

Dawn and Bryce

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Ambient noise.

INT. THE CHAPEL - IGNATIUS HOUSE - MORNING

We pan around a circle of meditating women.

TITLE: "DAWN AND BRYCE"

"MARCH 2024"

We linger on a woman. Asian, short black hair, wearing a red sweatshirt, medium build. DAWN LEE. She is fully in the zone, eyes shut.

We then focus on another woman. White, curly blonde hair, black yoga suit, thin-ish. This is BRYCE LELAND. She is fidgety and has trouble keeping her eyes closed.

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

DAWN washes her hands. She moves to the dryer. The loud roar of the dryer covers up a quiet conversation in the back.

DAWN sees BRYCE speaking to someone on the phone in hushed tones. She shakes her head slightly. BRYCE notices DAWN watching and whispers something to the person on the call and hangs up. DAWN leaves.

Focus on BRYCE. She seems anxious.

INT. THE CHAPEL - IGNATIUS HOUSE - MORNING

Another pan around the meditation circle. This time, BRYCE has parked herself right besides DAWN. Once again, DAWN is hyped focused, while BRYCE is uneasy. She keeps eyeing DAWN, who barely notices.

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

BRYCE is sitting on the toilet. She flushes. She steps out and washes her hands. She purposefully takes her time, subtly eyeing who comes and goes.

Finally, she sees DAWN walk in. When DAWN is at the sink, BRYCE turns to DAWN. BRYCE taps her nametag.

"BRYCE LELAND, DENVER." DAWN smiles, taps her nametag. "DAWN LEE, NEW YORK." DAWN is about to leave when BRYCE holds her by the shoulder. She mouths "wait." DAWN is a bit taken back.

Once other people leave, and they wait for another minute, BRYCE whispers.

BRYCE
That was...

DAWN puts her finger to her lips.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
(Hushed)
That was my sister. The call was
important. I had to take it.

DAWN shrugs and tries to go, but BRYCE stops her.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Please don't tell.

DAWN breaks free of BRYCE'S grasp and leaves.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
(Soft yelling)
You don't get an award for tattling
on speakers.

DAWN is already gone.

FADE TO:

EXT. CHAPEL - IGNATIUS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

DAWN and other women gather around their group leader, exchanging polite nods of appreciation. BRYCE stands on the outside, watching. When DAWN is finished, she leaves - BRYCE follows.

EXT. IGNATIUS HOUSE RETREAT GROUNDS - AFTERNOON

DAWN walks on the grounds, enjoying her time. She suddenly spots BRYCE near her. BRYCE waves hello - DAWN awkwardly waves back.

DAWN walks to a bench and sits, facing the wilderness. BRYCE circles before clearing her throat. Before DAWN can respond, she takes a seat.

They sit in silence. BRYCE taps on her thighs, bored. She's about to say something when DAWN, immediately sensing this, shushes her. DAWN takes out a notepad from her bag. She grabs a pencil. She writes:

"I don't care."

DAWN shows BRYCE. BRYCE nods, looking relieved.

They sit in silence once again.

FADE TO:

INT. THE CHAPEL - IGNATIUS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

The chapel is now full of chatter now - the retreat has ended. We pan to DAWN, who's leaving with her luggage when...

She's suddenly accosted by BRYCE. BRYCE beams. DAWN smiles flatly.

BRYCE

Hi.

DAWN

Hi.

BRYCE

Sorry about all that last week.

DAWN

It's okay. At least you didn't talk the rest of...

BRYCE

I want to make it up to you.

DAWN raises her eyebrow.

EXT. IGNATIUS HOUSE RETREAT GROUNDS - AFTERNOON

We follow the two women as they walk around the grounds, sun setting, the air filled with the buzz of conversation.

BRYCE

My friend told me about this place.
Said I needed to clear my mind. I agree, by the way.

DAWN nods.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

But my sister was the one that called me. I told her no, it's a silent retreat.

BRYCE makes a stern face and wags her finger.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

No talking.

(She chuckles)

Allie sometimes doesn't understand.

DAWN nods again, just listening.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

I'm a people pleaser. I didn't want you to tell on me or be mad at that one annoying girl who doesn't know how to be silent at a...

DAWN stops walking. She turns to BRYCE.

DAWN

It's fine. We're all adults here.

BRYCE nods seriously.

BRYCE

Right, I know. That's why I had to clear the air with you.

DAWN

Consider the air... Cleared.

BRYCE

Did you find it hard to stay silent for so long? I mean after a day...

DAWN keeps walking. BRYCE follows.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

... I feel like I'm going insane. I need to talk to someone and ...

DAWN

Listen. I have to get my things and catch a train in Atlanta.

BRYCE

Perfect! I'm taking the shuttle to Atlanta and catching a flight.

DAWN

Okay, but ...

This time BRYCE stops and locks eyes with DAWN. She grabs her hands and holds firm.

BRYCE

Dawn. Please let me buy you dinner. I owe you.

DAWN

Thank you, but my train is soon,
and I don't wanna...

BRYCE

What time?

DAWN

At 7.

BRYCE checks her phone.

BRYCE

It's 1. The shuttle is only 30
minutes to downtown. Let me treat
you.

DAWN

I...

DAWN sees BRYCE's bright smile.

DAWN (CONT'D)

(Stuttering)

Okay.

EXT. GATES - AFTERNOON

A line of people for the shuttle. DAWN loads her luggage, but
struggles. BRYCE helps her.

INT. SHUTTLE BUS - AFTERNOON

DAWN sleeps. BRYCE, sitting a few rows back, is talking
quietly with someone. LATER, DAWN is awake, listening to
music on her phone. DAWN sees BRYCE still talking to the same
person. They're laughing. She goes back to her phone.

EXT. ATLANTA BUS STATION - AFTERNOON

DAWN steps off the bus. She grabs her luggage and looks for
BRYCE, who's saying goodbye to her friend. BRYCE waves her
over.

BRYCE

I found this Italian restaurant
near the Amtrak station.

BRYCE looks after her friend.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

By the way, did you meet Jen? I talked to her on the way here. She's from Salt Lake City. A park ranger.

(She nods, impressed)
Very cool.

A beat.

DAWN

Where's the restaurant?

BRYCE grins.

BRYCE

We're gonna be friends, I just know it. This way.

EXT. AN ITALIAN RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

The two women sit outside. Their plates are half eaten. BRYCE is nursing a red wine. DAWN is drinking a Coke.

BRYCE

... And then she said, that's not a healthy way to think about it. Everyone deserves a second chance. No exceptions.

DAWN

Depends on what they did.

BRYCE

No, no.

BRYCE holds up her glass, eyeing it through the sunlight.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

That's the beauty of forgiveness. It's unconditional.

DAWN

I don't agree.

BRYCE takes a sip of her wine.

BRYCE

Explain.

DAWN

Would you forgive someone if they beat you?

BRYCE
Was it an accident?

DAWN gives a look.

DAWN
No.

BRYCE
Was it the first time?

DAWN narrows her eyes.

DAWN
No.

BRYCE
It really depends how long the
relationship is, the context, how
sorry he is...

A buzz on her phone. She checks.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
... Oh, it's Boy Bryce. He'll be
here soon.

DAWN
Who?

BRYCE facepalms.

BRYCE
I'm the worst. Sorry. My friend
that told me about the retreat. He
lives in Atlanta.

DAWN
So he's gonna join us?

BRYCE
Yeah. We're wrapping up, right?

DAWN stares at her food and shrugs.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Unless you're not done? I don't
want you to rush. I can tell him
to...

DAWN holds up a hand.

DAWN
It's okay.

BRYCE

Okay. Just... tell me if it's not
okay.

DAWN smiles.

DAWN

It's okay.

BRYCE

Whew.

An exaggerated whistle.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

We just met and I feel like I
messed up already.

BRYCE points at DAWN.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Tell me about you. I feel like it's
been all about me.

DAWN

Well...

(A beat)

I'm from Queens.

BRYCE

I love the Mets! I love Flushing!

BRYCE finds it hard to contain her excitement.

DAWN

Yeah. Anyway, I grew up in Rego
Park.

(DAWN sighs)

Recently, the only thing in my life
is taking care of my mom.

BRYCE

How do you mean?

DAWN

She's at East Orange Psychiatric.
It's in Orange County, upstate.

BRYCE nods, sipping her wine.

BRYCE

Wow.

DAWN

She's been there for about 5 years now. My aunt and I take care of her.

BRYCE

And Dad?

DAWN rolls her eyes.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

All right then. Explain.

DAWN

He's got houses in Jersey and Miami. When Mom checked in, Dad checked out.

BRYCE

Nice.

She widens her eyes, apologetic.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

The phrasing of that sentence, that is, not the situation.

DAWN grins.

DAWN

I know.

(A beat)

Dad's MIA.

BRYCE

You might have some half siblings running around Florida.

BRYCE looks over DAWN's shoulder.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Hey, you.

DAWN doesn't look. Instead she focuses on the food and takes a few more quick bites.

A man, shorter than BRYCE, bulky, serious face, walks around DAWN and hugs BRYCE. It's BOY BRYCE (BB).

BRYCE (CONT'D)

(To BB)

This is Dawn. She's amazing. She listens to me ramble.

BB
I'm impressed.

He extends a hand.

BB (CONT'D)
Bryce. Letner.

BRYCE
(Hand to chest, amused)
Bryce. Leland.

DAWN takes BB's hand and shakes.

DAWN
Dawn Lee. Wow, that must have
confused your friends.

BRYCE
At first, yes. Even funnier, BB
used to date Allie.

BB
Her sister.

BRYCE
Isn't that so funny?

BRYCE hugs BB with love.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
We used to date, too. Things didn't
quite work out. But we're making it
work as friends.

DAWN
I see. And BB, is that an official
name?

BB breaks the hug, subtly pushing BRYCE away.

BB
Only with Leland.

BRYCE
He calls me Leland. Only I call him
BB.

BRYCE giggles.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
"Boy Bryce.*

DAWN offers a seat near her.

DAWN
Join us?

He takes the seat. BRYCE shifts her seat to make room.

BB
I don't want to impose, but I want
to make sure Leland doesn't miss
her flight.

BRYCE
Don't you worry, BB. I never miss
my flights.

BB
I beg to differ. Remember Cabo?

BRYCE doesn't recall. BB shakes his head, amused, making a slight tsk sound.

BB (CONT'D)
The flight back.

BRYCE claps her hands.

BRYCE
Right! We took the next flight,
though, so no harm, no...

BB
Point is...
(To DAWN)
She needs a little reminder
sometimes.

BRYCE smiles. DAWN nods.

BB (CONT'D)
How about you, Dawn? Are you good
with time?

DAWN, perplexed, looks at BRYCE, who's smiling as though encouraging her to answer.

DAWN
Pretty good with time, sure.

BRYCE
She has to take care of her mom, so
her time management...

BB
I didn't ask you, Leland. I asked
Dawn.

A silence. BRYCE maintains her smile.

DAWN

Bryce is right. I have to take care of my mom, so it is a lot of time management.

BB

Then Leland could probably use some pointers from you.

He chuckles. BRYCE laughs weakly.

BB (CONT'D)

Actually...

(He checks his watch)

Leland, you really should be going.

BRYCE

I think we have...

BB

(Waving to a waiter)

The check, please.

The waiter nods and retreats.

DAWN

I think you guys have some time.

BRYCE

Maybe we should get going. BB is right.

DAWN

(A shrug)

Whatever you want.

BB stands.

BB

Bathroom. Be right back.

He leaves. The waitress brings the check and BRYCE immediately places her card down. The waitress leaves.

DAWN watches BRYCE eat her food, voracious.

DAWN

Didn't know you were so hungry.

BRYCE

I'm not, really. I just don't want to take the leftovers.

DAWN

Why not?

BRYCE

BB doesn't like it because it's a
hassle to deal with airport
security. Right?

DAWN

You can just eat it before you go
through TSA.

BRYCE

Yeah, but then I'll be forced to
eat faster than now.

DAWN shrugs.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

I didn't mean to rush us. I'll make
it up to you.

BRYCE's face is full like a chipmunk. The waitress returns
with the receipt and card, which DAWN signs and pockets.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Glad you got to meet Letner,
though.

DAWN

Yeah, he's definitely a...

BRYCE holds up a finger. A swallow. BRYCE clears her throat.

BRYCE

Great guy! I know! He's so assured,
so smart and handsome. Allie says I
made a mistake breaking up with
him.

A beat. DAWN blinks once, twice.

DAWN

Are we talking about the same
person?

BRYCE laughs.

BRYCE

You're funny.

DAWN points to the bathroom.

DAWN
That guy? He seems like...

Just then BB emerges and DAWN stops talking.

BB
We ready?

He notices the empty plate in front of BRYCE.

BB (CONT'D)
My girl!

BRYCE
I was hungry.

BRYCE stands.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Let me say bye to my new friend
Dawn.

BB
I'll be outside.

He nods to DAWN.

BB (CONT'D)
Nice to meet you.

DAWN smiles, saying nothing. When he's gone, they hug.

BRYCE
It was so nice to meet you! We
should hang out again sometime.

DAWN
You tell me when...

BRYCE
I'll be in New York at the end of
the year. Is that okay?

DAWN
I...

A beat. It's all happening so fast.

DAWN (CONT'D)
Yeah, sure. That sounds great.

BRYCE leaves. FOCUS on DAWN as we hear BRYCE and BB talking outside. It's quiet...

BRYCE (V.O.)
Isn't she amazing? I love her.

BB (V.O.)
You love everyone...

DAWN eats the rest of her food. She smiles. Just a little bit.

CUT TO:

INT. DAWN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

DAWN is folding her clothes. A buzz from her phone. It's from BRYCE.

"DECEMBER 2024"

DAWN puts her laundry down and picks up her phone. Based on their previous messages, they've barely talked. Just a few messages about some silent retreats in the future.

The new message reads: "I'm in town! And have some big news :)"

DAWN texts back: "Welcome to NY! Where are you?"

BRYCE: "Landed at JFK. I was gonna surprise you but actually my person cancelled. I need a place to stay, can I crash with you?"

DAWN sighs. Hands on hip. She looks around her apartment. It's quite small but the living room is spacious.

DAWN texts: "Sure, come by. Let's talk details later." DAWN texts her a pin. She then begins to clean up the apartment.

BRYCE: "You are an angel 😊. Talk later!"

MONTAGE

DAWN cleans the apartment, vacuums, moves boxes, and lays out some blankets. When she is finished, she sits on her sofa. She closes her eyes. It's like the silent retreat.

A buzz from her phone. "Lynn." Then "Mom."

DAWN doesn't look. She's fully immersed when...

Her phone rings. It's BRYCE.

DAWN
Hey.

BRYCE (V.O.)
What's the apartment number?

CUT TO:

The door opens.

BRYCE
Hey!

BRYCE walks in and hugs DAWN.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
You're the best.

DAWN
It's nothing.

BRYCE
Sorry for the short notice.
(A beat)
I'm so excited to see you. I have
so much to tell you.

DAWN notices BRYCE's stomach. BRYCE notices DAWN watching her. She smiles.

INT. DAWN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

BRYCE walks in, followed by DAWN with her luggage.

BRYCE
Nice place.

DAWN
It's small.

BRYCE
Cozy.

DAWN laughs.

DAWN
That means small.

DAWN takes BRYCE's luggage and brings it closer to her bed.

DAWN (CONT'D)
You stay here. I'll stay in the
living room.

BRYCE
Stop it. This is your place.

DAWN pats the bed.

DAWN
I insist.

INT. DAWN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

DAWN and BRYCE walk out.

BRYCE
You got great light!

She runs her hands along the plants.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Must be nice having your own place.

A long pause between them. DAWN claps her hands.

DAWN
So...

BRYCE smiles, raising her eyebrows.

BRYCE
So...

DAWN
How are you? We've barely spoken
this year and now here you are
at...

BRYCE
I'm pregnant.

BRYCE lets out a sharp gasp.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
It's a boy.

She opens her arms.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
I was gonna tell you as a surprise
but...

DAWN goes to hug her. They both squeal in delight. When DAWN lets go, she feels not envious or jealous, but instead complete joy.

DAWN
I'm so excited!

BRYCE sobers up.

BRYCE

Bryce, I messed up. I mixed up timing with Shane, you haven't met him, but his kid is sick now and I was supposed to come last weekend and that would've worked then but not now... so I had to find someone else last second. Like...

