

MEDIUM

"From Here To Fraternity"

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"FROM HERE TO FRATERNITY"

FADE IN:

INT. DUBOIS HOUSE - ALLISON AND JOE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ALLISON lies awake as JOE sleeps next to her. She stares at the ceiling. Her VOICEOVER begins as she drifts off.

ALLISON (V.O.)

Stress. It's something we all have to endure.

(and then)

It's what keeps us up at night before we give in to exhaustion.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

ARIEL sits at a desk, her entire class taking a test. She taps her pencil against the exam sheet, rubs her acne-dotted temples.

ALLISON (V.O.)

It's what causes us to break out right before that big exam...

INT. ANOTHER CLASSROOM

BRIDGETTE recites a poem in front of her class. She loses her place in mid-verse, stumbles over her words. Fearful eyes dart back and forth.

ALLISON (V.O.)

...or get tongue-tied when we need to find our voice...

INT. FIRST GRADE CLASSROOM

MARIE removes a banana from her lunch box. ANOTHER KID grabs the fruit -- she and Marie engage in a tug-of-war.

ALLISON (V.O.)

...or make enemies with those who should be our friends.

INT. OFFICE

Joe sits at his desk, shuffles through paperwork. He searches for a document, but cannot find it. Scatters his papers across the desk, exasperated.

ALLISON (V.O.)  
We confront anxiety every day.  
Sometimes we just want to drop  
everything, let it all go.

EXT. CLIFF - DAY

EZRA BERMAN, 19, Caucasian -- slender, brunet, a large bob  
of curly hair -- stands at the edge of a cliff.

ALLISON (V.O.)  
And when our stress pushes us to the  
edge, what price will we pay?

He looks down, spreads out his arms. Then, allows himself  
to drop into a deep canyon.

ALLISON (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Or what price will be paid by those  
closest to us...?

From above, Ezra's body can be seen plummeting...

RESUME BEDROOM

Allison's eyes pop open.

SHOCK CUT TO:

ALLISON AND JOE'S BED

She sits up. Looks over, sees Joe's spot in the bed empty.

The toilet FLUSHES. Joe trudges out of their bathroom,  
rubs his neck.

JOE  
That Anderson account is killing me.

He plops down next to Allison.

JOE (CONT'D)  
Man, I'm so stressed.

Allison leans her head back, stares up at the ceiling  
again.

TITLE SEQUENCE

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. DUBOIS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Ariel -- not a trace of acne on her face -- pours orange juice into a glass. A CAMERA FLASHES. She squints.

ARIEL

Stop that.

Bridgette peers at her sister from behind a Polaroid camera, which shoots out a photo.

BRIDGETTE

Dad says practice makes perfect.

ARIEL

Then go take Dad's picture.

FROM THE LIVING ROOM

Allison lines Marie's inseam with a tape measure.

ALLISON

Bridgette, stop bugging your sister.

BRIDGETTE

Dad told me not to give up on it.

ALLISON

Try taking some still-lives.

BRIDGETTE

What's a "still-life?"

ARIEL

It's an object that doesn't move. In other words -- NOT A PERSON.

BRIDGETTE

Aw, that's no fun. That's boring.

Allison rolls the tape measure. To Marie:

ALLISON

Go finish your cereal, sweetie.

MARIE

What about my costume?

ALLISON

I've already bought the fabric. You are going to be the cutest Martha Washington your school has ever seen.

Marie joins her sisters. Joe enters from the hallway. Bridgette snaps another Polaroid of Ariel, who flinches.

JOE

Mornin', my lovely ladies!

ARIEL

Knock it off, Bridgette!

JOE

Aw, is somebody camera shy?

Ariel gives her dad a dirty look.

BRIDGETTE

Dad, where does the picture come from? The camera just spits it out.

JOE

Well, inside that camera there's a little sheet of material. And when its crystals absorb light, they become polarized and push that sheet forward.

Bridgette looks confused. Marie plays with silverware as Ariel chugs down juice. The kitchen phone RINGS.

ALLISON

(picks up phone)

DuBois residence.

INT. DEVALOS'S OFFICE

DEVALOS sits at his desk, speaks into the other end.

DEVALOS

Allison. Turn on the TV. Channel Six.

Allison presses down on the clicker.

INSERT NEWSCAST ON TELEVISION SET

FOOTAGE of a body bag gurney being rolled down a driveway.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

...who was found dead in his bedroom late Sunday afternoon. Authorities have no new leads...

## INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

Allison reacts to the newscast.

ALLISON  
Homicide?

DEVALOS  
We're waiting for the autopsy report.

## INSERT NEWSCAST

The female NEWS ANCHOR reports from a desk, a still photograph of Ezra on the screen to her left.

NEWS ANCHOR  
The victim has been identified as nineteen-year-old Ezra Berman, an English major at Papago State College.

## RESUME PHONE CONVERSATION

ALLISON  
I'll be there as soon as I drop off --

JOE  
I've got them, Al.

DEVALOS  
Send Joe my gratitude.

ALLISON  
I'll do that. See you in an hour.

## END PHONE CONVERSATION

Joe's gaze lingers on the TV news report.

JOE  
Poor kid.

ARIEL  
Hey, Mom -- can my friend Heather come over after school?

ALLISON  
Heather... have I met her?

ARIEL  
We have Advanced Chemistry together. She's in my lab group. She knows everything about the Periodic Table.

ALLISON

You actually sound excited about it.

ARIEL

Well, ever since Devin moved away, I don't have anyone to study with. I've only been getting B's on the quizzes.

JOE

Sounds like this mysterious Heather might be a good influence.

To all three girls:

JOE (CONT'D)

Alright, get ready to move it on out...

The girls start to pack up. Bridgette begins to snap photos of Marie, who giggles. Joe snatches the camera.

BRIDGETTE

Aw, come on.

JOE

Sorry, Ms. DeMille. After school.

Joe herds the kids out the door, shoots Allison a concerned look. Allison tries to smile, sips coffee.

INT. BERMAN RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - TWO HOURS LATER

Allison, Devalos, and SCANLON sit on immaculate furniture.

They face GEORGE BERMAN -- mid-forties, Caucasian, serious, goateed with curly, close-cropped hair -- and his wife, FRAN -- mid-forties, Caucasian, brunette, and petite. Both of the Bermans frown, fail to make eye contact.

DEVALOS

Mr. And Mrs. Berman, again, we're deeply sorry for your loss.

GEORGE

Thank you.

FRAN

He was way too young. We shouldn't have --

George clasps her knee, presses his fingers against it.

SCANLON

You shouldn't have what?

FRAN

Maybe if we'd just given him a little more freedom. He wouldn't have been afraid to come to us.

ALLISON

Your son had problems?

GEORGE

Ezra was diagnosed with Panic Disorder. Barely any friends, no girlfriend.

FRAN

He took Menadine.

ALLISON

An antidepressant?

Fran nods, still choked up.

FRAN

Ezra never functioned well in school. He was always picked on by the other kids. For being... different.

GEORGE

When he got into Papago State, we came to an understanding. We'd pay for his tuition if he lived at home.

ALLISON

You didn't want him in a dorm.

FRAN

He couldn't have dealt with it.

GEORGE

It's bad enough he got mixed up with the frat.

SCANLON

Which one was that?

GEORGE

Sigma-something. He began staying out late, going to their damn parties.

DEVALOS

So he was pledging the college's Greek system. And you had your doubts.

FRAN

He kept talking about this...  
Initiation.

FRAN (CONT'D)

At the end of the semester. He seemed so... excited.

(and then)

I'd never seen him passionate about anything. Except for his writing.

SCANLON

He was an English major, correct?

FRAN

Creative writing. His stories... the ones he let us read... he had a beautiful way with words. Like a world-famous author would.

SCANLON

And on the night Ezra died. Where was your family?

GEORGE

Fran and I had orchestra tickets. Ezra's sisters were at their Nanna's.

SCANLON

You found Ezra in his room?

Fran nods, looks down as she holds back tears.

ALLISON

Can I see it? Ezra's bedroom, I mean.

GEORGE

Who are you, again?

DEVALOS

As I explained on the phone, you may have heard that Mrs. DuBois has certain... abilities. If she sees where your son spent his time, she might be able to determine how he died.

GEORGE

We know how he died. He was shooting up. They probably gave it to him.

FRAN

(to Allison)

Can you... speak with Ezra?

George gives Fran a hardened stare, but she rises.

INT. EZRA'S BEDROOM - THREE MINUTES LATER

Fran leads Allison and Scanlon into an ocean of clutter. Books, DVDs, family photos, and RHO SIGMA PSI paraphernalia cover the carpet, bed, and desk.

FRAN

Take as much time as you need. Just try to keep everything the way it is.  
(and then)  
I'm not ready to... clean out...

ALLISON

We understand.

Fran exits. Allison examines Ezra's bookshelf: Stephen King, Louisa May Alcott, Jane Austen, William Shakespeare.

SCANLON

Medical examiner's initial reports showed trauma to his skull.  
(and then)  
Probably disorientation from an overdose... lost his balance, cracked his head, and collapsed.

ALLISON

Looks like he loved the classics.

SCANLON

Allison, don't touch anything. We already swept for prints, but still...

Allison notices a copy of the Hebrew Bible, lying in one corner of the floor. She stares across the room, sees...

Ezra, wearing a T-shirt with the Greek letters of RHO SIGMA PSI. He gives Allison a pained expression.

EZRA

You want to know who did this to me?

Allison gives him a subtle nod. A side-glance at Scanlon.

EZRA (CONT'D)

Talk to the guys.

ALLISON

You mean your brothers?

EZRA

They weren't my brothers yet. And now they never will be.

SCANLON

Allison?

Allison looks at him, then veers her head back at Ezra -- only to find he's disappeared.

ALLISON

He was here, just now. Ezra.

SCANLON

You mean -- ?

ALLISON

-- his spirit.

She glances up at the fraternity chapter's COMPOSITE PHOTO.

SCANLON

There were no signs of forced entry.

Ezra's spirit APPEARS again. He looks straight at Allison, anger in his eyes.

EZRA

*Panta pistos.*

FLASH:

A rosy-tinted, translucent MEDALLION falls to the carpet, SMASHES into many pieces.

END FLASH

Allison snaps out of it. She asks Ezra:

ALLISON

What does that mean?

SCANLON

It means --

Allison glances at Scanlon, then back to where Ezra stood -- he's gone again.

SCANLON (CONT'D)

-- that if someone brought drugs to him, it was probably someone he knew.

Allison pushes past him, exits.

INT. THE BERMANS' LIVING ROOM - TEN MINUTES LATER

Fran ushers Ezra's TWO YOUNGER SISTERS into their bedroom. George talks with Allison, Devalos, and Scanlon.

GEORGE

As a kid, his focus was all over the place. He never did his bar mitzvah. Never brought friends over.

(and then)

Except for his fraternity guys. I think they wanted to use our home for more parties.

DEVALOS

Did they know about your son's condition?

GEORGE

You'd have to ask them.

ALLISON

Mr. Berman, did Ezra own any kind of a... medallion?

GEORGE

What?

ALLISON

Round, smooth. Sort of pinkish in color. Quartz, maybe?

GEORGE

I never saw anything like that. This is absurd -- why are you forcing us to relive this? We should have buried him already.

(and then)

And I don't believe in psychics, Mrs. DuBois.

He holds his censorious stare on her. Allison purses her lips, raises her eyebrows.

INT. DUBOIS HOUSE - ARIEL'S BEDROOM - DUSK

Ariel and HEATHER ROTH -- 17, a pretty, fair-skinned brunette -- lounge around with their books open.

ARIEL

I still don't get how you balanced that equation.

HEATHER

It's simple. You did the reactant side the right way. So now just multiply the product side by two...

Ariel scribbles quickly, eyes lighting up.

ARIEL

Awesome!

Ariel suddenly flinches, as ANOTHER FLASH blinds her. Bridgette stands there with her camera.

BRIDGETTE

Say stinky cheese!

ARIEL

Bridgette, you are so dead!

Ariel grabs ahold of the camera, but Bridgette resists. Heather watches, holds back a chuckle.

BRIDGETTE

Hey, let go!

ARIEL

I'm going to smash that piece of junk!

HALLWAY - SAME

Allison emerges from the foyer.

BRIDGETTE (O.C.)

You can't do that! That's vandalism.

ARIEL (O.C.)

Wanna bet?

ALLISON

Girls, what's going on?

BRIDGETTE (O.C.)

I said let go!

Allison appears in Ariel's doorway. The girls stop.

ARIEL

Mom, Bridgette won't leave us alone. She keeps taking pictures of us.

BRIDGETTE

Dad told me to go work on close-ups.

ARIEL

That's because he wanted you to leave him alone.

ALLISON

Bridge, not everyone likes having their picture taken. No more until you finish your homework, okay?

Bridgette pouts, stomps away down the hall.

                          ARIEL  
Mom, this is Heather.

                          HEATHER  
Hi, Mrs. DuBois.

                          ALLISON  
Nice to meet you, Heather. Would you  
like to stay for dinner?

Allison's cell phone RINGS. Ariel gives Heather a look of encouragement, as Allison checks her caller ID.

                          HEATHER  
Sure. That'd be great.

                          ALLISON  
                          (on phone)  
Lee?

INT. SCANLON'S OFFICE

Scanlon sits at his desk from the other end of the phone.

                          SCANLON  
The gentlemen of Rho Sigma Psi are  
making themselves available to us.  
Spoke to Ian Rodriguez, their chapter  
president. Tomorrow morning at ten.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

                          ALLISON  
That'll work. Anything else to go on?

                          SCANLON  
The final coroner's report still isn't  
out. I'll keep you posted.

                          ALLISON  
Thanks, Lee.

END INTERCUT

Allison hangs up, turns her attention back to the girls.

                          ALLISON (CONT'D)  
Heather, do you like pot roast?

                          HEATHER  
I... try to keep my food kosher.

ALLISON

Well, good thing I make a mean Eggplant  
Parmesan.

Heather laughs. Allison begins to walk away down the hall.

HEATHER (O.C.)

Your mom's really cool, Ariel.

ARIEL (O.C.)

Yeah, sometimes.

Allison barely holds back a smile.

INT. ALLISON AND JOE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Allison lays in bed, the night lamp on. Joe paces in and out between the bathroom and master bedroom, brushes teeth.

ALLISON

He's still lingering in his bedroom.  
Told me to talk to his frat brothers.

JOE

Maybe one bad apple had it in for him?

ALLISON

Ezra would've had to have let the  
killer inside. But he didn't tell me  
who it was.

(and then)

He just chanted something in what  
sounded like Greek.

JOE

Ah, those Animal House days of my  
youth. Wild times.

He ducks back into the bathroom to spit.

ALLISON

Never a dull moment, huh?

JOE (O.C.)

The ragers. The mixers. Sorority car  
washes... intramurals... streaking.

ALLISON

But it doesn't make any sense. If he  
had social anxiety, you'd think a frat  
would be the last place he'd turn to.

Joe re-emerges.

JOE

Fraternities aren't just about keggers and getting laid, Al. It's like a built-in family. Constantly challenging yourself to improve.

ALLISON

So they do things like philanthropy? Community service?

JOE

Of course.

He crawls into bed next to Allison.

JOE (CONT'D)

Junior year, my chapter sponsored a kissing booth to raise money for cystic fibrosis.

ALLISON

Oh, really?

JOE

Those sorority chicks were damn good kissers.

Allison removes a pillow from under her head, thwaps him.

ALLISON

And then there was the medallion that got smashed. In my vision.

JOE

Might have been a pledge task. Something he had to hold onto, then pass off to one of his pledge brothers.

ALLISON

Hopefully I'll get some answers tomorrow.

She turns away from Joe, clicks off the night lamp.

JOE

You know you're the best kisser I've ever had.

As she drifts off, woozy...

ALLISON

Yeah, thanks for the vote of confidence.

INT. PANTHEON-LIKE TEMPLE - NIGHT

YOUNG MEN wear white togas and laurel leaves, assembled in a cluster. Sculpted panthers border an illuminated altar.

Ezra stands in the center, an ocean blue toga draped around one shoulder. A blindfold covers his eyes.

A SLENDER GUY -- Caucasian, 21, with longish blond hair -- stands behind him, hands clutching Ezra's tense shoulder.

SLENDER GUY

(whispers)

Dude, you're going to do great.

EZRA

(whispers back)

Thank you, sir.

An authoritative VOICE:

VOICE

Pledge Ezra, prepare for your branding.

Ezra grits his teeth, allows TWO BROTHERS to undo his toga strap. As they slide it down, off Ezra's shoulder...

VOICE (CONT'D)

Always remember how privileged you are to become a Rho Sig. *Panta pistos.*

...the voice is revealed to belong to a good-looking LATINO GUY, 22, lanky with voluminous hair. He holds a branding iron, which SIZZLES.

CEREMONY LEADER

Pledge Ezra passes Pre-Initiation. By one vote.

EZRA

It's an honor, sir.

CEREMONY LEADER

Of course it is.

TWO MORE GUYS approach Ezra from behind. One of them, a RUGGED-LOOKING HUNK, 21, slender with a buzzcut, dumps a massive bucket of red gunk over Ezra's head.

BUZZCUT GUY

Congratulations, brother. Tonight, you go first class.

The other guy, a REDHEADED DUDE, 20, athletic with freckles on his face, holds Ezra in place as the pledge struggles. "Blood" continues to stream down Ezra's face and chest.

REDHEADED GUY

With pride we wear the red and white.

As the guys laugh, Ezra puts his hands to his face. Wipes some of the blood away, then begins to run.

A foot trips Ezra. He falls to his knees. Proceeds to crawl along the blood-smearred floor, his naked body mopping up excess gunk.

He turns to stare up at the hooting, snickering dudes. Staggers to his feet, locks his stare onto them, and...

A SHROUD OF ELECTRICITY envelopes the brother with the buzzcut, who yelps -- collapsing to the floor.

Another vicious glare from Ezra, and...

The redheaded brother GOES UP IN FLAMES -- then COMBUSTS.

Remaining brothers SHOUT in fear, scatter.

Ezra slowly smiles, then begins to cackle hysterically.

FLAMES shoot through the temple's interior, set many of the guys ablaze. ELECTRICAL SHOCKS -- seemingly out of nowhere -- tackle and pummel other young guys to the ground.

EZRA

Tonight, you go blood red.

Only the blond, slender guy remains untouched by the havoc. He stares back -- solemn, compassionate -- at Ezra, who watches the place BURN.

A BRUNETTE WOMAN -- mid-forties, long hair, wearing a red turtleneck with black leggings -- appears next to the blond guy. She puts her arm around him, as they both watch Ezra.

INT. ALLISON AND JOE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Allison's eyes pop open. She gasps, sits bolt upright in bed, as we...

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. DUBOIS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Allison talks on the phone, pours juice into Marie's glass. Bridgette SNAPS PHOTOS of an irritated Ariel, who tries to eat pancakes.

ALLISON

(on phone)

I saw them, Mr. District Attorney.  
Hazing him.

BRIDGETTE

What's "hazing?"

ARIEL

It's what's going to happen if you  
don't get that camera out of my face!

ALLISON

Girls!

INT. DEVALOS' OFFICE

Devalos sits at his desk on the other end of the phone.

DEVALOS

I'm sorry, Allison. But until we find  
physical evidence linking any of the  
Rho Sigmas to Ezra's death --

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

ALLISON

I know, I know. No search warrant.

She sticks out a warning finger at Ariel and Bridgette.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

It's just hard... I could feel his  
humiliation. How... violated he felt.

DEVALOS

What you saw in your dreams might not  
have happened exactly that way, right?

ALLISON

Don't remind me.

DEVALOS

See what you and Detective Scanlon can find out. Get back to me afterward.

ALLISON

I will.

END INTERCUT

Allison hangs up the phone, gives Bridgette a stern look.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Now you promised you'll only photograph someone if they're okay with it.

BRIDGETTE

(pouts)

Yes, Mommy.

ARIEL

Hey Mom, I invited Heather over again.

ALLISON

No problem. She seems nice.

BRIDGETTE

Yeah, she lets me take her picture.

Ariel and Bridgette make faces at each other. Then Ariel turns back to Allison.

ARIEL

I'm going to ace our quiz today.

Joe enters the kitchen upon Ariel's bright prediction.

JOE

Woohoo! Go Chemistry!

(leans down, kisses Marie)

Okay, Daddy's taking everyone to school again. Mommy's got a date with some fraternity boys.

Joe shoots Allison a playful face, which she promptly mocks. The girls finish off their juice, begin to pack up.

ALLISON

Sounds like Daddy's jealous.

JOE

Try not to let them get fresh with you.

ALLISON

Hardy-har-har.

BRIDGETTE

What does it mean to "get fresh?"

ARIEL

You'll probably never find out.

Bridgette sticks her tongue out at Ariel as they make a beeline for the door. Allison shakes her head.

EXT. RHO SIGMA PSI HOUSE - THREE HOURS LATER

Allison and Scanlon stand in front of the ornate Victorian-style fraternity house. The Greek letters of RHO, SIGMA, and PSI hang above the front porch.

SCANLON

Ready?

ALLISON

Can't wait.

FRONT PORCH - MOMENTS LATER

Scanlon raps on the door-knocker -- which is shaped like a panther head. The Latino ceremony leader, from Allison's previous dream, dressed casually, answers the door.

LATINO GUY

You're with the police?

FLASH:

He holds the branding iron, which SIZZLES -- inches away from Ezra's bare chest.

END FLASH

Allison eyes the young man with an uneasy gaze.

SCANLON

Ian Rodriguez? I'm Detective Scanlon; this is Mrs. DuBois.

IAN

Come in.

He moves aside. Allison and Scanlon enter.

HALLWAY

Ian leads them past walls lined with FRAMED COMPOSITES.

IAN

Ezra was shy when I first met him. But he came out of his shell.

SCANLON

How so?

IAN

Once you got him loosened up, he could be a really fun guy.

ALLISON

And the branding?

Ian stops short, glares at her. Scanlon reacts.

IAN

What?

ALLISON

The ceremony where you branded a mark on Ezra's chest. How did he feel?

IAN

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

He escorts them into:

A COMMON ROOM

Beer bottles, trash, and days-old pizza boxes are scattered across old furniture. More FRAMED FRATERNITY COMPOSITES hang against the walls. RANDOM GUYS lounge around.

IAN

This is Eric, Carl, Danny G., Danny T., Ricardo --

Allison sees a redheaded dude and a brother with a buzzcut smacking paddles on opposite sides of a ping-pong table.

FLASHES:

Buzzcut Guy, electrocuted. Redheaded Guy, up in flames.

END FLASHES

Allison narrows her eyes at them.

IAN

-- Quinn and Sage, going for the gold over there.

SCANLON  
We'll need to conduct private  
interviews.

The ping-pong ball bounces off the table, onto the floor.

INT. BEDROOM - ONE HOUR LATER

Allison and Scanlon sit across from Sage, the redheaded  
guy. Notes in front of them.

SCANLON  
When did you find out Ezra had Panic  
Disorder?

SAGE  
Not until, like, two days ago.

SCANLON  
Ian said you were Ezra's Big Brother.

SAGE  
We didn't really have much in common.  
So they reassigned him to Kyle.

ALLISON  
And how did you feel about that?

SAGE  
Didn't care. I've had plenty of  
Littles. We wanted to do what was best  
for Ezra.

ALLISON  
So you didn't feel rejected by him?  
Resentment... fire in your stomach?

Sage flinches. Scanlon gives Allison a Look.

SAGE  
Um, no.

He looks down, then back up at them.

SAME BEDROOM - HALF AN HOUR LATER

Allison and Sage interview Quinn, the guy with the buzzcut.

QUINN  
He always seemed kind of worried about  
what we thought of him. I knew he  
was... different.

SCANLON

But you weren't aware Ezra was prone to panic attacks?

QUINN

I just assumed he was uptight. But most of the guys liked him.

ALLISON

And you didn't?

QUINN

He was an okay kid. Not someone who I'd hang out with.

ALLISON

Any friction in your friendship? Tension?... electricity?

QUINN

What?

SCANLON

Never mind.

Scanlon gives Allison another Look.

SAME BEDROOM - HALF AN HOUR LATER

The long-haired blond guy from Allison's dream sits across from her and Scanlon.

SCANLON

So Kyle, you were close to Ezra?

KYLE

I was his Big.

ALLISON

He didn't get along with his original Big Brother?

KYLE

Sage can be a jerk sometimes. He made fun of Ezra.

SCANLON

So all of the guys did know?

KYLE

Yeah, after Quinn found out. Before that, I was the only one he'd told.

(and then)

I guess Quinn overheard us.

ALLISON  
So he's a jerk too?

Kyle pauses, hesitates.

KYLE  
He's had problems in his life.

Allison and Scanlon exchange glances.

INT. FOYER - TWO HOURS LATER

Ian walks Allison and Scanlon to the door. Scanlon hands a business card to their host.

SCANLON  
If you can remember anything else you think might be of use to us --

IAN  
We'll let you know.

ALLISON  
Our deepest condolences. I'm sure Ezra misses all of you, wherever he is.

Ian holds the door open for them.

INT. DUBOIS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DUSK

Allison types at her laptop. She enters "QUINN DAVIDSON" and "ARREST" into a search engine. No results appear.

VOICE  
He covers his tracks.

Allison swivels, sees Ezra standing in her left blind spot.

ALLISON  
You mean Quinn?

EZRA  
Quinn's hometown. His dad's on City Council. Probably pulled strings.

ALLISON  
To keep his son out of the spotlight?  
(and then)  
Was Quinn involved? Sage? Ian?

Ezra closes his eyes, presses his fingers against his scalp -- as though it's throbbing.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Let me help you. Tell me who was in  
your bedroom that night.

EZRA

I...

(flinches)

...I can't say.

Allison looks back down at the monitor. Her eyes jerk back  
to where Ezra stands -- but he's suddenly gone.

Her phone RINGS. Allison gasps, then quickly answers it.

ALLISON

Allison DuBois.

INT. SCANLON'S OFFICE

Scanlon sits at his desk, shuffles papers.

SCANLON

(on phone)

Found something on the Davidson kid.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

ALLISON

Great. Because I'm coming up empty.

SCANLON

Three different drug convictions as a  
minor. Had to dig deep for his file.

ALLISON

Because his father was a city  
councilman. And he had Quinn's records  
sealed, right?

SCANLON

How did you know?

ALLISON

Ezra paid me another visit.

SCANLON

Of course he did.

(and then)

Did he tell you who was with him on the  
night he died?

ALLISON

I don't think he remembers. He  
seemed... out of it.

SCANLON

The final coroner's report came back.  
Bruising on Ezra's neck and wrists.

ALLISON

So there was a struggle with someone?

Scanlon flips a page.

SCANLON

Possibly. And guess what else?

ALLISON

The suspense is killing me.

SCANLON

A crescent-shaped marking tattooed  
above his left nipple.

ALLISON

Gee, I wonder how that got there?

SCANLON

Save the *I-Told-You-So's*, Allison.  
Quinn Davidson still has no alibi for  
that night. I'll try for a warrant.

ALLISON

Keep me posted.

SCANLON

Absolutely. Talk to you soon.

END INTERCUT

Allison glances at the doorway, only to see that Ariel and  
Heather have just appeared in the kitchen.

ARIEL

Mom, is it okay if we get a snack?

ALLISON

Only fruits or veggies. Dinner's going  
to be ready in another hour.

Ariel rolls her eyes, gathers up an armful of fruit and  
bottled water. Allison smiles at Heather, asks:

ALLISON (CONT'D)

How's the homework going?

HEATHER

Pretty good, Mrs. DuBois.

ALLISON  
 (corrects her)  
 Allison.

Ariel offers Heather an apple.

HEATHER  
 Um, can I use the bathroom first?

ARIEL  
 Sure. I'll get started on those new equations.

Ariel peels a banana, bites into it as she disappears down the hall. Heather looks at Allison, smiles nervously.

ALLISON  
 Oh, it's down the hall, second door on the right.

HEATHER  
 I know. I just...

She takes a deep breath. Allison looks concerned.

ALLISON  
 Is everything okay, Heather?

HEATHER  
 I heard about you from kids at school.

Allison reacts.

HEATHER (CONT'D)  
 So you can really... talk to ghosts?

ALLISON  
 Yeah. Sometimes.

HEATHER  
 My cousin... Ezra. He died last week.

ALLISON  
 I'm so sorry.

HEATHER  
 Thank you.

ALLISON  
 Were you close?

HEATHER  
 Sort of. Yeah.  
 (and then)

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Ezra was really stressed with pledging Rho Sigma. But he couldn't tell me about most of it.

ALLISON

Do you know anything about the guys in his fraternity? The older ones?

HEATHER

Not a lot. Most of them are going to be at the funeral.

(and then)

He probably wrote about it on his blog.

ALLISON

Ezra had a blog?

Heather nods.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Did he ever show it to you?

HEATHER

I don't think he showed it to anyone.

(and then)

So, do you think you can...?

Heather holds back tears.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

I miss him so much. I just want to know he's okay.

Allison takes Heather in her arms. They share a small hug.

FROM THE HALLWAY

Ariel finishes eavesdropping. She frowns.

INT. ALLISON AND JOE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Allison tromps out of the bathroom, runs floss through her teeth. Joe, clad only in boxers, climbs into bed.

ALLISON

It was a pig sty.

JOE

They're college guys. A messy house doesn't make them killers.

ALLISON

It shows what kind of boys they are.

JOE

And what kind would that be?

ALLISON

The kind who'd be a bad influence on a nice kid.

JOE

The kind I used to be, huh?

ALLISON

No, these guys are different from you. They're secretive, Joe. I can tell they're hiding something.

JOE

Fraternities have rituals. And you know what else? -- we're sworn to keep them secret from those who haven't been initiated.

ALLISON

Don't patronize me.

JOE

Then don't generalize. Not all fraternities are Skull and Bones. Each one is unique. Mine is, I'm sure Ezra's is... was... whatever.

ALLISON

That's my point. I don't know exactly what happens behind their closed doors. All I have to go on is what I saw.

(and then)

It's frustrating being in the dark. I can see where his parents are coming from.

JOE

If one of his brothers actually hurt him, why wouldn't Ezra just tell you?

ALLISON

Maybe for the same reason their chapter president played dumb with me about the branding.

JOE

Sorry I can't give you more insight about your ignorance, Allison.

She scoffs. He rolls over, faces away from her.

JOE (CONT'D)  
Your rationale is all Greek to me.

Allison sighs, turns off the night lamp.

INT. NINETEENTH CENTURY CABIN - DAY

Ezra lies in a bed, covered by quilts. He wears a wide-collared, ruffled shirt -- his skin is blatantly pale.

EZRA  
I tried not to be trouble.

Heather, dressed in Victorian clothing, and Kyle, wearing a gentlemanly outfit, stand at Ezra's bedside. They stare down at their sickly-looking friend.

HEATHER  
Don't say that.

EZRA  
It's true, dear. I feel stronger when you are here.

KYLE  
You derived it from yourself. Your ability to overcome.

EZRA  
My only true family.  
(to Heather)  
You, akin to a young sister who understood me.  
(to Kyle)  
And you were my only real brother.

HEATHER  
Don't speak in the past tense.

EZRA  
I don't fear it any longer. Remember that I don't forget you.

HEATHER  
We'll try, dearest Ezra.

KYLE  
All of the fine gentlemen cared about you. They still do.

EZRA  
Not Quinn. Not after the hastening of my demise.

HEATHER

Tell us how to keep our memories of you  
alive.

EZRA

You'll read all about it.

Ezra closes his eyes, begins to die. Heather and Kyle look  
on in sadness. Ezra strains to whisper:

EZRA (CONT'D)

Love is the only thing we carry with us  
when we go.

(a long beat)

Except for hate.

As Ezra takes his final breaths...

A CAMERA FLASHES

Bridgette stands at the foot of the bed, dressed in vintage  
clothing reminiscent of a turn-of-the-century newsie. She  
peeks out from behind an old-fashioned camera -- which  
spits out a Polaroid-style sheet of film.

BRIDGETTE

Say Mid-Nineteenth Century Limburger!

She prepares to snap another photo, but then...

A hand reaches over, yanks the clunky camera out of  
Bridgette's grip.

The mysterious brunette woman -- dressed the same as before  
-- holds the camera, looks down upon Bridgette.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Not everyone likes having their picture  
taken, baby doll.

The woman winks at Kyle and Heather. Bridgette pouts.

BRIDGETTE

Aw, rats!

INT. ALLISON AND JOE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Allison's eyes pop open. Joe sleeps soundly next to her,  
and we...

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Allison paces in front of her boss. Devalos sits behind his desk. Scanlon sits in a chair to Allison's left, a thick file folder in his clutches.

ALLISON

But why can't we?

DEVALOS

There isn't enough reasonable doubt to issue a search warrant.

ALLISON

Ezra was at the house for a pledge event the night before he died.

SCANLON

The Rho Sigs each have solid alibis... except for Davidson. Unless we suddenly find some damning evidence --

ALLISON

And he lives there! He's the only one Ezra named, on his deathbed.

DEVALOS

In your dream.

ALLISON

And Quinn did drugs as a teenager -- his daddy protected him.

(and then)

Quinn's a jerk! I saw him dump blood all over Ezra. Humiliated him in front of the entire fraternity.

SCANLON

Was Ezra wearing a prom dress while it happened?

ALLISON

Very funny, Lee.

Scanlon hands Allison the file folder.

SCANLON

Labwork came back. Residual traces of Troxapan in his blood.

DEVALOS

Allison, how can you be sure what you saw wasn't your own interpretation of how Ezra might have been killed?

ALLISON

He had a copy of *Carrie* in his bedroom.

SCANLON

Which you saw. And was probably stuck in your mind after you fell asleep.

ALLISON

And the dream I had last night... in it, Ezra died from pneumonia -- just like Beth did in *Little Women*.

SCANLON

Was that on his bookshelf too?

Allison shoves the nearest chair.

ALLISON

There could be something in Quinn's bedroom. A DNA sample.

DEVALOS

Allison, we can't just --

ALLISON

Maybe something he swiped from the Bermans' home? Like a medallion.

DEVALOS

Davidson has a roommate -- the Halter kid. We'd be invading their collective privacy without just cause.

SCANLON

And you thinking that Davidson is a jerk won't be enough for a warrant.

ALLISON

Fine, look the other way. But I won't.

She makes a beeline for the door.

DEVALOS

Allison --

The door SLAMS shut behind her.

EXT. DESERT PLAINS HIGH SCHOOL - BREEZEWAY

Ariel strides through a crowd of STUDENTS between classes, a sour expression on her face.

HEATHER (O.C.)

Ariel!

Ariel keeps walking, still sullen. Heather catches up.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Didn't you hear me say "Hi" to you today in class?

ARIEL

I heard.

HEATHER

Did I do something?

ARIEL

Mr. Stemper's lecture was just too damn engrossing.

HEATHER

Come on. Tell me what's wrong.

Ariel swivels around, flares.

ARIEL

I heard you talking to my mother.

HEATHER

Ariel, I --

ARIEL

That's why you wanted to be my partner?  
So you could talk to the dead?

HEATHER

No, it's not like that.

ARIEL

Stay away from me.

Ariel charges forward, leaves Heather in her dust.

EXT. BERMAN RESIDENCE - FRONT PORCH - ONE HOUR LATER

Allison knocks on the front door. Fran opens it, looks at our medium through the screen.

FRAN

Mrs. DuBois?

ALLISON

May I come in?

INT. BERMAN RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Allison sits across from Fran on an opposite couch.

ALLISON

Heather came to me because she's concerned. She thinks there might have been foul play involved.

FRAN

My niece has always been into conspiracy theories. She thinks Amelia Earhart was abducted by the Japanese.

ALLISON

I believe her instincts about Ezra.

FRAN

Heather was the only cousin he'd really bonded with. So given how close she was to him, I'm not...

(sighs)

...sure she's the most objective.

ALLISON

One of Ezra's fraternity brothers abused drugs as a teenager. Did you know that?

Fran remains silent, shakes her head slightly.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Quinn Davidson? Ever met him?

FRAN

Can't say I know the name.

(and then)

Has Ezra spoken to you?

ALLISON

Actually... he has.

Fran hangs on Allison's every word.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

He's appeared to me. But he seems shut off. Like he's hiding the details about how he actually died.

The door from the next room opens, and George charges in.

FRAN  
Honey, when did you -- ?

GEORGE  
(to Allison)  
Does your boss know you're here?

ALLISON  
They know I'm investigating.

GEORGE  
That doesn't answer my question.

FRAN  
George, maybe she can help us to --

GEORGE  
(to Allison)  
Our son's funeral is the day after  
tomorrow. Can't you let us lay him to  
rest? In peace?

ALLISON  
There's reason to suspect foul play.

GEORGE  
Based on what? They said he OD'ed.

ALLISON  
I had a dream last night --

GEORGE  
So that's what you're basing this on?  
Some figment of your imagination?

George shoots an intimidating glare at his wife. Then,  
back at Allison...

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Get out of my house! I will not have  
you soiling my son's memory like this!

Allison stands, gives him a hard look. She begins to  
leave, but stops short of the door to face George again.

ALLISON  
You are soiling your son's memory.  
Refusing to bring his killer to  
justice. If you don't do it, I will.

Allison flings open the door, walks through it. Slams it  
behind her.

EXT. RHO SIGMA PSI HOUSE - YARD - DUSK

Sage and Quinn toss around a football with other FRATERNITY BROTHERS. Allison arrives at the open gate just in time to catch the football before it can hit her in the gut.

The guys look at her. One of them, BOBBY, smirks.

SAGE

Sorry!

ALLISON

Go long!

Allison throws the ball back at them. Quinn catches it.

QUINN

Not bad for an old lady.

ALLISON

My younger brother was a wide receiver in high school. I helped him practice.

BOBBY

You're that detective. The one who thinks she's psychic.

ALLISON

Yeah, that's me.  
(to Quinn)  
Let's go for a walk.

QUINN

Why?

ALLISON

So I can do you a favor.

The guys teasingly HOOT and CATCALL. Quinn gives Sage a nervous glance.

EXT. STREET - TEN MINUTES LATER

Allison walks with Quinn along the sidewalk. Every so often, COLLEGE STUDENTS stroll or skate by.

QUINN

I'm sorry the kid OD'ed. But I don't know why he did it.

ALLISON

And you didn't want Ezra in your frat.

Sage runs up to them from behind, falls in step.

SAGE

He didn't show us much respect, the way a pledge is expected to.

ALLISON

Respect is supposed to be earned.

SAGE

He didn't care about earning it. Too busy popping pills or shooting up.

ALLISON

So you knew he was on medication.

QUINN

Menna-something. He always whined about it on his blog.

ALLISON

Ezra invited you to read his blog?

She studies their evasive reactions.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

How did you find it?

QUINN

Wasn't hard to figure out. Everyone knows his screen name.

SAGE

Aristophanes Ninety-one.

QUINN

He used the same name for his blog account at Gabster.

ALLISON

So because you didn't feel close, you thought you'd dig up dirt on him.

SAGE

He should have set it to private if he didn't want anyone reading it.

QUINN

I'm surprised he didn't admit he was doing Trox.

ALLISON

I never said he was using Troxapan.

Sage and Quinn exchange a quick glance.

ALLISON (CONT'D)  
 And that information hasn't been made  
 public. How did you find out?

Quinn attempts to walk away, but Allison blocks his path.

QUINN  
 I don't have to answer you.

ALLISON  
 Pretty confident talk from the only Rho  
 Sig without an alibi.

SAGE  
 We'd heard rumors, okay? Geez. And  
 Quinn was at our mixer with Delta  
 Omicron. He texted me from it.

ALLISON  
 And Detective Scanlon spoke to their  
 sorority's social chair. She has no  
 proof that you were there.

QUINN  
 She has no proof that I wasn't.

He turns his back on Allison. Over his shoulder...

QUINN (CONT'D)  
 I've lost a brother. Let me grieve.

Allison trades glances with Sage, who follows Quinn --  
 leaves her stewing.

INT. DUBOIS HOUSE - DEN - NIGHT

Allison types on the keyboard of her laptop.

ALLISON  
 Gabster-dot-Aristophanes-Ninety-One-dot-  
 com.

An ONLINE BLOG PAGE pops up on-screen. She scrolls down.

ALLISON (CONT'D)  
 "I'm a Menadine hound penned into this  
 torturous kennel of life."

EZRA (O.C.)  
 It's like my mom told you.

Allison looks up, sees Ezra by the refrigerator.

EZRA (CONT'D)  
I have a way with words.

ALLISON  
And you wrote about Quinn? Sage?

EZRA  
Keep reading, Mrs. DuBois.

Allison scans more TEXT on the blog, sees Quinn's name.

ALLISON  
You say Quinn was working at a strip club to make extra cash.

EZRA  
Everyone in the fraternity knew. But we weren't going to ruin his rep.

Allison looks at the DATE on the blog.

ALLISON  
So he was working there the night you died?

EZRA  
(sarcastic)  
You mean he didn't tell you?  
(and then)  
Figures. He thinks his body's so hot, but doesn't want anyone to know he's flaunting it for tips.

ALLISON  
So then what happened that night? Who came to see you?

Allison looks up -- Ezra is gone. She sighs.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Ezra -- dressed in a multicolored robe embroidered with Greek letters -- crawls on his hands and knees. A hand yanks him up by the collar.

Sage stands there, dressed in a biblical cloak and sandals.

SAGE  
What profit is it if we slay our brother and conceal his blood?

He whisks the robe off Ezra's shoulders, shoves the young man into a deep pit. Holding up the dreamcoat...

SAGE (CONT'D)  
Come, and let us induce the hypnotic.  
And only the pharaoh shall know.

INT. DEN

Allison wakes up, her head tucked into folded arms. Pushes bangs out of her eyes, spots a male torso at face-level.

ALLISON  
Ezra?

JOE (O.C.)  
Guess again, sleepyhead.

Allison tilts her head up, sees Joe standing there.

ALLISON  
I found his blog.

JOE  
You also snoozed through dinner.

ALLISON  
Sorry.

JOE  
No worries. We ordered out. Thirty-minute Italian cuisine.  
(and then)  
What happened in your dream?

ALLISON  
Ever seen *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*?

JOE  
Ezra's brothers sold him into slavery?

ALLISON  
Only if his master was Death. But apparently, Quinn Davidson has an alibi -- he just doesn't want to share it.

JOE  
So who does that leave?

ALLISON  
Sage Halter. I think he tricked Ezra into injecting himself.

JOE  
And how are you going to prove that?

Allison shakes her head, buries her temples in one palm.

JOE (CONT'D)

So... dinnertime update. Freshly  
sullen teenager in the house.

ALLISON

Ariel.

JOE

Barely touched her pepperoni. I kept  
asking her what was wrong. She  
wouldn't talk.

ALLISON

I think I know.

INT. ARIEL'S BEDROOM - HALF AN HOUR LATER

Ariel lies on her bed, face buried in a Chemistry textbook.  
A KNOCK, and then Allison opens the door.

ALLISON

Daddy said you lost your appetite.

ARIEL

I don't want to talk about it.

ALLISON

Did you and Heather have a fight?

ARIEL

You should know. You're her new best  
friend.

ALLISON

She told you about our chat?

ARIEL

I was listening from the next room.

ALLISON

Ariel.

Ariel blocks Allison from her sight with the book.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Hey.

Allison forces Ariel to put the book down, sits next to her  
on the bed.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Heather's just lost a close relative.

ARIEL

She used me to get to you. When Stemper told us we could pick our own lab groups...

ALLISON

It made you feel good that she asked to be in yours.

ARIEL

Yeah.

(and then)

Do you know what it's like, having everyone at school always joking about your mom? Telling you you're going to grow up to be some freak mind-reader.

ALLISON

And now that she has what she wants -- getting to me -- she's given you the cold shoulder?

ARIEL

Well... no.

ALLISON

(rhetorical)

Oh, she hasn't?

ARIEL

She tried to get my attention three different times today.

