Joyride: A Screenplay

by Lily Zella Jackson

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JOYRIDE

Written by
Lily Zella Jackson
“I want to say things to the world that are very true. Maybe then I can leave some light when my door closes.”

- Walter Dee Morris
INT. SARAH’S DORM ROOM – EARLY MORNING

Warm sunrise shines in through a small dorm window, illuminating a cluttered but cozy room. It appears in a state of disarray—clothes strewn everywhere, a vase of wilting flowers on the desk. A cap and gown hangs on the back of the closet door. The bed is unmade. SARAH BYRNE, 21, young looking and small, assesses herself in a full length mirror. She wears a t-shirt and jeans. She brushes her hair.

SARAH
(quietly)
Okay.

She grabs her purse from her desk and leaves, flicking the light off behind her. The door creaks shut with a heavy thunk, leaving us in silence.

EXT. DORM HALLWAY – EARLY MORNING

Sarah locks her door and walks down the quiet hall. She passes doors labeled with student names until she stops at May’s room and knocks. Next to May’s door is a door with the name tag “RUBY”, which is covered in paper flowers and cards. May glances at Ruby’s door and looks away, and then back again, staring at it. The door swings open and MAY MARINO, 22, tall and slender, appears in the doorway. She wears a black dress.

SARAH
Is this too happy?

MAY
No.

SARAH
Should I be wearing black, though?

MAY
No.

SARAH
You are.

MAY
This is just my slightly formal slightly casual dress.

(MORE)
MAY (CONT'D)
I always wear this to slightly
casual things.

SARAH
Right. Okay. That makes complete
sense.

May closes the door behind her. The two of them stare at
Ruby’s door. May reaches up and snatches a card off the door.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Who was that?

MAY
Marissa Stewart. Who I caught
talking shit about Ruby and I last
week while she was literally
walking five feet behind us. Ruby
turned around and was like What’s
up, wanna fight? And Marissa’s tail
went right between her legs.

Sarah laughs. May reaches out with her other hand and jiggles
Ruby’s door knob. It doesn’t budge.

SARAH
This is so fucked.

EXT. SMALL COLLEGE CAMPUS
Late spring morning fog hovers over the world. Everything is
quiet, almost everyone still asleep. A few birds fly over
brick towers, aged dorms and ivy-covered buildings. Aerial
shots show May and Sarah walking through campus.

INT. MAY’S OUTBACK
Sarah and May sit in the front seat of the car in silence,
May driving. Sarah stares out the window. There is a clear
absence in the middle of the backseat, framed at the center.

INT. BURKE AND SON’S MORTUARY – LATE MORNING
May and Sarah sit stiffly across from the receptionist, the
room silent save for the sounds of her typing. MR. ARNOLD
BURKE (70s, shabby suit) enters the waiting room and
approaches them.

MR. BURKE
Sarah and May?
SARAH

Yes, hi.

MAY

Hi.

MR. BURKE

I am terribly sorry for your loss. So sudden. So tragic. I appreciate you both coming out before the funeral to check Ruby over. We’ve finished the embalming process and she looks really lovely, fresh, very alive. So to speak.

May and Sarah are silent.

MR. BURKE (CONT'D)

Shall we? I’ll just point you in the direction of the viewing room and leave you be for a bit.

May looks to Sarah, who nods after a moment of hesitation. They hold hands and look to Mr. Burke.

MR. BURKE (O.S) (CONT'D)

You’ll be all right, I promise. She looks just like--

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. DISPLAY ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Sarah and May stand together in the same framing, their faces now slack with shock.

MR. BURKE (O.S)

--She’s sleeping! See, it’s not too scary to see. She’s just taking a nap.

MAY

Why is her- why can’t her-

Mr. Burke stands across from them, the casket between them. He frowns and glances down into it.

MR. BURKE

Oh. Oh god, sorry about that. We put some screws and a spring to keep it shut. It must’ve snapped off.

Mr. Burke makes his way toward the door.
MR. BURKE (CONT'D)
Goodness, hope no one was in here
to see that happen! Would’ve given
quite a scare. I’m going to grab
some tools and a new spring to fix
that. I’ll only be a minute. So
sorry. Wow.

Mr. Burke exits the room, leaving Sarah and May alone. CLOSE
ON the casket, where we see the body of RUBY SALOMON, 21
dressed in a too-small white confirmation-style dress. Her
face is painted with heavy makeup, dark blush and lipstick.
She looks like a clown. Her mouth is agape, slack, making her
look decidedly dead.

MAY
This is too much.

SARAH
She looks like a CPR dummy.

MAY
That, like, a makeup school for
clowns got to.

They stare at the body for a second.

SARAH
I know this is in like, hilariously
poor taste, but I have a deep urge
to put my hand in her mouth. Like
my whole fist.

May looks over at Sarah in shock, who makes a “yikes” face.
They burst into shocked, cathartic laughter. May sits down,
laughter turning to tears. Sarah sits beside her and rubs her
back, stone-faced.

MAY
(crying)
She was just here.

SARAH
I know.

Quiet for a few moments. Sarah looks up and freezes, her hand
stilling on May’s back. May glances at Sarah and turns to
look at what Sarah’s staring at and SEES:

RUBY stands in front of the open casket, where her body still
lays. The standing Ruby wears the same outfit her corpse
wears, the dress too short and small on her shoulders. She
stares at the two of them for a second blankly.
Mr. Burke re-enters the room from behind Ruby and smiles sympathetically, seeing May’s tear streaked face.

MR. BURKE
Sorry about that. I’ll be in and out in a flash.

Sarah and May glance from Mr. Burke to Ruby as he bends over the corpse, re-attaching the spring to keep its mouth closed. Ruby looks over at the two of them and mouths ‘what the fuck?’. The silence is palpable. After finishing his work, Mr. Burke stands and Ruby moves out of his way hastily.

MR. BURKE (CONT’D)
That should do it. Take as long as you want in here, all right? Let Melinda at the front know if you need anything. Except tissues. We are unfortunately out of tissues.

Mr. Burke smiles tightly again and leaves the room. The silence continues, Sarah and May staring at Ruby, who crosses her arms and shifts her weight from one foot to another.

RUBY
So do you speak first or do I?

SARAH
What in the absolute fuck.

RUBY (CONT’D)
Oh, I’m sorry, so sorry, you go first, you go first.

SARAH
No, I really feel like you should be going first here.

RUBY
Okay well first of all, you’re taking this so well, when I first realized what was happening I was like AAAAHHHHH!

Ruby yells dramatically, raising her arms to the sky.

RUBY (CONT’D)
And you guys aren’t doing any of that! Yet. It could be a delayed reaction.

May, white as a sheet, stands up and crosses the room to face Ruby, across the casket. Her lip trembling, she swipes a hand through the air at Ruby. Her hand passes through her. She looks back at Sarah.
MAY
I’m on drugs.

SARAH
You’re not on drugs.

RUBY
You could be on drugs.

SARAH
(sharply, to Ruby)
You are not helping.

MAY
We’re both on drugs. We’re both on drugs.

RUBY
I’m on drugs.

SARAH
We’re not on drugs. This is like, a vision or something. For us. To... let go. Right?

Sarah looks at Ruby expectantly.

RUBY
No, I’m just a full-ass ghost, I think.

SARAH
Oh.

MAY
You THINK?

RUBY
Sometimes, when I try really hard.

MAY
(face in hands)
I really cannot emotionally handle this right now.

RUBY
Imagine how I feel. I died.

MAY
Oh my god, STOP!

May goes back across the room and sits heavily in a chair.
SARAH
Okay. What’s going on. Are you
pranking us? Is this a horrible
elaborate prank?

RUBY
No, I’m not pranking you.

SARAH
Then what is this? You realize how
literally unfathomably insane this
is right? Either both May and I
have gone off the deep end or
you’re, you’re--

RUBY
A ghost. Yeah. I’m a literal ghost.

MAY (O.S.)

GREAT!

RUBY
There’s no time to hash this out. I
need you to get me clothes.

SARAH
What?

RUBY
I need my blue jeans with the patch
and my clown shirt. The one with
the primary colors.

SARAH
You want us to--

RUBY
I can’t be--look at me!

She gestures to her body in the casket.

RUBY (CONT’D)
I look like I’m attending my first
communion. But I’m an adult with
boobs. Who brought these clothes?

SARAH
Um, my mom, I think.

RUBY
Okay. That tracks. Very Catholic
chic. But I need you to go get me
clothes. And makeup wipes.

(MORE)
RUBY (CONT'D)
It looks like they just put lipstick on a corpse. Which I realize is just what they did, but you get my point.

SARAH
Your room is locked.

RUBY
That feels like a very small hurdle in the grand scheme of things.

MAY
(looking up from her hands)
I think I get it.

The two turn to look at her.

MAY (CONT'D)
This is our shared spirit journey. We know that this is what she would want, so we have to do it. For our own peace.

Sarah turns to look at Ruby.

SARAH
Is that true?

RUBY
No. But if that incentivizes you, then sure.

INT. DORM HALLWAY - LATER

May lightly bangs her head on Ruby’s door, various makeshift tools in a pile on the ground beside her. Sarah watches, arms crossed.

SARAH
If you kicked it hard enough, would it like, burst open?

MAY
Yeah, let me just eat a can of spinach real quick.

SARAH
I’m just trying to brainstorm here. You do squats!

May stands up and rolls her neck.
MAY
We’re gonna have to go around.

SARAH
No, no, I will not be the flyer again--

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE DORM BUILDING - A MINUTE LATER

May stands tall, holding Sarah’s ankles as she reaches up to push open Ruby’s window.

MAY
(yelling)
Stand up taller! The window’s cracked!

SARAH
I physically cannot be taller than 5 foot 3 and a half!

MAY
Grow a half inch!

Sarah rolls her eyes and reaches harder, finally getting leverage and pushing it open.

SARAH
Okay, I got it open more.

MAY
I’m gonna vault you inside. I’m just gonna throw you up.

SARAH
Oh my god. Oh my god!

Sarah shrieks as May pushes her upwards, propelling her through the open window.

INT. RUBY’S ROOM - SAME

Sarah climbs to her feet and looks around the room. Dark but colorful, cluttered, as though everything was left in media res. She walks up to and assesses a world map, dotted with safety pins. Sarah turns and looks at a wall of photographs of Ruby in various places--beaches, foreign cities, school--and reaches up to re-stick the corner of a photo that is coming off the wall.
It’s a photo of Ruby, Sarah, and May, laughing, waist deep in a lake. She sighs and closes her eyes for a moment before beginning to open drawers.

EXT. OUTSIDE DORM BUILDING – SAME

May stares up at the open window.

MAY
(yelling)
Any luck?

Silence from above. May sighs and turns around, surveying the area. A short girl with a short chop- BOBBI FOREST, 22- approaches her.

BOBBI
Hey!

May jumps, glancing up back at the building and then at Bobbi.

MAY
Oh, hey! How are you?

Bobbi gives May a kiss, wrapping her arms around May’s waist.

BOBBI
Where have you been? We’re supposed to grab dinner later and you’ve been sort of AWOL.

MAY
Agh, I’m sorry, Sarah and I have been doing some stuff for Ruby, and I lost track of time--

A loud SLAM is heard through the open window of Ruby’s room. Bobbi glances up.

BOBBI
Are people in there?

MAY
Yeah, they’re cleaning it out.

BOBBI
Oh. Jeez. Okay.

Beat. May fidgets.
BOBBI (CONT'D)
Maybe I should move in next door, now that it’s unoccupied...

May blanches, staring at Bobbi with horror.

BOBBI (CONT'D)
It was a joke. Sorry. Poor taste.

MAY
Yeah.

BOBBI
Well, is there anything I can do--

MAY
No. Thank you.

BOBBI
All right. I’ll see you later for dinner.

May nods tightly and Bobbi walks away, putting in headphones. May watches her walk away and then glances up at the dorm as Sarah pops her head through the window.

SARAH
Neither of her requests are here.

MAY
How is that even possible? She wears that outfit all the time. It’s like her cartoon character outfit.

SARAH
Oh shit.

MAY
What.

SARAH
I know where they are. Get your keys.

CUT TO:

EXT. SARAH’S FAMILY HOME – EVENING

Medium shot of a modest New England style home, light blue and all- American.
INT. SARAH’S FAMILY HOME ENTRYWAY - EVENING

Sarah and May creep through the front door of Sarah’s home, pulling it shut behind them. A television plays quietly from another room. They tiptoe up the stairs.

INT. SARAH’S BEDROOM - EVENING

Sarah turns to face May, holding a folded pair of jeans and a brightly colored shirt. She hip checks her drawer shut.

SARAH
(hushed)
She left them here a few weeks after we had to change for dinner with my parents.

MAY
(hushed)
I remember. The cardigans.

The two walk carefully out of the room, mindful of the creaking of the floorboards.

INT. ENTRYWAY OF SARAH’S HOUSE - SAME

They descend the stairs quietly and make it to the front door. Sarah pulls it open and it lets out one resounding creak. They freeze for a moment before continuing through the door.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)
Hello?

SARAH

Sarah’s mother, CHRISTINE BYRNE, small and mousy, 50s, walks down the hall and gasps.

CHRISTINE
Girls! Oh my goodness. What are you doing here?

Christine hurries over to hug Sarah, and then May.

SARAH
Hi, Mom. I just had to grab something.
CHRISTINE
Well you two just have to stay for dinner. Your father’s making pork loin.

SARAH
No, we really have to-

CHRISTINE
(herding them inside)
What you really need is some food cooked with love. Come in, there’s plenty. May, do you want to borrow a cardigan?

INT. SARAH’S DINING ROOM - EVENING

Sarah and May sit around a large dining room table with Sarah’s entire family: DAMIEN BYRNE, built like a log cabin, 50s, Christine, and twin brothers LUCAS and PETER BYRNE, 15. They all hold hands with their heads bowed. May wears a pink cardigan.

DAMIEN
In the Lord’s name we pray. Amen.

EVERYONE
Amen.

Everyone begins to dig in. May’s phone buzzes on the table and she switches it to silent. Quiet, save for the sound of cutlery on plates. Peter stuffs a massive piece of meat into his mouth and gags.

LUCAS
Is that what it’s like to suck dick, Peter?

Damien whacks Lucas on the back of the head.

CHRISTINE
So, May, when is your mother flying out for graduation?

MAY
The 29th, and then she’s staying for a week after to help move me and Bobbi to the city.

