

# THE LAKE HOUSE

IL MARE

(a.k.a. THE LAKE HOUSE)

by

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Based on the Korean film  
"Il Mare"  
written by Ji-Na Yeo  
and adapted by Mi Young Kim

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INT. CAR

Lucy takes a deep breath, then pulls away from the house. Dog next to her in the passenger seat. She drives down the road, gaining speed. She suddenly stops, remembering something.

LUCY  
Shit. Sorry.

She puts the car in reverse. Backs up until she is next to the mailbox. She reaches out the window, opens the box and puts an envelope inside. She strains to reach the flag.

The dog watches.

She finally succeeds in pulling the flag to the upright position.

LUCY  
Okay.

She puts the car in gear. It disappears down the road.

ON the raised red flag.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

CREDITS OVER.

As Lucy drives south, the Lake on her left. She passes a sign: CHICAGO 60 MILES.

Traffic gets denser as she approaches the city.

Soon the skyline is right on top of her and she's in it, at the height of the morning rush -- crowds, traffic, noise, energy.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

She pulls up outside an APARTMENT BUILDING on a densely-packed North Side street. It's a very new building, cold and sterile. The contrast with the tranquillity of the Lake House is striking. She parks the car, gets out. Takes a moment to absorb the change in her surroundings. Then she starts to unload her things.

END CREDITS.

CUT TO:

FADE IN:

EXT. ROAD - CLOSE ON A MAILBOX - DAWN

A very ordinary one -- metal, mounted on a post, hinged red flag on the side. The flag is down.

The SOUND of waves lapping the shore.

PULL BACK. Beyond the mailbox is LAKE MICHIGAN, endless and blue-gray on this overcast winter morning.

And on the Lake, hugging the shore, is a LAKE HOUSE.

This house, unlike its mailbox, is striking. It's at the end of a narrow jetty or walkway that shoots out into the Lake. It is perched on stilts right above the water, where it seems to float. Its design is modern, and in another setting it might be slightly austere, but here the fit with its surroundings is so perfect that the overall effect is one of serenity.

It is dawn. A smudge of sun can be seen rising in the space between the sun and the surface of the Lake.

INT. LAKE HOUSE

LUCY FORSTER, 30, lovely, watches the sunrise through a huge window that faces the water.

After a while and with evident difficulty, she tears herself away. She pulls on a coat and goes to the front door. The house is empty; Lucy is moving out. She opens the door and takes a final look back.

Her eyes fall on someone.

LUCY  
You coming or not?

A SMALL DOG is hesitating in the middle of the room.

LUCY  
Last chance...

EXT. JETTY - DAWN

Lucy walks across the jetty to the road, where her car is waiting, packed full of bones. The dog trots after her.

INT. COOK COUNTY HOSPITAL - DAY

The corridors of a huge urban hospital, crowded with PATIENTS, FAMILIES, ORDERLIES. It's chaotic and loud.

Lucy comes in. She walks to the main desk, tries to flag down a busy ATTENDANT.

LUCY

Excuse me?

ATTENDANT

Just a minute, okay?

Lucy waits for a minute, then tries to catch the Attendant again as she blows past.

LUCY

Excuse me, I need to --

The Attendant hands her a clipboard.

ATTENDANT

Just fill this out and wait over there for me, okay?

Lucy hands it back.

LUCY

No, I'm Doctor Forster. I'm a new resident. They told me to report here.

ATTENDANT

Oh, I'm sorry, Doctor. You need to find Dr. Klyczynski. She should be around here. Older lady, kinda tough, like this tall...

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR

ANNA KLYCZYNSKI, 45, no-nonsense manner, walks fast down the corridor. Lucy next to her, trying to keep up. Klyczynski hands her a big stack of files.

KLYCZYNSKI

You're covering 22 patients on rounds today, this floor and the next.

LUCY

Twenty-two?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KLYCZYNSKI

Quiet morning. If you get into trouble you can beep me, but try to keep it to a minimum. The med students are supposed to help you out with scut work. If you can find one.

Lucy is looking a little dazed. They pass a patient on a bed in the corridor. Klyczynski flags down a NURSE.

KLYCZYNSKI

What's he doing here? I ordered an immediate MRI.

NURSE

Transport said about four hours.

KLYCZYNSKI

Shit. All right.

She turns to Lucy, takes the files back, points.

KLYCZYNSKI

Doctor Forster, push him down to MRI -- that's a left, another left, a right, elevator to two, follow the signs. Then hustle back here for rounds...

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - LATER

Lucy with a stack of charts, reeling around, trying to find her next patient. She's lost in the busy corridors. Another young woman doctor, MADHVI PATEL, appears, glances at her chart.

PATEL

Wrong floor.

Lucy makes a frustrated sound. Patel guides her to an elevator.

PATEL

Takes a while to get your bearings. I'm Madhvi. You're the new resident, right?

LUCY

(nods)

Lucy. Forster.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PATEL

Where did you do your internship?

LUCY

A little community hospital. Up on the North Shore.

PATEL

Well, just think of this as a little community hospital, only with more gunshot wounds.

She smiles, but Lucy doesn't acknowledge the attempt.

INT. HOSPITAL LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Lucy comes off shift, very tired. Patel and another resident, TOM COSTELLO, are changing clothes to go home. They nod at Lucy. She smiles wearily.

PATEL

How was your first night?

LUCY

I'm... not sure.

COSTELLO

Nor should you be. A state of dazed near-panic is normal for the first few months.

Lucy smiles politely.

PATEL

Luckily there is a cure.

COSTELLO

The Cove.

PATEL

The Cove.

LUCY

What's that?

COSTELLO

Bar around the corner. Open all night. Acceptable burgers. Cheap beer in unwashed glasses.

PATEL

It's heavenly.

(CONTINUED)

Lucy realizes they're inviting her to come with them. She hesitates.

LUCY  
Thanks. Better not. I'm dead.

COSTELLO  
We all are.

LUCY  
And I've still got a lot of  
unpacking to do...

Patel and Costello nod. If they're put out by her refusal, they don't show it.

COSTELLO  
Next time, then.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT

Lucy comes home. Her apartment is small, sterile. She hasn't had time to unpack and boxes are strewn everywhere.

As she enters, her DOG LEAPS UP on her, WHIMPERING.

Lucy jumps, startled, then puts the dog down, goes into the kitchen and flicks the light on. Nothing happens.

LUCY  
(muttering)  
Need light bulbs.

She opens the (bare) fridge for the light. She pours dog food into a bowl, emptying the bag.

LUCY  
Need dog food. And human food...

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Her bedroom is as functional and depressing as the rest of the place. A loud SQUEAK as she walks into the room.

LUCY  
Fix loose floorboard.

Lucy goes to the window. Outside -- a solid wall of other buildings, other windows. Very hard even to see the sky. She sighs.

(CONTINUED)

LUCY

Need view.

She closes the blinds.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - DAY

ON the mailbox, its flag still up.

FIND a PICKUP TRUCK parked at the edge of the jetty. Its back is piled with furniture and moving boxes. A MAN is moving in to the house. Working alone, he heaves a large armchair off the truck and wrestles it along the jetty.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - LATER

The man plugs in a lamp and switches it on. JULIAN, 30, tall, moody good looks.

He surveys the place, pleased. He doesn't have much. A stereo, some books, the armchair. But the spare furnishings fit with the austere beauty of the house. He looks out the window at the Lake.

INT. LOCAL GROCERY - EVENING

Julian stocks up on groceries at a local shop. The young STOREOWNER and his WIFE behind the counter.

STOREOWNER

New in the area?

JULIAN

(smiles)

More or less.

STOREOWNER

You'll like it. Especially since it warms up a little.

(indicating  
groceries)

Let us get you some boxes for all that.

JULIAN

Okay, thanks.

(CONTINUED)

His wife goes to take an empty box down from a high shelf. She is visibly pregnant. The Storeowner hurries over.

STOREOWNER

No, honey, let me.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - EVENING

Julian pulls up with his groceries in the back of the truck. He notices the mailbox with its raised flag. He stops and opens it.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Julian sits in his chair by the window, silhouetted against the moonlit Lake outside. A beer in his hand. He opens Lucy's letter and reads.

LUCY (V.O.)

'Dear New Tenant. Hi and welcome to your new home and congratulations, etcetera. It's a wonderful place, as you already know, and I'm sure you'll love living here as much as I did. I'm the previous tenant by the way.

Julian looks puzzled.

LUCY (V.O.)

'The post office is forwarding my mail but I wondered if you could send anything that might slip through. My new address is below. Thanks.'

(beat)

'P.S.'

Julian flips the letter over.

JULIAN

(reads)

'Sorry about the paw prints by the front door. They were there when I moved in. Same with the box in the attic. I think it belongs to the owner.'

Julian stares at the letter.

He goes to the front door. The floor is clean. Nothing outside either.

INT. ATTIC

Julian opens the door to an attic crawl space. He looks around. It's empty. No boxes.

INT. LAKE HOUSE

Julian shrugs, crumples the letter and throws it away.

CUT TO:

EXT. EL PLATFORM (CHICAGO) - EVENING

Lucy walks up the stairs to the El, alone against the tide of people walking down -- they are coming home from work as she heads in for a night shift.

INT. ICU ROOM - NIGHT

An ICU PATIENT in crisis. MONITORS BEEPING and flashing red. Lucy runs in, swiftly begins CPR, asks a nurse to prepare a syringe.

Klyczynski appears and stands at the door, watching Lucy closely.

KLYCZYNSKI

You all right?

Lucy keeps working. The patient's crisis passes. The monitors quiet.

LUCY

I think we're okay.

Klyczynski nods.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Lucy checks on a PATIENT -- teenage girl lying awake in a darkened room, watching TV.

LUCY

Hey. You're supposed to be asleep.

(CONTINUED)

GIRL  
I know, but --

LUCY  
Sorry. Sometimes I've got to play  
bad cop.

Lucy goes to switch off the TV. She pauses.

It's showing Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman -- the long, long lingering kiss from Notorious. Lucy stares at it, transfixed.

Then she sits down on the edge of the bed to watch. The girl looks at her, surprised.

Klyczynski nods.

LUCY  
My favourite part.

INT. LUCY'S BEDROOM - DAWN

After work. Lucy prepares for bed, a blindfold around her neck. She goes to the window to close the blinds against the morning light.

She notices something outside. She gets up on tiptoe, straining. Then she pulls a chair over and stands on it.

HER POV

By standing up high at the extreme edge of the window she can just make out, through a gap in the buildings, a tiny sliver of Lake Michigan. The sun is just coming up.

BACK TO SCENE

She stands on the chair, staring at it.

CUT TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - DAWN

THROUGH the Lake House window we can see the sun rising, huge, over the Lake. Julian is up, lacing up work boots.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - MORNING

Julian pulls up in his truck, arriving at a Lakeside building site -- dozens of future condos, now mostly foundations and a few half-finished frame skeletons. It's a big operation.

An office set up in a large trailer on the site. Julian prepares for the day, consulting plans and schedules. MONA JAFFE (30s, brisk, stylish) on the phone.

MONA

That's right, each luxury residence has a private Lake view... They're not available for viewing quite yet, but if you'd like me to add you to the list... yes, we absolutely expect to be ready on schedule.

She throws a "right?" glance at Julian. He nods reassurance.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - LATER

Dozens of Men working at various places around the site. FIND Julian walking quickly, conferring with MULHERN (40s, construction foreman, hard look).

JULIAN

I'd like to get the foundation for number 17 dug today.

Mulhern looks at him with barely-disguised contempt.

MULHERN

I know you're kinda new here.

JULIAN

What?

MULHERN

I can't get to that at least 'til next week.

JULIAN

(smoothly)

Come on, Mulhern, that's bullshit and you know it. Take Clemens and Rodriguez off roofing, Jorge can run the backhoe they're not using on fourteen, and grab four or five of the other guys sitting on their asses on seven and ten -- Paulie, Frank, Carlos, Danny, and what's his name, the tall kid, Rafael.

Mulhern blinks.

MULHERN

Right.

Julian is the last man at work on the site at the end of the day. He hauls away some garbage and scrap.

He's about to throw out a couple of half-full cans of paint. He stops.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - EVENING

Julian kneels on the jetty, applying a fresh coat of paint to the weather-beaten boards. He finishes, pleased with the result. He begins putting his supplies away.

Behind him, a small dog, a stray, trots up the road. Julian doesn't notice. The dog looks at the jetty for a second, then walks right into it, into the fresh paint. Julian sees.

JULIAN

Hey!

He tries to grab the dog but it runs down the jetty. Julian has left the door to the house open and the dog runs inside. Julian is about to follow when he stops suddenly.

ON THE FLOOR going into the house is a trail of PAW PRINTS.

INT. LAKE HOUSE

Julian digging determinedly through his garbage. Near the bottom, he finally finds what he's looking for: Lucy's note. He stares at it.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Lucy heading out for lunch, her coat on. (We note the nurse's station is decorated with paper hearts, etc.)

As she exits the hospital, she realizes it is SURPRISINGLY WARM. She smiles, opens her coat.

EXT. GRANT PARK - DAY

Lucy eats her lunch in the large park, the Lake on one side, the city skyline on the other.

(CONTINUED)

The park is crowded on this gorgeous day. Heavy traffic on Lake Shore Drive beyond.

Lucy squints into the sunlight gleaming off the Lake. Sounds nearby -- a BELL TOLLING noon. Children laughing, yelling. A pair of OLD MEN on the next bench over.

OLD MAN

What's with the damn weather?  
60 degrees on Valentine's Day?

OLD MAN #2

It's global warming.

Buckingham Fountain is not far off. It sends up a huge plume of water. Lucy gets up and starts towards it. She runs a hand through her hair, enjoying the feel of the sun on her face, some of the tension leaving her.

Suddenly, a horrible SOUND -- a high-pitched grinding SQUEAL.

Lucy looks around.

A HUNDRED YARDS AWAY -- on the opposite side of the fountain from Lucy -- a double-length city bus is trying to stop.

It's going quite fast even though from the sound of things, the driver is absolutely crushing the brake.

Lucy just registers all of this -- the sound, the bus -- before she notices the MAN standing directly in the bus's path.

There is nothing to be done; it is inevitable and almost immediate -- the man being struck by the bus, and his small, distant figure arching into the air ten or fifteen feet before crashing onto the pavement. The faint sound of the impact reaches Lucy a half-second later, because of the distance.

Lucy automatically pulls out her cell phone and dials. She speaks calmly.

LUCY

We need an ambulance in Grant  
Park, near Buckingham Fountain. A  
bus has struck a pedestrian: Get  
an EMS crew here now.

She begins running.

Traffic is snarled around the halted bus. PEOPLE gathering. Lucy runs up, starts pushing through the crowd.

LUCY

I'm a doctor. Let me through.

She reaches the man, who is lying twisted, his face bloody, obscured. She can't move him because of risk of neck injury; there's not very much she can do except for feel for a pulse, listen for breath.

An ambulance pulls up. Two EMTs jump out.

LUCY

Get a back board!

One does. They strap him into it, Lucy working to get a pulse. The other EMT kneels to assist Lucy. They work intensely for a moment. Then he shakes his head.

EMT

He's done.

Lucy keeps working as if she hasn't heard. The EMT puts a hand on her shoulder.

EMT

Doctor.

Beat. Lucy finally stops.

She gets up.

The EMTs pull a gurney out of the ambulance and prepare to remove the body.

INT. HOSPITAL BREAK ROOM

Lucy pours herself a cup of coffee. Her hands are shaking. She takes a deep breath, willing them to stop. They do.

Anna Klyczynski has been watching her.

KLYCZYNSKI

I heard about Buckingham Fountain.  
EMTs said you fought hard for the  
guy.

LUCY

Yeah, I really knocked myself out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Beat.

KLYCZYNSKI

I had a case once. Routine heart surgery. They invented the word 'routine' for this kind of surgery. He died on the table. His body just chose that time to go. It was nobody's fault, and there was nothing I could have done differently

(beat)

I couldn't sleep for weeks.

LUCY

Thanks. I'm fine.

She turns to go.

KLYCZYNSKI

Lucy?

Lucy stops.

KLYCZYNSKI

You have anyone in the city? Any friends? Family?

Lucy shakes her head.

KLYCZYNSKI

Do me a favor. On your day off, get as far away from here as you can. Okay? Go someplace where you feel... most like yourself.

ON LUCY

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - MORNING

Julian, on his way to work, slips a note into the mailbox and raises the flag.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - DAY

Lucy driving north out of the city. The day is clear and bright, sun gleaming on the water.

INT. LOCAL GROCERY - DAY

Lucy buys lunch in the same grocery we saw before. Same couple running the store. The Wife is behind the counter. She recognizes Lucy.

STOREOWNER'S WIFE

Hey. We haven't seen you for a while. How's Chicago?

LUCY

Okay.

STOREOWNER'S WIFE

What are you doing back here?

LUCY

Just needed to get out of the city. When the weather's like this, you've got to.

STOREOWNER'S WIFE

I know it -- What is it, sweetie?

She bends to pick up a TODDLER, about 2, who has just run up.

LUCY

Hi there.

STOREOWNER'S WIFE

Say hi.

TODDLER

Hi.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

Julian, working, eating a sandwich. The day hasn't gotten much warmer and the wind is blowing strongly. Mona stops by, heading to the office with her lunch.

MONA

Trailer's nice and warm.

JULIAN

Love to. Can't.

MONA

(looks at the sky)

God, it's really miserable. Don't catch a cold or anything on me, all right?

CONTINUED:

JULIAN  
 (grins)  
 I never get sick.

She follows him as he works.

MONA  
 You find a place to stay yet?

JULIAN  
 Yeah. Just outside of town, up  
 the shore a little bit.

MONA  
 Up the shore...? I don't... Wait,  
 not that house with the thing, the  
 walkway thing, and the stilts...

JULIAN  
 Right.

MONA  
 That's not on the Lake, it's in  
 the Lake. That place has been  
 standing empty for years. What  
 made you take that?

JULIAN  
 Well, I --

MONA  
 Oh, goddamn it.

Her high heels are sinking into the muddy ground. She puts a hand on Julian's shoulder as she pulls her feet free. One shoe stays stuck. Julian gets it out for her.

MONA  
 Thanks.

JULIAN  
 Get yourself some boots.

Mona nods, smiles at him, watches as he wipes off her shoe for her.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - AFTERNOON

Lucy throws a stick, playing fetch with her dog on the beach, wind whipping her hair. Sun low on the horizon. Soon it will be time to go back, but she's in no hurry to.

CONTINUED:

They come over a dune and the DOG BARKS.

HER POV

The LAKE HOUSE, not far off. The dog runs towards it.

BACK TO SCENE

She follows, keeping up. They approach the house. The dog trots over to the jetty but Lucy picks him up before he can run across.

She looks at the house for a moment. It is empty, silent. Lucy turns to walk away.

Then she notices the mailbox with its raised flag. Acting on an impulse, she opens it. INSIDE is a single envelope. She pulls it out. To her surprise, it is addressed to her.

INT. CAR - DUSK

Lucy sits parked outside the House, reading the letter.

LUCY

(reads aloud)

'I got your note. Is it supposed to be some kind of joke? If it is, I don't get it.'

Lucy looks perplexed.

LUCY

'I'm not the "previous tenant." There was no previous tenant. I thought maybe you had the wrong place. But how did you know about the paw prints?'

Lucy is baffled. She thinks for a moment, then digs in her bag for a pen and paper.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - EVENING

Julian pulls up in his pickup, after work. The flag on the mailbox is up. He opens the box. Lucy's new letter is inside. He looks at it as he walks along the jetty. It has a return address: 1620 RACINE.

CONTINUED:

As Julian lets himself in, something leaps onto him.

JULIAN

Agh! What --

It's the stray dog, which Julian has evidently kept. It licks Julian's face. (We notice, if we haven't before, that this dog looks a great deal like Lucy's dog.)

JULIAN

Oh yeah. You.

He puts the dog down. He opens Lucy's letter and begins to read.

CUT TO:

INT. ARCHITECTURE CLASSROOM (CHICAGO) - DAY

An architecture class. A half-dozen GRADUATE STUDENTS (black clothes, hipster/pretentious eyewear, etc.) sit around a seminar table.

One student, HENRY FERRIS, 29, presents a project.

A severe-looking professor, BURNHAM, 60, watches.

HENRY

My project is informed and inspired by a metaphor of the loop, or fugue -- interlocking, repeating patterns in time and/or space that generate meaning and structural complexity via their contrapuntal interweaving and mutual interdependence, as much as by paradox and apparent contradiction.

Around the table -- generally approving looks. Henry pulls out a rolled-up poster.

HENRY

Specifically, as exemplified in the work of M.C. Escher, in his 'Relativity.'

He shows the Escher engraving of a dizzying building, staircases and ramps leading around in endless, impossible loops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY

...which I have re-rendered and reconceived here as a real-world contemporary structure incorporating offices, public space, a food court, and a 12-screen multiplex.

Beat. Burnham squints at Henry's proposal.

BURNHAM

So if I understand this correctly, you're proposing to build this Escher engraving.

HENRY

With some significant modifications, but essentially, yes.

Everyone takes this in.

BURNHAM

Interesting. I have only two comments, Mr. Ferris.

Henry looks eager.

BURNHAM

One, this makes no fucking sense at all. Two, the assignment was to design a single-family home. Don't waste the class's time, Henry.

(turns to the class)

All right, who's got something we can build here on Earth?

EXT. CLASSROOM - LATER

Henry comes out of class, chagrined, walking with VANESSA (another student, mousy/arty look).

HENRY

God, I mean what is the point of putting yourself out there in the visionary vanguard if you're just going to get shot down?

VANESSA

I thought your concept was really bold.

CONTINUED:

HENRY

It's like, if you don't take risks  
as an architect, if you don't at  
least try to push the envelope,  
you wind up, I don't know,  
remodeling kitchens for yuppies...

VANESSA

Exactly. I --

HENRY

(surprised)

Hey!

As he exits the building Henry sees JULIAN outside,  
waiting on the plaza in front of the school.

EXT. ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL

Julian grins as Henry comes over.

HENRY

He's back!

JULIAN

Believe it or not.

HENRY

What are you doing here? You're  
supposed to be this busy,  
important man.

JULIAN

Never too busy to look up an old  
friend and buy him a drink.

HENRY

I am truly touched.

JULIAN

And I had to run an errand in  
town.

Henry laughs. They hug.

HENRY

It's good to see you.

JULIAN'S POV - OVER HENRY'S SHOULDER

He sees Professor Burnham come out of the building.  
Their eyes meet. Burnham freezes. Then walks on, as if  
he hadn't noticed him.

BACK TO SCENE

Julian watches him go.

JULIAN  
Let's get out of here.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Crowded Chicago bar. Julian and Henry sit at a table with burgers and beers.

HENRY  
So. How's life in condo world?

JULIAN  
Well, it's a challenge managing a project so big, sometimes it's frustrating, but basically I --

HENRY  
Just tell me how much money you're making.

JULIAN  
Forget it.

HENRY  
Come on, a hint.

JULIAN  
I bought a house.

HENRY  
That much?

JULIAN  
On the Lake.

HENRY  
That much? Shit.

JULIAN  
Don't worry. I'm mortgaged up to my eyeballs.

HENRY  
Still. Lake House. God. I guess that makes selling out your dreams and betraying your talent totally worth it.

JULIAN  
Yep.

CONTINUED:

He clinks his glass against Henry's and drinks. Beat.

HENRY  
You never think about coming back  
to school?

JULIAN  
Never.

HENRY  
You sure? You're content just to  
be this upwardly-mobile cliché.

JULIAN  
Yeah.  
(he drinks)  
I even got a dog.

HENRY  
(rolls his eyes)  
Shit.

INT. JULIAN'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Julian drives around Chicago's North Side.

JULIAN  
Hank.

HENRY  
Yeah?

JULIAN  
Burnham ever ask where I went?

HENRY  
No.

Beat. Julian is silent for a moment.

HENRY  
You should have seen him rake me  
over the coals today. He hates  
me.

JULIAN  
He doesn't hate you.  
(beat)  
He hates your work...

They laugh. Beat. Julian turns a corner.

EXT. CHICAGO STREET - NIGHT

Julian walks down the street, looking for an address.

JULIAN  
1620 Racine.

HENRY  
What is it?

JULIAN  
I'm not sure.

HENRY  
Who lives there?

JULIAN  
I don't know.

HENRY  
So why are we going?

JULIAN  
I don't know.

HENRY  
Okay.

Julian crosses the street, notes an address on a building.

JULIAN  
Here's sixteen hundred.

HENRY  
So sixteen hundred twenty should be...

Henry walks to the next lot down. He is standing in front of a PIT. Just a recently-dug foundation, no building. They stare at it.

HENRY  
So should we buzz up, or what?

Julian takes a piece of paper out of his pocket. Lucy's last letter. The return address is correct: 1620 Racine.

HENRY  
Perhaps there has been some sort of mistake.

Julian looks at the letter itself. It is dated MARCH 20, 2004.

INT. HOSPITAL BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

Lucy comes in, studying a new letter from Julian. We can read the words "Mistake... tried to deliver this in person... wrong address... also the date (?!)"

She picks up the pad and begins to write, exasperated.

LUCY (V.O.)

I got your last letter. I'm not quite sure I'm writing back but I guess I want to get to the bottom of this.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Julian in his kitchen, reading the letter.

LUCY (V.O.)

By the way, for some reason the mail isn't getting forwarded to me. I've had to drive up there to get it. Anyway, no, I did not get the address wrong. I know where I live. Okay, it's ugly, but it's not quite an open pit.

Julian smiles.

LUCY (V.O.)

And I know the date, too. It's 2004.

He laughs. This is some sort of insane joke.

LUCY (V.O.)

Just curious: what year do you think it is?

Behind Julian -- the calendar on his wall is open to the MARCH, 2002 page.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy studies a letter from Julian. CLOSE ON the date, underlined: "2002."

And the words --

AND STOP BULLSHITTING ME, PLEASE.

She snorts, incredulous. The dog looks at her. She pets it, thinking. Then she gets up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She goes to a closet and takes down a shoebox. It's full of photographs.

She dumps them out and begins sorting through them.

She pauses to look at one. A younger Lucy with a BOYFRIEND -- MORGAN, 30, slightly bland good looks. They're in each other's arms, laughing, in love.

She looks at it for a second, then puts it away and keeps searching.

She finally finds the photo she's looking for. It shows Lucy and some friends, outside at night, wearing T-shirts and jeans, with snow falling around them.

She flips it over. On the back is an auto-printed date: APRIL 3, 2002.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - EVENING

WIND BLOWING fiercely as Julian arrives home to find the flag on the mailbox up. A new letter from Lucy inside. He retrieves it and walks across the jetty.

INT. LAKE HOUSE

THROUGH the window we can see thick clouds collecting over the lake as Julian reads the letter.

LUCY (V.O.)

Since you don't believe me, a little warning. There was a bad flu going around in the Spring of 2002. I remember because there was a freak late snow, and after that everybody got sick.

Julian rolls his eyes.

LUCY (V.O.)

So, my mystery correspondent, if you really are where -- or when -- you say you are... I hope you're getting plenty of rest and drinking lots of fluids.

This is too much for Julian.

JULIAN

Snow, right.

CONTINUED:

He crumples the letter and goes to throw it away. He's about to drop it in the trash when he suddenly SNEEZES.

It takes a second for this to register, and by the time it does, he sneezes again. He whirls around.

OUTSIDE THE WINDOW -- beautiful SNOW is swirling into the Lake.

EXT. MAILBOX - DAY

The mailbox is covered with a thick dusting of snow. Julian very tentatively opens it. He quickly slips in a letter and closes the box, almost as if he's afraid it will bite him. He pulls the red flag up.

EXT. MAILBOX - DAY (LUCY'S CONTINUITY)

The mailbox is dry; it's a warm day two years later. Lucy opens the box and takes out Julian's letter. She puts the flag down. She opens the letter. It has a single line.

CAN THIS BE HAPPENING?

Lucy, hands shaking, takes out a pen.

EXT. MAILBOX (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Julian stares at the snow-covered box. The flag is now down. He is starting to look a little freaked out. Also, he has the flu. He suddenly doubles over and sneezes violently.

When he looks back at the mailbox, the flag is up. He nearly jumps back in alarm.

He very hesitantly opens the mailbox and takes out... his note. The same one he just put in. He's slightly disappointed, but also reassured. He relaxes a bit.

He flips the note open and his jaw drops.

Underneath his line "CAN THIS BE HAPPENING?" is Lucy's handwriting, a single word:

YES.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy comes home, a little dazed. Her dog jumps up on her. She carries it into her bedroom and sits down on her bed.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Julian on his bed, nursing his flu, staring at the note, still struggling to believe this. His dog jumps up and settles into his lap.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy on her bed, writing.

LUCY  
(out loud)  
I don't know where to start.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - DAY

Julian reads Lucy's letter.

LUCY (V.O.)  
I don't even know the right  
questions to ask. Is there  
anything you can tell me that  
might shed some light on this?

Julian thinks. He looks at the paw prints tracking into the house.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy reads. CLOSE ON a line from Julian's letter:

I THINK WE HAVE THE SAME DOG.

SAME SCENE - LATER

Lucy at her desk. She writes back.

LUCY  
Does yours jump on you when you  
come home and scare the shit out  
of you?

INT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Julian reads this.

JULIAN

Yes.

He turns the page.

JULIAN

(reads aloud)

'And does he sleep like a person?'

He looks over at his bed. His dog lies asleep on his back, mouth open. He does look like a person. Julian starts to laugh.

He looks back at the letter.

LUCY (V.O.)

I call him Jack.

He looks at the dog.

JULIAN

So you're Jack.

(correcting himself,  
in amazement)

You... will be Jack.

EXT. EL PLATFORM (CHICAGO) - DAY

Lucy exiting a train in the morning rush hour.

LUCY (V.O.)

Maybe we should introduce  
ourselves properly.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Lucy arrives at the hospital, signs in, gets a stack of charts and files.

LUCY (V.O.)

I'm a doctor -- a first year  
resident in internal medicine.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE

Julian directing activity and conferring with Mona and Mulhern at the worksite.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN (V.O.)  
I build houses. I mean, I help  
run a company that builds houses.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - NIGHT

Lucy reads.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
Okay. I'm still trying to get  
this straight. If in two years  
you'll be living in an apartment  
building at 1620 Racine... which  
doesn't exist yet... where are  
you, uh, 'now'?

Lucy shakes her head.

LUCY  
I'm in medical school, Madison,  
Wisconsin.  
(she looks around,  
writes)  
I mean, in 'my' now I'm in a  
hospital cafeteria in Chicago,  
Illinois, but for you... Okay,  
this is weird. This is weird.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - ROOFTOP

Julian, on a break, scribbles on a pad.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
What's it like in 2004?

INT. EL TRAIN CAR - EVENING

Lucy rides him from work. Train packed with weary  
commuters.

LUCY (V.O.)  
It's amazing. Everyone drives  
these flying cars. We all dress  
in shiny metal jumpsuits. Oh, and  
the Cubs won the series last year.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Julian reads, smiling.

CONTINUED:

LUCY (V.O.)  
 Actually, nothing's changed much.  
 No. Cell phones are a little  
 smaller...

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy watching Back to the Future on TV. Doc Brown is yelling at Marty McFly.

DOC BROWN (V.O.)  
 (on TV)  
 Great Scott, Marty, do you realize  
 what you've done? You've upset  
 the entire space-time continuum!

SAME SCENE - LATER

Lucy writes.

LUCY (V.O.)  
 Okay. One thing worries me. What  
 if, in sending these letters, in  
 communicating like this, we  
 accidentally tamper with the  
 course of time itself, altering  
 human history forever in the  
 process?

INT. LAKE HOUSE - EVENING

Julian walks across the jetty.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 Yeah, good point. Let's not do  
 that.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

He lets himself into the house. Jack jumps up onto him.

JULIAN  
 Aggh!  
 (firm)  
No.

He sets Jack back on the floor, immediately goes back outside and comes in again. Jack jumps up. Julian puts him on the floor firmly and holds him there.

CONTINUED:

JULIAN

No.

Julian repeats this several times. Finally he enters and Jack stays down. Julian gives him a treat.

JULIAN

Good boy!

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - CORRIDOR

Lucy reads the latest letter as she gets out of her elevator.

JULIAN (V.O.)

Sorry. I did have to change one thing.

Lucy opens the door. Jack is sitting placidly, looking up at her.

JULIAN (V.O.)

You're welcome.

ON LUCY

beginning to laugh -- the first time we've seen her enjoy any sort of release, and we --

CUT TO:

EXT. MAILBOX - DAY

It's a bright, warm day. Lucy at the mailbox. She pulls the flag upright.

LUCY (V.O.)

Thanks for the favor. Here's one back at you.

EXT. MAILBOX - DAY

Overcast, cold, wind. Julian opens the mailbox and pulls something out. He keeps pulling -- it's a long, bright scarf. He tries it on, surprised.

LUCY (V.O.)

Put this on and don't take it off for the rest of the month. It's gonna stay cold till the middle of April.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

Julian fills a cement mixer. He's wearing jeans, work boots, work gloves -- and the scarf. Mulhern looks askance at him.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LUCY'S APARTMENT BUILDING/EXT. LAKE MICHIGAN

SPLIT SCREEN. Julian and Lucy both writing. Lucy on the roof of her building, where she can see the Lake behind the city buildings; Julian on the shore with Jack in his pickup. It's warmer in both continuities: Spring is here,

JULIAN (V.O.)

If we're going to keep doing this, we've got to know more about each other. Send me lists.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Julian in the kitchen. He has a cocktail recipe book and has set out gin and lime juice and a cocktail shaker. He mixes a drink as Jack watches.

LUCY (V.O.)

Okay. Let's see. I like dogs, as you know. Gimlets -- that's gin and lime juice, delicious on a warm night. I like the Stones' Exile on Main Street. Jane Austen. I like... I love... my work.

(joking)

Turnoffs: cruelty, infectious diseases, and guys with mustaches.

Julian tastes the gimlet and smiles.

EXT. ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO - DAY

Lucy, sipping a milkshake, goes up the steps of the museum.

JULIAN (V.O.)

For me: Milkshakes, black and white. Money Jungle by Duke Ellington. Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman in Notorious... The Art Institute of Chicago on a quiet afternoon.

INT. ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

Lucy stands in front of a canvas of boats on the water.

LUCY

I forgot one. I like the Lake  
House.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - DAY

A MATCHING SHOT, of Julian looking at sailboats on the  
actual Lake.

JULIAN

How'd you wind up living here,  
anyway?

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy sprawls on her bed, writing.

LUCY (V.O.)

I rented it after med school. It  
was the strangest place I'd ever  
seen. I couldn't imagine anyone  
building it. Or... I couldn't  
imagine building it and then not  
living here. I loved the way it  
sort of... hovered over the water.  
I loved that jetty. I don't know  
why.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - EVENING

Sunset. Darkness falling over the water. Julian sits on  
the jetty, writing.

JULIAN

You have to leave land to get to  
the front door. It's like getting  
on a ship. Every time you come  
home you're embarking on a voyage.  
(he winces)  
Sorry. Pretentious.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Lucy writing.

LUCY (V.O.)

Don't apologize. You can be  
pretentious. You can be anything  
you like.

## DOWN THE HALL

A small party is in progress for Costello's birthday. Cake and coffee, a dozen doctors talking, laughing.

After the toast, FIND Anna Klyczynski looking around. She goes out into the corridor.

She sees Lucy, sitting alone at the end of the hallway, deeply engrossed in her letter.

## INT. TRAILER - DAY

Julian writing intently at his desk. Mona is watching him from across the room.

DISSOLVE TO:

## EXT. EL TRAIN PLATFORM - MORNING

A few weeks have passed. WIND blowing fiercely on a late spring Chicago day. Lucy waiting for the train on a crowded platform. Her CELL PHONE rings.

LUCY

Hello?

(her explanation  
changes)

Oh. Hi.

## SAME SCENE - LATER

Lucy still on the phone. She sounds upset.

LUCY

(on phone)

Look, it's not easy for me,  
either. You know that... no, I'm  
not mad that you called. I  
just... I'm sorry, I've got to get  
to work and I --

A train is approaching the station.

LUCY

I don't think that's a good idea.  
No. Morgan, I'm saying please  
don't come down. Because we need  
more time... Especially if we're  
going to stay friends. I just  
don't think we should...

The train is about to leave.

CONTINUED:

LUCY  
 (on phone)  
 Look, I gotta go --

She runs for it but the doors close in her face and she groans in frustration.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Lucy near the end of her shift, about to check out. Madhvi Patel approaches her.

MADHVI  
 Lucy. I need a favor. I've got to have the night off. Take my shift?

LUCY  
 Tonight?

MADHVI  
 (shyly)  
 Please? I've got a date. He just asked me, and I really want to. I'll cover for you next time.

Lucy's exhausted, but she nods. She watches as Madhvi dashes off excitedly.

EXT. CHICAGO STREET - NIGHT

Lucy after her double shift struggles down the street with armfuls of groceries, Jack tugging at a leash. Car HORNS BLARING. A BIKE MESSENGER nearly runs her down. She looks strung-out.

EXT. MAILBOX - DAY

Julian opens the mailbox to find it empty. He's surprised at how disappointed he feels.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 Hey, pen pal. You haven't written for awhile.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy soaks in a tub, looking drained, reading this letter.

CONTINUED:

LUCY (V.O.)

It's been a... rough week. I worked 30 hours straight. I haven't been able to get away. I can't remember the last time I looked at the sky, or saw a damn tree.

(beat)

It's not so bad when I'm busy. It's when I have a minute to breathe, to look around, that it seems really hard. I wonder what the hell I'm doing here, alone, in this gray city. And I miss the way the world looked from the window of the Lake House.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Julian reads this letter. Beat.

He looks out the window.

OUTSIDE are dozens of INFANT TREES waiting to be planted on the construction site.

CUT TO:

INT. EL TRAIN - EVENING

Lucy, coming home from work on the train. Out the window she can see it's beginning to rain. She sighs.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE SHORE DRIVE - EVENING

Julian drives toward Chicago on a cloudless evening. In the back of his pickup truck is one of the TREES.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Lucy trudges down the rainy street toward her building. A CLAP of THUNDER and the rain begins falling really hard, sheets. She yelps and starts running for her door.

CUT TO:

EXT. 1620 RACINE (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Julian digs a HOLE outside the construction site that will become Lucy's apartment building. He finishes and starts to set the tiny, fragile tree in place.

CUT TO:

EXT. 1620 RACINE (LUCY'S CONTINUITY)

Lucy is completely soaked as she runs the last few yards to her front door. She struggles for her keys, dropping them, growing more and more frustrated as the rain absolutely pounds down on her, when suddenly --

IT STOPS.

She is baffled, as THUNDER and lightning continue to crack across the sky, and indeed the rain is still falling all around her, but not ON her.

She looks up.

Above her are the branches of a YOUNG TREE, leaves grown thick and high enough to form a canopy swaying in the rain just above Lucy. It wasn't there a second ago but now it's sheltering her, and she gapes at it.

CUT TO:

EXT. 1620 RACINE (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Julian smiles as he tosses the shovel in the back of his truck.

CUT TO:

EXT. 1620 RACINE

ON Lucy, moved, her face breaking into a wide smile.

LUCY  
(quietly)  
Thank you.

Drops of rain fall through the green branches as Lucy spins slowly beneath the tree.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAKE MICHIGAN - DAY

EXT./INT. LAKE HOUSE - DAY

Henry is standing on the jetty facing the Lake House. He has just arrived.

HENRY  
You... bastard...

Julian gestures for Henry to follow him inside. Henry is too flabbergasted by the house.

HENRY  
This is where you've been hiding out? This is yours?

JULIAN  
Yeah.

Henry follows Julian inside, appraising the place.

HENRY  
When was it built?

JULIAN  
Seventies. You want a beer?

HENRY  
Yeah.

Henry looks around.

HENRY  
It's like Le Corbusier meets Frank Lloyd Wright meets... me in five years. It's perfect.

JULIAN  
Actually, it's not.

EXT. REAR OF LAKE HOUSE

They stand on a narrow ledge that runs along the back of the house. There's a fifteen-foot drop down to the water.

JULIAN  
You can't swim. There should be a stairway down to the water. Maybe a porch. Something.

HENRY  
(shakes his head)  
It would ruin the line. Total aesthetic catastrophe.

EXT. JETTY - NIGHT

They sit in the darkness, listening to the WATER LAPPING, drinking beer. ROLLING STONES ON the STEREO inside.

HENRY  
Exile. Cool.

JULIAN  
Yeah.

Beat.

HENRY  
Julian. I didn't just come up here to escape my pathetic existence in the city.

JULIAN  
You didn't?

HENRY  
No. There's an agenda.  
(beat)  
If you dropped this bourgeois 'thing' and came back we could still graduate together in a year. Start the Firm.

JULIAN  
'Visionary Vanguard Associates.'

HENRY  
Visionary Vanguard. I can't do it alone.

JULIAN  
(shakes his head)  
Sorry, Hank.

Beat. Henry treads carefully.

HENRY  
I'm sure if you talked to him...

JULIAN  
Forget it.

HENRY  
Jules.

JULIAN  
He doesn't want me back. I don't want to be back. Everybody's happier now.

CONTINUED:

HENRY

What about your work? Your work was great. Even he admitted that. Look, I know it's hard, but if you suck it up and put all the personal shit aside for a few months, you'll have your degree, and --

JULIAN

I said forget it.

His tone is sharp. Henry is quiet.

JULIAN

Sorry. I just... like it up here.

HENRY

Are you involved with somebody?

JULIAN

(beat)

No.

HENRY

Why did you hesitate?

JULIAN

I didn't.

HENRY

Yes you did.

JULIAN

I -- I'm not involved with anybody, okay?

HENRY

Okay.

(beat)

All I'm saying is, maybe you should think about the future.

Julian starts to laugh. He can't stop. Henry looks at him.

HENRY

What?

(as Julian keeps laughing)

What?

CUT TO:

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy has an old 2002 filofax calendar open on her desk. She turns the pages until she sees an entry, circled: "5:46 TO MADISON." She picks up a pen, writes.

LUCY (V.O.)  
Let's try something.

EXT. AMTRAK STATION - DAY

Julian driving. He turns into the parking lot of a local train station, parks and gets out. Rain is falling.

BEYOND, a train is just pulling into the station.

LUCY (V.O.)  
Around 'your' time two years ago I lost something. At a train station. I was on my way back to school and I left it on the platform. See if you can find it for me. I won't tell you what it is. Then put it in the mailbox. This is your mission if you choose to accept it.

INT. AMTRAK STATION

Julian walks through the station. A few PEOPLE about. He looks for single women. He doesn't see any -- just a couple of FAMILIES, an ELDERLY COUPLE, some BUSINESSMEN.

ANNOUNCEMENT (V.O.)  
Final call for the 5:46 to Madison, making the following stops...

Julian keeps searching. No luck.

Suddenly, THROUGH the window that looks out onto the train platform, he sees a YOUNG WOMAN stand up and prepare to board the train.

It's Lucy -- here two years younger, a med student.

Julian doesn't know for sure that it's her, but she could be the person he's looking for, and she's startlingly pretty besides. He hurries through the door out onto the train platform.

EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM

He is about to go over to her when he stops.

She has her arms around a MAN whose BACK is TO us. They're embracing under an umbrella, saying goodbye. Neither has noticed that Lucy has left a book on the bench where they were sitting. Julian sees it, but it would be awkward to go over and interrupt the kiss. He hesitates.

The TRAIN CONDUCTOR announces final boarding.

Lucy reluctantly breaks off from the man and gets on the train.

The man Lucy was kissing doesn't move. He stands under his umbrella, watching as the train pulls out, and doesn't leave until it is completely out of sight. He never notices the book. Julian watches him go.

Once he's gone, Julian goes over to the bench. He looks at the book Lucy left. It is a well-worn copy of PERSUASION by Jane Austen.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Lucy driving along the lake, eager to get to the mailbox.

She passes a LAKESIDE CONDO DEVELOPMENT. It's new, upscale, sprawling. Lucy mutters to herself.

LUCY

Tacky.

She drives on.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Lucy arrives at the Lake House and drives up to the mailbox, eager. She opens it.

There's no book inside. Just a note. She opens it.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING JULY 4TH?

ON LUCY

She's a little disappointed.

INT. HOSPITAL - BREAK ROOM - EVENING

Lucy changes clothes after work. In the b.g., Patel and Costello are also heading out.

LUCY (V.O.)  
 Going to the fireworks, I guess.  
 I go every year. Why?

EXT. LAKE SHORE DRIVE (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Julian drives toward the Loop, buildings glimmering in the twilight.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 What do you say we both go?

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT (LUCY'S CONTINUITY)

Lucy walks out onto crowded downtown streets.

LUCY (V.O.)  
 You're not asking me out, are you?

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 No, no. I just thought it might be good to do the same thing, that's all.

LUCY (V.O.)  
 The same thing, two years apart.

EXT. CHICAGO STREETS - NIGHT (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Julian has parked his truck and joined the crowds moving down the streets.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 Better than staying home.

They arrive at the SAME CORNER from different directions.

LUCY (V.O.)  
 Okay. Let's go to the fireworks.

SPLIT SCREEN -- they both turn the corner, in both continuities -- and suddenly the RIVER is before them, thronged up and down with crowds of PEOPLE gathering in the warm summer night.

EXT. CHICAGO RIVER - NIGHT (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Julian stops at an Italian sausage stand run by a VENDOR in his 50s and an OLD MAN, the Vendor's father, who must be at least 80. The Vendor is about to hand Julian a sausage but his father stops him, piles some more onions and peppers on it for Julian.

OLD MAN

Give the man his money's worth.  
 (to Julian)  
 I'm still teaching him the  
 business.

VENDOR

(laughing)  
 All right, Pop.

Julian continues down to the river.

EXT. CHICAGO RIVER - NIGHT (LUCY'S CONTINUITY)

Lucy stops at the sausage stand. The Vendor is two years older, a bit sadder-looking. He tends the stand alone.

LUCY

One, please.

He nods, piles it high with onions and peppers.

LUCY (V.O.)

Did you go to the station? I  
 never got my book.

EXT. CHICAGO RIVER - NIGHT (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Julian walks through the crowds. He watches a HAPPY COUPLE go by.

JULIAN (V.O.)

Let me keep it for a while. I  
 want to read it.

(beat)

There's something I've been  
 meaning to ask you. Who was the  
 guy at the train station?

EXT. CHICAGO RIVER (LUCY'S CONTINUITY)

Lucy watches a DIFFERENT HAPPY COUPLE pass (and is surprised to see that it's Patel and Costello, holding hands away from the hospital, furtive lovers).

EXT. CHICAGO RIVER (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Julian stares up at the sky, in the middle of an expectant crowd, waiting for the fireworks.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
Your fiance? Why didn't you tell me?

LUCY (V.O.)  
You don't tell me about your love life.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
Because I don't have one. Unfortunately. God, I can't believe you didn't say you're married.

EXT. CHICAGO RIVER (LUCY'S CONTINUITY)

Lucy in her crowd by the river.

LUCY (V.O.)  
(gentler)  
I'm not married. We broke up when I moved to Chicago.

CHEERS as the show begins and the first FIREWORKS EXPLODE. She looks up at the sky.

LUCY (V.O.)  
I'm alone.

EXT. CHICAGO RIVER (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Julian alone in the crowd as his fireworks show begins.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
Okay. Me too.

FIREWORKS EXPLODE AND ECHO in both continuities. Julian and Lucy watch, the lights playing on their upturned faces.

INT. LUCY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lucy comes home. It's a hot night and her apartment is stifling. She gets ready for bed, stripping down to panties and tank top, and stands in front of a fan.

LUCY (V.O.)  
So. How were your fireworks?

INT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Julian strips down to boxers. He opens a window, trying to catch a breeze on his equally hot night.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 Not as good as yours, I'll bet.  
 They get better every year.

INT. LUCY'S BEDROOM/INT. LAKE HOUSE

SPLIT SCREEN -- the two of them, lying in different halves of their beds.

LUCY (V.O.)  
 Yeah...

They both lie there, hot and uncomfortable, tossing in frustration, separated by time.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Then Julian jumps up. He goes to his desk and pulls out a piece of paper. He writes:

AT THE TRAIN STATION, I...

He crosses this out and starts over.

WHEN I SAW YOU... I WASN'T EXPECTING...

He crosses this out too. Then takes a breath, and before he can stop himself, writes:

YOU DIDN'T TELL ME YOU WERE SO BEAUTIFUL.

INT. HOSPITAL - BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

Lucy reads these words. She can't suppress a startled little gasp. She looks around, embarrassed. No one has heard her. She writes:

LUCY (V.O.)  
 No fair. You saw me but I still  
 don't know what you look like.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Julian looks in the mirror, examines his hairline.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 You're right. I wouldn't mind  
 knowing what I'm like in two  
 years. Why don't you get together  
 with 'me' in the future and let me  
 know what you think?

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy considers this.

LUCY  
 Yeah.

She takes a breath, suddenly excited and nervous. Her  
 life could be about to change.

She writes:

OKAY... WHY NOT GIVE ME A CALL ON JULY 10, 2004, AT ABOUT

She checks her watch. It's 9:04. She writes.

9:05.

CLOSE ON THE TIP OF HER PEN

as it finishes the last curve of the "5" --

The PHONE RINGS.

She nearly falls out of her chair.

Lucy steadies herself. She gets up and crosses to the  
 phone. She hesitates, then snatches up the receiver,  
 heart racing.

LUCY  
 (whispers)  
 Hello?

VOICE (V.O.)  
 (on phone)  
 Lucy?

LUCY  
 Yes?

VOICE (V.O.)  
 (on phone)  
 It's Morgan.

CONTINUED:

It takes a moment for this to sink in.

LUCY  
Morgan?

MORGAN (V.O.)  
(on phone)  
Yeah. I'm in Chicago. I came  
down for a meeting but it was  
cancelled, so I thought I'd give  
you a call. What the hell. See  
if you were free.

ON LUCY

EXT. CHICAGO STREET - NIGHT

Lucy walks with MORGAN -- the man from the train station,  
now two years older than when we last saw him, good-  
looking, nicely dressed. They walk in awkward silence.

MORGAN  
Thanks for coming out.

LUCY  
Sure.

MORGAN  
Been too long.

She doesn't answer. Beat.

MORGAN  
How's Jack?

LUCY  
He's good.

MORGAN  
Adjusting to city life?

LUCY  
Yeah, he's doing great.

MORGAN  
Good. I miss him.

Beat.

MORGAN  
Have you eaten, by any chance?

CONTINUED:

LUCY

No, but --

MORGAN

Neither have I. I just realized  
I'm starving. We could grab a  
quick dinner.

Lucy nods, reluctantly. They are passing a small,  
elegant restaurant -- "IL MARE."

MORGAN

How about this? Looks all right.

LUCY

Oh, no, Morgan, this place is much  
too...

But Morgan is already heading inside.

INT. IL MARE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The place is small and stylish and serene. Also  
absolutely packed. Morgan goes up to the HOSTESS.

MORGAN

Two for dinner.

HOSTESS

(taken aback)  
Tonight?

MORGAN

Yes, please.

HOSTESS

I'm sorry, sir. We're completely  
booked for tonight.

She pages ahead through the reservation book.

HOSTESS

But three... no, I'm sorry, four  
months from now we have a dinner  
opening if you'd like to reserve.  
Five-thirty or eleven-thirty?

ON Morgan, disappointed.

INT. PIZZA PLACE -NIGHT

Bright, garish pizza place. Morgan and Lucy eat.

CONTINUED:

LUCY

Don't feel bad. It's the best restaurant in the city. No one gets a table.

MORGAN

It's not that.

(beat)

I didn't do this right.

She looks at him.

LUCY

You didn't have a meeting, did you?

He shakes his head. She waits for him to continue.

MORGAN

I thought you'd see me if it seemed like no big deal, a surprise, a quick coffee... But coffee could turn into dinner. And dinner could turn into...

LUCY

What?

MORGAN

Anything.

She shakes her head.

LUCY

So this was an ambush.

MORGAN

I guess so.

LUCY

Another one.

MORGAN

What do you mean?

LUCY

Morgan. You were always leaping ten steps ahead. A week after we met you had our whole lives mapped out. When I was still at school, you were picking out real estate.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY (CONT'D)

I'd come visit for the weekend and you'd have all your high school friends, the whole town at the house to meet me.

MORGAN

At least I didn't make out with somebody else.

LUCY

What are you talking about?

MORGAN

At the party...

LUCY

Oh my God. I didn't make out with him! I kissed him, once, and it was just some random guy and it was years ago... I can't believe you even remember that.

MORGAN

Okay. You're right. I don't want to fight.

(beat)

It's just... part of me wonders... if I had moved to Chicago when you wanted to --

LUCY

You didn't.

(beat; gentler)

Leaving was the toughest decision I've ever made. I hope you know that.

MORGAN

Yeah.

(sighs)

I'm sorry. I never should have called. I just... miss you.

Lucy doesn't answer. He pokes at his food, miserable.

CUT TO:

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Julian is parked in his truck outside the ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL. After a moment he gets out.

INT. ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL - BURNHAM'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Burnham, the architecture professor, at work at his desk. A SOUND at the door. He looks up.

Julian is standing in the doorway.

BURNHAM  
(quiet)  
This is a surprise.

JULIAN  
I was in the neighborhood...

He trails off, uncomfortable. Beat.

JULIAN  
How've you been?

BURNHAM  
I'm well.

Burnham doesn't say anything else. Julian steps into the room, tentative.

JULIAN  
How's Margaret?

BURNHAM  
She's in London for the year,  
teaching. Otherwise the same.

JULIAN  
You ever gonna marry her?

BURNHAM  
Did you come here to make small  
talk?

JULIAN  
No.

Julian puts an envelope on Burnham's desk. Burnham looks inside. A check.

BURNHAM  
What is this?

JULIAN  
It's what I owe you.

BURNHAM  
I beg your pardon?

JULIAN  
You paid my tuition for two years.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BURNHAM

So?

JULIAN

So you wasted your money.

BURNHAM

I really don't think we owe each other anything.

JULIAN

I'd feel better.

BURNHAM

(shrugs)

If it makes you feel better.

Burnham looks at the check briefly, pockets it. Beat.

JULIAN

There's something else. I bought the house.

BURNHAM

I heard a rumor. Word travels in this business.

JULIAN

Yeah?

BURNHAM

Yes. They said some sleazy little developer building McMansions up and down the lake shore snapped it up.

Julian stares at him for a moment. Then abruptly exits, slamming the door behind him.

INT. BURNHAM'S OFFICE

Burnham takes out the check again. He looks at it, then slowly tears it in half and drops the two pieces into a wastepaper basket.

Then he opens a desk drawer and pulls out a photograph.

CLOSE ON PHOTO

It is a photo of the Lake House under construction. Burnham stands on the jetty with a lovely WOMAN and a small BOY, about seven. The boy points at the house, his arms around his father's neck. Burnham holds the little boy in his arms, smiling and happy and proud.

BACK TO SCENE

Burnham looks at the photo a moment, starts to drop it *in* the wastebasket as well, then decides not to. He puts it back in the drawer.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAKE MICHIGAN - AFTERNOON

It is now autumn on the North Shore. Trees fiery and gorgeous against the deep, vivid blue of the lake.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - AFTERNOON

Julian steps out the front door of a COMPLETED CONDO -- the first one to be finished. He shakes hands with Mulhern, making a little ceremony of it. Applause from the crew gathered around.

INT. TRUCK - EVENING

Julian and Mona sit in Julian's truck looking at the site. Jack is in the backseat.

JULIAN

One down.

MONA

Forty-four to go.

JULIAN

We're not terrifyingly behind schedule. Just... alarmingly.

She looks anxious.

JULIAN

It's gonna be okay. We'll catch up. We could use a couple more guys who know how to handle a backhoe. And the waterline to number fourteen needs to be resealed...

MONA

Shut up.

JULIAN

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MONA

I'm kind of pissed at you, you know.

JULIAN

You are?

MONA

I thought you were supposed to be on top of things around here.

JULIAN

I thought I was.

MONA

Well you never noticed these.

She puts a foot up on the dashboard. She's wearing new, rather flashy red cowboy boots.

MONA

Don't you remember? You told me to get them.

JULIAN

Right. Right.

(laughs)

Wow. Not exactly what I had in mind, but...

MONA

You like them or not?

He looks at them. He also can't help looking at her leg.

JULIAN

I like them.

She grins.

MONA

Good. 'Cause I was thinking... if you're not busy tonight, we should --

IN THE BACK SEAT

JACK suddenly GROWLS and LEAPS out of the window. Julian surprised.

JULIAN

Hey!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Julian scrambles out. Jack is dashing off over a hill. Julian shouts but the dog doesn't stop. Julian takes off running after him. Mona gets out.

MONA

Julian?

EXT. TOWN STREET

Julian chases Jack down a nearby residential street. The dog is speedy. Julian racing to keep up.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Jack darts across someone's yard. Julian still chasing. AHEAD, a MAN in his driveway is unloading boxes from his car trunk. He sees what's happening and, quick on his feet, manages to scoop Jack up in his arms as the dog dashes past.

Julian runs up, winded.

JULIAN

Thanks.

MAN

No problem.

The MAN is MORGAN -- here, two years younger than we saw him last. Julian has only seen him once before, under an umbrella in the train station, and doesn't recognize him.

JULIAN

He's never run off like that.

MORGAN (MAN)

Gotta keep an eye on them. What's his name?

JULIAN

Jack.

MORGAN

(petting him)

Hi, Jack. I should get one like you for my girlfriend. She loves dogs.

Julian notes all of Morgan's boxes -- cases of beer and wine.

JULIAN

Let me give you a hand with that.

EXT. TOWN STREET

Mona, far behind and hobbled by the boots (which are hard to run in), stumbles down the street looking for Julian.

INT./EXT. MORGAN'S HOUSE

Julian helps Morgan carry in the boxes. Morgan is a genial, chatty guy. Julian listening politely.

MORGAN

... I do some real estate law, contracts, wills, whatever people need around here. Big stuff, small stuff.

JULIAN

Yeah?

MORGAN

(smiles)

Okay, mostly small stuff. How about you? You lived here long?

JULIAN

Just a few months. I've got a place on the Lake.

MORGAN

Nice.

They're done. Mona comes limping up, winded.

MONA

Oh, thank God. You found him.

JULIAN

Yeah.

Morgan nods "hi" to Mona.

MORGAN

Hey, just so you don't think I'm planning to drink all this by myself -- I'm having a bunch of friends over tonight. Locals. You two are welcome to come.

Julian and Mona exchange a glance.

MONA

Thanks. We've got plans.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORGAN

No problem. Good to meet you anyway. See you later, Jack. Oh, hey, Julian --

(reaches into  
his pocket)

Take my card? I might be looking to rent a place on the Lake myself. If you hear of anything, would you let me know?

JULIAN

Okay.

MORGAN

Thanks. I like this house, but my girlfriend doesn't. You know how it is.

JULIAN

Sure.

Mona and Julian start off.

MORGAN

I promised her a Lake view if she moves here after med school.

Julian stops.

JULIAN

She's in medical school?

MORGAN

Yeah. In Madison. She comes down on the weekends, though.

Julian stares. He finally realizes that Morgan is the man who was on the train platform with Lucy.

MORGAN

She's coming in later tonight, actually. That's why I'm throwing the party.

Beat.

JULIAN

What time does it start?

Mona stares at Julian.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Lucy comes out after work, tired. Starts to head for the E1. Then changes her mind and stops. She reverses direction and walks down the street until she comes to a bar -- the Cove, the place the other doctors told her about. She goes in.

INT. "COVE" BAR

The place is dead, mostly empty. She goes to the bar and sits down, glum.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORGAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Julian and Mona arrive at Morgan's house. Party in progress inside. Cars parked in the driveway, on the street. They start inside.

MONA

This better be good.

INT. MORGAN'S HOUSE - LATER

Morgan among his FRIENDS and NEIGHBORS, talking, laughing.

MORGAN

... You wouldn't catch me dead in Chicago. I grew up here. You'd have to be nuts to live anywhere else. I --

He stops Julian and Mona as they come in.

MORGAN

Hey! Glad you could make it. Bar's in the kitchen...

They move through the rooms. A pretty dull crowd. Mona gives him a "why are we here?" look.

No sign of Lucy anywhere.

They eventually sit on the couch next to DOUG and MARJORIE, a couple in their 30s. Doug sticks out his hand.

DOUG

Doug Ryan.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN

Julian.

MONA

Mona.

DOUG

I teach Earth Sciences at the middle school. Marjorie coaches Speech and Debate. She's an expert in public speaking. Isn't that right, honey?

Marjorie nods but doesn't say anything. Uncomfortable beat.

DOUG

You know anything about Earth Sciences?

Julian shakes his head.

INT. COVE BAR - NIGHT

CUT TO:

Anna Klyczynski appears and sits down at the bar next to Lucy. She orders a drink.

ANNA

According to most accepted social norms a person should not drink alone after ten P.M., unless they have a good excuse. What's yours?

LUCY

Don't have one.

ANNA

I do. My youngest left for college this morning. Marie.

(shakes her head)

There was this little girl splashing around in a wading pool in diapers in my back yard. And now she's packing her Volvo to drive to California. I have no goddamn idea where the time went.

(smiles)

She's going to be pre-med at Stanford.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY  
That's great.

ANNA  
(proud)  
Yeah.  
(drinks)  
You want another one?

LUCY  
Yeah.

Anna orders. The drinks come. Beat.

LUCY  
Okay. I do have an excuse.

CUT TO:

INT. MORGAN'S HOUSE

Julian and Mona are still on the couch with Doug and Marjorie, looking restless. Doug is using two paper plates to illustrate what he's saying.

DOUG  
... All of the Earth's continents rest on tectonic plates. Now these plates are continually moving and shifting...

MONA  
(to Julian, out of the side of her mouth)  
Get the coats.

JULIAN  
Excuse me for a sec, Doug.  
Julian gets up.

ELSEWHERE

Morgan is looking out the window.

MORGAN  
Okay, everybody! This is it!

Morgan turns out all the lights in the room. Everyone quiets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

After a moment a figure carrying an overnight bag comes into the darkened room. Lucy.

LUCY

Hello?

Morgan flips on the lights. Everyone yells "Surprise," "Happy Birthday," etc. Someone carries in a cake blazing with candles. Lucy looks stunned. Morgan kisses her.

Julian watches.

CUT TO:

INT. "COVE" BAR - NIGHT

Lucy and Anna at the bar.

ANNA

Why didn't you mention it was your birthday? We would have had a cake for you or something.

LUCY

It's just time passing. I hate making a big deal out of it.

Anna looks at her.

ANNA

You keep a lot to yourself.

Lucy doesn't say anything.

ANNA

Nothing wrong with it. But I've sometimes wondered what else you have in your life besides work. Family? Boyfriend?

LUCY

I did...

INT. MORGAN'S HOUSE

CUT TO:

Morgan enthusiastically introduces Lucy around, everyone toasting her, hugging her, etc. She's trying not to show that she's a little annoyed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORGAN

... And this, this is Larry  
Wuchich. 'The Wooch' -- I've known  
this maniac since third grade...

LUCY

Hello.

They turn to the next guests. Julian and Mona. Mona  
eager to leave.

MORGAN

Oh hey. This is Julian. This  
guy's gonna help us find our Lake  
house.

LUCY

Hello.

JULIAN

Hi.

Morgan sees that they're holding their coats.

MORGAN

You're not leaving?

Julian looks at them. Morgan's arm around Lucy.

JULIAN

No. We'll stay.

Mona glares.

INT. MORGAN'S HOUSE - LATER

Julian is looking for a bathroom. He passes a bedroom  
door, ajar. INSIDE, Morgan is kissing Lucy. Julian  
steps back quickly. He overhears:

MORGAN

Were you surprised?

LUCY

Yeah, I was. When are they going  
to leave?

MORGAN

What's the matter?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY

Nothing. Long train ride. I don't know. I guess I thought we were going to be alone tonight.

MORGAN

These are my friends, Lu. They're going to be our friends. I want you to get to know them. We're going to be making a life here.

LUCY

I know. I know...

CUT TO:

INT. "COVE" BAR

Lucy and Anna at the bar.

LUCY

We moved together after I finished med school. He rented this great house. Gorgeous place, up north, right on the Lake. His hometown. I did my internship. We were going to live there forever. That was the plan.

ANNA

What happened?

LUCY

It was his plan.

ANNA

Ah.

LUCY

No. That's not fair. I thought I wanted it too. I don't know. Anyway, I ended it.

ANNA

So who do you write to?

ON LUCY

Beat.

BACK TO SCENE

ANNA

I couldn't help noticing. Every time you get a break at the hospital you're writing, or reading a letter.

Lucy says nothing.

ANNA

Sorry. It's none of my business.

LUCY

No. It's okay. There is somebody.

(slowly)

It's kind of a... long distance relationship.

ANNA

How long?

LUCY

Long.

ANNA

How'd you meet?

LUCY

We haven't.

ANNA

What?

LUCY

We just write letters.

ANNA

You're kidding.

LUCY

No.

ANNA

You mean, like a pen pal?

LUCY

You got it.

Anna laughs, but Lucy looks morose. She drains her drink.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY

Story of my life.

(beat)

Keep everything at a nice, safe distance. Everyone...

(sighs)

The guy who was right in front of me, who wanted to marry me -- I push him away, I run. Meanwhile, the one man I can never even meet -- him, I want to give my whole heart to.

Beat.

ANNA

So you've really never spoken face-to-face?

LUCY

Never.

(stops, suddenly realizing)

No. Wait. Once...

CUT TO:

EXT. MORGAN'S HOUSE

Lucy comes out of the party. The look of someone badly in need of a break. She sits. Beat. Then she realizes that she's not alone.

Julian is out here too, alone.

She nods to him. He nods back, not sure what to say, if he should say anything. Beat.

JULIAN

Happy birthday.

LUCY

If one more person says that to me tonight I'll kill them.

JULIAN

(backing off)

Right.

Beat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY

Sorry. I know it's no big deal.  
Just another year. I guess I'm  
not really in a party mood.

JULIAN

Me either.

LUCY

So what are you doing here?

JULIAN

I was... hoping to meet somebody.

LUCY

Who?

JULIAN

Someone Morgan told me about.

LUCY

Ah. A fix up.

JULIAN

Kind of.

LUCY

He's always thinking ahead, our  
Morgan.

(beat)

So what are you waiting for?

JULIAN

I'm trying to work up my nerve.

She smiles, nods. Beat.

LUCY

So. You're going to get us a  
place on the Lake, huh?

JULIAN

Yes. I am.

She's a little taken aback by the confidence of his  
response.

LUCY

Are you a real estate agent?

JULIAN

No. But I have a Lake House.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY  
(puzzled)

Oh.

JULIAN  
And you're going to rent it after  
I move out.  
(beat)  
I mean, you could. If you want  
to.

LUCY  
When are you moving out?

JULIAN  
I'm... not sure. I guess after  
you finish med school?

She stares at him.

JULIAN  
Morgan said you were in medical  
school...

He trails off. Uncomfortable pause. Lucy is confused,  
and Julian feels he has lost his grip on the  
conversation, if he ever had one.

LUCY  
What makes you think we'd like it?

JULIAN  
You'll like it.

LUCY  
Can you swim?

JULIAN  
Sure, I took lessons as a kid.

LUCY  
No, I mean, can you swim from the  
house?

JULIAN  
Oh.

He laughs. She laughs too.

JULIAN  
Uh no. You can't. That's one  
drawback. There's no way down to  
the water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY  
That's too bad.

JULIAN  
(nods)  
Yeah.

As he talks, he moves over and sits down next to her.

JULIAN  
(growing more  
animated)  
I've actually thought -- well,  
you'd have to see it, but I've  
always had this idea you could  
change it. Nothing major. But a  
few new elements would really  
transform it. A deck out back.  
And some stairs.

LUCY  
Stairs going down to the water?

JULIAN  
Yeah. Just like a gentle slope,  
curving down... So you could step  
out the back door and slip into  
the Lake whenever you felt like  
it. Or if you just wanted to sit  
out there...

LUCY  
That sounds nice.

INT. MORGAN'S HOUSE

Lucy looks back at the house. Party still going strong.  
She sighs.

LUCY  
It's pretty late. Hadn't you  
better get back in there? If  
you're going to find your dream  
girl tonight?

ON JULIAN

JULIAN  
Yeah...

He hesitates, not sure what to do. He stares at her.

JULIAN  
Lucy...

BACK TO SCENE

LUCY

Yes?

JULIAN

(quickly)

Have you read Persuasion by Jane Austen?

Beat. Lucy looks startled.

LUCY

It's my favorite book.

(beat)

Why?

JULIAN

I have a friend who likes it.

LUCY

Your friend has good taste.

JULIAN

Yes. She does.

(beat)

I've been meaning to read it.

LUCY

You should.

JULIAN

I will.

He sits down next to her.

JULIAN

What's it about?

LUCY

It's about... waiting.

(beat)

These two people meet. They almost fall in love, but the timing isn't right, and they have to part. Then, years later, they meet again. They get another chance. But they don't know if too much time has passed, if they've waited too long, if it's too late for things to work out.

JULIAN

Sounds sad.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY

It's not. Not in the end.

They're sitting quite close. She looks at him.

She suddenly inclines her head toward his and their lips meet. A long, lingering kiss.

After a moment she breaks off.

LUCY

I don't know why I did that.

JULIAN

I'll try to explain...

He is leaning into her again when...

The door behind them OPENS and Morgan and Mona come out.

Julian and Lucy quickly separate but Morgan and Mona can see they've interrupted something. Very uncomfortable moment.

LUCY

Oh, Morgan, hey. Uh, Julian was just telling me about his house. It sounds really great.

MORGAN

(stony)

Great.

LUCY

(to Julian)

We're, uh, definitely interested.

JULIAN

Good. I'll be in touch.

(he stares at  
her. then, almost  
to himself)

I promise.

MONA

Julian. It's late.

Julian reluctantly gets to his feet.

CUT TO:

INT. TAXICAB - NIGHT

Lucy rides home from the Cove in a cab.

LUCY (V.O.)  
 My God. That was you. I remember  
 you. Why didn't you tell me who  
 you were?

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

Julian drives home through the darkness.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 Come on. You would have thought I  
 was insane.

EXT. LUCY'S CONTINUITY/JULIAN'S CONTINUITY

As the scene continues, TIME PASSES for both of them  
 (NOTE: we might see time lapse footage, etc.), although  
 we experience this exchange as a single conversation.

LUCY  
 (frustrated)  
 But I liked you. That was our  
chance. You should have told me.

JULIAN  
 What about your boyfriend?

LUCY  
 What about your girlfriend?

JULIAN  
 She's not my girlfriend!

LUCY  
 Well, he's not my boyfriend!

JULIAN  
 He was then! I mean, he is now.

LUCY  
Your now, not mine! And maybe  
 'now' would be different if you  
 had said something then. Maybe  
 now would have come sooner, or  
 maybe now it would be our now, not  
 just my now, you know?

JULIAN  
 No! I don't!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IN HER APARTMENT, Lucy reads this, groans in frustration, and tosses the letter across the room.

IN THE LAKE HOUSE, Julian, equally frustrated, tosses his pencil away.

IN BOTH CONTINUITIES JACK dodges the objects, and we --

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL - DAY

Henry is on a bench on the plaza, reading before class. Vanessa arrives, carrying a portfolio. She sits down on the other end of the bench. She looks at Henry.

VANESSA

Hi.

HENRY

(barely noting her)

Hey.

He keeps reading. Beat. She jiggles the portfolio up and down on her lap nervously. Henry glances over and she stops.

VANESSA

Sorry.

(clutching the  
portfolio)

I'm presenting today,

HENRY

You nervous?

VANESSA

A little, yeah.

HENRY

There's no reason for you to be.

She brightens.

VANESSA

Really?

HENRY

Nah. Whatever you did, I'm sure  
he'll shoot it down.

Her face falls. She gets up quickly and walks away. Henry is not aware that he's upset her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He reads a bit more, then checks his watch and gets up to go in. He sees something and stops.

HENRY

Oh no.

But he suddenly runs across the plaza.

Vanessa is kneeling over a MAN who has collapse near the entrance to the school. It is their professor, Burnham.

INT. LAKE HOUSE

Julian comes home. Jack waiting for him. He pours food for the dog, then notices his answering machine is blinking. He plays the message.

HENRY (V.O.)

(on machine)

Julian. Listen. It's your Dad.

INT. COOK COUNTY HOSPITAL - DAY

Julian rushes into the hospital. He goes to the admissions desk.

JULIAN

I'm looking for my father, Julian Burnham. He was admitted today.  
B-U-R-N-H --

DOCTOR (O.S.)

Mr. Burnham?

Julian turns. A doctor is approaching him. Anna Klyczynski -- here, of course, two years younger than we've seen her before.

KLYCZYNSKI

I'm Anna Klyczynski. I'm the attending for your father.

JULIAN

What happened? Is he okay?

KLYCZYNSKI

He's okay. Walk with me. He's had a heart attack. Fortunately relatively minor, and his students got him here quickly. We're monitoring him. We'll probably want to keep him for a day or two.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR

Henry is waiting outside Burnham's room as Julian walks up. He stands. Julian and Henry hug.

JULIAN  
Hank. My God. Thank you.

HENRY  
Are you kidding? I'm just sorry I  
had to leave it on your machine.  
You all right?

JULIAN  
Yeah.

Julian breaks off, readies himself to go in. He indicates the closed door.

JULIAN  
Is he sleeping?

HENRY  
No.

Julian starts to go in.

HENRY  
Julian. I wouldn't.

JULIAN  
Why not?

HENRY  
He's busy.

JULIAN  
Busy? Doing what?

HENRY  
Evaluating a student project.

Julian looks disbelieving. He starts to laugh.

JULIAN  
Of course.

HENRY  
Can't let a little coronary throw  
off your whole class schedule.

Julian shakes his head.

The door opens. Vanessa comes out, carrying her portfolio. She walks up to Henry. She looks him in the eye.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VANESSA

He loved it.

She turns on her heels and walks away. Henry watches her go, taken aback.

Julian lets himself into the room.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Burnham is propped up in bed, hooked up to monitoring machines, reading. He has a lot of work with him -- professional journals and magazines, papers, etc.

Julian walks into the room quietly, almost tentatively. Burnham doesn't hear him at first. When he does finally look over, he lowers his book but doesn't put it down.

JULIAN

Hi.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - NIGHT

Julian sits at a table, writing.

JULIAN (V.O.)

I know I haven't written for a while. But I need to... I wanted to tell you about my father.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy reads the letter.

JULIAN (V.O.)

He's famous. You know his work -- he built the Lake House. He sold it years ago, after my mother died. I guess he was trying to slam the door on that chapter of his life. Of course it was my life too. I got it back.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - NIGHT

Julian stares at the page. Then writes another line.

JULIAN (V.O.)

That's just one of the reasons we don't get along.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Julian brings Burnham a cup of coffee. Burnham is still up and working.

JULIAN  
I m not supposed to do this. I  
had to sneak it past three nurses.

BURNHAM  
It's not decaf, is it?

JULIAN  
No.

Burnham takes it, sips, goes back to his reading. Awkward beat. Julian sits. Eventually Burnham glances over.

BURNHAM  
I don't need you.

JULIAN  
I'm gonna stay until your test  
results come in.

BURNHAM  
That's not until morning.

JULIAN  
There's no point driving all the  
way back up tonight.

Burnham shrugs, goes back to his reading. The silence is deafening. Julian fidgets. After a moment he picks up one of the architecture magazines.

JULIAN  
Do you mind if I...

BURNHAM  
Help yourself.

Julian sits down, glum, and flips through it.

BURNHAM  
If that kind of thing still  
interests you.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT

Lucy continues reading.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 I've made my share of small,  
 stupid mistakes in my life. But  
 I've made one huge, epic,  
 massively stupid ultra-mistake.  
 And that was going to architecture  
 school to study under the great  
 Louis Burnham.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Burnham is now asleep. Julian watches him breathing in the dimly-lit room, the monitoring machines blinking silently.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 Everybody said I had his talent.  
 Try to learn from the old man.  
 Follow in his footsteps -- maybe  
 all the anger and mistrust would  
 just... melt away.

Julian gently takes the empty coffee cup out of his father's hand. He picks up the papers strewn on the bed and stacks them neatly on the bedside table.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 Right. Every class becomes a war  
 zone. Every dispute inflamed by  
 years of bitter feeling.

Julian sits, trying to find a comfortable position to sleep in the hospital room chair. It's impossible. He stares at the figure sleeping in the bed.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
 Somebody had to surrender. So I  
 did. I quit.  
 (beat)  
 And that is why, at the same age  
 when my father was embarking upon  
 a legendary career, I am throwing  
 up condos and living in the old  
 man's house.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Julian looks strung-out after his night in the chair. Burnham examines his breakfast tray, annoyed.

BURNHAM  
 No coffee.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN

You just had a heart attack.  
Don't you think you can do without  
it?

BURNHAM

Without it, I'll have a fucking  
stroke.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - LATER

Julian brings the coffee to his father's room, annoyed.  
Before he can go in Klyczynski comes out, carrying a  
patient file.

KLYCZYNSKI

There you are. Thought I'd missed  
you. We were just going over his  
results.

JULIAN

(disbelief)

I was coming right back. He  
didn't ask you to wait?

KLYCZYNSKI

No.

JULIAN

Jesus.

Julian is really surprised and hurt by this. Klyczynski  
sits him down.

KLYCZYNSKI

I'll tell you everything I told  
your Dad. He's going to be fine,  
as long as we do some  
intervention.

JULIAN

Intervention?

KLYCZYNSKI

An angioplasty. It's quite  
routine, and it should prevent a  
repeat of the coronary episode.  
He's agreed to schedule for  
tomorrow, get it done quickly.

JULIAN

Whatever he wants.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Julian gets up and starts off.

KLYCZYNSKI  
You're welcome to go in if you'd like.

JULIAN  
I've got to get back to work.

KLYCZYNSKI  
Don't you want to speak with him before the surgery?

Julian hands her the cup of coffee.

JULIAN  
Just give him this. It's all he wanted from me.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

Julian drives back up North, grim. He arrives at the Lake House.

JULIAN (V. O.)  
I don't know what I was expecting. I guess part of me thought, well, Dad's in a bed in Cook County Hospital, he's about to have serious surgery, it might go a little bit deeper than 'Is this decaf?

(beat)

But of course that's not how things work. When I quit school I rejected everything he stood for. That's how he saw it. So buying this house must have seemed like a sick joke. Maybe he was right. I don't know and it's too late to change things now. One thing's for sure: if I really was hoping for a tearful little bedside reunion. I'm as stupid as he thinks I am.

(beat)

Well. I seem to have poured my little heart out here. Sorry. Thanks for reading.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy reads.

JULIAN (V.O.)

I find myself wanting to tell you things I've never told anyone. Things I didn't know myself until I wrote them down to send to you. Maybe that's the strangest part of all of this.

(beat)

Love, Julian.

Lucy lingers on this letter, on the last word, "LOVE." Jack trots up and jumps into her lap. She pets him, thinking.

CUT TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - PREDAWN

Jack trots over to Julian's bed. He jumps up on it. Julian is lying awake, unable to sleep but it's too early to get up. He pets the dog. He has an impulse to pick up the telephone. He resists it.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - PREDAWN

Lucy comes into the hospital a bit early for her shift.

She goes to an elevator and gets in. She punches the button for a sub-sub-basement.

As she rides down she takes out Julian's letter and studies it.

CLOSE ON THE WORDS

"DAD'S IN BED IN COOK COUNTY HOSPITAL."

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - MORNING

Burnham is on a gurney being wheeled down the corridor toward surgery by an ORDERLY. He suddenly tries to sit up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BURNHAM  
Stop.

ORDERLY  
What?

BURNHAM  
I've decided... Before I go in I  
want to make a call, please.

ORDERLY  
I'm sorry, sir, I got to get you  
straight into the O.R. You'll have  
to do it after.

Burnham reluctantly nods.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL RECORDS ROOM

Lucy searches through endless shelves of old patient records. She eventually locates a file labeled "LOUIS BURNHAM."

She spreads it open and begins paging through it. Past test results, etc. She turns a page and stops.

A DEATH CERTIFICATE.

She looks at it, disturbed. It is signed by Anna Klyczynski. The date given is two years earlier. Place of death: Cook County Hospital. Cause: coronary failure during surgery.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR

Lucy runs up to Madhvi Patel, urgent.

LUCY  
Madhvi. I've got an emergency.  
Take my shift.

PATEL  
Now?

LUCY  
I've covered for you. Please.

Madhvi nods. Lucy runs out.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - MORNING (LUCY'S CONTINUITY)

Lucy drives toward the Lake House, very worried.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. LAKE HOUSE (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Julian gathers his things for work and walks across the jetty toward his truck.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - MORNING (LUCY'S CONTINUITY)

Lucy stops in front of the mailbox and jumps out. She shoves a note in and yanks up the red flag. She stares at it, breathless.

LUCY

Come on.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Julian driving away. He hasn't noticed that the mailbox flag is up. His truck recedes into the distance.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE (LUCY'S CONTINUITY)

Lucy opens the box quickly. Her letter is still inside. She bangs on the mailbox, tears of frustration in her eyes.

LUCY

Goddamn it.

The flag stays up.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

Julian working on a rooftop. His CELL PHONE RINGS.

KLYCZYNSKI (V.O.)

(on phone)

Mr. Burnham? this is Doctor  
Klyczynski at Cook County.

CONTINUED:

JULIAN

Yes?

KLYCZYNSKI (V.O.)

(beat)

I'm afraid I have some difficult news.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - A MOMENT LATER

Julian runs to his truck and takes off. Mona sees him dashing away. She calls after him. But he doesn't stop.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE

Julian arrives home. He is pale, stunned. He sees the flag on the mailbox.

He retrieves Lucy's note, opens it and glances briefly at it before letting his arm drop to his side. The note drops, fluttering away, to land in the water beneath the Jetty.

ON THE NOTE

The ink is smearing in the water but we can see the words

"GO BACK TO THE HOSPITAL NOW - UNFORESEEN COMPLICATIONS - YOUR FATHER..."

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MEMORIAL SERVICE -DAY

Julian outside a chapel, in a dark suit, nodding at MOURNERS as they file in for his father's memorial service.

LUCY (V.O.)

Julian. I am terribly sorry about your father.

(beat)

I knew I had to at least try to warn you. I thought I could get there in time. I hoped we could change what happened.

(beat)

I was wrong. I guess these things can't be changed.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

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

If they could, then the file wouldn't have said what it said, so I never would have tried to warn you... and then we'd be right back where we are anyway. It just goes in circles and I don't pretend to understand it. All I know is the shock feels fresh to me, even though it happened two years ago, so I can't imagine what it's like for you.

INT. MEMORIAL SERVICE

Julian listens, blank-faced, to the pastor. MOVING OVER the faces of the attendees, Henry and other students among them.

FIND Anna Klyczynski sitting in the back. She looks like she hasn't slept.

LUCY (V.O.)

These things just... happen sometimes. I know. Last February -- I remember it was Valentine's Day, but it was really warm -- I was at Buckingham Fountain. And something happened. I won't bore you with the details now, but it was rough. Not like what you're going through, but it bothered me a lot. And a friend gave me some good advice. She said to go somewhere that made me feel most like my true self.

INT. ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL - DAY

The funeral reception is being held at the school. Examples of Burnham's work on display around the room. Julian shakes hands with other MOURNERS.

LUCY (V.O.)

So I did. I drove to the Lake House. And that was the day I got your first letter.

INT. ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL - LATER

After the reception, Henry and a few other STUDENTS help fold chairs, clean up.

CONTINUED;

LUCY (V.O.)

It's a place we both love, and  
it's a place your father built, so  
I hope you can find some solace  
there.

FIND Julian sitting alone before a large photo of the  
Lake House, looking lost.

INT. ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO - CLOSE - THE SAME PHOTO  
on the page of a book held by Lucy.

LUCY (V.O.)

And I hope that whatever separated  
you will come to seem less  
important, and perhaps, in time,  
disappear.

She is in the architecture section of the Art Institute  
bookshop. She takes the book to the front to pay for it.

LUCY (V.O.)

Yours, Lucy.  
(beat)  
P.S. About the book.

EXT. LARE HOUSE - DUSK

Julian at the mailbox. He holds the book that Lucy has  
sent to him, along with the letter we've been hearing.

LUCY

It won't be published for a year  
or two, so don't show it to  
anybody. But I thought you should  
see it.

Julian opens to the first page. The title is LOIUS  
BURNHAM - LIFE WORKS. The publication date is 2004.

Then he notices that Lucy has marked one page. Julian  
turns to it.

It's the photo of Julian at age 7 with his parents on the  
jetty of the Lake House.

Julian stands on the jetty, staring at the photo.

INT. LAKE HOUSE -NIGHT

He sits, still looking at the same page. Then turns from the photo and flips through the rest of the book.

Photos, blueprints, sketches -- a lifetime of complex, beautiful work.

ON JULIAN

admiration in his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ART SUPPLY STORE

Julian carefully selects a large sketch pad and some charcoal pencils from among the art supplies. He carries them to the front and gives them to the CLERK.

JULIAN

I'd like these, please.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - EVENING

Julian perches on the back ledge in the fading daylight, his feet dangling.

The sketch pad is on his lap but he hasn't drawn anything. He looks down at the water, far below. He makes a decision and begins to write.

CUT TO:

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy on her bed, holding the same piece of sketching paper. She stares at it.

ON THE PAGE

Julian has written in charcoal "I WANT TO MEET YOU. FOR REAL THIS TIME."

INTERCUT - INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT/INT. LAKE HOUSE

Julian and Lucy write and pace, anxious and eager -- another exchange of letters that plays as a CONTINUOUS CONVERSATION.

CONTINUED:

LUCY

How?

JULIAN

Pick a place. I'll be there. I promise. Tomorrow, what do you say?

LUCY

Julian. It's not tomorrow for you. You'll have to wait two years.

JULIAN

I don't care. I'll wait. Go to the restaurant tomorrow and I'll be there. I'll be two years older but I'll be there.

LUCY

What will you do all that time?

JULIAN

Think of you.

(beat)

And work out every day, get in shape, pray I don't lose my hair...

Lucy smiles.

LUCY

Are you sure?

JULIAN

I've never been so sure of anything in my life. I've lost so much time already. I don't want to lose any more with you.

Beat.

She takes a deep breath. She suddenly feels almost giddy.

LUCY

See you in two years, then.

JULIAN

See you tomorrow night.

(beat)

Where would you like to go?

CUT TO:

INT. IL MARE RESTAURANT - DAY (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Julian in the restaurant talking to the Restaurant Hostess (here two years younger than we've seen her before). She leafs through the reservation book.

HOSTESS

Well, I'm sorry, but we just received our fourth star and I'm afraid a reservation at this time will be extremely difficult. When were you hoping to dine with us?

JULIAN

Two years from tomorrow.  
September 15, 2004.

The Hostess blinks. She closes the book.

HOSTESS

We should be able to accommodate you, sir.

DISSOLVE TO;

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Lucy getting ready to leave for work. She checks an elegant, rather sexy new DRESS that she has hanging in the closet, ready for tonight.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -EVENING

Lucy finishing rounds. She returns a stack of files to the nurses' station and starts for the locker room, eager to leave.

Klyczynski comes running up.

KLYCZYNSKI

Lucy. We never got daily bloods from the floor.

LUCY

What? The interns were supposed to...

KLYCZTI/SKI

The interns screwed up. Listen, if we each take half we can get it done pretty fast...

Lucy nods, rushes off.

EXT. EL PLATFORM - NIGHT

Lucy waits on the platform for the train home, late, impatient.

LUCY  
Come on, shit...

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She enters in a hurry, runs to the bedroom throwing off her clothes.

Jack is watching her. She notices him. She takes a deep breath.

LUCY  
He's waited two years. What's another half-hour. Right?  
She continues her preparations, but at a calmer pace.

EXT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy exits her building. She looks spectacularly elegant and beautiful.

EXT. IL MARE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Lucy approaches the restaurant. She stops before she goes in. She's ready: excited but calm, confident. She opens the door.

INT. IL MARE RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS ACTION

As she checks her coat she scans the room. There aren't many tables. Before she can locate Julian the Hostess comes up to her.

HOSTESS  
May I help you?

LUCY  
Yes. I have a reservation.  
Forster. Or Burnham, I'm not sure  
which name it's under.

The Hostess examines her book.

HOSTESS  
Oh! Yes! You're the...  
(stopping herself)  
Follow me.

INT. IL MARE DINING ROOM

Lucy is shown to a table for two. It's empty. She is a little surprised.

HOSTESS

I hope you'll forgive me, but I can't help asking...

LUCY

Yes?

HOSTESS

(eager)

This reservation is sort of... legendary. It's been here longer than-most of the staff. There's always been intense speculation about who made it, and why, and if you'd actually show up. Some of the crew even have bets going...

Lucy looks around. WAITERS all over the room are sneaking glances at her. CHEFS and BUSBOYS peering out from behind the kitchen door. Lucy suddenly feels very self-conscious.

HOSTESS

(quickly)

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have -- I'll send the waiter for your drink order right away.

INT. IL MARE DINING ROOM - LATER

A WAITER pours Lucy a glass of champagne.

WAITER

Complimentary.

LUCY

Thank you.

WAITER

(can't help himself)

Good luck.

He darts away. She sips the champagne, nervous.

INT. IL MARE DINING ROOM - LATER

Her glass is empty. She is still waiting, alone at the table. The Waiter comes over to refill her glass, but Lucy stops him.

CONTINUED:

She is aware that the restaurant staff is watching her, whispering to one another. The Hostess shoos them away.

INT. IL MARE DINING ROOM - LATER

Hours have passed. OTHER DINERS are lingering over dessert, coffee, chatting intimately across the candlelit tables.

Lucy still is alone.

After a long moment she pushes her chair back and gets up. Everyone is watching her, grave.

She makes her way to the front, expressionless. She collects her coat, not speaking to anyone.

She exits. The Hostess watches her go.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Lucy walks home, alone. Her stoic facade begins to crumble. Tears in her eyes.

LUCY (V.O.)  
You weren't there.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - DAY

A windy, grey day on the lake. Julian at the mailbox, reading the words "YOU WEREN'T THERE." He shakes his head.

JULIAN  
(out loud)  
I'm so sorry.

INT. TRUCK

Julian drives along the Lake.

JULIAN (V.O.)  
I don't get it. Something must  
have happened. Look I've got two  
years. I'll try to fix it.

INT. LUCY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Lucy gets up. She slept in her dress.

CONTINUED:

Her face is puffy from crying. She goes to the bathroom and scrubs her face clean. She puts on everyday clothes. She hangs up her dress in the closet and shuts the closet door.

LUCY (V.O.)

No, Julian... You don't understand. It's too late. It already happened.

(beat)

I'm not upset. Well, I was at first. But now I just feel stupid -- for forgetting how much a person's life can change in two years. And for expecting yours not to change. For expecting you to wait -- to run in place, to put your life on hold, for me.

EXT. LAKE

Julian throws stones into the Lake, frustrated.

JULIAN (V.O.)

But I can do it. I can wait for you. I know I can. I wouldn't just forget...

INT. HOSPITAL LOCKER ROOM

Lucy changes into her scrubs.

LUCY (V.O.)

Maybe you did. Maybe wherever you are 'now,' you're busy, and happy, and living so fully in the present that the dinner date you made two years ago just... slipped your mind. The way we forget impossible fantasies when we outgrow them, when we get on with our real lives.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Julian broods over this letter. Mona is at her desk, looking at him with longing. She looks away when he glances over.

JULIAN (V.O.)

Are you saying I should get on with my real life?

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Lucy wheels a PATIENT -- a pretty WOMAN, 30s, being discharged. She thanks Lucy, effusive, then turns to greet her approaching HUSBAND and DAUGHTER. Lucy watches as her patient embraces her joyful family, hugging them close.

LUCY (V.O.)  
I'm saying... I think we both  
should.

EXT. MAILBOX - DAY

Julian reads this last line, alarmed.

INT. LAKE HOUSE

Julian dashes off an obviously emotional reply. The final words are "PLEASE WRITE BACK."

EXT. LAKE HOUSE

Julian puts his letter in the mailbox and raises the flag. It stays up. He opens it; his letter is still inside.

CUT TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE/ EXT. MAILBOX - VARIOUS SHOTS

WEEKS PASSING AS Julian writes and posts letter after letter.

Eventually there is a STACK of his letters in the box. They keep piling up, and they are never answered.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. "COVE" BAR - NIGHT

It is now winter, a snowy night in Chicago. Patel, Costello, Klyczynski and some other DOCTORS are in a booth talking, laughing, winding down after work.

LUCY is with them.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT NIGHT

Lucy comes home to find a message waiting on her Answering machine.

CONTINUED:

She plays it.

MORGAN (V.O.)  
 (on machine)  
 Hey, Lu. It's Morgan. I'm in  
 Chicago. I had to come down for a  
 meeting.

Lucy starts to press the DELETE button.

MORGAN (V .O.)  
 (on machine)  
 A real one this time. I swear.

She hesitates.

MORGAN (V .O.)  
 (on machine)  
 Call me. Only if you feel like  
 it.

ON LUCY

INT. PIZZA PLACE - NIGHT

Lucy and Morgan eat in the pizza place they wound up in  
 before. They seem more or less at each with each other.

MORGAN  
 I didn't think you'd come out.

LUCY  
 Don't take it personally.

MORGAN  
 You just couldn't say no to the  
 free meal.

LUCY  
 Exactly.

He laughs.

LUCY  
 So. How'd your 'meeting' go?

MORGAN  
 I told you. I didn't make it up,  
 it really happened.

LUCY  
 Prove it.

CONTINUED:

MORGAN  
They offered me a job.

ON LUCY  
surprised.

BACK TO SCENE

MORGAN  
Big telecom company. I'm gonna be  
in-house counsel.  
(smiles)  
Call them if you don't believe me.

EXT. CHICAGO STREET - NIGHT

They walk.

LUCY  
When will you move?

MORGAN  
Right away.  
(off her look)  
I took the job because I wanted  
the job. It happened to be in  
Chicago. It's no ambush, Lu.

She nods.

LUCY  
And the man swore he'd never leave  
his hometown.

MORGAN  
(shrugs)  
People change.

They arrive at her building.

LUCY  
Well, it's great news.  
Congratulations, Morgan. I'm  
really happy for you.

MORGAN  
Thanks. Thanks for coming out.

LUCY  
Anytime.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She leans in and kisses him goodnight, briefly. Morgan surprised and pleased. She looks at him. It's comfortable, familiar.

A tree behind Morgan sways in the night air. It's the tree Julian planted. Lucy glances at it, then closes her eyes and draws Morgan to her.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

The mailbox is covered with snow. It's so cold that the Lake has frozen near the shore. Julian, walking by, checks inside the mailbox, a reflex. It's empty. He SLAMS it shut.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Mona Jaffee opens her front door. Julian standing there. She looks at him, surprised.

MONA  
What's the matter? Is there a  
problem at the site?

JULIAN  
No, no problem.

MONA  
So what are you doing here?

He steps forward. He kisses her. She returns it, eager. She pulls him inside.

MONA  
What took you so damn long?

She closes the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - MORNING

Julian walks Jack on a cold morning near the Lake. Julian's distracted, out of it, and doesn't notice as Jack trots away, toward the frozen lake. Julian finally looks around for the dog.

JULIAN  
Hey!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jack starts running. Julian chases him.

Jack dashes onto the lake, chasing birds across the ice. Julian goes out after him.

JULIAN

Jack!

But Jack is far away and getting farther, making for some distant trees. Julian tries to follow. He slips on the ice.

By the time he gets to his feet Jack is nowhere to be seen. Julian wheels around, upset. The dog is really gone.

Julian is about to call him again when he suddenly stops. A realization dawns on his face.

INT./EXT. TRAILER - DAY

Mona's red cowboy BOOTS CRUNCH through the SNOW as she heads for the trailer.

As she walks in, Julian is filling a cardboard box, clearing out his desk. She stares at him. After a moment:

JULIAN

We're on schedule. We're ahead even. The crew know the job backwards. It would take a major earthquake for you not to finish on time and you're not going to have a major earthquake.

MONA

How do you know that?

JULIAN

I know.  
(beat)  
I've got to go.

Beat.

MONA

Is it the job? Or me?

JULIAN

Neither. I'm sorry, Mona.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MONA  
I don't get it. Why now?

JULIAN  
It's just time.

MONA  
You sound so sure.

Julian nods.

MONA  
Well, shit, Julian.

She sits down, unhappy. Beat. She suddenly grabs her boots and yanks them off.

MONA  
These were so fucking uncomfortable.

She mock-throws them at him. He dodges, smiles. She can't help smiling back.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Julian methodically and determinedly packs up the house. He tapes together cardboard boxes and throws his possessions in. He bags garbage and sweeps and mops.

In the course of his work he finds a stack of Lucy's letters. He looks at them for a moment, then bundles them up and buries them deep in a cardboard box.

INT. ATTIC

He carries the box into the attic and seals it.

INT./EXT. MORGAN'S LAW OFFICE - DAY

Morgan in his storefront law office. Outside, Julian pulls up in his truck. The flatbed is piled with his possessions. Morgan comes out. He recognizes Julian from the party, and doesn't look happy to see him.

JULIAN  
Still want to rent a Lake House?

Julian tosses him a set of keys. Morgan looks stony. He throws them back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN  
It's what Lucy wants.

MORGAN  
How the hell do you know?

JULIAN  
Trust me.

Julian hands him the keys. They look at each other.

EXT. MORGAN'S LAW OFFICE - LATER

Morgan watches Julian drive away. He's taken the house.  
He pockets the keys and turns to go back inside.

Something catches his eye.

IN THE DISTANCE

A DOG is ambling slowly down the street, looking cold and  
lost and forlorn. It's Jack.

ON Morgan.

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE - MUSIC OVER

As TIME PASSES in BOTH CONTINUITIES.

INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT BUILDING (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Winter. Julian unloads his truck and moves in with Henry  
in Henry's ramshackle Chicago apartment.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT (LUCY'S CONTINUITY)

Morgan moving into Lucy's small apartment, unpacking.  
Lucy clears space in her closet for his clothes. He goes  
to her and they kiss.

EXT. ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Henry graduates from school. Julian is there to  
congratulate him. Vanessa is also graduating. Henry  
moves to congratulate her. They look at each other.

## INT. ARCHITECTURE CLASSROOM (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Autumn. ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS taking notes. FIND Julian among them; he is back at school. He takes notes as a PROFESSOR lectures.

## INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT (LUCY'S CONTINUITY)

Lucy goes through her closet, putting away summer clothes, taking out sweaters. She comes across the dress she wore to meet Julian. She stares at it, then shoves it to the back of her closet.

## INT. PARTY - NIGHT (LUCY'S CONTINUITY)

Winter. Lucy at an upscale NEW YEAR'S EVE party. Morgan joking with a group of annoying lawyers. Lucy looks bored. It's midnight. Everyone celebrates. Morgan turns to Lucy and kisses her.

## INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Julian at a New Year's party. Scruffy student crowd. At midnight, everyone embraces. FIND Henry and Vanessa kissing, in love. Julian, alone, looks out the window as fireworks go off in the distance.

## EXT. CHICAGO STREET - DAY (JULIAN'S CONTINUITY)

Winter. Julian walking down the street toward the architecture school, a portfolio under his arm. It's cold. He pulls his scarf tighter around his neck. It's the scarf Lucy gave him.

He passes a Chicago row house.

## EXT. BROWNSTONE - DAY (LUCY'S CONTINUITY)

The same house. It now has a "FOR SALE" sign in front. Morgan walks up the steps.

END MONTAGE.

## INT. BROWNSTONE

Morgan goes inside. The house is empty. It's a solid old place but badly in need of renovation. Lucy is already here. They walk through the echoing rooms.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY  
What do you think?

MORGAN  
This is what I gave up lunch for?

LUCY  
I know it needs work.

MORGAN  
It needs a hell of a lot of work.

LUCY  
I found an architect who  
specializes in renovations. I  
made an appointment for tomorrow.

He looks at her.

MORGAN  
Ambush.

She smiles.

LUCY  
We can't stay in my apartment.  
It's been almost a year. I want  
to keep moving forward.

He nods.

CUT TO:

INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT

Julian comes home. Henry, wearing a coat and tie, is slumped on the couch. He looks discouraged. Vanessa consoling him.

JULIAN  
How'd it go today?

HENRY  
No one's hiring. Or at least no  
one's hiring me.

VANESSA  
Give it some time.

HENRY  
I have.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN

Hey. As soon as I graduate we  
start the firm. Remember?  
Visionary Vanguard?

Henry nods, dejected.

INT. JULIAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Very late. Julian is bent over his drawing board,  
working intently. Henry passes the open doorway. He  
looks in.

HENRY

All-nighter?

Julian looks up, self-conscious.

JULIAN

Oh. No. This is just... my own  
thing.

Henry moves to look at Julian's work. Julian tries to  
hide it.

HENRY

Let me see.

JULIAN

It's nothing.

HENRY

Come on.

Julian relents.

ON HIS SKETCH

It is THE LAKE HOUSE -- but re-imagined. There's a deck  
running along the back, and stairs curving down to the  
water -- the stairs Julian described to Lucy. There are  
trees planted along the jetty, and lights glowing in the  
trees. The house is just as striking as before, but much  
less stark, much warmer, romantic.

BACK TO SCENE

HENRY

(beat)  
I like it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN  
You do?

HENRY  
Yeah.

JULIAN  
I didn't think you'd approve.

HENRY  
The old house is a place you go to  
be alone. This one, you bring  
somebody to.

Julian nods. Henry looks at him.

HENRY  
(quietly)  
Who is she?

ON JULIAN

Beat.

JULIAN  
Lucy. Her name was Lucy.

BACK TO SCENE

HENRY  
When you were living there?  
Julian nods.

HENRY  
I knew it. What happened?

JULIAN  
I lost her.

HENRY  
How?

JULIAN  
It's hard to explain. Mostly it  
was... bad timing.

HENRY  
You miss her?

Julian can only nod. Beat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY  
Get her back.

JULIAN  
It's too late. Or too early...

HENRY  
What?

JULIAN  
Nothing.  
(shakes his head)  
I don't even know where she is.  
Even if I did, I can't just walk  
up to her and say, 'Hey, here I  
am, let's pick up where we left  
off.'

HENRY  
What have you got to lose?

ON JULIAN

doubtful.

CUT TO:

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Morgan buried under piles of work. Lucy clicking through channels on the TV. She comes across a station showing the Grant/Bergman kiss from Notorious. She holds on it.

MORGAN  
Hey, could you turn that down a  
little, babe?

Lucy clicks OFF the TV, annoyed, and goes into the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION

As she walks in, the FLOORBOARD SQUEAKS. She stops, then tests it with her toe. It SQUEAKS again.

She bends down to examine it and finds that it lifts up quite easily.

Lucy pulls the floorboard back. To her surprise, there's a space underneath. She reaches down into it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She pulls out a package wrapped tight in dusty plastic. She opens it. It is her copy of PERSUASION.

ONE PAGE is marked by a ROSE, now dried and withered by time. She opens to the page. A sentence is underlined.

"There could have been no two hearts so open, no tastes so similar, no feelings so in unison."

She stares at it, her breath catching in her throat.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ARCHITECTURE FIRM - DAY

An overcast winter day. Lucy waits in the cold outside a converted loft building. Morgan arrives and they go in together.

As they do, they pass a SIGN with a logo that consists of TWO INTERTWINED V'S.

INT. ARCHITECTURE FIRM - DAY

Lucy and Morgan wait in a loft space. The offices look sort of makeshift. Morgan looks around.

LUCY  
It's a new firm.

MORGAN  
I'm sure they're very good.

LUCY  
While we're waiting.

She hands him a card.

LUCY  
Happy Valentine's.

MORGAN  
Lu. Thanks. Oh God, I didn't get you anything -- I've been so swamped...

LUCY  
It doesn't matter.

A RECEPTIONIST approaches them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RECEPTIONIST  
 Doctor Forster? They're ready for  
 you.

They follow her back to a conference area.

CUT TO:

EXT. HENRY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Henry and Julian coming out in their winter coats.  
 Henry's dressed for another job interview, Julian going  
 to school. As they emerge out onto the street they  
 realize it is surprisingly warm.

HENRY  
 Hey.

JULIAN  
 What is this?

HENRY  
 (shrugs)  
 Global warming.

CUT TO:

INT. ARCHITECTURE FIRM

Lucy and Morgan wait in the conference area. The door  
 opens and an architect comes in.

HENRY -- now two years older, professional.

HENRY  
 Hi. Henry Ferris. Sorry to keep  
 you waiting. I'm sort of the  
 number two man here. The boss'll  
 be here any second.

Lucy and Morgan nod. Then after a moment the door opens  
 again. They look up.

VANESSA enters -- now sleekly dressed, confident,  
 assertive.

VANESSA  
 Dr. Forster? Hi, we spoke on the  
 phone. Vanessa Vanderbeck.  
 Welcome to Vanderbeck and  
 Associates.

SAME SCENE - LATER

They examine sketches for the remodeling. Morgan looks unhappy.

HENRY  
... so that's basically what we're picturing.

MORGAN  
It's kind of... out there, isn't it?

VANESSA  
This is the direction Lucy said she was looking for.

LUCY  
I love it. I think it's great.

Morgan glares at her. She shoots a look back.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHICAGO STREET - DAY

Julian and Henry open their coats as they walk in the warm weather.

JULIAN  
You want to grab a beer after your interview later?

HENRY  
Can't. Taking Vanessa out for Valentine's.

Julian keeps going for a few more steps. Then he stops.

JULIAN  
What?

HENRY  
What? She's my girlfriend. Is that strange?

Julian looks around. The warm day. PEOPLE on the street enjoying the sunshine.

Julian turns back to Henry, a strange look on his face.

JULIAN  
What is the date?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY  
Valentine's Day. It's February  
14, what do you mean?

JULIAN  
February 14, 2004.

HENRY  
Yes. What is the matter with you?

JULIAN  
(slowly)  
She told me about today.

HENRY  
Who? You mean the girl?

JULIAN  
Yes! There's a letter that says  
where she's gonna be.

HENRY  
She wrote to you?

JULIAN  
Yeah. I could see her today. You  
said it last night -- what have I  
got to lose?

HENRY  
What are you waiting for?

JULIAN  
I've just got to find the letter!  
Julian runs back to the house.

CUT TO:

INT. ARCHITECTURE FIRM - DAY

Their meeting concluding, Lucy and Morgan shake hands  
with Vanessa and Henry.

VANESSA  
Well, terrific. We'll draw up  
some preliminary blueprints and go  
from there.

LUCY  
Great.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VANESSA

Henry, can you make sure they have everything they need from us?

HENRY

Yes, of course.

VANESSA

Good. We'll be in touch.

She exits. Henry walks Lucy and Morgan out.

HENRY

So, how long have you lived in Chicago?

LUCY

Well, I've been here about two years...

As they walk, they pass a series of framed PICTURES on the wall. We see several of Henry's old Escher prints... and then, finally, something else. It is JULIAN'S LAKE HOUSE DRAWING. Lucy doesn't notice it.

CUT TO:

INT. JULIAN'S ROOM

Julian rummages madly through his things. He can't find Lucy's letters anywhere. Then he remembers where they are. He runs from the room. The LAKE HOUSE DRAWING flutters to the floor in his wake.

CUT TO:

INT. ARCHITECTURE OFFICE

Lucy and Morgan pull their coats on, preparing to leave.

Lucy suddenly freezes. She is staring across the loft. She has noticed the Lake House Drawing.

She slowly crosses the room until she's standing in front of it. She stays there, absolutely riveted, not speaking.

MORGAN

Lu?

Henry is nearby talking to a co-worker.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY  
(softly)  
What is this?

Henry looks over. He clears his throat.

HENRY  
This? Uh, this was done by a  
friend of mine.

LUCY  
Who?

HENRY  
Julian Burnham.

LUCY  
Julian...

HENRY  
Yes.  
(off her look)  
Did you... did you know him?

LUCY  
Yes. He -- Where is he? Do you  
know how I could get in touch with  
him?

Henry looks stricken. Beat.

HENRY  
I'm sorry. You don't know?

LUCY  
What?

HENRY  
He died. Two years ago.

ON LUCY

Beat.

BACK TO SCENE

HENRY  
(realizing)  
Two years ago today, actually,  
There was an accident...

Lucy tries to take this in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY  
(whispers)  
Where?

EXT. STREET - DAY

It has begun to rain. Lucy runs out of the firm and to her car. Morgan is behind her, bewildered, trying to keep up.

MORGAN  
Lucy! Wait! What's going on?

LUCY  
It's an emergency.

MORGAN  
Are you going to the hospital?

She looks at him. She touches his face, gently.

LUCY  
No... I'm sorry.

She kisses him, quickly, upset, then jumps to her car and races away. Morgan watches her go.

CUT TO:

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Julian driving North out of the city. Bright sun. He's eager, excited. He accelerates, passing traffic.

CUT TO:

INT. LUCY'S CAR - DAY

Lucy driving North out of the city, frantic, RAIN POUNDING onto her WINDSHIELD. She weaves in and out of lanes, passing cars, driving recklessly, as fast as she can.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - DAY

Julian pulls up outside the Lake House. It's shut, empty. He runs across the jetty and unlocks the front door.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - DAY

Lucy arrives at the House and SKIDS to a stop in the rain in front of the mailbox. She pulls out a pad and begins writing, desperately.

CUT TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - ATTIC

Julian runs up to the attic. Inside is the single box he stored there when he moved out. He tears the box open and rummages through it. He locates the bundle of Lucy's letters. He shuffles through them and finds the one he's looking for. He reads it.

CLOSE - THE LETTER

Lucy's writing: "LAST FEBRUARY -- I REMEMBER IT WAS VALENTINE'S DAY, BUT IT WAS REALLY WARM -- I WAS HAVING LUNCH AT BUCKINGHAM FOUNTAIN..."

BACK TO SCENE

JULIAN  
Buckingham Fountain.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - MORNING

Lucy finishes the note and jumps out of the car. She shoves it into the mailbox and raises the flag. She stands there, clutching the box, the rain soaking her.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE

Julian jumps into his truck. He pulls away quickly from the Lake House. He passes the mailbox. The flag is up. We can SEE the raised flag in his REARVIEW MIRROR...

And we ---

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GRANT PARK - DAY

FIND Lucy finishing her lunch in the Lakefront park, not far from Buckingham Fountain, on this unusually warm day -- February 14, 2004.

She squints into the sunlight gleaming off the Lake. A pair of OLD MEN on the next bench over.

OLD MAN #1  
What's with the damn weather? 60  
degrees on Valentine's Day!

OLD MAN #2  
It's global warming.

The FOUNTAIN sends up a huge plume of water. She begins walking toward it.

EXT. LAKE SHORE DRIVE

Julian can see the fountain from inside his truck. He drives down Lake Shore Drive, looking for a parking space. He eventually finds one and jumps out. He begins jogging toward the park.

And we HEAR --

LUCY (V.O.)  
Dear Julian. I know now -- it was  
you at the Fountain that day. It  
was you in the park. Please don't  
go. Something terrible happens if  
you do.

Julian continues jogging toward the Fountain.

He stops. There are two lanes of heavy traffic in front of him. He searches in the distance, looking for Lucy beyond the WHIZZING TRAFFIC, among the crowds in the park.

LUCY (V.O.)  
Please don't look for me.

He finally spots her -- a distant figure, walking on the other side of the fountain. He smiles.

LUCY (V.O.)  
Don't try to find me.

We see the two of them, no longer separated by time, only by distance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY (V.O.)  
Don't run to me.

A break in the traffic. Julian has a clear view of Lucy straight ahead of him.

LUCY (V.O.)  
Do you understand? Please. You  
have to wait.

Julian steps off the curb.

A BUS turning off Lake Shore Drive is heading right for him.

LUCY (V.O.)  
Forget everything I said before.  
We both have to wait.

The DRIVER sees Julian and crushes his foot onto the brake.

LUCY (V.O.)  
If you love me -- and I love you,  
I do, it has taken me all this  
time to say it but I do love you -  
- wait for me.

ON LUCY

Alarmed, turning as she hears the SQUEAL of the bus' BRAKES.

LUCY (V.O.)  
Wait with me. Wait until time  
catches up with both of us and we  
can be together. Please. Just...  
Wait.

BACK TO SCENE

The bus is bearing down fast on Julian, who is staring straight ahead at Lucy.

LUCY (V.O.)  
Wait...

CUT TO:

Lucy is soaked, dissolved in tears at the base of the mailbox.

LUCY  
Wait. Wait...

She weeps.

A long, bitter moment. The RAIN continues to POUND DOWN.

Finally she stops, having given up hope, and tries to collect herself. She starts, very slowly, to get to her feet.

ON THE MAILBOX

Its flag is down.

BACK TO SCENE

Lucy is stunned. She very slowly reaches up and pulls open the mailbox door. She almost can't bear to look inside.

Her letter is gone.

CUT TO;

EXT. GRANT PARK - DAY

Julian is standing in the road, straining to see Lucy. The bus is right on top of him.

At the last second he steps back onto the curb, safe.

ON LUCY

As she watches the bus proceed without incident down the road. Except for the fact that the squealing sound has stopped, it has no significance for her, and she turns back to continue her walk.

BACK TO JULIAN

As the bus passes harmlessly in front of him.

MOVE DOWN. His hand is at his side, clutching Lucy's letter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He looks at her writing. The words "WAIT, WAIT."

He looks into the distance as...

ACROSS THE PARK

Lucy checks her watch. Her lunch break is over. She pauses for one last glance at the shimmering Lake, the sun soaked park, then turns and heads quickly back toward downtown.

Julian wants, desperately, to step off the curb again and run to her. But he doesn't. He folds the letter. He puts it in his pocket and slowly, with great difficulty, turns and walks away.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE

Lucy staring into the empty mailbox, her face soaked by tears and rain.

A HAND reaches from behind her and gently closes the box.

She slowly turns.

Julian is two years older but mostly unchanged. He stands quietly, looking at her, holding the now-worn letter she just posted.

They just look at each other for a moment. Then he takes a step towards her. He smiles, shyly.

JULIAN

Have we waited long enough?

She just stares at him for a moment, trying to convince herself this is real.

LUCY

(whispers)

Yes.

Then they fall into each other's arms.

When the kiss finally ends, he takes her hand. They turn.

Lucy gasps.

## ANGLE ON THE LAKE HOUSE

It has been transformed. In the two years that has passed in Julian's life -- the life she saved -- he has transformed it. It's now his drawing come to life -- the warmer, romantic house with the deck, and the stairs to the water that they talked about, and the trees planted along the jetty, lit and glowing in the rain.

She laughs, astonished. He smiles. They take hands and kiss again.

Then they walk slowly across the jetty and toward the house together.

FADE OUT.

THE END