

Two Slow Dancers

By:

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Based On Two Slow Dancers By Mitski

Cast of Characters

TEEN MICHEAL::

TEEN WILL::

EVE::

OSCAR::

HANNAH::

CLAIRE::

AMAIA::

BOWIE::

ACT IScene 1

Open on a high school gymnasium. It is rather large. It is primarily a basketball court with a small platform upstage. The platform upstage has a large screen behind it. The room is dimly lit and filled with teenagers. We are at the prom of TEEN EVE and TEEN AMAIA. TEEN MICHEAL stands on the platform with a microphone. Everyone stops to listen to them.

TEEN MICHEAL:

Hey guys. How is everyone doing tonight?

There is an excited shout from the prom-goers

TEEN MICHEAL:

I'll take that as good. Well, I just wanted to thank you all for coming. It's been a real nightmare setting this up, so hopefully, you all think it was worth it. Anyways, I came up here to announce the prom royalty. It's a big responsibility but as your class president...

From the back of the room

TEEN WILL:

Whoo!

TEEN MICHEAL:

Thank you. As your class president, it is my job to announce it. Reminder that the winners and their partners need to come up on stage for the King and Queen dance. So, the votes are in.

TEEN MICHEAL pulls an envelope out from his pocket.

TEEN MICHEAL:

and your prom king is...drumroll

a drum roll sound effect plays

TEEN MICHEAL:

Owen Jaffin!

OWEN heads on stage and the audience applauds. TEEN MICHEAL puts a crown on OWEN'S head.

TEEN MICHEAL:

Isn't he a winner, guys. Now to announce the queen...

a drumroll sound effect plays. The drum roll effect turns into background music that eventually fades out. The scene shifts.

Scene 2

We are fast forward 10 years later. The gymnasium, now much brighter, has PE equipment pushed to the side of the stage. There are ill-gilled balloons and streamers hung around the room and banner with the words "Welcome back" hanging above the platforms. There is an assortment of nicely dressed late 30's/early 40 years olds wandering around the room. Welcome to the class reunion. EVE sits at a table with her fellow alumni.

EVE:

Wow, Austria. That's cool. No, I've never been.

OSCAR:

Really? It was such an amazing experience. I didn't want to go initially, but it was transformative?

EVE:

Transformative. No offense, but what about Austria was transformative?

OSCAR:

Well...so, I was only there for a week, but we left on a train and when I reached into my coat pocket to listen to music, I realized I didn't have my phone on me. I must have left it in the hotel.

EVE:

In Austria?

OSCAR:

Yes! So then I had to go without a phone which was this very cleansing experience. Screens are such a bog in our everyday lives and--

EVE:

(Abruptly)
Do you have any kids?

OSCAR:

What?

EVE:
Kids? Do you have any? Or like a dog or something?

OSCAR:
How does that have anything to do with Austria?

EVE:
It doesn't. Listen, I don' want to be rude because your story was genuinely interesting, but I can tell this is going to turn into a technology rant and I truly don't have the energy for that. No offense.

OSCAR:
You're right that was rude.

OSCAR gets up and goes to mingle with other people.

EVE:
I'm really sorry.

AMAIA and CLAIRE enter. They are nicely dressed. EVE quickly notices them. They are greeted by a woman, HANNAH the event coordinator. She seems really enthusiastic. During their conversation EVE can be seen trying to subtly and consistently catch glances in AMAIA's direction.

HANNAH:
Hey, y'all. Welcome to the reunion party. I am so glad you could make it. As you can see we really put a lot of effort into this so please be respectful of not only our guests but decoration. We have a name tag table to your right so please just scribble one out and we can get to mingling.

CLAIRE:
Okay, thank you very much.

HANNAH goes back to mingling

CLAIRE:
So, honey, where should we start?

AMAIA:
Well, Hannah seemed very excited about the name tags.

CLAIRE:
(small laugh)
Cut her some slack, it must have been difficult to plan an event like this.

AMAIA:

You're right. Can you imagine having to get in contact with this many people from high school? I don't even follow most of these people on Instagram.

CLAIRE:

Why do you think I'm attending your reunion instead of mine?

