

Popular: Senior Year  
"Rule #2"

by

The Wild Pikachu

POPULAR: SENIOR YEAR

RULE #2

TEASER

FADE IN:

EST. KENNEDY HIGH - MORNING

Stock shot of the front of the school.

SUPER: "MONDAY"

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY

Brooke and Lily are standing by Lily's locker, and Brooke has just asked something that has made Lily very nervous.

LILY

What?!!

BROOKE

It's a simple question: what have you heard about Harrison and Sam?

LILY

Wh-why do you think there's anything to hear?

Brooke crosses her arms sternly.

BROOKE

You're being evasive. That means you know something.

LILY

I, uh—

BROOKE

Have Harrison and Sam gotten back together?!

LILY

What? No! I mean, I don't think so...

BROOKE

You don't think so??

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On the defensive, Lily tries a different track.

LILY  
I thought, um, didn't you and  
Harrison have plans on Saturday?

BROOKE  
(eyes narrowing)  
How did you know that?

Lily snaps her mouth shut, realizing that she's dug herself a deeper hole.

BROOKE (CONT'D)  
Harrison told you, didn't he?!

LILY  
Brooke—

BROOKE  
Did he also tell you about his  
little date with Sam?!

Lily doesn't say anything; but Brooke reads the guilty look on her face, and her eyes go wide in shock.

BROOKE (CONT'D)  
Oh my God! He did!

LILY  
Yeah, he did, Brooke, but—

BROOKE  
How could you?!

LILY  
Just hear me out, okay? Yes, he  
came to me and Josh for advice.  
We didn't know what to tell him!  
What do you say to someone who  
makes three dates on the same—

Brooke reaches out and grabs Lily's arm.

BROOKE  
THREE???

Lily's jaw drops as she catches up.

LILY  
Ah—

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BROOKE  
 (counting off on her fingers)  
 Me, Sam, and—

She releases Lily's arm and, eyes flashing, spins on a heel and storms off.

LILY  
 (calling after)  
 Brooke, wait!

But Brooke doesn't stop, and Lily just sighs.

CUT TO:

INT. ANOTHER HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Natalie has just closed her locker door and is turning around when, from out of nowhere, Brooke slams her into the lockers.

BROOKE  
 Come on! Let's go!

Gasping, Natalie eyes Brooke warily.

NATALIE  
 (growling)  
 Get away from me.

BROOKE  
 (pumped up)  
 Oh no! You've messed with me for  
 the last time!

SLAM CUT TO:

NATALIE

This is the first of several black-and-white setups in which the characters, against a plain backdrop, directly address the audience (ala "Once and Again").

NATALIE  
 Rule number one: Never get into a  
 fight you don't want.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Natalie has just gotten the wind knocked out of her again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATALIE (CONT'D)

Don't...touch me.

BROOKE

Touch you?! This is where I kick  
your ass all the way back to  
Michigan, you skank!

Brooke reaches out to shove Natalie again; but this time Natalie blocks her arms, and delivers a jab to Brooke's solar plexus that sends her reeling back across the hallway.

Natalie pushes herself away from the lockers and advances on Brooke.

NATALIE

That's Minnesota, bitch.

SLAM CUT TO:

NATALIE

NATALIE (CONT'D)

Rule number two: If you do get  
into a fight you don't want—  
always finish it.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Shrieking in rage, Brooke launches herself at Natalie, and the two girls are soon rolling on the floor, grappling and hair pulling. Neither one seems to have the upper hand, and both are oblivious to everything around them, until—

KRUPPS

Stop!

The girls freeze, and look up to see Principal Krupps towering over them, hands on hips, glowering down. He reaches down and half-hauls Brooke to her feet; Natalie pops up after her.

FLIP CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - LATER

Brooke and Natalie are sitting on the wooden bench in the outer office in identical poses: arms crossed, glaring straight ahead.

WHITE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Clearly beyond furious, the two girls sit side-by-side. But they still manage to argue, in low, bitter voices.

BROOKE

I hate you.

NATALIE

Really...I couldn't tell.

BROOKE

Keep your paws off Harrison.

NATALIE

Hey, no problem.

BROOKE

Don't give me that. I heard about your little date.

NATALIE

Yeah, so? I tried, he turned me down flat.

BROOKE

(off-guard)

He did?

NATALIE

Look, sister, you want him, he's all yours. I'm tired of getting shot down.

This takes some of the heat out of Brooke's fury, but before she can regroup, Krupps appears before them, not much less angry than before.

KRUPPS

Well, now...what am I going to do with the two of you?

FLIP CUT TO:

INT. GIRLS' RESTROOM - LATER

Brooke and Lily, on the tuffet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY  
He let you off with a warning?

BROOKE  
Yeah...but he said next time he'd  
suspend us for the rest of the  
year.

Lily studies Brooke.

LILY  
And yet you seem strangely  
detached.

BROOKE  
She said he turned her down.

LILY  
Who what?

BROOKE  
Natalie. She said Harrison turned  
her down.

LILY  
That's good, right?

BROOKE  
I dunno. She could be lying.

LILY  
Or, you could be trusting  
Harrison.

BROOKE  
(looking over)  
By the way, I'm still pissed at  
you for not telling me about  
Harrison.

LILY  
Well, what was I supposed to do,  
Brooke? Just pick up the phone  
and say, "Hey, Brooke! Harrison's  
going out with Sam and Natalie  
today!"?

BROOKE  
That would've worked.

LILY  
Look, I'm doing my best to just  
stay out of anything involving you  
and Harrison and Sam.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Brooke looks exasperated.

LILY (CONT'D)

(adamant)

I promised that I wouldn't take sides between you and Sam, and I'm not.

BROOKE

After what she did—!

LILY

I know you're pissed about her still being attracted to Harrison, but—

BROOKE

This isn't about Harrison! She—

Brooke is cut off by the opening of the Novak's door; Miss Glass is standing in the hallway.

GLASS

McQueen! Get out here, now!

Frowning, Brooke stands up and goes to the door, followed by Lily.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

In the hall outside the Novak, Krupps is waiting, along with a middle-aged man in a nondescript suit. Before anyone else can say anything, the stranger takes a half-step forward and flashes a badge.

DET. HARRIS

Brooke McQueen?

Brooke looks to her left and right uncertainly, then nods.

DET. HARRIS (CONT'D)

Detective Harris, Metro Division. I'd like to have a word with you, if you don't mind, Miss McQueen.

BROOKE

(flustered)

I'm sorry...what's this about?

The detective puts out an arm, as if to escort her away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DET. HARRIS  
If you'll just come with me—we  
just want to ask a few questions.

BROOKE  
What about?

DET. HARRIS  
Please, Miss McQueen, if you'll  
come this way...

The detective is still "asking," but now he latches on to Brooke's arm and begins to lead her away, with Krupps bringing up the rear.

Lily rushes up to Krupps, concerned.

SLAM CUT TO:

LILY

LILY  
Rule number one: Always question  
authority.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

LILY (CONT'D)  
What's going on, Mr. Krupps?

KRUPPS  
This is a police matter, Mrs. Ford.  
It's better if you stay out of it.

With that, Krupps turns away, following the detective and Brooke down the hallway.

SLAM CUT TO:

LILY

LILY  
Rule number two: If "The Man"  
tells you to stay out of  
something—don't.

SLAM CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

LILY (CONT'D)  
(calling out)  
Brooke! I'm gonna call your dad!

BROOKE  
(over her shoulder)  
No! Get Mr. Osbourne!

Lily makes an affirmative hand gesture and runs off in the opposite direction.

CUT TO:

INT. SIDE OFFICE - LATER

In the narrow side office, Brooke is sitting at the long wooden table, sulkily twiddling her fingers and glaring at Detective Harris, who is flipping through a file folder, making notes. The silence has apparently been going on for some time.

BROOKE  
Are you going to ask me something or not?

DET. HARRIS  
(easily)  
Are you in a hurry, Miss McQueen?

Brooke throws herself back in her chair, folding her arms across her chest.

BROOKE  
Fine. If that's the way you want to play it.

DET. HARRIS  
Is this a game to you, Miss McQueen?

BROOKE  
(acidly)  
Since you're sitting there not asking anything, it's mostly a waste of time to me.

DET. HARRIS  
(warning)  
Miss McQueen—

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BROOKE

No, Detective. You missed your moment. I'll admit you had me a little rattled at first, but that's over. Now, I know you think I did something. But since I know I didn't do anything, I know you're wrong. So you don't scare me, Detective.

Harris closes the file, seemingly unimpressed.

DET. HARRIS

Nice little speech. Practice it much?

At that, Brooke slams her palms on the table and jumps up, kicking her chair back.

BROOKE

Okay, that's it. I refuse to believe that you can just keep me here.

DET. HARRIS

I could arrest you right now.

BROOKE

(snorting)

For what?

Instead of answering, Harris takes out a ubiquitous notebook and flips through it.

DET. HARRIS

You had an altercation this morning with Natalie James, correct?

