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Gone

By James Watkins

Thanks.

Good luck, mate.

- Yeah.

Come on in.

- Hi. How are you?

- Whoa, whoa, whoa. Do you know Kylie?

Right here. Come on, buddy.

Hey. I missed the bus.

Not till tomorrow. Around midday.

I don't think you're gonna find it in there.

You know, whatever it is you're looking for.

Yeah, true.

But it's not for me, it's for my friend.

Fucking thing has been following me
around all day.

Taylor.

- Hey, there she is.

You good?

- Take care.

Take it easy.

You wanna get a drink?

Pretty sure it's gonna be more fun
than sitting here all night.

Yeah, I'd love to, but I've got
to find somewhere to stay.

- I can help you with that.

- Yeah?

Come on. I need you.

You'd be helping me out.

- Okay.

- Good. Fantastic.

Breakfast time.

Come on, man, let's go. Come on.

We got a long drive.

Shit, those girls crack me up, man.

They're wild.

Shame we had to leave so quick.

She's gonna miss you.

I would have said goodbye,
if she would have woken up.

- You got a girlfriend?

- No.

No, it's just that I was meant to be
in Byron yesterday,

'cause I've got some friends waiting for me.

- Where are you headed after Byron?

- Don't know.

Just get up there

and then see what happens.

- That sounds good.

- Yeah.

Thanks for the lift. I should

help you pay for some petrol.

What are you doing? Don't worry about it.

I'm going further than you, anyway.

Besides, it's good to have

a little company during the trip.

No, it's fair.

Are these Polaroids

of everywhere you've been?

You've been to a lot of places.

Kind of all over, yeah.

There's a pen in there. Just write

your name and whatever else you'd like.

Bit of an expensive way of

taking pictures, isn't it?

Don't forget the date.

Her name was Lena, by the way.

In case you don't remember.

- You up for some breakfast?

- Sure. Yeah, good idea.

Good. I'm so hungry I could eat my own ass.

We'll go halves.

\$12, please.

How much for half a sausage?

Don't worry, I'll get it.

- Thanks.

- Thanks.

- Is that good?

- Yeah, thank you, thank you.

Yeah. Back in a tick.

Come on! Don't puss out on me now, boy!

Oh, it's freezing, man.

Who's Sophie?

What?

I forgot to say, you got a...

You got a message on your phone.

- On... On me phone?

- Yeah, I forgot to say.
You were in the bathroom, I think.
It went off, I thought...
I don't know, I thought it might have been
the girls, so I just had a quick peek.
Sorry.
No, it's okay.
So, is Sophie the reason you wanted
to get out so quick this morning?
I drank too much, mate. Too much.
She's not here, is she?
She's not in Byron, is she?
- Yeah.
- Fuck.
You gotta be kidding me.
So how long you been going out with her?
- Couple of years.
- Yeah?
We met at college. Not on the first day
or anything corny like that.
- Second.
- Third.
How come she's out here?
She...
She only left college this year,
and she could get a cheap ticket
if she came earlier. Plus, I had to
finish some shit job I was in, so...
- Right, right, right.
- Plan is to head up to Katherine's Gorge.
Do you know it? See what happens.
You should have told me.
Instead of carrying that shit.
I was beginning to think you'd gotten
bored of the obnoxious American already.
Well...
- You tool.
- Come on. Human race.
We make mistakes.
Don't beat yourself up about it.
I'm on your side. Let's go.
So, listen, I really want to say thanks.
Can I settle up for any more fuel
or anything?

Don't worry about that.
You did more than enough of that.
I should be thanking you.
So, where are we meeting her?
Looks like everyone's been having fun.
Sophie.
I missed you.
Who's this? Hello.
Oh, this is Ingrid. She's German.
We were dancing. There was a party.
Hi.
- Oh, hi.
- Oh, yeah, this is... This is Taylor.
We met in Sydney. He gave me a lift.
I just brought your man back for you.
- Look what I found.
- Oh, wow!
Oh, no!
You ready?
You know, I've been thinking.
What do you guys think about
all of us travelling together?
Forget the bus. Bus is a pain in the ass.
I just spent \$300 on a hop-on, hop-off
Whipper Snapper bus pass.
Did he just say that?
Come on, it could be fun!
All right.
I'm taking it that's a yes, then. Come on.
What?
- What?
- Whipper Snapper.
- Whipper Snapper.
- You want to see it?
- No.
You sure?
Leave me, I don't want to go! Go!
Look, Dad let me watch Jaws
at an early age.
- Come on!
- Give me a kiss before you go. Be careful.
- Morning, kids.
Morning.
Morning.

- Are you sure this is okay?
- What? Hanging out with good people?
Having some fun?
Yeah, it's okay. Is that okay with you?
Yeah, definitely.
Go put your stuff in the back.
How about you?
It's good. Fine, yeah.
What are you doing?
Thought we better take care of this
before we forgot.
All right, let's have a picture.
- Shouldn't we wait for Ingrid?
- Yes, she said to say sorry.
She had to catch the early bus.
Something about a friend
she'd forgotten about.
I always have that effect on women.
- You okay?
- Yeah.
No. I'm just a bit pissed off with Ingrid.
I know. She didn't even say goodbye.
Have you got her phone number
or anything?
No. Nothing.
Well...
Taylor looks like his night
caught up on him, anyway.
- Yeah, I reckon so.
- Well, he'll find another girl soon.
Just wish it was you and me. That's all.
- Here it is. Pull up over there.
- Okay.
I'm just gonna hop out.
Just go around the back
if anyone tries to move you.
You hungry? You look famished.
- I do?
- Come on.
You got luggage going on?
What is that? What is all that?
No.
- Taylor.
- He's asleep.

Taylor?

Taylor? See?

- Okay. Be really quiet.

- Okay.

Oh, shit.

Taylor?

Taylor, come on!

Taylor?

He's pissed off, that's all. No big deal.

- Hi.

- Hi.

- I'm sorry about last night.

- No, are you insane? I'm sorry.

I completely overreacted. I should've actually slept in the tent, anyway.

- In the van. Given you guys a bit of space.

- No, no, we...

We put you in an awkward position.

How did you sleep?

It's a little bit of a hotbox after 7:00.

- Trying to describe what an asshole I am?

- No.

- No?

- No, it's just stuff. Thoughts.

It's kind of like what I do with my Polaroids. You know, remember things.

Not that it's gonna be too hard to remember the American freaking out in your tent.

I think it's good to go a bit nutty sometimes.

You know, it gets it out of your system.

Yeah?

Hey.

Hey, man. I just wanted to say sorry.

I was pretty upset.

No, I was... I was in the wrong.

I'm not doing it.

- I think he feels a bit stupid.

- Well, I think he is a bit stupid.

I think we should still get the bus.

It feels really mean. Just...

We can't just leave straightaway.

- Oh, Sophie...

- Alex, come on. We'll get the bus.

Let's just give it a day, you know?
It was our fault. It was your fault.

- You mean my fault?

- Yeah.

I think you were right
about that thing earlier.

- It's like a well-tailored suit.

- What, when it's cut?

Where are you going? Sophie?

Whoa, whoa, man.

Maybe you should slow down.

- I think we should go in harder.

- Yeah, it's rubbish soft.

Yes, it is a bit rubbish soft.

I think it's time for some shots.

Looks like he's off on one.

He's got that look in his eye.

Cheers.

Cheers.

What's wrong with Sofe?

- Her name is Sophie.

- Okay, Sophie.

- What's wrong with Sophie?

- She's pissed off with me.

Yeah?

Hey, listen, bartender wants me to settle up.

Jamie?

It's that American guy.

- Jamie?

- Sorry.

Jamie? It's Jamie, isn't it?

- It's Jamie from Thailand.

You got the wrong guy.

- You want to take care of your girl here?

See, American.

How many fucking Americans
with a poncey tattoo for a start?

I have no idea what you're talking about.

All right, Jamie, you know very well.

