and sits up.

SOPHIE

Right... Sure.  
(beat)  
So I got a red flag on your record this week. You've missed lectures this week and three seminars. What's happening?

ALEX

Nothing.

SOPHIE

Really?

ALEX

(sighs)  
I don't get why I'm here.

Sophie deflates from Alex's seemingly arrogant response. Alex realises the miscommunication and tries to elaborate poorly.

ALEX (CONT'D)

... I mean... It's not you. I'm just not enjoying it. It doesn't seem to mean anything.

Sophie looks concerned. ALEX leans forward head in hands, then rests his head on his knuckles.

SOPHIE  
Does it have to?

ALEX  
(shrugs)  
(pause)  
I think so.

Sophie sits back.

SOPHIE  
(sighs)  
But it doesn't have to. If you don't put too much pressure on it I'm sure that spark that got you here will be re-ignited.

ALEX  
Spark...

SOPHIE  
Alex. I don't want to write to the dean.

ALEX  
Can I go?

Alex clutches his bag and heads to the door.

SOPHIE  
Alex.

He stops and waits.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)  
Go on.

Sophie shakes her head, unsure what to make of Alex's changing character.

Alex leaves.

JOSH is sat at an empty desk. Alex walks in but tries not to notice Josh, who is turned ninety degrees from him. Josh looks around and notices Alex. Alex has Faustus in hand with notepad and phone.

Soundtrack thuds quietly in the background.

Josh waves. They make eye contact; Alex pretends to look happy to see him and approaches.

JOSH  
Y'alright?

ALEX  
Yeah, just on my way-

Josh tilts his head, looking at the cover of the book.

JOSH  
(He reads slowly)  
Dr Faustus... *Whose life are you  
saving?*

ALEX  
Mine. - I mean he's trying to... I  
have an audition.

Alex looks across from his eye contact with Josh as Elliot walks past.

He freezes up and tracks him with his head.

All background sound is suppressed except pulsing thuds.

Back to reality.

Alex starts to leave taking a few steps from Josh, trying to escape the conversation.

JOSH  
You messaged her?

ALEX  
No.

Alex leaves.

SHOT OF JOSH, CONFUSED.

25A

**EXT. SCIENCE SITE - DAY**

25A

SHOTS OF ALEX RUNNING THROUGH DURHAM.

A soundtrack should play behind. Something with momentum, maybe similar to the track from the first scene.

25B      **EXT. MARY'S DRIVE - DAY**      25B

Alex runs through a crowd students in the other direction.

25C      **EXT. RIVERSIDE OPPOSITE CATHEDRAL - DAY**      25C

PAN DOWN SHOT OF ALEX, SHOWING ALEX'S ANXIETY.

25D      OMITTED      25D

25G      **EXT. PALACE GREEN - DAY**      25G

Pan down from Cathedral to side on of Alex walking. He's looking forward, not up.

Blend to shot in next scene from side on when he tilts his head back to look up at the clock. It's 4.35.

26      **INT. CORRIDOR 2 - DAY**      26

Alex is growing impatient, looking at the clock and then down at his copy of Dr Faustus, barely taking in the words on the page. His leg is tapping faster than the thuds in the background which seem to match the slow ticking of the second hand.

Alex gets up and looks through the window into the practice room. He sees Charlie's back performing with muffled sound. Tom is out of frame.

Alex scans the room, catching eye contact with Elliot.

Elliot looks at him sharply.

Alex cowers.

His reaction seems exaggerated, almost falling backwards onto the seat he was on.

Thuds building and building.

Laughter from inside the room. The door opens. Tom is leading.

Soundtrack dims.

TOM

Nice work.

He looks at Alex when he says this. Intimidation.

TOM (CONT'D)

Would you mind just waiting here a minute?

CHARLIE

Sure.

Charlie exits, looking Alex up and down.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Good luck mate.

Soundtrack builds back up.

Alex and Charlie cross paths. Alex enters, thuds still building, reaching a crescendo when Elliot and Alex re-engage eye contact.

27

**INT. PRACTICE ROOM 2 - DAY**

27

Alex thoughtfully places his rucksack down and takes his position in the centre of the room; he's not surrounded by anything.

Tom takes his seat, primes his pen over his notebook.

PULL FOCUS ONTO PEN.

THE THUDS DISSIPATE WITH THE PULL AND SUBSEQUENT CUT TO ALEX.

TOM

We'll start with the first of the two passages, from page sixty.

Alex nods, adjusts himself, glances over at Elliot, regrets it, looks back to the floor then lifts his head and begins.

ALEX

Now hast thou but one bare  
hour to live,  
And then thou must be damn'd  
perpetually!

(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)

Stand still, you ever-moving  
spheres of heaven,  
That time may cease, and  
midnight never come;  
Fair Nature's eye, rise, rise  
again, and make  
Perpetual day; or let this  
hour be but  
A year, a month, a week, a  
natural day,  
That Faustus save his soul...  
(stutters)

Alex confuses his lines.

Elliot's unimpressed, shaking his head.

TOM

Let's try that again from  
'Perpetual'.

ALEX

Sorry.

Alex recomposes himself, looks off to the left slightly but  
avoids looking at Elliot this time.

Tom primes his pen again.

Silence.

Clock ticks.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Perpetual day; or let this  
hour be but  
A year, a month, a week, a  
natural day,  
That Faustus may repent and  
save his soul!  
The stars move still, time  
runs, the clock will strike,  
The devil will come, and  
Faustus must be damn'd.  
O, I'll leap up to my God!

Alex is clearly trying too hard; he's trying to perform  
without the script and it's not working.

TOM

-Alex. Stop.

Alex takes this in.



ALEX  
I'm sorry.

TOM  
Don't apologise.

ALEX  
Can I get some water?

Tom taps his pen on the pad, somewhat frustrated. He waves his pen in the direction of the door.

Alex rushes out the door as calmly as possible.

In the corridor, Charlie stands up when Alex leaves, thinking that he's being summoned back.

Alex just storms past.

28

**INT. CORRIDOR 2 - DAY**

28

Alex marches into a room down the corridor.

CAMERA STAYS FRAMED DOWN THE SYMMETRICAL LINES OF THE CORRIDOR. IT PANS IN SLOWLY.

Silence.

Deep pause.

**A chair flies out the door and smashes into the adjacent wall.**

The chair barely misses Elliot but that doesn't perturb him.

Elliot approaches angry.

ELLIOT  
What's going on?

ALEX  
(throat welling)  
I'm not sure.

ELLIOT  
What?

ALEX  
I can't do it.

Elliot puts his arm across frame, he's invasively close.

Elliot listens with pity.

ELLIOT  
There'll be other times.

ALEX  
No. There won't. I'm not waiting  
thirty auditions for my part.

ELLIOT  
Your?... You are hilarious.

ALEX  
Waiting that long isn't fair.

ELLIOT  
What? That you should earn your  
part like rest of us?

Alex shrugs.

ALEX  
What would you know about that?

ELLIOT  
Don't question me.  
(leans in close)  
I will ruin you.

Alex shrinks away at this threat. You can see in his eyes.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
That's what I thought.

Elliot rests himself on a table.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
Have you ever heard of Vaclav  
Havel?

ALEX  
No.  
(shakes his head)

ELLIOT  
He was a Czech playwright and  
possibly one of the brightest  
essayists of the 20th century. He  
wrote plays, dabbling in political  
satire criticising the Soviet  
regime.

ALEX  
How's this relevant?

ELLIOT

After the fall of communism he emerged as the new President of the Republic for fourteen years.

(beat)

You think he ever imagined that?...

ALEX

No.

Elliot eyes up Alex; he's not breaking through.

ELLIOT

Charlie's audition was average. He's too dependable. He'll end up at some mid-sized city theatre, making a nice living... that's it.

Alex is re-engaged.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

His parents were both actors... Average ones. What's he done with that? And yours were what? Accountants? Lawyers?

ALEX

Mum's a teacher.

ELLIOT

And your dad?

ALEX

(looks at the floor)

Elliot's face says empathy but his words say otherwise.

ELLIOT

(cold)

Exactly.

Elliot projects himself toward Alex.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Take from Charlie what he doesn't deserve.

Alex cracks a half smile.

Alex doesn't respond. He rushes back out the room, past Elliot.

29

INT. PRACTICE ROOM 2 - DAY

29

Alex storms back past Charlie, who half stands.

CHARLIE

What's (happening)??

His question fades; Alex has walked past him by the end of 'what'.

Alex resumes his position in the centre of the room; this time he occupies the space with authority.

He looks square at Tom.

Tom contemplates his demeanour.

ALEX

Can I do the start of act three?

TOM

Erm - yeah. Ok.

(mutters)

If that means you'll get it right.

ALEX

Having now, my good Mephistopheles,  
Pass'd with delight the  
stately town of Trier,  
Environ'd round with airy  
mountain-tops,  
With walls of flint, and deep-  
entrenched lakes,  
Not to be won by any  
conquering prince;  
From Paris next, coasting the  
realm of France,  
We saw the river Maine fall  
into Rhine,

Tom looks on, the quality of the performance affecting him.

