

JUMPSTART

Version 1.1

Written by

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EXT. A DESERT - DAY

In the sky, a group of buzzards circle.

Two sets of voices, speaking in thick SOUTHERN accents:

HOCKNEY

(OS)

Dang carburetor!

LILA

(OS)

Told you it was something in the engine!

EXT. THE CAR - CONTINUOUS

An elderly man, HOCKNEY (70s), looks hopelessly into the smoking engine of a broken down car.

HOCKNEY

Probably have to hike it.

A few steps away, his wife, LILA (70s) stands looking at the barren expanse around them, smoking a cigarette.

Hockney SLAMS the cover shut. Wipes his forehead of sweat.

He looks to Lila, who's glaring at him. He shrugs his shoulders.

HOCKNEY (CONT'D)

What? I didn't jostle it.

LILA

God sees, Hockney. He'll be the one to pass that judgement.

HOCKNEY

I didn't jostle it! You want to get up off your ass and give this a shot?

LILA

Said it yourself - it's the carburetor.

HOCKNEY

Well, I think it's the carburetor.

LILA

Maybe I do have to give this a shot.

HOCKNEY
Won't that be a first.

Lila stamps out her cigarette, walks back to the car.

Hockney pulls out a phone and attempts to make a call, but no connection is made.

Before she opens the door, she looks up at the buzzards.

LILA
It's getting late.

Hockney joins her by her side. Looks up to where she's looking.

HOCKNEY
Sorry creatures. Whole lives made out of last minutes.

LILA
Now don't give up that precious hope just yet.

HOCKNEY
Lila, I will never know what sort of person you think I am.

Lila gets into the car.

Hockney waits alone for a moment, then goes to the trunk of the car.

He opens it, revealing a funeral urn, named PRECIOUS by Hockney, taped and roped securely inside the trunk, walled in by suitcases and provisions.

HOCKNEY (CONT'D)
Precious. I'm sorry. But we may not make it.

LILA
(OS)
Don't jostle it!

HOCKNEY
I'm not! I'm talking to her!

Lila sighs and lights another cigarette.

LILA
(OS)
Just don't jostle. You know how these things are.

HOCKNEY

(to Precious)

It's the carburetor, Precious. Or, at least, I think it is. I don't know how these things work. And I don't know why we've been repaid like this by the Almighty. But I'll get you there, Precious. That's my promise. I'll make sure you rest.

Precious stares back. As much as an urn can stare back.

Then, a young girl's voice, Precious's voice, speaks.

PRECIOUS

Thank you.

Hockney wipes away a tear.

HOCKNEY

Goodbye.

Hockney shuts the trunk.

INT. CAR - LATE AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS

Hockney gets in beside Lila, who's eating out of a can.

As Hockney gets settled in his seat, Lila passes the can to him. He eats out of it.

He places the car key inside the ignition, turns it.

Nothing.

He takes it out.

Lila reaches into the backseat and grabs a bottle of water. She takes a gulp out of it.

The two sit side by side, in silence, for several moments.

HOCKNEY

It's late, ain't it?

LILA

Yes it is. By the minute it's getting even later.

HOCKNEY

That is a fact.

Silence.

HOCKNEY (CONT'D)
She'd have her last rites delivered
around now. By the priest.

Silence.

HOCKNEY (CONT'D)
That's why I was talking to her.

Silence.

HOCKNEY (CONT'D)
I'm not crazy.

LILA
I've gathered that much.

HOCKNEY
Just in case you were wondering
that.

Silence. Lila finishes her bottle, rolls down the window,
throws it out.

LILA
I wasn't.

Silence. Hockney finishes the can, throws it out his window.

HOCKNEY
You think the rest of them showed
up?

LILA
Well, maybe. They did promise a
whole buffet at the event.

HOCKNEY
Wonder what they're serving. Hams.
Cheeses. Oh, meatballs. I like
meatballs.

Lila looks at Hockney.

LILA
Hockney, what in the hell are you
talking about, and what in the hell
are you doing in here with me?

HOCKNEY
I don't know.

Silence.

LILA

I mean, have you called? For someone? A tow truck?

HOCKNEY

No reception.

LILA

Anywhere? You try walking out a bit?

HOCKNEY

Lila. It's dry, sandy, hellish, and 90 out.

LILA

And we're stuck smack dab in the middle of it.

HOCKNEY

Dang carburetor.

LILA

Shut the hell up, Hockney. Just shut the hell up.

HOCKNEY

Can I have a cigarette?

LILA

Of course you can, dear.

Lila gives Hockney a cigarette. He lights it up, takes a puff.

LILA (CONT'D)

I was going to go to book club tonight.

HOCKNEY

Lila, we go to book club together.

LILA

I thought you didn't like it.

HOCKNEY

But we can't go now, right?

LILA

What? We still can.

HOCKNEY

Not with... all this?

LILA

We could turn around. When the car's fixed, of course.

HOCKNEY

Not much fixing going on around here now.

LILA

When it's fixed.

HOCKNEY

And bury her where?

LILA

I don't know. Or I could go tomorrow.

HOCKNEY

If it's fixed by tomorrow.

LILA

I was going to start something. Online. Reviews of books.

HOCKNEY

Why?

LILA

I don't know.

Silence.

LILA (CONT'D)

Because I wanted to. Won't you help me with it?

Hockney sighs.

LILA (CONT'D)

It'll be a project, won't it?

Silence. Hockney finishes his cigarette.

LILA (CONT'D)

I like books.

HOCKNEY

We're all literate here.

LILA

A whole project, Hockney. We could - we could get a camera, perhaps. A whole camera. Wow.

HOCKNEY

And put it with the rest of the stuff when we're done with it?

Lila's offended.

LILA

What?

HOCKNEY

I mean, what have we done with the past 40 years? Our lives, Lila?

LILA

Hock, what?

HOCKNEY

Just hopping from one excursion to the next, hoping it'll be that start we'll need. But in reality we've just been stuck in a rut for that entire period of time.

LILA

What in the hell's gotten into you? You shouldn't have started smoking.

HOCKNEY

Now's not the time nor place for it. Tonight is. But not now.

LILA

At the book club?

HOCKNEY

No! Curses! At home - you know what, Lila, if by some miracle we make it home, you can still go to book club tonight. But this is the end of that.

LILA

I was, and I still am. I'll take my stupid books and read them, with or without your permission.

HOCKNEY

Good.

LILA

No, not good. Hock, what are you talking about? Give me a straight answer.

HOCKNEY

I've made a pledge to myself to not tell you until tonight.

LILA

To who? Damn, to whom? Who are you pledging this to?

HOCKNEY

Myself, I guess.

LILA

Some standard you hold yourself to. Hock, this is driving me mad. Like, I know what you're saying, but not what you're saying -

HOCKNEY

Can I have a cigarette?

Lila sighs.

LILA

Of course you can, dear.

Lila hands Hockney a cigarette and he exits the car.

EXT. THE CAR - EARLY EVENING

Hockney gets out of the car and shuts the door. Lights his cig.

The light has dimmed. The sun is beginning to set.

He goes to the back of the car. Opens the trunk.

He looks up at the buzzards.

HOCKNEY

What do you think they're waiting for? A confirmation?

He looks to Precious.

PRECIOUS

For a change.

HOCKNEY

Nothing changes out here.

PRECIOUS

Everything can change. God knows that.

(MORE)

PRECIOUS (CONT'D)

He'll turn a blind eye if He feels like it. Out here, no one lives, and certainly no one will be coming. That's what the buzzards depend upon. That is why they wait. Change can come any time. But it does come. That they can depend upon.

HOCKNEY

This place is dead. You're an urn. You don't know that.

PRECIOUS

But the dead come from the living. And the living die. When do they die? We don't know. But they do die. Nothing remains, Hockney. Nothing remains forever.

Hockney finishes his cigarette.

HOCKNEY

I miss you. And I know she does too.

PRECIOUS

I'm an urn.

HOCKNEY

And does that invalidate our feelings?

PRECIOUS

No it does not.

Silence.

PRECIOUS (CONT'D)

Unbuckle me. Let me see the sun, if it is to be my last sight.

HOCKNEY

Are you sure?

PRECIOUS

I am certain.

Hockney takes the layers of rope and tape off of Precious.

Holding onto her for dear life, he takes her to see the expanse of bland desert around them.

The sun is setting.

Behind them, Lila exits the car.

PRECIOUS (CONT'D)
It's beautiful. That is why I
wanted to see it.

HOCKNEY
I know.

Silence.

PRECIOUS
This is the end of me now. Goodbye.

Silence.

Lila comes up to Hockney.

LILA
It's getting late.

HOCKNEY
That is a fact.

LILA
Getting later by the minute.

HOCKNEY
That is also a fact.

LILA
I want to go to book club.

HOCKNEY
I do too.

The sun sets behind the mountains, and darkness envelopes the
land.

It is NIGHT.

EXT. THE CAR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Hockney and Lila take seats at the base of the car.

HOCKNEY
But I can't, Lila.

LILA
Even if you wanted to?

HOCKNEY

I do. But I can't keep holding on
to this forever.

Silence.

HOCKNEY (CONT'D)

Tell me, in your honest opinion. Is
this working?

Lila surveys the car.

LILA

We're stuck here. But we've got the
supplies. I'd say we have a pretty
certain chance of getting out.

HOCKNEY

Wouldn't it be nice to get some
rest?

LILA

Here? Yes. But home is nicer.

HOCKNEY

Home. It is nicer at home.

Hockney looks up. The buzzards still circling.

HOCKNEY (CONT'D)

Lila. Dear.

LILA

Yes?

HOCKNEY

Is this working?

Lila thinks.

HOCKNEY (CONT'D)

I mean, us. Are we working?

LILA

Well.

She thinks some more.

LILA (CONT'D)

I'd like more. Like to go off on
adventures. Not roped to the ground
like this. To... you.

HOCKNEY

I always wanted to do magic.

LILA

A magician?

HOCKNEY

Yes. Play with cards and such.
Large audiences. Fame.

Lila looks sadly to the ground.

LILA

It has come to this, hasn't it.

HOCKNEY

If we want the best for ourselves,
I think it has.

LILA

God. God.

HOCKNEY

He doesn't answer for such trivial
things in life.

LILA

This is nothing short of trivial.

HOCKNEY

To us, it would seem that way. But
we do not look upon things from the
Heavens.

Hockney gets up.

HOCKNEY (CONT'D)

I was going to stuff myself full.
Gorge myself chunky.

LILA

I don't want to do this.

HOCKNEY

Then I was going to drive home and
listen to your jokes and biting
words and love.

LILA

I don't want to.

HOCKNEY

Then I was going to sit in the bathroom for a full two hours and get myself sorry drunk. And then I would brush my teeth, look myself in the mirror, and think on my life. Some last minute convincing on my part.

Lila looks at Hockney.

HOCKNEY (CONT'D)

And then I was going to get in bed, kiss you good night, and ask for a divorce.

Silence. A long silence.

HOCKNEY (CONT'D)

Lila. Will you get a divorce with me?

Lila nods, holding back tears.

LILA

Yes.

She gets up and hugs Hockney.

HOCKNEY

I love you. I love you so much, dear.

LILA

I love you too.

HOCKNEY

I love you. I love you.

LILA

Love you love you love you.

HOCKNEY

I love you.

Suddenly, the car's engine starts up.

Lila and Hockney look at it, awed.

Then, hands clasped in each other's, they walk to the car and get in together.

The car revs and drives off.

We look up into a clear night sky.

FADE TO BLACK.

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