

A COUNTRY CALLED HOME
(Working Title)

by
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FADE IN:

1 INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

1

Alone and asleep in her double bed is ELLIE, 28.

After a moment, KATIE, 24, knocks and enters before Ellie has a chance to answer.

KATIE

Hey, are you up?

ELLIE

I think so.

KATIE

I'm so sorry to bother you, but I think I need a ride to work. My car is still in the garage and if I miss another day, I'm really going to get fired this time and then that puts all the burden of the rent on you again and-

ELLIE

Okay, I'll take you.

KATIE

Thanks. You're the best. Where's James? I thought I heard him last night.

Katie leaves before Ellie can answer.

Ellie looks over and sees that no one is sleeping next to her.

She sees a note on the bedside table and picks it up. The note reads 'Got a text about a card game. Grabbed some cash from your purse. Later, James.'

Ellie crumples the note and gets out of bed.

2 INT. ELLIE'S CAR - MORNING

2

Ellie is driving Katie to work. They are stalled in traffic.

KATIE

So she said that I can't sing. I mean, come on, Ellie, you've heard me sing. I'm really talented.

(MORE)

KATIE (CONT'D)

And I know what Brenda really wants: She wants to get Kenny out of the Karaoke Bar and over to the Sizzler where she can try and steal him from me. Good luck, Honey, because that ain't going to happen. Am I right? You're darn right I'm right.

Ellie is trying not to listen.

3 EXT. FURNITURE STORE - MORNING

3

Ellie walks from her parked car to the furniture store. It's early and there are no other cars in the parking lot.

Ellie opens the store's front door and goes in.

4 INT. FURNITURE STORE - MORNING

4

Ellie is at her desk. The sun is coming in through the windows, but the store isn't open yet and she hasn't turned any of the lights on.

Ellie has a small notebook open on her desk and is sketching out the design for an armchair that has separately moving foot rests.

Her cell phone vibrates. Ellie picks it up and sees that James is the caller and she ignores it.

5 INT. FURNITURE STORE - DAY

5

The store is now open and there is one customer, MAN, 55, who is looking at a couch. He sits on the far left side of the couch and then gets up and sits on the far right side.

Ellie and TYLER, 52, her boss and owner of the store, watch the Man.

TYLER

There's just some people who can't sit in the middle.

ELLIE

That seems kinda deep, Tyler.

TYLER

What, you mean like a fortune cookie kind of thing?

ELLIE

Yeah.

TYLER

No, I'm just making an observation,
not trying to start a religion.

Tyler walks over to the Man on the couch.

TYLER (CONT'D)

How's that couch feeling for you?

Ellie's cell phone vibrates. She picks it up and sees that the caller is someone with a 806 area code.

Ellie walks over to her computer and Googles 'Area code 806'. The area code is in Texas.

Ellie stares at her phone, which has stopped vibrating.

ELLIE

(To herself)

Please don't leave a message.

Please don't-

The phone vibrates once more. The phone indicates that she has one new message.

6

INT. FURNITURE STORE - CONTINUOUS

6

Ellie has her purse and is walking over to Tyler who is standing at the entrance. Tyler is watching the Man who was on the couch walk across the parking lot.

TYLER

He didn't buy that couch this time,
but I bet you a quarter that he
comes back and buys it by the end
of the month.

(He sees Ellie's purse.)

What's up?

ELLIE

Would you mind if I ran a quick
errand?

TYLER

Sure.

(Looks around empty
store.)

I think the rush is over.

7

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

7

As Ellie is heading towards her car, her boyfriend, JAMES, 32, pulls up next to her in his beat up Honda Civic. He's not wearing a shirt.

JAMES

Hey, where are you going? I was just coming to see you.

Ellie doesn't stop walking, so James just keeps driving slowly, keeping pace with her.

ELLIE

I'm sorry. I need to go see Cole.

JAMES

What's up with your brother?

ELLIE

Nothing. I just need to see him.

Ellie is at her car. James parks his and gets out.

JAMES

Aren't you going to ask me?

ELLIE

Ask you what?

JAMES

How I did in the poker game.

ELLIE

Well, you're not wearing a shirt, so I'm guessing that you didn't do too well.

JAMES

No, the guy who won my shirt left early, so I never got a chance to win it back, but I turned it around about an hour ago and ended up winning over two hundred bucks.

ELLIE

So you have my money.

JAMES

Well, I really need to pay off some back rent.

ELLIE

I've got to go.

Ellie gets in her car.

James motions for her to roll down her window and she does.

JAMES

What's going on? I'll get you the money tonight if you really need it.

ELLIE

It's not that.

JAMES

Let's get a couple of steaks tonight at that place you love so much. How does that sound?

ELLIE

I'll call you later.

Ellie starts her car.

JAMES

I'll even wear a shirt. A clean one.

Ellie drives away.

8

EXT. COLE'S HOUSE - LATER

8

Ellie parks in front of the house where COLE, 32, lives with his wife and two kids.

Ellie gets out of her car and walks over to the garage where Cole is putting boxes into the trunk of his car. The garage is so filled with boxes that you can't fit a car in there.

COLE

Hey Ellie, shouldn't you be at work?

ELLIE

What are you doing?

COLE

Sylvia wants to start parking her car in here so all this crap has to head over to Goodwill.

Cole opens a box, sees that it contains towels and takes the box to his car.

ELLIE
I got a call from someone in Texas.

COLE
Texas? Was it Dad?

ELLIE
I think so.

COLE
Well, did Dad call or not?

ELLIE
(She holds up her cell
phone.)
I'm afraid to listen to the
message.

Cole closes the trunk of his car and stands in front of
Ellie.

COLE
Do you want me to listen to it?

ELLIE
What do you think he wants?

COLE
Booze. Or money to buy booze. Or
money to get him out of jail so he
can then go out and buy booze.

ELLIE
Do you think-

COLE
Just erase it, Ellie. As far as I'm
concerned, we had a mom and a dad
and they are both very much dead,
except that no one has gotten
around to burying Dad yet.

ELLIE
I think I should hear what he has
to say.

COLE
Then listen to the message.

Ellie looks at her cell phone. She's torn about what to do.

COLE (CONT'D)
Let me show you something.

Cole walks over to a smaller box that he's placed away from the others.

COLE (CONT'D)
I found this earlier.

He opens the box. It's filled with old color Polaroids. Cole takes one out and hands it to Ellie. She sees that it's a picture of when Ellie was ten and Cole was fourteen. They are standing with their parents in front of the Grand Canyon.

COLE (CONT'D)
That's about the last time I
remember being a whole family. And
who is to blame for that except
Dad?

Ellie takes the phone and plays the message. She listens while Cole watches her.

Instead of her Father's voice, she hears AMANDA, 54.

AMANDA (O.S.)
Yes, this is a message for Ellie.
This is your stepmother Amanda. I
think you may want to head on down
here to Texas. Your Daddy had a
stroke and I don't know if he's
going to be around so much
longer... I just thought I should
let you know.

The message ends and Ellie closes her phone.

COLE
He wants money, right?

9

EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

9

Ellie is sitting in Cole's car at the airport.

COLE
Do you want me to stay with you
until your flight?

ELLIE
No, I'm fine.

COLE
Why don't you just drive down?

ELLIE
Road trips remind me of Dad.

COLE

Won't seeing Dad remind you of Dad?

ELLIE

I just remember sitting in the back of the car when Dad was driving us on a road trip and I would hold my breath and pray that he wouldn't crash into an oncoming car.

COLE

Look, you don't have to go.

ELLIE

I think I do.

COLE

I don't want to, but if things get crazy and you need me, I'll jump on a plane and come down there.

ELLIE

I know you will.

She gives him a hug. She grabs her suitcase and gets out of the car.

10

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

10

Ellie is at the counter of American Airlines. She's dealing with WOMAN, 28, in charge of ticketing.

WOMAN

I'm sorry, Eleanor,-

ELLIE

Ellie.

WOMAN

I'm sorry, Ellie, but I'm afraid this flight has been overbooked.

ELLIE

What does that mean?

WOMAN

It means that-

ELLIE

I know what the words mean, but I have to get on that flight.

WOMAN

We have another flight that leaves
at one-thirty.

ELLIE

Please, isn't there something you
can do. My father- He's not well.

WOMAN

I don't see-

ELLIE

Just check for a last minute
cancellation. Please.

The Woman, visibly annoyed, turns away and starts typing
something into her computer.

The Woman turns back to Ellie.

WOMAN

I'm sorry. The eleven-thirty is the
best we can do. Shall I reserve you
a ticket?

ELLIE

Isn't there-

Ellie's phone rings. She answers.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

(Into phone)

Hello?

AMANDA (O.S.)

Ellie, we lost him.

ELLIE

What? Lost who?

AMANDA (O.S.)

This is Amanda. I'm afraid we've
lost your daddy. He died not two
minutes ago.

11

EXT. AIRPORT - LATER

11

Ellie is sitting on the curb outside the American Airlines
terminal with her suitcase.

People walk by with their luggage, ignoring her.

12 INT. AIRPORT - LATER

12

Ellie has just been screened for boarding. She's putting her shoes, belt and jewelry back on as two female TSA employees ignore her and talk as though she wasn't there.

TSA EMPLOYEE #1

Have you tried pepper jack on it?

TSA EMPLOYEE #2

On a turkey sandwich? I don't think so.

TSA EMPLOYEE #1

Why not? What do you put on it?

TSA EMPLOYEE #2

Melted brie.

TSA EMPLOYEE #1

Oh no. I don't want nothing to do with that mess.

13 INT. TEXAS AIRPORT - DUSK

13

Later that night, Ellie walks with her suitcase through the small Texas Airport. She is looking at the few people there.

A woman, AMANDA, 54, wearing too much make-up and a short pink satin dress, has her arms open and is walking quickly towards Ellie. Ellie takes a few steps backwards, but Amanda has her in a big hug.

AMANDA

Here you are! You are Ellie, aren't you?

ELLIE

Yes.

AMANDA

It's a good thing or I might have got arrested for being a lesbian.

ELLIE

Can you get arrested here for-

AMANDA

Let me take your bag.

She takes her suitcase with one hand and takes her arm with the other.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

We've got to scoot. I had no idea that you were going to be this late.

ELLIE

There was a problem with-

AMANDA

Can you drive a shift?

ELLIE

Yes.

AMANDA

I'm afraid I might have had a few too many cocktails in the airport bar while I was waiting for you. I'm going to need you to drive.

14

EXT. AIRPORT PARKING LOT - DUSK

14

Ellie and Amanda standing by Amanda's Dodge Dart.

AMANDA

Wait a sec. Before you get in I want to show you something. How's the light here? Can you see okay?

ELLIE

See what?

Amanda opens the trunk and takes two suits out and lays them out on the hood. One suit is dark grey, with charcoal pinstripes and the other is brown. The suit's are out of style and worn.

AMANDA

What do you think?

ELLIE

About?

AMANDA

I think these are your daddy's two best suits. I like the brown, but everyone seems to like the grey.

Ellie moves closer and feels the material on both.

ELLIE

Maybe we could buy him something new. Maybe something black.

AMANDA

God, what a waste that would be.
He's not going to a party.
Actually, can I be one hundred
percent honest with you?

ELLIE

Okay.

AMANDA

I don't really think your daddy
wanted to be buried.

ELLIE

What did he want?

