

FADE IN:

INT. STUDIO - DAY

Pencils SKETCH ON PAPER. Stacks of drawings are on a desk which is covered in paints and pencils and fabrics in every color imaginable. A WOMAN is HUMMING away cheerfully. Her face is not revealed- only the back of her head and her deep blue eyes, which quickly dart from page to page. More sketching. PENCILS AGAINST PAPER. The hand puts down the pencil, picks up a cigarette, and lights it. Smoke swirls into the air.

FADE TO:

INT. CAR - DAY

EMILY, seventeen, tall, brown hair up in a ponytail, blue eyes, slender- drives down a long, narrow, winding road. She turns into a rundown, poor looking neighborhood. She slows down and stops in front of an old, ugly, small house. A woman appears in the window. Emily turns away so that she cannot see her face, but the woman opens the front door and walks out. Emily quickly drives away, hands sweating on the steering wheel.

EMILY  
(to herself)  
Dammit.

She speeds down the winding road.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Emily walks into her shiny, clean kitchen. Marble counter tops and a huge island in the middle. Her father, MICHAEL, tall and thin but with a strong-build, jet-black hair, square jawline- sits at the table.

MICHAEL  
How was today? Learn anything exciting? I went to Al's after work and picked you up a corn muffin. Last one left.

EMILY  
Ugh yes, thank you. I've been craving one since third period.

She grabs the muffin and takes a bite.

EMILY (CONT'D)

You can basically feel the senioritis in the air. Half the people skipped, the other half are frantic because the last round of SATs are coming up.

MICHAEL

Everyone at the office today could not stop asking about you. "What day does she start? Is she living in your old dorm building? Is she nervous-

EMILY

Dad, please. I haven't decided yet.

He scoffs.

MICHAEL

A no-brainer Emily. It's Wharton.

EMILY

I know. Wharton. There are other schools Dad. It's your second home- but I've been looking into other-

MICHAEL

Other what? Schools? U Penn has the top business program-

EMILY

-Other programs. Not business. I've always kind of thought about photography.

He sighs.

MICHAEL

And I've supported your hobby. I sent you to those photography camps, fashion after-school programs as a kid. But hobbies aren't careers Em.

He picks up a newspaper on the table and opens it, trying to forget the conversation that just took place.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I know you're done with SATs and applications but please don't slack.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Finish your work and make sure to  
send in your acceptance form.

Emily makes her way up the stairs, looking frustrated and tired.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Em-

She stops and looks down. From above he looks much smaller, much less intimidating- much more alone, sitting at a table made for at least six people.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
I only want what's best for you.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Emily sits on her king-sized bed with silver satin covers. She has cut-outs from fashion magazines all over the walls. In a frame is a picture of Michael and her, holding some sort of academic award. He holds one of her hands in the air. They both look so happy.

She pulls out an old photo album from under her bed and flips through photographs of the two through the years: riding bikes, going fishing, at the park.

She looks at the pile of fashion magazines on her bedside table. She grabs her laptop and opens up the application to the NYU Tisch School of The Arts Photography Program. The deadline reads March 5th. She clicks open her iPhone. It's February 20th.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - 11:30 A.M.

Emily wakes up in her uniform, on her bed. Laptop is opened and copies of VOGUE are spread out everywhere. She looks over at the time. 11:30 a.m. She jumps up, gathering her school bag.

EMILY  
Shit.

INT. EMILY'S CAR - THAT MORNING

Emily sits in her uniform with her hands on the wheel, her foot tapping. She turns the rear-view mirror to see herself. She stares for a few moments. She drives away, past multiple streets and down a main highway. She makes a sharp turn onto a winding, narrow road.

She stops in front of a small, dirty, rundown looking home. It's surrounded by dying trees. She breathes in, shaking. She slowly walks up the driveway, looking around at the surrounding area. A cat runs by with its ribs showing. She knocks. EILEEN, mid-thirties, opens the door. She's smoking a cigarette. She's tall, slender, big blue eyes, dark hair just like Emily's. She wears a pair of jeans and a ratty T-shirt that's too small for her. The smoke swirls into the air.

EMILY

Hello. Eileen right? I- uh- I'm-

EILEEN

I know who you are.

Silence. Emily's eyes dart around, not knowing what to say or do.

EMILY

Can I- uh- may I?-

EILEEN

Come in.

INT. EILEEN'S KITCHEN - MORNING

The kitchen is small and dirty. Broken pots and pans lying around dirty dishes. Emily sits at a tiny wooden table in silence, while Eileen brews some tea. Neither of them know what to say.

EILEEN

Tea?

EMILY

Sure.

Emily tries to tidy herself up- fixes her hair, tries to brush out the creases in her skirt with her hands.

EMILY (CONT'D)

So you live alone?

Eileen chuckles.

EILEEN

We don't have to make small talk  
Emily. I got your letter.

EMILY

Sorry for that. I didn't know if I was bothering you with the questions- so I thought it best to come by-

EILEEN

-You also already know that I live alone, considering you've been passing by every day for the past few weeks.

EMILY

I'm sorry- I just- I leave for college soon. You didn't reply to my letter so I re-sent it-

EILEEN

-I knew you would show up eventually.

EMILY

I'm sor- I shouldn't be here.

EILEEN

You didn't tell your father you were coming did you?

Eileen sits down.

EMILY

I should go. I'm already late for school.

Emily stands up and walks towards the door but stops and turns around.

EMILY (CONT'D)

May I come back? Like you said- Questions. There are questions I-

EILEEN

-Yes.

Emily walks out. Eileen slowly takes a sip of what was supposed to be Emily's tea.

INT. CLASSROOM. - DAY

Emily sketches in her notebook. She wears a private schoolgirl outfit with high black knee socks.

TEACHER (O.S.)  
The equation goes as follows-

The TEACHER, mid-fifties, slightly over-weight, short-notices Emily paying no attention to the lesson.

TEACHER (CONT'D)  
-Emily.

She does not hear him.

PROFESSOR  
Emily!

TEACHER  
Sorry Mr. Watson.

Bell RINGS. The students scurry out of the classroom but Emily takes longer to gather her things. Being the last student left, she rises and makes her way to the door.

MR. WATSON  
Congratulations Ms. Porter. I heard about Pennsylvania. You should be proud of yourself. Your dad must be so excited to visit you at his alma mater in the-

EMILY  
Nothing's set in stone yet.

EXT. EILEEN'S BACKYARD - MORNING

Emily sits in a partially broken fold out lawn chair. Eileen hands her a cup of steaming tea. She smokes a cigarette.

EILEEN  
Light?

EMILY  
No thank you, I don't smoke.

EILEEN  
Good girl. I've tried to give up the nasty habit myself but it never lasts more than a day or two. Shouldn't have had that first smoke eighteen years ago-

EMILY  
When you got pregnant.

EILEEN

So we're cutting right to it then.

She ashes her cigarette.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

I was too young. Had just graduated from high school. Can you imagine being a mother at this point in your life?

EMILY

No. I can't.

EILEEN

I wasn't fit to raise a kid Emily. Everyone knew it. Your father barely knew me yet he still knew it.

EMILY

So- what happened?

EILEEN

I didn't have anything together. I had to learn to take care of myself before I could fathom taking care of another mouth to feed. Kids cost a lot of money.

Eileen chuckles.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

And we know your dad had enough of it to be there for you. Look around you. Now think about your childhood, your home, your summers, your education. Does it look like this?

Emily looks around at the state Eileen is living in. The grass is uncut, the fence looks like it could break with a single tap, the backyard consists of two broken chairs and a few stones in the ground that act like some sort of patio. She looks at Eileen, who is focused on relighting her cigarette. There are dark circles under both eyes and her hair is matted. Her beauty is clearly fading from her better days, but still shows through.

EMILY

And you've learned? To take care of yourself I mean.

Emily's catches sight of two beautiful Red Robins, perched on a branch on the tree behind Eileen. The tree grows from right behind Eileen's fence, but its branches hang low into her backyard.

EILEEN (O.S.)  
You didn't need the two of us.

EMILY  
Could you give me just one moment?

She pulls her camera out of her bag and zooms in to get a good shot of the two birds. As she adjusts the focus ring she sees they're next to a nest filled with eggs.

EILEEN  
Work or pleasure?

EMILY  
Both I guess.

Eileen looks unsatisfied with this answer.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
This one's for a photography class at school. I get to take a bunch of electives my senior year.

EILEEN  
Let me see that picture you got.

Emily hands over the camera to Eileen.

EILEEN (CONT'D)  
You've got an eye. Might I ask- why photography?

