

boots (a love story)

EXT. STREET - DAY

Small town. Lots of dirt. Feels antique.

ELLE WATERS, 21, is slumped up against an old PAY PHONE. She's got the receiver in one hand and she's twirling hair with the other.

SUPER: SOMEWHERE IN TEXAS.

ELLE

I know you don't like him. *I know that.* You think I don't know that by now? Jesus.

She sighs and looks down at her BOOTS for a moment, then across the street at a large building.

An old FORD BRONCO is parked nearby. Still running.

ELLE (CONT'D)

Did I *ask* you for money? You're not listening to me. I'm calling to-

Elle goes quiet and follows a COP CAR with her eyes as it slowly approaches and pulls up to the Bronco.

ELLE (CONT'D)

Dad, I have to go. I'm sorry. I have to go.
(beat)
I love you.

She hangs up. A SHERIFF, 40s, thick mustache and cowboy hat, gets out of the car. He eyes the Bronco and heads towards the building across the street.

Elle fluffs her hair, pushes up her bra, and speed walks over to him.

ELLE (CONT'D)

Excuse me, sir?

She blocks his path with her body. He eyes her chest.

ELLE (CONT'D)

I'm, uh, lost and I need help-

SHERIFF

Pardon me just one second, ma'am.

He brushes past her and continues walking. ELLE whips around and blocks him again, this time placing her hands on his wrists.

ELLE
Please, I just need-

SHERIFF
Ma'am, I'm gonna have to ask you
again to get out of the way.

The Sheriff places one hand on his holster, and with the other, pushes her aside. He proceeds towards the door. *Shit.*

Elle runs back to the car and gets in the driver's side.

INT. BRONCO - CONTINUOUS

She puts the car in "DRIVE" and watches the front door closely.

ELLE
Come on. *Come on.*

BANG!! BANG!! Two loud gunshots from inside, a few seconds apart.

Finally, A MAN holding a GUN runs out, black duffel bag slung over his shoulder.

This is JULIAN WATERS, 20, denim jacket and a classic robber's beanie. Elle *WOOOOs* like her team just scored a touchdown.

Julian gets in the passenger seat and rips his beanie off. Long, brown hair and a smooth baby face covered in sweat.

He leans in and makes out with Elle for a good five seconds. For a couple of bootleg bank robbers, they sure don't seem to be in any hurry whatsoever.

JULIAN
Drive.

The Bronco burns rubber, speeds away. The lights on top of the Sheriff's car still flashing.

FLASHBACK: EXT. CITY HALL - DAY

Julian and Elle leave city hall arm and arm. Newlyweds. She wears a beautiful, floral dress. He looks like a teenager who doesn't really know how to wear a suit properly.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
Do you feel any different?

ELLE
Kinda. What are supposed to do now?

ELLE (CONT'D)
Honeymoony?

JULIAN
I've got the perfect place.

Julian picks up Elle and throws her over his shoulders.

ELLE
Help! I'm being abducted by a hot,
poorly dressed stranger!

Bystanders watch as they run through the streets, screaming,
laughing, and playing like children.

FLASHBACK CONT: INT. "SHIT BOOT" BAR - DAY

Julian and Elle enter Shit Boot: the kind of bar that has
sketchy shrimp tacos and dollar shots of bad tequila.

A GIANT, GREASY MAN in a stained wife beater greets them. He
sticks his finger in his nose. Then, *he smiles*.

GIANT GREASY MAN
Look at these beautiful people.

JULIAN
We just got married.

GIANT GREASY MAN
Married?! Somebody married you?!
Let me fix you something very
special!

The giant walks off.

ELLE
Who *is* that?

JULIAN
That's "Shit Boot." Isn't it
obvious?

The giant brings over shots. Elle and Julian cheers, then
drink them down.

*This would be the part of the film where we get a super cool,
super stylized, Tarinto-esque dance sequence. Julian and Elle
need to get down to some country tunes. So let's make a point
to budget for a badass choreographer.*

LATER, a MAN in his 30s, with a pony tail and leather jacket, approaches Elle, who sits alone, drunk and picking her nails.

PONY

'Scuse me, miss. Where's your boyfriend?

He plays with the strap of her dress. She flicks his hand away.

ELLE

He's in the bathroom. Watch your hands or I'll chop your pony tail clean off.

Julian returns from the bathroom, VERY Drunk.

JULIAN

Hey. That's my wife you're talking to, bubbo.

Julian pushes a finger into the dude's chest, chuckling.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Waitttt. I know you.

PONY

You owe me money, bum junkie.

Pony pushes Julian *hard*. He's wobbly.

JULIAN

WOAH. Don't touch me, hombre. I'm a married man.

Julian takes a drunken swing and misses. Pony tackles Julian to the ground and punches him one, two, three times in the face.

FLASHBACK CONT: INT. JULIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Julian lies on his back. He's got two black eyes. Elle holds a frozen bag of veggies over his face. She kisses him. With each kiss: a playful OUCH from Julian.

EXT. RUSTY RED MOTEL - DAY

Cheap motel off the side of the road. Middle of nowhere. The Ford Bronco enters the parking lot. Kicks up dust on the dirt road.

INT. RUSTY RED MOTEL - DAY

Elle sits on the edge of a hard mattress, flipping through a BIBLE. She reads various passages, moving her finger along the pages, then sets it back on the night stand.

She walks over to the bathroom door and gently knocks.

ELLE

Babe? Are you okay? Just let me see it.

JULIAN (O.S.)

It's nothing.

Elle slowly opens the door.

Julian has his shirt off and he's examining the wound. He's cringing and sweating.

Fuck.

*It's **definitely** not "nothing."*

ELLE

Holy shit. Oh my god. *OH MY GOD.*

JULIAN

I'm fine. It's fine.

