

D.C.
"Truth"

written by
John August

FADE IN:

1 INT. TOWNHOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING 1

CLOSE ON the floor. We hear an approaching CLACK, CLACK, CLACK, CLACK.

It's LUCY, the biggest dog on television. From this angle, she looks like an AT-AT walker, lumbering but oddly graceful.

She stops at her giant food bowl. It's empty.

This is a problem.

2 INT. UPSTAIRS TOWNHOUSE HALLWAY / BEDROOMS - DAY 2

WHIMPERING, Lucy scratches at doors, trying to wake someone up. At the third door, she succeeds in pushing it open.

3 INT. MASON'S ROOM - DAY 3

MASON SCOTT is sprawled out asleep, a lump amid a tangle of blankets. With no time for subtlety, Lucy climbs up on the bed, lying on top of him. She's a big girl.

Mason GROANS.

MASON
Alright, alright. I'll get up.

4 INT. TOWNHOUSE / ENTRY - DAY 4

Coming in from outside, Mason lets Lucy off her leash. He has the Post under his arm.

In the living room, an exhausted young woman (KRISTI) is looking for her other shoe. She's sporting some serious bed-hair, and still wearing last night's clothes.

She finds the missing shoe under the coffee table.

MASON
Hello?

Startled, she spins around to see Mason. She smiles, embarrassed.

KRISTI
Hi.

MASON

Hi.

(recognizing, smiles)

Kristi, right? You work for Piedmont.

KRISTI

I do.

(recognizing)

You work for Abbott.

MASON

I did. I'm looking for a new job.

(beat)

Mason.

He reaches out a hand to shake. She has to switch her shoe-holding hands to do so.

KRISTI

I know your roommate.

She points upstairs.

MASON

Pete.

KRISTI

Pete.

A long beat.

KRISTI (cont'd)

We kind of hooked up last night.

MASON

That's what I was guessing.

Another awkward moment.

KRISTI

So, anyway...

MASON

Good to meet you.

KRISTI

Same here.

Mason crosses to the kitchen, letting her rush for the front door.

5 INT. TOWNHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY / CONTINUOUS 5

SARAH LOGAN is dressed for work, eating cereal at the island.
FINLEY SCOTT pours herself a glass of orange juice.

Mason enters, sectioning apart the newspaper.

FINLEY
Who was that?

MASON
A friend of Pete's. She works for
Piedmont.

SARAH
Was that the same woman from Tuesday?

FINLEY
Tuesday was brunette. You're thinking
Saturday.

SARAH
This woman is from Saturday.

MASON
No, this woman looks like the woman from
Saturday. Different person.

SARAH
(realizing)
You're right. Wow.

MASON
It's pretty much a wow.

FINLEY
Pete's a slut.

With that, she heads out the door, taking us...

6 INT. TOWNHOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY / CONTINUOUS 6

As Finley crosses, Pete looks down from the upper hallway.
He's just wearing sweatpants.

PETE
Finley, have you seen my phone? My cell
phone? I'm waiting for a call.

FINLEY
From your little chippie? Your bunk
buddy? Your shagmate?

PETE
You're funny.

And then, a digital RING. It's coming from right beside
Finley. Pete charges down the stairs.

Following the sound, Finley picks a pair of khakis off the
floor, appalled by their implication.

FINLEY
(to Pete)
You couldn't even get to your room before
you took off your pants?

She reaches into a pocket to find his still-ringing cell
phone. Pete grabs for it, but she pulls away, circling behind
the couch.

PETE
Gimme.

FINLEY
Is it her? Is it?

He goes right over the couch, grabbing her. A bit of
wrestling -- she's screaming and laughing -- then she breaks
away.

Just as he's about to grab her again, she hits connect. With
one finger, she holds him at bay.

FINLEY [ON PHONE]
Pete Komisky's office. One moment.

She hands him the phone.

PETE
Hi, this is Pete. Eight o'clock, great,
I can make that.

The DOORBELL rings.

FINLEY
I bet that's her. Maybe she left her
heart behind.

She rushes for the door. Hanging up the phone, Pete charges
after her.

7 THE FRONT DOOR OPENS 7

revealing a well-dressed MAN and WOMAN in their late 40's.

REVERSE to Finley, sweaty and disheveled and completely surprised.

Not seeing who is there, a shirtless Pete grabs Finley around the waist. She pulls out of his grasp, trying to regain dignity.

FINLEY
Mom. Dad. Hi.

Pete smiles.

CUT TO:

8 MAIN TITLES. 8

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

9 EXT. DC - DAY

9

VARIOUS SHOTS, the city at its busiest.

Four YOUNG D.C. STAFFERS speaks directly to camera.

ONE

I will never hurt you.

TWO

You're the first person I've ever loved.

THREE

No, seriously. I adore your parents.

FOUR

The truth is, relationships are based on deceit. Anyone tells you otherwise, they're lying.

ONE

I was with the guys. I lost track of time.

THREE

I'm not mad. Really, I'm not mad.

FOUR

Truth is a goal, not a destination.

TWO

I tried to call but your voicemail didn't pick up.

FOUR

Best you can do is live your life honestly. That's the only way you can look in the mirror and be sure you're seeing yourself.

10 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

10

Wearing his best suit, Pete talks in empty space.

PETE

I think diplomacy is one of the fundamental arts of government. From Ben Franklin to J.F.K., the ability to negotiate conflict is often what shapes history.

He's speaking to a panel of three INTERVIEWERS. For the record, their names are CATHERINE MAXWELL, TOM CUNNINGHAM and BOB MORGENSON. Morgenson keeps dancing his water bottle around the table.

MAXWELL

When did you first learn about the State Department training program?

PETE

Freshman year of college. It was one of the main reason I stuck out French for four years.

He said that for the laugh.

PETE (cont'd)

I took the written test senior year so I could apply now. This program was always my goal when I came to D.C.

MAXWELL

(checking application)

Now, since graduation you've been working as a lobbyist.

PETE

I have, and it's been great experience. I think a foreign service officer is a lot like a lobbyist for America. You're trying to convince other nations that the U.S. has their best interests at heart and to sell them on our positions.

MAXWELL

That's a good definition.

PETE

A foreign service officer gets to represent the U.S. as a nation. I'd do anything for that opportunity.

11 INT. STATE DEPARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY

11

Looking through a window into a conference room, we see Pete shaking hands. By the looks of it, everything went well -- he's relaxed and smiling. Pete reaches the door, where a STAFFER (Asian, female) with a clipboard is waiting to lead him back to reception.

