

Jawbone Extract
Isabella Waldron

JAWBONE — In an old mining town in the Pacific Northwest, 17-year-old Frankie, Sofia and Lilah attempt to navigate growing up amid hauntings and ghost stories. "Jawbone" explores the nexus between ghost stories and sexual assault, asking which stories people choose to believe and which they don't. Extract comes from end of play after the death of town patriarch 1920 and Frankie's assault.

FRANKIE

(tweaking)

shoot I should have been there. I should have is there a funeral or anything for 1920 like we should be helping or doing *something* like he taught me my first ghost story and Pa is probably freaking out oh god Pa did he come looking for me did he shit where's Pa I need to find Pa I need to talk to him I need/

LILAH

he's taking care of it

FRANKIE

I need to talk to him I need to can someone please find my other shoe are they at the campsite still is everyone there is Pa shoot shoot shoot shoot why are you just sitting there we need to go we need to

(her breathing accelerates)

shit how do you tell about hypothermia again? how do you tell if you have—

LILAH

Frankie.
Steady.
What happened?

FRANKIE

what do you mean what happened? 1920 died is what happened, Lilah

LILAH

you know what I mean

FRANKIE

stop being freaky for once please this is not the time

(FRANKIE spins around, brushes a phantom moth off her)

SOFIA

dude are you okay? you're like malfunctioning...

LILAH

Frankie? Frankie, stop.

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(LILAH holds FRANKIE in place)

LILAH

I see the moths. I see them too.

(SOFIA looks between them, back to LILAH)

SOFIA

wait
what do you know that I don't?

LILAH

...

SOFIA

what is going on?

FRANKIE

nothing is going on

SOFIA

I'm not dumb. what happened?

FRANKIE

...

SOFIA

Jesus I'm supposed to be your best friend
What Happened?

FRANKIE

THAT'S THE THING!

(FRANKIE breaks away from LILAH)

FRANKIE

the thing is that
NOTHING HAPPENED.

nothing happened
and I'm telling myself that, I tell myself
you're dumb
Frankie, you're dumb
nothing happened
or nothing
hap—

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he wasn't
he didn't
it wasn't

LILAH

(so gently)
did he hurt you, Frankie?

SOFIA

what?

FRANKIE

I don't think he did
I think I'm making it up
in my head
it's a story
and it's not real
it's just —
and it's not real
because it wasn't
because
I think my body liked it

I think my body liked it
when he touched me
I liked being
but I didn't want
and I told him I didn't want to

but my body
was warm and like I was turned on I think
and maybe he felt that
you know
so he
that I was buzzing a little
when he put his fingers in me

you liked it you LIKED it
so I don't know why I'm being a BABY ABOUT IT
because it didn't
he didn't
rape
me
I wasn't raped
right?
lilah?

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right?
it was *me* I was buzzing and warm and I did it

right?

(LILAH is quiet. A terrible silence. FRANKIE looks at her friends and sobs. It is ugly. She falls into LILAH's arms)

it's okay
it's okay

LILAH

oh Frankie

SOFIA

you can't say anything
please don't say anything

FRANKIE

I won't
I won't
...

SOFIA

but you should, Frankie
you should tell the police or

no cuz it wasn't that. it wasn't—

FRANKIE

that's okay! it's okay. Or not the police then but
anyone?

SOFIA

I told you

FRANKIE

but like someone who can help?

SOFIA

you don't want that

FRANKIE

what do you mean
of course I do

SOFIA

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FRANKIE

No. You Don't.

(Oh.)

SOFIA

no
no No NO
oh God
oh God Frankie I'm so sorry
Fuck him
Fuck Him Frankie
That's not okay. That's fucked
He's fucked okay?
Please don't be quiet because of me
please please please don't —

LILAH

I think it's best to just keep it between us

(The moth begins flapping its wings rather frantically)

SOFIA

the fuck?

LILAH

it's dangerous to —

SOFIA

it's dangerous? it's dangerous to just have rapists out there / prowling around and —even if they're people you know it just —

FRANKIE

(quiet)

don't say
that

LILAH

that's how it works
that's how it WORKS

SOFIA

It works the same out there, Lilah! In the big world beyond here you keep talking about? Works the same out there!

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LILAH

I KNOW
YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW
There has to be somewhere—

SOFIA

Lilah
what the FUCK/
are you talking about

LILAH

STOP SAYING THAT WORD

SOFIA

FUCK?!

LILAH

Yes!

SOFIA

this is not the time to be watching your fucking manners! it's just
A WORD

LILAH

it's a stupid word
it's a stupid UGLY word
and it doesn't make you cool to say it
it makes it UGLY!
it makes sex
ugly
all those synonyms!
it doesn't *mean* anything
fuck
is to ruin or damage something
to ruin
fuck:
you're ruined
Fuck:
you're damaged
or Fuck-ing:
you're ruin-ing
you're damag-ing
and *you're* fucked?:
you're in deep and it's gonna get
worse and worse

SOFIA

(poking back at LILAH)

fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck
fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck
fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck
fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck
(takes a breath)

fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck
fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck

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or used to express annoyance
or *CONTEMPT*

FUCK

FUCK

FUUUUUUUCK you
fuck you fuck you fuck
you

fuck fuck fuck fuck
fuck fuck fuck fuck

fuck

woah

SOFIA

FRANKIE

...

SOFIA

...

LILAH

...

sorry

I'm sorry Sofia

I don't mean fuck *you*

I

SOFIA

...

LILAH

I just don't want people to hurt you Frankie I don't want them to hurt you more

SOFIA

but if he's just walking around like a fu —

sorry —

like a —

LILAH

my mom's haunted you know

(The moth flits around LILAH, grazing her skin)

FRANKIE

what?

SOFIA

what do you mean

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LILAH

that ghost story she told?
at my birthday?
with the man in the bedroom
and the woman in the mirror?
uh
it's not ghosts.
it uh
it had an ending?
which was me
...

SOFIA

but your dad lives in

LILAH

no
he doesn't

FRANKIE

why didn't you ever tell me?

LILAH

I didn't really want to know it?
um
I wish she hadn't ever told me
sometimes I get these nightmares
where he comes to the door and she answers it
and he grabs at me
um
but I wake up
I get to wake up

FRANKIE

why didn't she ...

LILAH

well she moved
when she was pregnant
she says uh
that she read about Jawbone in the newspaper
and thought uh
"people are scarier than ghosts" anyway
so

SOFIA

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Lilah I'm —

LILAH

please don't say sorry
it wasn't me it didn't
happen to me
but
uh
people were cruel though
even after it happened?
when she told them? they didn't —
They Don't Believe You.
if you tell them.
it just makes it
dangerous
you know

FRANKIE

...

LILAH

you know?

FRANKIE

...

SOFIA

what do you mean, Lilah?

(The moth begins to grow behind LILAH, beating its wings. FRANKIE notices)

FRANKIE

Lil—

(PA approaches; stops at a distance...maybe he hears the girls; maybe he only senses this is not for him to intrude upon)

LILAH

I just
some things are safer if we don't talk about them
you know
not everyone's gonna just go along with it

SOFIA

that's not true

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it's not safer

FRANKIE

you guys

LILAH

I'm just saying that—

SOFIA

he didn't even—
god, he didn't even look at us weird
like everything was fine and —

FRANKIE

STOP

FRANKIE

stop stop stop

*(A moth unfurls its wings until it takes up the stage
The soft humming of women's voices
The girls are transfixed)*