DAMIEN
Not going home?
MAY
No, I’m tutoring over the summer before starting grad school.

CHRISTINE
Oh, that’s right! You’re going right in, aren’t you?

MAY
Yep!

SARAH
Wait, Bobbi’s moving in with you?

MAY
Uh, yeah, we’re sharing the room sublet for the summer while she gets her footing at the law firm.

SARAH
(to herself)
That’s insane.

PETER
Bobbi’s a girl?

LUCAS
They’re all lesbians, you know that.

CHRISTINE
Boys. Of course Bobbi is a girl. Why shouldn’t she be? Right, Damien?

Damien nods, cutting his steak vigorously.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
We’re very supportive of all that. I would just love if Sarah had a girlfriend. I actually thought that...maybe Ruby was--

SARAH
Jesus, mom. No.

CHRISTINE
Okay, okay, there goes mom always saying the wrong thing.

May glances at Sarah, who shakes her head subtly.
DAMIEN
(loudly)
Sarah, have you looked at the grad
school options I sent you yet? Some
nursing programs could start as
early as January.

SARAH
No.

CHRISTINE
Maybe when you’re feeling better-

SARAH
I will. I’m just busy. It’s the end
of the year.

DAMIEN
Maybe after the funeral we could
take a look together.

SARAH
Maybe I should be looking at my own
pace.

DAMIEN
Maybe it would be a good
distraction, to throw yourself into
something--

SARAH
Guys! My best friend just died! I’m
grieving! Please!

The room quiets. Peter chokes on a piece of meat again.
Christine whacks him on the back of the head.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE MORTUARY - NIGHT

Sarah and May zoom into the parking lot, swinging into a
spot. May and Sarah get out as May talks into her phone.

MAY
(sending audio message)
Hey babe, I’m so sorry I missed
dinner tonight, Sarah’s parents
invited us over for dinner and I
couldn’t turn them down. I’ll come
over when I get home. Love you.
SARAH
Didn’t know Bobbi was moving in.
Pretty serious.

MAY
Yeah.

INT. DISPLAY ROOM - NIGHT
Mr. Burke ushers them into the viewing room quickly.

MR. BURKE
All right girls, not too long in
here please, we’re closing up shop
in a few.

SARAH
Thanks.

Mr. Burke leaves the room, closing the door behind him. The
two turn to see Ruby’s ghost again, standing in the middle of
the room near her body.

RUBY
Did you find them? I realized I
think I left them at--

SARAH
You did, but we got them.

Sarah holds up the clothes, and Ruby smiles widely.

RUBY
That’s amazing! Thank you for doing
all that. I really appreciate it.

SARAH
So I guess we’ll just...leave them
here with Mr. Burke and he can put
them on you or something?

RUBY
Oh god. Creepy. No.

SARAH
Oh.

RUBY
We’ll do that later.

MAY
What?
A beat. The two of them assess Ruby, who stares at them uncomfortably.

RUBY
Now you’re gonna take my body and we’re gonna go on a road trip.

Another long beat. Sarah opens and closes her mouth, May shakes her head slightly to clear it.

RUBY (CONT'D)
So he leaves the side door to the morgue unlocked, and my body is kept in-

MAY
Wait wait wait wait wait. You’re serious? Are you kidding me?

RUBY
I am serious and I am not kidding you.

SARAH
Where’s the road trip to?

RUBY
New York.

MAY
OH my god.

RUBY
I really don’t have time to explain because that man is going to come back so soon and kick you out so I’m kept in drawer seven, and there’s one security camera outside but just throw a rock at it or something, and--

SARAH
Ruby, what?

MAY
Why would we have to steal your body?

RUBY
I shouldn’t be too far from it. The ol’ ball and chain. So bring ice, and a blanket I guess--
MAY
I’m really going to lose my mind here.

RUBY
Listen, listen, just leave for an hour until they’ve closed up, okay? Go get toothbrushes and extra clothes or something.

MAY
Ruby, there’s finals, and graduation, and--

RUBY
You will be back for graduation.

SARAH
You’re serious.

RUBY
Dead serious.

SARAH
Is this unfinished business or something?

RUBY
...Yes.

The door swings open and Mr. Burke enters, in a rush. Sarah and May whirl around.

MR. BURKE
I hate to intrude, but we must close up--everything all right in here?

May looks at Sarah blankly.

SARAH
Yep, thank you. We will now be going home to our school where we live and will stay for the whole night.

May nods. Mr. Burke blinks at them.

CUT TO:
EXT. MORTUARY PARKING LOT - LATE NIGHT

AERIAL SHOT of the empty lot. May’s car pulls in and circles the building, a few spots down from a side door. LONG SHOT of a figure in a hoodie--Sarah--exiting the passenger side and hurrying to hug the wall before throwing something at a security camera. It hits, and she does a little victory fist pump, waving at the car. The trunk of the car pops open. Another figure--May--exits the driver’s seat.

They meet at the side door and look at each other for a moment before pulling it open. They enter, leaving it ajar. Nothing happens for a few moments, and then they exit, struggling to carry the body bag. They place the body on the ground beside the car and May opens the trunk.

CLOSE ON May and Sarah, surveying the space, and then the body on the ground.

MAY
How do we do this.

SARAH
Do we just...slide her in the backseat?

MAY
I will not have a dead body en plein air in my car.

SARAH
We’d cover her with the blanket–

MAY
And where is she, anyway?

SARAH
I assumed she’d be here by now.

MAY
What if we literally did dream it? What if we took the wrong--

SARAH
No.

MAY
What if!

The two look to the body bag on the ground and crouch over it, Sarah reaching hesitantly for the zipper. CLOSE ON Sarah and May’s face as they begin to unzip.
RUBY (O.S.)
Just put the seat down.

May and Sarah shriek, falling backwards before clapping hands over mouths. Ruby stands behind them, cringing and shushing. She still wears the too-small dress, standing uncomfortably.

RUBY (CONT'D)
Boo. Sorry. God. (beat)
I won’t make a bunch of ghost jokes, I promise.

May stands and climbs partially into the car, putting down one of the back seats. Sarah begins pushing ice bags into position.

RUBY (CONT'D)
Yeah. Yeееeah. Get me nice and frosty.

SARAH
Oh my god.

INT. MAY’S OUTBACK – MOMENTS LATER

Sarah and May sit in tense silence as May drives. Ruby sits in the middle back seat.

MAY (panicked)
What the fuck do we do now?

SARAH
Ruby, where are we going?

RUBY
Poughkeepsie!

May sighs and signals to change lanes, looking over her shoulder.

SARAH
What’s in Poughkeepsie?

MAY
Vassar?

RUBY
Lizzie’s in Poughkeepsie!

MAY
Does she know we’re coming?
RUBY

Nope!

MAY

Great!

Sarah sets May’s phone up on the dashboard mount with the GPS on and turns on the radio, blasting music.

SARAH

Okay. Siri says we’ll get in at 3:30 AM. No sleep ‘til Vassar, any of you.

They settle in, upbeat music playing. Ruby reaches up to squeeze Sarah’s shoulder, who shudders, unaware of Ruby’s touch. Ruby leans back, dejected.

MONTAGE

- May’s car zooms down a nearly empty highway, a few cars around them. One car passes May’s car.

- From the perspective of the other car, we see May and Sarah sit neutrally with no one in the back seat. They suddenly burst into laughter, apparently at nothing.

- From inside the car we can see Ruby in the back seat telling jokes, May and Sarah laughing hard.

- Shots of dense thickets of trees, barren hills with barns, barely lit by porch lights. May’s car pulls off the highway, the exit sign overhead reading “POUGHKEEPSIE.”

INT. MAY’S OUTBACK – EARLY MORNING

May and Sarah are curled up in the front seats, asleep. Ruby leans back with her eyes closed but opens one to survey if they’re still asleep. She closes her eyes again quickly as a loud BANG from outside jars the others awake.

MAY

Ow.

Sarah shifts her seat forward and peers out her window, rubbing her face.

SARAH

Trash truck.

They glance back at Ruby, who stretches and yawns as though she’d been sleeping. May glances at her phone and blanches.
MAY
(to herself)
Oh, shit.

May begins texting rapidly.

SARAH
Where does Lizzie live?

RUBY
Edge of campus in an apartment. But
I have to get changed first.

MAY
(distracted)
Okay, go for it.

Beat.

MAY (CONT'D)
Oh, right. Right. God.

SARAH
Does that mean we....

RUBY
Unfortunately.

CUT TO:

EXT. EMPTY PARKING LOT - MORNING

May and Sarah stand in front of the open trunk, steeling
themselves. Ruby stands a few feet to the side, arms crossed
uncomfortably in the dress.

SARAH
Ruby, just keep watch, okay?

RUBY
(turning around)
Got it.

SARAH
Okay.

MAY
Okay.

May reaches into the trunk and pulls the body bag toward
herself. She unzips it.
Close on Ruby’s face as we hear sounds of clothes rustling, the bag crinkling as it gets moved. She glances around, surveying the area, before glancing over her shoulder at the two of them.

May and Sarah pull the dress off Ruby’s body. We don’t see any of the body, just the girls, crying quietly as they put the new clothes on her. It’s a somber moment.

RUBY (O.S.)
Was one of my boobs always that much smaller?

They glance over at Ruby, closer to them now, scrutinizing herself.

RUBY (CONT’D)
I knew there was a size disparity but its so much more extreme when you see it from an outside perspective.

She looks at the girls, noticing their tears, and quiets, ducking her head.

RUBY (CONT’D)

Sarah laughs and sniffs, continues to pull the clothes onto the body. May follows suit.

MAY
Ruby, how does this work? How do you, uh, change when the-

She looks over her shoulder and Ruby stands there beaming, now comfortable in jeans and a button down. She strikes a pose.

RUBY
This feels so right.

Sarah zips up the body bag and pushes it back into the car, closing the trunk.

MAY
(hurry up)
Okay, Ruby, to Lizzie please.
RUBY
I don’t really know I’m gonna approach it-

CUT TO:

EXT. LIZZIE’S FRONT DOOR

POV through the front door of LIZZIE HART, 22, funkily dressed with a bob, frozen with shock.

LIZZIE
I’m on drugs.

Reverse shot revealing the three girls on the porch, Ruby standing stiffly in the middle.

MAY
You’re not on drugs.

RUBY
She might be on drugs.

LIZZIE
No, no, I’m not right now, unless I am, which would make sense. You, you--

RUBY
I died.

LIZZIE
But you...you’re?

RUBY
Sort of doing a farewell tour.

Lizzie’s eyes well up with tears, and May and Sarah glance at each other.

MAY
Why don’t we leave you guys--

SARAH
Yeah, we’ll get out of here--

LIZZIE
(sniffing)
Ruby, maybe we could go for a walk?

RUBY
(glancing over her shoulder)
(MORE)
RUBY (CONT'D)
I, actually uh, don’t wanna get too far from the-

Lizzie looks beyond them at their car, parked in front of the building.

LIZZIE
Oh. Oh my god, is your...

RUBY
Yeah.

LIZZIE

Ruby looks to May and Sarah.

SARAH
We’ll come back in a bit.

INT. LIZZIE’S APARTMENT

Ruby sits on the counter cross legged while Lizzie makes breakfast.

LIZZIE
I still can’t really conceive of this.

RUBY
Yeah, no kidding.

LIZZIE
I mean, I’d already started mourning.

RUBY
Sorry.

LIZZIE
Don’t--don’t apologize, I would much rather this than our last conversation be about Liam knocking his front teeth out.

RUBY
How is he?

LIZZIE
He’s all gums. My mom could’ve killed him.

(MORE)
LIZZIE (CONT'D)
He’s not gonna have new permanent teeth for literally almost a year, it’s ridiculous.

RUBY
A year? Holy shit. I cannot fathom that much time.

Beat. They realize the weight of that statement.

LIZZIE
How much time do--

RUBY
I don’t know.

LIZZIE
Yeah, I figured.

Lizzie turns away and begins cutting garlic.

RUBY
(noting her chopping)
Garlic hands.

LIZZIE
Garlic hands.

RUBY
Let me smell.

LIZZIE
Can you?

RUBY
I can smell, yes.

Lizzie approaches Ruby and holds her hands up for Ruby to smell.

RUBY (CONT'D)
Mmm. Your mom used to say that garlic was the best natural perfume.

LIZZIE
I think that’s just how she’d get us to cut the garlic for dinners.

Lizzie returns to the cutting board.

LIZZIE (CONT'D)
So I’m the first stop.
RUBY

Yup.

LIZZIE

What’s next?

RUBY

I don’t really know. I thought we could just, you know, fuck around and see some stuff while I’m still here.

LIZZIE

You don’t have any plans?

RUBY

Well, no, but you know I never do. You were always the planner, anyway.

LIZZIE

I know, but isn’t this, like, different? You don’t know when you’ll--you’ll go away. There must be some sort of deadline.

RUBY

Well, I’ve already died, so. Hard part done.

LIZZIE

But this isn’t forever.

A beat. Lizzie turns to face Ruby.

RUBY

Probably not, but I’m not really stressed about--

LIZZIE

But you must be here for unfinished business or something.

RUBY

That’s a little intense.

LIZZIE

Ruby, it was really sudden.

Beat. They look at each other.

RUBY

I know.

(beat)

(MORE)
RUBY (CONT'D)
God, Lizzie, you’re really killing my second-life adventure mood here.

LIZZIE
I’m not trying to. Just--what do you want? From being...back?

RUBY
(earnestly)
I want too much.
(trying to lighten the mood)
That’s why you’ll be a good guide on the way! By the way, do you have like, a pretty small duffel bag?
Because we don’t have a lot of space with my body in the trunk and all-

LIZZIE
Wait, what?

RUBY
What?

LIZZIE
Ruby, I can’t come.

RUBY
Why? I’ll get you back before your graduation, I promise.

LIZZIE
No, no, this isn’t for me.

RUBY
What do you mean, “this?” It’s just a road trip.

LIZZIE
I know, but--okay. You know I’m not like a deeply spiritual person. But...you’re here for a reason. Not here like in Poughkeepsie but like, back, and with May and Sarah specifically.

RUBY
No. You have to come.

LIZZIE
I can’t.
RUBY
(desperate)
You have to.
(beat)
Don’t you want to be with me before—

LIZZIE
Of course. Of course I do. But what we want and need are different things. They need you. Right now.
(approaching Ruby)
You have so much of my heart. You have given me so much of yours. I was like, raised on your love. You know how I used to call you the ‘author of my life’ in high school? You’ve gotta author them, too.

Quiet. Ruby drops her head in defeat.

RUBY
Is this because I took Sterling to Disneyland instead of you in Kindergarten?

LIZZIE
Yes. You bitch.

They laugh, somber. Ruby gestures at the pan.

RUBY
Add the eggs.

LIZZIE
Thanks.

RUBY
Don’t burn the garlic.

LIZZIE
I won’t.

Beat. The pan sizzles.

RUBY
Maybe I’ll go see Aunt Amy.

LIZZIE
Okay, there we go. That must mean something.
RUBY
I just think it would be fun. It would completely confirm her whole lifestyle.

LIZZIE
Yeah, definitely, but I mean the reason you want to see her must mean something.

RUBY
Not everything has to mean something.

LIZZIE
Look. You came to see me. Amy’s next. So is this actually a farewell tour?

RUBY
Maybe.

LIZZIE
So like, who do you need to say goodbye to. Who do you have unfinished business with? You know. Who you need to see.

RUBY
Right.
(beat)
I’m scared.

LIZZIE

RUBY
I’m not scared of dying. I’m scared of not living anymore.

LIZZIE
Maybe that scared can be what propels you to where you need to be.

RUBY
(sarcastic)
Okay, author of my life.

LIZZIE
Every author needs an author, baby.
RUBY
I guess.
(beat)
I mean, theoretically I can see as much as I want. Ghosts can’t die.

Lizzie doesn’t respond.

RUBY (CONT’D)
I mean that’s like a thing, right?
I’m not out here about to get Ghostbusted or anything, so I’m pretty free range at this point. I could just couch surf for eternity.

LIZZIE
I don’t think you have as much time as you think.

RUBY
What do you mean?

LIZZIE
I don’t know how to say this. You...
your skin, your neck looks...

Ruby frowns and hops off the counter, rounding the corner out of the kitchen into the bathroom. She moves her hair out of the way and examines the side of her neck, which is discolored and wrinkled. This is a sign of dehydration, which can occur when an embalmed corpse isn’t stored properly.

RUBY
Oh fuck me.

EXT. VASSAR CAMPUS – MORNING

Sarah sketches in her notebook on a bench next to May as she texts frantically.

SARAH
I applied here.

MAY
(distracted)
Really?

SARAH
Yeah. Got in too with my sculpture portfolio. Got some money for it. But my dad was like “I won’t let you waste your degree on art!” So.
May doesn’t say anything. Sarah looks over at her.

MAY
Sorry. Bobbi’s worried--

SARAH
Bobbi, yeah.

MAY
(not looking up)
Do you wish you went here?

SARAH
Nah. I mean...nah. Wouldn’t have met you guys. And I still sketch and sculpt on the side, obviously, so. Win win.

They sit in silence for a moment. A long-haired man jogs past and falters, glancing at them.

MAN
Hey, we’re doing a live fully nude Last Supper vignette in the Commons right now if you wanna come by.

Sarah looks at May.

MAY
(faux-earnestly)
You should’ve gone here.

CUT TO:

INT. LIZZIE’S APARTMENT

Sarah, May, and Lizzie sit on the living room couch, eating and chatting.

LIZZIE
--And Ruby’s mom basically co-raised me so when she found out that we were both gay she was just relieved we weren’t dating each other!

MAY
Sarah’s mom thought and Ruby and Sarah dated at some point--

SARAH
Oh she did.
MAY
(to Lizzie)
She brought it up at dinner last night.

LIZZIE
Yikes.

SARAH
I could’ve tried to explain how Ruby is like the Oprah to my Gayle but my mom thinks they’re gay too.
(beat)
My mom thinks I’m faking being my lesbianism because I haven’t had a girlfriend yet. Apparently lesbians can’t afford to be picky!

LIZZIE
I actually started this queer orgy club that meets bi-weekly! Free love renaissance and all that. You should come!

SARAH
I’m more of an Emily Dickinson lesbian.

LIZZIE
Ah.

MAY
Where’d Ruby go? We should head out soon if we wanna sneak the body back in before they notice.

LIZZIE
Back to the mortuary?

SARAH
Yeah, we straight up stole it.

LIZZIE
Oh. Well, I, I think Ruby is, preparing...something?

MAY
Preparing what?

SARAH
Oh no.

Ruby enters the room briskly, filled with manic energy. She stands in front of Sarah and May, her hands folded together.
RUBY
Okay. Okay. So it’s been brought to my attention that my new time on this Earth is perhaps more precious than I initially anticipated and I’ve decided that for once and maybe the last time that I cannot just fly by the seat of my pants.

MAY
What are you talking about?

RUBY
I need to go see some things. And people.

SARAH
What kind of things?

RUBY
Mostly people. And places. But I would love to see the Giant Ball of Twine which is in Kansas.

MAY

RUBY
No, I told you “Poughkeepsie.” No just. And I really only just realized this is what I want.

SARAH
So where are we going, Ruby?

RUBY
Ohio. Kansas.

SARAH
Where are we ending up, Ruby?

RUBY
....California?

May throws her hands up.

MAY
We can’t- we can’t just-

SARAH
Why wouldn’t you just open with that?
RUBY
You’d say no! Well...May would say no, which means you’d say no--

MAY
I would say no?

RUBY
You are a woman with obligations!

MAY
What is that supposed to mean?

RUBY
If I had said “lets pack up and galavant aimlessly across the country” you would’ve been like, oh, sorry, I’m roasting a chicken for my wife and kids tonight after I clock out from my desk job.

Sarah snorts and May glares at her.

MAY
You think I can’t be spontaneous?

RUBY
I just mean you like structure!

MAY
I can be spontaneous! I’ve been spontaneous! Remember when we went to IHOP at like midnight?

RUBY
(deadpan)
Woah, yeah, that was crazy.

MAY
Okay, you know what I mean. I just like plans, and maybe if we’d known of the, well, structure of this from the get go, but this-

SARAH
We have to do it.

MAY
What?
SARAH
May. This is the last time we’re going to be together as us, as us three, ever. How could we not do this?

Beat. May looks at her hands. Ruby chews her lip, watching.

SARAH (CONT’D)
Okay. Logistic it. What do you not want to miss. Graduation, right? Ruby. Can we be back for graduation?

RUBY
Yes.

SARAH
Okay. Check. What else. Finals are done. Papers submitted. Right?

MAY
Sure, but-

SARAH
You have your entire life planned out, May. Everything is already set into motion. Be out of control just one more time.

MAY
I can’t miss graduation. My mom and brother are coming. And Ruby, I love you, but you know that you’re not the most prompt person when it comes to plans.

RUBY
Well. I also have my own deadline, so to speak.

MAY
What does that mean?

RUBY
I think I’m rotting.

MAY
What?

CUT TO:
EXT. OUTSIDE LIZZIE'S APARTMENT- MOMENTS LATER

Sarah and May look down at the body bag in the trunk, unzipped. Sarah hesitantly pushes Ruby’s corpse’s hair aside and we can see the discoloration on her neck. Ghost Ruby pulls her hair aside and shows the same.

MAY
I thought they’d embalmed you.

LIZZIE
I googled it. Embalming just slows down the decay process.

SARAH
I miss rigor mortis being the main concern.

RUBY
That’s my drag queen name. Miss Rigor Mortis.

Sarah snorts.

LIZZIE
So since-

RUBY
Since I’m not frozen in a morgue-

Sarah shakes her head in disgust.

RUBY (CONT'D)
I’m rotting in slow motion.
(beat)
So I have to get this done before I turn into a zombie.
(beat)
There’s my deadline.

May looks at Sarah, and then Ruby, and sighs, a deep exhale, letting go of something intangible.

MAY
(to Ruby)
You need to structure out where we’re going. You need to at least give me a map.

RUBY
Okay.
MAY
Okay.

RUBY
Holy shit. Really?

MAY
We should get more ice.

RUBY
(punching the air)
YES!

EXT. OUTSIDE LIZZIE’S APARTMENT

Lizzie stands outside her front door, crying and waving as the three of them pull away in the car. Ruby’s window is rolled down.

RUBY
(yelling)
I love you more than the sky!

LIZZIE
(yelling)
I love you more than the earth!
I’ll see you in my dreams!

RUBY
You will! I promise!

They drive away, and Lizzie’s hand drops. She sighs deep. It’s quiet again, save for the chirping of birds.

INT. MAY’S OUTBACK – EARLY AFTERNOON

Sarah types on her phone in the passenger seat as May drives. Ruby lies on her back in the backseat, hands over her eyes, thinking.

SARAH
So after Aunt Amy, we go-

RUBY
To see Kieran.

MAY
Kieran from abroad?

SARAH
Nose break Kieran?
RUBY
Yes.

MAY
Short term soulmate Kieran?

RUBY
(snorting)
Yes.

SARAH
(to herself)
Fuckboy Kieran.

MAY
Anyone else?

RUBY
I wanna see Carson. She’s in Nevada now until camp starts.

SARAH
And then?

RUBY
I don’t know.

MAY
You said you’d--

RUBY
It’s hard to plan the last two weeks of your lifedeth, May!

SARAH
Okay. We’ll cross that bridge. Then back to Mass?

RUBY
No. I wanna be home.

MAY
So we’re doing a full country cross.

RUBY
I refuse to be buried in Western Massachusetts.

SARAH
Oh, shit.

MAY
What.
SARAH
The body. The mortuary.

RUBY
Oh shit. They’re gonna call my parents.

MAY
Oh shit.

May gets a Facetime call on her phone, propped up on a mount on the dashboard. It’s Bobbi.

MAY (CONT’D)
Oh, shit!

SARAH
Don’t answer it. Don’t answer it.

RUBY
Maybe you should answer it, just to placate her-

MAY
Oh my god, I’m a terrible liar! What do I do!

RUBY
Tell her you’re on a restorative retreat.

SARAH
Don’t do that.

MAY
Fuck!

May leans forward and accepts the call. Bobbi’s face pops up on the screen. Ruby realizes she’s in frame of the call and freezes, unsure what to do.

MAY (CONT’D)
Hey, Bobs!

BOBBI
Hey. What’s up? Where are you?

MAY
I’m in the car.

BOBBI
Right.

(beat)
That’s all you’re gonna give me?
MAY
I’m off campus. I just. Need to clear my head.

BOBBI
Okay...okay. Are you gonna be back for the firm mixer tonight?

MAY
I thought you didn’t want to go to that. All the sharks.

BOBBI
Yeah, well. Changed my mind.

MAY
Oh.

BOBBI
I know you don’t wanna, but you know, I’ve been supporting you a lot with everything, and I’d like to be supported here.

MAY
(glancing at Sarah)
Uh-

BOBBI
Are you alone?

We can clearly see Ruby in the backseat in frame, and evidently Bobbi can’t see her.

MAY
No. Sarah’s here.

BOBBI
Oh.

SARAH
(head in hands)
Hi Bobbi.

BOBBI
(blankly)
Hi Sarah.
(to May)
Okay. I’ll take that as a no. I’ll talk to you soon.

Bobbi hangs up. May shakes her head. An awkward beat.
SARAH
May, that was so--

MAY
(abruptly)
That was so weird that she couldn’t see you, Ruby. I guess I didn’t realize that ghost seeing could be like, selective.

RUBY
...Right.

MAY
Like, do you choose who sees you? Or is it about who you know?

RUBY
I don’t really know.

SARAH
You’re doing the thing you do where you talk about everything—nothing instead of something.

MAY
No, I’m not. I’m talking about seeing ghosts.

INT. ROADSIDE DINER - LATE MORNING

Ruby and Sarah sit across from each other in a booth. Sarah glances over her shoulder toward the back of the restaurant. Ruby stares intently at the menu.

SARAH
I don’t see why she doesn’t just break up with her. They’re not good together.

RUBY
You know it’s not that easy.

SARAH
Yes, it is! May’s smart! I don’t know how she doesn’t see that being with her is just further and further streamlining her life.

RUBY
Well, that’s exactly it. It’s a streamline. It’s simpler for her.
SARAH
Bobbi has been making May’s decisions for her since they got together. Why would anyone want that?

RUBY
Isn’t that what you’re sort of doing? By just going straight into nursing school because your parents want you to?

SARAH
Oh, come on. That’s different. It’s just easier to go along with what they want instead of arguing about it.

RUBY
Easy. Simple. Same thing different shapes.

SARAH
Okay.

RUBY
I just think May wants a good old fashioned nuclear family. And to her this is the surefire way to achieve that.

SARAH
It just seems so...so constrictive.

RUBY
She’s secure. For her, love is security. Why let go of three years of security?

SARAH
So you think they should stay together?

RUBY
Fuck no. Bobbi’s a pre-law freak and is completely holding May back from doing things for herself. But I understand why May’s so stuck on her.

Sarah blanches at Ruby as a waitress walks up to the table.

WAITRESS
Hi, hun. Just you today?
Sarah glances at Ruby.

SARAH
Um, no. My friend’s in the bathroom, but I can order for us—could I get the Number 6 special scrambled with home fries, and then the Greek Omelet?

WAITRESS
Sure thing. Any coffee or tea?

SARAH
Two coffees, please.

WAITRESS
You got it. Oh, for the number six, what kind of toast do you want? We have wheat, white, sourdough, nine grain, and rye.

SARAH
Uh, uh, could I do wheat?

WAITRESS
Sure thing. I’ll be back with those coffees.

RUBY
GET ME THE FRENCH TOAST, YOU BITCH.

SARAH
Oh, and could I also get an order of french toast?

WAITRESS
Sure. Blueberry or plain?

Beat. Sarah looks over at Ruby, who has her hands in fists on the table.

RUBY
Blueberry.

SARAH
Blueberry.

The waitress frowns, glancing in Ruby’s direction, before smiling and turning away. The waitress passes May, who walks back to the table, putting her phone in her pocket.
MAY
Bobbi says sorry for not being
cnier on the phone. She’s really
stressed.
(beat)
Did you get me the omelet?

SARAH
Yes.

RUBY
I got french toast.

MAY
(perplexed)
Oh. I didn’t know-

CUT TO:

INT. ROADSIDE DINER – MINUTES LATER

Sarah and May watch in awe as Ruby stares intently at her
plate of french toast. May takes a slow bite of her omelet.

RUBY
What’s so important about french
toast is the vanilla in the egg
mixture. And this has vanilla bean,
you can see the little black specks
in it. Such a good touch.
(to May)
How’s your omelet? Is that feta or
goat cheese?

MAY
I think goat cheese.

