

HIDDEN

Written by

Shaner Ortiz

Based on the short story  
*The Awakening*

Address

Phone Number

MONTAGE - INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR WRESTLING HIGHLIGHTS

- Freestyle global styles versus Folk (USA)
- Males and females training and competition, all ages
- Interviews about style differences, leagues, competitions
- Quick clips and cuts sunk to hyped up, motivational music
- Competitions - local, state, region, nationals(foreshadow)

END MONTAGE

CUT TO BLACK

INT. AUTUMN'S TRAILER - BEDROOM - DAY

BEEP, BEEP - alarm clock sounds on vanity, in bed, slowly awakening is Autumn Rux (Mid 30's), overweight, tall, brown, mid-shoulder length hair, snarled, unkept, just like her.

Shivering, annoyed, Autumn slowly tries to move, in pain, to get out of bed. Her room is panned, across to reveal no pictures, but a calendar, pill bottles, liquor, cigarettes, phone unplugged, her and her room in total disarray.

MONTAGE - AUTUMN AWAKENING AND PREPARING FOR WORK

- Song blares of "I'm a Mess" by Bebe Rexha (Rock)
- Looking for cigarette but out, throwing carton across room
- Stumbling across floor and empty liquor bottles and cans
- Table, pill bottles, clock = 7:42am, divorce decree papers
- Autumn - lethargically grabs coat, key, purse, and departs
- Zoom calendar: 'Start new job, 8am, guidance counseling,' date of September 8, 2030.

END MONTAGE

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

ROOM, ROOM of revving engines are heard, sunny, birds chirp, a siren sounds in the far background, as Autumn speeds down the street, emotionless, looking like a Zombie, in her late model, black, dirty, and beat up VW Bug, hard rock blaring.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE PARKING LOT - DAY

HOOOOOOONK sounded, as Autumn quickly cuts off other driver to 7-11 parking lot, parks, enters, and returns back out with a Super Big Gulp, drinking a coffee, and unpacking cigarettes, gets back in her car and on the road once again.

EXT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - REAR PARKING LOT - DAY

SCREEN from Autumn's tires as she enters the school parking lot, exterior signs reading 'Welcome to Eastern High School.' Dark smokes fills the air as Autumn's car pulls in and quickly parks in the back, school parking lot.

DINGGGGGGGG - morning bells sound, school starting soon, Autumn surprised and annoyed as she departs her car and makes way to back door, as all others approach the front doors and walkways.

A woman, Miss Diana (Tall, short, curly hair, mid 30's, average build, dresses like an old school librarian) approaches Autumn suddenly from side.

MISS DIANA

(Smiling & excited)

Autumn Lynn Rux, you made it! Great to see you my dear! How long has it been since we were both here?

AUTUMN RUX

Long enough, never thought I'd be back, actually

MISS DIANA

(laughing)

I know, right? Well, regardless, I want to welcome you back home, and to our counseling team, glad I could help.

FLASHBACK - AUTUMN POTENTIAL EVICTION

Autumn seen, sitting in her small kitchen table, reading all overdue bills, collection notices, all in red, and shut off notices, as she looks at her calendar, that says DIVORCE FINAL, as of August 7th, graduate school complete, FIND A JOB!

Autumn next argues with landlord of her trailer, outside the trailer, about the rent due, and him nailing an eviction notice to her trailer's front door, zoom in to read it saying "Remit past due amount in 30 days" or evicted, and walking away.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

AUTUMN RUX  
...yea, thanks again.

MISS DIANA  
No problems, I mean you're helping me out too, as this extra coverage for guidance, might finally free me up.

Autumn's head nodding, as they both enter the school's back doorway, sign reading 'Emergency Exit - Custodial Only,' as MSW Lady suddenly stops, looks over Autumn before entry.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

MISS DIANA  
Well, again, ...great to see you... Autumn, or now 'Mrs. Rux' to the high school students.

AUTUMN RUX  
...riiiiiiiight, thanks again, Miss Diana then?

MISS DIANA  
(Hesitatedly chuckling)  
Yes, ...correct, well, good luck, I hope you like it. I'm covering down for half of your caseload for now.

AUTUMN RUX  
Oh?

MISS DIANA  
Yea, I mean, until you feel you are up to speed. It should give you more time initially to assimilate.

AUTUMN RUX  
(Sarcastically)  
Oh, ...ok

MISS DIANA

You can have more time to research  
and review your case files hence.  
Your office is straight down & left

Autumn peers down hallway gives a nod to acknowledge, and starts to depart as Miss Diana continues talking though.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

...&, I'm just kitty corner across,  
on the far right corner, in the  
main office, if you need anything.

Autumn flashes up a peace sign as she turns to give almost a grin, and continues to depart, Miss Diana still staring at Autumn, mumbling like she is tongue tied & can't speak quick enough.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

(yelling back towards Autumn)  
Oh, Autumn, I left you a copy of  
all the upcoming guidance  
appointments on your desk, also.

Autumn keeps walking, but raises hand for thumbs up. MSW Lady remains standing, her head nodding, smiling, a hopeful stare upon her face as she continues to watch Autumn traverse the hallway, as kids rush past Autumn in all directions.

RINGGGGGGGGG - final bell sounds, as Autumn startles, just as she reaches Room 125. Angrily grimacing, Autumn shakes it off, plus her head, side to side, as she quickly enters her office to SLAM the door behind her.

INT. - EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - DAY

RINGGGGGGG - another bell sounds, as Autumn is seen waiting in line, paying for some junk food for lunch, carrying her Super Big Gulp with her, as Miss Diana approaches.

MISS DIANA

You know, we do have healthy  
options, like salads, milk, and  
more Autumn also.

AUTUMN RUX

(Unfazed)  
Yea, I'm good

Autumn finishes paying, grabs her pizza, french fries combo basket, and makes her way to a near side table, as Miss Diana, with a salad, and tea in hand, just watches in horror.

Autumn reaches far side table, sits down, never looking around, and starts to dig in ferociously, without tact, to devour her food; but, after bite one, she immediately STOPS.

MISS DIANA  
Mind if I sit with you?

AUTUMN RUX  
(mumbling surprise)  
Um...ah,...

Miss Diana, waits, eagerly, as Autumn finally finishes her first bite, and annoyingly agrees, motioning for Miss Diana to go ahead then, and take a seat across the table.

MISS DIANA  
Oh good, thanks! I've been so busy,  
I didn't even think I'd have time  
to take lunch again today, ugh!

SLOW MOTION: Miss Diana continues to talk, and talk and talk more, out loud, as Autumn just listens and watching, no longer eating, the pizza still in hand. Autumn's eyes sink.

SLOW MOTION: Miss Diana's continued speech turns into talking in tongues for Autumn, as Miss Diana appears to be so prim, proper, excited, and happy, which continues to ramble on and on, till finally Autumn can no take it anymore.

AUTUMN RUX  
(Stands up briskly)  
...well, sounds great, I better get  
going now, almost time to get back.

Miss Diana abruptly stops talking and eating, as she watches Autumn. Autumn quickly departs, throws her lunch into a trash can, out of the cafeteria, back towards her office.

SLOW MOTION: Autumn walking away is watched by Miss Diana, who's mouth drops, as also her head, looking only down, then to her food, that she slowly discards also in a trash can BOOM.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Autumn, drinking pop, continues down the hallway, as she passes by a trainer's room, who is busy trying to stretch a student, who's in pain. Autumn freezes and stares (zoom in)

## FLASHBACK - AUTUMN'S WRESTLING ACCIDENT &amp; INJURY

SLOW MOTION - Autumn is seen on wrestling mat, crying, unmoving, but grimacing in pain, as others panic, racing to Autumn's side SCREAMING for help and asking Autumn to respond, trainers and referee's trying to help.

## BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Autumn starts to blink, stops staring as the trainer starts to look up, along with the athlete, out to the hallway at Autumn.

Autumn quickly departs, lips quivering a little, as she makes her way down a few more steps to her office, and quickly shuts her office door - SLAM.

## INT. AUTUMN'S TRAILER - BEDROOM - NIGHT

AUTUMN RUX

NO!

Autumn jumps up screaming in bed, breathing heavily, sweating, looking around everywhere in darkness of her room. Her head starts to finally lower and nod, left to right.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

...no, ...no, noooo.

Autumn covers her face, as her head continues to shake back and forth. Seconds pass, till finally Autumn looks slowly back up and around to her alarm clock reading 5:32am.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

SHIT! Two more hours and back down there again!

Autumn grabs her covers and throws herself back down into her bed CRASH.

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, alarm clock sounds, as Autumn looks back over to her alarm clock once again, revealing now a time of 7:42 am, temperature also seen reads 60 degrees outside.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

DAMN IT! I just can't get a break!

Autumn jumps back up from bed, cringing in pain, grabs a two pills bottles, quickly pops and swallows a couple pills, washed down with her previous Super Big Gulp, and departs her bedroom, grabbing her cigarettes also, clothes, and bag.



EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

ROCK MUSIC BLARES in foreground of Autumn's car on the radio. A partially sunny day, as the sun can be seen rising from the East.

Autumn chain smokes her cigarette, as she quickly darts back down the road, constantly fidgeting and grimacing in her seat till quickly reaching and swerving into 7-11's parking lot, last second. She enters and returns back out with coffee and pop.

EXT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - REAR PARKING LOT - DAY

RINGGGGGGGGG, morning bells ring at the school, as Autumn just pulls in. She parks, slams her car in park, gray smoke still surrounding her vehicle, as students happily YELL, SCREAM, and talk LOUDLY outside as they all enter the school.

Autumn pays no attention to anyone, focused on getting to the backdoor, as all other students and teachers enter quickly to the front. As Autumn reaches the back door though, she's suddenly surprised, as the door opens last second for her.

MISS DIANA

Autumn Ruxxxxxxx, you are just  
barely making it in again before  
the final bell to start school

Autumn doesn't look up, but quickly tries to pass

AUTUMN RUX

Yes ma-am, no time to talk hence; I  
better hurry and get to my office  
in case you scheduled me any  
appointments.

Miss Diana keeps trying to smile, and give a response while still holding the door, but can not; she just closes her mouth, tries to smile, shakes her head and rolls her eyes as she starts to quickly give chase to Autumn, doors SLAM.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

MISS DIANA

Actually Autumn, your mornings  
continue to be clear, as I haven't  
scheduled anything for you as of  
yet

AUTUMN RUX

Oh really? Well, I'm ready whenever you can; otherwise, I will be in my office available for any ...walk in's.

Both continue to walk down the hallway as various students rush to class around them.

MISS DIANA

Well, we don't typically have many 'walk-in's' as you say, for our high school students.

AUTUMN RUX

Oh no? Well, that's too bad, because I think that could be another creative way to reach kids.

Miss Diana starts to respond but then stops, bites her tongue, cocks her head, and grimaces.

MISS DIANA

(In deep thought)

...well, I guess that might not be a ...bad idea to consider. Um, well, let me know if you get anyone then.

AUTUMN RUX

Sure thing, I keep looking around the hallways anyway for any stragglers, between lunch, breaks, CO-OP, or more, I'm ready.

Miss Diana stops walking, going pale white, just looking at Autumn. Autumn takes a few more steps to her own office and turns.

MISS DIANA

...right, ok, well, maybe we should start to target those kinds of students or times then ...possibly.

AUTUMN RUX

Yea, yea, couldn't hurt, and that's what we're here for, to help.

MISS DIANA

(questioning)

...right, I mean - right, you're right, we are; good idea Autumn.

AUTUMN RUX

Yep, I'll keep looking, we just  
need to give it some time is all.

MISS DIANA

Yea, ...right

RINGGGGGGGGG, final bell sounds. Autumn shudders a little,  
looks up at the clock, of now 8am, and back to Miss Diana.

AUTUMN RUX

Speak of the devil, time for us  
both to get to work now! So, I'll  
see you later then, bye!

Autumn turns, and shuts her door quickly - SLAM.

MISS DIANA

Right, yes, time to get to work  
myself then, good point!

Miss Diana quickly turns, looks at her wristwatch, composes  
herself, and hurries to make her way across and further back  
down the hallway to her own office as the hallways traffic  
dwindles and her own door shuts behind her too - SLAM.

SUPER: SEVEN MINUTES LATER

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - AUTUMN'S OFFICE - DAY

SNORING loudly is Autumn, at her desk, feet up, drooling from  
her mouth, fidgeting and grimacing in her chair

RINGGGGGGGGGGG - school bells sounds

AUTUMN RUX

AH! What the hell!

Autumn jumps up from her desk, looks around, papers upon her  
desk fly everywhere, as Autumn grabs her chest, trying to  
catch her breath, wiping her chin, and looking up at her  
clock on the wall.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

SHIT! Lunch time, thank the lord!

Autumn quickly grabs her Super Big Gulp, tries to stretch as  
she grimaces more, grabs two bills bottles in her pocket,  
pops a few pills, and quickly departs, although walking with  
almost a limp of sorts, slowly, lethargically.

## MONTAGE - AUTUMN'S DAILY WORK SCHEDULE - MUSIC PLAYING

- Music blares
- Autumn eating junk food at lunch, avoiding healthy
- Miss Diana avoided at lunch, and during day
- Hourly breaks Autumn taking smoke breaks at rear doors
- Guidance appointments for Autumn shown as she just stares, waits, and impatiently asks kids what they're going to do after high school, although all kids are unsure and annoyed.
- Autumn shown back at her trailer at home, sore, stretching, popping many more pills, smoking, and drinking liquor, as she passes out watching television on sofa, her trailer in utter disarray, dirty, empties, and more.
- Autumn continues to awaken in middle of night from nightmares, same responses as before each time in bed, or while on sofa, watching the alarm clock and annoyed
- Days continue to get checked off on Autumn's calendar at home with big, red checks, as week one and two are complete, that say days of work at high school.
- Next days, Autumn is seen in mornings sore, trying to stretch, take more pills, and make her way around her trailer, and then to work.
- Autumn continues to be shown during mornings to be listening to hard rock music, stopping at 7-11 for morning coffee, Super Big Gulps, and more cigarettes before heading to school
- At school, Autumn is still seen entering through the rear, emergency exit, custodial entrance, as Miss Diana catches glimpse of such each day, but is too busy helping others to say anything, just dropping and shaking her head sadly.
- In her office, Autumn continues to take more student appointments the same ways, in between naps, cigarette breaks, and lunch, and avoiding Miss Diana at lunch.
- Autumn, on way back to her office once again, stops, catching glimpse of Miss Diana from a distance, as Miss Diana works feverishly, while smiling, to help students into her office, conduct counseling appointments and more.

END MONTAGE

Autumn remains standing, motionless and emotionless, as she appears entranced looking at Miss Diana at a distance.

As finally Miss Diana looks up, and over to Autumn's direction, Autumn quickly looks away, and departs to her office.

Miss Diana continues her talking at the distance, helping various students, all at the same, time, but continues to peer at the distance with a broken smile now to where Autumn was. A finger raises to her mouth; she stares across & nods.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - DAY

Autumn sits and quickly devours her tacos and fries at a far table as suddenly CRACK, a tray hits the table from Miss Diana who sits down across the table.

MISS DIANA  
HEY Autumn...

Autumn stuns and shudders for a second, almost choking.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)  
What a great week, looks like your caseload continues to be growing, more and more kids interested in guidance!

AUTUMN RUX  
(murmuring as eating)  
Yea, lucky me...

MISS DIANA  
...yes, indeed! In fact, I have a special surprise possibly for you also coming up soon.

AUTUMN RUX  
(freezing)  
...surprise?

MISS DIANA  
Yessss, indeed! I have a special case that is totally in need of your specific skill set and expertise.

AUTUMN RUX  
...skill set and expertise? And, what would that be, exactly?

MISS DIANA

Well, wrestling, of course,  
competing within such, training,  
and or coaching, possibly,  
thereafter as a vocation!

Autumn quickly stands up and stops eating.

AUTUMN RUX

No, I am not here to talk about  
wrestling Diane. I don't want to  
even think or remember about that.

SLAM on the table, as Autumn's Super Big Gulp hits the table,  
and Autumn gives a long stare, and quickly, turns to vacate,  
throwing away most of her meal in the trash can on the way.

MISS DIANA

Autumn? Wait? Wait a moment...

Too late, Autumn is already have way across the floor of the  
cafeteria as Miss Diana continues to try and yell to finish  
her thoughts for Autumn still.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

Autumn, it's just a test case, one  
middle schooler that I've already  
been working with!

Autumn cuts the corner to quickly exit the cafeterias Miss  
Diana continues her stare and awaiting response, to no avail.  
Miss Diana closes her eyes, shaking head, hands flown up in  
the air thereafter, mumbling to self, pushing meal away.

RINGGGGGGGGG - school bell sounds to end lunch as all happily  
vacate the lunch room to class, Miss Diana remaining,  
unmoving, staring off into space in the same direction of  
where Autumn last departed from, only person remaining alone.

INT. - EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - AUTUMN'S OFFICE - DAY

Autumn, sitting, also is entranced, staring off into the  
distance, but unmoving, appearing in deep thought, looking  
out one far window at a distant to see the school exterior  
grow suddenly dark, as dark filled clouds move in.

FLASHBACK - EXTERNAL - DAY

CRACK, lighting strikes on another dark day, raining heavily,  
as a younger Autumn is seen on a gurney, being rushed towards  
a helicopter, as people scream, and race to get her onboard.

Autumn grimaces in pain, unable to move, eyes blinking wildly, as tears stream down her fearful face

The helicopter crew and two other women race to get inside the helicopter with Autumn, as the copter quickly SLAMS the doors and starts to airlift away.

Both guest ladies on board of the helicopter, tremble, shake, yell, and scramble about to try and get Autumn to talk, and assure her that she's OK; but, both ladies are panicked.

Both ladies continue to look around for answers from the crew, as they fidget, trying to talk to Autumn, reassure her more, but finally start SCREAMING the crew to hurry up, and then finally back down to Autumn, 'Autumnnnnnnnnnnn!'

RETURN TO PRESENT DAY

Autumn SHREIKS in her seat.

AUTUMN RUX

Ahhhhhhhhhhhh!

Long, deep breath, Autumn, wriggles in pain, in her seat, grabs for her back, tries to stretch, lowers her head, nodding in denial, side to side, as she starts to wimper, to her self, within her now cupped hands, quietly.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE & COUNSELING - DAY

Miss Diana appears from across the way to catch sight of Autumn now. She, Miss Diana, waits, watches, head finally dropping a bit, as her mouth tightly clenches.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - AUTUMN'S OFFICE - DAY

Autumn quickly stands up, and SLAMS her fist back down upon her desk, wipes her face, grabs her bag, and flings her office door open, as she angrily struts down the hallway to rear entrance.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE & COUNSELING - DAY

Miss Diana gasps, jumps up from her own seat, and dashes towards her door, leaving her counseling appointment. The student receiving counseling, remains frozen, mouth wide open, eyes bugging out of their head, hands extended.

MISS DIANA

AH! She's leaving! SHUTE!

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Miss Diana darts down the hallway toward rear entrance and Autumn. Passing by various windows, along the way, the climate outside quickly changes, as groups of dark filled clouds start to move in overhead.

RINGGGGGGGGGGGGGG - school bells sound once more, as the hallway becomes instantly crowded, filled with students, commotion, loud LAUGHTER, screams, YELLS, and high school students equally trying to quickly transverse through.

Autumn reaches the back entrance door and CRACK, kicks it open, and walks out, starting to make her way a few steps to her automobile.

CRACK, another loud kick is heard from behind, rear doors once more, as Autumn snaps to look back to see Miss Diana racing towards, out of breath, sweating, panicked.

MISS DIANA

Hey, HEY, where are you going  
Autumn? I have another appointment  
scheduled for you next hour!

AUTUMN RUX

Cancel it; I'm not in the mood  
anymore, going to take a break.

Autumn stops, looking directly at Miss Diana while slowly opening up her coat, to light a cigarette, and then blow the smoke right in the face of the Miss Diana, who just freezes in place.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

You ...got a problem with that  
there...Diana?

Autumn steps to Miss Diana, almost face to face, as Autumn cocks her head to the side, a deep stare to Diana.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

Huh? Were you going to say  
something?

RUMBLE over top, from dark clouds as Diana, looks down, lips pierced, blushing red, toes starting to nervously tap. Autumn cocks her head now the other way while waiting, still deep stare, awaiting a response.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

What you going to do ...Diana? Huh?



Diana looks back up slowly to Autumn, but freezes in place, fear upon her face, as her mouth starts to slowly quiver.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

I think you can handle it there  
 ...boss. Try to be a good team  
 player there; I believe in you.

No different than before, just  
 cover down on any remaining  
 counseling or guidance  
 appointments.

Miss Diana face mouth drops, her face going pale white while now staring back at Autumn, who devilishly grin, and then smile, as she throws down her cigarette, and quickly STOMPS it out, forcibly on the ground while continuing to stare.

Autumn rolls her eyes, sighs annoyingly, and turns, walking away, as Diana's face slowly goes from shock, mouth wide open, to suddenly, something else.

MISS DIANA

...hey, ah, um,...Autumn?

Autumn slowly stops, turns her head, still smiling very coy.

MSW LADY

So, you not want the money...then?

CRACK through the sky overhead, as lightning strikes nearby.

Autumn's face immediately goes blank, no more smile.

Both Miss Diana and Autumn are locked in another stare down from a few feet away from each other, no one moving or talking.

SUPER: SECONDS PASS

Miss Diana starts to finally blink, then cock her own head, and finally respond.

MISS DIANA

So, yea, um, ...I approve all the  
 staff's pay, bi-weekly, also, in  
 main office, including yours.

Autumn takes a big breath in, cheeks fill with air, but are not let out, holding breath.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

That's how it works here Autumn;  
you can help my department with  
coverage I need, when I need or not

Autumn breathes out finally, slowly

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

You see, Human Resources actually  
hired you, but only after I put in  
the request for you, specifically.

Autumn's eyes bulge.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

So, if you don't work, decide to  
leave, whatever, then you don't get  
paid, & it's noted on your eval.

Autumn squints a bit.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

Which I also do, for everyone. And,  
yours is due soon, because you were  
only hired on probationary correct?

Autumn's head drops, shaking side to side in defeat.

SLOW MOTION: Miss Diana starts to step towards Autumn, until  
they are face to face, nose to nose, both emotionless though.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

...It's like this Autumn: I went  
out on a limb for you, and didn't  
have to.

Autumn starts to slowly look back up.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

So, if you want the job and the  
money, then you have to help me,  
help you, as they say.

Autumn starts to slowly nod in agreement.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

And, that is not just when you want  
to work, or who you want to see,  
when, ...

Autumn bites her tongue, grimacing once more.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

I mean, in between desk naps, smoke breaks, & late, morning arrivals to sneak-in the rear janitor entrance.

Autumn teeth clench now.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

Yea, I see everything Autumn, just like kids do too. So, if you also want to stay, this is your only warning.

Autumn's lips pierce.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

Do we ...understand ...each other?

Autumn's head nods, up and down in agreement.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

Yes? Or, no, Mrs. Rux?

Long pause by Autumn, till finally a last gaps of air is given and response.

AUTUMN RUX

Yes ma-am, Miss. ...Diana.

Miss Diana stars to give a small grin, as her head nods also in agreement, a look over once more of Autumn, and quickly turns to depart back into the school. As Miss Diana reaches the rear entrance, she turns once more to yell back to Autumn

MISS DIANA

Oh, and Autumn, one more thing...

Autumn slowly starts to turn her head around, a look of desperation now, upon her face.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

That middle-schooler, I had mentioned before, in need of guidance counseling, has been added

Autumn scowls as her eyes squint once more.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

She should be in some time this week, in fact.

Autumn still stands in shock, a look of disgust upon her face.

MISS DIANA (CONT'D)

Good luck Mrs. Rux! I'll be down  
approving time cards later, if  
you're still around, I hope to see  
yours! Thanks, let me know!

Autumn's eyes roll, as her head shakes, as Miss Diana enters  
the back door, which quickly SLAMS.

SLOW MOTION: Autumn's head shaking, as music suddenly BLARES  
to take over the scene by Michael Jackson, "Dirty Diana," as  
Autumn kicks dirt, grits teeth, screams, and finally starts  
making her way, hesitantly, back inside, CRACK heard overtop  
(lightning).

INT. AUTUMN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Autumn stares down to something, as a drawer is open, but  
contents unseen within.

SECONDS PASS

Autumn reaches in, grabs something, and finally unpacks it  
from within a large box, unrolling what is then inside. A  
large medal, a first place chart; her lips pierce, taking a  
big gulp, eyes become sunken, and then start to slowly close:

FLASHBACK - AUTUMN'S WRESTLING CAREER

CRACK, lightning strikes, Autumn lying in a hospital bed, just awakening, trying to look around, then hearing a woman, outside her door, interrogating a doctor, muffled, outside her room's doorway.

Autumn strains deeply to move, look around and more, but cannot. But, she can just barely listen and see, outsider her room, the woman finally being told something by the doctor, and him.

Doctor is heard and seen then telling the woman that woman, outside, that Autumn's neck is broke; she may never walk again.

SCREAMMMMMMM by the woman, outside, as Autumn hears such, and cringes.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

SMACK, the drawer's closed. Autumn still cringing, now looking only down, lips quivering as Autumn appears to be murmuring something.

Spin left, Autumn feverishly grabs and checks all pill bottles on the vanity, next to her bed, till finally getting one that has a few pills, rushes to the kitchen to take a shot of alcohol, from a fifth of something and stops.

INT. AUTUMN'S TRAILER KITCHEN - NIGHT

Breathing heavily, standing in place, eyes close, body trembling, Autumn remains in place in now the kitchen, continues to drink the liquor, reach for cigarettes, starting to chain smoke and hit drags very quickly, trying to catch breath.

Finally, Autumn starts to murmur again to herself, as she slowly starts to drop to the floor, her head falling into her lap, bouncing up and down, and then twisting left to right in a disbelief fashion then, after.

Taking more drinks, and drags, Autumn stretches out, trying to get comfortable sitting on the floor, as she looks round her small, trailer, all in disarray. Her head starts to shake in disbelief again, and finally lowers to her lap, dropping her drink.

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP

AUTUMN RUX

AH!

Autumn quickly awakens to an alarm sounding in the other room, looks around, then to the calendar, her drink spilled, cigarette butts, pill bottles, and kitchen, and quickly tries to stand, although difficult, as she wriggles in pain to do such.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

Ahhhhhhhhh...

Autumn stands finally, rushes to her bedroom as the alarm stops, as she rushes back out to the kitchen once more, looking around feverishly. She grabs her purse, bag, and keys, straightens herself a bit, and quickly vacates.

EXT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - REAR PARKING LOT - DAY

Autumn pulls in, parks, grabs her things and makes her way to the rear, school entrance, as usual, entering the back doors.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY

RINGGGGGGGGGGGG, last bell sounds as Autumn's walking down hallway.

AUTUMN RUX

AH!

Autumn's eyes roll as her head shakes.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

COULD THAT BELL ...get ANY louder?!

Autumn's head starts to twist left to right, as her teeth clench tightly, her still walking.

A couple more steps and Autumn can see Room 125 overhead, for her office, and immediately starts to almost grin, relax her shoulders, and slow her pace. As she reaches her door, she takes now her time, to find her key.

But, as Autumn continues to look for her key, finally finds it, and sticks it in the lock, her door is CRACK, flung open.

HOPE GARCIA

MRS. RUX?

HOPE GARCIA is a young female, 14 years old, short, thin, sharply dressed, wearing glasses, hair long, but tightly pulled back and braided, conservatively dressed like a girl might from an all girls' school or catholic school attire stands.

AUTUMN RUX  
Ummmmmmmm, yea...

HOPE GARCIA  
GREAT! HI, I'm Hope Garcia; you can  
just call me Ms. Garcia.

Hope quickly extends a hand to shake, as Autumn slowly does such, shaking her head shockingly, and then slowly entering her own office.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - AUTUMN'S OFFICE - DAY

Autumn enters, turns to slowly put her things down, and make her way to sit down to her desk, and then back up to Hope again, who is still standing, a professional half grin upon her, Hope's face still.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)  
I certainly do appreciate you  
allowing our middle school paper to  
interview you today.

AUTUMN RUX  
(mumbled response)  
Well, I didn't have much of a  
choice...

HOPE GARCIA  
...I'm sorry,...what?

AUTUMN RUX  
...ahhhh nothing, no problem.

Autumn almost giving a sarcastic grin, as she starts to recline back in her chair, drinking her coffee, and repositioning her Super Big Gulp to see Hope better. Hope remains standing still, as she is motionless, partial smile.

HOPE GARCIA  
Yes, ...right, well, again, I  
appreciate it, as this is my first  
story to submit to the Confidant...

AUTUMN RUX  
...Confidant

HOPE GARCIA  
 (Hesitant smile and laugh)  
 ...yes, I'm sorry, our campus  
 newspaper at Otto Middle School.

AUTUMN RUX  
 You go to Otto?

HOPE GARCIA  
 (Nodding enthusiastically)  
 Yessss, one more year and then  
 finally coming here.

AUTUMN RUX  
 (dead stare, shock look)  
 ...huh

SECONDS PASS as long or full shot shows both females locked  
 in a dead stare, between Autumn sitting, and Hope still  
 standing, head nodding, small smile.

HOPE GARCIA  
 (Snapping out of it)  
 I'm sorry, I forgot to ask Ms. Rux,  
 is this a good time for an  
 interview?

AUTUMN RUX  
 (Devilshly slow, arrogant)  
 Well, actually Ms. Garcia...

Autumn's eyes quickly shift right to the main office whereas  
 Miss Diana is in process of ripping up some kind of dollar  
 bill, while nodding her head in agreement to Autumn. Autumn  
 sees such, quickly blinks, pierces lips and continues.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)  
 ...it's fine.

Autumn's arm extends to an open seat in front of Autumn's  
 desk.

HOPE GARCIA  
 Oh, thank you Mrs. Rux...

Sitting down quickly, as starting to posture herself and her  
 things, as still talking.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)  
 I was hoping now might work, as I  
 am so busy between all my other  
 classes, that I may have to cut us  
 short.



AUTUMN RUX  
 (Murmuring to self)  
 Oh, I hope so.

Hope continues to talk, as digging out a pocket recorder, set of pencil and pen, notepad and clipboard, and then repositioning her glasses, before looking back at Autumn, ready.

HOPE GARCIA  
 Mrs. Rux, I heard that you also went to Otto, ALONG WITH Miss Diana! Is that true?

AUTUMN RUX  
 (Nodding and hesitating)  
 ....yep, many years ago. Did "Miss Diana" tell you that?

HOPE GARCIA  
 Of course, and a whole lot more! That's why I'm here, after hearing all about your life while here at Eastern, and before at Otto actually.

Autumn remains unmoving, as her eye brows raise, a small grimace forms, partially, upon her mouth.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)  
 Yes, indeed, Miss Diana told me EVERYTHING about YOU Mrs. Rux, since the time you were both at Otto also!

AUTUMN RUX  
 Is that right?

Autumn starts to sit up.

HOPE GARCIA  
 (stops, slows response)  
 Well, to be honest Mrs. Rux, I was seeing Miss Diana for quite some time, not for guidance, but counseling.

Autumn's head cocks right.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)  
 Full disclosure, yes, I was not doing so well, home life, and Miss Diana really took me in and helped.

AUTUMN RUX  
 (Curious glance)  
 Ah huh...

HOPE GARCIA  
 She was the one that first started me writing, just a journal though to start. But, after reading such, recommended that I try writing about something else of meaning, a story, or editorial, and possibly submit it to the Confidant.

AUTUMN RUX  
 ...Really? Then, why are you HERE? Why are you wanting to interview me then?

HOPE GARCIA  
 Well, for a few reasons, actually. But, mostly because after hearing all about your Cinderella story!

Autumn leans over a little bit and towards Hope, as her eye brows raise once more.

AUTUMN RUX  
 Anddddd, what would that be, again?

HOPE GARCIA  
 Winning a national championship in wrestling, of course...

Autumn hesitates, small grin almost forming upon her face, but sits back in her chair once again, slightly, not moving.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)  
 To do that ALONE was probably against all odds, correct?

Autumn doesn't respond, just looks on.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)  
 But, for you to return to accomplish such, after all you went through, before such, was just inspiring.

Autumn's lips pierce.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)  
 I just don't know how you did it.

Hope's head starts to twist, left to right continuously, then starts to look down, till finally responding and head raises once more.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)

How one survives breaking their  
back, and still decides to return  
and go on to win a nationals,  
...how?

SECONDS PASS - as Hope just stares up at Autumn; Hopes head continues to twist left to right in utter shock, her mouth open. Autumn sits idly by, her hands now up to cover her mouth, not moving or responding in any way.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE - COUNSELING - DAY

Miss Diana, across the way, is in dead stare across also, mouth wide open as she waits, unmoving, still looking right at Autumn.

SECONDS PASS

FLASHBACK - AUTUMN IN HOSPITAL FOR TREATMENT

Autumn murmuring to self, as her eyes blink wildly; she is in an oversized traction machine that has her stretched out, eight foot in the air and spinning slowly, as directions to relax, it is ok, come overhead from another room.

A set of women in the other room, visitors, watch through the window as Autumn's body spins in the air at the distance. Both women's hands are upon the window, trying to pound on the glass, to get Autumn's attention, but can not.

Autumn continues to spin, as the pounding continues by both women, Autumn's body facing the opposite direction, as finally the pounding by the younger of the two ladies intensifies to hysterics and a final SCREAM - AUTUMNNNNNNNNN!

HOPE GARCIA

Autumn, ...are you OK, Mrs. Rux??

Hope sits suddenly in shock, mouth open, as Autumn's head suddenly SNAPS to the side, back from the dead stare at a distant, and now to Hope once more.

AUTUMN RUX

(Awakens, heavy breathing)  
....yes, ...of course, sorry. I  
must have had a Deja Vu or  
something.

Autumn shakes it off by twisting her head wildly, grabs a long, extraaaaa long chug of her Super Big Gulp, pops a few pills off her desk, and sits back again in her chair again.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

That was ...quite some time ago,  
the injury, right before I came to  
your school, actually, to Otto.

HOPE GARCIA

Really? You mean, you didn't start  
wrestling then at Otto?

AUTUMN RUX

Oh no, no, no, no, I first started  
when I was like seven or eight.

HOPE GARCIA

Really? But, ...how? Did they have  
some other elementary school team  
also at Otto?

AUTUMN RUX

NO, I wish. My brother was training  
another style of wrestling, at a  
club across town, in middle school,  
at the time. And, I just followed  
him.

HOPE GARCIA

Really? A different style? I don't  
think I understand.

MONTAGE - AUTUMN EXPLAINING AMERICAN YOUTH FREESTYLE

-- Autumn (V.O.) talks both her and Hope through an  
explanation and examples of club wrestling, for Freestyle,  
including all boys in the practices, always, all in red and  
white at other club's practices

-- Autumn shown trying to learn how to train, tries slowly,  
but constantly rushed to keep up or else, never quickly  
assimilating or successful, but happy, training alongside her  
encouraging, middle school brother still.

-- Autumn wanting to quit, but brother encourages her, and  
mother, plus grandmother, now identified.

-- Training for practices shown, how tough, long, and  
exhausting, as older brother succeeds, and Autumn doesn't

-- First match, Autumn gets sick, so nervous, and cancels  
going, last minute, just watches older brother.

-- Next match, Autumn gets sick again, but finally does match and wins, rest becoming history as sticking with wrestling training, alongside almost all boys at club, then middle and high school guys teams too.

END MONTAGE

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)  
(Eyes bulging, mouth open)  
Really?

AUTUMN RUX  
Oh yea, always, as very few during my time, across the city or even county, actually wanted to join all boys' sports teams.

HOPE GARCIA  
VERY ...INTERESTING, indeed.

Hope scrambles to look down quickly and scribble feverishly within her notebook. Autumn remains steadfast, her just observing Hope, nodding still in agreement.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)  
WOW, ...I never knew that you started to so early in life, and had to join the boys' team to wrestle.

AUTUMN RUX  
That was the only way, and only thing available with enough people, to allow us to train wrestling, actually.

HOPE GARCIA  
Is it ...still like that?

AUTUMN RUX  
For girls, yea, as I've never seen enough girls at any age, beyond in Texas or California, to have enough number to justify their own girls' wrestling team.

HOPE GARCIA  
Oh...

AUTUMN RUX  
Even if they did, who else would they compete again, as a team, in their own state thereafter, again, unless living in Cali or Texas?

Mouth wide open, head twisting left to right in utter confusion is Hope.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

That's what it took back then, and  
for most, still today, even still  
in our state of Michigan.

Lips pierce for Hope, as she too starts to slowly nod in now acknowledgement too, another dead stare between both ladies.

SECONDS PASS

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE - COUNSELING - DAY

Miss Diana continues her own dead stare across from her office to Autumn's (office), waiting, mouth open, unmoving.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - AUTUMN'S OFFICE - DAY

DING, DING, DINGGGGGG - a bell sounds, as both Autumn and Hope shrug in surprise.

HOPE GARCIA

AH! ...

Autumn pointing up.

AUTUMN RUX

Morning announcements.

As the overhead announcements begin, in background, Hope immediately stands up though.

HOPE GARCIA

Well, I better go!

AUTUMN RUX

Cool, ...

Hope quickly gathers all her things and makes her way to the door, and then turns to look at Autumn, who starts to stand.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

I mean, OK, so, no further  
questions then, I assume, I wish  
the best for your story then.

Autumn open up the door for Hope quickly.

HOPE GARCIA

Thanks again Mrs. Rux, I think I have most of what I needed from talking with Miss Diana even before. But, with your additional interview today, research I did online before, and here in the school archives, we should be good to go, yes, thanks again!

Hope quickly shakes Autumn's hand, and departs, running out of Autumn's office, into the main hallway, as Autumn flings around to step out also.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY

AUTUMN RUX

(frozen, shocked look)

..."should be?" What's that mean?  
Hey, wait...

BOM, BOM, BOM, BOM BOM, overhead music now, from Eastern High School Marching Band BLARES overhead from morning announcements as Hope races down the nearest hallway to the front door and BOOM, thrust such open to vacate.

Autumn stands motionless, watching, listening, and then finally looking over the main office, across the way to see Miss Diana staring back at her, at Autumn.

Autumn's eyes sink, as she grits her teeth, stares back at Miss Diana, steps back towards her own office, Autumn's, grabs the door and SLAMS it behind her.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE - COUNSELING - DAY

Miss Diana jumps a little out of her seat in surprise, eyes roll, as she gestures one hand to her heart. She continues to stare across at Autumn's office, and finally a hand raises to her mouth, as she continues her stare, as one eye squints.

EXT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - REAR PARKING LOT

RINGGGGGGGGGG, final school bell rings, as Autumn flings the back doors open - SMACK, and walks outside, directly to her car. Other car engines ROAR, horns HONK from outgoing students' cars, other kids walking, SCREAMING, LAUGHING overhead.

Amongst all the noise, final announcements are given overhead, as Autumn about reaches her car.

At a distant, Miss Diana, near the front doors tries to scream over tope of all the commotion and noise at Autumn, across the entire lot.

MISS DIANA

Autumn? Autumnnnnnnnn?? Autumn!!

No response from Autumn, too far away, just opened her door, quickly entered her car, peels away, and departs the parking lot, smoke everywhere from her muffler, along with annoying, other sounds due to a lack of proper muffling.

Miss Diana just stands, waiting, observing Autumn's hasty retreat from the far distance. Miss Diana's hands still in the air waiving to Autumn to no avail, as all other kids passing by in all directions say hi, or by to Miss Diana cheerfully.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

In her car, Autumn turns on the radio quickly to start to bounce and jam out to some hard rock music that BLARES.

Autumn drives down the road, feverishly, almost in a road rage annoyance of other drivers driving too slow, no turn signal, taking too long to get going through a light and stop signs, all seen, till finally, and still quickly, Autumn is home.

EXT. AUTUMN'S TRAILER - DAY

Autumn quickly darts into her driveway to park, looking up to see her landlord - MR. PETERS, a tall, slightly overweight, male, mid 60's, balding; his attire makes him look like a vagrant, with old, ripped, dirty, wrinkled clothes on.

AUTUMN RUX

...shittttttttttt

Autumn parks, turns off the radio, starts to open her door as the landlord quickly makes his way over.

MR. PETERS

Where's my money Autumn?

AUTUMN RUX

I'm getting it Mr. Peters.

LANDLORD MR. PETERS

"Getting it," is not HAVING IT Mrs. Rux! You only have a few more weeks or YOU'RE ...EVICTED!



Autumn's mouth quickly closes, a look of fear upon her face.

MR. PETERS

I have your partial deposit to move in, but need the rest, and first months rent, or else! We already talked about this a few weeks ago!

AUTUMN RUX

Yes sir, I know, and I think my first check is...

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

I know that Mr. Peters, I ...

LANDLORD MR. PETERS

...dont' want to hear it anymore, have to get to the bank and find out now why MY property payments and taxes might be late too, because of YOU Autumn!

Mr. Peters gives a nasty stare and quickly vacates. Autumn still standing, a look of disappointment upon her face. Her head starts to drop, as it starts to shake left to right, mumbling once more to herself.

AUTUMN RUX

...DAMN IT ...

Autumn STOMPS on the ground, grabs her things, walks to the front door of her trailer, FLINGS the screen door open - CRACK, as it hits the outside of the trailer, as she walks in and SLAM, goes her front door, as hard rock music inside BLARES.

INT. AUTUMN'S TRAILER - KITCHEN - DAY

Autumn races to start chugging, GULP, GULP, GULP, liquor from her cupboard, scrambling, while shaking, to get some pills also there, then across the floor to find more.

Autumn stands, in between drinking, to start to quickly light up and chain smoke also, a cigarettes.

Autumn's leg starts to twitch, as she listens to the music, but has a look of desperation, anger, and fear upon her face, as she finally stops, and starts to stare at a distant, starting to look entranced, as she takes one last, big drink, cringing.

FLASHBACK - AUTUMN'S INTERVIEW WITH HOPE AND INJURY - DAY

SLOW MOTION: Autumn observes a smiley, continuously talking, asking questions - Hope, as Autumn's just listens, sitting down, her one leg, underneath the table, nervously tapping.

Autumn's confrontation with Miss Diana, outside is reviewed, as Miss Diana steps up into Autumn's face.

Autumn lies in a bed, not in her trailer, but another home, her previous one with parents, as younger, in a special bed, with a total body cast, as a family of two older women, a man, and a boy, all sit around her, in tears, trying to assure her as she lies in bed, eyes closed.

A tear starts to form and travel down Autumn's cheek, as she grimaces in what appears to be anger or pain, and then opens her mouth to SCREAM at the top of her lungs, as hands from observers raise to their mouths, as others into their laps.

AUTUMN RUX

(Scream)

NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Autumn, sweating, breathing heavily, head snaps in all directions, as she looks around, a look of confusion upon her face. Her head slowly lowers, as she sinks to the floor, starting to whimper, and cry, to herself, on the kitchen floor.

HOURS LATER

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP - the morning alarm clock sounds once more, as Autumn, tries to get up, but can't, falling back down, cringing in back pain, her leg starting to twitch. She looks around, then at a clock at a distance that reads 7:43am.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

SHIT! Not again!

Autumn finally finds a way to her feet, scrambles into her bedroom, alarm stops, as she makes her way back out to the kitchen once more, grabs her things, bag, and keys, and vacates.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

RINGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGG, morning bells sounds, as Autumn makes her way down the hallway to Room 125.

Upon reaching it, she immediately gives a sign of relief once more, stops, and immediately goes pale white, seeing her door already open, Hope inside waiting.

AUTUMN RUX

AH! ...

HOPE GARCIA

Morning Mrs. Rux, how are you???

Autumn's eyes bulge out of their sockets, as she freezes in place in the hallway.

AUTUMN RUX

What, are you, ...doing back?

HOPE GARCIA

Good question, I spoke to my editor yesterday, and apparently I was still missing a few things.

AUTUMN RUX

...like what?

HOPE GARCIA

Just a couple questions, nothing big, should just be a few minutes Mrs. Rux, nothing to worry about.

Autumn's head drops in disappointment, frozen.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)

Can I come in then?

AUTUMN RUX

You kind of, already are! So, I guess so!

Hope starts to laugh, as Autumn does not. Autumn slowly enters her office, as Hope takes a seat, all her things being made ready, as Autumn looks, rolls her eyes, and SLAMS the door behind.

Autumn takes a seat, reclines, and just starts to stare with an annoyed look at Hope. Hope, in contrast, is still smiling, enthusiastically, and now ready with her recorder back out, clipboard ready, and pencil, and notebook, as she looks up.

HOPE GARCIA

So, my apologies in advance Mrs. Rux, but my editor is PRESSING me to hurry and finish this, but ...

AUTUMN RUX

But what????

HOPE GARCIA

Well, he says that the piece is  
...incomplete.

Autumn's head cocks to side.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)

Yea, I know, my own thought  
exactly. But, he wasn't even going  
to print it before, but now says  
he'll consider it if re-done.

AUTUMN RUX

RE-DONE?

HOPE GARCIA

Well, sorry, not re-done, that's  
not how he said it, but more  
complete as to the total content.

Autumn gives a confused look as she scratches her head, and  
pivots in her seat, taking a drink of coffee, as she pops  
some pills, still looking at Hope, and waiting.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)

Basically, he told me that my story  
premise could be incredibly dynamic  
and just what our readership might  
need.

AUTUMN RUX

...but?

HOPE GARCIA

But, that there are a lot of gaps,  
a lot of left out details about  
your life, your motivation, all you  
sacrificed to get to your goal, and  
loss you endured to complete it.

Autumn reclines all the way back now, her hands quickly raise  
to cover her mouth, as she takes in a deep breath and holds  
in, not talking, nor moving, as Hope waits, them both  
ensnarled in a deep stare.

SECONDS PASS

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE - COUNSELING - DAY

Across the way, Miss Diana observes both Autumn and Hope at the distance, eyes bulging, while waiting also.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - AUTUMN'S OFFICE - DAY

HOPE GARCIA

(Hesitant response)

Mrs. Rux, ...I really want this. I know you may not wish to talk about some of these things, previously you endured, but ...

Autumn lowers her hands, as she exhales finally.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)

I need your help. I just need to fill in some gaps of time, nothing else. I'm not trying to belittle your or any part of your legacy; I just think that other girls need to hear it, is all.

Autumn stands up slowly, as her head lowers. She starts to face the far corner, and freezes in place, her hands back up to cover her mouth.

SECONDS PASS

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE - COUNSELING - DAY

Miss Diana leans in and over in anticipation and falls out of her seat - THUD, from across the way.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - AUTUMN'S OFFICE

Over her shoulder, without turning, Autumn finally responds slowly, and lowly back.

AUTUMN RUX

What...do you want to know?

Hope's head SNAPS up further and directly to Autumn, her mouth wide open, eyes bulging, as she scrambles through her notes, taking off her glasses, as she starts to panic and stand to respond back to Autumn.

HOPE GARCIA

Well, um, yes, I, think,  
that...what my editor wants is to  
find out what you did, and were  
thinking when first injured.

Autumn sulks in the corner, head lowering, small gulp.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)

(Slowly, discretely)

How...did you hurt your back?

#### FLASHBACK - AUTUMN'S YOUTH WRESTLING & THEN INJURY

Autumn narrates, background music playing throughout, as a youth, her training with her brother, at the other club wrestling, as a youth, in elementary school, in the city. Autumn notes how her family denies her to join the club though.

Autumn begs, each week to return, to go back to the wrestling club once more, but only her brother gets to go. Autumn starts to develop a complex, acting out hence, in school, in class, getting in trouble, starting to hang out with bad people, doing bad things, like drinking, smoking, etc.

Autumn gets into a fight in school with another girl, and is called into meet the principle and her parents, who say that Autumn only has this one warning and next time expelled.

Autumn's parents fight at home about what to do, grounding Autumn to her room.

Days pass, and Autumn's behavior doesn't change at school. But, on lunch hour, her brother catches her skipping, drinking, and smoking, and smacks her around, and drags her back home to their family's house.

Autumn's dad is called home, and along with Autumn's mother, and then brother, the family debates for hours on what to do, where to send Autumn, and more. Autumn jus sulks the entire time, still with an attitude, and nothing to say.

When finally asked why? Autumn responds that because it felt good, felt like she was finally doing something that she liked, that she was good at. But, her family starts to screech and yell in horror, thinking that Autumn is talking about drugs, alcohol, fights, and skipping school.

Autumn finally speaks up again, to interject, stating that no, it felt good to wrestle, to train alongside her brother, at the club, stating that everything was fine when she was allowed to just do the one thing she liked.

Autumn quickly departs the table, SLAMMING her chair in, as her family looks remorseful. Autumn's brother, finally advocates to try it again to allow Autumn to wrestle, and the family denies such, stating that Autumn could get hurt.

Andy agrees, but continues on, as the family reminds Andy that it is an all boys team, no other girls are there, and Autumn was a big kid, already, big boned, meaning that she's have to train with other kids possibly older, and maybe still bigger too.

Andy agrees, but says he would be willing to be Autumn's only training partner while she is there. The family is in shock, and start to think, as Autumn listens intensely, up the stairwell, upstairs.

Autumn's parents reluctantly say they will think about it, but no competitions, no actual tournaments will be allowed for Autumn to actually have a match versus another male. Andy agrees, stating no problem, just think about it, and let him know.

As Andy departs, he says that Autumn's grades, previously, before now, were perfect, AP for honors type classes, no problems with teachers, truancy, never would drink, smoke, or fight.

Hence, Andy continues, as wrestling possibly honored and didn't allow or encourage any of those things, that this idea might be best for Autumn to get her back in balance, and Andy departs. The parents stand in shock, idle, not moving at the table.

Autumn finally shakes her head, and smiles, and nods, as she quickly departs back up the stairs to her room.

A WEEK LATER

Autumn returns back home with a progress report from all her teachers, showing no further problems in class, perfect attendance, and all grades of A- or above. Her mother and father are in shock, as Autumn pitches the idea of returning to the way she was, no problems ever again, if she can wrestle.

Autumn's parents stop, sit, stare at each other and wait.

SECONDS PASS

Finally, Autumn's father finally responds to Autumn, stating that they might agree if Autumn agrees to focus on practices and training. Autumn enthusiastically agrees, and starts to bounce enthusiastically, screaming out loud her thanks and hugging her parents.

Autumn quickly departs upstairs, stating that she needs to study if she is going to be ready for practice the next day with her brother once again, and races up her stairs, THUD, falling halfway and then racing still back up though!

Autumn's parents look to be in shock, still locked in a dead stare with each other, across the room.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)  
SO???? What happened then????

RING, RING, RINGGGGGG, the morning announcements sound, along with the BUMP, BUMP, BUMP of the school's fight song. Hope looks to be almost jumping out of her skin in anticipation, her toes tapping, as she stands, still staring at Autumn.

SECONDS PASS: Announcements complete and Autumn still remains in the corner, in deep thought, but finally responds back to finish her story once more.

FLASHBACK - AUTUMN'S YOUTH WRESTLING & THEN INJURY

Autumn starts to resume her story by now describing her training, rough, rugged, and around all boys, each and every week, all the cardio, conditioning, strength type training drills, activities, actions, and of course technique.

Autumn restates the face of how happy she was, in now returning back, training in the sport of wrestling, and being able to do such with her own brother. But, she also ensure to state how challenging everything was, both there, and in school.

Autumn reviews how she had to study more, more often, and later some nights, on the weekends, etc., And how on weekends she went the entire day to watch her brother, with Autumn's mom and grandmother, to route on Andy, who did fairly well.

But, Autumn equally noted on how she was also alone, most of the times, hence, no more time for friends with bad behaviors, partying, or more, and how Autumn also never had a true boyfriend, either, so things were really tough then over the next, actually, two years, from 4th till about 6th grade.



Then, one day, Autumn remembers that Autumn's brother Andy came home with a flier for an all girls and boys wrestling tournament on the following weekend, all boys' divisions still, but also a new, all girls' division too, one that had Autumn's weight class.

Autumn became immediately crazed and couldn't believe it, but her mother reminded her and Andy of what her father and Autumn's mother had agreed to, in Autumn conducting training, nothing else.

Devastated, Autumn starts to cry and depart to her room, and forgets about the conversation, becoming a big numb thereafter in practice and her training, plus in school.

The next day, Autumn studies up stairs and hears of a big fight ensue between her parents and Autumn wanting to compete, against "only other girls, her own age." Autumn's dad loses it, throws stuff, yells, and more, and leaves.

Autumn goes down the stairs to see her mother chain smoking and drinking heavily, but having nothing to say. Autumn gives her mom a big hug and stays with her that night, just on the sofa, watching television.

A FEW DAYS LATER

Autumn's mom is back drinking again, as both her, Autumn, Autumn's brother Andy, and Autumn's grandmother, all depart the night before, to the co-ed wrestling tournament, to weight in, out of town.

Andy weighs in and as he is, Autumn's mother continues to drink and drink, and watch, differently, across the room, to the female wrestlers that are weighing in. Autumn is not watching, but rather keeping an eye on her mom and her mom's drinking.

MOMENTS LATER

Over head an announcement is made that weigh in's are about to close, and that any girls that still wish to weigh in, that they still have another moment.

Autumn's mother, now obviously drunk, looks over again at the girls weighing in, look at the group labeled over top, with the sign of 6th grade, School Girl Division, 138lbs, and starts to stare up and down the girls in line, who look feeble.

Autumn's mother looks back at Autumn, up and down, as Autumn starts to worry, and raise her eyebrows waiting for her mother to speak, as grandma starts saying NO, absolutely not!

Too late, Autumn's mother drags Autumn over the weight line, up to the front, onto an open scale, with it reading 138.5 total. Autumn's mother looks around everywhere, then back to Autumn, telling her to take her shoes off QUICKLY.

Autumn takes off her shoes quickly, steps back on the scale as an official walks over to say weigh in's now are closing, final weigh in's only. Autumn, still on the scale, looks back up to see 137.75 upon her scale.

The referee asks if Autumn wishes to weigh in officially for the girls' School Girl division, for 138 lbs, as her mother quickly interjects, YEP, and here's her \$10 for her registration. Autumn goes immediately pale, as grandmother's mouth drops.

Referee takes Autumn's money, writes 138 upon Autumn's wrist, writes down the information on a chart with 3 other girls, and then asks Autumn's name, as she hesitates and then finally responds AUTUMN LYNN RUX, of Everett Wrestling Club.

Autumn's brother walks over and starts to smile, grab Autumn and give her a big hug, as the entire family quickly vacates weigh in's.

NEXT DAY

Autumn quickly beats the first two females, easily, and hence, celebrates in her corner, with her family. An official then approaches, and states that Autumn could be in a round robin and actually have one more match, which her mother quickly responds back saying OF COURSE, we're not here for nothing!

SLOW MOTION: Autumn takes the mat for her final match, her family watching from the side, as both girls tie up and start their match. Autumn continues to dominate the other girl for the first two periods, and then chooses down for the final.

Happy, smiling, about to win her match, her family routing her on from the sidelines, Autumn takes down and the whistle BLOWSSSSSSSS.

Autumn tries to stand STRAIGHT UP, and as she does, her opponent grabs all the way around her, from behind, in a reverse type bearhug, raises Autumn, up off the mat, and literally THROWS Autumn backwards, and over that same opponent's head, right onto Autumn's head and neck.

CRACK is heard throughout the coliseum by all, as the referee rushes to Autumn's side, plus two other trainers, the opposing coach and Autumn's brother. Autumn's mother and grandmother are frozen in place, waiting for Autumn to get up, but Autumn is not able to move.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

With her mouth on the floor now, and cringing from her mouth, Hope responds back to Autumn once more.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)  
 (large sigh in)  
 Oh no, she threw you; ...didn't she?

Autumn's head bobs in the corner, up and down, till finally she responds.

AUTUMN RUX  
 ...yes, the big difference I learned that day was that style of wrestling, how much more dangerous it was to do that Freestyle wrestling.

Hope awaits more, as Autumn finally starts to turn to further respond.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)  
 My mother never knew; I guess I didn't either.

HOPE GARCIA  
 New ...WHAT?

AUTUMN RUX  
 That Freestyle, was the style we were doing, where throws and rolls were not only allowed, but encouraged, hence, a lot more risk.

HOPE GARCIA  
 I ...don't get it.

AUTUMN RUX  
 That's the difference Ms. Garcia, as I was doing the style that was the Olympic style, not what typical middle and high schools did.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)  
 There's ...another style?

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)  
 Yes, come to find out, the other style boys do in middle school, high school, and college, is called Folkstyle, and is only done here, USA.

HOPE GARCIA

So, ...why couldn't you do that style then? I don't understand how this happened.

AUTUMN RUX

It wasn't offered Hope, only the Freestyle was, and usually, as you know by now, only for boys, This was my one chance, and I screwed it.

Destroyed look upon her face, disappointment clearly seen, Hope slowly sits back down, her head in her hands.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

I never learned the differences enough to prepare or counter throws. Our coach at the club then, was just another dad volunteer.

Hope looks up at Autumn.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

I mean, he was a great coach; I loved that guy, but no, very few kids new what style we were doing, nor in contrast to other wrestling styles.

Hope's lips pierce, as her head starts to shake

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

I should have never ...stood up. That something I learned the hard way in wrestling that style: you NEVER, ever ..., do that. And, I paid the ultimate price.

SECONDS PASS: Autumn remains standing, looking down at Hope. Hope is not moving, frozen.

RINGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGG, school bell sounds, but Autumn and Hope, this time, don't even flinch, nor blink, till the bell completes.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

Well, you better get going.

Autumn walks over to Hope to slowly help Hope up to stand, and then to the door to depart. Hope looks like a Zombie though, in shock, glossy eyes, not even grabbing her things. Autumn instead, collects all of Hope's things.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)  
Oh, don't forget your things.

Autumn quickly steps back inside the doorway to collect all of Hopes things, handing them to Hope, and then looks back at Hope once more, Hope still in a daze and not moving.

HOPE GARCIA  
(Mumbling)  
Well, ah, I ...um, thanks Mrs. Rux.

AUTUMN RUX  
Sure, good luck with your submittal  
Ms. Garcia.

Both girls shake hands quickly, as Autumn looks down, and then BOOM, shuts the door in Hope's face.

INT. HOPE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hope spring up in bed.

HOPE GARCIA  
(SCREAM)  
NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

DEEP breath, eyes bulging, breathing heavily, sweating, Hope is seen in bed, suddenly awakening, looking around, then at a clock on the wall, jumps out of bed - THUD, and WHISKS the covers back (wipe), running.

EXT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - REAR PARKING LOT - DAY

RINGGGGGGGGGG, the warning bell from school sounds, as Autumn is seen casually walking to the rear entrance, taking a last drag of her cigarette, as she throws it to the ground, takes a drink of her coffee, and reaches for the back door to open.

BOOM - back door is flung open. Hope stands inside, waiting.

HOPE GARCIA  
HOW?

Autumn freezes in place.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)  
HOW???

AUTUMN RUX  
(Confused and shock)  
...HOW, ...what? You indian or something?

Autumn pushes past Hope, as they both venture inside walking, Autumn still rush drinking her coffee.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY

HOPE GARCIA

HOW did you return? How did you even WALK again, let alone get your family to re-approve you to return to the sport, LET ALONE come back and then win a national championship in that SAME STYLE?

Both reach Autumn's office, as Autumn stops, looks down at Hope, collects her things and keys, opens the door, and then walks in. Hope waits outside, still giving a look of desperation and shock.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE - COUNSELING

Miss Diana is affixed from across the hall, now turning to catch the action.

SECONDS PASS

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY

No movement still from Hope, as Autumn finishes moving around in her own office without talking, finally taking another GULP of coffee, sitting down, reclining, looking up at Hope, then finally over, across the hall to see Diana.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE - COUNSELING

Miss Diana's head cocks to side, awaiting, not talking.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - AUTUMN'S OFFICE

Autumn turns to stare back at Hope, still staring back, waiting.

SECONDS PASS

Autumn finally, gives a reluctant arm raise, pointing to the open chair. Hope immediately starts to walk in, then stops, grabs the door behind her, without turning, and SLAMS it behind her.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE - COUNSELING

Miss Diana JUMPS, shakes her head, shaking her head in deep thought, and finally returns back to her work.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - AUTUMN'S OFFICE

HOPE GARCIA

HOW?

Autumn takes a small gulp, clears her throat, and finally pauses before responding.

AUTUMN RUX

My ...father found out, ...what had happened, and went berserk.

Hope's head and gaze drop.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

I was ...in the hospital for months, many more after that for rehabilitation. Everyone thought I was paralyzed, you know?

HOPE GARCIA

Yea...and?

AUTUMN RUX

Well, apparently it was a clean break, and after many tests, secondary opinions, and more, I was told that I may not remain paralyzed, if my body responded to rehabilitation over time.

Hope's eyes bug out of her head, as her hands SNAP to her mouth, covering such.

HOPE GARCIA

AH!

AUTUMN RUX

So, yeaaaaa,...

HOPE GARCIA

Weren't you ...FREAKED OUT?

AUTUMN RUX  
 OF COURSE, but I didn't really  
 fully comprehend what was going on,  
 as I was on morphine most the time  
 and a bunch of other drugs.

Hopes' head cocks to the side.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)  
 I guess I had just given up, after  
 first awakening in the hospital,  
 and unable to move. I remembered  
 the throw, and my injury. So, I  
 understood later what I had done,  
 to myself.

HOPE GARCIA  
 You mean, what your opponent had  
 done to you.

AUTUMN RUX  
 At the time, yes, Ms. Garcia. I  
 tried to blame her, wrestling, God,  
 even my parents; but, once I  
 realized that it was me, much  
 later, I started to look at my  
 accident a different way.

HOPE GARCIA  
 What...do you mean? What happened  
 later?

AUTUMN RUX  
 Well, after months and months of  
 hospitalization and treatment, my  
 body finally started to respond.

#### FLASHBACK - AUTUMN'S HOSPITALIZATION & THERAPY

Autumn is shown in pain, sleeping, fed through a tube, bored,  
 crying a lot, upset, her family with her at all times, mom,  
 and grandmother, sometimes brother, only at night, outside  
 her room, from father.

As months pass by, therapy starts to try and get Autumn's  
 body to respond again, including finally moving a TOE, as a  
 major success, which everyone goes CRAZY about! Then, all  
 toes and a foot, and leg.

More times passes by, more pain, more sacrifice by Autumn,  
 and hence, more use of pain medication through her pump,  
 connected to her bed! But, over this time, finally Autumn can  
 move her fingers, hands, and arms also, finally sitting up!



Autumn's family goes again NUTS, especially her brother, the biggest proponent and helper each time to help Autumn. Autumn each time is in tears, scared, but excited through emotions on her face, her body always twitching and reacting, hair longer.

Next phase shows Autumn finally standing UP, help of various male, nurses, her brother routing her own with her family, and her first chance to STAND, everyone going NUTS, before then Autumn almost falls, and is caught, all still smiling & laughing.

Months more pass, and Autumn now, is shown on her own, walking down hallways, by self, with aid of parallel bars on walls. Getting better, she then is seen in a physical therapy room doing the same, and finally in water, trying to move and swim.

Autumn next is shown walking now around the hospital, with a cane, and finally approached later, by her doctor, with Autumn's family. As Autumn is set down, her doctor, happily, reviews the success of Autumn's therapy, and approval for discharge.

Autumn's family goes crazy, Autumn happy, crying, excited, as Autumn's brother, mother, grandmother, and friends, collect Autumn, and return her back to the comforts of Autumn's home, seen lastly.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Hope's mouth - wide open, her head shaking side to side in dismay and shock.

HOPE GARCIA  
I don't believe it.

AUTUMN RUX  
BELIEVE IT; that's actually what happened.

HOPE GARCIA  
You were SOOOOOO LUCKY.

AUTUMN RUX  
(head shakes in agreement)  
...yes

SECONDS PASS

Hope just continues to stare at Autumn, Autumn back at her, as Autumn's head is still shaking up and down.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

That was ...one of the things I was talking about Ms. Garcia, that it was something that woke me up, surviving that injury, and what happened NEXT.

Hope leans over, a look of shock still on her face.

HOPE GARCIA

What happened ...next?!!

Autumn fights to keep back a sudden grin or smile, pausing before responding, trying to stretch, within her chair, before doing such, repositioning. Pausing, but then finally looking back up, leaning over her self, towards Hope, from desk.

AUTUMN RUX

I had ...survived it. But, my story was incomplete.

HOPE GARCIA

What do you mean?

AUTUMN RUX

I mean ...that I had JUST learned what I should have learned ...before, was doing great, before that ONE, HUGE, MISTAKE, and now as I was finally ready to become successful in my sport, in wrestling, I couldn't?

Hope's hands are thrown up in the air, in desperation.

HOPE GARCIA

Ahhhh YEA, HELLO? You were lucky to have even survived it, let alone back to walking again!

AUTUMN RUX

(hesitant response)

...yes, but I still needed something.

Hope in dead stare, impatiently waiting.

(MORE)

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

I wanted the right to finish, to see what I truly could do in wrestling, as ...it was finally the only sport I had done that I felt like I was good at, comfortable at, relaxed, energized, and more.

HOPE GARCIA

You mean, ...even AFTER breaking your BACK?

Autumn pauses once more, takes in a deep breath, and holds it.

AUTUMN RUX

...yes, I guess I felt cheated, kind of emasculated, or enslaved almost by my parents after that.

HOPE GARCIA

WHAT'D YOUR DAD SAY?

Autumn lets a big breath out, as she stands up, rolling her eyes.

AUTUMN RUX

Ohhhhhhhhhhhh, that was a much larger situation.

FLASHBACK - AUTUMN'S PARENTS FIGHTS & SEPARATION

Autumn describes the next, ongoing year of being at home, rehabilitating outpatient at a nearby hospital, at home, and returning back to school, and studying once more. But, also shows how during all of such, Autumn's father was in constant arguments with her mother, and started to almost disappear.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

My father, was apparently left twisted, after hearing of my injury, and that my mother, after drinking, had approved me to do such.

HOPE GARCIA

Oh no...

AUTUMN RUX

Oh yes, and they fought all the time after that, over the next year, till finally my dad just kind of stopped.

HOPE GARCIA  
Stopped ...what???

AUTUMN RUX  
Stopped engaging with us, with the  
family, especially my mom.

Hope's head lowers, in dismay, starting to shake, side to side.

Autumn's arms are thrown up in the air, in confusion.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)  
He ...was never the same after  
that. He started volunteering for  
weekend work, overtime each night,  
and started drinking even himself.

Hope's hands raise to her mouth, to cover it once more.

Autumn's head start to shake side to side now too.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)  
There was nothing I could do to  
really repair them, or what had  
happened. I was so determined to  
still get back on the mat, that I  
just studied and focused on that  
til my body fully rehabilitated.

HOPE GARCIA  
But, ...how long did THAT take?

AUTUMN RUX  
EWWWWWWWW, gosh, probably at least  
a year or year and a half.

HOPE GARCIA  
But, I don't ...understand. Your  
parents were NOT going to allow you  
to wrestle again, surely.

AUTUMN RUX  
NO, that is correct.

HOPE GARCIA  
So, what ...WERE YOU DOING THEN???

Big breath in by Autumn.

AUTUMN RUX  
To be honest, ...I didn't know,  
yet.

(MORE)

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

What I did know was that I needed  
that one more chance, one more  
opportunity to know the truth.

HOPE GARCIA

Soooooooo, what happened?

Autumn gives her first grin, and SLAMS her hand down.

AUTUMN RUX

I cheated!

Hope sits in shock once again.

HOPE GARCIA

WHAT?

Autumn starts to laugh a little, under her breath.

AUTUMN RUX

I started training with another  
club on my own, after school.

HOPE GARCIA

WHAT?

AUTUMN RUX

Yea, ...there were three other  
clubs in Lansing, and I just found  
out where the next one was that was  
holding practices right after  
school, that I could get to by bus,  
and WENT.

Arms FLUNG up in the air again by HOPE.

Autumn starts to laugh again.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE - COUNSELING

Miss Diana's caught in SHOCK looking across to see Autumn  
smiling, and Hope, fully engaged, watching such.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - AUTUMN'S OFFICE

HOPE GARCIA

(Standing)

HOW ...THE...HECK, did you do that  
without your parents finding OUT?!

## FLASHBACK - AUTUMN'S RETURN TO WRESTLING TRAINING

Autumn starts to describe and review how she altered her last name, joined the club, and paid for such out of her own savings, without telling her brother, or parents, or grandmother.

Autumn is shown, gathering the money out of a piggy bank, taking the city bus, and transferring to the other school, and downtown station, and then getting to practice each day early.

Autumn is shown training, slowly but surely getting stronger, better, and more adept to such, and working out again with all boys, the style difference, and location too, of almost getting lost each time to enter or exit, and get back home.

## RETURN TO PRESENT DAY

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)  
WHAT ...ARE YOU...TALKING ABOUT?!!

Laughing once more is Autumn.

AUTUMN RUX  
Yea, I guess I still had a little bit of 'bad girl' left in me, you could say, after all those previous times and people I was hanging out with.

Hope's head is back shaking, side to side in disbelief.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)  
I guess you could say I was lucky, that the club let me join without a parental consent though, since I paid all my money each month.

HOPE GARCIA  
No kidding! But, ...none of your family ever found out either?

AUTUMN RUX  
OHHHH YEA, ...my mom finally DID!

Hope freezes in place, sitting down slowly, eyebrows raised, waiting.

Autumn stops smiling, head starts to bob, up and down.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

Soooo yea, my mom found out, had apparently still been drinking, now using my old crutch, also, and limped her way up to the club to get me.

Horrified look on Hope's face, eyes bulging out of their sockets

HOPE GARCIA

WHAT ...DID YOU ....DO?

AUTUMN RUX

I didn't know WHAT to do. I thought she was going to put me BACK IN the ...hospital.

HOPE GARCIA

SO, WHAT HAPPENED then???

FLASHBACK - AUTUMN'S CAUGHT BY MOM TRAINING AGAIN

Autumn describes on how her mom shows up at the end of wrestling practice at the other city club, waits patiently, across the room, a psychotic look upon her face, as Autumn finishes finally, and slowwwwwwwwwly, in SLOW MOTION, walks over.

RETURN TO PRESENT

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)

AND????

AUTUMN RUX

I ...I, ...don't ...KNOW what happened, to be honest

Autumn starts to laugh again, unconsciously.

HOPE GARCIA

WHAT? What do you mean??

Autumn pauses as she grimaces, sits back down and reclines once more.

AUTUMN RUX

All I remember is my mom walking me to the car and NOT talking, smelling like she had been drinking all day or something.

HOPE GARCIA

Ummmmmm, ok, and?

AUTUMN RUX

And, then ...the next thing you know I was being led up the stairs to the other city club for Lansing, to their wrestling practice, at night!

Hope gives a frazzled look to Autumn.

HOPE GARCIA

WHAT?!

Autumn gives a coy grin and looks of dismay herself.

AUTUMN RUX

Yea, I didn't have any idea WHAT was going on, but I knew that if I spoke, I was probably going to be in WORSE TROUBLE EVER. So, I just followed her and ...waited.

Hopes eyes bulge out of the sockets once more.

HOPE GARCIA

SO, ...WHAT HAPPENED THEN????

AUTUMN RUX

Well, ...we waited and waited, and finally that club's practice begun.

HOPE GARCIA

This was the club you used to be at with your brother?

AUTUMN RUX

NO, nor was this one the one that be BOTH ended up joining after, either, to note. But, on this night, something else was amidst.

HOPE GARCIA

What's THAT supposed to mean?

AUTUMN RUX

It means that we had no reason to be up at this other club, but we were not there to wrestle, nor my brother; my mom was looking for something.

HOPE GARCIA

LIKE WHAT???



RINGGGGGGGGGGG, morning announcements come on, as the school's fight song starts to BLARE with the BOOM, BOOM, BOOM!

SECONDS PASS

Announcements complete, as finally Hope stands, impatiently pacing till Autumn responds once more.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)  
Like WHATTTTTTTTTT?

AUTUMN RUX  
Well, come to find out, it wasn't something, but ...actually SOMEONE.

Pause by Hope, before responding once more, a look of confusion upon her face, eye brows raising.

HOPE GARCIA  
Who?

AUTUMN RUX  
Coach Tisdale

Hope freezes once more in place, emotionless, as she sits back down, dead stare into the distance, not talking.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)  
My mother actually KNEW the truth, knew that I was not going to stop till I knew it, and knew that Shane, or Coach Tisdale, was the only one to provide it to me, in that style, or Freestyle, as Shane had started to make his life around that style after high school, becoming more of specialist with it, and with coaching females, come to find out!

Hope sits back, hand to over, to cover her mouth, not speaking.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)  
So, that was it, my mother, in her drunken rage, waited and waited till Shane, or Coach Tisdale appeared at the other club, and confronted him.

HOPE GARCIA  
What happened?

## FLASHBACK - AUTUMN MEETS NEW COACH SHANE TISDALE

Autumn describes how Coach Tisdale arrived in late, everyone saying hi and kind of mobbing him at the door, till finally Autumn's mom pushed through to say hi and see if Shane remembered her, and Autumn's mom's brother - Paul, from school.

Shane agrees, blushes, and speaks some kind words about Autumn's uncle then, Uncle Paul, and how Shane remembered training Folkstyle for their middle and high school together, out in the other city, and having great success together.

Autumn's mom agrees, says kind words about Coach Shane, as Autumn patiently listened in to learn more about him, finding out that Shane was the only county champion, at the time, for Uncle Paul and their team there, in the other city.

Shane is chagrined and blushes once more, appreciative to hear Autumn's mom remember back that far as to how things used to be wrestling for him. And, then Autumn's mother, finally inquires further to see if it was true.

## RETURN TO PRESENT

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)

(Confusion)

If ...what was true?

AUTUMN RUX

If it was true that ...Shane, Coach Tisdale, was no longer training or competing himself, or coaching others in the school style of wrestling, or Folkstyle.

HOPE GARCIA

What'd he say???

AUTUMN RUX

He told my mom no, not really as much anymore, because indeed, he now specialized in coaching Freestyle, the Olympic style, and girls.

HOPE GARCIA

REALLY?

AUTUMN RUX

Yep, and my mom's eyes just LIT UP. That was the first moment since she picked me up that I truly felt that I wasn't returning BACK TO the hospital.

Hope starts laughing, as Autumn starts to herself.

HOPE GARCIA

So? What happened then?

AUTUMN RUX

Again, I don't really recall everything AFTER that. But, what I do remember my mom getting in Shane's face.

HOPE GARCIA

WHAT?

AUTUMN RUX

(laughing)

Yea! That happened! I didn't know HOW much she had to drink that day, before that, nor how ANGRY she still was, at me, but I didn't know WHAT was going to happen next.

HOPE GARCIA

SO! What happened then????

AUTUMN RUX

She ...introduced me

FLASHBACK - OFFER TO COACH TISDALE FOR AUTUMN'S CAREER

Autumn, as younger, shorter hair, smaller, lighter weight, shy, not making eye contact, not talking, but still TALL, in stature, is yanked over to meet Coach Tisdale, by Autumn's mom, and then an offer is made by Autumn's mom, almost whispering.

HOPE GARCIA

What ...did ...she say???? What was the offer??

AUTUMN RUX

IRONICALLY, my mother did NOT want me to train wrestling ever again, but said she MIGHT, if I could only train with SHANE.

Hopes mouth drops.

Autumn gives a coy grin.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

Yea, I looked JUST like that, like you now, thinking that I just HIT THE LOTTO, possibly not getting grounded for life, possibly return to wrestling, and get a coach that specialized in Freestyle, plus for girls, so that I never became injured like that AGAIN.

BOOM, Autumn pounds her desk with her hand. Hope startles and jumps in shock. They both start to smile.

HOPE GARCIA

I...don't believe it.

AUTUMN RUX

I didn't either, at the time. But, at that moment, I couldn't stop smiling; I couldn't believe what was happening. And, I guess I just ...felt something immediately with Coach.

HOPE GARCIA

What? What ...do you mean?

AUTUMN RUX

I mean, I kind of blacked out, don't really remember too much about what happened thereafter, with our initial training and such.

HOPE GARCIA

Mmmm ok, but ...

AUTUMN RUX

But, I remember that moment, as my mom gave that offer to Shane, and then him, in turn, looking at me, up and down, and giving his OWN offer back to her.

HOPE GARCIA

What was the offer?

AUTUMN RUX

I couldn't really...hear it all, but the last thing he said, as he looked back, directly at me, as speaking to my mom still, had me convinced.

## FLASHBACK - AUTUMN'S OFFER BY SHANE FOR CAREER

Autumn describes how Shane stops, steps to Autumn, cocks his head, and then responds back to her mother, as still looking at Autumn, and THROUGH her. His response was simple, in that he said he would GUARANTEE to get her past states, to TAKE nationals, and would ensure to teach her everything to properly defend herself to NEVER get hurt again.

## BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Hope start so cry, as Autumn stands and turns, trying to fight the tears herself, speaking from over her shoulder now, after a few second pause still, but having problems composing her words.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

My heart...kind of BROKE on that day.

Tears start to FLOW down Hopes face now.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

Coach came into my life right when I most ...needed HIM, and said exactly what I wanted to hear, and what my mother NEEDED.

Hope tries to wipe away the tears quickly and compose herself, as Autumn turns finally, to look directly in Hopes' direction once more.

AUTUMN RUX (CONT'D)

That's HOW, Ms. Garcia, that ...I was able to survive, rehabilitate, return to wrestling, and finally have my mother convince herself, that I was destined to go on for more, in Freestyle, but only with Coach.

RINGGGGGGGGGGGGG, school bell sounds, as Hope quickly tries to compose herself further, wipe away the final tears, and quickly make her way towards the door, then stops, and turns.

HOPE GARCIA

Thank you ....Mrs. Rux, ...

Autumn pauses, but then starts to finally nod, up and down, in agreement.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)

I know now why my editor wanted more.

(MORE)

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)

I think he knew what I did not,  
that there was much MORE to your  
story. It's truly remarkable.

Autumn finds back another tear, a coy grin, coming to her face, as she quickly stands, makes her way towards Hope, and puts out her hand, to shake.

Hope waits, looks at Autumn, and Autumn's hand, not moving.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE - COUNSELING

Miss Diana is literally leaning up, upon the glass looking over to Autumn's office, eyes bulging, eyebrows raised, with a crazy look of desperation at this point.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - AUTUMN'S OFFICE

Hope leaps forward, and directly into a large HUG to Autumn - THUD. Autumn's still standing, arm extended, a look of confusion and shock upon her face.

SECONDS PASS

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE - COUNSELING

Miss DIANA, with her tongue sticking OUT now, head shaking up and down, smiles and starts to SCREAM from the distance  
yes!!!

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - AUTUMN'S OFFICE

Still being hugged tightly, as Hope is crying, Autumn listens to such, looks around, then down to Hope, and finally over to Diana, from the distance, in the main office, trying not to smile, and finally back down to Hope again.

Eyes roll, and finally Autumn gives Hope a quick, BIG HUG, lifting her up, in the air, as a surprising SCREAM is given by Hope.

HOPE GARCIA

AHHHH!

As quickly lifted up, Autumn returns Hope back to the ground, stops hugging her, and sets her back in front of Autumn once more, now leaning down and into Hope's face.

AUTUMN RUX

That, my dear, is what we call a  
'lift' in Freestyle wrestling, to  
note.

Hope, in shock, eyebrows raised, still trying to wipe the  
tears back and collect her things once more, sits startled  
and then finally responds.

HOPE GARCIA

Was ...that how you were thrown and  
injured Mrs. Rux?

AUTUMN RUX

...yea, it was similar, actually.  
But, that will never happen again.

Hope nodding, staring at Autumn for a moment, before  
responding.

HOPE GARCIA

Because of ...Coach Tisdale?

AUTUMN RUX

CORRECT, ...Shane's the one that  
actually saved me, and that  
Freestyle wrestling career to  
nationals.

Almost holding hands, arms extended, Hope steps back a  
little, continues to look at Autumn, and then responds  
finally again.

HOPE GARCIA

Thank you Mrs. Rux, for everything.

AUTUMN RUX

For what? I don't think I really  
did ...anything, actually.

HOPE GARCIA

More than you probably KNOW ma-am.

Autumn head cocks left, in a little bit of confusion, but  
still a small grin.

HOPE GARCIA (CONT'D)

And, now I have my all for my final  
story submittal! So, thank you,  
thank you, and wish me luck Mrs.  
Rux!

Hope jolts forward into one last hug to Autumn - THUD, grabs  
her, and then looks up, as she steps back once more.

AUTUMN RUX  
You can call me Autumn, Ok?

Hope smiles, nods, and quickly turns, and immediately departs, running towards the front door.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE - COUNSELING

Miss Diana's going berserk in watching Hope, running by the front, main office, out to the school's front doors, clapping, smiling, and bouncing about.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY

Outside her office now completely, Autumn watches also, down the hall, seeing Hope run to the front doors, quickly and feverishly waive to Miss Diana, in the main office, then BOOM - thrusting the front doors open to exit the building.

SLOW MOTION: Autumn continues to watch, staring to nod, tries to hold back the smile, but can't, and starts to grin, shake her head, look down, laugh, look back up, to the doors, now starting to shut, and finally over to the main office.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN OFFICE - COUNSELING

Miss Diana's smiles, laughter, bouncing about and clapping quickly stops, as she turns to see Autumn across the way, and throw up a middle finger to her, still smiling while doing such, and then CRACK, closing her shades to her office.

INT. EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY

AUTUMN RUX  
(Playful shock gasp)  
AH!

**CUT TO BLACK**

(CONT'D)



(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

Autumn

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)