

## Ruination (a screenplay)

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EXT. DUSK- RESIDENTIAL STREET IN SUMMER

A burning house is being hosed down by fire trucks. A mother, KALEIGH, and father, THOMAS, sit wrapped in blankets. The mother is holding their daughter, REINA. Kaleigh is sobbing while Thomas rubs her back, Reina just stares at the house with wide eyes. A man in a trench coat approaches them. He flashes a badge and smiles lightly at the family.

AGENT

Hello, Mr. And Mrs....?

THOMAS

Matren. I'm Thomas Matren.

AGENT

Mr. And Mrs. Matren. And this is?

He bends down and smiles at Reina, her gaze does not shift from the burning house.

THOMAS

Reina.

AGENT

Reina... How old are you, Reina?

Again, her stare does not waver.

KALEIGH

She's 7, sir. What is this about?

AGENT

I'm with public safety involving gifted individuals. We just want to know how this fire started. Are any of you gifted with any sort of flame manipulation?

Thomas and Kaleigh glance at one another.

KALEIGH

No, sir. I have slight plant manipulation, Thomas... he's a weather manipulator. He works for city tourism.

The agent looks at them both and nods.

AGENT

And what about your daughter?

BEAT

THOMAS

She has a bit of both. We notice she has a way with plants, she also made a small tornado in her playroom- nothing we didn't prepare for as two gifted parents.

The agent nods again and looks back at the fire.

AGENT

And the little one you lost?

Kaleigh begins crying.

THOMAS

He was 4, we're not sure what he was capable of. It's possible he had fire gifts- we don't know.

He begins to get choked up. The agent nods.

BEAT

The agent goes to shake Thomas' hand, but Thomas does not take it.

AGENT

We will be in contact again, soon. As soon as we figure out what caused this. Public safety and all.

He takes his hand back.

THOMAS

With all due respect, sir, we're in shock. We just lost our son-

He chokes back tears. The agent nods and starts to walk away. He glances back at Reina who is still staring at the fire before leaving completely.

FADE OUT.

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Flashes of news involving disasters caused by gifted individuals. Villains depicted on TV being defeated by the 'A Team' superheroes.

-  
Flashes of 'C Team' search and rescue saving people from burning buildings and sinking ships.

-  
Flashes of wanted villains.

FADE OUT.

INT. NIGHT- A FRAT HOUSE

A raging party full of college students is at its highest point. A now 21-year-old Reina is holding a solo cup and laughing with two girls her age.

REINA

Alright girls! Let's see which one of these frat guys will pour us a shot!

FRIEND 1

Girl, what's the occasion?

Reina looks at them with a huge smile.

REINA

What's not to celebrate? We're almost done college, I've been single a year now- drinking at a *legal* age for once.

The two friends look at one another and shrug.

FRIEND 2

Alright, Reina. Let's get some shots!

The three girls whoop and run over to the bar that is nothing more than a water trough filled with ice and liquor. A blonde man around their age stands behind it.

FRIEND 1

Oh, damn.

REINA

What?

FRIEND 1

That man be looking you up and down, hon.

Reina slows her pace and looks at the blonde. He smirks and looks away. She smiles and marches over.

REINA

How much for a shot?

BLONDE

(smirking) Depends.

REINA

On what?

BLONDE

You gifted?

She pauses and her smile fades for a moment. She snaps out of it and raises her hand. A beer can shakes and spins into her hand. She cracks it, takes a large sip, and hands it to him. He laughs and pounds back the beer.

BLONDE

Alright, that's pretty damn cool. What's your poison?

REINA

Tequila.

BLONDE

Okay, okay, so it's like that. What's the occasion?

He begins pouring Jose Cuervo into a shot glass.

REINA

Why does everyone keep asking me that? Can't a girl just party?

He exhales a laugh.

BLONDE

You got me there. Here.

He hands her the shot and has one for himself.

FRIEND 2

Hey! Two more beers, boy.

He looks at Reina then hands his shot to the friend and pours another. The man pours another for himself and shoots it after they drop the little red cups. He gags.

REINA

Not a tequila guy?

BLONDE

Oh, yeah. More of a Bud guy.

They laugh. Reina looks at him and they hold a gaze.

REINA

What are you doing after this?

BLONDE

Cleaning up all the floor-cups probably.

She squeaks and rushes to pick up the three cups her and her friends dropped. She tosses them in the garbage and looks at him innocently.

BLONDE

Wow! How kind of you....

REINA

Reina! I'm Reina.

He blushes into a smile.

RHYS

I'm Rhys- junior.

REINA

I'm a senior!

RHYS

Damn, okay, showing me up again! Well, Reina, I am plan-free tonight.

She looks at her friends who are still giggling and bouncing to the music.

REINA

Wanna hangout?

RHYS

I would love that.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT- SAME PARTY

Reina drunkenly stumbles around and trips. Rhys catches her and smiles.

REINA

Where did you come from?

He hesitates.

RHYS

I was right beside you! Want some water?

She nods and he whisks her away.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT- A FRAT HOUSE

Reina and Rhys sit in the florescent kitchen on the floor, both drinking water- Reina with two hands. Her makeup is smeared and her hair messy. There're cups all over the floor alongside empty cans and bottles. Reina's friend enters the kitchen.

FRIEND 2

Hey, Reina.

REINA

(Coughs) Yeah?

FRIEND 2

You good here? We're gonna head out.

Reina glances at Rhys.

REINA

Yeah, I'm good. Get home safe. I love you.

FRIEND 2

Love you too, goodnight.

She stumbles out of the kitchen. Reina looks at Rhys and starts laughing, he joins in her fun. She flicks water from the cup with her gift, which he blocks and laughs.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT- RHYS' BEDROOM

The sun is peeking through the curtains. Rhys opens his eyes and looks at Reina, who is laying under his arm on his chest. Reina starts to open her eyes. Rhys panics a little and glances around frantically.

REINA

Were you watching me sleep?

He laughs nervously.

RHYS

I woke up first. Sorry.

She smiles at his eyes; he seems to melt in her gaze.

RHYS

You're so beautiful.

Reina widens her eyes. She lurches up and covers herself with the blanket. She begins to tear up.

RHYS

I'm sorry!

REINA

No, no please. It's okay. It isn't you.

He reaches to touch her back with his hand but pulls away.

RHYS

Are you okay?

Reina sniffs and looks back at him.

REINA

I'm sorry. Last night- there was an occasion.

She wipes her tears away and puffs her cheeks. Reina grabs a glass of warm water from the bedside table and drinks it slowly. Rhys watches her drink and then stands up. He puts some clothes on- a tank top and sweatpants.

REINA

I'm sorry-

RHYS

No, no. Look, I'm gonna go get us breakfast, okay? What do you like?

REINA

Uh, I like anything. Where are you going?

RHYS

McDonalds?

She wipes away another tear and nods.

REINA

Want me to come with you?

RHYS

No, I'll only be a second.

He smiles at Reina who is clearly confused. He jumps up and down a little before blipping away. Reina looks frantically around the empty room.

REINA

(Whispering) What the fuck?

She grabs one of his shirts and throws it on. She finds a pair of boxers and tosses them on as well, deciding to trust he will return.

Suddenly, Rhys returns, only minutes later.

REINA

Holy shit!

She falls back onto the bed in terror. He is holding a bag of McDonalds, and smirks at her in his clothes.

RHYS

Breakfast!

REINA

Dude, you can teleport?

Rhys blushes and sits next to her on the bed. He hands her a breakfast sandwich and hash-brown from the bag.

RHYS

Yeah... It got me out of a lot of trouble as a kid. It's actually the only reason I'm in the frat.

REINA

Really?

RHYS

Yeah, the guys thought it was awesome, so they offered me a spot in the house in my freshman year.

Reina opens the sandwich and takes a bite.

REINA

(Munching) And now you're a beer boy.

Rhys laughs and gives her a gentle shove.

RHYS

It was my turn.

He opens his own sandwich and begins eating it

BEAT

RHYS

So, what's going on?

Reina stares at her sandwich and sniffs. She places it next to her and looks at him.

REINA

My brother died, 14 years ago. Last night was the anniversary of his death.