ALLISON

And why might that be?

Ariel remains silent.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Maybe she cares what you think.

ARIEL

So you're saying I should hear her out?

ALLISON

Wow, you really can read minds.

Ariel begrudgingly grins as Allison gives her a squeeze.

INT. ROMAN PALACE - DAY

Ezra stands in an immaculate dining hall, surrounded by George, Fran, Sage, Quinn, Ian, Bobby, and OTHER FRATERNITY BROTHERS. Everyone wears Greco-Roman garb.

EZRA

My true firmness will not be melted by these things that melt fools. By that I mean intimidation, manipulation, and emotional blackmail.

GEORGE

Pardon, Ezra. Ezra, pardon. Georgius falls at your feet to beg pardon for --

EZRA

I am as constant as my vial of Menadine, whose true-fixed and permanent flow has no equal in the apothecary. The skies are painted with innumerable sparks. They are all fire, and everyone shines.

QUINN

O, Ezra.

SAGE

Great Ezra.

GEORGE

He fails to heed our warning. Speak hands for me.

Everyone -- including George -- pulls out a syringe, injects each one into a different part of Ezra's body. He screams, then begins to plummet forward.

The mysterious brunette woman -- the only one in modern dress -- catches him in her arms. As Ezra looks up...

Fran stares down at him, regretful.

EZRA

*Et tu, Mater?*  
(and then)  
Then fall Ezra!

He collapses into unconsciousness.

INT. ALLISON AND JOE'S BEDROOM

Allison gasps, sits straight up in bed. And we...

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. ALLISON AND JOE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Allison immerses herself in a morning bubble bath. Joe sets a glass of orange juice with ice at the tub's edge.

ALLISON

Thanks.

JOE

Just relax. Clear your head with some citrus. I'll get the girls ready.

ALLISON

Is Bridge still going at it? With the Polaroid?

JOE

I think we have a future Pulitzer winner on our hands.

(and then)

Too bad they've stopped making the film for that model she's using. I told her we'd get her a digital if she can prove she'll use it for good rather than evil.

Allison raises her eyebrows at Joe, who smirks back.

JOE (CONT'D)

So now we can rest assured Ariel won't go permanently blind.

ALLISON

Have I ever mentioned how much I don't deserve you?

JOE

Only when I serve you orange juice in the bathtub.

Joe exits. Allison lays her head back, drifts off.

INT. EARLY-NINETEENTH CENTURY BEDROOM

A bedgown-clad Ezra lies back against his mattress, sickly-looking. Blood red bedding covers his chest. Kyle -- dressed in a royal blue riding jacket and pantaloons -- kneels at Ezra's bedside.

EZRA

Please give the good gentlemen of our bulwark due time and attention.

KYLE

I can spare so considerable a sum with little inconvenience.

EZRA

So they never forget me once I depart. Not even those who prepared my ill bed.

Ezra looks up, sees the brunette woman across the room -- still dressed in her red turtleneck and black leggings.

EZRA (CONT'D)

You may go now.

A splash of static FILLS IN the woman's body.

EZRA (CONT'D)

May they soon discover... 'twasn't the elusive opiate.

Ezra closes his eyes, dies. An old-fashioned phone RINGS.

The woman picks up the phone. Puts it to her ear, listens. Then, extends it straight outward... as though she's speaking directly to Allison.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Worry no more -- it's for you.

RESUME BATHTUB

A cell phone RINGS.

Allison wakes up, reaches for her cell phone.

ALLISON

Hello?

KYLE (V.O.)

Mrs. DuBois?

EXT. GRASSY KNOLL

Kyle sits in front of landscaped Southwestern foliage.

KYLE

(on phone)

It's Kyle Adams. From Rho Sigma Psi. I was Ezra's Big Brother.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

ALLISON  
Kyle. What can I do for you?

KYLE  
We need to talk. Right away.

END INTERCUT

Allison closes her eyes.

EXT. PAPAGO STATE COLLEGE - ORANGE GROVES - ONE HOUR LATER

Allison walks alongside Kyle underneath orange trees.

KYLE  
It was about a month ago. Sage asked me to get his wallet from his room. I opened the wrong drawer. It was tucked in the front corner, covered by socks.

ALLISON  
Do you remember the name of the drug?

KYLE  
Troxa-something.

ALLISON  
Troxapan.

KYLE  
That's it. I never told him I saw it.

ALLISON  
You were afraid you'd lose his trust.

KYLE  
He would've accused me of snooping. I figured he had a reason for hiding it.

ALLISON  
Did you guys dump blood all over Ezra? Stripped him naked as some sort of barbaric ritual?

KYLE  
No! I mean... we're not supposed to tell anyone --

Allison gives him a hard look. Kyle quickly reveals:

KYLE (CONT'D)

We use slime, not blood. Edible stuff. It's vanilla pudding and green food coloring. And all of the pledges get naked for some of our rituals.

(and then)

And we help everyone get through it. I wouldn't have let them single out Ezra.

ALLISON

But he thought Sage and Quinn were laughing just at him.

KYLE

He never told me that. He seemed to take it like a man... I was proud of him. But I guess I can see why he felt we might be treating him differently.

ALLISON

Why did you wait until now to say anything about the Trox?

KYLE

If I'd snitched to Detective Scanlon, Sage would've put the pieces together.

ALLISON

And what does *Panta Pistos* mean?

KYLE

It's Greek. You can look it up.

(and then)

Please don't tell anyone I came to you.

Allison gives him a sympathetic look.

EXT. ACADEMIC BUILDING - PAPAGO COLLEGE - FOUR HOURS LATER

Allison finishes up a cell phone conversation.

ALLISON

(on phone)

Thanks, Mr. District Attorney. We should be back within an hour.

As she hangs up, Sage strolls up the walkway among OTHER STUDENTS. He glares at her, adjusts his backpack.

SAGE

What are you doing here?

ALLISON

Been shooting up lately, Sage?

SAGE

What the hell are you talking about?  
Leave me alone.

Allison blocks his path. Over Sage's shoulder, Scanlon lurks -- face buried in a campus magazine.

ALLISON

The Troxapan in your dresser drawer...  
the stuff you forgot to throw away, the  
night of Ezra's death. The same drug  
found in his bloodstream.

SAGE

You've got nothing. If you did, you  
wouldn't be here --

ALLISON

How did you come up with your alibi?  
You got someone to lie for you?

SAGE

Am I going to need a lawyer?

ALLISON

Do you have something to hide?

Sage does an about face -- but runs directly into Scanlon before he can get very far.

SCANLON

The D.A. wants to ask you a few  
questions.

Sage swivels -- he faces Allison, ferocious.

SAGE

You didn't even know him. Why the hell  
do you care so much?

ALLISON

Because!... I was him.

Sage and Scanlon each react.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Sophomore year. One of my girlfriends  
had joined a sorority. She fixed me up  
with this guy from a local frat.

SAGE

And, what? He cheated on you?

ALLISON  
He tried to rape me, Sage.

Allison locks her eyes on Sage, who freezes.

ALLISON (CONT'D)  
In the front seat of his car. I was able to get away... remembered a *uechi-ryu* move from my Wellness class.  
(and then)  
That's how Ezra felt, anytime you guys singled him out. Like you were violating his dignity, whenever you treated him differently... just because you thought he was weird.

SAGE  
We didn't haze him!

ALLISON  
I never said you did. But he refused to go along with your whims -- and that's why you wanted to keep Ezra from getting initiated, wasn't it?

Sage remains silent.

ALLISON (CONT'D)  
That's why, when Ezra wouldn't let you drug him, everything escalated. You never meant to kill him, Sage. What happened that night wasn't even your idea in the first place, right?

He glances away from her.

ALLISON (CONT'D)  
We can help you. But only if you tell us the truth.  
(and then)  
Only if you reveal who approached you.

Sage gives both of them vicious looks, then relents.

INT. EZRA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ezra leads Sage inside from the hallway.

EZRA  
I'm glad you came by, man. I didn't think you liked me.

SAGE

Hey, we're going to be brothers. Let's dump out all of our bad blood.

EZRA

So the rituals... getting naked, getting slimed --

SAGE

We all went through it. I promise you, Ez. No one was singling you out.

EZRA

So you laughed at everyone?

SAGE

A bunch of us talked with your dad. Explained to him what Rho Sigma Psi is all about.

EZRA

He didn't say anything to me.

SAGE

Your dad wanted us to work it out. But he's cool with you pledging now.

EZRA

Sweet.

Sage removes a house key from his pocket, holds it up.

SAGE

He even gave me a key, in case you didn't let me in.

EZRA

My dad wouldn't do that.

Sage's face freezes, then returns to normal. Ezra's eyes dart toward the exit.

EZRA (CONT'D)

Maybe I should call him, just to make sure.

SAGE

You're not going anywhere.

Ezra leaps to his feet, and Sage blocks his path. As Ezra tries to go around him, Sage lunges. They struggle... Sage gives him a shove backward -- and Ezra's skull hits the headboard. Hard.

Ezra collapses onto the carpeting. Sage gasps, panics.

ONE MINUTE LATER

Sage slips on gloves. His hands dig through his opened backpack, remove syringes. He kneels, injects a substance into Ezra's arm.

SAGE

A little Troxapan to give you some energy. Can't pin it on me, because I was at the campus library all night.

As Sage gets to his feet, his elbow accidentally knocks the pink medallion resting on Ezra's nightstand. It SMASHES.

SAGE (CONT'D)

Looks like someone in this semester's pledge class lost their rock.

He kneels again, hastily begins to scoop up the shards.

INT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - LOBBY

...Allison wakes up, finds herself lounging against the arm of a leather couch. She takes in her surroundings.

A WAITING ROOM

Through office windows, Allison can see Sage handcuffed by AN OFFICER as he finishes talking with Scanlon and Devalos.

Allison looks back down at the GREEK-TO-ENGLISH DICTIONARY cradled in her lap. Opens it to the bookmarked page, where the word "PANTA" translates to "ALWAYS."

She flips a couple of pages over, to "PISTOS" -- which translates to "LOYAL." Allison looks up from the book.

The officer leads Sage away down the hall. Devalos approaches Allison, puts a hand on her shoulder.

DEVALOS

You okay?

ALLISON

Yeah. Just a bad dream.

DEVALOS

Mr. Halter admitted to chucking a pink medallion, which he'd knocked over while in Ezra's bedroom. Says it was a symbol of loyalty given to the pledges.

DEVALOS (CONT'D)

(beat)

The Bermans are here.

Allison looks up at a TV SET playing on the lobby wall.

INSERT SCREEN

The brunette woman from Allison's dream lies in a hammock, a serene expression on her face.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Want to feel like everyday is a ride on  
a cloud? Like every breath of air has  
the taste of cotton candy?

(and then)

Menadine causes your stress to fade.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

I worry no more.

Allison gazes across the lobby. Sees Ezra watching her...  
a faint glimmer of regret in his eyes.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - TEN MINUTES LATER

George and Fran sit across the table from Allison, Devalos,  
and Scanlon.

GEORGE

Obviously, we want to press charges.

SCANLON

So neither of you were acquainted with  
Sage Halter before today?

GEORGE

Ezra might have brought him over at  
some point. Didn't memorize his face.

ALLISON

Yet, you gave Sage a house key.

Fran looks down. George bristles.

GEORGE

Excuse me?

DEVALOS

Sage is willing to testify that you  
hired him to murder your son.

GEORGE

That's absurd! He's lying! I would never hurt my son. I didn't want anything to happen to Ezra.

FRAN

But it did, George!

GEORGE

Fran, be quiet!

FRAN

No! I won't lie anymore.

ALLISON

Mrs. Berman?

FRAN

George set up the alibi for Sage. We'd wanted to scare Ezra away from them.

(and then)

After it happened... Sage made it look like Ezra had OD'ed. George made him get rid of the medallion, and...

Fran bursts into tears. George wears a combination of shame and loathing on his face.

FRAN (CONT'D)

I should have told the truth from the beginning! But I didn't want the girls to lose both of us!

GEORGE

I told Ezra, he needed to take baby steps. Why couldn't he just take baby steps?

ALLISON

What seemed like "baby steps" to you might've felt like something completely different to your son.

GEORGE

Why'd he have to get involved with those damn party animals? I just --

(sighs)

I wanted the best for him. Better than them.

ALLISON

Not all frats are Skull and Bones, Mr. Berman.

Allison shoots a glance at Scanlon and Devalos, who summon a UNIFORMED OFFICER into the room. Fran continues to weep, while George maintains a stone-cold face.

INT. DUBOIS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DUSK

Allison removes a meatless lasagna from the oven. Joe finishes tossing a salad, gestures to the lasagna pan.

JOE

Tofu-spinach lasagna, in honor of our vegetarian friend.

Heather helps Ariel finish setting the table. Joe hands the salad bowl off to Ariel, murmurs:

JOE (CONT'D)

Just don't tell Bridge what's in it.

ARIEL

I won't. We'll just say it's cheese.

Ariel smiles at both her parents, and then back at Heather. She places the salad on the table, touches Heather lightly on the arm. Then, hollers into the next room:

ARIEL (CONT'D)

Bridgette! Marie! Dinner!

Joe brings a basket of garlic bread to the table, as Heather makes her way over to Allison.

ALLISON

How are you holding up?

HEATHER

It's getting easier.

(and then)

A little bit.

ALLISON

You're sure you should still be in school right now, with everythi-- ?

HEATHER

Ezra meant a lot to me. But the only way I can handle it is by staying busy. The funeral's going to be tough enough.

Allison nods, sympathetic.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Besides, he wouldn't have wanted me to skip class for him.

ALLISON

I'm sorry about your aunt and uncle.

HEATHER

I'm glad we know what happened. Maybe now, Ezra can rest in peace.

Allison looks up, sees Ezra giving Heather a warm smile. She pats Heather's shoulder with one hand.

Ariel returns from the next room. Bridgette follows behind her sister, cups her hands around her mouth.

BRIDGETTE

Attention, peasants and fools --

Ariel rolls her eyes.

BRIDGETTE (CONT'D)

-- introducing First Lady Martha Washington!

Marie emerges, dressed in a colonial petticoat, a wig of snow white curls, and tiny bifocals. She twirls for them.

Allison, Joe, Ariel, and Heather all cheer and applaud.

JOE

Okay, Mrs. Washington, let's get that off before you spill white sauce on your red petticoat.

Joe walks over, picks up Marie, who beams. Heather takes a seat at the table next to Ariel, who mouths the words "THANK YOU" to her mother. Allison's VOICEOVER returns:

ALLISON (V.O.)

But when we finally confront the stress we cause others, the time for healing can begin.

Joe and Marie -- now costumeless -- rejoin the dinner table. Bridgette positions her camera, snaps A PHOTOGRAPH of the DuBois family and their guest smiling around the dinner table. The Polaroid spits out...

A lovely "family photo." And we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR