

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

An abstract brown stain against white. We're not quite sure what we're looking at until we PULL BACK -- it's the wall of a suburban home. Wallpaper has been peeled back. Water damage.

TOBEY FALLS (18, messy hair, slept-in clothes) cocks his head to take it in. We're not sure if he's finding strange shapes in the stain or if he's dazed from having just woke up.

He barely winces at the SNAP of nail guns behind him. Two WORKERS are on their knees laying down new carpet.

TOBEY (V.O.)

I guess it was strange... to see her standing there, in her new house... away from us all. She was going on about water damage, and her shingles, and how they rushed to build all the houses in this subdivision, hearing similar complaints from the people across the street.

TOBEY (CONT'D)

(under his breath)
Shit-ass workmanship.

MRS. FALLS (40) whisks into the room wearing a pink track suit.

MRS. FALLS

Did you hear me?

TOBEY

(covering)
Uh, yeah. New roof. Good for ten years.
(pause)
This is the highlight of my visit.

She gives him the "don't be smart" look.

MRS. FALLS

It was in the walls, for heaven's sake.
It seeped right down to the basement.

Tobey walks towards the kitchen, still stiff from sleep. The POPPING of the staple gun in the background, the THUMPS of the workers kicking the carpet stretchers with their knee-pads.

TOBEY

(quietly, to his mother)
Do people *have* to use staple guns at 8am?

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MRS. FALLS
It's noon!

Tobey rummages through the cupboards for cereal. His mother stops him, fluffing her curls with a hair-pick.

MRS. FALLS (CONT'D)
Don't eat. I'm gonna pick up some subs
for the men.

TOBEY
(sarcastically)
The *men*?

MRS. FALLS
Why don't you come with me?

Tobey comes to a HALT.

TOBEY
Don't they have their own lunches?

His mother EXITS, ignoring him.

EXT. VEHICLE - DAY, MOMENTS LATER

Tobey behind the wheel. The floor of his car is filled with junk: napkins, magazines, drive-thru bags.

His mother pretends not to notice. They drive in silence.

MRS. FALLS
How's your car keeping up?

Tobey SHRUGS.

TOBEY
It's alright.

SILENCE.

INT. SANDWICH SHACK - DAY

Tobey squints up at the picture menu above the counter, waiting for the woman to make his sandwich. His mother stands to his right, holding the bag of subs for the workers.

MRS. FALLS
You're not wearing your glasses these
days?

Tobey stops squinting and shrugs it off.

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CONTINUED:

TOBEY

Nah.

The woman finishes wrapping the sandwich and hands it to Tobey. He hands a bill to the cashier.

His mother tries to cut in, her wallet in hand.

MRS. FALLS

Don't be ridiculous.

(off Tobey)

If I'm buying them subs I can certainly pay for yours, too.

Tobey shrugs her off with a smile and takes his change from the cashier.

TOBEY

(to mother)

Ready?

She looks like she's about to cry.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

They near the car. Tobey flips his sub on the roof to fish for his keys.

His mother is even closer to tears. Tobey doesn't want to get into it.

TOBEY

(whiny)

Aww, ma.

She doesn't look at him.

TOBEY (CONT'D)

I've got money.

She stands there silent, looking off towards the strip mall.

INT. VEHICLE - MOMENTS LATER

The drive is very quiet.

MRS. FALLS

You have more burgers than home-cooked meals.

SILENCE.

(CONTINUED)

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MRS. FALLS (CONT'D)

Your father doesn't even know how to work the stove.

TOBEY

Ma, it's just lunch.

(trying to lighten the mood)

I'll let you pay next time.

TOBEY (V.O) (CONT'D)

I wanted to tell her that it's a distance thing...and that I hate driving all that way just for a visit...and I'm not taking sides in this bullshit divorce because I think that maybe it was for the best anyway. But I didn't.

INT. TOBEY'S BEDROOM - DAY, FLASHBACK

There is an abstract section of a white ceiling. Star stickers.

TOBEY

Aren't these things cancerous?

(pause)

I think I read that somewhere.

LEA (O.S.)

You're so neurotic.

Tobey and his girlfriend LEA (17) are standing on his bed, putting glow-in-the-dark star stickers on his ceiling, forming the Big Dipper. Tobey's collectible space figures stand neatly on a shelf.

LEA (CONT'D)

Why don't we spell something?

TOBEY

Nah. That's too corny.

LEA

C'mon. You can have your name in lights.

Tobey and Lea add more stickers.

Tobey flicks the light switch off. He stuffs his checkered work shirt under the crack of the door to block the light seeping in.

Tobey and Lea lie on their backs on the bed, admiring their work.

EXT. EMPTY SWIMMING POOL - DAY, PRESENT DAY

Tobey is at the bottom of a pool that has been drained. He wears kneepads and is surrounded by small boxes of colored tiles.

TOBEY (V.O)

As soon as you realize that there's a world outside of your hometown, that's bigger than you, and bigger than you can even imagine, it's hard to concentrate on things. To think that halfway across the world, at any given moment, someone was doing something spectacular, like diving from five hundred-foot cliffs, or attacking seal hunters up north. Or planting trees. Not at the bottom of an empty pool.

The tiny tiles are actually forming the shape of a giant SAGITTARIUS -- HALF MAN, HALF HORSE, pulling back a bow and arrow.

CLOSE-UP on Tobey's hands as he tries different combinations of tiles.

He squints to look at his work for a moment, then refigures them again.

EXT. EMPTY SWIMMING POOL - DAY, FLASHBACK

The owner of the pool MR. TSUROAKA (50's, Asian) stands on the deck, his hands behind his back. He is watching Tobey and his boss RUSS (30's) in the empty deep-end, stenciling the outline of the figure.

MR. TSUROAKA

It was one of the first things I remember seeing here as a boy. Such a strange thing. And powerful.

He LAUGHS, scratching the back of his neck.

MR. TSUROAKA (CONT'D)

I thought all Americans were into astrology.

EXT. EMPTY SWIMMING POOL - DAY, PRESENT DAY

Tobey at the bottom of the pool, adjusting tiles.

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JAMES

How's it goin', G?

Tobey SNAPS a tile prematurely, spooked. He turns to see Mr. Tsuroaka's son JAMES (16, all baggy clothes and fake bling) standing comically close to Tobey in the deep end.

TOBEY

Jesus. You scared the crap outta me.

James leans over to inspect the new tiles forming the head and chest of the archer.

JAMES

That is lookin' dope.

Tobey's attention goes back to the tiles.

JAMES (CONT'D)

So how much is my Dad payin' for this?

Tobey stands up to stretch his back, and loosen his kneepads.

TOBEY

Well... that's between my boss... and your boss.

As if on cue, a GIANT BOX KITE cuts through the air.

Tobey and James turn their heads. They can't see the end of the string. The kite bobs and whirls, dancing in the air.

MR. TSUROAKA holding the string at the far end of the grounds, laughing like a little child.

INT. TOBEY'S DAD'S HOUSE - DAY, FLASHBACK

Tobey walks in the kitchen wearing boxer shorts and a T-shirt he's shrunk in the dryer. His hair is messed up and his eyes are swollen with sleep.

His dad, MR. FALLS (40's) sits at the table reading the paper, wearing an identical outfit.

MR. FALLS

Have you heard from Lea, yet?

Tobey absently grabs a section of the paper from the table.

TOBEY

Yeah. I got a postcard.

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Tobey sorts through the morning mail. He notices a POSTCARD with a moose on the front. He smiles and turns it over.

TOBEY (V.O) (CONT'D)

It was a card with a moose on it. The corners got wet and it looked like Lea had written "I've made 75 cents in two days." There are things up there called wood ticks and they bury their heads under your skin. She also said she wanted to take me up in a plane to see all of the clear-cuts, and maybe have me grow a beard and become a hippie with her. Her hair would be longer when she got back. She told me that BUBBY blew off somewhere near Sudbury, the letters doing somersaults on the highway. In a few hundred years, there'll be a giant Douglas fir with a fridge magnet in its lap, a little 'Y' growing towards the sun.

INT. TOBEY'S BEDROOM - DAY, PRESENT DAY

Tobey's boss Russ leans in his doorway, bright and chipper. It's 6 am. Tobey groans.

RUSS

Come on, I'm doin' you a favor. I'm not leaving until you throw some pants on.

Tobey is so tired he's barely able to speak.

TOBEY

Are you insane?

RUSS

A few rounds'll do you some good. It's a "Zen thing".

TOBEY

(not believing him)

Zen.

Russ absently looks through some of Tobey's things, waiting.

RUSS

Come on...it's the new you. Up and at 'em. Clear your head a little. No more shit-ass workmanship.

Russ SMILES. Tobey throws his pillow at him.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

Tobey stands on the fairway in his pajamas and flip-flops, unimpressed. Russ steadies himself at the tee.

RUSS

You have to *actively participate*.

TOBEY

Tell me you didn't just say that.

RUSS

Do what she did. Get out there. Shuffle your feet a little. See the world.

Russ POPS the ball. They both watch it.

TOBEY

You sound just like my mother. Next, you'll be telling me to get my hair cut and go to more dances.

Russ is already on his way towards the ball. Tobey watches him walk away.

Russ calls out, without looking back.

RUSS

Life goes on, buddy.

(pause)

With or without you.

Tobey's face as he considers this.

EXT. SKATING RINK - DAY, FLASHBACK

Winter. An outdoor skating rink in the city. Colourful jackets dot the rink, kids are scrambling.

Tobey is trying to hold onto Lea, but they're both struggling on the ice.

LEA

(jokingly)

Doonn't! You're dragging me down.

They slip and slide and finally let go of one other. Tobey watches her go. He smiles at her ankles turning in, her comically oversized jacket and the mittens that make her look like a kid.

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CONTINUED:

Tobey is now on the wooden bleachers lining the rink, pretending to tie his skates. He watches Lea skate past -- they wave.

His face as he loses her in the crowd again.

INT. SHOWER - DAY

Tobey and Lea are in the shower. Tobey stands beneath the faucet, Lea is behind him. He speaks very quietly.

TOBEY

I used to do this as a kid. You plug your ears...and close your eyes...and then you slowly back under the water. It sounds just a car wash. Rinsing your brain.

Lea SMILES.

They both plug their ears, close their eyes and slowly back under the spray.

The SOUND of a large broom SWOOSHING along the pool deck.

Tobey is doing a final sweep of Mr. Tsurroaka's deck.

Mr. Tsurroaka is hidden from view in the far gardens, his kite moving high against the wind.

The pool is still empty, but the Sagittarius mosaic is now complete, and gleaming in the afternoon sun.

Tobey leans against his broom to watch Russ doing some fine-tuning to the seal along the deep end.

TOBEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I always remembered what Russ told me about the pressure of the water. How it was always moving... always looking to find holes... find air... places to begin. The new walls of my mother's house. Aren't we just like them, I would ask you in a letter... the water interrupting...always pushing at our form. Aren't we just our parents in disguise?

THE END.