

1. INT. LIVING ROOM. LATE EVENING.

JEMMA STANDS IN THE CENTRE OF A DIMLY-LIT LIVING ROOM, HER ATTENTION ENTIRELY FOCUSED UPON A FIGURE STANDING A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY.

JEMMA

You don't even need to tell me when it was that you realised you liked me. I already know - it was on your balcony. You were sitting out there on your own, waiting for me in the dark and rolling a joint. It took me a few minutes to follow you out because I was locked in a struggle with that fleecy brown blanket you had. Do you still have it? The one with the awkward sleeves. It was warm, yeah, but so bloody annoying that by the time I got outside I still hadn't fixed it, and I was totally absorbed - muttering to myself and adjusting it around my shoulders and not paying much attention. I wasn't looking at you when you spoke. I still have no idea what triggered it ... what thoughts you were turning over in your mind. Maybe it was where we were, cocooned up there together in the dark, hidden between the apartment buildings. Maybe in that moment you felt just about safe enough that your walls came crumbling down around you and it just came out, you couldn't stop yourself. Or perhaps it was more simple than that: maybe it was just the sight of me standing there in your clothes, shivering slightly in the cold and struggling to get my arms into those stupid sleeves. But whatever it was, you sat there in your little chair, you looked at me - joint in hand - and you told me that I scared you to death. I looked up at you, and for one long moment it was as if time had stopped. All I could see were your eyes - your beautiful fucking eyes, shining at me through the smoke and the haze as though I was the only person on the planet that mattered. They were filled with the most desperate, sad, aching hope I think I've ever seen. You looked at me like I was the key to a long held, deeply cherished, carefully protected dream; one that at some point in the past you'd stopped believing was even possible, and now that it was actually there, right within your grasp ... you just didn't know what the hell to do. Then, slowly, you reached out with both arms, pulled me down on to your lap, and you kissed me like you didn't want to ever stop. You only broke off to ask me if I could taste the weed on your tongue, and when I said I could you just shot me this cute little sheepish grin and kissed me all over again. And I knew in that moment that you wanted this just as much as I did.

BEAT

I don't think I ever had the chance to tell you when I knew I liked you - it might surprise you, actually.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

We'd only been dating for about three weeks, and I was sitting on your kitchen floor, watching you while you fed Lawrence and Lucy some of those crinkle-cut carrots they love so much. You were silent for a moment, and then without any warning, without even looking me in the eye, you started to talk about Ginger - about what she'd meant to you. You told me about the accident she'd had the year before, about how ill she became. About the lengths you went to to try and save her - the mounting vet bills, the sleepless nights, the driving back and forth, week in, week out. How it had been all you could think about, all you could focus on. And then, you told me that one night your Dad had called you up, worried sick, and asked you if it was really worth it - if it was really worth all this time, money and effort. After all, she was only a rabbit. He wasn't meaning to be heartless. He just couldn't comprehend why you were doing it to yourself - why you were allowing it to hurt so badly. And, you know, maybe he had a point, because you were tearing yourself to pieces, weren't you? You could have listened to him. You could have changed course. You could have started to ease away from her, to detach yourself. To dampen your emotions down, to withhold the love you felt for her in order to protect yourself. To prepare yourself for the inevitable, screaming pain of loss by just ... choosing to not feel any of it at all. But you didn't, did you? You chose to lean even further in and pour into her all you could possibly give of yourself, and to hell with the consequences. And when you finally met my eyes and told me that one by one, all the treatments failed and she wasted away, it was painfully clear to me that not one single cell in your body regretted making that poor little creature feel loved from the moment she lived to the moment she died. I heard you tell that story, and I knew - I just knew - that you were exactly what I needed.

BEAT

I know that you think that I hate you, but I don't. I could live a thousand years, mulling over the way things ended every single day of my life, and still never hate you. But I'd be lying if I said I wasn't furious with you. Because you could have done it, you know: you could have taken my hand and leaped head-first into the uncertainty with me. You could have cradled my heart in your hands and protected it at all costs, the way that I did with yours. You could have dug your heels in and ignored the doubts, the fears, the innumerable roadblocks that could have come our way, and you could have decided that no matter what happened, it was still worth it to try. But instead you flipped a switch inside your head, deactivated everything you were starting to feel for me, and just gave up.

(MORE)

CONTINUED: (2)

You threw in the towel and you quit on what we had without even a backwards look or a kiss goodbye.

BEAT

Do you want to know what pisses me off the most of all, though? You told me something else during that conversation. You told me that when you introduced Lucy to Lawrence, they fell in love straight away. No resistance, no fear. It's far easier for animals, of course - they don't drag their past pain around with them like boulders on their backs. They didn't find it difficult at all, they took to each other like former lovers from a past life. But interestingly, you noticed something when you watched them together. Something new was growing between them - something different than you'd seen between Lawrence and Ginger. It was an entirely unexpected development, one which neither you nor Lawrence could ever have anticipated - the best things in life often are. You noticed immediately that everything was ... *calmer*. Softer. More gentle. Not as fiery and intense, admittedly, but no less strong. She doesn't bully him the way that Ginger did, or domineer him, or try to rule the roost. Instead, she brings him peace, and she brings him safety. And what makes me the angriest of all about this whole thing, is that you never realised what was staring you in the face the whole time: that I could have been your Lucy all along.