They walk-and-talk. Pete's flirting a bit, because he's Pete.

PETE

That was surprisingly painless.

STATE DEPT. STAFFER

You did well. What I saw looked good.
Did they explain what happens from here?

PETE

Not fully.

STATE DEPT. STAFFER

(smiling)

An agent will call you at home to schedule a background check. After that, you'll be notified whether or not you've been accepted to the program.

They reach the doors to the reception area.

12 INT. RECEPTION AREA - DAY

12

Stepping through...

STATE DEPT. STAFFER

Good luck.

PETE

Thanks.

As he heads off, she checks her clipboard.

STATE DEPT. STAFFER

Mason Scott?

Off Pete's reaction, we WHIP TO find Mason, who sets down his magazine. It a beat before Mason spots Pete.

PETE

Mason?

MASON
 (just as surprised)
 Pete. Hi.

Grabbing his stuff, he closes the distance between them.

PETE (cont'd)
 I didn't know you were going for this.

MASON
 I didn't know you were, either.

A beat, both still bewildered. Individually, they look over at the waiting staffer.

PETE (cont'd)
 Go. Good luck.

MASON
 Okay. Thanks.

We stay with Pete as Mason introduces himself to the staffer, a bashful smile. From Pete's P.O.V., we track them as they head down the hall to the interview room.

We hold on Pete, confused and just a little betrayed.

13 INT. TOWNHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

13

A copper kettle WHISTLES. Still in sweats, Finley fixes herself a cup of de-stress herbal tea. Her parents are with her.

VIRGINIA SCOTT is professionally elegant, the grace of old money without the pretension. JOSEPH SCOTT is a bulldog in custom suits: smart, strong and intimidating when he wants to be.

VIRGINIA SCOTT
 Your father has client meetings in town, so we thought we'd make a round trip of it. See you and your brother, then Nana Scott in Richmond tomorrow.

FINLEY
 (already weary)
 Great.

Coming in from the laundry...

JOSEPH SCOTT

Do you keep this door locked? I know it's the back yard, but it's still an easy way for a burglar to get in.

Finley blinks twice.

FINLEY

(an idea)

I'm going to go change.

She heads out...

14 INT. TOWNHOUSE LIVING / DINING ROOM - DAY

14

...blowing on her too-hot tea. She doesn't see LEWIS FREEMAN, who was waiting for her. He's dressed for work, and already running behind.

LEWIS

Finley.

FINLEY

(startled)

Hi. Hello.

LEWIS

I left a note on your door yesterday.

FINLEY

You did?

LEWIS

About the lease.

At "lease," Finley panics. What if her parents hear? She backs towards the front door, trying to get Lewis to follow her.

FINLEY

(re: note)

Huh. I didn't get it.

LEWIS

Sarah and I still need to sign the lease for the guest apartment.

A beat. She's still backing away.

LEWIS (cont'd)
 When Sarah and I moved in, I asked if
 there was an actual, physical lease we
 could sign. You said...

FINLEY
 Absolutely.

LEWIS
 So we can sign it?

FINLEY
 Yes.

LEWIS
 (frustrated)
 First I need to see it.

FINLEY
 Oh. Okay.

A long beat. She's stalling, boxed in against the front door.

LEWIS
 Finley? You said there was a lease.

FINLEY
 I'd be lying if I said I was completely
 truthful.

15 EXT. DUPONT CIRCLE - DAY [TWO MINUTES LATER]

15

Finley and Lewis walk towards the Metro station. She's still
 in sweats, carrying her tea.

LEWIS
 At least tell me there's some sort of
 contract between you and the Sorensens.

FINLEY
 A written contract?

LEWIS
 Yes.

FINLEY
 No.

Damn.

FINLEY (cont'd)
I don't see what the big deal is. You and Sarah have an amazing place for almost no money...

LEWIS
...Which we could lose at any moment if the Sorensens come back from Lithuania. Legally, we have no right to be here. We're squatters.

FINLEY
Do you like the apartment?

LEWIS
That's not the point.

FINLEY
But do you like it?

LEWIS
Yes, very much.

FINLEY
(stopping him)
Then, reality check: you're living in a great apartment, in a cool neighborhood, with excellent roommates and your beautiful girlfriend. Why are you obsessed about losing it all?

LEWIS
Because that day is going to come.

FINLEY
But not today and not next week. Why not enjoy what you have?

He begrudgingly acknowledges her point.

FINLEY (cont'd)
Look -- I have a double major in art history and physics, no job, and no idea what I want to do with my life. But am I worried? No. I choose to be happy.
(backing away)
Choose to be happy.

16 EXT. OUTSIDE STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY

16

Mason emerges from inside, finished with his interview. Pete is leaning against a barricade, reading the Post while waiting. Spotting him, Pete waves.

MASON

Hey.

PETE

Hey. How did the interview go?

MASON

Good. I guess. Fine.

PETE

Did that one guy keep playing with his water bottle?

MASON

(thank God he noticed)

Yes! What was that?

PETE

I don't know. Maybe it's some kind of psychological test.

MASON

Aha! But did we pass or did we fail?

PETE

I did not kill him. I consider that a tremendous achievement.

A smile. A beat. Someone has to broach the topic...

MASON

So what happened here? How did we not know we were both going for the same job? I mean, I know you talked about it a year ago, but nothing recently.

Pete shakes his head.

PETE

I guess I didn't tell anyone, because if I didn't get it, I didn't want anyone to know.

MASON

Exactly. We're so afraid of visible failure that we hide everything.

(MORE)

MASON (cont'd)

(beat)

And you and me. I feel like, when we were living in our old place, I knew every single thing you did. Our little Palm Pilots were always synchronized.

PETE

I know. And since we moved into the townhouse, everything's different. There's more people, more stuff going on, and we're not hanging out as much as we used to.

MASON

And thus situations like today.

PETE

Exactly.

(beat)

And yeah, we're competing, but there's 25 slots. We could both get in. In which case we'd be spending way too much time together.

MASON

So we're good.

PETE

We're good.

A nod, done.

PETE (cont'd)

Are you going back to the house?

MASON

My parents are there. I ducked out before they could ask too many questions. They still think I'm working for Abbott.

PETE

I got the rest of the morning off. You wanna play hooky?

MASON

Absolutely.

They head off.

18 INT. CNL NEWSROOM - DAY

18

Sarah hangs up the phone. The moment she does the phone RINGS.

Grabbing it...

SARAH (ON PHONE)

Sarah Logan.

