

END OF THE ROAD

Written by

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Sophie finds solace away from home with her uncle Julian for the summer, but after new experiences, she realizes that she might never want to go back to her old life.

INT. JULIAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Hot desert sun beams through large sliding glass doors falling on SOPHIE (17, sweet, trusting, bold). She lies down on the couch, letting her head hang off the edge.

JULIAN (61, jaded but loving, Sophie's uncle) walks in from the hallway. Sophie groans, lifting her head to look at him.

SOPHIE

Can we go to the pool?

JULIAN

Kiddo, we've gone to the pool every day this week. Are you trying to give me skin cancer?

SOPHIE

I don't know what else to do with myself.

JULIAN

Stop hanging out with me! Go meet people your own age. Make the most of your summer.

SOPHIE

People my age are weird.

JULIAN

You're telling me. I've been living with you for the past 3 weeks.

Julian comes and sits next to her on the couch.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

It's not good for you to keep moping around like this, though. I know things have been tough, but you've gotta learn how to pick yourself up sometimes.

Sophie meets Julian's eyes.

SOPHIE

It's just never been this bad with her before.

JULIAN

I know the feeling. But believe me when I say that your mom loves you. She just doesn't know how to tell you.

SOPHIE
I don't buy it.

JULIAN
There are no excuses, but remember
that she's human, too.

Sophie flops her head back off the edge of the couch. Julian puts his arms under her shoulders and pulls her up.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
Okay, c'mon. Get up. You're gonna
make me depressed if I keep seeing
you like this.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sweat beads on Sophie's face as she walks along the highway. The afternoon sun is even brighter than it was before. An upbeat song BLASTS in her wired headphones.

She sees a MAN walk out of the gas station convenience store with a crisp, cold lemonade. It looks delicious. And she's thirsty.

INT. GAS STATION - CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

DING. A bell rings as Sophie pushes the doors open. An AC unit starts to pump above her head. Instant relief.

She looks toward the front counter, where MAEVE (18, effortlessly cool) stands. Sophie's eyes stick like glue onto her. Maeve catches her eye. Sophie immediately pivots and walks through the aisles, trying to be nonchalant.

DING again. VAUGHN (19, charming) walks in. He bee-lines to Maeve and starts chatting with her.

VAUGHN
You on break soon? I've got some
good shit for us.

MAEVE
I don't believe you when you say
that anymore. Your "good shit" last
time was horrible.

Sophie grabs a lemonade and presses it against the back of her neck, letting the condensation drip down her shirt.

Maeve watches as Sophie hesitantly approaches the counter.

SOPHIE

Hi.

She puts the lemonade down on the counter. Vaughn turns around, sizing up Sophie.

MAEVE

Hey.

Sophie stares, waiting for Maeve to scan her drink or do...anything, really. Vaughn takes charge first, though.

VAUGHN

I don't think I've seen you before.
You new here or something?

SOPHIE

Kinda. Just staying with my uncle
for a little bit.

They both just look at her.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Uhh, how much will this be?

VAUGHN

Oh, c'mon. Give it to the girl for
free. She's new. And *pretty*.

SOPHIE

No, you don't have to do that.

Sophie starts to pull some change out of her pockets.

MAEVE

Nah, he's right. Keep your money.
It's on me.

Sophie smiles and cracks open her lemonade, dying for a sip.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

Do you know many people here yet?

She falters, putting her drink down.

SOPHIE

To be honest...not really, no.
Doesn't seem like there's much
going on around here.

VAUGHN

What?! There's tons of fun to be
had. You just gotta know where to
look.

MAEVE

Want something to do tonight?

She lets herself think for a moment, but then--

SOPHIE

You know what, why not?

VAUGHN

That's the spirit!

Vaughn playfully pushes Sophie, but she keeps her eyes locked on Maeve who finally cracks a smile.

