

ABOUT NOTHING

Written by
Ilana Wolpert

Based on
"Much Ado About Nothing"
by William Shakespeare

Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

- Benedick to Beatrice, Act V, scene ii,

Much Ado About Nothing

INT. FRAT HOUSE - NIGHT

We're at a college frat party. Shitty music, shittier beer.

Parting the Red Sea of Pi Kappa Whatever's, BRIDGET (22, bright, intense) drags her cousin HOPE (21, sweet, easygoing, but currently miserable) further into the depths of the sticky-floored house.

The girls finally reach the drinks table. Bridget swipes a handle of VODKA and fills a Solo cup. She hands it to Hope, then pours herself one.

BRIDGET

Love is the sickness. Vodka is the cure.

HOPE

God, I hope not.

BRIDGET

Just toast me.

Bridget holds her cup out expectantly, for Hope to toast her.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

To your independence.

HOPE

What if instead we toast to Jon realizing he's made a huge mistake dumping me and groveling on his knees for me to take him back?

BRIDGET

We're definitely not toasting to that.

They down their drinks.

HOPE

How could he just decide that, on the way to Econ on a freaking *Tuesday*, he wanted to break up?!

BRIDGET

Honestly, Jon did you a favor. You can do way better than him.

HOPE

(miserable)
What if I can't?

BRIDGET

Jon thinks tea is a legitimate substitute for coffee. He thinks it's funny to talk in the Borat accent like, all the time. It's literally only funny when Borat does it, and sometimes not even then!

HOPE

You can't quantify love.

BRIDGET

You don't love him. You just feel a series of chemical brain reactions toward him that's triggering an attachment.

BEN (O.S.)

I never knew you were such a romantic, Leopold.

BEN (22, sarcastic, attractive and annoyingly knows it), now stands beside the girls. Bridget's hackles go up.

BRIDGET

You might find this hard to believe, Padovan, but no one was talking to you.

Ben extends a friendly hand and a charming smile to Hope.

BEN

Ben Padovan, how's it going.
(then)
If you want my two cents --

BRIDGET

We definitely don't --

BEN

Go get this guy you love. Make a big romantic gesture. Show him he can't live without you. Life is short, right?

HOPE

(turning to Bridget)
Okay, I like this guy.

BRIDGET

You do not like this guy, he's the human version of a hit-and-run.

BEN

What's that supposed to mean?

BRIDGET

Every time I see you, Padovan, you have a new girl you're stringing along. It's pathological.

BEN

I don't think you'd eschew dating around so much if you yourself actually had prospects.

BRIDGET

Screw you, I have prospects.

BEN

Of course, I'm sorry. I must have missed the long queue of your suitors trailing out the door here.

Before she can hear the rest of the argument, Hope dips out, leaving Bridget and Ben still bickering.

She scans the room and finds CLAUDIA (22, half Italian, dry), surveying the party, munching on a bag of chips she's clearly stolen from the frat house kitchen.

Claudia notices Hope looking around helplessly, and catches her eye. She holds out the bag as an offering. Hope smiles, walks over, takes a few chips.

HOPE

Thanks.

CLAUDIA

No problem. I stole them from the pantry.

HOPE

So I'm now implicated in your life of crime?

CLAUDIA

I was looking for a Thelma to my Louise anyway.

They grin at each other. Connecting.

HOPE

I'm Hope. Bridget's my cousin, I'm here visiting for the weekend. I go to Michigan.

CLAUDIA

Claudia. I'm here because I go to school here.

(Hope laughs)

Ben's been my best friend since we were like 8, he makes me come to his frat's stupid parties so I steal their chips.

Claudia goes in for a handshake, Hope goes in for a hug. They collide, and laugh, awkward. There's definitely something here. Sparks are flying.

BACK TO Ben and Bridget, still bickering.

BRIDGET

I'm not a nun, I just don't have the rabbit-like need to sleep with everything that moves. I actually have standards for the people I choose to spend time with.

BEN

And how's that working out for you?

Annoyed, Bridget turns on her heel, walking away.

BEN (CONT'D)

(calling after her)

That's what I thought.

Bridget turns back to Ben, seething.

BRIDGET

I can't wait until we graduate and never have to see each other again.

BEN

Counting the days.

OVER BEN'S SHOULDER, Bridget sees Hope and Claudia, chatting. Hands brushing hands. There's a clear chemistry between them.

BRIDGET

Wait.

BEN

The hours, actually --

BRIDGET

Just shut up and look.

Ben tracks Bridget's gaze to Hope and Claudia. He clocks the chemistry too, but shakes it off.

BEN
My friend and your friend?

BRIDGET
My cousin.

BEN
It's probably nothing.

They LOOK BACK to Hope and Claudia, who are gazing at each other romantically, as they lean in to kiss --

BEN & BRIDGET
No no no no no no -- !

CUT TO:

SUPER: FOUR YEARS LATER

CLOSE ON a SUPER FANCY WEDDING INVITATION, cordially inviting BRIDGET LEOPOLD+1 to the wedding of one Ms. Hope Leopold and one Ms. Claudia Messina in Palermo, on the island of Sicily.

INT. BRIDGET'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bridget, now 26, looks at the invitation, pinned to a CORKBOARD in her bedroom. The corkboard's littered with reminder NOTES, PHOTOS of Bridget and Hope, and PHOTOS of Bridget and her parents SUSAN (50s, think Goldie Hawn) and IRA (60s, think Mandy Patinkin). Bridget's clearly an only child, and very close with her parents.

The ENVELOPE for the invitation is discarded on Bridget's desk, addressed to BRIDGET LEOPOLD +1. It's the only thing seemingly out of place in Bridget's well-ordered, Home Edit-esque organized room.

Bridget looks in the mirror, makeup perfect, hair perfect. Takes a centering breath, and then WALKS OUT of her apartment.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - CONTINUOUS

It's a perfect early evening in New York, and Bridget hurries through the streets. And cliché though it may be, this is a romantic comedy so we're gonna ZOOM OUT and see our TITLE now over the New York lights --

TITLE: ABOUT NOTHING.

INT. NICE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Bridget sits across from MATT (29, harmless). They don't have the awkwardness of a first date, but they also don't have the ease and comfort of a full-blown relationship.

Despite her general cynicism toward relationships, Bridget has the tension and excitement of someone who *really* wants this one to work.

MATT

The pad thai looks good. What do you think?

BRIDGET

Oh, for sure. I'll have whatever you want to share. I'm super easy.

MATT

Cool.

A long beat. Bridget puts her menu down. She gives Matt a winning smile.

BRIDGET

So I actually have something to ask you.

MATT

Okay...

BRIDGET

My cousin's actually getting married in a couple weeks, in Italy. And she's my best friend, I thought it'd be really fun if you could, maybe --

Matt's face shows that he knows where this is going, and is terrified, but Bridget doesn't pick up on it yet.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

You could maybe... go with me.

Bridget waits hopefully for his answer. Matt cycles through seventeen different emotions before settling on:

MATT

Oh.

BRIDGET

Oh like "yes, you're surprised but you're thrilled and you definitely want to go"? Or oh like --

MATT

Bridget, I... actually kind of thought this was going to be our last date.

BRIDGET

What? Why would you think that?!

MATT

I'm sorry, I thought you felt it too.

BRIDGET

Felt what?

MATT

There's just no... spark.

BRIDGET

But we're perfect for each other. We both loved Obama's autobiography, we cried at *Ratatouille*, we like all the same foods, so we can share dishes at any restaurant --

MATT

Those are things lots of people have in common.

BRIDGET

We even had the perfect meet cute, at a mutual friend's Leonardo DiCaprio themed birthday party!

MATT

Look, I know we're amazing on paper but --

BRIDGET

You can't build a life on *sparks*!

MATT

Okay, I don't care how good a lawyer you are, you can't argue me out of not breaking up with you.

BRIDGET

Objection!

INT. BRIDGET'S APARTMENT - ANOTHER NIGHT

Bridget sits at her kitchen table, looking worse for the wear. Her computer and phone are next to her.

Her phone BUZZES with a text from HOPE -- it's a selfie of her and Claudia, looking blissed out in love, cliffs and ocean in the background. **We can't wait for you to get here!!!! XOXOXO**

Bridget responds **SAME CANNOT WAIT LITERALLY SCREAMING** and adds a million heart eyes and Italian flag emojis. Her expression doesn't change as she taps out her response.

She drops her phone on the table and GROANS, putting her head in her hands.

Her computer LIGHTS UP, with a FACETIME from DAD. Bridget moans and hits IGNORE -- she can't deal with that right now. But immediately gets another FACETIME from DAD. She sighs, and clicks ACCEPT.

Bridget's parents SUSAN and IRA appear on screen. They've been married for almost 30 years, one of those adorable still happy older couples.

SUSAN

Hi, honey!

IRA

Oh, I can't handle the small talk.
What'd he say?!

BRIDGET

(playing dumb)
What'd who say?

SUSAN

Don't be coy. Your new beau! What's his name, I?

IRA

Michael.

SUSAN

Matthew.

IRA

Why'd you ask if you knew?

SUSAN

I only just knew that I knew. Is he coming to the wedding? You never updated us!

BRIDGET

I just wish you guys were coming too.

SUSAN

Us too, honey, but with saving for retirement and the cost of flights these days -- it just didn't work out. Besides, you have all your wedding party festivities.

IRA

Don't let her change the subject. So is this Matthew coming with you or not?!

BRIDGET

Right, about that... I was thinking, maybe it's too soon with Matt, maybe I shouldn't ask him --

IRA

Of course you should ask him! I asked your mother to marry me on our third date.

BRIDGET

Yeah, and that was crazy, Dad. She said no.

IRA

But eventually she said yes. Once I wore her down.

BRIDGET

You're not really allowed to "wear women down" these days.

SUSAN

(clearly disappointed)
So you didn't ask him? Bridget, this is the first guy in years --

IRA

In forever --

SUSAN

-- that's actually checked all your boxes. And when you know you know!

BRIDGET

Actually --

Bridget looks at her parents -- sparkly eyed with hope even over FaceTime. Can't bring herself to tell the truth.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
 (in one breath)
 I asked him he's coming he said
 yes!

Susan and Ira do the adult version of squee-ing.

IRA
 You sly dog!

SUSAN
 Trying to psych us out!

BRIDGET
 (weakly)
 Yup! I got you guys!

SUSAN
 You got us!

IRA
 Oh, show us a picture of Matt!

BRIDGET
 (interrupting)
 Hey, I should go, you guys. Early
 meeting tomorrow, and all.

SUSAN
 We love you!

Ira and Susan wave goodbye as Bridget ends the call. She takes a beat. What has she done?

BRIDGET
 Ultimately, I will deal with this
 later.

And off Bridget CLOSING her laptop, we CUT TO --

INT. AIRPORT - THE NEXT DAY

Bridget waits in line to board, tapping her foot. Out of the corner of her eye, a few people ahead of her, she sees a GUY and her stomach DROPS.

-- Because it's BEN (now also 26, because time) scans his ticket, gives the FLIGHT ATTENDANT a winning smile, and boards the plane. Bridget did not expect him to be on this flight. She looks pleadingly up at the ceiling.

BRIDGET

Gods, are you punishing me for lying to my sweet kind parents, even though it was a lie told solely with the purpose of not disappointing them and therefore prolong their precious lives?

VOICE (O.S.)

(gravelly)

Yesssssss.

Bridget WHIPS around, totally freaked out. A BOY (14, little shit) cracks up.

BOY

Oh, I totally had you.

Bridget grits her teeth -- *asshole*.

INT. PLANE - SAME

Bridget makes her way to her seat, keeping her head down. No sign of Ben so far. She sits down, next to another GIRL (this is 13E). Her heart skips, maybe she's free --

BEN (O.S.)

Don't I know you from somewhere?

And from the row behind her, Ben's POPPED UP over the seat. Bridget's startled, but quickly gathers herself. She doesn't turn around to look at him.

BRIDGET

No.

BEN

(to 13E)

She's kidding. We went to college together. Both going to the same wedding. I'm the best man and she's the maid of honor.

13E

Oooh, a destination wedding! That's so romantic.

BRIDGET

Not really. It's just a regular wedding that you have to blow more money on.

BEN

(to 13E)

Bridget here is planning to play the role of resident cynic this weekend, apparently.

BRIDGET

I'm not a cynic. I'm practical, and I just think practically, weddings are a waste of money and a celebration of outdated patriarchal traditions.

BEN

(to 13E)

Which is ironic, as both our friends are ladies.

13E

(overcompensating)

Love that.

BEN

So what are you up to now, Leopold?

