

Mutt

**by
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EXT. ESTATE - NIGHT

Emma Stanley (15, hair pulled back tightly, not especially pretty, wearing jacket and skinnies) is sheltering under the awning of 'Sunrise Food Market'.

It's drizzling and unfortunately the awning doesn't reach far enough to cover all of her dog Noah. A scruffy, black mongrel, he sits beside her looking sodden and dejected. They've both been waiting some time but it's Valentine's night, Emma's not giving up.

The shop's owner Hasan ambles out - business is slow tonight. Emma smiles but he gives her a hard look - hasn't got time for love-sick teenagers hanging around.

As Hasan goes back in, Emma shivers, fed up of waiting and feeling exposed. She pulls out her mobile, rubs the raindrops off the screen with her sleeve and dials.

EMMA

It's Em, where are you?

Grinding noise of skateboard wheels approaching. Unconcerned, Emma turns and uses the shop window as a makeshift mirror, quickly readjusting her hair, then pouting to check her lipstick. The noise stops. Emma frowns, seeing the grinning reflection of a lad of 10.

JOE

Go on, give us a kiss!

EMMA

Go away Joe.

JOE

Waiting for your boyfriend?

(as she gives him the evil eye)

Where is he then?

Joe looks up and down the street, as if to emphasize his point.

JOE (CONT'D)

Stood you up right?

Joe's rolling back and forth beside her on his skateboard. The noise is irritating, the embarrassment factor even worse. Emma's had enough, pushes him away. Joe sprawls in a heap onto the street.

JOE

Oi! What you do that for?!

Joe's trouser has ripped at the knee and he's bleeding.

EMMA

(feeling bad)

You alright?

But Emma's distracted, her phone buzzing in her pocket.

JOE

My mum's going to go mental!

Ryan's name has come up on her phone, Emma really needs to get this call.

EMMA

I know. I'm sorry but I've got to get this Joe.

JOE

She's going to kill me!

Emma's about to press the button, when the phone goes dead. She's too late.

Joe huffily snatches up his skateboard, hobbles away with a couple of incriminating glances back. Noah eyes his mistress anxiously as Emma presses 'missed call'.

PHONE

You have one message.

RYAN (V.O.)

It's me. Something's come up. I can't see you tonight. Bye.

Emma let's this sink in, bitterly disappointed. As she bends down to un-trip Noah from his lead, he responds with a big, wet slobbery kiss.

EMMA

Hey Noah!

But she doesn't care. Putting her arms around the soggy mutt, Emma's got a smile on her face once more.