

TOO SOON

Written By

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INT. A MODEST YET BOHEMIAN SO-CAL BUNGALOW LIVING ROOM - DAY

SOPHIE (28), disheveled yet darling and nothing if not dramatic, sits in an armchair drinking a DIET COKE. She's wearing a top that says IN YOUR DREAMS and a scowl.

SOPHIE

Wasn't my intervention 90 days ago?

WILL (29), methodical, bordering on unemotional, sits across from her on a couch.

WILL

Yes. Now this is your second one.

SOPHIE

They come in twos? I was under the impression the last one worked.

WILL

It did. You're sober. That's amazing. But you were sober the last time you left rehab four years ago. And we're going to make sure you stay that way this time.

SOPHIE

Like my boyfriend is going to stay dead? Like my soulmate is going to stay...

Sophie looks down at an URN which is on the coffee table in front of her.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

(disturbed)

...in that jar...that you...

(even more disturbed)

...brought to this meeting?

Will rolls his eyes.

WILL

Yes. We keep his ashes around. It reminds us of his presence without, well, having to bring it up every twenty seven seconds.

SOPHIE

The Uber driver who brought me home seemed to think it was an interesting conversation starter.

MAGGIE (26), girly, career-driven, with expert enabling skills, sits next to Will.

MAGGIE

It's okay Soph. We aren't gonna make you do anything you aren't ready to do.

WILL

Except we are. You have to figure your life out. Look at these bills.

Will points to a large STACK OF BILLS next to Jason's urn.

WILL (CONT'D)

These need to be paid. You quit your job in a pretty irreparable way.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT LAW OFFICE - (6 MONTHS PRIOR)

Sophie dances on a desk and swigs from a FANCY BOTTLE OF SCOTCH in an office that overlooks an INFINITY POOL.

SOPHIE

(yelling)

I'M NOT GETTING YOUR DRY CLEANING OR YOUR SUSHI OR SCHEDULING YOUR APPOINTMENT WITH "VERONICA" WHO WE ALL KNOW IS MORE THAN A MASSEUSE.

A SECRETARY, LAWYER, and SEVERAL INTERNS watch in horror. Sophie looks out the window with dead eyes.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Who feels like a swim?

She leaps. CRASH. Through the window into the pool. She resurfaces, nicks and cuts on her face. A SHARD OF GLASS sticks straight out of her forehead.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

TO INFINITY AND BEYOND!

INT. SO-CAL BUNGALOW LIVING ROOM - PRESENT DAY

Sophie rolls her eyes and rubs her forehead.

SOPHIE

That was a dead end job anyway.

WILL
I'm not finished.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - (6 MONTHS PRIOR)

Sophie does LINES OF COKE off of the closed bottom door of an old man's CASKET.

SOPHIE (V.O.)
I wasn't alone. Dear departed Mr. Horowitz was there!

MAGGIE (V.O.)
You made out with a server at the reception.
(then)
Jason's mom would have seen you if Will hadn't taken one for the team.

EXT. INLAND EMPIRE RECEPTION HALL - (6 MONTHS PRIOR)

Sophie makes out with a CATER WAITER against a VOLKSWAGEN.

SOPHIE
(moaning)
Oh. God. Yeah.

MRS. WALSH shuffles to her car. Will grabs her, spins her around and kisses her bright pink lipsticked face like you would your great aunt.

INT. SO-CAL BUNGALOW LIVING ROOM - PRESENT DAY

SOPHIE
Coke makes me face blind.

WILL
God, Sophie, if you don't get a handle on sobriety you will lose everything. Including us. We won't enable you any more.

MAGGIE
(muttering)
I'd probably enable her.

Will shoots Maggie a look.

SOPHIE
(real serious)
Guys, can I ask you something?

WILL
Anything.

MAGGIE
Absolutely, girl.

SOPHIE
Who's he?

PAN TO REVEAL: A man has been sitting in the corner this entire time.

WILL
That's Ned, your sober companion.

NED (late 30s), meticulously dressed in khakis and a checkered button-up, sits quietly on a bench.

SOPHIE
Say what now?