THE MASTER SHOT SHOULD BE ONE LONG CIRCULAR PAN THAT STARTS WIDE AND CLOSES IN.

In the background, emotive music should build, complementing the tone of the performance.

Elliot enters.

HE LINGERS BEHIND ALEX, OUT OF FOCUS. HIS PRESENCE DOESN'T AFFECT ALEX LIKE BEFORE.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Whose banks are set with groves of  
fruitful vines;

Then up to Naples, rich  
Campania,

Whose buildings fair and  
gorgeous to the eye,

The streets straight forth,  
and pav'd with finest brick,

Quarter the town in four  
equivalents:

There saw we learned Maro's  
golden tomb,

The way he cut, an English  
mile in length,

Thorough a rock of stone, in  
one night's space;

From thence to Venice, Padua,  
and the rest,

In one of which a sumptuous  
temple stands,

That threatens the stars with  
her aspiring top.

Thus hitherto hath Faustus  
spent his time:

But tell me now what resting-  
place is this?

Hast thou, as erst I did  
command,

Conducted me within the walls  
of Rome?

Tom looks up at Alex, then down at his notepad, unsure exactly what to say.

Alex steps back, as if spent from the performance.

Tom collects himself. Smiles.

TOM

Get Charlie.

Alex nods and goes to open the door.

ALEX

He wants you back.

CHARLIE

Both of us?

Charlie enters. Alex and Charlie stand side-by-side in front of Tom.

TOM  
 (taps his pen on notepad)  
 I want you two to try something.

They both nod.

CUT TO THEM SEPARATELY.

TOM (CONT'D)  
 Play out a scene. Alex read Faustus  
 and Charlie read Mephistopheles.  
 I'll fill in the rest.

ALEX  
 Sure.

CHARLIE  
 Ok.

TOM  
 Use your scripts - (I want to see  
 the dynamic).  
 (beat)  
 From 'Accursed Faustus' on a  
 hundred and eighty-eight, Alex  
 reading for Faustus.

Alex does not use his script.

ALEX  
 Accursed Faustus, where is mercy  
 now?  
 I do repent; and yet I do  
 despair:  
 Hell strives with grace for  
 conquest in my breast:  
 What shall I do to shun the  
 snares of death?

CHARLIE  
 Thou traitor, Faustus, I arrest thy  
 soul  
 For disobedience to my  
 sovereign lord:  
 Revolt, or I'll in piece-meal  
 tear thy flesh.

Tom gets up from the desk and joins the actors.

Elliot orbits.

ALEX

Sweet Mephistopheles, entreat thy  
lord

To pardon my unjust  
presumption,  
And with my blood again I will  
confirm  
My former vow I made to  
Lucifer.

CHARLIE

Do it, then, quickly, with  
unfeigned heart,  
Lest greater danger do attend  
thy drift.

ALEX

Torment, sweet friend, that base  
and crooked age,  
That durst dissuade me from  
thy Lucifer,

RACK FOCUS TO ELLIOT.

TOM

Ok. Ok...

Alex and Charlie look at Tom and each other. Elliot orbits around Alex, stepping in a little closer but he remains out of focus in the background.

TOM (CONT'D)

That's it. Yes. That's it. Perfect.  
We'll stick with these roles.

Tom leans on the desk. Alex and Charlie look on relieved. Alex tries to mute his celebration, but it's still visible.

TOM (CONT'D)

Tomorrow morning. 8:30am. Be here.  
We're doing Wagner and the scholars  
on 122.

Alex smiles leaves quickly.

Charlie stands still on the spot, looking at Tom for a moment then follows.

30      **EXT. LIBRARY - EVENING**

30

Alex is practically running to the library after his audition. He's determined, focused only on getting there quick.

Group with shooting 14 but change Rom's clothes.

31      **INT. LIBRARY LOCATION 1 - MOMENTS LATER**

31

Group with shooting 15a but change Rom's clothes.

Alex bursts into the library, toward where he first met Liv. He scorers the headline, looking for her.

No luck.

He approaches where he first met her.

There she is, sat back turned to Alex working away.

Alex approaches (with uncharacteristic confidence).

ALEX

Liv.

Liv turns. She smiles genuinely.

LIV

Hey Alex--

ALEX

Did you get my---

Liv looks back unsure what he's saying.

ALEX (CONT'D)

It doesn't matter.

(beat)

How'd you wanna get a drink?

(beat)

Or a chat? Sometime...

Liv looks down at her work.

Waits.

Looks back at him, composes herself elegantly.

LIV

Sure. That sounds, really nice. Why not now?



ALEX  
 (stunned)  
 Errr - yeah. Sure. Great. Ok.

32 **EXT. OBSERVATORY HILL - TWILIGHT**

32

Alex and Liv are sat side-by-side. It's awkward but cute. Alex's phone is on the bench between them.

LIV  
 This is lovely.

ALEX  
 Yeah. I like it up here.

LIV  
 I've never been.

ALEX  
 Really?

LIV  
 Yeah. I used to live over there you know.  
 (points off)

ALEX  
 Why didn't you come then?

LIV  
 (half smile)  
 I think I was waiting for somebody to take me.

Alex is pleased with her comment.

ALEX  
 It's even better in the day. We should come back some time.

His confidence fades realising the impetuosity of the comment.

Liv smiles, brushing her hair back behind her ear but in doing so tilts her head away from Alex as an awkward gut response.

LIV  
 (beat)  
 What'd you do up here?

ALEX  
 I dunno. I take photos sometimes.

LIV  
That's nice.

Alex looks to the ground.

LIV (CONT'D)  
Let's have a look.

Liv reaches to his phone, he snatches it away.

Liv caught out by the bluntness of Alex's response - she's mildly embarrassed and Alex feels that.

ALEX  
You can't. They're on film.

LIV  
I'd love to see the prints.

ALEX  
You can't... I've never printed any of them.

LIV  
How come?

ALEX  
It's expensive.

LIV  
Oh.

ALEX  
I mean, it's not. I'm not tight. I just have never developed any of them.

LIV  
Ok.

ALEX  
It was my dad's camera... And I dunno, I just haven't got around to it, I guess.

LIV  
Sure... My dad has this vintage vinyl player but he never lets me use it, at least yours trusts you with his things.

ALEX  
I doubt he did.

Liv is caught out by this and is subsequently unsure what to respond.

Alex tries to recover the conversation.

ALEX (CONT'D)

What d'you play on your vinyl?

LIV

It's definitely not mine. It's 100% my dad's.

ALEX

There's no way that stops you.

LIV

(smiles cheekily)

You're right.

(smiles)

What would you play on it?

ALEX

No. You first.

LIV

Why?

ALEX

If I tell you, you'll think I'm a nerd.

LIV

Trust me. My taste is worse. I guarantee.

ALEX

Surely not. What is it?

LIV

They're so corny...

(beat)

No I can't. I can feel the judgment.

ALEX

Tell me. Or I'll assume the worst.

LIV

Oh yeah? What's that?

ALEX

Hmmm. Fleetwood Mac.

LIV  
What? Why?

ALEX  
All their songs sound the same!  
They're for hippies and I dunno,  
ummm...

LIV  
I like them.

ALEX  
What?

LIV  
Yeah. I like Fleetwood Mac.

ALEX  
Oh. That makes me look bad doesn't  
it?

LIV  
A little... Who are you into then?

ALEX  
The Cure, the Rolling Stones, you  
know, mostly cool 70s and 80s rock.

LIV  
Hey!

Liv laughs and gently pushes him away. They look each other  
in the eyes.

It's cute.

SHOT LINGERS ON THE TWO OF THEM WITH THE VIEW IN FRONT OF  
THEM, CATHEDRAL IN FRONT OF THEM.

33

**EXT. RIVERWALK - NIGHT**

33

The pair are walking together. It's more relaxed now.

LIV  
Charlie tells me you're in a play?

ALEX  
Yeah. How'd you know him?

LIV  
He does English.

ALEX  
Oh yeah. Right.

LIV  
For an actor, I've always thought  
you were quite shy.

LIV (CONT'D)  
In lectures you always had your  
head down or were looking around  
somewhere.

ALEX  
Yeah my sister says I do that a  
lot.

LIV  
Hm. I always thought it was  
quite... enigmatic.

ALEX  
Enigmatic?... (Right).

LIV  
Or, you were just really hungover.

ALEX  
(smiles)  
I don't know which is better.

LIV  
Me neither.  
(chuckles)  
I'd always wonder if I'd be in a  
class with you and find out - but I  
guess I was never meant to know.

ALEX  
(And) I guess you never will.

LIV  
Won't I now?

ALEX  
Maybe...

LIV  
(ironic)  
So enigmatic.  
(beat)  
It's Dr Faustus, right?

ALEX

Err. Yeah. I'm surprised Josh remembered.

LIV

Oh, he didn't.  
(beat)  
Who's directing?

ALEX

Tom Sutton, produced by a guy, Elliot...

LIV

Wow.  
(beat)  
Tom's serious. You must be good.  
Who're you playing?

ALEX

Erm. I think Faustus.

