

#EllaandCash Project

by

Chloe Behrens

Chloe Behrens
behrens.chloe@gmail.com
www.chloebehrens.com

Synopsis -

Ella Rose - a little girl born to an alcoholic, abusive mother - grew up in the slums of New York City. Upon finding out that her daughter loved to sing and was good at it, her mother began to drag her down into the subways to sing for change on almost a daily basis.

And that's when William Hatcher discovered her.

Escaping her life, which has hit rock bottom, Fiorella takes off to California and is introduced to a life she never thought was possible. Hatcher becomes more than a manager; he plays the role of father-figure and much more, as the series continues.

But it wasn't until Fiorella landed the part of a movie, that her path crossed with Cash Murphy - an actor that caused women across the globe to salivate over, with his intense blue eyes and killer smile. Immediately upon seeing one another, there's an unmistakable spark, and he makes it his personal mission to get close to Ella.

Ella's attraction toward him is strong, even when she is preoccupied by other projects, other problems, and other men in her life. In addition to co-starring with her on a movie, he goes on to star with her on a television show, and their friendship and bond continues to strengthen.

All the while, the tension between them continues to mount. And Ella, prone to self-sabotage, keeps throwing a wrench in his plans to win her over. Over the course of time, Cash has been sweet, but he also resorts to aggravating and provoking Ella to make her face her feelings.

I am looking for someone to capture the spark and tension between Ella and Cash, and bring it to life on screen. The scenes I have scripted were some of my personal favorite moments of their journey!

Characters:

Ella Rose - late teens/early 20's. Doe-eyed brunette. Humble and demure, but fiery when her buttons are pushed.

Cash Murphy - early-mid 20's. Brown hair, blue eyes. Sometimes scruffy/sometimes clean-shaven. Lean frame. "Pretty." Usually dons button-ups and jeans or flannel and trucker hats. Intense stares and smirky playfulness.

Leah - early 20's. Bubbly brunette. Petite. Oblivious to the fact that her boyfriend is smitten with someone else. A tad bitchy.

Jared Cooper - Tall, buff, blond. Clean-cut. All-American surfer looks. Nice guy, bordering being a total pushover to make Ella happy.

Jessica - Ella's personal assistant. Petite, beautiful blonde. Always in heels and trendy clothes. Tiny in stature, but packs a mean punch. Make-up is always perfect. Brash, brazen, bold and no-nonsense, she keeps Ella in line. Always by Ella's side, and has her back.

FADE IN:

INT. AUDITORIUM - EARLY EVENING

Pre-awards ceremony. Women of all ages in cocktail dresses. Men in a range of clothing from casual to dressy. People are walking about, socializing before they find their seats, as CASH MURPHY's V.O. commences. ELLA ROSE, in a cocktail dress, pauses, looking about. Her eyes land upon CASH for the first time, and he's eyeballing her already. His eyes narrow slightly with intrigue, as a slow smile spreads over his face. He winks, takes a step back, and turns to disappear in the crowd.

CASH MURPHY (V.O.)

We had no idea what we were getting ourselves into. The road was long. We were both stubborn. It wasn't thought out. At times, it wasn't even fair... In my heart, I knew she was The One, from the first moment I saw her. She had no idea, but I knew she felt it. The spark in her eye when our eyes first locked wasn't recognition; it was Fate. The ball was in her court, even then.

FADE OUT.

EXT. AUDITORIUM - RED CARPET - EVENING

REPORTER, microphone in hand, interviews ELLA outside.

REPORTER

It must be quite surreal being here, as a young woman who, just months ago, was discovered singing in a subway in New York.

ELLA ROSE

(demurely)

Oh, yes. This is all beyond my wildest dreams...

REPORTER

And it has just been confirmed that you will be co-starring alongside Cash Murphy in an upcoming movie?

Ella nods.

ELLA ROSE

Yes. We begin filming next month.

EXT. STUDIOS - ELLA'S TRAILER - MORNING

ELLA stands before a set trailer. A paper posted in the window has her name on it. She stares in awe of it and snaps a picture with her phone as CASH approaches, amused. His gaze never wavers from her during the entire exchange.

