

FADE IN TITLE

Mental

FADE OUT TITLE

INT. RACHEL'S APARTMENT - DAY

The door opens and RACHEL enters looking somewhat distracted and a little on edge. She is average looking, not a knockout but not hideous either. She is a twenty-year-old, jeans and T-shirt type of girl.

In Rachel's hand are a couple pieces of mail. As she walks in she separates the mail--a single envelope in one hand, three in the other. She places them down on a dresser behind the couch, which a 5-gallon tropical fish tank is also stationed on. The tank would be considered eerie by some, complete with skeleton pirate bopping around at the helm.

She continues into the room to the computer desk to get a pen. The desk, as well as the whole back wall, is covered with pictures. They are mostly of Rachel and her friends (ALLY, FRED, MIKE, and JAY), though there are a few of her and her family.

Rachel quickly gazes with a reminiscent half-smile and a look of hurt in her eyes at one picture in particular, which has her and ALLY laughing with their arms around each other like the good friends they were.

Ally is about the same height with dirty blond hair, and a little more attractive than Rachel. She wears jeans too but what some would call "slutty" shirts--skin tight, belly exposed.

Rachel returns with the pen. The single envelope is addressed to "Allison Katz," the other three to "Rachel Mason." Rachel circles Allison's name and crosses out the address.

RACHEL
(irritated)

How many times am I going to have to
tell the mailman?

Rachel writes "Return to Sender" at the top left and "Moved Out" in the middle with an arrow pointing to the circled name.

Rachel puts down the pen and picks up a container of fish food. She begins to feed the fish with a smile on her face. Across the room, there is a SCRATCHING NOISE at the fire-escape window. Outside is a dirty TOM CAT pawing at the window.

Rachel makes her way through the living room to the window. There is an unsettling air in the apartment. In some areas it seems cluttered and somewhat messy (Rachel's stuff), in others it is just empty and void of life (from Ally's abrupt departure).

Rachel opens the window.

RACHEL

(sadly)

I told you, Ally's gone Stinky.

STINKY doesn't seem to mind. He jumps in on to Rachel's lap, rubs his head against her, and then licks the little remaining fish food off of her hands. She pets him a few times and he begins to PURR.

Suddenly there is an IM SOUND at the computer.

RACHEL

Alright, off you go.

Rachel places Stinky back outside and closes the window. She then goes to the computer where there is a message from "FunFunFun1987."

"FunFunFun1987: Dad told you im going to court?"

Rachel types back (her screenname is "DazedAndConfused").

"DazedAndConfused: What? No"

"FunFunFun1987: for drug charges, and speeding. they want to give me jail time..but im gonna ask for a public defender, hopefully everything will be okay."

"DazedAndConfused: uh-huh"

"FunFunFun1987: im serious"

"FunFunFun1987: fine ask dad when you talk to him."

Rachel picks up the cordless and dials. While it is RINGING, she picks up a small-framed photo off the desk. In it, Rachel is playfully choking her sister KARYN, both smiling. Karyn is three years younger than Rachel, and she is very pretty (she inherited the good looks in the family).

Karyn answers the phone.

KARYN (V.O.)

Hello?

RACHEL

(concerned)

Drug charges?

KARYN (V.O.)

Yeah. I was carrying weed when they pulled me over... And cuz it's my car, I got blamed.

RACHEL

(a little relieved)

Oh, so it wasn't your's?

KARYN (V.O.)

No.

RACHEL

Nice friends you've got there.

KARYN (V.O.)

It was a kid from school... We're kids. Shit happens. You missed the whole fun part of your life.

RACHEL

Yeah, like JAIL.

KARYN (V.O.)

I'm hot. I hope they won't try anything.. The most will be like three months though.

RACHEL

(sarcastic)

Oh, only three months.

KARYN (V.O.)

Well, that's not bad. It could be a lot worse. Dad is flippin though.

KARYN (V.O. CONT'D)

I'm surprised he hasn't told you...
Guess he wanted to save me embar-
rassment.

RACHEL

Well you know how often I talk with
him... Not surprised though. Jail is
jail... Three months or three years.

KARYN (V.O).

