

TWO BIRDS

"The Canary"

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EXT. WOODS NEAR LAKE SHORE - NIGHT, FLASHBACK

SARA (17) runs frantically while holding back tears, weaving in and out between a seemingly endless sea of trees. Her shirt is wet, and she appears to be running alone until JADE (17), also partially wet, grabs Sara's hand, yanking her to stop her from running. Sara turns to face Jade.

SARA

What the hell are you do-

Jade throws her hand over Sara's mouth and puts a finger to her own lips, shushing her. Jade widens her eyes and motions with her head to something happening behind Sara. Still with Jade's hand over her mouth, Sara slowly turns her head to look behind her. They realize they're close to the lake shore. Colorful LED strip lights from the inside of a boat shine through the trees, and a group of four teenage boys - MILES (18), LEO (17), ANTHONY (15), and THOMAS (15) - dock the boat and drunkenly stumble onto the shore. A fifth boy, LUCAS (16), balances on the back end of the boat on the balls of his feet, swinging his arms back and forth beneath his waist.

LUCAS

I'm telling you! I can do it! I've got skills, baby. Talent like nothing you've ever seen before.

MILES

If you actually try and flip off that right now, the only thing you'd be talented at is killing yourself.

Lucas glances to the other boys for support. They all shake their heads, and Lucas lowers his feet. He walks to the front of the boat to hop onto the shore but trips over a pack of Bud Light and stubs his foot. Miles stifles a laugh and rolls his eyes, turning back to the other boys. Lucas scurries over to catch up to them, hobbling on one foot and rubbing the other one he hurt with his hand.

MILES (CONT'D)

(to the group)

I haven't even told you the best part of the story yet. Chloe was literally right outside the fucking door, bro. I had to pull trig all over her bed so she wouldn't notice when she came in. She was talking to Anna. Or Ava. Whoever the new one is. We hooked up too.

(MORE)

MILES (CONT'D)
Hot, red hair, moved down the
street from Lucas...?

Sara turns back to Jade, pulling Jade's hand away. She
mouths Lucas' name.

JADE
I swear to God, Sara, if Lucas sees
us, we're done for. Gone. Dead. End
of story.

SARA
Shut up then.

JADE
You were the one before who was
about to start screaming bloody m-

Jade stops herself.

SARA
Don't.

They stare at each other in silence, eyes wide. Sara's lip
quivers. Neither know what to say. Jade shakes her head.

JADE
Just- let's both shut up.

Sara and Jade slowly crouch down to the ground and crawl
toward a log, keeping their eyes on the boys.

LUCAS
Are you talking about Vicky?

ANTHONY
How do you get Anna from Vicky?

MILES
Just too many to remember, man.

THOMAS
Must not've been that good if you
can't remember.

Sara and Jade reach the log and lay down behind it on their
stomachs. They listen in on the boys' conversation.

MILES
Leo, why don't you take her for a
spin sometime so we can compare
notes? Maybe it'll jog my memory, I
don't know...
(MORE)

MILES (CONT'D)

But what I do know is that it'll finally shake loose that massive stick up your ass. Legend says it's been lost up there for years.

Lucas, Anthony and Thomas snicker. Upset, Leo bites his lip, but stands still.

LEO

Your mom found it last night, actually.

MILES

Ah, the student becomes the master.

Sara and Jade peek their heads out just high enough over the log so they can see what's happening.

LEO

If being the "master" also means I have to cheat on my girlfriend in her own bed, then I think I'm good right where I am.

There's an awkward silence. Lucas is the only one stupid enough to break it. He nudges Miles with his shoulder.

LUCAS

Nah, he's not the master. He's nowhere near your level, Miles.

MILES

Alright, Lucas, get off your knees and stand up. I don't want you choking down there.

Anthony and Thomas giggle and shake Lucas by the shoulders, who turns around and faces the woods.

Sara and Jade immediately duck back down behind the log.

SARA

We can't stay here. One wrong move and they'll find us.

JADE

Would you stop? We just need to wait it out.

Alone, Jade peeks at the boys, this time from the side of the log.

Lucas breaks away from Anthony and Thomas's grip and heads back to the boat.

LUCAS
I'm getting another beer.

MILES
Hey, man—

Lucas eagerly turns around, thinking Miles sounds sincere and is about to apologize.

MILES (CONT'D)
Grab me one too? Since you're there already.

Lucas is about to salute him as if to say yes, but then turns it into a middle finger.

MILES (CONT'D)
Yeah, that's deserved. But you're wrong, you know. You wanna know who's the master AND —

Miles clutches his heart as if he's been shot by Leo's comment about his infidelity but then shoots him a dirty look. Leo is unfazed.

MILES (CONT'D)
(mocking)
— is a good person too?
(beat)
Quinn. Where the hell is that guy?
Somebody get him on the phone.

LUCAS
I got it.

In one hand, Lucas angrily pulls out his phone, finds Quinn in his contacts and clicks call. In the other, he grabs two beer bottles. He heads back to the group and hands the second beer to Miles.

Sara whips her head toward Jade.

SARA
Jade? Where is it?

JADE
What are you talking about? I thought you had it!

SARA

No, no, no. I remember I specifically handed it to you. Like that is vivid in my memory.

JADE

Well, I don't have it.

SARA

Are you serious? So it's still in the cabin?

JADE

I don't know, but we better figure it out. Now. Stay here.

SARA

Are you out of your mind? I'm coming with you.

The girls quietly stand up and go as quickly as they can to the cabin, trying not to step on a stray branch that could give them away. But before they can go inside, much to the girls' horror, they realize it is not, in fact, still in the cabin – Sara's inside jacket pocket lights up and starts ringing.

Lucas looks up at the woods.

LUCAS

Yo, you guys hear that too, right?

Lucas makes his way toward the edge of the woods. He notices an abandoned cabin that he's never seen before. Confused, he heads toward it.

JADE

What are you waiting for? Turn it off!

SARA

I– I'm trying.

Her hands shake as she tries to get the phone out of her pocket and walk quietly at the same time.

ANTHONY

Hey, Lucas, where are you going?

LUCAS

Just– just give me a sec.

He gets closer to the cabin, while Sara and Jade are able to sneak in through the back door.

MILES
(yelling)
Dude, there's nothing there. Just
leave it. I'm sure he's just angry
at me about what happened earlier.

Lucas doesn't believe him.

Sara grabs the phone.

SARA
Got it.

In all her shaking, Sara accidentally accepts the call, but
she quickly hangs up. The two sigh in relief.

MILES
(growing angry)
Lucas?

LUCAS
Do you ever shut up? Even for like
two fucking seconds? Or is that
clinically impossible for you?

Lucas redials Quinn's number.

MILES
(angrier)
Excuse me?

Lucas ignores him and reaches the cabin.

Jade snatches the phone out of Sara's hands.

SARA
What are you doing?

Jade grabs a lamp from beside her and smashes the phone.

Lucas hears a thump from inside the cabin. He looks at the
phone and sees his call went straight to voice mail.

The two girls slowly sink down to the ground, their backs
against a wall beneath a window.

Lucas puts his face up to the window and peers inside.

Sara has her hand over her mouth and her eyes squeezed shut,
shaking. Jade stares straight ahead and doesn't move a
muscle.

MILES
(to himself)
Screw this.

MILES (CONT'D)
(to Lucas)
Have fun swimming back to yours. If
you drown, that's on you.

Scared, Lucas turns and jogs frantically back down to the lake shore.

LUCAS
No, no! Wait!

He stops and turns back around to look at the cabin once more, but eventually catches up to the guys, who are about to untie the boat from the dock. He climbs onto the boat just as they're pulling off. He puts his hand on Miles' shoulder, who's driving.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, man.

Miles turns to him and smiles. Lucas is confused by his apparent kindness and doesn't want to ruin it. He gives Miles a weak smile in return, but Miles' mouth drops.

MILES
You don't know how sorry you'll be
if you ever say shit like that to
me again.

Miles looks at Lucas' hand on his shoulder, and Lucas immediately takes it off. He sheepishly bows his head and sits at the back of the boat, away from everyone else.

The girls hear the boat engine and slowly stand up.

JADE
Come on. I can't believe we're even
here right now.

The girls walk toward the cabin front door, but we only follow their feet. We watch as they step over someone's torso. We pan up to see the girls' backs as they're about to leave, and Sara opens the door.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. SARA'S FRONT DOOR — BRIGHT AND EARLY MORNING, THREE DAYS LATER

DETECTIVE COLLINS (37) stands perfectly still in Sara's doorway holding her hands in front of her body as Sara opens the door. Right after she opens the door, the scene pauses, and text slowly unveils on the screen to say "THREE DAYS LATER." The text disappears and we resume the scene. Sara holds the door handle. She's shocked to see Collins and doesn't know how to hide it.

COLLINS

Sara. Nice to see you again. Do you have a minute to chat?

END OF TEASER.

ACT 1

EXT. SARA'S FRONT DOOR — CONTINUOUS

Sara stares as if she were in a trance.

COLLINS

Are you okay?

Sara snaps out of it.

SARA

Y- yes, I'm okay.

COLLINS

You look like you've seen a ghost.

Sara gulps.

SARA

Nope, no. No ghost here, Detective.

Collins waits for Sara to say something else.

SARA (CONT'D)

Aaand you, obviously, look nothing like one.

Sara doesn't know what to do. Collins look at her blankly.

SARA (CONT'D)

You've got, um, great color in your cheeks. Is that a MAC blush?

Collins has a confused look on her face and tilts her head.

SARA (CONT'D)
Urban Decay? No? All natural then,
my kinda girl- er, woman.
Detective.

Collins crosses her arms. Sara slaps the inside of the door frame and rubs it.

SARA (CONT'D)
It is a pretty old house, though,
so watch your back, cause who
knows? Maybe there is a ghost
lurking somewhere around here, just
waiting for the right time to
strike.

Sara breathes in sharply, then jumps forward and opens her hands.

SARA (CONT'D)
BOO!

Sara chuckles and painfully waits for Collins to as well.
She doesn't.

COLLINS
You're saying I should watch my
back?

SARA
(exasperated)
No, no I'm not. At all. I'm sorry,
Detective...?

COLLINS
Collins. We spoke two days ago. You
don't remember?

SARA
Yes, yes, that's right. And yes, I
do remember. I'm sorry, Detective
Collins. Those two days feel like a
lifetime ago. It's been... really
hard for me. To put it lightly.

COLLINS
I can imagine. You mentioned that
you and Quinn are close?

SARA
Very. He's... one of my best
friends, actually. I just don't
know what to do with myself now.

Collins doesn't respond. There's an odd silence again, as if Collins is baiting Sara to slip up and fill it.

SARA (CONT'D)

Do you... have any ideas? Or theories? About where he might've gone?

Again, Collins waits to respond. She doesn't know how much she wants to reveal. Perhaps against her better judgment, she decides to answer.

COLLINS

To be quite honest with you, no. At least not right now. In the beginning, we weren't sure if he was missing at all. We thought maybe he skipped town with some friends, maybe even a girl, and woke up somewhere too hungover to plug in his phone and let his Dad know he'd be back for dinner.

SARA

(defensively)

No, he... that's not something he would do. He's not like that.

Sara regrets saying that as soon as it comes out of her mouth, but she can't show it.

COLLINS

Actually, we see it happen more often than you might think. Even with the good ones.

Sara doesn't realize she's been holding her breath. She sighs.

COLLINS (CONT'D)

But it's been too long now. No one's heard from him since Friday night.

SARA

When?

Collins furrows her brow.

COLLINS

Late. Where did you say you were again?

SARA
Um, I was with Jade.

COLLINS
That's not really what I asked.
Where were you two?

SARA
Uh- her house. Playing Mario Kart.

COLLINS
Can anyone else corroborate that?

Sara's phone rings. She winces, pulls her phone out of her back pocket and checks to see who's calling.

SARA
Sorry, one second. It's my dad.

She turns away from the door.

SARA (CONT'D)
(awkwardly into phone)
Hey, Dad. What's going on?

INT. ADAM'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

ADAM (59) rifles through papers on his desk and in his drawers. He's balancing his phone between his cheek and his shoulder.

ADAM
(into phone)
Hey, sweetheart. Are you having a nice morning?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

Sara glances over at Collins.

SARA
(into phone)
It's... fine. Ish.

ADAM
(into phone)
Is there any chance you haven't left for school yet?

SARA
(into phone)
Actually, yes. But I was-

She grimaces at Collins.

SARA (CONT'D)
(into phone)
—just about to head out the door.
Jade should be here any minute.

ADAM
(into phone)
Oh, thank God. Would you mind asking her to swing by my office before school? There's a file on my nightstand that has a lot of my notes for debate prep. I don't know how I forgot it. I called Lucas a bunch of times, and he hasn't answered once. I don't know why I even bother with him anymore.

SARA
(into phone)
Don't worry, Dad. I can bring it.

ADAM
(into phone)
Perfect. Tell Jade thank you from me. I'm sorry I'm making you guys late.

SARA
(into phone)
It's fine. I probably would've been anyway.

ADAM
(into phone)
I'll write you both a note.

SARA
(into phone)
I don't know if that would help Jade. Her attendance is a lost cause.

ADAM
(into phone)
All the more reason for me to try.
Love you.

SARA
(into phone)
Love you too. Bye.

EXT. SARA'S FRONT DOOR — CONTINUOUS

Sara puts her phone back in her pocket.

COLLINS
Saved by the bell.

Sara laughs awkwardly.

Jade's car pulls into Sara's driveway. She vigorously honks the horn with an obnoxious rhythm.

COLLINS (CONT'D)
And the horn, it seems.

SARA
I'm sorry, Detective. I really have to run. I have school and my dad needs me to drop off some file. Just— one second.

Sara runs up the staircase behind her to her dad's bedroom. Without entering, Collins leans her head further into the house and looks around, realizing just how massive it is.

Sara flies back down the stairs while putting on her coat, file in hand. She grabs her backpack beside the front door.

SARA (CONT'D)
(over-confidently)
I really appreciate you checking in with me and being so thorough. Please let me know as soon as you have any updates on Quinn.

COLLINS
I will.

The two stand there again in silence. Collins moves her body to the side to let Sara leave, as if she had been blocking her in before. Sara pauses awkwardly but then rushes out in big strides with her head down.

