

Listen®

by
Danny Herb

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(916) 224-2242

ANYTOWN USA

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Robert (early 30's) is asleep in his still neatly made bed with soft music playing. The room is meticulously clean and organized.

One wall is floor to ceiling CD racks filled with CD's. Another, floor to ceiling with records and cassettes. A huge stack of milk crates, filled with music magazines organized and neat, in the corner. An organized collection of spiral notebooks in another.

Set up on an Ikea desk is a small computer, with iTunes open, surrounded by multiple external hard drives labeled with different genre's of music (Country, Rock, Jazz, Opera, etc.)

The clock radio on his night stand reading 6:59 AM switches over to 7:00. The alarm starts and he awakens. He switches the music to a more energetic happy song.

INT. ROBERT'S BATHROOM - MORNING

An iHome displaying 7:08 AM sits on a shelf filled with messy bathroom junk. Used towels, old toothpaste containers, dirty underwear, etc.

The floor, mirror, and counter tops look like they haven't been cleaned in years. The song continues as Robert is showering.

INT. ROBERT'S KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - MORNING

The impressively filthy Kitchen is open and connected to the equally dirty living room. There is a big stereo system at the other end of the living room that is completely spotless clean, surrounded by a disaster of mess.

Another iPod dock that reads 7:24 is on the disgusting counter. Robert is cooking for one in nice slacks, a nice shirt and tie.

He doesn't bother dishing himself, he just eats his food straight out of the pan. He opens a bottle sitting on the counter, takes a pill, and puts the pan in the sink.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Robert's computer desk is spotless, with his laptop open, showing 7:48, with iTunes open, saying "sync complete. Okay to disconnect."

He closes the application, unplugs his iPod, ejects his hard drives labeled 1-5, turns the computer off, grabs his name tag with a "PMC" music company emblem on it and stuffs it into his backpack. He puts his earbuds in, grabs the trash bag on his way out, and heads out the door.

INT. OFFICE CUBICAL - DAY

Robert sits at his well organized, clean desk with headphones on. A home-made checklist sheet is next to him with things like "Upstrokes" "Minor keys" "Major keys" "Energetic" "Slow-paced" and other analytical characteristics within music genre's on it.

From his earbuds, you can hear really heavy fast music. Robert taps his pencil along to the beat.

A co-worker walks by with appears to be a new employee.

CO-WORKER

...but every new artist needs to be marketed correctly. And this is our genre classification specialist, Robert. He puts music into a category so we know how to market it.

NEW EMPLOYEE

Nice to meet you Robert.

He reaches out to shake Robert's hand. Robert looks at him and ignores him, putting his head down in a shy manner.

CO-WORKER

He doesn't really talk. But he's damn good at what he does. Over here we have the 12 for 1 order department...

The new employee offers a "hello" head nod with a smile to Robert and Robert returns.

He follows the Co-worker as Robert checks off another category and types in "Post-Hardcore Punk" into the genre and changes the track.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Robert is walking down the street with his ear buds in. "One" (runtime 4:08) from Sunny Day Real Estate plays.

The music becomes louder and he starts to drift off into a daydream. The colors get brighter and his world becomes a music video.

He starts to lip sing and adjust his stride to the music. His entire demeanor changes. This once timid, shy man is now open, unreserved, and confident.

He turns a corner and there is the band playing the song. Bums get up and start dancing to the music.

He continues to immerse himself into this daydream running his fingers along a sign that reads "Private Property, No Trespassing."

Robert is now the lead singer of the band. Full transformation into a rock star.

He is hopping over things and singing with the band. The statue from the cover of Sunny Day Real Estate's album "The Rising Tide" appears out of nowhere and Robert is dancing around it, hanging off it and leaning on it.

A stage appears and he runs up to it, joining the band. The audience is made up of all homeless people.

Blue and Red lights illuminate him on a stage performing.

Suddenly Robert is grabbed by a cop. His world instantly returns to reality. The blue and red lights are from a police car. He snaps out of it when the cop takes his headphones off, silencing the music.

COP

What are you deaf or something?

Robert says nothing with his head down.

COP (CONT'D)

You think "No Trespassing?" doesn't apply to you?

Robert remains quiet.

INT. MOM AND POP GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Robert walks up to the check out counter with a small basket.

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In the basket is a loaf of bread, a packet of meat, baby carrots, and juice boxes among other lunch items. A frat looking man, his age, is in line in front of him. The grocer PETE (50's) an older man with kind eyes and a friendly smile, is ringing him up. He scans a box of condoms, and the Frat Guy turns to Robert.

FRAT GUY

For tonight. Tah ha.

Robert looks down, avoiding eye contact.

FRAT GUY (CONT'D)

Whatever, weirdo.

Pete finishes ringing up the frat guy and starts with Roberts items. The Frat guy leaves.

PETE

Hey Robert. How's the night treating you?

Robert says nothing but shyly smiles at his friend.

PETE (CONT'D)

Got some more compliments on your CD mix today. They seem to like that song from um, plastic gun?

ROBERT

Rainy Monday from Shiny Toy Guns. It's off the 2006 album We Are Pilots. I'm glad they like that song.

PETE

I like that song too.

Robert smiles. JORDAN an attractive girl (late 20's) dressed like a boy, with a green army man toy on a necklace and an "employee in training" badge, is stocking shelves, nonchalantly eavesdropping.

PETE (CONT'D)

\$19.82, like always.

Robert hands him a twenty and grabs his bags.

PETE (CONT'D)

Have a good night Robert. See you next time.

ROBERT

Thanks, Pete.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He grabs his change and heads out the door.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Robert picks up a sheet of paper titled "Court Ordered Community Service Referral" and a business card with "Waste removal" on it and puts it in his backpack. He puts his ear buds on and walks out the door.

EXT. STREET - DAY

There are a few older homeless looking men in fluorescent orange vests walking around, picking up trash. Robert, in a vest and a garbage bag in hand, is alone on the side of the street picking up trash, listening to his iPod. He is listening to "Breathless" by One Line Drawing (runtime 2:15).

The colors get brighter, and he slips into a music video. Jonah Motranga, the singer, sitting on a bucket, accompanies him, playing guitar.

He sings along and picks up trash very melon collie. Steadicam movement around him, as he plays with his bag.

Jordan, in the same vest, hastily walks up next to him and puts his daydream to a sudden halt.

JORDAN

You missed one.

Robert ignores her, hoping she'll go away, and continues to pick up trash. Jordan, thinking nothing of it, persists.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

I saw you at my work the other day. You know my boss? ... Hello? ... Not much of a talker? ... So whatcha in for? ... You know, how'd you get community service? ... I flipped off a cop after he gave me a speeding ticket, so he pulled me over again and stacked a bunch of other bull-shit charges on me.

Robert, now uncomfortable, says nothing and tries to slyly walk away to avoid her. Jordan, now feeling challenged, persistently follows.

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JORDAN (CONT'D)

Whatcha listening to? ... Can you even hear me? ... Nice shoes, wanna fuck?

Robert, now getting uncomfortable, tries to walk faster. She picks up her pace to keep up.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Ah-Ha! If you couldn't hear me you wouldn't be walking faster! ... I was just kidding anyway. I don't like guys. I haven't had straight sex since high school.

Jordan starts to pace backwards in front of him trying to force him to acknowledge her. He turns around, in the other direction, vigorously trying to dodge her.

With each of his moves, she is right back in his face. From a far it looks like 2 children dancing or playing a game.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

I'm Jordan. What's your name? ... I'll stop following you if you tell me your name.

She pulls out his earbuds and gets right in his ear.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

What's your name?

He gives up, stops out of pure frustration, and bursts out.

ROBERT

What do you want?

Without even a flinch Jordan replies.

JORDAN

Company. Conversation. I've been picking up trash every weekend for months and I get a little stir crazy. But right now I'll settle for your name.

ROBERT

I just want to be left alone.

JORDAN

Fine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She playfully stares at him. He turns to leave and she blocks his way again. She stares in his aggravated eyes and smiles, awaiting his name.

ROBERT
What?

JORDAN
Name?

ROBERT
Robert.

He scurries away.

JORDAN
Nice to meet you Robert!

She grips her necklace and smiles, watching him walk away, intrigued by him.

INT. COMMUNITY SERVICE BREAK ROOM - DAY

The room is sparse with very few people sitting at tables eating. Robert sits alone in the corner of the room, with his earbuds in, eating a sandwich and drinking a juice box.

He pulls out a neatly wrapped bag of baby carrots from his brown lunch bag. All the while tapping his hands on the table along to the beat.

Jordan saunters into the room, grabs a bag of chips from the vending machine and walks up to him.

JORDAN
Hey, Bob. Do you mind if I sit here next to you?

ROBERT
I'd rather you didn't.

JORDAN
I won't talk, I promise. I know how you hate that.

She awkwardly sits next to him, eating her chips in silence. The crunch of the chips echo in the silent break room.

Robert blinks and twitches in discomfort with every crunch. He turns up his music, drowning out the crunch and continues eating.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Robert is on his computer. Several windows are up. His e-mail account, a music review column "Get Into It" and a word document.

He is writing a music review in the word document and signs the end: "Robert Knell" He copy and pastes it to his e-mail, and sends it to editor@GetIntoIt.com.

INT. COMMUNITY SERVICE BREAK ROOM - DAY

Robert sits, quietly eating his lunch, earbuds in but not playing. Jordan sits silently next to him eating a bag of pretzels.

Robert stops and tries several times to speak before he finally mutters.

ROBERT
Melissa Ethridge is a Lesbian.

Jordan looks at him in shock.

JORDAN
Did you just speak?

Robert, embarrassed, gets up, throws his half eaten lunch away and darts back outside. Jordan, waits for a second in awe and then gets up, rushing after him.

JORDAN (CONT'D)
Wait, Bobby!

EXT. STREET - DAY

Robert hustles to an open area with his garbage bag. Jordan, chasing him, catches up.

JORDAN
Look, Bert, I didn't mean to poke fun, I'm sorry. It's just hearing the silent man speaketh was worthy of a holy shit.

Robert lets out a small smile and begins to calm down.

JORDAN (CONT'D)
...know who else is a lesbian?

ROBERT
Yes. Joan Jett, The Indigo Girls,
K.D. Lang.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Alix Dobkin released Lavender Jane Love Women, the first openly lesbian album in 1973. And of course there's Tegan and Sara, too.

JORDAN

They're good.

ROBERT

Good, bad, better, worse, is all an opinion which says nothing about the artist. To really appreciate music you have to look past your tastes and evaluate real things like talent, creativity and originality. Originality is a whole separate argument though, considering that music is essentially the same 8 octaves over and over like mathematical patterns. The key is to create something with those notes that invoke emotion to the listener or even inspire them. That is where music becomes an art form.

JORDAN

I get it, like really good lyrics?

ROBERT

Lyrics aren't even the half of it. Unless of course you're a solo Acapella singer. Then it's quite literally half of it.

She laughs. They pick up trash together, talking and laughing.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Robert sits on the couch writing in his notebook with Queen's "Bicycle Race" playing (runtime 3:03).

The colors get brighter and a bicyclist rides by his window. More and more ride by and everything starts to become animated.

Cartoon Robert starts to sing along to the song. He runs to the window and sees a whole marathon of people riding bicycles through the street.

A little girl riding slowly behind with training wheels, resembles Jordan.

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CONTINUED:

A bicycle rides through his house and suddenly his furniture is made out of bicycles. The band is playing all set up in the kitchen.

Cartoon Freddie Mercury and all. Cartoon Robert with a mustache is riding a tandem bike with the little girl that resembles Jordan.

They ride through the apartment and fields, on the beach, etc, while sunshine and other happy images appear.

Then, they ride roller coasters, ride more bicycles, and other friendship activities. Now he is playing bass to the song, and Jordan is playing drums.

The bass drum gets louder and it starts to transform into knocking.

He snaps out of his dream and turns down the music. He hurries to the door and looks through the peephole. There is Jordan standing with a few CD's in her hands.

JORDAN

Hey Rob, I wanted to get your opinion on these CD's. Can I come in?

ROBERT

(shouting through the door)

Go away.

JORDAN

C'mon, man. I had to be all Jane Bond to find out where you live. Can't we just hang for a bit?

ROBERT

Please just leave.

JORDAN

Robby, dude.

ROBERT

Please.

JORDAN

Seriously?

ROBERT

Yes.

JORDAN

You suck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Defeated, she turns around and stomps away. Robert stares in the peep hole watching her walk away. A look on his face shows relief and intrigue all at once.

INT. COMMUNITY SERVICE BREAK ROOM - DAY

Robert sits alone, slowly eating his lunch with his earbuds in, tapping on the table. Jordan casually comes and sits next to him.

JORDAN
Whatcha listening to?

ROBERT
Miles Davis.

JORDAN
Old Jazz huh? Is that what socially inept hermits listen to?

ROBERT
Sure.

Trying to avoid ridicule, he gets up and moves to another empty table. She watches him sit down, realizing she isn't going to get anywhere with him by being rude, waits a bit then follows.

JORDAN
My friend's band is playing downtown tonight. Wanna come?

ROBERT
No, thank you.

JORDAN
You don't go to shows or you just don't want to come with me?

Robert says nothing.

JORDAN (CONT'D)
Hey, who sings that one song, "dun dun duh-duh dun duh-duh duh"?

ROBERT
Suzanne Vega, Tom's Diner. Mother of the MP3. Written in 1981 but made billboards when it was remixed without permission ten years later in 1991 by DNA.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN

Interesting. Do you know
everything about music?

ROBERT

No, that's hardly possible.

JORDAN

So what's your favorite kind of
music?

ROBERT

Highly creative, difficult,
revolutionary-

JORDAN

I mean what style.

ROBERT

All styles and genres.

JORDAN

Yeah right.

ROBERT

What?

JORDAN

Okay, challenge accepted. You like
country?

ROBERT

Yes.

JORDAN

Classical?

ROBERT

Of course.

JORDAN

Rap?

ROBERT

Sure.

JORDAN

What hip hop artist is your
favorite?

ROBERT

I don't have favorites

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JORDAN

Which ones do you listen to most often?

ROBERT

Run DMC, Public Enemy, Atmosphere, Sage Francis, Mos Def, KRS-one, Sugar Hill, Jedi Mind Tricks, Mr. Lif...

JORDAN

Okay, okay. What about heavy metal?

ROBERT

Yeah.

JORDAN

Like what?

ROBERT

Black metal, Death Metal, Speed Metal, Thrash Metal, Power Metal, Doom Metal, Hair Metal, Goth Metal, New Metal, Drone Metal, Funk Metal, Industrial Metal, Metalcore, Neoclassical Metal, Post-Metal, Progressive Metal, Sludge Metal, Symphonic Metal, Avant-garde Metal, Butt Metal, Math Metal, Viking Metal, Melodic Death Metal...

JORDAN

Wait, did you say "Math Metal?" What the hell is Math Metal?

ROBERT

The term is used to describe a sub group of metal music that uses complex time signatures and patterns that some how fit together like a math problem.

JORDAN

Jesus. Okay, what about pop?

ROBERT

I tend to veer away from the commercially constructed pop chart artists. Although there are many pop artists which deserve to be praised.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JORDAN

Wow. That sucks. 'Cuz I really wanted you to come with me to see Miley Cyrus.

They laugh.

ROBERT

She is a talented singer.

JORDAN

You like her?

ROBERT

No.

JORDAN

Ha Ha Ha. What pop do you like?

ROBERT

Michael Jackson, Lady GaGa, Pink, but what is pop anyway? If it's just simply popular music, that's a whole different discussion.

She giggles at him.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Robert and Jordan walk together down the street. Robert is visibly more comfortable around her.

JORDAN

Do you listen to any modern music?

ROBERT

I mostly listen to modern music. It helps with my Job.

JORDAN

What do you do?

ROBERT

I'm a genre classification specialist.

JORDAN

What?

ROBERT

A Genre classificat-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN

No, I heard you, I just thought that was one of those jobs that don't exist. Like the guy who puts the glue on the post-its.

ROBERT

Frank.

JORDAN

You know the guy who puts the glue on post-its?

ROBERT

No.

She laughs.

JORDAN

You're funny when you talk.

ROBERT

I think they're made by machine anyway.

They walk by the Mom and Pop grocery store, Pete sees them, and gets suspicious.

JORDAN

When you're not blessing the community service people with silence, or genrefying music, what do you do for fun?

ROBERT

I write reviews for an online music magazine.

JORDAN

So, you get to tell everyone on the interwebs what to listen to. That's a huge responsibility to decide who sucks and who doesn't.

ROBERT

I try to leave my personal opinion out of it.

JORDAN

Oh yeah, "it says nothing about the artist."

ROBERT

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JORDAN

What else?

Robert says nothing.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Ever go to concerts?

ROBERT

No.

Realizing that he's getting uncomfortable Jordan abruptly changes the subject.

JORDAN

Do you have a catchy little sign-off or tag-line or anything?

ROBERT

Just Robert Knell.

JORDAN

Oh, c'mon. You can do better than that. You need something to make the reader remember you.

ROBERT

The review isn't about me.

JORDAN

Yeah, but if they remember you, they'll keep reading your reviews and start to trust your opinion. Think of all the talented artist you can bring to the ears of people, that would have never known of them before, just because they like you.

Robert lightens up and then thinks for a second.

ROBERT

Thanks for listening, Robert Knell.

JORDAN

Catchier. Like "Rob your ears" or "Bob your head"

ROBERT

Ha ha, "Bob your head." Why Bob your head?

JORDAN

'Cuz you're Bob.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ROBERT

I'm Robert.

JORDAN

It's just an idea. I used to date this girl who was this like marketing pitch person thing. I don't really remember exactly what she did, but she was always trying to come up with clever titles for the stupidest shit. My clever title for her was "Judas Jess" She outed me to my parents for 40 pieces of silver.

ROBERT

Really?

JORDAN

Yep. Well, except for the silver part, that was a lie.

They laugh as they saunter up to Roberts apartment.

ROBERT

See you next weekend.

JORDAN

Yeah, do you want to maybe watch some music videos or something?

ROBERT

No, thank you. Good night.

Robert steps inside and closes the door quickly behind him. Jordan waits for a second, thinking Robert is joking. Robert locks the deadbolt and she pauses for a second, and then turns around, offended and leaves.

INT. JORDAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Her apartment is very messy and unorganized. Several beer cans, take out boxes, pizza boxes and mail littered on every square inch of the counter, tables, etc. Clothes and underwear on the ground. The TV is blaring fuzz.

INT. JORDAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jordan is in bed with another woman AMBER (mid 20's) attractive, illuminated by the TV on the dresser. The room is also a mess. Her clothes are covering the whole floor. Make-up and cosmetics conquer her dresser.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The cell phone on the night stand starts to vibrate. They ignore it.

INT. JORDAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jordan and Amber, lie asleep in bed. Jordan wakes up and sits on the edge of the bed. She gets up, gathers her things and picks up her phone.

She checks the missed call from last night and sees it says "Home." She sits down on the bed and stares at her phone, playing with her army man necklace.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jordan and Robert silently pick up trash together. Jordan still in shock from the morning.

JORDAN

I got a weird phone call last night. I still haven't listened to the voice mail yet. I haven't heard from my parents in 8 years and suddenly they call me.

ROBERT

Maybe one of them died.

JORDAN

Fuck you. That was rude!

Jordan storms off.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Robert walks home by himself.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Robert, earbuds in, comes in with a bag of groceries, mail and a box from the post office. He sets the groceries and mail down, opens the box, removes a stack of CD's from it and throws the box on the couch.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Robert sits listening to Daft Punk, totally entranced. His entire body is consumed by the experience.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Every little note and change is noted in a twitch, or eyebrow raise, or finger or foot tap.

INT. OFFICE CUBICAL - DAY

Robert sits at his desk with his headphones on. He checks off the genre Smooth Jazz on his list and skips to the next track.

The title "Susanne Vega" appears on the screen and he stops to ponder about Jordan, leaning back in his seat.

INT. JORDAN'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

Jordan is getting ready for work next to Amber. She puts on her grocery store vest and gives herself a last look into the mirror.

AMBER

So what'd your parents want?

JORDAN

You were snooping through my phone?

AMBER

You snoop through mine.

JORDAN

I didn't kiss some dyke bitch at the club because I was on X!

AMBER

How long you gonna hold that over my head?

JORDAN

I gotta go to work.

She storms out in a huff.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Robert is in his own world, picking up trash. Jordan approaches.

They share a look, but nothing is said. She starts to pick up trash along side of him.

JORDAN

Do you get along with your parents?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Robert takes a long time to answer.

ROBERT
I don't have any parents.

JORDAN
You're an alien?

ROBERT
They died 14 years ago.

JORDAN
Oh. Any siblings?

ROBERT
No. My parents didn't want kids.

JORDAN
But they had you?

ROBERT
Yeah.

JORDAN
I get it. Music never neglects
you.

ROBERT
Music isn't a person.

JORDAN
What is it about music you love so
dearly?

ROBERT
There are so many things to love
about music.

JORDAN
Like what?

ROBERT
It's man's single most greatest
creation. It continues to reinvent
itself. Music can let you feel
what someone else was feeling when
they wrote it like nothing else in
the world. It can communicate
love, anger, depression, joy,
desperation, complacency, anything
the artist wants you to feel. It
can reach the masses. It changes
the world.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Music can inspire, hurt, or reveal emotions inside you that you would have never been able to realize on your own. Music can communicate things that you can't express with words. It's a universal language that breaks down all communication barriers. It makes warm days brighter and cold days gloomier. Above all, it's whatever you want it to be.

JORDAN

Wow.

Robert goes on picking up trash. Jordan is in awe of his passion.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Bob your head.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Jordan and Robert walk down the street together.

JORDAN

Most talented... um, bassist of all time, go!

ROBERT

Les Claypool from Primus. Interestingly enough, he auditioned for Metallica after Cliff Burton passed away and they refused him for being too talented.

JORDAN

Ha ha, really?

They walk by the Mom and Pop grocery store, Pete sees them again, and this time gets angry.

ROBERT

Primus was also responsible for the big mud fight at Woodstock 94 when they played one of their popular songs My Name is Mud from the Pork Soda album released in 1993.

JORDAN

You talk like a music review. I bet you write a kick ass column.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT

Les Claypool told the crowd that "Anyone who throws things on stage has small and insignificant genitalia." He says he still has mud in his bass cabinets to this day.

Jordan looks at him in small awe and smiles to herself.

JORDAN

I used to play bass when I was younger. Do you play any instruments?

ROBERT

No.

JORDAN

Really? You just love music?

ROBERT

I guess so.

JORDAN

Fair enough.

They approach Roberts apartment.

ROBERT

See you next weekend.

JORDAN

Can I come in?

ROBERT

No.

JORDAN

This is the weirdest friendship I've ever had.

ROBERT

We're friends?

JORDAN

Aren't we?

Robert is confused and ponders for a bit. He stands there awkwardly in a daze and Jordan, not knowing how to act, gives a forced smile. Suddenly, he scoots inside, closing the door behind him. Jordan is left there, hurt and confused.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JORDAN (CONT'D)

I guess not.

INT. JORDAN'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jordan and Amber lie in bed watching TV. Amber is surfing through channels. Primus's Music Video "Jerry Was A Race Car Driver" comes on.

JORDAN

Oh, keep it here. This guy is crazy talented.

AMBER

When did you start liking this shit?

JORDAN

Shut up, it's Les Claypool, he's like the best bass payer in the world.

AMBER

And I care because, why?

JORDAN

My friend Robert said he once tried out for Metallica.

AMBER

(rolling her eyes)
Even worse.

JORDAN

You should look past your tastes and judge music based on talent, creativity and originality.

AMBER

If it sounds anything like this garbage, I'm not listening to it.

JORDAN

Jesus Amber.

Jordan, frustrated, rolls over, back facing Amber and closes her eyes.

INT. MOM AND POP GROCERY STORE - DAY

Jordan walks out from the back room with her purse, ready to leave from her day at work. Pete notices her and catches her before she gets to the door.

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CONTINUED:

PETE

Jordan! Can I talk to you for a second?

JORDAN

Yeah, what's up?

He gently, but sternly leads her away from the registers to talk in private.

PETE

What are you doing with Robert?

JORDAN

Hanging out, but he's kinda weird about stuff sometimes.

PETE

What do you want with him?

JORDAN

Jesus, nothing. I just wanted to be his friend. We hang out at Community service.

PETE

Community service? What did he do?

JORDAN

He didn't tell me. He doesn't talk much.

PETE

Yeah, I know! Well, he doesn't need anyone making his life harder by leading him on and breaking his heart okay, so leave him alone.

JORDAN

We're just friends. He knows I'm gay. And no offense, Pete, but you're my Boss, not my life coach. You can't tell me who I can and can't be friends with.

She storms out.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Robert sits in front of his computer writing a review. He signs the end "Bob your head." He stares at it for a bit before sending it. He smiles in pride.

INT. MOM AND POP GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Robert saunters up to the counter with a small basket of groceries and a smile on his face. Pete starts to ring up the food.

PETE

Hey Robert. Did I hear you got in trouble with the law again?

Robert's smile dissipates and his head hangs down in shame.

PETE (CONT'D)

What'd you do?

Robert says nothing. Pete tries to let the disappointment go, and readjusts his demeanor, to be there for his friend.

PETE (CONT'D)

I heard you made a new friend. How do you feel about that?

Robert warms up a little and finds comfort in his Pete's comforting disposition. He reaches in his bag and pulls out a burned CD. He hands it to Pete, with a silent smile.

PETE (CONT'D)

Is it that time?

Pete looks at the calendar.

PETE (CONT'D)

I guess so. Thanks, Robert. You're last one was a hit.

Pete stops rigging up the items.

PETE (CONT'D)

Hey buddy, You know that Jordan's not... You know, she...

ROBERT

We're friends.

PETE

Okay. I'm just sayin'.

Pete finishes ringing up the groceries.

PETE (CONT'D)

That's \$19.84

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Robert pays for the groceries, and Pete gives him his change.

ROBERT

Thanks, Pete.

PETE

My pleasure. See you soon. And hey Robert, I'm glad you made a friend.

ROBERT

Bye Pete.

PETE

See ya buddy.

Robert leaves. Pete watches him leave, concerned. He then starts to help the next customer.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jordan is picking up trash, by herself, sulking. Robert walks up to her, silently. Jordan sees him, but doesn't welcome him so warmly.

JORDAN

Hey Robert.

Robert reaches in his bag and pulls out a mix CD. It's labelled and listed with over 30 tracks on it. The title reads "The first of many, for my first friend."

ROBERT

Here.

Jordan, truly touched, grabs the CD with great care.

JORDAN

And just when I thought you were a total dick head. Let's play hookey today.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jordan is pushing Robert down the street. Robert is resisting in fear.

ROBERT

Why do I have to do this?

JORDAN

Because it's good for you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They approach a mom and pop music store that's packed with people.

Robert notices how crowded it is and gets extremely anxious. He makes a valiant last attempt to get away but Jordan persists.

ROBERT

This isn't Tower Records.

JORDAN

Nope, they closed years ago.
C'mon, Robby. You can do this.

INT. MOM AND POP MUSIC STORE - DAY

Robert enters with terror. Once inside, like a child's first visit to Disneyland, he looks around at all the posters, stickers, CD racks, vinyl bins, and other music apparel.

Jordan pats him on the back, and nudges him on. Someone walks by and offers him a hello. Robert gets uncomfortable, and stands there anxious.

JORDAN

Let's go Ronbert.

Robert quickly scuffles to the CD's and starts sifting through albums. His hands start to fill up, as he scans so quickly as if he's done this before. Jordan approaches from behind with a shopping basket.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

This might've been a bad idea.

ROBERT

Why?

JORDAN

'Cause I feel like an enabler to what is about to become your first bankruptcy.

He smiles and keeps rummaging.

INT. MOM AND POP MUSIC STORE - NIGHT

Time passes. Robert is getting rung up at the check out counter. The lights are off because the store is closing.

The clerk, JESSE, a cute rocker girl, finishes the huge purchase.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JESSE

That's \$320.08

JORDAN

Jesus, Bob. Do I need to set up an intervention?

Robert hands him his card. Jesse looks at the card before swiping it.

JESSE

Robert Knell? Like the critic from "Get Into It?"

Robert, embarrassed and uncomfortable, says nothing and puts his head down.

JORDAN

That's him.

JESSE

I really like your reviews, dude. You got a great ear.

Robert says nothing. Jordan smiles, and proudly pats Robert on the back. He lets out a small smile.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Well, have a good night, guys.

Jordan notices the spark between them.

JORDAN

Oh, and can I get this too?

She grabs a guitar-shaped lighter and puts it on the counter.

JESSE

Yeah, just go ahead and take it. Consider it a gift from me.

She smiles at Robert. He gets shy, and scuttles away. Jordan and Jesse share a look, and they walk out, with 2 big bags of CDs.

INT. JORDAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jordan walks in the door, in a good mood from a good day with her new friend. Amber, angry and pouting, is on the couch waiting for her.

AMBER

Where have you been?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN

I was just hanging out with Bob.

AMBER

And just forget about how you were supposed to make dinner tonight?

JORDAN

You can make your own food.

AMBER

I've been working all day. And Saturdays have always been your day to cook.

JORDAN

Oh, big deal, Amber. What's one night?

AMBER

It's a lot when you're spending it with some guy.

JORDAN

You're acting like I'm cheating on you.

AMBER

Did you fuck him?

JORDAN

Jesus, Amber! I meet a new friend and suddenly I'm turning straight? Maybe you chose to be gay, but I sure didn't!

She storms out, to her bedroom.

INT. JORDAN'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jordan throws her bag down on the floor and collapses on her bed, frustrated. When she calms down, she shuffles through her bag, and pulls out Robert's CD. She puts the CD in her stereo.

"A Wish" from Gregory and the Hawk is the first song. She listens as she contemplates. Tears develop as she personalizes the Lyrics.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONG

I wish to feel smaller under your
sheets, I wish for the whole truth
every time you speak, and I think
about how you care half as much
for me, as I watch you arrive,
smoke cigarettes, sleep...

EXT. ROBERT'S PORCH - NIGHT

Jordan walks up to the front door with a few bags and a sleeping bag. She takes a deep breath, then nervously knocks and waits for Robert to open the door.

The peep hole goes dark, then bright again like when someone looks through it. The door cracks open and Robert peeks his head out.

JORDAN

Hey.

ROBERT

Why do you have bags?

JORDAN

My girlfriend kicked me out.

ROBERT

No.

JORDAN

I don't have any other friends.

ROBERT

You can't stay here.

JORDAN

Robert, I have nowhere to go.

ROBERT

Please leave.

JORDAN

Seriously?

ROBERT

Yes. Please go now.

JORDAN

I'm going to sleep on your porch
then.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT

No. You can't do that. You have to go.

She rolls out a sleeping bag and fluffs her bag as if it's a pillow. She stretches out on it exaggerating her comfort.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

I'll call the police.

JORDAN

Oh, could you? I'll get free food and shelter in jail.

ROBERT

Ugh!

He furiously slams the door.

INT. ROBERT'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Robert rushes into the kitchen in a huff and paces around aimlessly. He recklessly puts his Ipod into his Ipod dock and turns it up loud. "Wish Resign" by Circa Survive (runtime 4:15) plays creating eerie panic. He begins to tear up a little and falls to the ground in anxious panic.

The colors get brighter and he slips into another music video. He begins to sing along with the song.

The band appears in the kitchen and plays along with him, while he rocks back and forth.

Suddenly he is running away in slow motion from a beating human heart that has a mouth that is singing along to the song.

He stops and screams up to the sky in desperation as the camera circles around him chaotically. He continues running in slow motion, trips and falls to the ground.

The heart's mouth opens wide and swallows him. Black.

Robert appears back in his kitchen, huddled up against his bottom cabinets, rocking back and forth.

The colors fade into reality as he begins to calm down. The music fades and he stops rocking. He looks over and sees the guitar-shaped lighter.

EXT. ROBERT'S PORCH - NIGHT

Robert slowly opens the door. Jordan, still laying on the porch, looks up at him with a smile. There is a long silence before anything is said.

Robert is searching for the courage to mutter out words. Finally he speaks.

ROBERT

Do you like macaroni and cheese?

JORDAN

What am I, 8 years old?

With nearly no hesitation, Robert begins to close the door.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

No, wait. I'm sorry. I was just kidding. It was just a joke.

Not impressed, he opens the door back up. Jordan, confused of the motivation behind the questioning, tries to keep a smile.

ROBERT

How's your back?

JORDAN

Ship shape?

ROBERT

My couch isn't a very good substitute for a bed.

Jordan now realizes he is inviting her to stay with him. She starts to roll up her sleeping bag.

JORDAN

Oh. I'll be okay. Thank you, Bert. Seriously, thank you so much.

Like a disappointed parent, Robert grabs one of her bags and heads inside. She grabs the rest of her bags and follows him.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jordan's bags and sleeping bag lie next to the couch. 2 empty bowls with cheese residue are on the coffee table.

Robert and Jordan relax on the couch, talking. Music is softly playing in the background.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN

What about Gwen Stefani?

ROBERT

I like No Doubt and I appreciate her talent and what she did for the pop industry.

JORDAN

Oh, c'mon. But she's so hot. Don't you think she's hot?

Robert smiles

JORDAN (CONT'D)

I always had a crush on the girl from The Cranberries.

ROBERT

Now that's a band worthy of praise. They not only solidified the genre of alternative but they have talent and originality. Extremely under-appreciated Delores O'Riarden has a wide and unique vocal range. One of the two major hits from Ireland. ... And yes, she is a very attractive woman.

JORDAN

Ha, ha! There you go. Now we just gotta find you a cute little Irish girl that sings.

ROBERT

I don't want a relationship.

JORDAN

Who said anything about a relationship? I'm just talking about getting your dick wet.

Robert, embarrassed, looks away from her in his shy manner.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Oh relax. I'm not suggesting you be Hugh Heffner.

ROBERT

I don't listen to Jazz that much.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JORDAN

What? Nevermind. God, you can be so dense sometimes. What about that girl at the record store? She seemed kinda into you.

Robert gets up and grabs the two empty bowls. He heads to the kitchen to wash the dishes while Jordan kicks off her shoes and sprawls out on the couch.

ROBERT

I wouldn't know what to say.

JORDAN

You know you guys have a lot in common. I'm sure you could find something.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Robert is listening to "Home" by Edward Sharpe and the Magnetic Zeros (runtime 5:06) in a trance on the couch.

Jordan strolls in and puts her bag on the counter, exhausted from a long day at work. She opens the fridge looking for something to eat.

She notices a neatly prepared plate of dinner with plastic wrap, and a sticky note that just says "Jordan" on it. She smiles, grabs it and puts it in the microwave.

As it's heating up, she moseys over to Robert, still subdued by the music.

JORDAN

Who's this?

ROBERT

Edward Sharpe and the Magnetic Zeros

JORDAN

They sound... worldly.

ROBERT

Can you hear the density?

JORDAN

(impersonating George McFly)

You are my density.

ROBERT

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN

Nevermind. They do have a lot going on. They're very hipster.

Robert breaks his concentration.

ROBERT

What's hipster?

JORDAN

You know, those people that never leave the coffee shop or cut their hair and act like they're better than everyone else because they listen to obscure music that they think is Avant-garde.

ROBERT

I don't understand.

JORDAN

It just sounds like something they would listen to.

ROBERT

Oh.

Robert turns the music off and looks for another selection as Jordan retrieves her dinner from the microwave, and grabs some silverware.

JORDAN

Thanks for dinner.

ROBERT

You're welcome.

She takes a bite of her meal and starts to talk to him with her mouth full.

JORDAN

Hey, do you have any?...

ROBERT

Yeah.

JORDAN

I haven't even said the artist.

ROBERT

I'm sure I have it.

JORDAN

What if it's a local underground band from Missouri?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ROBERT

If they have their music online,
chances are I have it.

JORDAN

Really? You have that much music?

ROBERT

Have you heard these guys?

"Matroshka" by Dredg starts playing (runtime 3:48).

JORDAN

No, but they're good. I like this.

ROBERT

Notice how their tone is crystal
clear perfect? How precise their
timing is?

JORDAN

They remind me of U2

Robert looks at her with disgust.

ROBERT

They sound nothing like U2.

JORDAN

You don't like U2?

ROBERT

Of course I do, they're amazing.
But your analysis is completely
off base. This band is eons away
from U2 or any other band that
would be considered sounding
similar to U2. You have a lot of
listening to do. I bet you think
all heavy metal sounds the same,
don't you?

JORDAN

Yeah.

Robert sinks his head and sighs in disappointment. Jordan
grabs her dinner, walks into the living room and sits
down next to Robert.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Okay, so teach me master Robert.

ROBERT

I'm not a master.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JORDAN

Compared to me you are. Seriously,
I want to know. I'm your
grasshopper.

ROBERT

What do you want to know?

JORDAN

I don't know. What's good about
this song?

Robert closes his eyes. She stares at him for a bit, then
smiles with inspiration.

He lets the music take over. He twitches and moves to it
in every part of his body from his toes to his face.

ROBERT

Notice the quality of tone coming
from each instrument. This is a
band that spends hours on end in
front of their amplifiers tweaking
it to perfection.

JORDAN

It does sound crisp.

ROBERT

Listen to how it flows so well
from one part to the next. How
fluent it is. Every player is in
their own world and somehow it all
comes melting together in perfect
symmetry.

JORDAN

He has a nice voice.

ROBERT

Feel the rhythm in your chest?
Feel it swell and burst? Like
oceans waves pulling you in and
letting you go.

Robert, moving further into submersion, moves his arms as
if conducting the music.

JORDAN

Yeah.

ROBERT

Now stop trying to listen, and
feel it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JORDAN

What?

ROBERT

Now stop trying to listen, and
feel it.

Robert appears to slip into a whole other world. The music has control over him.

Every movement in his body is in unison with the music. Jordan sees his immersion and closes her eyes, in an attempt to join him.

She starts to move her head and gets more into it, enjoying herself. Suddenly, she lets go.

The colors get brighter and Robert is conducting a symphony of guitarists, bassists, drummers and singers in a cardboard looking, circus set.

We circle around him over and over. Jordan is in the audience of our cardboard circus type theatre in a historic Gothic dress.

She is intensely watching the concert in amazement.

The song finishes, mentally exhausting Robert; Jordan is blown away.

JORDAN

Wow.

Robert smiles in pride.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Do you do that with all your
music?

ROBERT

Yeah.

JORDAN

Incredible.

Speechless, Jordan sits on the couch in shock as if she had just had an orgasm. She is motionless, breathing heavily, trying to cope with experience. Robert appears unaffected.

INT. MOM AND POP GROCERY STORE - DAY

Robert and Jordan stroll through the aisles shopping. Robert is slowly becoming more comfortable around her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They get to the empty check out counter and Pete is waiting for them.

PETE
Are you harassing my customers,
Jordan?

JORDAN
No, sir.

ROBERT
We're friends, Pete.

PETE
I know. And I'm glad.

Pete looks at Jordan, and smiles in approval. Then he sings James Taylor's "You've got a friend"

PETE (CONT'D)
"You've got a friend."

Roberts chuckles.

JORDAN
Thanks Pete.

PETE
"Ain't it good to know, you've got
a friend"

They smile.

ROBERT
I never should have showed him
that song.

Pete starts to sing "with a little help from my friends" by the Beatles.

PETE
"I get by with a little help from
my friends"

They walk out, laughing at him, while Pete continues to sing.

Begin montage.

EXT. STREET - DAY

They drive down the street in Jordan's beat up car. They both see a pretty girl walk by and follow her with their heads.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jordan whips her head back and swerves back into her lane avoiding a crash. She laughs, Robert is not amused.

INT. ROBERT'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Grocery bags cover the counter. Jordan playfully throws groceries at Robert. He catches them and scolds her, then puts them away.

She continues to throw them to him in an assembly-line like manner, too quickly for Robert to avoid it. He yells at her in fun aggravation, as they laugh together.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - DAY

They huddle over his computer, with iTunes open, clicking through music, singing along.

EXT. MOM AND POP GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Robert stands outside, waiting for Jordan to get off work. She walks out, they begin to walk together. She takes his headphones and puts them in her ears.

He takes them back. She gets excited that it's a song she likes and knows well because of him, and tries to steal them back.

INT. PHOTO BOOTH - DAY

Jordan And Robert take goofy pictures together.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

They huddle over his computer, looking at pictures of hot chicks from bands. She is eating Ice cream out of the carton with a spoon.

Robert takes the Ice cream from her, and puts it away from his computer.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Robert turns on the stereo and begins coaching Jordan on what she's listening to. He has her full attention, like she's his student.

He conducts, sways, and gets into it. She begins to do the same.

INT. MUSIC STORE - DAY

Jordan picks up a CD and shows it to Robert for affirmation. He takes it from her, puts it back and hands her a different CD. She gives him a snide smile.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Robert is on the couch listening to music. Jordan opens the door with a small TV in her arms and a backpack on her back.

Robert protests to no avail. She tries to assure him he will enjoy what she has for him, while she hooks up a Nintendo.

Robert is unimpressed. She puts on "Mega Man 2." Robert still protesting, she encourages him to listen to the soundtrack.

She turns the volume up. He becomes interested, then enjoys it.

INT. MALL KIOSK - DAY

Jordan is playing with a music trivia machine, asking Robert every answer. He gets every one of them right.

End Montage.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The TV plays a Björk music video in the background. Jordan is sitting on the couch going through Robert's wallet, whilst he makes food. Robert is noticeably more comfortable.

JORDAN

Your middle name is Lois?

ROBERT

Louis. It was my Father's name.

JORDAN

It still is... Holy shit! That means your name is Bobalou!

ROBERT

Another nick-name?

JORDAN

Does it bother you, Bobalou?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He smiles.

ROBERT

No.

She picks up a newspaper from the coffee table, and looks through the music section.

JORDAN

Oh, hey! My friends band is playing at The Talking Cat next month. You want to go?

ROBERT

I don't think so. Thank you.

JORDAN

Oh c'mon! You're Mr. Obsessed with music. It'll be fun.

ROBERT

Neah.

JORDAN

I don't accept.

ROBERT

You don't accept what?

JORDAN

"Neah".

ROBERT

You can't make me go.

JORDAN

Maybe not, but I do have a month to convince you.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

Jordan leads Robert in to the studio. Robert is timid and amazed at the magic in the air. Sean Gordon is in the big room with a guitar.

He sees Jordan and Robert and waves with a smile. Jordan approaches the engineer behind the sound mixer. Robert is like a kid in a candy store, staring at all the equipment.

JORDAN

Hey man. Sean said it would be okay if me and my friend sat in on one of his sessions. Is it cool?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The engineer motions to Sean.

SEAN

Hey Jordan!

She waves.

ENGINEER

Yeah, sure. There's a couch over there.

They walk over to the couch and sit watching him.

JORDAN

This guy has got a lot of talent. Right up your alley.

ENGINEER

Okay, Sean, you wanna go for another take?

SEAN

Let's do it.

He starts to play and Robert is entranced by his talent. Robert stares and looks like he is in shock.

JORDAN

There's nothing like seeing it live.

Robert stares and studies Sean's playing. Robert smiles and can not take his eyes off of Sean.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

His band is even better. The crowd is so electric when they play.

Robert continues staring in awe as if he didn't hear a word she said.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Robert and Jordan lay on the floor next to each other with headphones on. A pizza box is on the kitchen counter and two glasses of wine on the coffee table. Jordan pulls the headphones off one ear.

JORDAN

Who's the musician you respect most?

ROBERT

Dave Grohl.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN

Really? I thought you'd say like Tom York or something.

ROBERT

(smiling)
You're learning.

JORDAN

Not that I don't like the Foo Fighters or anything. Everyone likes them. So why Dave Grohl?

ROBERT

Nirvana aside?

JORDAN

Of course.

ROBERT

He just seems to speak to me. His song writing is so passionate and solid. It's poetic and yet catchy. It's deep and at the same time filled with energy. I just really admire him.

JORDAN

I never hear you listen him.

ROBERT

I don't have to listen to him all the time to appreciate it.

JORDAN

Huh.

She takes the rest of her headphones off to prepare for a serious conversation.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Hey Robert?

ROBERT

Yeah?

He takes his headphones off.

JORDAN

How come you never tried to play music?

ROBERT

No need.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JORDAN

What do you mean you have no need?
It would bring a whole new passion
into your life, with hopes and
dreams. Not to mention it would
help you appreciate music more.

ROBERT

Have you ever met someone famous?

JORDAN

Yeah. My cousin knows Christian
Slater.

ROBERT

Who?

JORDAN

The actor.

ROBERT

Okay, so after you met him, did it
ruin the magic of everything
you've seen him in?

JORDAN

A little.

He puts his headphones back on. She thinks a bit, smiles
and puts hers back on too.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jordan is on the couch with two gay men, Aaron and Scott,
hanging out, watching music videos, talking, laughing
etc.

SCOTT

What's with this new-found love
for Rock?

JORDAN

C'mon, it's Rock and Roll! You
ever notice nobody ever says "That
Raps" or "You Jazz" nah it's Rock!

AARON

A lot of Rock really sucks.

JORDAN

Yeah, but it's so vast. In any
other genre there's maybe at most
5 sub-genres in that category.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Rock has alternative, classic rock, metal, hard rock, soft rock, indie, etcetera. And each of those sub-genres has sub-genres of it's own. Do you know how many different kinds of metal there is?

SCOTT

Blah, blah, blah.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Robert is writing a review on his computer with his headphones on. He signs the review "Bob your head, Bobalou Knell" He stares at it for a second with pride.

He then takes his headphones off and immediately loses his smile when he hears talking and laughing from the other room. He gets up with haste and bolts out.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Robert walks out, twitching and nervous.

JORDAN

Dude, this bassline is so sick!
These guys are so talented.

Robert taps Jordan on the shoulder, anxiously.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Hey Robby, cop a squat.

ROBERT

What are they doing here?

Taken by surprise, everyone stops what they are doing. The tension fills the room. Aaron and Scott look at each other in discomfort.

JORDAN

We're just hanging out, Bob.

ROBERT

No, you need to leave now!

JORDAN

Robert, chill out, dude. We're not playing with matches or anything.

ROBERT

DO NOT TELL ME TO CHILL OUT!!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Everyone gets really uncomfortable.

JORDAN

Whoa, what's your deal, dude?

ROBERT

My deal is this is my home, now
get out!

Aaron and Scott, gather their things and get up to leave,
but Jordan stops them.

JORDAN

No, you guys, he's freaking out
for no reason. Let me just talk to
him.

She sits them down and hands them the remote. Robert
rushes over to the TV.

ROBERT

I said GET OUT!

In a rage, he picks up the TV and throws it on the
ground, destroying it. The guys immediately leave with
haste.

JORDAN

What the fuck is your problem
Robert?

ROBERT

This is my home!

JORDAN

And those were my friends. You
need to start opening up to
people.

ROBERT

I'm not like you Jordan! I don't
want to open up. I don't want
friends.

JORDAN

Why? Why the fuck are you like
that? Did you get molested or
something when you were a kid?

ROBERT

No, I just don't want your stupid
friends in my home! I don't even
want you here, but you made me. I
just want to be left alone!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JORDAN

You don't want me here?

Robert says nothing stewing in his anger. They stand in silence for a few seconds, staring at each other. Robert is scared and angry, unsure what to do or say next. Jordan composes herself and calms down.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

I just wanted to have a few friends over.

ROBERT

Well don't!

JORDAN

Okay.

Confused, Robert walks out and slams the front door, behind him. Jordan sits down in shock of her friend's outburst, trying to make sense of it all.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Robert comes in carrying a large box. Jordan's stuff is all gone and the TV is still on the floor with a letter on it. He puts the box down and reveals its a TV box. He grabs the note and Reads:

JORDAN (V.O.)

Dude, you owe me one. The show is at The Talking Cat, next Friday. You can apologize there if you want to stay friends.

Robert stands alone in his living room pondering. He walks to the stereo, turns it on and sits down. "Empty" by The Cranberries plays. (Run time 3:26)

Slowly, the Colors get brighter and the room fades to black, but Robert is still lit.

The members of the Cranberries appear on the couch with him as like their famous photo from the cover of "No Need to Argue" When he notices them, they fade.

Robert starts to play each different instrument and walks by himself. He's on the beach, in the woods, the desert, all by himself.

He opens a door to find the room from the Cranberries second album "To The Faithful Departed" and the band is there playing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He joins them and just as he joins, they disappear, fading away, leaving him alone.

He is starting to realize he doesn't like being alone and begins searching with fervor for people.

The moment he finds someone and tries to interact, they fade away.

The song ends and he sits alone on the couch with tears in his eyes, feeling empty.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

Jordan, gripping her necklace, stands in front of a grave stone that says: Andrew Nicholas 1977-2008.

INT. MOM AND POP GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

The store is empty, and closed. Jordan is at the check out counter with headphones around her neck, buying things for herself.

She opens her wallet to pay for the items and comes across the picture strip of her and Robert from the photo booth.

She stares at it for a bit, then flips to the next picture of her family.

INT. JORDAN'S PARENT'S HOUSE - DAY

(Flashback)

Jordan is in her room packing up her belongings. Her older brother, Andrew, enters. Andrew is holding a green plastic army man toy, and has violent ticks caused from turrets.

ANDREW

Where you going Jordan?

Jordan looks up and her face fills with hurt.

JORDAN

Oh, sweetie. Sissy has to leave.

ANDREW

When you coming back?

JORDAN

I don't know if I am, Drewsky.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANDREW
No.

JORDAN
Sweetie, it's not up me.

ANDREW
Why?

JORDAN
I just have to.

ANDREW
Can I come with you?

JORDAN
I wish you could, sweetie. I wish
you could.

MOM (O.S.)
Andrew! Get out of there, your
sister has to pack up!

ANDREW
Come visit me.

Andrew rushes to his sister and hugs her tight.

MOM
Andrew!

JORDAN
I love you, Drewsky.

MOM
ANDREW!

ANDREW
I love you, Sissy.

Their mom enters and stands in the doorway. He gives Jordan the army man and walks out, past mom as Jordan wipes her tears and continues packing.

MOM
One freak is enough for this
family.

She walks out. Jordan tries to fight back tears.

INT. MOM AND POP GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Jordan stares at the family picture, clinging to her Army man necklace, and flips it to the next photo of Andrew and her together.

PETE

19.77

JORDAN

What?

PETE

Nineteen dollars, seventy-seven cents. You alright, Jordan?

She hands him a twenty and he gives her change.

JORDAN

Yeah, I was just thinking about something.

PETE

You didn't hurt Robert, did you?

JORDAN

It's kind of a long story.

PETE

Come here, I want to show you something.

INT. MOM AND POP GROCERY STORE, BACK OFFICE - NIGHT

Pete walks to his filing cabinet and opens the bottom drawer. It's filled with home-made CD's. Jordan stares at them, awestruck.

PETE

He's made one of these for me every month to play in the store. The first few didn't work out too well. My customers didn't like the Rap, Heavy Metal, Country, and Techno he mixed with the Classical, and Alternative music. He has quite the eclectic taste.

Pete opens the next drawer and the next, all filled with Robert's CD's.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETE (CONT'D)

He's been giving me these for years. I've never heard the same song on any CD.

Jordan stares in amazement.

PETE (CONT'D)

That boy means a lot to me. Don't lead him on. It's break his heart.

JORDAN

It's not about that.

PETE

Well whatever it is, he's fragile. Remember that.

JORDAN

Why do you protect him so much?

PETE

When Robert was 16, he was applying for a job here, after his parents had just died. I tried to give him a job, but he didn't really fit in here. He was constantly complaining about the music I played and wouldn't talk to anyone. So I set him up with some interviews with a friend of mine in the music industry. I found him an apartment and he's been doing well since. But I've never seen him happy until you came around. Whatever you're doing with him, don't take it away from him. He doesn't deserve to be hurt anymore. He doesn't understand things the way we do. He's different.

Jordan tries to process all this.

INT. JORDAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jordan and her two friends, Aaron and Scott from the other night, are hanging out, watching TV. Amber is on her phone, there but not really hanging out with them.

JORDAN

Yeah, but nothing beats Frank Sinatra.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AARON
Barbara Striesand!

SCOTT
Madonna.

JORDAN
You guys are so gay.

AMBER
What, and you're not?

JORDAN
I'm not stereotypical.

Amber gets up and starts milling around the kitchen.

AMBER
Yeah, 'cuz you've been hanging
around that straight retard.

JORDAN
He's not retarded!

AARON
So what's wrong with him?

JORDAN
Nothing!

AMBER
He's fucking retarded!

JORDAN
Fuck you, Amber! Stop saying
retarded, that's so offensive.

SCOTT
No dude, he's got Asbergers.

JORDAN
No he doesn't. He's just a little
different. He's not retarded, and
he doesn't have Asbergers.

SCOTT
Are you sure?

Jordan sits and thinks, staring off into the distance.

INT. MOM AND POP GROCERY STORE - DAY

Robert walks up to Pete without getting any groceries. He interrupts the person in the line, getting rung up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT

Hey Pete, is Jordan here?

PETE

She's off today. Isn't she staying with you?

ROBERT

No. I mean, not anymore.

Pete gets frustrated and disappointed internally.

PETE

(to the customer)

That's \$44.34

(to Robert)

You guys okay?

ROBERT

She's mad at me.

Pete, surprised, takes a bit to think about a solution.

PETE

In my experience, women like to be apologized to with a gift. What does she like?

(To customer)

You have a good day now.

The customer leaves.

ROBERT

I don't know.

PETE

You don't know? I thought you guys are best buds.

Robert stares into nothing, realizing he knows nothing about her. Pete seeing his epiphany, realizes the same.

PETE (CONT'D)

Okay, why do you like her?

ROBERT

She waits for me.

Pete is touched. He now realizes why they're friends and is moved by it. He lets the moment sink in for a bit before continuing.

PETE

Look, just give her some chocolate.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PETE (CONT'D)

You can't go wrong with giving
chocolate to a woman. Here, this
one's on the house.

He hands him a candy bar.

ROBERT

Oh, no. I have to pay for it,
Pete.

PETE

Just go get your friend back,
buddy!

Robert hands him a dollar and heads out.

ROBERT

Thanks, Pete.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Robert is getting ready to go out. His anxiety shows in every movement he makes. He puts on a hoodie, a hat, and looks in the mirror.

He grabs the candy bar, stuffs it in his pocket, grabs the flier for the show, his Ipad and heads out the door.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Robert walks down the street listening to "How Soon Is Now" from the Smiths (runtime 6:42).

The colors get brighter and he begins stepping in puddles that weren't there originally. He sings along.

INT. TALKING CAT VENUE - NIGHT

Jordan sits at the bar, waiting for Robert. She continually looks toward the door.

Aaron and Scott are there with her. They seem to be enjoying themselves while Jordan is anxious.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Robert is immersed in his music video. He starts dancing like Morrissey and passes people on the street with Morrissey hair cuts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

His world begins to feel like The Smiths music video from the 80's.

INT. TALKING CAT VENUE - NIGHT

Jordan is looking at her phone, and then back to the door, over and over. Scott, notices and tries to reassure her.

SCOTT

I'm sure he'll be here.

JORDAN

Yeah, I know.

She orders a drink, then looks at her phone, then to the door. The girl from the record store walks up to her.

JESSE

Thanks for inviting me. These guys are awesome.

JORDAN

Sure.

JESSE

So, do you think Robert is coming out?

JORDAN

I hope so.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Robert is now suddenly in a nice designer suit. He runs his fingers down the sides of the buildings as he sings and dances down the street.

A guy playing drums is on a fire escape. A guitar player leans in a dark corner, playing.

Robert turns down a dark alley. He approaches a homeless woman, he takes off her hat and wig to reveal a beautiful woman.

He sings to her very sensually and then moves on as if on top of the world. A dark figure begins to follow him.

A keyboard player stands in a dumpster playing. The dark figure gets closer. Robert oblivious, continues to dance.

Suddenly the dark figure grabs Robert and in a flash he snaps in to reality.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Robert is back in his normal clothes, the dark alley is now dingy and real. The homeless woman is not beautiful, no musicians, and the light is dark and scary.

MUGGER

Give me your money!

ROBERT

(trying to get away)
What?

The mugger punches Robert, knocking him back quite a bit.

MUGGER

I said give me your money!

ROBERT

I...I...I...

The mugger punches him again, this time Robert falls to the ground. The mugger tries to reach for Roberts wallet, but Robert resists.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Why are you doing this?

The mugger begins kicking him repeatedly until he can grab his wallet. Robert, crying and bleeding, tries to crawl away.

MUGGER

Where you going? I haven't got my new Ipod yet.

The mugger tries to take his Ipod from him, but Robert holds on for dear life.

ROBERT

No.

The mugger hits Robert in the face, over and over. Robert, in bad shape, still holds on to his Ipod. The mugger now starts to kick him in the head.

Robert resists, the mugger continues to beat him. One final blow and Robert goes limp, his vision turns white and SILENCE.

The mugger pulls the Ipod out of his hands and runs off.

Robert lays on the ground severely beaten, in shock. The candy bar smashed on the ground.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Silence. Robert lays in bed, with medical bandages, staring at the ceiling. He has blood soaked bandages on both ears.

The only thing heard is ambient swirls and soft, muffled bass tones.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Robert sits on the couch, staring at the TV still in the box. His wounds are beginning to heal. The light on the phone flickers, but no ring is heard.

INT. JORDAN'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jordan is calling Robert, and hangs up when there is no answer.

INT. ROBERT'S KITCHEN - DAY

Robert stares at the wall while he makes his food. Very subdued and out of it. The front door moves as if someone is banging on it.

EXT. ROBERT'S PORCH - DAY

Jordan is banging on the door. She is yelling, but nothing is heard.

INT. ROBERT'S KITCHEN - DAY

Robert continues cooking, without a flinch.

EXT. ROBERT'S PORCH - DAY

Jordan gives up, leaves a burned CD on the step and walks away. The CD says "What you missed: Live at the Talking Cat, and songs that remind me of you."

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Robert sits on the couch with headphones on. Silence. Tears run down his face. With closer inspection we see that the headphones are not even plugged in fully, and the speakers are vibrating.

INT. JORDAN'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jordan plays video games, arguing with Amber, looking very depressed.

EXT. ROBERT'S PORCH - DAY

Robert approaches his door with mail in his hands and sees the CD Jordan left for him days ago. He picks it up, and stares at it.

One of the tracks is "How Soon Is Now?" Furious, he throws it on the ground, shattering the CD, and rushes inside in a huff.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - DAY

He enters the room in a rage and commences ripping posters off the wall, CD's from their shelves and smashing them.

He throws his hard drives on the ground and stops on them. He breaks his records in half and continues destroying anything he can get his hands on, related to music.

He screams to the sky in silence, and collapses on the floor, crying.

EXT. ROBERT'S PORCH - DAY

Pete walks up and sees Jordan's CD smashed on the ground. He picks it up, sighs with disappointment and goes around to the side, to find a trash can.

When he gets to the trash can he notices it's full of Roberts music apparel. He gets concerned.

Suddenly we hear the loud beep of a smoke alarm. Pete hears it and rushes back to the porch.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Robert is staring at the empty walls, with a bottle of pills in his hands.

The prescription reads: "Paroxetine brand Name Paxil. Take 1 tablet a day. WARNING: exceeding prescribed dosage could lead to ... loss of life"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He pours the entire bottle out into one hand, and contemplates.

INT. ROBERT'S KITCHEN - DAY

Smoke billows out of a pan that was left on the burner.

EXT. ROBERT'S PORCH - DAY

Pete rushes to the door and tries vigorously to open the locked door, to no avail. He pulls out his cell phone and calls Jordan.

PETE

Jordan! Get over here to Robert's apartment. NOW! No time to discuss. Hurry, Robert's in trouble.

He runs over to a window and climbs in.

INT. ROBERT'S KITCHEN - DAY

Pete rushes to the stove, pulls the pan off the burner and turns it off.

PETE

Robert, you left the burner on, buddy! Robert! Hello!?!

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Robert continues to stare with no interruption. A handful of pills. He takes a deep breath and gets ready to take the pills.

Smoke starts to creep in his room and the smell of it, breaks his stare into nothingness. He gets up and rushes to the kitchen.

INT. ROBERT'S KITCHEN - DAY

Robert rushes in to find Pete putting the burning pot into the sink. Robert, confused and uncomfortable, runs straight to the bathroom and closes the door.

PETE

Robert, I'm sorry, I was worried.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He finishes cleaning up the mess and follows him to the bathroom.

INT. ROBERT'S BATHROOM - DAY

Robert is sitting against the door. Inside the bathroom, we hear nothing. Outside the bathroom, Pete comes knocking.

Robert feels the door move and reacts to each knock.

PETE

Robert, I'm sorry I broke in, I was just worried... Where've you been?

Robert reacts every time he feels Pete knock, but can't hear him talking. Pete gives up and walks away.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Pete opens the door and Jordan comes in.

PETE

He's in the bathroom.

Jordan walks up to the bathroom door and starts knocking.

INT. ROBERT'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Robert is awoken from his daze when he feels the door move from the knock.

JORDAN

Bobalou, you okay, man? ... You back to the quiet game again? ... Dude, just open up... I'm not mad at you, man. Okay then, I'm just going to just sit here then, till you come out.

She sits down next to the door. Pete walks in.

PETE

You got this?

JORDAN

Yeah, I know how to handle him.

PETE

Okay, call me tomorrow so I know everything is okay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN

Yeah.

Pete leaves.

INT. ROBERT'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Robert opens the door. Jordan is asleep. Robert watches her for a bit feeling relieved she's there.

Then he tries to sneak past her. She wakes up and follows Robert into the living room.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Robert sits down on the couch trying to avoid eye contact with Jordan.

JORDAN

Dude, we gotta work this out.
You're my best friend.

She sits down next to him. She starts to talk to him, but all we can see is her mouth moving. No sound.

Suddenly we hear a very loud siren and see the curtains glow red. Jordan covers her ears. Robert is reactionless. Jordan becomes suspicious.

The light fades and the sound passes. She turns away from him so he can't see her face.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

If you don't say anything that means you believe Radiohead is the most over-rated band of our generation!

No reaction. She looks at him as if was an alien, and becomes fearfully concerned. She turns away again.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Can you hear me?!

Nothing. She turns back around to face him.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

(mouthing)
Can you hear me?

Robert puts his head down, knowing what she said, by her lips. She examines his ears to find blood residue. It hits her, and her heart sinks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She tears up, realizing her best friend's life was taken from him along with his hearing. She leans over to hug him.

He resists at first, then settles in to her arms in comfort. They hug each other crying.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jordan wakes up from the couch and sits up solemnly, then walks towards Roberts room.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Robert in bed, is staring at the ceiling. He sees Jordan walk into his room. He looks to her like a sick child and makes several attempts to speak, before muttering.

ROBERT

Thank you.

She smiles.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Jordan? Why do you keep coming back?

She leaves briefly and comes back with a pad of paper and a pen. She writes "You remind me of someone" and shows it to him, while gripping her necklace.

She smiles at him, eyes full of love. They look at each other, sharing their hearts with their eyes.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

I don't know anything about you,
and you're my best friend.

She writes "I'm not going anywhere" and smiles. She flips the page and writes "We got time". He smiles for the first time since the accident. They share a look of understanding.

The moment seems to last a lifetime. She then writes "I'm taking you to the doctor today". He agrees.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jordan is asleep on the couch. A pad of paper and a pen sit on an end table, with a clock that reads 1:23.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jordan wakes up and sees Robert sitting in a chair staring at the broken stereo. He has fewer bandages on as he is starting to heal.

JORDAN

Jesus, Bob, you scared the shit out of me.

She realizes he can't hear her, and writes down "Why are you awake?" on the pad and shows it to him.

ROBERT

Do you know the last song I ever heard was?

She shakes her head.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

"How Soon Is Now?" from the Smiths, written by Morrissey and Johnny Marr in 1984. It's all I hear in my head. That swirling guitar, that deep voice. I can't get it out of my head.

Jordan sits up, preparing for a long night. They sit there in silence for a few seconds, before Robert gets up and heads off to bed.

Jordan, crushed by her friend's misery, sits there, thinking, sympathizing.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jordan lays on the couch awake, thinking. The clock reads 4:56.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Jordan lays thinking. The clock reads 7:00

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Jordan lays thinking. Suddenly, her face lights up from an idea. She gets up and quickly puts on her clothes. She grabs the pen and pad from the end table, the clock reads 8:00.

She writes "Be back later" on the pad and puts it on the couch, before she heads out the door.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Robert is writing in a journal, Jordan comes in.

JORDAN
 (also written on pad)
 I have a surprise for you.
 (flips page)
 Come into the living room.

He half smiles and gets up.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Set up is a Drum set. Robert smiles and walks over to it slowly admiring the new shine. Jordan hands him a pair of drum sticks. He smiles. He sits down and hits a cymbal. No sound.

His smile dissipates a little. He hits a tom and we see the ripple of the sound wave hit him in the chest.

His smile grows a little. He stomps on the bass drum and his smile grows huge while the sound wave hits him so hard, his shirt flutters.

He begins hitting everything hard like a child, laughing and making drum noises with his mouth. Jordan watches with tears of joy.

INT. MOM AND POP MUSIC STORE - NIGHT

Jordan walks through the store with a basket full of CD's and a list in her hand.

She puts a CD in her basket and crosses off the last of the list. She heads to the check out counter and the girl is there.

JESSE
 Hey, I haven't seen a new review from Robert in a while. Did he quit, or something happen?

JORDAN
 Yeah, he was... uh. There was a bad accident.

JESSE
 Oh No, is he okay?

JORDAN
 He lost his hearing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JESSE

Oh no.

Beat

JESSE (CONT'D)

Do you think I could see him?

JORDAN

Sure. I think that'd be nice.

INT. GROCERY STORE BACK ROOM - DAY

Jordan comes in and brings the notebook to Robert.

JORDAN

(on notebook)

I have a special treat for you.

ROBERT

Okay

Jordan yells toward the door.

JORDAN

OKAY! C'MON IN!

Jesse comes in and Robert smiles shyly putting his head down. Then his crush immediately turns into nervousness. And he shuffles on the couch. She holds up a notebook of her own.

JESSE

(also on Notebook)

Hello Robert.

(flips page)

I've been thinking about you a lot lately.

Robert calms a little.

JESSE (CONT'D)

(also on Notebook)

Jordan told me what happened.

(flips page)

It's okay. I can help.

(flips page)

My parents are deaf.

(flips page)

I can teach you and Jordan Sign language.

(flips page)

Would you like that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Robert just starts crying. Jordan sits next to him and holds him.

JORDAN
Thank you, Jesse.

INT. MOM AND POP GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Robert and Jesse are pushing a shopping cart down the aisle. He is fully healed with a few scars on his face. He grabs a box of macaroni and cheese.

ROBERT
(in Sign Language)
Do you like M-A-C-A-R-O-N-I and
Cheese?

JESSE
(in ASL)
Macaroni and cheese? Who doesn't?

ROBERT
(ASL)
I knew I liked you.

They laugh and flirt. In the background Jordan is teaching Pete sign language.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Robert is cleaning. Jordan walks in, clearly upset.

JORDAN
(ASL)
Can we talk?

ROBERT
(ASL)
You mean sign?

JORDAN
(ASL)
You know what I meant.

ROBERT
(ASL)
Jesse is going to be here soon.
We're going to get coffee to
drink.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN

(ASL)
Look, Bob, I got another call from
my parents.

ROBERT

(ASL)
Pete says women like it when you
get all cleaned up for them.

JORDAN

Are you even paying attention to
me?

Robert turns away from Jordan, stops engaging and
continues cleaning.

Jordan grabs Robert.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Hey!
(ASL)
I was talking to you.

Robert freaks out when she touches him, and pushes her
away from him.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Fine. Be a dick.

She leaves.

INT. CAFE - NIGHT

Robert and Jesse sit in a booth. Robert is tapping
paradiddles on the table with his fingers, focused with
his head down and eyes closed.

Jesse tries to get his attention to no avail.

She grabs his hand, and he looks up.

JESSE

(ASL)
Hey, people are starting to stare.
Your tapping is very loud.

ROBERT

(ASL)
I didn't mean to.

JESSE

(ASL)
I know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT

(ASL)
I can't hear.

JESSE

(ASL)
I know that, Robert.

ROBERT

(ASL)
Then how do you expect me to know
that I'm being loud?

JESSE

(ASL)
Look, I'm not mad or anything, I'm
just saying maybe you should stop
tapping right now, that's all.

Robert begins to shout

ROBERT

How am I supposed to get better at
the drums then?

JESSE

(ASL)
Robert, please.

ROBERT

You don't know what it's like to
lose your hearing, Jesse!

JESSE

(ASL)
No, you're right. But I know what
it's like to care for someone who
has.

ROBERT

Like a Nurse? I'm not a baby. I
don't need you to care for me!

He turns to leave. Jesse stops him and tries to sign to
him, but he won't watch her.

She gets out her phone and dials.

Intercut with:

INT. GROCERY STORE BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Jordan is sitting at Pete's desk, and puts her cell phone
to her ear.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN

Hello?

JESSE

What do you do when Robert freaks out?

JORDAN

Are you still with him?

JESSE

He just walked out of the coffee shop.

JORDAN

Follow him.

JESSE

Seriously?

JORDAN

Yeah. It's not like he'll hear your footsteps.

She begins to walk after him.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

So, he was a dick to you too?

JESSE

He's just having a hard time adjusting.

JORDAN

And being a friend apparently. I love that he's different, but sometimes I just wish he was normal for like 5 minutes.

JESSE

You're the only one he trusts. How'd you do it?

JORDAN

You just be patient. It's not that hard. I wonder if it's even a real friendship, or me just taking care of him.

JESSE

Don't say that to him.

EXT. ROBERT'S PORCH - NIGHT

Robert goes to the front door and turns around to confront Jesse, who's following him.

ROBERT

(ASL)

I am supposed to say sorry because people want to hear that. But I'm not sorry.

JESSE

(ASL)

It's much nicer if you just say sorry and leave out the rest.

ROBERT

(ASL)

Okay.

She turns around to leave.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Jesse?

She turns back.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

(ASL)

Would you like to come in?

She smiles.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Robert is playing drums quite well. Several post-it's are up with inspirational notes from Jordan. The apartment is decorated with Jordan's stuff. Jesse is on the couch reading with earplugs in her ears.

Jordan walks in, still in uniform from work and hangs her purse on the new hook next to the door. Next to the hook is a calendar with "Sign lang lessons" written all over it, and "Date with Jesse" next to each one.

JORDAN

(ASL)

You're getting good.

ROBERT

(ASL)

I've been working on staying in the pocket a lot lately.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN

(ASL)
I have no Idea what that means.
But you sound good.

ROBERT

(ASL)
Just because I can't hear, doesn't
mean you can lie about how good I
sound. I'm amazing.

JORDAN

(ASL)
And humble.

She starts to walk away

ROBERT

Hey!
(ASL)
Did you ever call your parents
back?

Jordan's heart jumps out of her chest.

JORDAN

Why?

ROBERT

I wish my parents were still
alive. Even though they were mean
to me.

Jordan stands there, lost in thought.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

(ASL)
I don't know your parents. But I
know you. And I know if I were
your parents, I would really love
to know you.

Jordan on the verge of tears is conflicted by her sadness
and the emotional breakthrough that is happening with her
best friend right now.

JORDAN

(ASL)
They passed away.

ROBERT

(ASL)
Oh. Then you can't call them back
now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JORDAN

(ASL)
You're bedside manner is
atrocious.

ROBERT

(ASL)
What do you mean?

JORDAN

(ASL)
Did you ever think that might hurt
my feelings?

ROBERT

No.

JORDAN

(ASL)
Exactly. It's like you have no
compassion.

ROBERT

(ASL)
No, they say I have no empathy.

JORDAN

(ASL)
Does it make you sad, that I'm
sad?

Robert is confused.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

(ASL)
My god damned parents died,
Robert!

ROBERT

(ASL)
You said that.

JORDAN

(ASL)
Do you know how that feels?

ROBERT

Yes.

Suddenly she remembers that Robert was orphaned in his
adolescence.

She regroups and changes her demeanor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JORDAN

(ASL)
How did you get through it?

ROBERT

(ASL)
Music.

JORDAN

(ASL)
You distracted yourself from the pain?

ROBERT

(ASL)
No. Music made me experience the pain more. But I would imagine in my head that I was the artist who wrote the sad song, and somehow it made me feel better.

JORDAN

I thought people with Asperger's don't have empathy.

ROBERT

I was trying to make you feel better by saying nice things when you're sad. That's what Jesse says friends do.

Jordan smiles and hugs him. He resists slightly at first, and then embraces.

JORDAN

Yeah, that's what friends do.

Jesse looks over and is startled to see Jordan. She smiles at the moment, and then yells

JESSE

I didn't know you were home.

She takes out her earplugs and the girls share a laugh.

INT. JORDAN'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jordan puts headphones on and lays back on to the bed. She is holding the CD Robert made for her.

"Barrel of Leaves" by Augustines (runtime 3:02) is playing. The colors get brighter. Everything is in slow motion.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jordan opens a door that says "No Adults Allowed." She sees a little girl, resembling Jordan is on the bottom bunk, writing in the slats above her. Her brother Andrew pops his head over the edge and makes a funny face. They laugh.

She turns around and is instantly outside. Jordan's dad picks young Jordan up and throws her in the air, catching her as she comes down.

She turns around and peers into the house. Jordan's family, sit around the Christmas tree in the living room. Andrew gets a box of green army men.

She turns around again and her mom is pushing young Jordan on a swing, with Andrew on her hip.

She sits down on a patio chair. She drops her necklace and bends down to pick it up.

She sits back up and is with the family in a station wagon. Young Jordan is playing with the wind, out the window.

She looks out the window behind her and is now in the back of a bus, watching her parents wave as she drives away from them.

Jordan starts to cry. Everything returns to normal Jordan is crying on her bed.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jordan, leans on the door frame just watching Robert. Robert, feeling like he's being watched, turns to see her.

JORDAN

(ASL)

I have another idea.

ROBERT

Okay.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

She leads him to the new stereo and sits him down next to the large speaker. She turns on "Hero" by Foo Fighters (runtime 4:20) puts earplugs in, then turns the volume all the way up.

We hear muffled bass sounds and see Roberts face glow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN

(ASL)

Now stop trying to listen and feel
it.

He smiles. He starts to sway with the music he now feels.

INT. FOO FIGHTERS CONCERT - NIGHT

Jordan is having a good time enjoying the concert. Her friends Aaron and Scott, and Jesse are all there with her, as well as Pete from the grocery store.

They are all laughing, singing and rocking out.

Robert is standing directly in front of the speakers, smiling big as his clothes and hair flutter from the sound waves.

The End