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Water the Plant

Taylor Keaton

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FINAL THESIS
FEATURE SCREENPLAY PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Student Name: Taylor E. Keaton

Thesis Logline:

Water the Plant

Title

A teleplay written and produced and presented to the faculty of
the Writing for the Screen MFA Program in the School of Film &

Television at Loyola Marymount University of

Los Angeles, California

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Fine Arts

Writing for the Screen

By

Taylor E. Keaton

Student Name

Taylor E. Keaton

Taylor E. Keaton (May 4, 2022 13:57 PDT)

Student Signature

APPROVAL TO ADVANCE TO CANDIDACY

The following student has met all the criteria to advance to candidacy for an M.F.A. in Fine Arts with an emphasis in Writing for the Screen:

Taylor E. Keaton

Student Name

May 4, 2022

Date

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Graduate Director Signature

WATER THE PLANT

Written by

Taylor Elle Keaton

A thesis presented to the

Faculty of the Department of
School of Film and Television
Loyola Marymount University

In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Writing for the Screen

May 5, 2022

FADE IN:

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A dark house. No effort made to flip a switch.

The dingy freezer light spills onto freezerburnt casseroles sweating on the hardwood floor.

SHUFFLING through rubbermaid after rubbermaid is VAL.

Disgruntled would be a compliment for this 35 year old man with his overgrown beard, lopsided fro and watery eyes.

He addresses an URN, gripped tightly in his left hand.

VAL
Should we have casserole
or...casserole?

Val chooses the slightly less inedible one.

With one hand, he shoves the unchosen dinner back. DOWN go the mountain of casseroles!

The Urn WOBBLER! His grip tightens.

BAM! He body SLAMS the freezer shut. Urn steady.

His head BUMPS the handle as he slides down the silver door. Val looks at the Urn.

VAL (CONT'D)
Callum, I swear to God...if you
laugh at me.

He gives the Urn a huge hug as he sobs.

VAL (CONT'D)
God, I miss your laugh.

The lid TWISTS. Val opens the Urn, inscribed with a golden peace lily. He peers inside.

VAL (CONT'D)
I'm gonna have that talk with your
mom, today. She will listen.

Val stands. His left foot slips on a puddle from the sweating casserole! He grips the refrigerator door, pushing the water dispenser. A bigger puddle!

The Urn FALLS!

The Urn lands on the casserole! Both SLIDE across the floor!

Val LAUNCHES to the Urn with the lid! His fingertips graze the rubbermaid.

The sliding stops, the Urn tilts forward. Val THRUSTS forward and TOPS the urn.

He screws it shut tight! An exhale of relief.

He belly scooches to a dry area, trailing water like a snail.

Val brings his legs to his chest, ass in the air. He props up to his elbows. Feet. Stands, Urn in hand.

Val grabs a broom and drags the casserole container close.

He places it on the counter and takes out a bread knife to hammer-chainsaw the frozen meal.

VAL (CONT'D)

(recitation)

Mirren, Callum is your son. But, I
am his husband. You may have had
your trips, but he came home to me.
That's what until death do us part
means!

HACK! HACK! HACK! HACK!

VAL (CONT'D)

I'm! Not! Dead! Yet!

A chunk of frozen cheese clung to chicken flies off onto the Urn. He grabs and eats the icy bit.

INT. MIRREN'S CAR - DAY (MOVING)

Frigid air BLASTS through the A/C vents of the Jeep Explorer.

MIRREN, a nomad for most of her 72 years, adjusts the vents on her with a tick-like urgency.

Her eyes dart over to the passenger seat.

Resting is a worn Yelp article: Top 10 Best Scattering of Ashes is Las Vegas, NV. Most places are crossed off with a bold slash. "Bristlecone Pine Grove" is unmarked.

Mirren pulls into a parking spot. A sign for Bristlecone Pine Grove can be seen through the windshield.

Her hands fall to her Texas Lexica in her lap. In gold sharpee, Callum's name is etched on the side. Mirren rubs her thumb over the letters.

MIRREN

We're cutting it close. Let's see if this place does it for you.

Mirren takes off the lens cap.

EXT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOUSE - PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Cleaning the glasses lens with the bottom of his shirt is ED (72), a soft-spoken, intuitive man who tries not to ask too many questions even of the truly bizarre.

He walks up to his son's, Val, front door. He RINGS the doorbell. A few moments, nothing.

Glasses on, he leans an ear close to the front door. Depeche Mode plays: All I ever needed is here in my arms.

Ed shakes his head and RINGS the door bell, again. The music goes down a few decibels. He rings once more.

After some banging down the stairs, Val, urn in hand, answers the door. Ed looks from the urn to Val. He sighs.

ED

Have you ever listened to their live in Berlin version? It's atmospheric.

VAL

Dad, dinner is not for another four hours.

ED

It'll take me that to get this place clean enough so your mom won't worry about you too much.

VAL

I know how to clean.

ED

Good, I could use the help.

Ed hugs his son on the way in and places a greeting hand on the Urn.

ED (CONT'D)

Callum.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ed jumps when he sees Callum's large funeral portrait.

ED
Callum!

He holds his chest as he calms.

ED (CONT'D)
How about we put Callum's portrait--

VAL
Where?

Where do you put a 10 by 8 of your dead husbands portrait?
Neither know.

ED
Let's start in the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Ed looks like he regrets starting here as well.

ED
Why is your kitchen floor wet?

VAL
A leak.

ED
From where?

VAL
I fixed it.

Ed sighs and grabs the mop as Val goes to the sink to hide the casserole. He pushes it down the drain.

ED
You gotta stop eating that year old
casserole.

Val jumps as Ed reemerges with the mop.

VAL
That's why I'm putting it down the
drain.

ED
Are you gonna put the ones from the
freezer in the drain too?

VAL

There are none in the freezer.

Ed raises an eyebrow. Val grips the edge of the sink. Then both race to the freezer, slipping a little. Val blocks the freezer.

VAL (CONT'D)

You're old, you shouldn't exert yourself like this.

Ed, shoves him out the way, gives him a glare and opens the freezer.

ED

(disappointed)

Val. It's past freezer burnt.

VAL

I like my food burnt. It adds flavor.

Ed dons a sympathetic look.

ED

Go clean your living room.

Ed grabs the mop and gets to work.

As he escapes to the living room, Val passes one of Callum's framed photos of a tranquil desert.

EXT. ANCIENT BRISTLECONE PINE GROVE - DAY

Mirren squints through the viewfinder. Two bristlecone pine's branches interweave. They're magnificent. Mirren HUFFS!

She adjusts the lens. Paces to a different place in the park. Mirren pans across the still, dry and...bare landscape.

Her nimble fingers fidget with the camera under the towering, twisted, torpid branches more than four-thousand years old.

In her native Scottish accent, dripping with acidic sarcasm:

MIRREN

Top ten for sure.

Flushed in frustration and by the unrelenting Nevada sun, she aims the lens again.

This is no place to rest.

She rests her camera on her neck, she RIPS the review from her back pocket and TEARS it in half!

MIRREN (CONT'D)

How about I scatter this shit list
in this godforsaken hellscape?!

She HISSES. A paper cut. With a deep inhale, she balls up the article and shoves it in her back pocket.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Val sits across from the urn, a scrabble board rests on the table between them.

VAL

I mean sure he loved the ocean, but
you can't just dump him in there.

Words on the board are "home, reliable, forever." He looks at the Urn.

VAL (CONT'D)

She can't just dump you in the
ocean. That's a bit morbid, don't
you think?

He scans his letters.

VAL (CONT'D)

Or if you toss him over a bridge...
that's a bit morbid don't you
think?

Val spells out, "stability." He pauses. He's missing the second "I."

VAL (CONT'D)

He was an adventurer!

He reaches over and examines the Urn's letters. He plucks an "I" and places it on the board.

VAL (CONT'D)

(smiling)
But he loved home, he loves me.

Val grabs and opens his laptop beside him.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Ed stands in front of the mountain of casseroles in the freezer with a garbage bag. He grabs a rubbermaid. They all tumble out.

ED

After I just mopped the goddamn--

He settles himself. He grabs a chair from the kitchen table and places before the spill. He bends over, picks up a rubber maid, empties it into the trash. He sets the rubbermaid aside and bends again.

ED (CONT'D)

(raises his voice for Val)

How's that menu for Fred coming along?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Val sits in his mess, typing away on his laptop. He's created a visually impressive infographic despite the title, "Cal And Val Forever."

VAL

It's fine.

Ed sighs, dumping another casserole.

ED

You know Fred's one of my oldest friends.

Val adjusts the saturation.

VAL

All of your friends are old Dad, you're old.

Ed shakes his head.

ED

So, I'm just saying... do a good job.

Val rubs his head in frustration.

VAL

I am, I'm literally working on it now.

Val resizes an image of him and Callum laughing.

Ed purses his lips in disbelief. He flexes his fingers, tips red from the frosty containers, and just starts dumping the casseroles, Rubbermaids and all, in the trash.

ED

He said you named one of the breakfast menu subtitles, "The Last Breakfast."

Val adjusts the font of the infographic.

VAL

(distracted)
It was fitting.

Dump, dump, dump.

ED

It's a fifties themed diner.

Val looks up toward the kitchen door, exasperated.

VAL

If you were a black person walking into a 50s diner, it probably was your last breakfast.

Ed leans back, considering that. Val's not wrong. He ties up the trash bag. Nevertheless:

ED

He's a friend, Val.

VAL

You want me to white wash over it and make it cheery?

Ed enters the living room and DROPS the vacuum. Val looks up, startled. He shifts his laptop from the view of his dad. Ed shakes his head.

ED

(sighs)
What am I supposed to say to that?

Val shrugs and goes back to his work, unaffected.

ED (CONT'D)

Don't--

VAL
 --Tell mom you stopped by to clean.
 I know.

Ed heads out of the living room. Val lifts his head.

He smiles softly at Callum's portrait.

VAL (CONT'D)
 Finally. He's gone.

He goes to his music and presses play. Depeche Mode's 'Enjoy the Silence' starts to play. Val grabs the urn and begins to dance.

EXT. BRISTLECONE - CONTINUOUS

A GRIEVING WOMAN (79) WAILS a prayer.

Mirren, started, lifts her camera to the Grieving Woman. Through the viewfinder she watches as the woman waves a red urn from side to side as she CHANTS.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Val dances harder. He sweats and cries.

EXT. BRISTLECONE - CONTINUOUS

Mirren zooms in, the Grieving Woman whole body convulses as tears flow down her cheeks. Mirren walks closer when the Grieving Woman's movement gets lost behind a tree.

The Grieving Woman stops and turns to Mirren.

GRIEVING WOMAN
 Oh hi, there.

MIRREN
 I'm sorry for interrupting.

GRIEVING WOMAN
 I must seem really crazy, huh?

MIRREN
 No, I just-- I thought I was alone
 out here.

GRIEVING WOMAN
 It feels like that doesn't it.
 Especially when you get to our age.

Mirren nods and gives a sympathetic smile. She begins to walk away.

GRIEVING WOMAN (CONT'D)
 Could you help me?

The Grieving Woman lifts up the urn.

MIRREN
 Oh--I-I don't know. That's more of
 a private thing. I'm--

Grieving Woman sobs.

MIRREN (CONT'D)
 I mean, of course. Yes.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Val sobs hard as he dances vigorously. He pushes around the unplugged vacuum like a prop.

VAL
 I'm keeping him, MIR-REN. I'm
 keeping the ashes.

Val HITS the bookshelf with the vacuum a little too hard and a box falls. Postcards from various places flutter down.

Val drops to the ground to gather the cards.

They are addressed to him from Callum. Val cries and kisses the cards. He rereads them and holds each to his chest.

He collects them from the floor. A postcard of Mexico is signed of with "P.S. Water the plant."

A postcard from Sweden is also signed off with, "P.S. Water the plant."

Among the various landscapes depicted on the cards, one thing remains the same on each one. They are all signed off with, "P.S. Water the plant"

He unscrews the Urn's top and whispers inside:

VAL (CONT'D)
 I'm so sorry. I-I lost the plant.

He wipes tears from his eyes until he notices...a trail of dirt behind the bookcase. He quickly places the top on the urn without twisting.

He crawls over. In the back we see a withered plant in a cracked pot. Dry soil, spilled.

EXT. BRISTLECONE PINE - DAY

GASP! The Grieving Woman curses and cries as the ashes blow back at her instead of forward.

Unable to move out of the way in time, Mirren is covered in ashes.

She looks at the ashes clung to her clothes, to her arms, to her camera. She's frozen. Until she hears the Grieving Woman.

GRIEVING WOMAN

No, no, no...

Grieving Woman, on the ground, scoops dirt and ashes back into the urn. Mirren grabs the lid of the urn and hands it to her.

GRIEVING WOMAN (CONT'D)

Thank you.

She looks up.

GRIEVING WOMAN (CONT'D)

Oh! Oh, no.

She stands and begins to dust off Mirren. It just smears.

GRIEVING WOMAN (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry. I'm so--

Mirren grabs her hands.

MIRREN

It's okay.

