

"The Wilding"

Emily^{11.}

KAYLA

(re: poster)

How long has she been gone?

CARLOS

A week. Her whole family disappeared with her. Happens all the time. People leave their lives behind - bad loans, bad choices. They just pick up and go. Too much of that around here.

(re: cards, teddy bears)

But you can see, we really care about each other. This is a change for you, a good one.

KAYLA

(trying to joke)

Yeah, no straight-jacket will really expand my wardrobe.

CARLOS

Your mom and I will help any way we can, but you're the only one who can make this work.

Kayla nods. Message received.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

I'm in 803 if you need me.

9 pgs.

INT. WAITING ROOM, MARGARET'S PRACTICE -- DAY

DR. EMILY BERGOM (40s) waits. A reserved professional, smart suit. But a bit wan, withdrawn.

She takes in the waiting room, wonders what the hell she is doing here. Gum stuck to the carpet, water stains across the popcorn ceiling, the magazines sticky. About to leave --

Margaret pops out of her office.

MARGARET

Emily?

Too late. Emily follows Margaret into --

INT. OFFICE, MARGARET'S PRACTICE -- DAY

Emily settles into a sofa opposite Margaret's desk. She eyes the bowl of jolly ranchers, the AC window unit, the Glade PlugIns - the crassness of it all urging Emily to run out.

Start
#1



1/9

MARGARET

Good to meet you.

EMILY

You come highly recommended from a colleague.

MARGARET

Mark and I go back.

A beat. Emily remains silent, not wanting to cede ground.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

How you feeling today?

EMILY

Fine.

MARGARET

Mark said it was urgent.

EMILY

I never said that.

MARGARET

Why do you think you're here?

EMILY

Stress. Work-related.

MARGARET

You're at Prolexa Stearns with Mark?

EMILY

I'm heading up R&D on a cholinesterase inhibitor. For Alzheimer's. We're pre-clinical. Our IRB is in a few days - That's when you present to a review board before moving forward --

MARGARET

To Phase I trials. They covered that in med school. At Duke. That's how I know Mark. He was my research advisor.

EMILY

(re: her blank walls)

You don't have a degree up. I wasn't sure you're a doctor.

MARGARET

No worries, you're sure now... Mark oversees your study, so he's more of a superior than a colleague.

EMILY

You could say that.

MARGARET

That piss you off, your boss making you come here?

EMILY

I can see this from his side, I really can. My actions were erratic. The long hours, too much caffeine, low blood sugar, you get tunnel vision. There's a thought, an impulse, and you carry it through. But it was a blip, a bad afternoon... And I still have an IRB to prepare for, so...

MARGARET

Mark knows that, but he thought it was important for you to see me. Urgent even.

EMILY

He needs someone to give me a few Klonopin to get through the IRB.

MARGARET

(changes tact)

... Okay, I'm gonna show you something -

Margaret spins her computer screen around, plays a video -- the quality grainy, the position fixed. Security footage with no audio --

CUT TO:

We're inside the PROLEXA STEARNS LAB, a state-of-the-art facility. Lab Techs bang away at a bank of computers, grinding out data charts.

From the corner of the screen, Emily charges in, pushing a cart full of lab equipment and computers. All the wires tangled, screens smashed.

More disturbing than a quarter million dollars in damages is Emily -- sweat soaks through her shirt as she snatches at every scrap of metal in sight.

Stop
3/9

Still no audio, but we see Emily shouting at a Lab Tech as she tries to rip apart a 200 pound freeze dryer.

The Lab Tech blocks her, but she keeps clawing at the hulking machine. Relentless, rabid.

The video stops.

CUT BACK TO:

Margaret waits for Emily to say something. Emily only stares at the star-field screen saver darting around the computer.

Start
#2

→ EMILY
... Mark sent you that.

MARGARET
He's concerned --

Emily unravels.

EMILY
-- I drop out and there's no way,
no fucking way, the FDA will let us
move forward. Mark tell you that?
His head researcher pulls out two
days before an IRB and his billion
dollar study is over. I'm not the
one on the line, he is.

MARGARET
That might be why he insisted you
see me, but I don't give a shit if
some IND gets pushed through the
pipeline. I'm here to help you.
Were you hearing voices during this
episode?

Emily looks away, doesn't want to admit it.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
Do the voices come from the objects
you were collecting?

Emily turns back to Margaret, surprised she knew this.

EMILY
Yes.
(defensive)
It's only when I'm at work.

MARGARET
And home, how's that going?

4/9

EMILY

This has nothing to do with my family.

MARGARET

Never said it did. You married?

EMILY

Yes, but he lost his job a year ago.

MARGARET

Him being unemployed, that make him less of a partner?

EMILY

No, it's better this way. He helps out with the kids.

Clearly an issue there, but Margaret lets it go for now.

MARGARET

Your research is under review, supporting your whole family. That's a lot to shoulder.

EMILY

Nothing I haven't handled before.

MARGARET

What do you think these voices are?

Emily deliberates, weighs how much she wants to reveal.

EMILY

(letting go)

... We're all made of the same particles - mammals, machines. All of us, aware, listening, remembering. And we know it, can feel it. This connection. But you walk forward, eyes ahead, stay in your lane. And then you hear it... all around you... Past or present, matter can't be destroyed.

Margaret not understanding, still listens. Emily pauses, it's hard to say aloud.

EMILY (CONT'D)

People died in there. And I can hear them.

Margaret nods, not fazed. Gets this a lot.

5/9

MARGARET

Ghosts. And what do they say?

EMILY

There's no words... Numbers. I only hear numbers.

Margaret's heard enough.

MARGARET

I specialize in psychotic disorders. These diseases present early, or they involve trauma... You're a healthy woman, overworked, but no history of mental illness. Your MRI was clear. But if there's even the slightest genetic predisposition, these diseases can be triggered. And if they are, you need treatment. Not a few Klonopin.

EMILY

I'm not psychotic.

MARGARET

I know it's a scary word to hear. Especially for someone like you, with your mind.

Emily's bravado melts away. Margaret takes Emily's hand, comforting her.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

These voices, these ghosts you're hearing, they're not real.

Emily snaps away from Margaret, unwilling to accept that she's losing her mind.

~~INT. HALL, JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL -- DAY~~

Stop

Between classes, Kayla follows the herd down the hall. She ventures a few smiles at fellow Students.

She stops at her locker. But there's an African American STUDENT in front of it. Her back to us.

KAYLA

Excuse me. I gotta get in there.

Not hearing Kayla, the Student doesn't turn. Kayla moves to tap the Student, but stops short, noticing...

6/9

EMILY

After the IRB... I have to get Beth ready.

Sam checks the baby monitor - their son sound asleep.

SAM

I'll feed Jack.

Emily is already headed upstairs.

BETH'S ROOM

A tomboy six-year-old girl's room. Dinosaur fossil decals on the wall. Pirate sheets on her bed.

Emily pokes her head in, hears mumbling from the closet.

Start
#3



EMILY

Knock. Knock.

BETH (OS)

We're having a birthday party. You bring a present?

Emily grabs a stuffed elephant off the shelf and walks into --

CLOSET

BETH (6), wearing glasses, holds up a tea pot. She sits under her rack of clothes.

Emily kneels next to Beth. This is the only time she gets with daughter and she cherishes it.

EMILY

Whose birthday is it today?

She holds up a mossy BLACK QUARTZ ROCK.

BETH

Polly.

Emily realizes Beth has arranged a circle of QUARTZ ROCKS, all of them muddy and covered in moss.

EMILY

Where did you get these?

BETH

They're my babies. They're so heavy, I put them down.

7/9

Beth pets moss on one of the rocks as if it were hair.

BETH (CONT'D)
Pretty Polly.

EMILY
Did you go outside by yourself?

BETH
No.

EMILY
Where'd your babies come from?

BETH
Here. They were waiting for me.

Emily helps Beth to her feet.

EMILY
(not believing her)
Okay, but now you have to take a bath. You can thank your dirty babies for that.

INT. JACK'S ROOM -- DAY

Sam bottle feeds JACK, a colicky baby. Jack wails, refusing the bottle. Sam keeps trying, patient with him.

Emily slips in, shivering. She throws a blanket over her shoulders and notices the windows fogged with condensation. It must be freezing in here.

EMILY
You lower the thermostat?

SAM
Haven't touched it.

EMILY
I'll call someone to take a look.
(re: Jack)
He's doing better.

SAM
I switched to soy.

Emily clicks off the baby monitor, so the kids can't hear.

EMILY
Beth's keeping rocks in her closet.

8/9

SAM

(shrugs)

Helluva lot cheaper than those
American Girl dolls.

EMILY

She's got free reign, running in
and out of the house, dragging in
whatever she wants.

SAM

I'd never let her out on her own.

EMILY

She's getting older, we have to
keep a better eye on her.

SAM

Add it to the list.

Emily softens.

EMILY

The review's today. I'll be home
more.

SAM

Until you get approved.

Even he realizes that he's being passive aggressive.

SAM (CONT'D)

... Knock 'em dead.

Too little, too late. Emily walks out.

~~EXT. BERGOM HOUSE MORNING~~

Still in his pajamas, Sam dumps Beth's mossy rocks out in the gravel pathway.

Confused, Sam notices that the BLACK QUARTZ ROCKS stand out in the white gravel. He spreads them around to make the contrast less noticeable.

In the driveway, Emily packs Beth into the backseat of her car.

A SCHOOL BUS pulls up. ELLIOT (13) bursts from the house, dressed in a private school uniform and still half asleep. He flashes a peace sign to his mom and races onto the bus.

SUPER:

STOP

9/9