

Love U2

By Ines Durand

INT. INSIDE BATHROOM--EARLY MORNING

It is the first day of term in Britain in the mid 2000s, and ROBIN DELAMARCHE, a 17-year-old boy with a black immigrant background, is preparing for his first day in sixth form. He is gelling his hair when his mum, ANASHA, a woman in her late 40s, knocks on the bathroom door.

ANASHA'S VOICE

Robin Taylor Delamarche, come on out right this instant! If you get there late on the first day, you're getting whooped the minute you're home! I wish you were as obedient as your brother when he was 17. Don't waste your chance at school and end up slaving away like your mother the rest of your life!

ROBIN

(annoyed)

I'm coming, mum. Nearly done. Promise I'll be there on time.

Robin rushes out the bathroom and accidentally slams the door, gathering his worn notebook and short pencils into a tattered backpack. Anasha stands outside the door.

ANASHA

How many times do I have to tell you not to slam the door? Never mind being late; you know not to disrespect my house. Close it gently!

EXT. OUTSIDE FRONT DOOR--A FEW SECONDS LATER

Robin accidentally slams the front door and winces, reopening and closing it gently again.

ROBIN

(rushing back in)

Oh! The breakfast dishes!

ANASHA

What are you doing?

ROBIN

Want to help with the dishes.

ANASHA

Shoo, shoo. I'll do them. Go, go. Go!

Robin runs to the bus stop. He extends his hand and chases a leaving bus. The bus driver mercifully stops for him. He opens his nearly empty coin wallet and gives the exact change.

INT. CLASSROOM--MORNING

Robin walks into a classroom full of high-schoolers. Everyone is looking at him. MRS NEWELL is a maths teacher in her early 50s.

MRS. NEWELL

Hello, you're late. What's your name?

ROBIN

Robin Taylor Delamarche, madam. Please excuse my lateness.

MRS. NEWELL

Nice to meet you, Robin. I am Mrs. Newell, and in my class we come on time.

He sits down at the one available seat at the back and notices a clump of fluorescent green--his seat neighbour STEVEN DARTMOUTH's hair. He says nothing.

MRS. NEWELL

As I was saying, since today is the first time you're seeing your peers, I will allow you to introduce yourselves and get familiar with everyone. When I call out your name, tell us where you're from, what you'd like to do in the future, and perhaps your favourite artist. Alistair, Rudy!

RUDY is a burly white teen.

RUDY

Heya. I'm American-bred through and through, no trace of anything else in me, no black, no Asian, nothin'. I wanna be a professional football player; you know, the oval ball, not the round one y'all kick around. And I listen to Black Sabbath. Heavy metal.

He slumps back down on his chair before the end of his sentence. The chair is too small for him. The teacher calls another student and she introduces herself.

MRS. NEWELL

...thank you Jonie. Dartmouth, Steven!

STEVE

Hi guys. I'm Steven, call me Steve. M'Irish, dunno what I wanna be yet, maybe an entrepreneur. And I love U2.

MRS. NEWELL

Delamarche, Robin!

ROBIN

Hey, I'm Robin, I'm from
uh...around here. I'm not sure what
I want to be, just as long as I can
make a good living. I was brought
up on Aretha Franklin.

Some students snicker. He sits back down gingerly.

STEVE

Hey bruv'. If you only listen to
Aretha Franklin, you've got some
serious catching up to do. Let's
modernise you a little. You heard
of U2? What--didn't you say you
were from here? They're huge right
now.

Steve slyly takes out his walkman outside of Mrs.
Newell's sight and hands him earphones covered in earwax.
Robin grimaces.

ROBIN

Yuck! Don't gimme--

STEVE

Shut up, she's gonna hear us. Now
listen and you'll see how awesome
they are. My mullet hair is a
tribute to Bono, the lead singer.
Such a cool guy.

Robin closes his eyes and places the earphone as loosely
to his ear as possible. Steve presses play. As they
listen, Robin's low expectations turn around and he
unintentionally starts to move with the beats.

MRS. NEWELL

Sorry, Brenda, could you please
stop for a moment-- Robin
Delamarche! This is your first day
at school. If you think you can get
away with disrespecting your
classmates and not focusing, you
are sorely mistaken. I want a word
with you before this gets any
further.

ROBIN

What? It wasn't even me...

INT. ROBIN'S HOUSE--EVENING.

It is dinnertime. Robin's dad is absent as usual due to
work. On the table is a simple meal, with a few dishes.

ANASHA

Your brother called when I was
coming home from work. He asked you
how your first day went.

ROBIN

(gulping soup)
 Was okay. Don't like my maths
 teacher, she's too strict. Plus,
 the content's easy, so I don't see
 why she'd pick on me. That woman is
 so uptight.

ANASHA

You're saying that now. With this
 attitude your grades are gonna slip
 and fall. Don't blame her then.

ROBIN

Mum, it's fine! Why is everything I
 say or do always wrong to you? It's
 like I'm never accepted anywhere!

He sighs and gets up to wash the dishes.

ANASHA

It's not that you're wrong. I just
 don't want you to... just be good,
 okay? Better to do things right
 than to regret it your whole life.

Robin groans while scrubbing a plate.

INT. BEDROOM--LATE AFTERNOON THE NEXT DAY.

Robin drops off his backpack with a defeated sigh and plops
 onto his chair. He does nothing at first, then remembers the
 existence of U2. He searches their discography, clicks
 "play", and closes his eyes.

U2 MUSIC FROM THE LAPTOP

"And in the world a heart of darkness,
 A fire zone
 Where poets speak their heart
 Then bleed for it[...]"
 "Though his blood still cries
 From the ground[...]"
 "We run like a river to the sea
 And when it's raining
 Raining hard
 That's when the rain
 Will break my heart..."

He stirs. A few songs pass, and he gets teary-eyed.

U2 MUSIC (CONT'D)

"I have run
 I have crawled
 I have scaled these city walls
 Only to be with you
 But I still haven't found what I'm
 looking for
 But I still haven't found what I'm
 looking for"

He springs up, clutching his chest as if there were a knife
 in his heart. He breathes heavily, wide-eyed, breathless.

ROBIN

This is...me...Bono, you wrote this for me. You, you've felt it too.

U2 MUSIC FROM THE LAPTOP

"They said be careful where you aim
'Cause where you aim you might just hit
You can hold onto something so tight
You've already lost it."

As "Beautiful Day" plays, he starts dancing and his earphones are accidentally yanked out from the laptop, blaring out sound. He hurriedly puts them back in and dances with one arm holding the laptop. An hour later the door opens, and Robin is caught still dancing to U2.

ANASHA

What's this nonsense? Dancing! I come back from work and prepare your dinner, and this is how you repay me? With laziness?

ROBIN

Aw come on! Do I have no freedom to even do what I like?

ANASHA

That's what your uncle Scott said, years ago. He did just that, music. He got popular, went down a slippery road, did things musicians do... and one day he was no more. Robin, do you know what I'm trying to tell you?

INT. CLASSROOM--MORNING

Robin is in his usual seat. Steve comes in.

ROBIN

Steve! What you said about U2 yesterday...I think I've found my idol. Bono's words speak to my soul. And the guitar solos...I've never heard anything remotely like this before.

STEVE

(winks)

You're in luck. They have a concert comin' up in just a few days, and my friend quit on me last minute. What'cha say to a free ticket?

EXT. AT THE U2 CONCERT--LATE AFTERNOON

Robin is standing amongst a dense crowd, lost in the music.

ROBIN
 (Loudly, out of sync, and
 mispronouncing lyrics)
 "I'M HANGING ON
 YOU'RE ALL THAT'S LEFT TO HOLD ON TO
 I'M STILL WAILI--WAITING--I'M
 HANGING ON..."

FELLOW FANS AROUND HIM
 This 'un seems like a wannabe.
 Doesn't even know the lyrics well.
 "Wail", aren't you passionate!

INT. CLASSROOM--MORNING

MRS. NEWELL
 Once we have this value, we square
 root it to give us two
 possibilities. Who can tell me one
 possible answer?

ROBIN
 "3:33 when the numbers fell off the
 clock face", haha.

Dead silence and confusion in the class.

ROBIN (CONT'D)
 What? It's a lyric off of Unknown
 Caller from U2.

STEVE
 (nudges him, whispering)
 Mate, you don't have to be that
 much of a fan, chill. Even I'm not
 that hardcore.

Mrs. Newell looks at him longer than usual, concerned.

INT. CANTEEN--NOON.

Robin, Steve, REY, a lanky boy dressed in baggy clothes; and
 ARMIN, an unremarkable boy of medium height; eat at a table.

REY
 --walked past me in the hallway and
 I said, "Wassup". So smooth.