AMANDA

Well, he always said that we could
just stuff him under the couch or
bury him out back, but most of the
times he said he wanted to be
cremated.

ELLIE

Oh.

AMANDA

But, you know your daddy, he jokes
around a lot. Did he ever tell you
or your brother what he wanted?

ELLIE

No. I don't think we ever talked
about his death.

AMANDA

Are you kidding? He talked about
that all the time.

Amanda grabs the two suits and puts them back in the trunk
and closes it.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Hop in. We've got to make a quick
stop before we go home. What time
is your brother flying in?

ELLIE

Cole is not coming.

AMANDA

He's not?

ELLIE

No.

AMANDA

Well, I didn't know it was quite like that.

ELLIE

It is. And then some.

They get in the car. Ellie starts the engine.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Okay, which way-

As Ellie adjusts the rearview mirror, TOMMY, 5, sits up from the backseat where he was sleeping.

TOMMY

Hey, Grandma!

Ellie gives a small, startled scream. Tommy laughs at her.

AMANDA

Tommy, go back to sleep. We'll be home soon.

(To Ellie)

That's my Grandson, Tommy.

ELLIE

He's been out in the car all this time?

AMANDA

Well, I couldn't exactly bring him into the airport bar, now could I?

TOMMY

I'm hungry, Grandma.

AMANDA

I'll fetch you something.

(To Ellie)

When you pull out of here, take the first right and go on down the road a piece.

15

EXT. GAS STATION - LATER

15

Ellie is waiting in the car while Amanda is buying a few cartons of cigarettes in a small gas station. Tommy has two big bags of potato chips in his hands. Amanda makes him take one of them back.

Ellie takes out her cellphone and calls Cole.

COLE (O.S.)

Hello?

ELLIE

It's me.

COLE (O.S.)

How was your trip?

ELLIE

It was...

COLE (O.S.)

Are you okay? Did Dad say something awful to you?

ELLIE

I should have called you earlier.

COLE (O.S.)

He did, didn't he. What did he say?

ELLIE

Actually, Dad's dead.

COLE (O.S.)

Really? Did you get to see him at least?

ELLIE

No, he died before I left the airport. This Amanda woman called and told me.

COLE (O.S.)

I don't understand. Are you still at the airport?

ELLIE

No, I decided to come to Texas anyway.

Amanda and Tommy are leaving the gas station.

COLE (O.S.)

What? Why would you do that?

ELLIE

I've got to go. I'll call you later.

16

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

16

Ellie, who is carrying a fast asleep Tommy, and Amanda are walking down the hospital hallway.

ELLIE

Why are we here?

AMANDA

I thought that you might want to see your daddy before they take him over to the funeral home.

ELLIE

I don't want to be rude, but I think I can wait to see him.

AMANDA

Can I be one hundred percent honest with you, Ellie?

ELLIE

Okay.

AMANDA

Well, technically, your Daddy and me aren't exactly married. On account of I'm still married to a no good, son of a bitch who lives up near Houston.

ELLIE

I don't-

AMANDA

Well, they need someone to officially sign some forms so that the body can be released to the undertakers. Someone who's family.

ELLIE

I see.

AMANDA

I knew that you were coming and I didn't want to make your Grandparents have to do it.

ELLIE

Who?

17 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

17

Ellie enters and quietly closes the door behind her.

Her dead father is lying in bed.

Ellie stands with her hand on the door, staring at her father.

After a moment she walks over to him and tentatively reaches out the back of her hand to her father's unshaven cheek.

Two tears run down her face.

Ellie quickly wipes away the tears. She looks at her father with anger.

She takes hold of the thin blanket that is on top of her father and grips it in both of her hands. She is holding on tight. She sees that she has accidentally pulled the blanket so that one of her father's bare feet is exposed. She goes to the end of the bed and covers the foot again.

18 INT. HOSPITAL BATHROOM - LATER

18

Ellie is sitting in one of the stalls in the hospital bathroom.

She opens her cell phone and scrolls down to Cole's name. She is about to call him, but instead puts away her phone.

19 INT. HOSPITAL - LATER

19

Ellie is signing a bunch of hospital forms.

SUSAN, 45, the head nurse at the hospital comes up to Ellie.

SUSAN

Ellie?

ELLIE

Yes?

SUSAN

I thought that might be you. You look just like your father.

ELLIE

I do?

SUSAN

That old man was some kind of character. I'm so sorry for your loss.

ELLIE

Thank you.

Susan takes a tiny brown envelope out of her pocket. She hands it to Ellie.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

What's this?

SUSAN

I don't know, but your father told me to give it to you if you showed up here.

Amanda turns the corner and walks towards them. She has put the still sleeping Tommy in a wheel chair and is pushing him.

Ellie slips the tiny envelope into her purse.

Amanda stops the wheelchair when she reaches them.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Amanda, where did you get that wheel chair? These things are not toys that you can just play with.

AMANDA

I know, but he's just so heavy.
(To Ellie)
Are we just about done here?

20

EXT. AMANDA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

20

Amanda's car is parked in front of her house. It's a small two bedroom, with a garage.

Ellie has gotten out of the car and gets her bag from the back.

Amanda is getting the still sleeping Tommy out of the back.

ELLIE

This is where my dad lived?

AMANDA

This is it. Be it ever so humble.
We had an apartment a piece down
the road, but your daddy loved to
monkey around with his guitars and
this place suited him because of
the garage. It's my son's place and
really it was too big for just him
and Tommy to live in by themselves.

ELLIE

He was still making guitars?

AMANDA

Making them, repairing old ones.
Sure. He used to work on them most
days. I don't think he ever
finished too many, but he did love
to work on them.

21 INT. AMANDA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

21

Ellie and Amanda, still holding Tommy, walk through the
living room to the kitchen.

Seen through the screen door is JACK, 28, sitting outside on
the steps leading to the back yard. He has his back to them
and is smoking a cigarette and drinking a cup of coffee.

AMANDA

There's my own baby boy. Jack, this
is Ellie. Mark's daughter.

Without turning his head, Jack raises his coffee in greeting.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Oh, he's a charmer.

(To Jack)

No, don't get up or anything. I'll
put your son to bed.

(To Ellie)

He works hard, so you have to cut
him a little slack when he acts
like a poo-poo head. I'll be right
back.

Amanda leaves with Tommy.

Ellie puts her bag down and looks around the kitchen.

JACK

There's beer in the fridge.

Ellie opens the refrigerator and takes a bottle of beer and opens it.

Jack still hasn't turned around to face her.

22

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

22

Ellie is walking around the garage. There are several guitars around in various stages of development.

Ellie finds one that is almost finished, just needs a final polish. She sits down and strums a few chords, then puts the guitar back.

Ellie walks over to the work bench. She picks up a few tools and sees how old they are and worn with use.

There is a car with a tarp on it. Ellie lifts the corner of the tarp to peek at the car.

Ellie removes the tarp to find a battered 1972 Oldsmobile station wagon. She walks around it.

Amanda enters.

AMANDA

There you are.

ELLIE

(About car)

I can't believe this.

AMANDA

That was your Daddy's car.

ELLIE

He had this piece of junk when we were kids. We used to take the worst road trips in this beast. Does it still work?

AMANDA

Oh sure.

Ellie walks around the garage with her beer.

ELLIE

Who did he make the guitars for?

AMANDA

He gave them away as gifts mostly, although he did sell a few every year.

(MORE)

AMANDA (CONT'D)

There's a music store over in Austin that would buy as many as he would make.

ELLIE

Did he ever make any violins?

AMANDA

Violins? I don't think so. Ellie, I was wondering if you could help me with the announcement of your daddy's death. I have to get it to the paper tomorrow.

ELLIE

Actually, can that wait?

AMANDA

You've only been in town for about two minutes. Do you already have a hot date?

ELLIE

I think I'd like to drive around a bit and see the town.

AMANDA

I don't know that there's too much to see, but okay. The thing is that Jack might need to borrow my car tonight.

ELLIE

Do you have another car?

23 EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

23

Ellie is driving down the road in her father's station wagon. She turns on the radio, but only one of the speakers works.

24 EXT. DAIRY QUEEN - NIGHT

24

Ellie is sitting at a wooden table outside the Dairy Queen. She is having some French fries and a soda.

A LARGE MOM, 24, is sitting at one of the other tables. She has her sleeping baby daughter in her one arm and she's eating a cheeseburger with the other. Her son, BILLY, 6, is sitting across from her.

Billy takes a French fry from his mom's plate.

LARGE MOM
Don't you do that again, Billy.

BILLY
I'm hungry.

LARGE MOM
You said you wasn't hungry so I
didn't get you nothin'.

Billy reaches out to take another fry and his mother smacks his hand, hard.

Billy jumps up from the table. He starts crying.

LARGE MOM (CONT'D)
Just hush now.

Billy takes off his shirt and throws it up in the air.

LARGE MOM (CONT'D)
Hey, now, you stop that!

Billy takes off his shorts and throws them in the air. Billy, only in his underwear, runs to the car and gets in the back seat. He slams the door closed.

Large Mom sees Ellie has seen all this.

LARGE MOM (CONT'D)
(To Ellie)
Do you have kids of your own?

ELLIE
No.

LARGE MOM
Then why don't you mind your own
business. We ain't some TV show for
you to gawk at.

25 EXT. BAR - NIGHT

25

Ellie pulls up to a bar called Tony's Bar and parks.

26 INT. TONY'S BAR - NIGHT

26

Ellie is having a beer at the bar. She looks around and sees a few couples sitting together. There is a large group of hard drinking regulars at the bar.

Several tables have been pushed together and been taken over by a bunch of college age guys. She notices a lone acoustic guitar on a stand next to a microphone stand.

Ellie leaves the bar and walks over to the stage. She tries to see the name of the guitar maker, when RENO, 24, walks out on stage and removes the guitar from it's stand. Reno has a boyish figure is wearing cowboy boots, old blue jeans, a worn flannel shirt and a cowboy hat.

Reno has a seat on a stool on stage. As he tunes his guitar, Ellie makes her way back to the bar.

Reno gets off the stool and starts to play his guitar. When he starts to sing, Ellie hears that Reno has a beautiful female voice. Ellie doesn't understand, but Reno is a cross-dressing/transgender woman.

It doesn't take long for the crowd to start grumbling and yelling at Reno, who is into the music and ignores them.

SAMMY, 38, who is drunk and sitting at a small table by the stage by himself, gets up and points at Reno and yells at the rest of the bar.

SAMMY

Is this fella lipsyncing to some
woman or is he about two balls
short of a sack?

Sammy sits back down as the bar laughs at what he said.

The act is cut short as two bottles of beer come flying at the stage. One misses Reno by a few feet, but the other knocks his hat off.

Reno picks up his hat and puts it back on, all the time staring defiantly at the audience, then he takes his guitar and slowly walks off the tiny stage.

27

INT. TONY'S BAR - LATER

27

Ellie is having another beer at the bar.

Reno takes the seat next to her. He puts his guitar case on the bar.

ELLIE

Oh, hey, I loved your song. At
least what I heard of it.

RENO

The thing that really pisses me off
is wasting beer like that.

Reno makes sure that the bartender is turned the other way
and he leans over the bar and grabs two beers from the ice.
He opens them both and hands one to Ellie.

RENO (CONT'D)

Cheers.

They both drink.

Ellie is looking through her purse and takes out the small
envelope that the nurse gave her. She opens it and removes a
small key. There is no note, just the key. The key itself has
no marking other than the number 328.

