

CENTRAL

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1st Draft

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FADE IN:

INT. GLASGOW CENTRAL STATION — NIGHT

The grand concourse of the station is nearly empty. A few stragglers and the remaining train times show on the huge timetable board above the waiting area.

Footsteps echo in the distance. A cleaner sweeps up nearby.

WIDE SHOT — THE CLOCK.

Silent, imposing.

DAVID (30s, local, smart-casual) stands, pacing impatiently beneath it, phone in hand. He sighs, restless, worried.

He fails to notice KATE nearby (30s, New Zealander, backpacker) watching him from the quickly closing coffee kiosk.

A last irritated staff member hands her a paper cup. She lifts the cup with a wry smile in David's direction.

KATE  
Missed the last train?

David looks up, surprised.

DAVID  
Uh...no. Missed a date.

KATE  
Me too. Fresh off a twelve-hour bus ride. Someone was supposed to meet me here for a couch surf but they haven't showed. Didn't think Glasgow would be this quiet?

David still scans his phone, barely listening.

DAVID  
That sucks. The station closes up soon. Welcome back, anyway.

KATE  
It's my first time here.

She looks disappointed at his lack of interest, and gestures with her cup.

KATE (cont'd)  
You look like you need this more than me. Can I get you one?

COFFEE STAFF (O.S.)  
We're closed.

DAVID  
Nae luck.

He pauses for the first time, putting away his phone.

DAVID (cont'd)  
Sorry, I didn't meant to be rude.

KATE  
No worries. How late is she?

DAVID  
Only half an hour.

KATE  
You don't give up easy.

DAVID  
I thought this-

KATE  
-would be the one?

They both share a giggle.

KATE (cont'd)  
We've all been there, mate. Never fun  
being stood up.

DAVID  
I thought she would be-

KATE  
-different?

He smiles, warming to this unexpected arrival.

DAVID  
Yeah. So, you have somewhere to stay,  
or-?

KATE  
You offering?

She grins at his sudden awkwardness.

KATE (cont'd)  
It's OK, I'll find a hostel or  
something.

DAVID  
Is anything open, I-

She holds out a gloved hand, putting down her huge backpack.

KATE  
I'm Kate, by the way. New-

DAVID  
-Zealand? I recognise the accent.

KATE  
Auckland. You ever been?

DAVID  
I wish.

KATE  
Been travelling through Europe for a while now. Figured I should see the sights while I'm young.

DAVID  
Yeah? Good call.

David looks down at his phone again, distracted. Kate senses she is losing him, and swings up her backpack again.

KATE  
Anyway, was nice meeting you Dave.

DAVID  
David. Uh, you too. Hope you enjoy Glasgow.

KATE  
Sure, I'll do my best. How you getting home then?

DAVID  
I think I missed the last train. It's not far, I can walk.

KATE  
Lucky you.

The slight disappointment in her voice is obvious.

DAVID  
Do you have far to go?

KATE  
(mock hurt)  
We have phones too down under.  
(MORE)

KATE (cont'd)  
I'll be just fine, thanks.

They shake hands again, an awkward goodbye. She seems unimpressed with his hand shaking skills.

KATE (cont'd)  
It's OK you won't break my arm. So,  
you think she's still on her way?

DAVID  
(shrugs)  
I dunno. She's not answering.

KATE  
Doesn't feel like a total loss  
though, right.

One last hopeful smile from Kate. They exchange smiles this time and David puts his phone away, looking sheepish.

KATE (cont'd)  
Do you know if anything's still open?  
I could do with putting this down.

DAVID  
Well, there's probably somewhere  
nearby. Plenty hostels?

She looks disappointed.

KATE  
Oh...OK. I was hoping someone could  
show me-

DAVID  
-I didn't mean to be rude. It's  
just...

He looks up at the clock.

KATE  
No worries. No doubt she's still on  
her way. Like a said, nice meeting  
you.

David can only nod uselessly as Kate strides off in a slight huff, towards the main exit door, slowly, half-glancing back at David.

David half-glances back, looks down at his phone again, then up at the big clock, with a long sigh.

He makes a decision.

DAVID  
(to himself)  
What am I doing?

He turns and jogs up to Kate, who turns back and smiles.

KATE  
Given up already?

DAVID  
Yeah, you're right, she's not coming.

KATE  
Her loss, mate. So where now?

DAVID  
I know a place, opens late? We can  
look for something over a pint?

KATE  
I'm sold. You buying?

DAVID  
It's only fair.

KATE  
Awesome!

Kate struggles with her rucksack and David offers to take it. It is a lot heavier than he was expecting.

DAVID  
What do you keep in here?

KATE  
Everything!

She giggles at him, as he struggles to sling it over his shoulder. He gestures at the exit doors.

DAVID  
After you?

KATE  
A gentleman? I love it!

They share another laugh as Kate grabs his free arm, and they both head cheerily towards the Gordon Street exit.

INT. GLASGOW CENTRAL STATION — CONCOURSE — NIGHT

Quick heeled footsteps echo from the back of the concourse.

EMMA (20s, student, windswept, clutching her phone) hurries frantically into the concourse from the dark of the escalator, wrestling with her phone, trying not to panic.

She checks her phone, and a smile blooms. She has a signal!

EMMA

Yes!

EMMA'S POV – across the huge, bright concourse she catches sight of David still under the clock.

Still there, still waiting! For her!

Her whole body floods with relief, the adrenaline suddenly releasing her. She almost laughs, brushing her hair back, fixing her coat, ready to wave, even checking her makeup.

She goes to call to him, nonchalantly, like this was all part of the plan. She raises an arm to wave, then-

Her lips part, to try to call out.

EMMA (cont'd)

Dav-

But hardly any sound issues. Too late.

She freezes, arm half raised.

She sees David glancing up at the big station clock, sighing. Then he turns and jogs back to the exit.

SLOW MOTION – Emma watches as David reaches someone and offers to take their rucksack, playfully struggling under its weight. Emma looks confused then-

She hears Kate's faint LAUGH, and her arm curls into David's. Emma's smile quickly falters.

Nightmare! After all that effort!

Emma stands on her own obscured in the shadows of the station, watching heartbroken as they leave.

The big clock above strikes, the sound BOOMING across the empty concourse, or is it in her head?

A beat of silence.

Then she EXPLODES, slapping a nearby bench with her handbag.

EMMA (cont'd)

Shit! Shit, shit, shit! SHIT!

STAFF MEMBER (O.S.)  
Hey, watch it!

Emma slumps into the chair, crying, her head in her hands.

OWEN (O.S.)  
Tough night?

OWEN (late 20s, messy hair, disheveled) sits up a few seats away, wiping the snooze out his eyes.

Emma immediately LEAPS up again, defensively hiding behind her bag. She did not notice the slightly scruffy young man snoozing across from her.

OWEN  
Stood up?

EMMA  
I guess.

OWEN  
He didn't wait? Really?

She smiles a little at the compliment.

EMMA  
He did. I saw him go.

OWEN  
Why didn't you go after him?

EMMA  
He left with someone else.

OWEN  
Oh, wow. Fast worker.

EMMA  
I guess. What about you?

OWEN  
Same. No sign of them. No messages. I must have nodded off. Shit, what time is it?

He looks up at the big clock. A passing staff member shouts over as he walks by.

STAFF MEMBER (O.S.)  
It's closing time!

EMMA  
That's you told then.



She sits there sadly, head down.

OWEN  
That bad, huh?

EMMA  
I really thought he was-

OWEN  
-the one?

She just nods, staring back at the exit where David left.

EMMA  
(almost to herself)  
I guess.

Owen looks her over for a moment.

OWEN  
His loss, eh?

He knows she is not listening. She is staring at her phone, disconsolate.

OWEN (cont'd)  
Well, I'd better get-

Something slides off Owen's lap onto the floor.

EMMA  
What's that?

OWEN  
Sketchpad. I'm an art student.

Emma lets out a relieved laugh.

EMMA  
So you're not actually a psycho?

OWEN  
Not usually.

He holds out his hand.

Owen.

EMMA  
Emma.

They hesitantly shake hands.

EMMA (cont'd)  
I'm not a psycho either. Usually.

OWEN  
That seat might disagree.

She laughs, the tension lifting. She's warming to him maybe.

OWEN (cont'd)  
It's nice to meet you.

EMMA  
You too.

An awkward pause. Emma checks her phone again. It lights up with messages she is only just receiving. She puts her head in her hands, and lets out a little SCREAM.

STAFF MEMBER (O.S.)  
Please leave the station now, or  
we'll lock you in!

OWEN  
(looking at Emma)  
Could be worse.

She almost blushes a little.

EMMA  
Guess that's my night over then.

Emma looks like she is about to cry.

OWEN  
Is it?

She glances hopefully back at him.

OWEN (cont'd)  
Look, I don't usually...I don't  
suppose...I know a place? You can  
tell me all about it?

Emma glances at the door David left through again. Then at Owen. She nods, trying not to show her relief.

EMMA  
Sure OK. I could do with a drink.

OWEN  
Cool! Sorted.

EMMA  
You can show me your etchings.

They both laugh and gather up their stuff. Emma noticeably perks up, Owen tries to hide his smile.

EXT. GLASGOW CENTRAL STATION — NIGHT

The pair walk down the now very empty concourse. As the make for the exit, Emma hesitates.

She stands on her own under the big Station clock, just where David was a few short moments ago. Her lost date.

She looks forlornly at the exit where he and Kate left.

OWEN (O.S.)

You OK?

EMMA

(pointing towards  
the opposite exit)

Could we go this way?

OWEN

Sure.

Owen smiles reassuringly. They exit together towards Jamaica Street and disappear from view into the night, to the sound of the last gates closing around the station. The station lights fade out too.

Above, the big clock keeps time.

FADE OUT.

THE END