

Beneficiaries

By

Chris Todd

COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

TARA, late-twenties, sits at her kitchen island drinking wine with her date, DANIEL. There is both nice cheese and eye contact.

DANIEL

Do you bring all your dates back to your apartment?

TARA

I have a rule. No apartment until the third date.

Beat.

DANIEL

This is our first date.

TARA

Honestly, I thought you were someone else.

A knock at the door.

DANIEL

If that's your other date, this is going to get weird.

TARA

(flirty)

Or a whole lot more fun.

Tara walks to the door, uses the peephole for its intended purpose, sighs, and opens it.

Her neighbor KEN, mid-forties, stands there with MAIL in his hand.

KEN

These were in my mailbox.

He hands her several envelopes.

TARA

It's like 11 O'clock, Ken.

KEN

Yeah, sorry. I'm just really anxious  
to find out what that top one is. It  
looks important.

Tara looks at the top envelope marked 'urgent.' It also  
appears tampered with.

TARA

It looks like you tried to open it.  
Did you try to open it, Ken?

KEN

I did.

DANIEL

Did you try using steam from a kettle?

KEN

Of course. First thing I tried.

She glances at Daniel to let him know now is not the time to  
be cute.

Extended beat. Ken continues to stand, impatient, in the  
doorway.

TARA

You're going to stand here until I  
open this?

KEN

Correct.

She opens it. She reads it. She says nothing.

DANIEL

Well?

TARA

Mr. Stevens died. I'm named in his  
will.

KEN

I was hoping it was a subpoena.  
Something exciting like that.

Beat.

KEN

I should go.

He leaves. She closes the door. She stares blankly at her small stack of mail.

DANIEL

Sorry for your loss, Tara. You and Mr. Stevens were close?

TARA

I have no idea who that is. Want to go make out?

Beat.

DANIEL

I do.

She drops the mail on the counter. Gulps down her wine. And leads Daniel into the other room.

FADE OUT.

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. OFFICE BREAKROOM

Tara waits for fresh coffee to brew. She taps a pen on the counter like she's keeping time. Her CELL PHONE rings. It's an embarrassing ringtone and she dances an embarrassing dance.

She answers.

TARA  
(on phone)  
Hello? Oh yeah, I got the letter. It's when?

Tara's superior, KEVIN, peeks over her shoulder to see if the coffee is done. It's not.

He stands very close to Tara. She stands very close to the coffee.

TARA  
(on phone)  
I didn't know I'd have to be there in person.

KEVIN  
Is that a personal call?

TARA  
(to Kevin)  
No. I'm making a business deal.  
(on phone)  
I can't just be in Pennsylvania on Monday. I have work.

Kevin leans in.

KEVIN  
Sounds like a personal call.

TARA  
(to Kevin)  
How? I said the word 'work' and everything.

KEVIN  
Saying the word 'work' doesn't make something work related.

TARA  
(to Kevin)  
It literally does.  
(on phone)  
Ok thank you. I guess I'll *work* something out and be there.

She puts the phone back in her pocket. Kevin squeezes past Tara. Fills up his mug first. Then accidentally drops the pot and spills it all over the counter.

TARA  
I need to take PTO.

KEVIN  
Sure. Can you clean this up before you go? I need to get back to work.

TARA  
*This feels personal.*

EXT. AIRPORT ARRIVAL PICKUP

Tara waits for an UBER by the curb. Earbuds in. She vibes on her music selection.

TARA  
Pandora is killing it today.

Her phone vibrates. The Uber is arriving. She looks up to see the app was telling the truth. The car approaches. Stops.

The driver, LONNY, gets out to help with Tara's BAGS. He looks at Tara and smiles.

LONNY  
Of all the airports in eastern Pennsylvania.

TARA  
Lon? You're an Uber driver?

LONNY  
It's a great side hustle. It also happens to be my main hustle.

They hug a big, haven't seen you in forever, hug.

