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A Diagram on Birds and Women's Representation in Film

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A Diagram on Birds

By

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INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

The room is dim, the curtains drawn. It's sparse: only a dresser, a bed, and a few paintings on the walls.

A black dress lies flat on the carpet.

REGINA SHIPMAN, mid-30's, auburn hair, average build, sits on the edge of the bed. She wears a pale slip. Her hair is frizzy, wild.

ANGLE ON REGINA'S FACE

Her eyes are red and wet. There are slight wrinkles around them already. She sobs.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

The sky is gray. Around thirty people attend the funeral of DANIEL SHIPMAN, whose enlarged photograph stands among an impressive array of flowers. His face is young, attractive.

A REVEREND recites the standard biblical lines.

ANGLE ON REGINA

Her expression is sober, her hair is pulled back and pinned tight to her head. She looks up across the circle of funeral-goers.

ADDIE, 13, a string bean, catches Regina's eye. She gives a wave and a sad smile. Regina waves back, then gives Addie a thumbs-up. Addie nods.

REGINA
(mouthing)
Your mom?

Addie looks up over her shoulder. KATE SHIPMAN, early 30's, brunette, attractive, stands beside her. She can't stop wringing her hands. Addie looks back at Regina, then shrugs and shakes her head.

Kate cranes her neck, looks away from the coffin. A crow pecks around a headstone some twenty feet away. It takes off. Kate stares at the sky.

EXT. CEMETERY GATES - DAY

The funeral goes shuffle toward their cars. Addie approaches Regina, who shakes hands with the Reverend. He exits and she turns to Addie.

ADDIE

Can I hitch a ride?

REGINA

Of course. Where's your mother?

ADDIE

She said she wanted to walk for a bit, I don't know.

Regina looks around. No sign of Kate.

REGINA

Well, I'm not leaving you all alone in your house. Stay over tonight, I'll cook something up.

ADDIE

I'm feeling a big bowl of pesto pasta right now.

REGINA

Sounds like a plan.

She puts her arm around Addie and they head for her car.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Kate moves slowly against the current of passersby. Her tight black funeral dress blends in with the nightlife.

A low bass beat surges out from one of the surrounding clubs. Kate bobs her head to the rhythm.

A male BOUNCER watches her with a smile.

BOUNCER

You know honey, it sounds way better inside.

Kate notices him for the first time. Flashing light leaks out from the doors behind him. She keeps moving.

KATE

My husband died on Wednesday.

The bouncer says nothing. He leans out and watches her wander down the street.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The kitchen is sleek, modern, not a speck of dust. Regina and Addie sit on polished wood stools on opposite sides of a marble island. Two halfway-finished bowls of pasta sit between them.

ADDIE

Oh my God. I'm gonna puke.

REGINA

Go outside if you must.

ADDIE

Eh, I'm good.

Regina smiles. Addie continues to eat, albeit with difficulty.

REGINA

You don't have to go to school tomorrow, you know.

ADDIE

It's okay. I had enough work to make up from Thursday and Friday. I don't wanna get behind.

REGINA

Don't work too hard, now.

ADDIE

Really, Aunt Regina, it's fine. I'm hoping school will be like a distraction, you know? Besides, I miss my friends.

Addie ducks her head down. Regina studies her.

REGINA

I saw your friends at the service.

Addie looks up.

ADDIE

Yeah...

A pause. Regina makes a what's-up gesture with her hands.

ADDIE (CONT.)

Alright, there's kind of a guy,
sort of. But, like, not really. I
haven't talked to him a lot.

REGINA

So he's the distraction.

ADDIE

No, he's Liam. And he said he liked
my phone cover. Also, he borrowed a
pen once, and another time he asked
what the homework was for math.

REGINA

Just like that one part in *Titanic*.
You were made for each other.

Regina stands and collects the pasta bowls. She goes to the
sink and starts to clean them out. Addie sighs.

REGINA (CONT.)

I'm just teasing you. Get down with
your bad self, girl.

The slang sounds horrendous coming out of Regina. Addie
shakes her head.

She goes to the freezer and pulls out a pint of ice cream.
As she passes Regina at the sink, she kisses her shoulder.

ADDIE

You're such a weirdo. I'm taking
this.

She shakes the ice cream tub and begins to exit the kitchen.
Regina turns around.

REGINA

Your sheets are clean, please don't
stain them.

ADDIE

I won't!

REGINA

And don't forget, your mom might
still come and pick you up.

Addie stops. She looks back at Regina.

ADDIE
You think so?

Pause. Regina's hands drip with soapy water.

REGINA
She might.

Addie shrugs and exits the kitchen. Regina stands unmoving over the sink.

INT. OFFICE FLOOR - DAY

A bright, massive office floor. The space is very open, with desk clusters lining the space. The wall-length windows show a cityscape outside.

Regina brushes past reception. The name CHICAGO COURIER is printed on the wall behind the massive desk.

Regina is followed by PAUL, mid-30's, clean-cut, attractive. He takes notes with an iPad and stylus.

REGINA
So we need the green light on Stacy's story, the Top 10 list from Drew, and that blurb thing Colin was talking about. I'm so ready for this meeting.

PAUL
So. Ready.

REGINA
Okay. Trade me.

Paul hands off the iPad and stylus. He moves in front of Regina. They continue through the office.

PAUL
Okay, uh, my part of the speech is all about innovation, so... Here at the *Courier*, our priority is your everyday. That's why we're expanding our exciting Life and Leisure section--

Regina looks up from her notes.

REGINA
Don't say exciting. That's overreaching.

PAUL

Right, right. Our enriching Life and Leisure section. We'll have daily news on your favorite local hotspots, the newest fads, and damn it all if we don't get those pictures of Spiderman!

Regina stops.

REGINA

It's weird that they're already doing another Spiderman movie.

PAUL

Joking, Gene.

Regina forces a smile. She tries to pick up the pace again, but Paul steps in her way.

PAUL (CONT.)

Can we talk, please?

Regina gives a disparaging look. Paul shuffles away from a cluster of nearby desks. The two of them arrive next to a window.

PAUL (CONT.)

Look, I heard about your brother. I had to bribe Tammy to tell me why you kept receiving flowers.

REGINA

Ah, so she dabbles in extortion. Now we can fire her and upgrade to a younger, prettier secretary.

Pause.

REGINA (CONT.)

I'm on a *Mad Men* kick.

PAUL

Don't change the subject on me. Are you sure you should be at work? Maybe the family needs you.

REGINA

Nope. We're good. Addie even wanted to go to school today.

PAUL
Well, shit. Tough kid.

REGINA
I know. Like I said, we're good.
We're dealing. I'm even having
lunch with my sister-in-law later.

She takes up walking again. Paul follows.

REGINA (CONT.)
If she shows up, anyway.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

ANGLE ON: a sledgehammer slamming into a wooden beam.

Kate wears full construction gear, hard hat, utility belt, the works. She leans on the sledgehammer and wipes the sweat from her brow. Then she hoists the hammer up again and continues smashing into what would've been a wall.

GONZALEZ, 40s, Hispanic, also in full gear, comes rushing over.

GONZALEZ
We're supposed to have a supervisor
here before we take this down.

KATE
Take it easy. I got this.

She hurls the hammer into the wall again and again. Gonzalez watches in amazement.

GONZALEZ
I could help, if you want.

KATE
Step off, Gonzo, I got it.

Kate swings one more time. The rest of the wall frame comes crashing down.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Mild hall traffic. Addie stands at her locker, picking out a few books.

LIAM, 13, lanky, brace-faced, approaches her. She doesn't see him.

LIAM
Hey, Addie.

Addie jumps. Her eyes widen when she sees who's talking to her.

ADDIE
Liam! How's it going?

He leans against the lockers and smirks.

LIAM
Nothing much.

The cool act is dead.

LIAM (CONT.)
I mean, uh, it's going good. What's up with you?

ADDIE
(imitating)
Nothing much.

LIAM
So how'd you spend that long weekend of yours?

Addie closes her locker, a pile of books shoved under one arm. She inches towards a nearby classroom.

ADDIE
I had a family thing.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Liam trails behind Addie. They take two seats next to one another near the back.

LIAM
Well, I'm sure it was way more fun than this stupid project. Like, we're already swamped in Pre-Algebra, do we really need this?

ADDIE
Oh, right. Nothing's due for that yet, is it?

LIAM
 You just gotta say what animal your
 project is about.

Addie stares down at her desk, her eyes wide in horror.

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

The teacher, MRS. ESPEN, examines a class roster. Behind her, the chalkboard says "WILDLIFE OF ILLINOIS."

Mrs. Espen calls on kids one by one. Each answers with a very specific animal name. She scribbles on her clipboard.

ESPEN
 Liam?

LIAM
 I'm gonna go with the Hairy
 Woodpecker.

A few chuckles surface. Mrs. Espen rolls her eyes.

ESPEN
 And...Addie?

Addie glances at Liam, who's still laughing about his choice of animal. She takes in a deep breath.

ADDIE
 European sparrow-hawk?

ESPEN
 Okay, that's not real. Common house
 sparrow it is.

Addie sighs. Mrs. Espen finishes writing and stands tall before the class.

ESPEN
 So, guys, I know this project seems
 pretty dull. We're researching
 wildlife we encounter on a daily
 basis that we probably don't care
 about that much.

She begins to pace with typical teacher enthusiasm.

ESPEN (CONT.)
 But the point is, we're gonna be
 taking something from our everyday
 environment and learning about how
 (MORE)

ESPEN (CONT.)
it's adapted, how it survives, and
that way we'll know what to look
for when we move on to different
ecosystems.

Liam leans over to Addie.

 LIAM
 (whispering)
I can't wait for the ecosystem that
has dragons in it.

Addie giggles. She watches Liam even after he's started
paying attention again.

EXT. CAFE - DAY

Half a dozen tables outside, big umbrellas over each. It's
mildly crowded.

Kate, slumped down in her chair, plays idly with the straw
in her glass of soda. She's dressed down, no hard hat, no
utility belt, but still grungy. Two plates of uneaten food
sit at the table.

Regina exits the cafe, a tall cup of coffee in hand, and
sits across from Kate.

 REGINA
Machiatto. Look how fancy I am.

Kate crosses her arms.

 KATE
Good for you.

Regina's unfazed. She slurps the coffee loudly.

 REGINA
Tell me why you've got that
sourpuss look.

 KATE
Because I know you're gonna chew me
out. And you're gonna take your
sweet time with it.

Pause.

REGINA

You didn't call last night. Not even to talk to Addie.

Kate shifts in her chair.

KATE

We talked after the funeral. She seemed fine to me.

REGINA

Oh, she is. She went to school today. But that doesn't change the fact that you blew her off.

KATE

You caught me. I'm a runaway mother. Would you please testify at my trial?

REGINA

Addie doesn't need this right now. The past few months, you've been acting like a brat. I would say no offense, but I need you to get the message here.

Kate smacks her hands on the table. She's halfway out of her chair.

KATE

Wow, really? You wanna look back on the past few months? If Addie needs me, I am there, no matter what. We understand each other better than you think.

REGINA

So, what's that understanding like, exactly? You leaving her alone to go drinking until five in the morning?

Pause. Kate sits down. Regina sits taller.

REGINA (CONT.)

Or maybe it's forcing her to sleep in two different houses.

Kate slumps down further.

KATE
(muttering)
She shouldn't have to.