COLLINS (CONT'D)
(loudly)
I'm looking forward to speaking with you again later today.

Sara stops immediately and looks up, but she doesn't turn around to face Collins.

SARA
What?

COLLINS
You didn't know? I'll be stopping by the high school today.
(MORE)

COLLINS (CONT'D)
Your principal graciously invited
me to come in so I could chat with
some of your classmates about
Quinn.

Silence again.

COLLINS (CONT'D)
You know. So I can get you those
updates.

SARA
That's— that's great. Really great,
actually. I, uh. Yeah. Great. See
you then.

Sara continues heading to Jade's car, but much slower this
time. She and Collins make eye contact briefly as Sara
slides into the passenger seat.

INT. JADE'S CAR — CONTINUOUS

JADE
Um, dude? Hello? Why the hell are
the police here?

She notices the file.

JADE (CONT'D)
What's that for?

SARA
Just— just drive.

JADE
Yup. Got it.

FADE OUT.

INT. JADE'S CAR — CONTINUOUS

Sara leans her head against the passenger window, holding
her forehead with her hand.

JADE
You're sure she doesn't know
anything?

SARA
Yes, Jade. I promise. I was totally
cool.

JADE
You're never cool.

SARA
(sarcastically)
Mmm, funny.

SARA (CONT'D)
She just took me by surprise is
all. But she was kind of... weird.

JADE
Weird? Weird how?

SARA
I don't know. Quiet. Awkward I
guess. Intense.

JADE
That's bad, Sara. Even I know that,
and you're the genius. How can you
not know that's bad?

SARA
I'm not a genius, I'm—

JADE
—just the one of us who's going to
an ivy, yeah, I'm aware.

SARA
Are you ever going let that go? And
I didn't say the interaction was
good, I just said it was weird.

JADE
With this kind of stuff, "weird" is
bad. Weird is literally always bad.
It means she's suspicious. You're
kidding me with this, right?

SARA
Can you just drop it?

JADE
All you told her is that we were
playing video games?

SARA
Yes. Mario Kart. I mean, it's not
that much of a lie. We do play it a
lot.

JADE
I don't think you fully understand
the concept of what a lie is.

There's an awkward beat of silence. Sara can feel that Jade is pissed, but she doesn't want to continue the conversation.

SARA
Well, if she asks you, I played as
Yoshi.

Jade rolls her eyes and ignores Sara's attempt at changing the subject.

SARA (CONT'D)
And I won. Obviously.

Jade smirks and shakes her head, desperately trying not to laugh and let the severity of their previous conversation die. She fails.

JADE
Not a chance.

EXT. ADAM'S OFFICE — MOMENTS LATER

We see an establishing shot of the outside of a local government office building.

INT. ADAM'S OFFICE — MOMENTS LATER

Sara peeks her head in through the office door. Adam sits at his desk with his eyes closed, rubbing his temples. He's talking to himself, but he's whispering so softly under his breath that Sara can't make it out. She opens the door fully.

SARA
Knock knock!

ADAM
(relieved)
Oh, there's my girl.

SARA
Hey, dad. How's your morning?

ADAM
Better, now that you're here.

Sara drops the folder onto his desk a little too hard. Adam looks up at her in disbelief.

SARA
Sorry. It's heavy.

ADAM
Yeah, I know. It's okay. Sydney keeps telling me I should digitize everything, but I like having my most important work as something that I can really hold in my hands.

SARA
I guess. It's just so much easier on your computer. Trust me.

ADAM
I do trust you. It's just everyone else I don't trust. I just got sent another phishing scam last night. Did you know I've gotten one at least once every—

SARA
I'm telling you. Get a MacBook. They're safer. I'll teach you how to use it.

ADAM
I don't like being interrupted.

Sara opens her mouth to say something but decides against it. Adam takes off his glasses and rubs his eyes.

ADAM (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. I just— I'm really stressed about the debate. More than I thought I would be.

SARA
I know, Dad. It's okay. But you really shouldn't be. Mr. Anderson is a great guy and all, but you're kind of a shoo-in. People have really loved you the past few years, you know.

ADAM
How is he doing? Have you heard from him? Or anything about Quinn at all?

Sara doesn't know if she should tell him about her encounter with Detective Collins that morning, but the words come out of her mouth before she even realizes she's made the decision to lie.

SARA
Um, no. I haven't, actually.

ADAM
I just feel so terrible for him.
God, I can't even imagine. And I
feel bad that now he has to deal
with all of this election stuff on
top of it. There's been rumors
about putting everything on hold
until they find Quinn, but I doubt
it'll happen.

Sara knows her dad is talking but doesn't hear any of it. We
hear his voice start to muffle as Sara zones out, and we
hear water trickling instead.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Sara?

Adam's voice causes Sara to come back to reality.

SARA
Mm. Yes?

ADAM
You've got a visitor.

Jade stands awkwardly in the doorway.

JADE
Hey, Mr. Baker. Sara, you good? You
know I'm always down to skip, but
if not, we should probably go soon.

Adam clears his throat and gives Jade a disapproving look.

JADE (CONT'D)
Sorry, Mr. Baker.

ADAM
I'm teasing. And you know you can
call me Adam at this point. You're
practically my second daughter.

SARA
Bye, Dad.

ADAM
Have a nice day, girls.

JADE
You too, Mr. Baker. I mean Adam.

Much to their surprise and dismay, as Sara and Jade leave Adam's office, they run into Detective Collins. The girls stop dead in their tracks.

COLLINS

Hi there, Sara. Nice to see you again.

She turns her head to talk to Jade, but intentionally keeps her body faced toward Sara.

COLLINS (CONT'D)

And you must be Jade. I don't think we've spoken yet.

JADE

Um, no. I mean— yes, I'm Jade, but no, we haven't spoken.

COLLINS

Well then, I'm definitely looking forward to it later.

Jade glances at Sara and sees her picking her nails, looking at the ground and trying to slow her breathing. She obviously can't hide her anxiety. Jade realizes she needs to be the confident one of the two if Sara can't.

JADE

I am too, Detective. Thank you.

Detective Collins stares at the girls for a few moments longer then turns to head into Adam's office, but she lets her gaze linger a little too long for the girls to be comfortable. The girls wait for her to close the door behind her before they scurry off to Jade's car.

JADE (CONT'D)

Did you know—

SARA

Of course I didn't. You know I would've mentioned it.

EXT. ADAM'S OFFICE — MOMENTS LATER

The girls get in the car, but Jade slams the door a little too loud. We slowly pan from the car driving away and get closer to an office window, where we see Detective Collins' face watching them drive away.

INT. ADAM'S OFFICE — MOMENTS LATER

Detective Collins turns around and leans against the window.

COLLINS

How are the girls holding up with all of this?

ADAM

As good as can be expected, I guess. At least for Sara. I can't really speak for Jade, but I'm sure she feels the same.

COLLINS

(accusingly)

And do you? Feel the same?

Adam is taken aback. He furrows his brow and clears his throat.

ADAM

Of course. I'm sorry, have I done anything to make you think otherwise?

COLLINS

Not yet.

ADAM

Excuse me, Detective, but if you're insinuating I had anything to do with—

COLLINS

Let me rephrase. All I'm saying is that these things are messy. I just want you to be upfront with me about how you feel and what you know. Anything at all that can help me paint a better picture about everything happening in his life, and that means his family life, too. He is Jack Anderson's son, after all, and—

ADAM

(defensively)

That doesn't matter to me. He's one of Sara's best friends. They're always together, the three of them.

COLLINS

And were they together on Friday?

ADAM

(growing more defensive)
Is there something I should know?
If you think my Sara is somehow
involved here, with— with whatever
this is, I can promise you without
a shadow of a doubt that you're
mistaken.

COLLINS

I just need to connect the dots
about where he was that night.
That's all.

Adam isn't sure if he believes her, but he realizes he
doesn't have a choice. He releases the tension he was
holding in his shoulders.

ADAM

Well, my SeaDoo three-seater was
out past Suicide Rock on the lake
that evening, so I assume so.

COLLINS

You're saying you saw it there?

He balls his right hand up into a fist beneath his desk
where Detective Collins can't see and scrapes his nails
against his palm.

ADAM

I just meant it's always there.
I've learned to keep an eye on
them, so I know they're being safe.
Especially since Sara's practically
been in love with the kid since the
second grade.

COLLINS

(surprised)
Is that right?

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW BENTHAM HIGH SCHOOL — A FEW HOURS LATER

Jade's car speeds into the student parking lot, which is
almost completely filled. They're obviously very late. Sara
gets out and races to the front of the school to the main
office.

JADE

Wait! Not that way.

She motions in the opposite direction.

JADE (CONT'D)
The exit past Mr. Smith's room in
the history wing is always open.

They run towards a door on the side of the school.

SARA
(concerned)
That's kind of a safety concern,
isn't it? We should tell Principal
Slater.

JADE
Mmh, yeah, no shot. This is where
the magic happens. It's my savior.
My lifeline. And also, it's not
fully open.

They reach the door, and Jade starts to jiggle the doorknob aggressively.

JADE (CONT'D)
You just gotta know how to work it
right.

There's a click from the lock, and Jade smirks as she pushes the door open inward with her shoulder.

INT. NEW BENTHAM HIGH SCHOOL — HISTORY WING HALLWAY

Sara sighs, frustrated, and follows Jade but makes sure to close the door quietly behind her. She looks for another lock besides the push lock on the handle, but there isn't one. Defeated, she hurries to catch up with Jade. They peak around opposite corners of the hallway. Jade raises her eyebrows at Sara.

JADE
(whispering)
Later.

