

THE SNOWBIRD

BY

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OPENING

FADE IN

INT. ITALIAN CAFE - MID AFTERNOON

Italian Cafe. 12:35. Palm Springs. The place is jammed with guests. Food is cooking, orders are being taken out and an overall hum of conversation is heard. Different shots of different aspects of the cafe are shown.

In the back of the cafe, the door slams open. In walks ALEX, early 20's, average looking guy wearing aviators. He struggles to pull his bike in. After making his entrance he begins to walk through to the front.

As he walks past the kitchen...

COOK

(Angrily)

Where ya been man?! You're gonna hear it from Mark!

ALEX walks on by, half genuinely waving to the cook. He makes it to the front counter. Next to him is a fellow waitress.

WAITRESS

Well look who finally decided to show up.

No response.

WAITRESS (cont'd)

(CONT'D)

Oh, I'm sorry, I forgot. Do you have a headache? Am I being too loud?

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

No, I'm not hungover.

WAITRESS

Got no money to drink then, huh?

ALEX

Well, when you're job pays
shit-fifty an hour, yeah, you're
kind of low on drinks.

WAITRESS

So what's the excuse today? Car
trouble? Oh, wait you ride a bike.
Family member die? Oh, your mom
already died three times.

ALEX

For your information, I was up,
writing late last night.

WAITRESS scoffs

WAITRESS

Well look, make yourself useful and
get me a scotch on the rocks for
table 14. And try not to let it
slip through your hands like Jill.

WAITRESS walks away. Annoyed, ALEX mimes choking her and
beating her up. He looks up and stares across the cafe.
There she is, JILL, early 20's beautiful. ALEX looks. He
then heads to the bar to make the drink.

ALEX pours the shot into the glass, looks around to make
sure no one is watching. Coast is clear, he chugs it, makes
another glass and walks out onto the dining room floor.

The camera follows him and does an establishing shot of the
crowded dining room. The shot remains still as we...

CUT TO:

INT. ITALIAN CAFE - NIGHT

Same still shot of an empty dining room. JILL is busting one
table and another table remains with two people.

Slowly and unenthusiastic-ally, ALEX heads to the final
table and hands the CUSTOMER his change back.

(CONTINUED)

CUSTOMER

Thank you.

ALEX

(Halfheartedly)

Mhmm-hmm

ALEX walks behind the counter and watches the customers leave. He immediately heads to the table to receive his tip. He looks. 75 cents.

In the back, MARK, the mid 40's, slightly overweight, manager walks up.

MARK

Hey, Alex.

ALEX turns around.

MARK (cont'd)

(CONT'D)

Can I talk to you for a second?

ALEX walks to the back. JILL silently watches him.

INT. MARK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Inside MARK's office. Motivational posters everywhere.

MARK

How are you doing, Alex?

ALEX

I'm fine.

MARK

That's good, that's good.

Silence

MARK (cont'd)

(CONT'D)

I'm doing good too, by the way. So, the reason I wanted to talk to you is, well, your performance has been lacking lately. Showing up to work late, your professionalism is low, and you're not very friendly to the customers. What's going on here, buddy?

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Nothing is going on here, Mark. I'm just in a rough spot right now. Okay, that's it, I can leave. Right?

ALEX tries to leave.

MARK

Well, hold on now. I think you really need to evaluate yourself here. I understand that you've been late the past two days, and I know it's probably because of, well Jill. But the drinking has to stop. Now you're a good looking guy, with a good-- with a -- you have a heart. Just like everyone else. (trying to recover) But don't think that doesn't make you special. Because you are apart of this team. And we need you, like every cookie needs exactly 6 chocolate chips. . . You are that sixth chocolate chip. (whispers) You're the 6th chocolate chip. (normal) Without it, the cookie crumbles. You understand the metaphor?

ALEX is completely bored by this point.

ALEX

Thank you, Mark. I'm going home now.

MARK

Well safe journey, little buddy.

MARK extends his arm out for a shake, ALEX shakes his hand but MARK destroys it by trying a "fancy secret shake". ALEX FINALLY walks out. MARK stands there pleased with himself.

MARK (cont'd)

You've done it again, Mark. You've done it again.

INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

ALEX walks into his apartment. There are boxes, clothes and other items scattered throughout the place. There is a lone keyboard with chair and one futon. ALEX puts his bike to the side and continues on with his night.

ALEX does his little home work out, some push ups.

(CONTINUED)

Pulls out some cereal but has to find his one and only bowl somewhere. He digs through a pile of clothes to find it.

He pours cereal into the bowl. Looks in the fridge to see that there is barely any milk left. He eats it dry.

He accidentally tries to eat the little plastic toy that's the prize in the box.

He sits down on the futon holding his stomach.

He looks at himself in the mirror.

He does a second round of push ups.

Goes to the toilet and tries to make himself throw up. He succeeds and looks into the toilet.

ALEX

Beans? When did I eat beans?

ALEX sits down at the keyboard and pulls out pen and paper. He begins to play . . .

ALEX (cont'd)

(singing/improvising)

What would you do, If you had to
write a song?

Tries another

ALEX (cont'd)

(singing/improvising CONT'D)

Singing a song to be the number one
hit.

Tries another

ALEX (cont'd)

(singing/improvising CONT'D)

Screw you Mark, with your
inspirational poster and your
stupid cookie metaphor.

ALEX gives up. He slams his hands on the keyboard. He is defeated, AGAIN. He begins to play again. He looks at his song book. There is a title *JILL'S SONG*. ALEX takes the page and rips it up.

ALEX lays in his crappy futon. He looks next to him, there is JILL, laying there. He wraps his arms around her and-

(CONTINUED)

She disappears. Disheartened, he grabs a pillow and snuggles with that as the screen fades to black . . .

CUT TO:

INT. ITALIAN CAFE - MID AFTERNOON

The cafe is busy again, ALEX walks in late again, pulls his bike in and heads to the front counter. He walks past the cook.

COOK

Oh, damn, man! Again?!

ALEX, walks on by up to the front and clocks in. He makes another scotch on the rocks and walks to WAITRESS.

ALEX

Here you go.

WAITRESS

What is this?

ALEX

Didn't you ask for scotch on the rocks, table 14?

WAITRESS

Yeah, yesterday. God.

WAITRESS walks away.

ALEX

Oh, well okay, can't let this go to waste then, huh?

ALEX chugs it down. He grabs a tray and walks out onto the dining room floor. The camera has an establishing shot of the dining room, jammed pack. Keep the same shot and . . .

CUT TO:

INT. ITALIAN CAFE - NIGHT

Completely empty dining room. JILL is out on the floor busting the tables, ALEX is at the counter, counting his bag full of tips. Just a bunch of quarters and dimes.

JILL walks up to the counter. They both work in silence.

JILL pulls out a small pocket knife and gives it to ALEX. ALEX then pulls out a roll of fruity chap stick and gives it to JILL.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX
So that's it?

JILL
Yeah.

ALEX
Just like that?

JILL
What were you expecting, an
apology?

ALEX
It would be nice.

JILL
Alright.

JILL stares at ALEX, waiting for something.

ALEX
What?

JILL
Unbelievable, you are asking me to
apologize. After all you said?

ALEX
I gave you back the chap stick.

JILL
You'll never change, will you?

ALEX
Broke up, two days ago, and you're
already going to that cliché?

JILL
You've got no room in that
shit-hole apartment for another
person--

ALEX
I prefer the term hell-hole.

JILL
You have no personal regard for
people around you--

ALEX
They are adults they can take care
of themselves.

(CONTINUED)

JILL

And that! You still act like a child.

ALEX

May I remind you that, that use to turn you on.

JILL

Stop. Just, stop.

Silence.

JILL (cont'd)

(CONT'D)

I'm moving to Seattle, next week.

ALEX

What?

JILL

I called my aunt today, she said I can stay with her for a while. I think it's best if we- I just go away, I can get closure and move on.

