

LITTORAL

by
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EXT. BED & BREAKFAST - MIDDAY

An unmarked, unloved car sits outside of a weathered two-story BED & BREAKFAST. Waves could be heard in the distance.

After a moment, the driver side door opens. CLAUDE steps out, talking into his phone.

CLAUDE

...and one more thing: I was told that payment would be mailed out at the end of the month. Will shipping costs be covered? Great, just wanted to confirm. Thank you again, I-

Claude briefly fumes as he is cut off; this isn't the first time whoever he's talking to has done this. Behind him, the passenger seat opens, and LILLY emerges.

CLAUDE

Yes, this number is the best way to contact me. I'm on vacation right now, but I'll still be available to call. (beat) Of course. Thank you. Have a good afternoon. You too.

Claude ends the call, his face briefly dropping in exhaustion. After a moment, he heads towards the car's trunk.

CLAUDE

Well, this is the spot. Cozy. It looked bigger in the pictures, but...no, it's charming. Quaint.

Claude begins to unload luggage. Lilly goes to help, but Claude works around her.

CLAUDE

(patronizingly)

No no, I got it. I got it.

CUT TO:

INT. BED & BREAKFAST - LOBBY

A bell rings out as the front door opens. Claude steps through, holding the door open for Lilly, but the luggage makes it far more awkward than if she had come in first. On the counter, a BELL sits, but neither seem to notice it.

CLAUDE

(beat)

I wonder if we need to—

Footsteps and shuffling can be heard from upstairs. It is HUDSON, the owner, and the sound of his presence puts the couple somewhat at ease.

CLAUDE

Well, at least they're not out fishing.

Lilly barely pays Claude's comment any mind. Hudson emerges behind the counter just as Claude finishes his remark.

CLAUDE

Oh, hi. Sorry if we made you get up.

HUDSON

Apologies all mine. Just hope I didn't keep you waiting long. You the Gardeners?

CLAUDE

That's us.

Claude approaches the counter as Hudson begins pulling out a guestbook.

HUDSON

Not a lot of newcomers nowadays. Let alone tourists.

CLAUDE

Beats Santa Fe this time of year, let me tell you. Sometimes all you need is a little bit of peace and quiet.

HUDSON

(without looking)

Quiet doesn't always mean peace. Sign here, Mr. Gardener.

Claude laughs, but one glance from Hudson tells him that it wasn't meant as a joke. He signs in.

CLAUDE
You must have lived here long,
then.

HUDSON
All my life. Born and raised in
this very house, then had it
passed down to me and the missus.
Never found a reason to leave.

Hudson hands over a set of keys to a silent Claude.

HUDSON (CONT'D)
Welcome to Greatport.

Lilly looks on, her expression unreadable. Not long after, Claude tries to move upstairs, the luggage slowing his process.

HUDSON (CONT'D)
First door on the right is your
room. Bathroom's the next door
over. We serve breakfast from 6 to
10 every morning except Sundays.
(beat) Need help moving anything
there, son?

CLAUDE
No no, we got it.

Claude continues to struggle balancing their luggage up the stairs while Hudson puts the guestbook away. Lilly follows.

CUT TO:

INT. BED & BREAKFAST - BEDROOM

On the other side of the door, Claude eventually succeeds in unlocking and pushing the door open.

CLAUDE
(playfully)
Ah, look at that. You can barely
smell the ocean from here.

Dropping their luggage inside, Claude finally allows Lilly to take her belongings and move them to the bed. Claude sets his own bag on the nearby desk, retrieving his LAPTOP.

CLAUDE

I have some work I want to get done, so if you want to stretch your legs, I'm sure there's at least a place to eat around here. I know you don't like seafood, but we may not have a choice.

Even while Claude speaks, Lilly is unpacking, laying her clothes out on the bed before examining a small handheld CAMCORDER that had also been packed.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Maybe we can...

Claude notices that Lilly doesn't seem to be paying attention and trails off. He approaches her warily.

CLAUDE

Here's an idea: once we get some dinner, let's go for a walk by the beach. The forecast said a storm's coming in later this week, so we should find somewhere to sit back and enjoy the sunset while we have the chance.

Lilly doesn't react as Claude embraces her from behind. Claude takes notice, and can't seem to decide if he's annoyed or saddened by her disinterest.

CLAUDE

...Listen, Lills, I know you wanted to stay closer to home, but we've always talked about seeing the East Coast. Besides, you remember what the counselor said: "Same sights, same life."

Claude lets go of Lilly and sits on the edge of the bed, taking her hand in his.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Look, I really want this to be a fresh start for us. Once this

contract is over, we can take another week off; go wherever you want. (beat) I know there's nothing I could do to ever make up for what I did, but I *want* to fix it. Please, believe me when-

Claude's phone begins to ring. He answers it and steps away, as if he was never talking to Lilly at all. Lilly returns to organizing her belongings.

CLAUDE

Claude Gardener. (beat) Yes, I'm free to call now. Can you give me a moment?

Claude's face falls into annoyance, but shifts to feigned regret as he turns back to Lilly.

CLAUDE

I need to take this. You should go look for a place we can have dinner. I'll call when I'm done.

Lilly doesn't need to be told twice. Grabbing the camera, she heads out as Claude sits at the desk. Claude returns his attention to the phone, face set in practiced compliance.

CLAUDE

Yep, I'm still here.

CUT TO:

INT. BED & BREAKFAST - LOBBY

Lilly climbs down the stairs and stands between the front door and the counter. After some consideration, she approaches the counter and rings the bell. Hudson emerges.

HUDSON

What can I do for you, ma'am?

LILLY

Hi. Is there anywhere in town you'd suggest for dinner?

Hudson laughs a bit; up until now, he hadn't heard Lilly speak.