

Riverkeeper

Nalah - female, 30's

Dylan - male, 30's.

SCENE 2

RIVER RUN

Early June. RIVER stretches out the rope of her canoe for the finish line in the river valley.

NALAH runs in first, DYLAN right after her.

RIVER drops the rope back in the canoe.

DYLAN notices NALAH, but not until a lot of his own brow mopping, stretching, breath control. She doesn't look at him, but the instant he looks at her, she does.

DYLAN

→ start
Good race?

NALAH

Yeah. You?

DYLAN

Yeah. Great day.

RIVER hands him a plastic water bottle.

DYLAN offers it to NALAH.

NALAH

No thanks.

DYLAN

I love the free water.

RIVER hands NALAH a metal water bottle.

NALAH

I bring my own.

They drink.

NALAH

You know, for the cause.

DYLAN

Yeah, running makes me feel home free.

NALAH

You don't even know. This run is to keep our *river* free.

DYLAN

The cause doesn't matter. I'm the guy who scoops all the invites at work.

RIVER

Larry was the same. Golf, hockey, runs, he did them all. Never to win, but for the cause.

NALAH

What's work?

DYLAN

City council.

NALAH

No wonder you like running.

DYLAN

Why?

NALAH

It's not a team sport. Like being a politician.

DYLAN

I'm a public servant. Not elected yet. But I have plans.

NALAH

To be in charge.

DYLAN

Exercise democracy.

NALAH

Be in the decision seat.

DYLAN

Act on my vision and passion.

NALAH

Conduct meetings to win.

DYLAN

Help make this city great.

How about safe? NALAH

What do you mean? DYLAN

I'm an activist. NALAH

What kind of . . . activist? DYLAN

Environmental. With a special interest in water rights. NALAH

I got that from you. RIVER

Oh. So the river run. DYLAN

The river runs for everyone. I run for the river. NALAH

You know our agenda? DYLAN

That's what activists do. NALAH

And your lobby position? DYLAN

Keep the valley as it is. NALAH

Why? DYLAN

Because it's part of the river. NALAH

A river through a metropolis. DYLAN

NALAH

The valley is an integral riparian habitat and needs trees and bush to soak up overflow. You can't be serious about a fake beach.

DYLAN

But you can hardly see the river even here, on the trail. People need access. They do it in Europe. We need to open it up.

NALAH

To erosion and flooding?

DYLAN

We have engineers for that. We have environmental studies. Great cities need great green spaces. And water views. All the most desirable world cities . . .

→ finish

NALAH

Have you ever been on it? This river that made this city?

DYLAN

Uh, no.

NALAH

Every kid gets on the water in junior high.

DYLAN

I'm from Westlock.

NALAH

Okay, Westlock, come on a canoe trip with me.

DYLAN

It's Dylan, and you're on.

NALAH

Nalah. Okay.

RIVER

Larry and I went cycling for our first date. On the same river path. This is amazing.

DYLAN

Is this a date?

NALAH

Oh, no.