ALEX

What, you don't think we could work this out?

JILL

There is nothing to work out, not as long as there is still this--

ALEX

This what? This want to do something more with my life than work in this place forever. I wanted to go places.

JILL

It's always another dream. You can never be happy. You want to move in together, you find something to complain about, you want a job but once you get one you want another job. Nothing was ever good enough for you. I was never good enough for you.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Thats--

The front door bell rings. The clock say 9:02.

JILL

It's yours.

ALEX

I'll be back.

ALEX walks to the front. In the door is a older looking woman, in her 80's, BEV.

ALEX (cont'd)

I'm sorry, we close at 9, it's 9:02.

BEV

Well, I'm only 2 minutes late.

ALEX

I'm sorry but-

MARK walks up from behind.

MARK

You are more than welcomed to come on in.

ALEX

What?

MARK

Yes, come on in. We'll take care of you!

BEV

Thank you.

MARK leads BEV to a table and sits her down. ALEX follows.

MARK

Here you go. And Alex, here, will be your server. Can we start you off on a drink?

BEV

Just water please.

MARK

No, problem. Alex?

(CONTINUED)

ALEX walks to the back to get water. He looks around for JILL, but she has already left.

ALEX

Mark. What are you doing, it's 9:02?

MARTY

I know, but seriously think about it, it's one table with one person, it'll be done in a pinch.

ALEX

Yeah, well you sent the cooks home, remember?

MARTY

Well, you've worked in the back before, you know how to cook the food.

ALEX

Well, yeah, but-

MARTY

And you can lock up for me.

ALEX

No, no you are not leaving me here by myself.

MARTY

Sure I am, I can trust you. Think of it as a little test. All you have to do is lock up. Just imagine your job is on the line (chuckles) but really imagine it, like it's real. (chuckles)

ALEX

I can't believe this, you're screwing me over man.

MARTY

Oh, come on. It's one little old lady. It's not like it's going to be a big meal, just water, a salad and she's out of here.

CUT TO:

INT. ITALIAN CAFE - NIGHT

BEV

I would like a small individual house salad with ranch, but only use a quarter of the croutons on the regular serving and substitute that with anchovies. I would like that approximately 20 minutes before my entree which will be as followed, one bowl of minestrone soup, one order of the garlic bread, a small pizza with a quarter of it bell peppers, just green, a quarter of bacon, only the edge cuts of the bacon, a quarter with zucchini and a quarter with mushrooms but look at the mushrooms and examine them, if any of them resemble any presidents of the united states then don't use them unless they look like Clinton. And I would also like a plate of Shrimp Scampi, prepared to perfection with a teaspoon of garlic, a teaspoon of hot sauce and a tablespoon of basil and a pinch of lemon. And finally a piece of tiramisu cake, fresh. And..... That'll do it.

BEV sets down the menu. ALEX is just staring.

ALEX

So.....?

BEV

(Laughs)

ALEX

(confused)

I'm sorry?

BEV

Oh, I'm sorry dear, I just wanted to see your face. You see, when I go into restaurants, I always make ridiculous demands from my waiters just to see the look on their faces. Oh it's priceless. (laughs) and it keeps my improv skills up to date.

Silence

(CONTINUED)

ALEX
Salad?

BEV
Oh yes, dear.

ALEX brings out a small house salad. BEV eats the salad, and enjoys it, every little bite, slowly. CRUNCH CRUNCH CRUNCH. ALEX is vacuuming around the cafe but no matter where he goes, he still hears the CRUNCH. Finally, BEV finishes.

ALEX walks over, takes her plate.

ALEX
Ready for the rest?

BEV
Oh, yes, please.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

ALEX breaks out all the ingredients and begins to cook.

He breaks out the shrimp and tenderizes it for a Shrimp Scampi.

He begins to toss the dough for the pizza.

He tops the pizza with sauce, cheese and toppings. He picks the screen up to place in the oven and looks up ...

ALEX screams. BEV is standing right there.

ALEX
Holy sh- you scared the crap out of me. What are you doing?