Brooke's jaw drops.

BROOKE

Is that what this is about?!

DET. HARRIS

Are you denying it?

BROOKE

Am I—? That conniving little slut! Look, Detective, if anyone should be pressing charges, it's me! She hit me first!

Harris closes the file and looks up at her enigmatically.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DET. HARRIS

No one's pressing charges, Miss  
McQueen. I just think that it's  
pretty...convenient. Don't you?

Brooke shakes her head, completely lost.

BROOKE

What???

Before the detective can say anything, the door opens and  
Osbourne walks in.

BROOKE (CONT'D)

Mr. Osbourne!

Osbourne goes to Brooke before Harris has a chance to  
protest.

OSBOURNE

Are you all right?

BROOKE

I'm starting to get pissed.  
(waving at Harris)  
And I can't make sense of what this  
guy is saying!

DET. HARRIS

Look, Mr.—

OSBOURNE

Osbourne. We were introduced  
earlier.

DET. HARRIS

Right. Anyway, you're not  
authorized to be here—

One of Osbourne's eyebrows arches aristocratically.

OSBOURNE

Not authorized?

DET. HARRIS

—and the young lady here knows  
exactly what's going on.

OSBOURNE

(icily)  
Your assumption that Miss McQueen  
is guilty and therefore cognizant  
of the situation is unwarranted.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

OSBOURNE (CONT'D)

As is your attempt to interrogate a minor without a guardian or attorney present.

DET. HARRIS

I haven't asked her a thing.

OSBOURNE

And where is her father?

DET. HARRIS

He's been notified. He's on his way.

BROOKE

(breaking in)

He is?

OSBOURNE

Interesting. I spoke to Mr. McQueen only moments ago, and he seemed quite unaware that his daughter was in custody.

DET. HARRIS

(grating)

She's not in custody.

OSBOURNE

(insincere)

Of course not.

DET. HARRIS

(heated)

Look, Mister, you're impeding a police investigation. So unless you want to find yourself under arrest, I suggest you leave. Now.

Osbourne makes a motion towards leaving.

OSBOURNE

If you wish.

Brooke looks at him in alarm.

OSBOURNE (CONT'D)

Of course, if you persist in this attempt to intimidate Miss McQueen, I'm certain that an attorney can be found to file the proper lawsuit against your department.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

From the doorway, a new voice enters the conversation: a middle-aged woman is standing there, a shield clipped to her belt.

DET. CANDIDO  
That won't be necessary.  
(nodding towards Brooke)  
She's free to go.

Harris whips around to glare at her, but holds his tongue. Osbourne gathers up Brooke quickly.

OSBOURNE  
Thank you, Detective.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Osbourne is hustling Brooke along the mostly-empty corridor.

BROOKE  
What the hell is going on?!

OSBOURNE  
(urgently)  
Not here.

He takes her arm and hurries her on.

CUT TO:

INT. TEACHERS' LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

Osbourne pulls Brooke into the empty lounge and shuts the door. She frowns at him, arms folded.

BROOKE  
Okay, now can you tell me what's going on?

OSBOURNE  
I'm afraid I don't know a great deal. The authorities have been rather tight-lipped. But, apparently, Principal Krupps' office was burgled late Saturday night.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BROOKE  
Burg—broken into?! The cops think  
I broke into Mr. Krupps' office?!

OSBOURNE  
So it would seem.

BROOKE  
WHY??!

OSBOURNE  
Quite honestly, I have no idea of  
the extent or nature of the  
evidence they possess.

BROOKE  
There's no evidence because I  
DIDN'T DO IT!!!

OSBOURNE  
Please, Miss McQueen. I understand  
how you feel—

BROOKE  
How can you understand?! Have you  
ever been accused of a crime you  
didn't commit?!

OSBOURNE  
(discomfited)  
Well...yes.

Momentarily sidetracked, Brooke's eyebrows go up.

BROOKE  
Really?

OSBOURNE  
It was...a long time ago. Suffice  
it to say that I appreciate your  
inclination towards outrage. But  
you must keep your wits about you,  
if you are to prove your  
innocence.

BROOKE  
This is America! Since when do I  
have to prove I'm innocent?!

OSBOURNE  
I have noticed that your much-  
vaunted legal system often does  
not live up to its principles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BROOKE

(glumly)

You mean I could get thrown in jail, even though I didn't do anything.

OSBOURNE

It's not without precedent.

Brooke sits on the edge of a table.

BROOKE

Great. My life sucks.

(beat)

Now what?

OSBOURNE

Your father is on his way, and—

Brooke makes a distasteful face; Osbourne breaks off and cocks his head at her expectantly. She stares him down for a moment before relenting.

BROOKE

I had a fight with them Saturday.

OSBOURNE

(droll)

You don't say?

BROOKE

You don't understand! They are the most unreasonable, impossible—

OSBOURNE

I believe we've been here before.

BROOKE

Listen to me! Sam did change my grades! I got proof!

OSBOURNE

Excuse me?

BROOKE

Yeah! Absolute, honest-to-God proof! I tracked down the kid who actually did the hacking, and I got him to confess—on tape!—that Sam told him to do it!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

OSBOURNE

Well...congratulations are in order.

BROOKE

(indignant)

You'd think! But do Dad and Jane think so? No! After they heard the tape, not only did they not get mad at Sam, they jumped all over me!

OSBOURNE

(frowning)

That's...difficult to believe.

BROOKE

No kidding! I was there, and I don't believe it. I'm telling you, I can't keep living like this...

OSBOURNE

Miss McQueen, I sympathize, but now is not the time. This matter with the authorities is most serious, and you and your father must present a united front when you are questioned.

BROOKE

Couldn't you just be there?

OSBOURNE

I am not your legal guardian, Miss McQueen.

BROOKE

(grumbling)

You're more qualified.

(beat)

Thanks for saving me from that detective. I had no idea you knew about the law.

OSBOURNE

(casually)

John Grisham is such an invigorating author.

Brooke gives him a wide-eyed look. The door opens and Mike comes in, followed by the female detective, Candido. Mike rushes over to Brooke and hugs her; she seems a bit put off by the embrace.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MIKE  
Are you all right, honey?

BROOKE  
(flat)  
I'm fine, Dad. Getting harassed.  
Nothing new.

He pulls back, holding her by her shoulders, studying her face. She looks away.

DET. CANDIDO  
Excuse me—we need to have that  
discussion now.

Mike turns to face the detective, standing in front of Brooke protectively.

MIKE  
There'd better be a damned good  
explanation for this, Detective.

Detective Candido holds her hands up, placating.

DET. CANDIDO  
We're just trying to clear a few  
things up, Mr. McQueen. Again, I  
apologize for the delay in  
notifying you.

Mike doesn't look very mollified.

DET. CANDIDO (CONT'D)  
Now, if we could go back to the  
office...

The detective goes to the door and holds it open. Grudgingly, Mike and Brooke head that way—but Brooke stops and turns back when she realizes that Osbourne isn't following.

BROOKE  
(to Osbourne)  
Aren't you coming?

OSBOURNE  
(shaking his head)  
It's not my place.

BROOKE  
But—

OSBOURNE  
You'll be just fine with your  
father.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

For a moment it looks like Brooke is going to balk, but then she drops her head and follows Mike out the door. Osbourne watches them go; after the door has closed, he extracts a cell phone from his suit, flips it open, and makes a call.

OSBOURNE (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

Bob? It's Eric... I'm well. And yourself?... Good to hear. Are you busy this afternoon? I thought I might drop by for a chat...

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY

Detective Harris and two uniformed officers are escorting Natalie out of the school—in handcuffs.

NATALIE

I'm telling you, I didn't do anything!

As the cops hustle her past, Carmen and Lily look on, open mouthed. Then Mary Cherry runs up to them.

MARY CHERRY

Oh my Gawd, didja hear? Natalie got busted for breakin' into the principal's office!

CARMEN

(numbly)

Yeah...

Lily nods towards the exit, and Mary Cherry turns in time to see Natalie going through the double doors.

LILY

I just can't believe it.

The three girls continue to stare after the doors have swung shut; and behind them, Sam looks on speculatively.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. SIDE OFFICE - LATER

Detective Candido is sitting on one side of the table; on the other are Brooke and Mike—side by side, but not very close.

DET. CANDIDO  
Now, I'm sure that we can get this  
over with quickly.

BROOKE  
I hope so. That other detective  
just wanted to glare at me.

DET. CANDIDO  
I'm sorry about him. He can be a  
bit much sometimes.

BROOKE  
So, does that make you the "good  
cop"?

DET. CANDIDO  
(smiling)  
Only by nature.

Candido produces a notebook, flips it open and leafs through it.

DET. CANDIDO (CONT'D)  
Now, Miss McQueen, I just need to  
know where you were Saturday  
afternoon. Between, say, two and  
five o'clock.

BROOKE  
(brow furrowing)  
Afternoon? I was, um...out.  
Driving.

The detective looks just a bit skeptical.

