

**FUNNY, SAD, AND BEAUTIFUL**

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**EXT. WEST ORANGE HIGH SCHOOL - ENTRANCE - DAY**

Daylight wanes over YOUNG FRANKIE BLOOM (16, Alanis Morissette concert tee, antsy) seated on the curb long after school, backpack and guitar case beside her.

**SUPER: "West Orange, New Jersey - 1996"**

A black Pontiac rolls up. Something's off. She rises, wary.

FRANKIE

Is he dead?

LENNY (O.S.)

What kind of question is that?

FRANKIE

Hour and a half late after he makes a big deal this morning about picking me up himself, which he never does, and yet here you are.

"UNCLE" LENNY (45, hair slicked back) in the driver's seat.

LENNY

Easy, kid. He just asked me to give you a lift.

YOUNG FRANKIE

Why?

LENNY

Why? I don't know why, he's busy, working late, something, just hop in.

She's frozen, hand squeezing open and closed.

YOUNG FRANKIE

So he didn't say why.

LENNY

Why why why, yes, no, he said, he didn't say, we'll get you home, OK?  
(pats the seat, grins)  
Come on. Your Uncle Lenny don't bite.

FRANKIE

(mutters, steps forward)  
Not my friggin' uncle.

LENNY

What's that?

**EXT. LONELY TWO-LANE ROAD/INT. LENNY'S CAR - DAY (MOVING)**

**Doo wop PLAYS SOFTLY on the car radio** as they head down a two-laner lined with forever businesses -- car repair, sandwiches, pawn, and porn.

In the passenger seat, Young Frankie stares straight ahead, guitar between her legs, backpack on the floor.

LENNY

Been a while since I seen you, huh?  
Your mom's funeral, I guess. Helluva  
thing that was. Helluva thing.

(a beat)

Wasn't his fault, you know. I mean, I  
know, I know, but he sure as shit  
didn't mean it. He loved her. Loves  
you, too. And your brother.

Nothing from her. He shrugs, eyes her t-shirt.

LENNY (cont'd)

Hey, that that girl who sings about  
giving head? Excuse my French.

YOUNG FRANKIE

Alanis. Saw her concert last night.

LENNY

Yeah? Bet you play just like her.

YOUNG FRANKIE

Why'd he ask you to pick me up?

LENNY

Jesus, kid, I told you he didn't--

YOUNG FRANKIE

Here's my turn, slow down!

He doesn't slow down.

YOUNG FRANKIE (cont'd)

What are you doing?!

LENNY

Sorry. Quick stop.

He veers left onto a lonelier road, run-down "Sunrise Motel"  
on one side, chintzy gas station on the other.

**EXT. SUNRISE MOTEL - PARKING LOT - DAY**

Lenny pulls in, parks at one end of the single row of rooms near a door -- "Office." No other cars but the one at the other end, a shiny black Cadillac, windows tinted dark.

**INT. LENNY'S CAR - DAY**

Lenny turns off the car, swings open his door.

LENNY

Wait here. I gotta chat with the owner real quick, then you'll help me with something.

FRANKIE

What, bookie business? No, thanks.

LENNY

I like to think of myself as a debt liaison. Now strum a few tunes, I'll be back in a jiff.

FRANKIE

I want to go home. Now.

LENNY

(low, gentle but firm)  
You'll get home, just do as I tell you, it'll be OK. OK? OK.

She grabs the door handle.

FRANKIE

Then I'm walking.

LENNY

Frankie?

He slowly shakes his head. She pauses.

LENNY (cont'd)

This isn't my call, kid. So don't be dumb. Please.

He hops out with the keys.

FRANKIE

Wait!

He ignores her, heads for the office.

She watches uneasily. He glances back, then front, enters.

She eyes the Cadillac. Then the gas station. A police car pulls in!

Office...Cadillac...gas station -- parked at a pump, a cop emerges. She powers downdown down the painfully slow window.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
Officer? Officer, hey. Hey!

The officer turns when BRRRRRRR! -- an 18-wheeler pulls between them, tries to back into the station.

Another survey -- Caddy, office, road -- the truck still rumbles in place. She bites her lip.

The office door opens. She doesn't notice, grabs her door handle with one hand, guitar case with the other... breathes...breathes...threetwoone and...

LENNY (O.S.)  
Whoa, whoa, whoa.

Pale, she turns slowly to Lenny outside the driver's side, fresh red specks dotting his knuckles, wad of cash in hand.

She checks the gas station, truck finally parked at a pump. The cop finishes up.

She raises her hand over the car horn.

FRANKIE  
Take me home now or I swear I'll--

He grabs her skinny wrist with his meaty hand.

**EXT. SUNRISE MOTEL - PARKING LOT - DAY**

He slowly walks behind her down the row of rooms.

YOUNG FRANKIE  
(quick panic)  
What is this?

LENNY  
I don't got a choice, Frankie.

YOUNG FRANKIE  
But there's always a choice, right  
Uncle Lenny?

Nothing.

YOUNG FRANKIE (cont'd)  
 Hey, remember how you used to take me  
 and Bobby to Applegate Farm for ice  
 cream? You said to us never grow up.  
 That's what you said.

Near the halfway point, he spins her, leans close, whispers.

LENNY  
 Look, I tried to protect Marty but he  
 owes too much this time. Fucking guy  
 and his fucking Jets. The big guy's  
 done with him. No more payment plans  
 or running numbers or anything else  
 to work off the debt. He only has one  
 thing left to make this go away. See,  
 the big man -- he's got a weakness  
 for -- for certain things.

YOUNG FRANKIE  
 What things?

LENNY  
 He does this sometimes. Offers an  
 out, one time only, for loyal  
 customers -- even deadbeats like  
 Marty. No offense.

He turns her back around, nudges her forward, speaks low.

YOUNG FRANKIE  
 What things, Lenny?  
 (beat)  
 Tell me what things!

LENNY  
 Nobody's gonna touch you, OK? You're  
 just gonna let him have a look, you  
 know? That's it, I swear. He won't  
 make you do nothing else.

YOUNG FRANKIE  
 What?! Fuck no!

LENNY  
 Sh! Your dad didn't want this and I  
 didn't either, but it's the only way.

YOUNG FRANKIE  
 (calls out)  
 No! Help me! Somebody help--

He covers her mouth. She struggles but he grabs tighter.

LENNY  
You're saving your dad's life, kid.  
Understand? His life. Now -- ssshhh.

He uncovers her mouth as they reach the last room and KNOCK  
KNOCK KNOCK. Her tears bubble.

YOUNG FRANKIE  
You can't do this.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

LENNY  
I'll be right outside.

YOUNG FRANKIE  
You can't, Uncle Lenny. You can't!

KNOCK KNOCK -- the handle jiggles from inside.

YOUNG FRANKIE (cont'd)  
I'm begging you, please don't do  
this. Please.

And the door...

**INT. JACKPOT DINER - ONE-PERSON BATHROOM - DAY**

...of a tiny, dim restroom creaks open, jolts FRANKIE (43,  
waitress uniform, name tag, red eyed), who smokes at a small  
window.

FRANKIE  
Hey!

The door slams shut. She waves the smoke outside, tosses the  
cigarette in the toilet.

**SUPER: "Las Vegas, Nevada - 27 Years Later"**

She studies her drawn face in the dirty mirror.

OLDER BOY (V.O., PRELAP)  
Hot fudge sundae, please.

**INT. JACKPOT DINER - DAY**

Humble diner, scattered patrons. Frankie grins at MOM and  
DAD (40s), YOUNG BOY (7) and OLDER BOY (9).

YOUNGER BOY

Me too! Me too!

FRANKIE

Dessert first. My kind of people.

MOM

They'll have the grilled chicken.

YOUNGER AND OLDER BOY

We don't want chicken!

DAD

Gimme steak and eggs. Rare. What happens in Vegas, right?

He winks at Frankie, who looks away.

MOM

Fine, then. Whiskey Sour.

DAD

After last night? Come on, honey.

MOM

Make it two, then. What happens in Vegas, right honey?

(to Frankie)

Some family vacation, huh?

FRANKIE

Family vacation's an oxymoron. Like family values. Or family friendly.

Mom sighs. Frankie heads for the counter where LOIS MANFRED (late 50s, suit) sips coffee, pile of documents spread out.

LOIS

Staff taking orders today or do we cook it ourselves?

FRANKIE

What'd I tell you about expectations, Lois? Come here you're bound to be disappointed. I'll get Sheldon.

LOIS

Please, God, no. That boy hasn't gotten my order right in two years.

SHELDON MORRIS (forever 29, tall, thin) emerges through the kitchen's swinging doors.



FRANKIE  
Speak of the devil.

SHELDON  
Aw, thank you.

She hands him the order, unties her apron.

FRANKIE  
Lace the whiskey with Ambien. Give  
the rest of the Griswolds a break.

SHELDON  
The who?

FRANKIE  
Never mind. Off to job number 2.

She heads behind the counter. He follows.

LOIS  
You talk to LVCC yet? You need to get  
certified. I can only hold the  
paralegal position open so long.

FRANKIE  
Tomorrow, I swear. It's a community  
college anyway. Thirteenth grade.  
They'll take anybody.

SHELDON  
Meanwhile, she gets to be a Speedee  
Mart girl!

FRANKIE  
Part time. Very part time. If Chuck  
would only toss me a few more hours  
here I wouldn't need that job.

She shoves her apron under the counter.

SHELDON  
He'll never take hours away from his  
beloved Aunt Glenda.

They check a booth in the back where GLENDA (70s, in  
uniform) leans against the wall, fast asleep.

SHELDON (cont'd)  
Coming to MacMullan's later?

She opens the register, adds to a pile of cash.

FRANKIE  
Can't. Movie night with Mel.

SHELDON  
Wait. Before you go. He's been eyeing  
you for an hour.

He nods at a booth where EDWARD (50s, distinguished,  
graying) nurses a coffee, plate with a few fries before him.

FRANKIE  
I noticed. Slimeball.

SHELDON  
Hot slimeball. And British!

LOIS  
Leave her alone, Sheldon.

SHELDON  
I can't, Lo. Her last date was during  
the Michelle Obama years.

FRANKIE  
I have my reasons.

He raises his eyebrows.

FRANKIE  
OK, fine, but you asked for it.

She grabs a business card from a stack near the register,  
marches back to Edward's booth.

EDWARD  
(British)  
Ah. You noticed me--  
(reads her name tag)  
Frankie. Now sit. Please.

She doesn't.

EDWARD (cont'd)  
Fine. Then let's chat about this  
afternoon. About my suite at the  
Bellagio. About all the money I have.  
You're no mere waitress. You're  
special, Frankie. I can tell. You  
contain multitudes.

She tries not to laugh, but does sit.

FRANKIE

OK. Right. Well here's the thing,  
Walt Whitman.

EDWARD

Edward Bell.

FRANKIE

OK, Eddie. First, you've been here  
before. With your wife? Young. Perky.

(pulls out the  
business card)

"Jasmine Bell - Your Las Vegas Home  
Expert." She left these on the  
counter. I should give her a call.  
I'm looking for a change of scenery.

She tosses the card on the table.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

Second, I don't like taking money  
from men. The interest is too high.  
And besides, I hate hotel rooms.  
Nothing good ever happens in hotel  
rooms. So before you make another  
pass at a mere waitress, remember  
that we deal with lots and lots of  
assholes, so we're really good at  
smelling them from a mile away.

She hops up, flashes a smile at him, and marches off, Edward  
reeling.

**EXT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT**

Squat, gray four-story apartment building, parking lot out  
front with a range of humble cars. Frankie exits an aged,  
dented Corolla.

MRS. JACOBS (V.O., PRELAP)

(over a phone speaker)

Hi, Mel. It's Mrs. Jacobs.

**INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Drab room adorned with second-hand furniture, brown water  
stains here and there on the wall, tiny kitchen with a  
meager island turning one room into two -- sort of. On the  
island, two plates and forks.

MRS. JACOBS (O.S.)  
 We've been notified that you're  
 selected to the Southwest Regional  
 Honors Orchestra.

MELODY "MEL" BLOOM (15, glasses) sits on the floor in front  
 of a worn couch, textbooks spread across a rickety coffee  
 table, phone on top. She stares at it, grins, astonished.

MRS. JACOBS (O.S.) (cont'd)  
 We're very proud! Now, the cost for  
 travel expenses is \$1200.

Her smile disintegrates.

**INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Frankie approaches a door, pink "Rent Overdue" notice taped  
 to it. Again? She rips it off, shoves it in her pocket...

**INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)**

...and zips through the front door, all smiles. Mel taps the  
 phone off, forces a smile of her own.

MEL  
 Joleen made it home this time.

FRANKIE  
 Only took three tries to get her  
 going. Then she hummed like a Lexus.  
 I'm starved.

Frankie kisses Mel on the head, bolts for the kitchen. Mel  
 follows, phone in hand, sits at the island. Frankie inspects  
 a pot on the stove.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
 You could've ordered Chinese,  
 sweetie. I left you that coupon.

