

Popular: Senior Year
"Sister, Sister"
by
The Wild Pikachu

POPULAR: SENIOR YEAR

SISTER, SISTER

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. KENNEDY HIGH PARKING LOT - MORNING

Amid the normal hubbub of the morning student commute, a sleek red Corvette pulls up to the curb, and everything seemingly comes to a stop as the passenger-side door opens and a very leggy blonde steps out.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

In a blaze of light, the double doors at the end of the corridor fly open, and the blonde catwalks in, accompanied by fashion-show music and swirls of confetti. As she walks by, girls glare enviously, and boys ogle and drool—including Josh and Harrison, who are standing with Lily and Brooke. Lily notices Josh's wide eyes and smacks him on the arm.

JOSH

Ouch! Hey, Lil, I'm married—I'm not blind.

Harrison sees Brooke frowning at him.

HARRISON

(flustered)

D-d-don't look at me, I'm not blind either.

Brooke just huffs.

Sugar Daddy comes up behind them, looking from side to side curiously.

SUGAR

Yo, guys. What's the commotion?

JOSH

Man, you just missed a, a pure vision.

Lily smacks Josh again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY
It was just a girl.

HARRISON
That was no girl, she was a—a
goddess!

Brooke swats Harrison.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
Hey! I'm not even married!

BROOKE
Keep it up, and you're not even
gonna have a girlfriend.

Sugar Daddy steps out into the hallway and looks for himself.

SUGAR
Wait, that's...

His expression souring, he turns and slugs Josh's arm.

JOSH
Damn, Shug, what are you hitting
me for?!

SUGAR
Man, don't you know who that is?
That's Ellie!

JOSH
Huh?

SUGAR
My sister?! Ellie?!
(calling out)
Yo, Gator Breath! What the hell
are you doing her?!

The blonde turns: minus all of the fantasy accouterments, she is still drop-dead gorgeous. At seeing Sugar Daddy, she breaks into a dazzling grin.

ELLIE
Mikey!

WHITE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER

Sugar Daddy and Ellie are standing toe-to-toe, while the rest of the gang form a loose semi-circle around them.

SUGAR

Okay, okay—so you're home for a week. But what are you doing here?

ELLIE

What, I can't visit the place my baby brother goes to school? Where he spends his formative hours?

SUGAR

No, you can't!

ELLIE

(laughing)
Aw, you're just playing around.

SUGAR

I'm not, really.

She just laughs him off, turning an eye to Josh, who, along with Harrison, seems to have been stunned into immobility.

ELLIE

Hey—you're Josh, aren't you? Wow, you grew some!

JOSH

Wh-wh-wha... I-I-I—I mean, I-I-I did, uh—

Lily interposes herself between them.

ELLIE

(neutrally)
And who are you?

LILY

(gritting her teeth)
I'm Lily. His wife. We have to go now.

With that, she pushes and shoves Josh off down the hallway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The flurry of motion jerks Harrison back to reality.

HARRISON

Oh—

(sticking his hand out awkwardly)

Harrison. Harrison John.

ELLIE

(frowning)

Harrison? Or John?

HARRISON

First name Harrison, last name
John.

Ellie shakes his hand.

ELLIE

Ah—got it. Sorry.

HARRISON

(grinning stupidly)

No, no—I mean, I get that all the
time—

Brooke steps into Ellie's line of sight, extending her own
hand.

BROOKE

(trying to be gracious)

Brooke McQueen.

Ellie shakes her hand in turn, and then gasps.

ELLIE

Wait—I've heard about you!

Brooke does a double-take.

BROOKE

What?

ELLIE

Oh, you know—I never hear
anything from Mikey, because he's
too busy being the superjock to
call me. But he talks to our mom,
and she talks to me.

BROOKE

(nervously)

What did you hear?

Ellie suddenly checks her watch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLIE
Hey—never mind. It's not
important. Anyway, I gotta run.

SUGAR
(anxious)
So, you're leaving now, right?

ELLIE
What? No, I've got to get to your
principal's office. He's going to
give me a tour of the school.
(laughs)
Relax, Mikey—you'll hardly notice
that I'm here.

She takes off, leaving Sugar Daddy groaning in her wake.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE QUAD - LATE MORNING

Sam is walking by herself when the honking of a car horn
attracts her attention. Looking out to the street, she sees a
convertible parked at the curb—with Jaycee leaning on the
horn and waving wildly. Mouth agape, Sam jogs over.

SAM
Jaycee, what are you doing here??

JAYCEE
Hey, you've got lunch, right?
Come on—my treat.

SAM
(hemming and hawing)
Um...I'm not really supposed to...

JAYCEE
(cajoling)
Aww, come on, Sammy! You don't
really want to eat cafeteria food,
do you?

SAM
Really, I've got this thing—

But as she looks around anxiously, she catches sight of
Harrison and Brooke, walking arm-in-arm.

SAM (CONT'D)
(glowering)
You know what—screw it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She throws her things in the back, and hops into the passenger seat.

SAM (CONT'D)
Let's jet.

As the convertible roars off:

SAM (CONT'D)
Jaycee?

JAYCEE
Yeah?

SAM
Do me a favor—don't call me Sammy.

JAYCEE
Not a problem.

Meanwhile, back on the quad, Lily, who has witnessed the whole scene, just sighs and shakes her head.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA - NOON

Josh, Lily, Brooke, Harrison and Sugar Daddy are eating lunch together.

SUGAR
Man, you have no idea what it's like. It's always, Ellie this, and Ellie that, and isn't Ellie wonderful, and why can't you be more like Ellie?

BROOKE
Come on, your parents don't really say that, do they?

SUGAR
(wagging his finger adamantly)
I can hear them thinking it.

BROOKE
I think you're exaggerating. I mean, sure she's done more, but that's just because she's older. It's not like she's Wonder Woman, or—

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Brooke's argument happens to be disrupted by the sound of Ellie and Natalie entering the cafeteria, while carrying on an animated conversation—in Swedish. Upon seeing the gang, they have a brief exchange; as Ellie heads over to the lunch line, Natalie climbs into an empty spot and begins unpacking her brown paper bag.

NATALIE

(gushing)

Hey, Sugar Daddy, you didn't tell me you had a genius sister! I haven't had a chance to practice my Swedish in a long time.

(to everyone)

Did you guys know she interned with a U.N. Ambassador? And that she studied at Oxford? And bicycled around France? She even rode some of the same route they use for the Tour de France! Isn't that cool?!

Sugar Daddy looks pointedly at Brooke, who just shrugs sympathetically. Natalie finally breaks to take a bite out of her apple.

