

FROM EARTH TO EARTH (VER. 3)

by

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FADE IN:

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - LOBBY - DAY

"FROM EARTH TO EARTH"

"CHAPTER 1"

A young woman sits in the empty funeral parlor, frame right. LORI BENZ, short blonde hair, dark rimmed glasses, hunched over. She looks a bit anxious. There's a soft ticking of a clock in the background. A door opens out of frame. LORI stands up, making herself proper. FOOTSTEPS approach from the left. An older woman, MARGOT JONES, stands on frame left. She opens her arms and they embrace.

MARGOT

How are you holding up?

LORI shrugs. They both take a seat.

LORI

Dad's keeping everything together.

MARGOT

I bet Mitch is happier now.

(a beat)

Come on, you know I'm right. He didn't give a shit about her.

LORI takes a calculated breath.

LORI

Have you been drinking?

MARGOT

He just wants to get Jojo in the ground as fast as possible. Who cares what she wanted, right?

LORI

Mom is dead. I don't think she would care how she goes. Ground, ashes, Viking funeral, I don't think it matters anymore.

MARGOT

That's what Mitch wants you to think! It's always what he wants.

(she leans in)

He tricked Jojo into leaving Miami... for MAINE!

MARGOT stands up, slightly unbalanced, now slurring.

MARGOT
(pointing at LORI)
You should be ashamed of yourself.
How could you watch her go in the
ground when all she wanted was...

LOUD FOOTSTEPS approach from the left. MARGOT turns around and immediately puts on a fake smile.

MARGOT
Hi.

Two men appear in the doorway: the FUNERAL DIRECTOR and MITCH BENZ, LORI'S DAD. DAD and LORI lock eyes and nod. DAD ignores MARGOT. The FUNERAL DIRECTOR smiles warmly.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
Thanks for your patience. Mr. Benz
was signing some papers. Are we
ready to view the body now?

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - MORGUE - DAY

PAN right. A body on a preparation table. It's JOCELYN JONES, LORI'S MOM. Her body is completely covered with a tarp, besides the face, which the FUNERAL DIRECTOR is uncovering. LORI and DAD stand on one side, while MARGOT and the FUNERAL DIRECTOR stand on the other side. The hum of the overhead lights is grating.

LORI
Still doesn't seem real.

MARGOT
(softly)
Jojo...

LORI
She looks like she's...

DAD
...sleeping.

DAD sobs a little bit. LORI watches DAD. She's trying to keep it together too. The FUNERAL DIRECTOR clears his throat.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
She'll be ready by next week.

DAD recomposes himself.

DAD
Good. Lor, paperwork's all set?

LORI is still a bit dazed, but she nods.

LORI
All set.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
(a polite nod)
Right. We hope this puts your mind
at ease.
(to DAD)
Know that your wife is in the best
hands.

A pause. Everyone stares at the ground, stealing brief glances at MOM. Focus on LORI, who's taking deep breaths.

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - LOBBY

The FUNERAL DIRECTOR, DAD, MARGOT, and LORI file out of a door and gather by the front desk. DAD and the FUNERAL DIRECTOR shake hands.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
Take care. Goodbye, everyone.

Everybody offers a kind goodbye as the FUNERAL DIRECTOR walks out the front door. The minute he's gone, DAD turns to LORI.

DAD
(to LORI)
Where's Wes?

MARGOT
Mitch, we just saw Jojo. Maybe
wait a second.

DAD
(ignoring MARGOT)
Where's Wes?

LORI
(stuttering a bit)
I told you, he's coming up next
week.
(a beat)
Dad, that was Mom. On that slab.

DAD appears frustrated and walks to the front door, facing it, back turned to everyone else.

DAD
I know. But we have to move on.
You already settled everything
with Jan?

LORI
(nodding)
The payment should go through
today.

DAD
(claps)
Good. Then she'll finally be put
to rest.

DAD turns around and beckons LORI to leave. He points at MARGOT.

DAD
See you next Saturday.

MARGOT
You didn't know anything about
her.

A beat.

MARGOT
If you did, you would know she
hated the idea of being buried in
a box.

DAD remains composed and turns to LORI.

DAD
Lor? How do you feel about what
your Aunt Margot just said?

LORI says nothing, looking down. DAD shrugs, amused, and turns back to MARGOT.

DAD
Lori and I knew Jo. We knew she
didn't care how she was buried.
Right, Lor?
(LORI still
remains silent)

MARGOT
That's because she wouldn't tell
YOU about that. You ... you never
even...

MARGOT fumble her words.

DAD
What? I never loved her?

LORI
Dad...

DAD holds up a hand to LORI, who stops.

DAD
Margot, you're still in shock. I'm
in shock too. It's only been a
week.

MARGOT
I know what she wanted.

DAD
Lor, let's give your aunt some
space.

DAD smiles and directs LORI to the front door. LORI obeys
and exits without looking at MARGOT. Focus on MARGOT as DAD
leaves.

EXT. A HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

A truck drives by.

INT. DAD'S TRUCK - AFTERNOON

LORI and DAD. We focus on LORI, leaning to the side as she
stares out the window.

DAD (V.O.)
How are you doing?

LORI
Fine.

DAD (V.O.)
You don't look fine.

LORI
Mom died a week ago. I just saw
her dead body. And now ... we're
arguing about the burial. It's
just a lot, okay? So yeah, maybe
I'm not fine right now.

LORI turns to face forward. DAD furrows his brow and taps
the wheel.

DAD

Your aunt, she's not well. It's like I'm on trial! I mean, what does a man have to do after his wife dies? Seriously?

(a chuckle)

I swear, your mom's sisters drive me up the goddamn wall.

(a sigh)

At least Nancy stays out of all this.

LORI

That's because she's in Georgia.

DAD

All the better for that.

(a beat)

Lor, your Aunt Margot.... she drinks. She says things when she drinks. You know I'd do anything for your mother. I loved her.

LORI closes her eyes and sighs.

LORI

When we moved to Maine, was that for her too?

DAD facepalms, shaking his head.

DAD

Margot's gonna be the death of me.

LORI

Well?

DAD

Lor, your mom... sometimes, she didn't know what she needed.

LORI

Like whether to be buried or cremated.

DAD slams the dashboard. LORI jumps in her seat.

DAD

Loretta, you're not thinking straight.

(a beat)

You already filled out the paperwork. The funeral is

(MORE)

DAD (cont'd)
happening.

LORI
The last ten years, it's only been
about what you wanted. Not Mom.
(a beat)
You can't even let her die the way
she wants.

DAD
(softening his
voice)
Lor. Mom is dead. Mom doesn't care
if she's buried or cremated. We
loved her. We knew what she
wanted. She wouldn't care, Lor.
(he turns to look
at her)
You know this. Right?

A long pause. DAD turns back to face the road.

LORI
No, she wouldn't.

DAD
That's a good girl.
(DAD pats LORI on
the shoulder)
Now, the next thing you gotta do
is make sure Wes gets his ass up
here before next Saturday.

LORI
He'll be here.

DAD
(nods)
Everyone. Everyone needs to be
here. Even him.

DAD extends his hand to LORI. LORI looks down at it. He
wiggles it. LORI reluctantly takes it. Unexpectedly, she
begins to cry. Rain begins to pour.

LORI
I miss her so much.

The patter on the windshield grows louder. FADE OUT.

EXT. BENZ HOME - NIGHT

FADE IN: a single light is on.

WES (V.O.)
How'd it go today?

INT. BENZ HOME - LORI'S ROOM - NIGHT

LORI is sprawled on her bed, on the phone.

LORI
Dad called you out for not being
there.

WES (V.O.)
(a sigh, a chuckle)
I'm not gonna keep explaining
myself to him.

LORI
You'll still be here next Friday,
right?

WES (V.O.)
Yes, ma'am.

LORI rolls over on the bed, belly side up now, staring at
the ceiling.

LORI
I feel like I'm losing my mind.

WES (V.O.)
What happened?

LORI
Aunt Margot said Mom wanted to be
cremated. At least, that's what
she said when she was younger.

WES (V.O.)
She never told us that.
(a beat)
Wait, are you thinking what I
think you're thinking?

LORI shrugs, smirking.

LORI
Read my mind.

WES (V.O.)
No, Lor. It's too late to change
anything. Mom goes in the ground.

LORI
But it's always what Dad wants.

WES cackles. Lori pulls the phone away from her face.

WES (V.O.)
You *just* realized that? That's
why I got the hell out. There's no
winning in that house.
(a beat)
Honestly, I'm shocked you've
survived for this long.

LORI
But don't you care what Mom
wanted?

WES (V.O.)
Mom's dead.
(a sigh)
Sorry, that sounded harsh. Look,
the old man gets what he wants.
Just don't do anything stupid.
Don't do anything I would do.

LORI
(cheeky)
I'll do what I please.

WES (V.O.)
Uh-huh.
(a beat)
Hey, Trish is calling me. Good
talk. I'll see you soon, all
right?

LORI tosses her phone aside on the bed. She stares at the ceiling and then FADE OUT.

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - LOBBY - MORNING

FADE IN: Lori, dressed up in all black, stares at a picture of a line of coffins. Her eyes dart between the options available. In the reflection of the picture, a Hearse appears from out the window, pulling up in the driveway. Lori turns around and walks to the window. The Hearse drives around the back.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR (V.O.)
Ms. Benz?

LORI jumps. She turns around.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to
frighten you.

LORI
No, you're fine.
(she ponders for a
second)
Please call me Lori. Ms. Benz
is... not me.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
(nods)
Understood. You're very early,
Lori. Your father's not even here
yet.

LORI
I didn't sleep last night.
(a beat)
Is it possible to see her one last
time? I think it might put my mind
at ease.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
Of course. Right this way.
(he holds out a
hand)

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - HALLWAY - DAY

LORI and the FUNERAL DIRECTOR walk down a long hallway. LORI
is filled with a sense of dread, and time seems to pass
slowly as she walks.

INT. FUNERAL HALLWAY - MORGUE - DAY

LORI and the FUNERAL DIRECTOR look down upon MOM in a wood
casket, with the top off. MOM is dressed in a beautiful
dress. Her eyes are closed.

LORI
Can I have a minute alone?

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
Certainly. I have to attend to
some business, but if you need
anything, we'll be right down the
hall.

LORI
Thanks.

The FUNERAL DIRECTOR leaves the MORGUE. After a pause, when LORI knows she's alone, LORI begins to cry.

LORI
Mom. I miss you so much. I don't
know what I'm doing anymore.
(a beat)
I don't know what you want. I
don't know what I want. I just ...

LORI hears a car door slam outside. LORI looks around and notices a door ajar. She walks to it and peeks her head out the door. It's the same Hearse from before. She watches a man get out of the Hearse and greet somebody nearby. He walks away.

LORI
(to herself,
quietly)
... I just can't believe he left
the engine running.

MUSIC: a SNARE DRUM plays, slow at first, gradually speeding up. LORI turns around and looks at MOM on the table. Then she turns back to look at the Hearse. The SNARE grows louder and faster. Her eyes keep dashing back and forth between MOM and the Hearse, and then suddenly we lock in on LORI's eyes. Something flashes.

LORI walks back to MOM.

LORI
Mom, I might be going insane, and
I know this is very unladylike,
but...

The SNARE becomes a fast roll.

LORI
How heavy are you?

CUT TO:

INT. A GARAGE - AFTERNOON

FADE IN: an active garage repair shop. Repairmen are working. Focus on one man, WES BENZ. He's signing some papers, walking around, inspecting operations. After a bit, he pulls out a pack of cigarettes.

WES
Be right back.

EXT. GARAGE - AFTERNOON

WES strolls outside, taking a drag. Suddenly, a car horn honks. A Hearse pulls up right besides him. It's LORI, and WES and LORI lock eyes as she kills the engine.

"CHAPTER TWO"

WES looks around, confused. He then knocks on the passenger side window. LORI lowers the window and he pokes his head in.

WES
I have many questions.

LORI
It's a long story.

WES
Let's start with the most obvious ones. Why are you here?
(a beat)
And why are you driving a Hearse?

LORI
(a sigh)
Can you just get in?

WES
Uh....
(he pops back out)
... no, no, you tell me what's going on before...

LORI
Wes!

A beat. LORI's breathing is fast.

WES
(deliberately)
Lori, what did you do?

LORI
(quickly)

I just pulled the fire alarm.
Everything else was easy. He left
the car keys in the engine. Mom
was on a cart thing. It rolled. It
was a little too easy, if you ask
me.

WES nods, almost amused. He checks his cigarette, and then shrugs. He tosses it away and then chuckles.

LORI
I don't know what I was thinking.
I just didn't want Dad to...

LORI notices WES is still chuckling quietly to himself.

LORI
This isn't funny!

WES
Hold on.

WES, still locking eyes with LORI, yells loudly.

WES
Jim, cover me!

A faint response ("You got it."). WES nods, and then gets into the car. They both look straight ahead.

WES
Start talking.

EXT. HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

The Hearse speeds by.

LORI (V.O.)
You don't believe me.

INT. HEARSE - AFTERNOON

A close up shot of WES playing with his pack of cigarettes as he fumbles them, anxiously.

LORI (V.O.)
I'll show you if you don't believe
me.

WES

Oh, I believe you. I believe that
you're an idiot. A real A+ idiot.

WES peeks out the window.

WES

Where are we going?

LORI

(shaky)

Just driving in circles...

WES

This is insane. You're insane.
Dad's gonna kill you. Dad's gonna
kill ME.

LORI

Forget Dad!

WES

Stop the car.

EXT. SIDE OF ROAD - AFTERNOON

The HEARSE pulls over.

WES (V.O.)

Don't block the bike lane, sis.
You want a ticket?

LORI (V.O.)

Mom's dead and all you care about
is the fucking bike lane?

INT. HEARSE - DAY

WES

(hands up in
defeat)

Okay, fine, but don't say I didn't
warn you...

WES gets out. LORI watches him walk around to the back,
dodging traffic, and taps the hatch. LORI pops the hatch and
turns around to watch. Slowly zoom in on WES.

WES

You're not messing with me?

LORI

No.

WES feels the casket and knocks.

WES
You moved this yourself? You're
stronger than I thought, sis.

LORI
Adrenaline.

MUSIC: cymbals. It starts slow, building speed. As we zoom in, WES ponders. He unlocks the casket. He sighs, placing his head on the casket. His fingers graze the edges and just as he's about to open it, just as the music reaches its peak, he stops and locks it. He takes a step back, closes the hatch, and walks back to the passenger side, stepping in, and closing the door.

LORI
You okay?

WES
I can't do it. I just can't do it.

LORI
Trust me. It's her.

WES sighs, shaking his head.

WES
I think you're a criminal now.
(turns to LORI,
looking serious)
You have to take this back to
Maine. You're gonna get personally
thrown in jail by Dad himself,
IF he doesn't kill you first.

LORI leans her head on the wheel.

LORI
One minute, I was standing next to
her body. The next, I was driving
the Hearse.
(turns to WES)
I didn't even stop to pee.

WES
(repeating)
Lor, you HAVE to take Mom back.
(a beat)
What were you *thinking?*

LORI

We're *not* taking her back! I've come too far to just let this go. This is what she wanted.

WES

Sis...

(hand on shoulder)

... there were definitely better ways to go about this without invoking the wrath of Dad. Like maybe a conversation, you know, things normal people have.

A biker bikes by, ringing his bell and yelling curse words. Lori flips the biker off. WES smiles.

LORI

I admit I didn't think this through.

WES

It's not too late. Let's go back to Maine. We'll go together.

LORI holds a hand up.

LORI

But... even though I didn't think this through, I still know it was the right thing to do.

WES facepalms and then leans back on his chair.

WES

Then expect Liam Neeson Dad. He's probably hunting you down right now.

LORI

I don't care. I've only been living for him.
(a beat)
I'm never going back.

WES

You mean... literally? Or figuratively? Because all of your shit is there.

LORI hits WES.

LORI
This isn't a joke!

WES
(shrugs)
I did tell you that you should
have come to New York with me when
you had the chance...

LORI humphs. She starts the engine and pulls back onto the road.

LORI
You're not better than me because
you went to New York and did your
little thing with Trish.

WES
(desperate)
I'm not saying I'm better. I'm
saying you don't have a plan, sis!

LORI
Here's a plan: let's grab your
truck and put Mom there. Then dump
the Hearse.

WES
Oh my god. You're serious.
(a sigh)
Crime is bad, Lor. Crime doesn't
pay!

LORI
Wes. I need you.

WES
I got a job, Lor. I can't be a
felon. Trish is gonna kill me.

WES leans his head against the dashboard.

WES
You're resorting to kidnapping
your little brother then?

WES offers his wrists. LORI shakes her head and pushes his
hands down.

LORI
I don't want to kidnap you.
(a beat)
But at the same time, you can't
keep running away from this. You
(MORE)

LORI (cont'd)
know Dad didn't care about Mom or
what she wanted.

WES sits back in his chair and holds his hands like he's
begging.

WES
Mom. Is. Dead. Mom doesn't want.

A heavy silence.

WES
I'm sorry.

LORI
Wes. I need to do this.

WES takes a breath. He shakes his head.

WES
You've driven around this traffic
circle at least a dozen times.

LORI
I'm waiting for you to join me.

WES
So if I say yes, will you take the
next goddamn exit and spare me?

LORI
(shrugs)
I guess.

WES
(desperately)
Then yes!

LORI violently swerves the Hearse out of the traffic circle
and takes another road. She accelerates.

WES
Thank God.
(a beat)
This is all crazy. But I admit...
I kind of dig this new Lori.

WES lightly punches LORI on the shoulder.

WES
Look at you. Sticking with the
plan. Committing. I like that.
(a beat)
(MORE)

WES (cont'd)
Not me. I was a coward. I ran
away.

He leans back and looks for a cigarette.

LORI
No more running.

WES
You know, sis... I may not agree
with your methods, and I don't
want to go to jail, but...
(he pulls a
cigarette out)
... I do support a strong
independent woman taking control
of her life. At least we have that
going for us.

He pulls a lighter out.

WES
You were never gonna let me have a
choice.

LORI
Nope.
(she pats WES)
Great. I knew I could count on
you.

WES
Remember: this is *your* plan. The
brother takes no responsibility.

LORI
I will take the blame.

WES
Good.
(a beat)
I'm all for pissing Dad off.

He lights up. Focus on LORI, shaking her head, watching him
smoke. MUSIC: snare drum and cymbals.

EXT. A SUBURBAN STREET - AFTERNOON

From above, the Hearse turns onto a cul de sac and pulls
into a driveway, next to an old blue pickup truck.

LORI (V.O.)
Why is your truck parked in Jersey
again?

WES (V.O.)
Have you SEEN parking prices in
Brooklyn?

INT. HEARSE - AFTERNOON

LORI
Should have come to Maine.

WES
What is Maine even famous for?
Lobster?

LORI
And lighthouses.

LORI kills the engine and hops out. She examines the truck.

LORI (V.O.)
Can't believe you're paying for a
spot in someone's driveway.

WES
(snarky)
Sorry, we don't have football size
parking lots here.

LORI (V.O.)
How would you know? You don't
visit.

WES rolls his eyes.

EXT. HEARSE - AFTERNOON

LORI is closely examining the truck. It's a solid white pick up truck: nothing special, but it'll get the job done. She picks at some peeling paint and rust. WES walks over from the passenger side. He slaps her hand away. LORI recoils, wincing.

WES
I like the aesthetic.

LORI
You weirdo.

LORI and WES turn around from the truck. They stare at the casket at the back of the Hearse.

WES
How are we doing this?

A beat. LORI looks around while WES leans on the truck.

WES
Now what?

LORI
You got an empty parking lot?

WES grins.

WES
How about a Blockbuster?

MUSIC: the snares and cymbals are in full swing. A shot from the back of the Hearse, now in a Blockbuster parking lot. LORI opens the hatch. WES backs up the truck to face directly against the Hearse. Brother and sister work together to awkwardly drag the casket over from the Hearse to the truck. WES finds straps to tighten down the casket as LORI watches. Her face shows the same mix of adrenaline, dread, and hope. CUT TO:

LORI and WES sit in the back of the truck, each one flanking the casket, both looking beat. WES is smoking, LORI is browsing her phone. LORI peeks over the top of the cabin and looks around.

LORI
Do you think anyone saw us?

WES
Maybe that one hipster who still borrows VHS tapes.

Focus on LORI as she keeps looking.

WES
I'm kidding. There hasn't been a normal person here for years.

LORI sits back down. She sighs deeply and leans her head against the casket. A few voices echo in LORI's mind, growing louder until...

WES
Sis?

LORI is broken from her trance.

WES
We should go.

LORI stands up and hops over the truck cabin's edge onto the ground. She walks to the Hearse, grabs the keys from her pocket, then tucks them behind the driver's side visor. She then turns around, arms spread wide, almost as though absolving herself of sin.

LORI
No crime to see here, folks. Keys
are in the visor. We're off the
hook.

WES
That doesn't mean you didn't
commit a crime. I'm sorry, sis,
that's not how, you know, law,
works.

LORI
Just let me have this, okay? We're
worrying about consequences later.
This act first think later thing
is new for me.

WES
(shrugs)
Not for me.

They both return to the truck. WES hops into the driver's seat and LORI settles into the passenger side. From the outside, we watch the truck leave the empty parking lot. Focus on the Hearse, looking particularly lonely.

INT. TRUCK - AFTERNOON

LORI and WES sit in silence. LORI checks her phone. 10 missed calls. LORI puts her phone away.

LORI
Did you tell Trish?

WES
Yeah. She understands. We're good.

LORI
(leans forward)
What? When did you tell her?

WES
I have my ways. But I do need to
tell the boys.

WES takes out his phone. He makes a call.

WES

Hey... yeah, so my sister is like, going through some stuff right now, and I just need to be there for her... uh huh, yeah, let's say family emergency... great. Thanks a bunch, Jack.... yeah, she'll be okay. Also, can you and Bobby drive out to the Blockbuster on 5th?