BRYCE makes a face.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

All my fault. I was gonna surprise you and tell you all this but that got ruined.

DAWN

It's okay. You're having a kid!

They both jump up and down.

BRYCE

I know I've been a bad friend this past year...

DAWN

No, I've been a bad friend, too. It's just been really busy and...

BRYCE

That changes this weekend. I know we don't really know each other that well, but let's be real, you're already a better friend to me than all of BB's friends...

BRYCE makes a dismissive gesture.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Let's go out. Have some fun.

DAWN looks at her stomach.

DAWN

But your...

BRYCE shakes her head.

BRYCE

I can have fun without drinking.

DAWN nods.

DAWN
Who's the dad?

BRYCE
BB, obviously.
(She chuckles)
Oh, I didn't tell you we got back together?

DAWN raises her eyebrows. She shakes her head.

DAWN
Really?

BRYCE
Hey, hey, be nice. He's turned over a new leaf.

DAWN shrugs. BRYCE sits on the sofa. DAWN sits next to her. BRYCE holds her belly, staring.

DAWN
You deserve someone that loves you for who you are. That's all. As long as you're sure he's good for you ...

BRYCE lightly nudges DAWN.

BRYCE
Aw. It's sweet that you care. He's a good man. He's made some mistakes, but we're all human.

DAWN nods. She chuckles.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
What?

DAWN
We barely know each other but I do care that you're...

She struggles for the word.

DAWN (CONT'D)
... Happy.

BRYCE beams.

BRYCE
You see? Beneath that cold exterior...

DAWN
(Feigned anger)
Cold?

BRYCE
... Is a hot ass woman.

They both laugh.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
So...
(A beat)
What are you doing this weekend?

DAWN
My friend has a birthday party.

BRYCE
Nice...

DAWN
And then I gotta take the train up
to Orange to see my mom.

BRYCE cracks her knuckles.

BRYCE
All right, busy weekend.

DAWN
You're obviously more than welcome
to come to the bar tonight.

BRYCE
And tomorrow, too. Haven't taken
the train upstate before.

DAWN is surprised to hear this.

DAWN
You don't have to come tomorrow.
Don't you wanna see Shane or
sightsee or...

BRYCE walks to the bedroom, unpacking her stuff mid
conversation. DAWN watches her, confused.

BRYCE (V.O.)
Don't worry about it. I want to go
with you.

BRYCE walks out with two dresses.

BRYCE

Plus, I wanna meet your mom.

She holds up the dresses. DAWN points to the one on the left.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

You see? I knew we were gonna be
friends.

LATER

INT. DAWN'S APARTMENT HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

DAWN and BRYCE, dressed nice, walk to the front door. BRYCE holds up a hand. She inspects DAWN by walking around her in a circle, dusting her clothes, and nodding.

BRYCE point to herself. DAWN nods approvingly. BRYCE flicks her hair.

INT. SUBWAY - EVENING

Focus on DAWN. Turn to see BRYCE chatting with a stranger, another girl. DAWN smiles.

EXT. A STREET - EVENING

DAWN and BRYCE walk through a busy street.

BRYCE

So you seeing anyone?

A beat. BRYCE chuckles.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

I feel like all we talk about is
me.

DAWN

You know about my aunt and my mom.

BRYCE shrugs.

BRYCE

Still. Are you seeing anyone? Are
you married? Tell me, Dawn Lee.

A beat.

DAWN

Single. Haven't dated in years since Mom got sick. It's just... So much. Every weekend, I gotta check in. Don't know when she's gonna freak out. Dad's always on our case about me and Aunt Lynn even though he doesn't do shit.

DAWN takes a breath. She exhales sharply and smiles.

DAWN (CONT'D)

So no luck.

BRYCE

Damn. You need to get drunk. Now.

DAWN

Amanda was 4 years ago. She was my last relationship.

BRYCE stops DAWN. They get real close, head to head. The air goes out and it's just them.

BRYCE

You're a strong, gorgeous woman, and you can land anyone you want.

BRYCE grabs her shoulders.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Let's go.

Focus on DAWN. She smiles. Music begins to get louder.

CUT TO:

INT. A CLUB - EVENING

The camera pans through a busy club. It's full of people.

Focus on BRYCE getting 2 drinks. She's also chatting up the bartender.

We pan to DAWN, talking to a friend. This is JESSIE, small Asian woman, wearing heels and a black dress. She's surrounded by other Asian women. The music is so loud, we don't hear their conversation.

BRYCE appears with 3 drinks, 1 for JESSIE, DAWN, and BRYCE. JESSIE thanks her and they all cheers.

BRYCE
(To JESSIE)
Thanks for letting me me crash your party.

JESSIE
Thanks for coming! How'd you guys meet?

DAWN
We met at a meditation retreat.

JESSIE'S jaw drops.

JESSIE
That is so cool, you guys. That's like such a beautiful story. So wholesome. Aw.

She turns to DAWN, furrowing her brow.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Bitch, you didn't tell me you did a meditation retreat. You know I'm all about that shit.

DAWN
Bitch, you know how hard it is to tell you anything.

JESSIE giggles. She talks on the side to BRYCE.

JESSIE
I'm always busy with the boy. I am *impossible* to get a hold of.

She flings her hair dramatically, giggling.

BRYCE
You should listen to this one.
(She points to DAWN)
She's full of good ideas.

JESSIE
Oh, I know. I'm just the worst.

Two other girls hear this and give an affirmative woot. JESSIE joins them, excusing herself.

BRYCE leans in to talk to DAWN.

DAWN
Sorry, she's a lot. Hasn't changed a bit since college.

BRYCE

That girl loves you, though. I can tell.

DAWN

I think she pities me.

BRYCE shakes her head, puts her drink down, and props her up. JESSIE and her friends are peeking.

BRYCE

Hey, none of that. You are an amazing woman. Stand up straight.

She takes DAWN's drink and sets it aside.

DAWN

Jessie was always partying, she's so cool, and...

BRYCE

She respects that.
(Calls loudly)
Jessie?

JESSIE perks her head up. She comes to BRYCE.

JESSIE

Yes, ma'am?

BRYCE

How long have you and Dawn been friends?

JESSIE blows a raspberry, almost spilling her drink.

JESSIE

First day of college, this girl asked me for a tampon.
(Snaps her fingers)
Just like that.

DAWN

You were my neighbor! I didn't know who else to ask.

JESSIE smiles and leans her head on her shoulder.

JESSIE

You only had to ask me.

BRYCE

That's super adorable.

JESSIE
So 16 years now.

BRYCE
And you love her?

JESSIE
Of course I love her.

DAWN and JESSIE hug. JESSIE points at BRYCE.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
She's mine and you can't have her.

BRYCE
I would never. She's too good for
me. I was gonna be homeless but she
saved me.

JESSIE and DAWN share a look.

JESSIE
Sounds like my Dawn.

JESSIE's gaze lingers on BRYCE. She leans in and examines
BRYCE's face, her features, her hair. She strokes her chin
and looks back and forth between DAWN and BRYCE.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
You bitch! Did you tell Lori?

DAWN laughs awkwardly and pushes BRYCE back to her other
friends.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
You don't see it?!

DAWN shuts her up and steps back to BRYCE. She is intrigued.

BRYCE
Who's Lori?

DAWN
Just a friend.

JESSIE
(Yelling)
Girlfriend!

JESSIE's other friends shut her up and giggle.

BRYCE
I thought you were single.

DAWN
I'm single.

BRYCE
So this was before... Amanda?

DAWN nods.

DAWN
Good memory.

BRYCE
So who the fuck is Lori??

DAWN sighs. She pulls out her phone and shows BRYCE a photo. BRYCE examines it and gasps in delight. She holds the phone next to her face.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Bitch, that's me!

DAWN laughs. BRYCE gasps and turns the photo back around.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
You little kinky woman. I knew you couldn't resist my good looks.

DAWN
It's a coincidence. You found me, remember??

BRYCE
And it was the best day of your life.

DAWN
(Laughing)
Yeah, right.

MONTAGE

Various shots of DAWN, BRYCE, and JESSIE talking, laughing, dancing, over soft music. DAWN looks happy, happier than we've seen her.

A birthday sparkler arrives for JESSIE. When JESSIE blows the candles, DAWN notices BRYCE is standing next to JESSIE and cheering next to her, while DAWN is by herself.

Various snippets of random conversation: BRYCE is saying how beautiful and elegant DAWN is to a random girl. DAWN watches from afar.

FADE TO:

INT. A TAXI - EVENING

BRYCE stares out the window. Pan to the left. DAWN is snoring.

INT. DAWN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - EVENING

The light turns on. BRYCE leads DAWN to her bed and puts a cover on.

DAWN
(Slightly slurred)
No, you take the bed.

But DAWN then passes out. BRYCE smiles. She then gets up and turns off the light.

LATER

An upside down view of DAWN. She's leaning off the bed. She wakes up. The camera turns over - she looks tired. She rubs her head.

INT. DAWN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

DAWN walks into the living room. She begins undressing when she remembers BRYCE is here and stops. BRYCE is lying on the sofa, smirking, watching her.

BRYCE
Please, don't let me stop you.

DAWN, embarrassed, rushes back into the bedroom.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
I like what I see.

DAWN walks out with pajamas.

DAWN
Sorry.

BRYCE
Why should you be sorry?

BRYCE stands up, the blankets drifting onto the floor.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
I saw you had no food in your
fridge, so I think we should get a
bagel and coffee nearby.

DAWN yawns.

DAWN
I have some cereal and fruit.

BRYCE raises her eyebrows.

DAWN (CONT'D)
Okay, fine.

EXT. A BAGEL SHOP - MORNING

Pan down to see DAWN and BRYCE walking with bagel and coffee in hand. BRYCE looks well put together, showered, and beautiful. DAWN looks unkempt, dirty, and unappealing. Her sunglasses hide her misery.

BRYCE
Man, I missed these.

BRYCE takes a bite. She savors it.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Colorado bagels... Let's not talk
about them.

DAWN
(Mumbling)
Can we sit down?

They take a seat. DAWN drops her bagel and coffee on the table loudly. She groans as she leans back, tired.

DAWN (CONT'D)
How are you so bubbly?

BRYCE
I didn't drink.

A beat.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
What's the plan today?

DAWN takes off her sunglasses and stretches.

DAWN
Gotta catch a train at Grand
Central.

BRYCE
Which one?

DAWN narrows her eyes. She shakes her head.

DAWN
You really don't have to come.

BRYCE
But I want to come! I want to meet
your family. Your mom, Aunt, Dad...

DAWN snorts and sips the coffee.

DAWN
Dad's in Jersey. He won't be there.

BRYCE shrugs.

BRYCE
You never know.

Dawn leans forward.

DAWN
(Curtly)
I know.

DAWN leans back. Focus on DAWN. The world grows quieter. She tries to meditate. She closes her eyes but can't concentrate.

BRYCE
You okay?

DAWN
My head hurts. And we got a lot to do.

DAWN opens her eyes and stands, grabbing her bagel and coffee.

DAWN (CONT'D)
You coming?

BRYCE stands.

BRYCE
Yes, ma'am.

CUT TO:

EXT. A METRO NORTH TRAIN - MORNING

A train charges through Westchester.

INT. TRAIN CAR - MORNING

DAWN is on her phone. She looks up to see BRYCE staring at her.

DAWN

What?

BRYCE

So we're not gonna talk about it?

DAWN leans her head on the window.

DAWN

About what?

BRYCE

That your ex looks just like me.

BRYCE giggles and inches a little closer to DAWN.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

You don't have to say any more. I just think it's funny.

DAWN

Okay, okay, laugh all you want. But I'll reiterate: you found me.

BRYCE shrugs and leans on DAWN. A beat.

DAWN (CONT'D)

So, how you been?

BRYCE

Just pregnant as hell.

DAWN extends her hand. It hovers over BRYCE's belly.

DAWN

Is it ok?

BRYCE

Sure. The bump's small.

BRYCE lifts her shirt and DAWN slides her hand under her shirt and onto her belly. DAWN rubs. BRYCE giggles.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Hey.

DAWN stops rubbing but holds her hand there. BRYCE holds DAWN's hand.

TICKETMASTER

Ticket?

DAWN quickly pulls her hand back. DAWN shows the tickets. The Ticketmaster leaves. BRYCE clears her throat.

BRYCE

BB has been helpful.

DAWN nods.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

I want to see the best in people.
You know that.

DAWN shuffles away from BRYCE, blushing.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

What? Do I smell bad?

DAWN

Nothing.

BRYCE shrugs.

BRYCE

I know how you feel about him, but
he's a good guy, I swear. He's
responsible, he's always looking
out for me...

DAWN

He just seemed a little...
Controlling.

BRYCE waves the air.

BRYCE

He just likes things a certain way.
It's nice to have some rigidity in
your life.

A beat.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

You know before we broke up, he was
in a bad place.

(MORE)

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Cheating, drugs, whatever... but
he's really turned over a new leaf.

DAWN
Cheating?

BRYCE
I mean, once. People really get
hung up on unimportant things. It
didn't matter. I mattered. He was
thinking about me.

DAWN raises her eyebrows and looks out the window. Yikes.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
The retreat really helped organize
my thoughts, you know? I realized
that my life just goes smoother
when everyone else is happy.

DAWN
What about your happiness?

BRYCE
Well...
(A beat)
During the retreat, when no one was
talking, I didn't feel happy. And
it was because I didn't feel other
people's happiness. People express
their happiness through their
words. They emanate it. So...
(A beat)
I kept seeking other people's
attention, wanting to see how they
could be happier.

DAWN nods.

DAWN
So your takeaway from the retreat
was... Everyone should be talking
all the time?

BRYCE shrugs, amused.

BRYCE
I guess you're right. There was
some reflection, though.

BRYCE turns to DAWN.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
What about you? How's it been since
the retreat?

DAWN puts on her sunglasses.

DAWN
I don't know.

BRYCE
Do you feel more peaceful or
reflective or...

DAWN
I feel like I've internalized more.

DAWN rubs her forehead.

DAWN (CONT'D)
I thought a lot during the retreat.

BRYCE
About what?

DAWN
My mom, my dad, my aunt, Jessie...
you.

BRYCE
About how pretty I am?

BRYCE giggles and leans on DAWN.

DAWN
About how annoying you were.

BRYCE gasps, hand to heart.

BRYCE
Excuse me! I was so charming.

DAWN ignores her.

DAWN
I was thinking about all this anger
I kept pent up. My frustrations, my
disappointments. And I felt like I
was burdening everyone with it.

BRYCE
It's not a burden to me!

DAWN smiles.

DAWN
You're special.
(A beat)
But for everyone else... it was an
internal reflection. And I just
don't want to be a bother to others
during that.

BRYCE
Dawn, you can talk to me. Okay?

DAWN leans back on her chair and nods. She closes her eyes.

DAWN
I'm tired.

BRYCE leans on DAWN, yawning.

FADE TO:

INT. EAST ORANGE PSYCH - RECEPTION - AFTERNOON

A dank reception. It smells old.

DAWN and BRYCE walk in from the bright outside. BRYCE
immediately greets somebody and walks over.

It's AUNT LYNN. Almost a spitting image of DAWN, she stands
almost a foot taller and dresses more fashionably than the
efficiently dressed DAWN.

BRYCE hangs back while DAWN and LYNN catch up.

DAWN
Hi, Aunt Lynn.

LYNN
You're late.

DAWN
Since when do you care?

LYNN cracks a smile.

LYNN
I don't.

LYNN waves BRYCE over.

LYNN (CONT'D)
I don't bite!

BRYCE walks over. LYNN welcomes her into the conversation.

BRYCE

Hi, I'm Bryce.

LYNN extends her hand.

LYNN

Lynn.

They shake.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Why you coming to this boring
Sunday parent visit? It's only for
the old Asian people.

BRYCE

I wanted to support my friend.

She grabs DAWN by the arm.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Plus, I know what it's like. My dad
was also in care many years before
he died.

DAWN turns to BRYCE.

DAWN

I didn't know that.

BRYCE

Well, I didn't tell you.

(A chuckle)

It's okay. It was a long time ago.

She turns to LYNN.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Dawn is an amazing woman.

LYNN

How did you two meet?

(To DAWN)

Is this your ...

BRYCE laughs. She fans herself.

BRYCE

No, she wishes.

DAWN blushes.

DAWN

We met at that retreat I was
telling you about.

