

INT. FRENCH CAFE IN THE SUBURBS OF LOS ANGELES -- MORNING

PUSH across a crowded cafe to AMELIA, reading a menu, and sitting alone with coffee and a book, at a tall table by a huge window peering out onto the street. There's a flower in a arrangement inside a vase centering the table. The other restaurant-goers are dressed business casual, most attending a business brunch.

A waitress, JACKIE, walks purposefully to the table, and sets down a glass of water.

JACKIE
(excitedly)
Amelia Jane?

Amelia, startled, places her book down and stares, first confused, then excited, at the server's face. She sighs, almost scoffs, in disbelief. Jackie seats herself across from an old friend.

AMELIA
Jackie! What - what are you doing here?

JACKIE
Okay, um, wow. I could I ask you the same thing. It's been years! How are you?

Amelia looks down and laughs, embarrassed for being rude. She glances around, skeptically, as if someone were listening/watching.

AMELIA
I'm alright. Just grabbing some food before I head to work.

JACKIE
(prying)
Work? Oh, please. I heard all about your new "work". Congratulations on the part by the way! You always said you would be a successful actress, and here you are, getting cast on a movie directed by Jason Murphy! If only all of the high school cliques could see you now.

Amelia forces a smile, practically looking through her friend, eyes glazed over. She flashes back to the moment she met Jason Murphy; the moment her life turned upside down.

(CONTINUED)

AMELIA

Yeah.

JACKIE

So? What's he like?!

AMELIA

(annoyed)

I can't talk about it.

Non-disclosure agreements. You get it.

Jackie, disappointed but understanding, waves goodbye to leaving guests before changing the subject. She starts cleaning up the table to distract her boss from the fact that she's catching up with an old friend rather than working.

JACKIE

So what brings you to this part of town anyway?

AMELIA

(attempting to be friendly)

Sometimes I like to get away from the city, that's all.

JACKIE

I get that. I just assumed you'd be eating out at all of the fancy restaurants by now.

AMELIA

(laughing)

It's not like I'm paid up front okay? I'm still drowning in that college debt. The Jane family doesn't have the likes of the Byers Family Trust Fund that you get to dip into.

JACKIE

So my parents paid for my college. I still work hard!

Jackie sits back down across from Amelia, no longer trying to look busy.

AMELIA

I know, I know. You should be proud of yourself.

(CONTINUED)

JACKIE

I am. But what about you? You're living your dream! See, good things happen to good people; you're living proof.

AMELIA

(regretfully)

I wouldn't go that far. I'm not so sure of what it even means to be a good person lately.

JACKIE

(matter-of-factly)

Yeah, well, fame will do that to you. But come on, we haven't gossiped since senior prom. What's he like?

AMELIA

(happily reminiscent)

Who?

JACKIE

Jason Murphy!

AMELIA

(suddenly cold)

He's not how you'd think. Hollywood's gotten inside his head and it's eating him alive.

JACKIE

Ooh, a struggling artist. I like that.

AMELIA

(irritated)

Struggling doesn't begin to cover it.

JACKIE

(concerned)

Are you ok? I know it's been awhile, but I don't know, you seem -- off.

AMELIA

(hesitant)

I'm just sorting through some stuff right now, that's all.

(CONTINUED)

JACKIE

You know you can talk to me right?
Whatever's happening. I'm there for
you.

AMELIA

(appreciative)

Thanks. It's not your problem
though, best not to get involved.

Jackie shakes her head, and reaches out to hold her friend's hand. Amelia winces. Jackie looks down and sees bruises covering Amelia's arm, and some cuts on her hands.

JACKIE

Amelia, what happened?

Amelia quickly places her arms under the table. She flashes back to Jason Murphy pinning her against a wall. The flashback is silent but powerful as he is almost spitting, yelling at Amelia. Amelia's breathing gets heavier and faster. She appears to be on the verge of passing out. She stands up and runs out of the cafe, leaving behind her book. Jackie calls after her.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Amelia! Amelia wait, I'm sorry!

The cafe door slams shut.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

You still have to pay for that!

Jackie notices she has made a scene. She smiles at the concerned customers, and begins to clean up the mess.

JACKIE

(muttering to an obviously
eavesdropping audience)

Actors, am I right?

FADE TO BLACK.