MEL  
 We can make four frank and bean  
 dinners for the price of one decent  
 take-out.

FRANKIE  
 Forget decent. The goal is edible.

She carries the pot to the island, eyes a stack of mail.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
Anything good?

MEL  
Bills. And something from a law firm  
in New Jersey. What'd you do now?

Frankie feigns nonchalance, hops up, heads to the fridge.

FRANKIE  
Yeah? Jersey? Hm. Must be a mistake.  
Bobo Sprite or Bobo Coke?

MEL  
Sprite. That pink note on the door --  
how behind are we?

Frankie returns with two generic sodas and digs in.

FRANKIE  
I'll work it out.

MEL  
I was thinking, what if I got a job  
at Menchie's? I could help, plus have  
money for who knows? Stuff. Alan  
works there. He'll put in a good  
word.

FRANKIE  
Number one, you're 15. Got your whole  
life to sling frozen yogurt and work  
other shitty jobs. And we agreed you  
wouldn't give Alan the time of day.  
Kid asked you out 20 times--

MEL  
Three.

FRANKIE  
--and you said no every time. He  
doesn't get the message, Mel. That's  
dangerous in a man.

MEL  
But it turns out he's kind of nice.  
And smart.

FRANKIE  
Smart's not everything. Nor is sexy.  
Or British.

MEL

What?

FRANKIE

Just steer clear.

MEL

So because you live in some self-imposed monastery...

BONG! of Mel's phone on the counter. She checks. Her eyes shoot open.

MEL (cont'd)

Oh my god! Oh my god! You're right! He's a creep! He -- he just sent me a picture of his -- his --

FRANKIE

His what?! That little...

Frankie grabs the phone.

**INSERT - Phone screen**

**"Tomorrow's Weather - Sunny, 88."**

**BACK TO SCENE**

Mel grins. Frankie, faux bitter, slides the phone back.

**INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Frankie on the couch, red canister of generic potato chips beside her. On the floor, Mel sorts through DVD cases.

MEL

Technically *Ghostbusters* is next in the rotation.

FRANKIE

Skip to *Grease*.

MEL

John Travolta? Yuck.

FRANKIE

Hey, he was the hottest guy on the planet until he went hoo hoo.

MEL

You talk to that school yet?

FRANKIE

Et tu, Brute? Sheesh. Tomorrow.

Mel nods, wary. Been down this road before.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

What?

MEL

I just want you to mean it this time.

FRANKIE

Why, you suddenly too good for--  
 (checks the canister)  
 --Bingles?

MEL

I'm serious.

FRANKIE

Yes, mother. Money isn't everything.  
 Long as we have each other, you and  
 me against the world, remember?

**INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT - MEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Small room teeming with posters from Einstein sticking out his tongue to Yo-Yo Ma to The Beatles. In the corner, a cracked violin case and tilted music stand.

Mel lies on her bed, arm over her eyes, phone near her head, speaker on, playing softly.

MRS. JACOBS (O.S.)

(over the speaker)

The cost includes transportation to Phoenix, lodging for three nights, and meals. Let me know soon if you can make it. We're very proud of you.

CELL PHONE LADY (O.S.)

To replay the message, press one.

A glutton for punishment, she presses one.

MRS. JACOBS (O.S.)

Hi, Mel. It's Mrs. Jacobs. We've...

**INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Late. At the counter, Frankie inspects an envelope from "Greenbaum & Associates" from Newark, New Jersey. Hands shaking, she opens it, pulls out a letter.

Reads. Her chin quivers.

**INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT - FRANKIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Frankie, on the floor, pulls a tattered photo from a shoe box -- LITTLE FRANKIE (10, cute) next to her mom EMILY Bloom (40, youthful, smiling), Statue of Liberty behind them.

She puts it aside, pulls another out. Same setting, Little Frankie with her arm around smiling LITTLE BOBBY (8, pudgy).

Next, the cut out of a news article -- "West Orange Woman, Mother Of Two, In Deadly Crash"

Finally, she pulls out one more photo, same setting -- MARTIN BLOOM (52, domineering, forced half smile). Her breath catches.

**INT. MARTIN'S CAR - DAY (FLASHBACK)**

Parked. Young Frankie, Alanis t-shirt on, readies to get out, backpack over her shoulder, guitar case in hand. From the driver's seat, Martin (green maintenance uni) calls out--

MARTIN  
 Don't get a ride after practice, OK?  
 (looks off)  
 I'll, uh, I'll pick you up.

**INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT - FRANKIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT)**

She jumps up, bolts.

**INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)**

She runs into the bathroom. SOUND OF PUKING.

**INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

She lights a match, tosses it into the kitchen sink where the letter awaits. As it crumples, we see a few words -- "cancer" and "visit" and "\$100,000."



**EXT. CLARK COUNTY HIGH/INT. FRANKIE'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY**

Frankie -- jeans, sleepless -- and Mel pull up.

FRANKIE  
1200?! Seriously, Mel, what have I  
said about day drinking?

MEL  
But it could lead to a scholarship!

FRANKIE  
What do you want me to say exactly?

MEL  
I could ask Dad for extra next month.

FRANKIE  
No way! We don't take money from--

MEL  
Men, I get it, but it's for me, not  
you, and he's not just some man. He's  
my father.

FRANKIE  
That's just a word.

MEL  
I'd go to someone else but his  
parents are dead, your parents are  
dead. I don't have aunts or uncles.

FRANKIE  
(looks away, guilty)  
I know. I'm sorry.

MEL  
It's not your fault, I'm just saying.

FRANKIE  
You do this, he'll think we're in  
trouble. Then he'll try to take you  
away like before.

MEL  
Yeah, right. He'd never want me.

Frankie sighs, leans over, kisses Mel's head.

FRANKIE

That's not true, honey. It's just --  
for him life's a string of  
possessions. Art, cars, women. Add a  
daughter to the mix.

Mel pulls away, grabs the door handle.

MEL

Gee, I feel so much better.

FRANKIE

Honey, wait, I'm trying here.  
Everything I -- I...

Stops, dazed, as Martin's voice floats into her head.

MARTIN (V.O. IN HER HEAD)

Everything I do, I do for you kids.  
Everything.

MEL

Mom?

Frankie, shaken, can't speak.

MEL

Ohhhh-kay then.

Mel shoves out.

**EXT./INT. SPEEDEE MART - DAY**

Gas station and food mart, empty but for Frankie, red vest  
on, behind the counter, on her phone, and a nervous CHAD  
(17, short, pimply) at the beer fridge in back.

FRANKIE

A good deal? For who, Bill Gates?  
There must be some program for  
parents who can't afford it.

MRS. JACOBS (O.S.)

Look, we'd love to have her there but  
with budget cuts, there's nothing we  
can do, Missus--

FRANKIE

Mizz.

MRS. JACOBS

There's nothing we can do.

FRANKIE

Bet you never say that to the  
basketball players who can't afford  
new sneakers, do you?

MRS. JACOBS

Now, Miss Bloom--

Frankie smacks the phone screen. Chad approaches, glances at  
a running car, plops down a six-pack. She looks him over.

FRANKIE

Seriously?

CHAD

What? I'm 21.

He fumbles with his wallet.

FRANKIE

Born?

CHAD

2002.

DING! of a bell on the front door. They ignore it. He shoves  
an ID at her, looks furtively away. She studies the ID.

FRANKIE

What's your birthday Otis...Redding?  
Seriously?

CHAD

What? June -- July -- July 3rd.

FRANKIE

Says here you're six two.

CHAD

(on tiptoes)  
Oh, it -- it does?

She leans in, nods towards the window.

FRANKIE

Look, McLovin, I get you're trying to  
impress some girl out there in the  
backseat and my shift's almost over  
so I'm tempted to turn the other  
cheek, but beer or no beer, you're  
not getting laid. She's using you,  
sweetie. So stop trying so hard.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
 Find someone who appreciates you for  
 who you are. It's not easy, I know.  
 I'm still waiting for my--

YOUNG MAN  
 God, whatever.

He scoots away empty handed. BZZZ of her phone from behind.  
 She turns, checks the phone.

**INSERT - Phone screen**

**Text from Mel: "Rummikub tonight? You're going down, lady."**

**BACK TO SCENE**

She grins, taps.

BOBBY (O.S.)  
 Used to try the beer thing myself.  
 Back then you'd get away with it if  
 you begged hard enough.

Still not facing front, she finishes her text.

FRANKIE  
 Those were the days, I guess.

BOBBY (O.S.)  
 They sure were. Frankie.

She spins to face BOBBY BLOOM (41, tall, pricey suit, dark  
 sunglasses). Peers closer. He removes the glasses.

Her eyes spring open, jaw drops...and she ices over.

FRANKIE  
 Inez! I'm leaving!

She grabs her phone and purse as INEZ (40s, Latinx, red  
 vest) emerges from the back, looks Bobby up and down.

INEZ  
 Damn. I'd be up outta here, too.  
 Gonna introduce me?

FRANKIE  
 Sure. Inez? Meet my fucking brother.

**EXT. SPEEDEE MART - DAY**

Frankie emerges in a fury, Bobby chasing after.

BOBBY

Whoa, slow down. You already ran away from me once, remember?

She stops, turns, approaches him, finger wagging.

FRANKIE

I called your school, your friends, even the house when I knew he'd be gone but you never called back!

BOBBY

I was scared he'd find out. I was just a kid.

FRANKIE

So was I! Easy to forget since I was playing wife and mother while you two ganged up on me every chance you got. "Listen to her, Bobby. She thinks she's gonna be a famous singer or a rich lawyer. Thinks she's smarter than us. Better than us. But she's a dreamer. Just like your mother." And you? You nodded. Lapped it up.

BOBBY

I didn't know what else to do. And I never saw him again after I left for college. I never went back.

FRANKIE

Smart.

BOBBY

But you couldn't even make it that far, Frankie. You just took off and wouldn't tell me why.

FRANKIE

You couldn't have handled it.

BOBBY

I can now.

They reach their cars, her Corolla, his BMW convertible.

BOBBY (cont'd)

I chased after you that day but you just kept driving.

FRANKIE

Bullshit.

She tears open her door, then pauses.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
Look, I know why you're here, and the  
answer's no, not interested, not now,  
not ever, so just go back to  
wherever.

BOBBY  
Upper West Side. Got a wife. A kid.

FRANKIE  
And a shirt that could cover my rent  
so congratulations, you've got life  
all figured out.

She falls into the front seat.

BOBBY  
Come on, you read the letter.

FRANKIE  
And set it on fire. Literally.

She tears through her purse for keys.

BOBBY  
But a hundred grand each! He's only  
five hours from here. Some facility  
in Scottsdale.

FRANKIE  
Soon he'll be somewhere way hotter  
than Scottsdale.

BOBBY  
All we have to do is both show up, be  
in a room with him for an hour. I  
know you need the money.

FRANKIE  
Of course I need the fucking money.

She finds keys, jams one in the ignition.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
Know why? 'Cause of him. The man you  
want to see. The man who fucked me up  
so bad I have to work jobs that make  
my brain atrophy while I chow down on  
dollar store hot dogs!

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
(takes a breath)  
But I have it all under control. I'm  
gonna fix it. In spite of him.

BOBBY  
So take his money. Make it easier on  
yourself. I mean, this car alone--

FRANKIE  
My car's fine.

She tries to start it -- CUNKUNKUNK...and nothing. She bangs  
the dashboard.

BOBBY  
And that apartment.

FRANKIE  
How do you know about my apartment?!

BOBBY  
I work in real estate. I know people  
down here. Look, I really need this  
money too, Frank. I'm in trouble.

She tries again -- CUNKUNKUNK. Zilch.

BOBBY (cont'd)  
My business is flat-lining, I made  
some bad investments, and now I owe  
the wrong people.

FRANKIE  
Sounds familiar.

She yanks her door to close it, but he grabs on.

BOBBY  
If my wife finds out, I'm finished.

FRANKIE  
Let go.

BOBBY  
Think of my kid, Frankie. She'll take  
him from me. You know what it's like  
to be scared someone's going to take  
your kid away?

She hesitates, then shoves the thought aside.

FRANKIE  
 You don't let go of this door, I  
 swear to Christ.

BOBBY  
 If you won't think of my kid then  
 think of yours.

She seethes, slowly stands, glares, inches from his face.

FRANKIE  
 The last thing I want is for my  
 daughter to get sucked into our  
 cesspool of shitty genes.

BOBBY  
 What genes? She's never even met her  
 uncle. Doesn't she wonder why?

FRANKIE  
 Not when she doesn't know he exists!

He winces. She plops down again, exhausted.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
 See why we've stayed apart for 25  
 years? He poisoned us against each  
 other. And now you expect him to do  
 what -- beg for forgiveness and write  
 a check? He's evil, Bobby. Every  
 syllable that comes out of his mouth  
 will hit you in the chest like a  
 bullet. No amount of money is worth  
 that. So just let him decay in some  
 shit-smelling nursing home, go back  
 to the city, and move on with your  
 life. Forget me. Forget this. Forget  
 him. That's what I did.

