INT. PARKED VEHICLE - NIGHT

Open to an ornament dangling from the front mirror. Focus on the quote written on the ornament: “Loyalty is about the people who stay true to you behind your back.”

DENIS, a young handsome man and **BABY,** an equally beautiful young lady are seated in the front seats of a parked car. They’re both elegantly dressed. Baby wears a short casual gown with jewelry all over. She sits looking all cute in the driver seat, clutching her purse.

From the back seat: Denis stretches his hand and Baby’s hand meets him halfway. Their hands hover below the dangling ornament in the background.

DENIS
You ready, baby?

BABY
(Nodding)
Yeah.

Denis pulls her hand and kisses it. She blushes.

He gets out, goes round and opens her door.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Denis and Baby walk towards the entrance of a dazzling but low-key restaurant. She has her hand tucked in his arms. As they get to the main entrance, a guard welcomes them with a big expectant smile. He’s **TARIQ**, a young security guard that could easily be a guest with a change of clothing.

TARIQ
Welcome to Lomo Cafe. Would you be interested in our valet service? It’s complimentary.

DENIS
We’re fine, thank you.

Tariq smiles and ushers them in.

INT. RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Denis leads her and they settle into a booth. They sit beside each other.

BABY
Ooh, the place is nice.

DENIS
Yeah it is, baby. Its a perfect place for a perfect night.
(Cups her face)
For the perfect girl.

She blushes.

A waiter shows up with a bottle of wine and two wine cups and sets it on the table.

WAITER
Compliments... From our manager.

The waiter gestures towards the restaurant bar. A young man, **MARK**, waves at them with a smile.

Denis nods at the manager with a smile. Baby puts her hand on her chest and mouths “thank you.”

The waiter leaves.

Denis proceeds to serve. As he raises the bottle, a hand grabs him by the shoulder. He drops the bottle, looks up and recognizes the face he sees.

Standing beside him is **JAMES**, a tall good-looking man about the same age as Denis. He opens himself for a hug and Denis embraces it.

DENIS
My man! What are you doing here?

JAMES
Just came to cool off bro? How you doing?

DENIS
I’m great, I’m great. You know, having a special night with my woman.

JAMES
(Excitedly)
Ahn...

DENIS
Meet the love of my life.

Denis points at each of them.

DENIS (CONT’D)
James, baby. Baby, James.

James shakes Baby. They smile pleasantly at each other.

DENIS (CONT'D)
Today's our anniversary.

JAMES
Aww, that's great. I envy you two.

They all laugh.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Well uh, I'll leave you guys to it.
Enjoy your night.

Denis shakes him once more. James smiles at Baby and walks away. He settles in a boot further away from them.

They begin to swipe through the menu. As they ponder on what to order, Tariq the security guard walks up to them.

TARIQ
(In hushed tones)
I'm sorry to interrupt you two...
umm are you the ones that parked
the Toyota Camry?

DENIS
Yes, that's us.

TARIQ
Please, your car alarm is shouting.
You need to deactivate it please.
It'll only take a minute.

DENIS
Oh sure. Of course.
(He looks at his baby)
I'll be right back.

He gives her a peck and stands.

We follow Denis in a TRACKING SHOT as he walks out of the restaurant...

EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Into the parking lot. We hear a car alarm ring louder and louder as he moves. We STAY with him as he points his remote trying to shush the car when all of a sudden --

Two masked men grab him aggressively from behind. He begins to struggle but is easily overpowered by the men. They cover his head with a cloak.

From nowhere, a car screeches to a halt beside them and Denis is bundled into the boot. The masked men rush in and the car speeds off.

As the car speeds off, ANGLE ON a CCTV camera by a corner. We see it blinking red.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Back at the restaurant, Baby is still as she was. She swipes lazily though the menu. She drops it, gets up and walks towards the restroom.

James is seated at his booth eating fried chips. As he mouths it nonchalantly, a text rings on his phone. He looks at it. It reads “Its done.” He puts the phone in his suit pocket and looks around calmly.

INT. RESTROOM

Baby gently applies a lipstick. She stares at her reflection in the mirror and likes what she sees.

BACK TO:

James as he continues to eat. As he reaches to pick up a piece of chip, a hand drops a folded note and walks away. We look up with James and see Baby, who walks to her booth and sits as if nothing happened. James looks around and clears his throat.

He takes a deep breath and slowly unveils the note, leaving his hand on the table as if he’s scared of the paper. He opens it.

CUT TO:

Baby checks the time on her phone. She begins to feel uneasy. She gets up and walks to Tariq standing outside the door.

