

TABLE FOR ONE

Screenplay Draft

June 18, 2026

INT. SMALL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Warm room. Low conversations. Glassware catching candlelight.

Not fancy in an intimidating way. The kind of place people save for.

A host stand near the door.

NORA, 30s, enters dressed with care.

Not overdressed.

Intentional.

She gives the HOST a practiced smile.

NORA

Reservation for two. Nora.

The host checks the screen.

HOST

Anniversary?

Nora's smile holds one beat too long.

NORA

Yeah.

The host picks up two menus.

Nora notices.

Lets it happen.

INT. RESTAURANT - TABLE - MOMENTS LATER

A small two-top.

Two menus.

Two water glasses.

Two folded napkins.

A small candle between them.

Nora sits facing the door.

The other chair faces her.

It feels occupied by absence.

She places her phone screen-down on the table.

The SERVER arrives.

SERVER

Still waiting on someone?

Nora looks at the empty chair.

NORA

Just a minute.

The server nods and leaves.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

Nora checks her phone under the table.

No new messages.

She opens a thread.

The last visible text:

I can't do this tonight. I'm sorry.

She locks the phone.

Looks up immediately, as if caught.

No one is watching.

That somehow makes it worse.

She straightens the unused fork across from her by a fraction of an inch.

Then realizes what she is doing.

INT. TABLE - CONTINUOUS

The server returns with bread.

Places it between the two settings.

SERVER

Do you want me to hold off?

Nora almost says yes.

Instead:

NORA

No. I'm ready.

The server waits.

Nora opens the menu.

Her eyes do not move.

The page could be blank for all she can read.

NORA

We'll start with the oysters.

She hears herself say we.

Corrects softly.

NORA

I'll start with the oysters.

The server does not react.

That kindness nearly breaks her.

SERVER

Of course.

The server collects only Nora's menu.

The other menu remains.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

The second place setting remains untouched.

Nora eats one oyster.

Then another.

The ritual is too intimate for one person, which is why she keeps going.

She pours herself water from the bottle meant for the table.

Across the room, a couple laughs.

Nora smiles politely at nothing, like she is part of the same world.

Her phone buzzes.

She freezes.

Looks.

A calendar reminder:

ANNIVERSARY DINNER - 8:00 PM

She turns the phone off.

Not silent.

Off.

The screen goes black.

INT. TABLE - LATER

The server approaches.

Nora has finished the appetizer.

The empty chair is still arranged perfectly.

SERVER

Should I clear the other setting?

Nora looks at the second napkin.

The second glass.

The second menu.

This is the choice.

If the setting stays, she is waiting.

If it goes, she is alone.

Nora nods.

NORA

Yes, please.

The server clears the other place setting carefully. No pity.
Just clean work.

The table becomes smaller.

More honest.

Nora breathes.

For a moment, she looks exposed.

Then she pulls her chair a few inches closer to the table.

INT. RESTAURANT - END

Her entree arrives.

One plate.

Placed in the center.

The server places a fresh fork beside it.

One fork.

Nora picks up her fork.

She takes a bite.

It is good.

This surprises her.

She laughs once, almost silently.

Not happy.

Alive.

The server sees from across the room and gives her privacy.

Nora takes another bite.

She looks toward the door one last time.

No one comes in.

This time, she does not deflate.

She turns back to the plate.

The candle flickers where the second setting used to be.

The table is still small.

But it is hers.

Cut to black.