WILL
He's a companion for your sobriety.
We don't feel like we can help you
alone. He's trained and--

SOPHIE
I know what a sober companion is. I
just left a pricey surf-side rehab
facility. Even the chefs are
certified SCs.
(then)
Where is he gonna stay?

WILL
With us.

SOPHIE
(suspicious)
Who's us?

WILL
Well, I kinda had to move in while
you were at New Beginnings.

SOPHIE
It was called Unique Journeys.

MAGGIE
I thought it was called The Road
Less Traveled?

WILL

That's a Robert Frost poem.

(then)

Someone had to step in to pay the rent and take care of things. There wasn't really a choice.

SOPHIE

(ticked off)

Let it be noted that I resent this. You moving in is one thing. But a stranger? A man? A man stranger? I feel violated.

WILL

(teasing)

Says Angeldust McCorpse.

MAGGIE

(to Will)

Maybe Ned just stays for a few days until Sophie gets back in the swing of things?

WILL

Yeah. Like from the chandeliers.

No. Ned stays.

(curtly)

It's what Jason would have wanted.

Sophie swallows hard.

SOPHIE

What Jason would have wanted was to be alive.

That lands. Will tries to adjust his sensitivity.

WILL

Sophie. We all miss him. But he would want what's best for you now.

SOPHIE

And you're sure that's a live-in therapist? You know what happened last time I was forced to see a therapist.

MAGGIE

You were seven and she didn't press charges.

SOPHIE

Yeah, okay. Whatever. Can we just get on with this?

Ned takes control.

NED

Of course. Firstly, my condolences. It means a lot to me to be invited into your home.

SOPHIE

What's the secondly.

NED

Secondly, I'd like to use this newly created safe space to tell you there's a party tonight in honor of Jason's birthday.

(then)

How does that make you feel?

Sophie leans in towards Ned and bites the air real feisty. Ned cracks a slight smile.

INT. SOPHIE'S KITCHEN - AN HOUR LATER

Will and Maggie are gone. Sophie feverishly roots through the FRIDGE. Ned sits patiently at the table. Sophie pulls out a GIANT HEAD OF KALE.

SOPHIE

This is all Chinchilla food.

Sophie puts the kale back.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

What kind of person puts their own life on hold and be a sober companion for a living?

Sophie opens a container of YOGURT and licks the lid.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

How do they make yogurt from almonds? How long have I been locked away?

NED

Are these questions you'd like me to answer?

Sophie sits down at the table with her yogurt.

SOPHIE

I'm sorry. I'm being rude.
(offering her food)
Would you like some nut ejaculate?

NED

No, thanks. I ate a really big
breakfast of aborted chicken
fetuses and razor thin animal flesh
on a dough frisbee.

Sophie cracks her first smile.

NED (CONT'D)

Here's the deal. I live here. In
the guest bedroom. When you're
awake, I'm awake. I go where you
go. I can't force you to do
anything good and I can't stop you
from doing anything bad. I can use
my words and the trust we build.

SOPHIE

How do people build trust?

NED

How do you think people build
trust?

SOPHIE

You're going to have to stop doing
that.

NED

Doing what?

SOPHIE

That! Answering my questions with
questions!

NED

Any other requests?

SOPHIE

Can we go to a bar?

NED

Sure.

SOPHIE

Seriously?

NED
Yeah. I'll drive.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - A LITTLE LATER

Ned and Sophie stand in the doorway looking into a room with a small circle of people seated in chairs.

LEADER
Welcome to Narcotics Anonymous.
Shall we begin with the Serenity
Prayer?

CLOSE ON: Sophie's face looks anything but serene.

INT. NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS MEETING - LATER

Sophie and Ned sit in the circle now. A LEADER (40s), super monotone, unanimated, yet still trying to create a fun vibe, stands in the middle.

ADDICT #7
I'm Lucy and I'm an addict.

EVERYONE
(in unison)
Hi, Lucy.

Sophie is next in the circle. She makes a "pass" motion with her hands.

SOPHIE
I'm good.

BURNOUT
Hi, Goo--

LEADER
(interrupting)
Okayyyyy. Let's get right into it.
The topic for this week's meeting
is "Starting Over"

He begins to read from an INDEX CARD in a stiff cadence.

LEADER (CONT'D)
If I can be an example of getting
sober, then I can be an example of
starting over.

SOPHIE

(to Ned)

Dude. That's a Macklemore lyric.

Ned shushes her.

LEADER

Relapse is a very real threat. But
with the right set of tools we
can...

(turns over card)

...neutralize this threat.

(then)

Here to share his story is a very
special speaker, Sgt. Thomas Ardnt.

(then)

He's back from his second tour of
duty and is here to talk about how,
to some, staying sober is a matter
of life and death.

Sophie attempts to BOLT out of the room. Ned blocks her and
escorts her back to her seat.

INT. GROCERY STORE - AN HOUR LATER

Sophie hunts through the aisles as she opens a can of Diet
Coke from a six pack. Ned follows.

SOPHIE

But once he talked about being
alone in the desert doing lines of
coke off his own rifle, I knew this
dude was for real.

Sophie reaches onto a shelf and grabs several boxes of
garbage bags and shoves them into Ned's arms, which are now
serving as a basket.

NED

I completely disagree. I don't
think you should throw away
everything that reminds you of
Jason.

SOPHIE

Sgt. Ardnt said all he kept was a
mattress, a pillow and a copy of
Full Metal Jacket.

NED

Because a Nurse Ratchett wannabe took the rest away from him in the psych ward. Were you listening at all?

SOPHIE

Yep. PTSD. Bush did 9/11. F the police. I heard him.

(then)

The man had some good ideas. I relapsed cause of Jason's death. I can't change that.

(then)

But I can stop living with constant reminders of my grief.

Sophie throws more waste disposal solutions into Ned's arm basket.

NED

I don't think this will help you stay sober. I think we should try to get to the heart of the issue instead of rushing things. When my gir--

SOPHIE

(inspired)

Oh! Rushing things.

(counting)

1, 2, 3... 7

(then)

Perfect. We can go to the express checkout!

Sophie runs toward the checkout. Ned is left in the dust.

NED

(to no one)

...girlfriend died I went trash bag crazy too. It didn't help.

INT. SOPHIE'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

Sophie places objects into a trash bag. First JASON'S CLOTHES, then a MONEY CLIP off the dresser. She sprays Jason's COLOGNE on her wrist before throwing it in the bag, too. Ned watches.

NED

This is far from healthy.

Sophie smells her wrist longingly.

SOPHIE
You just don't get it.

INT. SOPHIE'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sophie takes several picture frames and trinkets off of a bookshelf. Ned stays close.

NED
Maybe we can bring this stuff to a storage facility on our way to the party tonight? You're gonna be glad you saved it.

SOPHIE
Your persistence is admirable.
(then)
Do you really wanna help?

NED
(surely)
It's why I do this.

SOPHIE
Can you go get Jason's razor from the bathroom? I doubt I should have sharp objects around me in such a...

Sophie clears her throat.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
...difficult time.

Ned walks into the bathroom. Sophie closes the door and barricades him in with a CHAIR.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
Thank you!

INT. SOPHIE'S KITCHEN - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

Sophie grabs a spatula and throws it in the bag. Sophie picks up a paint brush and frowns.

WILL (O.S.)
UNBELIEVABLE!

INT. SOPHIE'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sophie rushes in. The room is completely bare except for a few BOXES of Jason's belongings by the door. Will removes the barricade from the bathroom. Ned emerges.

WILL

(to Ned)

A little birdie told me you needed help.

SOPHIE

(to Ned, scowling)

Tattle-tale.

NED

(to the tune of R. Kelly's
Trapped in the Closet)

Trapped in the bathroom.

SOPHIE

(deflecting)

The chair was just leaning against it. It's not my fault he's too weak to open a door.

Will takes a good look at the apartment.

WILL

What happened here?

The doorbell rings.

SOPHIE

Hold onto that wonderful question.

Sophie rushes to open the door. Jason's parents MR. & MRS. WALSH (60s) with every inch of their beings screaming CINCINNATI, are on the other side.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

(shocked)

Hiiiiiiiiii.

MRS. WALSH

Oh, Sophie, sweetheart.

Mrs. Walsh immediately goes in for a smothering hug. Sophie receives it hesitantly.

SOPHIE

Mary! It's so nice to see you. What are you doing here?

(MORE)

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

(then)

I mean in town? Is everything okay?

MRS. WALSH

Oh heavens yes, dear. We're just in town for Jason's party.

SOPHIE

Yes. A party makes perfect sense.

MR. WALSH

You're coming of course?

SOPHIE

Well, I was thinking mayb--

MRS. WALSH

We won't take no for an answer!

Will walks to the door.

WILL

(gushing)

Mary! Do you get younger every time I see you?

Will gives Mrs. Walsh a big hug. Sophie glares at him.

WILL (CONT'D)

Mr. Walsh better watch out. I might steal you for myself.

MRS. WALSH

Oh, William. You were always quite the charmer.

Sophie makes a gagging motion. Ned walks over.

SOPHIE

(reluctantly)

This is Ned.

Sophie looks around the empty room.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

My interior decorator.

(showing off the room)

As you can see, we're going to be painting.

Sophie holds up the paintbrush still in her hand from the purge.

MRS. WALSH
How wonderful!

MR. WALSH
Well, we won't keep you. We just
dropped by to collect some pictures
and mementos to display at the
party.

SOPHIE
Ah, yes, in place of a living
participant.

Sophie looks around at the empty room, then down at the
boxes. Mr. Walsh notices them now too.

MR. WALSH
Oh. Perfect. Will already took care
of it.
(to Will)
You always were such a thoughtful
and sentimental young man.

Before Sophie can speak up, Mr. Walsh picks up the boxes.

MR. WALSH (CONT'D)
We'll take these to the party.
We'll have more of a chance to
catch up there. Can't wait!

MRS. WALSH
What color are you painting the
room? I hope something bright and
cheery!

SOPHIE
(through her teeth)
Yep. It's called. I Can't Believe
This is Real.

NED
(helping out)
It's the color of the most
beautiful explosion you can
imagine.

EXT. CITY STREET - AFTERNOON

Sophie, head to toe in workout gear and Ned, in RUNNING
SHORTS and a HEADBAND, power walk side by side.

NED

Seeing Jason's parents today must
have been be pretty stressful.

SOPHIE

It was always pretty stressful.
Today it's down right soul
crushing.

NED

This walk will help. I promise.

Ned takes a swig from a WATER BOTTLE attached to his arm.

NED (CONT'D)

Physical activity releases
endorphins and reduces stress
hormones that can poison the body.

SOPHIE

I'd kill to be poisoned right now.

Ned's cell phone, that is also attached to his arm by some
contraption, rings.

NED

(answering it)
Hello?

Ned is distracted on the phone. Sophie looks at him and then
back at the open road. She sprints away as fast as she can.
Ned is left in the dust.

NED (CONT'D)

I'll have to call you back.

INT. MAGGIE'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Sophie stumbles into Maggie's office completely out of breath
and almost crawling.

SOPHIE

(panting)
I lost him!

Maggie hurriedly sorts through a pile of HEADSHOTS.

MAGGIE

Jason? Yeah, we get that.

Sophie hides behind a CHAIR.

SOPHIE

No, Ned.

MAGGIE

I know. He called.

SOPHIE

He thought a brisk jog would fix my life.

Maggie adjust the settings on a CAMERA pointed at a MARK.

MAGGIE

Did it?

SOPHIE

(wiping her mouth)

I can't breathe and I threw up twice.

MAGGIE

(annoyed)

Soph. I'm sure he knows what he's doing.

SOPHIE

People who think exercise can solve problems have never seen anything truly traumatic.

MAGGIE

I'm sure open heart surgeons think it helps.

(then)

I don't have time for this right now. I'm being paid to help OTHER women make fools of themselves.

An ASSISTANT with a CLIPBOARD pops in.

ASSISTANT

The ditsy girls are here.

The assistant exits.

MAGGIE

I have to start casting for a show where we pit ditsy girls and diva girls against each other and see which unfortunate personality can best find their way through day to day life.