EMILY  
I love the feeling when I get a shot that looks exactly how I envisioned it. A camera's like an eye. It needs to be adjusted with light and distance. I don't want to bore you with this-

Eileen looks intrigued. She smiles and watches the two birds play with each other.

EMILY (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
I love that anyone can take pictures. It's not about the quality-although good equipment doesn't hurt. It's about so much more.



EILEEN

We should come out and check on these little guys until they hatch. I've always wanted to watch baby birds hatch.

Eileen spots two copies of VOGUE peeking out of Emily's bag. She raises one eyebrow in realization.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

Fashion?

EMILY

What about it?

EILEEN

That's what you'd like to shoot?

EMILY

Eventually yes. How did you-

EILEEN

When I was your age I wouldn't be caught dead without a copy.

Eileen points at VOGUE.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

I want to show you something.

Eileen gets up. Emily hesitates, but stands up and follows her.

INT. EILEEN'S STUDIO - AFTERNOON

They stand in the doorway of a tiny room at the back of the house. About the size of a walk-in closet, filled with bolts of cloth hanging over small tables, and stacks of folders. A single dress form, stands in the corner.

EILEEN

I used to practically live in here.

EMILY

A studio?

EILEEN

Well a sad excuse for a studio, but yeah.

EMILY

So what- were you a designer or something?

Eileen eyes the room as if she is reliving a distant memory.

EILEEN

I tried. I romanticized over the idea for most of my childhood and in my early twenties. Pipe-dreams ya know.

Emily picks up a dress draped over a chair. She proceeds to open the folders on the desk, finding hundreds of sketches.

EMILY

Yeah- I'm starting to know. WOW- you designed these?

Eileen nods, smiling. Her gaze is held on Emily. She watches her every movement and expression.

EILEEN

Good God. I forgot about half of those. They've been sitting there for years.

Emily blows a bunch of dust off of a few, creating a dust cloud. It blows in Eileen's face. They both giggle.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

(O.S)

That's what happens when you're neglected I guess. It's OK though. They'd just get thrown away eventually anyway-

Emily's expression changes, realizing that the description of the sketches applies as much to Emily as it does to the dust on the paper, Eileen stops and looks over at Emily.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I'm new to this. The right words are hard to find. Keep that one.

Eileen points to the dress Emily is holding.

EMILY

No thanks. I have plenty of my own clothes-

EILEEN

Take it.

Emily nods and folds it in her arms.

FADE TO:

INT. EMILY'S LIVING ROOM - THAT NIGHT

Emily sits with her feet up on the couch. She stares at her blank application to New York University's Tisch School of The Arts. All that it reads is the prompt: What do fashion and photography mean to you, and how do the two work together to create meaning?

MICHAEL

Hi Hun. Heading upstairs to checkout early, I'm exhausted.

He stops on the stairs.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Hey Em?

EMILY

Yeah Dad?

She shuts the laptop.

MICHAEL

Thanks for finally sending in your acceptance. Gives me peace of mind.

He is beaming. She smiles up at him but says nothing.

Once he is out of sight, she looks down, seemingly disappointed. She opens her laptop only to look at the screen for a moment, then slam it shut.

INT. EILEEN'S FRONT YARD - DAY

Emily walks up to Eileen's front door. She knocks. No answer. She knocks again. She keeps knocking until finally Eileen comes to the door, looking disheveled. In a robe, her hair a mess. She blocks the sunlight with her hand, covering her eyes.

EILEEN

Shit Carl. I told you to get here later than two.

EMILY

Carl? It's Emily.

EILEEN

Oh. Hi. Sorry expecting uh- someone to come later and uh- work on front lawn stuff.

Emily looks over at the small lawn, covered in dead grass and tall weeds.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

Did you say anything about coming down here? It's early.

EMILY

I need your designs. And I need your help.

Eileen is out of it, struggling to make coffee while barely taking in what Emily is saying.

EILEEN

Uh- you want what?

She rubs her eyes.

EMILY

Basically it's for this-

EILEEN

-cream and sugar?

EMILY

Yes please. It's for a portfolio. A highly competitive program. Dad doesn't approve so it has been difficult finding a place or time to work on mine.

EILEEN

What about your friends?

EMILY

They're all too busy. Besides, they know nothing about fashion. They dress like they're half-blind.

EILEEN

And I don't?

Looking down at her ensemble.

EMILY

I saw what you can do. The application is due in two weeks. Two. I've been putting it off thinking I'll listen to my dad but I turned down Wharton. And lied about it.

EILEEN

Why are you telling me this? I don't know anything about this stuff. Didn't go to college. No diploma, no cap and gown, no skills. Why is it so bright in here dammit. This is between the two of you.

EMILY

Not anymore. You got involved the moment you traced me back to your love for fashion.

Eileen hands Emily her coffee.

EMILY (CONT'D)

What's two weeks out of eighteen years?

She sees how desperate Emily looks.

EILEEN

Fine. Don't know what help I'll be. And no early mornings. I hate mornings.

Emily stops stirring her coffee. She looks up and smiles. She's got her.

MUSIC CUE- something along the lines of Send Me On My Way by Rusted Root.

Montage of Emily and Eileen working hard to create some of Eileen's old designs. Emily puts aside ones she wants to bring to life, placing them in a separate pile. Eileen takes down old bolts of fabric from the higher shelves. She drapes some on the dress form, and some on Emily. She uses a tape measure to mark folds.

They goof around, wrapping themselves in cloth, looking like they are playing pretend dress up. SCISSORS SNIPPING AND SEWING MACHINE VIBRATING.

The two women take turns walking up and down the living room trying on dresses in the making, both looking like models- Eileen just an older version of Emily. Their outfits change and the time of day outside changes. Days go by. The fabric swirls around in the air. More tea is poured. The song is interrupted when Emily's phone RINGS.

EMILY

Hi Dad. Yeah yeah I'm here now.  
Don't worry Shelly's Mom is making  
dinner. OK. See you soon.

She hangs up. She helps pin some fabric onto the dress form,  
but accidentally pricks her finger.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Shit! I'll be right back.

CUT TO:

INT. EILEEN'S BATHROOM - DAY

Emily turns on the sink to wash her finger which now has a  
few drops of blood on it. She opens the medicine chest,  
looking for a band-aid. Instead, she sees about six pill  
bottles. She looks at the labels. It's Oxycontin. Above the  
pills is a syringe.

EILEEN (O.S.)

You OK in there?

Emily spots a band-aid kit on the top shelf and grabs it,  
only to put it right back. If she uses it Eileen will know  
she's been in the cabinet. She quickly closes the medicine  
chest.

EMILY

Just washing my finger off!

Emily walks out of the bathroom, trying to act normal.

EILEEN

Well don't just stand there! We  
have work to do.

INT. EMILY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Michael sits on the couch reading, glasses at the tip of his  
nose. The lights are dim. Emily walks in.

EMILY

Hey. I'm exhausted. So much  
studying to do for tomorrow. Got a  
lot done at Shelly's-

MICHAEL

I ran into Shelly. She said you  
haven't been there all week.

She stops walking up the stairs.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
You haven't been to school in two days either.

EMILY  
I've been working on something.

Beat

MICHAEL  
This was supposed to be a choice we made together Emily.

EMILY  
What part of this is a decision to make together? It's what you want, not me. I don't want to go to Wharton. I rejected them because it's not what I want-

He looks shocked. He slowly sits down with his hands holding the back of his neck, and his head down.

MICHAEL  
You- you rejected them?

Beat

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
You told me you sent in your acceptance form.

Emily now realizes that they have been arguing about totally different things.

EMILY  
But you just said-

MICHAEL  
-I didn't mean Wharton. I meant your Mom.

Long beat.

EMILY  
She's not that bad Dad. She's really not. She's kind of great. She's been helping me-

MICHAEL

She left you, only thinking about herself. Addicts don't change Emily.

EMILY

She's not like that anymore.

He picks his head up from his hands to look at her. His expression is more full of pity than anger at this point.

MICHAEL

About fourteen years ago, she said her life was finally together, and that she was starting a new job- so I said I would allow her to slowly take part in your life if she was committed to making it work.

EMILY

She means well. She didn't have the resources to take care of me at first. But you see- she's been trying-

MICHAEL

-You took a liking to her immediately. Invited her to your birthday party. She was so excited to be there-

EMILY

-so now she's the bad guy for wanting to come to my party-

MICHAEL

-she didn't show Emily.

Beat.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I went to her house. She was passed out.

Emily gets teary-eyed. She looks angrily at her Dad.

EMILY

She could have been too exhausted. She could have been sick. You don't know-



MICHAEL

It was drugs. They change her. Her relationship with the drugs will always be stronger than-

EMILY

You're wrong. We do have a relationship. She's my mother! She's different now. She's been helping me with my Tisch application. She accepts me as I am.

MICHAEL

Wharton was going to take your places. You have so much potential. But I love you and I do trust your ultimate judgement. But I can't when it comes to her.

FADE TO:

EXT. POND - DAY

Flashes from a camera. Emily practices photographing the beautiful gowns that are finally finished. There are large, white swans paddling in the pond, which compliment the white gown Eileen wears. Eileen looks slender and glowing. She has combed her hair, put on some makeup, and is full of energy. Emily practices with the flash and looks at her camera to check out how the light is hitting the fabric- a beautiful shimmering silver. She looks frustrated and is mumbling to herself.

EILEEN

Is everything all right?

EMILY

Remember that feeling I told you about? When I get the shot I had envisioned? Well I can't get it. It's flat.

EILEEN

You wanted to capture the essence of the beauty in the natural world, right? Well I look exactly like a proud mother swan!

EMILY

That was the idea but when I think back to the prompt, it doesn't feel right.

EILEEN

Emily. It's due in two days. You don't have time to change your mind.

A stray, black cat walks past Eileen, trying to rub its side against her.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

Dumb cat! Get away! You'll get the dress dirty!

Emily stops. She watches the cat as it runs out of sight, frightened. She thinks back to the stray, skinny cat that lurks outside of Eileen's house.

Flashback to the cat. So skinny its ribs show. It disappears behind a dumpster.

Emily's eyes widen.

EILEEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Dammit! It got some muddy streaks on the dress! Do you think it will matter?

EMILY

No. I have an idea. Help me carry the lights back to the car.

EXT. EILEEN'S STREET - DAY

Emily snaps photos of Eileen standing in the middle of the street. The beautiful white gown sharply contrasts with the littered streets, lined with tiny broken down homes. It's getting dirty, as it drags along the concrete. The lawns are mostly unkept, there is garbage lying in every gutter, and the lights inside most of the homes are out.

EMILY

Just do what you're doing now.

Emily snaps some more. Camera flashes. Eileen tries posing. Emily looks down at her camera to check what she's getting. She smiles and looks up.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Let's take some inside.

INT. EILEEN'S KITCHEN - DAY

Emily has Eileen pose with her legs up on the kitchen table. A beam of light hits her face and the dress perfectly. The shimmering fabric contrasts with the dull, ugly, small dusty kitchen she is sitting in.

They move out to the backyard to take pictures in the overgrown weeds. Emily has Eileen place one of her old lawn chairs within the weeds and pose there.

The two run around the area looking for places to shoot. Final flash goes off and

FADE TO:

INT. EMILY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Emily walks through the front door to see Michael at the dinner table eating a bowl of cereal.

EMILY

Did the mail come?

He doesn't look up from his bowl.

MICHAEL

On the counter.

She runs over to find a letter from Tisch School of The Arts. She rips it open.

EMILY

I got it.

He stops munching, but doesn't look up from his cereal.

EMILY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I got it! Dad I got it!

She reads the letter aloud.

EMILY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Dear Ms. Porter, we are pleased to inform you that you have been accepted to-

MICHAEL

-that's great Emily. You'll be much happier there I'm sure.

His tone is slightly sarcastic. He sounds like he is trying hard to be happy, but isn't excited for her.

He keeps on eating his cereal. She sees this and her expression of joy turns to sadness. She walks over and places the letter in front of him, then walks to the front door. She stops right before she opens it.

EMILY

It's kind of a big deal. At least read it.

He doesn't look up.

CUT TO:

INT. EILEEN'S KITCHEN - DAY

EILEEN

Why don't you look happy?

EMILY

Just a lot to take in. New York City all by myself. It's going to be a big change. This all happened so fast. The reality of moving hasn't really hit me until now.

EILEEN

An adventure. That's what it will be. There are so many people at that school you'll never feel alone.

EMILY

It's not so much about me being alone.

EILEEN

I'll be fine don't you worry. I'll come visit and we'll do so many things together. Go to the top of The Empire State Building and go ice skating and visit all the big stores on 5th-

EMILY

I meant my dad.

EILEEN

Right. Of course.

EMILY

It's been the two of us for- well ever.

(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)

I didn't realize until recently how much his life changed when I came into the picture. I hadn't considered him through all of this. Penn was just a fifteen-minute drive from home.

EILEEN

This is your moment. Your time. The letter said something about a showing of your work?

EMILY

All of the accepted students are a part of it. You're coming right? 5 o'clock Thursday. It shouldn't take too long-

EILEEN

Wouldn't be anywhere else.

Emily smiles.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

Lets check if those stubborn birds have hatched yet.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOWROOM - NIGHT

Tons of STUDENTS and PARENTS stand around a white, modern looking gallery. It's lined with photographs of all sorts, and in one corner "Emily Porter's Photography". Emily, wearing nude heels and a floral dress walks up to the wall, unable to believe her eyes. A MIDDLE-AGED COUPLE walks up to them.

WIFE

Are you Emily Porter?

EMILY

Yes ma'am.

HUSBAND

Please, tell us a little bit about your collection.

EMILY

An unnecessary amount of money goes into some of these high fashion pieces we admire and even purchase all the time.

(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)

I've come to learn these past few weeks that not everyone is as fortunate as I was growing up. Fashion is about a lot more than being exclusive, and it seems that we have forgotten that.

WIFE

An important truth and an exquisite use of contrast to shed light on it.

HUSBAND

It's uncanny how much you look like your model.

EMILY

Actually, that's because it's my-my Mom.

WIFE

Beautiful and so young!

She looks at her watch.

EMILY

If you'll excuse me.

INT. GALLERY - NIGHT

Emily sits on a cushioned bench with her chin resting on her hands. She looks at her watch. She smiles at people as they walk by.

As she sits in place, the PEOPLE around her are fast-forwarded to a speed so fast that they turn into blurred colors. Fewer and fewer enter the room, until eventually, only a few people are left.

Emily gets up and walks to the coat-check. A GIRL, about her age, stands in line next to her.

GIRL

You an accepted student?

EMILY

Yeah.

GIRL

Same here. Always dreamed of getting in. Kind of knew I would though. Both my parents work in the program.

EMILY

Must be nice. Mine just stepped out for a bit, it's kind of stuffy in here.

GIRL

They should meet mine! A lot of the accepted students said they were grabbing a late dinner later with their parents, so we decided to just make it a big group thing-

EMILY

Mine will probably want to get home. They've worn themselves out looking at all of the work, you know.

GIRL

Come on! It'll be fun. We can ditch the parents and hit a bar after! Text them and tell them they're coming.

Emily checks to see if the line is moving.

EMILY

I don't know what is taking them so long in the bathroom!

GIRL

I thought you said they stepped out.

EMILY

Uh- yeah. They- uh-

MICHAEL

Sorry that took so long Em. The line for the bathroom was ridiculous. Hi, Michael Porter, nice to meet you.

Emily turns around shocked. Michael shakes the girl's hand.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Let's take another look at your work before we leave, shall we?

CUT TO:

INT. GALLERY - MOMENTS LATER

Michael studies Emily's photographs. Emily looks at him, trying to read his expression.

MICHAEL  
She here?

EMILY  
She couldn't make it.

Michael looks sorry for Emily.

MICHAEL  
This isn't something I wanted to be right about.

EMILY  
You think it's- it's

MICHAEL  
Drugs?

Beat.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Maybe, maybe not.

EMILY  
Does it matter either way?

Emily holds her gaze on the centered photograph of her mother. Eileen wears the silver, shimmering dress, looking so intensely at the camera that it feels like she is peering into your soul.

MICHAEL (O.S.)  
She's made mistakes. Yes. But she gave me something I can never truly repay her for.

He looks at Emily and she looks back at him. He hugs her with one arm and kisses the top of her head.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
She won't know what she's missing.

FADE TO:

EXT. EILEEN'S STREET - MORNING

Emily stops her car right past Eileen's house. Eileen's car is not in the driveway.



Instead of walking to the front door, she makes her way around the side of the house, through the tall weeds and stops at a tree. A camera hangs around her neck. She climbs the tree about seven feet. She inches her way along a branch which grows out over Eileen's backyard. She holds up her camera, looks through the lens, and adjusts the focus ring. She starts shooting. She is taking pictures of the Red Robin's nest where four baby birds CHIRP. Only one of the two adult birds which had previously been protecting the nest, is perched at the nest's edge. It stands tall, and feeds the four babies. Emily stops to take a glance at Eileen's backyard. Empty. She looks back at the family of birds, as she watches the single parent take care of its children.

FADE OUT.

THE END