AMAIA:

It's gonna be fun though. I promise.

CLAIRE:

I believe you, but remember we told the sitter we would not be out late, so not too much fun.

AMAIA:

No, never too much fun. How could we?

CLAIRE and AMAIA begin to fill out name tags. BOWIE approaches them. He taps AMAIA on the shoulder.

BOWIE:

Hi, sorry, are you Amaia?

AMAIA:

Yeah, oh my gosh good to see you again.

BOWIE:

What? We've never met before.

AMAIA:

Oh, thank goodness. I have no idea who you are.

BOWIE:

(laughs)
So you pretended you did?

AMAIA:

Yeah, Yeah I really did. Sorry about that.

a pause

AMAIA:

Wait, so how do you know my name?

BOWIE:

(turns to face EVE)
Hey babe, come over here! Look who I found!

EVE, slightly embarrassed walks over to the group.

AMAIA:
Eve?

EVE:
Amaia, hi. How are you? I was looking at you from over there and I couldn't tell if that was you. I was like, huh is that Amaia? And it was. It was. Sorry, I'm blabbering, hey how are you?

AMAIA:
(laughs)
I'm good. I'm good. Whose this?
(gestures to BOWIE)

BOWIE:
Shit, I forgot to introduce myself. Hey, I'm Bowie. I'm Eve's fiance.

AMAIA:
Good to meet you. I'm Amaia and this is my wife...

CLAIRE:
Hello, I'm Claire.

BOWIE:
A pleasure to meet you, Claire.

EVE:
Yeah, pleasure.

HANNAH sticks her head in

HANNAH:
Hey, sorry. Y'all are actually blocking the entrance so if you could please take a seat at one of the many tables I would appreciate it. Thank you.

HANNAH ushers BOWIE, EVE, AMAIA, and CLAIRE to a table, and they all (but HANNAH) sit down

HANNAH:
Now, you can get to chit-chatting. I was actually just reading an article--
(notices MICHEAL attempting to plug up his own music to the speakers)
Micheal, are you serious?
(to EVE and AMAIA)
I will be right back.

HANNAH goes to scold MICHEAL

EVE:
I guess some people really don't change.

AMAIA:
Do you mean Hannah or Micheal?

EVE and AMAIA both laugh

CLAIRE:
So, how do you two know each other?

AMAIA:
We used to date in high school. Come on babe, I told you about her.

CLAIRE:
Oh, so you're *the* Eve. Like *Eve* Eve.

EVE:
I mean, I guess so. Does that mean you've heard of me?

CLAIRE:
All good things, all good things.

EVE:
Really?

CLAIRE:
No, I've- I've heard some pretty bad things too.

EVE:
Hey, I'm happy to be remembered at all. I made an impact.

BOWIE:
(To EVE)
Don't act so high and mighty.
(to AMAIA)
She has a framed photo of you in our room.

AMAIA:
(disbelief)
Nooo...

BOWIE:
Yes, that's how I recognized you.

EVE:

(To BOWIE)

Don't make it sound creepy.

(To AMAIA)

It's a photo of us and a couple friends from like 11th grade. I've also got a photo of me and my elementary school neighbor and me and my college roommates,

(To BOWIE)

but you don't bring that up do you?

BOWIE:

I would have if it was relevant.

EVE:

Unfortunately, Bowie's memory is airtight.

CLAIRE:

You two are cute.

EVE:

Thank you, we try.

An uncomfortable pause

EVE:

So... you know where we attended high school. Where did you go, Claire?

CLAIRE:

Oh, well I went to a small alternative school. It was definitely strange, but I think it rather fit me. That being said I am sure the majority of those I went to school with are not necessarily the type I would get along with now.

AMAIA:

And what about you, Bowie?

BOWIE:

I actually went here.

AMAIA:

What? Why don't I remember you

EVE:

He was a few years above us. We just missed each other actually.

CLAIRE:

Huh, small world.

BOWIE:

I know, right?

CLAIRE:

I need to be excused if you don't mind. Amaia, honey, could you point me to the restrooms?

AMAIA:

I could just take you if you want.

