

Coaster Flipping Drama (Title TBD)

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Int. Restaurant - 7p

We open on a guy in his mid-twenties walking into a bar-and-grill and telling the hostess he has a party of two. She/he seats the man and he gets settled in. He looks nice, not overly dressed up but nice enough for a night out -- maybe a button-down shirt and his "good" jeans.

TRANSITION TO INT. BEDROOM

We see a YOUNG WOMAN in her twenties hurrying to get dressed. She rushes to put make up on, get some earrings in, make sure her hair looks nice, put her shoes on and then finally head out the door.

TRANSITION BACK TO RESTAURANT

Our YOUNG MAN is patiently waiting, maybe reading the menu. He orders some waters for his presumed date and him. He glances at his phone as if to check the time.

TRANSITION TO CAR

Our YOUNG WOMAN is drumming her fingers on the steering wheel, glancing at the time on her dash.

TRANSITION TO RESTAURANT

The YOUNG MAN is looking at his phone again and starting to look nervous, but he refuses when the waitress/waiter asks if he would like to order.

TRANSITION TO STREET

The YOUNG WOMAN closes her car door after parking and starts hurriedly walking down the street to the restaurant. Her phone rings and she quickly answers it.

YOUNG WOMAN

Hey, Mom! Listen, I can't really talk right now. I'm on my way to--
She listens for a moment and reacts to something she hears.

YOUNG WOMAN

(startled) What? (she listens again) But I--just spoke to him two hours ago. (She listens for a moment again but has a far-off look on

her face) Um...no, I can't do that. I'm---I'm late to be somewhere.
I...I can't deal with this right now.

She hangs up the phone and pauses for a moment, looking shaken. Then she slowly starts walking again.

TRANSITION TO RESTAURANT

We focus on our YOUNG MAN again, who we see has noticed his date enter the restaurant and waves her over pleasantly.

YOUNG MAN

I was a little worried you weren't gonna show!

The YOUNG WOMAN is silent and stares off into the distance.

YOUNG MAN

Um...are you ok?

YOUNG WOMAN

What? Oh! Yeah! Sorry, just have a lot on my mind. Sorry I was late.

YOUNG MAN

It's fine, no worries! I wasn't sure what you would want to drink so I just got us water for now.

YOUNG WOMAN

That's great. (She catches a waiter by the arm) Could I get a dry martini please? Like...as dry as you can make it. Thank you.

YOUNG MAN

Oh, starting off the drinking already! Don't worry, I can keep up. I need a little liquid courage in me when it comes to dates...too...

He trails off as he stares at the YOUNG WOMAN who has started flipping the coasters on the table. He's clearly fascinated as he's never seen anything like what's she's doing before.

YOUNG MAN

Wow, that's pretty cool! How did you do that?

YOUNG WOMAN

Oh, it's easy. You just balance the coaster on the edge, flip it up with the back of your hand, and then catch it in one fluid motion. And when you master one, you add another and see how many you can catch. (by this point she is up to a stack of 6 or 7)

YOUNG MAN

Well, that's definitely something I've never seen before! Where did you learn that?

YOUNG WOMAN

From my dad. He's from Europe, so they have all kinds of little games like this that he's taught me. It drives my mom crazy when we do this at restaurants. (a beat) You ever think about your parents dying?
(She says this as if she's asking about the weather)

The YOUNG MAN chokes on his water, sputtering for a bit. At this point, the waiter comes back with the YOUNG WOMAN's martini. She gulps down twice and sighs in relief before going back to her coaster flipping.

YOUNG MAN

Um...I mean...yeah, I guess. I think a lot of people think about what would happen if their loved ones die. But I find it's best not to dwell on something that probably won't happen for a long time.

YOUNG WOMAN

Yeah. I used to think the same way. I used to think about what it might feel like once my dad actually dies. I've never lost anyone close to me before, you know? So, I've never known what to expect when it finally happens. It's like...the first time you think about your parents dying you think "Well, that won't happen for ages." But then you think about it again. And then here and there it pops into your head. And then suddenly, it becomes like a ticking in the back of your head. When is it gonna happen? Will it happen in 20 days or 20 years? How much time do I have left with the people I care most about? But it's all just in the back of your head. You shove those thoughts down because you think "I'm just being morbid or paranoid. Nothing is gonna happen to my parents. Nothing is gonna happen to my dad. He's a picture of health, especially for his age! No, I've got at least another 20+ years with him, easy. He'll be there to walk me down the aisle. He'll get to meet my children -- his grandchildren. How could he not? How could he not be there when I'm picturing him there in my head?"

The woman fails to catch the stack of coasters she was just flipping and they fly all over the table. The couple sits there for a beat in tense silence.

YOUNG WOMAN

And then it happens and...you can't...wrap your head around it. I can't...wrap my head around it. I mean...a phone call doesn't make something real. Hearing someone tell you news doesn't necessarily make it true...right?

The YOUNG MAN is staring cautiously at the YOUNG WOMAN, unsure of what to do or say, but he seems to understand what has happened. Suddenly, the girl's phone vibrates on the table. The screen displays the name "Mom." The YOUNG WOMAN stares at her phone, unmoving. The YOUNG MAN is watching her warily.

YOUNG MAN

(carefully, as if a single word could break the woman) Are you...going to answer?

YOUNG WOMAN

I don't know. I don't...

Alt: She doesn't respond at all.

YOUNG MAN

Do you...want me to answer it? Would that...help you at all?

She stares at him for a long moment. The phone stops vibrating, then promptly starts vibrating again with the same caller displayed. She looks at the phone again, then looks back at the YOUNG MAN before finally nodding. The YOUNG MAN reaches across and gingerly picks up the woman's phone.

YOUNG MAN

This is Shelby's phone? (listening) Yes, this is her...friend, Cole. (listening) Yeah, she's safe. She's here with me. (listening) Yes, I heard. I'm so sorry for your loss. (listening) Uh huh...ok. Yes, I will tell her. You're welcome, goodbye. (He ends the call and puts the phone down.) That was your mom. She wanted me to tell you that everyone is at the hospital. She would like you to join them there.

There is a long pause and the young people sit in silence for a time. The YOUNG MAN finally breaks the silence.

YOUNG MAN

If this is overstepping, you can tell me. But...do you want me to go with you?

The YOUNG WOMAN snaps her attention at him and stares, her expression unclear.

YOUNG MAN

No, of course you wouldn't. You know, we can just ask for the check
and you don't ever have to see me again.

He motions for the waiter to get the check for them.

YOUNG WOMAN

You would...do that for me?

YOUNG MAN

(clearly surprised) Oh! Uh...well, of course. It seems like...I don't
know. You might need some support.

YOUNG WOMAN

(after a beat) Yeah...that would...I would really appreciate that.

YOUNG MAN

Alright, let's go then.

He leaves some money on the table, the two get up, and leave the
restaurant.