

FADE IN:

EXT. NOSTALGIC DRIVE-IN RESTAURANT - EVENING

An exterior shot of a roadside rest stop with a combination restaurant/gas station. It's one of those old fashioned style servers on roller blades type of joint, but has seen better days. The out of view sunset casting a purple-rusted sky against silhouettes of pure black pine, with the cold but bright neon bulbs providing refuge, and welcoming a stop.

CUT TO:

INT. PICK-UP TRUCK - POV

A donut is lifted up from the screen bottom, framing a man with a moustache, DAD in the driver's seat speaking to the waitress.

DAD

(to waitress)

Yeah we're heading up on our way to our cottage.  
It used to be a family tradition but we haven't been  
up there for a while.

CUT TO:

A view of the holder of the donut, MACK, the daughter in this duo sitting in the front seats of the pick-up truck. MACK is well-and-done with dinner right now, just trying to make her donut and ice cream dessert last. We can see the waitress making change for DAD as he continues.

DAD

(cont'd)

It's been a while, I just hope the pipes  
haven't burst, or we'll be in real trouble.  
But thing have been a little rough  
lately and we need to get away.

WAITRESS

Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. Is your  
just on the lake here?

DAD

*Just off the next county, on Lake Bear. Have you ever  
gone up there?*

WAITRESS

Oh, actually my aunt used to live up around there,  
it's very beautiful.

*(finishes up the bill)*

Well I hope you two have a great time. Would you  
like anything else before you go?

DAD

Actually a coffee please, we still  
have a couple hours to go.

*(checks nametag)*

Fran.

WAITRESS

Oh this is my coworker's tag, I'm Annie.  
I had to borrow her uniform, I got too  
tied up for laundry day this week haha.

DAD

Oh, heh. We are Phil and Mackenzie.

MACK

*(perks up)*

Mack!

DAD

*(pauses with a smile)*

Oh, I'm sorry, it's Mack now.

WAITRESS

*(smiling)*

That's a cute name, much better than Annie.

MACK gives a forced smile in return.

WAITRESS

Alright, I'll be right back with that coffee.

The waitress smiles again at MACK and then starts heading back to the kitchen window.

MACK

Why do you always do that?

DAD

(absent minded)

Hmm?

MACK

You always get so involved with everyone we meet.

DAD

Well..I suppose it just makes me happy. Why?

(beat)

Does it embarrass you?

MACK

No! It's just tiring, that's all. Not everybody  
has to be your best friend. And you don't  
have to always get me involved.

DAD

Oh. I guess that's just something that dad's do.

MACK

Well you should stop. ...And please  
don't play your oldies the rest of the trip.

DAD

You know what, those little things you don't like now,  
you're going to miss when you're older.

MACK

Yeah, not likely.

The WAITRESS returns with a large coffee to go. DAD and MACK sit in silence, but DAD keeps the smile on his face.

WAITRESS

Here you go.

The WAITRESS hands DAD the coffee and he nods.

WAITRESS

And here's...your bill.

The WAITRESS shuffles around receipts from her pocket. DAD inspects the paper and shuffles through his wallet for the money. These moments go by in a silence.

WAITRESS

Alright, you guys have a safe drive!

DAD

Thank you, have a good night.

DAD starts up the car, then carefully lifts the lid from his coffee to take a sip. He shifts into gear but holds on the break.

MACK

Don't do that either!

DAD

(holding the cup to his lip)

Do what?

MACK

You're patronizing me. You don't have to treat me like a child, I'm 15 now, just because I have to still live with you and go to school doesn't mean-- I'm not...

DAD

(surprised at the outburst)

No, you're not an adult now. Not yet.

MACK pouts and turns to look out the window. After a moment of silence passes, DAD puts the cup in the holder and puts the car back in park but leaves it on.

DAD

Listen Mack, I know you're older now, and I do know what it's like being your age. I get it. But I promise you

that the only thing I want to do is love you  
and try to be the best father I can be.

MACK continues looking out the window with a pout, but still is aware of her father's words.

DAD  
I know that life took a big dump on us.

MACK turns around.

DAD  
But you're not in this alone. We can't go back  
to how things were. Hell, going to our cottage  
won't fix what's happening, we can't escape the  
past. But I'll be here with you, and I'll  
be here for you. I love you honey.

There's a moment between them where neither speak. DAD shifts the car into gear and starts rolling away from the drive-in, stopping at the entrance to check the road.

MACK  
...I love you too. Dad.

DAD turns and gives a huge smile to MACK, who turns to look at him. He begins making the turn and she arranges her head on the seat to sleep. After a moment driving down the straight road, he turns the volume up on one of his classic rock CDs that have started playing.

MACK  
(eyes still closed)  
...and no old music.

DAD chuckles to himself then flips to the radio. An exterior shot of the truck driving down the now pitch black country road with the music from the radio playing.

MACK  
(older, V.O.)  
Before I closed my eyes...  
(beat)  
...was the last time I saw my dad.