INT. UBER

Tara, breaking Uber protocol, sits in the front as Lonny drives.

LONNY

You should've told me you were coming home. I would have picked you up for free.

TARA

You could still make this free.

LONNY

It's already in the app. There's nothing I can do except waive the surge pricing.

They are the only car on the road.

TARA

There was no surge pricing when I booked it.

LONNY

That's why I can waive it.

Beat.

He taps on his GPS and turns off the screen.

LONNY

I think I can turn this off. I could drive to your house in my sleep. And think I have once back in high school.

TARA

You're confusing 'sleep' with 'drunk'.

LONNY

I'm much more responsible now.

He slams his brakes to avoid a human being in the crosswalk. He uses his motherly arm extension to protect Tara.

She gently removes his arm from her personal space.

He looks out the passenger window past Tara to see they've stopped by restaurant, bar, and hang-outery The Hungry Pear.

LONNY  
Hungry?

TARA  
If it gets me out of this car.

LONNY  
You'll still rate me five stars right?

TARA  
If you're paying for lunch.

LONNY  
How about four stars. And I'll cover  
tip.

INT. THE HUNGRY PEAR

Tara and Lonny are deep into their meal of greasy sandwiches and fries. The waitress drops off the check and leaves.

TARA  
It's crazy. It took me the whole flight here to remember Mr. Stevens was my neighbor. Why would he put me in his will?

LONNY  
And maybe just as importantly, why not put me in his will? I was his neighbor too.

TARA  
He probably found out you used to smoke pot in his backyard.

BEGIN FLASHBACK.

EXT. BACKYARD

Young Lonny is sitting alone on Mr. Stevens' patio furniture, smoking.

-- a siren

Lonny jumps up, panicked, and runs directly into the glass backdoor, knocking himself to the ground. Mr. Stevens is just inside the door. He shakes his head.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. THE HUNGRY PEAR

LONNY  
I don't think that's it.

She looks at her phone.

TARA  
I need to get to the lawyer's office.  
Can you hold on to my bags?

LONNY  
That's five star service.

TARA  
Fine, five stars. You're still  
covering the tip.

She gets up, puts her money on the check.

LONNY  
I actually don't have any cash at the  
moment. It's an all-app business.

She puts a few more dollars down.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE

CARL sits in a chair, opposite the LAWYER, who also sits in a chair. A desk separates them. Carl's three kids are huddled nearby.

-- DONOVAN, 10, is on his phone.

-- TREVOR, 8, is on his phone.

-- MILES, 5, is on his phone.

LESLIE STEVENS, mid-forties, sits a few seats away from Carl, dressed in all black.

LAWYER  
We're just waiting on the others to  
arrive before we get started.

CARL

Ok. But we have 10, maybe 15 more minutes before the next meltdown.

LAWYER

They seem like great kids.

CARL

They do seem that way.

Tara knocks on the office door and sheepishly enters.

TARA

Am I in the right place?

She notices Carl. Carl notices her back.

CARL

Hey, Tara.

TARA

Carl! I didn't expect anyone else to be here.

CARL

You thought you were literally the only one Mr. Stevens mentioned in his will?

TARA

Kind of. Yeah.

LESLIE

I'm his daughter.

TARA

Nice to meet you. And sorry to hear about your dad. He was a great man.

LESLIE

You knew him well?

TARA

I did not.

Beat.

TARA

Carl, your kids are so big. It seems like just yesterday they were this tall.

She motions low to the ground. Lower than any human kid would be.

TARA

That's something an old friend would say, right?

CARL

You are nailing this somber reunion.

LESLIE

It's ok. My dad always loved small talk.

LAWYER

He and I used to talk about the weather for hours. It was nice. The small talk. Not the weather.

Tara spots one more empty chair in the offices.

TARA

Who else are we waiting on?

LAWYER

A Mr. Drew Lively.

Tara shoots a glance at Carl, who returns a look of "don't blame me."

TARA

Cool. My high-school ex and I in a tiny room together. Could this day get any worse for me?

LESLIE

My dad's dead.

CARL

That's worse than your thing, T.

TARA

Again. Sorry for your loss.

DREW enters the room, quietly. He puts his hand on Leslie's shoulder.

DREW

I'm sorry for your loss, Leslie. Mr. Stevens was good people.

LESLIE  
Thank you.

CARL  
(to Tara)  
That's how you should have entered the room.

TARA  
(to Carl)  
Is that not what I did?

DREW  
Tara, Carl, it's great to see you again. I wish it was under better circumstances.

He gives each an awkward, yet comforting, standing hug while they remain sitting.

LAWYER  
Shall we get started?

Drew finds his seat. Tara nods yes.

A beat, then Leslie nods yes.

LAWYER  
As you know from the letter sent to each of you. Mr. Stevens has decided to leave each of you a piece of his estate. And in this instance, he is leaving his house and business to you. As a group.

Carl raises his hand.

LAWYER  
You don't have to raise your hand.

CARL  
Is this one of those stay in a haunted house for 24 hours and it's yours scenarios? Because I'm in.

He looks at Tara. Tara shrugs. She's down.

LAWYER  
No. No eccentric strings attached. You'll be able to sell your portion of the assets, or do as you please.

TARA

Why?

LAWYER

Well he simply wasn't a very eccentric man.

TARA

Not why no strings attached. Why would he give us anything? Leslie, sure. But we're basically strangers.

LAWYER

He included one brief note to read aloud which should answer your question.

(reading)

In my years I have seen this community change in ways good and bad. When I pass, I want to leave what's mine to those who know this neighborhood. The next generation who might be able to bring life to the community I've loved. Can you believe this cold streak we've been having? ~ Mr. Harold Stevens.

Blank faces. Unsure of what to do with this new information.

LESLIE

(emotional)

He really did love small talk.

INT. LOBBY OF LAWYER'S OFFICE

Carl holds two of his squirming children, while the third, Donovan, jumps around the lobby being careful to avoid the lines created by the tile on the floor. Tara, Drew, Carl and Leslie are huddled together.

LESLIE

You have my info. I'll see you at the house a little later? We'll talk about what we're going to do.

DREW

Yeah. Sounds good. We'll see you in a bit.

Leslie leaves through the lobby door. The rest of the group remains huddled.

CARL

What are we going to do with 25% of a house and local bookstore?

TARA

Think Leslie will buy us out? We can't just drop everything and, what, move here and run a small business together. We have jobs. Lives.

CARL

I seem to remember, last time we talked, you hating your job. Life.

BEGIN FLASHBACK.

INT. OFFICE

Tara is in a meeting. Kevin stands in front, addressing the group of tired corporate types.

KEVIN

I know you've all been stressed recently. And I hear you. That's why we're going to work nights this week and next, so we can get ahead of our deadlines.

TARA

We're going to work more, to alleviate stress?

KEVIN

We're thinking outside of the box, Tara. You can't spell work life balance without 'cancel life.'

TARA

That checks out.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. LOBBY OF LAWYER'S OFFICE

TARA

As the poets of our youth, Blink182,  
once said, work sucks.

DREW

I know.

CARL

Solid reference, guys. I think that  
settled the whole issue.

DREW

I don't think we need to settle this  
now. Let's go see the house, talk to  
Leslie, and catch up a little while  
we're all here.

Donovan steps on a line on the floor and loses his mind.

CARL

Time to get the kids to their mother.  
Who I can only assume, now has a  
broken back. I'll see you over there.

Carl deposits one kid on the ground, and scoops up the  
meltdown. They leave.

DREW

You have kids?

TARA

Nope.

DREW

Smart. Want a ride?

Tara gets a text from Llonny: "ready for me to pick you up?"

TARA

I do.

FADE OUT.

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. THE STEVENS HOUSE LIVING ROOM

Leslie pours tea for the gang into cups on a coffee table. The living room is cozy, a FIREPLACE is crackling, family photos on the end tables, and well-curated art on the walls.

Carl sprawls out on the couch. Tara is in a chair with Drew on the floor by Carl's feet.

DREW

Your house is beautiful, Leslie.

LESLIE

Our house.

CARL

I could get used to this.

TARA

Being away from your wife and kids?

Leslie finishes serving tea and sits.

CARL

No. I'm not some cliche husband. I love my wife and kids. The Damon Waynes show and in real life.

DREW

What is it you could get used to?

CARL

Being away from my wife and kids. I'm a cliche.

LESLIE

You'll put a fresh spin on it, I'm sure.

Quiet sipping of tea.

Carl, without moving from the couch, stretches as far as he can to reach the sugar. He's inches short but keeps trying with minimal effort.

Drew gives him the aid he was inaudibly looking for. He drops two cubes dropped in. Carl nods in appreciation.

LESLIE

I'm not sure where y'all were planning on staying while you're in town. But there's plenty of room here.

TARA

Well, I was going to stay with my parents. But since I haven't told them I was in town yet, this might work better.

DREW

I can cancel my AirBnb.

CARL

Considering I live next door, I think I'll pass. Despite the obvious Real World vibes I'm getting from this situation.

TARA

It's more of an episode of Cribs, since we own the place.

DREW

And hopefully not an episode of True Life, we're going through an existential crisis.

LESLIE

I do not get these references.

INT. THE STEVENS HOUSE STUDY

Drew and Tara are exploring the home's study, complete with BUILT-IN BOOKSHELVES and comfy chairs to read them in. Tara takes a book from the shelf.

DREW

This room might be worth staying in town for.

TARA

Are you still writing?

DREW

I am. I guess you aren't still reading my stuff.

She closes the book, and puts it back.

TARA

I'm just trying to play it cool. I read everything you do. I even follow you on Instagram.

DREW

I don't have an Instagram.

TARA

Yes you do. You don't use your real name to keep your crazed fans away. But you have one.

DREW

Apparently a crazed fan slipped through the cracks.

She coyly shrugs. A beat, then Tara slides open a drawer to check out its contents.

TARA

No way.

DREW

What?

TARA

Remember when we used to play baseball out back?

She holds up an old baseball.

DREW

That can't be the ball I hit through his window.

TARA

I think it is, because the frisbee we got stuck on his roof is here too.

Drew goes closer to check out this drawer of memories. He grabs an item.

DREW

And this must be Lon's.

He holds it up for Tara to see. It's drugs.

TARA

It would be crazy to quit my job, move  
in here, and just start all over.  
Right?

DREW

Yes. But crazy isn't always wrong.

Leslie pokes her head into the room.

LESLIE

Hey there. You ready to make some  
decisions?

TARA

Ready to start to thinking about being  
ready.

DREW

We'll be right there.

Beat.

LESLIE

I'm getting a real will they or won't  
they vibe from you two.

INT. THE STEVENS HOUSE LIVING ROOM

Leslie, Drew, and Tara are sit around the coffee table. Booze  
replaces the tea's previous position.

Carl and his wife, DEBBIE, enter the room.

CARL

I know you didn't start happy hour  
without us.

TARA

Who's watching the kids?

DEBBIE

We are.

(into phone)  
Listen in on house.

Sounds of cartoons coming from phone.

CARL

We've got at least an hour before they even know we're gone.

He pours himself and Debbie a drink. They sit.

DREW

Leslie and I have been talking a bit. She doesn't want the house or bookstore on her own. And I've decided to stay and help with both.

LESLIE

I think we should all at least try to run the bookstore together. And if we're going to do that, we might as well live in this house together.

CARL

Perfect. We'll start moving our stuff in tonight.

TARA

Probably just makes sense for those of us who don't already live on this block.

DEBBIE

Does that mean you decided to stay too?

TARA

It's George Clooney and Anna Kendrick at the moment.

CARL

Up in the air. Nice.

They fist bump.

LESLIE

You should stay. But we'll buy out your portion if we need to. Your percentage of the house too, Carl.

DEBBIE

We'll be keeping our share of the house. The one we have now is full of kids. We just need one bedroom here and permission to sound proof that one bedroom.

CARL  
For reasons.

DEBBIE  
For sexy reasons.

DREW  
OK. Let's never talk about reasons again.

LESLIE  
Great. I'm going to live in the space above the garage. It was my room during my Fonzie phase. Plus it would feel weird to live in Dad's space and it's already sound proofed.

Gross. Everyone is wide-eyed.

CARL  
So that leaves the rest of the house for Drew and Tara.

BEGIN FLASHBACK.

EXT. PLAYGROUND

Teenaged Tara and Drew sit on swings, not swinging as much as swaying near each other.

TARA  
You ever try to swing so high that you go around the bar?

DREW  
Of course. I did it once and it sent me back in time one year.

TARA  
Repeating 4th grade isn't the same as going back in time.

DREW  
You remember it your way. I'll remember it mine. Either way, we ended up in the same grade. So it was worth it, right?

TARA  
The jury's still out on that one.

DREW  
Do you think we'll grow old together  
and live happily ever after?

TARA  
I think you should try to keep your  
questions swing related.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. THE STEVENS HOUSE LIVING ROOM

TARA  
A half of a house is an enticing  
reason to stay.

DREW  
I'll even give you the master bedroom  
to sweeten the deal. And if that's not  
enough there's always Carl and Deb's  
house.

DEBBIE  
Don't joke. We'll trade houses, no  
problem. As long as you keep the kids.

CARL  
We can visit them on the weekends.  
They like pizza and one of them is  
allergic to peanuts. That's all you  
need to know.

TARA  
Did that father of the year award come  
in the mail yet? I forgot to  
congratulate you.

CARL  
It did not. But I have a mug that  
conveys a similar sentiment.

DREW  
Let's not life swap just yet. Tara,  
take the master bedroom for now. I'll  
be in the basement.

LESLIE  
Just FYI, the basement is not sound  
proof.

DREW

Cool.

INT. THE HUNGRY PEAR

Lonny and Tara are sitting at a booth drinking coffee and eating breakfast.

LONNY

So let me get this straight. And please correct me if this isn't an accurate summary of everything that's happened so far. Mr. Stevens left you and a group of people his house and business to run. You, an adult human, would need to quit your job. Move here. And live in a house with two other adult humans. One of which is your high school boyfriend?

TARA

It sounds insane when you say it.

LONNY

I think it probably is insane. It would be nice to have you back home though.

TARA

Chicago is home. This is just a place I grew up.

LONNY

A place you grew up, where your funny, relatable best friend still lives.

TARA

Carl does live here. That's true.

Beat.

LONNY

Rude. But also, I get it. Carl's a sweetheart. You'd probably miss Drew too, huh?

TARA

If I had feelings, they would probably be resurfacing right about now. Sure.



LONNY

You two should just pick things up  
where you left off. Young and in love.  
But be old now.

TARA

You don't think we should slowly  
rediscover our friendship through a  
series of group and intimate one-on-  
one settings until nostalgia and booze  
culminate in a rekindled lost love?

LONNY

Now that I'm thinking about, let's not  
focus on it at all. Let's focus on us.

Beat.

TARA

Are you hitting on me?

LONNY

It's not you it's me.

TARA

And you're already breaking up with  
me.

LONNY

We had a good run.

Lonny takes a huge bite of food.

TARA

It looks like you're on the rebound  
with that waffle.

He puts his hand tenderly on Tara's shoulder.

LONNY

(mouth full)

No waffle could replace what we had.

He coughs. Food escapes his mouth and onto Tara's shirt and plate.

INT. BOOKSTORE

Carl and Tara stand on either side of the front counter of a

small book shop. Books are everywhere. A small cafe is in the corner. Carl's kids are playing on one of those ladders with wheels connected to the bookshelves.

TARA  
That seems a little dangerous.

Carl investigates his kids' activity.

CARL  
It's fine. Kids are basically indestructible at this age. Last week they taped cardboard wings on Miles and threw him off the top bunk.

TARA  
Did the wings work?

CARL  
They did not.

Drew and Leslie show up. Drew is holding four coffees.

DREW  
Hey. Coffee, anyone?

He places them on the counter.

TARA  
I actually just had some coffee.

DREW  
So you don't want any?

TARA  
No I want it. I just find people love when you talk about how much coffee you drink.

LESLIE  
I drank 9 cups a day for three years in the 90s.

CARL  
Which three years?

LESLIE  
1993. 97. And 99.

Beat.

DREW  
Good years.

TARA  
Seems like maybe you would have been  
really young for that much coffee.

LESLIE  
Thank you.

Beat.

DREW  
Shall we figure out how to run this  
charming local bookshop in a way that  
will sustain three, maybe four, grown-  
ups with varying levels of business  
savvy and financial stability?

LESLIE  
Well, Trey does most of the work.

TARA  
Who?

TREY, late-teens, is standing nearby. Shelving books. He waves.

TREY  
Hey, guys. I'm Trey.

TARA  
(whispers)  
Has he been here the whole time.

DREW  
This is the first I'm seeing him.

Trey pops into their conversation.

TREY  
I have been here the whole time.

TARA  
Cool.

Beat.

Trey gets back to shelving books in the background.

CARL

He seems stable. But maybe we can just drop in sometimes and provide support.

TARA

And if I do end up staying. I can help keep the books.

LESLIE

We actually want to sell the books. Not keep them. This is a bookstore.

DREW

I think she means she'll take care of the financial bookkeeping.

LESLIE

Got it.

TARA

That's on me. I should have been clearer.

DREW

Is anyone running the cafe?

The cafe has books all over it. It looks, and is, unused.

LESLIE

Dad would usually come in to do that.

DREW

Do you think he'd mind if I got it going again? I could write here in between serving lattes.

LESLIE

I think he would have liked that a lot.

CARL

I think he would have liked that a latte.

TARA

No, Carl.

CARL

My kids would have loved it.

DUNCAN  
(from the back of the shop)  
It was pretty dumb, dad.

CARL  
Thanks, Champ.

He shrugs a 'kids, am I right?' shrug.

DREW  
There's a good vibe here. I can't imagine we'll make much money, but it should be fun. And very writer-y.

TARA  
Plus your house is free, so who needs money.

DREW  
That could be our free house.

CARL  
Not all houses are free.

Trey pops back into the conversation.

TREY  
Is this a good time to talk about a raise?

FADE OUT.

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. MASTER BEDROOM

Tara is lying on the bed. She explores the room with her eyes.

-- An ornate dresser still crowded with Mr. Stevens' things.

-- An antique writing desk, currently used for housing knick-knacks.

-- A window with a view of the backyard. She sees the house where she grew up.

She gets up. Walks over to the window. She sees her father mowing the yard. Her phone buzzes, "work." She answers.

TARA

Hello...no, I'm still in my hometown...no, I can't come in tomorrow morning...it's a Sunday. And I'm not in Chicago. Can you hold on one second?

She looks back outside. She sees some kids playing baseball.

A ball comes crashing through the bedroom window. It narrowly avoids hitting her. She picks it up and places it in a drawer. Back to the phone.

TARA

I quit.

INT. DINING ROOM

The whole gang eats dinner together, even Lonny. Drew passes some bread around. Tara fills wine glasses. She sits down. She clinks her glass.

TARA

I quit my job. My boss called, and I just...quit.

LONNY

Wow. How'd he take it?

TARA

Honestly? He told me they had already been interviewing for my position.

CARL

Seems like a bad time to tell you we also have to let you go.

DREW

It's true. You've seen the books. We can't keep you.

TARA

Shut up. But also the shop made a nickel last month. A literal nickel in profit.

LESLIE

Not bad.

CARL

It's a 1987 Michael Jackson album.

LONNY

(proud of himself)

Bad.

DREW

We have our work cut out for us. But I'd bet on us to pull it off.

He makes meaningful eye contact with everyone. He lingers on Tara.

LONNY

I would bet on you guys too. Except I have what my therapist calls "a gambling problem." So I can't be trusted.

TARA

I like the part where you say you have a therapist.

LONNY

She lives in my building and she gives me free advice while we wait for the elevator.

DREW

I have so many questions.

CARL

Like, how slow is your elevator? How do you and a licensed therapist afford the same building? And is she accepting new clients?

DEBBIE

And can she write prescriptions?

LONNY

I don't remember any of your questions.

TARA

They weren't real questions.

DEBBIE

Except the one about prescriptions.

LESLIE

I've got us covered.

She stands up. Walks over to a beautiful vase. Reaches in and pulls out a bag full of pot.

LONNY

Sorry, T. Leslie's my new best friend.

TARA

I think she's all of our best friends.  
I'm glad I'm staying.

INT. KITCHEN

Debbie, Carl, Drew, and Tara are huddled around a bag of chips and jar of salsa. Lonny is asleep. Debbie looks at the clock. It's late.

DEBBIE

We should go.

CARL

We should go check out our new bedroom first.

DEBBIE

Yes. Great idea.

CARL  
The kids will be fine for another 20 minutes.

DEBBIE  
10 minutes.

Beat.

They hug Drew. Hug Tara. Pat Lonny on the head. Walk upstairs.

DREW  
They're adorable.

TARA  
I hope I'm like them when I grow up.

DREW  
Has nobody told you?

TARA  
What?

DREW  
You are all grown up. You're old now.

TARA  
I might be old. But I'm also a home and business owner. Not too shabby.

He laughs.

DREW  
All we ever used to talk about is getting out of this town. And somehow we've been pulled back in.

TARA  
Are we making a mistake?

DREW  
You might be. I can write from anywhere. Especially if the weed and salsa are this good.

He scoops up a hefty amount of salsa and fills his mouth.

She gets up and runs up the stairs. He stays. Confused.

Extended beat before she returns. WRITER'S DESK in hand. She plops it on the floor.

TARA

I found this upstairs. I think if there's going to be a writer in the basement, there might as well be a dope writer's desk too.

DREW

That was in your bedroom?

TARA

It was.

DREW

So you were thinking about me in your bedroom.

TARA

Well it wasn't my bedroom yet when I was thinking of you.

Beat.

DREW

What made you stay?

TARA

I looked out of the window and I saw the neighborhood Mr. Stevens must have seen. And nostalgia got the better of me. The weed probably didn't hurt either.

DREW

You quit your job before the weed.

TARA

Really? I feel like I've been high for hours.

DREW

To nostalgia and weed.

He raises a chip with salsa on it. She dips her own chip in salsa.

TARA

To nostalgia and weed.

They 'cheers' with their tortilla chips.

FADE OUT.

TAG

FADE IN:

INT. STUDY

A fort of books and blankets fills the study. It's very detailed with a door and multiple towers. Debbie enters.

DEBBIE

Alright boys, it's time to go back home.

Carl pops his head out from behind one of the walls of books.

CARL

Five more minutes?

Lonny jumps up from behind another wall holding a pillow as a shield.

LONNY

Please. Just a few more minutes.

DEBBIE

Fine. But just five minutes.

Tara pops up.

TARA

There's a Debbie sized hole in the castle over here. Grab some books!

DEBBIE

I thought you'd never ask.

She disappears into the castle's door.

FADE OUT.