LYNN

In Atlanta.

BRYCE

Yes! And I learned how beautiful
and giving and generous Dawn is. So
I wanted to meet the family.

LYNN takes BRYCE's hand and sighs.

LYNN

Nice to see a white girl.

They both giggle. LYNN lets go and messes with DAWN's hair.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Just kidding.

BRYCE

What about Jessie?

LYNN chuckles.

LYNN

Jessie...

(In Chinese)

Basically a white ghost.

DAWN

Lynn!

LYNN smiles. BRYCE doesn't understand but DAWN waves her off.
LYNN guides them to the front desk.

LYNN

Cherry's getting impatient. Let's
go.

BRYCE

Wait.

DAWN and LYNN both stop.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Should I know anything before going
in?

DAWN shakes her head.

DAWN

Just take everything she says with
a grain of salt.

LYNN

She's kooky. Don't listen to her.

INT. EAST ORANGE PSYCH - CHERRY'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

The nurse knocks. DAWN, BRYCE, and LYNN walk in. The nurse leaves.

CHERRY LEE is on her bed, watching television.

LYNN

Chen-chen.

CHERRY looks up.

CHERRY

Li-Li. Fan shu.

DAWN

(Whispering to BRYCE)
Fan shu is my mom's nickname for
me.

BRYCE

Cute.

LYNN strides over and sits next to CHERRY on the bed.

LYNN

(In Chinese)
What episode are you up to?

CHERRY

(In Chinese)

The one where she fell down the
stairs.

(She eyes BRYCE)
Who's the white girl?

LYNN chuckles.

BRYCE

(To DAWN)
What's so funny?

DAWN

Nothing.

LYNN
(In Chinese)
It's Dawn's friend.

CHERRY grunts. She looks BRYCE up and down. She shrugs.

CHERRY
(In Chinese)
At least not girl friend.

DAWN shakes her head.

DAWN
(In Chinese, to LYNN)
Did she take her meds yet?

LYNN looks at CHERRY's bedside table and sees a pill cup and gives it to CHERRY. CHERRY pushes it away.

CHERRY
Later.

BRYCE steps forward.

BRYCE
My dad hated his meds too. Hi.

She waves.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
I'm Bryce.

CHERRY
Cherry. Like the coca cola.

BRYCE giggles.

BRYCE
Not like the fruit?

CHERRY and LYNN exchange quick words in Chinese.

CHERRY
Like both.

DAWN
Bryce and I met at the retreat.

CHERRY
Okay.

CHERRY turns back to the television. LYNN turns the TV off.

CHERRY (CONT'D)

Hey!

LYNN

We have a visitor.

CHERRY

I don't care about a goddamn visitor. I want to watch some goddamn TV in peace.

BRYCE

I can just go.

DAWN grabs and holds BRYCE's shoulders.

DAWN

Don't go yet.

LYNN

Say something to Bryce. She came all this way for you.

CHERRY

Like a retard.

Everyone gasps.

LYNN

Apologize to her.

CHERRY

What for? She's a retard to come up here for someone she doesn't even know.

BRYCE

I wanted to be a good friend to Dawn. Your daughter's so lovely.

CHERRY

Yeah, yeah. Stop kissing my ass.

DAWN facepalms.

CHERRY (CONT'D)

(In Chinese)

Dumb white ghost.

LYNN

(In Chinese)

Hey! So rude.

DAWN turns to BRYCE.

DAWN

This was a mistake. Let's go.

BRYCE

I'm sure your mom has some reason
for being upset. Why don't we just
ask her?

A beat. CHERRY is frozen. She locks eyes with BRYCE.

The sounds of the television seem to drone louder.

CHERRY

(In Chinese)

This white woman, comes into my
room ...

CHERRY gets to her feet, but is held back by LYNN.

CHERRY (CONT'D)

(In Chinese)

... Tells me I have a problem?!

DAWN steps in front of CHERRY and begs.

DAWN

(In Chinese)

Please, please, can we have one
weekend where you don't fucking
yell about white people or
Taiwanese people?

LYNN

(In Chinese, to DAWN)

Ah, stop it, Dawn. She's psycho.
You can't do anything about it.

(To CHERRY)

You hear that? Psycho. Now go back
to TV.

LYNN looks back to DAWN and BRYCE, chuckling. "Typical Cherry
being crazy." CHERRY, a bit of fire in her eyes, backs down
and stares back at the TV.

BRYCE is still quiet. DAWN gestures to the door.

DAWN

Let's go.

INT. EAST ORANGE PSYCH - RECEPTION - AFTERNOON

DAWN and LYNN are talking with the front desk clerk, laughing. Pan to BRYCE, sitting on a sofa by herself. She seems a bit distressed.

DAWN appears at her side. BRYCE looks up.

DAWN
You all right?

BRYCE nods.

BRYCE
Reminds me of my dad, that's all.

DAWN takes a seat next to her.

DAWN
Your dad's also racist and needs
restraints?

BRYCE laughs.

BRYCE
No, he was the sweetest, kindest
man.

She pauses.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
It's just the anger? Sadness? It
was the same, him and your mom.

DAWN
Sorry you had to see that.

BRYCE
(Shrugs)
I asked for it.

She holds DAWN's hand.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
You come here every weekend?

DAWN nods.

DAWN
Mostly.

BRYCE
I knew you were special. You're a
good daughter.

She winks. DAWN chuckles, weakly.

DAWN
It doesn't feel like it sometimes.

BRYCE
Are you guys hungry?

DAWN
I'm starving.

LYNN walks over, as if on cue.

LYNN
Let's eat!

INT. A RESTAURANT - EVENING

DAWN, BRYCE, and LYNN finish a meal. The plates are all empty.

LYNN
And then I told her, you check
yourself in! But she made me drive
her all the way from Queens to
Orange County! I mean, that's so
far!

LYNN shakes her head. She looks at DAWN, who is staring at her empty plate. She's reliving it in her mind.

LYNN (CONT'D)
She was acting crazy! But she made
me drive her all the way, checked
her into facility, paid big money
because Ryan won't pay shit, and
that was that. She's not even
dying!

DAWN shoots LYNN a dirty look.

DAWN
Hey! She recognized she had issues
and she addressed them.

BRYCE
Better than most people.

LYNN rolls her eyes.

LYNN

But still... So much driving. Back and forth, Queens, Orange, Queens, Orange...

DAWN holds up a hand.

DAWN

All right, all right.

LYNN

Ryan visited once. Then he moved to his other house in Jersey and we never saw him again.

LYNN tsks.

BRYCE

Just like that?

LYNN

And left Dawn to take care of the house.

DAWN

He was overwhelmed. Every day, Mom was acting up. But I was overwhelmed too.

BRYCE holds DAWN's hand.

BRYCE

I'm sorry. It's so much.

LYNN

I stay with her at the house sometimes. I cook. Make sure she eats.

DAWN nods. She holds BRYCE's hand tighter.

BRYCE

(To DAWN)

You do need to eat more.

DAWN chuckles.

DAWN

I think Bryce is the only one that actually listens.

LYNN

What about your best friend Jessie?

DAWN rolls her eyes.

DAWN
Jessie was my best friend in college.

LYNN
Jessie knew Cherry before she went cuckoo.

DAWN shoots daggers at LYNN.

DAWN
Stop.
(A beat)
I think she just didn't want to be too involved. But Bryce is new here, so she gets it.

BRYCE
I get it.

BRYCE smiles, their grips tight.

LYNN
Bryce, you are exactly what she needs right now.

LYNN checks the time.

LYNN (CONT'D)
Shit. I told Greg I'd call him.

She puts down a credit card.

LYNN (CONT'D)
You guys talk.

LYNN excuses herself.

BRYCE releases DAWN's hand.

BRYCE
Sorry, firm grip.

DAWN
It's fine.

BRYCE
You all right?

DAWN
Yeah, why wouldn't I be?

BRYCE nods.

BRYCE
Why wouldn't you be, indeed.

She smiles brightly. The sun glistens around her outline, forming a halo. DAWN is enamored.

DAWN
When's your flight tomorrow?

BRYCE
8am.

DAWN's eyes widen.

DAWN
Then we gotta get you back home.

BRYCE
(Flirty)
What, you want me in bed that bad?

DAWN blushes.

DAWN
No. But I ... I want to make sure
...

BRYCE laughs.

BRYCE
Kidding. Thanks for the reminder, I
almost lost track of time.

She looks for LYNN.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Who's Greg?

DAWN, still coming down from her blush, clears her throat.

DAWN
Her son. He lives in Chicago.

BRYCE
Must be a pressing issue.

DAWN stands.

DAWN
Must be since he's really chill.

Right then, LYNN returns.

LYNN
My stupid son doesn't know what an
emergency means.

She looks around.

LYNN (CONT'D)
You guys gotta go?

DAWN
Bryce has an early flight.

LYNN takes her card and goes up to pay.

LYNN
I'll give you a ride.

INT. TRAIN CAR - EVENING

BRYCE is passed out. She leans on DAWN, who's looking out the window.

Soft music. DAWN is also fading.

INT. DAWN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - EVENING

BRYCE walks into the bedroom and collapses onto the bed.

DAWN
You want me to set an alarm for
you?

BRYCE
Yes, honey.

DAWN chuckles.

DAWN
You taking a cab?

BRYCE
Yes, honey.

She mumbles and covers herself with a pillow.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
(Muffled)
You're talking too loud.

DAWN takes BRYCE's phone, plugs it in, and sets an alarm.

DAWN
5:45.

BRYCE groans.

BRYCE
Turn off the light please, thank
you.

DAWN leaves.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Wait.

BRYCE sits up.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Come here.

BRYCE extends her arms. DAWN walks over and they hug.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Thank you for being an amazing
friend. And for being an amazing
person.

DAWN
You're welcome. And thank you for
visiting.

BRYCE
Thank *you* for letting me stay.

BRYCE refuses to let go. DAWN tries to release herself before
realizing BRYCE has fallen asleep in her arms.

DAWN gently removes her arms and lies her back down onto the
bed. She covers her.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
I give you permission to take my
clothes off and change me. I feel
so hot in these clothes, Dawn.

BRYCE grins and then passes out, cold.

DAWN walks to the door and turns off the light.

CUT TO:

INT. DAWN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

DAWN, on the sofa, wakes up with a jolt. A truck horn. She sits up.

DAWN walks to her bedroom. The bed is made and BRYCE is gone. A handwritten note on the bed.

"You're the best! ❤ You have to come to Colorado. Talk soon!"

DAWN takes the note. She smiles. She places it on her fridge.

FADE TO:

INT. AN AIRPORT - AFTERNOON

Pan around a quiet airport lounge. Some people hug at arrivals, while other people rush to the gates.

Focus in on a bench.

"OCTOBER 2025"

It's BRYCE. In a stroller, she plays with a little baby boy, making faces and laughing, while BB sits to the side, browsing his phone.

BB
How much longer is she gonna be?

BRYCE
(Mid baby play)
She said she just left the
carousel.

BB
Why do you need to check in luggage
for a weekend trip?

BRYCE
Everybody packs differently. You
pack like a prisoner, she packs
luxuriously, let's all be conscious
of each other's...

BRYCE stands, her ears perked up.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
That's her.

DAWN, coming in with a large yellow suitcase, approaches with her arms outstretched.

DAWN

Hi!

BRYCE runs over. They hug.

BRYCE

Hello sexy!

BB rolls his eyes and tends to the baby.

After a long hug:

DAWN

I want to see Dylan.

BRYCE steps aside, presenting her baby son DYLAN. DAWN notices BB right next to him.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Hey.

BB

Hey.

BRYCE sneaks up behind.

BRYCE

You wanna hold him?

BB picks up DYLAN and hands him to DAWN. She cradles the baby.

DAWN

He looks just like...

BB

Me, I know.

(He smirks)

He's got good genes.

BRYCE

He sure did!

DAWN stares into DYLAN's eyes. A pause, a connection perhaps, forms between them.

CUT TO:

INT. A JEEP - AFTERNOON

DAWN is napping. BRYCE and BB fight over the radio. Audio is muted as DAWN is in her own world.

EXT. THE CABIN - AFTERNOON

The Jeep pulls up to a small wood cabin. BB gets out and begins unloading the luggage from the trunk.

A VOICE (V.O.)
(Singsong)
Hello!

Another tall blonde woman, sharply dressed like a businesswoman, steps out of the cabin. This is ALLIE, BRYCE's sister.

ALLIE steps to the Jeep before DAWN and BRYCE even have a chance to exit. She points to DAWN, who lowers her window.

ALLIE
You must be the famous Dawn.

DAWN holds up her hands.

DAWN
Guilty.

ALLIE
Oh, you're so cute! Isn't she so cute, Bryce?

BRYCE
Yes, she's my favorite!

BRYCE hugs DAWN.

ALLIE
Okay, Bryce, you can let go now.
The poor girl's suffocating.

BRYCE quickly releases her hug.

DAWN
It's ok. I like her hugs.

ALLIE chortles.

ALLIE
No, you don't. My sister hugs like a bear. Like a big, smelly, friendly, bear, suffocating...
(She makes a roaring sound)
... you to death. With kindness.

ALLIE grins. BRYCE smiles weakly.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
Welcome to the family retreat. I'm
Allie.

BRYCE
I already filled her in on all the
details. She may need to leave
because her mom...

ALLIE holds up a single finger.

ALLIE
Bryce, what did we say about
speaking for others?

A beat.

BRYCE
Let them say it if possible.

ALLIE
You don't want to misrepresent
someone's words.

BB
(From the back)
Allie, I keep telling her that. She
doesn't listen.

ALLIE shrugs.

ALLIE
She will.

DAWN
It's fine, guys. She's right. My
mom is unpredictable, so she might
need me.

ALLIE nods. She looks at BRYCE.

ALLIE
See? So simple.

BRYCE
My bad, sis.

BB shakes his head and goes back to unpacking the Jeep.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Let me grab Dylan.

BB
I got him.

BB steps in from the back and unbuckles DYLAN. He makes silly faces.

BB (CONT'D)
I got him. Yes I do, yes I do!

ALLIE helps BB unpack the trunk. DAWN watches BRYCE and BB play with DYLAN.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CABIN - DAWN'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

BB wordlessly drags DAWN's luggage in, drops it, and leaves.

DAWN
Thanks.

BB has already left. It's a small room, but comfortable. DAWN lies on the bed. BRYCE walks in.

BRYCE
Did BB help you?

DAWN gives a thumbs up. BRYCE sits besides DAWN. She lays down and hugs her.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
I missed you!

DAWN
Been too long.

They cuddle. DAWN easily falls into BRYCE's embrace.

BRYCE
Are you feeling settled?

DAWN
Yeah. Why?

BRYCE
Because I saw you seemed
uncomfortable before. I don't know
why. I just want you to have a good
time with us!

DAWN sits up.

DAWN
Bryce, I mean I know you love your
sister and BB, but they treat you
like...

BRYCE holds up a hand. She twirls her fingers around.

BRYCE

Stop. You're beginning to sound
like my dad.

A beat.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Allie is my sister, my blood. And
BB is my life. And Dylan, of
course.

DAWN

We didn't even talk about BB. What
happened there?

BRYCE sits up, excited now.

BRYCE

Well... It all happened so fast. He
made a promise, to change, to be a
good father, and I believed him. No
more cheating, no more lying. And
then we got married. And got
pregnant.

BRYCE sighs, obviously content.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Life just works out sometimes.

DAWN

You're telling me that after
Atlanta, he apologized and you guys
got back together and married and
then conceived a kid... In a month?

BRYCE

It was quick. But it felt like it
was meant to be.

A beat. BRYCE seems to be lost in her head, recapping her and
BB's romance.

DAWN

Listen, Bryce, as your friend, your
sister and BB are really...

BRYCE

Stop it!

A sudden outburst. DAWN is taken back.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
All I want during this trip is for
you to be happy.

BRYCE leans her head onto DAWN's.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Help me help you to have a good
time.

CUT TO:

EXT. CABIN PATIO - EVENING

BB works the grill. ALLIE is talking with BRYCE on the lawn.
DAWN walks out from the living room. BRYCE immediately stands
and waves DAWN over.

DAWN bumps into another man on the way over.

ALLIE
(Yelling)
AJ!

The man holds his hands out in apology, backing away.

AJ
Sorry.

AJ snaps his fingers.