Rhys immediately stops chewing and looks at her with deep concern. She starts to tear up again.

REINA

It's okay. I'm fine 364 days of the year but it's the one day I just can't... life. You know?

He nods slowly, placing down his sandwich. He wastes little time giving her a hug.

RHYS

I'm sorry, Reina I feel horrible-

REINA

What? About last night?

RHYS

Yeah, I just. I'm sorry I took advantage of-

REINA

No. Shut up. I wanted to. I don't like people- but I like your vibe, and I think I like you. You're genuine and you can teleport, dude. You're really cool, so just shut up.

He nods and smiles at her.

BEAT

They begin eating again in silence. Rhys balls up his empty wrapper and puts it in the bag.

RHYS

So, what is your gift anyway? I was trying to figure it out last night- with the beer can. What is that? Liquid manipulation?

Reina smirks. She stands up, he follows her with his eyes. She pulls the water from the glass she was drinking out of and it flies around the room. Rhys stares in amazement. The water flows gently back into the cup.

RHYS

That's really cool, Reina.

REINA

Wait, hold on.

She walks over to a plant on the windowsill and holds her hand above it. The roots break through the pot, dirt falls onto the surface. She goes to pick up the glass. Rhys shoots up and helps her.

RHYS

You can mess with plants *and* water?

REINA

Yeah, and, well...

They place the glass and dirt into a small trashcan next to his desk.

RHYS

What do you mean?

Reina moves him to sit down on the bed again and stands before him. He waits in anticipation. The air in the room begins to spin, book pages blow open and spin around them- then it stops. Rhys looks on in amazement.

REINA

Wait.

Rhys looks even more shocked by her. Reins glances around and beelines to a lighter on the desk. She sparks it and stares into the flame.

BEAT

She moves her hand above it and begins manipulating it around her arm. It crawls like a snake. She then dissipates it into the air. She sets the lighter down and smiles shyly at him.

RHYS

Reina... you're amazing. You can control the elements? That's unheard of!

Reina covers her face and squeals.

REINA

I'm not supposed to show people that.

RHYS

Why? That's so cool!

He stands up and grabs her, pulling her into a hug.

RHYS

Go on a date with me.

REINA

What?

RHYS

I want to take you out. Sunday night.

REINA

Damn, beer boy.

Reina stares at him, they lock eyes. She kisses him and they are frozen in their moment.

REINA

Yeah, let's do it.

They kiss again and laugh together. In their own little world.

FADE OUT.

EXT. DAY- PICNIC TABLE IN QUAD AT THE UNIVERSITY

Reina is studying with her Air Pods in. Rhys jumps into the seat across from her with two Starbucks cups. She takes her Air Pods.

RHYS

Triple shot. Ready for the exam?

REINA

Agh! No. I'm freaking out.

RHYS

You're so smart, you will be fine. Best marketing agent on the planet right here.

A group of girls walk past, gabbing.

GIRL 1

Did you see it on the news? Incinerator blew up another power plant.

GIRL 2

Why isn't A Team doing anything? Like Beam? Or Energist?

Reina and Rhys eavesdrop.

GIRL 3

Apparently, they're not tough enough. Crazy Incinerator is a villain- imagine if he was a hero, dude.

GIRL 1

I'd feel so much safer! The attack wasn't even that far away...

They are too far to hear. Rhys looks at Reina and bites his lip.

REINA

Just so long as Incinerator doesn't ruin my chances of passing this exam and graduating, I am not worried.

Rhys laughs, but stares at his hands worryingly. He takes a sip of his coffee and shakes it off.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY- RHYS BEDROOM

Reina knocks and walks in, Rhys is at his desk pouring over a textbook.

RHYS

Hey! How was your last exam?

Reina flops on his bed and squeals.

REINA

I'm all done, Rhys!

He walks over to the bed and leans over top of her; arms on each side of her head. He kisses her.

RHYS

I'm so proud of you.

The air in the room begins to spin, his papers fall all over the place. He stands up, she follows.

REINA

I am so sorry!

They rush to pick up the papers. Reina gently grabs a hand-written card.

REINA

What's this?

Rhys blushes while gathering the rest of the papers.

RHYS

I love how the weather changes inside a room when you're happy. Also, that is a birthday card. You weren't supposed to see it yet.

She flips it open and smiles.

REINA

*'Happy 22nd birthday. Beautiful Reina, you wonderful person, you are a star- let's go to the bar and celebrate you.'* Rhys, oh my god.

RHYS

I'm not very good at writing. Us nurses- surprised you can read the chicken scratch.

She smiles brightly and hugs him.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT- NIGHTCLUB

Reina and Rhys are dancing their hearts out in the crowd. A friend pulls Reina away.

FRIEND 2

Shots, girl! Birthday shots!

REINA

Yes! Rhys, come on.

Rhys dances out of the crowd. The DJ starts glowing and flashing lights from his hands and mouth.

DJ

Ayo! Let's get fucked up tonight.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT- STREET

The five friends are walking all over a residential street, laughing and stumbling.

FRIEND 1

(Singing) Happy birthday to you!

ALL

Happy birthday to you! Happy birthday, dear Reina!

REINA

(Joking) Shut up!

ALL

Happy birthday to you!

REINA

It's past midnight guys!

They all laugh together. Reina notices rain drops. Moments later it starts to pour. The group screams as the sky drenches them. Reina stops and puts her hands out beside her, she begins to raise them. She shifts her arms around, moving the rain around the group. An air pocket encloses them, the rain blocked by her gift. Rhys stares in amazement at his girlfriend. The girls all scream in support of their friend. They run down the street, protected from the elements.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT- RHYS' BEDROOM

Reina and Rhys lay, legs intertwined in the blankets and with one another. Reina gently places a kiss on his lips.

REINA

Thank you for tonight.

RHYS

Anything for you.

BEAT

REINA

Is it too early to say it?

RHYS

Say what?

REINA

(Quieter) I love you, Rhys Brandon.

Rhys begins to tear up and kisses her.

RHYS

I love you too, Reina Matren.

BEAT

RHYS

Can I say something?

REINA

Anything.

RHYS

I think, despite your degree and stuff, you should join A Team.

Reina looks at him with surprise and shakes her head.

REINA

What? Rhys, what are you saying?

RHYS

No, I'm not trying to offend you or anything, babe. There's so much crazy shit going on right now, and I feel like you'd absolutely make a difference as a hero.

Reina looks at her hands before turning over and staring at the ceiling.

RHYS

Reina-

REINA

Goodnight, Rhys.

They drift off.

FADE OUT.

INT. MORNING- RHYS' BEDROOM

Reina shakes him awake. It is the morning after her birthday and Rhys' drunken statement.

REINA

(Softly) Hey, wake up.

Rhys mumbles and grumbles awake. He looks at her and rubs his eyes.

RHYS

I'm sorry, Rein.

REINA

Shut up and listen.

Rhys stops and looks at her in worry.

REINA

Why did you say I should join A Team?

RHYS

Rein...

REINA

Please just... be honest and tell me.

RHYS

There's so much bad in the world. Villains running around blowing shit up. I know for a fact that you could wreck them. Rein...

He sits up, she does too. Rhys grabs her face, softly and puts their foreheads together.

RHYS

You are so amazing. What you did with the rain last night was incredible, and beautiful. Most importantly, it was powerful. The world needs someone like you.

Reina sighs.

REINA

Do you mean that?

RHYS

Absolutely.

BEAT

REINA

Can I say something now?

RHYS

Anything.

REINA

You. C Team. Wanna talk about someone making a difference? Teleporting in the search and rescue team- you'd save so many people.

Rhys shakes his head.

RHYS

I mean, I've thought about it. Honestly. But, you on A Team...

REINA

I haven't shown anyone, my whole gift. I always leave out the fire thing. Always.

RHYS

Why?

Reina inhales sharply.

REINA

It scares people.

RHYS

It'll scare the shit out of villains, Rein.

REINA

Civilians too. My mom told me to keep it under wraps. I don't see myself as a hero, Rhys.

RHYS

I know. It was stupid of me to suggest. I'm sorry. I-I love you.

Reina's serious face becomes softer. She kisses him and rests her head on his chest. He runs his hand through her hair.

REINA

I love you too.