NATALIE (**CONT'D**)

Hey—anyone know where Sam is? We're supposed to hook up.

There is a moment of slightly awkward silence.

LILY

(reluctantly)

She went off-campus for lunch.

NATALIE

Are you sure? She was going to help me with this thing for English.

LILY

I saw her take off with that girl that lives in her building.

NATALIE

(subdued)

I guess I'll catch up with her later.

SUGAR

Hey, speaking of missing persons, where's Carmen got to?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

All eyes turn to Lily; after a moment she looks up, annoyed.

LILY
How come I'm everyone's baby-sitter all of a sudden?

SUGAR
(holding his hands up)
I just thought you might know.

LILY
(grousing)
I'm sorry, I don't.

Before anyone can say anything else, Ellie sits down with her tray.

ELLIE
You know, this food looks good.
Like what we had at Yale.

HARRISON
Really?

ELLIE
(considering)
Well, no...but close, and
definitely better than what I had
to eat in high school.

BROOKE
So, Ellie...you said your
parents...talked about me...?

NATALIE
(interrupting)
Hey, tell everyone that story
about how you were in Africa, and
you saved that whole village from
getting flooded.

ELLIE
(modestly)
It really wasn't that big a
deal...
(beat)
Okay, see, I was on this mini-
safari—I just had to get out of
New York, because Elite and Ford
were all over me about signing
some stupid modeling contract...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Sugar Daddy just puts his hands over his face and groans.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER

Josh and Sugar Daddy are walking.

JOSH

You know, Ellie doesn't seem that bad. Though she did turn into a major hottie. No offense.

SUGAR

Man, you don't have to live with her. I'm telling ya, I'd rather listen to John Tesh CDs 24-7 than hear my parents go on and on.

JOSH

That's harsh, Shug.

As they pass by the open doorway of an empty classroom, Josh spies Lily sitting on a desk, all by herself.

JOSH (CONT'D)

Hey, I'll catch you later.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Josh pokes his head through the doorway, and raps on the door to get Lily's attention before coming in.

JOSH

Babe, are you okay?

LILY

I'm sorry I snapped at Sugar Daddy.

JOSH

Aw, he knows it's nothing. I just thought you'd be worried about Carmen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY

I am worried about Carmen. I'm worried about Carmen, I'm worried about Sam...it's like there's this endless reservoir of worry building up in my head. Plus, I have to go to that therapist tonight.

JOSH

Are you sure you don't want me to come? I feel really weird about you being there by yourself.

LILY

(patting his hand)

No, Josh...it's my stress, I have to deal with it. It'll be okay.

Josh puts his arms around her and lets her snuggle next to him.

DISSOLVE TO:

EST. MCQUEEN HOUSE - EVENING

CUT TO:

INT. MCQUEEN DINING ROOM

Mike, Jane and Brooke are sitting around the table, supposedly having dinner, and the mood is—to say the least—somber. And silent. Brooke picks at her food, and Jane doesn't look very happy, either. Mike looks back and forth between them, and finally tries to strike up a conversation.

MIKE

So, Jane...how was your day? Did you get an offer on that house you were showing?

JANE

(shrugs)

Maybe. They'll let me know next week.

MIKE

Well...great.

The exchange peters out into another long, oppressive silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE (CONT'D)

Brooke—

At the mention of her name, Brooke turns a pair of brooding eyes on her father that makes him abandon whatever ice-breaker he was going to use. Instead, he lets out an exaggerated sigh of annoyance.

MIKE (CONT'D)

See, what I don't understand is how you can be mad at Sam, and mad at us, too.

BROOKE

I'm not mad at Sam. She's mad at me.

MIKE

You know what I mean.

BROOKE

Look—I know I hurt Sam. It was a horrible, heinous thing to do. But, at least I had a reason. I love Harrison. Now, maybe that's a lousy reason, but...I mean, what you guys did...

MIKE

We had reasons, too.

JANE

We just wanted to keep her from running away again.

BROOKE

(biting)

Yeah, how'd that work out?

MIKE

Brooke!

BROOKE

Did you really think you could get her to stay by making it impossible for her to leave?

MIKE

(muttering)

It seemed like a good idea at the time.

CUT TO:

INT. MCQUEEN KITCHEN - LATER

Mike and Jane are side by side, putting dishes in the sink.

JANE
Mike, what are we going to do
about this?

Mike starts to open his mouth, but ends up just shrugging.

JANE (CONT'D)
It's been two weeks! What if it
were Brooke out there?!

MIKE
Honey, you know I want Sam to come
home just as much as you do,
but...I don't know what I can do
about it.

JANE
I can't have my daughter out
living—god knows where. Or how.
I have to do something.

Brooke appears, dropping her plate on the counter with a
clatter.

BROOKE
You can't do anything! God, don't
you get that? You couldn't make
her stay, and you can't make her
come back. Anything you do is
just—

FLIP CUT TO:

INT. JOSH AND LILY'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Lily, sitting on the sofa, picks up the end of the same
sentence:

LILY
—going to drive her further away.
I'm sorry, Mrs. McPherson, but...I
don't know what I can do, either.

Jane, sitting alone across from Lily, holds out her hands.

JANE
I just thought...you're one of the
few people she'll listen to
anymore...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY
(shrugging)
I really haven't seen much of her lately.

JANE
Look, I really don't want to put you in the middle between Sam and I, but...I don't even know where she is.

Lily considers for a moment, then reaches for a pad and scribbles on it. She tears off the top sheet and hands it over.

JANE (CONT'D)
Thank you.

LILY
I really think you shouldn't go over there, Mrs. McPherson. At least, not for a while yet.

Josh pads out from the kitchen.

JOSH
Lil? Oh...hey, Mrs. McPherson.

JANE
Hi, Josh.

JOSH
Babe? You wanted me to remind you about the thing.

LILY
(checking her watch)
Oh, thanks, honey.
(to Jane)
I'm sorry. I have an appointment with a stress management therapist.

JANE
(getting up)
No, it's all right.

Lily walks Jane to the door.

LILY
I'll try to talk to her, Mrs. McPherson. But I really don't know how much good I can do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JANE

Thank you, Lily. For whatever you
can do.

After Jane leaves, Lily leans against the door and sighs.

JOSH

Hon?

LILY

(holding up a hand)
Yeah, yeah, I'm going.

As Lily walks out of the room, the phone rings. Josh goes
over to the end table and picks it up.

JOSH

(into the phone)
Hello?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. AUSTIN LIVING ROOM

where George is.

GEORGE

Hey, Josh.

JOSH

Yo, George, what's shakin'?

