

MOTHERLESS

"PILOT"

Written by

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INT. MANDY'S CAR - DAY

MANDY(28) is driving her nice rental car, happily jamming out to a classic hip-hop hit. She's wearing a black long sleeve shirt and sleek black sunglasses. She wears a care-free attitude.

Mandy sees a fast food restaurant ahead, and looks down at her watch as she's still quietly rapping to the song. She looks concerned, like she shouldn't go. She is mulling it over in her head. But she turns her blinker on and gets in the other lane.

CUT TO:

INT. MANDY'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Mandy continues to sing along to the same song, but with a mouth full of food. She's relaxed and having fun--like she is heading to a party.

Mandy pulls over on the side of a small road, and tosses the rest of her food into the bag it came in. She takes out lipstick and mascara and starts applying it in the sun visor mirror. She checks herself out. Looking good. She dances back into the song and finds a lyric she can't resist lip syncing to.

She puts the car in drive and slowly pulls around the corner--she turns down her music slowly but still mouthing along as tombstones start to appear outside of her window. She's at a graveyard. She pulls to the side of the road, where there's a funeral party standing around a plot.

Mandy steps out of the car, and walks towards the funeral party.

TITLE: MOTHERLESS

CUT TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME - LATER

People are mulling around a bland and bare, but bright white open room. There's a sneaky old lady looking around the room, and secretly putting some extra ham and turkey sliders in her purse. There's some people crying, and other people comforting.

Mandy is on her phone off in the corner. A stranger walks up to her.

FUNERAL LADY 1
I'm so sorry for you loss, Amanda.

Mandy frowns, it seems sudden.

MANDY
Oh, hey, yeah, no, please. Call me
Mandy. And thanks. I'm...sorry
(beat)
As well...

The Funeral Lady smiles a condolence and walks away. Mandy instantly loses her frown. She gets back on her phone. She's on Tinder, swiping, swiping, swiping.

And old man approaches at a slow and excruciating pace with his walker. We wait as he finally gets to Mandy.

JERRY
My dear sweet Amanda...do you
remember me?

MANDY
Mandy. And oh sure! You're...

JERRY
Jerry!

Mandy has no clue who Jerry is.

MANDY
Jerry! Oh that's right, how are
you? How's...the family?

JERRY
Well...most of them are dead.

MANDY
Ah...well alright...

JERRY
Hopefully you'll be at my funeral
next!

MANDY
Ha, uh...no no. I don't want to do
that.

Jerry takes Mandy's hands in his, her phone in sandwiched between her hands.

JERRY
I knew your mother when she was
just a little girl.

Beat. He's taking a long and drawn out old man breath.

JERRY (CONT'D)
And I have to say, you look just
like her.

Beat. He's breathing again.

JERRY (CONT'D)
So...hmm...I had something else to
say. Hold on...

Mandy is clearly in a rush to have this conversation over,
but she's trying to be nice enough to this strange slow old
Jerry man. We wait. Mandy isn't enthused.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Oh shit! I'll remember some other
time...hang in there kid. It'll get
better.

MANDY
Thank you Jerry.

Jerry *slowly* waddles out of frame. Mandy breathes out,
excited to get back to her phone. She pulls the app back up
and MIA (18) creeps up behind Mandy's shoulder with a fake,
and forced smile.

MIA
Hello.

Mandy jumps.

MANDY
Christ!

Mandy looks over and sees Mia.

Mia stands right next to her and they are having a
conversation looking straight forward. Mia is smiling now,
more genuine after the scare.

MANDY (CONT'D)
Mia, oh my god! You, you're...

Many is excited to see her sister all grown up.

MANDY (CONT'D)
Wow.

Mandy goes in for a hug. It isn't reciprocated back.

MIA
-Yeah it's been a while.

MANDY
You're graduating high school,
that's amazing. Last time I saw you
was when you were a teeny-tiny kid
with that crazy hair and--

Mia's cold attitude permeates the enthusiastic air. Mandy gets the hint.

MANDY (CONT'D)
Hey, Penn State! That's pretty
cool. Are you still wanting to be a
doctor?

MIA
No.

The sisters are nearly shoulder to shoulder but feel miles apart as they look onto the people gathered to celebrate their mother. It's a humble sized crowd.

MIA (CONT'D)
(obligated tone.)
How are things?

MANDY
Things are fine, I guess. I just
got this promotion at the-

MIA
-oh and how's William.

MANDY
Uh, yeah, Will and I are good,
thanks for asking.

Beat.

MANDY (CONT'D)
Well alright...

(It's going to be like that?)

Silence fills the space. They still look forward, but we see them using the same mannerisms of rubbing their thumb and index fingers together. A few beats go by. Mandy exhales.

MANDY (CONT'D)
(sarcastically.) Oh boy, this
weather lately has been-

MIA

-I need you to go away.

MANDY

(continues her small
talk.)

-so dry lately. I saw there might
be some rain in the forecast
though. Speaking of dry those
turkey sandwiches need some mustard
or something-

MIA

No. I need you to just be gone
again. I mean mom was sick for how
long?, yet-

MANDY

-but hey they must be good because
that old lady has really been
stocking up-

MIA

-you haven't changed.

MANDY

Well mom never changed either,
so...

Mia doesn't know whether to yell or hit her sister first, but
both options show in her eyes.

The sandwich bandit old lady walks up to them to offer her
condolences.

OLD LADY

Amanda, I haven't seen you in a
long time. How are you?

MANDY

Oh, just call me Mandy. I'm doing
well, thank you.

OLD LADY

How's New York? Have you hit it in
the big city yet?

MANDY

New York is good. I actually just
got a promotion.

OLD LADY

Well good for you sweetie. It's
that mother's work ethic in you.

The Old Lady winks, but neither of the sisters receive it well. They flash very similar obligatory smiles.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)
Make sure to stop by sometime to
say hello. Don't be a stranger.

MANDY
Of course.

They both smile and thank the woman. The Old Lady hobbles out of frame.

MANDY (CONT'D)
Do you know who that is?

MIA
(whispering.)
Your presence here is disturbing
everything.

MANDY
(whispering.)
My presence?

MIA
Why are you even here?

Beat. Mandy gets lost in trying to find the right words. Mia seems to be trying to find words of her own.

Mia turns to Mandy so they are face to face. Another old attendee starts walking up to them with a cute old smile when all of a sudden—!

MIA (CONT'D)
(announcing)
You're *not* welcome here! You
weren't her daughter. I was the
only one. Me. You had *years* to come
back and you didn't! That's your
fault!

The old attendee turns and walks away. People begin to look over.

Mandy looks away from her sister and calmly feels around her black dress, and feels her pocket. She takes out a single cigarette and a small matchbook. Everyone is still looking so Mia commits.

MIA (CONT'D)

Do everyone here a favor, and just
fuck off.

Mandy stands there methodically prepping a cigarette. When Mia looks up she meets her sister's eye contact with chilling indifference.

MANDY

You think you know everything. You
don't.

Mandy puts on her sunglasses and coolly starts the long walk out of the room. We see her walk by an easel with a large photo of their mom. "Amanda Davis" with dates of her birth and death. She was 44.

There's a photo board next to it with family photos--the vacations, the milestones, the happy times.

Mandy walks back into frame concentrating on one photo. It's a white picket fence family of 3--Mia, a man, and mom. There's another arm wrapped around the mom's shoulders but not body. The photo has been cropped.

Mandy takes the photo off the board, and turns to see her sister. The indifference begins to melt away, and Mandy leaves with intention.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Mandy is putting a cigarette in her mouth and fumbling with the matchbook. She's walking towards her car, and past a group of people gathered outside. A tall man in the group, TOM (Late 40's) we recognize as the man in the cropped photo.

He sees her and excuses himself from the conversation. He starts jogging towards Mandy.

TOM

Mandy!

Mandy looks back, and then returns her gaze forward.

MANDY

(to herself.)

For Christ's sake.

TOM

Hey! Mandy!

Even with sunglasses the proceeding eye-roll was obvious. She begrudgingly uses all her effort to turn around. Tom catches up.

MANDY

Hey Tom.

TOM

Hi. I have to say everyone was a bit surprised to see you show up all of a sudden.

Beat.