Julian keels over, almost falls. Elle helps him out of the bathroom.

ELLE

It's okay. Come on.

She helps Julian into bed.

ELLE (CONT'D)

I'm gonna get help. We need help.

JULIAN

Don't need help.

ELLE

You're *shaking*.

She watches his body tremble and wraps him in more sheets. *So much blood.*

ELLE (CONT'D)

Okay. Okay. Shit. Shit. Hold on. I need to get more towels.

Elle looks around the room, then runs back into the bathroom.

FLASHBACK - INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Julian is naked in bed, sheets wrapped around his thin body.
No blood this time.

Elle is also naked, and sitting on the edge of the bed. She's
breathing into the phone, listening.

ELLE

I do. I *have* a job.

She glances back at Julian. He looks *completely* out of it.

ELLE (CONT'D)

He... has a job too. We just need
some extra cash right now. It *will*
be the last time. Because I just
told you it will. Don't even-
How can- I'm trying to-

She SCREAMS and SLAMS the receiver back down. It makes a loud
CLUNK, which Julian is unaffected by.

ELLE (CONT'D)

Hey. I'm going to work.

No response.

ELLE (CONT'D)

Hey. *You*.

She slaps him in the face playfully.

ELLE (CONT'D)

Wake up.

Again. Harder. And harder.

ELLE (CONT'D)

Wake the fuck up.

Not dead. Just really, really messed up. He grumbles.

ELLE storms off and slams the door.

Julian looks around.

JULIAN

I'm up. I'm up.

But she's gone.

INT. RUSTY RED MOTEL - NIGHT

ELLE paces the room. She's been crying.

ELLE

Okay. We've got to go. We've got to go the hospital.

Julian is just barely awake. He shakes his head NO.

ELLE (CONT'D)

You're going to die. You're going to **fucking die here**, Julian. We have to go. Now.

JULIAN

(inaudible)
The cop.

ELLE

What?

JULIAN

*I killed a cop. And you were there.
We'll both get the chair.*

She thinks for a beat. It sinks in. *He's right.*

Elle curls up with Julian and weeps. Blood gets all over her.

FLASHBACK: INT. JULIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ELLE and Julian have sex. It's slow moving and soft. The glow of a tiny, vintage television set projects **blues** and **reds** all about their bodies.

LATER, they spoon in bed, wide-eyed and completely still, clutching each other tightly like children who can't sleep because they just saw a monster under the bed.

ELLE

What are we gonna do?

(beat)

We need money. We're gonna need more money for the baby.

JULIAN

I spent the 1-

ELLE

I know.

A long beat. He's thinking.

ELLE (CONT'D)
I'm not blaming you.

Julian looks away. A tiny moment of shame.

JULIAN
Thanks.

INT. RUSTY RED MOTEL - NIGHT

Elle is on her knees beside the bed, like she's praying.
She's squeezing Julian's cold hands.

ELLE
What do I do? Tell me what to do.

He can't really speak. Elle cries for a long beat. She completely breaks down.

FLASHBACK: INT. BEAUTY PARLOR - DAY

Julian sits in front of a large, smudged up mirror. He's got a black barber's cloth on and looks giddy, like a child.

JULIAN
(to someone off screen)
My mom said I used to cry and
scream and scratch up the barber
when I was little. Hard for me to
believe, though. I love this place.

He takes a swig from a FLASK, and makes silly faces at himself in the mirror.

ELLE walks over with a spray bottle and comb.

ELLE
Is that right?

She wets his hair and combs it back. Julian closes his eyes.
Feels so good.

ELLE (CONT'D)
Ya'll men just loved being
touched.. Like a buncha goddamn
mutts.

He opens his eyes. They smile at each other through the mirror. Julian takes another hefty swig.

ELLE (CONT'D)
And didn't I tell you no drinking
in here?

JULIAN
But I'm your favorite customer.

She snaps her gum. Half smiles. Grabs it from him and takes a swig.

Elle begins cutting his hair.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
So when are you gonna go out with
me?

ELLE
You asked me that last time.

JULIAN
And the time before.

BARB, late 20s, pipes up from a nearby station.

BARB
He's a piss poor bum junkie, Elle.

JULIAN
I'm gonna pretend I didn't hear
that, BAR-BA-RA. That was
incredibly hurtful.

Elle continues cutting. She laughs.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
And for the record, *my* record, is
squeaky clean.

ELLE
Bull. My daddy said you're a
troublemaker.

JULIAN
What are you, *scared* of
troublemakers?

BARB
Hell of a lot more than a
troublemaker.

JULIAN
One more time Barb. One more time
and I'll shoot your damn **TITS** off.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Tell you what, Elle. We go on a little date, and since you're all scared and 'spicious of me, you can bring *those* puppies along. You know, for protection, or whatever.

ELLE

You want me to bring scissors on a date?

JULIAN

Yes, ma'am. And if that ain't just about the deal of the day, then I don't know what is.

Barb scoffs. Gets up and walks to the back of the store.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Always great chatting with you, Barb.

They stare at each other for a long beat.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

So?

INT. RUSTY RED MOTEL

Elle kisses Julian on the forehead. She picks up the old phone and sets it within his arm's reach of Julian. Wipes her tears.

ELLE

As soon as I'm far enough away, I need you to dial 9-11. Okay? *Do you understand?*

No response.

ELLE (CONT'D)

I need you to nod for me. Julian, *please.*

He just barely nods. She glances over at the night stand and sees a notepad next to the Bible. It reads: TELL US ABOUT YOUR STAY. She writes something on one of the notes, rips it off, and puts it in her pocket.

Then, she leaves. Julian hears the sound of the BRONCO engine starting, warming up, and finally, driving away.