SOPHIE
(judgmental)
And you think I need help.

MAGGIE
Yes, Pukey McYoga Pants.

Sophie looks at her vomit pants. Maggie checks her phone.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
He's looking for you. I'll give you
a ten minute head start. Can I
trust you to go straight to him, or
do you need an escort?

SOPHIE
What I need is to be left alone
cause I'm fine.

Sophie begins to walk out of the room as a PROVOCATIVELY
DRESSED WOMAN in strappy wedges enters. Sophie immediately
pukes on the woman's shoes.

INT. GROCERY STORE - LATE AFTERNOON

Sophie paces up and down the LIQUOR aisle. Ned rushes into
the store and finds her.

SOPHIE
How did you find me?

NED
Maggie called Will and Will called
the bar down the street, who called
a few of their regulars, who called
911, who gave them a stern lecture
about how that's not what that's
for. So I figured I'd try here.

SOPHIE
Ok. We get it. I'm disaster.

Sophie squats to look at the bottom shelf.

NED
I know how hard this is. But the
solution is not in this aisle.
(then)
And it's definitely not on the
bottom shelf.

SOPHIE

If I drink, maybe I can get through the party. No one noticed I was a drunk for years.

(quizzically)

They did notice every haircut I got. So there's a trade off.

NED

NO.

Sophie stands up.

SOPHIE

Excuse me?

NED

No. No, I'm not letting you buy alcohol. I forbid it.

Sophie puts her hands on her hips.

SOPHIE

You forbid it? You can't do that. It's not part of the rules!

Ned puts his hand on his hips, mirroring Sophie.

NED

Screw the rules. No rules, just right.

SOPHIE

Okay. That's the slogan for Outback Steakhouse.

(then)

Does anyone have any respect for intellectual property these days?

NED

You want to go to liquor aisles instead of meetings? We'll have a meeting right here.

Ned raises his hand.

NED (CONT'D)

Hi. My name is Ned and I'm an addict.

Ned pauses and waits for Sophie to greet him. Nothing.

NED (CONT'D)

I've been sober for five years.
Five years exactly today. My
girlfriend passed away six years
ago. It was by far the hardest
thing that's ever happened to me.

(composing himself)

And it caused me to relapse. Losing
my sobriety felt like just as big
of a loss.

(getting choked up)

There's no magic formula for
getting over something like this.
It would be foolish to think so.

(then)

You have to do what feels right.
Every day you try to stay sober and
you try to take a step forward.
That's how I honor Sarah's life. By
committing mine to something
greater.

Sophie stands in awe.

SOPHIE

Hi, Ned.

INT. BANQUET HALL - LATER THAT EVENING

Sophie and Ned walk into a packed room. An entire wall is a
SHRINE to Jason, complete with POSTER-SIZED COLLAGES of
photos. Sophie takes a good look at everything.

SOPHIE

Step forward or hashtag throwback
Thursday?

NED

Yolo.

SOPHIE

Never say that again.

Sophie takes a deep breath and a step forward. She runs into
a GIANT CARDBOARD CUTOUT of Jason in a bathing suit.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

(to Jason)

Hi.

Mr. Walsh walks up to the front of the room. Sophie remains
in the back with Maggie, Will and Ned.

MR. WALSH

(in a loud voice)

Thank you all so much for coming.
Everyone gathering together is
exactly what Jason would have
wanted.

SOPHIE

(to herself)

He hated birthdays.

MR. WALSH

I hope I get the chance to talk to
each of you. It's what Jason would
have wanted.

SOPHIE

(to Maggie)

Yes. He would have loved to see his
dad make small talk at his post-
death birthday soiree.

MR. WALSH

But now. It's dinner time!

Everyone settles into various round tables. The FRONT TABLE seats Will, Maggie, Mr. & Mrs. Walsh, Ned, Sophie and a few friends of Jason. One is HIPPIE FRIEND (30ish), male, Caucasian, yet wearing a Sari. Sophie stares at the lavish detailing on it.

SOPHIE

That's a very beautiful...
(stumbling for the right
word)
Sorry.

HIPPIE FRIEND

Thank you.

Sophie shoots a confused look to Ned.

HIPPIE FRIEND (CONT'D)

I got it in India. I went last
month for a Vipassana Meditation
course. I really needed to get away
from LA. Especially after Jason's
death and all.

SOPHIE

Oh. How did you know Jas--

A WAITER interrupts the conversation. He holds up an OPEN WINE BOTTLE.

WAITER

Would you care for some wine?

Sophie shakes her head and looks at Ned.

SOPHIE

I'll take a Diet Coke.

The waiter disregards her request and pours wine for the rest of the table. Sophie eavesdrops on the table behind her. A MODEL TYPE GIRL is mid-story.

MODEL TYPE GIRL

Yeah. So that's how I met Jason. We only dated for a month and it was seven years ago, but we had a really special connection.

Sophie grabs her stomach as her face melts in anguish. The party gets louder. Sophie spots Jason's urn. It's on the table like a center piece next to a BIRTHDAY CAKE with UNLIT CANDLES.

SOPHIE

(laughing)

At least they got the amount of candles right.

Her eyes dart around the table. Looking for something to make her feel better.

MR. WALSH

(to Ned)

So have you decorated the apartments of any famous people?

Maggie runs her hands over the detailed fabric of HIPPIE FRIEND'S Sari.

MAGGIE

This must have cost a fortune.

Maggie leans in flirtatiously.

HIPPIE FRIEND

Ten thousand Rupees.

Maggie leans in more.

WILL

That's not even two hundred dollars.

MAGGIE
 (through her teeth)
 Shut up Will.

As Chet Baker's Look for the Silver Lining comes on the sound system, Sophie's eyes well up. She leaps from her seat.

SOPHIE
 (in the most guttural way
 imaginable)
 AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH

Everyone stares in motionless silence.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
 Everybody shut up.

Sophie points to Hippie Friend.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
 Especially you, Yoga McDumbass.

Sophie faces the whole room.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
 What do ANY of you know about
 grief. I've never even met some of
 you.

Sophie points to Model Type Girl.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
 You. You're Lacy, right?

Lacy nods.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
 Jason told me about you. You only
 ate salads and never gave head. Is
 that your boyfriend next to you?
 (then)
 For his sake, I hope you've
 changed.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
 This is the worst thing that's ever
 happened to me. Sometimes I think
 it can't even be real. Like I half
 expect Jason to walk through the
 door right now and start helping me
 make fun of you.

Everyone looks over to the room's entrance.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

And the drinking? Real nice, guys.
I just got out of rehab. Today. Do
you know how hard it is for me to
sit here and watch you guzzle wine
by the bucket?

Lacy raises her hand. Sophie shakes her head.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

The only urge I have right now
that's stronger than wanting to
drink ALL the alcohol is wanting to
throw it in your faces.

A few people take their WINE GLASSES and move them further
away from Sophie.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

You know when I lost my sobriety?
The love of my life's funeral
reception. The one that some of you
didn't even come to.

(then)

You know what else I did that
night?

Lacy raises her hand. Ned escorts her out of the room.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

I hooked up with a cater waiter.

(then)

Because he "kind of" looked like
Jason.

Sophie tries to get the attention of the waiter who stands in
the corner of the room.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

(to waiter)

You hear that? You're my type!

The waiter stops in his tracks.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

It's okay. You're safe. I'm not
dating. It's hard to put on a
little black dress when all you can
do is think about the fragility of
human existence.

(then)

And now sometimes it's a struggle
just to breathe. But I do it. Cause
he can't.

(MORE)

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
(realizing)
Ha. He drowned. So I guess he
REALLY couldn't breathe.

Sophie looks over at Mr. & Mrs. Walsh with concern.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.
(then)
You know what? I'm not sorry for
what I said. If that's the most
shocking thing you've ever heard
then I'm sorry for YOU.

Mr. & Mrs. Walsh are like deer in headlights.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
I guess Jason didn't tell you that
to pay for acting school he robbed
a drug dealer in an elaborate heist
that involved bribing a guard dog
with a hot dog.
(then)
Did you really think he made that
much money as a counselor at Bible
Camp in Cincinnati? He didn't.
(then)
I was the only one he told
everything to.

Sophie pushes her chair in.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
Who throws a birthday party for a
dead man. Death is the opposite of
birth and this is the opposite of
sane.

Sophie picks up Jason's urn.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
We'll be in the back room.

Sophie starts to walk away then reaches back and grabs the
cake from the table.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
With this cake. Have a wonderful
evening.

Sophie whips back around. The urn tips over onto the cake.
Jason's remains spill out onto the icing. Sophie falls to the
ground. The ash-covered cake lands on top of her. Ned rushes
to her side.

INT. PRIVATE PARTY ROOM OF RESTAURANT - A LITTLE LATER

Ned mulls around Jason's shrine. He picks up a coffee mug with Jason's face on it that is filled with Hershey's Kisses. It was in a large row of other party favors just like it.

NED

Wow. What is going on in Cincinnati?

All the guests have cleared out. Sophie walks up to Ned with a slice of BIRTHDAY CAKE in hand. She holds it out like a child would a peace offering.

SOPHIE

Cake?

Ned stares at the cake discerningly.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

It's Jason-free. I promise.

Ned takes the cake.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

I mean it's your birthday too, right?

Ned nods.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Five years ain't too shabby.

Ned smiles.

NED

For what it's worth I think it was actually incredibly weird that they threw a party for a dead guy.

SOPHIE

Right? I was starting to think I was crazy for thinking so.

NED

I'm glad we got you here though. It helped you get closer to your truth. Next time maybe we work on the delivery.

SOPHIE

Wait, so you'll stick around?

NED
 (like a therapist)
 Do you want me to stick around?

Sophie stares right through Ned and then breaks into a playful smile.

NED (CONT'D)
 Sorry. I couldn't help myself.

SOPHIE
 Will you tell me more about Sarah?

They exit together.

INT. SOPHIE'S VOLKSWAGEN GOLF - LATER

Sophie, Ned, Will, Maggie and a cardboard cutout of Jason in a bathing suit, cramp into her small hatchback. Will drives.

SOPHIE
 Think I scared Jason's parents back to Cinncinatti forever?

MAGGIE
 Pretty sure they just went back to their hotel for the night. But I did catch Mrs. Walsh audibly praying for you.
 (then)
 We can do damage control tomorrow.

Sophie looks to Ned for support.

SOPHIE
 Sounds good. Ned can come, too. He's going to hang around and help for awhile.

Will smiles.

WILL
 That's great to hear. I started to worry maybe I was too harsh or that we pushed you too far.

Sophie smiles.

SOPHIE
 Will. I swan dove through a plate glass window and snorted nose candy with a corpse. I think you reacted appropriately.

WILL

You were right, though. Jason was pretty irreverent and in your face. I forgot about that. I'm glad you're around to remind me. Jason loved you something fierce.

(then)

And you know what he loved most about you?

SOPHIE

My left breast.

WILL

That you never gave up.

(then)

You've been through so much but you don't let it stop you. Even when you make mistakes. You keep going and you get it right eventually.

MAGGIE

I'm really glad Ned is staying. He'll make an excellent addition to our family. Please don't run away from him.

WILL

Or lock him in bathrooms.

NED

Or tell people at meetings that I'm your dead boyfriend and that if they can see me they might be dead too.

WILL

You did that?

MAGGIE

You did not.

WILL

Wait.

(then)

You never actually told me why the apartment looks like the set of the movie Panic Room.

INT. SO-CAL BUNGALOW - LATER THAT NIGHT

Sophie lies sound asleep on her couch. She clings to an oversized plaid male dress shirt. Will and Ned look on.

WILL

I think she wasn't ready to sleep
in their bed yet.

NED

It was a big day for her. She did
good.

WILL

I haven't seen her this peaceful in
a long time.

(then)

Whatever you did to get through to
her, it worked.

(then)

Alright. I'm gonna hit the hay.

Will exits down the hall. Ned approaches Sophie and gently
kneels down. He covers her up with a blanket.

NED

(sotto)

You remind me so much of her.

FADE OUT.