RENO (CONT'D)

What you got there?

ELLIE

A key.

RENO

Is that the one to my heart? I've
been looking everywhere for that.

ELLIE

My father left it for me, but I
don't know what it's for.

RENO

Let me see.

Ellie gives him the key and Reno inspects it.

RENO (CONT'D)

This looks familiar.

ELLIE

Does it?

RENO

I can't remember where I saw this
kind of key before, but it'll come
back to me.

Reno hands her back the key. Ellie puts it back in the
envelope and returns it to her purse.

RENO (CONT'D)

Do you want to hear my new song?

ELLIE
You're not going to go back up
there, are you?

RENO
No, not tonight.

Reno reaches over the bar again and steals two more beers.

RENO (CONT'D)
Let's go.

28

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

28

Ellie and Reno are sitting on either side of WENDY, 54,
Reno's heavy-set mother. Wendy is sleeping.

Reno lightly strums his guitar as he sings softly.

Ellie and Reno both have beers.

When Reno finishes his song, Ellie softly claps.

ELLIE
That was amazing.

RENO
Thank you.

They are both quiet a moment as they sip their beers.

ELLIE
I'm sorry, but
(Indicates Wendy)
Who is this?

RENO
That is Wendy Thacker, also known
as my mom.

ELLIE
Oh.

RENO
She's been in a diabetic coma for
the past four days.

ELLIE
I'm so sorry. Is she going to be
okay?

RENO

They think so, but they're not sure. On the plus side, we've never gotten along so well as we have these past four days.

29

EXT. HOSPITAL - LATER

29

Ellie and Reno stand outside the hospital.

ELLIE

Can I drive you home?

RENO

Nah, I'm just about two blocks down the road. Are you okay to drive?

ELLIE

Oh, I'm fine. It's not like there are that many things to hit in this town.

RENO

Well, I guess I might run into you again.

ELLIE

Oh, yeah maybe, but I'm not here for very long.

RENO

If you're here, I expect I'll see you. It's a pretty small town.

30

INT. AMANDA'S HOUSE - MORNING

30

Ellie, still dressed from last night, is sprawled out asleep on the couch in the living room of Amanda's house.

Tommy is standing over her, giggling.

The giggling wakes Ellie up. She has a hangover, but still smiles up at Tommy.

ELLIE

Good morning.

TOMMY

Hi. You're baby sitting me.

ELLIE

I am? Who's baby sitting me?

Tommy laughs.

TOMMY
You're old. You don't need anyone
to watch you.

ELLIE
I'm not so sure about that.

TOMMY
We have company.

ELLIE
What?

Tommy stands back and Ellie sees that her grandparents, JUDY, 83, and BRUCE, 85, are sitting in chairs, watching her. They both have their morning coffee.

BRUCE
Hi, ya.

ELLIE
Hello.

Ellie sits up on the couch, trying to straighten her hair and wake up.

TOMMY
I'm going to go eat my cereal.

Tommy goes out to the kitchen.

ELLIE
I'm not sure where Amanda is. She
might be upstairs.

JUDY
We're here to see you.

ELLIE
Oh, why is that?

JUDY
Because you're our granddaughter.
Why wouldn't we want to see you?

BRUCE
We didn't mean to step on your
beauty sleep.

JUDY
Oh, Bruce.

Judy is quietly crying. Bruce takes a tissue from his pocket and hands it to Judy. She dries her eyes.

ELLIE

It's okay. I needed to get up anyway.

BRUCE

It's not that.

JUDY

It's just that you look so much like Mark.

BRUCE

Your father.

ELLIE

Yes.

JUDY

Of course, he was our son long before he was your father.

Ellie is looking from Bruce to Judy, amazed that she has grandparents that she's never seen until right now, while Judy and Bruce act as though they've always known her.

BRUCE

She certainly looks more like Mark when she's sleeping with that half empty bottle of beer next to her.

Ellie looks at the side table by the couch and sees the beer bottle that he's talking about.

ELLIE

I don't usually drink so late.

BRUCE

We understand. It's a tough time.

JUDY

We have wine with dinner most nights.

Ellie picks up the bottle of beer and looks at it.

ELLIE

I'm not like him. I'm not like my father.

Everyone lets this sink in for a moment.

Judy digs in her purse and brings out her wallet. She opens it and shows Ellie a picture. It's a picture of Ellie and Cole when they were ten and fourteen. They are at the beach in their bathing suits.

JUDY
I always carry this picture with me
wherever I go.

ELLIE
I remember this day. That was the
first time I ever saw the ocean.

JUDY
Do you have any...

ELLIE
Any what?

BRUCE
She wants to know if you have any
pictures of our beautiful faces?

ELLIE
Well...

JUDY
I know you wouldn't carry them
around with you, but, at home, I
was wondering if you had any.

ELLIE
I'm sorry.

BRUCE
That's okay.

ELLIE
The thing is Dad told us that the
two of you were killed in a car
accident when he was fourteen. When
Amanda mentioned you yesterday,
that was the first time I knew that
you were both alive.

JUDY
Oh, Bruce.

Judy starts to quietly cry again. Bruce hands her another
tissue. Judy dries her eyes.

There is a very loud car horn noise out front that makes all
three of them jump.

Tommy comes running through the living room.

TOMMY

Daddy!

Tommy runs out the front door.

31

EXT. AMANDA'S FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

31

Ellie follows Tommy outside. Jack has just driven up in his pick-up truck.

Tommy runs to the front of the truck's cab as Jack gets out and steps down. Jack picks him up and spins him around.

TOMMY

Where are you going, Daddy?

JACK

On up the road. I'll be back later.

Amanda drives up and parks. She gets out of the car.

TOMMY

Can I go with Daddy, Grandma?

AMANDA

No, Tommy, Daddy has to work.

(To Ellie)

We just got his truck out of the shop.

JACK

I got to have my truck if I'm going to get any work done. You know, someone around here had to work.

Jack goes inside the house, followed by Tommy.

ELLIE

What does that mean?

AMANDA

Don't pay no mind to him. He's cranky in the morning.

ELLIE

He didn't seem much nicer last night.

Ellie turns around and sees Judy and Bruce standing behind her.

BRUCE

We seem to keep sneaking up on you,
don't we?

Judy gives Ellie a big hug.

JUDY

It was so good to finally meet you.

ELLIE

You too.

JUDY

I've thought about hugging you and
your brother for so many years.

Judy steps back and looks at Ellie.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Hopefully this is hello, instead of
good-bye.

Bruce and Judy walk towards their car.

BRUCE

Don't worry. We don't have too many
years left to bother you.

JUDY

Bruce! You stop that.

AMANDA

(To Ellie)

Come on, hon, I let you sleep in,
but we've gotta shake a leg.

ELLIE

Do we?

Amanda looks over at the station wagon that Ellie was driving
last night. The car is parked at an angle, half on the
driveway and half on the grass.

AMANDA

I see you got your parking skills
from your daddy.

Ellie and Amanda are having breakfast at a local diner.

AMANDA

Can you talk to the undertaker when we get there?

ELLIE

Why?

AMANDA

I don't like those kind of folks and I don't know what kind of coffin to get.

ELLIE

I can talk to him.

AMANDA

Oh, I just don't know what to do.

ELLIE

I said I'd talk to him. It's not a problem.

AMANDA

It's just that I think your daddy really did want to be cremated, but everyone at where I get my hair done says that a body needs to be buried to be at peace. I don't know if that's true, but they made me feel so bad.

ELLIE

You shouldn't.

AMANDA

I tell you: My head feels like it's splitting in two. I just don't see how I can face all this today.

ELLIE

Why don't we finish up eating and I can run you home where you can maybe get a little more sleep and I'll take care of everything.

AMANDA

You will? You'd do that?

ELLIE

I will.

AMANDA

I'll tell you: That's a huge load off my mind. And, anyway, he was your Daddy.

ELLIE

That's right. And I'm going to go ahead and have him cremated.

AMANDA

I think that's what he really wanted. That or for us to bury him in the backyard, but I think that's illegal. We just rent that house.

ELLIE

Let's just go. Do we pay up at the counter?

Amanda finishes the rest of her water glass in one big gulp.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

I guess you were thirsty.

AMANDA

Could you pay for this while I go visit the Little Girl's Room?

Amanda takes her purse and goes to the bathroom.

Ellie gets up and walks toward the cashier, but stops when she sees an empty pint of rum where Amanda was sitting. Ellie holds up the glass that Amanda was just drinking from and smells it for alcohol.

33 INT. CAR - LATER

33

Ellie is driving downtown in her father's station wagon. She looks at all the stores on Main Street and is surprised to see that almost half of them are boarded up or have announced that they are going out of business.

Ellie pulls in front of Randy's Hardware. She parks and goes into the store.

34 INT. RICKY'S HARDWARE - CONTINUOUS

34

RICKY, 52, is behind the counter of his hardware store. He's talking to GLEN, 60, the local reverend when Ellie walks in.

ELLIE

Excuse me, I was wondering if you could help me?

RICKY

I will or I'll find someone who can.

ELLIE

I'm looking for the funeral home.

RICKY

Are you sick? You don't look that sick to me? Or are you suicidal? Get in there Glen and stop that woman from hurting herself.

GLEN

I'm sorry, miss.

RICKY

What are you sorry about?

GLEN

If she's looking for the funeral home, then maybe someone she knows has died. You ought to show a little respect.

RICKY

(To Ellie)

Somebody die on you, honey?

ELLIE

Yes. My father, Mark Edwards.

On hearing the name, Glen takes his bag and leaves the store without looking at Ellie and without saying another word.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

What's his problem?

RICKY

I guess not everyone around here liked your daddy so much.

35

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

35

Ellie comes out of the hardware store. She sees Reno walking down the street. Reno walks up to her.

RENO
Hey, it's my number one fan. Did
you make it home in one piece?

ELLIE
I did. How's your mom?

RENO
I guess she's the same or someone
would have called me.

ELLIE
Do you know where the funeral home
is? I think I'm lost.

RENO
You've come to the right person: I
was lost for years.

36 INT. FUNERAL HOME - LATER

36

Ellie and Reno are at a funeral home looking at a dark grey
and a black urn. MR. HARRIS, 54, is standing behind them.

RENO
So, what do you think?

ELLIE
I'm not sure. I like how thin I
look in something black, but I
don't think that is a concern in
this case.

MR. HARRIS
I'm sorry, the gentleman is...

RENO
Dead? Yeah, he's dead, all right.

MR. HARRIS
I mean, he's a relation of yours?

ELLIE
Of mine. He's my father.

MR. HARRIS
I see.

RENO
Well, I like the black. Makes me
think of Johnny Cash.

ELLIE

(To Mr. Harris)

Do you have something more cheery?
Something with flowers maybe?

MR. HARRIS

No, ma'am.

ELLIE

Then let's go with the grey.

MR. HARRIS

How about an inscription on the
urn? Perhaps your father's name?

RENO

What's she need the name for? Do
you think she has like twenty
different urns at home and she
might get them all mixed up?

MR. HARRIS

Well, perhaps your father's
favorite poem.

ELLIE

I don't know that he had one.

MR. HARRIS

How about your family's coat of
arms?

RENO

His what?

ELLIE

Just a simple urn, Mr. Harris, no
engraving, please.

MR. HARRIS

As you wish.

37

INT. FUNERAL HOME - LATER

37

Mr. Harris is showing Ellie and Reno the room for the wake.
There are folded wooden chairs along the wall.

MR. HARRIS

The casket is usually put on the
podium by the back wall, but with a
cremation we usually just put a
framed picture on a table. Or
several pictures.

(MORE)

MR. HARRIS (CONT'D)
You see the speakers? We have
several tapes of soothing music or
you are free to bring your own.
I'll give you the number of the
florist we use and you can go over
the flowers. They do a traditional
arrangement, but can feature a
favorite flower of your loved one.

38 INT. CAR - LATER

38

Ellie and Reno are driving down the center of town.

RENO
You okay?

ELLIE
I think so.

RENO
What's next?

ELLIE
I think I need boxes.

39 INT. UPS STORE - LATER

39

Ellie and Reno are getting some different sized boxes and
tape.

Sammy, the guy who was heckling Reno while he was trying to
sing at the bar, comes up to them. Sammy owns the store.

SAMMY
I hope you're not planning on
taking all those boxes.

ELLIE
I was going to pay for them.

SAMMY
Well, you can't take all my big
boxes. What if I have someone who
comes in and wants to ship
something in a large box?

RENO
Hey, Mister, why don't you calm
down?

ELLIE
Are these boxes for sale?

SAMMY

Yes, but-

ELLIE

There's no, 'Yes, but', they are either for sale or not.

SAMMY

(Pointing at Reno)

I don't want this kind of person in my store.

ELLIE

His name is Reno and he can be in here if he wants to.

RENO

Let's just go.

Sammy points down in alarm at Reno's muddy boots.

SAMMY

God, what is that?

ELLIE

They're called boots.

SAMMY

He's tracking mud all along my carpet.

ELLIE

I don't see anything. What are you talking about?

SAMMY

I can't stand dirt and filth. I spend my whole life battling it.

ELLIE

Okay, Crazy, let's try and stay on topic.

RENO

Let's just go.

ELLIE

No! My father is dead and I have to pack up his things. Okay?

SAMMY

Yeah, we all know who your father was.

(MORE)

SAMMY (CONT'D)

I'm just glad that he didn't run down some innocent kid while he was drunk.

ELLIE

You know what? I don't want any of your fucking boxes.

Reno starts to pull her out of the store.

SAMMY

You're both going to have to leave.

ELLIE

What do you think about that? You can stay here in your sad little world and be king of the boxes! And you can just do that until the day you die! And my shoes are dirty too!

Ellie starts to walk around wiping her shoes all over the carpet.

SAMMY

Stop that!

Reno pulls her outside.

40

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

40

Reno lets go of Ellie once they get out on the street outside the UPS store.

Ellie gives Sammy the finger and she and Reno start walking down the street.

ELLIE

That guy. That nut. We ought to burn his store down.

RENO

Well, that seems little extreme.

ELLIE

That little jerk. He doesn't like you or my dad.

RENO

He probably doesn't like you too much either. Come on, there's a store uptown where we can get some boxes.

41

INT. BEDROOM AT AMANDA'S HOUSE - LATER

41

Ellie is going through her father's closet and putting his clothes into boxes.

Tommy is in his own world, jumping up and down on the bed like it was a trampoline.

Amanda enters.

AMANDA

Tommy stop that jumping.

Tommy ignores her.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

(To Ellie)

Where are you going to take all these things?

ELLIE

Whatever Reno doesn't want, I'm going to take over to the Goodwill.

AMANDA

Where is your friend?

Ellie gestures towards the bathroom.

ELLIE

He's trying on something.

AMANDA

Oh, I just don't think that I could wear a dead man's clothes.

ELLIE

Why not?

AMANDA

Well, they're dead. It doesn't feel right.

Reno comes out of the bathroom, wearing a dark green suit. It looks good, but is too big for him.

RENO

Check this out.

Reno spins around so they can see the full suit.

RENO (CONT'D)

These are some sharp threads, man. Are you sure I can have this?

ELLIE

Take whatever you want.

AMANDA

It doesn't really seem to fit you
too good.

RENO

I can take care of that.

42

INT. GARAGE - LATER

42

Reno is back in his old clothes and sitting on the hood of the station wagon with Tommy. Reno has one of the almost finished guitars from the workshop and is playing a song for Tommy.

Ellie is at her father's desk, going through his papers.

RENO

Did you ever play an instrument?

ELLIE

My dad made me a violin when I was a kid. I was too young to play it, but I loved it. I'd carry it around wherever I went. My dad sold it when we were short of money.

Ellie opens a drawer on the bottom and pulls out a stack of papers. As she goes through them, she is surprised to see that her father saved all the home made Father's Day and Birthday cards that she and Cole made for him. There are even a few old report cards she had gotten.

RENO

What's all that stuff you're going through?

ELLIE

I can't believe all the junk that my dad saved. He kept our report cards and...

Ellie looks through some letters that she wrote him. She takes one out of the envelope and reads it.

RENO

And what?

Ellie finishes the letter and puts it back.

ELLIE

And letters I wrote him when I was in college. I was not the nicest person then.

RENO

It's all right.

ELLIE

I don't know.

Amanda comes out to the garage with a large drink in her hand.

AMANDA

Tommy, go on and get ready for your soccer game.

(To Ellie)

His dad is going, but he can't get out of work in time, so I'm going to run him over there.

Tommy gets off the hood of the car and runs into the house.

Ellie sees Amanda stumble slightly as she walks toward the door. Reno sees this too. She makes a drinking motion to Ellie, indicating that she thinks Amanda is drunk.

ELLIE

Hey, Amanda.

Amanda stops at the door and turns back to her.

AMANDA

Yeah, hon?

ELLIE

Why don't I take Tommy to his soccer game.

AMANDA

You'd want to do that?

ELLIE

Yeah. It'll be fun.

AMANDA

I guess I could use the time to make some calls. We're going to have a full house at this wake.

Amanda turns and leaves the room.

43

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - LATER

43

Tommy is running around the field during his soccer game.

Ellie and Reno are on the sidelines watching him.

To the left of them are all the 'soccer moms' in the stands rooting their kids on.

RENO

Thanks for the new duds.

ELLIE

You're welcome.

RENO

I think I'm going to wear that green suit tonight when I sing.

ELLIE

Are you going to sing at that same bar?

RENO

That's my place. My uncle is one of the owners, so they let me get up there when I want.

ELLIE

But they are just going to throw bottles at you again.

RENO

We'll see.

ELLIE

No, we need to find you a new crowd.

Ellie looks over at the soccer moms in the stands.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Go get your guitar from the car.

RENO

Why?

44

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

44

During a break in the soccer game, Ellie drags Reno, and his guitar, over to the stands with the soccer moms, including a WOMAN, 32, sitting in the front row.

ELLIE

Excuse me, ladies. My name is Ellie and, since we have a break in the action, I'd love to tell you that my friend Reno is playing tonight at Tony's Bar and that we'd all love for you to come by and hear him play tonight.

Tommy is watching curiously, not sure if he is proud or embarrassed.

WOMAN

That's all we need is another redneck with a guitar.

ELLIE

Well, this young man has just signed a record deal and is going off to Nashville next month to record his first album. I'll tell you what: Let him play a quick one for you and if you like it, then you might want to come on down and hear some more.

Ellie pushes Reno front and center. Reno sings a short love song. When he is done, the soccer moms are a little stunned, hearing this voice come out of this person.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

How was that ladies?

WOMAN

I'm not sure what I'm seeing.

ELLIE

Well, we all start life one way, but that doesn't need we have to finish up the way we started. I hope we'll see some of you ladies tonight at Tony's.

Ellie sees Jack, still in his suit from work, getting out of his car and making his way towards them.

JACK

(Yelling to Tommy)

Let's go, Tommy. Remember what we've been practicing.

Tommy gives Jack a wave and goes back to the game.

Ellie walks to meet him.

ELLIE

Hi, Jack.

JACK

Hi. How's Tommy doing?

ELLIE

He's running around and kicking the ball this way and that.

JACK

Is there any score?

ELLIE

It's hard to say.

JACK

You don't know anything about soccer, do you?

ELLIE

Not so much.

JACK

Where's my mom?

ELLIE

I thought she's had a few too many drinks.

JACK

And you brought him?

ELLIE

Yeah, it was no problem.

JACK

Thank you.

Reno joins them.

RENO

Hey.

ELLIE

Jack, this is my friend Reno.

JACK

How are you?

RENO

I'm good. I've been watching that coach there yelling at his kid for the last five minutes.

ELLIE

How can you tell that's his kid?

RENO

They look exactly alike.

(Points to the stands)

I've been matching up the parents
in the stands with the kids on the
field. It's so easy to pick up who
is who's kid.

Tommy waves at them from the field. Reno and Ellie wave back,
but they also notice that Tommy doesn't look anything like
Jack. Jack knows this is what they are thinking.

RENO (CONT'D)

Tommy must look more like his
mother.

JACK

Not really.

Jack finally waves back to Tommy.

45

INT. DINER - LATER

45

Ellie is sitting with Bruce at a small, neighborhood diner.

Ellie is showing Bruce her book of drawings. She has it open
to an armchair she designed.

BRUCE

(Pointing at a drawing)

So what does this do?

ELLIE

It's for seniors who have trouble
rising from their chairs. What you
would do is hit a button and the
armrests would rise and move
forward. It would be like people on
either side of you helping you out
of the chair.

BRUCE

Hey, I'd buy one of those. Heck,
I'd buy two of them. Where can I
order them?

ELLIE

It's just an idea I'm working on. I
don't have any way to get these
things made.

BRUCE

You sure won't if you don't show them to anyone. Do you have more of these drawings?

Judy comes from outside, waving a brown envelope.

JUDY

Here it is. I knew I brought it, I just left it in the car.

Ellie closes the notebook and puts it away.

Judy sits at the table and opens the envelope. She takes out a stack of pictures and hands them to Ellie.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Here's some that I found.

Judy starts to silently cry. Bruce hands her a tissue.

Ellie looks through some black and white pictures of her father from childhood until he was a young man.

SYLVIA, 72, is passing the table. Judy dries her eyes.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Sylvia! This is my granddaughter, Ellie.

SYLVIA

Oh, how nice!

JUDY

Doesn't she look just like my Mark?

SYLVIA

Let me see.

Sylvia digs through her purse.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

I have my glasses here somewhere.

Sylvia puts her purse on their table and continues to dig through.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

Gotcha!

Sylvia takes her glasses out of her purse and puts them on. She stares at Ellie.

JUDY

You see?

SYLVIA

I don't see it.

Sylvia takes her glasses off. She puts them back in her purse and walks away.

JUDY

Oh, what does she know.

Judy goes through the pictures. She hands Ellie a picture of her father as a five year old, sitting on a horse.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Your father always loved to ride.

ELLIE

Did he?

JUDY

He wasn't any kind of cowboy. He couldn't rope a steer to save his life, but he loved to take a fast horse out and ride him all day.

Ellie flips through several other pictures. She stops when she sees her father in a suit at a dance with a pretty young woman.

JUDY (CONT'D)

That was some dance or other. Your father loved to cut a rug.

BRUCE

He was a pretty good dancer. There's an old gal he took to the prom and she still talks about how your daddy was the best dance partner she ever had.

NICOLE, 31, the waitress stops by their table.

NICOLE

Are you ready, Judy?

JUDY

Bruce will have the cheeseburger deluxe, well done, with a chocolate shake. I'll have a hamburger, medium, with grilled onions, on the side and a Dr. Pepper, if you please.

Nicole just stands there.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Don't you want to write any of that down, Nicole?

NICOLE

You've ordered the same thing since before I was born. I think I can remember it.

(To Ellie)

How about you, sweetie?

ELLIE

Just a coffee would be fine.

Nicole leaves to place their order.

JUDY

I'll be right back. You two stay put.

Judy gets up and goes to the bathroom.

Bruce rearranges the silverware at all three settings. He takes the napkins and refolds them and puts one on each plate. This seems like a private ritual that he does wherever they eat, both at home and away. Ellie watches as he does this.

Ellie continues to look through the pictures and comes to a large, and very handsome, picture of her father in a sailor's outfit.

BRUCE

This was the last picture where he was still our boy. It was while he was in the Navy that all the drinking started up.

Judy comes back from the bathroom and sits down.

She sees the picture they are looking at and starts to cry again. Bruce hands her another tissue.

JUDY

You must think I'm the most overly dramatic old woman you've ever met. Normally you can't squeeze a tear out of me. Tell her, Bruce.

BRUCE

She's a tough old bird, but we're having a tough week. I expect it's not too fun for you either.

46 INT. DRUG STORE - LATER

46

Ellie is walking through the local drug store.

As she turns the aisle, she sees Jack. She sees him take a small box of something off a shelf. He looks at it for a moment, then puts it back on the shelf. Ellie starts to walk towards him, but she sees Jack is angry and rips that box back off the shelf and walks quickly over to the register. Ellie decides to leave him alone.

She walks through more aisles.

Ellie stops an EMPLOYEE, 22.

ELLIE

Excuse me, but I'm looking for a frame.

She holds up the picture of her father from the Navy.

47 INT. FUNERAL HOME - LATER

47

Ellie is at the funeral home. Mr. Harris puts the framed picture of Ellie's father on a table, next to a vase of orchids.

MR. HARRIS

It'll be just this photo?

ELLIE

That's it.

48 INT. GARAGE - DUSK

48

Ellie is in the garage. She has the passenger side door of the station wagon open and music is playing from its one good speaker.

Ellie is looking through the various jars on the wall for a brush that is in decent shape. She finds one.

She takes the almost finished guitar and takes the strings off.

She gets her brush and finds an unopened can of varnish and she opens it.

She puts the guitar on a stand and starts to paint the guitar.

49

INT. BATHROOM, AMANDA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

49

Jack is in the bathroom with Tommy. Tommy is in his pajamas.

TOMMY

Did you see that goal I made at the end?

JACK

I did. That was a good one.

TOMMY

The goalie fell down, but it was still a goal.

JACK

That's right. It sure was.

Tommy puts some toothpaste on his toothbrush, but Jack stops him before he puts it in his mouth.

JACK (CONT'D)

Hang on, Tommy.

Jack takes out a cotton swab.

JACK (CONT'D)

Open up and let me do this before you brush. It's not going to hurt.

TOMMY

What's it for?

JACK

Just something I have to do for your school.

Tommy opens his mouth wide and Jack runs the swab around his inside cheek.

50

INT. TOMMY'S BEDROOM - LATER

50

Tommy is in bed and almost asleep. Jack is rubbing his back, which helps Tommy to sleep.

TOMMY

Is Ellie going to live here now?

JACK

No, she's just here because her dad passed away.

TOMMY

Would you let her live here if she wanted.

JACK

She has a life back where she lives.

Tommy falls asleep.

51

INT. KITCHEN, AMANDA'S HOUSE - LATER

51

Ellie and Jack are sitting at the kitchen table.

They can faintly hear the television in the next room. Amanda has fallen asleep on the couch.

ELLIE

The wake's tomorrow. Are you going?

JACK

Yes, Tommy wants to go.

ELLIE

You didn't like my father very much, did you?

JACK

He kept my mom busy, so that was something.

ELLIE

It's funny how you say he kept her busy, instead of saying that he made her happy.

JACK

Look, it's tough living with drunks. I put up with her because she's my mom, but it was tough putting up with your old man. He was funny one day, snarling like a dog the next.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

He would throw me some money when he sold one of those guitars, but it was hard to get him to focus enough to finish anything.

ELLIE

I know he was tough to live with. I grew up with him.

JACK

Yeah, but it's not like you've been around much lately.

ELLIE

I thought... Well, I don't know what I thought. Somehow I never thought he'd die and we'd have time to re-connect.

Jack smiles.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

What's so funny?

JACK

I've been thinking a lot about time over the last few months. You have a boyfriend?

ELLIE

Yes- Well... no. It's complicated.

JACK

That's all right, I don't really want to hear about him, whoever he is.

ELLIE

Is Tommy's mom out of the picture?

JACK

She's alive, if that's what you want to call it... She's a junkie. I never even suspected it. I know about alcohol, obviously, but I didn't know anything about drugs.

ELLIE

You said you've been thinking about time.

JACK

It seems like I blinked my eyes and I was married.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

I blinked again and I was divorced with a young boy. Another blink and that boy is already five years old. I wonder how you make everything slow down a little bit. I don't want to blink and be in the grave.

52

INT. TONY'S BAR - NIGHT

52

Ellie is having a beer at the bar of Tony's Bar. SANDY, 28, and BARBARA, 30, two of the 'soccer moms' from earlier, are sitting at a table together. A few of the other soccer moms are there as well, some together, some with their husbands or boyfriends.

Reno comes on stage. Some of the soccer moms clap politely. Reno is wearing the dark green suit that he got from Ellie's dad. He has safety pins here and there to make the suit a better fit.

Reno goes and sits on the stool on stage. He tunes his guitar. When he's happy with how it sounds, he steps up to the microphone and starts to sing and play guitar.

Some of the regulars, older guys, start to boo and yell insults.

Sammy, the UPS Store employee, stands up.

SAMMY

I thought we were going to have some Toby Keith, but it looks like we got Dolly Parton instead.

He sits down, with the older guys laughing at what he said.

Reno looks a little worried, but then Sandy stands up from her table and looks at the crowd.

SANDY

Hey, why don't you all settle down and let this fella sing?

Barbara also stands.

BARBARA

Yeah, go finish your drinks in the parking lot if you don't like good music.

Sandy and Barbara glare at the regulars one last time and then sit down. The soccer moms give them a round of applause.

Reno sees that he's going to get to continue and sings a little stronger, with more confidence. We hear that the song is much more emotional than the one we heard him sing last night.

53 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

53

Ellie and Reno are in the hospital room with Reno's mother, who is still in a coma. They both have a beer. Reno is softly strumming his guitar.

ELLIE

That was a pretty great show tonight.

RENO

It was.

ELLIE

You might have a few groupies now. Are you ready for that?

RENO

I guess.

ELLIE

You need to record some of those songs. That way you can sell CDs after the show. And you need to make up some T-shirts.

Reno doesn't answer. He just keeps softly strumming his guitar.

54 EXT. AMANDA'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - MORNING

54

Ellie is asleep on the couch at Amanda's house the next morning.

Tommy has a length of yarn and is holding it above Ellie's face, tickling her nose.

Ellie, still asleep, rubs her nose and Tommy tries to keep from laughing.

Jack has come downstairs, getting ready to go to work and watches the two of them.

Tommy tickles her nose with the string again. This time it wakes Ellie up. Tommy starts to laugh.

ELLIE

You want something to laugh about?
I'll give you something.

Ellie grabs Tommy and pulls him on to the couch with her. She tickles him and he really starts to laugh.

Ellie sees Jack at the door and she smiles at him. Jack smiles back.

JACK

You better watch out or he might
wet himself.

ELLIE

I'm willing to take that chance.

Jack, still smiling, leaves.

55

INT. AMANDA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - LATER

55

Ellie and Amanda are having their morning coffee.

AMANDA

Well, I guess today is the day.

ELLIE

Yes.

AMANDA

I think I want to wear my hair up.

ELLIE

Okay.

AMANDA

I haven't worn my hair up in about
ten years, but this is a wake and I
think it might be the right thing
to do.

ELLIE

I think that's okay.

AMANDA

Do you think you could help me?

56

INT. AMANDA'S BEDROOM - LATER

56

Ellie is brushing out Amanda's hair.

AMANDA

I met your daddy in a bar here in town. I guess that's not such a big shock.

ELLIE

No, not really.

AMANDA

He bought me a drink and told me that he had just moved back here, to his home town, to die. And that's exactly what he did. Of course, it took him a little over five years to finally do it, but he was true to his word.

Ellie starts to put Amanda's hair up with the help of bobby pins.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

You know, you seem like a nice enough girl.

ELLIE

Nice enough for what?

AMANDA

I just don't know that I can ever really forgive you or your brother for what you've done to your father.

ELLIE

What we've done?

AMANDA

You've basically left his well being to complete strangers. It just so happens that I cared for him and found him this place to live, but it seems like you two didn't really care if he was living in the woods, dumpster diving for his meals.

ELLIE

Okay, you have no idea what you're talking about.

AMANDA

I know Mark had his problems, but-

ELLIE

His problems? Do you know how many different schools I had to go to because my father always got fired for excessive drinking and we had to move to another state where no one knew about him or his problem?

AMANDA

I'm sure that was hard, but-

ELLIE

Do you know what it's like to walk home from school with the few friends I was able to make and see all our belongings, all my toys and clothes, being sold in a yard sale, so we'd have enough gas money to out of town?

AMANDA

Ellie-

ELLIE

Do you- Oh, just forget it!

Ellie walks toward the door.

AMANDA

What about my hair? It's only halfway done.

ELLIE

Then just wear a hat!

AMANDA

You're just so selfish! You and your father both! Don't think I haven't noticed.

ELLIE

Like my father, maybe you should have another drink and then you can forget about everything.

AMANDA

You're so stupid!

ELLIE

I'm stupid?

AMANDA

Don't you know anything: We drink
all the time because we can't
forget. I'd have thought that much
was obvious.

Ellie leaves.

57 INT. CAR - LATER

57

Ellie drives around town in the station wagon. She sees a
small park and she parks.

58 EXT. PARK - MOMENTS LATER

58

Ellie is sitting on a swing at the park. She watches as
mothers sit on benches as their children play together.

Ellie takes out her cell phone and sends a text to Cole:
'Everything is fine. Be home before you know it.'

Ellie sees Jack and Tommy enter the park. She sees Jack take
out a ball and sees him play catch with Tommy. Tommy is not
great at catching the ball, but Jack has patience and teaches
him.

Ellie, still watching Jack and Tommy, makes a call on her
cell phone. She's calling James in Los Angeles.

JAMES (O.S.)

Hey, Ellie, what's up?

ELLIE

Hi, James.

JAMES (O.S.)

I came by your place last night.
Did you hear me knocking?

ELLIE

I'm still in Texas.

JAMES (O.S.)

Oh, yeah, that's right.

ELLIE

I came here because of my father.

JAMES (O.S.)

Yeah.

ELLIE

This is the moment when a boyfriend would typically ask a girlfriend if her father was doing okay or not.

JAMES (O.S.)

I don't like to deal with sick people. You know that.

ELLIE

James, would you be too upset if we broke up?

JAMES (O.S.)

Of course I would. I love you. You know that.

ELLIE

I don't think you're even the kind of person who should date anyone. You're more like a fun one night stand, but somehow I've let it last for close to a year.

JAMES (O.S.)

You think I'm fun?

ELLIE

James, I think we should not date anymore.

JAMES (O.S.)

Starting when?

ELLIE

As soon as I hang up the phone.

JAMES (O.S.)

Well, in that case, I won't let you hang-

Ellie hangs up her cell phone and turns it off.

She gets up from her swing and walks over to Jack and Tommy.

Tommy sees her first.

TOMMY

Ellie!

He runs over and gives her a hug.

ELLIE

Hey there. What are you up to?

TOMMY

I had some coloring I had to do,
but Daddy wanted to play catch.

ELLIE

That was nice of you.

Tommy runs over to the swings and sits in one.

TOMMY

Can you give me a push, Daddy?

Ellie and Jack walk over to Tommy. Jack pushes him on the swing.

ELLIE

(To Jack)

You had to get out and play catch?

JACK

Yeah, something like that. What are
you doing here?

ELLIE

Don't take it the wrong way, but
I'm avoiding your mother.

JACK

That's pretty much why we're here
too.

ELLIE

When did my dad and your mom first
move in?

JACK

Almost four years ago. They got
kicked out of their apartment, but
my mom did help a great deal with
Tommy.

ELLIE

Wow, you might actually be a saint.

JACK

The stuff I was saying earlier,
that was mostly just talk: Your dad
was a pretty okay guy most of the
time. He was always good to Tommy.

(To Tommy)

Isn't that right, Tiger? You always
loved Grandpa Mark, didn't you?

TOMMY
I love Grandpa Mark.

Jack pushes Tommy higher on the swing. He turns and sees that Ellie is looking away.

JACK
Are you okay?

ELLIE
Yes. I love that my father was sweet to Tommy. Well, look at him: Who wouldn't be good to him. It's just that my father actually had two grandkids that he never saw.

JACK
Your brother's kids?

ELLIE
And they are just the cutest girls you'd ever want to meet. Except that I guess he didn't want to meet them.

TOMMY
Grandpa Mark loved his Jesus Juice.

JACK
He means his wine.

ELLIE
Well, I'm glad he loved something.

59 INT. CAR - LATER

59

Ellie is driving through town. She has the windows open and the music playing out of the one speaker that works.

She sees Reno walking towards the hospital.

Ellie drives up and parks. She gets out of the car and meets Reno.

ELLIE
Hey, Reno, what's up.

RENO
I got a call from the hospital.

ELLIE
Is your mom okay?

RENO
Well, I guess yes and no.

60 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

60

Ellie and Reno are standing in Reno's mother's hospital room. The bed is empty. On top of the sheets are the hospital gown that her mother was wearing the last time they visited.

RENO
It's not like she's some little
bitty thing that you could really
misplace too easily.

Susan, the head nurse, comes into the room.

SUSAN
Hey there, Reno, thanks for coming
in.

RENO
Should I have brought a picture of
my mom so we can pass it around and
start up some search parties?

SUSAN
We didn't misplace her.

Susan opens the closet door. There are just empty hangers
inside.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
She must have woke up, got dressed
and decided to check herself out.

61 INT. CAR - LATER

61

Ellie and Reno are parked in front of the Dairy Queen. Inside they see Reno's mom, Wendy, eating a big breakfast by herself. Wendy doesn't see them outside watching her.

ELLIE
Shall we go in?

RENO
In a minute.

They sit there quietly for a moment.

RENO (CONT'D)
Do you think I look like her?

ELLIE
Not so much.

RENO
(Pointing at Wendy)
You know she's eating herself to death.

ELLIE
She can't help it.

RENO
You ever had a nightmare? One that was so bad you had to get out of the bed, just to try and walk away from it?

ELLIE
Yes, I have.

RENO
You might think that my nightmare would be looking in the mirror and seeing a Barbie doll instead of me, but it's not. My nightmare is to look in the mirror and see my head on top of my mom's body. That's a pretty awful thing to say, ain't it?

ELLIE
No.

RENO
Well, I reckon there's no use in crying our eyes out like we was sitting around and watching Oprah.

ELLIE
I'd actually like to meet your mom, if you don't mind.

62 INT. DAIRY QUEEN - MOMENTS LATER

62

Wendy is digging into her pancakes, when Ellie and Reno walk up to her table.

RENO
Hey, Mom.

WENDY
Hey there.

RENO

I think they're looking for you
back at the hospital.

WENDY

Yeah, I woke up there this morning.
What was that all about?

RENO

I came home a few nights ago and
found you passed out at the foot of
the stairs. Turns out you were
actually in a diabetic coma. This
here is my new friend Ellie.

ELLIE

Hi, it's nice to meet you. Are you
feeling better?

WENDY

I never felt bad. I can tell you
that I sure was hungry when I woke
up this morning.

RENO

We ought to run you by the
hospital.

WENDY

Oh, I'm not going there. Hospitals
depress me too much.

RENO

I'm sure they got a list of foods
that they want you to stay away
from and some medications for you
to take.

WENDY

Pop on by there tomorrow and fetch
that stuff for me, would you
Margaret?

RENO

Mom!

WENDY

I mean, Reno. Is this girl a friend
or a friend friend?

RENO

She's come to town because her
father died.

ELLIE

Mark Edwards. Did you know him?

WENDY

I knew him just to wave at. I know his mom pretty well.

RENO

You feel like doing some sewing?

WENDY

Oh, sure. Let's just grab a check.

63

INT. RENO'S HOUSE - LATER

63

Ellie is at Reno's house that she shares with Wendy. Reno is wearing a white dress shirt and boxer shorts. Wendy is at her sewing machine doing alterations to the green suit that was Ellie's father's suit.

RENO

Make them pants nice and tight,
Mom. You know how I like 'em.

WENDY

I reckon I ought to by now.

ELLIE

I've got to go. Do you need a ride
to the wake?

RENO

No, I'll find it all right.

64

INT. CAR - LATER

64

Ellie is driving Bruce and Judy. Bruce is wearing a black suit and tie and Judy has on a black dress, with a black hat. Ellie is wearing jeans and a T-shirt.

BRUCE

(To Judy)

Did you eat?

JUDY

I had a little something. I'd hate
to pass out at the wake.

BRUCE

No, you wouldn't want that.

JUDY
How are you, Ellie?

ELLIE
I'm okay.

JUDY
It's so nice of you to drive us.

ELLIE
It's my pleasure.

BRUCE
She gets being so nice from my side
of the family.

JUDY
Oh, don't start that Bruce.
(To Ellie)
I could tell you a few stories
about that family of his.

65 EXT. FUNERAL HOME - LATER

65

Ellie has parked the station wagon in the parking lot of the funeral home. She and Bruce are helping Judy out of the car.

Bruce offers Judy a tissue.

BRUCE
Just in case you need one later.

JUDY
I'll take it, but I might be all
cried out for the rest of my life
long days.

Judy looks around the parking lot and sees that there aren't that many cars there. She takes Bruce's arm and looks at the watch on his wrist.

JUDY (CONT'D)
Are we early?

66 INT. FUNERAL HOME - LATER

66

The wake for Ellie's father has begun.

Ellie is sitting next to Judy and Bruce. Reno, wearing the dark green suit that Wendy altered, is sitting on a stool, quietly strumming his guitar.

Jack is sitting in the back with Tommy and Amanda, who had to put her hair up herself and didn't do the best job.

Instead of the funeral home being packed, there are just four other people there, including ROGER, 58, who is sitting by himself and openly drinking from a small flask that he keeps in the pocket of his suit jacket.

Amanda gets up and walks up to the table that has the picture of Ellie's father from the Navy.

AMANDA

Hello, everyone, and thanks for coming. I'd like to say a few words about Mark Edwards, who may not have been my legal husband here in Texas, but who will be, I know, waiting for me at the altar of heaven. I think-

ROGER

Where's the body?

AMANDA

Excuse me.

ROGER

I said where is the body?

AMANDA

I heard what you said, I was saying, 'Excuse me, but I'm still talking.'

ROGER

This is a wake, isn't it? I hope you're not planning to roll his casket out like it was a birthday cake.

AMANDA

Roger, if you'll just let me-

Ellie has gotten up and walked over to where Roger is sitting.

ELLIE

Maybe you'd like to step outside and get some fresh air.

ROGER

Yeah, something stinks in here all right, but I ain't fixin' to move.

ELLIE

Maybe-

ROGER

Who are you?

ELLIE

I'm Ellie. Mark Edwards was my father.

ROGER

Oh, right, now the ungrateful kids show up. Looking for a little money, are you?

ELLIE

Not at all.

ROGER

Where in the hell is the body?

BRUCE

Roger, you need to button it and button it fast.

JUDY

Drunk as a skunk and the sun isn't even down yet.

TOMMY

'Drunk as a skunk! Drunk as a skunk!'

AMANDA

Ya know, I spent a lot of time thinking about what I was going to say up here and you all need to sit on down and get ready to cry.

ROGER

This whole clown show makes me want to cry all right.

(To Ellie)

I'm only going to ask you one more time: Where is my friend's body?

ELLIE

Apparently it was my father's wish to be cremated and we're in the process of honoring that.

ROGER

Cremated?

ELLIE
That's right.

ROGER
Your Daddy never wanted to be
burned to a crisp!

ELLIE
His soul is no longer in that body
now that he's dead. It doesn't
really matter what we do with the
body he's left behind.

ROGER
It don't matter? God Almighty, she
says it don't matter.

Jack stands up from the back of the room. Ellie and Roger see
this.

ROGER (CONT'D)
So you're going to sic your goon
squad on me. Is that right?

ELLIE
It's okay, Jack.

Jack reluctantly sits back down.

ELLIE (CONT'D)
No one's going to hurt you.

ROGER
Can you imagine getting beat up at
the wake of your best friend?

AMANDA
Christ, he was hardly your best
friend.

ROGER
I knew him for about fifty years.
That's more than any of y'all can
say, except his parents.
(To Ellie)
And you've done this all wrong.

ELLIE
Okay, I know you're upset, but I'm
really going to have to ask you to
leave.

ROGER

You've burnt up his body, you got
that picture of him from the Navy.
He hated that damn Navy!

(About Reno)

And you got some freaky he/she/it
playing music.

Ellie takes Roger by the arm.

ELLIE

Okay! Out! Right now!

Roger pulls his arm away from her. She tries to push Roger
out. Roger turns and pushes Ellie.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Hey!

Ellie goes to push Roger, but he trips and falls and she
falls on top of him. They are wrestling around.

Reno puts his guitar down and jumps on both of them.

Jack gets up and rushes over to them, trying to break them
all up.

Roger tries to stand and Reno gets thrown to the side,
hitting his head on one of the folding chairs. He has a cut
above his left eye that is bleeding.

Roger has gotten up and he pushes Jack to the ground.

Roger sees the picture of Mark in the Navy and he walks over
to it.

Ellie sees this. She gets up from the ground and jumps on
Roger's back. She has her hand over Roger's mouth. Roger
bites her hand and Ellie screams.

Ellie falls over his back, holding her hand.

Roger picks up the picture of Mark in the Navy. As he is
trying to break the frame by twisting it, Amanda hits him in
the back of the head with one of the folding chairs.

Roger goes down in a clump on the floor. He's knocked out.

Amanda picks up Mark's picture from the ground and puts it
back on the table.

Amanda straightens out her dress and catches her breath.

AMANDA

Like I was saying: Hello everyone
and thanks for coming.

67 INT. HOSPITAL - DUSK

67

Ellie is sitting in the waiting room with Jack. She has a bandage on her hand where Roger bit her.

The head nurse Susan is walking by, but stops when she sees Ellie.

SUSAN

Ellie, you spend more time in this
hospital than I do.

ELLIE

This is my last time, I promise.

SUSAN

We'll see.

Susan continues down the hall.

JACK

How can you be sure this is your
last time here?

ELLIE

Well, basically, I'm going to throw
my clothes in a bag and catch the
next flight out of here tomorrow.
Unless I get in an accident along
the way, the odds of me coming back
here are pretty slim.

Roger comes out of one of the rooms. He has a bandage on his head from where he got hit with the chair. He sees Ellie and Jack.

JACK

Just keep on walking, Roger. You've
done enough damage for one day.

ROGER

That's all right. We'll see each
other again.

Roger walks up to Ellie.

ELLIE

What?

ROGER
I'm sorry I bit you.

ELLIE
Yeah, me too.

ROGER
And I'm sorry that your Daddy
passed on. He was a good person.

ELLIE
Thank you.

ROGER
Well, okay.

Roger leaves.

Reno comes out of a room. He's holding some gauze above his
left eye.

ELLIE
Are you okay?

RENO
I'm fine. You all can leave, I
gotta wait for some stitches.

ELLIE
We can wait.

RENO
No, go on. I need to head on home
afterward and check on my mom.

ELLIE
Okay. Is that cut going to leave a
scar?

RENO
You're not very interesting until
you got a bunch of scars that you
can tell a bunch of lies about.

68

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - NIGHT

68

Ellie and Jack are sitting in the stands of a small, and very
run down, high school baseball field. It's night and no one
else is around.

JACK
This used to be my field.

ELLIE

You owned a high school baseball field?

JACK

No, I used to go to this high school and I was one of the best players we ever had. I had scholarships to play baseball with three different colleges.

ELLIE

What position did you play?

JACK

I was the pitcher, but I also played third base. I had an arm like a cannon.

ELLIE

What college did you go to?

JACK

I didn't. I never left.

ELLIE

How come?

JACK

I hurt my arm pretty bad and couldn't pitch anymore. And then I got Tommy's mom pregnant a few years later... Or at least I thought I got her pregnant.

ELLIE

What do you mean?

JACK

I bought a DNA kit at the drug store the other day.

ELLIE

I saw you there.

JACK

You did?

ELLIE

You seemed pretty conflicted about something.

JACK

You've seen him: He looks nothing like me. I told you that Tommy's mom was an addict. Well, she used to do all kinds of things behind my back to get drugs. Sometimes even-

ELLIE

Does it really matter, Jack?

JACK

What do you mean?

ELLIE

Tommy's such a great kid and I see your eyes light up anytime he walks into a room. Would it really matter if he wasn't your biological son?

JACK

I don't know.

ELLIE

Of course you do. You're one hundred percent the father he needs. You're much more of a father than mine ever was.

Jack looks out at the baseball field, lost in thought.

Ellie reaches out and lightly rubs his back, very much the same way that Jack was rubbing Tommy's back as he was falling asleep the other night.

69

INT. CAR - LATER

69

Ellie and Jack pull up to Amanda's house. The radio is playing.

Jack is getting ready to turn the engine off, but Ellie stops him.

ELLIE

Can you leave it on for a minute?

JACK

Sure.

ELLIE

My dad used to love this song.

JACK
Tell me something about him.

ELLIE
What?

JACK
First good thing that pops into
your head.

ELLIE
He loved music.

JACK
That's something.

ELLIE
I mean he really loved it. And he
wasn't a snob either. He'd listen
to Jerry Lee Lewis and love it just
as much as something classical.

JACK
Did he ever play any of those
guitars?

ELLIE
When he was younger. He was in all
kinds of bands. He met my mom when
she was singing in a band in
Nashville.

JACK
Is that right? You're a show
business kid?

ELLIE
No, they quit all that by the time
my brother and me came along,
although my mom would always be
singing around the house.

JACK
Where is your mom now?

ELLIE
She passed away when I was getting
out of college.

JACK
I'm sorry. You probably don't want
to think about all this stuff right
now.

ELLIE
My brother thinks that we lost my
father years ago.

JACK
Is that how you feel?

ELLIE
I don't know.

70 INT. AMANDA'S HOUSE - MORNING

70

Ellie is folding the sheets that were on the couch. Tommy is helping her.

TOMMY
I have to make my bed in the
morning, but I don't always do it.

ELLIE
Why not?

TOMMY
I'm tired and I forget.
(Whispers)
I don't really forget, but
sometimes I just don't wanna do it.

ELLIE
I hear you.

Ellie puts the folded sheets on the table.

She grabs some clothes on the floor and puts them in her bag.

When she turns her back, Tommy takes the clothes she just put
in and takes them out.

ELLIE (CONT'D)
What are you doing, you little
monkey?

Tommy laughs, but he puts the clothes back in her bag.

71 INT. GARAGE - LATER

71

Ellie is sitting at her father's desk in the garage.

As she goes through more drawers, she finds an envelope.

She opens it and takes out an 8x10 black and white picture. The picture is of a beautiful woman standing on stage in front of a microphone, with a three piece band backing her up. The picture is of her mother.

Ellie puts the picture back into the envelope.

She finds her purse and puts the envelope inside.

When she is getting ready to close her purse, she sees the tiny envelope that the head nurse gave her in the hospital that was from her father.

She takes the small envelope out of her purse. She opens the envelope and removes the key inside.

Ellie looks around the garage.

She gets up from her chair and hunts around the room for where this key might fit. It's too big for any of the locks on the desk drawers.

She walks over to his tools. The key is too big for any of the tool chests.

Ellie opens the station wagon and ruts around to see if there is any kind of locked box inside the car.

As she does this, Amanda comes out to the garage.

AMANDA

What are you doing?

Ellie puts the key into her pocket and gets out of the car and closes the door.

ELLIE

Nothing. Just thought I lost something.

AMANDA

What did you lose?

ELLIE

I don't know.

AMANDA

You don't know what you might have lost? Yeah, I guess that's going to take you some time to find that.

ELLIE

Was there something that you wanted?

AMANDA

No. I see that you got your bag packed and waiting by the front door.

ELLIE

Yes, I'm leaving.

AMANDA

You are?

ELLIE

Well, I came to say good-bye to my dad and that's what I did, more or less. I don't see any other reason to stay on.

AMANDA

They called and said that they'd have your daddy's ashes ready tomorrow by noon. Did you want me to send them on to you and your brother?

ELLIE

No, thank you.

AMANDA

What do you want me to do with them?

ELLIE

You can keep them if you want. Or you could scatter them someplace.

AMANDA

Oh, I don't know that I could do that.

ELLIE

You'll think of something.

AMANDA

I also wanted to say that I was sorry for what I said yesterday. I didn't mean it.

ELLIE

It's okay.

AMANDA

No, it's not. You've been a big help to me these last few days and I want you to know that I appreciate it. I don't exactly know how I would have gotten through all this without you.

Ellie gives her a hug.

ELLIE

I was happy to pitch in and do what little I could.

AMANDA

You're going to keep in touch, aren't you?

ELLIE

I will.

AMANDA

That couch is yours to sleep on anytime you pass on through.

ELLIE

Thanks.

72

INT. AIRPORT - LATER

72

Ellie and Reno are sitting at the airport.

Reno is taking the bandage off his left eyebrow.

ELLIE

Should you be doing that?

RENO

Bandages just aren't my style.

He gets the bandage off and moves his head so Ellie can get a better look at the wound.

RENO (CONT'D)

How's it look?

ELLIE

Not great.

RENO

Do you think people will believe me when I tell them I got it from a shark attack?

ELLIE
Maybe if it was from a plastic toy
shark.

RENO
What time is your flight?

ELLIE
It's not until nine. You don't have
to stay if you don't want.

RENO
Since we got all this time, I was
hoping that you might help me with
something.

73 INT. CAR - LATER

73

Ellie is driving Reno around the quiet streets.

ELLIE
Where exactly are we going?

RENO
I think I saw one right up here.

ELLIE
One what?

RENO
(Pointing to a house on
the left.)
Right here. Pull up here.

74 EXT. BACK YARD - MOMENTS LATER

74

Ellie is sitting on Reno's shoulders in the back yard of a
small house. The lights are all out. Ellie is trying to reach
a bird feeder that's on a branch of a tree. The bird feeder
is loaded with bird seed.

ELLIE
Why do you want this thing?

RENO
I had an idea.

ELLIE
Can't we just buy one of these?

RENO
Oh, I already got a bunch.

ELLIE
Is this your thing?

RENO
My thing?

ELLIE
Yeah, you like to collect stolen
bird feeders.

RENO
Why would that be anyone's thing?

ELLIE
Okay, but-

RENO
Hey, you ain't getting any lighter.
Can you reach that thing or not?

Ellie stretches and is just able to reach and remove the bird
feeder.

ELLIE
I got it!

In her joy, Ellie was a little too loud. A neighbor's dog
starts barking. A light goes on upstairs at the house.

Reno dumps Ellie on the ground.

RENO
Run!

Ellie gets up and they both run for the car.

75 EXT. UPS STORE - LATER

75

Ellie and Reno are standing outside the UPS Store where Sammy
works. All the stores on the street are locked up and quiet.

Reno takes out a small leather pouch from his back pocket.

ELLIE
What's that?

RENO
Tools.

ELLIE
What kind of tools?

RENO
Tools that will let us get inside
this UPS Store.

ELLIE
That's breaking and entering where
I come from.

RENO
Yeah that's what we call it here,
too.

Reno works on the door with his tools and has the door open
in less than a minute.

RENO (CONT'D)
And there you go.

76 EXT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

76

Ellie, with Reno standing next to her, opens the back gate of
the station wagon. Inside are about a dozen bird feeders and
two bags of bird seed.

77 INT. UPS STORE - DUSK

77

Ellie and Reno are inside the UPS Store with the lights off.
They have the bird feeders and bird seed.

ELLIE
What now?

Reno takes a knife out of his back pocket. He stabs the bag
of bird seed and cuts the bag wide open. Reno puts the knife
away and then picks up the bag of bird seed and spins in a
circle, scattering seed everywhere.

Reno throws the empty bag in the corner.

He takes out his knife again and cuts open the second bag of
bird seed. Reno hands the bag to Ellie.

Ellie, like Reno, spins in a circle and the seed scatters to
all parts of the store.

ELLIE (CONT'D)
Now what?

RENO
Let's get these bird feeders
hanging from the ceiling.

78

INT. CAR - NIGHT

78

Exhausted, Ellie and Reno are sitting in the front seat of the station wagon, parked across the street from the UPS Store.

They pass a pint bottle of bourbon back and forth.

Ellie looks at her watch.

ELLIE

My plane is leaving in ten minutes.
Do you think I've got time to make it?

RENO

I'm sorry. I must have lost track of time.

ELLIE

It's okay.

RENO

Plus you have to see Sammy's face in the morning when he shows up.

ELLIE

We can't be here.

RENO

Why not?

ELLIE

He'll know we did it.

RENO

Hell, he'll know I was behind it, but let's see that bastard prove it in a court of law. Also, you ain't really ready to leave here.

ELLIE

I'm not?

RENO

No, you just got here.

ELLIE

Actually, as soon as I got off the plane and saw Amanda, I was wondering if it would be rude to turn around and fly right back home.

RENO
Yeah, this place sucks.

ELLIE
You should come out to Los Angeles
with me.

RENO
I'd sooner wear a dress with
buttons and bows than get on an
airplane.

ELLIE
You can stand and sing in front of
a whole bar that wants to kill you,
but you're too afraid to get on an
airplane?

RENO
I'll get on one, as long as it
don't leave the ground.

Ellie takes the bottle and has a big sip. She passes the
bottle back to Reno. Ellie has a big yawn.

79

INT. CAR - MORNING

79

Ellie and Reno are sound asleep in the station wagon the next
morning. The car is still parked across the street from the
UPS Store.

They both wake up with a start when Sammy slams his hands on
the trunk of the hood.

SAMMY
Hey, what are you two doing here?

It takes Ellie and Reno a moment to remember where they are
and what they've done.

ELLIE
What?

SAMMY
I'm getting the cops! That's damn
sure what I'm going to do!

Sammy goes stalking off down the street.

Ellie and Reno look over at the UPS Store.

80 EXT. UPS STORE - MOMENTS LATER

80

Ellie and Reno cautiously walk up to the UPS Store. They find about a hundred birds eating from the bird feeders and from the loose bird seed on the floor. There are all kinds of birds eating, singing, flying around and crapping everywhere.

ELLIE

Wow.

RENO

Hell, yeah, wow!

Reno hugs Ellie, both of them laughing.

They break the embrace when they hear the distant sound of sirens.

81 EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

81

Ellie and Reno come running away of the UPS Store and jump in the car.

Ellie starts the car and they go roaring down the street.

82 INT. CAR - LATER

82

Ellie is sitting in her station wagon as Reno makes his way to the front door to his house.

Reno stops at the door and turns back to Ellie.

RENO

You're all right, Ellie.

ELLIE

I guess.

RENO

Trust me: You're all right. Oh, I remember where I saw that key of yours.

Ellie reaches in her purse and takes out the small envelope that her father had left for her. She takes out the key and holds up so Reno can see it.

ELLIE

This one?

RENO
Yeah, my mom has one just like it.
Her's is for a safety deposit box
at the bank.

Reno turns and goes into his house and shuts the door.

83 EXT. FIRST NATIONAL BANK - LATER 83

Ellie stands outside the bank with the safety deposit key in her hand.

84 INT. BANK - MOMENTS LATER 84

Ellie comes up to BANK MANAGER, 38, who's sitting at his desk, drinking his morning coffee.

ELLIE
Good morning.

BANK MANAGER
Morning.

Ellie shows him the key.

ELLIE
Is this key for your bank?

85 INT. BANK - MOMENTS LATER 85

Ellie and Bank Manager are standing in front of the safety deposit boxes in the bank.

Bank Manager takes out a key and puts in into box number 328.

BANK MANAGER
I need you to put your key in and
we have to turn at the same time to
open the box.

Ellie puts her key in. They both turn their keys and the box opens.

The Bank Manager reaches in and removes the box. He takes it and places it on a small table in the room. He backs away from the box.

BANK MANAGER (CONT'D)
I'll give you some privacy.

Bank Manager leaves.

Ellie stands looking at the box like it might explode.

After a moment, gathering courage, she opens the box. Inside is a violin.

Ellie reaches in and takes the violin out of the box. She runs her hands along the sides. On the back, towards the bottom, she finds her father's initials.

With tears in her eyes, Ellie starts to smile.

86

EXT. BRUCE AND JUDY'S HOUSE - LATER

86

Ellie is knocking on the front door of Bruce and Judy's house. There's no answer and the car is not in the driveway.

Ellie walks to the window and tries to see inside.

The MAILMAN, 35, comes to the porch to drop off the mail.

MAILMAN

They're not home.

ELLIE

I see.

MAILMAN

You the granddaughter?

ELLIE

Yes, I'm Ellie. How do you know about me?

MAILMAN

You're all Judy can talk about these last few days. They're over at the department store. Didn't Judy tell you?

ELLIE

Tell me what?

MAILMAN

She's modeling today.

87

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - LATER

87

Ellie is walking through the department store when she sees a small stage and catwalk set up near the food court. There are a small group of elderly women sitting in foldout chairs waiting for the show to begin. There is a banner above the stage that reads: SENIORS MODELING FOR SENIORS.

88

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE FITTING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

88

Ellie goes to the fitting room and sees that it has been transformed into a dressing room for the modeling seniors.

HANNAH, 68, is in a robe and talking to JESSICA, 50, one of the designers. Jessica is folding up a yellow dress on a hanger.

HANNAH

No, ma'am. I do not do yellow. I put that in my contract.

JESSICA

What contract? No one's getting paid.

HANNAH

I told my niece Sally that I'd wear anything but yellow and purple. Those are just not my colors and they never have been.

JESSICA

But this is all we have left.

HANNAH

Then you got a problem.

Ellie finds Judy sitting in a chair dressed in her robe. She's looking in a mirror and putting on her make-up.

ELLIE

Judy?

JUDY

Ellie! Bruce said you had up and gone away without saying a proper good-bye and I told him that he was wrong. He said you got that in your blood from your father and I told him that you also had some of my blood and my blood is just not that rude. How are you, dear?

ELLIE

What is all this?

JUDY

It's not the best timing: Being a model for senior wear a day after your son's wake, but it's been planned for months and I'm hoping that it'll take my mind off my troubles. And how often do you get asked to be a model at my age?

Judy stands up and takes a light blue dress that is hanging near by.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Now go find Bruce and get a good seat. We'll go to the diner afterwards.

89

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - LATER

89

Ellie and Bruce are sitting with the crowd in the foldout chairs. There's music playing.

Hannah comes walking down the catwalk. She is not wearing the yellow dress, but has on a black one.

We see Jessica standing on the side of the catwalk holding a very cheap microphone. She holds it up to her mouth.

JESSICA

Here we see the California Casual.
Delightful and comfortable, cut
just below the knee.

As Hannah walks past, people are clapping and some are taking her picture.

Bruce and Ellie are ignoring the show.

BRUCE

We thought you had left.

ELLIE

I was going to, but I missed my flight.

BRUCE

Don't you have a life that you have to get back to?

ELLIE

I guess.

BRUCE
You don't sound too sure.

ELLIE
My brother is there and his family,
but there's not much else to go
back for.

BRUCE
You know how old I am?

ELLIE
I'm not really sure?

BRUCE
I'm about as old as dirt. And when
you're about as old as dirt, do you
know the one thing that you can't
do?

ELLIE
What's that?

BRUCE
Change. The person I am right now
is going to be the person they
stick in the pine box, but you're
young, honey. If you don't like
something, you know what you can
do?

ELLIE
Change it?

BRUCE
You see: You got your smarts from
my side of the family.

Hannah turns back from the front of the catwalk.

JESSICA
(Into mic)
With this you can run your errands
in comfort, but still look like a
lady on the go.

Hannah leaves the catwalk.

After a moment, Judy comes out wearing the blue dress.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

(Into mic)

Now here we see the Aztec Blue
Dress, which is not just for summer
any more.

Judy makes her way down the catwalk. She's smiling and having a grand time.

At the end of the cat walk are two ladies taking a bunch of pictures. The flashes from the camera are bothering Judy and she is blinking to clear her sight.

Judy turns and walks back up the catwalk, but, because of the camera flashes, she is not walking a straight line and accidentally walks off the side of the stage, falling to the ground with a great thud.

90

INT. HOSPITAL - LATER

90

Ellie and Bruce are sitting in the hospital waiting room. They are holding hands. Bruce looks devastated.

ELLIE

It's going to be okay, Bruce.

BRUCE

Boy, I wish I knew a prayer about now. Do you know any?

ELLIE

I'm afraid I don't. Don't you and Judy go to church?

BRUCE

I just go for the singing and Judy goes to see all her friends. I sleep through a lot of the praying part.

Amanda enters with Jack and Tommy.

AMANDA

How is she?

ELLIE

We don't know yet.

AMANDA

I want to see her.

Amanda sees Susan, the Head Nurse, down the hall. Amanda jumps up and heads towards her.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Susan!

91 INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - LATER

91

Ellie and Jack are having coffee in the hospital cafeteria.

Tommy, who's shoes hide skates, is skating around the cafeteria. Ellie and Jack are watching him.

JACK

Judy's going to be okay.

Jack reaches out and takes Ellie's hand for a moment. He squeezes her hand. Ellie leans into him and then looks up into his eyes. Jack leans down to kiss her, but Ellie pulls away at the last second.

ELLIE

Sorry, I'm-

JACK

You're leaving.

ELLIE

Right, it's not-

JACK

No, I understand.

ELLIE

I mean, it's not that I don't want to.

JACK

Thanks.

Tommy comes by and they watch him skate around.

JACK (CONT'D)

I really wouldn't know what I'd do without him.

92 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

92

Ellie is in Judy's hospital room, holding her hand.

Susan is looking at Judy's chart.

SUSAN

A broken hip is bad, but from the height you fell from, I'm going to count ourselves pretty lucky.

Susan puts the chart back.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

The doctor should be around in a few minutes.

(To Ellie)

I thought you said we wouldn't be seeing you again?

Susan leaves.

JUDY

You should leave, dear.

ELLIE

Do you want to sleep?

JUDY

You should go back to your home in Los Angeles.

ELLIE

You think so?

JUDY

Don't overstay your visit. If you do that then you'll never want to come back. And I want you to come back with your brother and my great-grandkids! I've never even seen them.

ELLIE

But you have a broken hip.

JUDY

We have doctors here and it'll give Bruce something to do. You need to go home and find someone to make that furniture that you design.

ELLIE

I don't know anyone that can do that.

JUDY

And you never will until you open your eyes and look around.

(MORE)

JUDY (CONT'D)

Come on now, I'm far too old to
tell you all the obvious things.
Give me something hard to work with
next time you come visit.

93

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - LATER

93

Ellie leaves the hospital and walks towards her car in the parking lot.

She finds Reno leaning against the car. He has a packed bag and his guitar with him.

ELLIE

Hey there.

RENO

Where would I stay?

ELLIE

What?

RENO

If I came out to Los Angeles. Where
would I stay?

ELLIE

You'd live with me.

RENO

For how long?

ELLIE

As long as you could stand it.

RENO

Okay.

ELLIE

Good. You'll have to help me throw
out the awful roommate I already
have, but she scares pretty easy.

RENO

That's fine, but one thing.

ELLIE

What?

RENO

I ain't getting on any plane.

ELLIE

Do you want us to walk?

Reno slaps the hood of the station wagon.

RENO

What's wrong with this thing?

94

INT. CAR - LATER

94

Ellie is driving on a highway, heading home to Los Angeles.
Reno is sitting next to her.

Ellie reaches in the back and gets the violin.

RENO

What's that?

ELLIE

This was what was in the safety
deposit box. He must of tracked
down whoever he sold it to and
bought it back for me.

Ellie hands Reno the violin. Reno studies it.

RENO

It's beautiful.

ELLIE

I want you to have it.

Surprised, Reno accepts the violin.

Reno plucks the strings, getting to know the instrument.

Smiling, Ellie drives down the highway.

95

FADE OUT

95