RUBY
That’s fucked up.

The waitress approaches May and Sarah, glancing at the table.

WAITRESS
Would you guys like a box for the
french toast?

MAY
No, that’s okay. Thank you!

SARAH
Do you guys have any ice?
WAITRESS
Like...cups of ice?

SARAH
Like, bags. We’ll pay.

EXT. ROADSIDE DINER PARKING LOT - MINUTES LATER

The parked outback sits in an almost empty parking lot. May slides a bag of ice into the trunk and slams it shut.

INT. MAY'S OUTBACK - EARLY AFTERNOON

Sarah sits in the front seat turned toward May and Ruby, her phone in her hands.

SARAH
I have to play the company and your mom?

RUBY
No. May’s gonna be Mom.

MAY
No.

RUBY
Her voice is gonna sound the same two times in a row!

MAY
You know I can’t lie! I’ll freeze!

RUBY
I will write you a script!

SARAH
We just have to do this now or shit’s gonna get messy.

MAY
Fine! Fine.

RUBY
Trust me. You know this is my specialty.
(to Sarah)
Call.

Sarah presses a button on her phone and holds it up to her ear.
It rings for a while until we can hear a faint voicemail message from the other end. Sarah and Ruby silently celebrate.

SARAH
Hello, Mr. Burke, this is Sue from Hearthome, the West Coast’s premier human remains transport service. I’m confirming the pick up of the body of Ruby Salomon early this morning. Everything went smoothly, thank you for leaving the door unlocked for us. If you have any questions for us please don’t hesitate to call. Thank you.

Sarah hangs up and they all cheer.

RUBY
Easy! May, if we call right now you won’t have to speak to anyone. I bet it’ll hit voicemail again.

MAY
But I need a script!

RUBY
All you have to say is you got the confirmation from Hearthome and thank them for taking care of me. Of Ruby. That’s it.

MAY
Oh god.

Sarah grabs May’s phone and dials a number, placing it back on the mount.

SARAH
Ready?

MAY
No.

Sarah presses call and pushes the speaker button. It rings for a while, and then goes to voicemail.

MR. BURKE (V.O.)
You’ve reached Burke and Son’s Mortuary. Our hours are 9AM to 6PM. We apologize for missing you. Please leave your name and number in your message.
MAY
H- Hi, this is Katrina Salomon
calling. I received a call from
Hearthome confirming-

The phone beeps a few times, signifying an incoming call.
It’s from the mortuary.

RUBY
Oh, fuck.

SARAH
You have to answer. They’ll get
your voicemail.

MAY
I CANT LIE!

SARAH
You’re gonna start now!

Sarah leans forward and accepts the call, pressing the
speaker button.

MAY
Hello?

MR. BURKE
Hello, just returning the call.

MAY
Oh, hi! I, uh, was actually mid
voicemail when you rang. This is...
Katrina Salomon.

MR. BURKE
Mrs. Salomon, hi.

MAY
Hi. I was just calling to cross
check the confirmation I got from
Hearthome a few minutes ago that
Ruby had been picked up.

MR. BURKE
Yes, we just got a call about that
as well. Was this authorized with
you?

MAY
Yes, of course.
MR. BURKE
Alright. Admittedly I wasn’t aware of this service being used, and I wasn’t present at the pick up this morning--

MAY
Oh, that’s okay.

MR. BURKE
I beg your pardon?

MAY
I...no, I. We spoke about it on the phone a few days ago.

MR. BURKE
We did?

MAY
You were very distracted. I explained how...my...niece runs the company we used. Runs Hearthome.

MR. BURKE
Oh. I don’t remember that at all.

MAY
Well.
   (beat)
I was just confirming that you received a confirmation as well.

MR. BURKE
Yes, yes I did. I apologize, perhaps my age is catching up--

MAY
Catching up to you, I completely understand. Sometimes I forget my own name! My last name. I. Sometimes I forget things. Don’t worry about it. Thank you so much for returning my call.

MR. BURKE
Of course. My condolences--

MAY
(quickly)
Thank you goodbye.

May hangs up. A beat.
SARAH
Well that happened.

MAY
I just fully blacked out.

RUBY
You just, you- what a show. Great work out there.

MAY
Was it good?

Sarah looks at Ruby pointedly. May sees Sarah look at Ruby.

MAY (CONT'D)
It wasn’t good.

RUBY
Hey, no, it got the job done.
Valiant effort, on the spot.
Couldn’t ask for more.

Ruby leans back in her seat.

RUBY (CONT'D)
I’ve trained you well, my young padawan.

May smiles, pleased with herself. She turns the radio on.

MONTAGE
- The Outback zooms down practically abandoned highways, expansive land on either side.

- Ruby rolls the window down and sticks her head out, the wind whipping her hair in every direction. She closes her eyes and breathes. Sarah draws in a sketchbook. She glances over her shoulder at Ruby and smiles, faltering after a moment.

- The car drives past a WELCOME TO OHIO sign.

- May and Sarah lug bags of ice away from a gas station convenience store.

- The three sit in a booth at a shitty diner and Ruby dictates their orders to them, gesturing at the menu and pointing at items. The food arrives with an extra plate for Ruby. The two eat as Ruby talks out loud about her meal.
EXT. STREETS OF TOLEDO - NIGHT

The car drives through the city slowly, and we can see the three peering around through the windshield.

INT. MAY'S OUTBACK - SAME

MAY
I can’t believe Ohio has culture.

The two in the front glance back at Ruby, who stares out the window in wonder, not looking at the two of them.

SARAH
So, where are we going?

RUBY
(still staring out)
Amy lives above the storefront.

MAY
I didn’t realize she had a whole business. I just thought she was kooky and earthy.

RUBY
Oh, no, it’s a whole thing. She had an NDE a few years ago-

MAY
NDE?

SARAH
Near death experience.

RUBY
Yeah. So it quite literally opened her third eye, and now she helps people open theirs, I guess? She like, touches people and then helps commune with them or with others.

SARAH
That’s insane.

MAY
Has she done it to you?

RUBY
Yeah. It was really cool. She told me a lot.
SARAH
Do you actually believe all that?

RUBY
I mean, grain of salt always, but.

SARAH
Well, come on, did she tell you
that--

RUBY
That I was going to die tragically
early and come back as a ghost? No.

That shuts Sarah up.

EXT. ALIGNMEANT STOREFRONT - LATER

The car parks outside a small shop, with a simple storefront
adorned with curtains and lights. Above it, a loft apartment
is lit warmly, candles in windows. The three get out of the
car and approach the door. May glances at Ruby.

RUBY
Go for it.

She presses the button and we hear a buzz. Quiet for a
moment, and then a voice comes through the intercom.

AMY (V.O.)
Hello? I’m closed for the evening.

MAY
I know, sorry, we just– we’re–

RUBY
Amy?

Silence through the intercom, save for the crackling of the
connection.

AMY (V.O.)
Ruby.

INT. AMY’S LOFT

May leads the way up a set of stairs, followed by Sarah, her
arms crossed. They enter into a spacious but cozy loft.
Candles everywhere. May and Sarah arrive atop the stairs and
see AMY SALOMON, 40s, standing in the middle of the room with
her hands clasped over her mouth.
A tabby cat weaves around her feet. She’s wrapped in a shawl and laden with necklaces. She wears bunny slippers.

**AMY**
(looking past them)
Is she-

Ruby arrives at the top of the stairs and Amy lets out a relieved sigh, crossing the room quickly to meet her. She doesn’t touch Ruby, but cups her face a few centimeters away.

**AMY (CONT'D)**
I knew I’d get to. I knew I’d get to say goodbye. I could feel it.

**MAY**
(behind Amy)
I’m sorry, but is there a lot of crime in this neighborhood? I really don’t want my car to get... grave-robbed.

**EXT. VIEW FROM AMY’S WINDOW- SAME**

Sarah and May each hold an end of the bodybag, lugging it out of the trunk and into the building.

**INT. AMY'S LOFT - LATER**

Amy, Ruby and May sit together in the living room. Sarah wanders around the loft, examining things. Ruby’s body bag is in the background.

**AMY**
So what did you, how did you feel, when you...separated from yourself?

**RUBY**
Good question.

**MAY**
(to Amy)
Did you feel yourself “separate” when you...

**AMY**
That’s the word I’d use.

**MAY**
Wow.
RUBY
It was too sudden, I think. I just wasn’t, and then I was something again, but it was different. Obviously. Like I’m here but-

AMY
But not fully.

RUBY
Yes.

AMY
You can’t touch those you love.

RUBY
Yes.

May looks at Ruby, realizing that properly.

AMY
I believe we continue to touch regardless of form. Even from beyond.

SARAH
So you believe in an afterlife?

This is the first time Sarah’s spoken in a while. Amy, May and Sarah look at her.

AMY
I believe in an existence beyond our own, in some capacity, that can be accessed in some ways.

(beat)
Do you?

SARAH
No.

AMY
Why not?

MAY
She’s a recovering Catholic.

Sarah rolls her eyes.
AMY
Well, a lot of people, especially people in my position with an experience like mine, find peace in the idea of something else in the beyond.

MAY
What does it look like for you?

AMY
Comfort.

A beat. Sarah looks away.

AMY (CONT'D)
I think I should read your tarot.

RUBY
Mine?

AMY
All of you!

SARAH
Oh, god. No.

MAY
Yes!

SARAH
No.

AMY
Just one card each.

Sarah pauses, then concedes, shrugging in agreement.

RUBY
Yes!

CUT TO:

INT. AMY'S LOFT - LATER

Lights are dimmed and candles lit. Close on Amy’s hands as she shuffles the tarot deck, spreads them out smoothly on the floor.

AMY
Move your dominant hand over the deck and pick the one that calls to you.
CUT TO: May quickly taps a card. Sarah stands off to the side, arms crossed.

CUT TO: Ruby moves her hand over and then falters, looking at Amy, and then points at one.

CUT TO: Sarah waves her hand quickly over the cards and shrugs.

MAY
Play along!

Sarah sighs and taps a card.

CUT TO: Ruby across from Amy, cross legged. Amy flips the card to reveal: DEATH.

RUBY
That feels a little on the nose.

AMY
A little. But it also makes sense. This is reversed, too. While an upright death card gives us change, rebirth, this gives us stagnation, decay. Refusing the call to change.

RUBY
(rubbing her neck)
Jeez.

AMY
What do you need in order for you to want it the change? What are you missing?

RUBY
God. Scary question.
(beat)
A lot of things?

AMY
You may be holding on to fear. Do you know what that fear may be?

RUBY
Being forgotten?

AMY
So you are afraid.

RUBY
Yes.
AMY
Of missing out?

RUBY
Yes.

AMY
On?

RUBY
Everything.

CUT TO: May peers down at the card Amy just flipped: THE LOVERS.

MAY
Aw, that's cute.

SARAH
It's upside down, though.

Amy
Hmm.

MAY
Oh, now you're invested.

AMY (CONT'D)
This one is admittedly pretty straightforward. You have someone in your life you consider your person?

MAY
I mean. Yes. I don't really like the phrase my person, but sure.

AMY
This card tells us that they aren't your person.

MAY
(scoffing)
Just that cut and dry, huh.

AMY
Well, we are all looking for balance in our lives. That's considered "completion." This card tells me there's an imbalance in that aspect of yourself. So, yes. Cut and dry.
MAY

Okay.

(beat)
Are you in on this?

AMY

What do you mean?

MAY

Well, Sarah and Ruby love to rag on
my girlfriend all the time, and
this feels really pointed.

AMY

No, just reading what I see. You
take what you want or need from
that.

MAY

(signing off)
Okay.

CUT TO: Sarah sits with her knees to her chest in front of
Amy.

AMY

Last one.

(she flips and reveals
JUDGEMENT, reversed)
Judgement.

Sarah pales.

AMY (CONT'D)

Do you carry doubt?

SARAH

Yes.

AMY

About what?

SARAH

Lots of things.

AMY

What is it keeping you from?

SARAH

(scoffing)

Probably lots of things.
AMY
What this card tells us is that this doubt may be keeping you from reflecting on yourself. The card is “judgement” for a reason. Is your doubt coming from judging yourself too harshly?

SARAH
I think I’m nice enough to myself. Everyone’s insecure.

RUBY
You definitely judge the world harshly.

SARAH
No, I don’t.

RUBY
Yes, you do. You’re skeptical about everything.

SARAH
That’s not true.

MAY
I mean, kind of. You do consider yourself a pessimist.

SARAH
I’m a realist.

RUBY
You doubt your own successes and abilities all the time. I mean, your art? You haven’t worked on your sculptures in months.

MAY
And, like, relationships. You never believe things are going to work out.

AMY
Hold on--

RUBY
There’s so many opportunities out there for you! Why don’t you--

SARAH
Stop. Stop!

Everyone quiets. Sarah stands and backs away.
AMY
I’m sorry. I don’t want this to stress you out. You just take what you want from the reading.

SARAH
Sorry, but I don’t “want” any of this. I was perfectly fine until Ruby--I’m perfectly fine--

RUBY
(overlapping)
Until what? Until I came back?

SARAH
No! I mean, of course not, it’s definitely super weird and scary but I’m of course happy to see you again--

Ruby stands up.

RUBY

SARAH
(dismissive)
Stop it.

RUBY
I’m serious!

SARAH
It’s not that...It’s not that easy.

RUBY
Why are you so freaked out?

SARAH
I don’t know!
(to May)
Why aren’t you?

MAY
About Ruby or about the tarot?

SARAH
I don’t know! Ruby!
MAY
Well, first of all, I did freak out, right away, and you didn’t as much.

SARAH
(to Ruby)
But why weren’t you freaking out? It’s you we’re talking about!

RUBY
I can’t afford to be! I’ll lose my fucking mind!

SARAH
Well please teach me how to not because I’m losing it now!

RUBY
Okay. We’re gonna let it out right now. Right here. Ask me the question.

SARAH
What question?

RUBY
What question. Come on.

SARAH
What?

RUBY
If there’s a God! A heaven! Whatever floats your boat!

SARAH
You said yourself nothing happened when you-

RUBY
Not the point. I want you to ask.

SARAH
Well, I know there isn’t, so-

RUBY
But that’s what’s freaking you out! You are so devoutly black and white in everything you do that you can’t for a second believe in anything grey! And now you’re unsure about something and you’re losing it!

(MORE)
RUBY (CONT'D)
There always has to be a right and a wrong answer with you!

SARAH
Oh, so you did meet God, huh?

RUBY
No! That’s not my point! I don’t give a shit about if there’s a God or not and I’m the closest to meeting him or her out of all of us.

A beat. Everyone sits in that statement.

RUBY (CONT'D)
My point is that you won’t allow yourself to change your mind. To be malleable.

SARAH
It’s not that easy! Just because you can go with the flow all the time-

RUBY
What does that mean?

SARAH
You’ve always been someone who can change her mind so easily. Oh, maybe I’ll go here, maybe I’ll do this after school-

RUBY
What does this have to do with God?

SARAH
My point is, I can’t just change my mind all the time! When you believe something so strongly that it colors everything else, it affects you! I believed in God so much for so long that I was going to be a nun! And then I was like, oh fuck, I’m a lesbian, and wondered why God would let me be gay if that’s so horrible and makes life so hard. And it’s not like love is easy to find for me, so I’m not really validated in my choices just yet.

MAY
Sarah.
SARAH
The God I prayed to wouldn’t have made life so hard for me, so I don’t believe in God, so of course God isn’t real. So I have to do what my parents say if I can’t at least believe what they believe! I have to do something for them and I can’t go back to God! Not when it was so hard to get away!

Beat. May sniffs and they look over to see May crying. Amy reaches over and rubs her back.

RUBY
So it’s the not knowing.

SARAH
Yes.

RUBY
Okay.

SARAH
I have to decide or I’ll go crazy.

RUBY
Even if it’s not what you want?

SARAH
Even then.

Sarah sits down heavily.

SARAH (CONT’D)
I’m sorry.
(to Amy)
I’m sorry.

AMY
Oh, please, don’t apologize. You don’t have to believe any of this. If it’s helpful, it’s helpful. If not, no sweat.

RUBY
I just don’t want you to streamline your life.

SARAH
It’s not a streamline, it’s just—my family wants me to be a fucking nurse. So I’ll be a fucking nurse.
Quiet again. Everyone in their own worlds, thinking.

AMY
Okay.

(beat)
Fuck God. Okay?

MAY
(snorting through tears)
Jeez.

AMY
Why don’t you compromise. Look, I agree that it’s important to be able to change your mind about things. Since you can’t do that with everything, God can be black and white. Fuck him.

RUBY
I can get on board with that.

Sarah shakes her head and looks up at Ruby. She laughs dryly.

SARAH
Sure. Deal.

INT. AMY'S LOFT - EARLY MORNING

Warm sunrise shines through the large windows of the loft. Close on Sarah and May asleep on a pile of blankets. Ruby stands at the window. In the background, we see Amy descending down a spiral staircase from the lofted bedroom, followed by her cat. She approaches Ruby, who turns slightly and smiles at her.

AMY
Can’t sleep?

RUBY
Don’t sleep.

Silence. They look out at the sky together.

AMY
You’re back for your friends, aren’t you?

RUBY
I think partially.
AMY
And what about you? Why are you here for you?

RUBY
I just want to keep seeing things forever.

AMY
Not even the living get that luxury.

RUBY
I guess not.
(beat)
I don’t have a lot of time, I don’t think.

Ruby holds out her hands and shows them to Amy. They’re slightly discolored and wrinkled: the hands of an older woman. Amy examines them.

AMY
(looking at her hands)
Mm.
(beat)
I think you’re going to have to be the one to choose to let go.

RUBY
(small)
That’s a big choice.

AMY
It doesn’t have to be as big as you think.
(looking out the window)
We lost you very suddenly, Ruby. You lost you very suddenly. It’s not about how much you get done “in time”. Maybe it’s just getting to be ready.

Ruby glances over into the living room where the girls sleep.

RUBY
Maybe.
(beat)
Please don’t call my dad.
AMY
I won’t. But for what it’s worth, I’ve been texting him every day that I can feel your energy still floating around. So if he listens to his sister, he’ll be marginally prepared.

MAY (O.S.)
Coffee.

RUBY
They’re up.

EXT. OUTSIDE ALIGNMEANT — MORNING

Sarah sits in the passenger seat with the door open, fiddling with her phone. May exits with her bags.

SARAH
(gesturing to her phone)
May? It says 13 hours to the Giant Ball of Twine, so we’re gonna have to stay somewhere tonight.

MAY
Okay, let me see.

May goes over to Sarah in the front seat. Ruby approaches Amy.

RUBY
I’m really scared.

AMY
I know. But being scared is a part of life. And believe it or not, you’re still full of life. Buzzing with it.

RUBY
(welling up)
Okay.

Amy cups a hand beside Ruby’s face and then tries to touch her and DOES, making contact. Ruby startles and gasps, pressing a hand to Amy’s hand, squeezing. They stand there, Ruby leaning into the touch, until May calls out from behind.

MAY
(calling over)
Ready?
Ruby opens her eyes and Amy pulls her hand away, smiling. Ruby wipes her tears and huffs a sigh.

    AMY
     (wiggling her fingers)
     Midas touch.

Ruby laughs.

    AMY (CONT'D)
    Talk soon?

    RUBY
     (laughing, wiping tears)
     Talk soon.
     (steeling herself, then whirling around)
     TO THE GIANT CAN!

Amy watches Ruby run up to the car, sliding into the back seat.

    AMY
     (off to the races)
     Fuck you, God!

Ruby points at Sarah expectantly from the back seat.

    SARAH
     (obliging)
     Fuck you, God!

    RUBY/MAY
     FUCK YOU, GOD!

    HARD CUT TO:

EXT. GIANT CAMPBELL’S SOUP CAN - DAY

The three women stand a few yards away from a larger than life tomato soup can, protected by a metal fence. It’s pretty unimpressive. A few other onlookers stare up at it. The three of them scream to the heavens, shaking their fists.

    RUBY/SARAH/MAY
    FUCK YOU, GOD!

The onlookers startle, glancing over at them. The three deflate, post-catharsis, and stare at the big can.

    MAY
    I can’t believe you can’t get closer to it.
RUBY
It’s like, why deny us of this spectacle if we’ve come all this way? Let us touch her. I want to touch the can.

SARAH
It’s so fucked up.

RUBY
Yeah.

SARAH
No, it’s SO fucked up.

Sarah walks up to the fence, grabbing it with both hands and shaking it.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Why is this here? What’s the big deal? It’s stupid.

MAY
Don’t do that, we’re gonna get in trouble.

SARAH
(shaking the fence)
It’s just a big can! Ruby wanted to see it and be close to it and it’s not fair!

RUBY
I’m seeing it, it’s okay--

SARAH
But you wanted a photo in front of it and everything! Why! Would they do this!

RUBY
Sarah--

TOURIST
It’s full of water for the factory’s sprinkler system. It’s just protocol.

SARAH
(at the tourist)
OKAY! THANKS!

Sarah sits down hard on the grass and puts her head in her hands. May sits down beside her.
Ruby stands there for a moment, watching them, before sitting down in front of Sarah, ducking her head to be level with Sarah’s bowed head. She rests her chin in her hands.

SARAH (CONT’D)
(muffled)
I just want you to be able to do everything you wanted to do.

RUBY
I know. But I am. We’re here. I’m with you guys. Everything else is just icing on the cake.

WIDE SHOT of the three of them in a cluster sitting in front of the big can. It’s quiet.

MAY
We’ll find a new stupid monument to not prop Ruby up in front of.

RUBY
It could totally work! Just put sunglasses on me!

Sarah sniffles a laugh, Ruby mock-glaring at May.

SARAH
I never cry like this.

MAY
Welcome to my world.

Ruby shifts to sit beside Sarah on the ground so they sit in a row.

CUT TO:

INT. ROADSIDE DINER - DAY

The three sit on stools in a row, all with burgers in front of them. A man walks up with a woman and gestures to the stool Ruby sits on. Sarah waves him off, citing that someone is sitting there. Ruby doesn’t notice, staring at her burger with distaste, scooting away from it.

INT. GAS STATION MINI MART

Ruby watches Sarah try on pairs of horrible sunglasses. Sarah puts on a reflective pair.
RUBY

Those.

EXT. GAS STATION – DAY

May carries a large bag of ice on her shoulder toward the car. A bearded man in a trucker’s cap gestures to the bag, asking to carry it. May holds a palm up to him, continuing toward the car. She gets a call and glances at her phone, slowing for a moment before hitting decline.

EXT. EMPTY SPRAWLING HIGHWAY IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE – DAY

May’s car makes its way down the highway, completely abandoned, surrounded in every direction by countryside.

INT. MAY’S OUTBACK- SAME

May rolls her shoulders, hands on the wheel, and glances over at Sarah, who scrolls through her phone, wearing the reflective sunglasses. Ruby’s face is pressed up against the backseat window.

MAY

Sarah.

SARAH

Hold on, I’m queuing up the entire Abba discography.

MAY

No, Sarah, maybe you should drive.

Ruby pulls away from the window, incredulous, as Sarah looks up at May sharply.

SARAH

I can’t. Why would you ask. You know the license thing is a sore spot for me.

RUBY

Honestly, she’s right.

MAY

I know! Which is why this is the perfect place to practice. You’ve driven before, haven’t you?
SARAH
Briefly before my dad started praying and I had a panic attack.

MAY
I think this would be good for you. Push you out of your comfort zone.

SARAH
What’s that supposed to mean-

MAY
And I’ve been driving the whole time and my arms might fall off. It’s a straight shot for a while.

SARAH
No, oh my god, I’ll crash the car, It’ll be horrible, please don’t make me actually-

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MAY’S OUTBACK - LATER

May, Sarah, and Ruby scream sing “Gimme Gimme Gimme” by Abba, Sarah much more comfortable behind the wheel now.

RUBY/SARAH/MAY
WONT SOMEBODY HELP ME CHASE THESE SHADOWS AWAY!

EXT. EMPTY SPRAWLING HIGHWAY IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE - SAME

The car hurdles down the highway, windows rolled down. Far up ahead, a car drives in the same lane, May’s car catching up quickly.

INT. MAY’S OUTBACK - SAME

The music continues to blast.

SARAH
There’s a car ahead! What do I do!
MAY
This is your first test. You’re going to signal with this, check your mirrors, and if the coast is clear, smoothly merge into the other lane.

RUBY
I feel unsafe.

MAY
I have never once heard you say that.

SARAH
Oh, fuck you guys. And Ruby, stakes are pretty low for you at this point.

RUBY
Ouch!

SARAH
Oh god. Okay. Okay.

Sarah uses the turn signal and checks her mirrors, craning her neck.

EXT. EMPTY SPRAWLING HIGHWAY IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE - SAME

May’s outback slowly but surely makes it into the next lane, passing the car.

INT. MAY'S OUTBACK - SAME

Everyone cheers.

EXT. EMPTY SPRAWLING HIGHWAY IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

A lone police car sits on the side of the road. A beat, and then May’s Outback zooms by, and we can hear the three of them singing as they pass. Another beat, and then the police car pulls onto the road, lights flashing.

INT. MAY'S OUTBACK - SAME

The music still blasts. May glances into the rear view mirror and blanches.
MAY
Oh no.

SARAH
What?

MAY
We’re being pulled over.

Ruby gasps loudly and turns around, looking through the rear windshield.

SARAH
Oh my god. Oh my god. Oh my god.
We’re gonna be arrested.

MAY
Stop. Stop. I’m supposed to be the panicker. We can’t have two panicers.

RUBY
We might get arrested.

MAY
Jesus Christ-

EXT. EMPTY SPRAWLING HIGHWAY IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

May’s Outback is pulled over on the side of the highway. A few yards behind it, a cop car is pulled over. He turns the engine off and unbuckles, preparing to head over.

INT. MAY'S OUTBACK

The three sit in panicked silence.

MAY
Oh my god. He’s gonna check in the trunk. He’s going to check in the trunk.

RUBY
He’s not going to check in the trunk! He has no reason to check the trunk.

SARAH
(on her phone)
I’m googling body transport laws.
MAY
I can’t lie. I cannot lie.

RUBY
(to Sarah)
He’s coming. Say you left
your license at the farm.
There are farms around here,
right?

The policeman raps his knuckles against the driver’s window
and Sarah rolls it down. The two in the front seat turn to
smile at him.

POLICEMAN
Afternoon, ladies.

SARAH/MAY
Good afternoon! Hi.

POLICEMAN
Where y’all headed this afternoon?

Beat.

SARAH
Church.

The policeman steps back and glances around at the wide
expanse of nothing around them. He leans back in, resting his
arm on the rolled-down window.

POLICEMAN
You playin’ games with me,
sweetheart?

SARAH
(flirty)
Only with you, officer.

May balks, turning it into a cough. Ruby’s mouth drops and
she leans in on the console between them to see this up
close.

POLICEMAN
Well, little lady, you were goin’
pretty fast for these parts. I’m
prepared to let you off with a
warning this time. Do you have your
license and registration for me?

SARAH
I do have my registration, of
course, as cars do have and of
course need, but I did leave my
license...at the farm.

(MORE)
SARAH (CONT'D)
(beat)
You know how it can be.

POLICEMAN
(chuckling)
Oh, I do indeed. Well, I’m feeling nice today so I’ll just let you go along now. Keep it slow even on these roads.

SARAH
Thank you very much, officer. We’ll be much more cautious going forward.

POLICEMAN
Y’all do that.

Sarah rolls up the window. They sit in silence for a second and then exhale.

RUBY
Did Sarah just flirt with a man?

Before they can catch their breath, they’re startled by another knock at the window. The cop is back. Sarah rolls it down an inch.

POLICEMAN
By the way, ladies, your trunk is leaking. Y’all want me to check it out?

SARAH
Oh, no, thanks, we’ve got some bags of ice back there that probably have started melting a bit. We’ll change them out when we get to the mall.

POLICEMAN
I can grab those bags for you. You don’t want the water to soak into your mats too much, get all mildewy-

SARAH
NO.

POLICEMAN
Excuse me?

SARAH
I—we’ve got everything packed up very precariously back there.

(MORE)
SARAH (CONT'D)
Wouldn’t want to risk it falling apart.

The cop looks at them for a moment.

POLICEMAN
I’m gonna check in the trunk.

He steps back from the car. Ruby, Sarah, and May sit in horrified silence. We see the trunk open through the rear windshield.

Cop’s POV looking in the trunk. There’s no way around it: it’s very clearly a body bag surrounded by melting bags of ice.

May starts to cry. Sarah stares forward blankly. Ruby watches as the cop steps back from the trunk and walks towards the driver’s window.

RUBY

SARAH
What?

The cop returns to the window and leans down. May cries harder.

RUBY
GRANDMA’S IN THE TRUNK.

POLICEMAN
I’m gonna have to call this in--

SARAH
It’s grandma.

POLICEMAN
I beg your pardon?

SARAH
That’s our grandmother. She--we’re taking her to church. For the service. We’re running late.

Sarah reaches over and rubs May’s back, “soothing” her.

POLICEMAN
Oh. Oh. I sincerely apologize. My condolences.
RUBY
(from backseat)
Thank you.

POLICEMAN
Would you--would you like an escort? To the church? Clear you a path.

SARAH
No thank you.

INT. MAY'S OUTBACK - MOMENTS LATER

The three sit in silence, Sarah driving slowly. May glances over her shoulder through the rear windshield.

MAY
Pull over.

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD - SAME

May and Sarah get out of the car, Sarah preparing to switch. May walks a few feet away from the car, head in hands. Sarah opens the backseat door and Ruby climbs out.

RUBY
May?

SARAH
May.

MAY
That was too close.

SARAH
I know.

MAY
No, no, that--that was too close. Do you know how much trouble we would be in if we got caught with a body crossing multiple state lines?

SARAH
I know, but at this point we just need to keep going, we're--

MAY
At this point? We could go to prison, Sarah.
RUBY
You’re not gonna go to prison.

MAY
How do you know?

SARAH
I mean, you were the one who told me to drive--

MAY
You were the one who told me we had to drop everything to do this!

SARAH
It was either do this or never fucking see Ruby ever again! That felt like an easy decision!

MAY
Oh, don’t give me the moral reasoning, please.

SARAH
It’s not about morals, Plato, it’s about being a good friend.

MAY
You don’t think I’m a good friend?

SARAH
If I had to choose between being with my shitty girlfriend and my best friend, I’d choose my best friend--

Ruby shuffles in place, unsure if she should intervene.

MAY
Sarah, I know you’re unhappy because I’m in a healthy long term relationship--

SARAH
Healthy?

MAY
But you can’t take it out on me because you’re picky and unlucky in love.

RUBY
May! What the fuck?
SARAH
I wouldn’t call you lucky. I’d call you a pushover.

MAY
I have a lot ahead of me, Sarah. I have a lot banking on graduation, and my future, and you can’t blame me for wanting to preserve that.

SARAH
And I don’t? Have anything ahead?

MAY
You know what I mean.

SARAH
No, I don’t. Tell me.

MAY
Well...you don’t have any concrete plans for the future! You’re completely directionless!

SARAH
I’d rather be directionless than subject to the whims of someone else.

MAY
Okay.

SARAH
Do you want to do all these things that she’s set up for you? Or are you just scared to do anything of your own volition? Why can’t you have your goals and she has hers?

MAY
Do you have goals?

RUBY
Stop. Stop!

May looks over at Ruby, remembering that she’s there. Sarah nods and takes in the insult.

MAY
Listen. I love Ruby with all my heart. But one more misstep and I-- we-- could lose our entire futures.
SARAH
But you said yes. And we’re in the middle of nowhere now. So, what? You wanna turn around?

MAY
Yeah, I do.

Beat. Sarah stares at May.

SARAH
Seriously?

MAY
Yes.

May continues around the car and faces Ruby, who is on the verge of tears.

RUBY
It’s okay.

MAY
I’m sorry.

May gets into the driver’s seat. A beat, and then Ruby climbs into the car. Sarah slams Ruby’s seat shut.

INT. MAY'S OUTBACK- MINUTES LATER

No one is talking. Sarah is turned away from May. Ruby stares into the middle distance, lost in thought.

GPS
Take a U-Turn up ahead.

Beat.

GPS (CONT'D)
Take a U-Turn up ahead.

May glances at the rear-view mirror to look at Ruby, who wipes her eyes, unaware she’s being watched.

GPS (CONT'D)
Take a U-Turn up ahead.

MAY
(under her breath)
God damn it.

May signals and then turns the wheel hard, making a wide U-Turn. Ruby sits up and looks between Sarah and May.
RUBY
Do you hate me?

Sarah shakes her head, still staring out the window.

MAY
No.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah settles into one of the two motel beds, fluffing the pillows and sheets. Ruby sits in the other bed, cross-legged atop the sheets, zoning out. The toilet flushes in the bathroom.

SARAH
This is like the motel in Virginia Beach. Remember Roachie?

RUBY
Hm?

SARAH
When we kept Roachie as a pet and you tried to tie a string to him like a leash.

RUBY
Oh. Oh, yeah.

EXT. DRIVE-UP MOTEL - SAME

May sits on the curb of the drive-up motel. Split screen between May and Bobbi, who we can see from the background is in a dorm room.

MAY
(laughing)
You would’ve hated Ohio. We didn’t pass through a single major city. Just tumbleweeds and fields.

BOBBI
I mean...

MAY
What?

BOBBI
I could’ve come.
MAY
I mean, sure, but...you weren’t close with Ruby. It’s kind of a farewell tour for her.

BOBBI
Mmm.

(beat)
I guess I just wish you’d have told me you were gonna do this.

MAY
I know, I’m sorry, it was sort of a spur of the moment thing--

BOBBI
You can’t just go do stuff like that. My family is getting in tomorrow. We were supposed to go up to the Cape with them.

MAY
I know, just this...This doesn’t really happen more than once--

BOBBI
I know. We’ve just always been on the same page about this.

MAY
About what?

BOBBI
About supporting each other.

MAY
I always support you. Can’t you support me now?

BOBBI
Everything I’ve planned is to support you.

May is silent for a moment.

BOBBI (CONT’D)
Right?

MAY
That’s not what I--okay.

BOBBI
What?
MAY
No, it’s okay. Um. So. Tell me about the mixer.

INT. MOTEL ROOM – NIGHT

May walks back into the motel room, looking tired. Sarah looks like she wants to say something, but decides against it.

CUT TO:

EXT. WORLD’S LARGEST BALL OF TWINE, CAWKER CITY, KA – MORNING

RUBY
This. Is so cool.

Zoom out to see: The three of them standing in front of a really large ball of twine. Some people mill around, taking photos, touching it.

RUBY (CONT’D)
(earnestly)
This is so cool. This is like, peak road trip.

Ruby does a lap, leaving the two of them alone.

MAY
It’s definitely... a big ball of twine.

Sarah says nothing, glancing around.

MAY (CONT’D)
Are we still not talking?

Sarah walks toward Ruby, who is jogging toward them.

MAY (CONT’D)
Got it.

RUBY
Come on! They work at the ice cream shop nearby. We’ll spend more time with the twine once we grab Kieran.
EXT. DOWN THE STREET - SAME

Ruby walks with purpose, people walking the opposite direction parting unconsciously to make way for her. The other two follow, flanking her.

RUBY
(scrutinizing shops)
In the last postcard they sent me they were talking about how they can see the twine ball from the shop window. So I’m assuming its on this street.

SARAH
When’s the last time you spoke to them?

RUBY
Not for a while. Like three months. We talked a lot less after abroad but its one of those things you can just pick up again when you talk, you know? Oh my god, I bet that’s it.

Ruby runs up to a shop window and glances in, gasps, and pulls away.

RUBY (CONT'D)
Oh my god. I see them. Okay. You guys go in first. I’ll follow.

INT. CAWKER CITY ICE CREAM SHOP - SAME

May and Sarah faux-scrutinize the ice cream flavors in the almost-empty shop. It’s quiet. Ruby stands at the door and steel herself, smiling. She walks confidently up to the counter, where a cashier, KIERAN, 22 (tall, lanky, zoned-out) stands.

RUBY
Hi, could I get a scoop of Mint n’ Bits or is that just a Dublin thing?

She laughs. Kieran stares blankly ahead, unfazed.

RUBY (CONT'D)
Kieran?

They don’t hear her. Ruby frowns in confusion. May stares at Ruby, while Sarah stares at Kieran.
RUBY (CONT'D)
Hello?

SARAH
(to Kieran)
Hey!

Kieran startles and looks at the two of them.

KIERAN
Hi. Sorry. Zoned out for a sec.
What can I get the two of you?

Ruby’s face falls. She suddenly looks more tired, more gaunt than before. Someone enters the shop, the bell chiming, and Ruby falters backwards before turning and running out the open door.

SARAH
Ruby!

The two turn to follow. They leave, the bell left jingling in their wake.

KIERAN
(to themself)
Ruby...?

EXT. THE WORLD'S LARGEST BALL OF TWINE - MINUTES LATER

Ruby sits on a park bench near the twine, the two others flanking her. May opens her mouth to speak.

RUBY
Don’t. Just let me sit.

They sit in silence, people milling around them.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE WORLD'S LARGEST BALL OF TWINE - LATE AFTERNOON

Match shot to the three on the bench. Ruby has hardly moved. The attraction is nearly abandoned.

RUBY
Okay. I’ve processed. Say your piece.

Sarah finally looks at May. Gestures with her head for her to speak.
MAY
Just because they didn’t see you
doesn’t diminish the time you two
had.

RUBY
Mhm.

MAY
People come and go in life, you
know?

RUBY
Mhm.

Beat.

SARAH
This doesn’t mean you’ve been
forgotten.

RUBY (tearing up)
Mhm.

Ruby takes a deep breath and stands up, rolling her neck.

RUBY (CONT'D)
All right. Enough twine. Lets get
going.

INT. MAY'S OUTBACK - LATE AFTERNOON

Ruby sits, eyes closed, in the front passenger seat, her feet
up on the dashboard. May looks over at Ruby and as golden
hour floods the car, she notices Ruby’s skin looks sallow,
thin. We can see her collarbones more prominently.

SARAH
Okay. Booked us a motel in Denver.
(looking at Ruby)
You okay?

RUBY
(turning her face to the
sun)
Yup. Just lizarding.

MAY
Tonight in Denver, tomorrow night
in?
SARAH
Utah. Then we can get to Carson the next morning.

MAY
Are you excited to see Carson?

Ruby nods, eyes still closed.

SARAH
Are you okay?

RUBY
(joking)
That’s becoming a harder question to answer, huh.

The two are silent. Ruby opens her eyes and glances at them.

RUBY (CONT'D)
Sorry. I think I’m getting scared that all of this is really fucking wasteful, for you and me and everyone, and I’m costing a lot of people a lot of emotions that could’ve been avoided.

MAY
Ruby, you know we--

SARAH
(about her and May)
We’re okay.

RUBY
I know. I know. I’m just being melodramatic. And I’m tired. I miss sleeping.

MAY
You can take a nap.

RUBY
I don’t really sleep anymore.

SARAH
You don’t?

RUBY
No. I just lay.

SARAH
All night? What do you--
RUBY
Just think. Lots of thoughts in this skull of mine.

MAY
Have you ever watched West Wing?

CUT TO:

INT. DENVER MOTEL - NIGHT

Ruby sits on one of two motel beds. May places a laptop in front of her, clicks on something.

MAY
Once we go to sleep, I’ll press play and then they’ll keep playing without you having to click.
   (beat)
So you don’t have to think so hard all the time.

RUBY
Thanks.

May’s phone rings from the other bed. May reaches over and clicks it off.

MAY
I think it shouldn’t be too loud to distract us, but I also have those little earplugs just in case.

May’s phone rings again. Ruby and Sarah look at each other. May clicks it off again.

MAY (CONT’D)
   Sorry. Okay, I think that’s it.
   (to Sarah)
Can I shower first?

SARAH
Yeah. But...

May looks up at Ruby and Sarah, who stare expectantly at May’s phone. After a moment, it starts to ring again. Exasperated, May picks it up, walking into the bathroom. Split screen of May and Bobbi.

MAY
Hi, sorry, we’re just getting into--
BOBBI
It’s time to come back.

MAY
What?

BOBBI
You’ve had your trip, now you need to come back, please. I need you here with me.

MAY
Bobbi, I can’t do that. I— I’m in Utah. You want me to come home from Utah?

BOBBI
You’re in Utah?

MAY
Yeah.

Sarah and May look at each other from separate beds, concerned.

BOBBI (O.S.)
Okay. That’s ridiculous. We’re done with this now.

MAY
Are you actually serious right now?

Beat.

MAY (CONT’D)
You know what, Bobbi? We are done.

BOBBI
What?

MAY
I’m serious. We’re done. My life isn’t yours. Find a new sublet for the summer. Don’t call back.

May ends the call and walks back into the room. She turns her phone off and places it on the ground.

SARAH
Did you just—

MAY
Yes.
RUBY
Are you okay?

MAY
Yes.

Ruby and Sarah glance at each other.

MAY (CONT'D)
No, really. She was trying to get me to choose between going home to supplement her life or being here. That’s a no fucking brainer.
(beat, deep breath)
I think I want to watch West Wing. Can we start it?

RUBY
Sure.

May kicks off her shoes and climbs onto the bed, sitting cross legged beside Ruby. She presses play.

CUT TO:

INT. DENVER MOTEL - EARLY MORNING

Ruby sits in almost the same position, as the rising sun shines through the front window. The show is still playing. Ruby glances over at May, who is sound asleep on her side, curled toward Ruby.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN COLORADO - MORNING

The car drives through pretty scenery, trees galore. Close on the rear passenger window, where Ruby watches the world go by, enraptured.

EXT. REST STOP IN UTAH - EARLY AFTERNOON

May and Sarah tear into gas station-grade sandwiches. Ruby stands beside the car, stretching.

MAY
You sure you don’t want anything?

RUBY

Sarah frowns.
RUBY (CONT'D)
Do I smell bad?

SARAH
No.

RUBY
Are you lying?

SARAH
...No.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN UTAH - LATE AFTERNOON
The car continues through different scenery, Ruby peering out the back window in wonder at the forest.

INT. MAY'S OUTBACK - EARLY EVENING
Sarah looks up from her phone and looks over at May, who stares forward, expressionless.

SARAH
You okay?

MAY
Yup.

SARAH
Okay.
  (gesturing ahead)
  Turn in here.

MAY
What?

SARAH
Just trust me.

May signals to turn.

INT. MAY'S OUTBACK - EVENING
Close on Ruby’s face zoning out while looking through the rear window. We hear the car engine shut off and Ruby blinks, turning around as Sarah opens the passenger door for her. Her face falls in wonder.
EXT. THE TREMBLING GIANT, FISHLAKE NATIONAL FOREST – SAME

The three walk toward a lake surrounded by bright yellow trees. The sky is an explosion of pinks and reds, a spectacular sunset framed by the forest. They sit on the bank, Ruby flanked by May and Sarah.