MAN'S VOICE

I have to ask you a really serious important question.

She obviously knows the guy.

SARAH

(continuing to work)

Shoot.

MAN'S VOICE

If a colleague of yours, let's say he's a friend. If a friend of yours just found out that he was in the late stages of a serious disease, and the only hope for him to live was a bone marrow transplant...

As we CIRCLE BEHIND Sarah, we see that the caller is sitting directly facing her on the other side of the glass partition.

He is GEOFF GUNDERSON, a producer one notch ahead of her.

GEOFF

(continuing)

...Would you agree to be a bone marrow donor, knowing that it would be incredibly painful and involve drilling into your leg?

On Sarah, looking at him. Is he serious? He seems to be.

GEOFF (cont'd)

I mean, would you do that? If I were dying?

SARAH

Of course I would.

He's touched and relieved. It's an oddly affecting moment.

GEOFF
 So if I weren't dying -- but just really
 swamped -- you could do one more tiny
 story, couldn't you?

SARAH
 (appalled)
 Damn you.

She starts to hang up. He cries out...

GEOFF
 Please. I beg you. I'll give you a
 stapler.

He offers it to the glass.

SARAH
 I already have a stapler.

GEOFF
 You'll have two. You'll be envied.

CUT TO:

19 INT. CNL HALLWAY - DAY [A MINUTE LATER]

19

Geoff pursues Sarah down the hallway as she counts through her
 faxes.

GEOFF
 Just hear me out. Parking in D.C. is a
 mess; the laws are draconian; we all know
 that. But, if you have diplomatic
plates, you can willfully disregard the
 laws.

SARAH
 The District can't enforce parking
 tickets on diplomats, because of
 diplomatic immunity. I know. It's "The
 Parking Story." I've seen that exact
 story ten times. I think I've produced
 it twice.

She hands off two faxes to a passing CO-WORKER...

SARAH (cont'd)
 (to Co-Worker)
 These didn't go through.
 (to Geoff)
 (MORE)

SARAH (cont'd)
 Why don't you just dig it out of the tape library and run it again?

GEOFF
 Look, I know it's an old story, but could you just freshen it up? Please. I have nothing, and Macaffee's still on maternity leave.
 (new tactic)
 You'd give me bone marrow but you won't give me one tiny favor.

A beat. Finally relenting...

SARAH
 How and when?

GEOFF
 Single camera by Friday. I'll get someone to lay in voice.

SARAH
 Fine.

GEOFF
 You are the best person who ever lived.

As he heads off, she calls after him...

SARAH
 Remember that.

20 INT. VIDEO ARCADE - DAY

20

Jackets off and shirt sleeves rolled up, Mason and Pete play Time Crisis II, a two-person shoot-em up notable for its foot pedals. Everyone else in the arcade is 15 and wearing t-shirts.

PETE
 Did you meet Kristi?

MASON
 I did. This morning.

PETE
 You said it would never happen.

MASON
 Both you and NASA continue to impress me.

They clear the level, MUSIC as it advances.

PETE

Can I ask you why the State Department?
I never heard you say anything about it
before.

MASON

I took the written exam in college. I
honestly hadn't thought about going for
it until this recent, you know, firing.
(a beat; "reloading")
And now I'm really excited about it.
It's great to be actively pursuing
something.

The next level begins, carnage-palooza.

PETE

What was your score? On the written
test.

MASON

One-fifty-five, combined.

PETE

That's excellent.

MASON

I always overthink multiple choice tests.
How about you? What did you get?

PETE

One-seventy.

Mason looks over.

MASON

That's a perfect score.

PETE

I don't overthink things.

A burst of gunfire and Mason is killed. Pete hands him some
tokens, never taking his eyes off the game.

21 INT. SOLARIUM LOBBY - DAY

21

We move off a CAMERA/SOUNDMAN, setting up his equipment for an
interview, to find Sarah and Finley.

FINLEY

They overanalyze every little detail of
my life.

(MORE)

FINLEY (cont'd)
And it doesn't help that Mason is so perfect. I swear, he's like the Stepford Brother.

SARAH
Come on.

FINLEY
I'm serious. My family is disturbingly happy. I have heard my parents argue three times in 20 years, and it was always about something I did.

SARAH
I bet you were a hellraiser. You played with matches.

FINLEY
I loved matches.

CAMERAMAN
I'm ready.

SARAH
Thanks.

FINLEY
(re: the camera setup)
So what do I have to do?

SARAH
Just translate for me. I think this guy only speaks German.

FINLEY
Is he a famous war criminal?

SARAH
Sadly, he's an anonymous parking criminal. He's racked up a record 75 parking tickets in the last six months, none of which he has to pay because of diplomatic immunity.

A beat.

FINLEY
You're doing a story about that?

SARAH
Exactly. It's a horrible story.

FINLEY
What's this guy's name?

A MAN'S VOICE
Stefan Stimtmann.

The first name's pronounced "Steffin," and he's standing right in front of them.

Yikes, that's A GOOD-LOOKING MAN. He's about 27.

FINLEY
(charmingly)
Guten tag.

STEFAN
(a smile)
Wie geht zu ihnen?

22 EXT. STREET - DAY

22

Sarah and the Cameraman pack up into the van. Climbing into his convertible, Stefan sees a parking ticket under the windshield wiper.

He holds it up to Finley and Sarah, smiling -- a case in point.

STEFAN
(to Finley)
Es fangt um neun Uhr an.

FINLEY
Auf wieder sehen.

A wave, and he's off. We look back on Sarah and a somewhat smitten Finley.

SARAH
You seemed to get along well.

FINLEY
Very well. He asked me out.

SARAH
You're kidding. What about Pete?

FINLEY
Please. Pete and I are barely friends. He drives me crazy. He's all Mr. Player Man. It's appalling. Pete and I would be a complete disaster.

SARAH

I'm not disagreeing. I just assumed it was going to happen.

FINLEY

European men are much better than American men. They're not so achievement-driven. I was explaining to Stefan how I'm at this transitional point in my life, and he completely understood -- he could appreciate the value of not having your entire life mapped out.

23 INT. BIG FAT SENATE HALLWAY - DAY

23

Mason checks the giant directory board on the wall, trying to find a room number.

From behind him...

WOMAN'S VOICE

I don't think your name's up there.

Mason turns to see Kristi.

KRISTI

Give it a few years.

He's a bit surprised she stopped for him.

MASON

How are you?

KRISTI

I'm good. It's good to see you. Again. So soon.

MASON

You survived your trip home?

KRISTI

The walk of shame? Or rather, the cab ride of shame?

MASON

Why shame? I see nothing shameful.

KRISTI

You're right. No shame. Midwestern guilt hereby set aside.

They move, letting others see the board.

KRISTI (cont'd)
 What are you doing over here? I thought
 you left Abbott.

MASON
 I did. I'm dropping off resumés.

She takes one from his stack, skims through it.

MASON (cont'd)
 I'm trying to get a few meetings. I'm
 also going for the State Department.

KRISTI
 The training program. I almost did that.
 (reading)
 Ooh, good goal statement.
 (further down)
 And, I was this close to picking Harvard.
 We have almost met at least three times.

MASON
 As long as you meet once, that's all that
 matters.

KRISTI
 Well said.

That came out flirtier than Mason meant. But there is an odd
 little moment happening here.

KRISTI (cont'd)
 (re: resume)
 Listen, can I take this? I think there's
 a job opening up over with Owens, if
 you're interested.

MASON
 Absolutely. Please.

KRISTI
 Good luck with State. And say hello to
 your roommate for me.

MASON
 (a little deflated)
 Pete.

KRISTI
 Pete.

She heads off, a look back after a beat. He looks, too.
 Maybe there's something there.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

24 INT. JUDGE BOK'S CHAMBER - DAY

24

Lewis briefs JUDGE ELIZABETH BOK on the next appeal, halfway through a stack of cases. Her office is small -- she's one of the newer justices -- but in every way traditional: dark wood and tall shelves of gold-spined books. It's at once intimate and intimidating.

Bok plays solitaire as they speak, but she's completely focused on the conversation.

BOK

What would you consider the question of the case?

LEWIS

(prepared)

Does a witness necessarily commit perjury by concealing embarrassing personal facts that may not be relevant to the case?

BOK

Define relevant. Define embarrassing.

LEWIS

Situational.

BOK

Then your question isn't general enough. Try again.

He takes a long beat, thinks about it.

BOK (cont'd)

Don't get hung up on perjury per se. Think bigger.

LEWIS

Does a person ever have the right to lie?

BOK

(looking up)

There's your question. What's your answer?

LEWIS

No. The entire legal system is based on the presumption of honesty. The minute you start introducing situational exemptions, the process falls apart.

BOK

What if the truth is embarrassing? What if the truth is horrible?

LEWIS

Then you shouldn't be living your life in a way that the truth about it is horrible or embarrassing.

A beat as Bok thinks about this, still playing her cards.

BOK

Do you have a girlfriend?

LEWIS

Yes.

BOK

And you're honest with her. You only tell her the truth.

LEWIS

Absolutely.

BOK

You're in love.

LEWIS

Very much.

BOK

Are you in the kind of love that poets swoon about? That the stars spin in heaven? That you could not possibly imagine a greater love?

LEWIS

Honestly, no. But I don't know anybody who's in that kind of love.

BOK

But you agree that "that kind of love" could exist.

LEWIS

(recognizing the trap)
Yes.

BOK

So the question becomes, Would you admit to your girlfriend that you are not as fully in love with her as you could conceivably be?

LEWIS

Would I tell her that? No.

BOK

Why not?

LEWIS

It would be cruel.

BOK

Exactly. So the question becomes, Would you rather be cruel to your girlfriend, or just a tiny bit dishonest?

25 INT. GUEST APARTMENT - NIGHT

25

Lewis sits on the bed, changing his shoes while Sarah gets dressed in front of the mirror. She notices him watching her.

SARAH

What's wrong?

LEWIS

Nothing.

SARAH

You don't like this dress.

LEWIS

I love the dress.

SARAH

But your family won't. It looks too sexy.

LEWIS

It doesn't look sexy.
(realizing mistake)
It looks sexy, but not too sexy.

SARAH

For your family? It shouldn't look sexy at all. And why am I saying "sexy?" I hate that word.

Lewis comes up behind her, holding her around the waist. They both look into the mirror.

LEWIS

Sarah, if you're tense about going to this tonight, you don't have to go. Do whatever makes you happy.

She takes a beat, regrouping.

SARAH

Happiness is not an option anymore. We're going. It's going to be great. I swear.

A KNOCK at the door before it opens. It's Pete.

PETE

Hey. Lewis, a package came for you. It's upstairs.

LEWIS

Thanks.
(to Sarah)
We need to...

...get going.

SARAH

I'm almost ready.

Lewis heads for the stairs.

PETE

(to Sarah)
I like your dress.

SARAH

Thank you.

PETE

It's very sexy.

The worst thing he could have said. Lewis GROANS as he exits. Sarah moves back into panic-mode.

PETE (cont'd)

(confused)
What?

Sarah gives a gesture, it's complicated. She starts going through her jackets and sweaters, trying to find one that will de-hottify her dress.

As she's searching...

SARAH

So what's this about you and Mason going for the State Department?

PETE

It's the foreign service officer training program. It's a very cool job. You basically run embassies.

He sits down on the bed.

SARAH

When do you find out if you got it?

PETE

All that's left is a background check. They're sending agents to the house tomorrow morning.

SARAH

What do they ask?

PETE

Where were you born, what organizations have you joined, do you have any secret vendetta against the U.S. The usual stuff.

SARAH

What drugs have you done.

PETE

Yeah, that too.

SARAH

From what I've heard, State is very hardcore about that. What do you say when they ask?

PETE

Drug? What's a drug?

She smiles, tossing aside three more sweater/jacket options.

SARAH

First and only time I got stoned was with you. Senior year, debate championships.

PETE

(confused)
You didn't smoke.

SARAH

But I was in the room. Contact high.

(beat)

You also kissed me. That was part of it.

Although he tries to hide it, it's like a blindfold being pulled off. Pete is starting to remember things he'd forgotten.

Sarah catches the look, but doesn't comment.

From upstairs...

LEWIS [O.S.]

Sarah? Are you about ready?

SARAH

(a complete lie)

Yes!

She makes a whole new wardrobe plan.

PETE

You think I'm a bad influence?

SARAH

Good, bad, I think you're an influence -- more of an influence than you realize. Mason looks up to you.

PETE

C'mon.

SARAH

You guys need each other. He's the angel on your shoulder, and you're the devil on his.

PETE

(a little offended)

Thanks.

She finally decides on sweater, one of the first things she tried. Heading out...

SARAH

I mean that in the best possible way.

A background PIANO and the CLINKS of forks on plates.

Mason and Finley are having dinner with their parents. It's not going well.

FINLEY

(to her mother)

You make it sound like we're burglars. We are housesitting. People get paid good money for housesitting. We're doing it for free.

(changing tactics)

Would you rather we be living in Mason's old apartment, where there were rats and roaches and bullet holes?

Mason rolls his eyes at her description.

VIRGINIA SCOTT

We'd rather you be living at Cornell, where you're supposed to be getting a graduate degree.

JOSEPH SCOTT

We've already paid your tuition for the semester.

FINLEY

I'm sorry, but what? Do you want me to be unhappy?

JOSEPH SCOTT

We want you to be responsible.

FINLEY

I am being responsible.

VIRGINIA SCOTT

You've never lived on your own.

FINLEY

(outraged)

I lived in Europe for six months. I went climbing in Nepal. I can't believe this. I have done so many things that you have no idea about.

(beat)

I went night scuba diving in Mallorca with hashish dealers.

MASON

Way to sell the responsibility thing.

VIRGINIA SCOTT

Finley, yes. You've had a lot of wild adventures, most of which we probably shouldn't know about. But when you were done -- when the money ran out -- you came home. To the same room you've had since junior high.

JOSEPH SCOTT

That room isn't going to be there anymore, do you understand?

FINLEY

Fine.

VIRGINIA SCOTT

Your father and I both think you should go back to Cornell.

FINLEY

(heated)

Why is every family conversation is about how I screwed up? The three of you are perfect but Finley is the problem. Finley doesn't have a job. Finley doesn't have a graduate degree. Finley doesn't have a Big Life Plan.

JOSEPH SCOTT

Mason has a goal.

FINLEY

Mason got fired.

Mason looks over. What the fuck?

FINLEY (cont'd)

He didn't want to tell you until he got a new job. You've made him so afraid of failure, he couldn't face you.

A beat, finding their bearings.

VIRGINIA SCOTT

Is that true?

Mason glares at his sister. Finally...

MASON

Yes, I'm no longer working for Abbott. I'm interviewing at other places. I'm in the final cut for the Foreign Service Officer training program.

JOSEPH SCOTT
You don't want to work at the State
Department.

MASON
Maybe I do.

VIRGINIA SCOTT
Why were you fired?

MASON
It's complicated. I really don't want to
get into it.

JOSEPH SCOTT
It wasn't your fault.

MASON
Yes, it was partly my fault.

Virginia looks at Joseph. They're thinking the same thing.

JOSEPH SCOTT
Roger knows Abbott. I could have him
call...

MASON
No! I don't want anyone to call anyone.
This is why I didn't tell you -- I didn't
want you trying to fix this. I got the
job with Abbott on my own. I lost it on
my own, and I will get the next one on my
own.

His mother looks away, frustrated. Finley offers a
conciliatory look at Mason, who doesn't acknowledge her.

29 INT. TOWNHOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

29

Joseph Scott sits with a drink, talking with Lewis and Mason.

LEWIS
I had Byerson for Constitutional. He
would go on for hours about how smoker's
rights were being chipped away.

JOSEPH SCOTT
Starting with...

LEWIS
Johnson vs. New Hampshire, 1984.

JOSEPH SCOTT
Very good.

LEWIS
(getting up)
I should head down. It was good to meet
you, Mr. Scott.

JOSEPH SCOTT
Likewise, Lewis.

Joseph watches Lewis walk out, impressed.

JOSEPH SCOTT (cont'd)
He's a bright young man.

MASON
Of course he is.
(mocking)
He's a Yalie.

His father smiles, lifts his drink to toast. Mason raises an
air-toast.

JOSEPH SCOTT
You could go Yale.

MASON
I went to Harvard.

JOSEPH SCOTT
You could go for law school. They have
your politics.

MASON
So does Washington.

JOSEPH SCOTT
What is a man these days without a law
degree?

MASON
Human?

JOSEPH SCOTT
Ba-dum-bum.

It's an old joke between them.

JOSEPH SCOTT (cont'd)
I'm serious. You could take your LSATs
this winter and be in by the fall.
(MORE)

JOSEPH SCOTT (cont'd)
 What better time than now? You're not working.

MASON
 I'll get another job.

JOSEPH SCOTT
 For the State Department? It's a bureaucracy, Mason. You'll be pushing papers and filling out forms.

MASON
 And dealing with global issues.

JOSEPH SCOTT
 You're just like your sister.

MASON
 Excuse me?

JOSEPH SCOTT
 You rush into things without planning, then convince yourself it's what you always wanted. Think about where the State Department puts you in five years. I know I'm not supposed to understand you, but I really think I do. You won't be happy there.

Getting up, Joseph puts on his coat.

JOSEPH SCOTT (cont'd)
 If I were you, I'd think about law school.

A smile.

MASON
 You're not me.

JOSEPH SCOTT
 And herein lies our problem.

He tweaks his son on the chin.

30 INT. FINLEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

30

Finley lies back on her bed, feet on the wall. She brushes away one last tear.

A KNOCK at the door. Mason pokes his head in.

MASON
You okay?

FINLEY
Fine.

MASON
Liar.

He enters.

MASON (cont'd)
Scootch.

She moves over to the edge of bed. Mason lies down opposite her. We look straight down upon them.

MASON
They're not bad people, our parents.

FINLEY
I know.

MASON
They didn't hit us, or yell at us, or lock us in basements. They just fed us and clothed us and sent us to really good schools and encouraged us to pursue our ambitions, damn them.

She smiles.

MASON (cont'd)
So now I reach the point where it is my natural duty to question my father's complete belief system, and yet I can't fault him as a father.

(beat)
It's very frustrating.

FINLEY
I was horrible to you tonight.

MASON
Yeah, you were.

FINLEY
You still love me, don't you?

MASON
Yes.

FINLEY

I'm not a pain in the ass?

A beat. Mason says nothing. Finley looks over.

MASON

What? Yes, you are a pain in the ass sometimes. That's a simple fact.

FINLEY

Your life would be easier if I hadn't come here.

MASON

Life would be easier but a lot less fun. I know I rip on you a lot, but you're kinda great.

FINLEY

I am?

MASON

You're honest with me, always. I really need that here.

He tags her hand. She smiles.

FINLEY

I hope you get the State Department job. I hope you're wildly successful and happy.

MASON

Thanks.

31 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

31

Pete is looking in the fridge. [PRODUCTION NOTE: At this point, none of the food has labels.]

Sarah is drying a bowl.

PETE

Why do we never have milk?

SARAH

There's ongoing food issues.

Pete sniffs a questionable bottle of grapefruit juice. Keeps looking.

PETE

How was dinner?

SARAH

To summarize: the food was good, the dress was too sexy, and Lewis' family hates me.

PETE

No one could ever hate you.

(beat)

Who's oolong tea is this?

SARAH

I think it came with the house.

Pete takes the bottle out, apprehensive. Cracks it open, sips it. A shrug. It's okay.

Pete heads out into the living room. We HOLD ON Sarah, deciding whether she's going to say something. Finally, she goes after him.

INT. FOYER/STAIRS/HALLWAY - NIGHT

As Pete is heading up the stairs...

SARAH

Pete. Hold up.

They keep their voices low-ish, as people could be sleeping.

SARAH (cont'd)

Earlier we were talking about debate finals, back in high school, and I didn't say something I wanted to say.

PETE

(a little apprehensive)

Okay.

SARAH

The thing is, those four days, I had a total crush on you.

On Pete, flattered but bewildered.

SARAH (cont'd)

I kind of thought we were hitting it off, and then we faced each other in the quarter-finals, and you just ripped me apart.

PETE

It was debate.

SARAH

No, it was personal. You knew exactly where to hit me. I got flustered and couldn't defend myself.

A beat. Pete doesn't know what to say other than...

PETE

I'm sorry.

SARAH

I'm over it. It was high school. I've changed, I think you've changed.

PETE

I have?

SARAH

For the better. Which is why I want to talk about Mason. I know you both want this State Department job, but you want it more.

A beat. Pete has to admit...

PETE

Yeah. I probably do. I've wanted it longer.

SARAH

Then you should ask Mason to step aside.

Pete waves her off, no way.

SARAH (cont'd)

I'm serious. Look at it logically. There are three possible outcomes. He gets in and you don't. You're upset. You get in and he doesn't. He's upset.

PETE

Or we both get in.

SARAH

In which case, you're competing with him every day, over assignments, contacts, relationships. Your friendship is at stake.

PETE

C'mon. It's not.

SARAH

This interview tomorrow. Are you going to warn Mason about the drug questions?

PETE

He doesn't need me to tell him.

(off reaction)

What, you think I'm trying to screw Mason over?

SARAH

I don't. It's just I know you, Pete. When push comes to shove, you're usually not the one getting shoved.

A beat. Backing off from this intrusion...

SARAH (cont'd)

Good night.

PETE

Night.

As she heads for the downstairs doorway, we settle on Pete, still sitting on the staircase.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

34 INT. TOWNHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

34

Dressed for work (except Finley), the five roommates stand around the island, finishing breakfast and holding an impromptu house meeting. Finley is visibly annoyed by the discussion.

LEWIS

I move that all food in the refrigerator be labelled by its owner, for the exclusive use of said owner.

PETE

Second.

MASON

The motion is made and seconded. Is there discussion?

FINLEY

Yes, this is retarded. You people are insane.

SARAH

(ignoring)

I move to amend the motion to set aside a class of foods including but not limited to mustard, mayonnaise, margarine and ketchup as community property, free to be used by anyone.

PETE

Second.

LEWIS

(to Sarah)

The famed condiment amendment.

MASON

Is there discussion on the amendment?

(hearing none)

All in favor?

Pete, Lewis and Sarah say "aye."

MASON (cont'd)

All opposed?

FINLEY
(hand up)
...to this entire process.

MASON
The motion carries. Discussion on the
motion as amended?
(hearing none)
All in favor of the motion as amended?

All say "aye," except Finley.

MASON (cont'd)
All opposed?

Finley just rolls her eyes.

MASON (cont'd)
The motion carries. Without objection,
the chair designates Lewis to draft a
list of proposed "excluded foods."
(all nod)
Meeting adjourned.

He bangs his Coke on the counter, then goes back to reading
his Newsweek and eating his bagel.

Sarah and Pete head out, while Lewis begins writing the list.
Finley is still appalled by what she's just witnessed.

LEWIS
(to Mason, re: list)
Peanut butter?

MASON
Food, not a condiment.

LEWIS
I agree.

FINLEY
You people terrify me.

As she starts to leave...

LEWIS (cont'd)
Finley, can I ask you a question?
(she stops)
You and Mason are twins, but you have
different accents. How is that possible?

Mason smiles a little, without looking up.

FINLEY

I went to boarding school in Switzerland.

MASON

For a month, before they sent you home.

(to Lewis)

In fifth grade she did a book report on Pride and Prejudice and adopted what she thought was a British accent. This is the result.

FINLEY

That is not true.

MASON

"Oh Mumsie, oh Father, I do love you ever so." It was like living inside Masterpiece Theatre. She started putting "u's" in words that should never, ever have "u's." Our parents finally sent her to a speech therapist.

As she heads in to the living room...

FINLEY

He was not a speech therapist.

MASON

Not a qualified one, at least.

A beat, then he follows her...

37 INT. LIVING / DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

37

...past Sarah at the dining room table. Sarah is packing her stuff for work.

SARAH

(to Finley)

You have your date with Stefan tonight.

FINLEY

Ja wohl. He's taking me to some kind of party.

Pete is looking out the windows.

PETE

Mason! They're here.

Mason was halfway up the stairs, but reverses for the front door. Pete watches him as he goes, almost saying something, then not.

His look takes him past Sarah, who is looking straight at him.

At the last possible moment, just as Mason's about to open the door...

PETE

Hold up.

MASON

What?

PETE

(closing the distance;
quietly)

What are you going to say about the drug thing?

MASON

What drug thing?

PETE

They're going to ask you what drugs you've ever done. Just say nothing. Never seen a drug, never touched one.

MASON

It's not like I've been freebasing heroin.

The doorbell RINGS.

PETE

I know a guy who went through one of these for Advance. Any drug thing is a red flag.

ANGLE ON Mason, put off-guard by these sudden instructions.

MASON

Why are you telling me this now?

PETE

Just don't say anything.
(off reaction)
Trust me.

38 INT. TOWNHOUSE LIVING / DINING ROOM - DAY

38

Mason sits on the couch, facing his INTERVIEWER. [We never hear the interviewers ask questions. Instead, we jump cut from answer to answer.]

MASON

Richmond, Virginia. Although my family moved to Manhattan when my sister and I were 12.

(jump cut)

My father is a defense attorney. My mother is a fundraiser. They've been married for...

(trying to remember)

...29 years.

39 INT. TOWNHOUSE BACK PORCH - DAY [SIMULTANEOUS]

39

Pete sits across from INTERVIEWER #2.

PETE

My father is in the Army.

(jump cut)

No, I don't know what rank. I'm not in contact with him anymore. My mother is a secretary back in Tucson.

INTERCUT PORCH / LIVING ROOM

MASON

Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, England, Ireland, Belgium...

PETE

I've never left the country.

MASON

I met Pete four summers ago. It was a D.C. internship program.

PETE

We were both moving here after graduation, so we said, hey, let's be roommates.

(jump cut; a beat)

I won't even take Tylenol for a headache. You can read through the list, but I'm sure I haven't done any of the drugs on it. That's just not my scene.

Back to Mason, making a decision...

MASON

Just marijuana. That and only that.

(jump cut)

How many times? I would say three or four times. No, just three times. All of them were in college. The situation where you're at a party and they're passing a joint around, or a pipe, and even if you don't want any yourself, you sort of have to pass it along. So it was just in those situations I've tried it. It was fine. It was just pot. It wasn't any big deal.

From Mason's P.O.V., we see the interviewer writing down what he said.

On Mason. Did he say too much?

MASON

I'd just like to stress the "not a big deal" aspect of it.

40 EXT. BATTING CAGES - DAY

40

THUNDER overhead. It's a gray afternoon, and a storm is brewing.

Pete swings and connects. Mason is behind the fence.

PETE

These guys didn't want to know if you had ever smoked pot. They just wanted to check the box that said "no."

A swing.

MASON

You're right. I mean, you're not ethically right, but you are correct in your assessment.

(Pete swings)

Ironically, two of the three times I smoked pot was with you.

PETE

I know. I am an enabler.

A swing. That was the last ball.

MASON

They asked if I'd ever seen you do drugs
and I said no.

PETE

See, that. You're willing to lie for
other people, but not for yourself. Why?

MASON

I don't know. I don't know.

Pete loads more quarters into the machine.

MASON (cont'd)

It's about to rain.

PETE

No it's not.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN BUS SHELTER - DAY

An absolute downpour, splashing off the concrete. We TILT UP
to find Mason and Pete, soaked, cold and half-drowned.

Mason glares at Pete. Not going to rain, huh?

A beat.

PETE

Want to know what I think?

MASON

Bet you're going to tell me.

PETE

You don't even want the State Department
job. I mean, I've known you for a year
and you've never mentioned it. My theory
is, you got fired, you're feeling down,
now you just want some quick validation.

MASON

Really.

PETE

(overlapping)

By getting into an exclusive program,
that's someone saying, "You, Mason Scott,
you're better than everyone else."

MASON

Aha!

PETE

Your whole life, you've always been better than everyone else. The problem is, everyone here is better than everyone else. You're in the top one percent of the nation. Everybody in D.C. is the best and the brightest. Suddenly, you're not so special.

MASON

What is this, the de-motivational pep talk?

A beat.

PETE

Forget it.

MASON

No. Let's not forget it, Pete. What are you actually trying to say? We've been having these weird half-conversations, and then this morning at the last minute you spring this drug issue on me. Were you trying to sabotage me?

PETE

I was trying to help you.

MASON

I really wish I could believe you.

It escalates further.

PETE

You know, I actually want this job. You've travelled the world. I've never left the country.

MASON

So did you want me to drop out? Did you? Because I would have, Pete. I would have stepped aside if you asked.

PETE

I thought you'd figure it out for yourself. You don't really want this job.

MASON

You know what it is? I'm getting sick of people telling me what I should want. This is my life, my decisions. So don't pretend you know what's best for me.

He heads out into the rain, walking home.

After a beat --

PETE

Mason!

(he turns)

I know why you told the truth. To sabotage yourself. Give you a good excuse why you didn't get the job and still be Mason Scott, high and mighty, the most honest man who ever lived.

MASON

Good luck, Pete. I hope you get the job. America needs you.

As Mason heads off into the rain, we end close on Pete.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

43 INT. GUEST APARTMENT - NIGHT

43

We hear RAIN outside, and occasional thunder. The room is dark. The alarm clock reads 2:32 AM.

FINLEY
(urgent whisper)
Sarah. Sarah!

A male GRUNT.

FINLEY (cont'd)
Sorry!

More GROANING. A bedside lamp switches on, revealing Lewis. He's blurry-eyed and grouchy.

Finley is crouched beside the bed.

LEWIS
Finley.

FINLEY
Sorry! I need Sarah.

Sarah leans up over Lewis' big shoulder.

SARAH
Finley, what is it?

FINLEY
I have to talk to you about Stefan.
(beat)
You guys are completely naked under there, aren't you?

44 INT. LIVING / DINING ROOM - NIGHT

44

The sound of RAIN continues underneath. In her pajamas, Sarah sits with a very agitated Finley.

SARAH
What happened? Did Stefan try to assault you?

FINLEY
He tried to indoctrinate me.

She hands over a printed booklet.

FINLEY (cont'd)
 Everything about being directionless,
 trying to figure out what you want to do,
 that was part of his spiel. And the
 "party" he took me to wasn't a party at
 all. It was some kind of group meeting.
 Sarah, he runs a cult.

SARAH
 (flipping through brochure)
 Just because he has certain religious
 beliefs doesn't make him a cult leader.

FINLEY
 I'm telling you he is. When I was hiding
 in his bathroom, I started going through
 some of the books in there. He's
 connected to that same group in Europe,
 the one with the hoods, and the sundials,
 and the "Hey-would-you-like-some-cyanide-
 with-that?" He goes after embassy
 staffers because they're young,
 vulnerable...

SARAH
 ...and have diplomatic immunity.

FINLEY
 They can do anything, and the government
 can't arrest them. There's a story
 there.

Sarah tucks her feet up underneath herself, thinking.

SARAH
 I would need more proof.

On Finley, frustrated. But Sarah is still plotting...

SARAH (cont'd)
 What time is it in Germany?

CUT TO:

45 MONTAGE

45

At the dining room table, Finley and Sarah make calls. On the cordless phone, Finley sometimes translates, sometimes hands it over to Sarah. Sarah types on her Powerbook.

Lucy rolls over at their feet. Finley and Sarah both reach for the same Diet Coke. Dosing off, Finley wakes up suddenly, confused. Sarah keeps typing.

46 INT. LIVING / DINING ROOM - TWILIGHT

46

Finley completes a pyramid of empty Diet Coke cans. She looks to the windows, where the light is just starting to grow blue. The rain has stopped.

FINLEY

Do you realize, we just pulled an all-nighter.

SARAH

(still typing)
Major college flashback.

FINLEY

When I'm sleep-deprived, I get very punchy and weird. Once at Brown during finals I started calling everyone Mr. Fart Farmer. "Hey, Mr. Fart Farmer how's the wife and the little farts?" "Sorry I don't have a #2 pencil, Mr. FART FARMER."

Sarah finishes spell-checking.

SARAH

Done.

She turns the Powerbook so Finley can read it. A paragraph in, Finley is impressed.

FINLEY

You are going to be the hero of the network.

47 INT. CNL NEWSROOM - DAY

47

GEOFF

We can't run this.

Geoff hands her back the copy. Just reading it has sent him into a panic.

SARAH

What do you mean? I have nine sources. We're more than covered.

GEOFF

You're turning this into an indictment.
I just wanted a parking story, not an
expose on foreign cults.

SARAH

I already gave it to Packman.

Speak of the Devil...

PACKMAN

Both of you, in here now.

INT. PACKMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Sarah and Geoff take seats. This can't be good.

PACKMAN

(to Geoff)

This diplomat story. Did you assign it?

GEOFF

It was a different story.

SARAH

(jumping in)

My interviews led me to an angle I
thought was more compelling.

PACKMAN

So you just went and changed the
assignment without asking?

How can she answer that?

SARAH

That was not my intention but I
apologize.

PACKMAN

Don't ever do it again.

SARAH

Understood.

PACKMAN

Where are you at with the story now?

SARAH

I've been pulling research all morning.
There's a lot more.

PACKMAN
Let me see it by four.

GEOFF
(surprised)
We're going to run it?

PACKMAN
Of course we are. It's good.

A beat.

GEOFF
I agree.

ANGLE ON Sarah, suppressing her reaction to Geoff's reversal.

48 INT. TOWNHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

48

Dressed for work, Pete rips open an official-looking envelope. Reads the letter inside. Finley awaits his reaction.

He finally smiles.

PETE
(showing the letter)
I got in. Program starts in two weeks.

Finley cheers, kissing him on the cheek. It was a bit closer to the lips than she intended.

FINLEY
I knew you would get it.

PETE
What about Mason?

FINLEY
He got an envelope, too.

She shows it to him. It's still sealed.

PETE
We should let him open it.

A beat, then he takes the envelope from her, holds it up to the light.

FINLEY
You can't see through. I tried.

She takes it back. A beat. With her finger, she flips up a corner of the flap, tearing it a little.

FINLEY (cont'd)

Oops.

Again, and she tears a little more. Then, screw it. She just rips it open.

FINLEY

"Dear Mr. Scott, In regards to your phone call yesterday, I want to thank you for your honesty and candor in declining your candidacy for the Foreign Service Officer training program."

PETE

(surprised)

He pulled out of the running.

FINLEY

"I wish you the best of luck in your career and future endeavors. Catherine Maxwell, Program Director."

Pete takes the letter, re-reads it. He and Finley look at each other, a beat.

49 INT. SHORT SKINNY CONGRESS HALLWAY - DAY

49

PUSH IN on the sign for John Owens, State of Michigan. Then TURN TO SEE Mason talking with Kristi. She straightens his tie.

KRISTI

Whatever you do, don't mention the Pistons. He's obsessed.

MASON

Kristi, thank you for doing this.

KRISTI

I like it when the good guys win.

50 INT. OWEN'S PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY

50

MOVE TO REVEAL Representative JOHN OWENS (30's). He's clean-cut and handsome, smart and compassionate. In a word, ideal.

OWENS

So why not the State Department?

MASON

I wasn't being honest with myself. I am Mr. Domestic Policy. Working in Congress is why I came to Washington. No other job is going to make me happy. Everyone else could see that but me.

OWENS

What you told me about your old job, getting fired. Would you do the same thing again?

MASON

In execution, no. In spirit, yes. It was the right thing to do. I just did it wrongly.

(beat)

I'm 22 years old. And I'm realizing that I don't know everything. I'm going to screw up sometimes. But that's better than doing nothing for fear of making a mistake.

A beat.

OWENS

Well.

(a beat)

Would you like a job?

MASON

(a smile)

Very very much.

53 INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

53

Checking the mostly-empty lobby, Finley approaches the front desk. A female DESKWORKER looks up.

FINLEY

Hi. I'm supposed to be meeting my parents. Could I call up to their room?

DESKWORKER

Certainly. What's the last name?

FINLEY

Scott.

Typing, then...

DESKWORKER
Joseph or Virginia?

FINLEY
That's them.

DESKWORKER
Which one?

FINLEY
(confused)
Excuse me?

DESKWORKER
Joseph Scott or Virginia Scott? They're
in separate rooms.

ANGLE ON Finley. Puzzled, but not alarmed. Clearly what the woman means is...

FINLEY
Separate adjoining rooms.

DESKWORKER
(checking)
No. One's on the 18th floor, one's on
the 20th.

A beat. We feel something sinking in Finley, a note of dread that grows more pronounced as we continue.

FINLEY
That doesn't make sense. They're
together.
(a beat)
They've always been together.

DESKWORKER
(at a loss)
I'm sorry.

A man's voice behind her...

VOICE
Finley!

She turns to see Mason across the lobby, still dressed from his interview.

MASON
Mom and Dad are in the restaurant.

She blinks.

54 INT. HOTEL CAFE - DAY

54

Finley enters the restaurant with her brother, still numb. The note of doom has gotten more forceful.

MASON

I got a job this morning, with Owens of Michigan. I start next week. I don't want to jinx it, but it feels like it's going to be so much better than the job with Abbott, because the office is smaller, and my actual responsibilities are a lot greater...

Mason continues speaking, but we're focusing only on Finley. The speed RAMPS DOWN, and Mason's voice is lost.

From Finley's P.O.V., we look across the restaurant to see her mother and her father sitting at a table, waiting. They're not laughing, not talking. Their hands are not touching. They're not looking at each other.

They're conspicuously, deliberately not looking at each other.

Finley stops in her tracks, studying her parents.

Virginia Scott notices Finley and Mason. She straightens up. So does Joseph. They begin a subtle, happy charade.

ANGLE ON Finley. It's like a betrayal.

Mason steps into the shot, breaking the spell.

BACK TO SPEED

MASON (cont'd)

Finley. Fin? Is everything okay?

A beat.

She smiles faintly. Falsely.

FINLEY

Everything's fine.

On her look, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE