

"WAYWARD"

(pilot)

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. APARTMENT - CHICAGO

Two police cars pull away to reveal NATALIE (22)--the girl next-door type-- sitting in a ball with forehead resting on her knees.

A dapper young man, Tyler (24), bursts from the front door of the apartment behind Natalie.

TYLER  
Natalie! Will you please come  
inside?

Natalie lifts her head to look at Tyler.

NATALIE  
Are you fucking kidding? You just  
called the police to try and get me  
kicked out!

TYLER  
I'm sorry. I don't know what to do  
anymore.

NATALIE  
Clearly! Not cheating on me  
would've been a good start.

Keeping her gaze down, Natalie gets up and blows past Tyler. She enters the apartment.

INT. APARTMENT

Frantically, Natalie moves through the apartment with Tyler trailing her.

TYLER  
Maybe we shouldn't have moved in  
together.

Now, in the kitchen, Natalie pauses to turn and face Tyler.

NATALIE  
WHAT?! What are you talking about?

TYLER  
I was scared of this happening.

NATALIE  
Of what happening?

TYLER  
Of hurting you.

Natalie rubs her forehead.

NATALIE

Jesus, Tyler. If you're not ready to commit the last thing you should do is move in with someone.

TYLER

I never agreed to it!

NATALIE

What?

TYLER

You forced me!

NATALIE

Yeah. I just hopped in the fucking u-haul as it was pulling away and now SURPRISE... you're stuck with me.

Tyler stares blankly at Natalie.

NATALIE

No! You're just trying to justify your actions.

(pause)

I can't believe I gave everything up for this.

TYLER

You didn't give up shit!

NATALIE

Oh wow. Yeah we moved to Chicago because I was the one with a job... and friends here.

(pause)

No. I only had you.

Forcefully, Natalie pokes Tyler in the chest. He grabs her hand squeezes it, grits his teeth, and lets go.

TYLER

I fucking hate you!

Natalie stumbles back a couple steps and looks stunned.

TYLER

Can't you just leave?

NATALIE

Sure, I'll just drive away in my car that I was able to bring here.

TYLER  
I'll take you.

NATALIE  
This is unbelievable.

A cell phone goes off. Natalie goes to the bedroom to check it. Tyler leans in the doorway watching her.

TYLER  
Who is it?

NATALIE  
No one.

TYLER  
You're lying.

NATALIE  
I know.

Tyler grabs Natalie's phone from her hand.

TYLER  
Who the hell is Colin?

NATALIE  
What does it matter?

Natalie reaches for her phone but Tyler swings his arm back so she can't get it.

TYLER  
You've been talking to other guys  
this whole time?

NATALIE  
He's a co-worker!

Tyler throws Natalie's phone on the bed and exits the room.

NATALIE  
(shouting)  
Not someone I used to fuck!

Tyler returns with a garbage bag.

NATALIE  
People from work were getting  
together and he--

Tyler starts stuffing clothes into the bag.

NATALIE  
What are you doing?

TYLER  
I'm taking you back to Michigan.

NATALIE  
You are seriously acting insane.  
He exits with a garbage bag full of clothes.  
Natalie phones her MOTHER.

MOTHER  
Hello?

NATALIE  
Mom! Hi.

Natalie lies back on the bed.

MOTHER  
Natalie, are you okay?

NATALIE  
Why do you think something is wrong?

MOTHER  
You only call when you're not getting along with Tyler.

NATALIE  
Yeah, it's bad this time. He tried to get me kicked out by calling the police.

MOTHER  
You should really think about moving back home.

NATALIE  
Well... that's why I called... he's packing my stuff up right now.

Tyler enters the room and stands staring at Natalie.

NATALIE  
I've gotta go, I'll text you.

MOTHER  
Ok, love you.

NATALIE

Love you too.

Natalie hangs up the phone and looks at Tyler.

NATALIE

What?

TYLER

Who were you talking to?

NATALIE

My mother.

TYLER

Why?

NATALIE

mm... well... to let her know I am coming home.

TYLER

I don't want you to leave.

NATALIE

What?

(pause)

You literally just got done putting my shit in your car.

TYLER

I know. I know. I can go get it. Just stay, please.

NATALIE

You cheated on me.

(pause)

And I'm not calling my mom back saying that was a joke.

Natalie exits the room and returns with a garbage bag and begins randomly throwing things into it. Tyler stands still.

NATALIE

This will be over sooner if you help.

Natalie carries stuff out of the room.

Tyler starts packing.

Upon her return Natalie passes Tyler in the hallway silently.

Tyler exits the apartment carrying bags.