CLAIRE:

Oh no, you keep socializing.

AMAIA:

Okay well just exit the gym and go right. Just keep walking till you see room 109 and then it should be across from there.

CLAIRE:

Thanks. I'll be right back.

CLAIRE exits

BOWIE:

Oh! That reminds me, do you guys know if Mr. Schoenberg still teaches here?

AMAIA:

Mr. Schoenberg?

BOWIE:

Yeah, he taught... what was it... he taught economics.

EVE:

Oh yeah, Bowie loved him.

BOWIE:

I didn't love him. We just really clicked.

EVE:

He called him dad in class once.

BOWIE:

(turns to EVE)

I can't tell you anything.

AMAIA:

(laughs)

Oh no, you don't have to be embarrassed I called our chemistry teacher, Dr. Moncor, mom more than once.

EVE:
Yeah, but he did it in class.

AMAIA:
That— yeah that is pretty bad.

BOWIE:
(laughs)
I know.

There is a short pause as BOWIE thinks. WILL enters

BOWIE:
Actually, he was pretty cool about it though. But, that didn't stop my friends from blending my ass. It was high school, you know, my friends brought it up every chance they got. But
(Looks to EVE, jokingly offended)
I would never suspect my partner, who I trust implicitly, to out me like this.

EVE:
That was a bad call on your part.

BOWIE:
Obviously not. I—
(Notices WILL)
Holy shit, is that Will Young?
(Shouts to WILL)
Will! Hey, Will Young, is that you?

WILL turns and notices BOWIE, happily

EVE:
What? How do you know Will?

BOWIE:
He was two years below me, but we were on the same lacrosse team. He kicked ass. Hey babe, do you mind if I go say hi real quick?

EVE:
What? No, of course, go say hi. I'm not in charge of you.

BOWIE:
Cool, alright.

BOWIE gets up and goes to WILL on the other side of the room. They mime dialogue. There is

silence between EVE and AMAIA

AMAIA:

So...he's nice.

EVE:

Oh no, he's the best. Easily distracted though.

A beat

AMAIA:

Fiancé huh? Are you excited to be married?

EVE:

(Small laugh)

Honestly? I am. We're not doing anything big. It's just a piece of paper to me. You know, I've never been big on weddings. But hey, it matters to him and he matters to me.

AMAIA:

That's really sweet.

EVE:

How about you? What's marriage life like?

AMAIA:

It's kind of the best. I wake up every morning next to the love of my life.

A beat

AMAIA:

No offense.

EVE:

Oh, none taken. We've been broken up for over ten years now, Amaia.

AMAIA:

I know, but still.

EVE:

I get it. Being back here is weird.

AMAIA:

Yes, yes it is.

EVE:

This place smells the exact same though.

AMAIA:

Right! What is with that? How do all gyms smell the exact same? It's like frozen in time.

EVE:

Except for all the tumbling mats they strapped to the walls.

AMAIA:

One too many concussions I guess.

EVE:

Oh my gosh, remember when Michael got his head bashed against the wall trying to catch that basketball?

AMAIA:

Remember? It's permanently scarred in my brain. That was so scary. There was blood everywhere.

EVE:

You almost fainted.

AMAIA:

That is a normal reaction to seeing blood. You're the one with the weird fascination.

EVE:

It's not weird. Plenty of people have an interest in the human body.

EVE pauses, thinking

EVE:

I'm actually a thanatologist. I've got a doctorate and everything. The whole nine yards.

AMAIA:

Wow, that's cool.

(A beat)

What is that?

EVE:

It means I study death academically. Technically I have a job in forensics, but I prefer to say thanatologist.

AMAIA:

You've always been so morbid.

EVE:

Morbid or academically inclined towards the

grotesque? It's all about how you frame it.

AMAIA:

Still a positive outlook, I see. I've always loved that about you.

an uncomfortable pause

AMAIA:

I work in advertising.

EVE:

Really? What's that like?

AMAIA:

I'll be honest, it's not what expected for myself when I was younger, but I like it. I get paid a salary to make art. We've got an animating team and a huge kitchen. I get to pitch weird ideas. It's pretty fun for a job.

EVE:

Do you ever get to help with the animating?

AMAIA:

Yes and no, I don't really do the animating. I just give pointers.

EVE:

But I thought that was your dream.

AMAIA:

It was, but after my first year of college, I realized that it wasn't all I thought it was. I like a normal sleep schedule. I don't know. I guess dreams change.

EVE:

I used to love those little comics you did of us.

AMAIA:

I know you did. That's why I drew them.

EVE:

I think I might still have a couple of them In a box in my closet.

AMAIA:

(Jokingly)

Aw, you didn't frame them with the photo of us?

EVE:

Okay, Bowie made it sound really embarrassing. But yeah, I can admit it, I still have photos of you.

AMAIA:

Photos? Plural?

EVE:

I mean, yeah, I do. I've changed a lot since high school, but some things remain the same, I'm nostalgic. I still have memory boxes where I keep old letters or my favorite shirts from childhood. So, yeah, I have a few photos of us lying around. It was an important time in my life. You were an important time in my life.

EVE looks down, embarrassed. There is a sort of longing pause. AMAIA puts her hand on EVE's shoulder and EVE looks up

AMAIA:

You were important to me too.

EVE:

Yeah?

AMAIA:

Yeah. We were together for four or five years. That's amazing. It's still the longest relationship I've had besides Claire.

EVE:

Can I ask you a stupid question?

AMAIA:

I love stupid questions.

EVE:

Do you ever miss it?

AMAIA:

What? Highschool?

(takes a moment to think)

I suppose. It's weird, I never thought I would. When it was happening, or even a few years after it happened, I was so happy to get out. I hated it there, well hated everyone except you. I was just so anxious all the time studying things I didn't care about. Even during lunch, it was all just too much. Too loud.

EVE:

But?

AMAIA:

But, it was simpler. I had an easy schedule and whenever I was stressed I just had to call a friend and we would go get milkshakes or buy pharmacy candy. I had a general idea of where I wanted my life to go. I was so sure I was going to animate for my favorite shows and we were going to get married. And that's, well obviously that's not how life turned out.

EVE:

(small laugh)

No, no it is not.

AMAIA:

What about you?

EVE:

What about me?

AMAIA:

Do you miss high school?

EVE:

I mean, yeah, kind of. I miss the comradery, I think. Like there is something special about knowing someone else is going through what you're going through. It just feels less lonely. I just miss having a moment to complain about something and having someone tell me that they can relate. And I miss having teachers, oddly enough, like I miss having someone who I thought had all the answers. Does this sound silly? Does it make sense?

AMAIA:

No, no, it makes sense.

EVE:

Yeah...

AMAIA:

I get it. It's funny having been on both sides.

EVE:

What do you mean?

AMAIA:

Well, my kids consistently ask me questions and it's great that they're curious, but I don't always have

the answer. I know they think I'm supposed to because I'm the mom, but I don't. But, I've been them and I don't want to let them down.

there is a long pause

EVE:

You have kids?

AMAIA:

I have two, Andi and Marco. They're great.

EVE:

Yeah.

AMAIA:

Are you okay?

EVE:

I'm fine. Just surprised I guess. Wow, kids.
(she thinks for a second, she smiles)
I'm happy for you. I know you've always wanted them.

AMAIA:

I'm happy for me too.

EVE:

Do they get along? I remember you and your brother fought all the time.

AMAIA:

(laughs)
Oh no, no. They do fight, but they are nowhere near as bad as Yosef and I.

EVE:

You annoyed the hell out of him.

AMAIA:

I want it on the record that he provoked me.

EVE:

Of course, of course.

AMAIA:

But he's out of my hair now. He has a wife to annoy now.

EVE:

He's married?

AMAIA:

I am as shocked as you. And she's gorgeous too, way out of his league.

EVE:

I don't know, I remember thinking he was cute.

AMAIA:

Are you serious? There is no way you were dating me and thinking that my brother was cute.

EVE:

He was my type, he looked like you.

AMAIA:

Wait, that's cute.

EVE:

You forget I'm very cute.

