

A BIT OF A MISUNDERSTANDING...

By D. Brent Holland

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A Comedic Duet

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SYNOPSIS: Austin wakes up to find his hands behind his back and his girlfriend scrambling to explain how he ended up that way.

TIME: The present.

SETTING: Laura's parent's living room.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 male, 1 female)

LAURA (f)..... A high School student dating Austin. Has trust issues and a tendency to act without thinking. *(102 lines)*

AUSTIN (m) A high school student dating Laura. Sleeps like the dead. *(98 lines)*

SET: Bare stage with a chair

PROPS

- handcuffs
- key
- cell phone

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

We had a lot of fun with this at Laney High School. This scene works best if you play the emotions straight and raw, with all of the confusion that would come with such an improbable situation.

AT START: *When the lights come up, we see AUSTIN in a chair with his hands tied behind his back.*

LAURA: If I unlock the cuffs, you have to promise not to freak out at me.

AUSTIN: *(Obviously already freaking out.)* What?!

LAURA: You can't freak out. This is all a misunderstanding. I see that now, and I'm going to explain, but I need you to not freak out.

AUSTIN: My arms are literally handcuffed behind my back.

LAURA: I know. I'm sorry! I said that!

AUSTIN: What were you doing? We were watching a movie.

LAURA: And you fell asleep.

AUSTIN: It was "The Notebook" and you've made me watch it three times!

LAURA: It's my favorite movie!

AUSTIN: And I fell asleep! And when I woke up...

LAURA: If you had just stayed asleep another five minutes none of this would have happened.

AUSTIN: I woke up because it's uncomfortable to have your hands cuffed behind your back!

LAURA: You sleep like the dead! You've been sitting like that for half an hour!

AUSTIN: Half an hour?! Why?

LAURA: Because I couldn't find the key!

AUSTIN: But why was I handcuffed? Are you punishing me because I fell asleep?

LAURA: If I punished you every time you fell asleep during one of MY movies, you'd be dead by now.

AUSTIN: Then why am I handcuffed, Laura?

LAURA: Well, now thinking about it, it's kind of a funny story.

AUSTIN: Is this a joke? Were you playing a joke on me? I don't get it.

LAURA: Well...

AUSTIN: Well... what?

LAURA: It wasn't a joke...

AUSTIN: I'm not understanding any of this and I'm losing feeling in my fingers. Can you unlock me now?

LAURA: Not yet.

AUSTIN: What?

LAURA: I think I should explain it a bit while you're still sitting there.

A beat passes.

AUSTIN: You're serious?

LAURA: Just hear me out!

AUSTIN: Do I have a choice?

LAURA: *(Thinking.)* I guess not.

AUSTIN: Then I'm all ears. *(Dripping with sarcasm.)* Please, Laura, tell me why I woke up on your couch handcuffed. Explain to me why it's not a joke.

LAURA: If you're going to be a jerk about it, I can just leave you there.

AUSTIN: Until your parents come home? How are you going to keep me handcuffed on your couch when your parents walk in?

LAURA: They won't be home until midnight.

AUSTIN: What time is it?

LAURA: It's a little after ten.

AUSTIN: Unlock me, Laura.

LAURA: Not yet. If I unlock you now, you're just going to get mad and it's going to be a big fight and you'll leave without me getting to explain what actually happened.

AUSTIN: If you unlock me now, I promise to hear you out.

LAURA: Cross your heart?

AUSTIN: I can't cross my heart; my hands are cuffed behind my back.

LAURA: Just say it then.

AUSTIN: Fine. I cross my heart.

LAURA: Ok then. *(Goes to unlock him.)* You promised!

Once AUSTIN is unlocked, he goes to leave.

LAURA: Where are you going?

AUSTIN: I'm leaving!

LAURA: But you promised!

AUSTIN: I lied!

LAURA: But you crossed your heart!

AUSTIN: While I was being held against my will. You're lucky I don't call the police or something. (*Reaches for his phone.*) Where's my phone?

LAURA: About that...

AUSTIN: What did you do to my phone?

LAURA: Nothing. It's fine.

AUSTIN: Then give it to me!

LAURA: Not until you hear me out.

AUSTIN: You stole my phone too?

LAURA: I knew you wouldn't leave without it and I also knew that if I unlocked you, that you might leave without letting me explain, so I kind of hid your phone.

AUSTIN: You didn't trust me?

LAURA: With good reason!

AUSTIN: What do you mean by that?

LAURA: You lied to me! You crossed your heart and everything!

AUSTIN: Where's my phone?

LAURA: I hid it.

AUSTIN: Where?

LAURA: I'm not telling you until you let me explain.

AUSTIN: Fine! Say whatever you need to say to give me my phone back.

LAURA: Ok. So... we were watching the movie.

AUSTIN: Right.

LAURA: And you fell asleep again.

AUSTIN: Considering what movie we were watching and my well-known opinion of it, that's totally understandable.

LAURA: I wasn't mad you fell asleep.

AUSTIN: You have a weird way of showing it.

LAURA: While you were sleeping you got a text.

AUSTIN: Ok...

LAURA: From Hannah.

AUSTIN: And?

LAURA: And you never mind me looking at your phone, so I did, and she sent a picture.

AUSTIN: What of?

LAURA: Well, that's the funny part, and I totally realize now that I overreacted and that I'm totally in the wrong and I should have trusted you.

AUSTIN: What was the picture of?

LAURA: It was a picture of you and Hannah kissing.

AUSTIN: (*Confused.*) What?

LAURA: There was no message or anything... just the picture of you two kissing.

AUSTIN: I don't understand.

LAURA: You think YOU don't understand? Here I am, right at the climax of the movie... you KNOW what that movie does to me.

AUSTIN: I will NEVER understand why anyone would want to watch a movie that makes them cry like that.

LAURA: Sometimes you need a good cry!

AUSTIN: Whatever. Look, I'm not into Hannah. You know that. She must have photoshopped that picture or... (*Realizes.*) Wait...

LAURA: I know what you're about to say.

AUSTIN: Hannah and I are scene partners in Honors Theatre.

LAURA: I realized that.

AUSTIN: That must be from our scene today.

LAURA: Well, it was, kind of...

AUSTIN: What?

LAURA: I'll get to that.

AUSTIN: Ok...

LAURA: So here I am, an emotional wreck and this picture comes through.

AUSTIN: You know... if I were cheating on you, I wouldn't have told you how to unlock my phone.

LAURA: In hindsight, that makes all of the sense in the world, but at THAT moment I wasn't thinking clearly. A girl I know you're close with sends a picture of you two kissing. I kind of went into freak out mode.

AUSTIN: (*Sarcastically.*) Kind of?

LAURA: You know I have trust issues!

AUSTIN: Trust issues don't cover this. (*Looking at his ankles.*) What's all over my legs?

LAURA: (*Trying to avoid that particular topic.*) Let's try to stay focused.

AUSTIN: (*Inspecting it closer.*) It's sticky. Is this tape?

LAURA: So, about the picture...

AUSTIN: Did you duct tape my ankles together?!

LAURA: What?

AUSTIN: Did you duct tape my ankles together?

LAURA: (*Trying to divert.*) What do you mean?

AUSTIN: (*Pantomiming.*) Did you, Laura... take duct tape and use it (*Demonstrating.*) to tape my ankles together?

LAURA: I did, but I cut it off.

AUSTIN: You cut it off?

LAURA: After I realized what was really happening.

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