True. But I can't think of it like
that... I gotta go dry my hair. Hear-
ing is at the end of the week.
You'll hear from me or dad soon
enough. Bye.

Rachel presses the off button on the phone and hangs it up.
Rachel looks at the picture as she places it back on the
desk and shakes her head in the "no" fashion.

RACHEL

How stupid can you be?

Rachel grabs her jean jacket off the back of the computer
chair, flings it over her shoulder, and leaves the
apartment.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK POND - DAY

It's a nice sunny afternoon, one of the last days of summer.
CHILDREN can be HEARD playing. Rachel sits on a bench
overlooking the pond with a loaf of bread at her side.
PEOPLE of all ages are all around. Some are flying kites,
some are walking the path that passes in front of her,
others are doing as she is--feeding the ducks.

Rachel takes a slice of bread, breaks it into four pieces,
and crumples those pieces into balls. She then delightfully
throws them to a family of mallards swimming in front of
her. She watches and smiles as they eat.

A cute YOUNG BOY, no older than four, approaches Rachel. He
looks at the mallards she is feeding. Then he thoughtfully
puts his index finger in his mouth and looks at the bag of
bread, and finally makes eye contact with Rachel.

Rachel smiles and holds out a slice of bread.

RACHEL

Here you go.

The Young Boy's face brightens up as he accepts the bread and begins to feed the ducks too. The BOY'S MOTHER, late twenties, comes over.

BOY'S MOTHER

There you are. I've been looking all over for you.

The Boy's Mother turns to Rachel.

BOY'S MOTHER

Thank you.

RACHEL

No problem.

The Boy's Mother takes his hand.

BOY'S MOTHER

Come on. Let's go.

The Boy and his mother leave. Rachel continues feeding the ducks. A goose flies over and, as it lands in front of her, a few feathers fall before her eyes.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. BEDROOM - DAY

A rather healthy-looking WOMAN, early forties, is sitting up in bed in swan-printed pajamas. She has just a hint of tiredness about her. FIVE-YEAR-OLD KARYN is sitting under the covers beside her watching TV. EIGHT-YEAR-OLD RACHEL grabs a brush off the dresser and sits on her mother's other side on the edge of the bed.

RACHEL begins to stroke her mother's beautiful long auburn hair with the brush. After a few strokes, a big chunk of hair comes out. Rachel's eyes widen, she drops the brush on the bed, stands up and takes a few steps back.

THIRTEEN-YEAR-OLD ANDY, who entered the room with a breakfast tray as Rachel began brushing her mother's hair, puts it down at the bottom of the bed and hugs Rachel as their mother jumps out of bed and runs to the bathroom.

Karyn, who didn't see what happened, looks at her brother and sister puzzled.

KARYN

What's the matter?

Both Rachel and Andy's eyes drop down to the brush with the big chunk of hair left in it on the bed. Karyn follows their eyes and sees the brush. She GASPS and then begins to SOB.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - NIGHT

The WOMAN no longer appears healthy. She is wearing a dew rag with swans wrapped around her head. Her eyes are closed, her face drawn (appearing many years older) with a lot of make-up. She is wearing a pretty blouse. She is lying in a coffin.

SIX-YEAR-OLD KARYN is wearing a nice dress and hovering over the coffin. She begins SOBBING uncontrollably. The parlor is crowded for the wake and all eyes turn on her.

NINE-YEAR-OLD RACHEL, dressed all in black, is the closest and she reaches Karyn quickest as her FATHER, mid-forties, and FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD ANDY make their way from the door where they were greeting people.

Rachel's efforts to console Karyn are to no avail. Karyn places one hand on her mother's forehead and one on her chin.

KARYN

(wailing)

Mommy! Mommy!

Father puts his hands on the side of Karyn's stomach.

FATHER

(distressed but gently)

Come on, sweet heart.

He picks her up but her hand was clenched on her mom's dew rag and it remains in her hand as she hugs her Father and he carries her away.

Rachel looks at her mother's bare, bald head, only a thin strand here and there. Tears begin to roll down Rachel's cheek. Andy puts his arm around her and begins to lead her away.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK POND - DAY

Feathers continue to fall before Rachel's eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNKNOWN - NIGHT

Rachel is lying on the grass looking up into the night sky. Lying beside her (on her right) is twenty-year-old FRED, about a 7 on a scale from 1 to 10, wearing average clothes. He turns his head to look at her face, with just a slight gleam in his eyes.

FRED

So, how's Karyn? Still wreaking havoc?

Rachel continues to silently stare at the stars. After waiting a few seconds for an answer, he attempts to get her attention again.

FRED

(exaggerated)

Hello?

Still no response. Fred takes his right hand and waves it in front of her face. She promptly shakes out of it, tightly blinking her eyes, and looks at Fred.

RACHEL

What were you saying?

She turns her head back towards the sky.

FRED

Karyn. How is she?

RACHEL

(blankly, still elsewhere)

Who?

FRED
(laughing)
Uh, your sister.

RACHEL
(finally snapping out of it)
Ohhhh, Karyn.

She looks at Fred and smiles.

RACHEL
Shut up.

She looks back up at the sky and all is silent.

FRED
Well? How's she doing?

RACHEL
(snidely)
She's doing. She's still breathing.

Suddenly, out of no where, a scary, menacing STRANGE FACE pops out inches away from Rachel's and SHOUTS.

STRANGE FACE
(deep, probing voice)
BOOOO!!!

Both Fred and Rachel jump. Rachel then starts LAUGHING and Fred smiles.

FRED
Asshole!

The strange face emits a HEARTY LAUGH. The strange face belongs to JAY, now squatting next to Rachel. He is wearing all black, a trench coat concealing his large figure--he is a menacing 6'5" and twenty-four-years-old. He is average looking, clean cut.

RACHEL
Where's Mike?

JAY
C'mon, he's setting up.

Jay begins to stand up, offers his hand to Rachel, and helps her up as well. For the first time the CAMERA reveals that Fred and Rachel were laying in front of a TOMBSTONE engraved, "Devoted wife & loving mother, Rachel Mason. September 8, 1951 - December 27, 1993". The stone is a pinkish marble and swans are chiseled into it. (This is where Jay jumped out from behind). The CAMERA pulls out further to reveal that they are in the middle of a rather large CEMETERY.

Jay leads the way as Fred and Rachel follow, all careful not to disturb anyone's eternal resting places.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

The mausoleum is old and creepy. It's dark with years of dirt, dust, and death. There are many cracks, and the tarnished metal gate on the door is green in spots. Despite all this, it still looks elegantly distinguished.

The door swings open and MIKE takes a step out before looking up and halting. Mike is twenty-one, average looking but muscular, with 5 o'clock shadow.

MIKE

There you are.

Jay, Rachel, and Fred just arrived. Mike hugs Rachel.

JAY

I told you I'd find them.

Jay starts to go inside as Mike shakes Fred's hand.

MIKE

(like he owns the place)

Come in, come in.

Rachel follows Jay in, followed by Fred, and finally Mike who shuts the door behind them.

CUT TO:

INT. MAUSOLEUM - CONTINUOUS

The inside is gray, dimly lit by various sized WHITE CANDLES strategically placed throughout the room. Two rather large candles throwing off the most light are on either end of an encased coffin in the center of the mausoleum.

The left side wall is lined with several vaults with bronze plaques memorializing their lost ones. The back wall has a small altar with religious statues, wilted flowers long dead, and a few small slits near the top for ventilation. The right side wall also has a pattern of slits.

On either side of the center coffin are long cement benches. Jay sits on the back end of the left bench, while Rachel sits on the end closest to the door. Fred sits on the right bench across from Rachel as there are two BROWN PAPER BAGS on the back end.

Mike proceeds to where the bags are and pulls out a MIKE'S HARD LEMONADE 4-PACK, putting it on the coffin between himself and Jay. Jay takes one.

JAY

Good man.

Mike also takes one out and puts it in front of where he's standing. He then takes out a 6-PACK of DR. PEPPER and puts it in front of Fred and Rachel.

MIKE

(laughing)

There will be no drinking for you two till you're legal.

Rachel grabs a can and opens it.

RACHEL

Fine with me.

She takes a sip as Mike pulls POTATO CHIPS and PRETZEL RODS from the other bag and plops them in the center of the coffin.

FRED

(whining, but not really)

That's not fair. She'll be twenty-one in a couple of weeks! I won't be till summer.

JAY

Life's a bitch...

Mike takes a PACK OF PLAYING CARDS from the bag and flings it on the coffin in front of Rachel, who is opening the pretzel bag.

MIKE

...then you marry one.

RACHEL
(playfully protesting)

Hey!

FRED
Speaking of bitches, I still can't believe Ally.

Rachel droops as she sticks the pretzel rod in her mouth. Mike puts the paper bags on the floor and sits in the empty spot. Jay grabs the pack of cards, opens it, and starts shuffling.

JAY
She just up and left.

MIKE
Didn't even bother saying bye to any of us.

Jay starts dealing for a game of Hearts.

RACHEL
Well, how do you think I feel? I was her fucking best friend. Come home to find a fucking letter.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
(mockingly)
"Left with the love of my life...

RACHEL (CONT'D) MIKE
for the other coast. Love of my life?
Talk to you soon. What, she know him
Your friend forever." for a whole 6 seconds?

RACHEL
Six months.

JAY
Might as well be six seconds.

FRED
Six months is a record for her but it's still bullshit.

RACHEL
What's bullshit is how we've been living together for two years, close as can be, and then she takes off with no notice whatsoever, just like that.

Rachel loudly SNAPS her finger to make her point. The others pick up their hands and begin to sort them. Rachel does as well.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

How am I suppose to pay the fucking rent? I can't afford that by myself. Come the end of the month, I don't know what I'm going to do.

Rachel takes a quick sip of her soda. Fred throws down the first card.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

(upset and sarcastic)

Move back home? Wonderful. I rather live here!

Rachel throws her card down.

MIKE

No need to bash our accommodations this evening...

Mike looks around the room as Jay plays his card.

MIKE (CONT'D)

It's not all that bad.

RACHEL

That's my point.

DISSOLVE INTO:

INT. MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT - LATER

The candles are all almost completely burned, rivers of dried wax on the stubs that remain. The bag of potato chips is empty, the pretzel bag is half full, the alcohol is gone, and one Dr. Pepper remains. Fred is gathering the cards together as Mike calculates the score with PENCIL and PAPER. Rachel is standing, looking at the names and dates on the plaques.

MIKE

Rachel wins...AGAIN.

Mike crumbles the paper up and throws it into one of the paper bags. He slides the pencil behind his right ear.

MIKE (CONT'D)

You know, I was reading "Weird New Jersey." Apparently there is an abandoned mental institution somewhere around here.

JAY
Uh-huh.

RACHEL
Really?

FRED
Where?

Upon hearing Jay's response, all turn to him.

JAY
Been there.

MIKE
Well, why didn't you tell us?

JAY
Long time ago. Dunno.

MIKE
How was it? Worth a look?

JAY
Was. Just started getting graffitied up the last time I was there. But that was years ago. Probably in shambles now.

Mike grabs the rest of the trash and puts it in the bag where he threw the crumpled paper.

FRED
What's everyone doing Friday night?

RACHEL
Nothing.

MIKE
I'm good.

JAY
I'll give you a tour of the place.

MIKE
Excellent.

Mike puts the box of playing cards as well as what's left of the snacks into the other bag. He then begins to pull a OUIJA BOARD BOX from that same bag.

MIKE
Anyone up...

Fred starts blowing out what remains of the candles.

JAY
(cutting Mike off)
...Not tonight.

Mike looks somewhat surprised by Jay's response. He wasn't expecting it at all.

RACHEL
I'm starting to get tired anyway.
Besides, that's getting old already.

In the little light left in the room, we see a slight look of disappointment quickly come and go from Mike's face. Fred stands over the last lit candle, one of the former large ones on the coffin, licks his right thumb and pointer finger, and has them hover over the still burning wick.

FRED
Let's call it a night.

Fred extinguishes the flame with his fingers. All is BLACK.

CUT TO: