

NOVELTY ULTRA

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"NOVELTY ULTRA"

EXT. BACKYARD - VAL'S HOME - DAY

VAL is in his backyard garden, planting seeds in soil.

CLOSE ON his hands. They spill flower seeds into a small burrow. CUT TO

Soil fills the burrow. CUT TO

VAL waters the newly planted seeds. CUT TO

He waters OTHER BLOOMING FLOWERS.

TITLE CARD: NOVELTY ULTRA

CUT TO

INT. LIVING ROOM - VAL'S HOME - DAY

CU. TV SCREEN...

A fight scene from "Transformers: The Last Knight" is playing. We hear loud crashing and explosion noises. PULL BACK to reveal:

VAL and his friend JOE watching. Joe is thoroughly enjoying it while Val watches, disinterested.

JOE

Man this is the best Transformers ever.

VAL

Which one is this... like the eight one?

JOE

Fifth. There are only five.

VAL

And they're making another one?

JOE

Well obviously... they're amazing movies.

Val sighs. He rises to leave.

(CONTINUED)

VAL
Alright. I'm going out.

JOE
Where you headed?

VAL
Out. To write.

JOE
Oh... you're going to go work on
your book.

Val grabs his keys and wallet. Goes for the door --

JOE
Hey Val...

VAL
Yeah..?

JOE
I just want you to know man... I
think it's really cool what you're
doing... you know... writing a
book and all.

A beat. It's so random that Val doesn't know how to take
it in.

VAL
Cool... thanks.

JOE
Cool. That's all I wanted to say.
Ride on.

Val nods. He leaves.

The scene from where Optimus Prime is fighting Bumblebee
is on. Joe suddenly jumps up and starts shouting at the
TV --

JOE
Come on Optimus!!! Beat up! Beat
him!! Arrrrrgghh!!! YEAAAAHHHHH!!!!
(then,)
I LOVE YOU OPTIUMS PRIIIMEE!!!!

CUT TO

MONTAGE:

INT. VAL'S CAR - MOVING - DAY

VAL drives in his car. He lets the windows down. The wind sways, stirring his hair.

EXT. BAKER WETLANDS - DAY

VAL moves through the wetlands, thinking solitarily.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

VAL sips a latte. He types away on his laptop.

EXT. PARK - DAY

VAL sits on a bench alone, eating ice cream.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

VAL looks away from his laptop and onto his phone. He pulls up Instagram. Begins scrolling. And then he sees...

A PHOTO of A GIRL, unknown to us.

Val stares at the photo fondly.

CUT TO

INT. KITCHEN - VAL'S HOME - DAY

VAL walks into the kitchen. He sees strands of uncooked pasta laying on the counter. A BOILING POT full of green beans. And finally, he turns to...

The other counter to find it covered in APPLES. Neatly lined up in ROWS and COLUMNS.

Val stares at the apples. He then picks one up. He BITES into it. CHEWS for a beat. Then neatly puts it back he got it from.

CUT TO

EXT. TENNIS COURT - DAY

WE PUSH IN on VAL and his friend PAIGE who are sitting on the court, drinking iced tea out of mason jars. (But they are not playing tennis).

As Val and PAIGE are talking, we PUSH PASSED a MAN sitting in the foreground of our frame, EATING a sandwich while reading a book.

PAIGE

I didn't want to make it obvious that I was avoiding him so I walk in, get my things -- Like, okay, I'll admit, I could have spent like ten minutes less in there looking for my face wash, but they had these 5.99, buy one-get-one-half-off body scrubs -- you probably don't -- wait, actually, do you use body scrub?

VAL

I use Axe.

PAIGE

Oh. You should switch over to Dove by the way, Axe is... my ex-boyfriend got some infection from it one time, I wouldn't trust them.

Val nods.

VAL

Okay. I might.

PAIGE

Just -- to be safe, you know. You don't want to take a chance.

(then,)

Where was I now? Ah, right, the body scrubs. So I got a few of those, and literally I put my hoodie up, make my way to the check out line, and next thing I know, my blind ass can't see that I'm *IN HIS* line --

VAL

So this is one of your ex's or..?

(CONTINUED)

PAIGE

No. Just... he's just some guy I hung out with.

VAL

And so did you move lines, or what?

PAIGE

No. I didn't -- Val, I was stuck -- literally if I moved, I knew he would've seen me. So I just had to go to his line and... face him. And I did.

VAL

How was that?

