

AFTER EVERYTHING

by

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"AFTER EVERYTHING"

EXT. ROCKY BLUE LODGE - DAY

A timber lodge hotel surrounded by pine trees; nothing fancy, just worn-in and warm. The Rocky Mountains tower around it, glorious and unforgiving. The summer sun beams. Birds CHIRP.

There's a sign out front with illegible, swirly scrawl.

Then the CRUNCH of tires on gravel. A door SLAMS.

A pair of heeled feet wobble into frame. YSL logo. Ankles at their breaking point. Not ideal footwear for this terrain.

WOMAN

Christ...

The feet stop, and the woman bends over. Takes off her pumps.

This is JULES (45, but can afford to look 39. An approachable magnetism and self-deprecating charm wrapped in expensive clothing. Impressive to everyone except immediate family.)

Barefoot, she pauses, stares up at the lodge. Apprehensive. Then, drawing a bracing breath, she trudges forward, dragging a carry-on behind her, heels dangling from her other hand.

INT. ROCKY BLUE LODGE - LOBBY - DAY

Cozy and understated, mostly wood. Except for the floor-to-ceiling glass back wall that reveals the lodge's *pièce de résistance*: a mesmerizing, otherworldly blue lake.

Jules' eyes soften as she takes it in -- memories flooding back. She watches lodge staff place the final chairs on the lawn. Neat rows facing an arch at the edge of the lake.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

Hi there! Welcome to the Rocky Blue Lodge! Are you checking in?

She snaps back to the present. And turns with a practiced smile, stepping towards the perky receptionist.

JULES

Hello! Hi, yes, Juliette Bateman.

RECEPTIONIST

Oooh -- a Bateman! Here for the wedding?

JULES

Sure am.

RECEPTIONIST

Lucky you! I love weddings. The
romance, the fashion, the speeches!

Jules maintains her polite smile in response. A beat.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

(typing; then frowning)

I'm so sorry ma'am... we don't have
a reservation under that name...

JULES

(embarrassed)

Could you try Jules Valentine?

RECEPTIONIST

(typing; then beaming)

That we do have! I'm just going to
need a credit card and an
additional piece of ID.

JULES

Right. Thing is... my ID and credit
card have my real name on them.

(off her look)

Juliette Bateman.

RECEPTIONIST

But the reservation is under 'Jules
Valentine.'

JULES

Yes, that's my *nom de*... fake name.
My assistant made the reservation.

(joking)

Shocked it's not under 'Old Hag.'

The receptionist laughs, charmed, then leans forward to snoop
as Jules digs through her messy purse.

JULES (CONT'D)

Look, no 'Jules Valentine' will be
showing up, so could you perhaps
cancel that reservation and create
a new one under my real name?

Jules pulls out her UK DRIVER'S LICENSE and PLATINUM AMEX and
slides them onto the counter.

RECEPTIONIST

(typing)

Okay... so, I'll have to cancel...
and then... new one... Great. Done!
You're in room 304.

She grabs a nearby key.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Here is your room key. And I'm just going to need you to pay the late cancellation fee now, as I can't transfer that to the new account.

Jules's polite smile falters ever so slightly.

JULES

(*it's just money*)

Sure thing. Pop that on my Amex.

She swipes Jules' card, and places it back on the counter along with a thick, pink sheet she grabs from nearby.

RECEPTIONIST

Wonderful! That's all done for you, Mrs. Bateman. The itinerary's here. There's a lovely welcome brunch in the Westlake cafe at 10--

(checks time)

Ooh -- in an hour! And that's for all the guests to mingle while the bridal party get ready, and then the ceremony begins at noon.

JULES

Great, thanks. Which room is the bridal party getting ready in?

RECEPTIONIST

Are you in the bridal party?!

JULES

You know what, nevermind.

RECEPTIONIST

I do hope you have a *magical* day, Mrs. Bateman.

JULES

Will do. And... it's *Ms*.

(off her confused look)

Ms. not *Mrs*.

Jules waggles her ringless left hand, then gathers her things and leaves. She starts towards the elevator, but swerves for the glass doors to see the lake in all its *magical* glory.

The attendant types 'JULES VALENTINE' into Google. Photos and links briefly populate the screen before we cut away to--

EXT. ROCKY BLUE LODGE - LAKEFRONT - DAY

The lake, framed by dramatic mountains, stirs in the warm breeze. An idyllic setting for a summer wedding.

Staff add final touches: bows on chairs, flowers in vases.

Jules leaves her luggage by the door and crosses, barefoot, from the terrace to the water's edge, transfixed by the view.

A long beat here. Her expression growing solemn.

It's only when she turns back towards the lobby that she locks eyes with a MAN leaning against the lodge, smoking.

He offers no warmth. No acknowledgment. Just a hard stare.

This is ADRIAN (47, handsome in a rough way; his lifetime of manual labor undisguised by the rented suit he now sports. Long, drawn face and sad eyes offset his nervous fidgeting.)

A momentary stand-off as Jules collects herself.

JULES

Very *James Bond* of you.

Adrian is unmoved. Uncharmed.

JULES (CONT'D)

You look good. Older, but good.

(then)

I was hoping to run into you before everything kicked off. I... You...

Uncharacteristically fumbling her words, Jules swallows.

JULES (CONT'D)

Adrian, I'm so sorry. I know I've said it a million times, but I am. I wish you would have talked to me, let me explain. I didn't mean to hurt you...

(beat)

Just tell me... what do I need to do for you to forgive me?

Her brows furrow, pleading, while Adrian looks away, annoyed. He takes another drag of his cigarette.

JULES (CONT'D)

Are you really not going to talk to me all weekend?

ADRIAN

Easy.

JULES

(dying)

Can we at least be civil?

She steps toward him, as if approaching a stray dog, and tries another angle.

JULES (CONT'D)

Mom said you got a new puppy.
Alfie, is it?

ADRIAN

(reading her...)

A Yorkie.

JULES

I was sorry to hear about Barkley--

ADRIAN

Seen mom yet?

JULES

(points to her suitcase)

No, I literally just got here.

He bristles at her tone. Nothing worse than feeling stupid.

ADRIAN

Shocked she wasn't waiting out
front for you.

JULES

(sarcastic)

Yeah, well, she didn't have the
welcome sign ready in time. Ran out
of glitter glue.

Adrian has no patience for her schtick. He starts tapping his thumb to his cigarette methodically. Jules course corrects.

JULES (CONT'D)

It's a great venue. I always loved
coming here.

ADRIAN

Mhm.

JULES

I was just thinking about the
frogs. Do you remember that? When
we saved them from the storm?

ADRIAN
 Captured. We captured them.

JULES
 We were kids.

ADRIAN
 (drops cigarette butt)
 Don't matter.

Adrian turns, his back to Jules, and heads for the doors.

JULES
 (desperate)
 Well, there's a sight I know well.
 Nothing ever changes, does it?
 Skeleton Village all over again.

The last line stops him. He turns, slow. For the first time, we see his great smile -- an incredulous one.

ADRIAN
 Really? Still? Tha--that's not even
 what happened!

JULES
 I know what happened! You left me
 there. On my own. I was six--

ADRIAN
 You shouldn't have gone in!
 (shaking his head)
 'Course you bring that up--

JULES
 It was a pretty fucking formative
 experience.

ADRIAN
 We were kids.

JULES
 (mimicking)
 Don't matter.

Regret washes over Jules immediately. She rubs her eyes.

JULES (CONT'D)
 Sorry. It was a long flight. I've
 had four hours of sleep...

A beat. She doesn't deserve sympathy.

ADRIAN

Go ahead and take another five
years before you talk to me again.

(then)

Why are you even here?

JULES

(stung)

Because I'm a part of this family.

Whether you like it or not.

He looks at her with pure disgust, then turns and walks into--

INT. ROCKY BLUE LODGE - LOBBY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

We follow Adrian through the lobby and into the--

INT. ROCKY BLUE LODGE - ELEVATOR - DAY - CONTINUOUS

He removes a PACKET OF PILLS from his wallet, pops two in his
mouth. When he looks up, his gaze burns holes into Jules.

Then the elevator doors close, and he's faced with his own
reflection in the mirrored glass. His hateful glare remains.

INT. ROCKY BLUE LODGE - ADRIAN'S ROOM - DAY

Adrian enters in a huff. Shuts the door. Paces.

A few suitcases lie open, one of which has some women's
clothing pouring out. The other is pristinely organized.

He starts folding and organizing the woman's suitcase.

Then he tidies up the room. Whatever he can do to keep busy,
until there is nothing left but his anxiety, his agitation.

He sits on his bed and closes his eyes. Jaw tense. A moment.

Then a KNOCK on the door. The last thing he needs.

He waits a beat before crossing to open it.

On the other side, his mom YVETTE (70s; light French accent,
relentlessly cheerful -- or at least trying to be).

YVETTE

(holding her phone)

Hi, sweetie. Do you have a minute?

Something is wrong with my phone.

See that thing at the top? That's
not normal, heh? *Es-ce piraté?*

Adrian takes her phone, looks it over.

ADRIAN
You turned your roaming off.

YVETTE
C'est mauvais? I didn't connect to
the lodge wifi, like you said.

ADRIAN
No, it's not bad.

YVETTE
They won't be stealing my data?

ADRIAN
You use WhatsApp, mom. Meta already
has all your data.

YVETTE
(panicked)
Mais, WhatsApp is the only way I
can call Juliette.

Adrian tenses. Her name alone is irritating.

ADRIAN
No. It's not.

Yvette looks bewildered. Technology is beyond her.

ADRIAN (CONT'D)
She's here.

YVETTE
Juliette?!

ADRIAN
Downstairs.

Adrian watches his mother light up; eyes wide, buoyant. Jules
has always been her pride and joy. Even now, it still hurts.

YVETTE
Ah, ma fille! You spoke to her?!
How does she look?! How is she?!

ADRIAN
(under his breath)
Still a bitch.

Yvette slaps his arm.

YVETTE
(in French)
Adrian. She's your only sister.

Adrian looks away.

YVETTE (CONT'D)
Pas aujourd'hui. She loves you.

He scoffs. Yvette's face falls. A mother's worst nightmare. She notices Adrian's thumb tapping his leg.

YVETTE (CONT'D)
 (in French)
 Are you nervous?
 (then)
 The speech?
 (off his look)
Ah, oui. You have it written down, non? You just have to read it.

ADRIAN
 I know.

YVETTE
 It will be a **pizza cake**. You're going to be *super*, sweetie.

She watches him nod, unconvinced. The silence stretches on a moment too long. He looks to her, then her phone.

ADRIAN
 You gonna call her?

YVETTE
 (lighting up again)
 She needs to come to the bridal suite. Everyone will be *tellement excité!*

She starts to tap into her phone, then pauses. Looks up.

ADRIAN
 (softening)
 It's okay, you can use WhatsApp.

YVETTE
 (in French)
 I really wish you'd forgive her...

Yvette searches his face for any sign of hope.

INT. ROCKY BLUE LODGE - JULES' ROOM - DAY - SAME

Jules' phone BUZZES on the bedside table.

She's passed out on the covers, heels dropped beside the bed.

INT. ROCKY BLUE LODGE - ADRIAN'S ROOM - DAY

Adrian watches Yvette impatiently ring and ring.

HOLD ON: Adrian. His face twists, caught between pain and irritation. A buried memory breaks the surface.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SUBURBS - DAY - FLASHBACK

CHYRON: 1987

Those same eyes -- YOUNG ADRIAN, eight. Perched on his bike. He surveys a mausoleum of half-built homes. Some are mere frames; others nearly complete with siding. The cul-de-sac is a raw, unlandscaped pit. A fresh suburb being born.

This is Skeleton Village.

His attention turns to SIX-YEAR-OLD JULES, arms crossed, mischievous, standing beside her dropped bike.

Then she starts to climb into the dirt pit, crossing the threshold into one of the half-built homes.

ADRIAN-8

Jules--don't! Dad said we're not allowed without him!

JULES-6

Oh, come on. How many times have we been to Skeleton Village before? I know what I'm doing.

Adrian looks around nervously, scanning for adults, as Jules enters the wooden frames.