

RACHEL SIDE

Far DL, a lifeless man lies on a hospital bed, hooked up to monitors and machines that quietly beep and hum. Rachel sits US of the bed, leaning over it, holding the man's US hand.

RACHEL *(after a moment)* Dad... I'm not sure what to say. I feel so many things right now. I'm angry – I hate Mom and Dr. Riker for wanting to take you away from me... but... well, I also know you've really already been gone for 3 years. I'm mad at God...or whoever's in charge here... for everything, really. For Mom's affair, that everyone in town talked about all those years... for your job that took you away from us so often... for Thomas Avery pulling you into that Ponzi scheme... for your stupid motorcycle... for my own pain. God, I think I'm most pissed off that I'm sad. I hate this sadness. It SUCKS. It sucks my life away, it sucks my energy, and it sucks my heart completely dry. It leaves room for everything, so I feel every emotion and react to them because there's no buffer. The sadness erased everything, making room for all of this shit to just settle in; and since no one understands what it's like to feel this way, I'm mostly just pissed off. All the time. And I hate that. Because where did I go? Where is the me I once knew? I used to be a good person with a kind heart and a big smile. I used to be fun. I used to embrace life and wanted to live each day like it could be my last. God, I was great; I mean I really fucking was. But then, suddenly, the accident... and everything stopped. You know what? Fuck you, too. You got on a motorcycle to escape a dying marriage and financial ruin, to feel free, and wound up destroying the people around you. How selfish is that? For three years now, my life has revolved around YOU and your needs. And instead of feeling HAPPY that I can finally go back to the life I was trying to make for myself before the accident, all I am is pissed. Because in spite of everything, I still miss my Dad. I miss you. Geez... you were my hero. You were my knight in shining armor. You made me laugh. You held me when I cried. You showed me how to throw a football and how to change a flat tire. You were strong, even when your eyesight started to fail you... you never showed any signs of weakness. You never let it get to you. You were a warrior. You were a survivor. You were everything.

You know, I've asked myself for three years now why this happened. Why did you go on that ride? Why did you leave? Why did Mom cheat? Why did you take that job? What happened to my family? The memories I have from my childhood feel like a watercolor painting that's fading away. I have nothing left of what once was.

(beat) They want to take you off of these machines, you know. They're going to. And then you'll be gone forever. I won't be able to feel warmth in your hands any more. I won't see your face any more. I won't kiss your cheek or cut your hair...and I don't want to be without you. I don't want to say goodbye... I know it's improbable, and probably impossible, too, but... I wish, just once, that I could feel you hug me one more time. Or even just squeeze my hand. I wish I knew you heard me.

Dad? Could you do that for me? Could you? *(beat)* Please?

(He does not squeeze her hand. Lights fade as she slowly hangs her head)