PAIGE

Awkward. So awkward. He just started out saying "Hey, nice to see you again" and I was like "same, you too" and... okay this is the really embarrassing part. Please don't judge me.

VAL

No promises.

PAIGE

Val! Seriously!

VAL

What did you do?

Paige smirks.

PAIGE

I... I asked if they were out of condoms. Which, it didn't occur to me at first, but it's pretty weird because the other night we almost... you know...

(then,)

Almost, Val, ALMOST. Okay? It didn't go that far, I promise!

VAL

That's a really incredible story, Paige.

PAIGE

Original, right? I knew you'd love it. I love telling stories people have never imagined of right? It's so refreshing -- so -- so bold -- I mean SO BOLD, like come on.

VAL

You had me the whole time.

PAIGE

I did. And I didn't even tell you about the fruit cake I bought from there. They had it in the bakery next to the pies --

(then, suddenly,)

VAL! Do you want to go eat fruit cake right now?

VAL

Ah... I thought we were just drinking these?

PAIGE

Well we can finish on the way to my house. What are you even doing today?

VAL

Um, I mean, I have some writing to get done.

PAIGE

Oh, right! Aw, I forgot to ask you about your book.

And before Val can respond...

PAIGE

But that -- you don't *have* to do that today, right? Like not like -- right this second.

VAL

No. I mean, there's no set time.

PAIGE

Okay cool. Let's go, then. Come on.

Paige gets up. Val is a bit overwhelmed.

(CONTINUED)

PAIGE

Come on Val.

Val rises to join Paige. She begins to walk ahead and keep talking.

PAIGE

Oh, I can also show you my sweaters that I bought for my dog. One of them is blue, it is so cute! Like, I found one at Marshals, and I told myself, he only needs one, don't overdo it. But the one at the mall was SO CUTE! Like, I just couldn't help myself.

As Paige talks, Val turns over his shoulder and glimpses THE MAN with the sandwich and book. He then turns back and follows Paige.

INT. BEDROOM - VAL'S HOME - DAY

VAL is writing on his laptop. He then stops. Takes his glasses off. Lays back in his chair. He then RUBS his eyes.

INT. BATHROOM - VAL'S HOME - DAY

VAL enters. Stares at himself in the mirror for a beat.

CUT TO

VAL starts the shower. WARM WATER, turning HOT, pours out. Val wets a towel and lets it soak in the water.

CUT TO

VAL removes his shirt. He WRAPS the hot towel around his head and COVERS himself in it. WIDEN to see --

Val sitting upright on the toilet with his head SHEATHED in the towel

CUT TO

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS - DAY

VAL'S CAR pulls up on the street. Ahead of him, on the front lawn, he sees:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A GIRL is ferociously practicing COMBAT MOVES while wielding a knife.

He exits and looks to A HOUSE. CUT TO

VAL makes his way to the door. He KNOCKS. No one answers. He knocks again. Nothing again. Then...

GIRL (O.S.)

It's open, dude.

Val turns to the girl.

VAL

Huh?

GIRL

It's open. You can let yourself in.

Val turns back to the door. He pushes on the door handle. The door opens. He turns back to the girl --

VAL

Thanks.

The girl is already too busy with her moves. She doesn't respond. Val goes in.

INT. DAXTON'S HOUSE - DAY

VAL enters the house, trying to find someone.

He finds A LARGE STUFFED MONKEY sitting on the couch.

A GUY is listening to ZEN MUSIC (the kind you can find an hour's worth of on YouTube), and is meditating to it.

Val turns to see TWO OTHER GUYS playing checkers.

Val moves along to...

THE KITCHEN...

He enters to find ANOTHER MAN at the counter. Cutting a papaya.

MAN

Hey man, can I help you with something?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VAL

Ah... yeah, I'm Val. I'm looking for Daxton. He and I were going to hang out.

MAN

Oh. Okay. Let me get him for you.

The Man heads over to a flip phone. He dials a number. It rings. Then...

MAN

Hey Dax... hey, there's a Val downstairs looking for you.

(then,)

Okay. Okay, I'll tell him you're coming.

The Man gets off the phone. He turns to Val...

MAN

He's coming. You can hang out here or in the yard.

VAL

Alright. Cool. Thanks.

MAN

Mhm. Did you want any papayas?

VAL

Ah... no. I'm good. Thanks, though.

CUT TO

EXT. FRONT YARD - DAXTON'S HOUSE - DAY

VAL and his friend DAXTON are on their way out. They pass the GIRL with the knife.

VAL

I'm not -- I don't know -- I guess I'm not about that. See -- when you consume something, it should be -- it should make you feel something. Why else would you be taking it in?

Daxton looks impressed by Val's words. The two arrive at Val's car...

(CONTINUED)

DAXTON

Damn Bro -- you gonna make your
book like this? Am I gonna be
shook when I read it?

VAL

(shrugs,)
Hey, maybe you will.

Val then turns to the girl in the b.g.

VAL

Is she just gonna keep going at it
like that?

DAXTON

(shrugs,)
I don't know.

And as they get into the car...

CUT TO

EXT. FIELD - DAY

ATOP an old airplane, we find VAL and DAXTON sitting and
talking.

VAL

You've been making anything new
lately?

DAXTON

Nah... hoping to start that back
up again soon, though. Just like --
like five or six minute short
clips... just to put stuff out
there.

(a beat,)

Not sure if anyone would watch...

Val shrugs.

VAL

I would.

DAXTON

Really...

VAL

I mean I've already seen some of
your stuff, so...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VAL (CONT'D)

yeah, I'd check it out.

(then,)

I prefer that kind of stuff...
like anything serialized? There's
just...

(a beat,)

I don't know -- like even with a
TV show, when you say "Oh I'm
going to go watch an episode of
whatever show... there's this
comfort in watching it, because
you know the characters, the
plot... It's a world you can go
into whenever you want.

DAXTON

So you know me, that's why you
would watch my videos.

VAL

Not only that, but I know your
story... you know? Like it's that
connection I have to it, which
makes me want to see more of it.

DAXTON

Thanks Val. I'll read your books
too bro.

VAL

Bet.

DAXTON

When's it going to be done?

VAL

No idea man.

DAXTON

Man, you've been working on that
thing forever.

VAL

Right?

(a beat,)

It sure is taking a while.

DAXTON

You lost, or what?

A beat. Val considers.

(CONTINUED)

VAL

I guess I kinda am. It...

(a beat.)

Like I just want to be new with
it, you know?

(then,)

Like when you're reading it, I
want you -- or whoever is reading
this -- to feel like they've never
knew they wanted something like
this, but they love it.

DAXTON

Yeah...

VAL

And I'm just trying to be
extremely, extremely radical in
all the stuff -- with character,
and story and all that.

(then,)

Like nothing's really cool if it's
just more of the same, you know?

DAXTON

I feel...

VAL

I remember when I was young...
every spring break, we'd drive to
Texas. And it would be the same
thing every time. Us cousins would
play monopoly till like two am,
and then my aunt would take us to
this aquarium. And I'd hate it
because it was just the same
fuckin' trip over and over.

(then,)

And so anyway, this one time,
outside the aquarium entrance,
there was this guy... he was
probably like fifty... and like,
I guess he and his family owned
this health club... he was just
standing outside giving out
business cards... and we went over
to him, listened to him talk...
and then when he was done, he told
us we were the only ones who
stopped to talk to him... and I
just remember he got so happy and
started dancing with my aunt...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

VAL (CONT'D)

literally, he just grabs her, says "thank you" and starts going at it with her... a hundred other people in the background watching.

DAXTON

That's wild. That's really wild.

VAL

And that ended up being my favorite trip. Like... It was super random, but I just remember suddenly getting really excited because was something new.

DAXTON

You should put it in your book.

VAL

Hey. I probably already have something like it in there.

DAXTON

Do I get to know what it is?

VAL

Gotta read first.

DAXTON

Aw, that's how it is?

VAL

That's how it goes.

The two start to chuckle. Off them...

CUT TO

INT. REYA'S APARTMENT - DAY

VAL and his friend REYA are on the apartment floor looking at a cluster of artwork.

REYA

This one I did last summer. I mixed oil and watercolor.

VAL

Mhm. I like it.

Reya pulls out another drawing.

(CONTINUED)

REYA

This one was just came out of
nowhere. I was bored during
Thanksgiving so I went at it.

VAL

That's amazing.

And Reya pulls out another one.

REYA

And this one is my favorite. It's
a character out of this weird book
series my grandma used to read. I
can't remember it.

VAL

When did you make this?

REYA

Probably some time when I was
bored. I don't know -- most of
this stuff is when I'm alone.

VAL

Not surprised.
(then,)
You should sell it.

REYA

Nah. I'll keep it. It's better
sitting in my closet than in some
teenage stoner's room.

VAL

Oh I thought you liked the idea of
some teen jerking off to it.

Reya gives a look.

VAL

What... it's pretty seductive.

REYA

Shut up.
(then,)
I worry what you're writing in
that book of yours.

VAL

You want to read it for me?

Reya looks at Val in shock. Jaw open.

(CONTINUED)

VAL

What? Why are you looking at me
like --

Reya SLAPS Val across the face. Val is confused.

VAL

Ow! Reya --

REYA

Val that is so fucked up -- you
should never have *anyone* read your
shit. Ever.

VAL

Why, it's just feedback from a
friend.

REYA

It's an excuse to mindlessly steal
other people's ideas.

VAL

What do you mean?

REYA

You're going to give it to him or
her to read and they're going to
tell you everything you did wrong,
and what they would do instead,
and that's so... uninspired.

VAL

Why, though?

REYA

Because they'll just suggest stuff
that *they* think would be cool.

(a beat,)

Like... You wanna show them what
you think is cool. And if they
hate it... then...

(shrugs,)

It's just an opinion.

VAL

You don't have to agree with 'em,
though.

Reya slaps Val again.

VAL

Dude -- what the hell.

REYA

That's my point, dummy -- I'd rather already do me than have them tell me to do me.

VAL

Too many do's.

REYA

I know. I'm sorry.

(then,)

I'm sorry for hitting you. Does it hurt?

VAL

I don't know, kinda.

REYA

Can I get you an ice pack?

VAL

I'm not sure it hurts that much.

REYA

I mean -- we could blind draw. You want to blind draw with me?

VAL

I'm not really a good drawer.

REYA

You just scribble, Val.

VAL

Yeah. I could probably do that.

REYA

Cool. You do a little portrait scribble of Abby. I'm sure you have her face locked in there.

VAL

Ha. No thanks.

REYA

Oh come on Val. You're terrible at hiding it.

VAL

Hiding what?

(CONTINUED)

REYA
Have you spoken to her?

VAL
No.

REYA
Val.

VAL
What? I haven't seen her.

REYA
You're literally a heartbreak.

VAL
...And proud.

Reya and Val start laughing.

REYA
I meant pussy. I definitely meant
pussy.

They continue to laugh.

CUT TO

EXT. WETLANDS - DAY

CU. A TAPE RECORDER. VAL inserts a TAP and latches it
shut. He hits RECORD. CUT TO

Val strolls the Wetlands. Speaking into the tape
recorder.

VAL
And then he waited on the bridge
for another three hours, staring
at the endless blanket of tall
grass ahead of him... contem...
contemplating every possible
outcome if he were to go... to go
now and leave everything behind.
Would his mama even want him to
come home, knowing how and why he
left in the first place. He
stared, and continued to stare...

Val stops. He sees something ahead of him. He slowly
approaches it to find...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A HUMAN BRAIN. Smothered in dark red blood. It lays on the pathway.

Val stares at it for a beat.

He then picks it up. Into his own hands.

WIDE -- Val stands in the middle of the pathway, holding a human brain that he just found.

CUT TO

VAL lays the brain back on the pathway. He continues to chug ahead, speaking into his tape recorder...

VAL

The very moment it hit him was when he knew he had birthed a decision. A definitive one, at that. And this... decision... was so instinctive that it was almost... a... a potent germ in his mind that entered and branched ever so quickly.

HOLD ON the brain...

CUT TO

INT. BEDROOM - VAL'S HOME - DAY

VAL types away on his computer while on the phone.

VAL

Mmmm I'm kind of like in a -- sort of a bubble -- like I know where I'm going to end up eventually... but... I'm just kind of following every route... to see what works.
(a beat,)

Huh?

(a beat,)

It's really just the middle part that I'm having trouble getting through, otherwise I've got it all.

(then)

Yeah... really slow process, but... you know, it's a grind.

We CUT TO his laptop screen to see the words he is typing:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A potent germ in his mind that entered and branched ever so quickly. He couldn't shy away from it. Not that he wanted to.

We CUT ALL AROUND his area to see NOTE CARDS with plot ideas written on it, a stack of papers with messy longhand writing.

Val stops. Stares at the laptop.

INT. LIVING ROOM - VAL'S HOME - DAY

VAL comes into the living room to see his friend JOE arranging suit ties into snow-flake like shapes while he sings along to "Clarity" by Zedd (playing on the speaker).

JOE

If our love is tragedy, why are
you my remedy... if our love is
sanity, why are you my clarity...
aaaaaaaaeeeeeeooooohhhhh,
oooooooooooooooooooo....
Aaaaaaaeeeeeeooooooo
oooooooooooooooooooo....

Joe turns to Val to see him watching. He nods to Val, who nods back.

CUT TO

EXT. PLAZA AREA - DAY

VAL is sitting at the fountain. He is on his computer, clacking away as he writes.

A beat. Val stops. He refers to his notes. He opens his notebook which he opens up as --

LOOSE LEAF PAPERS start to fly away and onto the sidewalk. Val goes to get them.

ON THE PAPERS. They land on the sidewalk. A PAIR of WALKING SHOES stop right by them. PULL UP TO SEE --

A GUY. He's holding a black folder. Looks to Val --

GUY

These yours?

(CONTINUED)

VAL
Yeah, sorry about that.

GUY
Nah, you're good.

The Guy puts his black folder down. He gathers Val's papers, fastens them up, and heads over to Val sitting at the fountain.

GUY
Here man.

VAL
(takes the papers,)
Thanks.

Val tucks the papers back into his notebook.

The Guy checks out Val and his laptop, as well as his notes.

GUY
You got quite the set up there.
(then,)
School project?

VAL
(grins,)
Ah, no... I'm a writer.

GUY
Oh. Nice.

VAL
You like to read?

GUY
(chuckles,)
Not really. I play the piano... so
I guess I read notes.

VAL
Oh. Well there you go.
(then,)
What's your name, man?

GUY
(offers his hand,)
I'm Jay.
(then,)
You?

VAL

I'm Val.

JAY

Hey, ah, you take care Val. Good
luck with your writing.

Jay begins to leave.

VAL

You too. Nice meeting you.

Jay waves, and then walks away.

BACK ON Val. He goes back to his laptop and starts
writing. A BEAT. His eyes then glance across to the
sidewalk, and catch --

JAY'S BLACK FOLDER. Val immediately gets up and picks it
up off the sidewalk.

VAL

Hey, man -- you left your --

He looks ahead to the street. JAY is already gone.

Val goes back to the fountain. He sets the black folder
beside him. A beat. And then he opens it up to see...

A COLORED PENCIL DRAWING of A GIRL IN A YELLOW DRESS. And
with it are a FEW COLORED PENCILS.

Val studies the drawing for a beat. He then closes the
folder.

INT. HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT

Amidst a raging, happening, and LIT house party, we find
VAL on the side, sipping on a drink. He checks his phone,
and then looks around the party, checking everybody else
out. We move pan around with him until his eyes land
on...

ABBY. We recognize her from earlier as the girl on Val's
phone.

Val's eyes stay fixed upon her.

CLOSE ON VAL. He faintly smiles as he closes his eyes,
and we FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The house is EMPTY. The other guests are gone. It's just Val and Abby.

Their eyes lock on each other. Intense, deep staring ensues as...

ABBY

Val? Val... Hey, Val--!

BACK ON VAL. He is interrupted by ABBY who is now at his side, trying to get his attention.

ABBY

Where are you dude, I said your name like ten times!

VAL

Oh, sorry... Hey Abby.

ABBY

It's been a while!

Val can't hear because of the music...

VAL

Huh?

ABBY

I said it's been --

Abby stops herself.

ABBY

Do you just want to go talk outside?

(louder,)

Let's just go talk outside!

Val hears it. Looks around. Shrugs.

VAL

Okay!

CUT TO

EXT. BACKYARD - HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT

The patio area is lit with red and blue lighting. VAL and ABBY stand on the patio.

ABBY

Wait so you know you David too?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VAL

Ah, I don't know *know* him, I just came here with my friend tonight.

ABBY

Oh. Well that's cool. Yeah, it was like weird, 'cause when I saw you, I was like, oh I didn't know Val hangs out with these guys.

(then,)

Not that I think you shouldn't...

VAL

No, I don't really know them.

A beat. It's silent between them. And then, Abby starts to crack up.

VAL

What?

Abby keeps chuckling.

VAL

You good there?

ABBY

Yeah, I just... it's funny to see you because... you're still the exact same.

(then,)

Just from high school and all, You're still... you're still Val.

VAL

Well I hope I am.

(then,)

Were you expecting someone else?

A beat. Abby takes a second to answer. A twinkle remains in her eye --

ABBY

Yeah.

(then,)

But I'm glad the same person's still there.

(then,)

You know, it's funny... like a couple weeks ago I had this thought... about how we used to be so close... and then, you know, life happens obviously.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ABBY (CONT'D)

But little did I know that two weeks later... at David's house, I would... or we would...

Abby trails off into a beat as she doesn't know how to continue. She keeps her eyes on Val, hoping for her words to get across...

VAL

You trying to go somewhere with that?

Abby laughs.

ABBY

I should just stop, right? Yeah... anyway... so what's up Val? What's been going on?

Val takes that question in for a beat. Looks off, grins, and then looks back to Abby --

VAL

I'm writing a book.

Abby looks impressed.

ABBY

A book. Wow... that's... that's pretty bold.

VAL

Yeah. I've been working on it for the past year. Well, almost a year now.

ABBY

Huh. Did that just come out of the blue, or... I mean -- I don't remember you being into writing and all.

VAL

It just happened. I started reading again for an English class I had to take... and it just made me want to try it.

ABBY

That's awesome.
(then,)
That's really cool.

(CONTINUED)

A beat. Val nods, *thanks*.

ABBY

So are you going to tell me what
it's about or..?

VAL

(smiling,)

Ah...

Val tries to answer, clearly somewhat shy about it.

ABBY

Unless it's like confidential or
something, then I understand --

VAL

No... no... it's...

Val looks off once again. Thinking on how he can best
explain this.

And then something dawns on him. He looks at Abby --

VAL

So it's about this boy... and this
girl... they're young... they're
really, *really* good friends...
like super close and all... but
the boy, he starts liking her a
lot. And... but like, he knows
that she probably won't feel for
him the same way. But you know, he
has these feelings... that he
can't shake... he's --

ABBY

So he's like supposed to be in
love with her?

Val takes that thought in. Eyes still on Abby. He smiles.

VAL

Pretty much. Yeah.

(then,)

He loves her, even though she
doesn't feel for him -- not in
that way, at least -- but he loves
her anyway... he makes this box
for her in ceramics class... he
tries to be there for her when he
can...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

VAL (CONT'D)

he even switches into a class for her to be closer with her... but then she ends up getting with this other kid in that same class...

ABBY

Oh... damn, that's awful.

VAL

Yeah.

(then,)

But he still loves her, you know. Even after the heartbreak and all. And then they separate for a bit... he misses her, and he wishes her well... because he wants her to be happy.

A beat. Val and Abby stare at one another.

ABBY

And... does he end up getting her?

Val keeps staring for a long beat. Then:

VAL

I don't know yet. I'm still figuring it out.

ABBY

Huh... that's... that's a story. Don't get me wrong, it's fucking romantic.

VAL

I was just kidding, by the way. That's not what my book is about.

Abby is suddenly confused.

ABBY

Wait... you just made that up on the spot?

(then,)

So then what is your book about?

(CONTINUED)

VAL

Um, it's... about this guy, he's a monk, and he finds out his mom is sick, so it's about him and his struggle -- he has to like decide whether he wants to leave his monastery or not for his mom, and... yeah, it's a whole thing, I still have to finish it.

Abby nods slowly, taking that in.

ABBY

Still sounds interesting.

(then,)

Thought I kinda wish you were writing the other thing you just told me about.

VAL

Really?

ABBY

Yeah. I'd read it.

Val nods, and then checks his phone for a beat while Abby is looking straight at him, studying him.

ABBY

You seem really lonely, Val.

Val looks up at her.

A beat.

VAL

What makes you think that?

ABBY

You just do.

(then,)

Are you... lonely?

Another beat. Nothing from Val. He only shrugs.

VAL

I couldn't tell ya.

ABBY

Do you want to dance, Val?

VAL

Do I want to dance?

(CONTINUED)

ABBY

Mhm.

VAL

To that music inside?

ABBY

It doesn't have to be that music
inside.

VAL

Then?

ABBY

I don't know... come up with a
song. You're a writer right? You
make up stuff all the time.

(a long beat,)

Do you want to dance Val..?

Off Val...

CUT TO

VAL and ABBY are SLOW DANCING while basked in the red and blue lighting that casts hues over their faces. They hold onto another and dance in silence. It's SOFT, it's INTIMATE, and it's somewhat affectional.

CLOSE ON Val who is taking in the feeling of what this could be...

ON ABBY who is swirling with thoughts, but is embracing the moment...

We CUT ALL OVER, and BACK AND FORTH between the two, DANCING, and letting the sensation of BEING TOGETHER AGAIN -- in whatever way -- WASH OVER THEM.

TIGHT ON VAL. He seems as if he's not so lonely anymore.

And off him... slowly **FADING TO BLACK**.

THE END