

TO LIVE FOR

written by

Teddy McCormick

(478) 238-3339
teddyhwmccormick@gmail.com

EXT. LAKESIDE PRECIPICE - NIGHT

It's a beautiful night out. The moon is full, the stars are shining... couldn't ask for a better night to kill yourself.

TAYLOR (V.O.)
Dear Mom and Dad.

TAYLOR HIGGINS, 17, stands on the edge of a precipice that extends out into a large lake; she's maybe twenty feet above the water. She wears a crude harness of rope, tied to several weights, which she carries.

TAYLOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I know this is probably coming as a surprise to you, but I've given it a lot of thought.

Tears streak her makeup. She sniffs, chokes back a sob.

Taylor leans over the edge, looks into the water - she instinctively steps back, then forces herself to lean over again.

TAYLOR
Oh god.

TAYLOR (V.O.)
This isn't just a spur of the moment thing, this is planned and deliberate.

Shouting in the distance behind her - she doesn't look, just scoots closer to the edge.

Fails to stop the next sob.

TAYLOR
Oh god!

TAYLOR (V.O.)
Please don't blame yourselves. This isn't something you could've prevented.

She looks forward, out towards the sparkling lake.

Closes her eyes.

CUT TO BLACK.

TAYLOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I'm very sorry. Love, Taylor.

Hip hop plays, something good. Arrogantly good, like Jay Z. Dirt Off Your Shoulder, maybe, or Big Pimpin'.

INT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Taylor marches through the hallway. She's the queen bee and she knows it.

Taylor walks past a stream of students pouring out of a classroom.

One of the students, LEN CARTER, 17, falls in line behind her. She'd be a big deal if she wasn't trapped in Taylor's shadow.

They move through the hallways like the royalty they are. Taylor greets another girl they pass, they laugh, then move on.

They walk past STELLA, 16. Stella only dresses from Goodwill or Salvation Army, but she does it pretty well. In a school without Taylor Higgins, she'd probably be okay.

This school has Taylor Higgins.

TAYLOR

Ooh, Stella, looking good. Nobody makes "thrift store" look "Marshalls" like you.

Len laughs like a good lackey.

Stella puts up a front, but is clearly upset.

STELLA

Suck my dick.

TAYLOR

You couldn't afford me.

STELLA

No, I'm pretty sure I've got some change in the bottom of my backpack.

TAYLOR

Too bad it's not a change of clothes.

Stella rolls her eyes, tries to look nonchalant as she walks away.

Taylor moves on.

EXT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Outside they're met by HANNAH HIGGINS, Taylor's twin sister. She's got Taylor's confidence without her arrogance - she's happy to follow, she's got too much shit on her plate to worry about who's hot and who's not.

HANNAH

Hey guys.

TAYLOR

How was Theater?

HANNAH

Theater's Tuesdays and Thursdays.
Today was Programming.

Taylor laughs, rolls her eyes.

TAYLOR

And how was it?

HANNAH

Fine. We're working on... Hey
Wyatt.

They walk past WYATT TIMM, 17, the hottest guy in school, hanging out with his friends. He's got a tattoo of a cross on his bicep.

Hannah waves to him. Taylor gives her a suspicious glance.

TAYLOR

(to Wyatt)

Hey babe.

WYATT

Hey Hannah. Hey Taylor.

He turns back to his friends.

Taylor waits, expecting something.

Beat. She coughs.

Wyatt takes the hint, kisses her cheek.

TAYLOR

There we go.

WYATT

I'll see you at the game?

TAYLOR
 (sarcastic)
 No, I'm gonna stay at home and
 watch my soaps.

She laughs, moves on. Hannah and Len follow - though Hannah's eyes linger on Wyatt a beat longer.

HANNAH
 Tonight?

LEN
 The Knights game.

HANNAH
 That's tonight?

TAYLOR
 You have something else?

HANNAH
 Yeah, actually. The science fair is
 coming up, and-

Taylor groans.

TAYLOR
 This is like, the third event in a
 row you've blown off. You left
 halfway through our birthday party.

Hannah groans - it's the exact same as Taylor's groan.

HANNAH
 Because you turned it into this big
thing and it wasn't my sort of
 thing.

TAYLOR
 Sorry for throwing too good a
 party.

HANNAH
 Whatever.

Sigh.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
 I'll try to grind it out in time to
 go.

TAYLOR
 Really?

Taylor's genuinely happy.

HANNAH
(hopeful)
Yeah, it's whatever. But it'll be a
lot easier if I got some help?

TAYLOR
Oh no. No more "twin studies."

HANNAH
That was one time.

Len just makes a face.

LEN
I've got my own homework.

TAYLOR
You're on your own, good-lookin'.

Hannah groans, but Taylor and Len are already walking away.

INT. TAYLOR'S ROOM - DAY

Taylor's room is perfectly ordered and arranged. The decor is sleek and modern, and her computer desk is bare but for her laptop and a mug full of pens and pencils.

Taylor collapses on her bed, pulls out her phone. Texts Len.

"I'm so ducking bored"

Beat.

"What are you doooooing."

A response: "wtf look at FB."

She looks over at her computer. Back to the phone.

"Why?"

"do it bitch"

Taylor sighs, rolls out of bed and sits at her computer.

She pulls up Facebook. Sees a post from Hannah, 15 minutes ago.

It's a picture of Hannah, at Starbucks, with Wyatt. "Science is for losers #guessimaloser #studybuddies"

TAYLOR
What the eff.

She texts Hannah. "What the hell are you doing with Wyatt?"

Beat. A response.

"You guys wouldn't help so he offered"

"Is this what's happening now? This is your game?"

"I don't even know what you're talking about and I'm busy"

Taylor bolts up. Yells.

She texts Len.

"She is so dead."

INT./EXT. TAYLOR'S CAR - EVENING

Taylor and Len arrive at Starbucks. Taylor HONKS.

Beat. She HONKS LONGER.

INT. STARBUCKS - CONTINUOUS

Hannah and Wyatt sit at a table looking at a laptop. Wyatt looks out the window, sees Taylor.

WYATT
Oh, shit, what time is it?

HANNAH
What?

She looks around, sees Taylor too.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
It's all good. I'll finish later tonight.

But Wyatt's already heading out the door.

INT./EXT. TAYLOR'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Wyatt hops in the back of the car.

WYATT
Hey Taylor. I...

She doesn't acknowledge him. He notices.

WYATT (CONT'D)
...Sorry. Lost track of time.

TAYLOR
Mmhmm.

He sighs.

Hannah hops in the car like nothing's wrong.

HANNAH
Hey guys, ready?

Taylor and Len share a look. Taylor pulls out.

INT. BASKETBALL COURT - NIGHT

Taylor, Wyatt, Hannah and Len sit on the bleachers watching the school basketball game.

Well, all except for Taylor, who spends most of her time glaring sideways at Hannah.

Hannah, for her part, is just a tiny bit too touchy with Wyatt - who doesn't seem to mind enough for Taylor's tastes.

EXT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT

The four of them leave the school. Hannah is elated. Taylor and Len fake it convincingly enough. Wyatt's suspicious.

HANNAH
...And then when he went for that three-pointer, I was like, "Oh holy shit what an idiot," but then it just slid in!

TAYLOR
Aren't you glad you came?

Hannah groans.

HANNAH
Yes, mom.

Taylor smiles. Very "I told you so."

WYATT

Hey, a bunch of people are going to like Derby's or something, they've got those \$5 appetizers.

Hannah's pumped.

HANNAH

Let's do it!

TAYLOR

Oh wait, Hannah, did you grab your purse?

HANNAH

What? You said you were getting it.

Taylor shrugs.

Hannah rolls her eyes.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

I'll be right back.

She heads back inside.

WYATT

That was kind of petty, Taylor, even for-

TAYLOR

Petty nothing. Let's go.

She and Len head towards the car. Wyatt hesitates.

WYATT

...Really?

Beat.

He follows.

A long beat.

Hannah walks out. Looks around.

HANNAH

Guys?

INT. DERBY'S SPORTS BAR - NIGHT

Taylor, Len, and Wyatt sit with a dozen classmates laughing and having a good time.

Taylor's phone rings. She looks at it: MOM [we'll meet her later, for now we'll call her by her name, CYNTHIA].

She rolls her eyes, excuses herself, and answers.

TAYLOR

Hi mom.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)

What did you do to your sister?

TAYLOR

What do you mean?

CYNTHIA (O.S.)

What do I mean? I just picked up my phone to three messages of her crying, saying you left her at school?

TAYLOR

(trying to sound sincere)
Oh, no! I totally forgot her! She went back for her purse, and-

CYNTHIA (O.S.)

Don't you give me that, I know how you girls get! You go pick her up right now!

TAYLOR

Mom! Chill! I'm already on my way!

CYNTHIA (O.S.)

Don't you tell me to chill! If you're not both home in half an hour, so help me god, I will...

Taylor sighs and lowers the phone. Cynthia's voice fades.

Taylor gets Len and Wyatt's attention.

TAYLOR

(ugh, so annoying)
Can you guys get rides? I need to go get Hannah.

WYATT

We're fine. Hey, make sure she knows this wasn't my idea?

Len shoves Wyatt playfully.

LEN
You're such a pussy.

Taylor scowls, puts the phone back to her ear, walks away.

TAYLOR
Uh-huh. Yeah mom.

EXT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT

Hannah sits on the curb. She's not crying anymore, but her makeup is long since ruined. She looks miserable.

Taylor pulls up.

Hannah keeps staring at her feet.

Taylor rolls down the window.

TAYLOR
Get in.

Beat.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Mom says we have to be home five minutes ago. Get. In.

Beat.

Taylor groans.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, okay? It was an accident.

Hannah looks up.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
...It wasn't accident, but I am sorry. Can we go?

Hannah stands.

Gets in the car.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Thank you.

She rolls up the window as she drives off.

SMASH TO BLACK

BEEPING.

SLOW FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

The BEEPING comes from a medical machine.

Taylor lies in a hospital bed. She looks like somebody wailed on her with a lead pipe. She's covered in bandages and has a couple tubes sticking out of her.

CYNTHIA HIGGINS, 38, sits next to her, holding her hand. She hasn't slept in a week.

It takes her a beat to realize Taylor is awake.

CYNTHIA
Taylor? Taylor?

TAYLOR
(quiet, weak)
...mom...

Cynthia bursts into tears, hugs Taylor.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
...What happened?

Cynthia can't respond.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Mom?

Cynthia sits up. Collects herself as much as she can.

CYNTHIA
You were... you were in an
accident, honey. You're lucky to be
alive.

Taylor nods; this makes sense.

TAYLOR
Hannah?

Cynthia does her best not to cry harder.

Taylor chokes up.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Mom?

Cynthia shakes her head.

Taylor coughs out a sob.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
 (weak, but urgent)
Mom?

CYNTHIA
 I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry.

Taylor breaks down.

Cynthia bursts into tears.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)
 I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry.

EXT. HIGGINS' HOUSE - DAY

Cynthia helps Taylor out of the car while Taylor's father, ANDREW HIGGINS, 38, grabs her crutches from the trunk.

Andrew gives Taylor her crutches, and she hobbles up to the house.

INT. HIGGINS' KITCHEN - DAY

Taylor gets to the kitchen table, sits down.

Andrew grabs a beer from the fridge and sits next to her.

He thinks... offers it to Taylor.

She shakes her head.

CYNTHIA
 Are you hungry? Do you want a sandwich or something?

Taylor's eyes water. She shakes her head.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)
 I can get you a drink? Do you want help getting upstairs? I can-

TAYLOR
 (barely holding it together)
 I'm fine.

ANDREW

Are you sure? Anything at all-

Taylor starts crying.

TAYLOR

Oh my god! I'm fine.

She struggles to her feet. Andrew tries to help her with her crutches, but she pushes him away.

Pushing him destabilizes her, and he has to catch her.

As soon as she's steady, she shrugs him off and hobbles to the stairs.

INT. TAYLOR'S ROOM - DAY

Taylor lies on her bed. She stares at the ceiling as day turns to sunset and then night.

She looks at the clock. It's 2AM now.

She struggles to her feet.

INT. HANNAH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Hannah's room is a mess. There's papers covering her computer desk and half her floor, and her bed is pretty much just a mound of blankets and pillows.

There are shelves with pictures and trophies that have been co-opted into being bookshelves - of course, with no organizational scheme.

Taylor tries not to break anything on the floor with her crutches as she makes her way to the bed.

She crawls onto the bed and cries.

INT. HIGGINS' KITCHEN - DAY

Cynthia cooks breakfast - ham and eggs. Andrew's just about finished his.

Taylor enters, sits at the table. Cynthia puts a plate in front of her.

TAYLOR

I'm not hungry.

Cynthia hesitates. Shares a look with Andrew.

Andrew shrugs. Cynthia takes the plate back.

ANDREW

We're gonna make you eat eventually.

TAYLOR

I'll be hungry eventually.

Andrew nods.

Cynthia gives a pointed look to Andrew. He nods, coughs.

ANDREW

So. You, uh... you missed the funeral.

Taylor gets misty-eyed, but is otherwise stoic.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

We... we recorded it for you, if you want to watch. To be honest, I don't think I would, but...

CYNTHIA

And we can take you to the...

Beat as she holds it together.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

We can take you to the cemetery if you want. It's...

Another breath. She looks at Andrew. He shakes his head; he's almost crying again himself.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

It's the one in Old Town, so it's pretty close.

She looks away. Head in her hands.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

(sotto)
Jesus.

Taylor still hasn't reacted.

ANDREW

Do you think that's something you'd want to do?

Beat.

Taylor shakes her head.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
I really think it'd be... I think
it'd be good for you. Eventually.

TAYLOR
Then maybe I will eventually! Holy
shit just leave me alone!

An awkward beat.

Taylor looks at her mom, who's trying really hard not to cry.

Taylor cools down.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Maybe just... like, just one egg.

Cynthia hurries to get her plate again.

INT. CYNTHIA AND ANDREW'S ROOM - NIGHT

Andrew lies in bed reading "Parenting a Grieving Child."

Cynthia climbs in next to him, snuggles up.

ANDREW
I think she's in Hannah's room
again.

Cynthia grunts.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
Do you think that's okay? I'm
worried that's not okay.

CYNTHIA
They were twins. I can't... we
don't have any relationships like
that. I didn't even have a sister.

Andrew sighs.

ANDREW
I wouldn't know what to do even if
they weren't twins.

Beat.

INT. HANNAH'S ROOM - DAY

Taylor sits at Hannah's computer, working on a Word document.

Cynthia walks in the open door, knocks as she does.

CYNTHIA

Hey.

TAYLOR

Hey.

Cynthia sits on the edge of the bed.

CYNTHIA

I think it's time we talked about school.

Taylor sighs, keeps working.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

First, I want to tell you everything is on the table right now. If you just want to stop now and do another year, we can talk about it. I'm not saying it'll happen, but-

TAYLOR

I want to go back.

Cynthia nods.

CYNTHIA

Okay. That's great. I've already talked to your teachers about homework, and they said-

TAYLOR

They emailed it to me. I'm working on it.

She gestures to the computer screen, points at a neat stack of papers on top of the mess next to Hannah's printer.

Cynthia's surprised.

CYNTHIA

Oh. Okay. Um, that's... that's good, I guess.

TAYLOR

So I'll go tomorrow?

CYNTHIA

Yeah! Yeah. But listen, the school counselor wants you to know his door is always open, and he gave us-

Taylor gives a thumbs-up.

TAYLOR

Cool. Got it.

Beat.

Cynthia starts tidying up some of the stuff on the floor.

Taylor spins around.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Mom. Seriously. You have to do that now?

Cynthia coughs, gets up.

CYNTHIA

Uh... Dinner should be ready in half an hour.

Taylor spins back to the computer.

Cynthia leaves.

INT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Kids mill about the hallway, the day beginning as usual.

A CLATTERING at the door: It's Taylor, trying to get in with her crutches.

Wyatt walks by. Taylor sees him, relaxes some.

TAYLOR

Wyatt, hey. Can you help-

Wyatt looks her in the eyes, walks away.

The MURMURS and WHISPERS start immediately. Generally people look sorry for her, but there are a few people glad to see her knocked down a couple pegs.

Taylor manages to get inside. She hobbles down the hallway, head down, just focused on getting to her locker.

Stella stands next to her locker.

Taylor ignores her, tries to figure out how to get her books into her backpack while on crutches.

Stella groans.

STELLA
Just watching this is exhausting.

She shoves Taylor aside, grabs a book.

STELLA (CONT'D)
You have, what, math and history first, yeah?

Beat.

Taylor nods.

Stella puts the appropriate books in Taylor's bag.

TAYLOR
I have socks worth more than your entire outfit.

STELLA
And?

Beat. Taylor's not used to needing help.

Getting help, sure. But not needing it.

TAYLOR
...This doesn't make us friends.

STELLA
Good. I know what happened to your sister, I'd hate to see what you do to your friends.

What the fuck? Who says that?

STELLA (CONT'D)
Shit, Taylor. I'm sorry. That was too-

Taylor's already hobbling away.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Taylor clatters into class, over to the back corner.

There's a KID already sitting in the corner.

TAYLOR
You're in my seat.

The kid looks at her like she's crazy.

KID
I've been here all year.

Taylor just stares at him.

He looks around.

KID (CONT'D)
(pleading)
My friends are all back here.

Taylor keeps staring.

He mutters under his breath. Grabs his stuff and moves.

Taylor sits, just stares out the window.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Taylor stands with her tray in hands, facing the cafeteria. She sees Len, holding court with a group of three other popular girls. She walks towards her.

Len sees her. Eyes widen. She gives a quick shake of the head.

Taylor stops in her tracks.

Len's already back to laughing with her new friends.

Beat.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Taylor sits in a bathroom stall, sobbing.

Someone else walks in. She stops, waits.

They pee in the stall next to her.

Wash their hands.

Leave.

Taylor cries more.

INT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Taylor hobbles down the hallway. Sees MR. REED, 55, sweater vest, at the other end of the hallway.

She turns around and tries to hurry around a corner, but he sees her.

MR. REED

Taylor! Hold on a minute!

Taylor sighs. Waits.

Mr. Reed comes up to her.

MR. REED (CONT'D)

I've been looking for you all day, Taylor. You doing okay?

TAYLOR

(deadpan)

I'm great.

MR. REED

Good, I'm glad to hear it. Listen, Taylor, I'm here for you, anything you need. It doesn't have to be anything serious; if you just want to jabber about the weather, my door is always open, okay?

Taylor grunts.

She tries to move past him.

MR. REED (CONT'D)

(stern)

Taylor.

Taylor's a little startled.

MR. REED (CONT'D)

My door is always open. Okay?

TAYLOR

...Okay...

Mr. Reed nods, satisfied.

MR. REED

Do you need anyone to help with your books or anything?

TAYLOR
I really gotta get to class.

MR. REED
Sure, sure.

He steps aside, and she moves on past him.

EXT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Taylor leaves school. Walks past the steps where Wyatt and his friends are hanging out.

Wyatt stares at her, furious.

Taylor lowers her head and keeps going.

Len suddenly appears next to her.

LEN
Hey, Taylor, how you holding up?

TAYLOR
I-

LEN
Look, sorry about lunch and all,
but it's it was Mary's birthday and
I didn't want you to, like, bring
the mood down, you know?

TAYLOR
...What.

LEN
Yeah, so, maybe we can eat lunch
together sometime next week? I'm
sure you'd really like that, it'd
be good for you to hang out with
the old crowd, huh? Cheer up, it
gets better!

Len jogs off, leaving Taylor stunned.

Her mom pulls up. HONKS.

INT./EXT. CYNTHIA'S CAR - DAY

Taylor slumps in the passenger seat as Cynthia drives.

CYNTHIA
How was it?

Beat.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)
Okay. Listen, if you need-

TAYLOR
Oh my god. I'm not broken.

Cynthia isn't sure how to respond.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
It sucked, okay? School sucks for lots of people. It was weird when I liked it.

CYNTHIA
That's not true. Lots of kids like school.

TAYLOR
Whatever.

CYNTHIA
I know things are hard right now, but-

TAYLOR
They're not friggin hard, okay? They're just school! I don't...

She shifts, faces away.

Cynthia wants to keep talking... but she lets it go.

Beat.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
(quiet)
What happened?

CYNTHIA
What do you mean?

TAYLOR
The accident. I don't... I remember driving away from the school, and then...

A wave of terror washes over Cynthia.

CYNTHIA
It's not... let's leave that in the past, okay?

Taylor nods.

INT. HANNAH'S ROOM - DAY

Taylor sits at Hannah's computer. She searches local news:
"car accident broomwood street."

She sees an article about the accident.

"No charges for teen who caused fatal accident"

She skims the article.

"Witnesses say she swerved to avoid it, and accidentally hit
the truck head-on..."

Taylor looks nauseous.

"The driver of the truck, Micah McFarland, died later from
his injuries..."

"McFarland leaves behind a wife and two children, ages 6 and
9..."

She gags.

Grabs a trash can and throws up.

INT. HIGGINS' BATHROOM - DAY

Taylor stares at herself in the mirror. She's been crying.

Beat.

She opens the mirror, looks at the bottles of medicine.

She grabs some ibuprofen. Puts it back.

Looks at the cough syrup. Groans.

She pulls out her phone. Types "best medicine suicide".

She hesitates.

Backspaces, clears the search bar.

Beat.

She drops her phone (it's got a case, it doesn't break).

Stumbles back to the wall.

Sobs.

INT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Taylor moves down the hallway. She's getting used to her crutches now.

She passes Wyatt. Can't meet his gaze.

She gets to her locker. Stella's there again.

Stella sighs.

STELLA

I'm not, like, your helper. But do you need me to get your books again?

Taylor can't look at her. She nods.

Beat.

STELLA (CONT'D)

Uh, you need to open your locker.

Taylor does. Stella grabs her books.

STELLA (CONT'D)

Your backpack?

Taylor shrugs it off. It plops to the floor.

Stella sighs... then examines Taylor.

STELLA (CONT'D)

Are you... you know. Are you okay?

TAYLOR

You used to...

She's not sure how to ask. Struggles to find the words.

Stella's impatient. She doesn't want to be doing this.

STELLA

I have stuff to do too, you know?

TAYLOR

Do you still... cut yourself?

STELLA

Fuck you.

She drops Taylor's books, turns around.

TAYLOR

Wait!

Stella turns around. She's not pleased.

