

JMCStories

— *When the lines get blurry* —

A T F I R S T S I G H T



JMCStories

Written by: Emily O'Hara

AT FIRST SIGHT

— *When the lines get blurry* —

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Jim

I could drown myself in someone like you
I could dive so deep I never come out
I thought it was impossible
But you make it possible

Impossible, Nothing But Thieves

Samantha

When it feels like this, like a light came on
And you look at me, like I'm all you want
I got everything, at my fingertips
How can I resist, when it feels like this?

Maisie Peters, Feels Like This

Genre: *Drama / Romance*

Format: *Feature film, 1h 20m*

Targetgroup: *15–30 years of age*

Potential buyers: *Netflix, Amazon, HBO, Viaplay, and other SVODs*

Estimate: *2–4 mill €*

At Pitch-level: *At Pitch-level Q2*

>>>

AT FIRST SIGHT

They walk in companionable silence for a few moments, scanning the engravings across the many headstones.

*JIM:
Who, being loved, is poor?*

*SAMANTHA:
What?*

*JIM:
Oscar Wilde said that.*

*SAMANTHA:
He also said, "quotation is a serviceable substitute for wit."
Jim laughs, amused his attempt to show off backfired.*

*JIM:
Hey, he was a great believer in true love and stuff!"*

*SAMANTHA:
Don't get that debate started.*

*JIM:
Are you? A believer?*

Sam pauses, really taking in his question, and delivers her answer carefully.

*SAMANTHA:
I believe if true love comes along you should grab it with both hands and never let go. It is likely to test you to the limit, wear you thin and bring you to your knees. But it will still be worth it.*

Jim is taken aback by Samantha's passion, and goes quiet for a minute.

When he replies, it is as if he is speaking to himself.

*JIM:
So I guess, the problem is, recognizing when you have found it.*

At First Sight is a boy meets girl story, with Paris as its enchanting backdrop, seeping into every edge of the story. British Jim and American Samantha are both visiting the iconic French capital as they meet, purely by chance, or perhaps fate, in a bar. The only problem? Jim has a girlfriend back in the UK, so nothing can happen - or can it?

At First Sight is a high intensity romantic drama. The feature focuses almost exclusively on Jim and Samantha. The entire movie takes place during a warm summer's afternoon and night, ending as dawn breaks over Montmartre, the next morning. This is a story about a whirlwind romance that has the potential to change the lives of Jim and Sam forever, a veritable fork in their roads. Both have

weighty reasons to hold back, but nevertheless, they struggle to ignore what they feel more and more certain they have found with each other: "the one."

The movie follows the pair, as they experience the kind of instantaneous connection which happens to very few people in this lifetime, and that which many dismiss as myth: love, at first sight. They first meet in a bar in Montmartre, and even then, the initial attraction and the inexplicable, pulling need to be around each other, making itself clear. They spend the evening and the night together after their initial meeting. It transpires that Sam is saddened because she will miss the chance to see Oscar Wilde's grave and a show at the Moulin Rouge, as her friend Giselle ducks out of their

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plans. Jim, assuming the role of the English gentleman, offers to accompany her, and they embark on an adventure around Paris and it's ever romantic quarters as they discuss art, poetry, literature, each fascinated by what the other has to say.

During their twilight wanderings, they take in the bustling nightlife in the Latin Quarter, finding old book shops and street artists. They speak to a troubled former reverend of Notre Dame. At the Moulin Rouge they miss their show but spend a while talking to the owner and the dancers after being let in the stage door by one of them, who took a liking to Sam. She even lets Sam perform alongside them to an empty theatre after hours, Jim staring at this American beauty, entirely in awe of her. As the early hours creep in, they bid their Parisian companions farewell, and find Montmartre once again to catch a typical Parisian breakfast in the square they set off from as the sun slowly rises over the beautiful city. By the end of

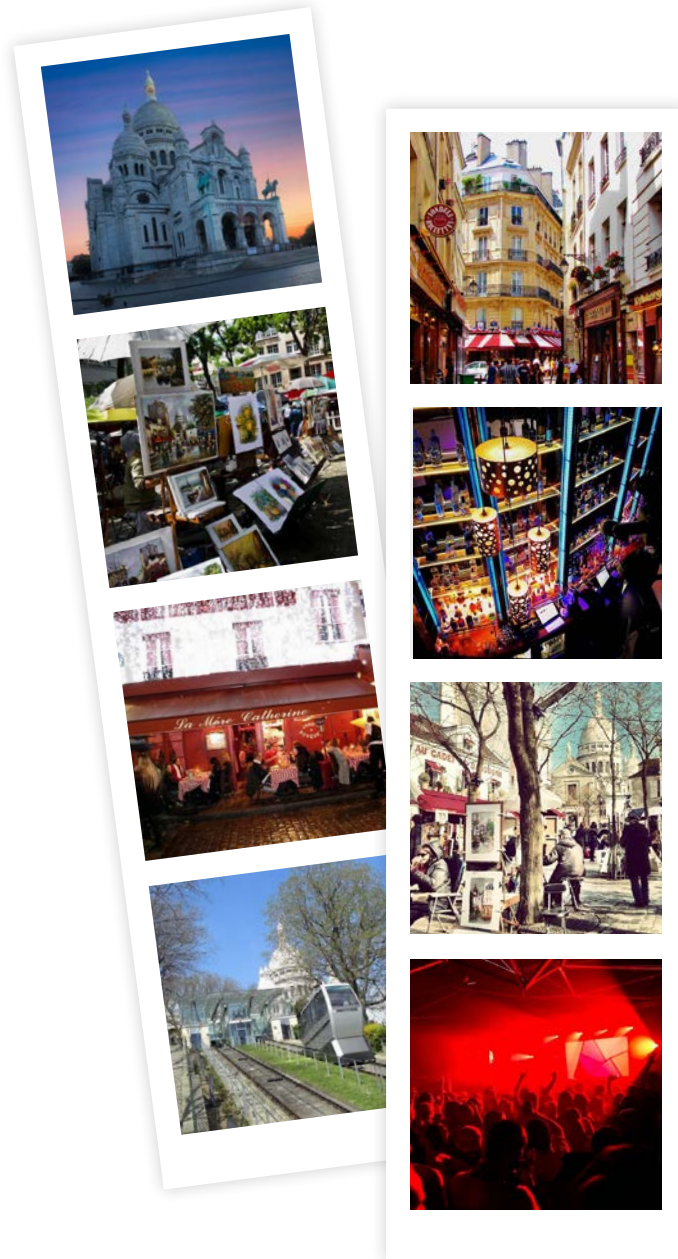
the night, it becomes almost physically painful for Jim to resist being romantic with her.

The film questions at which point an affair becomes an affair, and if love at first sight is really possible, and whether you can love two people simultaneously, pinning new attractions and well-established relationships head to head. It also leaves the door open to ask the question most people at one time have asked themselves: Is the person I am with really "the one"?

The film concludes back in Montmartre, with Samantha discovering the existence of Jim's girlfriend. The ending is ambiguous as to whether Jim stays with his girlfriend, or cuts ties and seeks out Samantha - the viewers will be left reeling, with heads full of questions that could instigate heated discussions on the dilemmas raised by the movie.



AT FIRST SIGHT



AT FIRST SIGHT

Written by Emily O'Hara

AT FIRST SIGHT

1 INT. L'ARSOUILLE BAR - MONTMARTRE - LATE AFTERNOON

JIM RILEY, 24, is sat in a cramped Parisian bar with his best friend and boss, TONY, and his colleagues JANE, KATE and MARK.

Kate is showing off a flashy engagement ring.

JANE

It's so beautiful! This must have cost him a bomb!

KATE

(excitedly)

I know!

Mark rolls his eyes at Jim, bored of the conversation.

Jim grins.

TONY

Does this get you thinking about doing the same, Jim?

JIM

I beg your pardon?

KATE

Ooh, yeah he's right - are you thinking about getting one of these bad boys for Megan?

Jim raises his eyebrows.

TONY

She's right you know! You've been together, what - four years, now? Isn't it about time?

JIM

I'm just going to go ahead and deflect this very uncomfortable conversation with, who wants another round?

MARK

(to Jim, in an undertone)

Nice getaway!

Jim winks.

The girls and Tony wave Jim off, immersing themselves in

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2.

conversation.

At the other end of the bar, SAM and GISELLE enter.

They join the queue for drinks.

GISELLE

Oh my God, hot bartender.

Sam follows her eye line.

SAM

Seriously? The guy with the shark
tooth earring?!

GISELLE

Hey, I didn't judge you on that nerdy
guy in the Louvre you thought was
cute!

SAM

I guess. Go on then, I'll order from
the other guy.

Giselle approaches the barman, and we see them flirting.

GISELLE

*Bonjour, Giselle, enchantée. Je
voudrais un verre s'il-vous-plaît?*

Jim, close by, texts Megan a selfie of himself up at the top
of the Eiffel Tower.

He begins looking impatient as Giselle is hogging the
attention of the bartender, who is now oblivious to the rest
of the queue.

Sam sees this, and laughs.

SAM

Sorry, can't take her anywhere.

Jim and Sam lock eyes.

BARTENDER

What can I get you?

Sam doesn't take her eyes off of Jim, even as she orders.

SAM

Cosmo, please. And a

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(she pauses, thinking, flirtatious)
- Scotch? - for my friend here.

She smiles at the bartender, then her gaze falls back on Jim.

Jim looks at Sam questioningly.

There's an intensity in the way they look at each other, like a fire has just started burning. They can feel a change coming.

SAM
My friend over there is going to be a
very long time with the other
bartender, this is my way of apology.
I'm Sam.

Jim, mesmerised, smiles.

JIM
Well, Sam, I accept your apology. I'm
Jim.

Sam comes to stand closer to Jim, and offers her hand.

SAM
Nice to meet you, Jim.

They shake hands, and Sam slides Jim his drink. He doesn't catch it, busy staring at her, and it shatters to the floor.

He doesn't notice, but acknowledges her change in expression.

JIM
What?

SAM
Um - I think you missed it.

She indicates the shattered glass, and Jim laughs, embarrassed.

2 MONTAGE: PARIS

As we go through the shots, it turns from daylight to the city lit up at night.

The skyline, a few famous locations, queues and swarms of tourists.

Boats going up the Seine, street artists and performers.

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Couples - all different kinds - smoking on Parisian balconies, relaxing in secluded parks, drinking in trendy bars and clubs.

Sam and Jim, at the same bar, moment after they've just met.

END MONTAGE

SUPER: AT FIRST SIGHT.

3 INT. L'ARSOUILLE BAR - MONTMARTRE - LATE AFTERNOON

Jim follows Sam onto a small table in the corner, looking slightly like he can't believe he's here with *this* girl.

They sit down, Sam smiling broadly at him, Jim realising he is supposed to be making conversation.

The orchestral version of *Impossible - Nothing But Thieves* is playing in the restaurant.

JIM
(confident)
So, that accent - you're not a local girl?

SAM
I'm from a little town in the bayous of New Orleans.

JIM
(frowning)
Bayou. That's a nice way of saying swamp, isn't it?

Jim panics slightly that this may have somehow been a rude thing to say, but Sam misses this.

SAM
(nodding)
Yeah, pretty much.

JIM
(playful)
You're a swamp girl?

He grins. Sam laughs.

SAM
Hey, that's offensive! And I'd love to disagree.

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Beat.

SAM (CONT'D)

But my mother does actually run swamp tours for a living.

Jim laughs.

JIM

Wow. What does that entail?

SAM

Um, yeah. So we have a few rattly old boats, we take tourists out, show them the alligators, the snakes, go around the bayou for an hour or two. Overcharge them.

JIM

That's amazing! So... your back garden is full of alligators?

SAM

Yeah, they come up to the house sometimes, but just swat them with a broom and they slink back in the water. It's the snakes you've got to watch out for, they get in the house and cause all kinds of carnage. My grandmother lives with us and you wouldn't believe the amount of times I've had to pry a Kingsnake from her shoulders, she tries to pet them, see, and they always try to kill her.

Jim is mind blown at just how interesting this girl is.

Pause.

JIM

(unable to think of a witty response)

Never a dull day, huh?

SAM

That's nothing. My Mom's girlfriend used to do witch tours in the French quarter. So, Jim, what about you? Any nutty swamp-dwelling relatives?

Jim looks astounded.

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JIM

Wow - um, no. I just live a fairly straightforward life in Southampton. Far less cultured. Worst I have to deal with is killing the occasional spider when my Dad comes over, and not even poisonous ones.

Pause.

JIM (CONT'D)

OK that's a lie I call my Dad over when I find a big one and he kills them for me. I'm pretty sure I'd be dead in a day if I lived where you do.

Sam bursts out laughing. Jim seems amazed that this glorious, exotic woman is actually sitting with his awkward, spider-fearing self.

Oblivious to Jim's internal monologue, Sam looks over to the bar, where Giselle is now wrapped around a bartender.

She rolls her eyes.

SAM (CONT'D)

That's Giselle, I'm staying in her Airbnb. We hit it off. She's meant to be doing a bunch of things with me tonight, but I'm not so sure that's the plan anymore.

Sam raises her eyebrows at Jim, giggling.

Jim looks over at Giselle, too.

JIM

Yeah, I think that ship may have sailed. But I'm pleased, it means your sat here talking to me instead.

Jim cringes. He hadn't meant to say that out loud.

He and Sam exchange embarrassed glances, Sam smiling a little.

JIM

So - what brings you to *Ole Paris*?

Jim immediately regrets the cheesy French accent, but Sam smiles.

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SAM

I'm gonna pretend I didn't hear that attempt at the accent.

JIM

I appreciate that, thanks.

He takes a nervous slug of his drink.

Sam smiles, and does the same.

SAM

Just doing the tourist thing for a few days, I'm onto a jazz festival, Marciac, in the South next.

She sips her drink. Jim struggles to keep his eyes off of her.

SAM

(genuinely interested)

Are you much of a traveller?

Jim laughs nervously and takes a sip of his drink.

JIM

Um - no. Not really. I mean, I've done a few all-inclusives in Tenerife and the like, but that's about it.

SAM

All inclusives, eh? Inspiring stuff!

JIM

I know, I know.

He hands another fistful of euros to the bartender, who clears their drinks and replaces them.

SAM

Merci.

Jim takes a nervous sip of his drink.

JIM

We can't all be adventurous.

Sam smiles.

SAM

Did you go to College?

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JIM

Yeah, well - you mean uni, right?

Sam nods, smiling.

JIM

Yeah, just at home in Southampton, not to a fancy one or anything. I wanted to do art, but my dad pointed out its a little useless these days, so I did media and design instead.

SAM

And how was that?

Jim sips, considers her question, and acts as though he's going to tell her all about it, then changes his mind, opting for the truth.

JIM

Extremely dull.

Sam bursts out laughing.

SAM

(frowning)

Why didn't you drop out, do something else?

JIM

Well.. I didn't want to disappoint my Dad, I guess. I hated it, but I was really good at it. Besides, I don't really know what else I would do, because art is useless. Unless you have a rich uncle who owns a gallery or whatever. Which I don't.

Jim is joking, but Sam seriously considers what he's saying.

SAM

I don't think that's entirely true. You can get good jobs in museums, or as a critic, teaching... do commissions. Sell shit on Etsy or eBay. Rich people will pay a fortune for splashes on a canvas from a good name. Millie Brown vomits coloured milk onto a canvas and those sell for millions.

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JIM

That's true. Certainly an original way to paint.

Sam smiles.

JIM (CONT'D)

No, yeah, I suppose you have a point. I don't know. I guess you could say I'm a little lazy, and don't really know what I'm doing in life.

SAM

Wow.

JIM

Yeah.

Pause.

SAM

Well, that's fine. Who does know what they're doing? I literally could not point you to any functioning adult that isn't a complete mess on the inside.

Jim smiles curiously. This is a new perspective for him.

JIM

I guess you're right. Never thought about that before.

Sam downs the rest of her drink, and shrugs.

SAM

Trust me, when you've nearly been eaten by alligators enough times, you learn a thing or two about how short life is.

Giselle comes up to them.

Sam turns to grin at her, pleased she's having a good time.

SAM

Let me guess, you're bailing?

Giselle looks apologetic.

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GISELLE

Is that OK?

Sam rolls her eyes.

SAM

Of course. Just check he's not a serial killer or anything, OK?

GISELLE

(nodding)

It's the first thing I asked him, don't worry!

She goes to exit the bar, pulling the bartender along behind her.

SAM

(calling after her)

And call me when you're there safely!

Giselle gives an impatient wave of her hand as she walks out of the door, showing she's heard.

Sam looks frustrated and sad, despite what she said to her friend.

SAM

Damn, that's annoying.

Jim looks quizzically at her.

JIM

What?

SAM

Oh, nothing, I was just excited about our plans tonight and don't want to wonder around Paris alone, really. I had a few things planned, one or two tourist sites, tickets to a show.

Sam looks miserably at his drink.

Jim is troubled by her sadness.

He glances over to his friends, who don't seem to have noticed his absence yet.

He closes his eyes, and takes a deep breath, unnoticed by Sam.

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JIM
Well, I could come with you.

Sam looks up.

She considers him. Finally, her face changes to a dazzling smile.

SAM (CONT'D)
Won't your friends miss you?

Jim looks at them again.

JIM
(shrugging)
Colleagues. They're all blasted anyway.

SAM
And you're not a serial killer, definitely?

JIM
No. Are you?

SAM
No.

He downs his drink, then leans into Sam.

JIM
Great. Let's slip out the back, come on.

The two of them sneak away through a side door of the bar.

4 EXT. COBBLED MARKET STREET - EARLY EVENING

Jim and Sam are walking through the market street which takes them to the back steps of sacre coeur.

JIM
(not really caring about the answer)
Where are we headed, by the way?

SAM
First stop is Sacre Coeur.

A busker plays, setting the scene.

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JIM

What is Sacre Coeur, again? A church?

Sam scoffs.

SAM

A church..!

Jim glances sideways at her.

JIM

You have no idea what it actually is, either, do you?

SAM

Well, I know its very famous. And I'm pretty sure it is a church. "sacre" - that has to mean sacred, right?

JIM

Probably. And I know it's very pretty and fancy.

SAM

I think that's *why* it's famous. For its grand look, maybe?

Jim frowns, and googles it.

Sam glares at him.

SAM

That's taking all the mystery out of it!

Jim laughs.

JIM

Sorry. Do you want me to not tell you why its famous, then?

Pause.

SAM

Fine, go on.

JIM

Um - so it's famous for being old, pretty, and the highest point in Paris after the Eiffel Tower. Apparently it has the best views of the tower, too.

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SAM

Oh. Is that it?

Jim checks the page up on his phone.

JIM

There's a lot of history to it, too, apparently.

Sam nods, vaguely intrigued.

SAM

Like what?

JIM

Um...

(scrolling, frowning)

Can I just send you the Wikipedia link? It's all very confusing. There's some stuff about the middle ages, the French revolution, building certain parts hundreds of years after other parts... apparently its a political landmark, too, whatever that means.

SAM

You know when I said you could be an art teacher earlier?

JIM

Yeah?

SAM

Yeah maybe don't do that.

Jim laughs.

They arrive at the back of the Sacre Coeur.

Jim frowns.

JIM

Hey it doesn't look like this on the pictures.

SAM

...This is the back of the building.

JIM

Oh.

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Sam laughs.

SAM

Come on.

5 EXT. SACRE COEUR - DAY

Sam and Jim get to the front of the church.

SAM

Worth the walk. Look.

Jim follows her gaze.

JIM

Shit.

They make a beeline for the railings, with the best views.

SAM

You don't see that everyday.

Jim is focused on the many people who took the steps route up to the top, and is amused by their struggle.

JIM

I wonder how many tourists collapse on those steps each year?

SAM

(grinning)

I reckon that isn't in the guide book.

They lean against the railings, in silence, absorbing the hot day and the views over the romantic city.

Jim keeps glancing at Sam, unable to believe that he is here with her.

SAM (CONT'D)

Reckon your friends have noticed you're missing yet?

JIM

I doubt it, we'd been drinking since three.

Sam laughs a little.

SAM

How are you still standing then?

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JIM

Effort. It's working well though it's taken away the nervousness and nausea I usually feel when talking to a beautiful swamp girl.

Pause.

SAM

You didn't mean to say that out loud, did you?

JIM

I did not.

Sam smiles, tempted to make a flirtatious comment back.

JIM (CONT'D)

If we could change the subject now to save my embarrassment that'd be great.

Sam laughs. She casts around for a subject.

SAM

Um... do you like them? Your team - you said you were on a work trip of sorts?

Jim exhales, thoughtful.

JIM

The team is great. Tony, he's probably my best friend.

SAM

But?

Jim turns to look at her.

JIM

How did you know there was a but?

SAM

You're easy to read.

JIM

Yeah? Well I hate every second of that job, and nobody else seems to notice.

SAM

Really? You hate it?

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JIM

Well, no, I mean, it pays the bills.
But it's not exactly exciting. I
thought I'd do something meaningful in
life, instead I'm just designing
shitty flyers.

Sam nods, taking his words in.

JIM (CONT'D)

So, do you have a job?

SAM

I work in bars to earn cash when I
need it. It's a fun job, for now. I
don't really know what I want to do
career-wise.

JIM

Well, what are your interests?

SAM

Books. Travelling. Jazz.

JIM

Jazz?

SAM

I'm from New Orleans, remember? It's
in my blood. My Grandpa was a jazz
singer - he was good, actually.

JIM

Are you good?

SAM

Nah, but I can stay in key at least.
Play a little bit of piano. No, but I
don't know what I want to do. That's
why I saved, and I've come here.

JIM

What, to "find yourself" or something?

SAM

Ha! No. To put off working out what to
do with the rest of my life.

Jim frowns.

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JIM

Damn, that's smart.

Sam laughs.

SAM

I know.

Something about Jim's expression tells us, while this was a lighthearted comment, he's genuinely impressed by everything about this girl.

JIM

Did you go to college, too?

SAM

Yeah, NYU. Majored in literature. Not that that's a degree you can actually do anything with. I just read for four years.

JIM

Hey, you can do loads with literature. You can, um...

SAM

List a lot of dead poets?

JIM

Well, yeah.

SAM

You know some people get doctorates in literature?

JIM

Why?

SAM

No idea. Anyway, speaking of dead poets, we've got a date with one.

JIM

We do?

SAM

Oscar Wilde. He's the main draw of Paris for me.

JIM

Oh, yeah. Well, let's not keep him

waiting, that would be rude.

They walk away.

Jim notices a sign to a funicular.

JIM

Wanna take the funicular down?

SAM

The - what?

JIM

Well I *think* its called a funicular.
Like a train, ski lift type thing?

Sam simply stares at him, baffled.

He sighs, grabs her gently by the shoulders, and turns her so that she's facing the vehicle's route, and can see it making a descent.

SAM

Oh!

Jim grins, and notices that he's still holding onto her.

He quickly lets her go.

JIM

So - do you?

SAM

Yeah, sure.

She smiles widely at him, and they get in line.

SAM (CONT'D)

I didn't know that's what these things were called.

JIM

Learn something new every day, hey?

The queue moves forward, and Sam and Jim are admitted onto the funicular.

It's cramped, filled with sweaty tourists, and Sam and Jim are pressed right into each other as it fills.

It shudders to life, and Sam falls into Jim. He catches her,

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and owing to the overcrowding, is forced to hold her close.

SAM

Sorry!

JIM

That's OK. My pleasure, its not like you're drenched in sweat like this lot.

A tourist standing next to them glares at Jim.

JIM (CONT'D)

Sorry - not you, sir.

Sam turns her face away from the tourist's, so he can't see her laughing.

SAM

I bet a load of tourists get to the top and then are really miffed they missed the free lift up all those stairs.

JIM

Yeah, probably.

SAM

It's a shame its so crowded, I can't see the view.

JIM

(seriously, speaking without thinking)

I've got a gorgeous view right here.

Sam raises her eyebrows, not displeased.

He tries to recover this a little.

JIM (CONT'D)

You know - I'm um, taller.

Sam nods, smiling at his awkwardness.

We get a snap of Jim's face, which is both mortified and pleased, as Sam looks away in a bid to get a glimpse of the view.

Recovering, he stares at her beautiful face as they descend, enjoying the forced closeness.

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6 EXT. STEPS OF SACRE COEUR - DAY

Sam has a map out in front of her, and is studying it. She and Jim are sat down at the bottom of Sacre Coeur.

JIM

Why don't you just use your phone?

Sam looks embarrassed.

She sighs, and takes out a flip phone. One of those from about 2004.

SAM

What, this?

JIM

Wow.

Sam laughs.

SAM

I broke my iPhone, this is just temporary! But it is nice, being back to basics, not scrolling through Instagram for hours on end. Enjoying life, in the real world, you know? So I haven't got around to replacing it yet, and this is fine for now.

JIM

Hey, no judgement here. Well - if you have no objection to google maps coming to the rescue?

SAM

None! Oscar Wilde is buried at Père Lachaise Cemetery, I checked with Giselle.

JIM

OK...

He pulls out his phone and taps away.

JIM (CONT'D)

- it says here Père Lachaise Cemetery is about an hour and twenty minutes to walk. And look - I can put a pin in it, save it as a location.

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SAM

Yeah, I do know how to use phone maps, you know, I just don't have a phone at the moment.

JIM

Oh yeah - sorry.

SAM

But hey - that's not too bad.

JIM

I had escargot at lunch. Funnily enough, I was still hungry after eating, you know, insects. Let's stop for some food, too?

SAM

Sounds good.

Sam folds up her map, and stands up. She offers her hand to Jim, who takes it to stand.

7 EXT. WALK FROM MONTMARTRE TO PERE LACHAISE - DAY

Walking closely beside each other, but being careful not to touch, Jim and Sam begin their walk through Paris.

SAM

So, stranger-I-met-in-the-bar-earlier, tell me about yourself.

JIM

(mysterious, playful)
Well, what do you want to know?

SAM

What is the worst film you ever saw?

JIM

Les Miserables. But just because of Hugh Jackman. I liked the stage show.

SAM

Not seen it.

JIM

You?

SAM

Shrek Forever After.

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JIM

That's a very fair choice.

SAM

(trying to keep her tone casual)

What about exes, anything scandalous in your history?

Jim looks uncomfortable for a second, but recovers his calm before Sam can see.

JIM

Nah, I'm sorry, I've just got a few nice, standard, amicable breakups in my dating history. But I did have a stalker.

SAM

Seriously?!

JIM

Well, no, but I figure you've probably got a really interesting dating history and I wanted to seem like I did too.

Sam bursts out laughing.

SAM

No, no, I don't. Well, an ex did once leave a ham on my front porch so all the crows would come up to my front door, but that's it.

JIM

And that's not interesting in your book?

SAM

Nah, that's just standard breakup practice where I'm from.

Jim laughs.

SAM (CONT'D)

So, where did you go to school?

JIM

Um - I went to a posh private one near Southampton.

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SAM

Oooo, fancy! Sure you should be slumming it with a commoner like me?

JIM

I think out of the two of us you're definitely the least common one.

SAM

How'd you work that out?

JIM

I dunno... you're interesting. You do stuff.

SAM

I do stuff?

JIM

Yeah, like - I dunno, you go places. You've seen alligators and not in the zoo. Your stepmother ran witch tours. I feel like I haven't asked enough questions about that, by the way.

Sam doesn't respond.

They walk past a shop window, which has a stock of porcelain dolls on display. Sam pauses and examines them.

Jim raises his eyebrows quizzically, and Sam catches this. She sniggers.

SAM

Sorry. She actually had a load of these, and you were just talking about her.

JIM

The witch lady?

SAM

The very same.

JIM

It's not everyday you meet someone who claims to know a real witch!

SAM

Oh, no, Kathleen wasn't a witch. She did know a few, though.

AT FIRST SIGHT

24.

JIM

You really believe in all that?

SAM

Loads of people do where I'm from, and it brings in half of the tourism. But mostly, I think they just use tricks and drugs to dazzle tourists. Although Kathleen *claimed* to have seen the real deal a few times. I was quite little then, though, she may have been messing with me!

JIM

Lets hope so. Is she still with your Dad, then, happy ending?

SAM

My step-mother was actually with my mother. She swings both ways.

Sam smiles, raising her eyebrows at Jim, daring him to ask more questions.

As they walk, they come across a WOMAN, begging.

Sam gives the woman some euro.

The woman beams.

WOMAN

Merci, merci.

SAM

Je vous en prie.

They move on.

JIM

What did you do that for? She'll just spend it on drugs.

SAM

You cannot possibly know that. You shouldn't be so quick to judge.

JIM

But I bet she will.

SAM

So what? I'd rather she got the money

from me tonight rather than having to do something dangerous, or illegal. You better hope you never find yourself in a situation like that.

Jim raises his eyebrows, but says nothing, thinking. He doesn't wish to annoy Sam further.

SAM (CONT'D)

Look - sorry for biting. But you're clearly a little... sheltered, and where I grew up, plenty of people ended up homeless through no fault of their own. You can't know people's stories unless you listen.

JIM

OK - sorry. You're right. It's just, literally all the homeless where I'm from are thieves or drug addicts.

SAM

In which case I expect they have a hard enough time surviving without posh guys like you looking down on them.

Jim laughs, uneasy.

JIM

Yeah, OK - that's probably fair.

Sam notices a smoking woman, ADALENE, is manning a stall selling paintings, watching Jim and Sam.

SAM

Hey, the Marciac festival!

Jim follows her eye line.

There is a beautiful oil painting, on a sheath of canvas paper. The painting is filled with people, and a little stage on which a jazz troupe are playing. This painting is dominating the centre of the stall.

JIM

Wow, look at the use of *Impasto* there...

AT FIRST SIGHT

26.

Sam looks impressed.

SAM
(impressed)
Impasto?

ADALENE
The Englishman knows his oils.

JIM
Sorry - um, its a technique. Do you
see where the paint is layered on
thickly, especially around the stage,
and in the backdrop?

SAM
Wow.

JIM
Couldn't have said it better myself.

SAM
No, I mean, wow, you know your stuff.

JIM
No, I know a few brush and layering
techniques. There's a difference.

SAM
If you say so.

Jim smiles awkwardly, but is still absorbed in the painting.

JIM
(to Adalene)
Did you paint this?

ADALENE
Oui.

JIM
It's beautiful. Did you say it was a
festival, Sam?

SAM
Yeah, Marciac. It's kind of near
Toulouse, in the South. Runs for a few
weeks, I'm hoping to go.

ADALENE
Me too. you have good taste. You're a

AT FIRST SIGHT

27.

fellow jazz-lover?

SAM
Understatement of the year.

JIM
(very British, joking)
She's from New Orleans, so it's in her
blood, or pancreas - skin, or
something - apparently.

Sam smiles, pleased he's picking up on little pieces of her
life.

JIM (CONT'D)
How much for it?

ADALENE
Fifty-five euro.

Jim gets out his money.

ADALENE (CONT'D)
But forty-five for the lovely English
couple.

Sam and Jim get flustered.

JIM
Oh -

SAM
We're not -

JIM
I mean -

Adalene smirks while the pair get flustered.

ADALENE
My mistake. Thirty, then.

There's a twinkle in her eye, and she winks at Sam as Jim
fills out his details and counts out some euros.

Sam grins, and laughs.

Jim pays Adalene, who rolls up the painting and puts it in a
scroll.

AT FIRST SIGHT

28.

JIM

Thank you - it's beautiful.

He immediately gives it to Sam.

JIM (CONT'D)

Here.

Sam looks amazed.

SAM

What? - No, I couldn't -

ADALENE

Just take it, girl, its a gift.

She smiles, and Sam accepts.

SAM

Thank you, Jim.

They turn to walk away.

SAM

(to Adalene)

It was so nice to meet you - your paintings are beautiful.

ADALENE

I know.

She smiles as she turns to pack up her stall, and Sam and Jim depart.

JIM

She was nice.

SAM

Yeah and - so talented. I don't know how to thank you, Jim, that was so nice of you. I've been dying to see this festival for years, and now I'll have this memento of it forever, and -

JIM

I get it, you like the painting. You can stop jabbering now.

He nudges her playfully, she laughs.

SAM

I also feel less like you might be a murderer now you've bought me something nice. Now it's more... date like, less just wondering around a strange city with a strange man.

JIM

Well, that's a relief, I was worried you'd never let your guard down so I could go ahead and find a good murder spot.

They lapse into silence, Sam looks deep in thought.

JIM

Oh my God, that was just a joke.

Sam laughs.

SAM

You really should paint you know.

JIM

Ah, there's not much money in it.

SAM

No, but there's a lot of happiness in it. From the impression I'm getting of you, anyway. Your face when you saw that beautiful painting... it was nice, to see that passion in someone.

She smiles radiantly.

Jim, ever the awkward Englishman, doesn't quite know how to respond.

Sam raises her eyebrows, prying the truth from him.

JIM

(sighing)

You're right, I do love it. I adore it. My apartment is filled with originals by various independent, unknown artists. But do I really want to be like the people who's pieces I buy on the internet or from market stalls? That woman - she can't be scraping much of a living, can she?

AT FIRST SIGHT

30.

SAM

That lady looked like she was doing
just fine to me.

Jim laughs.

JIM

(flirtatious, loaded with meaning)
Yeah, she did. You care quite a lot
for a stranger, you know?

Sam just looks at him.

JIM

Well, I was pretty good. I haven't
picked up a brush in years, now,
though. My Dad kind of dissuaded me a
bit. Don't get me wrong, he was
supportive, he just wondered if a
career selling oil paintings was all
that realistic.

SAM

He was probably just afraid you'd cut
your ear off and post it to him if
things went wrong.

Jim grins at her.

JIM

Yeah, maybe.

SAM

Well... you should think about it,
anyway. Life's too short to do a job
that your heart isn't in.

Jim smiles, really taking in her words as they walk on.

They come to a beautiful, quaint cafe, with people sitting
out in the sun. One WOMAN (blonde, well-dressed) has a
strawberry tart and champagne in front of them.

SAM (CONT'D)

Nice tart.

Jim frowns, taken aback.

SAM (CONT'D)

(gesturing, amused)
The pastry.

AT FIRST SIGHT

31.

JIM

Oh!

SAM

And champagne. Think we've found our
pit stop?

JIM

After you, Madame.

He gestures, and they head inside.

8 EXT. CAFE - EVENING

Sam and Jim are sat enjoying the last hour or so of sun as it
slowly sinks. There is a bottle of champagne between them,
and a waitress brings over two tarts.

SAM

(beaming)

Thank you.

JIM

Thanks.

Sam takes a bite.

SAM

Oh my God.

JIM

What?

She grabs his spoon, and gives it to him.

The romanticism of the gesture is not lost on Jim, who
hesitates a little.

Despite this, he takes a bite, and lets out a moan.

SAM

(cheeky, flirtatious)

Is that a preview?

Jim splutters a little, then recovers.

JIM

I think this is the best thing I've
ever tasted.

AT FIRST SIGHT

32.

SAM

Right?

Smiling, Sam wipes a bit of stray tart from the side of Jim's face.

She opens the champagne bottle with smooth skill and pours champagne into Jim's glass first, then her own.

She catches Jim's impressed look.

SAM

I worked in bars and restaurants all through college, remember? Got pretty good at all things alcohol and food related.

She winks, and Jim laughs.

Sam gets her map out again, and begins studying it.

JIM

It's like a time machine back to the nineties.

SAM

(not looking up from the map)
Hey, if you're phone battery dies, you're fucked. It's physically impossible for a map to die.

Jim merely smiles, and carries on eating.

SAM (CONT'D)

It says here we're right next to a subway. Shall we get the underground the rest of the way?

JIM

Sure. Eat up, then.

Sam folds up her map and digs back into her tart.

Jim accidentally stares at her as she eats, none too gracefully.

She catches him watching and laughs, covering her mouth, at her own goofiness.

SAM

Sorry. Super attractive.

Jim shakes his head, smiling.

SAM (CONT'D)

Be right back, I'm just gonna use the restroom.

JIM

OK.

Jim watches her as she walks away, watches her chatting to a waitress, ODETTE (tall and slim, 60's with sleek grey hair), after asking her directions, noticing her smile, her gorgeousness, the effect she has on people.

He's mesmerised.

Coming back to reality, he takes a deep breath, and downs his glass of champagne, looking torn.

ODETTE (O.C)

Is everything OK with your *amante*?

She refills Jim's champagne, nodding in the direction in which Sam just disappeared, a knowing look in her eye.

Jim.

JIM

What, Sam? Um -

ODETTE

She is not your *amante*?

JIM

Um. No, I guess not. Yes. Um. It's complicated. I don't know.

ODETTE

You want her to be your *amante*? But it is not as simple as that, is it?

Odette frowns.

JIM

How did you - what the - are you psychic?

ODETTE

No, I have just been alive a very long time. Too long.

JIM

Huh. Well - any advice?

Odette nods, smiling.

Pause.

ODETTE (CONT'D)

*L'amour, c'est renoncer a
l'intelligence pour vivre de ses sens.*

Translation: (Love is giving up intelligence to live by your senses).

Looking mysterious, and all-knowing, Odette smiles and disappears into the crowd.

JIM

(calling to her)

Um - excuse me?

(lowering his voice as she doesn't
come back)

I didn't understand.

Frowning, frustrated, he takes another drink.

9 INT. METRO - DAY

Sam and Jim are on a platform, the bottle of champagne dangling from Jim's hand.

A train pulls up, and they get on.

10 INT. TRAIN CARRIAGE - DAY

They stand in the middle, hanging on to the bar in the centre of the train.

The carriage jerks as it starts to move, causing Sam to stumble a little. Jim catches her around the waist. She looks up at him, their faces dangerously close.

He quickly lets go, and ensures a safe distance between them.

They travel in silence for a few minutes.

Sam notices a few guys staring at them, and talking among themselves in French.

JIM

So, you know we were -

SAM

Shh.

She listens hard to them speaking rapid French.

SAM

(barely audibly, to Jim)

Those guys are talking about us.

JIM

(in a low voice)

Wait, what - really?

SAM

Yeah. But my French isn't great, I
can't make all of it out.

She listens, her face full of concern.

SAM

Let's move carriage at the next stop,
just to be safe.

The train rattles to a halt.

Sam and Jim exit, and dart into a carriage three doors down.

The men follow, not taking their eyes off of them, and
managing to squeeze into their carriage: they are dangerously
close.

Jim and Sam are both on edge now.

The train starts up again.

Jim takes charge, seeing the fear in Sam's face, and feeling
a pull to protect her.

He angles his body around her, like a shield.

JIM

Get off at the next stop, and run.

The train slows.

Jim takes Sam's hand.

JIM (CONT'D)

Don't let go.

The train stops at Phillipe Auguste.

AT FIRST SIGHT

36.

Sam and Jim RUN like their life depends on it.

They twist and dart through tourists and locals alike, we can see they are still being pursued.

Sam reaches for Jim's hand and clings to him as he pulls her up the steps and into daylight.

11 EXT. PHILLIPE AUGUSTE - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

Still they run, until they reach the cover of a large group of tourists being shown the area by a guide.

Finally, as the men pass, Jim lets go of Sam's hand, and they burst into laughter.

SAM

Oh my God, that was terrifying!

JIM

I know!

SAM

Hey, you played it so cool!

They hug, elated.

JIM

God, no, I was a wreck, then. How did you know they were onto us?

Jim lets her go.

SAM

French class at college. The professor was really hot, so I studied quite hard.

Jim laughs even harder.

JIM

Well thank God for your hot professor!

Sam winks, still breathless with laughter.

She pauses. Looks at Jim intently, seeing him in a new light.

JIM

What?

Sam shakes her head.

AT FIRST SIGHT

37.

SAM

Nothing, just - I'm glad you were here, that's all.

Jim smiles, guessing some of that sentence was unsaid.

JIM

Yeah. No problem. I mean - hey, it was you're mad French skills that alerted us and all that. Yeah.

Jim cringes, aware he's sort of killed the moment.

They break out from the crowd and push closer to the gates of Pere Lachaise.

JIM (CONT'D)

Well, here we go.

They walk, a little awkward after their loaded almost-moment.

SAM

You didn't even spill the champagne, I'm impressed!

JIM

I have my priorities straight.

He gestures through the gates, into the cemetery.

JIM

After you.

Sam falls into line, with Jim close behind her.

They only have to queue for a little while in order to get through.

They keep getting closer and closer together physically, Jim often shifting his body around her, like she's his axis.

SAM

Dammit.

She is gazing around, astounded.

JIM

What?

SAM

It's like the biggest graveyard in the

world.

Pause.

SAM (CONT'D)

And I have no idea whereabouts he is.

Jim snorts.

JIM

You didn't think to research this
before embarking on the journey?

SAM

No, no I did not.

Jim rolls his eyes playfully.

JIM

Um. Let's just start walking?

SAM

Sorry! I guess that's the only option!

Jim smiles, he doesn't mind, and he leads the way through the
maze of tombs.

12 EXT. PERE LACHAISE - DUSK

The sun is setting now. Sam and Jim are meandering through
large tombs, some adorned with statues, some you can enter.

Jim turns to look at her.

JIM

(theatrically, trying to impress)
Who, being loved, is poor?

SAM

What?

JIM

Wilde - he said that.

Sam raises her eyebrows.

SAM

He also said, "quotation is a
serviceable substitute for wit."

Jim laughs, amused his attempt to show off backfired.

JIM

Shit.

SAM

Yeah!

JIM

Well, he sacrificed a lot for love.
I'm sure he'd appreciate my effort
here.

SAM

I'm sure you're wrong. So - what do
you believe when it comes to love?

JIM

Nothing. Some people are better suited
to certain other people, that's it.

SAM

Shit, let me get my notebook, that's
the sort of wisdom that needs to be
written down!

Jim laughs, but sticks to his guns.

JIM

You disagree?

SAM

Completely!

Jim raises his eyebrows, sceptical.

JIM

Really, though?

SAM

(a little annoyed by his
scepticism)
Yes! I've seen it!

JIM

I doubt that, quite a lot. You're what
- twenty-two? I don't think frat boys
count.

Sam looks frustrated now.

SAM

Don't be a dick. And I wasn't talking

about me. You wouldn't understand.
Love like that... its amazing, but it
can destroy you. Trust me.

Jim realises she's talking from observational experience. He makes an effort to keep the scepticism out of his voice now.

JIM
What do you do when you've found
something like that, then? If it's as
painful as you say?

SAM
Take it. Grab it with both hands and
never let it go. Or else, spend the
rest of your life wondering how good
you could have had it.

Sam looks directly at Jim, her expression unreadable.

Jim can't meet her gaze.

JIM
I'm sorry. For being a dick.

SAM
You weren't a dick. You're just... a
little frustrating.

Jim nods, relieved she seems willing to move past their minor disagreement.

JIM
Can I ask why you thought so?

Sam seriously considers him.

SAM
Maybe later.

She walks away, and Jim follows.

SAM
Even if we never actually find Oscar
Wilde, I'm still glad we came here.
This place is amazing.

JIM
So, what's the draw of Oscar Wilde's
grave for you? Just a bit morbid?

SAM

No. I don't know... It's just his wit, his view of the world, the ingenuity in his plays... there's a reason people always quote him, you know? He was a genius. And years ahead of his time. Like - I can't really put into words what I feel for him. Not in a weird way. Just... yeah. I - I read a lot of his work, during a... well, doesn't matter.

She looks as though she's remembering something painful: the look in her eyes is haunting.

Jim looks so concerned that this girl has ever felt pain. He does not pry. Sam's eyes glaze over a little.

He does, however, realise that her statement warrants a response, and trips over his words a little.

JIM

(awkwardly)

No, I get it. Its cool you're so passionate about him.

Jim pauses, Sam is looking at him, but doesn't really seem to be with him in the present at that moment.

JIM (CONT'D)

Hey. You OK?

He touches her lightly on the side of her face, bringing her back.

SAM

Yeah - sorry. Miles away.

JIM

Happens to the best of us. So. Ever been to poet's corner, in London?

SAM

Last week.

JIM

Oh wow, really?

SAM

Yeah, I was just in London with a friend. Next stop is the south, then

Rome.

JIM

Wow, you've got quite the European tour planned. I've hardly ever been to any of the main cities and I live here.

SAM

Well, you have time. You're young, and free. You could always tag along.

She says it casually, playfully, but with an unsaid seriousness.

Jim smiles, staring at her just a little, deep in thought.

Sam smiles.

Jim spots something, up ahead.

JIM

Hey, there's a big old crowd around one over there.

He points to a large, intricate tomb nearby.

JIM (CONT'D)

Think we might be in luck?

Sam turns to look at him. She grins.

SAM

I think we may be!

They hurry over to the tomb, luckily, the crowd appears to be a huddle of tourists, who are moving in.

SAM (CONT'D)

Oh my goodness. He's in there, he's actually in there.

JIM

Whats with all this plastic?

He is pointing to the perspex glass that surrounds the tomb.

Sam looks embarrassed.

SAM

They - um. They had to do that to

protect the grave, because tourists
were performing this ritual, this
urban legend thing.

Jim looks curious.

He smiles, confused.

JIM
What's that look for?

SAM
What look?

She giggles.

JIM
Come on, tell me!

Looking straight into Jim's eyes as she says it, Sam
explains.

SAM
So. They had to put the glass there.
Because, legend says, if you kiss the
tomb, and run around it three times...
you have the best sex in Paris that
night.

She collapses into laughter, as does Jim. He looks very
tempted to perform the ritual.

He laughs harder, averting eye contact with Sam, trying to
cover up that the thought definitely just crossed his mind.

JIM
So, a bunch of horny tourists were
damaging the grave in their bid to
have a decent, ah, night of passion?

SAM
Precisely.

JIM
That's amazing.

SAM
I feel like Wilde would have been
incredibly pleased with the legend
that sprung up around his final
resting place.

AT FIRST SIGHT

44.

Jim raises the champagne bottle.

JIM
To Oscar Wilde, and horny tourists.

He swigs, then offers the bottle to Sam.

SAM
To damaging tombs in the pursuit of
great sex!

She swigs, winking.

They fall silent.

JIM
I am sorry. About before.

Sam turns to look at him.

JIM (CONT'D)
Minimising your experiences with,
y'know, love and stuff.

SAM
That's OK. You were right, I'm a
twenty-two year old who personally
knows nothing about love.

JIM
Well, I can't exactly say much. I knew
nothing about it either. That's
probably why I was a little... harsh.

SAM
(loaded)
Knew?

JIM
Well, until today.

She stares.

SAM
Same here.

JIM
I guess the problem with seeing a love
like you described is knowing when
you've found it yourself?

AT FIRST SIGHT

45.

SAM
Yeah. I guess so.

They gaze intently for a moment.

CUT TO

13 EXT. OUTSIDE PHILLIPE-AUGUST STATION - DUSK

Sam and Jim are nervously looking around.

JIM
I mean, I can't see those guys from before, but we better watch out.

SAM
Yeah. God, I'm glad I didn't come alone, I would have panicked and maybe would be tied up in a basement by now.

JIM
Eh, they'd probably just have robbed you. But still, best be careful in the big cities I guess.

They walk down into the underground.

14 EXT. BASTILLE STATION - NIGHT

Sam and Jim arrive outside the station, stepping out into the night.

Sam unfolds her map once again.

JIM
Well, that was nice, no creepy stalkers this time.

SAM
I know! I think we should make that the last train we get on tonight, though? Although those weirdos were out in broad daylight...

JIM
We'll see. That's a later problem. Besides, isn't walking the streets with no idea where we are *more* dangerous?

AT FIRST SIGHT

46.

SAM
Well - maybe.
(seriously)
But at least I've got you here.

She smiles. Jim stares back at her, they have a moment.

SAM (CONT'D)
To use as a human shield, or offer up
in my place to any kidnappers.

Jim bursts out laughing.

JIM
Well, it'd be my pleasure to die
horribly so you can continue dazzling
poor, unsuspecting strangers you meet
in bars.

He winks.

SAM
I appreciate that.

Jim gets awkward again.

JIM
Um - so, where next?

SAM
Well, wanna see what's left of Notre
Dame?

JIM
I'd prefer to see it in all it's
glory, but I guess that's not an
option.

SAM
Beggars can't be choosers. It's a nice
walk by the river to get there,
anyway.

Sam laughs, as they set off.

Jim nods.

JIM
How do you pronounce the name of the
river, anyway?

AT FIRST SIGHT

47.

SAM
(teasing)
Cultured, aren't you?

She winks.

SAM (CONT'D)
It's kind of like "*Sehn*".

JIM
Sehn. I tried to get directions
yesterday saying "sign" and the locals
laughed at me.

SAM
Bless your awkward British-ness.

JIM
It's the bane of my life.

SAM
Really, though?

JIM
No, that's overly-chatty Uber drivers.

SAM
Oh, yeah, hate those.

JIM
(wistful)
So - when do you leave Paris?

SAM
Tomorrow. This jazz festival starts in
two days, so I'm hitting the road
again. What about you?

JIM
Got the old Eurostar booked in about
11am tomorrow morning - so, same.

SAM
Ooh, last night in Paris for both of
us then.

It crosses both of their minds that they wish this wasn't the
case: you can see it on their faces.

Almost unconsciously, Jim angles his body closer to hers.

AT FIRST SIGHT

48.

JIM
(wistful)
Yeah, I'll be sorry to go. I'll miss... Paris.

Sam smiles sadly, a little curiously.

SAM
Yeah. I'll really miss *Paris*, too.

They walk in silence for a few minutes, reaching the river.

A jazz musician busks nearby, and they are having to dodge tourists a lot, with Jim taking a protective stance of Sam.

The view is magical.

There are a few boats on the Seine, the medieval buildings on either side lit up, drinkers on terraces, the water glistens under the lights of the city.

SAM
Takes your breath away, doesn't it?

Jim nods in agreement. They share a look just then, and Jim nervously breaks the eye contact.

JIM
So - tell me more about yourself.

SAM
What do you want to know?

JIM
Favourite TV shows?

Sam snorts.

SAM
We're here in one of the cultural capitals of the world, and the first question that springs to mind is what is my favourite TV show?

JIM
Don't act like you're too cultured to binge watch Netflix like the rest of us!

Sam laughs.

AT FIRST SIGHT

49.

SAM

Actually, I only got Netflix when I went to college in New York.

JIM

You're joking?! That's - wow.

They shift closer together to let passers-by get through, then resume their safe distance.

Sam nods in response to Jim's outburst.

SAM

Yeah. My roommate introduced me. The Wi-Fi where I grew up is terrible so I only watched terrestrial.

JIM

Ah, of course!

SAM

So, I'd say Friends. I grew up with it, you know? It's comfort TV.

JIM

No, Friends is good - a solid option. My favourite is probably, um -
(he casts around for a manly option)
Breaking Bad.

He looks away.

Sam did not miss this.

She rolls her eyes.

SAM

(dry)

You're lying. What is it really?

Jim looks at her, impressed.

JIM

Wow, your instincts are flawless.
(embarrassed pause)
OK, you got me, it's actually Riverdale. I thought Breaking Bad sounded more masculine.

Sam laughs.

AT FIRST SIGHT

50.

SAM

Hey, there's no shame in that! Well, maybe a little. Remember when Chad Michael Murray built a rocket in that show?

Pause.

JIM

Yeah, that was bonkers.

SAM

Sorry, I'll stop embarrassing you now.

JIM

Thank you, I'd appreciate that.

SAM

So, what about music?

JIM

(playful)

I'd have to say, equally embarrassing pop stuff. You?

SAM

Jazz!

JIM

Of course. Ummm, movies?

SAM

(sighing)

Titanic. Or anything with a young Leonardo Dicaprio in it.

JIM

Ah, yeah, he's a bit of a man-crush, I'll admit.

Sam laughs.

SAM

And your favourite movie?

JIM

I'm a comedy guy, all the way. I like anything written by Richard Curtis.

SAM

Who's he?

AT FIRST SIGHT

51.

JIM

Um - the guy who made Love Actually,
Bend it like Beckham, Notting Hill.

SAM

I guess we're past you pretending to
have manly preferences now.

JIM

Apparently so.

Jim looks up, and sees the grand Notre-Dame's shell ahead.

JIM (CONT'D)

Hey, look!

SAM

Notre Dame.

JIM

I always wanted to see it.

SAM

I mean, half of it is still there.
Let's make a detour.

15 EXT. NOTRE DAME - NIGHT

They come to rest at a bench just outside Notre-Dame.

The cathedral is still black in places, all its treasured,
surviving artefacts removed, with scaffolding holding up the
thousand-year-old stonework, its famous carvings still
visible.

SAM

Oh, my God.

JIM

Woah.

A man approaches them from behind, unseen by Sam or Jim.

ANDRE (O.C)

It's beautiful, isn't it?

Sam and Jim turn to look at the newcomer. ANDRE is around
thirty-five, and looking glum.

SAM

It's breathtaking.

AT FIRST SIGHT

52.

ANDRE

I was supposed to lead my first service here, two weeks after she burnt down.

JIM

Wow! Really?

Andre smiled.

ANDRE

Yes. It would have been a dream come true. This is my favourite place in the world.

SAM

I can see why. I'm sorry you never got to do it.

Jim, not great with the deep conversations, struggles to participate adequately.

JIM

Um. You may do - when they've rebuilt it, though?

ANDRE

Maybe. It will take years before there can be services here again.

Pause.

Andre mulls over his next words.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

I can't help wondering why God would let this happen.

SAM

Yeah. It must be... quite hard to see the light, from your position, I guess.

Andre comes and sits beside them.

ANDRE

Are you two believers?

JIM

Honestly, no.

Andre smiles, understanding.

SAM

And honestly, yes. I know its not the same, but hurricane Katrina took down my home, my parents livelihood, it took everything away. But, we survived. I know a lot of people didn't, but, I don't know. I felt protected, by something other than my parents.

Jim looks at her, feeling aghast - and a little dumb. It hadn't occurred to him, but of course, growing up in New Orleans, this was something Sam had lived through.

SAM (CONT'D)

And - I think you should take comfort in that, too. Although the cathedral burned, nobody got hurt. Nobody died.

Andre nods, thoughtful.

ANDRE

There is some truth in that. But still - such a holy place, burning to the ground? It will take millions to repair, which could be spent on the poverty in the city. Where is God's logic in that?

SAM

I'm afraid that's where my - er - wisdom, ends. I don't know. You could give some of the homeless jobs in the repair works?

JIM

Wow that's a good idea.

ANDRE

(impressed by Sam's innovation)
Yeah - it really is.

There is an awkward pause, while Andre, who seems to be having a profound moment, ponders.

Jim breaks the silence.

JIM

So, did you see it burn?

AT FIRST SIGHT

54.

SAM

It was one of those moments where everyone in the world remembers what they were doing when they found out the news.

JIM

Yeah - like 9/11, or Diana's death.

SAM

Exactly.

ANDRE

It was - and I did see. Paris stopped as one. I was here, in the church, training. We all got out before there was any real danger, but when we realised the roof was in flames... I can't describe it.

SAM

That's awful.

ANDRE

It was the strangest day of my life. It was so beautiful, and so terrible. The sky went black, the flames glowing against it. I didn't sleep for days, afterwards.

JIM

Wow.

ANDRE

You know, a priest here - he ran into the blaze to save the crown of thorns. They say Jesus himself actually wore it, it is the most sacred relic ever found.

JIM

Do you believe its the real one?

ANDRE

I think I do, yes. I have seen it myself.

(sighing)

Well, it's a comforting thought, anyway.

The three sit in silence for a minute.

AT FIRST SIGHT

55.

SAM

So, what are you doing now, since your
- um - promotion? Fell through and
all.

Andre laughs.

ANDRE

I'm preaching at Saint-Eustache. And -
it's still a privilege, even if it
isn't here.

Sam shivers with cold.

JIM

Oh hey - are you guys cold? I might
run into that cafe and get us some
coffee?

SAM

Oh, yes, please.

ANDRE

I'm alright, thank you.

Jim nods, and exits.

Sam and Andre stare at the building for a minute.

ANDRE

So. The awkward Englishman seems nice.
Are you two together?

SAM

No, I only met him tonight. I met him
at a bar in Monmartre, thinking of a
holiday romance type thing - oh, sorry
-

ANDRE

(laughing)

Not at all.

Sam grins guiltily.

SAM

- Yeah, but, I don't know. We've spent
tonight together, and I've never felt
this way before. About anyone. Or
anything. So, I'm not going to do
anything rash, or think with my, ah -

you know. I think this could be real.
I want it to be real.

ANDRE

(smiling)

Sounds like you've found something a
lot of people search a lifetime for,
if you ask me.

SAM

You think so?

ANDRE

I've rarely seen anyone look the way
he looks at you.

Jim arrives back with the coffee, handing Sam one.

SAM

Thanks.

Sam gets a notebook out of her bag, and writes down her email
address.

She rips the page, and hands it to Andre.

SAM

I want you to email me, whether its
next year or in ten, when you get your
first service here, at Notre-Dame.
Even if it's still being held up by
scaffolding.

Andre, touched, accepts the ripped page.

ANDRE

Thank you - for your faith. I promise
I will do this for you - ?

SAM

Sam. And this is Jim.

Jim waves, awkwardly.

ANDRE

Sam and Jim. You are very kind - I'm
Andre. Watch out for my email.

SAM

We will.

AT FIRST SIGHT

57.

With that, Sam smiles broadly, and she and Jim leave the priest sitting there, looking at the shell of Notre Dame, a little more lighthearted.

JIM

That was incredible, what you did there.

SAM

What, had a conversation?

Jim smiles.

JIM

No, like - I don't know. You just seem to have an effect on people.

SAM

Eh, I'm friendly, its the southern girl in me. Come on, let's cross to the other side of the river.

16 EXT. LATIN QUARTER - NIGHT

Sam and Jim are in the quaint Latin quarter, leisurely walking through stalls and market squares.

JIM

So. I'm sorry, I didn't put two and two together, earlier. You survived Katrina, huh?

Sam's expression hardens. Just barely, we can hear the ghost of the storm as she remembers.

JIM (CONT'D)

Sorry, I - didn't mean to pry. You don't have to talk about it.

Sam smiles.

SAM

No, it's OK. Honestly, it was one of the experiences that shaped my life. The magnitude of it, the ramifications, what happened next.

Jim walks beside her in silence, listening.

SAM (CONT'D)

I remember the build up as well as I

remember the storm. I wasn't even five, but for days and days before, it was all my parents talked about - they were together, back then. My grandmother lived with us, and the three of us were lucky enough, and close enough to the city, that we evacuated to the super dome.

Pause.

Sam looks haunted.

SAM (CONT'D)

That was the worst part. It was overcrowded. There was fighting, and injured people - a lot of them. You could hear the hurricane raging outside, battering the place down. Mom and Dad held me in their arms the entire few days. It was... hell. I can still remember how it *smelled* in there. The screams, the sheer volume of the storm outside. I've never known anything like it.

Sam takes a deep breath.

SAM (CONT'D)

At least, it was as much hell as I'd experienced... until we got home. Well - we never got home. It was underwater. Every memory, every picture, all our boats... they'd been swept out. The bayou had swelled, our house - or what was left of it - was feet under water. We stayed with my Dad's family for a while in the Quarter. We tried to rebuild. And we succeeded. But, it cost my parents their marriage.

Jim is staring at her, amazed, having lived his sheltered, nice life, at what Sam has survived through.

JIM

I'm so sorry.

Sam smiles.

SAM

It's OK. My parents still get on, and my Dad is fantastic, as is my Mom. Kathleen came into her life soon after, Mom's wife. And things were better than ever for a few years there.

Jim frowned.

JIM

What went wrong? I take it - is this the true love you were on about? Your parents and how they split up?

SAM

No, my Mom and Kath, actually. And it's a little more complicated than that.

Just then, they come to an ancient-looking, tiny second hand bookshop.

Sam stops suddenly, and turns to Jim.

SAM

Do you mind? The literature nerd in me finds it literally impossible to simply walk past one of these.

Jim laughs.

JIM

Not at all.

Sam grins, and they head inside.

17 INT. BOOKSHOP - NIGHT

Bells tinkle as Sam and Jim enter.

Maisie Peters - Feels Like This is playing quietly in the shop.

Sam is instantly amazed by the dusty, old volumes of varying colours, the cobwebs and the clutter.

She crouches down to examine a low shelf, running her fingers down the spines of the old books, pulling out a few at random.

She sits on the floor and opens one, with Jim watching her, mesmerised, as she seems to slide into a different world.

She notices Jim has been staring when he suddenly averts his eyes, and smiles, pleased at his attention.

Jim spots an elderly man, JEAN-MARC, is up on a ladder, replacing dusty volumes, watching him with amusement.

JIM

Oh - shit. Sorry, sir. *Mon-sir*, I mean. I don't suppose you know how to get a girl out of a trance?

He indicates Sam, still engrossed, and loses himself watching her for a few moments.

The Jean-Marc laughs.

He climbs down, still agile, despite appearing frail.

JEAN-MARC

Bonne Nuit, madame et monseieur.

SAM

Bonne Nuit monseieur, parle-vous Anglais?

JEAN-MARC

That's quite alright. And yes, I do. How can I help you this evening?

SAM

I'm just looking - I can't walk past a bookshop without going inside, sorry.

JEAN-MARC

Ah, I am the same way!

JIM

You're open late, aren't you?

JEAN-MARC

This is Paris! Everything is open late, young man. Now, is there anything in particular that you would like to see, here? A romance novel, perhaps?

He casts a knowing look at the pair.

Sam and Jim smile at each other: neither deny they are a couple anymore.

SAM

Actually, I'm after a book with a certain kind of spine - Jim, can I borrow your phone, find him a picture of the edition I'm talking about?

Jim looks wary, and presses a few buttons before handing it to Sam. He holds his breath while she googles a certain type of spine, and shows Jean-Marc the picture.

SAM (CONT'D)

Do you have any like this?

JEAN-MARC

Oui, I do. What does she not have?

SAM

I think she's missing *Far From the Madding Crowd*. She has all the others.

Jean-Marc scans a shelf in the corner of the shop.

He plucks out a volume, and opens it.

JEAN-MARC

Ah, but we only have this print in French language.

SAM

That's OK - my Mom is fluent.

JEAN-MARC

Oh, fantastic. In which case, that is 19 euro please.

Sam grins, and hands over the money.

SAM

Thank you, sir.

JEAN-MARC

You are very welcome.

They exit the shop.

AT FIRST SIGHT

62.

18 EXT. LATIN QUARTER - NIGHT

JIM
Pleased with your new book?

SAM
Yeah. Well, Mom is. She got me the
phone that broke right before I left
so I need to score some daughter
points, she won't be pleased with me!

Jim smiles.

JIM
That's nice. Hey - how much time do we
have before the show?

SAM
An hour or so?

JIM
Wanna hit the jazz bar over there?

He points, and Sam follows his gaze to Le Caveau de la
Huchette. She grins.

SAM
Oh, hell yeah.

19 INT. LE CAVEAU DE LA HUCHETTE - NIGHT

The bar is packed, but Jim and Sam sit at the bar.

The American BARTENDER, upon their arrival, puts two shots
down.

JIM
Oh - we didn't order these.

BARTENDER
They're complimentary. Absinthe.

Sam raises her eyebrows.

SAM
Well, my Nana tells me to never, ever
turn down a free drink. Cheers!

They clink glasses, and down the shots, pulling faces and
gasping.

Jim smiles lazily at Sam, who giggles.

The bartender, amused, heads off into the back.

JIM

Shit.

SAM

What?

JIM

I've never had absinthe before. Its...
(shaking his head, recovering)
shit!

SAM

I think it's pretty good, actually.

It takes Jim a minute to get that joke.

He gestures when he does, laughing, while Sam winks.

JIM

I see what you did there.

SAM

Doesn't really hold a candle to your
quirky British humour.

Someone is singing *That's Life* with the jazz band, on the
karaoke.

SAM (CONT'D)

(quietly)

*Flying hiiiigh in April. Shot down in
May...*

(normal voice, to Jim)

Hey, do you know what karaoke
translates as?

Jim shakes his head, smiling.

SAM

Empty orchestra.

JIM

Wow. That's pretty.

SAM

I think so!

AT FIRST SIGHT

64.

The bartender reappears.

BARTENDER
Hows that absinthe treating ya?

SAM
Wonderful!

She grins and winks.

Jim laughs.

BARTENDER
Yeah, I can see that.

He grabs a few glasses, polishing and replacing them.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)
So, do you two like jazz?

SAM
I'm from New Orleans, so its in my blood.

BARTENDER
Chicago, myself.

SAM
Oh no way!

JIM
And I've unwillingly seen *La la land*.

The bartender laughs.

BARTENDER
(in an undertone, to Jim)
Smooth, man.

SAM
That does *not* count.

Jim laughs.

BARTENDER
You should sing a song for your date then, no? Show him what a real jazz number sounds like?

SAM
What?! No!

AT FIRST SIGHT

65.

JIM
Go on, please!

SAM
No. I'm so drunk I probably couldn't
even sing.

BARTENDER
You seemed to be crooning along to
Sinatra just fine a minute ago.

The sax player in the jazz band steps up to the microphone.

SAX PLAYER
Hey, we need a new singer please guys!
Any takers?

BARTENDER AND JIM
(pointing at Sam)
Over here!

SAM
What? No, no no!

JIM
Her name is Sam, guys, she's from New
Orleans, she'll show us how its done!

CROWD
Sam! Sa-am! Sa-am!

SAM
I'm gonna kill you both.

Jim winks.

BARTENDER
You sing, you get one more free shot
each.

Sam rolls her eyes.

SAM
Ugh, fine!

He pours, they drink.

Sam walks up to the band, and whispers in the sax players
ear.

AT FIRST SIGHT

66.

She goes over to the piano, and plays the first few bars.

Louis Armstrong's version of *La Vie en Rose* plays, and Sam nervously sings into the microphone, her fingers expertly playing on the keys.

She stares into Jim's eyes, as he and the bartender watch, and as she starts singing, her nervousness melts away: she belongs on stage, and has a deep, raspy yet feminine voice.

SAM

(singing in French)

*'Des yeux qui font baisser les miens, Un
rire qui se perd sur sa bouche, Voilà
le portrait sans retouches, De l'homme
auquel j'appartiens...*

BARTENDER

Wow, she's singing the French version!
You wanna hold on to that one, kid.

Jim says nothing.

Sam plays piano effortlessly, expertly, still singing, and the band, the bar - it's quite show, she's impressive.

She doesn't take her eyes off of Jim, who is mesmerised by her.

She plays some of the final bars, her voice hitting impressive notes, maintaining its rasp.

The song ends, on an impressive note from Sam. The bar fills with applause, but she only has eyes for Jim.

BARTENDER

(to Jim, staring at Sam)

Well, you don't meet a girl like that
every day.

JIM

You really don't.

FADE OUT

20 EXT. BOULEVARD DE CLICHY - NIGHT

Sam and Jim are running down the street.

Sam stops suddenly, breathless.

AT FIRST SIGHT

67.

SAM

There's no point. We missed it. We're just giving ourselves stitches for nothing.

JIM

I'm sorry, I think you're right.

SAM

I've had tickets to that show for a whole fucking year!

She seems really angry.

JIM

I'm sorry, it was my fault, we got a bit drunk there, and - time got away -

SAM

Hey! No - I had the best time. Sorry. I wouldn't change tonight for anything.

They lapse into silence.

JIM

I'll stay.

SAM

What?

JIM

And take you to a show tomorrow

SAM

But you're leaving tomorrow.

JIM

I could stay.

Sam is amazed. She smiles.

SAM

Let's go get a drink.

21 EXT. BOULEVARD DE CLICHY - O'SULLIVAN'S - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Jim and Sam approach a table where REMY (gay, dark hair, glam dress sense) is sat, drinking alone.

AT FIRST SIGHT

68.

JIM

Bonjour. Do you mind if we sit here?

REMY

Please, please!

He waves a hand airily.

Jim pulls back a chair for Sam, on a table outside the front.

She smiles at him, and Jim sits next to her.

REMY (CONT'D)

I'm Remy - I'm a makeup artist next door.

SAM

Oh wow! Sam - and this is Jim - tourists!

REMY

I had guessed, dear.

Sam laughs.

Remy leans into the pair of them.

REMY

I was just about to go to the bar, would you two like a drink?

SAM

Oh, thanks!

JIM

Well - an Irish bar, how about a whiskey?

SAM

(countering)

Or, because its in Paris, should we order champagne, or a Parisian cocktail?

Remy rolls his eyes.

REMY

Why don't I just surprise you both?

JIM

Yeah, OK that's probably best.

AT FIRST SIGHT

69.

SAM
Sounds good.

Remy gives them his winning smile, and winds his way expertly through the crowded venue up to the bar.

Two girls, CELESTE (blonde, tall) and JULES (dark hair and olive skin, British accent), walk up to the table.

JULES
Hey, is this seat taken?

JIM
Oh - no. There's one more of us, but feel free to sit down.

SAM
Oh, look - a fellow Brit, Jim!

Jules laughs, as she and Celeste take seats.

JULES
Thanks for letting us sit - ?

JIM
Jim. And this is Sam.

Jules hugs them both.

JULES
I'm Jules. And this is Celeste.

She gestures, Celeste waves.

CELESTE
Nice to meet you.

JULES
Where are you guys from, then?

JIM
Well, Sam lives in a swamp, apparently -

SAM
Not exactly true. I live near the Bayou in New Orleans.

JULES
Oh wow that's cool!

AT FIRST SIGHT

70.

JIM

And I'm from Southampton.

JULES

No way! Winchester, originally, just down the road!

JIM

Oh, yeah! I went to school in Winchester.

JULES

Small world!

CELESTE

So, what brings the two of you to Paris?

SAM

Oh - we only met tonight, actually.

CELESTE

Oh?

JIM

Yeah. Um - work trip, for me, putting off finding a job for her.

Jim winks at Sam. Jules and Celeste laugh.

SAM

It sounds bad when you say it like that! What about you two?

Remy returns, with a pitcher of margaritas.

REMY

Ah! I see you've met my two favourite dancers!

SAM

What? You guys dance next door?

CELESTE

Oui, oui.

SAM

That's so cool!

JIM

Yeah! We just missed your show!

AT FIRST SIGHT

71.

JULES

Oh no! Why did you miss it?

JIM

We got drunk and did karaoke. Time ran away with us.

Jules bursts out laughing.

REMY

Happens to the best of us!

The conversation begins to split into two, the girls and the boys.

SAM

(to Jules and Celeste)

So - dancers! That's got to be like a dream job, surely?

JULES

It's brilliant! Hard work, but -
(a waiter brings her a massive dish of pasta)
- you can eat whatever you want! It's very physical.

Sam laughs, as Jules begins eagerly tucking in.

Celeste drains her drink.

CELESTE

Come on, I'll show you some moves, while Jules here stuffs her face.

She nudges her playfully, then takes Sam's hand to lead her away.

Sam leans into Jim.

SAM

We're going to go claim a spot on the dance floor! See you in there?

She grabs her drink to take with her.

JIM

Sounds good, I'll be in soon.

He watches her leave. Remy watches Jim watch her leave.

AT FIRST SIGHT

72.

REMY

So tell me, James, you found each other tonight?

Jim sips his drink nervously.

JIM

(delighted to get the chance to gush about Sam)

Yeah. Haven't let her out of my sight since.

REMY

Ah, well be careful, James. Paris has the tendency to make people fall in love.

Jim says nothing. He turns to look at Sam - he can see Celeste teaching her twirls and moves through the glass, falling about laughing, and looking so beautiful.

JIM

(still staring at Sam)

Yeah... I think I've been working that out for myself.

Through the window, we see Celeste teach Sam how to do a complex spin and lift, and we see them nailing it on the first try.

JIM (CONT'D)

Is there anything this girl *can't* do?

JULES

(through a mouthful of linguini)

So'vemudmove'et?

Remy cackles.

JIM

I beg your pardon?

Jules swallows.

JULES

Sorry - so have you made your move yet?

JIM

Um. What do you mean?

AT FIRST SIGHT

73.

REMY

Your move! You're in love with the girl, yes?

JIM

I only met her tonight!

Remy and Jules simply stare.

JIM (CONT'D)

Seriously.

They continue to stare.

JIM (CONT'D)

OK, yes, I'm fucking smitten.

More staring.

JIM (CONT'D)

OK, OK, I'm in love with her!

Remy and Jules cheer.

JULES

OK, so you need to make your move.

JIM

No. It's too soon. And... complicated. We met *tonight*. Like... eight hours ago. There is no way she feels the same way.

REMY

Are you sure?

He indicates through the glass, where Sam is dancing, but she keeps looking at Jim, staring, wishing he was dancing with her.

JIM

I don't want to blow it, OK? I don't want it to just be a one-night stand, either. This is so much more than that.

REMY

Fine. Do nothing. Go back to England, forget about her.

AT FIRST SIGHT

74.

JULES

Yeah, be pen pals or something. *That's* romantic.

She rolls her eyes.

22 INT. O'SULLIVAN'S - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Celeste and Sam are dancing together, enjoying the music, chatting a little.

They have to yell to make themselves heard.

CELESTE

So - Jim. You and he look something special, no?

SAM

(almost exhilarated)
He's... just amazing! We're so in sync. I just don't want to blow it.

CELESTE

I'm sure you won't, he's so into you.

Celeste watches Jim, Remy and Jules enter, behind Sam.

SAM

I'm just playing it cool for now. See where it goes... it's scary.

CELESTE

If I were you, I'd just take the leap. You say you think this is special? I'll bet he does too. Besides, he's *hot!*

Sam laughs.

SAM

(as the music suddenly stops)
I THINK HE'S FUCKING GORGEOUS!

Jim sneaks up behind her, and briefly putting an arm over her shoulders.

JIM

(whispering in her ear, very sexy)
I don't think the people at the top of the Eiffel Tower heard you.

AT FIRST SIGHT

75.

Sam burst out laughing, and turns to face Jim. The music starts back up.

The bar is crowded, they are close together.

SAM
(loaded with implications, sexy)
Wanna get out of here?

JIM
Sounds perfect.

SAM
(to the group)
We're going to move on, guys! So nice to meet you all!

They share hugs and goodbyes, and Sam and Jim tumble out into the street again.

23 EXT. BOULEVARD DE CLICHY - NIGHT

Back in the warm night air, Sam and Jim wander off aimlessly.

They walk in silence for a minute.

SAM
They were so nice. I love meeting interesting strangers in bars. Hey - like you, I guess.

Jim pushes her playfully.

JIM
Yeah. I got Remy's number, he was awesome.

SAM
I bet it's fake.

JIM
(laughing)
Rude.

JIM (CONT'D)
Paris is... wild.

SAM
That was so glamorous! My Mom's girlfriend, Kathleen, told me Paris is the best place she'd ever been. God,

she was right.

JIM
She sounds great.

Sam hesitates.

SAM
Yeah, she was.

Jim stops. The penny drops.

He sighs, understanding, finally.

JIM
Was?

SAM
Sorry - guess I should have mentioned it earlier. I don't usually talk about shit with strangers, but, I don't feel like you are a stranger anymore.

Jim wraps an arm around her, listening.

JIM
That's OK. Tell me about her.

There's a pause, while Sam finds the words.

Jim drops his arm, but his fingers brush over hers, then she takes his hand.

SAM
She... raised me, along with my Mom, and God, they were so in love.

Pause.

SAM (CONT'D)
But she got sick. When - back when I was a teenager. Its, um, not nice to see someone so strong die like that.

JIM
I'm sorry.

SAM
Don't be. But - it kind of broke my Mom afterwards, you know? To have that kind of love taken away from you, in

AT FIRST SIGHT

77.

such a cruel way.

JIM

Yeah, I get it.

SAM

(reliving it, eyes far away)
It's not... nice. Dying of cancer.
It's brutal, actually. First, Kath
stopped being able to walk and things,
about a year in. Then she stopped -
y'know - being able to look after
herself. Kath didn't have health
cover, so we basically bankrupted
ourselves and she didn't get better
anyway.

Pause.

Sam takes a breath - it's clear she's never talked about this
before.

SAM (CONT'D)

Even through all the physical stuff,
she was still Kath, still smiling.
But, by the end... she couldn't string
a sentence together. She didn't know
what was happening around her and she
wasn't really herself. *That...* that
was the hardest part.

Jim reaches out to her, brushing the tears out of her eyes as
they come.

JIM

I'm so sorry you had to go through
that.

SAM

Yeah, well... that's what put me off
the happily ever after of life, you
know?

JIM

(loaded)
You still feel that way?

Sam smiles. Her eyes are dry now.

SAM

No. I don't. I want to find that sort

of love now.

She stares meaningfully at him, and he looks momentarily lost for words.

SAM (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, that's way too heavy!

JIM

No, I... it's nice to know you, a little better. Baggage and all.

SAM (CONT'D)

So, ah, is your family just as depressing as mine? While we're... on the heavy conversation.

JIM

Oh, um. Well my Dad is lovely, really sweet, very quiet, but he works a lot. That's, ah - why I went to boarding schools. He didn't have all that much time with my Mum gone. It was... a bit shit. Quite lonely, you know, growing up.

Sam nods, taking his words in.

SAM

When did your mum leave - are you in touch?

There's a pause - this is out of Jim's comfort zone in terms of conversation, but he makes an effort to be honest for Sam.

JIM

She... well. She left when I was five. I guess you could say I have trust issues after even my own mother didn't stick around. She lives in Bath, now, with her new kids and husband. I see them all once or twice a year.

SAM

You don't like them?

JIM

No, I do. It's more my Mum I don't get on with. Well, not even that, we're just... not close.

AT FIRST SIGHT

79.

His eyes are dry, but there's a hardness, a resentment to his expression.

SAM

I'm sorry.

JIM

No, don't be. We're fine, now - I guess. She's got her new family, I've got Dad.

SAM

Still, it sounds painful.

JIM

It hurt a bit at the time. Well, it hurt a lot.

(pause)

She wanted a family, just not *our* family.

Jim breathes out, unused to sharing his emotions.

JIM (CONT'D)

She rejected us.

(pause, Jim sighs)

She rejected *me*. And, this family she met later in life... they were good enough for her, for some reason.

He shrugs.

SAM

(tearing up just slightly)

I'm so sorry.

Jim frees his hand from hers to wipe her tears away again, rolling his eyes playfully at her emotional side.

JIM

(amused and touched at her reaction)

What am I gonna do with you, eh?
Sorry, it's weird, I've never actually talked about all this.

Sam smiles, understanding. Jim links his fingers through hers again.

SAM

Do you see her now? And the - new

family?

JIM

(nodding)

Yeah. Her, uh, husband, Gordon, he's actually OK. He makes an effort with me, and is nice to me, and none of this was his fault, they met a few years later.

There's a pause, Sam waiting for him to go on, not pushing him.

JIM

Paul and Michael are little shits, though, they're the two eldest step-brothers. They treat Caleb, my youngest brother like shit.

(grinning suddenly)

He's so sweet.

Sam smiles at the tone Jim uses when talking about Caleb.

SAM

That's so nice. How old is he?

JIM

He just turned eight. The other two are teenagers and they're awful to him.

SAM

That sucks. I bet he's glad he has you, though.

JIM

Yeah, I hope so.

They walk in silence for a minute, each lost in thought.

JIM

Um - do you have any idea where we are?

Sam laughs.

She gets out her map, holding it under a streetlight.

SAM

Can you see a road sign anywhere? Moulin Rouge is over here...

AT FIRST SIGHT

81.

She indicates on the map.

SAM (CONT'D)
And we went this way, so...

She turns the map, squinting and frowning at it.

Jim pulls out his phone, and hits **turn on location**.

JIM
We are on *Rue Lepic*.

Sam glares.

SAM
Cheater. Cartographers everywhere are turning in their graves.

JIM
Cartographers?

SAM
People who make maps, before Apple butchered the art. Damn, though, I'm nowhere near Giselle's place.

Jim laughs.

JIM
On my un-artistic map, it says there is a nightclub which is open until 6am. Fancy another drink?

Sam looks into his eyes and smiles broadly.

SAM (CONT'D)
That'd be nice.

JIM
I think it's a few minutes -
(He spins around a little,
frowning at his phone)
- this way?

SAM
Lead the way.

They walk off into the street lit night.

AT FIRST SIGHT

82.

24 INT. MEGA NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Sam and Jim walk in, Sam first, looking picture perfect, with a shot of Jim's face, hardly able to believe he is with her.

SAM

Go get us some tequila!

JIM

Coming right up!

Sam grabs his arm.

SAM

Don't lose me! I'll wait right here.

He winks, and slips off towards the bar.

Sam watches him, her expression soft, as he orders, and laughs with the barman.

He brings back two drinks, and they down them.

They head off into the centre of the dance floor, where blaring, fast music is playing, and they dance together.

25 MONTAGE: THE CLUB - NIGHT

Jim and Sam taking shots.

Dancing and lights going up and down.

More shots at the bar.

A game of pool in the corner of the bar, Sam taking a winning shot, Jim admiring her.

Sam and Jim dancing on the bar, then spotting the Moulin Rouge crew at the back and climbing down to see them.

Sam and Jim separating from the crowd, getting together in the middle of the dance floor.

Sam and Jim dancing, getting closer together and more flirtatious.

END MONTAGE

26 INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Sam and Jim are in the centre of a crowded dance floor.

The fast, sexy music plays, with them getting closer together.

The song changes: it's a slow, romantic song, *angels - the XX*, the last song of the night.

They break apart, both nervous. Jim, stealing himself, holds out his hand, which Sam takes.

They dance slowly together, Jim managing to pull off some decent spins, sweeping Sam off of her feet.

As the last note of the song plays, their faces are close together, lips parted. They are a second away from finally kissing.

The lights go up: they break apart, blinking in the light, dangerously close together.

27 SACRE COEUR - JUST BEFORE SUNRISE

Sam and Jim are sat in darkness, the lights of Paris illuminated below them.

They are close together, but not too close.

SAM
What a night.

JIM
I'm going to quit my job.

SAM
(smiling)
Yeah?

JIM
Yeah. I want to paint. And the first thing I put on canvas, will be this view right here.

SAM
It really does take your breath away.

JIM
I wish I could capture it forever.

As they lapse into silence, the sun begins to rise. It's a cloudless night, and a red glow engulfs Paris, the sun's rays just beginning to touch the city's streets.

AT FIRST SIGHT

84.

SAM

I do, too. That's the thing about beautiful moments, though.

Beat.

SAM (CONT'D)

They pass.

The sun rises in its entirety, and Sam stands, illuminated by the glow.

She holds her hand out to Jim, who takes it.

He stands up, then their hands fall apart.

Jim looks at the sun, now glowing over the city.

JIM

Up all night. Haven't done that in a while.

Sam smiles, following his gaze, then turning back to him.

SAM (CONT'D)

I don't know about you, but I'm starving. Wanna get some breakfast?

Jim smiles.

JIM

That sounds perfect. I'm ravenous.

28 EXT. MONTMARTRE - DAWN

Jim and Sam walk down the street, exhausted, hungover, but intensely happy. Life has changed for both of them.

They walk past closed cafe after closed cafe.

SAM

Well, it is, what, half past five in the morning?

Jim checks his phone.

JIM

Yep.

SAM

That killer hour after the clubs are

shut but the cafes haven't opened yet.
We may starve to death right here on
the streets.

JIM

No last meal, that's a raw deal. And
I'm craving a full English.

SAM

Well, we're in Paris, so I'd say you
didn't have a great shot at that
anyway.

JIM

Oh, yeah.

SAM

Maybe try your luck with French Toast?

JIM

You know, I've never actually seen
French Toast on any menu in France.

SAM

Well, a pan au raisin then, perhaps.

Jim smiles at her.

They finally locate an open cafe.

JIM

Oh, thank God. Coffee and breakfast?

SAM

Yeah, sounds lovely. Then the pharmacy
after, I need some painkillers for
this headache.

Jim laughs.

JIM

You've got it. Hey, take a seat out
here, I'll run in. What do you want?

SAM

Espresso and some sort of pastry.

JIM

Coming right up.

AT FIRST SIGHT

86.

SAM
Thanks, Jim.

She sits down, and Jim enters the cafe to place their order.

29 EXT. MONTMARTRE CAFE - DAWN

The sun is rising over the streets, as Sam and Jim sip their espressos outside and order breakfast.

JIM
I can't believe we didn't sleep, I'm
knackered.

Sam raises her eyebrows.

SAM
Really? I do this all the time.

Jim raises his eyebrows.

SAM
Well, OK, not *this* -

She indicates the two of them

SAM
- specifically. But I'm a little
nocturnal.

JIM
I know what you mean.

He reaches across the table for her hand, but decides against it, and picks up his coffee cup instead. The gesture was not missed by Sam.

JIM
I better go inside and see what's
taking so long with the food.

Sam smiles at him, intimately.

SAM
OK.

Jim goes inside, and Sam looks around the waking up Parisian street, the sun climbing higher in the sky, glowing almost orange in the early morning.

She leans back and closes her eyes, feeling the warmth on her

skin, spreading her fingers, enjoying the sensation.

Opening her eyes, they fall upon Jim's phone on the table. She smiles wryly, and picks it up.

She glances inside the cafe, and sees Jim engaged in conversation with the server, then opens his phone and searches for the maps.

She searches her hometown in Louisiana, and drops a pin on it, labelling it "found - "

A text comes up on his phone. She doesn't open it, but sees enough.

She casts the phone aside, as if it stung her, and gathers her things.

She takes one last look at him, changed now in her eyes, and sets off down the street, breaking into a run with tears sliding down her cheeks, then she rounds a corner and disappears out of sight.

Jim comes back, and is confused by her absence, but can see his phone open on the table, with the maps up and a text overhanging, and Sam has left the painting on the floor.

He picks up the painting, confused, then takes his phone.

Jim reads the text, which appears on the screen.

FROM MEGAN: Will be late at work today, babe, may not be home when you arrive, sorry.

A second text reads:

Can pick up some Thai food on my way home, though?

JIM

Shit.

He glances up the street in the direction that Sam ran off, but doesn't see her.

He gets up and runs down the street, to the next corner, hoping to see her. No luck.

He runs in the other direction, but she's definitely gone.

His reply reads:

AT FIRST SIGHT

88.

OK, sounds good, see you at home.

He pauses, and wistfully looks up the street once more, as if hoping Sam will reappear. She doesn't. He stares at his phone for a long while, agonising over his reply, as he is now more torn than ever.

Eventually, he adds to his text:

Love you.

He changes his mind, and deletes the "love you." He hits send.

He gets up, and walks down the street, in the opposite direction to the way Sam left, his silhouette against the sun.

Jim gets up, and walks down the street. We see him go past a beggar, whom he gives a few euro to, and stops to chat to them.

He moves on, and we zoom up in a drone shot, seeing Jim disappear as the whole of Paris comes into view.

FADE TO BLACK

SUPER: CREDITS:

SAM -

JIM -

DIRECTED BY -

CUT TO:

30 INT. SAM'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

SUPER: TWO MONTHS LATER

We see a Christmas tree, and decorations, in a house that's flooded with warm sunlight.

A picture of two women with their arms around a young Sam is hanging on the wall, decorated with tinsel.

There's a knock at the door.

BETH, Sam's mother, goes to open it.

AT FIRST SIGHT

89.

It's a delivery.

BETH

It's a delivery for you, Sam. Must be
your Christmas present from your Dad.

Sam takes the parcel.

SAM

No, his came yesterday.

BETH

Ooh, what is it then?

They both subconsciously glance at the picture of Sam with
her mother and Kathleen as Beth says this, both knowing all
the time in the world is never guaranteed.

She's opened the package, and unfolds the painting of
Marciac.

A note falls out, along with a ticket to the Moulin Rouge
dated: 12/04/2023

Please forgive me?

Sam looks up at her mother, shock in her eyes - and love.

END OF AT FIRST SIGHT.

AT FIRST SIGHT

– *Character Bios* –



– *Character Bios* –

AT FIRST SIGHT

Sam (22)

Sam is the female protagonist in *At First Sight*. Hailing from New Orleans, Louisiana, Sam has a rich personal history and family background, having survived through Hurricane Katrina, and growing up fending off alligators in the swamps. She is confident and outgoing, but wary of falling in love, given her mother's experiences of heartbreak. Sam is travelling, having just finished college at NYU at the time of *At First Sight*, unsure of what she wants to do next, and in no rush to find out. She finds beauty and joy in everyday life, causing Jim to find the same in her.

When it comes to family, Sam has divorced parents, but never felt like she missed out. She has a great relationship with her Dad who lives in central New Orleans, but lives with her mother in the bayou. Her mother and father separated after trying to rebuild their home after Hurricane Katrina, but remain amicable. Following her divorce, Sam's mother married a woman, Kathleen, and Sam formed a close bond with her, seeing the perfect example of what love should look like. However, when Kathleen died in Sam's teens, she was left under no illusion as to how badly heartbreak can destroy a person.

Sam studied at NYU from the age of Eighteen, majoring in Literature. She worked bar and retail jobs to support herself through College, and aced her course, picking up lifelong friends along the way. She is rather sophisticated, with expert knowledge of the jazz scene and modern and classical literature - this impresses Jim, who has to dig through his memories of private school in order to reciprocate her enthusiasm for things such as dead poets.

Sam doesn't know what she wants to do for a career, so she's been working and travelling since she graduated, and loving every minute. She has a relaxed approach to life, and is an instantly engaging and likeable person, charming everyone she meets. However, she doesn't let a lot of people in close, knowing how hurtful it can be when a person you let in is taken away from you: Jim's the first person she's divulged this too, as well as the first person she's let become this close to knowing the real her.

– Character Bios –

AT FIRST SIGHT

Jim (24)

Jim is in Paris on a work trip at the time of *At First Sight*. He has a girlfriend, Megan, at home, who he loves – so nothing could have prepared him for the instantaneous connection between himself and Sam, when they meet in a bar in Montmartre. We watch through their night together as Jim opens up a little more with each part of their journey, and see his attitudes and beliefs change as their time together goes on. We also see him struggle to fight his feelings of love and to keep their relationship on the right side of platonic – and ultimately see him fail. At a glance, he's a typical Englishman, with a decent job and a nice salary. However, Sam brings out a much deeper character in him – a chance taker, an artist – and convinces him it's OK to not have everything figured out right now.

Jim, while not having quite the same charisma as Sam, is effortlessly charming and cool on the outside, and very quick-witted, and this often gets him out of sticky or awkward situations. In comparison to Sam, he's hardly travelled except for all-inclusive holidays in

Mallorca and the like, but she opens his eyes during the course of *At First Sight* to the joys and wonder of exploring different cultures and countries.

His tastes are a little less sophisticated, opting for cheesy music and light-hearted comedy shows and films, but he has excellent knowledge, skill and taste when it comes to art, showing Sam there's more to him than just being good looking and charismatic. She alone discovers his silent passions and sense of being lost.



AT FIRST SIGHT

Andre

Andre is a priest, whom Sam and Jim encounter near the ruin of Notre Dame. He was supposed to start doing Mass in the famous cathedral before the fire hit, and they share a conversation about belief, faith, and the Parisian disaster.

Odette

Odette is a middle aged waitress in a cafe, who shares a friendly encounter with a lost-looking Jim. She has seen and done it all, and departs some wisdom on love to Jim - albeit in French, that he cannot understand.

Adalene

Adalene is a seller of art, who has a stall in Montmartre. She's beautifully skilled at oil paintings, and paints a beautiful picture of the Marciac Jazz festival - which Jim buys as a gift for Sam.

Remy

Remy is a makeup artist at the Moulin Rouge. Sam and Jim meet he, Jules and Celeste at O'Sullivan's bar, and he creates a genuine bond with Jim, rooting for him and Sam's romance all the way. He is glamorous and handsome, and the life of every sophisticated party.

Jules

Jules is an English dancer, who's a resident in the cast of Moulin Rouge at the time of At First Sight. She's very keen to pry at Jim and Sam's relationship, and helps to push them that bit further so they may confess their feelings for each other.

Celeste

Celeste is a French dancer at the Moulin Rouge, and takes to Sam immediately. While Jules and Remy are grilling Jim about their relationship, Celeste is doing the same to Sam inside the bar - all while teaching her the most impressive new dance routines.

Beth

Beth is Sam's mother, who she is incredibly close to. She runs a swamp tour business in the rural bayou of New Orleans, Louisiana. After she divorced Sam's father, she found love again with Kathleen, who ran Witch Tours in the French Quarter. The two women raised Sam and helped shape the woman she is today, but tragically, they lost Kathleen to cancer when Sam was a teenager. Beth is Sam's confidant and most trusted friend, and Sam considers herself lucky to be her daughter.

Jean-Marc

Jean-Marc is the elderly owner of a dusty old bookshop in the Latin Quarter of Paris. Sam and Jim visit his shop, seeking out a gift for Sam's mother. He's reserved and quiet ordinarily, but takes a shine to these two charming tourists.

Giselle

Giselle owns the Airbnb that Sam is staying at, and the two women quickly bond, often hanging out around Paris before Sam meets Jim. Despite this, Giselle abandons Sam in favour of the company of a bartender on the night in which At First Sight takes place, meaning Jim now has the opportunity to accompany Sam on her last night in the city.

Tony, Jane and Kate

Tony, Jane and Kate are colleagues of Jim's, who are also in Paris for a work trip. He is especially close to Tony, but finds Kate in particular a little irksome. They are harmless, but when Jim sees the option of ditching them in favour of an adventure with Sam, the decision is a no-brainer.

— *Additional information* —



– *Writers vision* –

At First Sight is a boy meets girl story with Paris as its enchanting backdrop, seeping into every edge of the story. British Jim and American Samantha are both visiting the iconic French capital as they meet, purely by chance, or perhaps fate, in a bar. The attraction is immediate, and they spend the warm summer night exploring the city together and making it their own. The only problem? Jim has a girlfriend back in the UK, so nothing can happen - or can it?

At First Sight explores the possibility that two people can actually fall in love instantly upon meeting. This is what we have in store for Sam and Jim in the feature film. Jim, happily in love with his girlfriend back home, meets the charming American girl, Sam, and the two fall absolutely in love in the course of the night. Throughout the script, we watch Jim as he struggles with his commitment to his girlfriend, trying not to cross physical lines with Sam, but finding it almost impossible as they share a mutual connection like neither one of them has ever felt before.

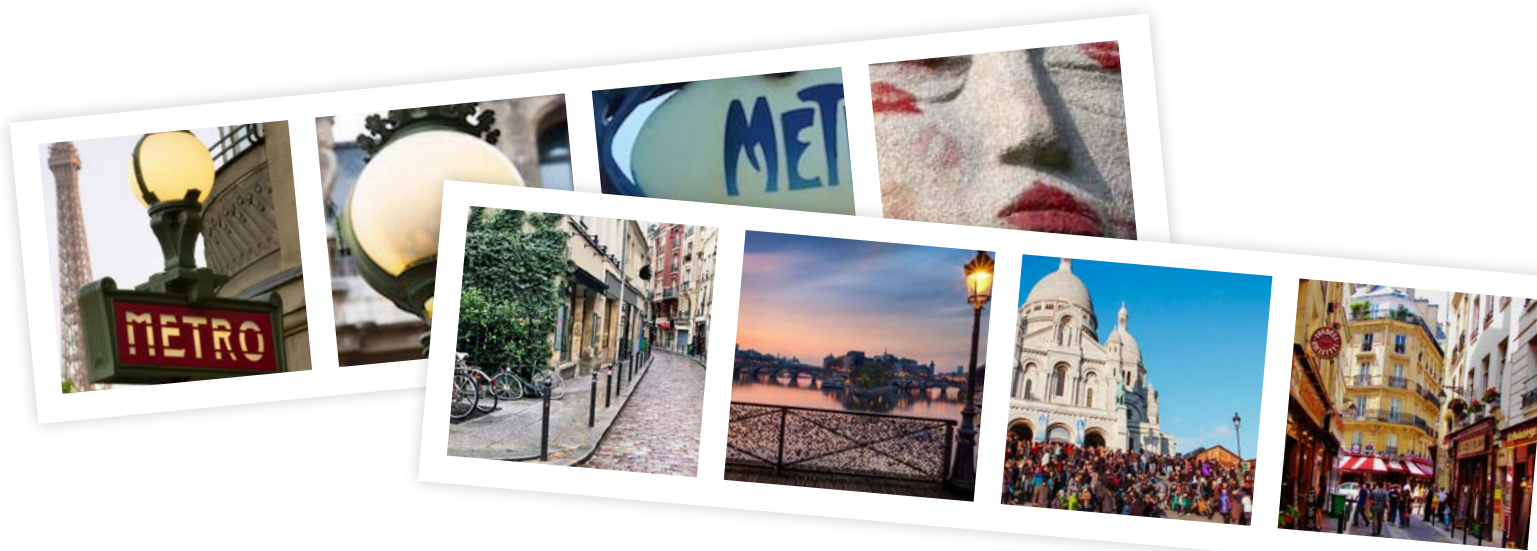
The script aims to get the viewer to forget that Jim has someone back home, and get completely immersed in the romance playing out in the warm Paris night. The viewer should root for them, sympathise with Jim's situation, and should be left thinking about what they might do were they in Jim's position.

The dialogue begins trivially, with just polite, flirty conversation between two strangers who feel a connection between each other that they can't yet

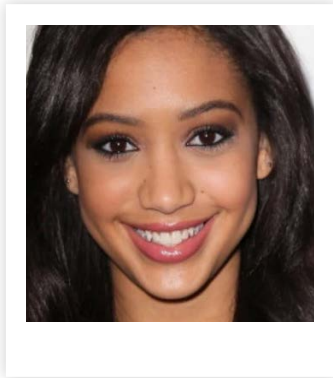
understand. As the film progresses, and events become more exciting, the dialogue increases in intimacy and drama, and it gets harder to keep from physically touching, until they feel so close to each other that they seriously consider cutting ties with their old lives to remain with one another, unwilling to part ways.

We raise the theme, at precisely when an affair becomes an affair. Is it when you cross a physical line, or when you know you're in love and cannot help the emotional intimacy between two people? If you find yourself in the situation where you think you may have found The One, but you are already with someone else, what do you do - ignore it and wonder what could have been, or do what every fibre of your being is telling you to, and cross that line? Sam and Jim increase their intimacy in terms of the depth of their conversation and the amount of physical contact between them throughout the night, but they never even kiss, not technically breaching the affair territory. These are fundamental questions almost anyone who has been in, or is in a relationship will have to tackle at some point, and we aim to make them think seriously about what they would do.

This is a unique story, with a heartbreaking conclusion, which should leave the viewer reeling, wanting to know what happens next, and questioning whether they have found "the one", with the film leading them to believe it is possible soulmates exist.



– *Extended Character Bios* –



*Actor's aid:
For Sam – Samantha Logan*

Samantha Porter, 23

Sam grew up in a clean, beautiful house right on the water's edge of the bayou outside New Orleans, Louisiana. Her mother, Beth, ran boat tours through the swamps, right off their home, and from the age of about thirteen, Sam, too, was taking groups of keen tourists out into the green waters to earn some extra cash. During AFS, Jim takes great delight in realising that she is, as he calls it, a "swamp person" who has routinely shooed crocodiles off of her porch.

When she speaks of her home, it is clear that Sam feels a deep sense of peace and belonging back aside the murky waters, and even in the glamorous city nearby. She says it is a beautiful world, but a small world there – in terms of residents, everybody knows everybody, and the tourists come and go, and although she loves her little corner of the world, there's so much more to see and do during her short time on earth.

Her mother, Beth, is a black woman, and grew up in central New Orleans. Sam is very proud of her heritage, especially on her mother's side, and has helped her mother with plotting her family tree right back to the 1800s. Beth met Sam's father when she was at college in Tulane University. Honestly, Sam's

mum is never quite sure how she ended up living by a swamp doing tours when she majored in political sciences, she took a boat tour job to make money one summer, and never really left, finding she liked the tourism industry, meeting the variety of people and charming them every day. She ended up buying her own house and starting her own tours there, and has never looked back. This is something Sam admires about her mother, her love for what she has, feeling blessed with what life has given her.

Sam's father, John, stuck with her mum for a few years, until Sam was about 7. Beth fell pregnant in the last year of college. They made it work for a while, but weren't entirely happy, so they called it a day when Sam was about nine. John has stayed close to Sam despite this, her spending summers with him in his new house in the French Quarter – he studied Hotel Management, and runs a small independent hotel. He is satisfied with his lot in life. Sam is none too keen on his long-term girlfriend, Marie, but her daughter, Kayla is Sam's age, and the two get along well. If she's honest with herself, there's nothing wrong with Marie, either – perhaps she's a bit too nice? Sam's never really been able to put her finger on what she dislikes about her. Regardless, she makes Sam's dad very happy, which is no bad thing in Sam's book.

In 2005, when Sam was a kid, Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans, and tore the family home to pieces. Sam has never encountered anything as bad, since. Despite being only 5, she can perfectly recall being evacuated to the Superdome, how it felt overcrowded, terrifying, people screaming out for loved ones they were supposed to meet there and couldn't find. People with horrific injuries were laid there without treatment, as only 35 medical staff were

in attendance. Violence was frequent. During the hurricane itself, Beth and John both wrapped their arms around Sam, while they listened to Katrina destroying their homeland. Their house and livelihood was ripped apart, flooded, dangerous to go back to. They had to stay in a motel for a long time while they raised funds and borrowed to re-build, digging themselves into debt. It took them years to recover, and cost Sam's parents their marriage in the end.

Of course, you can't grow up a stone's throw from New Orleans and not love a bit of Jazz. When Sam went to university, she'd never heard of any of the bands or singers people liked. She was too busy listening to local, up and coming jazz singers, like Meghan Stewart, seeing them play in bars and clubs, as well as singing along back home to old Louis Armstrong, Irma Thomas and Ellis Marsalis classics with her mother. Sam has a beautiful, husky voice and loves to sing. Her voice wouldn't get her a chart-topping record deal these days, but it'd draw her a crowd in the House of Blues back home, if she were ever inclined to get on the stage.

In terms of grandparents, both of Sam's grandpa's are dead. Her Nana Jeanie, her father's mother, lives in Washington, and she doesn't see her that often, but thinks she is a nice enough lady. Her Grandpa Joe, her mother's father, died when she was thirteen - she and he were very close, as Joe and her grandmother, Alyssa, lived in the family home with Sam and Beth. Alyssa remains there with Beth today, but is getting quite frail. She has a sharp tongue and a judgey attitude, but Sam loves her to bits. Alyssa and Joe were very religious, so when Sam's mother came out as bisexual the year before Joe died, and introduced them to her girlfriend, Kathleen, there was turbulence and tension for a while. However, that soon died down, after Joe died Kathleen was so kind and helpful to the family, that Alyssa saw the error of her ways, and invited her to live in the family home.

Kathleen ran witch tours in the French Quarter of New Orleans, and was the most fascinating woman. She

absolutely doted on Sam, and made Beth happier than Sam had seen her in years. She and Sam developed a very close bond, but cancer took Kathleen when Sam was away at NYU. Thanks to Kathleen and Beth, Sam has a great idea of what true love and healthy romantic relationships looks like, and they do their best to live without her now. But Kathleen had seen the world, and travelled everywhere you could imagine before she settled down with Beth - Sam promised her that she would do the same, shortly before she died. Seeing Kathleen and Beth made Sam realise true love absolutely exists, but she also sees the pain it causes when taken away, leading her to be wary of taking the plunge herself in this aspect.

Sam went to a small town school, but aced all her exams, and got into NYU where she majored in classic literature. You see, when she wasn't driving boats around the bayou near her home, she had her nose buried in books - as many as she could get her hands on. Her favourites were canonical classics, authors and poets alike: Emily Bronte, Oscar Wilde, Tennyson, Hardy, F. Scott Fitzgerald, to name but a few.

While she was at NYU, Sam had an amazing time, but did have her fair share of stereotypical dirtbag boyfriends, although she's had a few lovely ones too, and is trying to stick to those. She's always been more attracted to charming guys, and has dated a bit, had a few boyfriends, but nothing serious. As of her time travelling, Sam is kind of taking a break from men. Despite being familiar with New Orleans, she had never lived in the city itself and found it difficult to adapt from small town to big city life. Sam struggled initially to get used to the lack of friendliness, the business, the sheer volume of people around her, but she persevered, to the point that by the time her studies were over, she was confident she was a real New Yorker. During her four years in the big city she had a tiny apartment in a dodgy corner of East Village - consequently, she's no stranger to a good party. Her roommate for these four years was a girl called Emma, whom she remains close to.

After college, Sam and Emma went travelling - hence Sam being in Paris at the moment. First, they went to Canada, then they started on the European leg of their tour: up first was Dublin - this was of particular interest to Sam, who's father claims to have Irish roots. Next came London. Here, Emma stayed for a few weeks staying with family, and Sam went on to France.

While she is in Paris, Sam is staying with Giselle, a Parisian who lets her home out on Airbnb. The girls hit it off so have been going about the city together at times - although Giselle will only come for the drinks and dinners, having seen the tourist spots herself a thousand times.

As a person, Sam is very grounded. She doesn't know exactly what she wants from life, which is OK for now, but knows that she wants to see as much of the world as she can before she dies - Kathleen died at the age of forty-six, so she's aware how painfully short our time here is. She's hoping she might pick up some ideas along the way.

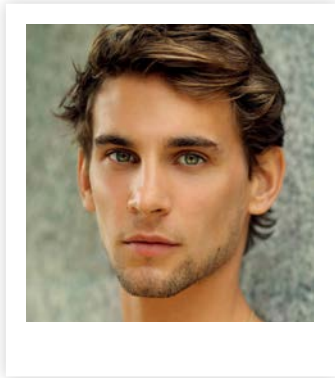
Her all-time favourite book is *Wuthering Heights*, and when she visited London, she took the megabus for four hours just to visit Haworth and see the Bronte House, and the moors that the sisters used to roam. She idolises Emily the most, for she deemed her literary skill superior to that of Charlotte or Anne, but is most fascinated by the feminist aspect of the sisters, with them masking themselves as men to get their works published, being years ahead of their time and not accepting their fate as women to be wives and mothers. Always a fan of the underdog, Sam again made a trip to Dorset to see Hardy's house and grave - alas, the only time she actually spent in London when she was in England was her nose around Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey. Her strongest urge to visit Paris comes from the desire to pursue the routes that Victor Hugo and Oscar Wilde once walked, and to see their resting places.

You see, growing up in the noughties in rural Louisiana, Sam never had much time for TV. In fact, she only got

a Netflix account when she moved to New York and Emma couldn't believe she'd never subscribed - she'd relied on terrestrial TV until then, the signal around her home being too temperamental to make it worth paying the monthly fee. Emma made sure to prioritise Sam watching the most important shows she'd missed out on, namely *Game of Thrones*, *Breaking Bad*, *The Walking Dead*, *The Big Bang Theory*, and more. Of course, they both watched seasons 1-10 of *Friends* again, too. When Emma wasn't dictating her binge-watching, though, Sam discovered some period dramas on the BBC and even adaptations of some of her favourite books. She'd never read *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, but after watching the BBC adaptation, she ordered a copy on Prime straight away (another great perk of living in the city as opposed to the middle of nowhere - delivery drivers can find your house!)

Sam is a keen runner. In the summers by the bayou she'd get up before the sun rose and run for miles. In New York, she'd do the same. It gives her time to breathe, time to think, and she enjoys the peaceful, dawn hours before the world wakes up, where she is all alone with herself and her thoughts. She finds that it keeps her sane, especially when she was working hard at college, long nights serving behind a bar, this time to herself to just feel her muscles working and be in her own company was of immense value to her. Her beloved stepmother Kathleen used to try and get her to do yoga and meditate. Yoga she liked, but she found she always fell asleep when she tried to meditate.

In terms of now, Sam could be lost - not knowing what to do career-wise, having just graduated, single and unattached, but she does not see herself as lost, she sees herself as figuring it out, and knows that this is more than OK. Her mother and grandmother are proud of her, and she visits often, intending to come back when she's done her trip around Europe. She's unusually happy and content for someone of her age, and this is something that anyone who meets her instantly sees, and loves about her.



*Actor's aid:
For Jim - Freddie Thorp*

Jim Riley, 24

Jim has lived in Southampton his entire life. He lived with his father after his mother left the home. She moved to Bath with a new man, and they have children now.

He grew up in a luxury apartment on the harbourfront. His dad was an executive in a huge media company - the same company that Jim is now employed at. Unfortunately, Jim had a bit of a lonely childhood. His mum, Sandra, left when he was about 9, and had always been a bit cold and distant anyway. His dad, Tom, is lovely, but spent so much time at work, leaving Jim alone with various nannies as a child and teenager. Jim never went without anything, living in this beautiful apartment overlooking the harbour, getting the in toy each year for his birthday and Christmas, but he was certainly bereft of the care, love and attention he needed - despite his dad's best efforts.

Consequently, as a teenager, Jim rebelled. He stopped going to school, started hanging out on the streets, taking drugs and sneaking into clubs. His dad's solution was to send him away to boarding school. This straightened Jim out, but he did nevertheless feel abandoned by his dad, and like he couldn't put in the effort himself to put Jim on a straight path. They reconciled, though, and have as good a relationship as possible today. They love each other deeply, but don't

always have that father-son connection, and both are a bit stunted when it comes to talking about the way they feel.

When Jim finished boarding school, he studied Media at Solent University. It was here, in his second year, that he began dating Megan, a criminology student. They've been together ever since, but she tends to work long hours at HMP Winchester, where she develops various programmes to help rehabilitate prisoners, a job she adores. They are in their fourth year as a couple, and she lives nearby, but the spark has maybe gone now. Despite this, Jim is happy, and loves her, even if their life is a little incomplete.

In terms of friendships, Jim has shaken off the worse crowd from his teenage years, and doesn't keep in touch with anyone from boarding school. He mostly socialises with people from his team - he's quite close with his boss, Tony, who is in his early forties, but never married, so they have a lot of time to hang out.

Jim's job is a little monotonous, even if it is well paid - he only took it because his father works high up in the company, and he did his degree in media, but honestly, it's not all it was cracked up to be. He is second in command in his department, and answers to Tony. In reality, Jim's not even sure if he wants to pursue media as a career anymore, but he cares about his colleagues and always tries to do right by people. He has talked to Megan about this, but she thinks that he should stick it out until he does know what he wants to do, even though he'd be secure with his dad's money. If Jim is brutal with himself, he's got no idea what he's doing with his life, he's just going in whatever direction someone points him in. When he meets Sam, she helps him realise that it's his life, not anyone else's, and so what if he's a flake for a little while? That's OK.

Jim also liked literature in school - not enough to do it at degree level, but he can still quote a few of the greats.

His real passion was art, but his dad didn't think there was much in terms of career prospects in that. For a long time, Jim painted with oils, on massive canvases, which were scattered around his top level apartment. Nowadays, all these canvases are in a storage locker in the centre of town. He is embarrassed if someone discovers he likes art, because, really, his favourite artists are Van Gogh and Monet, and he knows he should have a wider range of artistic interests than just these two - and he does, in a way. He always likes local street art, and small pieces he's seen in museums, and little galleries lesser-known artists put up - but he likes these two best. He really does just think, plain and simple, that they're probably the two best painters who ever lived.

Jim was also quite fond of history - not as much as art, but it did fascinate him, all the amazing people who had walked the earth before him, the various eras and dynasties, the rise and fall of kingdoms, all over the globe. One of Jim's favourite things to paint, when he still did paint, was portraits of what he thought various historical figures may have looked like. He did a huge, portrait oil-on-canvas of Boudicca, and King Tut, Anne Boleyn, Caesar - even, once, Oscar Wilde. His father had praised these, but again reiterated that although they were incredible, there is little money in art - it's all modern glass pieces, 3D art that sells these days. Jim tried his hand at these, and hated it. He hasn't tried to paint or make anything since his dad handed him a media job, thinking it best to follow a conventional career - at least this one is kind of creative.

In terms of travelling, Jim's not been to any curious corners of the world, and he's not much of a country lad - his dad tended to take him on two week breaks at luxury all-inclusive hotels in sunny countries, so he's definitely a little uncultured. The idea of going to a city you know nothing about where you don't speak the language, meeting strangers and exploring,

is somewhat alien to him. His work trips away tend to be in Paris, or Milan, Edinburgh, Barcelona - so he has been to a large variety of places, but he has never really seen them, felt the atmosphere, soaked in the culture. He only ever really explores the hotels he stays in and a handful nearby bars. In *At First Sight*, his eyes are really opened to what travelling can be, how it can liberate a person, deepen them. He finds it inspirational, and for the first time in a long, long time, finds some of the sights he sees in Paris inspiring him to pick up a brush - this is something he'd kind of buried of late.

Although he doesn't have much of a relationship with his mother - far less so than he does with his father - he does love her new kids. Well, one of them. Her eldest, Paul, is fifteen and is, in Jim's opinion, a little shit, but then Jim supposes he was at that age too. Her youngest, Michael, is only four, and a bit snotty and smelly for Jim's taste. Her middle child, Caleb, is 11, and he and Jim get on very well, he's a classic underdog, a bit nerdy, often picked on both in school and by his older brother, but he's very kind and gentle, and Jim finds him so engaging, and genuinely loves him. Jim's gotten himself into trouble with his mum a lot for putting Paul in his place when it comes to his bullying of Caleb. So, although visiting his mum is never at the top of his to do list, he does so a good few times a year, just to visit Caleb: Jim often feels he is the only one who looks out for him. They facetime, too, and this is a sibling relationship that Jim cherishes.

His stepfather, Gordon, has little to do with Jim, but is a perfectly nice guy - he struggles to talk to Jim, despite his best efforts, and Jim appreciates this - he probably prefers him to his mother, in all honesty. Not that there's anything wrong with his mother, she's just never really been able to grasp Jim, and it hurts him that she could walk out of his life so easily, only to have a proper family elsewhere.

AT FIRST SIGHT

Jim's not really had girlfriends, apart from Megan, but he likes strong-willed, intelligent women - a woman that will challenge him, make him question things. He likes an exciting streak, too. He had this for a while with Megan at uni, and had a few casual relationships, but nothing that's kept him on his toes before.

Unlike Sam, Jim is very up to date with music and television. He watches a lot of shows, like the Mandalorian, The Boys, The Man in the High Castle, for example. Secretly, however, his favourite TV show and guilty pleasure is Gilmour Girls, maybe a bit of Desperate Housewives too. He enjoys cooking and loves Gordon Ramsay. He tells everyone he likes very cool metal bands, but in reality prefers the likes of Taylor Swift, Lady Gaga and Katy Perry.

Outwardly, Jim is a cool, relaxed and confident guy, but there is so much more to him than that. He's quick

witted, funny, and very clever, but doesn't really put any effort into anything. He often feels like no-one in the world, not even Megan, really, truly knows him, the depth of his character. Maybe, his little brother Caleb is the exception to this - he alone sees how sweet Jim really is.

At the end of the day, Jim is the definition of a guy who seems to have everything - charisma and charm, a great apartment, decent money, a good job - but in reality feels as lost as anyone. At the time of his work trip to Paris, he isn't even looking to find meaning in his life anymore, just going with whatever life gives him rather than seeking his own happiness out. Little does he know, his whole life is about to be turned upside down.



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