

AMERICAN GOTHIC

Written by

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TEASER

EXT. BOSTON - INTERSTATE 90 - ESTABLISHING - DAY

As traffic snakes through the central artery of downtown Boston, FIND an old GRAY SEDAN zooming toward the I-90 connector tunnel...

TESSA (O.S.)
You ready for this?

GRADY (O.S.)
What's a pre-interview, anyway?

And we PUSH INSIDE --

INT. GRAY SEDAN - DAY

In the passenger seat, TESSA ROSS, 27, bright, nurturing, smiles at GRADY ROSS, 31, solid, honest, a touch of cynicism.

TESSA
It's just her PR people reminding us not to say anything idiotic.

GRADY
They're not actually going to interview me, are they?

TESSA
Probably not. But you'll be in the photo, so your fake-smile game better be on point.

Grady flashes her a fake smile.

TESSA (CONT'D)
Wildly insincere.

GRADY
Well, yeah...

INT. I-90 CONNECTOR TUNNEL - DAY

Suspended CONCRETE CEILING PANELS line the roof. PUSH IN... closer, closer... until we get to an XCU of a GIANT BOLT, straining... pulling apart from its metal anchor...

INT. GRAY SEDAN/I-90 CONNECTOR TUNNEL - DAY

Back with our couple as they zoom into the tunnel...

TESSA

You have to sell it. "I love this." "This is not a family of lunatics." Look.

She GRINS. It seems sincere.

GRADY

That's convincing. That's so convincing I'm kind of worried... Are you actually into me?

TESSA

Nope. Gotcha. Just married you for your sweet ride.

Above them, XCU OF THE BOLT... straining, straining... and GIVING WAY, slipping out of its mooring, causing a chain reaction as other bolts SNAP FREE... Oblivious commuters zoom by below as a three-ton CONCRETE PANEL DETACHES from the ceiling and FALLS to the roadway below...

... CRUSHING a GRAY SEDAN.

BRAKES SLAM, TIRES SQUEAL as drivers swerve to avoid the crushed, motionless car, and we're --

INT. GRAY SEDAN - DAY

Back with Grady and Tessa, now safely on the other side of the tunnel.

TESSA

Did you hear that?

GRADY

What?

TESSA

Ovulation app. Today's the day.

She pulls out her PHONE as it makes a DISTINCTIVE BEEP.

GRADY

I hear that sound, immediate erection.

TESSA

(laughs)

Should we do it at my parents' house? Just to see if we can get away with it?

Grady grins at her. That's nuts, but maybe...

EXT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - CIRCULAR DRIVE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

A gorgeous estate in Beacon Hill. Fit for the uber-rich.

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - ENTRYWAY/GREAT ROOM - DAY

A manicured finger traces the top of a FRAMED PHOTO of Tessa in high school. No dust. Good. REVEAL MADELINE HAWTHORNE, 58, warm but protective of this privileged life. She looks over other PORTRAITS... and then a BLANK SPOT. Just the nail where a picture hung. She picks up another FRAMED PHOTO: twin baby girls and a toddler boy. Must be grandchildren. And as she goes to hang it on the blank spot --

EDWARD (O.S.)

Did you take Patrick's picture off
the wall?

She turns to EDWARD HAWTHORNE, 60, charming, ambitious, but relaxing into retirement; he enjoys his steak and Scotch.

MADELINE

(gently)
It's been nine years...

EDWARD

He's still part of the family.

Madeline straightens the photo of the grandkids.

MADELINE

Just for today, then.

Edward's about to respond, when -- BELLS CHIME -- the doorbell. They share a look, excited. Both move toward the door, and Edward opens it to find --

EXT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

A picture-perfect family on the stoop. ALISON HAWTHORNE-PRICE, 36, polished, poised, driven, stands with her husband TOM PRICE, 40, a bit of a trophy husband but a devoted dad. The twin girls from the photo, POPPY and WILLOW, now 6, are doing their best impression of well-behaved.

EDWARD

(to Madeline)
Honey, did you order a walking
Norman Rockwell painting?

ALISON

(smiles; this gets old)
Never gets old.

And now we REVEAL someone else on the porch: RENEE FUENTES, 40, standing off to the side of the family. Power suit, sexy, intimidating.

ALISON (CONT'D)

This is Renee, my new campaign manager. Six weeks to go, I had to bring in the best.

Renee steps up. Handshakes.

RENEE

Wonderful to meet you, Mr. Hawthorne, Mrs. Hawthorne.

MADELINE

Please, come in. Wipe your feet, if you don't mind...

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - GREAT ROOM - DAY

Renee takes in the sprawling home.

RENEE

It's stunning.

But she doesn't sound happy about that. As she looks around, Alison spots CAM HAWTHORNE, 30, cool kid grown world-weary. He's sitting with his son JACK, 8, extremely smart, extremely strange, drawing something we can't see.

ALISON

How are you, Cam?

CAM

Peachy.

She hugs him. As they break apart, she looks in his eyes; they're clear. She looks down at his arms, trying to be subtle... no track marks.

ALISON

You look good.

Cam exhales, resentful of this little check-up.

CAM

Yep.

(then)

Where's Tessa?

TESSA (O.S.)

We're here, we're here.

Tessa and Grady at the doorway. Edward hugs her, has a soft spot for his youngest.

EDWARD

My favorite newlyweds.

Cam takes this in. It stings a bit...

ALISON

We're all yours, Renee.

(re: her phone)

I'm even turning this off. Big moment.

Renee smiles, addressing the whole group.

RENEE

Wonderful to meet you all. As you know, it's never easy to unseat the incumbent --

ALISON

Even when he really deserves it...

RENEE

(smiles)

So our objective here is to invite the press in to get to know the Hawthornes. The people of District 8 love their City Councilor. We need the people of Boston to love their potential new mayor -- and her family.

(then)

The key is keeping you relatable to working-class constituents who are growing disillusioned with Mayor Conley.

Edward smiles. Easy enough.

EDWARD

Well, this family grew up working-class. And now Tessa's a teacher, Grady's a police officer --

TESSA

(proud of him)

He actually just made detective.

They ad lib congrats; Edward pats him on the back.

EDWARD

Fantastic.

(to Renee)

You know what else? You've got the creator of "Roger That" right here. An icon of the everyman.

He nods at Cam, who musters a smile. Doesn't love attention.

RENEE

I know, terrific. I'm a big fan.

Madeline, proud of him, gestures at a FRAMED COMIC STRIP on the wall behind her.

MADELINE

That's the first strip published.

We see ROGER: a put-upon office worker with the head of a frog, who carries a briefcase and makes wry commentary about working for the man.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

For years, he would read the comics every day and draw in his own right beside them... Now he's syndicated in 85 newspapers.

Alison, compelled to bring it back to herself...

ALISON

But here's my question: how do you feel about having Roger officially endorse a mayoral candidate?

CAM

Oh, definitely, he's a big supporter... of Conley.

Alison smiles, swats him. Renee looks at Jack.

RENEE

You going to be an artist like your dad?

Jack shakes his head. Matter-of-fact:

JACK

Actually, I want to be a medical examiner. For the autopsies.

And... dead silence.

CAM
(mumbling)
He's going through a phase...

Renee nods, looking around... Anyway...

RENEE
So... are there any rooms that are
not quite as... grand?

As they move to another room, Tessa grabs Grady's hand, pulls
him into --

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - KITCHEN PANTRY - DAY

Rushed, furtive button-fumbling...

GRADY
If we get caught, your dad's gonna
kill me.

TESSA
We're married adults.

GRADY
We're still in your parents'
pantry!

TESSA
Less talking. More sex-ing.

And as they get to it --

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - DEN - MOMENTS LATER

Renee looks around. It's marginally less ostentatious.

RENEE
This could work.
(to Edward)
Have a seat.

He sits on the leather couch.

RENEE (CONT'D)
Let's say I'm the interviewer.
(to Edward)
Tell me about your career.

EDWARD
Sure. Well, I'm an entrepreneur...

RENEE

(correcting)

No. You started your own business.
You work construction... Let's tap
into the people that you were
twenty years ago, before Hawthorne
Concrete became...

She trails off, distracted by a PAINTING on the wall.

RENEE (CONT'D)

Is that an original Vermeer?

MADELINE

Yes.

Renee stands. This room won't work either. As she moves
toward the back door --

RENEE

Maybe we try setting this
outside...

She pulls open the curtain.

RENEE (CONT'D)

Oh my God.

The backyard is like a world-class resort.

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - PANTRY - DAY

The pantry SHELVES RATTLE, a BOX of CHEEZ-ITS falls to the
floor as we REVEAL Grady and Tessa, mid-sex. An out-of-
breath whisper --

GRADY

We should do this again... right
before the photo... That'll make
the smiles real...

Tessa shushes him, hearing something.

TESSA

(whispers)

Someone's coming.

GRADY

Not yet --

TESSA

Get... out -- we have to --

RENEE (O.S.)

This isn't going to work.

And as Grady and Tessa panic, we PUSH OUT to --

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - KITCHEN - INTERCUT

Renee and Alison, having a private conversation.

RENEE

... It's too extravagant in here.
Not accessible. We need a change
of venue.

ALISON

What are you thinking? Stick to
campaign headquarters?

RENEE

(nods)
That's our best bet.

IN THE PANTRY -- Grady and Tessa are frantically trying to
extricate themselves from each other.

RENEE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

So the little boy, the budding
coroner -- where's mom?

IN THE KITCHEN -- Alison hesitates.

RENEE (CONT'D)

Lay it on me -- I need to know
where all the bodies are buried.

ALISON

She and Cam met in art school,
bonded over their deep love of
drugs, and along came Jack. Cam
finally got clean last year and is
divorcing Sophie, who hasn't been
clean for more than five minutes as
long as I've known her.

RENEE

So she's our wild card. Okay.

