

BEAUTY OF A BLANK SPACE

Logline and Synopsis

Logline: While on a weekend getaway in Vegas, an aimless young woman, Haley, and her by-the-book brother, Mac, embark on a spontaneous road trip to Portland to rediscover a time capsule that they buried as kids. Within, holds the bracelet of Haley's biological mother.

Synopsis:

2 sentence version:

A young woman treks through the Nevada desert and Pacific Northwest with her adoptive brother in search of a lost keepsake of her dead mother. Along the way, both siblings will have to confront uncomfortable truths about themselves and their relationship with one another if they hope to make it back home.

Full version:

After spending a wild weekend in Las Vegas together, Haley, an aspiring would-be writer, convinces her adoptive brother Mac, a semi-successful makeup artist, to extend their trip in search of a lost memento of her deceased mother. Although reluctant at first, Mac comes around when he notices how despondent Haley becomes on their return trip to Los Angeles, delaying a romantic rekindling with his ex-boyfriend, Jason.

Stopping for the night in a small town in Nevada, Mac dresses Haley in heavy prosthetic make-up before the two enter a small dive bar, intent on making a scene. Although they receive a couple odd looks, both end up having a great time partying with the locals before heading back to their hotel. Still drunk and energized from the bar, Haley unknowingly delivers painful truths to Mac about his past relationships, and ends up alienating him further after pushing him into their motel pool.

As they leave the motel the next morning, Mac has forgiven Haley, but finds and returns her medication that she almost left behind; noticing that the slots are still all filled, and that Haley is nonchalant about almost leaving it behind. On the road, as Haley is driving, they have a heated discussion about their own individual philosophies towards life before she stops the car and coerces Mac to follow her up a steep hill. Once at the top, Mac receives a message from Jason, but Haley, annoyed at Mac's refusal to just enjoy the moment, accidentally flings the phone over the ledge, destroying it.

Driving in silence the rest of the day, Haley and Mac arrive at their housed lodging outside Portland, where they are greeted by the eccentric owner of the house, Leslie. After a night smoking and revealing personal stories, Leslie is able to mend the damaged rift between the siblings. The two set off the next day to replace Mac's phone and retrace their steps to find Haley's lost memento. Once they reach the site, Mac leaves to take an emergency call from his agent, while Haley desperately searches through their old time-capsule; however, the only thing of hers she can find is an old notebook.

Back at the car, Mac reveals that he lost a breakthrough gig when they pushed production up, and when they return to the house Mac verbally berates Haley, blaming her for the trouble she's caused him and herself. Haley defends herself and her choices, revealing that she has been taking her medication and berates Mac for being judgmental and not believing in her and what she's said. Chastised, Mac drives away on his own, leaving Haley alone with Leslie at his house. After trying multiple times to contact Jason, Mac comes to a stop and discovers through a friend's social media post that Jason has been hooking up with other men.

At the house, Leslie comforts an emotionally drained Haley and shares with her his own trauma of his wife's death, and how he needed to learn how to communicate his feelings of grief. Haley despondantly listens to his advice before heading to bed, but the next morning she wanders off on her own, where she sadly reminisces on a past suicide attempt. Mac, having returned to the house during the night, panics at the sight of her empty room and frantically searches for her, before she returns to the house, still upset at him. The pair pack up and say their farewells to Leslie, but drive away in silence until they reach San Francisco. Mac, reaching for a way to make amends, asks if Haley still wants to go tour the city with him, which Haley accepts.

The next morning, as they walk around sight-seeing, the two run into Mac's High School crush and secret boyfriend, Colin. Haley pushes for the two to spend the day together and spends the rest of her day walking around the city on her own. That evening, while watching the city below, Colin tells Mac about his struggles coming out to his family and how what he really needed was someone to listen to what he was going through. Meanwhile, after returning to the hotel room on her own, Haley decides to read through the old journal from the time capsule, finding that her short stories inspired other travelers to write their own stories in the empty pages. Feeling inspired, Haley breaks through her writer's block and relentlessly types away on her laptop hours into the night before going to sleep.

The next morning, while staring at the ocean, Haley reminisces again on her suicide attempt when Mac arrives to talk. He tells her about his night with Colin and that, despite how great it was, he is going to wait before rushing into anything serious. While driving through the mountains, Haley is still withdrawn before she quietly confesses to Mac that she had tried to kill herself a couple months after she arrived in Los Angeles. Mac, shocked at her confession, stops the car and demands that Haley tell him about it. She responds angrily that he doesn't get to tell her what to do, and that he can't fix her.

Taking Colin's advice, Mac tells her that he's ready to just listen, and Haley describes the events of her suicide attempt. How she felt isolated and alone in Los Angeles, and that her birth mom's own suicide was how she felt connected to her. She elaborates that she took a handful of pills, drove to the top of Mulholland Drive, but fell asleep before she could go through with jumping. Eventually the feeling subsided, and her shame at her failure kept her living.

As she's crying, Mac grabs a container and leaves the car. Haley tearfully chases after him, finally catching up to him at an overlook. There, Mac says that they'll make another time

capsule, just for the two of them, and he puts in his favorite lipstick. Haley takes a moment to compose herself, then places her mother's photo into the container, much to Mac's astonishment. As they leave the site, content and making a promise to return with each other, Haley tells Mac that she started writing a new screenplay.