SARAH
So, this is the Trembling Giant.
All the trees share one root system. Everything grows from one single organism. They grow together, even though they’re separate.
(beat)
I googled it.

MAY
It’s beautiful.

Shot reverse shot of the view, and then close on each of them as they speak. The golden hour hits their faces. Sarah reaches behind Ruby and grabs May’s hand, squeezing it. They look at each other for a moment— a little reconciliation. Sarah and May look over at Ruby, who is silent. The sunset glow makes her look more alive than she’s looked since her passing. She’s smiling. Tears are streaming down her face.

INT. MAY'S OUTBACK – EVENING

Ruby watches as the yellow trees disappear behind them as they leave the forest.

RUBY
Everything feels so big and so small all at once and I don’t know what to do with it.

MAY
You’re taking it all in, aren’t you?

RUBY
Yes.

MAY
Then there you go.

EXT. SOUTHERN NEVADA – MORNING

The car zooms past a sign pointing toward Las Vegas.
EXT. DESERT CUL DE SAC - LATE MORNING

The car eases down a suburban street, and slows to a stop outside a house in a row of identical houses. Sarah, May, and Ruby climb out of the car and approach the front door.

RUBY
This is her parent’s house so I don’t know what’s gonna happen here. You guys go first.

May and Sarah approach the front door, Sarah pressing the doorbell. After a moment, the front door swings open and we see CARSON, 24, tall with curly dyed-blonde hair, earthy with a few tattoos peeking out from her short sleeves. She is incredibly hot. She blinks at Sarah and May, who both stare at her, a little dazed.

CARSON
Hi. Do I- wait. I do know you.
(gesturing to Sarah)
You’re Ruby’s friend. I’ve seen you on her Instagram.
(to May)
You too. Hi. What’s- why the fuck are you guys out here at ten in the morning? Is it about Ruby? I mean- must be, sorry, that’s dumb, what else would unite three folks such as ourselves? Besides good taste in friends.

The two stare at her, dumbfounded. Ruby peeks over their shoulders.

RUBY
Hi.

CARSON
Oh, ho-ly fuck.

EXT. CARSON’S BACKYARD - LATER

Sarah, May, and Carson sit with their feet in the pool. Ruby stands on the diving board.

RUBY
And then we went to see Kieran, remember I told you about them-

CARSON
Nose bleed Kieran. Love it. Hot.
RUBY
And they didn’t see me which
fucking sucked--

CARSON
Fuck em. Never trusted them.

RUBY
Right. So now we’re here, just
passing through, not expecting
anything, sort of was expecting you
to freak out because I know I’m
getting all decrepit even though
they won’t tell me.

Close on Sarah and May, who both are staring at Carson. Sarah
frowns.

SARAH
It’s the five minute rule. Why
would I tell you something you
can’t easily fix?

CARSON
(pointing at Sarah)
That’s fucking sisterhood.

Sarah smiles. May glances over at Sarah, then at Ruby.

MAY
Yeah, you’re not that scary
looking.

CARSON
(not hearing May)
Listen, Ruby, you’re my soul
sister, and a little zombie action
isn’t gonna stop me from wanting to
spend some lucky fuckin’ time with
you, okay?

RUBY
(relieved)
Okay.

CARSON
And since this is a road trip,
you’ve gotta see the Hoover Dam.
You guys can crash here tonight,
plenty of space.

SARAH
Do you have ice?
EXT. CARSON’S DRIVEWAY - EARLY AFTERNOON

Sarah and May hold massive bags of ice and watch as Carson opens the trunk and surveys the body bag. She glances at Ruby, who shrugs.

CARSON
Can-Do Carson, right?

Carson reaches in and lifts the body, shifting to hold it like a log in her arms. She adjusts, but barely struggles to carry it. May and Sarah watch in awe.

RUBY
When Carson was junior counselor at Whittle she was Can-Do Carson. All the little kids would pretend to hurt themselves so Carson could fireman style carry them to the medic cabin.
(off their expression)
Stop finding her deadlifting my corpse hot. Please.

SARAH
I think I just broke my ankle.

INT. MAY’S OUTBACK - AFTERNOON

May drives, Sarah shotgun. Ruby and Carson share the backseat.

CARSON
So what do you guys study?

MAY
I’m an Econ and Poly-Sci major. Going to grad school for Poly-Sci.

CARSON
Wow. Very impressive. You must have your shit together.

MAY
Oh, well. You know.

CARSON
You?

SARAH
I’m an English major. My parents want me to go to Nursing School.

(MORE)
SARAH (CONT'D)
So I guess I’m going to nursing school?

RUBY
She’s also an artist. Show her.

SARAH
No, no--

RUBY
Yes. Show her the immersive one. From your final.

Sarah, flustered, pulls out her phone and starts looking.

RUBY (CONT'D)
She does these huge found object pieces based on classics. Very interdisciplinary.

Sarah turns in her seat and hands her phone to Carson, who swipes through some photos.

CARSON
Wow. This is incredible. Is this Jane Eyre?

SARAH
Yeah! It’s the attic--I did a study on Antoinette in *Nervous Conditions* into Jane Eyre.

CARSON
Really cool. I love trash art. Not--not in an offensive way. Like found objects.

SARAH
Oh no yeah, yeah, it’s absolutely trash.

MAY
What do you do, Carson?

CARSON
Oh you know, jack of all trades. I’m an art teacher out here but in the summers I work at the same camp Ruby and I went to. I do lots of crafts. Really into jewelry making these days.

MAY
Oh, will you make me something?
CARSON
(still absorbed in Sarah’s phone)
Sure.

EXT. HOOVER DAM - AFTERNOON

The four walk away from the parking lot, squinting in the desert sun.

RUBY
So I’m thinking we prop me up right at the middle so you can see the bridge behind me.

MAY
Oh, my god. Stop.

SARAH
Ruby’s been trying to get us to pose her corpse in front of great American monuments like the Giant Campbell’s Soup Can.

CARSON
I’m game. I’ll do the heavy lifting.

RUBY
As much as I appreciate the gung-ho attitude I think my sweet little body might be a little too ugly for the Gram now.

A joke, but sobering regardless.

RUBY (CONT’D)
I’m gonna wander with Carson for a bit. We’ll find you.

The two walk away, Sarah and May slowing.

MAY
She’s hot.

SARAH
Yeah.

May watches Sarah stare at Carson. Then May looks back at Carson, and Sarah watches May stare.
EXT. HOOVER DAM BRIDGE - SAME

Carson and Ruby stand beside one another in the middle of the bridge, dwarfed by the monument.

CARSON
Is it dumb to ask you how you’re feeling?

RUBY
I’m exhausted.

CARSON
Yeah. That makes sense.

RUBY
But I don’t like—I don’t want to stop moving. Because if I stop moving it ends.

CARSON
Shit always comes to an end when you don’t want it to.

RUBY
It’s just...the longer I’m still here the harder it is to think about leaving.

CARSON
Like camp!

RUBY
(laughing)
Yes, like camp.

(beat)
Things were just starting to get good when it all ended.

CARSON
I think you could spend a whole lifetime doing things and still end up feeling like you’ve missed out.

RUBY
I know. It’s just a lot of missing out, huh.

CARSON
Listen. You have done the remarkable thing of taking your heart and giving pieces of it to all these people spread out all over the world.

(MORE)
CARSON (CONT'D)
And it’s so hard to have your heart
spread out so far. But it also
means your love, and their love for
you, expands beyond just your life
and your body. You’re going to be
everywhere they go.

Ruby nods and bows her head. The wind blows.

CARSON (CONT'D)
So. Did you have some grand
pronouncement for me? Some big
secret or confession or something?

RUBY
No. I just wanted to be with you
one more time.

CARSON
(nodding)
Okay.

They stand there in silence for a bit longer.

EXT. CARSON'S BACKYARD - EVENING

The four sit around a lit fire pit, the sun setting behind
them. They’re all laughing. Sarah passes a lit joint to May.

SARAH
So the next morning I climbed out
of the lake, soaking wet, phone in
hand, and some townies walked by
and I had to just wave and be like
“Good Morrow!” and like, squelch
all the way back to my dorm.

CARSON
So did your phone work?

SARAH
Yeah, it fucking did!

CARSON
Holy shit!

RUBY
I still can’t believe you didn’t
come to me for help.
SARAH
You were hooking up with that
Christian Screamo Girl! I couldn’t
interrupt. May’s door was unlocked.

RUBY
Oh god. Right.
(to Carson)
She asked me to punch her in the
face.

CARSON
No. RUBY (CONT’D)

CARSON (CONT’D)
Did you do it?

RUBY
(cackling)
No comment!

MAY
So are you seeing anyone?

CARSON
Oh, uh, nah, not really. Just
hangin’ around, I guess. Not really
trying to date right now cuz I’m
living at this artist collective in
Sedona this summer.

SARAH
Oh, that’s so cool.

MAY
So you’re not seeing anyone.

CARSON
No.

Sarah glances over at May, who looks at her and shrugs.

RUBY
(changing the subject)
Do you remember like second year of
camp you asked me to tell you if
your boobs were misshapen?

CARSON
(earnestly)
Yes. I was very concerned.
RUBY
That was the first set of boobs I’d seen beyond my own.

SARAH
Were they misshapen?

RUBY
Yes.

CARSON
So was I your gay awakening?

RUBY
No. My gay awakening was Frankie, who was the head counselor that year and wore Chacos.

CARSON
Oh, she was hot. What about you guys? Gay awakening?

SARAH
Maid Marian in the animated Robin Hood.

RUBY/CARSON
Ohhhhhh. Yes.

MAY
Mine was my babysitter.
(beat)
She actually looked a lot like you, Carson.

CARSON
That’s funny.

RUBY
May.

MAY
What?

CARSON
It’s okay, all good-

SARAH
May’s on the prowl because she just got out of a long term relationship.

CARSON
Oh. I’m sorry–
MAY
So?

SARAH
Nothing! It just literally was like, 36 hours ago.

MAY
I’m just making conversation.

SARAH
(sarcastically)
Oh, okay.

RUBY
Well, maybe you--maybe you should take some time for yourself since everything is fresh? You haven’t had any May-time in a long time.

May blinks at them, and then stands up, going back into the house.

MAY
Okay. I can see when I’m not needed.

RUBY
May, stop. May.

May disappears into the house, and the three sit in silence for some time, listening to the front door shut. We hear May’s car turn on and drive away.

RUBY (CONT'D)
Jesus Christ.

SARAH
Sorry. She’s working through a lot of shit right now.

CARSON
No worries, man. Been there.

SARAH
Should we call her, Ruby?

No response.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Ruby?

The camera pans over to reveal that Ruby has DISAPPEARED.
INT. MAY'S OUTBACK - MOMENTS LATER

May cries as she drives. Ruby sits in her usual spot in the backseat, confused. May pulls out her phone and glances at it, starting to type something.

RUBY
May.

May SCREAMS and the car swerves. The two lurch to the side before May adjusts.

MAY
What the fuck! How are you in here!

RUBY
I don’t know. I guess wherever the stiff goes, I go!
(beat, to herself)
So much for my pipe dream of floating around.

MAY
Ruby, I would really like to be alone right now.

RUBY
Well it seems like that’s not going to happen at this point. Were you about to call Bobbi?

May is silent.

RUBY (CONT'D)
Were you gonna try to leave for good? Go back home?

MAY
No. I don’t know. No.

RUBY
Can you pull over? I’d like you to look me in the eye while you have your quarter-life crisis.

May signals.

INT. CARSON’S HOUSE - SAME

Sarah looks out the front window. Carson makes tea in the background.
SARAH
She’s threatened to leave before.

CARSON
If anyone can convince her to stay, it’s Ruby.

SARAH
(distracted)
Yeah.

CARSON
(approaching with tea)
This might be weird, but I have a huge oil set up in the guest room. Do you wanna paint?

SARAH
Sure.

EXT. DESERT SPRAWL – MINUTES LATER
Ruby and May sit on the hood of the car. It’s dark, but the moon and stars are bright. May sits hunched forward, deep in thought.

RUBY
Why were you acting like that back there? That’s not you.

MAY
I know.

RUBY
Do you actually like Carson or is this some reverse coping mechanism?

MAY
I don’t even know.

RUBY
Okay.

MAY
My entire life is falling apart.

RUBY
No it’s not.

MAY
Yes, it is.
RUBY
Why? Tell me why.

MAY
Bobbi-

RUBY
Okay, beyond Bobbi. Tell me how else your life is falling apart. You’re still graduating, you still have an apartment, you have work, you have a future-

MAY
My best friend died.

Beat.

RUBY
Right.

MAY
Two massive pillars in my life are gone.

RUBY
Right.
   (beat)
Do you remember first year when we went to that ramen place where when you finish your food you have to tell the restaurant your biggest dream? And without even thinking you were like, “see the world”. And then I said I wanted to travel the world too and that was sort of when we got closer?

MAY
Yeah.

RUBY
I haven’t heard you talk about seeing the world for years. Not since Bobbi.

May shakes her head.

RUBY (CONT'D)
I’m not gonna sit here and espouse why you are now free from the chains of a bad thing. Though I could, I won’t. That’s not for me to do.
May starts to cry.

MAY
I know. I know.

RUBY
All I’m saying is your entire life isn’t falling apart. It’s not even--it’s barely constructed, you know?

MAY
We had a plan.

RUBY
No, you had a plan with her. Plans change. I was gonna be an Physics major. I don’t even know what physics is.

MAY
It was just so easy. It was all laid out.

RUBY
But do you want easy or do you want good?

MAY
I want both.

RUBY
It wasn’t both. And good things are rarely easy.

May sighs and lays back on the hood.

MAY
I know Sarah likes Carson. I don’t know why I was–I don’t know. I guess I just miss that part. The newness.

RUBY
God, me too. But imagine how good it must feel for her.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The front door swings open revealing Sarah and Carson, covered in paint. She looks almost guilty, or maybe giddy. May and Ruby take them in.
SARAH
Oh, thank god.
(beat, realizing herself)
We’re painting.

CUT TO:

INT. GUEST ROOM - SUNRISE

Warm sunrise shines in through a window. Reminiscent of the opening scene. Sarah wakes slowly and shifts onto her elbows. She sees Ruby sitting on a window seat, looking out. Ruby turns her head when she hears Sarah rustling. They make eye contact. Ruby looks tired. Ruby glances over and Sarah realizes that May is awake as well, looking at Ruby. They all take each other in.

EXT. CARSON’S DRIVEWAY - MORNING

May walks out of the house, and then Sarah, who is stopped by Carson, who hands her a note. Sarah smiles and hugs her, then scurries to the car. Ruby leaves and turns around to face Carson.

RUBY
I love you. That’s it.

CARSON
I love you. I will never forget you.

RUBY
Thank you.

Ruby starts to walk backwards, toward the car.

RUBY (CONT’D)
And of course you were my gay awakening.

CARSON
Thank GOD! You were mine.

RUBY
CABIN ELEVEN, BABY!

CARSON
(yelling)
Cabin Eleven, Feels Like Heaven!

In the car, Sarah peers into the note and smiles.
MAY
She give you her number?
SARAH
Yeah.
MAY
Good.
Sarah looks at May.

MAY (CONT'D)
I’m sorry.
SARAH
I know. I love you.
MAY
I love you too.

INT. MAY’S OUTBACK – MORNING

Back on the road. May sees Ruby glued to the window and opens the sunroof.

EXT. DESERT SPRAWL – SAME

Ruby climbs partially out of the sunroof, her hair whipping around in the wind. She closes her eyes. She, and the car, are made small by the vast expanse of desert around them.

EXT. DESERT SPRAWL – LATE MORNING

The Outback drives past a sign that reads “HART GHOST TOWN NEXT EXIT.”

INT. MAY’S OUTBACK – LATE MORNING

Sarah notes the sign as they drive by.

SARAH

Ruby scrambles to look out the passenger window.

RUBY
Can we go?
EXT. GHOST TOWN - MINUTES LATER

The trio wander around a short strip of old abandoned western-style houses. Ruby looks toward the end of the strip and sees a figure shuffling around.

RUBY
Guys?

SARAH
What?

RUBY
Do you see that?

SARAH
(looking)
What?

Ruby walks toward the figure and stops about six feet away. The figure is decrepit, practically bones - either an extremely old woman or a zombie. She stops moving to glance up at Ruby.

RUBY
Hi.

May and Sarah catch up.

MAY
What is it?

Ruby shakes her head slightly and approaches the woman, holding a hand up in greeting. The woman holds her hand up in return.

RUBY
Why are you here?

The woman shakes her head slightly.

RUBY (CONT'D)
Are you alone?

The woman gestures with her head. Ruby glances around and sees shadows of figures in windows, doorways. All ghosts. Ruby realizes that this is what she could become.

SARAH
Ruby, what is it?

The woman steps back.
WOMAN
Go.

Ruby blinks and nods slightly.

RUBY
Let’s go.

EXT. SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA DESERT - DAY
The Outback zooms past flatlands. Sarah sketches. Ruby peers out the window.

EXT. THE WORLD’S TALLEST THERMOMETER - MIDDAY
The three sit in the parked car, Sarah and May eating sandwiches. They’re parked beside the world’s largest thermometer.

RUBY
This honestly rocks.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - EARLY AFTERNOON
Shots of the car finally moving through the city. They drive with windows rolled down. Ruby points out familiar landmarks. They drive down the Pacific Coast Highway, parallel to the ocean.

INT. MAY’S OUTBACK- SAME/OVERLAPPING
Dialogue overlapping with shots of the school, houses.

RUBY
That’s my middle school. That’s the tree where we’d all wait to get picked up. One time a fight broke out and I broke it up by standing between them and just screaming.

SARAH
That tracks.

RUBY
That’s Lizzie’s house. Hi Lizzie.

SARAH
Hi Lizzie.
RUBY
Turn here.

EXT. RUBY’S STREET – EARLY AFTERNOON

The trio walk down the street, the beach a stone’s throw away. Ruby looks up ahead.

RUBY
(nervous)
That’s my house. I, uh-

MAY
We’ll hang back?

RUBY
You can come to the door, they’re probably busy inside-

They stop in front of a little orange house. A tall, lanky man– DEE SALOMON (50s) stands on the porch with a mug. A short bespectacled woman– KATRINA SALOMON (50s) waters hanging plants with a hose. She turns and sees Sarah, May, and Ruby.

SARAH
Oh.

Katrina promptly faints, crumpling in a heap on the porch. The hose splashes everywhere.

DEE
Katrina– what-

Dee looks up and sees Ruby and promptly drops his mug, shattering it.

RUBY
I’M SORRY, I’M SORRY, I’M SORRY-

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. RUBY’S HOUSE – MINUTES LATER

Dee and Katrina sit on a couch in the living room, Katrina still damp from the hose. Sarah and May awkwardly share an armchair. Ruby stands in the doorway, finishing up the recap.

RUBY
–And now I’m here.
(beat)

(MORE)
RUBY (CONT'D)
Since when do you water the plants with a hose? They’re desert plants. You’ll drown them. It’s wasteful.

KATRINA
Says the girl who takes a bath a day.

RUBY
A few times a week--

KATRINA
Maybe we should water the lawn with your bathwater, then--

DEE
God, it’s like you never left.

Beat.

DEE (CONT'D)
(shaking his head)
Is this why Amy’s been texting me about your active energy every day?

RUBY
Probably.

KATRINA
(to Sarah and May)
It’s really nice to finally meet you two. Even if it’s under these, um, unfathomable? Circumstances. You’re welcome to stay the night.

MAY
Oh, thank you so much.

RUBY
Actually, um.

MAY
What?

EXT. RUBY’S HOUSE - AFTERNOON
The three sit on the porch steps.

RUBY
If you guys leave today you’ll make graduation. It’ll be close, but--
SARAH
What? No.

MAY
No, no, that’s not important, I know I was freaking out about it before but I’d rather be with you-

RUBY
No, I’m serious. We can get you guys on a plane today, you’ll get in late, but--

SARAH
Why would we leave after all this?

RUBY
(to May)
You can leave your car here, we have an extra spot, you’ll have to come back for the funeral anyway--

MAY
This is crazy. We came all this way!

RUBY
Guys, I’m serious.
(beat)
You have to go back. You have to have the ending.

SARAH
Graduation doesn’t matter.

RUBY
Yes, it does. You have to say your goodbyes. You have to have an ending. Not everyone gets that.

May starts to cry.

MAY
How are we supposed to say goodbye to you?

RUBY
We’ve been doing it this whole time.

Sarah starts to cry as well.

RUBY (CONT'D)
You guys are my best friends. Okay?
May nods.

SARAH

Okay.

Beat.

RUBY

I feel like I need to sign your yearbooks. Have A Great Summer. Love, Ruby.

MAY

(crying and laughing)

H.A.G.S.

They lean their heads together.

INT. RUBY'S ROOM

Ruby wanders around her bedroom, showing Sarah and May relics from her childhood. Ruby’s parents watch from the doorway.

EXT. RUBY'S HOUSE - MID AFTERNOON

Sarah slams the Uber trunk shut, joining May and Ruby.

RUBY

I don’t know how to end this.

SARAH

Did you do everything you wanted?

Ruby hesitates, and then nods.

SARAH (CONT'D)

(smiling)

Good.

INT. UBER - MID AFTERNOON

Sarah and May, crying, turn around in the passenger seat to watch Ruby. Ruby stands with her legs apart, holding her arms out wide in an impossibly large hug. She shrinks in the distance.
INT. RUBY'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Ruby stands in the front doorway, arms wrapped around herself. Katrina watches her from the couch. Dee walks in from the kitchen, hanging up the phone.

DEE
(on the phone)
Yes. Thank you. Well, uh, 
Hearthome’s service was much appreciated. Thanks, Mr...? Burke.
Thank you. Bye.
(beat, seeing Ruby)
Are you all right?

RUBY
Is this okay? Are you gonna be okay? Was this a mistake?

KATRINA
No, no, no. Not a mistake.

RUBY
But... If you had the choice? Would you have chosen to see me again? Even if--even like this?

KATRINA
Oh, Ruby. Of course. It doesn’t matter how hard it is.

RUBY
(small)
Okay.

KATRINA
Why do you think you... came back?

RUBY
When I went to see Lizzie she kept asking me about what unfinished business I had. And I don’t think... It’s not like I had some big quest to complete, you know? So I don’t think it was unfinished business. I think it was just that it--I--was unfinished. I didn’t get a proper ending.

KATRINA
Is there anything we can do? To give you that?
RUBY
No, no, you don’t have to do anything. Just being here is a part of it.

INT. AIRPLANE – LATE AFTERNOON

Sarah and May sit solemnly in middle and window seats on a crowded airplane, commotion around them. Sarah looks out the window.

MAY
I think I’m gonna defer grad school for a year.

SARAH
What? Seriously?

MAY
Yeah. I’m gonna talk to my mom tomorrow. End of summer I’m gonna go...somewhere. I don’t know yet. See the world.

SARAH
That’s amazing. I think that’s great.

MAY
Thank you.

SARAH
Ruby would love that.

MAY
I know.

Beat. Sarah shifts in her seat.

SARAH
I, uh, also have news.

MAY
Oh?

SARAH
I think I’m gonna...go to Sedona?

MAY
WHAT?
SARAH
To that artist collective Carson
was talking about? It’s a co-op.
Grow your own food, make art.
There’s space for me.

MAY
And Carson will in fact be there?

SARAH
...Yes.

MAY
YES!

SARAH
Is that selfish? I just really want
to do it.

May stops Sarah and grabs her face, looking her in the eye.

MAY
I am so proud of you.

SARAH
Thank you.

MAY
And so is Ruby.

SARAH
I know.

The flight attendant begins to make announcements over the
intercom and they adjust, buckling their seatbelts.

SARAH (CONT’D)
I have not told my parents.

MAY
Got it.

INT. RUBY'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Ruby sits on the floor with her arms wrapped around her legs
in front of her parents who are still seated on the couch.

RUBY
I was really nervous to come back
for a lot of reasons, obviously,
but I kept remembering how you guys
always said I’d do “big things” and
I was like, I can’t let them down.
DEE
You could never let us down.

RUBY
I know. You have to say that.

Dee chuckles.

RUBY (CONT'D)
I think it’s more letting myself down? Like my idea of what I should be doing?
(beat)
But now I’m realizing that I did do big things, and they’re big because I loved doing them. That’s what makes them big.

KATRINA
That’s very wise.

RUBY
It’s not even about being wise, though, it’s about—it’s about doing what I could with what I had. Like—okay, theoretically, if suddenly everything was over, and then it wasn’t, what would you do if you had this chunk of time given to you? Last hurrah.

Dee and Katrina are at a loss for words.

RUBY (CONT'D)
I know! It’s an insane ask! So I stuffed all of the best things in my life into this short amount of time, and it’s not even close to enough, but it’s something, and it was beautiful. And I feel so profoundly about everything that I could explode with it. And I feel like I know nothing and everything which is terrifying but at least now I—
(beat)
I got to have my goodbye. An ending. You know?

KATRINA
You were always so bad at goodbyes when you were little.

(MORE)
KATRINA (CONT'D)
You used to leave little farewell notes for the babysitter and hide in your room when you heard us come home.

RUBY
I hate goodbyes! I hate them!

KATRINA
(emotional)
Oh, baby.

RUBY
I think I just want you guys to know that I’m okay? I mean. I know. But. I’m just glad I got to prepare this time. I’m very...lucky. To feel more ready.

DEE
“The readiness is all.”

Katrina looks at Dee.

DEE (CONT’D) RUBY
Hamlet. Hamlet.

KATRINA
Yeah, yes, I know it’s Hamlet. God.

Quiet. Ruby’s parents take her in.

DEE
You know, when you were little you used to stand on my shoulders while we took walks so you could touch the tree branches. And I’d say “One day you’ll be taller than the trees” and you’d say “Oh no, Dad, I’m too little.” I’m just glad I got to see you touch the branches on your own.

Ruby ducks her head.

DEE (CONT’D)
After a while you learn that life is both very big and very small. I’m happy to know you got to experience that.

KATRINA
How long do we have you?
RUBY
For a little bit.

KATRINA
Okay.

RUBY
(beat)
I’m so scared to go.

Beat. Katrina shifts off the couch onto the floor and Dee does the same. After a moment of hesitation, they wrap their arms around Ruby, hugging her. Ruby startles at their touch, and then leans into it, crying in earnest. A quiet moment.

DEE
It’s okay. We’ve got you.

INT. RUBY’S ROOM – NIGHT

Ruby climbs onto her childhood bed slowly, rolling onto her back. She looks up above her bed frame and sees something taped to the wall. Turning onto her stomach, she realizes its a page from Sarah’s sketchbook that she taped to the wall when Ruby wasn’t looking. There are a few sketches: the trio standing in front of the Giant Campbell’s Soup Can, the trio hugging in caps and gowns, a sketch of Ruby leaning out of the car window, wind blowing her hair. Reverse shot of Ruby staring at it, smiling widely. She rolls onto her back.

(SONG: When You Know Why You’re Happy– Richard Reed Parry, Little Scream)

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. RUBY’S ROOM – EARLY MORNING

Ruby lies in the same position, sunrise warming the room. She sits up.

INT. DORM HALLWAY – MORNING

May and Sarah hurry down the dorm hallway, adorned in caps and gowns. They slow to look at Ruby’s door.

INT. RUBY’S KITCHEN – DAY

Ruby perches on a counter and watches her parents cook, commenting on something every once in a while. She takes it all in.
EXT. GRADUATION TENT - DAY

May and Sarah walk in a line amongst a crowd of graduating seniors, filtering into a crowded tent. They hold hands.

EXT. RUBY'S HOUSE - EVENING

Ruby exits her house and walks down the porch steps to the street, pausing at May’s car, parked on the curb. She blows it a kiss, and then keeps walking.

EXT. WILL ROGERS BEACH - EVENING

Ruby walks down the sand toward the shore.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Sarah Byrne.

EXT. GRADUATION TENT - DAY

Sarah crosses the stage to applause. We see her family applauding. She smiles and accepts the diploma.

EXT. WILL ROGERS BEACH - EVENING

Ruby continues down the sand, sun setting. She stops walking.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
May Marino.

EXT. GRADUATION TENT - DAY

May crosses the stage to applause. We see her mother and younger brother applauding. She smiles and accepts the diploma.

EXT. WILL ROGERS BEACH - EVENING

Ruby sits near the water, holding her knees. The sunset is spectacular before her. Match shot to the trio watching the sunset in Utah, but now it’s just Ruby.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Ruby Salomon.

Ruby closes her eyes. Blackout.
END FILM