

THE ROOF

EXT. CONDOMINIUM ROOFTOP GARDEN, 8 STORIES HIGH WITH A VIEW OF DOWNTOWN CHICAGO. IT'S APPARENT THE ROOF IS A POPULAR HANGOUT FOR TEENAGERS LOOKING TO AVOID AUTHORITIES – NIGHT TIME

MARCUS (17, emo lead singer) plays guitar while ANNABEL (17, pop-rock bassist) leans on his shoulder, looking at the skyline. He starts playing "Annabel's song," a slow, bittersweet love song.

MARCUS

(singing)

*We can only go so far, our arms  
cannot escape. I'll trick my mind  
and think it has, but it all comes  
back the same. Forming words from  
shadows, I wrote you a bleak poem.  
It will leave you searching for  
that special air, that air that we  
breathed when we first said "I love  
you." I love you. I love you.  
Comets fell those awful nights the  
alcohol of love fading fast. Kiss  
the brick and hold her tight on the  
roof of your grandma's house. Yeah,  
comets fell those awful nights,  
those awful nights when we said "I  
love you." I love you. I love you.  
We'll watch the stars melt and  
streak across the sky and  
disappear. They'll help us hold  
our fears, deep and far away. Just  
smile at the pretty sky and ignore  
the mess in our lives. Yeah,  
comets fell those awful nights,  
those awful nights when we said "I  
love you." Yeah, I love you. Yeah,  
I love you.*

ANNABEL

(softly)

I mean, wow, that's beautiful.  
It's mostly sweet but...

MARCUS

(insecure)

I know, I know, I should say

"awesome nights" and not "awful nights."

ANNABEL

No, no. Keep it like that. It's great, I like it. (beat). It's bittersweet. I have a bass line in my head already. We can definitely add it to our repertoire. I'm not sure we should play it for the battle of the bands though. Well, maybe if we speed it up.

MARCUS

Jesus. It's not why I wrote that song. It's not for the fucking battle. (beat). I mean, did you listen to the words?

ANNABEL

Oh yeah, of course, I figured it's about us but...wait. I'm confused.

MARCUS

Yeah, I am too. Like, I love you so much but...we just graduated high school. You'll be going to Grinnell in fucking Iowa...

ANNABEL

Yeah, but that's like months away.

MARCUS

72 days. In 72 days I will be saying bye to you, probably right up here.

ANNABEL

Oh my god, you're counting days? Can't we just enjoy the time that we do have?

MARCUS

I'm trying to. I really am, but I keep thinking about a world without you...

ANNABEL

Marcus, I'm just going to be in a different state. A couple hours away. I don't know what you're so worked up about.

MARCUS

People change once they go away for college. I have older siblings, I've seen it firsthand. Like, Kevin and Bridgette had been together all through high school and then two months at different colleges, only an hour apart, and boom. Broken, busted, never talked to each other again.

ANNABEL

Well, thank god we aren't them.

They have an awkward kiss.

ANNABEL (CONT'D)

Babe, we're going to be fine.

CUT TO:

EXT. DINER - DAY

We see a diner from across the street of a busy road in a northside Chicago neighborhood. We see a couple of different angles before following a patron (high school girl) into the diner. We follow her until we come up to a table with two boys talking. We stay with the two boys.

BROCK (18, jockish drummer) and MOSES (18, punk rocker, lead guitarist) are eating at a table seat by a window.

BROCK

I can't see myself as a Marine. The Army would be good enough.

MOSES

Both options suck. (beat). What if there's a war? You're a pacifist for god's sake. Would you be able to shoot somebody?

BROCK

There's not going to be any more wars. And who says I'm a pacifist?

MOSES

There's going to be war. There's always war.

BROCK

Not right now there sure ain't.

MOSES

You say that like it's a bad thing.

BROCK

I don't know, I feel like people born in different generations always had something to rage against. What the fuck do we rage against?

MOSES

Well, I think it's a good thing that we're living in times of relative peace. I don't think we need a Vietnam War to be angsty. What do you think your mom would say to you wanting to join the army?

Beat - Brock leans back. Beat.