She bends down and begins to scoop the ashes back into the urn. Grieving Woman joins her again.

GRIEVING WOMAN

No, no. It's okay, I'll just...

She wipes the tears from her eyes, and ash smears under them. Mirren tries not to grimace.

Grieving Woman points the tube in the right direction and pours the ashes. They scatter softly in the distance. Mirren watches them take flight before settling to the earth.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Val shoves the bookcase forward to make space. It's quite heavy, especially using one hand so he stands and the Urn slips from his hands! As he falls, he grapples to get his hands on it.

He catches it sideways. Breathes an air of relief, but then the top falls off. Ashes begin to pour out.

VAL

Oh! Oh no!

Val's eyes are open in horror at the ashes spilled over the dry soil of the plant.

Val lifts the topless urn back up!

He stretches to get the top. Winces from the over stretch, but manages to grab it and top the urn.

Val puts the urn aside and uses his fingers in attempt to separate the ash from the soil. It smears on the floor.

Val sits up. He brings the pot closer and scoops the ash soil combo into it. He picks it up, but it's cracked at the bottom. He puts it back down.

Val grabs a whiskey glass from the coffee table and scoops the plant into the glass. He grabs the urn and the glass, stands and pushes the bookshelf back using his back.

EXT. GRIEVING WOMAN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The Grieving Woman stands in her open door.

GRIEVING WOMAN

Thank you again. I'm sorry I don't have any wipes.

Mirren spots the used tissues throughout the woman's car.

GRIEVING WOMAN (CONT'D)

It's just-- It's hard when you get to our age, you know? We're losing everyone.

MIRREN

Mm, yeah.

GRIEVING WOMAN

(sob fest)

But you gotta let them go, you just gotta.

Mirren shifts, uncomfortable.

MIRREN

I lost my son exactly eleven months ago.

Grieving Woman pauses. She grabs onto Mirren, smearing ashes of her husband on both of them.

GRIEVING WOMAN

Oh, god. I'm so--so sorry.

Mirren pats her back.

Grieving Woman looks up at Mirren and then bursts into tears again, clinging onto her tighter.

EXT. MIRREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The house to the left of Val and her son's home.

Mirren SLAMS the door shut of her jeep explorer. She walks straight to the hose. Mirren begins to rinse herself off. She scrubs at the ashes that rinse away like mud. She is doing her best not to freak out.

Mr. Brinestone (86), he wasn't nice when he was young and he isn't nice now, smokes outside with his cat on a leash.

MR. BRINESTONE

Mirren.

MIRREN

Jared.

MR. BRINESTONE

We're in a drought.

MIRREN

Thanks for the update.

MR. BRINESTONE

You're more than welcome.

Mirren bends to turn the hose off, spraying Mr. Brinestone. He jumps!

MIRREN

Apologies.

Brinestone glares at Mirren, she glares right back. A car pulls up. The window rolls down and it's Val's parents.

RAINIE (68), blunt, lively, and more than capable of pushing a few buttons for the right cause, reaches over from the driver's side.

RAINIE

Mirren, see you for dinner?

MIRREN

As always.

Rainie ignores Mirren's disingenuous tone and squints closer.

RAINIE

What's all that on you?

MIRREN

An old woman's dead husband.

Ed raises his eyebrows in intrigue. Rainie isn't fazed.

RAINIE

Well, you rinse off and we'll see you at dinner. Lots to discuss!

Mirren nods.

INT. RAINIE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Rainie pulls into the driveway.

RAINIE

For a second there, I thought it was Callum covering her.

Ed hums.

ED

Maybe next time.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOME - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Val examines the urn and plant on the counter. He brings his hands to his head in frustration, but freezes. His hands and nails covered in dirt and ash.

He hyperventilates. One hand on the faucet, he looks at the urn with guilt.

He opens the medicine cabinet and pulls out a nail file. He uses the pointed end to scoop ashes and soil from his nails into the plant's glass. He hears his front door OPEN. And he panics.

INT. VAL AMD CALLUM'S HOME - FOYER

Ed carries a huge pot with oven mitts. Rainie sets down a mega-sized purse on a small stool.

RAINIE

Well what use is having a spare key, if I can't use it?

ED

You can't just storm into your adult child's home, Rain.

Rainie dismisses him with a wave.

RAINIE

Val, honey. You home?

Ed heaves the pot to the kitchen.

ED

Where else would he be?

INT. VAL AMD CALLUM'S HOME - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Val tries to clean faster. Footsteps come close to the door.

RAINIE (O.S.)

Are you in here?

The knob twists. Val SLAMS his body on the door.

VAL

Mom, privacy. I'll be out in a bit.

RAINIE (O.S.)

Alright...you okay?

VAL

I'm fine. I'll be out in a second.

RAINIE (O.S.)
Alright, dinner should take too
long. I just have to heat a few
things up.

VAL
Awesome.

The other side of the door is silent for a second and then her footsteps carry away. Val sinks and looks over at the deteriorated crunchy leaves of the peace lily plant.

INT. MIRREN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mirren stands in the bathtub as she tries to yank out the detachable shower hose. It's stuck.

She loosens the nob of the holder. This doesn't work.

She uses her shampoo bottle to bang it lose and it finally drops.

She picks it up and turns on the water, but there are only dribbles. Mirren screams and throws the floppy shower dispenser cord out of the bathtub. It bangs on the wall, creating a dent.

Moments later, Mirren sits and rinses off in the ash coated bathtub. Her claustrophobic panic intensifies as she scrubs many times over.

When she's done, she hops out and catches her breath. Better.

The shower gurgles. Mirren watches the ashes go down the drain. Then, she kneels to guide the rest that cling to the walls of the tub. Once it's clear, she rests back, relieved.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOME - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Val crawls over to the plant and puts the whiskey glass under the sink.

He lifts the faucet handle. The water RUSHES out! The plant floods.

VAL
Shit!

He shuts it off. He grabs a bunch of toilet paper and sticks it in the glass to try and soak up the excess water. He fishes out the bits of toilet tissue that break off.

Still drowned, but as good as it's gonna get. Val pushes off the sink, his back hits the wall and he slides down to the floor. The plant is on the counter's edge before him.

His shoulders begin to shake as he gives way to a sob.

VAL (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Rainie massages her left shoulder as she tends to various pots, while Ed sets up the table.

ED

You have to stop cooking like it's Thanksgiving.

RAINIE

I don't hear you complaining when you're stuffing my stuffing.

Ed can't argue with that. With an amused grin, he folds the napkins with a military like precision for each place. He sets it down with a nervous look back at his wife.

ED

I was thinking... after they scatter his ashes, we should go on a little trip.

Rainie swivels away from a pot, spatula raised high as her eyebrow, to look at her husband.

RAINIE

You want to go on vacation the day after our son says his final goodbye to his husband?

ED

I want you to rest.

RAINIE

Rest! Callum's halfway rested and you see what Val's like.

ED

You can't grieve for him. He'll be fine--

RAINIE

He locked himself in his guest bathroom!

ED

At some point he's gotta unlock the door and open it himself.

DING DONG. They both wait to see if Val will get it. A few moments pass. Ed makes a "you see" expression.

RAINIE

Why don't you go unlock that door for Mirren?

Ed sulks as he exits.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOME - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Val finishes cleaning off the sink in a rush. DING DONG. He jumps and scratches his head.

VAL

This doesn't change anything. You're staying with me.

Val takes a deep breath.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mirren examines the familiar photos taken by her son on the walls as she sips a glass of whiskey.

MIRREN

He said it was acceptable to drink plenty of it because it's Gaelic derivative meant "water of life.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Val watches her for a beat, his hand tightens around the urn and then he enters.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mirren's gaze immediately shifts to him. Their eyes lock. Her gaze shifts from him to the urn and the sad looking plant in the whiskey glass.

ED

Oh, there's the other glass.

Ed hunches to examine the plant through the glass.

ED (CONT'D)

Now this is a cocktail I've never
seen before.

He tries to exchange his whiskey filled glass with the plant
filled glass. Val shifts back, but his eyes still laser in on
Mirren.

MIRREN

It was Callum's favorite.

ED

That boy did have a lot of hair on
his chest.

VAL

(mumbling)
I'm his favorite.

ED

What? Why don't you sit down?

Val doesn't budge.

VAL

I'm keeping him.

MIRREN

The deal was a year. It's been 11
months, we need to figure out where-

-

VAL

I don't give a fuck about a deal.

Mirren swallows her whiskey down. Her cheeks hollow.

ED

Val! Have you lost your mind--

Rainie enters from the kitchen.

RAINIE

What in the hell is going on?

Ed holds up an apologetic hand to Mirren, who just waves it
away.

VAL

I'm keeping him.

Rainie tenses, she sees how tight Val is clutching the urn
and tilts her head curiously at the dead plant in a glass.

She turns to see Mirren launch for the urn.

RAINIE]
 (interjects)
 Why don't we all just sit down for
 dinner I just spent 8 hours making.

Mirren freezes, eyes on urn.

VAL
 I'm tired of--

RAINIE
 Come. Sit. Down.

INT. DINING ROOM TABLE - CONTINUOUS

The dinner is silent. Val doesn't eat, hands still preoccupied by the plant and urn. Mirren, across from him, stabs at her food. Rainie eyes for Ed to say something, he shrugs.

ED
 The food is really good,
 sweetheart.

Rainie releases a frustrated exhale.

RAINIE
 (to Mirren)
 How's the photography going? We
 haven't seen your images in a
 while.

MIRREN
 Once I learn of the place, I want
 to capture Callum's ashes.

VAL
 So that's what this is? You want to
 dump my husband's body in a lake or
 an ocean for some hippie art
 project--

Mirren SLAMS her fork down! Ed and Rainie jump. Val huffs.

MIRREN
Dump his body?!
 (composed)
 I'm trying to provide my son rest!
 You're the one dragging him along
 everywhere. I won't let you drag
 this out.

VAL
It's what he wanted! This is his home.

MIRREN
Did he tell you where he wanted to be scattered or not?

VAL
With me! He wants to stay with me.

RAINIE
Please, let's just get through this dinner and then we can talk about this rationally.

Ed rests a hand on Rainie's arm.

MIRREN
You can't tie him down forever.

VAL
He's not yours to just throw away.

Mirren shoves up from the table and races to the living room. Val runs after her, struggling with balance with preoccupied hands.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mirren sees the postcards. She grabs the box and starts to fill it.

VAL
Stop! That's mine.

Motioning to his full hands:

MIRREN
Take it from me then!

Val's anger flares, he tries to trip her with his feet as she collects more post cards.

MIRREN (CONT'D)
Tell me where!

VAL
I take good care of him!

Rainie tries to push the two apart, stooping to pull Val's legs. She falls, but Ed enters just in time to catch her.

ED
Rainie, it's not his to keep.

Rainie pushes him away.

Val looks at his dad with hurt before he uses his hips to SHOVE Mirren as she gathers the remaining postcards from the bookcase.

MIRREN
(mocking)
Mine! Mine! Mine!

Val uses his head and elbows to push Mirren's hands down and away.

VAL
Don't! Stop! Callum--

Crunch!

THE PLANT
(in Callum's voice)
Blue note.

Val freezes, his head caught between the bookcase and the box in Mirren's arm. Crunch!

THE PLANT (CONT'D)
Top drawer.

Val curls his head down to The Plant. Crunch!

THE PLANT (CONT'D)
Blue note. Top Drawer.

Val gasps. Mirren scrunches her eyebrows in confusion and pulls back. Val remains hunched, eyes on The Plant.

VAL
(whisper)
Callum?

RAINIE
Val, baby? Are you okay.

Val looks up at Mirren, Ed and Rainie eyeing him warily. Crunch!

THE PLANT
Blue note. Top Drawer.

His breath rises again but he straightens fully when he realizes none of them seem to hear it.

VAL
That crunchy sound and that voice --

MIRREN
You're incessant whining?

RAINIE
What voice?

Crunch!

THE PLANT
Blue note. Top Drawer.

Val watches how no one reacts. They don't hear it.

VAL
Get out.

ED
What's going on?

VAL
Please, just leave.

He looks to Mirren with the box.

VAL (CONT'D)
Take it. Take whatever you want.

She pulls other items from the bookcase, including a thick worn journal. She walks over to the mantle and swoops up the whiskey.

Val races out of the room.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOME - FOYER - NIGHT

Rainie follows after him. She notices Mirren's left her coat. She pauses in debate for a second and follows Val up the stairs.

Ed enters, reaches an arm out to Rainie.

RAINIE
Mirren left her coat!

Ed drops his hand in defeat.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Val locks the door and sinks to the ground.

There's a knock.

RAINIE (O.S.)

Please, honey. Just talk to me. I promise I'll just listen.

VAL

Mom, please! I just need to be alone.

RAINIE (O.S.)

You said you heard something. A crunch?

VAL

I was lying okay. I just wanted some space. Mirren was annoying me. Please just--go home.

RAINIE (O.S.)

Val I--I'm here for you okay.

Val hits head against the door in frustration.

VAL

Okay. Bye.

RAINIE (O.S.)

Goodnight. Bye.