TOM (CONT'D)

Yeah, pretty surprising.

MANDY

Don't worry I'm showing myself out.

TOM

Well, I was meaning to talk to you before you left. I don't mean to be crass, but...gosh...your mom didn't leave you anything in the will.

MANDY

What?

TOM

I know that sounds terrible and I feel terrible saying it, but I just thought I'd float it out there. I mean-

MANDY

-I'm not here for money-

TOM

-how much do you need? I'll write you a check right now-

Dan gets out his checkbook from his inside jacket pocket and flips to a blank check. He's ready and eager to get the pen moving.

MANDY

(calmly)

I'm not here for the fucking money.

TOM

-I may have to move some stuff around but within a few days-

MANDY

I've made my own money.

Tom puts the checkbook back in his pocket.

TOM

Why are you here?

MANDY

Does it matter? I'm on the way out.

TOM

I suppose not.

Mandy starts turning away.

TOM (CONT'D)

It's probably for the best anyway.
You know, you really broke your
mom's heart.

Beat. Mandy turns back.

MANDY

I bought my plane ticket a month
ago.

She walks away, and a tear slips beneath her dark shades. She
can't get to her car quickly enough.

CUT TO:

INT. MANDY'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Mandy takes the cropped photo and throws it across into the
passenger seat. Mandy takes a napkin out of the glovebox and
dries her tears. She flips open the visor mirror and fixes
herself back up to the way she was when she arrived.

She takes a deep breath and pulls away.

INT. GROCERY STORE - LATER

Mandy, basket in hand, is wandering around the grocery store
picking up this and that. She is dressed nicer than anyone
else around her.

She's getting a call-she answers and wedges the phone between
her shoulder and cheek.

MANDY
Hey there handsome!

WILL (O.S.)
Hello. How did everything go?

MANDY
It went.

Does she want Pop-tarts? She contemplates.

WILL (V.O.)
I'm sorry to hear that. How are you doing?

MANDY
Distressed. I'm trying to decide what to have for dinner.

WILL (V.O.)
Don't eat Pop-tarts again, treat yourself to a proper meal. I'll Venmo you some money.

Like a kid she sneaks a box of Pop-tarts into her own basket and keeps meandering through the store.

MANDY
That's alright, but thank you. What are you having for dinner?

INT. THE APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Will is prepping dinner. The kitchen is modern and sleek. So is Will.

WILL
Raviolis. You didn't say how you are doing?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

MANDY
I'm fine.

WILL
Do you want to come home early? I can change your flight.

MANDY
Yeah, I'm not sure I can last another couple days.

WILL

Okay I'll do that tonight. But seriously, are you alright? I can't imagine how tough it must be to be home and with the funeral-

MANDY

I'm fine, really.

WILL

Okay, if you say so. What are you doing with the rest of the day.

MANDY

I'm about to head out to the shop.

WILL

Tell your dad hi for me.

She's in the pharmacy isle, looking around at the creams and odd-end products. She sees what she's looking for--a pregnancy test. She puts it in the basket.

WILL (CONT'D)

I love you!

MANDY

I love you too.

WILL

(gasps sarcastically)
What. No way.

MANDY

(laughing)
Okay talk to you later.

WILL

Have a good night. Call me if you need anything. I'll send you the flight information later.

MANDY

Sounds good.

She hangs up with a smile and walks towards the checkout. There's only a couple, and only one open. She puts the basket on the conveyer belt. The cashier is an old woman. She scans Mandy before scanning the Pop-tarts. She's suddenly aware of her brand-name clothes. No words are exchanged, just awkward smiles.

The cashier gets to the pregnancy test, and looks at Mandy's hands. No ring. Into the bag it goes. The transaction goes through.

MANDY (CONT'D)
Have a nice day.

She doesn't wait for a response before leaving.

INT. MANDY'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

She throws the bag with the pregnancy test visible on top of the cropped photo and drives away.

INT. AUTO SHOP - LATER

DAD (50's) is working underneath the hood of a car, as Mandy walks in. There's the sounds of a baseball game in the background mixed with clanging and mumbled profanity.

MANDY
Hey do you have time for a paint
job? I was thinking purple flames
on the side.

Dad's head pops from underneath the hood with a big grin and starts wiping off his hands with a rag just as dirty.

DAD
I'm sorry we don't do paint here
but there's a great place down the
road! But the flames--great taste.

Mandy smiles and walks over for a hug.

MANDY
Hi Dad.

She gestures for a hug.

DAD
Let me change real fast-you
probably don't want grease all over
your fancy-dancy clothes.

MANDY
Oh I don't give a shit.

The hug says it's been a while since they've seen each other.

MANDY (CONT'D)
Who's playing?

DAD
Yankees Red Sox.

MANDY
Who's winning.

DAD
I don't want to talk about it.

He shuts off the radio and sits on a tall rolling stool, and he tries to clean one off for Mandy.

DAD (CONT'D)
Sit down, stay a while.

She does. She looks out of place but the most comfortable she's been so far.

DAD (CONT'D)
You hungry?

MANDY
A little, yeah.

Dad turns around and grabs a package of Pop-tarts. She's thrilled and rips them open. Sweet aluminum stress relief.

DAD
So how's everything going?

MANDY
It's going. I actually just got a promotion at work.

DAD
Mandy! That's so exciting!

MANDY
Yeah it's pretty exciting.

DAD
And how's Will.

MANDY
He's good. Same ol' same ol'. He says hi.

DAD
Oh well tell him hi back. Any wedding bells?

Mandy's mouth is full of Pop-tart and she scoffs. She's an embarrassed teenager all over again.

MANDY

Dad.

DAD

What? You guys have been going steady for a while now...hell you guys live together.

MANDY

Daaaad stop.

DAD

Okay okay, I'll drop it.

They sit comfortably in silence. They share the same posture, and relaxed and carefree vibe.

DAD (CONT'D)

(surprised)

Oh do you hear that?

MANDY

What?

He starts humming "Here comes the bride." Dum dum da da!

MANDY (CONT'D)

DAD!

He explodes with laughter.

DAD

How long are you going to be here?

MANDY

I was actually planning on leaving tomorrow.

DAD

Tomorrow? But you just got here.

MANDY

I just have that new job and everything, you know. I'm a busy lady.

DAD

I get that. I just miss you is all.

MANDY

I miss you too.

Beat.

MANDY (CONT'D)
The funeral was today.

DAD
Yeah, I saw that. Did you end up going?

MANDY
Yeah...big mistake. People were assholes the whole time.

DAD
Say whaaaa?

They both laugh at the obvious and predictable.

DAD (CONT'D)
What else is wrong?

MANDY
What do you mean?

DAD
You seem off. Even on the phone these past few weeks.

MANDY
Oh I'm fine, just stressed.

Dad raises his eyebrow. *You sure?* Mandy nods. They both know she's lying.

DAD
Well at least let me take you out to get some food before you leave tomorrow.

MANDY
Sounds good. I should get going before it gets too dark.

She hops up and hugs Dad again.

MANDY (CONT'D)
Love you.

DAD
Love you too. I'll see you tomorrow then!

She nods and Dad watches her walk back to the car. She pulls away and Dad turns on the baseball game.

RADIO

*And that's all she wrote folks. Red
Sox 5 Yankees 2.*

DAD

Ah god damnit!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

Mandy walks into the room exhausted with groceries in hand. She isn't in a rush and goes through the motions. She puts the groceries on the granite counter in the full kitchen. She notices flowers. "Flowers just as beautiful as you...I hope these flowers are beautiful by the way. (:"

She smiles and grabs the pregnancy test with a big sigh.

INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

She walks into the bathroom, and sits down on the toilet. She's entranced with the box and can't stop shaking her nervous leg.

Mandy opens the box and reads the instructions. She grabs the pregnancy test stick and opens the cap. She starts peeing, and quickly places it face up on the counter like it's a bomb. She sits there with her legs bouncing over and over again. The longest two minutes of her life

MANDY

Okay okay okay.

She quickly looks at the test and sits on the toilet with a blank stare forward. What is she thinking? She wipes and pulls her pants back up with the same cold indifference she wore at the funeral parlor. She flushes, checks the test again, and grabs her purse and leaves.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Mandy is sitting at the bar in blank contemplation. The bartender walks up to her.

BARTENDER

(smiling)

Do you know what you want yet? Or
should I come back again later?

MANDY

Gin and tonic, please. What gin do
you have?

BARTENDER
We only have one kind.

Oh, the feeling of being back in a small town.

MANDY
Alright surprise me.

The bartender fixes her drink and slides it over in an old-western style trying to cheer her up. Nothing. He gets a bar rag and starts wiping down the bar--in that old western kind of way.

BARTENDER
What's got you troubled?

Mandy doesn't take a drink. She just stares at it.

MANDY
It's...just been a long day.

BARTENDER
I hear that. My car got totaled the other day.

MANDY
That really sucks.

BARTENDER
Yep.

Beat.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)
Are you going to drink that? I know it looks good but it tastes even better.

MANDY
I don't know.

Mandy checks on the time and grabs her wallet out of her purse and hands the Bartender a sleek black credit card. He takes it and turns around to ring her up. He gets the receipt and looks at it.

BARTENDER
Amanda Davis?

MANDY
Just call me Mandy.

BARTENDER

Was...did your...any relation to
Amanda Davis in town.

MANDY

Yep, that's my namesake.

BARTENDER

I. I'm really sorry to hear about
her. She was a really nice lady.

He offers a friendly smile. Mandy breaks down sobbing. The
Bartender has no clue what he said wrong and stands there
awkwardly.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I...do you want me to
leave?

Mandy shakes her head "no." He just stands close to her while
she cries.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

You know when my Dad died, I just
didn't know what to do because it
sucked so bad, you know? No one
prepares you for shit like that.
And I kept fixating on the bad
times and how I could change it but
I should've done the opposite. I
should've focused on the good times
and how I wouldn't change a thing.
No one can make it any better, but
it will get better.

Mandy nods as she begins to wipe away her sobs.

MANDY

Things were just so complicated.

BARTENDER

Everyone has a complicated
relationship with their parents.
They're parents. They suck.

Mandy half-heartedly laughs through her exhausted tears.

MANDY

Sorry for crying.

BARTENDER

Sorry for making you cry. You'll be
okay though, I promise.

She takes her card and smiles a "thank you" to him and leaves. The gin and tonic is sitting untouched on the bar. The Bartender takes it and dumps it out.

INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - LATER

Mandy is soaking in the bathtub with the test on top of the toilet right next to her phone. She grabs her phone and dials.

WILL (V.O.)
Well hello there! Did the flowers
look okay? That note wouldn't have
worked if they looked bad.

Silence.

WILL (V.O.)
Mandy? You there?

MANDY
Yeah, I'm here. Sorry.

WILL (V.O.)
What's wrong.

MANDY
I uh...I...I'm..

WILL (V.O.)
Mandy?

MANDY
Have you booked the flight?

WILL (V.O.)
Not yet, why?

MANDY
I think I'm going to stay here for
a few more days.

WILL
Oh that's great news!

MANDY
I'll call work in the morning, I
have vacation days to use up
anyway.

WILL

Yes! That's awesome Mandy, I'm glad to hear that. Did things turn around, then?

MANDY

Yes things are different than this morning.

WILL

Well I miss you but I'm excited to hear that. I love you!

Mandy is fixated on the pregnancy test. It's positive.

MANDY

How much?

WILL

More than anything, I promise!

MANDY

I love you too.

WILL

I don't want to pry, but are you sure you're okay? You sound off?

MANDY

I'm good, just a looong day.

WILL

Okay, well I'm going to go to bed it's almost 2 a.m. here.

MANDY

Have the sweetest of dreams.

WILL

I always do.

Mandy hangs up. She has the test in her hands and starts crying in the tub.

INT. FLASHBACK, BATHTUB. 1993.

A young AMANDA (16) (we recognize from the photos at the funeral home) sits in the same position as Mandy in the tub. She's crying, pregnancy test in hand the mirror image of Mandy. Amanda throws her head back helpless.

CUT TO:

INT. PRESENT DAY HOTEL BATHROOM

Mandy does the same--and throws her head back in helplessness.

TITLES: MOTHERLESS

END OF EPISODE 1.