

WEIGHT OF THE WORLD

Written by

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INT. JESSICA'S CAR - **SUNDAY, MARCH 18TH - 2:34PM**

A photograph captures three people at a party: two girls (one noticeably older than the other) and a guy. It rests atop the glass in front of the odometer.

The older girl, JESSICA LEE (21), is seated sits in the driver's seat in a neatly furbished 2017 Toyota Corolla, stuck in traffic on a crowded freeway.

Even though Jessica is legally an adult, she has yet to reach the threshold of independence. She has come all this way with someone by her side--for better or worse.

The word "Dad" and a timer counting up appear on the car's touchscreen as she engages in a conversation with her father, ANDREW (late 50s).

ANDREW (O.S.)

This is going to help. After this, you're going to be on your own.

Andrew's voice encloses Jessica through every speaker in the car.

JESSICA

What about homework?

ANDREW (O.S.)

You got those audiobooks I sent, right? It might not be much but it's enough to keep you in a groove while you're there.

JESSICA

(sarcastic)

Sounds great.

She rolls her eyes, a little proud her father can't see it.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

(serious)

Dad, what's stopping me from taking the next exit and turning around?

ANDREW (O.S.)

Don't do this, Jessica. One week. That's all I ask. Go and spend spring break with your mother and Rachel and Christina and I will be waiting once you get back. Okay?

A hard look at the screen.

JESSICA

Okay.

ANDREW (O.S.)

Atta girl. You'll thank me for this later. Don't overdue it and have fun.

JESSICA

Alright, Dad. Talk to you later.

ANDREW

And remember: No drinking!

JESSICA

No drinking. Got it.

The call ends.

EXT. FREEWAY - SAME TIME

Beneath a clear blue sky, the northbound lanes of Interstate 5 are gridlocked with cars, punctuated by the occasional honk. The congestion is overwhelming.

INT. JESSICA'S CAR - 3:01PM

An audiobook titled "**Studies in Computer Data**" By Evelyn Poniewaz plays through the 'Kindle' app, narrated by a sophisticated middle-aged woman.

AUDIOBOOK

While simple to implement, uncoordinated checkpointing can lead to the domino effect, known as a "Rollback". A Rollback is a SQL database command that allows users to undo, update or delete a program or bring it back to a previously defined state, usually in response to a critical error. Each process starts its execution with an initial checkpoint. Suppose the second process fails and rolls back to the third checkpoint. The rollback "invalidates" the sending of the sixth message, and so the first process must roll back to the second checkpoint to "invalidate" the receipt of that message.

Under the sweltering heat, a drop of sweat drips down Jessica's face as she is listening.

AUDIOBOOK (CONT'D)

This cascaded rollback may continue and eventually may lead to the domino effect, which causes the system to rollback to the beginning of the computation, in spite of all the saved checkpoints. Cascading rollbacks due to the single failure forces the system to restart from the initial set of checkpoints, effectively causing the loss of all the work done by all processes.

Jessica pauses the audiobook.

On her phone, Jessica opens Instagram and navigates to her messages with a user named "mara.niverse".

The profile picture matches the young girl in the photograph.

She sends a message: **You up for hanging out later?**

No response.

Next, she switches to another tab with the username "nathann16", whose profile picture also shows the guy from the photo.

She sends a message: **Do you know if Mara is at the beach?**

N: Maybe. Sis isn't my problem when she's out of the house. Where are you?

J: I'm on my way. Stupid traffic.

After a moment:

N: When do you think you'll be here?

J: A couple of hours. Why?

N: I'm up for hanging out if you are.

J: Hell yeah! Just gonna stop and say hi to Mara first. Where should we meet?

N: How about the market. Does 5 work?

J: Yeah. Plenty of time.

N: Fuck yeah. I just gotta do some shit first then I'll meet you there.

Jessica double taps the last message, sending a heart emoji.

She taps on his username to opens his--

PROFILE PAGE

Two photos pop up on his IG story:

Posted 18 hours ago, one shows a glass of beer with the caption "I think I'm getting used to this lol", tagged at "**Carpenter's Tavern**".

Posted 15 hours ago, the next captures a serene lake under a golden-yellow sky.

She lurks through his posts: A photo of him pitching for the Lumina High School baseball team from March 2021. A celebratory post about his commitment to Eldrin Community College in April. A high school graduation post in June.

She reaches his most recent post, dated January 2023, which shows Nathan posing with a blonde woman she doesn't recognize on a ferry with a stunning sunset behind them.

Her eyes land on the caption: "**To the moon and the stars w/ my best friend @Simply.sydney**" followed by a couple heart emojis.

Suddenly--

HONK* *HONK

Jessica jumps at the sound of the horn behind her. She glances in the driver's side mirror, then ahead as the car in front of her inches forward.

Tossing her phone onto the passenger seat, she follows its lead.

INT. JESSICA'S CAR - DAY - **3:35PM**

Luxurious lake houses line the foreground to a vast lake on one side of a quiet suburban street.

Jessica drives leisurely down the street. "Glory Days" by Bruce Springsteen plays through her Bluetooth. She sings along, hitting every note.

She pulls into the parking lot at--

EXT. DAVIDSON BEACH

Wooden docks extend into the lake, framing a view of picturesque snow-capped mountains in the distance.

INT. JESSICA'S CAR

Jessica glances at her phone, reviews her messages with Nathan again, and checks the time.

She turns off her phone and looks outside, spotting a young girl with a braided ponytail in a red long-sleeve T-shirt, sitting at the edge of one of the docks.

This is MARA NOONAN (15).

It's hard to pin down what she thinks most of the time. She's very bright and sweet, but if asked, wouldn't tell you that. The world around Mara has gotten her to believe something very different.

EXT. DOCKS - DAVIDSON BEACH

Just beneath the dock, Mara swings her legs, creating small splashes in the water below.

As she sits, slumped over, Mara does not notice Jessica approaching.

As Jessica gets closer, she sees tears streaming down Mara's face--no sniffing, no effort to wipe them away.

Jessica hesitates for a moment before stepping closer.

JESSICA
(hesitates)
Mara?

Mara whips her head in Jessica's direction. A little smile grows on her face, almost hopeful.

MARA
Hey.

JESSICA
Been a while. Is everything alright?

MARA
Yeah. Why?

JESSICA
Looks like you're crying.

MARA
Oh, it's nothing. Allergies have been acting up lately. Nothing serious.

Mara laughs it off, pretends she's not upset.

Jessica nods and sits next to Mara.

JESSICA
You still doin' piano?

Mara doesn't answer.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Come on. I've seen your videos.
You're great at it.

MARA
You're just saying that.

JESSICA
I'm serious. You've been getting
better with every video. Granted, I
don't know how to play but it looks
hard, so I'll give you that.
(pause)
Could you sing a song for me?

MARA
I'm not up for it right now. I'll
sing for you when I'm ready.

A pause.

JESSICA
What about swimmin'?

MARA
What about it?

JESSICA
Usually I'd see you doing laps from
here to--
(points to the dock next
to theirs)
--the one over there. Ten minimum.
Twenty if you really had the energy
for it.

MARA
You remember that? To be honest, I
was half-expecting you to come back
with half your head shaven off and
the rest dyed blue or purple or
something.

JESSICA

(groans)

Please tell me you don't think that's what everyone in Seattle looks like.

MARA

No, no, not at all. But I'm certain you met at least some good looking people over there. Someone who might be on a magazine cover within a year, who knows. I'm surprised you aren't on your way onto one yet.

JESSICA

Sorry, Mara. Much to your utter disappointment, nothin' has changed. When it comes to what's going on, I only know what I know. I'm clueless to everything else. Not to mention, you haven't changed a bit, either. You know that?

MARA

Really?

JESSICA

I wouldn't mistake that hairstyle from a mile away.

MARA

(mumbles)

Really? I feel like changed a lot lately.

Mara dips her head towards the water.

Jessica gets a good look at Mara's face. Upon closer inspection, she notices faint black circles under Mara's eyes.

JESSICA

Is everything *really* alright?

Mara turns towards Jessica. They make eye contact.

She offers a warm, welcoming smile. It's alright.

Leaning her head on Jessica's arm, Mara nestles closer as Jessica wraps her in a side hug.

MARA

Do you think U-Dub is the right place to go for college?

JESSICA

It's different for everyone. Do you have enough money for it?

MARA

I have some stashed in my room. I'm hoping a scholarship will cover the rest of it.

JESSICA

I'm sure you'll fit right in and find out what you want to do.

MARA

Have you?

Jessica doesn't answer Mara's question.

Continually breaking the silence, the waves continue to pound the docks beneath them.

EXT. LEE HOUSE - DAY - 4:15PM

Jessica pulls into the driveway. She exits the car, a roller suitcase in one hand and a small metal baseball bat in the other, and heads to the front door.

On the front porch, her mother, HELEN LEE (early 50s) opens the door with a big smile on her face.

Mother and daughter embrace.

INT. JESSICA'S ROOM - LEE HOUSE - DAY - 3:37PM

Apart from a collage of photos hanging above her bed, the bedroom is fairly minimalist and well-put together.

The metal baseball bat rests against the bedstand.

Jessica takes some time to gaze at the assemblage of memories, her eyes moving from one photo to the next--family portraits, school achievements, and numerous pictures with Nathan and Mara.

Yet in none of the family photos are her parents together.

She lingers on an image from a computer science competition with her dad, then shifts her focus to a beach photo with her mom and little sister.

EXT. COMMUNITY PARK - DAY - THREE YEARS AGO - **A MEMORY**

On a picnic blanket next to a wide open patch of grass.

This whole scene is seen through the lens of an instant camera manned by Jessica (17).

She points the camera towards Mara (12), her back to Jessica.

JESSICA (O.S.)

Hey, Mara. Smile for the camera!

Mara turns around and immediately covers her eyes upon realizing what's about to happen.

MARA

Jessica, stop! Don't point it at me.

JESSICA (O.S.)

The camera's not gonna hurt you, Mara. No radiation is gonna spit out of it.

Mara turns her back to the camera once more, this time willingly.

From out of view, NATHAN (17) scooches next to Mara, wraps his arm around her shoulder and attempts to turn her back towards Jessica.

NATHAN

Come on, sis. How often would you get the chance to be a part of this?

MARA

You said that last week.

NATHAN

Well, unlike last week, I got a plan.

MARA

What?

Without saying anything, Nathan tickles Mara on her stomach, causing her to take her hands off her face.

MARA (CONT'D)
 (laughing)
 No! NO, stop, Nathan! That's not
 fair! Don't do that!

NATHAN
 Jessica, take the picture. Take the
 picture! Now's your chance.

Jessica attempts to snap a picture of some typical sibling
 tomfoolery.

JESSICA (O.S.)
 I got it.

Nathan lets go of Mara.

MARA
 That's not funny!

Mara lightly slugs Nathan's shoulder.

JESSICA (O.S.)
 It's kinda funny.

MARA
 No it isn't.

NATHAN
 Okay, guys. I'm gonna go get the
 baseball and gloves from the car.
 We're playing catch today. I DID
 NOT forget this time.

MARA
 Okay.

JESSICA (O.S.)
 Hell yeah!

Nathan stands up and puts his ballcap on Mara's head before
 heading out of view.

Mara watches him until--

JESSICA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Hey, Mara.
 (Mara turns to Jessica)
 How about we take a picture
 together?

MARA
 Why?

JESSICA

Nathan might be on to something.
When would we get a chance to do
this again?

A pause.

MARA

Okay.

Jessica switches her phone to selfie mode and scoots next to Mara, angling the camera to fit them both in frame.

MARA (CONT'D)

Do you think this will work?

JESSICA

Let's see. Smile for the camera!

They both smile. Mara leans her head on Jessica's shoulder.

SNAP

INT. JESSICA'S ROOM - **PRESENT DAY**

The very picture sits in the middle of the collage. She keeps an eye on the photo, examines it. **Remember this for later.**

HELEN (O.S.)

Is everything alright with your
father over at U-Dub?

Note: "U-Dub" is local slang for University of Washington.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LEE HOUSE - DAY - **3:45PM**

Jessica and Helen sit on the couch, in conversation.

JESSICA

It's been good. Wish he'd stop
telling stories about our childhood
to his students when he gets the
chance but, of course, my words
fall on deaf ears.

HELEN

Did he give you anything to work
on?

JESSICA

Just a few books. Nothing too much. Might spend a good amount of time cooped up in my room. Getting it done.

HELEN

I'm sure there's something you can do. Anything is better than staying in your room for a week.

JESSICA

I'm gonna go see Nathan in a bit. If all you want is for me to touch some grass, you got it.

Helen looks off to the side, thinking.

Then...

HELEN

Oh! If that's the case...

Helen stands up, heads towards the kitchen, out of view.

JESSICA

What is it?

Now with a stack of papers, she returns to the living room and places them on the table.

At the top of the pile, Jessica reads the headline:

"LOST CAT," bold and black, above a photo of a white cat with a black ring around its left eye, almost like a bruise.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Oh my god! Mr. Donut! When did this happen?

HELEN

Your sister saw him go through the back door this morning, didn't think anything of it. Next thing you know, I'm using up all my precious sheets of paper by the truckload to find him. There's already a few scattered around town.

JESSICA

Any tips?

HELEN

Not yet. He couldn't have gone far.
If you could pass some around when
you go out, that would be great.

JESSICA

Sure thing.

Helen picks up the flyer on top of the stack, looks at the picture. Almost nostalgic.

HELEN

I don't think it's too bad to let
your dad know about it. At least we
know the cat's coming back.

Jessica takes a mandarin orange from the fruit bowl on the table and peels it.

HELEN (CONT'D)

At least he's happy.

After a moment, the front door opens.

RACHEL (O.S.)

Mom?!

They both turn towards the voice.

HELEN

In here!

Walking into view is Jessica's little sister, RACHEL (17).

She and Jessica exchange differing glances, the former with utter disdain, the latter with slight surprise.

RACHEL

(to Helen)

What's she doing here?

Jessica puts the orange on the table, stands up and heads towards her newly reunited little sister.

JESSICA

(playfully)

Come on, now. That's not the best
way to talk about your older sister
like that. Didn't mom tell you I
was coming?

RACHEL

She did.

JESSICA

Then you should know that I just--

RACHEL

--wanted to spend spring break here instead of with that backstabbing piece of shit?

Jessica turns to Helen, then back to Rachel. That one stung.

HELEN

(cuts in)

RACHEL! Don't call your father that!

RACHEL

Well, I'm not gonna call him my father, I know that much. Mr. Donut might as well be called Mr. Vanity.

All three stay silent, let her words sink in.

HELEN

Why don't you both come over here and take a seat.

They both sit on the couch.

Jessica heads back to her original spot while Rachel sits where Helen was just earlier.

HELEN (CONT'D)

I'll whip up some food in the kitchen. Would either one of you like some lemonade?

(no answer)

No? Jessica, have you gone around to it or...

Jessica shakes her head: Still don't like it.

Helen heads out of view towards the kitchen.

Rachel hangs her head down in shame.

JESSICA

So what year are you now? Junior?

No response.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

I remember when I was a junior. I tried really hard to get into any club I could, even though I was horrible at most of them. Are you in any clubs, Rachel?

RACHEL

You've had two years to ask about this and you're deciding now's the best time?!

