

INT. JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

A lonely glass sits atop a mahogany bar, encapsulated by rings left by drinks past. Fairy lights twinkle in the reflection on the top of the honey-coloured liquid.

A pale hand wraps slim fingers around the glass, takes it from the bar.

A single white ring is left stained in its wake.

DANIEL (O.S.)
Thanks mate. Needed this tonight.

INT. JAZZ BAR (PIANO) - NIGHT

Daniel stands at the bar, as alone as the glass.

It looks as though he has a permanent dark cloud above his head; it casts shadows over sunken features.

His mum would probably say there is still kindness hidden beneath dark brown eyes.

Daniel slinks away from the bar, glass in hand. He shuffles towards a piano crowded in the corner.

He almost trips over his own feet in an attempt to **STOP-**

DANIEL
Jesus Christ! Will you please stop
doing that all the time.

Heels.

Black.

Glittery.

Fishnets.

Dress.

~~Wait no...~~ **is that a bedsheet?**

It is definitely a bedsheet. With two holes cut out for eyes.
Picture: a rushed homemade costume you might wear to your neighbours halloween party, circa 1995.

A cheap imitation of a GHOST.

Ghost perches suggestively on the piano stool. Their long legs crossed at the ankle. They take a slow sip of a Martini. There is a pink crazy straw winding out of it.

They're unbothered by Daniel's unwavering glare.

A BARTENDER approaches the two of them. Nods acknowledgement at Daniel. He leans across the piano to retrieve a glass balanced precariously on the cover.

Ghost leans to move out of his way, the bartender seemingly does not notice Ghost.

Daniel smiles a shy smile at the bartender, then side-eyes Ghost with a panic stricken expression.

INT - DANIEL'S FLAT (KITCHEN) - EVENING

One Bedroom, one Bathroom - "requires some love, a project for the right person". That is what it was called on Zoopla.

Daniel sits alone, in a halo of light from a window behind him.

A solitary mug sits on the kitchen table. It seems to have escaped from the fate of the pile of dirty dishes in the sink.

Next to it, an open copy of *Playgirl*.

Ghost jabs a finger at the very naked man on full display. They have a mug of dark coffee in the other hand.

DANIEL

Will you stop leaving that out on the kitchen table, please. I don't understand why you insist on terrorising me at every opportunity.

There is a lightness to his tone, but an undercurrent of desperation crackles. Its not unnoticeable.

He makes a point of closing the magazine and pushing it towards Ghost.

There is a slightly less naked man on the front cover.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

You caught me having a guilty wank ten years ago. Ten! You can stop following me around and showing me this shit. Anytime you like - by the way!

DANIEL (CONT'D)

You're torturing me for something every teenager does. Everyday you leave another one of these magazines somewhere you know I'll find them.

Ghost shakes their head emphatically. Jabs a finger harder at the naked man.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Can't even bring girls back here -
they'll think I'm gay or some shit!
You're killing me with this.

It does look like its killing him.

Ghost simply shakes their head; points again at the naked man.

Ghost shrugs.

Pushes *Playgirl* back towards Daniel.

INT. JAZZ BAR - PIANO - NIGHT

Pale, long, fingers dance across ivory piano keys with a sense of familiarity and confidence only gained with years of repetition.

Daniel plays *Nocturne in F Minor, Op. 55, No.1*. Chopin.

Ghost lays on the top of the piano, legs crossed, sheet covered arm hanging nonchalantly over the side of the piano.

The sheet brushes the keys but produces no sound. A Piña Colada is on the piano beside them. The pink crazy straw inside.

They wave their arm in front of Daniel, it interrupts his playing.

Daniel speaks to Ghost in hushed tones, as always.

DANIEL

I'm trying to play for the
customers, please. Just let me get
through this one song.

Ghost gestures towards the bar...towards the Bartender.

The Bartender works frantically, his dark fringe flops over his eyes as he pours drinks for impatient patrons. A slight sheen of sweat plays across ghostly white skin.

The Bartender looks up and catches Daniel's eye. Could be that Daniel is staring, could also be that Daniel is no longer doing his job.

Daniel looks like he is never sure why people stare at him.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Shit.

Daniel looks away sheepishly, casts daggers at Ghost.

Ghost sips from the crazy straw. Daniel follows the flow of liquid with his eyes as it snakes its way through the loops, awaits a response.

It never comes.

The Bartender is suddenly at Daniel's side.

BARTENDER

Daniel.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

Daniel!

Ghost makes a loud slurping noise with the straw.

Daniel snaps his eyes to the Bartender.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

You can't keep stopping in the middle of songs. People are staring. John is getting cross and you know he might let you go.

DANIEL

Sorry.

He hovers his fingers back over the keys, but doesn't play yet.

EXT. ALLEY OUTSIDE THE JAZZ BAR - EVENING

A cigarette hangs limply from Daniel's fingers, both it and him are damp in the midnight drizzle. He crowds himself up against the enclave door.

Ghost slides up next to him...

...almost as if out of nowhere?

They lift up their arm, their sheet now shields Daniel from the rain.

DANIEL

Hah. Thanks.

Ghost leans their head on Daniels shoulder. Their other hand holds a Cosmo - still a signature fruity cocktail, still a pink crazy straw.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Where do you get those drinks from by the way?

Ghost shrugs, gestures with their drink to the inside of the bar. Daniel laughs.

He doesn't believe Ghost.

INT. NORTHERN LINE TUBE CARRIAGE - THE SAME NIGHT

Disheveled.

Daniel looks it and looks like he feels it.

The noise of the tube is so crass it almost deafens him.

His face is stuck in the crook of a girls armpit. A girl who, by her giggles and raised voice, Daniel thinks has had too much to drink. Although, so has he.

She would be quite pretty if her makeup hadn't run down her face in such a stereotypical fashion.

Right now she looks something akin to a corpse bride.

Ghost sits on the lap of a very stern looking business man, a few people further down the carriage.

Their legs are crossed. Heels perched daintily as if to avoid the dirty floor.

No one notices Ghost.

Invisible.

The carriage jostles and Daniel pushes further into the drunk girl.

DRUNK GIRL

Hey - watch it!

DANIEL

Sorry. Sorry. Its just... I don't have anywhere to hold on to.

Drunk Girl lifts her chin and fixes him with a stare full of determination.

And something darker.

DRUNK GIRL

Hold on to me.

She takes Daniel's hand and places it on the dip of her waist. He doesn't fight, looks too exhausted to care.

They finish the tube ride like that. Daniel clings on with desperation - for what, he doesn't look sure.

Be it the jostling, be it loneliness.

They get off at the same station.

EXT. OUTSIDE TUBE STATION - MOMENTS LATER

They unconsciously walk together until they surface. Daniel looks around for Ghost. Doesn't see them. Daniel has to jog to catch Drunk Girl up.

DANIEL
Are you alright?

DANIEL (CONT'D)
I mean - sorry if that's too intrusive. I just, just saw that you were crying earlier on the train.

She stops suddenly, turns to him.

Kisses him?

INT. DANIEL'S FLAT (BEDROOM) - MOMENTS LATER

It's what can only be described as two comically tipsy people doing a dance that only they understand. Kissing. Hands everywhere and nowhere simultaneously.

Messy.

Daniel trips over the front door step. Then the wonky floorboard in the bedroom. Stubs his toe on the bed.

Turns the tiny bedside light on.

Playgirl.

On the bed.

Open.

Naked man. **NAKED MAN?**

Daniel barks out a strained noise and looks around the dark corners of the room. Out of one, materialises Ghost.

Ghost fucking waves.

Drunk Girl can't see Ghost, of course. But she can definitely see the magazine.

DRUNK GIRL
Um...What is that? Are you-

Daniel braces himself against the bedpost. Knows what's coming.

DRUNK GIRL (CONT'D)
Are you, like, into men?

Ghost sips his drink - a Tequila Sunrise. With a tacky little umbrella.

INT. DANIEL'S FLAT (BEDROOM) - MOMENTS LATER

SLAM.

That's the front door, then.

The two stand in Daniel's sparse bedroom. It feels even more sparse without Drunk Girl in it. Just Ghost and him.

A Mexican stand off - *just if one of the cowboys was wearing a sheet.*

DANIEL
What the actual fuck is wrong with you?

Ghost flinches a little at Daniel's tone. He speaks it with all the force of a weak slap though.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.

He does sound it.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
You've... I don't know. You're here every time I bring a girl back...doing this-

He gestures towards the magazine.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
I mean. Don't get me wrong, it has been really helpful in the past. They haven't always been supermodels, have they? I haven't always been...up for it.

Daniel grimaces.

Ghost shakes their head, sympathetic. Sips their drink. Points to the man spread out on the spread of the magazine.

INT. JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

DANIEL
James.

Daniel gives a nod of acknowledgement to the bartender. JAMES smiles a small smile back.

Fairy lights twinkle with ferocity. They halo Daniel as he sits alone.

Not completely alone.

Ghost hovers as usual. An ever present force, Daniel's shadow. They nurse a Mai Thai, pineapple floats on top.

Ghost has been watching them play this silent game of tennis for months now. Sitting in each-others silent familiarity.

Not this time.

James points at Ghost.

JAMES

Could you ask your friend to move a little bit?

WHAT? !

Daniel and Ghost both turn to look at each other. Daniel looks like a deer caught in headlights.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Yeah, sorry, you're just right in the way of the CCTV screens. There's a dickhead over there who keeps stealing our Neck Oil glasses - wanna watch him.

There is MAN in his mid-40s sat by the Fruit Machine. His trench coat pockets are clearly filled with several Neck Oil glasses.

Daniel panics.

James giggles.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Sorry. I should have told you before. I can see your friend. I know no one else can - or probably ever has.

DANIEL

I-I. *What?*

JAMES

It's just- I really thought you knew I could see them. Who do you think has been making them the drinks the whole time?

EXT. JAZZ BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel tumbles out the door. The sound of the door cracks loudly into the alleyway. James follows. So does Ghost.

DANIEL

I don't get it? No one has ever mentioned my Ghost, EVER. It's always just them following me round.

JAMES

(Through slight laughter)
Oh I know what they do. I used to have one of my own. A funny little thing. All Dr. Martens and ripped jeans under their sheet.

DANIEL

...Used to?

JAMES

Yeah. Followed me round for...

James counts on his fingers. Loses his place. Starts again.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I don't know. About 13 years, all told. Used to cock-block me from bringing girls home at Uni.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Took a few years of my ghost leaving my secret framed picture of Chad Michael Murray around my Uni house for me to get the point.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Anyway, turns out I'm gay. Got drunk, kissed a guy in the back of *Popworld* in Manchester whilst the DJ was playing Britney Spears.

JAMES (CONT'D)

And then my ghost backed off. I still see them sometimes, mind you. When I get stood up on dates, or when someone gives me their number at the bar. But yeah, embraced the shame I used to feel and here we are.

Daniel sighs, but he smiles too.

His brain lets off flares that he hasn't seen before, the joy they leave in their wake is evident on his face. There is a chance that this could be over for him one day.

Ghost nods emphatically. Puts one finger on their nose and points the other one at James with frantic movements. It's a gesture of confirmation. James smiles at them.

DANIEL

I'm, like, not gay though, I don't think? So... How do I get them to back off?

James shoots Ghost a look of bewilderment..

INT. NORTHERN LINE TUBE CARRIAGE - LATER

The tube is oddly void of people. The silence looks like it sits heavy on Daniel tonight.

The tube does scream, as normal. The through wind is moving his hair. The same wind is making Ghost's sheet flutter.

The two are alone in the carriage. They sit in each other's personal space.

DANIEL

I'm grateful for you, you know.

Ghost turns to look at him. Its odd to see Ghost without their signature drink.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

You're still really fucking annoying sometimes. But I think... I think I might finally understand what you're doing.

The announcement of a station rings over the PA. Daniel pauses his speech for a minute. Ghost takes this time to lean on Daniel.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

How long have you known?

DANIEL (CONT'D)

It was that time, wasn't it? The- The guilty wank? *The Playgirl*?

Ghost nods on Daniel's shoulder.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Yeah. I understand you now.

Ghost rests their hand on top of Daniel's. The tube continues to scream in the background.

INT. DANIEL'S FLAT (KITCHEN) - AFTERNOON THE NEXT DAY

"MUM"

Daniel's phone rings with the familiar notes of *Nocturne Op.55*.

Ghost makes a phone gesture with one hand *the 90s kind of phone. The other holds coffee.

He makes the choice in a split second. Darts for the phone before the music stops.

He waits for the inevitable tirade.

MUM

Hi, honey. How are you? I feel like I haven't spoken to you for years! You must come down to see us, your brother misses you! Nan said she saw Catherine in Tesco last week. I know its been a long time but have you thought about getting back in touch with her-

DANIEL

I'm gay!

Ghost stops sipping their coffee, looks up with a start.

Daniel squeezes his eyes shut.

No taking it back now.

MUM

Okay, never mind about Catherine then.

Daniel opens his eyes. The *Playgirl* is now on the table in front of him. Ghost must have put it there.

MUM (CONT'D)

Can you please remember to bring the pump for the air-bed with you when you come home? Your Aunt is coming next month and we need it-

DANIEL

Is that it? Seriously?

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I come out to you and all you can say is "please bring my airbed pump back".

He doesn't sound cross.

He sounds like he has finally released a breath that he has been holding for an eternity.

MUM

Darling. It wouldn't matter if you fancied Barney the Dinosaur, for all I care. I just want the pump back.

