

1 EXT. CHURCH - DAY 1

SCREECH. RORY (18) makes an aggressively illegal U-turn to stop by the curb. BELLE (18) stands. She gets in. They share an awkward hug. Rory drives off.

2 EXT. HILLTOP - SUNRISE 2

Overlapping giggles join the peaceful ambient noise of the bright spring day. YOUNG BELLE (7), YOUNG RORY (7), and PIPPA (60s) run up a yellow hill, hair glowing red in the golden hour sun.

They reach the top. Soft beams of light filter through the crooked branches of a small tree atop the hill. Pippa unfurls a gingham picnic blanket and tosses down a Cinderella book. She settles in against the tree and smiles lovingly at the girls.

Young Belle and young Rory, in matching outfits, happily, clumsily climb their way up a small oak tree. Rory jokingly dances, plays, and sings on the branch, taking up more and more room. Tension builds. Belle narrows her eyes at her performing counterpart. And leans forward, preparing for a shove.

3 INT. CAR - DAY 3

Belle and Rory drive in silence. Rory rolls down the windows. Belle quietly attempts to smooth her hair down. It flies up again.

4 INT. GAS STATION - DAY 4

FLUSH. Belle steps in front of the mirror. Turns the faucet on. Rory perches on the toilet seat. She's humming. The roll is empty. She stops humming.

RORY
Hey would you?

She motions to the roll and then waits awkwardly in her squat as Belle opens a cabinet, grabs a roll, unwraps it, and hands it over.

FLUSH.

RORY
How was church?

BELLE
It was church.

Pause.

BELLE
Lit a candle.

Belle steps away. Then lightens the mood.

BELLE
Thanks for being so prompt.

RORY
Well I was busy-

The hand dryer roars.

RORY
(laughing)
Yeah yeah okay.

Rory puts her hands beside Belle's under the hand dryer. The two stand in loud silence.

RORY
How are you doing? You know.
Actually.

Belle offers a small smile and and scoffs.

BELLE
I can't believe it took a death to
bring us back together.

Rory looks down.

BELLE
(sincerely)
But it's good to see you.

Beat.

BELLE
You?

Rory shrugs back. The hand dryer clicks off. They both stand awkwardly. Someone begins fiddling with the knob outside the door.

Another beat. Belle clears her throat and heads out. Rory follows.

5 INT. CAR - AFTERNOON

5

Back on the road. Belle's driving, glancing at an open notebook on the dash.

BELLE
Happy birthday Pippa. May the gentle breeze carry your soul-

Rory has an idea. She pats her pockets and cranes her head around. A fruit roll up dangles from her mouth. Rory makes an unintelligible noise and then motions in the way of taking a picture.

BELLE
Purse.

Rory reaches in. Belle grabs her wrist, fishing around herself. There. She pulls a Camcorder out. Rory lights up, hikes the rest of her roll-up into her mouth, flips it open, and points it right at Belle.

RORY
You have my full attention.

Belle glares.

RORY
Resume.

BELLE
May the wind carry your soul-

Rory snickers.

BELLE
Okay no camera.

She swats at it and misses.

BELLE
(resets)
Happy birthday-

RORY
Before we get into that whole thing again!

BELLE
(impatient)
Go quick.

Belle continues mouthing her speech.

RORY
I have come to a consensus.

BELLE
You what? That's not-

RORY
We're stopping in Brigham.

BELLE
We-

Belle motions between them.

BELLE
-already came to a consensus. No
time.

Her hands tighten on the wheel. Rory holds back a retort. She flips open her camera and starts scrolling through footage.

RORY
C'mon. Market at least.

Belle notices the camera. Ah of course.

BELLE
Another video huh?

RORY
(pleading)
Belle.

BELLE
30 minutes. Max.

Rory smiles.

BELLE
Happy birthday Pippa-

Rory leans back in her chair. Here we go again.

6 INT. MARKET - EVENING

6

Fruit and vegetables piled in big green bins. Christmas (Baby Please Come Home) by Mariah Carey plays out of the fuzzy speakers above.

Rory is singing into a carrot. She dances with confidence and ineptitude, jumping, twirling her way through the aisles.

Belle is aside studying a plum. She brushes a finger across a dark bruise. Rory shoves the Camcorder in her face and extends an imaginary microphone.

RORY

Sing it!

Rory flips the camera toward herself and then angles it to fit Belle in the frame as well. She dances to the camera.

RORY

Baby please come home!

BELLE

(hissing)

Rory. Rory.

Belle tries to grab the camera. When that doesn't work, she yanks Rory's arm down and flips the off switch.

BELLE

(serious)

Get it together.

Rory offers a sheepish smile and pops a grape into her mouth.

BELLE

It's March. What is wrong with this town?

RORY

It's the spirit of joy, Scrooge.

Rory has already pulled her camera back out.

RORY

Perfect for my video.

Belle grabs Rory's shoulders and turns her 90 degrees.

BELLE

Yes. Go film then. Bye.

Belle looks back at the plum, pausing for a moment before shoving it back into the produce pile.

7 INT. CAR - DUSK

7

It's getting dark. Rory's driving. The radio's on. Belle's scribbling in a notebook, still mouthing words as she writes. NEXT EXIT: BRIGHAM. Rory flips her turn signal on. Belle looks up.

BELLE
Why are you turning?

RORY
Huh? What's that? Eulogy's calling?
I think you'd better answer Belle.

BELLE
Rory....

Nothing.

BELLE
Rory.

Belle turns off the radio.

BELLE
Rory! I already gave you your
detour.

Rory turns it back on. She motions apologetically: "Sorry! I can't hear you."

The radio turns off. On. Off. On. Off. Belle looks up, exasperated. Rory takes the chance to turn it back on.

BELLE
(panicked)
Brake!

Rory's eyes widen first at Belle then out the front windshield. The car JERKS to a screeching halt. They stop just before the road ends. The music happily plugs on.

Belle flips the radio off. The two breathe heavily. A hissing sound comes from outside the car. Belle closes her eyes.

BELLE
(quietly)
What is that?

8 EXT. AUTO SHOP - NIGHT

8

CLOSED. Belle sits on the curb in the front of the shop and puts her head in her hands. Rory cups her hands against the window, trying to peek inside the darkened storefront. The pair are blanketed in dim green light. Nobody is inside.

RORY
Hey...

Rory sits next to Belle. Belle stands immediately.

9 EXT. STREET - NIGHT**9**

Belle is walking FAST back to the car. Fuming. Rory run-walks to keep up.

RORY
(half-hearted)
Be-Belle.

Belle opens the car door.

BELLE
I thought-

SLAM.

BELLE
-the least-

She swings her purse over her shoulder.

BELLE
-you could do-

She turns towards Rory. They are face-to-face.

BELLE
-was take Pippa's death seriously.

Belle cups Rorys hand.

RORY
(hurt)
I am.

Belle shakes her head and turns to leave. Rory is left with the key sitting in her palm.

Rory sighs and watches Belle walk off. Rory sits back on the curb.

10 INT. USED BOOKSTORE - NIGHT**10**

Dusty books line the dark wood shelves. It's a bookstore straight out of a novel. Dim and moody, simultaneously full and devoid of life.

Belle sits in a worn armchair, her eyes darting between a book titled *A Labor of Love: Writing a Eulogy* and her red leather notebook. She chews on the end of her pencil.

Sitting straight up, splayed across, splayed the other way, legs crossed, upside down. No progress is made.

Belle closes her notebook. She looks up and spots a book of Grimm's Fairy Tales. Twisting awkwardly out of her armchair so she doesn't have to get up, Belle retrieves it.

She brushes her hand over the cover, tracing the letters of the title. Slowly, she pulls it open.

11 EXT. PIPPA'S HOUSE - NIGHT 11

Rory stands outside a cheery red door. Staring. She takes a shaky inhale, reaches in her pocket, and pulls out a key with a red ribbon attached. Click. She twists the knob.

12 INT. PIPPA'S HOUSE - NIGHT 12

Pictures in frames. Trinkets on shelves. An empty teacup that never made its way to the dishwasher. The house is eerily still.

Rory walks her way through. The room is dimly illuminated by the moon outside the window. She sees an old toy on the floor and bends down to look at it. She sighs.

Getting up, she clicks on a lamp and films across the mantel. She then maneuvers her way around open, half-filled boxes to a shelf of CDs and VHS tapes. She pockets a CD before scanning through the tapes. There. She pulls one out labeled "March 1986".

13 INT. USED BOOKSTORE - LATER 13

Belle reads the book of fairy tales, open to Cinderella. She is completely absorbed.

The bug-eyed BOOKSTORE OWNER (60s, large, round glasses) peers at the deeply focused Belle.

BOOKSTORE OWNER
Closing time, hon.

14 EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - CONTINUOUS 14

Belle wanders down the yellow-dashed center of a sleepy suburban avenue, trees arching in towards her. Still in a deep-reading daze, notebook gripped loosely in one hand, pencil in the other, Belle gives a little twirl. Plop. Her notebook hits the ground. Belle twirls again - one leg in the air - to retrieve it.

15 EXT. PIPPA'S HOUSE - NIGHT 15

Belle nears Pippa's house. A light is on. The door is open. Weird. She walks up, and, just like Rory, hesitates before the doorway.

16 INT. PIPPA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 16

Belle drifts through the entryway, pulled forward by the faint sound of laughter inside. She enters the living room. Rory sits in front of the old TV, transfixed.

On it plays a grainy version of the opening scene. Young Belle is gearing up to push Rory.

BELLE
(to young Belle)
Stop.

17 EXT. HILLTOP - SUNRISE 17

PIPPA
Belle stop!

Young Rory loses her balance on the branch but catches herself with her hands. Pippa rushes over and lifts Rory down from the tree and onto the blanket

Young Belle sits alone, gaze pointed down.

PIPPA
Come sit.

Pippa pats the blanket. Young Belle shakes her head stubbornly from the tree.

PIPPA (O.C.)
Suit yourself.

Young Rory rests her head on Pippa's lap. Pippa opens the book.

PIPPA
Do you know what happened in my version, girls?

Rory shakes her head as does Belle, though more timidly.

PIPPA
Well those misbehaving stepsisters didn't just have to clean the castle. They chopped off their toes.

Young Belle and Rory at first look at her mortified. Then, Rory begins to giggle, and then laugh and then Belle does the same.

18 INT. PIPPA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

18

Pippa sets the camera down to play with young Rory. The two begin making "snow angels" in the grass. Belle remains in the tree but looks down longingly at the happy scene.

The TV cuts to static. The voices are gone. The static cuts off. The silence hurts. Rory stares at the ground. Belle looks at Rory, eyes glistening.

RORY

I miss it.

BELLE

I know.

Rory gives a small laugh which quickly turns into a sob. She begins to cry. Belle's initial surprise gives way to sadness. She envelopes Rory in a hug. Beat. Rory sits up to wipe her tears.

Belle reaches to her side. She plops the fairy tale book in Rory's lap. Rory looks up, surprised. When she sees the book, she laughs a surprised (and congested) laugh.

RORY

Where-

BELLE

Stopped by the bookstore. I guess these were her versions.

Rory opens it and starts flipping through. Belle smiles and rests her head on Rory's shoulder. She closes her eyes.

19 INT. PIPPA'S HOUSE - DAWN

19

The night sky has faded from velvet navy to suede grey. The wind blows through the wispy off-white curtains.

Rory gently shakes Belle awake.

20 EXT. AUTO SHOP - EARLY MORNING

20

A sleepy, grumpy mechanic walks up to his shop. He sees the girls. They are annoyingly eager and annoyingly early. He heaves a sigh, unlocks the door, and flicks the "OPEN" sign

on. BZZZ. The red and green glow softens Rory and Belle's wide-eyed reflections in the glass.

21 INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

21

As Belle drives, Rory rifles through her bag. Aha! She pulls out the CD: Merry Christmas by Mariah Carey. She wiggles her eyebrows at Belle.

RORY
Look what I found at Pippa's.

Belle offers a bemused sigh and shrugs.

BELLE
'Tis the season I suppose.

She clicks open the CD player. Rory pops it in. She dances as the intro plays.

RORY
Christmasssssss-

She extends an imaginary microphone to Belle. Belle laughs.

BELLE
(quietly and badly)
..coming down...

RORY
Christmasssss!

Rory reaches to grab her Camcorder. Hesitates. Turns down the volume.

RORY
Can I film?

BELLE
(smiling)
If you must.

Rory's face lights up. She flips it open, turning the camera so that they're both in frame.

BELLE
Christmasssssss!

22 EXT. HILLTOP - SUNRISE

22

Belle and Rory SPRINT up the hill as the sun rises. When they arrive, they collapse, breathless and giggling, on the grass.

They quickly pull themselves back up and Rory rushes to climb up the tree, taking the ashes.

Belle pauses and opens her notebook. She glances at Rory. Rory nods, supportive. Belle looks back at her notebook and closes it, and then tosses it aside.

Rory smiles. Belle climbs the tree, and the two stand up on the branch.

Camcorder clips of the road trip and their childhood play: the market, the old house, Pippa.

With watery eyes, Belle and Rory offer each other a nod. Rory opens the urn.

RORY

3...2...1...

Together, they release the ashes. A breeze picks Pippa up immediately, spreading her across the rolling hills. Rory shouts loudly into the distance.

RORY

Happy Birthdayyyyyy!

Belle smiles softly.

BELLE

(to herself)

Happy birthday.

23 EXT. HILLTOP - A LITTLE LATER

23

Rory lays in Belle's lap, listening to Belle read the fairy tale book, as the credits roll.