AJ (CONT'D)
Wait. You must be Dawn.

DAWN
Hi.

She offers her hand. A shake.

AJ
AJ.

ALLIE
(Yelling)
I'm sorry for my clumsy husband.

AJ
Allie's got me running around. I'll
be right back.

AJ hurries off. BB snickers.

BB
(Whispering)
Like a little mutt.

BB points his spatula at DAWN.

BB (CONT'D)
Want a burger?

DAWN nods.

BB (CONT'D)
You got it.
(He turns to the grill)
Don't worry about AJ, he's
harmless.

ALLIE
(Calling out)
And a cutie.

DAWN smiles. She steps onto the lawn. AJ has disappeared into a shed. BRYCE taps a lawn chair besides her. DAWN sits.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
Nice mountain air, huh?

DAWN
It's refreshing.

BRYCE
Mom and Dad bought the cabin in the
80s. I can't imagine how much it is
now.

ALLIE
Millions.

BRYCE
(Exaggerated)
Billions.

The two sisters laugh. BRYCE takes a beer from a bucket and hands it to DAWN.

DAWN
Thanks.

She opens the beer. BRYCE, ALLIE, and DAWN cheers.

BRYCE
To Dawn. Thanks for making it all
the way to Colorado.

DAWN
Thanks for having me.

They sit in silence for a bit, watching BB grill while light music drones in the background.

DAWN (CONT'D)
So what's the plan tomorrow?

ALLIE
(To BRYCE)
You didn't tell our guest?

BRYCE
I did.
(She looks at DAWN)
Didn't I?

DAWN
You did, I just
don't remember.

ALLIE
She probably didn't. She's not
really good with time.

BB
(Calling out)
I tell her that all the time!

ALLIE waves BB off. She then leans up from her chair.

ALLIE
We leave at dawn, Dawn.
(She giggles)
We'll wake you. It's an hour drive
to the trail, about an 8 hour hike
up, then down, then we camp out at
the base. Sound good?

DAWN
Sure.

ALLIE smiles and leans back.

BRYCE
And if you need anything,
equipment, snacks, food, we got you
covered.

ALLIE
(Insistent)
I made sure she didn't forget
anything.

AJ bursts out of the shed.

AJ
Allie, I need your help!

ALLIE rolls her eyes. She stands, dusts herself off, and looks at DAWN and BRYCE.

ALLIE
Men, you can't live with them, you can't live without them.

ALLIE thinks.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
Letner's okay, though.

She winks, pats BRYCE on the shoulder, and walks to the shed.

Just DAWN and BRYCE now.

DAWN
This is nice.

BRYCE
It's my favorite place.

Hold on the two of them, at peace. BRYCE grabs DAWN's hand.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Thanks for being here.

DAWN smiles.

FADE TO:

INT. A CAR - MORNING

DAWN is sleeping. The car is bumpy. The sun beats down on her, filtered through the leaves.

The car then pulls to a stop.

BB (V.O.)
Wake up, sleepyheads.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - MORNING

Focus on DAWN, yawning. She trudges along in the back. Ahead, ALLIE and BB chat and laugh. BRYCE walks in the middle, enjoying the nature. AJ holds the back with DAWN.

AJ
I hate hiking.

DAWN chuckles.

AJ (CONT'D)
But family, so...

DAWN is tired and stops walking. She takes a swig of water.

DAWN
So... Who's watching Dylan?

AJ
My mom. She loves kids.
(A beat)
Didn't you see her this morning?

DAWN shakes her head.

DAWN
No. I was a zombie.

She makes a groggy zombie noise. AJ smiles.

AJ
I see why Bryce likes you.

DAWN
I'm just sleepy is all.

AJ waits for her to catch her breath. Up the hill, BRYCE, BB, and ALLIE stand up on a ridge. They yell.

BB
Come on, slowpokes!

ALLIE
Don't let a girl beat you!

BRYCE, offended, nudges ALLIE.

BRYCE
She's our guest!

ALLIE shrugs, pushing her back.

ALLIE
I'm not commenting on Dawn. I'm
commenting on my slow as shit
husband!

BRYCE and ALLIE trade blows, muttering insults. BB shakes his head and keeps walking.

Down the ridge ...

DAWN gestures for AJ to walk past her. AJ shakes his head.

AJ
Please. After you.

DAWN takes the lead. Focus on DAWN as she climbs.

AJ (V.O.)
Allie's mouth is worse than her
heart.

DAWN
Yeah?

AJ catches up and walks side by side.

AJ
She's only nice to Letner. They
used to date.

DAWN
(Nodding)
Bryce told me.

They keep walking. A long pause.

AJ
She's not perfect. No one is.

DAWN
I know.

AJ
Just don't write her off.

DAWN
I wasn't.

AJ
Okay, good.

Another beat. AJ is fidgeting - he has more to explain.

AJ (CONT'D)
Allie and Letner have a lot of
history. It makes sense they're
messy.

DAWN
Why are you telling me all this?

DAWN is surprised how short she is.

AJ
(Stuttering)
Oh, I... Well, you're a good
listener, so ... I don't know.

Now DAWN feels bad.

DAWN
Sorry.

AJ now steps up and sprints forward. Focus on DAWN as she watches him leave. Up ahead, ALLIE whoots.

ALLIE
There he is!

Some clapping. BRYCE locks eyes with DAWN. She motions. It's a "come on" but with a motivational energy. DAWN picks it up.

EXT. SUMMIT - MORNING

The mountaintop air is perfectly clear. Up first is BB, then AJ, then ALLIE, then BRYCE, then DAWN.

DAWN collapses on the floor while the boys take selfies with ALLIE. BRYCE sits next to DAWN.

BRYCE
You're a trooper.

DAWN
Thanks.

BRYCE
Those 3 need to get a room.

They watch AJ, ALLIE, and a strangely enthusiastic BB celebrating.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Maybe they beat their time.

DAWN
Sure felt like it to me.

She drinks water. She lies down. BRYCE joins her.

DAWN (CONT'D)
I keep thinking about my mom.

BRYCE
Why?

DAWN

I don't know.

BRYCE

She's fine. I'm sure of it!

DAWN nods.

DAWN

I feel... Guilty for being here.

BRYCE

You deserve to be here and have a good time. You're having a good time right?

DAWN

Yeah.

BRYCE

Well, good.

She interlaces her fingers and rests them on her chest. Light banter from the other three.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Man, I missed you.

DAWN

I missed you, too.

BRYCE

Because I get to just ... Exist with you. Be peaceful with you. Like at the retreat.

DAWN

You were chaotic there.

BRYCE smiles.

BRYCE

You know what I mean. Hey...

She sits up.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

I think we should do a solo trip. Just us.

DAWN

Where you thinking?

BRYCE

How about...

BB (V.O.)

Leland!

BRYCE turns her head to BB. He waves her over.

BB

Selfie?

DAWN sits up. She sees ALLIE and AJ taking pictures. AJ does not seem very enthusiastic, which makes DAWN chuckle.

BRYCE

Dawn?

BRYCE helps DAWN up. They walk over and gather in a group. BB takes the photo, not consulting anyone, and movee on.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Let me see the pictures?

BB has already put his phone away.

ALLIE

Don't worry, Bryce, I'm sure it's great.

BRYCE nods.

BRYCE

You're right.

BB starts to push everyone to get going.

DAWN

We're not gonna stay up here?

AJ

Letner says we got "places to be."

Heavy quotations.

BB

Sun's moving down, so we gotta move down.

AJ snickers. BRYCE grabs DAWN's hand.

BRYCE

Let me grab a selfie with Dawn.

ALLIE
Bryce, we gotta get...

DAWN
It'll take only one second. We'll
catch up.

An awkward silence. AJ is the one to usher people down now.

AJ
(Clapping)
Let's go, people.

ALLIE and BB leave. AJ tags a little behind, checks on the
girls, and leaves.

When BRYCE and DAWN are alone...

BRYCE
Thanks.

DAWN
For what?

BRYCE
For standing up for me.

DAWN
I didn't. I was just saying they
could go.

BRYCE grins.

BRYCE
I don't deserve you.

They snap a selfie.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - AFTERNOON

As DAWN and BRYCE walk down, they overhear snippets of BB and
AJ arguing. It ends with a huff and AJ hangs back while BB
and ALLIE laugh it off.

BRYCE
Let me talk to AJ.

She walks ahead. DAWN exhales, taking it easy. She checks her
phone, looking through messages. Nothing new from LYNN.
JESSIE texted her.

JESSIE: "bitch you free tonight, going to Bushwick"

DAWN: "I'm in Colorado remember?"

A bit of a pause.

JESSIE: "oh shit I forgot. With your girlfriend"

DAWN: "not my girlfriend"

JESSIE: []

DAWN laughs and starts texting "we'll catch up when..."

AJ (V.O.)

Hey.

DAWN looks up from her phone. She puts it away.

DAWN

Hey.

AJ

Bryce went ahead. Just us slowpokes again.

DAWN

I'm so tired.

AJ takes out his water and hands it to her. DAWN thanks him and drinks.

AJ

It was a dumb argument.

DAWN finishes drinking and hands the bottle back.

DAWN

Thanks.

AJ

It was dumb.

A beat. DAWN doesn't know what to say.

AJ (CONT'D)

They don't like you.

DAWN doesn't say anything. She knows who.

AJ (CONT'D)

I defended you.

DAWN

Thanks.

They keep walking. Feeling bad about before, DAWN asks...

DAWN (CONT'D)
So... How'd you and Allie meet?

AJ seems to brighten.

AJ
Through Letner. I knew him from
Ohio State. We played football
together.

DAWN
Wow.

DAWN interlocks her fingers.

DAWN (CONT'D)
So you guys all know each other.

AJ chuckles mildly.

AJ
Allie brought us all together. She
met Letner at a club, they dated, I
met her and Leland many times, they
got engaged, they broke up...

DAWN
BB and Allie were engaged?

AJ looks at DAWN with a puzzled expression. He grimaces.

AJ
Ew, you call him BB?

DAWN
That's what Bryce says.

AJ shudders.

AJ
Anyway, yes. Engaged for a month.
He cheated on her.
(A beat)
Trust me, I know. He's got
problems. We all talked to him
about it.

DAWN
And?

AJ

He's toxic. What do you want me to say? He claims to be different now.

He shrugs.

AJ (CONT'D)

Trust me, he's only around because he's dating Allie's sister. Family.

(He rolls his eyes)

He's family. Allie basically crossed all her wires...

(He twists his arms)

... And here we are. Yippee.

AJ huffs. Like he's got a vendetta. He stops talking.

AJ (CONT'D)

Sorry. I'm spiraling.

DAWN

You don't have to say sorry.

AJ

I just met you but I feel like you get it. Right? I love Allie. I don't... Love the family. I mean I do, I love Leland, she's so sweet, but...

BRYCE (V.O.)

(Yelling)

Dawn! Come check this out.

Desperate to leave, DAWN makes her way past AJ.

DAWN

I'm sorry. Let's talk later?

AJ

Yeah.

Focus on DAWN as she walks down to meet BRYCE...

FADE TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE GROUNDS - EVENING

Pan around a campfire ground, where the 5 of them are gathered. BRYCE, by herself, roasting marshmallows. ALLIE and BB are besides each other, ALLIE lying on BB's knees, and DAWN and AJ sitting on a log.

ALLIE

Dawn. You looked tired up there.

DAWN

It was tough.

ALLIE

Nothing us women can't handle,
right?

She flexes her arm.

DAWN

Right.

BB

You were sprinting past AJ a few
times there.

AJ

So?

BRYCE

It wasn't a competition, guys!

BB

(Snorts)

It's always a competition, right
AJ? Down to the last play.

AJ

(Shrugs)

Sure.

BRYCE slowly rotates her marshmallow. It catches on fire.

BB

Leland...

BRYCE

I know.

ALLIE

I don't think you do.

BRYCE takes the marshmallow and blows out the flame.

DAWN

I like it burned.

BB

No, you don't.

BRYCE
Yes, I do!

BRYCE examines the charred marshmallow. She eats it.

ALLIE
So Dawn, tell us about you.

BB
Leland hasn't said much about you.

BRYCE
That's not true, BB!

BB chuckles.

BB
I'm just joking.
(To DAWN)
God, she won't stop talking about
you.

ALLIE
But we still want to hear more. You
know, women, our voices ...

She loudly claps her hands.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
Always quashed.

DAWN
I was born in Queens, live there
still. Not that exciting.

AJ
How's New York? I've never been.

ALLIE
Yes, we have, AJ!

AJ
That was a layover.

ALLIE gasps. She looks up at BB.

ALLIE
Layover counts, right?

BB
Sure, Allie.

AJ
We should actually visit, though.

BRYCE
You should, it's amazing.

AJ turns to DAWN.

AJ
Sorry. Didn't mean for all of us to
interrupt.

DAWN
It's fine. Queens is amazing, I
work and live there, so I barely
leave. Great food, great vibe.

BRYCE
She took me to get some great
bagels and pizza.

ALLIE shrugs.

ALLIE
Pizza's pretty good in Colorado.

BB
(Nodding)
It's decent here.
(To BRYCE)
I mean, Leland, you've had what, 5
slices your entire life?

BRYCE
So? It's still good!

BB
Yeah, I know you get very excited
about pizza.

BB smiles. ALLIE snorts, laughing.

ALLIE
She does get very excited
sometimes. When we were young, one
time...

She sits up. She snaps her fingers.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
Remember when we won the semifinals
in 2009?

BRYCE
(Glowing)
Oooh, yes. I got the game winning
goal. I was so excited I...

ALLIE
Peed her pants. Literally a stream.

BB laughs, a little too loud. ALLIE laughs with him. AJ rolls his eyes. DAWN remains silent, imagining what's going through BRYCE's mind.

When the laughter has receded...

BRYCE
(Embarrassed)
I was gonna say I thought I was
gonna cry... But ok.

ALLIE's face is horrified. She waves her hands around the campfire.

ALLIE
Oh my God. Sorry. Everyone just
pretend you didn't hear that.

BB
Too late. My poor Leland.

AJ stands.

AJ
Anyway... Anyone want another beer?

DAWN
I'll take one.

AJ points to everyone, double-checking, then walks to the cooler.

ALLIE
(To BRYCE)
Hey, sis, I'm sorry, I know how you
get embarrassed.
(Clicks her tongue)
Letner, go to your wife.

BB stands, sighs, and trudges over to BRYCE, who has shrunken in embarrassment. BB sits besides her and puts an arm around her. They chat quietly. BRYCE loosens up and laughs. ALLIE looks on like a proud mom.

AJ returns and hands a beer to DAWN, who immediately cracks it open.

DAWN
Thanks.

ALLIE beckons AJ over.

ALLIE
(Facetiously)
I'm lonely.

BB rolls his eyes. AJ walks to his wife and sits besides her. She hooks her arm on him and snuggles.

The two couples are chatting. DAWN takes the opportunity to check her phone. A new message from LYNN, sharing some silly Facebook post. She then sees her unfinished text to JESSIE. "We'll catch up when I'm home. Bryce's family is... Interesting."

ALLIE (V.O.)
Oh, we've let poor Dawn third
wheel.

BB
Fifth wheel.

BRYCE and DAWN lock eyes. BRYCE smiles. She's better now.

BRYCE
Dawn is totally chill with
whatever.

BB
Hey Dawn...

BB leans forward into the fire, his face illuminated from below. He's dragging BRYCE with him, who goes with it.

BB (CONT'D)
I've been thinking about something
and I wanna ask your opinion about
it.

AJ
(To DAWN)
I can guarantee you this is going
to be a dumb question.

BB tosses a stone at AJ's head, and he winces in pain.

BB
Shut up.

ALLIE
I wanna hear.

BB turns back to DAWN.

BB
What's your opinion on cheating?

BRYCE
BB!

BB shushes her.

DAWN
It's ok, Bryce.

AJ
(To BB)
You're a moron.

ALLIE
I wanna hear what Dawn has to say.

DAWN looks around the campfire. BB, eyes glinting from the fire like the devil, ALLIE staring eagerly, BRYCE covering her eyes, looking down, AJ shaking his head, drinking a beer.

DAWN
I want to ask you something first.

BB
Sure.

DAWN
What's *your* opinion on cheating?

BB chuckles.

BB
That it's bad, of course.

BB stands and points around the campfire.

BB (CONT'D)
Cheating isn't tolerated around here.

AJ waves his beer around.