(he rolls his eyes)

I don't care if it's lunchtime, just drive out here. There's a Hearse with keys, drive it back to the garage, and keep it there.... you'll find out later. Thanks.

LORI clears her throat.

WES

Gotta go. Text me.... all right... all right, bye.

WES ends the call. He starts the truck.

LORI

"Going through some stuff"?

WES shrugs.

MUSIC: snare drum and cymbals. LORI shakes her head, sits back, and crosses her arms. We focus on LORI as she takes a breath.

LORI

Here we go.

CUT TO:

INT. TRUCK - EVENING

"CHAPTER 3"

We hear a prolonged honk of a horn.

LORI is beating down on the wheel horn from the passenger seat. WES shooes her away.

LORI
Asshole!
(a beat)
Sorry.

WES
Your first felony is always a
rush. I get it.

LORI grumbles.

WES
It's okay. We're all felons here.

LORI rubs her head.

LORI
Well... the jail time's gonna be
split between us. Right? You're an
accessory.

WES laughs.

WES
You have no idea what you've
gotten yourself into.

LORI
Then why didn't you talk me out of
it?!

WES
I wanted to see what you'd do.
Also, I can't let my big sister
have all the fun and go to jail.

WES's phone pings.

LORI
I got it.
(she grabs his
phone)
It's from Dad. Again.

WES
Why is he calling *me* so much?

LORI
Because I've ignored his 100 calls
and he thinks you're involved now
too.

WES
Pretty soon the whole army's gonna
be after us.

The truck hits a pothole.

WES
Mom's still back there?

LORI turns around to check.

LORI
Mom's still back there.

WES rubs his hands.

WES
Okay. So, what's the plan?

LORI
(she grimaces)
Ugh. I did not think this through.

LORI's phone rings. She checks it.

LORI
Aunt Margot. Dad's really changing
up his strategy now.

She silences her phone.

LORI
We need to find a cremator.

WES
Okay. Should we just cold call
every funeral parlor from New
Jersey to Florida?

LORI
Don't we need to fill out
paperwork or something?

WES
(sassy)
I don't know, Lori. It's almost
like it would've been easier to do
this the right way instead of...

LORI
All right! Jeez.

MONTAGE: MUSIC: the SNARE begins. LORI makes many calls, all overlapping each other, beginning with her usual greeting, followed by awkward explanations and clarifications. Then...

LORI

Ugh.

(she hangs up)

Why do you need to make a reservation to cremate a body??!!

(she hangs her head down, defeated)

You don't happen to know any... cremators or...

WES

Oh, sure, car repair guys get great rates on cremation and...

(a beat)

... actually.

LORI

What?

WES

I do know a welder. Has his own shop. We took the same welding class at Stevens.

LORI

Does he work with... bodies?

WES

Let's just say this: I would be surprised if he hasn't cremated a body.

LORI

And you... trust this guy?

LORI turns to WES. He finishes texting just as LORI grabs his phone.

LORI

Focus on driving!

WES swerves violently to the exit lane as LORI holds on for dear life. When they reach a red light, WES's phone pings again. WES grabs the phone and reads it, smiling.

WES

I think we missed a turn.

EXT. A WORKSHOP - NIGHT

An old workshop with busted doors and windows. It has seen better days. From within, there are sounds of welding, drilling, and other equipment. Pan right and a TRUCK pulls up the gravel driveway.

WES (V.O.)
Damn, they work late.

LORI (V.O.)
This place is creepy. You sure
about this?

WES (V.O.)
He's kind of weird. But he's a
nice guy.

WES rolls his window down. He honks the horn. A stout man hobbles out of a door, looks both ways, and notices the truck.

WES
Hey, Al!

AL
(extending his
arms)
You found it. Welcome to the zoo.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

WES
(quietly, to LORI)
See? Nothing to worry about.

LORI
Yet.

WES
You want to get this shit done or
not, Lori?

LORI
(hushed)
My idea wasn't to get us murdered
by some weirdo in a junkyard!

WES
(pats LORI)
Hey, hey. That's my friend you're
talking about. He's normal, well
adjusted, and definitely not a
(MORE)

WES (cont'd)
serial killer. I made sure that...

AL suddenly appears at the window.

WES
... Al will show us a good time!
Right, Al?
(he holds his hand
out for a
handshake)
How you doing, man?

They shake hands. AL smirks.

AL
You talkin' shit about me?

WES
I would never.

AL
Just because I dress like a greasy
clown doesn't mean I don't get
sensitive.
(pounds his chest)
Up in here.

AL spots LORI, who's crouching down slightly.

WES
That's my sister, Lori.

LORI
(flatly)
Hi.

AL
Wes, you didn't tell me you were
related to such a beauty.

WES
You hitting on my sister in front
of me?

AL
(shrugs)
Only if she's okay with it.

LORI awkwardly laughs and kicks WES under the seat. WES yelps.

LORI
Let's just get on with why we're
here.

WES
Al, I need a favor.

AL
(leans in, quiets
his voice)
Look, I told Alyssa I wasn't doing
that no more.

WES chuckles nervously and playfully nudges AL.

WES
No, no, not about that. I'm
talking about Bessie.

AL
(confused)
Bessie? What about her?

WES
You still taking orders?

AL ponders for a minute, then glances between WES and the
back of the truck. He quietly shuffles to the back.

LORI
(quietly)
Who's Bessie?

AL (V.O.)
Is that who I think it is?

WES turns around, peering at AL through the dirty back
window.

WES
If you thought our dead mother,
then yes.

AL pats the casket.

AL
Next time, you gotta tie it down
better.
(he pulls the
straps)
This is a shit job, Benz.

WES
Noted.

AL
So.
(a beat)
What is this?

LORI
It's our mom.

AL
(a pregnant pause)
Uh-huh. And Wes, tell me, why do
you have your mom in a casket in
the back of your truck?

LORI
I stole it from the funeral.

AL
I see.
(claps hands)
Well, as long as I know ahead of
time. To Bessie!

WES and LORI stare at each other, WES beaming and LORI
dumbfounded. WES turns to the window, hailing AL.

WES
Thank you, man, you're a goddamn
lifesaver.

AL points to a back garage.

AL
Bring her round back.

AL starts to walk back to the workshop.

LORI
Wait! Mr...

AL stops walking.

AL
Just call me Al.

LORI
Al... you're not gonna ask any
questions?

WES nudges LORI. He gestures her to stop talking.

LORI
(loudly)

I want to know this guy is
trustworthy and does a decent job
of cremating our mother!

AL turns around, wagging his finger.

AL
Mr. Benz. Your sister isn't so
bright.

LORI
What kind of a guy just takes a
body, no questions asked, and
burns it? I demand to know your
process.

AL
(chuckles)
My process is Bessie. She'll burn
anything to a nice char, no two
ways about it.

AL walks back to the truck. WES, facepalmed, doesn't even
look up. LORI makes eye contact.

AL
You want questions?
(he shrugs)
Okay. How did you she die? How did
you take the body? Did you steal
her? Does everyone know you took
her? Is she missing right now? Am
I aiding and abetting a criminal?

WES perks up, desperate.

WES
Come on, Al. You know this is all
strictly legal.

AL leans into the truck cabin with a smile. WES leans back
but LORI remains steadfast. A beat. Then AL grins and slaps
the dashboard.

AL
I'm just pullin' your leg. I trust
this guy.
(he ruffles WES's
hair)
I don't care about how it got
here. I'll get it done.

LORI
We're expecting one thing from
this. Ashes.

AL
(tips his cap)
Yes, ma'am.

AL backs out of the truck. Still smiling, he walks back to
the workshop.

AL
I think once you see Bess, you'll
understand.

Once AL is gone...

WES
Are you trying to sabotage this,
sis?
(a beat)
Let *me* do the talking.

LORI
I just want to know who I'm going
into business with.

WES
Just...
(frustrated grunt)
... just let me handle this.

WES puts the truck in drive and they drive down the path to
the garage.

EXT. AL'S WORKSHOP - GARAGE - NIGHT

The truck pulls up to the garage.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

WES lets out a breath.

WES
Stay here. Al and I will get Mom
to Bessie.

LORI
So who's Bessie again?

There's the sound of crunching gravel behind them. LORI and
WES turn around to see AL approaching.

WES
He'll tell you. Hey Al, who's
Bessie?

AL
The only serious girl I need in my
life.

AL points to the workshop, to a large, metal furnace. It
bursts out steam.

LORI
That's a serious furnace.

AL
I'm a serious kind of welder. Wes,
give me a hand.

LORI
I can help.

AL
Nope. You sit your pretty bum down
and let us handle it.

LORI is so tired she doesn't even protest. She settles in.
WES leans over and kisses LORI.

WES
(he winks)
We'll be careful.

WES gets out and helps AL with the casket. LORI hunches down
and shuts her eyes, the sounds of the men moving the casket
gradually fading away...

INT. TRUCK - DREAM

LORI jolts awake. She's in the truck but she's by herself.
She looks around. Sunlight streams in the open windows. WES
and AL are nowhere to be seen.

LORI
Wes?

A familiar voice.

MOM
Hi, hon.

LORI turns around to see MOM in the backseat.

LORI
Mom.

MOM
I'm happy you're taking all this
so well.

LORI
It's not like I had a choice.

MOM
The job opportunities for Dad are
better in Maine.

LORI
But there aren't any pools in
Maine! It's freezing. People don't
need lifeguards up there.

MOM
(laughs)
People always need lifeguards,
Lor. It gets hot there, too.

LORI
It won't be as nice as Florida.

MOM sighs and edges towards LORI, leaning into the front seat.

MOM
It won't be easy. But you and Wes
are strong, right? At least we'll
all be together in Maine. That's
the most important thing. Sticking
together.

LORI
But what about what you want?

MOM
(dismissively)
That's not very important, now is
it?

LORI
I want you to be happy. I want you
to have what you want. I never get
to see it.

MOM smiles sadly.

MOM
 If your Dad is happy, I'm happy.
 We're all happy. Plus...
 (a chuckle)
 ... it's all kind of a moot point,
 isn't it?

LORI
 Why?

MOM
 Because dead women don't want.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

LORI snaps awake. She holds her head in pain. Next to her on the driver's side is a bottle of water and a granola bar. She munches on the bar and has a swig of water. She takes a minute to recalibrate. She slowly peeks her head up to see the busy workshop in the distance.

WES
 (yelling, from a
 distance)
 Lor!

In the distance, WES waves. LORI waves back. WES jogs over, holding something in his hand. LORI looks more closely... it's a jar. WES reaches the truck and hands LORI the jar.

LORI holds the jar, examining it. She looks at WES, who just nods.

LORI
 It's so small.

WES
 That's five pounds.

LORI
 Wow.
 (her voice breaks)
 Wow. All that life, into a jam
 jar.

WES
 Weird, huh? Ashes to ashes.

LORI
 Dust to dust.
 (she places the
 jar besides her)
 Okay. Let's go.

WES shakes his head.

WES
We need a place to stay for the
night. It's late.

LORI huffs.

LORI
Dad's hunting us.
(swings her arm)
Let's go!

WES
There's a guest house right above
this garage. We need sleep.

LORI slumps back, holding her face in her hands.

LORI
We don't have time!

WES
(shakes LORI's
shoulder)
Hey, hey.

LORI retreats, slapping his hand away.

WES
It's midnight. You really wanna
drive right now?

LORI shrugs.

WES
Mom wouldn't let us drive at
night. Remember?

LORI
(bursting out)
Mom would've done it for us!

WES sighs.

WES
Mom's dead.
(a beat)
She'll forgive you if you wait a
day to get to Florida.

LORI has her arms folded, looking away. We focus on her
face, hopelessly lost.

LORI
6AM. We're gone.

WES
(V.O.)
Yes, ma'am.

We stay focused on LORI as we hear WES walk back to the workshop. Music: a slow SNARE. LORI's face is planted right on the seat. FADE OUT:

INT. GARAGE GUEST ROOM - DAY

FADE IN: LORI is lying in bed, eyes open.

"CHAPTER 4"

LORI hears quiet sobbing. She turns around and looks to the other side of the small room. WES is lying in bed, turned away, keeping the sobbing to himself. An alarm goes off. Close-up: LORI cancels the alarm.

INT. TRUCK - MORNING

LORI watches her phone miss another call, this time from DAD.

LORI
Only 10 calls this hour. He must
be giving up.

A bump on the road. The casket rattles in the back.

LORI
Remind me again why we we need the
casket.

WES
Do you know how much those cost?

LORI
(shrugs)
Like a couple hundred?

WES
(chuckles)
Try a couple *thousand.*
(gestures backward)
That thing is 2 months of rent.
You bet your ass we're taking care
of that.

Another bump on the road.

LORI
Good call.

WES
I got you, sis. I hope you know
that.

LORI nods. Another buzz of a phone. LORI checks and is surprised to see "AUNT MARGOT." He shows it to WES.

WES
Don't pick it up.

LORI
But shouldn't she know?

WES
Dad's gonna use her to get info.
Wait until we get to Florida.

LORI thinks. She still picks up the phone.

WES
(under his breath)
What??!! Why??!!

LORI
I don't -- hi, Aunt Margot.
(taps to put on
speaker)

MARGOT
(over the speaker)
Lori. Why have you been ignoring
our calls?

WES mouths "our?"

LORI
I can't explain right now. Just
trust us.

MARGOT (V.O.)
When I told you those things about
Mitch, I didn't think the next
thing you'd do is kidnap Jojo.

LORI and WES trade looks. "Oh boy."

MARGOT (V.O.)
We know what you did.

LORI

You should be proud. I took
matters into my own hands.

MARGOT (V.O.)

Listen, Lori. Now's not the time
to be a vigilante! You stole a
body and a car. You're on the
news.

LORI

Well, good! Now everyone knows
about Dad and how shitty he was.

WES

(quietly)

No, not good!

MARGOT (V.O.)

Hi, Wesley.

An awkward chuckle.

WES

Hi, Aunt Margot.

MARGOT (V.O.)

Please, tell your sister to bring
your mother back.

LORI

We can't.

MARGOT sighs.

MARGOT

I shouldn't have said those
things, to you or Mitch. You and
your father, you have a good
relationship. I didn't mean to
make you doubt that. He loved your
mother very much.

LORI

You didn't make me doubt anything.

(a beat)

If anything, you opened my eyes.

MARGOT (V.O.)

You're not thinking straight.

LORI

Dad loved the *idea* of Mom and a family. But he just controlled us.

(he looks at WES,
who nods)

It wasn't love.

Another voice mumbles incoherently on the other end of the phone. The familiar sound of DAD clearing his throat.

DAD (V.O.)

Lor, you know that isn't true.

Focus on LORI. Push in.

DAD (V.O.)

Please. Just bring her back.

LORI is struggling with her feelings. She shuts her eyes, grimaces, and shakes it off.

LORI

I know what I said is true.

WES looks over, nodding. A sound of struggle on the phone and MARGOT's voice comes in.

MARGOT (V.O.)

This isn't a game anymore. This is a crime. People are hurting.

Everyone wants Jojo back. I saw

Mrs. Mackey ...

(a beat)

... sobbing. She was sobbing,
Lori.

WES

(waves his hands)

Oh please.

MARGOT (V.O.)

Shut up, you little shit!

LORI

I'm hanging up.

MARGOT (V.O.)

Listen, you little bastards.

Tomorrow, in DC, at the Robinson Funeral Home, there'll be a car waiting. Bring Jojo there. If you...

(a beat)

.... if you even remotely care
(MORE)

MARGOT (cont'd)
about your mother or this family,
you'll do this. Won't you?

A beat. LORI remains silent. WES looks over. "Well?"

MARGOT (V.O.)
Won't you?

LORI
Oh, go fuck yourself.

LORI ends the call. WES whistles in admiration.

WES
It's a new you! All you needed was
a dramatic receiver slam.

LORI
Margot was always full of shit.
All talk, no action. Now she's
just a minion.

LORI sighs, rubbing her forehead, thinking.

LORI
There's probably gonna be cops
waiting for us in DC. We need to
get the job done first.

WES
Wow.

LORI
(snappy)
What?

WES
You sound different now. Like a
woman with a plan.

LORI
We have mom's ashes. We just gotta
get it to Florida.

WES
(finger pointed up)
Only 3 states and many
questionable statues to go.

LORI lowers the window. The highway air blows loudly.

LORI
(yelling)
I needed that.

WES
To tell off Aunt Margot? Don't we
all.

EXT. HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

From above, the truck exits to a gas station.

EXT. A GAS STATION - AFTERNOON

The truck pulls up, rattly and smoky.

WES (V.O.)
Smoke?

INT. TRUCK - AFTERNOON

LORI is sitting with her window rolled down. WES is pumping gas and offers her the carton. LORI grabs them quickly and tosses them to the driver's seat, angry.

LORI
Are you crazy?

WES
(shrugs)
It's not lit, sis. Relax. I've
seen Zoolander.

LORI
Still.
(she looks at the
carton now)
I quit, by the way. You should,
too.

WES
It's too late for my lungs. Plus,
a breath of New York air is
basically a drag of a cigarette.

LORI checks her phone.

LORI
Come on, make it pump faster.

WES
I can't ask it to go faster, Lor.
(a beat)
Plus, aren't you enjoying this?
(MORE)

WES (cont'd)
Our fun adventures together,
evading the law, stealing bodies,
causing hi-jinx.

LORI
I'm just... freaking out.

A beat. The gas pump clicks, and WES replaces the nozzle. He leans into the window.

WES
Lor, I already told you what was
going to happen.

LORI
But what if Margot said...

WES places his hands on LORI's shoulders, calming her.

WES
You said it yourself. She's full
of shit.

LORI
But we still committed a crime.

WES
What happened to act first, then
deal with consequences later? What
happened to that Lori?

LORI
She's out of my system. It's back
to old boring Lori, non thrill
seeking Lori, reality check Lori.

WES smiles, ducks out of her window, then walks around to
the driver seat. He gets into the truck. He yawns.

WES
But don't forget responsible,
loving, and thinks 10 steps ahead
Lori. The one we all know and
love.

LORI
Fuck. I'm so over my head.

WES
I'll support you, no matter what.
If you wanna go back to DC, we can
do that.

A beat. LORI leans back in her seat and closes her eyes.

LORI
I'm afraid, Wes. I'm not
adventurous like you. I could
never walk away from Mom and Dad.

WES
I'll take that as a compliment.

LORI
Reality check Lori is telling me
to give up, but new Lori is saying
we can do it.

WES nods.

WES
Yes, we can.

LORI's phone rings. She fumbles for her phone and checks the caller ID.

LORI
Oh shit. It's Aunt Nancy.

WES
Who's that?

LORI looks over, incredulous.

LORI
Seriously?

WES
You're talking to the guy who
ditched his family.

LORI
This is true.
(a beat)
Aunt Nancy. She's kind of weird.
She lives in Atlanta.

The phone keeps ringing.

WES
Well, are you gonna pick up?

LORI answers the phone.

LORI
Hi, Aunt Nancy.

NANCY (V.O.)
Lori, what are you doing, hun?

LORI
I'm sorry?

NANCY laughs, a raspy and guttural laugh.

NANCY (V.O.)
Word travels fast with three
gossiping sisters. Well, now two.

LORI
We're not going back.

NANCY (V.O.)
No, no, no. That's not why I'm
calling.
(a beat)
I want to see her.

LORI looks at WES. He shrugs.

LORI
You want to... see her body?

WES
Why?

NANCY (V.O.)
Is that Wes?

WES
Hi, Aunt Nancy.

NANCY (V.O.)
Big hot shot New Yorker too busy
to talk to his auntie in the
sticks, huh?

WES
Just been busy, is all.

NANCY cackles.

NANCY (V.O.)
Okay, sure, kids. Anyway, yes, I
want to see my sister.

A truck honks its horn and speeds by on the interstate.

NANCY (V.O.)
Where in God's name are you?

LORI

Why didn't you come to the
funeral?

A beat.

NANCY (V.O.)

Well, word on the street is there
was no body. I'm happy I didn't
go. That would've been a letdown,
huh?

(a chuckle)

Now, be a darling, bring her here.
I want to see her before she goes
all over the Florida Keys.

LORI

I... hold on.

(LORI mutes the
phone)

How does she know?

WES

I don't know.

NANCY (V.O.)

By the way, I know you can hear
me, you don't have to answer, but
just know, I wanted to go the
funeral, but Dr. Federman wanted
me to stay home, so I couldn't go.
I told him, it's my sister, but he
wouldn't listen. Men, am I right?

LORI and WES look at each other, confused, yet amused.

LORI

We can afford some time.

(she checks her
watch)

Not much, though.

WES

Oh, just relax. Even Dad's not
gonna drive for 2 days straight.

(he pauses, eyes
widening)

Probably.

LORI looks out the window, thinking, closing her eyes,
imagining her aunts and her mom bicker as young children.
Opening her eyes, she looks back at her phone.

LORI
Okay. Fuck it. Let's do it.

She unmutes her phone.

LORI
We'll be there.

NANCY (V.O.)
Great! I live in Loganville, a
little outside Atlanta. I'll text
you the address.

A beat. NANCY is emotional.

NANCY
Thank you, kids. I can't wait to
see Jojo. Even if she is just...

LORI
See you soon.

LORI hangs up.

WES
Well, thank God Mom was the well
adjusted one.

LORI
Mom would love this.

The two siblings sit in silence, both still grieving and
processing. WES turns over the engine.

LORI
It still feels unreal.

WES holds LORI's hands.

WES
She'd be proud of you.

LORI smiles. She lets herself cry a little bit. The silence
is broken when her phone pings. It's a text from NANCY.

WES
Wow. She really can text.

LORI inputs the address onto her GPS.

LORI
Okay.... that's about 6 hours from
here. It's a bit of a detour.

WES nods. FADE OUT...

EXT. A HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

FADE IN: The truck pushes south. MUSIC: the snare drum, mixed with the cymbals, create an uneasy tension. FADE OUT...

EXT. A DUSTY ROAD - AFTERNOON

FADE IN: the truck rumbles over the dirt road. It pulls up to a driveway, leading up to NANCY's house. WES kills the engine.

"CHAPTER 5"

INT. TRUCK - AFTERNOON

WES looks over at the house.

WES

Why does anyone need that much space? We should all be content with 4 walls and a bathroom.

LORI unbuckles her seatbelt.

LORI

That's as big as the house in Miami.

WES

Well, sorry, Miss Maine. I've been living in a shoebox in Manhattan. Many of them.

LORI and WES get out of the truck.

EXT. NANCY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

WES stretches. LORI starts walking up to the house. In the distance, a door creaks open. NANCY walks out, shielding her eyes from the sun to get a better look.

NANCY

Do my eyes deceive me? That can't be Lori and Wes?

LORI

Hi, Auntie.

NANCY
My forward thinking criminal
niece! Ooh!

NANCY hobbles down the steps and towards LORI. WES, still stretching, waves hello.

WES
You're a criminal now, sis. Get
used to it.

LORI
Shut up.

NANCY pulls LORI in for a hug. She spots WES.

NANCY
(winks)
I'll get you later.

WES
No rush.

NANCY hugs LORI tighter.

NANCY
You're so pretty now!

LORI
(smiles)
Thanks, Auntie.

NANCY pulls away from the hug, examining her like a specimen.

NANCY
And so tall!
(her eyes dart to
WES)
Both of you!

WES, who has walked up to meet them, offers a hug to NANCY.

NANCY
Now that Mitch isn't here, we can
have some alone time. Finally.

WES
Hear hear.

LORI
You look... good, Auntie.

NANCY

Oh, don't lie to me, Lor. I know I look like a hobo fortune teller. That's why probably why Jojo never wanted me up in Maine. Ha!

(a beat)

Speaking of which, where is she?

LORI reaches into her bag and pulls out a jar. We focus on the jar.

WES (V.O.)

That was not as easy as it looked.

NANCY (V.O.)

That's it? That's all of Jojo?

Focus on NANCY, who looks stricken with emotion.

NANCY

(hands out)

May I?

LORI

Please be careful.

LORI hands the jar over. NANCY holds it in her hands. She stares deeply at the ashes.

NANCY

Oh, how unusual this world is. Wouldn't you say?

LORI and WES looks at each other. They nod.

NANCY

An entire life... distilled into a jar.

(a beat)

How did you cremate her?

LORI

It's a long story.

Focus on LORI. FADE IN: MUSIC: a triangle ding, a snare drum, a cymbal, and a kettle boiling. It roars and grows until suddenly...

INT. NANCY'S HOME - AFTERNOON

WE CUT TO: a kettle is steaming. NANCY takes the kettle and pours two cups of tea. She brings the cups to the table, where LORI and WES are sitting.

NANCY
I only have chamomile.

WES
Thanks.

NANCY takes a seat besides them.

NANCY
I gotta say... that was almost as crazy as the adventures Jojo and Mar and I would get into.

LORI picks up the tea and sips it.

LORI
I just want this to be over.

NANCY
(laughs)
Just like Jojo, always thinking a mile ahead. I think she'll be okay if you wait a day.

LORI
I'm not just worried about her.

WES
Dad's hot on our trail.

NANCY waves dismissively.

NANCY
That man's got no sense of direction.
(she taps the table)
How are you two?

LORI shrugs.

LORI
Okay.

WES
Other than being on the run and all that, not bad.

NANCY
Kids.
(she looks between them, lowering her voice)
Really. How are you two holding
(MORE)

NANCY (cont'd)
up?

LORI and WES look at each other. Then they look at NANCY. LORI sets her tea down.

LORI
Honestly, I don't know. I feel
like I did something very stupid.

WES
No. You did great, sis.

LORI shakes her head.

LORI
And I just miss Mom. You know?

NANCY
I know.

WES nods. The three of them sit in silence.

NANCY
It's depressing in here. Let's
change topic. How's that piece of
work Mitch?

LORI
I'm realizing I only did what he
ever wanted. And now, I'm trying
to do what Mom wants. And it feels
... different.

NANCY
(nods)
Still a piece of work.

WES
Lori's finally seen the light.
Hallelujah.

NANCY nods and leans forward on the table.

NANCY
Hallelujah, indeed.

NANCY grabs LORI's and WES' hands.

WES
What's happening?

NANCY
Pray with me, kids.

WES
Why are your hands cold?

NANCY
You know what they say, Wes.

A beat.

WES
No?

NANCY
Cool hands, warm heart. You've
heard of that, right Lor?

LORI
Yeah, Wes, haven't you heard of
that classic expression?

WES
(confused)
No.

NANCY clears her throats and closes her eyes.

NANCY
Jojo, I have your kids here with
you. They're good kids. Hmm... I
think Wes needs to eat more. And
Lori needs to relax a little bit.
She's too much like you.

LORI
What are we doing, Aunt...

NANCY
When we were kids, you didn't care
that I was the middle child. No,
as the big sister, you always took
care of us. When Mom got
Alzheimer's, when Dad just took
off, even when Margot was spoiled
rotten, you were there. So the
least I could do is watch these
two, even if just for a night.

WES
Amen.

NANCY releases their hands.

NANCY

Now, what were we talking about?

LORI

Grandma had Alzheimer's?

NANCY

Has, thank the lord. She's still kicking. I hope. Wouldn't it be funny if she passed and I didn't know... then I'd be down two family members. Ha!

WES

(awkward chuckle)

Yeah, that'd be... crazy, right Lori?

LORI

Where is she?

NANCY releases LORI's and WES's hands and leans back on the chair, looking puzzled.

NANCY

Jojo never told you any of this?

LORI

She didn't like to talk about this stuff.

NANCY

What? Family?

LORI

I mean...

LORI looks over at WES, who just shrugs.

WES

Don't look at me.

LORI

She just never really talked about herself. Only about our family. The Benz family.

NANCY

Jojo was Jocelyn Jones before she became Jocelyn Benz. So tell him to stick that...

(a beat)

... sorry, kids. Your Aunt doesn't like to get emotional. Our family
(MORE)

NANCY (cont'd)
wasn't the neatest, but we're
still a family.

NANCY gets up from the chair.

NANCY
Right. So, your grandma is in a
nursing home, just outside of
Miami. I called her yesterday. I
was kidding, by the way. I know
she's fine. Wouldn't be a good
daughter if I didn't check in on
her.

NANCY's voice breaks a little.

NANCY
I need a minute.

NANCY steps away from the table, grabs a tissue, and walks
into the living room, blowing her nose.

At the table, WES stares into his untouched tea.

WES
I think we broke Aunt Nancy.

LORI
She just needs time to process.

WES
It's gonna take a long time to
process her sister in a jar.

LORI finishes the remaining tea in her cup and pushes it to
the center of the table.

LORI
I think we should go visit Grandma
on the way.

WES nods. He plays with the untouched tea.

WES
She won't remember. We haven't
seen her since we were
toddlers. Probably.

LORI
Dad always kept us away. We didn't
even think twice about that.
(a sigh)
We have to tell her. It's the
(MORE)

LORI (cont'd)
right thing to do.

WES
You know, sis, I wish I was as
strong as you. Committed, not
wishy washy, not second guessing
everything.

LORI chuckles, amused.

LORI
Are you kidding? I'm terrified.
But I need you. This is part of my
"new me", remember?

WES
(grins)
Man. I still can't get over the
fact that you friggin' stole Mom.
What a badass move.

LORI
But I also was too afraid to
leave. I wasn't brave enough to
choose to start a new life like
you did.

WES
No, no.
(a beat)
I didn't make a choice. I ran.
It's easy to run. It's harder to
stick with it.

WES grabs LORI's hand.

WES
Lor, I know I may appear to be
like a fun, happy-go-lucky
brother, but I kinda... stink.
However, like I said before, I'll
always support you.

LORI holds WES's hand tightly.

LORI
Wes... why are you really here?

WES
Because *somebody* dragged me
along.

LORI
No... why are you *really* here?

A beat.

WES
I don't want to be afraid anymore.
I want to confront Dad.

LORI pounds the table in agreement.

LORI
Then good. Me too. This is for
Mom.

WES
(nodding)
Yeah. For Mom.

WES looks down at his hand. LORI is clenching it tightly.

WES
I think bonding time is over.

LORI releases her grip and then promptly hits WES on the shoulder.

WES
Ow!

LORI
Appreciate sibling bonding time.

WES
I just wanted my hand back...

There's a bit of commotion in the living room as NANCY re-emerges, slightly sniffly.

NANCY
Sorry about that. Lori, you'll know soon enough, but middle aged women, you never know what to expect. My body doesn't listen to my mind. I tell it, no, stop it, stop the crying, but it just...
(awkward laugh)
... it just wants to cry. You know? Anyways....

She claps her hands together.

NANCY
 Jojo would kill me if I didn't
 feed you guys. Who's hungry?

LORI and WES raise their hands.

MUSIC: the snare, mixed with the cymbals, rolls on at a nice tempo. CUT TO:

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

The crickets chirp loud as the MUSIC begins to fade. A door pushes open. LORI walks out in pajamas. She turns to see NANCY rocking on a chair.

LORI
 Do you sleep out here?

NANCY
 Almost every night.

NANCY rises from her seat partially.

NANCY
 You wanna try?

LORI shakes her head. NANCY shrugs and sits back down.

NANCY
 Your grandfather. That bastard
 could really lay a hand on a girl,
 but he also knew the comforts of a
 chair better than anybody.

NANCY rocks back, then leans to LORI, beckoning her over. LORI obliges, leaning in.

NANCY
 But this man... When your
 grandmother got sick in the
 brain...
 (a snap)
 ... he was out the door. 40 years
 of marriage, poof!
 (a beat)
 I hope he's dead.

NANCY shooes LORI off, and LORI backs away, a bit confused.

NANCY
 I mean, not really, he's still our
 dad.
 (a mild chuckle)
 When he died, I took all of the
 (MORE)

NANCY (cont'd)
stuff he loved, dragged it here,
and now it's mine. Like this
chair.

NANCY taps the chair and takes out a pack of cigarette,
which she offers to LORI.

LORI
I quit.

NANCY takes out a cigarette herself and lights it up.

LORI
You should quit.

NANCY takes a drag and smiles.

NANCY
Just like Jojo. Listen...

NANCY struggles to stand up. LORI tries to help but NANCY
refuses. NANCY stands, a bit wobbly.

NANCY
Don't take after us, Lori. We had
no idea what we were doing. Mar
was a brat, I was impulsive,
vindictive, your mother was
just... too selfless.
(points the
cigarette at her)
You figure out what *you* want.

LORI
I just want this to be over.

NANCY smiles weakly.

NANCY
There's no easy way out, kid. But
I'll say this.
(a drag)
Jojo's heart would be crushed if
you two went to prison.

LORI
(snaps back)
Her heart would also be crushed if
she knew that some people wanted
to disrespect her by burying her.

NANCY barely reacts. Instead, she just nods. She then turns around and walks to the front door. LORI just watches this time.

NANCY
You're right. I'm sorry.

LORI
When I told you I wanted this to be over, I wasn't asking for your approval.

NANCY stops. Again, she just nods.

NANCY
I think I'll have the bed tonight.

Focus on LORI, breathing heavily, a bit angry, as NANCY shuffles away and disappears into the house. FADE OUT.

INT NANCY'S HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

FADE IN: A box of clothes. LORI and MOM hover over it.

LORI
You want to bring *all* of these clothes?

MOM
You and Wes don't fit into them anymore.

LORI
I might...
(she tries a shirt on)
... okay, maybe 9th grade Lori could have.

MOM
Exactly. So I just wanted to be nice and let you double check everything.

LORI
What about Wes?

MOM
(fake whisper)
Let's just assume he doesn't care.

LORI
Have you SEEN the way he dresses?
I'm sure he won't.

LORI sorts through a few other items while MOM watches diligently.

LORI
Does Dad have anything to donate?

MOM
Not this time.

LORI
How about you?

MOM reaches into the box, searches for a minute, and then picks out a red one-piece swimsuit.

MOM
Check this out!

LORI
Ooh la la. Pamela Anderson, eat
your heart out.

MOM
Minus the big boobs.

LORI
Oookay, moving on.

MOM puts the swimsuit back into the box.

MOM
Portland isn't Miami, you know?
There's no pools.

LORI
Hey, that's what I said!

MOM
(winks)
I know.

LORI looks through more items but then sighs. She looks at MOM.

LORI
i'm sad that you never got to be a
lifeguard again.

MOM

Don't you go living in the past,
Lori Benz. You look backwards, you
end up backwards. We adapt.

LORI

For Dad?

MOM

For the family. For us. Even Wes.

LORI does a final look through.

LORI

Okay. That's all of it then.

LORI and MOM once again hover the box. The ticking of a clock in the background fades in.

LORI

I love you, Mom. I don't say it enough. You're the strongest woman I know.

The ticking gets louder. MOM looks down, closing her eyes, shaking her head.

LORI

What is it?

MOM

You never say that, Lor.

LORI

I know. I should say it more.

MOM

No, I said: you never said that.

LORI

What are you talking about?

MOM looks up, a tear streaming down her face.

MOM

You added that last part. To make yourself feel better. Because you know...

LORI

... know what?

MOM
... this is the last conversation
we had.

CUT TO:

INT. NANCY'S HOME - GUEST BEDROOM - MORNING

LORI wakes up. There's a heated argument that she can barely hear through the walls. She sits up.

LORI
(snaps fingers)
Wes.

From the bed across the room, WES buries his head in his pillow.

WES
(muffled)
5 more minutes, Trish.

LORI
Wes!

WES jolts awake. He then immediately sits up and rubs his forehead.

LORI
Listen!

WES, barely awake, leans against the wall and listens. His eyes grow louder.

WES
Shit.

INT. NANCY'S HOME - GUEST HALLWAY - MORNING

We push through the hallway. The argument grows louder. It features the unmistakable voices of two additional people: DAD and MARGOT.

"CHAPTER 6"

NANCY (V.O.)
They're sleeping, Mitch!

Loud footsteps, and CUT TO:

INT. NANCY'S HOME - GUEST BEDROOM - MORNING

NANCY pops in and shuts the door behind her. She looks very guilty.

LORI
What's going on?

NANCY
I had no choice.

WES
What are you talking about?

Footsteps behind NANCY in the hallway. She steps aside and grimaces, as though something is about to burst through the door. The door opens and in walks DAD and MARGOT. An awkward silence.

MARGOT
Boy, you two have been a handful.

DAD
Where's your mother?

LORI ignores DAD and just stares daggers at NANCY.

LORI
Why?

NANCY
I couldn't lie to Marg. I didn't think they'd show up!

MARGOT
You did the right thing, Nance.

WES shakes his head.

WES
The ultimate betrayal...

DAD
Wesley, shut your damn mouth. This ends now.
(steps forward)
Where's ... your ... mother?

LORI is in disbelief. She stares back and forth between DAD and MARGOT.

LORI
How did you get here so fast?

MARGOT
Fucking red eye flight, okay Lori?
Where's Jojo?

LORI lock eyes with MARGOT, rage in her eyes.

LORI
You goddamn hypocrite.

MARGOT
(shrugs)
You know you shouldn't have
listened to me. I might have had a
few drinks. I might have said some
things.
(a beat)
But at least I don't steal dead
bodies like a crazy person!

DAD clears his throat.

DAD
We're wasting time here.

MARGOT
(to NANCY)
Nance, can you believe this girl?
Maybe one time Jojo said she
wanted to be cremated, maybe she
didn't. But this girl hears it
from me and fucking runs with it!

NANCY
It doesn't matter, Marg. That was
what Jojo said.

DAD
Jo's dead. Lori, where is she?

LORI stands up.

LORI
Back away.

DAD takes a few steps back, hands out. MARGOT doesn't move.

DAD
You get your space, Lor. I just...
(a sigh)
... it's been a long 3 days and
I'm tired. Do you even know what
you did? Do you even *comprehend*
what you did?

LORI
I did what Mom wanted.

DAD
No. You robbed her family of a funeral. You took her dignity. When you drove off in that Hearse, you must've thought it was funny. But the truth is that she would've been ashamed of you. She died just so you could embarrass her.

LORI remains steadfast, fighting back tears.

WES
(to DAD)
No. She didn't embarrass her. You embarrassed her.

DAD
(points to WES)
Stay out of this.

LORI
But he's right. You never respected her. Mom would hate who you've become.

DAD
Lor...
(he shakes his head)
I've never been anything but loving and caring to her.

LORI
(bursts out)
All you cared about was you!
(a breath)
I was blinded by you. Until Margot opened my eyes. Mom lived for you and you didn't even love her back.

A beat. NANCY glances around.

NANCY
Everybody take a breath.

But a rage seethes in DAD. Before he can control it, he walks right up to LORI and slaps her so hard she crumbles to the ground.

DAD
How fucking dare you.

WES jumps up and shoves DAD.

WES
Don't fucking touch her!

DAD easily deflects WES away into NANCY, who holds onto him. NANCY is in shock, too afraid to say a word. MARGOT watches with amusement. DAD is the center of attention, towering over everyone.

DAD
(to LORI)
I expect this of Margot, but not
you. What's happened to you?

LORI holds her red cheek.

LORI
I woke up.

DAD
What happened to my Lori? The one
who was always at my side, always
helping Mom?

LORI
That Lori did what you wanted. And
look where Mom ended up.

NANCY
Now, Lori, that's not wise to say.

DAD takes a breath and gently points at the door.

DAD
Margot, Nancy, out of this room.

NANCY
This is my...

DAD
NOW.

NANCY and MARGOT bicker as they push each other out the door. Once they're gone, DAD offers a hand to LORI. LORI refuses and instead WES walks over and helps her up.

LORI, WES, and DAD stand around awkwardly.

LORI
What do you want?

DAD
I want our family back.
(a beat)
Even you, Wes.

WES
Go back to Maine.

LORI
We're taking Mom to Florida.

DAD laughs.

DAD
You two have no idea what you're
getting yourself into.

LORI
At least Mom will be happy.

DAD
Your mother's dead. She can't be
happy.

LORI
Happier than if she's buried
underground.

LORI walks to her bag. She pulls out the jar.

LORI
This is going to Florida. Not to
you.

Focus on the jar.

WES
Lor, put that away... you're
making me nervous.

DAD's eyes are transfixed on the jar. He can't take his eyes
off of it. Soon, he snaps out of his trance.

DAD
Kids, listen... you're going to go
to jail if you don't listen to me.

LORI
(emphasizes the
jar)
Mom's dead. In this jar. And all
(MORE)

LORI (cont'd)
you can think about is jail. How
could you be so detached?!

DAD
Give me the jar.

LORI
No!

A beat. DAD steps back and reassesses the situation.

DAD
I know. I took the easy way out
when your Mom died. I grew
distant. I didn't... I don't know
what to do.

(a beat)
Are you happy? I admitted. I was a
bad Dad. Now look, we can resolve
this peacefully. Just give her to
me.

LORI
You didn't know what to do because
you only cared about yourself. You
never asked her what she wanted.

DAD
And Margot knows better? She's
drunk more than she's sober.

DAD sighs. He leans on the door, grimacing.

DAD
I'm only with her because she said
she could help me find you two.

(points out the
door)
I don't know what goes on in that
little mind of hers, but I know
she led you down a dark path.

WES
Aunt Nancy knew about the
cremation, too.

LORI
Right. So how about you just stop
lying for once?

DAD

Lor, I'm not lying. They create a narrative in their heads and...

LORI

Just *STOP* lying.

LORI trembles in frustration and sharply exhales.

LORI

I know what I heard. Mom never even wanted to go to Maine, and now you won't even let us put her to rest the way she wants to.

(holds her hand

out)

Just back off.

LORI takes a step to the door, holding the jar under her arm, but DAD blocks the exit. WES closes in, keeping an eye on the jar.

DAD

I loved your Mom. She needs to go back.

WES

No.

DAD tries to grab the jar. LORI dodges and tries to go around him. Now, DAD grabs her shoulder to hold her down and reach for the jar, but this hurts LORI and she yelps. WES tries to grab the jar but it's too late. The jar falls and shatters unceremoniously into a million pieces. The ashes spill everywhere, under the floorboards, into corners and unseen places.

Everybody remains transfixed until DAD breaks the silence.

DAD

(to LORI)

You did this. If you just listened to me...

LORI

(booming)

GET. OUT.

DAD

(emotional)

Why can't you just FUCKING LISTEN?!

DAD kneels to help clean up the mess. LORI and WES nod at each other. WES opens the door and LORI uses her brute strength to push DAD out. WES slams the door and locks it. DAD does not try to get back in but remains outside, hyperventilating, yelling to himself, almost in tears. WES tries to calm LORI but LORI wants none of it as she stands there in shock, sitting on the bed to recompose herself. Eventually, they hear DAD leave, leaving LORI and WES in silence.

WES
Let me look for a container.

LORI cries, but not a lot. She cries only the appropriate amount, enough to get her through what needed to be done. WES finds a Tupperware and holds it up.

WES
Will this work?

LORI
Oh God. Is this what's it's come down to?

WES
That or this trash can.

There's a knock on the door.

LORI
Get out!

NANCY (V.O.)
It's Nancy.

WES looks to LORI, raising his eyebrow. LORI nods. WES opens the door and NANCY and MARGOT walk in. NANCY's jaw drops and she immediately kneels to help WES clean up.

NANCY
Jojo!
(she grabs a
folder to help
sweep)
What happened?

MARGOT folds her arms.

MARGOT
(to LORI)
He said you did this.

LORI shakes her head.

LORI
Just get out.

MARGOT
What did you say to me, you
ungrateful little bitch?

NANCY
Ladies, please, no time for
fighting. Jojo is fighting for her
life here! Wes, do you have a....

WES
(holds up
Tupperware)
All we have is this.

NANCY
Then today must be a playful one
for God. Get sweeping, ladies!

WES and NANCY work together to help clean up MOM's ashes and glass. MARGOT just stares at LORI, whose head is down. However, LORI feels MARGOT staring and looks up.

LORI
What's your fucking problem? *I*
didn't do this.

LORI points at the door.

LORI
He did.
(points at MARGOT)
And you used me.

LORI looks for help from NANCY and WES, who deliberately avoid eye contact.

LORI
Aunt Nancy.

NANCY stops sweeping, still looking down.

LORI
What did Mom really want?

NANCY sighs heavily.

NANCY
We were kids when she told us
about the cremation. Did she still
want that now? I don't know. Was
it a big deal to her? I don't
(MORE)

NANCY (cont'd)
know. Did your reckless aunt tell
you that to provoke you into
action?

(shrug)
Hell, it worked!

LORI
Why me?

NANCY
We didn't plan any of this. But it
is kind of beautiful that one
thing Marg said brought about all
of this. Isn't that right?

LORI shakes her head.

LORI
I wouldn't call this beautiful.

WES
Mom's all over this floor, 4
adults sweeping her into a
Tupperware... it couldn't get more
beautiful.

MARGOT takes a step towards LORI, trying to tower over her.
LORI waves the air.

LORI
You smell like dollar store vodka.

MARGOT
Why didn't you stop to think,
Lori? Then we wouldn't be in this
situation! You're so fucking
reckless!

LORI stands.

LORI
You were just going to watch Mom
go into the ground.

MARGOT
(exasperated)
Oh my God, Lori! I didn't take it
seriously! Jojo was a child.

LORI
You're a goddamn coward.

NANCY
LADIES!

Immediate silence.

NANCY
Focus. Jojo might have something
to say about this.
(gestures to the
floor)
Let's first get her into this
Tupperware.

After a beat, MARGOT unfolds her arms, kneels, and helps NANCY to sweep. LORI just watches. She can't get herself to do anything.

WES
Lor.
(he waves LORI
over to his side)
It was my fault, okay? Not yours.
Now come help me. Mom needs a
little pick me up.

LORI hesitates. She then sees WES's eyes. She nods and goes to help.

MARGOT and NANCY collects the glass to toss out. WES and NANCY gather all the ashes into the Tupperware.

LATER: NANCY surveys the room and nods. It's clean to her standards. WES, who is holding the Tupperware, grasps it tightly. NANCY walks around to WES and holds out her hand. WES hands it over.

NANCY
(to the container)
I'm sorry, Jojo. We couldn't get
all of you. You're gonna be a part
of this house now. You're gonna
have to live under the
floorboards, with the rats. Ha!

MARGOT leans against the wall, crossing her arms. LORI walks to NANCY, staring right at her, and nods. NANCY is reluctant at first but eventually concedes and hands the Tupperware over.

LORI
We gotta go.

MARGOT
You're not going anywhere.

A car horn from outside.

DAD
(muffled)
Margot!

MARGOT
Don't move. Nance, keep them here.

MARGOT steps outside. LORI and WES look at each other and then begin packing their bags. LORI places the Tupperware into her large bag and zips it tight.

LORI
Thought that bitch would never leave.

NANCY
Kids.

LORI and WES look up from packing.

NANCY
I'm sorry. I didn't mean for things to turn out this way.
(a beat)
Jojo might have been 10, but the cremation was something Jojo would not have forgotten. I'm just sorry we didn't tell you sooner. This old foggy brain isn't good anymore.

LORI walks over to NANCY and hugs her.

LORI
It's okay. Thank you.

WES
It's all his fault, anyway. It's easier that way.

NANCY
You're good kids.

WES
So just to be clear... you're letting us go?

NANCY releases LORI and shooes her off.

NANCY
Yes! Go!

LORI and WES finish packing and drop their duffel bags in front of the door. They turn around to see NANCY staring at them.

NANCY
I would like to go with you,
but...
(a beat)
... well, I suppose I have a part
of Jojo right here with me.
(she pats her
heart)
And under the floorboards.

WES hugs NANCY, who also pulls LORI in.

NANCY
Jojo would be so proud of you two.

They break the hug and WES and LORI grab their bags, heading out the door. NANCY watches and waves.

NANCY
Don't forget to take pictures!

EXT. NANCY'S HOME - PORCH - MORNING

WES and LORI exit the house, bags slung on their arms. They make their way to the truck. DAD and MARGOT, near their rental vehicle, glare at them. MARGOT runs over and intercepts them.

MARGOT
(calling out to
the house)
Nance, you're weak!
(to LORI and WES)
Where do you think you're going?

LORI
(points at DAD)
You did this.

DAD
I see we're getting nowhere.

LORI
What are you going to do, stop me
from leaving? Come on, Wes.

LORI steps by MARGOT and WES follows. MARGOT lets them go, fuming. LORI and WES drop their bags in the back. LORI gets in while WES double checks the casket. He ties it down and then gets into the truck.

WES starts the engine. Through the windshield, WES and DAD lock eyes.

DAD

I know where you're going. She told me about her "dream", too.

LORI

(sticking her head out the window)

Then you're even more of an asshole for not listening to her.

DAD

Your mother was young, Lor. Full of ideas in her head.

LORI

It doesn't give you the right to take that away from her!

MARGOT

It doesn't give you the right to steal my sister, either!

DAD

(holding out his hand)

Margot, stop.

(to LORI)

The next time we see each other, I won't be so diplomatic.

WES

(salutes DAD)

We look forward to it.

WES honks the horn. DAD and MARGOT step out of the way. The truck drives softly through the gravel. WES glares at DAD and MARGOT as he drives by. Not a word is said. LORI keeps her eyes forward. We focus on LORI as there's MUSIC: the snare drum, slow-paced, followed by cymbal crashes. It's very chaotic.

CUT TO:

EXT. INTERSTATE 95 - AFTERNOON

The truck pushes south, hitting traffic.

INT. TRUCK - AFTERNOON

LORI leans against the window, anxiously checking her cell phone. Outside, the traffic is bumper to bumper.

LORI

This won't clear up for another 2 miles.

WES

Relax, sis. We're making good time.

LORI puts her phone down and leans back on the seat. Focus on LORI, thinking.

LORI

Why'd he let us go?

WES (V.O.)

Who cares?

Zoom in on LORI. She eyes WES's cigarettes and sighs. MUSIC: the snare drum intensifies. CUT TO:

INT. NURSING HOME - RECEPTION - AFTERNOON

We're facing a nurse at a front desk. She looks through some records on a computer.

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NURSE

You said you're family, right?

LORI (V.O.)

Yes.

NURSE looks to the right.

NURSE

Are you Jocelyn?

(she glances back
at the computer)

Or Margot? Nancy?

LORI (V.O.)

(a chuckle)

Uh, no, we're her grandchildren.
We're Jojo... Jocelyn's kids.

NURSE

Ah. Well, Mrs. Jones doesn't get visitors, usually, so this will be a nice surprise. Right this way, please.

INT. NURSING HOME - CORRIDOR - AFTERNOON

The NURSE takes WES and LORI down a sterile looking corridor. They reach a door and walk in.

INT. NURSING HOME - GRANDMA'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

The NURSE appears first and knocks on the wall.

NURSE

Mrs. Jones, we have visitors for you.

LORI and WES appear from behind her. GRANDMA lies in the middle of the room on a large bed.

GRANDMA

Jojo? Come to visit me? How unlike you.

NURSE

No, Mrs. Jones. These are your grandkids.

WES

Grandma, it's Wes and Lori.

GRANDMA sits up and leans forward, examining LORI and WES.

GRANDMA

No. No fooling me. Wes and Lori, they're just little pumpkins.

WES

We grew out of our pumpkins,
Grandma.

NURSE

I'll be right outside.

The NURSE smiles and steps out. LORI and WES approach the bed. GRANDMA looks confused.

GRANDMA

You're not fooling me, Jojo. I
know that's you.

LORI

No, Grandma, it's me, Lori.

GRANDMA eyes the two of them, suspicious.

GRANDMA

What are you doing here?

LORI sits on the bed.

LORI

Grandma, Mom is dead. Your Jojo...
she's dead.

A beat. GRANDMA doesn't seem to process this.

GRANDMA

Don't kid with me, Jojo.

WES steps forward, at the foot of the bed.

WES

Grandma, we just wanted you to
know. We don't know if anyone else
told you.

GRANDMA

Told me what?

LORI smiles sadly and holds GRANDMA's hand.

LORI

We miss her every day.

WES

Every second.

LORI

No one told you?

GRANDMA

Told me what?

(a beat)

How are the kids, Jojo?

LORI looks down, shaking her head. She kisses GRANDMA on the cheek and straightens her pillows.

LORI
Let's go, Wes.

WES
Wait.

WES fumbles in his bag and pulls out the Tupperware. He walks over to GRANDMA and places it in GRANDMA's hands.

WES
Here's Jojo.

GRANDMA feels the Tupperware. A faint look of recognition.

WES
We're here, Grandma.

GRANDMA cries. WES and LORI remain by her side. FADE OUT:

INT. TRUCK - AFTERNOON

FADE IN: WES and LORI, looking bored, driving on the highway. They hit a pothole. The casket jostles. LORI checks.

LORI
I can't believe we still have
that.

WES
It's not ours, Lor.

LORI
I know. It's just... ridiculous.

WES
This whole thing is ridiculous.

LORI checks her phone's GPS. Not much left to go. WES glances over.

WES
It'll be over soon. Thank God.

LORI
I don't know what I'd do without
you.

WES grins. He pats LORI on the shoulder.

WES
I didn't have much of a choice.

LORI

It doesn't matter. You were there for me when I made stupid decisions. And you never doubted me.

WES

Well, I wouldn't say never, but...

LORI

And you never doubted me.

WES nods.

WES

And I never doubted you.

LORI

We got it done.

WES knocks on the dashboard.

WES

Don't jinx it. Liam Neeson's on our tail.

WES's grin fades into something more serious.

WES

You know, back there... when I spoke back to Dad, I was shitting my pants.

LORI

I know.

WES laughs.

WES

Was it that obvious?

LORI nods.

WES

I don't know why I ever felt guilty for going to New York. They don't like me. I don't like them. So fuck 'em.

LORI

It's what I've been trying to tell you. You were the sensible one.

WES
You were the stupid one.
(a beat)
I'm proud of you. And she'd be
proud of you, too.

LORI
Thanks.

They both stare forward, still not quite acknowledging their feelings, but grateful anyway.

WES
Nancy was cool, though.

LORI
She's a good kind of crazy aunt.

WES
Do you think Mom really wanted
this?

Focus on LORI. MUSIC: the snare starts at a rolling pace, intensifying until:

EXT. A BEACH - NIGHT

A sign. "ANNE'S BEACH PARK." The truck pulls up to a parking area. WES and LORI get out of the truck. There are some other beachgoers in the distance. WES grabs his bag, leaving his cigarettes behind, and they trot out onto the sand.

LORI
Why would Dad want to leave...
this?

WES
He wanted to leave Miami. I
understand why you'd want to leave
Miami.

LORI takes off her shoes and buries her toes in the sand.
She smiles.

LORI
Do you remember coming here?

WES
I'm younger than you, sis.

LORI
(remembering)
Oh, right.

FLASHBACK: the family walks on the beach on a sunny day. It's a younger DAD and younger MOM, who is holding LORI's hand, who is holding WES' hand. DAD takes LORI and WES further while MOM stays behind. WES cries but MOM reassures him while LORI comforts him.

MOM

You two go ahead. Daddy wants
Mommy to stay behind and watch the
towels. Now you don't want anyone
eating the chips, now do you?

WES shakes his head. LORI takes his hand and walks with DAD. Focus on MOM.

PRESENT: LORI is smiling, a bit sad now.

LORI

It was never about her. It was
always about us.

WES fumbles in his bag and procures the Tupperware.

WES

So we just do this ... anywhere?

LORI walks over to WES and takes the Tupperware. She half opens the lid. A beat, as though she's smelling it. Then she closes the lid. She points to a tree.

LORI

Let's go there.

LORI and WES take a walk on the sand. Waves crash, kids run by, yet they remain silent. It's a funeral procession.

MUSIC: a slow snare and cymbals, very melancholic.

We focus on LORI. FLASHBACK, no audio: LORI is at home when DAD walks in, a ghostly expression on her face. DAD says something and walks upstairs. LORI is shaken. A long shot of her experiencing every emotion. But no tears. Yet.

We focus on WES. FLASHBACK, no audio. WES receives a phone call. it's from LORI. We focus on his face as it gradually breaks down into complete horror and then uncontrollable tears. He turns away from us, like he's ashamed to face the audience.

PRESENT: LORI and WES walk together and approach the tree.

EXT. A BEACH - TREE - NIGHT

The two of them reach the tree. WES takes out his phone to light the area. They look around. The beach is empty. Some fires glow in the distance.

WES

Come on. Don't want the beach police to arrest us.

LORI opens the Tupperware.

LORI

Mom hated people talking about her.

WES just shrugs, crossing his hands in front of him, looking down.

LORI

Right.

(a beat)

Mom, you were the most selfless person I've ever known. If you saw what happened, you'd probably be apologizing to the driver for your clumsiness.

(WES chuckles)

We spent so much time being loved by you, we didn't let you love yourself.

LORI takes a deep breath.

LORI

So now, we're living for you, Mom. You were selfless to us, to Dad, to Aunt Nancy and Margot, and now, we're listening and we'll be selfless to you.

WES

And we really hope you wanted this, because otherwise we drove all the way down here for nothing.

LORI nods.

LORI

You want to do the honors?

WES is distracted.

LORI
What? What is it?

WES points to his left.

WES
Dad's over there.

LORI looks in that direction. A car's headlights are beaming and someone is standing next to the car.

WES
He's watching.

LORI
How do you know?

WES
I know.

LORI
Then let's get the hell out of here.

WES peers more closely.

WES
No, wait...
(a pause)
... he's literally just watching.

LORI shakes her head, frustrated.

LORI
What the hell is he doing?

WES
Being "undiplomatic." That seems pretty diplomatic to me though.
(he shrugs)

LORI
He knows we're doing the right thing.

WES
I don't think he knows what the right thing is. Just ignore him.

LORI offers the ashes to WES. He immediately pushes her away.

WES

This was all your idea. And I
don't mean that sarcastically
anymore.

LORI

You did before?

WES

Well...

LORI rolls her eyes. She then looks down at the ashes.

LORI

Here goes nothing.

LORI disperses the ashes. The particles fly in all directions. LORI shakes the Tupperware and then closes the lid. Just for a second, they remain still.

WES

Reaaaalllly wish the wind was
blowing the other way.

LORI chuckles, and then cries, just full on sobbing. WES brings her in for a hug. They hold there for a long time.

LORI

Just like Aunt Nancy. We got a
little bit of Mom living with us.

WES

And on our clothes.

(WES peers into
the distance)

He's leaving.

LORI

Good.

NANCY (V.O.)

Kids!

LORI and WES turn around and see two shaded figures trudging through the sand. It's NANCY and MARGOT.

LORI

What are you guys doing here?

NANCY and MARGOT, out of breath, reach LORI and WES and drop on the sand to rest.

NANCY

I helped Marge come to her senses
a little, but it looks like we
were too late.

MARGOT

I'm still angry at you two but...
(a breath)
... it's Jojo. I think she would
have liked this. But damn it. Of
course we missed it. I told you,
Nance, you should've floored it!

NANCY

You started all this! I should be
mad at you!

LORI clears her throat. NANCY and MARGOT turn to her
attention. LORI stares right at MARGOT.

LORI

You gonna call the cops on us?

MARGOT shrugs.

MARGOT

It's not up to me. If it were, I
would arrest you two shits myself.

NANCY

Marge! Enough with the foul
language. Jojo would hate this
bickering.

MARGOT

Oh, forget it. Jojo's gone.
Disappeared in the wind.

LORI steps up to MARGOT, who's lying in the sand. LORI looms
over MARGOT.

LORI

Just arrest us. I don't regret
what we did.

WES walks to LORI, patting her on the shoulder.

WES

(chuckle)

Hold on there, sis.

MARGOT
It's not up to me. It's up to
Mitch.

WES
Really?

MARGOT
Oh, how should I know? I'm not a
fucking lawyer!

NANCY hits MARGOT, who winces in pain. She then grabs LORI and WES and huddles everyone together, bringing in MARGOT last.

NANCY
I feel Jojo with us.
(she looks around;
everyone nods)
She would love this. All of the
Jones... here together.

MARGOT
(grumble)
She would.

WES
What about Grandma?

MARGOT
(shrug)
Eh.

NANCY
We don't talk about Mom. She's ...
forgetful.

LORI and WES trade looks. LORI begins to talk but WES shakes his head. LORI keeps quiet.

NANCY
Anyway, Lori, you never even told
me how you stole Jojo? We were so
rudely interrupted by this one.

MARGOT
Eh. They're still criminals.

NANCY
Oh, stop it, Marge.
(to LORI and WES)
So, how'd you do it?

WES raises his eyebrows at LORI.

WES
Sis?

Focus on LORI as MUSIC: the snare drum and cymbal beats grow faster. We zoom in on her eyes and then CUT TO:

EXT. A FLYOVER OF MAINE - LATER

The treetops of MAINE are in full autumn swing.

EXT. BENZ HOME - NIGHT

DAD sits in his car, pondering. He then suddenly yells, muffled.

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EXT. A ROADWAY - NIGHT

FLASHBACK, no audio: Police surround a car accident. DAD is running over, pushing past police. He fights every last officer, explaining he's the husband. He finally gets to the front and sees a broken rail, an ambulance, and a long cliff drop down. He's holding back his emotions.

He slowly creeps up to peer over the edge while police hold him back. Smoke emanates from the wreck. He drops to his knees. Finally, he lets the tears flow. The police officer finds a blanket to cover DAD. CUT TO:

DAD walks home, stoic. We've seen this before. He breaks the news. LORI goes through the stages of grief. Now, we see DAD walks upstairs and closes the door. He sits on the bed and cries into his pillow. We hold here as he processes his emotions. He hears LORI coming upstairs and then wipes his tears.

EXT. BENZ HOME - NIGHT

PRESENT: DAD stops yelling. He just sits there. Audio fades in:

EXT. SUBURBAN MAINE - MORNING

Audio of a news broadcast. Footage shows a slow pan through a suburban neighborhood in MAINE. We see various cars drive by, parents walking their kids, and other things going on.

NEWS ANCHOR #1
... opens tomorrow. And in local news, a truly bizarre story from just outside Portland. A local woman, 32 year old Lori Benz, will not face any jail time after her father declined to press charges. Benz allegedly stole her mother's body and drove away in a Hearse.

(mild laughter BTS)

Security footage shows Benz making the getaway, leaving the funeral goers very confused. Last week, Benz and her brother returned to Maine, but with no body. According to CNN, Benz and her brother cremated the body and spread her ashes in Florida.

NEWS ANCHOR #2
Sounds like they were working out some family issues.

NEWS ANCHOR #1
The Hearse was recovered in New Jersey and the coffin was returned safely to the morgue.

NEWS ANCHOR #2
Talk about crashing a funeral.

NEWS ANCHOR #1
And in some lighter local news...

The pan ends at a funeral, where a procession is going on.
FADE OUT:

INT. AN APARTMENT - NIGHT

An empty apartment full of boxes. A doorbell rings. LORI runs to the door and opens it. It's WES. His beard has grown out.

LORI
Who is this man I see before me?
Is he hidden underneath there?

LORI pokes at his beard. WES rolls his eyes and swats her hand away.

WES
Hello, miss. Have you seen my sister around? She's yay high, not good with people, never leaves
(MORE)

WES (cont'd)
Maine, I think one time she stole
her Mom's body? That doesn't sound
real, right?

LORI taps her wrist.

LORI
You're late.

WES
Cape Cod weekend traffic.
(looks at the
boxes and
whistles)
Need help unpacking?

LORI
Nah.
(a beat)
About Cape Cod ... you wanna go
out there tomorrow?

WES chuckles.

WES
I'm not falling for that again. No
more road trips. Coming up to
Boston is enough.

A beat. The wind howls.

LORI
Are you just gonna stand there?

WES
You tell me. How does "frostbite"
look on me?

LORI
Oh, stop. Come on in.

WES steps inside and LORI closes the door. She takes his
coat and drops it on a box. WES steps around, examining the
house.

WES
Nice digs.

LORI
Wes.

WES

Hmm?

LORI sighs.

LORI

I just wanted to say... thank you.

WES

(suspicious)

You all right, sis? It's been
months since Florida.

LORI

I couldn't have done it without
you. So thanks.

LORI hugs WES. WES looks a bit confused as he breaks the
hug.

WES

This is a trap. I know it.

DAD

Wesley.

DAD appears from the dining room.

WES

Ah, shit.

LORI

We're all we have left in this
family. We have to talk.

DAD

Just talk. I promise.

WES sighs.

WES

Am I supposed to be grateful you
didn't sue us or something?

DAD steps towards WES, who instinctively takes a step back.

DAD

Wes, and Lori...

(he nods to LORI)

I'm here to talk as your father.
Not as your enemy. Whatever
happened, that's in the past.
We're a family. We're not perfect.

LORI
No, you definitely aren't.

DAD pulls up a chair and sits down.

WES
This doesn't change anything.

DAD
I'm not saying it should. But I
want to start somewhere. Right,
Lor?

(he glances at
LORI, who nods)
Please.

A beat. WES shakes his head but LORI walks over and hugs him again.

FLASHBACK, NO AUDIO: WES cries on the phone after hearing the news of MOM's death.

LORI lets go of the hug. WES finally nods.

LORI
Okay.

LORI smiles.

CUT TO: END CREDITS.

FADE OUT.