

DISPLACED

Written by

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OPENING: A car pulls up to a modest home on a small farm. Inside the sedan is a teenage girl. A woman exits the sedan first and she is greeted by an older married couple. After a verbal exchange, the woman opens the rear door and a young girl emerges. She carries a trash bag filled with her belongings. With her head down she enters the home followed by the couple. The woman enters the home as well.

INT: INSIDE THE MODULAR HOME. THE HOME IS TIDY WITH FEW NICK KNACKS. THE COUNTERS ARE CLEAN AND THERE IS A FRESH POT OF COFFEE.

LOUISE IS A YOUNG GRANDMOTHER. SHE IS WELL KEPT BUT NOT FASHIONABLE. SHE IS SITTING AT THE KITCHN TABLE WITH HER HUSBAND DAVID. DAVID IS QUIET, RUGGED AND SPORTS A FIVE O'CLOCK SHADOW. THEY ARE SPEAKING WITH A DCF CASE WORKER.

DCF CASE WORKER

Okay, like I said on the phone. Since her birth father passed, she can stay here temporarily. In a few days I will get the court date and we can go through the steps necessary to place her here full time..

LOUISE

I understand.

DAVID

I don't.

LOUISE

Please don't start.

DCF CASE WORKER

There are steps and procedures.

DAVID

Yes, we have been through steps and procedures before, we tried to protect her before this happened and you....

LOUISE

(to the case worker)  
Not you personally.

DAVID

Whatever, the steps and procedures kept her in a horrible place for thirteen years.

Abby enters the room

ABBY  
Fourteen years, I'm fourteen now.

DAVID  
Fourteen, sorry. You can understand  
my anger.

LOUISE  
Frustration, we're not angry.

DAVID  
I'm angry.

DCF CASE WORKER  
I'm sorry. I wasn't involved with  
this at that time and placing a  
child with family is always  
preferred.

Abby enters the kitchen

ABBY  
Which the minor has no say in.

LOUISE  
Abby, would you like to sit down?  
Have something to drink?

ABBY  
So I can stay and listen?

DAVID  
Heck yeah, you're not some kid with  
no opinion. Drink coffee?

ABBY  
Yes, just a little cream.

DAVID  
The way I take it, cool.

David fixes her a cup

LOUISE  
Anyway back to what happens next.

DCF CASE WORKER  
She stays here, we check in and set  
up a court date.

LOUISE  
How soon does she stay here full  
time, officially?

DCF CASE WORKER  
Do you want the truth?

DAVID  
Please.

DCF CASE WORKER  
I don't know. If her mom does well.

DAVID  
And hell freezes over.

LOUISE  
That's enough, go out to the barn  
break something. Then fix it. Go  
now.

David gets up and leaves

LOUISE (CONT'D)  
Sorry, there is a lot of pain  
there.

ABBY  
Maybe I shouldn't be here either.

LOUISE  
That is up to you. I feel that you  
need to here this and be involved.

DCF CASE WORKER  
I agree.

ABBY  
Fine, when do I get to break  
something?

LOUISE  
I will point out some things in the  
barn, that I would be happy to be  
rid of.

DCF CASE WORKER  
Anyway, we are pretty much done  
here. Abby tested well and can  
start sophomore year in a few  
weeks.

ABBY  
Excuse me?

DCF CASE WORKER  
School, high school. You know  
reading writing and math.

LOUISE  
And you have to do one thing  
extracurricular.

ABBY  
Why.

DCF CASE WORKER  
I will leave you two to sort this  
out. You have my numbers, if I  
don't hear from you, you will hear  
from me for the first check up.

ABBY  
Extracurricular?

LOUISE  
Extracurricular.

ABBY  
Shit.

David bursts into the kitchen

DAVID  
Swear jar, swear jar.

LOUISE  
Shut up.

FADE OUT.

INT. ABBY IS SITTING ALONE ON A SINGLE BED. SHE IS TAKING IN  
THE BEDROOM THAT USED TO BE HER MOTHERS. THE ROOM IS  
UNDISTURBED. THERE ARE NO TROPHIES, PLAQUES OR POSTERS ON THE  
WALL. SHE WANDERS AROUND THE SMALL SPACE OPEN DRAWS AND  
CLOSETS.

Louise enters

LOUISE  
All your mother left with was her  
clothes.

ABBY  
The room seems lonely.

LOUISE  
She was lonely, I'm sorry this is  
happening to you.

ABBY

I get that a lot. The police were sorry, her friends were sorry and the social worker was sorry.

LOUISE

Okay, sorry, I mean, what do you want to do?

ABBY

I don't understand.

LOUISE

Well you have never spent any time here, it is a farm, a small farm. There are things to do. Why don't you have David show you around? We can have an early dinner and tomorrow we can get out of here and buy some stuff to make this room yours.

ABBY

Mine?

LOUISE

Yes, I prefer to think that this is going to work out, you staying here.

ABBY

I guess, I don't know.

LOUISE

Do you need someone other than us to talk to?

ABBY

Like a social worker? No.

LOUISE

There are priests, support groups or a therapist?

ABBY

All wonderful choices, thank you, no.

LOUISE

Abby, you going to have to get used to the fact that being here is going to be a very different life than before. I want to try really hard to make it work.

ABBY

Did you try really hard with my mother?

LOUISE

Yes, I think I did. But you are not her and I'm very different person now. So all I can hope to do is move forward, thats sounds like bad bumper sticker.

ABBY

It does sound like a bumper sticker.

LOUISE

So what do you suggest?

ABBY

I want to move around, I'm tired of sitting in offices, cars and court rooms.

LOUISE

Let's go see what David is breaking.

FADE OUT.

EXT. LOUISE AND ABBY ARE OUTSIDE WALKING THE PROPERTY. THERE ARE A FEW OUT STRUCTURES, A SMALL BARN. CHICKENS ROAM FREELY THERE IS A LARGE ENCLOSED VEGETABLE GARDEN.

ABBY

So what do you guys do?

LOUISE

I have a cleaning business, which pays for everything David breaks. David is retired.

ABBY

Retired?

LOUISE

Yes Honey we are old.

ABBY

You don't seem it.

LOUISE

David and I have be working and saving since we were eighteen.

(MORE)

LOUISE (CONT'D)

He might seem like a bit of a flake, but he is a good provider and frugal.

ABBY

Like you said, this is all new to me.

A goat runs past the two girls with David following behind.

DAVID

You said goats would be fun!

FADE TO:

INT: MALL ABBY AND LOUISE ARE WALKING AROUND.

LOUISE

Ugh, sorry I'm not used to this many people in one place.

ABBY

I used to hide in places like this.

LOUISE

I don't understand.

ABBY

Shelter, when you have no place to live you look for shelter. A couple dollars and a food court buys a few hours of a clean warm place to be.

LOUISE(shaken)

I can't imagine.

ABBY

I didn't have to imagine.

LOUISE

I have to sit. Can you get me a cup of coffee?

ABBY

Sure.

Louise gives money to Abby and finds a place to sit, Abby returns with two cups of coffee.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Cream and sugar.

LOUISE

Yes that's fine.



ABBY

You seem upset, is this a bad idea?

LOUISE

No, we have to get this done. I'm just trying to find a way to deal with all of this.

ABBY

Ha right, new place, a real bed, new clothes and starting school is a lot for me too.

LOUISE

I know, I'm sorry.

ABBY

Again.

LOUISE

Right, what else can I say?

ABBY

You could say "let go try on some clothes"

LOUISE

Good suggestion.

Montage of the two girls trying various things on. Some things they agree on, others not. Louise is uncomfortable when she drags Abby out of Victorias secret. They are sitting in the food court.

LOUISE (CONT'D)

This is not real food.

ABBY

Real enough.

LOUISE

We should go to the thrift store.

ABBY

Why?

LOUISE

So you can get some stuff to make that room yours, not my memory of being a failure?

ABBY

So you think it's your fault? My mother's choices?

LOUISE  
 Sometimes. Doctors and therapists  
 can tell you all you want that is a  
 mental illness, addiction. You  
 still feel like you did something  
 wrong.

ABBY  
 Something we share.

LOUISE  
 Really?

ABBY  
 Ever since I can remember, I've  
 felt like there was something I  
 could do, to make it all stop. But  
 I couldn't.

Abby starts to get emotional

LOUISE  
 Is it time to go?

ABBY  
 I'm tired.

Abby starts to tear up.

CUT TO:

INT ABBY'S NEW BEDROOM. DAVID IS TAPING UP A BOX

DAVID  
 (Surveying the room)  
 I like it.

ABBY  
 Really?

DAVID  
 Yeah, why?

ABBY  
 I've just never had to decorate  
 before.

DAVID  
 You're a natural. Louise will be  
 home soon, can you help me start  
 dinner?

ABBY  
 I guess.

The three are sitting at the table eating.

LOUISE  
So I was talking with the guidance  
counselor at the school.

DAVID  
Cindy?

LOUISE  
Mrs. David. She and your mother  
went to school together. No love  
lost there.

ABBY  
What do you mean?

DAVID  
You are going to find out that your  
mom had a gift for ruffling  
feathers. What did she call it?

LOUISE  
Disrupting the status quo.

ABBY  
What does that mean?

DAVID  
It's a nice way of saying she was  
suspended a few times.

ABBY  
Do I have to go to school?

DAVID AND LOUISE  
Yes.

LOUISE  
Have you thought about what else  
you are going to do there? Have you  
picked an extracurricular activity?

ABBY  
Football?

DAVID  
If there was a team that would  
disrupt the status quo.

ABBY  
No I really haven't.

LOUISE

Well think about it, you will have the first week to decide.

ABBY

Are you sure about sending me to this school?

LOUISE

There isn't much of a choice.

ABBY

You could home school, there are computer programs.

LOUISE

No computer program is going to teach you how to interact with people.

DAVID

I'm sure you've got great people skills.

LOUISE

And it's a small town so..

ABBY

Everyone will know my mom is in jail.

DAVID

I didn't think about that.

ABBY

I did, I'm always thinking about it. A bunch of people I don't know and all they know about me and I have a junkie mom behind bars. May I be excused?

LOUISE

Of course.

Abby leaves the table.

DAVID

This is going to be fun.

LOUISE

Are we supposed to hide? Is she not going to go to high school? We have to deal with this head on.

DAVID  
Like we dealt with Sarah head on?

LOUISE  
We tried.

DAVID  
Maybe not hard enough.