CASH MURPHY

Am I disturbing a private moment between you and your trailer?

She gives him a crooked smile.

ELLA ROSE

We were getting acquainted. Are you excited to kick this thing off today?

CASH MURPHY

I've been ready to get this show on the road since I landed the part.

ELLA ROSE

Well, then. Ready to get to our table reading, Lieutenant?

CASH MURPHY

You ready to get your heart broken, my beautiful butterfly?

She smirks back at him.

ELLA ROSE

Bring it.

She walks past him as he stares after her.

CASH MURPHY

Oh, I plan on it...

EXT. BALCONY - EVENING

Tense, ELLA sits outside, pensively staring out. What sounds like a Hollywood gossip/tabloid show is heard:

VOICE (V.O.)

...'Ella Rose' was born Fiorella Rose Parisi. Her rise to fame has been inspiring, and her wide and hopeful eyes paired with the voice of an angel makes you believe in her tragic story of a little girl who fell victim to depravity and despair. But it seems that every day we learn something new about this young star. Early this morning, her estranged mother Gia Parisi was arrested on prostitution charges. The man arrested with her claims that this was the norm for her, and she had been doing this for years...

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - AFTERNOON

ELLA and her assistant JESSICA are getting out of JESSICA's car, as she's trying to reason with her.

JESSICA

You don't *have* to do this...

ELLA ROSE

It's fine. This *needs* to happen. I need to have my say.

JESSICA

Want me to go in with you?

Ella shakes her head and opens the door to step inside.

ELLA ROSE

I'll be fine.

She disappears inside.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - AFTERNOON

ELLA and INTERVIEWER are sitting at a table with coffee. INTERVIEWER, late 40's with scrutinizing eyes, is dressed nicely and jotting notes into her notebook.

INTERVIEWER

It's rumored that during filming of your movie, you cheated on Jonathan Bradley with Cash Murphy.

ELLA ROSE

Cash and I have only ever been friends. He is a wonderful person, but I haven't even seen him since we wrapped.

INTERVIEWER

Are you afraid the squeaky-clean image that you've tried so hard to maintain is being flushed down the toilet?

ELLA ROSE

(stone-faced)

I don't try to maintain any image. I'm me. I don't pretend - I just live my life.

INTERVIEWER

Then why bother changing your name to "Ella Rose," if you're not pretending?

ELLA sits straighter and narrows her eyes with a tight smile.

ELLA ROSE

Who wouldn't want to change their name from "Fiorella"? Besides, who uses their real names in Hollywood?

INTERVIEWER

The ones have nothing to hide.

ELLA sits back and narrows her eyes at INTERVIEWER.

INT. NICE HOTEL - LOBBY - DAYTIME

A bustling hotel, as a press junket is going on. Pictures snapping. Reporters everywhere. Craving a moment alone, ELLA ducks into a nearby restroom.

INT. HOTEL RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Overwhelmed, ELLA steps into a stall, closes the door, then takes a seat. She holds her head in her hands. We hear the door open. Someone takes the stall next to hers.

CASH MURPHY (O.S.)

Are you concentrating really hard?
Or hiding?

Horrified, ELLA looks up and sees CASH's head face grinning down at her over the top of the stall. Her jaw drops.

ELLA ROSE

What are you doing in here!?

CASH MURPHY

(mischievously)
You never called me.

ELLA ROSE

(flustered)
Invasion of privacy! What if someone comes in here and sees you!?

CASH MURPHY

Do I look like I care about that?
I'm standing on a toilet, in a women's restroom. I waited months for your phone call, you know.

ELLA stands up, unable to stifle her flattered smile, but putting her hands on her hips.

ELLA ROSE

You did *not*. You've had plenty to keep you busy in the last few months. Besides, I lost your number.

CASH MURPHY

Lost it? Or just didn't care to hold
onto it?

She cocks her head at him.

ELLA ROSE

I looked everywhere for it. How'd
you know I wasn't in the middle of
going to the bathroom!?

CASH MURPHY

(grinning)
I didn't.

ELLA opens the stall door and steps out. He does the same.

ELLA ROSE

(amusedly)
You're kind-of a creep, right now.

