

BLACK-

A black screen.

MABEL (V.O.)  
I feel like I'm stuck in my own  
head.

We heard the sound of car tires over rocks, but still we see nothing.

MABEL (V.O.)  
There's a whole world going on, but  
I'm just in here, alone.

Traffic noises. The disembodied voice continues.

MABEL (V.O.)  
There's like a disconnect between  
that's going on in my head and  
what's going on in real life.

Muted voices talking, laughing. Mabel continues, uninterrupted.

MABEL (V.O.)  
Sometimes I wish that the thoughts  
could just stop for a little. That  
I could turn them off. That I  
could think a little less, care a  
little less.

A POV shot looking outside the car window. The world rushes by.

MABEL (V.O.)  
Would I still be myself if I could  
do that though? Is this just who I  
am? I wish I could take a break  
from being me. I wish that-

DAD  
Hey Mabel. Earth to Mabel.

MOM  
Honey, we're home.

MOM and DAD smile from the front seat. We see MABEL now, she's 18, fresh off her first semester at college. She stares out of the car window. She looks at her mom and dad as if coming out of a trance.

EXT. MABEL'S HOUSE- DAY

The family climb out of the car and walk across the lawn into their home.

INT. MABEL'S KITCHEN- CONT.

Mabel sits at the kitchen counter while her Mom busies herself in the kitchen and her Dad leans against the counter.

DAD

So first semester at college, done!  
Wow! Feels like just yesterday we  
were dropping you off and now  
you're back. Wow!

MABEL

Yeah. Wow.

DAD

So how do you feel?

MABEL

Good.

MOM

Good?

MABEL

Great.

DAD

Great?

MABEL

Fantastic!

MOM AND DAD

Fantastic!

They both do finger guns then launch into an elaborate finger gun battle that leaves them both pretending to be dead on the floor. It's very dramatic. Mabel claps and they get up and take a bow. While it's a funny moment, there is some awkwardness to it. Something is off in their interactions.

MABEL

Way to go guys, the delivery has  
really improved since the last time  
I was home, I mean really, bravo.

Her Dad brushes from pretend dust off his shoulder.

DAD

You know we've had a lot of time to practice.

Beat.

MOM

But really, so you're good?  
Because when you left you-

Mabel cuts her off.

MABEL

I know. But really I'm good,  
college is good.

MOM

Well good! But you're still going  
to see Caroline tomorrow, right?

MABEL

That's the plan!

She slides off her stool and walks out.

MOM

Oh, okay bye!

She exits. Her Mom and Dad share a knowing look.

INT. MABEL'S BEDROOM- DAY

Mabel lies in bed, blank. The clock reads 9:03am. She continues to lie there. An alarm goes off. The clock now reads 11:30am. She finally gets up.

INT. CAROLINE'S OFFICE- DAY

Mabel sits on a squishy-looking couch. In front of her is Caroline, early 30s, well put together. The room is cheery, light and full of books. This is Mabel's therapist's office.

CAROLINE

So Mabel! It's good to see you again! How's school? You worked so hard over the summer to get back to a good place. How do you feel?

MABEL

Yeah I did. But um school's... school's not great. I'm kind of having a hard time.

CAROLINE

I'm sorry to hear that. That must be hard for you to admit, that you're unhappy. In some ways it probably felt like a failure.

This comment hits Mabel hard. She does feel like a failure.

MABEL

Yeah... I don't know what to do anymore. There's nothing even specifically wrong. I just feel so overwhelmed by it all. Nothing I'm doing is making me feel any better. I'm using all my coping strategies but nothing seems to be working. I can't snap out of it this time. Everything just feels wrong.

CARLOINE

Mabel, do you ever talk to your mom and dad about these feelings? Your friends? It's great that you talk to me, I think that's a really big step but it's helpful to have a support system outside of this room.

MABEL

I just... I can't.

CAROLINE

Could you elaborate on that feeling?

MABEL

I just feel like, if I were to tell them how I feel, if I could explain to them the way that I see the world, then they'd start to see it that way too. And they would be like this too.

CAROLINE

I understand why it could feel that way but I can assure you that mental illness doesn't work like that. It's not a like a disease where it can be spread. People want to help you, Mabel. You just have to let them, whenever you're ready.