LOUISE  
I, we cashed out a lot of our savings for rehab more than once.

DAVID  
I know, I know.

LOUISE  
We are squeaking by.

DAVID  
Please I don't need a budget session, I'm depressed enough. The thought of Abby in high school.

LOUISE  
Yes, high school sucks.

DAVID  
So what do we do?

LOUISE  
What can we do, she goes and we get ready for the fallout.

DAVID  
And we stopped drinking why?

LOUISE  
Shut up.

FADE OUT.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL EARLY MORNING BUSES AND CARS ARE DROPPING OFF STUDENTS OF VARIOUS AGES AND INCOME BRACKETS. SENIORS ARE DRIVING THEMSELVES. SOME IN PLOW TRUCKS, OTHERS ARE IN SPORTS CARS.

David and Abby sit in the front of David's truck.

DAVID  
You ready for this?

ABBY  
Define ready.

DAVID  
I've been meaning to ask you...

ABBY  
I don't use drugs.

DAVID  
Good to know, but not what I was going to ask.

ABBY  
Sorry, that was rude, I guess I'm a little nervous.

DAVID  
It's understandable, any how. So are you kinda tough or kinda broken?

ABBY  
I would say both.

DAVID  
Can you be tough during the day and come home a little broken.

ABBY  
Why?

DAVID  
High school sucks.

ABBY  
Inspiring.

DAVID  
Anyway, there are a lot of different kids here.

ABBY  
And?

DAVID  
And half the staff know you mom.

ABBY  
Wonderful.

DAVID  
So this isn't going to be easy.

ABBY

Not to keep with the rude theme,  
being homeless with an addict mom  
is tough. This will be difficult at  
most.

DAVID

We'll see. Just call if it's too  
much on the first day.

ABBY

Thank you.

DAVID

No problem, so you ready?

ABBY

Not really, but I have to go in  
sometime.

Abby gets out of the truck and does not look back.

INT. PRINCIPLES OFFICE. PRINCIPLE KIMBLE SITS ACROSS FROM  
ABBY.

PRINCIPLE KIMBLE

So your classes are picked out, (he  
hands Abby a slip of paper) you  
will also find your locker  
information.

ABBY

Thank you.

PRINCIPLE KIMBLR

I have arrange for a junior to give  
you a tour and spend the day with  
you.

ABBY

Really?

PRINCIPLE KIMBLE

Yes.

There is a knock on the door.

PRINCIPLE KIMBLE (CONT'D)

Come in.

Sara enters, Sara is a junior well put together but not  
glamorous. She has a backpack and headphones wrapped around  
her neck.

PRINCIPLE KIMBLE (CONT'D)  
Sara Johnson, this is Abby Johnson.

SARA JOHNSON  
No relation?

ABBY  
I wouldn't know.

Abby stands and extends her hand.

ABBY (CONT'D)  
It is nice to meet you and thank  
you for helping me.

PRINCIPLE KIMBLE  
So most of the teachers will expect  
the two of you to be wandering a  
bit and somewhat tardy, just don't  
make a habit of it.

SARA JOHNSON  
Yes, sir.

PRINCIPLE KIMBLE  
Alright, off you go, Sara my door  
might be closed sometimes, but this  
office is always open to you.  
Always feel free to come here if  
you need anything.

ABBY  
Thank you.

SARA JOHNSON  
Well let's go.

The two girls exit the office and start to walk around the  
school.

SARA JOHNSON (CONT'D)  
The classrooms are in sections  
according to grades.

ABBY  
Okay.

SARA JOHNSON  
So freshman will all be in one area  
and so forth.

ABBY  
No mixing of species.



SARA JOHNSON

Ha that's funny. So what do I need to know about you?

ABBY

How much time do you have?

SARA JOHNSON

Would you need a lot?

ABBY

Let's see, my mom went to school here, had me when she was seventeen. Left home, She's an incarnated drug addict who basically kept me homeless.

SARA JOHNSON

Wow.

ABBY

Yeah.

SARA JOHNSON

You seem to share easily.

ABBY

(Sighing) I've been going through this same story for a couple of months, so I guess it comes out a lot easier over time.

SARA JOHNSON

Obviously you aren't homeless now.

ABBY

My grandparents have stepped up. I don't even know them and now I'm living with them.

SARA JOHNSON

I would say I'm sorry or that I understand, but it seems stupid.

Bell rings

SARA JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Okay, so this is homeroom, all of your classes until lunch are within these four doors. I will be back to escort you to our fine dining cafeteria.

ABBY

Really?

SARA JOHNSON

Yes we have a cafeteria, no it is not fine dining.

ABBY

I meant you eating lunch with me.

SARA JOHNSON

It will give me some time to try to create an interesting life to compete with that story.

ABBY

I love creative fiction.

SARA JOHNSON

See you later.

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA TYPICAL HIGH SCHOOL LUNCH. EVERY TABLE IS POPULATED BY A DIFFERENT SOCIAL GROUP. ABBY AND SARA ARE SEATED BY THEMSELVES AT A TABLE.

ABBY

This is strange.

SARA JOHNSON

What part?

ABBY

All of it. Sitting in a clean place, looking at people my own age, not having to feel threatened. This is a-lot.

SARA JOHNSON

Should we go to the office? Call and get you home?

ABBY

It doesn't feel like home, yet.

SARA JOHNSON

Well at least you said yet.

ABBY

I guess. What did you come up with, anything creative?

SARA JOHNSON

Oh God no, I'm so boring it's not even funny.

(MORE)

SARA JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Parents met in college, they are environmental scientists. They did some research about 20 miles from here, fell in love with it, moved here, bought a small farm and now we are living the life.

ABBY

So you're a farmer.

SARA JOHNSON

Not really, they still do research and lectures. They both teach at the local college.

ABBY

And brothers and sisters?

SARA JOHNSON

One brother, he sits with the theater people. He's over there.

SARA'S BROTHER JOHN IS SITTING WITH HIS CLICHE, HE HAS A BOOK IN HIS HAND WHILE EATING.

ABBY

He actually reads.

SARA JOHNSON

Yeah, he's a freak.

ABBY

Moving on, what do I need to know to survive?

SARA JOHNSON

It's pretty typical. There are the haves, wanna bes, have nots and the don't give a ....well you know. This is a really small school so

ABBY

Everyone knows everything.

SARA JOHNSON

Yup.

ABBY

What about you?

SARA JOHNSON

Me?

ABBY

Yeah, what is your tribe?

SARA JOHNSON

Lady I'm a jock, Field Hockey  
goalie, so watch your ass.

ABBY

(Laughing) Why? Don't field hockey  
people have a stick up their...

Bell Rings

SARA JOHNSON

Okay enough fun, off to finish the  
day of higher learning.

ABBY

Thank you.

SARA JOHNSON

Please, this gives me a free pass  
to be tardy. Please need me for the  
entire year.

ABBY

Let me know how I can help. You  
know, I can have a breakdown or  
something.

SARA JOHNSON

Please don't.

FADE OUT.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL. BUSES ARE LEAVING, KIDS ARE PEELING  
OUT IN THEIR CARS. SARA AND ABBY ARE STANDING TOGETHER.

SARA JOHNSON

And you've got a ride.

ABBY

My grandfather.

David pulls up with the windows open.

DAVID (SHOUTING OUT THE CAR WINDOW)

I'm too young to be grandfather.

ABBY

Pops?

DAVID

It doesn't work.

Abby gets in the truck.

ABBY  
See you tomorrow?

SARA JOHNSON  
Where else are we going to be? See  
you.

ABBY  
Thanks again.

DAVID  
So, did you survive? Like it, hate  
it? Should we send you to France  
for finishing school instead?

ABBY  
Is that an option?

DAVID  
Not really.

Abby start to get emotional, slight panic attack.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Hey you okay?

ABBY  
Everyone was nice, this is to too  
normal for me. I'm just waiting for  
something bad to happen. I know I  
shouldn't, but I miss my mom.

DAVID  
Why shouldn't you?

ABBY  
Because I'm supposed to hate her.

DAVID  
Let's drive around, you can get  
some air, see where we live and  
talk a little.

ABBY  
And if I don't feel like talking.

DAVID  
Then enjoy the scenery, it's why  
most of us moved here.

ABBY  
Why did you move here?

DAVID

I was in the city, making money and living the life that was expected. It took a toll and before I collapsed, your grandmother convinced me to come here.

ABBY

Collapsed?

DAVID

A nice way to say nervous breakdown. Anxiety runs in the family.

ABBY

Do you think that was apart of my mom's issues?

DAVID

I'm not sure either of us is prepared to talk about this.

ABBY

(frustrated)

So when do we? I'm the one getting tossed around? I'm the one living with strangers and no one seems to want to talk about it.

DAVID

You're right.

ABBY

I don't care about being right.

DAVID

Sorry.

ABBY (SCREAMS)

Ugh. If I hear that again.

David pulls the car over they are in front of a ice cream store.

DAVID

Can we take a break for a ice cream?

ABBY

Sure, I guess that makes it all better.

FADE OUT:

INT. ABBY'S NEW BEDROOM. THE ROOM HAS BEEN CLEANED OUT. THE BED HAS NEW NON DESCRIPT SHEETS. ABBY AND LOUSIE ARE SITTING ON THE BED

LOUISE

Do you want to paint the room?

ABBY

What?

LOUISE

Pick out your own colors, paint the room. Make it yours?

ABBY

Is it mine?

LOUISE

I hope so, we're trying you know.

ABBY

This is too much too soon. Instant family, and school. Just add water and a boyfriend will appear.

LOUISE

Did you meet someone at school?

ABBY

No no no, I was joking. I'm just trying to breathe, I'm tired.

LOUISE

Not sleeping?

ABBY

No, yes.. I'm used to sleeping with one eye open. For various reasons.

LOUISE

I can't imagine.

ABBY

Do you want to know?

LOUISE

I'm not really sure.

ABBY

At least you're honest.

LOUISE

I try to be, do you think it will help?

(MORE)

LOUISE (CONT'D)

We can arrange for you to talk with someone on a professional level. So one with the skills to help.

ABBY

Did you do all this for my mom?

LOUISE

Yes and no, there was a-lot more anger and shouting, but we offered I hope as much as we could.

ABBY

I just don't understand this. Why would she choose how we lived over this?

LOUISE

Maybe you need to ask her?

ABBY

I'm not ready.

David pokes his head in

DAVID

Are you ready for dinner?

