

LIFE, LEAVING, & THE MOTHER ROAD

Written by

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LIGHT, SOARING  
MUSIC PLAYS

FADE IN:

EXT. RURAL IOWA - AERIAL VIEW - DAY

A blue summer sky holds fat white clouds that echo a hawk's cry.

A gray ribbon of road slices through miles of green fields. The road directs a line of slow-moving cars, headlights on, all following a hearse.

"Hawk's View" glides around the procession before closing in on the car behind the hearse.

END OF MUSIC AND  
OPENING CREDITS

INT. THE BODEY'S CAR

10 year old **JAMES "JIMMY" FRANKLIN BODEY**, in dark suit/white shirt/tie, slouches in the back seat. Quiet gospel music plays. Jimmy glances over at the other door.

A small Green Bay Packers football sits in the back seat, the name "*Ritchie*" scrawled across it.

Jimmy squirms upright to lean around the driver's seat.

The hearse's rear door fills the windshield. It shimmers like a mirage in the afternoon heat.

Jimmy falls back into the door as the tears come. He lowers the window and sticks his face into the wind.

**LINDA BODEY**, Jimmy's mother, is a trim late-30's, dressed stylish, yet modest, in black. She sits erect in the front seat. Her reddened eyes turn to Jimmy.

LINDA

The air-conditioning is on, honey.  
Please roll up the window.

No response. She touches his knee.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Jimmy. Close the window.

Linda looks at the driver, her husband, JEFFERSON THEODORE "J.T." BODEY, a trim late-30's as well, an ex-Navy SEAL turned pastor, wearing a dark suit and tie.

He stares ahead, his bearing ramrod straight. His eyes are as red as hers.

EXT. SMALL COUNTRY CEMETERY - LANE

The hearse rolls slowly down the white-gravel lane. It crunches forward until the huge shining grill stops.

EXT. SMALL COUNTRY CEMETERY - GRAVESITE

The funeral crowd moves toward the cars, leaving the Bodeys alone by the gravesite.

EARL C. JOHNSON, a wiry, well-scrubbed sad old man stands nearby in new bib overalls and a clean plaid shirt. He holds a ball-cap and a shovel in his hands.

**Undertaker** cranks the casket down into the grave.

The Bodeys stop by Earl. J.T. leans on his cane, his limp pronounced.

EARL  
So sorry, Mrs. Bodey - Jimmy -  
J.T..

Silent nods. J.T. shakes Earl's hand.

At the car, J.T. puts his hand on the door handle. A distant hawk's cry makes him look up. He pauses before getting in. His eyes narrow as his teeth clench.

INT. THE BODEY'S CAR

The car crunches down the lane. The rearview mirror shows J.T.'s eyes looking back.

Framed in the rear window, Earl slowly shovels dirt into the grave.

In the mirror, J.T.'s eyes glisten with tears.

EXT. IOWA HOME - DRIVEWAY

The Bodey car sits idling in the driveway. J.T. finally shuts the car off. The family sits in silence until J.T. climbs out. The others follow suit.

J.T.  
I need a walk. Back in a bit.

Linda barely manages a nod. She hugs Jimmy who clutches the Packer football to his chest. She forces a smile.

LINDA  
Will you go in and start the coffee?

Jimmy jogs to the house. Linda walks toward the backyard with its huge tree. J.T. limps down the driveway, his cane clicking a rhythm. He walks out onto the county road.

EXT. RURAL COUNTY ROAD

J.T. walks down the deserted road until the house is out of sight. He suddenly cuts into a cornfield.

He stumbles down the corn row. An anguished cry slips through gritted teeth as he slams the cane down. He drops to his knees as he begins to shake. He screams as he fires punch after vicious punch into the dirt. The punches slow, the scream becomes a sob. Then a silence. He stares ahead before raising his face to the sky.

J.T.  
Why?!

The sobbing begins again. He lowers his head.

EXT. IOWA CHURCH - DAY

The small country church squats among the Autumn dead, harvested fields. A faint hymn leaks out into a grey, clouded morning.

INT. IOWA CHURCH - SANCTUARY

The singing ends. Linda shoots a concerned glance at J.T. sitting on stage behind the pulpit.

J.T. walks to the pulpit and shuffles his notes.

J.T.  
I've done some tough things in my life. But this. This is the toughest I've faced.

He holds up his Bible.

J.T. (CONT'D)  
It says in here, "*The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.*" We can probably pretty much all agree on that. After all, He is God. But the next part - that's what I'm having trouble with.

He sets the Bible down on the pulpit.

J.T. (CONT'D)  
*"Bless-ed be the name of the Lord."*

J.T. stares at his notes. The quiet becomes awkward. He shakes his head, his voice a whisper.

J.T. (CONT'D)  
I can't say that right now. I'm -  
I'm sorry.

J.T. walks away from the pulpit, down the aisle, and out the back doors. The silence gives way to whispers. Linda stands, walks to the back and out the doors.

**MRS. OLSON**, **MRS. REDINGER**, and **MISS GLENN**, two widows and a spinster, all white-haired and bitter, exchange smug looks.

INT. IOWA CHURCH - FOYER/NARTHEX

The service is over. Fathers talk and mothers grasp air as kids run by. Voices are hushed except for a group of three.

MRS. OLSON  
That is NO way for a pastor to act.  
Rea-lly!

MRS. REDINGER  
Especially if front of the *whole* congregation.

MISS GLENN  
It's a poor witness, I'd say.

MRS. OLSON  
If they just had more faith, I'm sure Richie would still be alive.

MISS GLENN  
Or taken care of unconfessed sin.  
That takes away the Blessing. Yes.

MRS. OLSON  
Well, I heard -

Mrs. Olson looks across the foyer and freezes.

Linda locks onto her as she steps away from Jimmy. She stalks toward the three women, her disgust plainly visible.

LINDA  
We apologize, ladies, for not performing up to your standards. Please forgive us. It's our first death of a child. I'm sure we'll get it right on the next one.

MRS. OLSON  
Well, I never -

LINDA (INTERRUPTS)  
Let's hope you have a family member die soon. Then you can show us how it's *properly* done.

The three storm out the front doors. The foyer is silent.

Jimmy stands open-mouthed.

JIMMY  
Whoa.

EXT. IOWA HOME - DRIVEWAY

The Bodeys leave the car. Jimmy runs ahead.

JIMMY  
I'll get the game on!

Linda puts her arm through J.T.'s as they walk to the door.

J.T.  
Bobby D told me about you goin' all Army brat on those three - ladies.

LINDA  
Hey, nobody messes with my Navy guy. Unless it's this Army brat.

J.T. kisses her head.

J.T.  
Thanks, babe. Ya know, for Army,  
you're not all that bad.

LINDA  
Given your background, I'll let  
that slide, sailor.

INT. IOWA HOME - LIVING ROOM

The TV blares the Packer game. Popcorn, pop cans, dirty plates and bowls adorn the room. All have on Packer ball caps, Jimmy has on a Packer jersey, wildly waving the Packer football. Linda yells at the TV. J.T. stares at the wall.

He gets up unnoticed and walks out.

INT. IOWA HOME - KITCHEN

As J.T. moves through the kitchen, he sets his Packer hat gently on the table before going outside.

EXT. IOWA HOME - BACKYARD/TREE

He walks to the backyard and its huge old tree and ramshackle tree house. He stares over the dead, harvested field behind their home. Sudden anger explodes across his face.

J.T.  
I gave You my life! I trusted You!

Fists ball up as he quivers in rage.

J.T. (CONT'D)  
And You do this! You take Ritchie!  
Our first born!

He fires a solid punch into the tree trunk.

J.T. (CONT'D)  
You promised to watch over us! You  
promised!

Another punch. He raises two bleeding fists to the sky.

J.T. (CONT'D)  
I believed in You! I trusted You!

J.T. sags to his knees.

J.T. (CONT'D)  
 What did we do wrong?! What -

His bloodied hands cover his face as the tears come.

J.T. (CONT'D)  
 What do we do now? What do I do?

Framed in the window behind him, Linda turns away.

INT. IOWA HOME - KITCHEN

J.T. stands at the sink, running water over his hands. Linda walks in with dirty dishes.

LINDA  
 You're missin' a good game.  
 Halftime, Packers up by three.

She sees what he's doing. She opens the freezer door and pulls out two cold packs.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
 Here.

J.T. sits down at the table.

J.T.  
 Thanks.

LINDA  
 So what's goin' on?

J.T.  
 I used to know what I believed, at  
 least I thought I did. But now -

They sit in silence. Linda's calm veneer begins to crack.

LINDA  
 I, uh, didn't think my heart could  
 break any more, but, ah -

The tears come as her voice quivers.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
 Next week is Thanksgiving. And  
 then Christmas.

The dam breaks, the anguish flows.



LINDA (CONT'D)  
The Holidays without Richie!  
Without our son!

J.T. moves around the table.

INT. IOWA HOME - HALLWAY

Jimmy creeps up to the kitchen door and listens.

INT. IOWA HOME - KITCHEN

J.T. and Linda cling desperately to each other.

J.T.  
I dunno what to do, babe.

LINDA  
I can't stay here, Jeff. There's  
too much pain. Just too much.

J.T. kisses her cheek.

J.T.  
Maybe it's time to go. A fresh  
start.

LINDA  
Yeah. A fresh start.

INT. IOWA HOME - HALLWAY

Jimmy leans into the wall, eyes glistening. He turns and  
goes down the hall.

EXT. IOWA HOME - BACKYARD

J.T. steps out of the house, looks around.

J.T.  
J?

He walks toward the big tree as he scans the yard.

J.T. (CONT'D)  
J? You out here?

J.T. looks up the trunk as he circles the tree.

J.T. (CONT'D)  
You up there, J?

JIMMY  
Yeah, Dad.

J.T.  
What are ya doin'?

EXT. IOWA HOME - TOP OF THE TREE

Jimmy is in the topmost branches, watching clouds.

JIMMY  
Thinkin'.

J.T. (O.C.)  
About what?

JIMMY  
Richie. I feel closer to 'im up here.

J.T. (O.C.)  
Makes sense. You remember what corner of Heaven we're supposed to meet in?

JIMMY  
Yeah. The southeast corner. Ya think Richie will remember?

J.T. nods as he looks up.

J.T.  
Pretty sure. Wanna come down?  
You're missin' the end of the game.

JIMMY (O.C.)  
So are you, Dad.

J.T.  
Yeah. I guess I am.

EXT. IOWA HOME - BACKYARD

J.T. sits down, his back against the tree, the wind in the branches the only sound.

JIMMY (O.C.)  
Dad?

J.T.

J.

JIMMY (O.C.)

Do we hafta leave?

J.T. leans his head back to look up.

J.T.

Yeah. I think so. It's - time.

EXT. IOWA HOME - TOP OF THE TREE

Jimmy drapes himself over a branch.

JIMMY

But we'd leave Richie here and everything he's done! The tree house, the football field, the church, the school. It's all here!

J.T. (O.C.)

We'll never forget, J.

JIMMY

Never ring the bell, right?

EXT. IOWA HOME - BACKYARD

J.T. stares across the field. His voice lacks conviction.

J.T.

Never ring the bell.

Silence and wind.

JIMMY (O.C.)

He never got to do the Richie Run.

J.T. looks up.

J.T.

I'm sorry. What?

EXT. IOWA HOME - TOP OF THE TREE

Jimmy shouts down.

JIMMY

The Richie Run. He would've loved that.

J.T. (O.C.)  
The Route 66 trip? Yeah. Richie  
was pumped.

EXT. IOWA HOME - BACKYARD

J.T. scrambles to his feet and backs away.

J.T.  
Hey! What if we do it when you  
graduate high school?

EXT. IOWA HOME - TOP OF THE TREE

Jimmy blows it off.

JIMMY  
Nah, Dad. That was sumthin' you  
and Richie were gonna do.

EXT. IOWA HOME - BACKYARD

J.T. gets into it.

J.T.  
We'll call it the, uh, Double J  
Run. You, me, and Route 66. The  
Double J Run. Whadda ya say?

JIMMY (O.C.)  
Promise?

J.T.  
Promise.

EXT. IOWA HOME - TOP OF THE TREE

Jimmy nods.

JIMMY  
As long as we're not dead, right?

J.T. (O.C.)  
If we're not dead, we're goin'.

Jimmy's grin is huge.

JIMMY  
Okay. The Double J Run.

J.T. (O.C.)  
 Now get down here before your  
 mother sees you up there or we're  
 both dead.

JIMMY  
 Good point.

As Jimmy climbs down J.T. turns away, wiping at his eyes.

INT. IOWA HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

The Bodeys are around the table which holds the debris of  
 breakfast. J.T. glances at the clock.

J.T.  
 Better hustle, J. Bus is here in  
 four.

Jimmy stuffs toast into his mouth, mumbles something and jets  
 out of the room, just missing Linda and a full cup of coffee.

LINDA  
 James Franklin Bodey!

Smiles.

J.T.  
 I'll walk him out. I wanna go into  
 town anyway. Need the walk.

LINDA  
 It looks like rain.

J.T.  
 That's okay. My kind like the wet.

J.T. stands with a grunt. He takes a well-worn denim coat  
 off the wall hook, shrugs into it, then tugs on a faded black  
 ball cap bearing the SEAL emblem. He reaches for his cane.

J.T. (CONT'D)  
 C'mon, J! Gotta go now!

JIMMY (O.C.)  
 Yeah! I'm comin'!

Jimmy swoops through the kitchen toward the door. J.T.  
 blocks his way with the cane as he nods toward Linda.

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
 Oh-yeah-thanks-for-breakfast-Mom!

Jimmy loops around the table, glances a kiss off Linda's cheek, hits the door, and is gone. J.T. gives Linda a smile and leaves.

Linda's smile disappears as the door clicks shut.

EXT. IOWA HOME - DRIVEWAY

Jimmy waits by the road. J.T. catches up as the school bus arrives. They go through their parting ritual.

J.T.  
Give 'em Heaven, son.

JIMMY  
You, too, Dad.

J.T.  
See ya later, alligator.

The bus door opens. Jimmy shouts over his shoulder.

JIMMY  
In awhile, crocodile!

**Bus Driver** waves as the bus pulls away. J.T. walks out onto the deserted road and hits an easy pace.

INT. IOWA HOME - STAIRCASE

Linda trudges up the stairs with an empty laundry basket. She stops at the staircase window to watch J.T. walk by before going up to the hallway.

INT. IOWA HOME - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

She leans against the door frame of the first room.

INT. IOWA HOME - RICHIE'S ROOM

The immaculate pristine room is a shrine to the Green Bay Packers and the game of football. On the bed between yellow and green pillows is the "Richie" Packer football. Over the bed is a Packer jersey, Number 88, with the name "BODEY" across the shoulders.

INT. IOWA HOME - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Linda sobs and pushes herself away from the door. She moves stiffly down the hall and enters the next room.

EXT. IOWA SMALL TOWN

A troubled J.T. walks a deserted sidewalk, passing old well-kept houses with big lawns and huge trees. An old pickup honks as it goes by. He buries himself in a smile and waves. Two steps later the grimness is exhumed.

INT. IOWA HOME - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Linda carries the over-filled basket past an open door. She glances inside.

INT. IOWA HOME - OFFICE

The room is small and highly organized with a desk, a chair, a laptop, and two fully-stocked bookcases.

On the desk is a small brass ship's bell hanging over a elegant wooden base. The nameplate boasts the SEAL emblem and the words, "NEVER RING THE BELL".

There is an open handwritten journal lying by the bell.

INT. IOWA HOME - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Linda tries to enter the office but the laundry basket stops her. She fast-strides back down the hall to the stairs and without looking chucks the basket over the railing. She strides back to the office door as a faint crash is heard.

INT. IOWA HOME - OFFICE

Linda sits at the desk and begins to read, her eyes wide.

EXT. IOWA SMALL TOWN

J.T. walks down the business/main street part of town.

INT. IOWA HOME - OFFICE

Linda's eyes go wide.

A handwritten line: *"Why? Why did he have to die?"*

Another line: *"How can I trust You now?"*

EXT. RED STOOL DINER

J.T. stops in front of a red door to watch the activity on Main Street. He reaches for the door handle.

INT. IOWA HOME - OFFICE

Another line: *"Where do I go if You're not trustworthy?"*

Linda sits back.

LINDA

Oh, Jeff.

INT. RED STOOL DINER

The door's attached tinny bell clatters as J.T. steps in.

**Dominic "Dom" Dobrinski**, the balding, rotund proprietor, glances up. Over his paper soda jerk hat, the wall has a professionally hand-painted slogan - *"Everyone goes to The Stool sometime!"*. Dom's face breaks into a happy growl.

DOM

J.T.! Another walk, huh? Take a load off. Coffee?

J.T. nods. Dom pushes a steaming cup across the counter.

J.T.

Hey, Dom. Have Bobby D or Big Carl be in yet?

DOM

Not yet. But ya can set your clock by 'em. Any minute now.

J.T. settles into a booth as the door's tinny bell goes off.

**ROBERT "Bobbie D" KOLBY**, a rangy, animated farmer the same age as J.T. and a good friend, walks in while hotly debating the college quarterback situation with **CARL "Big Carl" SANDERSON**, a huge retired farmer who looks like he could bench press a cow.



BOBBIE D

He's got an arm like my sister and  
he's dumber than my dog!

BIG CARL

Then it's Divine intervention that  
allowed twenty-three touchdowns and  
only four interceptions!

They nod at Dom who nods toward J.T. They keep arguing as  
they head toward the booth.

BOBBIE D

Yeah-okay-but, most of those  
touchdowns came against unranked  
and truly pitiful teams.

BIG CARL

Now that's a loada fertilizer,  
Bobby D, and you know it. But I  
will give ya this - the boy does  
look like your dog.

Bobby D slides in by J.T. as Big Carl fills the other side.  
Dom brings over two coffees and a plate of donuts.

J.T.

Guys. I've made a tough decision  
and -

BOBBIE D (INTERRUPTS)

You're leavin', aren't ya, J.T..

J.T. sits stunned. Big Carl drops his donut.

BIG CARL

Shoot, J.T.. We can tell you and  
Linda are havin' a hard time since  
Richie passed. It's a tough row ta  
hoe, son. We understand.

Bobby D clears his throat, glances at Big Carl.

BOBBIE D

Fact is some of the Deacon Board  
feels it might be time for a -  
change.

J.T. stares at his coffee.

BOBBIE D (CONT'D)  
 Big Carl, me, and a couple other  
 deacons have told 'em to wait 'til  
 you all get it sorted out, but  
 honestly, they have bigger families  
 and a lot more votes.

J.T. takes a deep breath.

J.T.  
 Looks like everyone's been waitin'  
 on - me.

Silence. Suddenly Big Carl raises his cup.

BIG CARL  
 Time ta stop circlin' Jericho and  
 blow them trumpets! Here's ta  
 J.T., and Linda, and their new  
 Promised Land! God bless 'em good!

Bobby D taps up his cup up to Big Carl's and bellows.

BOBBIE D  
 Amen!

DOM (O.C.)  
 Amen!

They all look at Dom, who shrugs.

DOM (CONT'D)  
 Hey. Jericho. Know the story.  
 Love the song.

He mutters as he cleans the counter.

DOM (CONT'D)  
 I'm not a *TOTAL* degenerate!

Laughs. J.T. raises his cup to tap the others.

J.T.  
 To the Promised Land.

EXT. IOWA COUNTRY CHURCH - DAY

The windows are open as the last of a hymn wafts out to  
 mingle with the Spring breeze and brilliant flowers.

INT. IOWA CHURCH - SANCTUARY

J.T. smiles from behind the pulpit.

J.T.

This Irish Blessing seems appropriate given today's events and St. Patrick's Day tomorrow.

He holds a hand out over the congregation.

J.T. (CONT'D)

May the road rise to meet you. May the wind always be at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face, and the rains fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand. Amen.

J.T. starts to leave the pulpit. Bobby D hurries up front.

BOBBIE D

Wait a minute, J.T.. Hold on. Linda, would you come up and join your husband?

Linda hesitates then stands by J.T..

BOBBIE D (CONT'D)

You and your family have been a real blessin' to us. We're all prayin' for God's best for ya.

Bobby D reaches into his pocket for an envelope. He winks at Jimmy in the front row.

BOBBIE D (CONT'D)

Here's a gift from us to help with moving expenses and, uh, maybe a new fishin' rod or two.

The congregation, for the most part, smiles and applauds.

INT. IOWA CHURCH - FOYER/NARTHEX

J.T. and Linda stand by the sanctuary doors, shaking hands with the folks filing past. Earl steps up in clean bib overalls and a ironed plaid shirt. He offers his hand.

J.T.

My last Sunday and you finally come to church.

EARL  
 Shoot, J.T., I promised I'd come ta  
 hear ya preach. Didn't say how  
 many times I'd sit through it.

Earl shrugs deadpan as his eyes twinkle.

EARL (CONT'D)  
 I figure the next-ta-last one'd be  
 the one ta catch.

J.T.  
 Next to last?

EARL  
 Got one more to sit through. And  
 I'll probably sleep through it.  
 Barely managed to stay awake during  
 this one.

Chuckles. Earl offers his hand to Linda. Linda walks past  
 it to give him a hug, much to Earl's embarrassment and  
 delight.

She whispers to him.

LINDA  
 Thanks for helping him get through  
 everything. You'll never know how  
 much that fishing time meant to  
 him. And to me. Thank you.

EARL  
 You're very welcome, Mrs. Bodey.

More folks, handshakes, and smiles. Then the Three are next.

J.T. shoots a glance at Linda. She takes a quick breath,  
 looks straight ahead and fires off a whispered prayer.

LINDA  
 Oh, Lord - shut my mouth.

Mrs. Olson stops, turns to face J.T. She offers her hand  
 like a queen to a peasant.

MRS. OLSON  
 Well, Reverend Bodey, you lasted  
 longer than I thought you would.  
 Enjoy your new life.

J.T.  
 Oh, we're definitely looking  
 forward to meeting new people.

Mrs. Olson gives him a sharp glance. Linda starts to smile then stops as Mrs. Olson looks at her.

Mrs. Olson stands in front of Linda who offers her hand. Mrs. Olson makes her wait, touches it lightly, and moves on without speaking. Mrs. Redinger and Miss Glenn follow suit.

J.T. and Linda relax as the line continues.

INT. IOWA CHURCH - SANCTUARY BALCONY

The two Kolby brothers, **JUNIOR KOLBY**, a large seventh-grader, and his younger and smaller brother, **WESLEY KOLBY**, a fifth-grader like Jimmy, are draped over the balcony railing, one on either side of a gloomy Jimmy.

WESLEY

So where ya goin' again?

JUNIOR

Wisconsin - for the fifth time!

WESLEY

I know that, booger-brain. Where in Wisconsin!

JUNIOR

Booger-brain! That's the best ya got?

WESLEY

We're in a church, ya pagan!

JIMMY

Eagle River.

WESLEY

Where?

JIMMY

Eagle River. It's up in the woods, I guess.

WESLEY

Huh. How far up?

JIMMY

Dad says we point the car north-northeast and drive a day or so.

WESLEY

How many hours it that?

Junior reaches behind Jimmy to shove Wesley.

JUNIOR  
It's a *day*, nerf-nose.

Wesley pushes Junior, shoving harder on every "day".

WESLEY  
There's a *calendar* day! A *work*  
day! And a *solar* day!

Like God on Mt. Sinai, the voice of **KARLA KOLBY**, wife of Bobbie D and mother of the two combatants, rings through the sanctuary.

KARLA  
Junior! Wesley! No fightin' in  
church! Now get on down here,  
we're leavin'.

Both boys lean over the railing.

Karla jabs a finger at them then jabs it at the floor.

WESLEY/JUNIOR  
(in unison)  
Yes, m'am.

KARLA  
Jimmy, you okay?

JIMMY  
Yeah, Mrs. Kolby.

KARLA  
Well, get on down here as well and  
gimme a hug. C'mon.

Karla walks the boys over to J.T. and Linda as they shake the final hands.

Bobbie D shuts down the sanctuary and joins his family by the Bodeys.

BOBBIE D  
You guys packed'n'ready ta go?

Linda clears her throat as she looks at J.T..

LINDA  
We packed up last night and got up  
early to say good-bye to Richie.

The silence is broken by J.T..

J.T.  
 We'll change here, leave the keys  
 on the desk, and back-lock the  
 door. Then it's down the road.

BOBBIE D  
 Ya gonna work for your Navy buddy?

J.T.  
 Yeah. For awhile. It's a change  
 of scenery. For awhile.

J.T. and Bobbie D hug and back slap.

J.T. (CONT'D)  
 Thanks for everything, Bobbie.

Bobbie D nods, moves to Linda for a hug.

BOBBIE D  
 You take care.

LINDA  
 You, too.

Wesley and Junior solemnly shake hands with J.T. and Linda.  
 Karla hugs J.T. then breaks down as she envelops Linda in a  
 clinging hug.

KARLA  
 Ohhhhh. We're gonna miss you guys.

LINDA  
 We'll stay in touch. I promise.

The Kolbys leave, the foyer is silent. J.T. takes a final  
 look around. Linda turns to Jimmy.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
 Honey, go change in the bathroom.  
 We're ready to go.

J.T. is alone in the foyer. He starts to close the sanctuary  
 doors and stops. He stares at the pulpit and the huge cross  
 on the wall behind it.

INT. IOWA CHURCH - SANCTUARY

J.T. scowls as he clenches his jaw. The doors click shut  
 with a deliberate finality.

EXT. INTERSTATE - DAY

The U-Haul towing a car is just one more dot on the busy interstate cutting through farmland.

INT. U-HAUL CAB

The radio plays as the three Bodeys sit in jostling silence. J.T. forces a smile.

J.T.

A new day, a new adventure for the Bodey family.

JIMMY

Yeah, Dad. An new adventure.

Linda's smile dies as she looks out the side window. She whispers to herself.

LINDA

At least it can't be any worse.

She glances up at the sky.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Right?