

1 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY 1
A car putters down a desolate highway. Slightly beat up, it's used and weathered.

2 EXT. TWO LANE ROAD - DAY 2
We cut to the same car on a different two lane back road.

101 EXT. FAMILY CAR FLASHBACK - DAY 101
From low in the back seat we gaze up towards the driver's seat. The sun shines brightly into the camera, we can see a man driving, but we can't see his face.

PAUL (O.S.)
You feeling any better? *

(silence)

You want something to eat? *

3 INT. PAUL'S CAR - DAY 3
It's a bright day, but in a different car in a different time.

With one foot on the dash board, a cigarette patch on her left arm and a map with a red circle on it in her right hand, we see Natalie; eyes glazed, staring out the window. She's lost in a memory.

NATALIE
Sure.

We see Paul, the driver, he's patient through the delay.

PAUL
You want to stop? *

We watch him as he waits for Natalie's response, which isn't quick to arrive.

PAUL
We can keep going, or we can stop, it's up to you. *

Natalie speaks as if she talking to the wind.

NATALIE
It's fine then. *

She's not cold, but she's distant and Paul let's it be.

NATALIE
We can just keep going. *

PAUL
Okay - but if you want to stop,
just let me know. *

NATALIE
I will. *

Natalie feigns a smile. *

Paul looks ahead down the road. *

The wind blows in Natalie's hair and she squints at the
bright light. *

102 EXT. FAMILY CAR FLASHBACK - DAY 102

A young girl sits in the back seat, her eyes squint in the
bright light of the sun, her hair blows in the wind.

4 EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE - DAY 4 *

Paul sits on the front fender of the car, looking over a map.
A house is just beyond the car and Paul glances up looking
inside at Natalie. *

Natalie, inside the house, runs her hand along the wall. *

PAUL
You okay. *

NATALIE
Yeah. *

Natalie looks around the empty space. *

PAUL
Is there anything? *

NATALIE
No. *

Paul walks towards the house as Natalie walks out. *

PAUL
It looks like it's been abandoned
for years.
(pause)
How many of you lived in there? *

Natalie runs her hand along the front door frame of the house and walks outside of it.

NATALIE
Just me, my Mom and my Aunt.

*
*

Natalie walks over and opens the car door.

*

NATALIE
We can keep going.

*
*

5 INT. PAUL'S CAR - DAY 5

Natalie stares out the window, the terrain has changed, it's a bit more rugged.

In her hand she holds a piece of wallpaper from the abandoned house.

*
*

6 EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY 6

The car drops down a hill, kicking up dust on a dirt road.

7 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DUSK 7

Paul and Natalie walk into the Hotel room, they both wear black. The two stare at the full size bed.

*
*

PAUL
You cool with that? I can sleep on the floor. I have my sleeping bag.

NATALIE
It'll be all right.

Natalie steps into the room and drops her bag down.

8 INT. PAUL'S CAR - DAY 8

Natalie studies the pen marks on the map and points ahead directing Paul where to go.

9 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 9

Paul sits at the edge of the bed, rolling a joint. Natalie walks out of the bathroom with a towel wrapped around her head. She pulls a red pen from her bag and sits down at the table eyeing the map.

PAUL
I think this'll loosen you up.

NATALIE
Isn't this a non-smoking room.

PAUL
It's just one joint.

NATALIE
I don't know if it's a good idea.

PAUL
Is it gonna freak you out?

Natalie thinks, she wants be clever.

NATALIE
Let's just say it can spoil a
friendship.

Paul sparks the lighter. Natalie takes a red pen and slowly circles a location on the map.

PAUL
Define, spoil.

Paul holds the joint out to Natalie.

10 INT. PAUL'S CAR - DAY 10

Natalie studies the Polaroid in her hand and looks out the window at the surrounding area. We don't get to see exactly what the picture is of.

Paul looks over at Natalie, trying to read her mind.

11 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 11

Natalie ashes the joint in the an ashtray.

PAUL
You don't, you just have to listen
to your heart and see what it tells
you.

NATALIE
It tells me a lot of things.

PAUL
Does it tell you that friends can
be lovers, that I'm here and that I
want to be here?

*

Natalie doesn't speak.

PAUL
I want to be here, with you, not
anyone else.

It's a serious moment, they both can feel it. Paul smiles at
Natalie, she cracks the hint of a smile back.

PAUL
I guess that was serious.

*

Paul smiles wider and keeps his eyes locked on Natalie's.

NATALIE
It's okay.

*

*

12 INT/EXT. DRIVING - AFTERNOON 12

Dirt Road blasts past the spinning car wheels.

Paul's hands hold the wheel.

Natalie eyes the Polaroid, then pulls the map from the side
of the door.

Natalie holds her hand out the window with the map covering
it. It flaps in the wind undecided about whether it will fly
away or not.

103 INT. FAMILY CAR FLASHBACK - DAY 103

In our POV from the back seat we see the drivers head and
then look to the left to see his hand held out the window. It
dips and dives against the wind. Sunlight cracks out from
behind his arm and blinds us intermittently.

PAUL (O.S.)
What are you so afraid of?

13 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 13

Paul stares at Natalie. She says nothing.

Natalie looks down at the Polaroid picture, which reveals a young girl being held by a man whose face is obscured by a large lens flare. The two stand atop a beautiful mountain peak.

The little girl smiles a big smile. *

NATALIE *

I still can't ever see his face. *

14 EXT. LOOKOUT ROADSIDE - AFTERNOON 14 *

Natalie closes the car door and bends down to tie her shoes. Paul on the driver's side is stretching and wandering around the car surveying the area to determine it's safety.

Natalie stands up as Paul rounds her side of the car. He casually reaches out to touch her back. Natalie gently sways away from his touch and takes the lead to a faint trail just beyond the car.

Paul slowly follows allowing Natalie to lead the way.

Paul glances over his shoulder at the car, then starts up the trail.

Natalie walks at her own pace, her eyes look down at her feet, then out at the trail and the hilltop beyond.

104 EXT. VALLEY TRAIL FLASHBACK - DAY 104

The little girl walks along a dirt path, her hand is extended above her head to hold on tightly to her father's hand. She looks up at him, proud, as they walk along the trail.

PAUL (O.S.)

What do you think you're gonna find up there? *

NATALIE (O.S.) *

I don't know. *

15 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 15

Paul lies on the bed while Natalie leans back in her chair at the table.

NATALIE

I just want to remember something good. I just want to see his face. *

Natalie looks down at the Polaroid.

*

16 EXT. VALLEY TRAIL - AFTERNOON 16

Natalie is walking. She's getting closer to the hilltop.

NATALIE (O.S.)
When you lose something, you go
back - retrace your steps up to the
point you lost that thing you're
looking for.

105 EXT. VALLEY TRAIL FLASHBACK - AFTERNOON 105

The little girl keeps walking with her father.

NATALIE (O.S.)
And then hope to find it.

17 EXT. VALLEY TRAIL - AFTERNOON 17

Natalie looks down again to watch her step and then back at Paul.

NATALIE (O.S.)
I've never knew what I lost.

18 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 18

Thoughts swirl through Natalie's head. Paul keeps his eyes on Natalie, he's listening.

PAUL
If you want to find it, you'll find
it.

Paul looks at Natalie. Natalie cracks a smile.

*

NATALIE
I feel really high.

PAUL
Me too.

NATALIE
Something bad isn't going to happen
is it?

Paul calmly smiles.

PAUL

No, nothing bad is going to happen.

Natalie stares at Paul, more than anything she wants to trust what he's saying.

Natalie slowly gets up and walks over to lie down on the bed. *

106 EXT. HOUSE FLASHBACK - DAY 106 *

Two small luggage pieces are dropped on the ground. The little girl stands with a Polaroid in her hand. *

19 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 19

Natalie's head is on a pillow and Paul leans on his side beside her. Natalie's eyes are open. She's wide awake. Paul's hand timidly reaches around and slowly caresses her arm. It takes it's time, but the message is clear. Natalie stares up at Paul. *

107 EXT. HOUSE FLASHBACK - DAY 107 *

The father's arm grasps his daughter's. He gives it a tight squeeze as the girl gazes up unknowingly at her father. *

20 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 20

We watch Paul's hand continue to caress her arm, this time close-up. Natalie takes her opposite hand and entwines her fingers with Paul's. *

108 EXT. HOUSE FLASHBACK - DAY 108

The little girl sits beside her bags. Her father stands over her and she looks up at him.

Leaning down, he gives her a squeeze and nuzzles his face to her ear. We see his lips move:

PAUL (O.S.)

I love you Natalie.

21 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 21

Natalie's hand still holds Paul's. Paul is staring her in the eyes. *

Natalie's expression goes cold, she doesn't know how to respond. Slowly, Natalie retracts her hand and rolls away from Paul facing the camera. *
*
*

109 EXT. HOUSE FLASHBACK - DAY 109

A car pulls away in a cloud of dust. The little girl sits at the doorstep, bags beside her and a polaroid in her hand.

22 EXT. VALLEY TRAIL - AFTERNOON 22

Natalie is nearly at the top of the peak.

She breathes heavily but can't slow her pace.

She reaches the top and looks out at the majestic view.

NATALIE

This is it.

Paul stops beneath her.

PAUL

It's beautiful...

Natalie turns and faces the sun, it blinds her so she quickly shuts her eyes.

110 EXT. VALLEY TRAIL FLASHBACK - DAY 110

An old polaroid camera is passed from one man's hand to another.

23 EXT. VALLEY TRAIL - AFTERNOON 23

Natalie looks down at the polaroid she pulls from her pocket. We can see her with her father, smiling from ear to ear.

They stand in what appears to be the same spot where Natalie is standing.

Natalie studies the immediate surroundings and begins to block out the photograph.

NATALIE

We would have been right here.

(she directs Paul)

Stand right there.

Paul moves and stands in front of Natalie, he looks at her, framing her in his eye against the valley behind her.

Natalie pulls a digital camera from her pocket.

NATALIE
(distracted)
Take it from right there.

Paul holds up the camera and points it at Natalie.

Natalie stares at the camera.

PAUL
Do you want to smile?

Natalie continues to stare.

PAUL
Just smile.
(pause)
Come on.
(pause)
Say Cheese!

Paul puts the camera to his eye.

111 EXT. VALLEY TRAIL FLASHBACK - DAY 111

The little girl Smiles from ear to ear.

LITTLE GIRL
CHEEEEESE!!!!

The Polaroid clicks.

PAUL (O.S.)
Perfect.

24 EXT. VALLEY TRAIL - DAY 24

The camera drops from in front of Paul's face.

25 INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING 25

It's early morning and Natalie's eye's open. Within an instant she's self-conscious. Paul begins to stir and Natalie slips out of the bed and into the bathroom eluding any contact. Paul opens his eyes to see Natalie's bedside empty.

We HEAR the shower turn on.

26 EXT. VALLEY TRAIL - DUSK 26

Natalie is writing in a journal sitting on the trail.

Paul walks up with some water.

NATALIE

Let's just watch the sunset and
then we can go.

Natalie rises up and faces the west where the sun falls
beneath the mountains. The light blinds her and she squints.

112 EXT. HOUSE FLASHBACK - AFTERNOON 112

Staring up from doorstep, sunlight once again blinds our view
of Natalie's father. Flares fill the frame and the little
girl squints.

27 EXT. VALLEY TRAIL - MOMENTS LATER 27

Natalie's eye's are closed and when she opens them, the sun
begin's to set. She stares into the sunset and talks to Paul.

NATALIE

Everything just happens... I didn't
want to come back here, I didn't
want to be here. And now that I'm
here, I just want to see him more
than ever. I just want to ask him
why. I want to look into his eyes,
I want to see his eyes, I want to
know why.

*
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*
*

Paul steps closer, he listens.

*

NATALIE

I'm sorry about last night. It's
just...

*
*
*

Natalie chokes up.

*

NATALIE

It's just...

*
*

Natalie slows herself down, she breathes.

*

NATALIE

You know what I'm afraid of?

Natalie's eyes begin to water. She can't speak.

Paul takes it as a cue. *

PAUL

I'm here because I want to be here
Natalie. I'm here because I was
meant to be here. *

Natalie listens but still looks at the sunset.

PAUL

Last night, I said it because I
meant it, I do love you. I feel it
and know it. It's stronger than me. *

Natalie is quiet as Paul steps towards her.

NATALIE

I know...

PAUL

I'm not going anywhere.

Paul looks over at Natalie who doesn't look back, she just
stares at the horizon. She takes a breath, her guard drops
and Paul, feeling it, reaches out and puts his hand on her
shoulder. Natalie slowly puts her hand on his. *

Paul pulls Natalie close and cradles her head, she closes
her eyes.

113 EXT. HOUSE FLASHBACK - AFTERNOON

113

The little girl is being squeezed by her father. As he
releases her and stands up, she stare up at him.

28 INT. CAR - MAGIC HOUR

28

We look out the window of the car as it speeds down the
highway. The mountains are purple with the light of the
fallen sun. Natalie stares out and deep into herself, She
closes her eyes.

114 EXT. HOUSE FLASHBACK - AFTERNOON 114

The little girl stares up at her father and now, evading the sunlight we finally see his face.

Tears roll down his cheek, he has no choice in doing what he's doing and it hurts more than anything. He looks at the camera, turns to walk away, looks again, then he's gone.

29 INT. CAR - MAGIC HOUR 29

Natalie opens her eyes, they are wet. But she begins to form a smile on her face.

Paul looks over at Natalie who looks back at him.

Natalie reaches her hand over and grabs Paul's. She gives his hand a squeeze.

Natalie looks at Paul, and we see, within her gaze, a love that has awoken.

30 EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT 30

We follow the car from behind as it weaves into traffic and away from the camera into the night of the highway.

END.