

COMFORT ZONE

by

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A young man struggles with feelings of uncertainty after visiting his girlfriend in France for their anniversary.

FADE IN

1. EXT. DOWNTOWN LACOSTE, FRANCE - DAY

Open on several long, sweeping shots across the city. Roaming fields stretch across the outskirts and young, happy woman's voice is heard.

MEGAN (V.O.)
(excitedly)
Welcome to Lacoste, baby!

A large, featured castle sits atop the town.

MEGAN (V.O.)
I promise you're gonna love it here.

From the castle stems long roads and a beautiful downtown shopping area.

MEGAN
I'm so excited to finally see you again! Six months is way too long.

And on the road is Megan (22), the young woman in question with striking features. She's wearing jeans, boots, and a warm sweater. With her are two friends: a short redheaded girl and a taller blonde girl. The three of them walk closely down the main street of Lacoste together.

Megan is talking on her cell phone and seems excited.

MEGAN
I'm glad you had a safe train ride. I love you! See you soon!

2. EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM - DAY

Standing with his suitcase on Lacoste's train platform is EVERETT (24), a tall and hypermasculine man wearing a vintage letterman jacket. He's on his cell phone.

EVERETT
Love you, too. Can't wait.

Standing nearby is LINCOLN (21), a young man with softer features and intense dark hair, who's dressed impeccably. Fiddling with her suitcase behind the two of them is JEANNE (mid-late 40s), Lincoln's mother, also dressed to the nines and almost unbelievably gorgeous.

Everett hangs up the phone.

LINCOLN

Was that the esteemed Megan I've
been hearing about for the last
seven hours?

Lincoln's English is perfect, but there's still a tinge of
a French accent when he speaks.

EVERETT

It was. She's very excited.

LINCOLN

Aren't you? This is your three
year anniversary.

Everett nods slowly.

EVERETT

Oh, yeah. Of course. I'm just
tired. Y'know, jet lag.

LINCOLN

(playfully)

More like you realize what you
missed out on now that you're
seeing me again.

Lincoln laughs but there's clearly a level of discomfort on
Everett's face. Before he has time to react, Jeanne
finishes fussing over her baggage and approaches them,
putting a hand on Lincoln's back.

She smiles at Everett.

JEANNE

You'll get over the jet lag soon.
Everett, what a wonderful surprise
to see you again!

EVERETT

You too, Mrs. Alexandre. It was
nice to see some familiar faces.

JEANNE

I hate to rush away from you like
this, but I have a meeting with my
client, and if I'm not there on
time she might be asleep by the
time I arrive.

LINCOLN
(to Everett)
She's really old.

Jeanne whacks Lincoln's arm and smiles apologetically at Everett.

JEANNE
Perhaps we can get dinner? Lincoln
and I will be here through the
week.

EVERETT
That sounds great.

They all exchange smiles before Everett pulls Lincoln into somewhat of a bear hug.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
This was insane, but it was great
seeing you again, Link.

LINCOLN
I hate it when you call me that.

Everett smirks and the two separate, and Jeanne pulls Lincoln away. As Everett gets his suitcase ready to go, Jeanne whispers to Lincoln

JEANNE
(in French, with English
subtitles)
He looks *great*, no?

Lincoln nudges her.

3. EXT. DOWNTOWN LACOSTE - DAY

Everett, suitcase beside him, is paying his taxi driver through the window of the car. Megan approaches from behind.

EVERETT
(in a painfully American
accent)
Uh, mer-see, sir.

He catches an incoming hug from his girlfriend as he turns.

MEGAN
Ev! It's so good to see you!

He embraces her for a moment, then leans down to kiss her.

EVERETT

Wow, I missed you. You look great.

Megan blushes and he kisses her again. Taking her hand, he grabs his suitcase with the other and they start walking.

MEGAN

I can't wait to fill you in on all the details here, and introduce you to my friends. Thank God it's Friday, I'd hate to have to go to class tomorrow.

EVERETT

I'm here for a minute, babe. We've got time.

MEGAN

Only a week before my parents come and interrupt us! They're so excited to see you.

They walk in silence for a few moments while Everett takes in his new environment. Even compared to his girlfriend, he looks completely out of place - like a sore American thumb in a crowd full of manicured French tips.

4. EXT. LA BASTIDE DE MARIE - DAY

The couple approach the front of Everett's hotel.

MEGAN

I feel so bad you can't stay with me.

EVERETT

Don't worry about it.

MEGAN

They run a tight ship around here, and since you're a boy-

EVERETT

Seriously, don't apologize. I get it! I wouldn't want you getting in trouble so close to graduation anyway.

MEGAN

I'm so excited to spend the weekend with you, though.

5. EXT. CAFE DE FRANCE - DAY

Everett and Megan are sitting outside at a local cafe, having coffee and a small breakfast. Everett is picking at the remnants of a croissant and looking around at his setting, while Megan seems distracted by a book.