BABY
Sorry, have you seen my boyfriend? He hasn’t returned since you asked him to...

TARIQ
Oh no, I haven't. Is everything alright? Have you called his phone?

BABY
I don't know... His, his phone is with me.
(Looking very concerned)
Please can you help me check...?

TARIQ
Of course. Please wait a second. You may have your seat. She gives him a straight face.

Tariq walks way and Baby follows him behind.

EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

They approach Denis' car and she notices its still parked as it was. She begins to fondle with her necklace worriedly.

TARIQ
Please relax.

Baby is now in distress. She blows herself air with her hands as she begins to pace back and forth.

Mark the manager shows up. As Tariq updates him on the situation, Baby withdraws herself and begins to think. She paces back and forth, mouthing under her breath.

From behind her James walks out of the restaurant and approaches.

JAMES
(To baby)
What's going on?
Are you okay? Where's Denis?

Baby tries to speak but bursts into dry tears. She embraces James. He has an uncomfortable look. She begins to tell him what happened.

Tariq screams melodramatically and points to the CCTV camera at the corner and all of them frantically become excited. Baby's face brightens with hope.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Where is the live feed?

TARIQ
That's the estate camera. It is controlled from security post.

MANAGER
No, no, I can access it...

His voice tails off for a second as his eyes meets with James', who slightly shakes his head in disapproval. The manager throws him back a puzzled look.

MANAGER (CONT'D)
I can access the feed from my phone. Its in my office. One second.

Mark withdraws himself and jogs towards the restaurant. Baby tries to gather herself.

INT. RESTAURANT - SAME

Inside the restaurant is serene as it was. The note is still on the table as James left it. Denis and Baby's wine cups are untouched.

EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The manager approaches waving a phone. They flock towards him as he searches for the camera recording.

He finds the video. He presses play.

We watch with them as Denis walks into the CCTV frame and towards his car and is then kidnapped away. As the car zooms off on the phone, Baby looses her shit.

They all become frantic.

JAMES
Guys, guys. Everybody calm down.

Tariq grabs the phone and rewinds the feed. He pauses at a frame just before the car zooms off.

TARIQ
Here!

He points at the vehicle's plate number. He zooms in on the plate number until fills our screen.

STAY on the plate number for a BEAT and then DISSOLVE INTO:

EXT. EMPTY ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

The same plate number filling our screen, and then slowly zoom out to reveal the actual car, parked in an empty alleyway.

At the front of the car, a man calmly paces back and forth. We don't see his face, but he has a phone clutched in his hand. He checks his watch and leans nervously on the car.

Out of a DARK CORNER, a MAN walks towards the car with a worried look. He wears the same cloth as one of the kidnappers. The man gestures a question to the faceless man.

DARK CORNER MAN
What's happening man? They're getting anxious inside. Is everything alright?

Faceless man turns towards Dark Corner Man and we see his face for the first time. It's an unrestrained Denis. He doesn't look like he's been abducted.

DENIS
I don't know man. I called James... He didn't answer.

Denis looks helpless.

DARK CORNER MAN
Look... Just come talk to the guys inside. Boost their morale. They're here for you, you know.

Denis nods and walks towards the dark corner. Dark corner man follows him. We follow Denis as he walks through a passageway, opens a door and walks into-

INT. BANQUET HALL - CONTINUOUS

A banquet hall. Not too large but not too small either. The room is crowded with happy-faced people all well-dressed.

A massive banner decorated with ribbons hangs from one end to another with the message: "WILL YOU MARRY ME?"

Denis composes himself and gives a wide smile to the crowd.

DENIS
Sorry guys. Uh, James should be here any moment from now. I'm just waiting for his call.
(He looks at the banner)
Everything will be alright.

His nervousness seems to have leaked as a lady walks to him and gives him a reassuring pat on the back. He grimaces.

A call comes on his phone, he looks at it.

DENIS (CONT'D)
Oh shit, it's James!

He answers the call and steps out.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Denis clutches the phone to his ear.

DENIS
Hello man, what the hell!? Where are you?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - SAME

James has excused himself from the crowd. He speaks in hushed tones.

JAMES
Look man there's something I have to tell you.

DENIS
What? Is everything alright?

JAMES
Look... you have to call off the proposal man.

DENIS
What!? Are you drunk... what the fuck are you talking about?

JAMES
Bro... When you left, your baby dropped a note on my table.

DENIS
Note? What note? Baby?

JAMES
Yeah man, she just dropped it and left. And it said uh...

DENIS
It said what?

JAMES
It said uh...

DENIS
It said what man!? There's no time...

JAMES
It said "I want you."

There is pause. Nobody says anything.

JAMES (CONT'D)
"I see how you've been looking at me... I should be with you not Denis."

Denis is dumbfounded. He swallows.

DENIS
She said all that.

JAMES
Yes. On the note.

DENIS
On the small note she said that, ehn, James?

James stays silent.

Behind him, the little crowd exclaims. They seem to have discovered something.

JAMES
Shit. They've seen the note you left.

The manager finds a note tucked in between Denis' car windscreen. It reads:

"We have Mr. Denis. Follow the instructions behind immediately. DO NOT INVOLVE THE POLICE!" A short address is written below. Baby is speechless. She gather her breath.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Look man, I'm just being a loyal friend. Know what you're getting into.

Denis sighs and hisses.

JAMES (CONT'D)
We'll continue with the plan. I'll be on my way. Get ready.

James hangs up.

He walks back to the group and Tariq hands him the note. He reads it for a second.

JAMES (CONT'D)
We have to do it.

BABY
What? No!

JAMES
Listen. We have no idea who we're dealing with. Its wise for us to do exactly what they say.

Baby isn't convinced.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Trust me.

She looks defeated. James gives the manager a nod.

INT. / EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A car drives off. Inside are James driving, Mark beside him, and Baby in the back seat. She nervously clutches her necklace, staring away out the window.

EXT. EMPTY ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Dark Corner Man leans on a wall smoking a cigarette. As he smokes, he sees a car coming towards the alleyway. He quickly takes one more puff, throws the cigar on the floor, steps on it and runs inside.

EXT. EMPTY ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

James' car pulls over behind the kidnap vehicle. Baby jumps out first.

JAMES
(Pointing towards the dark corner)
Let's check there.

BABY
Are you sure? Let's just wait here and see.

JAMES
No. Let's go there. That's what the paper said.

James looks at the Mark. The manager has a delightful smile, obviously dying of anticipation. James leads the way into the dark corner.

INT. BANQUET HALL - SAME

The hall is quieted down with the lights off. Everyone is hushed but we can make out their excited faces.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - SAME

As they walk through the alleyway, CLOSEUP on Baby. She walks nervously, her eyes peering through, expecting the worse. She pauses as James knocks and opens the door to the banquet. She enters the hall and all becomes dark.

A BEAT and then- She startles as the lights suddenly comes on and everybody in the hall yells “surprise!.” Her face goes through different emotions when she sees James and the manager are also in it. Her eyes wanders around the hall as she identifies familiar faces.

Baby looks up across the room and sees the large banner and our guy Denis smoothly goes on one knee behind her. People gesture to her to turn and as she does, Denis pulls out a ring and points it at her.

She covers her mouth with her palms and then swallows him tenderly with a hug. Everyone applauds, films, takes pictures and whistles around them.

Cradled in his arms, Denis looks her deep the eyes.

DENIS
I love you, baby.

“Awws” all around he hall. Angle on James who has an uneasy look. He’s the least impressed person in the room. His eyes lock with Baby’s for a second but he looks away immediately.

MOMENTS LATER:

As everyone talks and socialize between themselves, Denis pulls Baby to the side.

DENIS (CONT’D)
So? Did he fall for it?

BABY
(Shaking her head)
I don’t think so. He’s been acting weird since I gave him the note.

DENIS
Yeah. He called and warned me to call off the engagement.

Baby chuckles, then hits him on the arm.

BABY
And why did you decide to do it this night, knowing you were proposing?

DENIS
(Laughs)
I thought it'll be funny.

BABY
You're crazy.

They both laugh. They turn and stare at James who's greeting some guests.

BABY (CONT'D)
(Thoughtfully)
He is a good friend.

DENIS
Certainly. The best.

A photographer asks them to pose. Fade to black.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Everybody's leaving. Denis enters a car and Baby is about to enter when she pauses.

BABY
Oh damn. Baby I need to go back inside. I think I dropped something.

DENIS
(Puzzled)
Uh, okay.

BABY
It'll be quick.

She walks away from the car and back into the dark corner. We follow her as she walks through the alleyway. Out of nowhere, a hand sharply pulls her to the side. Its James.

They stare at themselves for a moment. James seems anxious.

JAMES
So? Did he fall for it?

BABY
Yeah. You're his perfect friend.

James cools off, releases her hand. Baby gives him a flirtatious look for the first time.

BABY (CONT'D)
So... I'll see you at Transcorp tomorrow?

JAMES
Sure. Same room.

BABY
I have to go.

She tries to hurry off, he pulls her back and holds her hand.

They smile at each other. James pulls her hand and kisses her new ring. She disappears into the alleyway.

THE END.