JESSICA

I mean, it felt awkward to ask back then. Wasn't sure you'd wanna hear anything I said after I left.

As Jessica is talking, Rachel picks up the orange her sister was peeling earlier and continues where she left off.

RACHEL

Just because talking with a family member can be awkward, doesn't mean you can cut them out of your life like that. It's just common sense.

JESSICA

Geez. You really missed me that much?

RACHEL

What?! No! This is what I mean! I bet you didn't make any friends since you left.

JESSICA

Okay, hold on! I admit I've been a little inconsiderate. But you had my phone number this entire time!

RACHEL

Why is it *my* job to reach out to you when you ran off and ditched us in the middle of suburbia!?

JESSICA

Ditched you?! I left for college! What part of that is ditching you?

RACHEL

OH MY GOD! You don't get it!

JESSICA

Oh, stop it. You're going through a phase. An insufferable, rebellious phase.

RACHEL

Says the one who apparently isn't old enough to be under her daddy's wing even though he left with that fucking dumb broad from the sticks who TOOK HIS CLASS!

HELEN

ENOUGH!

Amidst the chaos, they turn to Helen, who is standing by the couch with a veggie plate.

HELEN (CONT'D)

RACHEL! Stop getting a rise out of your sister like that!

Rachel appears to say something, but doesn't say anything, looks away from her mother in defeat.

HELEN (CONT'D)

(to Jessica)

And you! You're supposed to be the mature one here. You can't let yourself be easily provoked like that!

Jessica looks away for a second, her lip quivering. Her ego is crumbling.

JESSICA

(sighs)

You know what? You're right.

Jessica SNATCHES the stack of missing posters, stands up and heads to the front door.

RACHEL

Where are you going?

Ignoring Rachel, Jessica puts her shoes on and exits the house, SLAMS the door behind her.

EXT. JAY'S MARKET - DAY - 4:51PM

A crimson red clock tower looms over a small-town grocery store, "JAY'S MARKET" displayed in large letters above the sliding doors.

A giant banner reading "**CONGRATS LUMINA VIKINGS 2024 4A STATE CHAMPS**" in purple letters hangs over the glass windows by the door.

Members of the girl's basketball team are plastered across the banner in faux-intimidating poses either with the basketball or just crossing their arms. Corny either way.

EXT. WOODEN PICNIC TABLE - JAY'S MARKET

Jessica scrolls through Mara's Instagram. Videos of Mara playing the piano cover her page. As she digs deeper, she finds clips of Mara's swim meets, including one dated five years ago.

She taps the first piano video, where Mara sings along to a slow, dreamlike ballad.

A crutch leans against the piano, clearly visible Remember this for later.

Every piano video has the same haunting tone--

--except the latest one, posted just three hours ago. In it, Mara plays "**The Great Pretender**" by The Platters, but isn't singing along.

Jessica goes back to Nathan's account, taps a photo of him and his girlfriend, and opens the tagged profile:

"**Simply.syd**", with the name "**Sydney Tri**" under the picture.

She blindly skims through all her posts and finds the usual pictures someone in their late teens/early 20s would post alongside the ones with Nathan:

Pics by the water with her friends, senior picture, family trips, cowgirl riding a horse in the country, the occasional summer bikini picture and the like.

MEOW

She hears a cat's meow coming from the adjacent roadway.

Jessica perks up to see a white cat across the road, near a gravel path leading into the woods.

She stands, pockets her phone, and heads towards the--

EXT. STREET

At the roadside, Jessica recognizes the cat.

It looks exactly like the cat in the poster. It's Mr. Donut.

Before she can react, a loud truck ROARS past. ***HONK* *HONK***

When the road clears, she spots Mr. Donut's fluffy white tail disappearing down the gravel path.

She sprints across the street.

EXT. STONE PATH - FOREST - **4:57PM**

Jessica appears to be gaining some ground, until--

--Mr. Donut CAREENS down a faint dirt path beyond the wooden log fencing.

Nevertheless, Jessica HOPS over the barrier. She SHIELDS herself as she passes through stray branches and thorny bushes.

EXT. FOREST - LATER - **4:59PM**

At an open patch of grass, Jessica spots Mr. Donut entering the mouth of a large cave.

She enters the--

CAVE

--and finds--

--a bed of white flowers with glowing petals scattered across the floor.

In the distance, a PURPLE HYACINTH catches her eye, emitting a faint, eerie ***HUM***, begging to be noticed.

Careful not to crush the flowers, Jessica crouches beside the hyacinth.

Jessica reaches out and touches one of its petals, when--

--a wave of goosebumps SHOOTS up her arm, making her pull back.

From afar, the clock tower begins to chime.

Jessica reaches out again. The second chime echoes. Her hand gets closer.

On the third chime, we--

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. JAY'S MARKET - DAY - **THURSDAY, MARCH 22ND - 5:00PM**

Jessica is suddenly back inside Jay's Market, standing at the cashier's desk.

Between her and the cashier, ROB (late 20s), sits a bouquet of purple hyacinths.

ROB
Excuse me?

Jessica whips her head to Rob. Confused as all hell.

ROB (CONT'D)
That'll be \$10.69.

Stunned, Jessica silently steps back from the counter and walks out of the store, leaving the hyacinths with Rob.

INT. LEE HOUSE - DAY - **5:22PM**

Rachel strides by the front door as Jessica enters the house. The two make eye contact.

RACHEL
You're late. Come on, hurry up and get inside.

JESSICA
(hesitant)
Sure, one sec.

From a nearby cat tree, Mr. Donut watches Jessica follow Rachel upstairs into the--

HALLWAY

Just as Rachel heads to the bathroom:

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Hey, Rachel?

RACHEL
Yeah?

JESSICA
I'm sorry for what I said earlier.

Rachel squints her eyes at Jessica. Not sure what she means by that.

RACHEL

What?

(remembers)

Oh that. Yeah, don't worry about it. I'm over it.

Jessica gives Rachel a look which screams out **"The hell was that?!"**

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Shouldn't you be getting ready?

JESSICA

(oblivious)

Oh, yeah, right, that thing I have to get ready for--totally.

(pause)

What should I be getting ready for again?

RACHEL

Did you forget about the wake? It starts in an hour. Mom has your clothes all ready for you in the bedroom.

Not taking this seriously:

JESSICA

(chuckles)

What wake? Did someone die or something?

The moment Jessica says this, Rachel squints at her again, this time with a look of reproach.

Jessica reaches in her right pocket, finds nothing, then her left pocket for her phone, checks the time.

"5:35pm Thursday, March 22nd".

Jessica peeks up to Rachel, then her phone, then Rachel again, her face now filled with deep concern.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - HALLWAY - **7:16PM**

Wearing all black traditional attire, Jessica trails behind Helen and Rachel.

They pass a sign hung up on the wall beside a set of open double doors.

The sign, against a sunset backdrop, reads: **"Welcome to a Celebration of Life Honoring Nathan Noonan. Thank you for coming."**

They step through the doors into the--

INT. GYMNASIUM

It is full with somber attendees, quietly talking amongst themselves.

Easels displaying photos covering different aspects of Nathan's life stand at the far end of the gym.

Out of the corner of her eye, Jessica notices Mara, now more ladylike and refined, engaged in conversation with a group of adults, all dressed in black.

On Mara's head sits a crown of white flowers, eerily similar to those Jessica had seen in the cave. **For the foreseeable future, Mara will be seen wearing this crown.**

Jessica heads to the front of the gym stops in front of one particular easel: **It's the picture Jessica took of Nathan and Mara from the flashback.**

She freezes, keeps her gaze on the picture.

With every second, more attendees gather around her, talking about Nathan in the past tense. It's at this moment it hits her. **Oh my god. Nathan is really dead.**

INT. BATHROOM - COMMUNITY CENTER

Slumped down in one of the stalls, Jessica pukes profusely in the toilet until only phlegm drools out of her mouth.

A couple women from the stalls next to her peek out and offer support, believing it was due to the grief of her friend's death. They are partially right.

INT. GYMNASIUM - 7:55PM

A good amount of the attendees draw their attention to her as Jessica saunters out of the gym with a few of the women from the bathroom.

Mara slips through the crowd and approaches her.

JESSICA
Hey, Mara. What's up?

MARA
I know what's going on.

JESSICA
With what?

MARA
I know what's been happening since
you came back.

JESSICA
(a tad loud)
You do!?

Mara puts her index finger on Jessica's mouth, shushing her.

She whispers in Jessica's ear:

MARA
Meet me at Hodgins park. 4:30PM.
Tomorrow. I'll tell you everything
you need to know.

She taps Jessica's shoulder twice, then trots back into the
sea of people.

INT. JESSICA'S ROOM - LEE HOUSE - **FRIDAY, MARCH 23RD - 8:37AM**

Quiet, except for the sound of Jessica's gentle breathing.

She wakes up and reaches for her phone on the nightstand.

With a hint of surprise and exhaustion:

JESSICA
(groans)
It's not Tuesday.

She pulls one of her pillows over her head, seeking refuge
from the world, while also determined to catch a few more
moments of sleep.

EXT. HODGINS PARK - DAY - **4:32PM**

A seaside park borders a lake, where a sandy beach stretches
to the water's edge. A row of wooden benches lines the far
side of the park, shaded beneath blooming cherry blossom
trees.

Jessica pulls her Corolla into an empty parking spot.

Stepping out, she notices Mara seated at a picnic table, her backpack resting at her feet.

Mara squints up at the delicate cherry blossom petals drifting down around her.

JESSICA

Mara!

Jessica hurries to the table, sits across from Mara.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

(catching her breath)

Sorry I'm late. I overslept.

MARA

No, it's fine. You're only late by a couple minutes, if that.

JESSICA

Okay, cool. Whatever. I'm here. I took the bait. Now, what's going on.

MARA

Actually, I think the best way to start is if you ask the questions.

JESSICA

What?

MARA

You heard me.

JESSICA

Why?

MARA

You'll see.

She is taken aback by how much Mara is taking control of the situation.

Jessica looks to the side, thinking, as a way to not blatantly point out how different Mara was from "earlier". An act of kindness.

MARA (CONT'D)

Don't think too much about it. Just look around you.

She glances at all the different parts of the park. The nearby beach. The parking lot. Those park restrooms that are always dirty. The playground. Then--

--back to Mara.

JESSICA

Why did you want to meet here?

MARA

It was your idea. We had a picnic at this table not too long ago.

JESSICA

What? I don't remember that.

MARA

Yeah, of course you don't. Because it hasn't happened yet. But it will.

Jessica is lost. A pause.

MARA (CONT'D)

You've heard of a quantum leap, right?

JESSICA

Yeah, that's time travel.

MARA

Right.

JESSICA

What about it?

Mara looks Jessica straight in the eye. No BS. Dead serious.

MARA

(point-blank)

Jessica, you leapt through time.

Jessica is speechless. Most people would be in this situation.

MARA (CONT'D)

I'll try to explain the best I can, but I'm gonna warn you. There's a lot of moving parts to this.

After taking a couple deep breaths to mentally prepare herself:

JESSICA
 Alright. Hit me.

MARA
 So, if I had to guess, you want to know why you don't remember anything between 5 pm back on the 18th to 5 pm yesterday, right?

She nods: Yes.

MARA (CONT'D)
 That's because your consciousness made a quantum leap between those two points in time. Only your mind made the jump.

JESSICA
 I'm sorry, who told you about this?

MARA
 I'm getting to that. This next part is very important, so listen carefully.

Jessica nods: Okay.

MARA (CONT'D)
 Okay, so here's how this is going to play out: Starting soon, you are about to relive the past four days, one by one, in **reverse order**.

Jessica shoots Mara a confused look. **What?**

MARA (CONT'D)
 After every 24 hours, you're going to be sent back in time 48 hours. One step forward. Two steps back. 5pm on the dot. This process will repeat until your memories fill the full four-day gap.

She sits with this information, thinks it over until--

JESSICA
 (shakes her head)
 I'm lost.

MARA
 Okay, gimme a sec.

Mara unzips her backpack, pulls out a spiral notebook and a mechanical pencil, and flips to a blank page.

On the top of the paper, she writes "**3/18 (5pm)**" and draws a long arrow pointing from it. At the bottom, she draws "**3/22 (5pm)**" and points at the arrow.

MARA (CONT'D)

So let's say this represents the initial quantum leap. You shot forward from 5 o'clock on the 18th to 5 o'clock on the 22nd. You with me so far?

Jessica nods: Yes.

From there, Mara draws an arrow to the right of the 3/22 marker and writes "**3/23 (5pm)**". She takes out her phone.

MARA (CONT'D)

Which means in about fifteen minutes, you're gonna get sent back to five o'clock on the 21st.

From there, Mara drew an arrow diagonally to the left and writes "**3/21 (5pm)**".

MARA (CONT'D)

And then from *there*, you'll have another 24 hours until you make it back to five o'clock on the 22nd, at which point--

JESSICA

--I'll be sent back to five on the 20th.

MARA

Now you're getting it.

Mara sketches out the rest of the diagram--repeating the "**one day forward, two days back**" pattern a few more times until she makes it all the way back to five o'clock on the 18th.

MARA (CONT'D)

This is what I mean. It's called the "rollback" phenomenon.

JESSICA

Why five o'clock? What makes that time so significant?

MARA

Not sure. It might have something to do with that purple hyacinth you found in the cave.

JESSICA

And that's related how? Flowers don't do that. That's way too specific.

MARA

I'm not sure, either, but I have a personal assumption, so take it or leave it. Apparently, the flower can be a way to let someone who had passed on know they're thinking about them and some crap about forgiveness and sorrow.

JESSICA

How do you know that?

MARA

Looked it up. Even if it's online, I only know what I know.

A pause.

JESSICA

Yeah, I'm not buying it.

MARA

Trust me, that was one of about three or four explanations I had. It's the most rational one I've got.

JESSICA

That's another thing. Your explanations. Everything you've said. The diagram. How do you know all this? Who *told* you about all of this?

Mara shoots Jessica a gentle glare with a hint of genuine sympathy.

MARA

Jessica, you told me all of this. In a past you haven't experienced yet.

JESSICA

And what about that?

Jessica points to the white flower in Mara's hair.

MARA

It was the only thing I found in
the cave.

JESSICA

For the sake of argument, I'll take
your word for it.

A warm smile from Mara.

MARA

(crystal clear)

**Jessica, I want you to save my
brother.**

Jessica sighs. Big inhale. Big exhale. She knows what to do.

JESSICA

When exactly did Nathan pass away?

MARA

Autopsy said anywhere between
midnight and 2 am on the 19th. His
body was found in the empty lot
behind the old tobacco shop near
Jay's. It was alcohol poisoning.

As Mara is talking, she pulls out her phone.

The time reads "4:59pm".

MARA (CONT'D)

It's almost time.

JESSICA

It's five o'clock on the 21st,
right?

MARA

Yeah. Pretty sure.

JESSICA

(impatient)

Pretty sure?!

MARA

What do you want me to say? You
told me all of this?!

The wind picks up. Jessica watches the cherry blossoms swirl
in the air, mesmerized, in a state of Zen.

But then, soft weeping breaks her trance. She turns to find Mara covering her face with her hands. **This isn't allergies. Mara is crying--really crying.**

JESSICA

Oh my god, Mara! Are you all right?

