

My Father's Daughter - Pilot

By

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TEASER

INT. BEDROOM - LOFT APARTMENT - AUSTIN - DAY

DAVID FOX, 25, dressed in boxers and a t-shirt, lays asleep in the middle of a large bed with the covers kicked off.

David has messy brown hair, partially covering his face.

A radio alarm clock sounds playing some standard Top 40 flair. The music gets louder and louder.

Finally, David rouses. He rolls over in bed, hits the alarm clock with an open palm and buries his head in his pillow.

INT. BEDROOM - FOX HOME - HOUSTON - DAY

HALEY FOX, 15, dressed in shorts and a long t-shirt, sleeps in a single bed with the purple comforter kicked off.

Haley has long brown hair, laying wildly around her head.

A radio alarm clock, playing the same Top 40 song, blares.

Haley rolls toward the alarm clock, slapping the top several times until the music stops. She rolls back over and sinks her face in her pillow.

INT. BEDROOM - LOFT APARTMENT - DAY

David continues to sleep until the alarm plays again. David turns it off as he stands up. He drags his feet as he walks across the concrete bedroom floor, his eyes not yet open.

We follow David from the bedroom into the open living room and kitchen. Large windows and a set of glass doors let light into the loft and show the Austin downtown skyline.

The concrete floors are continued in this room. Stainless steel appliances and a sleek black island in the kitchen paired with black leather sofas and a mounted flat panel television in the living area give an industrial chic look.

Set off in a corner, a built-in corner desk houses an iMac, recording equipment and a small soundboard. Several guitars hang on the wall above the desk and an electronic drumkit and keyboard take up a little more space in this area.

INT. BEDROOM - FOX HOME - DAY

When the music pours from Haley's alarm clock this time, she sits up, turning it off. She stands, rubbing her eyes sleepily. She drags her feet as she walks across her carpeted bedroom floor.

We follow Haley down a hallway where most door are closed save an office. Inside the gray-haired and handsome LARRY FOX, 48, sits at a large keyboard and plays a song only he can hear through a bulky set of headphones. He smiles at Haley as she walks by, but continues to play.

We stick with Haley as she makes her way through a well-decorated, but clearly suburban living room and into an equally upscale yet common kitchen.

Haley opens the fridge and pulls out a carton of orange juice. She takes a glass from a cabinet and pours herself some juice.

INT. KITCHEN - LOFT APARTMENT

David drinks orange juice from a glass. He sets the glass down and leans against the counter, looking a little more awake. He looks around his apartment.

INT. KITCHEN - FOX HOME - DAY

Haley leans against the counter, finishing off her glass of juice as she looks around the kitchen.

JENNIFER FOX, 37, enters the kitchen. Jennifer has long blonde hair and a great figure.

HALEY

Morning, Mom.

JENNIFER

Good morning, Sweetheart. Hurry on up and get ready. My car is still in the shop so Daddy has to give us both a ride today.

Haley nods and sets her class down on the counter then exits the room.

EXT. AUSTIN STREET - DAY

David, with a guitar case strapped to his back, walks down the street with his hands in his pockets. His jeans, fashionably torn and worn in, make him look edgy in combination with a plain black t-shirt, black boots and a mix of leather and rubberband-style bracelets.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

In the front of a busy high school, parents drop kids off then pull away.

A red Jeep Wrangler pulls up with Larry at the wheel, Jennifer in the passenger seat and Haley in the back seat. Haley struggles to climb out. When she gets down on the sidewalk, she turns to the car, waving at her parents.

Larry and Jennifer smile and wave back then smile at each other before they pull away.

Haley watches a moment in her capri jeans and layered top. Her once messy hair is straightened and falls well past her shoulders. Her look is cute, modern and youthful.

INT. HANGAR - DAY

A band is set up in the middle of the open space. A guitar player, bass player and drummer with styles similar to David's stand around talking.

David walks in and over to the band.

The guitar player, a 25-year old LUKE SAVAGE, walks up to David.

DAVID
Sorry I'm late.

Luke shakes his head, but smiles and hands over a cord to David. David takes it and plugs it into his guitar.

INT. CHOIR ROOM - DAY

Students are assembled on the risers. The choir director stands before them with his hands in the air.

The classroom door opens and Haley enters, struggling to balance her books as she struggles to shut the door behind her.

HALEY

Sorry.

She dumps her books on the floor and rushes over to a spot on the lowest riser level.

Before she even has time to catch her breath, the choir director starts a silent count.

INT. HANGAR - DAY

The drummer counts off. As the band begins to play "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" by U2, David steps up to the microphone.

DAVID

(singing)

I have climbed highest mountains. I
have run through the fields, only
to be with you. Only to be with
you.

INT. CHOIR ROOM - DAY

The choir sings to create a beautiful harmony.

CHOIR

(singing)

I have run. I have crawled. I have
scaled these city walls, these city
walls, only to be with you. But I
still haven't found what I'm
looking for.

INTERCUT: INT./INT. - HANGAR/CHOIR ROOM - DAY/DAY

The two groups are mixed and integrated together as they perform the song.

In the choir room, a man in a suit and a stern looking woman enter together and point at Haley.

Haley tilts her head, but stops singing and leaves the group to join the man and woman in the hallway.

We cannot hear what is said over the music, but Haley's look of shock quickly turns to anguish as she begins to cry. Her knees buckle, but the adults catch her and hold her up. She cries on the woman's shoulder as the man pats her back.

DAVID AND CHOIR
(singing)
But I still haven't found what I'm
looking for...

FADE OUT

OPENING CREDIT SEQUENCE

ACT I

INT. THE BAR CODE - NIGHT

The bar is L-shaped and fairly large with room for a stage, dance area, pool tables and a seating area. The bar area itself is setup along the interior of the L so that there are really two separate bar areas.

There are several groups of customers scattered around the bar. Though not full, the place is busy.

Behind one bar area, Luke serves drinks to a pair of middle-age ladies.

Around the corner, David is making a mixed drink for a college-age man. The man thanks David then walks away. David turns away to clean some glasses.

CONNIE FOX, 47, walks up to the bar and sits down. She looks like an older soccer mom with her bleached blonde, shoulder length hair, khakis and polo shirt.

David turns around, surprised to see her. He smiles.

DAVID
Mom? What are you doing here?

Connie has dark circles under her eyes and taps her fingernails on the bar top.

DAVID
Everything okay?

Connie sighs, looking down.

David steps up to her.

DAVID
You want a club soda?

CONNIE
Could you fix me a martini, Honey?
(she looks up at him)
With lots of olives, please.

DAVID
You don't even drink.

Connie looks at him with an arched eyebrow.

David holds up both hands then backs away to the alcohol.

He shakes up the martini and pours it into a glass, tossing in several green olives. He sets the drink down in front of Connie.

CONNIE
Thank you.

She takes two big sips then sets the glass down.

CONNIE
Your father...

David narrows his eyes and leans on the counter.

Connie takes another drink.

CONNIE
(quietly)
He and his wife were killed in a
car accident yesterday morning.

David's eyes widen, but then he nods.

DAVID
Okay. Thanks for letting me know.

Tears well in Connie's eyes.

CONNIE
I'm so sorry, David.

DAVID
(unaffected)
You know, I haven't seen the guy
since I was, what? Eight?

CONNIE
Nine. At his wedding.

DAVID

He never bothered to care about my life after he got married so why should I care about his death now?

CONNIE

He is your--he was your father.

DAVID

No, he wasn't, actually. Not in the important ways, anyway.

Connie looks at him for a long beat as she takes the last sip of her martini.

CONNIE

The funeral is on Saturday at two. Here's the address.

She slides a piece of paper across the counter. David puts the paper in his pocket. He smiles at his mom.

DAVID

Need me to call you a cab?

She stands quickly then grabs onto the counter for support.

DAVID

I'll call you a cab.

INT. CAR - DAY

David drives down a Texas interstate. He is dressed in black slacks, a white button-up shirt and black tie. His hair is combed neatly out of his face.

SUPER: "Saturday"

INT. CHURCH - HOUSTON - DAY

The church is packed. Two caskets sit at the front of the church. A pastor speaks to the guests.

PASTOR

And now, Jennifer and Larry's lovely daughter Haley will speak about her parents.

A few people sob loudly at this announcement.

David tilts his head and looks around. He spots Haley as she makes her way to the front of the church.

Haley stands in front of the microphone and looks out at the congregation of mourners.

HALEY

Thank you all for coming today. I know many of you knew my parents well and feel their loss very deeply. I'm not sure any of you could have seen them quite like I did, though. When I looked at my mother, for example, I saw a woman who was beautiful and young. Who never stopped smiling when she had to trade in her life as an artist for a job in real estate because she felt that it was my father's turn to pursue his passion: composing music.

David moves to the edge of his seat as he listens

HALEY

My father was opposed to this plan at first, but quickly became consumed by his craft--and I mean this in the best possible way. Everything we did as a family became music before our ears. Our experiences were transposed into notes and beats, time signatures and key changes.

David's eyes narrow and his lips purse. He finally gets up and walks out, letting the door of the church slam shut.

Haley takes notice of his departure.

HALEY

You truly have not experienced life until you hear it played back to you in musical form.

EXT. CHURCH - HOUSTON - DAY

David walks down a sidewalk next to the church. Just before he reaches his car, people exit the church en masse.

HALEY(O.S.)

Hey, wait? Hey, mister?

David turns around, inhaling deeply when he sees Haley running toward him. She stops when she reaches him.

HALEY
(out of breath)
Do...do...do I know you?

Haley looks at him carefully. David looks down.

DAVID
No. You don't know me.

HALEY
Did you know my parents?

David looks up at her.

DAVID
Not really.

Haley puts a hand on her hip.

HALEY
Then what are you doing here?

David shrugs, looking toward his car.

DAVID
I knew your dad. A long time ago.

Haley stares at David which causes him to shift from one foot to another.

HALEY
I'm Haley.

She puts out her hand. He withholds his hand for a second, but then extends it and shakes with Haley.

DAVID
David.

Haley looks at him carefully, his hand still in hers.

HALEY
David?

David nods then raises his eyebrows when Haley maintains her grip on his hand. She clears her throat and releases him.

HALEY
Will you be stopping by the house
after the burial, David?

DAVID

I wasn't even going to...

Haley bites her lip, her eyes downcast.

DAVID

...think about not stopping by.

Haley smiles at him.

HALEY

Then I'll see you there.

He nods. She stands awkwardly shuffling her feet for a moment before she walks off toward a line of limousines.

David stands alone on the sidewalk.

INT. LIVING ROOM - FOX HOME - DAY

David walks around the living room, checking out pictures on the wall. There are several with Haley at various ages and others of the whole family.

Haley stands with a an older woman. She catches David's eye.

After a moment, she thanks the lady for coming then makes her way over to David.

HALEY

I thought you might have been lying about coming.

DAVID

I thought so, too.

Haley smiles. A beat.

DAVID

I like your house.

HALEY

Thanks. I wish it were mine. My parents were just renting it. My dad was planning on moving us out to L.A. when he started working on scores for TV. He was so close...

DAVID

Who are you going to live with now?

Haley sighs and looks down.

HALEY

Well. Both of Dad's parents are dead. My maternal grandparents are alive and well... in Canada. My only other relative is my aunt--my mom's sister--and I really, really don't want to live with her.

DAVID

Why not?

Haley shrugs.

HALEY

Are you into music?

DAVID

Sometimes.

HALEY

Are you in a band?

DAVID

Yes.

HALEY

Yeah, you look like you're in a band. Even with the tie and all.

David laughs, adjusting his tie. A beat.

HALEY

Come with me; I want to show you my dad's office.

David hesitates, but Haley grabs his arm and pulls him out of the room.

INT. OFFICE - FOX HOME - DAY

Haley brings David into her father's office/studio. David looks around, touching some of the equipment.

Haley turns on the keyboard and touches a few keys.

HALEY

Do you play the piano?

DAVID

A little.

Haley waves her hand in the direction of the keyboard and office chair.

David hesitates, but when Haley puts her hands on her hips, he takes a seat in front of the keyboard.

David smiles, letting out an uncomfortable laugh.

DAVID
Any requests?

Haley puts a finger to her chin as she thinks.

HALEY
How about...the best song that came out while you were in high school.

David sighs, but his smile gets a little wider.

DAVID
Okay, all right...senior year.

David begins to play and sing "Innocent" by Our Lady Peace.

DAVID
(singing)
Oh, Johnny wishes he was famous.
Spends his time alone in the
basement with Lennon and Cobain, a
guitar and a stereo. And while he
wishes he could escape this, but it
all seems so contagious just to be
yourself and famous in a song that
has no soul...

Haley leans in the door frame as she listens, rocking slightly to the music.

DAVID
(singing)
I remember feeling low. I remember
losing hope. I remember all the
feelings and the day they stopped.

David stops abruptly.

DAVID
Haley?

She raises her eyebrows.

DAVID
How are you keeping it together?

Haley looks down then back up at David.

HALEY

My dad always said that life is full of frustration and setbacks. At some point, you either give in or you overcome.

David nods, looking down at the keyboard.

HALEY

I know he wouldn't want me to be consumed by grief. He'd tell me to find something positive and focus on it. So I found you.

DAVID

But you don't know anything about me. You don't even know who I am.

Haley smiles.

HALEY

Do you really think I'm that dumb?

DAVID

I don't think you're dumb, but...

David watches Haley go over to the closet and search through stuff until she finds a photo album. She carries it to David and hands it to him.

Haley stands next to him as he opens the album. On the first page, there is a copy of David's birth certificate and pictures of him as a newborn.

He looks up at Haley. She grins.

HALEY

I knew before you told me your name. I knew when I saw you. You look so much like my dad, David.

David flips through the pictures and finds more photos of himself as he got older. He finally reaches pictures of the nine-year-old David dressed in a tuxedo at Larry and Jennifer's wedding. David touches the photo.

He flips through the remaining pages, revealing newspaper clippings of high school sports, honor roll listings and articles, his name highlighted in each article. As he continues to turn the pages, he finds music reviews. As before, David's name is highlighted everywhere.

HALEY
Pretty cool, right?

David closes the book, looking down at it. A beat.

HALEY
He loved you a lot, you know. I
never understood why you didn't
want to be a part of his life.

DAVID
(angry)
Oh, is that what he told you?

David stands up and shoves the book at Haley.

DAVID
Coming here was a mistake.

HALEY
Please don't say that. I've been
wanting to meet you my whole life.

DAVID
And I didn't even know you existed.

Haley frowns and folds her arms in front of her.

David turns toward the the door.

DAVID
I...I'm sorry, but...I have to go.

HALEY
Wait, please...

David is already down the hall by the time Haley makes it to the door. He doesn't turn back.

Haley sighs, leaning her head back against the door frame. She looks back down the hallway, tears now streaming down her face.

FADE OUT

ACT II

INT. THE BAR CODE - NIGHT

The bar is nearly empty.

Behind the two bar areas, Luke and David work.

Luke give a guy a beer and watches him walk back to his solo pool game. He makes his way over to David.

LUKE

Dude, I hate Wednesdays.

David nods, wiping down the bar.

LUKE

The guys are stoked about this festival we're playing.

DAVID

They shouldn't be. It's just going to be a bunch of drunk people in lawn chairs screaming "free bird."

Luke laughs.

LUKE

I'll take it.

A beat.

LUKE

So, listen, Dave. I like being a cover band, but if we're ever going to get out of Austin--

DAVID

We're not going to get out of Austin. You have to stop thinking about the band as a way out.

LUKE

I think we should start performing original music again.

DAVID

Are you going to write it?

LUKE

I was thinking you could.

DAVID

Well, you may want to think again.

LUKE

Your stuff is good, David.

DAVID

How can you stand there and say that? Audiences hated my original music. Being a cover band actually gets us attention...and gigs.

LUKE

The scene is changing. You know that. Maybe there's a place for--

DAVID

Just stop, Luke. The band is a cover band for as long as I'm the manager and lead singer. Now, if you want to take over--

LUKE

You know that's not what I'm saying. I'm not a singer. I'm not a leader. I'm just a guy who plays guitar behind a genius with ridiculous amounts of unrealized potential. It's a little sick.

David laughs, shaking his head.

Luke stares toward the door.

LUKE

Whoa, check this girl out.

David looks up.

DAVID'S P.O.V.

LYDIA PATRICK, 26, enters the bar. Lydia has blonde hair several inches past her shoulders. She wears black slacks, a feminine blouse and heels which work together to give her the look of a young, sexy professional.

BACK TO SCENE

LUKE

What the hell is a girl like that doing here all by herself?

DAVID

Probably meeting someone.

LUKE

If not, you should buy her a drink.

David rolls his eyes.

LUKE

Seriously. Look how smart she looks. Totally your type of girl.

David chuckles and shakes his head.

Luke shrugs and walks back to his station around the corner.

David watches Lydia walk toward Luke until she can no longer be seen. He sighs and looks down.

When he looks up, Lydia comes around the corner. She approaches the bar and takes a seat on a stool a few yards away from David. She offers a smile in his direction.

David walks up to Lydia.

DAVID

Hi. How are you tonight?

LYDIA

Overwhelmed by my new job. You?

DAVID

Overwhelmed by...my life.

(beat)

What's your job?

LYDIA

I'm a social worker for the state.

DAVID

Well. That's...intimidating.

LYDIA

It's really a fun job, but I can already see that it's going to conflict me ethically...morally.

DAVID

In that case, let me do my job.

What can I get you to drink?

LYDIA

The guy around the corner said you'd be the one to ask for a good Shirley Temple.

David turns to the corner only to find Luke peeking around. Luke quickly disappears back around the corner.

DAVID
Shirley Temple. Coming right up.

He turns to prepare the drink.

She watches as he puts ice into a tall glass and pours grenadine syrup over it. He turns back around and grabs a soda gun, shoots 7-Up into the glass and tosses in a cherry.

DAVID
Meeting someone tonight?

LYDIA
Just you.

David laughs and drops a straw into her drink then places it in front of her.

DAVID
In that case, I'm David Fox.

Lydia takes a sip of the drink.

LYDIA
Lydia Patrick.

Lydia holds her hand out so they can shake.

David holds on for a second longer than necessary.

Lydia blushes then takes another sip of the Shirley Temple.

LYDIA
This is good, by the way.

DAVID
The trick is to add the syrup
before the soda.

LYDIA
I'll have to remember that.

They look at each other for a long beat. David blushes and looks down. He glances up at her.

LYDIA
What?

DAVID
I'm just wondering what kind of
woman comes into a bar alone and
orders a virgin drink.

LYDIA
There are a few options.

DAVID
A Mormon who wants company?

LYDIA
A recovering alcoholic who likes to
challenge herself?

David raises his eyebrows.

DAVID
A light-weight.

LYDIA
That's a distinct possibility.

They both laugh. David bites his lip and turns away to wipe
down the counter.

LATER

The place is completely empty except for Luke behind the
counter and David and Lydia occupying a couple of bar stools
off to the side.

Luke gives them a glance before heading for the door.

LUKE
Make sure you lock it up, Dave.

David barely turns in Luke's direction, his eyes transfixed
on Lydia.

DAVID
Yeah, alright.

Luke pauses at the door with a smirk. He exits.

At the bar, David sips from a bottle of water.

Lydia drinks the last of another Shirley Temple.

DAVID
You want another?

LYDIA
I think four is my limit.

David nods, taking another sip of water.

LYDIA
So, okay, you dropped out of college to go on tour with your band, but you never went on tour?

DAVID
Correct.

LYDIA
How come you didn't go back?

DAVID
To college?

LYDIA
Uh huh.

DAVID
Money at first. Then when that excuse went away, fear. Self-doubt.

Lydia nods.

LYDIA
And you were going to be a teacher?

DAVID
An elementary school music teacher.
(he chuckles)
It seems silly now, but I had so many great music teachers growing up that I wanted to carry on their good work. Change the world through music.

LYDIA
You still could, though, right?
With your band? With your music?

David laughs.

DAVID
Maybe if we weren't a cover band.

LYDIA
Cover band? So you only play other people's music?

DAVID

Right. We're basically like the radio except...bigger.

Lydia laughs. A beat as she yawns and checks her watch.

LYDIA

Is it really almost one? What kind of hours do you normally keep?

DAVID

Oh, four to midnight...unless a beautiful and totally sober woman somehow finds me worth her time.

Lydia looks down with a smile.

LYDIA

And does that happen often?

DAVID

Including tonight...it's happened exactly once.

She looks up at him, her smile coy.

DAVID

You know, I haven't really had the chance to ask much about you. Talking to you is almost like being interviewed, and I mean that in a good way.

Lydia tucks her hair behind her ear, swallowing.

LYDIA

If I were interviewing you, I would have already asked where you live.

He raises his eyebrows.

DAVID

I actually live upstairs.

He points up at the ceiling.

LYDIA

(put off)

You live above a bar?

(recovering, light)

I mean, doesn't it get kind of loud?

David shrugs.

DAVID
Only when I'm not there.

She nods.

LYDIA
Does the owner give you a discount
for working here and renting the
apartment?

David smiles.

DAVID
Uh...sort of.
(beat)
You want to see the apartment?

Lydia raises her eyebrows and tucks her hair behind her ear.

LYDIA
Um...

DAVID
I didn't really mean... I mean, I
know that sounded like me saying,
"Hey, want to come up to my place?"
but I was really thinking that I
could show you that living above a
bar isn't as bad as you're
obviously imagining.

She smiles.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LOFT APARTMENT - NIGHT

The front door opens. David leads the way in.

Lydia follows behind, looking around.

David shuts the door behind her.

LYDIA
This is great. Look at the view.

She walks over to the glass doors.

David follows and stands next to her.

LYDIA
So, what does "sort of" mean? How
does the owner "sort of" give you a
discount?

DAVID
Well, basically, I am the owner.

Lydia looks at him with a pleasantly surprised smile.

LYDIA
You own this building?

DAVID
Yeah. Two years ago, I got a loan, bought the building and opened the bar. Then I found out I'm a pretty good businessman. I made some money, remodeled this loft.

LYDIA
You did all this yourself?

David looks around, nods and puts his hands in his pockets.

Lydia turns to him.

LYDIA
You know, at first glance you seem like one thing, but you're really something else entirely, aren't you?

David smiles.

DAVID
Only if the "something else entirely" is less sucky.

She laughs. A beat.

DAVID
What's crazy is that you've discovered my first two layers--

LYDIA
Are there more?

DAVID
Aren't there always?

She tilts her head in concession.

DAVID
But, I've barely even had the chance to scratch your surface.

He smiles, leaning toward her slightly.

DAVID
And I'd certainly like to...

She smiles, leaning toward him slightly.

LYDIA
David, I...

Her smile falters just before they kiss.

She steps back from him.

LYDIA
I need to go. I shouldn't have come
up here...

She walks toward the door.

DAVID
But--

LYDIA
I know you don't understand, but--

DAVID
Then explain. Don't just--

LYDIA
You definitely will tomorrow so--

DAVID
What do you mean?

Lydia opens the door and walks out without looking back.

David rushes over, leaning out into the hallway.

DAVID
Lydia?

Almost to the stairwell, Lydia stops and turns around.

LYDIA
When you discover my next layer,
you're not going to like me much
anymore. Trust me.

David wrinkles his brow.

DAVID
Fine, but let me decide. What's the
deal?

Lydia opens her mouth to speak, but shuts it again.

LYDIA
I'll be back tomorrow. I promise.

She walks down the stairs.

DAVID
(shouting)
Tomorrow when?

LYDIA(O.S.)
(shouting)
Morning. Goodnight, David.

David stares off down the hallway for a moment then leans against his door, shaking his head.

FADE OUT

ACT III

INT. BEDROOM - LOFT APARTMENT - DAY

David lays asleep in bed with his covers kicked off. His alarm goes off and the familiar Top 40 radio station blares through the room. David rolls over and hits snooze.

After just a second, a loud knock sounds through the apartment.

David lifts his head and looks around. He puts his head back in the pillow.

The knock sounds again.

David groans, but rolls over and puts his feet on the floor.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LOFT APARTMENT - DAY

The knock continues as David drags himself, in boxers and a t-shirt, toward his door.

David opens the door to reveal Haley.

He steps back, suddenly wide awake.

DAVID
Haley?

HALEY

Hi.

David rubs his eye and steps aside.

DAVID

Come in.

As Haley walks in, David closes the door then narrows his eyes.

DAVID

How'd you get in?

HALEY

The front door was open.

David inhales sharply and pushes his palm to his forehead.

DAVID

So...what are you doing here?

HALEY

Well...remember how I told you that I didn't want to live with my aunt--

DAVID

Please tell me you didn't run away.

Haley chuckles and sits down on the arm of one of David's black leather couches.

HALEY

I didn't have to.

David tilts his head.

HALEY

You may want to sit down for this.

DAVID

What are you talking about?

Haley nods over to the couch. David complies, watching her as he walks over and sits on the couch.

Haley spins around, putting a knee on the couch while still sitting on arm.

HALEY

My parents' will states that in the event of their death, my half brother is to be my legal guardian.

David's mouth falls open. A long beat.

DAVID

My father doesn't speak to me for sixteen years then when he dies he leaves me...his daughter?

HALEY

Yeah, considering how you left the house... and the fact that you live in a bar--

DAVID

I live above the bar, okay? And I happen to own this building--the bar and the apartment so--

HALEY

I'm not criticizing your building... or your bar or your apartment.

DAVID

Then what--

HALEY

I'm just saying that I know you don't want me, okay?

David frowns and looks down.

DAVID

It's not that I don't--

HALEY

I just wanted you to know my--our father's wishes.

David runs his hands through his hair.

DAVID

I just don't think--

HALEY

You don't have to explain.

Haley stands up.

HALEY

If you want to get dressed, there's this lady downstairs. You have to sign off on some papers and then I'll be on my way.

David looks at Haley, blinking slowly. He nods.

INT. THE BAR CODE - DAY

Haley enters from a back entrance with her arms folded in front of her. She walks quickly across the bar.

HALEY
I told you this was a waste of
time, Ms. Patrick.

David follows out behind her and freezes in his tracks.

DAVID'S P.O.V.

Across the bar, Lydia sits at a table with paperwork spread out in front of her. She stands up and walks toward Haley and David.

BACK TO SCENE

DAVID
Oh my God...

Haley reverses and looks at him.

HALEY
What?

Lydia makes her way to them in a hurry. She sticks out her hand.

LYDIA
Mr. Fox? My name is Lydia Patrick.

DAVID
(clueless)
Yeah, I kn--

LYDIA
(loud and forced)
I am a--

DAVID
Social worker.

Haley looks back and forth between them.

Lydia's eyes widen.

DAVID
(to Haley)
I mean, that's what type of people
handle things like this, right?

Haley nods.

LYDIA
I'm here to facilitate the
placement of Haley with a relative.

HALEY
(to Lydia)
Yeah, well, he's not the one so get
the paperwork that says he doesn't
want to take custody.

Lydia's eyebrows come together. Her look is reproachful.

LYDIA
Would you like to sit down and hear
some of the details before you make
that decision?

HALEY
Ms. Patrick, I'd rather not waste
his time any more than I already
have so--

DAVID
Actually, I wouldn't mind learning
a little more about it.

Haley turns her head in his direction.

DAVID
(to Haley)
If that's okay with you?

Haley smiles and nods.

Lydia leads the way back to the table with the paperwork.

David and Haley sit down opposite Lydia.

LYDIA
Basically, even though you are the
requested guardian, a judge, in
this case the Honorable Luis
Mercado of Houston, still has to
approve the placement.

David nods along, smiling at Lydia.

Lydia looks down at some paperwork.

Haley looks from David to Lydia and back.

LYDIA

Judge Mercado appointed me to the case, which basically means it's my job to check out the living conditions initially and to make several follow-up visits. After six months, he will make a final ruling in the case based mainly from my reports.

David nods.

DAVID

So...do you live in Houston?

Lydia stares at him a moment.

LYDIA

I live here in Austin.

DAVID

So you'd be checking in often?

LYDIA

Weekly.

DAVID

I see.

David glances over at Haley.

DAVID

(to Haley)

Would you mind if I spoke with Ms. Patrick alone for a few minutes?

Haley shakes her head.

DAVID

You want to go look around my apartment a little more? See if you'd even want to live there?

Haley smiles.

HALEY

Sure...

She smiles at Lydia before getting up and walking out of the bar through the back entrance.

At the table, Lydia and David look at one another until Haley is safely out of the room.

DAVID
 (sarcastic)
 So... last night... was that just
 typical procedure?

LYDIA
 Of course not.

DAVID
 Then what the hell were you doing?

She sighs, putting her face in her palms.

LYDIA
 (rushed)
 I drove by to check the address and
 when I saw the bar, I assumed I had
 it wrong. I came in to ask and the
 other bartender pointed me in your
 direction. After we started
 talking, I didn't know how to bring
 it up.
 (she sighs)
 But I should have. I'm sorry.

She looks up at him.

DAVID
 No kidding...

He gets up and paces around.

DAVID
 All the things I told you... I
 mean, those were such personal
 things. Not things you'd tell--

LYDIA
 If it helps, you didn't tell me
 anything that would make me
 recommend against you.

David stops pacing and stares at her.

DAVID
 That doesn't help.
 (he shakes his head)
 I mean, I tried to kiss you, Lydia.

She smiles when he says her name.

He starts pacing again.

DAVID

And now what? There's this amazing kid who needs a parent and I'm supposed to be it? Me? I... I'm not equipped to handle a teenage girl.

David curls his hands in to fists.

DAVID

And even if I was, my father didn't want anything to do with me, why should I clean up the mess left by his untimely death? Screw him.

Lydia furrows her brow.

LYDIA

This is about Haley.

DAVID

Who is my father's daughter.

LYDIA

Which makes her your sister, David.

DAVID

Thank you for the genetics lesson.

David sits down across from Lydia once again.

LYDIA

I'm just pointing out that maybe you could afford her the courtesy that you seem to believe your father didn't afford you.

David sighs.

DAVID

She said she knew I wouldn't want her.

LYDIA

She said that to me before we got here. Several times.

DAVID

But... do you really think she wants me?

LYDIA
(firm)
Yes.

David looks at Lydia, a smile forming on his lips.

DAVID
Then I'd like to try.

Lydia grins.

DAVID
I may fail miserably--

LYDIA
Shh.

She pushes a set of papers and a pen at him.

LYDIA
Just sign.

David nods and picks up the pen, signing the documents.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LOFT APARTMENT - DAY

Haley sits on the couch with a duffel bag at her feet. David is in the kitchen, looking into the refrigerator.

DAVID
(over his shoulder)
I think I have some cereal.

He leans across the fridge door to pull open a cabinet. He reaches in and pulls out a box of Fruit Loops.

DAVID
Yep. Fruit Loops. Do you like Fruit Loops?

Haley smiles to herself then hops up from the couch.

HALEY
Um...

DAVID
Oh, but never mind. The milk expired...last month.

David holds the carton in his hand, examining the date.

Haley makes her way into the kitchen. As David closes the fridge, Haley takes the Fruit Loops and milk from him.

She sets the cereal down on the counter then opens up and pours the expired milk down the sink drain. She then glances around, spotting a silver trashcan. She tosses the empty milk carton inside.

David watches as she grabs the cereal again and walks back over to the couch, pulling out a handful Fruit Loops and tossing a few into her mouth.

HALEY

Can I ask you something?

DAVID

Sure. What's up?

He walks over and takes a seat with her on the couch.

She passes him the Fruit Loops. He takes a handful and hands them back.

HALEY

Did you say yes because you wanted to say yes...or because you've got the hots for Ms. Patrick.

David nearly chokes on a Fruit Loop.

DAVID

I don't...
(he coughs)
I do not "have the hots" for Ms. Patrick, okay?

HALEY

But... you think she's pretty.

DAVID

I don't know. I barely even remember what she looks like.

Haley closes up the cereal and sets it aside.

HALEY

David?

DAVID

Yes?

HALEY

Get real.

David raises his eyebrows and pushes an innocent look.

HALEY

If this has any hope of working,
we're going to have to work
together and we're going to have to
be honest with each other.

David bites his lip, taken aback.

HALEY

Now, did you say yes because you
like her or what?

DAVID

I said yes because I didn't want to
do to you what my--our father--did
to me.

He looks at her, finished. She folds her arms.

DAVID

(embarrassed)

And because I am slightly attracted
to Ms. Patrick.

Haley raises her eyebrows.

DAVID

Incredibly attracted to Ms.
Patrick?

Haley tilts her head.

DAVID

She stopped in the bar last night.
We talked. I found her smart and
funny and sexy and beautiful. In
fact, I don't think I've ever met a
woman and been more instantly
attracted to her on so many levels.

Haley laughs.

HALEY

I knew it!

DAVID

How was that for honesty?

David leans back against the couch, taking a deep breath.

HALEY

That was a good first effort.

He snorts, but then turns his head to look at her.

DAVID

But, hey, me saying yes wasn't really about Lydia, you know?

HALEY

Lydia. Even her name is pretty.

DAVID

I'm serious, Haley. This is about me and you.

HALEY

You and I.

DAVID

You and me. Actually.

They stare at each other for a moment before they crack up.

HALEY

So, by the way, where's my room?

David sucks air over his teeth and glances up at the storage room.

Haley looks over.

HALEY

You've got to be kidding.

David shrugs.

FADE OUT

ACT IV

INT. STORAGE ROOM - DAY

All of David's stuff is pushed over to one side of the room. A single bed is against the wall on the other side with a 6 ft. by 6 ft. area cleared out in front of it. The bed is made except for the pillow, which Haley is covering with a pillowcase.

David walks in.

DAVID

This looks pretty good.

HALEY

Yes. I've always wanted to live in a closet.

DAVID

At least there's a bed in here.

Haley rolls her eyes, but smiles. She plops down on the bed.

HALEY

This is fine. More than what I expected. Thanks, David.

He puts his hands in his pockets. A beat.

HALEY

So, since we decided to be honest with each other--

DAVID

Since you decreed it.

HALEY

Or that. Anyway, I want to tell you something about my dad, but I don't want you to get angry like the last time we talked about him.

David sighs and leans in the doorway.

HALEY

You're already getting mad.

DAVID

How can I not? He abandoned me.

HALEY

No, he didn't David. I think... I'm pretty sure someone lied to both of you.

DAVID

What are you talking about?

HALEY

I knew about you. I knew all about you. My dad talked about you a lot.

David narrows his eyes.

Haley goes to her bag and searches through stuff until she finds a photo album. She carries it to David and hands it to him. She then grabs his arm and leads him to the bed. He sits and opens the album.

Haley stands next to him as he looks through the book. On the first page, there is a copy of David's birth certificate and pictures of him as a newborn.

David flips through the pictures and finds more photos of himself as he got older. He finally reaches pictures of the nine-year-old David dressed in a tuxedo at Larry and Jennifer's wedding. David touches the photo.

He flips through the remaining pages, revealing newspaper clippings of high school sports, honor roll listings and articles, his name highlighted in each article. As he continues to turn the pages, he finds music reviews for a band called "Sly." As before, David's name is highlighted everywhere.

HALEY

Pretty cool, right?

David closes the book, looking down at it. A beat.

DAVID

I don't understand what this is.

Haley sits down next to him and takes the album. She flips to the back cover, taking out a yellowed envelope. She pulls out a letter.

David looks over at it with squinted eyes.

HALEY

(reading)

"Dear Larry, I am sorry to inform you that David would like for you to stop writing. He does not want to be a part of your family nor does he want to hear about it. I know you will respect his wishes. Good luck with all you do. Connie."

David turns back to her.

HALEY

My dad had been trying to get joint custody of you for years. I was about five when we got this letter. It broke his heart. Especially since it was the first reply he'd ever gotten.

DAVID

Reply?

HALEY

All the letters he wrote you. And this was the first time he got a letter back. He was heartbroken.

DAVID

But... I never got any letters.

HALEY

Connie is your mom?

DAVID

My mom wouldn't...

David takes several breathes.

DAVID

She hated him for leaving her. She hated him even more when she found out he was getting remarried.

David looks around the room.

DAVID

I can't believe...

He puts his head in his hands.

HALEY

I'm sorry.

DAVID

I spent all this time hating him. Everything that ever went bad in my life, I blamed him. But all this time, it wasn't his fault.

Haley nods, wiping back a few tears from her eyes.

DAVID

And now he's gone...

Haley wipes away a few more tears. David looks up at her, tears in his own eyes.

DAVID

I can't believe he's gone...

Haley embraces David. They both continue to cry.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LOFT APARTMENT - DAY

David sits at his desk with headphones on. He adjusts sliders on his sound board.

Haley walks out of the storage room, looking at him tentatively.

David looks up. He pulls off the headphones.

DAVID
Hey. What's up?

Haley shrugs.

HALEY
I'm bored. What are you doing?

DAVID
Mixing something.

HALEY
For your band?

DAVID
Uh, no, actually. Something I was working on by myself.

HALEY
Your band is a cover band, right?

DAVID
Right.

HALEY
But you write music.

DAVID
Uh huh...

HALEY
So... why not write music for your band?

David chuckles.

DAVID
Okay, did Luke send you here?

HALEY
Who's Luke?

DAVID
The guitarist for my band.

HALEY
He wants you to write stuff for the band?

DAVID
Yes. Which I used to do until I figured out that people would rather pay to hear cover songs.

Haley nods and walks over.

HALEY
Can I hear what you're working on?

DAVID
No.

Haley raises her eyebrows.

DAVID
No offense. I just... I mean, I'm not comfortable with--

HALEY
Dad would never share anything until it was done. Until he was totally happy with it.

DAVID
Well, I never share anything, period. Writing songs has become something very personal for me.

HALEY
Okay.
(she nods and walks over)
That's weird, but... I respect it.

David smiles and leans back in his chair.

Haley eyes the guitars on his wall.

HALEY
Are your guitars also something very personal to you?

David smiles and stands. He pulls off a guitar from the wall and hands it to her.

She takes it and plays three chords in succession.

DAVID

You play?

Haley shrugs.

HALEY

A little. My guitar is in storage.

DAVID

Feel free to play these anytime.

Haley smiles.

HALEY

Thanks.

She puts the chords together to form an acoustic rock riff.

DAVID

What is that?

HALEY

I don't know.

DAVID

You made it up?

HALEY

Maybe.

She grins.

DAVID

You write music.

She shrugs and stops playing.

HALEY

Not like my dad. I'm no composer.
And not like you, either. I don't
mix stuff. I just... play my guitar
and sing.

DAVID

So sing me something.

Haley stands up with a smirk. She hands the guitar back to David.

HALEY

You first.

He laughs, but shakes his head.

DAVID

Sorry.

Haley shrugs.

HALEY

Your loss.

She walks off in the direction of the storage room.

David puts the guitar back up on the wall then sits down in his chair. He smiles slightly, glancing in the direction of the storage room. He looks back at his computer.

DAVID

Oh, no...

(shouting)

Hey, Haley? I've got to go to band practice so...

Haley walks back out with a purse over her shoulder.

HALEY

Let's go.

David laughs.

DAVID

Okay. Let's go.

INT. HANGAR - DAY

The band is set up in the middle of the hangar.

David walks in quickly with his guitar on his back and Haley in tow.

The band stops and stares.

The slightly overweight drummer, ED, pushes his long, greasy hair behind his shoulders.

ED

(to Luke)

I hope that's not the hot girl you were talking about.

The bassist, FELIX, pretends to tune his guitar.

Haley and David make their way to the guys.

DAVID
Guys, this is my little sister,
Haley.

LUKE
You have a little sister?

DAVID
Haley, this is Luke.

Haley waves to him.

DAVID
That's Ed on drums and Felix on
bass.

HALEY
Hi.

Ed grins. Felix doesn't look up.

LUKE
Don't mind Felix. He's socially
awkward.

Felix looks up to glare at him, but then goes back to tuning
his guitar.

LUKE
Well, Haley, welcome to your own
personal Sly show.

DAVID
Our band is called Sly.

Haley nods.

LUKE
We only do cover songs because
David is lame and won't write us
any more good music.

Haley looks at David out of the corner of her eye.

LUKE
He's got this neurosis where he
thinks the music's bad. It's not
the music, though. We just need a
hook. Something about the band that
is interesting to people.

DAVID

I thought we agreed that if you had a problem, you could lead the band.

LUKE

And I thought we agreed that you're the only one in the band with any vocal power.

DAVID

Exactly. So which cover are we starting with today?

Haley steps back, taking a seat on an empty chair.

David pulls out his guitar and plugs it in.

LUKE

(to Haley)

Any requests?

HALEY

How about...something romantic?

David gives her a smirk.

LUKE

Romantic? Guys, you know what to do.

The band begins to play Mariah Carrey's "Always Be My Baby."

Haley sits back in the chair, wearing an impressed smile.

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. CHUCK'S DINER - ESTABLISHING - DAY

People enter and exit the bustling cafe.

INT. CHUCK'S DINER - DAY

Haley and David sit together in a booth. David is eating pancakes. Haley has a half a club sandwich and some fries on her plate.

HALEY

I take it you don't cook much?

DAVID

Rarely.

HALEY

And... do you usually eat dinner at three in the afternoon?

DAVID

I thought this was lunch.

HALEY

Looks like breakfast.

DAVID

The beauty of being an adult is that you can have pancakes anytime you want.

(he takes a bite)

Besides, I always eat at three. I have to open the bar at four.

Haley nods, pushing around her fries.

HALEY

Well, maybe you could start taking a dinner break. You have someone working with you every night, right?

DAVID

Most of the time, but--

HALEY

We always used to have a family dinner at six. No matter what.

David shifts uncomfortably.

HALEY

I'm a really good cook.

