

WHAT REMAINS

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INT. EMMA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

EMMA, a woman in her 50's with long grey hair and wearing drab, nondescript black clothing, stands in her living room, eyes closed as though asleep. There is a brief high-pitched RINGING in her ears, and her eyes snap open. She looks around for a moment, disoriented, when she sees her own body, lying motionless on the floor. There is a bucket of chicken dropped on the floor next to her, a half-eaten leg in her hand.

She stares at her body for a moment, shocked, before looking around again, calling out to no one in particular.

EMMA

Hello?

(beat)

Hellooooo?

There is no response.

EMMA

What am I supposed to do now?

There is still only silence. Emma looks down at her body in despair.

(CUT TO)

EXT./INT. EMMA'S APARTMENT - DAY

The next morning, Emma watches from her front porch as the CORONERS take her body away. She goes back inside and lies down on the floor where she died.

She falls asleep.

(FADE TO)

INT. EMMA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Emma wakes up to find that time has passed. The décor is brightly colored and inviting, in contrast to her dingy, nondescript furniture. She gets up and walks out.

EXT. ALEX'S HOUSE - DAY

Emma arrives at her daughter ALEX's house, hesitating at the door. Alex, a dark-haired woman in her early 30's, appears in the window, pregnant and wiping down the dining room table. Emma gathers her courage and goes in.

INT. ALEX'S HOUSE - DAY

Emma watches Alex as she cleans the house. ALEX'S HUSBAND walks into the dining room, greeting her with a hug and a kiss.

ALEX'S HUSBAND

Honey, it's fine. You've pretty much scrubbed down the entire place at this point.

ALEX

(teasingly)

Shut up, I'm nesting.

They laugh, and she looks around, sighing wistfully.

ALEX

It's just that... fuck, I'm gonna be a *mom*. I gotta at least look like I have my shit together.

ALEX'S HUSBAND

Yeah, I'm sure your friends are going to call you a terrible mother because the table wasn't wiped down at your baby shower.

ALEX

Hey, if my own mom could make a trashed house work for her...

Alex trails off, losing herself in thought.

ALEX'S HUSBAND

Do you wish she could be here now?
To meet the baby?

ALEX

I... yeah, I guess I do. But it's not like she would have stuck around long after that anyway. She was always just kind of... in the background like that, especially after she and Dad split. I don't... I don't want to be that kind of mom.

EMMA

(quietly)

I'm here now.

Alex and her husband don't respond. They can't hear her.

ALEX'S HUSBAND

Hey, she taught you a lot, for better or worse. At least you know what you don't want to be.

Alex smiles, a little sadly, and leans affectionately into her husband's shoulder.

ALEX'S HUSBAND

Your dad gonna be around for the shower?

Alex visibly brightens at the mention of her father.

ALEX

Yeah, but not 'til a little later. He's got a date.

Emma blinks, surprised, and goes to investigate.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Emma walks into a busy restaurant, scanning the room. She spots her ex-husband JACOB, a man in his 50's with curly grey hair, across the room, sitting at a table with a blonde woman in her 40's wearing a bright yellow dress. The woman is laughing at something Jacob said.

EMMA

(to herself)

I knew I'd find you here.

Emma crosses the room and stops at the table, right in front of the couple. They don't see her.

WOMAN

Oh, this is such a cute little place, though! How'd you find it?

Jacob's smile fades, and he goes quiet for a moment. Emma leans down over the table to talk directly into Jacob's ear.

EMMA

This is our place. Not hers.

JACOB

I, uh—actually, I used to come here with Emma. Alex's mom.

Jacob takes a nervous drink from his glass. The woman looks at him with concern.

WOMAN

You don't talk about her much. Especially after...

JACOB

I know. She... wasn't the easiest person to be around, honestly. Her mind just always seemed to be somewhere else. I think she loved us, in her own way. But she was always on her own growing up, and I think she just didn't know how to be needed like that. Once Alex was old enough to take care of herself, she was just... gone.

WOMAN

Do you miss her?

JACOB

Sometimes. But I moved on a long time ago.

WOMAN

I'm glad to hear that.

Emma, clearly upset, has heard enough. She abruptly turns and walks away.

INT. MONICA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Emma walks up the stairs to her old friend MONICA'S apartment.

EMMA

(loudly)

Boy, I'm sure glad my best friend
Monica will give a shit that I'm
dead!

Emma stops in the open doorway to the apartment to see a lively party going on, with Monica, a woman in her 50's wearing a white and pink suit, pouring a glass of champagne for another woman, giggling drunkenly. Emma throws up her hands and leaves.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Emma stands in front of a pair of gravestones. The engravings read "EVERETT HARLEY, LOVING HUSBAND AND FATHER 1945-1980" and "MOIRA HARLEY, LOVING WIFE AND MOTHER 1942-1982". Emma turns and walks into the nearby park and sitting down on a bench. She closes her eyes.

EXT. PARK - DAY

The daylight fluctuates as Emma sits there with her eyes closed, time passing rapidly.

ABBY (O.S.)

Don't you have somewhere to
be?

Emma's eyes snap open, and she looks to her left, startled. ABBY, a girl of about 10 years old, is sitting next to her.

ABBY

You've been sitting here for like
a bazillion hours.

EMMA

Are... are you real? How can you see
me?

ABBY

I am, and I have eyes. And you didn't answer my question. What are you doing just sitting here by yourself?

EMMA

I just don't have anywhere else to be. I'm dead and no one cares that I'm gone. And I don't know how to leave.

ABBY

No one?

EMMA

Nope.

ABBY

Well, if I'd known you then, I think I would have cared.

EMMA

You would have?

ABBY

Sure. You seem cool for an old lady. Even if you're just sitting by yourself like a weirdo.

There's a brief but comfortable silence.

EMMA

Well... thanks for listening to me. You're the first person to do that in... a long time.

ABBY

Sure.

EMMA

Is... there anything I can do for you?

ABBY

Well, since you're stuck here you might as well hang out with me.

EMMA

(smiles)

I think I can do that.

The camera pulls back as they sit together.

END