

PRETTY LITTLE PILLS

by
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1 EXT. FARM - DAY

A LITTLE GIRL of about 4 stands smiling. Her sandy hair is loose and wild around her face. She wraps her hands around the wire fence in front of her.

REVERSE SHOT - A LAMB grazes in a pasture with its mother.

A hand reaches out to the girl, and she takes it and smiles up at her MOTHER.

The girl runs around the field playing with the animals.

2 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

The same girl, now 17, stands looking down at something in front of her. This is HARLOW, headstrong and delicate.

REVERSE SHOT - Neat piles of GREEN AND WHITE PILLS.

HARLOW (V.O.)

This is how many pills it would take
to kill me.

A much smaller pile of capsules.

HARLOW (V.O.) (CONT'D)

This is how many pills I have. If I
took all of these right now I wouldn't
even die. I would get sick but I
would live. I've always liked the
irony in the idea of killing myself
by overdosing on my anti-depressants.
But it's just a fantasy. Suicide is
a lot harder than that.

She scoops all but four of the pills back into the bottle, and washes down the remaining pills. She slings a backpack onto her shoulders and walks out.

3 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Harlow walks past her mother, ANNE, in the kitchen.

ANNE

Have a good day at school, honey.

HARLOW

Thanks, mom.

ANNE

Remember what we talked about, yeah?
You're smarter than your anxiety.

HARLOW
 (smiles weakly)
 Thanks, mom.

She walks out the door.

4 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

AERIAL SHOT of a thick open book lying on a desk: *HAMLET*.

Behind the desk, Harlow stares out the window, a hand cupping her chin.

Behind her a STUDENT boy speaks to the teacher:

STUDENT
 It's just a bit tedious, looking for
 meaning in Hamlet's dialogue... he's
 just crazy.

HARLOW
 He's not crazy, he's suicidal.

She turns around.

HARLOW (CONT'D)
 "To be or not to be"?

STUDENT
 (shrugging)
 He's a little crazy.

Harlow turns around and returns to the window, angry.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

5 INT. THERAPIST OFFICE- DAY

Harlow stares dead-eyed at her THERAPIST/MOTHER, ANNE.

ANNE
 Don't say "crazy." This isn't
 "crazy," How you think of your illness
 affects it's hold on you!

HARLOW
 I think of it as my abusive boyfriend.

ANNE
 Try to find something healthier.
 Think of it like an ocean, coming in
 and out like the tides...

While Anne drones on in the background, Harlow continues:

HARLOW (V.O.)

Mom says I seek out self-destruction.

SEQUENCE OF SHOTS [E.C.U.s, DIFFERENT SETTINGS]:

Harlow's lips take a swig from a bottle of beer.

The lips take a drag from a cigarette.

A hit from a bong.

She pops a Xanax.

A tab of acid on the tongue.

Sniffing cocaine from someone else's finger in a dingy bathroom.

Adderall.

Percoset.

Pills...

CAMERA TRACKS OUT on Harlow in the middle of a high school party, zoned out as people flurry around her.

HARLOW (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I just really like changing my state
of mind. It's how I cope with all
the sad and angry and numb.

A BELL RINGS, END FLASHBACK.

6 EXT. GRASSY HILL - DAY

Outside the school, Harlow lays out on a hill next to a tree, staring up at the sky.

REVERSE SHOT - A kaleidoscope sky with cottony clouds.

DAISY (O.S.)

Hey.

Harlow jolts from her trance and turns to her best friend, DAISY, a born nurturer.

HARLOW

Hi.

DAISY

No lunch?

HARLOW
(shaking her head)
Not hungry.

Daisy shoots Harlow a concerned look, but doesn't push further. As she continues the conversation, Harlow's narration comes in over Daisy's speech.

HARLOW (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Daisy is perfect. She's talented and smart. Everyone loves her, everyone knows her. She's my favorite person, but sometimes being beside her really makes me feel like shit.

The conversation comes back in:

DAISY
Did you and your mom do therapy last night?

HARLOW
Of course.

DAISY
Are you making any progress?

Harlow is meticulously lining up blades of grass on her wrists. She sighs.

HARLOW
I think... I'm just too romantic for this world. And that's why it crushes me and I think in the end I'm gonna lose, like the world will eventually break me, so... what's the point of struggling through?

Beat.

DAISY
Dude, that's a shitty life outlook.

Harlow brushes the grass off her arm.

HARLOW
Yeah.

After a moment of silence, Daisy reaches out and intertwines her fingers with Harlow's.

DAISY
I just wish you could see yourself from literally anyone else's eyes.
(MORE)

DAISY (CONT'D)

You have so much to offer, so much to look forward to. And I don't think the world has the power to break you. You're too strong for that.

Harlow turns her head towards Daisy.

HARLOW

Thanks.

She gives a meek smile.

7 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Students sit bent over textbooks.

Harlow clenches her jaw. She tries to focus on the reading but cannot.

HARLOW (V.O.)

Sometimes, for really no reason at all, everything becomes too much.

She hurriedly stands and rushes out of the class.

8 INT. SCHOOL BATHROOM - DAY

Harlow rushes into a stall and slams the door closed behind her. She sits on the toilet and buries her face in her hands.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

9 EXT. FIELD - DAY

Young Harlow frolics around in the high grasses. She makes shapes out of flowers and uses sticks and rocks to create a little village.

HARLOW (V.O.)

I spent so much time in my imagination as a kid that when I grew up and I started to understand the bad in the world, the light inside me was snuffed out.

END FLASHBACK.

10 INT. SCHOOL BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Harlow sits back.

HARLOW (V.O.)

I miss my own worlds where everything
was pristine and good.

She breaks down, sobs racking her body in the tight stall.

After letting the breakdown take its course, she wipes her
face of expression and exits the stall.

11 INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Daisy catches up to Harlow, who is weaving her way through
students on their way to class.

DAISY

Harlow!

Harlow waits up.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Hey, so Darynn is having a party
tonight, she just invited me. You
should come. It'll be fun.

HARLOW (V.O.)

I know where this is going.

QUICK FLASHES:

Her lips drinking.

Sniffing, with a trickle of blood from her nose.

Playing with a pill on her tongue.

BACK TO HALLWAY:

Harlow gives an empty smile.

HARLOW (CONT'D)

Sounds great.

12 INT. PARTY - NIGHT

Harlow and Daisy are welcomed into a dark house. They squeeze
through a jumble of bodies.

They take a shot together.

Harlow continues pounding back drinks.

The party moves around her in a blur.

13 EXT. FRONT STOOP - NIGHT

Harlow approaches her front door. She digs her keys out of her bag and fumbles to unlock it.

14 INT. ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

The door opens and light slices through the entryway, and a silhouetted Harlow steps into the house, closing the door behind her and resealing the darkness.

15 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Harlow stumbles into the bathroom, bracing herself on the sink. She looks at herself for a moment, then pours out the remaining bottle of her antidepressants.

As if in preparation for a ritual, Harlow starts running a bath, lighting and arranging candles around the edge of the tub. She gingerly picks flowers and places them on the water's surface.

She gets in the bath. Closes her eyes.

She dips under the surface.

16 EXT. FOREST - DUSK

Suddenly, Harlow is floating in a pond, surrounded by bobbing flowers. Her hair floats around her as she sits still under the water.

She comes up, gasping for breath.

Seeing the paradise around her, a smile overtakes her face.

FADE OUT.

17 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Anne walks into the bathroom and finds Harlow unconscious in the bath. She rushes to pull her out.

As Anne's hand reaches for Harlow's, a MATCH SHOT of their hands connecting in the pasture comes in a flash.

FADE OUT.

18 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

[CU] Harlow twists around a HOSPITAL BAND on her wrist.

She is sitting upright in her bed.

HARLOW (V.O.)

I was put on a 72 hour hold. Because that's what they do. If you're so sad that you really need help and you don't know where else to go they put you in a white room for three days and send you back into the world shiny and new and not depressed anymore.

After a LIGHT KNOCK, Anne comes in with a glass of water in one hand, and the other hand cupping something else. She sits on the edge of the bed next to Harlow and offers the water and four pills to Harlow.

Harlow takes the pills and smiles meekly at her mother.

HARLOW (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I did that to you.

Anne looks heartbroken.

ANNE

Oh, honey. There's nothing for you to be sorry for.

(then,)

I'm sorry I wasn't what you needed me to be.

Harlow shakes her head, unable to speak. She hugs her mother and they sit on the bed holding each other.

19 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Daisy walks into the room and stands awkwardly, looking at Harlow in bed. A heavy silence hangs in the air.

After a moment, Daisy's face contorts and she runs to Harlow, enfolding her in a tight hug.

Harlow closes her eyes.

DAISY

I know I don't always know what to say or do, but...

Pause.

DAISY (CONT'D)

You are so loved.

Harlow's eyes open at Daisy's last words. She holds Daisy tighter.

20 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Harlow lies on her side, eyes closed. Behind her, Anne walks up to the bed behind her. She gently strokes a strand of Harlow's hair behind her ear, and Harlow's eyes flutter but remain closed.

FLASH TO: Young Harlow running in the field with her mother.

BACK TO BEDROOM: Harlow smiles.

FADE OUT:

THE END.