

INT. FUNERAL HOME - EVENING

An arrangement of flowers encircle a framed photo of a young woman, PAT, 21. Below, written in fine calligraphy, "IN LOVING MEMORY."

JAMIE, 21, PAT's identical twin, approaches the microphone.

Harsh microphone feedback whines. JAMIE winces, shuffles through index cards with shaky hands.

JAMIE

Even though we looked identical,
nobody ever had any trouble telling us
apart. Pat just had this... I don't
know, this quality that everyone she
met picked up on, instantly. If you're
here, you already know how special she
was. It was remarkable how she could
just pull you in to her every word.
She always was the better half.
Kinder, braver, smarter. Despite that,
we always knew what the other was
thinking. It's cliché, I know. Mom
always said it's like our brains were
two cans on a string. We shared every
scraped knee and every loose tooth.
When she died...

JAMIE falls silent, shakes her head. She's gone off-script.

JAMIE

Sorry, I uh... excuse me

She surveys the room- rows upon rows of pews stand stark and empty.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - MOMENTS LATER

JAMIE explodes out of the double-doors. The door slams into the wall with a bang.

She grips the railing as she reels back and forth, hand on her stomach. She barely makes it to the bushes before she pukes.

INT. APARTMENT- LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

JAMIE slumps in a chair, eyes glazed over, staring at the floor.

Noise from the street wafts through the window. The air-conditioner whines. The phone rings. It's all *too loud*.

JAMIE buries her face in her hands.

Behind her, the curtains are ripped from their rod, one ring at a time, and fall to the floor with a heavy thump.

Rustling sounds from behind the couch.

After a moment a FIGURE rises, shrouded head-to-toe in the curtains.

JAMIE remains oblivious as the FIGURE lumbers around her, settling inches in front of her with an unearthly groan, like a muffled scream of pain.

Ever-so-slowly, JAMIE drops her hands from her face. She raises her head to look up at the face of the figure, only to find it shrouded in the fine red cloth of the curtains.

The room goes silent except for the ragged breath of the figure.

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE

The FIGURE stands before JAMIE, head just out of frame.

They've been transported to a wide open stage, empty and pitch-black save for a lamp and the chair JAMIE sits in.

JAMIE'S numb stare gives way to hyperventilation. She shakes her head like a toddler refusing to eat their vegetables.

The FIGURE lurches away from JAMIE, across the stage. It disappears behind a dirty, translucent sheet held up by rusty clothespins and frayed twine.

Silhouetted against the sheet, the shroud drops from the shoulders of the FIGURE. A vaguely humanoid form is clear-- head, shoulders, torso-- but the limbs and neck are contorted at unnatural angles.

VOICE (O.C.)

Help me.

(NOTE: The voice is more noise than words, nearly incomprehensible, but it seems Jamie understands perfectly. Subtitles show us what's being said.)

JAMIE nods, eyes bigger than her face.

VOICE (O.C.)

Help.

JAMIE

Okay... Okay.

VOICE (O.C.)

Help.

JAMIE nods again.

JAMIE

Okay. Um, h-how?

VOICE (O.C.)

Cans on a string. You and me.

JAMIE jolts up.

JAMIE

Pat? What's going on? Where are we?

VOICE (O.C.)

The string.

JAMIE runs her hands back through her hair and exhales.

JAMIE

I don't... is this real?

Beat.

VOICE (O.C.)

Does it matter?

JAMIE

Oh, God.

VOICE (O.C.)

It hurts.

PAT presses her shaking hand against the sheet. Black grime like motor oil smears wherever her hand touches.

VOICE (O.S.)

Help me, Jamie.

JAMIE

Okay, what do I do? How do I help?

PAT collapses with a groan. Her hand leaves a trail of grime on the sheet.

JAMIE stands.

VOICE (O.C.)
(weakly)
Take me with you. Please.

Cautiously, JAMIE approaches the sheet. Her shoes squeak and scuff on the floor.

JAMIE grabs the edge of the sheet and slowly, *slowly*, pulls it back. She looks down at PAT, terror and disgust from the grisly sight lays plain on her face.

All the same, she extends her hand to PAT. After a pause, PAT reaches a mangled, dripping hand to grab it.

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. APARTMENT- LIVING ROOM - DAY

Indistinct T.V. sounds play on in the background.

Sunlight streams through the now curtain-less window and settles on JAMIE and PAT as they sit on the couch.

JAMIE chuckles as she plucks popcorn from a bowl on her lap.

JAMIE
I'm speaking at your funeral today. I
went to the funeral home last night to
practice, but I couldn't...

JAMIE clears her throat.

JAMIE
Grandma made a beautiful floral
arrangement. Popcorn?

She extends the bowl to PAT.

The bowl falls to the floor.

PAT is gone.

All color and warmth has been sucked out of the room.

JAMIE sits alone on the couch. The curtains are wrapped around her shoulders. She doesn't seem to notice the sound of

the dish breaking against the floor.

From the T.V., a laugh track plays.

JAMIE laughs along as she wipes a tear from her eye.