

Dead in the Water

By

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KEY: SCENE HEADING, LOCATION, PROP, SOUND,
CAMERA SUGGESTIONS, SCENE DETAILS, MAKEUP,
WARDROBE, RILEY, AVA, FRIEND

FADE IN

EXT. DOCK - MORNING (PRESENT)

We open on a DOCK that leads out onto a lakefront. The waters are lapping gently.

There is a HOUSE in the distance. It is clear we are on a farm property.

We PULL BACK to reveal a sleeping person. Her name is AVA. Ava is curled up facing the lake.

RILEY

(distant, at first)

Ava...Ava...Ava.

Riley shakes Ava gently. Ava wakes with a stir and shudders.

AVA

What? What time is it?

RILEY

Did you sleep out here all night?

Riley is standing over Ava with a cup of coffee. Riley has a cut across her temple.

AVA

Oh, yeah...I guess so.

RILEY

Here.

Riley hands Ava the cup.

RILEY (CONT'D)

I got you a cup of coffee.

AVA

Thanks.

(takes a sip)

Why isn't it warm?

RILEY

Oh, the coffee maker broke. I could really use a hot cup of coffee, too. It's chilly out here.

AVA

I don't think it's all that cold, but

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2.

I'm not you.

RILEY

Hey!

AVA

What?

RILEY

Your hands.

Ava's hands have some dried blood on them.

AVA

I must have scraped my palms or something.

RILEY

Well, let's clean up your hands. We also gotta get going on the packing if we're ever gonna finish going through everything.

INT. HOUSE - MORNING (PRESENT)

We can see a FOR SALE SIGN outside the front of the house.

Ava stands in a hallway adorned with pictures. Ava's hand passes across a photo.

AVA

I remember this was their favorite picture of each other.

RILEY

(emerging from a room with a box)

There's so much to sort through.


Ava and Riley start walking downstairs.

AVA

I don't get why mom was so insistent
on us coming down this weekend.
Grandpa just died two weeks ago. It's
not like Goodwill's going anywhere.

Ava and Riley walk into the kitchen. A water-logged SALE BILL
lies on the table. Riley quickly hides it.

Despite doing this, we can still see the sale bill in Riley's
pockets, next to her phone, for the upcoming scenes.

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RILEY

It's just better to clean up now while
we have the time. They may decide to
sell the house.

AVA

We're not gonna sell this place.
Grandma and Grandpa would have liked
us to keep the place, you know? It's
been in the family for so long.

RILEY

Yeah, but---

As they say the words at the same time, the shot shifts to a
WIDE VIEW to show that they are at a considerable distance
from each other across the room.

AVA & RILEY

---it's not up to us to decide.

Ava looks slightly confused as to why she was able to finish
Riley's thought.

RILEY

How did you know what I was gonna say?

AVA

I don't know...I just had a feeling, I
guess.

Suddenly, a ROTARY PHONE rings.

AVA (CONT'D)

Hello?

FRIEND


Hi, um, is this Ava, uh, Riley's sister?

AVA

Um, yes. Can I ask who's calling?

FRIEND

My name is Taylor. I'm a friend of Riley's. It's just that I've called her several times and she's not picking up. She didn't meet me today for lunch like we planned.

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AVA

Oh, well, she's right here next to me. She just must have lost track of time. We have been busy packing.

FRIEND

Oh, good! It's okay then. We can have lunch tomorrow. Could I talk to her real quick?

AVA

Sure...

Ava turns to hand Riley the phone, but Riley is gone. There is just a set of wet footprints.

CUT TO---

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT (FLASHBACK, MERGED WITH PRESENT)

Ava is standing at the end of the dock. There are wet footprints in front of her here, too. She pulls the phone from her ear down to her side and stares forward.

The sound of lapping water overtakes the scene.

FRIEND (V.O.)

(in the distance)

Hello? Riley, are you there?

We can now hear scuffling and dragging from behind Ava. She glances out the corners of her eyes, then stares forward.

We PUSH slowly toward the edge of the dock.

CUT TO---


INT. HOUSE - MORNING (PRESENT)

Ava looks shocked and out of sorts. We can still hear the water and dragging sounds, although fading behind Ava's voice.

AVA

Uh, I'll have her call you back. She just left the room.

Ava hangs up abruptly. The sound of the water and dragging cuts out just as abruptly.

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EXT. WOODS - DAY (PRESENT)

---that of Riley and Ava walking through the woods. There is a gardening statue with coins on it, but Ava nor Riley place a coin down.

In a ditch lies the carcass of an animal.

Riley's clothes look a little damp.

AVA (CONT'D)

Why did you leave earlier? It took me forever to realize you went out here.

RILEY

When?

AVA

When your friend called.

RILEY

Taylor? She called?

AVA

She was really worried about you. She said you've been dodging her calls. What's that about?

RILEY

Well, I think you know...

AVA

With grandpa dying, or something else?


RILEY

Sure.
(pauses)
I also can't leave you...I can't leave
here---

AVA
(said as if asking a question)
---until we've finished sorting
through everything.

RILEY
Um, yeah...

The two walk in silence for a little bit of time. They are
surrounded by trees, no water in sight.

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6.

Riley stops quickly and looks around her. She is distressed.

RILEY (CONT'D)
Can, can you hear that?

AVA
Hear what?

RILEY
All that water. I can just hear it
flowing. It won't stop.

AVA
I don't hear anything.

Despite the lack of water, the sound of lapping water begins
to slowly overtake the scene again...

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

We see the lake water flowing up onto the shoreline. We can
hear dragging. Someone steps their foot into the sand.

EXT. WOODS - DAY (PRESENT)

Ava is facing forward, walking through the woods. Riley is a
ways behind her dragging her feet.

AVA (CONT'D)
Hey, can you pick up your feet? You
don't need to drag them that much. We
haven't been walking long.

Riley's feet dragging across the ground grow louder.

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The moonlight and fading sun cast shadows across Ava and the dock around her. She is struggling with something.

EXT. WOODS - DAY (PRESENT)

Ava is still walking forward and then quickly stops.

AVA (CONT'D)

Riley, seriously, pick up your feet.

Ava spins around to find that Riley isn't behind her.

Confused, Ava stares off for a few brief seconds. The wind howls through the trees.

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7.

She turns around and Riley is standing in front of her. Riley's clothes are visibly more wet.

AVA (CONT'D)

Gosh, you scared me! Where did you go?

RILEY []

What are you talking about?

(brief pause)

I've been in the same spot the whole time.

Commented [1]: Could Riley look pale or dead? Should she be completely soaked when she appears, cut to Ava scared, then Riley is just dry/a little wet?

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT (PRESENT/PREVIOUS NIGHT)

Ava and Riley walk to the house through the back patio. Riley takes a seat at the table outside. Ava opens the back door.

Only Riley's phone is in her pocket now.

AVA

I need a glass of water. Need anything?

RILEY

(without looking up at her)

No, I think I've had enough water for now.

Ava is puzzled, but walks inside.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT (PRESENT/PREVIOUS NIGHT)

Ava walks past a stack of papers on the table. She goes to open a cabinet, but stops and turns around.

She shuffles through the pile until she pulls out the sale bill Riley hid. It is still soaking wet.

She carefully unfolds it and a worried and surprised look crosses her face.


EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT (PRESENT/PREVIOUS NIGHT)

Ava joins Riley outside. She slams the bill on the table in front of Riley. Riley tries to grab the bill, but Ava picks it back up quickly.

Riley's clothes are more visibly wet. Her cut is gone.

AVA

What is this?

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RILEY

Ava---

AVA

I thought you said we were just donating things, not actually selling the place!

RILEY

A couple down the way bought the property last weekend. Mom finalized it the other day. She had listed the house for sale several weeks before Grandpa died. She knew it was getting close. I'm---

AVA

You knew about this and didn't bother to tell me?

Riley stands up and moves over to the edge of the porch. Ava follows closely behind her and grabs Riley's shoulder to spin her around to face her.

RILEY

I wanted to break it to you slowly. I didn't want any of this to happen the way it has. You know none of us have the money to pay grandpa's hospital bills on top of our own.

AVA

You lied to me. You kept this from me. You think I couldn't handle knowing!

RILEY

I wasn't...I didn't---

Ava steps closer to Riley. She jabs a finger at Riley's shoulder.

Riley's clothes are suddenly dry and so is the sale bill in Ava's hands.

AVA

I can't believe you did this! We could have found some other way to pay the bills.

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RILEY

(while reaching for the bill)
Let's just take a deep breath and talk this through. Maybe we---

AVA

NO!

Ava grips onto Riley's shoulders, pushing her off the porch.

Riley lands with a hard thud. Her head starts bleeding. Riley struggles on the ground. Blood pools around her head.

Ava stands over Riley with a sinister calm expression. She doesn't move to help her.

Riley gurgles up blood and coughs. She looks away from Ava and stares in the distance. Her body and eyes go still and a breath exits her mouth. Blood continues to pool.

Ava crouches down over Riley. She folds up the sale bill and places it in Riley's pocket.

EXT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS - NIGHT (PRESENT/PREVIOUS NIGHT)

Through various shots of the exterior of the house, patio, the woods, and a dilapidated house nearby, we hear an eerily silence. We widen out (at a distance) to a shot of Ava crouched near Riley.

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT (PRESENT/PREVIOUS NIGHT)

The dock stands out against the fading sunlight. We can hear dragging sounds.

Commented [2]: We could also include a shot of the creek sign!


Off in the distance, we see the silhouetted figure of Ava. She is dragging Riley.

Ava walks through the sandy shoreline and starts to come down the middle of the dock with Riley. Ava stops to readjust herself.

In Riley's pockets we can see the sale bill and her phone. Ava continues dragging Riley to the edge of the dock.

Ava closes Riley's eyes then pushes her off into the lake. Riley floats down into the darkness. We see Ava through the water's surface.

Ava stands alone on the dock.

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EXT. DOCK - MORNING (PRESENT)

Ava lies, asleep, in the same spot she was in at FADE

IN. An out of focus figure comes up behind Ava.

RILEY

(distant, at first)

Ava...Ava...Ava.

Riley shakes Ava gently. Ava wakes with a stir and shudders.

AVA

What? What time is it?

RILEY

Did you sleep out here all night?

Riley is standing over Ava with a cup of coffee, again. Riley has a cut across her temple.

AVA

Oh, yeah...I guess so.

RILEY

Here.

Riley hands Ava the cup.


RILEY (CONT'D)

I got you a cup of coffee.

Ava stares off the edge of the dock. She doesn't answer

Riley.

THE END.

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