AMAIA:

I didn't forget. But your cuteness was never the problem.

EVE:

I know.

AMAIA:

Sorry, was that rude?

EVE:

No, you're good. You can't remember the good times without remembering the bad ones.

AMAIA:

It doesn't devalue it though.

EVE:

I know.

There is a pause as Eve thinks

EVE:

Maybe this is cheesy, but I'm happy you're happy.

AMAIA:

I am. It's simple and domestic, but kids are- my kids are just the best. You would like them. They're so smart, they get that from Claire. You would not want to be on the opposing team of those three. They could debate the pants off of anyone.

EVE:
It's everything you wanted.

AMAIA:
It is.

There is a moment as EVE and AMAIA, it's fond but cautious. CLAIRE reenters, but is pulled over by HANNAH they begin pantomiming a conversation. AMAIA notices this and laughs a bit.

AMAIA:
It looks like Claire got snared by Hannah.

EVE notices and laughs

EVE:
It's crazy. Some people really don't change.

AMAIA considers this for a second

AMAIA:
(slightly to herself)
But we did.

EVE:
Yeah...yeah... we did.

AMAIA:
Despite how everything went down, I want you to know, I really did love you.

EVE:
You always were a sap.

AMAIA:
(small laugh)
Eve, I'm serious.

EVE:
I know Amaia. I loved you too.

There is a long pause

AMAIA:
Wow, who knew a class reunion was going to make me emotional?

EVE:
Who knew?

A song starts to play on the school gym radio

EVE:
Holy shit.

AMAIA:
What?

EVE:
This was our song.

AMAIA:
(listens for a moment)
I think you're right.

EVE:
I haven't heard this song in forever.

AMAIA:
We should dance to it.

EVE:
What?

AMAIA:
For old time's sake.
(She extends her hand out to EVE)
Come on, will you have this dance with me?

EVE:
Are you serious?

AMAIA:
It will be fun.

EVE takes AMAIA'S hand. They walk center stage and begin slow dancing together. They aren't very close together, there is still some distance as they sway together. Their shadows (YOUNG EVE and YOUNG AMAIA) can be seen dancing as well on the screen on the platform. CLAIRE notices, she is amused, but not particularly interested. After 30 seconds or so AMAIA sees her watch. She stops dancing and pulls away. The shadows continue to dance

AMAIA:
Oh shit, time flies.

EVE:
You need to leave?

AMAIA:

Yeah. I should probably pull Claire away.

AMAIA waves to Claire who excuses herself from the happily conversation.

AMAIA:

Hey, sorry to keep you waiting.

CLAIRE:

It's okay. If we go now we'll still be able to go home in time. We can make it.

AMAIA:

Oh yeah, no problem. I'm ready.

CLAIRE:

(To EVE)

It was a pleasure meeting you.

EVE:

You too.

AMAIA:

Sorry to cut our dance short.

EVE:

It's okay. Bowie can fill in.

CLAIRE:

I'm sorry, but we really need to head out.

AMAIA:

Sorry, you're right.

(To EVE)

It's been great catching up, honestly.

EVE:

Absolutely.

CLAIRE and AMAIA begin to exit stage left. Bowie sees them leaving and goes to EVE.

BOWIE:

Is your friend leaving?

EVE:

Yeah.

BOWIE:

We should probably head out too. We have an early flight tomorrow.

EVE:

Alright, I just have to grab my stuff.

EVE grabs her things off and chair. Bowie follows her and they both begin to exit stage right. As they are exiting the lights become dim and the other characters exit the stage. A purple spotlight hits the screen where EVE and AMAIA's shadows (YOUNG eve and YOUNG AMAIA) both dance. The voice comes over the speakers and the "Welcome Back" banner falls to the ground. The voice on the speakers is TEEN MICHEAL.

TEEN MICHEAL:

And prom queen is...Amaia Townsend!

The screen where the shadows dance reveals TEEN AMAIA and TEEN EVE dancing together. Their song is still playing, but it's coming to an end. In They dance together as the song plays out for a moment completely in love with each other. We watch them. When the song ends, the lights cut to black. End Play.