LIV

You think. So you are Faustus?  
(pause)

Alex shrugs, smiles.

LIV (CONT'D)

A modest actor. How strange.  
(affectionately)

Alex takes this in. He stops. He's feeling a strong warmth.

Liv turns.

He clocks on the other side of the bank, Elliot staring at him.

LIV (CONT'D)

What's up?

Alex starts walking again.

ALEX

Nothing.  
(clears himself)  
You're hardly boastful yourself.

LIV

Oh yeah?

ALEX

Yeah. You were a bit of a child genius right?

LIV

(cheekily)

Not just a bit.

ALEX

I take that back.

LIV

I'm joking.

ALEX

Ok... So... Did you always want to be a journalist?

LIV

Not really. I had options, but I found sciences tedious.

ALEX

Tedious enough to get A\*s in them, yeah.

LIV

I guess, but I also didn't want to become a numbers girl for a bank.

ALEX

~~Yeah the world has enough of them.~~  
So instead you get yourself offered a job at the Guardian?

LIV

(smiles modestly)

Yeah. Seemed logical.

ALEX

Logical...

LIV

Yeah. I mean, no. I loved making that story. I wanna stand up for the little guy, take them on.

ALEX

Take on who?

LIV

Whoever.

ALEX

I bet Professor Thompson feels intimidated.

LIV

I think maybe he does a little.

Scene ends with them walking between the camera.

34

**EXT. HAWTHORNE - NIGHT**

34

Liv and Alex are still walking. They're both smiling, exchanging light banter.

ALEX

Remember that time he gave a lecture on 17th century Chinese seeds?

LIV

How could I forget?  
(laughs)  
He's quite cute though.

ALEX

I feel like you've said that before... Do you fancy him or something?

Liv slows down as they approach the door.

LIV

Maybe.  
(pause)

Alex's unsure.

Liv puts her key in the door and unlocks it.

LIV (CONT'D)

People tend to know if I like them.

Liv leans in and gives Alex a kiss.

She pulls away, Alex looks mildly shocked.

Liv opens the door and walks in, turns.

LIV (CONT'D)

See you Alex.

Liv shuts the door.



Alex takes in the night.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

35      **INT. ALEX'S BEDROOM - DAY**

35

Alex is lying asleep.

CAMERA PANS IN, GLIDING OVER THE CREASES IN THE SHEETS LIKE A LOW HELICOPTER OVER AN OCEAN.

Alex wakes up, looks over at the clock.

It's 8:10am.

The peaceful mood is broken instantly. He's very late.

He throws himself out of bed and starts piling clothes on. It's frantic, awkward.

QUICK CUTS BUT CAMERA SHOULD CONTRAST THAT BY BEING STABLE AND FIXED.

CUTS BETWEEN HIM PACKING HIS BAG. PICKING UP HIS TEXT. HAVING A DRINK OF SOMETHING. GRABBING HIS KEYS. URGENCY IS CRITICAL. HE SUDDENLY SEEMS TO HAVE BUTTER FINGERS, TOO.

36      OMITTED

36

37      **INT. CORRIDOR 1 - DAY**

37

Tom's rushing down the corridor. As he approaches the practice room, he clocks two figures talking and laughing. It's Camille and David. Tom's suspects there's chemistry between them.

Tom stares them down but continues his determined walk, trying to maintain an unperturbed exterior.

Camille follows him in, keenly, followed by Alex. Ollie dips off.

38

INT. PRACTICE ROOM 1 - DAY

38

Alex crashes into the practice room. The rest of the cast is sat there, waiting. They all look but say nothing.

Alex takes his seat and tries to compose himself.

DRAW FOCUS ONTO THE CLOCK IN THE BACKGROUND: IT'S 8:29.

Tick tock...

Tom walks in with a somewhat frantic stride. He looks around, takes in the room. Places a book on his desk. And looks at the clock. Elliot is standing behind him.

TOM

Good.

He looks back at the clock. It turns 8:31.

David opens the door.

DAVID

Sorry I'm la-

TOM

Why are you late?

David stays planted.

DAVID

Sorry I just popped to the loo.

TOM

(sneers)

Brilliant. Would've... Would've thought someone of your age would be

(rushing, trying finish his poor joke)

Able to control his bladder.

DAVID

What?

TOM

Go on. Off you go.

David glances side to side.

DAVID

I'm like a minute late-

TOM  
Yes. Late being the operative word.

DAVID  
It's just a minute.

Tom growing increasingly frustrated by his resistance.

TOM  
(erratic)  
~~Just... fucking leave or I'll, I'll  
take the part off you.~~

CAMILLE  
Chill out. Come in Ollie.  
(looks at Tom)

David walks in and takes a seat. Tom watches, trying to recover from being publicly undermined.

The actors take this in.

Tom lingers a bit, sighs, and rests his elbows on the table.

TOM TO ACTORS TO TOM.

Tension spreads in the silence.

TIGHT SHOT OF ALEX AND BACK TO TOM.

Tom smiles, cracks half a laugh.

To the room.

TOM  
Don't be late to my rehearsals. Ok?

Actors nod.

SHOT OF ALEX.

BACK TO TOM.

Tom sits.

TOM (CONT'D)  
If you haven't heard, I've chosen Alex to be Faustus and Charlie as Mephistopheles.

(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)  
 (to David)  
 Did you catch that David?

DAVID  
 (rolls eyes)  
 Yes. I heard you loud and clear.

Actors already knew.

CHARLIE LOOKS AT ALEX.

TOM  
 (to actors then Alex in  
 particular)  
 Don't let me down.

Tom cracks a mean smile. Alex nods.

Tom stands.

TOM (CONT'D)  
 Camille, Charlie and David. You're  
 up... Page forty.

David, Charlie and Camille all stand, make their way to the front and stand there, nervous.

TOM (CONT'D)  
 I want you to just read through it,  
 add your own movements for now and  
 we'll go from there.

Tom rests against a desk.

Scene starts.

CAMILLE  
~~Baliol and Belcher, spirits, away!~~

DAVID  
~~What, are they gone? A vengeance on  
 them! They have vile long nails.  
 There was a he-devil and a she-  
 devil: I'll tell you how you shall  
 know them; all he devils has horns,  
 and all she devils has clifts and  
 eloven feet.~~

CAMILLE  
 Well, sirrah, follow me.

DAVID

But, do you hear? If I should serve you, would you teach me to raise up Banios and Belcheos?

CAMILLE

I will teach thee to turn thyself to any thing, to a dog, or a cat, or a mouse, or a rat, or any thing.

DAVID

How! A Christian fellow-

TOM

(interrupts)  
Let's stop it there... David,  
(clicks)  
Are you with us today?

DAVID

Yeah... of course.

TOM

Show me. You're acting like C3PO without any WD40.

DAVID

Yeah. Ok. Sorry.

TOM

Don't be sorry David. That won't make you better.

(sighs)  
Let's get Camille up, to show us how it's done.  
(callously)  
Show us the Emperor's monologue on 172.

Camille and the other actors flick through the pages, frantically.

CAMILLE

Then, Doctor Faustus, mark what I shall say.

(MORE)

## CAMILLE (CONT'D)

About the honour of mine ancestors,  
 How they had won by prowess such  
 exploits,  
 Got such riches, subdu'd so many  
 kingdoms,  
 As we that do succeed, or they that  
 shall  
 Hereafter possess our throne, shall  
 (I fear me) ne'er attain to that  
 degree  
 Of high renown and great authority:  
 Amongst which kings is Alexander  
 the Great,  
 Chief spectacle of the world's pre-  
 eminence,  
 The bright shining of whose  
 glorious acts  
 Lightens the world with his  
 reflecting beams,  
 As when I hear but motion made of  
 him,  
 It grieves my soul I never saw the  
 man:  
~~If, therefore, thou, by cunning of  
 thine art,  
 Canst raise this man from hollow  
 vaults below,  
 Where lies entomb'd this famous  
 conqueror,  
 And bring with him his beauteous  
 paramour,  
 Both in their right shapes,  
 gesture, and attire  
 They us'd to wear during their time  
 of life,  
 Thou shalt both satisfy my just  
 desire,  
 And give me cause to praise thee  
 whilst I live.~~

The performance is good but Tom's not impressed.

Elliot leans over Tom. They do not interact, but it changes Tom's tone.

Tom waves his hand. Camille stops. The actors wait on Tom.

Pause. Deep pause.

TOM

Camille, can you read?

Camille, stumped by the infancy of the question.

TOM (CONT'D)  
Well. Can you read?

CAMILLE  
I'm trying, it's just.

TOM  
It's just what?

CAMILLE  
I only got the part last week.

TOM  
Can you believe it? Only a whole week to brush up on your, what? 100 lines.

CAMILLE  
It's a lot.

TOM  
Really? Charlie's doing better and he only got the part yesterday!

CAMILLE  
But, I mean... He's done this kind of thing before-

TOM  
What kind of thing? Please, enlighten me? Enlighten us?

CAMILLE  
Well, the style is different (to what I'm used to).

TOM  
What I'm used to...

Tom looks toward Elliot.

TOM (CONT'D)  
What I'm used to.  
(Tom paces)  
And you think Rada care one bit, one tiny little bit, if you haven't done  
(teasing)  
'This kind of style before.'

Camille's upset. She shakes her head.

TOM (CONT'D)

Yeah. They'll get someone better in... Maybe I should do that.

CHARLIE

You've made your point.

TOM

No. No. I haven't. I'm just trying to figure out why you'd turn up here looking like you've been out last night to our first rehearsal... Are you trying to ruin my show?

Elliot watches the two exchange shots passively.

CAMILLE

No.

CHARLIE

Tom. You've made your point.

Tom's tone elevates. He stands high, closing in on Camille.

TOM

(to Charlie)

Shut up!

(to Camille)

There is no way someone got into Rada acts like that, ever.

(beat)

Maybe mummy and daddy could help you there but not in my rehearsal, not in my show... Do you have any idea how important this passage is? You start it anything like, you've ruined the whole thing. So I'll ask again.

(beat)

Are you trying to ruin my show?!

Camille is practically in tears. She shakes her head profusely.

TOM (CONT'D)

Sorry. You're awfully quiet for an actor. So I'll ask you one more time. Are you trying to ruin my show?

Charlie steps in.



CHARLIE  
Control yourself. You've done  
 enough here.

DAVID  
 It's our show as much as yours.

Tom tries to launch back at him but can't conjure words,  
 knowing Charlie is right.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
 Look. Here goes your show.

David starts collecting his things. The others join him.

TOM  
 We still have another twenty  
 minutes here!

CHARLIE  
 No. You do.

Elliot shakes his head in the background.

39

**INT. PRACTICE ROOM 1 - DAY**

39

All the actors get up and leave except Alex.

TOM  
 (frantically)  
 Same time tomorrow.

We see in the background Charlie muttering to Camille.

CHARLIE  
 (hushed tone)  
 You ok?

CAMILLE  
 Umhmm... I've seen him do that  
 before.

*Add camera movement instead or on top of.*

THE PAIR EXIT FRAME. IN THE BACKGROUND IS ALEX SAT IN HIS  
 CHAIR.

TOM  
 Alex... you stayed.

Tom sits down next to Alex. He puts his hand on his shoulder,  
 opens his body up, adopting a relaxed position.

TOM (CONT'D)

You starting to see the level I want you at?

ALEX

Yeah?

TOM

This is the big leagues. That kind of thing... what I just did there. That's normal. That's how all the greats do it. These guys are used to it anyway.

ALEX

It didn't seem like it.

Elliot re-enters.

TOM

(chuckles)

Oh Camille. She'll be fine. We go way back.

ELLIOT

She loves herself too much.

ALEX

But... it didn't look that bad.

TOM

Huh? That performance.

ALEX

Yeah.

TOM

That right there... that's why I'm the director. And, Camille... she'll... she just  
(gritting his teeth)  
Needed to be reminded who's in charge.

ELLIOT

He just wants her.

TOM

And that works for Camille.

ALEX

In your opinion?

TOM  
No. From experience.

ELLIOT  
Something you lack.

ALEX  
So what's my version of getting  
shouted at?

TOM  
I'm not sure yet.

ELLIOT  
I reckon if he shouted at you you'd  
shrink and cry.

Tom contemplates. He grabs his things and heads for the door.

TOM  
Food for thought.

Tom exits.

Elliot steps across into Alex's line of sight.

ELLIOT  
Starting to get the picture?

ALEX  
(bluntly)  
Yeah. It's pretty clear, thanks.

ELLIOT  
Don't get... (like that with me)  
I'm on your side.

ALEX  
Great. Can't wait for some more  
history lessons.

ELLIOT  
I'm your only friend.

ALEX  
(glares intensely)  
You aren't my only friend.

ELLIOT  
You see how much we believe in you?

Alex nods.

Alex crouches forward, puts his head in hands.

ALEX

Yeah. No pressure then.

He looks up, the room is empty. He feels vacuous too.

40 INT. ABBIE'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

40

Alex and Abbie are sat at the dining table. It's a small student dining room but it's well kept. Alex is slouched in his chair. They are both at the end of their meal.

ABBIE

He really did that in front of all of you?

ALEX

Yeah.

ABBIE

He made her cry?

ALEX

Yes.

ABBIE

Don't you think that's a bit much?

ALEX

(shrugs)

Not really - he'll get the best out of us.

CAMERA PANS.

Another voice speaks up. It's Abbie's boyfriend, MILES. He's just walked back into the room with a glass of wine, his plate empty opposite Alex.

There's an undercurrent of tension between the two men - both are uncomfortable sharing the space with Abbie.

MILES

Wait. Who made who cry?

ALEX

(deadpan)

Tom Sutton.

MILES

(surprised by the tone)

Is that supposed to mean something?

ALEX  
(frustrated)  
Yes he's-

ABBIE  
He's a big director here.

MILES  
Oh. Okay.  
(not wanting to upset  
Abbie)  
Well... that's good, then.

ABBIE  
Sure. But I just can't imagine  
getting so worked up about a play.

ALEX  
It's more than a play.

ABBIE  
But if he got like that with you,  
you'd stand up for yourself -  
right?

MILES  
(pointedly)  
I'm sure he would.

ALEX  
Probably not if I'd been performing  
badly.

ABBIE  
Alex, that's stupid.

ALEX  
Is it?

MILES  
Well, yeah... for a university  
play.

Alex rolls his eyes.

MILES (CONT'D)  
You gotta start thinking beyond  
that now, Alex.

Trying to lighten the turning tone.

ABBIE  
Miles just got an offer for a PhD  
at Kings.

Alex raises his brows.

ALEX

Wow.

MILES

(looks over  
affectionately)

You're sister has an interview at  
Taylor and Sharp next month.

ALEX

Quite the power couple.

MILES

Can't you just be proud of your  
sister?

ALEX

I am.

ABBIE

It's ok-

MILES

It's not.

ALEX

(diffusing the escalation)

Ok - when's the interview?

ABBIE

I think it's like the twenty first  
to the twenty second... like four  
weeks or so.

Alex sits there, cold in the face.

MILES

We should go down together. Have a  
few days in London?

ABBIE

Err-

ALEX

Thats the same day as the play...

Abbie clocks Alex's vulnerability.

MILES

There'll be another.

ALEX  
No. There won't.

ABBIE  
Alex! Wait, they might, probably  
will cancel.

MILES  
(crudely)  
Why would they do that?

ABBIE  
(shrugs, stares at Miles)  
Sometimes they fill positions and  
cancel.

MILES  
Rarely.

ALEX  
You don't mind being told you're  
not good enough without getting a  
sitting?

ABBIE  
No. Yeah, it's different. It's a  
job.

ALEX  
And a PhD is?

MILES  
When you get to our age you'll  
understand.

ALEX  
I think I understand thanks.

ABBIE  
But so few people make it. It's  
uncertain.

ALEX  
(defensive)  
Why is that so laughable?

MILES  
Because you'd be more successful by  
now if you were serious.

ABBIE  
No-

ALEX  
Piss off. What d'you know?

MILES  
More than you.

ALEX  
I don't have to hear this.

Alex gets up, looks down at Miles.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Enjoy three years of your life  
doing a course you basically pay  
entry for.

Miles is stumped, he sits back and takes that in.

Alex picks up his plate and leaves, slamming the door behind him.

SHOT OF ABBIE SAT THERE STONE COLD WITH THE DOOR SLAMMING,  
BLURRED OUT IN THE BACKGROUND.

41 **EXT. OLD BAILEY - NIGHT**

41

ALEX WALKS ACROSS FRAME. THE CAMERA TRACKS, THEN PANS DOWN TO  
THE TARMAC.

TITLE ON THE ROAD:

'Four weeks later'

Water washes away the title.

CAMERA PANS BACK UP TO A DIFFERENT LOCATION.

42 **EXT. ELVET RIVERSIDE - DAY**

42

CAMERA IS PLACED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROAD.

Alex is walking in the same direction from a similar angle in  
front of the Elvet building. He's carrying coffees in his  
hand.



43

INT. PRACTICE ROOM 3 - DAY

43

Liv in the corner, sat on a desk. The desks have been cleared aside making a space in the middle. Both Camille and Charlie are standing in front of Liv talking.

They talk generally...

LIV

It was awful. It was like, three hours long, with an intermission-

CAMILLE

Actors didn't even know their lines in the final act.

CHARLIE

They had scripts? On stage?

LIV

Yeah.

Alex walks in, coffees in hand. He does not announce his arrival and the others don't really notice.

Alex grabs his script before crossing the room.

CAMILLE

At times they had their backs turned to us.

CHARLIE

What? That's outrageous.

CAMILLE

I felt so bad for Miranda. She cried into my shoulder for like-

ALEX

What's happened?

Camille and Charlie turn around to Alex. No one says anything.

CHARLIE

(beat)

Hamlet. These two went to see it last night.

ALEX

Really?

CHARLIE

Apparently it was a disaster.

ALEX  
 (to LIV)  
 You didn't say anything about that?

LIV  
 Didn't I?

ALEX  
 No.

Charlie, sensing tension.

CHARLIE  
 That wont happen to us.  
 (takes coffee from Alex)  
 That's why we're here, now.

LIV  
 Yeah. We were saying about how we  
 liked the last run through-

CAMILLE  
 You've come so far-

Alex takes this in.

CHARLIE  
 The end of Act five went so well.  
 We should suggest that change...

CUT TO:

44 INT. CORRIDOR 3 - DAY

44

A SHOT FROM WAIST HEIGHT DIRECTLY BEHIND TOM. HE'S WALKING  
 DOWN THE CORRIDOR. HIS HAND TWITCHING AS HE DOES.

Charlie's voice fades into muffling.

Tom walks past the door.

CAMERA STILL FIXED AT ALEX'S WAIST.

He stops.

Pause.

Takes a few steps back.

Still.

Tom looks through the window in the door.

HE SCANS THE ROOM.

He smiles.

Then turns.

He throws the door open.

CHARLIE

... I think he'd really-

The whole room turns around. Liv, in particular, shrinks away into the desk.

TOM

(to Liv)

Sorry. Who are you?

(points at her)

Alex opens his mouth but is too weak to defend her.

LIV

I'm Alex's girlfrien-

TOM

(to Charlie)

Is this a-?... Have you all got together-

Tom's interrupted by his phone. He accepts and takes his call out in the corridor, the door still ajar.

TOM (CONT'D)

Hullo.

TOM (CONT'D)

(sighs)

Of course. Yes. We'll be ready for Wednesday.

TOM (CONT'D)

Yes. Even him.

The actors look around at each other.

CAMILLE

(whispers)

Girlfriend?

LIV

(smiles warmly)

ALEX  
(listens to Tom)

Tom, still on the phone.

TOM  
(raises his voice)  
Get off my back. We'll stick to the  
plan and it'll be fine.

TOM (CONT'D)  
I've got this... Fine. I'll see you  
in a minute.

45 INT. PRACTICE ROOM 3 - DAY

45

Tom re-enters.

TOM  
Ok. Stop. What the fuck is going on  
here?  
(erratically to Liv)  
And who are you??

Liv gets up. Alex can barely make eye contact.

LIV  
I'm Alex's-

CHARLIE  
(defends Liv)  
-We... We thought we'd run some  
lines.

TOM  
(turns to Charlie)  
Which scene?

CAMILLE  
The last section of Act five.

TOM  
Are you blocking?

CAMILLE  
A bit.

CHARLIE  
We thought...

TOM  
Jesus christ you thought what? That  
you'd just do your thing?

CHARLIE

No, just...

TOM

Fan-fucking-tastic. I mean what do I know anyway? And what does that make you?

Tom's frustration now manifesting frantically as all of his worst nightmares come to life.

TOM (CONT'D)

(to Liv)

The director or something?

CHARLIE

(shielding Liv)

Of course not.

TOM

**Then why are you here?**

CHARLIE

She's just watching.

TOM

(to Charlie)

You can't just invite your mates-

LIV

No.

Tom stops. The room waits.

LIV (CONT'D)

Tom, right?

(squares back up to Tom)

You won't talk to me like that.

They're doing this for you.

Elliot enters. **Door opening to Alex but liv has to open it fully.**

Liv approaches Tom, looks him up and down.

LIV (CONT'D)

You arrogant, little man.

Liv exits.

Tom tries to recompose himself.

TOM

Who's in charge here?

Cold silence.

CHARLIE

I am.

TOM

Great... That's great.

Tom paces, clapping slowly.

He sits and collects himself.

Elliot sits in the background toying with his keys.

The room waits.

Tom gets up and walks to Charlie.

TOM (CONT'D)

**No you aren't.**

Charlie shrinks in place.

TOM (CONT'D)

**Are you trying to undermine me?**

CHARLIE

No.

TOM

Really? It sure looks like it.

Tom tries to absorb approval from the room.

He fails.

CAMILLE

It's nothing, we were just practicing.

TOM

And what's another word for practicing?

CAMILLE

I dunno... Rehearsals?

TOM

Well done.

(beat)

I don't know if you've noticed but I'm the one who calls those around here. **Not you.**

CHARLIE  
It's really nothing. Honestly.

TOM  
(tries to continue on the  
same tone)  
This is Marlowe as directed by me  
and acted by you. I make the show,  
you just... do it.

CHARLIE  
Just calm it a second.

TOM  
Just get out.

CAMILLE  
I'm guessing you want us to stop.

TOM  
No. No. Camille. Keep it up. I'll  
leave it to you... Of course I want  
you to stop. GET OUT!

Charlie looks at the ground, seemingly accepting Tom's  
dominance.

TOM (CONT'D)  
(desperately)  
Just... leave.

CHARLIE  
I don't wanna be here anyway.

TOM  
(to Alex)  
Not you.

CHARLIE  
You're kidding aren't you? Leave  
him-

Tom pulls in close.

TOM  
I'll tell you when I want you back  
in my rehearsal.

Charlie just shakes his head.

He leaves.

Tom turns to Alex.





ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
She's lovely.

Alex lifts his head, compelled to answer.

ALEX  
(beat)  
Yeah, she is.

ELLIOT  
That's nice, though, isn't it?

ALEX  
She likes me.

ELLIOT  
Brilliant. Great. Well done. (Well done).  
(assesses...)  
Why were you here?

ALEX  
What?

ELLIOT  
Here. Right here, with the other actors. What were you doing?

ALEX  
Rehearsing.

ELLIOT  
Which scenes?

ALEX  
The final act.

ELLIOT  
The whole final act... together.  
Without Tom?

ALEX  
(nods)

ELLIOT  
Jesus.

Elliot drags his hands down his face and stands. He contemplates.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
You have no idea what you've done,  
do you?

ALEX  
(shock)  
No?

ELLIOT  
Alex... Do you know what fuel you  
put in your car and dead bodies in  
a war have in common?

ALEX  
What have I done?

ELLIOT  
(ignores)  
They're dependent on each other.  
The delicate engineering of the car  
held back by a grim black oil any  
clown could unearth-

ALEX  
-We were only rehearsing.

Elliot launches at him. He gets disgustingly close. Alex can  
smell his breath, see his blemishes, notice his pupils  
dilate.

ELLIOT  
Shut the fuck up.  
(parodies)  
"We were only rehearsing."  
(serious)  
You won't ever be scouted you  
insubordinate worm.  
(beat)  
It's always the girl with you  
precious arty pricks.  
(beat)  
I will drive you apart. Do you want  
that?

Alex is shaken, tearing up.

ALEX  
Leave her out of this.

ELLIOT  
Do you want that?

Somehow, Elliot draws closer.

ALEX  
(no response)

Elliot clasps his jaw.

ELLIOT  
Do you want that?

ALEX  
(reluctantly)  
For you... Yes.

He releases his jaw, pushing his face away.

ELLIOT  
Good. Show me your lines on 197.

ALEX  
Huh?

ELLIOT  
The reason you're here. Show me.  
~~Show me how much you want this.~~

ALEX  
Ah, Faustus, Now hast thou but one  
bare hour to live-

ELLIOT  
No. Stand up you perpetual idiot.

Alex jumps to attention.

ALEX  
Ah, Faustus, Now hast-

ELLIOT  
What?! Did I ask you to speak?

Elliot closes in, his hand cupped to his ear.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
Compose yourself first. Christ.

ALEX  
Ah, Faustus, Now hast thou but one-

ELLIOT  
No. Again.

ALEX  
Ah, Faustus, Now hast thou-

ELLIOT  
Jesus. No. Again.

ALEX

Ah Faustus-

Cuts of Elliot saying over and over again.

ELLIOT

Again.

ALEX

Ah, Faustus, Now hast-

ELLIOT

Nope.

ALEX

Ah-

Elliot shakes head.

ELLIOT

No.

Cuts of Elliot.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

No.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Again.

Alex burns up. He throws the book across the room.

Elliot's engaged by this.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Yes. That's it, say it.

ALEX

Ah, Faustus, Now hast-

**SHUTTER ANGLE TO 90 DEGREES.**

Before Alex can finish the line, Elliot charges over to him like a missile driving through the air.

**Elliot slams his hand to Alex's throat. He drives him backward and pushes his head hard onto a desk. He presses down and mounts himself over his ear.**

ELLIOT

Say it.

ALEX  
Ah, Faustus, Now hast-

ELLIOT  
How long do you have to live?

Elliot presses on his throat.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
Say it!

ALEX  
Ah, Faustus, Now hast thou but-

ELLIOT  
S-I-X-T-Y M-I-N-U-T-E-S!

ALEX (CONT'D)  
One bare hour to live.

Elliot eases off.

ELLIOT  
Who's coming to take you away?

ALEX  
The devil!

Elliot twists his head round over Alex.

ELLIOT  
Time's running out.

ALEX  
Ah, Faustus-

ELLIOT  
Mean it!

He pressures his neck further. Alex starts to fight back.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
Say it!

ALEX  
Ah, Faustus, Now hast thou but one-

Elliot pulls out a pen and loads it into Alex's ear.

ELLIOT  
I will drive this into your skull!

ALEX  
Ah, Faustus-

ELLIOT

It's your fucking name! In your last moments on earth show me how you're feeling!

Elliot releases Alex. Alex is weeping.

ALEX

Ah, Faustus, Now hast thou but one bare hour to live, And then thou must be damn'd perpetually!

Elliot cracks a rye smile.

ELLIOT

Did I tell you to stop?

Elliot loves Alex's resistance.

ALEX

No. I did.

Alex sits, exhausted.

Elliot leans in.

ELLIOT

If you really think about it. **If you really think about it.** Liv stood up for herself, not both of you.

Alex wipes the tears from his eyes. He collapses into the chair.

Tom's still sat in the corridor, elbows on knees, head down.

THE CAMERA FRAMES TOM THEN PANS LEFT SLOWLY, REVEILING ALEX THROUGH A SMALL GLASS WINDOW IN THE DOOR.

Alex is sat in the centre of the room, head down. Alone.

The script he threw on the floor is not there.

48

**I/E. ALEX'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

48

Alex arrives back home, empty. There's a letter on the table for him.

Alex takes the letter outside and places it on the garden table.

He lights a cigarette then opens the letter, knowing what it's about.

The letter is from the dean of the English department, titled 'Unacceptable attendance record.'

'Dear Alex,

You have missed the maximum number of compulsory hours for a student on the English Literature BA 3 year course. For that reason...'

He puts the letter back down, takes a drag. He grabs the table, clamping his hands around the edge.

**He swipes the table, knocking the letter, the cigarette packet and ashtray to the ground.**

The ashtray smashes.

CUT TO BLACK.

**52:00:00 HOURS TO CURTAIN**

... the seconds ticking down.

49

**EXT. LAWSON TERRACE - NIGHT**

49

Alex pulls his phone out his pocket and dials.

Rings.

ALEX

Hey Charlie.

Pause. Response.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Yeah. You still good to get me tomorrow before the dress (rehearsal) tomorrow?

Into frame Liv is standing outside Alex's house getting her things out of her car. Alex stops, smiles.

ALEX (CONT'D)

(hurriedly)

Cheers. Thanks. I gotta go. --  
Yeah. Yeah see you at six.

Alex lunges toward Liv, smiling still.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
When'd you get back?

They kiss and hug. She pulls away.

LIV  
Turns out my dad didn't have a long weekend so I came back early rather than sitting around at home.

ALEX  
That's a shame.

LIV  
Well. I get to see you sooner.

ALEX  
(looks to ground)  
I will have to work this evening for the dress tomorrow...

Liv's expression drops.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
But... Of course... I'm glad you're here.

She smiles unassured.

Alex unlocks the door.

50      **INT. ALEX'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

50

QUICK CUTS OF DINNER BEING MADE. THE SHOTS ARE IMPERSONAL, JUST THE PAN BEING STIRRED, TINS BEING OPENED, VEGETABLES BEING CUT, ETC.

51      **ALEX'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

51

Alex and Liv are sat on opposite sides of the table, eating their food. They are sat in silence, but they exchange silent smiles. Though both are happy with each other's company and enjoying the food, there's something in the air. Alex is noticeably rushing his meal.

Slow pan in.

FADE TO BLACK:



52

INT. ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

52

Alex is pacing, reading his copy of Faustus.

Music plays in the background faintly. It's barely audible.

Liv is lying on the bed, eating a bag of sweets. She's bored.

She assesses Alex, contemplating his mood.

He continues, focused completely on his lines.

Beat.

Liv lobs a sweet at Alex.

ALEX

Ow.

She smiles. Alex doesn't.

She throws another sweet. It hits his head. He stops and looks at her. She smiles playfully but Alex is not in the mood. She checks herself and dips her head.

Alex paces.

LIV

Watch out!

**Liv lobs a handful at Alex, scattering him.**

Alex couldn't be more displeased.

ALEX

~~Hey,~~ I've really gotta do this.

LIV

You've done enough.

ALEX

I haven't.

LIV

Yes... you have.

ALEX

I can't mess up.

LIV

You won't. You've done so much already.

ALEX  
So why stop now?

LIV  
(playful)  
Because... I'm here.

Alex looks at her, her enthusiasm breaks his cold mood.

ALEX  
Just give me a minute.

More pacing.

Alex goes across and turns off the music.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
It was getting in my head.

Liv picks up the remote next to her. She turns it back on.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
(back turned)  
Very funny.

He turns, smiles.

Alex goes over and turns the music off again.

Back on.

Liv!  
ALEX (CONT'D)

Alex!  
LIV

More pacing.

She gets up and stands behind Alex. Alex's back turned, Liv turns off the speaker. He turns.

She grabs the copy of Faustus off him.

She smiles at him.

He looks at her, coldly.

Her face starts to drop.

Realising this, a warmth fills his eyes.

They're standing barely a yard apart, the mood peters on a knife edge, bordering on serious.

A beat.

**Alex launches himself at her. He kisses her affectionately.**

He picks her up. The fire in their relationship coming to fruition.

He throws her onto the bed.

Faustus falls to the side...

52A

**INT. ALEX'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

52A

Alex and Liv are lay in bed, comfortable and relaxed. Neither are wearing clothes, but covered by the duvet. They look physically tired.

They lie there.

LIV

You know, my dad said something funny to me over the weekend.

ALEX

Oh yeah?

LIV

Yeah. He was telling me about this one time at medschool, they had this guy come in at about 3am on a Sunday night. My dad already knew him, he'd been family friends with my granddad but they hadn't really seen him until he started coming in regularly with alcohol poisoning. This time he was rolling from side to side slurring "no more." All the doctors and nurses found this funny. They thought that he'd had enough and was saying this was his last time getting so drunk. After they'd cleared him my dad was saying that the next morning, they were walking home from the hospital at about 11 and they walked past a bar. And there he was drinking again... They'd removed the alcoholic hand gel from the ward so I guess it had been a while.

ALEX

He would drink that?

LIV

Yeah. A lot of them do. -- (But)  
 the thing I can't stop thinking  
 about is why, this time, in  
 particular he kept saying "no  
 more." - they didn't see him again.  
 Just imagine lying there, barely  
 conscious, wanting to die and  
 everyone around you laughing...

Liv rolls over and rests her head on Alex's chest.

ALEX

That's horrible.  
 (beat)

LIV

I wonder what he thought he'd be.

They both lie there.

Alex reaches over and cuts the light.

Streetlight coming through window, contouring their bodies.  
 Though they are both intimate physically, their eyes indicate  
 they're both thinking.

FADE TO BLACK.

53

**INT. REHEARSAL THEATRE - NIGHT**

53

Black.

In the darkness, we hear the sound of a wristband being  
 stretched and released. It's sporadic but intensely loud.

Fade in:

A TIGHT SHOT ON ALEX'S WRIST. HE IS PULLING AND STRETCHING AN  
 ELASTIC BAND, RELEASING IT WITH A PIERCING TANG.

A background thudding rises in volume in the background.

Alex is walking in several directions aimlessly before  
 walking in a straight line through the rest of the cast on  
 stage. The sound of them practicing their lines and general  
 chitchat fills over the top of the elastic band.

TOM (V.O.)

It's been a long month. The time  
 has come to run this for real.

(MORE)

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 You've... We've all had some lows.

But tomorrow, the agency will decide whether people will come and pay to see you or if they'll just stay home. Or if you're truly excellent, they'll take you on. So bring your A game because this, right here, could be the start of something.

(glances to a bit of paper in hand)

Give them the respect they'll deserve. Give yourself the respect you deserve. But most importantly, give me the respect of a great show.

TOM  
 Make this moment worth it.

Tom turns and steps back into the seating area.

TOM (CONT'D)  
Ok. Get into starting positions.  
 (a moment)  
 Lights down.

Lights dim.

A gentle track starts playing. It's meditative and soft.

Lights on David. He's sat on stage.

DAVID  
 Not marching now in fields of  
 Thrasymene,  
 Where Mars did matel the  
 Carthaginians;  
 Nor sporting in the dalliance  
 of love,  
 In courts of kings where state  
 is overturn'd;

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

Nor in the pomp of proud audacious  
deeds,

Intends our Muse to vaunt her  
heavenly verse:

Only this, gentlemen,—we must  
perform

The form of Faustus' fortunes,  
good or bad:

To patient judgments we appeal  
our plaud,

And speak for Faustus in his  
infancy.

Now is he born, his parents  
base of stock,

In Germany, within a town  
call'd Rhodes:

Of riper years, to Wertenberg  
he went,

Whereas his kinsmen chiefly  
brought him up.

So soon he profits in  
divinity,

The fruitful plot of  
scholarism grac'd,

That shortly he was grac'd  
with doctor's name,

Excelling all whose sweet  
delight disputes

In heavenly matters of  
theology;

Till swoln with cunning, of a  
self-conceit,

THE CAMERA, FIXED ON THE STAGE FROM THE AUDIENCE'S POSITION,  
BEGINS TO PAN ACROSS, ROTATING AWAY FROM THE STAGE TOWARDS  
TOM, TURNING OUR ATTENTION TO HIS IMPRESSION OF EVENTS.

Behind him, Elliot sits.

AS THE CAMERA PULLS IN ON TOM, DAVID'S DIALOGUE FADES TO  
SILENCE BUT THE BACKGROUND MUSIC CONTINUES.

DAVID (O.S.) (CONT'D)

His waxen wings did mount  
above his reach,

And, melting, heavens  
conspir'd his overthrow;

(MORE)

DAVID (O.S.) (CONT'D)

For, falling to a devilish  
exercise,  
And gluttoned now with  
learning's golden gifts,  
He surfeits upon cursed  
necromancy;  
Nothing so sweet as magic is  
to him,  
Which he prefers before his  
chiefest bliss:  
And this the man that in his  
study sits.

CAMERA CONTINUES TO TRACK IN. SOMEONE WALKS ACROSS THE FRAME.  
IT'S A FRAMEBLOCK. THE CAMERA TRACKS THIS PERSON TO THE LEFT  
TO REVEAL TOM STANDING UP IN A DIFFERENT POSITION, SUGGESTING  
THE PASSAGE OF TIME.

TOM

Ollie. Ollie. I need you to go  
around the back of Camille after  
your line so you're ready to  
deliver your response.

PAN CONTINUES DURING HIS LINES TO BRING DAVID, CAMILLE AND  
CHARLIE INTO FRAME ON STAGE.

The actors adjust and start again. No audio from stage  
though. Only soundtrack in the background.

Elliot watches closely.

PAN LEFT CONTINUES TO BRING TOM INTO FRAME IN NEW POSITION.

Audio from the stage comes back in.

ALEX

My God, my god, look not so fierce  
on me!  
Adders and serpents, let me  
breathe a while!  
Ugly hell, gape not!

ALEX (O.S.) (CONT'D)

come not, Lucifer!  
I'll burn my books!—Ah,  
Mephistopheles!

Tom stands; he smiles.

CAMERA TRACKS HIM CLINICALLY.

TOM

Getting there guys. That's brilliant.

(nods)

There's a couple of things though.

Alex peers his head around the curtain.

TOM (CONT'D)

Can we go from... erm...

(flicks through script)

Page two hundred and six, 'How many heavens' just before Ben comes in.

Actors nod and vacate the stage.

TOM (CONT'D)

Lights.

Pause.

CAMERA PANS IN WITH A CALCULATED STILLNESS.

Alex bursts onto stage.

ALEX

How many heavens or spheres are there?

CHARLIE

Nine: the seven planets, the firmament, and the empyreal heaven.

ALEX

Well, resolve me in this question: why have we not conjunctions,

Elliot watches still sat behind Tom.

Silence.

TOM AND ELLIOT IN FRAME, THE CAMERA PANS PAST TOM SLOWLY, MAKING ELLIOT THE SUBJECT OF FOCUS.

Elliot's eyes flicker across, analysing the play.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Oppositions, aspects, eclipses all at one time, but in some years we have more, in some less?



Elliot stands.

CAMERA TRACKS HIM INTENSELY.

He walks across the row and makes his way down the stairs with a cold authority.

ALEX (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Well, I am not answered. Tell me  
who made the world.

Elliot steps onto stage, calm but poised.

CHARLIE  
I will not.

Elliot encircles the pair on stage. His eyes focused on Alex like a predator.

ALEX  
Mephistopheles, tell me.

CHARLIE  
Move me not...

Elliot circling. He readies himself to interject.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
For I will not tell thee.

ELLIOT  
(mutters)  
Is this it?

ALEX  
Villain. Have I not bound thee to  
tell me anything?

ELLIOT  
Is this what I paid for?

CHARLIE  
Ay, that is not against our  
kingdom, but this is.

ELLIOT  
That's what the audience will  
think.

CHARLIE  
Think thou on hell, Faustus, for  
thou art damned.

ALEX

Think, Faustus, upon God, that made  
the world.

ELLIOT

Is this the lead? Who was that guy?

Alex looks around briefly, but refocuses himself.

CHARLIE

Remember this.

ELLIOT

Yeah. Remember you're nothing. A  
nobody. To anyone.

Alex looks to Elliot, not Charlie.

TOM

Alex! Jack is over here.

ELLIOT

What is this?

Alex stands still, trying to ignore him.

TOM

Listen to me.

Alex shakes his head and looks over at TOM.

ALEX

Yeah -- sorry.

TOM

Look at him.

Alex makes a point at looking at Jack.

ELLIOT

Even Tom's had enough.

TOM

Well done. You do have eyes.

Alex turns to Elliot.

ALEX

What's that supposed to mean?

TOM

You know those-

ELLIOT  
Could I say it any clearer? He,  
Like many others, have had enough  
of you.

TOM  
(piercingly loud)  
ALEX! Turn and confront Jack.

Charlie exits. It's just Alex on stage with Elliot.

ALEX  
Ay, go, accursed spirit, to ugly  
hell!

Alex reflects inwardly and deeply.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
(to Elliot)  
Others? Like who?

ELLIOT  
Look at you.

Elliot pursues Alex. He leans in close.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
You're a waste of time.

Circles.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
A pathetic no one.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
No friends.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
No family.

Alex snaps back.

ALEX  
You don't know what you're talking  
about.

This charges Elliot.

ELLIOT  
Oh fuck off. You weak little  
maggot.

ALEX  
Shut up.

Tears.

Jack enters in the background.

ELLIOT  
 (teasing)  
 Oh mummy mummy.  
 (serious)  
 Not that she cares.  
 (shouts)  
**You're useless!**

Elliot assesses Alex's state.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)  
 Tears? Really? Christ. Surely this  
 is a joke? You really started to  
 think you were something didn't  
 you?

Alex wipes his face.

ALEX  
 Go away!

ELLIOT  
You aren't! That's why mummy loves  
 your sister more and your  
 girlfriend-  
 (checks watch)  
 She'll probably be here any moment  
 to dump you when she realises what  
 a pathetic, limp, little man you  
 are-  
 (Gets close in Alex's  
 face)  
 Just like Tom will. Just like your  
 dad did.

Elliot steps back, releasing tension.

Alex, at the peak of his agitation.

JACK  
 Christ cannot save thy soul, for he  
 is just.

Alex ignores.

Elliot positions himself next to Jack.

A rage builds.

ALEX

Raaaahhhh.

Alex tries to throw a punch; he misses Elliot and clips Jack.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Leave me alone!

Cold silence.

Alex exits.

54      **INT. CORRIDOR 4 - NIGHT**

54

Alex storms down a long, straight corridor outside the theatre. We track him from behind. A figure is waiting in the corridor.

It's Greg.

GREG

Hey, congratulations on getting  
(the part).

Greg's voice quietens as he realises Alex is not going to stop.

Alex is full of rage and anguish.

CONTINUE TRACKING DOWN THE CORRIDOR.

55      **EXT. TOP OF ST. MARY'S DRIVE - NIGHT**

55

Alex runs at half pace away from the event. Shoulders hunched; he's cagey.

He runs up to the approach of the drive, turns and continues down it. It's long, straight and lit on both sides.

His phone rings. He clamps the phone and declines the call from Charlie.

Soundtrack plays in the background - a paced eerie track.

56      **EXT. ST. MARY'S DRIVE - NIGHT**

56

Alex is running down Mary's College drive, illuminated by the yellow-tinted street lights.

Liv, on her way to see the end of the dress rehearsal, is walking up the stairs on the approach. She has earbuds in, but unlike Alex in the first scene, she's bobbing her head slightly, enjoying the music. She's content.

As she corners the top of the stairs, she clocks a figure. She thinks nothing.

He gets closer.

LIV

Alex?

She's pretty sure it's him but says it tentatively to avoid potential embarrassment.

No response.

Alex draws into focus. She figures it's him. Smiles, unassured. Then clocks his mood.

LIV (CONT'D)

Hey... Hey...

Alex lunges toward her. He embraces her like never before.

They stand there, the Cathedral in the backdrop. Alex's eyes closed - he's relieved.

Liv's eyes aren't.

The hug lasts too long. Liv tentatively removes Alex.

LIV (CONT'D)

Are you ok?

ALEX

No.

LIV

What happened?

ALEX

I... I'm not... I'm not sure.

LIV

It's ok. It's ok.

ALEX

I messed up.

(pause)

I don't know what to do?

LIV

Ok. Ok. Let's take a minute.

Liv steps back. She sits on a bench behind them and taps to the empty spot, inviting Alex over.

Alex clenches his lips, resisting a smile. He sits next to her.

LIV (CONT'D)

Tell me what happened?

ALEX

I dunno... I was reading my lines, doing well and something just, I mean, I was bad.

LIV

Bad how?

ALEX

I dunno I...

LIV

Was it Tom?

ALEX

No. Yeah. It was both of them.

LIV

Who? Elliot?

ALEX

Both of them. Didn't you get that?

LIV

I was just.. checking.

(beat)

You know they aren't always right. It's just (their) opinions.

Alex wipes his face and nods.

LIV (CONT'D)

(beat)

And in my opinion, I know you'll be great.

Liv takes Alex's hands and squares herself with him. They look at each other. She leans her head forward. She pulls the earphones that were hanging from her jumper and puts one in Alex's ear and one in hers. They rest their foreheads on each others.

Alex smiles momentarily. They pull away.

ALEX

The Cure...  
(smiles more)

Liv grins back, deeply.

LIV

You made your mark on me.

The moment holds, beautifully.

LIV (CONT'D)

Hey, think about tomorrow night.  
And then maybe we can go away over  
Easter.

ALEX

...Yeah.

LIV

Doesn't that sound good?

ALEX

Yeah... Yeah... I just don't know  
how free I'll be.

LIV

I'll help you with coursework if  
that's what you're worried about.

ALEX

Oh yeah...

Liv looks at him. Her eyes drop.

ALEX (CONT'D)

It's just I could hear from Elliot  
at any moment after the play.

LIV

Oh... right. And then what?

ALEX

What'd you mean?

LIV

After Elliot calls, then what?

ALEX

Well. I go wherever he needs me. It  
could be anywhere... London, LA.



LIV

Oh.

Liv's head dips into her hands. The earphone pulls from her ear. Liv refrains from crying but her throat wells and she struggles to articulate.

Alex takes his headphones out.

ALEX

You ok?

LIV

Yeah... It's just a big decision.

ALEX

I know.

LIV

Did you? Where did I fit in to that?

ALEX

Well... you'd be able to come see me between shows.

LIV

So on your terms?

ALEX

My terms? You think I want that?

LIV

Do you?

ALEX

You're reading too much into it.  
(beat)  
You understand how important this is.

LIV

Oh I do. Of course I do. Out of everyone I would know.

ALEX

Really?

LIV

Yes. It's all you talk about.

ALEX

Like when?

LIV

Everyday.

ALEX

Give me an example.

LIV

No. I'm not gonna recount your infringements like a parking warden.

ALEX

Sure. Great analogy.

LIV

Every night it's Elliot this, the play that. Where do I figure?

ALEX

You wouldn't understand.

LIV

Do you ever talk to them about me?

ALEX

You wouldn't get it.

Pause. No response.

LIV

I bet you don't.

ALEX

I do.

LIV

So what wouldn't I get?

Liv stands tentatively.

ALEX

Putting yourself out there. Taking a risk.

Alex stands.

LIV

Can't you just be proud of yourself? The old you would have been.

ALEX

The old me?

LIV  
Yeah. Before Tom and Elliot.

ALEX  
It's got nothing to do with them.

LIV  
Really? Are you that naive?

ALEX  
Naive? Isn't this what you wanted?  
A posterboy?

LIV  
I didn't want this.

ALEX  
You don't get it... You've always  
had it all.

LIV  
You don't know the slightest bit  
about me.

ALEX  
I know enough.

LIV  
Which is?

ALEX  
You've never taken a risk.

LIV  
It's a student play.

ALEX  
You've never supported me.

LIV  
I've done nothing but that.

ALEX  
Then why did you try to put me off  
the other night?

LIV  
Put you off?

ALEX  
Do you want me to fail?

LIV  
Put you off?

ALEX

Yes.

LIV

You mean, actually spend time with you?

ALEX

If you'd ever taken a risk you'd understand.

LIV

(lashing)

I dated you didn't I?

They both realise the argument has elevated, but neither will back down.

ALEX

How is dating someone a risk? Are you that insecure?

LIV

Insecure? You're an actor!

ALEX

I act for myself.

LIV

**Says every actor ever!**

ALEX

Like you would know.

LIV

**And you would know!**

ALEX

You don't get it.

LIV

Get over it.

ALEX

What?!

LIV

**Just stop!**

ALEX

This IS me.

LIV

**Stop it!**

ALEX  
Stop what?

LIV  
Go away.

ALEX  
No.

LIV  
**Leave me alone.**  
(beat)  
Elliot's a liar and you're too dumb  
to realise if he was who he says he  
is, he wouldn't take you on!

The words were out before Liv could realise what she was saying.

ALEX  
(cold)  
Don't come tomorrow.

LIV  
But... I want to see the others.

ALEX  
They aren't your friends.

LIV  
Is Elliot one of those?

ALEX  
Yes.  
(beat)  
He gets me.

LIV  
**Nobody knows who he is!**

ALEX  
What?

LIV  
And you know what? The Cure suck.

Liv rips the earphone chord from under her T-Shirt and disgustedly throws them at Alex.

She leaves.

Alex takes this.

Alex looks to the ground, his eyes dancing.

57        **INT. ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

57

CONTINUE PAN AT SAME RATE TOWARD HIS CAMERA ON HIS BEDSIDE TABLE.

The camera is in his room on the bedside table by the door. It's dark, lit only by the street lights outside.

Then...

Door opens, light casts over the camera. Alex walks in and flusters around his room.

STILL FIXED ON THE CAMERA.

After a moment, a hand snatches the camera.

Alex leaves.

58        **EXT. RIVERSIDE 3 - NIGHT**

58

Alex walks past one of the posters for the play on a lamppost.

He stops by the edge of the bank, looks down at the camera and inspects it.

58A       **INT. FLASHBACK TO FIRST AUDITION**

58A

Tom's watching Alex perform.

From Alex's perspective. Elliot walks in but the shot pans in on Tom who looks confused by Alex. A close-up of Alex reveals he's looking off to the right (presumably where Elliot is).

Cut back to the pan in on Tom. He looks over to his left mildly confused.

58B       **EXT. RIVERSIDE 3 - NIGHT**

58B

Alex turns over the camera, wipes his finger across an inscription on the base. It reads, 'Elliot Small'.



TOM  
The reviews are in from yesterday.

ALEX  
Huh?  
(beat)  
There were reviewers there  
yesterday?

TOM  
You know most of them have never  
been in plays before?

ALEX  
What'd they say?

TOM  
These play reviewers, it's like  
letting me review a pair of skis. I  
don't ski but it looks easy with a  
bit of practice. It really can't be  
that hard.

ALEX  
To ski?

TOM  
To review.

ALEX  
Yeah. No. Of course.  
(beat)  
Were they good?

TOM  
Sure. We've been tweaking today.  
Having my lead there would've  
helped.

ALEX  
(reflective)  
I should probably apologise to-

TOM  
Please. You know I hate apologies.

ALEX  
Like our first rehearsal?

TOM  
(beat)  
D'you know why I did that to you  
guys?



ALEX  
No?... What was I meant to think?

TOM  
I guess...

Tom changes what he was about to say, realising Alex took something else away from that incident.

TOM (CONT'D)  
Exactly what you thought.

ALEX  
You made Camille cry.

TOM  
And?

ALEX  
Why would you do that?  
(beat)  
Why would you pick me for this?

TOM  
You know... I had this music teacher at school, Mr. Colburn. A real stickler. He practically bullied us-

ALEX  
How's this relevant?

TOM  
Let me finish. One day I came into school early and I saw him sat on the field with his son but he never called out to him. It didn't take me long to put together that his son was deaf.

ALEX  
So what? He took that out on you? He can't do that.

TOM  
Maybe he can't but he understood the process.

ALEX  
What?

TOM

~~That to make the best you can't be kind.~~

ALEX

~~That doesn't make sense.~~

TOM

- That He brought out the best in us because, not in spite of, his methods.

ALEX

You're in denial.

TOM

No. Sometimes people don't know what's best for them.

ALEX

And where does Camille fit into that?

Door slams open in the background.

CAMILLE

Tom! They're here. Hurry up.

Tom puts his hand up to Camille, keeps facing Alex.

ALEX

All you've done is burden us from-

TOM

Alex.

ALEX

Day one. And the way you carry yourself,

TOM

Alex.

ALEX

the way you talk, it's a joke. You're only a big-

TOM

**Alex!**

ALEX

Deal here in this-

TOM

-They're going to offer us a deal.

Silence.

Alex stops his rant and fixes on Tom.

TOM (CONT'D)

I've heard they're going to want us after yesterday.

ALEX

I don't get it.

TOM

There's an offer on the table.

ALEX

Ok?

TOM

But it has to be both of us.

Alex shakes his head.

TOM (CONT'D)

We'd have to leave to start in two weeks. It's a last minute opening.

ALEX

I won't do it.

TOM

Why?

ALEX

Because...

TOM

Why?

ALEX

It's..

TOM

Look at where you are now.

ALEX

That's not your doing.

TOM

It is, you're just too close to see it.













86

**EXT. OBSERVATORY HILL - DAY**

86

Liv and Alex lay together, absorbing the moment, truly happy.

Alex's phone is in the grass off to his side.

THE CAMERA PANS IN, MOVING BEYOND THEM, CLOSING IN ON THE PHONE UNTIL IT CONSUMES THE FRAME.

The phone lights up. A text. It reads: 'Hi Alex, it's the agent, give a call back ASAP.'

The camera lingers.

The soundtrack builds.

Then. A hand enters frame.

**Black.**