INT. MAEVE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - NIGHT

A small party bumps inside. A few of Maeve's friends crowd in her kitchen -- skater boys, stoners, girls with dyed hair. Sophie sticks out like a sore thumb.

Vaughn saunters over to Sophie, clearly trying to charm her some more.

VAUGHN

You want a drink?

SOPHIE

Ah, I already have one.

She lifts up her disposable cup to show him. He takes the hint quickly.

VAUGHN

Alright. Well, come find me if you want a refill.

SOPHIE

Sure.

Sophie stares as Maeve bounces between conversations with ease. She wills Maeve to look over, but she's too preoccupied with her *actual* friends.

Sophie chugs the rest of her drink, then heads outside.

EXT. MAEVE'S APARTMENT - BALCONY - NIGHT - LATER

Maeve opens the sliding door, holding a joint. She finds Sophie sitting down in the dark corner.

MAEVE
Hey, everything good? I've been
looking for you.

SOPHIE
Yeah, sorry. All good.

Sophie starts to get up, but Maeve comes and sits next to her instead.

MAEVE
What are you sorry about?

SOPHIE
I don't know. Nothing, I guess.

Maeve lights her joint and takes a few hits. She offers it to Sophie, but she shakes her head, declining.

The two stare into the desert sky for a moment.

MAEVE
I don't mean to pry, but how'd you
end up out here?

SOPHIE
Just-- family stuff. My mom,
ah...you know...

Maeve looks at her earnestly.

MAEVE
Yeah. I know what you mean.

SOPHIE
I think she really fucked things up
for me. It's hard to not feel like
a burden everywhere I go now.

MAEVE
Do you feel like that here?

SOPHIE
A little bit, yeah.

MAEVE
People want you here. I invited
you, didn't I?

SOPHIE
Why, though?

A beat.

MAEVE

Do you feel like a burden right now? Out here with just me?

SOPHIE

Umm. No, actually. I don't.

MAEVE

Well, for once neither do I. *That's* why I invited you.

A long beat. A comfortable one. Maeve looks at Sophie intently.

MAEVE (CONT'D)

And because I thought you were really cute.

She leans in close, pausing for a moment to make sure that what she's doing is okay. She leans in deeper and finally kisses her. Sophie kisses her back.

INT. MAEVE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Sophie is dead asleep next to Maeve. The sheets are tangled up all around them. Her makeup is smudged under her eyes.

Her phone lights up on the ground. It BUZZES incessantly.

Sophie slowly wakes up to the sound of the buzzing. She picks it up to see that Julian is calling.

SOPHIE

Shit.

She sits straight up and answers the phone.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Hi.

JULIAN (O.S.)

Thank God you're alive. You gave me a heart attack.

SOPHIE

I'm so sorry. I'll come straight home.

JULIAN (O.S.)

(hushed)

I don't know if that's the best idea, my love...Your mom is here.

SOPHIE

...What?

JULIAN (O.S.)

She wants you to come back home.

SOPHIE

How did she find out? How does she know?

Maeve starts to wake up next to her.

JULIAN (O.S.)

It was an accident. I'm sorry. But she really wants to make things better--

SOPHIE

--No. No, no, no. You promised that I'd be safe here. I trusted you.

JULIAN (O.S.)

And you still can. I'll talk to her. We can sort this out.

SOPHIE

I don't want to sort it out with her. I just want it to all disappear.

Julian's voice gets firm.

JULIAN (O.S.)

This is your *life*. You can't run away from it forever.

Maeve sits up and rubs Sophie's back, having heard the conversation. She swallows hard, trying not to cry.

EXT. DESERT STREET - DAY

Sophie stands against a desolate highway with nothing but herself. The wind whips her hair around her face.

In front of her, a bus stop. All on its own.

Sophie takes a deep breath, looking behind her -- to the town and everything in it -- then back to the bus stop. She takes a step.

She doesn't quite look lost, but she's definitely not found herself yet.