

The Split Bill

Production & Prompt Guide

A complete, repeatable workflow for a 15-second cinematic 3D story that plays a beat straight — from four locked character descriptions to the final Seedance 2.0 render.

15 sec · 9:16 vertical · Pixar look · Lip-synced dialogue · Built for virality

THE IDEA

A whole story told by what nobody says.

Every other guide on the site is comedy. This one isn't — and that's the point. A couple at a fine-dining table, a leather folder, a \$3,000 total, and a man who turns it toward her and asks, lightly, "We split it?" She says nothing. One slow breath, the chandelier catching the wet rim of one eye — no tears fall — and she pays the entire bill herself, thanks the waiter, and walks past him with "Everything was delicious." He's left alone in the emptying room. The film works because nobody performs the emotion: she never cries, he never argues, the camera stays still and the audience does the reacting. Fully lip-synced dialogue, four consistent characters, one continuous evening.

WORKFLOW AT A GLANCE

01. Lock the cast — Fix all four characters — she, he, the waiter, the room.
02. Build key frames — Three stills: the ask, the private decision, the exit.
03. Animate in Seedance 2.0 — Feed refs + master prompt, render 9:16 at 15s, lip-synced.
04. Polish & post — Restrained sound, quiet title, publish to Reels.

CHARACTER REFERENCE IMAGES

Identity is the only thing holding this story together — it's one continuous evening happening to one person, across four cuts. Seedance drifts identity between shots, so lock every character in Nano Banana (Gemini) or GPT Image and re-describe the wardrobe and features in full in every shot. A changed earring or a different updo between shot two and shot three breaks the film. Keep the restaurant consistent too — same chandeliers, same mirrored walls, same warm light throughout.

The Woman (The one who decides) — Soft rounded stylized features, large expressive dark eyes, a sleek black updo and diamond drop earrings, a white halter gown with a white feather-trimmed stole, a black clutch with a gold clasp. She never raises her voice and never cries — the whole beat lives in her stillness.

The Man (The one who asks) — Black tuxedo, black bow tie, dark hair slicked back. Turns the folder toward her and asks "We split it?" as if it were nothing, phone already in hand. The smile stays until the very end, when it's gone.

The Waiter (The quiet witness) — A man in a black suit who sets the leather bill folder at the man's elbow and later holds out the terminal. She looks up at him — not at the man — to say "Thank you."

STORYBOARD THE ASK, THE DECISION AND THE EXIT

[THE ASK] The open leather folder turned toward her, the \$3,000.00 total legible; he glances at it with a relaxed half-smile, phone lifting.

[THE DECISION] Tight close-up on her — gaze dropping, lips pressing together, one slow breath, chandelier light catching the wet rim of one dark eye. No tears fall.

[THE EXIT] She rises, gathers the clutch, walks past him without stopping; the smile gone from his face as

he turns to follow her.

KEY FRAME · THE DECISION

THE DECISION FRAME

[STYLE] Modern 3D animation style of Pixar feature films, warm cinematic subsurface scattering, Octane render look, 4k. Not photorealistic, not live-action. 9:16.

[ACTION] Tight close-up on the woman — soft rounded stylized features, large dark eyes, sleek black updo, diamond drop earrings, white halter gown with white feather-trimmed stole. Her gaze drops, her lips press together, one slow breath, the chandelier light catching the wet rim of one large dark eye — a beat of private decision. No tears fall.

[ENVIRONMENT] Fine-dining restaurant at night, crystal chandeliers, warm volumetric light, all music falling away.

[NEGATIVE] No tears falling, no comedic exaggeration, no raised voices, no identity drift, no wardrobe change, no text or captions.

TIMELINE

0:00–3.5s The hook — wide establishing push-in on the couple; close-up of her lifting a spoonful of berry tart; the waiter sets the bill folder at his elbow, he opens it with a half-smile.

3.5–6.0s The ask — extreme close-up on the \$3,000.00 total; he turns the folder toward her and says "We split it?", taps his phone; she stops, sips anyway, lowers the cup slowly, says nothing.

6.0–9.4s The decision — tight close-up, one slow breath, the wet rim of one eye, no tears; she draws a matte black card from the clutch, pays the whole bill, and says "Thank you" to the waiter, not to him.

9.5–15s The exit — she rises, walks past him without stopping: "Everything was delicious." His smile is gone; he sits alone in the emptying restaurant. Slow fade to black.

THE 15-SECOND MASTER PROMPT

This is the whole thing — the prompt that actually made the film. Copy it as-is; the redundancy and the full per-shot wardrobe descriptions are what hold the identity and the tone together.

MASTER PROMPT · THE SPLIT BILL

CINEMATIC 3D AI CARTOON MINI-STORY – THE SPLIT BILL

[FORMAT] 15-second vertical 9:16 stylized 3D animated story, 720p+. Spoken English dialogue, fully lip-synced.

[STYLE] Modern 3D animation style of Pixar feature films, warm cinematic subsurface scattering, Octane render look, 4k. Not photorealistic. Not live-action.

[TONE] Restrained, adult, emotionally quiet. The story is told by what nobody says. Subtle restrained character animation – nobody performs the emotion.

[SHOT 1 (0-3.5s) · THE HOOK] Wide establishing shot, slow push in. A stylized Pixar 3D animated fine-dining restaurant at night – crystal chandeliers casting warm volumetric light, mirrored walls, other diners softly blurred. A couple sits at a small table for two: a woman with soft rounded stylized features, large expressive dark eyes, a sleek black updo and diamond drop earrings, wearing a white halter gown with a white feather-trimmed stole, a black clutch with a gold clasp beside her plate; a man in a black tuxedo and black bow tie, dark hair slicked back. Cut to a close-up profile of her lifting a spoonful of berry tart, eyes lowered, calm and unreadable. Cut to a medium shot of him as a waiter in a black suit sets a leather bill folder at his elbow; he opens it with a half-smile. SFX: low restaurant murmur, soft piano, cutlery clink.

[SHOT 2 (3.5-6.0s) · THE ASK] Extreme close-up on the open leather bill folder, shallow focus: a printed restaurant check with the total \$3,000.00 clearly legible. Cut to a medium close-up of the same man in the black tuxedo and black bow tie. He glances at the total, turns the folder toward her, and says out loud – lightly, casually, as if it were nothing: "We split it?" Fully lip-synced English dialogue, clear readable mouth shapes, relaxed half-smile. He lifts his phone and taps it once, already sending her the request. Cut to a close-up of the same woman in the white halter gown and feather-trimmed stole, sleek black updo, the espresso cup halfway to her lips. She stops. Her large dark eyes flick once down to the folder and back up to his face. She sips anyway, lowers the cup slowly, and says nothing, her expression completely level. SFX: a single phone tap, the piano thinning out, porcelain meeting the saucer.

[SHOT 3 (6.0-9.4s) · THE DECISION] Tight close-up on the woman in the white halter gown, sleek black updo and diamond drop earrings. Her gaze drops, her lips press together, one slow breath, the chandelier light catching the wet rim of one large dark eye – a beat of private decision, all music falling away. No tears fall. Cut to a macro close-up of her stylized hands opening the black clutch with the gold clasp and drawing out a matte black credit card. Cut to a medium shot: she extends the card to the terminal the waiter holds out, paying the entire bill herself, while the man in the black tuxedo sits behind her in soft focus, phone still in hand, saying nothing. She looks up at the waiter, not at him, and says: "Thank you." SFX: hard silence, clasp click, one terminal beep.

[SHOT 4 (9.5-15s) · THE EXIT] Medium tracking shot. The woman in the white halter gown and feather-trimmed stole rises from the table, fabric and feathers moving with soft cloth simulation, gathers the black clutch, and walks past him without stopping. Mid-stride, without turning her head, she says evenly: "Everything was delicious." Cut to a close-up of the man in the black tuxedo and black bow tie, napkin still on his knees, turning his head to follow her – his large eyes still, his mouth slightly open, the smile gone. Her white gown sweeps close past the lens. Cut to a low wide shot: he sits alone at the table in the emptying restaurant beneath the crystal chandeliers, motionless, still facing the doorway she left through. Slow fade to black. Cool desaturated final frame. SFX: heels on marble, a distant door, one low sustained note.

[NEGATIVE – paste into every shot] no photorealism, no live-action, no comedic exaggeration, no slapstick, no bug-eyes or cartoon takes, no rubber-hose limbs, no subtitles or captions, no watermark, no real brand logos, no distorted hands or extra fingers, no identity drift between shots, no wardrobe change, no raised voices, no confrontation

QUALITY CHECKLIST

- [] All four characters look identical across every cut — same gown, stole, updo, diamond drop earrings, tuxedo and bow tie (identity consistency)
- [] The restaurant stays consistent — same chandeliers, mirrored walls, warm light throughout
- [] Nobody performs the emotion — she never cries, he never argues, the camera stays still
- [] Dialogue is fully lip-synced with clear mouth shapes; the three lines land level and quiet
- [] The \$3,000.00 total is legible early so it stops the scroll
- [] Sound thins to hard silence on the decision — no score fighting the beat
- [] 9:16, 15 seconds, 720p or better, no subtitles or captions

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