Taylor looks at her for the first time.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Did it help?

Beat.

Stella groans.

Picks up Taylor's bag, and the books she dropped. Puts them in.

STELLA

We're not friends.

She walks away.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Taylor sits at a table alone, watching Len a few tables away.

An aspiring COOL GIRL notices her. Thinks hard.

She gets up, walks over. Sits across from Taylor.

Taylor stares at her.

COOL GIRL

Hey. You're Taylor, right? I'm-

Taylor shoves the girl's tray off the table.

The girl is startled. She doesn't know what to do.

Taylor keeps eating.

The girl leaves, tears in her eyes.

Beat.

Stella watches, standing nearby.

STELLA

That was kind of a dick move.

TAYLOR
I'm kind of a dick.

STELLA
You are what you eat.

Taylor looks at Stella, serious.

TAYLOR
Why are you even talking to me?

STELLA
Excuse me, Ms. Queen of the Dicks.
I didn't mean to infringe upon-

Taylor rolls her eyes.

TAYLOR
(annoyed)
That's not what I meant.

She doesn't bother elaborating.

Stella sighs.

Sits down.

STELLA
...Kind of.

TAYLOR
What does that mean?

STELLA
It means, it helped, like, while I
was doing it. But not really before
or after. I don't... I don't
recommend it.

Taylor opens her mouth to respond.

STELLA (CONT'D)
-And no, I'm not just saying that
so you don't do it. It really
didn't help that much.

Taylor nods.

TAYLOR
Did you find anything that does?

STELLA

I get drunk sometimes. I smoked weed a few times, but then I smoked, like, way too much and threw up and it ruined the whole thing for me. I get nauseous just smelling it now.

Taylor nods.

Stella's pained.

STELLA (CONT'D)

But look, my life is... it works for me, but you don't want to be like that, yeah? You're goddamn Taylor Higgins.

Taylor just looks at her.

Stella sighs.

STELLA (CONT'D)

Whatever. I'm not your mom.

She gets up, walks away.

INT. HANNAH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Taylor lounges on Hannah's bed, a half-empty bottle of wine in her hand.

She pokes around on her phone. Takes a swig.

She sighs. Takes a longer swig.

She rolls over, gets off the bed. Sits at Hannah's computer.

She googles "suicide pain"

The top result is the phone number for the Suicide Prevention Hotline.

She plugs the number into her phone.

Chews on her tongue.

Takes a swig of wine.

Stares at her phone.

Puts her phone down.

Googles "does dying hurt"

INT. HANNAH'S ROOM - MORNING

Cynthia stares at Taylor and the empty bottle of wine, tears in her eyes.

Beat.

She picks up the bottle, careful not to wake Taylor.

INT. MR. REED'S OFFICE - DAY

Taylor sits with Mr. Reed. He's droning on, and she's bored as shit.

MR. REED

...But what it really comes down to is one simple decision. So I ask you, Taylor, what are you going to choose?

Taylor sighs.

TAYLOR

I don't know.

MR. REED

Come on, Taylor, that's not an answer.

Groan. Beat.

TAYLOR

Can't I, like, think about it?

MR. REED

What's there to think about, Taylor? Do you want to succeed, or don't you?

She rubs her face.

TAYLOR

Fuck it. No. I don't.

Mr. Reed is disappointed in her.

MR. REED

That's not the Taylor Higgins I thought walked into this office.

(MORE)

MR. REED (CONT'D)
I think you walked in here hoping I
could help you succeed.

Taylor groans.

EXT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Taylor exits Mr. Reed's office. Stella sees her.

STELLA
Ooh. He got you?

TAYLOR
No. I... I went to him.

Stella cringes.

STELLA
That was a mistake.

Taylor smirks. It's the first time she's smiled since the
accident.

TAYLOR
Tell me about it.

STELLA
He's not a dick or anything. He's
just out of touch.

TAYLOR
That's one way to put it.

Stella laughs.

STELLA
My cousin swears Mr. Reed is the
only reason he's in college. Which,
personally? Made me question how
bad I wanted to go to college.

Taylor laughs silently. Her shoulders just bounce a little.

Beat.

STELLA (CONT'D)
I was thinking about your question
the other day. And look, I don't-

TAYLOR
It's whatever.

Stella gives her a look.

STELLA
You sure?

TAYLOR
We're not friends, right?

Stella thinks.

STELLA
Yeah. Okay.

Beat.

STELLA (CONT'D)
But if you, like... shit. Like... I
don't have huge social schedule,
you know? It'd be easy to pencil
you in or whatever.

Taylor considers her.

EXT. BEHIND THE SCHOOL - DAY

Taylor and Stella sit on some steps, skipping class.

STELLA
So can I ask what happened?

Taylor just looks at her.

STELLA (CONT'D)
Sheesh, whatever.

Beat.

TAYLOR
I guess a bag or something blew
into the road and I thought it'd be
better to swerve into oncoming
traffic than run over some garbage.
Then I... killed everyone. Even the
guy I hit died.

STELLA
Shit. Sucks to be him.

TAYLOR
Right?

STELLA
Sucks to be you, too, I guess.

TAYLOR

Yeah, well, it sucked more to be
you up until a week ago, so.

Stella snorts.

STELLA

Screw you. I fucked your mom.

TAYLOR

You should get tested.

STELLA

Did you just call your mom a whore?

Taylor smirks.

STELLA (CONT'D)

(trying to be comforting)

So but like. It's not your fault?

TAYLOR

How is it not my fault?

Stella looks at the ground.

STELLA

I dunno. But like, you can't blame
yourself.

TAYLOR

Not even if it's my fault?

STELLA

Especially if it's your fault. I
think you'd snap.

INT. HIGGINS' KITCHEN - NIGHT

Taylor, Cynthia and Andrew sit around the dinner table.

CYNTHIA

So you had fun?

Taylor looks at her for a beat.

TAYLOR

...I dunno. Yeah.

CYNTHIA

What'd you two do? Anything
interesting?

Taylor shrugs.

TAYLOR
Not really. Just hung out.

ANDREW
Have I met Stella?

Taylor shakes her head.

CYNTHIA
I don't think so. You just started
"hanging out," right?

Taylor's so done.

TAYLOR
Oh my gosh, I have a new friend,
it's so crazy.

She gets up and heads upstairs.

ANDREW
I'm not happy with her attitude.
But I'm glad she's not just sitting
alone in her room.

CYNTHIA
I think this is really good for
her.

INT. HIGGINS' BATHROOM - NIGHT

Taylor looks at herself in the mirror. Her eyes are red from crying. She holds a bottle of painkillers.

She looks at the bottle.

Chews on her tongue.

She opens the medicine cabinet. Puts the painkillers inside.

She grabs a safety razor. Closes the cabinet. Sits on the toilet.

She holds the razor to her wrist.

Beat.

She grimaces, pulls the razor back. She examines her body. Her armpits? Too awkward to reach. Her stomach? No.

A thought. She pulls off her pants. Holds the razor to the top of her thigh.

She holds her breath. Slices sideways, leaving a thin, clean cut.

She looks at the blood.

Dabs at it with some toilet paper.

She grabs some antiseptic from the medicine cabinet.

Applies it.

It stings! She winces... but kind of likes it.

She looks at the antiseptic.

Applies a little more.

EXT. BEHIND THE SCHOOL - DAY

Taylor and Stella lounge on the steps. Taylor only has one crutch now.

STELLA

I did my wrist once, but it was kind of scary. I still have a tiny scar.

She shows Taylor her wrist: two thin scars cross the bottom of her wrist.

STELLA (CONT'D)

After that I switched to my arm, which is why I don't really wear tank tops.

She pulls up her sleeve, revealing a huge series of scars on her bicep.

STELLA (CONT'D)

If I was gonna do it again, I'd do it somewhere more hidden. I think a lot of people do it on their thighs. I read one girl cut her boob, which just kind of grossed me out.

TAYLOR

That is nasty.

STELLA
Where did you do it?

TAYLOR
My thigh. Just a little.

Stella nods.

STELLA
Yeah. It's whatever. It help?

Taylor shrugs.

Beat.

TAYLOR
You ever feel like the only thing
stopping you from killing yourself
is being scared you'll screw it up?

Stella shakes her head.

STELLA
Nah. I'm more scared of succeeding.

Taylor rolls her eyes.

STELLA (CONT'D)
No, that's not... I meant, like...

Beat.

STELLA (CONT'D)
Do you believe in hell?

Taylor raises her eyebrows. Considers.

TAYLOR
I don't... I don't think so.

STELLA
I do. Like, not really? Maybe? But
enough to scare me.

TAYLOR
I didn't even think about that.

STELLA
Right? Nobody I've talked to has.
They're all, "What if it hurts?"
or, "What if it doesn't work and I
wind up a vegetable or shitting in
a bag or something?"

Taylor laughs.

TAYLOR
You talk to a lot of people about
why they don't commit suicide?

Stella's suddenly quiet.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Um?

STELLA
I just meant, like... you know.
Whatever.

TAYLOR
Uh, no, I don't know.

Stella sighs.

STELLA
It's just, like, what you hear or
whatever.

TAYLOR
Yeah. Sure.

Taylor suddenly gets it.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Wait, Stella. Stella, seriously.

Stella bites her lip.

STELLA
Please don't tell anyone. You more
than anyone should understand why
I'd think about it, and-

Taylor holds up a hand.

TAYLOR
Stella, seriously. What the hell
are you talking about?

Stella looks around.

STELLA
It's just this... club.

TAYLOR
What club?

EXT. PETRA'S HOUSE - DAY

Taylor and Stella stand outside a small house in a quaint neighborhood. The lawn is completely overgrown.

Stella knocks. Beat.

Taylor is nervous.

The door opens, revealing PETRA, 38. She takes care of herself about as well as she takes care of her lawn.

STELLA

Hey Petra, this is the girl I was telling you about. Taylor, Petra, Petra, Taylor.

Petra eyes Taylor, nods. Extends her hand.

PETRA

Nice to meet you, I guess. Sorry, I guess.

Taylor shakes her hand.

TAYLOR

Sorry? ...Oh, uh, yeah.

PETRA

Come on in. You're the first here.

They enter the house.

INT. PETRA'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

In contrast to her yard and herself, the interior of the house is immaculate. You could rub a white glove along any nook or cranny in the house, and the glove would probably get cleaner.

Taylor and Stella slip their shoes off, sit on a sofa.

PETRA

Can I get you something to drink? I have coffee, tea, lemonade...?

TAYLOR

I'm okay.

STELLA

I'll have some lemonade.

PETRA

Sure.

She heads to the kitchen. Taylor's kind of freaking out.

STELLA

You doing alright?

TAYLOR

I don't know. I just, maybe this was a mistake.

STELLA

Relax. Nobody's going to expect you to do anything. We just kind of sit and talk about it.

TAYLOR

Nobody's actually done it?

STELLA

No. And we've been meeting for like, six months. So chill.

That does relax Taylor - though she's also a little confused now.

Petra returns with a lemonade for Stella and some coffee for herself. She hands Stella the lemonade, then sits across from her and Taylor.

As soon as she sits, someone KNOCKS on the door.

She sighs, gets up, answers it.

It's RYAN, 18. He's got short, curly hair, and wears a nerdy T-shirt.

PETRA

Ryan, this is Stella's friend, Taylor.

RYAN

Hey.

TAYLOR

Uh, hi.

RYAN

So what brings you here?

He laughs to himself, but Stella and Petra both give him dirty looks.

TAYLOR

Uh...

STELLA

God, Ryan.

RYAN

(not sorry)

Sorry.

STELLA

Gil is usually late, so, this is everyone for now.

TAYLOR

Okay.

Beat.

Ryan sits down.

Beat.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

What, uh... what normally happens here?

PETRA

Not much. We just kind of... talk about things.

TAYLOR

Like...

Ryan groans.

RYAN

Like, sleeping pills is a no-go.

Petra's disappointed.

PETRA

What happened?

RYAN

My mom's friends talked her into some weird herbal thing, and it's working.

PETRA

That really sucks.

STELLA

(to Taylor)

Ryan was gonna steal his mom's
sleeping pills for Petra to OD on.

RYAN

The Doctor was ready to diagnose
barbiturates.

PETRA

What am I supposed to do now?
Everything is falling through.

Ryan shrugs.

RYAN

I'm telling you, a gun is the way
to go.

Petra shudders.

PETRA

No, so not happening.

STELLA

Shut up, Ryan. You're just saying
that because you don't have a gun,
and you're too chicken to consider
anything that might actually
happen.

RYAN

Screw you. I notice you haven't
tried anything lately.

Stella rolls her eyes.

The door swings open, and GIL, 20, walks in. He has the
thinnest, patchiest beard you've ever seen.

GIL

Great news!

They look at him.

He looks at Taylor.

GIL (CONT'D)

Oh, uh.

TAYLOR

I'm Taylor. I'm... just visiting.

He takes a second. Nods.

GIL
Yeah, okay. I'm Gil.

He collapses into a chair.

PETRA
So what's the news?

GIL
I have \$200 worth of heroin.

STELLA
Holy shit. No way! RYAN

Taylor is uncomfortable.

GIL
That's right.

TAYLOR
(worried)
You didn't bring it here?

Gil sighs.

GIL
(air quotes)
Well, I don't "have it" have it yet. But I know a guy who can get it for me.

Stella rolls her eyes.

PETRA
\$200? How much is that?

GIL
It's a gram, but it's good stuff. Probably only need a third of that to OD. I'll use half, one of you can have the other half.

PETRA
And how do you know it's the good stuff? You have so much experience with heroin?

Gil rolls his eyes.

GIL
No, but I trust the guy.

PETRA
He's a friend?

GIL
...Of a friend. But he's-

PETRA
Great. So we would have to trust
the friend, of a friend, of a
friend. What if he cut it with
something and it doesn't work?

Gil loses confidence.

GIL
You don't think he'd do that?

PETRA
He definitely would. Don't you know
anything?

GIL
Sorry I'm not the king of the
underworld like you, Petra!

Taylor walks outside.

Stella follows as Gil and Petra keep arguing and Ryan bounces
back and forth, trying to decide whose side to take.

EXT. PETRA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Taylor sits on the front steps. Stella sits next to her.

TAYLOR
So is that, like, normal?

Stella shrugs.

STELLA
The whole thing devolving into Gil
and Petra arguing while Ryan and I
just watch? Pretty much.

TAYLOR
No, I mean... uh, heroin.

STELLA
Oh. No, this is... we've talked
about it. It's a... pretty
effective method. Supposedly.

Taylor nods.

TAYLOR
Yeah, but... I wouldn't want people
to think that I... you know.

STELLA
Did heroin.

TAYLOR
Yeah.

STELLA
I guess that's what the note's for.

TAYLOR
Well, if you leave one.

Stella makes a face.

STELLA
What kind of asshole wouldn't leave
a note?

TAYLOR
Uh, someone who's kind of
overwhelmed and doesn't know how to
function?

STELLA
No. Not an excuse. If you don't
leave a note, nobody's going to
know what happened or why. They'll
all blame themselves.

Taylor turns away.

TAYLOR
Let 'em. Walk a mile in my shoes.

Stella hesitates.

STELLA
Are you...?

Beat.

STELLA (CONT'D)
Let's go see if we can get Gil and
Petra to shut up, yeah?

TAYLOR
I'm just gonna chill out here a bit
longer.

STELLA

Okay.

Stella heads back inside.

INT. HIGGINS' KITCHEN - NIGHT

Taylor and Cynthia work on the dishes while Andrew sits at the table on his laptop.

TAYLOR

Wait, what are you doing?

CYNTHIA

I'm... cleaning a pan?

TAYLOR

Hannah and I do the big ones first.

CYNTHIA

Okay, I'll just finish this one and-

TAYLOR

No, do it right or don't do it at all. Hannah liked to stack everything, and that doesn't work if you're putting big things on small things.

CYNTHIA

I'm gonna do it right, I just-

TAYLOR

No, you're screwing it all up! Hannah never-

CYNTHIA

(close to breaking)

I'm sorry I'm not Hannah, okay?!

TAYLOR

I wish you were! Better yet, I wish I was her, and she was me, so I could be dead and she'd be the one dealing with you!

CYNTHIA

Yeah, sure sucks to be you!

TAYLOR

Fuck you!

Taylor storms off.

Andrew is just, so awkward right now. What exactly is he supposed to do here?

Beat.

Andrew clears his throat.

Cynthia yells at nothing, tears in her eyes.

INT. HIGGINS' BATHROOM - NIGHT

Taylor sits on the toilet in her underwear, two fresh cuts on her thigh, laptop on the sink. She's been crying.

She types in a word document.

TAYLOR
I, Taylor... no.

Backspace backspace backspace.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Dear friends and family. I'm sorry
to do this...

Backspace backspace backspace.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
I know you must have questions...

INT. TAYLOR'S ROOM - DAY

Taylor sits at her desk; Stella sits on Taylor's bed.

STELLA
No, it's nice, I like it.

TAYLOR
You should see Hannah's room. It's
a mess. She was always-

Taylor chokes up. Coughs.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
She was disorganized.

Stella deliberately changes the subject.

STELLA

So like, the other day. The way you talked about notes.

Taylor groans.

STELLA (CONT'D)

Are you planning on... you know?

TAYLOR

I don't know! No. Yes. What do you care?

STELLA

I don't! I just...

A long beat.

Stella coughs.

STELLA (CONT'D)

If you were... would you be working on a note?

TAYLOR

I don't know. "Working on it" would be a little strong. Brainstorming, more like.

Stella treads carefully.

STELLA

So you're, like... you're really gonna.

Taylor considers how to answer.

TAYLOR

It's just good to be prepared, you know?

STELLA

I guess, yeah.

TAYLOR

What about you? What's your note like?

Stella shakes her head.

STELLA

I haven't... like, I've thought about it a bit.

TAYLOR

You haven't even started? But you were the one who was saying how important it is!

STELLA

I know! I'm just not planning on... doing it yet, you know?

Taylor's surprised.

TAYLOR

Oh. I guess I thought... with the group, and all...

STELLA

Yeah, no, no. We've been getting together for a few months now. I guess since the start of the school year. There's no rush.

Taylor's... disappointed?

TAYLOR

I figured you were, like, all gonna drink some hemlock together in a week or two.

Stella laughs.

STELLA

What? God, no. Personally, I don't think Petra even wants to do it. I think she started threatening it for attention and then was too stubborn to stop.

TAYLOR

Attention from who? Where do you even know her from?

STELLA

I don't know her. Or, like, I know her through the group. But she talks a lot about how "they'll miss me when I'm gone" and stuff.

TAYLOR

Did she start the group?

STELLA

Yeah, I guess it was her and Gil, sort of a suicide pact thing that they kept procrastinating about. Then Ryan and me came later.

TAYLOR

Weird. So you, like... you guys have no plans or anything.

Stella shrugs.

STELLA

Not, like, together.

TAYLOR

I guess I just thought that was the point of the group.

STELLA

I mean, it is.

TAYLOR

If you say so.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)

Girls! Dinner!

TAYLOR

(yelling)
Coming!

Taylor walks to the door. Hesitates.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Um. You're not gonna, like...

She hesitates. She knows it's a stupid question, but she has to ask.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

...Tell my parents or anything?

Stella stares at her for a beat, incredulous.

STELLA

No!

She pushes past Taylor.

INT. HIGGINS' KITCHEN - EVENING

Taylor, Stella, Cynthia and Andrew eat dinner.

STELLA
Mrs. Higgins-

CYNTHIA
Call me Cynthia.

STELLA
Okay, Cynthia. Taylor was telling
me you work at the aquarium?

Cynthia nods.

STELLA (CONT'D)
That's so cool!

CYNTHIA
It's not that cool. I just give the
tours.

STELLA
Yeah, but you still work at the
aquarium! Do you get to swim in the
tanks?

Cynthia laughs.

CYNTHIA
No, nothing like that. But what
about you? Are you interested in
oceanography, then?

STELLA
Nah, I just like the ocean and
shit. Stuff!

Taylor snorts. Cynthia overlooks Stella's slip-up.

ANDREW
What are your favorite subjects?

TAYLOR
You don't have to give her the
third degree!

ANDREW
I'm not interrogating her, I'm just
asking-

STELLA
It's fine. I like history, but my
best grades are in math.

ANDREW
Oh, yeah? Hannah was...

He trails off, then acts like he was never speaking.

An awkward beat.

TAYLOR

Oh my god. Hannah existed. We don't have to, like, pretend she didn't.

A more awkward beat. Nobody knows what to say.

ANDREW

I know she existed.

TAYLOR

Then finish your thought! "Hannah was into history too."

ANDREW

Don't take that tone, Taylor. This isn't an easy-

TAYLOR

I'll take whatever tone I want! You can't-

CYNTHIA

(yelling at Taylor)

Hann- Taylor!

She freezes. She almost called her the wrong name.

Cynthia fights back tears.

Taylor's frozen. Stella looks around the room.

Andrew puts his hand on Cynthia's. She takes a breath.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

We have company.

A beat. Everyone goes back to eating.

INT. PETRA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Taylor, Stella, Gil, and Petra sit around the living room.

PETRA

I actually have several notes. I wrote a letter to each of my immediate family members and to a couple close friends, and then I have a note I want read at my funeral.

GIL

Good grief. Kinda seems like overkill, doesn't it? Like, the only purpose of a note is to let people know it wasn't an accident.

STELLA

What? No! It's to let people know it wasn't their fault! I don't want my parents to go the rest of their lives thinking there was something they could've done.

GIL

You really think there wasn't anything they could've done?

Stella squirms a little.

STELLA

I mean, I dunno. Maybe. But I don't blame them or anything.

TAYLOR

Guys! That wasn't the point!

Everyone looks at her.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

I meant, like. Who has one written already? Like, who needs help writing theirs?

Gil shrugs.

GIL

I don't have one, but it's just gonna be a sentence or two.

STELLA

Is it really that urgent?

TAYLOR

No, but like... I don't know about you, but I didn't come here for the uplifting conversation. I...

She coughs. It's harder than she thought to say the next part.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

I have a goal... and I'm gonna, you know. Work towards it.

Stella's taken aback.

STELLA

Um... yeah, no, I get you, but...

PETRA

I'd be happy to let any of you look at mine if you want.

TAYLOR

Let's try to have at least a rough draft of our notes together so we can discuss them next time. That sound reasonable?

Everyone but Stella nods.

INT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Taylor walks down the hallway. Mr. Reed sees her and stops her.

MR. REED

Taylor! Excuse me!

Taylor rolls her eyes, walks to him.

MR. REED (CONT'D)

I understand you've had a rough school year, but I feel like we need to get together to discuss your growing number of absences.

TAYLOR

I don't.

MR. REED

I understand that, but I'm afraid I'm going to have to insist.

TAYLOR

Why?

Mr. Reed is flustered.

MR. REED

Well, because, you, it's important for you to stay in school!

TAYLOR

Given that I'll have killed myself by the end of the year, I really don't think it matters.

Mr. Reed's eyes bug out of his head. He's too flabbergasted to respond.

Taylor walks away. Reaches her locker, and Stella.

STELLA

Hey.

TAYLOR

(groaning)

Hey.

STELLA

You okay?

TAYLOR

I just screwed up.

STELLA

How so?

TAYLOR

I told Mr. Reed I was planning to kill myself.

STELLA

WHAT.

TAYLOR

I meant it to sound like a joke!

STELLA

You can't joke with Mr. Reed! Especially when...

She looks around.

STELLA (CONT'D)

(quiet)

...Especially when you're not entirely joking!

TAYLOR

I know! I know.

STELLA

He's gonna tell your parents. For starters.

TAYLOR

Noooo, don't say that. Ugh. I should go talk to him.

STELLA

You need to go talk to him. God.

Taylor groans. Looks back towards Mr. Reed's office.

INT. MR. REED'S OFFICE - DAY

Taylor barges in to see Mr. Reed hanging up the phone.

MR. REED

Taylor! I just got off the phone with your parents. I'm glad you're ready to talk about-

TAYLOR

Ssssshhit.

MR. REED

I understand this is an emotional issue, Taylor, but that doesn't call for such crude language.

TAYLOR

Fuck you.

Beat as Mr. Reed composes himself.

MR. REED

I refuse to accept that insult.

TAYLOR

It was a joke! I was joking!

MR. REED

Taylor, suicide is not a joking matter! I am glad you came to me for help, but-

TAYLOR

I didn't come to you for help! It was a joke! Oh my god.

MR. REED

I'm not laughing, Taylor.

TAYLOR

So it was a bad joke!

MR. REED

Now, Taylor-

TAYLOR

Oh my god stop saying my name.

She presses her fingers to her temples.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

This is a nightmare. I'm living in a nightmare.

MR. REED

I know things seem hard right now, Taylor. But I promise you we are going to do everything we can to help you through this.

Taylor looks like her head is about to explode.

EXT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Cynthia drives up to the school to see an absolutely MISERABLE Taylor sitting on the curb, with Mr. Reed standing next to her.

INT./EXT. CYNTHIA'S CAR - DAY

Cynthia drives. Taylor looks somewhat more relaxed.

TAYLOR

No. Mom. I swear. Mr. Reed doesn't know how to take a joke. That's all.

CYNTHIA

You swear?

TAYLOR

Cross my heart and hope to... live.

Cynthia snorts. Looks at her.

CYNTHIA

Okay. Okay. I did find it a little difficult to believe, especially with all the new friends you've been making.

Taylor looks out the window.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

But listen, you're... You've been through a lot, and if you want to... get help, or something-

TAYLOR

Help?

CYNTHIA

I don't know. See a therapist or something. Your father and I probably should. What do you think?

TAYLOR

Like, with you and dad?

CYNTHIA

No!

She laughs.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

Unless you wanted?

TAYLOR

No!

Cynthia laughs again.

CYNTHIA

Think about it, okay?

Beat. Taylor nods.

INT. PETRA'S BACKYARD - DAY

It's a beautiful day. Gil and Stella throw a frisbee around while Petra and Taylor sit on lawnchairs, watching.

TAYLOR

Can I ask you something?

PETRA

Shoot.

TAYLOR

Have you ever considered, like, seeing a doctor?

Petra shakes her head.

PETRA

They won't prescribe you anything dangerous without-

TAYLOR

No no no. I meant, like, a psychiatrist.

Petra laughs.

PETRA

Oh, no, honey. I don't want some quack telling me all my problems come from me being attracted to my father when I was in diapers.

TAYLOR

You don't think it'd help at all.

PETRA

No. Definitely not. Nobody will ever know the inside of your head better than yourself.

Taylor nods.

TAYLOR

I guess, yeah.

PETRA

No "I guess." It's like this: suppose, you did nothing but talk about yourself for a week straight. Do you really think I could tell you anything about yourself you didn't already know? Everything I know about you is stuff you told me!

TAYLOR

Yeah.

PETRA

And a therapist isn't going to let you talk to them for a week straight. Try an hour every other week. How can they know anything about you?

TAYLOR

I never thought about it like that.

PETRA

Most people don't. They like thinking someone else can solve their problems.

She shifts to stare right at Taylor.

PETRA (CONT'D)

But they can't. The only person who can solve your problems is you. Remember that.

She settles back into her chair.

PETRA (CONT'D)

And if you've got a problem that can only be solved one way, nobody can fault you for solving it that way. Just the way it is.

Taylor thinks. Nods.

TAYLOR

Thanks. I think I needed to hear that.

PETRA

Sure.

INT. TAYLOR'S ROOM - NIGHT

Taylor stands in front of her closet. She looks at a couple bathing suits.

TAYLOR

I don't even...

She pulls out her phone.

Texts Stella: "You up?"

Beat.

Stella responds: "Yeah."

Taylor calls Stella.

INT. STELLA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Stella's room is too dark right now to see much, but it's pretty cramped. Stella lies on her bed.

STELLA

Hello?

INTERCUT BETWEEN TAYLOR AND STELLA

TAYLOR

Okay so like. If you're killing yourself in the tub. Are you naked?

Stella laughs.

STELLA

What?

TAYLOR

Like, you're in the bath, so are you naked?

STELLA

No!

TAYLOR

Then what are you wearing? A swimsuit? Are you just fully dressed in the tub?

Stella laughs more.

STELLA

I've never really thought about it. Hah! I guess you're dressed? Why are you calling about...

A heavy beat.

STELLA (CONT'D)

Oh, fuck.

TAYLOR

No. No!

Taylor fakes a laugh.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

I was just, having trouble sleeping. That's all.

STELLA

Yeah?

TAYLOR

Yeah.

STELLA

I don't think I could kill myself that way anyway. To float in a tub of blood...

She shudders.

STELLA (CONT'D)

But I'd never thought about what I'd wear.

She laughs.

STELLA (CONT'D)
You're right. I can't think of an
option that's not kind of weird.

TAYLOR
Right? There's no good way!

She closes the closet.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Taylor sits in the back of the class, staring at her phone.

Wyatt sits in front, paying attention.

The TEACHER looks over the class. Lands on Taylor.

TEACHER
Taylor.

Beat.

The teacher rolls her eyes.

TEACHER (CONT'D)
Taylor!

Taylor looks up, very casual.

Looks back at her phone.

TEACHER (CONT'D)
How about you, Olivia?

Wyatt looks back at Taylor.

INT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Taylor is the first one leaving the classroom. Wyatt pushes
to catch up with her.

WYATT
Hey, Taylor.

Taylor looks at him. Tenses up.

TAYLOR
Yeah?

WYATT
What's with you?

Beat.

Taylor walks away.

Wyatt jogs to keep up.

WYATT (CONT'D)

No, wait, that's not what I meant.

Taylor sighs, stops. Faces him.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Just, like... it sucks to see you like this.

TAYLOR

(extreme sarcasm)

I'm sorry, it must be very hard for you.

Wyatt groans.

WYATT

Look. I know I... I didn't handle things great. And I'm sorry, okay?

TAYLOR

You blame yourself for me.

WYATT

I mean. Kinda.

Taylor laughs.

TAYLOR

You vastly overestimate how much your opinion ever mattered to me.

Wyatt doesn't believe her, but it hurts anyway.

WYATT

Whatever. But if you want to hang out sometime-

Taylor walks away.

Wyatt sighs. Waits a beat. Walks the other way.

Len walks up to him, takes his arm.

Taylor peeks behind her the same time Wyatt looks back. She sees him with Len, and he sees her see him.

Taylor ducks into a corner. She's angry and crying.

INT. PETRA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Taylor stands, addressing everyone else.

TAYLOR

I don't know about you guys, but I'm tired. I'm tired of waiting. I'm tired of being scared. I'm ready to just be done.

GIL

We're all tired. That's, like, the reason we're here.

Taylor shakes her head.

TAYLOR

No. That's why we met, but you're here all the time just to fantasize about all your troubles being over while coming up with excuses and reasons why you shouldn't actually end them. I think it's time to do it.

Everyone shifts uncomfortably.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Everything I've read says drowning is peaceful and painless. It's easy to do, there's no mess, no pain, and it's fast. I vote we all go on a camping trip this weekend.

Panic on Stella's face. Everyone else is taken aback too.

STELLA

This weekend?

TAYLOR

Why wait?

STELLA

What's the rush?

TAYLOR

There's no rush! There's clearly no rush! How long have you guys been getting together? I've been coming for, what, two months now?

Murmurs.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
 I'm not trying to pressure anyone
 into anything. But if you actually
 want to kill yourself, I think it's
 time to stop pussyfooting.

Her face... opens. We see the exhaustion.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
 I'm just so fucking tired, you
 guys. I'm done.

Petra nods.

PETRA
 I... I'm done too. I'm in.

RYAN
 I'll do it.

GIL
 Count me in.

Beat. They look at Stella.

STELLA
 (to herself)
 Fuck. What the fuck.

TAYLOR
 Nobody's making you do anything.

STELLA
 Nobody else thinks this is fast?

She looks around. Maybe somebody else does, but none of them
 say anything.

TAYLOR
 You don't have to decide now.

STELLA
 Nobody has to decide now. That's
 what I'm-

TAYLOR
 No, you're totally right. But I can
 call the campground and get things
 set up for everyone who decides to
 do it?

She looks around the room. Unenthusiastic nods.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Okay. I'll call the campground.

INT. HIGGINS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Andrew watches TV.

Taylor walks in, trying very hard to be casual.

TAYLOR
Hey dad?

ANDREW
Hm?

TAYLOR
Is it cool if me and some friends
go camping this weekend?

ANDREW
What? Camping? Since when have you
been into camping?

Taylor shrugs.

TAYLOR
Just trying it out.

Andrew gives her a look. He doesn't really buy it.

ANDREW
There'll be boys, too?

Taylor thinks for a beat.

TAYLOR
No.

Andrew shakes his head.

ANDREW
You're lying.

Taylor groans.

TAYLOR
Okay yeah but it's not like that!

Andrew laughs.

ANDREW
I'm sure.

TAYLOR

Daaaad.

ANDREW

Go whine to your mother, I don't want to hear it.

Taylor stomps out of the room.

INT. HIGGINS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Cynthia sits at a computer in her organized office.

Taylor barges in.

TAYLOR

Dad won't let me go camping with my friends.

Cynthia doesn't look up.

CYNTHIA

And he didn't say why?

TAYLOR

Just because some of the friends are guys!

Cynthia sighs, looks at her.

CYNTHIA

What guys?

TAYLOR

Just some of Stella's friends. They're the ones with the tents, we can't camp without them.

CYNTHIA

Why are you even interested in camping? We went camping once and you hated it.

TAYLOR

I was like twelve! I just want to try it out again!

Cynthia thinks.

CYNTHIA

How old are these boys?

TAYLOR
They're, uh, like, freshmen.

CYNTHIA
You're going camping with freshmen?

TAYLOR
They're Stella's next-door neighbors, they've been friends for like forever. They're whatever.

CYNTHIA
I'm not saying you're lying. But I think you know how this sounds.

Taylor groans.

TAYLOR
If we wanted to... you know, we wouldn't need to go camping. Stella's parents are never home. We could do whatever we wanted there.

CYNTHIA
Oh, that's comforting.

Taylor makes a face. Please?

Cynthia sighs.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)
I will talk to your father. But if he doesn't want you to go, you aren't going.

TAYLOR
Thank you! You're the best!

Cynthia rolls her eyes.

EXT. BEHIND THE SCHOOL - DAY

Taylor and Stella laugh behind the school.

STELLA
Right? I mean, I'm still not sure or anything, but it is freeing. I was all worried about finals and then realized, "Oh wait, I could literally never have to take another test in my life."

TAYLOR

Exactly! We don't have to do anything we don't want to do. And we can do everything we do want to do.

STELLA

But I mean, what do you want to do?

TAYLOR

What?

STELLA

Like, this is your last chance to... do whatever.

TAYLOR

Oh. Yeah. I guess. I hadn't thought about it. Do you... is there stuff you want to do?

Stella squirms.

STELLA

I dunno. Maybe. I've never been to Disney World.

TAYLOR

Hannah was a big Disney buff. I think she could recite the entire script of Mulan from memory.

She looks at her feet. Hugs her knees.

Beat.

STELLA

Um... I have Mulan.

INT. STELLA'S ROOM - DAY

Taylor and Stella sit on Stella's bed, watching Mulan on a TV that had to have been made in the 90s.

The movie ends, and Stella turns on the lights.

Taylor's crying. Once the lights are on, she looks away.

TAYLOR

Shit. I'm sorry.

Taylor gets herself under control.

Stella isn't sure what to do.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
I just... I miss her. No big deal.

STELLA
You'll...

Stella puts a hand on her shoulder.

STELLA (CONT'D)
You'll... I guess you'll see her soon, though, yeah? Like, Friday night.
(muttered to herself)
Jesus, this Friday.

TAYLOR
You really think so? You don't think... I've kind of been hoping everything will just... stop.

STELLA
If I didn't think I'd see my grandma again, I don't think I'd be interested.

TAYLOR
Yeah?

STELLA
Yeah.

TAYLOR
I guess it'd be nice.

Beat.

STELLA
Do you think... if there is a heaven. Do you think we'll still be friends?

TAYLOR
What? Of course we will. Isn't everyone friends in heaven?

STELLA
Well, but like, before the-

She stops herself, coughs.

STELLA (CONT'D)
 Before, you and I didn't exactly
 get along.

TAYLOR
 I didn't know you then. I know you
 now.

She puts a hand on Stella's shoulder.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
 I don't know that I think there'll
 be anything. But if there is, I
 think we'll all get along. And
 Petra and everybody too.

STELLA
 Yeah...

TAYLOR
 Now come on. We did this for me.
 What's something you want to do?

STELLA
 I dunno. I'm alright.

TAYLOR
 There's gotta be something.

STELLA
 I guess... okay, it's kind of
 silly.

TAYLOR
 Nothing's silly.

INT. MCDONALD'S - DAY

Stella stands in front of the menu, staring at it in awe.
 Taylor stands next to her, staring at her. It's kind of slow
 right now, so the CASHIER just stands there staring at both
 of them.

Beat.

TAYLOR
 ...Are you gonna order?

STELLA
 I always thought it was just happy
 meals. I thought kids got happy
 meals and adults got Big Macs.

TAYLOR

You've never even... Like, have you seen a commercial for McDonalds?

STELLA

How do I know what toy I'll get in the happy meal?

TAYLOR

Don't ask me. Just because I'm allowed to eat here doesn't mean I choose to.

The cashier coughs.

Stella looks at him, startled.

CASHIER

There's a thing.

He points to a little display of all the possible toys.

Stella's eyes widen and she rushes over to it. Taylor follows, not quite as enthused.

When she gets there, though, she's disappointed.

STELLA

Oh. I guess I thought it was like, real toys. This is just...

She sighs.

Beat.

TAYLOR

So...

STELLA

I think I want this one, but I'd be happy with any of these three.

Taylor rolls her eyes, laughs.

INT. TAYLOR'S ROOM - NIGHT

Taylor sits on her bed, using her laptop.

On her screen is a CONFIRMATION for renting CAMPGROUND 6.

She swallows. The weight of what's coming hits her.

She breaks down into tears.

Beat.

Cynthia's voice is distant; she's knocking on the door to Hannah's room, not Taylor's.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
Taylor?

Beat.

Taylor's door opens. Cynthia sees Taylor crying.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)
Oh, honey...

Cynthia hugs her.

Taylor breaks down even more.

TAYLOR
(sobbing)
I just... miss her... so much.

Cynthia cries too.

CYNTHIA
I know, honey. I miss her too.

TAYLOR
But it's... it's my fault she-

CYNTHIA
Oh, no no no no no...

Taylor buries her face in her mom's shoulder.

A long beat.

INT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Taylor and Stella stand in front of their lockers.

STELLA
Are you sure? I mean, if tomorrow is our... you know. Shouldn't we be doing something fun?

TAYLOR
What's the point? If there's a heaven we'll have more fun there. If there's not, we won't remember.
(MORE)

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Right now, I just want everything to go smoothly. I don't want to risk anything getting upset.

Stella sighs. Nods.

STELLA

Yeah. I guess.

Mr. Reed walks by. Sees them.

STELLA (CONT'D)

Oh no.

MR. REED

There you are!

Taylor closes her eyes. Takes a breath. Turns to face him.

TAYLOR

Hey, Mr. Reed.

MR. REED

We need to talk.

STELLA

I'll just...

She tries to walk away, but Mr. Reed stops her.

MR. REED

Actually, that includes you, Stella.

STELLA

Oh god.

INT. MR. REED'S OFFICE - DAY

Taylor and Stella sit in front of Mr. Reed's desk. Mr. Reed sits on his desk in a failed attempt to seem casual.

MR. REED

Your teachers have been telling me about all the classes you've missed. Do you want to talk about that?

TAYLOR

It won't happen again. We promise.

Mr. Reed shakes his head.

MR. REED

It can't happen again. Your grades have been slipping, both of you. There's been enough of a drop that school policy is to contact your parents.

Their faces erupt in panic, but neither of them says anything.

MR. REED (CONT'D)

We haven't yet, because I told them not to.

Panic is replaced by confusion.

TAYLOR

Why?

MR. REED

Because, Taylor, I know you're going through a lot.

Mr. Reed's carefully casual exterior cracks a little. He kind of looks like a real person for once.

MR. REED (CONT'D)

I can imagine school isn't terribly high on your list of priorities, and you know what? I would probably feel the same way in your position.

He turns to Stella.

MR. REED (CONT'D)

And you, Stella. You've missed the occasional class before, but you kept your grades up. The difference now, I imagine, is you being there for Taylor. Which, frankly, is behavior I'd like to encourage.

Stella and Taylor look at each other: is this really happening?

MR. REED (CONT'D)

Now, I can't let this continue. There are hard limits on the number of classes a student can miss and still pass. And even if there weren't, you're both in danger of failing a class or two.

Stella stares at the floor.

TAYLOR
We understand.

STELLA
...Thank you.

MR. REED
Remember. If you need help, we can
get it for you. It doesn't have to
be me.

Taylor nods.

Beat.

TAYLOR
Um...

MR. REED
Yes, you can go now.

Taylor gets up. Stella follows, slower.

INT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

They leave the office and walk down the hallway.

STELLA
That was... weird.

TAYLOR
He talked like a real person.

STELLA
Right? Kinda makes me feel bad
about... you know.

Taylor grabs Stella's shoulders.

TAYLOR
No no no. Look at me. You can't...
everything that happens today is
going to make you doubt what's
coming. Everything.

She backs off.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
And if you doubt, then I'm gonna
doubt, and it's all gonna...

She looks towards Mr. Reed's office. Talks quieter and moves
further away.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Just think about what made you
decide you needed to do it. What
was it?

Stella hesitates. She's close to tears, but she keeps it
together.

STELLA

My grandma. She died last year, and
it was... everybody took it harder
than her. She had cancer, she knew
she was dying, and I was freaking
out, but she was just, so calm. She
said she knew where she was going
and it was better than here.

She coughs. Looks at the floor.

STELLA (CONT'D)

Every time things got shitty, I
just kept thinking, you know... it
sounds pretty nice.

Taylor... hesitates.

TAYLOR

You... want to go to heaven?

Stella nods.

STELLA

I mean, I dunno. I hope so.

Taylor nods.

TAYLOR

Um... let's get to class, I guess.

Stella nods. They leave.

INT. PETRA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The gang sits around the room. The mood is an odd mixture of
excitement and melancholy.

PETRA

...So as long as we've got the
campground, I think we're good.

Everyone looks at Taylor. She doesn't notice, lost in
thought.

Beat.

PETRA (CONT'D)
Taylor?

Beat.

Stella nudges her.

STELLA
Taylor?

TAYLOR
Sorry! What?

PETRA
Do we have the campground?

TAYLOR
Uh... yeah. Yeah. We'll meet here
on tomorrow around five o'clock.

Everyone nods.

INT. HIGGINS' KITCHEN - NIGHT

##Look at everyone's emotional journey

Taylor, Andrew, and Cynthia eat dinner.

ANDREW
Your mother and I talked. And I
know you really want to, but...
we're not very comfortable with
this camping trip of yours.

Beat. Taylor's not really paying attention.

TAYLOR
What?

ANDREW
We don't want you to go camping.

She's looking at them, but still not really listening.

TAYLOR
Okay.

She realizes what was said.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Oh, um. Could I spend the night at
Stella's instead?

Andrew looks at Cynthia.

CYNTHIA
If we call her house, you'll be
there?

Taylor nods.

She goes back to staring at dinner.

ANDREW
Is everything okay?

CYNTHIA
Honey?

TAYLOR
No, yeah, I'm fine.

She doesn't look fine.

ANDREW
Did... something happen at school?

TAYLOR
Just... something someone said. Do
you guys think heaven is real?

Andrew and Cynthia share a look. "Oof."

ANDREW
Uh... Yeah, I do.

Taylor looks at him, unimpressed.

TAYLOR
I don't need you to... like,
honestly. Do you?

ANDREW
Honestly.

TAYLOR
You're not just saying what you
think I want to hear?

ANDREW
No. I really do.

TAYLOR

Mom?

CYNTHIA

I'd like to think so. But I don't know. I guess... I guess I doubt it.

ANDREW

Really?

Cynthia shrugs.

CYNTHIA

Never really thought about it.

TAYLOR

But like. How do you...

She shakes her head.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

If heaven is real, like... why wouldn't everyone want to go there?

ANDREW

I think everyone does.

TAYLOR

That's not what I...

She hesitates. This is dangerous ground she's treading.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Why wouldn't everyone want to go there... immediately?

ANDREW

Oh.

CYNTHIA

I don't...

Cynthia looks at Andrew.

ANDREW

That question's kind of above my pay grade. You're not...

TAYLOR

No! I don't think it's real. But Stella thinks her Grandma is there and she like... wants to see her, you know?

CYNTHIA

Honey, this is really serious. Do you think Stella's going to... commit suicide?

TAYLOR

No!

CYNTHIA

Are you sure?

TAYLOR

(panicky)

Yes! God. This is just... it's not... I'm explaining it wrong.

ANDREW

If you think she's going to commit suicide, you need to say something.

TAYLOR

I will! If I do. But I don't. I'm just... shit. No. I just don't understand... like...

She takes a breath.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Nobody's committing suicide, okay?

CYNTHIA

(getting worried)

This isn't something to joke about like you did with Mr. Reed. Honey, if you think-

TAYLOR

I'm not joking! I'm not... oh my god!

Cynthia's reaching critical mass, and Andrew notices.

CYNTHIA

Maybe we should-

Andrew holds up a hand.

ANDREW

Hang on now.

He turns to Taylor.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
You are absolutely certain that
she's not even considering suicide?

Taylor grits her teeth.

TAYLOR
Absolutely.

Andrew and Cynthia relax a little. Taylor can't meet their gazes. She doesn't like lying so blatantly.

CYNTHIA
(trying to calm down)
You're just wondering why she
wouldn't if she wants to see her
grandma.

TAYLOR
I'm wondering why it'd be bad for
her to if there's really a heaven.

Cynthia looks at Andrew. "This is all you."

ANDREW
Okay. Purely hypothetically. I
would guess her grandma wouldn't
want her to, for starters. But for
another, if there is a heaven,
what's the rush? It's a one-way
trip. I'd rather live my life to
the fullest and go to heaven with
some stories to tell.

TAYLOR
What if your life sucks?

ANDREW
I don't... I don't know, sweet pea.
I don't have all the answers.

CYNTHIA
But it seems risky, doesn't it? I
mean, what if there is no heaven?
You'd be giving up everything for
nothing.

Taylor looks at her plate, nods.

TAYLOR
Yeah, I guess.

INT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Taylor walks with Stella.

TAYLOR

It's no big deal. I gave them your cell number, you can just pretend to be your mom if they call.

STELLA

...And if there's no cell service?

Taylor hesitates.

TAYLOR

Uh... they probably won't even call.

STELLA

Come on, Taylor! You shouldn't have told us everything was okay if you weren't even allowed to go!

TAYLOR

Well excuse me! It's not my fault my parents waited until like the last minute to say no!

STELLA

Shit, man. We should just call it off.

TAYLOR

(louder than planned)

No!

A couple kids walking nearby give her funny looks.

She coughs.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

I can make it work. Trust me.

She pulls out her phone, starts texting someone.

STELLA

What are you doing?

TAYLOR

Give me your phone.

STELLA

Why?

TAYLOR
Do you need it? Will you ever need
it again?

STELLA
Maybe!

Taylor shrugs, holds out her hand.

Stella sighs. Groans. Pulls out her phone.

STELLA (CONT'D)
Fine, whatever.

Taylor grabs it.

TAYLOR
I'll see you after class.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Taylor leans against the wall, waiting.

Len walks in, makes a big show of seeing her.

LEN
Hiiii! How are you?

She gives Taylor a big hug.

LEN (CONT'D)
(almost convincing)
Are you holding up okay?

Taylor shrugs her off.

TAYLOR
I just need a favor.

LEN
Oh, I don't know, I'm pretty busy-

Taylor hands her Stella's phone.

TAYLOR
Just pretend to be Stella's mom if
my mom calls tonight. Her name's
Yvonne Lane. They don't know each
other at all, it should be easy.

Len examines the phone.

LEN
Who's phone is this?

TAYLOR
It's Stella's.

Len's uncertain.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Come on, we used to do this sort of thing all the time. My mom still doesn't recognize your mom's actual voice.

LEN
What if she asks to talk to you?

TAYLOR
Just make something up. Doesn't matter.

LEN
She's not gonna call back later or anything?

TAYLOR
I mean, she might, but honestly, you just need to stall. We don't need all night.

LEN
What? What are you even doing?

TAYLOR
(harsh)
Why the fuck do you care all of a sudden?

Len tries to hand the phone back.

LEN
I don't think I'm comfortable with this.

Taylor refuses to take the phone, pushes it back.

TAYLOR
No no no no no, I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

She takes a deep breath, turns on the waterworks a little.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
 It's just, it's been really hard
 since Hannah died, and all of my
 friends abandoned me...

A very calculated puppydog look. Not too accusatory, but
 still a little accusatory.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
 You've always been my best friend,
 and I just really need a friend
 right now.

She still knows Len's buttons. Len sighs.

LEN
 Fine. Sure. When do I give the
 phone back?

Taylor stammers.

TAYLOR
 Uh, I dunno. School on Monday, I
 guess.

Len's very confused at that.

LEN
 She's not gonna need her phone all
 weekend?

TAYLOR
 Uh... No.

LEN
 Whatever. I guess losers like her
 don't have...

She stops herself.

LEN (CONT'D)
 Sorry.

Taylor pushes past her to leave.

LEN (CONT'D)
 Taylor.

Taylor stops, looks back.

LEN (CONT'D)
 We're cool, right? You and me?

TAYLOR
What?

LEN
Like, you get it, right?

TAYLOR
Just do this for me and we are.

She leaves.

EXT. SADDLEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Taylor and Stella walk out of the school at the end of the day.

STELLA
Ryan said he'll meet us here. He goes to Percy, he's just gonna walk over.

Taylor nods.

Beat. Taylor tries to work up the nerve to say something.

She clears her throat.

TAYLOR
I have something to say.

STELLA
Yeah?

Beat.

TAYLOR
I don't think... I don't know if...

STELLA
If you don't want to, it's not too late to-

TAYLOR
No, I want to!

STELLA
Okay. But just say the word and-

TAYLOR
No, that's not what I'm-

Ryan appears around a corner in the distance. They wave to him, he waves back.

Taylor starts to say something, but decides not to.

Ryan reaches them.

RYAN

Hey.

TAYLOR

Hey. You ready?

Beat.

STELLA

Let's do it.

They all walk to the parking lot.

INT./EXT. STELLA'S CAR - DAY

Stella drives a beat-up old Toyota. Taylor stares out the window. Ryan fiddles in the backseat, clearly anxious.

EXT. PETRA'S HOUSE - DAY

They pull up outside Petra's house. Petra and Gil are outside with Gil's SUV.

They hop out of the car and walk over to Petra and Gil.

It's awkward, somber.

RYAN

So...

Beat.

PETRA

Everyone's got everything? Everyone that's leaving a note left a note?

Nods all around.

PETRA (CONT'D)

Okay. Let's go.

Everyone but Ryan climbs into Gil's SUV.

RYAN

Um, hey, I...

They look at him.

RYAN (CONT'D)
I forgot my...

Beat.

He runs away.

Nobody's sure how to react. They all look to Taylor.

She doesn't know how to react either.

TAYLOR
Let's... wait for him?

STELLA
I don't think he's coming back.

TAYLOR
Um... yeah.

Beat.

Taylor buckles her seatbelt.

Everyone else follows suit.

They drive away.

INT. TAYLOR'S ROOM - DAY

A note sits on Taylor's bed, labeled "Mom & Dad".

Cynthia's voice grows closer to the room.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
...I'll just see if I can catch her
before she leaves.

The door opens. Cynthia, on her phone, leans in.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)
Taylor?

She looks around. No Taylor.

She notices the note. "What's that?"

The sound of the FRONT DOOR CLOSING.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)
(to phone)
Oh, maybe that's her.

She leaves.

ANDREW (O.S.)

I'm home!

CYNTHIA (O.S.)

Oh, I hoped you were Taylor. I've got her guidance counselor on the phone, and...

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

The gang pulls up at a campsite in the middle of the woods.

It's quiet, peaceful.

They climb out of the SUV, look around.

STELLA

Where's the, uh... water?

Taylor gestures.

TAYLOR

It's like half a mile that way. There should be a trail.

STELLA

Cool.

Gil pulls several large weights out of the trunk, along with plenty of rope.

Everyone watches him unload them.

Beat.

GIL

Nobody's gonna help?

Stella and Taylor help him finish unloading.

PETRA

So. Do we just go, or...

TAYLOR

No. The lakeside closes at six, but there will still be people there until after dark.

PETRA

What do we do until then?

Taylor shrugs.

TAYLOR
I brought some cards.

STELLA
I'm hungry. I don't want to die
hungry. Do we wanna go to
McDonalds?

GIL
Come on. We're camping. I brought
hot dogs and stuff for smores.

STELLA
(excited)
Whaaaat you're the best!

INT. TAYLOR'S ROOM - DAY

The note still sits on the bed.

Cynthia walks in with some laundry.

She hangs up some clothes in the closet. Doesn't notice the
note.

Leaves.

EXT. CAMPSITE - EVENING

Everyone sits at a picnic table playing Uno. A small fire
crackles nearby.

Stella's fingers still have some marshmallow on them. Petra
slowly works on a hotdog.

TAYLOR
So it's about to all be over,
right?

They all look at her.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
What are you glad you'll never have
to deal with again?

PETRA
Oooh. No more applying to jobs.

GIL
Yes! God, that's the worst. No more
rejection letters.

STELLA
No more finals.

GIL
No more school whatsoever.

STELLA
No more loneliness.

PETRA
No more small talk with people you
hate.

GIL
No more nagging parents.

PETRA
No more bills.

STELLA
No more lying awake at night trying
to sleep.

PETRA
That's a good one.

GIL
Word.

Beat.

STELLA
What about you, Taylor?

TAYLOR
Those are all... those are all
good. I don't think I could add
anything.

STELLA
You can't think of one thing?

Taylor sighs.

TAYLOR
No more being terrified of whether
or not I'm doing the right thing.

Everyone's quiet for a beat. Nods.

Petra looks at her watch.

PETRA

It's getting late. Maybe we should start thinking about heading over to the lake.

GIL

It's not gonna be a fun walk with those weights.

TAYLOR

Let's get started.

INT. TAYLOR'S ROOM - NIGHT

The note still sits on Taylor's bed.

A long,

Long,

Beat.

EXT. LAKESIDE - NIGHT

Everyone but Taylor and Gil rests by the dock, panting. Taylor and Gil examine the canoes, chained to a nearby tree.

TAYLOR

I didn't think about this.

GIL

I didn't figure.

Taylor gestures at a nearby closed convenience stand.

TAYLOR

Any chance the keys are stored in there?

GIL

There's a chance. Not a good one.

TAYLOR

Shit. What do we do? We can't call it off.

Gil shrugs. Taylor sighs.

CUT TO:

Nearby, they have the group in a circle.

STELLA

I know we came all the way out here, but if there's nothing we can do-

PETRA

What about that over there?

She points at a small precipice that extends over the lake, about a mile away.

EXT. LAKESIDE PRECIPICE - NIGHT

Taylor, Stella, and Petra lie exhausted near the precipice. They work on getting their weights tied while Gil looks over the precipice.

GIL

Yeah, this should work.

He goes to grab his weights.

Taylor, weights already tied, helps Stella with hers.

TAYLOR

(quiet, just to Stella)
Look, I've been thinking...

Stella looks at her. Shifts to turn away from the others.

STELLA

(quiet)
Yeah?

Taylor sighs.

TAYLOR

There's no easy way to say this. I-

STELLA

It's okay. Look, if you don't want to, we're not going to make you. Just wait to jump in last, and if you change your mind, then none of us will know.

TAYLOR

What? No. I don't... your grandma wouldn't want this. You shouldn't do it.

STELLA

(loud)

What the hell?

Everyone looks.

STELLA (CONT'D)

You can't just... you've spent the last month convincing me to do this, you don't get to drag me out here and then tell me you don't want me to do it!

GIL

What's going on?

STELLA

You didn't even know my grandma! How do you know what she would want?

TAYLOR

You're telling me this is what she'd want?!

GIL

What's going on?

STELLA

(still on Taylor)

Just, what the hell, man? Why me? You don't want me to do it, but you're fine with Gil drowning himself because he's get didn't get a job at his dad's office?!

TAYLOR

What.

GIL

Fuck you, Stella! That was more than a job to me, and you know it!

STELLA

You're still in college, Gil! Try graduating first!

PETRA

I think we all need to calm down-

STELLA

Shut up, Petra! We're sure it was very hard to lose your job when you're sitting on like a bajillion dollars in the bank!

TAYLOR

Seriously?

Petra fumes.

PETRA

It's not about money! It's about contributing to society!

GIL

Right? I'm with you, Petra.

PETRA

Oh, please. You haven't even tried to contribute to society!

GIL

Fuck you!

TAYLOR

EVERYBODY SHUT UP!

EVERYBODY

Fuck you!

Beat. Nobody's sure what to do now.

TAYLOR

So like... Gil. You're committing suicide because-

GIL

It's my business.

TAYLOR

I'm not judging.

STELLA

Yet.

Beat.

GIL

My dad worked for that company for his entire life. I was going to carry on his legacy.

TAYLOR
Right. And Petra lost her job.

Petra, still mad, nods.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Holy shit. This is...

Beat. Taylor's overwhelmed.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
You're all being ridiculous. You're
all being fucking ridiculous.

Everyone protests at once.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Okay, Gil! Do either of you agree
Gil should kill himself?

Beat. Awkward grumbling. Heads shake.

Gil breaks into tears.

GIL
What?! You guys don't get to-

PETRA
Honey, I know it's sad. But... no.

Stella looks at Gil, pitying.

STELLA
She's right. I just... you should
talk to someone.

Gil runs back to the campground.

It hits Taylor that she almost killed everyone here.

Hooly shit.

TAYLOR
Petra, do you... you...

PETRA
You can't do this. You can't bring
us out here and then tell us not to
do it at the last second.

TAYLOR
I know. I'm sorry. But there has to
be a better way. You don't... you
don't have family?

PETRA
I have a lot of family. None of
them will miss me.

TAYLOR
Don't be ridiculous. Just everyone
here would miss you.

Petra chews on her tongue.

PETRA
This is absurd.

She walks back to the campsite.

Taylor looks at Stella.

Beat.

STELLA
Shit.

TAYLOR
You said it.

STELLA
You really... you didn't know any
of this, and you were trying to
convince us all to do it?

TAYLOR
I just...

She tears up.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
I didn't want to go alone. I
couldn't do it.

Beat.

Stella laughs.

Taylor's shocked.

STELLA
God. You know, I think I liked you
better when you shouted insults at
me every time you saw me?

Taylor can't look at her, but Stella grabs her shoulders and
forces her to.

STELLA (CONT'D)

Actions have fucking consequences.
You'd think you of all people
would've learned that lesson, but
no! You were ready to kill all of
us, too!

Taylor collapses to the ground in tears.

STELLA (CONT'D)

You need to get your shit together.

Stella walks away.

Beat.

Taylor pulls out her phone. Tries to call home.

No signal.

She sobs.

INT. LEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Len's room hasn't gotten new decorations since she was about
5 years old. Pink, covered in horses.

She sits on her bed, staring at Stella's phone on the bed
next to her.

She chews on her tongue.

Pulls out her own phone.

INT./EXT. WYATT'S CAR - NIGHT

Wyatt drives a beat-up old Audi, his FRIEND in the passenger
seat.

Wyatt's phone DINGS.

WYATT

That might be them. Can you...?

He pulls out his phone, tosses it to his friend. His friend
takes it, reads it.

FRIEND

Nah, it's Len.

WYATT

What's she want?

INT. LEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Len gets a text from Wyatt. "SEND ME A TITTY PIC"

Len rolls her eyes. Calls.

INTERCUT BETWEEN LEN AND WYATT

Wyatt takes the phone from his friend.

WYATT

Yeah?

LEN

I'm serious.

WYATT

About what?

LEN

My text!

Wyatt gives his friend a sidelong glare.

WYATT

Jeff didn't read it to me. What's up?

LEN

Do you think Taylor's okay?

Wyatt raises his eyebrows. Is this a trap?

WYATT

I dunno. I guess?

LEN

She asked me a really weird favor, and I just... she's been really dung-heap lately, you know?

WYATT

Shit, babe, it's not like I've been hanging out with her. I got no idea.

He sighs. Pulls the car over.

WYATT (CONT'D)

No. You know what? She has seemed really weird to me lately. If you think so too, maybe it's not nothing. What's the favor?

LEN
So today she texts me out of the
blue...

INT. TAYLOR'S ROOM - NIGHT

The note is gone.

Cynthia paces around the room on her phone, terrified, but keeping a handle on it.

Andrew sits on the bed, note in his hand, Taylor's laptop on his lap, also on the phone.

ANDREW
That's right. Opal Lake Park.

CYNTHIA
No, Len, honey, you did the right
thing. I need to hang up now so I
can try to call her, okay?

ANDREW
(to Cynthia)
There's an ambulance on the way
there.

CYNTHIA
Everything's gonna be fine. Okay.
Okay. Bye.

Cynthia hangs up, dials frantically.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)
Oh god, oh god...

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Petra sits at the picnic table, grumbling.

Gil packs up the SUV.

Stella walks up. Sits down.

STELLA
So this was a joke.

PETRA
I knew it was a mistake. I knew the
entire time.

STELLA
Then why didn't you say anything?

Beat. Petra ignores her.

STELLA (CONT'D)
I left a note. It's not... they've probably already found it. Do you know how messed up my life is gonna be now?

GIL
Preaching to the choir.

PETRA
So is Taylor coming?

STELLA
Screw her.

Gil stops. Looks at Stella.

Beat.

PETRA
But... she's coming, right?

Stella looks at her.

Beat.

EXT. LAKESIDE PRECIPICE - NIGHT

It's a beautiful night out. The moon is full, the stars are shining... couldn't ask for a better night to kill yourself.

Taylor stands on the edge of the precipice. She carries the weights that are tied to her harness.

Tears streak her makeup. She sniffs, chokes back a sob.

She leans over the edge, looks into the water - she instinctively steps back, then forces herself to lean over again.

TAYLOR
Oh god.

Shouting in the distance behind her - she doesn't look, just scoots closer to the edge.

Fails to stop the next sob.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Oh god!

She looks forward, out towards the sparkling lake.

Closes her eyes.

Steps forward.

STELLA'S POV

Stella is close enough to see Taylor disappear and hear the SPLASH.

STELLA

TAYLOR!

She charges forward, leaps off of the precipice.

INT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

Taylor hangs underwater, holding her breath despite herself.

There's a SPLASH above her. She looks around, but it's too dark to see anything.

EXT. LAKESIDE PRECIPICE - NIGHT

Gil and Petra reach the precipice.

PETRA

What happened? Did she jump in?!

GIL

Taylor! Stella!

Down in the lake, Stella surfaces.

STELLA

I can't see anything!

Gil turns on the flashlight, throws it down to Stella.

PETRA

Will that work?

But Stella caught it and is already underwater.

INT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

Taylor starts to struggle. It hurts more than she expected.

A beam of light cuts through the water. She sees it, but it flickers out.

She can't take it anymore. She bends over, struggles with the rope.

She's fading, she can't untie it fast enough.

Her movements are sluggish.

She's almost gone as she gets the last knot and pushes to the surface.

EXT. LAKESIDE PRECIPICE - CONTINUOUS

Taylor bursts to the surface, gulps down air.

GIL

Taylor!

PETRA

Are you alright?

Taylor can't answer yet, busy breathing.

GIL

Where's Stella?

Taylor looks at him.

TAYLOR

(choked)

What?

PETRA

Stella's down there!

Gil jumps in, dives underwater.

Taylor clings to the rock wall, holds herself above water.

A long beat.

Gil resurfaces with a nearly unconscious Stella.

TAYLOR

Stella? Stella!

She helps Gil keep her afloat.

Sirens in the distance.

FADE TO BLACK

BEEPING

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Stella lies in a hospital bed.

STELLA'S MOM and dad are there, along with Taylor.

Everyone's sort of sitting around awkwardly. The mood isn't exactly cheery.

Taylor opens her mouth to say something, but then stops.

Beat.

Stella coughs. Her eyes crack open.

TAYLOR

Stella! Are you-

Stella's mom shoots Taylor a glare, pushes her aside to be close to Stella.

STELLA'S MOM

Stella, honey, are you okay?

Taylor gets up, backs away. Guilt is all over her face.

TAYLOR (V.O.)

Whatever, you're not really listening, I'm not gonna...

The voiceover coughs.

TAYLOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But I guess, just in case, um...

MONTAGE

- Taylor walks into her room. Everything's still a mess; she sees her note on the floor.

TAYLOR (V.O.)

I used to fantasize about going to a different college than you. I wanted to finally date someone that would never get me confused with someone else.

- Taylor walks down the hallway at school. Whispers, pitying looks.

TAYLOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 But now, I... sometimes, I look in
 the mirror, and I see you not me.
 Like, I'm the one getting us
 confused.

- She sits alone at lunch. She's not eating.

TAYLOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I don't think I'm ever really going
 to feel whole again.

Wyatt walks over, sits with her. Len follows. They talk to her, try to cheer her up.

TAYLOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 But I'm starting to feel like maybe
 I'm not broken.

- Taylor leans against the wall in her room, crying. Her parents come in and embrace her, and they all cry together.

TAYLOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And just because I feel lonely
 sometimes doesn't mean I'm alone.

- Taylor talks with Mr. Reed in his office. They stand. She somewhat reluctantly gives him a hug.

TAYLOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 It's not like anyone can replace
 you, but I'm realizing they don't
 need to.

- Taylor and Cynthia clean up Hannah's room together.

TAYLOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 You'll always be you, and they'll
 be them. And that's okay.

- Taylor, Wyatt, and Len eat lunch together. Stella walks by; they call her over, and she sits with them.

TAYLOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I've made a lot of mistakes in the
 last few months. But now, instead
 of wishing they didn't happen, I'm
 going to start trying to make
 amends.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Taylor stands in front of Hannah's grave. Andrew stands a short distance behind her, giving her space.

Taylor's eyes are wet, but she's not crying.

TAYLOR

I guess what I'm trying to say
is... you don't have to worry about
me. And if there is a heaven or
whatever, then one day we'll meet
up and swap all our stories and
stuff, but... not for a while.

One last deep breath.

She nods.

Walks back to her dad.

FADE TO BLACK

SUPER:

If you're thinking about suicide, are worried about a friend or loved one, or would like emotional support, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available 24/7 across the United States. 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

FADE OUT

ROLL CREDITS

THE END