

Adopted

By

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FADE IN.

INT. BAILEY'S BEDROOM - DAY

A teenage girl's room, but not a silly one. This room belongs to a serious student. Posters for indie bands and fine art prints cover the walls.

BAILEY BAXTER, a pretty 17 year old girl, is standing in front of a vanity, removing her cap and gown to reveal a modest dress underneath. She has just graduated high school.

She perches her cap on the corner of a mirror, along with her yellow honor cords. She puts her robe on a hanger and hangs it on her open closet door.

Bailey opens the folder to her diploma and takes out her final report card, nestled inside. From Calculus to Chemistry, all A's, but next to Honors English is a B+.

Bailey takes a final look at her diploma before placing it on a shelf next to several academic awards and plaques. Every parent's dream.

One says "1ST PLACE SPELLING BEE", another says "NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY BRANCH PRESIDENT". Yet another boasts, "AWARD FOR SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION IN COMMUNITY SERVICE".

She takes one last look at herself in the mirror, fluffing her hat hair, before heading out the door and down the stairs. She's the guest of honor and everybody is waiting.

INT. BAILEY'S HOUSE, FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS.

The house is big and old, with high ceilings. None of the walls, floors, or furnishings are up-to-date. It is a grandparents' house. You can smell it by looking at it.

A party is going on--a graduation party. Festive streamers are hanging from every doorway, and a giant banner declaring, "CONGRATULATIONS BAILEY" is hanging on the wall.

A spread of sandwiches and veggie platters is on the table, well picked-over. On the television is a video montage of photos from Bailey's life up until now.

Bailey enters the room unnoticed--they weren't waiting for her after all.

(CONTINUED)

Everybody is eating and drinking and sharing stories about Bailey, but nobody seems to notice her around them. It's like she's invisible.

Bailey picks up a small plate and piles it high with vegetables. She eats them as she meanders through the crowd, eavesdropping on family and friends.

She stops in front of a group including her brother TOM, early thirties, his wife JENNIE, who is holding a baby, and two older uncle-types.

TOM

I'd bring her to football games with me, wearing her little cheerleader uniform, and even though I wasn't on the team, the girls would flock to me. Flock to me.

The group is amused. Jennie had been one of those girls.

JENNIE

Well, she was just about the cutest thing in the whole wide world.

TOM

I'm glad you thought so, babe.

Jennie and Tom share a peck on the lips. Bailey moves along. She's heard that story a million times.

She stops in front of a group of older family members and friends, including her AUNT GRACE, mid sixties.

AUNT GRACE

...and she came in covered head to toe in mud and asked, "is this how you make a mud pie, Aunt Gracie?" She was so sweet and serious that I didn't even yell at her for dirtying my carpet!

Bailey smiles politely as she passes her aunt. She'd heard that story many times too. She continues to wander and walks through an archway into the kitchen.

INT. BAILEY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The decorating style in the kitchen is consistent with the rest of the house. Old. The cabinets and tiles look like they were installed in the 80s, and they were.

On the kitchen table is a large white sheet cake with the words "Congratulations Graduate" written on it in pink icing. A few icing flowers decorate one corner.

Bailey's brother ANDY, mid-thirties, hippie-type, is next to the table. He's got a small, hand held video camera in his hand, zooming in on the cake.

He is enthralled, and obviously high. She joins him.

BAILEY

Hey, Andy. Studying the cake? Got it memorized yet?

ANDY

It looks like the Arctic. I can feel the coldness from here. Where are the penguins?

BAILEY

Uh, it's not even an ice cream cake.

Andy snaps out of it and stops filming.

ANDY

(This guy is seriously high.)  
I think I'll make a short film with extreme closeups on different foods. Just when you think you're looking at Alaska--BOOM!--zoom out to reveal "Congratulations Graduate!".

BAILEY

That could be cool.

ANDY

I'm gonna do it.

BAILEY

Great job on the montage video, by the way. That was really nice of you.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

No problem, Bay. Glad to do it. So, ready for the college experience?

BAILEY

Ugh, not really.

ANDY

What? Why not? Mom was so excited, she said you got a full-ride.

BAILEY

Yeah, yeah--I did. Just...I don't know.

ANDY

You don't want to go to college now?

BAILEY

I'm keeping my options open. Austin's going to tech school in Springfield, and it's so far--

ANDY

Austin's a tool, Bay.

BAILEY

He is not! You don't know what he's like when we're alone.

ANDY

Why do girls always say stuff like that? If he acts like a dick--ever--then he's a dick.

BAILEY

It's not just him. I don't know what I'd major in anyway.

ANDY

I thought it was always gonna be creative writing? You're a great writer.

BAILEY

You think so? My English teacher wouldn't agree with you on that one. He's the sole reason I didn't get valedictorian, you know.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Mr. Gearing?

BAILEY

Yeah. God, I'm glad to be rid of him. I know I'm not supposed to say this about teachers but, man! I hate that guy!

ANDY

(amused)

Hey, look at it this way: he saved you from having to stand up in front of everyone and give a speech at graduation.

BAILEY

Good point.

ANDY

Anyway, I think you should still go for the writing degree.

BAILEY

We'll see. did you know what you wanted to be when you were 17?

ANDY

Did I know that I'd be a gardener, working for my kid-brother, you mean? Dude, nobody knows what they want to be when they're 17. I thought I'd be big-time director.

BAILEY

Then why are we expected to "declare" it?

ANDY

That, my little fortune cookie, is the age-old question.

BAILEY

You are so high.

ANDY

Yeah. Speaking of which...

Andy pulls a joint out of his pocket and motions at it to Bailey as if to say, "want some of this?". Bailey pushes him away playfully.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY  
Put that away!

ANDY  
Just trying to be  
courteous. Hey! You know what you  
should do?

BAILEY  
If you say peyote, I'm out of here.

ANDY  
You should backpack across Europe!

BAILEY  
Psh! Yeah. With what money?

ANDY  
The best thing about being a recent  
grad is all the credit card  
offers. You're a clean slate,  
credit-ly speaking, my little  
peanut butter cup.

BAILEY  
I wonder if Austin would go with  
me.

Andy gives her a disapproving "puh-lease" look.

BAILEY  
I'll go ask Mom and Dad about the  
cake situation--I sense your  
munchies.

ANDY  
Thanks, my little candy corn.

BAILEY  
Stop calling me food.

ANDY  
Did I tell you how proud I was of  
you, by the way? I love you, Bay.

The two hug it out.

BAILEY  
I love you too, Andy. Thank you.

ANDY  
Hey, you wanna come over later and  
watch The Graduate?

BAILEY  
Sounds good.

Andy begins filming the cake again. Bailey walks out the door, back into the family room.

INT. BAILEY'S HOUSE, FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As Bailey exits the kitchen her parents, MIKE AND ALICE, late fifties/early sixties (and looking it), motion her over from across the room.

BAILEY  
I was actually coming to talk to you guys.

Alice begins taking photos of her daughter, at an arm's length.

BAILEY  
Mom!

ALICE  
You look so beautiful! I'm so proud of you--I can't help it.

MIKE  
Oh, let your mom take her pictures. It's not every day your youngest daughter graduates high school with honors.

BAILEY  
OK, but can you please turn the flash off? All I see is spots.

ALICE  
How do I do that?

Bailey takes the camera from her technologically-handicapped mom and turns the flash off for her.

MIKE  
Hun, your mom and I were just sayin' that you should say a few words.

Bailey is nervous. She is shy, not a fan of public speaking.

(CONTINUED)



BAILEY

Seriously? I'd rather not,  
Dad. Nobody even wants to talk to  
me, I'd feel weird.

ALICE

Oh, everyone was so sweet to show  
up, we just want you to thank them  
for coming.

BAILEY

Well...OK. Can we do it now,  
though? The longer I think about  
it, the harder it'll be. Besides,  
Andy was asking when we're gonna  
cut the cake.

ALICE

Yes, let's do it now!

Alice begins pushing her daughter towards the front of the  
room and clearing her throat loudly. She forces her up on  
top of a chair, an impromptu stage.

ALICE

(shouting)

Ahem! Can I have your attention  
please? Everyone, Bailey would  
like to say a few words.

The room suddenly gets very quiet. All eyes are on Bailey,  
who is now standing in front of all of her family and family  
friends, with no prepared speech. She is scared.

BAILEY

I just wanted to thank you all for  
coming.

Bailey is ready to step down, but Alice signals to her that  
she should say more.

BAILEY

Oh. Um, I appreciate you all being  
here on the day that I graduate  
high school. I'm sorry that I  
wasn't the valedictorian. My  
English teacher really had it out  
for me...

An awkward pause. People don't quite know how to respond to  
that.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

I mean, thank you for all your gifts. I'll definitely be able to use the money. We're not very well-off, you know...What I mean is, high school was a time I will not soon forget, nor would I like to re-live.

The room laughs politely. This is a really weird speech, and they feel bad for her. She is encouraged.

BAILEY

I know that my parents have waited what seems like forever for their last kid to fly the nest. Leave the coop? Fly the coop. I know you guys had me at an...advanced age, and you thought that you were done, but...you really hung in there! And you showed me that...it's never too late!

The door in the back of the room, which only Bailey is facing, opens. In walks ERICA, 33, disheveled and wearing an outfit meant for someone ten years younger and ten pounds lighter.

She is carrying a couple of black trash bags, filled with clothes. She looks confused and drops the bags.

Bailey is the only one who notices the new guest. She perks up a bit at seeing her sister.

BAILEY

Anyway...thank you. Let's cut the cake!

The room gives a collective sigh of relief and a round of polite applause. Alice begins cutting slices of cake and handing them out. Andy is first in line.

Bailey steps off the chair and heads towards the door to greet her newly-arrived sister. Erica is drunk and a bit disoriented.

BAILEY

Erica! Wow, what a surprise! I'm so glad you could make it!

ERICA

(noticing the banner)  
Oh, yeah, I--is this your graduation party?

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY  
Mom and Dad didn't invite you?

ERICA  
No.

BAILEY  
Oh. Well, yeah, I graduated today! Can you believe it?

ERICA  
That can't be right. You're 18?

BAILEY  
Well, 17--but yeah.

ERICA  
God, that's crazy. Congratulations, sweetie.

The two share a warm, but uncomfortable hug.

BAILEY  
(noticing Erica's bags)  
So, are you staying a while?

ERICA  
Uh...yeah, actually. I was hoping to. I lost my job and me and Rowan broke up. Where's Mom and Dad?

At that moment, Mike spots Erica from across the room and heads toward her with a confused look on his face.

MIKE  
Erica?

ERICA  
Hey, Dad.

MIKE  
What are you doing here?

Mike whisks Erica away, as if they have business to take care of. They talk amongst themselves, arguing. We are unable to hear them above the crowd, until--

ERICA  
(raising her voice, barely audible over the crowd)  
--to my own daughter's graduation party?

(CONTINUED)

Mike puts his hand on her shoulder, whispering something. She's getting hysterical, he doesn't want her to cause a scene.

Alice joins Mike and Erica, looking very upset and speaking inaudibly to try and calm her daughter. People are watching.

Bailey is straining to listen, confused by what she's hearing, she moves in.

ERICA

(shouting even louder now)  
--will not calm down! I grew her  
in my body, I deserve at least to  
be invited to the Goddamn party!

The room has gone quiet. Everyone is looking at the trio, unable to ignore the conversation any longer.

Bailey realizes what Erica has said and joins her family, very surprised and confused.

BAILEY

I'm sorry--what's going on?

Alice, Mike, and Erica turn to look at Bailey, suddenly aware that the room is watching and the cat is out of the bag. Alice begins to sob.

BAILEY

Mom? Why would she say that? Why  
are you crying?

MIKE

Goddamn it, Erica. This is not the  
time or place.

ERICA

(ignoring her father,  
addressing Bailey)  
Bailey...I'm your mother. Not Mom.

BAILEY

What, now?

ERICA

You're adopted. I had you when I  
was 15 years old. You're my  
daughter.

BAILEY

Very funny.

She looks around the room for any confirmation that she's not crazy.

BAILEY (CONT.)

What is this, some sort of graduation prank? Tom?

Tom and Jennie just look sorry for her and avert their eyes to the floor. Bailey looks around the room for her brother Andy and finds him.

BAILEY

Andy? Are you in on this? This is a joke, right?

ANDY

Not cool, Erica. Not cool.

The realization is setting in. Bailey looks to her parents, with a pleading look. Alice puts her head up, her eyes filled with tears. She touches Bailey's shoulder.

ALICE

Sweetie...we never intended for you to find out this way.

Bailey is dumbfounded. All eyes are on her, and they all look sad for her--but not surprised. The room is spinning, and before we know it, she's passed out on the floor.

BLACK.

INT. BAILEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bailey wakes up in her own bed, it is night and the house is quiet. Mike sits in the chair next to her, still wearing his party clothes, and snoring.

She rubs her eyes and gets out of bed quietly, so as not to wake her sleeping father. She picks up her cell phone from the bedside table, starts texting, and tiptoes out the door.

INT. BAILEY'S HOUSE, STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Bailey is tiptoeing down the stairs, careful not to wake up the family. As she descends, she passes by and notices several family photos. They look different now. Surreal.

INT. BAILEY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Bailey enters the dark kitchen. The sink and counter tops are still full of dirty dishes and food scraps, leftover from the party earlier.

As Bailey flips the light on, she sees Erica sleeping at the table, a bottle of vodka next to an empty glass. The light wakes Erica. She sits up, startled.

ERICA

What? (noticing Bailey) Oh. How are you feeling? Everyone was really worried about you.

BAILEY

Alright. I just came down to get a glass of water.

ERICA

Is Dad still awake?

BAILEY

No, I got up really quietly.

ERICA

He took over watch when Mom went to bed. They wanted to talk to you.

BAILEY

(suddenly)

I'm really confused. So...you walked in on my graduation party and told me that you're my mom? That wasn't a dream?

ERICA

No, that was real. Look, I'm sorry you had to find out like that. I didn't mean to--

BAILEY

You're my mom?

ERICA

Technically, yes.

BAILEY

How did I never know this until now?

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

Mom and Dad adopted you from birth. They didn't want anyone to know that I'd had a baby. They were embarrassed.

BAILEY

But this is a really small town. How come nobody ever told me?

ERICA

I hid it. Mom and Dad didn't even know I was pregnant until I was six months along, and that was right before summer vacation. They sent me to stay with Aunt Gracie until you were born in September, and then I came back home. Nobody ever found out.

A long silence. Bailey is trying to process all of this information. It's overwhelming.

Erica gets up from the table and walks over to the sink, pulling a glass out of the cabinet.

ERICA

You wanted some water?

Bailey nods. Still trying to connect the dots in her own mind.

ERICA (CONT.)

I really didn't want you to find out this way.

BAILEY

You keep saying that. Who is my dad?

ERICA

(handing her the water)  
He was a guy I dated for a few weeks. Nothing special.

BAILEY

(from confused to angry)  
Nothing special? This guy is my father. How can you be so cavalier about this whole thing?

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

I'm sorry.

BAILEY

Sorry? You changed my life. Today, you took everything I thought I knew about myself and threw it out the window. Sorry is not the word. Sorry is not enough.

ERICA

I'm sor--I mean, I don't know what to say, Bay.

BAILEY

If you're my mom, then how come I only see you once a year, if I'm lucky? I barely know who you are, for Christ sake!

ERICA

Look, you have to understand that giving you up was the hardest thing I ever had to do. I did not want to do it. Mom and Dad basically forced me.

BAILEY

Yeah?

ERICA

Yes.

BAILEY

So then why didn't you make an effort to see me?

ERICA

I regret that--I do. I left home when you were two years old, but I never planned on staying away so long. It's just that Mom and Dad are so Goddamn difficult! They're always telling me how to live my life--I can't take it.

BAILEY

So, you thought running away was the answer?

ERICA

Look, I can't go back and change what I've done. I'm here now.

(CONTINUED)



Bailey studies her glass of water for several moments. She is unsure of what to say, what to do. Finally, she relents.

BAILEY

How long are you here for?

ERICA

That depends. I don't have anywhere to be, and I was hoping that Mom and Dad would give me my old room back for a while, until I figure out my next move.

BAILEY

Maybe we can spend some time together, get to know each other better.

ERICA

I'd like that.

Bailey gets up from the table and puts her glass in the sink.

BAILEY

OK, I guess I'll see you tomorrow then. Goodnight--

ERICA

Mom?

BAILEY

Erica.

Bailey leaves the room to head back to bed. Erica stays at the table and pours herself a drink from the bottle of vodka.

INT. BAILEY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

Alice, fully-dressed, is setting the breakfast table with plates full of bacon, eggs, and toast. Cheery light streams in the windows, and the room is clean and neat.

Mike walks in, rubbing his neck and wearing a bathrobe. He has just woken up. Alice prepares him a cup of coffee and places it in front of him.

MIKE

Mornin'.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE  
Mornin'. How'd you sleep?

MIKE  
Not bad, but I'm a feelin' that  
chair this morning. You seen  
Bailey?

ALICE  
Not yet. You?

MIKE  
I heard her in the shower when I  
woke up. How 'bout Erica?

Alice walks over to the sink and takes an empty vodka bottle  
out.

ALICE  
(re: empty bottle)  
I found her passed out on the table  
this morning with this next to  
her. I sent her upstairs to sleep  
it off.

She throws the bottle in the trash and takes a seat next to  
Mike, helping herself to some food.

MIKE  
Goddamn it.

ALICE  
I'll have a talk with her this  
afternoon when she's up.

MIKE  
After all these years, I just can't  
believe she'd a gone and done it  
that way.

ALICE  
Really? Seems about par for the  
course, if you ask me.

MIKE  
We always agreed that we'd tell 'er  
together.

ALICE  
Well, Erica's never been one for  
plans, has she?

MIKE

Do you think she's gon' tell her  
about Tyler?

ALICE

I hope so. He's been so patient  
through the years. He deserves it.

Bailey walks in, freshly showered. She stops in the doorway, unsure of what to say to her "parents". Mike stand up to greet her.

BAILEY

Oh...good morning.

ALICE

Good morning, honey. How'd you  
sleep? We were worried about you.

BAILEY

Alright.

MIKE

How 'bout you sit down and have  
some breakfast with us?

BAILEY

No, that's OK. I'm supposed to  
meet Austin, so...

ALICE

You should eat something.

Bailey grabs a banana from a bowl on the table on her way to the door.

BAILEY

I'll see you guys later.

MIKE

You need a ride?

BAILEY

Got my bike.

She's gone. Alice puts her head in her hands, Mike stands over her and comforts her.

EXT. A PARK, SWINGS - DAY

It's a beautiful Spring day, but the park is secluded. It's old and run-down, none of the bright plastic slides and wood chips are present here. It's all steel and gravel.

Bailey and her boyfriend, AUSTIN, a not-so-bright but very good-looking 18 year-old redneck, are sitting on swings next to one another, barely moving back and forth.

Bailey's bike, a rusty vintage cruiser with a basket, is leaning against a nearby tree.

Austin speaks with a thick Arkansas twang.

AUSTIN

Sounds like I missed one hell of a party.

BAILEY

Where were you last night anyway? I texted you like a million times.

AUSTIN

Oh--yeah. Me and the guys drove to the city and used our fake IDs. I got so wasted! I think I may have peed in Lance's trunk.

Austin chuckles, totally immature. How can she like this guy?

BAILEY

That's disgusting.

AUSTIN

You had to be there, I guess.

BAILEY

I really wish you would have been there for me. I needed you.

Austin stops swinging and turns to his girlfriend, looks her in the eye, and takes her face into his hands.

AUSTIN

Hey...I'm sorry. I didn't know this was all goin' on. You OK?

BAILEY

I mean, yeah, but...you could have texted me back.

(CONTINUED)

The two continue swinging, in silence.

AUSTIN  
So, you gonna meet your real dad?

BAILEY  
God, that's such a weird question.

AUSTIN  
Sorry.

Silence, again.

AUSTIN  
You wanna make out?

BAILEY  
Now?

AUSTIN  
We can go in my car. There's  
nobody here.

BAILEY  
Are you being serious right now?

AUSTIN  
Uh...no?

BAILEY  
Jesus Christ, Austin.

AUSTIN  
What?

BAILEY  
Just...never mind.

She gets up and walks over to her bike, picks it up and gets on.

AUSTIN  
So, I'll see you later?

BAILEY  
Yeah, whatever. See you tonight.

Bailey rides away. Austin is left swinging by himself. He is completely clueless.

INT. ANDY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT DAY

Andy's house is small and dingy. It's clear that a bachelor lives here. The living room is scantily furnished with second-hand furniture, but a big-screen TV.

An entire wall is taken up by shelves full of DVDs. Hundreds, possibly thousands of them. This is what he spends his money on.

Bailey is lying on the couch, clearly comfortable here. She's got a bowl of popcorn balanced on her chest. Andy is lying back in a recliner.

*Annie (1982)* is on the television, the lovable orphan is singing "Tomorrow". Andy looks touched, Bailey looks confused.

BAILEY

I don't really think this applies to my life, Andy. Annie lived in an orphanage...I lived with my grandparents--who I thought were my parents.

ANDY

But you were both adopted.

BAILEY

Yeah...

ANDY

It's a good movie, anyway.

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. Andy gets up and opens it. Erica is standing on the other side.

ERICA

Can I come in?

Andy gestures her in. Bailey looks over to see Erica standing there and gets up out of her seat.

ERICA (CONT.)

Mom and Dad told me you were here.

BAILEY

Yeah...Andy's giving me a little film therapy.

ANDY

Happy endings are the best medicine. I'll leave you two alone.

(CONTINUED)

Andy grabs Erica's bowl of popcorn and exits the room. The girls look at one another expectantly. They aren't sure what to say. They speak up at the same time.

ERICA  
Wanna go somewhere?

BAILEY  
How'd you sleep?

They both react self-consciously.

ERICA  
So, you wanna hang out?

BAILEY  
Um...OK. What do you wanna do?

ERICA  
How about burgers? You hungry?

Bailey nods in agreement, with a half-smile.

INT. DINER--DAY

Erica and Bailey are sitting in a booth at a greasy spoon-type diner, plates of burgers and fries in front of them. They seem more comfortable, happy.

ERICA  
--and I was like, dude! You're not fooling anyone. Give me my purse back.

BAILEY  
You tackled him in the street?

ERICA  
Hell yes, I did! No tranny steals my purse and gets away with it. Besides, I run much faster in heels than he--she--did.

BAILEY  
That is so bad ass! How long did you live in San Francisco?

ERICA  
Not long. Two months? It was too expensive to stay for long. Drinks there are, like, twelve bucks a pop in the bars.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

What did you do for money?

ERICA

Oh, this n that. A friend of mine lives there, and he's pretty well-off.

BAILEY

Wow.

Quick, Erica! Change the subject!

ERICA

Hey, look...I'm really sorry for yesterday. You should never have found out like that.

BAILEY

I just don't understand why everyone kept it a secret from me. The betrayal is the worst part.

ERICA

Nobody meant for it to go on this long.

BAILEY

Did you ever regret not taking me with you when you left?

ERICA

Of course. I've thought of you every single day for the last seventeen years.

BAILEY

You have?

ERICA

A person doesn't just forget about their child.

BAILEY

It sounds so weird when you call me that.

ERICA

(ignoring the comment)

How has it been, living with Mom and Dad? I know it wasn't all butterflies and rainbows for me.

(CONTINUED)



BAILEY

They've been great parents,  
actually.

ERICA

Oh...good.

BAILEY

The hardest part has been the  
generation gap. I was always the  
kid with the "old parents".

ERICA

Do you have a boyfriend?

BAILEY

Austin. He's pretty great.

ERICA

Is he hot?

BAILEY

Definitely.

ERICA

How'd you two meet?

BAILEY

His family moved here from Arkansas  
at the beginning of the school  
year, and I was assigned by the  
principal to show him around. He  
was so adorably helpless, I  
couldn't help but fall for him  
right away.

ERICA

Aw, that's so sweet! So you've  
been dating ever since?

BAILEY

No, only about six months.

ERICA

You had a crush on him for three  
months before you started going  
out?

BAILEY

It was hell.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

I'll bet!

BAILEY

I asked him to the winter formal --as friends--and we ended up making out in a corner all night. It was magical.

ERICA

Ah, young love. I remember those days. Just make sure you guys use condoms.

BAILEY

Oh, we don't actually...

ERICA

You haven't done it yet? Don't tell me you're still a virgin.

BAILEY

He wants to. I just--it seems like a really big deal, I want it to be special.

ERICA

Take it from me: the first time will never be as special as you hope it'll be. In fact, no time will.

BAILEY

Really?

ERICA

And it hurts.

BAILEY

I've heard that.

ERICA

If you want my advice, just get it over with. It gets lots better the more you do it.

BAILEY

But...don't you think I should make sure Austin's "the one" first?

ERICA

Hey, if you wanna wait, wait. I'm just sayin'--life isn't the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ERICA (cont'd)  
fairytale it's made out to be in  
movies. Your first will probably  
not be your last, no matter how "in  
love" you think you are.

Bailey takes this all in. It's a lot to think about.

ERICA (CONT.)  
I made a few phone calls this  
morning, and I have someone I think  
you should meet. You done?

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

A beat-up old Dodge Neon pulls up in front of Bailey's high school and parks in front along the curb. Erica exits the car, followed by Bailey, who looks confused.

BAILEY  
What are we doing here?

ERICA  
Meeting your dad.

The two walk towards the school, Bailey is visibly nervous.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Bailey and Erica enter through a set of heavy double doors. Erica is leading the way, with purpose.

BAILEY  
Why is my dad at my high school?

ERICA  
He works here. Teaches English.

Bailey looks especially scared and confused as they continue down the hall.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL, ENGLISH CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

TYLER GEARING, a handsome and athletic teacher, is working at his desk in street clothes. School is out for the summer and he's wrapping things up in his classroom.

Bailey and Erica approach, Erica knocks quietly on the open door. Bailey looks stunned and horrified. This is her worst-possible scenario.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

Tyler?

BAILEY

Oh, come on! Are you fucking kidding me right now?

TYLER

Language, Bailey! Jeesh.

(Turning to Erica)

Erica. It's been a long time. I can't believe this is finally happening.

BAILEY

Mr. Gearing. This has got to be some kind of joke.

ERICA

Bailey, Tyler's your biological father.

BAILEY

No, he's not.

ERICA

You don't see the resemblance? Honestly, I'm surprised you never figured it out sooner.

BAILEY

Uh, I thought I knew who my dad was, Erica.

ERICA

Oh, that's right.

Tyler pulls up a chair for Bailey to sit in.

TYLER

Here, sit down. I know this is a lot to take in.

Bailey ignores the chair.

BAILEY

(To Tyler)

But...you hate me.

TYLER

Come on, I don't hate you, Bailey.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

Oh really? Then how come yours was the only class I didn't get an A in?

TYLER

You didn't earn an A. I knew you could do so much better, and I didn't want to give you an A until your work was up to your full potential.

BAILEY

This is not happening.

ERICA

(stepping backwards toward the door)

Maybe I should let you two talk.

BAILEY

(walking out the door)

No, stay. I'm going.

ERICA

Bailey!

Erica starts after her, but then stops at the door and lets her go, disappointed.

TYLER

Well, that went well.

ERICA

She just needs time to let it sink in.

The two sit down on Tyler's desk.

TYLER

I can't believe she finally knows. I spent the last four years watching her here, seeing both of us in her face and in her school work.

ERICA

You didn't have to be so hard on her.

TYLER

She's got real talent, Erica.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

She must have gotten that from you.

TYLER

She got your good looks,  
though. How have you been?

ERICA

Oh, you know...good, I guess.

TYLER

I've thought about you.

ERICA

I've thought about you too. I'm  
sorry I left the way I did. It was  
just too hard being here with  
Bailey.

TYLER

I understand. Having no authority  
over your own child is tough,  
especially when you see her on a  
day-to-day basis.

ERICA

You didn't have to stay around  
here.

TYLER

How else was I going to see how she  
turned out?

ERICA

Are you married?

TYLER

No, I never got married.

ERICA

Me neither.

TYLER

I should really get back to work.

ERICA

Packing up for the summer?

TYLER

Actually, I'm packing up for  
good. I'm moving to Chicago.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

Oh...wow.

TYLER

I got a teaching job at a private school there, and I can't really see any reason to stay around here now that Bailey's off to college.

ERICA

She's not really sure if she's going.

TYLER

What? Why not?

ERICA

She said she wants to keep her options open.

TYLER

No! She's got such a gift for writing!

ERICA

Yeah, well I guess you should have told her that.

TYLER

Shit.

Erica makes her way toward the door.

ERICA

I guess I'll be seeing you around.

TYLER

How long are you staying?

ERICA

Indefinitely at this point.

TYLER

Maybe we can get together again before I leave town, after Bailey cools off a bit.

ERICA

I'll see if I can talk to her. I don't think I'm her favorite person right now, but it's good to see that I'm not her least favorite person. (a beat) That's you, if you haven't figured it out.

(CONTINUED)

TYLER

Yeah, I got that.

ERICA

I'd better go home and wait for her. Make sure she's not too upset.

TYLER

Yeah, you'd better. Call me when you think she's ready.

ERICA

See you around.

Erica gives him a wave and walks out the door. That was kind of awkward.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Bailey and her brother Tom are going for a walk through a quiet residential neighborhood. He's pushing the baby in a stroller, she's walking her bike.

Tom is wearing a shirt advertising his business. It says "Baxter Landscaping" over a large green oak tree.

BAILEY

Thanks for picking me up and getting my bike. This is all too weird.

TOM

Aside from the Tyler-revelation, how did it go?

BAILEY

Aside from her ruining my entire life, you mean? Good.

TOM

I just meant--

BAILEY

No, I know. It was good. I actually kind of like her.

TOM

That's good. She was always fun to be around.

(CONTINUED)



BAILEY

Yeah, she is fun. She's got some great stories. Did you know that she lived in San Francisco?

TOM

I remember that.

BAILEY

She's really lived, you know? What a cool life.

TOM

It's amazing, the things you can accomplish when you shirk all responsibility and run away.

BAILEY

That's not fair.

TOM

I'm just saying, she could have stuck around a little longer--or come back more often.

BAILEY

I can understand why she didn't, though.

TOM

I can't.

BAILEY

Even now that you're a parent?

TOM

Especially now that I'm a parent. I can't imagine ever leaving Owen, even if I wasn't allowed to be his dad. I love him too much.

BAILEY

Maybe she doesn't love me.

TOM

I doubt that's the case. Parents can't help but love their kids.

BAILEY

Well, whatever the reason, I guess it's good that I've got the chance to know her better now.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

I agree. Just make sure to keep your guard up.

BAILEY

What do you mean?

TOM

Let me put it this way: One time when we were kids, she pierced the dog's ears and blamed it on me.

BAILEY

We don't have a dog now.

TOM

Just watch out.

BAILEY

OK, I will. Do you and Jennie still need me to babysit on Saturday?

TOM

If it's not too much trouble.

BAILEY

No, it's fine. I love Owen.

TOM

You probably want to spend as much time with him as possible before heading off to college, huh?

BAILEY

If I even go. Maybe I'll just stay here and work for you.

TOM

Aw, you don't want to do that. Besides, I think I'm covered for now with Andy. He's really got a green thumb.

BAILEY

And this surprises you?

TOM

Yeah, not so much. I guess he's been "gardening" for almost 20 years now.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

It's kind of sad that he never did anything more. He would have been great in the movie business. He's obsessed.

TOM

He should have gone to film school...just like you should go to college. Take the scholarship, Bay.

BAILEY

We'll see.

Bailey's phone vibrates, signaling a text. She reads it and then looks up.

BAILEY (CONT.)

Oh, I have to go. I've got to meet Austin.

TOM

Austin's a jerk, Bailey.

Bailey ignores the comment, kisses the baby, gets on her bike and begins riding away.

BAILEY

I'll see you Saturday night!

She's off in the opposite direction.

INT./EXT. AUSTIN'S CAR - SUNSET.

Tyler and Bailey are in the backseat of his car, a beat-up old muscle car. They are parked somewhere secluded. He's got his arm around her, comforting her.

AUSTIN

That is insane. So...you're technically Bailey Gearing.

BAILEY

Ugh! Don't say that! God, it could have been anyone else. Anyone.

AUSTIN

Well, it could have been worse.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

How?

AUSTIN

At least you didn't find out that you and me are related.

BAILEY

You and I.

AUSTIN

Whatever.

Austin goes in for a kiss. Bailey takes comfort in his familiarity and kisses him back.

BAILEY

You're right. That would have been worse.

The two begin making out, heavily. Bailey climbs on top of her boyfriend, straddling him as they kiss. She begins to unbutton his pants when Austin pulls back.

BAILEY

Do you have a condom?

AUSTIN

Well, yeah.

Austin takes his wallet out of his back pocket and removes a condom.

AUSTIN (CONT.)

You serious?

BAILEY

Put it on.

Bailey takes off her shirt and continues unfastening Austin's pants as they kiss furiously. The two undress quickly and fumble awkwardly with the condom.

They have sex, Bailey still on top. It is very, very quick, and the look on Bailey's face is one of excruciating pain.

Austin climaxes, ecstatic. Bailey digs her fingernails in his shoulder, holding him close. She just wants it to be over. It hurts.

AUSTIN

That was fucking amazing.

(CONTINUED)

What a horrible let-down. Bailey is painfully disappointed, but she tries not to let either show.

BAILEY

Uh-huh.

INT. BAILEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bailey is sitting on her bed, photo albums and loose pictures scattered around her. She is studying each photo, searching for something in them as she listens to her iPod.

She picks up a family picture from when she was a baby. In the photo, Erica is holding her, with a happy grin on her face. Bailey puts the photo down and picks up another.

In the next photo, Alice is holding baby Bailey on her hip, cooking dinner with the other hand, looking frazzled.

We see a photo of Bailey, presumably in the hospital, being held by Mike, who's wearing hospital scrubs. He looks like a proud dad.

Bailey picks up her senior yearbook and flips to the faculty pages, studying Mr. Gearing's photo, looking for some resemblance to herself.

Bailey continues to shuffle through the family photos. She's stressed and confused.

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. Bailey takes out one of her ear buds.

BAILEY

Who is it?

ALICE

It's your mom.

BAILEY

Come in.

The door opens slowly, revealing Alice in the doorway. Bailey sits up and takes out her other ear bud.

BAILEY (CONT.)

My mom?

Alice is sad and disappointed. She walks over and sits on the bed next to Bailey.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

Yes, your mom. Erica may have given birth to you, but I am your mother, legally and truthfully. I love you more than anything.

BAILEY

I just don't know what to think of all this. How could you--

ALICE

Your dad and I love you so much, Bailey. We never meant to hurt you.

BAILEY

Why couldn't you have told me sooner?

ALICE

We always intended to, but as the years went by, it got harder and harder.

BAILEY

I met my birth dad...or, I should say, my worst nightmare came true. Apparently Saddam Hussein wasn't available, so she picked the next best thing.

ALICE

You went to see Tyler? How'd that go?

BAILEY

How do you think? How can those two be my parents? (the words sting Alice) Or, you know what I mean.

ALICE

I know, it's a lot to wrap your mind around.

BAILEY

She didn't even know that Mr. Gearing and I don't get along. She's practically a complete stranger.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

No, she wasn't around much, and I'm sorry for that. I blame myself. I think I drove her away. Your father and I both should have been more open-minded when she told us she was pregnant with you. We should have given her a chance.

BAILEY

You guys haven't done a bad job.

ALICE

We've done the best we could, but you and I both know that we were the oldest parents at the PTA.

Bailey shrugs her off. Alice puts her arm around Bailey and gives her a squeeze.

ALICE (CONT.)

Just please, give Erica a chance. I don't expect the two of you to become best friends, but it would do both of you a world of good to get to know each another better.

A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. Erica pushes one hand through, holding a white thong, waving it like she's surrendering. Her head follows the makeshift flag.

ERICA

Is it safe yet? Can I come in?

ALICE

We were just talking about you, come in.

ERICA

Uh-oh. (to Bailey) Are you still mad from earlier?

BAILEY

I'm not mad, I'm just...discombobulated.

ERICA

Huh?

BAILEY

Confused.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

Oh. Well, I was just wondering if you wanted to go out with me for a bit, if that's OK with Mom.

ALICE

Oh! That might be nice. What are you thinking of doing?

ERICA

Maybe a movie or something kind of low-key.

ALICE

You've been wanting to see that new Pixar movie, haven't you Bailey?

The two look at Bailey expectantly. She's on the spot.

BAILEY

Um, I guess so.

ERICA

Great, c'mon, help me get ready.

Erica takes Bailey by the hand, and off they go.

INT. BAILEY'S HOUSE, ERICA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Erica's bedroom is now Alice's sewing room. There is still a double bed, but the room is mostly taken over by a sewing machine and piles upon piles of fabric.

The bed is unmade and Erica's belongings are strewn all over the place. It looks like she's been here a month.

Erica is on the floor, going through what's left in the trash bags she brought. She is pulling out club clothes and holding them up to Bailey.

BAILEY

I'm confused...I thought we were going to see a movie.

ERICA

How are we supposed to bond over talking animals? Yeah, that's not happening.

BAILEY

Then where are we going?

(CONTINUED)



Erica picks out a very short, very sparkly dress that looks like it belongs on a hooker.

ERICA  
(ignoring the question)  
Ooooooh, this would look great on you!

BAILEY  
(trying to be nice)  
It's cute...but I think it's a little too...sparkly.

ERICA  
Maybe you're right. I keep forgetting where we are.

Bailey joins in and begins sifting through clothing. She finds a cute tank top and holds it up for inspection.

BAILEY  
How about this?

ERICA  
With some tight jeans and heels?

BAILEY  
Uh...sure.

ERICA  
Trust me. You are going to look smokin' hot.

BAILEY  
Me? I'm not hot! Ha!

ERICA  
Are you kidding me? Bay, you are gorgeous. And I'm not just saying that because--

BAILEY  
Oh, come on!

ERICA  
Here, let me show you. Put that on. (she grabs a pair of jeans from her bag) And these...(she picks up a pair of spiked, lucite platform heels, the kind that strippers wear)...and these. I'm a size 9...you?

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

Size eight.

ERICA

Ha! Will you look at that. Try all these on.

Bailey takes the clothes and begins stripping down and changing into Erica's selection. Erica keeps looking through her things, pulling out a pair of hoop earrings.

ERICA

Oh! These will look great with that outfit. You have got to wear these.

BAILEY

You sure have a lot of going out clothes.

ERICA

I do? I feel like I have nothing to wear most of the time. I lose a lot of them, I move so often.

Bailey struggles to pull the jeans on.

BAILEY

I think these are too small.

ERICA

No, you've just gotta jump into 'em.

Erica demonstrates her method by jumping while simultaneously pulling up the top her her jeans. It works for Bailey.

ERICA (CONT.)

See? They look great on you! Put on the top.

Bailey complies and pulls the top over her head.

BAILEY

Oh, no, I don't need to bend my knees. Where are we going, anyway?

ERICA

I thought we'd go to the city and go dancing.

BAILEY

Really? How? I'm not even 18 yet.

Bailey slips into the shoes and walks unsteadily over to a full-length mirror.

ERICA

Let me worry about that. You look amazing.

BAILEY

Yeah?

ERICA

All we need now is a little makeup. Have a seat...

Bailey sits on the floor, barely able to bend her knees in the jeans. Erica finds her makeup bag in the mess around her and gets to work.

EXT. CITY NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Bailey and Erica walk up to the front of a nightclub from the parking lot, dressed to the nines.

Bailey is wearing her sister's choice and way too much makeup. Erica is wearing something entirely too small and too trendy for her age. They look like sisters.

The two approach GABE, the bouncer, at the front of a long line of people behind a velvet rope.

ERICA

(to the bouncer)

Gabe the babe!

GABE

Erica! How you been, baby? Give me some sugar.

Gabe grabs Erica and gives her a big hug, hands everywhere. Bailey is uncomfortable.

ERICA

This is Bailey.

GABE

Well, hey there Bailey! Erica, I didn't know you had a sister.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

Actually, she's my daughter.

GABE

Whoa whoa whoa! Your daughter? You gotta be shittin' me! (then) Erica, you know this club is 21 and over.

ERICA

I had her when I was practically a baby myself. C'mon, Gabe. We'll up the hot factor in that club by at least 40% and you know it.

GABE

I'd love to, but I could lose my job, man...

Erica gets very close to Gabe, whispers something in his ear, grasping his belt at the same time. That did it.

GABE (CONT.)

OK, come on in sweetheart. You ladies have a lovely evening.

Gabe opens the ropes and lets the two in, leering at their bodies as they walk in.

ERICA

Thanks, babe, you're the best. I'll see you later?

GABE

You know you will.

Bailey goes in, looking back at Gabe with a mildly disgusted look on her face.

INT. CITY NIGHT CLUB - CONTINUOUS

City Night Club is a few years past its prime. It's worn down and the crowd is all a little past their prime as well. Not the hottest club in town. Music thumps.

Bailey and Erica enter the club. Bailey looks around nervously as she follows Erica, who makes a beeline toward the bar. The two have to shout over the music.

BAILEY

How did you do that?

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

Gabe and I go way back. Let's get  
you a drink. Hey Carl!

CARL, the bartender, notices Erica with a big smile on his  
face. Erica pushes her way through the crowd to the bar and  
kisses him on the cheek.

CARL

Erica! How the hell have you been?

ERICA

Great! This is Bailey.

CARL

(shaking Bailey's hand)  
Bailey? Nice to meet you. What  
can I get you girls?

ERICA

Two long islands.

CARL

Comin' up.

BAILEY

What is that?

ERICA

Trust me, you'll like it.

An unattractive MIDDLE-AGED MAN approaches the two with a  
perverted smile.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

Well, what do we have here?

BAILEY

Uh, hi.

ERICA

What do you think you're lookin'  
at?

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

I just wanted to buy you two fine  
ladies a drink.

BAILEY

Oh, that's alr--

(CONTINUED)

ERICA  
Sure. Why not?

Carl puts the drinks on the bar in front of Bailey and Erica.

CARL  
That'll be 18 even.

ERICA  
Our friend here's got it.

Middle-Aged Man ponies up to the bar and pulls out his wallet. Erica pulls Bailey by the hand and the two retreat into the crowd quickly, before their suitor can see where they've gone.

They move to a tall, dark corner table and have a seat at a couple of bar stools while scoping out the place.

ERICA  
So whaddaya think?

BAILEY  
(taking a sip)  
I think I'm drunk. What is in this?

ERICA  
Just drink it fast, it'll burn less.

BAILEY  
Why is everyone so old?

ERICA  
Hey, now!

BAILEY  
I'm just sayin'...they're all, like, 30.

ERICA  
Well, my dear, this is a bar. Technically, you have to be over 21 to even enter. Besides, there are plenty of hot guys here.

BAILEY  
Show me one.

Erica looks around the room, scoping out the crowd. She sees a good-looking guy dancing with a young, scantily-clad girl.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

Ha! There's one! He's already taken, though.

Bailey looks in the direction Erica was pointing and discovers, to her horror, that the dancing guy is actually Austin, her boyfriend.

BAILEY

Oh, my God.

ERICA

It's OK, I'm sure there's more--

BAILEY

(interrupting)

No, you don't understand. That's Austin.

ERICA

Your boyfriend Austin?

BAILEY

Yes.

ERICA

That son of a bitch.

Erica gets up out of her seat and starts towards Austin. Bailey grabs her arm.

BAILEY

No! What are you doing?

Erica continues, with Bailey trailing behind her. Erica walks up to Austin, who is grinding seductively on his dance partner, and taps him on the shoulder.

ERICA

Excuse me?

Austin, thinking that she wants to dance with him, begins to move in on Erica as well.

AUSTIN

I'm not really into cougars, but I can make an exception if you're up for a threesome.

ERICA

What? No! Oh my God!

(CONTINUED)

Bailey steps toward them, upset, and Austin sees her. He's immediately flustered. His dance partner takes the cue and leaves.

AUSTIN

Bay...hey! What are you doing here?

ERICA

I brought her, you dickhead.

AUSTIN

Whoa whoa whoa! It's not what you think.

ERICA

Oh yeah? Because it looks like you're hooking up with other girls when you're supposed to be dating my daughter.

AUSTIN

(slow on the uptick)  
Whoa! Daughter?...You're Erica?

ERICA

Who the fuck did you think I was?

BAILEY

Austin? How could you do this to me? After earlier--

AUSTIN

Oh, hey...come on, Bay...you know how I feel about you. I was just dancin'.

BAILEY

We had sex, what? Five hours ago, and now you're out here--

AUSTIN

Hey, you were the one who wanted to do it!

BAILEY

Well, I wish I could take it back. Go to hell, Austin.

Bailey turns to leave, Erica follows her towards the door.

(CONTINUED)



ERICA

Hey, you OK?

BAILEY

I can't believe I lost my virginity  
to that asshole. What was I  
thinking?

AUSTIN

(shouting from across the  
room)

Well fuck you, Bailey! You weren't  
even any good!

ERICA

(to Bailey)

Wait here.

Erica walks back to Austin, very angry.

ERICA

(Shouting at Austin)

Fuck her? Well, Fuck you, you  
fucking pencil dick. (very loudly,  
playing to the room of on-lookers)  
I hope your next girlfriend doesn't  
mind your obsession with little  
girl's underwear. Hey, no  
judgment.

The crowd looks disgusted and backs away from Austin.

AUSTIN

Hey! What the--Wait--no!

Erica walks back to Bailey, and the two walk out the front  
door.

INT./EXT. ERICA'S CAR - NIGHT

Erica is driving and Bailey is in the passenger  
seat. Bailey is crying hysterically and loudly, Erica looks  
at her uncomfortably. She puts a hand on her shoulder.

ERICA

Hey, it's gonna be OK.

BAILEY

I thought he loved me! I thought  
he was the one!

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

You thought that guy was "the one"?

BAILEY

Well...yeah! Why in the hell did I have sex with him?

ERICA

I don't know. Why did you have sex with him?

BAILEY

Because you told me to!

ERICA

Oh. Well, I'm sorry--I guess I was wrong.

BAILEY

It's not your fault. I should have followed Tom and Andy's advice and dumped him a long time ago.

ERICA

They didn't like him?

BAILEY

Andy's always said he's a tool.

ERICA

Well, why didn't you listen? Andy's awesome. He knows his shit.

BAILEY

I don't know! Mom and Dad liked him.

ERICA

Mom and Dad liked Tyler too, and look at how that turned out.

Bailey cries hysterically again.

ERICA

Oh, hey...I'm sorry. I didn't mean it that way.

BAILEY

I can't believe Mr. Gearing's my dad!

More crying.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

C'mon, he's not so bad...he has a really high opinion of you.

BAILEY

He hates me!

ERICA

He does not hate you.

BAILEY

Then why did he give me a C+ on my final paper and presentation? I could have been valedictorian!

ERICA

You heard what he said--you could do better. Also...was there public speaking involved?

BAILEY

Yeah, why?

ERICA

No reason.

More crying.

BAILEY

This is the worst day of my life!

Erica pulls the car over and parks on the shoulder of the road. They are in the middle of nowhere. Bailey looks up, confused.

ERICA

This is the worst day of your life? Really? Well, do you know what the worst day of my life was?

BAILEY

No.

ERICA

It wasn't the day that I almost got raped by a guy in a bar bathroom, or the day that I got my first DUI. Hell, it wasn't even the day that I found out I was pregnant. The worst day of my life was the day that I signed over my rights to be your mother.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

What's your point, Erica?

ERICA

I'm trying to give you some perspective, daughter!

BAILEY

Stop saying that! I am not your daughter.

ERICA

Like it or not, yes, you are. Now come here.

Erica pulls Bailey to her for a hug. Bailey cries on Erica's shoulder as she comforts her.

BAILEY

It's just that...everything is so fucked up now!

ERICA

I know.

BAILEY

I wanted to backpack across Europe with Austin.

ERICA

Really? Europe? With that guy?

BAILEY

What?

ERICA

Oh, nothing. He just doesn't seem very...worldly, that's all.

Bailey thinks on this for a moment and stops crying.

BAILEY

You know what? You're totally right.

Erica shrugs her shoulders as Bailey comes to a stark realization.

BAILEY (CONT.)

What the hell was I thinking? Austin wouldn't have backpacked across Europe. Hell, he never even took a foreign language class.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

Really?

BAILEY

He said that since he lived in America, he only needed to speak American.

Erica looks at Bailey incredulously, then begins to giggle. The two start to crack up.

ERICA

Seriously?

BAILEY

Yeah. He was also planning on getting a confederate flag tattoo.

ERICA

Bailey!

BAILEY

I know, I know. But what can I say? He's hot.

The two begin to giggle again, then go into full-belly laughter.

ERICA

Oh, Bay, you can do so much better. You will do so much better.

BAILEY

I just wish he'd never seen me naked.

ERICA

Yeah, well...you didn't send him any pictures or anything, did you?

BAILEY

What? Oh, God no!

ERICA

Then don't worry about it. (beat) Hey...where does he live?

## EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Erica and Bailey exit Erica's car and run into the convenience store, hand-in-hand. Giggling.

When they exit, moments later, both are running back to the car carrying several packages of toilet paper.

## EXT. AUSTIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is a run-down double-wide, with a few lawn ornaments in the front. Beer cans litter the driveway. Rednecks live here. The lights are all out.

Erica and Bailey are up to no good. They are throwing rolls of toilet paper over the trees, sometimes two at a time.

The lawn ornaments get lots of attention, Erica turns each one into a tiny lawn mummy.

Bailey takes a roll and spells out "MAN WHORE" in giant, toilet paper letters on the front lawn.

The two are having a wonderful time. They're giggling and trying to be quiet, and they don't stop until they run out of ammo.

## EXT. BAILEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Erica and Bailey are sitting on the hood of Erica's car, looking up at the stars. Erica is catching up on Bailey's life. They are happy and relaxed.

BAILEY

Heck yes, I was a two-time spelling bee champ! Give me a word.

ERICA

How about...precocious?

BAILEY

P-R-E-C-O-C-I-O-U-S. Precocious.

ERICA

I'll trust you on that one.

BAILEY

(looking at her watch)

Oh my gosh! It's almost 5:30. The sun will be up soon.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

Wow, really? I don't remember the last time I was up this late without some sort of drink in my hand.

BAILEY

Do you think...you have a problem?

ERICA

With what?

BAILEY

You know--drinking. You seem to do it a lot.

ERICA

I do.

BAILEY

Do you think you should maybe give it a rest?

ERICA

I'm not hurting anybody.

BAILEY

No, I guess not...

ERICA

I like it. I'm old enough.

BAILEY

Well, tonight's been a blast.

ERICA

I've had a great time with you. Let's not have to do it again, though, OK? No more losers.

BAILEY

Word.

ERICA

To...me. Ha!

A beat.

BAILEY

You know what? I think I'll go to Europe anyway.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

Really? Wow. I wish I could do something like that.

BAILEY

You should come with me!

ERICA

I don't even have a place to live. You think I can afford to go jetting off to Europe?

BAILEY

I'm going to get a few credit cards to pay for it.

ERICA

I have always wanted to see the Eiffel Tower...

BAILEY

Let's do it. We'll ride trains and stay in hostels.

ERICA

We'll pick up a couple of hot guys who don't speak a word of English. Everyone will think we're sisters.

BAILEY

The way I did.

A moment of silence and reflection between the two of them as they look up at the stars. They are happy dreaming. Bailey sits up, ready to go in.

BAILEY

Well, I've got to get to bed. I'm supposed to be working the Honor Society blood drive tomorrow.

ERICA

Blood drive?

BAILEY

Yeah, we do it every year. I'm the NHS President--or, I was--so I've got to be there.

ERICA

Miss community service.

(CONTINUED)



BAILEY

Do you wanna come? You could give a pint.

ERICA

I don't know...needles--

BAILEY

I just thought it'd be nice to spend a little more time together.

ERICA

OK, I'll give it a shot. What the hell.

Bailey gets down from the car, happy.

BAILEY

Great. We'll leave at noon.

ERICA

I think I'm gonna stay out here a little bit longer. Goodnight.

BAILEY

Goodnight...mom.

Bailey races inside before letting Erica react to the word "mom". Erica's happy--a mini-breakthrough.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Erica pulls her car up to the pump. It rattles when it stops--this is one crappy car.

Erica gets out of the driver's side, swipes her card, and begins filling up.

Bailey gets out of the front passenger side.

BAILEY

I'm gonna get a water before donating. Do you want anything?

ERICA

Coffee.

BAILEY

Cream? Sugar?

(CONTINUED)

ERICA  
Black. Big one.

Bailey heads towards the convenience store, opens the door and goes in.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - CONTINUOUS

It's a small-town convenience store--everything feels old. The floors haven't been mopped in a few weeks, at least. One of the florescent lights is flickering.

There are a few convenience items--tampons, band-aids, vienna sausages--all dusty and some of them bearing sun-faded labels from about five years ago.

The one part of the store that looks clean and new is a wall of liquor bottles. They clearly sell a lot of them.

Two men dressed in hunting gear, are mulling over a whiskey purchase together.

Bailey walks directly to the back of the store and grabs a bottle of water out of the cooler.

Standing in front of an open cooler full of various energy drinks is Austin, looking very hung over, wearing the same clothes as the night before. Bailey doesn't notice him at first.

AUSTIN  
Bailey?

BAILEY  
What are you doing here?

AUSTIN  
Getting a Monster. Late night.

BAILEY  
I'll bet.

Bailey turns her back on him and walks over to the lone coffee maker in the store. She pours some coffee into the biggest cup she can find and puts a lid on it.

AUSTIN  
Look, you got the wrong idea. That girl is a friend of mine, she's my cousin Amy's stepsister.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

Ew. That would make her your cousin too.

AUSTIN

It would?

BAILEY

Uh, yeah.

AUSTIN

Well, it doesn't matter, 'cuz nothin' happened.

BAILEY

C'mon, Austin. You can think up a better lie than that.

AUSTIN

It's true, I swear! And I'm not a man-whore.

BAILEY

So you have been home.

AUSTIN

My mom is soooo pissed.

BAILEY

Good.

AUSTIN

I don't even want to go back there.

BAILEY

If you're trying to make me feel sorry for you, it's not going to work. I can't believe you, Austin.

AUSTIN

Believe whatever you want.

BAILEY

You embarrassed me in front of Erica and a room full of strangers!

AUSTIN

You were embarrassed? YOU were embarrassed? How do you think I felt, everyone thinking I was a sick-o?

Bailey walks up to the CLERK and puts her two drinks on the counter. He rings her up.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

I have to go. Erica's waiting for me, we have to get to the blood drive.

AUSTIN

Can we please just talk?

CLERK

\$2.43.

Bailey pays for the drinks and gets her change back.

BAILEY

Maybe later. I have to go.

She walks out the door.

AUSTIN

(after her)

I'll text you!

We can see Bailey get in the car with Erica through the front glass doors. The car leaves.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYM - DAY

The High School gym is set up for a blood drive. There are cots lined up in rows with students and adults sitting in them, donating blood.

On one of the cots is Bailey. A NURSE is just finishing getting her set up, covering the needle in her arm with a piece of gauze. She hands Bailey a stress ball.

NURSE

Now, just give this a good squeeze ever 5-7 seconds, okay sweetie? You let me know if you start to feel light-headed.

BAILEY

OK, thanks.

Erica is ushered over by a volunteer and shown to the cot next to Bailey. She sits down as the volunteer hands the paperwork off to the nurse.

BAILEY

(to Erica)

All set up?

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

Barely made it. My last tattoo was 13 months ago, so I guess I'm good.

NURSE

Is this your first time donating?

ERICA

I have a deep-seeded fear of needles.

NURSE

Oh, you won't even know it's in there. Let's get you set up. Let me see your arms.

The nurse inspects the inner elbows of both Erica's arms, pressing around to find the right vein. Erica looks terrified.

BAILEY

You gonna be OK?

ERICA

Is it hot in here?

BAILEY

I'm kind of cold.

ERICA

Huh.

NURSE

Looks like this left arm is going to be our best bet. Is that OK with you?

ERICA

Fine.

The nurse begins cleaning the site with iodine and preparing the materials.

BAILEY

I've given blood every eight weeks since I was eligible. It's really not that big a deal.

ERICA

Everyone keeps saying that.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

Just think of all the good you're doing. You are saving. someone's. life.

ERICA

Right. You're right.

Tyler, who is there helping out with the event, walks by the pair with a clipboard in his hands.

TYLER

Hey there you two.

BAILEY

Oh...hi. I forgot you were helping out today.

TYLER

Every year. Wonderful job, Bailey--great turn out. (to Erica) Bailey was in charge of advertising in the community. She got a lot of butts in the cots.

BAILEY

(cool)

Thanks.

ERICA

I'm just having a bit of a meltdown, do you mind?

TYLER

First time? It'll be fine. Just don't look.

NURSE

(sticking the needle in Erica's vein)

Just a little stick here--

Erica looks anyway, just in time to see a giant needle going into her arm. All at once, she's very dizzy and looks very pale.

ERICA

Oh my God! Stop! I'm gonna--

Erica pukes all over the floor next to the nurse. This is not sanitary. The nurse is barely phased. She's used to this kind of thing.

(CONTINUED)

NURSE

Leonard! We've got a puker over here! Lie back, sweetie, we'll get you all cleaned up.

A man comes over in a white nurse's uniform, he appears to be in charge. He and the nurse get Erica's cot reclined all the way back and put a cold, wet rag on her forehead.

ERICA

This is beyond embarrassing.

TYLER

I'll go get the janitor.

BAILEY

Well...at least you tried.

ERICA

I get to pick the next activity, OK, Bay?

BAILEY

Alright.

INT. MALL, NEAR FOOD COURT - DAY

Erica and Bailey are walking out of the food court, through the mall with drinks in their hands. Erica still looks a bit woozy, but Bailey looks great, healthy.

Bailey's wearing a bandage around her elbow and a "Hug me, I gave blood!" sticker. Erica is wearing a band-aid and an "I tried to give blood" sticker.

BAILEY

(re: the drink in her hand)  
Is that helping at all? Do you feel any better?

ERICA

Gettin' there. I know that Andy says movies are a cure-all, but nothing makes me feel better than a little retail therapy. Let's do this.

BAILEY

Oh. Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

Kudos to you for donating blood,  
though. Clearly you're a better  
woman than me.

BAILEY

Than I.

ERICA

Whatever.

BAILEY

I can't believe I forgot that Mr.  
Gearing was the NHS sponsor. Ugh.

ERICA

You should really give him a  
chance, Bay.

BAILEY

We're just so...different.

ERICA

Nah, I think your problem is that  
you're too much alike, if anything.

BAILEY

How can you say that? I am nothing  
like him.

ERICA

Let's see here, you look alike--

BAILEY

Take that back!

ERICA

--you both get offended easily,  
you're both grammar freaks, you  
both have a strong work ethic,  
you're both do-gooders, you're both  
super-crazy-smart, you both get  
that same bewildered look on your  
faces when you realize that you're  
wrong about something...

Suddenly self-conscious, Bailey quickly changes her facial  
expression.

BAILEY

OK, OK, I get it.

(CONTINUED)



ERICA  
Shall I stop?

BAILEY  
Please, before I throw up too.

ERICA  
You just had to go there, didn't  
you?

Bailey shrugs it off, light-heartedly. She is happy to be here.

BAILEY  
(sincerely)  
I'm having a really good time,  
Erica.

ERICA  
Aw, me too!

BAILEY  
No, I mean, a really good time. I  
can't believe I've been missing out  
on this all these years.

ERICA  
Never again, Bay. Never again.

BAILEY  
So, you'll stick around?

ERICA  
I promise.

Bailey thinks about this for a moment. She is, at this moment, supremely happy.

INT. MALL CLOTHING STORE - DAY

Bailey and Erica are shopping in a store with lots of young, trendy clothing. Erica has a pile of clothes in her arms, they're both picking through the racks.

Erica picks up a tiny tube top and holds it up to Bailey.

ERICA  
Whaddaya think?

BAILEY  
Maybe...

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

Come on, Bay. You've got a great body, you should show it off while you still can.

BAILEY

I never thought I'd even consider something this slutty--

ERICA

Hey!

BAILEY

--but after last night...I think I'll give it a try.

ERICA

Atta girl!

BAILEY

There's a lot of cute stuff here, actually.

ERICA

(handing Bailey a stack of clothes)

Here, why don't you go in and try these on, and I'll pass you more stuff as you go.

Erica shoves Bailey into a dressing room with a few items and continues to hunt around.

MONTAGE

-Bailey comes out of the dressing room wearing the tube top and a denim mini skirt, covering herself uncomfortably.

-She goes back in before Erica can even see the outfit, Erica is disappointed.

-Bailey comes out wearing a very tight, very bright dress--something a hooker would wear.

-Erica loves it.

-Bailey vetoes.

-Bailey struggles to take off the too-tight dress--she's stuck.

-Erica helps Bailey get out of the dress. It's next to impossible.

(CONTINUED)

-Bailey comes out of the dressing room wearing a shapeless floor-length maxi dress.

-Erica vetoes.

-Erica hands Bailey more clothes through the curtain.

-Bailey comes out wearing a hideous knee-length poncho.

-Bailey comes out wearing a low-cut sequin tank top and fitted jeans.

-Erica and Bailey both love it.

-Bailey comes out wearing a long peasant skirt and a white A-cut tank top.

-Bailey comes out wearing a strapless maxi dress.

-Bailey comes out wearing a vintage t-shirt and a denim skirt.

-Bailey comes out wearing a pair of jeans and a sheer, flowy chiffon top. She does a spin.

-Erica and Bailey agree, it's perfect. Some good compromises were made.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. MALL CLOTHING STORE, CASH REGISTER - LATER

Erica thrusts a pile of clothing up onto the counter and the CASHIER begins to ring them up.

BAILEY

I can't afford this many clothes,  
Erica.

ERICA

My treat.

BAILEY

You don't have to do that.

ERICA

I'm the one who dragged you here,  
now let me pay. You're gonna need  
these clothes for your trip,  
anyway.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

OK, then. Wow, thank you!

ERICA

No problem.

CASHIER

Your total is \$206.85.

Erica pulls out a credit card quickly and passes it to the cashier. The cashier runs the card as Erica and Bailey check out some accessories on the counter.

ERICA

(holding up a pair of earrings)

These would go great with that top.

BAILEY

Oh, definitely.

CASHIER

Excuse me, Ma'am?

ERICA

Yeah?

CASHIER

This card isn't working. It says it's over the limit.

ERICA

Hm, that's strange.

Erica pulls out another card and passes it swiftly to the cashier, hiding it from Bailey.

ERICA (CONT.)

Try this one.

BAILEY

I can put some stuff back, really. You don't have to--

ERICA

Bailey, just calm down. I've got this.

The cashier takes the other card and runs it.

CASHIER

Wow! You're both named Bailey? I thought you were sisters.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

Huh?

CASHIER

Wait...are you sisters? Your  
parents named you both Bailey?

Bailey looks confused. Erica looks busted.

ERICA

Oh, no...I just go by Bailey  
sometimes.

CASHIER

(suddenly suspicious)  
Can I see your ID please?

ERICA

Of course.

Erica looks through her wallet and sifts through cards. We can see that she has two driver's licenses. She pulls out the one with the name "Bailey Baxter" on it and hands it to the cashier. Bailey sees the ID and begins to get upset.

BAILEY

What's that?

ERICA

What's what?

BAILEY

Why do you have an ID with my name  
on it?

Erica tries to play it off, she doesn't want the (very suspicious) cashier to catch on.

ERICA

What are you talking about, silly?

CASHIER

Ma'am, is this your real ID?

ERICA

Of course it's my real ID. Came  
from the DMV and  
everything. See? That's my  
picture.

CASHIER

(to Bailey)  
Is her name Bailey Baxter?

(CONTINUED)

Bailey isn't sure of what to do. She doesn't want to get Erica in trouble, but she's pissed at Erica for using her name.

BAILEY

That's what the ID says.

The Cashier is unconvinced, but she doesn't really want to get involved in anything, so she relents and hands Erica the receipt to sign.

CASHIER

Sign here.

Erica signs the receipt, the cashier gives her another copy and the shopping bag.

ERICA

Thank you.

She hightails it out of the store with Bailey quick on her tail.

INT. MALL, OUTSIDE OF CLOTHING STORE - CONTINUOUS

Erica is walking quickly out of the store, Bailey is trailing her, flustered.

BAILEY

Erica. Erica. Erica! Will you please stop?

Erica stops and sits on a bench with her shopping bag, relieved she wasn't caught. Bailey sits next to her.

BAILEY (CONT.)

What was that all about back there? Why do you have an ID and credit card with my name?

ERICA

Look, I don't want you to freak out.

BAILEY

Go on.

ERICA

A few years back, I opened an account with your name.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

You what?

ERICA

I wanted to do you a favor! Do you know how important it is to build up a credit history?

BAILEY

Exactly how big is my credit history?

ERICA

Exactly? I'm not really sure.

Bailey is livid. She gets up and starts pacing back and forth.

ERICA (CONT.)

I move a lot! It's hard to keep track of all my bills when they don't follow me from place to place.

BAILEY

How many cards, Erica?

ERICA

I think there's five.

BAILEY

Five? You opened five credit cards in my name to "help me out"? What in the hell were you thinking?

ERICA

It got out of hand!

BAILEY

No shit it got out of hand! How could you do this to me? Did that card that was declined have my name on it too?

Erica looks down at the floor. Her silence confirms Bailey's suspicion.

BAILEY

I can't believe you, Erica! Of all the--how am I supposed to get a credit card now? I guess we can kiss Europe goodbye!

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

I was planning on having all the cards paid off by the time you graduated. I thought I had more time!

BAILEY

What do you mean you thought I had more time?

ERICA

I thought you graduated next year.

BAILEY

Are you kidding me?

ERICA

Look, it's not that bad. We'll work this out.

BAILEY

How much?

ERICA

I said I don't know.

BAILEY

Ballpark.

ERICA

Around...15,000?

BAILEY

I have to sit down.

Bailey is on the brink of a breakdown. She sits on the bench and puts her head between her knees. She is angry and hurt.

ERICA

I'm...I'm sorry, Bailey.

BAILEY

I think you should leave now.

ERICA

I can't just leave you--

BAILEY

Go.

Erica leaves Bailey sitting on the bench. She takes the clothes with her. Bailey begins to sob.



EXT. TYLER'S HOUSE - EVENING

Bailey walks up a sidewalk and approaches the front door to the house of her English teacher, Mr. Gearing. The house is small but neat. It's a tidy bachelor pad. Clean but boring.

She's still upset. She knocks forcefully on the door. Tyler answers with a confused look on his face.

TYLER

Bailey. What are you doing here?

BAILEY

I have questions, and I think I deserve answers.

Tyler opens the door and motions her in.

INT. TYLER'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The house is tidy, but packed up. There are boxes everywhere, some sealed, some still open. The big furniture is still there.

Bailey charges in, Tyler shuts the door behind her.

TYLER

What I mean is, how did you get here?

BAILEY

I was at the mall. I know a girl who works at The Gap. I waited for her to get off and she drove me here.

She suddenly notices the boxes.

BAILEY (CONT.)

Are you moving?

TYLER

Yes, actually--to Chicago.

BAILEY

I didn't know that.

TYLER

I didn't want a lot of people to know. What's going on, Bailey? You look upset.

(CONTINUED)

With this, Bailey breaks down. She begins to cry.

BAILEY  
I've been spending a lot of time  
with Erica lately.

TYLER  
Yeah? Well, that's...good.

BAILEY  
She's been using my identity.

TYLER  
She what?

BAILEY  
She stole my identity! I can't  
believe it. She has an ID and  
credit cards and everything.

Tyler pulls out his cell phone, angry.

TYLER  
That is not OK.

BAILEY  
What are you doing?

TYLER  
We need to call the police. We  
have to report this.

BAILEY  
No, don't.

TYLER  
Don't? We have to, Bailey. I'm  
sorry. I know you don't want to  
get her in trouble, but she can't  
keep on doing this.

BAILEY  
Just...let me talk to her about  
it. I'll get her to stop.

TYLER  
But the implications this will have  
on your life--your credit  
score--you may not even be able to  
get a job. We don't know what  
she's done under your name.

BAILEY

I didn't really come here to talk about her.

TYLER

Oh?

BAILEY

I came here to talk about you.

TYLER

Oh.

BAILEY

If I'm your biological daughter...why do you hate me so much?

TYLER

I don't hate you, Bailey. I love you.

BAILEY

You don't know anything about me.

TYLER

I know everything.

BAILEY

How?

TYLER

I've kept up. Your parents--Alice and Mike--have been great. They've kept me involved your whole life.

BAILEY

They have?

TYLER

Yes. You probably don't know this, but I was there for your kindergarten graduation. I was there when you were crowned fifth grade spelling bee champ. I sent you a present every Christmas and birthday money every year.

BAILEY

Wait...you're uncle Tyler?

(CONTINUED)

TYLER

I guess so. Is that who they said  
the gifts were from?

Bailey nods.

BAILEY

I never realized...

TYLER

I can't tell you how difficult it's  
been, all these years, watching you  
grow up before my eyes, but not  
being able to even give you a  
hug. I had to see every milestone  
from the shadows.

BAILEY

I had my appendix out when I was  
thirteen--

TYLER

I was right there in the waiting  
room until the doctor told us you'd  
made it through surgery.

BAILEY

You were?

TYLER

It took all of my willpower not to  
tell you. I wanted to write it on  
your papers in class, "Great work,  
but no daughter of mine confuses  
your and you're!"

BAILEY

So that's why you were so hard on  
me?

TYLER

It was the only parenting I could  
really do, you know?

BAILEY

I guess. But now you're leaving  
anyway...to Chicago?

TYLER

I just have to finish packing up  
and tie up a few loose ends at  
school, then I'm on my way in a  
couple days.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

That's too bad. It might have been nice to...spend a little time together.

TYLER

I had no idea we'd get the chance. I've been waiting for years--I thought they'd never tell you.

BAILEY

I wish they hadn't.

TYLER

(ouch)

Oh.

BAILEY

I don't mean that--I just mean--this has been a big adjustment.

TYLER

I know. I can imagine, I mean. Erica told me that you were re-thinking college?

BAILEY

Yeah, I was...before I broke up with Austin. Now I have no idea.

TYLER

Thank God!

Bailey shoots him a look as if to say, "what the hell?"

TYLER

Not that you're unsure of your future--I'm just happy that you broke up with Austin. I know I'm not supposed to say this, because I'm a teacher and all, but I really hated that kid.

BAILEY

I know. Everyone saw it but me. He was cheating on me. At least...I think he was. He says that he wants to talk, but I don't know what to think anymore.

(CONTINUED)

TYLER  
Don't do it, Bailey.

BAILEY  
Do what?

TYLER  
Take him back. You're better than that. It's your last summer home, don't waste it on that idiot.

BAILEY  
I was thinking about going away--taking a trip to Europe for the summer--but Erica screwed that up.

TYLER  
How? You were going to use credit?

BAILEY  
Yeah.

TYLER  
You know, I really think we should go to the authorities about this.

BAILEY  
Just, let me think about it.

TYLER  
Hey, since I'm moving, I have to finish everything in my freezer--want some ice cream?

BAILEY  
Sure.

INT. TYLER'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - LATER

The kitchen is littered with boxes, sparse but clean. Tyler and Bailey are sitting at the kitchen table, eating.

There is a smorgasbord of food in front of them--all from the freezer: a carton of ice cream, some cooked corn dogs, tater tots, frozen pizzas, chicken tenders--all junk.

Bailey is eating directly out of the ice cream carton with a spoon, Tyler is snacking on everything else, one at a time. He has a plate with ketchup on it in front of him.

(CONTINUED)

TYLER

In retrospect, maybe I should have had a party.

BAILEY

I hope you didn't pack up the antacid yet.

TYLER

Damn it, I think I did.

BAILEY

(serious again)

What did you ever see in her, anyway? I mean, you two seem like polar opposites. How did I even get here?

TYLER

Erica's changed a lot. We always had different personalities, but there was a time that I really was in love with her.

BAILEY

She told me that you didn't date for long.

TYLER

That's not true. We actually dated on and off for about two years. It wasn't until you were born that we broke up for good.

BAILEY

Because you were mad at her?

TYLER

What do you mean?

BAILEY

For getting pregnant.

TYLER

What? No, of course not, Bailey. I wanted to keep you. I proposed to her, but her parents--your parents--wouldn't allow it. They didn't want anyone to know that she was pregnant.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

She told me that--not that you proposed, but that Mom and Dad wouldn't let her keep me.

TYLER

They shipped her off to your aunt's house, and I was so heartbroken that I just couldn't handle it. I threw myself into school and she handled it in a slightly different way.

BAILEY

Booze?

TYLER

Among other things.

Bailey stops eating, upset. She hangs her head in shame.

BAILEY

How could I have been responsible for screwing up so many people's lives, and I didn't even know it?

Tyler moves his chair closer to hers, puts his arm around her for comfort.

TYLER

Hey, you didn't screw up anyone's life. You didn't.

BAILEY

I had no idea.

TYLER

There is absolutely no reason for you to take any blame here. You have done nothing wrong.

BAILEY

It's hard to believe that.

TYLER

Our actions were all our own. If anything would have been done differently back then, you wouldn't be who you are today. You are an amazing young woman, Bailey. You've got a whole world of possibilities ahead of you, all you have to do is believe in yourself.

(CONTINUED)



BAILEY

It's hard sometimes.

TYLER

I know it is. But I also know that you show more promise and potential than any other student in class--and not just from an academics standpoint. You are a truly good, kind, caring person. I am so proud of you. I should have told you that before.

BAILEY

That means a lot to hear. Thank you.

Bailey leans in and gives Tyler a long, heartfelt hug. He doesn't want to let go, he's waited for so long.

BAILEY

I really need to get home--Mom and Dad are probably wondering where I am.

TYLER

Do you think it would be okay if you and I kept in touch? Through email or something?

BAILEY

I think that would be really nice.

TYLER

Do you need a ride home?

BAILEY

Yeah, thanks.

TYLER

I'll get my keys.

INT. BAILEY'S HOUSE, FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Bailey walks in the front door right as her cell phone rings. Mike and Alice are sitting on the couch, very upset. Alice is crying, Mike has a phone up to his ear.

Bailey looks down at her cell phone just as Mike and Alice notice her walking in.

(CONTINUED)

BAILY

Are you guys calling me?

Mike and Alice jump off the couch, ecstatic to see their daughter.

ALICE

Bailey!

MIKE

Oh, my God. You're OK.

The two rush over to give Bailey a big hug, smothering her in the process.

BAILEY

Yeah, I'm...fine. What's going on?

MIKE

We just got off the phone with the police. They said that you'd been drinking and driving and that there was an accident. I was just calling your phone to make sure--

BAILEY

What? No, I--oh my God! Erica!

ALICE

What? Weren't you with her? Didn't she bring you home?

BAILEY

No, Mr. Gearing brought me home.

MIKE

Gearing? Tyler? Wait a minute, where's Erica?

BAILEY

She must be in the hospital.

ALICE

I don't understand. Why would the police think that Erica was you?

MIKE

Tell us on the way, I'll drive.

Mike grabs his keys from a side table and they all head out the door, confused.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

A dim, private hospital room. Erica is in the sole bed, her face is banged-up and she's got lots of scratches. Her arm is in a sling. She is resting her eyes.

Bailey knocks lightly on the door and enters the room from the brightly-lit hall. The sound of her entrance wakes Erica. She opens her eyes and looks over at Bailey.

Bailey walks calmly over to her, stoically. She is not happy. Erica is still happy to see her.

ERICA

Bailey...how did you know I was here?

BAILEY

The police called Mom and Dad. They told them that I was in the hospital.

ERICA

Oh. That's right.

BAILEY

I guess that's what happens when you drink and drive with someone else's ID in your wallet.

Erica has no idea of how to respond to this. She's hangs her head in shame.

BAILEY (CONT.)

The doctor said that it looks worse than it is--thank God for that. You look terrible.

ERICA

I feel terrible.

BAILEY

What did you do? Head straight from the mall to the liquor store?

ERICA

Look, I don't need a lecture from my daughter right now.

BAILEY

I am not your daughter.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

Bailey--

BAILEY

No. I am not your daughter. You gave birth to me, yes, but you are no mother of mine. I have a great mom, and she would never do what you've done to me.

ERICA

Are they here with you?

BAILEY

In the waiting room. I told them that I wanted to talk to you first.

ERICA

Did you tell them what happened earlier?

BAILEY

I had to. I also told the police who were waiting in the lobby for you.

ERICA

You what?

BAILEY

I wasn't going to. I was planning on working all this out between the two of us.

ERICA

I guess I screwed that up.

BAILEY

What in the hell were you thinking?

ERICA

I was upset!

BAILEY

So you drank a bottle of vodka and hopped in the car? That makes no sense.

ERICA

I almost made it to--

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

You almost killed yourself! Or someone else! What in the hell is wrong with you? Can't you get it through your head? This is not something you can do, Erica!

ERICA

I told you, I don't need a lecture right now.

BAILEY

I shouldn't have to lecture you! You're fifteen years older than me, you should know better than to do this kind of crap. I'm 17 years old, and I know better. It's time to grow up. Just...grow up.

ERICA

You think it's so easy? You have no idea what kind of life I've been living. You don't know what it's like to lose your child at fifteen and to be forced to go on as if nothing is missing all these years. You've been missing! You're a piece of me, and you've been gone. Do you know what that's like?

BAILEY

I've been right here, the whole time. You were the one who left, Erica: you. And I'm not going to blame myself for your pitiful life anymore. If you wanted to love me, you knew where to find me.

ERICA

I couldn't come back here.

BAILEY

But you could go everywhere else? Move around the country with a bunch of strange men? Face it: you ran away. Nobody forced you to abandon me. You did it all by yourself.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

I guess I should have never come back.

BAILEY

Why? So that you could go on living off my name and on my credit?

ERICA

So that I wouldn't have made you hate me.

BAILEY

I don't hate you.

ERICA

You don't?

BAILEY

No. I feel sorry for you. You need help, Erica.

ERICA

Nobody will help me. Mom and Dad are going to cut me off entirely after this--

BAILEY

I mean professional help. Like rehab.

ERICA

Fuck that.

BAILEY

Well, I don't think you're gonna have a choice in the matter. The cops said you almost took out a whole family in a mini-van when you hit that fence.

ERICA

I did?

BAILEY

Add that to the identity theft...

ERICA

Oh my God. What am I going to do?

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

Anyway, I just wanted to let you know that...I don't really want to hang out anymore.

ERICA

Why?

BAILEY

Come on, you know why. This isn't going to work out.

ERICA

You can't just kick me out of your life.

BAILEY

I'm not saying that I'll never see you again. I just think it's a good idea if you take care of all this stuff on your own. Get your life in order, then we'll see if we can build some sort of a relationship.

ERICA

Okay, I'll try.

BAILEY

You will?

ERICA

If that's what it takes. I mean, it won't happen overnight--

BAILEY

Of course not.

ERICA

I'll try.

BAILEY

Promise?

ERICA

I said I'd try, okay?

BAILEY

Mom and Dad are waiting, I'm going to wait outside for them. I'll come back tomorrow to see how you're feeling.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

I love you.

BAILEY

(reluctantly)

I love you too.

Bailey reaches over and gives Erica a light kiss on her cheek, then walks out. As she leaves the room, Mike and Alice barrel in, causing a commotion.

EXT. TYLER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

It's the middle of the night. The street is quiet, not a porch light is on. The world is asleep. A CELL PHONE RINGS.

INT. TYLER'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

There are boxes all around the room, some half-open. The dresser drawers are open.

Tyler, sleeping soundly in his bed, is startled awake by the PHONE RINGING on his bedside table. He bolts up in bed and turns on a lamp--usually late-night calls are serious.

He looks at the phone and doesn't recognize the number. He answers, a bit nervous.

TYLER

Hello?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME TIME

Erica is propped up in her hospital bed, the room dimly lit. She is holding the receiver from the bedside phone up to her ear.

She's had a lot of morphine and is emotional, nostalgic, desperate. Sad.

ERICA

Hi, Tyler.



INTERCUT -- PHONE CONVERSATION

TYLER  
Erica?

ERICA  
Are you busy?

TYLER  
What time is it?

ERICA  
Sorry, were you sleeping?

TYLER  
Is everything okay? Where are you?

ERICA  
I'm in the hospital. I was in a  
car accident.

TYLER  
Oh my God! Where's Bailey, was she  
with you? Are you okay?

ERICA  
Bailey wasn't with me. She's fine.

TYLER  
Oh, thank God.

ERICA  
I'm okay too...just dislocated my  
shoulder, lots of cuts and bruises.

TYLER  
Good.

Silence on her end.

TYLER (CONT.)  
I mean, that it wasn't more  
serious.

Silence again.

ERICA  
What are you wearing?

TYLER  
Huh?

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

I miss you.

TYLER

I'm not going to do this right now.

ERICA

Oh, come on. I'm in the hospital. That warrants a little sympathy phone sex.

TYLER

This isn't a good idea. I'm hanging up now.

ERICA

Wait--why?

TYLER

Lots of reasons. For one, you're not making any sense.

ERICA

Sorry, I'm pumped full of pain killers.

TYLER

Bailey came by earlier and told me what happened at the mall. How could you do that to her? Your own daughter?

ERICA

Listen, I don't know what she told you, but she's blowing this whole thing way out of proportion.

TYLER

You stole her identity.

ERICA

I was going to pay everything off.

TYLER

Why did you call me?

ERICA

I miss you, Tyler. Being around Bailey--I see you in her, so much. It reminded me of how much I missed you.

(CONTINUED)

TYLER

I missed you too--I did. But after everything that's gone on, I don't think I can do this.

ERICA

But I thought--

TYLER

(ready to hang up)  
Get some rest, I'll talk to you tomorrow.

ERICA

(Quickly--she's desperate to keep him on the line)  
If we could just work things out, if we could just be together, I think that you, me, and Bailey could really be a family, you know?

TYLER

I don't think that's going to work.

ERICA

Why not?

TYLER

(blowing up)  
Because your daughter can't trust you! Because I can't trust you! You call me up in the middle of the night, thinking you can make everything better with sex, well you can't!

ERICA

But...don't you want me anymore?

TYLER

It's not that I don't want you. I just don't think this is a good idea. You have a lot going on that you need to figure out right now.

ERICA

So Bailey hates me and now you hate me too. Great.

TYLER

Nobody hates you.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

No, I get it. It's too late.

TYLER

It's too late.

ERICA

I'm sorry I called. I won't bother you again.

When Erica hangs up, she is gone. Tyler looks at his phone and sees that she's hung up on him. He turns off the light and lies back down, staring at the ceiling.

No sleep tonight.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

It is the next day.

Bailey walks in to Erica's hospital room carrying a bouquet of flowers. The bed is empty. She looks around for any clue that Erica is still around, but nothing is there.

INT. HOSPITAL NURSE'S DESK - CONTINUOUS

A HOSPITAL NURSE is sitting behind the desk, going over charts. Bailey walks up, flowers still in her hand.

BAILEY

Excuse me?

HOSPITAL NURSE

Yes, dear?

BAILEY

Do you know if they moved Erica Baxter? The room she was in yesterday is empty.

HOSPITAL NURSE

Are you a family member?

BAILEY

I'm her sister.

HOSPITAL NURSE

The police haven't contacted you?

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

No, why would they?

HOSPITAL NURSE

Ms. Baxter left last night.

BAILEY

Did they take her to jail?

HOSPITAL NURSE

No, but they'd like to. She snuck out. The police are looking for her now.

Bailey is shocked and upset at this news.

BAILEY

She what? Why would she do that?

HOSPITAL NURSE

Do the police have your information, if they need to contact you?

BAILEY

I gave it to them yesterday.

HOSPITAL NURSE

I'm sorry, Miss.

BAILEY

Me too. Thanks.

Bailey is fed up. She walks away, throwing her flowers in the trashcan on the way out.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bailey storms down the hall on her way out of the hospital. She is sad, but mostly angry.

As she passes through the waiting room, she sees Austin sitting there, holding a bottle of crappy vodka with a cheap bow stuck to the front. Bailey stops in her tracks when she sees him.

BAILEY

Austin?

Austin stands up to greet her.

(CONTINUED)

AUSTIN

I went by your house, your mom said you were here.

BAILEY

What in the hell are you doing here? (re: the bottle) What's that?

AUSTIN

I wanted to see you. You won't return my texts. I heard about Erica, and I thought I'd stop by and bring her a get well present.

BAILEY

You brought her a bottle of vodka?

AUSTIN

I thought she'd like it.

BAILEY

Could you be any dumber?

AUSTIN

What?

BAILEY

Erica isn't here. I guess the rumor-mill in this town doesn't turn quite as fast as I thought it did.

AUSTIN

Huh?

BAILEY

She bailed. She's gone.

With this news, Austin steps in, sensing that she's vulnerable, hoping to comfort her. He puts his hand out to touch her shoulder.

AUSTIN

Oh, hey, I'm sorry Bay. I didn't know.

Bailey is fed up. Enough.

BAILEY

Don't touch me.

Austin steps back, her words sting.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY (CONT.)

I didn't text you back because I don't want to see you or talk to you ever again.

AUSTIN

I told you, she was my cousin's step sister, it was noth--

BAILEY

(interrupting)

It doesn't even matter! Hell, I'm glad that you cheated on me at this point

AUSTIN

(over her)

I didn't cheat on you!

BAILEY (CONT.)

--because it helped me to see what everyone else could see the whole time. You are a loser, Austin. I am so much better than you. Spending all that time with Erica made me realize that it doesn't matter how close you are to someone; if they suck, you need to cut them loose. You suck, Austin. I'm cutting you loose. Go fuck your cousin or your cousin's sister or whoever the hell you want. It's over.

Austin stands there holding his sad little bottle of vodka, looking stunned...and really pathetic.

Bailey storms out of the hospital, completely exasperated.

INT. ANDY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Andy and Bailey are lounging around the living room, eating popcorn. The movie *The Bourne Identity* is playing on the television. Bailey looks confused. Andy looks high.

BAILEY

Andy...I don't think this movie is about identity theft.

ANDY

Yeah, I think you're right.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

Don't get me wrong--the car chases and stuff are great--I just don't think it really pertains to my situation.

ANDY

I guess not.

BAILEY

I really appreciate the thought, but I don't think there's a movie that'll help in this situation.

ANDY

There's always a movie. Always. Something will work here...

Andy gets up and looks through his DVD collection. He pulls out a box.

ANDY

Wanna watch Star Wars?

BAILEY

Star Wars?

ANDY

Yeah, you know: "I am your father" and all that.

BAILEY

Uh, that's OK.

ANDY

Alright, but nobody would make Erica look better than Darth Vader. Identity theft looks pretty paltry next to trying to overthrow the entire Galactic Empire.

Andy puts the DVD box back in its place and looks through the titles. Bailey watches him for a moment.

BAILEY

Hey, Andy?

ANDY

Yeah?

(CONTINUED)



BAILEY

How come you never went to film school? I mean, you obviously love movies more than anything in the world. The short films you make are great.

ANDY

I was going to go. I was actually accepted into NYU.

BAILEY

Really? That's amazing! What happened?

ANDY

Well, I wasn't as smart as you are, so I didn't have scholarships to pay for it. Mom and Dad were all ready to send me anyway, but then Erica got pregnant, so they needed the money for hospital bills and diapers.

BAILEY

I'm the reason you never went to film school?

ANDY

Nah, not really.

BAILEY

But you just said--

ANDY

I got the loans. By that time, though, I'd kind of talked myself out of it.

BAILEY

Why?

ANDY

Oh, you know, I thought I wasn't talented enough, I thought everyone would look down on me, coming from a small town. That kind of thing.

BAILEY

I guess I can understand that.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Yeah, but now I see that I should have gone for it when I had the chance. Maybe I'd still be here working for Tom and making little films with my digital camera, but at least I would have given it a shot.

Bailey thinks about this for a few moments.

BAILEY

So, you think I should go to college then, huh?

ANDY

I know you should.

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. Andy goes to answer it. Tyler is standing on the other side, he has an envelope in his hand. Andy gives him a bro-hug, happy to see him.

ANDY

Tyler! How the hell you been, bud?

TYLER

Hi, Andy. Is Bailey here?

Andy motions toward Bailey on the couch. Tyler walks over to her. Andy sits back on the other couch. Bailey stands up to greet her biological father.

BAILEY

Hi. What are you doing here?

TYLER

I had a late-night phone call from Erica last night.

Really? ANDY

BAILEY  
You did?

TYLER

You haven't heard from her?

BAILEY

No. What did she say?

TYLER

She called me up, high on painkillers, wanting to get back together.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY  
From the hospital?

TYLER  
That's what she said.

ANDY  
Well, she's gone now.

TYLER  
I know--the police called me this morning. I told them about our conversation, but I have no idea where she went.

(beat)  
She shouldn't have left this way, Bailey.

BAILEY  
Yeah, well...it was only a matter of time. I should have never let myself get so close to her.

TYLER  
Regardless, I just wanted you to know that I'm sorry.

BAILEY  
It's not your fault.

ANDY  
(to Tyler)  
Bay tells me that you're moving to the Windy City. You need any help packing up?

TYLER  
Actually, no--I've changed my mind, I'm not going to Chicago.

BAILEY  
Why not?

Tyler hands Bailey an envelope. She opens it.

BAILEY (CONT.)  
What's this?

TYLER  
Plane reservations, hotel reservations, a rail pass--you leave for Barcelona in a week.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

What?

TYLER

I don't think you should have to miss out on that kind of an opportunity just because of Erica.

BAILEY

You bought me a trip to Europe?

Andy goes over and inspects the travel documents with Bailey.

TYLER

Well, yes.

ANDY

Wow, Tyler. That's awesome.

Bailey is ecstatic. She gives Tyler a huge, excited hug.

BAILEY

I can't believe this!

TYLER

But, there are some strings attached. These tickets will get you back a week before classes start at State. By taking this trip, you're promising me that you won't let your scholarship go to waste.

ANDY

Sounds like a pretty sweet deal to me, Bay.

BAILEY

I don't know...I don't even know what I want to study.

TYLER

You're a writer.

BAILEY

I thought I could be, but--

TYLER

No. You are a writer. I'm sorry I didn't make that clearer to you before. You have so much talent, Bailey. Don't let it go to waste.

(CONTINUED)

BAILEY

This is the most amazing gift. Thank you so much! But, it's too much...I can't accept it.

TYLER

I want you to have it.

BAILEY

But...you gave up your move for this? Chicago...you could get out of here once and for all.

TYLER

I think I was running away from a town and a school with a lot of sad memories. I don't see it that way anymore, now that I've got you. Go see the world, Bailey.

She thinks about it for a moment, then realizes that there's nothing standing in her way. This is so exciting.

BAILEY

Okay. I'll go. I'll send you a postcard from every city. This means more to me than--thank you so so much!

Bailey gives Tyler another big, heartfelt hug. Andy walks over to the DVD wall and pulls out a movie.

ANDY

Who wants to watch *European Vacation*?

INT. BAILEY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Bailey is packing for her trip. There are clothes thrown all about the room, some on the bed. She's trying to fit as much as possible into a large backpack. It's a challenge.

Alice comes into the doorway and knocks lightly on the open door. She is carrying a small bag.

ALICE

Can I come in?

BAILEY

Sure! Just packing up.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

I see. Quite a project, isn't it?

BAILEY

How am I supposed to fit an entire summer's worth of clothes into a backpack?

ALICE

This is some graduation gift. Kind of makes the hundred bucks your dad and I gave you look pitiful, doesn't it?

Bailey reaches in and gives her mom a hug.

BAILEY

Aw, Mom.

ALICE

Back to Mom?

BAILEY

I'm sorry about that.

ALICE

No, I'm sorry. I should have never put you through all of this. Your dad and I should have been honest from the beginning.

BAILEY

I understand why you weren't. Erica's not really mom-material. I would have been better off not knowing.

ALICE

Oh, don't say that.

BAILEY

(shrugs)

At least I have a spare dad now who can afford to send me on expensive trips.

ALICE

Are you sure you're going to be okay traveling all by yourself?

BAILEY

I'll be fine. I think the time alone will be good for me.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

I'm really glad you've decided to go to college, I have to say. I hated the idea of you throwing the whole thing away.

BAILEY

Yeah, I don't know what I was thinking.

ALICE

So, will it be writing?

BAILEY

It is decidedly so.

ALICE

In that case...

Alice hands the bag to Bailey. She looks inside and takes out a blank leather-bound journal.

BAILEY

You didn't have to do that, Mom. Thank you.

ALICE

Now, I want you to write down everything you see. I want to know what every leaf looked like and how every train seat smelled.

BAILEY

I think I can handle that. I love you, Mom.

The two share a warm hug.

ALICE

I love you too.

INT. AIRPORT, SECURITY CHECKPOINT - DAY

Bailey is on her way. She has her backpack on, a ticket in her hand, and her family is there to see her off.

Andy is there. Tom and Jennie are there with the baby, Alice and Mike are weeping, and Tyler is also there to see her off. Bailey's going down the line, hugging each family member as they say their final farewells.

(CONTINUED)

MIKE

Now, you keep an eye on your things at all times, and make sure you keep your money and passport close to your body. Don't put them in your backpack.

BAILEY

Got it.

ALICE

Did you pack comfortable walking shoes?

BAILEY

Of course. And plenty of underwear, Mom.

JENNIE

Take lots of pictures!

TOM

Yeah, and make sure you upload them as you go so we can see that you're safe.

BAILEY

I will, I will.

ANDY

If you make it to Amsterdam, bring me back a souvenir.

BAILEY

I will. But only a t-shirt.

ANDY

Yeah, OK.

TYLER

Just have a great time.

BAILEY

Thank you so much. Again, I cannot even tell you how much this means to me.

TYLER

It's my pleasure.

BAILEY

You're the best thing that's come out of this whole situation.

(CONTINUED)



The two hug again, a big, father-daughter hug. They both tear up.

TYLER

I can't believe I'm actually here to see you off--I don't have to watch from across the room. This is the happiest day of my life.

ANDY

Awwww.

BAILEY

I'll miss you all so much. I'll be in touch, I promise.

MIKE

OK, now go, go! Before we all start to cry.

BAILEY

OK, OK. I'll see you all in August!

Bailey breaks away and heads through security. The whole family watches her, happy and sad at the same time. They turn around and walk away.

As they head out of the airport, nobody notices Erica, standing beside a plant, watching the whole scene play out. She is very bruised and scratched, still has her arm in a sling.

Now she's the one watching from afar, hiding in the shadows.

After the coast is clear, Erica takes her luggage (a few shopping bags stuffed full) from behind the plant. She limps over and stands in line for security. She's going somewhere too.

FADE OUT

THE END.