MARA

(crying)

N-No, I...I just...

As Mara is trying to talk, the clock tower, albeit farther away this time, begins to chime.

Mara lifts her disheveled, tear-drenched face to Jessica.

MARA (CONT'D)

Listen to me, Jessica.

(second chime)

Please take care of me.

In the middle of the third chime, we--

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. BREWERS FESTIVAL - DAY - **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21ST - 5:00PM**

Suddenly, Jessica jolts awake--in mid-air. SHE'S FALLING!

She SLAMS into the concrete below. Beside her, the body of a middle-aged man in an American flag tank top (mid-40s) CRASHES to the ground at the same time.

Gasping for breath, Jessica slowly picks herself up, disoriented.

She's in the middle of a brewers festival, surrounded by beer tents and a crowd of people all staring at her.

The clock tower, this time even farther away, rounds off its remaining chimes.

The man gets up and staggers toward her, his beet-red face inches from hers, so close their noses almost touch.

His face is beet red. He is plastered.

U.S. TANK TOP

Hey! Where do you think you're doin'? Huh?

JESSICA

What?

U.S. TANK TOP
You made me drop my beer!

The man points to an empty plastic cup and its remaining contents laid out on the ground next to them.

JESSICA
Whoa, whoa! Hang on a minute! I didn't do this. This is a misunderstanding.

U.S. TANK TOP
Misunderstanding?! You ran into me! What's not to fucking understand?!

In a fit of rage, U.S tank top **SHOVES** Jessica to the ground.

From out of nowhere, a woman with blonde hair gets in between them, **PUSHES** U.S. Tank Top away from Jessica.

It's SYDNEY TRI (21), Nathan's girlfriend.

SYDNEY
Okay, that's enough! ENOUGH! Break it up!
(to tank top)
She didn't do anything wrong, sir. It was just a mistake. Okay? Okay? There are better ways of handling this. Why don't you stop by our tent. I can get you some water.

Sydney guides the drunk redhead away from Jessica.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
(to Jessica)
I'll handle it from here, Jessica. You get on home.

Jessica nods in agreement and starts to leave.

After a moment, she suddenly pauses, realizing she somehow knows Sydney's name without ever being introduced.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
Go. You're good. Go!

Jessica sprints in the other direction.

INT. JESSICA'S CAR - 5:05PM

Jessica enters her car. She pulls out her phone, turns it on. She sees the time.

INT. JESSICA'S ROOM - LEE HOUSE - 5:42PM

At her desk with a pen and a spiral notebook, she flips to the first blank page she can find. She attempts to recreate the diagram Mara made "earlier".

The results are in: It's good enough.

She unlocks her phone and notices a Notes app widget on her home screen, right above her audiobook app, displaying unfamiliar notes. It reads:

- **Reminder: Check under Nathan's cap in his living room.**
- **3/19: Found Nathan's body @ 5:30 PM in empty lot behind tobacco shop and called police**
- **Estimated time of death between midnight and 2 AM of alcohol poisoning.**
- **For more information, check under Nathan's cap**

JESSICA

The hell?

Taking note that she *apparently* called the police, Jessica checks her call history.

They reveal Jessica had called Mara twice (one went to voicemail) on the 20th, Helen twice, Andrew once and 911 once (at exactly 5:30) on the 19th, and Mara twice and Helen twice on the 18th.

Jessica stares at her recent calls, thinking until--

RACHEL (O.S.)

(muffled)

Jessica! Dinner's ready!

Rachel's booming voice breaks Jessica's concentration.

JESSICA

Coming!

As she stands up, she puts her phone in her left pocket, only to feel something crinkling next to it. She pulls out a folded-up twenty dollar bill she does not remember getting.

Jessica puts it in her wallet.

INT. BATHROOM - **5:57PM**

Jessica relaxes in a warm bath, her eyes closed, the sound of gentle water filling the room. Her mind drifts as she reflects on everything that's happened. Calm. Meditative.

INT. JESSICA'S ROOM - **THURSDAY, MARCH 22ND - 1:03AM**

Jessica wakes up to the sound of her phone vibrating on the nightstand. Groggily, she rubs her eyes and checks the caller ID.

It's Mara.

She answers the call.

JESSICA
 (mumbling; sleepy)
 Hello? Mara?
 (pause)
 I was.

Jessica turns to her alarm clock. "**1:01am**".

JESSICA (CONT'D)
 What is it?
 (pause)
 What? Sorry, I didn't catch that.
 (pause; more alert)
 Right now?!
 (pause)
 Alright. What do you want me to do?
 (pause)
 Yeah, I got a hoodie lying around
 somewhere. Why?

EXT. NOONAN HOUSE - NIGHT - **1:22AM**

Wearing a pair of sweatpants and a hoodie, Jessica is seated in her car, parked on the driveway.

Mara enters the car, slides into the passenger seat, also with a hoodie on.

INT. CAR

MARA
 Sorry for dragging you out here
 this late.

JESSICA
No, it's fine. Is something going
on?

MARA
No. I just wanted to hang out.

Jessica is about to say something, but stops herself.
Instead, she gives Mara a helpful smile.

JESSICA
Alright. Let's go.

Immediately, Mara's expression softens into one of relief.

MARA
Thanks, Jessica.

JESSICA
Don't mention it.

Jessica starts the car.

INT. 2017 TOYOTA COROLLA - MOVING - **1:31AM**

"Before the Day is Over" by Joji (or any applicable song that
sounds moody at 1 in the morning) plays over the radio at low
volume.

JESSICA
Hey, Mara. Quick question.

MARA
Yeah?

JESSICA
Do you happen to know what I was
doing sunday night?

As soon as Jessica asks the question, Mara's eye shoot open
and her mouth hangs in the slightest crack, but no words come
out. Just a long, shallow breath.

Mara is in a state of shock, almost scared to say a word. A
memory unknown to us plays in her mind.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Mara?
(turns to her)
Hey, Mara!

Mara snaps out of her trance.

MARA
What? Sunday?

JESSICA
Yeah. After we talked at the docks.

Her expression warps into a smile that's blatantly insincere.

MARA
(scared; soft voice)
No. Sorry. I don't know.

JESSICA
Is everything alright?

After a few moments:

MARA
(lies)
It's nothing, sorry. I just
couldn't remember if I locked the
door on the way out.

JESSICA
So did you?

MARA
I'm about ninety-nine percent sure
I did.

JESSICA
It's better than nothing.

EXT. MAIN BUILDING - LUMINA HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT - 1:47AM

Shrouded in darkness, Jessica and Mara stand outside the side entrance of the school's four-story building. It's decked out in a modern design, too flashy for its own good.

JESSICA
Are you sure we're not gonna get in
trouble for this?

MARA
We'll be *fine*. Just keep your hood
on.

Jessica follows Mara as they circle around the main building. They walk until Mara stops at one of the frosted sliding glass windows.

Without hesitation, Mara GRABS the window by its edges and RATTLES it around in its frame.

JESSICA
What are you doing?

MARA
This one's a little janky. All you
have to do is wiggle it around and
give it some pressure and--

And just like that, the window POPS right open. Mara turns to Jessica with a smug grin.

MARA (CONT'D)
--you got yourself an open window.

Jessica can't help but be proud.

JESSICA
You sure know your way around.

MARA
I hope so. If I wasn't, that's two
years of my life down the drain.

Mara hops inside. Jessica follows her inside a--

INT. CLASSROOM - LUMINA HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT

They go through the empty classroom and into the--

MAIN HALLWAY

She passes by a bland, corporate poster of smiling kids giving thumbs-up beneath the words "YOU ARE NOT ALONE."

Above them, a security camera is placed at the corner of the hallway.

MARA
It's up here. C'mon!

Jessica spots Mara above a set of stairs, follows her up a few more without a care in the world.

Jessica finally catches up with her at a--

DOOR LEADING TO ROOF

It is secured with an ordinary padlock.

JESSICA
This what you wanted to show me?

MARA

Not yet.

Mara pulls two hairpins out of her pocket and straightens them out to make them look like small lengths of wire.

MARA (CONT'D)

Watch this.

She JAMS the hairpins into the padlock and SHAKES them with expert precision.

In a matter of seconds, the padlock falls on the floor.

JESSICA

Jesus, Mara. You got way too much time on your hands.

MARA

What can I say? I'm a simple woman. I see a door, I wanna open it.

As Mara pushes the door open, they get hit with a gust of wind.

They power through it and step out onto the--

EXT. ROOF

The moon hangs low and massive in the sky.

Mara strides to the far edge of the roof, grips the railing, and leans her upper body over the side, taking in the view below.

Her hood flies off her head, blown by the wind. She's at the edge of the world!

Jessica stands behind her, takes her hood off.

JESSICA

Hey, be careful!

MARA

I'll be fine.

Jessica stands next to Mara.

She looks down at the dark abyss below, then up at the stars.

MARA (CONT'D)

This is my favorite spot in all of Lumina. It's pretty during the day too.

JESSICA

When did you think this was a good idea?

MARA

Sometime last year. Started doing it during lunchtime and just kept doing it since I never got called in for it. Then I upped the ante by coming here at night. But it's worth it. I can't get enough of it.

Mara speaks about this with a hint of wonder and enthusiasm. This is her happy place.

MARA (CONT'D)

Don't you get to see a lot of stars down in Seattle?

JESSICA

You'll be surprised how little light pollution really does. It gets blown into a bunch of nothin'.

MARA

Did you see the train in the sky?

JESSICA

Train?

MARA

You know? Those satellites that were launched last year?

JESSICA

I think so. If you showed me a video of it, I might remember.

MARA

I didn't need a video. I was right here. Every time I think about it, I imagine it was a train going around the world in circles forever. It goes full circle over and over again, forever in peace.

(chuckles)

Now I think they're just a bunch of satellites.

Mara reaches her hand out towards the darkness, the unknown.

MARA (CONT'D)

I'm not sure I can make it in a big city like you.

JESSICA

Sure you could. You just gotta put yourself out there. Even if it doesn't work out, you can always stay with Dad and I. We'll prop up a spare room, get you situated. Next thing you know, we'll be crunching through deadlines together. You'll be just fine.

Silence.

They continue to bask in the beauty of the night when--

--Mara wraps her arms around Jessica and rests her head on her shoulder.

MARA

(fragile; scared)

Please don't hate me.

Jessica wraps her hands around Mara's back. They stay still for a moment.

INT. CAR - MOVING - **2:00AM**

Jessica and Mara silently sit in the car. No music is playing this time.

MARA

Thanks for hanging out with me, Jessica.

JESSICA

No problem.

(pause)

You wanna meet up tomorrow?

MARA

With the wake coming up, I don't think I'll have time.

JESSICA

(confused)

The wake? Wasn't that--

Jessica stops herself before she says anything else, realizes what day it is.

MARA

Yeah, sorry. We've been running ourselves ragged the past couple of days. I can't leave Mom to handle it herself. We spent most of yesterday setting things up.

JESSICA

There's no need to apologize. Regardless, it's all gonna be alright when this is over with. I know I'll get to Nathan in time.

MARA

Right. Nathan...

EXT. NOONAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Jessica parks the Corolla in the driveway.

INT. CAR

MARA

Hey, Jessica. How do you see Nathan? What's your impression of him?

JESSICA

Oh, man. I mean, nothing too out of the ordinary. Not too boring, either. That's what I liked about him. But he always struck me as a bit clumsy when it came to expressing his emotions. At least that's how I saw him back then.

MARA

What do you mean?

JESSICA

Back in middle school, he asked me to do him a favor.

MARA

What was it?

JESSICA

He asked me to look out for you anytime I could.

(MORE)

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Any time he wouldn't be able to hang out after he truly committed to baseball. It was after he came back from that world series thing when he was in little league. It was like he sold his soul on national television so he can play baseball for the rest of his life. But at the same time, he didn't feel like he was being a good brother after what happened to your dad. He didn't want you to be in a horrible place.

Mara looks at Jessica, taken aback.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Kinda made sense if you think about it. We already hung out a lot to begin with. But I guess that's how older siblings are, y'know? They always look out for the younger one but are too proud to admit it and, after a while, life gets in the way. Hell, Rachel and I aren't that different.

(smiles; laughs a little)

In fact, we had a huge argument the other day, the latest in a 15-foot long laundry list dating back to when she could talk. But, at the end of the day, she's my younger sister and I care for her.

Jessica laughs along to her story. Mara isn't.

In fact, her expression becomes more soberingly serious as she listens.

MARA

(shaky)

He really said that?

Realizing she made a terrible mistake, Jessica is about to say something when--

--Mara gets out of the car, races straight to the house.

JESSICA

Wait, Mara!

Mara ignores her, heads inside.

Jessica stays where she is, doesn't start the car. A moment of awkward silence, not knowing what to do, or say, next.

INT. KITCHEN - LEE HOUSE - 3:00 AM

You can hear a pin drop. The moonlight casts shadows as Jessica slowly opens the sliding door, creeping inside.

INT. JESSICA'S ROOM

Jessica gently creaks open her bedroom door, squeezing inside.

She quietly clicks it shut and slips under the covers of her bed.

She lies on her back, staring at the ceiling.

EXT. JAY'S MARKET - EVENING - THREE YEARS AGO - **A MEMORY**

Nathan stands by the automatic front doors, drinking an iced tea he just bought from inside.

After a few seconds, Jessica parks in an open spot next to Nathan.

She runs out of the driver's seat and runs into Nathan's arms, cries into his shoulder.

NATHAN

It's alright. It's alright. I'm here.

Nathan awkwardly taps her back a few times.

EXT. WOODEN PICNIC TABLE - JAY'S MARKET

Nathan and Mara sit across from each other, in conversation.

JESSICA

It just doesn't make sense.

NATHAN

How's your folks holding up?

JESSICA

We can't get ourselves to talk about it.

NATHAN
What about him?

JESSICA
He's gonna move closer to the
university. With her.

Jessica stares off into the distance, her mind filled with not-so-nice thoughts about her father.

NATHAN
At least you get to see yours.

A misguided response.

JESSICA
What did you do, then?

NATHAN
Just kept doing what I was doing.
After a little bit of time, I
realized he was a huge part of who
I was. As long as I kept playing,
it would be for him. He would buy
all the supplies, drive me
everywhere, go to all the games.
(chuckles)
It's hard to think he would be able
to do all that while still being
with Mom but they stuck it out.

Jessica leers at Nathan, realizing he had just lost the point of this conversation.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
I mean, it's hard to even fathom
what would happen if *they* got
divorced but--

JESSICA
(interrupts)
Nathan.

Nathan stops talking, turns to Jessica. He is finally reading the room.

NATHAN
Right.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
(change of topic)
You still like computers, right?
All that tech shit?

JESSICA
(after a second)
I guess so...yeah.

NATHAN
What's the first thing that comes
into your head when it comes to
computers?

JESSICA
Well, he would help me out with all
my projects--

NATHAN
(interrupts)
Forget about him. What do you like
the *most* about that?

After a few seconds:

JESSICA
The planning. The planning and
knowing it will get done.

NATHAN
So you don't half-ass it?

JESSICA
No. No I don't. I get it done.

NATHAN
Yeah, you do.

A pause.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
Jess, take it from me, if you go
all in, even without you dad being
over your shoulder, you're going to
make something incredible. **You
don't need him to get what you
want.**

A pause.

