

BELIEVE

by

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EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

1

A child's OVERNIGHT SUITCASE rolls down the sidewalk, the words "FIRST ADE KIT" written in marker on one side. A few letters are backward, clearly written by a young hand.

JOEY (7) marches with a sense of purpose toward his destination, pulling the suitcase behind him.

ANGELA (13) follows him, her frustration in stark contrast with Joey's calm assurance. She wants to protest, but she bites her tongue.

Joey stops, parking the suitcase. He's arrived at his destination.

He turns to face Angela.

ANGELA

This isn't going to work, Joey.

JOEY

We need to believe.

Joey lifts his eyes, and Angela follows his gaze.

The words "HOPE CEMETERY" are wrought in iron above an open gate. A field of tombstones lies just beyond.

2

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

2

Angela and Joey stand over a GRANITE TOMBSTONE. The grave marked by the stone is new, the grass not yet grown over.

ANGELA

We shouldn't be here.

JOEY

She shouldn't be here.

Joey's eyes remain fixed on the stone. Angela glances around, but there isn't another soul in sight.

Joey opens his first aid kit and starts unpacking. He places each item on the grave in turn.

First, a STUFFED PUPPY DOG DOLL. It's well-worn, dirty, and missing its tail.

It's loved.

Next, he removes a CHERRY SUCKER. He lays the candy on the ground, beside the stuffed animal.

(CONTINUED)

Finally, Joey reaches into the kit and removes a WHITE SATIN BABY BLANKET, covered with angels. He lays the blanket over the puppy.

Joey steps back, expectant.

The cemetery remains silent.

ANGELA

What now?

Joey won't be discouraged. He racks his brain.

Closing his eyes, he starts singing "Hush Little Baby" as best he can.

Still nothing.

ANGELA (cont'd)

Joey...

Joey faces Angela, tears forming in his eyes.

JOEY

Why isn't it working?

ANGELA

She can't get better.

JOEY

But I believe!

Joey's tears flow freely.

JOEY (cont'd)

I want things to be the way they were before. Maybe I just need to believe harder-

ANGELA

She's gone, Joey.

JOEY

I don't want her to be gone. I want her back.

Angela wraps Joey in a hug. Joey cries into her shoulder.

ANGELA

Me too.

They stand alone in the graveyard, holding each other. Joey's sobs soften.

(CONTINUED)

ANGELA (cont'd)
Come on. Let's go.

Angela moves to pack up Joey's kit.

JOEY
Don't. I want her to have them.

Joey wipes his eyes and reaches back into his kit. He produces a homemade SIGN and leans it up against the tombstone.

Joey zips his first aid kit closed and walks back to Angela. They leave the cemetery hand-in-hand, the empty suitcase rolling along behind them.

The cemetery attendant, GABE (early 50's), sidles up to the grave. He watches the children leave.

He's dressed in dark blue slacks and a light blue shirt, with a blue cap to shield his eyes from the sun. His name is prominent on his iron-on name tag.

Gabe reads the engraving on the tombstone: CLAIRE BACHMAN, DEVOTED WIFE, LOVING MOTHER.

Gabe bends down and picks up Joey's sign.

The image of a family is drawn on the construction paper: father, mother, daughter, and son, side-by-side.

The mother is dressed all in white, a placid smile on her face. All other faces are sad, their mouths turned down.

Below the family are the words "I RILLY MISS YOU MOMMY".

In Gabe's hands, the sign begins to GLOW.

3 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

3

JACK (34) struggles to make grilled cheese sandwiches. He flips one over to reveal a blackened underside. Ruined.

JACK
Dammit!

He FLINGS the sandwiches across the kitchen. His shoulders shudder as he fights back tears of frustration.

The kitchen door opens. Angela and Joey walk in.

(CONTINUED)

ANGELA

Hey, Dad.

Jack turns his back to them, wiping his eyes with his sleeve, hiding his emotion.

JACK

Hey, kids. I was just getting ready to start lunch. How does mac and cheese sound?

ANGELA

Sure.

Joey and Angela slide up to the table. Neither speaks.

Angela keeps her gaze fixed on Joey until he makes eye contact. She makes a silly face, trying to cheer up her little brother. Joey can't resist a smile.

They're going to be okay.

A KNOCK at the door.

JACK

Angela, can you get that, please?

Angela walks to the kitchen door. She opens it and stops cold, her face a mixture of fear and amazement.

Joey watches his sister's reaction and stands. He walks to the door to stand by Angela, a huge GRIN crossing his face.

He whispers in Angela's ear.

JOEY

Believe.

Joey beams at CLAIRE (34). Standing in the doorway, she's surrounded by a soft glow.

In her arms, she cradles a stuffed puppy dog, wrapped in a white satin blanket. The dog's arms are wrapped around a cherry sucker. It looks like it's holding a rose.

CLAIRE

Hi, Angela. Hey there, little man.

Angela is still too stunned to speak.

JOEY

Hi, Mommy.

(CONTINUED)

Claire steps into the kitchen, bending low to hug her children. Behind them, the CRASH of a dropped plate.

JACK

Claire?

CLAIRE

Hey, Jack. I'm home.

Joey glances over his mother's shoulder, through the open door. He notices Gabe across the street, observing them.

Gabe holds Joey's construction paper sign at his side. He tips his hat, smiling.

Gabe mouths a single word.

GABE

Believe.

Gabe turns to walk away. Joey's construction paper sign flutters to the ground as Gabe vanishes before his eyes.

4 EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

4

Joey's sign lies on the sidewalk, facing the sky.

The once sad faces are now all smiles.

5 FADE TO BLACK

5