BROCK

Well, what do you think your dad is going to say when you tell him you want to travel for a year before going to NYU?

Moses shrugs indifference. Beat.

MOSES

Promise me you won't join the fucking army? Why not take a year off with me. We'll go travel, do the whole discovering ourselves bit.

BROCK

Dude, I think we have discovered ourselves.

MOSES

In what way?

BROCK

We have a kick-ass band. We do, we could be big if you guys didn't have to fucking leave. There, I said it.

MOSES

We're just high school good. I don't think we could rock the Metro or anything. My motives for being in a band weren't to make it big. I just thought it'd make me seem a little more mature for...

BROCK

How's that going for ya?

MOSES

I got her to actually talk to me yesterday...for like, two minutes, maybe even three. And she smiled at least four times.

BROCK

That's progress...you know you could probably fuck half the girls in our class without even taking them on a date? You don't have to torture yourself over your sort of hot librarian.

MOSES

Sort of hot? Ok, she is hands down way hotter than any girl in our class. But, it's not just that though. She's smart and she gets me and when I make her laugh...

BROCK

Yes, I know...what'd she say about coming to the Battle of the Bands?

MOSES

Well, that really made her laugh.

BROCK

So, she won't be there?

MOSES

Hmm, yeah, don't think so...but,  
she didn't say no.

BROCK

You know who will be there?

MOSES

Who's that?

BROCK

Half the girls in our class that  
want to bone you.

CUT TO:

HOUSE PARTY

EXT. - NIGHT TIME - OAK PARK MANSION

We follow two arms carrying a keg into a crowded high school house party. Music, something like a Smoking Popes song, gets louder as we follow the arms and keg inside.

INT. - CROWDED HIGH SCHOOL HOUSE PARTY

The keg finds its home in the kitchen of the house in a large tub of ice. The keg gets tapped and pumped, and we see an arm holding up a pitcher. The pitcher gets filled to the brim with beer and we follow the pitcher through the party where we get to a makeshift stage. The music stops as the pitcher gets poured into the outstretched arms of the people on the stage. The final cup gets poured, and we follow the cup to the lips of Marcus who chugs the beer as we zoom away to see the full stage. Marcus finishes his beer and grabs the mic.

MARCUS

Wow, thank you all for coming.  
This next one is a little emo, a  
little punk. Now let's all go get a  
little drunk.

Marcus drops the cup, and we stay on Marcus.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

(singing)

*My surroundings reflect my  
emotional state. Empty bottles  
fill the trash my clothes heaps of  
rags. My body once taut now  
flabby and pale. The words from my  
mouth getting slurred and unheard.  
The reason I guess is all the  
liquor.*

We see a crowd jumping up and down to the music.

ANNABEL

(singing)

*The decisions I made after that  
night. "Take care," she had said. She  
hoped she was right.*

MARCUS

(singing)

*Now buried in the debris of what  
could be called sadness has blinded  
me from the light our desperate  
search for happiness. I lay out a  
prayer, and I light up some candles.  
I hold out a pen write myself a  
goddamn letter. If you still feel  
how you felt, give up and surrender.*

We see Annabel close up.

ANNABEL

(singing)

*The decisions I made after that  
night. "Take care," she had said. She  
hoped she was right.*

We see Marcus move over to Annabel's mic as they sing.

MARCUS AND ANNABEL

(singing)

*If you still feel how you felt, give  
up and surrender. If you still  
feel how you felt, give up and  
surrender. If you still feel how*

*you felt, give up and surrender.*

The song ends with applause, we focus back onto the pitcher that is now being carried back through the party to the kitchen and to the keg. We watch the pitcher get filled up and carried away as we stay on the keg. We watch in fast motion as it gets emptied and a red cup is placed on top of the tap.

EXT. MONTROSE BEACH, ON THE CONCRETE, LOOKING AT THE CITY SKYLINE.

MARCUS

Well, I think that was our best show ever.

BROCK

Dude, you say that after every show.

MARCUS

But, this one totally was.

ANNABEL

We fucked up at least once on every song. We need to practice.

MARCUS

No, we didn't.

MOSES

We did, but I don't think anyone besides us noticed.

ANNABEL

Well, I don't think the judges at the Battle of the Bands are going to be as drunk as our audience was tonight.

MOSES

Fuck the Battle of the Bands.

MARCUS

What's your problem?



BROCK

He's just upset his lady didn't show up again.

MARCUS

I don't think a thirty-year-old librarian is going to show up at a high school party, to be fair.

MOSES

She's not thirty years old.

MARCUS

Well, twenty-eight, whatever... I think if she did show up people would think she was a narc.

BROCK

Technically, isn't she a narc?

MOSES

How so?

BROCK

Narc. Not available, really cold. Narc.

ANNABEL

Wow, very clever. Anyhow, we need to practice.

BROCK

Dude, you say that after every show.

ANNABEL

You don't become a touring band by just playing house parties and places where we know we'll be well-received. We have to work on our chops, make it flawless.

MARCUS

Fuck flawless, we're not going to be the next big thing or something. We're just having fun...trying to get fucked, you know? I mean, right?

ANNABEL (ANGRY)

Why don't you have another drink?

MARCUS

That's the plan...and another  
after that...and another after that  
and...

Marcus waves his hand in the air, clearly the most drunk  
of the four.

ANNABEL

Jesus fucking Christ.

BROCK

Uh oh, here we go.

ANNABEL

Marcus, honey, we are good. The  
band that is, like, really fucking  
good. We have fans besides the  
people from our school. That's  
like next level. We have a chance  
to prove it with the battle, and I  
don't want to fuck it up or,  
rather, have you fuck it up because  
you want to get drunk and party  
like a rock star.

MARCUS (JOKINGLY)

I am a rock star.

ANNABEL

Yes! Yes! Yes! You fucking are! We  
fucking are (beat) just, nobody  
knows it yet.

Beat.

BROCK

Can we change the band's name?

ANNABEL

What? You don't like Wilco  
Wannababies?

BROCK

Hell no, never did.

MOSES

It's just stealing a trending band's name for attention and the Wannabbes part? Jesus, I don't think I can subscribe to that anymore.

ANNABEL

Oh, ok. Well, what should the band name be then?

Beat.

BROCK

Igloos in Space?

MARCUS

Terrible.

BROCK

You're terrible.

MARCUS

Fuck you.

BROCK

Fuck you.

ANNABEL

Why don't you guys shut up?

MARCUS

Hey, nobody likes you.

Beat.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Yeah, wait, no that's great.  
Nobody Likes You.

BROCK

For the band name?

MARCUS

Yeah.

BROCK

I'm in.

MOSES

Ummm...it's clever, makes you  
laugh, then makes you think.

BROCK

I think it's just funny, totally.  
Nobody Likes You.

MARCUS

Annabel?

ANNABEL

Nobody Likes You.

MARCUS

No, you. Nobody Likes You.

MOSES

Official-Nobody Likes You.

CUT TO:

EXT. LIBRARY - AFTERNOON

Moses pushes along a cart full of books following VIKI (28,  
hot librarian) who is sometimes flirtatious and other times  
cold.

MOSES

So, you missed an awesome show.

VIKI

Oh yeah? How many people were  
there?

MOSES

Easily a hundred. Maybe two.

VIKI

Oh yeah? And how many of them were  
older than 21?

MOSES

There were definitely some creepers there. Maybe five?

VIKI

Darn, I wish I had been there.

MOSES

No, you don't.

VIKI

Nope, I don't.

MOSES

Well, what'd you do this weekend?

VIKI

You know, just things an old, boring librarian would do.

MOSES

You aren't that old.

VIKI

I'll be twenty-nine years old in a week.

MOSES

You don't look a day over nineteen...and, we'll have to do something to celebrate your birthday. Is there anything that you want?

Moses slips into a daydream.

VIKI

Yes, Moses, there is something I want for my birthday. It's you. I want you, all of you, all over me, all over me oooooooooooooooooooooo.

Moses snaps out of his daydream.

VIKI (CONT'D)

A back massage and a week off of work.

MOSES

Hey, I can give you a back massage.

VIKI

Jesus, didn't your shift end like ten minutes ago.

MOSES

Fifteen.

VIKI

Go home.

Moses walks out of the library dejected.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD OF BROCK'S PARENT'S HOUSE - PATIO

Brock is talking to his parents about joining the army. We join them mid-conversation. BROCK'S MOM (early 50s) is not on board and BROCK'S DAD (early 50s) has remained silent so far.

BROCK'S MOM

It just seems a little out of the left field, son. I mean, no mother wants to see their son go off and fight a conflict.

BROCK

Dad was in the army, and he always tells great stories about it. And there aren't any wars right now!

Beat.

BROCK'S DAD

Son, I didn't choose to be in the army. My number got called, and I went. The stories you've heard from me are the cherry-picked PG-13 ones that I can tell you. The ones that I can't...

Brock's dad seizes up, his mind goes off into a dark place. We zoom into Brock's dad's eyeball and into a flashback of some Vietnam violence in the jungle, twenty seconds of hell, and we zoom back out of the flashback to Brock's dad heavily breathing.

BROCK'S DAD (CONT'D)

The shit I've seen would haunt you for a lifetime.

Beat.

BROCK'S MOM

We just want you to think about it more, son.

BROCK

I have thought about it. It's all I think about. I'm not a good student, mom. I'm actually a terrible student and I don't need four more years to prove how fucking stupid I am.

BROCK'S DAD

Then go into the trades! Become an electrician like your uncles! Or carpentry—you're great with your hands. Or keep going with that music band of yours—you guys sound really good. You're a good drummer.

BROCK

I don't know, dad. I don't know where I'm going. I just don't think school is in my future. And, I kind of thought I'd just follow in your footsteps.

BROCK'S DAD

My path was not chosen for me. I just want you to take the summer to think about it. Sign up for some junior college courses. Think of it like an extension of high school. Just for God's sake, don't join the army.

BROCK

Ok, I'll think about it.

We follow Brock into his parent's house.

INT. THE BASEMENT WHERE THE BAND PRACTICES

Brock walks around the musical equipment. Brock brushes the strings of the guitars that are hung against the wall. He is in deep thought, song writing mode. He sits behind his drum set and grabs a notebook and starts writing down words while making a beat with the snare drum.

BROCK

(speaking to himself)

I don't know what to be...I don't  
know what to be...no longer seventeen...

We follow the point of view of the words on the page being written by Brock, but we hear the full band play "Brock's Song."

MARCUS

(singing)

*I don't know what to be. No longer  
seventeen. I can't claim self-defense.  
Or premature innocence. It's a  
stalemate, sleep in separate beds.  
We talk so much about being bad. I  
think I missed the boat. Or I  
forgot to float. And I just sank  
in. To whatever it is, I am in. I'm  
drowning in this shit I'm in.  
Where's the safer coast? Oh,  
where's the gentler host?*

We transition from the words being written to the full band now in the basement practicing.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

(singing)

*Oh, please extend your hands. No,  
please extend your hands, yeah.  
Please reach out your hands, and we  
can be best friends.*

MARCUS (TALKING) (CONT'D)

I think it's good man, very solid.  
I'm not completely sure about the  
ending, but the rest is good.

BROCK

Thanks.



ANNABEL

Ok guys, if we want to play this live, I think we have to speed it up.

MARCUS

Can't we just create something for the sake of creating something. Who gives a shit if anyone likes it but us. This is Brock's song, I think he should be the one making decisions about how it should sound.

BROCK

She does have a point though—the song is kind of wimpy right now.

MARCUS

I think it's perfect as-is.

ANNABEL

It's a very pretty song, don't get me wrong. I just think it needs to be sped up a bit, more pop.

BROCK

Fuck it, just scrap the song. I don't feel comfortable with my words out there like that anyway.

MARCUS

Dude, it's ok to have feelings.

BROCK

Well, if we play it, I don't want anyone to know that I wrote it.

MOSES

Let's just play the hits for the battle. I don't want to test out anything new.

MARCUS

I think we should play "Still Annabel." With you doing the organ intro.

MOSES

That one is fun.

ANNABEL

Oh my god, do you know how embarrassing it is to hear you sing that song?

CUT TO:

BATTLE OF THE BANDS

INT. THE METRO CHICAGO NIGHT TIME

We see a MC (30-to-50-year-old female) on stage, leaning into a microphone. The band Blowout Boy (a pretentious looking band that eerily resembles Fallout Boy circa 2001).

MC

All right, ladies and gentlemen, it's coming down to these two solid groups: Blowout Boy and Nobody Likes You...who are coming back to the stage as we speak. Let's give it up for all the bands we heard tonight though.

We scan the crowd showcasing some of the early aughts fashion stylings.

MC (CONT'D)

And now, Nobody Likes You playing their brand new song, "Still Annabel."

MARCUS

(singing)

*Romeo had Juliette and Juliette had this. I couldn't be more confused with the way things have been. And I finally changed my shirt today, but I still feel the same. My dreams were so thick with you, don't ask me where I've been. 'Cause you are still Annabel, and I'm still where I've been. You are still Annabel, so indecisive, oh those lips. And I suppose what I'm trying to say is that we are still kids.*

(MORE)

MARCUS (CONT'D)

(singing)

*Keep going on your way like  
it matters what I say. Because you  
are still Annabel, and I'm still  
where I've been. You are still  
Annabel, so indecisive with those  
hips. And I don't care if you tell  
your boyfriend I wrote another song  
for you. Ask yourself this question,  
how many songs did he write for you?  
I bet it's zero. Would it hurt that  
guy to smile? I feel so bad for me,  
and those awful things I did. Like  
another song could ease your mind.  
You'll always be my muse, I don't  
care what that paper said; I don't  
write this shit to be cool. Just  
another song for you. Oh, you will  
always be my girl. You are still  
Annabel, and I'm your softcore kid.  
You are still Annabel, I guess I can  
Wait four more years. You are still  
Annabel, it doesn't matter what I  
say. It doesn't matter what I say.  
It doesn't matter what I say; you  
are still Annabel.*

The vocals for the song end as a montage starts with an instrumental of "Still Annabel."

MONTAGE OF PARTYING AND MARCUS GETTING INTO A FIGHT WITH BLOWOUT BOY.

We see the band win the Battle of the Bands.

We see them partying afterward at the Metro.

We see Marcus try and get a drink afterwards at the bar, and he's turned down.

Marcus retreats to the bathroom where he takes a swig off his flask.

Marcus is peeing in a urinal next to the bassist from Blowout Boy.

We see Marcus get a smirk on his face as he turns and

starts to pee on the bassist from Blowout Boy.

Marcus hysterically laughs as a shoving match ensues.

The shoving match spills out of the bathroom as Marcus is getting his ass handed to him.

Brock comes to aid Marcus with a flying punch and a brawl ensues with both bands.

Nobody Likes You comes out of the brawl as the "winner," but the bandmates are pissed at Marcus for starting a brawl in the first place. We see Marcus walk away from the band, stumbling down Clark Street, not bothering to help with equipment takedown.

We follow Marcus as he goes to score a bag of cocaine from a drug dealer in an alleyway. We see him buy a fifth of Seagrem's Seven Whiskey and head up to THE ROOF. We see Marcus, laughing and crying and spitting and looking pretty miserable.

We watch Marcus use and drink alone as the night gets darker, and he eventually passes out dramatically with his arms outstretched.

CUT TO:

INT. MARCUS'S BEDROOM.

We see Marcus on a cellphone looking distraught.

MARCUS

I'm sorry, ok, I'm sorry.

It's a one-sided conversation, and we don't hear who is on the other end.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

It's not going to happen again. I'm good, I just...

MARCUS (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, babe...

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Sorry. Sorry. Sorry, sorry, sorry, sorry.

Marcus grabs a pen while he's apologizing on the phone and starts writing down song lyrics.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

This is all legit? I mean, I never thought we'd play anywhere outside of Chicago.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I'm fine with taking a year off to tour.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

I would probably have dropped out anyway. Everyone else is on board?

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Holy mother, this is actually happening.

Marcus hangs up the phone and does a line of cocaine with the pen he was writing lyrics with.

CUT TO:

GOING AWAY PARTY

EXT. BACKYARD OF BROCK'S PARENT'S HOUSE

There's a going away party for the band. Parents are in attendance, so the atmosphere is tame. Brock's dad proposes a toast.

BROCK'S DAD

Never in my wildest dreams would I have seen this coming. A month ago this knucklehead was talking about joining the army, and I was wondering how to accept that. And now, I see him about to head out on the road to pursue his dreams. I sometimes feel like I'm the luckiest dad alive. Raise a glass to these four as they set out on the greatest adventure of their lives. To New York, Boston, D.C...

We have a clinking of glasses as the bandmates cheer each other on.

EXT. THE ROOF - NIGHT - SEPTEMBER 10TH

Annabel and Marcus are laying on a blanket on the other side of the glass enclosure of the roof without much clothes on.

MARCUS

I'm still in disbelief. (beat).

ANNABEL

I'm not sure what's weirder, that we are about to go on tour or that it's September 10th and we aren't in a classroom?

MARCUS

Eighty-two days ago I thought we were going to break up.

ANNABEL

Stop counting days.

MARCUS

I'm sorry, it's just simple math. (beat).

ANNABEL

Can you promise me something though?

MARCUS

Sure.

ANNABEL

Well, I don't think you should say yes until you hear what I want you to promise.

MARCUS

Ok, let's hear it.

ANNABEL

Well, if anything happens between us, like we break up or something—I mean, god forbid—just if anything does, I want us to keep the band together. (beat).

ANNABEL (CONT'D)

Say something.

Marcus shakes his head and starts to put his clothes back on. He's clearly upset.

ANNABEL (CONT'D)

Well, say something! It's not a ridiculous request.

Marcus continues to put his clothes on through gritted teeth. Annabel starts to put her clothes on, too, in a hurry.

ANNABEL (CONT'D)

Babe, we aren't going to break up. I'm just saying if something were to happen in, say, a year or two. (beat). God, don't do this. Stop, I'm here, I'm here, I'm not going to leave you. Jesus. (beat).

Marcus stops what he's doing and longingly looks into Annabel's eyes.

ANNABEL (CONT'D)

I just want us to keep the focus on the music.

Marcus is crushed.

MARCUS

I don't think you have any idea how much I love you. (beat).

ANNABEL

Marcus, baby, come on, come here, come here.

Annabel brings a now sobbing Marcus into her arms.

MARCUS

I'm not some kind of business venture. I write these songs for you, for us. I could give two shits about being famous. (beat).

Annabel looks over Marcus's shoulder at the Chicago Skyline.

ANNABEL

I know, babe. I know.

We focus on Annabel's determined face. Her emotions are in check.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE FRONT YARD OF BROCK'S PARENT'S HOUSE — THE MORNING OF 9/11

We start to hear Tom Petty's "Into the Great Wide Open" covered by Nobody Likes You.

The bandmates say their goodbyes to Chicago in the very early morning of 9/11. We see them hugging their parents and siblings. We see them debate who is going to drive first as they get into a black 1998 Dodge Ram church van that is packed to the gills with musical equipment. Annabel wins the debate and takes the keys. We see Nobody Likes You driving out of Chicago in a black 1998 Dodge Ram church van.

CUT TO:

We see our band in a studio reenacting the "Into the Great Wide Open" music video where Tom Petty (Moses) is dressed up like a jester/pimp with John Lennon sunglasses and Johnny Depp (Marcus) is the rebel without a clue. Annabel plays the agent character in the music video. Brock is the stoic-faced drummer.

We hear sound bytes from the WGN Radio news team's coverage from September 11, starting shortly before 8 am.

We'll hear voices including Spike O'Dell, Tom Petersen, Mary Van De Velde, Rick Jager, Doug Cummings, Mike Mathis, Wes Bleed, David Stewart, Steve Bertrand, Andrea Darlas and Larry Schreiner.

We hear the audio from President George W. Bush.

We see the van turn around and head home to Brock's Parent's house where they watch their country, their way of life, their hopes and their dreams become forever changed by the horrific acts of 9/11.