

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Jim stands before his mother's coffin in uniform. He addresses the congregation.

JIM

Hey everybody. Thank you for coming. Brenda was a free spirit. She was a wonderful mother. She had three children. My brother and my sister couldn't make it today but I've spoken to 'em on the phone. She had seven grandkids. Loved 'em very much. She was a certified public accountant, and she ran the dance academy here in town 'till about 2009. My mother didn't believe in any of this. Not that that's a bad thing. She just never judged anybody. And loved everybody and cared for everybody and never put herself first seems like hearing some sorry yeah thank you so much for coming. Kevin, Matt. We got people here. Judy. Thank you. It means a lot. Thank you. My mother was a extremely cheritable woman. She donated to my school once when I was a kid. There was this girl in my grade named Caitlyn. She had Down syndrome. She had something. She was. No she was horrible. She was a bitch, this girl. And I know you're not supposed to say that about a little girl, bless her heart, but she used to bite kids a lot and she'd just come out at ya and oh the nightmares I used to have. She actually bit a teacher and anyway. My mom donated like, a thousand dollars to the school because she wasn't allowed to play on the play structures. It was too dangerous. But my mom wanted her to - so they built her a little play house and my mom gave like a thousand dollars and she didn't like the idea of her being left out. And she did it all anonymously. She didn't tell anybody about it or anything and I don't have that in me. Whatever that is. But umm. It was her. And...

(MORE)

JIM (CONT'D)

I opened the door for somebody this morning and I got angry that they didn't say thanks. Sorry. I had some stuff uh... I had some stuff written down. When you're a kid and you think about stuff, you lean about America and uh founding - Thomas Jefferson and all that. But when you're a kid you think about it and you say yeah, you know these guys, they did all this. Doesn't mean anything to ya. And then you grown up. And you realize these guys were incredible. And they were just people like us. Lived and loved. Had a kid. And you think about your mom and your dad. The stories they you used to tell you when you were growing up. Of them being young. Before I called her mom she was Brenda. Sorry.

Jim addresses an attendee.

JIM (CONT'D)

I don't know if I can keep going. Yeah? That's cool. Yeah no I'm fine. She was just so wonderful and I gave her hell growing up. We gave eachother hell. And it gets to you when you grow up. And I'm one of the good guys now. I was just mean to her. Lied to her. I didn't mean to be John Wayne. I tell my daughter sometimes, "hey, never say anything mean to me" not for my sake obviously I can take - I'm a grown man. But you just hate for her to have to look back and I was stupid. I was just so stupid. I have um - I'm a dyslexic. Never even think about it really. When I was in highschool I'd listen to all these books on tape - it looks like the words are all jubmled up when I'm reading. I can do it, I'm just not that fast. But when I went to school at LSU, go tigers, we found out that they weren't gonna have anything like that for my text books. And so my mom bought a little tape recorder, and so she'd read all the things I had to read so I could do well in school.

(MORE)

JIM (CONT'D)

That's all she wanted. Screwed that up. And I'd say, "hey thanks mom for doing that. That means a lot. Send it to me in the mail" but she must have been up so late. And it gets to you when you grow up. It eats you alive. I'm so sorry. I'm so. I hadn't planned, I wasn't - anyhoo. My mom was a big fan of Bruce Springsteen. She loved Bruce Springsteen, and Bruce Springsteen meant leaving your small town and going to do something with your life. She said that she wouldn't have left if she hadn't heard him she loved him so much. I'm so sorry. She used to sing Thunder Road to me when I was going to sleep. And I'm not a singer or a dancer or you know anything. My daughter's the creative one. But, people said it would be a good idea if I brought it in so, so I brought it in and uh. Yeah. So I'm gonna sing it. Okay.

Jim heads for the CD player.

JIM (CONT'D)

I had it workin' this morning I promise. Uh. Come on work. Come on please. Sorry. Uh. It's not gonna work.

An attendee get up to help.

JIM (CONT'D)

Uh yeah could you do that? That would be great it's just uh, it's track four. Thank you very much.

Jim addresses the audience once again.

JIM (CONT'D)

Uh, it's a beautiful song. Uh, how do you explain it? Um, it's a song about this guy telling this girl to leave their small town forever, change their lives - (to the gust fiddling with the cd player) should we just call the manufacturer?

(MORE)

JIM (CONT'D)

(to the audience) changed her life forever for the better and my mom really loved it - (to cd player guy) It's not gonna work? (to audience) He's saying it's not gonna work I'm sorry. Uh, well. Typical. I uh, I don't even know if it's gonna work without the song to be honest with you but I did a lot of planning for it and I love my mom and I'm just gonna do it and I don't know what else to do so.

Jim takes a deep breath and begins his choreography.

JIM (CONT'D)

It starts out and there's a harmonica. And this girl walks out on her porch. And she's listening to Roy Orbison. Back in the day, Roy Orbison used to sing songs for sad and lonely people so they wouldn't be sad and lonely anymore. It's a beautiful song. You could find it. Actually the whole thing's on YouTube I have it on my phone. I could have just done that now that I think about it. Uh, I'm just gonna do it. Sorry. Alright.

Jim's choreography builds.

JIM (CONT'D)

Crystal go sit back down with mommy. Crystal please go sit back down with mom, baby. Crystal go sit uh, I didn't even get half - I'm sorry. That's okay. That's okay. That's okay honey. Daddy's here. (To another face in the crowd) Oh Mona! I didn't mean to make you cry! I'm sorry. Your mascara is all - it's awful. (To the funeral coordinator) Do I have to leave? Oh yeah, I can go sit, that's fine, actually can I just say goodbye real quick? Okay? Yeah?

Jim turns to casket.

JIM (CONT'D)

Mama.