THE FOSTERS

"Pilot"

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ABC FAMILY

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THE FOSTERS

"PILOT"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. JUVIE - CAFETERIA - DAY

CALLIE JACOB (16, offbeat, beautiful, hard behind the eyes) navigates the maze of cement tables, chin up but eyes down, trying to find a place to eat in the buzzing, grey-green cafeteria. When she spots a COUPLE GIRLS in a shouting match, she reconnoiters to avoid the conflict.

She spies an empty table on the periphery and sits down quietly. Before she can finish even a bite of the slop they call a meal in this place, TWO TOUGH GIRLS descend, plopping down on either side of her.

GIRL #1
You getting out today? Huh? That's what we heard.

Callie grips her fork, lets out a deep sigh, and looks down.

GIRL #2
Aw, she don't want no trouble. That it?

GIRL #1
Why you so quiet, bitch? You was all mouthy the other day when I cut in front of you in the showers. I lost my yard privileges 'cause of you...

Callie bites her tongue so hard it almost bleeds, then nods her head and grabs her tray. She stands up slowly, carefully.

Girl #2 gets in her face. Callie tries to turn around, but Girl #1 is already there. She is trapped.

GIRL #2
She asked you a question - you gettin' out today?

She shoves Callie, who rocks back but does not fall. The rage and fury behind Callie's eyes is terrifying. But she still says nothing.

GIRL #1
Huh? You too good to talk to me, pretty girl?

She shoves her again. Callie's tray falls to the floor with a clatter.

GIRL #1 (CONT'D)
We oughtta beat the crap outta you.

Tough Girl #1 shoots a look at one of the GUARDS standing in the corner.

GIRL #1 (CONT'D)
Nah, you ain't worth it. You ain't worth anything.

But she stays in Callie's face. These words set off something in Callie, who can't hold her tongue anymore.

CALLIE
(with venom)
You really need a dog treat for that breath, bitch...

And with that, Girl #1 hauls off and CLOCKS Callie, right in the jaw, hard. Callie staggers to the left, absorbing the blow. But she does not retaliate.

This enrages the girls, who both unleash on Callie, pounding her from all sides. It's almost hypnotic, watching Callie receive punch after punch, never responding.

IN SLO-MOTION: Callie gets knocked side to side, her eyes full of rage and pain, but even more than that, full of purpose. A soft, elegiac piece of CLASSICAL MUSIC begins to play on a piano.

The brutality of Callie's beatdown is highlighted against this soothing, perfect composition.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - DAY

A dark high school auditorium. Onstage, BRANDON FOSTER (16, intense, sexy, different, think young Andrew Garfield) plays a baby grand piano and finishes his song. Behind him, a banner proclaims SAN DIEGO MUSIC SOCIETY ANNUAL COMPETITION.

Throughout the audience, a smattering of STUDENTS and CHAPERONES wait their turns.

Toward the back of the house, STEF FOSTER (about 40, strong but full of heart), still wearing her Police Officer's uniform, proudly bobs her head in time with her son.

On the seat beside her, her iPhone lights up - LENA CALLING - but she doesn't notice. It finally stops its silent ring and the screen changes to read SIX MISSED CALLS.

INT./EXT. VOVLO STATION WAGON - NIGHT/CONTINUOUS

Inside, LENA FOSTER (35, warm, striking, African-American) sits in her car with her cell phone pressed to her ear.

STEF (V.O.)
Hey, it's Stef. I'm either working or avoiding your call, so leave a -

Lena hangs up, takes a breath, then climbs out of the car.

EXT. JUVIE - PARKING LOT - NIGHT/CONTINUOUS

Lena approaches DAVID FRESSOLA (32, overwhelmed, harried), who extends his hand.

DAVID
Hi, Lena? I'm David. Nice to meet you.

LENA
Where's Bill? I just spoke with him.

DAVID
Um, yeah. One of his cases - well, a kid in one of his foster homes OD'd, so he had to rush to the hospital.

LENA
Oh my God.

DAVID
Yeah, it's terrible. Anyway, I take it he told you about Callie...

He consults a file in his hands.

DAVID (CONT'D)
It seems she's been having a little trouble with male authority figures of late, which is why he thought of you, I guess...

Lena nods.

LENA
I guess so. She got into a fight with her foster father?

He checks the file again.

DAVID
Um, yes. And she, um, damaged some of his property. Which is how she landed here in juvie.

This is news to Lena. She is taken aback.

LENA
Damaged his property? What does that mean?

David doesn't know.

LENA (CONT'D)
Oh, wow. Um, look, David. Bill and I have known each other a long time. He's been a friend of the family ever since he placed the twins with us. And I know he wouldn't have asked me to do this if he weren't in a jam -

DAVID
- yeah, he had someone lined up but they fell through this afternoon -

LENA
- but I can't be bringing someone violent into my house. I've got my own kids to think about.

DAVID
(checking the file)
This is the first time anything like this has ever happened with her.

LENA
Still...

DAVID
Bill would never have put you in this position if he thought she was actually dangerous.

This is true.

DAVID (CONT'D)
And if there were <u>any</u> other options.

This was a smart move on David's part. Lena's a soft touch.

LENA
I don't know. I'm just not sure this is the right time for us.

DAVID
Please. We just need a few weeks to find a more permanent solution.

A beat. Lena's wheels are turning. She wants to help; she's a caretaker by nature.

Just then, a LOUD BUZZ and the doors open to reveal Callie, dressed in tight jeans and a ragged T-shirt, her face bruised and bloodied. Her right eye is swollen almost shut, and her lower lip is cut. Lena gasps. Her instinct is to get in her car and leave. But she doesn't - she looks at David instead.

DAVID (CONT'D)
(explaining)
Sometimes - when kids are getting out, the other inmates get jealous and pick fights.

He smiles at Lena, then trots over to meet Callie. As soon as he approaches her -

DAVID (CONT'D)
Hi, Callie. I'm David. I work with Bill at Child Protective Services...

CALLIE
Where's Jude?

DAVID
Um, I'm - I don't know.

CALLIE
I wanna talk to Jude.

DAVID
Callie, this is not the time.

Callie starts to get upset.

CALLIE
What the hell? I wanna talk to Jude! Where's Bill? Why isn't Bill here?

David looks over at Lena, who is watching Callie like a hawk.

CALLIE (CONT'D)
(then, re: Jude)
Why can't I just call him? I just got out of juvie! Jesus! What the hell is wrong with you people!

David shoots one more look to Lena, sure that he's going to lose her. Then he shuts Callie down.

DAVID
(sotto, but intense)
Callie! Enough! Unless you want me to turn you around and march you right back in to Juvenile Hall, you need to calm down and be quiet!

Callie shuts up, but she's not happy about it. A pause, before David leads her over to Lena.

LENA
Hi, Callie, I'm Lena. Nice to meet you.

Lena holds out her hand. Callie does not take it. A long beat. David turns to Lena, moves in for the kill.

DAVID
I mean, I guess I could take her to one of the group homes...

Lena sighs - she knows how awful those homes are. Callie looks to Lena. She would never beg, but her bruised eyes say everything. Please. Please don't send me away.

LENA
It's just for a few weeks, right?

DAVID
Absolutely.

A beat. A breath.

LENA
Okay.

DAVID
(a smile over his threat)
All right, Callie. I need you to behave, okay? No acting out, no mouthing off, no running away or you'll be back in juvie before your head hits the pillow - got it?

LENA
(re: David's threat)
David...

But David stands his ground with Callie.

DAVID
Got it?

Callie finally nods.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Okay, I'll let you guys head on home.
Thank you, Lena.

Lena nods. David hands Lena Callie's overstuffed, dirty backpack.

LENA
You ready, Callie?

Callie nods again. She still hasn't said a word to Lena. Lena lets out a tense breath, then leads Callie wordlessly to the car.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Callie sits in one corner of the kitchen, diametrically across from MARIANA (15, Latina, smart as a whip) and JESUS (15, Mariana's fraternal twin, surfer dude swagger) - who are carefully eyeing this new girl. They exchange a look of WHO-IS-THIS-GIRL-AND-WHAT-IS-SHE-DOING-IN-OUR-HOUSE?

Lena pulls a bag of frozen peas out of the freezer and hands it to Callie, who puts it on her swollen eye without saying anything.

LENA
Mariana and Jesus were in the foster program, too. They came to us about eight years ago, and we formally adopted them, what -

JESUS
- five years ago.

MARIANA
(making an effort)
The foster system sucks -

LENA
Mariana...

MARIANA
What? It does.

JESUS
What happened to your face? You get in a fight?

Callie looks at her for a moment, then shrugs. She is not ready to open up to these people. Lena jumps in.

LENA
Callie's had quite a day, so why don't we cool it with the third degree.

An awkward moment. Callie finally speaks.

CALLIE
Is there a - where's the bathroom?

Lena points down the hall.

LENA
Second door on the right.

Callie nods, disappears down the hall. Mariana turns to Lena.

MARIANA
So... where'd she come from?

LENA
Um, well - I, um, called Bill - from Child Protective Services, remember him? - to talk to him about something, and he was in a jam and needed a place for Callie to stay. She's had a - rough time lately, so I want you guys to be extra nice to her...

JESUS
Whaddaya mean, a rough time?

Lena conspicuously doesn't mention juvie.

LENA
She got herself in some - trouble, that's all. Don't worry about it.

MARIANA
(antenna up)
Talk to Bill about what?

JESUS
(to his sister)
Guess...

Lena considers whether to tell them or not.

LENA
I was gonna wait until everyone was home to tell you guys, but... I was calling to see if we could arrange a visit with your birth mom.

A beat. Silence. Lena looks at them both.

LENA (CONT'D)
(mostly to Mariana, confused)
I thought you'd be more excited. It's kinda all you've been talking about for the last six months.

Mariana shakes her head, gets a little quiet.

MARIANA
Yeah, I know. I just - I don't think so.

Lena is completely shocked by Mariana's response. Frankly, so is Jesus.

LENA
Really?
(then)
Did Jesus talk you out of it? Just because he doesn't want to -

Jesus throws his hands up.

JESUS
Don't look at me.

MARIANA
No. I just changed my mind, is all.

LENA
Are you nervous? Is that it? You know I'd be there with you, right?

Mariana shakes her head again.

LENA (CONT'D)
Did something change? I'm just not understanding, Mariana...

Mariana gets up to get herself a cookie.

MARIANA
(not unkindly)
Look, I just - I decided I'm not ready, okay. Can we please talk about something else?

This doesn't ring entirely true to Lena, but she decides not to push it for the moment.

LENA
Okay. Well, let me know if you change your mind.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - POWDER ROOM - NIGHT

Callie sits on the closed toilet with her knees pulled up under her chin. She stares into space, the first quiet moment she's had in ages.

There is a soft knock on the door.

LENA (O.S.)
Callie? You okay in there?

Callie takes a deep breath and opens the door.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Lena leads Callie back into the kitchen.

LENA
Okay, guys, did everybody do their homework?

Mariana nods.

JESUS
Yeah.

Lena doesn't quite believe him, shoots a look to Mariana. Mariana shakes her head.

JESUS (CONT'D)
Man, why you gotta be like that? Just because you don't ever gotta study and you get all A's...

LENA
We all have our strengths, Jesus. You heard your sister, get to it.

Jesus makes a big show of being annoyed, gets up to head upstairs, when Brandon wanders in, carrying his guitar. He slaps hands with Jesus, who uses the interruption to avoid going to do his homework.

BRANDON
Hey.

LENA
How'd it go?

BRANDON
What?

LENA
The music thing.

Brandon locks eyes with Callie. He's never seen anyone quite like her - beautiful, but broken.

LENA (CONT'D)
How'd it go?
(no answer)
Brandon.

Callie looks away, snapping Brandon back to reality.

BRANDON
Oh - good, good. I made the finals.

LENA
What? You did? That's great!

MARIANA/JESUS
Oh my God./Nice.

BRANDON
(a little sheepish)
It's no big deal.

LENA
It's a very big deal! When are they?

BRANDON
Tomorrow night.

LENA
Oh, I can't wait.

Brandon tries to deflect the attention, turns to Callie.

BRANDON
So... who's this?

LENA
Oh! This is Callie. She'll be staying with us for a while.

Brandon looks to Lena. This is surprising - and weird - news.

BRANDON
Like staying with us? Really? Wow. Okay. Nice to meet you.

Callie nods at him. A beat.

CALLIE
What about him?

Lena is surprised that Callie is starting to open up a bit.

LENA
What?

CALLIE
What about him? How'd you get him?
(then, a joke)
Amazon?

Lena laughs, pleased. This is going better than expected.

LENA
Oh, Brandon is my -

Just then, Stef strides in to the kitchen, STILL IN HER UNIFORM, carrying her bag.

LENA (CONT'D)
- partner Stefanie's biological son.
Hi, honey.

Seeing Stef's uniform, Callie's blood goes cold. She visibly stiffens. The twins both notice.

JESUS
You okay?
(then)
What? Nobody told you our mom's a cop?

MARIANA
See? This is why no boys ever wanna come over.

STEF
As it should be.
(then, to Lena)
Hey, babe.

Stef kisses Lena. Callie takes this in. Her tone becomes less jovial, more defensive.

CALLIE
So you're dykes?

JESUS
Um, they prefer the term "people," but yeah, they're gay.

Stef clocks Callie, and looks around, perplexed.

CALLIE
And he's the <u>real</u> son?

This brings the conversation to a halt. All the air gets sucked out of the room. Jesus lets the comment roll of his back, but something in Callie's words hit Mariana where it counts; she ices over instantly. This pushes even friendly Brandon back on his heels. After an unbearable pause -

BRANDON
(territorially)
We're <u>all</u> their real children.

Callie just nods - sure.

STEF
And who's this?

Off Stef's tight smile...

INSERT TITLE CARD: THE FOSTERS

<u>END OF ACT ONE</u>

ACT TWO

EXT. FOSTER HOUSE - BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Lena and Stef step outside. Stef is a little hot; Lena was prepared for this, and is assuaging her as fast as she can.

LENA
I tried to call you. Several times.

STEF
I was with Brandon at his audition. You knew that.

LENA
Look, I'm sorry - but it was time sensitive. And I knew you wouldn't want to leave the poor girl -

STEF
Oh, no. No, no. Don't make this about me. We made a deal, a long time ago -

Lena tries a new tack.

LENA
It's just for a few weeks.

STEF
What happened to her face?

LENA
She got beat up in juvie.

Stef grumbles - juvie?

LENA (CONT'D)
I double-checked with Bill - she's not violent, she's not dangerous in any way. It was a one time thing.

STEF
You can't save them all, Lena.

LENA
Don't patronize me, please.

STEF
Who's patronizing you? How about you don't get all uppity with your fancy words.

LENA
Patronize is hardly a fancy word. And don't call a person of color "uppity." It's tawdry.

STEF
(mocking her)
"Person of color?"

LENA
(pointing to her skin)
Brown.

STEF
(pointing at her skin)
White.

LENA
White's not a color.

STEF
Okay, fine. Sorry, Person of Color. I'd hate to be "tawdry" in my own home.

Lena laughs.

STEF (CONT'D)
It's just a few weeks, right?

Lena nods. A moment. Stef heaves a big sigh - she's knows she doesn't really have a choice. With a shake of her head, she gestures for Lena to head back inside.

STEF (CONT'D)
(to herself)
Tawdry... don't be tawdry... stupid.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT/LATER

The other kids have gone to their rooms, leaving Callie alone with Lena and Stef. Stef explains the house rules.

STEF
- and you don't leave the house without asking permission. Also, you'll be going to school while you're staying here -

Callie is surprised to hear this, and is visibly more hostile to Stef than to Lena.

CALLIE
Why do I have to go to school? It's not like I live here...

STEF
Because you're not staying around the house all day. Lena is the Vice-Principal, and all the kids go to Riley, so you'll be fine. Everybody leaves at 7:15, so lights out by -

CALLIE
(cutting her off)
Where do I sleep?

STEF
Excuse me?

CALLIE
It's not my first time in a foster home. Where do I sleep?

Callie's attitude rubs Stef the wrong way. She shoots a look to Lena, who silently gestures for Stef to "breathe." Stef lets out a long sigh. Lena whisks Callie away.

LENA
Let me show you...

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT/LATER

Lena finishes making up the couch for Callie to sleep on.

LENA
One pillow - or two?
(off Callie's shrug)
Okay, I'll leave them both. It's just for tonight. Tomorrow I'll move Jesus in with Brandon so you can have his room. There's a bathroom just down the hall. You have a toothbrush?

CALLIE
I'm not disgusting. I have a toothbrush.

LENA
(done with the attitude)
Okay, Callie? We're on your side. I know you've had a rough time lately - but we're the good guys. So you can take it down a notch.

Callie looks down, then starts digging around in her backpack, then realizes something. She considers what to do. Finally -

CALLIE
(softer)
I need toothpaste.

Lena smiles a little, to herself. This is a breakthrough.

LENA
Let me get you some. And I'll grab you a towel, so you can take a shower, if you want.

And Lena makes her way down the hall, then looks back to see Callie standing there, clutching her canary yellow toothbrush like a shiv. Lena stops.

LENA (CONT'D)
You okay?

Callie nods.

LENA (CONT'D)
You seemed pretty upset when you were talking to David earlier...

Callie takes a breath, resolves to take Lena into her confidence. After a moment -

CALLIE
Um, it's just - when they sent me to juvie -

Just then Stef comes in from the kitchen. Callie clams up.

STEF
Got enough blankets? Need anything?

Callie doesn't say anything. Lena shakes her head.

STEF (CONT'D)
Okay. Good night.

Stef continues on upstairs. Once she's gone -

LENA
You were saying?

But Callie's moment of openness has passed.

CALLIE
You got that toothpaste?

Lena decides not to press her. She smiles at her and disappears down the hall.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - MARIANA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Mariana and Jesus lounge on the bed, talking in Spanish - never a good sign. Stef appears at the door.

MARIANA
(in Spanish)
- I don't trust her, she's weird.

STEF
Hey. You know the rules - no using Spanish to talk behind people's backs.

Mariana doesn't respond.

STEF (CONT'D)
You guys know it's not true, right? What Callie said. You two are every bit as much our kids as Brandon.

JESUS
We know.

LENA
Mariana?

They look at Mariana, who puts on a smile and nods. But Jesus notices something in her expression - something unsettling.

STEF
Okay. Love you guys. Lights out in fifteen. Goodnight.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Callie lets the steaming hot water of the shower run over her bruised body. She winces with the pain.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - BRANDON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Stef looks over Brandon's shoulder as he does his trigonometry homework on his computer.

STEF
You need to step up while Callie's in the house, okay? I'm counting on you.

Brandon rolls his eyes, unsure what that means exactly.

STEF (CONT'D)
I'm serious, Brandon. Callie's a lot older than the twins were when they got here.

BRANDON
So?

STEF
(thoughtfully)
So... just between us, Callie was in juvie for a little bit. Okay?

BRANDON
(protective)
She was in - what the hell is she doing in our house, then?

STEF
She's fine, just - keep your eyes open. I'm counting on you to... I dunno...

BRANDON
Okay, I'll be sure to "I dunno" as much as I can.

STEF
Are you sure you're not Lena's biological son?

BRANDON
Mom. I've got homework to do. MOBY DICK waits for no man.

Stef shudders. Brandon looks at her.

STEF
(going for the dirty joke)
You said MOBY DICK. Gave me flashbacks of your father.

BRANDON
Uch, Mom!

STEF
Speaking of MOBY DICK, do you need condoms? You and Talya are using them, right?

BRANDON
Oh my God. I'm gonna kill you. Go!

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The house is dark and quiet. Callie, her T-shirt and boxer shorts clinging to her damp body, towel dries her hair. After a moment, she tosses the towel on the floor starts padding around the room, looking at things, inspecting things - almost like she's casing the place.

She wanders over to the desk, looking for something specific. She spots the base for the cordless telephone, but the receiver's not there. Damn.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

The phone receiver lays on the nightstand beside Stef, who is already in bed, watching a rerun of FRIENDS. Lena comes out of the bathroom, rubbing lotion into her hands.

LENA
Haven't you seen that one about a hundred times?

Stef gets the message - Lena wants to talk. She turns off the TV, as Lena sits on the edge of the bed beside her.

LENA (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. I know we agreed once we adopted the twins that we weren't gonna foster again until Brandon was out of the house, but I just... Anyway, I get it. I won't do it again.

STEF
Thank you. Please don't. You keep bringing kids home and it's gonna be like the Brady Bunch in here.
(then, after a laugh)
I know you only did it 'cause you wouldn't have been able to sleep knowing there was some poor girl out there with no place to stay...

LENA
There are lots of kids out there tonight, without a place to stay.

STEF
Wait! Come back from the dark place! Because of you and that big stupid heart of yours at least one of them is safe tonight. It's fine. Everything is gonna be fine...

She pulls Lena down onto her chest, and the two women lie there, still and quiet for the first time all day. Then -

LENA
Wanna hear something strange? I told the twins that we would arrange a meeting with their birth mom like we talked about - and now neither one wants to do it.

STEF
Really? Not even Mariana?

LENA
Nope. She said she wasn't ready.

A beat. Stef lets out a long, slow breath.

STEF
Good.

Lena closes her eyes, and drifts off to sleep. Stef goes back to watching FRIENDS.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mariana is in the kitchen, looking for something in a cabinet near the sink. She grabs a PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE and empties about half a dozen blue and red pills into her hand. She puts the bottle back, closes the cabinet and turns to see -

- CALLIE STANDING THERE. Mariana covertly slips the pills into the pocket of her sweatshirt. How long has Callie been watching?

MARIANA
I needed some water.

Mariana brushes past Callie and heads upstairs - without a glass of water.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - NIGHT/LATER

Callie tiptoes through the house in the dark, peering in closets and lifting up everything that isn't nailed down - touching it, to see what it is. This place is foreign to her.

She wanders down the hall and spies in to Jesus' room, where he sleeps splayed across the bed, almost impossible to see under the clothes and surf magazines. Mariana's door is shut tight.

Then Callie comes to Brandon's room. The lights are still on and Callie watches through the crack in the door as the golden boy, shirtless in his pajama bottoms, sits at his keyboard, practicing intently, headphones on. He keeps messing up a chord progression, and is getting frustrated with himself - but he doesn't stop. He plays it again and again until he finally gets it right.

There's something almost erotic about the way Callie's looking at him - like she's seeing some exotic animal in its natural habitat. Then she spots his CELLPHONE, charging on top of the dresser beside the door.

She holds her breath and reaches inside ever so carefully, keeping her eyes locked on Brandon. She tugs it free from the wall and silently pulls it out the door.

Brandon hears something, and pulls off his headphones. He turns around - but no one is there.

EXT. FOSTER HOUSE - NIGHT

Callie slips around the side of the house and dials a number from memory on Brandon's phone.

CALLIE
Hey, it's me. I'm out. And I'm coming. I promise. I just gotta figure out how to get there.

She hangs up, lets out a deep sigh.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. FOSTER HOUSE - DAY

Day breaks over the charming craftsman. It's perfectly still and silent out here.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

But it's chaos inside. Stef, in her uniform, fills a thermos with coffee while Lena dishes up breakfast. Brandon is still busily doing homework, Jesus is riding his skateboard on the hardwood floor, and Mariana is talking in Spanish to someone on her cell. Callie is conspicuously not present.

STEF
Did you wake Callie up?

LENA
Three times. I've been trying for half-an-hour.

STEF
Unacceptable.

Stef sighs, then gets an idea. She grabs a glass, fills it with cold water.

LENA
What are you doing with that?

STEF
(with a smirk)
I'm thirsty.

LENA
Stef....

Jesus runs into one of the cabinets.

LENA (CONT'D)
Jesus! Enough! Have you taken your Ritalin?

Lena opens a cabinet, grabs a bottle and pours a blue and red pill into her hand. She hands it to Jesus who swallows it without water.

LENA (CONT'D)
Jesus, drink something.

Jesus makes a big show of getting himself a glass.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY/CONTINUOUS

Stef strides into the living room where she finds Callie, or rather a lump under the covers that she presumes to be Callie.

STEF
Callie.

Callie grumbles, rolls over.

STEF (CONT'D)
Callie, it's time to get up.

Nothing. Stef peels back the blanket over Callie's head - then bit by bit POURS THE GLASS OF WATER ON HER. Callie jumps up, livid. Callie's eye is still somewhat bruised but she looks decidedly better.

CALLIE
What the -

Stef stands her ground, smiling.

STEF
Next time Lena comes to wake you up - get up. Breakfast is ready. You're leaving in fifteen.

And she heads back into the kitchen. Callie glares at her as she goes. This place might be worse than juvie.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY/CONTINUOUS

Stef returns to the kitchen where the kids are scarfing down oatmeal or cereal and Lena is eating a yogurt at the counter. Lena notices Stef's empty glass and raises her eyebrows.

STEF
She'll be in for breakfast shortly.

LENA
What did you do?

STEF
I have no idea what you're talking about.

Stef grabs her keys, kisses Lena on the forehead and heads out the back door.

After a moment, Lena notices that Stef forgot her thermos of coffee. She runs to the back door.

LENA
Stef! You forgot your...

Too late - Stef is already pulling out of the driveway.

EXT. RILEY CHARTER SCHOOL - DAY

Lena's car pulls into the parking lot alongside RILEY CHARTER SCHOOL. Everyone piles out.

LENA
Why don't you guys show Callie around? She'll be in Timothy's room to start the day...

Brandon and Jesus nod. Mariana takes off like a bullet.

MARIANA
See ya.

Jesus watches her go - he is a little concerned about her.

CALLIE
(under her breath)
Man, that girl is sketchy...

JESUS
She's just being all weird right now. Ignore her.

BRANDON
(defending his sister)
Didn't you just get out of juvie?

This is news to Jesus, who looks at Brandon, both surprised and impressed. Callie's unhappy that word is out, and looks around uncomfortably as the boys lead her across the small, grassy quad at the center of the campus.

CALLIE
Thanks a lot. Just what I want - everybody in the school knowing I just got out of jail.

Jesus laughs. Brandon mumbles an apology. SEVERAL KIDS wave hello to Brandon and Jesus, shooting them funny WHO IS THAT? looks.

JESUS
Are you kidding? That's the best thing in the world anybody could say to these asshats. They'll be scared as hell of you...

But Brandon can see that Callie's not buying Jesus' logic. For the first time, he feels some sympathy for her situation.

BRANDON
But don't stress - we won't say anything.

Callie has little choice but to believe them.

Jesus sees a FRIEND, stops to talk. Brandon and Callie wander the campus. An awkward moment of silence.

BRANDON (CONT'D)
So, um, Timothy's room is over there...
(he points)
You'll find it okay? We've got like twenty minutes before class and I wanna go practice.

CALLIE
Practice for what?

BRANDON
I have that music competition tonight.

CALLIE
Oh, right. Okay.

Brandon gives her an awkward wave and starts to cross the quad. Callie feels the eyes of the arriving students on her and calls out to him.

CALLIE (CONT'D)
Hey - wait up.

She trots over to him, grateful to have someplace to go.

INT. MUSIC ROOM - DAY

Brandon sits at the piano, his brow furrowed as he practices his ORIGINAL COMPOSITION. Callie meanders around the room, touching things and half-listening.

CALLIE
What is that?

Brandon stops playing, slightly annoyed.

BRANDON
What, the song? I wrote it.

CALLIE
You wrote it? Really?

Brandon nods.

BRANDON
For the contest. You have to play one classical piece and one original composition. It's about the night Mom and Mama asked me if it was okay for the twins to come and live with us.

Callie stares at Brandon for a moment.

CALLIE
How is it "about" that? It doesn't have words...

BRANDON
Listen -

He starts to play the simplest melody line from the piece.

BRANDON (CONT'D)
This is me. And here -

He adds two more chords on top of the phrase.

BRANDON (CONT'D)
- these are my moms. And then this -

And now the piece reaches its full resonance - five different lines all working in unison.

BRANDON (CONT'D)
- this is all of us - me, mom, Lena, the twins. See how it all works better together.

Callie nods. She gets it - sort of, anyway.

CALLIE
Nice.

Brandon shrugs, a little embarrassed by his own geeky enthusiasm.

BRANDON
I dunno. Now I kinda feel like it's missing something.

CALLIE
I like it.
(then)
(MORE)

CALLIE (CONT'D)
They asked you if the twins could move in? What were you gonna say, No? I bet you wanted to...

Brandon smiles a little.

BRANDON
Nah, I figured there was enough to go around.

CALLIE
Enough of what?

BRANDON
I dunno. Everything.

This lands on Callie. She's never had the privilege of believing there was enough for everyone.

BRANDON (CONT'D)
It's a good thing I didn't. Their mom's a total mess - she couldn't take care of herself much less two little kids.

CALLIE
At least they have a mom.

BRANDON
Actually, they have two, now.

Oh. Right.

BRANDON (CONT'D)
But you - do you know your mom? Is she - around? Is she -

CALLIE
(simply)
Dead. She's dead.

Brandon wasn't quite prepared for this response.

BRANDON
Oh. Sorry.

Callie shrugs, smiles a little, shakes off his pity.

CALLIE
Don't be. It is what it is.

Brandon's sense of Callie is changed in this moment - for the better. A little electricity passes between them.

Just then, a GIRL'S VOICE calls out from behind Brandon.

GIRL (O.S.)
Hey, baby! Who's this?

Brandon looks over, smiles at TALYA (16, beautiful, boho chic), who is standing in the doorway. Talya is the kind of girl who isn't interested in how pretty she is, which makes her surprisingly cool and fun to be around.

BRANDON
Hey, Talya. This is Callie.
(beat)
She's staying with us for a while.

Talya kisses Brandon on the mouth, then offers her hand to Callie.

GIRL/TALYA
Hey. Welcome to Riley.

Callie manages something that passes for a smile and shakes her hand.

CALLIE
Thanks.

Talya wraps her arm over Brandon's shoulder. A moment of silence. Brandon jumps in.

BRANDON
Callie's gonna be in Timothy's class with you, T. Can you show her where it is?

TALYA
Yeah, sure, of course. But we should go. Timothy gets all parental when we're late. And I don't wanna make him mad - I totally didn't do the reading last night, gonna have to wing it...

And they head out the door, leaving Brandon alone with his piano.

INT. RILEY CHARTER - CLASSROOM - DAY

Callie, Talya and about a DOZEN STUDENTS sit in big chairs in a circle, where TIMOTHY (30s, hip) leads a discussion about Kafka's METAMORPHOSIS.

TIMOTHY
- but do you think he participated in his own transformation? Did he will it? Did he want it to happen? Or did it happen to him?

Talya looks over at Callie and winks. Then she jumps in, even though she has no idea what she's talking about.

TALYA
Huh. That's a really interesting question, Timothy. Because, I mean, you could really argue it both ways. Did he want it to happen? Or did it happen to him? I totally see both sides...

Callie laughs to herself, starts looking around the room. The BOY next to her shifts in his seat, and his HEAVY KEYCHAIN jangles on the wood. Callie looks at it, gets an idea.

Timothy tries to engage her in the conversation.

TIMOTHY
What about you, Callie? I know you haven't read the material, but what would you do if you suddenly woke up and found yourself living a nightmare?

CALLIE
(without blinking)
If I was living a nightmare?

Timothy's not quite sure what to say - neither is anyone else.

EXT. RILEY CHARTER SCHOOL - QUAD - DAY

Jesus trots up behind Mariana.

JESUS
Hey.

MARIANA
Oh. Hey.

They walk a few steps in silence.

JESUS
So I been thinking - I'll go with you.

MARIANA
What?

JESUS
To meet Ana. I'll go with you. If you want.

Mariana gets a little awkward.

MARIANA
You don't even want to meet her.

JESUS
I know...

A beat.

MARIANA
I told you - I don't think I'm ready.

JESUS
I know, that's why I wanna go with you...

MARIANA
No, thanks.

And she walks away, leaving Jesus more confused than ever.

EXT. RILEY CHARTER - BREEZEWAY - DAY

Callie comes out of class and trots over to the BOY WITH THE KEYCHAIN. She puts on her most seductive smile.

CALLIE
Hey, um - what's your name?

He slows down.

BOY
Aiden.

CALLIE
Nice to meet you, Aiden.

BOY/AIDEN
You new here?

CALLIE
Yeah. Yup. New girl. Just, um, moved here. I could really use someone to show me around...

AIDEN
That could probably be arranged...

He's playing it cool, but he's definitely into her. Callie, however, is after something here - something specific.

CALLIE
Yeah? Cool. In fact, I was kinda thinking about checking out San Ysidro this afternoon.

AIDEN
(instantly put off)
San Ysidro? Down by Tijuana?

CALLIE
Yeah. I heard it's cool down there.

AIDEN
(cautiously)
What, are you looking to party or something?

CALLIE
No, no. I just - I got someone I need to see.
(then, glancing at his keychain)
You got a car, right?

And suddenly he sees through her facade. And then he notices the remnant of her black eye. He shuts down entirely.

AIDEN
Yeah. No thanks. Good luck.

And he walks away. Fuck.

INT. RILEY CHARTER - LIBRARY - DAY

Mariana sits at one of the school computers, logs on to her Facebook account. She goes straight to her messages, opens one from someone named ANA GUTIERREZ. It reads I'M SO HAPPY I'M GOING TO GET TO SEE YOU. CAN YOU MEET TONIGHT?

Mariana looks at it for a long time, not sure exactly how to respond. After a long moment of going back and forth in her head, she types YES. AS LONG AS IT'S AFTER DINNER. MEET YOU AT WESTERN HILLS PARK, AS SOON AS I CAN GET THERE. She presses send.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. RILEY CHARTER - QUAD - DAY

It's lunchtime. Kids litter the quad, sitting on the grass or the few tables in pairs or threesomes or foursomes or moresomes. Mariana is eating lunch with a couple of LATINA GIRLFRIENDS, speaking Spanish, when she overhears Callie talking to a STUDENT nearby.

CALLIE
Hey. Is there a metro stop around here?

Mariana crosses to her.

MARIANA
(with attitude)
You going somewhere? Gotta meet your pimp?

CALLIE
You wanna back the hell off, Selena Gomez?

Callie glares at her, turns to go, then stops.

CALLIE (CONT'D)
You know, I didn't ask to be brought into your house, okay? I'm not trying to steal your family or something.

MARIANA
You can have 'em. They're pissing me off.

CALLIE
(cautiously)
Why?

MARIANA
Lena is always in my face, and Stef jumps down my throat every time I open my mouth.

Callie nods - she gets it.

CALLIE
Well what do you expect, your mom's a cop...

MARIANA
She remind you of the guards from juvie?
(then, off Callie's face)
Jesus told me. What'd you do?

A beat. Of course he did. Callie considers whether to take Mariana in her confidence.

CALLIE
My foster dad did something really screwed up, so - I took a baseball bat to his beloved Mustang.

Mariana's eyes get wide.

MARIANA
Seriously? That's bad ass.

Callie shrugs.

CALLIE
Keep it to yourself?

Mariana agrees. A beat.

MARIANA
So are you leaving?

CALLIE
I got some stuff I gotta take care of.

Mariana looks at her curiously.

CALLIE (CONT'D)
Sorry. Better if you don't know. That way, if your moms start asking questions -

Mariana gets it - she's got secrets of her own. As Callie turns to head for the front entrance -

MARIANA
Wait. If you're gonna take off, make sure you go out the back way - Lena's office looks out over the front entrance. The Metro's three blocks that way.

Callie smiles, nods - these two have come to a small, but important, understanding. The BELL RINGS. Both girls head off in separate directions.

ELSEWHERE ON THE QUAD - Lena stands near the rear exit, talking to a FIRST YEAR TEACHER.

LENA
Believe me, I get it. I've got four of them at home right now. They can make you absolutely homicidal. But you cannot, under any circumstances, let them see that they're getting the better of you, okay? I learned a long time ago that as soon as I raise my voice I lose my power...

Lena looks over and spots CALLIE HEADED HER DIRECTION. She waves.

With a sigh, Callie changes directions and goes to class.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

CAPTAIN ROBERTS (50s, fatherly) looks up from his desk as Stef enters his office. MIKE (almost 40, handsome, average joe) stands off to one side. Stef looks at him quizzically.

CAPTAIN ROBERTS
(teasing her)
You okay? You're not gonna start crying are you?

STEF
With all due respect, Sir - screw you.

Roberts laughs.

CAPTAIN ROBERTS
Well, Vasquez was a pain in my ass, so as far as I'm concerned, Sacramento can have him. You're too good of a cop to be taking care of a hothead like that anyway.
(then)
Now, since you're both partner-less, starting tomorrow I'm gonna pair you up with Mike.

Stef's eyes get wide.

STEF
Sir?

CAPTAIN ROBERTS
That a problem?

Stef looks around, clearly taken aback. She looks at Mike, who explains.

MIKE
I asked. That cool?

Stef considers this a moment, then...

STEF
Sure. No problem. Sir.

CAPTAIN ROBERTS
Good. Take the rest of the day off, you guys can hit the beat tomorrow.

Stef looks at Mike, something strange passing between them, then back to the Captain.

STEF
Yessir.

EXT. RILEY CHARTER - QUAD - DAY/LATER

The BELL RINGS. Students flood the breezeways. Brandon walks with Talya. His phone BUZZES. He looks at the screen - SAN YSIDRO, CALIFORNIA. He IGNORES the call.

TALYA
So... my parents are out of town this weekend.

Brandon smirks at her.

BRANDON
Oh yeah?

TALYA
Yup. Wanna spend the night?

She puts her hand through Brandon's arm.

BRANDON
I'd have to sneak out.

TALYA
Or just tell 'em you're staying -

Brandon looks at her, with a smirk. Then, out of the corner of his eye, he notices CALLIE HEADED OFF CAMPUS. He takes off.

TALYA (CONT'D)
- at Aiden's. Where are you going?

BRANDON
Gimme two secs. Hey, Callie!

Brandon trots across the lawn, chasing after his new foster sister.

ELSEWHERE - Mariana hangs by her locker with some girlfriends when Jesus comes striding over, his hand out.

JESUS
Hey. I need some money.

MARIANA
Um, rude much? No - you've got your own money.

JESUS
I left my wallet at home. C'mon, I'm hungry. I didn't eat lunch.

MARIANA
Too bad for you.

JESUS
I just want a snack. I'll pay you back...

MARIANA
No, you won't. You never pay me back, because you never have any money, because you always spend it on surf stuff. So no...

Mariana turns back to her friends.

MARIANA (CONT'D)
(in Spanish)
So what were you saying? Sorry...

Jesus grabs her purse out of her locker, takes out her wallet.

JESUS
Look, just gimme five bucks. I promise I'll pay you back tonight.

MARIANA
Jesus! Gimme that!

She turns to grab her wallet from him, but it's too late - he's opened it to find a WAD OF CASH, mostly twenties and fifties, several hundred dollars all tolled. He holds it up.

JESUS
What is this?

She grabs it from him, stuffs it back in her purse.

MARIANA
Nothing.

JESUS
Bull. Where did you get that?

MARIANA
Don't worry about it.

She peels off a five dollar bill and shoves it in his hand.

MARIANA (CONT'D)
Here. Now go get something to eat and leave me alone.

Jesus knows better than to push her when she's this angry, but he also knows she's lying through her teeth. He gives her a look, then walks away.

BACK TO Brandon AND CALLIE - Callie is being more stand-offish than usual.

BRANDON
So... where you going?

CALLIE
I've got some stuff to take care of.

BRANDON
Stuff to take care of? Right now?

CALLIE
It's important.

Brandon looks over and catches Talya staring at them, displeased. He almost unconsciously takes half a step back from Callie

BRANDON
Well, you're not gonna be able to take care of it if you end up back in juvie. My mom's a cop - do you seriously think she won't track you down in like a minute flat?

Callie loses it.

CALLIE
Why can't you just stay out of my goddamn business! Your whole freaking family!

BRANDON
We're just trying to help you...

CALLIE
Well stop!

Before Brandon can reply, his phone BUZZES. He pulls it out of his pocket, looks at it, annoyed.

BRANDON
God. Someone's been calling me from this number all day...

Callie grabs the phone from him.

BRANDON (CONT'D)
Hey -

She looks at the screen, then answers.

CALLIE
Hey, baby, it's me. What's going on?

Brandon overhears something. It sounds something like a teen boy saying YOU GOTTA GET ME OF HERE.

CALLIE (CONT'D)
What? What do you mean?
(a beat)
Jude, what are you saying?

Someone interrupts the call. Callie gets mad.

CALLIE (CONT'D)
Let me talk to Jude.
(a beat)
Put him back on!

The line goes dead. Callie dials a number and presses send - but no one answers.

Brandon stares at her, disturbed by what he overheard. Callie is clearly devastated.

BRANDON
What's going on? Who was that? And why were they calling my number?

CALLIE
I borrowed your phone last night. Look, I gotta go. Now.

BRANDON
So who was that? Your boyfriend or something?

Callie looks at him, shakes her head.

CALLIE
No. It's my brother.

Not the answer Brandon was expecting. He takes in her scared but determined face.

CALLIE (CONT'D)
He's all I got.

BRANDON
Let me call my mom. She can help.

Callie is instantly against it.

CALLIE
Who? Stef? No way.

BRANDON
She's a -

CALLIE
No cops. I don't trust -

BRANDON
My mom's not like that.

CALLIE
If you call your mom she's gonna look in the system and find all these complaints my foster father filed against me. I kept trying to tell the police my side of the story, but they didn't care. And then they arrested me instead of him. You're just gonna get me sent back to juvie and Jude is still gonna be stuck in that house.
(then)
I gotta go. I gotta go now.

And she takes off, leaving Brandon to decide who he wants to be - the good boy he's always been, or the great man he might become. He watches her disappear through the rear gate - and after a deep breath, he takes off after her.

END OF ACT FOUR.

ACT FIVE

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brandon comes up behind Callie, who is moving at quite a clip.

CALLIE
I'm not coming back.

BRANDON
I'm not asking you to. I'm coming with you.

Callie is shocked to hear this. And not 100% sure she trusts him. She stops.

CALLIE
You're not gonna call your mom?

He shakes his head. A beat.

CALLIE (CONT'D)
Okay.

And together they take off down the street.

INT. METRO TRAIN - DAY

Brandon and Callie sit tensely on the subway, Callie deep in thought. Brandon notices their knees are touching and looks over at her. Callie suddenly remembers something.

CALLIE
Don't you have that music thing tonight?

BRANDON
It's just a - don't worry. There'll be others.

A beat. She looks at him gratefully.

BRANDON (CONT'D)
So what happened? In the house?

Callie takes a breath.

CALLIE
(matter of fact)
Well...

(MORE)

CALLIE (CONT'D)
my foster father caught my brother wearing one of his ex-wife's dresses, and started beating the crap out of him.

BRANDON
Seriously? He hit him?

Callie nods, half-laughs.

CALLIE
Um, yeah. He used to hit me all the time, which, you know, whatever... But when I saw him going after Jude, I just went nuts.

Brandon knows what it means to protect your siblings.

CALLIE (CONT'D)
So I got his baseball bat and whacked him on the knees. And then I went outside and beat the hell out of his car. When the cops came, he told them he was defending himself. Nobody seemed to care much about my side of the story.

BRANDON
If he was so awful to you guys, why was he even a foster father in the first place?

Callie looks at him with a knowing laugh.

CALLIE
The money. He doesn't have a job, so...

Brandon is horrified to hear this. After a moment, he places his hand on her knee, as reassurance. She looks down at it, unsure what to do, as the train rockets through the city.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - JESUS' ROOM - DAY

Jesus flops across his bed, playing a surf game on his computer. Lena appears.

LENA
(casually)
So - what's going on with Mariana?

JESUS
(playing dumb)
Whaddaya mean?

LENA
Has she said anything to you? Any idea what's up with her?

JESUS
I dunno. Maybe it's her time of the-

LENA
(playfully)
If you say, "Time of the month," I'm going to sign you up for a Women's Health Workshop at Planned Parenthood. Don't ever say that in a house full of women.

JESUS
Okay, fine. Jeez.

LENA
And you're sure you don't want to meet with Ana? Don't you think it would be good to have some, um, cultural influences? Someone to ask about your heritage? I know for me growing up in a white neighborhood, it was really important to hear family stories and things. Helped me feel less... out of place.

He shrugs, shakes his head. It's just not his thing. Mariana comes upstairs, listens from the hall.

LENA (CONT'D)
Well, if M says anything or you notice anything, let me know, okay?

Mariana can't believe what she's hearing, gets furious.

MARIANA
You want him to spy on me?
(then, in Spanish)
You might as well put me in juvie like Callie!

LENA
Mariana...

She storms into her room, slams the door. Lena looks to Jesus, who just laughs at her. Stef's voice rings out from downstairs.

STEF (O.S.)
I'm home!

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Stef is shoving some string cheese into her mouth, staring off into space, when Lena descends upon her.

LENA
So Mariana overheard me asking Jesus if something was going on with her and completely flipped out on me.

STEF
Okay. We'll talk to her. So listen -

LENA
You're gonna have to talk to her, because I swear I'm going to lose it!

STEF
Okay, fine. Can we get into this later? I'm not in a great mood - today was Vasquez's last day.

Lena feels horrible, shifts gears.

LENA
Oh. Right. I forgot. You okay?

Stef nods.

STEF
And in other exciting news - guess who they're partnering me with now?

LENA
Who?

STEF
Mike.

Lena actually falls speechless. A beat.

STEF (CONT'D)
I guess he asked for me.

LENA
(not cool with this)
Uh-huh.

STEF
Oh, God. Don't go all non-verbal on me. It's fine.

It may be, but Lena is not. Stef goes to the fridge, grabs herself a beer. The DOORBELL RINGS.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

Lena opens the front door to reveal MIKE, still in his uniform. She looks at him dryly, raises an eyebrow.

MIKE
Hey. You guys ready?

LENA
Brandon! Your dad's here! Time for your contest!

No answer. They wait an uncomfortable moment.

LENA (CONT'D)
He'll be down in a second. I think he's nervous. Brandon!

The tension is so thick you would need a hacksaw to cut it.

LENA (CONT'D)
So I hear you and Stef are gonna be back on the beat together.

MIKE
Oh. Yup.

LENA
(territorially)
Stef said you asked for her?

A breath, while Mike figures out how to explain.

MIKE
Look, it was either me or some rookie. I never felt comfortable when she was working with Vasquez. I just - I feel better knowing I'm around. I mean, we've got the kids to think about.

Lena takes a deep breath of her own. She's a little embarrassed by her assumptions.

LENA
Oh, okay. Thanks.
(then, lightly)
I mean, the feminist in me is offended, but as her wife, you know... thanks.

MIKE
Don't tell Stef I said that, okay?

Lena shakes her head - of course not. Another moment passes between them.

LENA
Mind if we take separate cars? Stef and I can meet you there.

He agrees. Another beat.

LENA (CONT'D)
God, where is that kid?

Stef wanders in from the kitchen, nods at Mike.

STEF
Brandon! Let's go! You're gonna be late!

Jesus appears at the top of the stairs.

JESUS
He's not here.

STEF
Wait. Where's Callie?

JESUS
I haven't seen them since school.

Stef and Lena share a concerned look. This isn't like Brandon.

STEF
So where the hell are they?

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

Dusk has just fallen. Brandon follows a step or two behind Callie, who storms up the street on a mission.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Lena hangs up her cell.

LENA
He's not answering.

Jesus is there with Stef and Mike.

LENA (CONT'D)
Let me try Talya.

And she picks up her phone and steps away.

MIKE
Guys, I'm sure he's fine. Let's not freak out. Maybe he thought we were gonna meet him over there? At the contest?

Maybe...

MIKE (CONT'D)
Why don't I head over there and check.

Stef nods, and he heads out the door. Then she gets an idea.

STEF
Jesus - hand me my phone.

He reaches across the counter and hands it to her.

JESUS
Who you gonna call?

STEF
Nobody.

She starts up an app on her cell.

STEF (CONT'D)
I put that tracking app on all our phones, since you -
(to Jesus)
- are always leaving yours everywhere.

Lena hangs up, rejoins the conversation.

LENA
She says the last time she saw him he was talking to Callie before seventh period. Maybe Mike's right - maybe we're over-reacting.

Stef checks the screen in front of her

STEF
If we're over-reacting - what are they doing in San Ysidro?

A beat. Nobody has an answer. Stef shoots Lena an I-TOLD-YOU-THIS-WAS-A-BAD-IDEA look.

LENA
Are they going to Tijuana?

STEF
I'm gonna kill him. Where are my keys?

JESUS
You want us to come?

STEF
No, stay here with your sister. We'll be back soon.

LENA
Don't forget to take your pill. And finish your homework.

And she and Lena take off. Jesus opens one of the cabinets, pulls out his bottle of Ritalin, opens it. He dumps one into his hand when he notices that there are VERY FEW LEFT.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - MARIANA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Mariana watches out her bedroom window as Stef and Lena pull out of the driveway. She immediately grabs her purse and is headed for the door when Jesus appears in the hall.

JESUS
Brandon and Callie are missing...
(then)
Where are you going?

MARIANA
What do you mean, missing?

JESUS
They never came home from school.

MARIANA
Oh. Huh. I guess Brandon went with her.

JESUS
Where?

MARIANA
She wouldn't tell me...

Mariana is clearly trying to get out of her room, but Jesus doesn't clear the door.

JESUS
Hey - you didn't take any of my Ritalin, did you?

Mariana freezes, just for a millisecond.

MARIANA
What? No, why?

JESUS
'Cause Mom just picked me up a new bottle, and now it's almost gone.

MARIANA
What are you looking at me for?

JESUS
I was just asking.

She's avoiding eye contact with him. But he's onto her.

MARIANA
Well ask Brandon. Or Callie. Now excuse me, I gotta go.

She tries to push past him into the hall, but Jesus stops her.

JESUS
Is that how you got all that money?
(then)
Are you selling my freaking pills?

MARIANA
Wha- No...

JESUS
'Cause Mama sure as hell didn't give you that big wad of cash. Or did she? Should I ask her?

Her silence is the only confession he needs to hear.

JESUS (CONT'D)
Why? Why would you do that? It's so damn stupid. What the hell do you need all that money for, anyway?

A long beat. Mariana decides to tell him the truth.

MARIANA
I been talking to Ana.

JESUS
Ana, our birth mom?

Mariana nods. Jesus can't believe what she's saying.

MARIANA
She got back in town last month.

JESUS
Wait - what? I thought you didn't want to meet her...

MARIANA
No - I just didn't want Stef and Lena sticking their noses all up in my business, okay? They wouldn't get it. Ana needs some money. I just want to help her out a little.

JESUS
You're giving her money? For what?

Mariana shrugs. He glances over to her desk, where she has a FRAMED PHOTO of the two of them, at THREE YEARS OLD, sitting on the lap of a WOMAN in her mid-twenties (who looks remarkably like JENNIFER LOPEZ), all smiling radiantly.

JESUS (CONT'D)
Why?

MARIANA
Whaddaya mean, why? 'Cause she's our mom.

JESUS
She's not our mom! Our moms live here, in this house! What the hell is wrong with you?

MARIANA
I knew you wouldn't understand. That's why I didn't tell you.

JESUS
Understand what?! That woman is not our mom, Mariana. She freaking abandoned us! That woman -

Jesus grabs the framed photo, RIPS open the back of the frame and yanks out the picture. He shoves it in Mariana's face.

JESUS (CONT'D)
This woman is not our mother. She's a monster who left her two babies so she run off with some dumbass and screw whoever she wanted! This. Woman. Is. Not. Our. Mother.

And with every word, he tears the photograph into smaller and smaller pieces.

MARIANA
Jesus, stop!

But it's too late. Mariana starts to cry, in spite of herself. It's obvious how much Ana represents to her.

JESUS
I thought you were supposed to be the smart one.

As soon as he is gone, Mariana takes the pieces of the photo and starts taping them back together, her heart as broken as the picture.

INT./EXT. XTERRA - NIGHT

Stef drives as Lena stares out the window apprehensively. Stef's phone rings. Lena picks it up, looks at it, answers it.

LENA
Hey, it's Lena.

INTERCUT

INT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Mike stands inside the auditorium, looking through the CROWD for some sign of Brandon.

MIKE
No sign of him here. He hasn't checked in yet either.

LENA
We tracked his phone. He's in San Ysidro. We were afraid they were headed to TJ but it doesn't look like it. We're on our way now. I'll call you as soon as I hear something.

And she hangs up, the urgency filling the silence.

EXT. MODEST HOUSE - NIGHT

A modest house in a nondescript neighborhood. A DENTED MUSTANG sits in the driveway. Callie drops her backpack silently on the patchy grass, and signals to Brandon with a head nod. He goes to the front door and KNOCKS.

BRANDON
Hello? Anyone there? Can you help me? I'm lost...

Callie sneaks over to one of the windows on the side of the house and taps on it lightly.

CALLIE
(just louder than a whisper)
Jude? Jude?

No response. Callie taps again.

CALLIE (CONT'D)
(a little louder)
Jude?

A light turns on in the house. Callie drops to the ground. Brandon knocks again.

BRANDON
Hello? Anybody home?

Callie gets up, tries once more.

CALLIE
Jude?

Still nothing from Jude. The front door opens. JIM PIERSON (40s, imposing) peers out through the screen.

PIERSON
Can I help you?

Callie disappears around the back of the small bungalow.

BRANDON
Um, yessir. I was... I was just... I'm looking for the, um, Metro?

PIERSON
The Metro's a few miles from here.

BRANDON
Yessir. Guess I got kinda lost.

Over Pierson's shoulder, Brandon can see all the way to the back of the tiny house, where Callie slips in the kitchen door. She creeps into the house as quietly as she can.

PIERSON
Well, you gotta go about six blocks -

Callie steps just a little too hard, making a small THUD. Pierson whips around.

PIERSON (CONT'D)
What the hell are you doing in here? Get outta my house.

CALLIE
I just want to see Jude. Just for a minute.

PIERSON
No.

She moves toward the hallway. Pierson grabs her by the arm.

PIERSON (CONT'D)
I said No! You made a lot of trouble for me the last time you were here.

BRANDON
Hey! Don't touch her!

Brandon reaches for Pierson. Pierson whips around and shoves Brandon against the wall.

CALLIE
Look, I'm sorry about your car. I'll pay to have it fixed. I just want to talk to Jude, okay - please?

She shakes him off. He grabs for her, but she slips past him.

CALLIE (CONT'D)
Jude!

Pierson opens a desk drawer and pulls out a gun.

BRANDON
Callie!

PIERSON
Get the hell outta my house!

She freezes.

BRANDON
Hey, man! Calm down.

PIERSON
Don't you move.

EXT. MODEST HOUSE - NIGHT

Just then, Stef and Lena pull up in Stef's XTerra. Stef, (still in uniform) jumps out and sprints to the front door. Through the window, she can see Pierson with his gun drawn. She pulls out her pistol.

STEF
Brandon, get back!
(then)
Freeze! Police!

Pierson puts his hands up.

STEF (CONT'D)
Set down the gun, slowly.

He does. As soon as he lets go of the gun, Callie DASHES DOWN THE HALL.

PIERSON
Damnit! Tell her to stay outta my goddamn house!

STEF
Don't you move! Now back away. And get on your knees.

Callie comes out of the back with JUDE (13, artistic, effeminate).

Stef and Lena watch as Callie hugs this boy. There's a softness to Callie in this moment, a vulnerability not seen before.

CALLIE
You okay?

JUDE
Yeah.

She notices that Jude has a BAD BRUISE on his arm.

CALLIE
Did he hurt you?

Jude doesn't answer. Brandon walks over to Lena.

LENA
Who is that?

BRANDON
That's her brother.

Not the answer Lena was expecting. Stef snaps cuffs on Pierson, then leads him outside.

EXT. MODEST HOUSE - NIGHT

Stef sits Pierson down on the gravel drive. Lena leads Callie, Brandon and Jude out of the house. After a moment, Lena makes her way over to Stef.

STEF
So what do we do now? Call Child Protective Services?

A beat. Lena looks at her, something hopeful in her expression. Stef knows where this is headed.

STEF (CONT'D)
(quietly)
Lena...

LENA
We can't - send these kids away...

STEF
We don't have enough room as it is.

LENA
We'll make room.

Stef looks to Brandon. He nods his approval. With a sigh, Stef surrenders. Lena smiles, turns to Callie.

LENA (CONT'D)
Callie, introduce us.

Callie leads Jude over. She is a little hesitant, afraid there might be consequences for her actions.

CALLIE
This is Lena and Stef. This is Jude.

Jude hangs back, uncertain. Callie takes in Lena's face.

CALLIE (CONT'D)
It's okay - they're on our side.

Slowly, Jude reaches out his hand. Lena takes it.

LENA
Nice to meet you, Jude.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Mariana sits on the top of a damp picnic table, under the harsh glow of a street lamp. She holds the taped-up photo in her hands, tracing the cracked lines with her fingers.

ANA (O.S.)
Mariana?

Mariana looks up to see her birth mother ANA (40s, beautiful but tired), for the first time in over a decade. She swallows and stands up.

MARIANA
(quietly)
Hey.

A long moment. Ana seems even more anxious than Mariana. Is it just nerves? Or something else?

ANA
You're really pretty.

MARIANA
Thanks. So are... you.

Ana just shakes her head.

MARIANA (CONT'D)
How are you?

ANA
I'm good, I'm good. Back in town, you know - trying to get back on my feet...

And with that, Ana's agenda becomes pretty transparent. It hangs in the air, until Mariana reaches in her purse, pulls out the cash.

MARIANA
Oh. Here. Hope this helps.

Ana looks at it, resists the urge to count it. The humiliation on her face is easy to see.

ANA
It will. Trust me. Thank you so much.

Mariana just nods.

ANA (CONT'D)
Promise I'll pay you back. Once I get a job and stuff...

Now that Ana has the money, she's ready to go.

ANA (CONT'D)
So... you better get home, huh? Your folks'll be wondering where you are...

And suddenly it all clicks for Mariana. This is not going to be the mother-and-child-reunion of her fantasies. She hardens, just a bit.

MARIANA
My moms.

ANA
What?

MARIANA
My moms will be wondering where I am.

Ana nods - right. Another beat.

ANA
Okay. Well...

And she gives Mariana a very awkward hug. Ana's eyes well with tears that do not fall. As she turns to go, she holds up the money.

ANA (CONT'D)
Thanks again.

Mariana nods, then watches as Ana disappears into the dark.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT

As they load Jude's few things into the back of the car, Lena gives Brandon a stern look, shakes her head.

BRANDON
I was trying to do the right thing.

It's true. A moment.

LENA
I get it. But you're still in all kinds of trouble. We'll talk about it later.

He wisely chooses not to argue.

ELSEWHERE - Stef gets a moment alone with Callie.

STEF
So I need to ask you... Why didn't you come to us?

Callie has nothing left to lose, tells the truth.

CALLIE
The last time I told a cop the truth, I ended up in jail.

STEF
Well I'm really sorry to hear that. I'm a cop, but I'm telling you, I'm not like that.

CALLIE
Look, if you guys wanna send me back to juvie now, at least I know Jude'll be somewhere safe.

STEF
Callie, I want you to listen to me - we're not going to send you back, like you're a... bad steak or something. You're not disposable. You're not worthless.

These words land hard on Callie. It's the first time in her life she's heard something like this. If she were a different girl, she would cry. But she's not a different girl, so she simply lowers her eyes to the ground and nods her head.

Stef places a hand on her shoulder with a smile.

STEF (CONT'D)
Come on - let's go home.

MUSIC UP: BRANDON'S COMPOSITION

Brandon's flawless composition starts to play.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - MARIANA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jesus is searching through Mariana's things, looking for something. He digs into the bottom of her backpack from school, where he finds a baggie containing a few of his Ritalin pills. Damn.

INT./EXT. XTERRA - NIGHT

Stef and Lena drive Jude, Callie, and Brandon home in silence. Stef places a comforting hand on Lena's leg.

Callie is draped protectively around Jude. Brandon stares at her, more taken with this confounding creature than ever. She looks over at him with a soft smile. Then something occurs to him.

Just then, Brandon's music begins to build, but this time there is an ADDITIONAL LAYER - TWO new components adding to the complexity of the piece. It makes the sound richer, darker even - but also more harmonious. It's beautiful.

Brandon ever so SUBTLY PLAYS AN IMAGINARY KEYBOARD along with the music. He glows with satisfaction.

INT. FOSTER HOUSE - JESUS' ROOM - NIGHT

Jesus pulls up Mariana's name on his cell phone, presses send.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Mariana sits on the bench, not yet ready to go home. Her cellphone rings. She looks at the screen, ignores it.

INT./EXT. XTERRA - NIGHT

The SUV cruises down the boulevard, framed by palm trees and the street lamps.

EXT. FOSTER HOUSE - NIGHT

The XTerra pulls into the driveway.

Stef, Lena, Brandon, Callie, and Jude tumble out, carrying Jude's few belongings. Jesus comes out on to the porch to meet them. Stef introduces him to Jude. They shake hands.

STEF
Where's Mariana?

Jesus tries to figure out how to answer the question, but is saved as she comes jogging up the driveway.

MARIANA
Here I am.
(then, off Stef's look)
I was over at Blanca's.

Stef shoots an I'm-not-buying-it look to Lena. Jesus tries to distract them, cover for his sister.

JESUS
This is Jude, Callie's brother.

Mariana smiles and waves hello. And one by one, they file inside the house, until only Brandon and Callie remain. As he heads into the house, she grabs him by the wrist and pulls him back onto the porch.

They stare at each other for a long moment - something unspeakable passing between them. Finally...

CALLIE
Thank you.

Stef appears at the door, wondering where they are - and notices the tension. Callie carefully extracts her hand and goes inside.

Stef gestures for Brandon to come in, then closes the front door, shutting out the danger, and heartbreak, and hardship that awaits them all in the rest of the world. Tonight, they are safe. Tonight, they are family. Tonight, they are home.

END OF PILOT.