ABBY

I guess.

LOUISE

What did you make?

DCF CASE WORKER

Something exotic, I like to call it (with a french accent) Le' Mac and cheese.

LOUISE

We'll be right there. Abby, there were mistakes and pain all around. We are all trying to take it slow, get through a minefield and do what is best for you.

ABBY

Is it best for my mom to be in prison?

LOUISE

When you leave here for school everyday, you will have to make decisions on your own.



ABBY  
I've been doing that for a long  
time.

LOUISE  
My point is, your mom made her  
decisions, not good ones. At least  
she made a great one by having you.

ABBY  
You don't know me yet.

DAVID (O.C.)  
It's getting cold.

LOUISE  
We will.

FADE TO:

DINNER TABLE. ABBY, DAVID AND LOUISE ARE SITTING AND EATING  
DINNER.

ABBY  
So can I get a little history here.

DAVID  
I've no secrets.

LOUISE  
What are you looking for?

ABBY  
Just how you got here.

DAVID  
I was in finance, you know  
investing other people's money.

ABBY  
And?

DAVID  
I made enough and we came here.

ABBY  
Right.

LOUISE  
No secrets?

DAVID

Fine, one day driving across a bridge into the city, I had a panic attack.

ABBY

Panic attack?

DAVID

Yes, heart beats fast, sweat comes pouring down, can't breathe world is closing in.

ABBY

Wow, so then you packed it in and moved to these green acres?

DAVID

Basically.

ABBY

Basically?

LOUISE

David still manages money, he is very good at it. He is careful and not greedy, so we are okay. Not rich, but okay.

DAVID

This week.

LOUISE

Funny.

ABBY

I don't understand.

DAVID

Do you know what the stock market is?

ABBY

Yes.

DAVID

So I move money around just enough not to lose money and make enough to live here.

LOUISE

And I work.

DAVID  
(Choking back)  
Uh Huh.

LOUISE  
Shut up.

ABBY  
This makes things even more tough  
to understand.

LOUISE  
Why your mom did what she did?

ABBY  
Yes.

LOUISE  
I don't have the answer, I can  
guess and tell you what we went  
through. But in the end you really  
don't know why people make the  
choices they do.

ABBY  
You just seem so normal and nice. I  
don't understand.

DAVID  
We don't either.

ABBY  
This sucks.

DAVID  
I've made better mac and cheese.

FADE OUT.

INT CLASS ROOM STUDENTS ARE SITTING THERE IS A TEACHER AT THE  
HEAD OF THE CLASS. ABBY IS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM.

MR. GREEN  
Okay the topic of the essay is "Can  
I change the world?"

BOB (STUDENT)  
I don't want to change the world.

CARL (STUDENT)  
Can't we give peas a chance?

Students laugh, general talking.

MR. GREEN

Thank you for the comedic interlude. Write how you feel, even if you feel you can't change the world tell me why. 500 words rough draft by Friday.

Students all groan.

MR. GREEN (CONT'D)

Ahh, music to my ears. Thank you and see you all tomorrow.

Students get up to leave. Abby is still writing in her notebook not noticing. Mr. Green approaches her.

MR. GREEN (CONT'D)

Abby?

ABBY

Oh sorry.

Abby closes her note book.

MR. GREEN

Are you okay? Keeping up?

ABBY

Yes, I think so.

MR. GREEN

I know this is new, so please let me know if you need more time or extra help.

ABBY

Thank you.

MR. GREEN

Are you settling in?

ABBY

Here, school, this town, or my new home?

MR. GREEN

Pick one.

ABBY (SHAKEN)

I'm trying, everything is happening too fast. So much has changed and I feel less in control now than when I was with my mom.

MR. GREEN

I went to school with Sara, I mean  
your mom.

ABBY

Oh god.

Abby gets up to leave, she wants to get out of there quickly.

MR. GREEN

Abby, I just meant if you ever want  
to talk to get a different  
perspective.

Abby at the door.

ABBY

Thank you, I will keep that is  
mind.

FADE OUT.

INT SCHOOL HALLWAY ABBY IS AT HER LOCKER, SHE IS SHAKEN. SARA  
APPROACHES.

SARA JOHNSON

Hey you okay?

ABBY (HYPERVENTILATING)

No.

SARA JOHNSON

Okay let's walk.

Sara walks side by side with Sara heading down the hallway.

SARA JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Let's get you some where private.

ABBY

There is no where that feels that  
way in here.

SARA JOHNSON

I don't understand.

ABBY

I don't either. I'm living with  
people I don't know, going to  
school with my mother's past and I  
feel like I can't breathe.

SARA JOHNSON  
Okay here we are the nurse's  
office.

They enter the room

NURSE COLLINS  
Hello, Sara.

SARA JOHNSON  
Hello Mrs. Collins this is Abby,  
please tell me you don't know her  
mother.

NURSE COLLINS  
I don't.

ABBY  
Thank you.

Sara sits Abby down and hands her some tissues. Abby begins  
to sob.

NURSE COLLINS  
Sara get back to your day, thank  
you.

SARA JOHNSON  
I can stay.

ABBY  
No thank you. I just want to go  
home, but not really.

NURSE COLLINS  
I'll just call your mom.

Now Abby really cries.

FADE TO:

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST OFFICE. LEATHER CHAIRS BOOK SHELVES ABBY IS  
SITTING ACROSS FROM A MIDDLE AGED WOMAN. NANCY WILLIAMS IS A  
WARM BUT PROFESSIONAL DOCTOR.

ABBY  
Is this typical?

NANCY WILLIAMS  
What part?

ABBY  
Do crack babies normally get this  
kind of attention?

NANCY WILLIAMS

They do when they have grandparents who are involved and caring.

ABBY

Where they this involved with their own daughter?

NANCY WILLIAMS

So you are angry at them? They caused your mother to be a drug addict and get arrested?

ABBY

How would I know? Again, crack baby.

NANCY WILLIAMS

If you aren't ready we can reschedule.

ABBY

I don't feel ready for any of this.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Why don't we start with that, trying to get to ready for where you find yourself now. After a bit we can work with the past and talk about the future.

ABBY

Do I have one?

NANCY WILLIAMS

A future? We all do.

ABBY

Right okay, now. I live in a town where everyone knows my convicted mom. I go to school with some teachers who were her classmates, this school is nothing I'm prepared for.

NANCY WILLIAMS

This is where I'm supposed to say how does that make you feel?

ABBY (CHUCKLING)

I think I have expressed it.

NANCY WILLIAMS

So what do you want to do?

ABBY

Excuse me?

NANCY WILLIAMS

What do you want to do?

ABBY

I don't remember being ever asked that.

NANCY WILLIAMS

So let's work on that, let's work on things you can control. How is school?

ABBY

The school isn't bad, just I'm not sure I can keep up? You know doing everything right?

NANCY WILLIAMS

Why is that important?

ABBY

What?

NANCY WILLIAMS

Getting it right.

ABBY

I don't know.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Abby everyone creates expectations. Good or bad, nothing meets them. Let's talk about that.

ABBY

Sure.

NANCY WILLIAMS

So what are your expectations?

ABBY

From what or who?

NANCY WILLIAMS

Pick one.

ABBY

I've never done this, everything has been on the run. Trying to eat not get caught or.....



NANCY WILLIAMS

Or?

ABBY

Being taken advantage of, from...  
people.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Men?

ABBY

Yes.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Is this something we can discuss  
now?

ABBY

Nothing ever really happened,  
enough close calls to make me sleep  
with one eye open.

NANCY WILLIAMS

How are you sleeping now?

ABBY

After four whole weeks of my new  
life? Not well, I stare at the dark  
ceiling wondering what will break  
next.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Do you read?

ABBY

Can I, yes.

NANCY WILLIAMS

No I mean do you? There is a  
difference. I have a few kids, some  
read because a school told them to,  
my other one always has something  
on him reading.

ABBY

Oh, I don't know. Seems like a  
luxury or something, why?

NANCY WILLIAMS

Well rather than staring at a  
ceiling, letting your mind wander  
creating nightmares, you could get  
lost in a book.

ABBY  
You sound like a commercial.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Well maybe.

Nancy gets up and pulls a book off here shelve and hands it to Abby.

NANCY WILLIAMS (CONT'D)  
I think you should read this.

ABBY  
The Count of Monte Cristo? Really?

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Oh you've read it?

ABBY  
No, I think I've seen the movie.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
The book is a bit different, a lot more detail. Take some time to get lost in that.

ABBY  
I guess.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Well give it a try, our time is about up.

Nancy hands Abby a card.

NANCY WILLIAMS (CONT'D)  
My number is on there, the service will contact me, if I'm able I will call back if you need to talk.

ABBY  
If your able?

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Other patients and a life, I don't want you to think that I'm ignoring you.

ABBY  
Right a life.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Which you can start to build.

Nancy walks Abby to the door, David is in the waiting room looking at a fly fishing magazine.

ABBY

Thank you.

Abby approaches David, he rises to meet her.

DAVID

Why do they always have fly fishing magazines in waiting rooms. Have you ever fly fished?

ABBY

I can't say I have.

DAVID

Me neither, we should do it?

ABBY

Really?

DAVID

Why not, I'm always looking for a way to waste time on the weekend, better than having the list from Louise.

ABBY

Sure, fishing why not.

FADE TO:

INT. BIG BOX ELECTRONICS STORE. DAVID IS LOOKING AT A LARGE FLATSCREEN TV. ABBY IS NEXT TO HIM.

ABBY

How is the fishing?

DAVID

I'm fishing for a deal.

ABBY

That's funny.

DAVID

Well this is the way I see it. You don't have a TV in your room.

ABBY

Don't need one.

DAVID

Let me finish.

ABBY

Sorry.

DAVID

So, you are probably going to want to catch up on the latest show so you can y'know relate.

ABBY

Yes, I long to belong.

DAVID

Now I figure you will need an opportunity to to

ABBY

Catch up.

DAVID

Right.

ABBY

Are you going to use me in order to justify a new TV?

DAVID

That would be?

ABBY

Bad.

DAVID

Right, well I think bad s a bit strong. Gangsters are "bad". I just made a poor choice, so I will take the heat, you smile and nod.

FADE OUT.

INT ABBY'S NEW BEDROOM. DAVID AND ABBY ARE FINISHING MOUNTING THE TV IN HER BEDROOM.

LOUISE (O.C.)

Why is there a very large new TV in the living room?

David and Abby look at each other.

DAVID

Do you want the long version or the short version?

LOUISE (O.C.)  
 You two are in charge of dinner,  
 I'm going to watch my new TV.

DAVID  
 What can you make?

ABBY  
 I've never really cooked.

DAVID  
 Really?

ABBY  
 Really.

DAVID  
 Our next adventure.

FADE OUT.

INT. CLASS ROOM STUDENTS BOOK DESK MR. GREEN IS STANDING AT  
 THE FRONT OF THE ROOM.

MR. GREEN  
 Okay, so everyone has their first  
 drafts back. Don't forget edits and  
 notes do not mean bad work. Every  
 writer has to rewrite.

Bell Rings

MR. GREEN (CONT'D)  
 I will see your young minds  
 tomorrow, Abby hang back please.

All the students begin their exit.

ABBY  
 Did I do something?

MR. GREEN  
 Well yes, but not anything bad.

ABBY  
 I mean, why did you want me to  
 stay.

Mr. Green open his desk draw and hands Abby a book.

ABBY (CONT'D)  
 Hooray another book.

MR. GREEN  
You don't like to read?

ABBY  
No, but everyone seems to be  
throwing books at me.

MR. GREEN  
Sorry, here.

ABBY  
No pity.

MR. GREEN  
Not really, this is fundamentals of  
writing.

ABBY  
And.

MR. GREEN  
And you write well, but you need to  
go through this. Start reading it  
and let me know if you want to have  
some help with it.

ABBY  
I know how to use a semi colon.

MR. GREEN  
That's a relief, you can teach me  
all about it. Good day.

ABBY  
Thank you.

Abby exits. Sara is waiting for her outside of class.

ABBY (CONT'D)  
My bodyguard.

SARA JOHNSON  
Someone has to eat your lunch. What  
was that about?

ABBY  
My fundamentals are lacking.

SARA JOHNSON  
What does that mean?

ABBY

Extra homework. He gave me a book to use to help with my grammar and stuff.

SARA JOHNSON

He must like you.

ABBY

Why?

SARA JOHNSON

Mr. Green only gives out Fundamentals in writing to kids he likes or feels can write. He is always trying to get a student on that young writer's thing on the radio.

ABBY

Radio, what's a radio?

SARA JOHNSON

Oh it's "I think I'm funny day."

The two girls walk to the lunch room.

FADE OUT.

INT ABBY'S NEW BEDROOM. ABBY IS SITTING ALONE ON A SINGLE BED. THE BED IS COVERED WITH BOOKS AND PAPERS. SHE IS HARD AT WORK.

Louise enters

LOUISE

Hard at work?

ABBY

Yes.

LOUISE

Are you okay do you need help? It looks like you could use a desk and some shelves?

ABBY

I like working on the bed, but some shelves would be nice.

LOUISE

I'll let Mr. Fixit know.

Louise picks up a book from the bed.

LOUISE (CONT'D)  
Fundamentals ...ugh I hate this  
book.

ABBY  
Sorry?

LOUISE  
I could never write.

ABBY  
(Looking up) )  
Could my mother write?

LOUISE  
No she liked history and art. What  
do you like?

ABBY  
Sleeping in a warm safe place,  
thank you. Have I said thank you?

LOUISE  
You just did twice, do you like  
writing?

ABBY  
Kinda of, it's a safe way to  
express stuff and no one can judge  
you.

LOUISE  
As long as no one reads it.

ABBY  
Mr. Green reads it.

Abby hands the paper to Louise.

LOUISE  
That's a lot of red.

David enters

DAVID  
"Better dead then red" What are we  
talking about?

ABBY  
We were conducting a meeting about  
my love of writing and lack of  
basic skills.



DAVID

Ahh the fundamentals. Did he give you a copy of your own, or do you want to borrow mine?

ABBY

Really?

LOUISE

Really, Mr. Romance still has his copy from college.

ABBY

(Starting to get emotional) I don't understand this.

Abby starts to cry.

ABBY (CONT'D)

This seems so normal so nice, why would my mom mess this up?

Abby is full on sobbing.

DAVID

I'll get some tissues.

Louise makes room for herself on the bed. Trying to console Abby.

ABBY

I mean, I don't mean to be rude. You and David seem great, nice loving, why did she do the stuff that she did?

LOUISE

David?

ABBY

He doesn't like Grandpa.

LOUISE

I do, call him that.

David returns with the tissues.

DAVID

Should I stay or should I go.

ABBY

I'm okay, I mean not really but somewhat.

Abby blows her nose.

ABBY (CONT'D)  
I can't make sense of this.

LOUISE  
Abby, we can't either. And we are  
scared and confused just like you.

DAVID  
We are just better at hiding it.

LOUISE  
Is there anything we can do?

DAVID  
Say go camping.

ABBY  
What?

LOUISE  
I do not want to go camping.

ABBY  
What?

LOUISE  
He is looking for any excuse to buy  
something, he has a problem.

ABBY  
You could buy me a car or a  
computer.

DAVID  
Oh Oh Oh a computer. Amazon or big  
box?

LOUISE (TO ABBY)  
See a problem.

FADE TO:

INT. SCHOOL LUNCH ROOM. GENERAL NOISE AND MOVEMENT FROM  
STUDENTS. ABBY IS SITTING ALONE WITH A BOOK. A BOY APPROACHES  
HER.

Scott is a freshman like Abby. He is the kind of kid who is  
not yet grown into his own skin, not shy but awkward.

SCOTT  
The Count of Monte Cristo? That's a  
little light reading.

ABBY  
I'm sorry what?

SCOTT  
Hi, my name is Scott, my sister is Sara, your bodyguard. She has something to do so she asked me to check in with you.

ABBY  
Your obligation is complete.

SCOTT  
That was overly warm.

ABBY  
And?

SCOTT  
And do you mind if I sit? I need to eat.

ABBY  
And your friends?

SCOTT  
Are far and few between, I'm an oddity in that I like to read.

Scott sits and begins to unpack his lunch.

ABBY  
Another freak.

SCOTT  
Says the Dumas fan.

ABBY  
I have to read this.

SCOTT  
Have to?

ABBY  
Doctor recommended.

SCOTT  
Ah, wish I had a doctor like that.

ABBY  
You don't.

SCOTT  
Don't what?

ABBY  
Wish that.

SCOTT  
Oh sorry, I was being flip.  
Sarcastic.

ABBY  
I understand what flip is.

SCOTT  
I'm doing well.

ABBY  
Sorry, this is uncomfortable for  
me.

SCOTT  
Lunch, school or me?

ABBY  
All of the above.

Abby gets up to leave.

ABBY (CONT'D)  
But you are welcome to try  
tomorrow.

SCOTT  
It's a date.

ABBY  
Excuse me?

SCOTT  
Stop you know what I mean.

ABBY  
Learn to say what you mean, it will  
be easier.

FADE TO:

INT PSYCHOLOGIST OFFICE LEATHER CHAIRS BOOK SHELVES ABBY IS  
SITTING ACROSS FROM NANCY.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
How is the book?

ABBY  
Good, I think I understand why you  
want me to read it.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Okay.

ABBY

Edmond is a victim of circumstance, things he could not understand or control. But then he spends his energy escaping and in the end finds some happiness.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Or?

ABBY

Or?

NANCY WILLIAMS

It's just a really good book, it's one of my favorites. Transporting me to a fantasy world where although things weren't easy for Edmond, he could take control of how he choose to react and feel.

ABBY

So the revenge thing.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Is bad, plus you don't know how to fence.

ABBY

Yet.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Yet, but it is a good book. How is reading for enjoyment?

ABBY

A bit weird, I don't see a lot of people around me doing the same.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Their loss. How are the uncontrolled sobs this week?

ABBY

There were a few. I still feel confused and then I get angry. Like my Mom had this life and well threw it away.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Do you want to talk about that? Or are you ready to talk about her?

ABBY

Not really, but I know it is something I will have to do.

NANCY WILLIAMS

The fact that you know not to ignore or run from it, is a good sign.

ABBY

It doesn't feel good.

NANCY WILLIAMS

And?

ABBY

Maybe she had a problem with reality. Maybe escaping to drugs is what she did to ignore it..

NANCY WILLIAMS

Well not to get too into it, that is one aspect of it. We here more about you and how you are doing.

ABBY

What happens when my mom is released?

NANCY WILLIAMS

When?

ABBY

If? Why is this a question? She is getting out soon?

NANCY WILLIAMS

I don't really know.

ABBY (FRUSTRATED)

Well who does, why am I here?

NANCY WILLIAMS

Before we escalate. Can you breathe a little?

ABBY

You're concerned I'm going to escalate, what does that even mean?

(MORE)

ABBY (CONT'D)

I just want to know how long I'm staying here with grandparents I don't know.

NANCY WILLIAMS

I want you to try to breathe so you can control how you choose to react to a situation. Do you think we don't have your best interest in mind?

ABBY

What about my mother's best interest?

NANCY WILLIAMS

You will have to speak to someone else about that. I'm hear for you, not her.

ABBY

That was warm and fuzzy.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Abby, you're old enough and you were there.

ABBY

She's not a drug dealer.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Maybe but she is a drug user an addict who put you at risk.

ABBY

I don't care.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Well a-lot of other people do, the state, your school and your grandparents.

ABBY

I want to be with my mom.

NANCY WILLIAMS

She is going to have to work very hard if she wants to be with you. And that is up to her not you. This is enough for today. I know this is difficult.

ABBY

Difficult (Abby scoffs) trying to find food is difficult, staying safe was difficult, this is not those things.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Yes, but talking about those things and accepting where you are now is.

ABBY

Can I go now?

NANCY WILLIAMS

Yes.

Nancy walks Abby to the door.

NANCY WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Did you finish the book?

ABBY

Almost.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Do you like it?

ABBY

It's a bit wordy, but yes.

Abby exits David is waiting for her.

ABBY (CONT'D)

How are the fishing magazines today?

DAVID

Annoying, how'd it go?

ABBY

I want to know when I can see my mother.

DAVID

Okay.

ABBY

Okay?

DAVID

Yeah okay, this is not some conspiracy to keep you apart. I, we are just trying to keep you safe.



ABBY  
Thank you.

DAVID  
You're welcome.

FADE OUT.

INT DAVID AND LOUISE'S KITCHEN THEY ARE JOINED BY THE SOCIAL WORKING AND ABBY.

