

Isolove

By

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INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM. MORNING.

A beautiful modern day apartment. It's a Saturday morning and SAFFRON is stood in her small adjoined kitchen making herself some cereal. She pulls out some muesli from a container that reads 'Co-op muesli 2021 Ration Pack'. Saffron is an attractive blonde, she's wearing yoga pants that are sported by millennials everywhere. A regrettable tattoo clings to her wrist, a name of an ex, best left forgotten.

As Saffron preps her breakfast, the radio plays.

RADIO PRESENTER 1 (VO)  
...Absolutely gorgeous tune there from Jimmy Webb, Wichita Lineman. It's 8:46 and we hope everyone is having a cracking morning today, send us your requests and we'll see if we can play them before 10.

RADIO PRESENTER 2 (VO)  
...So Fern have you heard about **Isolove**? This virtual dating service for those looking for love in isolation?

Saffron puts her breakfast onto her coffee table and then wanders over to the other side of the room to her radio whilst simultaneously tapping away on her mobile.

RADIO PRESENTER 1 (VO)  
...Oh I'm not sure, shouldn't people be focusing on more important issues like volunteering, their families and the sanctions put in place...

Saffron suddenly shuts it off. She sits down at her computer and takes a mouthful of muesli and chomps away. She taps at her keyboard and video calls BECKY, her best friend.

INT. BECKY'S BEDROOM. CONT'D.

A smoky bedroom where the curtains are drawn. There are piles of clothes, books, DVDs everywhere. Teacher training books lay untouched on her bedside table. It could be the room of a seven year old who's never been asked to tidy but it's Becky's. She's a mid twenties black girl with oceanic blue hair, several face piercings and a bad attitude.

(CONTINUED)

SAFFRON

Becky?

BECKY

Hey fuckface. What you video calling me at this time for?

Saffron's best friend BECKY sounds dogged and tired.

SAFFRON

Woah, someone's a little tetchy this morning!

BECKY

Well what do you expect first thing? Not even had a cigarette and my phone's buzzing.

SAFFRON

Thought you were quitting?

BECKY

I was, last week.

The two girls laugh.

BECKY

It's hard ya know! Especially since Amazon deliver straight to your door.

Becky yawns, lights up a cigarette then takes a drag and exhales the smoke like it's an inconvenience.

SAFFRON

I was gonna ask if you were all set for Monday?

BECKY

The observations?

SAFFRON

Yeah, John is observing your lesson periods one and two, have you made all your resources?

BECKY

Ahh shit. Thought he was observing me period four and five, was going to prep Monday morning. I'll do it tomorrow. I best actually get dressed up, last week I was teaching in Paul's Game of Thrones tee and joggers.

(CONTINUED)

The girls both laugh.

SAFFRON

Anyway, what's happening with you and Paul? Saw your Insta story yesterday. Not going well I presume?

BECKY

Pfft. If that guy says the word 'distance' one more time I'll scream. There's nothing but distance for everyone these days, what does he want from me?!

SAFFRON

Oh, do you think he's going off you or what then?

BECKY

Nah mate, he knows he can't do any better than yours truly.

Saffron almost spits her cereal out with laughter. We see a bunch of polaroids pinned to a corkboard. Half of the photos are of Becky and Saffron and the other half show Becky loved up with her boyfriend. Becky continues to puff on her Marlboro.

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM. CONT'D.

SAFFRON

Well you are one hell of a catch Bex.

BECKY

I know. Anyway speaking of Instagram, you seen those cringe adverts for that app? Isolove or whatever it is?

SAFFRON

Oh yeah, I've been wondering what that was. Swear it's been everywhere lately, assumed it was another Channel 4 dating show or something.

BECKY

No it's pure grim. A virtual dating thing, people can match with each other over webcam and then chat.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BECKY (cont'd)

You know, to save singletons from going mental in these dark times.

Becky laughs down the speaker. Saffron is curious.

SAFFRON

Well it's easy for you to say, you're not single. The last year and a half has been tough for us who don't have someone! I haven't been on a date in god knows how long!

BECKY

Jeez, you sound super thirsty mate.

SAFFRON

Well maybe I am. Well - not thirsty but maybe I'm missing having someone to get close to. It's bad enough spending Christmas, birthdays and all the rest alone and away from your family but to not have a guy hits you harder sometimes.

BECKY

Hmmm.

SAFFRON

Seriously. I was watching Notting Hill the other night and I started welling up.

BECKY

Whaaaaat?

SAFFRON

No hear me out. It was the part where Julia Roberts goes back to see Hugh Grant's character in his book shop and she does that whole speech, you know the one. "I'm just a girl standing in front of a boy" blah blah blah.

BECKY

Yup...

SAFFRON

But it wasn't that per se that made me cry, I've seen that fucking film a hundred times. It was the idea that none of us know if we're ever going to get that sort of connection again face to face. We don't know if finding "love" will ever be the same again. You know what I mean?

BECKY

(Sniffles)

God Saffron, I'm welling up here.

SAFFRON

Really?

BECKY

No! You idiot!

Becky howls with laughter and Saffron is unimpressed. She puts her bowl down and folds her arms like a moody teen after a scolding from a parent. She watches Becky laugh as she puts out her cigarette.

SAFFRON

(Stubbornly)

Well I might just try it.

BECKY

Seriously?

SAFFRON

Yes.

BECKY

In a completely non-ironic way?

SAFFRON

Yes.

BECKY

Not a Louis Theroux style experiment but to actually find someone?

SAFFRON

Yes!

BECKY

Okay, just don't call me when someone's sent you a pic of their

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BECKY (cont'd)  
joystick and you're reeling from  
the experience. It'll be more Hugh  
Heffner than Grant.

SAFFRON  
Who?

BECKY  
Nevermind. Good luck. Call me in a  
few hours when you're grossed out  
and ready to become a lesbian.

Saffron smiles.

SAFFRON  
Will do. Thanks for the pep talk!

BECKY  
Bye bitch!

INT. APARTMENT OFFICE. MORNING.

Saffron taps away at her keyboard whilst looking at the screen of her enormous iMac. An over the shoulder shot reveals she is on the signing up page of 'Isolove' where the tagline reads "We connect the disconnected" underneath a photo of two people smiling at each other over their respective webcams. It's a site with little subtlety but Saffron is unperturbed.

Saffron takes a sip of coffee. She hesitates for a moment and then after an intake of breath she clicks her mouse as though she's just pressed the nuclear button. She looks scared and bemused yet now she's signed up there's an intrigue in her eye.

### MONTAGE

-Saffron navigates the website, half baffled and half entranced by it. She has a profile photo, bio and her webcam of herself is on show at all times on the bottom right of the page.

-She looks grossed out by some messages she's recieved - the usual concoction of oddball men and their bizarre messages - "Hey bbz you look so hot", "Please go on cam now, I want you", "Amazing boobs, can I see them?".

-Saffron is on Skype to Becky, "I told you men are freaks and it was a bad idea! I warned you!" Saffron rolls her eyes yet is in agreement with Becky.

(CONTINUED)

FADE OUT.

**END OF MONTAGE.**

INT. APARTMENT OFFICE. AFTERNOON.

Saffron looks ever so slightly defeated. She glances out of her window. She rolls her mouse over to the top left of her internet browser in order to close the window. Suddenly her computer makes a sound and she notices a new message, we follow her mouse as she brings it back into the centre of the screen. She's recieved a message from someone named 'Rob94' that reads 'Hey. Remember me?'. She clicks 'video chat'.

A man appears on screen sat in front of his computer. With dark hair and such a pale complexion, he could moonlight as a vampire. He smiles radiantly when he sees Saffron. She smiles back.

SAFFRON

Hey Rob. How're you doing? God it's been eight years, that's wild.

Rob looks quite besotted and amid his blushes you can see how happy he is to have seen Saffron again.

ROB

It's great to see you! I'm alright thanks, yeah we're getting on a bit now aren't we! So what brings you onto here? Feels pretty lame doing this right?

SAFFRON

We are indeed! Oh I've seen the adverts and was curious. Gotta say I was a little disappointed, so many creeps and weird messages. I know we're all craving connection but my god, just have a conversation with me without asking to see my breasts ya' know!

They both laugh and smile at each other.

ROB

Well I'm certainly glad that you didn't give up too early.

(CONTINUED)



SAFFRON

Yeah me too. I've got to say, I always wanted to get back in touch with you after we broke up in college, just never had the courage I guess.

INT. ROB'S LIVING ROOM. CONT'D

ROB

I did too, there were so many times I typed out a message to you trying to reach out then I deleted what I'd written.

SAFFRON

Yeah I know what you mean, college was tough for me. I'd lost my dad in Year eleven and I found it hard to adjust.

ROB

Yeah I'm so sorry, it must've been awful for you and I didn't really reach out or support you.

SAFFRON

Don't be silly, you had stuff going on at that time too. I remember all that. I'm so glad I opened your message.

ROB

Me too.

SAFFRON

So how come you're single then? Have you had many relationships since school?

ROB

Oh a few yeah, I just never met the right person. I just go with the flow then realise months down the line that I have nothing in common with a person, kind of sucks. What about you?

SAFFRON

Oh I meet the wrong guy all the time. I mean it's quite a talent really, I have quite the knack for  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SAFFRON (cont'd)  
meeting guys who treat me badly or  
cheat on me - it's my only party  
trick.

They both awkwardly laugh together. Both are beaming.

SAFFRON  
In all seriousness I've always been  
regretful that things didn't work  
out between me and you. You were  
always so sweet and caring. That  
time you made me a mixtape full of  
Smiths songs, or when you cooked me  
a meal and nearly burnt your  
parents' house down. Nobody's ever  
been that sweet to me.

ROB  
Well you were the best thing in my  
life. Sort of horribly ironic that  
the worst pandemic in history has  
brought us together isn't it?

SAFFRON  
Yeah I guess. I think we'd have got  
in touch eventually though, I've  
thought about you from time to  
time.

ROB  
(Scoffs)  
Pfft. Only from time to time? What  
a bloody nerve.

Rob feigns shock whilst Saffron laughs.

SAFFRON  
Yeah well, a girl gets busy ya  
know.

ROB  
Hey Saffron? Is it okay if we talk  
again in an hour or so? Just gonna  
make dinner. We have loads to catch  
up on, sorry to cut it short  
suddenly.

SAFFRON  
Of course. I'll look forward to it.  
I'm going to lay on the sofa, eat  
crisps and watch Mean Girls - I  
mean if that's not an attractive  
proposition I don't know what is.

Rob laughs and Saffron has a cute smirk on her face.

ROB

I mean that's got me super hot  
under the collar.

SAFFRON

Rob.

ROB

Yeah?

SAFFRON

I'm really glad we've spoken.  
You've made my day. In fact, you've  
probably made my month.

The pair of them look at each other and smile. Silence  
speaks volumes.

ROB

Speak soon Saffron.

The pair hang up. Rob switches his internet browser tab to  
Facebook. He scrolls through his old photographs until he  
hits a bunch from his school and college days. He flicks  
through photos of him and Saffron together. There's theme  
park trips, holiday photos and all the usual cliché couple  
snaps. This is not the first time he's done this. He stops  
on one photo, it's the pair of them jumping off the top of a  
waterfall, something that seems extremely far away at this  
moment.

Rob begins to cry. As we pull away we can see Rob is in a  
wheelchair and hooked up to a drip.

FADE OUT.