

INT. CAR - DAY

LILY (45) drives down a dusty highway in her light blue car. Sun beams down. Her grip tight on the wheel. Face taut. Jaded. Melancholy *Lana Del Rey* plays in the background.

LILY (V.O)
Emily Dickinson once wrote:

"You and I, hand-in-hand, might ramble
away, as children, among the woods and
fields, and forget those many years
and sorrowing cares, and be a child
once again."

A single tear traces Lily's cheek. She wipes it away, determinedly.

EXT. FOREST - EVENING - BEGIN FLASHBACK

Echoes of laughter filters through the misty air. The forest is alive. Whispering, waving trees. A sliver of a moon.

Four children tumble through the trees, grins on their faces, sticks and grass sticking out of their hair. Each one wears a wildflower necklace.

LILY (13), curly wild blonde hair and a smudge of mud on her cheek, climbs onto a rock jutting up from the shrubbery. Opens her arms wide, as if addressing her subjects.

LILY
My fellow Artists, we arrive here to

YOYO
To eat mud pie!

YOYO (13), a boy with a cropped Camp Wildwood shirt, scoops a handful of mud and throws it towards Lily. She ducks out of the way with a wide grin.

LAURA (13), a brunette girl, shoves Yoyo playfully.

LAURA
Let the girl speak!

NUNE
Lily! Lily! Lily!

TOMAS (13), a curly-haired boy with a shy expression on his face, bows down to Lily, a sly smile playing on the corner of

his lips. The others follow suit dramatically.

Lily holds her hands out again.

LILY
Do you all swear to keep our secret
oath as artists?

Lily jumps down from the rock and holds out her hands. The children stack their hands.

CHILDREN
We swear!

LILY
For what?

Lily glances from each face conspiratorially.

CHILDREN (OVERLAPPING)
To keep our secret oath as artists!

The children whoop. Yoyo does a poorly executed cartwheel. Tomas gazes at Lily.

LAURA
Hello, Tomas?!

She waves a hand in front of his face and laughs. He reddens. Lily taps Tomas.

LILY
Tag! You're it!

Tomas stands still for a moment, as if mesmerized. Then, rushes after her. The rest of the children run after Tomas, yelping and laughing and stumbling over the forest terrain.

The children are blurs of color against the oppressive swirling fog and a torrent of green.

INT. CAR - DAY - END FLASHBACK

Lily's (45) phone rings. AUNT HILDY's (67) name flashes up on the screen. Lily accepts the call.

AUNT HILDY
Hi, honey.

LILY
Hi.

AUNT HILDY
How are you doing?

LILY
I'm okay.

Lily sighs. Squints her eyes in the sun.

AUNT HILDY
Are you sure you want to go to this
thing? After everything that happened?

Lily's jaw sets. Places her sun visor in front of the window.

LILY
I'm going, okay. Don't ask me again,
please.

AUNT HILDY
Ok, sweetheart. Drive safe.

LILY
I love you.

AUNT HILDY
Love you too. Bye, hun.

Aunt Hildy hangs up. Lily's eyes begin to mist up. She leans over to her phone and clicks on Spotify. Affirmations began playing. Lily repeats them aloud.

LILY & AFFIRMATION TAPE
I am happy. I am okay. I am safe.

Lily sobs, the affirmations still playing in the background.

LILY (V.O.)
My life was supposed to make sense. It
was supposed to special.

The sun glares down beamingly. Lily contemplates the long, dusty road, her eyes glassy. A far-away gaze.

The car whips down the highway, sunlight reflected off of the bright blue car, clouds of dust billowing behind her.

INT. REDWOOD PREPARATORY SCHOOL LIBRARY - DAY - BEGIN
FLASHBACK

Gray fog swirls outside the long white windows that overlook bookshelves throughout the spacious library. Tall trees and