

MOONSTONE RESCUE

"PILOT"

Written by

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OVER BLACK.

WOMAN (V.O.)
I'll start where we left off.

GIRL (V.O.)
No, let's go back to the beginning.

WOMAN (V.O.)
The beginning? But we're so close
to the end...

GIRL (V.O.)
I know. Endings make me sad.

FADE IN:

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

On the back of an uncovered horse-drawn wagon, a dozen
INDIGENOUS CHILDREN sit silently. Broken.

SUPER: California, 1896

INT./EXT. UNCOVERED WAGON - DAY (MOVING)

HENRIETTA (4) stares straight ahead with dried tears on her
face and two long braids down her back.

WOMAN (V.O.)
Your great-great grandmother was
only four years old when she was
taken from her tribe and given the
name Henrietta. The government
called it "assimilation."

As the wagon moves along, Henrietta notices an ORANGE CAT
hiding behind some brush. And the cat notices her, too.

EXT. ST. ROSALIA INDIAN SCHOOL - DAY

An imposing red brick building at the foothills of a valley,
surrounded by lush olive and oak trees.

In front, UNIFORMED INDIGENOUS KIDS march in formations.
Emotionless, focused, obedient. They've been assimilated.

A staff of NUNS and TEACHERS stand beside a sign that proudly
reads: ST. ROSALIA INDIAN SCHOOL.

The wagon carrying the children approaches. A steely-faced nun, SISTER BERNADETTE (30s), steps forward.

SISTER BERNADETTE
Remember: be compassionate but
firm. God knows they'll need both.

Once the wagon comes to a stop, the nuns spring into action to promptly usher out the new arrivals.

Henrietta is lifted off the wagon bed. She frowns at the FLESHY ADULT HAND that grabs and pulls her.

Without warning, Henrietta sinks her tiny teeth into the stranger's thumb. Hard. The owner of the thumb CRIES OUT.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

YOUNG GIRLS practice their sewing in silence. The SEWING TEACHER writes at her desk.

PRETEEN HENRIETTA, now 12, fusses with sloppy needlework in the back corner. Her short-cropped hair is hopelessly untamed, unladylike and unassimilated.

WOMAN (V.O.)
They did everything to make her
forget who she was. She learned
their language, manners, customs...

Henrietta fumbles with her needle, accidentally pokes herself. A tiny pool of blood forms on the pricked finger.

She closes her eyes. Inexplicably, she smears the blood across her forehead.

WOMAN (V.O.)
...but she never did fit in. Not
that she really tried.

A LITTLE GIRL sitting close by stares at Henrietta, clings to her rosary. Others take notice, frightened.

EXT. ST. ROSALIA INDIAN SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

The Sister Bernadette holds Henrietta by the neck over a bucket of water, vigorously scrubs her forehead with a cloth.

SISTER BERNADETTE
No more witchery, understand?

INT. GIRL'S DORMITORY - NIGHT

In bed, silent tears roll down Henrietta's red, raw face.

WOMAN (V.O.)

Henrietta cried not for the pain
she suffered, but for her parents
whose faces she couldn't recall.
The language she'd forgotten. She
didn't even remember her name, her
real name.

Amid the darkness, a LIGHT appears. Henrietta sits up,
startled.

HENRIETTA

Hello?

The light gets brighter, beckons her to follow. She gets out
of bed, chases it.

WOMAN (V.O.)

She didn't know what compelled her
to follow that light. It seemed
familiar, like an old friend.

EXT. ST. ROSALIA INDIAN SCHOOL - NIGHT

Outside, Henrietta follows the light under a large oak tree.
The light dims. For a moment, she stands in darkness.

The light returns, an ORANGE CAT in its center. Henrietta and
the cat make steady, unblinking eye contact.

WOMAN (V.O.)

Though the cat's mouth did not
move, she told Henrietta secrets.
Secrets of her ancestors. Of the
old ways. And the future, too. The
cat agreed to be her guide, always.

In the distance, the ANGRY MATRON holds a lantern. She spots
Henrietta under the oak tree.

ANGRY MATRON

HENRIETTA!

Henrietta whips around, eyes wide.

MAN (PRELAP)

More cat furry-tails?

INT. BEDROOM - DAY (PRESENT DAY)

ROBERT RHODES (30s) stands at the doorway with a tea tray.

He's got a snarky, irreverent smirk on his face but his bright puppy print veterinary scrubs betray his inner dork.

ROBERT
I said "furry-tails." Get it?

In bed, a frail and tired NORAH RHODES (30s). A hand-knitted cap covers her head. She manages to smile at her husband through her obvious fatigue.

NORAH
Yeah, we got it.

Norah holds a LEATHER SKETCHBOOK filled with handwritten notes and drawings. Snuggled close beside her and Robert's exuberant daughter, MAYA RHODES (12). Her wild, tightly-coiled red hair flies all over the place.

MAYA
It's not a fairytale, dad.

ROBERT
Nasty nuns, psychic cats. It's basically a Cinderella rip-off.

As Robert walks over with the tray, he NEARLY TRIPS.

The culprit: HENRIE THE CAT. Black with big yellow eyes, she stares up at Robert. Innocent. Robert doesn't buy it.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
This cat is always in my way!

NORAH
Robert, my love, have you considered that Henrie has been there for an hour and it is you who put yourself in her way?

ROBERT
Excellent logic, Professor Rhodes.

Robert sets the tray down. Kisses her, sweetly.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
How are you feeling?

NORAH
Great.

ROBERT
The doctor said you might be--

NORAH
(firm)
I'm great.

MAYA
Sit with us! We're at the part
where Grandma Henrietta escapes.

ROBERT
Everyone claims Pocahontas as an
ancestor. Why is that?

MAYA
Grandma Henrie is way cooler than
Pocahontas!

ROBERT
But at least there's evidence she
actually existed.

NORAH
Shut up, grumpy. Get in here.

ROBERT
My scrubs are dirty.

Norah and Maya grab both his arms. He's no match.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
Fine! Fine!

He gets into the bed. Henrie the cat jumps on his lap.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
I swear this cat has it in for me.

MAYA
She's not just a cat. She knows
things. Things we can't even see!

ROBERT
Like I said. Furry-tails.

NORAH
Dad doesn't get it, does he?

Norah winks at Maya. Henrie's powers are their secret.

ROBERT
Get what?

She ignores the question, turns the page of her sketchbook.

NORAH

"The angry nun grabbed Henrietta by the shoulders and shook her..."

INT. MAYA'S ROOM - DAY

Maya snoozes in bed. She's a bit older but her room looks like it belongs to a younger kid. Stuffed animals, childish posters, old drawings. Norah's sketchbook on the nightstand.

SUPER: TWO YEARS LATER

Light from a nearby window wakes Maya. She stretches and rolls over. When she opens her eyes, two HUGE YELLOW EYES stare back at her.

MAYA

Ahh!

Startled, Maya falls to the floor. Henrie the cat looks down at her from the edge of the bed.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Henrie, I love you but you've gotta stop doing that.

Maya stands and picks up the cat, holds her close.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Did you tell mom that I graduate 8th grade tomorrow?

Henrie blinks, her face adorable but ambiguous.

INT. RHODES HOME - STAIRCASE - DAY

Maya runs downstairs, fully dressed and Henrie at her heels. SOUL MUSIC blares from the kitchen.

KITCHEN

Maya's quirky grandma, JEAN RHODES (60s) carves a clay figurine of a voluptuous, nude woman. Jean's hips move to the music, her long locs swing down her back.

The eat-in kitchen doubles as her art studio. Intricate erotic sculptures sit on every flat surface.

Maya enters, opens the fridge for a snack.

MAYA
Morning Granny.

JEAN
Hey baby. You're up early.

MAYA
Gotta tell mom about graduation.

Jean smiles, represses concern. Maya heads to the door.

JEAN
Making any other stops?

MAYA
Like where?

JEAN
I dunno. Maybe wherever it is
you've been going after school.

MAYA
(lying)
I've been helping Jackie with her
valedictorian speech. I told you.

JEAN
Thought maybe you got a boo-thang
or something.

MAYA
"Boo-thang?" Ew.

Maya picks up Henrie, cringing and eager to leave and avoid further inquiries.

MAYA (CONT'D)
Hey, can you remind dad about
tomorrow? So he doesn't forget.

