

You Look So Ugly When You Cry

written by

Josh Park

[joshparkfilm@gmail.com](mailto:joshparkfilm@gmail.com)

FADE IN:

INT. TESTING LAB - DAY

NAOMI (30s) lays down on a metal operating table. She wears a blue patient's robe. Curly hair.

Her face and arms are covered in faded surgical scars.

A nurse walks in with a long syringe.

NURSE

Ready?

Naomi nods.

The nurse squeezes Naomi's bicep.

NAOMI

Hey.

Nurse makes eye contact with Naomi.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

You don't want to squeeze that much. Here... just grasp the injection area. Otherwise you might just be shooting into fat tissue.

NURSE

Thanks.

The Nurse injects Naomi.

NURSE (CONT'D)

How do you know that?

NAOMI

I do this a lot.

NURSE

Oh. You're a nurse?

NAOMI

No. More like, a professional guinea pig.

Fleetwood Mac's *What Makes You Think You're the One* plays in:

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

Naomi drinks a clear cocktail at the bar. She wears a loud pink blouse.

MAN #1 in a flannel sits across from Naomi.

MAN #1

Hi.

Naomi smiles.

NAOMI

Hi.

INT. MAN #1'S APARTMENT - LATER

Man #1 and Naomi make out in a small studio apartment.

INT. SPINAL FLUID LAB - DAY

A large, brightly-lit lab.

At the front office, a nurse asks Naomi:

OFFICE NURSE

ID please.

FLASHBACK: Naomi, back home, scanning and printing a fake ID that reads JESSICA GARVEY.

Naomi hands the ID to the nurse.

OFFICE NURSE (CONT'D)

Hi Jessica. Follow me please.

Framed sign on the door: SPINAL FLUID EXTRACTION CLINIC.

Bone Marrow Nurse wields a scalpel and slices into Naomi's back.

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

MAN #2 jabbers on at dinner.

Naomi stares into the distance.

INT. MAKEUP TESTING CLINIC - DAY

A Clinical Trial Worker brushes some experimental eye shadow on Naomi. The Clinical Trial worker takes some notes, then wipes it off.

INT. CAFE - EVENING

MAN #3 sits across from Naomi. He wears a blue dress shirt.

MAN #3

Can I ask...

Naomi, mid-bite a croissant, gestures to the scars on her face. She wears suspenders and a red sweater.

NAOMI

All this?

MAN #3

Yeah.

NAOMI

It's from roller derby.

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

Naomi sits with a gin and tonic.

CRAIG (30s) in a blue shirt, sits next to Naomi. He drinks his drink, a little drop of absinthe in a tiny glass.

CRAIG

How'd your date go last night?

NAOMI

"Roller derby." Then the conversation...

Naomi blows a raspberry and gives a thumbs down.

CRAIG

You could consider telling them the truth.

NAOMI

So I can be lectured about getting sliced open for money? No thanks.

Naomi puts her drink down.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
How's your game coming along?

Craig sighs.

CRAIG  
It's going great. I love scamming kids.

NAOMI  
Cheer up bud. You're scamming old people too.

Craig also blows a raspberry.

CRAIG  
It pays the rent.

NAOMI  
Come on. You don't get to say that.

CRAIG  
What?

NAOMI  
\*I\* can say "it pays the rent."  
That's for people who can't pay the rent.

CRAIG  
Understood. What's next, then?

NAOMI  
I don't know, actually.

Naomi whips out her phone.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
They just gave me an address. It's early tomorrow, though. I should get going.

Naomi grabs her jacket.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
Say hi to Melinda for me.

CRAIG  
Melinda's no more.

NAOMI  
Aw. I liked her.

CRAIG

You told me to break it off!

NAOMI

You can't date someone who wears coveralls every day, Craig.

Naomi walks away.

CRAIG

Don't let them harvest you.

NAOMI

They can take a spleen.

She opens the door and leaves.

EXT. SARANG CORP LABS - DAY

Naomi walks up to the sidewalk where a large intimidating building faces her.

Curved steel and glass in almost incomprehensible architectural configurations.

She tosses a stick of gum into her mouth. She chews for a second. Blows on her palm. Thinks. Throws a second stick of gum into her mouth.

As she chews, she looks over and sees a woman, wearing a gray hoodie and sunglasses, staring right at her.

Naomi stares back for a second. She then walks into the lab.

INT. SARANG CORP LABS - FRONT DESK - CONT'D

Naomi walks up to the front desk.

LANA (20's), a bored lab assistant, sits behind the desk.

LANA

Name.

NAOMI

Christie Gwendel.

Lana types into her computer for, really, far too long. Naomi looks around to examine the minimalist building, complete with chic art.

Finally, Lana hands Naomi a badge with an ID number. She then hands her a pink t-shirt.

LANA

Changing room is down the hall, to  
your left.

Naomi nods. She accepts these beautiful gifts.

INT. SARANG CORP LABS - SCREENING ROOM - CONT'D

Naomi, now in her pink t-shirt, watches an introductory film projected on the wall in front of her, along with other participants also wearing pink t-shirts.

A woman in a blue pantsuit walks into frame of the video.

PATRICIA LEE

Hello and Welcome. I'm Patricia Lee. CEO of Sarang Corporations. You, our valuable test subjects, are taking part in a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I want to welcome all of you to this exciting journey, as we optimize our products and gain a deeper understanding of not just each other, but the world that surrounds us. Please be courteous to staff throughout the process, follow all rules and regulations, but most importantly: Be Wonderful.

The video fades out to the SARANG logo, with the tagline "BE WONDERFUL" displayed underneath the logo.

Naomi rolls her eyes.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN (50's), in a teal lab coat, walks up to the front of the audience.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN

Hello. Pleased to meet all of you. I'm Doctor Hartounian, the research lead on this project. We're all very excited to see this come through, but first, I'd like to see...

He pulls out a card from his lab coat pocket.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN (CONT'D)

Test subject Oh-one-eight-four, in my office. The rest of you, please sit tight.

Naomi slumps into her chair.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN (CONT'D)  
Oh-one-eight-four.

Naomi awkwardly tries to avoid eye contact.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN (CONT'D)  
Oh-one-come on.  
(gestures)  
Get up. I know it's you.

Naomi gets up and follows Hartounian.

INT. HARTOUNIAN'S OFFICE - CONT'D

Hartounian sits across from Naomi.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN  
Christie Gwendle.

NAOMI  
Yes?

Hartounian fiddles with a half-dollar, gliding it effortlessly between his fingers.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN  
Christie Gwendle.

NAOMI  
Hmm?

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN  
Christie.

NAOMI  
Yep.

Doctor Hartounian drops the half-dollar. He reaches into his desk cabinet and pulls out a thick manila folder. He opens it and reveals the sheets inside.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN  
Also known as... Marian Garfield,  
for a sleep study at UCSF, Rebecca  
Lee for a biometric waistband test  
at Gorky Company, Paula Wong for  
skin adaptability research at  
Berkeley. All in the past six  
months.

Hartounian closes the folder.



DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN (CONT'D)  
I don't know what your name is, but  
unfortunately, we can't have you  
participating in the test.

Hartounian stands up.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN (CONT'D)  
You can collect your \$25 for the  
preliminary physical at the front  
desk.

He walks out the room and holds the door open. Naomi sits in  
her chair.

NAOMI  
Marcy Waylan. Saline test at Lamb  
Medical.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN  
What?

NAOMI  
Karoline Kang, touchscreen  
tactility at MORP. Phyllis Ba, non-  
toxic hair dye test at Reed/Walker.  
Tina Wallace, UV exposure lab at  
Stanford.

Naomi stands up and faces Hartounian.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
Not to mention three different  
tests at satellite locations of  
this very company. "Mia." "Alexis."  
"Susan."

Naomi walks outside Hartounian's office.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
I know the ins and outs of how you  
guys work. I've been shot up with  
more pharmaceutical products than  
anyone in history. Every cosmetic  
has been splotched on my skin. I  
got sunburn from a lamp once. It's  
not your protocol, but I can be a  
real asset to whatever's going on  
here. Your product would need to be  
bulletproof.

She then walks towards the exit. But turns around before she  
leaves.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
The real name is Naomi. Naomi Kim.

Naomi opens the exit door.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN  
Stop.

She indeed stops. She walks back.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN (CONT'D)  
Fill out your paperwork at the  
front desk. Correct info this time  
please.

Doctor Hartounian dangles out a badge. Naomi smiles and takes  
the badge, walks away.

Lana steps up next to Hartounian.

LANA  
Is she right?

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN  
Not at all.

Hartounian turns to Lana.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN (CONT'D)  
But we're looking for non-  
believers. Take the subject to the  
waiting room.

INT. SARANG CORP LABS - WAITING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Naomi now wears orange scrubs. She follows Lana. Lana  
gestures to one of the waiting room chairs. Lana walks away.

Naomi sits and twiddles her thumbs. The air conditioner vent  
RATTLES. She stares at the vent.

Naomi looks forward, but across from her she sees:

MALCOLM (30)

Possibly the most beautiful man she's ever seen.

He reads a colorful magazine.

She catches a breath in her throat. Her bodily functions  
stop. She looks over at Lana, who browses her phone.

After a moment, Naomi sprints from her side to two seats away from Malcolm. She leans her head against the wall behind her.

Without moving her head, she scans Malcolm's body and face. Takes special notice of his hands and eyes.

Malcolm flicks his pupils back at Naomi.

Naomi's been caught. They maintain eye contact for a second until Naomi breaks the silence with--

NAOMI

What're you reading?

Malcolm goes back to looking at his magazine.

MALCOLM

If I'm being honest, I'm not 100% sure.

Malcolm tilts his head, as if he's looking at an alien object.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

It might be for kids.

(beat)

It's definitely for kids.

NAOMI

That's probably the best literature you could ask for here.

MALCOLM

Oh yeah?

NAOMI

Those things have activities. Better than articles about elections or melting glaciers.

MALCOLM

I do like the mazes.

Malcolm looks at Naomi.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Malcolm.

He holds his hand out.

NAOMI

Naomi.

She shakes his hand.

Naomi notices Malcolm's leg shake.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

You good?

MALCOLM

It's just my first time doing anything like this.

NAOMI

Oh! Are you liking it?

MALCOLM

It's okay. I'm sad I can't drink-- guess I'll have apple juice at karaoke.

NAOMI

Look: the important thing is to stay in the trial. Keep your head down.

MALCOLM

Seems like you did your best to keep your head up.

NAOMI

You heard all that?

MALCOLM

Oh, don't be embarrassed. It was a nice respite.

NAOMI

Why are you here?

MALCOLM

I heard this trial is going to test some crazy psychological shit that could change the world. Change therapy, change medications for the brain... whatever that is, I want to be a part of it.

NAOMI

Huh.

MALCOLM

Why are you doing this?

NAOMI

Twelve thousand US dollars for two weeks.

Malcolm chuckles.

MALCOLM  
Yeah, that's fair.

A nurse, BRAD (41) steps out of the testing room. No windows to see what's happening inside.

BRAD  
Oh-one-eight-four, please.

Naomi walks in. Brad welcomes her.

INT. SARANG CORP LABS - TESTING ROOM - CONT'D

Naomi sits at a large metal table. Doctor Hartounian sits to her left, and Brad sits to her right.

In front of Naomi, a massive control panel with hundreds of steel switches sits in front of her. The backlit array illuminates her face.

A slide projector CLICKS.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN  
Don't be too intimidated. This is a spectrum tactility panel. On the very bottom and the very left, you'll notice the switches are quite cold. On the very top and the very right, the switches get almost uncomfortably hot. Plus an increasing electrical charge that gets more intense the higher up you go. All the other switches in between reflect a gradient of temperatures.

BRAD  
On the screen in front of you, we'll be projecting images on slides. You'll be flipping one. I repeat, ONE switch, based on your reaction to the image.

NAOMI  
Wait, is one more positive or negative?

BRAD  
You shouldn't think too much on it. Just try to be quick.

NAOMI

Sure. Okay.

Brad lifts up a box with a button on it.

BRAD

Ready? Three, two, one...

Brad presses the button. The slide projector CLICKS, revealing a slide of a salamander.

Naomi flips a switch to the bottom left.

Brad presses the button again. A jar of honey.

Naomi flips a switch in the middle, towards the top.

Brad presses the button a third time. A baby.

Naomi flips a switch on the middle right.

EXT. SARANG CORP LABS - LATER

Naomi walks out in her regular clothes. She looks across the street, and again comes face to face with the same woman in sunglasses.

They share prolonged eye contact.

A customer walks up to the woman in sunglasses. She gives the customer an item wrapped in a brown paper bag in exchange for a wad of bills.

BEGIN MONTAGE

- Naomi, now in a light blue set of scrubs, sits next to Malcolm. They laugh as Malcolm reads another kids' magazine.

- A series of slides. A swing set. Tacos. A map of Canada.

- The woman in sunglasses looking at Naomi.

- Now Naomi and Malcolm wear bright orange scrubs. Malcolm dances on the shiny waiting room floor. Naomi claps.

- A slide of a tape dispenser. A rainy street. Dollar bill.

- Naomi and Malcolm sit next to each other once again, now in green scrubs. Naomi leans her head against Malcolm's shoulder, but catches herself and perks back up.

END MONTAGE

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Naomi wakes up out of her mattress on the floor. She wipes her eyes, furrows her brow.

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - CONT'D

She turns the light on.

The whole frame goes

PINK.

A beat of silence.

Sound of FALLING PLASTIC SHAMPOO BOTTLES, TOOTHBRUSHES, HAIR DRYER.