INT. NEW BENTHAM HIGH SCHOOL — MAIN HALLWAY

Sara slowly turns the corner and is relieved to hear the bell ring. Students immediately file out of the classrooms, and Sara nervously heads past the front office to her next class. Lucas comes strolling in through the front doors with his head high, wearing sopping wet swim trunks dripping all over the floor and flip flops that squeak obnoxiously from the water every time he takes a step. He sees Miles down the hall.

LUCAS
(proudly)
Hey! Got my fishtail practice in.
Did twelve back to back. You
should've been there. Would've
knocked you right off the back.

MILES
Dude... You look like a moron.

Miles turns around and walks away from Lucas, but Lucas calls after him.

LUCAS
(yelling after him)
I still have to show you my other
skills, you know! Tonight!

Miles rolls his eyes and continues walking without acknowledging him at all.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
(louder, cupping his
hands around his mouth)
You don't know what you're missing!

INT. MAIN OFFICE - SAME TIME

PRINCIPAL SLATER (45) is straightening pencils in a row on her desk. She huffs and shakes her head when she sees Lucas dripping all over the floor through the window, but she's got too much on her plate to care. She puts her hair behind her ears, sits down at her desk and turns on the announcement microphone.

INT. CLASSROOM 1 - SAME TIME

Sara enters her classroom and sits down as Principal Slater's announcement comes through the loudspeakers. MRS. GRIFFIN (65) sits at her desk in the front of the classroom, and we can hear her completing her daily Duolingo Swedish lesson when the announcement starts.

PRINCIPAL SLATER
Hi everyone. We're going to have a
change of schedule for today. In
light of Quinn Anderson's
disappearance, the head detective
from the New Bentham Police
Department, Detective Collins, is
going to be calling some students
out of class throughout the day to
help fill in some gaps for her
investigation.
(MORE)

PRINCIPAL SLATER (CONT'D)

We need to come together right now,
not just as a school, but as a
family.

(beat)

We need to bring Quinn home.

Sara's eyes dart toward the door and then relax in relief when she sees Jade open it and walk through. She slides into the desk next to Sara with ease. Lucas, Miles and Leo follow close behind Jade through the door, but Miles doesn't hold the door open for Leo and it hits him lightly. Miles doesn't even notice; he's got an airhead look in his eyes and chews on a toothpick. Leo has pursed lips, trying to hold back from saying something that might get a reaction out of Miles. He closes his eyes for a brief moment and decides it's not worth it. They both sit down at desks next to each other.

MILES

(mocking)

So, what are you gonna say to this
"detective"?

LEO

I don't know what you mean. The
truth, obviously.

MILES

Nah, I just mean like - I don't
want our spot on the lake hijacked
by these guys. Like with yellow
tape and shit.

LEO

Why would they do that? Quinn
wasn't with us. And why do you even
care if it helps them find him?

MILES

I just - I don't know man. You
never know what these guys are up
to. And he's definitely fine. Maybe
he got into an argument with his
dad and fucked off for a few days.

He leans closer to Leo and stops chewing the toothpick.

MILES (CONT'D)

I also don't want them hearing
about our, uh, extracurricular
activities on the boat. I've talked
to Anthony and Thomas already, but
uh, you think you can do that?

Leo gives him a "no shit" look. Miles smirks and nods and pulls out his phone. Various students slowly walk through the door one by one. AIRHEAD (15) comes in, not once looking up from her phone and is texting furiously. She bumps into someone in front of her. DRUMMER (16) air drums while he wears over-the-ear headphones that play extremely loud, obnoxious death metal. BRAINIAC (14), who is very obviously a freshman, carries an absurdly tall pile of textbooks, binders and folders with papers spilling out of them; she rushes to a desk so the stack won't fall, but she doesn't make it in time. Everything falls just as Detective Collins opens the door. She sighs.

COLLINS

Alright, I feel like the answer's gonna be no, but I'll ask anyway: does anyone wanna go first?

Brainiac shoots her hand up in the air and shakes it, still trying to pick up papers with the other one.

COLLINS (CONT'D)

No no, it's fine. You just... deal with that.

INT. CLASSROOM 2 - MOMENTS LATER

Drummer sits in a desk with Collins sitting in front of him. He still has his headphones on like they're glued to his ears; his eyes are closed and he's shaking his head, vibing to the music. Collins waves her hand in front of his face.

COLLINS

Hey. Hey there. Can you take those off please?

Drummer has quite literally no idea she's talking to him. He starts air drumming.

COLLINS (CONT'D)

(impatiently)

Excuse me.

He continues. Collins knocks on the desk so he feels the vibration. He realizes she's waiting to talk to him.

COLLINS (CONT'D)

I need you to take those off.

She mimes taking off headphones on her own head, and he lifts them off of his ears.

DRUMMER

Shit, I'm sorry. Is the music too loud?

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM 2 - MOMENTS LATER

Airhead sits in the same desk where Drummer was. Her fingers are flying almost impossibly fast on her phone. She doesn't look up at Collins once.

COLLINS

Can you tell me where you were this past Friday night?

AIRHEAD

Yes.

She keeps texting. Detective Collins waits for her to elaborate but quickly realizes that's not happening.

COLLINS

Where?

AIRHEAD

Home.

COLLINS

(annoyed)

Were you with anyone?

AIRHEAD

Yes.

COLLINS

Who?

AIRHEAD

Kyle. I love Kyle.

Airhead stops texting suddenly and looks up with fearful concern in her eyes.

COLLINS

Yes? Do you know something? Did you remember something?

Airhead whips around her phone to show Detective Collins her screen, revealing a series of text messages that are all sent by her. There's probably about 20 in a row.

AIRHEAD

Do you think this means we're on a break? He said that he's done but this has happened before and I think he really means we just need some time apart before we can fall back together again. I've told him a hundred times that I don't care that he slept with my sis-

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM 2 - MOMENTS LATER

Brainiac has now replaced Airhead at the same desk. For some reason, she's brought in all her books. They are, once again, in a stack on the desk in front of her, hiding her face. Detective Collins peers behind the stack, and Brainiac is silently writing something in a college-ruled notebook. She keeps switching between pen colors from her clear pencil case, in which she has about 10 different colored pens and even more highlighters.

COLLINS

Do you know Quinn?

BRAINIAC

Yes. We're in multivariable calc together.

She keeps writing.

COLLINS

Aren't you a freshman?

BRAINIAC

Yes.

COLLINS

(confused)

What are you working on right now, exactly?

BRAINIAC

Oh. I'm just taking notes on our interview so I can give them to you afterwards. In case you want to refer to them later during the investigation.

COLLINS

(exasperated)

What could you possibly be writing right now?

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM 2 - MOMENTS LATER; MONTAGE

Miles, Lucas, Anthony, Leo, Thomas, and Airhead, Drummer and Brainiac all individually take turns answering Detective Collins' questions. We intercut between separate one-one-one interviews with the students, who sit at the same desk directly in front of Collins.

COLLINS

Can you tell me where you were on
Friday evening?

MILES

(southern accent)

Sure thing, ma'am.

He tips his head at her like he's tipping a cowboy hat. He's adopted an accent for some reason. Detective Collins shakes her head, telling him to stop.

MILES (CONT'D)

Miss. I was hanging out with-

LEO

Thomas, Miles, Anthony, and Lucas.
We were all on-

LUCAS

Miles' parents' boat. A pontoon.
It's really sick, it's got these
lights that flash to the beat when
you're-

THOMAS

Playing music. We were chilling
and-

ANTHONY

Definitely not smoking.

He shakes his head no assuredly. He's having trouble keeping his red eyes open.

COLLINS

(whispering)

Oh, for sure.

ANTHONY

We honestly were just vibing and-

AIRHEAD

Hanging out with Kyle.

COLLINS

Yes, we've established that you were hanging out with Kyle.

AIRHEAD

Yeah, there really wasn't anything other than that. I really was only hanging out with—

BRAINIAC

My cat. Her name is Mrs. Mittens. We actually had a cat play date with Luna and Chloe and—

DRUMMER

My bandmates. We had practice. We're in a band. We just came out with a song. It's called "Ego Death in Greg's Basement."

Detective Collins stares at him blankly.

DRUMMER (CONT'D)

We made it in Greg's basement.

COLLINS

Yeah, I gathered that much.

DRUMMER

We're gonna make it big. We have our first album coming out soon. It's really—

MILES

Terrible... This whole thing with Quinn is just so terrible. I wanted him to come join us that night. Lucas called but it didn't go through or he didn't pick up or something. He said he thought he heard a phone ring but the rest of us didn't. I honestly think he was just too high—

Detective Collins waits for him to finish that thought.

MILES (CONT'D)

—tired. Highly tired.

COLLINS

You heard a phone ring when you called Quinn?

LUCAS

I think so. I don't know. Yeah, maybe I did. In the woods somewhere off the shore. I thought maybe it was coming from that shitty cabin, but no one was in there.

COLLINS

You went inside?

LUCAS

Well, no. But I looked in the window. It was completely dark. And quiet. So I just left.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY — END OF MONTAGE, MOMENTS LATER

Detective Collins leans against the wall and rubs her forehead. She's holding a small notepad, and we see it only has two bullet points: "Cell phone — check iCloud?" and "Shitty cabin." Then, after a few minutes of deliberation, she writes, "Sara in love with Quinn... Motive?" She closes the notebook and heads toward the first classroom.

INT. CLASSROOM 1 — MOMENTS LATER

Detective Collins enters the classroom and sees the students chatting loudly amongst themselves. They all immediately quiet down when the door opens.

COLLINS

Alright, I only have a few more students left that I need to talk to today. I really appreciate you guys being so patient and cooperative and—

She glances at Sara. Sara desperately fights the urge to look away, and she gives Collins a weak smile.

COLLINS (CONT'D)

—honest with me. Sara, why don't you come with me?

Collins holds open the door and gestures for Sara to leave with her. Everyone turns their heads to look at Sara. She freezes, and Jade has to kick Sara with her foot underneath their desks so she responds.

SARA

Hmm? Oh, yes Detective. Absolutely.

She rises from her chair and smooths down her shirt, trying to appear casual and not draw attention to herself – she's just like everyone else. Jade stares intensely at Sara and realizes Sara won't survive this. She slowly pulls out her phone from beneath the desk and hides it from anyone's view. She opens her messages and texts Lucas.

Jade: sara's too nervous rn and wants your dad with her when she talks to that detective. can u do something to help please

Lucas feels his phone buzz in his pocket and takes it out. He rests his wrists on the desk as he looks at the message. Confused, he turns his head and looks at Jade. She gives him a look with her eyes and gestures with her head to lower his phone, which he does and holds it in his lap.

Lucas: what's in it for me

Jade: 20 bucks

Lucas: no

Jade: 30

Lucas: no

Jade looks up at Sara and sees that she's about to leave the classroom with Collins. She replies to Lucas.

Jade: does miles know about sept 18th at the party

Lucas: i don't know what ur talking about

The typing bubble appears and disappears a few times, showing that Lucas keeps typing and deleting his message because he doesn't know what to say.

Lucas: ok fine

Lucas stands up from his desk abruptly, loudly pushing his chair behind him.

LUCAS

I, uh, I think that we could all use a little laughter today. During these hard times.

Collins closes the door and looks at Lucas.

COLLINS

Normally I'd agree with you, but I really need you all to be focused right now.

LUCAS

Everyone's stressed already. I think they'd be able to answer your questions better if they could enjoy themselves for a second.

Collins moves past Sara and approaches Lucas. Sara slowly slinks away from the door and leans up against the wall.

COLLINS

I don't appreciate this, Lucas. Can you please sit back down?

Collins looks at Mrs. Griffin for support. She's still totally engrossed in her Duolingo lesson. Collins clears her throat, and Mrs. Griffin finally looks up. She glances back and forth between Lucas and Collins and then back at her computer, completely unfazed. Collins scoffs.

COLLINS (CONT'D)

Seriously. I mean it. Sit down.

LUCAS

I'm sorry, Detective, but I really can't do that for you. I don't have time to explain. I just have this—this feeling. Something's come over me. I don't know if it's the adrenaline from the past few days or if I've been struck by the power of God through a prophetic vision but I just— it's finally my chance. I have to do this for the collective good.

Lucas walks up to the front of the classroom right in front of Mrs. Griffin at her desk and turns to face the class. He takes a bow, then turns sideways. It's the moment he's been waiting for. He swings his arms beneath his waist and jumps up backwards to do his infamous back flip. However, he's somehow forgotten that his clothes and flip flops are soaking wet — he slips and falls flat on his back, revealing Mrs. Griffin's face still completely unfazed by the catastrophe unfolding right in front of her. The class erupts into laughter while Lucas groans loudly, and Mrs. Griffin stands up abruptly.

MRS. GRIFFIN

(yelling in horror)

NO! My streak! How did I lose my streak! No no no n—

She's suddenly aware of the chaos and sees Lucas laying on the floor.

MRS. GRIFFIN (CONT'D)

Oh. Lucas. Why are you wet?

Lucas groans louder and folds into the fetal position. Angry yet concerned, Collins rushes over to to help him stand up. Jade realizes this is her moment. She quietly slips out from her desk and passes Sara, still standing up straight against the wall. Jade stealthily opens the door just wide enough for her to slide through and leaves.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Jade races down the hallway toward the history wing and finds the fire alarm. She sighs and shakes her head - no going back now. She pulls the fire alarm. She whips out her phone to text Sara.

Jade: magic door. now

INT. CLASSROOM 1 - MOMENTS LATER

We hear the fire alarm echo throughout the classroom.

COLLINS

Great. This is just- this is excellent. Okay, everyone, I'm sure this is just a drill. Stay calm and don't-

The students furiously stuff their backpacks and scatter to the door, pushing each other out of the way. Sara forces her way through and exits.

COLLINS (CONT'D)

-panic.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Sara rushes down the hall toward the history wing where Jade waits for her by the door.

SARA

What are you doing? We should be with everyone else so no one gets suspicious.

JADE

Wow, okay, what happened to "gee, thanks Jade for saving my sorry ass before I accidentally totally ruined our lives."

Sara doesn't say anything.

JADE (CONT'D)
The fire alarm is going off,
genius. Do you really think they
care how we get out?

Sara huffs and realizes Jade's right, and gives her a guilty look.

SARA
You're right. Come on.

Sara leads the way and holds the door open for Jade as they leave the school.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT.