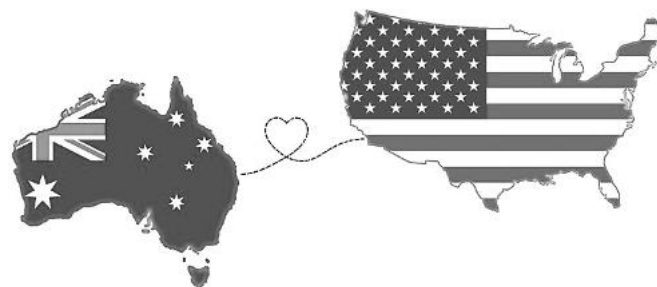


# THE L♥NG HAUL

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**INT. CHICAGO PUB - NIGHT**

A quirky pub with a small stage up the back. Fairy lights litter the ceiling. It's karaoke night and SOME CHICK is singing Beyonce. She's feeling herself way too much.

EMMY BAXTER (24, glasses, a confusing mix of anxiety & confidence) is speedily typing on her phone while her younger sister, BETH (21) sucks face with an 80s-MUSICIAN-LOOKING-DICKASS. Beth takes a breath and glares at Emmy.

BETH

Thought you were off the clock.

EMMY

Thought you were a vegetarian. But your mouth is full of Meat Loaf?

MUSICIAN DICKASS

I'm gonna get another drink.

The musician flicks his long hair and leaves. Emmy bristles.

EMMY

Where'd you find him, an episode of *Stranger Things*?

BETH

He's not that bad.

EMMY

Somehow, he's not your worst. You're too good for these guys, Beth.

BETH

Sometimes it's okay to just have fun and not control every little detail. Wild concept for you, I know.

The karaoke chick wails her last note.

EMMY

When are they gonna play my song?? I submitted it like an hour ago. This is so unorganized.

KARAOKE DJ (O.S.)

Next up we have Emmy with '*Torn*.'

Emmy's eyes light up. Beth cheers. Emmy walks to the stage. ANGUS (22, Australian), sitting at a nearby table, also walks up to the stage and grabs the mic right before Emmy does. The first strum starts.

EMMY

Excuse me. What are you doing?

ANGUS

Hmm?

EMMY

This is my song.

ANGUS

No, no this is my song.

EMMY

He literally just said Emmy. Is your name Emmy?

ANGUS

Natalie Imbruglia. She's Australian.

EMMY

...and?

The lyrics start - Angus jumps in. Emmy is stunned. Beth looks on, intrigued. She shoos the Musician away from her.

ANGUS

*I thought I saw a man brought to life. He was warm, he came around, and he was dignified. He showed me what it was to cry.*

Emmy grabs the mic.

EMMY

*I've been waiting an hour - Well you couldn't be that man I adore. You don't seem to know, seem to care, what your heart is for. I don't know him anymore.*

Angus saddles up with her.

EMMY (CONT'D)

*There's nothing where, we used to lie -*

ANGUS

*There's nothing where, we used to lie -*

EMMY (CONT'D)

Stop it, you're ruining it!

ANGUS

*AND THAT'S WHAT'S GOING ON!* That's the best bit right there.

Emmy steps in front of him, taking the stage. Angus does his best to get himself involved. The DJ hands him a SECOND MIC.

EMMY

*Nothing's fine I'm torn. I'm all out of faith. This is how I feel. I'm cold and I am shamed lying naked on the floor.*

ANGUS (CONT'D)

*Nothing's fine I'm torn. I'm all out of faith. This is how I feel. I'm cold and I am shamed lying naked on the floor.*

Angus continues to sing right into Emmy's face - he's flirting. She's softening, amused by how absurd this duet is.

**INT. CHICAGO KARAOKE BAR - LATER**

Emmy and Angus now sit at the bar, locked in conversation. Their chemistry is electric.

EMMY

I'm a 3 wing 2, because I-

ANGUS

A what?

EMMY

A 3, which is the Achiever, like I already told you, but I also have a wing of 2, the Helper-

ANGUS

No no no.

EMMY (CONT'D)

(making fun of him)

Neuuur neeeeeuur neeur.

ANGUS (CONT'D)

You can't just put people into boxes like that.

EMMY

You would say that. Because you're a 4.

CUT TO LATER:

The bar has emptied out. Beth and the Musician pathetically sing *'I'd Do Anything for Love'* by Meat Loaf.

EMMY (CONT'D)

A playwright? So you're frustrated and emotional all the time.

ANGUS

Unfortunately. We'll see if grad school knocks it outta me. What about you? Does event planning fill you with emotion?

EMMY

Oh, everything fills me with emotion. I cry anytime I'm in a crowd of people.

ANGUS

Why? Anxiety?

EMMY

No. Though, yes. But no. Just human connection, I guess. I cry every wedding I work.

ANGUS

That sounds exhausting.