ARMIN
 Heh, I was right behind you and saw
 her smile. You have a chance, mate.

STEVE
 I wouldn't bet on that. She's got
 Rudy chasing her already, you'd
 better back off or face him.

ROBIN

"My hands are tied
My body's bruised, she's got me with
Nothing to win and nothing to lose
I can't live
With or without you..."

REY

Oh for God's sake, shut up about
your stupid U2. Robin, you're such
a nut.

ROBIN

(not getting the memo)
"See the stone set in your eyes
See the thorn twist in your side..."

INT. BEDROOM--LATE AFTERNOON.

It is a weekday afternoon. We hear chords of "With Or Without You" being played between pauses and tentative singing. Beside him is a flyer advertising audition calls to a new rock band. Upon receiving an email reply of the time and date, he writes "TUESDAY 5:30 PARK AUDITION" on his notepad and sticks it to the wall. The door opens and Anasha hands him the phone.

ANASHA

See you, sweetheart. I'm handing it
over to Robin.

JAMES is Robin's older brother in his mid-twenties.

ROBIN

Hey bruv', what's up?

JAMES

Hey Rob. It's fine, getting used to
the busyness of Hong Kong. It's
still way too hot, though, I'm
melting my way through financial
analyses. How's school for you?

ROBIN

Eh. Friends are stupid. I don't
like the teachers. There's one
Mrs. Newell; she always picks on
me--

JAMES

--wait, you have Mrs. Newell for
maths? Dude, she's amazing! Yeah,
yeah, listen to me, I get you. She
was strict at first but later as we
got closer, I realised she just
wants the best for her students.
Trust me, she's an ogre outside but
inside she's a total muffin.
Anyway, back to work for me. No one
even rests in this city. Can't wait
to get back home to you guys.

ROBIN
Bye James, miss ya.

He hangs up.

ROBIN (CONT'D)
Still hate her, though.

INT. CLASSROOM--MORNING

Robin enters the classroom before class starts and everyone becomes silent, looking at him, having all heard of his musical oddity. He warily walks past them and sits down.

ROBIN
(murmuring)
"If you go your way and I go mine
Are we so
Are we so helpless against the tide?
Baby, every dog on the street
Knows that we're in love with defeat"

INT. CLASSROOM--THE SAME MORNING

MRS. NEWELL
Alright, you are dismissed. Robin,
could you see me for a moment?

He comes to the teacher's table.

MRS. NEWELL
The reports are out and I'm quite
concerned with your grades in
maths. You look distracted lately.
Is everything fine?

ROBIN
Mrs. Newell, honestly, I have no
idea why everyone's so weird to me.
I used to be really good at maths,
I swear! You taught my brother,
right? Obviously he did well in
your class. If my mum sees these
grades, she'll really kill me.

EXT. NEARBY PARK--LATE AFTERNOON.

Robin waits at the designated place with his guitar, trembling slightly. He sees HANNAH, a girl in her early 20s, approaching. When she moves into focus, Robin tenses up, flustered by her beauty.

HANNAH
Hi, I'm Hannah, the band leader. I
assume you're here for the
audition. Seems like you're the
only one who's responded to the
call. You are...?

ROBIN
(still transfixed)
Ro... Robin Delamarche.

HANNAH
 Alright. Play away.

ROBIN
 This song is called, "With Or
 Without You" by my favourite band,
 U2.

He starts playing but not once does he look down at the
 guitar. His eyes are fixed on her. She is uncomfortable.

HANNAH
 Um, thank you but you're not a
 good fit for our band. Sorry. Have
 a good day, Robin.

ROBIN
 (blurting out U2 lyrics)
 "You! All I want is
 You, all I want is
 You!"

Hannah, having already been unsettled by his gaze, leaves
 upon hearing this.

ROBIN (CONT'D)
 Wait! Come back! Sorry!

He groans.

INT. CLASSROOM--MORNING

STEVE
 So. Your audition?

ROBIN
 Doomed. She ran away. 'Cause I
 blurted my darn mind out.

STEVE
 Lemme guess...you did some stupid
 U2 acrobatics. Correct?

ROBIN
 I've lost my chance.
 "Did I ask too much? More than a
 lot
 You gave me nothing, now it's all
 I got..."

STEVE
 Okay mate, look here. You're
 obsessed, not in a good way. U2 has
 eaten its way into your brain.
 I don't even know who you are other
 than a U2 fanatic. You can't even
 think apart from their lyrics. It's
 sad! Do you realise this? U2 has
 become... you, too.

ROBIN
 (barely taking it in,
 whispering)
 Is this why everyone treats me like
 rubbish?

STEVE
 By the way, just saying 'cause you
 probably already know this, but
 U2's also doing a huge festival
 with a bunch of other artists next
 week--

ROBIN
 --where?

STEVE
 Really far, Exeter. Not worth the
 commute.

ROBIN
 I'm going.

INT. BEDROOM--LATE AFTERNOON.

Robin struggles to take out a well-hidden box under his bed. He opens the dust-laden box and takes out bank notes one by one until only one is left. He closes it and puts it back.

ROBIN
 Ten years well saved.

EXT. FESTIVAL AT EXETER--EVENING TWO DAYS LATER.

Robin arrives alone at the concert stadium. It is already packed. He has a nosebleed seat, all his money could get him.

HOST
 And that was Paramore for you. What
 a blast! They are gonna get big,
 that's what's true. Next up, the
 last but certainly not the least,
 the band that needs no
 introduction, whose many albums
 have sold 76 million copies in the
 UK alone... let's welcome U2 to
 rock it out!

BONO
 How are ya? Great to see so many of
 you tonight. Our first song is
 Satellite of Love. Ready?
 "Satellite's gone up into the sky
 Things like that drive me out of my mind
 I watched it for a little while
 I watched it on TV..."

Out of the corner of his eye, unmistakable since her face had been etched into his memory, Robin spots Hannah below, swaying and jamming. He is stunned. He bolts off his place to reach her.

EXT. FESTIVAL AT EXETER--THE SAME EVENING.

Robin breathes, hesitating before tapping on Hannah's shoulder. She turns around, mildly surprised.

ROBIN
Hey Hannah, I didn't know you were
a U2 fan!

HANNAH
Yeah, they've been my favourite
band since I was little.

Bono sings "All I Want Is You", the same song he blurted out in the audition.

ROBIN
(face turns red)
Why did they have to play this
one...

Amidst the lyrics of "You say you'll give me eyes in a world of blindness; a river in a time of dryness; a harbour in the tempest; but all the promises we make, from the cradle to the grave, when you know all I want is you", Robin shuffles awkwardly.

HANNAH
(while song is playing)
Look, I want to make it super clear
to you. I'm not interested. I'm 20
in university. I've got my own
life. If you really want to, we can
be friends, but nothing more. Got
it?

ROBIN
(gulps, song still
playing loudly)
Yes. Alright.

Robin stays next to her. The air gets tense. They glance at one another, never meeting eyes. Finally, Robin slowly steps out.

EXT. BUS STOP OUTSIDE FESTIVAL. NIGHT.

Hannah and Robin wait at the same bus stop. No one says a word.

INT. BUS--NIGHT.

Robin sits near Hannah. Robin has been withholding all his questions for a long while and looks like he'll explode. Hannah is completely fine.

ROBIN

So...what made you love U2?

A long pause.

HANNAH

My dad played them all the time on his cassettes. Every time he'd put one of their albums on I'd dance to it with him. Lots of good memories. They have a special place in my heart. Then... he went through a really hard time, he and mum fought. U2 was his source of comfort, and became mine too when they split. That time it was like...

She chortles.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

I was stuck in a moment I couldn't get out of--

ROBIN

(simultaneously)

Moment I couldn't get out of. Hm! Sorry. Please continue.

HANNAH

Yeah. Just felt trapped and U2 led a way for me, out and away from the chaos. Actually, I performed U2 once in a school concert. That kinda damaged me forever. It was so bad...backstage, the manager told me I was trembling like a leaf! When I got onstage, people started smirking and my voice shook the entire time I sang Beautiful Day, off-key as well. Then the song ends, silence. Some people clapped, some booed. It was horrible, ha. How did you get into U2?

ROBIN

Um...I dunno actually. I love their lyrics. They're so beautiful and I relate to them so much. I guess it's also because I never fit in anywhere, and I'm looking for something... "I still haven't found what I'm looking for", and U2 somehow knows. They've touched a vein in me that I don't know how to describe. But... maybe I'm addicted.

HANNAH

And why is that?

ROBIN

(about to tear up)

That's the thing, I don't know. I'm too into them that I can't tell who's who in my head anymore. I can't think properly. I don't even know who I am anymore. Everyone who sees me at school now stays two meters away from me like I have a problem. Well, that's the thing, maybe I do. I shouldn't have gone to this festival.

HANNAH

Hey. I used to have a hard time getting out my feelings and understanding all the layers of my complicated thoughts too. I've found that writing really helps. Have you ever tried writing to get your thoughts out?

Robin's eyes slowly widen. Lightbulb moment.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Anyway, my stop's here. It was nice talking to ya.

ROBIN

(very fast)

Hey can I have your phone number?

HANNAH

Sorry, what?

ROBIN

Can I have your phone number?

HANNAH

7454 002392. Remember: friends.
Bye.

Robin hurriedly notes it down in his phone, and realises he has had 11 missed calls from his mother. He groans.

INT. ROBIN'S HOUSE--LATE NIGHT.

Robin opens the door and steps inside. His mum is sitting in the living room with a direct view of the door, fuming.

ANASHA

Where were you? Why haven't you told me you were coming back so late? Without telling me! I was

worried sick. I wondered whether you got kidnapped, or if you were out partying and doing God knows what. Hell, I've even asked whether my own son would join a gang and run away from home! "Oh, maybe he gave up on school and decided to travel the world with his guitar!" Where were you??

ROBIN

At a festival at Exeter. U2 was there.

ANASHA

(composure breaking down)

Today, I got your report. D's and F's. I thought it was a joke. Do you know how much this pains your mother? Who has to go to work in a low-paying toxic job while taking care of you? Your father, he breaks his back day and night, endlessly, just so you can have food to eat every night and live in comfort. We are immigrants, you know how hard it is in this country to make a living with this system? Try doing that with these grades. There will be no opportunities left. Robin, I see him in your eyes. You don't know your uncle Scott; he died before you were born. Scott, he was fed up with life. Couldn't keep up with school and decided to flunk it. Made music instead. It worked at first, but the drugs, the girls, the pressure on blacks in the industry then still in the 80s...it was too much for him. He died of an overdose, Robin. He gave up. He was so young. And I don't want you to end up like him. Oh, my son!

ROBIN

(hugging her)

Mum. Mum...I'm sorry...I'll try. I'll really try.

INT. CANTEEN--NOON.

Robin sits with Steve and his friends. He is very quiet.

STEVE

What's up, Rob? Not singing U2? Never would've thought this day could happen.

ARMIN

Yeah, mate. Silence is golden,
'innit? What's with you?

ROBIN

Got bad grades.

REY

Why, saddo? Oh, you know what
else is really sad? Brenda
said no to me yesterday.

ARMIN

No way...

Robin's anger starts building up silently.

INT. HALLWAY--AFTERNOON

RUDY

(surrounded by friends
and girls)

Hey, U2 boy! How you doin' today?
Boy band couldn't save you from
your grades, huh? Flunkin' school,
blackie? Maybe that's all you're
worth. Need some help with school?
Here, lemme come help your poor
ass!

He punches Robin full in the gut and he falls. His friends
laugh and the girls watch.

ROBIN

(exploding)

I don't need help from a dumb,
blond, coke-infused pig! If you're
so good, why don't you start
snorting textbook pages instead!

RUDY

Hey, did y'all hear what he said?
What a sheltered lil' kid. Regret
it yet?

Rudy manages another four full blows before Robin flees,
staggering, amongst laughter.

INT. ROBIN'S HOUSE--LATE AFTERNOON.

Robin is lying down on the sofa. He can't move from all the
bruises he's gotten. His mum arrives home and sees him.

ANASHA

Okay, what's gotten into you today?

ROBIN
Got beat. By a bully.

ANASHA
(sighs)
Is there not a normal day in this house? I'll give you some ointment. What happened?

ROBIN
He just picked on me 'cause of U2, my favourite band. 'Cause he's dumb and got nothing else to do other than partying and girls.

ANASHA
That brute. It's those kinds of people who are gonna be the worst bosses one day. Oppress and dominate. I tell you, they're the deadly ones. That's my boss for you. I'll call the school to give you sick leave. Love you.

ROBIN
Thanks, mum. Love you, too.

INT. ROBIN'S HOUSE--THE NEXT AFTERNOON.

Robin remembers his conversation with Hannah on writing and wants to try it out. He has been at it the whole day, wincing as he writes and crosses words out. The wastebasket is filled with crumpled balls of paper.

ROBIN
(muttering, crossing out lines)
Still too much like U2.

His mum opens the door of his room.