Mabel stays silent.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

You know, we talked about it briefly before you left, but I really think you could benefit from going on an antidepressant. You're doing everything right with therapy and sometimes-

MABEL

No. No, I don't want to do that.

CAROLINE

Why not?

MABEL

Because that feels like cheating. If it works and it makes me feel better then it feels like that's just artificial. And then if I were to stop taking it everything would go back to the way it was.

CAROLINE

Antidepressants don't work like that. They can't cure you. All they do is help to raise your base level. So that your lows feel less low and more manageable. I understand your hesitation, but it doesn't have to be forever. I think it would help you to take them until you get back on your feet. Until you get back to a place where you feel less overwhelmed. Just think about it.

Mabel's face says she doesn't want to think about it.

INT. MABEL'S BATHROOM- NIGHT

A pill bottle sits on the counter. Mabel considers it.

MABEL (V.O.)

I should just take it. Caroline wouldn't of recommended I take it if she didn't think it would help.

Beat.

But do I really trust her? Do I really trust anyone? Do I trust myself? She only knows what I tell her, but what if I just made this whole thing up in my head? What if I'm just being dramatic?

(MORE)

MABEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
And now I'm going to put some  
medication in my body and it's  
going to affect my brain and what  
if I don't even really need it?

Mabel's Dad appears in the doorway.

DAD  
Hey whatcha doing?

Mabel is startled.

MABEL  
Oh hey Dad, sorry I didn't see you  
there.

Her Dad notices the pill bottle and Mabel's hesitation but  
doesn't comment on it.

DAD  
So! You excited to spend some time  
at the beach this weekend! See all  
your old pals?

MABEL  
Oh yeah. Should be a blast.

DAD  
Cool, cool.

He turns to walk away.

MABEL  
Hey Dad?

He back tracks

DAD  
Yep, what's up?

MABEL  
I'm actually kind of nervous. I  
haven't really seen anyone since  
college started, I'm worried it's  
gonna be weird.

DAD  
Oh, oh yeah, well that's tough.  
Maybe it won't be quite the same  
but just try to have fun. You  
know, I think we need different  
people at different points in our  
lives. And that's okay.

MABEL  
Isn't that kind of sad though?

DAD  
Mabel if this is about-

MABEL  
It's not.

DAD  
Because you don't have to go.

MABEL  
No, I'm going to go. I'm probably  
just overthinking it. Thanks Dad.

They hug.

DAD  
Don't forget to pack sweaters, it's  
chilly there this time of year.

He exits. Mabel looks back at the pill bottle. She opens it  
and takes a pill.

EXT. GAS STATION- DAY

A car turns into a gas station and pulls up to one of the  
pumps.

INT. AUDREY'S CAR- CONTINUOUS

AUDREY, KIM, ERIN and Mabel sit in the car. Audrey is in the  
driver's seat, Mabel is sitting shotgun and Erin and Kim are  
in the back. They are all doing a weird synchronized  
handshake thing with lots of clapping.

ALL GIRLS  
Give me only one time! Two times!  
Three times. Break it down. Woo!

They all laugh.

KIM  
Oh my god do you guys remember that  
one time at summer camp when I left  
my bra on the clothesline and Ms.  
uh... uh what the fuck was her  
name? Anyway it doesn't matter but  
she held it up in front of everyone  
and was like "who's bra is this"  
"WHO'S bra is this?!"

Kim mimes holding something in her fist and starts shaking it. All the girls lose it at her impression.

MABEL

Wait... wait remember that time in elementary school when we thought it would be cool to lip sing "Fergalicious" at the talent show? In front of the entire school?

AUDREY

Hey, I stand by that, that song was and still is iconic. No, really I don't care what the critics said, we were robbed. We were!

Everyone laughs but gradually the laughter starts to die out. There is a lull, like they've run out of things to talk about.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

All right, I'll be back in a sec, don't tell any stories without me!

She hops out of the car to fill the gas tank. Erin takes this chance to pull out a water bottle from her backpack. She takes a swig. She offers it to Kim who grabs immediately. Seeing this from the outside, Audrey bangs on Kim's window, startling her. Everyone laughs again. Audrey slides back into the driver's seat while the tank fills up.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

Hey, you know the rules, spill anything in my car and you're fucking dead!

Kim passes the bottle up to Mabel. She unscrews the top and sniffs it. Vodka. She passes it back to Erin.

MABEL

Oh, um no thanks.

KIM

Bummer. Oh you guys aren't going to believe this so my first weekend at school I got so drunk that I passed out in one of our communal bathroom stalls. No for real, I was just slumped over the toilet like-

She does another over-exaggerated impression. Everyone laughs again but Mabel's smile doesn't quite reach her eyes.



ERIN

Yeah, well, you weren't doing so hot the weekend that Audrey and I visited either.

KIM

Stoooooop. You promised not to bring that back up!

AUDREY

Okay but obviously that was a lie. Oh my god you know what I've been really into drinking lately? You mix vodka with water and a lemon wedge.

ERIN

Audrey, that literally sounds like the worst thing in the world.

AUDREY

No, but like, less calories!

KIM

You're so stupid.

They continue to talk over each other. We hear Audrey get back out of the car to finish pumping gas. The sound fades away as Mabel stares out the window. The driver's door shuts again. The car pulls away as Mabel watches the world go by, lost in her head.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE- AFTERNOON

The garage door of the beach house opens. The girls pull out on their bikes. Mabel seems to have been able to pull herself out of the car incident and is part of the group again. Or is she pretending? They ride off in the direction of the ocean.

EXT. BEACH- CONTINUOUS

Kim, Erin and Audrey toss a frisbee around and take turns drinking out of a wine bottle. Mabel sits on a blanket nearby, book in hand but not reading, watching them have fun.

MABEL (V.O.)

Sometimes I feel like I don't enjoy things the way I should be. Like everyone else is just always having more fun than I'm having, even if we're doing the same thing.

(MORE)

MABEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Physically I'm here but mentally, I  
feel like I'm a million miles away.

The frisbee lands in front of her.

AUDREY  
May, get over here!

ERIN  
Yeah come on!

Mabel picks up the frisbee and runs over.

INT. BEACH HOUSE KITCHEN- NIGHT

Mabel is alone in the kitchen making a grilled cheese.

MABEL (V.O.)  
I think coming here might have been  
a mistake. I thought it might help  
but I feel like it's all just  
making things worse. Are we all  
even still friends anymore? What  
if all we have in common is the  
past? Fuck. What am I even  
supposed to say to them?  
Everyone's moving on and I'm stuck.  
I'm stunted. There's something  
wrong with me.

MABEL  
Fuck!

The grilled cheese is burned to a crisp. Her moment is  
interrupted by Erin. She grabs some water from the fridge.

ERIN  
Oh shit. He's looking a little  
crispy pal.

MABEL  
Yeah... I think I'm still gonna eat  
it though.

ERIN  
Right on. So listen, it turns out  
that Jake, you remember Jake from  
school right? Well he and some  
friends are actually at his beach  
house like fifteen minutes away and  
they invited us to come over and  
hang out. His older brother said  
he'd buy us shit so. Is that cool?

MABEL

Oh uh sure. Yeah sounds good.

ERIN

It should only be a few more people. Just a chill hang.

MABEL

(echoing)  
Chill hang.

ERIN

Oh my god stop.

Erin takes a sip of her water. Mabel inspects her grilled cheese in silence.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Hey are you good?

MABEL

Huh? Oh uh yeah I'm fine.  
Everything is fine.

ERIN

Okay if you say so. Be ready in an hour!

She bounds out of the room. Mabel eats her burnt grilled cheese in silence.

MABEL (V.O.)

Huh. I kind of feel better now.  
Was I actually just hungry? Is that how this works?

She leaves the plate in the sink.

INT. BOY'S BEACH HOUSE LIVING ROOM- NIGHT

It is not a chill hang. Party would probably be a more accurate description of the scene unfolding in the living room. Erin plays beer pong with a few other partygoers. Audrey is nowhere to be found. Kim and Mabel stand off in a doorway, witnessing everything unfold.

MABEL

Okay, but where in the world is Audrey?

KIM

I thought I saw her go... go over there? No!

(MORE)

KIM (CONT'D)

She's over on the couch. No wait, that's some other girl... I have no idea, I lost her. Sooo typical, right?

MABEL

Yeah remember when we lost her on that class trip to Williamsburg and she showed on the bus like two hours later wearing a full like colonial costume, acting like nothing even happened?

KIM

Oh my god! I haven't thought about that in so long! I wonder if she still has that dress! Wait, remember that one time when-

The beer pong game ends.

AUDREY (O.S.)

Kim! Get over here! We're up!

KIM

There she is! I gotta get over there before she disappears again. I'll be back!

She saunters away, getting lost in the crowd. Mabel is alone again. A boy approaches her, obviously drunk.

BOY

Hey you look like you need a drink!

MABEL

Oh no thanks. I'm not drinking tonight.

BOY

Oh how come?

MABEL

Ah... you know... just got too fucked up last night. Decided to take it easy.

BOY

Fuck yeah. Man, I've been there.

No response.

BOY (CONT'D)

Right. So what are you doing over here alone?

MABEL

Oh you know. Just thinking about how life is full of pain and nothing really matters.

The boy doesn't seem to know what to do with this. They look at each other for a moment before he backs away awkwardly and gets lost in the crowd.

MABEL (V.O.)

Wow that was so effective. I'm gonna remember that.

The party rages on around her. She is disconnected.

MABEL (V.O.)

You know what? Fuck this.

She picks up the bottle next to her and starts drinking directly from the handle. Uh oh.

EXT. PORCH STEPS- CONTINUOUS

Mabel leans over and throws up in a bush.

MABEL (V.O.)

Oh god. It's so much worse now. This so much worse. This is why I don't drink when I'm having an episode.

She sits slumped on the steps.

MABEL (V.O.)

Fuck. Wow. Everything is so fucking sad everything. Shit. Everything's different. I can't do this. I can't.

Her phone starts to ring but it takes her awhile to notice it. It's her Mom.

MABEL

Mom?

MOM

Oh Mabel. Thank god. I just had this horrible feeling that something was wrong.

MABEL

Oh something's definitely wrong.  
Something's wrong with me.

MOM

No honey, don't say that.  
Nothing's wrong with you. You, you  
know your Dad and I will accept  
you, no matter what.

MABEL

Accept me... Mom. Wait. I'm not  
gay. I'm just depressed.

MOM

Just depressed? It's not, you  
know, being caused by something  
else?

MABEL

Nope there's no real reason for it.  
It doesn't really work like that.  
It's just sort of a feeling about  
life, a feeling about myself that  
isn't great. Sorry if that's  
worse.

MOM

Oh. Well how can I help with that?

MABEL

Just try not to freak out all  
right?

MOM

Oh no, I won't I won't do that, I'm  
good.

MABEL

Because I know you get worried but  
it doesn't help me if you freak  
out. Really, I'm going to be fine.

MOM

Got it. I won't. No really I  
won't, I promise. I mean I'll  
always worry about you, it's my  
job, but I won't freak out. Okay  
so what else?

Mabel smiles.

MABEL

You know what Mom? Let's talk about it tomorrow. Thank you. I love you. I have to go now.

MOM

Okay, I love you too. Be kind to yourself, yeah?

Mabel hangs up the phone and leaves it on the steps. She gets on her bike and rides off toward the direction of the beach again.

EXT. STREET- CONTINUOUS

Mabel bikes at alternating paces. She bikes calmly, which is quite a contrast to what's going on in her head.

MABEL (V.O.)

I have to... I have to get it together. Everything is terrible it's all falling apart. Why do I have to be like this? Why?

EXT. BEACH- SUNRISE

The sun is starting to come up. Mabel has been biking for a long time it seems. She hops off the bike and abandons it in the sand. She wanders over and stares out over the ocean. Then it happens.

MABEL

Oh fuck this.

She screams out into the ocean. It seems cathartic.

MABEL (CONT'D)

It's not fair! It's not fucking fair! I didn't ask to be like this! I don't want to be like this! Why is it so fucking hard to be happy? I just want to be happy!

She rips off one of her shoes and chucks it into the ocean.

MABEL (CONT'D)

Oh no. That was a bad idea. I'm sorry! I didn't mean to litter I'm sorry!

She wades out into the water and retrieves the shoe. She lumbers back onto shore, shoe in hand, clothes wet. It's quiet now, without her yelling.

The sounds of seagulls fill the air. The waves crash gently on the shore. The sun rises over the water. It is beautiful. It is peace.

Mabel stands silently, taking it all in. She closes her eyes. At this moment, she finally gets some peace. Peace with herself and peace with her depression. It's not much, but it's enough to get her through. She'll be okay.

She takes off her other shoe and walks barefoot back over to her bike. She gets back on and rides off. It's quiet, no voiceover.