Regina leans forward.

REGINA
I didn't hear you.

KATE
(louder)
She shouldn't have to do that. But
I don't know why she can't just
stay home. She's old enough.

REGINA
Addie needs someone to come home
to. She's not like you were.

Kate doesn't answer.

REGINA (CONT.)
You've been really good to her. And
she loves you. But something needs
to change.

KATE
Yeah? Then you change it.

Pause.

REGINA
I'll move the rest of her things to
my place tonight.

Another, longer pause. Then Kate perks up.

KATE
Well, great! Can I turn our place
into the opium den I always wanted?
I'm gonna invite all my homeless
friends to hang out.

REGINA
Stop it. I never said you were a
bad influence. I'm not trying to
take Addie away. I just want to
take care of her.

KATE
Right. You've always been so
selfless.

Regina shifts, taps her fingers against the coffee mug. Kate watches.

KATE (CONT.)
Maybe I can help fold her clothes
for you tonight.

Regina nods. The two eat in silence.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The lights are dim, rock music blasts. The few tables scattered around are empty. Kate sits alone at the bar, drinking a beer.

GREG, late 20's, average-looking, approaches her.

GREG
Whatcha drinking?

Kate eyes him.

KATE
Whatever.

Greg gestures to the BARTENDER. He comes over.

GREG
Two more of whatever she's
drinking. It's on me.

Kate looks at him again. Greg sits beside her.

GREG (CONT.)
This place is best on Mondays.
Nobody's ever here, not too loud,
it's easy to talk...

The bartender puts two glasses of beer in front of them.

KATE
Yeah, awesome. Hey, you wanna just
down these?

Greg looks at the glasses.

GREG
Um, sure, I guess.

KATE
Sweet.

She grabs the nearest glass and starts to chug. Greg follows her lead. Kate puts her glass down halfway through. He does the same.

KATE (CONT.)

I feel like a shot, you want a couple shots?

GREG

Uh, yes?

Kate snaps at the bartender. She guzzles the rest of her beer before he reaches her. Greg rushes to match her.

INT. GREG'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kate pins Greg against the wall. She kisses him forcefully.

KATE

What was your name?

GREG

It's Greg!

KATE

Yeah, yeah, my bad.

They land on the bed together. Kate positions herself under Greg, kisses him again. She pulls away suddenly.

KATE

Did I tell you mine?

GREG

You're Kate!

KATE

Hey, cool, points for remembering.

She pulls him closer. She takes off her shirt.

ANGLE ON Kate's clothes falling to the bedroom floor.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Regina throws folded clothes onto a pile on the marble island. She flips through them.

Addie sits on the counter top next to the sink.

ADDIE

So you didn't see her at all after lunch?

REGINA

We didn't make a definite plan.

ADDIE

Well, I would've helped if you'd told me. It sucks you had to get all this stuff alone.

REGINA

It does, which means you have to wear it all.

Addie looks at the pile and makes a grimace. Regina sighs pats the pile proudly.

REGINA (CONT.)

Well, that's that. If you think of anything I missed later, just let me know.

ADDIE

I only need the essentials these days. I'm a pro.

Regina circles the island, stopping in front of Addie.

REGINA

That you are. Watch out.

She reaches up to a cabinet behind Addie's head, pulling out two wine glasses. She grabs a nearby bottle of wine.

ADDIE

Do I get one of those?

Regina pours into both glasses.

REGINA

You get sips.

Addie slouches. Regina hands her a glass. They clink them together.

ADDIE

So do you like sparrows?

REGINA

I suppose so. They're underrated. The pizza's not that bad there.

ADDIE

Oh my God. That's Sbarros. I cannot believe you just said that. I meant the bird.

REGINA

Oh. Still, then. Very underrated bird.

ADDIE

Really? Do you know anything about them?

REGINA

No.

ADDIE

Ugh!

She hops off the counter.

ADDIE (CONT.)

I spent like eighty hours on Wikipedia. I have this project about sparrows and they're basically the most pointless things ever.

She exits the kitchen.

REGINA

(calling)

Keep it up, kiddo! Who knows, they might surprise you!

Regina downs the rest of her wine.

INT. GREG'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Kate lies awake next to a sleeping Greg. She turns to look at him.

LATER

Fully clothed, Kate sneaks quickly out of the room.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Addie slings a backpack over her shoulder. She heads for the front door.

ADDIE
See you, Aunt Regina!

No answer. Addie opens the door. Kate leans against it on the other side, wearing sunglasses and the same clothes from last night.

She grins when she sees Addie. Then she puts a finger to her lips and gestures for Addie to come outside.

EXT. REGINA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Addie slowly closes the door behind her. The house is big, suburban, well-landscaped. Kate stands on the lawn.

KATE
Hey babe! Came to drive you to school!

She puts her arm around Addie's shoulder.

INT. CAR - DAY

KATE
So you and Aunt Regina been having fun? Not that Regina would know fun if it hit her in the face.

Kate laughs. Addie doesn't.

ADDIE
We're doing good. She let me have my own glass of wine last night.

KATE
Ooh, yum! White or red?

Addie twists towards the passenger window.

ADDIE
It looked yellow to me.
(pause)
How are you?

KATE

Me? Well, we're taking down the old post office, that's been kinda hectic. But I met a really nice guy last night.

ADDIE

That's cool.

Kate glances at her. She puts a hand on Addie's knee.

KATE

Don't worry, babe. No one's gonna replace your dad.

Addie pats Kate's hand stiffly.

ADDIE

Thanks. But I wouldn't freak out on you or anything. You can see people, if you want.

KATE

Addie! That's not happening for a long time.

Addie doesn't respond.

KATE (CONT.)

Right now I think I need to just get out there, you know? Nothing serious.

They pull up to the front of the school. Kate turns off the car and turns to Addie.

KATE (CONT.)

So you're gonna be amazing today, right?

ADDIE

For sure.

KATE

Alright, come here.

She leans far over in her seat to hug Addie.

KATE (CONT.)

And if you need me, you just call, text, whatever. You got it?

ADDIE
Yep. Thanks, Mom.

KATE
Love you, sweets. See ya!

Addie leaves the car.

EXT. SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Kate drives off. Addie watches her go, then walks through the yard up to the school building.

As she gets close to the main entrance, she veers off to one side. She stops at an inconspicuous corner and drops her backpack.

Addie leans against the wall of the school, covering her entire face with her hands. She stays that way for a few moments, breathing deep.

When she takes her hands down, Liam is standing in front of her.

LIAM
Rough day, champ?

Addie stands up straight and takes her backpack from the ground.

ADDIE
Just dreading the old grind.

LIAM
I don't know what that means.

They walk back towards the main entrance.

ADDIE
Me either. It's something my aunt says a lot.

EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - DAY

Kids run around, sit at picnic tables, eat their lunches.

Addie sits on a bench. She watches a nearby sparrow peck at the ground.

CLOSE UP of sparrow. Each peck is like a drum.

RENEE, 13, chubby, wears glasses, runs up to Addie's bench. The sparrow flies off.

RENEE
I have a secret.

ADDIE
Do share.

Renee sways on her heels. Addie leans back and sighs.

ADDIE (CONT.)
I'm so tired of these stupid birds.

RENEE
What?

ADDIE
Birds. Sparrows. Ugh.

RENEE
Okay? Well, anyway, somebody has a crush on you!

Addie looks up.

ADDIE
Who?

RENEE
I promised I wouldn't say!

Addie leans back again and pulls out her phone.

ADDIE
Okay, then.

RENEE
I can't take it! Liam likes you!

Renee giggles. Addie looks across the yard: Liam stands and laughs with two other boys.

ADDIE
Who told you that?

RENEE
Shandi from art class. Maybe you should go on a date!

ADDIE
Yeah, we could go birdwatching.

RENEE

What? That's kind of weird. You could do a double date with me and Phillip, but not this week because my mom is taking us to a drive-in screening of *Ghost*.

Addie looks back at Renee.

ADDIE

Well good luck with that.

She turns to look at Liam again.

INT. OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Regina and Paul enter to find DANA, 40's, sharply dressed, alpha-female, waiting by an enormous glass window. She smiles.

DANA

Morning Paul, Gene. Have a seat.

Regina and Paul sit next to one another at the long conference table. Dana sits across from them. She folds her hands in front of her.

DANA (CONT.)

So you crazy kids had some great stuff at the meeting yesterday.

PAUL

Well, we do it for our fans.

REGINA

Is there any word on the new projects yet?

DANA

I'm still sifting through. But I want to talk about you first. I think you're both looking for new directions to take the department, and you've got some really creative ideas.

PAUL

Aw, thanks Mom!

Dana rolls her eyes.

DANA
Don't get all cute with the
nicknames. This is already hard
enough.

REGINA
What is? What's hard?

Dana sighs, leans forward.

DANA
Guys, I'm leaving the Courier.

Paul and Regina don't answer.

DANA (CONT.)
I know it's sudden. I just found
something better, is all.

PAUL
What could be better than us? Oh,
God, this is gonna suck.

DANA
Yeah, well, life sucks and then you
die. Hence why I got a higher
paying job.

REGINA
What does that mean for us? For the
department?

DANA
Well, that's why you're in this
room. I'm gonna be watching you
both for the next couple weeks, and
when I'm gone, one of you will get
the job.

Pause. Regina looks away.

PAUL
You decided to tell us this
together? At the same time? Jesus,
Dana, why not just put us in
gladiator gear too?

DANA
Stop being dramatic. You're adults,
you can take it.

PAUL
Can we though?

REGINA
Maybe Paul and I can be the search committee for a new department head. We're a good team, it'd just be a mistake to split us up.

DANA
Are you questioning my judgment?

Dana looks long and hard and Regina. Regina clears her throat.

REGINA
No. No, I was just spitballing or something.

DANA
Gotcha. Well, if either of you have questions, shoot me an email. If not, I'll be giving one of you the keys to the kingdom in two weeks.

Regina and Paul exchange a glance.

EXT. CAFE - DAY

Regina and Paul sit at a table, each with coffee in hand. Paul is slumped over.

PAUL
Let's kill Dana together.

REGINA
Did you see the way she looked at me? It's not like I was the only one who didn't like what she had to say.

PAUL
Yeah, that was shitty. Not gonna lie, though, that job would be sweet.

REGINA
I know! I want it too.

Paul raises his head.

PAUL
I can't compete with you for it.

REGINA
Maybe we should make a pact or something.

PAUL
Or rock-paper-scissors for it.

He waits for her answer. After a moment, Regina puts out her fist.

Just as Paul and Regina begin their game, Kate comes up to their table in a huff.

KATE
What the hell did you say to Addie?

Regina looks up at her.

REGINA
Nice to see you too.

PAUL
Hey, Kate! How long has it been?

She ignores him.

KATE
Don't fuck with me, Regina. What did you do?

People turn to look at their table. Regina stands.

REGINA
Maybe we should talk somewhere else.

KATE
No, just tell me why my daughter hates me all of a sudden!

REGINA
She doesn't. I haven't got any idea what you're talking about.

Kate begins to pace.

KATE
I dropped her off at school this morning, thinking, I don't know, maybe she'd be happy to see me?

(MORE)

KATE

Well she wasn't. I could tell. So what, have you been talking about me?

REGINA

Of course not.

KATE

How am I supposed to believe that? Addie wouldn't even look at me today!

REGINA

Maybe you're not the problem, for once. Maybe there's something wrong with Addie and you didn't think to ask.

KATE

Screw you! Do you have any idea how passive aggressive that sounds? I just wanna know if you were talking about me or not.

Paul stands, approaches Kate and Regina.

REGINA

Well, I wasn't. So I guess we're done.

Paul puts a hand on Kate's shoulder.

PAUL

Kate, maybe you could join us, grab a coffee or something.

She shrugs him off.

KATE

No, I'm going. I'm just tired of being constantly undermined.

REGINA

Is that what they're calling it these days?

KATE

Wow. I thought that whole "cunt" thing was just a defense mechanism, but you actually are one.

PAUL
 Alright, enough.

He steps between them and points at Kate.

PAUL (CONT.)
 Don't talk to her like that. She's helping you, you know. She's practically raising your kid for you.

REGINA
 Paul--

Kate backs away from both of them.

KATE
 Thanks for the update, pencil dick. If I ever want to feel even more inadequate, I'll just come see you.

She turns and walks off.

REGINA
 Kate, don't.

Kate gives the finger without turning back around.

Paul and Regina watch her for a moment.

REGINA
 You really shouldn't have done that.

PAUL
 Sorry. I like to seek out opportunities to be called "pencil dick."

They return to the table and sit.

REGINA
 I'm serious. She's still trying to figure some things out.

PAUL
 So what, she gets to shit on you whenever she wants? And you just take it because she's "figuring things out?"

REGINA

No. I don't know. I never know with Kate.

PAUL

Well, I didn't like how she was talking to you. I'm sorry if I overstepped or something.

REGINA

Thanks. I appreciate that.

Pause. Paul sips at his coffee.

PAUL

So back to killing Dana.

INT. BAR - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Kate enters, her hair a mess. She wears heavy black eye makeup, tight-fitting black clothes and jewelry. She goes to the mirror.

In the open stall behind her, Greg and a WOMAN, 20's, attractive, are groping one another.

Kate smooths down her hair, then notices the couple. She squints at them through the mirror.

Greg looks up, notices Kate and grins.

GREG

Kate?

Kate turns to him slowly.

KATE

Hey...you.

GREG

It's Greg, from last night!

The woman with Greg continues kissing his neck.

KATE

You're pretty tied up. I'll get out of your way.

GREG

No, don't go! I didn't get a chance to talk to you this morning.

KATE
Yeah, I had a thing.

GREG
No, I get it, I get it.

He nudges the woman away from him and gestures at her.

GREG (CONT.)
This is Felicity.

The two women nod at one another.

FELICITY
Are you the construction worker?

Kate looks at Greg.

GREG
Sorry, I just thought it was kinda cool.

KATE
You think my job is cool?

GREG
No, I meant, I think you're cool.

He smiles at her. They stare at one another.

INT. BAR - DANCE FLOOR - LATER

It's crowded. Rock music blares.

Greg holds Kate's hand as she twirls around him. Felicity's holding him from behind.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Addie is nestled among a pile of blankets on the sofa. Regina enters with a huge bowl of popcorn. She puts it on the coffee table.

REGINA
Look at you.

ADDIE
Don't make fun of me, it's warm.

REGINA
You're a little babushka.

ADDIE
What?

Regina goes to the DVD rack. She studies it.

REGINA
Your grandma called me that all the time, according to her. She says she would wrap us up in towels after a bath and say "Who's my little babushka?" And it always put Daniel on the floor laughing.

A silence. Regina draws a DVD from the rack.

ADDIE
Can I ask you something about dad?

REGINA
Yes. And we're doing "Spice World" unless you can think of something better.

ADDIE
Impossible.

Regina smiles. She puts the DVD in the player and turns to Addie.

REGINA
So what's up?

ADDIE
Well, I know mom and dad met when they were really young, but I was just wondering how young.

REGINA
I'm not sure. They must've been fourteen or fifteen, since they were together all through high school. Why?

Addie pushes some of the blankets away from her.

ADDIE
What made him like her?

Regina pauses.

REGINA
I guess because she was pretty.

ADDIE
Well, what made him love her?

An even longer pause. Suddenly Regina laughs.

REGINA
She yelled at him a lot.

ADDIE
What's that supposed to mean?

REGINA
If he ever had a mean joke, or if he failed a test or anything, she'd call him out.

ADDIE
Really? Why would he like that?

REGINA
I think he was glad to have someone looking out for him. Someone who pushed him to be better.

Addie stares at the coffee table.

ADDIE
Who has time for that, though?

INT. GREG'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

60's rock blares. Greg sits on the ground between the sofa and the coffee table. He's hunched over something on the table.

Kate and Felicity dance. Greg leans up.

REVEAL several lines of cocaine, a razor blade nearby.

GREG
Ladies, let's get this show on the road. Got some clubs to hit up!

Kate and Felicity burst out laughing. Greg watches them, confused.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Kate does a line.

Kate and Greg clinking beer bottles.

Felicity and Kate jumping on Greg's sofa.

Kate and Greg embrace.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Addie watches the movie, transfixed. Regina sits beside her eating popcorn.

REGINA

Hey, you're not mad at your mother,
are you?

ADDIE

No, why would I be?

REGINA

I just assumed that was the reason
you were asking about her.

Addie shakes her head. They return to the movie for a moment.

REGINA (CONT.)

You could always tell me, though,
if something was up.

ADDIE

I know. It wasn't that. I was just
thinking about both of them, you
know, back when they were kids.

A pause. Addie looks away from the TV screen.

ADDIE (CONT.)

Like, how they hardly knew each
other, and then boom, they're in it
for life.

REGINA

Yeah.

ADDIE

And they were my age, pretty much.

REGINA

Happens all the time.

Addie turns towards Regina.

ADDIE

Does it? Do you really think that?

Regina looks hard at her.

REGINA

Do I look like I would know the answer to that question?

Addie slumps back down.

ADDIE

Sorry. It just freaks me out, kind of. I mean, how could they have been my age?

REGINA

Well, it's different for everyone, Addie. And your mom's never been the sort to second-guess herself.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Kate, Greg and Felicity dance in a tight unit among a massive crowd. The multicolored lights flash: it's seizure worthy. The bass of the club music booms.

Kate's covered in sweat. Her eyes are closed. She raises her hands above her head and dances harder.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ADDIE

So were you friends with her from the start, pretty much?

REGINA

I guess so. Mostly I was grateful to have her around.

ADDIE

Why?

Regina looks away.

REGINA

I was glad someone else was there to keep my little brother out of my hair. In hindsight, it was sort of mean.

Addie reaches for a handful of popcorn.

ADDIE
 (chewing)
 It's alright. You didn't know.

REGINA
 No, I did. I knew better. The thing is, I didn't care. I was too fixed on college, the future...I went a little too gung-ho with all that.

ADDIE
 Well, it's not like you were ever mean to us, or anything. And your way looks like it paid off.

Regina lets her head fall back on the sofa.

REGINA
 My way. I'd love it if you could tell me what that is.

Addie watches her for a moment, then dumps one of her blankets on Regina's head. Regina tosses it back at her. They laugh.

INT. GREG'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kate lies in bed between Greg and Felicity, all three unclothed. Kate's the only one awake. She stares at the ceiling.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The bell rings. Kids rush to pack up their stuff. Mrs. Espen waves her arms.

ESPEN
 Don't forget, your final presentations are due a week from today!

Several groans as kids file out of the room. Addie trails behind.

ESPEN
 Addie, hold up. Can we chat?

Addie turns, slides the backpack from her shoulder.

ADDIE
What's up?

Mrs. Espen leans back on her desk.

ESPEN
I noticed your source cards are a little lacking.

ADDIE
Yeah. There's really not that much to know about sparrows.

ESPEN
Well, your work is usually great, Addie. I know you can make this a really good project.

A silence. Addie nods absently.

ESPEN
That being said, I also wanted to make sure you were getting enough time. I know it's only been a week since your father passed, and I don't want you to think I don't care.

Addie shrugs, shakes her head.

ADDIE
It's fine. Well, it sucks, but it happened. Just a part of the old grind.

ESPEN
What?

ADDIE
I'm sorry my note cards were bad. But I'll finish on time, I promise. Anyway, I gotta go. Have a good weekend, Ms. Espen!

Addie rushes out the door. Mrs. Espen reaches towards her, opens her mouth to speak, but Addie's already gone.

HALLWAY

Addie comes up to her locker, where Liam's waiting.

LIAM
Hey, Addie. You okay?

She performs her locker combination.

ADDIE
I'm awesome. It's the weekend. How about you?

She yanks open her locker, rips open her backpack. She draws out a hulking science textbook and dumps it inside.

LIAM
Equally awesome over here. But I had a question for you.

Addie closes her locker and starts walking. Liam follows.

LIAM (CONT.)
You know Shandi from our art class?

ADDIE
Sure.

LIAM
Well, she said you and Renee were talking--

Addie looks at Liam without breaking stride.

ADDIE
Sounds like us.

LIAM
Right, well, it was during free period the other day.

ADDIE
Was it? Now that part sounds fishy.

Liam stops short.

LIAM
Do you wanna go out with me?

Addie stops, turns to him and squints.

ADDIE
For how long?

LIAM
What? Well, for as long as you want, I guess. My curfew's at ten, though.

Addie takes a moment. She scoots closer to him.

ADDIE

You meant, like, go out on a date?

Liam shifts his weight, glances around. Students shuffle past them.

LIAM

Yeah. Sorry, I should've texted it to you.

He pulls out his phone, looks, pockets it.

ADDIE

I'm going to the park tomorrow. It'll probably be super boring, but if you want to come...

LIAM

Really? No, yeah, that sounds good.

ADDIE

Okay, then. I'll just shoot you a text about it later, I guess.

She does finger guns at him. He returns the gesture.

LIAM

Ha, great. See you tomorrow!

He walks backwards a few feet, then turns and goes back down the hall. Addie watches for a moment. She glances behind her.

The hallway's empty. Addie sprints through it, her bag bouncing on her back.

INT. OFFICE FLOOR - DAY

A cluster of desks: Regina is the only one there. She types away on her laptop.

ANGLE ON the cellphone buzzing on her desk. The name ADDIE flashes on the screen. Regina answers.

REGINA

Hey!

EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

Addie leans against the wall of the school, phone to her ear.

Across the yard, buses are lined up. Kids are piling inside.

ADDIE
Hi, Aunt Regina.

INTERCUT ADDIE/REGINA

REGINA
You sound like you're sick.

ADDIE
No. Well, maybe. I just had something to tell you.

REGINA
Tell away.

ADDIE
You know Liam?

REGINA
Yeah, your math class kid. We go way back.

Regina rocks back and forth in her chair.

ADDIE
He asked if I wanted to go on a date.

Addie huddles closer into the wall. She can't hide her smile.

REGINA
Bet that took some cojones. Did you say yes?

ADDIE
I did, yeah.

REGINA
Aw. Lucky guy! What did your mother say?

Addie looks around, fidgets.

ADDIE

I haven't told her yet. I'm still kinda jumpy about it, you know, but I think I just needed to calm down first.

REGINA

Right. Well, I'm happy if you're happy. And if this kid turns out to be a jerk then I can always show up to kick his ass.

Enter Dana, who stops near Regina's desk and watches her, arms crossed. Regina stops rocking immediately and sits up straight.

ADDIE (O.S.)

Thanks, Aunt Regina. You should show up for all my dates.

REGINA

Then I'll be sure to do so. Thanks for letting me know. I'll talk to you soon. Uh-huh. Goodbye.

Regina hangs up and shoves her cell phone into her pocket. She looks up and smiles at Dana.

REGINA

My niece. I was helping her with--

DANA

Kicking someone's ass?

Regina's shoulders drop.

REGINA

Yeah.

DANA

Fascinating. Maybe when you're done with that, you can get your new layout to me. Unless you think it's best to go with Paul's.

Regina glances across the office. Paul's chatting with the secretary at reception. Regina turns back to Dana.

REGINA

No, Dana, I will get that to you straight away.

Dana nods and walks away. Regina stares down at her desk and sighs.

EXT. PARK - DUSK

Addie and Liam amble along a dirt path. The surrounding trees are thinly dispersed.

LIAM

Believe it or not, the Hairy Woodpecker is not as fun as I thought it was gonna be.

ADDIE

Seriously. I thought getting a sparrow would be super easy.

Liam stops, points in front of him.

LIAM

Wait, wait, is that one?

A sparrow hops around on the path ahead.

ADDIE

Yep. I'd recognize those beady little eyes anywhere.

She takes out her phone, snaps a few pictures. Liam watches her.

LIAM

Want me to take one of you?

Addie doesn't look up.

ADDIE

Sure. I have to be careful it doesn't fly away, though.

She hands him the phone and creeps closer to the sparrow. She crouches. Liam takes the shot.

LIAM

That looks cool. The light is really cool.

ADDIE

Is it? Let me see.

She gets up, leans in close to him. They each have a hand on the phone.

ADDIE

Yeah, that's perfect!

They look at each other. Their faces are only inches apart. Addie backs off, taking her phone. They start walking again.

LIAM

I better get photo cred for that.
Maybe it'll help my grade.

ADDIE

Maybe. We can't all be winners.

LIAM

Hey, if I'd gotten to do the
project on dragons, it would be the
greatest thing anybody ever saw.

ADDIE

That would make for a totally
different date.

LIAM

You're right. This one totally
blows.

He takes her hand. She smiles at him, then looks away, her eyes wider than dinner plates.

They pass by the sparrow, who twitches its head in their direction.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Regina sits on the couch, her knees tucked into her chest. She wears sweatpants and reading glasses. She types on a laptop.

A glass of wine, filled nearly to the top, sits beside her on the coffee table. She takes a sip.

Suddenly, a knock at the front door. Regina gets up.

HALLWAY

She opens the door. Kate stands on the other side, waving with a full grocery bag in hand. She wears a short skirt and a leather jacket.

REGINA

Kate?

Kate slouches and sighs.

KATE

Is it too late for Saturday?

Regina steps aside, lets Kate enter. She closes the door.

LIVING ROOM

Kate sets the grocery bag on the coffee table. She takes Regina's glass of wine and takes a gulp.

KATE

My contribution is movie
theater-sized candy. Where's Addie?

REGINA

She's still out with Liam.

KATE

Who?

Regina leans against the wall.

REGINA

The boy who asked her out. She told
you, didn't she?

Kate shakes her head.

KATE

I didn't even know there was a boy.

A pause. Kate looks at the ground. Regina steps closer to her.

REGINA

Oh, Kate, I'm sorry. It only just
happened yesterday. She probably
just forgot, is all.

KATE

Right. Sure.

She sits on the sofa and takes another sip of wine. Regina stands over the coffee table.

REGINA

Listen, I know she'll be back soon.
And she'll give you every last
detail, I'm sure.

KATE

Yeah, if she can stand talking to
me that long.

REGINA

Oh, come on. She's a teenager. It's normal. Let's not waste another Saturday.

She paws through the grocery bag.

REGINA (CONT.)

Look, you brought Red Vines, Whoppers, all these gummy worms. Here, have a pack of Pop Rocks.

She tosses a packet at Kate.

REGINA (CONT.)

I've got a whole bunch of movies we can look through, too. Come on. We deserve this. I think we should use it, don't you?

Kate opens her mouth. The sound of fizzing Pop Rocks is her answer.

REGINA (CONT.)

Please don't sulk. Hell freezes over when you're not yelling or dancing on something.

Kate crunches the Pop Rocks, sits up straight.

KATE

Alright, fine. Let's go do something.

She stands up.

REGINA

Wait, what? Do something? What about Addie?

KATE

She's got a key, right? Leave her a note. You and I can grab a drink.

REGINA

That sounds like a mistake waiting to happen.

She opens up the pack of Red Vines.

KATE

It's early enough that it won't be crowded! Come on. When was the last time you went out?

Kate takes a Red Vine. Regina pauses.

REGINA

I have a lot on my plate right now.

Kate throws her hands in the air.

KATE

Whatever. I guess I'll just go by myself.

She heads for the door. Regina follows.

REGINA

Kate, please. Don't turn this into another fight.

KATE

I'm not. I just want to go out. If you don't wanna come with, that's fine.

REGINA

It's not that I don't want to spend time with you, you know.

KATE

I know. I just figured you might like a quick and easy night out, but...

REGINA

Ugh! God.

Regina rushes back to the coffee table and closes her laptop.

REGINA (CONT.)

Can we be back here in an hour?

Kate gasps.

KATE

Yes! Totally! Ah! Come on!

She grabs Regina's arm.

EXT. PARK - CONTINUOUS

Addie's phone beeps. She lets go of Liam's hand, reaches into her pocket.

AUNT REGINA appears on the phone's screen, along with a text: "GOING OUT FOR A BIT. U OK?"

Addie stares at her phone for a few seconds.

LIAM
Everything alright?

Addie looks at him. She pockets her phone and takes his hand again.

ADDIE
Yep. All hunky-dory over here.

LIAM
"Hunky-dory"? I gotta buy a dictionary for some of the stuff you say.

ADDIE
Would that even be in the dictionary?

LIAM
Dunno. I was gonna get a thesaurus, but they're all extinct.

Addie nudges him with her shoulder. She can't hide a giggle.

ADDIE
Boo. Terrible joke.

They continue walking.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

It's crowded. Regina and Kate sit at the bar. Regina's ditched the sweatpants for mom jeans and a tee shirt.

The bartender sets an old-fashioned in front of each of them.

KATE
Woo!

She takes a long gulp of hers. Regina sniffs, then sips at hers lightly.

REGINA
I haven't had one of these since
college.

KATE
Yeah, you haven't set foot in a bar
since college. Now drink til you
get to the cherry!

REGINA
Oh my God.

Regina smiles. She takes a longer, albeit still timid, sip.
Kate watches her.

KATE
I'm glad you're here.

Regina sets her drink down.

REGINA
No you're not.

KATE
I am, though. I haven't really
gotten to talk to you.

REGINA
Yeah, you're too busy screeching at
me about Addie.

KATE
I do not screech!

She hits Regina's arm.

KATE (CONT.)
I do not screech. I'm a mom, so it
counts as lecturing.

REGINA
You're not my mom.

Regina picks up her drink and stands. Kate follows. They
push past people, crossing the room.

KATE
(calling)
You're lucky I'm not your mom! You
would've been fucked up!

REGINA
(calling)
I already am fucked up!

They find a table for two shoved against a wall. They set down their drinks. Kate sways with the house music. Regina makes an attempt.

KATE
Regina, you've gotta be the least
fucked-up person I know.

REGINA
You might be surprised.

KATE
Really?

Regina looks down, thinks about it.

REGINA
No. Not really.

Kate laughs. She takes Regina's hand and twirls herself under it.

KATE
Doesn't mean you can't get
fucked-up tonight!

Regina rolls her eyes. She reaches for her drink: this time, it's a good, long swallow. Kate cheers.

EXT. REGINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Addie and Liam approach the front door. They stop on the stoop. The lights are off inside the house.

LIAM
I can wait with you, if you don't
want to be alone.

ADDIE
Don't you have a curfew?

He takes her hands.

LIAM
I like to live dangerously.

ADDIE
Don't tell me that's your go-to
line.

LIAM
Yeah, you caught me.

Addie leans in fast and kisses him.

ADDIE
There. No cheesy line needed.

LIAM
You wanna hear something really
cheesy?

ADDIE
What?

Liam shifts his weight, glances around.

LIAM
I made my dad wait down the street
to pick me up.

ADDIE
Oh, wow.

LIAM
Hey, at least I was honest!

ADDIE
Good point. In the spirit of
honesty, then, I guess I should let
you know--

She kisses him a second time.

ADDIE (CONT.)
I want to go out with you again.

Liam stares at her, grins, showing all his braces.

LIAM
Me too.

A car pulls slowly up the street. Liam spots it, then turns
back to Addie.

LIAM
My dad. I'm sorry.

ADDIE

It's okay. I'll see you on Monday.

LIAM

Yeah, definitely! Definitely.
Goodnight, Addie.

He steps backwards off the stoop, waving at her as he heads for the car. She waves back.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Addie creeps inside the darkened house, closing the door slowly behind her. She turns on a light. She takes in a deep breath, then suddenly jumps up and down and laughs to herself.

She scrambles to get her phone out of her pocket. She dials, holds it up to her ear and waits a few rings.

ADDIE

Aunt Regina? Call me when you get this. I just wanted to let you know I'm home safe. And also everything is amazing. And I kind of sort of kissed Liam. So yeah, please call me! I am freaking out! Bye!

She hangs up, then presses her hands against her face.

INT. BAR - LATER

A circle of people are gathered around Regina and Kate, who stand facing one another. They each hold a beer. They clink glasses and start to chug.

The crowd cheers. Kate finishes first. Regina follows a few seconds after. She leans in close to Kate.

REGINA

You're a murderer!

KATE

What?

REGINA

This is killing me.

Kate is handed two full shot glasses, seemingly out of nowhere. She gives one to Regina.

KATE
 Promise you won't die until the
 train ride home!

They clink again. Kate downs hers in an instant. Regina hesitates, then swallows the shot.

LATER

A slow song plays over the speakers. Regina sits cross-legged on top of a table, drinking something tall and tropical.

She watches Kate, who dances with a MAN, 30's, dark and brawny. It's getting hot and heavy.

Regina pulls out her phone and looks at it. The time reads 11:35.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Addie stands on her tip-toes at the refrigerator, reaching for a box of cereal perched on top. She sings to herself. She's into it.

Lying on the marble island, her phone vibrates. She sets the cereal on the counter and picks up her phone.

The name AUNT REGINA appears with the message: STILL GOOD? WE R GOOD 2. DON'T LEAVE HOUSE.

Addie squints at the text.

ADDIE
 We?

She leans against the counter and types a response.

INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

Regina sinks into a chair. She slurps the last of her tropical drink. Her phone beeps. She pulls it out and looks.

The name ADDIE appears on the screen with the message: ARE YOU WITH MOM?

Regina looks up. Kate is laughing with another MAN, older, mid-40's, rugged. He has his hand around her waist.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Addie sits on the sofa watching TV. The open cereal box sits beside her. She reaches in and eats a handful.

Her phone, which lies on the coffee table, lights up. She notices, grabs it.

The message says: SHE WAS UPSET B/C OF LAIM

Addie looks up and frowns.

ADDIE
(mouthing)
Laim?

She types out a response, then drops the phone beside her.

INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

Regina wanders among the tables and the crowd. Her phone beeps. She goes to reach for it, but suddenly a hand catches her wrist.

A GUY, 30's, good-looking, grins at her.

GUY
Saw you sitting back there all by
yourself. What's up?

Regina's visibly flustered. She brushes hair out of her face.

REGINA
I'm with my sister.

GUY
Sisters, huh? Cool, where's she at?

REGINA
Sister-in-law. I don't know--

GUY
Can I get you another drink?

REGINA
No, I'm okay. Goodbye.

He takes her hand again.

GUY
Just wait a second.

REGINA
No thank you.

She tries to pull her hand away. He won't let her go.

Kate walks up, taps on his shoulder.

KATE
You wanna take it back a couple
hundred yards there, pal?

He turns to her and smiles.

GUY
I take it you're the sister-in-law?

KATE
I take it you're a creep. Bye now!

She and Regina turn to leave.

GUY
Wait now, hold up, there's no need
to be such a bitch about--

Kate faces him again. She's glaring.

KATE
You feel like picking glass out of
your gums? Finish that fucking
sentence. I dare you.

He holds his hands up, backs away. Kate and Regina slip past him.

GUY
(under his breath)
Crazy skank.

Kate stops. She takes in a breath, but doesn't turn around.

Regina looks at her for a few seconds. Suddenly, she turns, picks up a shot glass from a nearby table, and chucks it at the guy. It misses and shatters on the ground.

Kate stares in horror. Regina stifles a laugh.

KATE
Oh my God!

Regina grabs her arm.

REGINA
Run, you crazy skank!

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Regina and Kate hurry along the sidewalk. They stumble periodically. They're cracking up.

KATE
You are a hundred percent insane.

REGINA
I disagree. I had the foresight to
pay my tab first.

She trips. Kate holds her up. They walk arm-in-arm.

KATE
Is this the most drunk you've ever
been?

REGINA
Yeah!

She laughs, then stops moving. She stares into the distance.

REGINA
No. Oh, no. I remember a different
time.

KATE
Don't tell me: your Senior Prom?

REGINA
You and Daniel bought me that
bottle of something.

KATE
Cognac. We thought you were gonna
get lucky with what's-his-face.

They pick up walking again.

REGINA
Jamie. His name was Jamie. Or
Jamison. He was sweet.

She leans in close to Kate.

REGINA (CONT.)
(whispering)
He was small.

Kate hits her arm.

KATE

You're awful. Is that why you came to my place?

REGINA

Yep. Celebrating my emancipation from the most boring date ever.

KATE

I knew it. Daniel thought you got dumped. But you just wanted to hang out with us cool kids.

REGINA

No, oh my God. You were such losers. All three of us were losers.

KATE

Losers that got way too hammered that night.

REGINA

It was a blast, though.

KATE

Yeah.

They walk in silence for a while.

REGINA

Do you feel like a widow?

A long pause. Kate watches the ground.

KATE

No.

REGINA

Sorry. I didn't mean to say that.

KATE

It's okay. I don't really know what I feel like.

REGINA

Neither do I.

Another pause.

KATE
I kind of feel like Chinese food
right now.

REGINA
Oh, God, yes.

They laugh.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Regina and Kate lie in Regina's bed. Regina's asleep, still fully clothed. Kate looks at the ceiling.

KITCHEN - LATER

Addie sits at the table in her pajamas, peeling an orange.

Kate, wearing an over-sized tee and sweatpants, enters. Addie looks up. The two stare at each other for a moment.

KATE
Hey, sweetie pie, how are you?

ADDIE
Fine. You?

KATE
Oh, I'm great. Regina and I did the whole gal-pal thing last night, so.

Kate goes to the fridge, opens it, stares inside.

ADDIE
Yeah, is she okay? I was asleep before you guys came back.

Kate pulls out a can of ginger ale and snaps the tab.

KATE
She's fine. She just stayed up way past her bedtime, that's all.

She sips the ginger ale and takes the seat opposite Addie, who fiddles with the orange peel in front of her.

ADDIE
And you're sure you're okay? You're not, like, upset over anything?

KATE
What? No, babe, like I said, I'm
good.

A pause. Addie looks down at her hands. Kate watches her.

KATE (CONT.)
Actually, I met a really sweet guy
last night.

ADDIE
Oh. That's good.

Silence.

ADDIE (CONT.)
I thought you met someone a couple
days ago.

KATE
Yeah, yeah, I did, but...well, you
know how things go.

Addie nods. She eats a slice of orange.

KATE (CONT.)
Well, speaking of, do you have
anything new going on in your life?
I hope you had a good week.

ADDIE
Pretty normal, I guess. I have this
project I gotta finish.

She stands, goes to the trash can by the marble island. She
throws her peel away, then lingers in the middle of the
kitchen.

ADDIE (CONT.)
It's this presentation about
sparrows. At first I kinda hated
it, but I don't know. They're not
that bad.

Kate twists in her chair to look at Addie.

KATE
I bet you're gonna kill it. Is it a
big deal, a big grade?

ADDIE
Yeah, I guess.

KATE

Oh. Wow.

Addie exits to the living room. Kate sits for a moment, staring at the floor. She stands and follows Addie.

LIVING ROOM

Addie sits cross-legged on the sofa. Kate stands at the threshold, leaning against the wall.

KATE

Addie?

Addie looks up. Kate opens her mouth, but nothing comes out.

Suddenly, a clamor from the stairs. Kate leans into the hallway to investigate.

Regina descends: she moves like she's got feet made of lead. Her hair is wild, a mess. Her eyes are mostly shut.

Kate grins.

KATE

Well good morning, sunshine!

Regina groans.

ADDIE

(calling)

It's errand day!

Regina groans louder.

KITCHEN

Regina goes to the fridge at a snail's pace. She opens it and drags out a bottle of water. She reaches for a bottle of aspirin on the counter.

Kate enters as she pops two pills.

KATE

You're not mad, are you?

Regina squints at her.

REGINA

Nope. Happy as a clam. Why?

KATE
 Never mind. But I was just
 wondering--

REGINA
 What?

KATE
 You sort of look like death. Do you
 want help with your errand day or
 whatever?

REGINA
 Oh, uh...

Regina turns, shuffles around the kitchen. She leans against
 the marble island.

REGINA (CONT.)
 Addie was supposed to come, I don't
 know.

KATE
 Well, the three of us could go,
 maybe. We can go out for lunch,
 too.

REGINA
 Really? You want to?

KATE
 Yeah! I had a great time with you
 last night.

REGINA
 Just a regular party monster over
 here. What can I say?

Kate leans down next to her on the island. She nudges
 Regina's arm.

KATE
 You can say yes, Kate, let's go
 paint the town red!

REGINA
 Yes, let's. With my vomit.

KATE
 If it makes you feel better, then
 sure!

Regina looks at her, then rests her head against the island
 and moans.

INT. SUSHI BAR - DAY

The light is dim, the floor covered in bamboo mats. Elegant Japanese artwork lines the walls. The bar is sleek.

Regina, Addie and Kate sit at the bar: the only people there. Regina, in the middle, wears khakis, a blouse, and looks much more alert. Kate and Addie both wear jeans and a tee shirt.

Several shopping bags sit at the girls' feet. On the counter, there's a green-apple soda in front of Addie, a sparkling water in front of Regina, and a glass of white wine in front of Kate.

The CHEF, a thin, elderly Japanese woman, works away behind the bar. She doesn't look up. Addie looks at Regina.

ADDIE

Did you know, in Japan, there's a restaurant with only ten seats, and you pay three hundred dollars for, like, five pieces of sushi?

REGINA

I did not know that.

Kate leans forward to look at Addie.

KATE

Where'd you find that out?

Addie shrugs.

ADDIE

Just online, I guess.

Kate sips at her wine.

KATE

You'd probably go into spasms if you had to pay that much to get your fix.

Addie leans past Regina and smiles.

ADDIE

I can quit anytime I want!

Kate laughs. She nudges Regina.

KATE

We gave her a two-day sushi-making class for her tenth birthday. She literally cried.

ADDIE

I appreciate good food! It's your fault for putting on Iron Chef America every night.

Regina sips at her sparkling water, her eyes flicking back and forth between the two of them.

The chef sets three plates of intricate sushi in front of the girls. Addie gasps.

ADDIE

I'm staring at heaven.

The chef smiles, exits into a back room. Kate holds up her glass.

KATE

What are we saying cheers to?

Addie and Regina hold up their drinks.

ADDIE

I got nothing.

REGINA

To nothing!

KATE

To everything!

ADDIE

Whatever. Olay!

They clink their glasses together and drink.

EXT. REGINA'S HOUSE - LATER

Addie, Kate and Regina stand in the driveway, where Kate's SUV is parked. Kate hugs Addie.

KATE

I'll text you when I get home.

ADDIE

You could stay, though. If you want. Just to watch the new CSI or whatever.

Kate looks up at Regina, who shrugs. Kate looks back at Addie.

KATE

I really wish I could, babe. But I've got some plans to go over for tomorrow, I've gotta make a few calls...

Regina frowns. Addie backs up towards the house.

ADDIE

That's fine! We're just gonna be boring over here tonight, right Aunt Regina?

She looks to Regina.

REGINA

Ben Stein levels of boring.

KATE

Oh, well, okay. I'll see you soon!

ADDIE

Bye!

She waves at Kate, then heads into the house. Kate and Regina face one another. Kate sighs.

REGINA

What was that about? You were getting along today.

KATE

Getting along? Please, I've never had a fight with that girl in my life. She'd probably win, anyway.

She leans against her car.

REGINA

You know what I mean. I have no idea where all this "my daughter hates me" stuff is coming from. She really wants you here.

A pause. Kate bends forward.

KATE

(whispering)

She still hasn't told me about this kid she's dating.

REGINA

Oh, well, my mistake, then. Clearly she despises you.

KATE

It has to mean something, doesn't it?

REGINA

No. It doesn't.

KATE

How would you know?

REGINA

Because you're her mom, Kate. And she's a teenage girl, for God's sake. There's no map or key or whatever that's gonna help you figure it out.

Kate begins to pace.

KATE

It wasn't like this before. I never had to fucking question what was going on with us!

She stops suddenly and looks at Regina.

KATE

Do you think I should bring her back home?

Silence. Regina fidgets, shifts her weight.

REGINA

You know, I really can't say. Do you think it'd be better that way?

KATE

That's why I'm asking you.

Another pause. Regina stares at the ground.

REGINA

Maybe we shouldn't talk about it right now.

KATE

Yeah? Well, alright. I mean, we had a good day, why fuck it up, right?

They both laugh. It's clearly forced.

KATE (CONT.)

So, anyway, yeah. I'll just head out then. I'll call you tomorrow.

REGINA

You got it. See you.

Kate gets in her car and starts it up. She waves, then pulls out of the driveway and drives off. Regina watches. She sighs.

INT. OFFICE FLOOR - DAY

Regina and Paul walk briskly through the office, each holding stacks of various papers and folders. Regina wears a pantsuit, her hair down but coiffed to perfection. Paul's in a casual shirt and tie.

They pause every few desks or so, handing off papers to people working at their computers.

REGINA

Did we ever get back to Colin on his story?

PAUL

We talked last week. It was a no, remember? He was a little bitter.

REGINA

Right, right. I should've written that down.

PAUL

Careful, I might just snatch the promotion right out from under you.

Paul smiles. Regina slows down. He notices.

PAUL (CONT.)

Joke. Sorry, that's maybe not the best choice of subject.

REGINA

No, it's fine. I just haven't been thinking much about it lately.

She takes up her quick pace again. Paul follows.

PAUL

Yeah, I'm sure it's rough, with everything going on.

REGINA

Not rough. Just different.

They approach their own cluster of desks, which is crowded with all manner of office supplies. Regina circles around to her station, Paul goes to his.

They set down their files. Regina sits. Paul, still standing, looks at her.

PAUL

You could always take a break, you know. Nobody's gonna blame you for that.

Regina smiles, runs a hand over her hair.

REGINA

I don't need one. Don't even want one. I just feel like kicking some ass.

She winks at him. He chuckles and sits down.

PAUL

Okay. Well, I'm just saying, as your partner in crime, it's cool if you ever wanna chill.

Regina leans back in her chair and crosses her arms.

REGINA

If I didn't know any better, I'd call sabotage, sir.

Paul holds his hands up.

PAUL

This is a sabotage-free zone. Although, speaking of which, I am seeing some definite crow's feet today.

He leans forward, squints at Regina's face. She picks up a paper clip and flicks it at him.

REGINA

Pencil dick.

Paul throws his head back and laughs.

PAUL

Oh my God. And how is your
enchanted sister-in-law?

REGINA

Enchanting as ever. We went out on
Saturday.

PAUL

No shit! Why wasn't I invited?

A pause. Regina holds up a pencil, wiggles it in front of
him.

PAUL (CONT.)

Oh, right. Well, how was it?

REGINA

Fine. I could never get away with
it on a weekday, though.

PAUL

Yeah, preaching to the choir. And
Kate was cool?

REGINA

Why wouldn't she be?

PAUL

I don't know if you noticed last
time we met, but she was kinda...

He makes an explosive gesture on both sides of his face,
adding an explosion sound effect with his mouth. Regina
sighs.

REGINA

I honestly couldn't tell you what
that was about. It wasn't like her,
really. She's never ambushed me
like that before.

Kate enters from across the office floor. She wears baggy
overalls. Her hair is in a poor attempt of a bun. She smiles
at Regina as she approaches.

Regina and Paul both stare at her wide-eyed.

REGINA

Kate? What are you doing? How did
you get up here?

Kate stops in front of Regina and shrugs.

KATE
What are you, the CIA? It wasn't
hard.

Paul shrinks behind his computer.

PAUL
Hi, Kate.

Kate leans over to see him. She grins and waves.

KATE
Hey, Paul! Sorry if I scared you
last time. You know how it is, you
just get pissy.

Paul glances uneasily at Regina.

PAUL
Yeah...totally.

Kate turns to Regina.

KATE
Okay, so I won't bug you for long,
but I was at the site just now and
some of the guys were talking about
going out tomorrow night--

Regina looks across the room.

ANGLE ON DANA, looking hard-edged as ever, chatting with a
few people near the conference room.

KATE (CONT.)
And I figured it'd be cool if you
came along, you know, because you
could meet a couple of my friends
and everything. And they said the
Stones are playing!

Paul leans towards Kate.

PAUL
Did you just say the Stones are
here?!

KATE
Not those ones. They're literally
just called "The Stones." I think
it was a smart PR move, honestly.

PAUL
Well, now I'm intrigued.

KATE
Yeah! Come!
(to Regina)
Your friends and my friends! It'll
be fun!

Regina looks at her and sighs. Kate pouts her lower lip.

REGINA
I would need to get back really
early.

KATE
Oh my gosh, eleven at the latest!

Kate clenches her fists and squeezes her eyes shut. Regina rolls her eyes.

REGINA
Alright. I'll go.

Kate throws her hands up and grins.

KATE
Yes! Thank you! I'll leave now, I
promise.

Regina looks at Paul.

REGINA
You better come too.

PAUL
Definitely! Can't wait.

Kate claps.

KATE
Yay, it's a date!

Regina and Paul glance at each other.

KATE (CONT.)
Alright, I'll text you later. See
ya! Thanks again!

She pulls out her phone, walking off without looking up from it. Regina waits until she's gone. She turns to Paul.

REGINA

And to think she called me passive aggressive. It's like she knew I'd agree to anything to get her away from Dana.

PAUL

Dana and Kate together? Be like an episode of Jersey Shore.

Regina looks across the room again.

Dana is staring in Regina and Paul's direction. Regina quickly looks down at her desk.

PAUL (CONT.)

Or, God forbid, they'd hit it off.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Mrs. Espen moves along the rows of students sitting at their desks. She passes out papers. The class is murmuring amongst themselves.

ESPEN

The first drafts of your reports looked good, guys. But there's always room for improvement!

She reaches Liam and Addie, hands them their papers without a word. She moves on.

Liam glances at his, then turns to Addie.

LIAM

Eighty-nine. I'll take it.

Addie puts her hand over her paper.

ADDIE

Yeah, that's awesome.

Mrs. Espen reaches the front of the class.

ESPEN

Alright, let's talk about where we're gonna go from here.

She begins to teach. Addie can't take her eyes off her paper. It's a 72%.

EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - LATER

Free period. Kids are everywhere. Addie and Renee walk through the grounds.

ADDIE

I can't believe this. I'm not a C student!

RENEE

Mrs. Espen probably hates you. She hates me. She thinks I'm a cheater.

ADDIE

Well do you cheat?

RENEE

Doesn't everybody?

Addie glances sideways at her.

ADDIE

I don't. And Mrs. Espen doesn't hate me. It's not her fault.

RENEE

Well, it's not your fault!

They walk in silence for a few seconds.

RENEE (CONT.)

Maybe it's Liam's fault. You could be distracted by his libido.

ADDIE

His what?!

Addie stops, turns to Renee. Renee opens her mouth, but suddenly Liam approaches them. He gives a timid wave.

LIAM

Hi.

ADDIE

Speak of the devil.

LIAM

What? I was wondering if I could talk to you.

ADDIE

Yeah, one sec.

She turns to Renee, who mouths the word "libido" before walking off. Wide-eyed, Addie turns back to Liam.

LIAM
Renee didn't have to leave.

ADDIE
Trust me, she did. What's up?

LIAM
You have a good Sunday?

ADDIE
Yeah, I hung out with my family.
You?

LIAM
Same.

They stand in silence for a few moments, nodding at each other.

LIAM (CONT.)
I wanted to see when you could hang
out next.

ADDIE
Oh! Well, I don't have much going
on--

LIAM
I got you something too.

He digs deep in his pockets. Addie steps back, starts to fidget.

ADDIE
You really didn't have to get me
anything.

Liam doesn't look up from his pocket.

LIAM
I wanted to.

ADDIE
No, Liam, seriously.

He pulls out a gold chain thinner than a piece of string. He holds it out for her to see. Hanging from it is a flat, gold cutout of a bird.

LIAM
I got it yesterday. See? It's a
sparrow.

Addie shakes her head.

ADDIE
Liam...

He studies her, then lowers the necklace.

LIAM
What?

Addie looks down at the ground.

ADDIE
Nothing. It's awesome.

She looks up. He holds out the necklace. She takes it.

ADDIE (CONT.)
Thank you.

Liam frowns.

LIAM
You're welcome.

Silence. Addie hugs herself.

ADDIE
Anyway, I have to go. I'm gonna
catch up with Renee. But we'll
definitely hang out soon.

LIAM
Right.

Addie waves, then shuffles away. Liam watches her go.

LIAM
(calling)
I'll text you!

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Addie sits slumped over at the table. Beneath her are
photographs and sketches of sparrows, including the one
taken by Liam. She stares off into space.

The front door opens and closes. Footsteps.

REGINA (O.S.)

I'm home!

Addie doesn't move. Regina enters. She sees Addie and goes to the table. She starts to remove her jacket.

REGINA (CONT.)

Well don't you look chipper.

ADDIE

Hi.

Regina tosses her jacket over an empty chair. She goes to the fridge and stares inside. Addie sits up.

REGINA

Your big project's coming up soon,
isn't it?

ADDIE

Mm-hm.

REGINA

Is it ready? Can I see it?

ADDIE

No.

REGINA

Why not?

She turns to Addie with a cup of Jell-O in hand. She removes the lid and dips her finger inside.

ADDIE

I'm still choosing pictures for the
display. And I haven't sketched the
diagram yet.

Regina stands over her, licking Jell-O off her finger and looking at the pictures.

REGINA

You could just print something off
the internet, you know. No
painstaking sketches needed.

Addie looks up at her.

ADDIE

I'd rather not.

REGINA

Why?

ADDIE

I've given it a lot of thought. I realized this awful project is pretty much the one thing I have a hundred percent control over.

Regina sits down next to her.

REGINA

Yeah, and? If I were you, I'd want to make it as easy as possible.

ADDIE

Well, that's the thing. I didn't get to pick my subject, and now it kinda sucks. But I decided I'm going to give the best presentation out of everybody. And that means I have to do my own sketches.

A pause. Regina slurps Jell-O out of the cup.

REGINA

You really think you can get it done by Friday?

ADDIE

It'll be work, but I'm doing it.

Regina stands, tosses the empty Jell-O cup in the trash.

REGINA

Then it's already the best.

She smiles. Addie returns it. Regina approaches the table again, glancing over the pictures. She points at the one of Addie that Liam took.

REGINA (CONT.)

And you should definitely use that.

She pats Addie's shoulder and exits.

Addie stares at the picture.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

A crowd of ten or so people stand outside a brick building. Club rhythms boom out of it. A sign on the wall reads THE STONES: WEDNESDAY AT EIGHT.

Among the crowd stand Regina, Kate and Paul. Regina wears a dark-colored, tight dress. Her hair's down. Her makeup's heavier than usual.

Kate wears a tight, short black skirt, black stilettos, a loose black top, and heavy makeup.

Paul wears a Rolling Stones tee and jeans. The others in the crowd, all men, wear plaid flannels and jeans. Kate puts her arm around one of them.

KATE

I am so pumped for this!

PAUL

Wild Wednesday, right?

Kate laughs. Regina looks at them both and smiles.

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

The floor is lost in a sea of people's heads. A stage at the front of the huge room is being set up with instruments and microphones. Club music blares over speakers. Everyone's dancing.

Kate, holding two glasses of beer over her head, shuffles her way through the crowd. She reaches Regina and Paul.

Paul dances. He's into it. Regina watches, smiles, bobs her head with the rhythm. She sees Kate coming up.

KATE

Here you go!

Regina takes a glass and sips it. Kate leans in close to her.

KATE (CONT.)

I'm really glad you're here!

REGINA

Me too.

A pause. Kate bobs to the music.

KATE
I wanted to ask you something.

Regina looks at her.

REGINA
What's up?

Kate sips at her beer. Paul looks at her and Regina, slows his dancing down a little.

KATE
Are you gonna be free this weekend?

REGINA
Yeah, why?

KATE
I wanna move Addie back home.

Regina says nothing. She stares at the empty stage.

KATE (CONT.)
I think it's about time, don't you?
I'm ready if she is.

No answer.

KATE (CONT.)
Regina?

REGINA
It's fine. I'm sure she'll be happy
to go home.

She takes a long chug of her drink.

KATE
Be honest with me, okay? Do you
think I should bring her back?

Regina looks at her.

REGINA
I don't know. I'm not her mother.

She turns away from Kate, grabbing Paul by the shirt. They move through the crowd together.

KATE
(calling)
Regina! Wait!

PAUL
What's up, Gene? Where are we
going?

REGINA
To get fucked up.

LATER

A band with THE STONES written on their drum kit rocks out on stage. The crowd goes wild, cheering, dancing, throwing their hands up.

Regina and Paul hover at a high table together. Paul has a glass of beer. Regina has a whiskey on the rocks. She gulps it down. Paul watches, laughs.

BAR

Kate turns away from the bar and looks around, a gin and tonic in hand.

Greg appears out of the crowd. He grins.

GREG
Hey, you!

He takes her face in both his hands and plants a kiss on her mouth. She doesn't react.

GREG (CONT.)
So did you get conned into seeing
this shit band too?

KATE
No, I think they're cool.

He glances back at the stage.

GREG
Well, if you change your mind,
maybe wanna get outta here or
something...

Kate smiles at him.

KATE
Probably not.

Greg raises his eyebrows.

KATE (CONT.)

I'm here with some friends.

They lock eyes for a long moment. Greg breaks, smiles.

GREG

Cool, that's cool. Anyway, I got someone waiting too. I better go find her.

KATE

Okay. Good seeing you.

GREG

Bye, Kate.

He wanders back into the crowd. Kate watches him go. Then she turns, looks across the room, and gasps in horror.

On the other side of the room, Regina stands on a chair and chugs down a beer. She's surrounded by people chanting for her. She finishes the drink. They cheer.

Kate fights her way through the throngs of people. She approaches Regina, who's stepping down from the chair.

Paul is beside her. He hands her a shot.

KATE

What the hell, Regina?

Regina notices Kate. She rolls her eyes.

REGINA

Don't tell me you're judging me.

She takes the shot.

KATE

You said you didn't wanna go crazy tonight!

REGINA

What? I'm not looking for a hookup. Or drugs. This is, what, like nothing for you, isn't it? Calm down.

Kate steps back. Her brow furrows. She looks to Paul, who shrugs and smiles at her.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Addie sits alone on the floor. Charts, photographs, poster board, and glue sticks are spread out around her.

She scribbles on a sketch pad, harder and harder, until suddenly the point of her pencil breaks. She throws the pencil across the room, leans her head back and sighs.

A few moments of silence. She looks up at a clock hanging on the wall. It's 11:55. She stares down at her project materials. She sighs.

She stands and exits the living room.

HALLWAY

Addie grabs a jacket and puts it on as she walks out the front door.

INT. CLUB - CONTINUOUS

Regina pushes past people on her way to the bar. She stumbles but quickly recovers. Kate follows, with Paul behind her.

KATE

Is this about Addie? Regina, wait up!

Regina won't turn around.

REGINA

It's not about anything.

KATE

If you're mad at me, I get it, okay? I get it. But don't you think we should talk?

REGINA

Nope.

She moves faster through the crowd.

KATE

Fuck! Wait!

INT. SHIPMAN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It's pitch black. A key scrapes in the lock. The door opens, letting in a little light. Addie steps through and flicks the switch.

The living room is untidy, not a total wreck. There's a huge TV, a sofa, two easy chairs and a coffee table. Unfolded blankets are lying everywhere. The sofa and coffee table are cluttered with magazines, remotes, and DVDs.

Addie surveys the room. She approaches one of the easy chairs. Lying at the base of the chair is a pair of men's slippers.

Addie pauses to look at them, then curls up in the chair. She pulls out her phone. She scrolls through photographs.

She stops at one of her and Liam together, a goofy selfie. She scrolls and stops at one of her, Daniel, Regina and Kate standing close together and smiling. They're at Navy Pier. Daniel wears an oxygen tube.

Addie puts the phone down, curls up even tighter. She wipes away tears.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The street is somewhat crowded. Regina hurries down the sidewalk. Kate runs in front of her and cuts her off.

KATE

Enough!

She puts her hands on Regina's shoulders, forcing her back. Regina stops, glares at Kate, and begins to pace back and forth. She breathes heavy.

REGINA

Did Paul leave?

KATE

Yes, he fucking left, because you're in the middle of a fucking meltdown!

REGINA

Leave me alone.

She tries to push past Kate, who moves into her path again.

KATE

Tell me what the hell's wrong with you! I'll leave you alone, whatever, just tell me what I did to piss you off!

REGINA

It's not about you! It's nothing! I felt like getting hammered, I went a little too hard. It doesn't matter. Sober now. Let's just go.

She picks up the pace again. Kate walks alongside her.

KATE

It's not like you're never gonna see me or Addie again.

Regina turns on her heels, sucks in a breath. Her jaw is clenched.

REGINA

I don't want to talk about it, Kate.

KATE

Well, I do! Why don't you want me to bring Addie home?

Regina won't answer. She stares at the ground. Kate tries to catch her eye.

KATE (CONT.)

What? You think I can't handle it?

REGINA

No.

KATE

You think I'm not a good enough mom without Daniel around? What?

Kate throws her hands up. She waits for an answer.

KATE (CONT.)

Can't you see that I'm trying? I know I'm not a goddamn housewife or anything, but I'm working really hard to make a change!

REGINA

I know.

KATE

Then what is it? Why won't you just be okay with this? Regina--

REGINA

You were the one that was supposed to fall apart!

Pause.

KATE

What's that supposed to mean?

REGINA

You're the one that goes out and gets wasted every night, and disappears all the time, and I'm supposed to be keeping it together! You've never been the one who knows what's best!

A long silence. Kate stares at the ground. Regina walks in circles.

KATE

Okay. I think we should just go home.

REGINA

Fine. Fine.

They start walking again. Kate sniffs and wipes her face with her hand.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Regina and Addie sit at the table together. Addie wears a sundress, shrug, and leggings. Regina wears a long skirt and blouse. She hardly wears any makeup.

Addie eats cereal. Regina holds a cup of tea in her hands. They look at each other, hold it for a moment, then look away.

INT. SHIPMAN HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

A queen-sized bed. Kate lies on her side. She stares at the space beside her.

INT. OFFICE FLOOR - DAY

Regina walks past clusters of desks. Coworkers whisper, stare up at her. Some snicker quietly. She watches them as she walks.

She approaches her cluster. Paul's chair is empty. His desk is full of office supplies and files, but organized. Regina's desk has the same amount of work, but looks a little more chaotic.

Sitting at the third desk is TAMMY, short, plump, late 20's, brunette. She wears a suit jacket and matching skirt. She's on her phone and doesn't notice Regina. She giggles.

Regina steps closer to her. She laughs loudly, obnoxiously. Tammy whirls around, eyes wide.

TAMMY

Oh! Gene, I'm sorry, I didn't think you were coming in today!

Regina goes to her chair.

REGINA

Why wouldn't I be here?

She sits down. Tammy glances at her phone.

TAMMY

Paul said...you might be sick.

Regina looks up, looks around.

REGINA

Paul said? How would he know?

TAMMY

You're right, I'm sorry. Can I get you anything?

Regina flips through some of the papers on her desk.

REGINA

Yeah, if you could get Drew on the line, ask him to come up here. And in a couple minutes you can come with me to check in on Stacy.

TAMMY

Oh, okay. I meant, like, coffee, or an aspirin or something.

REGINA

What? No. I've got a list, and we're gonna plow through it to get ahead on next week, okay?

TAMMY

Okay.

Tammy goes back to her phone. Regina watches her for a moment. She leans towards her.

REGINA

Hey.

TAMMY

Hm?

REGINA

Did something happen? Everybody's acting weird.

Tammy glances around. She clears her throat.

TAMMY

Uh...I don't think...

A COWORKER in khakis, a button-down shirt and tie walks by. He points at Regina.

COWORKER

Hey, Gene, saw what you were up to last night! We need to hang out more!

He gives her the rock-on symbol and walks off.

Regina turns to Tammy, glaring.

TAMMY

Someone spotted you at the clubs last night, that's all.

REGINA

Someone?

TAMMY

And that someone might've been having tons of fun, and they might've wanted to preserve the memory--

REGINA

Show me.

She goes stone-faced. Tammy gulps, scrolls through her phone. She holds it up for Regina to see.

The picture on the phone is taken at a low angle: Regina stands on a chair, giving the finger with one hand and downing a shot with the other.

Tammy pulls her phone away. Regina drops her face into her hands.

TAMMY

I'm sorry, Gene. I shouldn't have been laughing. I just thought you looked really cool.

Regina looks up.

REGINA

Cool? Tammy, I could lose my job!

TAMMY

No you won't! People do this stuff all the time--

REGINA

Not this job!

She leans up, looks across the office floor. There, near the conference room, stand Paul and Dana. They're chatting. They both laugh.

Paul notices Regina. His smile drops.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - EVENING

Kate sits on the bed, leaning against the headboard. She wears her baggy overalls. She finishes the last sips of a bottle of Coke.

Staring off into space, she blows over the top of the bottle. It makes a low whistling sound. She does it repeatedly.

Regina enters, still wearing her shoes and jacket. She carries a large black tote bag. Kate doesn't look at her. She drops the bag.

REGINA

I saw your shoes when I got in.

She kicks off her heels and takes off her jacket. She throws it on the bed next to Kate.

REGINA (CONT.)

What are you doing here?

A pause. Kate turns her head slowly towards Regina.

KATE

I miss Daniel. And then I don't.

Regina goes to the dresser. She opens a drawer.

KATE (CONT.)

I used to think that made me awful. That I was gonna forget him, or something. And going out makes it easy, because I don't have to think about it either way.

Regina pulls out a pair of sweatpants. She throws it on top of the dresser. She slides off her skirt.

KATE (CONT.)

That's how I deal. It's not something to be proud of. It's just me. But when it comes to Addie, I'm there. And not because I have to be, but because I love her more than anything.

Regina puts on the sweatpants. She unhooks her bra from under her blouse.

KATE (CONT.)

You can't tell me that I don't know what's best, Regina. You can't say that to me.

Regina slips her bra out from under her blouse and throws it on the ground.

REGINA

Really? Then why couldn't you be around for the last two weeks?

Kate sits up. She glares.

KATE

It's what was best for all of us,
Regina. You needed Addie here. And
I needed you.

A pause. Regina fights emotion.

REGINA

I know that. But now you're gonna
take her away and it won't matter
anymore.

KATE

What?

REGINA

You're my family. Daniel, and
Addie, and you, and I'm not going
to have any idea what to do when
you're not around!

She fights back tears. Kate stands and approaches her.

KATE

That's not gonna happen.

Regina steps away from her.

REGINA

But you don't know! Look at us,
Kate: I'm a mess, you're a mess. I
thought it'd be my job to pull us
through this but I keep fucking
everything up!

She shoves the dresser. A few knick-knacks sitting on it
topple over. Kate watches her for a moment.

KATE

Every family's got problems.

Regina turns to look at her.

KATE (CONT.)

I know the last couple weeks have
been hard. I mean, I saw what they
did to you last night.

Regina smiles. She shakes her head.

KATE (CONT.)

But you're right. You do have a
job. You have a part in our family.

(MORE)

KATE (CONT.)
And I really don't wanna do it
without you.

A pause. Regina rubs her face.

REGINA
Are you still taking Addie home?

KATE
Yeah. When she's ready.

Regina sighs.

REGINA
We'll be here Saturday. I'll help
you pack.

Kate nods. She goes to Regina. They embrace.

REGINA (CONT.)
And unlike you, I'll keep my word.
Bitch.

Kate laughs.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Mrs. Espen stands at the front of the class. She looks at a clipboard.

Students sit with posterboards, papers, and models of animals at their desks.

ESPEN
Okay, thank you Robbie, for that
killer presentation on the Eastern
Cottontail. Next up is...Addie
Shipman!

Addie takes in a deep breath and stands. She collects her posterboard and a pile of index cards. She glances at Liam. He's staring down at his desk.

Addie walks to the front of the class.

INT. OFFICE FLOOR - DAY

Regina sits at her desk, typing away on her laptop. Paul sits across from her, staring at her. Tammy glances between the two of them.

Paul leans towards Regina.

PAUL

Gene--

Dana approaches the cluster. She looks at Regina.

DANA

Can I see you in the conference room, Gene? Just for a couple minutes.

She exits. Regina glares at Paul, closes her laptop and follows Dana.

Paul and Tammy watch her go.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Addie's presentation is set up on a desk in front of the class. It is a huge posterboard filled with photographs of sparrows, including the one with Addie in it.

Liam sees the photograph.

In the center of the posterboard is a hand-drawn diagram of a sparrow. It's just about perfect.

Addie faces the class.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dana sits at the huge conference table. Regina slowly opens the door and steps inside. She stands at attention.

Dana looks up and sees her.

DANA

Well, Gene, we've certainly got a lot to talk about.

Regina stands still.

ADDIE (V.O.)

The sparrow doesn't ask for a lot of attention. It doesn't need flashy colors or an exceptional call to thrive.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

Kate wears a hard hat, her overalls, a utility belt and goggles. She hurls a sledgehammer at a wall. A cloud of dust surrounds her.

ADDIE (V.O.)

In fact, the sparrow is a lot stronger than it looks.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Addie gestures at the posterboard.

ADDIE (CONT.)

According to National Geographic, the sparrow flourishes in both large cities and remote areas.

She catches Liam's eye. He's smiling at her. She smiles back.

ADDIE (CONT.)

It will also aggressively defend its nest, sometimes causing problems in the local ecosystem to do so. Now we know who to blame if there's a drought in Chicago.

The class chuckles.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - CONTINUOUS

Kate lands a final blow with the sledgehammer. A wall comes crashing down. She pulls down her goggles and looks around.

She stands on a pile of wreckage. She's joined by a group of construction workers. She grins and high-fives one of them.

ADDIE (V.O.)

At the end of the day, they're smart, they're sociable...

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Regina takes a seat across from Dana.

ADDIE (V.O.)
...and they really know how to roll
with the punches.

Dana leans forward, folding her hands on the table.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Addie holds up her diagram.

ADDIE (CONT.)
So I did this sketch to show a
basic anatomy, and I have a few
others if you guys want to see.

The class watches her intently. Liam's smiling.

ADDIE (CONT.)
Other than that, I'm just about
done. Thanks!

The class claps enthusiastically. Liam whoops. Mrs. Espen stands. She flips through a few sheets of paper.

ESPEN
Addie, you drew these?

Addie nods and begins collecting her presentation materials.

ESPEN (CONT.)
These are amazing! Thank you so
much, this was really well done.

Addie grins. She heads back to her seat.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DANA
Now, I'm gonna be honest with you
here. Lately you seem a little
scattered, a little disorganized.

Regina nods. She looks down at the table.

DANA (CONT.)
And Paul, well, he seems to be on
top of things.

Silence. Dana watches Regina.

DANA (CONT.)

That brings me to the unfortunate little incident from yesterday.

REGINA

The picture?

Dana nods.

DANA

I saw it. But that's not my business. What I'm wondering is, do you know who sent that picture out?

REGINA

Yes.

Dana leans forward. Regina says nothing.

DANA

Well, would you care to share?

Regina sighs and looks Dana in the eye.

REGINA

If it's all the same to you, I'd rather not say.

DANA

Why?

REGINA

I'm going to handle it myself. I don't need anyone else to do it for me.

Dana leans back. She smiles.

DANA

And that's why you've got the job.

Regina frowns.

REGINA

Are you serious?

Dana nods her head.

DANA

You think I don't know it was Paul? He's always been a kiss-ass, you

(MORE)

DANA
 know that. He would've done
 anything to get this job. But I
 don't need someone who thinks
 they're still in high school.

REGINA
 You're kidding. Did you just
 Willy-Wonka me?

Dana laughs.

DANA
 Yeah, I guess so. The truth is,
 you've been cranking out the same
 work Paul has, only you just lost
 someone close to you. I'd say
 that's a huge disadvantage,
 wouldn't you?

REGINA
 I suppose.

DANA
 It is. Right now, you're sorting
 stuff out at home, but when
 everything's settled--just imagine
 how much you're gonna blow everyone
 away.

Regina smiles. She stands.

REGINA
 I can't thank you enough.

DANA
 You earned it.

They shake hands. Dana heads for the door.

DANA (CONT.)
 Just try not to get plastered on
 weeknights from now on.

Regina laughs. Dana exits.

EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - DAY

Addie leans against the school. She has her phone to her
 ear.

Students board a line of buses in the parking lot, some
 fifty feet away.

ADDIE

Hey, mom, it's me. I was just calling to chat, I guess. You don't have to call me back. See you tonight!

She puts her phone away. Liam rounds the corner, sees her and stops.

LIAM

Addie! Hey! I didn't think I'd see you!

ADDIE

Hi, Liam.

She smiles.

LIAM

I thought your project was the best, you know.

ADDIE

Really? Nah, it was kinda boring, wasn't it?

LIAM

No! Man, those sketches? Those were awesome!

Addie curls her hair behind her ear.

ADDIE

Thank you.

A pause. They both fidget.

ADDIE (CONT.)

Hey, can I talk to you about something?

LIAM

Yeah, definitely.

They walk around the corner, near the school's entrance. A bench sits outside. They take a seat.

ADDIE

So, you know how I was absent a couple weeks ago?

LIAM
Of course.

ADDIE
Of course?

Liam looks at the ground.

LIAM
Well, I mean, when you were gone--I
guess I kinda realized how much I
liked you.

ADDIE
Oh.

He runs a hand through his hair.

ADDIE
Well, I think you should know why I
wasn't here.

LIAM
Okay.

She takes in a breath.

ADDIE
My dad died.

A pause. Liam looks stunned.

LIAM
I'm so sorry.

Addie looks away.

ADDIE
He met my mom when they were
fourteen. He was sick for a few
months, and then...

She shakes her head. Liam puts his arm around her. She takes his hand.

ADDIE (CONT.)
Anyway, I guess I shouldn't have
freaked out on you.

LIAM
Are you kidding? Freak out on me
whenever you want.

Addie laughs.

ADDIE

I think I was just scared of ending up like...I don't know. Whatever it was, I'm good now. Promise.

LIAM

I'm glad. I was afraid we just came here to break up.

Addie smiles. She hugs him.

ADDIE

I'm not breaking up with you. Not while the drive-in's still playing *Ghost*.

INT. SHIPMAN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Addie and Kate burst through the front door, each holding stuffed duffel bags.

Addie drops hers on the sofa and sits beside it. Kate tosses hers onto an easy chair and faces Addie.

KATE

Ready for the second trip?

ADDIE

I have an idea. Let's just burn the rest of my clothes.

Kate sits down beside her.

KATE

C'mon, lazy. We'll be done before you know it.

ADDIE

I'm not lazy, I'm telling you! I physically cannot lift any more!

Kate nudges her.

KATE

Weakling. Just keep thinking of pizza with Aunt Regina later.

Addie leans back, lays a hand on her stomach.

ADDIE

I need it now.

Kate smile. A pause.

KATE
Are you glad to be coming back?

Addie leans up and looks at her.

ADDIE
Yeah. Yeah, mom, why?

KATE
I don't know, I just really wanna
make sure everything's good.

Addie nods. She doesn't answer.

KATE (CONT.)
You kinda thought I was
bullshitting you, huh?

Addie turns to Kate and frowns.

ADDIE
What?

KATE
The past couple weeks. Whenever we
talked. That's how I felt, anyway,
like I just kept bullshitting you.

ADDIE
Mom!

KATE
What? I'm telling you now, that
won't happen anymore. Everything's
gonna be different.

ADDIE
Thanks, Captain Obvious.

KATE
Okay, well, it's not gonna be bad,
is what I'm saying! Just different.

ADDIE
That I can live with.

She hugs Kate. Kate hesitates, then hugs her back with full
force.

KATE
Also, I'm gonna ground you if you
and Regina drink wine without me.

ADDIE
(muffled)
It was one time!

INT. REGINA'S OFFICE - DAY

A large, spacious office, with several black leather chairs, a few potted plants. The entire back wall is a window overlooking the city skyline.

Regina sits at a wide, mahogany desk, on which her nameplate is displayed prominently. She wears a black suitjacket and matching skirt. Her hair is down.

Paul opens the door and slowly enters. He holds a large manilla folder.

PAUL
Hi, Gene. I have the layout all set, if you want to review it.

He approaches the desk. She takes the folder from him.

PAUL (CONT.)
So, do you need anything else?

Regina flips through the file.

REGINA
Nope.

Silence. Paul looks at her. She doesn't look up.

PAUL
Can I say something about what happened last week?

REGINA
I don't see why not.

PAUL
Well, I just...I'm really sorry. I'm shit. I'm a pile of trash. And I never should've done it.

REGINA
No, you shouldn't have.

PAUL
For what it's worth, you're a way better boss than Dana so far.

REGINA

Thanks.

A silence. Paul rocks on his heels.

PAUL

So...is there the tiniest
sliver-slice of a chance that we
can be friends again?

REGINA

Oh, sure there is. I just need to
clear up one thing.

PAUL

What? Yeah, anything!

She pulls out her phone, scrolls for a few seconds. She holds it out for him.

REGINA

You don't mind if I show this to
everyone in the office, do you?

Paul leans in to see the picture. It shows him, wearing his Rolling Stones shirt, only it's lifted up to expose his nipples. He's licking one and holding a beer.

Paul looks at Regina.

PAUL

That's...great. Yeah, you sure can.

Regina smiles. She puts her phone away.

REGINA

Don't worry. I think I'll save it
for a rainy day. See you, Paul.

PAUL

See you, Regina.

He exits. Regina writes in a day planner for a few seconds. Her desk phone rings. She answers.

REGINA

Regina Shipman.

INT. CAR - DAY

Kate drives, her phone up to one ear. Addie sits in the passenger seat. Kate's grinning.

KATE
Listen to you!
(imitating)
Regina Shipman.
(normal voice)
Oh my God, I love it.

INTERCUT KATE/REGINA

REGINA
Hey, you. Pick up Addie from school yet?

KATE
Yep, I got her right here with me.

Addie leans across the car.

ADDIE
Hi, Aunt Regina!

REGINA
Hi, Addie. So what are we feeling tonight, Chinese? Indian?

KATE
Actually, I was thinking I would cook.

REGINA
Ew.

KATE
Shut up! Addie found this really cute recipe online for a taco pie. Like, it's a pie, but with taco stuff.

REGINA
And I reiterate: ew.

KATE
Don't knock it til you try it!

REGINA
Alright. Whatever you say. I'll be over in an hour.

KATE
Sounds good, lady! Bye!

REGINA
Bye!

Regina hangs up. She's smiling. She reclines in her chair,
twists towards the window. She looks out at the city.

FADE TO BLACK

END SCRIPT