Bridget's resigned. There's no avoiding him.

BRIDGET

I'm a lawyer. I just finished law school at Columbia.

BEN

Nice.

BRIDGET

Thank you.

BEN

Now's the part where you ask me what I'm up to.

BRIDGET

I'm good, thanks.

13E

Do you guys want to sit together?

BEN / BRIDGET

No.

BRIDGET

(to 13E)

Please press the flight attendant button thing if he bothers you.

BEN
I'm not bothering you, am I, 13E?

13E
(charmed by him)
No.

Bridget rolls her eyes. Puts on her headphones, drowning them out, dreading this weekend with all her energy...

EXT. HOTEL PALERMO - DAY

A tipsy Hope sprints toward Ben and Bridget, as they walk up, bags in hand. Hope tackles Bridget. They both SQUEAL.

BRIDGET
I can't believe you're getting married!

HOPE
I can't believe you're here!

BRIDGET
Yeah, well, weddings are dumb but I love you, thus -- Italy!

BEN
Bridget comes bearing her distrust of the industry of love, I come bearing earnest optimism and also, candy.

Hope throws her arms around Ben now too. Bridget rolls her eyes. Hope steps back from Ben, noting that Bridget's flying solo.

HOPE
You said you weren't sure, but this means --

BRIDGET
Yeah, Matt... couldn't make it.

BEN
Matt?

HOPE
Her boyfriend.

BRIDGET
Um... ex-boyfriend.

HOPE

What?!

BRIDGET

We can talk later --

BEN

This Matt sounds like a great guy.

BRIDGET

(rounding on Ben)

Do you really ever stop talking--?!

BEN

Only in movie theaters.

HOPE

(forced smile)

Guys, don't do this all weekend
please --

BEN

Yeah, Bridget, don't be mean to me,
you'll find, as your cousin has,
that when get to know me, I have a
really big --

CLAUDIA

(walking up to the group)

Stop talking.

BEN

Heart. Pervert.

CLAUDIA

(grinning)

Asshole.

They hug. Bridget takes a step back from the group, looking around. The hotel is a GORGEOUS, COASTAL VILLA, right by the beach. It's both quaint and ostentatious, and easily the nicest place she's ever been to, hands down.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

Isn't this place gorgeous?

BEN

You did great, Claud.

BRIDGET

It looks like the Mamma Mia
franchise and one of the Royal
Weddings got married and gave birth
to another wedding.

CLAUDIA

(to Hope)

That's a compliment, right?

(Hope nods)

Thank you.

HOPE

Everyone else should be here soon.

Claud has every detail planned.

We're having a masked ball tonight!

CLAUDIA

Like a Venetian carnival!

HOPE

It'll be the most perfect weekend.

Hope looks at Claudia, drunk on love, high on marriage.

HOPE (CONT'D)

I love you so much.

CLAUDIA

I love you so much.

BRIDGET

Wait, you guys are in love?! That's crazy --

BEN

You should get married or something

--

Hope and Claudia laugh, enjoying the bit, but Bridget looks at Ben -- weirded out that they were kind of in sync there. Hope spots more people walking up to them.

HOPE

More friends!

PETE (26, turquoise hair, nose ring) comes into view, followed by JON (27, golden boy, Hope's ex).

BRIDGET

(to Hope, aside)

I can't believe you really invited Jon.

CLAUDIA

My thoughts exactly.

HOPE

Oh my god, I don't know why this is so weird for everyone! People can be friends with their exes!

BRIDGET

We seem to remember this break up differently.

Pete and Jon reach the group.

PETE

I need pizza mainlined into my system immediately. I did that whole intermittent-fasting-on-a-flight-to-combat-jet-lag thing and it was the dumbest shit ever. I'm still exhausted and now I'm also starving.

BEN

Is that a thing?

PETE

Yeah, this Instagram food influencer I hate-follow does it.

BEN

Aw, I missed you.

They hug.

PETE

Do you love your new roommates as much as you loved me?

BEN

You kept your jockstrap in the microwave.

PETE

Carrie Bradshaw put her shoes in the oven.

BEN

Very different.

PETE

Conceptually similar.

Jon throws his arms around Hope and Hope reciprocates. Whatever animosity or tension they had four years ago post-breakup seems to have faded away.

Claudia watches them, hating it. Jon turns to her, ever the gracious ex.

JON

Claud! Every time I see you, you're more gorgeous. Tell me your secrets!

CLAUDIA

(huge smile)

I eat a little bit of arsenic every day, so if anyone tries to poison me, I've built up my immune system to it.

Ben snorts. Jon can't tell if she's joking.

JON

I'll have to remember that one!
(then, back to Hope)
Holy moly, Hope, you have to hear this story our cab driver told us.

As Jon pulls Hope away, Ben catches Claudia's eye, mouths "holy moly" -- making fun of him, for her benefit. She grins back at him.

Everyone starts to disperse, chatting --

CLAUDIA

(calling out)

Hey, masked ball is tonight at 8, people! Be on time!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

An adorable hotel room. Bridget finishes unpacking. She sits down on the bed. It's very quiet. She's very alone.

BRIDGET

(convincing herself)

I'm in Italy. I'm at my best friend's wedding. I don't need anyone. I'm having so much fun. I'm happy.

A beat. She bounces on the bed a little, an attempt at "fun."

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

This is not that bouncy of a bed.

EXT. HOTEL PATIO - NIGHT

The party's been in full swing for a minute -- mostly full of Claudia's aunts, uncles, and cousins. The Leopold contingency is almost nonexistent.

Bridget holds a VENETIAN CARNIVAL MASK in one hand and a drink in the other. She takes in the party, downs her drink, then heads to THE BAR for another --

CUT TO:

Ben stands with Claudia and Pete, all in masks. Ben's is a TIGER, Claudia's and Pete's are different colored birds.

BEN

So here's what I'm thinking.

PETE

Go for it.

BEN

Maggie shows up to the wedding. I'm a bridesman, she's a bridesmaid --

PETE

(to Claudia)

Wait, is it brides-man or bridesmen?

CLAUDIA

Does it matter?

PETE

(very serious)

Yeah.

BEN

Maggie sees me. I'm alone, she's alone. The sparks? Fly. Our chemistry? Undeniable. Our history? It's all there. She can't resist me, we get back together by the ceremony, end of story.

PETE

I thought you were happy when she dumped you.

CLAUDIA

The word he used was "relieved," actually.

BEN

Obviously that was a lie, that I told to everyone I know, to mask my immense pain. But it's totally fine. Trust me, within a millisecond of seeing me again, Maggie's going to be begging to get back together. I'm wearing a goddamn three-piece suit, for crying out loud.

PETE

He says, confidently, as his ex-girlfriend approaches him and his stunningly hot friend.

Claudia elbows Pete.

PETE (CONT'D)

And his other friend.

Another elbow.

PETE (CONT'D)

If you want to narrate, be my guest.

MAGGIE (25, cute, horse girl vibes) walks up to the group.

MAGGIE

You guys! Hi!

She hugs Claudia and Pete, then turns to Ben.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Hey, Ben.

BEN

(casual)
Oh, hey Maggie.

A tall GUY walks up, putting his arm around Maggie possessively. This is BORIS (26, Adonis). Ben's brain can't fully compute this.

PETE

Oh shit.

MAGGIE

Ben, this is Boris. Boris, Ben.

Off Ben's face, as he registers what's happened to his grand plan --

CUT TO:

Bridget once again makes her way back to the bar. She BUMPS into a MASKED couple.

BRIDGET
Oh, sorry --

IRA
B, it's us!

The couple pulls over their masks to reveal that it's IRA AND SUSAN -- Bridget's parents. Who she totally lied to earlier. Bridget's shell-shocked.

BRIDGET
Mom?! Dad?!

SUSAN
Surprise!

Hope runs over, laughing.

HOPE
Surprise!

BRIDGET
Wait, wait, wait, you knew about this?!

HOPE
Of course! I couldn't let Aunt Susan and Uncle Ira miss my wedding! We helped them with miles.
(then, to Ira and Susan)
My mom's been waiting for you guys, Claudia's parents are drinking her under the table. She needs back up.

SUSAN
(giving Hope a hug)
We'll be right there, sweetie.

Hope skips off, leaving Bridget alone with her parents.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
This is so exciting! We've never been to a
(whispers)
Lesbian
(MORE)

SUSAN (CONT'D)

(normal)

Wedding before --

BRIDGET

You can say "lesbian" out loud,
it's not a bad word, but you guys,
why didn't you tell me you were
coming --

IRA

Because it was a surprise.

SUSAN

B, we've just been dying to meet
Matthew! Where is he?!

Bridget is so screwed.

BRIDGET

He is... around somewhere. Hard
with the masks, and all.

SUSAN

Well, let's go look for him!

BRIDGET

(trapped)
...Okay!

Susan and Ira link arms with Bridget, leading her away.
Bridget has truly no idea how she'll get out of this.

CUT TO:

Maggie and Ben, with Boris watching them like they're an
episode of TV.

MAGGIE

Can you not be weird about this,
Ben --

BEN

I'm sorry, we broke up two months
ago and you're at my best friend's
destination wedding that we were
supposed to be at together, with a
guy who's the CW teen drama version
of me. I'm going to be weird!

Boris laughs. Ben turns to glare at him.

BORIS

Sorry, that was just funny.

BEN

You of all people do not get to
laugh at my brilliant wit!

CUT TO:

ON THE DANCE FLOOR, Hope and Claudia sway cheek to cheek. Jon taps Claudia on the shoulder.

JON

May I cut in?
(joking)
Or is that not on the itinerary?

Hope laughs. Claudia grimaces -- she lets Jon cut in, but she hates him for it.

CUT TO:

ACROSS THE ROOM, Bridget leads her parents around on a wild goose chase.

SUSAN

I feel like we're going in circles.

BRIDGET

That's just the wine, Mom.

SUSAN

I've had one glass.

IRA

One and a half.

SUSAN

Ira --

IRA

The halves add up!

SUSAN

I'm exhausted, honey. You sure we haven't seen Matt?

BRIDGET

Let's go look at the bar one more time.

CUT TO:

Ben, now wearing his TIGER mask, and Pete walk through the party. Ben watches MAGGIE, talking to a GROUP of people, touching Boris's arm. Ben seethes.

BEN

I hate him. I hate him so much. I want to punch him right in his perfectly chiseled jaw.

PETE

I know.

(then, lustful)

He could run me over with his car if he wanted to.

BEN

I want to run him over with a car.

PETE

I think we mean that in very different ways.

BEN

It's been two months, Pete.

PETE

Just hook up with someone else and try to make her jealous.

BEN

Is that what you do with other guys? Does that even work?

PETE

Tens of times!

BEN

Did you say "tons" or "tens"?

PETE

I'm gonna go dance. You want to come or not?

BEN

No, I'll just stand here looking approachable but mysterious.

PETE

Hard to do that with a tiger mask on.

Pete walks away. Ben sighs -- this night has *really* taken a turn -- and heads for the bar.

CUT TO:

UNDER THE BAR, Bridget's hiding, mask in hand, pretty drunk and sipping more champagne.

AS HE APPROACHES, Ben, with his mask on, glimpses Bridget. He weaves through the crowd and DUCKS under the bar, crouching beside her --

BEN

(putting on an accent)
Why dost the lady hide so
diligently?

BRIDGET

Because the lady is a screw up and
needs to avoid her parents, whom
she lied to shamelessly.

BEN

Perhaps a dance could ease thy
pain.

Bridget finally looks up at him, seeming to not recognize him. Ben considers -- this could be fun.

BRIDGET

And then what? We'll dance once and
make small talk and it'll be
boring, because neither of us is
willing to actually connect. You'll
resent me for agreeing to dance
with you, I'll resent you for not
living up to my ridiculously high
standards, and the whole affair
will be a waste of time.

BEN

One dance is a waste of time?

BRIDGET

See, you get it.

Bridget sees her parents, heading right for the BAR. She puts on her mask and GRABS Ben's arm.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Actually, changed my mind. Let's go
dance. Immediately.

She drags him to the dance floor.

BEN

So what are these ridiculously high
standards for men, exactly?

BRIDGET

Why do you just assume it'd be a man?

BEN

I --

BRIDGET

Kidding. Tragically, I am heterosexual. Okay, my perfect man...

Ben DIPS her.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Good teeth. Nice hair. Reads for pleasure, of course. Appreciates movies but isn't a film buff. Someone in my field, a plus but not a necessity. Plays an instrument well but isn't in a band. Love language is quality time, taller than me, cries at Pixar movies --

BEN

Oh.

BRIDGET

What?

BEN

Nothing, you're just looking for something that doesn't exist.

BRIDGET

I don't think it's wrong to have principles.

BEN

And how's that gone for you so far?

BRIDGET

(suddenly)

Wait, Padovan?

But Ben plays it off.

BEN

Hm, who is this Padovan? A lover?

BRIDGET

(snorts)

Yeah, right.

(MORE)

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Padovan's a pretentious dick who's only talent is coming up with witty insults --

BEN

Wit sounds like a valuable characteristic in a person --

BRIDGET

-- To mask the fact that he has absolutely zero value as a human being in the world.

Ben's a little taken aback by this. He really did think Bridget's "hatred" toward him was just masking a crush.

BEN

If I ever meet this Padovan fellow, I'll let him know what you really think of him.

BRIDGET

I'm sure he'll have similarly glowing things to say about me.

Ben's upset, his pride and ego totally shot.

BEN

I think probably he'd say he'd find you attractive if you weren't so much of a misanthropic bitch.

Bridget stops dancing. Takes a step back, finally realizing who her dance partner is through her beer goggles.

BRIDGET

Wow. It's Padovan. Obviously.

BEN

Yeah. So nice to hear what you really think of me.

BRIDGET

Ditto, asshole.

On "asshole," Bridget PUSHES Ben away from her, not *that* hard, but Ben's not expecting it. He loses his balance anyway, stumbling backwards, into --

A WAITER HOLDING APPETIZERS, who trips, falling into ONE OF THE ANCIENT STATUES, which knocks over ONE OF THE TORCHES.

And the statue is set on fire. The party goes silent as everyone just watches, stunned.

CLAUDIA

Tell me that wasn't really old.
Tell me it was a decoration.

Claudia's grandmother NONNA (80s) runs forward. She sees the wreck, clutches her chest.

NONNA

Il Santo Principale!!!

INT. HONEYMOON SUITE - NIGHT

Hope brushes her teeth in the bathroom.

HOPE

We don't know for sure that it was
an important statue.

Hope spits, then walks into the bedroom. Claudia's in bed, clearly distraught over the events of the night.

CLAUDIA

Nonna called it "Il Santo
Principale." "The Principle Saint."

Claudia buries her head in the pillows. Hope sits on the bed beside her, pats her hair.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

I told you, it doesn't matter if
it's been four years or four
seconds since Ben and Bridget have
seen each other, they're gonna be
at each other's throats
immediately.

HOPE

They can't just fight for three
days straight.

CLAUDIA

Trust me, Hope, they'll find a way.

HOPE

We'll ask them to stop. We'll tell
them they're ruining the wedding.

CLAUDIA

I don't think they can stop. This
was only night one, and they
already almost cremated half the
island.

(MORE)

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

At this rate neither of us is making it to the altar without third degree burns.

Hope hesitates. She doesn't have any more solutions.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

We're screwed.

Hope flops onto the bed. Claudia does the same beside her.

HOPE

What's crazy is they'd honestly be perfect for each other.

CLAUDIA

Yeah, if Ben could get over himself.

HOPE

Or if Bridget could just chill.

Hope and Claudia look at each other, an idea forming.

CLAUDIA

There's no way a little bit of that hate doesn't loosely translate to just wanting to jump each other's bones --

HOPE

Their fighting is totally all foreplay! They're just both too dumb to figure it out!

They both sit up, giddy with excitement.

HOPE (CONT'D)

We trick them into thinking each is into the other, they stop fighting, boom, wedding's saved.

CLAUDIA

And the integrity of the itinerary remains intact!

Hope wraps her arms around Claudia's neck, bringing her in.

HOPE

I love you so much, but if you say "itinerary" one more time, I *will* leave you at the altar.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Ben digs his toes into the sand, attempting to moodily smoke a cigarette. He breaks into a coughing fit.

BEN
 (addressing the cigarette
 directly)
 I don't care how cool and European
 you'll make me look. This isn't
 working for us.

He buries the cigarette in a pile of sand, then checks his phone. His BACKGROUND is still a photo of Maggie, sticking her tongue out, eyes closed -- it's objectively a bad photo but it's sweet. He genuinely believed this wasn't over.

Ben lingers on the photo, getting bummed out all over again.

The sounds of GIGGLING -- Claudia and Hope skip through a clearing, Hope pulling Claudia by the hand.

CLAUDIA
 I'm so glad we finally have a
 chance to be alone.

HOPE
 Mmm, same.

They KISS. Not wanting to intrude, Ben starts trying to sneak away --

CLAUDIA
 (stage voice)
 Can you believe Ben and Bridget?

Ben leaps behind a BOULDER. He can stay and eavesdrop for a second.

HOPE
 (louder)
 It's so silly. Bridget just needs
 to admit to Ben how she feels,
 instead of hiding behind all of
 this witty banter.

Ben reacts -- how DOES she feel?!

CLAUDIA
 (even louder)
 How does she feel, exactly?

HOPE

She loves him, obviously. She's always been in love with him, ever since college.

Whoa. Ben's surprised but also -- yeah, makes sense.

CLAUDIA

But it's always seemed like she's hated him!

HOPE

A ruse!

CLAUDIA

Well, maybe one day she'll finally swallow her pride and tell him how she feels.

Ben sneaks out from behind the boulder before he can hear Hope's response and runs back to the hotel. Hope nudges Claudia -- they HIGH FIVE as they watch him run away.

We track Ben, as he jogs out of sight, then slows down when he gets closer to the hotel. A GRIN stretches across his face -- maybe this weekend won't be so terrible after all.

INT. BRIDGET'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Bridget's lying on her bed, in a robe, flipping through channels. All in Italian. She checks her phone -- her apology text to Hope has gone unread and unanswered. Shit.

FROM THE HALLWAY, Bridget hears --

EXT. HOTEL PALERMO - HALL - SAME

Hope and Claudia "argue" in overtly loud voices.

HOPE

No, Claud, I just don't think she likes him. You saw them tonight.

CLAUDIA

Can you talk to her? I just think Ben was really looking forward to this. He's always had a thing for her.

HOPE

Has he really?

CLAUDIA

Oh, forever. But I mean, if you don't think she likes him --

HOPE

Definitely not. Bridget's got that whole list of things she wants in a guy. Talking to Bridget would just be a waste of time.

CLAUDIA

Then I'll tell Ben to just keep his secret crush to himself.

On Bridget, trying to work out what they're up to --

INT. HOTEL PALERMO - HALL

Ben practically swaggers down the hall, flying on the dangerous feeling of being right. He's about to knock on Bridget's door -- but then she **THROWS IT OPEN** --

BRIDGET

You guys must think I'm really gullible --

(seeing Ben)

Oh. Hi.

BEN

(seductive)

Hey.

BRIDGET

(realizing)

Oh god.

BEN

What?

BRIDGET

They got to you, didn't they?

BEN

Who?

BRIDGET

Hope and Claudia. I'm pretty sure they're trying to trick us into thinking we like each other.

Bridget walks back into her room, pacing, annoyed. Ben's a little crestfallen, he definitely thought it was real.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
I can't *believe* they thought we'd
fall for this.

BEN
Yeah. They messed with the wrong
guys.

BRIDGET
(turning back to Ben)
I mean, seriously could you think
of a couple more doomed than we'd
be?

BEN
Bonnie and Clyde.

BRIDGET
Thelma and Louise.

BEN
The Menendez Brothers.

BRIDGET
Gross, they were brothers.

BEN
That's why it's doomed.

Bridget laughs, despite herself. Some of their tension is
fading. A beat. Ben's still standing in her doorway.

BEN (CONT'D)
Well... goodnight, then.

BRIDGET
Goodnight.

Ben heads DOWN THE HALL -- but hears voices: MAGGIE AND
BORIS, holding hands, giggling. He searches desperately for
somewhere to hide, but there's nothing.

Maggie and Boris round the corner. Maggie's face goes pale.

BEN
Maggie. Maggie's friend.

BORIS
(helpfully)
Boris.

BEN
Don't care.

MAGGIE

You look like you're going
somewhere.

Ben looks at them, and his heart sinks. He feels so alone.

BEN

I am. I'm going...
(getting an idea)
To a midnight tryst.

BORIS

Get it, bud.

BEN

Not your bud. So I'll just... be on
my way.

Ben tries to walk in a cool way back to Bridget's room,
knowing they're watching him. He KNOCKS frantically on the
door, until Bridget opens it and Ben DUCKS INSIDE.

BRIDGET

Can I help you?!

Ben spins around, hyped on this idea that's forming.

BEN

Think how happy it'd make Hope and
Claud if they thought we fell for
their matchmaking.

BRIDGET

No.

BEN

Why not?!

BRIDGET

I'm not an idiot. Your ex showed up
with some other guy and you want to
make her jealous.

BEN

Okay, while that *might* be true --

BRIDGET

It's definitely true.

BEN

Lest you forget, in your now sober-
ness, that you did confess to me
you lied to your darling older
parents who have shown up
unexpectedly tonight.

BRIDGET

Don't call my parents "older."

BEN

Let me guess: you told them this
prodigal perfect guy of yours
agreed to come with you to the
wedding and now they're wondering
where he is.

BRIDGET

I can handle my own problems,
Padovan.

BEN

Face it, Leopold. You need me just
as much as I need you.

Bridget hesitates. This *would* save her from having to tell
her parents the truth.

BEN (CONT'D)

So? Can you put aside your
animosity and join me in this ruse?

A beat.

BRIDGET

Fine.

Ben triumphantly holds up his hand for a high-five. Bridget
reluctantly slaps it.

BEN

As of tomorrow, we're the fake
loves of each other's lives.

BRIDGET

Daylight can't come soon enough.

Ben salutes her, grinning, and walks away.

Bridget closes the door, then FLOPS onto her bed in defeat,
wondering what she's gotten herself into.

EXT. HOTEL PALERMO - NEXT DAY

Hope, Claudia, and Pete eat breakfast on the deck. Pete points a croissant sternly at the other two.

PETE

Look, I agree that they most likely want to bone, but you really should have consulted me before you went into full-scheme mode.

HOPE

All we're doing is planting the seed of the idea.

CLAUDIA

Just don't tell them.

PETE

But --

CLAUDIA

Pete. Do not.

PETE

Maybe it's just me, but I thought weddings were supposed to be fun celebrations of love, not weekends full of secrets and lies.

CLAUDIA

Sometimes secrets and lies are necessary.

HOPE

Yeah, my dad thinks the wedding is next week.

PETE

(trying again)

But --

CLAUDIA

Just shut up and eat your croissant.

OUTSIDE THE PATIO, Ben and Bridget are psyching themselves up for their big debut -- stretching, bouncing up and down like they're about to run a marathon.

BRIDGET

Okay. First things first.

She takes out her phone, pulling up her notes app.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
The grand entrance. We have to look sheepish, yet smitten.

BEN
When did you make a checklist for our fake relationship?

BRIDGET
After you left last night. Now what does "sheepish yet smitten" look like to you?

Ben tries a face. He looks insane.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
No. Try to wrinkle your eyes a little.

Ben tries again. It looks crazier.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
What's wrong with your face?

BEN
I'm trying to look like a sheep.

BRIDGET
"Sheepish" does not mean "like a sheep."

BEN
Well, it should.

BRIDGET
You have to --

BEN
Forget it, we're going over there.

Ben grabs Bridget's hand, pulling her over to the group.

BEN (CONT'D)
Morning everyone! We have an announcement.

Claudia and Hope look at Ben and Bridget HOLDING HANDS. They grin at each other -- did it work that fast already?!

HOPE
(trying not to be too excited)
"We"?

BRIDGET
That's right.

BEN
We're so sorry about last night.
After the party, we got to
talking... well, Bridget came to my
room to apologize --

Ben bumps Bridget with his hip, flirty.

BRIDGET
Ben actually came to my room.

Bridget BUMPS Ben back, hard. He tries not to yelp.

BEN
(rubbing his hip)
Maybe we met in the middle.

BRIDGET
And Ben says "Bridget, why are we
fighting? Why have we ever been
fighting? I've only been a dick to
you because I'm compensating for my
very small --"

BEN
Ego, my teeny tiny ego, because I
am so humble and modest, and then
Bridget blurts out to me that she's
always been in love with me, that
her icy exterior was just a shield,
because she was afraid of letting
anyone in.

BRIDGET
Of course Ben started crying
immediately after that --

BEN
Bridget was already crying, she was
crying first --

BRIDGET
And then, messy, tenderly --

BEN
Romantically --

BRIDGET
Very romantically --

BEN
We kissed.

HOPE
Awww!

BRIDGET
And now -- we are Couple.

Ben puts his arm around Bridget to emphasize the point. She tries not to cringe. He's not entirely sure where to put it. Settles on having his hand rest on her shoulder, like he's a proud dad.

CLAUDIA
This is amazing!

HOPE
We had a feeling!

PETE
I for one am shocked and awed that you came to that conclusion last night.

Hope and Claudia shoot Pete a warning look, as Jon, Maggie, and Boris take seats at the table.

BEN
Oh, hey, Maggie. You've met Bridget, right?

Ben pulls Bridget in even closer.

MAGGIE
Yeah, hey, I didn't realize you guys were --

BEN
A couple? Oh, yeah. Big time. Big time couple. Big time love.

MAGGIE
Wow, things moved quick.

BEN
Well, when you know, you know.

Maggie looks at Ben, smiling a little, but a little wary. Ben smiles back, but he's internally panicking. Does she not believe them?! Jon interrupts Ben's anxiety reverie --

JON

You know what sounds divine today?
Fighting jetlag out on that
beautiful beach.

HOPE

Oooh, my mom's been out there all
morning, she said it's gorgeous.

CLAUDIA

While that may be fine for our
families and wedding guests, we're
the wedding party. And we have a
lot of activities planned.

PETE

Ugh, I hate doing things.

JON

So let's do nothing on the beach.

HOPE

(admitting)

I honestly do still feel a little
brain-fogged.

Jon slings a friendly arm around Hope.

JON

Sea and salt are the best cure for
that.

(then, seeing Claudia's
face)

But of course, I don't want to mess
with the schedule --

CLAUDIA

(teeth gritted)

Itinerary --

HOPE

Come on, Claud, we can deviate from
the plan just once, right? The
beach sounds so nice.

Jon smiles at Claudia, innocently.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Hope, Claudia, Ben, Bridget, Pete, Jon, Maggie, and Boris all
lie on the beach. Claudia's still glaring at Jon.

JON

I'm going to go grab drinks. Hope,
what do you want?

CLAUDIA

I can go --

JON

No, no, don't move! These are on
me, gang.

Everyone echoes their thanks. Jon raises a hand like "no
worries" and heads off.

BORIS

What a nice guy.

Claudia rolls her eyes. She leans over to Ben.

CLAUDIA

Doesn't Jon seem weirdly polite?
Like he could be a robot? Like the
villain in Scooby Doo. I feel like
there's a tiny Scrappy Doo dog
inside his body controlling all his
movements.

BEN

You don't like Jon? Hope's ex-
boyfriend, Jon? Who could have seen
this coming?

CLAUDIA

Don't be a dick. I think he still
has feelings for Hope.

BEN

Come on, Claud. You think Jon only
came here to break up this wedding
and win Hope back?

CLAUDIA

I just don't trust him, no one
who's that hot is also that nice.

BEN

(gesturing to himself)
Uh, okay, Exhibit A?

Claudia doesn't answer -- she's distracted by Jon, returning
with drinks, doling them out with winning smiles.

BEN (CONT'D)

Your silence speaks volumes.

EXT. BEACH - LATER

Ben scooches over to Bridget, getting reaaaally close.

BRIDGET

Hey, hey, hey, personal space.

BEN

I don't know what's next on your checklist --

BRIDGET

Initial reveal, which we did this morning, then hold hands on group walks, joint rehearsal dinner toast, dance together at the wedding --

BEN

No to that.

BRIDGET

No to what?

BEN

No to all of it. If we're really playing house all weekend, we have to do it adult-style, not third-grade style.

BRIDGET

I'm not kissing you if that's what you mean.

BEN

Yeah, you wish.

BRIDGET

Because I'd rather put a fork in an electrical socket.

BEN

I'd rather get my pinky caught in an elevator door.

BRIDGET

I'd rather --

BEN

Okay, one thing you should add to the list: we need to try to stop fighting so that people think we're in love. Or at least in like.

From ACROSS THE BEACH, Bridget sees HER PARENTS walking up, with towels. They WAVE TO HER, then exchange an excited look -- *this must be the guy!* Bridget smiles and WAVES BACK reluctantly. She knows Ben's right.

BRIDGET

Fine. Here.

Bridget scoots in front of Ben. She attempts to rest her head on his chest.

BEN

This is great. Everyone's watching.

BRIDGET

Your hand is dangerously close to my boob.

OVER ON everyone else, watching them cuddled up. Hope mouths to Claudia -- "LOOK AT THEM!" They share excited grins.

BORIS

They're a really cute couple.

Maggie glances over at Ben and Bridget, then at Boris.

MAGGIE

(teasing)

Not as cute as us.

Maggie kisses Boris, but she can't help but look at Ben and Bridget out of the corner of her eye.

EXT. HOTEL PATIO - LATER

The group traipses back to the hotel. Bridget spots Susan and Ira, having a drink on the patio. She grabs Ben's hand, leading him over.

SUSAN

Finally! Here he is!

BEN

Susan, Ira, it's so wonderful to finally meet you. I'm Ben.

IRA

(confused)

I thought you said his name was Matt?

Bridget cringes -- they've already messed up.

BRIDGET
It is, Matt is just --

BEN
-- her nickname for me. Because she
thinks I look like Matt Damon.

SUSAN
Ooh, I see it!

BRIDGET
Well! Now you've met. And now we
will go.

IRA
No, no, no. Sit down. Stay a while.
Don't go running off.

BRIDGET
We've got this whole itinerary --

BEN
Babe, we don't have anything else
until 5.

BRIDGET
(trying not to cringe)
I guess you're right, *babe*.

They take seats at Susan and Ira's table.

SUSAN
So, Benjamin --

BEN
It's Benedict, actually.

BRIDGET
(surprised)
It is?

IRA
Like the Revolutionary War traitor?

BEN
Or the breakfast dish.

Susan and Ira crack up. They *love* him.

SUSAN
Tell us everything about your
entire life. How did you two meet?

BRIDGET

Well, we went to college together --

BEN

And we hated each other.

IRA

Hated each other?!

BEN

You know, one of those enemies-to-lovers type tropes. We "hated" each other but really that hate was just disguising a deep, deep love.

IRA

(nodding)

Of course.

SUSAN

Very Shakespearean.

BEN

Anyway, I call Bridget up when I find out we're going to be bridesmaids and bridesmen together. I tell her I'd love to catch up, it's been forever, she of course hangs up on me.

SUSAN

Bridget!

BEN

But I push it. I'm not letting it go. I know there's something between me and this girl and I'm not going to give up.

IRA

(knowingly)

Intuition.

BEN

Exactly. So finally we get on the phone and we talk for 3, maybe 4 hours? I lost track of time.

SUSAN

What did you talk about?!

BEN

Oh, everything. Books, mostly. And music. And our families -- you guys of course --

IRA

What are your parents like?

BEN

Oh, my mom actually died when I was 18, and I'm not super close with my dad.

Bridget throws Ben a look of surprise -- is that real? But Ben keeps going.

SUSAN

(heart goes out to him)
Oh my gosh --

BEN

It's okay, but anyway, I had just moved to New York, and after that, we started talking all the time, and since I was living in New York, we started seeing each other, and now we're here.

SUSAN

What a wonderful way to reconnect. So how long have you been together now?

BRIDGET

Three... weeks?

BEN

Months --

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Three months and three weeks.

BEN

To the day.

Ben squeezes Bridget's hand.

BEN (CONT'D)

I'm counting.

Susan and Ira love him even more.

INT. HOTEL PALERMO - HALL - LATER

Ben and Bridget walk together, to their respective rooms.

BRIDGET

Damn, a whole fake band and fake absentee parents? You really came to play.

BEN

Yeah...

BRIDGET

So I'm thinking we'll let someone glimpse us going to each other's rooms after dinner, and then that person can sneak back to their own room after a designated amount of time.

Ben opens his door. All of Bridget's stuff is piled in there.

INT. HOTEL PALERMO - SAME

Hope runs back over to Claudia, who's standing with Pete.

CLAUDIA

Done?

HOPE

They're roomies now!

Claudia and Hope high-five.

PETE

You guys sure about this? Maybe best they carry out your masterminded plan from separate living quarters?

CLAUDIA

We can't just set them up, Pete. We gotta get them to *keep* falling in love.

HOPE

Or at least in bed together.

PETE

But don't you think they're going to talk and realize neither of them is in love with each other?

HOPE

By that time it'll be too late.

CLAUDIA

The only thing you have to worry about is not saying anything to Ben.

PETE

I hate secrets. I hate keeping secrets and I hate secrets existing in the world. This is how Watergate happened, you know.

CLAUDIA

This is my wedding, not a political scandal.

PETE

Yeah, for *now*.

INT. BEN (NOW BEN & BRIDGET'S) HOTEL ROOM - SAME

Ben and Bridget take in the situation.

BEN

Okay, so Hope and Claudia clearly orchestrated giving your room away so you'd have to be in with me.

BRIDGET

I really thought the scheme was over with the staged conversations.

BEN

A scheme is never just "over," Leopold. There are steps. There are layers.

BRIDGET

You're saying schemes are like ogres?

BEN

That's exactly what I'm saying.

BRIDGET

Well what do we do?

BEN

We can't complain about it. That would sort of defeat the purpose of the scheme.

(beat)

Our scheme, not their scheme.

BRIDGET
Hard to keep track.

INT. BEN & BRIDGET'S HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Ben's in the process of building an elaborate wall of pillows to divide the bed. Bridget walks out of the bathroom.

BRIDGET
I thought we agreed you were going to sleep on the floor.

BEN
Yeah, and then I decided I didn't want to do that.
(gesturing)
This is your side, this is my side.

BRIDGET
Then I'll sleep on the floor.

Ben goes into the bathroom.

BEN (O.S.)
You're not sleeping on the floor. I spent a lot of time on the wall so we could both sleep in the bed.

A minute later, he comes out in his underwear.

BRIDGET
Ahhh!

She throws a pillow at him. He blocks it. She shields her eyes.

BEN
Why are you attacking me?!

BRIDGET
Why aren't you wearing pajamas?!

BEN
These are pajamas!

BRIDGET
According to who?!

BEN
According to whom.

A T-SHIRT now hits him in the face.

BEN (CONT'D)
(reading the shirt)
"UChicago Mock Trial Champions."
Glory days, huh?

BRIDGET
Put on real pajamas.

BEN
Pajamas for dudes is underwear!
This is standard pajama-ing!

BRIDGET
I can see the entire outline of
your penis.

BEN
Lucky you.

Now a pair of JEANS hit Ben in the face.

BRIDGET
If you want to sleep in this bed,
you have to at least wear pants.

BEN
But jeans?!

BRIDGET
Do you have any other pants?

BEN
I have my tux for the wedding and
suit pants from Friday.

BRIDGET
Then jeans it is.

Ben rolls his eyes but he's not gonna argue. Puts on the
jeans. Gets into bed.

BEN
No one should have to relax in
denim.

Silence.

BEN (CONT'D)
I'm just saying, it's very
uncomfortable. Very stiff.

Bridget closes her eyes. Light floods the room again -- Ben's
turned a lamp on.

BRIDGET
Morning already?

Ben props himself up on his elbow, facing the pillow wall.

BEN
If you were Maggie, what would make you want me back?

BRIDGET
A lobotomy.

BEN
I'm serious. Like, what's a thing one of your exes did that made you jealous?

Bridget hesitates.

BRIDGET
I kind of... haven't exactly had an ex. So to speak.

BEN
Okay, liar.

BRIDGET
I'm not.

BEN
What would you call this perfect Matt guy?

BRIDGET
We only went on 5 dates. I don't think he counts as an ex.

BEN
You went on 5 dates and you invited him to a destination wedding?!

BRIDGET
I already know it was stupid, don't rub it in.

BEN
So you've never really dated anyone?

BRIDGET
I've dated people, I've just never had like an actual, real in-love sort of thing.

BEN

(beat)

But you're not ugly.

BRIDGET

Thanks, fake boyfriend. Means a lot coming from you.

BEN

No, really. I mean your personality is terrible, but you know you're objectively attractive, right?

BRIDGET

(smiling to herself)

You're bad at giving compliments.

BEN

Yeah, but my irresistible charm and good looks make up for it.

They both stare at the ceiling. A beat.

BEN (CONT'D)

What I had with Maggie was real, by the way. I'm not as...

BRIDGET

Shitty? Womanizing? Obnoxious?

BEN

Impulsive, with relationships as I used to be in college.

BRIDGET

(beat)

Sorry. I said we should stop arguing and we should stop arguing. Recalibrating.

(then)

How'd you guys meet?