ANASHA
Hi--what's this? Musical poems? Oh no, no, no, don't start with these, please. I told you I want you to excel at school! This is not how you do it! It's a vacuum that will suck you right in, that you can never get out of. Waste of time.
No! I won't allow it. Focus on your studies. If you had done that from the beginning, your bully would not even have picked on you for your grades! I'm sorry but I have to do this.

She tears his drafts into pieces.

ROBIN

(enraged)

MUM! What are you doing? How could you do this? I--I can't believe it. I can't believe it. I can't. No, I need a time out. I'm leaving. I am this close to hurting you and if I see you a second more I just might.

He stands up quickly and winces, packing up his things and taking his guitar swiftly out of the house.

ANASHA

Robin!

EXT. NEARBY PARK--NIGHT.

Robin has not uttered a sound since leaving. He shivers. His anger still occupies his being, and he is reluctant to go back home. He has the idea to call Steve.

ROBIN

Steve. Do you mind if I sleep at your place tonight? I can't go back home right now.

STEVE

Hey mate, I want to say yes, but I live in a dingy shack with my mum and four other kids. I'm so sorry but there's really no space here.

ROBIN

Ah, it's okay. Thanks though. Goodnight.

Robin stares into the distance. He grabs his phone again.

ROBIN

Hey Hannah? Can I...stay at your place for a night...as a friend? A friend in need.

Garbled words end in a question from the other side.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

My mum. I need to cool down. Can't see her or I'll explode. She ripped up all my stuff. Please. Fine, I'll call her saying I'll be at this address. Please...

Silence, then more garbled words (the address) in an authoritative tone.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Thank you so much... promise I
won't be a bother for long.

INT. HANNAH'S LIVING ROOM--EVENING.

Robin is sat at a round dining table in a spacious and cozy house with warm lighting, very bruised and battered. Around him is Hannah's family, comprised of ALLWYN, the father in his late 40s, and Hannah's younger brother and sister. Her siblings are not much younger than Robin. They are eating dinner, in conversation.

ROBIN

...it's rough with my mum. I feel like I'm always doing everything wrong around her. My dad is never here 'cause he works so much, so when he is around, I don't actually know how to talk to him. And I feel like I don't fit in anywhere. No one at school likes me. I don't have many interests. I've tried to cut U2 off to find myself again, but they feel like the only ones who get me so deeply. Speaking of which...

He sings part of "Love Is Bigger Than Anything In Its Way".

ROBIN (CONT'D)

"So young to be the words of your
own song
I know the rage in you is strong
Write a world where we can belong
To each other and sing it like no
other..." Yeah. Sorry.

Allwyn sits speechless then lets out a slow whistle. His two children mutter words of awe. Hannah looks sheepish.

ALLWYN

Young fella', what you just sang there, I want to say that was spectacular. I don't know why you were rejected from that audition you mentioned earlier. What was that audition about?

ROBIN

Well erm...the thing is, the audition was...from Hannah's band. Haha. Oh, this is awkward.

HANNAH

Okay, I confess. I actually thought you sang really well... it's just that I was so creeped out by your staring that I said no.

A polite awkwardness ensues around the table.

ROBIN

Yeah. Really sorry about that. I'm good with it, no hard feelings. Sorry.

HANNAH

By the way, do you remember how I suggested writing as a way to offload your emotions? How is that going?

ROBIN

A fail. It always ends up sounding like U2. But I'll start again.

HANNAH

Try starting with two simple words, "I feel". That gets it every time for me.

INT. GUEST ROOM IN HANNAH'S HOUSE--EVENING.

We see a side view of Robin on a table, having written two words, "I feel", and pausing for a long time. It takes him much effort.

ROBIN

(with a defeated sigh)

It's a mess in here. Get all this muck out of me onto these pages. I want it to be like tar spilling onto snow...

The summer sky darkens without him writing anything else. He goes to bed.

INT. CANTEEN--NOON.

Robin eats by himself, with his usual group of friends at the far end of the canteen sniggering.

ROBIN

I feel...

INT. GUEST ROOM IN HANNAH'S HOUSE--EVENING.

Robin stares at the same sheet of paper. It is left untouched till sundown. His eyes droop and he goes to bed.

INT. HANNAH'S LIVING ROOM--EVENING.

HANNAH
Any luck yet?

ROBIN
No.

INT. HALLWAY--AFTERNOON

He sits down with glazed eyes. He makes a sudden movement.

ROBIN
(punching the floor)
Why... can't I... get it OUT?!

INT. GUEST ROOM IN HANNAH'S HOUSE--EVENING.

Robin lies down, spread-eagled, hopeless. Hannah knocks and opens the door.

HANNAH
How's the writing?

ROBIN
(pointing to his head)
Blocked.

Hannah leaves. A few moments later, she enters with a cup of steaming tea.

HANNAH
Thought it might help the anguish.

The door closes. Robin stares at the cup. He mechanically stands up, and hesitates. Then he cautiously sits down and deliberates some more. Next to the two words, he simply writes, "loved?", before putting down the pen. Suddenly he starts a frenzy of scribbles. He fills pages of paper like a maniac without stopping, way into the night.

BEGIN ROBIN'S MONTAGE DURING THE NEXT THREE DAYS.

... Robin talking and laughing with Hannah's family at dinner.
... writing in the room.
... sitting at his desk at school.
... strumming his guitar.
... Anasha sitting at an empty home, sobbing.
... Robin crumpling more paper and rewriting.

END ROBIN'S MONTAGE.

INT. HANNAH'S LIVING ROOM--EVENING.

ROBIN
 (brandishing sheets of
 paper and his guitar)
 Everyone, make yourselves
 comfortable! Ready? This piece is
 called "If I lose myself I lose it
 all".

"If I lose myself I lose it all

I run. To, from. Where, what.
 I need to get out of my head.
 Out, somewhere anywhere
 But it can't be found
 Turning, turning, turning nowhere
 Because I know I can never escape myself
 And yet I still try
 I can't
 I run

If I lose myself I lose it all

Bound by the infinite,
 The limitless is the ultimate
 limit
 It suffocates
 Where is refuge now?
 It smothers all
 Particles choke and are choked,
 hunter and hunted
 But I am the hunted
 Can we ever be free from the
 weight of the universe?
 No; and I become nothing
 Yet, all is nothing
 All and nothing fused together
 into a fabric of burden,
 oppression we cannot escape
 Never truly free

I run
 Wearier, gasps of air

If I lose myself I lose it all

But can this running continue
 forever?

A crash
 An infolding
 A crumpled prayer
 A blooming

If I lose myself I lose it all

Accept that separating myself from
 the constraints of this world will
 not happen
 And that my messiness is a given
 But Love has never left me

Find my strength
 And rest in who I was created to be
 And the sky and wind
 The smiles and hearts
 Ever beating through joy and suffering
 Are more than what I will ever need
 And I realise I am
 Free

I stop running.

If I lose myself I lose it all.

Everyone is speechless.

HANNAH

Wow. You've found it. Your voice.

INT. CLASSROOM--MORNING

Mrs. Newell is going over exercise questions. Robin
 is furiously crossing out calculations and writing.

MRS. NEWELL

Ooh, now this is one of the hard
 ones. Anyone know the answer to
 this?

BRENDA

14 root 3?

ROBIN

6?

MRS. NEWELL

(pleasantly surprised and puzzled)
 Robin, that's correct! Good work.

INT. ROBIN'S HOUSE--LATE AFTERNOON.

Robin has arrived at home and hears his mum step in the
 front door. He goes to her.

ROBIN

Hey mum. I'm really sorry for
 taking the time out. The whole of
 this week I've reflected--

ANASHA

(hugging him long and
tight)

Oh, my dear Robin! I've missed you
so much. I'm so sorry, baby. I've
reflected on things too, but tell
me later. I'll make some hot
chocolate for the both of us, let's
talk it out then.

EXT. NEARBY PARK--LATE AFTERNOON.

Robin plays his original song to the rest of Hannah's band
members. They whistle and concede a few slow claps.

BAND MEMBER 1

You know Robin, this is exactly
what we've been looking for. Where
did you get this knack for writing?
The lyrics alone are enough for us
to play gigs all around the
country. You're really not bad with
your guitar skills either.

A pause.

HANNAH

So guys, is he in?

THE OTHER MEMBERS

Duh, he's in.

ROBIN

(incredulous)

It's a beautiful day!

He realises he's subconsciously slipped in another U2
lyric and facepalms.

HANNAH AND THE OTHERS

(all knowing the song)

...Don't let it get away! Haha!

Robin lets out a smile and spontaneously strums the chords
of the song while they sing along.

ROBIN

U2: a blessing, a curse, a
blessing.