CASH slides his arm around ELLA's shoulder, and guides her
out of the restroom as they walk the opposite direction from
the activity in the lobby.

CASH MURPHY

You know what sounds good?

ELLA looks up at him.

CASH MURPHY

Room service. And cheesy television.
Us, away from all the reporters and
interviews, having dinner in our
underwear.

ELLA ROSE

That part isn't going to happen. But
I like where your head's at,
otherwise.

He grins down at her and pulls her in closer.

CASH MURPHY

Hey, a guy can dream, right?

INT. JESSICA'S CAR - DRIVING - LATE MORNING

JESSICA drives off from the hotel and eyes ELLA sternly.

JESSICA

You wanna tell me what you were
doing in Cash Murphy's room, last
night?

ELLA gives her a look of surprise.

CUT TO:

A SHOT OF ELLA AND CASH, ON THE HOTEL ROOM BED THE NIGHT
BEFORE, IN PAJAMAS, SURROUNDED BY EMPTY ROOM SERVICE PLATES.
WE SEE HIM HOLD HIS ARM OUT, AS HE'S LAYING BACK, FLIPPING
THROUGH THE TV CHANNELS. ELLA PAUSES, BUT SNUGGLES UP NEXT TO
HIM, IN THE CROOK OF HIS ARM. HIS ARM WRAPS AROUND HER.

THE NEXT SHOT IS OF THEM ASLEEP IN THAT POSITION.

CUT TO:

INT. JESSICA'S CAR - DRIVING - CONTINUOUS

ELLA's surprise diminishes as she stares back out the window.

ELLA ROSE

He's *not* that bad, Jessica.

JESSICA tosses her an irritated look.

JESSICA

He's a publicist's worst nightmare..
Besides, in this town, you don't
have to have sex with someone for
them to tarnish your reputation.

ELLA gives JESSICA an irritated look, and then turns back to
her window.

6. INT. ELLA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

CASH and ELLA are seated on her couch. The TV is on. She sips
her drink, and he looks over; his eyes sweeping her face.

CASH MURPHY

(softly)

Let me bring you home to meet my family.

Her look turns to one of alarm.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. ELLA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - LATE EVENING

Since CASH told her he wants to bring her home for the holidays, ELLA is tense. Feeling cornered. Combative. In the midst of a confrontation, they are standing in the kitchen. She's wild-eyed, and he is confused, trying to understand, and trying to keep calm.

ELLA ROSE

You know what? I'm done. I'm done with all the demands, and controlling bullshit! I'm not a kid anymore, and I don't have to put up with everyone trying to dictate what I do, and when I do it!

CASH's eyes widen as he loses it.

CASH MURPHY

(yelling)

"Dictate!?" Demanding, and controlling you!? Are you serious right now!? Is this about me taking the liberty of buying you a damn plane ticket to spend the holidays with me and my family?! Is the possibility of *maybe* settling into a *real* relationship getting under Ella's skin!?

ELLA ROSE

(snaps)

No one informed me that this was a relationship.

ELLA turns and starts away from him, as he looks hurt and takes some folded papers from his coat pocket, tossing them upon the kitchen counter.

CASH MURPHY

(coolly)

I'm leaving. You obviously need to get your thoughts together.

ELLA stops and glances at the papers.

CASH MURPHY (CONT'D)

Your trip itinerary.

INT. AIRPORT - EARLY MORNING

CASH is walking through, with his backpack and a coffee in hand. He looks at the people sitting around the gate.

CASH MURPHY (V.O.)

I want to see you on that plane, Ella. And I promise, this will be dropped as soon as you're in the seat next to me.

INT. AIRPLANE - EARLY MORNING

The airplane is on the runway, and the seat next to him is empty as he solemnly stares out the plane window.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. STUDIO LOT - EARLY MORNING

ELLA nervously marches through the lot, mouthing words to herself, as if she's practicing. She hesitates just outside CASH's trailer, takes a deep breath, and then knocks firmly on his door. CASH opens, stiffens when he sees her, and looking in, LEAH is hanging out inside. She looks at CASH's solemn face in alarm. As he steps out and shuts the door behind him, she becomes incensed.