EVERETT

I like it here. It's pretty.

MEGAN

Hm?

She looks up to address him.

EVERETT

It's pretty here.

MEGAN

I don't think I've ever heard you use the word "pretty" to describe anything but me. And even that's a rarity.

EVERETT

It's so different from anywhere I've ever been.

MEGAN

Obviously. Do you see anyone else here wearing a letterman jacket?

EVERETT

(feigning offense)

I thought you liked my jacket!

MEGAN

(playfully)

It's my favorite thing about you.

6. INT. CHATEAU DE LACOSTE - NIGHT

Inside Lacoste's main attraction, the large and imposing castle that sits atop the village, Megan is giving Everett the grand tour.

EVERETT

How would you feel about a weekend in Paris while I'm here?

MEGAN

What? You never mentioned anything about wanting to go to Paris.

EVERETT

Didn't really think about it until I actually landed there.

MEGAN

Sounds like fun! I've already gone a couple times with my friends, but if we can find the time I'd love to.

She kisses him casually, but her passiveness at his idea clearly irritates him.

7. EXT. FLOWER FIELDS - DAY

Megan and Everett are having a picnic. The sun is shining bright on them and Megan is poking at some homework idly while the two chat.

EVERETT

(playfully)

So have you been on any dates while you've been here?

Without missing a beat, Megan answers.

MEGAN

A couple, but nothing worth following up on.

She shrugs, then looks up from her homework at him.

He looks a little taken aback by the speed she answered at.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

What? That doesn't bother you does it? When I asked about it before I left, you said it was fine.

EVERETT

It doesn't bother me. I was just curious, since I wouldn't know how to compete with a pretty French boy.

MEGAN

What about you?

Everett shakes his head.

A beat. Everett changes the subject.

EVERETT

Y'know I didn't really think about what I'd do while you're in class all day. When are you gone until?

MEGAN

Ten to four. You'll find something to do!

EVERETT

Dinner tomorrow night, after class?

MEGAN

That sounds great.

8. EXT. DOWNTOWN LACOSTE - DAY

Everett stands in the streets alone, looking through the display window of a nearby shop but not fully focusing on anything.

From the distance, Lincoln approaches, with Jeanne a few steps behind him.

EVERETT

Link! You made it!

Lincoln rolls his eyes.

LINCOLN

Obviously. How's France treating you?

EVERETT

Great until Meg had class. Now I'm bored out of my mind.

Jeanne catches up to the two of them.

JEANNE

Everett! Good to see you. I know the three of us were supposed to have lunch, but you two are going to have to go without me.

LINCOLN

Her client is making a big stink about the accessorizing of the dress she's designing and wants her to pick out jewelery for her from this little shop in town.

Everett raises an eyebrow but nods, understandingly.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)
Mom, I'll catch up with you later?

JEANNE
Perfect. Everett, we'll
reschedule. I'm buying you dinner
while I'm here - count on it.

Everett laughs.

9. INT. SMALL RESTAURANT - DAY

Everett and Lincoln sit across from each other at a small table, waiting for their waiter. Lincoln sips on a glass of water with lemon, while Everett stares blankly at the menu.

EVERETT
I still can't believe we ran into
each other on the plane.

LINCOLN
And just a few days later, you're
taking me on a date. It's a small
world!

Everett gives Lincoln an awkward look, and Lincoln rolls his eyes, giving him an exaggerated pout.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)
You used to be so fun.

EVERETT
I don't know what you mean.

LINCOLN
You used to flirt back with me!
You know I'm never serious. I
flirt with everybody.

Everett nods slowly, thinking.

EVERETT
Actually, it did come in handy
back in high school. You were the
best wingman a guy could ask for.
You always knew exactly what to
say to girls.

LINCOLN

And now we're both adults and you're leaving me for a long term relationship for a *girl*.

Everett chuckles at him.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

It was the least I could do for the only person willing to give the French exchange student a chance.

EVERETT

(laughing)

Just don't forget the school forced that on me, I didn't choose it.

LINCOLN

Best thing that's ever happened to you.

There's a few beats of silence before Lincoln chimes up again.

LINCOLN

I've got an idea! You should come visit Paris after my mom and I go back. I'll finally get the chance to show you around *my* home city.

Everett laughs.

EVERETT

Sure, that sounds fun if I can make it work with Megan's schedule. I asked her if she wanted to go-

LINCOLN

She can come with!

EVERETT

Well she's already been a couple times so she's not making it a priority.

A beat.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

But I'd love to, if we can make it work

10. INT. JEWELRY SHOP - DAY

Lincoln and Everett enter a small, private jewelry store in town. Lincoln looks focused.

LINCOLN
Mom said she'd be here... let me call her.