BOBBY  
 And look at you now.

Frankie SLAMS shut the door.

Above the radio, a white piece of tape with writing on it --  
 "Joleen" an

**INT. FRANKIE'S CAR - DAY (CONTINUOUS)**

d a heart drawn beside it.



BOBBY

We deserve that money, Frankie. Mom would've thought so. And she's part of this, too. More than you know.

She pauses, eyes her brother, tries the car one last time -- CUNKUNKUNK and HMMMMM -- voila!

BOBBY (cont'd)

I'm at the Hilton on the Strip 'til Saturday.

She wipes away a tear, pulls out of her spot.

BOBBY (cont'd)

You're not the only victim here! You don't know what he did to me, too. You left me alone with him, Frankie! You owe me! You fucking owe me!

She drives toward the lot entrance, eyes him diminishing in her rear-view mirror.

**EXT./INT. MARTIN'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

In a rear-view mirror, teary YOUNG BOBBY (14, pudgy, boxers on) runs into the alley, watches, calls out silently.

YOUNG FRANKIE (17, teary, disheveled) navigates her father's El Camino down the bumpy alley behind a string of rickety twin houses, glances at the rear-view mirror, Young Bobby yelling for her, shrinking.

She flips up the mirror so she can't see him anymore.

Her PHONE BUZZES from her passenger seat. She taps.

WOMAN (O.S.)

(on speakerphone)

Ms. Bloom? This is Beverly Clark from Las Vegas Community College. You called earlier to speak about our paralegal program?

FRANKIE

Look, it's not a good time.

WOMAN (O.S.)

(on the phone)

Oh. Well, we're filling up fast for next term so--

Frankie shoves it off the seat.

**INT. MACMULLAN'S PUB - NIGHT**

Cozy neighborhood bar and grill. Frankie, Sheldon and Lois in a booth with drinks, Lois in a suit, Sheldon overly fashioned, Frankie in knockoffs.

LOIS  
Maybe life's telling you something.

FRANKIE  
That I'm a horrible mother?

SHELDON  
Wasn't gonna say anything, but--

LOIS  
Sheldon! I mean sometimes we need to revisit the past.

FRANKIE  
Nothing will make me step foot in a room with that monster.

LOIS  
You blame him for everything.

FRANKIE  
Because it's his fault!

LOIS  
But if there's a chance for progress...

FRANKIE  
There's never progress with my family. Only pain. And it keeps on giving.

A hand plops a huge plate of nachos on the table. Sheldon digs in.

SHELDON  
What'd he do to you anyway? Your dad.

LOIS  
Sheldon!

FRANKIE  
Doesn't matter. Too late to fix it. The past is the past.

LOIS

Not according to my estate clients. When parents die, the real reason families fight isn't about money -- it's about unresolved issues.

FRANKIE

There are unresolved issues, and then there's the shit that went down in my house. You have no idea.

LOIS

I didn't speak to my mother for 25 years, Frankie.

Thrown, Frankie takes a nacho, trying to play it off.

FRANKIE

I can't do it, Lois. I'm sorry. He'll think it means I forgive him.

LOIS

It's not about him. It's about you. And your brother. You'd be forgiving yourself.

FRANKIE

For what?

LOIS

For leaving.

Frankie looks briefly into Lois's eyes -- this hits.

BOBBY (V.O., PRELAP)

Let me just talk to him, Dana.

**INT. HILTON - HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT**

Swanky room, TV playing in silence. Bobby lies atop the bed, clothed, eats room service shrimp, talks on his phone.

BOBBY

What do you mean why? He's my kid so have a fucking...what bullies?... Look, he's got to stand up for himself, I know firsthand what can happen if you don't, now put -- Dana?

He looks at the phone, heaves it away, closes his eyes.

**INT. BLOOMFIELD HIGH - LOCKER ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACKS)**

Young Bobby quickly changes in the far corner of a raucous boy's locker room.

MIKE TERMINI (15, short, tough) snaps his towel at JAY RYMAN (14, scraggly).

JAY  
Stop, dickhead!

Alpha male COLE HANSON (16, movie-star looks) approaches with a gym bag. Young Bobby's eyes go wide.

COLE  
Hey.

YOUNG BOBBY  
Um. Hey.

Cole watches the towel-snappers. Bobby watches him.

COLE  
Assholes, right?

YOUNG BOBBY  
Oh. Yeah. They live up the street from me. We used to be friends when we were little, but...

He looks away, embarrassed to be rambling.

COLE  
Some kids get dickier as they get older. I'm Cole. I'm new this year.

YOUNG BOBBY  
I know. I mean I've seen you around.

COLE  
You're Bobby, right?

Wait, Cole Hanson knows him?

COLE (cont'd)  
This place is alright. Better than my last school, I guess.

YOUNG BOBBY  
Wh-Where was that?

COLE  
The Bronx. My mom changed jobs.

YOUNG BOBBY  
Yeah? That's cool.

COLE  
Hey, we should hang out sometime. I haven't made a lot of friends since I moved here.

YOUNG BOBBY  
You haven't?

COLE  
Nah. I'm pretty shy.

YOUNG BOBBY  
(delighted and terrified)  
Me too.

COLE  
There's this cabin in the woods off West Orange Avenue. I go there to think. It's quiet. Nobody around.

He pulls off his shirt. Young Bobby tries not to stare.

COLE (cont'd)  
So today after school?

YOUNG BOBBY  
Um, yeah, OK.

COLE  
Sweet. I'll bring my boom box. Play some tunes and who knows?

Cole shrugs, flashes his million-dollar smile.

**EXT. WOODS/CABIN - DAY**

Young Bobby rides his bike on a dirt trail, reaches a rickety cabin. **Hard rock beats THUMP** inside.

He leans his bike against a tree, hesitates, glances behind -- something's off but this is Cole Hanson. He approaches, takes a breath, grazes the door. CREEEEAAAANK...

**INT. HILTON - HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT)**

Bobby swings to the side of the bed, head in hands.

**INT. APARTMENT - LEASING OFFICE - DAY**

Frankie, pink slip in hand, sits across a messy desk from JOANNE COHLE (50s, large, tough), who studies paperwork.

FRANKIE

Look, I have a daughter.

JOANNE

As do I. One week, Ms. Bloom.

FRANKIE

What would it do to her to be out on the street?

JOANNE

(looks up)

Girls are resilient. You know what I mean. Don't you?

Frankie eyes her, thrown. Joanne looks back to her paperwork, end of discussion.

JOANNE (cont'd)

One. Week.

**INT. JACKPOT DINER - DAY**

Frankie works the register behind the counter, studies the cash-stuffed drawer. CHUCK SANDERS (40s, tattooed) slips behind her lugging a large cardboard box.

She slams the drawer shut.

FRANKIE

Hey, Chuck?

CHUCK

Busy.

FRANKIE

We're, uh, we're low in the drawer.

CHUCK

What? I filled it this morning.

FRANKIE

Guess there are more tourists with bad taste than we thought.

He eyes her, considers, leans in, whispers--

CHUCK

I gotta roll for the day. Just get it from the safe. Combo's in my top left desk drawer, taped under the stapler.

She nods quickly.

CHUCK (cont'd)

Frankie? Don't be dumb. Please.

Her eyes go wide at Uncle Lenny's words haunting her again.

CHUCK (cont'd)

What, I'm kidding. But not really.

He heads off, Frankie watching, bewildered.

**INT. JACKPOT DINER - OFFICE - DAY**

Tiny office, dented desk, lockers. Frankie kneels before a safe, purse by her side. Shakily, she spins the dial.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

This isn't like at the bar.

CLICK. She opens the door -- packets of cash.

FRANKIE (V.O.) (cont'd)

Just take only what you need.

She stares, considers her next move. Tentatively grabs a pack of 20s, slips it in her purse. Stops.

FRANKIE (V.O.) (cont'd)

Then straight to the roulette table.  
All on black. Or red.

She takes another. More. All that'll fit.

FRANKIE (V.O.) (cont'd)

You win, put back what you took, take the rest home. Rent covered. Mel's orchestra covered. No harm, no foul.

Closes the door, spins the dial, stands. Breathes.

FRANKIE (V.O.) (cont'd)

And if you lose?

She eyes the purse. The safe.

FRANKIE (V.O.) (cont'd)  
If you lose...

Purse. Safe.

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
When have you ever won, Frankie?

In a flash, she kneels at the safe, spins the dial, opens the door, yanks money from her purse, places it back inside.

FRANKIE  
(mutters)  
When have you ever fucking won?

She shuts the door, hops up, scoots out of there.

And the safe door swings open...juuuuuuust a crack.

**INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Frankie enters. On the coffee table, textbooks and notebooks but no Mel. WATER RUNS from a bathroom.

BONG! -- Mel's cell phone on the floor. Frankie glances at the hall, kneels, checks the phone screen. Her eyes go wide.

**INSERT - PHONE SCREEN**

**Note from "Dad" -- "Sure! How much do you need?"**

**BACK TO SCENE**

Another glance back...and Frankie deletes the note.

**INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT - FRANKIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Late. She lies awake in her twin bed, Googles "Hilton Las Vegas" on her phone. Then tosses it away, turns over.

**INT. JACKPOT DINER - DAY**

Dressed for work, Frankie enters. Sheldon runs up.

SHELDON  
What the fuck did you do?

FRANKIE  
What?



SHELDON  
Chuck's on the warpath.

**INT. JACKPOT DINER - BACK OFFICE - DAY**

At the desk, Chuck examines receipts. Frankie zips in, sits.

FRANKIE  
Hey, hi, I wanted to chat anyway, see  
I need a little advance, I know, I  
know, but I never ask for this and  
I'm a little late on rent and also my  
kid got picked for this--

CHUCK  
Do you think you're smarter than me?

He finally looks up.

FRANKIE  
This true/false or multiple choice?

CHUCK  
I've kept you on for a year even  
though you come late, leave early,  
insult customers.

FRANKIE  
Chuck, you've met our customers.

He WHAMS the desk!

CHUCK  
I trusted you!

FRANKIE  
What do you mean trust-ed?

CHUCK  
I mean you're fired.

Frankie leans in, speaks in a low panic.

FRANKIE  
Look, please, I swear I don't know  
what you're talking about.

CHUCK

I come in this morning, check the safe, and it turns out somebody decided to give themselves an advance. Now you wouldn't know anything about that, would you?

FRANKIE

What?! No! In fact I didn't even need cash for the drawer after all.

CHUCK

They warned me. The casino, the bar, the Circle-K. Always ended up a few bucks short. But I thought, she seems nice. Bright. Maybe too bright for this job but everyone has their shit so out of the goodness of my fucking heart I brought you on. Now I let my guard down for two seconds--

FRANKIE

(teary)

But it wasn't me! I did the right thing! Have you talked to Glenda? I bet it was Glenda. Fits the profile. When she's not snoring in the corner she nabs sugar packets, forks, anything not nailed down.

CHUCK

Go.

FRANKIE

Chuck--

CHUCK

And don't be surprised if the cops knock at your door. Now go!

**INT. FRANKIE'S CAR - DAY**

In the diner parking lot, Frankie cries as her radio softly plays classic rock.

DJ (O.S.)

(on the radio)

97.1 The Rock and here's Billy Joel with "Only The Good Die Young."

She glares at the radio.

**INT. MARTIN'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY (FLASHBACK)**

In the back seat of an Olds Cutlass, Young Frankie (15, black dress, eyes closed) and Young Bobby (13, suit) grips a program -- "In Loving Memory of Melissa Bloom" on front.

Up front Martin, stoic, black suit on, drives.

Young Frankie reaches down, pulls up a Discman, wire plugged in with connected earpieces. She offers Bobby one, adjusts the other in her ear, hits Play. **Billy Joel's "Only The Good Die Young" KICKS IN LOUD -- we're listening too.**

They bob heads, smile. Martin eyes them in the rear-view.

**INT. FRANKIE'S CAR - DAY (BACK TO PRESENT)**

She WHAMS the radio off, dials her phone.

FRANKIE

Fucking fuck.

(phone to ear)

Bobby Bloom's room, please.

(waits)

Where are you, it's Frankie, look, the shit's hit the fan at work and things are shaky on the housing front and my life's basically going to hell so I guess I'm in but I'm not saying a word, just a fly on the wall, and I'm gonna need money from you up front, take care of some things.

(checks herself in the mirror)

To be clear here, I'm not doing any of this for me. I'm doing it for my kid. OK? It's about her. And speaking of her, one more thing.

**INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT - MEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Frankie sits on Mel's bed as Mel flies around the room, tosses clothes into a duffel bag.

MEL

What if I forget something? I know I'll forget something. And what if Joleen doesn't make it? I don't think putting duct tape over the red engine light actually fixes the engine.

FRANKIE  
We're not exactly taking Joleen.

MEL  
Then who's driving?

FRANKIE  
Oh. Guy from work. One of the cooks.

MEL  
God, this is so surreal. I've never actually been anywhere before. Or stayed in a nice hotel.

FRANKIE  
What about our weekend in Reno?

MEL  
Motel 6 is no friggin' Fairfield Inn.

FRANKIE  
Listen, honey, I want to make sure you understand the plan.

MEL  
You drop me in Phoenix, come home, and I take the grimy Super Bus back when camp ends in three days.

FRANKIE  
Between driving you there and the grimy Super Bus we're saving a ton. And I packed you breakfast bars so no brioche French toast for you, got it?

Mel stops, grabs Frankie in for a hug.

MEL  
Thank you for this. I can't believe your boss gave you an advance. It's like he trusts you or something.

Frankie lets out a nervous snicker.

**EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY**

Frankie and Mel, overnight bag and violin case, wait in the lot. Bobby's BMW pulls in, rolls towards them. Mel gapes.

FRANKIE  
Oh. Right. Independently wealthy.

Bobby stops. Mel runs ahead. Frankie sighs, follows.

**INT. BOBBY'S CAR - DAY (PARKED, THEN MOVING)**

Bobby, in his dark sunglasses, watches with a grin as Mel hops in back, Frankie in front.

BOBBY

Road trip!

MEL

I'm Melody.

BOBBY

Perfect name, considering how your mom here--

FRANKIE

Ahem! This is Bobby, the cook at the diner who likes to run his mouth.

Bobby drives through the lot.

BOBBY

(to Frankie)

No change of clothes?

FRANKIE

Like I told you, we drop her off, stop to -- to eat -- and come home.

BOBBY

Five hours each way, Frankie.

FRANKIE

I don't like hotel rooms.

BOBBY

Who doesn't like hotel rooms?

MEL

Actually, you guys should stay at my hotel tonight. Then Bobby can treat us to a fancy breakfast. Brioche French toast, right Mom? How'd you get independently wealthy? And why do you cook at a diner?

FRANKIE

Enough, Mel.

BOBBY

Nah, I like how this kid thinks. She has a question, she asks it.

FRANKIE

(to Mel)

Why don't you get some rest, honey? You didn't sleep a wink last night.

As Bobby nears the parking lot exit, a police car enters. Frankie, alarmed, sinks down in her seat.

BOBBY

Classy place you got here.

MEL

Oh, it's not that bad. They're probably after the drug dealer in 201 or the hooker in 403.

FRANKIE

Mel? Enough.

Frankie anxiously watches them in her side mirror.

**EXT. VEGAS ROAD - DAY**

Dense traffic, light after light.

**INT. BOBBY'S CAR - DAY (MOVING)**

Mel sleeps, headphones on. Frankie and Bobby speak low.

BOBBY

Man, traffic's worse than Manhattan. Why'd you end up here?

Nothing.

BOBBY (cont'd)

Five hours, Frank.

She sighs in defeat, glances at Mel, and they speak low.

FRANKIE

After I -- left -- I headed for LA, ran out of money in Vegas, worked shitty jobs, rented shitty rooms in shitty places that make our place now look like Shangri-La.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

Eventually I got my GED, worked more jobs while I enrolled at UNLV part-time...and fell for a Physics professor, a handsome, brilliant ass wipe -- mistake. The professor, not the school, even though I flunked out. But out of that came Mel, definitely not a mistake. Been running in place ever since.

BOBBY

Where's Dr. Ass Wipe now?

FRANKIE

Guest lecturing at Yale and screwing some hapless grad assistant from one of the flyover states. We haven't talked in two years.

BOBBY

Then how do you know about him?

FRANKIE

(nods to the back)

They talk. More than I want to know.

BOBBY

Did you love him?

FRANKIE

First time I met him, he saw my initials on my wallet -- FSB. That's you, he said. Funny, sad and beautiful. Right then? I fell in love. For a little bit.

MEL (O.S.)

Can we stop soon? I'm starved.

They eye each other, fall silent.

**INT. CRACKER BARREL - DAY**

Huge dining room, wood interior. In a booth, Mel and Frankie devour pancakes and bacon while Bobby watches, stunned, from behind his plate of egg whites.

BOBBY

You people need to get out more.

MEL  
This tastes different than the diner.  
It's got...flavor. No offense, Bobby.

BOBBY  
Why would I be offended?

FRANKIE  
Don't listen to her, chef.

BOBBY  
Oh, right.

MEL  
So what's she like as a waitress?

FRANKIE  
Bobby, don't.

BOBBY  
Your mom? Polite. Caring.

MEL  
You must be confused. I mean the  
woman sitting with us at this table.

BOBBY  
She was great. Customers loved her.

MEL  
What do you mean loved, past tense?

Frankie glares at Bobby. Bobby mouths "sorry."

MEL (cont'd)  
Mom?

FRANKIE  
Listen, honey, I've kind of decided  
to make a change.

MEL  
(fork down)  
So you got canned again.

FRANKIE  
No, I mean technically yes, but it  
was a misunderstanding. We'll be  
fine. I have a plan.

MEL  
Always do.







FRANKIE  
I wanted to tell you a thousand  
times, but we come from -- bad stock.

MEL  
So? Everyone's family is messed up.

FRANKIE  
I know.

MEL  
Now he just appears out of the blue.  
Where's he even from?

FRANKIE  
New York.

MEL  
Why is he here?

FRANKIE  
To see a man. My father.

MEL  
You mean the one who died in a car  
crash with your mother?! She stashed  
away somewhere too?

FRANKIE  
She's really dead.

MEL  
But my grandfather survived.

FRANKIE  
Look, honey, he's bad. Real bad.

MEL  
I don't care! He's a relative. Anyone  
else I should know about? An aunt in  
Sacramento? A cousin in Seattle.

FRANKIE  
There's nobody else, sweetie.

MEL  
Jesus. I have no idea where I come  
from or who I am.

FRANKIE  
Relatives don't define who you are.

MEL  
So you're going to see him, too?

FRANKIE  
I didn't want to but Bobby -- asked.

MEL  
What did he do that was so bad? Did he, like, hit you or something?

FRANKIE  
No.

MEL  
Did he, you know, touch you?

FRANKIE  
No, but he was on the sidelines, calling the plays.

MEL  
What does that mean?

FRANKIE  
Look, can we just go back?

MEL  
I'm going with you to see him.

FRANKIE  
Uh uh. No way. We're dropping you off in Phoenix like we planned.

Mel spins, heads back toward Cracker Barrel. Frankie chases.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
Mel!

MEL  
I need to meet him, Mom. If you hate him, I'm sure I'll hate him too, but I deserve to know my family.

She stomps away.

FRANKIE  
(mutters)  
Sorry, kiddo. Ain't happening.

**EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY/INT. BOBBY'S CAR - DAY (MOVING)**

Bobby's car rides along an endless expanse of road surrounded by bare desert and majestic mountains.

Mel, in back, stares out, still steamed.

Frankie, eyes closed, wishes it all away.

Bobby admires the spectacle.

BOBBY

Man, this is something. You can really think out here.

FRANKIE

Thinking's overrated. How much longer?

BOBBY

Three and a half hours.

FRANKIE

Christ. I just want this to be over. I'm so tired.

BOBBY

I did make a reservation at a resort in Scottsdale. Just in case.

MEL

Resort?

FRANKIE

Jesus, Bobby. Even if we were going to stay overnight, which we're not, I can't afford a resort.

BOBBY

Already paid for.

MEL

Now Mother, listen to rich Uncle Bobby.

FRANKIE

Like I said, Bobby and I are coming home tonight and you're staying in Phoenix. End of story.

MEL

Total buzz kill.

BOBBY  
Hey, what do you know about buzzes?

FRANKIE  
Nothing. She knows nothing.

Bobby winks at Mel in the mirror, who rolls her eyes.

**EXT. GAS STATION - DAY**

At a remote gas station, Frankie paces near Bobby's car, phone to ear, as defeated Mel sits in back, window down.

FRANKIE  
(low)  
Like I said I'm not available for a few days. Then we'll get this straightened out.

OFFICER (O.S., ON PHONE)  
Never said there was anything to straighten out, ma'am.

FRANKIE  
OK, Colombo, you got me.

OFFICER (O.S., ON PHONE)  
But if there was, you're technically a fugitive.

FRANKIE  
Fine, when I get home you can throw me in the paddy wagon.

OFFICER (O.S., ON PHONE)  
Where are you now? Out of state?

She bites her lip.

OFFICER (O.S., ON PHONE) (cont'd)  
All I need's a judge's order to track your location. You're making this worse on yourself.

FRANKIE  
My specialty. I'll be in touch.

She hangs up, takes a huge breath, tries to recover.

MEL (O.S.)  
One night at a resort, Mom. One friggin'' night.

Frankie approaches the car.

MEL  
School. Home. I work hard, don't I?

FRANKIE  
Of course.

MEL  
So I deserve this.

FRANKIE  
It's not about deserving, honey.

MEL  
Please? I won't miss anything at camp. First rehearsal's not until tomorrow afternoon.

Bobby emerges from the side of the building. Frankie speaks quick and low.

FRANKIE  
No. Even staying the night with us is dangerous. You can't trust these people, Mel. Not even him.

She nods towards Bobby. Mel slumps back, angry.

**INT. BOBBY'S CAR - DAY (MOVING)**

They drive in the desert, Mel with headphones on.

BOBBY  
You mind another stop?

FRANKIE  
That was only a half hour.

BOBBY  
Not that kind of stop.

He nods at a passing sign - "Sedona - 1 mile." Headphones off, Mel's part of the action.

FRANKIE  
Huh. She always talked about coming here.

MEL  
Who?

BOBBY  
Then I guess it's time she did.

MEL  
She?

FRANKIE  
What do you mean?

Bobby nods at the glove box.

BOBBY  
Open it.

Frankie opens the glove box, pulls out a baggie of gray ashes, confused. Then, she gapes at her brother.

MEL  
Is that weed?

Frankie stares at the bag in wonder.

FRANKIE  
No, honey. It's your grandmother.

**EXT. RED ROCK VIEWING AREA - PARKING LOT - DAY**

They pull into a parking lot with few cars. Mel pops out, runs to the edge of the viewing area, stares at the red mountains in the distance.

MEL  
Oh. My. God.

Frankie and Bobby -- baggie in hand -- follow her.

FRANKIE  
Mom loved all that crystals and energy crap.

Mel spots the baggie, holds up a finger, runs to the car.

BOBBY  
You think she and Dad ever loved each other?

FRANKIE  
Remember that trip to the city when I was 10? I saw him take her hand in Central Park. Something, at least.



BOBBY  
I just remember the bad stuff.

FRANKIE  
Lots to pick from.

BOBBY  
Ready?

Mel re-joins them, plops something down beside her.

Bobby offers Frankie the baggie.

BOBBY (cont'd)  
You do it.

FRANKIE  
We should both do it.

MEL  
I want to, too.

Bobby pulls out his wallet and the photo of Emily Bloom, hands it to Mel, who warmly studies it.

MEL (cont'd)  
Wow.

He pulls out a handful of ashes.

BOBBY  
Hope you like the view, Mom.

He flings it -- gray dust flutters around them. Frankie takes the baggie.

FRANKIE  
Don't go into town, Mom. I hear it's a tourist trap.

She tosses some out, hands it to Mel, who turns the bag over and shakes the rest free.

MEL  
We never met, but I wish we did.

Nothing more to say, they all stare out again. Mel tries to hand the photo back to Bobby.

BOBBY  
Keep it, kid.

Mel nods, touched. Frankie fights tears, ambles away from the others, tries to pull herself together.

MOURNFUL VIOLIN MUSIC RISES. All eyes on Mel playing her violin with deep concentration. Bobby sidles over to Frankie, whispers.

BOBBY (cont'd)  
Holy shit, she's good.

FRANKIE  
Better musician than I ever was.

BOBBY  
Nah, I used to love listening to you.

FRANKIE  
I always thought it bugged you.

BOBBY  
It was an elixir. Especially that last year.

The song stops. GENTLE APPLAUSE from Bobby, Frankie and a few tourists nearby.

FRANKIE  
That was amazing, honey.

Mel gently rests her violin in its case.

Bobby's phone BUZZES in his pocket. He checks.

BOBBY  
I gotta take this.  
(whispers to Mel)  
Hey, that music -- like mother, like daughter I guess, huh?

Mel eyes him, baffled. He winks, heads for the car as Frankie approaches Mel.

FRANKIE  
Better take that out of the sun.  
Honey?

Mel studies the landscape. Frankie takes the violin case.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
I'm glad you were a part of this.  
And, um, one night. Then first thing in the morning, off to Phoenix, you're not coming with us to--

MEL  
OK, Mom. OK.

Frankie leaves. Mel smiles softly.

**EXT. RED ROCKS VIEWING AREA - PARKING LOT (OUTSIDE BOBBY'S CAR) - DAY**

Bobby leans against his car, talks desperately on the phone.

BOBBY  
I'm doing my best here.

Frankie approaches from behind but freezes, listens.

BOBBY (cont'd)  
I want it to be real, too, so just  
let me get through this. Don't give  
up on me. Please.

Frankie sneaks off.

**INT. BOBBY'S CAR - DAY (MOVING)**

Back on the highway, Mel has her eyes closed and headphones on. Bobby, mum, sad eyes, just stares.

FRANKIE  
You OK?

BOBBY  
Fine.

A beat.

FRANKIE  
How are things at home?

BOBBY  
Oh, you know.

FRANKIE  
I don't actually.

Bobby glances in the rear-view at Mel, speaks low.

BOBBY  
Truth be told, not great.

FRANKIE  
She find out about those investments?

BOBBY  
She found out about something else.

FRANKIE  
Uh oh.

BOBBY  
It's complicated.

FRANKIE  
Men always say that. To me it's  
pretty black and white.

BOBBY  
Marriage is never black and white.

FRANKIE  
What's her name? I mean the  
complication.

MEL (O.S.)  
How much longer?

They turn to her, wide eyed.

MEL  
What?

FRANKIE AND BOBBY  
Nothing!

Mel rolls her eyes, tosses the headphones back on.

FRANKIE  
Well?

BOBBY  
I don't feel like talking about it.

**EXT. SCOTTSDALE STREET - DAY/INT. BOBBY'S CAR - DAY (MOVING)**

They roll past a "Welcome to Scottsdale" sign.

BOBBY  
Welcome to paradise.

An ancient man wobbles by on a shaky bicycle.

FRANKIE  
Yeah, if you're pushing 90.

BOBBY  
You ride a bike, Mel?

MEL  
I'm never allowed.

FRANKIE  
Our area's not safe.

BOBBY  
What's not safe about hookers and  
drug dealers, right kid?

Mel snickers. They approach the long driveway of the "Hyatt  
Regency Gainey Ranch," a sign says, hotel hidden beyond.

**EXT. HYATT - DRIVEWAY - DAY**

Bobby navigates the winding driveway.

FRANKIE  
Always wanted to stay at a place you  
can't see from the road.

They pull up to the hotel lot toll booth. Bobby grabs a  
ticket, the arm rises.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
You have to pay to park?

MEL  
Even if you're staying here?

He pulls through into a huge, busy lot.

BOBBY  
Ever been to Manhattan?

MEL  
Yeah, right.

BOBBY  
(to Frankie)  
You never took her to Manhattan.

MEL  
Never took me east of the Hoover Dam.

BOBBY

(to Mel in the mirror)  
 You'd love the Met. New York  
 Philharmonic. I have season tickets  
 and I don't even like Classical.  
 (eyes Frankie)  
 Maybe you guys'll come east sometime,  
 Mel. We'll go to a concert.

FRANKIE

Bobby, don't.

BOBBY

What, I'm serious.  
 (to Mel)  
 I'll work on her.

Mel shrugs with a tiny smile.

**INT. HYATT - LOBBY - DAY**

They enter a huge, decadent lobby. Mel stares about in awe, then wanders off as Frankie and Bobby hit the line for the front desk.

FRANKIE

You don't have to do this.

BOBBY

I want to.

FRANKIE

I'll need a room with two beds. Mel  
 and I will share.

BOBBY

You can get your own rooms, Frankie.

FRANKIE

I said one.

**INT. HYATT - LOBBY - DAY**

Frankie joins Mel at the back of the lobby, stares out at the massive open-air bar. Beyond the bar, a stunning courtyard and an array of swimming pools.

FRANKIE

He wasn't kidding.

Frankie notices a stool and mic on a stage in the bar, chalkboard with "Open Mic Tonight" against the stool.

Then she comes to.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
Shit. Underwear!

**INT. HYATT - HALLWAY - DAY**

They head down the hall of rooms -- Bobby with an overnight bag, Mel with her backpack and violin case, Frankie with a plastic bag from the hotel gift shop.

They stop at Mel and Frankie's room.

BOBBY  
I'm down a few more. Meet me at the south pool at six. I've got a surprise planned for dinner, ladies!

He winks, heads for his room.

**INT. HYATT - FRANKIE'S AND MEL'S ROOM - DAY**

Frankie and Mel enter a huge room, two beds. Mel flops on one. Frankie examines gift shop underwear and toiletries.

MEL  
I like him.

FRANKIE  
Don't get too chummy.  
(holds up the panties)  
Sweat shop. No question.

MEL  
Why didn't you talk all this time?

FRANKIE  
All we see in each other is our past.

MEL  
He doesn't look at you that way.

FRANKIE  
You don't know what you don't know.

MEL  
What don't I know?

Frankie heads into the bathroom with her bag.

FRANKIE (O.S.)  
What you don't need to know.

Mel follows her, stands in the doorway.

MEL

Bet this is why you won't enroll in school. You can't move forward unless you face your past. Learned that in psych class.

FRANKIE

OK, Freud, stop trying to be the adult in the room all the time.

MEL

So I should just let you self-destruct again? Even Dad said--

Mel catches herself, drops it. Frankie freezes.

FRANKIE

Dad said what?

MEL

Nothing.

Frankie turns to her.

FRANKIE

No, I want to hear, what exactly did father-of-the-year have to say?

MEL

He said I had to look out for you. That you were -- you were delicate.

FRANKIE

Really? Mr. Benevolent said that?

Mel heads to the window, takes in the view. Frankie follows.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

Mel?

MEL

I never said he was benevolent, OK?

FRANKIE

Well he is. I mean, think of your 7th, 10th, and 13th birthdays when he was gonna swing into town and make up for missing your 6th, 9th, and 12th birthdays but, oopsie, he screwed the pooch on those, too.



Mel slumps on the bed.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
You know I bet--  
(clears her throat)  
--I bet you asked him for the money  
even though I explicitly said not to.

Mel stares at her mother, then away, swallowing tears.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
He blew you off, didn't he?

Mel shrugs. Frankie sits beside her.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
Look, this isn't how I intended  
things to turn out. I was like you  
once, believe it or not. Good grades.  
Friends. A future.

MEL  
So what happened?

FRANKIE  
My father happened.

MEL  
What does that even mean?

FRANKIE  
It doesn't matter now.

She tries to pull Mel in for a hug, but Mel pulls away.

MEL  
It seems to matter a lot since you  
blame him for everything.

FRANKIE  
I never said -- just drop it, Mel.

MEL  
What will you do when you see him?

FRANKIE  
Nothing.

MEL  
So you're not gonna yell at him? Tell  
him how terrible he is? Tell him  
where to go?

FRANKIE  
It's a waste of breath.

MEL  
Then why the hell are you here?!

FRANKIE  
Because he's paying us to show up,  
Melody! A lot. Like, life changing.  
Help us finally turn things around.

Mel, stunned, stands.

MEL  
And here I am thinking you were  
actually trying to fix yourself.

FRANKIE  
I just said about the money.

MEL  
Screw the money! I mean dealing with  
what haunts you and keeps you from  
actually making something of your  
life! What happened to "there's more  
to life than money?" You don't  
believe that. You're just...  
transactional!

She storms off, Frankie stymied.

**INT. HYATT - LOBBY - FRONT DESK - DAY**

Mel approaches an ATTENDANT (20s, female).

MEL  
Do you guys have bikes?

**EXT. SCOTTSDALE ROAD - DAY**

Mel slowly pedals down the sidewalk outside the hotel  
grounds on a mountain bike, traffic flying by.

The old man from before rides towards her, nods as he  
passes. Mel smiles at him, then notices a sign up ahead -  
"Scottsdale Cacti Garden."

**INT. CACTI GARDEN - DAY**

Peace and quiet. Bike parked against a wall, Mel roams, entranced, around a walled garden of majestic cacti, each one with a placard identifying the variety.

BONG! -- phone in her pocket. She checks - a picture of dweeby ALAN (16, sweaty, trumpet in hand). She smiles.

**POP OUT** of Mel's phone screen as she walks - a text conversation for us to see.

**Alan -- How's your trip to the 48th state?**

She types back.

**MEL: Eventful.**

Sends.

**Alan: Would love to hear about it sometime...over pizza?**

She bites her lip, thinks...thinks...taps.

**MEL: (thinking emoji)**

Sends, pockets the phone with a tiny grin.

**EXT. HYATT - POOL - NIGHT**

Hint of darkness. Bobby in a lounge chair by a gorgeous lit pool, Frankie and Mel on either side of him. Water TRICKLES DOWN a wall of rocks behind them.

He chomps on a deli sandwich from a Styrofoam container.

Frankie stews in silence, container closed on her lap.

Mel, earbuds in, closed container on the ground, watches two pre-teens frolic in the water.

Bobby looks to each side, tries to break the ice.

BOBBY

Who knew you could find real deli in  
Arizona, huh?

He waves his sandwich. Nothing.

BOBBY (cont'd)

Lotta Jews out here now, I guess.

FRANKIE

Arizona's the new Florida. I mean if Moses knew his people would come back to the desert after everything they went through he would've ridden the next camel out of town.

Bobby laughs. Frankie sinks into herself.

BOBBY

Christ. Two angry bookends.

FRANKIE

We're not exactly seeing eye to eye.

BOBBY

Mothers and daughters, huh?

MEL

So are we Jewish or not?

Frankie and Bobby exchange a surprised glance, turn to Mel.

BOBBY

Technically, yes.

FRANKIE

But we never stepped foot in a synagogue.

BOBBY

At least Mom ate gefilte fish.

MEL

What's that?

BOBBY

You take weird fish you'd never want to eat to begin with, turn it into a blob of meat, and store it in a jar of clear jelly. You eat that, you're Jewish whether you like it or not.

FRANKIE

Now Dad, on the other hand.

BOBBY

Dad didn't believe in anything.

FRANKIE

He believed in money. Which he now has apparently.

MEL  
Is your wife Jewish?

BOBBY  
My wife is a country club Gentile and  
my son's a spiritual blank slate. I  
don't know what's worse.

MEL  
What are their names?

BOBBY  
She's Dana. He's Jaxon. With an X.

MEL  
So his nickname's, what, Jax?

FRANKIE  
Like the cheese balls you eat for  
PMS.

Frankie watches Mel, hopeful for a snicker. Nothing.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
There was a girl in Mel's class named  
Nivea, like the lotion. Right, honey?

Mel ignores her.

MEL  
Jax Bloom. Kind of cool.

A VOICE from the distant outdoor bar.

HIPSTER MC (O.S.)  
Welcome to the Hyatt Gainey Ranch  
Open Mic night. Our first act up,  
actually our only act on the list  
right now -- Janie and Jen!

Scattered, DISTANT APPLAUSE.

FRANKIE  
See? Janie and Jen. Normal names.

BOBBY  
They must be old like us.

A cover of "**Closer To Fine**" by **Indigo Girls** starts. Frankie  
closes her eyes, mesmerized.

BOBBY (cont'd)  
Does every female duo have to cover  
this song?

FRANKIE  
Not a lot of female duets for female  
duos to pick from.

MEL  
Uh, Tegan and Sara? Chloe X Halle?  
Somebody a tad less hackneyed than  
Indigo Girls.

Bobby high-fives Mel.

FRANKIE  
Yeah?  
(to Bobby)  
Tell her I used to play this for her  
in the car all the time. She told me  
she loved it.

MEL  
And tell her that apparently not  
everything you're told is true.

FRANKIE  
And tell her that sometimes the truth  
can be a wrecking ball so it's hard  
to know the right time to let it out.  
(right at Mel)  
But at least it's out now, right?

MEL  
Well it wouldn't even be out if you  
weren't fucking up your life so much.

FRANKIE  
Mel!

BOBBY  
OK! Who wants pickles?

He reaches for the bag. Mel and Frankie stare off in  
opposite directions. Bobby sighs, bites into a pickle.

BOBBY (cont'd)  
Little sweet, little sour. Kind of  
like life, right, you two?

Frankie sits up, stares towards the bar area. An idea hits.

FRANKIE

Know what? I gotta take a walk.

She's up and out.

MEL

Bye bye, Mother. Been a blast.

BOBBY

You're pretty tough on her.

MEL

Believe me, she's earned it.

A COUPLE (30s) accompany a LITTLE GIRL (4) in swimmies to the pool's edge, urge her to get in.

MEL (cont'd)

Must be nice.

BOBBY

What?

MEL

Two parents.

The couple cheers as the delighted girl hops in the water.

BOBBY

I don't know. If one's good and one's bad, the good one always lives in your heart, but the bad one always lives here.

(taps his head)

And that's the one that sticks.

MEL

My dad's bad. Jury's out on Frankie.

BOBBY

She's had some rough times, Mel. Even I don't know the whole story.

MEL

I don't know any of it. There's an entire person locked behind her eyes that she won't let me see.

BOBBY

She has her reasons, kid.

Mel eyes him. He watches the young family.

MEL

What will you say to your -- you  
know -- dad or whatever?

BOBBY

Oh. The truth? I hope. If I have the  
guts. Show him who I really am.

MEL

What do you mean?

He takes a long look at her. The song ends. APPLAUSE.

HIPSTER MC (O.S.)

Next, we have a newbie.

**EXT. HYATT - BAR - NIGHT**

On stage, the HIPSTER MC (27, knit hat) studies a clipboard.

HIPSTER MC

So give it up for -- um -- Nivea?

SCATTERED APPLAUSE.

**EXT. HYATT - POOL - NIGHT**

Bobby and Mel stare at each other.

MEL

What. The actual.

FRANKIE (O.S.)

(distant, over the PA)

Well. You're in for a treat.

**EXT. HYATT - BAR - NIGHT**

Bobby and Mel approach the back. Frankie sits on the stool  
on stage with an acoustic guitar.

FRANKIE

Last time I sang into a microphone,  
some of you weren't even born. It was  
all I wanted to do then. Until real  
life intervened and it wasn't pretty,  
but I digress.

She strums a few notes.



BOBBY  
You really didn't know about her.

Mel, mesmerized, slowly shakes her head.

FRANKIE  
Hey, thanks for lending me your  
guitar -- what's your name?

She nods at the front row.

GUNNER (O.S.)  
Gunner.

FRANKIE  
Course it is, now this goes out to  
two special people here tonight.  
Technically one's more special than  
the other but he's growing on me.

Frankie kicks in with the rollicking OPENING NOTES of **Billy  
Joel's "Only The Good Die Young."**

Bobby glances at Mel, who gapes at her mother in disbelief.

BOBBY  
She used to sing this all the time.

From the stage, Frankie nods at them, sings, raspy but true.

Atop her purse at the foot of the stool, her phone BUZZES  
with a call from "Sheldon."

**EXT. HYATT - BAR - NIGHT (SAME)**

APPLAUSE. Frankie heads back for Mel and Bobby, stops feet  
away, nervous to face Mel, who just stares, overwhelmed.

FRANKIE  
I hope that didn't suck too bad.

No reaction from Mel -- just shock.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
I know, I know, I should've told you,  
like the millionth thing I should've  
told you but now at least you know  
where the name Melody came from,  
right? I still needed music in my  
life even if I never sang again.

Mel goes to her, grabs her, hugs her hard.

MEL  
You can be such an asshole.

FRANKIE  
Nicest thing you said all day.

Bobby smiles warmly. Frankie catches his gaze, smiles back.

**EXT. HYATT - BAR - NIGHT (LATER)**

Canned music plays softly from the stage as they laugh and drink, Frankie and Bobby alcohol, Mel a strawberry thing.

MEL  
So was she as annoying as a kid as she is now?

FRANKIE  
He was actually the instigator. Quiet but deadly.

BOBBY  
Bullshit.

FRANKIE  
Really? Remember what you did to my Baby Alive doll?

MEL  
What's a "baby alive" doll?

FRANKIE  
This doll I had where you put liquid in its mouth and it just pours out the bottom. One hundred percent medically accurate. Luckily I didn't want to be a doctor.

BOBBY  
Thing freaked me out.

FRANKIE  
So that's why you blew it up.

MEL  
Ohmygod, what?!

FRANKIE  
M80 right in its butt - KABOOM!  
Remember my poem?

BOBBY  
Yeah. Yeah. What's in the tree?

FRANKIE  
Baby Alive's knee. What's on the  
shed?

BOBBY AND FRANKIE  
Baby Alive's head!

They all CRACK UP.

FRANKIE  
God, I haven't thought about anything  
that went on in that house for years.  
Wasn't all bad I guess.

BOBBY  
That's a lie, sis.

An odd, tense pause as Frankie and Bobby drift somewhere.  
Mel looks at one, then the other.

MEL  
Hey Mom, remember that doll I had to  
carry around in 8th grade? It beeped  
like a robot when it was hungry.  
(to Bobby)  
Later they ditched it for the old  
condom-on-a-banana routine after two  
girls actually got pregnant.

Frankie lets out a weak laugh, looks away, pained.

**INT. HYATT - BOBBY'S ROOM - LATER**

Bobby, at the desk, tumbler of liquor beside him, mostly  
empty whiskey bottle next to that, phone to his ear.

BOBBY  
Dana, it's me again. I'm sorry I blew  
my stack, OK? Can we at least--

FRANTIC KNOCK at the door.

BOBBY (cont'd)  
--I'll call you back.

He hangs up, wobbles over, peeks out the eye hole -- Frankie  
outside, fired up. He opens it. She plows in, paces.

FRANKIE  
I can't do it.

BOBBY  
What?

FRANKIE  
I have to get home.

BOBBY  
But you got this far.

FRANKIE  
I'm in trouble. But for once it isn't  
my fault. Not really.

BOBBY  
Well, you usually just slip away in  
the night. You're known for that.

FRANKIE  
I'd slap you but you're drunk.

BOBBY  
You came all this way, Frankie.

FRANKIE  
I know, I know, but--  
(she plops on the bed)  
--I don't know.

BOBBY  
A hundred grand.

FRANKIE  
Is it really worth it?

They think it through.

BOBBY  
What'd he do to you that day?

Nothing. He shakes his head, plops back down at the desk.

BOBBY (cont'd)  
Same old Frankie. Never a straight  
answer.

FRANKIE  
I'm trying to protect you.

BOBBY  
I'm a big boy.

She shakes her head.

BOBBY (cont'd)  
How's Mel?

FRANKIE  
I'm worried it's all too much.

BOBBY  
Ever think about what kids remember?

FRANKIE  
Unfortunately everything.

BOBBY  
We sure know how to suck as parents.

FRANKIE  
We had a good teacher.

BOBBY  
I built this life, you know?  
Apartment in the city, wife and kids,  
friends and parties and traveling the  
world and none of it matters.

FRANKIE  
Not even the apartment?

BOBBY  
I mean it. Every statement in my life  
has turned into a question.

FRANKIE  
Trust me, except for that thing with  
your assistant and the whole being-  
in-debt-to-Tony-Soprano situation,  
your life's pretty peachy.

He looks down. Deep breath.

BOBBY  
Do you even care what he did to me?

She gives him a long, sad look. Nods.

**MUSIC CUE:**

**EXT/INT. WOODS (OUTSIDE/INSIDE CABIN) - DAY (FLASHBACK)**

**Hard rock BLARES** as Young Bobby pushes open the door, peeks in.

The song plays from a shitty boom box on the wooden floor of a raggedy room overrun by years of teenagers and neglect -- rusty stove, graffiti on the walls, cracked dirty window.

Mike lies on a stained mattress on the floor and peruses a magazine, cover unseen.

Jay inspects the stove as he smokes. He kicks it - BONG!

JAY

Ow! Shit!

Cole sits on the floor -- TING, TING, TING -- flicks a pocketknife opened and closed.

Young Bobby takes this in, panicked. Maybe he should just--

COLE

There he is!

Mike jumps up, shoves the magazine in his back pocket.

MIKE

Well, well, well.

All eyes on Young Bobby shaking and staring at that knife.

MIKE (cont'd)

Hey, there, Bobby boy.

YOUNG BOBBY

'Sup.

COLE

Glad you could make it.

MIKE

He showed, now we know, right, Cole?

YOUNG BOBBY

Kn-kn-know what?

COLE

Needed to be sure. Before.

YOUNG BOBBY

Before what?

JAY

Anything go missing lately, Bobby?

YOUNG BOBBY

M-missing?

COLE  
Yeah. Did something of yours  
disappear by chance?

**INT. BLOOM HOUSE - YOUNG BOBBY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (MEMORY)**

Young Bobby shoves his hand under a twin mattress, feels around, eyes wide!

**INT. WOODS - CABIN - DAY (BACK TO REALITY)**

YOUNG BOBBY  
I mean, no.

The boys take a step forward.

MIKE  
Really?

Young Bobby takes a step back.

YOUNG BOBBY  
Yeah.

MIKE  
You're lying.

COLE  
That true? Are you a liar, Bobby?

YOUNG BOBBY  
No.

MIKE  
I bet he noticed last night.

YOUNG BOBBY  
I didn't notice anything.

JAY  
When he looked under his mattress.

YOUNG BOBBY  
I don't know what you're talking about.

COLE  
Hm. Well, man says he's not a liar.

MIKE  
Then what's this?

He reaches back, yanks out the magazine, holds it up -- an issue of *Playgirl* -- hot naked guy on the cover.

With every fiber, Young Bobby tries not to react.

YOUNG BOBBY  
Wh-what's that?

JAY  
What's that, he says.

YOUNG BOBBY  
I don't know what--

MIKE  
Oh, you know.

YOUNG BOBBY  
I mean that's not mine.

COLE  
Pages are kind of sticky, right Mike?

MIKE  
Oh, yeah.

JAY  
Probably his jizz, right?

MIKE  
Is this your jizz, Roberta?

COLE  
Yeah, you fucking faggot. Is it?

Young Bobby slowly shakes his head, takes another step back towards the door.

MIKE  
Where you going, Roberta?

COLE  
Don't you want it back so you can whack off to these guys with their dicks hanging out?

MIKE  
You like their big dicks, don't you, Roberta? Big hairy fucking dicks they can stick in your asshole.

JAY  
They do that?



COLE  
Fucking right. Stick it right up each  
other's shitter or put it in each  
other's mouths.

MIKE  
That what you like to think about,  
Roberta?

JAY  
We should watch him do it! Jack off  
to some fucking guy in there.

MIKE  
What?! Shut the fuck up, Jay!

COLE  
You know--

Inspects his knife.

COLE (cont'd)  
--I heard if you cut a homo's balls  
off, he'll like girls again.

Cole gently taps the knife blade. Steps forward.

Mike shoves the magazine behind the old stove and joins him.

Jay makes three.

Young Bobby sweats bullets, steps back...and takes off!

**EXT. WOODS (OUTSIDE CABIN) - DAY (CONTINUOUS)**

He flies out, jumps on his bike, wobbles, pedals...pedals...  
but they catch up, grab him, tear him off.

YOUNG BOBBY  
Get off me! Help!

MIKE  
Don't you want to know how we found  
it, Roberta?

Young Bobby fights, then falls to the dirt as they drag him  
back towards the cabin.

JAY  
It was your dad, man!

Young Bobby's mouth falls open.

COLE

Yeah! Fucker paid us fifty bucks each to beat the queer out of you! Thing is I fucking hate queers so I'd have done that shit for free.

They pull him inside, yanks the door -- WHAM!

**INT. HYATT - BOBBY'S ROOM - NIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT)**

WHAM! of Bobby's glass on the counter. He stares in the mirror, wipes away tears. Frankie waits, stunned and still.

FRANKIE

Jesus, Bobby.

BOBBY

You know my "complication" at home? His name's David. We've never actually, you know, done anything. But I want to. I want to be honest to my wife, where ever the chips fall. I want to be an example for my kid so he doesn't live life like I did. To do that, I need to face dad, tell him to his face who I really am.

FRANKIE

You don't need him for that!

BOBBY

Tell that my therapist.

FRANKIE

Ah, false gods who promise to erase the past while they ply you with meds so you don't know the difference. Enjoy the early on-set dementia.

BOBBY

Dad already ruined my brain.

FRANKIE

Join the club, but that doesn't mean he deserves us.

BOBBY

Please, Frankie. Please come with me tomorrow. Whatever trouble you're in, I can help.

BUZZ of a phone in her pocket. Frankie checks it--

**INSERT: Frankie's Phone - "Sheldon"**

FRANKIE

Fuck.

**INT. HYATT - HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Frankie roams the hall.

SHELDON (O.S., ON PHONE)

They're asking me where you are.

FRANKIE

Technically I never said where I was.

SHELDON (O.S., ON PHONE)

Did you do it, Frankie?

FRANKIE

No! I -- I thought about it. But I didn't. You have to believe me.

SHELDON (O.S., ON PHONE)

I do.

(a beat)

But I kind of told them you might be in, like, the Phoenix metro area. That's all I said, I swear!

FRANKIE

Oh, Christ.

SHELDON (O.S., ON PHONE)

Just come home, Frankie. The longer you're gone, the worse this gets.

**INT. HYATT - FRANKIE'S AND MEL'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Dark. Mel wide awake in her bed, Frankie awake in the other.

MEL

When's the last time you saw your dad?

Frankie turns to face Mel.

MARTIN (V.O., PRE-LAP)

Frankie, hold on.

**EXT. BLOOMFIELD HIGH/INT. MARTIN'S CAR - DAY (FLASHBACK)**

The Cutlass in front of West Orange High School.

Martin, in his maintenance uniform, stares hard at Young Frankie in her Alanis Morissette t-shirt, ready to bolt with her guitar case. She sits back, rolls her eyes.

MARTIN

Look, I know you do a lot for us.

She eyes him, not trusting this, but not hating it, either.

MARTIN (cont'd)

Cook. Clean. Look after your brother.

She looks off again, her ice melting a bit.

MARTIN (cont'd)

Thing is, when I was your age I had to do things for my family, too. Some of those things seemed bad. Wrong. But you know what? In the end, they turned out to be harmless. Water under the bridge.

YOUNG FRANKIE

What are you saying?

MARTIN

I'm saying if you ever have to do something you think you shouldn't have to do, remember after a while, you'll move on. You'll be OK. You'll probably forget it ever happened.

YOUNG FRANKIE

I don't understand.

MARTIN

I'm trying to say I'm sorry here.

YOUNG FRANKIE

For what exactly?

MARTIN

For -- for this. For your mother.

YOUNG FRANKIE

Now you say it? In front of my school when I don't even have time to react?! Why? Why now? Why today?

A pause.

MARTIN  
 Don't get a ride after practice, OK?  
 (looks off)  
 I'll, uh, I'll pick you up.

Exasperated, she shoves open her door.

MARTIN (cont'd)  
 Frankie? Everything I do, I do for  
 you kids. Everything.

**INT. HYATT - FRANKIE'S AND MEL'S ROOM - NIGHT (BACK TO  
 PRESENT)**

Mel waits.

MEL  
 Mom?

FRANKIE  
 He killed her, Mel.

MEL  
 What?!

FRANKIE  
 He was driving. Said he swerved to  
 miss a deer, ended up headfirst into  
 a tree. But there was no deer. He  
 just thought he saw one. We knew the  
 truth. He was drunk.

MEL  
 Why didn't you tell anybody?!

FRANKIE  
 Nobody listened to kids back then.

MEL  
 That is fucked. Up.

FRANKIE  
 (softly)  
 It sure is, so listen, honey, about  
 tomorrow, truth is I don't think I--

MEL  
 (closes her eyes)  
 I'm proud of you, Mom. For facing  
 him. Money or no money, it's huge.

Frankie stops in her tracks, breathes this in.

FRANKIE  
Oh, I...oh. OK. OK.

Frankie turns over, closes her eyes too.

At the foot of the room door, the slit of light from the hall darkens -- someone's there! They wait...wait...until an envelope silently shoots in...and the light returns.

**INT. HYATT - FRANKIE'S AND MEL'S ROOM - DAY**

A SHOWER RUNS. Frankie wakes up to sunlight through the curtains. Climbs out of bed, stretches, spots the envelope inside the door.

She grabs it, extracts a car key and a check -- \$100,000 from Bobby! She gapes, reads, eyes wide.

FRANKIE  
No, no, no.

She grabs her phone, dials. RINGS.

BOBBY (O.S.)  
Frankie.

FRANKIE  
How the fuck could you do this to me?!

BOBBY (O.S.)  
But you got what you wanted.

FRANKIE  
I don't want your money.

BOBBY  
You deserve it.

FRANKIE  
Not from you. From Dad! And you're in all this trouble so how could you--

BOBBY (O.S.)  
I'm fine, Frankie.

FRANKIE  
What do you mean fine?

She glances at the bathroom, quiets, shoves her panic down.

BOBBY (O.S.)  
I lied about that. And the letter.

FRANKIE  
I don't understand.

BOBBY  
I wrote it. I wrote it and sent it to you. Pretended it was from Dad's lawyer. I'm sorry.

She wobbles, blinks, utter shock.

FRANKIE  
You mother...goddamnit, Bobby, you made this whole fucking thing up?!

**INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL/INT. HYATT - FRANKIE'S AND MEL'S ROOM - DAY**

Bobby traipses quickly through the airport past gates and shops, earpiece in place.

BOBBY  
He really is on his deathbed. His lawyer told me. We did a real estate deal together. He said it would be my last chance to look him in the eye, but I couldn't do it alone. I needed you. So I wrote the letter. Figured it was the only way you'd come.

FRANKIE  
You figured -- Jesus, Bobby.

He enters a gate, "New York - La Guardia" on the digital sign behind the desk.

BOBBY  
Thing is, you convinced me I don't need him.

FRANKIE  
Don't listen to me! I'm a fucking disaster.

BOBBY  
I've decided to stop seeing David.

FRANKIE  
What? Why?

He stands before the window, watches planes roll in and out.

BOBBY

My wife. My kid. Time to put this all behind me and be the husband and father they deserve. I made my bed.

FRANKIE

But you can't just live a fake life!

BOBBY

Neither can you. So go. Face your demon. Prove he didn't beat you. It'll help you. You know it will.

FRANKIE

Who the fuck are you to tell me what'll--

BOBBY

I don't regret writing that letter, Frank. I wanted to see him. But I wanted to see my sister more.

She's at a total loss.

BOBBY

When you tell Mel I left, make something up. I don't want her to hate me.

FRANKIE

Why should I care? You're just another man letting her down.

The shower STOPS.

BOBBY

Letting her down or letting you down?

FRANKIE

Screw you, Bobby! Enjoy your phony life.

BOBBY

Wait! There's something I have to tell you about him before you go.

FRANKIE

What makes you think I'm still going to see him?!

BOBBY

Mel won't let you get out of it. Now, the thing you don't know is that he--



She jams her finger on the screen, heaves her phone to the night table, crumples the check, tosses it into a tiny trash can beside the dresser. From behind--

MEL (O.S.)  
Mom, what's wrong?

Frankie doesn't turn.

FRANKIE  
Nothing. Pack. I'm dropping you at camp. Then I'm going home.

**INT. HYATT - LOBBY - DAY**

Frankie and Mel, belongings in hand, head through the lobby. As they pass the front desk, Frankie glances over -- two cops talking to the attendant.

FRANKIE  
(mutters)  
Shit, shit, shit.

He yanks Mel's arm, pulls her along.

MEL  
Jesus, what are you doing?!

FRANKIE  
Sh. I'm on the lam.

MEL  
You're weird, you know that?

They head through the sliding doors.

**EXT. SCOTTSDALE ROAD/INT. BOBBY'S CAR - DAY**

The BMW hums past trees, small houses, and hotels.

Frankie drives, keeps eyeing the rear-view mirror.

MEL  
Look at us, driving a car with working parts. We're like the Kardashians.

FRANKIE  
Hm.

MEL  
Wonder who Scott was. Of Scottsdale.

MEL (cont'd)  
 Probably a guy who slaughtered Native  
 Americans, built a bunch of  
 bungalows, and invented Air BnB. Hey  
 look, Rabbi Mountain Bike is back.

Mel watches the same old timer from before pedal along the  
 sidewalk. He nods at her. She nods back, checks Frankie.

MEL (cont'd)  
 Why do you keep looking behind us?

Frankie forces herself to ignore the mirror.

MEL (cont'd)  
 Look, he said his kid got sick. You  
 can't blame him for leaving.

No response.

MEL (cont'd)  
 We still need to do it, though.

FRANKIE  
 I learned my lesson. I'm never  
 letting you anywhere near the stench  
 of my family again.

MEL  
Our family.  
 (taps her phone)  
 Now what's it called? Gotta be a  
 million old folks' homes in this  
 town.

FRANKIE  
 Mel.

MEL  
 Bobby said it was something like the  
 Village or--  
 (eyes out the window)  
 That's it! That's it! The Villas!

As they approach a red light, on their right, a sign for  
 "The Villas of Scottsdale."

FRANKIE  
 You don't understand what he's like.

Frankie drums the wheel.

FRANKIE  
 It's too dangerous.

MEL  
He can't hurt you anymore.

FRANKIE  
Oh, he can and he will.

The light turns green.

MEL  
Listen. You need this. We need this.

HONK! from behind.

FRANKIE  
Honey, I just can't do this alone.

MEL  
Mom? You're not.

**EXT. THE VILLAS/INT. BMW - DAY**

They slowly pull up to a campus of buildings, reach a sign with arrows for the "Clubhouse," "Pool," "Rec Center," and "Lobby" straight ahead.

FRANKIE  
How can he afford this? We didn't have a pot to piss in.

They drive on.

**INT. THE VILLAS - LOBBY - DAY**

Ritzy marble lobby. Residents amble about. Frankie and Mel enter, look around, astonished.

MEL  
God, when can we move here?

They approach a huge front desk where LUCY (late 20s, peachy and perky) awaits.

LUCY  
Welcome to The Villas.

FRANKIE  
Uh, yeah, we're looking for a resident? Martin Bloom.

LUCY  
Oh, yes. Mr. Bloom. What a pleasure he is.

FRANKIE

No, I said Bloom.

LUCY

Right. He's in room -- oh, wait.

(her face drops)

He was in 225, Building C, but he just moved a few days ago to 118, Building E.

(looks up, concerned)

That's our nursing care unit. You're family, I assume?

They wait.

LUCY (cont'd)

I'm so sorry, but I'm sure he'll be fine. He's a tough old bird, as you know. Here, you'll need these.

She slides them two visitor badges.

**EXT. THE VILLAS - DAY**

Badges clipped to their shirts, Frankie and Mel stroll past a pool crowded with residents -- some lively, some immobile.

They pass a club house -- digital sign out front -- "Movie Night at 6:00 - A Star Is Born." Mel senses her mother's tension, elbows her gently.

MEL

Hey. Which version?

She nods at the movie sign.

MEL (cont'd)

Gaga, Streisand, or Judy Garland?

FRANKIE

Or Stanwyck. From the '30's.

MEL

There were four?

FRANKIE

I say Streisand.

MEL

Gaga.

FRANKIE

Nah, definitely Streisand. All the women here wanted to be her, and all the men wanted to sleep with her.

MEL

They don't want to sleep with Gaga?

FRANKIE

Depends on who they are. The Jews want Streisand. Of course Gaga's one hell of a Shiksa fantasy.

MEL

What's a Shiksa?

FRANKIE

You've got a lot to learn, kid.

They reach a sign for Building E straight ahead.

**EXT. THE VILLAS - BUILDING E - DAY**

They stand before the glass entrance doors - "Building E - Nursing Care" printed on them. Frankie breaths hard.

FRANKIE

I don't like this.

MEL

You'll be OK.

FRANKIE

Look, you wait in the car and I'll--

MEL

You'll what? Roam the halls for 20 minutes, make up some lie, and we go back to our perfectly healthy lives? This is a chance to change things, Mom. It's a chance to heal.

Frankie shakes her head in awe.

FRANKIE

How'd you get to be so smart?

MEL

Well...Dad, I guess.

Frankie snickers, Mel grins.

**INT. THE VILLAS - BUILDING E - HALLWAY - DAY**

They traverse a utilitarian hall of closed doors and DRONING TVs. A WOMAN CRIES OUT. Frankie anxiously glances about.

FRANKIE

Tell me you'll never send me to a place like this when I get old.

MEL

Why wait 'til you get old?

Frankie stops at Room 118 -- "Bloom" scribbled on a sticker outside the door.

FRANKIE

Shit.

MEL

I'm right here.

FRANKIE

You're not going in there, Mel.

MEL

Too late. Ready?

Mel reaches for the door handle, but Frankie steps back.

MEL (cont'd)

Mom?

Frankie, pale, struggles for breath, leans against the wall.

MEL (cont'd)

Mom, it's OK.

Frankie grabs herself with both arms.

MEL (cont'd)

We'll get through, Mom. We will.

FRANKIE

No. It's too much. It's too much.

She slides down the wall to the ground, shaking her head. Mel strokes her hair. Frankie, dazed, rambles.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

When I ran away I was headed to LA to be a singer.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

I was gonna prove him wrong, be rich and famous but then I -- I didn't have any money, so I did things. With men. I needed the cash. I also thought I was re-taking control of my body after...

MEL

After what?

FRANKIE

But I never got control. All I got was money. Money I needed bad.

Frankie stops, closes her eyes.

MEL

For what?

FRANKIE

To get rid of it. The baby.

MEL

What are you talking about?!

Frankie stares at Room 118.

**INT. SUNRISE MOTEL - ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)**

Frankie stands at the foot of the bed, cries quietly, arms crossed over her bare chest.

BOSS (O.S.)

(gravely)

Come here, sweetheart.

FRANKIE

(softly)

No.

BOSS (O.S.)

Nah, sit, sit.

FRANKIE

No! He said I just had to do -- this -- and I was done.

Shaking, she keeps covered by one arm, grabs her shirt from the floor with the other, heads for the door, false bravado.

BOSS (O.S.)  
Walk out that door, your dad's a  
goner.

FRANKIE  
You think I care about him?

She reaches for the knob.

BOSS (O.S.)  
How 'bout your brother?

She freezes.

BOSS  
You care about him?

She drops her hand from the knob in horrified defeat.

**INT. THE VILLAS - BUILDING E - HALLWAY - DAY (BACK TO  
PRESENT)**

Frankie sobs.

FRANKIE  
I couldn't bring someone into this  
world born of such vile  
circumstances.

MEL  
What circumstances? What aren't you  
telling me?!

FRANKIE  
Listen! That man in there's pure  
evil. He sent me into the lion's den  
to be devoured so he didn't have to.  
And now you want me to be with him?  
He's my Hitler. What do you say to  
Hitler? Huh? What do you say?!

Mel stands, offers her hand.

MEL  
You say you failed, motherfucker.

**INT. THE VILLAS - BUILDING E - ROOM 118 - DAY**

A room furnished sparsely with in-house furniture.

Mel pokes her head in, then enters. Waits. Looks back. Gives  
a quick nod. Frankie slips in.



In a hospital bed, eyes closed, is OLD MARTIN (81) -- painfully frail, withered, face slightly contorted, a harmless relic of a man.

Mel and Frankie exchange glances. Mel reaches for Frankie's hand, squeezes it. Steps forward.

FRANKIE

Honey, wait.

But Mel heads to the bed, leans over him, speaks gently.

MEL

Hello?

FRANKIE

I don't know if he can even--

MEL

HELLO!

Old Martin's crusty eyes flicker open.

MEL (cont'd)

Hi. I'm Mel. Short for Melody. What you make when you play guitar and sing. Like someone you know.

She grins. He blinks. His body shimmies a bit. Then, his gaze floats to the woman at the foot of his bed.

His eyes go wide.

FRANKIE

Martin.

His chin shakes. He tries to speak but just can't do it.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

It's me. It's Frances.

A look from Mel, who's never heard her speak this name.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

Surprise.

She slowly approaches, looms over him. His breaths accelerate. Mel steps back.

FRANKIE

We found you, didn't we?

He looks past them to the door, seeking help.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
And you know what? Kids remember  
everything.

His crusty eyes moisten. Frankie leans in close, voice hard.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
See, it takes a sick, twisted son of  
a bitch to ruin a girl's life before  
it even starts. But I overcame it.

A pause. Did she? She looks to Mel, who'd perhaps be forever  
influenced by what came next. And she decides that yes, she  
sure as hell did overcome it. At least right now.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
I'm a singer, see. A great one. And  
my songs are all about you. I put you  
on trial, let my fans be the judge,  
and you know what? You're guilty  
every time! Sentenced to death from  
the looks of you.

She checks Mel, who watches, rapt and proud. He reels,  
incapable of a response.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
Course, maybe I'm not a singer at  
all. Maybe I'm a high-powered  
attorney who works for children,  
victims of the sick fucks who steal  
their innocence. Kids don't have  
choices, Martin. Kids don't have  
voices. And when they're made to do  
horrible things, it's not just water  
under the bridge. You don't get over  
it. Ever.

She pauses, glances at Mel, who's eyes fill with tears.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
Of course, maybe I'm none of those  
things. Maybe I'm working bad jobs  
for shitty pay, trying desperately to  
impart something of value to the only  
person truly close to me. See because  
of you, I have trouble opening my  
heart. But at least...at least I  
fucking have one.

He reaches for her now, a drowning man. She snickers.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

Bobby says hi, by the way. He couldn't make it. We're close. We have holidays together. Vacations. Sometimes we talk about you. How we hate you. How we're so glad you're not there. How our kids never had to endure the agony of spending a single minute with the man that killed our mother and ruined our lives. Oh, he's married, by the way.

(sick smile)

His husband's a wonderful guy.

She lets this sink in. Mel, wide-eyed, struggles not to crack up, unknowingly not, in fact, in on the joke.

Frankie's eyes grow moist. Mel glances behind, then front.

MEL

(quietly)

Um, Mom?

FRANKIE

Just know this. I'll never, ever forgive you.

MEL

Mom!

FRANKIE

In fact I hope you burn in--

SANDY (O.S.)

(harshly)

Excuse me. Who are you?

Old Martin grunts. Frankie spins to SANDY STROH (30, plain, concerned). Sandy approaches, rests a hand on his shoulder.

Mel and Frankie back away.

SANDY

What'd you say? He's all agitated.

She leans in affectionately.

SANDY (cont'd)

It's OK, Daddy.

Frankie and Mel gape at each other, mouth "Daddy?!"

SANDY (cont'd)  
Well?

FRANKIE  
We're, uh--

MEL  
Volunteering!

FRANKIE  
Right. My daughter has a project.

MEL  
Exactly.

Old Martin coughs. Sandy caresses his arm.

SANDY  
Shh, shh. It's OK.  
(to Frankie and Mel)  
I'm Sandy. The cancer moved fast.  
It's been tough on all of us. Mom  
especially.

Frankie and Mel just nod, both numb.

FRANKIE  
How long have they been, um,  
together?

SANDY  
Twenty years. I was tough. Martin was  
kind. Took me in as his own.

She takes his hand.

FRANKIE  
Was he married -- before?

SANDY  
Briefly, he claims.

FRANKIE  
Huh.

SANDY  
He was a different person, he said.  
Angry. Bitter. But he changed.

Frankie nods. Waits. But she has to ask.

FRANKIE  
Um, did he have kids? From before.

SANDY

No. Such a shame. Children of his own would've helped him clean up sooner. He would've been the same wonderful father to them he was to me.

Frankie stares at him with a bitter sparkle in her eyes, struggling to hide her devastation.

For the briefest moment, Old Martin seems to stare right back, hardened, touch of the old fire.

SANDY (cont'd)

I don't know if we ever really knew him. Sorry. I don't know why I'm telling you all this.

She pauses now, squints at Frankie.

SANDY (cont'd)

Do I know you? You look so familiar.

Mel and Frankie look at her, then each other and -- they can't help it, it's all too much -- BURST OUT LAUGHING.

SANDY (cont'd)

What?

They're IN HYSTERICICS, holding each other.

SANDY (cont'd)

What's so funny? What is happening?!

FRANKIE

I--

MEL

We're sorry.

Their laughs subside. Mel leans to Frankie.

MEL (cont'd)

Maybe we should, like, tell her the truth, Mom.

FRANKIE

Oh. OK. Well.

She pauses, eyes Sandy, who's clearly having a rough go of it these days.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
 Listen. The truth is -- you've never  
 laid eyes on us before, now come on  
 honey, let's leave her be.

She nudges Mel toward the door, but stops, stares hard at  
 Martin one last time.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
 If he's ever with it again? Ask him  
 about what happened at the Sunrise  
 Motel. Or in that cabin in those  
 woods off Prospect Avenue.

Now Mel pushes Frankie towards the door.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
 Ask him, Sandy. Ask him!

And with that, Frankie and Mel fly out of there, Sandy  
 utterly flummoxed, Old Martin watching, eyes clear as day.

**INT. BMW - DAY**

Frankie SOBS, head buried in Mel's consoling arms. She comes  
 up for air, hicks her way through.

FRANKIE  
 Why weren't we good enough? Why  
 didn't we earn his love?

MEL  
 Sometimes grown ups take a really  
 long time to actually grow up.

Frankie stares at her wise daughter, kisses hers forehead.

FRANKIE  
 I'm sorry, Melody. I've let you down  
 every step of the way.

She STARTS THE CAR.

MEL  
 Not today! You were killer in there!  
 I mean that Bobby-being-gay story you  
 came up with? Twisting the dagger!  
 But what was that stuff about a motel  
 and a cabin?

FRANKIE  
Let's just get you to Phoenix, kid.

She backs up the car, drives.

MEL  
We can't. You didn't get paid, right?

FRANKIE  
Honey, listen. I was wrong about  
never depending on a man for money.

**INT. HYATT - FRANKIE'S AND MEL'S ROOM - DAY**

A MAID (20s) peeks in the little trash can where Frankie had tossed Bobby's check -- empty.

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
Sometimes life owes you one.

**EXT. JACKPOT DINER - DAY**

A police car pulls up to the entrance.

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
Course, there's another shit storm to face.

**INT. JACKPOT DINER - OFFICE - DAY**

Two cops enter the office.

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
But maybe our luck's finally changed.

At his desk, Chuck shakes his head. Across from him, Glenda, in tears, pile of cash on the desk.

**SUPER - "SIX MONTHS LATER"**

**Alanis Morissette's "Out Is Through" PLAYS...**

**EXT. FRANKIE'S NEW APARTMENT COMMUNITY - DAY**

...OVER attractive garden apartments.

**INT. FRANKIE'S NEW APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

...AND in this pretty and bright room with boxes everywhere, Frankie and Mel on the floor eating takeout Chinese, laughing.

**INT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE - CLASSROOM - DAY**

...AND at a desk, where Frankie studiously takes notes, glances at a textbook beside it.

**INT. FRANKIE'S NEW APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

...AND at a dining room table where Frankie studies that same textbook, glances up, eyes Mel and Alan on the couch watching TV, her hand grazing his.

Frankie clears her throat. They whip their hands apart. She looks down, grins, takes a sip from a cup of coffee.

**INT. CRACKER BARREL - DAY**

...AND in a booth where Frankie, business suit on, sips coffee, studies the menu, looks up to grinning Mel, in uniform, name tag slightly askew, ready to take her order.

Frankie reaches up, straightens the name tag. Mel reaches down, straightens Frankie's collar.

**INT. OFFICE - DAY**

...AND at the conference table where Frankie touches the same collar, Lois beside her, dressed to kill, patiently speaking with an ELDERLY COUPLE (80s) across the table.

**INT. MACMULLAN'S PUB - NIGHT**

...AND on stage where Frankie, same outfit, suit jacket gone, plays guitar and sings, Mel, Sheldon and Lois watching with pride.

**EXT. AIRPORT - BAGGAGE CLAIM ENTRANCE - DAY**

...AND at a curb, Frankie and Mel with suitcases as a Lincoln pulls up and Bobby jumps out, all smiles.



**INT. BOBBY'S CONDO - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

...**AND** in a stunning New York condo decked out for both Hanukkah and Christmas, tree on one side, electric menorah on the other, as Bobby beams.

Behind him, DAVID GROSS (40s, kindly) rests his hands on Bobby's shoulder, kisses him on the head. Frankie eyes them warmly from a sofa.

On the floor, Mel opens a violin case with a bow on it, stunning violin inside. She gapes at the instrument, then at Bobby. Bobby nods at the case -- there's more.

Mel removes the violin -- tickets.

**INSERT: Tickets - "Lincoln Center Presents The New York Philharmonic."**

Mel wipes away a tear. Frankie mouths "thank you" to Bobby.

**EXT. BLOOMFIELD ROAD/INT. BOBBY'S CAR - DAY**

Bobby's Lincoln heads down a two-lane road.

BOBBY

You sure you want to do this?

Inside, Bobby drives Frankie. Each have a Starbucks cup.

FRANKIE

My therapist's idea.

BOBBY

Well. Welcome to the dark side.

FRANKIE

She helps. Got a long way to go, though. Make a left here.

They turn.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

David's great. What made you finally take the plunge?

BOBBY

Two things. For one, Dana kicked me to the curb.

FRANKIE

And Jax?

BOBBY  
Every other weekend. It's tough. He  
loves David, though.

FRANKIE  
Right here.

They turn right.

BOBBY  
But what you did, what you told him?  
That's really what did it. It's like  
I was there. It freed me, Frankie.

FRANKIE  
And the money freed me.

They drive in content silence.

BOBBY  
I was pissed at you for so long for  
leaving. But that's not fair. I see  
that now. You did so much after Mom  
died. Even before. They were too busy  
hating each other to raise us. So  
thank you, Frankie. If it wasn't for  
you I would've imploded. Or ended up  
like him.

She's stunned at the words she never thought she'd hear.

FRANKIE  
I can't believe he's really dead.

BOBBY  
I can. Your visit killed him!

FRANKIE  
Hilarious.

BOBBY  
Sorry.

FRANKIE  
You think those people ever figured  
out who we were?

BOBBY  
I doubt it.

FRANKIE  
They got a completely different  
person.

BOBBY  
What was wrong with Mom then?

FRANKIE  
Whatever it was, I'm glad we don't  
know. Here?

They slowly approach a corner with a CVS.

FRANKIE (cont'd)  
Wait, what the hell?

She looks across the street at the same chintzy gas station  
as that fateful day years before. They pull into the CVS  
lot, park.

BOBBY  
That old motel? Torn down.

FRANKIE  
I'm glad it's gone.

BOBBY  
What happened in there, Frankie?

Frankie takes a long breath.

FRANKIE  
I can't tell you. Ever. For your own  
good. Maybe mine, too.

BOBBY  
Same old Frankie.

She glares.

BOBBY (cont'd)  
I mean protecting her kid brother to  
the end. I went to the cabin, by the  
way. Townhomes.

FRANKIE  
Childhood trauma wiped away by  
"progress."

BOBBY  
Progress is good.

FRANKIE  
Yup. I guess it is.  
(nods at CVS)  
Need anything? Overpriced Snickers?  
Prescription narcotics?

BOBBY  
You on any?

FRANKIE  
You mean aside from the Wellbutrin,  
Trazodone, and Mexican Xanax?

BOBBY  
I'm on Wellbutrin, too!

FRANKIE  
Kick ass!

Bobby raises his Starbucks for a toast.

BOBBY  
To early-onset dementia.

FRANKIE  
Hear, hear.

They click cups, drink.

BOBBY  
We should all get a beach house.  
About time for some family vacation.

FRANKIE  
I don't know. Family vacation is...

BOBBY  
Is what?

FRANKIE  
An excellent idea.

He takes her hand. She squeezes back. They drive.

**EXT. ROAD - DAY**

Bobby's car turns onto the road.

BOBBY (V.O.)  
Almost got Mel a Baby Alive Doll.

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
She'd probably prefer the M-80.

BOBBY (V.O.)  
Good kid. Takes after her uncle.

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
Don't push it.

**THE END**