HOW TO GET AWAY WITH MURDER

Pilot

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ACT ONE

1 EXT. MAIN QUAD, MIDDLETON UNIVERSITY - NIGHT 1

FOOTBALL PLAYERS. CHEERLEADERS. A SEA OF SCREAMING, RILED UP COLLEGE STUDENTS...because we've been thrust into the center of a PEP RALLY for the MIDDLETON UNIVERSITY WARRIORS. By day, this quad is filled with the best and brightest minds in the country -- future Rhodes Scholars and Nobel winners -- but right now? They're just drunk. Spooky, foreboding music sets the tone as we MOVE SLOW MOTION over the crowd. Even though it's the middle of winter, the GUYS are SHIRTLESS, showing off their pecs painted in school colors while their GIRLFRIENDS sit on their shoulders, chugging from bottles of whiskey. It's a wild, rowdy, debaucherous ORGY of school pride that only America's wealthiest children could get away with. The only person who could possibly get them to pay attention right now is the FOOTBALL COACH shouting into a mic on the stage, a preacher with his disciples. He holds a TORCH.

FOOTBALL COACH
It's been a rough year, no doubt, but that all ends Saturday! Because that's when this team, my Warriors, are gonna burn those lazy, cocky, pansy-ass Princeton players to the ground! AIN'T THAT RIGHT, MIDDLETON?!! LET ME HEAR IT!!

As the crowd ROARS, the coach now brings the torch to a TOWERING WOODEN EFFIGY behind him, the word "Princeton" painted across its make-believe jersey. And as the effigy BURSTS INTO FLAMES and the MARCHING BAND LAUNCHES INTO SONG, the camera suddenly speeds up, pushing through the students and over the bonfire and past the gothic buildings and ivy-covered arches that make up this beautiful campus until we CRASH INTO --

2 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT 2

It's dark and eerie as we whip past the trees, deeper and deeper into the woods, the sounds of the pep rally fading behind us. Suddenly the camera SCREECHES TO A HALT. We are now in a small CLEARING. Through the dark we see 3 TWENTY-SOMETHINGS, a diverse motley crew, shivering in the cold and freaking out. About what, we'll soon discover. The first of them, MICHAELA PRATT (27, preppy, type-A) paces and thinks as the two others sit, quiet and trembling. She was born knowing how to "lean in" so that's what she's going to do right now -- take control, CEO this shit.

MICHAELA
It's been too long. We did what we said, we waited, we stuck to our word, but we can't just sit here all night. We have to do something. And I know you're not going to like it, but I'm calling Aiden.

PATRICK
ARE YOU HIGH??!

Under normal circumstances, PATRICK DONAHUE (25) is sexy, sophisticated, confident, cool, and hyper-articulate. Right now though? He's shitting his pants.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
We're not calling your fiancé! We wait. THAT is what we decided so THAT is what we're going to do.

MICHAELA
I was never part of that decision.

PATRICK
Because you had a meltdown! You could barely make a sentence! So shut up, sit down, and stop acting like a little bitch baby.

MICHAELA
I am acting like a person does in a situation like this!

PATRICK
No. You're hysterical and you need to calm the hell down.

MICHAELA
DO NOT TELL ME HOW TO FEEL RIGHT NOW!

WES (O.S.)
Hey.

They all jump, SCREAMING BLOODY MURDER, just like we do at home, because now a 4th person stands there. Meet WES GIBBINS (27). Wes is boyish, easy-going, instantly likable...and his t-shirt is covered in blood.

WES (CONT'D)
Sorry it took me so long. I went back for this.

Wes removes a backpack, pulls out a TROPHY, also covered in blood.

MICHAELA
Wes! Why'd you bring that here? Take it back *right now*.

LAUREL
No. It's smart.

Finally we hear from LAUREL WILDING (23, bookish, introverted). She's been quiet up till now.

That's her thing -- she's a thinker, an observer, the type of person easy to underestimate. She has the answer now though, decisive, confident.

LAUREL (CONT'D)
The People vs. Gallivan! Pennsylvania vs. Gottlieb! Cases the prosecution should've won but lost because there was no murder weapon...

PATRICK
So what are you saying?

LAUREL
We clean it and put it back. Hide it in plain sight.
(beat)
<u>After</u> we bury the body.

A long beat as everyone takes that in. Then --

MICHAELA
No, absolutely NOT.

PATRICK
I agree with Michaela.

LAUREL
Patrick--

PATRICK
The trophy we need, yes. But the body stays where it is.

LAUREL
The body is what gets us caught.

PATRICK
Then why'd we leave it there in the first place?

LAUREL
Because we panicked. All of us. But now that we're finally thinking straight--

MICHAELA
<u>You</u> are not thinking straight--

LAUREL
Then what do you suggest??!

MICHAELA
Something that doesn't involve carrying a body across campus on the busiest night of the year!

PATRICK
She's right, Laurel. Even if we were able to get it out of the house, unseen, the ground is frozen--

LAUREL
We have all night to dig!

PATRICK
You don't know what you're talking about!

LAUREL
This is murder, none of us know what we're talking about!

MICHAELA
Please, just yell that a little louder--

WES
Hey...

MICHAELA
Honestly, you're all dumber than I thought if you think we should go back there.

PATRICK
I'm agreeing with you!

Now everyone's yelling, except Wes who keeps trying to interrupt.

MICHAELA/PATRICK/LAUREL/WES
You should've agreed with me weeks ago when I begged, BEGGED, to tell the police instead of deluding ourselves that we were on the right side of this!/And I'm sorry Laurel but someone will sniff out the body if we bury it, if they don't catch us before, there are cops everywhere tonight!/You two need to MAN UP and THINK because we're going to jail unless we go back there and destroy the DNA!/Guys...Listen...Hey...SHUT UP!

Finally they all stop, look at Wes. He's calm, focused, a quiet and confident leader to this very outspoken group.

WES
It's two against two. We have no other choice. We flip a coin.

Beat.

MICHAELA/PATRICK/LAUREL
That is the dumbest thing you've ever said. /I'm not letting a freaking coin decide this. /We're adults, we can figure this out...

WES
We don't have time to fight! We need to make a decision and commit to it. So if someone has a better idea, say it now!

They all realize, no one does. Wes pulls a coin out of his pocket.

WES (CONT'D)
Heads we get the body. Tails we leave it where it is. Okay?

A beat, then they all nod. Okay. And as Wes tosses the coin in the air, the four of them watching and freezing and totally totally fucked, we HOLD TIGHT ON WES AND CUT TO:

3 EXT. MAIN QUAD, MIDDLETON UNIVERSITY - DAY - 4 MONTHS EARLIER 3

Wes, the September sun on his face, now rides his bike through Middleton's pristine, manicured campus. A CHYRON appears: **FOUR MONTHS EARLIER**. He weaves his way past the fresh-faced, Abercrombie-clad undergrads playing frisbee on the green and professors holding class under trees. And just as we find ourselves remembering our own college days and wishing we could go back, and to this idyllic campus in particular, Wes stops his bike in front of a beautiful, historic building. He looks up at the letters etched into the stone: "MIDDLETON LAW SCHOOL." Wes takes in the sight, his face full of so much hope and promise, that he doesn't notice the BULLETIN BOARD he passes on his way inside. Stapled across every inch of its surface is the same FLIER -- it shows a PHOTO of missing student LILA STANGARD (21, all-American) printed with the words, "Have you seen me?" As we HOLD ON this eerie, haunting image, a mystery about to unfold...

4 INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY 4

Wes enters through the back of this old-fashioned lecture hall filled with 80 OF THE MOST BRILLIANT LAW STUDENTS IN AMERICA. As he makes his way to the front of the room, smiling at people, way too friendly, we hear snippets of different conversations, but all of them about the same exact person.

NERVOUS GIRL
I threw up four times this morning worried she's gonna call on me...

DOUCHEFACE
She's a ballbuster, sure, but I spent my summer interning for Justice
(MORE)

DOUCHEFACE (CONT'D)
Roberts. I know how to handle a big personality...

NERDY INTELLECTUAL
Dershowitz has the upper hand in the academic world but I think DeWitt's clearly the better defense attorney...

Wes reaches the front row, taking a seat next to a person we do not yet see. He takes a deep breath.

WES
Here we go. I'm not usually a first row kinda guy but I promised myself I wouldn't hide in the back of the class on the first day--

MICHAELA
I'm engaged.

And now we REVEAL MICHAELA in the next seat. She wears a tasteful sweater set and a GIANT DIAMOND RING, which she now holds out for Wes to see. He realizes what she's thinking...

WES
Oh. Oh no. I wasn't hitting on... That's not... You're attractive, yes, but--

MICHAELA
Seats are assigned. There's a chart over there.

Michaela goes back to meticulously high-lighting her already tabbed TEXTBOOK. Wes, now mortified, quickly hurries off, passing--

PATRICK
Nice try, player.

Patrick's all suave and dapper in a tie, not a hair out of place.

WES
No. I wasn't...

PATRICK
You should go find your seat. You don't wanna be a sitting duck when the Shooter gets here.

WES
Who?

PATRICK
(amused)
Oh my god. You have no idea what you just walked into.

But before Wes can ask what he means, the ROOM SUDDENLY GOES QUIET as PROFESSOR ANNALISE DEWITT (40s) enters. Annalise is everything you hope your law professor will be -- brilliant, passionate, creative, charismatic. She's also everything you don't expect -- sexy, elegant, glamorous, dangerous. Without a word or wasted motion, a shark through water, she moves to the front of the room.

ANNALISE
Good morning. I don't know what terrible things you've all done up to this point in your lives but clearly your karma's out of balance to get assigned to my class. That said, here we all are. I'm Professor Annalise DeWitt and this is Criminal Law 100. Or, as I prefer to call it --

She picks up a RED MARKER and writes on the board, the students all watching, twisting their necks to see the words. Finally she finishes, turning to them as she reads the words aloud...

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
How to get away with murder.

And as the students sit forward in their seats, some amused, some scared, but all of them THRILLED beyond belief, we HOLD ON the words she's written on the board. Which is also our:

TITLE CARD

5 INT. LECTURE HALL - MOMENTS LATER 5

Annalise jumps into her lecture, commanding the room, Patton before his troops.

ANNALISE
Many of you brought your textbook. Don't bother. Not because you won't be tested on its content -- you will -- but because that's material you'll need to learn on your own time. Because this lecture? Is my time. And unlike many of my colleagues, I will NOT be teaching you how to study the law or theorize about it, but rather, how to practice it. In a courtroom. Like a real lawyer.
(beat)
Now, to our first case study, a past client of mine known as the Aspirin Assassin.

