

THE NEW LONELY

by

Andrew Hinderaker

CAST:

GUY: 20s

GUY'S FRIEND: 20s

SETTING:

Present. The guy's apartment.

A NOTE ON THE FORMATTING:

A double dash (--) is meant to signify no pause.

GUY

All right, here's what I'm trying to say.

It's like... few months ago, I'm at this wedding -- buddy of mine -- good guy -- and he's put me at a table with this super cute girl. And I'm sorry, but there isn't, like, an overabundance of cuteness at the wedding -- this is the girl everyone's after and my buddy's stuck me right there.

So, you know, I ask her she wants a drink, which is really an excuse for me to get like three, 'cuz I'm still in middle school when it comes to talking to girls.

So I bring this girl her drink and start chatting her up -- mostly about Loren -- the one who's getting married -- which, by the way -- making fun of your mutual friend? Great way to break the ice. It's like you've got a wingman and he's not even there.

And we're just, you know, we're swapping stories -- and she's, she's got this thing where she runs her tongue over her teeth when she smiles, and I just, you know... I start to feel like a little warm inside -- and I know, this point, we've each had a couple more drinks, but that's not it, you know.. it's just...

It's like there's possibility here.

Like clearly I've built this girl up in my head, and yet we're talking and nothing's a let down, you know? I mean, forget about the fact she's smoking hot and her dress is like made of this magical fucking fabric that clings in all the right places.

We're actually, you know, we're having a conversation there isn't a single moment I think, "I gotta come up with something to keep this going." I mean, it's just moving, and every now and then she puts her hand on my wrist, and I start to think, "What if this isn't just a wedding thing? What if there's really something here, you know?"

And then we go out on the dance floor, and...

And right away she starts making fun of how everyone's dancing.

And, you know, it's a way to make conversation, I guess, but it's just like... Well I mean first of all, I can't dance for shit, so now I'm all self-conscious and like immediately reverting to the whiteboy dance -- you know, one arm up...

(imitating it)

(MORE)

GUY (cont'd)

...move as little as possible -- like, "I could break it down if I wanted, but I'm WAY too cool for this shit." And that's what bothers me about what she's -- cause it's like, yeah -- no one here can dance -- but fuck it, they're drunk and having a good time. And it's fucking "Love Shack," you know?

So now I got this little thing in the back of my head, you know, like an alarm going off, but I'm trying to block it out, 'cuz whatever, we all say shit sometimes and people deserve the benefit of the doubt.

Okay, that's a lie. Reason I'm giving her the benefit of the doubt is she's cute as hell and this has been like a serious investment. I mean, we've been chatting it up over an hour, and this is a cash bar is what I'm saying.

So, anyway, whatever, it's cool, no big deal.

But then we go back to the table -- okay, no, actually we stop at the bar first -- but then it's back to the table and immediately she starts in on her sorority and who had the biggest SUV and "It was SO me til Jenny's dad got her an Escalade and that's why I'm getting the new Range Rover" and OH MY GOD.

But, see, this is the part of the story where I gotta put everything on pause.

'Cause a couple weeks after the wedding, I'm talking to my buddy, Loren -- the one who got married -- and he starts tellin' me how this girl -- her name's Erica by the way -- when she was 16, she got in like this massive accident on I-5. Apparently she was driving her mom's Saturn when a Hummer like changed lanes into her bumper. Yeah. I guess her car flipped like eight times before it landed in an embankment -- upside down. Anyway, Loren was telling she had to have like 2 years of PT and it was another a year after that before she'd get behind the wheel -- and only then if it was like a fucking tank.

Anyway, the point is this: the girl's not a stereotype, no matter how I'm making her sound.

But, you know, I don't know any of that as she's going on about SUVs and Sigma Pi, and I swear to god, when I hear the phrase, "Jewish American Princess," I'm like, something's gotta be done. And as I see it, I got a couple options. I can, you know, thank her for the drinks and conversation and actually hang out with Loren, who I've been neglecting on his big day. Or I can, you know, redirect the conversation.

I don't even let her finish her sentence. I just, you know, I hear the phrase, "Daddy's little girl," and I'm like, "Yeah, that's great, you wanna get outta here?"

(MORE)

GUY (cont'd)

And she looks at me a second...

Like a little too long, you know, like it's clear to her I haven't been paying attention to what she's saying.

And then she goes, "My place is down the road. Can we grab another drink first?"

And I'm, you know, this point I'm way too drunk to be having another, much less driving, but there I am -- double shot later -- behind the wheel, like focusing on her tail lights, actually mouthing the words, "You're fine to drive. You're fine. You're good." And the fucked up thing is all I can think about as I'm blasted off my ass, on my way to get naked with this girl I don't know, is this medal I won in middle school... for integrity.

And I know, at any point, I can just ease the car to the side of the road and stumble my ass back to the wedding. It's that easy to do the right thing.

Couple minutes later we get to her apartment.

She opens the door and this like wallet-sized dog comes flying round the corner, yapping its ass off. And she just scoops it right up and is like, "Who's my little poopers? Who's my little poopers?!" -- and who the fuck calls their dog poopers?! I mean, everything is just wrong, you know?

But then she asks me I want a glass of wine.

(laughing)

And this point, you now, that last drink's just starting to kick in -- I mean, I'm drunker now than I was when I was driving.

But I start to think -- what if it wears off before we're done? I mean, that's actually what's going through my head -- and I wasn't joking when I said I's still the guy in middle school who's too shy to ask the girl to dance.

But... I don't know. I mean, I'm looking at Erica and she's the girl everyone wanted to dance with and she is right there and I know it sounds bad, but it's like... I can, you know?

I'm doing this because I can.

So yeah, I say, wine sounds good. And I throw my glass back in like five seconds, and then I walk up to her and I actually take the glass out of her hand, and like lead her to her own bedroom. I know. What a fucking poser, right?

(MORE)

GUY (cont'd)

We fall down on the bed, and I grab her and pull her tight, move in like I'm gonna kiss her hard, like that's what she really wants, you know...

And then she puts her fingers on my face...

... like, just her fingertips on my jaw.

And I stop moving.

And she leans in and...

(smiles)

... kay, well, the truth is she's a really good kisser. I mean, it's just... it's soft, you know? It's like a really great first kiss, which is, at this point... not what I'm expecting.

And then she takes my hand and runs it along this scar on her collarbone, which I guess -- looking back -- is where the seatbelt must have dug into her skin.

And it's like... okay, I know it's gonna sound fucked up, but it's like, I'm running my fingers along her scar and the wine's kicking in and she's this great kisser, and there's no conversation to get in the way, and I honest to god start to forget everything that's happened from the dance floor to now.

I'm like, back at that moment when everything was just... when there was that possibility.

And when I... you know, when I... enter her... she whispers my name and I mean she hasn't said my name all night, like I'm pretty convinced she doesn't even know it. So when she says it, you know, it like opens my eyes, and she's looking right at me and it's so clear she's hoping this is real too.

And it's like when I see that look on her face, I get like insanely hard -- I mean, like up to that point, obviously I'm doing well enough for this to work, but I've had like 9 drinks and I'm not setting any personal records, you know?

But when she looks at me like that -- man, you know -- and then she feels my reaction and gets this big grin on her face, which just makes me feel great, you know? And she pulls me close -- and it's like, we're not kissing, but our lips are touching and we can feel each other's breath. And you know, she keeps pulling me closer and closer, and it's like, okay, to me there's nothing more, you know, intimate than the feel of skin on skin and our bodies are touching everywhere. And she keeps pulling me tighter and tighter and then she moves her lips to my ear and whispers,

"Whenever you want.

(MORE)

GUY (cont'd)

I'm right there." And that's like, you know, that's all it takes.

And when she feels me, you know, start, she pulls me so tight I swear to god I can feel her heart pounding against my chest.

And I close my eyes...

... and just try to hang onto this, you know...

'Cause it's like, all this possibility, like all that excitement from that moment I sat down beside her, it's all being realized, you know? And I'm just trying to hang onto it -- that feeling -- I'm trying to make it last. I'm like holding my breath, and gripping her as tight as I can, and if I can just hold onto this, if I can just keep this then I...

Then I hear her say my name.

And it's not like before.

I mean, she's not like whispering it, she's flat out saying it and when I look at her she's got this expression, like "You need to loosen your grip."

And so, you know, I let go and roll off her, and all those parts where our skin were touching I just feel air.

Then the dog starts yapping -- and, I don't know, maybe he's been going this whole time, but she's like, "Poopers, no!"

And that's how fast it's gone, you know?

So I guess that's what I'm trying to say. I mean, maybe it sounds like, vulgar or whatever, but I just want to be with a girl and then, like, when we come, I want the part after to be the climax.

You know?

(Quick Beat)

GUY'S FRIEND

Uh. Yeah.

GUY

That make sense?

GUY'S FRIEND

Yeah. No, it does.

I just, you know.

(MORE)

GUY'S FRIEND (cont'd)

I probably wouldn't use it in your profile.

(Beat)

GUY

No?

GUY'S FRIEND

I don't think so.

GUY

Why, what do most people write?

GUY'S FRIEND

You know...

"I can't believe I'm actually doing this.

"Just looking for someone fun to do something fun with."

The guy looks at his friend, like, "You gotta be kidding me."

GUY

I'm looking for someone fun to do something fun --

GUY'S FRIEND

Dude, you can't write what you just said.

GUY

It was the truth.

GUY'S FRIEND

That's the problem.

(Long Beat)

GUY

Yeah.

Yeah. Well.

I guess we better just go with what you said, then.

Guy's friend begins to type away.

Guy watches him, then turns away.

Lights down.