JEAN
Why would he forget?

MAYA
He forgot my birthday. And
Henrie's. And yours.

JEAN
It's that clinic. I told him to
hire help but you know how he gets.

MAYA
The whole town knows how he gets.

Jean stops sculpting to look Maya in the eye.

JEAN
You know he loves you, right?

MAYA
Sure he does.

JEAN
Love is a language. Everyone has
their own funky way of speaking it.

MAYA
Then dad speaks love in Pig Latin.

Jean can't help but to grin in agreement with Maya.

JEAN
That's my son but sometimes it's
like that boy talks pure gibberish.

INT. DELI - DAY

Robert stands in the line of a busy deli shop. He's in his own world, rocking out to INDUSTRIAL HIP HOP that blasts loudly from his headphones.

He's less polished, less affable than we remember him. Certainly scruffier, too.

Robert ignores the glaring eyes of others around him as he lip syncs the song's unintelligible lyrics. It's getting to the good part when-

The music stops.

Pissed, he looks at his phone. Incoming call from: HELL. He rejects the call, restarts the music.

HELL calls again. He rejects it again. The music resumes.

Behind Robert, an IRKED CUSTOMER taps his shoulder.

IRKED CUSTOMER
You mind turning the music down?

Robert feigns confusion.

ROBERT
What?

The customer motions to their ears. Now Robert feigns comprehension, produces a phony smile.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
No, but thanks for the offer.

Robert turns around where he's finally next in line. He takes off his headphones.

DELI CASHIER
What can I get you?

ROBERT
Hold on, let me look.

Robert reads the menu, carefully considers his options.
ANNOYED CUSTOMERS in line roll their eyes, GRUMBLE and GROAN.

INT. RHODES VET CLINIC - LOBBY - DAY

CLIENTS and PETS sit in the waiting area. They're growing impatient.

MRS. SILVA (70s), quintessential cat lady, approaches the front desk. Her crated feline GEMMA in tow.

At the desk sits overworked vet tech/secretary/crisis manager ZARA (25). She smiles, anticipates Mrs. Silva's complaints.

ZARA
I am so sorry Mrs. Silva. Dr.
Rhodes should be here any minute.

MRS. SILVA
You said that thirty minutes ago.

ZARA
If you want, I can reschedule your
appointment.

MRS. SILVA
Gemma can't afford to be
rescheduled!

ZARA
I'm sure Gemma will be fine.

MRS. SILVA
Does this look fine to you?

She holds up the crate. The scrawny cat struggles to breathe.

The front door opens. Robert enters, mouth full and breakfast sandwich in hand. Clients glare as he walks past them.

Zara stands up, follows Robert into his office.

ROBERT'S OFFICE

Robert quickly puts on a white coat over his scrubs. Zara represses frustration.

ZARA
I tried calling you. We had some
clients leave.

He hands her the remainder of his food.

ROBERT
Can you put that in the fridge?

ZARA
Robert...

ROBERT
Yeah?

Zara wants to say something. She thinks better of it.

ZARA
Never mind.

INT. RHODES VET CLINIC - EXAM ROOM - DAY

Robert stands across from Mrs. Silva with test results.

ROBERT
Acute kidney failure.
(beat)
I wish I had better news but she's
beyond help at this point.

MRS. SILVA
But--why--how?

ROBERT
Could be a number of things.
Pesticides, meds, certain plants...

He shrugs, oddly cold and impenetrable. He's definitely not the same Robert who once wore puppy print scrubs.

MRS. SILVA
It's not possible. Check again.

ROBERT
You're welcome to get a second
opinion elsewhere.

MRS. SILVA
The next vet is miles away. I don't
have a car.

Robert nods, looks at his watch.

MRS. SILVA (CONT'D)
So what's next?

ROBERT
Gemma's 16 years old with failing
organs. There is no "next."

Mrs. Silva's eyes go wide as she comprehends.

MRS. SILVA
Euthanasia?

ROBERT
It's your choice. But if it were
me, I wouldn't let her suffer like
this for another minute.

INT. RHODES VET CLINIC - LOBBY - DAY

Mrs. Silva returns to the lobby, empty-handed and teary-eyed.

ZARA
(calls out)
Daryl Ingalls? Mr. Rhodes will see
Misty now.

DARYL INGALLS (50s) stands up. A stiff old German Shepherd,
MISTY, at his side. Daryl approaches Mrs. Silva.

DARYL
Gemma, she--?

MRS. SILVA
(tearful)
He wasn't even nice about it.

She walks out of the clinic. Robert enters the lobby.

ROBERT
Daryl, you coming?

Daryl looks down at his beloved Misty for a moment.

DARYL
Hell no.

ROBERT

Excuse me?

DARYL

For the last two years we've all been understanding and patient with you and your antics. But this is the last straw for me. You're not touching a hair on Misty's head.

ROBERT

I'm lost. What's the issue?

DARYL

Sure wish someone would come along and put you outta business.

Daryl and Misty storm out. Robert looks at Zara, puzzled.

EXT. MCGREGOR FARM - DAY

Dingy, poorly maintained structures scattered across several acres of land. The property is redeemed by its old-growth trees and pretty landscape.

EXT. MCGREGOR FARM - STABLE - DAY

Neglected, frustrated horses NEIGH in their stalls.

LUPE MCGREGOR (30s) an Afro-Indigenous woman with long dark hair, struggles to remove a shoe from a sassy horse.

She pulls and pries the shoe clinches with rusty clinch cutters. Takes a rubber mallet to hit the clinch. BAM!

The cutters break.

LUPE

Dammit.

Lupe tosses them to the side, pets the horse gently.

LUPE (CONT'D)

We'll get these off you soon.

EXT. MCGREGOR FARM - MAIN HOUSE - DAY

Lupe approaches the front door of an old but charming country home. An absurdly cute fox runs up to her, excited. This is PUMPKIN. She picks him up.

Pumpkin WHIMPERS.

LUPE
I know. I'm hungry too.

INT. MCGREGOR FARM - MAIN HOUSE - DAY

Inside, a dozen half-packed boxes sit around. It's hard to tell if someone's moving in or moving out.

KITCHEN

Pumpkin looks up at Lupe as she opens a cabinet, takes out a can of dog food. The last one.

Lupe opens the fridge. It's bare. She looks at Pumpkin, distressed.

LUPE
You think Postmates delivers here?
(beat)
Yeah, I don't think so either.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

Maya leans against a gravestone. She wears binoculars around her neck as she reads her mother's sketchbook. Henrie watches squirrels nearby.

MAYA
"...as the days went by, Henrietta grew more and more lonely until one day, the cat showed her how to escape the vile school."

HENRIE THE CAT
(longingly)
MEUUUURRR!

The cat stares up at a PRETTY BIRD in a tree. Maya scrambles to her feet, puts the binoculars to her eyes.

MAYA
It's a rose-breasted grosbeak!

Behind her, the gravestone reveals: NORAH RHODES / BELOVED MOTHER, WIFE & WATCHER OF BIRDS.

MAYA (CONT'D)
She's listening!

Leaves CRUNCH under clumsy footsteps. The bird flies away.

Maya turns to see MAVERICK GRAYSON (14). Blonde and large for his age, he's a gentle giant disguised as a baby frat boy.

MAYA (CONT'D)

You shouldn't creep up on people like that, Maverick.

MAVERICK

What were you looking at?

MAYA

Just an extremely rare rose-breasted grosbeak that I'll probably never see again.

MAVERICK

I don't see it.

Maya can barely conceal irritation.

MAYA

Yeah, 'cause it flew away.

MAVERICK

Oh.

(beat)

I came to apologize for the other day. It wasn't cool how Kyle and Doug locked you in the bathroom. They're insecure bullies.

MAYA

You know what they say, birds of a feather flock together.

Maverick thinks about this for a moment.

MAVERICK

That's actually really deep.

MAYA

Why are you apologizing for your friends anyway?

MAVERICK

Because...you deserve an apology.

Maverick is earnest, bashful. He clearly has a *thing* for Maya. Unfortunately, she knows it. It's awkward.

MAYA

I have to go meet my friends now...

MAVERICK

In town? I'm meeting my dad there.
We can walk together. It's perfect.

MAYA

(grimacing)

Great.

INT. OAK BLUFFS TOWN CENTER - DAY

Maya, Maverick and Henrie arrive to a street adorned with colorful shops, old buildings. It's quaint, charming, magical. Right out of a storybook.

They stop in front of FOLEY'S ICE CREAM PARLOR. Maya puts Henrie on the ground.

MAYA

Don't go far, k?

INT. FOLEY'S ICE CREAM PARLOR - DAY

Maya and Maverick enter the shop packed with rowdy, summer-ready kids.

JACKIE ANDREWS (14) waves to Maya. Jackie is witty with micro braids and thick glasses. Standing on a chair across from her is the hyperactive, animated HUGO FUENTES (14).

Maya beelines to their table. Maverick trails close behind.

JACKIE

Your ice cream melted.

HUGO

(burps)

Don't worry, it didn't go to waste.

Jackie's eyes narrow at Maverick.

JACKIE

What's he doing here?

MAYA

Um, this is Maverick.

Maverick extends a friendly hand. Jackie and Hugo ignore it.

JACKIE

Duh. Why's he here?

MAVERICK
You're Jackie and Hugo, right?

HUGO
He knows our names!

JACKIE
I'm sure his buddies told him all about us.

MAVERICK
I'm not like those guys. Our parents are friends but I'm realizing we don't have anything in common. And the older I get, the more I see that they aren't the kind of people I want to be around.
(to Maya)
Birds of of a feather, right?

He turns to wink at Maya.

JACKIE
Can't tell if this vulnerability and self-awareness is an act but I lowkey kinda like it.

Maverick takes this as permission to sit down at the table.

HUGO
And who's that?

They all turn to look out the window.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Across the street, Lupe nervously enters the butcher's shop.

INTERCUT BETWEEN FOLEY'S ICE CREAM AND ACROSS THE STREET

JACKIE
You don't know about Tom McGregor's widow?

HUGO
I didn't even know he had a wife.

JACKIE
Yeah. Her name is Lupe and apparently she's the one who killed him.

ALL

What?!

JACKIE

Not with her bare hands.

(low)

With magic. She's a witch.

HUGO

You're lying.

JACKIE

My mom went to school with her. She lived on the Wampanoag reservation before transferring to Oak Bluffs High. Apparently, she used to carry potions in her backpack.

MAYA

So what?

JACKIE

If someone got on her bad side, they'd throw up blood or something the next day.

HUGO

Cool.

INT. MCGREGOR HOME - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Lupe and TOM MCGREGOR argue.

JACKIE (V.O.)

Right after high school, Lupe married Tom. He treated her really bad. Everyone knew it.

Tom grabs Lupe's wrist, hard and menacing.

JACKIE (V.O.)

She used to come into town with bruises and stuff.

EXT. OAK BLUFFS TOWN CENTER - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Lupe walks down the street. TOWNSPEOPLE stare at her, whispering amongst themselves.

JACKIE (V.O.)

Pretty soon she stopped showing up in public at all.

She pulls down her sleeve to conceal bruising on her arm.

EXT. MCGREGOR FARM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Tearful and furious, Lupe loads a pickup truck with her belongings. Tom runs out of the house, grabs her by the shoulders. She SHOVES HIM him off.

Tom suddenly grasps at his chest in pain, keels over. Lupe stares at him coldly and gets in the vehicle, drives off.

JACKIE (V.O.)
She finally left him for good and
went back to the reservation.

INT. FOLEY'S ICE CREAM PARLOR - DAY (BACK TO PRESENT)

The kids hang on Jackie's words.

JACKIE
For years, no one heard anything
about Lupe McGregor. Tom was never
the same. And now that he's dead,
she's back to take over the farm.
He left her everything.

MAVERICK
But why?

MAYA
Maybe he felt guilty. Sometimes
people change after losing someone.

HUGO
Yeah, look what happened to your
dad after your mom--

Oops. He stops, realizes he's stepped into taboo territory.

MAVERICK
Your cat obviously likes her.

They look out the window again to see Lupe petting Henrie.

AXEL GRAYSON (late 30's), a bulky ex-UFC fighter stuffed into an expensive suit, approaches Lupe in a familiar way.

MAYA
Maverick, how does your dad know
Lupe?

MAVERICK

Dad's been trying to buy the
McGregor farm since forever.

MAYA

Why? He already owns half the town.

Lupe and Axel's conversation heats up. It's an argument. He
gestures wildly. She gestures back before storming off.

JACKIE

Must be 'roid rage.

MAVERICK

I should go. See you guys at
graduation, okay?

Maverick stands up and scurries out the shop.

HUGO

I like him.

MAYA

It's his dad I'm worried about.

Maya stares out the window, concern on her face.

INT. SPORTS BAR - DAY

Robert chugs a beer at a mostly empty bar. Next to him is
JOSH ROLLINS (30's) professor, mensch. Robert's only friend.

JOSH

Her name's Debbie.

ROBERT

Do you hate her?

JOSH

She is in the math department but
no, I think she's quite nice.

ROBERT

You must hate her if you're trying
to set her up with me.

JOSH

You were quite the catch, once.
Just channel that guy.

ROBERT

I'm undateable, Josh. By design.

JOSH

I guess making old ladies cry is taking up all your time.

(beat)

Yes, I heard about Mrs. Silva's cat.

ROBERT

What about Mrs. Silva's cat?

JOSH

Everyone's talking about it on the MyNeighbor app.

Josh hands Robert his phone. He scrolls the message board.

ROBERT

"Rhodes Clinic used to be amazing. Now it seems Dr. Rhodes gets off on killing pets. Oak Bluffs citizens must boycott."

JOSH

It's a small town, Rob. Something like this could end your business.

ROBERT

Sometimes animals have to be put down. Sorry, it happens everyday.

JOSH

Maybe you could be nice about it?

ROBERT

I'm efficient and I'm honest. I think that's pretty nice.

Robert takes a deep swig of his beer as Josh facepalms.

JOSH

What happened to that grief support group you joined?

ROBERT

Sad sacks with sob stories.

JOSH

Thought that was the point.

ROBERT

Look, I have problems but these people had problems. It was depressing. Do you want me to--

He puts fingers to head like a gun, pulls the "trigger."

JOSH
Dude, that's so wrong.

ROBERT
Another beer?

JOSH
I gotta go. It's finals week.

ROBERT
You're tenured now. Loosen up.

Josh puts a bill down on the bar counter, picks up his bag.

JOSH
It's 2PM and I'm an adult.
(beat)
Norah wouldn't like this guy you're
pretending to be.

ROBERT
(under breath)
Well she's dead, so...

As Josh leaves, Lupe enters. She's flustered from her encounter with Axel. She sits at the far end of the bar.

Robert watches her, intrigued. The BARTENDER walks over to take Lupe's order.

LUPE
Just water, please.

ROBERT
Water? At a bar?

LUPE
Why not?

ROBERT
It's a bar.

LUPE
Water is the foundation of life.

ROBERT
But a stiff drink makes life
tolerable.

LUPE
Because it dulls the senses? Kills
brain cells? Numbs pain?

ROBERT
All of the above.

Lupe looks into his eyes, reading him.

LUPE
You remind me of someone.

ROBERT
Funny, I was thinking the same thing about you.

LUPE
Who do I remind you of?

ROBERT
Can't put my finger on it.

LUPE
Too bad. Must be the alcohol.

ROBERT
Must be. So who am I?

LUPE
Pagliacci.

ROBERT
Pagliacci. The sad clown?

LUPE
A smile that hides a broken heart.

Robert is taken aback by Lupe's casual intensity.

ROBERT
Well, that took a depressing yet
oddly accurate turn.
(beat)
I'm Robert, by the way.

LUPE
I know.

Lupe finishes her water and stands to go.

ROBERT
What's your name...?

But Lupe is already out the door.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
And people say I'm rude.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The sun is just beginning to set. Maya walks along a tree-shrouded road, carries a bag of groceries. Henrie the cat follows along.

They arrive at a shabby, splintered driveway gate. A lopsided sign reads: MCGREGOR FARM. Maya pushes the gate open, enters.

EXT. MCGREGOR FARM - ENCLOSURES - DAY

Lupe feeds VARIOUS SMALL ANIMALS as she holds a phone between her ear and shoulder.

LUPE
(on phone)
Mom, please stop worrying about me.

EXT. AQUINNAH WAMPANOAG POWWOW GROUNDS - DAY

DEBORAH WINSLOW (60s) warm, humble, holds a phone to her ear as she oversees VOLUNTEERS fumbling with picnic tables.

DEBORAH
Hey! Those tables belong on the
other side! The other side!

They shrug, confused. Deborah returns to the call.

DEBORAH (CONT'D)
You sound stressed. How am I
supposed to not worry?

INTERCUT LUPE/DEBORAH

Lupe opens the crate door of an OPOSSUM FAMILY. The MAMA POSSUM has a bandage on her back leg, HISSES at Lupe.

LUPE
No, you're stressed. And that's
stressing me out.

DEBORAH
Of course I'm stressed. This year's
been a pain. I could use your help
now that I'm on the Council.

LUPE
I think you can handle it.

Lupe's eyes widen at the sight of a LETHARGIC BABY POSSUM.

DEBORAH

And I worry about you in that
house, all those memories -

LUPE

(abrupt)

Sorry, I have to go.

INT. LUPE'S EXAM ROOM - DAY

Lupe brings the possum into a makeshift exam room, places it on the bed. It's a humble space compared to Robert's sterile clinic, but she has everything she needs here.

She examines the animal's eyes, mouth...it doesn't look good.

EXT. MCGREGOR FARM - MAIN HOUSE - DAY

Maya knocks on the front door. No answer. She knocks again, harder. The half-closed door CREAKS open. Henrie runs in.

MAYA

Henrie! Get back here!

INT. MCGREGOR FARM - MAIN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Maya walks into the house. Henrie is nowhere to be found.

MAYA

(calling out)

Hello?

She takes a step inside.

INT. LUPE'S EXAM ROOM - DAY

Lupe searches through her cabinets, looks through various jars, canisters and herbal remedies.

The baby possum's breathing grows shallow...

INT. LUPE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME

Maya is fascinated by Lupe's house, looks closely at the various Wampanoag tribal artifacts, ceremonial objects, garb, books, photographs.

She picks up a BROCHURE for the Grief Relief Support Group.

LUPE (O.S.)
What are you doing here?

Maya whips around. Lupe stands behind her with the baby possum.

MAYA
Door was open.
(lifts grocery bag)
Got carrots and apples for the horses.

INT. LUPE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Lupe uses a mortar and pestle to grind herbs to a powder. The baby possum lies on the counter. Maya watches close by.

LUPE
Hold him.

Maya hesitates but Lupe smiles, reassuring. Maya picks up the possum with care.

MAYA
What's wrong with it?

LUPE
I don't know yet. Could be a flu.
Or he might be playing possum.

MAYA
That's a real thing?

LUPE
Sometimes opossums get so afraid
and overwhelmed, they just freeze.

MAYA
A trauma response.

LUPE
Exactly.

Lupe looks at Maya, admires her knowledge.

MAYA
Everyone's saying you're a witch.

LUPE
Typical. Predictable.

MAYA

They called grandma Henrietta a witch too.

LUPE

"They" tend to do that. Easier to use scary labels than try to understand things you don't understand.

(beat)

I met your dad today.

Suddenly nervous, Maya sets the possum down on a towel.

LUPE (CONT'D)

You haven't told him, have you?

MAYA

He's never around for me to tell.

LUPE

I've loved having your help around the farm these last few weeks. But it's important that he knows you come here. That was part of our deal.

MAYA

This place is so magical. I don't want to ruin it. Dad hates magic. Always has.

Lupe mixes the herbs with water, stirring gently.

LUPE

Tell him. Or I'll have to.

Maya nods but seems doubtful of her own resolve.

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Families pack the seats as the eighth grade sits on stage. Jackie stands at the podium, halfway through her speech.

JACKIE

As we turn the page on this next chapter, I'm reminded of what Slick told Lieutenant Starbuck in season 4 of *Battlestar Galactica*.

Maya and Hugo sit together in their graduation gowns. They beam with pride at Jackie.

Behind them, STIFFLED GUFFAWS from boneheaded classmates DOUG and KYLE (14).

KYLE

Why is she talking about Starbucks?

Maya turns around, glares.

JACKIE

"You may feel like hell. But sometimes, lost is where you need to be. Just because you don't know your direction, doesn't mean you don't have one."

(dramatic pause)

Thank you.

CHEERS from the crowd of parents as she returns to her seat. The school PRINCIPAL steps up to the podium.

PRINCIPAL

Please give it up for our class valedictorian, Jackie Andrews!

Maya and Hugo enthusiastically clap. Doug leans over to Hugo.

DOUG

How is your friend valedictorian but you're in special ed?

Maya elbows Doug in the chin, causing his teeth to CHATTER.

KYLE

Whoa dude. She got you good.

DOUG

(to Maya)

Your ass is grass, weirdo.

IN THE AUDIENCE SEATS

Robert sits next to Jean. He's dozed off. His face twitches, his breath irregular.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY (DREAM)

Norah is in bed, thin and sickly. Tubes going out of her nose and mouth. The heart monitor BEEPS, unusually loud.

Robert approaches Norah, slow. He touches her hand.

NORAH
Please. It hurts. Make it stop.

Frightened, Robert pulls back, turns away and runs.

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - DAY (BACK TO REALITY)

Jean shakes Robert's arm until he opens his eyes.

JEAN
Wake up. Maya's walking.

On stage, the Principal hands Maya her diploma. Dazed and still shaken from his dream, Robert joins in the applause.

INT. RECEPTION ROOM - NIGHT

PARENTS and STUDENTS mingle, pose for pictures, share laughs.

Jean tries to take a photo of Maya and Robert.

JEAN
Smile, Robert. Please?

Robert's miserable expression morphs until he manages to pull his lips from his teeth, producing a grotesque, painful, fake smile.

JEAN (CONT'D)
Forget it.
(to Maya)
I'm so proud of you.

ROBERT
Me too.

MAYA
So is mom.

ROBERT
What?

MAYA
Henrie told her about it. And guess what? We saw a rose-breasted grosbeak at her grave.

ROBERT
So what?

MAYA
It's a sign she's listening.

ROBERT
Maya, your mom is dead.

MAYA
Yes, but not really.

ROBERT
She's dead.

MAYA
But dad, Mom always said she'd talk
to us through the birds--

ROBERT
(loud)
No, Maya. Grow up!

JEAN
Robert...

A few bystanders turn to look.

ROBERT
I'm going to the bathroom.

He walks away. Embarrassed and hurt, Maya represses the tears
that fill her eyes. Jean embraces her.

INT. SCHOOL BATHROOM - NIGHT

Robert splashes his face under a running faucet. Washes away
the shame.

Axel exits one of the stalls, joins him at the row of sinks.

AXEL
Don't you hate these things?

ROBERT
It's for the kids I guess.

AXEL
I keep meaning to bring my son's
parrot by the clinic.

ROBERT
Oh yeah?

AXEL
It pulls out its own feathers and
squawks all damn day.
(imitating parrot)
Eeehhhk! Ahhhnnnn! Can't stand it.

ROBERT
(disinterested)
Sure, bring him by.

AXEL
I like the way you do business.
Straightforward. No-nonsense. Not
everyone's cup of tea. Happens to
be mine, though.

Robert puts his hand under the dryer as hot air BLOWS OUT.
Axel doesn't wash his hands, stands close to Robert.

AXEL (CONT'D)
(loud, over dryer)
Gonna be tough with the new
competition, though.

ROBERT
What do you mean?

AXEL
Tom McGregor's widow is opening a
new clinic. All-natural, holistic,
yadda yadda. Hippie crap.

The dryer finally stops.

AXEL (CONT'D)
You know, before he died, Tom was
gonna sell that farm to me.

ROBERT
I heard about that. Also heard you
were trying to rip him off.

AXEL
Rip him off? He'd have been lucky
to get five figures for that dump.

ROBERT
Can't beat the location though,
right? Isn't that why you want it?

Axel smirks, ambiguous. Robert opens the door to leave.

AXEL
For the sake of your family, you
might wanna consider how deeply
unpopular you are in this town.

Axel pats Robert on the shoulder.

AXEL (CONT'D)
Our interests might align more than
you think. I'll see you next week
about that bird.

He walks out of the bathroom ahead of Robert.

INT. RECEPTION ROOM - NIGHT

Robert looks around for Maya and Jean. They're nowhere to be found. He stands in the middle of the room of people, alone.

INT. MCGREGOR FARM - MAIN HOUSE - NIGHT

Lupe drinks tea on the sofa. Pumpkin is curled up in his bed close by. The baby possum sleeps next to her.

The possum's muscles TWITCH. Lupe holds her breath. It twitches again, its feet move furiously until finally, it sits up. Happy and alert.

LUPE
You're alive, baby, you're alive!

Relieved, she pets the possum's little head.

INT. MCGREGOR FARM - ENCLOSURES - NIGHT

Lupe gently places the baby possum in the crate with its mother and siblings. Looks on as they're happily reunited.

EXT. MCGREGOR FARM - NIGHT

The gates of the farm SQUEAK as they're pushed open and closed by the wind. Lupe approaches the gate with a bright lantern in one hand and a can of red paint in the other.

Smiling, Lupe dips an old paintbrush into the paint, draws a thick line across the letters of the McGregor Farm sign. Below it, she begins to paint new letters:

MOONSTONE RESCUE.

ACROSS THE STREET

Axel sits in his black BMW. Stares longingly at the farm. Glares with disgust at Lupe who doesn't notice him.

He takes a moment but seems to make up his mind about something, an expression of determination crossing his face before he drives off into the night.

INT. MAYA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maya sits up in bed, flips through the pages of Norah's sketchbook. But she's too distracted to pay attention.

FOOTSTEPS in the hallway followed by A KNOCK at her door.

ROBERT (O.S.)

Maya?

Maya almost responds. But instead, she reaches over to her lamp and turns off the light.

INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Exhausted, Robert collapses onto a futon with dingy, yellowed sheets and a thin blanket.

His eyes are only closed for a moment before he hears SOFT, BROKEN-HEARTED SOBS from the next room. Maya. Robert sits up as if prepared to go to her, but...

He reaches for his headphones and puts them over his ears. LOUD MUSIC drown out the sounds of his daughter's crying.

INT. MAYA'S ROOM - SAME

The moonlight illuminates the tears that streak down Maya's face as she lies in bed.

A BRIGHT LIGHT fills the room. Maya stops crying and sits up.

We can't see what she sees but whatever it is, its brightness causes her to squint and put a hand up to her eyes. She continues to squint into the light until her eyes widen in amazement.

MAYA

Mom?

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Henrie the cat prowls the moonlit streets, her movements quick and alert.

The soft sound of TCH-TCH-TCH echoes in the quiet night.

Mrs. Silva appears in her doorway, a silver dish in hand, beckoning.

MRS. SILVA
Tch-tch-tch!

Henrie meows softly and approaches, her curiosity piqued.

Mrs. Silva places the dish on the ground. Henrie eagerly laps up the cream inside.

MRS. SILVA (CONT'D)
Good kitty.
(and then)
Good Gemma.

She scoops Henrie into her arms.

MRS. SILVA (CONT'D)
Come on, Gemma. Let's get you warm
inside.

With a final glance around the silent street, Mrs. Silva retreats indoors, closing the door behind her.

END OF PILOT

MOONSTONE RESCUE

"Episode 2"

Written by

Dominique Mouton

INT. ST. ROSALIA INDIAN SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Henrietta stands in the corner of the room, holds a stack of books above her head. Her hair is freshly butchered and shorter than ever. She winces as her arms tremble...

SISTER BERNADETTE (O.S.)
Straighten your arms, Henrietta.

SUPER: ST. ROSALIA INDIAN SCHOOL, 1905

The STUDENTS in the classroom keep their eyes fixed on the hymn books at their desks, avoiding even a glance at Henrietta.

NORAH (V.O.)
After the night by the oak tree,
the grownups at St. Rosalia's
refused to let Henrietta out of
their sight. They were harder on
her than ever.

Sister Bernadette, stiff and severe, walks slowly down each aisle. The frightening CLICK-CLACK of her shoes hit the wooden floor.

SISTER BERNADETTE
Leave the Indian and save the
child. That is what we are called
to do for you all.

She steps closer to Henrietta, leans in and whispers:

SISTER BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
And I do intend to save you from
that wicked savage within.

Henrietta pushes the books up higher, her arms trembling violently now but her gaze steady. Defiant.

INT. CLOSET - DAY

A tired and haggard Henrietta sits in a dark closet. A RAY OF LIGHT from outside enters a crack in the wall and touches her face. She looks up with renewed resolve.

NORAH (V.O.)
Before long, Henrietta stopped
talking altogether.

Sister Bernadette opens the door and pulls Henrietta out. She's surprised - then satisfied - to see a blank look on her face.

INT. GIRLS' DORMITORY - NIGHT

The dormitory MATRON scans the room where the children sleep. Henrietta, too, sleeps peacefully.

NORAH (V.O.)
As she seemingly became pacified,
the nuns gave up on trying to break
her, satisfied enough by her
silence.

After another glance in Henrietta's direction, the Matron turns to leave.

NORAH (V.O.)
The orange cat hadn't returned and
Henrietta was now more alone than
ever. And yet, she was at peace.
She finally understood her purpose.

Henrietta's eyes open wide, a slight smile on her face.

MONTAGE - DAILY LIFE AT ST. ROSALIA

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

A MALE TEACHER holds up a leather strap and brings it down on the open the palm of a SMALL GIRL. The child winces, holds back tears.

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

The room is now empty and the small child sits alone at her desk, tears stream down her face. Henrietta walks over to her, reaches out a hand and smiles. The girl beams, smiles back.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Quiet Children eat at tables. A STERN NUN narrows her eyes at a YOUNG BOY who uses a utensil incorrectly. She beelines towards him, takes away his food - leaving him with nothing.

Henrietta takes the bread off her plate and puts it on his.

INT. GIRL'S DORMITORY - NIGHT

A TEEN GIRL lies in bed shivering from the cold. Henrietta tip-toes with an extra blanket and places it over the her.

Frightened, the girl shakes her head "no." But relief washes over her as she stops shivering.

END MONTAGE

INT. GIRLS' DORMITORY - NIGHT

The dormitory is bathed in moonlight. Henrietta kneels in the center of the circle, surrounded by the OTHER CHILDREN - each clutches a small offering: a feather, a button, a stone.

NORAH (V.O.)

By showing the others compassion
and solidarity, Henrietta had won
their trust. So much so, they
forgot they had called her a witch
not so long ago.

Henrietta holds a sharp needle. She pricks her finger, lets a drop of blood fall onto a smooth stone in the center.

The children watch, wide-eyed. One by one, they add their offerings to the circle. A hush falls over the room as Henrietta raises her hands, palms open to the sky.

Everyone closes their eyes, MURMURING unintelligible prayers.

A FAINT HUM VIBRATES through the walls, growing louder. The children open their eyes, startled as a soft glow appears in the center of the circle.

The glow intensifies and expands into A BALL OF SHIMMERING LIGHT that pulses with warmth.

Henrietta looks up, her eyes glisten with tears.

NORAH (V.O.)

Finally, they had seen it too. And
it was at that moment that
Henrietta learned the words that
would free them all -

Henrietta wordlessly mouths words we can't understand...

EXT. MOONSTONE RESCUE - PIG PEN - DAY (PRESENT DAY)

Maya slams Norah's book closed. She sits on a bale of hay as Lupe dumps homemade pig feed into trays. Three very big and very delighted PIGS greedily grunt as they scarf down their lunch.

Henrie the cat and Pumpkin look on from the other side of the fence.

MAYA

And it happened to me two nights ago, just like how Henrietta saw. You believe me, right?

LUPE

You kidding? I've seen crazier things. Who am I to deny you a giant ball of light?

MAYA

Wish I knew what Henrietta said. Like, the exact words.

LUPE

Do you know who Henrietta's people were? Might be a good start.

MAYA

Chumash, I think. Mom researched it a little but I don't know for sure.

LUPE

I could help you look into it, if you wanted me to.

Thrilled, Maya's eyes light up.

MAYA

Really?

LUPE

Sure. A friend of mine works with the Aquinnah tribal council. He's a genealogist — I could ask him to help you look into it.

MAYA

Thank you, thank you!

She stands, jumps up and down. For a moment, she seems to be a much younger child. Her infectious excitement brings a genuine smile to Lupe's face.

Maya squats next to one of the pigs, pets him as he eats. Lupe opens a bale of hay, spreads it across the muddy pen.

MAYA (CONT'D)

What was it like growing up in Aquinnah?

LUPE

I loved being close to my family
and culture. It's very beautiful
there and everyone knows each other
and works together. And we just
started growing pawpaws there -

MAYA

Pawpaws?

LUPE

Oh my God, they're divine. They're
these little fruits that taste like
banana - but so much better! - and
you can make them into pies. My mom
makes the best pawpaw pie.

For a moment, Lupe is lost in happy thought.

LUPE (CONT'D)

It was wonderful, really.

MAYA

So why would you come back here?

Lupe's smile fades slightly. She turns back to her work.

LUPE

Grab me a hay fork, would you?

Maya hops off the hay bale and goes to fetch the fork.

They hear a CAR PULLING UP out front. Lupe opens the pen,
runs to see who it is. Maya follows behind.

EXT. MOONSTONE RESCUE ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

A red car parks haphazardly, skids slightly in the gravel.

MAYA

It's Ms. Kent. She was my math
teacher.

MEGAN KENT (30s) jumps out of the car as Lupe and Maya
approach. Her face is pale, her movements frantic.

MEGAN

Are you McGregor's widow?

LUPE

My name is Lupe.

MEGAN

Lupe, please, I need your help.

Megan points to the backseat of her car. A GOLDEN RETRIEVER WHINES and YELPS. Her left back leg visibly mangled.

Lupe immediately opens the door, examines the dog carefully. Maya shadows her, wide-eyed.

LUPE

What happened?

MEGAN

She got out of the yard. A car hit her and kept going.

LUPE

This is an animal sanctuary. I'm not a vet...

MEGAN

Please. Daryl Ingalls told me how you helped his dog. Said he'd trust you with his own life.

LUPE

That was a one-time thing.

MEGAN

I'm begging you. Please.

LUPE

What's her name?

MEGAN

Fiona.

Fiona WHIMPERS as Lupe prods her lightly.

LUPE

Fiona's leg is broken but there doesn't seem to be internal damage. I'll need to take her inside.

Maya steps forward, ready to assist.

MAYA

I'll help you carry her.

EXT. RHODES HOME - DAY

Robert and Josh load heavy boxes into Josh's old van parked in the driveway.

Robert struggles to lift one of Jean's large clay sculptures - an abstract carved man contorted around a woman's nude body. Robert grimaces in pain, grabs at his lower back.

ROBERT
Geez, that weighs a ton.

JOSH
You're still sleeping on that old futon, aren't you?

ROBERT
Who told you that?

JOSH
Hate to break it you - you're not the man of mystery you think you are. Under eye bags, obvious back pain, snarkiness at level 10...

Jean walks out, carries another box.

JEAN
It's why he's going back to grief counseling.

She hands the box to Josh.

JEAN (CONT'D)
Careful with this one.

JOSH
Yes, ma'am.

ROBERT
Ma, I told you. It's a cult.

JEAN
And I told you to get your stuff together ASAP. Talk to someone about - *you know* - for Mary.

JOSH
It's like Shakespeare said: "Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak knits up the o-er wrought heart and bids it break."

JEAN
Oh, I like that.

ROBERT
First of all, Shakespeare sucks.

Mrs. Silva walks by the trio. She GLARES INTENSELY at Robert as she passes. Jean waves, friendly.

JEAN
How ya doing Mrs. Silva?

MRS. SILVA
Tired and old.

JEAN
In that case, allow me to formally invite you to my exhibition. Bring a friend if you want.

Jean hands her a flier displaying nude clay bodies in erotic poses. Mrs. Silva hands the flier back, disgusted.

MRS. SILVA
I don't have friends. Not any more.

Another nasty, accusatory glance at Robert.

JEAN
There's gonna be food and drinks and plenty of good company.

MRS. SILVA
I like you Jean, even if your art looks like something out of Sodom and Gomorrah. But that son of yours is a killer. I'd hate to see your business fail because of him.

She throws one more dagger at Robert and continues her walk. Josh and Jean both look at an incredulous Robert.

JEAN
I don't care if it's Jim Jones running that group. You're going.

INT. MOONSTONE RESCUE - EXAM ROOM - DAY

On an old table, Fiona WHIMPERS softly. Maya strokes the dog's head and glances nervously at Lupe, who remains focused as she grinds herbs with her mortar and pestle.

MAYA
What is that?

LUPE
This is a mix of elecampane leaves and linseed oil. It's applied as a poultice to the broken leg.

MAYA

"Poultice?"

LUPE

You put it on a cloth and apply to a wound.

MAYA

Poultice. I like how that sounds.

LUPE

I'm going to realign the bones and stabilize the injury. If not done properly, it might never heal right.

(and then)

If you feel squeamish feel free to step out.

MAYA

(stiffens her spine)

I got this.

LUPE

Good. Hold her steady.

EXT. MOONSTONE RESCUE ENTRANCE - DAY

Megan anxiously waits in her car. Lupe opens the door of her house as Fiona limps out, tail-wagging.

MEGAN

My baby!

Megan gets out of the car, excited to reunite with her dog. She kneels, wraps her arms around Fiona.

LUPE

I've written out instructions that explain what medicines to give her and when. The splint can be removed at the vet clinic in town.

MEGAN

I'm never going back to that place. Dr. Rhodes probably would've euthanized her.

LUPE

Well...I can't speak to that.

She looks to Maya who is out of earshot and mounting her bicycle to leave, Henrie in tow.

MAYA
(calls out)
See you tomorrow!

Lupe and Megan both wave bye to her.

MEGAN
Poor little thing. Imagine losing
your mother so young and getting
stuck with such a jerk for a dad.
It's just not fair. Did you know he
berated her in front of everyone on
graduation night? Deplorable.

Uncomfortable, Lupe struggles with how to respond.

LUPE
I didn't know that.

MEGAN
Anyway, what do I owe you?

LUPE
Nothing. It's my pleasure to help.

MEGAN
(distressed)
But...how will you keep this place
open if you don't charge?

She takes out a hundred dollar bill.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
Consider it a donation.

Megan's eyes plead with her to take the bill. Lori relents.

LUPE
Thank you. It means a lot.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Maya, Hugo and Jamie ride bikes down the street. Henrietta
sits in Maya's basket. Maverick trails behind them.

JAMIE
Where were you all day? We tried
calling a bunch of times.

HUGO
You get a job or somethin'?

MAYA

I had to help my grandma with her exhibition.

JAMIE

Well, we're gonna need you if we want a chance to beat the Guinness record for biggest sand castle. We had to let loverboy help.

She looks back where Maverick trails behind them on his bike. He smiles, gives a thumbs up.

HUGO

It didn't matter. The tourists came and ruined it all anyway.

Before Maya responds, Kyle and Doug ZOOM past them on tricked-out e-bikes. Maya nearly loses her balance.

The two boys turn back around, heading directly towards them at full speed. Jamie and Hugo quickly get out of the way.

Maya pivots hard to avoid collision, crashes her bike onto a lawn, slides on the grass.

DOUG

Told you your ass was grass!

KYLE

Nerds!

Kyle and Doug YUK IT UP as they ride away.

JAMIE

(yells back)

Oh yeah? Go back to the 80's with those lame, cliched bully tactics!

HUGO

Jamie, don't -

JAMIE

I'm surprised they didn't call us "dweebs" and "four-eyes."

Maverick finally catches up, hops off his bike and runs to help Maya.

MAVERICK

Maya! Are you hurt?

MAYA

Where's Henrie?

Hugo points to a group of BOBWHITE QUAIL running across the lawn. Henrie stalks them from under a car.

INT. MRS. SILVA'S HOUSE - SAME

From an open window, Mrs. Silva stares at the scene on her front lawn. Horrified, she storms out of the house.

EXT. MRS. SILVA'S LAWN - CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Silva stands on her porch, hands on her hips.

MRS. SILVA
Get that bicycle off my property!

MAYA
Sorry Mrs. Silva. My cat's under your car. We'll grab her and go.

MRS. SILVA
You oughta take better care of that cat. She shouldn't even be outside. Keep her indoors, where it's safe.

MAYA
Okay, Mrs. Silva.

MRS. SILVA
Surprised your dad didn't teach you that. He knows all about cats.

Mrs. Silva, still miffed, goes back inside. The kids look at each other, confused by the bizarre encounter.

INT. RHODES VET CLINIC - DAY

A CAT OWNER exits Robert's office. Robert comes out a moment later, approaches Zara at the front desk.

ROBERT
Who's next?

ZARA
Um...no one.

Zara begins packing her things to go.

ROBERT
What do you mean no one?

She points to the waiting area. It's empty.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
(confused)
Is there a holiday or something?

ZARA
Honestly, Robert, I think people
are upset with you.

ROBERT
What, on the internet? Please.

ZARA
It's a small town and that stuff
matters.

ROBERT
Oh my God. I've been canceled. Is
that what this is?
(beat)
You're a Gen Z whippersnapper -
what does one do in this situation?

ZARA
(shrugs)
Apologize.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Robert grabs milk from a refrigerated shelf. He spots Daryl
Ingalls near the eggs. He approaches him.

ROBERT
Pasture raised is the way to go.

Daryl gives him a side glance but doesn't respond.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
Hey, how's Misty doing? She's about
due for her shots if I'm not
mistaken.

DARYL
Misty's doing just fine. She
doesn't need any shots either.

ROBERT
Oh. You go to a vet down in
Edgartown or something?

DARYL
Moonstone's the only place I'll
ever take my dog.

ROBERT
Moonstone?

DARYL
Last one to know, huh? The old
McGregor farm. It's Moonstone
Rescue now.

ROBERT
I've heard of it.

DARYL
That Lupe gal is a real sweetheart.
Smart as a whip too. Misty's
arthritis? Gone.

ROBERT
I'm sure whatever hocus pocus she
used isn't--

DARYL
Robert, with all due respect, we
won't be going back to Rhodes.

Daryl pushes his cart away as Robert smarts from his words.

ROBERT
(to self, loud)
Fine - I'll go!

CONFUSED SHOPPERS stare at him as he storms out of the store.

INT. GRIEF RELIEF SUPPORT GROUP - NIGHT

Several GROUP MEMBERS convene in an outdated but cozy living
room. All eyes are on the BAWLING, red-faced BETH (40s).

She's in the middle of a thought but struggles to finish.
Robert stares at her with utter judgmental snark on his face.

BETH
Mom was my everything, you know?
People say I need to move on with
my life. Spread her ashes and
pretend like everything is okay.

DENNIS (60s), the host and group therapist, leans forward. He
has eyes that always look on the verge of tears.

DENNIS

You don't have to pretend, Beth.
Remember: you define "moving on"
for yourself.

BETH

It's been four years and I just
can't. I don't care if people think
I'm crazy. I mean, everyone's
crazy, right?

ROBERT

Was it Norman Bates who said that?

Dennis peers at Robert over his glasses.

BETH

Norman Bates...sounds familiar. Is
he a writer?

A gentle hand reaches over and touches Beth's shoulder. It's Lupe. She looks at Beth with genuine empathy. Robert perks up, seeing her here for the first time.

LUPE

I can't imagine how you must feel.
I can relate, though.

BETH

Your mother's dead?

LUPE

No. But when you talked about
having constant reminders
everywhere...

DENNIS

Go on, Lupe.

LUPE

Most of you know I've struggled
with moving back to Oak Bluffs.

(pause)

I find myself triggered over the
smallest things. One minute, I'm
mourning Tom and the next I'm
paralyzed with terror.

DENNIS

So you decided to keep his farm?

LUPE

The animals help me. Maybe more
than I help them.

(MORE)

LUPE (CONT'D)

By keeping the farm, I feel like I
can transform this pain into
something useful.

This info causes Robert to have an epiphany:

ROBERT

Wait, you're the one opening
'Moonbone Rescue?'

LUPE

Moonstone.

ROBERT

Moonstone. Like the rock.

LUPE

Correct.

ROBERT

Why not "Tiger's Eye?" At least
it's durable.

DENNIS

(warning)

Robert...

ROBERT

Or maybe Carnelian -

LUPE

Why do you care? I don't need to
discuss my personal business with
you.

ROBERT

Isn't that why we're all here - to
share our innermost secrets and
reveal our souls?

DENNIS

(stern)

Robert, if you're going to rejoin
this group, you'll respect
boundaries. OK?

ROBERT

Fine.

DENNIS

Last warning. Are you done?

Robert concedes, nods. Dennis waits a beat as if expecting Robert to try for the last word. Robert motions for Dennis to continue the session.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
Beth, to go back -

ROBERT
Party pooper.

The entire group turns to Robert annoyed and frustrated.

EXT. GRIEF RELIEF SUPPORT GROUP - NIGHT

Exiled, Robert stands outside alone. Group is over. The others leave the house and walk to their cars.

Robert spots Lupe just as she gets into her truck. He runs over to her.

ROBERT
Hey, wait a second!

Lupe closes the car door. Rolls down the window an inch.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
Sorry I was rude. It's kind of why I'm here. I'm a rude person and my clients are mad at me. They hate my guts and they love Moonstone. Guess you should thank me, huh?

She starts her car. Robert flounders for words, blurts out:

ROBERT (CONT'D)
You wanna grab a glass of water?

INT. ART STUDIO - NIGHT

The studio is bright, pretty. Maya helps unpack boxes as Jean organizes sculptures on a display. JAZZ MUSIC plays softly though a speaker.

JEAN
You can't avoid your father all week, you know.

MARY
Why not? He does a good job avoiding me. Plus, this is my last summer before high school. Me and my friends have stuff to do.

JEAN

Looks like one of your friends is
here now.

She signals to the street-facing window. Maverick waves from
outside. Maya makes a contemptuous face.

Before she can say anything, Jean opens the front door.

MAYA

Don't let him in--

It's too late. Maverick is in the studio, filling the room
with his eager energy.

MAVERICK

This looks awesome, Mrs. Rhodes!

He can't help but stare at the nude sculptures everywhere.

JEAN

Glad you think so. I hope my art
doesn't offend you?

MAVERICK

Not at all. My mom has one of your
pieces. She's a big fan.

JEAN

Isn't that sweet? And remind me who
your dad is again.

MAVERICK

Axel Barry.

JEAN

Oh, the one with all the muscles.

MAVERICK

That's him.

JEAN

He'd make an excellent model.

MAYA

(mortified)
Grandma!

JEAN

A bit Hulkish for my work. I like
'em a little leaner. But still, a
very good physique.

MAYA
(covers her face)
God, please stop.

MAVERICK
It's fine. Trust me, he works on his body. A lot. He likes the attention. My mom calls it "peacocking."

JEAN
But you're not like him, are you?

Maverick grins ear-to-ear.

MAVERICK
That's the nicest thing anyone's ever said to me.

At these words, Maya looks at Maverick. Almost sympathetic.

INT. MR. DEET'S CAFE - NIGHT

Lupe and Robert sit at a table in a folksy, mom-n-pop cafe. She's got tea; he's already finished his coffee.

ROBERT
So this clinic you're opening...

LUPE
God, you're obsessed.

ROBERT
Just professional curiosity.

LUPE
Worried I'll steal your clients?

ROBERT
Should I be?

LUPE
It's not a vet clinic. I'm building an animal sanctuary. I also practice holistic medicine.

ROBERT
Ah - pseudoscience. No offense.

LUPE
People come to me after allopathic medicine has failed their pets.

ROBERT

By "allopathic medicine" you mean science.

LUPE

Sure, after science has failed their pets.

ROBERT

In my experience, pet owners often have unrealistic expectations for what can be done.

LUPE

I don't find that all. I think they just want to feel like the person caring for their loved ones is coming from a place of possibility, not limitation.

ROBERT

Giving people false hope isn't ethical.

LUPE

You're exhausting. After all these years, you're exactly the same.

Robert thinks for a moment, as if a memory has come back.

ROBERT

Have we met? Like before now?

LUPE

Not surprised you didn't recognize me. I used to wear my hair in pigtails back then.

ROBERT

Don't tell me you went to Oak Bluffs High.

LUPE

Just for senior year.

ROBERT

So you were the nerd and I was the jock. Unrequited love.

LUPE

I can assure you that was not the case. Did you even play sports?

ROBERT

Nah, I was too busy listening to
Insane Clown Posse and getting
detention for being a loudmouth.

LUPE

That part I remember. Pagliacci.

Robert smirks as Lupe takes a sip of her tea.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The streets are busy with TOURISTS. Lupe and Robert stand
outside her car, not really knowing how to end the evening.

LUPE

See you at group next Thursday?

ROBERT

I should go. Not so sure they'll be
welcoming me back, though.

LUPE

Guess I'll see you when I see you.

ROBERT

What about tomorrow?

LUPE

Tomorrow?

ROBERT

My mom's an artist. She's having
this exhibit thing - my daughter
Maya will be there too.

LUPE

I'm not big on crowds.

ROBERT

It'll be small, intimate. You'd
like it. Though I have to warn you,
mom's art is...unconventional.

LUPE

Tempting. I'll think about it.

Lupe gets into her truck and closes the door. She watches as
Robert walks away and breathes a large SIGH OF RELIEF. She
takes another deep breath in, then out.

EXT. ART STUDIO - NIGHT

Maya and Jean stand outside with Maverick. Jean gives him a flier for her exhibit.

JEAN

Now make sure you give that to your parents. I wanna see you all there.

Axel's car pulls up.

MAVERICK

Here's my dad. Thanks, Mrs. Rhodes.

JEAN

Call me Jean, please.

MAVERICK

Bye Maya!

MAYA

Bye, Mav.

This abbreviation of his name puts a wide grin across Maverick's face. His moment of reverie is interrupted as Axel HONKS the car horn.

INT. AXEL'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

It's silent between Axel and Maverick.

AXEL

Why am I picking you up here?

MAVERICK

I was hanging with Maya.

AXEL

Why?

MAVERICK

She's cool. I like her.

AXEL

There's something wrong with that family. Especially that grandma character.

MAVERICK

She's different. In a good way.

AXEL
You ever heard of the law of
proximity?

MAVERICK
No.

AXEL
When people spend enough time
together, they adopt each other's
habits, traits, values. We become
who we surround ourselves with.

MAVERICK
Birds of a feather flock together.

Axel looks at his son, surprised by his acute comprehension.

AXEL
Exactly.
(off the flier)
What's that?

Maverick folds it in half, puts it away.

MAVERICK
Nothing.

INT. RHODES HOME - NIGHT

Wearing a pretty summer dress, Maya feeds Henrie. Robert
walks in and pats her on the head.

ROBERT
Hey kiddo.

No response from Maya.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
You're really not gonna talk to me?

Maya doesn't look at him.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
It's been four days. This is
ridiculous.

Jean enters the kitchen, bright red lipstick on her mouth and
her locs in a beautiful updo.

JEAN
What's going on here?

ROBERT
Maya's still mad at me.

Maya ignores him, turning to Jean.

MAYA
Grandma, can I bring Henrie to the
gallery tonight?

ROBERT
No.

JEAN
Of course she can. She's part of
the family.

ROBERT
Mom, are you serious?

Maya smirks triumphantly at Robert, scooping Henrie up and heading toward the door.

INT. JEAN'S EXHIBITION - NIGHT

The gallery is bustling. DOZENS OF PEOPLE mingle, sipping wine and admiring Jean's provocative sculptures.

Jackie and Hugo hang out near the snack table with their parents. Jean moves gracefully through the room, chatting with potential buyers. Maya, brings around a tray of hors d'oeuvres to the guests.

Robert, ill at ease, looks around the room. His face brightens as he spots Lupe entering. She looks elegant, her presence drawing a few surprised glances from onlookers.

Maya notices Lupe and Robert's reaction to her. Confused, she sets down the hors d'oeuvres tray and watches their interaction intently.

LATER

A worried Maya stands by a sculpture, holding Henrie. She glares at her dad and Lupe chatting in a corner of the gallery. Lupe laughs at something Robert says.

MAYA
(under her breath)
Unbelievable. He's not even that
funny!

She turns to HUGO, who's munching on hors d'oeuvres nearby.

MAYA (CONT'D)

I need your help. But you can't ask why.

HUGO

That depends. What's in it for me?

MAYA

I won't tell Jackie about your *Twilight* fan fiction.

Hugo sighs, clearly defeated.

HUGO

Well played. What do you want me to do?

MAYA

Just...distract my dad.

HUGO

Why's he talking to the witch?

MAYA

She's not a witch — anyway, just go ask him something weird. Something so annoying he has to stop talking to her.

HUGO

Fine, but you owe me big for this.

Hugo grabs a plate of snacks and walks to the

CORNER OF EXHIBIT

He reluctantly approaches Robert and Lupe, interrupting their conversation.

HUGO

Excuse me, Dr. Rhodes?

ROBERT

Yes?

HUGO

Uh, so...I ate six bags of hot Cheetos and now I've had uncontrollable diarrhea for three months. Is that bad?

Robert and Lupe freeze, caught completely off guard.

LUPE
(smiles awkwardly)
I'll let you two handle this.

Lupe steps away gracefully, leaving Robert to deal with Hugo.

ROBERT
What—? Yes, of course that's bad.
Why would you wait three months?

Nearby, Jackie overhears the odd conversation. Sensing Hugo needs help with his shenanigans, she jumps into the conversation and improvises.

JACKIE
Dr. Rhodes, what's your opinion on
nootropics? For pets, I mean.

ROBERT
(trying to keep up)
Uh, I'm not sure that's...

HUGO
Am I dying?

JACKIE
Also, do you think dogs can benefit
from yoga? I read this article—

ROBERT
One at a time, please!

Across the gallery, Maya grins in satisfaction, her mission accomplished.

Robert sighs, visibly exasperated, as Maya strolls over to Lupe, who's now admiring a sculpture.

LUPE
(nods toward Robert)
Your dad's pretty popular tonight.

MAYA
Yeah, he's great with people.

LUPE
You still haven't told him.

MAYA
He won't understand.

LUPE
Tell him by tomorrow. Or I'm sorry,
you can't be at Moonstone.

MAYA

But -

LUPE

Lying never makes anything better,
Maya. It just creates chaos.

Lupe touches Maya's cheek gently and gives her a reassuring look before she heads to the exit. Robert observes from afar.

Jackie and Hugo walk over to Maya.

JACKIE

You've got major explaining to do.

EXT. MOONSTONE RESCUE ENTRANCE - DAY

Driving her truck, Lupe pulls into the driveway of her home. A FLASHY CAR is already parked there. ROBERT DELWOOD (40s) steps out, sporting slicked-back hair and a big, cheesy grin.

LUPE

Sorry, we're closed.

Robert extends a hand out. Lupe reluctantly shakes it.

DELWOOD

Robert Delwood. Realtor.
I believe you already know my
client, Mr. Axel Barry.

He reaches into his satchel, hands her a stack of legal docs.

LUPE

I'm not interested in selling.

Lupe gives him back the papers without looking at them.

DELWOOD

Too bad. This place is a money pit.
My advice is to get out before
you're in too deep. Besides, your
roots aren't really here anyway.

Delwood squirms under Lupe's hard glare.

DELWOOD (CONT'D)

I understand that you and the late
Mr. McGregor had been separated for
many years. Mr. Barry is prepared
to pay twice the market value of
the property because he's got
sentimental attachment to it.

Delwood leans in closer with a false sense of familiarity.

DELWOOD (CONT'D)

Take the money, get yourself a cute little place in town. You love animals? There's a local vet clinic I hear is looking to hire.

Lupe continues to stare at Delwood - after a few uncomfortable moments of silence, she steps forward.

LUPE

Ogkeshkuppe.

DELWOOD

I'm sorry, what?

LUPE

Ogkeskuppe. It's the Wampanoag name for Oak Bluffs.

DELWOOD

Interesting. I didn't know that.

LUPE

The Wampanoag were the original inhabitants of this place. Sentimental attachment? I can trace my ancestry all the way back from before the Mayflower ever reared its ugly head. My roots here are deep and strong. You're standing on my land, Mr. Delwood. And I'm done talking to you.

DELWOOD

I apologize if I offended you.

LUPE

If I see you or Axel here again, I'll call the police.

(beat)

Or maybe I'll deal with you myself.

Delwood gives her a puzzled look.

LUPE (CONT'D)

I'm sure you've heard the rumors about me. They're 100% true. Just ask the late Mr. McGregor.

Delwood turns white and slowly backs up.

DELWOOD

I'll be sure to convey your
feelings on the matter to Mr.
Barry.

He stumbles into his car. Lupe laughs to herself as he speeds
away.

END OF EPISODE 2