

COMMITMENT

Written by

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INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

The sun dances through opaque, white curtains- caressing a large bouquet of white and pink flowers.

The camera follows the sunlight toward a young woman sitting in front of a vanity, dressed in white. This is CHLOE (28). Lace petals graze her shoulders and chest. She inhales deeply, her eyes welling up with love as she reflects on how she got to this moment.

An older woman, BARB (60), her mother, appears behind her in the mirror. She rests her hands on her daughter's shoulders.

BARB

You look just like I did on my wedding day.

Chloe reaches back to grab her Mother's hand on her shoulder.

Suddenly, the door opens. A highly anxious man in a tuxedo bursts in unapologetically. This is GIL (28).

GIL

Are you two done being sentimental? Chlo, we have people waiting and it could start raining any second.

CHLOE

Gil, get out! You're not supposed to see me yet!

GIL

What, it's nothing I haven't seen before.

Gil looks at Barb, impressed.

GIL (CONT'D)

Lookin' hot, Barb. Those spanks really do wonders for someone your age.

Barb blushes.

CHLOE

(giggling to herself)
Out!

Gil reluctantly exits. The door shuts.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

The moment we are witnessing is the inhale before the conductor waves his baton. The warmup before the symphony begins. Guests are buzzing with excitement. An older couple sits next to each other, arm in arm. A husband and wife stand nearby, the wife calming her newborn baby. A little boy in a tuxedo toward the back holds a pillow that reads, "It's too late, here she comes," awaiting his cue.

We settle on a young man sitting in the middle of all the anticipation. He is another face in the crowd, looking around as everyone else connects. He seems to be looking for someone. This is ASHER (25).

An attractive woman, JULIE (26), sits down next to ASHER. She gives him the up and down.

JULIE
Bride or Groom?

Asher turns to her, confused.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Which do you know?

ASHER
Oh. I'm with the maid of honor,
actually.

Disappointment shrouds Julie's face. She quickly covers it up.

JULIE
Oh, cool! My boyfriend couldn't
make it unfortunately. Couldn't get
a dog sitter...

Asher isn't really listening. Julie continues talking but there's no sound.

Music begins suddenly. The bridal party enters.

Gil walks down the aisle, assuming his position. He is sweating, eyes darting around.

ASHER looks to Gil, hoping they'll lock eyes. No dice.

The music shifts, and Chloe begins gliding down the aisle.

Gil finally breathing, eyes radiating with pride, cheeks wet with tears. Chloe and Asher lock eyes as she passes him, his eyes welling up, too.

Finally, Chloe and Gil lock eyes and smile at each other. When she gets to Gil, she turns to face him... ..and hands him the bouquet.

Chloe turns around and faces her husband-to-be, who we are all seeing for the first time. This is Jordan (30).

Gil kneels to the ground, and fans out Chloe's train.

TITLE CARD: COMMITMENT

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Asher waking up with the morning light. A small Yorkshire terrier comes into frame, licking Asher's face- a good morning kiss. Gil is out cold, sleeping next to him.

Asher gets out of bed.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Asher is sitting on the couch, having tea and reading a book. The dog in his lap. GIL walks in, half-asleep still.

ASHER

Morning.

GIL

(Rubbing his eyes)

Ugh, I hate being awake.

Asher doesn't look up from his book.

GIL (CONT'D)

What are you doing today?

ASHER

Not sure. I have an audition later, but that's pretty much it.

Gil gets a text, he looks at his phone.

GIL

This wedding is stressing me out. We leave in 2 days, and I still have to pack.

(MORE)

GIL (CONT'D)

I have to make sure my suit is tailored when I get there, and I swear to god if Chloe ordered me a skinny tie like the other guys in the wedding party, she's never going to hear the end of it.

ASHER

Gil, it is her wedding.

GIL

I don't care, she has shit taste and I have to be in all the wedding party photos. I'm the maid of honor and I better feel honored.

Asher holds his tongue.

ASHER

Okay.

GIL

What?

ASHER

Nothing!

GIL

Clearly there's something.

ASHER

I just don't think this is about you, and you're causing yourself stress for no reason.

GIL

You don't get it. I had to plan the bachelorette, and the shower, and organize all this shit for my best friend. If one thing goes wrong, it's all on me.

ASHER

You should be excited and happy! The hard part is over, the wedding is her day. Breathe, babe.

GIL

You wouldn't understand. You don't have a best friend.

Ouch. Asher breathes before starting another argument.

Gil exits into the kitchen.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. GARDEN - THE WEDDING - DAY

Asher sitting alone in a sea of unfamiliar faces. He watches as Chloe and Jordan give their vows.

The orchestra plays in the background.

CHLOE
I promise to put you first.

JORDAN
I promise to always listen.

Asher looks to Gil, who is radiating love toward Chloe.

CHLOE
...to cherish.

JORDAN
...to compromise.

CHLOE
...to encourage.

JORDAN
...to support.

Asher is starting to get tears in his eyes.

CHLOE
...in sickness.

JORDAN
...in health.

CHLOE
...'til death.

JORDAN
...'til death.

Chloe and Jordan kiss, and everyone cheers. They stand. Asher stands too, smiling, wiping his tears, and applauding as the newlyweds walk back up the aisle hand in hand.

Asher watches them go, and looks back to Gil, who is already following behind Chloe and Jordan.

INT. PARTY TENT - EVENING

The celebration has begun. String lights hang above white and gold tables. LED lights warm the dance floor as teens show off their best moves, and couples intertwine. Friends socializing at tables, devouring the catering. A little boy, perhaps the ring bearer once again, swiping a taste of the cake when no one is looking.

The little boy runs away, hoping nobody saw him. He runs past Asher who is once again, alone at the table, eating.

Gil sits beside him, exasperated.

GIL

Hey.

ASHER

Hi.

GIL

Everything look good earlier?

ASHER

Mhm. Haven't stopped crying.

Gil kisses him.

GIL

(Looking at his food)
What's that?

ASHER

Salmon and--

Gil takes a bite.

GIL

Mm, I haven't eaten all day.
Thanks.

Beat.

GIL (CONT'D)

Okay, I gotta go make sure Chlo
doesn't need anything before I give
my speech.

Gil gets up and exits.

Asher returns to his food, unsurprised.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. DINING ROOM/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Asher and Gil having dinner.

GIL
You're the man!

ASHER
So are you!

GIL
Yeah, but you're more masculine.

ASHER
Am not. And why does that even matter? I still want to be proposed to. Always have.

GIL
But I want a ring.

ASHER
We can both have rings.

GIL
Do they have to match?

ASHER
No...we can each pick what we like.

GIL
We're not ready to get married anyway. I'm barely making enough to pay rent, and your dad is still supporting you.

ASHER
How much money we have shouldn't dictate whether or not we get married.

GIL
If I'm not making at least eighty grand a year by the time I'm thirty, I won't be ready. And forget about kids.

ASHER
What do you mean?

GIL

If I'm not successful before I'm,
like, thirty five, I don't want
kids. I'm not putting my life on
hold for someone else.

This information is a blow to Asher. He picks up their dishes
and walks into the kitchen.

ASHER

We're too young to think about kids
right now anyway.

An awkward beat. Gil gets up, following Asher into the
kitchen.

GIL

I dunno...I still think you should
propose. You're used to being on
your knees and...

Asher puts the dishes down, and turns to Gil offended.

ASHER

Oh yeah?

He starts to tickle GIL.

GIL

(Laughing.)
Stop, stop! You're hurting me!

They're both laughing.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. PARTY TENT - EVENING

Gil is giving his speech. His audience is mid laughter. He is
standing in the middle of the dance floor with a microphone.

GIL

I'll never forget my first words to
Chloe. She walked into my cousin's
wedding and was wearing this
beautiful peplum gown. We were
twelve years old. I walked straight
up to her and I told her, "Wow.
That is a beautiful dress. If only
your boobs were big enough to fill
it out."

The crowd roars with laughter, Asher included. Chloe blushes, and her grandmother shakes her head, holding back a giggle.

GIL (CONT'D)

We've been inseparable every since. I tell it to her like it is, and she lies to me to boost my self esteem. It's a perfectly healthy relationship. You can ask our joint therapist. Here we are fifteen years later: You found a straight man to marry and you finally fill out a dress.

He raises a glass. He starts to choke up.

GIL (CONT'D)

In all seriousness though, I'm so happy for you and Jordan. I've never worried about losing my best friend, because I always knew I was gaining another one when you met Jordan. Cheers, to Chloe and Jordan!

The crowd joins in toasting. Asher wipes away his tears.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

The peak of an argument. Asher has been crying and Gil is holding his breath.

ASHER

It was just a kiss.

Gil won't look at him.

ASHER (CONT'D)

I didn't think it was important to tell you. We've gone way further with guys together.

GIL

That's different. We discussed that and this happened before we did any of that.

ASHER

You said you couldn't handle someone cheating and would break up with them instantly.

(MORE)

ASHER (CONT'D)

I didn't think this was worth us ending. You said you wouldn't want to know, so I never said anything.

GIL

...and we hooked up with those other guys together.

ASHER

I was drunk. I know there's nothing I can do to take it back, but I am sorry.

GIL

You don't seem sorry.

Silence.

ASHER

(matter of factly)

I am. I know I may not look it, but that's because I dealt with this guilt months ago on my own. I know I can't do anything to change my actions. I'm sorry.

GIL

I know. But I don't know if I can trust you again. How do I know you won't go out and make out with someone when I leave for the bachelorette next weekend?

ASHER

I won't.

GIL

But how can I know? You've been lying about this for months.

ASHER

I promise. I can't force you to believe me, but I swear, it won't happen again.

There's nothing else to be said.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. PARTY TENT - NIGHT

Asher is sitting on a bench alone. A moment to breathe. The party bumps in the background.

CHLOE (O.S.)
You come here often?

Asher looks up to see CHLOE standing next to the bench. He smiles.

ASHER
Just a little loud in there for my liking.

Chloe sits down next to him.

ASHER (CONT'D)
Shouldn't you be soaking up all the attention in there?

CHLOE
I needed a quick breather. The bustle keeps coming undone on this dress and if one more person steps on it, I'm going to lose my mind.
(beat)
Are you having fun?

ASHER
Yeah. Would be more fun if Gil didn't run away from me every two minutes. You'd think I was a guest at his wedding.

CHLOE
It is his wedding, you know that. The dress, the ring. There are things he won't be able to experience himself. I'm pretty sure he's in the bathroom crying right now because my straps keep falling down.

ASHER
I don't mind him wearing a dress.

They both laugh.

A beat.

CHLOE
Do you want to get married?

Asher has been asking himself this for a while.

ASHER
I dunno. Not yet.

CHLOE
He told me you want kids.

ASHER
One day.

CHLOE
What if he doesn't?

Asher knows the answer.

ASHER
How did you know Jordan was the
one?

CHLOE
I wanted him to be.

Asher is puzzled by her reply.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
We fight, sure who doesn't. There
are days I want to knock his teeth
in, but he looks at me like I'm the
rising sun and he does what I tell
him to. Most days. There's no one
I'd rather watch shitty TV with,
and he makes the worst days better
with his goofy smile. I spent a lot
of time looking for him, and I
don't think I would want to risk
looking again. I may not ever find
it.

Asher understands.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Asher and Gil's first date. Asher, overdressed, is waiting
outside when Gil walks up. Asher smiles. They awkwardly hug
each other, introducing themselves, and head in.

INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

RED lighting saturates the beat down bar. Gil and Asher order
drinks and chat.

CUT TO:

DANCE FLOOR

Gil is bopping to the music with a drink in his hand, while Asher is really getting into it. He starts to grind up on Gil, to Gil's surprise.

CUT TO:

STAGE

Gil and Asher watching a drag queen perform.

CUT TO:

BACK PATIO

Gil and Asher talking, a little more drunk now. Asher goes in for a kiss, once again to Gil's surprise.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAR/STREET - NIGHT

It's raining now. Asher and Gil are leaving. They are running to the nearest bus stop. They take shelter in front of a Chinese restaurant. Gil is holding Asher now. They kiss.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. PARTY TENT - NIGHT

Guests are filing out. The party is over and the music has died down.

INT. PARTY TENT - CONTINUOUS

Gil is sitting at a table. His shirt slightly unbuttoned, tie undone, sans his suit jacket. It's been a wild night. He looks up and sees Asher walking toward him.

GIL

Hey handsome. Did you have fun?

ASHER

Would've been more fun with you.

Asher sits down next to him.

FLASHES OF MEMORIES: Overlapped with the dialogue. Glimpses into the highs and lows of Asher and Gil's relationship strobe frenetically as if flickering through Asher's mind, without sound.

GIL

I'm sorry. I know I was all over the place.

ASHER

I get it.

FLASH: Asher washing dishes while Gil eats peanut butter from a jar. Gil places the dirty spoon on the counter.

GIL

I can't believe her dress is ruined. I'm going in to complain tomorrow. What a waste of money.

ASHER

Chloe didn't seem too upset.

FLASH: Gil and Asher cuddled on the couch, watching a movie.

GIL

You ready to get out of here? I'm sure Chloe and Jordan are already half way into consummating their marriage. Or seconds away from finishing, I should say.

FLASH: Gil and Asher making out at the bar.

ASHER

Do you love me?

GIL

Of course I love you, Asher. Do you love me?

FLASH: Gil and Asher screaming at each other.

ASHER

Yes. You know I do.

GIL

Is everything okay?

FLASH: Gil giving Asher a quick peck on the lips, leaving for work. Asher barely turning away from his computer.

END FLASHBACKS.

ASHER

Yeah. I just missed you tonight.

Gil gets up, and reaches back for Asher's hand.

GIL

Come. It's way past our bedtime.

Asher hesitates.

One of the bridesmaids calls out from outside the tent.

BRIDESMAID

Party's over lovebirds! Let's go!

ASHER

I'll meet you out there in a second.

Gil obliges, and runs to meet the BRIDESMAID.

Asher pulls a small ring box out of his suit jacket pocket. He holds it for a moment. He opens it, looking at the sleek onyx band inside. He caresses it. He closes the box. He puts it back in his jacket. He gets up, and walks out.

CUT TO BLACK.