Naomi's HEAVY BREATHING, as we fade from a fully PINK frame to--

NAOMI, sitting on the corner, with fallen bottles and bathroom items scattered on the floor. She catches her breath and rubs her eyes.

INT. SARANG CORP LABS - FRONT DESK - LATER

Naomi stands in front of Lana, who fills out some paperwork.

LANA

Have you experienced any side effects in the last twenty-four hours?

Naomi scratches her neck.

NAOMI

Nope.

Lana scribbles on her clipboard.

INT. SARANG CORP LABS - WAITING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Naomi and Malcolm once again sit next to each other, now in purple scrubs. Naomi shakes her leg.

Malcolm unfurls a children's magazine that's been doodled all over.

NAOMI

Tomorrow's the last day.

MALCOLM

Yep.

Malcolm tosses the magazine into a basket of crumpled activity publications.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

I can't believe we've gone through all of those.

NAOMI

I told you they're fun.

(quieter)

What do you think of the experiment?

Lana pipes up from her corner desk.

LANA

Please do not discuss clinical trial details.

NAOMI

Sorry.

MALCOLM

I just wanna get through it.

Naomi grabs a magazine from the basket. She takes a marker and writes some numbers on one of the mazes. A phone number.

She hands the magazine to Malcolm. He reads the page and quickly crumples it up.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

(low whisper)

Do you want to get caught?

NAOMI

(low whisper)

Just thought you'd want it...

MALCOLM

(low whisper)

After the trial.

NAOMI

Someone cares about the financial incentive now.

Malcolm places his pinky finger on Naomi's pinky finger.



MALCOLM  
 (whispers)  
 Tomorrow.

Naomi smiles.

EXT. SARANG CORP LABS - LATER

Naomi walks out in her normal clothes.

The screen goes

BLUE.

Sound of a SLAP. Another SLAP. Another SLAP.

On the fourth SLAP, we see the trail end of Naomi hitting her own face, as the BLUE color that covered the frame cuts out at:

INT. CRAIG'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Naomi rubs her reddened cheek.

Craig walks into the room and hands her a bag of frozen boysenberries. Naomi takes it and places it against her face.

Craig sits on the couch next to her.

CRAIG  
 Colors...?

NAOMI  
 All I can see.

CRAIG  
 Like, now?

Craig puts on a video game. A rabbit jumps up the screen.

NAOMI  
 No. For a few minutes. It comes in so randomly, I have no idea what triggers-- what the hell is that?

CRAIG  
 Oh, this? It's the 'Jump Rabbit Jump' prototype.

NAOMI  
 People are supposed to want to play this?

CRAIG  
Our tests show it's extremely  
addictive.

Craig presents the controller to Naomi. Naomi pushes against  
it with her palm.

NAOMI  
I think you should actually be  
tried for this. You're giving  
digital meth to kids. And old  
people, probably!

CRAIG  
Probably.

NAOMI  
What was that shooter thing, way  
back when? You stayed up soooo long  
working on that shit.

CRAIG  
Oh no. "Gorbachev's Last Stand."

NAOMI  
That's right! I think you should go  
back to that, the original Craig  
demos!

CRAIG  
Yeah, those don't exactly process  
microtransactions.

NAOMI  
Pizza-Hut-Nike-Coca-Cola America  
wins again.

CRAIG  
If I remember correctly, you didn't  
play that either!

NAOMI  
But just the title was awesome.  
Versus...

CRAIG  
Jump Rabbit Jump?

Naomi gives a thumbs down.

Craig laughs.

CRAIG (CONT'D)  
Do you have to go back?

NAOMI

Yeah. Or else I lose all the money  
I stuck out for. And I think I made  
a friend.

CRAIG

A friend?

NAOMI

Yeah. A friend.

Naomi pushes the bag of boysenberries into her cheek.

INT. SARANG CORP LABS - WAITING ROOM - NEXT DAY

Naomi walks into the waiting room, only to see that the chair  
Malcolm has been sitting in is... empty.

Naomi looks around. Only sees strangers.

She sits next to the empty seat.

TIMELAPSE of multiple test subjects getting called into the  
testing room. One by one, the waiting room empties out.

Finally, Brad steps out to announce:

BRAD

Oh-one-eight-four. Final test.

Naomi looks around. No sign of Malcolm.

She walks into the test.

INT. SARANG CORP LABS - TESTING ROOM - CONT'D

Doctor Hartounian and Brad flank Naomi as she sits in front  
of the panel of switches.

A slide pops in: A seagull.

Naomi, "over it," flips a switch.

Another slide: an apple pie.

Naomi flips another switch.

Then, a slide: Headshot of a redheaded woman against a white  
background.

She flips a switch.

Another slide: Exact same style of headshot, this time with a bald man.

She looks over at Hartounian, who looks straight ahead.

Naomi flips a switch.

Another headshot, the same template, this time with an older woman.

Naomi hesitantly flips another switch.

Finally, the killer:

A slide with MALCOLM's headshot, in the same style.

Naomi bites her lip.

The whole frame goes

RED.

Sound of, like, thirty switches going off.

OVER RED:

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN  
Naomi? Naomi?

BRAD  
Are you okay?

Naomi opens her watery eyes. She looks down. Her whole hand has accidentally pushed way too many switches. She lifts her hand.

NAOMI  
I'm sorry.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN  
Don't worry about it.

Doctor Hartounian scribbles on his notepad.

EXT. SARANG CORP LABS - LATER

Naomi opens an envelope. A check in the amount of \$12,043.77.

She folds the check and puts it in her pocket. She looks across the street: a CRAZED MAN screams at the woman in sunglasses.

CRAZED MAN

What do you mean?! You had it LAST  
WEEK!!

Naomi whips out her keychain, which has a pocket pepper spray canister. She rushes across the street.

EXT. STREET - CONT'D

The woman in sunglasses is unfazed. She simply stares straight at the crazed man.

CRAZED MAN

My girlfriend broke up with me,  
man! I need this!!

Naomi points the pepper spray at the man, but the wind BLOWS it back into her face, and dissipates the spray to all three people.

CRAZED MAN (CONT'D)

AH!

The Crazed Man runs off.

The woman in sunglasses whips them off her face.

She covers her eyes.

WOMAN IN SUNGLASSES

What the fuck?

Tears drip down Naomi's face. She also covers her eyes.

NAOMI

I'm SO SORRY.

INT. DINER - LATER

Naomi and the Woman (now without sunglasses) put napkins to their teary eyes.

The Woman is CLAIRE (20s).

CLAIRE

I appreciate it.

NAOMI

I would do it for anyone.

CLAIRE

I know. I appreciate it.

NAOMI  
What's your name?

CLAIRE  
Claire.

NAOMI  
Naomi.

CLAIRE  
Nice to meet you officially, Naomi.

Naomi puts the soothing wet napkin on the table.

NAOMI  
How often do you have to deal with that?

CLAIRE  
Oh, people like Mike? Kind of a lot.

NAOMI  
Yeesh. I'm sorry.

CLAIRE  
It's okay. I understand them.

NAOMI  
I mean I get it, but to get that mad?

Claire takes a sip of coffee.

CLAIRE  
Have you ever been heartbroken, Naomi?

NAOMI  
(sarcastic)  
No. Never.

Naomi wipes her eyes.

CLAIRE  
These aren't normal junkies.

NAOMI  
I want to make it clear I did not use that word.

Beat.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

What do you mean?

Claire puts her napkin down.

CLAIRE

In grad school, I found a correlation between increasing rates of divorce and proliferation of consumer pheromone-blocking substances. Deodorants, strong perfumes, scented bodywash: things like that. I worked with some Biochem PhD candidates, and we were able to isolate particular pheromones that could conceivably be the cause for what we describe as "romantic love." Or, at the very least, intense infatuation. This was an exceedingly exciting development, so every pharmaceutical company wanted their hands on it. But the people who really wanted it? The people who wanted to mass-produce and heavily market it? It was the cosmetic companies. Imagine: a compound that actually, literally recreates the phenomenon of real, true love.

NAOMI

And the people who bought it--

CLAIRE

A Korean conglomerate called Sarang Cosmetics.

Naomi leans back.

INSERT: The grinding air conditioner vent.

NAOMI

If you don't mind me asking...

CLAIRE

All my research was taken from me by my Professor. He was smart with trademarks. It was a whole thing, I do this now.

Naomi shakes her head in disbelief.

NAOMI

Hold on, that's crazy.

CLAIRE

Yeah. But I had my breakdown over all that, it is what it is.

NAOMI

How are they letting you be so close to the premises? Surely they must've noticed.

CLAIRE

I don't know. In my head, they still feel a pang of guilt. This is their small sliver of salvation. Or they just can't see ten feet ahead of them.

Claire stirs her coffee. She leans forward.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry for what they did to you.

NAOMI

Comes with the territory. I was in a supplement test once where I had diarrhea for two months.

Claire takes a sip of coffee.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Could I... Could I have some? Of the substance?

CLAIRE

No.

NAOMI

What?

CLAIRE

Are you in a committed relationship?

NAOMI

No.

CLAIRE

Do you have kids?

NAOMI

No.

CLAIRE

Then no. I'm sorry.



Claire stands up and heads to the door.

NAOMI  
Is it real?

Claire stops.

CLAIRE  
Is it real love?

NAOMI  
All this I'm feeling.

Claire takes a second to think.

CLAIRE  
The idea of "real" has stopped  
mattering to me.

She walks out.

Naomi sits there. A tear rolls down her cheek.

It's unclear whether it's the sadness or the pepper spray.

The screen turns VIOLET.

Title: THREE MONTHS LATER.

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Naomi SPEEDS down a hill on her bike.

Her hair flaps behind her.

INT. FOOD SCIENCE LAB - DAY

A technician pours a blue liquid into a cup.

TECHNICIAN  
Please take a sip.

Naomi takes a sip.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)  
Please gargle this.

Naomi gargles a shot of clear fluid that the Technician hands her.

The technician then pours a powder into the blue liquid and swirls it.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)  
Please take another sip.

Naomi takes another sip.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)  
Would you describe the taste as  
sweeter, less sweet, the same, or  
something else?

Naomi spits out the liquid and walks out of the test.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)  
Ma'am? MA'AM?!

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Naomi sits across from a LAME DATE.

LAME DATE  
I was born in Duluth in 1988, and  
it's been pretty smooth sailing  
since then.

NAOMI  
Cool. What do you like to do?

LAME DATE  
Oh, well, I enjoy movies and books.

NAOMI  
(really trying)  
Oh nice, what kind of books?

LAME DATE  
Mostly fiction books, although I  
occasionally dabble in non-fiction.

Naomi nods.

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Naomi lays on her bed. She watches "Garfield Gets Real" on  
her laptop. She eats a microwave burrito wrapped in an  
envelope with RENT DUE stamped in red.

FLASHBACK: Malcolm saying--

MALCOLM  
Guess I gotta drink apple juice at  
karaoke.

Naomi pauses the movie.

She googles "Karaoke near me."

BEGIN MONTAGE

- Naomi bikes through city streets at night.

- Walks into all kinds of karaoke venues.

- On her phone:

NAOMI

When is your Karaoke tonight?

- She sits in the back, swirling drinks and watching bad karaoke.

- In her bedroom on the phone again:

NAOMI (CONT'D)

And when is your next karaoke event? Do you have a cover charge?

- Naomi sits in the back of a dingy bar.

INT. KARAOKE BAR - CONT'D

Dark walls undoubtedly hiding some stains. Not a well-populated venue.

Naomi's eyes are heavy and she slumps against the bar.

A woman sings a snippet from *Take a Chance on Me* - ABBA.

After the performance, Naomi and the two other people in the bar clap halfheartedly.

The Karaoke Host walks up to the stage.

KARAOKE HOST

Beautiful! Thank you so much Jessica. Who'd like to perform next?

Silence.

KARAOKE HOST (CONT'D)

Anyone?

Naomi leans against the bar even more.

KARAOKE HOST (CONT'D)  
 ANYone? How about you at the bar?  
 New girl??

Naomi slowly slinks up. She walks towards the stage.

KARAOKE HOST (CONT'D)  
 Wonderful! Thank you, what's your  
 name?

Naomi takes the microphone.

NAOMI  
 Naomi.

KARAOKE HOST  
 Fantastic Naomi. What would you  
 like to sing?

NAOMI  
 In Between Days - The Cure.

KARAOKE HOST  
 Classic. Let's get that fired up.

The Karaoke Host speedwalks off the stage. The music starts.  
 She sings in a bored tone:

NAOMI  
*Yesterday I got so old/ I felt like  
 I could die/ Yesterday I got so  
 old/ It made me want to cry... Go  
 on, go on, just walk away/ Go on,  
 go on, your choice is made/ Go on,  
 go on, and disappear-*

In that moment, the door swings open. Who walks in but  
 MALCOLM! in a collared shirt and black jeans.

Naomi takes a breath, missing the line "*Go on, go on away  
 from here...*"

She snaps back into it, escalating her performance.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
*And I know I was wrong when I said  
 it was true/ That it couldn't be me  
 and be her in between/ Without you/  
 Without you/ Yesterday I got so  
 scared/ I shivered like a child/  
 Yesterday, away from you/ It froze  
 me deep inside-*

Malcolm notices Naomi on the stage, recognizes her. His face lights up and points at her. Naomi smiles.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

*Come back, come back, don't walk away/ Come back, come back, come back today/ Come back, come back, why can't you see?/ Come back, come back, come back to me... And I know I was wrong when I said it was true/ That it couldn't be me and be her in between without you/ Without you/ Without you, without you.*

Naomi walks off the stage as the Karaoke Host gets back up.

KARAOKE HOST

Thank you Naomi!! Wonderful!!

Naomi sits next to Malcolm.

NAOMI

What the hell, man!

MALCOLM

What the hell to you!

Malcolm and Naomi share a side hug.

NAOMI

What're you doing here?

MALCOLM

I'm here every Friday! Or, I guess every Friday I'm not in a bizarre Clorox'd basement.

NAOMI

Yeah, figures. I can't believe you're... here! In the real world!

MALCOLM

Flesh and blood.

NAOMI

Listen, I didn't get a chance to tell you something before-

They're interrupted by SHEILA (30s). She sits in between Naomi and Malcolm.

SHEILA

Hi folks!

MALCOLM

Oh hey!

Malcolm and Sheila hug. Then they KISS. Naomi tries to swallow the tennis-ball sized lump in her throat.

As Sheila faces Naomi, Naomi puts on the fakest smile in the world.

NAOMI

Hello.

MALCOLM

Sheila, this is Naomi. We were in that weird trial thing together.

SHEILA

Oh my goodness... I was terrified of that. I mean, it was great, we got to pay some bills -- but I had no idea what it would be. I'm so glad he made it out untouched.

Naomi nods.

MALCOLM

It was honestly kind of fun. I was actually telling Sheila here that this seemed to be your thing.

NAOMI

Karaoke?

MALCOLM

No, the trial.

NAOMI

Oh, right.

MALCOLM

Yeah, she told me not to ever touch the dermatology ones. The skin stuff gets weird.

NAOMI

I mean, I didn't get this way through roller derby.

Sheila looks at Naomi, and reaches out to hold her hand.

SHEILA

You are still so beautiful.

Naomi's fake smile goes into overdrive.

NAOMI

Thank you.

SHEILA

What do you like to drink?

NAOMI

I just go gin and ton-

SHEILA

Okay, you HAVE to try their "Blue Mojave." Oh my God.

MALCOLM

It's good.

SHEILA

Oh... *just* good?

Sheila raises her hand to signal the bartender.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

Could we get three Blue Mojaves?

The bartender nods.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

So, Naomi. Are science experiments your full-time gig?

NAOMI

It has been so far. Started when I was 19.

MALCOLM

Wow.

SHEILA

Yeah... wow.

NAOMI

I think I've had enough, though. I'm gonna look around.

SHEILA

Listen, jobs are a dime-a-dozen in this city. I can reference you to a million.

NAOMI

Thanks.

SHEILA

Hey, you know, if you want, Malcolm and I are having a little get-together next week with some friends. You should come!

MALCOLM

That's an awesome idea.

NAOMI

I'll think about it.

SHEILA

You'll think about it, then you'll come over. It'll be great! At least you'd meet some folks outside of the Bunsen burner and beaker world.

The bartender brings out three blue cocktails in cartoonishly tall glasses.

KARAOKE BARTENDER

Three blue mojaves.

SHEILA

Thank you!

Sheila hands over her card.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

You can hold onto that.

Sheila, Malcolm, and Naomi CLINK all their glasses together.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

To science!

They take their first drinks. Naomi's eyes widen.

NAOMI

Whoa.

SHEILA

Right?

INT. KARAOKE BAR - HOURS LATER

Naomi, Sheila, and Malcolm sit at a table now, with a bunch of scattered empty, blue-stained tall glasses.

Sheila has her arm around Malcolm's back. Her eyes are half-open. Sleepy. All three of them LAUGH at a joke that's just been told.



MALCOLM

I've been curious, Naomi.

Naomi tips the last few drops of her drink into her mouth.

Her breath fogs up her glass as she just barely vocalizes:

NAOMI

Uh-huh?

MALCOLM

Why did you become a guinea pig?

NAOMI

The money's too good. And all I have to feel is a liiiiiittle pinch.

Naomi giggles drunkenly. Malcolm smiles.

MALCOLM

No, but really. I can't imagine anyone's done this like you.

Naomi puts her glass down. She tries to collect the words for a story she doesn't really want to tell.

NAOMI

When I was like seventeen, my mom got really sick. She always had issues, but this was... really bad. We found out that her kidneys were failing. BUT I was a donor match. It was great news. I was happy. Really happy. The problem was I was a big idiot stupid baby, and before the procedure I had this massive panic attack that made them delay the transplant. They told me it was fine. That this was normal. And my mom would kiss me, say how brave I was for even going through with it. But a couple weeks later... she was gone. Earlier than they expected.

She tries to take another sip, but the glass is empty.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

If I can be a warm body they cut up so fewer people have to be hurt... so be it.

MALCOLM

I'm so sorry. I shouldn't have asked.

NAOMI

No no. It's good. It's good to talk about that stuff, right?

MALCOLM

I assume so.

NAOMI

Plus, it doesn't even really feel like a 'job.' People take care of you. They make sure you're okay. Monitoring your state. I kind of like that.

Malcolm looks at Naomi.

The speakers blare with the voice of:

KARAOKE HOST

Who's next? Who is playing our closing song?

Sheila wakes up. Her and Malcolm look at each other. Sheila smiles, grabs his hand, and they head up to the stage.

SHEILA

Hello, you've seen us before.

KARAOKE HOST

Indeed we have, Sheila! What are you singing for us?

MALCOLM

"C is the Heavenly Option."

KARAOKE HOST

Let's run it!

The host walks off the stage. The music plays.

SHEILA

*My boyfriend says he will leave me, should I, A:*

MALCOLM

*Get down on your knees.*

SHEILA

*Should I, B:*

MALCOLM

*Tell him where to go.*

SHEILA  
Or should I, C:

MALCOLM  
Kiss him until it shows. Your  
boyfriend's got no fashion sense,  
should you A:

SHEILA  
Try not to take offense.

MALCOLM  
Should you, B:

SHEILA  
Tell him to go to Next.

MALCOLM  
Or should you, C:

SHEILA  
Kiss him and forget.

DOLLY IN on Naomi smiling at this lovely display of bubbly romance. A mix of jealousy, bliss, and alcohol flows through her as she watches.

SHEILA (CONT'D)  
If you're an (A) you will see,

MALCOLM  
You'll get chucked and end up  
unhappy.

SHEILA  
If you're a (B) you will find:

MALCOLM  
That's cool but hey don't be so  
unkind.

SHEILA  
And if you're a (C), you'll end up  
like me...

MALCOLM  
And love will bowl you over.

SHEILA  
If you're a (C), you'll end up like  
me...

Sheila and Malcolm join in on the refrain together.

MALCOLM AND SHEILA (CONT'D)

*Don't play games if you're broken-  
hearted/ Don't try to finish what  
you ain't got started/ And if  
you've got problems/ Then don't  
bring them to me.*

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Naomi bikes in the dark. Her bike light flickers. Then DIES.

NAOMI

Shit.

Naomi stops on the sidewalk. She slaps the light a few times, then checks the back of the light.

A car approaches. It drives past her, but the side window nearly CLIPS her.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Hey!

Naomi THROWS her bike light at the car.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Asshole.

Naomi walks her bike home.

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Naomi opens the front door. She sifts through a pile of mail. An envelope with massive red letters: LATE RENT. WARNING.

Naomi CRUMPLES up the envelope.

INT. SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY - NEXT DAY

Naomi prints out a bunch of resumes.

A series of job interviews follows.

COFFEE SHOP

INTERVIEWER #1

Do you have any kind of service  
experience?

NAOMI

Unfortunately, not really. But I am great at injections.

RITZY RESTAURANT

INTERVIEWER #2

I don't know if we can hire someone who doesn't know their way around a kitchen, unfortunately.

NAOMI

I think I could learn. I have been in a lot of VERY confusing buildings.

RESEARCH CENTER

INTERVIEWER #3

Sorry, so you were like, a lab tech?

NAOMI

Not exactly.

INTERVIEWER #3

Researcher? Student?

NAOMI

No, but more on the... other end of all that.

BOOKSTORE

INTERVIEWER #4

How many actual jobs have you held?

NAOMI

Depends on your definition of "actual job."

ICE CREAM SHOP

INTERVIEWER #5

I'm so sorry, we just don't know if we can take on anyone new.

Naomi drops her shoulders in disappointment.

NAOMI

Thank you for your time anyway.

INTERVIEWER #5

Want a scoop of lemon meringue?

Naomi lets out a big exhale.

A beat.

NAOMI

Okay, that does sound really good.

The interviewer smiles and hands over a small cup.

EXT. SARANG CORP LABS - LATER

Naomi bikes into the Sarang Labs parking lot with her little cup of ice cream. She walks out to the spot where Claire used to work.

Nobody is there. She stands in Claire's spot, looks around. Then sits in the dirt. Eats her ice cream. Empty air. She hears indecipherable muttering from the Sarang Labs building.

EXT. PARKING LOT - EVENING

Naomi bikes around on the pavement. She creates tighter and tighter circles on her bicycle, until eventually she spins out and falls off.

Scraped elbows. Bruised knee. She doesn't seem to care very much.

She sits up and scrolls on her phone. She taps an icon and puts the phone to her ear.

NAOMI

Hi. Are you free tonight?

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Naomi and Craig sit across from each other.

Naomi is slurring her words.

NAOMI

And she says... no way. Can't give you any of the magic juice because I'm not, like, married. Pfff.

Naomi sits back, as if the air has been deflated out of her.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Thanks for coming out with me.

CRAIG  
Thanks for telling me. Jeez. What  
are you gonna do now?

NAOMI  
I guess I'll just rot away.

Naomi chuckles.

A waiter comes by. Naomi hands the waiter an empty martini  
glass.

WAITER  
Another?

Craig does a "cut it out" gesture.

CRAIG  
No, that's enough.

Naomi LAUGHS.

NAOMI  
That's enough, he says!

CRAIG  
It is.

Waiter leaves.

NAOMI  
You don't have to baby me.

CRAIG  
I'm not babying you.

NAOMI  
I don't have a drinking problem.

CRAIG  
Didn't say you did.

NAOMI  
I have a boredom problem.

Craig takes a beat. The waiter leaves a check at the table.  
He signs it.

CRAIG  
Wanna do something fun?

Naomi narrows her eyes.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

BUMPING music. Flashing lights. The effects in the club mix with the solid colors that fill up Naomi's vision: Red. Purple. Green.

Craig holds Naomi's hand as he guides her through the various groups. All kinds of people here, from the alt crowd to folks in suits.

Craig and Naomi approach the bar, where a bartender in a foot-tall mohawk haircut polishes glasses.

CRAIG  
(yelling over music)  
Vodka soda please!

The bartender nods.

BARTENDER  
(to Naomi)  
You?

NAOMI  
I'll have the same!

Bartender pours a couple drinks.

Naomi takes the drink and sips.

After the thumping club beat, Psychic TV's *White Orchids* plays. Naomi makes her way to the dance floor.

Couples dancing romantically.

Naomi looks over at Craig. Craig walks over.

They dance delicately with each other. Careful not to touch too much.

They move in closer. The music keeps playing. Naomi leans her head against Craig's chest.

She closes her eyes.

Her vision slowly goes blue.

The languid tunes of *White Orchid* ends, transitioning into another thumping club beat.

Naomi opens her eyes. In the corner of the club, sees CLAIRE holding onto a woman wearing a "The Offs" shirt. They face each other, noses almost touching.



CLAIRE  
 (loudly over music)  
 I THINK THE KEY IS SUGAR CRYSTALS  
 ON THE GALETTE. YOU HAVE MORE  
 SURFACE AREA THAN A PIE CRUST, SO  
 MORE OPPORTUNITY TO FLAVOR IT--

Naomi approaches Claire. She puts her hand on Claire's shoulder. Claire whips her head around. Smiles.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)  
 Hi!

NAOMI  
 Hi! You weren't at your spot today!

CLAIRE  
 I'm taking a break. It's good to see you here!

NAOMI  
 Yeah. Hey, I know you said you didn't give the stuff to certain people. But I found the guy.

CLAIRE  
 That's great! But listen, I don't sling the potion anymore. I'd love to help you, trust me...

Naomi looks closer at Claire's face.

NAOMI  
 Your pupils are really dilated.

Naomi looks over at Claire's affectionate beau. She sees that her pupils are also very dilated.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
 What did you do with your supply?

CLAIRE  
 I just don't sling it anymore.

Naomi nods.

EXT. BEACH - LATER

Pitch dark night. Craig and Naomi walk next to each other on the sand. The tide is loud and boisterous.

They come across a big beach fire crackling on the sand.

They stand and watch.

Naomi leans her head on Craig's shoulder. They face each other. Naomi leans in for a kiss. Craig angles his cheek towards her, planting the kiss on his face. He hugs her.

CRAIG  
Hey. We're friends.

NAOMI  
(whispering)  
I'm sorry.

CRAIG  
It's okay.

NAOMI  
I'm so stupid.

CRAIG  
No.

Naomi holds Craig tight.

NAOMI  
Do you wanna go to a party with me?

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - STAGE - DAY

Patricia Lee, in a sharp pantsuit, walks up to center stage. All lights on her.

PATRICIA LEE  
Hello everyone. My name is Patricia Lee, CEO of Sarang. Today, I want to invite one of the top men at the Sarang U.S. Division to present a very exciting new development. Doctor?

Doctor Hartounian walks up next to Patricia.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN  
Hello. I'm Doctor Derek Hartounian. Today, I want to present something revolutionary. Not just in the history of Sarang, but in our understanding of interpersonal relationships as we know it. What if I told you, the question of what makes "romance" so addictive, so alluring, so intense... is now a question that can be answered?  
(MORE)

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN (CONT'D)  
 That this seeming ineffability, has  
 been, effectively, unlocked? Wonder  
 no longer, because we at Sarang  
 have SOLVED love, on a molecular  
 level.

Doctor Hartounian gestures to the massive screen behind him,  
 where a VIDEO plays.

In the video, two actors in a coffee shop brush up against  
 each other.

ACTOR #1

Hi.

ACTOR #2

Hello.

COMMERCIAL VOICEOVER

The meet-cute.

The two actors LAUGH at a restaurant.

COMMERCIAL VOICEOVER (CONT'D)

The date.

The two actors kiss.

COMMERCIAL VOICEOVER (CONT'D)

The kiss.

The two actors YELL at each other.

COMMERCIAL VOICEOVER (CONT'D)

The fight.

The two actors, splitscreen, alone.

COMMERCIAL VOICEOVER (CONT'D)

The break-up.

The two actors in the rain.

ACTOR #1

You know what I can't handle!

ACTOR #2

What?

ACTOR #1

I can't handle the fact that  
 despite everything, I will ALWAYS.  
 ALWAYS LOVE YOU!

Actor #2 looks at #1, then they RUN into each others' arms.

COMMERCIAL VOICEOVER  
Happiness. Forever. There's a  
formula here. We have a formula of  
our own.

Product footage of a can of PURE LOVE.

COMMERCIAL VOICEOVER (CONT'D)  
Reignite. Feel it again. Ask your  
doctor about "Pure Love."

The tagline, BE WONDERFUL, runs across the bottom of the  
screen.

DEAFENING APPLAUSE from the convention crowd.

INT. MALCOLM AND SHEILA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sheila hands Jello shots to everyone in the apartment. The  
place is PACKED with invitees. Naomi is among them. Sheila  
and Malcolm kiss in the kitchen. Naomi watches.

Next to her is Craig, having a blast. Someone hands him a  
platter of crackers with caramelized onions on top.

CRAIG  
Naomi, this is awesome.  
(eats a cracker)  
Oh shit. The onions are like candy.

Naomi takes one and eats it.

NAOMI  
You're right, that's good. I love a  
fun cracker treat. What do you  
think this party's for?

CRAIG  
Who cares?

Craig holds up the crystal-like plastic cup that the Jello  
shot is served in.

CRAIG (CONT'D)  
Probably just an excuse to use  
their trinkets.

Sheila TAPS her glass. Craig slightly chokes on the jello  
shot, for a few seconds as the room goes silent.

Naomi pats Craig's back. Hard.

SHEILA  
Are you okay?

CRAIG  
(out of breath)  
Yes. Yes.

Sheila nods.

SHEILA  
Hello friends! Thank you so much  
for coming to another  
Sheila/Malcolm shindig. I hope you  
have as much fun attending as I do  
planning.

The partygoers CLAP.

SHEILA (CONT'D)  
I want to especially welcome Naomi,  
who's joining us for the first  
time! She's a real hoot! And--

Craig waves to the crowd.

CRAIG  
Craig.

SHEILA  
Craig!

People look at Naomi and Craig and wave awkwardly.

SHEILA (CONT'D)  
Let's show them a good time. Drink  
and be merry!

EXT. SHEILA AND MALCOLM'S APARTMENT - BALCONY

Naomi smokes a cigarette on the balcony. A lovely view of the  
city from here.

Sheila opens the sliding door and joins Naomi.

SHEILA  
Are you having a good time?

NAOMI  
Oh, yeah, of course.

Naomi gestures to her cigarette.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry, is this okay?

SHEILA  
Of course. Mi casa es su casa.

NAOMI  
Thanks.

Naomi and Sheila look inside.

Malcolm converses with the guests. Craig is in the corner, with a plastic cup in one hand and a champagne glass in the other.

SHEILA  
You must think I'm crazy.

NAOMI  
Why do you say that?

SHEILA  
Why's this woman holding parties every month for nothing.

NAOMI  
No. Why wait for an excuse?

SHEILA  
EXACTLY. You get me! Plus, it gives me and Malcolm a little activity to do.

NAOMI  
You're a very lucky lady.

SHEILA  
I would agree.

NAOMI  
The dating scene here is...

SHEILA  
Oh, sorry I thought you and Craig--

NAOMI  
No. Well, we... tried it once. Years ago. Not ideal.

SHEILA  
Yeah.

NAOMI  
How'd you two meet?

SHEILA

I was working catering at a museum. He was the bartender. It was funny, I wasn't looking for anything. My brain was fried from the apps. But during a lunch break, he came up to me and offered me a little ginger beer vodka thing.

NAOMI

Moscow mule?

SHEILA

See, that's what I thought. But he said "no no, it's not in a copper cup, and we're out of limes." I thought that was so funny. And throughout the night, I got more and more tired, but looking at his face... it was a little jolt each time. I think I survived that gig because of him.

Naomi takes a puff of her cigarette.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

May you find what you're looking for, Naomi.

Sheila touches Naomi's shoulder, then walks inside.

Naomi watches through the sliding glass door as Sheila jumps into Malcolm's arms. They embrace and kiss passionately. Craig, mouth full of party food, claps with the rest of the crowd.

An icy glare shoots across Naomi's face.

EXT. SARANG CORP LABS - DAY

Naomi stands across the street from the laboratory building. She makes her way to the back of the building, where they're having a company luncheon.

The attendants grab badges from a table with stacks of them. Confidently, Naomi walks up to the table and swipes a badge.

INT. SARANG CORP LABS - CONT'D

Inside, the groups of attendants are corralled by Lana.

LANA

And these are our screening facilities. Because of our advancements in skin testing technologies, we've actually been contacted by multiple dermatological firms and research labs to help diagnose skin cancers!

The attendants clap, all except for Naomi. She opts to stare at the video screen, where the CEO is again giving a pep talk about the clinical trial. Doctor Hartounian once again walks out to give a speech about logistics.

Naomi sees a sign in the back: EMPLOYEES ONLY.

A keycard reader is installed on the door. Naomi taps her newfound badge on it. It blinks RED. Of course.

FOOTSTEPS.

Naomi sneaks behind a corner.

An exhausted lab tech YAWNS as she swipes her keycard. The heavy door opens and the tech walks in. Naomi follows close behind her.

INT. SARANG CORP LABS - BACK OFFICES - CONT'D

A completely different environment. Instead of the glitzy corporate snazz, we see beige walls and stuffy office spaces.

Naomi walks past a bunch of multicolored scrubs hanging in a closet.

She sees a metal cabinet labeled SUPPLIES. She opens it, only to see various snack foods: cereal, granola bars, bananas, etc.

Naomi closes the metal cabinet. She sees a door labeled HARTOUNIAN.

INT. HARTOUNIAN'S OFFICE - CONT'D

She walks in. Looks around.

The office is filled with various magic trick trinkets and toys. Card decks. Metal rings. Fushigi balls. She scans the shelves and desk space. Nothing but toys and dense science documents.



She walks behind his desk. Opens the top drawer. A granola bar and some writing utensils. She opens the second drawer. Another granola bar, half-eaten, and a dinosaur toy. She jiggles the third drawer, but it's locked. She sees a ring of keys on his desk, when FOOTSTEPS interrupt her focus. She whips her head up.

Doctor Hartounian walks close to the door.

Naomi holds completely still.

Hartounian is interrupted by LANA.

LANA (O.S.)

Hi Doctor. Did you want to greet the next tour group?

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN

Sure. Sure, I can do that.

They leave.

Naomi breathes a sigh of relief. She grabs the key and opens the bottom drawer, revealing: a CAN, labelled "INFATUATION SUBSTANCE PROTOTYPE." She can barely control her breathing. Finally! She has it!

Naomi stuffs the can into her jacket pocket, walks out of the office and heads to the emergency exit, when--

LANA

Hey!

Naomi turns around. Lana walks over to Naomi.

LANA (CONT'D)

What the hell are you doing back here?

NAOMI

I'm looking for the lost-and-found.

LANA

Bullshit.

Lana immediately reaches into Naomi's jacket pocket, pulls out the canister.

LANA (CONT'D)

This is Sarang intellectual property. You know you could get arrested for this?

NAOMI

I'm sorry.

LANA

You better be. Come on. I'm showing you out.

Lana takes Naomi out of the back exit.

EXT. SARANG CORP LABS - BACK EXIT - MINUTES LATER

Lana closes the door.

Naomi now stands in a barren exterior, worlds away from the bustling corporate/scientific spaces they've been in.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - LATER

Naomi watches a romantic comedy as she holds a jumbo bucket of popcorn. She eats the kernels slowly, as she's more focused on the couple in the front seat making out than the movie.

The obligatory emotional "break-up" scene plays out onscreen.

BEAUTIFUL FEMALE MOVIE STAR

You lied to me.

BEAUTIFUL MALE MOVIE STAR

I only did it to protect you.

BEAUTIFUL FEMALE MOVIE STAR

(weeping)

Screw you!

In front of her, the couple has progressed to being literally on top of each other in their seats.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - LOBBY - APPROX. ONE HOUR LATER

Naomi walks out with her half-eaten popcorn bucket. The couple walks in front of her, arm-in-arm, and one of them THROWS their soda into the trash, causing quite a bit of it to splash onto Naomi's face.

Naomi stops in her tracks. She throws her popcorn away.

EXT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - LATER

Naomi rustles in her pockets for her keys. She opens the door and walks in.

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONT'D

Naomi shuts the door, then leans her back against it. She close her eyes, takes a deep breath. She slides down the door and sits for a moment.

In the corner of the room, Claire sits on a loveseat. A large black duffel bag on the floor.

CLAIRE

Hi.

Naomi opens her eyes. She YELPS, startled.

NAOMI

How- what're you doing here?

Claire walks up to Naomi.

CLAIRE

I needed to talk to you.

Claire locks the front door behind Naomi. Naomi is still on the floor.

NAOMI

How'd you find me?

CLAIRE

It was easy.

SEQUENCE:

- Claire spots Naomi from the typical dealing spot outside of Sarang Corp. Claire rushes and hides.

- Claire stalks Naomi from the bushes. A little boy approaches.

LITTLE BOY

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT???

- Claire SHUSHES the little boy.

- Claire is across the street from Naomi as Naomi bikes. Claire rides a rental scooter, trying to be nonchalant and looking ahead, but keeps looking sideways at Naomi and CRASHES into a newsstand.

- Claire watches Naomi get into her house from behind a tree.  
An OLD MAN approaches.

OLD MAN  
EXCUSE ME. WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING  
AT??

- Naomi turns around. Claire SPRINTS away.

END SEQUENCE

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONT'D

CLAIRE  
I have my methods.

Naomi walks into her kitchen.

NAOMI  
What do you need?

Naomi runs the tap in her kitchen.

CLAIRE  
They're closing in, Naomi.

NAOMI  
Sorry, I can't hear you. Do you  
want some tea?

CLAIRE  
(A bit louder)  
Oh, yeah. That's great.

NAOMI  
I have chamomile, jasmine, green.

CLAIRE  
I'll take jasmine.

NAOMI  
Okay. Cool.

Naomi pours hot water into a cup with a teabag. Walks over  
and hands it to Naomi.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
What were you saying?

CLAIRE  
They're closing in, Naomi.

NAOMI  
What do you mean?

CLAIRE  
Some agents came to my apartment.  
Could've been DEA. This shit is too  
hot.

NAOMI  
Oh no.

CLAIRE  
Oh no is right.

Claire drops the duffel bag on a chair and unzips it. STUFFED  
with cans of the pheromone compound.

NAOMI  
Holy--

CLAIRE  
Yep.

NAOMI  
Why didn't you just throw it away?

CLAIRE  
And risk someone finding it in the  
garbage? Or leaching out into the  
water supply? No.

She zips the duffel bag up.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)  
I can only trust you. Plus you seem  
to need it right now.

NAOMI  
I don't want to get in trouble.

CLAIRE  
Please, Naomi. I can't go down for  
this.

Naomi looks at Claire.

A KNOCK at the door.

Naomi goes up to the front door. She sees a MAN IN A SUIT,  
holding a clipboard.

Naomi aggressively gestures at Claire to go hide.

Claire grabs the duffel bag and runs into Naomi's bedroom.  
Shuts the door.

Naomi shouts through the door:

                          NAOMI  
Who is it?

                          FDA AGENT GARRISON  
Hi, this is Sam Garrison with the  
Food and Drug Administration. I'd  
like to ask you a few questions, if  
you don't mind.

                          NAOMI  
Of course. Of course.

Naomi's vision goes **ORANGE**.

                          NAOMI (CONT'D)  
                          (under her breath)  
Oh no...

Naomi SLAPS herself a couple times.

                          FDA AGENT GARRISON  
Are you okay, ma'am?

                          NAOMI  
Yep. Just one second.

We see Naomi rub her eyes as she tries to get herself out of  
the color trance.

                          FDA AGENT GARRISON  
Hello?

                          NAOMI  
Sorry.

Naomi opens the door and lets Garrison in. Still blind.

                          NAOMI (CONT'D)  
Did you want some tea or anything?

                          FDA AGENT GARRISON  
I'm okay. Thanks.

Naomi looks around and clumsily pulls up a chair. She's  
operating entirely off of her memory of the space. He takes a  
seat and whips out his clipboard with a questionnaire.

FDA AGENT GARRISON (CONT'D)  
I'll be out of here in just a  
minute.

Garrison clicks his pen. Naomi sits across from him.

FDA AGENT GARRISON (CONT'D)  
Were you a participant in Sarang  
Corp's clinical trials for their  
new product "Pure Love"?

NAOMI  
Yes.

Garrison writes for a really long amount of time, considering  
Naomi's short answer.

In Naomi's bedroom, Claire leans her ear against the door.

FDA AGENT GARRISON  
Did you experience any unreported  
adverse effects in these trials?

NAOMI  
...No.

Naomi looks off to the distance.

Garrison shoots her a look, looks behind him, then scribbles  
on his clipboard.

FDA AGENT GARRISON  
I'll be forthcoming. We're here  
because we suspect that a compound  
is being manufactured, made to look  
like a deodorant or antiperspirant,  
but in reality is a homemade  
chemical cocktail designed to  
induce hormone production. The  
compound would be an infringement  
on the rights of the company you  
were a test subject for. Would you  
have any knowledge of this?

Naomi shakes her head.

NAOMI  
Sounds really sci-fi.

He taps his pen on the clipboard.

FDA AGENT GARRISON  
Do you know a woman named Claire  
Ballard?

Her **ORANGE** episode turns into a **RED** one.

Naomi blinks a couple times. Takes a deep breath.

NAOMI  
Doesn't ring a bell.

He scribbles again. He looks up, sees Naomi staring at the wall behind him. Garrison turns around, then looks back at Naomi.

FDA AGENT GARRISON  
Ms. Kim, are you okay?

NAOMI  
Splendid.

Garrison purses his lips in doubt.

Then he reaches into his pocket.

FDA AGENT GARRISON  
I'm going to give you my card. If  
some other details come up, we  
would really appreciate it.

Agent Garrison then shakes Naomi's hand and walks to the front door.

FDA AGENT GARRISON (CONT'D)  
We need all the help we can get.

Garrison leaves.

Naomi sits for a second. She then opens the door to the bedroom. The window is open.

Claire is gone, once again.

Naomi zips open the duffel bag, inspects the can. PURE LOVE, it reads on the label. Homemade, but snazzily designed.

Naomi stuffs the duffel bag deep into her closet and shuts the sliding door.

EXT. BEACH - SUNDOWN

Naomi sits on the sand. She watches a beach clean-up crew sift through the sand, picking up ash and burnt wood.

The orange sun glows through Naomi's hair.



She holds the "PURE LOVE" canister. She reads the instructions on the back:

"1. Drip a small amount of bodily fluid into the vial. Tears, sweat, and/or spit will work.

2. Spray the subject with the canister. Effect should be fairly immediate.

WARNING: Use with consent."

Naomi unscrews the canister, and takes out a small clear plastic vial. She spits into it, places it back into the spray canister and screws it tight.

She looks at the sunset.

EXT. KARAOKE BAR - LATER

Naomi rides her bike up to the exterior of the karaoke bar. She stops and gets off the bike before she gets close, as she sees Malcolm hugging Sheila.

Naomi pulls the canister out of her pocket.

She walks a few steps towards them, but sees Malcolm nestled deep into Sheila's shoulder.

He's sobbing. Tears soaking up Sheila's shirt.

Naomi stops dead in her tracks. She looks at the canister, stuffs it into her jacket pocket and gets on her bike.

EXT. STREET - CONT'D

She rides as fast as she can. The wind blows through her hair as if she's facing a large industrial fan.

The trees and street signs that she races past turn into blurs of gray and green.

Her vision goes RED.

Then... KAPOW.

For a split second, we see her head CRASH into a telephone pole. The bike skeeters out and Naomi is splayed onto the concrete, a massive fresh gash on her forehead.

Her vision goes GREEN.

Sirens in the background.

## PINK.

Ambient sounds of a hospital.

E.R. NURSE (O.S.)  
You're going to be okay. Just take  
some deep breaths with me.

Sounds of Naomi taking deep diaphragm breaths.

E.R. NURSE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Okay. Good.

## BLUE.

Someone new walks into the room, heavier shoes. Some time has  
passed. Rustling of clothes.

HOSPITAL DOCTOR (O.S.)  
Hi Naomi. How are you feeling?

NAOMI (O.S.)  
I'm fine. My head hurts.

HOSPITAL DOCTOR (O.S.)  
That figures. I want to ask about  
your vision.

NAOMI (O.S.)  
Right. I might need glasses or  
something.

HOSPITAL DOCTOR (O.S.)  
Interesting. Because you're not  
even looking at me right now.

## VIOLET.

NAOMI  
Oh?

HOSPITAL DOCTOR  
The nurse found this canister in  
your pocket. "Pure Love."

NAOMI  
Hmm.

HOSPITAL DOCTOR  
What is this?

NAOMI  
... Deodorant.

HOSPITAL DOCTOR

(suspicious)

Interesting. Okay, I'm going to let you rest. A prognosis is difficult to make, but I think you'll be fine by tomorrow morning. It seems like the blindness is waning. Just get some rest.

Screen fades to BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NEXT MORNING

Naomi flutters her eyes open. She's in a hospital gown. She looks over at the nightstand. The can of "Pure Love" is still there.

A small series of stitches lines her forehead.

EXT. ACROSS THE STREET FROM SARANG CORP - DAY

Naomi, in a gray hoodie and sweatpants, stares out at Sarang Corp. Another company event happening in the parking lot.

She looks over and notices the Crazy Man who yelled at Claire. The man looks back at her. His facial hair is more unkempt than the last time we saw him.

Claire reaches into her pocket and pulls out the canister of PURE LOVE.

He walks over. She holds it out to him.

He takes it. Observes the can.

He drops it on the ground. The Crazy Man walks away.

Naomi stands there. Picks up the can that's now dented.

She pulls out her phone and calls someone.

INT. GAMES HQ - SAME

Craig watches a monitor as two video game testers, one a teen and the other a man in his 30s, play a game that involves tapping the screen quickly to get a rabbit to jump.

CRAIG

How do the haptics feel on this one?

TEEN GAME TESTER  
What the fuck is haptics?

ADULT GAME TESTER  
I'm tired of it.

Craig receives the phone call. He picks it up.

CRAIG  
Hello?

INTERCUT between Craig and Naomi.

NAOMI  
Hi Craig.

CRAIG  
Hey! Sorry, one sec.  
(to Games Testers)  
How do you feel about this megajump  
upgrade?

TEEN GAME TESTER  
There's an upgrade?

ADULT GAME TESTER  
Not a fan.

NAOMI  
You're working late.

CRAIG  
I know. We're trying to roll out  
the game in a few weeks, there's a  
few hiccups we need to iron out.

NAOMI  
Ironing out hiccups...

CRAIG  
Mixed metaphor, I know. What's up?

NAOMI  
Not much. Just losing my mind.

CRAIG  
Aren't we all?

NAOMI  
Craig...

Craig faces away from the game testing screen.

CRAIG

Yeah?

NAOMI

I got hurt, Craig.

CRAIG

What?

NAOMI

I did something really stupid.

Craig grabs his coat.

CRAIG

I'm on my way.

Craig hangs up. He passes by the games testers.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

I'm out. Talk to reception when you're done.

TEEN GAME TESTER

Okay.

ADULT GAME TESTER

Where's reception?

EXT. BOARDWALK - NIGHT

Craig and Naomi sit on a dock. Waves crash in the distance. Craig looks at Naomi's stitched up forehead.

CRAIG

Ouch.

He looks into Naomi's eyes.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

So everything turned red? You couldn't see anything?

NAOMI

Yep.

CRAIG

That's fucked.

NAOMI

I know. I might just be losing it.

CRAIG

Eh.

Craig tucks Naomi's hair behind her ear.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

I might as well be seeing pure colors sometimes.

Naomi smiles. She catches herself. Can't fall into it. She looks the other direction.

NAOMI

Look.

Naomi stands up, takes Craig's hand.

They walk to the edge of the dock.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Hear that?

Harmonic YELPING, mixed with the sea waves pummeling onto shore.

CRAIG

What is it?

NAOMI

Rainbow seals. They sing these songs at night so they don't lose each other.

CRAIG

They must be exhausted.

NAOMI

They sleep during the day. My mom used to take me out here to see them.

CRAIG

You never told me that.

NAOMI

I've never told anyone that. She used to say, "look, how pretty. They're shimmering just for you."

Craig and Naomi look out into the blackness of a night's sea.

Craig reaches over and holds Naomi by the waist. Pulls her closer to him. Naomi leans her head on Craig's shoulder.

As the seals harp on, Craig hums the tune of Psychic TV's *Godstar*.

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Naomi and Craig kiss passionately as they enter the house.  
They move into

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONT'D

As they get into bed.

NAOMI  
(whisper)  
Does your penis still look weird?

CRAIG  
What?

Naomi laughs.

NAOMI  
Idiot.

Craig reciprocates the laughter and pulls her close to him.  
Naomi smiles as she kisses Craig into the pillows.

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

Light streams in.

Craig and Naomi rustle under the sheets. Both naked.

CRAIG  
(whispers)  
Hey.

NAOMI  
(whispers)  
Hi.

CRAIG  
Are you busy today?

NAOMI  
I'm so unbusy I'm losing my  
apartment.

CRAIG  
What? Really?

NAOMI  
Yeah. It's fine, I'll solve it.

CRAIG  
You sure?

NAOMI  
I'm regretting mentioning it. Why  
do you ask if I'm busy?

CRAIG  
I wanna check something out.

EXT. BOARDWALK - DAY

Naomi and Craig scan the coast.

The seals sleeping on the rocks aren't rainbow. They are in  
fact gray.

CRAIG  
The rainbow seals are gray?

NAOMI  
No!

A dude in a blue flannel close to the water pipes up.

RANDOM BOARDWALK GUY  
Yes, due to climate change the  
rainbow seals have lost their  
distinctive pigmentation.

CRAIG  
Thank you.

NAOMI  
Ugh.

CRAIG  
I'm sorry Naomi.

RANDOM BOARDWALK GUY  
Yep. Their songs have also changed:  
instead of a harmonic yelping that  
had the melodic structure of an 80s  
pop tune, their vocals now resemble  
those of grunge acts of the 90s.

(MORE)



RANDOM BOARDWALK GUY (CONT'D)  
 Even heard one the other day that  
 was reminiscent of *Lithium* by  
 Nirvana.

NAOMI  
 I see.

CRAIG  
 Thanks man.

RANDOM BOARDWALK GUY  
 Yes. Unfortunately you will never  
 see a rainbow seal with their  
 distinct patterning again. The last  
 one was killed in captivity in  
 2017.

CRAIG  
 Do you work here?

RANDOM BOARDWALK GUY  
 Nope. I am just a curious mind.

NAOMI  
 Thank you!

Craig and Naomi walk away.

INT. ARCADE - LATER

A large, open-air arcade. Mostly families.

They walk up to a machine with a glass display and a hand  
 painted on it. "PLACE YOUR PALM AGAINST THE GLASS. GET YOUR  
 FORTUNE!"

Naomi inserts a quarter into the machine. Puts her hand  
 against the glass. The machine spits out a small card.

Naomi picks it up and reads it:

NAOMI  
 You will face challenges that will  
 make you stronger. Be kind, be  
 thoughtful, be strange: because in  
 the end, the mark of a good person  
 is resilience. Love and friendship  
 await. Do not fear the unknown.

CRAIG  
 Whoa.

Craig puts in his quarter and places his hand on the glass. Another card ejected. He reads it:

CRAIG (CONT'D)  
Happiness is good for you.

Craig nods mockingly.

EXT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - FRONT DOOR

Craig walks Naomi to her front door. They face each other.

NAOMI  
I can't remember the last time a  
boy walked me home.

CRAIG  
I hope I did a good job.

NAOMI  
It was perfect.

Naomi kisses Craig. Craig kisses Naomi's neck.

He walks away. Naomi waves bye.

Naomi walks inside.

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM

Naomi plops onto her bed, grinning wide. She rolls over.

For a minute, it seems like she's about to nap.

But she sits up. A new idea has struck. She whips out her laptop from her floor and googles:

CRAIG MENDOZA.

Clicks search.

Waaaaaaaay too many results. 12.7 million, to be exact. She narrows it down in the search bar: "Craig Mendoza games."

A little portrait of Craig shows up. Yippee. She scrolls down, and clicks on his personal website. A goofy little site that seems like a time portal to the early 2000s: starry sky background, rotating gifs of cats, and a mess of links in the middle of the page.

She clicks on the last link. "GORBACHEV'S LAST STAND." It's a silly space shooter, where lasers blast out of a pixelated Gorbachev's mouth. Sophomoric humor. She laughs.

NAOMI

Stupid.

EXT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT

Day fades into night.

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM

Naomi drinks a can of beer as she BLASTS away ships in the browser game.

NAOMI

Take that, motherf- oh!! NO!!!

Naomi CRUSHES the beer can.

Then clicks TRY AGAIN.

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER

Naomi has fallen asleep. No change of clothes. The sound effects and music from GORBACHEV'S LAST STAND loops on her laptop.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Naomi bikes around once again, whipping around blocks and speeding down steep hills.

EXT. TOY SHOP - CONT'D

Naomi whizzes past a toy shop with a big window display. She BRAKES. Walks her bike back. Spots: a stuffed rabbit with big feet.

Naomi puts her hands on the window.

EXT. CRAIG'S APARTMENT - LATER

Naomi bikes up to the stairwell leading up to the front door. She carries her bike up and rings the doorbell.

Craig opens the door.

CRAIG  
 (playfully)  
 And what are you doing here?

Naomi reveals the plushie. Craig takes it and kisses Naomi.

NAOMI  
 I played Gorbachev's Last Stand.

Craig backs up.

CRAIG  
 No way.

NAOMI  
 It's pretty accessible.

CRAIG  
 That's awful. You did a bad thing.

NAOMI  
 Good for a laugh. Or two or three.

Craig smiles.

CRAIG  
 Okay. I have something to show you.

INT. CRAIG'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONT'D

Craig types some stuff on his computer. Naomi sits next to him, looking at the terminal on the screen and looking back at Craig.

CRAIG  
 It's not quite finished yet, but  
 I've never been opposed to a hack  
 job... get ready.

Craig starts a game. It's a platformer, where the player is a rainbow seal that waddles on platforms and bumps off gray seals by jumping on them.

NAOMI  
 No way.

Naomi leans in.

CRAIG  
 It's a pretty simple project. I  
 liked designing the rainbow seal.

NAOMI  
You did this in one day?

CRAIG  
Yeah. More like one and a half.

NAOMI  
Craig... this is amazing.

CRAIG  
You think so?

NAOMI  
You brought them back to life!  
They're so colorful.

CRAIG  
I thought I had to pull it off  
somehow. Considering, you know.  
Anthropocene.

Naomi hugs Craig.

NAOMI  
One comment.

CRAIG  
Yeah?

NAOMI  
The colorful seal shouldn't be  
eliminating the gray seals, right?  
They're family, after all.

CRAIG  
I see your point.

NAOMI  
And they should be underwater.

CRAIG  
(nodding)  
Yeah. Yeah, they should be  
underwater.

Naomi blushes.

NAOMI  
Okay, let me play.

Craig moves aside and Naomi plays the game.

INT. CRAIG'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

Naomi and Craig are asleep under the blankets. They hold onto each other.

Craig's phone RINGS.

Craig sleepily turns over. Answers the phone.

CRAIG

Yes.....

Naomi turns over, facing away from Craig.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

Yeah, I can do lunch. Cool. Yeah, text me.

NAOMI

(sleepy)

Who was that?

CRAIG

My project manager. It's just a meeting.

Naomi turns over, now facing Craig.

NAOMI

I hope it goes well.

CRAIG

I hope so too.

Craig kisses Naomi on the forehead.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

Help yourself to anything you want in the pantry.

NAOMI

Oh, how lucky.

CRAIG

Yeah, try the froot loops.

NAOMI

Can I wait for you?

CRAIG

Sure, but you ask him what time it is, he'll tell you how to build a watch.

Naomi stretches.

                    NAOMI  
Mmm. Gotcha.

                    CRAIG  
I'll see you soon.

Craig finishes dressing, grabs his keys, and walks out.

The rabbit plushie sits on Craig's nightstand.

INT. CRAIG'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONT'D

Naomi sits and eats Craig's cereal. Watches cartoons on TV.

As Naomi crunches away on cereal, she notices something on the TV. Or, perhaps, around the TV. She walks up to it, and sees wires attached to the TV, but leading to nothing.

She also notices that the walls are quite bare, as she runs her hands across the drywall.

BRIEF FLASH: Previous iteration of the wall with paintings.

And she walks up to a corner of the room.

BRIEF FLASH: The table with the spinning record player on it.

INT. CRAIG'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM

Naomi opens Craig's closet door. Absolutely empty.

Naomi sits on the bed for a second. Then she pulls out her phone.

Searches MANTA RAY GAMES NEWS.

She scrolls. Sees a headline: MANTA RAY GAMES TO RELOCATE TO NEW YORK CITY.

Naomi turns off her phone. She lays down and curls up in Craig's bed.

Screen goes GRAY.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The TV shows a football game.

Naomi leans against the wooden bar. She drinks a clear cocktail.

The Bartender switches channels.

BARTENDER

I can't stand this dogshit.

The Bartender runs down channels. Infomercial. TV Movie. Soap opera. *Interview with Doctor Hartounian*. Preview for upcoming show.

NAOMI

Wait!!

The Bartender stops.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Could you go back a channel?

The Bartender goes back.

Doctor Hartounian is on a split-screen on a cable news show.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN

I don't think it's of concern.

INTERVIEWER

But do you see how this could be?  
It's a date rape drug that's  
somehow more sinister!

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN

It's clearly not for that. Rohipnol wasn't CREATED for nefarious purposes. But think about the positives of this medication. Which is what it is, let's keep in mind! Think about it: thousands, if not MILLIONS of relationships saved. If a union makes too much logistical sense, why let the flimsy chemicals in our brain get in the way? How many cases of clinical depression, anxiety, and PTSD can we mitigate by patching together cracked relationships? We're finally treating the SOURCE, not the symptoms!

Naomi's viewing is interrupted by a man in a COWBOY HAT.

COWBOY HAT

Hi there.



Naomi doesn't bother to look at him. She sips her drink.

NAOMI

Howdy.

Cowboy Hat takes off his cowboy hat.

COWBOY HAT

Can I buy you a drink?

NAOMI

Do you come here often?

COWBOY HAT

No.

NAOMI

You wanna know something cool about this bar? The actual wooden bar here.

She knocks on the bar.

COWBOY HAT

Sure.

NAOMI

This thing is actually a piece of an ancient ship. See the grain? These little tick marks show how long they were at sea.

COWBOY HAT

No way...

NAOMI

Yep.

Naomi swings around her chair.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Nice talk, bro.

Naomi gets up and walks to the door.

COWBOY HAT

Wait!

Naomi, annoyed, turns around.

NAOMI

What?

COWBOY HAT

Listen. I make good money. I don't get angry fast. And I've been told I can make folks laugh.

NAOMI

Okay...

He pulls into his denim jacket pocket and whips out: a can of PURE LOVE.

COWBOY HAT

I don't know if you know what this is--

Naomi snags it out of his hand.

NAOMI

What.... where the hell did you find this?

COWBOY HAT

... At Walgreens.

Naomi observes the can, then SPRINTS out of the bar.

COWBOY HAT (CONT'D)

Hey! HEY! THAT SHIT'S EXPENSIVE!!

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

Naomi quickly opens her door. A pile of envelopes with RED LETTERING labelled EVICTION NOTICE in front of her. She takes these envelopes and THROWS them in the garbage.

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM

Naomi unzips the duffel bag full of canisters and tosses the can inside. She zips it back up.

She leaps on her bed. Looks up at the ceiling. She whips out her phone, types in "Pure Love." Videos pop up: reviews, testimonials, commercials. She taps a commercial.

COMMERCIAL VOICEOVER

Real. True. Pure. Ask your doctor about "Pure Love" today.

A couple kissing on the beach. The sand around their hands morphs into wedding rings.

The Sarang logo appears. Then the product name: PURE LOVE.

Naomi slams her laptop shut.

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

Naomi wanders around the club as the loud music pumps.

She spots a couple heading into a bathroom stall together. The woman spits into a canister of PURE LOVE and she pulls her date into the bathroom.

The music becomes deafeningly loud.

Naomi sits at the bar and sees the dance floor become a mess of bodies and mist. People spraying Pure Love all over the place, as people feel and kiss each other.

Naomi leans over the bar to speak to the bartender.

NAOMI  
(over the music)  
Those cans...

CLUB BARTENDER  
Yep.

NAOMI  
They're everywhere, huh?

CLUB BARTENDER  
It was overnight.

NAOMI  
I bet. You'd think a drug like that  
wouldn't be easy to get.

CLUB BARTENDER  
Eh. My cousin went to her  
psychiatrist for her OCD. Got  
prescribed that stuff. She didn't  
even mention her boyfriend.

NAOMI  
Wow.

CLUB BARTENDER  
These companies push this shit  
hard. I would never take it.

Naomi observes the dance floor for a bit, then turns back around.

NAOMI  
Could I get a Blue Mojave?

CLUB BARTENDER  
What's in that?

NAOMI  
I don't know. Just get me something  
blue. In a really tall glass.

Club Bartender preps Naomi's drink.

Naomi sits back down. She spots a man and a woman on the other side of the bar. The man hovers over the woman. He pulls out a can of Pure Love, seemingly out of view of the woman.

CLUB BARTENDER  
Really tall blue drink.

Naomi puts some money on the counter.

NAOMI  
I'll close it out. Thank you.

Naomi walks over to the man and woman.

She GRABS the can out of the man's hand.

MAN WITH THE CAN  
What--

She PUNCHES the man.

NAOMI  
The hell are you doing?

The woman stands up.

WOMAN AT BAR  
What's going on?

NAOMI  
He was trying to use this on you!!

WOMAN AT BAR  
What?

NAOMI  
(to Man)  
You're a sicko! I will kill you!

The Man backs up.

MAN WITH THE CAN  
Bitch...

A bouncer grabs Naomi's shoulder.

BOUNCER  
Let's go.

NAOMI  
He's trying to break her brain!

BOUNCER  
Ok. Let's go.

NAOMI  
You should be kicking him out! Let  
go--

Naomi wrestles her way out of the Bouncer's grip.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
I'm leaving.

Naomi sprints out of the club.

EXT. CLUB - CONT'D

Naomi gets out and catches her breath on the sidewalk. She grabs her knees and leans over, spotting a puddle of vomit on the street.

The loud club music emanates from the building.

The Woman walks out of the club.

WOMAN AT BAR  
Are you okay?

Naomi catches her breath. She nods, unable to get a word out.

WOMAN AT BAR (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry.

Naomi takes a deep breath.

NAOMI  
It's okay.

WOMAN AT BAR  
I- thank you.

NAOMI  
It's okay.

The Woman's friends walk out of the club.

They surround her as they escort her down the sidewalk.

WOMAN'S FRIENDS

We're never going back there again.  
Stupid. Shitty music, too...

The Woman looks back at Naomi. She waves bye.

Naomi waves.

Naomi then VOMITS on the street.

PINK overtakes the frame.

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Naomi is splayed out in her bed, sleeping.

Her phone rings. She picks up.

NAOMI

Hello?

CRAIG

(Over phone)

Hello sunshine. What're you up to today?

NAOMI

Nothing much.

CRAIG

If you want to accompany me to the launch party for the rabbit game, it would be a treat.

Naomi sits up in bed, wipes drool off her cheek.

NAOMI

Are you really and truly moving across the country in two weeks?

Silence on the line.

CRAIG

Naomi...

NAOMI

Please just answer.

CRAIG

Yes. Yes I am.

NAOMI  
And why wouldn't you tell me?

CRAIG  
I'm sorry.

NAOMI  
Just... even as a friend?

CRAIG  
... It just got so complicated.

Naomi nods.

NAOMI  
Okay.

CRAIG  
No, Naomi, not like that-

NAOMI  
Bye Craig.

Naomi takes a deep breath. She drops her phone on the floor.

INT. KARAOKE BAR - NIGHT

The last drunk karaoke singer finishes their song.

Naomi drinks a beer at the bar.

Malcolm is at the other end of the bar. Naomi looks over.  
Then looks back at her drink.

KARAOKE HOST  
Alright, next we have: MALCOLM!

Malcolm unseats himself and walks up to the stage.

KARAOKE HOST (CONT'D)  
And what do you have for us  
tonight, Malcolm?

MALCOLM  
(slurring)  
Kokomo.

KARAOKE HOST  
Lovely. Take it away!

Malcolm gets on mic.

MALCOLM

*Aruba, Jamaica, ooh I wanna take ya  
Bermuda, Bahama, come on pretty  
mama Key Largo, Montego Baby, why  
don't we go? Jamaica... Off the  
Florida Keys--*

Malcolm takes a breath. He holds the microphone and SOBS to the side.

The background music keeps playing.

Naomi watches. She returns to her drink.

NAOMI

Could I get another one?

The bartender nods.

Malcolm keeps crying onstage as the karaoke tune drones on.

Naomi gets a beer. She takes a sip.

Malcolm tries to get another word out, but chokes on his tears.

Naomi sighs.

The weathered bar patron next to Naomi pipes up.

WEATHERED BAR PATRON

God, I hate Kokomo.

NAOMI

Me too.

Naomi gets up and walks towards the stage.

She stands next to Malcolm. Malcolm looks over at Naomi surprised, as if she materialized out of thin air.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

*We'll put out to sea/And we'll  
perfect our chemistry/By and by  
we'll defy/A little bit of  
gravity...*

Naomi pats Malcolm's back. They both belt out:

NAOMI AND MALCOLM (CONT'D)

*Afternoon delight/Cocktails and  
moonlit nights/That dreamy look in  
your eye/Give me a tropical contact  
high/Way down in Kokomo--*



EXT. KARAOKE BAR - MINUTES LATER

Malcolm and Naomi share a cigarette. Naomi leans against the wall, Malcolm sways upright on the sidewalk.

MALCOLM  
I'm sorry about that.

NAOMI  
That's nothing to be sorry about.

MALCOLM  
That kind of stuff only happens to losers. I promise I'm not a loser.

Malcolm leans against the wall next to Naomi.

NAOMI  
Where's your gal?

Malcolm scoffs. Takes a drag of the cigarette.

MALCOLM  
If she's still "my gal."

NAOMI  
What do you mean?

MALCOLM  
We got into a fight, it got too big. We started bringing up shit, whatever.

NAOMI  
Whatever.

MALCOLM  
Whatever. We slept in separate rooms. All that.

Malcolm puts out the cigarette on the sidewalk.

NAOMI  
She'll come around.

MALCOLM  
I don't care.

NAOMI  
I don't think you mean that.

MALCOLM  
Yeah. I know.

Malcolm sits on the sidewalk.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)  
This shit is so scary.

Malcolm takes a deep breath.

Naomi looks off into the distance.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)  
Do you have another cigarette?

Naomi zoned out.

Malcolm taps Naomi's leg.

NAOMI  
Oh. Yeah, yeah. Here.

Naomi hands another cigarette to Malcolm. Naomi lights it.

Malcolm takes a puff. Smoke wisps away into the night.

MALCOLM  
I haven't smoked in six months.

NAOMI  
Yeah?

MALCOLM  
Yeah.

He takes another puff.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)  
She wanted me to quit so bad.

Naomi sits next to Malcolm. Malcolm rests his head on Naomi's shoulder. His eyes are shut.

Seals bark in the distance.

NAOMI  
You hear that?

MALCOLM  
The seals?

NAOMI  
Yep. They broke my heart the other day.

MALCOLM  
How?

NAOMI

My parents used to take me to see  
the rainbow seals in the wharf.  
Thought I would visit them again.  
Turns out they're all gone now.

MALCOLM

That's sad.

NAOMI

Yup.

MALCOLM

Scientists don't know everything  
though. Maybe there's a few out  
there.

NAOMI

Maybe.

Naomi turns to Malcolm, his head still on her shoulder.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Where's Sheila now?

MALCOLM

Who knows.

NAOMI

Yeah.

Malcolm snuffles a bit.

MALCOLM

It's over. I think.

NAOMI

What?

Naomi reaches into her pocket. Grips the canister.

MALCOLM

She's gone.

NAOMI

...Gone gone?

MALCOLM

I think so.

A beat.

NAOMI

Malcolm... would you be open to--

Malcolm sniffles again, on the verge of a cry.

MALCOLM  
I was so mean to her.

Naomi lets go of the canister. Naomi moves her shoulder, forcing Malcolm's head upright, and she fully faces Malcolm.

NAOMI  
What do you mean?

MALCOLM  
I said mean things. The worst...

Malcolm wipes his eyes.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)  
Was I said... "you look so ugly when you cry."

Naomi scoots back.

NAOMI  
Malcolm...

MALCOLM  
It's not true. She's so pretty. All the time.

NAOMI  
Malcolm, that's... that is really mean. Wow.

Malcolm bawls.

MALCOLM  
I know. I know. It's just... ever since that trial, and my eyes... I can't deal.

Alarm bells going off in Naomi's head.

NAOMI  
Your eyes?

MALCOLM  
Weird shit. Colors. Constantly. Right now, even. All green.

Naomi leans in.

NAOMI  
Have you told anyone about this?

Malcolm's head is fully in his knees at this point.

MALCOLM

I was gonna tell Sheila. But I  
can't worry her. It was just to pay  
rent. That's all it was. It can't  
be... all this.

NAOMI

I feel that.

Naomi spots a taxi, and hails it.

She puts Malcolm's arm over her shoulders.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Let's get you home, big man.

INT. MALCOLM AND SHEILA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Naomi guides Malcolm to the couch. He plops down and  
stretches out, then rolls over to face the back of the couch.

NAOMI

Now, what are you going to do in  
the morning?

MALCOLM

Hm?

NAOMI

You're going to call Sheila...

MALCOLM

Mhmm.

NAOMI

And tell her you're sorry. Right?

MALCOLM

Yuh, yis.

NAOMI

Can you say it?

MALCOLM

Hm?

NAOMI

Say what I just said.

MALCOLM

Call Sheila... morning.

NAOMI

Good.

Naomi finds a spare blanket and places it over Malcolm. She then walks out of the living room, but not before spotting some colorful magnets on the fridge.

She takes out her wallet, and finds FDA AGENT GARRISON's business card. She puts it on the fridge.

She writes a note: "Call about EYES. PLS."

She posts the note on the fridge as well.

INT. SARANG CORP LABS - LOBBY - DAY

A camera crew follows Doctor Hartounian around. Lana trails him.

JOURNALIST KYLE

Beautiful space you have here.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN

Isn't it? It used to be a printing press. The whole building was repurposed and retrofitted by Klein & Scholler. Brilliant architects.

JOURNALIST KYLE

It shows. The arched beams are almost invisible. Like a prize in a maze.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN

I hadn't even noticed. Sharp eye, Keith.

JOURNALIST KYLE

Kyle.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN

Sorry.

JOURNALIST KYLE

Now I hate to get into this so soon--

Doctor Hartounian picks up a sleek helmet.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN

Oh, your crew is going to love this. Here, one of you, put this on your head.

Nobody steps up.

Doctor Hartounian goes ahead and places it on a crewmember's head.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN (CONT'D)  
Feel that?

The crewmember nods.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN (CONT'D)  
That is an aloe massager. Imagine that after a long shoot, huh?

JOURNALIST KYLE  
Doctor Hartounian, we're here to ask about the allegations of health issues glossed-over during the clinical testing phase of the Pure Love product.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN  
That's all these are. Allegations.

JOURNALIST KYLE  
As you've said.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN  
Oh, check out these facemasks. They've got corn husk polymers. For the environment.

The Journalist and camera crew crowd around these facemasks.

Lana approaches Doctor Hartounian.

LANA  
Doctor? Do you think we need to worry about any of this?

Hartounian gestures with his head to walk somewhere else.

Lana follows Hartounian as he heads to a corner of the room.

INT. FDA OFFICES - SAME

Agent Garrison, in front of a messy desk, listens in on their conversation. But the audio is almost completely ruined by STATIC. A constant HISSSS on his end of the feed.

Garrison speaks into a small microphone.

FDA AGENT GARRISON

Lana. Lana, adjust your mic. Please  
adju-

INT. SARANG CORP LABS - BACK OFFICES - SAME

A slight bit of volume from Lana's earbuds hidden in her lab coat collar is heard. Lana pushes the earbuds down further into her uniform.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN

Lana. No matter how bad this gets,  
or how big they blow these  
allegations up, there's one fact  
that's on our side. Naomi Kim is  
the origin point of all this mess.  
And who is the law and the public  
going to side with? The crazy woman  
who committed fraud to take part in  
this test? Or the trusted, reliable  
family brand?

Hartounian smiles and pats Lana on the shoulder.

Lana nods.

He then walks off.

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN (CONT'D)

You guys like the corn masks? Cool,  
huh?

Lana stands there.

INT. SARANG CORP LABS - BACK OFFICES - CONT'D

Lana zooms past the offices into the filing room, where she pulls out Naomi's folder.

Lana takes a deep breath. She looks around, then shuts the door.

She grabs the collar of her lab coat and speaks into the inner flap.

LANA

Did you catch that?



INT. FDA OFFICES - SAME

FDA AGENT GARRISON  
(under breath)  
Put your earbuds on.

Garrison scribbles in his notebook.

LANA  
What? I can't hear you. Oh, right.  
Earbuds.

Lana sticks an earbud into her ear.

LANA (CONT'D)  
You got all that?

FDA AGENT GARRISON  
No. I did not get any of that.  
Sorry to say.

LANA  
Oh.

Garrison clicks the transmission off. He replays the tape, as Doctor Hartounian, now recorded, says:

DOCTOR HARTOUNIAN  
(on speaker)  
Let's make it a little...

Then just pure HISS.

Garrison leans back in his chair.

FDA AGENT GARRISON  
I love my job, actually. I love my  
job.

He SNAPS a pencil with one hand.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Naomi, wearing a hoodie, carries a bag of groceries. She tries using those rent-a-bike stations by scanning her phone, but can't quite get the bike out of its holder.

She gives up and walks, but not before she's assaulted by a GIANT digital billboard, flashing colors in her face.

She turns to look at it. The monstrously large screen shows a pale-faced model looking towards the viewer.

A spray of mist covers the model's face. Then the logo:

SARANG. BE WONDERFUL.

EXT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - FRONT DOOR

Naomi walks up, but notices that EVERYTHING she owns is outside. Couch, TV, kitchen appliances, bed, everything. She sees a notice on her door and reads it.

EVICTIION NOTICE. AMPLE WARNING GIVEN. ALL PERSONAL BELONGINGS VACATED.

Naomi drops her groceries and KICKS the door.

She SCREAMS furiously and bangs her fist against the door. She gets quiet, slides her backside down to the ground and sits against the door, defeated.

She sniffles, wipes her tears.

A pile of mail next to her. One flyer WAVERS in the wind. She picks it up: "YOU'RE INVITED! To the release of JUMP RABBIT JUMP!" She looks at the truly horrendous "cute" rabbit character on the invitation.

She holds it for a beat. Wipes her eyes again, then looks in a pile of clothes that has been so unceremoniously dumped in front of the complex.

She finds it: a lovely black dress.

INT. RELEASE PARTY - LATER

Footage from the JUMP RABBIT JUMP game plays on a massive screen in the middle of the venue.

Tapas and little glasses of orange cocktails scatter the place. People wear blazers, suits, elegant dresses.

Craig watches as two partygoers play JUMP RABBIT JUMP. He takes a sip of his drink.

Craig walks up behind them.

CRAIG

Hi! What do you guys think?

PARTYGOER #1

This is great!

CRAIG

Thank you!

PARTYGOER #2

Yeah, so far it plays really  
cleanly.

CRAIG

That's mostly what we go for here.  
Clean, I guess.

Craig deflates a bit as he says the last bit. He looks  
around.

PARTYGOER #1

This'll be big.

Craig smiles and nods.

EXT. RELEASE PARTY - SAME

Naomi walks up to the party in sweats and a hoodie, but  
carrying a plastic bag. She holds up the invite.

The Party Security looks her up and down. Then lets her  
through.

NAOMI

I'm sorry, do you have a place I  
can change?

INT. RELEASE PARTY - CONT'D

Naomi wears a lanyard badge that bears her name. Now, she's  
in her swanky black dress.

She scans the room. Someone hands her a plate full of small  
crackers with spread. She takes a cracker. Another hands her  
a platter full of garlic toasts. She takes one of those. Yet  
another presents to her more crackers with spread.

NAOMI

Oh, I got one of those already.

PARTY SERVER

What you have is Pâté. This is  
Terrine.

NAOMI

... Okay.

The Server nudges the plate towards Naomi. She takes the cracker.

Naomi sees the gigantic screen showing the JUMP RABBIT JUMP demo. She wolfs down the crackers and mini toast, and gets on the display console.

She presses start, and launches the rabbit into the air. Navigating it through the sky.

It's a pretty generic looking game.

Craig spots her from a distance. He heads over to her and taps her shoulder. She turns around. Gives a slight smile.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Hi.

CRAIG

Hello.

She returns to the game.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

How are you liking it?

NAOMI

It's okay.

CRAIG

Just okay?

NAOMI

It's neat. I don't know if I could separate the hard-working team from my experience.

CRAIG

Just tell me how you feel about it.

NAOMI

Hm. I guess it's a little boring.

CRAIG

Yeah?

NAOMI

I feel like I've seen this before.

CRAIG

Yeah?

NAOMI

Mhmm. I like the flowers that you have to jump on, though.

CRAIG

Yeah. I like the flowers too.

Craig and Naomi look at each other. A voice booms that interrupts this moment:

PARTYGOER #3

I wanna try the game!! Please!!!

The two move aside as this person rushes to the game and maniacally presses the buttons.

CRAIG

You know, they've got a patio here.

EXT. RELEASE PARTY - LATER

Naomi and Craig sit on the wooden patio. The wind drifts through their hair.

Naomi puts the hoodie on over her black dress.

CRAIG

I didn't think you'd show up.

NAOMI

Can't a girl say goodbye?

CRAIG

That's a sad way to put it.

NAOMI

Oh, yeah. I'd have no reason to be sad. Where are you headed, anyway?

CRAIG

Buffalo.

Naomi nods.

NAOMI

You always said you wanted to go.

CRAIG

I think I meant more, like, Brooklyn. But yep. I like seasons.

NAOMI

All your dreams are coming true.

CRAIG  
I don't know about that.

They look out at the skyline.

CRAIG (CONT'D)  
Look, I'm sorry. I should've--

NAOMI  
Oh we don't have to do that.

CRAIG  
We don't?

NAOMI  
It was a bonehead move, for sure.  
You were a coward.

Naomi touches Craig's face.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
But I don't know. I'm scared too.

Craig pulls out the rabbit plushie from his pocket. He puts it on Naomi's lap.

CRAIG  
Emotional support.

Naomi smiles as she holds up and looks at the doll's face. Black beads as eyes. She sees her reflection in them.

Naomi hugs the doll.

A voice BOOMS from inside.

EVENT MC  
And our Junior Lead, CRAIG  
MENDOZA!!!!

The crowd CHEERS for Craig to come on.

NAOMI  
Time for you to get on, cowboy.

Craig stands up, extends his hand. Naomi stands up on her own. She tilts her head to the direction of the stage.

Craig walks up and faces the CLAPPING crowd.

CRAIG  
Helloooo!! First, I want to thank  
you all for coming.  
(MORE)

CRAIG (CONT'D)

It's a beautiful night out here,  
and I hope we're all having a good  
time. But we're not just here for  
the canapes!

PARTY SERVER

It's TERRINE!

Silence.

Craig watches as Naomi slinks from the crowd and out of the party.

CRAIG

Sorry. Terrine. Um, I wanted to  
talk to you about how we all got  
started on this project. Bobby, who  
is somewhere here... Bobby hired me  
on after he saw my college games.  
Which was a pretty bad decision,  
Bob, because those were awful.

Light chuckles from the crowd.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

Um, but I am so grateful he had  
that faith in me. Because over the  
course of two years and countless  
days, and nights, in the office,  
we've finally got this guy to show  
for it.

Craig gestures to the giant, horrendous rabbit behind him. He looks at this beast for an awkward moment. He breathes a little too hard into the microphone.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

This guy. It's... it's a rabbit  
alright.

(shakily)

Ummm... As you all probably know,  
we're moving base, alllllll the way  
across to Buffalo. Bobby loves the  
Bills, so we had to get up and go.  
But before we do, we wanted to show  
our game here in public for the  
first time. In the city where it  
all started. So let me get this  
thing booted up. Let's show you...  
how it works. And you can feel free  
to play it after my... we worked  
really hard on this.

(under his breath)

Digital meth for kids.

Crowd murmurs to each other.

Craig chuckles.

CRAIG (CONT'D)  
And old people. Probably.

Craig walks offstage, pushes some party guests aside as he jets his way to the front exit.

But not before stopping himself in front of the server.

Everyone stares at him.

CRAIG (CONT'D)  
Could I have this?

PARTY SERVER  
Sure.

Craig takes the WHOLE PLATTER and walks out.

EXT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Naomi, still in her dress and hoodie over, breathes a cloud of fog into the night sky.

INT. CRAIG'S CAR - SAME

Craig buckles a seatbelt on the platter of terrine crackers, then buckles his own seatbelt.

He drives.

EXT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - MINUTES LATER

Naomi puts on her headphones. She listens to some music, and closes her eyes.

Car headlights illuminate her face. She doesn't open her eyes, though, until Craig walks up and says:

CRAIG  
Hi.

NAOMI  
(startled)  
Ah!

She sits up on the couch seat.



Craig stands in front of her, holding a really messed-up plate of terrine crackers. He wears a backpack. He looks like a Jehovah's Witness missionary.

CRAIG  
What the hell happened?

NAOMI  
I moved some things around.

Craig walks up to the front door. Naomi stands up and follows him. Craig looks at the paper slip taped to her door.

CRAIG  
Here. Hold this.

Craig hands Naomi the platter of appetizers. Naomi takes it. Eats one of the crackers.

NAOMI  
I'm glad you brought these.

Craig backs up, and RUNS into the door, aiming his shoulder at it. He bounces off of it, and grips his arm in pain.

CRAIG  
Shhhhhiiiiit. SSSSSSSSS.

NAOMI  
What the hell??

Then, he RUNS into the door again.

CRAIG  
Oh, pfffffff... oh that hurts...

NAOMI  
Craig, stop!

CRAIG  
Sorry. Thought it was worth a try.

NAOMI  
No, I know. You're an idiot.

Craig faces Naomi.

CRAIG  
They shouldn't be allowed to do this.

NAOMI  
Yeah...

Naomi and Craig walk away from the door. But then Craig spins around and SPRINTS back into the door. This time the hinge SPLITS, causing the door to CRACK OPEN.

CRAIG

Ah!!!

NAOMI

Holy shit.

INT. NAOMI'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

Craig runs in and puts his hands in the air to celebrate, but quickly grips his shoulder again.

CRAIG

Oof. Okay.

NAOMI

Are you insane?

CRAIG

No. Yes.

Craig then RUNS outside again.

NAOMI

Now what?

Craig drags Naomi's TV in and plugs it into the wall. He then takes his backpack off and, with an HDMI cord, plugs his laptop into the TV.

CRAIG

Here. Sit.

Naomi puts the mess of an appetizer platter on the floor, and sits cross-legged next to it. She eats another one. Craig plugs a controller into the laptop.

A game shows on the screen.

Naomi now sees the Rainbow Seal platforming game displayed on the TV. Now it's underwater, and the rainbow seal blows bubbles at clams. The rainbow seal is followed by a posse of gray seals.

Craig sits down and hands the controller to Naomi. She plays the game.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

See, they're friends now, all a family. And underwater.

Naomi plays for a bit. Then her character dies. Game over.

NAOMI

Craig...

Naomi looks at Craig.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

You freak me out, dude.

CRAIG

Why?

NAOMI

Just that... for the first time  
in... a long time, I really saw  
what love without taking was like.  
I forgot what that was.

Naomi looks down.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

I thought love was a blistering,  
fucked-up thing you felt in the pit  
of your stomach when you see  
someone. When you feel their touch.

Naomi looks away.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

... I didn't know that making  
someone soup when they have the  
slightest cough was love. I didn't  
know that running over when  
something seemed even a little bit  
wrong was love.

She looks at Craig. Wells up.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

I didn't know that kissing scars  
before asking how they happened was  
love.

A beat.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

And I realize now that all I wanted  
was your face hanging above me in  
the morning.

Craig looks deep into Naomi's eyes. She cries.

Craig cradles Naomi, as if he's protecting her from the rest of the cruel, insipid world.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

I didn't know having you was a choice I could make every day.

Naomi releases herself from Craig's embrace. She pulls out a can of Pure Love. The pre-market can that Lana gave Naomi, now dented.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Craig...

Naomi holds the can and looks at Craig. She puts the can under her cheek, where tears roll into the canister.

CRAIG

I'm not leaving.

She takes the canister. And points it at Craig.

NAOMI

Yes you are. I'm coming with you.

Naomi snuffles. She holds the canister up to his face.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Ready?

Craig smiles. He gently pushes the canister away...

and KISSES her.

CUT TO PINK.

OVER PINK:

JOURNALIST KYLE (V.O.)

Hi. This is Kyle Zephyr with KQED. Today I'll be telling you about the most particular story behind a story you probably already know. We follow Lana, the whistleblower from Sarang Corporation. Maybe better known as the folks behind Pure Love. Yep, that Pure Love.

A sound snippet from the Pure Love commercial plays, complete with catchy jingle.

COMMERCIAL (V.O.)

Real. True. Pure. Introducing Pure Love from Sarang.

JOURNALIST KYLE (V.O.)

So, Lana.

LANA (V.O.)

Yes.

JOURNALIST KYLE (V.O.)

Can you tell us a little bit about your decision to expose some of the practices over at Sarang?

LANA (V.O.)

Sure. It all started with human trials. When we were working on mice, it was a little different: mating wasn't as consequential, I suppose. But when I saw some of the effects these pheromones were having on these people, innocent clinical trial subjects... I knew this stuff had to be pulled from market.

JOURNALIST KYLE (V.O.)

So, that's very interesting. And from what you've said before, a very important piece to the case, other than your whistleblower testimonies, was actually a test subject who broke his silence, correct?

LANA

Yes. And it was a call that came out of nowhere. Actually, his girlfriend was the one who urged him to contact the FDA--

Lana keeps talking as the audio fades out.

Hold on the color **PINK** completely overtaking the screen. Interrupted by a hand unveiling pink sheets, as two pairs of legs slide out of bed.

The color **YELLOW**. Interrupted by a spatula moving the egg yolk around a pan.

A black screen, interrupted by a splash of cream that swirls in the coffee.

The color **ORANGE** interrupted by Naomi opening the orange curtains that looks out into the city.

From the view of this yard, we see Craig kiss Naomi. They get into a taxi.

INT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Naomi has a window seat as Craig sits in the middle. He's fast asleep. She holds his hand.

Naomi watches a rom-com movie on her little plane TV. Two perfect faces sharing one perfect kiss.

The movie is stopped by an announcement:

PILOT (O.S.)  
We are 30 minutes away from landing  
in beautiful San Francisco. Please  
fasten your seatbelts--

Naomi puts her seatbelt on and reaches over and clips Craig's seatbelt. She settles back in when she sees a LITTLE GIRL looking between the gaps of the seats in front of her.

Naomi smiles.

The Little Girl gasps.

NAOMI  
Hi.

LITTLE GIRL  
Hi.

NAOMI  
What's your name?

LITTLE GIRL  
Jessica.

NAOMI  
Hi Jessica. I'm Naomi.

LITTLE GIRL  
Hi Naomi. Your face is scary.

Naomi chuckles.

NAOMI  
It is, isn't it?

LITTLE GIRL  
What happened?

NAOMI

I didn't eat my fruits and vegetables. I kept falling over and hitting my face on the ground.

LITTLE GIRL

Oh no...

NAOMI

Yep.

LITTLE GIRL

Do you eat your fruits and vegetables now?

NAOMI

Yes I do.

LITTLE GIRL

And do you you still fall?

NAOMI

Not anymore.

LITTLE GIRL

Wow.

Naomi nods and smiles.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - LATER

Naomi and Craig walk by the shelves.

Craig picks up a toothbrush.

Naomi spots an employee taking down a PURE LOVE retail advertisement.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - MINUTES LATER

Naomi and Craig walk outside. They walk towards the rental car. She opens the door and puts their bags into the backseats.

She spots a bike shop next to the convenience store. "BIKE RENTALS HERE. SEE THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE!"

NAOMI

I think I might bike around for a little bit.

CRAIG

You sure?

NAOMI

I'm going to check out the bridge.

CRAIG

Sounds good. See you at the hotel?

Naomi comes up to Craig and hugs him.

NAOMI

See you at the hotel.

CRAIG

Tell me how it goes, okay?

Naomi smiles.

NAOMI

Okay.

They kiss.

EXT. STREET - LATER

Naomi bikes up a large hill.

She can't quite make it up effortlessly anymore. She disembarks and wheels the bike up the hill as cars pass her.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - DAY

Naomi bikes across the Golden Gate Bridge. Her hair blows in the wind.

EXT. LAW OFFICE - DAY

Naomi bikes up to a large fancy office building of glass and slate. She locks her bike and walks up to the front door. But she smells her breath. She chews a stick of gum.

INT. LAW OFFICE - WAITING ROOM - CONT'D

A legal assistant escorts Naomi to the waiting room lined with brown padded folding chairs.

Naomi takes a seat. She looks over to see CLAIRE at the coffee station, pouring herself a cup of decaf, no cream or sugar. She wears a light blue striped collared shirt.



Claire notices Naomi and smiles. She walks over and sits next to her.

CLAIRE  
Funny seeing you here.

NAOMI  
They want you to testify too?

CLAIRE  
I guess an allegation of "stolen research from a young, naïve grad student" would support their case.

Claire gives a \*whatever\* shrug, then takes a sip of decaf.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)  
What's your damage?

NAOMI  
Temporary flashes of blindness.

CLAIRE  
What?

NAOMI  
Solid colors. Like I'm staring at a one-tone painting.

CLAIRE  
Whoa. Are you okay?

Naomi's turn to shrug.

NAOMI  
It's kind of interesting, honestly.

CLAIRE  
I'll say.

Naomi looks around. Sees the legal assistant occupied with typing something on a laptop.

NAOMI  
(quieter)  
Can I ask you something?

CLAIRE  
Sure.

NAOMI  
That woman you were with, in the club that one night...

CLAIRE  
Gail?

NAOMI  
Probably, you would know better.

CLAIRE  
(chuckles)  
Fair. Fair.

NAOMI  
Why would you give me ALL the  
pheromones if you two were using  
them?

Claire cocks her head.

CLAIRE  
We weren't using that.

NAOMI  
Come on.

CLAIRE  
I don't mess with it.

NAOMI  
Yeah, but your eyes were so...

Naomi makes an EXPLOSION hand gesture.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
Ppphhhh.

CLAIRE  
Ohhhhh. That was probably the  
molly.

NAOMI  
... Oh.

A paralegal opens the door to the conference room.

PARALEGAL  
Naomi Kim?

Naomi stands up and walks in.

INT. LAW OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - CONT'D

The paralegal gestures to a chair. Naomi takes a seat. Across from her at the other end of the glass table, three LAWYERS handle paperwork in manila folders. A transcriber in the corner typing away on a special keyboard.

LAWYER #1

Naomi Kim...

NAOMI

Yes.

LAWYER #2

Welcome. So I see you've suffered temporary blindness episodes as a result of the human testing performed by Sarang Corporation?

NAOMI

Yes I have.

LAWYER #3

And can I ask how those symptoms have affected you?

Naomi shifts in her chair.

Shots of Naomi and Craig talking on a swing set in an empty playground.

NAOMI (V.O.)

I guess it's kind of changed everything.

Naomi and Craig walking along a beach.

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

I used to see the world a different way. The way I thought was "correct."

Naomi and Craig eat a tasting menu at a fancy restaurant. Naomi pushes away a small plate in disgust, and Craig laughs.

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

Now I realize there are all kinds of ways to process stuff.

LAWYER #1 (V.O.)

Can you elaborate?

Naomi and Craig playing whack-a-mole. Craig is miserably bad at this game.

NAOMI (V.O.)  
 You know that conundrum, "what if  
 what you see as blue is different  
 from my blue?"

LAWYER #1 (V.O.)  
 Sure.

Naomi cries in Craig's arms in bed.

NAOMI (V.O.)  
 It's as if I know now, oh, your  
 blue is different from my blue. And  
 that question now seems really  
 boring and obvious. Almost not  
 worth asking.

LAWYER #2 (V.O.)  
 And would you say these are  
 negative effects to your everyday  
 life?

Back to the conference room.

NAOMI  
 Is this the part where I have to  
 say it ruined everything?

LAWYER #3  
 Just tell us the truth.

Naomi takes a breath.

Shot of Naomi staring at yellow curtains in their home.

NAOMI (V.O.)  
 Sometimes I stare at objects with a  
 solid color. I don't know why;  
 maybe I want to make sure it's  
 still real.

She pulls back the curtain. Sees Craig pulling weeds in the  
 yard.

LAWYER #2 (V.O.)  
 Do you ever feel it's made-up?

NAOMI (V.O.)  
 Sure. Maybe. But if I see it, why  
 does it matter if it's made up?

Naomi holds Craig tight on a beach boardwalk. Craig clutches  
 her hair. Naomi's face is buried in Craig's chest.

NAOMI (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
And more and more, I forget.

LAWYER #3 (V.O.)  
You forget?

Craig pulls Naomi in even closer.

NAOMI (V.O.)  
I forget there was a time I didn't  
feel this.

Craig taps Naomi on the shoulder and points to the distance.

Naomi turns around.

A rainbow seal sleeping on the rocks, with its full  
multicolored pigmentation.

Naomi and Craig watch from the boardwalk.

*Silently* by Blonde Redhead plays:

*Silently, I wish to sail into your port, I am your sailor*

*Quietly, I drop my weight into your sea, I drop my anchor*

*I sway in your waves, I sing in your sleep*

*I stay till I'm in your life.*

Fade to **BLUE**.

END.