GEORGE

Did you see Sugar this afternoon?

JOSH

(frowning)
Not since school. Why?

GEORGE

Ah, he was supposed to come over.
You know, he's helping me rehab my
ankle. But he never showed.

JOSH

Sorry, man, can't help you.

GEORGE

(sighs)
Okay. Thanks.

As Josh hangs up the phone, Lily re-emerges from the back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY
How do I look?

JOSH
(cuddling)
Sexy, as usual.

LILY
(laughing)
I mean, do I look all right for my
therapy session?

JOSH
You look fine, Lily.

LILY
I guess I'm just a little nervous.

JOSH
Hey, I can still come with you,
you know.

LILY
(pushing him away firmly)
No, no—I'm fine. Really.

She pulls on her coat, and pecks him on the cheek.

LILY **(CONT'D)**
I'll be back.

And with that, she's out the door.

CUT TO:

EST. A CITY STREET - NIGHT

A moderately busy urban street, as Jaycee's convertible goes
roaring past.

CUT TO:

INT. JAYCEE'S CAR - MOVING

Sam is lounging in the passenger seat.

SAM
Okay, where are we going again?

JAYCEE
Trust me, you're gonna love this.
Eddie's raves, they just rock.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM
I'm really not into this scene.

JAYCEE
Yeah, I can see that.

She reaches over and flips open the top button of Sam's blouse.

JAYCEE (CONT'D)
You gotta lighten up, though.

SAM
Jaycee...

JAYCEE
You know, advertise.

SAM
(re-buttoning her blouse)
I'm not interested, thank you.

JAYCEE
C'mon, what about those urges?

SAM
I'll have you know I have plenty of urges. I'm just...not ready to jump into another relationship.

JAYCEE
So who's talkin' relationship? You meet someone cute, you take 'em home... And, you don't have to worry about your mom walking in on you.

Sam just shakes her head and laughs.

CUT TO:

EST. CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Another shot of Jaycee's speeding convertible; after which the focus segues to a Mr. Cluck restaurant on the corner.

CUT TO:

INT. MR. CLUCK - CONTINUOUS

Sugar Daddy steps up to the counter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COUNTER BOY
Can I help you, sir?

SUGAR
Yeah...gimme two—no, three Mr.
Cluck dinner specials. And
supersize everything.

CUT TO:

INT. AN OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

Lily and her therapist—a solidly-built forty-ish man—are chatting while strolling along the edge of a large atrium.

LILY
You know, Dr. Morgan...this isn't
exactly what I pictured.

DR. MORGAN
Oh? What did you picture?

LILY
(shrugs)
Ummm...luxurious office...lots of
bookshelves...leather couch...

DR. MORGAN
Well, we can go back to that
office if you prefer. But some
people find this more comfortable.

LILY
No, it's fine. This is...
relaxing.

DR. MORGAN
(leading)
And you don't relax easily.

LILY
I don't know...I guess maybe
sometimes people think I'm too
serious.

DR. MORGAN
There's nothing wrong with being
serious. Do you think you're too
serious?

She stops walking and chuckles at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY
Sometimes I forget that you're a
psychologist.

DR. MORGAN
Don't worry, I won't let you
forget. So...?

LILY
I really don't know. I mean, if I
see something wrong, then I have
to do something about it. I can't
just do nothing. Is that bad?

DR. MORGAN
(considering)
Do you think it's a bad thing?

LILY
No...!

DR. MORGAN
Then I don't either.

They walk on for a moment.

LILY
Just out of curiosity...if I did
think it was a bad thing—I don't,
but if I did...?

DR. MORGAN
Well, if you're doing something
you're not happy with, then that's
something that might need to be
addressed.

LILY
(sourly)
What I'm doing that I'm not happy
about is turning into a basket
case whenever my husband raises
his voice.

DR. MORGAN
And you don't feel threatened by
him? Not at all?

LILY
No! Doctor, he's the sweetest,
gentlest man ever. This is just
tearing him up. I could never,
ever feel threatened.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DR. MORGAN
Consciously.

LILY
Dr. Morgan...you think my
subconscious is afraid of Josh?

DR. MORGAN
It might be a little more
complicated than that, but...your
subconscious reacts on a different
level than your conscious mind.
It interacts differently with
people. There's a possibility—
based on what I've heard—that
subconsciously you're equating
Josh with your father. That's
only a preliminary opinion, of
course.

LILY
Well, how do I un-equate them??

DR. MORGAN
That's what therapy's for.

LILY
If you really think it'll help...

DR. MORGAN
I'm a psychologist. It's my job
to think it'll help.
(chuckles)
Really, Lily, I don't see any
reason why you shouldn't be able
to make significant progress in
dealing with this trauma from your
childhood. I don't mean to say
it'll be easy—but it is a fairly
straightforward process.

LILY
What about my stress, Dr. Morgan?

DR. MORGAN
Hmmm...I could say that your need
to be actively involved is a by-
product of your childhood trauma.
To put it rather tritely, that you
feel you need to change the world
because you couldn't change your
situation at home.
(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

But, then I'd be talking like a psychologist—and we wouldn't want that, would we?

They walk along for a moment more.

DR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

You know, there are a couple of exercises you can try to lower your immediate stress levels...and it might make you a bit less prone to panic attacks.

FLIP CUT TO:

INT. DR. MORGAN'S OFFICE - LATER

Lily has a doubtful expression on her face.

LILY

I don't know about this, Dr. Morgan.

She holds up her hands, which are encased in—what else?—boxing gloves.

LILY (CONT'D)

I've never believed in any kind of violence. And besides, I already tried something like this with Josh, and it didn't work.

DR. MORGAN

(shaking his head)

This isn't about working things out with Josh. This is all about you. Consciously, you might shun violence, but your subconscious is still angry about all the things your father did. Bottling up that anger is part of what creates your stress.

He holds up a sparring pad.

DR. MORGAN (CONT'D)

Go ahead—it's perfectly all right.

LILY

(shrugs)

But I don't feel like hitting anything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. MORGAN

Sometimes, even most of the time, you're not aware of what your subconscious is doing. But it's fairly easy to channel those feelings.

LILY

(pliantly)

Tell me how.

DR. MORGAN

Well...since you're an environmentalist, it might help to think of causes you've rallied against. Things that really make your blood boil. Say, for instance...oil slicks. Or, clear-cutting. Or baby seals being clubbed to death for their furs—

In the midst of Dr. Morgan's helpful commentary, Lily lashes out—except that instead of hitting the pad, she catches the psychologist square on the chin with a right hook, dropping him to the floor. An instant later she gasps and claps her gloved hands over her mouth, mortified by what she's done.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. JOSH AND LILY'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Lily is curled up on the sofa, despondent, while Josh sits on the other end.

JOSH
You decked the guy??

Lily throws up her hands.

LILY
I didn't mean to!

JOSH
I can't believe you actually leveled your therapist.

LILY
Stop saying that! It was an accident!

JOSH
So...did it make you feel any better?

LILY
(looking over at him)
Sure, Josh, just as soon as I'm finished dying of humiliation!

JOSH
Awww, babe.

He opens his arms invitingly, and she scoots over and curls up next to him.

JOSH (CONT'D)
I'm sure it wasn't that bad.
(beat)
Did you give him a shiner?

She swats his leg.

LILY
No...I didn't hit him in the eye.
I hit him in the jaw.

JOSH
Ouch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She makes a clucking noise, and reaches for the phone.

JOSH (CONT'D)

What?

LILY

(sighs, dialing)

I promised Mrs. McPherson I'd try
and talk to Sam for her.

She waits on the phone for a few seconds, then hangs it up.

LILY (CONT'D)

Great. No answer on her cell.
And she doesn't even have a
regular phone anymore.

She leans back against Josh, who closes his arms around her.

LILY (CONT'D)

So much for getting rid of stress.

CUT TO:

INT. A WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The rave is in full swing. Sam's cell phone happens to be
dangling from its pouch on her belt, as she and Jaycee dance
in the midst of the throng of party-goers.

DISSOLVE TO:

EST. L.A. SKYLINE - MORNING

Sometime after dawn.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT

Sam is lying face-down on her rickety old bed, dead to the
world, still wearing the previous night's clothes. Finally
she opens one eye, groaning. She turns over, and the sound of
the springs creaking makes her groan again and grab her head.
After a few moments, she tries to sit up—but only makes it
partway before squeezing her eyes shut and collapsing back
onto the mattress.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE SAM'S APARTMENT - LATER

The door opens, and Sam shuffles out, barely awake. Suddenly Jaycee's door opens, and a scruffy-looking guy pops out. He pulls up short when he sees Sam.

PARTY DUDE

Hey, you were with Jaycee at Eddie's last night. I remember you.

SAM

(swaying)
Good for you.

PARTY DUDE

Party hardy—catch ya later.

He trots off down the hallway, with Sam squinting after him and mouthing, "party hardy?" Then the door opens again, and Jaycee sticks her head out.

JAYCEE

Oh, hey, Sam. Did I tell you Eddie's raves rock, or what?

SAM

(dully)
I'm dead. I just want you to know that.

JAYCEE

Oooh, looks like someone had a good time last night. Someone else, I mean. So, blow off school and crash today.

SAM

(rubbing her head)
Ohh...I can't, I have a history test...

Sam blinks, trying to focus.

SAM (CONT'D)

Is it history?
(moaning)
Ohhhh, my head... I need aspirin.
Lots of aspirin.

JAYCEE

(holding up a finger)
I got something better. Hang on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jaycee disappears back into her apartment, re-emerging a moment later with a couple of pills in her hand. She holds them out to Sam.

JAYCEE **(CONT'D)**

Here, take these. They'll make everything better.

Sam casts a foggy glare at her.

SAM

Nothing will make this better.

Jaycee puts the pills into Sam's hand and closes it around them.

JAYCEE

Trust me.

Finally, Sam pops the pills into her mouth.

JAYCEE **(CONT'D)**

There...give it a few minutes to kick in, and you'll be good as new.

CUT TO:

INT. SUGAR DADDY'S BEDROOM

When Sugar Daddy wakes up, he, too, is suffering, but with a different cause; his hands go immediately to his stomach.

CUT TO:

INT. SUGAR DADDY'S BATHROOM - LATER

Sugar Daddy trudges in and steps up onto the scale. He peers down, and his eyes widen.

INSERT: THE SCALE DIAL

from Sugar Daddy's POV, spinning comically around and around.

SUGAR

Oh, man...

MRS. BERNADINO (O.S.)

Michael! Come down to breakfast!
Ellie's making Crepes Suzette!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUGAR
 (shoulders drooping)
 Oh, man...

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER

Natalie is walking down the hall with an armful of books when Sam skips—literally—up from behind and catches her shoulder.

NATALIE
 (surprised)
 Sam! I, uh—

SAM
 (overriding her)
 Hey, I know I totally blew you off yesterday, but it was just one of those things, you know? Anyway, Nat—can I call you Nat? You really look like a Nat—I wanna make it up to you. We'll go do the whole thing, right now, 'k? C'mon!

While Sam pulls at Natalie's arm, Natalie looks Sam over, with a very strange expression on her face.

NATALIE
 Ah...we have history?

SAM
 (clapping)
 History! Yes! Bring it on, girl—I'm psyched for all that historical stuff!

Sam prances off down the hall, while Natalie stares after her, eyes narrowed.

FLIP CUT TO:

INT. GIRLS' RESTROOM - LATER

Natalie, Carmen and Brooke are conferencing on the tuffet in the Novak.

CARMEN
 No way!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATALIE

I know what I saw, okay? Look, we had stoners in Minnesota—okay, not as many as in California, but we had enough of them. I'm telling you, she was higher than the space shuttle.

CARMEN

No, you don't understand. Sam doesn't do that kind of thing. Not ever. It's impossible.

As if on cue, all of them look over to Lily, who is leaning against the wall, eyes down, arms folded. At the sudden onrush of silence, she looks up at them, then shrugs.

LILY

I don't know.

CARMEN

Lil!

LILY

Look, up until a couple weeks ago, I'd be right there with you. But...who knows what Sam's doing now? She's got a new place, new friends...

CARMEN

Come on! You know she's not doing drugs!

LILY

Have any of you even seen her today?

Carmen and Brooke shake their heads.

LILY (CONT'D)

(to Carmen)

And how would YOU know? You haven't even been here most of the last two weeks.

CARMEN

(indignant)

Hey, I've had good reasons for not being here!

NATALIE

(interrupting)

Guys! What about Sam?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BROOKE
 (holding out her hands)
 Even if Sam is into something,
 what are we supposed to do about
 it?

NATALIE
 You're her friends—

Brooke rolls her eyes.

NATALIE (CONT'D)
 (backtracks)
 Okay, you're the people who know
 her the best. I just thought you
 should know. Maybe you could talk
 to her...

BROOKE
 Well, I can't do it.

LILY
 (resigned)
 I'll do it.

Lily pushes herself away from the wall, a faintly disgusted
 look on her face.

CARMEN
 Lily...

