

PINEVILLE

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. PINEVILLE PARK, NC - DAY

Calm.

Water laps gently against the rocky shore. It glistens in the low, winter sun.

Just beneath the surface, something shimmers. A simple wedding band is tucked under the water.

MAE LANGLEY, 24, sits on the edge of the lake staring straight ahead. She pulls a long drag from a cigarette and lets the smoke slither from her nose.

Mae is not the type of girl to spend time outdoors, nor to cry over her problems. The daughter of a powerful businessman in a small town, Mae is used to being under scrutiny but not used to caring about it.

Mae reaches into her coat pocket and pulls out her cellphone. Her hand shivers as she punches in a number.

It rings. Once. Twice.

PHONE

Please leave a message after the
bee--

Mae clicks it off. She takes another drag.

ROSE (O.S.)

Is that Mae Langley?

MAE

Shit.

Mae puts out her cigarette in the grass. She turns around to see ROSE CATON, 40, approaching her.

Rose lives by the guiding principals of God and the Home Goods catalog. Wife and mother by twenty-one Rose knows how to take care of just about everyone except herself.

ROSE

You must be freezing out here! Wait
till I tell your mama I found you
trying to catch pneumonia.

Mae forces a smile.

ROSE (CONT'D)

We missed you at service on Sunday. Pastor John spoke on Jeremiah 13, you should have seen those Gideon boys squirm. What scoundrels! Nancy just about smacked them on the way out.

Mae nods but Rose waits for a reply.

MAE

Sorry I couldn't make it.

ROSE

No matter. What are you doing out here?

MAE

Nothing. I was just about to leave.

She stands.

ROSE

You didn't walk did you? I can give you a ride! No one should be walking in this weather.

MAE

Someone is picking me up.

ROSE

Well, you can wait with me then. Let's get you out of the cold. Look at your hands you poor thing!

Mae shoves her hands in her pockets.

MAE

Thank you, Rose. I'm alright.

ROSE

No, no! I have my car heating up, it's no trouble.

MAE

I'm really okay.

ROSE

It's no bother, you must be freezing.

MAE
I really appreciate your offer, but-

CUT TO:

INT. ROSE'S CAR, PINEVILLE PARK PARKING LOT - DAY

The two women sit in Rose's car. Rose rummages through a pile of candy in her cup holder and offers Mae a Rolo. Mae declines.

Rose cranks the heat.

ROSE
Isn't that better!

Mae nods. She loosens the scarf around her neck. Rose notices her bare ring finger.

ROSE (CONT'D)
How's Ryan doing?

Mae quickly lowers her hand and looks out the window.

MAE
Fine.

ROSE
And your family?

MAE
Good.

ROSE
Nancy said you were selling the house. So soon after moving in!

MAE
Just rumors, believe me.

ROSE
I see. She does love to talk.

Forced laughs.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Are you and Ryan coming to the pot-luck on Thursday?

MAE
We haven't decided.

ROSE
Oh? It's going to be wonderful! I'm
making my famous chocolate pie.

MAE
He's got a lot of work.

ROSE
Oh, I see. Husbands do find ways to
always have "work" don't they.

Mae shifts in her seat.

ROSE (CONT'D)
There's no shame in some trouble in
paradise! We've all--

MAE
--Everything's fine.

ROSE
It's just your mama mentioned--

MAE
--I should really be going.

Mae opens her door.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Rose follows her out.

ROSE
Mae, listen.

MAE
If my mother wants to know
something she can ask me herself.

ROSE
Your mama didn't--

MAE
--Sure.

ROSE
Mae.

MAE
I'm good. Okay? Really.

She turns around.

MAE (CONT'D)
Thank you, Rose.

She smiles and turns away.

Rose watches her leave the parking lot.

INT. ROSE'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Rose heaves three large bags of groceries onto her kitchen counter.

The room is small and dimly lit, closed off from the rest of the house.

She begins putting everything in its place. There's a rhythm to her movements only gained by years of experience.

She glances at the clock: 5:30pm.

She listens. A car engine pulls up outside and turns off.

INT. ROSE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

The bags are gone. Everything is put away.

Rose leans against her countertop. She looks at the clock: 6:01pm.

She sighs and walks over to the doorway.

INT. ROSE'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rose looks out her living room window. A car is parked outside. In it RODNEY CATON, 47, Rose's husband, sits on his phone.

He scrolls, not glancing from the screen.

Suddenly, the screen illuminates Rodney and a smile springs onto his face. He brushes his hair back in the rearview mirror and begins talking.

Rose pulls her cardigan tighter around her. She watches him until a timer dings from the kitchen.

EXT. MAE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mae sits on her front porch smoking. Beside her, "FOR SALE" signs are scattered on the floor ready to be put up.

Mae pulls out her phone and dials a number.

It rings. Once. Twice.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Hello?

MAE

Mama?

Silence.

MAE (CONT'D)

Mama, can we talk please?

MAE'S MOTHER (O.S.)

Mae, your father was very clear...

MAE

I know, I just--

MAE'S MOTHER (O.S.)

Just give him some time to work things out. I have to go.

MAE

I have something important to tell you.

MAE'S MOTHER (O.S.)

Mae, I can't.

Beep.

Mae throws her phone to the ground and collapses into her arms. Her body heaves.

She settles and slowly raises her head.

Mae snatches up one of the signs and marches to her front lawn.

She pushes it into the ground and steps back to admire it.

EXT. PINEVILLE PARK - DAY

Calm.

Water laps gently over the rocky bank.

Rose strolls along the edge of the lake. She looks into the shimmering water, unaware of the cold.

She rubs her wedding ring between her fingers. She pulls up and it catches on her knuckle.

She stops and pulls harder. It doesn't move.

Panicked, she frantically yanks at her finger. Her eyes sting with tears.

The ring remains firm. She takes a deep breath.

Her hands calm and she adjusts her ring to its usual spot. She looks down at its plain but elegant beauty.

A car door slams.

Rose turns around.

At the edge of the parking lot, Mae stands by her car. It is packed to the brim with suitcases and boxes.

Mae waves and starts walking over.

Rose waves back. She smiles.

FADE OUT.