

SLIDING

Written by

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1 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 1

EMILY (16) lies sprawled across a large armchair, her head turned towards the flickering lights of the TV. She doses and checks her cellphone, looking up at the cartoon on the screen every now and then. The clock above the TV reads 12:17am.

A shrill phone rings in the distance. Emily jumps to her feet and sprints into the-

2 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT 2

She answers the phone as soon as she finds it, focused on stopping the ringing.

EMILY
Hello? (pause) Where are you, I'll
come get you. (pause) I can- OK,
I'll get him.

Emily holds the phone to her chest and quietly runs upstairs-

3 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT 3

- and down the hallway until she is standing in front of her Dad's bedroom door. The hallway is dark and silent. She hesitates as she lifts her hand to the door, finally knocking quietly. She enters the room.

4 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT 4

The bedroom is dark and calm. The decorations are sparse and the room is cluttered. It is clear that he has not shared this room with anyone for quite some time. Her FATHER (50), stirs in his sleep. Emily approaches him.

EMILY
(whispering)
Dad?

Upon hearing his daughter, he immediately wakes.

FATHER
What's wrong?

Her father abruptly sits up and reaches over to the bedside table, turning on a lamp.

EMILY
Everything's going to be ok-

Emily hesitates before holding out the phone and her father quickly grabs it from her hand. He clears his throat, pausing, before bringing his eyes up to meet hers. Emily remains standing in the bedroom, watching him.

He motions for her to leave with his head. She pauses, before quickly exiting the bedroom.

5 INT. HALLWAY- NIGHT

5

As Emily leaves her father's bedroom and is closing the door she hesitates, letting the door stay open a crack. She listens through the door. Footsteps interrupt Emily's thoughts and the door shuts.

Emily leans against the door, listening to the muffled conversation inside. Her eyes drift across the hall to her brother's door, covered in band stickers.

After a few moments Emily stands up and turns to face her father who is opening the door to the bedroom.

FATHER

I'll be back in an hour.

He begins to walk down the hallway towards the stairs, stopping when she begins to follow him.

FATHER (CONT'D)

It's time for bed, Emily.

EMILY

I'm coming.

They continue walking into the-

6 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

6

-living room towards the front door. As he reaches for the doorknob Emily notices a winter jacket lying over a chair.

EMILY

Dad-

Her father stops and turns around to look at his daughter. Emily holds up a worn jacket and pulls a pair of car keys out of the pocket.

He walks towards his daughter and gently takes the keys and jacket out of her hands. As he moves back towards the door he opens it and steps back, holding it open for Emily.

She walks through the door and her father follows, shutting it once they're outside.

7

INT. CAR - NIGHT

7

Emily and her father sit in the front of a car and drive down a dark country road. Their faces glow red, reflecting the light from the dashboard in front of them. The only sound comes from the hum of the truck engine and the whooshing of trees and they drive.

Emily fidgets uncomfortably, looking at her dad out of the corner of her eye. Her father remains stoic, eyes on the road, hands tightly gripping the steering wheel.

Emily plugs her phone into the car stereo. She chooses Jimi Hendrix's "Are You Experienced" and classic rock fills the car.

EMILY

Want to hear something cool?

FATHER

Hm?

EMILY

Kurt says that this whole solo was recorded and then played backwards for the album. Like, they flipped it to make it sound like sliding. Isn't that cool?

Her father pauses.

FATHER

Kurt says a lot of things.

A silence passes between them. The song continues. Emily turns down the volume a little.

EMILY

Dad, it's his friends...

Her father shakes his head.

FATHER

He knows what he's doing.

Emily turns the music back up and puts her hands in her lap. Neither look at one another. Finally, Emily grabs her phone and begins flickering it on and off. She checks for text messages but sees none. The battery is low.

The father turns into a quiet parking lot. A street lamp flickers illuminating two lonely police cruisers parked outside the building. The father parks the truck next to one of the cruisers and shuts the ignition off. Their faces become bathed in the soft car lights. They sit in silence.

EMILY

Dad, he needs you.

Her father pauses, taking in her words, and then exits the car to walk towards the station. Her eyes follow him as he walks away from the car. Emily sits in silence, mindlessly scrolling through her phone, waiting.

The phone battery dies. She plugs it into the car charger and tosses the phone into the cupholder, looking out the window. A few moments pass before she sits up, focusing on the figures walking towards her.

Emily watches her father and her older brother, KURT (20), walk out of the police station. Kurt wears his father's jacket, the street lamps illuminating his disheveled hair. She reaches for her phone but pauses, remembering it's dead.

Emily can hear her father's muffled words, but can't make anything out. He opens the passenger door for Kurt to get in. As the door to the car opens, soft light fills the brother's face. His eyes are red and his face filled with anger. As his eyes meet his sisters he immediately looks down. Emily slides from the passenger seat into the middle so Kurt can sit beside her. The father shuts the door and the girl and her brother are enveloped in darkness. The only sound that escape from the darkness comes from the harsh breath escaping from Kurt's nose.

The father walks around the car to the drivers side and gets in. He starts the engine and drives out of the parking lot. The three sit in silence, the only sound coming from the hum of the truck's engine.

KURT

Why did you bring her?

FATHER

You should thank her, she's been on your side this entire time.

Kurt pauses. Emily's phone buzzes, turning back on. She reluctantly picks it up and scrolls through her music. She settles on a song. The opening chords of Jimi Hendrix's 'Are You Experienced' fills the car. She peeks at Kurt out of the corner of her eyes.

EMILY
(quietly)
Wasn't this whole solo recorded
backwards?

Kurt glances at his sister.

KURT
That's why it sounds like it's
sliding.

Emily grabs her brothers hand and they continue to drive,
listening to the music.

END