

GOING HOME

Written by

John Lente

Line 1: Loss doesn't work the same for everybody. We don't get to pick the things that fix us, make us whole, give us purpose.

Line 2: Now is the envy of all the dead.

Line 3: We have to live with the choices we make, but sometimes we have to die with them too.

(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

EXT./INT. CAR - DAY

FITCH, 30's, White, male, clears the passenger seat of gas station snack food and trash to make room for T'NIYAH, 20's, Black, female to get in. His glasses, knit scarf, and pasty skin contrast with her ripped denim jacket repaired with punk rock patches and oversized safety pins, the linked jewelry in her face, and her partially-shaved and dyed hair.

T'NIYAH

Hey, thanks, ya know? I didn't think I'd find a ride before lunch, you know what I'm sayin'?

FITCH

It's no trouble. You're doing me a favor, really.

Fitch's and T'Niyah's breath fogs in the snowy morning air. He guides the car onto the highway and gets up to speed.

T'NIYAH

No bigs that you ain't going all the way to St. Paul. Every bit helps, you know what I'm sayin'?

FITCH

Sure. What's in St. Paul?

T'NIYAH

My fams. It's my little brother's graduation. I ain't seen him in years, since I left home. My moms and me still ain't alright, but I kept in touch with D'Vante.

FITCH

That's nice.

T'NIYAH

Yeah, he's so smart. Like, book smart. He's going to college and everything, and not even for football. He got a scholarship for engineering or some shit.

FITCH

Good for him. I bet he's looking forward to seeing you.

T'NIYAH

Oh, he don't even know I'm coming! I can't wait to see the look on his face, know what I'm sayin'?

FITCH

Yes. Yes, I do.

T'NIYAH

What about you? Whatchoo doing out here?

FITCH

I'm going to see my wife.

T'NIYAH

Oh, she stay out here?

FITCH

Yes. She's been here for a year now. A year today. (beat) You know, they say that now is the envy of all the dead.

T'Niyah quietly clutches her shoulder bag closer to herself, wary of Fitch's weird vibe.

T'NIYAH

What's that even mean?

FITCH

The dead wish they had a now to live in, but all they have is the past. Life is just one now after another, strung together until you run out of nows.

T'Niyah leans over to see the climbing speedometer as Fitch slowly accelerates, recklessly passing cars without signaling and starting to lose traction on the icy road.

T'NIYAH

Hey, uh, maybe -

Fitch undoes his seatbelt, triggering the alarm in the car.

FITCH

It wasn't her fault. We have to live with the choices we make, but sometimes we have to die with them too. Thank you for being with me today. I didn't want to be alone.

He pops her seatbelt lock and yanks the wheel, spinning the car out of control. T'Niyah's screams merge with the screeching of the tires as they arrive at their final "now" together.