

DADDIO

by

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OVER BLACK...

DING!

(LEFT OF SCREEN TEXT)

You fly today?

Then. That all too familiar "typewriter" clicking sound-
CLICK, CLICK, CLICK, CLICK, CLICK! *BLOOP!*

(RIGHT OF SCREEN TEXT)

Getting on plane now

Three little dots wave shades of gray on the **LEFT OF SCREEN** indicating a reply being composed, when-

DING!

(LEFT OF SCREEN TEXT)

Can I see you? When you gt home

(...)

DING!

(LEFT OF SCREEN TEXT)

**get*

There's a pause.

A great hesitation to reply.

Then-

(LEFT OF SCREEN TEXT)

(...)

DING!

(LEFT OF SCREEN TEXT)

?

The sound of a PLANE TAKING OFF swells, as-

INT. DREAMLIKE VOID (JFK ARRIVALS) - NIGHT

-Dancing pools of yellow, blue and red light permeate the darkness, creating spots and halos... as if staring directly into the sun.

Within this dreamlike void, dark SHADOWS tease and flirt in and out of frame, illusive and evasive- **MUNDANE AIRPORT NOISES** issuing within, when-

From the calliope, a FIGURE takes human form, the form of a **YOUNG WOMAN**, confidently walking toward camera in **SLOW MOTION**, the shadows shown to be nothing more than NONDESCRIPT TRAVELERS crisscrossing in the background.

The red and blue and yellow smatters of light also begin to take solid form, revealing-

INT. JFK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, ARRIVALS - NIGHT

-A grand terminal, towering with glass and steel, dimly lit and relatively empty this late at night... creating a feeling of a cold expansive loneliness.

Trailing a small piece of rolling luggage behind her, this rare beauty continues to march in SLOW MOTION toward camera with the hyper-focus of a seasoned New York transplant.

As she draws nearer, the mesmerizing details of this stunning creature come fully into focus...

GIRLIE, late 20s to early 30s, sporting thick-heeled, black ankle-boots, kickass Dickies, a leather jacket and scarf... short platinum blonde hair... and a face to fucking die for.

As she marches onward-

The cacophony of NEW YORK CITY NOISE pierces through this serene dreamlike scene with the HONKING of HORNS and the ROAR of PASSING BUSES as- Girlie bursts out of the-

EXT. JFK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, PASSENGER PICK UP - NIGHT

-Terminal, marching across two lanes of traffic- Toward a sleepy YELLOW CAB LINE tucked just underneath a steal overhang a short distance away, where- Forgotten taxis are lined up, all resting in park-

EXT. JFK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, TAXI LINE - NIGHT

-The rope-and-stanchion of the WAIT LINE holding TWO INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS, 30s, a mother and a father, both trying to soothe the CRIES of their fussy NEWBORN.

The feeling over here far more archaic, isolated, obsolete and *abandoned*- Girlie taking her place in the short line, giving the CRYING NEWBORN a slight, somber glance as-

The TAXI LINE ATTENDANT, a man wearing a yellow vest, 50s, helps the tourists into a yellow cab and SLAM!

As the **UNSEEN DRIVER** of the next taxi inches forward, its front passenger side window rolling down in anticipation-

The attendant lifts his receipt pad- To Girlie-

TAXI LINE ATTENDANT

Where to?

GIRLIE

(Standard American accent)

Manhattan. 44th, between 9th and 10th.

The attendant writes "**MAN - 44 bt 9 + 10**" on the ticket and passes it off to the **UNSEEN CABBIE** through the front passenger window, while-

Girlie walks the length of the vehicle to the back-

POP! goes the trunk, the **UNSEEN CABBIE** hopping out of the front, slamming his door and rounding to the back on the other side- Girlie paying him little mind as-

She parks her rolling luggage near the right taillight.

Then- With attitude-

Opens the backdoor - CLIP! - tosses her purse inside and - SLAM!

INT. NYC YELLOW CAB, BACK SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Girlie disappears into the backseat. The darkness here providing a comforting hiding place from the toxic, yellow cloud of light pollution just outside - an urban, mixed-florescent stew.

Remaining in the taxi, we stay tight on Girlie as the cab rocks lightly with the weight of her luggage being thrown into the trunk. Then- WHAM! The trunk shuts, hard.

Girlie TURNING OFF the small screen in front of her, rejecting the endless stream of commercials as- The **MYSTERIOUS DRIVER** passes her on the left side of the cab, his likeness distorted by the glass, until-

CLIP! He opens the door, jumps in, and-

INT./EXT. NYC YELLOW CAB, FRONT SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

SLAM! We finally come face to face with the driver-

CLARK, 50s, chomping on a wad of gum with the determination of a Major League Baseball player.

At first glance, one might assume Clark to be a hardened, blue-collar, New York stereotype.

Tough exterior.

Thick arms.

Faded puffer vest over a weathered t-shirt.

Rugged whiskers.

And a bold stare that is both alluring, and also... a little dangerous.

Clark gives a quick glance at the receipt in his hand - "**MAN - 44 bt 9 + 10**" - then tosses it on the passenger seat beside him.

Casually, he adjusts his rearview mirror catching a glimpse of his passenger paying him no mind at all as she uses a small compact mirror to paint her lips.

It's quite a sight to behold- As she presses her lips together- Now perfectly tinted, when- Suddenly-

A HONK! HONK! issues from the taxi behind them, Clark having been caught *indulging himself*. Startled-

CLARK
(thick New York accent)
Goddamit.

Throwing the cab in drive-

CLARK
Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

With an aggressive TUG on the wheel, Clark successfully pulls away from the curb-

Launching the two out into the night.

Neither Clark nor Girlie acknowledge their seat belts.

CLARK
 (barely audible)
 Fuckin' asshole.

Slowly resuming the chomping of his gum, Clark pointedly directs his eyes at the rearview, watching as-

Girlie takes off her scarf... the glow of the passing lights outside hinting at something much deeper masked underneath her strong, stoic, city stare-

Her gaze turning to the window, lost in thought, her fresh lipstick - in this particular moment - more resembling *armor* than a means of flirtation.

Clark wisely remains silent.

As the cab picks up speed, the yellow florescent cloud outside begins to dissipate as the two make their way onto Interstate 678.

EXT. INTERSTATE 678 AND BEYOND - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

PULLIN UP AND AWAY from the yellow cab to more of a GOD'S EYE VIEW, the awe and wonder of urban living becomes evident through the beauty and poetry of *light*.

From high above, the many roadways, highways and freeways that lead to the island of Manhattan look more like veins pumping bioluminescent yellow and red life to and from the heart chamber of an other worldly creature.

Moving back down again from macro to micro, we follow the red taillights of countless vehicles racing along the interstate until a bright yellow cab ZOOMS into frame.

The HUM of the cab's rubber wheels kissing the asphalt evoking a calming consistency.

HHHHUUUUUUUUUUUMMMMMMMM.

Yet... through the back window, the lonely silhouettes of Clark and Girlie cause the cab to look more like a cage.

HHHHUUUUUUUUUUUMMMMMMMM.

INT. NYC YELLOW CAB, BACK SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

CLOSE ON- Girlie's face, gazing out. Her pensive expression the perfect backdrop for the reflections of yellow, red and blue streaks of reflective light - resembling some abstract film projected upon her skin.

Finally, she pulls her gaze from the window and-

Carefully peeks at the rearview mirror ahead, gifting her a quiet glimpse of this unknown driver who doesn't seem to be paying her any mind.

With a childlike intrigue, Girlie takes note of the fascinating character before her:

- His strong jaw moving up and down as he chomps on his gum.
- The gusto with which his thumbs lightly TAP percussion on the steering wheel to some song stuck in his head.
- The thickness of his muscular arms.
- A few **PHOTOS** rubber-banded to his sun visor overhead.

Drawing a deep, quiet INHALE, Girlie unlocks her phone, the device automatically picking up right where she left off - to a very specific text message thread.

The one from our opening, ending with a question mark.

The light issuing from the screen creates a bright white reflection in the darkness of her pupils.

CLOSE ON GIRLIE, wrestling with something.

Then- She composes a text- And sends-

GIRLIE (**TEXT**)
Landed

CLARK (O.S.)
So... 44th and 9th, huh?

Looking up, Girlie finds the reflection of her cabbie's eyes staring at her in the rearview.

She stares back.

GIRLIE
Yup.

CLARK
(chit-chat)
Midtown.

GIRLIE
Good ol' Midtown.

Girlie locks her phone.

INT. NYC YELLOW CAB, FRONT SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Up front, Clark wants to say more. But hesitates.

It's dark in the cab.

And quiet.

Except for the ever present HUUUUUUMMMMMMM of rubber on asphalt.

The street lamps of the interstate racing over them in streaks of white light, contorting the darkness into living shadows that seem to have a mind of their own.

Finally-

CLARK

You're my last fare for the night.

Once again, Girlie confidently matches his stare in the rearview.

GIRLIE

Yeah?

CLARK

Yeah.

A good-natured smile creeps across her lips-

GIRLIE

I won?

CLARK

You fuckin' won, sweetheart. You did.

GIRLIE

And... What do I get? For winning?

CLARK

(mildly sexual)

Anything you want.

Girlie still doesn't look away, causing Clark to continue to "test the waters" a bit.

CLARK

Yeah, I had a rough day of it. Short trips, barely nothin' extra. This fuckin' business with the credit cards. *When it was cash?* People'd throw you a ten, twenty, fifty. "Keep the change" ain't a cliché no more.

(MORE)

CLARK (CONT'D)

And when it was, it was nice. When it's paper, you hand it over. Fucking Monopoly money, right? But you swipe that plastic, you got time to *think*. You stare at all those little numbers, and before you know it - *I* get fucked up the asshole.

He looks to Girlie again in the rearview.

She seems intrigued enough.

CLARK

It's these fuckin' apps, all of 'em - can get a coffee, burger, soap, socks, wine, water, weed, fuckin' Chinese takeout - you can get all that shit, and never reach for your purse, not even for tip. Nah, it's all up in that cloud up there. That big fuckin' cloud, thinkin' it knows better. Swearin' it can keep a secret. But what happens when that cloud starts leakin', huh? What happens when it starts to *rain*? You bet your ass we're gonna wish we'd stuck with the Monopoly money, am I right?

(a beat)

I mean... *salt* used to be money. Mother fuckin' salt. The same shit you sprinkle on your eggs. Yeah. Every mornin' you toss that cheap-ass-shit all over your eggs with no idea that people used to *die* for it. Tea, coffee, same thing. All that shit you gloss over at the grocery store, at one point in time, humans fuckin' killed each other for it.

(a brief pause)

Bird's eye view of that shit? Over the years, you see money go from salt to gold to paper and *now*? *Money*? It ain't nothin' but an *idea*. Little numbers on a screen. You can't touch it, can't bury it, can't put a little "x" that marks the spot- Nah... you just tie it to a fuckin' butterfly and send it to that cloud up there. But, one of these days, I'm tellin' ya, that cloud's gonna open up and it's gonna pour acid rain down, all over our dumb faces... Yellow cabs don't play that game. Not in New York. Too much bullshit.

Playfully, Girlie offers a clever smirk.

GIRLIE

I got ya covered.

CLARK

Yeah?

GIRLIE

Yeah. My bag in the back should settle us.

CLARK

How?

GIRLIE

(teasing)

It's *full* of salt.

Clark chuckles. Sincerely surprised by her quick wit.

CLARK

That's good...

(a beat)

For that- You can use a damn credit card, honey. It is what it is at this point. But, back in the day, shit, we fought it, we all fought it. Cash is king, ya know?

(a slight pause)

Million dollars for a fuckin' Medallion, and they still put that credit card shit in my back seat. And one day soon, *like that*, they're gonna come back and rip it out again, like it was nothin'... Credit card machines, they're gonna be like fuckin' pay phones. Just sittin' there. Lookin' dumb. Waitin'. Waitin' for somebody, *anybody* to give 'em a ring. Havin' no idea... the world's moved on.

(a beat)

And... I guess I'm no different. I mean... *cabs*, yellow cabs? We're fuckin' Blockbuster, ya know? We're fightin' it all too hard, swimmin' up stream. Busy swimmin' and missin' the whole fuckin' boat... Me, too. I been fightin' it, too. Swimmin', swimmin' *hard*...

(another beat)

But... I don't know... If *we're* Blockbuster... it's already too late. Ten years time, there ain't gonna be no yellow no more. And all those other guys, the ones with the apps, the guys takin' over? They are gonna be nothin' but a blip on the screen. Fuckin' blink of an eye... when it's all said and done.

(MORE)

CLARK (CONT'D)

(a pause)

Yeah... you'll order up a car on your phone, just like before, but when you hop in, it ain't gonna be no *human* behind the wheel, I can tell ya that. You'll order up a car and that fuckin' car will drive *itself* to wherever-the-fuck you wanna go. And it won't speed, won't stink, won't make ya sick, won't ever get lost. Might even ask you 'bout your day... *Fuckin' apps.*

A beat. Then-

CLARK

Want some radio?

GIRLIE

Not really.

CLARK

Yeah, it all sounds the same. 'Specially in my business. After so many hours, drivin' around... all sounds the same.

In the quiet that follows, it seems Girlie is still studying him with intrigue, begging the question-

CLARK

You-uh... you ever get a cabbie before that was-uh... ya know... that was born *state-side*?

GIRLIE

Uh... I've never thought about it.

CLARK

Think about it.

GIRLIE

(after a beat)

I don't know, I... I guess I haven't.

Clark nods his head, processing something.

GIRLIE

Is that supposed to mean something?

CLARK

Not really. I mean... some people... Sometimes people ask about it.

GIRLIE

Really?

CLARK

Yeah. Like, one guy, some Wall Street fuckin' douche... he wanted to know *why*.

GIRLIE

Why what?

CLARK

Why *I'm* drivin' a cab. Wanted to know how I fucked up so bad.

GIRLIE

That's... disturbing. For a lot of reasons.

CLARK

Right?! I fuckin' pull over, right then, turn around and tell the guy, "Ride's over, buddy, get the *fuck* outta my cab." Guy jumps out, don't even pay.

After a beat, he beams at Girlie in the rearview-

CLARK

Didn't even occur to you.

She simply shakes her head. Clark seems very pleased with this stranger in the back, allowing himself to reveal a vulnerable touch of melancholy.

CLARK

It's just... weird, ya know? I mean. I used to be *exactly* what you'd expect behind the wheel of a New York City cab. And now... I don't know. I guess. Nothin' stays the same no-more...

(a pensive beat)

And... I guess... it's better that way. For the most part. Can't say I didn't have a good run.

Silence. Then-

CLARK

Nice you're not on your phone. I mean, you don't have to keep talkin' to me or nothin', but... it's just nice. You know. To see a human. Not plugged in.

GIRLIE

Yeah, I need a break from it.

CLARK

(after a beat)

Picked up a couple this mornin',
LaGuardia, older couple. And they got
their-uh, I don't know, their
granddaughter with 'em - fifteen,
sixteen. And she's just textin', the
whole ride. First time in the city, and
she don't say a word. I make a joke to
grandma - I was like, "So, what, ya ask
her questions and she *texts* ya the
answers?" Grandma laughed, but Princess
gives me a glare. A *glare*, mind you, but
still no fuckin' word - barely looked out
the window. And get this shit. I drop 'em
off near Macy's, right? Pop open the
trunk, start helpin' Grandpa with the
bags - Empire State, right there. I point
it out to Grandpa, *he* points it out to
Princess, and all of a sudden, *Princess*
holds out her phone and snaps a fuckin'
picture - all smilin' at the camera, big
toothy grin - lookin' all excited and
shit. And then... she's back on her
phone. Not smilin'. Not talkin'. *Nothin'*.
Just sendin' a fuckin' butterfly to that
cloud up there. Makin' her friends all
jealous she's in the big city. When the
truth is?

In the rearview, Clark LOCKS EYES with Girlie-

CLARK

She never fuckin' showed up.

Amazed by the thoughts rattling around in this cabbie's
head, Girlie's genuine gaze glows with curiosity.

GIRLIE

What's your name?

CLARK

Why?

GIRLIE

Just like to know people's names.

CLARK

Fuck. You really are a human, aren't ya?
That's sweet.

He smiles at her reflection, a bashful shyness surfacing
then submerging again, quickly.

CLARK

Clark.

Thoughtfully absorbing the name-

GIRLIE

Clark.

-Girlie spots Clark's **TAXI DRIVER'S ID** displayed in the far left corner of the plexiglass. His "mugshot" a bit disheveled. As if he rolled out of bed right before the photo was taken. Playfully "calling her out"-

CLARK

You thought I'd say *Vinnie* or some shit.

Girlie lets out an intoxicating laugh.

GIRLIE

I... I don't know what I thought.

CLARK

Ah, it's fine. I mean. Shit. We pass out these names, ya know, random ass names to these cute, little babies. Any name you want. Whatever-the-fuck has a nice ring to it. Whatever-the-fuck gives you high hopes for higher education and bullshit. But that little thing in your arms, it's never gonna be *exactly* what you had in mind. I mean, Clark plays tennis, he's got a house in the Hamptons, goes to opera and shit. I just ain't that guy.

GIRLIE

What name would you choose? If you could?

CLARK

(with a shrug)

Ah... *Vinnie.*

INT. NYC YELLOW CAB, BACK SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Girlie watches Clark as his eyes find her in the rearview.

CLARK

So-uh... You live here, right?

GIRLIE

I do.

CLARK

Yeah, your little outfit gave you away.

GIRLIE

(with a chuckle)

My outfit?

CLARK

Says a lot about ya.

GIRLIE

What does it say?

CLARK

That you can handle yourself.

GIRLIE

How can you possibly know that?

CLARK

It ain't that difficult to read people. I mean. You jumped in, business as usual, ya turned off that damn little screen back there, 'cause you already know what fuckin' Broadway shows are playin', and you didn't even think to reach for your seat belt. Why would you? You've had enough rides. In and out, am I right?

GIRLIE

(intrigued)

What else?

CLARK

You gave me cross streets, not some recited fuckin' address from your phone. And I can tell you're not concerned with the meter, 'cause you already know JFK's a flat rate.

GIRLIE

Impressive.

CLARK

(a chuckle)

I'm not claimin' to be some Sherlock or nothin'. Just a guy who pays attention. You've had a long day. You're tired. You wanna go home, take a shower, sleep in your own bed. And. You got in line for a mother fuckin' taxi. Now- *That's* a New Yorker that pays attention. Someone who knows what the fuck's goin' on. And-

Once again, they LOCK EYES in the rearview.

CLARK

You're not afraid to look me in the eye.

(a beat)

Like I said. You can handle yourself.

Girlie's smile hints at sadness.

GIRLIE

I like to think so.

Suddenly, Clark rolls down his window, inviting a rush of wind to fill the taxi with its fresh breath and all encompassing SOUND.

PPSSSSSSHHHHHHHHHHH!

Then- Clark rears back and launches his wad of gum out the window with a loud-

HOCK!

The gross act causes Girlie to grin, a glimpse that she's super chill as fuck underneath.

Yet, her amusement quickly fades as she glances down at her iPhone.

PPSSSSSSHHHHHHHHHHH!

Looking like an addict staring at a heroine needle, Girlie's face begins to contort with a sudden, irresistible urge.

She bites her right thumbnail, the SOUND of the wind decrescendo-ing into SILENCE as Clark rolls up his window.

In the following moment of suspended stillness, Girlie closes her eyes for but a moment's peace, until-

Her eyes open wide with aching addiction, Girlie flips over her phone and unlocks it to find two texts waiting-

L (TEXT)

Home yet?

Can I drop by?

She composes a reply- And sends-

GIRLIE (TEXT)

In a cab

L (**TEXT**)
 (...)

There you are

(...)

hello

GIRLIE (**TEXT**)
Hola

L (**TEXT**)
 (...)

How do I say pretty?

GIRLIE (**TEXT**)
Bonita

L (**TEXT**)
 (...)

You are very bonita

GIRLIE (**TEXT**)
Thank you

L (**TEXT**)
 (...)

I need you

(...)

How do I say that

(...)

?

CLOSE ON GIRLIE. Staring at her phone, not responding.

CLARK (O.S.)
 Where ya flyin' from?

GIRLIE
 Oklahoma.

She composes a text-

And sends-

GIRLIE (**TEXT**)
I can't remember, I just started learning

CLARK (O.S.)
 What's in Oklahoma?

The three gray dots appear again, promising a response.

GIRLIE
 I grew up there.

WE STAY ON GIRLIE. When-

L (**TEXT**)
when do you get home??

ON GIRLIE- The weight of the world resting in this moment. When- She finally composes her answer-

GIRLIE (**TEXT**)
*it's going to be late
 maybe another time?*

L (**TEXT**)
 (...)

But I need you

(...)

need your pink

(...)

L (**TEXT**)
Can u show me?

(...)

Put your phone between your legs

(...)

need to cum

(...)

help me cum

Suddenly, Girlie locks her phone.

CLARK (O.S.)
 Hey-

INT. NYC YELLOW CAB, FRONT SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

CLARK

What about your accent?

In the backseat, Girlie glances up at Clark, in a daze.

GIRLIE

Sorry... *What?***INT. NYC YELLOW CAB, BACK SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)**

On Girlie, confused as to what he's talking about.

CLARK

Your accent.

GIRLIE

My accent?

CLARK

Yeah. Don't people from Oklahoma -
 (badly imitating a Midwestern
 accent)
 - *talk like this?*

Girlie relaxes, allowing a chuckle.

GIRLIE

Not all of us, apparently.

INT. NYC YELLOW CAB, FRONT SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

A beat. Then. Clark continues, clearly committed to keeping this mysterious beauty happily distracted from whatever-the-hell she's got happening on her phone.

CLARK

Where ya from, what part of the state?

GIRLIE

Just. A tiny little town.

CLARK

What's the town?

GIRLIE

You've never heard of it.

CLARK

What's the town?

Clearly enjoying the distraction, Girlie extends her right arm.

GIRLIE

Okay, so... Oklahoma's shaped like a pan, right? So if- If my arm's the panhandle, then- I grew up here.

She points to her right armpit.

CLARK

The armpit.

GIRLIE

Of Oklahoma. Yep.

CLARK

What's it called?

GIRLIE

Gage.

CLARK

Gage, Oklahoma.

GIRLIE

You got it.

CLARK

How many people?

GIRLIE

Four hundred-ish.

CLARK

Huh.

(after a pause)

I honest-to-god would have never guessed Oklahoma.

GIRLIE

What would you have guessed?

CLARK

Not an armpit, I can tell you that.

(a beat)

How long you been in New York?

GIRLIE

Nine years, in June.

CLARK

No shit.

GIRLIE

No shit. One more year, and I'll be official.

CLARK

Yeah... but let's be honest, you're official now. Anyone who chooses for nine years to wait at the post office until the idea of "goin' postal" starts to have a nice ring to it - anyone who chooses for nine years to ride around in those little sardine cans underground, some guy rubbin' up against you like some dog humpin' your leg - anyone who chooses for nine years to drag loads of laundry down the street to fight off a tough-ass-broad for some machine that eats up all your quarters and gives ya bedbugs - and all for the privilege of gettin' a whiff of that sweet 'n sour piss aroma every now and again as you run down the street, eatin' your mornin' bagel? You're a fuckin' New Yorker.

(after a pause)

That is... unless you got money and don't do any of that shit. That's-uh... that's a different New York, altogether. Might as well be another fuckin' planet.

GIRLIE

I did all that. For a long time.

CLARK

And what changed for ya?

GIRLIE

Worked my ass off.

CLARK

What'cha do? For work?

GIRLIE

I'm a programmer.

CLARK

Computers?

GIRLIE

Computers.

CLARK

No shit.

GIRLIE

No shit.

CLARK

Like ones and zeros and shit?

GIRLIE

Like ones and zeros and shit.

(playfully "calling him out"
this time)

You thought I'd say something more *girly*,
didn't ya?

CLARK

(laughing)

Yeah, like a weddin' planner or fashion
or somethin'.

GIRLIE

Not as many women code, I'll give you
that.

CLARK

And you drew a line in the sand. Lifted
your leg and made your mark.

GIRLIE

(with a grin)

I don't mind squatting.

Captivated by her reflection-

CLARK

So... what's the deal with the ones and
zeros?

GIRLIE

Like...?

CLARK

They're like building blocks or whatnot,
right? Like. When I look at my computer,
I'm really lookin' at a bunch of ones and
zeros or some shit.

GIRLIE

Yeah. Something like that.

CLARK

No, tell me. I honest-to-god wanna know.
Can't be a know-it-all if I don't know
nothin'.

For emphasis, Girlie perches on the back seat, drawing closer to the plexiglass between them.

Clark shifts his weight, doing his best not to look too excited by the sudden change of her proximity.

GIRLIE

Basically... a computer uses electricity to create "on" and "off" states that can represent ones and zeros. One being "on" and zero being "off." But- They more often represent the idea of... "true" or "false."

CLARK

(amused)

Ones and zeros mean... true or false?

GIRLIE

Not always- They can also represent numbers and other things, too, but- Much of what I do is *testing* whether something is true or false. I've always used "one" to mean "true"- And-

CLARK

"Zero" to mean "false."

GIRLIE

You got it.

CLARK

Huh.

GIRLIE

(a strong beat)

Everything in a computer - color, images, music, *money*, three dimensional worlds, all of it - is represented by ones and zeros.

CLARK

True and false.

GIRLIE

Correct. It's basically how... everything you see... operates.

Pensively, Clark analyses this new information as he grabs his thermos nearby and takes a swig of water.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. NYC YELLOW CAB, BACK SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Having come closer to the plexiglass, Girlie now has a better view of Clark, something in her eyes registering surprise by how handsome this cabbie truly is up close.

Then.

She observes quietly as... Clark gifts a drink of water to a sweet little plant resting in a cupholder.

Her eyes welling with emotion seeing this tender act come from such an unlikely person.

Then. With a shrug-

CLARK

I mean... makes sense. We all do that. Lay down our bricks of ones and zeros and build our own little fort. And that shit, it starts young. I mean, think about it. "You are stupid." True or false? "You are ugly." True or false? "Your mother loves you." True or false? And when you grow up? That shit don't stop. "Climate Change." True or false? "Jesus Christ." True or false? "I must wear pants today." True or fuckin' false. And on and on it goes.

SITTING BACK, Girlie falls silent a moment. When-

CLARK

We all gotta choose our ones and zeros. And whatever we decide... yeah... that becomes the *foundation* from which we operate.

As if in reply, Girlie grins at him, playfully.

CLARK

Or. Maybe I'm just talkin' bullshit.

GIRLIE

("False.")

Zero.

INT. NYC YELLOW CAB, FRONT SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

With a chuckle, Clark's bashful side surfaces, then quickly submerges again.

CLARK

You're a... you're a surprising person, I gotta say.

GIRLIE

Awwwww, shucks.

CLARK

Very little surprises me these days.

Silence. Then-

GIRLIE

And... what about you?

CLARK

What about me *what*?

GIRLIE

Where are you from?

CLARK

Hell's Kitchen. Or. What was Hell's Kitchen. Not too far from where we're goin'.

GIRLIE

What was it like, when you were a kid?

CLARK

Back in my day? Man. If Hell really *did* have a kitchen... *that* was it. Junkies on every stoop. Hookers on every corner. *It was fantastic.*

GIRLIE

Still live in Manhattan?

CLARK

Own a place. Jackson Heights. Small house.

GIRLIE

Still. It's a house.

CLARK

You better fuckin' believe it.

GIRLIE

So... Clark lives in Queens.

CLARK

No, no, no... *Vinnie* lives in Queens. Clark's gotta loft in Tribeca.

GIRLIE
 (with a chuckle)
 Right, right.

Suddenly, Clark notices something up ahead, causing him to tap the breaks.

CLARK
Oh, fuck. That ain't good.

CLARK'S POV - Through the windshield, a wall of stationary red taillights force the cab to come to a complete stop.

INT./EXT. NYC YELLOW CAB, BACK SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Turning, Girlie gazes out the back window, squinting against the wall of yellow headlights crowding in from behind.

The two have been captured between uncompromising walls of red and yellow light, the street lamps overhead glaring down, fixed florescent stars in the night sky.

Utter gridlock.

The worst kind.

The New York kind.

CLARK
Dammit. Got some kinda fender bender up there.

INT./EXT. NYC YELLOW CAB, FRONT SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

They both look ahead at the flickering emergency lights not too far in the distance, pulsing red and blue.

Clark aggressively throws the cab in park - THRUST! "P."

CLARK
 Sorry, sweetie. I hate this shit.

GIRLIE
 Not your fault.

CLARK
 I fuckin' know these roads like the back of my hand. But still can't predict the weather, ya know?
 (MORE)

CLARK (CONT'D)

That's the *one thing* those fuckin' apps got on me, that's the *one fuckin' thing*.

GIRLIE

It's fine. Really.

CLARK

(at a loss)

It's not fine. It's not professional. Should've been payin' attention- Could'ah got off back there.

GIRLIE

(a beat, teasing)

Well? I'm on the flat rate, so-

CLARK

(a laugh)

Nah, I'm gonna *meter* your ass!

GIRLIE

Nope. I won. I won again. Two to zero.

CLARK

Leavin' me in the dust over here.

INT. NYC YELLOW CAB, BACK SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

All is still. Too still.

All is quiet. Too quiet.

Girlie watches as Clark begins to TAP percussion on the steering wheel again - unable to sit still.

As his thumbs DRUM to some unknown rhythm, Girlie's gaze falls to her purse.

The BEAT of the driver's thumbs crescendoes in Girlie's mind as that wave of fierce addiction washes over her again.

TAP, TAP, TAP - goes the "drums."

She softly bites her bottom lip.

TAP, TAP, TAP.

The emergency lights pulsing red and blue-

A glimpse of humanity.

A reminder.

That we're built... to make *mistakes*.

TAP, TAP, TAP.

In a daze, Girlie reaches inside her purse, pulls out her phone and unlocks it to find-

Two new texts await.

L (TEXT)

*You there?
Lost you*

Girlie drafts a reply. With the phone still muted, this time the clicking "typewriter" sound has been replaced with SILENCE.

GIRLIE (TEXT)

*Lo siento.
Stuck in traffico*

Surprisingly, she receives an immediate response-

L (TEXT)

(...)

K

(...)

How was the trip?

GIRLIE (TEXT)

It was a hard trip.

(TEXT)

Good. But hard

L (TEXT)

(...)

I'm hard

Girlie looks wounded. Frustrated. Angry. But she has no time to reply, because-

L (TEXT)

(...)

Missed yo

(...)

**you*

(MORE)

L (TEXT) (CONT'D)

(...)

Need you

(...)

Need your pink

(...)

your sweet tits

(...)

If you can't meet me

(...)

show me

(...)

please sweetie

(...)

help me cum

Red and blue pulsing on her face, Girlie simply stares at the slew of texts before her.

Biting her right thumbnail, she sits perfectly still as-
Waving gray dots appear.

L (TEXT)

(...)

Then disappear.

Then appear.

L (TEXT)

(...)

Then disappear again.

Girlie's disengagement has clearly caused "L" to greatly question what he should say next.

Finally-

L (TEXT)

(...)

You their?

(...)

**there*

(...)

???

A beat. Then. Waving gray dots appear.

L (TEXT)

(...)

Then. Disappear again into nothing.

CLOSE ON GIRLIE.

Pulling her thumbnail from her mouth, she begins to compose another text in the darkness of the back seat.

Red and blue.

GIRLIE (TEXT)

Here

L (TEXT)

(...)

She bites her thumbnail again as she waits.

L (TEXT)

(...)

Will you?

She pulls her thumbnail from her mouth.

GIRLIE (TEXT)

Will I what?

L (TEXT)

(...)

show me

Girlie lightly shakes her head, her eyes softly rolling in agitation, while even more texts arrive-

L (TEXT)

(...)

Mmmmm

(...)

cock so hard

(...)

throbbing

(...)

You have to see

(...)

what you do to me

Girlie glances up, paranoid that Clark might be watching.

He isn't.

He remains distracted by the song in his head.

TAP, TAP, TAP.

Girlie looks down at her phone again-

FROM GIRLIE'S POV ON HER PHONE - We see a bathroom-stall-dick-pic has just been delivered.

REVERSE ON GIRLIE'S REACTION-

Her face bursting with a fascinating mix of haunting sadness and wild irritation. And yet. She still writes-

GIRLIE (TEXT)

Oh baby

L (TEXT)

(...)

u like?

Girlie habitually puts her thumbnail between her teeth, not knowing how to respond, when-

CLARK (O.S.)

How long were you in Oklahoma?

SNAPPING BACK TO REALITY, Girlie looks up from her phone.

GIRLIE
 (covering)
 Uh... Two weeks.

CLARK
 (after a beat)
 You-uh, visitin' family or somethin'?

GIRLIE
 I have a half sister.

GIRLIE'S GLANCES AGAIN AT HER PHONE. The gray dots have begun their dance again.

L (TEXT)
 (...)

Girlie waits. Finally-

L (TEXT)
want to cum for you

(...)

need you to watch

Suddenly, a call from "L" fills her screen, the contact wanting to *FaceTime*.

REVERSE ON GIRLIE.

Utter SILENCE, as if all the air has been sucked out of the taxi.

Girlie herself literally holding her breath.

Red, blue. Red, blue.

Deeply conflicted, Girlie doesn't blink for a long pause... until the *FaceTime* call falls away.

INT. NYC YELLOW CAB, FRONT SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Clark watches as Girlie quickly locks her phone again and places it face down on her lap.

CLARK
 What's she like? Your sister?

Taking her time to answer, Girlie stares out the window again - red taillights illuminating her from the windshield, yellow headlights from behind. Creating a cage. Or confessional. Of light.

GIRLIE
(quietly)
She's... Honestly, she's kind of a bitch.

CLARK
How she a bitch? What she do?

GIRLIE
Little things, like... she makes fun of
my cankles.

CLARK
Your *cankles*?

GIRLIE
I have thick ankles.

CLARK
I don't believe that.

GIRLIE
It's true.

CLARK
But you're small.

GIRLIE
I'm small *and* I have thick ankles.

CLARK
That's a thing?

GIRLIE
It's a thing.

CLARK
Huh. Sounds cute.

GIRLIE
Thank you, it *is* cute.

With a wry grin, Girlie attempts to mask the emotion pulsing in her veins.

CLARK
I take it that... you and the bitch don't
visit all that often?

GIRLIE
Hadn't seen her in years.

CLARK
Why?

GIRLIE

We just stopped talking. We didn't have a fight or anything, we just... stopped talking.

CLARK

Why now?

GIRLIE

She tracked me down. Asked me to visit. Had no reason to say no.

CLARK

How she track you down? The cloud?

GIRLIE

The cloud.

CLARK

Acid rain?

GIRLIE

We had a nice time. I mean- She's a total bitch, but we laughed a lot. We drank a lot and we laughed a lot.

CLARK

She married?

GIRLIE

She has a girlfriend.

CLARK

Nice.

GIRLIE

Named *Eagle*.

CLARK

(genuinely loving this)
Fuck me. She *Native American* or somethin'?

GIRLIE

That's right.

CLARK

Well, that's some cool-ass-shit-right-there.

GIRLIE

Yeah, they seem happy. Live in a trailer, just got a parakeet... saving up to do some traveling next year.

(MORE)

GIRLIE (CONT'D)

(after a beat)

She's come a long way.

CLARK

She older, younger?

INT. NYC YELLOW CAB, BACK SEAT - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Girlie takes off her jacket, getting even more cozy in the backseat-

GIRLIE

She-uh... she was eleven when I was born, so... she was like a mom growing up. But she was a fucked up mom, like... she used to tie me up, ankle to ankle, wrist to wrist, and put me in the bathtub and lock me in the bathroom.

CLARK

What the fuck? Bathtub full?

GIRLIE'S POV ON CLARK'S EYES IN THE REARVIEW. Eyes that offer a surprising softness. An empathy. Empathy that can only be crafted from a long life of heard knocks.

GIRLIE

Empty.

This new information seems to have rattle Clark to the core. One might wonder if it speaks to something much deeper. A time when. Memories this man has long since left behind.

CLARK

(softly)

Why the fuck would she do that?

GIRLIE

(softly back)

It was... her way of helping me practice.

CLARK

Practice what?

GIRLIE

If I ever got kidnapped, I'd be able to escape. That was her logic.

Clark has been rendered speechless, his thoughts held captive by something, something disturbing.

His cab in park, that stubborn, sinister wall of red taillights before him-

Clark TURNS HIS BODY FOR THE FIRST TIME. And. Curiously slides the plexiglass window open. The two locking eyes without that barrier between them. Engaging in a real human connection, advancing these two souls far beyond mere reflections in a rearview mirror.

CLARK
(softly, simply)
Did you like bein' tied up?

The cab suddenly ceases to be "**front seat**" and "**back seat.**" Somehow this place, this metal cage, has emotionally expanded.

And.

You can *feel* it.

CLOSE ON CLARK. Waiting for her answer.

CLOSE ON GIRLIE. Finally finding her answer.

GIRLIE
(sincerely)
I liked the challenge of getting *free*.

CLOSE ON CLARK. With a deep understanding, almost as if he's talking about himself-

CLARK
You got loose... didn't ya? You sat there in that bathroom... in that cold, empty tub... for God knows how long... and you wiggled yourself free. Every. Fuckin'. Time.

CLOSE ON GIRLIE. A resiliency washing over her face. Red and blue.

CLOSE ON CLARK. A shared understanding. Red and blue.

These two are *survivors*.

GIRLIE
Kidnappers be damned.

CLARK
Like I said... you can handle yourself.

We hold here. Caught in a staring standoff, when-

CLARK

You get a prize or somethin'? For gettin' loose?

GIRLIE

Not really. By the time I'd get free... my sister would be at work or whatever.

CLARK

And. Where was mom?

GIRLIE

Mom was gone.

CLARK

Where'd she go?

GIRLIE

(with a deep, dramatic voice)
Mom went out for a pack of smokes and never came back.

CLARK

That's funny. You're funny... What are you? Twenty-five? Twenty-six?

Shaking her head-

GIRLIE

No, I don't answer that question.

CLARK

Why the hell not?

GIRLIE

Because. It's bullshit.

CLARK

What, you weird about your age or somethin'?

GIRLIE

(with a chuckle)
The whole world's weird about my age! If I told you I was *twenty-four* or *thirty-four*, your opinion of me would *drastically* change.

CLARK

That is not true.

GIRLIE

For women? It is. It is fucking true. The moment we hit thirty, our value's cut in half.

CLARK

I mean...

CLARK

Fine, fuck it, it's true. It is true. But, listen, you really do look twenty-somethin', but - by the way you *talk* all smart and shit - if I wasn't lookin', I'd guess you were fifty, so-

GIRLIE

So what does it matter how many times I've been around the sun?

Put in his place, Clark draws a breath, but cannot muster a reply. Then-

CLARK

Hell if I know... It's just a question, I guess. Somethin' people ask. Maybe you're right, maybe it is bullshit.

(a beat)

I guess... it's just my way of... tryin' to understand.

GIRLIE

Understand what?

CLARK

It *is* a bit confusin' to meet some chick who looks twenty-two, but so clearly is a fuckin' rocket ship.

GIRLIE

(amused)

A rocket ship, huh?

He imitates the SOUND of a NASA rocket launching, accompanied with a hand gesture.

CLARK

That's you.

GIRLIE

(like a badass boss)

Yeah. That *is* me.

CLARK

Feel it. Own it.

GIRLIE

Oh, I feel it.

CLARK

Gonna take over the whole wide world, no question.

GIRLIE

I'll build a small empire and leave the rest.

CLARK

(after a chuckle)

You-uh... you plan on sharing that Empire with someone? A boyfriend or... girlfriend or... whatnot?

Girlie's smile fades.

CLARK

What? You need me to kick someone's ass?

GIRLIE

Nah. It's okay.

CLARK

What's their name?

GIRLIE

His name doesn't matter.

CLARK

He fuck up that bad?

No reply.

CLARK

Come on. I told you *my* name, let's hear his.

GIRLIE

I'd rather not say.

CLARK

Oh. I see. I get it.

This grabs her attention.

GIRLIE

You get what?

CLARK

He's married. I get it.

Girlie doesn't say anything for a pause.

Red and blue. Red and blue.

Finally-

GIRLIE

Why do you think he's married?

CLARK

You could've said his name and how would I ever know? As if there's only one Bob or Sam or Jeff in New-York-fuckin'-City. Nah... you so afraid to say a name? The guy's married. Or you're married. Or someone's fuckin' married and no one wants to say that shit out loud. Gum?

GIRLIE

... Yes, please.

Pulling a stick of gum, Clark offers it to Girlie.

Accepting his gift, Girlie takes a beat to allow the minty treat to soften in her mouth, when-

GIRLIE

(plainly)

He's married.

CLARK

I know he's fuckin' married. I know people. Don't drive a cab for twenty years and not know people.

CLOSE ON CLARK- A gleam in his eyes-

CLARK

Word of advice? And this is comin' from a man married twice with a lotta action on the side - ya ready?

(no reply)

Don't ever say the word "love." All right? Just... don't say it.

Silence.

CLARK

Oh, sweetheart... You fuckin' said it, didn't you?

No reply.

CLARK

You did! You said the fuckin' "L" word!
Oh, God, honey! That's fuckin' suicide in
that world, didn't you know that?! Fuck!
He does not want to hear that from you.
He wants to hear it from his mother, his
wife, his kids - but he does *not* want to
hear that shit from you. In the cognitive
wheel that is his life, that is *not* your
function.

GIRLIE

And what is my function?

CLARK

Sex! Touch me, suck me, lick me, but do
not *love* me. Don't you fuckin' love me.

This time, Girlie opens her mouth to say something, but
falters. It takes a few tries until-

GIRLIE

I'm not... *that girl*, okay? I just- I
couldn't *not* say it anymore.

CLARK

And what? He's supposed to love you back?
He's supposed to ride in on a big, white
horse and whisk you away to some cliff in
Greece? Live out his days braidin' your
hair with wild flowers and forget-me-
nots? No fuckin' way.

(a beat)

He's not gonna be there when your olive
oil dries up, sweetheart. You're not that
important. *He* knows that, *I* know that,
but *you* - you just gotta catch up, it's
all right. Gotta change your ones to
zeros, sweetie, I get it, it takes time.

Girlie wants to say something, but sits utterly
dumbfounded. Clark, in true form, barrels forward.

CLARK

Honest-to-God, my first wife was
everything you'd ever want. Five-eight,
hundred and fifteen pounds, tits out to
here - hair full of bleach and a head
full of *nothin'*. Men love women that are
dumb as shit. They're fuckin' pigs in the
bedroom. Mother-fuckin'-pigs and we love
that shit.

GIRLIE
You think smart women-

CLARK
Cannot reduce themselves to pigs in the
bedroom. That is right. Can't have it
both ways, don't exist.

GIRLIE
That is zero true.

CLARK
You're a smart girl, went to college -
read a lot, talk politics, all that shit?

GIRLIE
Yes.

CLARK
You ever been a pig in the bedroom?

GIRLIE
(frustrated)
What's your definition of a pig?

Clark throws his head back, howling with laughter.

CLARK
You see! Dumb chicks don't need
explainin' - they just do it! *That* was my
first wife. *Man...* everything a guy could
ask for.

For a moment, Clark loses himself in what must be fond
memories. But, it quickly fades.

CLARK
But, uh... she-uh... she starts gainin'
weight, right? And it makes her feel bad
about herself and she stops wantin' to,
ya know-

GIRLIE
(dryly)
Oink?

CLARK
Do her wifely duty or whatnot. And, in no
time flat, honest-to-God, I go out and
find myself a nineteen-year-old, put her
up in an apartment down the street, pay
for the whole damn thing.

GIRLIE

Are you fucking *serious*?

CLARK

Oh, yeah. Cute little thing. Polish. Long legs. Fucked the shit out of her. Best year of my life. Would've kept her around longer, but-

GIRLIE

Ahhh... the "L" word.

CLARK

Not your function. You are there because their wives had kids and got fat. Or their wives have a career, or cancer, or whatever-the-fuck it is - men don't want to hear that shit come outta your mouth. They barely want you to say a word at all.

GIRLIE

So why get married? Why don't men just stay single so they can fuck whoever, whenever?

With a cheeky grin, Clark corrects her grammar-

CLARK

Whoever.

GIRLIE

Oh-my-god- Seriously?

With a chuckle, Clark continues, very much enjoying this lively debate. Clearly, he loves to "get under the skin."

CLARK

Men? We wanna look good for other men, if that makes sense. We wanna have a fancy suit, big house, fast car. "He who dies with the most toys wins." Sure, that's talkin' about the suit, the house, the car, but... it also *includes* the wife and the kids. *Toys.*

(a beat)

Now. Lotta guys out there, maybe they did fall in love. Maybe they really did wanna get married and have kids and whatever-the-fuck. But deep down? If they're honest? Real-honest? *Lookin'* like a family man's more important than bein' one.

GIRLIE

There are good men out there.

CLARK

Yeah... But they are very few and very far... Much more than you would ever wanna know.

GIRLIE

Women cheat, too.

CLARK

Different reasons. Women wanna feel sexy. But they wanna feel sexy, 'cause they wanna feel wanted, and they wanna feel *wanted*, 'cause they wanna feel *loved*. And, there it is - the "L" word again.

GIRLIE

That is just such bullshit. I am certain there are *plenty* of women out there that can cheat just like a *fucking* man!

CLARK

Sure, sure. There are women out there that just wanna get fucked, no question. But, those women... they don't just fuck any Joe Blow down the street. *Nah*. They reserve their skills for men that have *money*. Men who have *power*. Thus, causing the whole world of men to *want* money and power all the more. The suit, the house, the car - we *want* those things, because we want those *skilled* women to fuck us senseless, like a man, no strings attached. Therefore? You ladies fightin' so hard to be our equal, is actually, in essence, still reducing most of you to nothin' but toys. And so the cycle continues.

GIRLIE

I seriously hate you right now. This is *everything* that is wrong with the world.

Clark laughs.

CLARK

Look. At the end of the day, I do agree with ya. Man or woman, people are people.

GIRLIE

Thank you.

CLARK

And *people* get lonely. Don't matter the reason. Humans just want a soft spot to rest their heads. For an hour even... one fuckin' hour to forget yourself.

(after a thoughtful beat)

But... in *your* particular case...

GIRLIE

In my case... *what?*

CLARK

You mean it. You don't use the "L" word unless you mean it, do ya? And that puts you in the "stereotypical category" as much as it makes you hate me.

Silence.

CLARK

Look. I know you're not "that girl," all right? I get it. I can tell. All the little boys out there, they been chasin' you. You don't remember their names, you don't wanna cuddle, and you most definitely don't use the "L" word. You wanna get in, get out, go home, take a shower and sleep in your own bed. It's not about havin' babies for you. It's not about bullshit. It's about bein' *distracted*. Just long enough that you can forget about... whatever-the-fuck happened in Gage, Oklahoma all those years ago.

(a beat)

But then... one day... for whatever reason... this guy grabs your attention. And suddenly... you don't know yourself. Suddenly, you want things you never fuckin' wanted. Am I right?

No reply.

CLARK

Good news is... you'll know right when it happens next time, 'cause you'll actually know what the fuck's goin' on. Won't be caught with your panties down on the next round, sweetie. Unless you wanna be.

GIRLIE

Please just- Don't say "panties." Call them literally *anything* else.

CLARK
Pantaloons, underwears-

GIRLIE
Great. Fantastic.

CLARK
Regardless... it will happen again.

Girlie looks instantly sick at the very thought.

CLARK
Oh, *yeah*. You'll meet someone. Doesn't matter where. And the-uh, the conversation'll start to go a certain way. Men know how to do that. Steer the talk to see if there's interest. When you met your fella, he was doin' the same thing. He was pokin' around to see if you had any candy to give. And the answer, clearly, was *yes*.

Girlie almost objects.

CLARK
Whether you knew it or not, you told him, "Yeah, I got candy." So, he kept pushin' and pokin' 'til he got it. And there you were, thinkin' how great this guy is and how nice he's listenin' and, oh, such a perfect smile, so warm behind the eyes.
(a pause)
Bullshit. Bull-fuckin'-shit, sweetheart. It wasn't no accident. He's done it before, he'll do it again. Ain't nothin' special about it.
(a declaration)
And now?!

With his right knee dramatically bouncing up and down, Clark grabs an empty plastic bottle-

CLARK
I gotta piss like a fuckin' racehorse.

He starts to unbutton his jeans.

GIRLIE
Oh-no- Do not do that in here!

CLARK
Fuck am I supposed to do?

GIRLIE
Take it outside!

CLARK
And get arrested?

GIRLIE
Who the fuck's gonna arrest you? Come on,
Hell's Kitchen, like you've never taken a
piss outside before.

Clark desperately glances around the gridlock. Then-

CLARK
Fuck.

With that, Clark jumps out of the cab and-

SLAM!

Behind her, the cars-

INT./EXT. NYC YELLOW CAB - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

-Begin to HONK! The UNSEEN DRIVERS clearly upset that the
cabbie ahead of them has left his taxi unattended-

Girlie nervously glancing about-

HHHHOOOOOOONNNNNNNKKKK!

But still no sign of Clark, when-

The lane to the right of the cab inches forward just
slightly, leaving a WHITE SEDAN parallel to Girlie.

There, one **LITTLE GIRL**, 5, in the back of the sedan
stares at Girlie from her carseat with large, dark,
fascinated eyes.

Girlie stares back.

The little girl's beautiful Afro perfectly frames her
stunningly innocent face.

As if looking directly into her own childlike innocence
lost, Girlie swallows hard.

Then... she gives the girl a little wave.

In response, the little girl smiles at Girlie with bright teeth and lifts a yellow **FISH-SHAPED CRACKER** in her direction. A *metaphor*. Tightly framed for a strong beat. **The little lady giving Girlie one last powerful look-**

Until- The white sedan inches forward a bit more... stealing the little girl from **GIRLIE'S POV**. Leaving her once again utterly alone.

And. There, in the dark, in the quiet, Girlie stares at her phone... but does not unlock it. When-

CLIP! The driver's door opens- Clark jumping back inside and - SLAM!

Silence. A profound silence. That lingers longer than expected. When- Quietly-

GIRLIE

He gave me his card.

CLARK

What?

Slowly, softly, that faint RINGING sound emerges again, the sound that can be found deep within one's ear.

GIRLIE

(barely audible)

He...

Suddenly. The RINGING stops.

GIRLIE

He gave me his card. He didn't ask for my number or anything.

CLARK

Well. There you go.

GIRLIE

No. That's my point. He gave me his card and I e-mailed *him*, not the other way around.

CLARK

Uh-huh. Yeah. He's good. I bet that man gives out a shit ton of cards, wherever he goes. It's a numbers game. Sometimes he gets the candy, sometimes he don't. But you better believe he's dishing out those cards like it's fuckin' ice cream. And when you contacted him, sweetie, you gave away your first piece of candy.

(MORE)

CLARK (CONT'D)

Can't blame a guy for wantin' more.
 (after a pause)
 Think about it. His card, it had a
business e-mail on it, am I right?

No reply.

CLARK

How long it take for him to switch you
 over to somethin'... a little more
private?

Something starts to take hold in Girlie... a thought
 that's disturbing. Something she's known. Deep down. But
 didn't want to know.

CLARK

Blink of a fuckin' eye, am I right?

No reply.

CLARK

He wasn't lookin' for love, sweetheart.
 He wasn't lookin' to *replace* his wife.
 Who the hell wants to go to all that
 trouble? *Nah*. He's all set up, the way he
 wants to be. He was just lookin' for
 another toy to play with. And clearly...
 he found it.

(after a pause)

For all your smarts and all the time and
 effort and everything you've clearly done
 to make yourself a fuckin' fortress...
 somehow... you have found yourself back
 in that bathtub again. Your hands and
 legs all tied up. Fightin' so hard to get
 free.

Attempting to lighten the mood-

CLARK

One to two. I'm catchin' up.

So over this conversation-

GIRLIE

(dryly)
 Ya done yet?

CLARK

What?

She almost says the word, "**Mansplaining.**" But, instead,
 decides to swallow that word like a jagged little pill.

GIRLIE

You have said very little, in a *very long time*, that I didn't already know.

CLARK

So...

GIRLIE

(simply)

So go fuck yourself.

With that, Girlie turns her gaze to the window again. Clearly, he's gone a bit too far.

Clark lets out a very soft EXHALE. And his own brow furrows at himself.

CLARK

Listen... I run my mouth off sometimes... That's my problem. I like to push buttons.

No reply.

CLARK

And stuff like this. It's just somethin' people don't wanna talk about. Who fuckin' talks about this shit? *No one.*

Again. No reply.

With utmost sincerity, Clark turns again, half his face slightly distorted from a few scratches embedded within the plexiglass... the other half clear as day.

CLARK

Look... I can tell you're a wonderful person. A *human*. Askin' my name and shit. You got a good heart. I can see that. Which is why... I just gotta tell ya that... you're better off just walkin' away.

(a beat)

And I say all this, not 'cause I think I'm smarter than you are, I'm sayin' it 'cause... I used to be that guy. Doin' what your guy's doin'. But now- I mean- Honestly- The way you look right now... that face of yours, all sad and shit... it's why I don't go for the full candy no more.

(MORE)

CLARK (CONT'D)

I mean, I'll take a blowjob now and again, but- A lot of you girls these days, you grow a conscience in the mornin', and I can't deal with that no more, I'm too old.

After only a beat, a slave to curiosity...

CLARK

Your guy young or old?

GIRLIE

(after a beat)

Old.

CLARK

How old?

GIRLIE

Old.

CLARK

Like what? *Daddy*-type shit?

Girlie pulls an old receipt from her purse and buries her gum inside it.

GIRLIE

(after a pause, plainly)

He could be my father, yes.

CLARK

So... I'm guessin' you don't have a daddy, right?

GIRLIE

I mean, I do, but-

CLARK

But you don't have a daddy. And you wanted *him* to be your daddy, am I right?

No reply.

CLARK

(after a long beat)

Ever call him "Daddy"?

Girlie forces another melancholy grin.

GIRLIE

(after a pause)

Two to two.

CLARK

We're tied?

GIRLIE

We are tied.

CLARK

You call him "Daddy."

GIRLIE

I do.

CLARK

That's *hot*.

GIRLIE

It's fucked up.

CLARK

Nothin' fucked up about that. I mean... I don't know much about psychology or whatnot, but it don't take rocket-science to know that you got a little girl inside you. The little girl you used to be. She didn't go nowhere. And that little girl didn't have a daddy, but she still fuckin' needs a daddy, right?

(a pause)

So, you meet this guy, what, with his bald head and liver spots - whatever the hell he's got goin' on - would make most girls your age wanna puke, but not you. 'Cause he's everything you missed out on back in the day. He's all the things your friends had, but you didn't fuckin' have.

(a pause)

And now, years later, yeah, you meet this older guy, and the little girl on the inside, she just wants her daddy to hold her, tell her nice things, read her bedtime stories. But, the grown woman you are on the outside wants, well... she wants a different kinda bedtime story, if you catch my drift. Put the two together, and *that* guy gets a chance at havin' somethin' he would've never fuckin' touched otherwise.

GIRLIE

(after a pause)

Me.

CLARK

You.

(after a beat)

He's a lucky son-of-a-bitch to have gotten your candy, if you don't mind my sayin'.

Red and blue lights pulse on his face for a pause.

CLARK

He got kids?

GIRLIE

He does.

CLARK

How many?

GIRLIE

Three.

CLARK

Shit. How old?

GIRLIE

Young.

CLARK

How old?

No reply.

CLARK

Single digits?

GIRLIE

Single digits.

CLARK

His wife young?

GIRLIE

Nah, I think they just waited.

CLARK

Have you met her?

GIRLIE

No.

CLARK

You seen her?

GIRLIE

No.

CLARK

But you seen pictures.

No reply.

CLARK

Come on, this day and age? You wanna picture, you can find a mothah-fuckin' picture. Hell, for a little salt? You can even find out where they live. Shit, the last *three* places they've lived if you set your mind to it.

GIRLIE

(after a beat)

Why do you care?

CLARK

Huh?

GIRLIE

Why do you care if he has kids or a wife or any of it? What does it matter to you?

Clark sincerely weighs the question.

CLARK

I guess... I don't know... Guess I've always been curious. 'Bout people. Gets me into trouble, I'm not gonna lie. I got a mouth on me, and I need to learn how to zip it now and again, I do know that.

(a thoughtful beat)

I guess, I-uh... To be honest, I drive this beast around and... can't do much else but *think*, ya know? And when you think too much, you ask too many questions. Nothin' special about it.

(a pause)

But, hey, it ain't all for nothin', I mean... who else you gonna talk to about this shit?

(another pause)

Not like you're ever gonna see me again.

Silence. A very weighted silence. Then-

GIRLIE

I found *one* picture of her. They're pretty private.

CLARK

They both in the picture?

GIRLIE

They're at some corporate thing. Like an award thing.

CLARK

What are they doin'? In the picture?

GIRLIE

They're just... smiling. They're sitting next to each other and... they're just... smiling at the camera.

CLARK

And?

GIRLIE

And... they look... normal. They just look normal.

CLARK

He win the award?

GIRLIE

He did.

CLARK

What, he some kinda big-shot or somethin'? Someone I'd recognize?

GIRLIE

(softly, plainly)

Oh-yeah.

Silence. Then-

CLARK

How old is she? The wife?

GIRLIE

Late forties, I'd say.

CLARK

She pretty?

GIRLIE

(sincerely)

She looks really sweet.

CLARK

(a laugh)

So, she's not pretty.

GIRLIE

She's lovely. She has this huge smile,
like a really happy smile.

(a painful beat)

I looked at that photo for a long time.
It gave me this strange feeling like,
maybe... maybe she and I could have been
friends.

CLARK

(genuinely)

Yeah. Maybe. Another time, another place.
Maybe.

(a beat)

Ever meet the kids?

GIRLIE

Oh-God-no.

CLARK

You find pictures?

GIRLIE

He shows me pictures.

CLARK

Fuck. Like on his phone?

GIRLIE

Yeah. Video, too.

CLARK

(actually surprised)

No kiddin'. That is some fuckin' trust
right there. That is some real fuckin'
trust.

(a thoughtful beat)

Huh.

GIRLIE

What?

CLARK

You did it.

GIRLIE

What did I do?

CLARK

I don't know. But you did somethin'.

Girlie's expression begs for Clark to explain further.

CLARK

He let you in. As far as anyone in your position can possibly go.

GIRLIE

And what am I supposed to do with that?

CLARK

Look. It don't change nothin'. But it *is* a compliment.

Silence.

CLARK

The kids cute?

GIRLIE

They're adorable.

CLARK

Boys? Girls?

GIRLIE

Twin boys and a girl.

CLARK

Huh.

GIRLIE

(after a beat)

He showed me this... this video of his daughter, dancing. Three years old and... she's wearing this red cape. Like a princess cape or something. And she's just... twirling and twirling.

CLARK

Dancin' for her daddy. That's sweet. You ever dance like that for your daddy? Your *real* daddy, I mean. When you were a kid?

GIRLIE

(simply)

No.

A beat. Then-

GIRLIE

I had a cape though. A long purple cape.
(after a pause)
Made me think I could fly.

CLARK

Cape wasn't lyin'. You can fly just fine.

Another beat. Then-

GIRLIE
I still have it.

CLARK
What?

GIRLIE
My purple cape. It's the only thing I kept. From back then.

CLARK
Ever put it on?

GIRLIE
No.

CLARK
You should. Every once in a while.

GIRLIE
Yeah?

CLARK
Yeah. Why the fuck not?

GIRLIE
It's under my bed. In a garbage bag.

CLARK
Pull that shit out, put that shit on, and walk down the fuckin' street. In this town? No one's gonna bat an eye.

Silence.

CLARK
So, what about the twins? What do they do?

GIRLIE
They're silly. They like to shake their butts at the camera and say, "Nanny-Nanny-boo-boo."

CLARK
I thought it was "Nanna-Nanna-boo-boo"?

GIRLIE
I don't know - they say, "Nanny-Nanny."

CLARK

Guess it don't matter either way. They're still gonna get a pop on the ass for wavin' it around.

The two chuckle lightly together.

CLARK

Nothin' "Nanny" or "Nanna" can do 'bout it, am I right?

GIRLIE

Ah, they seem like good kids.

The two lock eyes.

CLARK

(with sincerity)

And you get the feelin' you coulda been friends. With the kids. Another time, another place.

With a sad smile, Girlie simply nods. Another ocean wave of true empathy crashing over Clark's countenance.

CLARK

Yeah, well... He can pretend to be a daddy to you... but he's gotta be a real daddy to them, so... you get why you ain't goin' to Greece.

HONK, HONK!!

Startled, Clark turns and- Throws the cab in "D"-

Driving carefully beyond the FIRE TRUCK and two POLICE CRUISERS-

The emergency lights pounding down even harder upon their stark faces as they pass-

A wrecked car flipped upside-down and beaten to shit.

The horrific scene assuring both Girlie and Clark that... someone lost their life tonight.

Right here. *In this spot.*

CLARK

Shit. That ain't no fender bender.

Stoically, Girlie stares out the right windows as-

EXT. INTERSTATE 495 AND BEYOND - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

-The cab carefully maneuvers around the RED and BLUE, gifting us a glimpse of Clark and Girlie each gazing out their windows with a reverent fear and awe of mortality, their faces aglow from the fire of the red flares.

As the cab begins to pick up speed, the fixed street lamps morph into shooting stars of passing light, the HUUUUUUUMMMMMMM of rubber kissing asphalt beginning its comforting song again.

INT. NYC YELLOW CAB - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Still rattled by the accident, Girlie and Clark both have fallen silent.

And in this expansive, cold, perpetual loneliness...

Girlie stares at her phone.

And. Flips it over.

And. Unlocks it to find-

Lost you L (TEXT)

You there? L (TEXT)

Paying bar tap L (TEXT)

**Tab* L (TEXT)

Heading home for the night L (TEXT)

See u next time? L (TEXT)

CLOSE ON GIRLIE. The phone illuminating her beautiful, conflicted face.

She types a text... and sends.

Still stuck in traffic GIRLIE (TEXT)

New dots immediately appear, not so surprising this time. Clearly, "L" has been waiting.

L (TEXT)

(...)

Sorry for being a dick

(...)

Sober now

(...)

Lots of water :)

ON GIRLIE- Softening-

GIRLIE (TEXT)

Old school smiley

(TEXT)

Classic :)

L (TEXT)

(...)

proud of you for going

(...)

Just missed you

(...)

Missed the smell of you

(...)

those lips

(...)

You're skin

(...)

**your*

ON GIRLIE. That aching addiction. Rising. Finally-

GIRLIE (TEXT)

Missed you too

Then.

GIRLIE (**TEXT**)

Makes me wet
(TEXT)
dripping wet
(TEXT)
thinking of you

EXTREME CLOSE UP ON GIRLIE-

AS SHE TYPES FIVE LETTERS-

"D-A-D-D-Y"...

And.

Sends.

GIRLIE (**TEXT**)

Daddy

L (**TEXT**)

(...)

fuck

(...)

Send pic please honey

(...)

daddy needs you

At war with herself, Girlie locks her phone, with the paranoia of a teenager afraid of being caught watching porn.

She sits in silence, the wheels in her brain turning, turning, turning.

HUUUUUUMMMMMMMMMMMMM - sings the rubber on asphalt.

Looking up, Girlie studies Clark who seems completely lost in thought - his eyes on the dark road ahead, his thumbs gently TAPPING on the steering wheel again.

Then.

Girlie opens **"ALL PHOTOS"**-

Scrolling through her **"ALBUMS"**-

Landing on a series of **NAKED SELFIES** she's previously taken in the privacy of her own apartment.

They are so fucking sexy, they are truly mind blowing.

Selecting her **FAVORITE PHOTO-**

Girlie takes to editing.

GIRLIE'S POV ON HER PHONE - Girlie ZOOMS IN on her soft, young, gorgeous tits, cropping the photo.

She chooses a filter which darkens the image a bit, then takes a screenshot of the photo to make it appear as if it was just taken in the back of a cab, as marked by the current day and time stamp.

Then-

With one last moment of hesitation-

She sends the photo to "L."

And-

Within an instant-

(...) L (**TEXT**)

REVERSE ON GIRLIE-

Impatient for her next fix- Waiting for a reply.

(...) L (**TEXT**)

Oh darling

(...)

Did you let your driver watch you?

(...)

so naughty

(...)

Thank you princess

The screen suddenly goes dark as Girlie locks her phone.

Swallowing hard again, Girlie chokes back a wave of emotion, her face hardening with her signature, militant resolve. And-

CLARK (O.S.)

Eleven years... that's a big difference.

Turning her head, Girlie faces Clark without the slightest trace of weakness.

CLARK

Your sister. Bein' that much older.

Internally rattled, taking a moment to reply-

GIRLIE

Yeah... she was only seventeen when we both left home. I was six.

CLARK

You run away?

GIRLIE

I... went to live with her.

CLARK

Can't imagine any Oklahoma judge sayin' that was all right.

GIRLIE

No. No one said it was all right. But that's what happened.

CLARK

You live in the armpit? With your sister?

GIRLIE

We moved to Woodward, actually. About twenty minutes away. Into her boyfriend's house.

CLARK

Boyfriend?

GIRLIE

She had boyfriends back then.

CLARK

Why'd you go live with your sister? Your daddy do somethin'? Somethin' he shouldn't have done?

GIRLIE

No, it was never like that.

CLARK

What was it like?

GIRLIE

(after a thoughtful beat)

He-uh... he actually... he *never* touched me. He just... he never touched me.

CLARK

Not ever?

GIRLIE

It's actually an easy thing to do, not touch someone.

CLARK

Not one hug? Not once?

GIRLIE

It didn't have to be a hug. Pat on the back would have been nice. A fuckin' high-five.

Clark nods. He seems to greatly understand.

GIRLIE

(a thoughtful beat)

But... the day we left... I remember my sister... jumped in her car and... my dad was sitting on the porch.

Slowly, softly, that faint RINGING sound emerges again.

GIRLIE

And just before I left... I turned around and... I looked at him. And he looked at me. And then he... got up and walked over to me... and he reached out... and he shook my hand.

(a pained beat)

I'd never shaken anyone's hand before, I was six... I was just little, ya know...

The RINGING finally stops. Softly---

GIRLIE

But I knew what it meant.

CLARK

(after a beat)

What he look like? Your pop?

GIRLIE

Oh... he was a cowboy.

CLARK

Never met a cowboy before.

GIRLIE

You'll know it when you see it.

CLARK

What? 'Cause of the hat?

GIRLIE

You'll know it when you see it.

CLARK

He have an accent?

GIRLIE

Oh, yeah.

(with a thick, Oklahoma
accent)

A real, real good'n.

CLARK

Huh.

(after a beat)

Gonna put that on my list. You know,
before I die. Number twenty two: Meet a
mother fuckin' cowboy.

Girlie glances at her phone, but fights away the
maddening temptation with-

GIRLIE

What else is on your list?

CLARK

Already done most of it.

GIRLIE

Like what?

CLARK

Like, I-uh... I learned how to scuba dive
last year. Took a trip to Nassau. Sat on
the edge of a boat and - they make you
fall backward, right? You fall back in
the water, and... start to let the air
outta your sails. And down, down, down
you go... I mean, I didn't go too far.
Don't have the trainin' for the crazy
stuff - shipwrecks and whatnot. But I did
swim around this-uh, this mountain of
coral, what with all these little fuckin'
clownfish and angelfish and barracuda and
sponges and snapper and grouper.

(after a beat)

Saw a blue whale even. *Yeah.*

(MORE)

CLARK (CONT'D)

A big ass blue whale passed right by us, not too far away, just swimmin' along like it was nothin'. Fuckin' poetry, that shit.

GIRLIE

Wow.

CLARK

Yeah, wow. That was a big fuckin' WOW. But... I don't know if I'll do it again.

GIRLIE

Why not?

CLARK

... Takes a lotta guts to breathe underwater. That's the biggest challenge. Tellin' your brain that it's okay to allow your body to do this thing it wasn't fuckin' made to do. Had to take ten minutes just to breathe calmly, you know, in and out, in and out. Tellin' myself I wasn't gonna die. Tellin' myself I could always surface if shit went down. Wasn't afraid to see a shark, wasn't afraid to be left alone, was just... mostly afraid of breathin'. And that. Is some scary shit right there. Findin' yourself afraid to breathe.

GIRLIE

(a thoughtful beat)

Always liked sharks. Did you see one?

CLARK

Nah. But I tell everyone I did.

(telling the story)

Great White. Thirteen feet long. Two, three tons. Swims around me, lookin' for lunch. Until I look that fucker in the eye and give him the middle finger. Just like that, shark swims away. He knew what's what. *Fuck, I love that story.*

GIRLIE

What's on your list that you haven't done?

CLARK

(a thoughtful beat)

I do wanna go to Japan one day. Heard a lot about it.

(MORE)

CLARK (CONT'D)

Heard about how, in that culture, if you're drunk or if you're a foreigner, you're forgiven for makin' an ass of yourself. And if you are *both* drunk and a foreigner, all the more mercy is extended your way. Which is great for me, 'cause, I love gettin' shit-faced in a new city.

(a pause)

They also got these-uh, these vendin' machines... with used bloomers in 'em.

GIRLIE

Bloomers?

CLARK

Panties!

GIRLIE

C'mon, man, we've been over this!

CLARK

Well, I tried to call 'em somethin' else, and you didn't know what the fuck I was talkin' about!

(teasing, very loudly)

They got used girls' panties!

GIRLIE

(teasing back)

Nooooooo!

CLARK

Panties in vending machines! Least that's what I heard. And I gotta see that shit.

GIRLIE

They can't really be used.

CLARK

I don't give a fuck either way. It'll be mind over matter on that one.

Girlie cannot help but laugh.

CLARK

What about you, huh? What's on your list?

GIRLIE

Oh... I don't know.

CLARK

Come on. Talk to me.

GIRLIE

Well, I... guess... I have always wanted to learn how to swing dance.

CLARK

Yeah?

GIRLIE

Yeah. Like get tossed around and stuff. It looks like a lot of fun.

(a beat)

I think I'd be good at it.

CLARK

Bet you would.

SLOW ZOOM IN ON GIRLIE - The following monologue delivered almost directly into the camera, as a confession or admission.

GIRLIE

(laced with a sad longing)

And. I guess... I have been thinking about having an herb garden in my window... basil and stuff. And then. Try to remember to use it when I'm cooking. Which. Isn't that often, but...

CLARK (O.S.)

What else?

GIRLIE

(a thoughtful beat)

I wanna be a freaky birdwatcher in Central Park that knows about all the birds. Someone that can recognize their calls. I just wanna be a bird-lady... I wanna learn how to play the ukulele, and not be afraid to sing... even though I can't really sing... I wanna see virgin rainforest before it disappears... some place in Brazil, maybe... I wanna... hablar español perfectamente and go to Oaxaca during Noche de Rábanos and eat *all* the things... I want to know Paris and London and Rome and Berlin and Barcelona like... they were my friends, and, yes... I want to stand at the edge of a fucking cliff in Greece... and dive off that mother fucker.

ON CLARK.

CLARK

What else?

GIRLIE

(with a laugh)

What do you mean, what else, I just told you so much.

CLARK

(laughing back)

What? Time for me to ante up?

GIRLIE

Damn straight.

CLARK

How many chips you got on the table?

GIRLIE

Two. We're tied, remember? Two to two.

CLARK

And you raise me one?

GIRLIE

And it better be a good one.

CLARK

I give you a good one... you'll match me?

GIRLIE

I'm not gonna let you win, that's for damn sure.

CLARK

All right, all right, I can hang.

Clark sincerely takes a moment to think, but-

GIRLIE

And it has to be something personal, okay, not one of your little anecdotes.

CLARK

Well, fuck, I don't know.

Coyly, Girlie leans closer, elbow perched on the open window of the plexiglass, a playful smirk on her lips.

GIRLIE

Like... How'd you meet your wife?

CLARK

Which one?

GIRLIE

The first one.

Clark lightly chuckles at the memory...

CLARK'S POV THROUGH WINDSHIELD-

The white lines in the dark asphalt - the separation of the lanes - guide the cab onward around a curve. Into the darkness. The unknown. What it feels like to live a life.

INT. NYC YELLOW CAB, FRONT & BACK - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

CLARK

She threw up in my cab.

GIRLIE

Classy.

CLARK

She was clubbin' with her girlfriends. Ladies' night or some shit. They were all in these tight dresses, and high heels, and smelled like booze and sweat and... flowers. Fuck. I was in Heaven. All these pretty ladies, crammed in my cab, sittin' on each other's laps, talkin' so loud, laughin' and screamin' out the window, askin' me to turn up the music like some disco ball was gonna drop from a fuckin' moonroof. And, I gotta be honest - My cock was so hard, just poundin' in my panties, 'cause odds were, I was gettin' lucky that night. And if I wasn't lucky, I'd have plenty of good material to rub one out later, ya know?

GIRLIE

Riiight.

CLARK

And then, out of nowhere, blonde in the back doubles over and empties out her stomach. Which wasn't holdin' much, I am thankful to report.

GIRLIE

What happened?

CLARK

Not much you can do. I drop 'em off, light the "Off Duty," get back to the garage, hose down the cab - and there it was. Her *purse*. Right there on the floor.

(a beat)

Next day, she calls the company, gives an address. And me, bein' the *gentleman* that I am... I offer to drop that shit off myself, and-uh... didn't have to jerk off after payin' her a visit, I can tell ya that.

Sincerely needing to know, Girlie leans her head against the side of the plexiglass window- Then-

GIRLIE

Why did you marry her?

CLARK

(softening)

Ah... she was a doll. Dumb as shit, but still... she was a sweetheart.

(a beat)

Used to play pranks on her. You know, hide behind the couch and jump out, put sugar in the salt shaker, dumb shit like that. And... she always laughed about it. You know, she'd *choose* to laugh about it. Like... when somethin' happens and you gotta choice. That choice to get pissed off or the choice to laugh it off... She'd *laugh*. She'd *choose* to laugh every time.

GIRLIE

She ever get you?

CLARK

What? A prank?

GIRLIE

Yeah.

Recalling the memory for the first time in years-

CLARK

(a chuckle)

She did once. She-uh... she poured cold water on me when I was takin' a shower. A bucket of ice water - Niagara Falls - right down on top of me. And I had that same choice, ya know. That choice whether to get *pissed* off or to *laugh* it off.

GIRLIE

What did you choose?

Clark grins, his gaze softly focused on the Interstate ahead, but his mind is elsewhere.

CLARK

I laughed my fuckin' ass off. Chased her 'round the house in my birthday suit. She was screamin' like a little girl, like we were playin' tag or some shit... Finally caught her in the kitchen...

(a thoughtful pause)

That was a good day.

GIRLIE

I bet she's a lot smarter than you give her credit for.

No reply.

CLOSE ON GIRLIE. Still lingering in the plexiglass window-

GIRLIE

You miss her?

CLOSE ON CLARK. Weighing his feelings very carefully-

CLARK

I guess I do sometimes.

(a beat)

Yeah... She was like a summer day, you know? Not too complicated. Just... a beer and a bag of chips... and we were set.

(after a beat)

Three to two. You gonna match me or what?

Girlie draws a breath, but has no words-

CLARK

That last one's a tough act to follow.

GIRLIE

Yeah, you surprised me there.

CLARK

Surprised myself, I don't talk about my shit!

GIRLIE

You think I talk about my shit?!

CLARK

So, there you go. That's what's on the table.

CLARK

Let's talk about shit. Let's talk about *alllll the shit!*

GIRLIE

I'll think of a good one.

CLARK

Easy. Make it about your daddy.

GIRLIE

(a chuckle)

Which one?

CLARK

You pick.

GIRLIE

Fuck.

Girlie retreats from the window with a dramatic sigh, now reclined again in the backseat-

CLARK

Come on. There's gotta be at least one more thing you haven't told me. Something you are just *dyin'* to say out loud.

(a beat, OFF GIRLIE)

Take your time. Not like I'm goin' nowhere.

As Girlie sinks into the seat, her stare turns to the window again- Where a **SPRAWLING VISTA OF MANHATTAN** reveals itself. A spellbinding twinkling topography of urban stars. Stars worthy to wish upon. An offering of hope. Glittering across her somber expression.

EXT. INTERSTATE 495 - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

TRACKING WITH THE CAB - the lights of Manhattan shimmering closely in the background - we round a bend and disappear into the darkness of the Queens Midtown Tunnel, a passageway just under the flowing East River.

These two souls have literally just gone underwater.

INT./EXT. NYC YELLOW CAB / QUEENS MIDTOWN TUNNEL - NIGHT

This claustrophobic tube - covered wall to ceiling in off-white tiling - bathes the cab in that same sickening yellow cloud of toxic light pollution.

And there, in the yellowed dim, Girlie's face falls... making her look like a lost little girl... staring at the small darkened TV screen before her. At her own black mirrored reflection. Sitting in the back of a cab. Alone.

And... this imagine causes her to flip over her phone again... and unlock it.

L (TEXT)

*Sorry
Twins woke up*

CLOSE ON GIRLIE. Her face brightening at the mention of the twins, a very genuine, maternal impulse.

L (TEXT)

(...)

Got one down. One to go

GIRLIE (TEXT)

Who's still up?

L (TEXT)

(...)

Marlon. He had a bad dream

GIRLIE (TEXT)

Poor baby

L (TEXT)

(...)

Been looking for monsters under the bed

(...)

so we can stab them with a sword

GIRLIE (TEXT)

The light up sword?

L (TEXT)

(...)

Yup

GIRLIE (**TEXT**)
What color is it set to?

L (**TEXT**)
 (...)

Green

GIRLIE (**TEXT**)
The perfect color for killing monsters

L (**TEXT**)
 (...)

Exactly

(...)

sorry should go

A beat.

Then-

GIRLIE (**TEXT**)
Wait

L (**TEXT**)
 (...)

?

Girlie looks like an anxious kid coming to the edge of a very high diving board just before taking a brave leap.

GIRLIE (**TEXT**)
Did it bother you?
When I said I loved you?

L (**TEXT**)
 (...)

No

She doesn't buy it.

GIRLIE (**TEXT**)
It seemed to bother you

L (**TEXT**)
 (...)

Surprised me but did bother me

(MORE)

L (TEXT) (CONT'D)

(...)

**didn't*

Still not assured-

GIRLIE (TEXT)

Okay

L (TEXT)

(...)

I care more than you think

(...)

You're important

ECU OF THE PHONE

Girlie drafts:

"But what does that mean? I don't know what that means."

But, she decides to delete this and-

Instead she writes, **"Yeah?"**

And sends.

GIRLIE (TEXT)

Yeah?

L (TEXT)

(...)

Yes

(...)

always have been

ON GIRLIE. Gravely unsure. Then-

L (TEXT)

(...)

Sorry, m Marlon needs me

GIRLIE (TEXT)

Go kill all the monsters

L (TEXT)

(...)

I will

(...)

goodnight

(...)

Then, from the **POV OF THE PHONE**, looking up at Girlie through the glass, we witness the next four words as they are branded across her somber face...

L (TEXT)

(...)

love you too

ON GIRLIE. In shock. That last text reflected in her eyes. She draws a soft INHALE.

Only to glance up, to find... Clark gazing at her in the rearview with a look on his face revealing he knows exactly who she's been talking to. And, further still... it seems as if he's always known.

Owning it, Girlie doesn't look away. They hold here, sharing an entire conversation without saying one word.

Then-

EXT. EAST 37TH STREET - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

-The cab emerges from the birthing canal of the Midtown Tunnel into the bright bustle of Manhattan.

INT./EXT. NYC YELLOW CAB - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

As they head west on 37th street across town - every color of light gleefully bursts into the cab, dancing and flirting and teasing away the shadows.

CLARK

Got a few more minutes, if you still
wanna play for the win.

A bit rattled, Girlie sits in silence.

CLARK

What's left? What have you not told me?

Clark waits patiently as Girlie wrestles with something.
After a long beat-

GIRLIE

Last night... my sister and I...

CLOSE ON GIRLIE - The glaring lights of Manhattan have demystified the details of this beauty, offering a vulnerability unlike we've ever seen.

GIRLIE

We got drunk. We got really drunk. And. We were sitting outside her trailer, and... she has these little chili pepper lights - like Christmas lights or something - draped all around. And... we sat there, in these old beach chairs, and just... drank and drank.

CLARK

What about Eagle?

GIRLIE

She was grilling up some burgers.

A stoplight turns from green to red, forcing the cab to halt...

CLARK

You talk about the bathtub?

GIRLIE

(with a laugh)

We did! I brought it up and she just... laughed. She laughed so hard, she cried. She didn't apologize or anything- It was amazing.

CLARK

What else ya talk about?

GIRLIE

Everything. We talked about the perms our mom used to give us, sitting on a stool in the kitchen, with this old pink towel draped over our shoulders... That smell... that perm smell... it'd stick around for days.

Girlie swallows, hard.

CLOSE ON GIRLIE-

GIRLIE

And we start talking about that day...
the day she took me away. And I told my
side of the story. And she told *her* side.

INT./EXT. NYC YELLOW CAB - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

The stoplight turns from red to green-

Clark continuing onward-

CLARK

What'd she tell ya?

ECU OF GIRLIE-

GIRLIE

She told me that... our dad *was* on the
porch that day. She told me that... we
passed him on our way to her car. And
then... she got in the car, and then, I
got in the car. And then... we just drove
away.

(a beat)

She said that... he *didn't* shake my hand
that day. But. When I think back on it,
it doesn't make any sense, because... I
remember it so clearly... even the feel
of his hand... I remember thinking it
felt like sandpaper.

CLARK

And. So. Which of you is right? You or
your sister?

GIRLIE

(shaking her head, simply)

I don't know.

(a pause)

But... if that memory isn't real... the
moment my father *finally* touched me... I
don't know what is...

CLARK

(a beat, quietly)

Ones and zeros.

GIRLIE

(quietly back)

Yeah... Ones and zeros.

Clark weighs his words carefully. Then, quietly-

CLARK

I got a story kinda like that... 'bout my pop. That moment when all the shit comes into focus. Then goes back out again. But-uh... that's a whole other cab ride.

The two GAZE at one another in the review, sharing a deep understanding without words.

GIRLIE

We're tied again. Three to three.

CLARK

Three-all. *Nice.*

Breaking their gaze, Girlie looks out the window again, the lights of the city kissing her face, until-

Another stoplight turning red, the cab halting again.

INT./EXT. NYC YELLOW CAB - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Girlie still gazing out the window.

The city lights etched upon her pensive face.

After a beat, the red stoplight turns green.

GIRLIE

We did a rain dance last night. The three of us... just drunk... but Eagle, Eagle showed us how.

CLARK

(after a beat)

Did it rain?

Her eyes gloss over as she fights back tears...

GIRLIE

That's just the thing... Two weeks ago, when I flew to Oklahoma...

With that same, stubborn resiliency, Girlie attempts to swallow back this tidal wave of emotion, when...

All goes SILENT, as if the air has been sucked out of the taxi again.

And there in the quiet, that gentle RINGING begins again.

RIIIIIIIINNNNNNNNG.

Until, finally, Girlie allows but one, small tear to dance down her cheek.

The RINGING stops for one more breath of SILENCE.

Then-

GIRLIE

... I was *pregnant*.

CLOSE ON- Clark in the SIDE MIRROR- Taking this information like a bullet to the chest.

CLARK

(after a beat, simply)

What'd your "daddy" have to say about that?

GIRLIE

I never told him... I never told anyone.

CLARK

(a beat, carefully)

You... get rid of the baby?

A few more tears just barely escape Girlie's eyes, carving a small, thin salt stain down each cheek.

GIRLIE

It got rid of *me*... First day in Oklahoma, I started bleeding.

(a beat)

My sister didn't know. I just told her I was having a bad period. Like a really shitty period... She let me sleep a lot. Gave me a heating pad and ice cream.

(a pause)

But... after seven days, when I kept bleeding... I had to hide the tampons. Pretend it was just a regular period that ended... I had to get up and go out and meet all her friends and eat fucking barbecue and drink beer and go to a Thunder game... feeling like *trash*.

(a beat)

I wasn't going to keep it. I'd already made up my mind. I wasn't going to keep it, and I wasn't going to tell anyone. And then... when it happened, when it just... happened on its own... I was so relieved, I've never been so relieved in my life...

INT./EXT. NYC YELLOW CAB - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Clark gently turns right on 10th Ave, heading north.

GIRLIE

And then last night, when we were dancing... in my mind... I really did, I just begged the sky to rain down on me... To *clean* me... to *wash* it all away... the whole fucking thing.

Large pools of tears welling in her eyes-

GIRLIE

I asked the sky to just take it from me.
(a pause)
And then... this morning, when I woke up... I wasn't bleeding anymore. After two weeks... it stopped.

CLARK

... Rain dance worked.

With one laugh through free-flowing tears, Girlie finally allows the floodgates to open, the salt stains upon her cheeks now healthy, necessary streams.

GIRLIE

Four to three.

CLARK

(softly)
Shit, I fold.

After a beat, lightly smiling through tears-

GIRLIE

I win?

CLARK

Can't beat that, that's for sure.

Leaning her head back, Girlie let's out a soft EXHALE and-

The cab hits another red light, slowing to a stop.

Clark watching Girlie silently wipe the tears from her eyes in the rearview, with ache- Wanting to say something, anything of comfort, but not knowing how.

INT./EXT. NYC YELLOW CAB - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

The red light turning green- Clark turns right on 44th-

When-

CLARK

Sorry, sweetie, uh... not quite sure
where to stop.

Immediately, pulling herself together-

GIRLIE

Oh, uh- It's the-uh, the brownstone-
Right up there on the left.

INT./EXT. NYC YELLOW CAB - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Pulling up to the curb, Clark puts the taxi in "P," as
Girlie pulls a wallet from her purse.

GIRLIE

I don't have any cash.

CLARK

No one ever does.

GIRLIE

I'm sorry, but-

She pulls out a credit card.

GIRLIE

I'll leave you a big tip though.

CLARK

(good humored)

Yeah, my advice don't come free.

She swipes her card, prompting the little screen in the
back to spring to life again, gifting Girlie the option
to leave a ten, fifteen or twenty percent tip.

CLARK

You gonna need a receipt?

GIRLIE

Nah, I'm good.

With that, Clark POPS open the trunk, jumps out of the
cab and SLAM!

Behind her, the trunk lifts open as Clark rescues her
rolling bag.

Unbeknownst to Clark, Girlie presses an "optional tip"
button which reads - **"CUSTOM."**

EXT. 44TH, BETWEEN 9TH AND 10TH - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

One sturdy, black ankle-boot plants onto the trampled, black-gum speckled sidewalk as Girlie assuredly lifts herself from the yellow taxicab.

She shuts the back door - WHAM!

The trunk still ajar, Clark places the rolling luggage carefully next to Girlie.

Normally, he'd slam the trunk closed, but instead...

The two stand, facing one another for the very first time, granting a new perspective. And it's caught them both off guard. As if in a dream.

GIRLIE

So...

CLARK

So...

(after a beat)

You gonna be all right?

GIRLIE

(after a thoughtful beat,
simply)

I don't know.

CLARK

Listen... Your brain... it's just confused right now. It's in a panic, 'cause it ain't used to breathin' underwater. It's gonna try to tell ya that you're in way over your head, that this is *it* for you, no gettin' out, you're done, end of story... But you just... just keep on breathin', all right? No matter how far down you go... you just keep on breathin'. 'Cause someone like you, you are *not* a shipwreck. You're gonna be all right. You're gonna... swim yourself back up again... back to all that life and light and color... Might even see a blue whale.

Girlie forces a vibrant smile through forming tears.

GIRLIE

I hope so...

Then. Slowly, gently, Clark holds out his hand, offering a *handshake*.

You can see it in his eyes, that he means this as a sincere offering, a way of attempting to make Girlie's false memory of her father *right* somehow. However he can.

So touched by this... Girlie reaches out her hand. But instead. Gently places it on Clark's *cheek*, cupping his face with it, looking deeply into his eyes.

GIRLIE
(with utmost sincerity)
Thank you.

CLARK
(sincerely back)
You are... most welcome.

They share a moment of quiet, neither knowing how to say goodbye. Finally... Girlie withdraws her touch.

GIRLIE
Have a good night.

CLARK
You too.

Then. Taking her rolling bag, Girlie begins to walk away. Yet, unable to help himself, Clark calls after her.

CLARK
Mikey.

Girlie stops, turning to him once more.

GIRLIE
What?

The two stand, their feet planted a distance away from one another, though they seem only inches apart.

CLARK
I always... sorta... felt like a *Mikey*.
Not a Vinnie. Not a Clark. If it were up to me... I'd choose *Mikey*.

Deeply touched by this, Girlie's tears give way to a grateful grin.

GIRLIE
Four to four.

CLARK
I have met my match.

GIRLIE
You play a good game.

CLARK
You too.

They smile at one another in another suspended moment of stillness. Then---

CLARK
You, uh... you live alone?

GIRLIE
(with a gentle grin)
You're not getting any candy.

With a playful shrug-

CLARK
Can't blame a guy for tryin'.

GIRLIE
(sweetly)
Goodnight, Mikey.

Clark watches Girlie head toward her building, not looking back, her luggage trailing behind her reinstated New York strut.

CLARK
Yeah, you take care of yourself, *girlie*.

And.

With that.

Clark slams the trunk tightly shut.

WHAM!

BLACKOUT.

CREDITS.