Listen, I've never met you before in my life.

You're cute, but I've never been to Thailand.

You barefaced fucking liar!

She's had a couple of drinks, mate.

Yeah, just walk away.

Don't you walk away from me,
you lying prick!
Fuck off, you fat piece of shit!
I'll call the fucking police, I will!
Serious, I'll fucking call them!

- Who's that?
- No idea.
- You bastard!
- Seems pretty certain she knew you.
- What's she calling you, Jamie?
- You good for a drink?

Yeah, I just... I just bought myself one.
Wouldn't have thought she was your type.
She's a right minger.
Don't listen to him. He's a fucking liar!
You American bastard!

Shit. No wonder you gave her
a false name, Jamie.
That's funny.
We've all fucked some girls
we wish we hadn't have, Alex.
I'm gonna go.
Hey.
Did you manage to get him to bed?
He seemed pretty out of it.
He wasn't that bad when we got back.
Looks like you had a few problems
as well this evening.
I told you, I have a funny effect on women.
She looked really upset.
You're right. That wasn't very funny.
Where did you meet her?
Thailand.
I was pretty messed up back then.
Not a very good person to be around.
I didn't behave very well
towards a friend of hers.
Tried to apologise to her tonight,
but she was too angry.
Nimming.
- What?
- The thing with your leg.
Nimming.
It's funny how it just kind of does it

by itself, huh?
I should get back.
Sophie, wait.
Thank you.
Fuck's sake.
Morning, boozier.
- Was it a... Was it a good swim?
- It was great.
I tried to wake you.
That was weird last night.
I don't think you saw.
That girl, some big Scottish unit,
started having a go at Taylor,
accusing him of stuff.
Started calling him Jamie.
Called him Jamie, for fuck's sake.
- It's his christened name.
- Is it?
Yeah, he told me.
When?
This morning. He swam, too.
He didn't drink too much?
No.
Just your boyfriend.
Maybe we should go our own way
when we get to the next town.
Just the two of us.
Good plan.
Yeah, we can be together.
We'll have a laugh.
- I can get out me Whipper Snapper.
- You're always keen to do that.
Yes, I am.
Alex.
All right.
At least you could pretend to look happy.
That's nice.
Taylor, Sophie and I
are thinking of moving on.
There's a place called Longreach.
Yeah. We wanted...
There's a bus from there.
- Longreach, huh?
- Yeah.

The bus leaves tomorrow.

It only goes once a week, so...

Sure.

- Hey, can you do some driving?

- Me?

Yeah, I don't know how to get to this place. I'm guessing you do.

Wanna hop in the back?

Let me see.

- Fucking hell.

- What are we gonna do?

I don't know.

Oh, my God, Alex.

- Sophie, you okay?

- Yeah.

Let me take a look at that, man.

Fuck.

I know they're in here somewhere.

- Shut up. Stop fussing.

I'm trying to help you.

I feel... It'll be all right.

Just don't worry about it.

Just need to get to Longreach, and then we can split from him.

Alex, you just...

What? Go on, what?

The guy's...

Just trust me, he's bad news.

What?

Hey, Alex, we're in the middle of nowhere.

Are you pissed off at me?

No.

- A bit, yeah. But...

- Why?

It doesn't...

Sophie, you and Taylor, there's no...

- Jesus.

- What?

He couldn't keep his fucking eyes off you earlier at the petrol station.

- You know what I'm taking about.

- What's got into you?

We're lucky that we're okay.

What? You don't get it, do you?

Don't you understand
what he's trying to do?

Are you fucking thick?

Alex. Hey, baby.

Alex.

Take these.

- So you found them?

- Taylor had some.

- Hey.

- Hi.

I just got him some water and paracetamol.
Hopefully it'll lower his temperature,
help him sleep better.

- Thank you. How much?

- Peanuts. Don't worry about it.

Oh, and I got a doctor to stop by the room.

He's gonna stop at the hotel around 3:00
to check up on him.

Brilliant. Thank you.

- Here.

- I think it's better if I go on my own.

