

JESSICA (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

STEVE

Back at ya, sis.

JESSICA

It's none of your business. Go home.

STEVE

My sister sneaks out of the house in the middle of the night, during horrible weather, with a crowbar and...

(looking at the other tools on the ground)

Some pliers and a hammer, and that's not my business?

JESSICA

No, it isn't. Get out of here.

STEVE

What's in the backpack? It looks pretty full.

JESSICA

I don't have time to talk to you, Steve.

STEVE

Are you going to tell me what you're doing, besides trying to break this deer out of this cage, or do I have to haul you back to the house over my shoulder?

Jessica knows she's not going to get rid of Steve.

JESSICA

I'm not goin' back home. Not now. Not ever.

STEVE

Really.

JESSICA

Listen, Steve, there's no way I'm going to live with Aunt Sarah, so I might as well leave right now.

STEVE

What're you talking about?

JESSICA

Dad didn't tell you? He's kicking me outta the house in January.

STEVE

You're crazy. No way is he doing that.

JESSICA

Just ask him. He said Aunt Sarah'll be able to take better care of me than he can.

Jessica goes back to working on door. The sound of a vehicle approaching can be heard over the wind. Headlights flash across the lot. Jessica and Steve dart behind a couple of unsold Christmas trees. When the vehicle passes, brother and sister come out from behind the trees.

STEVE

C'mon, Jessica. It's nasty out here. We'll both talk to dad about this tomorrow. No way is he sending you to Aunt Sarah's.

JESSICA

He is, and I know the reason why. He doesn't want me around anymore.

STEVE

Of course he does.

JESSICA

You've seen how he treats me.

STEVE

He's just mixed up right now.

JESSICA

He doesn't understand me. Doesn't love me.

STEVE

Maybe he doesn't always understand you, but that doesn't mean he doesn't love you. I don't understand you half the time, and I love you.

Halting her work on the cage door, Jessica stares in surprise at her brother. He never told her he loved her before.

STEVE (CONT'D)

I'm tired of talking about this. Let's get outta here.

JESSICA

Steve, if you think I'm going home, or anywhere else before I'm done getting Prancer outta this lousy prison, you don't understand me *at all*.

Steve watches Jessica work on the cage door. He grabs the crowbar from her.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Give it back!

STEVE

Go over there and keep a lookout.

JESSICA

Lookout? What are you talking about?

STEVE

What's it sound like? Go over there and watch for cars while I work on this door.

JESSICA

You're gonna help me?

STEVE

It's Dora we need to be worried about. She makes her rounds every half hour or so.

JESSICA

How do you know Dora makes her rounds every half hour?

STEVE

I just know, okay? Now get over there.

JESSICA

Yes, sir.

Delighted to have the help of her brother, Jessica takes up a position behind some Christmas trees as Steve goes to work on the cage door. A second later, there is the sound of another vehicle approaching.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Someone's coming!