

WEST PARK

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1

EXT. WEST PARK SKATE CENTER - DAY

1

A RUNDOWN SKATING RINK sits at the edge of a desolate parking lot; TRASH sweeps across the space like plastic tumbleweeds.

The only sign of life is a MINIVAN parked beside the rink.

KATHY (54), a stern-faced maternal figure in a BLACK FORMAL WEAR, leans against the hood of her van and watches over the rink.

Her eyes catch the FORECLOSURE SIGN hanging from the door. She walks over, rips it down, and shoves it into her PURSE.

*
*

Just then, a SPORTS CAR pulls into the lot. Kathy jerks to face it and frowns as it approaches.

PAUL (51), an impulsive man-child in BLACK FORMAL WEAR & SUNGLASSES, exits the car and strides towards her.

PAUL

Excuse me, ma'am - I'm looking for Kathy Nelson? Young, pretty, bubbly attitude... sound familiar at all?

Kathy rolls her eyes; Paul removes his glasses with a grin.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Oh hey, sis. Been a while. Didn't even recognize ya.

KATHY

Good to see you too, asshole. Let's get this over with already.

She pulls out a set of KEYS, and they both approach the rink.

2

INT. WEST PARK SKATE CENTER - MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

2

The siblings enter the rink. The inside is large but cold and dusty, like it hasn't been touched in ages. All of the lights are off, with only daylight illuminating the place through it's various windows.

PAUL

On the bright side, you're not the dustiest thing in the room anymore. You really let this place go.

KATHY

Good thing we're not here for the scenery then.

(MORE)

KATHY (CONT'D)

Once we find dad's skates, we're getting the hell outta here. That was the deal.

PAUL

Ya know Kathy, your negativity is really fucking with my vibe.

He pulls a FLASH from his inner jacket pocket and takes a hearty swig. Kathy scoffs.

KATHY

Being drunk at a funeral... that's a new low, even for you.

PAUL

Sure beats sitting through the whole thing sober.

Paul takes one more swig before pocketing the flask. Then, he spies the DJ BOOTH beside the rink.

KATHY

Please don't--

He darts off. She releases a heavy sigh.

KATHY (CONT'D)

--run off on me. Dick.

Now kathy stands alone, looking out at the vacant rink.

Inside the booth. Paul rifles through a STACK OF RECORDS. He mutters at the selection until he spots one particular VINYL.

His eyes light up. He yanks the record from its sleeve, blows DUST off it, and places it on the RECORD PLAYER.

Then, Paul flips on the MIC SYSTEM, causing LOUD FEEDBACK to echo throughout the rink. Kathy covers her ears and winces.

PAUL

(thru mic; warbled)

Good morning, West Park! I'm your DJ for this evening, Paul Nelson. How we doin' tonight?

He waits for an imaginary crowd to respond; Kathy folds her arms and frowns back at him.

PAUL (CONT'D)

(thru mic; warbled)

Tough crowd, but that's okay. We'll get this party started with a lil' throwback to the 80s. Enjoy.

He places the NEEDLE on the record...

BEGIN FLASHBACK

3 INT. WEST PARK SKATE CENTER - MAIN FLOOR - NIGHT (THE 80'S) 3

(SONG FOR TONE: Rich Girl by Hall & Oates)

...and it starts to spin. *CAMERA PULLS OUT*, and we see the rink in its heyday -- CROWDS OF PEOPLE in 80s ATTIRE skate around to the music and have fun.

RINK-GOERS chat and laugh in the seating area; every ARCADE MACHINE is occupied and chirps lively; all-in-all, the rink is in glorious full swing.

TEEN KATHY (19), bright-eyed & happy, weaves between SKATERS on her roller skates. Her movements are flowing and free: she's in her own world.

TEEN PAUL (16), hyperactive & ornery, is close behind. He zips past a few skaters and abruptly cuts in front of his sister, nearly causing her to fall.

She yells at him; he sticks his tongue out and speeds off.

Beside the rink, DAD (45), in a SKATING RINK UNIFORM, struggles to deliver an OVERLOADED TRAY OF CONCESSIONS to a family.

Kathy exits the rink and rushes to help; together, they set the tray down without spilling anything. He smiles at her.

She then turns to continue skating, but Dad grabs her arm before she can leave. He nods over to the concession booth.

Kathy protests, but he insists. He pulls out another UNIFORM and hands it to her. She reluctantly accepts it.

Back on the rink, Paul is having a blast. He grooves to the music, skates backwards, and showcases a few other tricks.

From behind the concessions counter, Kathy, now in uniform, watches her brother have fun. Her jaw clenches.

END FLASHBACK

4 INT. WEST PARK SKATE CENTER - MAIN FLOOR - DAY (MODERN DAY) 4

Kathy stares at the empty rink, far away. She snaps out of it * and marches up to the DJ booth.

In a fit, she flips a couple of switches, cutting the music off abruptly, and steps down from the booth. Paul watches this in complete shock and disgust.

*

KATHY

Any time you wanna quit screwing around and help me look for these skates, that'd be great.

PAUL

I'm still not sure how it's genetically possible for me to be related to such a god damn buzzkill.

KATHY

Well, pardon me for giving a shit. Maybe you don't care about being late, but *I* have people counting on me to be there.

PAUL

I'm sure Dad won't mind. Not like he's going anywhere.

Kathy glares at him. He backs down.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, okay? That wasn't cool. But we grew up here, Kathy! I feel like I'm home for the first time in over twenty years. It still has that magical feel that it did when we were kids.

KATHY

Our childhood was never magical.

PAUL

It was for me.

The two go quiet for a moment.

KATHY

Please help me look? Dad's funeral wouldn't be the same without the.

Paul nods, exits the booth and shuffles past Kathy without looking at her. She sighs.

Paul glances over his shoulder to make sure Kathy isn't looking before he sneaks another swig from his flask.

He then begins searching. Paul squats down and starts with the bottom shelf of skates. He waddles along the row, reaching to see the back as he searches for the skates.

He runs his hand along the shelf. His fingers stumble across something etched into it; he leans to see what it is.

Paul spies a HEAT scratched into the wood shelving. In it, there are CARVED INITIALS: "CB & PN". His face grows soft.

6 INT. WEST PARK SKATE CENTER - DINING AREA - DAY 6

OUTDATED BOOTHS & TABLES decorate the concessions area.

Kathy looks under tables and scans the room for the skates. Her eyes land on an 'EMPLOYEES ONLY' DOOR, then quickly dart away.

She checks that Paul is distracted, then pulls the crumpled notice from her purse and chucks it into a nearby TRASH CAN.

Kathy passes a wall full of FRAMED PHOTOS & MEMORIES. She approaches it hesitantly.

Teenage Kathy grins from an 'EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH' PHOTO. She spots her reflection in the glass, then hangs her head.

Head hung, Kathy spots a LONE ARCADE TICKET on the ground in front of her. She bends down, picks it up, and holds it in the center of her hand.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

7 INT. WEST PARK SKATE CENTER - MAIN FLOOR - NIGHT (THE 80'S) 7

Teen Kathy, behind the TOY STORE, stares at the lone ticket in her hand, zoned out.

The kids across the counter from her clears his throat.

KID

Can I get my tootsie roll now?

She shakes out of it, reaches for a TOOTSIE ROLL, and hands it to him. He leaves, satisfied.

Over in the seating area, Kathy spots her brother. Teen Paul sits next to CAITLYN (16), bookworm-ish, and helps her into her ROLLER SKATES.

TEEN PAUL

Nervous?

She nods.

TEEN PAUL (CONT'D)

Well, don't be! Your date happens to be the best skater this rink has ever seen. You got nothing to worry about.

CAITLYN

If you say so...

TEEN PAUL

C'mon, would I lie to you?

CAITLYN

Probably.

He stands up and offers Caitlyn his hand, grinning.

TEEN PAUL

Only one way to find out.

She rolls her eyes, cracks a smile, and accepts Paul's hand. The two enter the rink together.

At first, Caitlyn's strides are quick and choppy, but Paul holds on to her, laughing along with Caitlyn.

Kathy watches them wistfully from her post. Then, she clenches her jaw and nods to herself.

She skates from the Toy Story over to Dad, who is working the concession register. She stands next to him while he takes people's orders.

TEEN KATHY

Hey, Dad. Shift was supposed to end an hour ago, so... can I go now?

DAD

Sorry, Kath - Friday nights are always this busy. I need your help at merchandise a little bit longer.

TEEN KATHY

Then make Paul do it! Why am I the one who's always stuck working while he has all the fun?

Dad groans, looks over his shoulder and motions to another employee in the kitchen to take his post.

He then takes Kathy's shoulder and nudges her to the back of the kitchen with him. He then faces her, looking her directly in the eye.

DAD

Because I trust you; and one day,
when I'm not around, it's gonna be
up to you to keep the rink going.
You think Paul is gonna?

Kathy's face falls.

DAD (CONT'D)

Look, I know it's a thankless job.
But do you see how happy everyone
is? When they walk through those
doors, they forget about their
troubles. We work and worry so they
don't have to... because that's
what family does for each other.

She nods, disappointed. He shows her a sympathetic smile.

DAD (CONT'D)

But I think we've sold enough candy
for one night. The crowd could use
a visit from Bingo...

KATHY

(face lighting up)
You mean it?!

Dad grins and indicates to the 'EMPLOYEES ONLY' room with his head. She smiles at him, then speeds off towards it.

CUT TO: *

The 'EMPLOYEES ONLY' door opens. Stepping outside is Kathy in a GOOFY MASCOT COSTUME. She skates around in it and interacts with the crowd, who laughs at and partakes in her antics.

While everyone is distracted, Paul leads Caitlyn by hand into the rental booth. Once inside, they start to make out.

Dad watches Kathy have fun in the costume and smiles.

END FLASHBACK

8 INT. WEST PARK SKATE CENTER - MAIN FLOOR - DAY (MODERN DAY) 8

Kathy stands by herself, staring at the red 'employees only' door. Paul joins her.

PAUL
Any luck over here?

She shakes her head. He follows her gaze to the door.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Well, duh... they're in there.

KATHY
You're probably right.

PAUL
(shocked; then suspicious)
I am? You feeling okay?

Kathy releases another heavy sigh.

KATHY
Peachy.

9 INT. WEST PARK SKATE CENTER - EMPLOYEES OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 9

The door swings open, and the siblings hesitantly step in.

They're home. FRAMED FAMILY PHOTOS adorn the walls; a row of LOCKERS have CRAYON DRAWINGS stuck to them by magnets; and a METAL DESK is filled with PILES OF PAPERWORK.

Paul is a kid in a candy shop; he enters and takes it all in.

PAUL
I used to dream about what it looked like in here. I would sneak peeks whenever one of you left the door cracked. I can't believe I'm actually inside.

KATHY
Coulda seen it a while lot sooner if you woulda just taken the job.

PAUL
You couldn't let me in anyway?

KATHY
(shrugging)
I didn't make the rules. *Employees Only.*

PAUL

Yeah, I can read... thanks.

He plops himself down at the desk and kicks his feet up on it. Kathy watches in disdain.

Then, Paul notices the BINGO OUTFIT hanging from the corner by the desk. He laughs out loud. *

PAUL (CONT'D)

You always looked so stupid in that thing. *

KATHY

I did not! In fact, I kinda liked dressing up as Bingo. *

PAUL

Really? You're a big fan of wearing a kiddie costume, huh? *

KATHY

I guess it was just fun pretending to be somebody else for an hour. *

PAUL

You wouldn't know fun if it bit you in the ass, sis! I woulda thought your favorite job perk was filing paperwork. Which you are doing a very bad job of, by the way.

He takes his feet off the desk and starts to rifle through the papers that clutter it; he stops when he spots something.

It's another FORECLOSURE NOTICE. Paul looks it over quickly and then looks back at Kathy, eyes wide.

PAUL (CONT'D)

We lost the rink?

Kathy sighs.

KATHY

They're tearing it down at the end of the month, putting in a Starbucks. I tried to save it, but people just don't wanna skate anymore.

PAUL

And when were you gonna tell me?

KATHY

I wasn't. It's not your problem.

PAUL

So they go and tear down our
childhood home and you couldn't
even be bothered to let me know?!

*

KATHY

There's no "our," Paul; there's no
"we." You made it pretty clear you
didn't give a shit about our family
or the rink when you left us.

*

*

*

PAUL

Well, I'm here now.

*

KATHY

Only because dad's dead - if he
wasn't, it'd be another ten years
before we even spoke! Maybe you
remember all the fun times we had
here, but all I can think about is
how I promised dad I'd take care of
this place and how I failed. You
were nowhere around - why the hell
would you cross my mind?

Paul opens his mouth to reply, but Kathy shakes her head.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Just... don't, okay? We're not kids
anymore, Paul. Time to grow up.

She exits.

Now alone, Paul releases a heavy sigh and takes a beat to sit
in the moment. He swivels his chair to face the lockers,
spotting a COLORFUL CRAYON DRAWING on one of them.

He gets up, walks over, and removes the drawing.

It's a classic childhood depiction of their family. FOUR
STICK FIGURES are labeled as PAUL, KATHY, MOM & DAD. A crude
DISCO BALL hangs above their heads, and they all wear SKATES.

In the bottom corner is PAUL'S POORLY WRITTEN NAME. Tears
form in his eyes; he covers them with the drawing and fights
back sobs.

When he's done, he carefully folds the drawing and pockets
it. Then, he opens the locker, and his eyes light up as he
spots something.

10 INT. WEST PARK SKATE CENTER - MAIN FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER 10

Kathy sits alone at the edge of the rink, head hung low.

Paul sits down next to her and places DAD'S SKATES, old & tattered, on the rink in front of them. Kathy remains solemn.

KATHY

So they were there the whole time.
Guess that shoulda been the first
place we looked.

PAUL

I'm glad it wasn't.

He pulls the drawing from his pocket and shares it with her.
A faint smile crosses her face.

PAUL (CONT'D)

You know, not all of my memories
here are magical ones. I never had
what you and Dad did. Being here
was a reminder that I was never in
on the joke, that I didn't fit in
with you guys. That's probably why
I felt I had to go my own way in
the end.

He pulls out his flask and takes a swig. Kathy watches on.

PAUL (CONT'D)

But now dad's gone. The rink too. I
somehow figured they'd always be
right here waiting for me. Now I'll
never be able to make that right.

Paul snuffles, and Kathy places a comforting arm around him.
He closes his eyes and again fights back tears.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I can't lose you too.

KATHY

You haven't lost me. Yet.

He wipes away a tear and looks at her.

PAUL

'Cause you're so old?

Kathy removes her arm around him.

KATHY

God, you just had to ruin it.

PAUL
 (raising flask in a toast)
 To the last of the Nelsons!

He drinks, then offers some to Kathy. She gives in and takes a small sip; it's horrid! She goes into a minor coughing fit while Paul grins.

PAUL (CONT'D)
 (checking phone for time)
 Well, we should probably get going.
 Service starts in fifteen and I
 know how you feel about being late.

Kathy looks around the empty rink before turning back to him.

KATHY
 I think we've got enough time for
 one final skate. That is, if you
 aren't too rusty...

A grin slowly spreads across Paul's face. *

CUT TO: *

11 MOMENTS LATER

11 *

BEGIN MONTAGE *

The needle is places back on top of the record. The song from the beginning resumes. Light switches are flipped. Disco ball and color lights turn on. Arcades turn on. Shoe laces on a skate are being tied.

END MONTAGE *

Kathy skates over to Paul, who now sits on a yellow bench tying up his skate. She offers him a hand; he takes it, and she helps him to his feet.

The siblings start to skate around the empty rink. Paul is pretty rusty, and it isn't long before he trips and falls to the ground.

Kathy turns and laughs at him, continuing to skate away from Paul. He eventually joins in laughing at himself.

He flips over onto his back and leans up. Rather than getting up right away, he remains seated on the floor and notices his sister skating by herself.

Her mood seems lighter, more free. He cracks a smile as he watches his sister have fun. After a moment, he gets up and skates away.

12

INT. WEST PARK SKATE CENTER - MAIN FLOOR - LATER

12

Kathy and Paul arrive at the exit. Then, they both turn back and face the rink once more.

PAUL

I'm gonna miss this place.

*

KATHY

Me too. Gimme a minute?

*

PAUL

Of course. I'll see you there.

*

They hug, for the first time in a long time. When they pull apart, he smiles at her warmly before exiting.

*

Kathy takes one final look around, letting it all soak in.

Then, she walks over to the edge of the rink, gets down on her knees, places down her father's skates, and pushes them off. She watches them as they glide away...

KATHY

So long.

Kathy gets up, turns around, and exits the skating rink; putting it all behind her.

FADE TO BLACK.