Everett nods and Lincoln walks off, leaving Everett to himself. He pokes around the shop slowly, looking cluelessly at pairs of earrings and necklaces and everything else the shop has to offer.

After a few moments, he stops at a glass case full of rings.

Lincoln approaches from behind.

LINCOLN
See anything you like?

EVERETT
Ha ha.

Lincoln looks down at the rings and laughs quietly.

LINCOLN
You gonna propose?

EVERETT
In your dreams.

LINCOLN
To Megan, idiot.

Everett goes silent.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)
Oh my God, you totally are.
Congrats, dude! Do you think she's gonna say yes?

EVERETT
Oh, she'll say yes.

There's a hesitancy in Everett's voice that Lincoln catches onto immediately.

LINCOLN
Don't be so excited, Ev.

EVERETT
She's dying to get married. And her parents are coming next week.

A beat.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
I figured I could pick a ring out
while I was here.

LINCOLN
Do you want help?

EVERETT
No.

Another beat.

LINCOLN
Well do you want to marry Megan?

EVERETT
I'm... I don't know! I'm twenty-
four. I don't want to marry
anyone.

LINCOLN
So don't get married.

EVERETT
That's what she wants to do.

LINCOLN
Then maybe you two aren't right
for each other.

Everett looks dumbfounded, like the possibility has never
even occurred to him.

EVERETT
I guess I always just assumed we'd
end up together.

The bell at the door chimes indicating a new customer and
Jeanne enters, approaching the two young men. The tension
in the air is tangible. She picks up on the mood
immediately.

JEANNE
Lincoln, I need to head back. Are
you coming?

He nods, and the two turn to leave. Jeanne gives Everett an
empathetic smile, and Lincoln leaves with one last comment.

LINCOLN
I'm just saying, don't do anything
you don't want to do. If you need
an out, you're welcome to come
stay with me in Paris.

A beat. Everett is silent.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

We leave at the end of the week.
Either way, though, you have a
decision to make.

EVERETT

What, between you or her?

LINCOLN

Between you or her.

Lincoln and Jeanne leave, leaving Everett alone in the
store.

11. INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Everett and Megan are sitting at a table across from each
other, food in front of each of them. Megan's in a good
mood, but Everett seems distant. They're both slightly
dressed up, and Everett's jacket is hanging off his chair.

MEGAN

You look nice tonight! I don't
remember the last time I saw you
without your jacket on.

EVERETT

How could I ever take it off when
it's your favorite thing about me?

Megan laughs, but Everett stays quiet.

MEGAN

So, I was talking to my parents
today and they're really excited
to see you.

Everett doesn't respond.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

They were talking about renting a
little villa near the vineyards
for a weekend where the four of us
could go stay. On them.

More silence.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

It kind of feels like they're- Ev?
Everett, are you listening?

A beat.

EVERETT

I don't think that's happening,
Meg. Not with me, at least.

MEGAN

What do you mean?

EVERETT

I'm gonna go to Paris.

MEGAN

Paris? By yourself? Right before
my parents come?

EVERETT

Not by myself. I have a friend.

A beat.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

But I'm not coming back.

Megan immediately goes on the defensive.

MEGAN

A friend? A *girl*? Ev, I thought
you said-

EVERETT

It's not a girl.

There's a moment of silence. Everett looks almost
embarrassed. Megan's face drops and there are looks of
confusion, concern, and anger all within her expression.

MEGAN

(laughing nervously)
What the fuck? Is it-?

EVERETT

I don't know what it is.

She realizes he's serious, and confused, and she does her
best to take a step back from her own feelings. A few tears
well up in her eyes regardless.

Everett looks down at his hands. He doesn't want to see her
upset.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

It's not... God, what a cliché.
It's got nothing to do with you.

MEGAN

Don't you want to think about this
a little first?

EVERETT

I have. Trust me.

She nods. She gets it. There's another moment of silence

MEGAN

So who is this "friend?"

EVERETT

I went to high school with him.
He's from Paris. I ran into him on
my way here.

A look of understanding crosses Megan's face, realizing
that he didn't come to France intending to break it off.

She gets up from her seat and crosses to the other side,
hugging Everett, still seated, from behind his chair. He
doesn't look up from his hands.

12. EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Everett stands behind a small black car and fits his
luggage into the trunk.

As he slams it closed, he moves to the side and gets in.
Jeanne is in the front seat, with Lincoln in the back
opposite Everett.

JEANNE

I hope you're ready to see Paris,
Everett! I'm so excited you're
coming back to stay with us. It's
about time you finally see our
city!

LINCOLN

You're gonna love it.

Everett nods. He looks both defeated and relieved, like
he's trying to sort out his emotions. He's not 100% sure
about the decision he's made to tag along with Lincoln's
family.

He gives Lincoln a weak smile. Jeanne puts the car in
drive.

EVERETT

I hope so, Link. I sure hope so.

FADE OUT.