David smiles then looks down.

HALEY

What?

DAVID

You're already brainstorming ways to take care of me... when it should be the other way around.

HALEY

I don't mind, though. I've always liked chores and cooking and stuff like that. It's really fine.

David sets his fork down and rests his chin on a propped up hand.

DAVID

I'm just wondering if I really am the best person to do this. Isn't there anyone else who--

HALEY

No.

David looks up into her eyes.

DAVID

I'm a recovering alcoholic. How do you think the judge is going to take that?

Haley considers his words.

HALEY

Better than if you were a non-recovering alcoholic?

David chuckles.

DAVID

Seriously, though.

Haley sighs.

HALEY

If you're a recovering alcoholic, why do you own a bar?

DAVID

Maybe I like a challenge.

HALEY

Maybe you like to make yourself miserable.

David sits back, looking at her thoughtfully.

HALEY

I mean, you write all this music that Luke seems to think will be great--

DAVID
Luke has impeccably poor taste.

HALEY
But you won't share it. You probably love it, but you won't share it.

DAVID
Enough with the music.

Haley sits back against her seat, getting more angry.

HALEY
Why are you looking for an out all the time? Why do you assume that you won't be good enough?

DAVID
I said--

HALEY
I'm not talking about the music, David. I'm talking about me. You're already ready to give up.

He looks up at her.

HALEY
Please, don't give up yet.

David sighs.

DAVID
Okay.

HALEY
Really?

DAVID
You make a convincing argument. Your insight into my character is frighteningly good. And... you can Cook so I guess that makes you a triple threat.

A beat.

HALEY
I make good pancakes, too.

They laugh together.

FADE OUT

ACT V

EXT. PARK - AUSTIN - DAY

Hundreds of people are spread out on the grass. In the middle of it all, a stage is set up.

DAVID

(on stage)

So, thank you all very much for coming out and showing us a little bit of love. Our name is Sly and you can check us out every Friday at The Bar Code. Our last song of the night came out my senior year in high school. If you believe in the basic goodness of people, this song is for you. If you believe we're all innocent...

The band starts to play the song. A few people in the audience cheer, but most are not overly enthused with the song, band or performance.

EXT. SIDE STAGE - DAY

Haley stands on the side of the stage wearing a backstage pass badge. She smiles as she listens.

DAVID

(singing)

Oh, Johnny wishes he was famous.
Spends his time alone in the
basement with Lennon and Cobain, a
guitar and a stereo. And while he
wishes he could escape this, but it
all seems so contagious just to be
yourself and famous in a song that
has no soul...

Haley bobs to the music.

On stage, Luke looks over and gives her a smile.

DAVID

(singing)

I remember feeling low. I remember
losing hope. I remember all the
feelings and the day they stopped.

As David continues with the chorus, Luke walks over to Haley's side of the stage.

LUKE
Hey, come out here.

HALEY
What? No.

LUKE
You have stage fright?

HALEY
No, but...

LUKE
Then come on...

He walks back to his mic, but Haley stays where she is.

During a musical interlude and a guitar solo for David, Luke steps up to his microphone.

LUKE
Ladies and gentleman, give it up
for our sexy lead singer's adorable
little sister. Haley Fox.

No one notices her presence anymore than they pay attention to the band.

David looks back at Luke then looks up at Haley as she tentatively walks out on the stage.

He grins at her before singing the last few lines of the chorus. He nods for Haley to come to his mic.

She takes a deep breath and walks over.

The band starts the next part of the song.

HALEY
(singing, quiet)
Oh, Tina's losing faith in what she
knows. Hates her music, hates all
of her clothes. Thinks of surgery
and a new nose. Every calorie's a
war...

Her voice is smooth and beautiful. The audience stops talking. Suddenly, all eyes and ears are directed at Haley.

HALEY

(louder)

And while she wishes she was a dancer and that she'd never heard of cancer. She wishes God would give her some answer and make her feel beautiful.

HALEY AND DAVID

I remember feeling low. I remember losing hope. I remember all the feelings and the day they stopped.

The crowd cheers. David glances over at her and mouths "wow" to her as the crowd screams and sings along to the chorus.

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. BACK STAGE - DAY

The band is packing up their equipment while another band has already taken the stage, their slightly muted music heard in the background.

Luke stands with Haley and David.

LUKE

You see? That is what I'm talking about. That's the hook.

HALEY

What is the hook?

LUKE

You.

DAVID

Dude...no. She's fifteen. We're a bar band. That's not going to fly.

LUKE

Then we won't be a bar band. We'll be a tour band. A sold out concert band. An MTV band.

David and Haley look at one another, neither comfortable.

LUKE

Oh my God, she's just like you, isn't she? Afraid of her own freaking talent...

HALEY

(David)

Does he always try reverse
psychology?

DAVID

Uh huh.

Luke rolls his eyes.

HALEY

Anyway, I'm not really a band kind
of girl. I'm more of a singer
songwriter on YouTube kind of girl.

LUKE

Think about it. That's all I'm
saying.

He points at both of them then goes to pack up his guitars.

MAN (O.S.)

Excuse me? Who represents this act?

David and Haley turn around to find ARNOLD EVANS, 40. Arnold
wears a suit and an out-of-date mustache.

DAVID

If you mean Sly, that'd be me.

ARNOLD

Sly and it's new singer.

He nods to Haley. She looks at David, uncomfortable.

ARNOLD

I'm a manager.

DAVID

So am I.

ARNOLD

If you're interested in doing some
other... more popular venues, give
me a call. You have something I can
sell. My name is Arnold Evans.

He holds out his business card to David. David looks at
Haley, but she shakes her head.

DAVID

Well, thank you for the offer. I'll
have to talk to the band.

Arnold nods and turns to walk away.

DAVID

Arnold Evans. He's known for
getting bands out of Austin.

Haley raises her eyebrows.

HALEY

Are you really going to talk to the
band about it?

DAVID

Yeah... eventually. I'm going to
think of all the implications
first.

He looks over at her.

DAVID

This could be huge, Haley.

They look at one another for a beat then look away, both
lost in their own thoughts.

FADE OUT

THE END