BEV
I'm so sorry dear, I didn't mean to scare you, I was just wondering, if I could maybe watch? I- I figured there was no one else here, and I know it's-- well it's not a big deal, I'll go sit down.

ALEX
(confused)
No-- it's fine, you can watch.

BEV
Really?

(CONTINUED)

ALEX
Sure?

BEV
Oh, thank you!

ALEX shakes it off and goes right back to work.

He chops up some basil.

Chops up the veggies for the soup.

BEV watches in amazement.

BEV (cont'd)
Do you think-- I- no never mind.

ALEX
What?

BEV
Nothing. I just-- do you think I
could help? Just something small?

ALEX looks over and sees --

FLASHBACK:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY (3 MONTHS AGO)

JILL is standing next to him.

ALEX
You wanna help?

JILL
Oh, that whole women have to work
in the kitchen thing?

ALEX
I'm working in the kitchen.

JILL
My point exactly.

They both laugh

FLASH FORWARD:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

ALEX

Yeah-- sure..... Just. Hand me
that mixing bowl.

BEV

Here.

ALEX

Put all the veggies in there and
mix it up with this.

FLASHBACK:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY (3 MONTHS AGO)

ALEX and JILL are cutting veggies together.

They start a little food fight.

FLASH FORWARD:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

ALEX hands BEV a spoon.

BEV

Look at them go! And they're off!
Carrots have a lead but the
zucchini is making a run and it
looks like they might have the lead
and--

ALEX tosses the white wine in with the shrimp. Flames burst.

BEV (cont'd)

(CONT'D)

Wow! That was amazing.

ALEX

(chuckles)

Really?

BEV

I mean now we're talking the
difference between eating and
dining.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

You- you wouldn't want to try it
would you?

BEV

Could I?

ALEX

Sure just come one over. Grab the
wine in there, now pour it on the
edge of the skillet all the way
around.

BEV pours and the flames ignite.

BEV

Now stir the skillet, gotta get rid
of the flames.

FLASHBACK:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY (3 MONTHS AGO)

ALEX and JILL both pour wine into their skillets and make
flames.

They kiss.

FLASH FORWARD:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

ALEX helps BEV stir the skillet until the flames die down.

BEV

Wow!

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

BEV sits down at her table, surrounded by plates of food.
Pizza, soup, shrimp and bread. She begins to eat it, just as
slowly as the salad. As she eats, ALEX continues to clean
the dining room.

BEV

This is delicious! Great job!

ALEX

Well don't forget to give yourself
some credit. You helped.

(CONTINUED)

BEV

Thank again. I know it's not normal for a guest to do that but I just felt so happy, seeing every little detail, enjoying it all.

ALEX

Well, enjoy.

ALEX continues to clean up. He looks at the clock. 11:10 PM. He begins to clean the piano on the little stage. He wipes down the "OPEN MIC NIGHT" on the chalkboard. He accidentally hits a key on the piano.

ALEX (cont'd)

Sorry.

BEV

Oh, don't worry, I'm fine. You play?

ALEX

Uh, yeah. I used to, still do. I'm an aspiring musician.

BEV

Wonderful! You written any songs?

ALEX

Yeah-- I've written a few.

BEV

Well then!

BEV gets up and sits at a table close to the stage.

ALEX

(chuckles)

Oh, no. No, I'm sorry, not tonight.

BEV

Well why not?

ALEX

Because-- I.

BEV

I don't judge. I love music. Please play something, for me?

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

If I play, will you sit down and eat the rest of your food. I don't want to impose but--

BEV

Oh, don't worry, I understand. I love it here.

ALEX

(sigh)

Ok.

ALEX sits down and begins to play a beautiful composition. As he plays

FLASHBACK:

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT (4 WEEKS AGO)

ALEX and JILL are sitting down at the piano together.

JILL

You're so talented.

ALEX

Oh, it's nothing. Just things I've been working on.

JILL

You have to make a demo.

ALEX

What? For who, no one is going to buy it.

JILL

For me?

They kiss.

ALEX

I promise, I'm gonna write the best song there ever was, and we're gonna be millionaires and own tigers and jets and go to ... I don't know. Helsinki!

JILL

Just as long as we go together.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX
I think I love you.

JILL
Stop.

ALEX
I'm serious. Do you?

JILL
I tolerate you.

ALEX
Ouch! (laughs)

JILL
I love you too.

They smile

FLASH FORWARD:

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT(PRESENT DAY)

ALEX finishes playing. He sits and stares for a second.

BEV sits there and smiles.

ALEX
Thanks. Now--uh- eat.

CUT TO:

BEV sitting down with a book in her hand, she has finished her meal. ALEX rushes to clean the table up. He looks at the clock. 12:30 AM.

ALEX (cont'd)
Ready for the check?

BEV
No, not quite, I'm just enjoying some Shakespeare.

ALEX
Well, it's tomorrow, so I think I'll just grab the check and set it down for you.

BEV
What's your hurry? What's the big idea?

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

It's midnight, the cafe closed at 9. I should have been out of here.

BEV

Is that the way to talk to a customer? (chuckles)

ALEX

Look, I have tried to be civil about this, but this is ridiculous. I'm going home, have fun locking up. Oh and if robbers come in and hold you up, the money is in the safe, all 2,000 of it. Goodbye!

ALEX walks away.

BEV

Wait! Come back!

ALEX

What?

BEV

That anger. That rage! Do it again.

ALEX

What the hell are you talking about.

BEV

Are you into theater?

ALEX

No.

BEV

Here try this, this monologue right here in this book. Right here, Edmund's monologue.

ALEX

Are you crazy? I'm not playing Shakespeare with you. I'm going home.

BEV

If you do it, I'll leave.

ALEX

You'll leave?

(CONTINUED)

BEV

I promise, once you have had your
moment, I'll leave.

ALEX

Promise?

BEV

Yes.

ALEX reluctantly takes the book and begins to read . . .

ALEX

(reading)

Thou, Nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base? Edmund the
base
Shall top th' legitimate. I grow; I prosper.
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!
BEV claps.

ALEX (cont'd)

Now will you leave?

BEV

How did it feel?

ALEX

(sigh)

It felt good.

BEV

In what way?

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

I don't know it just- it felt like I was-- I don't able to transfer my feelings for a little. I was angry, so I used that. It felt-- actually it felt good.

BEV

You've done it before then haven't you? You know a little something.

ALEX

It was from me, it was from my girlfr- ex. She was really big into theater.

BEV

Ohh, how about this monologue.

FLASHBACK:

INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT- NIGHT (4 DAYS AGO)

ALEX is sitting at his piano. JILL is practicing a monologue. Both are overlapping each other, competing for the room. Finally, enough is enough.

ALEX

Babe, babe? Please, could you stop, I'm trying to write?

JILL

Maybe you should take a break and let me practice, my audition is in two days.

ALEX

Look, you've been doing this all day, I think it's as good as it's going to get.

JILL

No, I have to keep practicing until I get it perfect--

ALEX

Well you know what, there is no such thing as perfection, especially when it comes to friggin shakespeare. The guy was a hack.

(CONTINUED)

JILL

Well, this hack just happened to write a show that I am auditioning for, and if I get in it maybe we can move into a bigger place together.

ALEX

What's wrong with this place?

JILL

You're serious?

ALEX

Well, yes certain things can be improved, but money is tight.

JILL

Well when is that going to be solved, you've been sitting there all day with your piano, and nothing has come out.

ALEX

Hey, if you have a problem with the way I make a living--

JILL

Do you have a problem with how I make a living?

ALEX

It's not a living!

JILL

What?

ALEX

It's not a living. I'm sorry it's not, it's memorizing words and shit in hopes that maybe you'll get a chance to sleep with the director and maybe he'll throw you a friggin bone!

JILL

You think I would sleep for a role.

ALEX

Well you have obviously been using your skills somewhere else, because there is nothing here--

(CONTINUED)

They both begin to argue as the audio dies out and a piano instrumental plays. They begin to throw stuff at each other. They become more physical with each other. JILL immediately flees the scene.

BEV
(V.O)

Look, when I vow, I weep. And vows so born,
In their nativity all truth appears.
How can these things in me seem scorn to you,
Bearing the badge of faith to prove them true?

FLASH FORWARD

EXT. ITALIAN CAFE - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

ALEX is sitting down outside, depressed. BEV walks on out.

BEV
You ok?

Silence.

BEV (cont'd)
(CONT'D)

Hey, do you want to do some improv?

ALEX
No, I do not want to do improv, ok?
Can't you just leave me alone?
Please?

BEV
We'll play a game, it's called
question question. The trick is to
hold a conversation entirely with
questions.

ALEX
Thanks for the invite but I have to
go in there to clean your mess.

BEV
I did it already.

ALEX
No you didn't. Did you?

(CONTINUED)

BEV
Don't I always?

ALEX
What?

BEV
Aren't we playing?

ALEX
(sigh)

Do we have to?

BEV
Why not enjoy the game?

ALEX
Don't you want to go home? Aren't
you a snowbird, from Canada? Can't
you just go back to Canada, now?

BEV
Can't you just enjoy the game?

ALEX
Why?!

BEV
What else is there to focus on?

ALEX
How about my future, my career?

BEV
How about food?

ALEX
How about money?

BEV
What about happiness?

ALEX
What else?

BEV
What about now?

ALEX
Wait, can you repeat that?

(CONTINUED)

BEV

What about now? Oh fiddlesticks,
you can't repeat questions two
times in a row like that. You won.

ALEX thinks for a second

ALEX

I won?

BEV

Yeah.

Now that he has fully taken in that he has won.....

ALEX

Yeah!!!!!!! I won! I won!

ALEX hops up and shouts, grabbing BEV and jumping up and
down. BEV sits back down.

ALEX (cont'd)

Yeah! I won! And now? Come on, we
gotta go--

ALEX turns around. BEV is gone.

ALEX (cont'd)

(confused)

Hello? Where did you-?

ALEX looks on the ground. There is a monologue written on
it. He picks it up and looks.

JILL

(V.O)

Hello, my name is Jill Brown and
I will be performing a monologue
from The Tempest.

CUT TO:

INT. AUDITION ROOM - DAY

JILL is performing her piece for casting directors at a
table.

JILL

(CONT'D)

One of my sex, no woman's face remember-

(CONTINUED)

Save, from my glass, mine own. Nor have I seen
 More that I may call men than you, good friend,
 And my dear father. How features are abroad
 I am skill-less of, but, by my modesty,
 The jewel in my dower, I would not wish
 Any companion in the world but you,
 Nor can imagination form a shape
 Besides yourself to like of. But I prattle
 Something too wildly, and my father's precepts
 I therein do forget.

CUT TO:

EXT. AUDITION BUILDING. - DAY

JILL walks out, excited. She turns the corner and --

ALEX
 (V.O)

Hey.

JILL turns around, there he is.

ALEX (cont'd)
 How'd did it go?

JILL
 I got it.

ALEX
 Surprised?

JILL
 No.

ALEX
 Me neither.

They smile.

ALEX (cont'd)
 So I have an appointment with a Mr.
 Broom and Mr. Mop at my apartment
 today. They both convinced me that
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALEX (cont'd)
I might be stuck there a little bit longer, but I should still make it nice. Would you like to join me?

JILL
Can I practice in the living room?

ALEX
You gotta make it perfect, right? It obviously worked.

JILL
Yeah.

ALEX
I was thinking, maybe on the way to our apartment, we could make a pit stop in Helsinki?

JILL
(chuckles)

I like that.

ALEX
Good! Thank god! Yes? Oh what a relief, I need someone to help get the bus tokens home.

They smile. JILL walks over and they kiss and hug. They grab each other's hands and make their way down the street. The camera pans up as JILL and ALEX run to make the bus at the stop.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END