LILY
 No, I can't get my own life
 straight; I might as well take a
 shot at everyone else's.

Lily walks out before anyone can say anything else; the other
 girls just look at each other guiltily.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER

Sam—in a much less hyper state—is rummaging around in her
 locker when she is hit by a twinge of pain; she winces and
 touches her forehead gingerly. When she closes her locker
 door, she finds Lily standing behind it.

SAM
 Oh, hey, Lily.

Sam notices the way Lily is looking at her, and her eyes
 narrow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM (CONT'D)

What?

LILY

Are you...okay?

Sam feels another twinge, and squeezes her eyes shut for a moment.

SAM

I was out late last night.

LILY

Yeah, I tried to call you.

SAM

Sorry...Jaycee dragged me to this rave.

LILY

(slightly incredulous)

Sam—you don't rave.

SAM

(annoyed)

So I'm trying to expand my social life, okay? Is that a crime? It's not like anything's happening here.

LILY

Sorry.

SAM

(shakes her head)

No, I'm...I guess maybe I did stay out too late.

She leans against her locker tiredly.

LILY

Are you sure you're okay? Maybe you should go to the nurse's station.

SAM

No, it's just a headache. I'll be fine.

(beat)

What's with the sudden concern?

LILY

I need a reason to be worried about my best friend?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Sam gives her a skeptical look.

LILY (CONT'D)
Ah...um...Natalie thought...there
might be something wrong.

SAM
Natalie?
(remembering)
Oh...yeah, I ran into her before.
But I'm fine. Really.

Lily seems reluctant to let it go.

LILY
If you're sure...

SAM
You know, speaking of Nat—
Natalie—I should do some research
for that English paper we were
supposed to do. I really feel bad
about blowing her off yesterday.

LILY
Well...okay...

Sam touches Lily's arm.

SAM
I'm glad there's still some people
around here who care about me.

Before Lily can come up with a response to that, Sam is off
down the hallway. Lily finally sighs, shakes her head and
turns in the opposite direction.

CUT TO:

INT. A CLASSROOM - LATER

Sam is sitting at a table, surrounded by books, but not doing
much researching. Instead, she has her head down on the
table, moaning quietly and rubbing her temples.

Behind her, Jaycee appears in the open doorway and taps on the
door.

JAYCEE
Knock, knock.

Sam turns around, startled. The sudden movement brings on
another wave of pain. Jaycee saunters into the classroom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

What are you doing here? You
can't just wander around campus.

JAYCEE

Hey, I can pass for seventeen.
Besides—

She takes something out of her pocket and shows it to Sam.

INSERT: A SCHOOL ID CARD

from Kennedy High, with Jaycee's name on it.

JAYCEE (CONT'D)

I used to go here.

SAM

I didn't know that.

Jaycee looks Sam over critically.

JAYCEE

You don't look so hot.

SAM

(managing sarcasm)
Really.

JAYCEE

Look, I thought you might crash,
so I brought you this.

She digs two more pills out of her pocket and lays them on the
table.

SAM

I can't keep taking this stuff. I
don't even know what it is.

JAYCEE

(cajoling)
Relax, it's nothing. You're not
going to get hooked. Look at me—
do I look like a drugged-out
zombie? But, hey, it's your
choice—you can keep feeling like
you do now, or...

Sam winces again, and, with an irritated glance towards Jaycee,
picks up the pills and pops them into her mouth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAYCEE (CONT'D)

See, that wasn't hard. You'll be feeling great in no time. And, just in case those wear off—

She scribbles on a corner of Sam's notebook.

JAYCEE (CONT'D)

There's a guy here who can give you more. Just tell him I sent you, and it'll be cool.

SAM

Doesn't this stuff cost money?

JAYCEE

(nonchalantly)

Naw, hardly anything. Well, I gotta jet. See you tonight?

Sam nods absently, and Jaycee is out the door, while she runs her finger over the name written in her notebook.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. MCQUEEN KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Mike walks in through the sliding glass door and sets his briefcase and things down on the breakfast bar. A moment later, Jane comes in.

JANE
Hey, you're home early.

MIKE
(glum)
I took the afternoon off.

Concerned, she goes over and snuggles next to him.

JANE
Did something happen?

He picks up a large manila envelope.

MIKE
My lawyer dropped this off this morning.

JANE
(looking)
The adoption papers?

Mike lets the envelope fall to the counter, and sits down.

MIKE
It was just a few months ago... I mean, okay, Brooke was in the hospital, but she was getting better, and everyone was getting along, and... How did everything fall apart so fast?

Jane lays her head on Mike's shoulder.

JANE
Maybe Sam will come around. Maybe she just needs to see that life on her own isn't any rose garden. Meantime, we still have Brooke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

You're right. I hope you're right.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A CLASSROOM

Lily is sitting at a table, poking away at her laptop computer, when Natalie comes in.

NATALIE

Am I bothering?

LILY

No, I'm just trying to psych myself up to doing research. I thought you were supposed to be studying with Carmen?

NATALIE

She flaked. Well, I don't know... she got a note from the nurse's station to go home early.

LILY

(shaking her head)

Man, she never coulda pulled something like that with Nurse Glass.

NATALIE

(frowns)

Nurse...Glass? As in...Miss Glass?

LILY

Oh, that's...way too long a story. Don't worry about it.

NATALIE

(amiably)

Okay.

Natalie sits down next to Lily.

LILY

Oh, I talked to Sam. She didn't seem any different. Except she said she had a headache.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATALIE

(earnestly)

Lily, she was crashing! I know what I saw.

LILY

(sighs)

I can try to keep an eye on her, but...

NATALIE

I know. I'm sorry, I guess I'm being a real pain.

LILY

No, you're not. I've just recently been trying to set limits on trying to be everyone's conscience.

Natalie leans over and looks at the computer screen.

NATALIE

How come you're having to psych yourself up to study? I thought you liked studying. Not that you're a dork or anything.

LILY

(giggling)

I'm very dorkish, actually. Did you see this?

She picks up a paper and hands it to Natalie.

LILY (CONT'D)

From Mr. Osbourne.

NATALIE

(reading)

"Describe an aspect of nineteenth-century society that is reflected in 'Thus Spake Zarathustra.'"

(puts the paper down)

Hmph. Still pushing Nietzsche.

LILY

It's really interesting watching the two of you go at it in class. Before, we only had Miss Glass for entertainment. And that wasn't always a lot of fun.

(looks at the paper again)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LILY (CONT'D)

I dunno about these assignments,
though.

NATALIE

Hey, can you get chat rooms on
this thing?

LILY

Uh...yeah...but we really aren't
supposed to—

Natalie pulls the laptop towards her and starts typing.

NATALIE

Oh, it's okay. I know a U of M
professor who'd love to expound on
this little question of Mr.
Osbourne's. He has his own
classroom chat...

(looks up at the clock)

It ought to still be going.

While watching the screen, Lily suddenly throws out a hand.

LILY

Wait! Hang on!

NATALIE

What?

LILY

I know that screen name...

(pointing)

Can you follow that person?

NATALIE

(typing)

Sure.

For a few moments they both watch the screen.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

Lily, what are we—

(reading)

"Hot Romance Lounge"?

LILY

(reading)

"27-year-old man in Florida seeks
woman to..." Oh my God...

NATALIE

(reading)

"Ladies, have you ever..." Ewwww!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Lily stands up, snapping the laptop shut and tucking it under her arm before running out.

NATALIE (CONT'D)
Lily, wait! Who was that?!

LILY
(calling back)
I'll tell you later!

Left alone, Natalie looks around the room.

NATALIE
(to herself)
Is everyone just nuts around here?

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER

Sugar Daddy is walking down the hallway when suddenly (in his head) everything goes into a distorted slow-motion. Even worse, everyone around him is eating rich deserts. As he starts to run, the people lining the hall thrust food at him. Suddenly Lily appears in front of him, and he pulls up short. She smiles up at him sweetly—then opens a huge pink box of donuts.

LILY
Donut?

Sugar Daddy pushes himself away from her, running down another corridor and barging into the locker room.

CUT TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

When Sugar Daddy comes crashing through the doors, he finds Josh sitting on one of the benches.

JOSH
(looking up)
Oh, hey, Shug.

Sugar Daddy rushes over to him.

SUGAR
Josh! You gotta help me, man!

Josh stands up and grabs Sugar by the shoulders, concerned.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOSH

Whoa, whoa, chill out. What's going on?

SUGAR

I don't know, man. I've been so freaked out with Ellie being here and all, and...

He looks around conspiratorially.

SUGAR (CONT'D)

I think...I think I'm seein' things, man. Things that aren't there. I really think I'm losing my mind, Josh, you gotta help me.

JOSH

Seeing things? Like what kind of things?

SUGAR

Like, everyone's eating, man! And I mean, everyone! I ran into Lily and she offered me a donut!

JOSH

(frowns)

A donut? That's not right—Lily's not into pastries.

SUGAR

That's what I'm sayin', man! I'm hallucinating!

JOSH

(reassuring)

Okay, okay. Look, I got your back, right? Hey, I bet I know what's wrong with you. Low blood sugar.

SUGAR

Huh?

JOSH

Yeah! You know, like when you don't pack away enough carbs before a big game, and then when the fourth quarter hits—wham! You know what you need?

Josh steps aside, and Sugar Daddy sees that the whole bench is covered with a lavish buffet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOSH (CONT'D)

How about a giant roast beef-turkey-pastrami sub?

Sugar Daddy screams and runs away.

SLIDE CUT TO:

EXT. BEHIND THE GYM - LATER

Sugar Daddy runs up to a student, Phil, lounging on a folding chair under a tree. Next to him is a suitcase on a folding stand.

SUGAR

(huffing)

Man, I need something, quick!

PHIL

Haven't seen you around here before. Hey—you're Sugar Daddy Bernadino! I caught your game against Roosevelt. You know, I hate to discourage business, but your performance sure doesn't need enhancing. Unlike some of the other guys on that line, I might add.

SUGAR

No, no, it's nothing like that! I'm lookin' at a serious weight problem. I just need some diet pills, like right now.

PHIL

(shaking his head)

Uh-uh. "Diet pills"? That's just code for speed. What you need, my friend, is an "appetite suppressant".

Phil opens the suitcase. Inside is a massive array of pill bottles of various sizes and colors. Unerringly, he picks one out.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Now, what kind of time frame are you looking for?

SUGAR

I have to get through at least the next three days.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PHIL
All right-ee...

He taps out a number of green odd-shaped pills into his hand.

PHIL (CONT'D)
This is exactly what the doctor ordered. Take one of these three times a day, and you'll be eating like a canary. An underweight canary. Guaranteed.

SUGAR
Yeah, a canary, that sounds good. How much?

PHIL
(looking skyward)
Let's see...overhead, insurance, markup...
(shrugs)
Forget it. You're a V.I.P.—for you, twenty-five.

Sugar Daddy digs out his wallet, pulls out a couple of bills and hands them to Phil, who gives him the pills in return.

SUGAR
I'm not gonna get hooked on these, right?

PHIL
No sir indeed-ee, those little babies are one-hundred-percent non-addictive. You got my personal word.

SUGAR
Man, you're a lifesaver.

PHIL
(piously)
Anything I can do to support our valiant student athletes.

CUT TO:

INT. MCQUEEN LIVING ROOM - LATER

Mike is sitting on the sofa, shoes off, feet on the coffee table. Jane comes in, holding a coffee mug.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANE

Mike?

She gets barely a grunt in response.

JANE (CONT'D)

Mike!

MIKE

(looking up)

Huh?

JANE

You're brooding.

MIKE

Am not. Besides, so are you.

With a sigh, she sets her mug down on the coffee table and sits down next to him. There is silence for a long moment.

JANE

I think we should tell them.

MIKE

(looking over)

You don't think they're mad enough as it is? You want to tell them that we've been lying to them for months now...

JANE

Mike, we've been waiting for the right to tell them, but apparently there isn't one. So—why not just get it all out? Really, how much worse can it get?

MIKE

Do me a favor—don't ask questions like that.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER

Sugar Daddy is walking down an empty corridor, casting furtive glances around. He is so busy looking to make sure he's not being watched that as he rounds a corner, he runs right into Brooke. She clutches at him to keep from falling down, and a couple of the pills slip out of his hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BROOKE
Oh! Sorry!

SUGAR
(embarrassed)
No, it's my bad.

BROOKE
Here, let me—

Brooke bends down and scoops up the pills. She is about to hand them back to him when she notices their odd color and shape, and instead holds one up to examine.

BROOKE (CONT'D)
Sugar, what are these?

SUGAR
Uh, nothin'. I mean, just aspirin.

BROOKE
These don't look like aspirin...

SUGAR
I swear, they aren't anything.

Brooke's mouth drops as she puts two and two together.

BROOKE
Did you get these from Phil the Pharmacist?!

Sugar does a double-take.

SUGAR
You know about Phil?

BROOKE
(eyes narrowing)
I was a Glamazon, of course I know about Phil.

SUGAR
Look, I just need something to get me through 'til Ellie leaves. Otherwise I'm gonna weigh half a ton!

BROOKE
Drugs are not the way to deal, Sugar! I thought you knew better than that.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BROOKE (CONT'D)

After we went through that program together—I just don't know what to say.

Sugar Daddy's shoulders slump, and he looks like he's going to start blubbering.

SUGAR

You don't know how Ellie makes me feel. She's always Little Miss Perfect this, and Little Miss Perfect that. How am I supposed to compete with perfect?

BROOKE

(uncomfortable)

I'm...sure she doesn't mean to make you feel bad. And, you don't have to compete with her! Just be yourself.

SUGAR

Easy for you to say.

BROOKE

(grimacing)

Yeah, well, if you need help, I'm there, but there's no way I'm letting you get hooked on pills.

SUGAR

Oh, no, man, Phil said I couldn't get hooked.

BROOKE

(rolls her eyes)

And you're gonna believe Phil?!

(extending her hand)

Give me the rest of them.

Sugar Daddy hesitates.

BROOKE (CONT'D)

(impatiently)

Come on, hand 'em over.

Finally he drops the pills into her hand. She grabs his arm and turns him around.

BROOKE (CONT'D)

Let's go.

SUGAR

Wait—go where?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BROOKE
We're taking these back to Phil.

SUGAR
No way! You can't just take stuff
back!

BROOKE
Oh, he'll take them back. He owes
me. Now come on.

She drags him back down the hallway.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEHIND THE GYM - MOMENTS LATER

Phil is still lounging under the tree when Sam approaches. She looks as though the effects of her pills are wearing off again.

SAM
Are you, um...Phil?

PHIL
(peering up)
Who wants to know?

SAM
Uh—Jaycee sent me? She said...

PHIL
Jaycee? I haven't seen her in...
Well, what can I do for you?
(holding up a hand)
No, wait, let me see... I'm good
at this...

He cants his head this way and that, looking at Sam from several different angles.

PHIL (CONT'D)
I'd say...you went out raving last
night, and this morning your head
decided it wanted the day off.
Right?

SAM
Well...kind of.

PHIL
Uh-huh. So what did Jaycee give
you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM
 (at a loss)
 I, um...I'm not sure. They were
 little, round, white...

PHIL
 Okay, no problem. I know what
 that is.

He opens his suitcase and pulls out a bottle. Then he fishes
 a pill out and holds it up for her to see.

PHIL (CONT'D)
 This look like it?

SAM
 Um, yeah...I guess so.

PHIL
 (nodding)
 That's what I thought. Nice
 little pick-me-up, this one is.
 Strictly short-term.

He counts out six pills.

PHIL (CONT'D)
 This'll get you through tonight.
 Tomorrow you'll be fresh as a
 daisy. Guaranteed.

Sam rubs her temples tiredly.

SAM
 Um...is this going to be real
 expensive?

PHIL
 (looking up at her)
 Hey, tell you what...I hate to see
 a girl in distress. Especially a
 pretty girl like you.

He takes the pills and presses them into her hand.

PHIL (CONT'D)
 It's on the house.

SAM
 Oh, I couldn't—

PHIL
 (shakes his head)
 I insist. Go on.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PHIL (CONT'D)

You'll feel a million times better tomorrow morning.

SAM

Well...all right.

PHIL

(smiling)

That's my girl. You'll be fine. Promise.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEHIND THE GYM - CONTINUOUS

About fifty feet away, out of earshot and partially behind a tree, Brooke and Sugar Daddy are watching Sam and Phil, bug-eyed and open-mouthed.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. A CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Brooke pushes Sugar Daddy into an empty classroom, slams the door shut and starts to pace ferociously. Sugar Daddy follows her with his head, back and forth, like he's watching a tennis match.

BROOKE
(frantic)
Oh my God...oh my God! What am I
gonna do? What am I gonna do??

Suddenly she spins and grabs Sugar Daddy by the front of his shirt, shaking him.

BROOKE (CONT'D)
Well?! What am I gonna do??!

He gulps, like a fish out of water, but nothing comes out. She lets him go and resumes pacing.

BROOKE (CONT'D)
I have to do something...I mean, I
have to...

From the sideline, Sugar Daddy nods helpfully. She's not paying attention.

BROOKE (CONT'D)
I have to tell someone...but...no,
I can't tell Dad...or Jane...I
can't rat Sam out...

Sugar Daddy shakes his head emphatically.

BROOKE (CONT'D)
But I, I can't just let her...I
have to talk to somebody...
Lily...yeah, Lily, she'll know
what to do... But, maybe she
won't...and, if Sam found out I...
she'd...

Groaning, she rubs her forehead. Meanwhile, poor Sugar Daddy is so caught up between nodding yes and shaking his head no that his head is going every which way.

Finally, her eyes narrowing, Brooke puts her fist and palm together.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BROOKE (CONT'D)
 (determined)
 All right. I've got to do something.

Without another word, she spins around and walks right past Sugar Daddy and out the door. Sighing, he looks around, pats his pockets, and produces a candy bar. He tears the wrapper off the end and takes a bite.

CUT TO:

INT. MCQUEEN LIVING ROOM - LATER

Jane comes down the stairs, buttoning her jacket.

JANE
 Mike?

On cue, Mike emerges from the kitchen area.

JANE (CONT'D)
 I have a couple of showings, and then I'm going to see Sam.

He walks over to her and holds her loosely.

MIKE
 I hope you can get through to her.

JANE
 I don't know how long I might be. Are you going to be all right?

MIKE
 We'll be fine. I'll talk to Brooke.

JANE
 (sighs)
 Mike...don't get your hopes up. I told you what she's going to say.

MIKE
 You don't know that for sure.

JANE
 Yes, I do. I think I know her pretty well by now.

She disentangles herself and picks up her briefcase before heading for the front door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE
 (calling after)
 Good luck.

CUT TO:

INT. FERERRA HOUSE - LATER

The hall outside Carmen's bedroom. Lily steps up to the closed door, laptop still tucked under her arm, and knocks firmly.

LILY
 Carmen?!

There is no answer from the other side. Lily knocks again.

LILY (CONT'D)
 Carmen, I know you're in there!
 (beat)
 I'm going to stay out here all
 afternoon if I have to!

Still silence.

LILY (CONT'D)
 Come on, Carm! Please let me in!

Finally the door cracks open, and Carmen peers out at her. Lily raises her eyebrows, and Carmen opens the door to let her step inside.

CUT TO:

INT. CARMEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Carmen stands next to her bed, arms folded, and looks at Lily crossly.

CARMEN
 Okay, you're in. Now what?

Lily puts on an understanding face.

LILY
 Carm, I know what you've been
 doing.

CARMEN
 I don't know what you're talking
 about.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY
(sighs)
Look, I know you probably don't
want to talk about it, but—

CARMEN
Whatever you think you know—

LILY
(rushed)
I know you've been skipping school
to go online in chat rooms.

Carmen's eyes get wide.

CARMEN
That is not true! You take that
back right now!

LILY
It is true, Carm! I saw you.

CARMEN
(adamant)
You did not!

Lily holds out her laptop.

LILY
Yes, I did. I know your screen
name.

CARMEN
Well, I know yours too, and I
didn't—I mean—

LILY
I was with Natalie. She was
signed in.

CARMEN
You two were spying on me?!

LILY
Of course not! She was looking up
a professor to help with an
assignment, and I saw your name.
And so...we followed you.

CARMEN
You...huh? Why did you do that?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LILY
Carm...I saw what kind of chat
room you went into.

CARMEN
Yeah...well, it was just that
once, I swear!

Lily doesn't answer, but looks at her very skeptically.
Carmen sits down on the end of the bed.

CARMEN (CONT'D)
Okay, maybe I spend some time
chatting.

LILY
(gently)
"Some"? Carmen, you're missing
school.

Carmen hangs her head, and Lily puts her arm around her
shoulder.

CARMEN
You don't understand. When I go
online...I can say anything I
want. Do anything I want. I
don't have to worry about what
everyone's thinking, or, you know,
people pointing and laughing. I
know I shouldn't do it so much,
but...

LILY
Hey, don't worry.

CARMEN
No, you shouldn't worry. I know
you don't want to take care of
everyone.

LILY
(grinning)
Well...I guess I can make one more
little exception.

Lily squeezes Carmen's shoulders.

CUT TO:

INT. MCQUEEN KITCHEN - EVENING

Brooke comes down the back stairs and stops upon entering the kitchen, which is deserted. She looks around, clearly expecting some kind of activity.

BROOKE

Hello?

Mike walks in.

BROOKE (CONT'D)

Dad? Where's Jane?

Mike comes over and puts his arm around her, herding her towards the living room.

MIKE

She had to go out for a while.
We'll order pizza later. Right
now...we need to have a little
chat.

CUT TO:

INT. MCQUEEN LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mike sits Brooke down on the sofa, and takes a seat across the coffee table from her. She curls up and looks at him apprehensively.

MIKE

Honey, there's been something
I've—we've, Jane and I—have been
wanting to talk to you about for a
while now.

BROOKE

(interrupting)

Is that where Jane is? Going to
see Sam?

Mike nods, and Brooke suddenly looks more nervous.

MIKE

Look, I don't know how Jane and
Sam are going to go. But in the
meantime...this is important,
Brooke, and I want you to hear me
out before you react.

She unfolds her legs and rests her chin in her hands, staring at him intently—which seems to make him uncomfortable.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE (CONT'D)

Ahh...you know, Jane and I, we want to be completely honest with you girls...

Under Brooke's quizzical scrutiny, he trails off for a moment.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Brooke...something happened today. Well—something came.

He reaches down and comes up with the manila envelope with the adoption papers inside.

BROOKE

What's that?

MIKE

Do you remember when we talked about going through with my adopting Sam, and—

Brooke suddenly looks pained.

BROOKE

Oh—Dad, I really...I don't think I can, now. I mean—

She takes a breath and gathers herself.

BROOKE (CONT'D)

(firmly)

Dad, I don't want to.

MIKE

Look, I know things between you and Sam are bad—

BROOKE

(breaking in)

No, Dad, it's not that.

(hastily)

And it's not Jane either, she's great, and I love having her around. It's...

(beat)

Last year, when you guys first brought up this adoption thing... I hadn't seen Mom since she left us, and she could've been in China for all I knew. I know she's not here; she's in San Francisco. I just...don't want to give Mom up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Mike nods to himself, a resigned grimace on his face.

MIKE

That's what Jane said you'd say.

BROOKE

I'm sorry, I really am.

MIKE

It's okay.

BROOKE

(cautiously)

It is?

He scoots forward and takes her hands in his.

MIKE

Honey, of course it is. I would never want you to do something like this if you don't want to. Neither would Jane.

BROOKE

(relieved)

Oh. Well. Good.

MIKE

(sitting back)

There's something else I have to tell you.

BROOKE

(on guard again)

There is?

CUT TO:

INT. OUTSIDE SAM'S APARTMENT

Jane is standing outside Sam's door. After a moment of hesitation, she knocks.

Sam opens the door; her expression sours instantly upon seeing her mother.

SAM

What do you want?

JANE

Sam, I just want to talk to you for a minute.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

I don't want to talk to you. I thought that was kinda obvious.

JANE

(ironically)

Well, I can track you down at school, if you think that would be less embarrassing.

Sam makes a sound closer to a growl than a sigh and turns her back, letting the door swing open. Jane takes that for an invitation and steps inside.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jane closes the door behind her and turns to face Sam, who is standing in the middle of the room with her arms folded, exuding hostility.

JANE

(looking around)

Can we sit down?

Sam makes an impatient gesture towards the only chair in the room, a metal folding chair tucked under a card table, on which lies Sam's laptop and piles of other things. Jane sits down gingerly, then looks up at Sam, who is still standing there.

JANE (CONT'D)

Sam, please?

Sam looks disgusted, but finally sits down on the bed in a huff.

JANE (CONT'D)

Sam...Mike and I...we haven't been completely honest with you.

SAM

(dripping sarcasm)

Really, Mom, this isn't news. You haven't been honest with me for a long time.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MCQUEEN LIVING ROOM

Cut between Mike and Brooke, and Jane and Sam.

MIKE

There's something Jane and I
haven't...that we've been keeping
from you.

Brooke thinks that over.

BROOKE

This sounds bad, but go ahead.

JANE

Sam, just listen for a minute. We
wanted to tell you, but—

MIKE

—there just never seemed to be a
good time.

Brooke is curled up again, listening patiently.

Sam looks bored, glancing around and rolling her eyes.

SAM

Whatever it is, I don't care, so
just spit it out, okay?

MIKE

Do you remember when we went to
the Caribbean?

JANE

We took Mac to Barbados.

MIKE

The thing is, while we were
there—

JANE

—Mike and I—

MIKE

—Jane and I—

SPLIT SCREEN - MIKE AND JANE

MIKE/JANE

—we got married.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPLIT SCREEN - BROOKE AND SAM

BROOKE/SAM

WHAT???

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FOUR

THE END