Everyone takes out a copy of a CASE STUDY PACKET. Everyone except Wes, who's just looking around, lost, no idea what's going on. But before he can ask anyone for help, Annalise starts a power-point, a PHOTO of GINA SADOWSKI (30s, peroxide blonde, trashy sexy) now popping up on the screen.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Tell us the facts of the case...

Annalise looks to her seating chart, everyone shifting nervously, before she comes upon a name.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Patrick Donahue.

Patrick stands -- effortless and confident.

PATRICK
The People vs. Gina Sadowski was a case of attempted murder. The defendant, Ms. Sadowski, worked as the Second Assistant to the victim, Arthur Levinson, who was the CEO of an advertising agency.

Annalise changes the slide, a PHOTO of ARTHUR LEVINSON (50s, distinguished) popping up. [Note: New slides will appear throughout this scene as we introduce new information -- photos of people they're discussing, evidence, etc.]

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Ms. Sadowski was not only Mr. Levinson's assistant though. She was also his mistress.

ANNALISE
What happened after Mr. Levinson's wife of 27 years, Agnes, discovered the affair...
(seating chart)
Asher Millstone?

DOUCHEFACE (20s, pompous, uber-prepared) stands.

DOUCHEFACE
Mr. Levinson ended the relationship with the defendant and transferred her to the accounting department. But on her last day working for him, she allegedly swapped one of his blood pressure pills for an aspirin -- which she knew he was allergic to.

ANNALISE
What occurred when Mr. Levinson ingested the aspirin? Anyone...?

HANDS SHOOT UP but Michaela beats them all by simply standing.

MICHAELA
Mr. Levinson went into anaphylactic shock. His throat swelled and his brain was deprived of oxygen for the 7 minutes it took his First Assistant to find him.
(then)
Michaela Pratt.

Michaela smiles and sits -- that's how it's done, bitches. And throughout all of this Wes is looking around, sweating, shocked that his classmates are able to answer these questions...

ANNALISE
We've established the *actus reus*, but what was the *mens rea*? Wesley Gibbins?

Wes winces. Fuck. He stands. Nervous.

WES
The *mens rea*. Right. Um...

Wes opens his textbook, starts to flip through it...

ANNALISE
Day 1 and you're unprepared?

WES
No. Well, yes, but... I didn't know there was anything to prepare.

ANNALISE
I emailed this assignment to the entire class two days ago.

WES
Oh. That's why. I didn't get that.

A beat. Annalise taking in the sight of him. Hungry.

ANNALISE
Mr. Gibbins, as a defense attorney I spend most of my time around professional liars so you're going to have to work a little harder to pull one over on me.

WES
I'm not...it's just...
(biting the bullet)
I only got accepted here two days ago. From the waitlist. So that's probably why you didn't get my email.

Some uncomfortable chuckles, Doucheface in particular getting a kick. We feel terrible for Wes, but Annalise presses on.

ANNALISE
Let me help you out. *Actus reus* means "guilty act" -- the poisoning of Mr. Levinson with an aspirin in this case -- whereas *mens rea* means "guilty mind." So what do you think was Ms. Sadowski's *mens rea*?

Wes just stares at her. No clue what she just said.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Think, Mr. Gibbins. This is nothing more than common sense.

But Wes can't think, his mind now only focused on the fact that everyone is staring at him and his utter, horrifying embarrassment when suddenly we hear...

LAUREL (O.S.)
To kill.

Annalise stops, turning to the class.

ANNALISE
Will the individual who just spoke please stand and repeat their answer?

Out of the abyss of students, a hidden, unnoticed LAUREL rises. She is meek, tentative, shy...different than the decisive, argumentative girl we met in the woods.

LAUREL
The *mens rea*, also referred to as "intent," was to kill Mr. Levinson. She didn't of course, which is why this was an attempted murder case and not first degree murder.

ANNALISE
That's right. Your name?

LAUREL
Laurel Wilding.

And just like a switch was flipped, from to zero to pissed--

ANNALISE
Don't ever take a learning opportunity away from another student, Ms. Wilding. No matter how smart we need everyone to think we are.

Ouch. Laurel sits, mortified, as Annalise continues.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Now who can tell me what verdict the jury came to on the case?

A beat as everyone starts to flip through the packets...

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
None of you know. Which makes sense. Because I lied. This is not a past case but one I go to trial on in two days. That's right. Gina is my client. And now your client too.

Off the students' stunned, excited faces, we CUT TO:

6 EXT. ANNALISE'S HOUSE/OFFICE - DAY 6

We're outside a quaint, two-story Victorian right on the edge of campus. A WOODEN SIGN sits out front -- "THE LAW OFFICE OF ANNALISE DEWITT, CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEY." And now as we get closer we see that STUDENTS pour out the door...

GINA (PRE-LAP)
Every day before lunch it was the same thing.

7 INT. LIVING ROOM, ANNALISE'S HOUSE/OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 7

CLOSE ON GINA SADOWSKI, now telling her story, her nervous voice shaking through her thick Philly accent...

GINA
I had to put a blood pressure pill on the plate next to his keyboard so he'd remember to take it.

We now REVERSE ANGLE to see ALL THE STUDENTS gathered in the packed living room -- people on the floor, pushed against the wall, overflowing into the foyer. Wes watches, on the edge of his seat.

GINA (CONT'D)
And this one day, I had been working there a few weeks at that point, I walked into his office to put the pill there when I screamed. Because Arthur was there. Back early from his lunch meeting. And when I say screamed, I mean, it was something out of a horror movie. I was like, crap, he's gonna fire me -- Arthur was a real ball busta' to work for -- but instead he just started laughin'. So then I started laughin'.
(MORE)

GINA (CONT'D)
That real, hard hurts-your-belly kind and...well I guess I really saw him then. As a man and not some big ad exec jerk. And then, well, he kissed me and...yeah, I became <u>that</u> girl.

As Gina looks down, embarrassed, Doucheface whispers to Laurel.

DOUCHEFACE
Something tells me she's always been "that girl."

Laurel just glares at him, offended, as Gina continues.

GINA
We went on like that for a few months until this one day when Agnes, his wife, she came in the office. I could tell the minute she met me -- she knew. I wasn't surprised when he told me he was moving me to accounting. They have kids and I was just some bimbo secretary. I told myself to just be happy they weren't firing me. It was on my last day working for him when I was coming back from lunch and saw the ambulance outside the building. When I heard why they were there, that Arthur was hurt...
(tearing up, emotional)
I loved him. I know that's hard to believe but... *I loved him, why in the hell would I want to hurt him??*

And now Gina's all tears. As are many of the students, moved by her story. Annalise puts a comforting hand on Gina.

ANNALISE
It's okay if you need a little break.

Gina nods and heads to the bathroom. Once she's gone...

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Gina only became my client 2 days ago. You haven't heard of her case yet because her previous lawyer was bad and had no clue had how to work the media. Which brings me to the question you're all asking yourselves. "Why are you here?" One, because the dean doesn't like me using university space for my private work.
(MORE)

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
And two, because your first assignment is to help me win this trial.

As the students take this in, confused, excited, scared...

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Tomorrow, each of you will have one minute to present what you believe is the best defense for Gina. I have my own strategy of course, but see if you can beat my approach, come up with something better. -- Mr. Gibbins?

WES
(startling)
Yes?

ANNALISE
A serious student would've checked with me about any prep-work, no matter the timing of their acceptance, so you'll go last -- an unenviable position since no two students will be able to present the same idea.

As Wes takes this in, totally fucked...

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Use the resources in this office -- Gina's discovery file, my library, the people who understand me even better than myself -- my associates Bonnie and Frank. Guys...?

From the back of the room, we spot FRANK DELGADO (38) and BONNIE WINTERBOTTOM (40s). Frank is a macho, takes-no-shit type of guy -- a local Philly boy done good -- while Bonnie is his perfect counterpoint -- a mama bear type, warm and sweet and smiley.

FRANK
Name's Frank and unlike every teacher you've had, I <u>do</u> believe there are stupid questions. So if you got 'em, please see my lovely colleague Bonnie.

BONNIE
<u>Or</u>, better, come to us with <u>answers</u>. We'll like you much better that way.

As the students stand, gathering their things--

ANNALISE
One more thing. Every year I choose 4 students to come work at the firm. I'll be using this assignment to decide who that will be. And the top student? Gets this.

Annalise pulls a TROPHY off the bookshelf, the trophy we recognize from that first scene in the woods.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Consider it your immunity idol. Whoever wins it can turn it back in at any point to get out of an assignment or exam. Now get to work.

And as the students all jump into action--

8 INT. WES'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 8

Wes works alone in this rundown, off campus apartment. An air mattress sits on the floor, unpacked boxes piled everywhere. He paces, talking to himself, as he reads from Gina's DISCOVERY FILE.

WES
The First Assistant saw Gina with an aspirin that morning. Forensics found aspirin residue on the plate. She was warned about his allergy the first day on the job, which means we should argue...we should argue...we should argue...that she's guilty.

He collapses on the bed, fucked, no ideas. But suddenly he squints, noticing something. He sits up, peering closer at -- a SERIES OF SCRATCH-MARKS etched into the wall. Scratch marks that look a lot like a crazy person took their fingernails to it. And as he sits there, staring at this creepy, strange image...

MUSIC BLARES through the wall - hip hop or something with lots of bass and anger. As he stares at the vibrating wall, HARD CUT TO:

9 INT. HALLWAY, WES'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER 9

Wes POUNDS on the neighbor's door. Finally it opens a crack, revealing REBECCA (22, edgy, pierced). We only get a glimpse but can immediately see that there's a haunted, vulnerable quality about her. Wes shouts over the music.

WES
Hi! Wes! I just moved in next door--
Are you okay?

He stops, because he now sees that she's been crying, her eyes red and puffy.

REBECCA
What do you want.

She's short, impatient. So much for a neighborly welcome.

WES
Your music! I normally wouldn't ask to turn it down but today was my first day of law school and I have this big assignment --

REBECCA
No.

WES
What?

REBECCA
The last guy who lived in your place was a law student. I put up with his crazy loud rabbit sex and nervous breakdown, you can deal with this.

She shuts the door in his face. And then turns the music even LOUDER. As Wes stands there, hating his new life...

10 INT. LIVING ROOM, ANNALISE'S HOUSE/OFFICE - NIGHT 10

Bonnie and Frank work on Gina's case -- piles of papers and Chinese take-out spread across the Persian Rug on the floor. But right now their attention is on the LIVE NEWS CONFERENCE playing on TV. Outside a police station, a very emotional STUART & MIRANDA STANGARD (50s) speak to a bank of reporters. Football hero LOGAN O'REILLY (22, square-jawed, built like an ox) stands beside them, holding a PHOTO of the MISSING GIRL FROM THE FLIERS, LILA. The scroll reads "Missing Middleton girl's parents speak out."

STUART STANBURG (ON TV)
To the person or persons who have taken our daughter, please, tell us your demands. And to Lila, sweetie, if you're watching, know we love you. All of us - your mother and I, your sisters, Logan--

BONNIE
How have they not arrested that fiancé yet? Look at him, he's a giant rage ball of testosterone and steroids!

FRANK
He's the hopes and dreams of an entire football season. No one's arresting him unless they find her body in his trunk.

ANNALISE (O.S.)
Who wrote this opening statement?

They startle, a stern Annalise now standing there as she shuts off the TV and throws some files down on the coffee table.

FRANK
I did.

ANNALISE
I hate it. Start over. Bonnie, no more burying my desk in precedents. We need to appeal to the jury's emotions, not their brains.
(then)
We have 36 hours, I don't care if it means staying here all night, we can do better than what we have right now.

They nod, good little schoolchildren, as Annalise leaves. Frank quickly dials his cell phone, Bonnie noticing...

BONNIE
The philosophy major?

FRANK
The gymnast. She's new.
(into phone)
Lacey, hey, I need to reschedule...

And as Frank steps out, he knocks a Chinese container over, food now spilling all over the rug. <u>And Bonnie</u>.

BONNIE
Frank!

And as we HOLD ON the NOW STAINED RUG and FLASH FORWARD TO --

11 *INT. LIVING ROOM, ANNALISE'S HOUSE/OFFICE - NIGHT - FLASH FORWARD* 11

That same rug now being rolled up by Wes and Patrick. <u>Because we are now back to that night in the woods</u>. And although we don't know who it is yet, we can tell there is now a BODY in the rug. (Note: These flash-forward scenes will be shot in some cool, grainy visual style different than the rest of our show.)

PATRICK
Michaela--

Michaela snaps from the other side of the room, her back to them.

MICHAELA
I never agreed to this!
(MORE)

MICHAELA (CONT'D)
The coin did so I'm going to stand here and not see anything so when I'm called to testify, I can say just that.

PATRICK
I understand, freak-show. I just want you to move your feet.

Michaela realizes, she's standing on the rug. So she steps aside. They finish rolling it up as a Laurel enters holding the now clean, shiny trophy in a clear zip-lock bag. She hands it to Wes.

LAUREL
Here. I wiped the sink down with bleach after I washed it.

WES
We'll put it back tomorrow, the cops won't ever know it was the weapon.

PATRICK
Can we hurry up here?

Wes puts the trophy in his backpack (leaving us wondering who had the trophy at the time of the murder), then goes to help Patrick lift the rug...which is too fucking heavy. Laurel jumps in.

LAUREL
Let me...

Still, the 3 of them aren't strong enough. They look to Michaela.

MICHAELA
Fine.

And now the four of them lift the rug off the floor, struggling to carry it into the foyer, bumping into crap as they go. Finally they reach the wooden front door. Wes turns to them. They all nod -- do it. So Wes now opens the door to REVEAL --

A CAMPUS COP standing next to a double-parked SUV, its hazard lights flashing. The cop looks up at them, all friendly.

CAMPUS COP
This car one of yours?

And as they all stand there, absolutely fucked, we --

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

12 *EXT. ANNALISE'S HOUSE/OFFICE - NIGHT - FLASH FORWARD* 12

Where we left off, the Cop waiting for an answer. A long beat--

PATRICK
It's my car, sir.

CAMPUS COP
You're double parked. You might get a ticket with all the city cops out tonight.

PATRICK
(*phew*)
Oh. Right. I'll move it now.

But before Patrick can, the Cop stops, now noticing the rug they've now lowered to the ground and stepped in front of. Huh.

CAMPUS COP
This is that law professor's office?

A beat, each of them hoping the other will do the talking until --

MICHAELA
Yes. Professor DeWitt. We're her law students, but she's out of town and she told us to take this old rug to the bonfire.

CAMPUS COP
She asked you to go into her house and burn a rug for her?

MICHAELA
It sounds weird, I know. Why don't I get her on the phone for you so she can explain?

Michaela digs out her phone as Laurel steps forward, glaring -- what the fuck does she think she's doing?

LAUREL
It's a little late to call her, don't you think?

MICHAELA
The nice officer here thinks we're burgling our professor's house, let's just clear this up.
(*then, to the cop*)
I mean, unless you'd rather me not?
(MORE)

MICHAELA (CONT'D)
She had to go to this funeral today, her mother's funeral, but she's probably not asleep yet. Hopefully...

CAMPUS COP
It's fine. Just--

DRUNK DUDE (O.S.)
Hey you guys!!

Down the street, a DRUNK COLLEGE STUDENT carries a GIANT REINDEER LAWN ORNAMENT as he runs to catch up to some friends.

DRUNK DUDE (CONT'D)
This'll burn good!

CAMPUS COP
God dammit.
(then, to our students)
Be safe, okay? There are ton of crazies out tonight.

The Cop rushes to regulate on the drunk kids. Patrick turns to Michaela, impressed.

PATRICK
Where the hell has that girl been all night?

MICHAELA
Can we just get this over with?

And now Michaela goes to pick up the rug, straining to lift it as we HOLD ON HER DETERMINED FACE AND FLASHBACK TO --

13 INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY - 4 MONTHS EARLIER 13

Michaela, **4 months earlier**, articulate and poised as she presents her defense strategy for Gina before the class. Annalise, Frank, and Bonnie are there taking notes as our students -- including Wes, Laurel, and Patrick, watch with jealous rage.

MICHAELA
We should offer the jury another suspect altogether -- Mr. Levinson's wife, Agnes. She was angry about the affair, had access to his office, and knew what aspirin would look like his blood pressure pill. So what better way to get revenge than to kill your cheating husband and pin it on his mistress? Thank you.

Michaela stops, proud and confident, just as an EGG TIMER GOES OFF -- right on time.

Annalise, Bonnie and Frank whisper to each other for a moment before Annalise turns back to Michaela.

ANNALISE
Take a seat, Ms. Pratt. You've made it to the next round.

Michaela beams, then sits. Wes crosses "Pin it on someone else" off his list of POSSIBLE DEFENSE STRATEGIES.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Who's next?

And as all the HANDS SHOOT UP we BEGIN A SEQUENCE of the students presenting their ideas, INTERCUTTING between them in a fast, stylized, energetic way. First up, a casual-yet-self-assured--

PATRICK
Yes, Gina put the aspirin on the plate on his desk, but did she have the intent to kill? Or was her intent to simply harm Mr. Levinson?

ENGLISH ACCENT GIRL speaks fast and furious--

ENGLISH ACCENT GIRL
Gina didn't realize it was an aspirin but actually thought it was the blood pressure medication which thus makes Mr. Levinson's near death an accident so therefore there was no *mens rea*...

Doucheface talks like he's Perry Mason in front of the jury.

DOUCHEFACE
It all comes down to a simple piece of evidence -- the fact that doctors ran Mr. Levinson's bloodwork too late to show aspirin in his blood...

Laurel presents a graph.

LAUREL
A statistical breakdown of the jury pool shows 80 percent of them come from a low socioeconomic class...

PATRICK
Gina knew her boss was allergic to aspirin but she did not know he could die from it. She simply wanted to give him a scare...

NERVOUS, STUTTERING STUDENT
So without a witness to assure that, uh, sorry, I think I lost my spot...

LAUREL
We use this inequality to our advantage and present this case to the jury as a *class struggle*...

MONOTONE, QUIET GUY
The issues at play are in need of more extensive research so my recommendation is to delay...

DOUCHEFACE
Yes, the doctor's on record saying that he didn't run the bloodwork on time but do we really trust him??!

NERVOUS STUDENT
I swear I'll find it. Just, one more second...

PATRICK
Attempted murder, therefore, is a bogus, inaccurate charge. The judge will have no other choice but to direct the jury to an N.G. verdict.

LAUREL
Gina is one of <u>them</u> -- the put upon and under-appreciated -- while Mr. Levinson represents the wealthy and out of touch. Thank you.

Laurel stops, waits for her fate.

ANNALISE
You can sit.

As Laurel sits, relieved, we now see that most seats are empty -- the majority of students disqualified now at the front of the class, sitting on the floor, leaning against the wall. Only about 20 students remain, including Patrick, Michaela, Laurel, English Accent Girl, Doucheface, <u>and Wes</u> -- who is now looking down at his LIST OF STRATEGIES, every single idea crossed out.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
And now our last victim. Mr. Gibbins?

Wes takes a deep breath, then stands. Annalise presses the timer.

WES
So, um, the way I see it is...well...
There's really only one option.
(then, out of nowhere)
We say it was self defense.
(MORE)

WES (CONT'D)
(some chuckles)
I know it's weird to enter a guilty plea now, the day before the trial, but it's my belief that, at the time of the crime, Gina was suffering from...Stockholm Syndrome.
(more laughs)
Which is actually quite common in assistants with demanding bosses. The affair, for example, is just one example of how far Mr. Levinson's brainwashing of Gina went -- he made her fall in love with him. So in this way, her poisoning him was actually just an act of self defense. And I'll just go stand over there...

Wes goes to join the disqualified students when --

ANNALISE
No. Sit.

As we hold on the class's utter shock, Wes included --

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Congratulations to all of you still seated. You'll be joining us for the next round in court tomorrow. That said, not one of you presented an idea I can use in court so my plan wins. Step 1...
(writing on the board)
We discredit the witnesses. Find the holes in their stories, attack their character. Step 2, we introduce a new suspect. That person is not Mr. Levinson's wife, Ms. Pratt, but rather his business partner, Lionel Brandt. Step 3, we bury the evidence by throwing so much information at the jury they'll walk into the deliberation room with one overwhelming feeling -- doubt.
(recapping)
Destroy witnesses. Find a new suspect. Overwhelm the jury. *That is how you get away with murder.* Or, in this case, attempted murder. Meet me at the courthouse at 9 tomorrow to present your ideas that'll work with this strategy.

As Annalise starts to go, Michaela stands.

MICHAELA
Professor DeWitt! We have torts at 9 tomorrow, then contracts, property--

ANNALISE
You're free to drop out of the competition at any point, Ms. Pratt.

MICHAELA
No, it's not that, I just wasn't sure how we were supposed to--

ANNALISE
(interrupting, fierce)
The way you're whining to me right now, it feels like you think I'm your mother. I'm not. Show up tomorrow or don't. It's that simple.

Annalise struts off, Bonnie and Frank following. As we go off a bitch-slapped Michaela, her classmates all gleefully watching...

14 EXT. PHILADELPHIA COURTHOUSE - DAY 14

Philly's criminal courthouse.

LINDA WHEELER (PRE-LAP)
So I just kept pumping his chest...

15 INT. COURTROOM - DAY 15

Annalise, Frank, Bonnie, and Gina sit at the defense table as PROSECUTOR HANK BALDWIN (50s, by the book) questions witness LINDA WHEELER (50s, cat lady type). Linda's tearful as she recounts the events of that day. We also notice she wears THICK, COKE-BOTTLE GLASSES. JUDGE KATHY POWELL (50s) presides.

LINDA WHEELER
Just like in our company CPR class. But it didn't work. He wasn't breathing and his skin...well it just kept getting more blue and--
(crying harder)
I'm so sorry Agnes, I tried everything I could think of...

She's talking to AGNES LEVINSON (50s), wife of ARTHUR LEVINSON, both of whom we now see sitting behind the prosecution. Agnes nods a sweet thank you to Linda while Arthur does nothing at all. Because now we see -- Arthur is in a wheelchair, his mental faculties not all there as a NURSE monitors his breathing machine. On the other side of the courtroom, we find our 20 STUDENTS (except Michaela). Patrick mutters to Wes.

PATRICK
And we just lost the case.

Back to the stand, the prosecutor feigns sympathy.

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
You did everything you could've, Miss Wheeler.

He sits. Now Annalise stands, walks to Linda. A shark to blood. Watching her in action is riveting, thrilling...

ANNALISE
You don't like my client, do you Miss Wheeler?

LINDA WHEELER
What?

ANNALISE
Sometimes you'd yell at her, throw things, call her...
(reading from a list)
"Incompetent," "stupid," "trailer trash?"

And now the jury looks to Gina sympathetically.

LINDA WHEELER
No. That's... I mean, working for someone as important as Mr. Levinson can be stressful. Tempers flare...

ANNALISE
So you're admitting you have a temper?

As Annalise continues her attack, Michaela now rushes in, out of breath as she runs up to the defense table, whispering loudly to Bonnie and Frank so that everyone in the courtroom is now distracted. Wes, Patrick, and Laurel watch, confused...

PATRICK
What is she doing?

ANNALISE
Your honor, can I have a moment?
(to Michaela, pissed)
What the hell...?

FRANK
(to Michaela)
It's all you, girlfriend.

As Michaela is about to explain, we cut back to our students.

PATRICK
She's lost it, right? The first of us to have a nervous breakdown?

WES
I was sure it'd be me.

LAUREL
It still might be. Look...

They sees what she means, Annalise now looking at Michaela with interest. Back to them --

ANNALISE
How sure are you?

MICHAELA
90 percent.
(off Annalise's stare)
95.

As Annalise looks at her, wondering whether to trust her...

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
Your honor, I don't know what this stalling is about but --

ANNALISE
Sorry for the delay.

Michaela takes a seat next to Laurel, Patrick whispering to her from the row behind.

PATRICK
What was that? Something you learned in torts?

MICHAELA
Something that just won me the trophy.

As Patrick wonders what she means, Annalise continues her cross.

ANNALISE
Miss Wheeler, you testified that you saw a pill on my client's desk the day of the accident, correct?

GINA
Yes.

ANNALISE
You said it was a yellow pill, similar to the color of Prosecutor Baldwin's shirt perhaps?

GINA
Yes.

And now the entire room stops because Prosecutor Baldwin's shirt is <u>not yellow</u>, but <u>blue</u>. Annalise steps closer to Miss Wheeler.

ANNALISE
Mr. Baldwin's shirt is blue, Miss Wheeler.
(then, softer)
Are you color blind?

As Linda shrinks in her seat...

LINDA WHEELER
Yes.

And now we hold on Michaela, who smiles victoriously, the other students now clocking this, not sure how she knew this.

ANNALISE
I see. So whether the pill you saw on my client's desk was blue, like her similarly shaped anxiety medication she took because of the stress endured while working with you, or yellow, like the aspirin used to poison Mr. Levinson, is not something you can tell us?

LINDA WHEELER
I told you, Gina was acting very strange that morning. Nervous...

ANNALISE
It's a simple question, Miss Wheeler. Is it possible the pill you saw on Gina's desk was her anti-anxiety medication?

LINDA WHEELER
...I guess so. Yes.

ANNALISE
Thank you for your candor.

A victorious Annalise sits at the table as Gina turns to Bonnie.

GINA
That was good, right?

BONNIE
No. That was excellent.

Off a relieved, smiling Gina...

16 INT. LIVING ROOM, ANNALISE'S HOUSE/OFFICE - NIGHT 16

A gloating Michaela explains her discovery as Annalise, Frank, Bonnie, and our 20 students listen. A jealous Patrick seethes.

MICHAELA
I looked up her Facebook profile and saw those crazy glasses, which got me wondering about her eyesight, so then I called every optometrist covered under her insurance. When I found hers, I pretended to be a claims provider and got the receptionist to tell me that Miss Wheeler has a condition called achromatopsia. It causes color blindness.
(then)
Step 1: Discredit the witness.

She stops, beaming, everyone hating her. Annalise stands.

ANNALISE
I might as well give this to Ms. Pratt right now.

Annalise picks up the trophy, Michaela's eyes now going wide like a girl about to get a rose on *The Bachelor*.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
But I won't. Not until I see how the rest of you step up your game.

As everyone jumps up, challenge accepted....

17 EXT. ANNALISE'S HOUSE/OFFICE - NIGHT 17

As Wes catches up with a now furious Patrick--

WES
Patrick!

PATRICK
That color blind crap was pure luck!

WES
At least there are 3 spots left.

PATRICK
Getting a spot isn't the point, Waitlist.

WES
It's not...?

PATRICK
<u>Winning</u> is the point. Law Review, Order of the Coif, a Supreme Court appointment... It all starts with that trophy. That's who DeWitt's going to respect and mentor and make into a king. That will be me.

WES
Or me.
(off Patrick's scoff)
Whatever, I was just gonna ask -- why don't we split up the prep-work for tomorrow? Study group style...

PATRICK
(stopping them)
What's your LSAT score?

WES
Oh come on.

PATRICK
You're a waitlister which means you probably got below a 170, right?

WES
...165.

PATRICK
(rushing off)
Gotta go.

WES
Patrick!

PATRICK
Not because I think you're a moron, which I do, but because my plan doesn't allow for a 3rd wheel. Later!

As Patrick runs off, Wes wondering what he's up to...

18 INT. WES'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 18

The apartment's FILLED WITH LAW BOOKS, the walls covered with PAPERS ABOUT GINA'S CASE. Wes stands there, reading, with TISSUES STICKING OUT OF HIS EARS to block the sound of REBECCA'S MUSIC BLARING FROM NEXT DOOR. We get QUICK SHOTS of him flipping through books, drinking coffee, going over Gina's file, circling phrases...when he suddenly stops. Digs up a paper. Cross references it with a book. Holy shit. He's found something. He jumps up, grabbing his bike and rushing out of his apartment...

19 EXT. MAIN QUAD, MIDDLETON UNIVERSITY - NIGHT 19

Wes rides his bike through an arch and SCREECHES TO A HALT. Because the ENTIRE QUAD'S LIT UP BY CANDLES, hundreds of students holding a VIGIL for Lila. Fiancé Logan speaks to the crowd from a stage.

LOGAN
If Lila was here, I know she'd want to thank everyone for their support.
(MORE)

LOGAN (CONT'D)
She loves this place so much, just like we all love her...

Logan chokes up, his teammates now all patting him on the back and escorting him away. 3 SORORITY GIRLS approach the mic.

SORORITY GIRL
This is for Lila.

They start to SING. Something overwrought and funny like Demi Lovato's *Skyscraper*. Wes watches the students sway and cry, finding this all very strange, then pushes his way through them...

WES
Excuse me. Sorry. Excuse me...

20 EXT/INT. ANNALISE'S HOUSE/OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER 20

A now breathless Wes dumps his bike on the lawn and runs to the front door, which he finds ajar. He enters -- it's quiet, empty...

WES
Hello?

No answer. He moves into the house, looks in the study, living room. No one home. But there -- he sees a light on in Annalise's office, some voices and laughter inside. He walks over to the office door, which is slightly open so he can see Annalise, her back to him as she sits on the desk. Wes knocks.

WES (CONT'D)
Professor DeWitt--

And the slight pressure of his knock now makes the door slide open enough so Wes now can now see a NAKED MAN NOW POP UP FROM BELOW THE DESK. Annalise jumps up, quickly pulling down her skirt.

WES (CONT'D)
Oh my god.

NAKED MAN
Get the hell out!

Wes turns, racing out of the office and back to the front door...

ANNALISE
Hey! Stop.

Annalise, eerily calm, heads down the foyer, stopping him.

WES
I'm so sorry. The door was open and--

ANNALISE
Oh my god, I'll kill him.

A now annoyed Annalise heads over to a desk, dials the phone. As it rings, she looks to Wes, who really just wants to leave...

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
So why are you here?

WES
Oh. That. It can wait--

ANNALISE
Clearly it can't if you barged in here this late.
(into the phone)
Frank. You didn't lock up. Again.

She hangs up, looks to Wes.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Speak.

WES
Right, um, I came across this case -- Commonwealth vs. McGinnis -- which says we can motion for a faster verdict if we think the prosecution's evidence is insufficient--

ANNALISE
A directed verdict.

WES
Huh?

ANNALISE
What you're suggesting is called a "directed verdict." If we ask for one and get denied, all the jury will hear is that the judge thinks there's enough evidence to convict.

WES
But you discredited the first assistant's testimony today and--

ANNALISE
You had an idea, I'm telling you it was a bad one. Good night, Seth.

WES
Wes.

ANNALISE
Right.

And now Annalise pushes him out the door. Off a mortified Wes --

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

21 *EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT - FLASH FORWARD* 21

That night in the woods. Patrick's SUV now idles outside a 7-11.

22 *INT. PATRICK'S SUV - CONTINUOUS* 22

It's eerily quiet, a nice respite from the panic of the previous scenes, as Patrick sits in the driver's seat, Michaela and Laurel in the back. Wes isn't there but the body is, rolled up in the rug that's now shoved in the back. Laurel rolls down her window.

PATRICK
What the hell are you doing? It's the middle of winter, we can't be riding around with the windows down!!

LAUREL
I can't take the smell.

PATRICK
You should've thought of that before you had the genius idea to move the body.

LAUREL
You're not seriously still questioning that decision?

PATRICK
Oh I think I'll be questioning it for the rest of my life. In jail.

MICHAELA
Wow, now who's the one who needs to calm down?

PATRICK
Shut up.

Suddenly the car door opens. Wes, wearing a hoody pulled up over his head for cover, climbs in with a six pack of beer and a bag full of contents we can't yet see. Patrick nods to it.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Did you get it all?

WES
Yup. Beer too in case they got me on the surveillance video.

PATRICK
Don't worry, we'll just kill the store owner if we need to.
(MORE)

PATRICK (CONT'D)
(*beat*)
That was a joke. You do all know that?

But they all just stay silent, too traumatized for jokes right now. As we HOLD ON Patrick, driving them out of the parking lot, wondering how the hell he ended up here, we FLASHBACK TO:

23 INT. UPSCALE BAR - NIGHT - 4 MONTHS EARLIER 23

Four months earlier, where a calmer, cooler, sexier Patrick carries two drinks through a crowd of business-y types. He arrives at a table occupied by OLIVER (30, glasses, nerdy cute).

PATRICK
Makers Manhattan, 2 cherries.

OLIVER
I'm getting the next round, otherwise I refuse to drink this.

PATRICK
Deal. -- So you know, your co-workers over there seem to want a show so say the word and we can start making out.

Oliver turns to see what Patrick means -- several of Oliver's BUSINESS-CASUAL-CLAD co-workers stealing glances at them.

OLIVER
Ignore them. I just don't talk to guys at bars that often.

PATRICK
I can tell.

OLIVER
And now I'm leaving.

PATRICK
No you're not.

OLIVER
No I'm not.

They both smile, the chemistry fun and easy.

PATRICK
So, let me guess, you all work in that advertising agency upstairs?

OLIVER
Is it that obvious?

PATRICK
I work in the bank across the street and the only hot guys who come here are from your agency.

OLIVER
Hot, wow, I don't think I've ever actually been called that. But I don't work in the cool part of the company if that's what you're thinking. I'm in I.T.

Ding. Patrick's just hit the jackpot.

PATRICK
I.T.? No, I think I.T.'s very cool.

OLIVER
No, you think I.T.'s very dorky, as does the rest of the world.

PATRICK
Maybe. But dorks are actually my type.

Oliver looks up, Patrick now giving him some serious sex-eye. And now Patrick goes in for the kill.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Can I ask you something? Did you know that secretary who tried to kill her boss with an aspirin?

OLIVER
Yeah. But I'm not supposed to talk about that actually. The legal department warned us as soon as the media got ahold of the story a few days ago.

PATRICK
Oh. Right. Sorry I asked.

And now Patrick looks down, checking his phone, no longer interested. Oliver realizes, he's screwed up here, especially when Patrick now checks out another guy passing by...

OLIVER
Okay, I'll tell you a little bit. But you have to promise -- you didn't hear this from me.

As Patrick smiles, an oblivious Oliver falling into his trap...

24 INT. HALLWAY, WES'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 24

Wes walks his bike down the hall when he hears an ARGUMENT inside Rebecca's apartment. The voices are muffled but angry--

MAN
YOU CAN'T JUST IGNORE-- NO- THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM--

REBECCA
STOP YELLING-- THIS ISN'T ABOUT--

MAN
IT'S ABOUT THE BOTH OF US!

Suddenly there's a loud CRASH, glass shattering inside. Wes steps to the door, wanting to help when -- THE DOOR OPENS, a MAN IN A BASEBALL CAP almost slamming into Wes.

WES
Hey.

LOGAN
Hey.

And now Wes realizes -- this man is none other than LOGAN O'REILLY, Lila's football player fiancé. (And if we need to, we can flash back to shots of the vigil to remind us who he is.) Logan moves past Wes and into the stairwell. Wes looks back to Rebecca, now picking up broken pieces of a lamp. He steps into the doorway.

WES
Hey. Do you need help?

REBECCA
It's fine.

WES
Here, it's not a big deal.

Wes is about to help clean when Rebecca just snaps.

REBECCA
I said it's fine! So go! Get out of my apartment!

Wes stops. And even though her words say one thing, the look on her face, the way her hands are shaking, say something different. He wants to stay there, help, but instead he says --

WES
Got it.

He gets up and leaves. Off Rebecca, still shaking.

25 INT. COURTROOM - MORNING 25

Annalise is reading over a PRINTED OUT EMAIL.

ANNALISE
How'd you get this?

Now we REVERSE ANGLE to find Patrick, pure confidence.

PATRICK
I'm not sure you really wanna know.

And as Annalise looks at him, intrigued, we FLASHBACK TO:

26 INT. OLIVER'S APARTMENT - THE NIGHT BEFORE 26

Patrick and Oliver are home from the bar and in full on make-out mode, pulling off their shirts and pants. Suddenly Oliver stops.

OLIVER
I have a confession. I thought all you wanted from me were those emails.

PATRICK
I did. But I want this too.

And as Patrick pushes Oliver back on the bed, we CUT BACK TO:

27 INT. COURTROOM - DAY 27

Back to Annalise and Patrick.

PATRICK
Point is, it wasn't exactly legal, which I know means you can't use it as evidence...

ANNALISE
No. That just means we have to get creative. -- Bonnie!

As Patrick watches Annalise go talk to Bonnie, wondering what she's up to, we DISSOLVE TO:

LATER. Annalise is now cross-examining LIONEL BRANDT (50s), a professional, well-coifed Ad Man. Our students all watching.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Mr. Brandt, you met with Mr. Levinson in his office the morning of the accident, correct?

LIONEL BRANDT
Yes. As co-CEOs, we have a weekly new business meeting.

ANNALISE
Was there any discussion about my client in the meeting?

LIONEL BRANDT
Yes. Arthur told me he was moving Gina to accounting.

ANNALISE
So to avoid any possible sexual harassment lawsuit?

LIONEL BRANDT
That's correct.

ANNALISE
Mr. Brandt, will you please read this email?

Annalise now hands Lionel the printed email Patrick gave her.

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
Your honor, can the defense please specify what she's just handed the witness?

ANNALISE
My apologies. This is an email the witness wrote to Mr. Levinson. It was in the discovery file given to us by the prosecution, your honor.

A stunned Patrick hears this, muttering so only Wes can hear.

PATRICK
O.M.G.

WES
What?

He doesn't answer, instead watching as Lionel reads the email.

LIONEL BRANDT
Dear Arthur, after several days trying to reason with you, I'm officially requesting that you step down as co-CEO. I've warned you about having sexual relations with employees of this company and have grown frustrated with your refusal to stop--

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
Your honor, this email was not part of the discovery file!

JUDGE POWELL
Ms. DeWitt, is that true?

ANNALISE
(feigning surprise)
Oh. I thought it was. Although my junior counsel is more familiar with the paperwork on this case. Bonnie?

Bonnie stands, not missing a beat. Patrick watches in awe.

BONNIE
I found the email in the files given to us by our client's previous attorney, your honor. I just assumed it was part of the discovery file.

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
It wasn't. Which means it was obviously obtained illegally.

ANNALISE
That is a ridiculous assumption, your honor!

JUDGE POWELL
Is it, Ms. DeWitt?

ANNALISE
Yes! Not to mention the fact that the content of this email pertains to the case! It clearly should've already been admitted into evidence!

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
The content's irrelevant, it's all fruit of the poisonous tree!

JUDGE POWELL
ENOUGH.
(then, to Lionel)
Did you write this email, Mr. Brandt?

LIONEL BRANDT
Yes.

JUDGE POWELL
Then I have to side with Ms. DeWitt here. The email's admissible.

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
Your honor!

JUDGE POWELL
I've made my decision, Mr. Baldwin.

ANNALISE
Thank you, your honor. -- Mr. Brandt, as stated in your email, you were angry at Mr. Levinson for taking part in a sexual relationship with an employee...

LIONEL BRANDT
I was frustrated, yes.

ANNALISE
So frustrated that perhaps you decided to swap his blood pressure pill for an aspirin during your meeting?

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
OBJECTION!

JUDGE POWELL
Ms. Dewitt.

ANNALISE
I withdraw the last question, your honor. Nothing further.

Annalise sits, point made, nodding to Gina as the whole courtroom buzzes about this masterful play...

28 INT. HALLWAY, COURTHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER 28

Annalise, Frank, and Bonnie approach our 20 waiting students.

ANNALISE
We did well today -- no doubt due to Mr. Donahue's hard work last night...

Patrick looks right at Michaela, grins. Wes smiles, enjoying their feud.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
That said, we haven't won yet. I'll be at the Dean's cocktail party if you find anything before tomorrow.

She leaves, Bonnie and Frank in tow, as Michaela turns on Patrick.

MICHAELA
How'd you get that email?

PATRICK
I don't kiss and tell.

MICHAELA
What the hell does that mean??

As Michaela chases after Patrick, Laurel rolls her eyes and peels off from the group, always one to avoid the fray. We go with her as she walks toward the restroom and passes wheelchair-bound Arthur, agitated as he clings to his wife Agnes...

ARTHUR
No. NO! Please don't please don't...

AGNES
It's just the restroom sweetie, I'll be right back.

As Laurel takes that in -- wow that's depressing -- she enters--

29 INT. WOMAN'S RESTROOM, COURTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS 29

Where Gina is checking her make-up in the mirror. Laurel pauses, thinking for a moment, then hurries into a stall so Gina doesn't see her. And now we're inside the stall with Laurel. She peeks through the crack in the door just as Agnes enters, stopping as she sees Gina. The two of them look at each other, and instead of the awkward, tense encounter between wife and mistress we all expect, Agnes smiles and gives Gina a tender squeeze on the hand before heading into a stall. As Laurel takes this in, her head now spinning...

30 INT. DEAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 30

A COCKTAIL PARTY. Our 1Ls are dressed up, downing champagne and mixing with PROFESSORS. Wes arrives at the front door, greeted by the liquored-up DEAN OF THE LAW SCHOOL and his BORED WIFE.

DEAN OF THE LAW SCHOOL
Welcome! Dean Howard. This is my wife, Constance.

WES
Wes Gibbins. Thank you so much for--

Before Wes can finish, the Dean moves to the next arriving student.

DEAN OF THE LAW SCHOOL
Welcome! Dean Howard. This is my wife, Constance...

Across the room, Wes spots Patrick, Michaela, and Doucheface talking to TOM (40s, handsome, friendly). Tom is a breath of fresh air in this competitive environment -- positive, encouraging, nice even. As Wes joins...

TOM
First year's the worst, no doubt. Just put your head down, do the work, and try not to take it so seriously.

DOUCHEFACE
You're obviously not a lawyer.

TOM
A psychology professor. I know, you've just lost all respect for me, but I work with the firm sometimes -- evaluating clients, reading witnesses.
(noticing Wes)
And you are?

PATRICK
This is Wes, Tom. He's in your wife's class too.

TOM
(shaking his hand)
How's it going so far, Wes? Has she gone full terrorist on you yet?

WES
I'm sorry...who's your wife?

MICHAELA
Professor DeWitt.
(to Tom, sucking up)
Who can I just say, is literally my personal hero. Her and Hillary of course...

As Wes takes this in, confused -- **Tom is not the Naked Man he saw Annalise with** -- a smiling Annalise arrives with two drinks.

TOM
There she is! Let me guess -- your ears were burning?

ANNALISE
Maybe just a little.

TOM
Don't worry, I didn't spill any secrets. Well, not yet at least...

And as they all laugh and Tom gives his wife a tender kiss on the cheek, Annalise stares straight at Wes and we --

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

31 *EXT. WOODS - NIGHT - FLASH FORWARD* 31

Back in the woods, where our four exhausted, aching students lug the rug through the dark. Patrick holds a flashlight when they SUDDENLY HEAR GIGGLING IN THE DISTANCE. Our four all hit the ground, hiding. Wes whispers to Patrick.

WES
Flashlight.

Patrick shuts it off just as a DRUNK COUPLE comes into view, heading right for them. Our four all share looks, panicked, as the couple finally stops, making out up against a nearby tree.

DRUNK GIRL
Hey. Jen can't find out about this.

DRUNK GUY
I'm not gonna tell her.

And now they kiss again, pulling at their zippers, about to go for it right there, our four all panicking when...a RINGTONE PLAYS.

DRUNK GIRL
What is that??

It's Laurel's cell! As she goes to silence it, we see the name "Frank" along with a PHOTO of him smiling on the phone's screen.

DRUNK GUY
Hey! Who's there??

Our four stay silent, faces pressed into the dirt.

DRUNK GIRL
Can we get out of here?

And now the couple runs off as fast as they can. Once they're gone, Laurel breathes a big sigh of relief. That is, until--

MICHAELA
Why is Frank calling you?

LAUREL
(*caught*)
What?

MICHAELA
I saw your phone, Laurel. What the hell's going on?

And as Michaela, Patrick, and Wes all stare at her, waiting for an answer, we HOLD ON LAUREL'S SCARED FACE AND FLASHBACK TO --

32 EXT. ANNALISE'S HOUSE/OFFICE - NIGHT - 4 MONTHS EARLIER 32

Laurel, **4 months earlier**, knocks on the front door. Frank answers.

LAUREL
Frank, hi, I'm in DeWitt's class.

FRANK
Shouldn't you be at that party?

LAUREL
I hate those things. And I saw something today at the courthouse that I think you should know about.

And as Frank wonders what she means, we TIME CUT TO:

33 INT. LIVING ROOM, ANNALISE'S HOUSE/OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER 33

Where Frank is now laughing at Laurel. Hard.

FRANK
Sorry, I was just imagining if Annalise heard what just came out of your mouth... Ooohff, it would've been ugly.
(then, straight faced)
But of course you already knew that or else you would've gone to her with this tall tale rather than me.

And now he's just looking right through her.

LAUREL
I only saw them touch hands, I know, but think about it. A wife gets so tired of her husband cheating that she enlists his mistress to team up for revenge.

FRANK
Fine, say you're right, they went tag team on the guy. What the hell do you expect us to do about it? Put you on the stand so the jury will definitely have enough evidence to convict our client?

LAUREL
No...obviously not, I just...
(beat, realizing)
You already knew.

FRANK
I didn't say that.

Frank just holds her look. His face betraying nothing. Laurel suddenly understands just who she's dealing with here.

LAUREL
Right. Because then you'd actually be admitting, out loud, that you're defending a guilty client. And who really has time to deal with the moral repercussions of that?

Pissed, Laurel starts to head out. Frank calls after her.

FRANK
Brown, right? Or was it Smith? Berkeley? What bastion of liberalism turned you into such a goody goody?

Laurel stops, turns back to him, suddenly feeling naked.

LAUREL
Brown. -- You read my application or something?

FRANK
Just a guess. We get a lot of you around here. Smart, idealistic girls who come to law school to help the less fortunate only to end up taking a corporate job after graduation which they then quit the second they get pregnant because they'd rather stay home. For the child of course.

LAUREL
You're a misogynistic ass.

She storms off, slamming the door on her way out. Only now does Frank look up to see Bonnie standing there, having heard all that.

BONNIE
Stop. Screwing. The students.

She leaves, Frank calling after her as she goes.

FRANK
Who else am I gonna screw?! We live at this office, I don't have time to go meet real girls!!

She doesn't answer, already gone, as we stay with Frank, whose face drops just the slightest to reveal the loneliness underneath the tough-guy act. But now he pushes it away, gets back to work...

34 INT. DEAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 34

Back at the party, where Patrick, Michaela, Doucheface, and a still spinning Wes all stand in a huddle as they watch Annalise and Tom talk to the Dean across the room. Tom's laughing at a joke, his hand on Annalise's lower back...

MICHAELA
I knew she was married, I just never expected to someone so--

PATRICK
Hot.

MICHAELA
Nice.

DOUCHEFACE
He married a sociopath, he's clearly not that nice.
(off their looks)
What? I want this job as much of any of you, but you've all got your heads in the sand if you don't think that bitch is cray.

PATRICK
You okay?

He's talking to Wes, who's now looking very distressed.

WES
Yeah. I'm gonna go find the bathroom.

As Wes peels off, passing Annalise, who we now see watching him...

35 INT. BATHROOM, DEAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 35

Wes enters, about to close the door, when Annalise enters, locking the door behind them. It's a tight space, intimate.

WES
I'm not going to say anything. Honestly, the fact that I even saw you that night was my fault--

ANNALISE
Stop. I need to apologize. I put you in a terrible position. It's unprofessional, not to mention embarrassing...

She stops, her voice cracking, eyes welling up. Wes -- and we -- are shocked. This isn't a person we ever thought we'd see cry.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
We've been trying to have a baby. For a long time now. And I hate to make excuses but...it's been a lot of pressure. On our marriage and...
(then, realizing)
Oh my god, I'm totally making this worse. Forgive me.

And now she places her hand on Wes's arm, looking at him. Like she might kiss him or hit him. You just can never tell with her.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Thank you for keeping this between us.

She's holding his look, intense. So Wes just nods.

WES
No problem. I'll just...leave now.

He rushes out the door. But we stay with Annalise, who just stares at herself in the mirror, her tears quickly drying up because, well, it was all an act. As she cleans up her now runny mascara, matter of fact and emotionless, us wondering what her deal is...

36 INT. LIVING ROOM, ANNALISE'S HOUSE/OFFICE - NIGHT 36

Bonnie and Frank work when Annalise and Tom return home, holding hands. Bonnie lights up at the sight of Tom.

BONNIE
Tom! How was Harvard? They loved you, right? Offered you the whole department?

TOM
We're just having some preliminary talks. No one's moving anywhere yet. What'd I miss here? Besides you guys kicking ass on the new case.

FRANK
Don't jinx it. We haven't even started our defense yet.

TOM
I'm only repeating what I read in the Times.
(then, to Annalise)
You coming up? I've missed you.

And now he pulls her in, kissing her, just like their marriage is perfect. Bonnie watches, a little uncomfortable, clearly knowing some secrets. Finally they break apart, Annalise smiling.

ANNALISE
I'll be up soon.

TOM
Make it very soon.
(to Bonnie and Frank)
Go home! You've won the case already!

He heads upstairs as Annalise walks into...

37 INT. ANNALISE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 37

She gets on her computer as Frank enters with some FILES.

FRANK
Here are the background checks. Mostly DUIs and pot possession... Although you should know the annoying kid's dad is a circuit judge.

He means Doucheface, whose file/photo Annalise now stops at as she flips through the students' files.

ANNALISE
That could be helpful. Put him in the yes pile. Along with these.

She hands him some of the files back, but Frank sees that Laurel is now on top of the reject pile. He pauses for a beat, thinking about Bonnie's advice, but then picks up Laurel's file anyway.

FRANK
Actually, this girl's pretty good.

ANNALISE
"Laurel Wilding?" I have no idea who that is.

FRANK
That's actually her strength. She flies under the radar, notices things. We could use someone like that.

ANNALISE
Fine, put her back in. Also, run one on the waitlist kid.

FRANK
I thought we gave that kid the ax.

ANNALISE
I changed my mind. Wes is his name. Wes Gibbins.

And as Frank leaves, us wondering what plan Annalise has for Wes...

38 INT. WES'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 38

Where Wes lies in bed, mind still racing, heavy with the burden of Annalise's secret, as he stares at the fingernail scratches on the wall. And now he puts his own hand up to them, seeing that his hand is an exact match. As he traces the scratches, he suddenly hears someone outside his door, a shadow peeking through. Wes jumps up, opens the door, and finds -- a BOTTLE OF SCOTCH.

WES
Hey!

He's talking to Rebecca, now trying to sneak into her apartment.

REBECCA
Oh. Hey. That's just to say sorry for the other night. And the night before that. I stole it from the bar I work at so don't think I'm actually that nice.

WES
I've heard the music you listen to. I never thought you were nice.

She smiles, shy but charmed, then goes to unlock her door as Wes now looks at the post-it attached to the bottle -- "Welcome to the neighborhood. Rebecca." And now he gets a burst of courage.

WES (CONT'D)
Rebecca!... Should we open it maybe? I kinda had a weird night and could use some heavy drinking...

REBECCA
I can't tonight, sorry.

She goes into her apartment. Off Wes, a little crush forming.

39 EXT. COURTHOUSE - MORNING 39

Another day in court.

ANNALISE (PRE-LAP)
Your honor, this is a trick!

40 INT. COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS 40

A livid Annalise now stands up, yelling.

ANNALISE
The prosecution hasn't informed me about any new evidence!

JUDGE POWELL
Approach the bench, counsel.

Annalise and the prosecutor go to the judge.

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
The police just gave me the video last night, Annalise. You can try and stall all you want but it's damning enough without showing the jury you don't want them to see it.

JUDGE POWELL
It's your call, Ms. DeWitt.

And as Annalise debates, we TIME CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER. The prosecutor questions a very young, nervous DETECTIVE GILL (25, voice shaky) who is now on the stand.

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
You got the call from the convenience store when, Detective Gill?

DETECTIVE GILL
Approximately 7pm on Tuesday.

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
So 2 nights ago. What happened next?

DETECTIVE GILL
I went to the store and met with the owner, Mr. Lira, who gave me the original copy of his surveillance camera video. He said he saw the defendant's picture on the news and remembered she came into his store a few months ago, how she seemed real nervous at the time, so he looked through his old surveillance video until he found the footage of her.

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
Footage that I will now play for everyone here.

He presses play on a remote, SURVEILLANCE VIDEO FROM A CONVENIENCE STORE now playing on screens for the entire courtroom. There's no audio but there's a date stamped into the image as Gina is shown buying <u>a bottle of pills</u> at the register. As he PAUSES...

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN (CONT'D)
There. <u>The night before</u> the murder attempt, Ms. Sadowski bought this item at Mr. Lira's store. And if we zoom in on the bottle, what does it say, Detective?

DETECTIVE GILL
Soloxacore. It's a brand of aspirin.

As Bonnie and Frank share a look -- we're fucked -- the prosecutor turns to Annalise.

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
Your witness.

ANNALISE
Your honor, I'd like a recess.

JUDGE POWELL
You've got one hour, Ms. DeWitt.

And as the courtroom breaks up, Patrick turns to Wes...

PATRICK
Aaaand we're screwed.

41 INT. HALLWAY, COURTHOUSE - DAY 41

Where our stunned students stand by a door, eavesdropping.

ANNALISE (O.S.)
You had <u>one</u> job!

42 INT. COURTHOUSE ANTECHAMBER - CONTINUOUS 42

Inside, Annalise YELLS at a teary Gina. It's the first time we're seeing Annalise's full fury. It's powerful and scary and clearly what makes her good at her job. Bonnie and Frank look away.

ANNALISE
To let us know what bodies we needed to bury! Texts, calls, ANYTHING WE NEEDED TO DESTROY. You didn't so guess what? You go to jail and I'm the shoddy lawyer who put you there!

GINA
I had a headache! It isn't what it--

ANNALISE
STOP LYING TO ME!

Gina startles, shaking. Finally Annalise breathes.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Get out, I can't think with you here.

Gina flees. Once they're alone...

FRANK
She's not wrong, Annalise. It's aspirin, we all buy it--

ANNALISE
Who was it, Frank? What slutty undergrad pulled down her pants and made you forget how to do your job this time?!

FRANK
I grilled Gina the minute we got this case. She obviously chose not to tell me this because, well, it's obvious, ain't it? She's guilty--

ANNALISE
ENOUGH WITH THE EXCUSES!

And the way Annalise now looks at him -- a mix of disgust and rage -- makes this grown man cower.

FRANK
I'm sorry. I'll do better next time.

Bonnie steps forward, taking control, the mediator.

BONNIE
We have 1 hour, I say we put Gina on the stand, have her testify that she had a migraine.

ANNALISE
The prosecution will destroy her in the cross. Our only option is to discredit the video.

FRANK
We could call the store owner into question.

BONNIE
Yes, throw doubt into why it took him so long to turn over the footage.

ANNALISE
No.

BONNIE
It's a good idea!

ANNALISE
And I have a better one. No thanks to either of you.

Annalise leaves. Bonnie looks to Frank, about to say something comforting when suddenly he PICKS UP A CHAIR AND THROWS IT. As it CRASHES AGAINST THE DOOR, we CUT TO:

43 INT. COURTROOM - ONE HOUR LATER 43

Wes, Patrick, Laurel, Michaela and all the students are straining to hear what's going on at the front of the courtroom where Annalise and the prosecutor are sidebar-ing with Judge Powell.

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
He's not a detective on this case, your honor. I don't see how his testimony could be at all relevant.

ANNALISE
Relevance will become clear during testimony. And his sudden addition to our witness list is a result of the prosecution conveniently springing this video on us at the last minute.

JUDGE POWELL
I'll allow the testimony. I assume the witness is here and ready to testify?

ANNALISE
I had him called in.

JUDGE POWELL
Let's move it along then.

Annalise and the prosecutor return to their tables...

ANNALISE
I'd like to call our first witness to the stand. Detective Nate Seidel.

Our students share a confused look --

LAUREL
Who's that?

WES
I have no idea--

But Wes stops -- because now he sees DETECTIVE NATE SEIDEL (38) enter from the back of the courtroom. Detective Nate Seidel who is also the Naked Man he saw Annalise having sex with in Act 2. Nate walks up the aisle, whispering angrily and discretely to Annalise as he passes her...

NATE
What the hell is this?

She doesn't answer but just smiles, not giving him anything as Nate now then heads to take the oath. Off Wes -- and all of the audience -- wondering what in the hell Annalise is up to, as we --

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

44 *EXT. CLEARING IN WOODS - NIGHT - FLASH FORWARD* 44

Our Four now reach the same spot where we first met them, as they drag the rug to the middle of the clearing. Exhausted, chests heaving, they all collapse on the ground. Except for Wes.

WES
Come on, get up, we have to do this.

They don't move. So beaten down.

WES (CONT'D)
I SAID GET UP!

They finally stand as we STAY ON Wes, who now pulls a BOTTLE OF LIGHTER FLUID from the 7-11 bag. And as we realize, they're going to burn the body, we HOLD ON a tireless Wes and FLASHBACK TO:

45 INT. COURTROOM - DAY - 4 MONTHS EARLIER 45

Where a now confused Wes watches Annalise question her lover. Nate vibrates with anger, visibly pissed to be here.

ANNALISE
Detective Seidel, a junior detective under your supervision just testified that, 2 nights ago, he received a video my client appears in.

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
Your honor, Detective Seidel wasn't here when that video was played.

ANNALISE
I'm simply trying to establish a timeline here, your honor.

JUDGE POWELL
Get to your point, Ms. DeWitt.

Annalise goes to the stand and puts her hand on the box, her fingers just inches away from Nate. She looks him in the eye, direct and eerily calm as she now drops a bomb--

ANNALISE
Where were you 2 nights ago Detective?

NATE
What?

ANNALISE
2 nights ago, when Detective Gill acquired this tape, weren't you
(MORE)

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
supposed to be working at the precinct as Detective Gill's direct supervisor?

Nate looks to our young Detective Gill sitting in the front row.

NATE
I was.

ANNALISE
And were you there?

And as Nate now sits there, stunned, we move to Wes, who is equally stunned, because of course he knows where all three of them were 2 nights ago, a scene we now QUICKLY FLASHBACK TO:

46 *INT. ANNALISE'S HOUSE/OFFICE - NIGHT* 46

Wes knocks on her office door...

WES
Professor DeWitt--

And the slight pressure of his knock now makes the door slide open enough so Wes now can now see a NAKED MAN, NATE, POP UP FROM BELOW THE DESK. Annalise jumps up, quickly pulling down her skirt.

WES (CONT'D)
Oh my god.

NATE
Get the hell out!

CUT BACK TO:

47 INT. COURTROOM - DAY 47

CLOSE ON WES, his mind spinning as he watches Annalise in action. Nate hasn't answered yet, just glaring at his girlfriend.

ANNALISE
Please answer the question, Detective.

NATE
No. I was not.

ANNALISE
Where were you then? Home perhaps? Taking care of your wife? I understand she's recently been diagnosed with cancer...

And now Nate gets just what Annalise is doing here, that she's threatening him, and that he better play along. He answers.

NATE
No. I...was at a friend's.

ANNALISE
Okay. Let's be clear then. 2 nights ago, when you were scheduled to be at work, you were not present when Detective Gill received this footage?

NATE
That's correct.

ANNALISE
I only ask because there's something I find strange about the chain of custody on this video. Detective Gill testified that he received the video from the store owner at 8pm, but the logs say he didn't log it into custody until 2:09am. Don't you find that time gap odd?

NATE
No. Sometimes it can take us a while to log evidence into the computer.

ANNALISE
Because you're all so busy? Visiting friends and such?

Shit. Annalise is out for blood. Wes watches it all, his heart pounding as he waits to see what will happen next.

NATE
I'm sure Detective Gill had a good reason why it took him that long.

ANNALISE
Perhaps. Or perhaps he needed the extra time to doctor the video and further incriminate my client...

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
Your honor!

JUDGE POWELL
That was out of line, Ms. DeWitt.

ANNALISE
I withdraw my last statement. -- Detective, in your 12 years working for the city of Philadelphia, have you ever known an instance where video footage was altered to help the prosecution get a conviction?

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
Objection!

ANNALISE
Digitally adding an aspirin label to a bottle of vitamins for example?!!

PROSECUTOR BALDWIN
YOUR HONOR!

And now Annalise turns to the judge, quick and badass.

ANNALISE
I'm simply asking Detective Seidel about his personal experience within his department.

JUDGE POWELL
This is the last question I'll allow.

ANNALISE
Thank you, your honor.
(then, to Nate)
Are you personally aware of any instances of doctored surveillance footage within your department?

And now the whole room waits for Nate to answer the question. But Nate just looks straight at Annalise, her looking right back at him. It's a stand off. Finally Nate answers.

NATE
Yes. I am.

And as the whole courtroom ERUPTS, Wes shocked, we SMASH CUT TO:

48 EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY 48

A victorious Annalise stands with Gina before a GROUP OF REPORTERS.

ANNALISE
I took this case pro bono knowing an innocent woman had been scapegoated by a desperate, overworked D.A.'s office. Gina is and always has been innocent and we're just so happy the jury was able to see that...

At the bottom of the steps, our students watch, in absolute awe.

MICHAELA
I want to be her.

PATRICK
Me too.

LAUREL
(quiet)
I don't.

Wes looks to Laurel, noticing that she's watching Agnes Levinson stand at a nearby curb as Arthur's nurse helps him into the car. Agnes is looking straight at Gina, the two of them sharing a knowing, conspiratorial smile. And then Agnes climbs into the car, Wes now whispering to Laurel...

WES
What do you know?

Laurel turns to Wes. Debating whether to tell him.

LAUREL
Nothing.

And as Laurel leaves, we go OFF WES, watching Annalise with the press and wondering whether this case was all one big lie...

49 INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY 49

Criminal Law class, the white board full of legal legal as Annalise finishes up. Frank and Bonnie are also there.

ANNALISE
Tomorrow we start work on a new case -- a pastor accused of embezzling from his own church -- so let's find out which of you will be helping us out at the office. First, the standout of this class, the one you should all make it your mission to destroy... Mr. Donahue, come get your trophy.

And like a king rising to take his rightful crown, Patrick collects his trophy from Annalise.

PATRICK
I'm gonna work my ass off for you.

He turns, shooting a little "ha ha" glance at a*n enraged* Michaela.

ANNALISE
The others joining us will be...Asher Millstone.

DOUCHEFACE
Yes!

Doucheface pumps his fist, everyone rolling their eyes. Of course.

ANNALISE
Laurel Wilding.

Stunned, Laurel looks to Frank, smiling right at her, which Bonnie clocks, rolling her eyes, knowing exactly where this is going. But now the whole class sits up straighter, dying to be the last name called, especially Michaela, who might pee her pants...

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Michaela Pratt.

MICHAELA
Oh thank god.
(to Annalise)
I mean -- thank you.
(to Bonnie and Frank)
All of you.

Everyone sinks in their seats, defeated. Wes looks relieved when--

ANNALISE
And because our workload has grown I've decided to hire one more of you. That student is...Wes Gibbins.

And as the whole room goes quiet, shocked, but no one more so than Wes, we CUT TO:

50 EXT. MAIN QUAD, MIDDLETON UNIVERSITY - DAY 50

Wes catches up to Annalise.

WES
Professor DeWitt!

ANNALISE
Wes. How can I help you?

She smiles, like there are no secrets between them. A beat passes as Wes gathers the strength to say this.

WES
So that detective...?

ANNALISE
Is my boyfriend. Yes.

She holds his look. Direct. Unapologetic. And before he even knows what he's doing, he says --

WES
I don't want the job. Not if you picked me because of that.

ANNALISE
That?

WES
You got him to lie on the stand. About there being doctored videos...

Annalise just looks at him, her face revealing nothing. She takes a step closer. Intense yet calm.

ANNALISE
Is that why I picked you? Because I thought I picked you for showing initiative coming to my office that night. And because your directed verdict idea showed you think outside the box. And because your self defense argument proved you were good on your feet. Those are all qualities I look for in my employees. I was excited for you to be one of them. But now that you've exposed exactly what you think of yourself, that you don't believe you *deserve* this job--

WES
That's not what I--

ANNALISE
That is exactly what you said. Right before you accused me of having my boyfriend lie under oath to win this case. We won because of our defense -- pinning it on the business partner, discrediting an eye-witness, making the jury feel for Gina. But of course you don't understand that because you don't understand anything. You're a 1L -- soft, uneducated, dumb. So dumb you might still decide to turn down this job.

Wes stops, looking up at her, surprised.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
Yes, I'm letting you reconsider. Think carefully because everything that comes after this moment will determine not the type of career you have, but life. You can either spend it in a sad corporate office drafting contracts and hitting on chubby paralegals until finally putting a gun in your mouth...or you can join my firm and become a person who does something with his life. So decide. Now. Do you want the job or not?

Off Wes, both repulsed and attracted, terrified and excited...

51 INT. SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT 51

Just another night at Kappa Alpha Theta. SORORITY GIRLS text and eat fro-yo in their lululemon as they listen to a MEAN GIRL vent.

MEAN GIRL
I mean, what kind of trash goes around saying a girl who might be dead is a crack whore?? She's lucky JC was there to hold me back because, you guys, I swear, I woulda cut the bitch.

The DOORBELL rings. A BOUNCY GIRL opens the door to find a MAINTENANCE WORKER (30s, sketchy) holding a toolbox.

MAINTENANCE WORKER
Someone call about low water pressure?

BOUNCY GIRL
(shouting to the others)
Guys! Did anyone call maintenance?

No one answers, too entrenched in Meanie's riveting story. Bouncy contemplates what to do, and just as we're yelling at our TV -- do not let this sketchball into your house -- she opens the door.

BOUNCY GIRL (CONT'D)
I think the water thingy's upstairs.

He enters, pausing as he glimpses the real life porn movie before him -- 20-year-old boobs and butts, some girls doing a dance routine to a Miley video on TV. He licks his lips a little, then heads up the stairs, passing a girl wrapped only in a towel, then a room of girls laughing on a bed...and right when we think he's going to do something terrible, he opens the door to the attic, heads upstairs, and opens another door that brings us out to --

THE ROOF. He heads over to a 6 foot high WATER TANK, opens the lid, and reaches his hand inside. He feels around, deeper now, struggling to get a hold of an object blocking the pipe. FINALLY, he yanks it free. Looks at what he's holding -- a HAND. Which is connected to an ARM. Which is connected to the BLOATED, DROWNED BODY OF LILA STANGARD. Off this grown man SCREAMING like a girl...

52 EXT. ANNALISE'S HOUSE/OFFICE - NIGHT 52

Annalise parks her car in front of the garage, then steps out, heading toward the back door when she SUDDENLY STOPS, gasping.

We REVERSE to see a dark, angry Nate now stepping out of the dark. Annalise looks scared, her eyes now darting around for an escape path. It's dark here though, far off from the street, only a small light from the back door casting shadows over their faces.

ANNALISE
Tom's inside.

NATE
Good. Maybe he'll catch us. You wouldn't mind that though, right? You were all ready to out us today in that courtroom anyway...

ANNALISE
I would never have done that.

NATE
No. You just wanted to threaten me with it.

ANNALISE
Nate...

NATE
Just tell me this -- it was a long con, right? You picking me up that night? Screwing me all these months? All because you knew that, eventually, you'd need to use me for a case?

ANNALISE
Don't be dramatic.

Now Nate CHARGES her, PINNING her against the garage, his fingers digging into her shoulders, so full of rage and desperation.

NATE
You made me lie under oath! Sell out my department, the people I work with! Don't you get that?! Or do you just not care?! You just use people, right?! Collect them and screw them and spit them out when you're done! That's what gets you off! It doesn't matter whose life is ruined in the process, just as long as you win and go home to your big house and trust fund husband who never learned how to screw you right!

A long beat as Annalise takes in his fury. But if she's scared, she isn't showing it. Instead she speaks calmly, coolly...

ANNALISE
I never lied about how I feel about you.

He holds her look, debating whether to trust her. Finally, he takes a step back, getting control. A long moment passes.

ANNALISE (CONT'D)
And let's be clear -- you're the one who picked me up.

And now she's smiling, sexy and flirty and in control, which is all Nate needs to push her up against the garage, kissing her hungrily, her kissing him back. And as they tear at each other's clothes, gasping and grinding and engaging in the kind of public, messy, animal sex we'd never dare have ourselves, we move to...

53 EXT. SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT 53

A REPORTER stands outside the Kappa house. Police cars and spectators are in the background.

REPORTER
Police are confirming that a woman's body was found inside the Kappa Alpha Theta house on Middleton's campus...

54 INT. COLLEGE BAR - NIGHT 54

Rebecca pours jager shots at this loud, divey, college bar.

REBECCA
That'll be 42 bucks. -- Dude...

The FRAT BOY doesn't answer because, like EVERYONE IN THE BAR, his attention is on the NEWS REPORT on TV: "Woman's body found at Middleton." Rebecca turns down the music to now hear...

REPORTER (ON TV)
Whether that woman is Lila Stangard, fiancé to Middleton football star Logan O'Reilly, remains to be seen...

Suddenly Rebecca's phone rings -- "Logan calling." As she picks up and runs into a backroom, we hold on the TV and MATCH CUT TO:

55 INT. BEDROOM, ANNALISE'S HOUSE - NIGHT 55

Annalise's husband Tom watches the SAME NEWS REPORT. He leans toward the TV, his knuckles gripping a glass of scotch...

REPORTER (ON TV)
That said, we do have word that there are currently police cars parked outside the house of her parents, Stuart and Miranda Stangard, owners of billion dollar tech company Stangard Industries...

ANNALISE (O.S.)
What's going on?

Tom startles, turning to see Annalise, still flush from Nate.

TOM
My student. They found her drowned in some sort of water tank...

His student? Now we get why he seems so shaken. Or maybe for another reason we'll learn later. Whatever it is, Annalise notices. She goes to him, puts a comforting arm around him.

ANNALISE
I'm sorry.

TOM
It's fine. I just...her poor parents.

They sit there for a beat. Sitting in the sadness of it. But then, quiet and emotionless--

ANNALISE
I bet the boyfriend did it.

And now Tom looks up, holding her look for a beat.

TOM
Yeah. I guess we'll see.

And as we leave them there, watching the news about Lila, us feeling the weight of their secrets, we move to..

56 INT. LAW LIBRARY - NIGHT 56

Patrick, Laurel, and Michaela work at a table filled with books and files. Patrick admires his trophy, trying to annoy Michaela.

PATRICK
It's heavier than I thought. Honestly. Feel it--

SUDDENLY Michaela RIPS the trophy out of his hand and THROWS IT ON THE FLOOR. THUD. Everyone in the library looks over.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Someone's got a temper on her, huh?

WES (O.S.)
Hey.

They look up, Wes now standing there.

WES (CONT'D)
Sorry I'm late. I stopped to pick up something we can celebrate with.

He pulls Rebecca's SCOTCH and some plastic cups from his backpack. Patrick grabs the bottle, starts to pour.

PATRICK
I love this kid. Shots all around.

LAUREL
Annalise wants our findings by 8am.

PATRICK
She'll get them. Let's just take a moment to feel good about ourselves.
(toasting)
To whatever hell this is we just signed up for.

WES/MICHAELA/LAUREL/PATRICK
(flat)
Cheers.

They all down the shots, simpler times, when Doucheface Asher shows up holding some books.

DOUCHEFACE ASHER
Hey. What'd I miss?

And as we leave them all there, looking at Doucheface, us now wondering if it's him in that rug, we FLASH FORWARD TO:

57 *EXT. CLEARING IN WOODS - NIGHT - FLASH FORWARD* 57

Our four, no longer strangers, standing around the BODY, its face still hidden from us. Patrick, Michaela, and Laurel finish placing scraps of wood around the body as Wes pulls out a box of matches.

WES
Okay. Last chance. Either we all agree or we stop right now.

MICHAELA
Just do it.

LAUREL
Hurry, so the bonfire can cover the smoke.

And they all look to Patrick, who is a wreck, but finally nods.

PATRICK
It's the only way to destroy the DNA.

Finally, Wes lights the match. And it's only now that the light exposes the FACE OF THE MURDER VICTIM. It's Tom, Annalise's husband. And as Wes drops the match, Tom's body BURSTING INTO FLAMES, the four of them watching their lives change forever, knowing there's no going back, we...FADE OUT.