

BONES

Written by

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FADE IN.

INT. CLARK'S RESIDENCE - EVENING, DAY 1

CLOSE ON HARRIET, 10, a tenacious girl who cannot hide her feelings. Her feet tap impatiently. Bracelets and Baby-G Watch jingle. She chews her lower lip.

HARRIET

Is it 10 o'clock yet?

Behind Harriet, her sister, RUTH, 14, a driven and self-contained girl, sits at a fold out table playing Solitaire.

RUTH

You have a watch!

Harriet checks her watch.

HARRIET

9:45. That's close. Why do they have that stupid rule anyways? "Children cannot join the party until after 10 PM." That doesn't make any sense!

RUTH

They just don't want you to see them getting their party on. Seeing kids kind of ruins the mood. And Harry, it's only 15 more minutes...

Harriet takes off her backpack and checks to make sure a small wooden BOX is securely inside. She puts her backpack back on.

HARRIET

I'm going out there!

Harriet opens the door. Nineties hip hop is heard in the distance.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

Come with me?

Ruth throws the cards in her hand on the table and crosses to Harriet. She tugs on one of Harriet's braids and then goes out the door. Harriet trails Ruth down the hallway. They turn a corner and see a party in full swing. A living room has been turned into a makeshift dance floor. A hip hop line dance song comes on (i.e. "Wobble" or "Cupid Shuffle") and PARTY GOERS go wild.

RUTH
Oo! It's my song!

Ruth joins the adults on the dance floor as everyone lines up in rows and starts to do a coordinated dance. Harriet ignores them and pushes deeper into the party.

EXT. CLARK'S RESIDENCE BACKYARD - EVENING

Lights are strung across a patio crammed with card tables and folding chairs. Men and women throw down dominoes or play cards. One table is set apart on a slightly raised deck. It has three folding chairs and one extravagant SOFA CHAIR. This is the CHAMPIONS TABLE. Harriet winds her way through the throng to that table. As she gets closer, the Man sitting in the Sofa Chair, DEVIN, 30s, confident and good looking with a fresh fade, everything about him intentional and impeccable, leans over to the player on his right, JERMAINE, 30s, a thin man whose clothes echo his flare for the dramatic and personal brand. The other two chairs are occupied by RAY, 50s, and PORTER, 40s, a man with a paternal air about him and an ability to smile from head to toe.

DEVIN
It must just eat at you to keep
losing to me! Don't matter if you
to my right or left, you can't win
bro. Go on, play your last bone.

JERMAINE
I cannot stand you!

Jermaine throws his domino on the table and then Devin SLAMS his last domino down.

DEVIN
DO-MI-NO! Alright, flip 'em over,
what did ya'll give me?

Devin rubs his hands together in glee.

PORTER
Count them yourself.

HARRIET
I've got next.

Harriet shifts awkwardly from side to side as the four men sitting at the CHAMPIONS TABLE regard her.

JERMAINE
Go ahead. I was just leaving
anyways.

Jermaine vacates his seat and Harriet takes it, dropping her backpack at her side. She starts to reach for the BOX inside and then thinks better of it and returns to the table.

DEVIN

Name?

HARRIET

Harriet.

Devin adds an "H" for Harriet to a notepad on the table next to a "D", "P" and "R." Harriet shuffles the dominoes face down and they each take seven. Porter starts the game with a double six and then they go clockwise around the table. The play accelerates.

BONES MONTAGE:

...Dominoes SLAM.

...Devin adds x's for points on the pad.

...Players knock. Repeat.

...Behind them, people start vacating the tables as it gets late.

END OF MONTAGE

DEVIN

Well, it's been nice, but it's starting to get close to my bedtime, so I am just going to wrap this up and win.

PORTER

Not yet you are. The kid's only ten points behind you.

DEVIN

Yeah, but she's about to place her last domino of the night because once she does, I am going out. So, what do you go with, the two-five or the four-one?

PORTER

Come on, you don't know what she has-

Harriet nervously bites her lip and then places down the four-one domino. Immediately, Devin SLAMS down his last domino.

DEVIN
Domino! Thank you very much!

Devin stands up, bows, and walks out. Harriet fights back tears. Porter places a hand on her arm.

PORTER
Better luck next time, kid.

CHARLES, late 30s, Harriet's father, a man still lost in his own grief, appears in the doorway.

CHARLES
Harriet! Time to go!

Harriet gets up and walks towards him. She tries to wipe away her snot. Her dad doesn't seem to notice.

CUT TO:

INT. GIRL'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Harriet sits on the lower bunk of a bunk bed with the BOX she had in her backpack gently resting on her lap. In her other hand is a PHOTOGRAPH. Ruth is in the upper bunk with her LAPTOP open.

RUTH
What's wrong with you? You haven't said a word since we left Auntie Di's party.

HARRIET
I lost the Bones Tournament.

RUTH
Ok, so you'll do better next time.

HARRIET
It's not just that! I thought I could win in her honor. When I play, I feel like she's with me.

RUTH
Who?

Ruth leans over the bunkbed to stare down at Harriet.

RUTH (CONT'D)
Is that Gram's Domino Set?

Harriet nods. Ruth climbs down and sits next to her, gently grabbing the BOX out of Harriet's lap.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Man! This brings back memories!
Every summer at her house with all
our cousins, throwing down at
Bones!

HARRIET

I thought I could win, just like
she taught us and take back her
seat...

RUTH

What are you talking about?

HARRIET

The Champions Chair! If Gram was
around, she'd be sitting in that
chair schooling people in Bones
just like she used to.

RUTH

You're too young to remember that.
She moved to Arizona when you were
a baby.

Harriet hands Ruth the PHOTOGRAPH. It is a grainy, old photo
with a woman, GRAM, 50s, full figured with white hair and a
big smile, sitting at the SOFA CHAIR playing Bones.

RUTH (CONT'D)

This was before Auntie Di moved in.
Gram looks so happy...and healthy.
I think she'd like it that Auntie
Di kept her tradition alive.

(beat)

If you're going to win that chair,
you just need to practice more, OK?
Now put this away before you break
it and get some sleep.

Ruth hands Harriet back the BOX and PHOTOGRAPH. She kisses
Harriet on the forehead and then climbs back up to her bed.
She looks at her LAPTOP once more. On it, a browser window
for a Summer Camp advertises "Apply Now."

RUTH (CONT'D)

Harry, I guess family summers at
Gram's house are over right? With
Gram gone-

HARRIET

Don't say that!

RUTH
Sorry. Goodnight Sissy.

Ruth closes the LAPTOP and turns off the light.

**To request the rest of this short film, please
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