

POSTCARDS
by
The Mailman

FADE IN:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

MICHAEL (20s) and PRIYA (20s), each dressed trendy casual, sit laughing in a booth. The table is cluttered with the remnants of nachos and wings.

MICHAEL
(between laughs)
He left his shoes by the door?

PRIYA
Brand new white sneakers, right there in front of the shoe rack. We thought we were so clever, but when I saw them there I knew my father had to have seen them.

MICHAEL
Was he mad?

PRIYA
My father comes down and says, "Priya, I'm disappointed. If you're going to sneak someone into the house, they should be smart enough to hide their shoes."

They both laugh.

MICHAEL
I wouldn't have left my shoes there.

PRIYA
Oh, you're a master of deception?

MICHAEL
I just walked into a trap, didn't I?

Priya smiles mischievously and leans closer.

PRIYA
Maybe he couldn't think straight because of me.

Michael looks long and hard at her.

MICHAEL
That, I believe.

Priya laughs.

PRIYA

You're cute.

MICHAEL

I like you. Can we do this again?

PRIYA

I would like that. But...

MICHAEL

Uh oh. There's a but.

PRIYA

But, I'm traveling for the next couple of months.

MICHAEL

That's terrific! Where to?

PRIYA

Southeast Asia, starting with Thailand.

MICHAEL

I've always wanted to go there.

Priya smiles again. She pulls a red pen from her purse and grabs a napkin.

PRIYA

What's your address?

MICHAEL

My address? Not my phone number?

PRIYA

I'm going to send you postcards.

MICHAEL

Oh! Great! Here, let me.

Michael scribbles his address on the napkin. Priya folds it up and places it in her pocket.

She grabs his hand and brings the pen to the fleshy part between his thumb and forefinger.

PRIYA

I always leave this on my letters.

Priya draws a stylized red heart as she talks. Michael looks at it appreciatively.

PRIYA

It's just something I do. It doesn't mean we're dating or anything.

MICHAEL

Maybe when you get back.

PRIYA

Yes, I'd like that.

They clink their beer bottles, smiling.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

The afternoon sun streams through the open blinds of the small kitchen. Michael scrubs dishes with latex gloves while JASON (20s), sports type, sits at the small table and drinks beer from a bottle.

JASON

So this girl is going to send you postcards. Like, for real postcards.

MICHAEL

I think it's cute.

JASON

Hasn't she heard of email?

MICHAEL

You know how much they charge for internet in some places?

JASON

It's still weird. I don't even send postcards to family. She old-fashioned or something?

MICHAEL

I don't really know. So what if she is? I like it.

JASON

Speaking of old-fashioned, since when do you wear gloves to do dishes?

Michael shrugs as he rinses the last dish. He takes the gloves off.

Jason points at the heart on Michael's hand.

JASON

What is that?

Michael hides his hand, blushing.

JASON

She did that, didn't she?

MICHAEL

It doesn't mean anything.

Jason studies him.

JASON

You're smitten.

MICHAEL

I'm not!

Jason nods his head as he drinks from the bottle again.

MICHAEL

Piss off.

JASON

Whatever you say, smitten kitten.

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - DAY

Michael, in office attire, bounds up the steps to the mailbox fixed next to the front door.

Michael opens the lid--

INT. MAILBOX - DAY

Michael's face hovers over the opening. His hand reaches in and pulls out...advertisements.

Michael takes another quick glance and closes the lid.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. MAILBOX - DAY

Michael again, different day. Hand reaches in, pulls out an envelope.

The lid closes.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. MAILBOX - DAY

A quick glance. Disappointed, Michael closes the lid.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Michael sits at the table, staring off into space. He absently rubs at the faded heart on his hand.

He opens his laptop.

INSERT: LAPTOP SCREEN - Search Bar: "How long does mail take from Thailand to US?"

Michael reads the screen intently, scrolling through information.

Perplexed, he types again.

INSERT: LAPTOP SCREEN - Search Bar: "Thailand mail disruptions"

After glancing at a few results, he closes the laptop lid, frustrated.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Jason and Michael jog along a wooded path.

MICHAEL

It's been over three weeks and nothing.

JASON

It's Thailand.

MICHAEL

It usually takes mail a week or so to get here.

JASON

Wait...so this woman you just met gets to Thailand where she probably has a full trip planned, and you expect her to rush to the nearest tourist trap to rush a postcard to you?

MICHAEL

When you put it that way...

JASON

It makes you sound like a self-centered asshole.

MICHAEL

I was going to say needy.

JASON

I'm your friend. I can tell you the truth.

Michael flips him the bird.

INT. MAILBOX - DAY

Michael opens the mailbox lid. He shrugs at the empty box and closes it.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. MAILBOX - DAY

Michael opens the lid partway, peeks in. Closes it.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. MAILBOX - NIGHT

Michael opens the mailbox lid, clearly drunk. He rummages around inside and his face lights up. He pulls out...a coupon book. Tossing it, he feels around again.

He slams the lid.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Michael drops heavily into the chair and gulps beer.

He rubs at the spot where the heart used to be.

INT. BAR - NIGHT (FANTASY)

Priya looks annoyed, even bored.

PRIYA

Maybe he couldn't think straight because of me.

Michael wavers in a drunken stupor.

MICHAEL

(slurs)
That, I believe.

Priya laughs at him.

PRIYA

(sarcastic)
You're cute.

They fall into silence. Michael stares creepily. Priya stares back uncertainly.

MICHAEL

I like you. Can we do this again?

Priya's face registers awkwardness. Her eyes flit like she's looking for a way out.

PRIYA

I would like that. But...

MICHAEL

Uh oh. There's a but.

Priya's face lights up. She has a great idea.

PRIYA

But, I'm traveling for the next couple of months.

BACK TO SCENE

Michael shakes his head. He dials on his cell phone and waits.

JASON (V.O.)

(over phone)
Did you see that goal??

MICHAEL

(slurs)
Can you get ghosted if you were never going out?

JASON (V.O.)

Get on Tinder and start swiping like the rest of us.

MICHAEL

Good pep talk.

JASON (V.O.)
Are you blind? Penalty!

Michael hangs up and drinks.

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Michael, in work attire, walks slowly up the steps. He doesn't even glance at the mailbox as he unlocks his door.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Michael, in casual clothes, chops vegetables. The doorbell rings.

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Michael opens the door to find an ELDERLY WOMAN (70s) on the landing.

ELDERLY WOMAN
Are you Michael?

MICHAEL
Yes...who are you?

ELDERLY WOMAN
Thank heavens! I wasn't sure I would be able to find you!

MICHAEL
How do you know me?

ELDERLY WOMAN
From these.

She withdraws a small stack of postcards from her handbag.

ELDERLY WOMAN
I've been getting them for weeks.
I didn't know what to do with them, so I've been saving them.

Michael turns the first one over. It's from Thailand.

INSERT: POSTCARD - *"I'm still smiling from that night. It was a pleasure to meet you, Michael."*

And there, next to Priya's name, is a little red heart.

ELDERLY WOMAN
I'm over on 18th. She must have
gotten the streets mixed up.

Michael turns over another postcard.

INSERT: POSTCARD - *"I'm loving it here, but my thoughts
keep returning to you. I'm looking forward to seeing if
that connection was real or all in my head."*

ELDERLY WOMAN
When I saw that last one, I had to
try to find you.

MICHAEL
The last one?

Michael flips through the postcards, stopping at the
Seattle Space Needle.

MICHAEL
She's back?

ELDERLY WOMAN
Yes, and if you don't hurry,
you're going to miss her!

Michael turns the card over quickly.

INSERT: POSTCARD - *"Did you miss me? I'll be at the bar
on Friday at 7pm. I hope you will be too."*

Michael hugs the woman, surprising her.

JASON (O.S.)
You didn't tell me she was an
older woman.

Michael and the Elderly Woman look at Jason standing at
the bottom of the steps with a smirk on his face.

Michael waves the postcards in his face.

MICHAEL
She did write!

JASON
So she's just nuts. You'll make a
wonderful pair.

Michael flips him the bird as he runs down the street.

EXT. STREET - LATER

Michael passes a flower stall and skids to a halt.

He grabs a bouquet of roses and practically throws the money at the vendor before dashing off again.

INT. BAR - LATER

Michael bursts into the bar and scans the room, breathing heavily, roses in hand. He looks around, his face falling further with each breath.

He glances at his watch: 7:45pm

MICHAEL

Shit.

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - LATER

Michael walks slowly up his walkway, roses hanging dejectedly from one hand, postcards in the other.

He climbs the stairs--

--and comes face to face with Priya.

PRIYA

I'm so sorry! The ink was wet and I thought I read it right but when that woman told me what happened I knew what you must have thought of me all that time and I just had to wait to tell you I really did feel a connection.

Michael looks at her, speechless. Priya holds up a box of chocolates.

PRIYA

I brought these back for you. Do you even like chocolate?

Roses, chocolates, and postcards drop to the ground as Michael takes her face in his hands and starts kissing her. She returns the kisses passionately.

INSERT: POSTCARD ON THE GROUND - angle closer and closer on the little red heart next to Priya's name.

FADE OUT.