AJ
Get off the stage, Letner.

BB
No! We all want to vilify me, go ahead, but Dawn is new here and I want her to know ...
(He pats himself on the shoulder)
... I too am human, just like everyone else. I know what's right and wrong.

BB sits. BRYCE hugs him.

ALLIE
Bravo.

AJ claps loudly and stands.

AJ
I've changed my mind about you. We
all have.

BB tosses another stone at AJ but he deflects it. He sits down.

BB
I just thought Bryce's new friend
should know. Seeing as she seems to
know everything.

DAWN
What the hell's that supposed to
mean?

AJ
Guys, guys.

AJ holds up a beer.

AJ (CONT'D)
I propose a toast.

Everyone slowly raises their beer.

AJ (CONT'D)
No one's perfect.

A beat. They all mumble the same thing and take a drink.
There's a long silence.

It's soon broken by a burp. It's BB.

BB
By the way, Dawn, you never
answered the question.

DAWN clears her throat.

DAWN
I think cheaters are the worst
people on earth.

AJ snorts laughing but quiets himself.

BB
How about this? Do you believe
people can change?

BRYCE
I do.

ALLIE
I agree. I mean, people do stupid
shit all the time, but when do we
hang up our whips? People change!

DAWN nods.

DAWN
Yes, but when it starts to become a
pattern, then ...

BRYCE
Hold on.
(A pause)
We've established people change.
Even if the pattern existed, and
people change, it shouldn't matter
right?

AJ clears his throat.

AJ
If I may...

BB shakes his head.

BB
You may not.

ALLIE
Let him finish.

DAWN
I want to hear.

BRYCE
BB, let him talk.

BB
I don't see why...

ALLIE
Let him finish.

BB shuts up.

BRYCE
Go ahead, AJ.

AJ
Letner thinks that any remorse must necessarily have forgiveness.

BRYCE
Sure.

AJ
But are all actions equal?

DAWN nods.

DAWN
Right. What if he murdered someone? Then he repents? Should we forgive him?

BRYCE laughs awkwardly.

BRYCE
Dawn, don't say such things. BB would never do that!

BB
I don't think cheating is the same as murder.

DAWN
Both require a certain level of forgiveness. What level is that? Maybe 1 murder is unforgivable. What about 1 cheating incident? How about 2?

BB
Excuse me, Dawn. I don't like your tone, you little...

BRYCE stands. She creates a buffer between BB and DAWN. BB's face is red.

BRYCE
(To BB)
Bryce, don't talk to her with that tone. Dawn is our guest and she's just sharing her thoughts.

DAWN peeks behind BRYCE, staring daggers at BB.

DAWN
Little what?

ALLIE
Don't speak, Letner.
(A beat)
Bryce is right. Chill out.
(Wags her finger at BB)
Don't disrespect women.

She takes AJ's hand and stands.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
We're tired.

AJ shrugs.

AJ
Good night, everyone.

ALLIE drags AJ away to their tent.

BB stands and stomps off into the woods.

DAWN looks up at BRYCE. BRYCE offers her hand and pulls DAWN up.

DAWN
Wow.

BRYCE
That was kinda nuts, right?!

DAWN looks towards the woods.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Don't worry. He's gonna cool off.

DAWN
I'm not worried.

BRYCE laughs gently. She picks up her stick.

BRYCE
More marshmallows?

DAWN
"It's burning, Bryce."

BRYCE smiles. She prepares the marshmallow, offering one to DAWN, who shakes her head.

The marshmallow roasts. They stand in silence watching the fire. The marshmallow catches on fire and BRYCE blows it out.

DAWN (CONT'D)
Perfect.

DAWN begins to put out the fire with some dirt. BRYCE stops her.

BRYCE

Wait, we should ask BB whether we should put it out.

DAWN

It's fine. Everyone's going to sleep.

BRYCE

We really should...

DAWN

Hey, Bryce.

BRYCE stops.

DAWN (CONT'D)

It's okay.

BRYCE sighs heavily.

BRYCE

Okay.

DAWN

Wanna chat in your tent?

BRYCE brightens.

BRYCE

Okay!

They walk to BRYCE's tent. In the woods, the glow from a cigarette.

INT. BRYCE'S TENT - EVENING

DAWN and BRYCE sit. DAWN sits up straight, BRYCE lying besides her. She eats her marshmallow. The crickets are chirping loudly.

DAWN

(Yawning)

I'm beat.

BRYCE reaches over and holds DAWN's hand.

BRYCE

I'm so happy you're here.

DAWN
(Smiles)
Me too.

BRYCE
I didn't even ask how your Mom is.
So rude of me. It's like "Bryce,
other people have lives too and..."

DAWN
It's okay! She's good. I had a 3
month shift - this is my break now.

BRYCE nods. She grips DAWN's hand tighter.

BRYCE
You deserve a break.

DAWN
Do I?

BRYCE sits up.

BRYCE
Yes! You're an amazing, thoughtful,
responsible woman, and even they
deserve breaks.

DAWN
Yeah but... Then my dad would
say...

BRYCE
No. It's about you and what you
deserve.

DAWN sighs.

DAWN
Okay.

BRYCE
It's about what you...

She places DAWN'S own hand on her chest.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
... Want.

DAWN
But what if what I want is wrong?

BRYCE shakes her head.

BRYCE

Shh. No. Stay with me. I'm here for you.

She closes her eyes.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Something I learned during the retreat is that people are most expressive when they speak.

She peeks an eye open.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

So speak!

DAWN sighs.

DAWN

I don't know what else to say.

BRYCE

I'll start.

She keeps her eyes shut.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Right now, I'm feeling grateful. For you. For BB. For Dylan.

She smiles.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

My sweet boy.

A beat.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Mhm. Now you!

DAWN closes her eyes, too. The nighttime noises seem to intensify.

DAWN

I'm constantly anxious. About Mom. About Dad. About Lynn, if she's doing a good job. I don't know if she is.

A pause. She exhales sharply.

DAWN (CONT'D)

And now, I'm worried about my friend Bryce.

(MORE)

DAWN (CONT'D)
She's so beautiful inside and
outside and I'm afraid she's not
seeing herself for who she is.

BRYCE lets go of her hand. She seems upset.

BRYCE
Dawn! I didn't know you felt that
way.

DAWN
I'm just saying what I'm feeling.

A beat. She tosses the stick aside and lies back down. Hold on DAWN as she then makes herself comfortable and lies down next to BRYCE.

From an overhead view:

BRYCE
I'm not stupid, you know.

DAWN's heart stops.

DAWN
What do you mean?

BRYCE
I know how the situation looks. I
know how you feel. But ...

BRYCE folds her hands on her chest.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
It's not that simple.

DAWN
It isn't.

BRYCE
Nobody really understands.

DAWN
No.

Her heart beats faster.

BRYCE
But they love me.

BRYCE turns to DAWN.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
They really do.

DAWN's heart slows.

DAWN
I ...

BRYCE
You understand, right? Family is
very complicated. It might seem one
way on the outside but it's
different to you. Your mom: I won't
ever pretend to really "get" it but
...

DAWN
Bryce.

BRYCE stops.

DAWN (CONT'D)
It's different.

BRYCE
Maybe.

BRYCE turns to face up again. A pause.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Maybe you should go.

DAWN's heart races again, but not in an excited way. Instead,
it's anxious.

DAWN
Did I say something?

BRYCE
I'm tired.

DAWN sits up. She looks at BRYCE, who's staring blankly.

DAWN
I'll go.

She begins to shimmy out. But something slips from DAWN.

DAWN (CONT'D)
How many times are you gonna give
him a pass?

BRYCE retorts quickly.

BRYCE
I'm not giving him a pass. It
happened twice. They apologized.
(MORE)

BRYCE (CONT'D)

People make mistakes. Family makes mistakes. They have history. It's understandable.

BRYCE, still staring into the void, closes her eyes.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Good night, Dawn.

Focus on DAWN. She leaves the tent.

EXT. CAMPFIRE GROUNDS - EVENING

DAWN walks slowly from BRYCE's tent. The campfire is glowing dim red. BB appears from the woods.

BB

Good night.

DAWN nods. He walks on the other side of the campfire and disappears into BRYCE's tent.

Before she reaches her tent, she hears something. Not too far away, she sees ALLIE squatting, shitting in a bushy clearing. DAWN shields her eyes. ALLIE waves.

ALLIE

Be right with you.

Focus on DAWN, looking away. After a bit, ALLIE appears next to DAWN. She cleans her hands.

ALLIE (CONT'D)

I don't get why people are so ashamed of shitting. I mean, AJ literally walked like a mile so no one could watch him take a shit.

She laughs, shaking her head.

ALLIE (CONT'D)

Prude. Anyway, how are you? Things got a little tense, huh?

DAWN shrugs.

DAWN

Nothing I can't handle.

ALLIE

Men, am I right?

She checks her phone.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
We gotta wake up early tomorrow, so
time to get sleeping, Dawn.

ALLIE pats DAWN aggressively.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
Look alive tomorrow. You got this.
If Bryce can do it, you can do it.

ALLIE nods and disappears into her tent. She turns and sees AJ approaching.

AJ
Hey. Everyone's turning in.

DAWN
Seems so.

AJ
See you bright and early.

He smiles and follows ALLIE into the tent.

INT. DAWN'S TENT - EVENING

DAWN lies down. She turns to face up. Nighttime nature is loud.

She checks her phone. It's been out of service for a while. But as she glances over it, a single bar returns.

Her phone blows up. A flurry of messages from LYNN. Missed calls, dozens of messages. They all say the same thing. "Mom had an accident. Where are you?"

CUT TO:

EXT. THE WOODS - EVENING

DAWN, packed only with her essential gear, is walking through the woods. She's peering at a map, using her phone as a flashlight, as she stumbles through the path.

She stops briefly. She turns back and forth. She's lost.

BB (V.O.)
Dawn?

BB appears with a flashlight. He's annoyed.

BB

Dawn. Where the fuck are you going?

DAWN

My mom's had an emergency.

BB

Let's wait until morning.

DAWN shakes her head. She turns away.

DAWN

I have to go.

BB

It's dark out there.

BRYCE (V.O.)

Dawn!

BRYCE appears out of the bushes.

BB

Goddamn it, Leland, I told you to stay in the tent! You never ...

BRYCE runs to DAWN. She's out of breath.

BRYCE

Is it your mom?

DAWN sighs.

DAWN

Yeah.

BRYCE

Shit.

BRYCE hugs her.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

You were gonna leave without saying anything?

DAWN

You guys were asleep. I was gonna text you.

BB

You expect us to carry all of your shit back? I mean that tent weighs a fuckton.

BRYCE
BB, it's not important.
(She turns to DAWN)
Seriously, not even a word?

DAWN shakes her head.

DAWN
You don't understand. I need to go.

BRYCE
What about your tent, like he said?
Your stuff at the cabin?

DAWN
I'll send for it.

DAWN turns to go but BRYCE catches her arm.

BRYCE
Text me.

DAWN nods.

BB
You should wait until morning.

BRYCE
Let her go. I know she'll take care
of herself.

BB shakes his head.

BB
Just follow the posts with the red
flags. I'm not responsible if you
turn up...

BRYCE hushes him. She releases DAWN, smiling, and walks back
to BB.

DAWN
See you guys.

DAWN disappears down the trail. Focus on BRYCE and BB,
watching her off.

EXT. ROADSIDE - EVENING

DAWN is walking along a road. She holds up her thumb. Some
cars pass but none stop. She keeps walking, checking her
phone for directions.

A honk. The headlights flood her figure.

INT. A TRUCK - EVENING BECOMING MORNING

DAWN is texting on her phone. First is to DAWN.

DAWN: "Hitchhiking with a rare lady trucker."

BRYCE: "Wow! That is rare. Stay safe ❤ turn on your location."

DAWN turns on her location.

BRYCE: "I see you now. You're not far from the airport! What's your plan?"

DAWN: "Already bought a ticket, first flight out to NY. 6:15am."

BRYCE: "Safe travels. Keep me posted!"

DAWN then goes to her chat message with LYNN. Since 12am, the last message, DAWN has sent 10 replies asking for more details but none have been replied to. Last message from DAWN was at 4:30am.

She browses to her calls. Many calls to LYNN, no responses. There's one to DAD and JESSIE too, but no responses. It was very late.

She leans back. She tries to sleep.

EXT. AIRPORT - MORNING

A large truck stops near the airport. DAWN thanks the driver, hops out with her stuff, and sprints to departures.

INT. AIRPORT - MORNING

DAWN rushes to her gate. She shows her ticket.

FADE TO:

INT. AIRPLANE - MORNING

Focus on DAWN. A ding. The engines power down. She jolts awake. She peeks through the window. The sun is shining brightly in NYC.

EXT. AIRPORT - MORNING

DAWN gets into a taxi. She checks her phone. No responses from anybody, except BRYCE, who's making sure she's okay. Nothing from LYNN or DAD. Her cousin, GREG, said that her mom wasn't picking up.

She checks Uber. The journey to Orange cost \$120. She flicks the app away, shaking her head. So many thoughts swirl in her mind.

Back at her calls page, she remembers she called the hospital before getting on the flight. Nothing. Now she tries again, with an hour journey ahead of her.

FRONT DESK (V.O.)
Orange Psych.

DAWN
Hello? Hi! I'm calling about Cherry Lee. Is she okay? You guys didn't pick up last night.

FRONT DESK (V.O.)
Hi, Mrs. Lee is fine. There was an incident last night. We were busy.

DAWN
What incident?

A beat.

FRONT DESK (V.O.)
Who am I speaking with?

DAWN
Her daughter. Dawn Lee.

FRONT DESK (V.O.)
Yes, Mrs. Lee, your mother is fine. Everyone is fine. Her sister and brother in law are here as well.

DAWN
Okay. What happened? I'm on my way.

FRONT DESK (V.O.)
Great. We will fill you in on details when you're here, but rest assured your mother is fine.

DAWN
Okay. But...

FRONT DESK (V.O.)
See you soon.

A click. DAWN puts her phone away.

FADE TO:

INT. TAXI - MORNING

DAWN is snoring. On her phone, her last message to GREG is that Mom is okay and she's on the way there. Previously, BRYCE had texted to check in.

The taxi stops.

INT. EAST ORANGE PSYCH - RECEPTION - MORNING

DAWN walks in with her bags, her sunglasses sloppily put on, and goes straight to the front desk clerk and taps the bell. The clerk watched her tap it, amused.

FRONT DESK
Dawn?

DAWN nods.

INT. EAST ORANGE PSYCH - CHERRY'S ROOM - MORNING

The door opens. LYNN and DAD are there, both asleep. DAWN walks in, dropping her bags quietly. DAWN looks around - CHERRY is nowhere to be found. The bed is empty.

LYNN wakes up. She smiles.

LYNN
Dawn.

DAWN goes to hug her.

DAWN
Where's...

LYNN
Let's talk outside.

INT. EAST ORANGE PSYCH - HALLWAY - MORNING

LYNN
Your mother went a little psycho
yesterday.

DAWN
What happened?

LYNN
She attacked the nurse with a
knife. Said she was a spy from
Taiwan. Dumb stuff like that.

DAWN widens her eyes.

DAWN
What the fuck?

LYNN
(In Chinese)
I don't know. Ah, always making
problems.

DAWN
Did she get hurt?

LYNN
She cut up the nurse very bad. So
she's in... Alone room.

DAWN
Isolation. Shit.

DAWN looks back at the room. She notices DAD is up now,
looking around.

DAWN (CONT'D)
When did he get here?

LYNN
Last night.

DAWN turns back to LYNN and shakes her head.

DAWN
I bet he was grumpy.

LYNN shrugs.

LYNN
He was worried.

DAWN
Sure.

LYNN
(In Chinese)
Aya, he was.
(In English)
(MORE)

LYNN (CONT'D)
I don't like him either but he was
here fast.

DAWN rolls her eyes. The door opens and DAD walks into the hallway and quietly shuts the door.

DAD
Hi, Dawn.

DAWN steps back and looks at both DAD and LYNN.

DAWN
Why were you guys ignoring me texts
and calls? You made me worry so
much.

LYNN
Your father said don't call you.
Only make you worry.

DAD
(To LYNN, nodding)
That was the right thing. We didn't
want a commotion.

LYNN grabs DAWN's arm.

LYNN
But look at her! She wanted to
know!

DAWN
Thank you!
(To DAD)
And you didn't want to tell me, so
you just ignored me?

DAD
I knew you were gonna cut your trip
short and then come over here and
complain when you should have been
here all along. And I would never
hear the end of it about how I
ruined your vacation... So I didn't
tell you.

A beat. DAWN clears her throat.

DAWN
Excuse me?

LYNN
Ryan, stop.

DAD

Your mother is sick, Dawn.
Mentally ill. She stabbed a nurse.
And you weren't there. You showing
up now ... isn't good enough.

DAWN closes her eyes and calms her anger. LYNN's grip on her arm tightens but she gently pushes her away. She turns to DAD.

DAWN

You don't get to tell me when I can
and can't be here. Aunt Lynn and I
talked about timing. I didn't know
she was going to freak out like
this.

DAD

You always must consider...

DAWN

And it's really rich that you're
saying this. Now you grow a pair
because you're suddenly the man
that shows up first? You're just
lucky that you were in Jersey and
not in Florida.

She takes a breath. She looks at DAD. He doesn't say a word. He's inviting her to speak more.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Don't. Don't you dare lecture me on
being there.

DAD

I'm not the same man as before.

DAWN

I don't care.

DAD

What I did in the past is separate
from who I am now. I don't care if
you do or don't forgive me. But I
want you to consider who you are
right now.

DAWN

I have considered who I am right
now, and I know I'm doing my best.
Okay?

DAD simply shrugs.

DAWN (CONT'D)

You. You're never here. You expect us to be here all the time. And yet you...

DAD

I'm not part of this family anymore, Dawn! Did you forget that?

DAWN shakes her head.

DAD (CONT'D)

You should be thankful I'm even here!

LYNN

Ryan...

DAD

(Pointing at DAWN)

You have a responsibility to your mother.

DAWN

(Yelling)

And so do you!

A nurse appears.

NURSE

Sorry.

LYNN

Family things.

NURSE

Cherry is doing fine. Ms. Henry is recovering as well.

The three of them nod. The NURSE hands LYNN a document. DAD tries to take it.

NURSE (CONT'D)

Sorry, sir. It's family only.

DAD

I'm her ex husband.

LYNN pulls the paper away.

LYNN

Right.

NURSE

These are her records.

DAWN

I thought she was fine.

NURSE

She is. It's just documentation of the incident.

LYNN nods, thanking her.

DAWN

So what's going to happen?

NURSE

Ms. Henry won't press any charges, but she won't be working with Cherry anymore.

DAD

Understandable.

LYNN

When can we see her?

NURSE

Dr. Ward said she'll be out tonight. They want to give her 24 hours.

DAWN

That's inhumane.

DAD

Dawn, let them do what they think is best.

The nurse nods.

NURSE

This is for her own safety and for other's safety.

DAWN

Are they giving her food?

NURSE

Yes, of course.

DAWN sighs.

LYNN

It'll be okay. We'll be right here.

NURSE

Her room will be open all day. I'll check back in around 4.

The nurse leaves. DAD takes the report. He reads it.

DAD

Blunt knife. That's new. Usually it's sharp.

LYNN

Lucky that the other woman didn't sue her.

DAD hands the report back to LYNN.

DAD

I have to take a call. Dawn ...

He turns to DAWN.

DAD (CONT'D)

You stay here. I might be a while. Don't leave.

DAWN

I'm not going anywhere.

He nods at LYNN and walks away. When he's gone, LYNN shakes her head.

LYNN

Let's go back to Cherry's room.

INT. EAST ORANGE PSYCH - CHERRY'S ROOM - MORNING

LYNN and DAWN take a seat.

LYNN

Take a nap.

DAWN is riled up.

DAWN

I'm so pissed at him. First, he doesn't tell me about Mom because he thinks I'm being inconvenienced and that I'll whine. Then, he's shocked to see me. Now, he's insisting I stay so I can cover him while he takes his stupid calls and...

LYNN holds her hand to calm her down.

LYNN
It's okay. He is who he is.
Breathe.

DAWN breathes and calms herself. She thinks of BRYCE.

LYNN (CONT'D)
There you go.

DAWN
I wanna call my friend.

EXT. EAST ORANGE PSYCH - MORNING

DAWN calls BRYCE. She sits on a bench.

BRYCE (V.O.)
Hey! Everything ok?

DAWN
She stabbed a nurse.

BRYCE (V.O.)
Oh my God! Is the nurse ok?

DAWN
Yeah. She's fine. Everyone's fine.

DAWN sighs.

BRYCE (V.O.)
Are you okay?

DAWN
Dad's being a pain.

BRYCE (V.O.)
You did an amazing thing going
back. I know I wouldn't have!

DAWN
Dad's blaming me for not being
here.

BRYCE (V.O.)
That's just crazy.
(A beat)
You know what we should talk about?
Your next trip here.

DAWN leans back. She closes her eyes.

BRYCE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Take your mind off things.

DAWN
Okay.

She exhales.

FADE TO:

EXT. A PARK BENCH - AFTERNOON

Sunny day. A beautiful Chicago park.

"AUGUST 2026"

Match cut to DAWN, leaning back on a bench. A buzz on her phone.

It's from BRYCE. "Be there soon. Here's Dylan from today."

A video plays of DYLAN looking cute in his tiny crib. BB, playing with him, genuinely has love for DYLAN.

DAWN texts back: "he's growing so fast ☺"

She looks around, appreciating the park. A buzz. It's JESSIE. "Hey I'm really sorry about everything. Can we catch up when you're back?" DAWN leaves her on read and puts her phone away.

In the distance, she sees BRYCE approaching. When BRYCE sees her, she speeds up. DAWN stands and they hug immediately.

DAWN
Hi, Bryce.

BRYCE
Dawn! It's been so long.

Focus on DAWN. She wants to leave the hug but BRYCE holds it for a beat longer. BRYCE then taps her like she's done with the hug.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Finally, a weekend to ourselves.
Feels like every time we meet,
something is happening.

DAWN
Hopefully not this time.

DAWN notices her hiking bag.

DAWN (CONT'D)
Just a bag?

BRYCE
BB told me to pack light. I guess I
always did pack way too much.
And...
(She pats her bag)
No baby stuff this time anyway.

She drops the bag.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
This weekend's all about you, me,
an AirBNB, and some clubbing.

BRYCE does a little dance. DAWN nods.

DAWN
I guess even moms need a break.

BRYCE rolls her eyes and sits down.

BRYCE
Tell me about it. But BB has been
stepping up. 5 days in the office
is no joke, but he works a day at
home just for Dylan and me so I get
a break.

DAWN
Good.

BRYCE
And Allie's been more free since
the divorce to look after Dylan. So
it's all working out.

DAWN
What about her job?

BRYCE
Oh, she quit. She's taking a mental
health break after the divorce. It
messed her up.

A beat. DAWN shifts uneasily.

DAWN
That whole situation with Harry was
rough.... I think AJ had a right
to...

BRYCE

Not now, Dawn. Come on. You know that stuff is sensitive to Allie. She apologized, people make mistakes with other people, she moved on, he didn't.

DAWN

I...

She pauses. BRYCE is itching to move on, but ...

DAWN (CONT'D)

AJ had a right to be mad.

BRYCE grumbles. She stretches out her limbs.

BRYCE

God, you're so... Moral sometimes. You of all people should know life is a little messy sometimes.

DAWN

Hey!

BRYCE leans over and pinches her nose.

BRYCE

And you handle it with such grace!

DAWN is pissed but then blushes.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

(Playful)

Sydney's gonna be so jealous.

DAWN

We broke up again.

BRYCE gasps.

BRYCE

What? When? Why?

DAWN

Don't get me started. You know she was bad for me.

(A beat; she chuckles)

Then, Jessie and I got into a huge fight about my mom. Well, I got mad at her for...

BRYCE stands, interrupting her.

DAWN (CONT'D)

What?

BRYCE

It's hot. Can we walk and talk on
the way to the AirBNB?

LATER

DAWN and BRYCE walk through the busy park, and we only hear
snippets of conversation. BRYCE hunches with her bag. DAWN
rolls her luggage.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

... And when they're happy, I'm
happy. It's a positive feedback
loop. I want my family to be happy
and it brings me joy. Speaking of
which...

She snaps her fingers.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Allie's actually in Evanston
visiting a friend, so she'll be
here tomorrow for lunch. That ok?

DAWN shrugs.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Just one meal.

DAWN

It's fine.

BRYCE smiles warmly.

BRYCE

That's the Dawn I know and love.

A beat.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

How's your mom, by the way?

DAWN

She's fine. That whole situation?
She doesn't remember at all.

BRYCE

That's good? I think?

DAWN

She needs to learn accountability.
The nurse quit so she doesn't even
have that reminder.

BRYCE

Yeesh.

DAWN

But...

She kicks a stray volleyball back to the players.

DAWN (CONT'D)

She's fine.

BRYCE

I'm happy she's okay. Are you okay?
With your dad and all that?

DAWN

He fucked off to his Florida house
for a while, so I couldn't care
less.

BRYCE nods. They reach a fork.

BRYCE

You know where you're going, right?

DAWN

I thought you did.

BRYCE gasps.

BRYCE

No?

DAWN

I'm just kidding.

DAWN grabs BRYCE's hand and pulls her left. BRYCE is surprised and delighted by this.

Down the path...

DAWN (CONT'D)

He keeps blaming me. Still. It's
been almost a year.

BRYCE

For what?

DAWN

For... Being in Colorado when it happened? I don't understand this man.

BRYCE shakes her head.

BRYCE

But *you* know that you didn't do anything wrong.

DAWN

(Nods)

Well, yeah! How was I supposed to know?

BRYCE

You couldn't. You're doing the best you can. As long as he knows that.

DAWN

He doesn't.

A beat.

BRYCE

I'm sure your dad's stressed, too. Maybe you should...

DAWN

(Firm)

No, no.

She holds steady.

DAWN (CONT'D)

No, Bryce. I don't need to hear about how my Dad is being reasonable.

BRYCE

I didn't say that.

DAWN

I need to know I'm not crazy and he's an asshole. This man, the one who left me and my mom and somehow he blames ME for ...

BRYCE grabs DAWN and holds her. She hugs her tight. DAWN calms herself.

BRYCE

I'm here. You're okay.

Focus on DAWN. She nods and does some breathing exercises. She then taps BRYCE.

DAWN

I'm okay.

BRYCE lets go.

BRYCE

Let's take a breather.

DAWN nods. She walks away. Focus on BRYCE. She's worried.

FADE TO:

EXT. THE AIRBNB - EVENING

The women stand in front of a house.

INT. THE AIRBNB - EVENING

The door opens. DAWN turns on all the lights and heads straight for the bedroom. She drops her luggage down. She notices that BRYCE is on the porch.

EXT. THE AIRBNB - EVENING

DAWN sits on the bench next to BRYCE, who's on her phone.

BRYCE

It's nice not having Dylan around.
I miss him, though.

She shows DAWN a photo.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Isn't he so cute?

DAWN takes the phone. DYLAN, who's growing up fast, and BB, looking like a responsible dad.

DAWN

He was ok with this?

BRYCE

Oh yeah.

(She waves her hand)

I told him a while ago. He made a
fuss but I'll deal with that when I
get back.

BRYCE takes her phone back.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
This weekend is about us.

DAWN
About us.

EXT. A BAR - EVENING

A lesbian bar.

BRYCE (V.O.)
So tell me about Jessie!

INT. A BAR - EVENING

BRYCE grabs 2 drinks from the bartender and DAWN and BRYCE walk through the crowd to the dance floor.

DAWN
There's not much to tell, I...

She dodges some people.

DAWN (CONT'D)
We just disagreed on some stuff!

They keep making their way to the back to an open table. It's very loud.

BRYCE puts the drinks down.

BRYCE
Sorry, one more time?!

DAWN
We just disagreed on a few things!

BRYCE nods. She hands DAWN her drink. They cheers. BRYCE leans in close to DAWN to speak.

BRYCE
What did you guys argue about?

DAWN
Mt mom. Jessie's been really MIA.
We used to be like sisters and my mom treated her so well. Then when Mom went to Orange, she stopped trying. And I called her out.

BRYCE shakes her head.

BRYCE
You are an amazing daughter. They
can't all be like you.

DAWN smiles, albeit weakly.

DAWN
It's hard caring this much. It's
just exhausting.

BRYCE
That's why tonight, it's about
relaxing! Unwinding!

CUT TO:

LATER

BRYCE and DAWN dancing. Slow motion. Loud music blaring. BRYCE is wild, DAWN is more reserved but we zoom in on her eyes, which are closed, as she takes in the freedom. She finds herself dancing with another man. He's tall, handsome, built, generic good looking man. They lock in on the dance floor. He pulls her in and they become one. BRYCE watches with intrigue from the outside.

LATER

The dance floor is filled. DAWN and the MYSTERY MAN are going at it. BRYCE watches with concern now, almost, perhaps a twinge of jealousy overcoming her. BRYCE dances alone now, while DAWN and the MYSTERY MAN are all over each other. Focus on BRYCE.

BRYCE walks over and taps the MYSTERY MAN on the shoulder.

BRYCE
Hey, you mind if I have a dance?

The MYSTERY MAN, a gentlemen, lets her dance with DAWN, and wipes his brow. He leaves for the bar. DAWN, broken from her trance, watches him leave. She then looks at BRYCE.

DAWN
What are you doing?

BRYCE
He was being weird.

LATER

BRYCE and DAWN walk to the bathroom.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
... He was being all grabby and
touchy and yucky.

DAWN
Maybe I wanted that.

BRYCE
You did?

DAWN shakes her head, amused.

INT. A BAR - BATHROOM - EVENING

They're washing their hands.

BRYCE
Are you mad?

DAWN finishes washing her hands and goes to dry them. BRYCE
watches her.

DAWN
He wasn't being weird. He was sweet
and he was a really good dancer.

BRYCE
He was touching you. And you don't
even like...

DAWN
You don't know what I like and
don't like.

A long pause.

BRYCE
Well okay, fine. You don't have to
be so snippy with me.

DAWN rolls her eyes.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
I'm just looking out for you. You
deserve someone better than that.

DAWN
HOW could you possibly know that?
You don't even know him! I don't
even know him! Just...
(MORE)

DAWN (CONT'D)
(A beat)
Stop, please.

A very long pause. Several people are pretending not to listen but are slowly working their way out to eavesdrop.

BRYCE
I'm like this because I know you
need support, Dawn. Your life isn't
easy. We all need support.

DAWN
You know what the problem is?
You're making this about you. It's
about what YOU think that I need. A
helping hand. Some moral support.

BRYCE
What's wrong with that? I know you,
Dawn, that's why I think that. I
love you and I know you.

DAWN huffs in anger and storms out. Focus on BRYCE. She's keeping it cool but cracks are showing.

CUT TO:

EXT. A BAR - EVENING

DAWN leans on a wall, hyperventilating. Heartbeats are loud, the ambient sound is quiet. It's just DAWN calming her nerves.

As it calms, we hear DAWN crying. It's short bursts of crying. A confused mess of emotions spill out.

Behind her, BRYCE appears.

BRYCE (V.O.)
Dawn?

DAWN instinctively turns away from the voice. She's still sniffing.

BRYCE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.

DAWN says nothing. She's facing us, away from BRYCE.

BRYCE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I'm taking a cab. I understand if
you wanna take another...

DAWN

Let's go.

BRYCE nods.

BRYCE (V.O.)

Okay.

FADE TO:

INT. A TAXI - EVENING

BRYCE and DAWN aren't speaking.

FADE TO:

INT. THE AIRBNB - BEDROOM - EVENING

Focus on DAWN, who's having trouble sleeping.

Focus on BRYCE. She's also tossing and turning.

They're facing opposite directions. Their nice going-out clothes are strewn everywhere.

BRYCE

I missed you.

DAWN says nothing.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

I don't understand why. But I just do.

DAWN shakes her head.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Don't shake your head. I know you.

DAWN grins.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Let's just... Start over.

DAWN closes her eyes. She falls asleep.

CUT TO:

INT. THE AIRBNB - BATHROOM - MORNING

DAWN sits on the toilet, browsing her phone. New messages. Some from Jessie. She ignores them.

A long message from LYNN, and her heart skips a beat. But it simply says: "Hope you're enjoying your trip! Cherry is good here, being quieter than usual, so no arguments from me. Tell Greg to take out the trash. It smells stinky!" It goes on but she closes the message.

A message from GREG, her cousin. "Hey, cuz, you in Chicago? Hit me up." DAWN texts back. "Yeah, but not free yet. I'll text you." He simply replies: "Aight. I also took out the trash so tell that to Mom." DAWN smiles and tells LYNN the good news. She heart emojis the message.

DAWN exits the bathroom. BRYCE sprints past her to the bathroom and slams it shut. DAWN hears the toilet seat drop. A trickle.

BRYCE (V.O.)
I wanna talk.

DAWN leans her head on the door.

DAWN
Now?

BRYCE (V.O.)
Could be, if you like it.

DAWN rolls her eyes.

BRYCE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I want you to have a good time
here. With me.

DAWN
I know.

BRYCE (V.O.)
That guy was gross.

DAWN
You were just jealous.

A beat. A flush.

BRYCE (V.O.)
Fine, maybe I was. But also you
could do so much better.

DAWN

Again, you don't know what I want
and...

The door opens. BRYCE, messy hair, baggy pajamas, bad breath presumably, steps out.

BRYCE

(Smirking)

Oh, I do.

She brings DAWN in for a kiss. It's short but effective. BRYCE pulls away, leaving DAWN hanging.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

See, you wanted that. And now I
know what's it's like. So we can
move on.

BRYCE walks past DAWN with a hop. DAWN is frozen. She feels her lips puckering. She savors it. She feels BRYCE watching.

DAWN turns around.

DAWN

So...

BRYCE shakes her head.

BRYCE

It's a kiss. So you can get it out
of your system. That's it.

DAWN

And is it out of *your* system?

BRYCE shrugs.

BRYCE

Yeah. I've always wondered. You're
kind of lousy.

She giggles. She then begins to change in front of DAWN.

DAWN

Still mad at you, by the way.

BRYCE

Okay.

She's in her underwear and begins to change into a dress.

DAWN

I...

She doesn't have words. She still feels the kiss.

DAWN (CONT'D)
I...

BRYCE
What?

DAWN
I like you without BB.

BRYCE straightens her dress. She's a bit confused.

BRYCE
BB is my life. You understand that,
right?

DAWN
You're more fun and...

BRYCE
Dawn. Stop. Not this again. Let's
just...

She exhales, wiggles her body.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Let's eat.

INT. A SUBWAY - AFTERNOON

Focus on DAWN. She's browsing her phone. Behind her, BRYCE is giggling with a random lady.

INT. A RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Push in on a table.

BRYCE and ALLIE sit on one side, DAWN on the other. They're mid conversation.

ALLIE
I finally have time for myself now.

BRYCE holds ALLIE's hand.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
And for you and Dylan. Of course.
My sweet baby Dyl-Dyl.

BRYCE smiles warmly.

BRYCE
How was Evanston?

DAWN leans back on her chair, invisible in the conversation.

ALLIE
Boring. Belinda is a cutie though.
But she also needs to get over
herself. Like, yeah, female
empowerment, but she's taking it a
little far, you know what I mean?

The sisters giggle. DAWN is stone faced, making her way
through a salad.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
How's your...

She glances at DAWN.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
Girl's trip going?

BRYCE
Good! We're just catching up. Been
so long.

ALLIE
I didn't even ask how you are,
Dawn. How's your year been?

DAWN chews her food. From her vantage, the two sisters
glaring at her seemed intimidating yet comical.

DAWN
Everything's good. Thanks.

BRYCE
She's still the best daughter in
the world.

ALLIE
Yeah, that was kinda crazy when you
left Colorado. We were wondering
what happened.

DAWN
It was fine. Mom's okay.
(A beat)
How's AJ, by the way?

A beat. BRYCE makes a face. "What are you doing?" DAWN
ignores her.

ALLIE

He's good. Last I heard, he moved
to Texas. Found himself a real
cowgirl.

DAWN

Oh. Good for him.

ALLIE

I've moved on. He's so sensitive.
Right, Bryce?

BRYCE nods.

DAWN

Sensitive how?

ALLIE

He doesn't understand forgiveness.
You know who understands
forgiveness?

She snaps her fingers.

ALLIE (CONT'D)

Letner.

DAWN

Of course.

ALLIE

What's that mean?

BRYCE shakes her head.

BRYCE

She doesn't mean anything by it.

DAWN

You and Letner love forgiveness. So
much.

ALLIE laughs.

ALLIE

And you don't?

DAWN

We've talked about this already.

BRYCE's eyes shift nervously back and forth between the two.
She doesn't say anything.

ALLIE

If you feel so bad for the guy,
give him a call. He's a sensitive
flower, he needs some more
nurturing.

She puckers her lips. She then leans back in her chair,
drinking her wine.

ALLIE (CONT'D)

God, Bryce, she's such a goddamn
prude.

BRYCE

We can talk about something else.

She gestures to DAWN. "Change the subject." DAWN rolls her eyes.

DAWN

It's bad enough you cheated. But
then blaming him for being
sensitive? That's just bad karma.

ALLIE leans forward and places her wine on the table. She puts her hands together and leans forward. She's making a prayer.

ALLIE

I don't need to explain myself to
you. Please, Bryce, remove your
friend from my sight.

BRYCE stands and takes ALLIE's shoulder.

BRYCE

Let's take a walk.

ALLIE slaps BRYCE's hand away.

ALLIE

No. I stay, she goes.

DAWN stands.

DAWN

I'm leaving.

BRYCE

Dawn...

DAWN

I'll Venmo you.

DAWN grabs her jacket and leaves. Focus on her as she walks out of the restaurant.

FADE TO:

EXT. A STREET - AFTERNOON

DAWN walks alone.

A text from BRYCE. "Why did you do that?" Then: "You know she apologized, crying, begged for forgiveness, you know she was drunk!" Another text: "AJ was being unreasonable!"

EXT. A CAFE - AFTERNOON

DAWN sits at a table with a coffee. After a sip, she makes a call.

JESSIE (V.O.)

Hey.

DAWN

You remember Greg?

A beat.

JESSIE (V.O.)

Your hot cousin?

DAWN fake barfs. JESSIE laughs.

DAWN

He told me that you don't need to always hear that you're right.

(A pause)

Because occasionally you need to hear that the other person is wrong.

JESSIE (V.O.)

All right, bitch, what are you trying to say now?

DAWN

Nothing. I'm just saying.

JESSIE tsks.

JESSIE (V.O.)

Look, I'm sorry about what I said about your mom.

(MORE)

JESSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But bitch, she's a troublemaker and
you can't ignore that!

DAWN
I didn't ask for your opinion on
that. And you don't get to say that
after you ignored her since she
checked herself in.

JESSIE (V.O.)
Bitch, yes I can! And if anything,
we should blame your stupid ass dad
for abandoning her. That bitch
should be there every day, not you.
He's making you miserable!

DAWN chuckles. The chuckle becomes a bit of a guttural laugh.

JESSIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Bitch, what's so funny? I know I'm
funny but that wasn't supposed to
be funny.

DAWN
I miss you.

JESSIE (V.O.)
Then get your dumb ass back to New
York and stop hanging out with the
white girl. You slut.

DAWN notices another incoming call. It's from BRYCE.

DAWN
I gotta go.

JESSIE (V.O.)
Bitch what...

She hangs up and accepts the call.

DAWN
Hi.

BRYCE (V.O.)
Hi. Where are you?

DAWN
At a cafe.

BRYCE (V.O.)
The ticket for the show is at 3.

DAWN

I know.

BRYCE (V.O.)

Do you wanna meet there?

DAWN sighs. She checks the time.

DAWN

I can be there in 30 minutes.

BRYCE (V.O.)

Okay, good. Let's meet there?

DAWN

Okay.

BRYCE (V.O.)

Great!

BRYCE hangs up. DAWN looks at her phone. Call disconnected. She sighs and downs her coffee.

INT. TRAIN - AFTERNOON

DAWN is browsing her phone. She looks up. A woman and her friend are laughing about something. DAWN smiles.

EXT. JAZZ CLUB - AFTERNOON

BRYCE waits outside the club. DAWN approaches. They walk up to each other.

BRYCE

Hey.

DAWN

Hey.

BRYCE

We were all being a little dramatic back there, huh?

DAWN

I guess.

BRYCE

Everyone kinda needed to chill the f out.

DAWN shakes her head.

DAWN

What do you want to say, Bryce?

BRYCE

I didn't like that.

DAWN

That I called out your sister for
being a...

BRYCE holds up her hand. She shakes her head furiously.

BRYCE

Stop it. Stop it, Dawn. Just please
stop.

A beat.

DAWN

I was just telling the truth. Just
calling it as it is.

BRYCE

Well, Dawn, it's making my life
extremely stressful.

She takes DAWN's hand.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

And it's making it harder for us to
have a good time here. Right?

DAWN

You have to know what kind of
person your sister is. I know she
loves you, but... come on.

BRYCE closes her eyes, shakes her head, chuckles.

BRYCE

You are a gift, Dawn Lee. You
articulate what I can't. I wish I
was as ... eloquent as you.

DAWN

I'm just looking out for you, too.

BRYCE

You care about me. I know. But I
hope you understand that she's my
family.

DAWN

Bryce... We all have family. But sometimes you got to see through it. Sometimes, they stink.

BRYCE laughs, a short, sweet laugh.

BRYCE

You're so amazing for being such a good daughter. I've told you, right?

DAWN

All the time.

BRYCE

Show's about to begin.

They look inside.

DAWN

Who even has a jazz show in the afternoon?

BRYCE shrugs. They walk inside.

FADE TO:

EXT. A PARK - EVENING

DAWN and BRYCE walk through the park, light jazz playing. They're chatting. We focus on DAWN with fades, zooming in. Everything seems okay now.

SHOTS OF CHICAGO. The two of them walk around, like a couple. They're lightly laughing, enjoying themselves, yet we cut to DAWN every now and then, just looking like something is off. BRYCE seems to not have a care in the world.

EXT. WATERFRONT - EVENING

DAWN and BRYCE walk.

DAWN

I think we should start heading to the restaurant.

BRYCE

Dawn...

They both stop.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
I know. Okay?

DAWN
Know what?

BRYCE
I'm... not a good friend. Or
sister. Or husband. But I'm trying.

DAWN holds BRYCE by the shoulders.

DAWN
What's going on?

BRYCE
I know how I am. I'm not perfect.

Hold on DAWN.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
This is the part where you say, yes
you are.

They both chuckle.

DAWN
You know that's not me.

BRYCE
I just want everyone to get along.

DAWN
You don't think about yourself.

BRYCE
Neither do you, and I love you for
that.

DAWN exhales and shakes her head. She walks away, then loops back.

DAWN
But I still maintain my sense of
self.

A long pause.

BRYCE
You're saying I'm not myself?

DAWN sighs.

DAWN

I'm saying... You... Change
yourself around others. You're
flirty, you're a loving wife,
you're a loyal sister.

BRYCE

So? That's what people do! At least
it's better than you being ...

A man suddenly appears and walks up to DAWN. He's a tall
blonde with a wife beater, baggy shorts, and some shades. He
hugs her. It's GREG.

DAWN

Hi, Greg.

GREG

Cuz! How are you?

GREG turns to BRYCE.

GREG (CONT'D)

You must be the famous Bryce.

He takes her hand and kisses it. BRYCE blushes.

BRYCE

Wow, Dawn, you didn't tell me your
cousin was so...

GREG

I'm starving. Let's go in, eh?

He taps DAWN on the arm and proceeds into the restaurant.
DAWN and BRYCE stare at each other, both smiling.

INT. A NICE RESTAURANT - EVENING

At the table, GREG bites into a burger.

GREG

Mmm mmm. The burgers are so good
here.

BRYCE munches into her burger. She nods, impressed.

BRYCE

You come here often?

GREG

Only on special occasions.

He winks.

GREG (CONT'D)
 Dawn and her friend visiting from
 out of town is special, I'd reckon.

DAWN is working on a large pasta dish.

DAWN
 Where's Rachel?

GREG
 She's out with her girlfriends.

DAWN
 Did you tell her I was here?

GREG
 Sorry, cuz. It's an important
 birthday. Maybe we can go check it
 out after?

DAWN nods. She watches the pasta sauce creep down her penne.
 Focus on DAWN.

BRYCE (V.O.)
 So Greg, you're Lynn's son?

GREG (V.O.)
 Yeah, she's my mom. I do miss her
 sometimes but I fell in love with
 Chicago after college, and I
 couldn't bear the thought of
 leaving my friends, y'know?

BRYCE (V.O.)
 I do know! I wanted to stay in
 Minnesota but...

Suddenly, DAWN feels the stare of GREG, but he says nothing.
 DAWN looks at BRYCE, who's speaking, but the sound is
 muffled. DAWN and GREG lock eyes. He smiles.

BRYCE
 (Her voice is unmuffled)
 ... But he wanted to go to Denver,
 and I think that was the right
 choice.

GREG
 And cuz, you visited Bryce in
 Denver, right?

DAWN nods.

DAWN

I got to meet Dylan.

BRYCE

Dawn left early to take care of her mom.

GREG whistles, putting his burger down.

GREG

I remember that.

(He picks up a fry and wags it)

I wouldn't do that for my Mom. If I'm out in the woods, I'll be tripping, and the world fades away.

DAWN

You're lucky you don't have to deal with Dad.

GREG

Uncle Ryan?

(He rolls his eyes)

He stinks.

GREG turns to BRYCE.

GREG (CONT'D)

Her dad left her mom at a psych ward and just left. And that's that.

He claps his hands.

GREG (CONT'D)

Done! I mean, who does that?

BRYCE

Dawn tells me stories about him.

GREG

Yeah, he stinks. I bet he'd kill me if I was high in the woods and I didn't get him. But luckily, he's not my dad, and my mom is a-okay.

He's all smiles. He looks at BRYCE.

GREG (CONT'D)

Look at us, talking about family stuff. Sorry. How's your parents? Siblings?

He munches on his burger. DAWN watches, slightly grossed out.

BRYCE

Oh, that's okay. Yeah, I have a sister. She's my best friend. My parents are fine, kinda typical cool white suburban parents. Not much to say.

GREG nods.

GREG

That's what's up.

He turns to DAWN.

GREG (CONT'D)

White parents, so much easier.

DAWN

Yep.

CUT TO:

INT. A BAR - EVENING

DAWN, BRYCE, and GREG are huddled around a small table. GREG snaps his fingers.

GREG

Oh, I got another thing to add to the Uncle Ryan stinks pot.

DAWN, slightly tipsy, playfully slaps his shoulder.

DAWN

Greg! Stop it!

GREG

You don't like him anyway.

BRYCE

I wanna hear.

DAWN grimaces.

DAWN

I don't even know what he's gonna say. You've already heard the worst of it.

GREG

Mom told me he's *unfaithful.*

He slams his beer down.

GREG (CONT'D)
Boom! Shithead alert!

DAWN
Greg!

GREG
We're amongst friends here. We all
know how shitty your dad is. Right,
Bryce?

BRYCE nods. She locks eyes with DAWN. They both giggle,
awkward.

She turns to BRYCE.

DAWN
I'm really sorry about him, he
doesn't know when to...
(Turns to GREG)
... Shut the fuck up!

GREG loops his arms around both DAWN and BRYCE.

GREG
I think we can all agree on two
things. 1...

He holds his beer out to DAWN.

GREG (CONT'D)
That my cousin is the best goddamn
person ever.

BRYCE raises her glass.

GREG (CONT'D)
And 2...

A beat.

GREG (CONT'D)
Fuck Ryan.

They all cheers. We focus on DAWN. She drinks, but feels
uneasy.

FADE TO:

DAWN is standing on a line for the bathroom. It's a long
line. She looks ahead: at least 5 people. She browses her
phone. Everyone else does the same.

GREG then appears and stands next to her.

GREG (CONT'D)
Hey, cuz.

DAWN
Hey.

She puts her phone away.

GREG
Listen, I'm sorry about bringing up
your dad and the whole thing.

DAWN shakes her head.

DAWN
It's okay. You're right.

GREG
Sometimes you just gotta say that
shit loud, you know? Don't tiptoe
around it. Your dad makes your life
miserable. Say it.

A beat. DAWN says nothing.

GREG (CONT'D)
Dawn?

DAWN
Oh, now? I mean, I know that.

GREG
But do you?
(A beat)
You don't need some other person
sugarcoating it. You just need it
told straight up. Say it, Dawn.

DAWN exhales. The line shimmies forward.

GREG (CONT'D)
Don't tell me you're afraid to say
it.

DAWN
It's not that.

GREG
Cuz...

He shakes his head.

GREG (CONT'D)
They got you thinking you're the
problem, man. But you're not.

DAWN
I know I'm not the problem!

GREG claps his hands.

GREG
Then say it!

DAWN
(Exclaiming)
My dad makes my life miserable and
I'm not the problem!

A beat. The music in the bar drowns out all conversation but DAWN feels a pulse of energy flow through her.

DAWN (CONT'D)
Dad really is a piece of shit,
isn't he?

GREG wraps an arm around her neck and messes with her hair.

GREG
One of a kind shit face.

Focus on DAWN. She's smiling, laughing.

FADE TO:

EXT. A BAR - EVENING

DAWN and GREG walk outside. BRYCE is smoking with some women, laughing about something.

BRYCE spots DAWN.

BRYCE
Hey! Guys, this is Dawn.

The women wave and greet her.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
She's the best.

DAWN
I'm a little tired. I'm gonna get
going.

BRYCE

Okay, I'll get my stuff.

DAWN

No, it's fine, if you wanna hang...

BRYCE puts out her cigarette and is already equipped and ready to leave.

BRYCE

(To the women)

Bye, ladies!

They all wave goodbye. BRYCE rejoins DAWN, hooking her arm around DAWN's.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Bathroom line was long, huh?

GREG

Miles!

DAWN

You need to go?

BRYCE

No, I'll hold it.

EXT. A CHICAGO DOWNTOWN STREET - EVENING

The three of them walk side by side. All of the bars are full of people, loud, drunk.

BRYCE

Where to? A club?

GREG

What kind of vibe you seeking,
Bryce?

BRYCE

Hmm... I don't know. Dawn?

DAWN

Something laid back?

INT. A CLUB - EVENING

Slow motion. Focus on DAWN, introspective, holding a drink. BRYCE and GREG are dancing. She checks her phone. She looks through LYNN's messages. Nothing new.

BRYCE, off the dance floor, taps on her shoulder. She points to her drink.

BRYCE
Want another?

DAWN shakes her head.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Is your mom okay?

DAWN
Yeah.

BRYCE
Hey. We're here to have fun, right?
So loosen up a little. You're doing
the best you can.

DAWN nods. She hands her drink to BRYCE.

DAWN
I'm actually gonna head back.

BRYCE is surprised. She stares between the drink and DAWN.

BRYCE
It's so early!

DAWN
I'm just a little tired.

BRYCE
It's okay. Here, let me...

She chugs the drink. DAWN is impressed. She puckers her lips and drops the glass on the counter.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
(Raising her finger,
making a swirling motion)
Let's go!

DAWN
No, it's fine, you and Greg
should...

GREG hops over, as though being summoned.

GREG
Yeah, cuz?

DAWN
I'm gonna go.

GREG

Oh, all right. I just met this
really cute girl, so I'll stay.
Will you be okay?

DAWN smiles and pushes GREG back to the dance floor. GREG makes a finger phone gesture.

GREG (CONT'D)
Call me if you need me!

EXT. THE AIRBNB - EVENING

BRYCE walks onto the porch and sits down on a bench. DAWN walks to the door.

BRYCE

Wait, wait. Let's sit out here.

DAWN, her hand on the door, releases it. She turns to BRYCE.

DAWN

Just for a little.

BRYCE pats next to her. DAWN drops her bag and parks herself besides BRYCE. She leans, yawning.

BRYCE

Do we have a plan for tomorrow?

DAWN

I don't know. Not thinking that far ahead.

BRYCE

All right.

BRYCE pulls a carton of cigarettes out.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

You want?

DAWN shakes her head, but then:

DAWN

Should you be smoking around Dylan?

BRYCE

I don't.

DAWN says nothing.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
You're right. I really should stop.

She puts the carton away.

DAWN
Since when did you smoke anyway?

BRYCE
Since I had Dylan.

DAWN finds herself closing her eyes. She's drifting off to sleep.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Do you think I'm a good mom?

DAWN's eyes are open.

DAWN
Yeah. I do.

BRYCE
I don't think I am.

DAWN
Who told you that? Boy Bryce?

DAWN sits up.

DAWN (CONT'D)
I'll kill him.

BRYCE laughs.

BRYCE
No. I'm just wondering.

DAWN
I suppose it's the same as me asking you if I'm a good daughter.

BRYCE
But I know you are.

DAWN
You don't.

A beat.

DAWN (CONT'D)
Do you understand?

BRYCE shakes her head.

DAWN (CONT'D)

You said you wonder if you're a good mom. And sometimes I wonder if I'm a good daughter.

BRYCE

Right...

DAWN

So me giving you some empty praise like "you're a good mom" is pointless, isn't it?

BRYCE

Excuse you! It's not pointless. It means something to me.

DAWN

You're telling me, if I say, you're an amazing mom, keep up the good work, that makes you feel better?

BRYCE

Yes!

DAWN

Even though I've met Dylan once, and I barely know how you are as a mom?

BRYCE exhales sharply.

BRYCE

You know how I am as a mom!

DAWN

It's empty praise, Bryce.

BRYCE

You're telling me... Whenever I tell you you're amazing, you don't believe me?

DAWN

I ...

BRYCE genuinely looks hurt.

DAWN (CONT'D)

I do believe you. But it's not what I need to hear sometimes.

BRYCE

Then what *do* you want to hear?

DAWN

Something other than how amazing I am. I know that works for you, but not for me.

BRYCE

So what, you want me to lie to you?

DAWN

No!

BRYCE

Because I'd be lying if I said otherwise. I'd be lying if I called you a terrible daughter, because I mean ...

BRYCE chuckles, nervous, anticipating her next words.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Who leaves her sick mother behind? A daughter should always be by her sick parent's side. That's not only irresponsible, it's dangerous.

Her hands are shaking.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Is that what you want to hear?

A long silence. A car drives by, breaking the lull. Focus on DAWN.

BRYCE (V.O.)

You know, it's really hard being your cheerleader. It gets really exhausting. And then you say this?

DAWN

My cheerleader?

BRYCE shrugs.

BRYCE

Yeah.

DAWN

I don't need your cheerleading, Bryce. I don't need you to figure out who is worthy to date me. I need someone who tells it like it is. That...

(MORE)

DAWN (CONT'D)
My life is really fucking difficult
and it's not my fault and my dad is
a piece of shit and my aunt is too
much and my mom just needs to...

DAWN catches her breath. She takes a deep breath.

DAWN (CONT'D)
I don't need you to cheer me on.

BRYCE
Okay, I'll be more mindful of what
I say.

DAWN groans.

DAWN
Bryce, you're still such a goddamn
people pleaser. Do you really agree
with me or are you just saying that
so we can move on?

BRYCE is annoyed.

BRYCE
Does it matter? Do you care if I
think your aunt is a bitch or your
dad is an asshole or your mom is
...

DAWN
(Interjects)
Yes!

BRYCE
Then fine.

She leans back on the bench, crossing her legs.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Fine. We wanna be honest.

DAWN
Yes.

BRYCE
I do. I think your life sucks. I
think your dad is a reprehensible
man, your aunt is a little pushy,
and your mom is a lost cause and
it's an impossible situation but it
makes this friendship really hard.

DAWN is about to say something but BRYCE cuts her off.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

I also think you really are an amazing person. An amazing daughter.

DAWN

But you just *say* those things.

BRYCE

Why won't you let yourself believe you're a good person?

DAWN

Because you're right! Who leaves their mom to go camping, who leaves for months and barely talks to her? Puts her friends first?

BRYCE

That's your dad talking.

DAWN

Stop, okay?

DAWN paces. She looks out onto the street.

DAWN (CONT'D)

My family isn't your family.

BRYCE

Yes, but it's all the same shit.

DAWN

No, it's not. I don't let my family walk all over me.

A beat.

BRYCE

Excuse me?

DAWN

Your sister. Fucking Mr. BB. I have some self respect.

BRYCE

Who are you right now?

DAWN

I've told you this before. If we're talking truth, here it is.

BRYCE

Dawn...

She stands, folding her arms.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
You've been holding this in?

DAWN says nothing.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Yes, you've told me. But not all
families are the same.

DAWN
God, you never get mad, do you?

BRYCE
I don't want us to fight. I want us
to talk. Deescalate. I want to
understand your point of view,
Dawn.

DAWN
Maybe *I* wanna fight. I want you
to stand up for yourself.

She smacks her forehead in disbelief, raising her arm into
the darkness.

DAWN (CONT'D)
You have no response to the "walk
all over you" comment or about self
respect?

BRYCE shakes her head.

BRYCE
You're angry.

DAWN
Yes, of course I'm angry! I see you
suffering under your family and...

BRYCE
Suffering?

A beat.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Dawn, what is this all really
about?

DAWN
That I don't want your fucking pity
when you can't even respect
yourself!

A long pause. DAWN is out of breath. BRYCE sighs. She stands up.

BRYCE
I think this is maybe not working out.

DAWN
Maybe.

BRYCE
You know I love you, Dawn. But...

DAWN
I love you, too.

DAWN shuts her mouth.

BRYCE
Okay. But it hurts me to see you like this. I know it's hard but I know you'll pull through.

She steps to the door.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
I don't mind being your cheerleader. But you make it really difficult to cheer.

BRYCE walks inside.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
And by the way...

She turns around. She's framed in darkness, her face obscured by the shadows.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
Being a mom is hard. I know we don't talk about it much, but ... A little encouragement, even if you don't see it or even if we don't talk about it, it would have been nice to hear.

A sad smile. She disappears into the house.

Back to DAWN. She sits on the bench again. She sighs, holding back her emotions. She closes her eyes.

FADE TO:

INT. THE AIRBNB - BEDROOM - EVENING

DAWN sleeps. BRYCE is behind her, on the other side of the bed.

Time passes. It's morning.

INT. THE AIRBNB - BEDROOM - MORNING

She wakes up. She yawns. On the other side of the bed:

BRYCE is gone.

DAWN takes notice. BRYCE has taken her things and gone.

On the door, a note.

"See you around. Hope you find some peace ❤"

DAWN tries to call BRYCE, but the number is either blocked or she doesn't pick up.

EXT. THE AIRBNB - MORNING

DAWN steps out. She sits on the bench. She leans back.

Timelapse. Zoom in. There's quiet music and calming vibes, as though she's meditating. She's holding back.

A honk of a car. A taxi pulls to the curb. DAWN leans forward.

It's ALLIE. She gets out of the car and looks at DAWN. The car leaves.

ALLIE
Where's Bryce?

DAWN doesn't respond.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
She was supposed to meet me for
breakfast but her phone is off and
I can't reach her.

DAWN shrugs but remains quiet.

ALLIE (CONT'D)
I'm worried about her.

ALLIE claps her hands together.

ALLIE (CONT'D)

Hello?

DAWN

She left.

ALLIE

Where?

DAWN shrugs.

ALLIE (CONT'D)

Did she go to get coffee? Did she go somewhere else? Did she go back to Denver?

DAWN shrugs again. ALLIE, mad at first, begins to soften, realizing what happened.

ALLIE (CONT'D)

Did you guys fight?

DAWN doesn't answer. ALLIE nods, empathetic, then immediately switches to annoyance.

ALLIE (CONT'D)

Great.

ALLIE leaves. She pauses, taking a quick glance at DAWN. A quick exhale. She then keeps walking.

Focus on DAWN. She closes her eyes and the tears flow.

PAN to the street.

FADE TO:

INT. THE CHAPEL - IGNATIUS HOUSE - MORNING

The camera pans around a circle of women. All are meditating. It is silent.

We catch up with DAWN.

"JULY 2027"

DAWN is focused. We stay on DAWN. After what seems like a long time, the camera continues panning to the teacher. The teacher nods, smiles, and claps her hands. Break time.

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

DAWN sits on the toilet. She exhales. She's focused. A little weary, but looking happy, content, restful.

She steps out. She checks herself out in the mirror. Flush from another stall. In the mirror, DAWN sees BRYCE.

They lock eyes but say nothing. There's a hint of a smile from both, a nod, but no words are exchanged. They both wash their hands in silence. DAWN shows BRYCE the way out. BRYCE smiles, nods, and leaves.

FADE TO:

EXT. IGNATIUS HOUSE RETREAT GROUNDS - MORNING

DAWN is outside the chapel, talking to someone. She notices BRYCE approaching.

DAWN
Excuse me.

DAWN steps away from the conversation and waves to BRYCE.

DAWN (CONT'D)
Hi.

BRYCE
Hi.

DAWN notices her backpack.

DAWN
Leaving already?

BRYCE
Yeah.

DAWN
Long time no talk.

BRYCE
I thought you would be here. I hoped you would be here.

They walk side by side on the grounds. The sun is fighting its way though the clouds.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
How's your mom?

DAWN

She's fine. You're not gonna
believe this.

A beat.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Dad actually visits regularly. We
rotate between me, Lynn, and him.

BRYCE is genuinely shocked.

BRYCE

Men can change?!

DAWN

Right?

They both giggle.

BRYCE

What happened?

DAWN

I talked to him. I wanted to be
kinder to myself, and I figured
that the first step was to talk to
him and Lynn. Lay it all out.

BRYCE

How'd that go?

DAWN chortles.

DAWN

About as well as one night expect.
But they listened. Eventually.

She shrugs.

DAWN (CONT'D)

It's a small win.

BRYCE

It's a big win. You really are an
amazing woman.

They share an intimate look, longer than expected.

DAWN

Well, how's Dylan?

BRYCE

Just the cutest.

BRYCE pulls a picture out on her phone. He's grown up.

DAWN

He's looking more and more like
you.

BRYCE

That's what BB said. He doesn't
like it.

She chuckles.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

He says hi, by the way.

DAWN nods.

DAWN

How are you guys? How's Allie?

BRYCE

We're good! BB and Allie have
really taken a load off of looking
after Dylan. It's a relief. They're
the best.

DAWN

And what about the other stuff we
talked about?

BRYCE

I...

A beat. She chuckles, turning to DAWN. She seems in awe.

DAWN

What?

BRYCE

It's just ... You're different. And
I love that.

DAWN

Different?

She blushes.

BRYCE

Don't think too much about it. Yes,
we talked about it. Is it working?
I want to be hopeful. Yes, I think
it is. I think they're more ...
conscious of my feelings.

DAWN

Good. So you did think about it.

BRYCE

Yeah.

They keep walking in silence. The crunch of the grass is magnified in the ambient noise of the campgrounds.

DAWN

It's weird. It's been about the same amount of time since we last saw each other, but this time feels different.

BRYCE

I mean, we didn't plan this.

DAWN

Right. I just needed a break.

BRYCE smiles.

BRYCE

Did you think this might happen?
Us, meeting here.

DAWN

Yeah, duh.

They both giggle again.

DAWN (CONT'D)

I'm happy it did.

BRYCE

Yeah.

Another beat.

DAWN

Well...

They both stop walking.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Where are you going now?

BRYCE

Where are you going now?

A pause. No giggles.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

You first.

DAWN
Back to New York.

BRYCE
I moved to Philadelphia.

DAWN
Oh, shit. Why?

BRYCE
BB's job.

DAWN
Ah.

BRYCE
Maybe we can...

DAWN shakes her head.

DAWN
No. Sorry.

BRYCE looks a little hurt. She recomposes herself.

BRYCE
Okay.

DAWN
You blocked me. Remember?

BRYCE
Yeah, I remember.

They reach the parking lot.

DAWN
You took your car?

BRYCE
It's a long drive.

BRYCE walks to her car.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
You want a ride?

DAWN
To New York?

BRYCE
I could take you to Philly.

DAWN considers.

DAWN

I think I'll take the shuttle.

BRYCE

Okay.

BRYCE unlocks her car. DAWN opens the door for her.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Thanks.

BRYCE steps in and throws the backpack in the back. She turns over the engine. DAWN leans on the car door.

DAWN

I'll see you around.

BRYCE nods.

BRYCE

Maybe!

She closes the door.

Focus on DAWN as BRYCE drives away. Her face is hard to read. It's a mix of sadness, relief, disappointment, confusion, but most of all, finality. We swap back and forth between DAWN and BRYCE, driving away.

The last shot is DAWN. Now her face is truly unreadable.

THE END