EXT. VAL'S AND CALLUM'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ed jogs to the yard between Val and Mirren's houses.

ED

Mirren, wait.

Mirren whips around, pissed still.

ED (CONT'D)

You forgot this.

He places the coat over her shoulders quickly, afraid of her fiery gaze a bit.

MIRREN

He's still my son.

Ed nods, nervous.

ED
Always.

MIRREN
I've been patient with him.

ED
Don't be.

Mirren tilts her head, surprised.

MIRREN
Tell Rainie I said thanks for
dinner.

ED
Feel free to steal Val's leftovers.
I never want to clean out his
freezer again.

Rainie exits putting on her coat and hiking her mega-purse up
her arm.

RAINIE
Night.

MIRREN
Night.

Rainie holds out a hand, she does not want to hear him speak.
He knows better, and hands her the car keys.

INT. RAINIE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

She gets into the driver's seat and take off just barely
after his door closes.

RAINIE
"He's not yours alone to keep."

ED
Mirren is his mother.

RAINIE
He knows that.

ED
No, you know that. And yet you
still coddle him. Aren't you tired.
He has to learn on his own--

RAINIE

Support him. Which I can't do if we
take a goddamn vacation.

Ed shuts up as Rainie makes a sharp turn.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Val leans against the door still.

VAL

I am not crazy. I am not crazy. I
am not crazy.

He peeks at the plant. Crunch!

THE PLANT

Blue Note. Top Drawer.

Val's eyes widen and he releases a shaky breath. He gets a
look of determination. He opens the door.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Val races throughout the entire house opening every single
top drawer. He goes crazy in frustration as each one does not
reveal a blue note.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOME - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Val sulks back to his bed, panting. He looks at the dresser
and his night stand. He launches in again. Nothing. He
SCREAMS. Mid-scream he looks over at Callum's night stand.

He awkwardly crosses the bed, plant and urn in hand.

He places them down on the nightstand. He hets on his knees
before the dresser.

VAL

Just open it. If it's not there,
you're crazy. And you should get
some help. If it's there...it's
Callum.

Val slides open the top drawer. He bites his lip and then
braves a look inside. It's full of random pictures and knick
knacks. He shoves through pictures of Callum and him, Callum
and friends, one of Callum and Mirren.

Then, he finds it. A blue sticky note, crinkled in the back.

Val yanks it out. He closes his eyes for a second.

VAL (CONT'D)
Whatever it is, I love you.

THE PLANT
Blue Note. Top Drawer.

Val opens his eyes and the palms of his hands to read the note.

The blue note: Go on a trip with me. #702-277-0896

Val mouths it over and over. He scrunches his eyebrows.

VAL
(disdain)
A trip?

Val paces the bedroom.

INT. MIRREN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The post cards lay out on the circular wooden table. Mirren's feet follow the spiral of the Gonbad design on the rug as she paces.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOME - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Val sets down the plant and urn on the bathtub ledge. He rips off his clothes in frustration and hops in the shower.

VAL
A trip? You know I don't like
traveling! I don't--I don't
understand.

He looks over at The Plant.

THE PLANT
Blue Note. Top Drawer.

VAL
There has to be more. Is there
another blue note in the top
drawer?

Val jumps out of the shower.

INT. MIRREN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

She picks up one card. She reads it and smiles sadly.

MIRREN

Love, Callum. P.S. Water the plant.

She picks up another and notices the same sign off. She notices one with a gold star.

MIRREN (CONT'D)

"Amira and I saw the shaman today.
Apparently we're twin flames."
Who's Amira?

Mirren examines the postcards. She finds another card with a star. And then one more. She reads them closely. Both mention Amira.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S HOME - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

This time Val, soaking wet in a towel, tears through the drawer, throwing out everything that isn't a blue note. The drawer is now empty.

VAL

What else, Callum? What else do you
want to say to me?!

His hands touch the scrunched up note on the ground. He stares at the number. He notices the picture underneath of Callum and Mirren, he forcefully slides it away. Then he sees a picture of him and Callum. His eyes tear up.

VAL (CONT'D)

You know how I feel about
traveling.

INT. VAL'S SHOWER - CONTINUOUS

Val watches the water swirl down his body into the drain. Sat on the tub's ledge is The Plant and The Urn. He squats low and touches the brown stem.

PLANT ONE

Blue Note. Top Drawer.

Val closes his eyes. The sounds of the rain hitting his back and Callum's voice surround him.

INT. VAL'S SHOWER - FLASHBACK

Val rinses soap from his eyes.

VAL
Hurry help! It stings.

Callum laughs and opens the shower curtain.

CALLUM
How'd you manage to do that?

VAL
Stop laughing!

CALLUM
I'm helping.

And he is. He gently cups water into his hands and rinses Val's eyes. After a few cup fulls, he wipes the excess water from the inner corners to the outer corners.

CALLUM (CONT'D)
You sure you can't come to Morocco
with me?

VAL
Don't you like it when you come
home to me?

CALLUM
(masking disappointment)
I love anything that involves you.

Val smiles and Callum thumbs the water at his lips.

Callum caresses his cheek. With his eyes still closed, Val leans into the touch. Callum kisses him softly on each cheek, the nose, the lips. Water trickles onto him, cascades over the pair as his head comes to rest onto Val's.

VAL
Thank you.

Callum pulls back to look at Val. Green eyes eager and yearning.

CALLUM
Open your eyes.

Val opens his eyes.

END FLASHBACK

INT. MIRREN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mirren holds the three starred postcards to her chest.

Her eyes water. She squeezes her eyes shut to keep from crying. She takes a deep breath and opens her eyes. She runs her fingers over the cobalt ink.

MIRREN

I'll pack my bags.

Val stares hard at the urn. His body sags.

VAL

I can't.

He shuts the shower off and wraps his towel securely around his waist. Val scoops up The Urn and The Plant and hops out of the shower.

He exits the bathroom, slipping on a little puddle.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

On the freezer door, a sticky note reads: No more casserole baby. Love, Mom.

Val attempts to open the fridge with his elbow grooved in the slender door handle. He fails. He debates whether to set down The Urn or The Plant. He sets down The Urn.

Val opens the fridge and takes out the pots and pans of leftovers. He chooses the mac and cheese casserole.

Under the tinfoil covering the casserole there is a note: eat some greens and meat too.

Val groans. He preheats the oven and puts the casserole and meat in there. Doorbell RINGS. He ignores it and puts the pot of greens on the stove.

He picks up The Urn, then slops down with it and The Plant on the floor. Doorbell RINGS, again.

He hits his head back against the wall as the oven slowly preheats. The Plants makes the CRUNCH sound.

THE PLANT

Blue Note. Top Drawer.

VAL

I did not sleep well. Thanks for asking though.

THE PLANT
Blue Note. Top Drawer.

VAL
Agreed. Your mom is the worst--

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK.

Val jolts to see Mirren at his small kitchen window.

VAL (CONT'D)
Yeah?!

Mirren shouts something, but it's muffled. She waits for his response.

VAL (CONT'D)
Okay, whatever!

Mirren shouts something else and gestures towards The Urn.

VAL (CONT'D)
I said the deal is off!

She slams a postcard on the window. He straightens up. She makes an "mhm, that's what I thought" face.

Val scrambles up to the window and opens it.

VAL (CONT'D)
Give those back.

MIRREN
Three of these postcards mention a woman named Amira.

Val tries to snatch it but Mirren holds it back.

VAL
Are you really that bored Mirren?

MIRREN
My son was very giving of his love.
It's the "hippie" way.

Val leans deeper into the window.

VAL
He'd never cheat on me!

MIRREN
I'm leaving to find Amira. I'm sure she'll know where he wants to be scattered.

VAL

All she'll know is how smothering
of a mom you are. Where are the
postcards addressed from anyway?

Mirren grits her teeth.

MIRREN

You seem to see yourself as his all
knowing God, you'll figure it out.

She walks away. Val tugs himself from the window.

VAL

Mirren! Where are they from?!

EXT. MIRREN'S HOUSE - DAY

Val sneaks over, The Urn and The Plant in each hand. Through
her kitchen window, Val sees Mirren packing a suitcase.

Val steams up.

He sees the postcard on the kitchen table. He squints, but
can't make it out. He shoves the urn under his elbow and digs
his phone from his pocket and tries zooming in to take a
look. Still blurry.

Mirren enters the kitchen, he ducks. He hits his phone on his
head in frustration then pauses when he hears The Plant
CRUNCH.

THE PLANT

Blue note. Top Drawer.

He digs the blue note from his pocket. He dials the number.

He tries to get a better look at the postcards.

Omar (V.O.)

Yo. Namaste.

Mirren comes back into view and he ducks. Val whispers
throughout the phone call.

VAL

...namaste. Is this Amira?

OMAR (V.O.)

Tony, I told you to stop doing
these dumb ass prank calls! I take
my shit seriously, man.

VAL
This isn't Tony. I'm Val. Uhhh,
Callum's husband. Callum Vass.

OMAR (V.O.)
(sad)
Yooo.

Mr. Brinestone, walking his cat, peers at Val from the sidewalk. Val offers a wave. Mr. Brinestone shakes his head, yanking his cat along.

VAL
My husband was supposed to take
some trip. You know anything about
that?

OMAR (V.O.)
Respect and all, but I can't be
sharing personal business on an
empty stomach.

VAL
I've got food!

OMAR (V.O.)
What you got?

VAL
Greens, turkey legs, mac n cheese--

OMAR (V.O.)
Bet! What's the addy?

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S KITCHEN

OMAR (27) a hustler and buddhist chows down on Val's leftovers. Val picks at the casserole.

Omar takes a gulp of water and clears his throat loudly. He looks at The Urn on the table.

OMAR
It's just look at that urn bro, so
small. And you know Callum he was
mad big. Like his life, bro, his
life was big. He was doing shit.

Val nods.

VAL
So you, Callum and... Amira had
some trip planned?

OMAR

Amira, man! That's a beautiful woman!

Val gets tense.

OMAR (CONT'D)

Those two were dynamo.

Omar digs into his bag.

VAL

What was their dynami--

Omar takes out weed and mushroom collection.

OMAR

(hands in prayer position)
The Mother bares her healing leaves
and we suckle on her peaceful
powers.

VAL

What the hell, you brought drugs
into my house! Oh--that is not the
kind of trip--

OMAR

--Relax, bro. The weed is legal. So
we'll start with shrooms. Callum
and Amira thought it would be best
to launch in, smoke a little of my
magic MJ and we'll be flying highh.

Val head dips low, almost touching his casserole.

VAL

Please get your drugs and leave.

OMAR

Aight. One thing, your plant can't
breathe in that glass, bro. What
you gotta do is--

VAL

Leave!

OMAR

Don't you want to hear his voice
again?

Val lefts his head up.

OMAR (CONT'D)
I only grow the best. I take my
business seriously. Plus! I'll
guide you through the whole thing.

VAL
We start with the what again?

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S - LIVING ROOM - LATER

The room is smoky. Val and Omar sit atop the coffee table.

The Plant and The Urn between them.

VAL
I can fucking feel it. She was
always jealous. And now she's
bringing up this Amira shit.

Omar nods slowly, blissed out.

OMAR
Yeah man, but what's *he* saying?

Omar points to The Urn. Val's eyes widen.

VAL
You can hear him?

Omar cups his ears. Val touches the leaf. The Plant CRUNCHES.

THE PLANT
Blue Note. Top Drawer.

Omar rears back!

OMAR
That plant is SCREAMING bro. What'd
you do to it?

VAL
Nothing. I didn't--

OMAR
Bro, it's yel-ling. Crunch, crunch!
I got like super hearing. I swear I
can hear Earth orbiting.

Val leans in, interested.

OMAR (CONT'D)
Rule one. Stay Grounded. Rule Two--

Omar rolls off the table with a THUD and presses his face into the wood floor. His hand cup his ears.

VAL
How are you able to hear--

OMAR
Rule two! Perk them ears. Watch me,
I'll tell you what Earth sound
like.

Omar accidentally pushed The Urn closer to The Plant. Val's eyes widen.

VAL
Stay grounded...

He sneaks a look to Omar, but his eyes are closed and ears are listening.

VAL (CONT'D)
Tell me where Amira is Callum.

Val opens the urn and begins to pour ashes into The Plant. Something white pokes out.

He leans over and looks inside.

VAL (CONT'D)
Shit. Shit.

He's face to face with a fragment of jaw bone. He gags.

OMAR
(not moving)
Rule three, you gotta stay quiet.

VAL
(choking down a gag)
Right.

He lifts the urn back up. Tears pour from his eyes and land on the jaw bone.

OMAR
You can't perk them ears if you're
not quiet. The rules are in flow,
bro.

VAL
(whispers)
Stay grounded.

He pushes the jaw bone with his index finger deep under the ashes. He closes the lid. Val holds The Urn tight to his chest.

VAL (CONT'D)
(whispers)
Perk my ears.

He wipes his eyes, smearing ashes underneath. He tries to suppress his cries.

OMAR
Yo, the earth is mad loud today.
Can you hear anything?

Val looks at the Plant.

VAL
No, I cant--

Crunch. Omar lifts his head up toward the Plant.

THE PLANT
Mom's house. Star cards.

Omar smiles wide.

OMAR
Crunch, crunch bro.

EXT. MIRREN'S HOUSE - DAY

BANG BANG BANG! Val is at Mirren's door sweating with the Urn and Plant. The door, already cracked open, flies forward. Mirren stands, bewildered, with some bags.

MIRREN
Are you fucking crazy!?

She pushes past him and puts them in her car. Val follows. Omar listens to the earth Mirren's driveway.

VAL
Show me the cards!

Mirren ignores him and walks back into the house. Val follows slamming the door behind him

INT. MIRREN'S HOUSE - DAY

OMAR (O.S.)
Ahhh, my ears.

VAL
The trip is for me!

MIRREN
Is that what you do all day? Get high and cry.

VAL
Callum told me! He told me about the star on the card.

MIRREN
I showed you a card with a star on it!

Val pauses, unsure of how to proceed.

VAL
It's just a fun game. It's just a trip. He told me he wanted me to go, but he knows--he knows I don't travel.

MIRREN
This card tells me he knows exactly where he wants to be, and whoever this Amira woman is, she knows too.

VAL
Well, you can't spread the ashes without The Urn.

Mirren pushes Val. He trips and tries to save The Plant but it crashes to the ground.

Mirren catches The Urn. Val begins to hyperventilate, trying to scoot the soil/ash mixture together. He looks up to see Mirren with The Urn.

She races out! Omar races in!

OMAR
Look what I found!

Omar holds a medium sized pot.

EXT. MIRREN'S DRIVEWAY

Mr. Brinestone appears behind her vehicle.

MR. BRINESTONE
I told you two to stop all that goddamn noise!

Mirren rolls down the window and leans out!

MIRREN
Get from behind the car!

MR. BRINESTONE
This is a quiet neighborhood and we
don't need--

Mirren revs her engine. Mr. Brinestone is startled.

MR. BRINESTONE (CONT'D)
H-how dare you! I'm calling--

Val runs outside with The Plant in the new pot and Omar
cheering him on from behind.

OMAR
Breathe! Be free!

Mirren rolls up the window just before Val reaches it. He
slams on the driver's window!

VAL
Give me The Urn, Mirren!

Omar covers his ears from all the sound. Mr. Brinestone
fidgets with his cell phone.

Omar grabs Brinestone's hand and places a joint in it. Mr.
Brinestone's eyes widen.

MR. BRINESTONE
I'm calling the police, the
neighborhood watch, the HOA--

Val walks around to the back of the car. He picks up a
shocked Mr. Brinestone and moves him to the side.

Mirren begins to back out but Val opens the trunk and DIVES
in.

INT. MIRREN'S CAR - DAY

Val climbs his way to the front.

MIRREN
Get out of my car!

VAL

Amira means NOTHING to him and this little trip is going to prove you are nothing more than an overbearing mother--

Mirren slam the breaks and Val flies forward, hitting his head on the dashboard.

VAL (CONT'D)

I'm not getting out, so you can keep on driving.

He looks at The Urn strapped to her.

VAL (CONT'D)

What do you think--this Amira person is some long lost lover--

MIRREN

I like my car rides silent.

VAL

He loved me, Mirren. Get over it--

Val's phone rings. It's Rainie.

VAL (CONT'D)

Hey, mom. No, I'm actually with Mirren...no we're not fighting.

There's a long pause.

VAL (CONT'D)

We're going on a trip to umm...

Mirren gives him a look.

MIRREN

Utah.

Val's eyes widen.

VAL

Utah! And we're driving!

MIRREN

Oi, you think you can handle flying?

VAL

No, yeah everything's okay. I'm fine.

(MORE)

VAL (CONT'D)
Yeah, actually if you wouldn't
mind. Okay, thank you. Bye.

Val hangs up.

VAL (CONT'D)
She needs me to text her the
address. She's gonna bring my
things. Are you sure it's Utah, I
don't remember Callum ever
mentioning--

Mirren motions towards the center console. The postcard has
been there the entire time. It has a Utah address. Val looks
sheepish as he picks it up.

A quote from the postcard: I met someone interesting today.
Her name is Amira.

Val tosses the postcard back on the console.

VAL (CONT'D)
And what if she's not in Utah?

Mirren notions to another postcard that mentions Amira.

MIRREN
Then we go to Colorado. We go to
every place he mentioned her in the
postcards. And I gotta tell you,
they traveled a lot together.

Val shuts up.

INT. VAL AND CALLUM'S BEDROOM - DAY

Rainie packs Val's stuff in suitcase. Ed sits at the end of
the bed.

ED
This is not what I meant when I
said you needed to take a vacation.

RAINIE
I've always wanted to go to Utah.

ED
You've always wanted to go to Bora
Bora.

RAINIE
Close enough.

Ed wraps his arms around Rainie.

ED

What kind of grown man leaves his house without his wallet or at least his keys?

RAINIE

One we've raised apparently.
(a beat)
He's spontaneous.

Ed gives her a look.

ED

He's a 35 year old man whose parents have his spare key.

Rainie pulls away and continues to pack.

ED (CONT'D)

It's Utah, Rainie. Why are you packing his whole life up?

RAINIE

Look, he's going. And he needs this stuff, okay? We'll go, drop it off and then you can help me abandon our son.

Ed shakes his head. As Rainie exits to the bathroom.

ED

If they even make it to Utah. That's half a days drive. They couldn't even do a half a dinner.

RAINIE

They can take stops along the way.

Rainie zips up the suitcase.

INT. MIRREN'S CAR - DAY

VAL

Please, Mirren, Please! I cannot "hold it" anymore!

MIRREN

You're a grown man! We are not stopping.

VAL
Well I didn't know I would be in
the car for--

MIRREN
We'll be in St. George in 20
minutes!

VAL
I've got 20 seconds!

MIRREN
Well then why don't you dump that
sorry excuse of a plant and pee in
there.

VAL
Don't! Don't talk about Ca-- my
plant.

MIRREN
There's nothing to talk about. That
thing is about as dead as
well...Callum.

The two quiet and think on this for a second. Val gives a guilty, suspicious look to Mirren. Her eyes stare straight ahead, hands rigid on the steering wheel.

EXT. RED HILLS DESERT GARDEN, ST. GEORGE, UTAH - DAY

A KID (12) with purple spiked hair and really cool purple nikes watches as Val BURSTS out of Mirren's car! Val races out of the parking lot toward the bathrooms.

Visitors of the park gawk at him and The Plant he carries.

INT. MIRREN'S CAR - DAY

Mirren unbuckles and places The Urn in the passenger seat. She picks up the postcard.

MIRREN
Please be here.

She looks up to take a look at the Garden entrance.

She makes eye contact with the Kid. He looks bored and annoyed. Mirren looks at him fondly, recognizing a trouble maker.

He catches her gaze. Mirren smiles. The Kid, creeped out, flips her off. Mirren's smile drops and she flips him off.

INT. RED HILLS GARDEN BATHROOM - DAY

Val pees. The Kid walks in and pees in the urinal beside him. He looks at the dead plant in Val's hand.

KID
Did you steal that from here?

VAL
...no.

The Kid smiles, not believing Val.

KID
Cool.

They continue to pee. Val looks down and is disappointed he's still peeing.

KID (CONT'D)
Why'd you steal a dead plant?

VAL
It's not dead.

KID
You're lame. It's totally dead.

VAL
You and your stupid purple mohawk
is lame!

The Kid turns towards him fuming and begins to piss all over Val.

KID
Fuck you, dead plant carrying
loser.

Val tries to run, but is still peeing. He hops down the line of urinals, trying to block his face.

VAL
(gagging)
Oh god! Please, stop. No!

The Kid shakes dry and leaves, without washing his hands. Val stands frozen. Pee drips from him. He looks down, he's finished peeing. He zips himself up.

He goes to the sink and rapid fire PUMPS the soap dispenser 23 times.

EXT. RED HILLS GARDEN PARK - FISH VIEWING AREA - DAY

People give Mirren pitiful looks as she walks along the Virgin River with The Urn.

She watches as a Flannelmouth Sucker Fish swims lazily on the far end.

The Kid runs up beside her to look at the fish.

KID

You can't dump that in there.

Mirren frowns, recognizing the purple-haired bird flipper.

MIRREN

I'm sure if I can dump you, I can dump this.

The Kid clucks his tongue in annoyance and walks off to keep up with his family.

Mirren looks back for the lazy Flannelmouth Sucker Fish. It's gone.

VAL (O.S.)

Find Amy, yet?

Val walks up beside Mirren.

MIRREN

It's Amira. You smell like piss.

Val smells his shirt and winces.

VAL

Let me hold The Urn while you search.

MIRREN

So you can ditch me once your parents get here?

VAL

You had him the whole drive.

Mirren begins to walk. Val groans.

VAL (CONT'D)
 Amira! Anybody here named Amira!
 No? Does Callum Vass ring a bell
 for anyone?!

Val, drenched in sweat, throws an annoyed glance to Mirren.

MIRREN
 Real mature, Val.

VAL
 Says the woman who's literally
 holding MY DEAD HUSBAND HOSTAGE!

MIRREN
 You mean the woman WHO LOST HER SON
 TO A SAD ASSHOLE.

VAL
 You know what? Cancer is a sad
 asshole!

EDGAR
 Uh, hi there folks.

EDGAR (47), the type of guy that knows everything for
 absolutely no reason.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
 I see we're having some familial
 issues. Would you like to resolve
 them in the Ranger Office?

VAL
 Actually officer, I was hoping you
 could tell this woman to give me my
 husband's ashes.

EDGAR
 Oh I'm just a park rang--

MIRREN
 You can tell this fucker--

EDGAR
 PLEASE! Let's go to the office. We
 got coffee, tea, snacks.

Edgar ushers them.

INT. RANGER OFFICE - KITCHEN - DAY

MIRREN

I'm looking for a woman named
Amira.

Edgar hands Mirren coffee and Val his caffeine free tea.

EDGAR

Pretty popular name, Amira. You got
a last name to go with that?

MIRREN

I'm not sure.

VAL

And yet you're so sure she was
sleeping with my husb--

EDGAR

Oreos?

He tosses them each a pack.

EDGAR (CONT'D)

So first I would like to say I'm
sorry for your loss. Second,
unfortunately scattering ashes in
the park goes against code four in
the park's--

VAL

Sir, I have no intent to scatter my
husband's ashes.

MIRREN

Callum Vass. Do you know a Callum
Vass?

Edgar sits up.

EDGAR

Your son was Cal?

Val crunches on his Oreos a bit harder.

MIRREN

Yes!

EDGAR

Oh... Amira! Amira Bennani. Those
two!

Val's jealousy flares. Mirren gives a smug look to Val.

EDGAR (CONT'D)

Oh man, I'm sorry about your loss.

VAL

What exactly was she to him?--

MIRREN

--Thank you. Where can we find her?
My son wrote about her in all these
postcards. I was heading to
Colorado next if she isn't here.
But if you know where she is--

RAINIE (O.S.)

I'm looking for my son. His name is
Val. Val Henson. No--no, he's 35!

Val and Mirren turn towards the door.

EDGAR

(to Val)

That's you right?

Val waves a dismissive hand.

VAL

Were they just photography buddies
or were they you know--

RAINIE

Do you know where she is? Is she in
Colorado? I have all these
postcards of places they went
together and--

Rainie bursts through the door.

RAININE

I told you I heard my son's voice!

Rainie breaths a sigh of relief and then marches over to Val.

RAINIE

Why didn't you pick up your phone?

VAL

We were trying to figure out--

MIRREN

Where Amira is.

ED

Who's Amira? And what happened to your tires? Are you guys okay?

VAL

She's no one.

MIRREN

She's Callum's
(spiteful glance to Val)
possible lover, and will know where to bury Callum's ashes. Wait what's wrong with my tires? Val, what did you do?

RAINIE

Possible lover? Ed, did you know about this?

VAL

(to Mirren)
How would I know?

ED

(to Rainie)
How would I know about that?

VAL (CONT'D)

I've been stuck with you this whole damn time!

RAINIE

I know you and Callum were close.

ED

Not close enough to tell me if he was cheating on my son.

MIRREN

Well, I still don't know why you smell like piss.

ED

Val, why do you smell like piss?

RAINIE

Jesus, Val.

EDGAR

I have Amira's number.

Everyone turns to look at Edgar.

INT. RANGER OFFICE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

The family surround the table and Edgars phone as it RINGS.

Val wipes away sweat from his brow. Mirren squints hard at the phone.

AMIRA (O.S.)
Edgar?!

EDGAR
Amira, hi!

AMIRA (O.S.)
What a delightful surprise. I'm so happy to hear your voice.

EDGAR
It's been to long. Actually guess who I'm here with?

AMIRA (O.S.)
Oh, wh--

VAL
Callum's husband. Val.

AMIRA
Val! Oh my goodness.

MIRREN
And his mother. Mirren.

AMIRA
Oh wow!

MIRREN
Look, my son obviously cared about you, did he ever mention--

VAL
But obviously he cared about you in a total different way than he cares about me--

MIRREN
--Where he wants to be scattered?

AMIRA
Oh, wow. Callum didn't ever think you two would take this trip.

VAL
What do you mean? You know about this.

AMIRA

The star cards. Although, it's been a year. So I'm not exactly in the last place of the star cards. Was it Maine?

Mirren looks at the cards.

MIRREN

Yeah, yeah it was Maine.

AMIR

We did discuss his ashes scattered here, but he didn't think...well he didn't think you'd guys get this far. And I was supposed to bring you all here once you got to Maine.

MIRREN

Where exactly is here?

AMIRA

Morocco.

VAL

Fuuuuuck.

EXT. MIRREN'S CAR

They all look at Mirren's tires.

RAINIE

Who would do this?

Mirren looks at Val, who starts raising his middle finger but Ed clamps his fist over it to lower.

A van pulls out of the parking lot, the Kid in the back window flips Mirren and Val off with a pocket knife in-between his fingers.

Mirren grits her teeth. Val balls his fist, then steadies his breath.

VAL

I'm going to Morocco.

Ed looks at his son in disbelief.

MIRREN

Perfect, I need a ride to the airport as well.

Ed looks at Rainie. Val looks at his parents with a plea.

VAL
(to Mirren)
Why don't you Uber?

Rainie smacks Val. She gives Ed a nod. Ed turns to Mirren.

ED
Of course.

Val groans.

INT. ED'S CAR - DAY

Rainie sings along to an old school R&B song. Ed taps to the beat on the steering wheel.

Mirren reads the other postcards she brought along. The Plant in his lap, Val eyes The Urn.

VAL
How can you trust someone that
sounds that cheery?

MIRREN
Please don't talk to me.

Mirren stacks the postcards and fans herself. Rainie turns and peaks into the backseat.

RAINIE
Just booked our flights.

ED
Our what?

RAINIE
It's the vacation you've always
wanted me to take.

ED
We don't have our passports or
anything.

Rainie pats her oversized purse.

RAINIE
Got your medications, spare glasses
and our toothbrushes too.

Val stays focused on Mirren. Mirren gives a nod of thanks to Rainie as she adjusts her A/C vent.

ED

What's the cancellation policy?

Rainie settles back in her seat.

RAINIE

I thought you wanted me to relax
Ed. These questions are not helping
me relax.

ED

Rocco Rocco here we come.

MIRREN

Ed can you turn up the A--

VAL

--So you're going to fly across the
world to a woman you've never even
met, so she can scatter your son's
ashes in a place you don't even
know.

ED

It's at full speed.

Mirren groans and rolls up her sleeves.

VAL

If you think you know your son so
well, why do you think he didn't
tell you?

MIRREN

Did he tell you?

Mirren unbuttons her shirt with a desperate intensity.

VAL

He's not having an affair. Callum
loves me! He would never--

MIRREN

Shut the fuck up Val!

Mirren is fully flushed she begins to strip her clothes off
in a rushed panic.

VAL

What are you doing? Put your
clothes back on.

Ed looks at them through the rearview, but quickly adverts his eyes. Rainie turns back to see Mirren stripping off her clothes.

VAL (CONT'D)
Okay, you win! I'll shut up.

Mirren is stripped to her bra.

MIRREN
I have to take these pants off.

VAL
Please don't.

Rainie reaches down into her mega-purse and pulls out cooling packs.

RAINIE
Put these on Mirren. Turn up the
A/C Ed.

ED
It's all the way up, sweetheart.

Rainie throws him a glare for his tone. Mirren runs them all over her body but it's not enough. She begins to yank off her pants.

VAL
You think this is going to make me
shut up?

MIRREN
I've given up hope in you shutting
up.

VAL
I know why you so easily trust this
woman. You're desperate! You don't
even know your son's final wishes.

Mirren shoves Val to his window and plants her body directly in front of the A/C vent.

MIRREN
You can't even leave the country
for him. You couldn't then, and
you're fooling yourself if you
think you'll actually step on that
plane now!

VAL
I got a passport!

MIRREN

It took you five years to get that passport.

VAL

You know why he didn't tell you about Amira? Probably because he wanted for once not to be smothered by you. You traveled around the world so he couldn't find any meaningful connections outside of you.

MIRREN

You're the one that kept him tethered to that house. Do you think he'd actually come back for you if you didn't keep him so tight on the leash?

ED

God, give me a sign.

The gas signal DINGS.

RAINIE

There's your sign, sweetheart.

EXT. GAS STATION

Ed leans against the car, mentally exhausted as he waits for the gas to fill. Rainie walks out of the car.

RAINIE

I'm going to get some snacks.

ED

You don't have any in that purse?

RAINIE

I don't have any patience for you either.

Ed closes his eyes as Rainie sashays away.

INT. ED'S CAR

Mirren finishes dressing and is about to grab The Urn.

VAL

Where would I go?

Mirren hesitates.

MIRREN

Only because I know you'd leave me,
but never your mom. Not if you want
to live.

VAL

Fair.

Mirren exits the car without The Urn. Val watches her walk
away and then immediately grabs The Urn.

VAL (CONT'D)

I've missed you.

He hugs it tight.

VAL (CONT'D)

I need you to tell me if Morocco is
really the next place for me.

Val opens The Urn. He peaks at his dad. Ed's back is to the
car.

Val pours the remaining ashes into The Plant's pot except for
the jaw bone. He places the Urn back.

Val yanks a half bottle from Mirren's side of the car and
pours it into the pot.

VAL (CONT'D)

(meditative, desperate)
Stay grounded. Perk them ears.
Quiet.

Val touches the brown leaves. Rainie and Mirren's voice begin
to carry. Val peaks open his eyes and then quickly caresses
The Plant in various places until--crunch!

THE PLANT

Amira. Morocco.

Val sinks into his seat as Mirren and Rainie enter. Rainie
tosses him a pack of chips, he fails to catch.

INT. AIRPORT - INTERNATIONAL CHECK-IN - DAY

Rainie hands out the boarding passes to each of them.

ED

I don't think you can take the
plant, Val.

VAL
It's my personal item.

INT. AIRPORT - TSA LINE - DAY

Mirren and Val's parents take off their shoes. Rainie plops her mega-purse into a bin. Mirren places The Urn in a bin.

AGENT 1
I'm sorry for your loss, ma'am.

Mirren nods thanks. She enters the body scanner.

VAL
I have to take off my shoes?

Ed nods his head. Mirren turns her head to look at Val and people look at him strangely. AGENT 2 (tired, overworked) walks over to Val.

AGENT 2
Plants must travel with bare roots.

AGENT 1
Ma'am please face forward.

VAL
No, it needs the soil.

AGENT 2
You can repot at your next destination.

AGENT 3, a bit too serious even for a TSA agent, walks up with hands on her hips.

AGENT 3
The plants dead, you can't travel with dead plants.

VAL
It's not dead!

ED
Val, just dump the plant. We don't have time for this.

VAL
I can't just DUMP him--

RAINIE
Val calm down sweetie.

VAL

NO!

Rainie pulls her head back from his tone.

AGENT 2

Sir, we're going to need you to calm down or we'll have to apprehend you.

Val hugs The Plant to his chest.

VAL

You will not take him away from me.

The Agents step closer. Agent 3 looks at The Plant suspiciously.

AGENT 3

Sir is their anything in the plant?

VAL

N-no! It's just, it's mine!

Agent 3 squints, debating.

AGENT 3

Martinez take the plant.

Agent 2 tries to take the plant. Val tries to run but Agents 3 blocks him. Val fights against them and desperately clings onto the plant.

Rainie tries to touch his arm.

RAINIE

Just let it go, baby.

VAL

I can't! I can't!

ED

It's just a plant, son. Let it go.

VAL

It's not. It's-- It's Callum. It's Callum's plant.

Mirren looks on, empathy passes through her eyes.

Val continues to fight. He yanks on the pot, but it's RIPPED from him! He latches onto the plant itself. He rips away the spadix as he's SHOVED to the ground!

He yells and cries. He fights to reach toward The Plant.

VAL (CONT'D)
Please! Please! Don't--

The Agent 2 gets a nod from Agent 3. He dumps the plant, ash and all, in the trash.

Val lets out a silent SCREAM as his whole body shakes.

His palms SLAM on the ground.

EXT. DETAINMENT OFFICE - DAY

Val walks out in a numb state. Rainie immediately embraces him.

AGENT 2
Sorry for your loss. You just can't
act like that in an airport man.

Val's fist clenches onto the spadix.

INT. PLANE - DAY

PASSENGERS glare at Val, last to board, as directed to his seat beside Mirren.

Ed and Rainie tense.

RAINIE
How about we switch--

Val, vacant, scooches past Mirren into his seat.

Mirren pulls The Urn closer as he passes.

Val notices.

VAL
What kind of mother has to ask
another woman where to bury her
son?

Mirren's eyes water.

Val's chair CREAKS forward with every SHOVE of Rainie's megapurse under his seat.

Mirren hands over the urn to Val.

Val is shocked. Ed and Rainie peek over, shocked too.

MIRREN

I'd put his oxygen mask on first.

VAL

I'm sure you would.

MIRREN

You'd take his mask for yourself.

Val goes rigid, urn held tightly, as the plane takes off.

Ed takes the mega-purse and slides it under Mirren's seat.

EXT. MARRAKESH MENARA AIRPORT, MOROCCO - DAY

The new, colorful and busy country around Val and Mirren goes unseen by both. Both scan through the crowd.

Ed takes in the airport, an architectural masterpiece.

Rainie digs in her mega-purse.

Mirren looks at the photo of Amira on her phone.

Val looks over Mirren's shoulder at the photo.

VAL

This heat is fucking suffocating.

MIRREN

So you finally understand how we feel around you.

VAL

She's probably a catfish.

MIRREN

How'd you figure that... considering she actually knew him!

VAL

Going on trips doesn't mean she knew him! I knew--know him!

Rainie takes out a water. Hands it to Val.

RAINIE

Honey, drink this. Planes are super dehydrating.

VAL

I'm only dehydrated because Mirren forgot to wake me up every time the damn cart passed.

MIRREN

Wake you up? And risk having to hear you whine about every fucking--

AMIRA

Don't worry, Callum was able to heal here. And you will, too.

AMIRA (39), so emotionally open she makes you uncomfortable, rubs down her arms and casts a "net" of her energy over Val and Mirren.

Ed and Rainie step forward.

Amira sends them a disarming smile. They pause.

Val and Mirren look at the photo then to the beautiful woman, who wears a traditional Moroccan djellaba. It's her.

Amira's smile drops, looking at the urn. A hand to the urn.

Val pulls the urn back.

VAL

Did you sleep with my husband?

ED AND RAINIE

Val!

VAL

Yes or no? Are you or are not Amira?

AMIRA

Haha, yes I'm Amira. After traveling together and under all sorts of conditions, you end up sharing many beds together.

Val looks at the Urn in his hand with betrayal. He sinks to the ground. Rainie tries to keep him up, but he's too heavy. She sits on the ground with him.

Mirren holds a hand out. Amira takes it with both of hers.

AMIRA (CONT'D)

Mirren. He wanted me to show you the place Callum called home.

Val looks up, crushed.

VAL
Home?

MIRREN
I'm here to scatter his ashes.

AMIRA
Soon. First, Callum's Morocco.

EXT. JEMAA EL FNA SQUARE, MEDINA - DAY

It's busy. It's beautiful. It's the largest market in the world.

Mirren keeps an eye on Amira, who gracefully maneuvers through the crowd.

Val tries not to touch anyone and fails to return smiles.

Ed looks on in wonder but frowns when he notices Rainie, worried by an overwhelmed Val.

AMIRA
Fna or fana can mean death or extinction. Actually it's hypothesized that Jemaa el Fna's means "assembly of the dead." They used to spike heads of criminals and sinners.

Amira smiles back at the group.

AMIRA (CONT'D)
Good thing times have changed. Callum and I were quite the sinners.

VAL
(to himself)
Whatever you and Callum had going on, I can assure you he--he loved me more. So it is for me to say if we spread his ashes or not and we're not. And not here of all places.

AMIRA
We have quite bit to see before we say goodbye. Who's hungry?

Ed raises his hand.

RAINIE
I think I have some granola bars--

VAL
We'll eat on our plane ride back.

AMIRA
Nonsense. Look around you. Let's
feast.

Amira weaves through the crowd. They hastily follow after her. Val lags behind.

Amira hugs and gives money to KORI (57), a vendor and an excellent cook, in exchange for spicy merguez sausages.

They all chow down except Val who looks at it with distaste.

RAINIE
Honey, you need to eat.

VAL
I'm not hungry.

ED
Let him be.

AMIRA
Callum's favorite. Merguez
sausages. Careful, they are spicy.

VAL
Callum doesn't do spice.

MIRREN
You don't do spice.

AMIRA
Kori, this was Callum's dear friend
and his mother.

Mirren nods a distant hello.

VAL
Actually, I was his--

Kori shoves a straw in his mouth.

Val bats it away. Orange juice splashes on PISSED TOURIST.

VAL (CONT'D)
He was shoving it--

AMIRA
We're so sorry.

Kori hands over another cup.

KORI
Got excited. It was Callum's
favorite. Orange with cayenne.

MIRREN
He can barely handle black pepper.

Val defiantly SLURPS it down.

RAINIE
Slow down, sweetheart.

ED
Jesus, Val.

The cayenne enters! Val has a cough attack!

AMIRA
The yin to Callum's yang.

KORI
Here take the plain OJ.

VAL
How did you know my hus--

AMIRA
He was also a friend. Like me.

Val's face crumbles as he looks Kori up and down.

KORI
(seductive)
I showed Callum flavors he'd never
seen before.

Ed and Rainie clear their throat with second hand
embarrassment. Val balls up the side of his shirt.

VAL
I showed Callum flavors! W-we
experimented! I can handle the
spice!

ED
Didn't need to know that.

AMIRA

Callum used to be amazed at how someone so... grounded, could keep him on his toes.

MIRREN

How much longer until we scatter my son's ashes?

VAL

You cannot trust this woman!

AMIRA

I promise my tour of Callum's Morocco will ease your hearts and fill your bellies before our journey to say goodbye.

VAL

You guys can Eat Pray Love on your own.

Val stomps off! They follow after him. Val zig zags around ducking behind a Vendor's station. He loses them.

Val sweat intensified by his panic.

He twists open the urn.

VAL (CONT'D)

Tell me what to do Callum. They're gonna know.

He looks out again and spots the group searching for him. He crawls over to hide behind another station.

Soil spills out the open urn.

VAL (CONT'D)

Shit--

As he tops the Urn he notices red dust on his fingers.

He looks around from spice vendor to spice vendor, all have too many people. Then he spots cayenne sparkling under the sun. The station is empty. Val looks for the group. Coast is clear.

VAL (CONT'D)

How much?

VENDOR TWO

2 for a pound.

VAL
I have America-American money.

VENDOR TWO
No.

VAL
Please, please.

Vendor 2 swats his hand and pushes Val away.

Val goes from place to place. Val kneels in front of another Vendor.

VAL (CONT'D)
I only have American money but I
NEED your spice.

Vendor 3 squints at Val. He walks around him three times. He holds out a hand.

VENDOR 3
Let me see. Is it real?

Val shows him a 20 dollar bill.

VAL
Y-Yes!

Vendor 3 is skeptical. Val waits for his answer. He spots Mirren on the other side of the busy market! He ducks.

VENDOR 3
I'm going to whisper something and
if you can hear me, I'll take it.
Three chances.

VAL
What?! It's too lou--

Vendor 3 turns around, he whispers to himself. Val looks around, helpless. He spots his worried mother pushing through people, including Ed.

Vendor 3 turns back around.

VENDOR 3
What did I say?

VAL
I don't--I don't kn--

Vendor 3 turns back around. Val tries to calm his breathing as he for the first time seems to take in the chaos of the large souk (market).

Mirren locks eyes with him and starts heading over! Rainie spots him too, using her mega-purse to part the crowd.

Vendor 3 faces him, waiting for the answer.

VAL (CONT'D)
This isn't fair--

Vendor 3 turns again. Last chance.

Val sees an older woman resting with her eyes closed. A reminder.

VAL (CONT'D)
Close eyes. Perk them ears.

Val closes his eyes. His forehead tenses in concentration.

Nothing. He stands and then leans closer to Vendor 3. The man smiles and whispers.

VENDOR 3
Spice is life. Spice is life. Say
it twice. Ain't life nice.

It's all Val hears. Vendor 3 literally SCREAMS it.

VAL
Spice is life. Spice us life! Say
it twice! Ain't life nice!

Vendor 3 continues to sing. Val gives him the 20. Vendor 3 grabs a bag but Val hands him the urn. Vendor 3 makes a confused face, but is moved by the money and by Val still singing.

Val dances around to block thVendor filling the Urn. He sees Mirren squinting her eyes to get a peak. Rainie and Mirren converge and then are BLOCKED by a LARGE TOURIST GROUP.

Val cheers and faces the Vendor.

Vendor 3 fills the urn halfway. Stops.

VAL (CONT'D)
More.

VENDOR 3
20 is only half life.

Val searches his pockets for money. Nothing. He snatches the urn.

He goes back into the crowd. Amira grabs him.

AMIRA

There you are. We were worried about you.

She grabs his face. He tears his face away.

AMIRA (CONT'D)

You okay? You have to watch for pick pockets here. Plenty of scammers.

VAL

You're the scam. We had an actual life together.

AMIRA

Callum had many lives with many people.

The others catch up.

MIRREN

What were you doing?

VAL

Trying to escape her!

INT. AMIRA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Val leans against the wall as the others dig into the food that Amira continues to heap on their plates.

AMIRA

I'd make more, but--

RAINIE

Never enough time.

Amira smiles.

AMIRA

Exactly.

ED

Val, sit down. Standing over us while we eat is creepy.

VAL
I'm not hungry.

ED
Nobody told you to eat. Just sit
the hell down.

Val slumps into a seat.

VAL
I can't believe you are all just
sitting here, pretending it's
normal to eat this woman's food.

MIRREN
No one's saying it's normal. We
just all haven't eaten since the
plane.

VAL
You ate those sausages.

MIRREN
And you ate nothing. So shut up and
eat. The quicker you do, the
quicker you can leave the table.

VAL
What even is this? Goat?

RAINIE
It's chicken, Val. Eat.

AMIRA
Chicken tagine with dried apricots.
Callum used to eat 5 plates of it.

The group seems to appreciate the dish more. Val puts a fork
in.

AMIRA (CONT'D)
I have some popsicles from when he
was last here. You can help
yourself to them as well. Though
they are a bit freezerburnt.

ED
He won't mind.

EXT. BAHIA PALACE - ENTRANCE - DAY

Beautiful artisanal work of intricate designs of blue, green,
yellow and red. In the center is a ceramic fountain.

Val looks at palm trees in the far behind the large riad (square).

VAL

I bet those aren't even real.

AMIRA

You're right. We import them.
Nevada does the same, yes?

Val glares after her as she floats through the courtyard.

AMIRA (CONT'D)

Could you imagine dancing here?

VAL

I can't imagine doing anything in
this place.

AMIRA

Callum told me you love having
little dance parties in your living
room.

VAL

He told me nothing about you. Which
tells me you just want him here for
yourself.

AMIRA

To embrace him again. To see his
smile right before he does
something he know he shouldn't.

VAL

You've no shame! Rubbing your--
past together in my face.

AMIRA

I don't mean to. I'm just
saying...you know what Callum's
love is like.

VAL

Better than anyone.

AMIRA

Callum loved this place. I'm doing
my best, so you can see it through
his eyes.

VAL

I'm not interested in the places
you snuck around with my husband.

AMIRA

I think you'd like to see the place
we go to next. It's where we will
scatter his ashes after all.

RIGHT WALKWAY

Rainie walks between the white columns, keeping a worried eye
on Val. Ed LEAPS out from a column in front of her. Rainie
YELPS and slaps Ed's arm.

RAINIE

Ed! Stop playing around.

Ed motions to the palm trees behind the riad.

ED

Looks like a little Bora Bora came
to you.

Rainie is too busy watching Val look on edge.

RAINIE

Does Val seem a bit on edge since
the airport? I mean he got so upset
over a plant. Since when does he
like plants? He didn't even want a
dog as a kid.

Ed sinks, disappointed.

ED

Honey, it's Val.

Rainie tosses Ed a stern look. Then she looks after Val
again.

ED (CONT'D)

Look around you, Rainie. You're in
a freaking palace.

RAINIE

I'm looking, Ed.

Ed walks off annoyed. Rainie turns back to see he's gone. She
sighs and looks back to Val, but he's gone. She groans.

INT. GALLERY BAHIA PALACE - CONTINUOUS

Mirren examines the intricate carvings on the wooden doors.

MIRREN

The Sahara?

AMIRA

He said it was the one place he traveled that seemed to have a heartbeat. With everything so simple, it felt like there was room to breathe.

Amira watches her. This bothers Mirren and she moves to another door. Amira casually follows.

MIRREN

You loved my son?

AMIRA

We loved each other very deeply.

Mirren examines the marble floors. Amira scoops down to examine it closer. She smiles as she runs her hands over the smaller squares. She lifts her head.

AMIRA (CONT'D)

Look up.

Mirren ignores her and instead focuses her laser vision onto Amira.

MIRREN

You know this one thing. But no one knows my son like me.

Amira stays steady in her squat.

AMIRA

Callum used to mention that on his travels with you growing up, you had this habit of looking at the ground. He said in the forest, in the mountains, on the street, your eyes were trained to the ground. He always wondered what kind of relationship you would've had if you ever looked up.

Mirren freezes. Amira rises, eye to eye with Mirren.

MIRREN

I was a good mom.

AMIRA
(genuinely curious)
Why do you feel the need to tell me
that?

Mirren's fist fidget.

MIRREN
Because I don't need some hippie--

AMIRA
Oh, I don't subscribe to hippie--

MIRREN
I know my son!

AMIRA
I don't think he even knew himself
until the end. That's kind of why
we needed each other.

Mirren freezes.

Mirren looks up to control her tears. Her body relaxes as she
is stunned by the beautiful decorated ceiling.

Rainie enters the space.

RAINIE
Have you all seen Val?--

She notices Mirren crying.

AMIRA
I'll go look for him.

Rainie goes to stop her, but she's gone.

Rainie slowly walks up to Mirren. She pulls a tissue out of
her mega purse. Mirren takes it with a nod of thanks.

RAINIE
She's a trip.

Mirren laughs.

RAINIE (CONT'D)
I never met someone so proud of
their infidelity. I'm surprised Val
isn't completely off the deep end.

Mirren gives her a look. Rainie sighs.

RAINIE (CONT'D)
Yeah, he's been in the deep end.

MIRREN
I didn't think it would actually be true. I mean Callum...I know he--I know he loved him. He loved him very much.

Rainie looks at Mirren with shock. Then she sinks onto the ground. She settles her mega-purse beside her.

RAINIE
I think my kid is still a kid.

Mirren looks at Rainie and then sits beside her.

Mirren points to a stream of golden light coming through the ceiling's skylight. Rainie looks.

RAINIE (CONT'D)
Wow.

MIRREN
Yeah. Wish I'd looked sooner.

Rainie grabs her hand.

EXT. BAHIA PALACE - THE LITTLE RIAD - CONTINUOUS

Val stumbles into the garden. His face looks like he's made jackpot. He tries to appear inconspicuous as he touches leaves and examines their ceramic plots on the marble ground.

He parts through some plants. A TOURSIT enters his section and Val pretends to admire the stem of the plant.

Val walks around. When the coast is clear, he looks out again.

Val spots Ed and goes back into hiding.

He tries to avoid him. It's like a dance, until Val finally loses him. He opens the urn to just the jaw bone inside.

VAL
Just for now, Callum.

He scoops dirt into the urn.

ED (O.S.)
What the hell are you doing?!

Val jumps and drops the urn's lid. Ed stoops to pick it up.

ED (CONT'D)
You're putting dirt in your
husband's urn?

VAL
I'm not--

ED
If you're gonna lie son, at least
make it believable.

Val tops the urn. A guard-like type MAN approaches.

MAN
What do you think you are doing?

VAL
It's not what it looks like.

Ed shakes his head.

MAN
(pointing to Ed)
It is as this man said!

VAL
No--I put ashes into the soil.

MIRREN (O.S.)
You what!

Mirren rushes over and snatches the urn.

VAL
Callum loved this place.

MIRREN
How would you know?

MAN
Many people love this place. It's
beautiful.

VAL
Because I know him best! Callum
would have loved this.
He loved breaking the rules.

AMIRA
He really did.

They all turn toward Amira.

VAL
No one asked you, homewrecker!

Ed shakes his head.

RAINIE
There it is.

AMIRA
Oh my god! When you asked if we
slept together, did you mean like
have a sexual energy transference?

VAL
What the fuck is that? Did you or
did you not have sex with Callum--

Amira grabs the Man by the neck and kisses him deeply.

They are shocked.

AMIRA
Nader and I have been together
since we were 17.

VAL
Did you know about her and Callum?

NADER
I loved Callum, too.

VAL
You both slept with my husband?!

Amira BURSTS out LAUGHING. Nader laughs, too.

VAL (CONT'D)
Answer me.

AMIRA
Callum and I have never and I guess
I could say now as well, will never
have sex.

Amira gets sad. Nader rubs her arm with comfort.

NADER
I can't have sex with Callum,
either.

AMIRA
Callum and I...we just had a very
deep friendship.

VAL

No sex?

AMIRA

Do tongue-filled intimate kisses
count?

Val looks ready to burst.

AMIRA (CONT'D)

Kidding. No, sex. Just friends.
It's hard to find those these days
Just open ears and open hearts.

VAL

And you!

NADER

Friends. We met in New Zealand
2016. Almost died because of that
wee kiwi bird.

VAL

(back to Amira)

Just friends. No-- sexual touching?

AMIRA

No sexual touching. Soil in the
ashes though. That's nice. He would
have loved that.

VAL

Stop saying you'd know what he
likes!

AMIRA

I'm only sharing what he shared
with me.

Amira hands over her phone. Mirren GASPS!

CALLUM

(video)

Hey mom. You look strong and
beautiful as always.

Val shoots up and snatches the phone.

CALLUM (CONT'D)

Val, if you are seeing this... that
means you made it to Morocco.

Val weeps and cradles the phone.

CALLUM (CONT'D)

You stubborn fuck, you did it! I love you. Honestly, I wouldn't be surprised if my mom murdered you on the way here. Mom, I hope when you spread my ashes in the Sahara it's just my ashes. No! Suck it up Val you made it to Morocco! You can go a little further. Amira, your lovely guide and my dearest friend, will show you the way. And no, I did not have sex with her! I wish I could picture your cute jealous face. Love you, Mir. Maybe you'll learn a bit more about me. And maybe--anyways, I love you. And I hope you've managed to be okay. Hug each other for me. Oh and give Rainie and Ed a hug for me! Okay, bye.

Mirren turns away to collect herself. Ed places a hand on her shoulder. She nods thanks, but steps away from his comfort.

Rainie tries to pry the phone from Val's hands. Amira places a hand on Val's cheek which he recoils from.

VAL

How could you keep that from me!

AMIRA

He told me to wait until we the end of showing you around.

MIRREN

How are we getting to the Sahara?

Nader smiles.

INT. VAN - DAY (MOVING)

Val frowns on the bumpy ride. Nader drives a large black van rather recklessly with everyone on board. Amira is in the middle of a story.

AMIRA

It was the largest sand dune I've seen in my life, and Callum just had to capture it--

VAL

We already lived in a desert! We could just spread his ashes there.

MIRREN

Why can't we put him in the Sahara?
You just put his ashes in a
freaking garden. Without me.

VAL

It was just a little.

Val looks at Mirren's clothes. Then everyone's clothes. He looks down at himself. He wears traditional Moroccan funeral clothing. It's white.

VAL (CONT'D)

This is so tacky. In America we
wear black.

AMIRA

It's tradition in Morocco to wear
white to depart from the beloved.

ED

Welcome to Morocco, Val.

AMIRA

Shall I continue the story?

MIRREN

Yes, please.

VAL

No.

ZOEY (34), smart, wild and blunt, turns around from the front passenger seat.

ZOEY

Oh, but this is the best part! It's
how Callum, Amira and I met.

VAL

Who the fuck are you?

RAINIE

Val, manners. This is Zoey. She's
our pilot.

ZOEY

Which brings us back to Callum.

AMIRA

I told him the wind would be too
strong to take photos off the
helicopter's ladder but--

NADER
Never listens.

Mirren leans in, smiling, interested.

ZOEY
To you! Because you had the dumb
idea he should hang off it upside
down.

AMIRA
Thank goodness he didn't listen to
you, but he did still fall.

ZOEY
A little dot!

NADER
Rolling and rolling--

MIRREN
(realization)
That's how he broke that camera.

ZOEY
Oh man, he was so scared to tell
you.

MIRREN
I got so angry. I didn't listen. I
thought it was his way of telling
me he didn't want to be like me
anymore.

Amira grabs her hand.

AMIRA
You're the reason he has so many
great stories. He loved how brave
you were and I think his
photographs were his way of showing
you he was the same.

NADER
Wait tell us about the crocodile
shot when you guys were in Perth.
He said you sang to it?!

MIRREN
He told you about that?

VAL
(dismissive)
Everyone's heard that story.

Mirren sinks.

AMIRA
I'd like to hear it, again.

EXT. HELICOPTER

Val shouts as he's helped onto the helicopter.

VAL
We could just bury the urn.

MIRREN
You had your chance to bury him a
year ago.

INT. HELICOPTER

Amira helps put on Val's headphones. He swats her hand away.
Rainie looks excited. Ed looks scared.

RAINIE
Lighten up, Ed. We're on vacation.

Rainie laughs and Ed glares at her.

NADER
Let me pilot, just this once.

ZOEY
No need to add to the body count.
We're already going to a funeral.

VAL
But if we bury the urn he stays in
one piece.

ED AND RAINIE
Jesus, Val.

MIRREN
This was his wish.

VAL
People take back wishes!

MIRREN
Well you can't take back his.

Val is silenced. Over the duration of the flight he sits with anxiety. He ignores as more Callum stories are told and Zoey points out landmarks including the Atlas mountains.

Rainie is in total awe. Ed looks happy seeing her happy.

RAINIE

What are all those people doing
down there?

On the ground is a long trail of people walking and on camel
back. Amira grins.

AMIRA

Those are all the people who loved
Callum.

Mirren and Val look out in silence. Mirren is in awe and Val
looks below with envy. Helicopter blades beating.

EXT. SAHARA DESERT - DAY

VAL

I'm not getting on that thing.

ED

It's just a lumpy horse.

VAL

I don't like horses either.

Amira is about to speak.

VAL (CONT'D)

I don't want to fucking hear that
Callum loved this.

Everyone else mounts the camels and Val struggles to walk in
the sand. Val struggles over to Mirren.

VAL (CONT'D)

You can keep the urn.

Mirren looks down at Val as he trips yet again.

VAL (CONT'D)

Keep the urn. Let's just not spread
his ashes. Plenty of people keep
ashes.

MIRREN

I was a good mom. But--but I'm not
all he needed.

Mirren looks at the crowd of camels.

VAL

You think he needs the sand and --

MIRREN

And open skies and the sun and moon
and stars. Yes, Val. I do.

Val looks anxious.

VAL

You won't ever have to talk to me
or see me again.

MIRREN

I never really got Callum's love
for you. But I think it's because I
never took the time to understand.
I'd like to understand.

Mirren reaches out a hand for him to get on the camel. Val
refuses and stays behind.

Everyone passes Val. He stands alone in the desert.

His anxiety is an all time high. He freaks out and begins to
kick the sand around in a hissy fit. He takes out the spadix
from his pocket. He holds it up to his face, squinting at the
setting sun.

VAL

You're supposed to help me!

He holds it to his ear.

VAL (CONT'D)

My ears are perked! Tell me what to
do!

There is nothing. The air is quiet and still.

Then, he sees a **mirage**. He follows the wavy image of himself
and sinks to his knees in the sand.

He mirrors as Mirage Val digs and digs and digs into the
sand. They both laugh maniacally. Val buries the spadix.

Mirage Val disappears and Val runs after the camels with one
shoe. The other shoe near the spadix burial site.

EXT. CEREMONY GROUNDS - SAHARA - CONTINUOUS

Val is all dusty. Everyone chats and greets Mirren and Val's
parents warmly.

Mirren is uncomfortable with the hugs, but as people express their love for Callum and how great of a son she raised, she relaxes into it.

Amira pulls him in.

AMIRA
Everyone, this is Val.

Val walks over to Mirren and takes the urn.

VAL
Let's do it. Let's get this over with.

Everyone's faces are weirded out, uncomfortable.

ED
You alright? Dehydrated.

RAINIE
Drink this water.

VAL
I'm good. I'm good. Amira, how does this work. You make a speech or what--

ZOEY
You're sweating...a lot.

AMIRA
I figured we'd all go around sharing one thing we loved about him.

Val throws his head back.

VAL
That's going to take forever.

ZOEY
(easing in)
I loved how dumb of a risk taker he was. Made me feel like I wasn't the only one.

VAL
Me too. I love how he managed to drag me all the way out to Africa! Africa!

RAINIE

I loved how thoughtful he was. He knew I was a bit of a mom-ster. And he got me these gifts like this mega mom bag.

VAL

God! We get it! You loooove being a mom.

Rainie smacks him. Val quiets down.

ED

He was the only one that pick up on my side comments.

VAL

Well if you'd just speak up--

Rainie hits him again.

People continue to express their love for Callum and Val gets dizzy with his annoyance, not really hearing anything.

AMIRA

The last time Callum and I were together in Morocco was in 2019 when we was diagnosed with cancer--

VAL

Wrong! It was 2020. The year that everything sucked.

AMIRA

Actually... Val it was 2019.

VAL

I'd think I know when my husband got sick with cancer.

He laughs, but then notices the uncomfortable expression of his parents and Mirren.

RAINIE

I'm sorry, sweetheart.

AMIRA

He was just diagnosed and he didn't know how to tell you. He didn't want to worry you. He came here so he could figure out a way to deal with it on his own first. He knew it would be a lot for you--

VAL

I stood by his side! I was a good husband! I did everything. And now I'm letting him rest.

He takes the urn and then kneels and starts digging.

VAL (CONT'D)

Any last words anyone? No. Okay, great.

He shoves the urn in the desert ground.

MIRREN

You crazy asshole!

She tugs on his arm. He keeps digging. She tugs on the urn. He won't let go.

Ed steps into help. Mirren twists off the top of the urn!

MIRREN (CONT'D)

Let. Him. Be. Free!

Val yanks the urn back, not realizing the urn is open and the spices and dirt fly up.

Val begins to scream from the Cayenne pepper.

RAINIE

The ashes are in his eyes.

Mirren covers her face with shock. Mirren tries to wipe off Val. Rainie runs to help. Then Mirren looks at her hands. Red.

MIRREN

This isn't--this isn't my son.

Rainie looks at her hands as Val continues to scream. She tries pouring water over his eyes. But his movement is too frantic. Amira and Ed step closer.

Mirren sticks her hand in the urn and grabs a handful of cayenne pepper seasoning. She tastes it. Everyone GASPS!

She sees red. She leaps onto Val!

MIRREN (CONT'D)

Where is he?! Where is my son?!

Ed looks into urn, curious. He dots a finger with the red spice. He tastes it. The crowd GASPS again. His face goes wide as he coughs a bit.

ED

It's... cayenne pepper.

Amira whole body seems to deflate from profound sadness. Val's sobs tear through the air.

VAL

You made me do it!

MIRREN

Where is my son?!

VAL

I didn't want to come here. If I hadn't have come here, he'd still be...

Mirren shakes him! She digs into the cayenne and attempts to shove it in his face, but SCREAMS realizing she grabbed the jaw bone. Her whole body shudders and Rainie sinks beside her to hold her. Ed looks at his son with horrified disappointment.

MIRREN

Give me my son. I just wanted--I just wanted to give him this.

VAL

I can't. He's gone. He--

MIRREN

Give him to me!

VAL

They threw him away.

Mirren goes silent. Then..

MIRREN

Who?

VAL

He was talking to me. When I put him in the plant, he started talking to me. But the plant couldn't come and they threw it away and--

Mirren tunes him out. Mirren launches at Val and hits him over and over again on the chest. The cayenne marks his white shirt like blood. The cayenne whips into the air by the wind and hits everyone.

MIRREN

You didn't listen when I talked about his postcards! You didn't listen to his stories when he was alive and you haven't listened now that he's dead! You couldn't even let any of us mourn him! And we can't even say goodbye!

VAL

He said he liked hearing about my day! I was a good husband! I was a good--

MIRREN

He had to leave the continent just to--just to feel understood. Just to have someone listen.

VAL

I listened!

MIRREN

Yeah?! Tell me one story from his travels.

VAL

I--he. The crocodile one. Everyone knows that one.

MIRREN

Then tell it.

Val struggles for words.

MIRREN (CONT'D)

If you'd really known him you would have let his ashes be spread he wished in peace.

Mirren shoves him back again and then stands. Amira is being consoled by Nader. Raine can't even look at Val who reaches out to her. She goes to comfort Mirren.

EXT. SAHARA DESERT - DAY

VAL

I listened!

MIRREN

Yeah?! Tell me one story from his travels.

VAL
I--he. The crocodile one. Everyone
knows that one.

MIRREN
Then tell it.

Val struggles for words.

MIRREN (CONT'D)
If you'd really known him you
would've let me spread his ashes in
peace.

Mirren shoves him back again and then stands. Amira is
consoled by Nader. Rainie looks at Val who reaches out to
her.

Ed places a hand on her back. She turns to him.

RAINIE
Let's go.

Rainie and Ed head out after the rest of the group.

Amira walks up to Val with a camel.

VAL
This is your fault.

She drops the leading rope for him.

As the sun sets, Val watches everyone leave.

EXT. SAHARA DESERT - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Val searches the desert with frantic worry. He doggy scoops
throughout the sand dunes. The camel walks slowly behind.

A TOURIST GROUP passes. Val looks up mid-dig.

TOURIST LEADER
(in Arabic)
Are you okay?

VAL
I--I have to find him. He'll tell
me. He'll tell me what to do and
then we can be together.

The Tourist Leader approaches.

TOURIST LEADER

(English)

Are you injured? Did you fall off
your camel?

VAL

It's not my camel!

The Tourist Leader signals for everyone to continue ahead.
Val picks up a hand fulls of sand!

VAL (CONT'D)

We could of had this at home! We
had this at home!

Some of the Tour Group look back at Val's tantrum.

TOURIST

(British)

Weird greedy bastards, Americans.
What's he gonna do with a whole
desert?

Val SCREAMS at them as they leave and then roars at the
camel!

VAL

Why won't you just leave me alone!
Go back to Amira! I bet you love
her! I bet your--

Val motions with his hand the humps of the camel.

VAL (CONT'D)

Humps get all humpy, when she's
around. Is she your twin flame too?

Val gets in the camel's face.

VAL (CONT'D)

You know where I put the seed? Tell
me where the seed is!

The camel PUSHES Val.

Val ROLLS down a large sand dune. A tiny dot just rolling on
and on.

He lands with a THUD. He looks up at the starry sky. He
begins to WEEP.

VAL (CONT'D)

Why'd you do this to me! This was
your dream! You come home to me!

(MORE)

VAL (CONT'D)

That was the deal. Fine, you can stay here! I'm leaving. Yeah! *I'm* leaving this time. And you're not going to know what I'm doing or who I'm secretly meeting.

Val rolls onto his stomach and attempts to get up with a grunt.

He's YANKED from behind! A THIEF begin to search Val.

VAL (CONT'D)

What?! Help! Someone! No, get off of me.

Val tries to fight back but is too sore from his fall. The thief strip him of his shirt.

VAL (CONT'D)

Stop!

THIEF

Shut up!

His pants are yanked off!

VAL

Please, just-- I need my inhaler!

Val clings onto THE THIEF who has his pants.

THIEF

Where's your other shoe?

VAL

(sobbing)

I don't- I don't know.

The Thief turns. Val tries to stand but trips over sand. He crawls as fast he can.

VAL (CONT'D)

Wait, please! The inhaler.

Val lunges and tackles the Thief down. They wrestle in the sand.

VAL (CONT'D)

You have everything else! Just, please!

Val yanks it out of his hand just as the Thief pushes him down another dune!

Val lays naked in the Sahara desert.

He catches his breath. He sits up. Val looks at the inhaler in his hand. He looks around.

VAL (CONT'D)
I will get you your inhaler. I just--
- need to find you.

He looks around, again. Open desert everywhere. Val jump around in frustration

VAL (CONT'D)
I should've just left with them. I
should've--

A WHISTLE sound. Val freezes. WHIRRR. Val looks around for the source. Nothing, no one.

WHIRRR.

Val looks at the ground. He lowers himself and put his ear to the ground.

The Sahara SINGS to him.

Val lifts his head, the sound faint again. He lowers his head and the song intensifies. He scooches on his knees following the different harmonies. He begins to laugh and sing along to the melody.

VAL (CONT'D)
Callum is that you?

He crawls and sings and listens. His head bumps against something. It's his other shoe!

Val raises it up and then hugs it to his chest. He then uses it dig around. He digs and digs.

He finds the spadix! Val shouts with joy!

VAL (CONT'D)
Tell me! Tell me how to get back!

He holds it to his ear. Nothing. Val keeps it pressed to his ear.

VAL (CONT'D)
My ears are perked! Come on!

Nothing. His breath begins to quicken as he realizes--

VAL (CONT'D)

I'm lost.

He drops the spadix. His eyes are blurry from his panicked breathing. He pulls the inhaler to his mouth--

Val freezes.

VAL (CONT'D)

This isn't... mine. This isn't mine!

He looks at the spadix now. He picks it up.

VAL (CONT'D)

This isn't mine!

Val puts on his one shoe and grips the inhaler and spadix.

He scans the desert. In the distance he sees it...the camel.

Val struggles to climb up dune after dune.

Finally he reaches the camel who just stares at him.

VAL (CONT'D)

You don't have to like me. But my mom, she needs this.

The camel turns.

Val looks defeated until the camel lowers. Val jumps up clumsily.

The camel goes pretty slow.

VAL (CONT'D)

Come on, giddy up!

The camel puffs its lips.

VAL (CONT'D)

Please!

Val clicks his heels on its sides. The camel begins to gallop. Val's eyes widen as he struggles to remain between its humps. Val and the camel's lips both flail around.

Val winces in pain from riding bareback while bareback. His limbs fly all over the place as he tries to remain on the camel.

He sees a helicopter.

VAL (CONT'D)
Right there, boy! Steady!

The camel won't stop. Val JUMPS off the camel! But, it's more like an exaggerated fall. A figure makes its way over to him.

Val squints, waiting for the dust to settle so he can see.

VAL (CONT'D)
Please, you have to help me.

The figure bends down, it's Amira.

AMIRA
Val? Where are all your clothes?

VAL
Where's my mom?

AMIRA
Nader took them to my home.

VAL
Take me!

Amira motions for him to follow her onto the helicopter.
Zoey blocks his entrance.

AMIRA
Zoey, let him in.

ZOEY
He can walk.

VAL
My mom needs her inhaler!

Zoey glares at him...then steps aside.

ZOEY
Only because your mom is fucking cool.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

Amira hands Val a blanket. They shout over their headphones.
He covers himself up.

VAL
I was robbed!

AMIRA
I know the feeling!

VAL

Do you have a phone so you can check in on her? She must be so panicked. It's my fault if she--

AMIRA

She's fine Val. She's in good hands!

VAL

Why because she's in your hands?!

AMIRA

Obviously not. But she's with Ed, Mirren, she's with other people who also happen to care about her!

VAL

She needs this!

AMIRA

I try to show you around Morocco, what Callum wanted and you ignored every part!

VAL

I didn't--

AMIRA

He loved you! You loved him! We know! But guess what so did Mirren. So did your parents. So did all his friends. So did I. And he loved us. He wanted today for all of us.

Val is silenced. The blades continue to beat loudly.

Val rolls shoulders back, gaining the courage.

VAL

How--how did you and Callum meet?

Amira side eyes him.

AMIRA

We didn't hav sex Val!

VAL

I know, I know. I just mean, I'm-I'm ready to hear about it.

AMIRA

No, you're not.

VAL
I am. Tell me!

AMIRA
I texted Rainie, she's fine.

VAL
My mom doesn't text.

AMIRA
She doesn't text you.

Val softens.

VAL
Tell me...tell me how you met.
Really.

Amira gazes at him hard, she sees he's genuine.

EXT. AMIRA'S CAR - NIGHT

Val is... laughing.

VAL
I still can't get it out my head.

AMIRA
Me either. He just stood there
trying to appear normal like orange
juice and cayenne wasn't POURING
out of his nose.

VAL
And you decided that that guy was
who you wanted to be friends with.

AMIRA
I admire anyone who braves the new.

Val laughs.

VAL
That was Val alright. One time he
tried to get me to try boiled eel.

AMIRA
You've never had eel!

VAL
Not even eel sauce!

AMIRA
It's just soy sauce and sugar!

VAL
Wait really?

Amira nods and they both laugh. Val sobers up when Amira pulls up to her home.

VAL (CONT'D)
I'm not sure I like you yet.

AMIRA
The only thing we have in common is-
-

VAL
Callum. And even then...it seems we got different versions.

AMIRA
He was never hiding from you Val.
It's just sometimes we need different people for different things.

VAL
Yeah...

He looks at the house.

VAL (CONT'D)
How made do you think they are?

AMIRA
Mirren was the same shade as that cayenne.

VAL
Okay.

AMIRA
But, she's mostly just hurt.

Val nods.

INT. AMIRA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

In the living room, Mirren is in the arms of Rainie. Ed brings water to the table before them. Nader cleans up tissues.

They all look as Val enters. Val looks at Mirren.

VAL
You're crying.

Mirren glares and stands. Val backs up with his hand up. The blanket drops and he's naked.

ED
Val!

MIRREN
What the hell!

RAINIE
Oh my Lord.

Val bends to grab it. Amira scrunches up her face from behind him.

AMIRA
Honey, get him some clothes please.

Nader shakes his head at an embarrassed Val and leaves the room.

Rainie grabs Mirren.

RAINIE
Let's go to the kitchen.

VAL
Mom, wait.

She looks at him. He holds out her inhaler. She takes it and looks at him with warmth, but then guides Mirren. Ed follows them to the kitchen.

INT. AMIRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

They all sit around the table. Val awkwardly sways in.

ED
Do not put your bare ass on Amira's seat.

AMIRA
Nader and I do that all the time.

They all shift uncomfortably in their seats. Val sits.

It's silent.

VAL
I lost the ashes.

Mirren reddens.

VAL (CONT'D)

I was pouring them into a plant thinking that Callum was trying to speak to me.

ED

Val.

VAL

I know that sounds crazy. But look at us. We're in Morocco because of some post card. Because Callum knew. He knew that--one day I'd get my head out of my ass. I'd ride a camel--

RAINIE

You got on the camel?

VAL

Yeah, but it kicked the shit out of me.

MIRREN

Did the job for me then.

Val, timid, clears his throat.

VAL

I was jealous of you. Dumb, I know, because you're his mom. But, traveling was your guys' thing and I didn't think I could ever fit into that. And seeing you fight all the time to fulfill his wish...

Val looks at his mom.

VAL (CONT'D)

Seeing you month after month cook for me. Check on me.

Rainie gets up. She walks to the sink.

VAL (CONT'D)

I should've--

Rainie cries. Val stands.

VAL (CONT'D)
You've all been so patient with me.
Mirren you the most. I've let you
down and--

Rainie GASPS. She struggles to breathe!

Ed goes to her! Val rushes to grab her fallen inhaler. She takes a puff. Then another.

Val sees how everyone's concerned gazes go to his mom. Rainie settles her breath. Mirren guides her to a seat. Amira wets a rag and places it on Rainie's neck. Ed holds her hand.

Val kneels in front of her.

VAL (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

Rainie nods.

RAINIE
I just got worked up. It's been a
long day.

Rainie adjusts his blanket.

VAL
Thank you.

Rainie is shocked at the thank you. Val smiles back then looks at Mirren. Rainie pats his hand, encouraging him. Val gulps.

He stands.

VAL (CONT'D)
He was never just mine.

Val places the spadix on the table.

VAL (CONT'D)
I poured ashes into the plant and I
could hear his voice again. I'm
sorry I can't--give you what--

Mirren holds onto it.

AMIRA
A peace lily.

VAL
I know it's not enough.

MIRREN

You're right, it's not.

VAL

But it's yours. You can keep it.

MIRREN

Thank you for telling me what I can
ans can't keep of my son. Thank you
for keeping me from my son. Thank
you for--

VAL

I thought if I gave him to you he'd
be gone.

MIRREN

How do you think I felt when he met
you and called you home. All of our
trips became about you. What should
I bring back to Val? He would like
this. He wouldn't like this.

VAL

I'm sorry. I just--

MIRREN

You had everything. And that's fine
because mothers are supposed to let
go. But you couldn't even let me
say goodbye.

The room is quiet. Nader enters with the clothes.

NADER

This is the best I could find.

VAL

Thank you.

Val looks at Mirren.

VAL (CONT'D)

I guess I just figured once you
said goodbye, I'd have to too. I'm
sorry. Really.

Val turns to leave.

MIRREN

I wasn't ready to say goodbye
either.

Val turns back.

MIRREN (CONT'D)

I think part of me hoped that the end of this trip he'd be waiting for me.

Amira picks up the spadix.

AMIRA

When you all came-- I'd heard about you all but I--I thought it was this new way to get to know Callum. To see him again. Through your eyes.

VAL

It feels like this was Callum's way of seeing us. All the people he loved one more time. And it's my fault we can't even say a proper goodbye.

AMIRA

Yes.

Val looks hurt.

AMIRA (CONT'D)

We can say goodbye.

She asks for permission with her eyes to Mirren. Mirren shrugs. Amira turns to Val. He is tense, but nods.

Amira cracks open the spadix.

EXT. ATLAS MOUNTAINS - DAY

The group finishes their trek. Val helps Rainie and Ed. He reaches a hand out to Mirren, who ignores it. She walks ahead of him.

Nader finishes digging a whole. Amira takes out the seeds from the spadix.

She places the seeds in Mirren's hand.

Mirren walks to place them in the ground.

Then...she looks back. All are teary eyed behind her. Val does his best to keep his sob under control. He nods his head, giving her the go ahead.

She turns back around and looks at the seeds in her hand.

MIRREN

I love you. Thank you for showing
me your home.

Mirren stands and places a seed in each person's hand to
their shock until she gets to Val.

Val looks down.

MIRREN (CONT'D)

I only have one seed left.

VAL

That's okay.

MIRREN

Let's do it together.

Val, overwhelmed, hugs her tightly. She freezes. Hugs him.

VAL

I'm so sorry. I know he's your son.
I want to hear the crocodile story.
But only if you want to tell me.
I'll listen. My ears are perked--

MIRREN

Jesus, Val. Shut up, will you? Did
you bring Omar's drugs with you or
something?

VAL

No, I just-- I'll listen.

MIRREN

Me too.

Mirren pulls him over and they place the seed in the ground.
Their tears fall. Ed, Rainie, Nader and Amira place their
seeds in the ground.

All huddle over. Val reaches over and scoops the dirt over
the seeds. Mirren does the same. Nader hands Val a bottle.

Val waters the land.

VAL

I love you. We love you. Goodbye.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END