Natalie takes one last walk through the apartment and grabs a few books off a shelf in the kitchen. Once she gets to the front door she pauses, looks back at the furniture-less living room, and closes the door.

EXT. APARTMENT

A parked car with Tyler sitting in the drivers seat is in the road. Natalie joins him and they drive away in silence.

EXT. HIGHWAY

INT. TYLER'S CAR

The silence is broken for the first time by Tyler crying and banging on the steering wheel.

Natalie glances at him then stares forward again.

NATALIE

Can you stop? Please.

(pause)

I don't want to die right now.

Well... I kind of do, just not like...  
just stop, please.

TYLER

What are we doing? Why are we  
doing this?

NATALIE

You... are taking me home because you  
cheated on me.

TYLER

No! I don't want to, I'm turning  
around!

NATALIE

No you're not. You're taking me  
home.

TYLER

If you're staying there then I'm  
moving back too.

NATALIE

I don't think that's a smart  
choice. You have a good job in  
Chicago.

TYLER

But I won't have you.

NATALIE  
You're not going to have me  
regardless.

EXT. MOTHER'S HOUSE

The house is tiny but cute as it is well cared for.

Natalie's mother is standing in the doorway as Tyler and  
Natalie pull into the driveway.

Natalie gets out and goes to hug her mother.

MOTHER  
You okay?

NATALIE  
Yeah... Yeah.

Natalie parts from her mother, walks towards the car, looks  
back, and waves her mother to join.

Tyler is unloading things from the trunk. Silently, Natalie  
and her mother help him.

INT. MOTHER'S HOUSE

The house is small and cozy. All the rooms are visible from  
the front doorway.

They drop everything in the front doorway.

MOTHER  
(to Tyler)  
Thank you.

TYLER  
Yeah, see you guys.

NATALIE  
Bye.

Natalie stands in the front door and watches Tyler as he  
closes the trunk and drives away.

She goes to the kitchen and opens the refrigerator staring  
into it.

MOTHER (O.S.)  
You want something to eat?

NATALIE

No, I'm just admiring your full  
fridge.

She closes it and heads to the living room and joins her  
mother on the couch. She puts her face in her and hands and  
her mother rubs her back.

MOTHER

It's okay Natalie... It's going to be  
okay.

Natalie lifts her head.

NATALIE

No, it's not! It's not going to be  
okay! I hate him! I fucking hate  
him! I finally felt like I was  
starting something away... away from  
this!

Natalie looks at her mother and sees hurt in her eyes.

NATALIE

I'm sorry... I just don't want to...  
I'm sick of being a burden to you.

MOTHER

You're not a burden. You'll figure  
something out.

NATALIE

Not in this black hole of a town.

MOTHER

And not with that attitude.

Natalie rolls her eyes and slouches back against the couch.

MOTHER

You made these choices.

NATALIE

What? To have my boyfriend cheat  
on me?

MOTHER

He cheated on you?

NATALIE

Oh. Yeah. I forgot I never told  
you.

MOTHER

Oh, Natalie... I'm sorry.

NATALIE

No... no... don't be--Wait. What choices did I make?

MOTHER

Well, you chose not to go to college. It would probably be easier to get a job.

NATALIE

I'd probably still be sitting here but with a bunch of debt.

MOTHER

You would pay it off eventually.

NATALIE

Alright, my boyfriend just dumped me off. Let me deal with that first.

Natalie gets up and takes a couple steps away.

MOTHER

Just don't wait too long to look for a job.

NATALIE

Goodnight mom.

MOTHER

Goodnight Natalie.

Natalie enters a bedroom and shuts the door. She turns on a lamp. The room is styled very simply hinting it could have once been Natalie's.

She admires photos and mementos that line the dresser. She picks up one of the framed pictures that shows her at graduation with her mom and brother. She stares at it for a few moments, sets it down, turns out the light, and climbs into bed.

NATALIE (V.O.)

So. This is my life. 22. No college degree. No job. And I guess no boyfriend. Living with mom. The failure. The black sheep. My brother, he's the perfect one. He followed the rules, went to college, got a good job, and never causes grief. At least I know the expectations.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The bar has many people bustling about but Natalie sits alone. She takes a big swig from her pint of beer and sets it down.

NATALIE (V.O.)  
And I will never meet them.

She makes eye contact with a creepy old guy and he winks at her. Natalie looks away in disgust.

BARTENDER  
Would you like another?

NATALIE  
Yes. Please.

People are talking loudly and laughing. Natalie watches them intently and is startled when a hand is placed on her shoulder.

Natalie turns to see EMMA- a short cute but ordinary girl.

NATALIE  
Emma! Hi!

EMMA  
It's been so long since I've seen you!

They hug.

EMMA  
Aren't you supposed to be in Chicago?

NATALIE  
Yeah. Well... No. I'm back here now.

EMMA  
And you haven't told me yet?

NATALIE  
It's only been a couple days. It was pretty sudden.

EMMA  
Fighting with Tyler I take it?

NATALIE  
You know us...

EMMA

I'm sorry—

NATALIE

No, don't be. It's one of those things like it's for the better!

EMMA

Oh. Okay.

NATALIE

How are things with you? Is your little boy well?

EMMA

Yeah we're doing alright. I'm just trying to finish up school so I can finally get a decent job.

NATALIE

I hear ya. I'm going to need a job soon, have you heard if anyone is hiring?

EMMA

Remember Marie? We went to high school with?

NATALIE

Yeah... I think so.

EMMA

She coaches gymnastics and they are looking for people.

NATALIE

I don't know if I have the credentials. I was a flexible child... does that count?

EMMA

Oh Natalie come on... you've been babysitting for years.

NATALIE

I know.

EMMA

You'd be great with the kids.

NATALIE

I'll look into it, thank you.

EMMA

Come join my parents and I for a drink.

NATALIE

I'm going to finish this then go home.

EMMA

Let's get together soon you know smoke some--

Emma looks around quickly before pretending to smoke a joint.

NATALIE

Girl, you know me. I'll be in touch!

Emma hugs Natalie.

EMMA

I'm glad you're back!

After she leaves, Natalie continues to drink her beer alone.

INT. MOTHERS HOUSE

Natalie is hanging out of her bedroom window smoking a joint. The only light is a burning candle.

Footsteps are heard. Natalie stubs out the joint on the windowsill and sits quietly.

The door is locked and the latch jiggles.

MOTHER

Natalie?

There's a light knock on the door.

NATALIE

Yeah?

MOTHER

Are you smoking weed in there?

NATALIE

What? No! Why would I be doing that?

MOTHER

It smells like weed. Come out here and see.

NATALIE

Mom. No. I'm not coming out there to see if it smells like weed.

MOTHER

Then open your door.

NATALIE

No. I'm going to bed.

MOTHER

Why won't you open your door?

NATALIE

Because! I don't want to!

(pause)

Goodnight!

A few moments pass before she hears her mother walk away. Natalie lets out a small sigh of relief.

Moving slowly, Natalie closes the window and blows out the candle.

INT. OFFICE OF GYMNASTICS GYM

A man, MARTY— mid 30's, is holding a piece of paper and is sitting across a desk from Natalie.

MARTY

I see here you have an extensive background caring for kids.

NATALIE

I do.

MARTY

What about gymnastics?

NATALIE

Well... not really. I took it for a couple years when I was younger.

MARTY

Are there any skills you can still do?

NATALIE

A walk-over.

MARTY

Not bad.

Marty glances over a blank spot on the paper.

NATALIE

Sorry I didn't fill out the section where you're supposed to make a class plan. I honestly had no idea.

MARTY

No, it's okay. That's something we can teach you in the training.

(pause)

So, where do you see yourself in five years?

Natalie shrugs her shoulders.

NATALIE

Hopefully not living with my mom.

MARTY

(chuckles)

How old are you?

NATALIE

22.

MARTY

I didn't move out of my moms til I was 27.

NATALIE

See. I've got five years!

Marty laughs.

MARTY

What about goals? Anything you want to accomplish?

NATALIE

I guess I just want to be working.

(pause)

I don't know, I'm sorry.

She shifts uncomfortably in her chair.

MARTY

No, No... it's okay.

(pause)

Do you still have open availability?

NATALIE

I do.

MARTY  
Perfect. Is there anything you  
would like to ask me?

NATALIE  
Yeah. When do I start?  
(laughs nervously)

MARTY  
Actually, I was hoping next week  
would work for you.

CUT TO: BLACK SCREEN

EXT. GYM PARKING LOT

Natalie walks to her car.

NATALIE (V.O.)  
And that is how you land yourself a  
minimum wage job.

EXT. MOTHER'S HOUSE

Natalie returns home to find flowers on the front porch, she  
picks them up, and goes inside.

INT. MOTHER'S HOUSE

While putting the flowers in a vase she notices the attached  
card. It reads - "miss you bug".

INT. TYLER'S PARENTS HOUSE

Tyler and Natalie are sitting by an open window in a bedroom  
passing a joint back fourth.

NATALIE  
I can't believe the first time I  
get flowers from you is after we  
break up.

TYLER  
I didn't know what I had til it was  
gone.

Natalie rolls her eyes.

NATALIE  
Stop.

TYLER  
What?

NATALIE

Being corny.

TYLER

You didn't like the flowers?

NATALIE

I may have liked them when you were my boyfriend.

(pause)

I tried doing this at home.

TYLER

Do what?

Natalie holds up the joint.

TYLER

Oh.

NATALIE

Yeah, that was a mistake. How do your parents not smell it?

TYLER

They probably do.

NATALIE

And they don't care?

TYLER

(grinning)

I'm an adult. I do what I want!

Natalie hits Tyler flirtatiously.

NATALIE

Yeah, like chase me around.

TYLER

I told you I would come back here.

NATALIE

Our parents must hate us.

TYLER

Mine don't.

NATALIE

Oh Jesus. Precious little Tyler.

(pause)

That turned his girlfriend into a stoner.

Tyler smiles.

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
I'm really high.

TYLER  
You can stay. I know you don't  
like driving high.

NATALIE  
This was your plan all along wasn't  
it?

TYLER  
(laughs)  
No!

Natalie stands up and lightly smacks him in the forehead.

NATALIE  
You're such a shit head!

Natalie climbs into the bed and before she is all the way in  
Tyler playfully tackles her.

NATALIE  
Don't get too excited.

TYLER  
I sure missed you.

They get under the covers and cuddle together.

TYLER  
We could be doing this at our own  
place in Chicago.

NATALIE  
At least here I have somewhere to  
go when you call the police on me.

Tyler reaches over Natalie to turn out the light  
and they begin kissing.

INT. MOTHERS HOUSE

In the kitchen Natalie is cooking breakfast. Her  
mother enters.

MOTHER  
Where were you last night?

NATALIE

Why does it matter?

MOTHER

I was just asking.

Natalie, ignoring her mother, focuses on flipping the bacon.

MOTHER

I saw the flowers. I hope you weren't at Tylers.

Natalie still ignores her mother.

MOTHER

You know the cycle. Things will be good for a few months before they explode again.

NATALIE

Mom, we aren't together.

MOTHER

Just be smart Natalie.

NATALIE

Says the lady dating an angry British man.

MOTHER

He treats me well Natalie.

NATALIE

Mom, he can't even show up to dinner on time.

MOTHER

That's because he gets caught up at work.

Natalie rolls her eyes. Her mother exits the kitchen.

NATALIE

(shouting to MOTHER)

I'm going to go have a drink tonight, since you know you're keeping tabs on me!

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The bar is full but the atmosphere is calm. Natalie and Emma sit side by side.

NATALIE

I don't know if I'm ready for all this.

EMMA

For what?

NATALIE

To go out and see everyone we've ever gone to high school with.

EMMA

(to bartender)

Two whiskey shots please.

NATALIE

Oh, no. We don't need to do that.

EMMA

Trust me, you'll need it.

They receive the shots, cheers, and take them.

EMMA

Welcome back.

NATALIE

Ick, that was rough.

EMMA

How was Chicago?

NATALIE

You have to have money to enjoy the city and we didn't so--

EMMA

(interrupting)

What's going on with you guys?

NATALIE

Ughh... I don't know.

EMMA

Are you still sleeping with him?

NATALIE

Maybe...

EMMA

NATALIE!

NATALIE

I know.

(pause)

He moved back too.

EMMA

Oh god.

Emma waves down the bartender.

EMMA

Two more shots please.

NATALIE

Emma, no.

EMMA

Natalie, yes.

They take the shots.

NATALIE

Are these shots of encouragement so  
you can fuck someone tonight?

EMMA

NATALE!

NATALIE

(chuckles)

Sorry...

EMMA

Some dude I met online...

(pause)

Said he would be out tonight.

NATALIE

I know you!

Emma hides her face in her hands.

NATALIE

Try not to go home with this one.

INT. LATE NIGHT BAR

There is hardly room to stand it is so busy. People are  
visibly drunk and many are dancing.

Emma points to a guy on the dance floor.

EMMA

That's him!

NATALIE

Well. Go get him tiger.

Natalie hits Emma on the butt as she leaves to navigate through the crowd.

A very good-looking businessy man, RAMON (30's), saddles up next to Natalie.

RAMON

Hola.

NATALIE

Como estas?

RAMON

Bien y tu?

NATALIE

Bien.

RAMON

Como te llamas?

NATALIE

Carmen.

RAMON

Really?

NATALIE

Yeah, you?

RAMON

Rrrramon.

NATALIE

Good job rolling your r's.

RAMON

I'm from Mexico.

NATALIE

I'm not.

RAMON

I notcied.

(pause)

What's your name?

NATALIE

Natalie.

RAMON

I like Carmen. Want a drink?

Natalie peers around the crowd to see Emma dancing with a guy and clearly enjoying herself.

NATALIE  
Yeah, let's go get one.

Ramon is at the bar waving down a bartender, Natalie stands behind him.

A group of three jock guys approach Natalie.

GUY 1  
Natalie! Hey! What's up?

Natalie gives them all high-fives.

NATALIE  
What's up dudes!?

GUY 2  
I thought you were living in Chicago?

NATALIE  
Yeah um... not anymore.  
(pause)  
What are you guys up to? Just bein bros?

They laugh. Ramon turns around and hands Natalie a drink. He nods his head at the group of guys.

GUY 1  
Well it was good seeing you!

NATALIE  
You too!

The guys continue on their way.

RAMON  
Popular girl!

NATALIE  
Ugh, no I hate that. I grew up here and know everyone.  
(pause)  
What brings you to this small ass town?

RAMON  
Work, been here three years.

NATALIE

Oh, that's nice.

RAMON

Kinda. There's not a lot to do,  
which makes it boring.

NATALIE

It's real boring, imagine having to  
grow up here.

RAMON

What do you do for fun then?

NATALIE

You're looking at it.

RAMON

This is not fun.

NATALIE

I know, it's the best I've got.

RAMON

Do you listen to music?

NATALIE

Are you a human?

Ramon looks at her confused.

NATALIE

Yes I listen to music.

RAMON

I will take you to have fun one  
night. Have you heard of The XX?

NATALIE

What makes you think I would go out  
with a stranger? And yes I have, I  
listen to them a lot.

RAMON

You let a stranger buy you a drink.

Natalie grins.

RAMON

Plus I can tell you like me.

NATALIE

How?

RAMON

Because you can't stop smiling.

NATALIE

If that's the case then I guess you're fond of me too. Wait, how do you know about The XX?

RAMON

What do you mean?

NATALIE

I just thought you like listened to mariachi bands or something.

Ramon grins. He grabs her hand and leads her through the bar.

NATALIE

What are you doing?

RAMON

Just come with me.

They stop in a quiet corner of the bar.

RAMON

I wanted to get you away from everyone.

NATALIE

Why?

RAMON

To try this with you.

They kiss for a few moments a little aggressively.

RAMON

Wow, that was better than--

Emma grabs Natalie by the shoulder, startling her.

EMMA

There you are!

She points at Ramon.

EMMA

Who's this?

Natalie looks back and fourth between Emma and Ramon.

EMMA

Ok, I don't care. We have GOT to go.

NATALIE

To where?

EMMA

That guy's house, he invited us over!

NATALIE

I think he invited YOU over.

EMMA

He has friends! Come on! Let's go!

NATALIE

I am not going.

EMMA

Well I am so let's go!

NATALIE

Are you dropping me off at home?

EMMA

Yes! Hurry up!

Emma staggers away.

RAMON

Is she okay to drive?

NATALIE

Yeah she'll be fine.

Emma comes back to grab Natalie by the wrist and pulls her away.

NATALIE

(silently mouths to Ramon)

I am so sorry!

Ramon half-heartedly waves.

INT. RESTAURANT

Natalie and Tyler sit across from one another in a booth.

NATALIE

Did you shower today? Your hair looks silly.

TYLER

Why, what's wrong with it?

NATALIE

It's sticking up all over the place.

Tyler runs his finger through his hair and puts a hat on. Natalie gives him a thumbs-up.

NATALIE

Did you find a job yet?

TYLER

I'm just going to do construction with Tom for now.

NATALIE

Well, that's good. At least it's money!

TYLER

Yeah, I guess.

NATALIE

Hey, you wanted to come back here!

The waiter approaches their table.

WAITER

Are you guys ready to order?

NATALIE

(to Tyler)

Are you ready?

TYLER

Are you?

NATALIE

Yeah.

TYLER

Are we sharing something?

Natalie looks back and fourth between the waiter and Tyler.

NATALIE

(to WAITER)

I'm sorry, could we please have a couple more minutes.

WAITER

Sure, no problem.

NATALIE

Thank you.

Waiter leaves.

TYLER

Don't we usually split something?

NATALIE

WE. Are not together.

TYLER

Then why are we hanging out?

NATALIE

Because you asked! I thought we could be friends.

A group of business-men walk by, one being Ramon. He nods his head at Natalie.

TYLER

Who the hell was that?

NATALIE

I don't know. He must have confused me with someone else.

CUT TO: BLACK SCREEN.

FADE OUT.