- Yeah, sure. No problem.

- Okay.

Alex?

Shit. Shit.

Alex? Alex?

God.

- I was looking for a picture.

- Okay.

- There's a picture... A photograph...

Jesus, look at you.

- Alex.

- Where are we?

- Okay, come on. Let's get out of here.

- Don't touch me. Don't touch me.

Sophie, you know what he did?

He fucking...

- The pills... He's fucking... Those pills.

- Alex.

I got to get the bus.

We've got to get the bus quick.

- I gotta get the bus.

- We're gonna get the bus.

I feel sick 'cause he's trying to poison...

I got you. I got you. I got you.
Don't touch me! Don't touch me!
Don't touch me! Fuck off!
Get away from us!
Get the fuck away from us!
Alex.
Alex.
Alex. Hey.
Over here.
- Oh, shit. Shit.
- Hey, it's okay. It's okay.
Sophie's sleeping.
Got you some water.
How you feeling? Any better?
You know, Alex, you shouldn't treat people
the way that you do.
Don't cheat on people.
Don't lie to people.
It only comes back on you.
Who are you? Who the fuck are you?
Hey, you. How you doing?
Oh, fuck.
Come on, Sophie.
Babe? Babe?
- I need to get some stuff out of the van.
- Okay, no worries.
- It's just in the parking lot.
- Is it fixed?
I fixed it.
The key.
- What, you want to get your backpack?
- Yeah.
- Oh, I brought it for you already, and Alex's.
- Oh, thank you.
Just brought it in when I went upstairs.
Popped in with some water for Alex.
- You saw Alex?
- You were asleep,
so I just kind of went
in. Didn't really talk.
Shit.
- What?
- My hand. It's just burning.
It was the accident. It keeps going like that.

- Really? Let me see.

- Yeah.

Comes and goes.

Thank you for bringing the bags back.

- I'll see you tomorrow.

- Okay.

Good night.

I saw you with him. I saw you.

So, what, you... Do you like Taylor?

Alex, listen, nothing is going on.

Then, if there's nothing going on,
why are you holding hands in the bar?

He's fucking with us, Sofe.

He's fucking with you.

Alex, please calm down.

I'm here with you.

I love you.

Yeah, and the van's fixed.

Well, as long as the van's fixed.

So, Taylor can drop us somewhere,
and then it can be just us.

Alex, you're ill.

Either we go with him

and we get a bus from Mount Isa,
or we stay here for a week.

Which is it?

Have you still got it?

I should give it to you.

You should have it.

Hey, Alex, where are those pictures?

Those photos, remember? I wanted to give
you guys that picture. You know the one.

I think they're in here.

Pull over. Pull over!

Alex?

Alex?

Shit. I should go see if he's all right.

No, I'll go. This is between me and him.

- Hey.

- Hey.

Come on.

You know where she was last night?

She was with me.

You were vomiting.

You were shitting, remember that?
She was with me.
She was with me.
Come on! Come on!
Alex!
- Alex!
Fuck, what are you doing?
- What are you doing? What are you doing?
- Alex, what the fuck are you doing?
Take a fucking breath.
Don't touch him! Don't touch him!
Sofe...
Sofe, he's...
He's gonna show you a photograph.
What photograph?
He took a picture of me
the first night I met him in Sydney.
Remember, I told you I got drunk.
Well, he took a picture.
- I don't think I wanna hear this.
- I met a girl.
And then...
All along, nothing happened.
Nothing happened.
And I know you probably don't believe me,
but nothing happened.
But this picture shows me asleep with her
the next day.
- Is that what this is about?
- Her name was Lena and...
God, I'm sure nothing happened.
If nothing happened,
then why couldn't you tell me about it?
No, don't go! Sophie, don't go!
What's important is he took a picture,
and he said that he threw it away,
but he kept it!
And he's gonna show it to you
to use against me, against us!
Sophie, nothing happened!
Wait. Why did you get separate rooms?
Why did you spend the night
with some girl in a photograph?
Are you going off with him?