DET. CANDIDO  
Just driving? Nowhere in  
particular?

Brooke gives a little, embarrassed shake of her head.

BROOKE  
No, I...uh, I had a...fight. With  
my dad and Jane.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DET. CANDIDO  
(consulting her notebook)  
Jane? That would be your  
stepmother?

BROOKE  
Right, yeah... So, we had a  
fight, and I went for a drive.

Candido is jotting notes down in her notebook.

DET. CANDIDO  
Mmmhmm...you didn't stop anywhere?

BROOKE  
No... Well, I wound up at the  
mall. I looked at shoes. Didn't  
buy any.

DET. CANDIDO  
Mall?

BROOKE  
Yeah, the Galleria. On Hillcrest.

DET. CANDIDO  
Uh-huh. And you didn't stop  
anywhere in Brentwood?

BROOKE  
Huh? No.

The detective lets the silence stretch out, seeming to study her notes.

DET. CANDIDO  
Anyone see you? Did you stop for  
gas?

BROOKE  
No. I mean, the mall, but that  
was, like, five-thirty.

Candido finishes making notes, mulls them over for a moment.

DET. CANDIDO  
You're sure you didn't stop  
anywhere? Maybe in Brentwood?

BROOKE  
(shaking her head definitely)  
No. I was nowhere near Brentwood.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The detective studies Brooke closely—then abruptly snaps her notebook shut.

DET. CANDIDO  
All right. That's all for now.

MIKE  
That's it? Brooke can go?

Candido spreads her hands disarmingly.

DET. CANDIDO  
I might have one or two more questions later. We'll let you know.

With that, she stands, gathers up her materials, and walks out of the office, leaving Brooke and Mike alone.

MIKE  
What was all that about?

BROOKE  
I don't know! They wouldn't tell me anything!  
(beat)  
I guess it has to do with Mr. Krupps' office getting broken into.

Before Mike can think of something to say, Brooke shoots him a piercing glare.

BROOKE (CONT'D)  
I swear to God, if you ask me if I did it—

Mike looks as though he has been seriously injured.

MIKE  
I can't believe you'd think that I'd think that.

BROOKE  
Don't you?

MIKE  
Honey, if you tell me you didn't do it—

Brooke comes to her feet suddenly.

BROOKE  
You shouldn't have to ask!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MIKE

Now let's be honest, Brooke. This isn't the first time you've been in trouble with the police.

BROOKE

That was an accident!

MIKE

I'm just saying, you've done some rash things before.

BROOKE

I'm not going around breaking the law! That's Sam!

MIKE

About that...

Brooke turns away, throwing up her arms.

BROOKE

I'm done with that. There's obviously nothing that'll convince you that Saint Sam would ever do anything wr—

Mike gets up and catches Brooke from behind by the shoulders.

MIKE

We shouldn't have reacted like that.

Brooke's fire dies down abruptly.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Brooke, you can't just drop something like that on us and expect us to be cool and collected about it. You want us—you're asking Jane to accept that her daughter is a criminal. Do you know how hard that is for her? For us?

(beat)

Come on, Brooke. Haven't you ever wanted to believe something so badly that you refused to see the truth?

BROOKE

Yeah, but...I'm seventeen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MIKE  
(chuckles)  
It's not something you grow out  
of.

Brooke turns her head.

BROOKE  
No?

MIKE  
Believe me, when you get to be my  
age, denial is a highly underrated  
tool.

Brooke turns the rest of the way around.

BROOKE  
So?

MIKE  
So...if Sam turns out to be the  
one—

Brooke starts to protest, but Mike puts up a hand to shush  
her.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
If Sam turns out to be the one  
responsible, then we'll just all  
have to accept it. And hold her  
accountable for her actions.  
Okay?

BROOKE  
(reluctantly)  
Okay.

MIKE  
And cut us a little slack next  
time, huh? We're just parents.

BROOKE  
(sighing dramatically)  
If I have to.

With that, the tension level between father and daughter drops  
significantly.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S OFFICE - LATER

The office is noticeably more cluttered than usual, with files and papers stacked haphazardly. Krupps is sitting behind Sam's desk, working.

The door to the hall opens, and Sam walks in.

SAM

Don't mind me. I just left a book in here.

KRUPPS

I'm sorry to put you out. I made the police promise to be finished by the end of the day.

Sam sits on the corner of the desk.

SAM

Maybe you should put me out permanently.

KRUPPS

(looking up)  
What?

SAM

(shrugs)  
I feel responsible.

Krupps gets up and comes around the desk.

KRUPPS

You're not responsible.

SAM

It was my idea to make Natalie Deputy Treasurer. I told her where the password was.

KRUPPS

You trusted her. Sometimes we trust people, and they betray that trust. It doesn't make it your fault.

SAM

I'll do whatever I can to help fix things.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A long, lingering shot of Sam's perfectly sincere face—

CUT TO:

EST. POLICE STATION - DAY

A typical suburban police station.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION

The two detectives, Harris and Candido, are walking side-by-side through a common room filled with desks in half-height cubicles.

DET. CANDIDO

What the hell were you thinking,  
dragging the James girl in here  
like that?

DET. HARRIS

She assaulted a police officer.

DET. CANDIDO

There have been times I've felt  
like smacking you myself. In  
fact, I feel one coming on right  
now.

DET. HARRIS

We could've held her on the  
assault charge.

DET. CANDIDO

And blown our case.

DET. HARRIS

(heated)

She's roll on McQueen. Those two  
don't like each other.

DET. CANDIDO

I know...it's odd.

A uniformed officer intercepts them.

OFFICER

Hey, Detectives, the Lieutenant  
wants to see you two in his  
office.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The detectives veer off towards a private office, with Candido sneaking a dirty look at Harris.

CUT TO:

INT. LT. SCHUBERG'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Again, a typical police lieutenant's office, ala "Law & Order." The two detectives walk in.

LT. SCHUBERG  
Where are we?

DET. HARRIS  
We've got 'em cold. All we have  
to do is bring them in and push.  
They'll crack.

Schuberg looks at Candido, and notices the expression on her face.

LT. SCHUBERG  
Cheryl? You're not convinced?

DET. CANDIDO  
It's a weak case.

DET. HARRIS  
What?!

DET. CANDIDO  
Okay...we know Brooke McQueen  
opened the bank account. But  
there's no record linking her to  
the transfers in and out. And as  
for Natalie James, we don't have  
any real evidence against her at  
all.

Harris looks incredulous.

DET. HARRIS  
What about the scarf?!

DET. CANDIDO  
A scarf that Calvin Krupps thinks  
looks like one James owns.

LT. SCHUBERG  
(holding up a hand)  
She's right—it's not enough to  
bring her in on.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LT. SCHUBERG (CONT'D)

You may have gotten away with more in New Jersey, but here kids like that have parents. Those parents have lawyers. And those lawyers like to hunt us for a living.

(to Candido)

What about fingerprints?

DET. CANDIDO

(spreading her hands)

The only identifiable prints on the handle of the desk drawer were the principal's and his secretary's. Nothing usable on the doorknob.

DET. HARRIS

We haven't gone over the rest of the room yet.

DET. CANDIDO

(to Harris)

It's a high school principal's office. Do you know how many students are in and out of there?

(to Schuberg)

We're trying to run down the scarf.

LT. SCHUBERG

Good. If you can link it to the James girl, then you can bring her in.

DET. HARRIS

What about McQueen?

The lieutenant pauses to think about that.

LT. SCHUBERG

Let's hold off until we've developed more of a case against both of them.

DET. HARRIS

But—

Schuberg holds up a hand.

LT. SCHUBERG

I don't want any mistakes. Now, if you'll excuse me, I'm late for lunch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

As the two detectives turn and leave—

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. AN OUTDOOR CAFÉ - LATER

Lieutenant Schuberg loosens his tie as he sits at one of the tables.

LT. SCHUBERG  
You know, this is the kind of  
thing IA dreams about.

A quick pan reveals that the lieutenant's lunch companion is none other than Mr. Osbourne.

OSBOURNE  
Nonsense. You are merely avoiding  
a rush to judgment.

CUT TO:

INT. GIRLS' RESTROOM - LATER

Brooke is standing, hands on hips, examining an array of black-and-white photos of Sam that are pinned up on the wall. Lily and Carmen are nearby.

LILY  
So, how long have you been having  
Sam followed, anyway?

BROOKE  
Just a few days...

LILY  
You said she went to that hacker  
kid's house, right?  
(peering along the wall)  
I don't see it.

From off-screen, Carmen clears her throat noisily. Brooke and Lily turn to look at her, Brooke looking very guilty.

SLAM CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARMEN

CARMEN  
Rule number one: Fad diets never,  
ever work.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. GIRLS' RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

CARMEN (CONT'D)  
I had to stop tailing Sam after  
Brooke saw her and Harrison at the  
diner.

SLAM CUT TO:

CARMEN

CARMEN (CONT'D)  
Rule number two: If one of your  
friends asks you to spy on another  
one of your friends—run.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. GIRLS' RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Carmen holds up a pair of heavily-bandaged hands, while  
looking accusingly at Brooke.

SLAM CUT TO:

CARMEN

CARMEN (CONT'D)  
(deadpan)  
Run. Run. Run.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. GIRLS' RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Brooke puts on her most contrite expression.

BROOKE  
I am so sorry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY  
When do the bandages come off?

CARMEN  
Not till next week. The doctor  
said it looked like my hands got  
caught in a machine press.

BROOKE  
Now that is an exaggeration.

Lily looks back at the wall of photos.

LILY  
And this kid—

BROOKE  
Delbert.

LILY  
This Delbert, the one who hacked  
into the school's computer—you're  
sure he said that Sam put him up  
to it

BROOKE  
Absolutely sure.

Lily sits down on the tuffet.

LILY  
I just can't believe that Sam  
would do something like that. I  
know she doesn't like you, but  
to...to...

BROOKE  
...try To ruin my chances of  
getting into college?

Lily just shakes her head in disappointment, and there is a  
lingering silence.

CARMEN  
Hey, what's this one?

Brooke and Lily turn to see Carmen pointing (as best she can)  
at a photo of Sam helping Jaycee out of her car.

CARMEN (CONT'D)  
I don't remember taking this.

Brooke steps over and takes a look.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BROOKE

I took it. It's Sam bringing her  
new best friend home from the  
hospital.

The Novak's door swings open, and Natalie walks in. Brooke  
moves to block her path.

BROOKE (CONT'D)

Hey, get out!

NATALIE

(distainfully)  
Hello, public restroom?

Natalie shoulders her way past Brooke. Brooke starts after  
her, but Lily grabs her arm.

LILY

(low)  
Brooke—suspension?

Brooke subsides; meanwhile Natalie has turned her attention to  
the array of photos on the wall.

NATALIE

You're spying on Sam? You're  
spying on Sam!

BROOKE

(mocking)  
Hello, none of your business?

NATALIE

I guess friendship works  
differently for you, but when  
someone spies on one of my  
friends, it's my business.

Shrugging off Lily, Brooke steps into Natalie's face, glaring  
down at her.

BROOKE

Want to do something about it?

Natalie looks ready to go another round; Lily quickly gets in  
between them.

LILY

Natalie, I think you should just  
go.

Natalie looks a bit hurt at that, glancing briefly at Carmen  
for support, but finally she shrugs sullenly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NATALIE  
Fine, whatever.

At the door, Natalie turns and holds up a finger to Brooke.

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
And by the way, I don't know what  
kind of scheme you're trying to  
run breaking into Mr. Krupps'  
office, but leave me out of it.

And with that she is out the door, which swings shut before  
Brooke can formulate a response.

BROOKE  
(outraged)  
—scheme I'm running—! That  
little—!

She turns to Lily.

BROOKE (CONT'D)  
I swear, Natalie James is going  
down.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER

Sam is strolling down the hallway, cell phone pressed to her  
ear.

SAM  
(into the phone)  
What?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. JAYCEE'S APARTMENT

Jaycee is wandering around while talking on her own cell  
phone.

JAYCEE  
(into the phone)  
I said, we're going to a party  
tonight.

SAM  
What party? When did this happen?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYCEE

The party at Mr. Manzetti's club.

Sam stops in her tracks.

SAM

Whoa, whoa, whoa! You can not be serious.

JAYCEE

(defensively)

What?

SAM

"What?!" Jaycee, he had you beaten! You could've been killed!

JAYCEE

He would've never killed me. Besides, it's all cool now, I swear.

(beat)

C'mon, Sam, please? I promised him you'd be there. He'll get really pissed if you don't show up.

Sam lets out a long sigh.

SAM

All right.

JAYCEE

(whooping)

Yes! We are gonna have a blast!

(beat)

What are you gonna wear?

SAM

(blank)

Wear?

SLIDE CUT TO:

INT. MANZETTI'S CLUB - NIGHT

Flashy, loud, and packed. Jaycee and Sam appear in the doorway, wearing barely-there outfits.

SAM

(looking around)

This is a bad idea.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYCEE  
C'mon, relax, get into it.

They make their way to the bar.

JAYCEE (CONT'D)  
What do you want?

Sam makes a non-committal motion. Jaycee attracts the bartender's attention.

JAYCEE (CONT'D)  
(to the bartender)  
Hey, couple of beers over here?

The bartender looks them over.

BARTENDER  
IDs, lately?

Sam and Jaycee glance at each other and start to fumble for their fake IDs; but then a man—the Manzetti lieutenant whom Sam has met before—comes up from behind and drapes his arms across their shoulders.

MAN  
(to the bartender)  
It's okay, Eddie. They're Mr. Manzetti's guests.

BARTENDER  
Yessir.

The bartender promptly produces two bottles of beer and sets them on the bar.

MAN  
(to Sam and Jaycee)  
Come to the back room. Mr. Manzetti's been waiting for you.

The girls have just enough time to pick up their beers before he ushers them away.

CUT TO:

INT. HARRISON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The door opens on the darkened bedroom and Harrison walks in, flipping the light on. Yawning, he goes to the bed, turns down the covers, turns around—and finds himself nose-to-nose with Brooke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRISON  
(jumping back)  
Gah!

Brooke just stands there, studying him as though he were some kind of alien curiosity.

HARRISON (CONT'D)  
What the hell are you doing here?!

BROOKE  
You've been avoiding me.

HARRISON  
(incredulous)  
So you just show up in my room?!  
What are you, Psycho Stalker  
Woman?

BROOKE  
Should I be?

He sits on the bed. She doesn't move.

HARRISON  
Okay, cut it out, Brooke. You're  
giving me the creeps.

BROOKE  
(creepily)  
Am I?

HARRISON  
I can see you're pissed, okay?  
But if you don't tell me why—

BROOKE  
You don't know? Think about it,  
Harrison...you haven't done  
anything I should be pissed about?  
Like maybe, Saturday?

Realization dawns on Harrison's face.

HARRISON  
Brooke, I can explain—

He starts to get up, but she reaches out and pushes him back down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BROOKE

You can explain?! How you're dating every girl in school when you're supposed to be my boyfriend?! I don't know why I bother kicking Natalie's ass when it's yours I oughta be after!

HARRISON

I really didn't want to go out with Natalie.

BROOKE

Oh, well, you might have said "no." That's what people usually say when they don't want to do something.

HARRISON

She said she just wanted to go to a movie. When I found out she really wanted to snuggle at home, I took off.

He stands up to look her in the eye.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

I do not want to date Natalie, okay? I let her know that in no uncertain terms.

BROOKE

Really.

HARRISON

I swear, Brooke. I told her that nothing was going to happen between us, and I walked away.

There is a heavy silence as Brooke steps over to the window and looks out into the night.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

Brooke...?

BROOKE

What about Sam?

HARRISON

(off-guard)

Ah...Sam?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BROOKE  
 (oddly flat)  
 I saw you. At the diner. I saw  
 the two of you get in her car and  
 drive off.

HARRISON  
 That wasn't anything. Brooke, she  
 has a problem. She started taking  
 pills right in front of me. She  
 didn't even care.

BROOKE  
 But you did.

HARRISON  
 I drove her home because I didn't  
 want her to get in an accident.  
 That's all.

Brooke doesn't seem to respond to that, and Harrison keeps  
 talking, mostly just to fill the silence.

HARRISON (CONT'D)  
 I didn't even really want to see  
 her, not really. She asked to  
 meet, just to talk. She said it  
 would be over if we didn't, so I  
 went just to hear her out. It  
 wasn't even close to a real date.  
 (beat)  
 Brooke?

There is another silence, with Harrison fidgeting all the  
 while.

BROOKE  
 Let me see if I've got this  
 straight. You had a chance to let  
 it end—for good—just by not  
 showing up?

HARRISON  
 Aw, come on, Brooke! I didn't  
 want things to end like that.

Now Brooke does finally turn to him, and the expression on her  
 face is as dead as her voice:

BROOKE  
 Maybe you don't want things to end  
 at all.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Brooke's lack of heat only serves to make Harrison more agitated.

HARRISON  
You know better than that!

BROOKE  
I know that you'll never get Sam out of your head. She'll always be there between us.

HARRISON  
That's not true! I love you!

BROOKE  
You love Sam. You can't look me in the eye and deny it.

HARRISON  
(intently)  
I love you. Before I ever met Sam, it was you and me. It's always been us.  
(beat)  
I loved you first.

Brooke drops her eyes for a moment. Then she looks back up at him.

BROOKE  
But you love her best.

HARRISON  
Brooke—!

BROOKE  
(with finality)  
Goodbye, Harrison.

Ignoring his stuttering protests, she walks past him and out of the room.

CUT TO:

INT. JOSH AND LILY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE: JOSH

who is in bed, fast asleep, snoring lightly in the silence of the darkened room. There is an indistinct knowing in the background, which isn't enough to wake him. A few moments later Lily stirs, and gets out of bed; Josh still sleeps.

(CONTINUED)

**CONTINUED:**

A muted light comes on from another room, and there are more soft noises. Finally Josh opens his eyes, turns over to find Lily's side of the bed empty, and, with a puzzled frown, gets out of bed.

SLAM CUT TO:

JOSH

JOSH

Rule number one: The man of the house has to be prepared to deal with any situation.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. JOSH AND LILY'S LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Josh appears at the end of the hallway, to find Lily sitting on the sofa, with Brooke curled up in a ball beside her. While Lily cuddles and comforts Brooke, she senses Josh's presence, and turns her head to look at him.

JOSH

(discomfited)

Uh...I'll make coffee?

SLAM CUT TO:

JOSH

JOSH (CONT'D)

Rule number two: If your wife and your ex-girlfriend are involved—forget it.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. JOSH AND LILY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lily gives Josh another look.

JOSH

...organic tea.

While Josh retreats towards the kitchen, Lily goes back to comforting Brooke, who doesn't seem to have noticed the exchange.

**(CONTINUED)**

CONTINUED:

BROOKE  
 (mostly to herself)  
 I don't care what problems Sam  
 has. I hope she's miserable.

SHATTER CUT TO:

INT. MANZETTI'S CLUB - NIGHT

where, amidst throngs of partiers, Sam is dancing up a storm,  
 looking anything but miserable.

Sam and Jaycee make their way out of the crowd and fairly  
 collapse on a plush couch near Manzetti and a bunch of his  
 cronies. Manzetti himself turns out to be a thirty-ish man  
 with a swarthy, Mediterranean countenance and the air of a  
 Mafioso "young gun."

MANZETTI  
 Jennifer! Samantha! I see that  
 you're enjoying yourselves.

JAYCEE  
 (lazily)  
 Slammin' party, Mr. M.

MANZETTI  
 Nothing but the best.

He turns to Sam.

MANZETTI (CONT'D)  
 And what about you, Samantha? I  
 hope I've made a good impression  
 upon you.

Sam looks a little less enthused than Jaycee, now that they're  
 sitting down.

SAM  
 (diplomatically)  
 Um...it's a great club, Mr.  
 Manzetti.

Manzetti spreads his arms in a gesture of benevolence.

MANZETTI  
 Samantha, Samantha... I don't  
 think I've had the opportunity to  
 apologize personally for the  
 trouble my men caused you.

Sam looks a bit mollified.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MANZETTI (CONT'D)

Epecially considering what you've done for Jennifer here. If I'd only known sooner that you were able—and willing—to guarantee her credit...

SAM

The money is all there, just waiting to be transferred to you.

Manzetti makes a poo-pooing motion.

MANZETTI

Of course! As soon as my accountant confirmed your bank details, Jennifer's debt was erased. Like it never existed.

He reaches out and pats Sam's hand reassuringly.

MANZETTI (CONT'D)

Don't you worry your pretty little head about that tonight. My accountant will call you tomorrow to make all the arrangements. I'm just sorry things went as far as they did.

(tsks ruefully)

Debt collection is so messy sometimes... Still, my men disobeyed orders and stepped out of line, and for that I am sincerely sorry. I try to run a professional organization, and I'm very disappointed when people let me down.

Sam does her best to put on an encouraging smile.

MANZETTI (CONT'D)

As a way of making amends, please feel free to sample anything in my inventory tonight, on the house.

Behind Sam, Jaycee throws Manzetti a look that falls somewhere between knowing and wary.

SAM

(at a loss)

Thanks...really. It's okay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Then, seemingly out of nowhere, one of the young men in Manzetti's group pulls out a packet of white powder. He dumps it onto a metal plate and holds a lighter under it.

YOUNG MAN

Hey, try this, man. Y' can't get  
quality smack like this on the  
street.

Without further ado, the man rips open a package and pulls out a syringe. The sight of the needle makes Sam pale, which Manzetti notices immediately. A quick barely-perceptible nod of the head to his lieutenant, and the enthusiastic young man find himself yanked out of his seat by the collar.

MAN

What's the matter with you?!  
Shooting up in front of the lady  
like some street punk!

The "punk" is unceremoniously hauled away by a couple of flunkies. Manzetti leans in towards Sam.

MANZETTI

I'm so sorry about that—some  
people have no manners at all.

He snaps his fingers, and another flunkie produces tiny plastic envelope. Manzetti takes it, and carefully pours a small amount of powder onto a hand mirror, meticulously dividing it up into equal lines.

MANZETTI (CONT'D)

Now this is for civilized people.  
Some of my finest premium  
merchandise. Guaranteed to put  
you on top of the world.  
(gesturing)  
Please.

Sam hesitates, looking around uncertainly. Jaycee gives her an encouraging nod, and finally Sam leans over—awkwardly, as someone who has never done this sort of thing before. Jaycee scoots up beside her, using her hands to guide Sam.

JAYCEE

(whispering)  
It's easy...

Helped by Jaycee, Sam bends down and inhales a line.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SHATTER TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EST. KENNEDY HIGH - MORNING

SUPER: "Tuesday"

Stock shot of the quad.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY

Brooke is walking down the hall, smiling and making small talk with the people she passes. Everything is fine until she gets to her locker, twirls the combination lock—and it won't open. Brow furrowing, she tries the combination again. Nothing. After a third attempt, she starts to beat on the locker with her fists. That's when George comes up. He catches her hands in his, preventing her from doing any more damage to herself.

GEORGE

Hey, hey! What's going on?

BROOKE

(crying)

Nothing! I'm fine! My stupid  
locker—won't—open!

She punctuates the end of that sentence with one final swipe at the locker, then slumps back against it.

GEORGE

Okay...let's talk.

He puts his arm around her and shepherds her away.

CUT TO:

INT. JAYCEE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

ANGLE: SAM

Sam is out cold, lying half off of Jaycee's bed. Slowly, sluggishly, one eye comes open. Then the other. After a long time of staring blankly into space, Sam's head shifts slightly, and then, with immense effort, she lifts her head up. That's when she realizes that she's naked. With a gulp, she rolls over onto her stomach, reaching for something to cover herself with. She grabs a blanket and wraps it around her. That disturbs Jaycee, who is sprawled out on the bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYCEE

Huh? Wha?

Sam, meanwhile, sits up suddenly, and immediately sways dizzily, grabbing her head.

SAM

Oh—

She reaches for a bottle of pills on the table by the bed and quickly swallows a few. Then she looks around the room frantically.

SAM (CONT'D)

Where—?

(shaking Jaycee)

Jaycee, where are my clothes?!

Jaycee makes a unintelligible grunt, and a gesture that might indicate anywhere else in the apartment. Sam slides off the bed, none too steadily, and begins to wander around shakily, picking up various articles of clothing. As she gets dressed, she shakes Jaycee again, more insistently this time.

SAM (CONT'D)

Jaycee! What happened?!

Jaycee finally opens her eyes and (sort of) focuses on Sam. She gropes at the empty bed.

JAYCEE

Guess they left.

SAM

Who left?!

Jaycee lets her brain catch up to that question.

JAYCEE

Nnnmm—the guys.

SAM

(mortified)

What—guys?!!

JAYCEE

Oh, those cute surfer dudes. At the party.

Sam closes her eyes, trying to process this.

SAM

WHO???

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAYCEE  
(lazily)  
I d'no. Don't think they ever  
said their names.  
(giggles)  
They were busy doing other stuff.

Sam just groans at that thought, and quickly finishes dressing.

SAM  
I have to go.

JAYCEE  
Why? Take th' day off.

SAM  
I can't.

She looks at her watch.

SAM (CONT'D)  
I am so late.

JAYCEE  
(singing brokenly)  
Just another manic Monday... Wish  
it was Sunday...

SAM  
Okay, I can't deal with this right  
now.

She makes a half-turn for the door before turning back.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Is my car downstairs?

Jaycee just shrugs faintly. Sam rubs her eyes tiredly.

SAM (CONT'D)  
I have to...go. I'll call you  
later, okay?

JAYCEE  
(little wave)  
Bye-bye.

Sam still looks stricken as she heads out.

CUT TO:

INT. KENNEDY HIGH GYM

George and Brooke are sitting in the bleachers (the same place they sat in IKWYDL5B).

GEORGE  
So...want to talk?

Brooke just gives him the evil eye.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Okay...let me guess. Your life's ruined. And it's Sam's fault.

Brooke's eye gets even more evil.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Hey, I heard about what happened, with your grades. Are you really sure—?

At this point, Brooke starts to get up. George has to reach out quickly to stop her.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
It's okay, I believe you!

BROOKE  
No you don't. No one does.

GEORGE  
I'm sorry, it just doesn't sound like the Sam I knew. Know.

BROOKE  
Why am I the only person who realized that underneath that sanctimonious crusading reporter there was a scheming psychopath waiting to get out?

GEORGE  
That's not fair, Brooke. She's got a problem.

This time Brooke shakes off his hand when she rises.

BROOKE  
And I'm tired of everyone making excuses for her!

GEORGE  
Whoa, whoa, whoa! I'm not making excuses for anybody.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT'D)

She's got a problem, but that doesn't make what she did any less wrong.

He pauses long enough to make sure that Brooke is still listening to him.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I'm not worried about Sam. I'm worried about you.

BROOKE

I'm fine.

GEORGE

You said that before, when you were trying to kill your locker. I've known players like you.

BROOKE

(offended)  
Excuse me?

GEORGE

Wait, I'm serious. They keep everything all bottled up inside, and then the slightest little thing and—  
(blowing-up motion)  
—BOOM!

BROOKE

Well, I'm not going to—  
(mimicking)  
—boom.

GEORGE

Right. That's why you were trying to kill your locker. Here, let me see.

George takes Brooke's hands in his, examining them gently. She winces slightly as he traces the faint bruises.

BROOKE

I'm tired of fighting her, George. I never get anywhere, and...  
(beat)  
Why is it that when I was the superficial pop princess and she was Miss Do-Gooder, I was on top, and now that I'm trying to be an adult she's the one getting away with everything?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GEORGE

She's not. It's might not seem like it, but sooner or later, everything's going to come back to her.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S OFFICE - LATER

The door to the hallway opens and Sam rushes in. She tosses her stuff onto the desk before noticing that Art Fleischer is sitting there.

SAM

Hey! What are you doing here?

He looks up at her, a grave expression on her face.

SAM (CONT'D)

What is it? What's wrong?

FLEISCHER

Sam, where's the piece on the waste disposal dispute in Riverside? You were supposed to turn it in to Metro.

SAM

(taken aback)

That...that's not due until Monday.

FLEISCHER

Yesterday was Monday.

Now Sam looks totally lost.

SAM

No, but...today is...?

Distracted, she hums a few notes of "Manic Monday" to herself.

FLEISCHER

Sam—

SAM

I am so sorry. Look, I admit it, I totally spazzed on what day it was, I don't know why—

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FLEISCHER

(rising)

Sam...I don't know what's happened to you. You don't make meetings, I can't even get hold of you half the time anymore...

SAM

I know, I've been...busy. But I swear, I'm on top of everything. I've got notes here—somewhere—

Frantically rifling through her desktop, she knocks a stack of papers onto the floor. As she bends down to gather them up, Fleischer gets up and squats down by her.

FLEISCHER

Forget about the story, Sam. It's taken care of.

SAM

What?

FLEISCHER

I've talked to the editorial board. We think...you need to take a break for a while.

They stand up together.

SAM

(astonished)

Wait—you're firing me?!

FLEISCHER

It's my fault, okay? I forgot that you're still a teenager. I shouldn't have... I just put too much pressure on you.

Fleischer turns away, and Sam clutches at him.

SAM

(desperate)

No, no, don't do this, please, I promise I'll never miss another deadline again, it's not too much pressure, really, I swear, I can do it—

He stops her by grabbing her shoulders.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FLEISCHER

You just concentrate on taking care of you. When you're ready, we'll talk about your coming back.

SAM

Please—this job is everything to me!

FLEISCHER

(gently)

You just can't handle it right now, Sam.

Fleischer releases her and walks to the door.

FLEISCHER (CONT'D)

I mean it—take care of yourself.

As Fleischer leaves, Sam slumps against the desk—but quickly rights herself when the other door opens and Principal Krupps walks in.

SAM

Oh—Mr. Krupps! I, uh—

She spins around and makes a show of rifling through her desktop.

SAM (CONT'D)

—I've got the, um, the last reports right here.

Sam snatches a bunch of papers up, but he waves her off.

KRUPPS

It's not important. Was that Art?

She looks towards the outer door apprehensively for a moment.

SAM

Oh, um, yeah, but, it was—

KRUPPS

I know. We had a chat.

Sam bites her lip, trying to keep her emotions in.

SAM

I suppose you want to fire me, too.

Krupps looks at her like she's just announced that the sky is polka-dotted.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

KRUPPS

Where'd you get an idea like that?

SAM

Everybody thinks I'm this great  
big loser. Nobody believes in me.

Sam turns away from him; but he uses a finger to turn her head  
back.

KRUPPS

Sam, I am not firing you. And I  
will always have faith in you. No  
matter what.

SAM

You're just saying that. You  
can't possibly believe in me, not  
after—

Sam breaks off (perhaps realizing what she was about to say).  
Krupps may or may not think something of it—it's hard to tell  
from his expression.

KRUPPS

(prompting)

After?

SAM

(covering)

You know...after all of the money  
was stolen out of the fund I was  
supposed to be managing.

KRUPPS

Now, Sam, that wasn't your fault.

Sam looks quite guilty at that (but only to the audience).

KRUPPS (CONT'D)

And don't worry about the loss.  
The insurance will cover it.

SAM

You're sure?

KRUPPS

I'm sure. The police will have to  
finish their investigation, of  
course...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SAM  
Oh, right...the police.  
(beat)  
Have they said anything?

KRUPPS  
They haven't arrested Natalie  
James yet.  
(confidentially)  
But I'm sure they will soon.

The conversation dies for a moment.

SAM  
What about Brooke? I...heard the  
police were questioning her?

KRUPPS  
I hope she didn't have anything to  
do with it. She's a very good  
student.

Sam makes an annoyed face at that—away from Krupps.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA - NOON

It's the normal bustling lunchtime; Brooke is waiting in line. Just as she gets to the trays, a couple walk by, with a giggle and hand gestures that might—or might not—be referring to her.

Nevertheless, she sneaks a peek back at them as she picks up her tray. Then, the entire atmosphere of the room changes, and she sees everyone pointing at her and talking. Brooke cringes, and people start to rise from their seats and advance on her. As the taunting crowd presses in, Brooke shrinks back, holding her tray up as a shield, until—

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA - CONTINUOUS

The scene—all in Brooke's head—vanishes and the room reverts to normal. Brooke throws down her tray with a clatter and runs off, while George, behind her in line, watches.

SLAM CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE

GEORGE  
Rule number one...

He stops and frowns.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
I don't remember rule number one.  
It's got something to do with chop  
blocking.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA - CONTINUOUS

As Brooke runs off.

SLAM CUT TO:

GEORGE

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
But rule number two is: if a  
friend's in trouble—be there.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA - CONTINUOUS

George takes off after Brooke.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Brooke runs to a deserted section of the corridor and stops, hugging herself tightly; a moment later George catches up to her.

GEORGE  
Hey! What happened?

BROOKE  
(shaky)  
I...I just can't face everyone.  
They all think—

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE

No they don't. And even if a few of them do, who cares?

BROOKE

I do! You don't understand, George. I told you. I'm tired.

GEORGE

That doesn't sound like the Brooke McQueen I know.

He takes her by the arm and leads her around a corner.

CUT TO:

INT. A CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

George pulls Brooke inside and closes the door.

GEORGE

You've got to snap out of this. You're not a quitter, you're a fighter.

Brooke just turns away. George persists.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

You can't let Sam do this to you. You can't let anyone do this to you. You're better than that.

Brooke chews that over.

BROOKE

You really think I'm a fighter?

GEORGE

Are you kidding? You're one of the toughest people I know. Aren't you the one who walked away from the whole cheerleader stereotype? Hey, I wouldn't want to go up against you.

Brooke does some more thinking, and finally nods slowly.

BROOKE

You're right.

Then she catches him in an unexpected hug.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BROOKE (CONT'D)

Thanks.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER

Brooke is strolling down the hall, looking remarkably calm. Her stride falters, though, when she hears indistinct sounds coming from a supposedly empty classroom. She stops and listens discreetly outside the slightly-ajar door.

CUT TO:

INT. A CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Inside the empty classroom, Natalie is in the middle of a conversation on her phone, her back to the door. She doesn't sound very happy:

NATALIE  
 (into the phone)  
 ...no...no, you don't  
 understand...  
 (sniffle)  
 ...nobody likes me here.

Natalie starts to pace a bit, but keeps her back to Brooke.

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
 (into the phone)  
 Yeah...there were these girls, and  
 I thought they liked me...but  
 everyone just stabs everyone else  
 in the back all the time...

ANGLE: BROOKE

In the doorway, Brooke watches her hand do an off-handed little mimic of a backstabbing motion, a quizzical expression on her face. Meanwhile:

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
 (into the phone)  
 ...no, I thought...that's not  
 working either...

More sniffles, and a sob.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
 (into the phone)  
 ...I don't like it here, Grandad.  
 I wanna come home.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The approach of a couple of students forces Brooke to step away from the classroom doorway and pretend to be doing something or other. When they have passed, Brooke steps back to the doorway.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Natalie has gotten off the phone and is sitting in one of the chairs, clearly moping. Brooke slips into the classroom, and closes the door behind her with an audible click. The noise makes Natalie twist around.

BROOKE  
 (quietly)  
 Can we just...talk?

CUT TO:

INT. GIRLS' RESTROOM - LATER

Sam is at the sink, daubing water on her face. She looks up into the mirror and unexpectedly sees Lily standing behind her, which makes her jump and spin around.

SAM  
 Hi!  
 (uncertainly)  
 Did I...were we supposed to do something?

Lily shakes her head slowly.

LILY  
 No-o-o.

SAM  
 (relieved)  
 Whew...I thought I might have forgotten something. I've had a rough few days.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LILY  
(muttering)  
You're not the only one.

SAM  
What?

Instead of answering, Lily changes the subject.

LILY  
Did you know Brooke found out who  
messed up her grades?

SAM  
(disinterested)  
Hadn't heard. I've got more  
important things to worry about.

LILY  
Yeah, some kid hacked into the  
computer here.

SAM  
Really...a kid. Hmmm.

LILY  
You really hadn't heard?

SAM  
(shrugging)  
First time.

LILY  
Brooke found him. The kid. And  
he told her who put him up to it.

Sam turns away for a moment, putting both hands on the sink  
and getting herself into a good outrage.

SAM  
Let me guess—she's going around  
telling everyone that I'm the Big  
Bad.

LILY  
I—

SAM  
Look, I don't what Brooke  
McQueen's been saying, and  
normally, I wouldn't give a damn.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM (CONT'D)

But if she's got some story about me doing something to her records— No matter what that Delbert kid said, or what Brooke claims he told her, I had nothing to do with it. And it really hurts that you believe her, even a little.

Lily thinks that over, her face unreadable.

LILY

Okay.

Lily turns away, leaving Sam at a loss.

SAM

Wait a minute! Is that it?

When Lily looks back at Sam, her expression is more sad than anything else.

LILY

I don't think we should talk to each other for a while.

SAM

(trying to regroup)

Wait, wait, wait...I told you I didn't have anything to do with what happened to Brooke. Why are you acting like you don't believe me?

LILY

Because I don't believe you.

As Lily walks to the exit, Sam acts both astonished and indignant.

SAM

Lily, we've been friends for years—I swear to you, Delbert and Brooke are lying. How could you possibly believe them over me?!

Lily stops at the door.

LILY

(without looking back)

Because I never said what the kid's name was.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Then she is gone, leaving Sam staring dumbfounded at the door.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EST. KENNEDY HIGH - DAY

Another stock shot of the school.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY

Lily is walking down the hall, looking for someone—probably Brooke. And she finds her, right outside the door to the Novak.

BROOKE

Lily! I—

LILY

(interrupting)

Before you say anything, Brooke, I just want you to know— I wanted to say, you were right about Sam.

BROOKE

What happened?

LILY

I confronted her. With what you said.

BROOKE

And...?

LILY

She lied to my face. I just can't believe that she'd lie to me like that.

BROOKE

(diplomatically)

I'm sorry. I know how close you two are.

There is an awkward pause.

BROOKE (CONT'D)

Hey—speaking of being right, I want you to know that you were right, too.

(CONTINUED)

**CONTINUED:**

LILY

Huh?

In response, Brooke takes Lily and guides her through the Novak door.

CUT TO:

INT. GIRLS' RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Inside the Novak, Carmen and Natalie are sitting, a bit stiffly, on the tuffet.

LILY

(warily)

What's going on here?

BROOKE

(hastily)

It's okay.

Natalie gets up.

NATALIE

We decided to call a truce.

SLAM CUT TO:

BROOKE

BROOKE

Rule number one: Keep your friends close, and your enemies closer.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. GIRLS' RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

BROOKE **(CONT'D)**

It's true. We're putting our differences aside, at least until we can get the cops off our backs.

SLAM CUT TO:

**(CONTINUED)**

CONTINUED:

BROOKE

BROOKE (CONT'D)  
 Rule number two: If they're  
 both—just keep 'em in sight.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. GIRLS' RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lily still looks skeptical. Carmen stands up—awkwardly, with her bandaged hands. The photographs have been gathered into a stack on the tuffet; Carmen bends over, but finds herself unable to pick them up. Natalie grabs them for her.

CARMEN  
 (to Lily)  
 Any luck?

LILY  
 (not following)  
 What?

CARMEN  
 Finding out what the cops know.

LILY  
 Oh...no. They haven't made  
 anything public.

CARMEN  
 Well—can't you just, you know,  
 hack into the police secret files  
 or something?

LILY  
 (annoyed)  
 No! Why does everyone think I can  
 do all this stuff?!

Brooke steps into the conversation.

BROOKE  
 All right, let's just calm down.  
 We just need a break. You know  
 how they say that all the biggest  
 discoveries are made completely by  
 accident? I'm sure that when we  
 least expect it—

Natalie's voice cuts across Brooke's:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NATALIE

Jaycee??

The others all look over to where Natalie, rather than taking part in the conversation, has been flipping through the photographs.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

Jaycee Hamilton??

Curious, the girls gather around Natalie.

INSERT: THE PHOTOGRAPH

One of the pictures of Sam and Jaycee outside the apartment building.

CARMEN

You know her?

NATALIE

Well...my parents know her parents. They own the chalet next to ours in Vail.

(beat)

Actually, they own quite a bit of property in Vail.

BROOKE

Wait a minute... Sam's living—

LILY

(interjecting)

Was living.

BROOKE

—was living in a crappy, run-down apartment building with a girl who's filthy rich.

NATALIE

Well, her parents are. Don't know about her.

BROOKE

(pressing)

What do you know about her?

Natalie thinks about that.

NATALIE

(shrugs)

Not a lot. We only saw them on vacations.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NATALIE (CONT'D)

They're from back East somewhere—  
Boston, I think. Oh, and this one  
time in London we ran into them—  
we went shopping at Harrod's.

(beat)

Her dad's pretty cool. He's some  
kind of investment guru.

BROOKE

And Jaycee?

Natalie thinks.

NATALIE

She partied a lot. Not like the  
Hilton sisters—

CARMEN

(awed)

You know the Hilton sisters??

NATALIE

(nonchalant)

I've met them a few times.

BROOKE

(finger-snapping)

Carmen! Focus!

CARMEN

Right. Sorry.

NATALIE

So how does Sam know Jaycee?

CARMEN

Oh, she moved in next to her.

(bright idea)

Hey, I bet she's the one who got  
Sam hooked on drugs!

Carmen is quite self-satisfied by her reasoning powers; Brooke and Lily give her an unnoticed "duh" look. Natalie just takes the remark at face value.

NATALIE

I suppose she could have. We  
didn't really run together—she's  
about five years older than I am.

CARMEN

(fascinated)

Really...she doesn't look that  
old.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LILY  
Please, not that old stereotype.  
Do you know how old the people  
playing teenagers on TV are?

Brooke gives her a look.

BROOKE  
This isn't helping.

CARMEN/LILY  
Sorry.

Natalie sets the photos aside.

NATALIE  
She's right. Jaycee's not our  
problem. The cops—that's our  
problem.

LILY  
Yeah, and why they think the two  
of you did something.

CARMEN  
And why are the cops making such a  
big deal over it?

NATALIE  
Well, they think whoever broke  
into Principal Krupps' office  
stole the Student Fund money.  
Which doesn't make sense because,  
isn't that money in a bank?

BROOKE  
Hey, they asked me about being in  
a bank on Saturday!

CARMEN  
Why were you in a bank?

BROOKE  
(irritated)  
I wasn't.

NATALIE  
I don't get the connection.

There is several seconds of silent head-scratching from the  
four girls.

LILY  
Me, either.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

BROOKE  
(hopeful)  
But there must be one, right?

The others try to look encouraging. Then the bell rings, and everyone rushes to gather their things and head for the door.

BROOKE (CONT'D)  
I think we're on the right track—

Brooke leads them out the door.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

BROOKE  
We just need to keep at it—

As the girls leave the Novak and turn down the corridor, they spot Harrison farther down the hall. Brooke and Natalie both pull up short, with Lily and Carmen almost running into them as a result. At the same time, Harrison notices them, and he suddenly becomes visibly apprehensive.

Natalie steals a glance at Brooke.

NATALIE  
Don't worry about me. I'm done tilting at that windmill. You want him, you can have him.

BROOKE  
I don't. I called it off with Harrison last night.

CARMEN/LILY  
You what?!

Brooke ignores the simultaneous outburst.

BROOKE  
(to Natalie)  
You can have him.

Brooke and Natalie give Harrison, out of earshot but looking anxiously at them, the same hard glare.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BROOKE/NATALIE  
(simultaneously)  
Sam can have him.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SAM'S OFFICE - LATER

Sam is sitting on the edge of her desk, methodically shredding a piece of paper into tiny bits. When she is finished, she reaches blindly behind her for another sheet.

There is a knock, and the sound of a door opening, but Sam seems oblivious.

HARRISON  
Hey.

Startled, Sam looks up to find Harrison standing there.

HARRISON (CONT'D)  
Whatcha doin'?

Sam shrugs and holds up her impromptu art project briefly, as though it should be self-explanatory. He sits next to her on the edge of her desk and reaches for the papers, while Sam goes back to her shredding.

HARRISON (CONT'D)  
(flipping through papers)  
Aren't these important?

SAM  
(distant)  
Not...anymore.

HARRISON  
These looks like story notes.

SAM  
Hmmhmm...

HARRISON  
But they aren't important.

SAM  
Uh-uh.

HARRISON  
(concerned)  
Sam, what's going on? You always keep your notes, even for old stories.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

There's no more stories. Sam  
McPherson, intrepid reporter, is  
off the story.

Sam reaches for another sheet, but Harrison takes hold of her  
hand.

HARRISON

What happened?

She finally looks at him.

SAM

I got fired.

He puts his arm around her shoulder comfortingly.

HARRISON

(awkwardly)

I'm sorry.

After a moment of silence, she squints at him.

SAM

What are you doing here?

Harrison struggles for an answer to that one.

HARRISON

I... I don't know. I guess... I  
just wanted to be around someone  
who wasn't pissed off at me  
(beat)  
Are you pissed off at me?

Sam's face scrunches up.

SAM

I don't remember.

Another awkward pause (typical of recent Sam/Harrison  
conversations).

SAM (CONT'D)

Soooooo, let me guess—you and  
Brookie are having problems again?  
(holding up a hand)  
No, don't tell me about it.  
(beat)  
If you've soured on Brooke, why  
don't just go to Natalie? I hear  
she's ripe for the picking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Harrison doesn't say anything, but Sam reads something in his face anyway.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Ohhh...so, I'm your third choice  
now?

Grimacing, Harrison hops off the desk—but Sam grabs his arm.

SAM (CONT'D)  
(earnestly)  
I don't care.

HARRISON  
You should.

SAM  
Just—don't go, okay?

Harrison looks at Sam's face and decides to push.

HARRISON  
Why don't you just take some  
pills? Isn't that how you handle  
stuff?

Sam laughs mirthlessly.

SAM  
I did. I need to find something  
stronger.

Harrison grabs her arms, as though he's going to try to shake some sense into her.

HARRISON  
What you need to do is get off  
those things.

SAM  
Are you kidding? This is me with  
pills—without them I'd be a  
raving suicidal loon.

HARRISON  
You can't keep going on like this,  
Sam. Your life is just a mess.

SAM  
(disgusted)  
Yeah, and all I get from you is  
self-righteous speeches.

She literally pushes him away with both hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SAM (CONT'D)  
Thanks a lot, Harrison.

Without another word she walks out of her own office, leaving Harrison standing there.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A CLASSROOM - LATER

An empty classroom, where Brooke, Lily and Carmen are gathered around Natalie, who is on her cell phone.

NATALIE  
(into the phone)  
...oh, of course I remember.  
(laughing)  
I'm sure the Ambassador hasn't forgotten it, either... They're fine... Dad was just talking about you the other day... Oh, I know, they wanted to go to Aruba, too. They felt so bad about having to back out...

The other girls trade glances as Natalie puts on this rich debutante persona—while her facial expressions make clear that it's just an act.

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
(into the phone casually)  
So, how is Jaycee these days?

Everyone leans in, even though they can't hear anything. Natalie listens for a few seconds.

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
(into the phone)  
Oh, I'm sorry to hear that... You have no idea where she is, then?...

Another round of glances.

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
(into the phone)  
Well, I'll let you get back to your work, Mr. Hamilton... Yes, I'll be sure to have Dad give you a call... Goodbye.

Natalie flips her cell phone shut and faces the group.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATALIE (CONT'D)

Jaycee and her parents had a big blow-up about six months ago, and she took off.

LILY

They don't know she's here?

APRIL

Natalie shakes her head negatively.

NATALIE

They thought cutting off her money supply would make her get in touch. Didn't work.

CARMEN

Ummm...okay, this might be a dumb question, but...are you going to tell her parents she's here?

Natalie doesn't look as caught off-guard by that question as Carmen perhaps expected her to be; apparently she's already been thinking about it.

NATALIE

I don't know.

LILY

You should. Maybe they could, I don't know, get her treatment or something.

BROOKE

(impatient)

Guys!

The budding new conversation snaps to a halt, and the others turn to stare at Brooke.

BROOKE (CONT'D)

Again, this isn't helping. I'm sorry about Sam's friend, really, but if we don't figure out what to do about the cops—

At that moment the door crashes open, and Miss Glass storms in.

GLASS

All right, clear the room! Let's go, everyone out!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

As the girls, in some confusion, gather up their things, Miss Glass herds them towards the door impatiently.

GLASS (CONT'D)  
Come on, everyone hustle, hut,  
hut, hut!

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The girls pull up short when they realize that a welcoming committee is waiting for them just outside the classroom: Principal Krupps, the two detectives, and a pair of uniformed officers. Detective Harris steps up to Brooke.

DET. HARRIS  
Brooke McQueen, you're under  
arrest for conspiracy to commit  
grand larceny.

BROOKE  
What?!

One of the uniforms moves smoothly behind Brooke and handcuffs her.

DET. HARRIS  
You have the right to remain  
silent...

Meanwhile, Detective Candido and the other uniform are doing the same thing to Natalie, who is also protesting vehemently.

CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #1 - LATER

Brooke is sitting in one of the wooden chairs, arms crossed, clearly furious. After a moment, the door opens and Detective Candido comes in.

BROOKE  
You can't ask me anything without  
my dad here. I don't have to say  
anything to you.

Candido holds up her hand.

DET. CANDIDO  
I'm not asking a thing. I'm just  
going to sit here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

True to her word, she sits in the chair opposite Brooke. For a few seconds the two of them stare at each other.

DET. CANDIDO (CONT'D)

You know, you can always volunteer to make a statement. If you're completely honest with me now, we can work something out.

BROOKE

(frustrated)

I am being honest!

DET. CANDIDO

I'm sure your part in this was very small. Maybe even unwitting. Maybe you opened the bank account without knowing what it was going to be used for.

BROOKE

(gritting her teeth)

I wasn't in a bank, I didn't open any account, and I don't know what you're talking about!

The detective keeps her sympathetic face on.

DET. CANDIDO

The bank does keep records, you know.

She lays a manila folder on the table before Brooke and opens it.

INSERT: THE FOLDER

The top sheet is a photocopy of the account application, with Brooke's signature, and her ID.

Brooke stares open-mouthed at the paper.

DET. CANDIDO (CONT'D)

You see? You might as well face the facts, Miss McQueen. We've—

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - CONTINUOUS

Detective Harris is taking a harder line with Natalie:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DET. HARRIS  
—got you cold, Miss James!

Harris brings out Natalie's scarf, encased in a plastic evidence bag, and drops it onto the table between them dramatically.

DET. HARRIS (CONT'D)  
Recognize this?

SWEEP CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #1 - CONTINUOUS

Brooke shakes her head, trying to get her thoughts straight.

BROOKE  
Look—I don't know how you got those, but I never filled out any application.  
(beat)  
And even if I did— Since when is opening a bank account—which I didn't do—against the law?

DET. CANDIDO  
When it's used for a criminal enterprise, Miss McQueen.

SWEEP CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - CONTINUOUS

NATALIE  
Wait—that looks like—

DET. HARRIS  
Not "looks like," Miss James. Is. Your scarf. Very rare, at least here. Made exclusively in the Udon Canton in Switzerland, not licensed for export to the U.S. And don't worry—the lab's gotten enough DNA off it to make a positive match.

Natalie looks thoroughly lost by now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATALIE

What are you doing with my scarf?!

SWEEP CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #1 - CONTINUOUS

BROOKE

What criminal enterprise?!

DET. CANDIDO

The one Natalie James cooked up.  
The one you helped pull off.

SWEEP CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - CONTINUOUS

NATALIE

I lost that scarf!

DET. HARRIS

(derisively)

Sure you did. In Principal  
Krupps' office, when you broke in,  
used his password to hack into the  
school's server and drain all the  
money out of the Student Fund  
account—

SWEEP CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #1 - CONTINUOUS

DET. CANDIDO

—which was then transferred into  
the bank account you opened.

SWEEP CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - CONTINUOUS

NATALIE

Hold on—the last time I had that  
scarf...

SWEEP CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #1 - CONTINUOUS

BROOKE  
The money was—did you say  
hacked...?!

SLIDE CUT TO:

SPLIT SCREEN - BROOKE AND NATALIE

As both girls simultaneously come to the same conclusion:

BROOKE/NATALIE  
(simultaneously)  
SAM!!

SLAM CUT TO:

SAM

...staring unwaveringly into the camera, a determined chill in her eyes.

SAM  
Rule number one: There are no  
rules.

For a moment it looks like she might say something else. But then, with a tiny twitch of her lip, she turns and walks away, leaving only the gray featureless background behind.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

THE END