ABBY  
Can you please just tell it to me simply?

DCF CASE WORKER  
It's not simple.

ABBY  
Do your best.

DAVID  
Abby, that was a bit rude.

ABBY  
Sorry, I'm upset.

LOUISE  
That's okay, it's okay to be upset, not okay to be rude.

ABBY  
Again I'm sorry, can you please try to explain it to me?

LOUISE  
Please.

DCF CASE WORKER  
Okay, your mother will be the care of the state.

ABBY  
Prison.

DCF CASE WORKER  
For at least 18 months.

DAVID  
I don't know if I can listen to this.

LOUISE  
David.

DAVID  
No I can't, sorry.

David gets up and walks out

LOUISE  
I'm sorry.

DCF CASE WORKER  
I understand.

ABBY  
I don't.

LOUISE  
Abby, Sara is your mom.

ABBY  
Yes.

LOUISE  
But she was our baby first.

Louise goes to the counter, pours some coffee and comes back with a box of tissues.

LOUISE (CONT'D)  
18 months.

DCF CASE WORKER  
Right, so when she is done with that, she goes to a halfway house.

ABBY  
That sound great.

DCF CASE WORKER  
It's not, Abby your mom went beyond the definition of user to dealer.

LOUISE (UPSET)  
My Sara, a drug dealer.

ABBY  
No she isn't.

LOUISE  
What, a victim of circumstance?

ABBY  
I told them, she didn't know what she was doing.

DCF CASE WORKER  
Not a great defense.

ABBY  
Thank you.

DCF CASE WORKER  
Abby, your mom crossed the line,  
child endangerment. You might not  
feel that way, but the court does.

ABBY  
So?

DCF CASE WORKER  
It is going to be a while before  
you can be alone with her.

ABBY  
I don't feel well.

LOUISE  
Neither do I.

DAVID (O.C.)  
Creamy run.

ABBY  
Sounds good.

FADE OUT.

INT. KITCHEN LOUISE AND DAVID ARE GETTING READY FOR THE DAY.  
ABBY ENTERS DISHEVELED.

DAVID  
Good morning sunshine, the earth  
says "Hello"

ABBY  
Can coffee say hello?

LOUISE  
Here, (Louise set her up with a  
cup) long night.

ABBY  
I didn't sleep much. My mind kept  
racing.

LOUISE  
Anything we can help with?

ABBY

I don't want to seem ungrateful or angry, but I'm angry.

LOUISE

And no where to put it?

ABBY

Yes, I'm sorry. Why didn't you guys help her?

DAVID

Abby, you're a kid.

ABBY

Thank you.

DAVID

No I mean because you're a kid, we will give some leeway. But you don't know what our lives were and what Louise and I went through.

ABBY

I'm mature for my age, experience will do that. I think it will help.

LOUISE

David? What do you think?

DAVID

Abby has been homeless, her mom is in prison and now she is stuck here with you, so it can't get much worse.

LOUISE

Me?

DAVID

I'm charming and fun.

LOUISE

Really?

ABBY

And trying to distract me.

David walks over to a kitchen draw and pulls out a thick file and puts it on the table in front of Abby.

DAVID

This is just the stuff on paper,  
nothing to do with the emotional  
stuff. Open the file and the first  
thing you see?

ABBY

(Opening the file) A big house.

DAVID

Yes, the one we sold to pay for  
treatment, doctors and anything  
else we could think to try. Then  
you can drill down and see all the  
different things, we tried.

ABBY

That's a big house.

LOUISE

It was a pain to clean.

DAVID

Yeah, Abby it's not about the  
money, or what we supposedly gave  
up. We never gave it a second  
thought and would probably do it  
again if we thought it would have  
any impact.

LOUISE

Sooner or later, your mom will have  
to change or I don't know what.

ABBY

I'm sorry. I was kinda thinking of  
myself.

DAVID

You're fifteen, you're entitled.

ABBY

It looks like my mom was too.

DAVID

Yes, it all looks great on paper it  
didn't do much to help her.

FADE OUT.

INT. SCHOOL LUNCH ROOM ABBY HAS A BOOK OPEN AND LUNCH. SCOTT SARA JOHNSON BROTHER APPROACHES.

SCOTT  
How is today's adventure Mercedes?

ABBY  
Huh?

SCOTT  
Mercedes, Count of Monte whatever.

ABBY  
Oh right funny.

SCOTT  
Wow tough crowd. How are you?

ABBY  
Why?

SCOTT  
Why what? Oh are you one of those types, "what do you care, I'm alone and that's the way I like it"?

ABBY  
Not really.

SCOTT  
Well it can't be me, I'm polite well groomed and charming.

ABBY  
You forgot humble.

SCOTT  
I'm working on that, youtube classes.

ABBY  
You are mildly funny.

SCOTT  
Charming.

ABBY  
Sorry, no.

SCOTT  
Wow, okay now I have a goal. May I sit?

ABBY  
If you must.

SCOTT  
I must, I must.

ABBY  
Blazing saddles?

SCOTT  
A classic, I'm impressed.

ABBY  
I'm catching up, watched it last weekend.

SCOTT  
Catching up?

ABBY  
Homeless kids, don't usually have access to Netflix.

SCOTT  
Wow, really?

ABBY  
Well yes, the food is great through.

SCOTT  
I think you're being sarcastic. Mercedes was not.

ABBY  
Mercedes was a victim of her time period. The damsel, I'm not.

SCOTT  
Victim, Damsel?

ABBY  
Yup. Carrot?

SCOTT  
Thought you would never ask.

Scott sits and opens his lunch.

ABBY  
What is that?

SCOTT  
Hummus, you've never tried hummus?  
Here.

ABBY  
Thank you.

SCOTT  
See charming.

ABBY  
Almost.

FADE OUT.

INT PSYCHOLOGIST OFFICE LEATHER CHAIRS BOOK SHELVES ABBY IS  
SITTING ACROSS FROM A MIDDLE AGED WOMAN.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
And?

ABBY  
And I can't see her for a few weeks  
at least.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Okay, but I was asking about the  
lunch with the boy.

ABBY  
We shared hummus, it was life  
changing.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
I wasn't implying that it should  
be.

ABBY  
I know, it's tiring that these  
normal experiences have to be  
treated like some life changing  
event.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Okay, how about "how are you"?

ABBY  
Okay no fits of crying lately.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Abby, there is nothing wrong with  
crying.



ABBY  
Uncontrollably?

NANCY WILLIAMS  
That could be an issue, when was  
the last time?

ABBY  
I don't know, at my locker a few  
days ago, I was having trouble  
opening it.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
That's a reoccurring nightmare for  
some.

ABBY  
Really?

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Oh sure, I have adults in here with  
nightmares about high school,  
missing tests walking around naked  
and such.

ABBY  
People are weird.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Keeps me employed. Back to the  
locker.

ABBY  
Right, so as soon as I knew I was  
losing it, I walked down to the  
nurse and just let it run its  
course.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Okay, that's good.

ABBY  
Good.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Sure, Abby you found a safe place  
and let it out in a healthy way.

ABBY  
It didn't feel that way at the  
time.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
And then?

ABBY

Dried my eyes and went about the day, when do we talk about seeing my mom?

NANCY WILLIAMS

I don't, Your mother is in prison, I don't have anything to do with it.

ABBY

I just want to see her.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Have you written to her?

ABBY

What?

NANCY WILLIAMS

You know, pen and paper, stamps. An old fashion letter.

ABBY

Worth a try.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Don't type it. Write it make it personal.

ABBY

Okay.

NANCY WILLIAMS

All right, see you next time.

ABBY

For how long are we doing this?

NANCY WILLIAMS

Up to you.

ABBY

Okay, see you next time.

Abby exits David is there reading a fishing magazine.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Again with the fishing.

DAVID

It's like I'm being programmed.

ABBY  
I need to get some stationary.

DAVID  
Stationary?

ABBY  
Paper and envelopes.

DAVID  
Thank you, I've always wondered.

ABBY  
See, I'm helpful.

DAVID  
What about a nice pen too?

ABBY  
Louise is right, you have an issue.

DAVID  
I like to shop.

ABBY  
It's weird.

DAVID  
Could be worse, I could like  
fishing.

FADE OUT.

INT ABBY'S NEW BEDROOM. EVENING ABBY IS ON THE BED WITH HER  
NEW STATIONARY. LOUISE ENTERS

LOUISE  
How's it going.

ABBY  
It's not.

LOUISE  
Sorry, do you want to talk or be  
left alone.

ABBY  
I've been left alone too much.

Louise pulls up a chair.

LOUISE  
So talk.

ABBY

Thinking about all this makes me sad, which turns into anger. And I don't think getting a mean letter from your kid is going to lift your sprits while you in jail.

LOUISE

No I can't imagine it would.

ABBY

So?

LOUISE

So write the angry one, just don't send it.

ABBY

Really?

LOUISE

Well that is what my therapist used to tell me what to do.

ABBY

You go?

LOUISE

Went. I stopped after a few years, I got what I needed.

ABBY

How many letters?

LOUISE

I usually write one a week or so, more depending on how things are going.

ABBY

Where are they, did you mail them?

LOUISE

No, I put them in a box and burn them every year.

ABBY

That sounds depressing.

LOUISE

It is very, usually there is crying and a few glasses of wine.

ABBY  
I could use the crying.

LOUISE  
But no wine.

ABBY  
No wine.

FADE OUT.

INT CLASS ROOM STUDENTS ARE SITTING THERE IS A TEACHER AT THE  
HEAD OF THE CLASS.

MR. GREEN  
So when I asked for an essay, I  
didn't want to limit you. I  
thought, to my grievous error.

CARL  
Wasn't that a general in Star Wars?

BOB  
Obi-wan took him out.

MR. GREEN  
Thank you, I will be a little less  
cryptic. The essay with be 1000  
words, due the end of the week.

Bell Rings

MR. GREEN (CONT'D)  
And Friday would be the end of the  
week.

CARL  
I'm glad he clarified.

MR. GREEN  
May the force be with you.

Students begin to leave.

MR. GREEN (CONT'D)  
Abby?

ABBY  
Yes.

MR. GREEN  
Stay behind.

ABBY

Great.

Everyone leaves.

MR. GREEN

So your essay.

ABBY

I think it was a little more than a thousand words.

MR. GREEN

Yes, well that was evident, I marked it up and would like the revision by Friday.

He hands her the paper.

ABBY

Wow, again that's a lot of red.

MR. GREEN

You write well, work on some of the mechanics.

ABBY

Okay.

MR. GREEN

Abby, I'm serious you write well. This could be something for you to pursue.

ABBY

I don't understand, pursue?

MR. GREEN

College, career.

ABBY

I've never really thought that far.

MR. GREEN

I don't pretend to know or understand, but you've been given an opportunity to be in a safe environment. College is right around the corner.

ABBY

You think I'm college material?

MR. GREEN

Yes and that is just based on your writing. I have no idea how you are doing in P.E.

ABBY

I could be a ninja.

MR. GREEN

I'll bet. Just start thinking about it.

ABBY

I'll try.

MR. GREEN

Fair enough, now go and may the force be with you.

ABBY

Really?

MR. GREEN

Sorry, you kids today. Is that better.

ABBY

Yes.

FADE OUT.

INT. ABBY IS SITTING IN THE KITCHEN WITH THE ESSAY. VARIOUS BOOKS PENS AND PAPAER. DAVID ENTERS FROM OUTSIDE.

DAVID

This looks studious.

ABBY

Thank you. I'm in the red again in English.

DAVID

Can I see.

ABBY

Sure.

DAVID

Wow, this Mr. Green must really like you.

ABBY

Why does everyone keep saying that?

DAVID

I'm sure from your perspective it must seem like work or Mr. Green is giving you a hard time.

ABBY

A little.

DAVID

Abby, if he didn't see something, he wouldn't bother.

ABBY

That's a nice way to think about it.

DAVID

I think it's true. Why put any energy or commitment into something you don't believe in. You should really try to respect that and put some effort into this.

ABBY

Sounds like a plan.

DAVID

Excellent, what's for dinner?

ABBY

Excuse me?

DAVID

You've been here for a while and have yet to cook and we need to start discussing the "c" word?

ABBY

Should I be afraid?

DAVID

Chores.

ABBY

Really?

DAVID

Really, really.

ABBY

This is a banner day.



DAVID

Louise hates hamburger helper, go look at that shelve grab some of the cook books and tomorrow I'll help you make dinner.

ABBY

You guys are brave.

DAVID

Our courage knows no bounds. Grab a book.

ABBY

What about tonight?

DAVID

Oh, Louise called she is bringing home pizza.

ABBY

After work?

DAVID

If you can call it that.

ABBY

What do you mean?

DAVID

Louise's work cost me money, she cleans houses and does meals on wheels. I give her a hard time about it, but it makes her feel good.

ABBY

I'll bet. And I would think she is making others happy as well. Oh here we go.

Abby starts to get emotional.

DAVID

What, what happened?

ABBY

I get upset, you guys border on prefect.

DAVID

Thank you, untrue, but i'll take it.

ABBY  
 Why with all this did my mom throw  
 it all away?

DAVID  
 If I knew.

ABBY  
 Yeah, I know.

Abby is holding back the tears. Louise walks through the door  
 with pizza.

LOUISE (TO DAVID)  
 What did you do?

DAVID  
 I broke the kid.

ABBY  
 Pizza might help.

LOUISE  
 It always does.

They start to clear the table and get ready for dinner.

FADE OUT.

INT. GR. GREEN'S CLASSROOM

MR. GREEN  
 Thanks to the few that turned  
 something in. Everyone else, you  
 will lose 10 percent every day  
 until you turn it in. We will begin  
 the exploration of Othello on  
 Monday, which will give you all  
 weekend to come up with snappy  
 mother jokes.

CARL  
 That really isn't enough time.

BOB  
 I know, I know. I'm going to have  
 to pull an all nighter.

Bell ring, students start to leave.

MR. GREEN  
 Abby?

ABBY

Here we go.

MR. GREEN

The latest draft of the essay was very good. I'm thinking about submitting to the young writers project.

ABBY

What's that?

MR. GREEN

Local public radio, it's a way to get young writers recognized for their work.

ABBY

What if I enjoy anonymity?

MR. GREEN

Think about it, you write well enough to take it to college. Plus writers enjoy a certain sense of anonymity.

ABBY

I will, think about it. Thank you.

FADE OUT.

INT. DAVID AND LOUISE'S KITCHEN ABBY IS READING A NOTE.

ABBY

"Went in to the city, be back before eight, food in the frig, no parties" Funny.

Abby opens the frig takes out some Tupperware and sits at the kitchen table. She takes out a chrome book.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Young writers program.

The phone rings.

ABBY (CONT'D)

(Picking up the phone) Will I accept a call from the correctional facility? Yes?

A few beats.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Mom?

FADE OUT.

INT KITCHEN DUSK DAVID AND LOUISE ARE RETURNING. THEY OPEN THE DOOR, THE LAPTOP AND TUPPERWARE ARE STILL ON THE TABLE.

LOUISE

Abby? Abby?

DAVID

I'll put this stuff away why don't you go check her room.

Louise goes to Abby bedroom. Abby is in bed curled up.

LOUISE

Abby, did something happen?

ABBY

Something is always happening, sorry, yes. I got a call from my mom today.

LOUISE

David, David come in here please.

David enters.

DAVID

What's going on.

ABBY

Me, I'm stupid, I took a call from my mother.

DAVID

Sara called here?

ABBY

You guys weren't here, it was a collect call and I'm an idiot.

LOUISE

It's okay, take a deep breathe. Just try to breathe.

ABBY

Okay, she called. It started okay and quickly didn't. She accused me of taking her place and being the perfect robot daughter.

LOUISE  
That's not really her talking.

ABBY  
You forget that's all I know her  
as.

DAVID  
I'm sorry.

ABBY  
So is that really it, I'm replacing  
her?

DAVID  
Nobody can replace anybody, we're a  
family the four of us. We don't get  
to pick and choose.

ABBY  
Is this it? Is this my life now?

LOUISE  
Is it such a bad life?

ABBY  
One without my mother.

DAVID  
For now, that is all we have.

ABBY  
I don't understand?

DAVID  
We can't change the past or predict  
the future. Abby try to concentrate  
on now, what can we do now?

ABBY  
Tea would be nice.

DAVID  
That I can do.

FADE OUT.

INT SCHOOL HALLWAY ABBY IS AT HER LOCKER UNLOADING BOOKS.  
SCOTT AND SARA APPROACH.

SCOTT  
Good Morning Mercedes.

ABBY

Edmund.

SARA JOHNSON

Weirdos. Are you going to let Mr. Green submit that essay?

SCOTT

What essay? It is about me?

ABBY

How did you know?

SCOTT

Really?

ABBY

No.

SCOTT

Wow, that was cold.

ABBY

Ice baby, ice. I don't know. Who really cares?

SARA JOHNSON

It gets your noticed, helps with college, you know all the bad things that happen when you're talented.

SCOTT

Gosh, I wish I were talented.

SARA JOHNSON

You're annoying, go to class before I bully you.

SCOTT

Again?

SARA JOHNSON

Scot.

SCOTT

See you later.

Scott heads to class.

SARA JOHNSON

So?

ABBY

So what?

SARA JOHNSON

The essay.

ABBY

Right, maybe I don't know, with everything else it seems a low priority.

SARA JOHNSON

Low priority? Where are you? On board a space ship?

ABBY

Sorry, trying to think rationally in an irrational world.

SARA JOHNSON

Well lighten up, it's bad enough to talk to my brother, I wouldn't want to have to start to bully the two of you.

ABBY

A veiled threat.

SARA JOHNSON

Cut it out, strange words frighten me.

They both laugh.

ABBY

C'mom education awaits.

They enter the classroom.

FADE OUT.

INT. MR. GREENS ENGLISH CLASS. STUDENTS ARE SEATED MR. GREEN IS AT THE HEAD OF THE CLASS.

MR. GREEN

Alright, my nightmares of Oedipus have subsided. Thank you all for those rather horrific essays. I'll let you know that your efforts will not go in vain and I'm moving to have Oedipus removed from the curriculum.

CARL  
Curriculum?

BOB  
Learnin'.

CARL  
Ah.

MR. GREEN  
Our next unit, or set of  
nightmares, will be poetry.

All the students groan.

CARL  
Does he mean rhyming?

BOB  
Yup.

MR. GREEN  
There are many forms, Haiku,  
Pastoral, Ballad...

BOB  
You know who writes really good  
ballads?

CARL  
Who?

BOB  
Springsteen.

CARL  
Word.

BOB  
Really?

CARL  
Sorry. Yup.

BOB  
Better.

MR. GREEN  
Epic, Limerick.

BOB  
I know a few of those.



MR. GREEN

Please.

BOB

Sorry.

MR. GREEN

We are going to be focusing on Imagery. T.S. Eliot's "Preludes," Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind," Sylvia Plath's "Daddy," and Mary Oliver's "At Black River." Are some points of reference. Everyone needs to pick a poet.

BOB

That almost sounds like a limerick.

MR. GREEN

You are getting very close to detention.

BOB

Again sorry.

MR. GREEN

You have 2 days to choose a poet, read a few of their poems and then pick one to write about.

FADE OUT.

INT PSYCHOLOGIST OFFICE LEATHER CHAIRS BOOK SHELVES ABBY IS SITTING ACROSS FROM A MIDDLE AGED WOMAN.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Thank you for returning my book. Can you tell me about the phone call?

ABBY

Again?

NANCY WILLIAMS

Please.

ABBY

She called collect, the conversation was okay for about a minute, then

NANCY WILLIAMS

Then?

ABBY  
She turned into the nightmare.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
The nightmare.

ABBY  
That's what we used to call it, it was like a bad dream, or so she would tell me. It like a nightmare, not real, then you wake up and it's over.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Like it never really happened.

ABBY  
Yes.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
So she could treat you poorly and not have to be responsible for it?

ABBY  
I guess.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Well what do you think?

ABBY  
I think this is the "how does it make you feel" thing.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
That thing is kind of why we are here.

ABBY  
Where does that get me?

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Where do you want to go?

ABBY  
Another question.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Abby you now have a life away from the nightmare, what do you want to do with it?

ABBY  
People at school talk about college.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
That is a good start?

ABBY  
Why, what am I supposed to do  
there?

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Well some people study, explore and  
decide what they want to become.

ABBY  
Is that what some people do? Was my  
mother supposed to do that?

NANCY WILLIAMS  
I don't know, but this is your life  
now. At some point you mother may  
come back into it, but not right  
now. So you have to come to terms  
with that and move forward.

ABBY  
Sure, isn't this a bit much for a  
teenager, shouldn't I be having  
fun and trying out for  
cheerleading?

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Do you like cheerleading?

ABBY  
Does anyone?

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Football players?

ABBY  
Anyway, way we were talking about  
college.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
And?

ABBY  
And me thinking about it.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
And?

ABBY  
That's kind of annoying.

NANCY WILLIAMS

It's a thing I do. Seriously is college something so far out of reach?

ABBY

I don't know, I have time to think about this.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Abby it moves pretty fast, my best advice would be to plan and work like you are going, so if you want to you are ready.

ABBY

I'm tired.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Sorry today was a lot. So for next time we'll just talk about thinking about college and what plans you might want to make.

ABBY

That sound really wishy washy.

NANCY WILLIAMS

Really?

ABBY

I get it, I will not be wishy washy about a plan for the next few years.

NANCY WILLIAMS

That's a little better. See you next week.

Abby exits the office this time both Louis and David are waiting.

ABBY

Well two for the price of one.

LOUISE

We have to take you somewhere.

ABBY

That does not sound good.

LOUISE

You mother has pneumonia.

ABBY

What?

LOUISE

She is in the hospital.

ABBY

Is this from being in prison?

DAVID

It's from the years of abuse to her body.

ABBY

Does she want to see me?

DAVID

I don't know, but we are going.

ABBY

Sure, right whatever let's go.  
Another chance to get cursed out by mom.

LOUISE

This is serious, she is sick. We all have to put it aside for now and deal with what is happening now.

ABBY

She put me aside for fifteen years.

DAVID

Abby we are going, you can sit in the waiting, I need to see my daughter.

ABBY

I'm sorry, you're right. I'm being difficult.

DAVID

That's okay, just be difficult in the car.

ABBY

Right, okay.

LOUISE

Okay let's go.

They get in the car and drive off.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM THERE ARE GUARDS PRESENT.  
ABBY AND LOUISE ARE SITTING DAVID ENTERS WITH COFFEE.

DAVID

Here.

LOUISE

Thank you.

DAVID

I got you a hot chocolate.

ABBY

What? Oh thank you.

LOUISE

I'm sorry you have to be dealing  
with this.

ABBY

I'm trying really hard not to be  
angry.

LOUISE

Angry?

ABBY

Do you know how many "visits" I've  
had like this?

DAVID

Abby, she never told us.

LOUISE

Anything.

ABBY

Right sorry, we have been through  
this for "friends" and once or  
twice with mom.

LOUISE

Oh my....

ABBY

Please don't, I didn't really know  
better. This was my normal. Now  
things are different and I'm angry.

A doctor enters the waiting room. Louise rises.

DOCTOR  
She is stable, not out of the woods, but it looks positive.

LOUISE  
Is she awake?

DOCTOR  
No still sleeping.

LOUISE  
Can I see her?

DOCTOR  
Yes, of course.

DAVID  
You go in and I'll stay here.

ABBY  
I'll stay with David.

LOUISE  
Are you sure?

ABBY  
No not really, which is why I'm going to stay here.

LOUISE  
Okay.

Louise leaves with the doctor. Abby crosses to the waiting area with David grabbing a box of tissues.

ABBY (HANDING TISSUES TO DAVID)  
You first.

DAVID  
Thank you. (David blows his nose and wipes his eyes)

ABBY  
So what should we talk about?

DAVID (LAUGHS)  
Funny, how many times.

ABBY  
I really don't remember. Honestly most were for other people, going in making sure they were taken care of.

DAVID

Really?

ABBY

Yeah, despite the calm bright appearances, things were pretty rough.

DAVID

I'm sorry.

ABBY

I'm not sure you're the one who should be apologizing.

DAVID

Let's change the subject, how's school?

ABBY

Good, okay actually I love it, but don't tell anyone.

DAVID

Teenage angst?

ABBY

Just trying to be normal, whatever that is.

DAVID

She loved school too.

ABBY

I hear that a-lot, it's very weird learning about your mom from complete strangers.

DAVID

They aren't strangers, just a lot of people who cared and tried to help.

ABBY

And failed, sorry. The shrink, excuse me, my therapist is trying to work with me sorting this all out.

DAVID

Well I'm not a therapist, but we all need to look forward right now.

Louise enters.



LOUISE  
She is still out.

                  DAVID  
And?

                  LOUISE  
They are pretty sure she will be  
okay.

                  ABBY  
So we can go?

                  LOUISE  
What?

                  ABBY  
I'm sorry, I really don't want to  
be here.

                  LOUISE  
I do.

                  DAVID  
I'll get Abby home and come back.

                  LOUISE  
Really?

                  DAVID  
We can discuss this when I get  
back.

                  LOUISE  
We will.

David and Abby leave. Louise fall into a chair grabs the box  
of tissues and sobs.

Fade out

INT. DAVID AND LOUISE'S KITCHEN. DAVID AND LOUISE ARE TALKING  
OVER COFFEE.

                  DAVID  
I don't agree.

                  LOUISE  
And?

                  DAVID  
And what? I'm allowed to disagree.

LOUISE  
I never said you weren't.

DAVID  
We have to concern ourselves with  
Abby and how she can move forward.

LOUISE  
I agree.

DAVID  
And...

LOUISE  
This is where I don't.

DAVID  
You've made that clear.

Abby enters the kitchen.

LOUISE  
Sorry.

ABBY  
It is a small house, a very nice  
house for which I'm grateful, but  
still I can hear.

LOUISE  
We aren't hiding from you.

DAVID  
Sometimes we don't agree.

ABBY  
Well, I wanted to throw my two  
cents in. What does that mean by  
the way?

DAVID  
I really don't know.

ABBY  
Well anyway, I don't currently  
forgive her.

LOUISE  
I'm sorry?

ABBY  
I'm not ready to. Maybe someday,  
just not today.

LOUISE

I hope so.

ABBY

But the important word there is  
"might".

LOUISE

That makes me sad.

ABBY

Me too, but I've had a lot of sad.  
And I'm lucky, the things I've seen  
other "parents" do make "sad" look  
like a Disney movie.

DAVID

I need more coffee.

ABBY

I could use some too please. Louise  
I'm so thankful to be here.

LOUISE

We love you.

ABBY

I know, and you have no idea how  
wonderful and painful it is at the  
same time.

DAVID

No we don't.

ABBY

I have to live with these mixed  
feeling.

DAVID

Hmm.

ABBY

The therapist is trying to help me  
process and come up with plans to  
help me manage all this.

DAVID

You sound way too mature for me.

LOUISE

Me too, can't we talk about boys.

ABBY

What, no ewww boys are gross.

They all have a collective laugh.

ABBY (CONT'D)

I just want to be honest and be able to talk to you two, because I didn't have that before.

LOUISE

Okay, but I still think you should see her.

ABBY

And I don't. So we disagree.

LOUISE

Yes we do, David?

DAVID

I'd like to go out for some Chinese food.

LOUISE

Nice.

DAVID

Thank you, any one hungry?

ABBY

I could eat.

LOUISE

You two are not funny.

DAVID

I think I'm a riot.

David grabs his keys

DAVID (CONT'D)

Coming?

LOUISE

Sure.

All three exit

FADE OUT INT Kitchen Louise is sitting drinking coffee and reading what looks a school paper. David enters the kitchen.

DAVID

What's that.

LOUISE

Something Abby left for us to read.

DAVID  
Really?

LOUISE  
Yes.

DAVID  
Well?

LOUISE  
It's sad, but good. I'm almost  
done.

She hands it to David.

LOUISE (CONT'D)  
She should submit it somewhere.

DAVID  
Like a contest?

LOUISE  
I don't know, maybe we should ask  
her english teacher.

DAVID  
Well maybe we should ask Abby  
before we do anything.

LOUISE  
Maybe you should read it first.

DAVID  
Right, I will.

David pours himself cup of coffee and begins to read

FADE OUTINT. MR.GREENS ENGLISH CLASS. STUDENTS ARE SEATED MR.  
GREEN IS AT THE HEAD OF THE CLASS.

MR. GREEN  
Alright that is enough torture or  
Shakespeare for the day.

Everyone get up to leave

MR. GREEN (CONT'D)  
Abby, give me a minute.

Abby stays behind.

MR. GREEN (CONT'D)  
I read the essay.

ABBY

Okay.

MR. GREEN

Well it's not okay. It good. Really good.

ABBY

Thank you?

MR. GREEN

I want to talk to you about sending it around.

ABBY

What does mean?

MR. GREEN

There are young writers associations.

ABBY

I don't know.

MR. GREEN

Why?

ABBY

It's one thing to give it to you and Louise and David.

MR. GREEN

But?

ABBY

I'm really not into anyone else.

MR. GREEN

Why it's good.

ABBY

And personal.

MR. GREEN

Which makes it even more authentic.

ABBY

Why?

MR. GREEN

I can give you some reasons. What are you going to do after high school?

ABBY

I haven't thought that far ahead.

MR. GREEN

Well you could use this talent to further your education.

ABBY

It's not that good.

MR. GREEN

Well you will never know if no one else reads it.

ABBY

And again...

MR. GREEN

It's personal, and probably painful. It is also an opportunity to be able to bring attention to your situation.

ABBY

Who cares?

MR. GREEN

Your grandparents, people here at the school. Apathy is not an epidemic, we can surprise you.

ABBY

And my essay will shed light and make a change?

MR. GREEN

I don't know, but why not?

ABBY

I'm not all that comfortable with sharing this.

MR. GREEN

Well think about the kids who don't have families to take them in.

ABBY

I make a conscience effort not to.

MR. GREEN

Excuse me?

ABBY

The more I think about it, the less I sleep.

MR. GREEN

Really?

ABBY

I know I'm being difficult, and just because I should do something doesn't mean I have to want to.

MR. GREEN

That's very insightful.

ABBY

Wise beyond my years.

MR. GREEN

I won't submit it anywhere without your approval. Which I will have when?

ABBY

Funny, let me talk to my grandparents.

MR. GREEN

Thank you.

FADE OUT

INT Car DAVID and ABBY are driving back from school.

DAVID

So, what did you learn today?

ABBY

I've learned all about my potential.

DAVID

Do tell.

ABBY

Yup.

DAVID

No I meant it, please tell me more.

ABBY

Oh, really?



DAVID

Yes, of course. Why wouldn't we be interested?

ABBY

Sorry, I'm not really wanting to talk about it.

DAVID

Can we talk about why you don't want to talk about it?

ABBY

That seems sneaky.

DAVID

"These aren't the droids you're looking for"

ABBY

Sorry?

DAVID

"These aren't the droids you're looking for"

Still no response from Abby.

DAVID (CONT'D)

No really? You don't get the reference?

ABBY

Umm, not really.

DAVID

Well, that changes the plans for dinner.

ABBY

It does?

DAVID

Yes, now it's pizza night and watching Star Wars.

FADE TO:

INT. DAVID AND LOUISE'S KITCHEN.

David and Abby are sitting at the table there is an open box of pizza.

DAVID

So.

ABBY

Han shot first.

DAVID

Ha! Now you're hooked.

The phone rings

DAVID (CONT'D)

Oh, I hope that's not a flat tire.

ABBY

Louise doesn't change her own tire?

David picking up the phone

DAVID

That's funny.

(David talking into the  
phone)

Hello, yes I'm David, excuse me?

(Becoming Upset)

How? When? No, I don't care about  
the car, how is Louise?

ABBY

What happened?

DAVID

(To Abby)

Some idiot hit her.

ABBY

Is she okay? Where is she? Why are  
we still here let's go!

DAVID

Slow down.

(Into the phone)

Yes, so where is she? Okay right  
thank you.

(To Abby)

She seems okay, they are checking  
for a concussion.

ABBY

Okay, why aren't we in the car?

DAVID

Because you don't have a coat on.

Abby throws a coat on and she and David exit.

FADE OUT.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM. DAVID IS HOVERING OVER LOUISE. LOUISE HAS NO VISABLE INJURIES.

LOUISE

I'm fine just banged up. So I can get a new truck now?

DAVID

Funny. No, maybe a used late model if they sell them with extra air bags. Are you really okay?

LOUISE

Sure, they did a complete diagnostic on me. I'm olympic material.

DAVID

I'll bet. Did they take a statement?

LOUISE

Yes, the driver was in worse shape than me. They are saying it looks like he was impaired. Where's Abby?

DAVID

In the waiting room.

LOUISE

Why?

DAVID

I think she is really shaken up.

CUT TO:

IN THE WAITING ROOM ABBY IS PACING BACK AND FORTH. DAVID WALKS OUT OF THE HOSPITAL ROOM AND IS TALKING TO THE OFFICER.

DAVID

So what happens now, officer?

OFFICER BOB

Not too much, we have to wait for his toxic screens to come back. Really through, even if we charge him, you folks won't be too involved.

ABBY  
(listening in)  
If you charge him?

OFFICER BOB  
Excuse me miss?

ABBY  
What do you mean if?

DAVID  
Abby.

ABBY  
No, I want to understand, "if".

OFFICER BOB  
I don't understand.

ABBY  
Some whack job, on drugs slams into  
my grandmother and we are using the  
word "if".

OFFICER BOB  
Miss...

ABBY  
(escalating)  
If they can toss my mother away and  
she never hurt anyone, can you  
really tell me that the word "if"  
is involved.

DAVID  
Abby, breathe try to calm down.

ABBY  
(Really losing it)  
Calm, calm! I don't think so, these  
officers throw moms in jail all the  
time and now someone really gets  
hurt and what we have it wait for  
if?

OFFICER BOB  
Miss...

ABBY  
(getting too loud)  
Stop calling me miss.

OFFICER BOB

(David)

I'm going to walk away now.

DAVID

Thank you.

ABBY

I don't think so.

David steps between the officer and Abby. Abby is about to get physical and sees David's expression. David looks as if he has gone through this and is reliving a nightmare.

ABBY (CONT'D)

(Realizing that she is out  
of control)

I'm...I can't believe I just did  
that.

DAVID

That makes two of us.

ABBY

You know I would never....

DAVID

Your mom said the same thing..  
(Now David is visibly  
shaken)

ABBY

David, no really I'm sorry.

DAVID

Let's go see Louise.

ABBY

Yes, that would be good.

The two enter the room, Louise heard some of the noise.

LOUISE

You okay?

DAVID AND ABBY

Fine.

DAVID

Can I get you anything?

ABBY

A coffee would be nice.

DAVID  
I meant for Louise.

ABBY  
Sorry.

LOUISE  
I would like one too.

ABBY AND LOUISE  
Cream and sugar.

ABBY  
(Starting to cry)  
Now that's funny.

LOUISE  
It's okay, you can cry.

ABBY  
I'm just really upset about the  
truck.  
(Now really crying)

DAVID  
I'll get the coffee.

LOUISE  
Do you want to talk?

ABBY  
I'd prefer just to sob for a bit.

LOUISE  
That's okay too.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN INT. ABBY, DAVID AND LOUISE ARE SITTING AROUND THE  
KITCHEN TABLE.

LOUISE  
I would have preferred the red  
truck.

DAVID  
I would have preferred no monthly  
payments.

LOUISE  
Get a job.

ABBY  
Can I talk to guys about something?

DAVID  
Is this a trick or rhetorical  
question?

ABBY  
That essay I wrote. My english  
teacher wants to submit to the  
young writers project.

DAVID  
So he thinks it's good.

LOUISE  
Of course it's good.

DAVID  
Right, is there a question in  
there?

ABBY  
It's somewhat personal, and I'm  
scared about what people would  
think of me.

DAVID  
Then why submit?

ABBY  
Because I'm angry.

LOUISE  
Anyone in particular?

ABBY  
No, the situation. You getting hit  
by an idiot. Mr. Green thinks that  
if I can influence one person it's  
worth it.

LOUISE  
What do you think?

ABBY  
I think right now I'm doing  
nothing. I need to start doing  
something or at least feel like I'm  
doing something.

DAVID  
And this is a place to start?

ABBY

Again, I really don't know. But it's better than what I'm doing, being ashamed of stuff that happened to me. Not anything I did. So maybe I should start.

DAVID

Umm doing stuff to be ashamed of?

ABBY

(Laughing)

Anything, start doing anything. I think telling my story, which I hate saying.

LOUISE

Sharing.

ABBY

Sharing sounds even worse. Whichever, maybe it will help someone, anyone.

LOUISE

Maybe it would help you.

ABBY

I guess.

LOUISE

So what's the next step?

ABBY

Talk to Mr. Green.

DAVID

Sounds like a plan.

FADE OUT.

INT. MR. GREENS ENGLISH CLASS. STUDENTS ARE SEATED MR. GREEN IS AT THE HEAD OF THE CLASS.

MR. GREEN

And that is why Socrates took the poison.

CARL

I thought suicide was bad.

BOB

This was a moral statement. It was a judgement.



CARL  
Forced suicide? What are we  
learning here.

MR. GREEN  
Tell me it's June.

CARL  
It's June.

MR. GREEN  
Class dismissed.

Students get up to leave Abby lingers.

ABBY  
Mr. Green?

MR. GREEN  
Yes.

ABBY  
I've given it some thought and  
discussed it with my grandparents.

MR. GREEN  
And.

ABBY  
I think it would be a good it to  
submit the essay.

MR. GREEN  
Cool.

ABBY  
So what happens now?

MR. GREEN  
I send it in, they decide if it  
gets published or posted, maybe  
read on air.

ABBY  
And if it does?

MR. GREEN  
Then you become a local celebrity.

ABBY  
What? Really?

MR. GREEN

I don't know, I was kidding. Abby the main thing is you are getting your work out there.

ABBY

Right. Okay then.

MR. GREEN

Good, VPR will contact you after I submit.

ABBY

And award me with a large cash prize?

MR. GREEN

You'd have better luck with the lotto, sorry.

ABBY

Oh, well. Thanks for your help and the gentle nudge.

MR. GREEN

It's a calling.

ABBY

I'll bet. See you tomorrow.

FADE OUT.

INT PSYCHOLOGIST OFFICE LEATHER CHAIRS BOOK SHELVES ABBY IS SITTING ACROSS FROM A MIDDLE AGED WOMAN.

NANCY WILLIAMS

So, you submitted your work and?

ABBY

And nothing, not a word. Maybe Mr. Green was trying to prop me up or something.

NANCY WILLIAMS

So what now?

ABBY

What do you mean?

NANCY WILLIAMS

What's the plan?

ABBY

Plan?

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Moving forward, keep writing, stop  
writing, join lacrosse?

ABBY  
Ew, no. Keep writing, I guess.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Well that's good, the writing  
doesn't have to be a profession.  
It's a great form of self  
discovery.

ABBY  
Yawn.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Sorry, I am required to say those  
things.

ABBY  
I was kidding, I know. Sometimes I  
think that this is too much for a  
kid to handle.

NANCY WILLIAMS  
It is, but what choice do you have?  
If you choose not to deal with it  
what happens, down the road?

ABBY  
Ummm, bad things?

NANCY WILLIAMS  
Good answer, go home be a kid,  
write, read and we'll talk again  
next week.

ABBY  
K

Abby exits, in the waiting room are David and Louise. Louise  
is holding a letter.

LOUISE  
This came for you.

DAVID  
It's from the young writers  
workshop.

ABBY  
Wow, really and you didn't open it.

DAVID  
We showed great restraint.

David hands the letter to Abby, she sits and opens it.

ABBY  
"Dear Abby," That sounds funny.

LOUISE  
Please.

ABBY  
Right okay, "We received and enjoyed your submission. Although it was well written we were unsure about reading it on air." Well that's a relief.

LOUISE  
Go on.

ABBY  
And you're sure you didn't read this?

DAVID  
C'mon.

ABBY  
Okay, okay, "We would like to invite you to join us at our next retreat this summer."

DAVID  
Well that's cool.

ABBY  
"And offer you a full scholarship for the event"

LOUISE  
That's cooler.

ABBY  
So I guess I've got plans this summer.

LOUISE  
So is this a possible career?

ABBY  
Who's knows, but it's some thing to explore.

DAVID  
I'd like to explore dinner.

ABBY  
I could cook.

DAVID  
And maybe watch "Phantom Menace"?

LOUISE  
I hate that movie.

DAVID  
She needs the education.

ABBY  
Can we talk about when we get home?

LOUISE  
That sounds like a plan.

FADE OUT.

#### THE FUTURE

Abby, as a young adult, dressed in semi professional clothing, is backstage at a speaking event, something similar to a TED talk. The Presentation reads "The Opioid Crisis and the ripple effect on families" She takes a deep breathe and enters the stage.