BEN

She was sitting courtside at a Bulls game and I saw her on the big jumbotron. And I said to myself, "I'm going to go talk to that girl."

BRIDGET

They let you just go to the courtside seats?

BEN

No, I'm a little bit banned from the stadium now. But it was worth it just to get her attention.

BRIDGET

That's insane.

BEN

I love a grand romantic gesture.

BRIDGET

Ugh, really?

BEN

What better way to prove how you feel about someone than in public? Isn't that why people have big weddings?

BRIDGET

No, people have big weddings because they think they have to. Long tradition of society gaslighting them into thinking that if they don't stand in front of an altar and say "I do," their love doesn't count.

BEN

So you don't want to get married?

BRIDGET

Of course I do. I just don't want to get married for the sake of getting married. It has to be the perfect person.

BEN

Which doesn't exist.

A beat.

BRIDGET

Hey, Ben?

BEN

Yeah?

BRIDGET

You... didn't make all that stuff up, did you. When you were talking to my parents.

Ben takes a beat. Deciding how to respond.

BEN
Ask no questions and I'll tell you
no lies.

Bridget sits with that for a second. Ben turns off the lamp.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NEXT DAY

The group congregates. Everyone's in athletic clothes, except Maggie, who's in full EQUESTRIAN attire. Ben and Bridget walk up in loungewear, both equally confused.

BEN
What's going on?

BRIDGET
Are we going on a group run or
something?

CLAUDIA
Seriously, did anyone read the
itinerary?!

BEN
No, Claud.

CLAUDIA
Well, go change, we're going
horseback riding.

MAGGIE
Oh, Ben, your favorite thing!

BEN
So fun!

But he goes very pale.

INT. HOTEL HALL - SAME

Bridget and Ben walk through the hall to their rooms to change. Ben's not talking.

BRIDGET
I know Claudia's your best friend,
but all this organized activity
stuff is really a lot for me.

BEN

I'm skipping the horseback riding.
Tell them I got sick.

BRIDGET

You can't *skip* --

BEN

Oh, tell them I ate some shellfish
accidentally. I'm allergic to
shellfish, that'll seem real.

BRIDGET

What's the big deal --

BEN

Promise not to laugh?

BRIDGET

...No.

BEN

I'm afraid of horses.

BRIDGET

Afraid like you're scared?

BEN

Correct.

BRIDGET

So why does Maggie think it's your
"favorite thing?"

BEN

Oh, because when we first met, she
told me she was a horse girl and
used to jump horses as a kid and I
said "same."

BRIDGET

You said "same"?

BEN

Correct.

BRIDGET

Why would you say "same"?!

BEN

Because I was stupid and infatuated with her and trying to win her over and we lived in a metropolitan city, I never thought I'd never have to *actually ride a horse in front of her.*

BRIDGET

How scared are you of horses?

BEN

Really, really scared.

Bridget giggles, she can't help it.

BEN (CONT'D)

It's not funny.

BRIDGET

I'm sorry. What is it about horses?

BEN

Shut up.

BRIDGET

No, I really want to know.

BEN

They're huge and powerful and could easily kill us if they wanted to, and they're treated like free labor, and at any moment they could Animal Farm us all and rise up on their hind legs and take over the world and bite off our hands with their giant teeth, and yeah, technically, you can sew a hand back on, but it's never gonna be the same.

(haunted)

It'll never be the same.

Bridget's still really trying not to laugh.

BEN (CONT'D)

They're 2000 pounds of angry muscle with metal feet! Any person in their right mind should fear them! Stop laughing!

EXT. BARN - DAY

Everyone's in the process of mounting their horses. Ben looks more terrified than ever.

MAGGIE
Ben, you should lead the way.

CLAUDIA
Why?

MAGGIE
(confused)
Ben used to ride as a kid. Did you not know that?

BEN
It was before Claudia and I met.

CLAUDIA
We've been friends since we were 8.

BEN
I was a child horse prodigy.

Everyone seems impressed.

BEN (CONT'D)
But that was a really long time ago, I haven't been on a horse in forever, probably really bad now --

Ben throws Bridget a look like "save me."

BRIDGET
Actually, Ben's going to hang back with me, because --

BEN
Because Bridget's afraid of horses.

Bridget glares at him. Ben gives her a look like "go on, lie for me."

BRIDGET
Yes. I fear horses. They're 200 pounds of angry metal.

PETE
Pretty sure horses weigh more than 200 pounds.

BRIDGET
They could eat our hands.

Ben puts his arms around Bridget.

BEN
 Isn't she so cute? Afraid of
 horses. Horses are so nice! They
 love carrots!

Ben faces the HORSE. The horse gives Ben a look like "you are correct to fear me."

BEN (CONT'D)
 I guess it's time to get on this
 horse, whom I already adore.

He tries to throw a leg over the horse's back. The horse makes a noise. Ben takes a deep breath, and attempts again. Unsuccessful. Forces a grin.

BEN (CONT'D)
 Haven't ridden in a while! You know
 how it is!

Everyone's watching him. He tries again. It doesn't go great.

EXT. TRAIL - A LITTLE LATER

Everyone's riding horses. Bridget rides up next to Hope, feeling like she might have to come clean soon.

BRIDGET
 Hey.

HOPE
 Hey! Have I told you how happy I am
 that you're here?

BRIDGET
 Yeah, listen --

HOPE
 Hey, is Ben okay?

They look back at Ben, right behind Bridget, who has his arms around his horse's neck, clinging to it for dear life, looking terrified.

BRIDGET
 Ben -- I mean, uh, *babe*, you okay?

BEN
 Oh, I'm great. Just like riding a
 bike. All really comes galloping
 back to you.

Jon rides by them all, GALLOPING on his horse like he's a knight.

JON

It's a beautiful day!

Claudia, not far behind them, rolls her eyes. But when Hope's horse sees Jon's horse, it immediately starts GALLOPING.

BRIDGET

Uh, what's happening to your horse?

HOPE

I think it's trying to follow Jon's horse.

Hope's horse is now totally out of control.

HOPE (CONT'D)

What do I do?!

Bridget's horse starts GALLOPING too, after Hope's horse.

BRIDGET

Oh god, now my horse is trying to follow your horse! Heel! Neigh!

All the horses start following the galloping ones. It's becoming chaos.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

(to her horse)

March to the beat of your own drum, horse! Be an individual! Don't follow the herd!

Bridget's horse ignores Bridget, picks up the pace.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Make your horse slower!

HOPE

I don't know how!

OVER ON Ben, who's clinging to his horse for dear life. His horse is the only one who hasn't gone full speed ahead, it's trotting along.

Everyone's yelling at their horses and each other. Jon GALLOPS over to Hope, and YANKS her horse's reins. The horse finally chills out.

JON

You okay?

Hope's still breathing hard.

HOPE
Yeah, I think so.

JON
It's okay. Deep breaths. Look at
me. In. Out. In. Out.

Hope breathes with Jon. Claudia, now in control of her horse,
watches them, seething.

EXT. TRAIL - SAME

Bridget rides up next to Ben, whose horse is barely moving at
a walk. He's still clutching the horse's neck in terror.

BRIDGET
Padovan.

Ben doesn't respond. Still frozen in terror.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
You have to sit up.

BEN
This horse is totally out of
control!

BRIDGET
You just have to show him who's
boss.

BEN
Oh, the horse is absolutely the
boss, and the horse knows that.
Horses are too smart. They're going
to rule us all with an iron hoof,
oh my god --

Bridget leans over, grabs his hand.

BRIDGET
Ben. Stop. Trust me. One step at a
time.

They lock eyes, and Ben slowly, carefully, sits up on the
horse.

BEN
Oh my god.

BRIDGET
You're riding a horse.

BEN
I'm riding a horse.
(yelling)
I'M RIDING A HORSE!!!

Bridget laughs. A nice moment. Then Ben immediately loses his balance and almost FALLS OFF. Bridget grabs his hand. Maggie watches them from her horse, almost wistfully.

EXT. BEACH - LATER

Ben's walking down the beach. He sees Ira, standing in front of the ocean, very still.

BEN
...Mr. Leopold?

Ira screams. Ben screams back.

IRA
Sorry. I'm trying to focus on the water.

BEN
Is it... telling you something?

IRA
Yeah, it's telling me if I get it, it'll drown me and that's the end.

BEN
Very talkative body of water.

IRA
I'm afraid of the ocean.

BEN
I'm afraid of horses. But I just rode one.

IRA
Yeah, I can smell that.

They stand there for a minute, just watching the waves.

BEN
If I can conquer my lifelong fear,
I bet you could too.

IRA

My life's been a lot longer than yours, kid. I've had many more years to build up my irrational -- you know what, it's rational -- fear.

A beat.

BEN

Come on.

Ben leads Ira to the ocean. The waves splash their feet. Ira winces at first, then calms down.

BEN (CONT'D)

We can just take it one step at a time.

They go further and further into the ocean.

FROM THE SHORE

Bridget walks up to Susan, who's watching the boys. She shakes her head, in awe.

SUSAN

I don't know how he did it. I haven't been able to get your father in the water in 30 years.

Bridget watches Ben with Ira, who's now splashing around, totally carefree. Feeling oddly sentimental.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Bridget's in the bathroom, changing. Ben sits on the bed.

BRIDGET

I can't believe you got my dad in the ocean. My parents are obsessed with you.

BEN

And did you see Maggie watching us today? She's totally jealous.

IN THE BATHROOM, Bridget adjusts her pajama shirt. A beat, then she unbuttons one extra button. Considers her reflection, then walks back into the room.

BRIDGET

I didn't think you were paying attention to anything but the demonic horse.

Ben notices her shirt but doesn't say anything.

BEN

Well, after I showed the horse who was boss, I was paying attention.

Bridget gets into bed, the wall is still intact.

BEN (CONT'D)

I'd say, as a fake couple, we're kind of killing it.

BRIDGET

We're murdering it.

Something's clearly shifted here. He turns off the light. They lie in silence for a second.

BEN

Can I ask you something?

BRIDGET

(heart pounding)
Sure.

BEN

What happened with Matt?

BRIDGET

Oh. Um. He said there was no proverbial "spark."

BEN

Ah, yes, the mythical spark.

BRIDGET

I just didn't get it. Everything was perfect on paper.

BEN

I mean, that's kind of "love"'s whole deal. It doesn't make any sort of explainable sense. It's just like... a feeling.

BRIDGET

I hate when people say that. It should make sense.

BEN

That's why people write so many songs about love. Just trying to find the words for it.

BRIDGET

Well, I hate that.

Bridget suddenly feels uncomfortable by the vulnerability. Ben's weighing how to respond, when:

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Anyway, I honestly doubt my parents would've been as into Matt if he came. I mean, my dad wouldn't even go to Ft. Lauderdale because he was so scared of the ocean. And now because of you he's like Aquaman.

BEN

(grinning)

So... I'm better than Matt.

BRIDGET

Is that what you want to hear, dude? Yes, Eggs Benedict Padovan, you are better than my bad ex-non-boyfriend.

Ben smiles to himself.

BEN

Bridget?

BRIDGET

Ben.

BEN

Don't take this the wrong way.

BRIDGET

(heart pounding)

Okay...

BEN

But it's actually been not terrible pretending to date you this weekend.

Bridget smiles.

BRIDGET

Goodnight, Ben.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NEXT DAY

Bridget wakes up. The pillow wall is partially collapsed, and Ben's arm is over her. She doesn't move for a second. It feels... comfortable. Easy. Real.

Ben starts to shift, Bridget shuts her eyes, pretending to be asleep.

BEN'S POV: He's awake. And he doesn't want to move either.

HOLD on both Ben and Bridget, as they try to process how they've *literally* broken down a wall in their relationship...

EXT. HOTEL PALERMO - MORNING

Ben and Bridget, now dressed, walk up, to Claudia, Hope, Pete, Maggie, Boris, Jon.

Both Ben and Bridget are a little shy from the morning, unsure how to act around each other. Ben REACHES OVER her for a pastry, accidentally brushes Bridget's arm, and they both FLINCH.

BRIDGET

(forced cheer)

So. Claudia! What's the plan? We're seeing some old churches today?

BEN

Ooh, this wedding weekend is finally getting wild.

CLAUDIA

Yes! We're going to see the Palatine Chapel.

Hope puts an arm around Claudia.

HOPE

Claud used to wander around there as a kid. There's these amazing mosaics on the ceiling --

JON

Oh, yes, the Byzantine art!
(to the group)

I know all about the Palatine Chapel.

PETE

Of course you do.

INT. PALATINE CHAPEL - DAY

The group walks through the chapel. Jon narrates as they go, a perfect tour guide. Bridget and Ben are holding hands, but it feels somewhat charged.

JON

They say the Palatine Chapel is the best example of the Arab-Norman-Byzantine style that prevailed in the 12th-century Sicily.

The group pauses in front of the main chapel.

JON (CONT'D)

Three cultures and religions, all coming together to create something beautiful.

HOPE

(genuine)

Wow.

Claudia rolls her eyes.

Ben pulls Pete aside, away from the group.

BEN

I need to tell you something.

PETE

Sure. Wait -- no if it's a secret, yes if it's literally anything else.

BEN

Bridget and I know about Hope and Claudia's whole plan. I'm assuming you know about it too.

PETE

(innocent)

Hope and Claudia? Plan?

Ben just looks at Pete. Pete immediately cracks.

PETE (CONT'D)

I hate all these secrets! I personally tell everyone everything, it's why I keep having to switch dentists.

BEN

We're only pretending to be a couple. I wanted to make Maggie jealous.

PETE

Well, the Maggie stuff seems to be working, she's totally been giving you "did I make a terrible mistake" eyes for the last couple days.

BEN

Has she?

PETE

How have you not noticed?

BEN

I guess I've been a little distracted.

PETE

Okay, this is your big master plan to get Maggie back. What's Bridget getting out of this?

BEN

She lied to her parents about bringing a guy to the wedding, the guy broke up with her, they showed up unexpectedly. Enter me.

PETE

That's convenient.

BEN

Anyway. That's it. Just needed to get that off my chest.

Pete snorts.

PETE

Are you kidding? That is not it. You might be able to fool Hope and Claudia because they are blinded by their own love and wedding logistics, but I see right through you.

BEN

What are you talking about?

PETE

Look, I know you're a musician and so technically a performer blah blah blah, but you're not a good actor.

BEN

I'm a great actor. I played Motel in *Fiddler* in middle school.

PETE

Wait, really? That's a great part.

BEN

I know!

PETE

You might not have liked Bridget at first, but you totally do now. I can tell.

BEN

It's just part of the plan, dude. That's it. Let's go look at another Jesus statue, come on.

But Pete catches Ben's gaze dart toward Bridget.

INT. PALATINE CHAPEL - SAME

Bridget lingers at the chapel. Maggie walks up to her. Bridget gestures to the mosaic.

BRIDGET

Doesn't that kind of look like an evil unicorn to you?

MAGGIE

Not really.

BRIDGET

Really? You don't see the horn?

MAGGIE

(shrugs)
Sorry.

They stand side by side, looking at the art for a second.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

So... you and Ben --

BRIDGET
 (suddenly)
 Why'd you break up with him?

Maggie looks conflicted. Not sure if she can talk about this with Bridget. But she's clearly been wanting to unload for a while.

MAGGIE
 I don't know. It was like we were perfect together, you know? We liked so many of the same things -- how often do you meet a guy who's favorite movie is *also* "Black Beauty"?!

Bridget grits her teeth -- she can't be the one to break it to Maggie.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
 He was like Chandler Bing and I was like Monica, but hotter. But I just felt like there was something missing, you know? Like a --

BRIDGET
 A spark.

MAGGIE
 Yes! Exactly. A spark. I told him I thought we were growing apart and wanted different things. But I don't know. Maybe I was wrong.

BRIDGET
 Because you see him with me.

MAGGIE
 (a little embarrassed)
 No! I -- we just have a lot of history.

BRIDGET
 He really loves you, you know.

MAGGIE
 He -- what -- ?

BRIDGET
 He told me the story of the jumbotron and everything.

MAGGIE
 He did?

BRIDGET
 You should talk to him. Tell him
 how you feel.

MAGGIE
 But, you two --

BRIDGET
 Ben and I are just a fling. A
 wedding hook up. All we do is
 fight, you saw us, the first night.
 He's only with me to get over you.

Maggie hesitates.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
 I'm serious. Talk to him. Tonight.

And Bridget bolts, before she can regret saying any of that.

INT. CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS

Ben watches Bridget head toward an OLD CONFSSIONAL in the church. She hesitates, then slips inside. Acting on impulse, Ben FOLLOWS HER IN --

INT. CONFSSIONAL - CONTINUOUS

Bridget JUMPS as the door BANGS behind her. Sees Ben.

BRIDGET
 Jesus, Ben.

BEN
 Hey, do not say the guy's name in
 vain. He is right here.
 (beat)
 So. Feeling that Catholic guilt?

BRIDGET
 You're talking to a Jew who feels
 nothing, so no.

BEN
 Seriously though. We're doing a lot
 of lying. Shouldn't we repent?

BRIDGET
 My people deal with this kind of
 thing on Yom Kippur.

BEN
I really like your parents.

BRIDGET
Everyone likes my parents.

BEN
I just want to stay friends with
Ira when the weekend's over.

BRIDGET
(smiling)
I'll give you his fax number.

Their faces are really close together. A flicker of a moment,
before Pete YANKS open the door.

PETE
What are you *lovebirds* doing in
here?

Bridget winks at Ben, steps out of the confessional.

BRIDGET
(lascivious)
Nothing.

Pete looks at Ben, wondering, but Ben just slides past him,
walking out too.

INT. PALATINE CHAPEL - SAME

The group explores another room. Jon leads the way.

JON
(authoritatively)
People think that King Roger II and
later Norman kings received guests
in the chapel with this platform
serving as an impressive throne
room. The mosaics above also
emphasize the king's divine power.

CLAUDIA
Did you swallow the Wikipedia page
on this place, or what?

HOPE
Claud, stop.

CLAUDIA
What?!

Hope pulls Claudia aside, genuinely annoyed.

HOPE

Stop giving Jon such a hard time.
He's not doing anything wrong.

Claudia locks eyes with Jon, who's watching them closely. He quickly looks away, pretending to be looking around the chapel.

CLAUDIA

How do you not see that he's so clearly been micro-sabotaging me this whole weekend?!

HOPE

All I see is you being a dick to one of my oldest friends, which frankly, isn't cool.

CLAUDIA

He's your ex-boyfriend, I feel like I have the right to be weird about this!

JON

Hope, come look at the detailing of the Paschal Candelabrum!

HOPE

I'm gonna go look at the detailing of the Paschal Candelabrum.

CLAUDIA

Hope --

Hope stalks away. Jon smiles innocently at Claudia. Claudia narrows her eyes at him -- she's onto him.

EXT. HOTEL LAWN - LATER

Hope and Claudia's rehearsal dinner. A Pinterest board of "Italy coastal wedding" realized. There's a gorgeous long table, on a lawn overlooking both the countryside and the water. About THIRTY WEDDING GUESTS of all ages have congregated.

Hope wears a GREEN DRESS. Claudia's in a GREEN PANTSUIT -- like something Shiv Roy in Succession would wear.

They're holding glasses of PROSECCO, mid-toast, using big fake smiles to conceal their annoyances with each other.

CLAUDIA

Thank you so much, everyone, for coming out here to our wedding. We know it's a plane ride or three away --

HOPE

But we love all of you so much.

CLAUDIA

We're so happy you're here to share this weekend with us.

HOPE

And if you're wondering why I'm wearing green, even though it decidedly does not complement my hair --

CLAUDIA

-- It's because it's an old tradition that Italian brides wear green on the eve of their weddings to bring good luck.

HOPE

And we need all the luck we can get in this marriage.

Hope's MOM and Claudia's PARENTS smile. LAUGHTER from the rest of the guests. These are the types of corny wedding speech jokes that *kill*.

CLAUDIA

Now, throwing it to our best man and maid of honor to play us out, so we can eat.

Ben and Bridget stand. They've rehearsed this.

BEN

Claudia's been my best friend since second grade, when she asked me if I was done with Little House on the Prairie and I said "bite me," because I sure as hell *wasn't* --

BRIDGET

And Hope has been my cousin since she was born.

BEN

And four years ago, we brought them together --

BRIDGET
Albeit accidentally --

BEN
And then they brought us together.

Some "awww's." Susan and Ira look on lovingly.

BRIDGET
Which really just proves that love
is a circle.

BEN
And life is a highway.

BRIDGET
And sometimes your best friends
will meet at a frat party you
dragged them to and end up falling
in love.

BEN
A frat party, ladies and gentlemen!
Talk about love in a hopeless
place.

BRIDGET
But actually, Hope and Claudia, we
are so, so happy for you. There's
really no one who deserves either
of you, so thank god for everyone
that you found each other.

BEN
So, a toast --

BRIDGET
Per centanni.

BEN
A century of happiness for you
guys.

BRIDGET
Salud!

Everyone clinks their glasses. Susan winks at Bridget from across the room. Bridget smiles back at her, heart sinking.

EXT. HOTEL LAWN - A LITTLE LATER

Post-dinner, everyone's mingling. Ben and Bridget are surrounded by a sea of RELATIVES.

RELATIVE

So you two were friends in college?

BRIDGET

Not exactly friends.

BEN

No, we hated each other.

BRIDGET

We actually first met at this party freshmen year. We lived in the same dorm.

BEN

Wow, I forgot about that --

BRIDGET

And eventually it got too loud inside, so we went outside and leaned against the trash cans and kept talking --

BEN

And when we finally realized we had been talking for three hours, the party was over.

Ben and Bridget look at each other, trying to find answers in the other's face. That's a real memory, and neither can tell if this is part of their game, or what.

RELATIVE

So what happened then?!

BRIDGET

I gave him my number and he never texted me.

BEN

No, I gave you my number, and you didn't text me --

The relatives shift uncomfortably, as it starts to dawn on Ben and Bridget that perhaps their years of hostility have been a total misunderstanding. But before either of them can come up with what to say to each other:

BRIDGET

I'll just be right back --

Bridget walks away, at first normal pace, then faster. Hope grabs Bridget as she passes.

HOPE
Hey! I wanted to talk to you.

BRIDGET
(kind of flipping out)
Right now?

HOPE
I just wanted to say -- your mom
and I were talking about you and
Ben --

BRIDGET
Oh, really, that's great, that's so
great --

HOPE
Look, I know you guys haven't
always gotten along but there's
something so real between you guys.
I just see it, it's like there's --

BRIDGET
(finishing)
A spark.

HOPE
Yes! Exactly. I'm just so happy for
you.

Hope gives Bridget a kiss on the cheek and then skips away. O
Bridget, letting this sink in, a smile growing...

EXT. HOTEL LAWN - LATER

The party's dispersed, except for the wedding party, and
everyone's a little bit drunk now. Jon pulls Hope in to
dance. After they dance for a few moments:

JON
Can we talk for a second?

HOPE
Of course. What's up?

JON
You want to sit on the beach?

HOPE
Sure...

Hope throws a glance toward Claudia to see if this is kosher -
- despite their argument, she doesn't want to piss off her
bride -- but Claudia's dancing with Pete. So she follows
Jon...

EXT. BEACH - SAME

Hope flops down on the sand. Jon sits next to her, gearing up
for a speech, but Hope's in her own head, doesn't notice.

HOPE (CONT'D)

Oh man, I'm gonna be so hungover
for the wedding tomorrow.

JON

Do you remember when we used our
fake IDs at the gas station to buy
Mike's Hard Lemonades?

HOPE

Oh my god, and then we drank four
each and I puked in your cat's
litter box.

JON

My mom still believes that that was
some form of cat excrement.

HOPE

(laughing)
We were so dumb.

JON

I can't believe you're getting
married tomorrow.

HOPE

Me neither!

JON

I'm still in love with you.

HOPE

Same! Wait --

JON

(excited)
Same?

Jon reaches out for Hope. Hope jerks away, realizing.

HOPE

No! No. Not same.

JON
 But you did say "same."
 Instinctively, you said "same."

HOPE
 I was just agreeing with the last
 few things that you were saying and
 then that slipped out and -- you're
 still in love with me?

JON
 I am.

HOPE
 Jon, we're at my wedding --

JON
 You have to admit this is a lot
 more intimate than objecting at the
 altar. Which I haven't entirely
 ruled out.

Hope backs away from him. Confused, reeling --

HOPE
You broke up with me.

JON
 And I made a huge mistake. I know
 that now.

Jon takes her hands, looks deep in her eyes.

JON (CONT'D)
 You weren't over me when you
 started dating Claudia.

Hope hesitates. That's true.

HOPE
 But I am now.

Jon tilts Hope's head up toward him. Hope can't help herself,
 she goes a little weak -- she wanted this moment so badly
 four years ago --

JON
 Are you?

EXT. HOTEL LAWN - SAME

Maggie takes the seat beside Ben, at the BAR.

MAGGIE
Hey.

BEN
Hey.

Maggie steals Ben's drink, downs it, then makes a face.

MAGGIE
You don't even like Scotch.

BEN
I like the way it makes me feel.
Like an adult man.

Maggie laughs. Flirting maybe?

MAGGIE
You want to take a walk with me?
I've eaten so much pasta that I
feel like if I don't move around
soon I'll pass out.

BEN
Where's Boris?

MAGGIE
I'm a modern woman. I think I can
take one walk without my boyfriend.

BEN
But with your ex-boyfriend?

MAGGIE
We're friends now. Aren't we?

Ben looks around for Bridget, but doesn't see her.

BEN
Sure. Let's take a walk.

EXT. HOTEL LAWN - SAME

Maggie and Ben, walk away from the party, onto a HILL, overlooking the ocean. Ben takes it in -- it's actually really beautiful.

BEN
The stars are nice tonight --

MAGGIE
I want to try again.

BEN

Okay, "the weather's been very unpredictable" --

MAGGIE

Not with small talk. With us. Maybe I made a mistake. I mean, you're not even allowed at Bulls games anymore because of me. That's pretty goddamn romantic.

BEN

Just the home ones, they can't ban me from the away games.

Maggie laughs, touching his arm. Ben's not sure why he's not immediately jumping for joy at this new development.

BEN (CONT'D)

I don't even live in Chicago anymore.

MAGGIE

We'll make it work.

BEN

What about Boris?

MAGGIE

Boris is too hot and rich to be interesting.

BEN

There's a great compliment in that insult.

MAGGIE

I've really missed you, Ben.

She draws closer to him, close enough for them to kiss.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

So?

BEN

I should talk to Bridget, before we --

MAGGIE

(confused)

Bridget told *me* you guys were just a wedding hookup.

BEN
Bridget said that? To you? When?

MAGGIE
At the chapel, she said you were
just with her to get over me. That
you were still in love with me.

Well. Ben knows where he stands now.

BEN
I was. I mean, I am --

Maggie takes a step closer to him, and she KISSES him --

OVER ON

Bridget's just RUN OVER, huge smile, but SEES Ben and Maggie, kissing. The smile drops off her face. A gut punch. A beat, then she heads back toward the hotel, not looking back.

BACK TO

Ben, who pulls away from Maggie.

BEN (CONT'D)
I just need a little time to think
about this.

MAGGIE
(teasing)
You want me to count to 5?

BEN
Just -- maybe by the wedding?

Ben gives her a weak smile, trying to match her flirtiness. Maggie doesn't clock his apprehension, she gives him a kiss on the cheek, and skips away.

Ben takes out his phone, quickly tapping out a text...

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT, LATER

Ben waits for Bridget eagerly. Bridget walks up to him, pushing her feelings deep down.

BRIDGET
If you need to talk, we could've
just talked in the room.

BEN
No, just -- come here.

Ben pulls Bridget onto a BLANKET, set up on the beach.

BEN (CONT'D)
Right?! Look at this view.

Bridget takes in the view for a beat. It's beautiful, but she can't get dragged further into this.

BRIDGET
(tired)
Who's here to see us, Ben? Are Hope and Claudia about to walk out here and catch us so super-duper in love? Are Maggie and Boris on their own moonlit stroll? Just tell me, so I can suck it up and act.

BEN
No one's coming, what are you talking about --

Bridget gets up, starting to walk away. Ben follows her, totally confused.

BRIDGET
I don't know what's real and what's pretend anymore, Ben.

BEN
Hey, I feel weird about lying too, but it's all part of the plan --

Bridget finally spins around to look at him.

BRIDGET
Is the whole reason we hated each other because of a stupid *misunderstanding* we had 8 years ago?!

BEN
Hated?

BRIDGET
What?

BEN
Past tense, you said hated, not hate.

BRIDGET

Look, I saw you and Maggie, Ben. Congratulations, the plan worked and now we can go back to hating each other in peace.

BEN

Don't push me away because I don't check every box on your stupid list!

BRIDGET

I'm not --

BEN

You want things to be perfect so badly you can't even see when there's something good right in front of you!

BRIDGET

And you want a relationship built on grand romantic gestures and fake child equestrian glory -- that's not love, that's just delusion. A real relationship --

BEN

Oh, don't even try to lecture me on "real" relationships, you'll just embarrass yourself with your utter lack of knowledge.

Bridget just looks at him, and Ben immediately knows he's gone too far.

BEN (CONT'D)

Bridget, wait, I'm sorry.

But they hear NOISES -- clearly there are other people on the beach. The light shifts, shining on Jon and SOMEONE he's hooking up with.

BEN (CONT'D)

Wait, that's Jon and --

We see a GREEN DRESS discarded on the beach near the couple. Not unlike the dress Hope's been wearing all night.

BRIDGET

(quiet)
Hope?

A beat, then Bridget takes off, running back to the hotel.

EXT. BEACH - SAME

A girl unsuctions herself from Jon. It's 13E from the plane!
She smiles at him.

13E
This is really nice.

JON
(tearing up)
I wish you were Hope.

13E
Okay, this is less nice.

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Hope skids back onto the dance floor, breathless, looking for
Claudia --

HOPE
Claud? Claudia?

Nonna grabs Hope's arm.

NONNA
Claudia went to sleep.

HOPE
Which room is she in? I just need
to talk to her, right now --

NONNA
It is bad luck to see the bride
before the wedding!

HOPE
But I'm the bride too!

But Nonna and some other RELATIVES march Hope away, back to
the hotel, jabbering away in Italian.

HOPE (CONT'D)
Come on, seriously, okay, ow --

EXT. HOTEL LAWN - DAY, MORNING

The morning of the wedding. The decor is tasteful, the
flowers abundant, it's gorgeous and of course, completely
over the top.

Hope and Claudia are posing for photos. They're in the same color scheme of green and white, but slightly upgraded.

HOPE

Hey, before we do this, I just have to say --

CLAUDIA

The lilies all arrived, right? We have to have lilies for the archway. If it's tulips, I swear to god, I will fall on a sword dramatically, in your very clean lobby. And I know where the swords are in this hotel.

A very scared FLOWER DELIVERY PERSON scurries off.

PHOTOGRAPHER

A little to the left!

They shift to the left.

HOPE

Claud --

PHOTOGRAPHER

Now, brides!

CLAUDIA

Hope, I promise, whatever it is, you have the rest of our lives to tell me.

HOPE

I was just going to say --

Hope hesitates -- should she even tell Claudia about Jon? Nothing happened...

HOPE (CONT'D)

I'm really happy we're getting married.

Claudia smiles. Softening.

CLAUDIA

Me too.

(then)

ARE THOSE BEGONIAS?!

OFF TO THE SIDE, Bridget and Ben wait to take pictures. Both look like they haven't slept. They argue in hushed voices:

BRIDGET

I think we need to talk to them.

BEN

Bridget, it wasn't Hope.

BRIDGET

Green dress!

BEN

I know, but I know Hope, and she would never --

BRIDGET

Well, I think I know Hope a little better than you do, and she was really in love with Jon. They were together all through high school and college, those are very formative years. She might be confused right now, possibly wondering if she should go through with the wedding, and he probably caught her in a vulnerable state --

BEN

You could give Hope a little more credit --

PHOTOGRAPHER

Maid of honor, best man, let's add you folks in.

Bridget and Ben walk into frame, giant fake smiles.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

Smile!

BRIDGET

Such an amazing day.

BEN

So happy for you guys.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Just the maid of honor and best man now.

Hope and Claudia are ushered off by respective relatives. Bridget and Ben immediately return to fighting.

BEN

Other people can wear green dresses!

BRIDGET

Don't you think that's a little
coincidental?!

PHOTOGRAPHER

Thank you, maid of honor and best
man!

Ben and Bridget walk away from the photographer, back to bickering. They don't see Claudia, directing FLOWER PEOPLE, out of their sight.

BRIDGET

It makes sense. Hope never had time to be alone and get over Jon. Jon came on to her, Hope's still not sure she should get married, she got confused, the end.

BEN

Hope wouldn't do that.

BRIDGET

They shouldn't go through with the wedding. We have to tell them from making a huge mistake.

BEN

We're not stopping anything. Hope and Claudia are solid.

CLAUDIA'S POV: Claudia, hearing her name, freezes. She dives behind a PILLAR to eavesdrop.

BEN (CONT'D)

And Claudia's already paranoid that there's still something between Jon and Hope. There's no reason to tell her, because I'm telling you, it wasn't Hope with Jon on the beach.

Claudia's stomach DROPS. She bolts, freaked as hell.

BRIDGET

I think we should pretend we're still perfect and in love for Hope and Claudia's sake until the party. Then you can go be with Maggie and we can be done.

BEN

What about your parents?

BRIDGET
I'll figure it out.

Ben looks at her a beat, knowing she doesn't mean this, but not knowing how to say how he feels. Then walks away.

EXT. WEDDING - DAY

Ben and Bridget stand on respective sides of the altar. A PRIEST (the one from the confessional, to make it easy) stands in front. Claudia stands near Ben.

Hope WALKS down the aisle, arm and arm with her mom.

Bridget tries to smile, but feels sick to her stomach.

Hope approaches the altar. Her mom pulls her veil back, kisses her on the cheek.

Hope turns to face Claudia, beaming, full of emotion. Claudia's reeling, upset.

PRIEST
We gather here today --

CLAUDIA
(blurting out)
Did you hook up with Jon last night?

The priest stops, shocked. Hope is equally shocked.

HOPE
No!

CLAUDIA
Because Bridget and Ben think they saw you. On the beach. With Jon. Last night. Making out.

HOPE
Claudia, I would never --

From the audience, Jon stands up.

JON
I'm in love with you, Hope. I meant every word I said last night!

CLAUDIA
So you were with him last night.

HOPE
 Okay, yes, but I promise, nothing
 happened!

CLAUDIA
 Something clearly happened.

JON
 I stand in the name of love!

BEN
 Well, sit in the name of rejection.

HOPE
 Claud, I swear to you, there is
 nothing between me and Jon --

CLAUDIA
 Well, Bridget and Ben seemed pretty
 convinced there is.

BEN
 Just Bridget, actually!

HOPE
 (desperate)
 Bridget and Ben are idiots! They're
 only dating because we tricked them
 into thinking they were in love
 with each other!

Everyone gasps. A beat, then Bridget and Ben GASP
 melodramatically, a beat too late.

BRIDGET
 What?!

BEN
 No!

PETE
 Oh, shut up, they both knew you
 tricked them the whole time.

HOPE
 Wait, you guys knew?!

BRIDGET
 Okay, yes, but --

PETE
 But they're actually into each
 other so it's fine.

BRIDGET & BEN
 No we're not.

They look at each other, furious, then look away. Susan tries to catch Bridget's eye -- both she and Ira looked shocked -- but Bridget can't look at her.

PETE

Also, Ben's afraid of horses.

MAGGIE

Wait, really?!

BEN

Was that really not obvious to you after my near-death experience?

At the altar, Hope and Claudia face each other, quieter, amidst the pandemonium.

HOPE

Claudia.

Hope takes her hands.

HOPE (CONT'D)

Look at me. I am not in love with Jon. Nothing happened last night. You know I would never do that to you.

Claudia pauses. Looks down.

CLAUDIA

I don't know. Maybe we shouldn't get married right now.

A beat. Then Hope BURSTS INTO TEARS, and takes off, running down the aisle. Claudia bolts in the opposite direction. Hope's mom and Claudia's parents look around, helpless.

Bridget and Ben tear after their respective friends. Maggie turns to Boris.

MAGGIE

I think we should break up too.

BORIS

Why am I even here?!

MAGGIE

Honestly, I don't know.

HUBBUB ENSUES. Everyone starts talking over each other. The Priest isn't sure what to do. Pete rolls his eyes -- he has to do everything here -- and runs up to the altar, commandeering a mic.

PETE

They're gonna be right back, they just all had to go to... the bathroom. At the same time. But while we wait...

(searching)

I will, um... I will sing a song!

(beat)

I somehow seem to have forgotten every song I've ever known.

INT. HONEYMOON SUITE - SAME

Bridget runs into the room. Hope's redoing her makeup in the mirror, game face on.

BRIDGET

Oh thank god, I finally found you. Are you okay?

Hope rounds on Bridget.

HOPE

I can't believe you really think I'd do something like that to Claudia!

BRIDGET

It's just, I saw Jon with someone, and there was a green dress on the beach, I wasn't sure --

HOPE

(confused)

Okay, so not only do you think I'd cheat on the love of my life but you think I'd have sex on a beach?!

BRIDGET

I'm not exactly sensing which thing you're madder about.

HOPE

All that happened between me and Jon was that he said he made a mistake and I told him I loved Claudia. That's it. No one took off their *clothes*!

Bridget winces. She's made a huge mistake.

HOPE (CONT'D)

(heading for the door)

I just needed a second, and now I'm gonna go find Claudia and make her understand that she's the only one I want to be with --

BRIDGET

Look, hey -- maybe it's a good thing the wedding blew up?

Hope stops, dumbfounded.

HOPE

What?

BRIDGET

I just want to be sure that this is really what you want.

HOPE

Of course it's what I want!

BRIDGET

Hope, honestly. Are you with Claudia because you love her? Or is she just the relationship you jumped into after Jon because you were scared to be alone?

HOPE

The only person who's scared is you, Bridget. You have this idealized version of a perfect person that's impossible to live up to because god forbid you actually connect with a real one! What are you so scared of?!

BRIDGET

Everything!

Bridget sinks onto the bed, near tears. Hope takes a breath, realizing Bridget's talking about Ben. After a moment, Hope sits beside Bridget.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

HOPE

I just can't believe you think I'd cheat.

BRIDGET

I guess I just... always saw you ending up with Jon and have this easy boring domestic life.

HOPE

(sarcastic)

Wow, thanks.

BRIDGET

You know what I mean. It's like you and Claudia seem like such opposites. With the itinerary, and this crazy-expensive wedding and I don't know... I guess I just... wanted you to be sure you weren't making the wrong choice.

Hope sighs.

HOPE

Look, things with Claudia happened out of left field. I wasn't expecting it. It was crazy and I know we're kind of young to get married, but that's it, isn't it? I can't really explain it. Love can't get explained away. It's a spark, a feeling -- whatever you want to say. But it doesn't have to be "about" anything. Mostly it's about nothing.

Bridget suddenly reaches over and pulls Hope in for a hug. And they both start crying, even harder.

BRIDGET

I'm sorry, for blowing up your wedding. I didn't mean to.

HOPE

I know.

BRIDGET

Wait, why are you crying?!

HOPE

Because you are!

The girls pull away from each other, wiping eyes.

BRIDGET

You really love her, huh?

Hope nods, wiping tears. Bridget grins.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
Then let's go get her back.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Ben's consoling Claudia, who's still distraught, pacing.

CLAUDIA
Was I not right about the storm?
Was it not a-brewing?!

BEN
You were right about the storm. But
I just don't think Hope --

Sounds of the DOOR JIGGLING. Then Hope and Bridget BURST INTO the room, with 13E in tow, wearing the green dress we saw on the beach.

BRIDGET
Hi. Sorry. Important. This is who
Jon was making out with last night.

BEN
13E?!

13E
Small island, right?!

BEN
You're way too good for Jon.

13E
Thank you!

HOPE
And show everyone, you have
pictures of you last night --

13E
Right. Look.

13E holds out her phone. She has an INSTAGRAM STORY dated 10hrs ago pulled up -- sure enough, she's wearing a very similar GREEN DRESS to Hope's.

BRIDGET

And there you have it. Proof that
13E was in fact the girl in
question with Jon and not Hope.

Hope goes to Claudia, pulling her over to the bed.

HOPE

I'm sorry, I should have told you
what happened with Jon last night --

CLAUDIA

It's not your fault, I jumped to
conclusions because I was scared,
and paranoid --

HOPE

It's okay, really --

CLAUDIA

I still want to marry you.

HOPE

I want to marry you back. I love
you.

CLAUDIA

(emotional)
I love you.

They KISS, for a while. Ben and Bridget watch them.

BRIDGET

So... wedding's back on?

BEN

Looks like it.

An awkward beat. Neither can look the other in the eye. Hope
and Claudia finally pull apart.

HOPE

We're sorry we tricked you two.

CLAUDIA

But... maybe Pete was right? Maybe
you guys realized there really was
something there all along?

BEN

It was a good effort, you guys. But
I think we'll stick to sworn
enemies with occasional truces.

Bridget's face falls a little. Hope tries to catch Bridget's eye, but Bridget keeps her head down, as they walk out.

13E

Can I come to the wedding?

No one answers her. She shrugs, then RAIDS the minibar, and follows them out.

EXT. WEDDING - SAME

Hope, Claudia, Ben, and Bridget sneak back to the wedding.

Pete, now joined by Boris and the Priest, are now singing a soulful slow ukulele rendition of "Watermelon Sugar" by Harry Styles.

PETE

Watermelon su-gah --

PETE/BORIS

Hiighhh!!

PETE

Watermelon sug-ah --

PETE/BORIS

Hiighhh!!

BEN

You really want to be the guys who cut this masterpiece short?

Hope and Claudia exchange a look.

CLAUDIA

Can you grab the priest and meet us in 5 on the beach?

BEN

And skip the whole big wedding? And your giant proclamations of love?

CLAUDIA

(shrugging, looking at Hope)

Yeah.

HOPE

(laughing)

Yeah.

MUSIC UP...

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The priest officiates. It's just Hope and Claudia, Ben and Bridget. It's simple and emotional.

Hope and Claudia kiss, all is well.

Bridget and Ben avoid each other's eyes.

EXT. HOTEL LAWN - LATER

The wedding party's now in full swing. Hope and Claudia dance cheek to cheek, in their own happy ending. Jon's nowhere to be found.

Bridget nurses a drink, sitting alone at a table. She watches Ben, dancing with Maggie. Boris dances with 13E. Pete sits down next to her.

PETE

Hey, you guys saved the wedding.

BRIDGET

Well, first we ruined it, then we saved it.

(then)

Wait, what happened to Jon?!

PETE

I think I saw him drinking under the bar.

Bridget smiles, but her face darkens when she sees Ben with Maggie. Pete clocks it.

PETE (CONT'D)

Both of you guys and the "not saying how you feel" thing. Come on.

BRIDGET

It doesn't matter if I say how I feel. Ben got what he wanted.

PETE

You sure about that?

Bridget's not. Susan and Ira walk over, toward the table. Pete takes his cue, leaving Bridget alone with her parents.

Bridget takes a deep breath, bracing herself.

BRIDGET

So Ben's not my boyfriend. And he's not Matt. Matt dumped me when I asked him to go to the wedding with me. Hope and Claudia orchestrated this whole thing with me and Ben to get us to stop fighting, so we decided to run with it.

SUSAN

Bridget...

She nods to Ira. They take seats on either side of her.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Why you felt you had to lie to us is beyond me.

BRIDGET

I didn't want to disappoint you guys.

IRA

Because you're single?! There are plenty of wonderful successful single people.

SUSAN

Oprah, for one.

IRA

Or Anderson Cooper!

BRIDGET

I just wanted it to seem like I had my life together. That things were perfect. And you guys are so perfect for each other that I just... wanted to have what you have.

SUSAN

How could you think we'd care about that?

BRIDGET

I didn't realize I put all this pressure on myself. It's like... I have these crazy, unrealistic standards for how I want to live my life and I couldn't see how miserable they were making me until now.

SUSAN

You know what I said after my first date with your father? I said --

IRA

"I hope he has taller friends."

SUSAN

I had a whole list. I wanted to date a tall man. He'd swim like a fish and make me drip coffee and make amazing french toast. And who'd I get?

IRA

Afraid of the water, caffeine is gross, can't cook for shit.

SUSAN

Sometimes your heart tells you to throw out the list. What matters is that you listen.

On Bridget, considering this --

OVER ON THE DANCE FLOOR

Ben dances with Maggie.

MAGGIE

Isn't this perfect?

It feels perfect. But it doesn't feel right.

BEN

Maggie, the thing is, I've spent all weekend pretending to date Bridget to make you jealous. And it worked.

MAGGIE

I mean, we also have a history, it wasn't all jealousy -- just mostly.

Maggie grins at Ben, teasing. But Ben stops dancing, takes a step back from Maggie.

BEN

I think I have to find out if it was real for her too. I'm sorry, Maggie.

And Ben runs off the dance floor, into Pete.

BEN (CONT'D)
Hey. Have you seen Bridget?

PETE
...didn't you hear?

BEN
Hear what? What should I hear?

PETE
She's leaving, dude. She just said
goodbye to Hope and Claud,
something about a work emergen --

But Ben's already taken off, sprinting through the lawn --

INT. HOTEL HALL - NIGHT

Ben runs through the halls, wildly --

INT. BEN & BRIDGET'S HOTEL ROOM - SAME

Bridget opens the door. She walks down the hall, and to the
elevators, wheeling her suitcase --

INT. HOTEL HALL - SAME

Ben running --

INT. ELEVATORS - SAME

Bridget rides down in the elevator.

INT. HOTEL HALL - SAME

The elevator doors open. Ben's panting in front of them.

BRIDGET
Ben?

Ben can't catch his breath. The elevator doors close before
he has a chance to stop them --

BEN
(wheezing)
Dammit!

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - SAME

Bridget gets out, wheeling her bag to the door --

BEN (O.S.)

Hey!

Bridget turns around. Ben races over to her.

BEN (CONT'D)

What's happening?! You're leaving?!

BRIDGET

I'm not great at goodbyes.

She turns away from him, walking to the door.

BEN

Bridget --

Bridget turns back. Ben's still trying to catch his breath.

BEN (CONT'D)

Don't pretend this weekend didn't mean anything.

Bridget turns away from him, but Ben grabs her hands.

BEN (CONT'D)

Please. I know you're scared but don't push me away.

BRIDGET

I can't do this, Padovan. I have to go.

BEN

That's all you have?! "I have to go"?! You're leaving with no witty back-and-forth, no clever insult, nothing?

BRIDGET

I'm sorry.

Bridget walks outside. Gets in a cab, and leaves. Ben's left standing there, alone.

Pete, Claudia, and Hope all RUSH into the lobby. They run over to him.

CLAUDIA

So?!

BEN
She just left.

PETE
Did you tell her you're in love
with her?

BEN
(dawning on him)
Oh shit.

All three of them HIT him.

BEN (CONT'D)
Ow!

HOPE
You're an idiot!

CLAUDIA
So neither of you have said they
love each other?!

BEN
No.

HOPE
But you do?! Mutually?!

BEN
Pretty sure, yeah.

PETE
This is why secrets are bad.

CLAUDIA
We gotta go catch her.

BEN
What, are we going to try to beat
her to the airport?! That's insane,
we'll never find her, and it's
incredibly romantic -- that's
exactly what we should do, let's
go.

CLAUDIA
No, we're just going to call her.

Hope takes out her phone, dials Bridget. Tries her again.

HOPE
She's not picking up.

BEN
Airport!!!

HOPE
Let's see if the hotel can call the
cab driver, maybe we can --

But suddenly there's the sound of TIRES SCREECHING. And
Bridget RACES back inside the lobby. She pauses, looking at
Ben.

Ben slowly walks over to her. The other three try not to
squee.

BRIDGET
Hi.

BEN
Hi.

BRIDGET
So I tend to flee when I get
scared. Because I like to have
lists and plans --

BEN
I know.

BRIDGET
And I didn't really account for any
of this happening. And I'm scared
that we'll do this and we'll fight
and you'll get sick of me.

BEN
I'm already sick of you.

BRIDGET
I'm so sick of you.

BEN
Then it kind of sounds like we're
perfect for each other.

BRIDGET
I'm starting to think perfection is
overrated.

Ben grins. Takes a step toward her.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
I didn't like you very much at the
beginning of this weekend. I hated
you, actually.

BEN
Past tense.

BRIDGET
(smiling)
Past tense.

BEN
Well, I'm pretty sure I'm in love
with you. Present tense. Current
tense.

Bridget opens her mouth to respond:

BEN (CONT'D)
No, I'm sorry. I have to get this
out. And it's not because I'm
trying to make Maggie jealous or
make our friends happy or get your
parents off your back. When I
imagine walking away from each
other at the end of this weekend, I
feel physically sick. I want to
argue with you about nothing
forever.

(deep breath)
And I know I don't check all the
boxes on your list and I'm not
perfect for you. But I think what
we have is better.

BRIDGET
(grinning)
Sparks.

BEN
So many sparks we could start a
wildfire.

Bridget looks at Ben. Ben looks at Bridget. And they finally
KISS -- a long, wonderful kiss.

BRIDGET
I am so glad you didn't do a big
romantic gesture.

BEN
Me too.
(then, mouthing to Pete)
Get the doves out of here.

Pete gives Ben a thumbs up, and WAVES a STRING QUARTET, slowly approaching, away too. And Ben and Bridget KISS AGAIN, as we --

FADE OUT.

THE END