

NO PLACE ON EARTH

Written by

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Based on the short story 'No Place on Earth' by Emma Ennis

FADE IN:

EXT. URBAN STREET - NIGHT

Lead in sounds are the hustle and bustle of life. Traffic, voices, laughter, the suggestion of music from night clubs and bars etc.

Cars pass up and down the street - mostly taxis - stopping at lights and going again.

A group of guys walk up the sidewalk, laughing and joking, hands in pockets. A couple hurry down the opposite side, holding hands. The woman is half a pace behind, trying to keep up in her high heels.

Closer to the foreground, three girls step to the edge of the street and hail an oncoming cab.

Everyone is dressed in their gladrags - this is party night.

A taxi pulls over for the girls and they get in. While the interior light is still on they can be seen directing the driver where to take them. They are exciteable, chatty, giddy. Their shouts and laughter can be heard on the street.

The driver takes off and we hop on for the ride. At the end of the street, red and blue lights spill onto the asphalt from the NIGHT CLUB on the corner. Bouncers stand on either side of a red carpet that bears the club insignia at regular intervals. The air pulses with the music and vibrations from inside.

Guests are arriving at the night club entrance in a steady dribble.

Just as the taxi disappears around the corner, we get off and--

INT. NIGHT CLUB LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

The sounds of music and voices grow louder. The club is a somewhat high-end kind of place - black walls, tall ceilings, huge mirrors, chandeliers. Art Deco in a way.

Two girls in white shirts and fitted black jackets stand behind a counter. Behind them are the cubbyholes and hangers of the cloakroom, already heavily populated.

A couple stand in front of the counter, the man shelling out the entrance fee while the woman removes her coat and passes it over to one of the cloakroom assistants.

The couple set out for the main room, which is through a pair of heavy, floor-to-ceiling curtains at the end of the entrance hall.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - CONTINUOUS

The night club is busy. Lots of bodies inside, drinking, mingling, dancing, making out. Coloured lights fight to cut through artificial smoke.

Standing around a tall table are a group of guys, one of whom is OUR GUY(late 20s). He's a 'guy next door' type - puppy dog eyes, gorgeous smile; you could see him wearing a cut-off t-shirt and mowing the lawn before rushing to help an old lady across the street.

Someone at the table has recently returned from the bar with a tray of shots and they each have one between thumb and forefinger.

Our Guy is already looking a little worse for wear. His eyes are glassy, his lids at half mast. His hand veers slightly off course as he raises the glass, but he manages to get it back on track before it reaches his lips.

He downs the shot, screws up his face at the taste, and shivers. He opens his eyes again just in time to see a small gaggle of girls enter the club. Among these is OUR GAL(32) and it is her who grabs Our Guy's attention.

She is a little on the short side, with STRIKING EYES and a sweet, SWEET SMILE, both of which Our Guy immediately homes in on. Our Gal is different from the other girls she's with, quieter, more refined, shy.

Our Guy's friends have noticed the newcomers too, and they wink at each other - fresh conquests. But Our Guy has eyes for Our Gal alone.

Those EYES. That sweet, SWEET SMILE.

The scene dissolves in a flare of light and smoke to--

INT. NIGHT CLUB - LATER

One of Our Guy's friends has decided to take one for the team and has infiltrated Our Gal's group. While he chats up one of her friends, Our Gal notices Our Guy looking at her. Their eyes meet, and in a reaction that is slightly delayed, he smiles at her. She smiles too, and drops her gaze, bashful.

Once again, the lights flare and the scene dissolves to--

INT. NIGHT CLUB - LATER

Our Guy's and Our Gal's crews have merged, and now they all stand around the table, another tray of shots at the ready. Some of the guys and girls have made initial pairings, marking their territory with arms slung over shoulders or by maximising proximity. Our Guy and Our Gal are close but not touching, into each other but shy about showing it.

They all tip back their shots in unison. Our Guy uses the distraction to slip his drink out of sight onto another table; his agenda for the night has changed.

Our Gal notices his deception. For a split second, before anyone else can see, he touches his lips with his forefinger - "Our secret".

As the girls squeal, and the men growl, flex or perform other manly displays of having taken a shot, Our Gal smiles that sweet smile at Our Guy. "Our Secret."

Our Guy can't take his eyes off her.

CUT TO:

EXT. URBAN STREET - LATER

Our Guy and Our Gal walk along a street outside a row of townhouses. Small front yards lead up to short flights of steps to the front doors.

It is late. There are not many people around besides them. The taxis are still on the go, though fewer and farther between than earlier.

Our Guy walks with his hands in his pockets, most likely to stop himself from making an awkward and presumptuous move like taking Our Gal's hand.

After a few beats, Our Gal gestures to the railing enclosing one of the front gardens - "This is me". She stops there, unsure of what kind of message it will send if she invites him beyond, despite the fact that all her body language says she wants to.

Our Guy solves the unspoken dilemma by opening the gate for her. He leaves it open, thus easing the pressure of expectation as he escorts Our Gal up the steps while she hunts for her keys.

A TAXI PASSES by on the street.

Gal unlocks the door and pushes it open. She steps just inside and turns. Our Guy stays outside.

OUR GAL

Thank you. For walking me home.

There's a tense 'how do we end this' moment before Our Guy reaches over the threshold and cups her cheek. He regards her for a beat before pulling her to him. Their lips meet on the border of outside and in.

The kiss may initially have been intended as chaste, but then Our Guy takes her face with his free hand too, caught in the intensity. Our Gal's hands go up to his chest, fingers hooking over his collar. One of Our Guy's hands slides through her hair to the back of her head.

After a beat they break away, breathless.

OUR GAL

(self consciously)

Will you stay?

OUR GUY

There's no place on earth I'd rather be.

Our Gal tugs on his collar, pulling him inside [...]