

Instant

Story and Screenplay by
Lauren Goodman

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laurgoodman27@gmail.com

1 EXT. HOUSE- NIGHT- ESTABLISHING 1

WIDE SHOT of exterior of house as cars are pulling up and parking. FAINT MUSIC IS PLAYING as lights can be seen from the house. A GROUP OF TEENAGERS are chatting indistinctly as they walk inside the house

CUT TO:

2 INT. HOUSE- NIGHT 2

POV SHOT of someone walking through the house. Camera is moving where action is as MUSIC CONTINUES over. As the camera PUSHES FURTHER IN the house we see some of the partying going on.

A GIRL can be seen vomiting in a toilet as the bathroom door is open.

A FEW GIRLS AND BOYS are taking shots.

A CROWD OF DRUNK GIRLS AND BOYS are playing beer pong, cheering as A GUY makes it.

THREE GIRLS are huddled taking selfies.

PAIRS OF TEENAGERS are sprawled on couches, talking and laughing.

There is a MOB OF TEENS dancing with solo cups and beers in their hands.

Basically, everything their parents thought they wouldn't be doing with just a "small group of friends" is completely the opposite.

Finally, PUSH IN on THREE GIRLS talking to TWO GUYS, laughing. They are all clearly buzzed. One of the girls notices that she got a text on her phone.

EMMA

Crap! My mom wants to know where we are.

LILLY

Just tell her we're back at your house.

EMMA

I kinda told her I was staying over your house.

(CONTINUED)

LILLY

I don't have a key to my house, so
I was kinda hoping... to sleep over
at your house.

BOY #1

What's the big deal? Just text her
back in the morning.

KAYLA

(exaggerated) Noooooo. Her mom is a
helicopter mom. She'll track her
phone down and find out we're here.

EMMA

If she finds out that I'm not at
her house, I won't be let out of my
room till college.

LILLY

(to EMMA)

(drunk and cheery) You know what,
it'll be okay. I will call my
brother to get the key and meet us
back at my house, we'll go send
pictures to your mom like we're
there, grab some more drinks, and
hurry back! (to KAYLA) Do you want
to come with us?

KAYLA

No I'm not spending my night
driving back and forth. Go ahead
I'll be fine.

LILLY

Okay. We'll be back in like 10...
15...30...

EMMA

(laughing) Come on!

BOTH GIRLS start walking through the swarms of people
towards the door.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. HOUSE- NIGHT

3

They both stumble to the car laughing. As Emma reaches for the door handle of the driver's side...

LILLY
(loudly) Wrong side! My car, my rules. I'm driving.

EMMA
(walking to other side of car)
I'm picking the music. I'm not listening to any pop music.

They both get in the car, turn on the ignition, back out, and zoom down the street. As the car leaves, you can still see the house and hear the music playing from it.

CUT TO:

4 INT. CAR- NIGHT

4

Rap music is playing in the background as Lilly is driving and Emma is on her phone.

LILLY
We have to get back there soon. I don't want Brandon talking to Liz. She's a bit of a--

EMMA
Um I actually think Liz is a very nice person! She's friendly and talks to everyone...

LILLY
(sarcastically) Yeah, every guy who breathes. Like, come on, we get it, you think you're hot, stop flirting with every guy you see cause you have a boyfriend!

EMMA
Yea I guess, well I don't think you need to worry. Brandon totally likes you.

LILLY
(sarcastically) Me? No! Never!
(laughs) Yea... which is why we need to get this done fast.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

Could you speed up a little bit? I
can walk faster to get home
Grandma. (jokingly)

LILLY

(jokingly) Okay bye!

CUT TO:

5 EXT. ROAD- NIGHT

5

The car is speeding and swerving a little as it is driving on the empty road. Clearly, though, the car is going over the speed limit.

CUT TO:

6 EXT. STOPLIGHT- NIGHT

6

No cars seem to be around the stoplight as it is green. The stoplight then switches to yellow.

BACK TO:

7 INT. CAR- NIGHT

7

The girls don't seem to notice the light change and keep talking as Lilly drives.

Suddenly, the stoplight turns red right as they are about to drive in the intersection.

In the middle of the intersection, right as Lilly and Emma realize what is happening, another car t-bones them on the driver side.

CUT TO BLACK.

There is a long, eerie silence as the audience is left temporarily to guess what happened. The sound of wheels squeaking on the floor starts to be heard as we--

FADE IN:

8 INT. EMMA'S ROOM- DAY

8

We see the wheels of wheelchair Emma is on as it goes towards a desk in EMMA'S BEDROOM. There are photos on her and Logan everywhere. Emma finally comes into view as we see her silently doing homework. She seems frustrated and depressing as she is circling answers and writing down hard with her pencil.

(CONTINUED)

She suddenly drops her pencil, which rolls under her desk. As she reaches in a jar for another pencil, she finds there are only pens, forcing her to try to retrieve the pencil.

We see Emma reaching on the ground as much as she can to pick up the pencil. Unfortunately, her wheelchair is restricting her movement to go under the desk and pick it up.

After multiple tries, Emma, now angry and exhausted, groans and leans back in the wheelchair to look at the ceiling.

CUT TO:

9

INT. KITCHEN- DAY

9

EMMA'S MOM and Emma sitting across the table eating during dinner. There is not much talking going on until-

EMMA'S MOM

So... do you like what I made?

EMMA

(monotone) yeah, it's great.

More silence. It's not so much awkward as it is somber. Both women seem to be bottling up their feelings.

EMMA'S MOM

(optimistically) So I read this article today on Yahoo about this girl, just your age, who won a bronze medal at the Paralympics. I mean, I know you haven't always been involved with sports, but it gave me the idea that you can take up some hobbies.

EMMA

(depressed) No, I think I'm good.

EMMA'S MOM (CONT'D)

Well it doesn't have to be sports. You could do painting, take up a pottery class. (having an idea) Maybe you can get involved with school again by playing an instrument. When you were little you did play a bit of piano--

EMMA

I'm fine

(CONTINUED)

EMMA'S MOM

Emma, I understand that you're in pain right now...

EMMA

That's the thing, Mom, you don't understand. You have no clue what I feel. And I don't feel any pain. What I feel is nothing because I'm paralyzed.

EMMA'S MOM

Well, I'm sorry you are angry and upset, but this is your reality. And it's time to get back to society and to school. If you are depressed, I could call the doctor and maybe get some medication...

EMMA

Medication? (laughs sarcastically)
Like a few pills are going solve all my problems. Are they gonna make me magically walk again?

EMMA'S MOM

I'm trying to do my best here, Emma.

EMMA

Stop trying then! Stop trying to fix me like it's all gonna be better if I pretend to be happy. I don't need you to tell me this is my life now, I'm perfectly aware of my condition. My life is pretty much over now, so stop trying to suggest I should act like it's not.

EMMA'S MOM

You are not the only one who's life was affected here.

EMMA'S MOM leaves the kitchen, leaving Emma and all the plates still on the table.

CUT TO:

10 INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM- NIGHT 10

Emma wheels back into her room, now nighttime. She stares across the room at her bed. Emma sits up on her wheelchair and uses her arms to push herself off the wheelchair and onto the floor.

Using her arms and upper body she crawls from one end of the room to the other.

She finally uses all of her strength to pull herself into bed.

As she lays silently in bed for a while, a few memories of her, Lilly, and their friends FLASH by as she stares at the ceiling.

Finally, exhausted by the day she closes her eyes.

BACK TO:

11 EXT. STOPLIGHT- NIGHT 11

FLASHBACK to the same night of the accident. The green stoplight switches to yellow.

BACK TO:

12 INT. CAR- NIGHT 12

The memory of the girls talking as Lilly drives.

The stoplight turns red.

Out of nowhere, Emma sees the light just as they are going into the intersection.

EMMA

STOP!

The car brakes suddenly as the girls are lunged forward.

Their car is stopped right over the line in the intersection right as the oncoming car zooms through intersection.

BACK TO:

13 INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM- DAY 13

Emma sits up from her bed, now wide awake.

CUT TO:

14 EXT. PLAYGROUND- DAY 14

Emma and Kayla are sitting side by side in a near-empty playground, Kayla on a swing and Emma in her wheelchair.

KAYLA

You know you could sit down on a swing and I'll push you. You're not glued to that seat the rest of your life.

EMMA

(solemnly) Oh I know.

Kayla swings in silence for a few moments as KIDS can faintly be heard in the background.

KAYLA

When are you coming back to school?

EMMA

I don't know yet. All of my work's at home or online, so haven't really thought about it.

KAYLA

Your teachers are worried. All of our friends are wondering where you are.

EMMA

It's not like our group has really hung out outside of school or parties, so I don't know why they'd care.

KAYLA

(beat and then changes subject)
This week is Lilly's birthday...I miss her a lot. I think about her all of the time and what happened.

EMMA

Me too. It just replays in my head over and over.

(silence and then)

I don't remember after the remember before. You know, I almost got in

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EMMA (cont'd)
the driver's seat. I should've
insisted I'd drive.

KAYLA
Don't do that to yourself. We were
all drinking.

EMMA
I wanted to go back to the house. I
wish we had taken my car instead.

KAYLA
So what? So that you could be the
one driving that died? Or you think
that that would just change
everything and she would be fine.
(beat) You could do that all day,
just go over the millions of what
ifs. But that doesn't change the
fact that she's gone and its not
your fault.

EMMA
I just can't believe it. It feels
like a dream.

KAYLA
I know... she was here... and then
in an instant... she was gone. Like
something you would see on the news
or read in a book.

EMMA
Yea... I miss her too.

KAYLA
In three days there's gonna be some
type of memorial vigil thing at the
school for Lilly's birthday. It
would mean a lot if you came. It
would help.

EMMA
I don't... I don't think I could do
it. All those people and her
parents... I haven't spoke to them
since the funeral. They'll look at
me and think--

KAYLA
-- that you were her friend... You
need to forgive yourself for what
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KAYLA (cont'd)
 happened. Nobody blames you for anything. Lilly wouldn't have wanted for you to blame yourself. She would've wanted you to pick up your life and be happy. I know you feel like you'll never be happy again, but there is more outside of this accident. You gotta believe me...Promise me you'll think about going, okay?

EMMA
 (beat) Okay.

15 INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM- DAY 15

Emma is once again doing homework in her bedroom. As she opens up a new assignment from English, the prompt says, "Write about someone who has impacted your life, how and why."

Emma stares at the prompt for a few moments, puts it off to the side, and then rolls over to the side of her bed and pulls out a bunch of photos and memories of her and Lilly.

In the box is a bunch of photos, CDs, movies, even a summer to-do list. On the list a lot of stuff was checked off. a few of the items that haven't been checked off read, "Have a bonfire" and "Have a High School Musical Marathon"

CUT TO:

16 INT. KITCHEN- DAY 16

Emma wheels into the kitchen and pulls out marshmallows, chocolate, and graham crackers out of the pantry.

She lights a candle, put a marshmallow on a stick, and roasts it for a while over the candle.

After she is done, she puts the s'more together on a paper plate and takes it to her room.

BACK TO:

17 INT. EMMA'S ROOM- DAY 17

Emma goes in one of her drawers and finds all of the High School Musical movies and puts the first one into the DVD player as opening credits start to roll.

CUT TO:

18 INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM- NIGHT 18

Now nighttime, Emma seems glued to the same spot as she was before. The paper plate is clean, and she is watching intently just as High School Musical 3 end credits roll. Emma smiles as she turns off the DVD player and checks it off of the two items on the list.

Emma goes back to her laptop and reads what the prompt says again. She starts typing out something on a google document.

CUT TO:

19 EXT. EMMA'S HOUSE- NIGHT 19

Kayla is wheeling Emma out of the house to her car. She helps Emma get in the car as she puts the wheelchair in the back.

20 INT. KAYLA'S CAR- NIGHT 20

The car is pulling into the school parking lot and parking.

KAYLA

Are you sure about this Emma?
Because you don't I have to go just
because I pressured you too.

EMMA

Yea. I'm absolutely sure. I uh... I
actually think you're right. Maybe
I should go back to school soon.

KAYLA

Why the sudden change?

EMMA

I don't know I guess I just don't
want to be alone anymore. Maybe
it's my time to rejoin society. I
think that's what Lilly would do.

KAYLA

Yea but you don't have to do
anything because you think Lilly
would do it. People would
understand if you needed more time.

EMMA

Really it's okay. And it's not just
because of her. It's because of me
too.

(CONTINUED)

KAYLA
 (looks at school and then to
 Emma)
 You ready?

EMMA
 Yea.

Kayla gets out of the car and helps Emma with her wheelchair and getting out of the car.

CUT TO:

21 INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM- NIGHT

21

There is a gathering of people sitting in the auditorium as a slideshow of Lilly is playing. It seems more like a funeral than birthday memorial vigil.

People start to whisper a little bit as Emma comes into the room. Everyone seeing her is a little taken aback.

In the front of the room, there is a girl sharing a story about a memory of Lilly. She sits down quietly as somebody else says--

PERSON #1
 Is there anyone else who would like
 to share something about Lilly?

EMMA
 I would.

Emma wheels herself up to the front.

EMMA
 (to crowd)
 Hi everyone. I am Lilly's friend,
 Emma. Today is Lilly's favorite day
 of the year. She loved other
 people's birthdays and she loved
 parties, so her birthday was always
 pretty epic. In fact if she was
 here right now, she would probably
 say that she would want to turn on
 some music and break out the
 confetti.

(beat and then) Um... In English
 our latest assignment was write
 about someone who impacted your
 life, how and why. (taking out
 paper) I'm still not finished with

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EMMA (cont'd)

it, but I think that you would want to hear it. (reads paper) "The person who has impacted my life the most was my best friend, Lilly. She was the funniest and happiest girl I knew. If you were lucky enough to talk to her, let alone be friends with her, she always would make you feel like the coolest person in the room."

While she is reading her speech. There is a MONTAGE of shots of people watching her speak. This includes FRIENDS, TEACHERS, ETC. People who knew Lilly.

EMMA

(cont'd)

"Although she is gone now, she did leave her impact not just on me, but on all the people she knew. This was to embrace life's challenges and look for something good in the bad as she did. How, you ask? By making people feel better by showing them the positive side of every situation. Living without a bit of happiness and focusing on just the negative is not worth it. And that is how I'm going to remember her, not how she died, but how she lived. It may have taken me some time to realize it, but I now know that her memory is best honored by those who loved and cared for her. And the best way to honor that, is to live with joy and celebrate her life the way she did..." (looks back at crowd and says) Happy Birthday, Lilly.

CUT TO BLACK.