JESSICA
But what if I still want to see
him?

NATHAN
That's up to you.

INT. JESSICA'S ROOM - **PRESENT DAY**

Jessica lays on her right side in the bed, still awake until--

INT. SAME - **2:24PM**

--she is out cold. Her alarm clock reads "**2:24 PM**"

JESSICA (O.S.)
Hey, Mara. It's me.

INT. JESSICA'S ROOM - **3:35PM**

With a good case of bed head, Jessica paces around the room, on the phone.

JESSICA
I just wanted to apologize for last night. I didn't mean to worry you. But remember this is all going to be okay when this is over. I don't know if you'll ever get the chance to feel it. But I promise you, when this is over, the version of you who will feel it will have the greatest sense of relief she has ever felt in her life. It's when she'll know that everything will be in its right place. Stay strong, Mara. I'm still here.

Jessica hangs up the phone.

EXT. CARPENTER'S TAVERN - DAY - **4:15PM**

At the front door of a small dive barr, its polished wooden exterior a stark contrast to the desolate surroundings.

Jessica wears a weary expression as she stares at the "**CLOSED**" sign hanging in the window.

Her gaze shifts to a schedule posted next to the door, revealing that Thursdays are completely closed, while the bar opens at 4:00 PM on other days.

EXT. EMPTY LOT - DAY - **4:46PM**

A cluster of transmission towers looms over a heartfelt display of bouquets and mementos resting on a worn patch of grass in an overgrown lot behind a brick building.

Jessica stares blankly at the enormous memorial, lost in thought.

EXT. TOBACCO SHOP - **4:50PM**

Jessica strolls along a gravel path to the front of a brick building with a neon "TOBACCO" sign in the window.

She glances down the street, spotting Jay's Market a few blocks to her right.

INT. JAY'S MARKET - **4:54PM**

With a small basket, Jessica saunters through the produce section and stops at a small floral shelf.

Rob rings up items for a customer at the cashier desk, one of a few in line. Business as usual.

Jessica examines the flowers until she spots a familiar bouquet: purple hyacinths.

She takes note of the colors, places them in her basket, and heads toward the cashier.

Suddenly, something catches her eye--a lottery vending machine.

Realizing what she's currently going through, Jessica pulls out her phone and checks the latest lottery drawings. Easy money.

She finds a set of winning numbers that was announced that day (**March 22nd**) connected to a prize of \$5.6 million.

JESSICA

(whispers to herself)

Okay, it's 17. 24. 48. 62. 68 and
23. 17. 24. 48. 62. 68 and 23.

She repeats the numbers, focused, then types them into her phone.

Rob finishes with the last customer, looks over at Jessica, and calls out:

ROB

Excuse me. Hey!

The "Hey!" breaks Jessica out of her green-eyed trance, nearly causing her to drop her phone.

JESSICA
Yeah? What? What.

ROB
Are you okay?

JESSICA
I'm fine. I'm good. I'm--

Jessica gives up in trying to finish her sentence and just heads up to the register.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
--just ready to buy these.

ROB
Are these for the wake?

JESSICA
No, it's for the memorial down the street. It just felt wrong to not pay my respects, y'know?

ROB
I hear you. I've had a few people swing by after going over there. Great ballplayer.

JESSICA
You met him?

ROB
Nope. But that's what I've been hearing about him from everyone else.

Jessica's phone rings in her pocket.

"Mom" is displayed on the screen.

She picks up the call.

JESSICA
Hey, mom!

HELEN (O.S.)
Hey, Jessica. Where are you? We're getting ready for the wake tonight.

JESSICA
Right. I'm sorry. I just went out to get some stuff. I'm heading home now.

HELEN (O.S.)

Good. You just up and left out of nowhere. I thought you went to go see Mara.

JESSICA

No. We hung out a little bit earlier but I'm head--

HELEN (O.S.)

So you *did* see her again?

JESSICA

Yeah, I did. Wait? What do you mean 'again'?

HELEN (O.S.)

Didn't you say you spent the night with her on Sunday?

JESSICA

On Sunday?

HELEN (O.S.)

Yeah.

JESSICA

You're positive?

HELEN (O.S.)

That's what you told me before you went to the detective.

Jessica takes a couple beats to process what her mother just said.

JESSICA

(more alarmed)

Wait...detective?! When did I meet a detective?

HELEN (O.S.)

Don't you remember? You met with him a couple days ago and called me from the station.

She looks off to the side, thinking, calculating a response. Something. Anything.

JESSICA

Right, of course I did! Sorry, this past week's been nothing but a blur. It all just blends together after a while, y'know?

HELEN (O.S.)

Definitely. If you ask me, and I'm just saying this as *your mother*, I think the best thing to take out of this is to always know your limits. Being outside in the middle of the night, blacked out with whatever life-reducer money can buy, if that doesn't kill you the cold will.

As Jessica is listening, outside, the clock tower begins to chime. She knows what *that* means.

JESSICA

Mom, I have to go!

Before Helen can respond, Jessica hangs up the phone and puts it in her left pocket.

On the second chime, Jessica darts her eyes outside the store, then back to Rob. She braces for what's about to come.

ROB

Hey, what's the matter?

Before Jessica can respond, in the middle of the third chime, we--

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. HODGINS PARK - DAY - **TUESDAY, MARCH 20TH - 5:00PM**

Jessica jolts awake, her eyes wide with confusion as the faint echo of the clock tower's chimes fades.

Jessica is sitting on a park bench next to Nathan's girlfriend, Sydney. A Shih Tzu on a leash rests on Sydney's lap as she is talking.

Sydney's dominant stature and composure compared to Jessica gives her more of a spitting image of an adult with more real-world experience and less of a filter. And she sure isn't old, but there's not a lot she hasn't seen nor said.

SYDNEY

So yeah, after that, I really don't know what happened to him.

In an attempt to remember who she is, Jessica stares at Sydney. It's been a while.

Then it hits her.

JESSICA
Wait a minute. Sydney?

SYDNEY
Yeah?

Jessica abruptly stares off into the distance, thinking of something to say.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
(impatient)
Um, hello? Did you want to ask me something, or...?

JESSICA
Oh, no, sorry. It's fine.

SYDNEY
Why are you so skittish all of a sudden? If you got something to say, just say it!

JESSICA
Right. Yeah.
(point-blank)
I'm sorry, but could you remind me what we were talking about?

The sheer awkwardness of that question almost becomes too much for Jessica.

SYDNEY
(confused)
You're joking, right? Did you have an epiphany about the end of the world or something while I was talking? What happened just now?

JESSICA
(under her breath)
Guess you could say that.

SYDNEY
You asked me about Nathan, remember? Were you even listening?

JESSICA
Right, right. And what were you saying about him, again?

Sydney speaks with a sense of soft-spoken anger.

SYDNEY

You're really gonna make me repeat
all that, are ya?

JESSICA

(backpedals)

No, no, it's okay. I got the gist
of it. I think.

Sydney leans back against the bench, stretches her arms over
her head.

SYDNEY

It's just not a pleasant subject to
bring up, you know? I'd rather we
not repeat it.

She checks her phone, the time.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

I gotta head out. Now don't forget.
I expect you to be there bright and
early tomorrow to set up.

JESSICA

(genuinely confused)

Set up? Set up for what?

SYDNEY

We're shorthanded at our family's
stand this year at the brewer's
festival and you offered to help
out. That's why I'm even here.
There--did that refresh your
memory?

JESSICA

(even more confused)

I offered to help?

SYDNEY

That's what you said.

Sydney looks at Jessica, suspicious at her state of mind.
Jessica locks eyes for a couple beats, then--

JESSICA

Right, of course. I remember now.
Guess I'll see you tomorrow then.

SYDNEY

Good! For a second there, I thought
you were losing your memory on me.

She slaps Jessica on the back as hard as she could. Jessica winces at the stinging pain.

Sydney gets up from the bench, turns to Jessica.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
 Tomorrow morning. Six o'clock sharp
 at the fairgrounds. Don't be late!

Jessica perks up upon hearing "six o'clock".

She mouths it out to make sure she heard it right. Six. O'clock.

After a few seconds, Sydney comes back.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry. What was your name
 again?

JESSICA
 Jessica. Jessica Lee.

SYDNEY
 Jessica. Got it.

INT. JESSICA'S ROOM - LEE HOUSE - DAY - **5:26PM**

Jessica collapses on her bed, covers her face with her pillow. She lets out a muffled groan.

JESSICA
 (in the pillow; muffled)
 What did I DOOOOO?????!!

On the bedstand, her phone rings.

She picks it up. It's Mara.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
 Hey, Mara.

MARA (O.S.)
 Hey, Jessica. Sorry I wasn't able
 to get to the phone earlier. Was in
 the middle of something. What's up?

JESSICA
 What do you mean? I never called
 you.

MARA (O.S.)

What are you talking about? You tried to call me about an hour ago.

Jessica paces around her room, trying to think of something, anything to say until--

JESSICA

Oh yeah, I did. There's actually something I need to talk to you about. Is this a good time?

MARA (O.S.)

Yeah. What's up?

JESSICA

Do you wanna hang out soon? Bring some food out to the park.

MARA (O.S.)

You wanna hang out? Now?

Jessica puts her free hand to her head, imagining the puzzled look Mara might be giving her on the other end.

JESSICA

Y-yeah, sorry. I guess I didn't think that through. Pretend I didn't even--

MARA (O.S.)

(interrupts)

Actually, that sounds like a great idea. Let's do it.

JESSICA

(shocked)

All right. Sounds like a plan. Do you wanna pick a time. I'm free all evening.

MARA (O.S.)

Does seven work? I gotta finish some homework.

JESSICA

Seven is perfect.

MARA (O.S.)

All right. See you then.

JESSICA

See ya.

Jessica hangs up the phone.

EXT. NOONAN HOUSE - EVENING - 7:10PM

Jessica knocks on the front door.

Mara's mother, TRISH NOONAN (late 40s), opens the door. She's on the phone.

TRISH

(on the phone)

I know! I told Sydney about Friday.
The moment we get the money, I'm
going to send her out to buy the
supplies. Gets her something to do.
She's barely left her room for
months!

Jessica attempts to talk to Trish, who seems to be giving more attention to the phone despite being the one who opened the door.

JESSICA

Excuse me? Could you...where's
Mara?

Trish points to the ceiling and mouths the words "Upstairs" to Jessica, all the while we hear a loud voice on the other end of the phone yapping away.

She signals Jessica to come inside.

INT. NOONAN HOUSE

Jessica follows Trish down a--

HALLWAY

--where family photos of Mara and Nathan line the walls.

One photo catches her eye: Nathan at 12, wearing a green and white baseball jersey with "Northwest" emblazoned across the chest and the Little League World Series logo on his cap, beaming alongside Trish. He's been at this for a while.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NOONAN HOUSE

TRISH

(to Jessica; whispers)

I'll let her know you're coming.

JESSICA

Okay.

Trish exits the living room, out of view. Jessica sits on the couch.

TRISH

(laughing; on the phone)

I KNOW! Wouldn't you believe that?!
But there's nothing to do about it.
Prepare for now and eventually,
what comes later is gonna be on its
way. What else can you do?

As Trish is still talking on the phone, Jessica notices a worn ballcap on a side table at the far end of the couch. **The same one Nathan put on Mara's head in the initial flashback.**

She scoots to the end of the couch, lifts the cap, and discovers Nathan's driver's license, fifteen dollars in change, a couple of debit cards, and five casino vouchers ranging from fifty to seventy-five cents.

For "future" reference, Jessica types the message into the notes widget:

Reminder: Check under Nathan's cap in his living room.

As she puts her phone away, a familiar sight catches her eye: Mara's piano next to the TV. It's the same one Mara used for her videos.

A small tripod sits beside it, where the phone would have been.

Jessica takes a seat on the piano bench and taps a few keys, one after another, until she strikes a broken one.

A pause.

She taps it a couple more times, and just as she's about to hit it again--

MARA

Hey!

Jessica sees Mara standing by the archway into the hallway.

MARA (CONT'D)

Mom didn't tell me you were here
already.

JESSICA

Well, I--

She stops herself, realizing Trish had forgot to tell her own daughter her friend was here.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
(to the piano)
Sounds like you might need a new piano.

MARA
Yep. Nathan said he was gonna buy me a new one.

A pause.

JESSICA
You ready to go?

MARA
Yeah. I need to get out of the house anyway. Good time for it.

They walk under the arch, back out into the--

HALLWAY

As they get closer to the door, Jessica turns back around and finds Trish at the other end, laughing up a storm to the person on the other end.

EXT. HODGINS PARK - EVENING - 7:31PM

The park is packed with people, taking in the gorgeous weather. As the sun sinks toward the horizon above the nearby lake, it paints the sky in vibrant oranges, pinks, and purples.

In the parking lot, Jessica steps out of her car, retrieving a picnic table cover from the back seat.

With Mara a few steps behind, Jessica passes by the very same bench where she talked to Sydney the night before.

MARA
How about that table over there?

Mara points to a table partially covered in petals from the blooming tree above. Unbeknownst to her, this is the same table where she would later explain the Rollback pattern to Jessica.

Jessica feels a wave of déjà vu wash over her as she notices it.

JESSICA

Sure. Why not?

They sit at the--

TABLE

Jessica lays out the cover and sits across from Mara.

Mara pulls out two bins of peeled oranges, three blueberry bars, and a giant bag filled with tiny bags of bread, cold cuts, and cheese from her bag, placing them on the table.

MARA

Lot more people here than usual.

JESSICA

Yeah.

Mara's enthusiasm slowly dies with every word she spoke.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Hey, it's alright. Don't mind them. They got their own thing going. We got ours. Right? You don't see them over there with all this food now, do you?

Mara smiles at Jessica's compliment.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Yeah, I see that smile. Could you pass me the sandwich bag please?

She hands Jessica the sandwich bag, opens it up and lays out the three small bags on the table, begins to make a sandwich.

A couple beats go by before Mara grabs one of the orange bins.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Could you pass me an orange?

Mara hands Jessica an unpeeled orange. Jessica peels it.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Just like middle school all over again.

MARA

I guess so.

JESSICA

I remember Nathan and I were always waiting until you were done with your food before we went outside. We've had to wait for you for a while at some points.

MARA

Could you blame me for it? I couldn't eat it all.

JESSICA

Yeah, but no one was *forcing* you to eat any of the food. After some time, it got really bad. Half the time you looked like a chipmunk choking itself to death. It's not worth cleaning your plate if you're gonna have literal tears in your eyes by the end of it.

MARA

I don't like wasting food, alright!?

Jessica laughs with Mara, letting out a wistful sigh as she savors the moment, recalling their "last" meeting.

Her gaze wanders around the area: the food, the table, Mara, and finally up at the falling blossoms drifting down on them.

MARA (CONT'D)

Jessica? Jessica!

Jessica, her concentration broken:

JESSICA

Yeah?

MARA

Something wrong?

JESSICA

Nothing. Nothing. Just spaced out for a bit.

(beat)

Actually, I got a quick question.

MARA

Yeah?

JESSICA

Do you remember when I told you about the Rollback pattern and all that jazz?

Mara looks to the side, thinking, recollecting.

MARA

Let's see...I believe you told me a couple days ago.

JESSICA

What was "a couple days ago"?

MARA

The 18th, I think.

Suddenly, she perks up at the mention of the date.

Curiosity piqued, she pulls out her phone, checks her call history, and sees two back-to-back calls to Mara on the 18th, shortly after 9:00 PM. One of the calls didn't connect.

JESSICA

So Sunday, right? Are you sure?

She taps on the one call that did connect and discovers that it lasted for only three seconds.

MARA

Yeah. I'm sure.

Jessica puts her phone back in her pocket, takes a deep breath.

JESSICA

Just to be sure, did I explain it to you in person or over the phone?

MARA

(immediately)

In person.

Jessica processes the information, realizing it contradicts what Mara told her during the car ride to the school, **making her lie about something she hadn't told Jessica yet.**

Seeking a distraction, Jessica glances around the table and spots Mara holding the bin of oranges.

JESSICA

You're not hungry?

MARA
Oh, I'll be having some. Don't
worry. Are you?

She looks down at her half-attempt at a sandwich.

JESSICA
Right. Yeah.

Jessica takes a bite.

Mara opens the bin, takes a single orange slice, closes it.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Mara?

MARA
(orange in mouth)
Hmm?

She closes her bin, puts them back in her bag, out of view of
Jessica.

JESSICA
(serious)
What happened on sunday?

Mara dips her head, the vivacity of the moment drains from
her face.

MARA
(in a fragile whisper)
Jessica, I...

Jessica waits a moment.

MARA (CONT'D)
I can't talk about that.

JESSICA
(impatiently)
What do you mean? We have all the
time in the world right now! If
something really bad happened,
don't you think I deserve to know
about it in advance?!

MARA
Please, just--

JESSICA
(interrupts)
No, you need to tell me. Or do you
not trust me? Is that it?!

MARA
 (pleading; louder)
 Of course I do! Please believe me!
 I can't tell you.

Mara's voice cracks and trembles as she pleads to Jessica with a heartbroken look on her face.

JESSICA
 (snaps)
 Why not?!

Jessica stands up, looms over Mara. Mara covers her face with her arms in fear in a defensive position.

After a few seconds, Jessica slowly sits back down, realizes she royally messed up.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
 Fine. Sorry I brought it up.

MARA
 No. I should be the one to apologize.

JESSICA
 (soft)
 --I said it's fine.

INT. BATHROOM - LEE HOUSE - 8:49PM

Jessica submerges herself in a bath tub filled with hot water.

She lets out a weary sigh and dips her head into the water. A moment of reflection.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAWN - WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21ST - 5:59AM

The disk-like sun hovers over an empty highway. The city of Lumina begins to wake up.

EXT. PARKING LOT - 6:02AM

Jessica parks her car in a vacant space next to the barricaded end of a city street, marked by construction signs.

Downing a cup of coffee, she exits the car.

BREWER'S FESTIVAL

At the far end of the closed street, nestled between two rows of tents, Jessica spots Sydney next to a flatbed truck piled high with beer crates, flanked by three large tents and promotional banners.

Sydney spots her.

SYDNEY
(waves)
Jessica! Over here!

Jessica arrives.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
(laughs)
What did I say?! Six o'clock.
Sharp!

JESSICA
I'm sorry. Sorry. Woke up late
again.

SYDNEY
I'm just playing wit' ya. You're
good. You're good.

Sydney playfully slaps Jessica on the back.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
Hope you're ready for a long day.

Jessica can only respond with a worried chuckle.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
Here, put these on.

Sydney throws a pair of work gloves to Jessica, who puts them on.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
Could you hop on the truck. We'll
carry the tent out.

JESSICA
Got it.

Jessica jumps on the back of the truck, assists Sydney in getting one of the huge folded tents on the ground.

EXT. SAME - 7:35AM

At the end of the closed street, amid two massive lines of tents, stands the setup: three canopies arranged side by side, each draped with polyester tent covers.

Above the table in the middle tent, a sign reads "**Tri Beer and Brewery.**"

EXT. BREWERY TENT - FESTIVAL GROUNDS

In front of the tent, Jessica unfolds the last of the folding tables, stepping back to admire the stand in all its glory.

JESSICA

Jesus, this thing's huge.

Sydney walks next to Jessica, admires the view with her.

SYDNEY

Yeah. Didn't Nathan tell you our family goes big every year?

JESSICA

I wouldn't know anyway.

SYDNEY

And don't worry, when this place is packed, it's something else. And I expect you to be there for every single one going forward 'til beer gets banned again! But for today, just stay awake and work your ass off and you'll be fine.

EXT. SAME - 8:56AM

Jessica is out cold on one of the tables. That coffee can only keep you awake for so long.

A little kid, about 8 or 9, sits across from Jessica, watches as drool drips from her mouth onto the table.

From behind the counter, Sydney spots Jessica. She walks up to the table, shoos the kid away and shakes her awake.

SYDNEY

You're lucky they're just starting to arrive.

Sydney points towards the other tents. There can't be more than 40 people spread out along the fairgrounds.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)
 Drink this. Should give you a bit
 of a kick. Make 7 hours feel like
 3.

She hands an energy drink to Jessica.

JESSICA
 (groggy)
 Got it.

SYDNEY
 Didn't you have something on the
 way here?

JESSICA
 Yeah.

SYDNEY
 What happened?

JESSICA
 I think it was decaf.

Jessica turns toward the tent and notices a glass jar beside
 the register.

A piece of paper taped to the front reads "**FOR NATHAN**",
 written in markers that match the high school and college
 colors.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
 What's the jar for?

SYDNEY
 It's a donation jar. For his
 service.

JESSICA
 His service?
 (realizes)
 Oh. Yeah. His service. Right.

Jessica examines the jar, realizes it's for the service she
 went to "earlier" in the story.

INT. SAME - 12:20PM

The jar is now full of money. A line of people in matching
 school colors waits in front of the tent, making it the most
 popular spot in the area.

Sydney runs the register while Jessica fills up glasses on the side.

SYDNEY
Jessica! One Raspberry Wheat.

JESSICA
On it!

Jessica fills a pint glass with Raspberry Wheat and is about to hand it to Sydney before the crowd in front of the tent catches her eye.

She glances out at the street, remembering where she ran into Mr. U.S. Tank Top.

Sydney taps her arm a couple times.

SYDNEY
Jessica. The Wheat.

JESSICA
(soft)
Right.

Jessica hands Sydney the pint and heads back to her station, drops her head down in embarrassment, away from the crowd of people.

EXT. BREWERY TENT - 4:45PM

Slouched in a plastic chair behind the tent after a hrd day's work, Jessica catches her breath.

Just then, Sydney exits the tent, spots Jessica.

SYDNEY
Ay. Good hustle out there today.

She hands Jessica a bottle of water.

JESSICA
Thanks.
(takes a sip)
I'm sorry but I'm gonna have to head out soon, if that's alright.

SYDNEY
Oh, that's fine. I was just going to say you're free to go.

Sydney sits next to Jessica on another plastic chair, turns to her.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

You really helped us out today. Really. You're like the perfect utility player. You did everything you needed to do for us. I'll talk to my parents and see if they can get you a job at the brewery. When you're old enough, of course.

JESSICA

--Maybe? Let me get back to you on that.

SYDNEY

(chuckles)

Now that's a 'no' if I ever heard one. Don't sweat it, though. It's fine. Mind if I vape?

JESSICA

No, you're good.

Sydney uses her vape stick, blows it away from the tent.

SYDNEY

Hey, Jessica?

JESSICA

Hmm?

Sydney peeks around the corner behind Jessica, then through the tent, then hands Jessica a twenty dollar bill as if it's a covert operation.

SYDNEY

Keep this between us, alright? I told my elders you were doing this for free.

With a smile, Jessica mimes zipping her mouth shut.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

But seriously, thanks for the help. You did a great job filling Nathan's shoes.

JESSICA

What's that about Nathan?

SYDNEY

Didn't I already tell you? Yeah, he was originally going to help. But, of course, he wasn't able to.

JESSICA

Wow, that's...I had no idea.

Jessica is filled with a lot of complex emotions after hearing the news.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

You two must've been pretty close, huh?

SYDNEY

Yeah. We were inseparable at Eldrin.

JESSICA

What was he like over there?

SYDNEY

Oh, man. Everyone looked up to him. His smile and athleticism alone gave him instant celebrity status.

JESSICA

Sounds like high school all over again.

SYDNEY

But behind closed doors, he was pretty much your standard egotist, I guess. He was always hard on himself on the field and was beating himself up off of it. Never took losing well. But he did walk the walk, I'll give him that.

JESSICA

He sure did.

SYDNEY

Well, until his shoulder injury, that is.

Jessica turns to Sydney, with an expression of disbelief and a little confusion.

JESSICA

Sorry?

SYDNEY

Hmm?

JESSICA

I don't think I heard you right. What about his shoulder?

SYDNEY

What are you talking about? You should know about this. You brought it up.

Sydney disposes the cigarette in her portable ashtray.

Jessica takes a second, thinks about what to say next after that bombshell.

JESSICA

(unsure)

So how did he hurt his shoulder?

SYDNEY

(sighs)

Again, I already explained it and I'd prefer not to talk about it.

As she listens to Sydney, Jessica hears the faint sound of the clock tower nearby.

JESSICA

Oh shit.

Jessica checks her phone. **It's 5:00 PM.**

JESSICA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I have to go.

SYDNEY

What's wrong?

Without hesitation, Jessica darts down the corner, out of view.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Wait. Jessica. Hold on!

Sydney stands up, chases after her.

EXT. FESTIVAL GROUNDS

Jessica DASHES through the crowd without looking back, as if her life depended on it.

She maneuvers through the dense crowd, but it becomes too much--people crammed into the narrow walkway.

Realizing she won't make it through, she pivots, JUMPS over a few boxes between the tents, and lands back on the street.

Unbeknownst to her, Sydney is just behind her, watching as Jessica reappears from the tents.

SYDNEY

Jessica!

On the second chime, Jessica STOPS and SPINS around, only to slam into U.S. TANK TOP, the guy she had an argument with "earlier".

On the third chime, as she stumbles back, we--

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. JESSICA'S ROOM - LEE HOUSE - EVENING - **MONDAY, MARCH 19TH - 5:00PM**

Jessica wakes up by her bedroom window. Disoriented, she nearly loses her balance, catching herself on the sill. For a moment, her body still thought it was falling.

Almost by reflex at this point, she checks her phone. The lock screen reads "**Mon. March 19th.**" Time: **5:00 PM.**

Sydney's words echo in her mind as she glances at the metal baseball bat leaning against her bed.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY - TWO YEARS AGO - **A MEMORY**

Nathan (18) stands on the mound, beside a bucket full of baseballs. Mara (13) is at home plate, ready to swing with the metal bat.

Jessica (18) crouches near the first base line, recording everything on her phone.

Several baseballs are scattered along the backstop behind Mara.

Nathan gets ready to pitch to Mara. The windup. The underhanded throw and...it goes over the plate.

Mara doesn't even attempt to swing at it.

NATHAN

Come on, that was a good pitch. You have to swing at it.

MARA

I'm GOING TO!

NATHAN

Nothing's gonna happen until you swing the bat. Now I'm gonna throw the same pitch again, alright?

Nathan goes through the motion again and delivers the same pitch. This time, Mara SWINGS--and makes contact.

Unfortunately, the ball ROCKETS straight back at Nathan, STRIKING his right leg. He falls to the ground.

MARA

NATHAN!

JESSICA

Oh shit, Nathan.

Mara drops the bat. Jessica stops recording.

They both run to the mound.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Nathan, are you alright?

With his right leg hanging in the air, Nathan takes a few deep breaths and gets in a sitting position.

The three get a good view of the aftermath: a huge bruise on his lower leg.

MARA

Oh my god.

JESSICA

Nathan, are you going to be fine.

NATHAN

Yeah, yeah. This is normal. I'm going to be fine.

Still in pain, Nathan lets out a large groan as he stands up. He tries to put pressure on his leg. He can't.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

We're heading back. I'm going back to the car. Can you two pick up the baseballs for me?

Nathan limps away from the mound and heads to an open fence door next to the first base dugout.

INT. NATHAN'S CAR

A 2008 Grand Cherokee Lerado. A baseball bag sits in one of the seats in the back.

Nathan leans his head on the headrest in the driver's seat, taking big, deep breaths.

Jessica and Mara enter the car. The former sits in the passenger seat, the latter in the remaining back seat.

MARA

Are you going to be able to drive us home?

NATHAN

Oh yeah. It's not that far from here. I can handle it.

JESSICA

What about the game tomorrow?

NATHAN

Oh, that? I can power through it. No problem. Coach Willie's gonna be pissed, though. But I'm willing to risk it.

He winces as he presses his injured leg onto the brake. **It looks as though he can't just "power through it."**

NATHAN (CONT'D)

(turns to Mara; smiles)
But hey, looks like you got stronger this time. Looks like swimming is really paying off. Are you liking it?

MARA

(smiles)
Yeah. I'm really loving it so far.

NATHAN

And if you keep it up, maybe you can get my other leg next time. Get more bonus points that way, huh?

Nathan and Mara laugh at Nathan's comment.

Jessica watches with a complicated look, then decides to laugh along with them. All at a joke made on Nathan's expense.

INT. JESSICA'S ROOM - **PRESENT DAY**

Jessica stares at the bat, lost in thought when--
--someone knocks on her door.

JESSICA
Yeah.

The door opens. It's Rachel.

RACHEL
Hey.

JESSICA
What's up?

RACHEL
Dinner's ready, if you want.

JESSICA
Oh, thanks.

Jessica heads to the door. Rachel stays where she is.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Is that it?

RACHEL
You're not still mad at me?

JESSICA
What? Why would I be?

RACHEL
You've been holed up in here since
you got back this morning.

JESSICA
(confused)
Huh?
(remembers)
OH YEAH! Nah, you're overthinking
it. We're good.

Rachel lowers her shoulders and takes a sigh of relief.

RACHEL
Okay. Just wanted to know.

She is about to head out when--

JESSICA
Wait, Rachel.

RACHEL

Yeah?

JESSICA

Do you happen to know where I went last night?

RACHEL

Not a clue. Why would I?

JESSICA

Good point.

They both exit the bedroom. Jessica follows Rachel.

INT. HALLWAY - LEE HOUSE

Jessica stops. Rachel notices, turns around.

RACHEL

What's wrong?

JESSICA

What time is it again?

Rachel checks her phone.

RACHEL

5:15. Why?

Jessica checks her phone, checks the home page. **The Notes app widget is gone.**

JESSICA

Rachel, you have dinner without me.

Jessica runs past Rachel down the stairs.

EXT. EMPTY LOT - EVENING - **5:34PM**

Jessica races down the gravel path beside the tobacco shop. She suddenly stops, eyes wide, as she spots a large black lump on the ground amidst tall grass and overgrown weeds.

She gets closer. It's the corpse of a man keeled over face down.

His skin is pale white and so still, it could be mistaken for a discarded mannequin. **It was Nathan.**

Jessica averts her eyes from her childhood friend's lifeless body, trembling.

She pulls out her phone, opens the Notes App, and types:

- 3/19: Found Nathan's body @ 5:30 PM in empty lot behind tobacco shop and called police

She places the note at the top right corner of her home page, above the audiobook app.

Heart pounding, she dials 911. As she waits for the call to connect, she glances back at Nathan, drilling the image in her brain.

INT. LOBBY - POLICE STATION - **6:16PM**

Jessica is still on the phone, only this time it's with Helen.

HELEN (O.S.)

Oh my god! Where did you find him?

JESSICA

Behind the tobacco shop next to the market. I think he died last night.

HELEN (O.S.)

Does Mara know?

JESSICA

Not yet.

HELEN (O.S.)

Do you think you're going to be fine over there?

JESSICA

Well, I've gone this far on my own, so why not? Just let Rachel know I'll be home late, alright? I'm gonna have a quick chat with the detective and I'll head back home.

HELEN (O.S.)

Okay. I'll let her know. I'm so sorry, Jessica.

JESSICA

At least I know I'm doing the best I can.

Jessica hangs up the phone, turns to a police officer standing nearby. The whole time, they were watching her make the call.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
 (to the officer)
 Okay, now I'm ready.

INT. JESSICA'S ROOM - LEE HOUSE - 8:28PM

Jessica rolls under the covers, staring at the ceiling, her gaze fixated on every bump. Her mind is racing.

For a moment, there is a glitch in the matrix. We get a glimpse into Jessica's mind.

Images of NATHAN'S DEAD BODY and MARA'S DISHEVELED, TEAR-FILLED EXPRESSION FROM MARCH 23RD AT THE PARK appear on-screen, switching back and forth with rapid-fire velocity.

Faint chimes fill the silence in the room. They're not real, but instead created from Jessica's own messed up memory bank.

The sequence FREEZES on Mara at the park. The chimes stop. All sound disappears.

MARA
 Please...
 (all sound drowns out)
 ...take care of me.

Suddenly, Jessica's phone rings on the night stand, breaking her trance.

She picks up the phone. It's Andrew, her dad.

It rings once, twice, three times before she reluctantly answers the call. **As with the first scene, Andrew is heard through the phone during this conversation.**

JESSICA
 Hey, dad.

ANDREW
 Hey, sweetie. Heard you got yourself wrapped up in a bit of an incident up there. Care to tell me what's going on?

JESSICA
 I think 'an incident' is a bit of an overstatement. It's okay. I talked to the detective earlier. All I told him was that I found his body and--

ANDREW

So you *did* find a body?

JESSICA

It's fine. It was ruled an accident. Nothing bad happened.

Andrew sighs wearily on the other end. Jessica imagines him rubbing his eyes with his thumb and index finger, contemplating the weight of the situation.

ANDREW

You know, Jessica, I thought this was the best time to send you back home so you can spend some time with your mother but next thing you know, there's dead bodies popping up all over the place.

JESSICA

Oh, dad, stop it! This is a one-time thing. Besides, Seattle is worse by a long shot!

ANDREW

Listen to me, Jessica! I want you to stay in that room until spring break is over. You got all the time in the world to finish your schoolwork. Speaking of, how far are you on that audiobook?

Jessica's face drops.

JESSICA

I'm about six chapters in. She was talking about...Rollback, I think. It's fine. I got it handled. Quit worryin' so much about me.

ANDREW

Quit worrying? Jessica, I am your father. I'm supposed to--

As Andrew begins his lecture about being a dutiful father, Jessica hangs up the phone.

JESSICA

(to herself)

There's only so many ways to tell me you're my father.

She exits the audiobook app, returning to her home page. The note widget above the app catches her eye.

It still shows the one note from earlier.

For future reference, Jessica types out the other note:

- Estimated time of death between midnight and 2 AM of alcohol poisoning.

EXT. CARPENTER'S TAVERN - DAY - **TUESDAY, MARCH 20TH - 3:35PM**

Jessica peeks through the front door window and catches the attention of the owner, GARRETT (mid-50s).

He heads to the door, peeks through it.

GARRETT

Can I help you?

JESSICA

Yeah, I just wanted to ask a few questions, if that's alright.

GARRETT

How many?

JESSICA

Not many.

GARRETT

Better be. What's up?

JESSICA

It's about Nathan Noonan.

As she says his name, Garrett glances to the ground for a few seconds, growing immediately uncomfortable.

GARRETT

We're you his girlfriend or something?

JESSICA

It never got that far.

A voice from inside the building calls for Garrett. He quickly attends to it, then turns back to Jessica.

GARRETT

(faster)

Look, kid, I gotta get ready in thirty minutes. I told everything to the cops and that's where it's gonna stay.

JESSICA

Wait, sir--

Ignoring her pleas, Garrett closes the door.

Jessica checks for the time on her phone: **3:35pm**, and walks away from the door.

INT. CARPENTER'S TAVERN - **4:05PM**

A cozy and dimly lit tavern.

From behind the bar, Garrett throws a glance at Jessica while talking to a couple of barhops, then walks towards her.

GARRETT

Hey, kid. Don't you have anything better to do?

JESSICA

Don't worry, pops. I'm not here to ask questions.

GARRETT

Really?

JESSICA

Really really.

Jessica takes a seat at the bar, just a couple stools away from the barhops.

They watch with confusion at their local bartender's seemingly random exchange with a college-aged woman.

GARRETT

Need to check your ID.

Jessica hands Garrett her drivers license. He checks the date of birth, then hands it back.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

Alright. What'll it be?

Jessica scans the menu placed above the bar.

JESSICA

One lemonade please.

Garrett pours some lemonade into a beer mug and CLUNKS it in front of Jessica.

Without even trying to taste it, Jessica GRABS the handle and downs the lemonade in one go. She SLAMS the empty mug down on the counter.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Gimme another one.

Following his customer's orders, Garrett refills the mug and hands it back to Jessica.

Once again, she chugs the drink, only this time it takes her about twice as long to glug it all down. Slamming the mug on the counter, she exhales sharply.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
(burps)
A-another one.

GARRETT
Are you sure?

JESSICA
(uncomfortable)
Yeah. Another one.

She pushes the mug towards Garrett with one hand while clutching her stomach with the other.

Under the bar, she crosses her legs. She needs to go to the bathroom. Bad.

GARRETT
I can't. Not when you're like this.

JESSICA
Then tell me what Nathan was doing here on Sunday.

GARRETT
Jesus christ. I knew you were still on that.

JESSICA
I need to know.

GARRETT
I told you. I can't.

JESSICA
Then can I have another lemonade?

GARRETT
You're holding your stomach in. It looks like you're going to burst!

The two make eye contact. Garrett can sense it. She's not backing down. She's dead serious.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

He got here at around 9 that night and stayed 'til closing at that back table over there.

He points behind Jessica to a table at the far end of the tavern.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

He just kept drinkin' alone the whole time. When I had to close down I had no choice but to kick him out.

(grins)

Probably would've helped the poor guy out if I'd known this was how things were gonna turn out.

Jessica keeps an eye on the table Nathan was supposedly at, thinking.

She turns back to Garrett.

JESSICA

Alright. How much do I gotta pay?

GARRETT

Two glasses rounds up to five big ones but I'll be nice and just charge you for the first one.

JESSICA

Oh, you don't have to do that.

GARRETT

Nah. I saw your face when you chugged the second one. Besides, that's chump change compared to the massive tab your friend racked up.

JESSICA

Nathan had an unpaid bar tab here?

GARRETT

Oh, you bet your ass he did. Hate to speak ill will of the dead but did that guy love to string me along. Same thing happened the night he died, come to think of it. Told him it was time to pay up, he shrugged me off.

(MORE)

GARRETT (CONT'D)
 Told him off again and he flipped
 his lid, sayin' he was too good to
 pay for drinks at a place like
 this. It was all I could do.

Still staring at the back table, Jessica listens on, stunned
 and understandably saddened by what she's hearing.

EXT. CARPENTER'S TAVERN - **4:29PM**

The sun begins its descent in the far-off distance.

Jessica paces back and forth in front of the tavern, her
 phone pressed to her ear.

It rings once, twice, three times before it goes to
 voicemail. The tone beeps.

JESSICA
 Hey, Mara. It's Jessica. I know you
 might be busy, but I need to talk
 to you as soon as possible. Please
 pick up when you can. Thank you.
 Bye!

She hangs up and scrolls through her contacts and stops at
 the 'S' section.

Jessica stares at the phone, lost in thought. Then it hits
 her.

She checks the time on her phone. It reads "**4:30pm**".

JESSICA (CONT'D)
 (to herself)
 The park.

INT. CAR - MOVING - **4:47PM**

Jessica makes the sharp turn into Hodgins Park. Along the
 way, she spots Sydney walking her Shih Tzu near a line of
 benches.

EXT. HODGINS PARK

Within seconds, Jessica SCREECHES to a halt in a parking
 space and exits her car.

JESSICA
 SYDNEY!!!!

Sydney turns to Jessica with a clear-as-day expression that says **"Who the hell is this chick?"**

Jessica jogs over to Sydney and takes a moment to catch her breath.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

(pants)

Sydney...There's...something I need to ask you.

SYDNEY

O-okay? That's fine, I guess. Are you alright?

JESSICA

I'm fine. I'm fine.

As a precaution, Sydney takes a few steps back from the weird woman.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

I want to ask you a few questions about Nathan.

SYDNEY

Nathan. Noonan?

JESSICA

Yeah. Could you tell me how he's been since he injured his shoulder?

SYDNEY

Sorry. I'm not in the mood to talk about that right now.

JESSICA

Wait, it won't take long.

Now standoffish, Sydney goes back to walking her dog.

SYDNEY

No means no, kiddo.

JESSICA

What about your booth?

After walking about ten feet down the sidewalk, Sydney stops, turns back around.

SYDNEY

Excuse me?

JESSICA

I heard you're running short on staff this year for your booth. Tri Beer and Brewery?

SYDNEY

How do you know about that?

JESSICA

I can help you tomorrow. I just need you to answer a few questions. After that, I'll do whatever you want me to. Set things up, serve drinks, whatever. Doesn't matter.

Sydney glares at Jessica, then looks off, thinking, then back to Jessica.

SYDNEY

Okay. What's your name?

JESSICA

Jessica. Jessica Lee.

SYDNEY

How old are you?

JESSICA

I'm twenty one. About to turn twenty two in a few months.

SYDNEY

And how do you know Nathan, exactly?

JESSICA

We used to go to school together. We hung out a lot.

SYDNEY

So he was your boyfriend?

JESSICA

No. You'll be surprised how many people thought we were, though.

Sydney continues to size Jessica up. After an agonizingly long beat, she nods her head in approval.

SYDNEY

So you'll really help out, huh?

JESSICA

Yes.

SYDNEY

It's gonna be backbreaking work.
And I can't pay you for it.

JESSICA

Fine by me. I'm up for it.

SYDNEY

Sounds like a deal. Let's sit right
here.

Jessica and Sydney both sit down at one of the benches lined
up on the sidewalk, the same one Jessica woke up on
"earlier".

JESSICA

So when did Nathan hurt his
shoulder?

SYDNEY

This was after the conference
championships so... last June, I
believe. That was around the time
Nathan started drinking. A couple
White Claws here and there, but
nothing too bad. But when the
school year ended, I just got back
home and got a call. Nathan drove
his truck into a ditch and he was
sent to the hospital. I went right
away. I couldn't even get a good
mental image of what he could've
done to himself. Fortunately, he
pulled through but he banged up his
shoulder so bad the doctor said it
caused permanent damage and he
should consider quitting baseball
altogether. The team over at Eldrin
didn't take it well, to say the
least.

JESSICA

Wow. It was really that serious.

SYDNEY

None of us could believe it either.
But obviously, Nathan took it the
worst. It burrowed a hole in his
brain and stayed there. What became
hell for me when I drove to the
hospital became a sort of hell for
him that had lasted his whole life
because his future endeavors meant
nothing now.

(MORE)

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

(pause)

And he had a good shot to get drafted, too. He'd always make sure to play his hardest before every game, before every practice because he knew there would be pro scouts watching him. He knew they were looking at him. To Nathan, everyone was always looking at him.

(pause)

At first, he tried to play it cool. That was really hard to watch. Then, as the fall and winter rolled around...that was when he started losing it. People became afraid of him. At school, no one even wanted to say his name out of fear he might take it the wrong way.

(pause)

I always looked up to him too, y'know? He was the only person that ever talked to me at school and he suggested I help out as a team manager. After a couple months, he stood right by me and after a game one day, I worked up the courage to ask him out, and for a while things were really great.

(pause)

But after the injury I had to keep my distance like everyone else. He wasn't himself anymore. But at the same time, I couldn't turn my back from him either. I asked him if he wanted to help out at the booth the other day. At first, he kinda grumbled about it and complained a little but you have no idea how happy I was when he said he would do it. I thought he would be back to normal. And just like that, the rug was pulled from under me. It was one sick tease.

(pause)

Still, I mean, it's not like it was guaranteed he would go back to normal, right? I heard a couple other students say they feared he was gonna rob a bank or something. He was on the verge of snapping. And I kinda see that. Maybe it was best it had to end this way. He's finally at peace.

JESSICA

C'mon, don't say that.

SYDNEY

No one deserves it. But after what I've seen, it's just hard to feel a whole lot of sympathy for him. It didn't help that I would hear rumors about what he did afterwards. That he was seriously in debt from gambling, he would drink all night, and so on, to the point where he was on the verge of dropping out of Eldrin. Basically threw everything away.

The faint sound of the clock tower can be heard nearby. It's 5:00pm.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Then, there were some fairly disturbing ones, including one regarding Mara.

The second chime goes off.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Apparently, right around the cave, Nathan has been--

In the middle of the third chime we--

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. FOREST - DAY - SUNDAY, MARCH 18TH - 5:00PM

Jessica wakes, staring at the purple hyacinth peeking out from the opulent flower bed. The clock tower tolls its final chimes behind her.

Mr. Donut, the cat, weaves around her legs. She scoops him up and walks out of the cave.

EXT. CARPENTER'S TAVERN - 5:44PM

Under the hot scarlet sky, Jessica's Corolla is parked across the street from the tavern.

INT. CAR

Jessica is on the phone with Helen.

JESSICA

Sorry, mom. I'm a little busy right now. I might not be home until sometime later tonight. Pretty late.

HELEN

(on phone)

Busy doing what? How late are we talking about?

JESSICA

I don't know. I'll call you as soon as I get a better idea of what's going on. Again, it might take a while.

HELEN

(on phone)

You're not still upset at Rachel, are you?

JESSICA

No, Mom. It has nothing to do with that.

HELEN

(on phone)

Okay. With whatever you're doing, please try and get home as soon as possible. She won't admit it, but Rachel's quite worried about you.

JESSICA

You don't say.

HELEN

(on phone)

Anyway, try and not stay out *too* late, alright? Talk to you soon.

JESSICA

Talk to you soon, Mom. Bye.

Jessica ends the call, dials Mara's number.

It rings one, two, three, four times before going straight to voicemail.

EXT. CARPENTER'S TAVERN - NIGHT - **9:15PM**

The skies overhead have turned to a deep navy blue.

INT. CAR

Seen from within the car, through the front windshield.

Jessica peeks through one of the windows into the tavern for Nathan. She doesn't find him.

She jaywalks across the street towards the car when her phone rings. She checks the caller ID, then answers.

After a few seconds, distress washes over her face.

She dashes back to her car, jumps in, and revs the engine. Tires screech as she hauls ass down the road.

EXT. NOONAN HOUSE - NIGHT - **9:24PM**

Without hesitation, Jessica parks in the driveway, gets out and--

INT. SAME - FRONT DOOR - NOONAN HOUSE

--barrels her way through an unlocked front door.

JESSICA

Mara!

No response.

The jarring sound of piano keys being slammed reverberates through the house. One batch of keys followed by another batch over and over again on a continuous loop.

INT. HALLWAY - NOONAN HOUSE

Jessica moves down the hallway toward the noise, crossing an open archway into the--

LIVING ROOM

Mara, disheveled, sits at her piano, fingers crashing against the keys as if she's possessed.

For the first time since we saw her at the docks, she does not have the flower crown on.

Jessica approaches, gently placing a hand on Mara's shoulder. But the moment she does--

--Mara abruptly stops playing and SWATS Jessica's hand away.

MARA

Don't you ever touch--

Mara stops mid-sentence upon locking eyes with Jessica. Her expression then twists into one which floods with grief.

She buries her face into Jessica's chest and cries. Niagara Falls.

Mara wraps her arms tightly around Jessica, lifting her shirt just enough to reveal a series of bruises on her lower back. **Jessica does not notice this.**

Jessica wraps her arms around Mara and gently soothes her back.

JESSICA

You're okay. You're okay now.

As she consoles Mara, Jessica quickly glances at a clock on the wall. It's 9:30pm.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Hey, Mara?

Mara lifts her head, now more calm.

MARA

Hmm?

JESSICA

I know this might not be the best time, but I have to head out.

Immediately, Mara grabs her right arm, squeezes it tight.

MARA

Don't go.

JESSICA

It's okay. I'll come back. It won't take long. I promise.

MARA

No... I don't want you to leave...

JESSICA

Then you can come with me. Is that alright?

Mara reluctantly nods: Sure.

Jessica helps Mara get on her feet.

With Mara still holding on to Jessica's arm, they make their way across the living room and back out into the--

HALLWAY

MARA

Where are we going?

JESSICA

Carpenter's Tavern. That's where Nathan's at.

While still tugging on Jessica's coat sleeve, Mara stops dead in her tracks.

MARA

Why?

JESSICA

Because otherwise, he's gonna drink himself to death.

MARA

How do you know that?

JESSICA

I'll explain it on the way there.

MARA

I want you to tell me right now.

JESSICA

Look, Mara, we're running out of time. Nathan is--

MARA

Jessica, just tell me!

A pause.

JESSICA

All right, but I'm warning you now, this might be heard to follow.

MARA

I don't mind.

EXT. NOONAN HOUSE - NIGHT - RAINING - **9:45PM**

Jessica and Mara exit the house and head for the Corolla.

INT. CAR

Jessica sits behind the wheel. Mara jumps in the passenger side and visibly winces upon landing on the seat.

JESSICA

Oh man. Are you all right?

MARA

I'm fine.

Mara rubs her lower back. She attempts to adjust herself to the best possible position in the seat.

JESSICA

Are you sure? Is that bad hip buggin' you?

MARA

Bad hip?

JESSICA

Yeah. Didn't you tell me you hurt your lower back recently?

MARA

When was this?

JESSICA

When we broke into the high school.

MARA

We never broke into the high school!

JESSICA

Sure we did. It was your idea. You showed me how to get in the building using the hairpins and the janky window.

MARA

Woah, whoa, whoa. How do you know about that? I only told a few friends at school about that.

Mara examines Jessica's face for any sort of bluff, but no. She is, once again, dead serious.

INT. CAR - MOVING

Mara gazes out through the passenger side window, watching the rain batter the glass.

MARA
So you're going to save his life?

JESSICA
Yep. And I want you to promise me
one thing. Alright?

MARA
(soft)
Alright.

JESSICA
You're going to be meeting
different versions of me over the
course of the week. Never tell them
what I told you until Friday. Get
that version of me to the park and
tell her what I told you when you
get there. Okay?

MARA
Okay.

JESSICA
Pinky-promise?

Jessica and Mara pinky swear on it.

MARA
Jessica?

JESSICA
Yeah?

MARA
Please stop the car.

JESSICA
Why?

MARA
I just want you to. Please pull
over.

JESSICA
Mara, we're almost there. We'll be
there in a minute.

MARA
(angry)
STOP THE FUCKING CAR!

Taken aback by Mara's booming voice, Jessica pulls to the side of the road, shifts into park, and turns on the hazard lights.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT - RAINING

Mara storms out of the car, slams the door and sits on the curb underneath a streetlight, watching the rainwater flow beneath her legs through the curb side.

After a moment, Jessica exits the car, stands beside Mara, giving her a glare which says **"What are we doing here?"**

A long pause.

MARA

Do we really have to save him?

JESSICA

Yes, Mara. We do.

Mara stands up, makes eye contact with Jessica.

MARA

I can't do it.

JESSICA

I understand, but this is life or death. He's going to die if we just keep standing here.

MARA

(fragile, paranoid)
I know, but...I just...

JESSICA

Why *don't* you want to save him?

MARA

Jessica, I can't stand being in the same room with him again. I can't stand hearing him talk about how much he would do to get back to playing baseball. I can't stand when he would throw shit at me, pull my hair, steal my money and make me his professional fucking punching bag day in and day out. Every time something like this comes up, Mom always took his side. Made excuses for all of it.

(MORE)

MARA (CONT'D)

She would keep saying that 'the world made him this way' and 'it was destined that he got hurt' and didn't punish him. That fate was going to put him on some better path. So if we're going to go by that brain-dead logic, then can't we just step aside and let fate *really* decide?

Having been asked that question in that moment in that way, does something to Jessica. Tears run down her cheeks.

A sobering pause.

She nods: I guess you're right.

After a few seconds, Mara walks towards Jessica and hugs her. Jessica wraps her arms around Mara and rubs her back once more.

JESSICA

Let's go home.

INT. MARA'S ROOM - NOONAN HOUSE - **9:55PM**

With Mara around her shoulder, Jessica opens the door and flicks the light switch on.

Clothes are strewn about the floor. Various novels are mis handedly placed on a bookshelf. Textbooks are piled high on top an old, weathered writing desk. The room of someone not in sound mind.

The flower crown sits on a thumbtack on the wall above the bed.

MARA

Sorry about the mess. I know I need to clean up. You don't need to tell me. I've been super busy.

JESSICA

That's fine. You don't need to justify it. You just need some rest.

Jessica escorts Mara to the bed and tucks her in.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

I'm gonna be right here until you fall asleep, alright?

Mara nods from under the blanket: Yes. Jessica turns the lights off.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Do you still use that night light?

Mara nods: Yes.

Jessica finds a night light already plugged in to a socket and turns it on, casting a soft green glow near the bed.

She sits on the floor, her back against the bed.

After a moment, Mara reaches her hand out from under the covers and taps Jessica's shoulder.

MARA
Could you hold my hand?

Jessica repositions herself near the bed and interlocks Mara's fingers with hers. Mara squeezes her hand tight.

Jessica presses her forehead on the corner of the bedframe. She closes her eyes and is about to drift off to sleep when--

--her eyes jolt back open. Something comes to mind.

JESSICA
Hold up. Wait a minute.

She lets go of Mara's hand, stands up.

MARA
What's wrong?

JESSICA
I'm sorry, Mara. I gotta go make a phone call. I'm just gonna be in the living room real quick.

MARA
You're gonna come back, right?

Jessica nods: Yes

INT. LIVING ROOM - NOONAN HOUSE - 10:00 PM

Jessica paces around the living room, in conversation on the phone with Helen.

HELEN
(on phone)
What the hell are you thinking?!

JESSICA

I know, but I--

HELEN

(on phone)

You know, when you called earlier,
I assumed you'd be back by now!

JESSICA

I understand you're mad, but--

HELEN

(on phone)

You do realize Rachel isn't mad at
you anymore, right? If this is some
type of cruel game just to make us
worried about you, well you won.
Mission accomplished.

I know you're old enough to go out
on your own and have a night out on
the town when you were in Seattle.
I get it. I used to do that. It's a
nice area at night. But when you're
living under my roof, you need to
let me know where you are and when
you are coming home--

JESSICA

(screams; fast talks)

I'm staying the night at Mara's
house. I'll talk to you later. Bye!

As quickly as she interrupts her mother, Jessica hangs up the phone. She takes a seat on the piano stool, thinking.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

(whispers to herself)

Did I really just say that?

(realizes)

Oh shit. Nathan's gonna die.

She makes eye contact with herself in a circular mirror. It hits her. Everything has gone full circle.

To Jessica's dismay, **everything is in its right place.**

Just then--

Mara opens the bedroom door and peeks at Jessica through the crack.

MARA

What's wrong?

Jessica peeks up towards the door. The two make eye contact.

MARA (CONT'D)
I heard you screaming.

JESSICA
It's nothing. I just told my Mom
I'll be staying here for the night.

MARA
Where are you gonna sleep?

JESSICA
I dunno. The couch? Just need to
get an extra blanket.

MARA
What about Mom?

JESSICA
What about her?

MARA
She's got the late shift again. You
know how she is when you stop by
uninvited.
(beat)
How about you sleep with me
tonight? There's plenty of room.

INT. MARA'S ROOM

Facing away from each other, Jessica and Mara lay under the covers in the bed.

A pause.

MARA
Hey, Jessica?

JESSICA
Yeah?

MARA
I'm thinking about going to U-Dub
next year.

JESSICA
Oh yeah? Since when?

They both flip themselves over. They're now facing each other.

MARA
Since you left.

JESSICA
Is that what the money is for?

Mara nods: Yes.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
How much do you have saved up?

Mara doesn't answer.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
We'll talk more about it tomorrow.
Good night.

MARA
Good night...

They both flip back over to their original positions.

Jessica closes her eyes.

After a beat, more glitches inside Jessica's mind. Silent images of--

--Nathan's photo at the wake--

--his dead body--

--Mara at the docks--

--Sydney at the park--

--and the makeshift memorial-- appear in that order.

The loop gets faster and faster, the images become more sudden and flashy.

Everything that *has* happened, that was *supposed* to happen and, unfortunately, *did* happen, indicates what the end result, the true ending, will be.

Suddenly--

INT. MARA'S ROOM - NIGHT - **MONDAY, MARCH 19TH - 1:17AM**

Jessica wakes up. Pure silence.

She looks up at the ceiling, then at the crown on the wall.

Sitting up, she turns to Mara, who is fast asleep.

JESSICA
(whispers)
Mara. Please forgive me.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

The atypical suburban street sleeps the night away.

INT. MARA'S ROOM

Jessica is gone.

INT. CAR - MOVING - **1:27AM**

Jessica grips the wheel with both hands as she trails behind an ambulance flashing its lights.

JESSICA
(to herself)
Please forgive me. Please forgive
me. Please forgive me. Please
forgive me.

INT. FRONT LOBBY - EVERETT MEDICAL CENTER - **2:15AM**

In front of a line of empty chairs and couches, Jessica anxiously stands by the empty receptionist's desk.

A DOCTOR emerges from an open hallway.

JESSICA
Excuse me?

DOCTOR
Yes?

JESSICA
How's Nathan?

DOCTOR
Fortunately, he's still breathing
but hasn't regained consciousness
yet. We got him stabilized for now
and we'll see how things work out
later in the morning.

JESSICA
Thank you so much.

DOCTOR

No problem.

Now relieved, Jessica saunters over to one of the empty couches and sits down. She tilts her head back, taking a deep, well-deserved breath.

After a moment, she pulls out her phone, opens Instagram, and heads into Mara's message tab.

She begins typing: "**Hey, sorry for earlier. I--**" but deletes it. She tries again, crafting a similar message, then deletes that too. She does it a third time. Nothing.

Finally, she types out: "**Hey, we need to talk. Lemme know when you're awake**" and hits send.

INT. SAME - 6:00AM

Jessica lays asleep on the couch. She opens her eyes upon hearing a frantic woman's voice.

She sits up, rubbing her eyes, spotting Trish conversing with a doctor near the receptionist's desk.

TRISH

When can I see Nathan? I just want to see my son!

DOCTOR

Mrs. Noonan, your son is in stable condition, but it'll take some time for him to wake up.

TRISH

Can I at least see him?

DOCTOR

Yes you can. His room is over here.

Trish and the doctor walk down the same open hallway from earlier that morning.

Jessica rises and heads to the end of the hallway, watching them disappear into another corridor.

Now truly relieved, Jessica exits the lobby through glass double doors, stepping outside beneath a sky painted with crimson clouds, heralding the sunrise.

EXT. NOONAN HOUSE - MORNING - 7:01AM

Jessica pulls up to the front door and rings the doorbell.

After a moment, the door creaks open.

Mara peeks through, her hair disheveled, eyes heavy, looking like a recluse.

JESSICA

Hey, Mara. How're ya feeling?

MARA

Mom hasn't come home yet, in case you're wondering.

JESSICA

I know. I'm sorry.

MARA

Don't be. I should be the one who should apologize for not thinking straight.

A pause.

MARA (CONT'D)

I think you should go.

JESSICA

Mara, I--

Jessica approaches the door, but before she even takes a step, Mara slams it shut.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Mara?

(knocks on door)

Mara, open the door!

MARA (O.S.)

(whimpers)

I just want to be alone right now.

JESSICA

I know you're not gonna believe me, but in the coming future, you're gonna tell me to save Nathan. It's going to be fine.

MARA (O.S.)

WHEN AM I GOING TO FUCKING SAY THAT?! WHERE?! WHAT ELSE!?

(MORE)

MARA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 What other bullshit am I going to
 tell you?

Jessica doesn't respond, freezes in place out of sheer terror
 and embarrassment.

MARA (CONT'D)
 Please...go home.

Defeated, Jessica heads back to her car.

INT. NOONAN HOUSE - MORNING

Mara sits in a fetal position with her back to the front
 door. Alone with whatever hope she has left.

INT. BATHROOM - LEE HOUSE - **8:30AM**

Behind the frosted shower curtain, Jessica stands under the
 running water, lost in thought.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LEE HOUSE - **8:40AM**

With her hair still damp, Jessica heads downstairs and spots
 Rachel lounging on the couch, watching TV.

JESSICA
 Hey, Rachel.

RACHEL
 Hey.

Jessica sits next to Rachel and watches TV with her.

After a short beat--

JESSICA
 Hey, sorry about yesterday.

RACHEL
 Nah, it's fine. I kinda crossed the
 line, too.

JESSICA
 So we're cool?

RACHEL
 We're cool.

Pause.

JESSICA
Hey, Rachel?

RACHEL
Hmm?

JESSICA
What if I told you I was dropping
out of U-Dub and moving back here?

Rachel turns to Jessica, the first time she's broken contact
with the TV.

RACHEL
What?!

JESSICA
I'm about eighty percent sure
that's gonna happen.

RACHEL
It's not because of what I said,
right?

JESSICA
No.

RACHEL
If so, I'm sure Dad would be
pissed. But I think Mom would
understand.

JESSICA
What about you?

RACHEL
I dunno. Having someone else scrub
the bathroom floors for the first
time in months might not be so bad.

JESSICA
Is that all I am to you?!

RACHEL
I mean, it *was* your job.

JESSICA
It doesn't sound that bad if that's
all I gotta do.

RACHEL
You're really serious about this,
are you?

JESSICA

Just about.

RACHEL

Did something happen?

JESSICA

It's a long story.

RACHEL

I don't wanna be too nosy, but it's not healthy to bottle things up so if you ever need someone to talk to or anything--

JESSICA

Thanks, but this is something I have to take care of myself.

They make eye contact for a moment.

INT. JESSICA'S ROOM - LEE HOUSE - DAY - **4:18PM**

On her bed, Jessica works on her spring break homework on her laptop. She finishes typing on a Google Doc, then closes a textbook labeled "**Algorithms, 3rd Edition**" by Robert Sedgewick.

On her phone, an Instagram notification pops up. **Mara has sent you a video.**

Jessica opens her direct messages and taps on it to play.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NOONAN HOUSE - **MARA'S VIDEO - PORTRAIT MODE**

Mara presses record and steps away from the phone, sitting at the piano.

The camera is positioned just as it has been for all her previous piano videos.

MARA

Hey, Jessica. I'm not posting this anywhere. This is simply between us. I've thought about what you did last night. A lot. Actions speak louder than words, Jessica. What you did said a lot. I was hoping what you said was true and would finally bring me peace.

(MORE)

MARA (CONT'D)

But it sounds like I have to find it on my own. I don't know if you remember this, but about a year ago, I got a good look at that line of satellites in the sky. I would often pretend they're little train cars going endlessly around the world. Well, last night, I had another dream about them. I was in one of those cars. Gliding above everything. High up in the vastness of space, going in circles for eternity.

Mara picks up a bagel from off-screen, eats it.

MARA (CONT'D)

I'm tired, Jessica. Tired of everything. Night after night of doing my best for a family that doesn't see me as a human being. But it was worth it knowing if I worked hard enough at school, I'd join you at U-Dub. I'd often pass out from studying too hard. And when I wasn't working, I'd swim so much I would throw up the moment I get back on land. But I still kept going. Even after all the shit Nathan put me through. One day, it got so bad, I snapped and finally took a stand against him.

She grabs the crutch from off screen, the same one that was in her earlier videos, and holds it up for the camera.

MARA (CONT'D)

That decision had me use this for three months and now I can't swim anymore.

She tosses the crutch on the ground, off-screen.

MARA (CONT'D)

All the money I saved for U-Dub? He spent it all. Ever since the accident, I've been cooped up in the house. Only went outside for school and stopped hanging out with friends. I thought I was done. But then I saw you at the docks and I found a little bit of hope.

(MORE)

MARA (CONT'D)

That I would get to see someone's face in full for the first time in a long time. I kept thinking about everything we did together. And even if I made the most selfish request imaginable, I knew you would still hear me out. But, it turns out, you were just like everyone else.

A pause.

MARA (CONT'D)

I want to play you something before I sign off. Goodbye, Jessica. I hope you can forgive me.

Mara turns to her piano and plays "The Great Pretender" once again.

MARA (CONT'D)

*Oh-oh, yes, I'm the great pretender
/ Pretending that I'm doing well /
My need is such, I pretend too
much/ I'm lonely, but no one can
tell*

EXT. DOCKS

The music continues. Waves crash into the pillars under the docks. Life goes on.

From the sound of Mara's voice, it brings her comfort, even if only for the moment.

MARA

*Oh-oh, yes, I'm the great pretender
/ Adrift in a world of my own / I
played the game but to my real
shame / You've left me to grieve
all alone*

EXT. PARK

A leaf floats down onto the bench from the hanging branch above. Life goes on.

MARA

*Too real is this feeling of make-
believe / Too real when I feel what
my heart can't conceal*

EXT. CAVE - FOREST

A young family walk into the empty cave as ripples of sunlight cut through the trees. Life goes on.

MARA

*Yes, I'm the great pretender / Just
laughin' and gay like a clown*

EXT. MARKET SQUARE

From outside, Rob attends to a small line of people at the cashier's desk. Life goes on.

MARA

*I seem to be what I'm not, you see
/ I'm wearing my heart like a crown*

EXT. MAIN STREET

A four way stop. Jay's Market sits at one of the corners. The Tobacco shop sits down the street in the foreground. Life goes on.

MARA

*/ Pretending that you're still
around.*

The song ends. A light turns green.

Suddenly, Jessica's Corolla HAULS ASS past a red light in the opposite direction.

EXT. PARKING LOT - LUMINA HIGH SCHOOL - **4:31PM**

The Corolla RACES past a stop sign, SCREECHES into a couple of open parking spots.

Jessica exits the car, heads toward the school.

EXT. MAIN BUILDING - LUMINA HIGH SCHOOL

Jessica reaches the same frosted glass window from earlier. She grabs the edges, RATTLES it until it POPS open.

She HOPS through into the empty--

CLASSROOM

--barrels through the door, runs down the--

MAIN HALLWAY

--following the same route she took with Mara the night they snuck in "earlier" until she reaches the--

STAIRS

She eyes the door leading to the roof. The padlock is gone. On the floor: the lock and two flattened hairpins.

Jessica SWINGS the door open and steps out onto the

EXT. ROOF

Jessica squints at the setting sun. As her vision clears, she sees Mara, standing beyond the fence, leaning over the edge of the building.

The wind picks up. Jessica looks down at the concrete below, then up at the sky.

Mara clutches the railing, holding on tighter. Jessica takes a few deep breaths.

JESSICA
(calm; measured)
Mara.

Mara turns her head around to Jessica.

MARA
Jessica!? How did you know I'd be here?

JESSICA
Talk to me, Mara. What's going on?
Did I do something wrong, Mara?

A pause. Mara takes a deep breath.

MARA
We had a promise, Jessica.

JESSICA
I know. I don't hate you, Mara.
Hell, if anything, I--

MARA
(interrupts)
Do you wanna know what hurt the most?

A pause.

MARA (CONT'D)
It was when I realized how much of a psychopath I had to be to let this happen.

A pause.

MARA (CONT'D)
Why did you choose him?

JESSICA
You asked me to. You told me everything!

MARA
I didn't tell you SHIT!

A pause.

JESSICA
There was no way you could've told me where he was unless you regretted your decision to let him go. I didn't want you to live the rest of your life thinking you could've done something different. The money can come back. Trust can be restored. People don't. You've got a good heart, Mara. I want you to have a peaceful life.

MARA
Stop lying to me.

JESSICA
I'm not lying to you. I wouldn't lie to you.

MARA
Oh yeah? Where's your proof? How much do you really know?

Jessica doesn't respond.

MARA (CONT'D)

Maybe that was the case in another timeline, but in this one, can you honestly say you did the right thing?

Jessica looks off to the side, thinking. A long pause.

JESSICA

You know what? You're right. How about this? If you step off the railing, I'll do anything you want. I'll drop out of U-dub. I'll move back here. I'll find a way to make back the money Nathan stole from you. I'll do everything in my power to make sure you never have to go through anything like this again.

MARA

Stop lying!

A pause. Jessica looks off to the side, thinking.

JESSICA

Hold on.

She approaches Mara.

Jessica HIGH-STEPS over the railing and stands next to Mara on the ledge.

MARA

What are you doing?

She looks down at the concrete below, then up at the sky.

A strong wind blows past the two. They grip the railing behind them even more.

Jessica looks to the side, takes a couple deep breaths.

JESSICA

There could've been a time, in some other plain of existence, where you were so blissfully unaware any of this would've happened.

(turns to Mara)

I really need you.

Mara looks back at Jessica, doesn't respond. Silence.

Jessica looks back up to the sky. She grabs Mara's right hand.

MARA
What are you doing?

JESSICA
If we're doing this, we're doing
this together.

MARA
Okay...here goes nothing.

JESSICA
On three, okay?

Mara nods. They both close their eyes.

OVER BLACK

JESSICA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Okay...one...two...three!

...

...

Nothing.

EXT. ROOF

Jessica opens her eyes and sees--

--Mara clinging to her waist, her head buried in Jessica's
shirt. Niagara Falls.

With one hand on the railing, Jessica wraps her other arm
around Mara, LIFTS her over the fence.

Jessica helps Mara to her feet, and they start toward the
door when--

--Mara's legs give out, pulling Jessica down with her. She
wraps her arms around Jessica, sobbing.

Then, suddenly--

--the faint sound of the clock tower can be heard nearby.

The second chime goes off.

Then the third.

And the fourth.

Finally the fifth chime can be heard. It's 5:00pm.

Jessica takes a huge sigh of relief. **It's finally over.**

FADE TO BLACK.

I/E. CAR - MORNING - **TUESDAY, MARCH 20TH - 9:04AM**

Like clockwork, Jessica parks her car in the Noonan House driveway.

Mara exits her house and races into Jessica's car.

She wears the white lily flower crown once again.

JESSICA

You ready to go?

Mara smiles and nods: Yes. She's ready.

INT. HALLWAY - EVERETT MEDICAL CENTER - **9:49AM**

Jessica and Mara stand in front of a door marked "425" with the name "Nathan Noonan."

MARA

There's no turning back now.

HOSPITAL ROOM

MARA

Nathan, it's me. We're coming in!

They walk in.

Nathan lies in bed, peeling an orange like a flower. He glances at them, uncomfortable.

Jessica gives him a stern look back.

NATHAN

When did I say you can come in?
(sees Jessica; surprised)
Jessica?

Nathan lets out a little chuckle. He realizes how long it's been since he's last saw her.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

I really owe you one. Doc said you found me passed out last night.

JESSICA

That's cool, man. But I think Mara has something to tell you.

NATHAN

Oh yeah?

Mara steps in front of Jessica, front and center.

MARA

I told Jessica everything. She knows about the money. She knows about the accident. The last few months have been hell, Nathan. I'm sick of tired of all of it. It needs to stop.

Now visibly uncomfortable, Nathan glances at Jessica, who gives a stern expression back to him, then back to Mara.

He slams the orange peel flower on a small table by the bed, squishing it.

NATHAN

What is this, a fuckin' sting operation?

(to Jessica)

What the hell did she tell you, Jess?

JESSICA

That you're a dick, that's what.

NATHAN

Excuse me?!

JESSICA

You heard me.

The orange peel flower puffs back open and blooms outwards.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Just because you were a star athlete once, ONCE, doesn't mean it should justify you turning into a complete asshole who don't even have the balls to apologize to his little sister!

NATHAN

(under his breath)

This is bullshit.

JESSICA

I'm not done. I heard about how excited you were to go play pro ball and go on TV and do what you love but you let so many people blow smoke up your ass and tell you this is who you're going to be. It doesn't have to be that way. There's more to life than baseball, y'know?

(pause)

As for Mara, I've decided she's gonna be spending more time around me until she heads off to college. You're not gonna be seeing her for a while.

NATHAN

Jess, don't do that. Don't take her away. Please. You can't just rip our family apart like that.

Jessica stands next to the bed, crouches next to Nathan's face.

JESSICA

If I ever see you anywhere near Mara...

(pause; thinks about what to say)

Nathan, do you remember that metal bat you lent me back in middle school?

It takes Nathan a full beat to realize what Jessica is about to say after starting a sentence like that.

NATHAN

(full of rage)

You PIECE OF SHIT!

Before Jessica can finish... Nathan LUNGES at Jessica, grabbing her shirt.

Upon making contact, Jessica backs up, dragging him off the bed. Nathan TUMBLES to the floor.

A trail of blood trickles down his arm. His IV tube had fallen out.

He slowly sits up, looks at the pair. His face contorts as if he's about to start crying but doesn't want to show it.

Mara clings to Jessica. Jessica avoids Nathan's gaze, tries not to give him the acknowledgement.

Nathan wipes the tears off his face and mouths "I'm sorry". Jessica doesn't see this.

After a few seconds, he clears his throat and tries again, but just as he's about to use his voice this time--

--the door opens.

It's Sydney, holding a cup of coffee in each hand.

SYDNEY

Sorry about the wait. It took a bit to get the--

(spots Nathan)

Oh my god! Nathan?!

Sydney sets the coffee down, SQUATS next to Nathan, and helps him back onto the bed.

She turns to Jessica and Mara.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Hey, Mara.

(looks at Jessica, back to Mara)

Who's your friend?

As Jessica is about to respond:

NATHAN

Could you knock it off, Syd?

SYDNEY

(turns to Nathan)

Oh, can it. You're still recovering. You need all the help you can get.

Sydney spots the blood on his arm.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Jesus christ, you're bleeding! I'll get a nurse.

NATHAN

Nah, it's nothing to worry about.

SYDNEY

Of course you'd say that.

Sydney presses the nurse call button next to Nathan's pillow.

NATHAN

C'mon, Syd. It's not that big a deal. I mean, look at me. I'm fine, aren't I?

SYDNEY

Nathan, you could've *died* out there. It's not my fault everyone around you didn't point that out. Did you ever wonder about that?

Letting her words sink in, Nathan shrinks into the bed, defeated.

Mara taps Jessica's shoulder, signaling to leave.

Jessica nods in agreement: **Yeah, let's go.**

EXT. CAR - DAY - 10:15AM

The Corolla drives on a two-lane highway surrounded by Douglas Fir trees. Not another car in sight.

INT. SAME

Jessica drives. Mara, in the passenger seat, watches the sun flicker through the trees.

A grocery bag sits by her feet. Mara pulls out an orange, peels it, and eats. No container. No problem.

MARA

Thanks for coming with me to the hospital.

JESSICA

Don't mention it. Just remember, I'll be down the street if anything happens.

A short pause.

MARA

Wait. You were serious?!

JESSICA

Yep.

MARA

You're not going back to U-Dub?

JESSICA

Nope.

MARA

I thought you were just bluffing yesterday.

JESSICA

Nah. No way. You saw me up there. I couldn't lie to save my life.

MARA

Did you already file the paperwork?

JESSICA

Not yet. I figure I'll take care of it over the phone. Who knows if Dad'll help out.

MARA

What would you do after you move back?

JESSICA

Not sure. Haven't really thought that far, to be honest.

MARA

Jessica, I appreciate the sentiment, but it wouldn't be right if you gave this all up on my account.

Jessica keeps her eyes on the road, thinking.

MARA (CONT'D)

How about this. I'll come join you in Seattle as soon as I graduate.

JESSICA

But what about--

MARA

I'll be fine. If anything bad *does* happen, I promise you'll be the first to know.

Mara holds Jessica's hand as if she's a parent trying to console her anxious child.

After a moment, Jessica squeezes Mara's hand back.

JESSICA

Alright. But we have to stay in touch even if everything's okay, you got it?

MARA

Of course.

JESSICA

And don't overdue it, either. Even if something else comes up, you can still crash at my dad's place.

MARA

Now I just got to save up some money.

JESSICA

Don't worry about that. I got it covered.

MARA

Jessica, you don't have to do that. I'm able to get my own money.

JESSICA

Oh, I know.

MARA

Then what are you talking about?

Jessica turns to Mara.

JESSICA

Mara, have you ever thought about trying the lottery?

Mara shoots a confused look. Jessica responds with a cute little smirk.

A photograph of Jessica and Mara, **the same one from the collage in Jessica's room at the beginning**, rests atop the glass in front of the odometer.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END

"Baby", an acoustic track by the indie rock band Warpaint, plays as the credits roll.