ELLA ROSE

(fuming)

Am I interrupting something?

CASH's look is cold and defiant.

CASH MURPHY

You are *not* coming here, to my trailer, after bailing on me the way you did, and then have the audacity to give me an attitude.

ELLA takes a step down, looking more like a lost little girl.

ELLA ROSE

(weakly)

I came here to apologize.

(huffing)

I panicked. I got scared, and it was wrong, Cash. I shouldn't have bailed on you, and I'm sorry.

His jaw tenses and then softens.

CASH MURPHY

You never contacted me. You were a no-show at the airport. I told my parents I was bringing home a great girl who I really cared about, and then I went home by myself, feeling like an idiot.

She gestures for him to continue.

ELLA ROSE

Good, keep going. I need to hear this! Just get it all out, so we can put this entire thing behind us and move forward!

CASH purses his lips together and then winces, shaking his head and breaking his eyes from her.

CASH MURPHY

I'm seeing someone now. I'm sorry.

Her eyes go blank, and her lips part in shock.

FADE OUT.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

A. EARLY MORNING SHOT OF ELLA THOUGHTFULLY STARING OUT LIVING ROOM WINDOW, SIPPING HER COFFEE.

B. SHOT OF ELLA LAYING IN HER BED, TOSSING AND TURNING. SHE REACHES OUT AND GRABS THE OTHER PILLOW, CUDDLING IT TO HER CHEST AND BURYING HER FACE IN IT, SQUEEZING HER EYES SHUT.

C. INT. STUDIO SET - AFTERNOON

Between takes, JARED COOPER and ELLA are talking.

JARED COOPER

Perhaps you can help me get settled into this town, and help me with some suggestions on where to go for coffee, dinner, drinks, what-have-you.

Ella smiles up at him, intrigued. He grins at her.

ELLA ROSE

You couldn't have picked a better tour guide, actually.

JARED COOPER

We should do dinner.

Her eyes catch CASH and LEAH far off, walking around the set. Her eyes flick back upward to JARED.

ELLA ROSE

When and where?

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. STUDIOS - ELLA'S TRAILER - EVENING

ELLA steps inside and CASH is already in there, waiting for her. Standing next to her vanity, where flowers are set. Her eyes briefly light up upon seeing him, before she awkwardly closes the door behind her and eyes him.

ELLA ROSE

Hi there...

CASH gestures toward the flowers.

CASH MURPHY

Nice flowers. Did I miss something?
I know it's not your birthday.

ELLA ROSE

A guy gave them to me.

CASH's eyebrows lift, and he shifts upon his feet.

CASH MURPHY

A guy? Like, a guy you're dating?

ELLA nods, and he looks like he's about to come unglued as she stares at him indignantly.

ELLA ROSE

How are things with Leah?

CASH's frustration boils over.

CASH MURPHY

How come you are ready to date now,
but when I wanted to date you, I
wasn't good enough?!

She loses her poise, as well.

ELLA ROSE

(snidely)

I thought we were dating! So imagine
my surprise when you came home from
your family and had an insta-
girlfriend!

CASH's eyes widen in a mixture of anger and surprise.

CASH MURPHY

You blame me for this?! I bought you
a plane ticket! I wanted to fly you
to Canada to meet my family, for
Christ's sake! You ditched me! You
couldn't even apologize for the

nasty things you said to me before I left your place, but then you wasted a plane ticket and a chance for something real, Ella. Real!

ELLA ROSE

(yelling)

And you wasted no time moving on! You took something that was *years* in the making, and tossed it aside!

CASH MURPHY

You're *not* putting this on me!

ELLA ROSE

I'm just *now* going on a date! It took you, what, the night after you got home from your parents'?

CASH MURPHY

(hoarsely)

That's not fair...

They stare at one another, both trembling from emotion. ELLA breaks their gaze, looking downward with teary eyes.

CASH MURPHY

(hoarsely)

I don't think our story is finished, Ella. The ending is still out there.

ELLA ROSE

(bitterly)

It ends with you putting a ring on Miss Perfect's finger. Good luck with that.

CASH shakes his head, looking hurt and lost. He looks as if he's about to say something, but instead goes for the door.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - EVENING

A New Year's Eve gala is in full swing, with people dressed up, throughout.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

A. SHOT OF JARED AND ELLA WALKING INTO THE BALLROOM, WITH JESSICA AND HER DATE ARM-IN-ARM BEHIND THEM.

B. SHOT OF THE FOUR OF THEM SEATED AT A BIG ROUND TABLE WITH OTHER PEOPLE, SIPPING WINE, CONVERSING AND LAUGHING.

C. SHOT OF ELLA GLANCING OFF TO HER LEFT AND CATCHING SIGHT OF CASH WALKING. HER SMILE DIMINISHES. SHE TAKES A DRINK.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - EVENING

ELLA is at the bar and is handed another glass of wine when LEAH walks up to order a drink. She turns to ELLA and smiles.

LEAH

Oh my God, this party is so cool!
It's so awesome you're doing this
for charity!

ELLA's smile is stiff.

ELLA ROSE

Thank you. Have a wonderful time
tonight.

ELLA walks off, instantly downing her glass of wine and setting it down on an empty table as she walks.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - LATER EVENING

As the crowd starts to count down to midnight, JARED excitedly jumps from his chair and pulls ELLA to her feet. She realizes she's drunk as she wobbles. JESSICA and her date have already run to the middle of the dance floor. As the crowd counts down from ten in slow motion, ELLA feels sicker. On the count of three, we see ELLA rushing for the door to exit the ballroom. JESSICA spots her and gestures for JARED to stay put as she rushes after ELLA.

INT. HOTEL RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

ELLA bursts into a stall, drops to her knees in her dress, and vomits in the toilet, as we hear JESSICA enter. JESSICA locks the restroom door and then stands with her hands on her hips, looking in on ELLA.

JESSICA

Hi there.

ELLA ROSE

Thank goodness! A voice of reason!

ELLA drunkenly turns to look at Jessica, narrowing her eyes.

ELLA ROSE

I didn't know you had a twin!

JESSICA cocks her head at her, sighs, and crouches down to ELLA's level.

JESSICA

You're a mess right now. I told you not to drink anymore wine.

ELLA moans miserably and keeps squinting at JESSICA.

ELLA ROSE

It feels twice as bad when there's two of you yelling at me.

JESSICA

I missed my New Year's kiss to run after you.

ELLA ROSE

It's okay. You don't like him, anyway.

JESSICA

(amusedly)

You're full of jokes when you've got your face in a toilet.

ELLA sighs.

ELLA ROSE

This feels horrible...

JESSICA

It smells horrible, too.

ELLA ROSE

Thanks. Where's Cash?

JESSICA

You mean, Jared? I made him stay there.

ELLA ROSE

You're a saint. How long am I gonna feel like this? This is worse than the flu.

JESSICA

Could've been worse. You could've barfed on the dance floor.

ELLA ROSE

Is that somehow supposed to make me feel better?

JESSICA chuckles and attempts to get ELLA up.

JESSICA

I guess? C'mon. Let's try to get you home. Quickly.

JESSICA puts her arm around ELLA and they exit the restroom.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. BAR/LOUNGE - EARLY EVENING

CASH and ELLA take a seat in a couch in a cozy, dark hotel lounge, and are approached by WAITER, who looks starstruck.

WAITER

Miss Ella Rose and Cash Murphy! What brings you both here?

CASH MURPHY

We're in town for the night, promoting our new show.

WAITER

Wow, that's awesome! Are you two dating, or something?

ELLA's denial is instant, with a shake of her head.

ELLA ROSE

No. *He's* got a girlfriend.

Cash appears defensive, lifting an eyebrow at her.

CASH MURPHY

She's got a boyfriend.

CUT TO:

WAITER is walking away, as CASH settles into the couch and ELLA begins to bicker with him.

ELLA ROSE

How is Leah, these days?

CASH MURPHY

How's what's-his-face?

ELLA ROSE

You know his name.

CASH's lips curl upward. His look is mischievous.

CASH MURPHY

I do. I just don't care.

ELLA ROSE

Nice.

CASH MURPHY

I know *your* name. You're all that matters.

She pauses from fidgeting with the straw of her drink to look over at him thoughtfully.

CUT TO:

WAITER is dropping off two more drinks. He takes the empty ones back with him. CASH adjusts upon the couch, and eyes ELLA intensely as she continues to fidget

CASH MURPHY

The ball's been in your court, ever since I last left your place. I left it there. I've even hoped that at

any given time, you'd bounce it around a few times to see if it was still aired up. But no. You just threw it in the closet and forgot about it.

Her eyes, turning teary, defiantly rest upon him.

ELLA ROSE

I never forgot. I just did what I had to do to try and move on, when everywhere I looked, there you and Leah were!

CASH MURPHY

(demanding)

Why didn't you get on that plane?

ELLA ROSE

I was scared! Scared of *you*, scared of what that trip meant, and scared of how I felt!

CASH MURPHY

How you *felt*?

She stares back at him anxiously, as his eyes pierce her, narrowing slightly.

CASH MURPHY

When Leah told me she loved me, you wanna know what my response was?

ELLA ROSE

(dryly)

Not really.

CASH MURPHY

I said, "I love that you said that."

ELLA's eyes meet his, narrowing now also.

ELLA ROSE

You don't love her?

CASH MURPHY

I'm in love with *you*.

Deeply affected, her eyes lower as her lips part.

ELLA ROSE

(softly)

Do you think we'll ever get the
timing right?

CASH leans toward her.

CASH MURPHY

Dump him and get back with me.

She shakes her head.

ELLA ROSE

It's - it's not that easy...

CASH's look means business as he shakes his empty glass.

CASH MURPHY

I mean it, Ella. If you come back to
me and give me your all, I'll never
look back. But until then, I'm not
going to stop living my life just to
wait for someone who isn't as sure
about me, as I am about her.

CUT TO:

CASH sets the empty glass down, and ELLA looks rattled as he
gets up and leaves her sitting there, leaving the bar. Her
teary eyes look upward, before she expels a long breath.

FADE OUT.

EXT. DESERTED ROAD - EARLY EVENING

Car is broken down. LEAH is agitated as she gets out and
slams the door. CASH is standing along the side of the road,
but doesn't look the least bit upset. He pulls his phone out.

LEAH

What the hell's wrong with this
thing?!

CASH shrugs, tapping at the screen of his phone.

CASH MURPHY

Dunno.

He puts the phone to his ear.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

JARED is kissing ELLA atop the bed, when her phone rings. She turns her head and JARED pulls back as she grabs it.

ELLA ROSE

It's Cash.

Jared rolls his eyes and props himself up as she answers.

CUT TO:

JARED getting up from the bed as we hear CASH's plea.

CASH MURPHY (O.S.)

(brightly)

We're broken down. I was thinking
you guys could come get us!

She flicks her eyes nervously to JARED.

CUT TO:

INT. JARED'S VEHICLE - EVENING

JARED is tensely driving. ELLA glances over at him apprehensively and then turns back to the window.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERTED ROAD - LATE EVENING

JARED's car is stopped just beyond LEAH and CASH's vehicle, and he gets out of the car and pops the trunk without acknowledging either of them, as ELLA appears awkward. But CASH is all smiles, even as LEAH looks put-out.

CASH approaches JARED, who is not amused, and pats him on the shoulder with a smile.

CASH MURPHY

Thanks for coming out, man!

JARED is giving him a leery look.

JARED COOPER
What's wrong with the car?

CASH shrugs nonchalantly, tossing his and LEAH's duffel bags into the trunk.

CASH MURPHY
Just... wouldn't start.

CASH shuts the trunk and goes around to get in the back seat, while JARED eyes him suspiciously.

CUT TO:

JARED is driving along, with ELLA in the passenger seat, staring out the window. LEAH is playing on her phone behind ELLA. CASH seems way too smirky, behind JARED's seat.

CASH MURPHY
How was everyone's evening?

JARED glances upward into the rearview mirror.

JARED COOPER
It was fantastic, barring an impromptu road-trip. I took Ella to meet my family.

CASH's smirk completely disappears.

CASH MURPHY
Is that so? I'm surprised you were able to get her to agree to that.

JARED's eyes flick back upward triumphantly.

JARED COOPER
Turns out, you do things you're not particularly comfortable with, when you love someone.

CASH scoffs.

CASH MURPHY
(blurting)
Are you kidding me?!

CASH immediately catches himself, but his eyes are focused upon ELLA. His nostrils flare.

CASH MURPHY

(coolly)

What I mean is... great! Wow... You two kids, crazy in love.

Still staring out the window, ELLA looks irked, and CASH continues to eye her, wild-eyed.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

EXT. HOTEL - EARLY MORNING

CASH is holding the door open as ELLA storms out, to get into the backseat of the awaiting sedan, followed by JESSICA. JESSICA gets in first, then ELLA, and then CASH, who is smiling brightly, despite ELLA's irritated look. Once the car begins to move, she speaks to him.

ELLA ROSE

(coolly)

Did you get the car taken care of?

CASH MURPHY

Turns out, it started right up for them! It's the craziest thing!

ELLA glares at him as he chuckles, and JESSICA leans forward with interest.

ELLA ROSE

What would you have done, if one of us decided to just get into the car and check for ourselves whether it was really broken down, or not?

JESSICA

Huh? Whose car broke down?

CASH is eyeing ELLA back with amusement.

CASH MURPHY
(innocently)
What do you mean???

ELLA ROSE
You know, if you didn't want to be
alone with your girlfriend, you
could've concocted a better story.

CASH MURPHY
Then I wouldn't have gotten to hear
about how in love with each other
you two are!

JESSICA
What is all of this? What'd I miss?

ELLA turns to give JESSICA a tight, sarcastic smile.

ELLA ROSE
Cash and Leah broke down Saturday
night, about two hours away, mind
you. So he called Jared and I to
pick them up.

JESSICA's eyebrows lift, glancing between them.

ELLA ROSE
(sweetly sarcastic)
His car wasn't broken down, though.
That's the thing. He was just
pretending, in an attempt to
interrupt our night, and it was *so*
completely obvious, even from the
moment he called me!

CASH MURPHY
(chuckling)
You have no proof of this.

ELLA's head whips around to glare at him.

JESSICA
(smirking)
Looking at you is all the proof I
need. Kudos. You've got balls, dude.

ELLA whips her head back around to look at JESSICA, confused.

CASH MURPHY
So! When's the wedding?

As the car comes to a stop, JESSICA gathers herself.

JESSICA
(muttering)
Nice to see you kids are playing
fair.

CASH MURPHY
It's okay! You get to go back to
lover boy soon, and then I'll just
be a thing of the past until we
start shooting season two!

JESSICA gets out of the car, and ELLA flashes a perturbed
CASH her prettiest, spiteful smile.

ELLA ROSE
(smoothly)
You've never been sexier than when
you're jealous.

ELLA slides over the seat to get out, as he stares after her.

MONTAGE OF SHOTS: TROUBLE BREWING

A. BLACK TIE AFFAIR - EVENING

In front of a room full of people - CASH and LEAH included -
JARED drops to one knee and presents ELLA a ring. Her hand
rises to her throat as she looks alarmed instead of happy.

B. SHOT OF CASH STORMING OUT OF THE BALLROOM

C. SHOT OF ELLA STANDING BEFORE AN APARTMENT WINDOW, LOOKING
OUT. JARED IS NEARBY, COOKING IN THE KITCHEN. SHE IS SOLEMN.

D. ELLA SITTING UPON A COUCH, AS SHE IS WATCHING THE NEWS.

TELEVISION (V.O.)
...Ella Rose's charitable foundation,
which she put together to keep city
kids off the streets, came to a
screeching halt today when the city

shut the shelter down due to
excessive violation of health codes.

E. DEVASTATED, SHE LEANS FORWARD, HOLDING HER HEAD IN HER
HANDS.

F. SHE GRABS HER COAT AND KEYS AND LEAVES JARED BEHIND.

G. INT. SHELTER - LATE NIGHT

Distraught, ELLA visits the dark, empty shelter. She flicks
one light on, and looks around for a moment. When CASH
appears behind her in the doorway, she turns and gives him an
appreciative look.

CUT TO:

INT. SHELTER - EMPTY KITCHEN - LATE NIGHT

Standing in the silent kitchen, ELLA turns to CASH, who is
just quietly standing a few feet from her, eyeing her with
his hands shoved in his pockets. Her eyes narrow at him
sheepishly.

ELLA ROSE
(softly)
I've been a jerk, lately. I'm sorry.

CASH's shrug is small.

CASH MURPHY
I've kind of been the same.

He smiles slightly, stepping forward and stopping just short
of her. His eyes pour downward over her face.

CASH MURPHY
Ever since I found out you met his
parents... I don't know. That moment...
It should've been mine.

She looks pained.

ELLA ROSE
What if I told you I believed it
will be, one day? Like you said...
maybe our story isn't over, yet.

His look brightens some.

ELLA ROSE

Maybe we tempted Fate before we were ready. Maybe this is all just practice for the main event.

CASH MURPHY

March Madness.

ELLA looks bewildered.

ELLA ROSE

What's that mean?

CASH shakes his head and chuckles, making ELLA cock her head at him and smile.

ELLA ROSE

Is that more basketball talk?!

CASH MURPHY

(laughing)

Could be.

JESSICA enters the room with notebook in hand, ready to work, and ELLA's are playfully rolling at CASH as she laughs.

INT. JARED'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

ELLA looks tired as we come in the midst of an argument.

JARED COOPER

I just don't see why you had *him* meet you there, Ella! It should be *me!* *Me* that you come to, for support! For *anything!* Not him!!!

Her head wearily bows down, but she says nothing.

INT. STUDIOS - ON-SET - AFTERNOON

ELLA is putting on earrings, when off behind her, JARED enters the shot, marching toward where CASH is standing. Hearing commotion, ELLA turns around just in time to see JARED haul off and punch CASH in the eye.

INT. WINTER CHARITY BALL - EVENING

JARED, ELLA, JESSICA, her date, and a few others are seated around a table. ELLA picks up her wine, and her eyes float off to where CASH is seated beside LEAH and several others. He looks distracted, and not part of their conversation. ELLA pries her eyes from him, and then his pensive stare rests upon her.

CUT TO:

As the rest of her table is laughing and talking, ELLA is sipping her wine. Her eyes once again find CASH, who looks as out of place at his table as she does at hers. Scratches his head, he looks uninterested in what LEAH is saying to him. Miserably, ELLA looks away.

CUT TO:

ELLA looks almost like a caged animal. She excuses herself and then rises to her feet. She heads for the ballroom exit, and CASH spots her as she passes through the door. He pushes his chair back, and starts to rise to his feet.

CUT TO:

ELLA is marching down the corridor. She tosses an anxious look over her shoulder, and then ducks into the first restroom she sees. The door closes behind her. Her breaths are quick. Alone, she props herself against the restroom wall, taking a deep breath. She leans forward and checks her reflection, swiping her finger along her cheek, and taking another deep breath, before propping herself back against the wall.

Then the door swings open behind her, and she stands straight again, as CASH enters. As if he is on a mission, and with a look of focus, he rounds her and stops just before her, staring straight at her. Neither of them speak, but their stares are locked. Intense. Passionate. She shifts slightly upon her feet. He lunges forward, takes her face into her hands and kisses her passionately. Hungrily. She reciprocates, and pulls him to her.

The door swings open again, and JESSICA is there, not looking surprised.

CUT TO:

JESSICA is giving them both a chastising look, as she's pointing out of the restroom. CASH is leaving, tossing ELLA a bold, lusty look. He is gone. ELLA turns and passes a stern JESSICA still standing in the doorway.

CUT TO:

INT. WINTER CHARITY BALL - CONTINUOUS

JESSICA and ELLA are seated back at the table, in their spots. JESSICA pats ELLA on the leg and goes back to conversation. ELLA picks up her wine glass as we see CASH has rejoined LEAH at their respective table. He still looks as disinterested as ever. ELLA picks up her wine glass, thoughtfully staring at him as she takes a drink.

FADE OUT.