Daniel listens as she carries on - we cant hear what she says anymore.

Ghost closes the *Playgirl* and takes it from the table, holds it under their arm and exits out of the kitchen.

INT. JAZZ BAR - EVENING

A "CLOSED" sign hangs lopsided in the bar window.

Daniel is sat alone at the piano, plays tune we have heard a thousand times before.

This time, he plays to no great audience, only James and Ghost.

DANIEL

I feel like this is all I ever play. Just this piece over and over again.

JAMES

You must love it? The piano?

Ghost nods along with James, the two of them are squeezed together on a red chaise lounge. Ghost has their legs crossed and sips a glass of red wine.

Daniel takes notice of the change in drink choice.

DANIEL

Yeah I've always loved the piano. Except - I used to have this teacher, right, and she-she used to send me to the school office to get her lunch because she thought I was so rubbish.

JAMES

Did that bother you?

Daniel's fingers hesitate over the keys for only a brief moment, if you hadn't heard the song played 1000 times you wouldn't notice. So James notices.

DANIEL

I actually agreed with her. I only started playing because this one-

Daniel gestures at Ghost, who shrugs their shoulders in response.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Wouldn't stop bothering me.

JAMES
This is- Chopin, right? You play this every night you're in. Just towards the end of the evening, always around the same time.

A small smile plays on James' lips. Ghost cocks their head.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Famously quite queer, that one.

There is that hesitation from the piano again.

James stands up and goes to flip the "CLOSED" sign to "OPEN"

INT. JAZZ BAR - LATER

The bar is busy. Chatter vibrates off of the walls, Daniel's playing is barely a whisper in amongst the chaos. His curly hair seems extra perfect tonight, it doesn't go unnoticed.

Ghost can almost blend in with all the other customers in here.

We sit with Daniel whilst he plays his usual finishing song.

INT. AT THE BAR - LATER

Daniel and his Ghost have a bottle of wine between them. A dark, opaque red colour. Daniels glass is noticeably emptier than Ghost's.

JAMES
Fucker. Another glass thief. One second guys, I'll be right back.

James leaves the bar to confront another glass thief in the smoking area, in the alley outside.

Ghost pours Daniel some more wine.

DANIEL
When did you start drinking red wine, by the way? Are you that depressed? Is my love life that draining?

Ghost cheers-es their glass against Daniel's, as if in confirmation.

A sound of a scuffle from outside makes both Daniel and Ghost turn towards the door. A wave of worry casts over Daniel's face.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Oh god. I think I fancy him.

Ghost shakes lightly with silent laughter, visible despite the sheet.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Oh its been so obvious to everyone
else hasn't it.

A nod from Ghost.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I can't fancy him.

Ghost leans their face in their hands and swings their fishnet clad legs in a childlike glee.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Ah, fuck. I should go and talk to
him shouldn't I? Tell him about
Mum?

Ghost nods. Takes the glass of red wine from Daniel.

Ghost points towards the door.

There is a fire of determination behind Daniel's eyes.

EXT. JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

The bar door always creaks aggressively, but this time it feels obnoxious in the quiet of the night. Eerie drizzle peppers the alleyway.

James is alone. The glass thief must be long gone.

Daniel takes a deep breath, turns to look behind him.

There's Ghost. They give a thumbs up.

He turns back to face James. Determination rears again.

DANIEL

I came out to my mum.

James smiles. It splits and radiates through the darkness of the alley.

JAMES

And? What else?

DANIEL
I guess now...I'm coming out to you
too?

It comes out poised as a question, but Daniel has never been more sure of anything. Daniel turns around to look back at Ghost.

Ghost is gone.

Daniel turns back.

James is right there, inches from his face. Breath fanning out over Daniel's face in mists in the cold of the night.

And then they're kissing.

It is nothing like the comedy of errors that Daniel is used to.

INT. JAZZ BAR - PIANO - ALONG TIME LATER

The familiar notes of *Nocturne in F Minor*.

Op. 55.

The bar is empty of people, but the space feels filled.

James and Daniel sit alone on the red piano stool. There isn't an inch of their sides that isn't sewn together. The fairy lights twinkle in the reflection on the piano.

Daniel plays the left hand notes. James plays the right. James plays a wrong note.

They both laugh, soft, and lean into one another.

INT. AT THE BAR - MOMENTS LATER

A glass with honey-coloured liquid sits on the bar.

Years of white rings from drinks past etched into the mahogany.

This time though, the glass is not so alone.

A glass of red wine sits on a tray. Next to it...

... a Piña Colada with a bright pink crazy straw.

Two sheet covered arms reach out to take the tray.