Sophie, just tell me the fucking truth.
Alex, what's happened to you?
I don't think I know who you are any more.
- Taylor, I mean, he's...
- Taylor? Taylor what?
The things he was saying. He made me do it.
- He didn't make you do anything.
- He did make me do...
I'm your boyfriend.
Why aren't you listening to me?
Do you think all this shit
has just happened by chance?
Why can't you see what he's doing?
He's a liar. He just...
He just wants you as one of his cheap fucks.
- Just stop, Alex.
- Stop what?
- I'm just telling you the fucking truth.
- Please, stop.
I'm sorry. I didn't mean that.
I love you.
Listen, Taylor,
Alex and I should move on tomorrow.
We need to work things out.
Okay.
Anyway, I just... I just wanted to tell you.
Okay.
Who is it?
Can I come in?
I got what you asked for from Sofe.
What did I ask for?
Hi.
Listen, I just wanted to say I'm sorry, too.
- We haven't really gotten along as well...
- I didn't ask for anything.
She said you...
Bus ticket. For you.
Alex?
Alex?
Taylor?
Alex?
- What's up?
- Where are you going?
Just gonna head into town. Grab a drink.

What's going on?

- Alex is gone.

- Okay. Where?

He just... He sent me a text message.

- Did you call him?

- He won't pick up.

Prick.

- He just wants your reaction.

- But he's not in his room.

His stuff is gone.

He sent me a text message saying, "Gone. "

- Was it "Gone" or "Going"?

- "Going. " It was "Going. "

Right. Well, he's probably still there.

Bump into him on the way back.

I'll bring him back for you.

Don't worry about it.

Alex, call me.

Maybe you should wait here.

Will you just call me, okay?

I think you should wait here,

just in case he comes back.

Can we drive and look for him?

Do you think it's better if you just wait?

Yeah, I guess. Will you wait with me?

It's Alex.

I'll go check for him outside.

Hello? Hello?

Speak to me.

Do you know what?

I don't want it to end like this.

Alex?

I've had enough of this, Alex.

Nothing. Not out there.

Where are you gonna go to next?

I don't know.

Wherever you want.

I think I should go back to Sydney tomorrow.

Maybe go home.

Will you take me to the nearest place?

Okay.

We should be there

in about two and a half hours.

Shit.

Sorry, my eyes are just closing.
I think we should stop, just for a little bit.
Is that okay?
Yeah. I guess so.
Sofe.
I'm sorry all this happened.
Listen, it'll be okay, all right.
And you'll be okay.
Things will work out.
Thank you.
Taylor.
Taylor.
Sofe?
Sophie?
Are you there?
Yeah, I'm here.
What's up?
I was cold. I was
shivering.
Come here, I'll warm you up.
Come here.
It doesn't work unless you're touching.
Sofe.
Ingrid texted me.
Must have been while we were sleeping.
She's on her way to Katherine Gorge.
I thought...
I thought maybe we could meet her there.
You know, we should talk.
Sophie, you should tell me.
You know, you should talk to me
and you should tell me if something's wrong.
Sophie.
Hey, hey, come here.
Listen, listen, listen, Sofe. Stop here.
Ingrid never texted you last night.
Ingrid doesn't have a phone.
Come here. Sophie!
Fuck!
Sophie!
Where's Alex?
Why do you have his phone?
Sofe.
Come on. Don't be ridiculous.

Where is he?
- What the fuck have you done to Alex?
- Don't ask me that!
Don't ask me that.
Instead, ask what he did to you that night.
That has nothing to do with you.
No.
Open up.
Unlock it. Unlock it!
I'm sorry.
Neutral.
Start it in neutral.
Easy, easy. You're gonna stall again.
Good girl.
Where we headed? Where we going?
We going into town?
Not sure we got enough fuel for that.
Fuck!
- You wanted me.
- No, I didn't!
That's not true.
Come on!
Listen. You have to listen.
You have to listen.
Alex attacked me. He attacked me
because he found out about us.
There is no "us"!
What are you... What are you doing?
No!
Stop it.
No! God!
No!