As Renee's wheels are turning, a NOISE from the pantry. They
turn to look --

ALISON

Is somebody in there?

Shit. They're caught. Tessa improvises, grabbing the BOX of
CHEEZ-ITS that fell. She pushes open the pantry door.

TESSA

Oh, hey.

(re: the box)

Just scrounging for a snack.

Grady plays along, grabbing a bag of chips, holding them up. Meanwhile, Alison grabs her phone, turns it back on, as Renee turns to Grady --

RENEE

Quick question, Detective -- do you still have a regular police uniform you could wear for the photo op?

GRADY

They actually make you turn them back in.

Alison's PHONE is already RINGING. She steps out...

RENEE

Ah, too bad. Just keep in mind that luxury reads on camera, so don't wear any articles of clothing that cost more than \$100.

Grady smiles -- he doesn't have any.

GRADY

Not a problem.

RENEE

Also, your fly's down.

On Grady: fuck. Alison pops back in the kitchen, in crisis mode.

ALISON

Renee. We have an issue.

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - HALLWAY - DAY

Alison huddles with Renee.

ALISON

Part of the ceiling collapsed in a tunnel on I-90...

Renee reacts. Shit.

RENEE

Okay, what else do we know?

ALISON

Not much. At least two people were transported to the hospital. Tunnel's closed while police deal with the aftermath...

Renee, realizing...

RENEE

Tell me Hawthorne Concrete didn't supply that part of the Big Dig.

ALISON

I wish I could.

Alison dials her phone.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Conley's going to be all over this.

INT. I-90 CONNECTOR TUNNEL - DAY

The aftermath of the collapse. News vans, cops rerouting traffic. A POLICE OFFICER examines what's left of the ceiling panel, something in the rubble catching his eye.

A BELT. Sticking out from the broken concrete. A REDDISH-BROWN STAIN on it... dried blood? Taken aback, the officer walks away...

... and returns a moment later, gloves and a plastic evidence bag in hand. And as he bags the belt for evidence...

INT. RENEE'S CAR - DAY

Renee drives as Alison's on the phone --

ALISON

(into phone)

What do we know, Ryan? Fatalities?

(then)

That's it?

(beat, to Renee)

Woman from Newton named Eva Taylor lost her right foot.

RENEE

Okay. We can work with that. We'll schedule a hospital visit tomorrow.

ALISON

(into phone)

Any indication of what caused it?

A beat as she listens, then visibly relaxes.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Okay, get me some face time with the NTSB rep - before Conley gets in there. Thanks.

She hangs up, turns to Renee.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Preliminary analysis suggests defective bolt anchors. Nothing to do with the concrete.

RENEE

Good. Let's scrap the family puff piece, do a press conference addressing the collapse, and a quick family photo shoot afterward.

Alison nods, admiring her. She's on the ball.

ALISON

Perfect. Thanks.

Alison squeezes her hand. Maybe a benign gesture of thanks. Maybe not.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

As Grady enters, the precinct is buzzing with energy. He spots a co-worker, OFFICER BAIERS --

GRADY

Happy hour start early in here?

BAIERS

Big find at the tunnel collapse.

He thrusts a PHOTO of the belt from the site at Grady.

GRADY

How did this get inside the tunnel?

BAIERS

Guessing somebody disposed of it after using it in a murder.

(then)

Prints match this guy --

Baiers hands him another PHOTO: the strangled corpse of a 30-something MAN. Caption: "Victim Shawn O'Brien, 34, DOD: 12/13/03."

BAIERS (CONT'D)

He must have left them on the belt
when he fought back. Name's Shawn
O'Brien. Ring a bell?

Grady frowns.

BAIERS (CONT'D)

A silver bell, maybe?

On Grady, realizing... This is huge.

BAIERS (CONT'D)

(off Grady's shock)

Yeah.

INT. ALISON'S CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Alison's on her phone.

ALISON

A belt?

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - GRADY'S OFFICE - DAY - INTERCUT

Grady's on the other end, amped up:

GRADY

Prints on it match one of the
victims of the Silver Bells killer.
Running it for DNA now...

ALISON

Oh my God...

GRADY

We've never had a Silver Bells
murder weapon -- it's the biggest
lead on this case in years.
Thought you'd want to know ASAP.

ALISON

Absolutely. Thank you.

GRADY

Sure. And Alison... Catching this
case would be a career-maker for
me. If you find yourself on the
phone with the Commissioner...

A pre-emptive quid pro quo. Alison gets it.

ALISON

Of course.

She hangs up, looks at Renee. She's energized:

ALISON (CONT'D)
If we get on top of this Silver
Bells case...

Renee smiles. And we're TIGHT ON --

NEWS REPORTER #1
Stunning break tonight in the case
of the elusive serial killer known
as Silver Bells. Rubble from the I-
90 ceiling collapse revealed
evidence connected to a victim
killed back in 2003...

Channel change...

NEWS REPORTER #2
... killer known for strangling his
victims and leaving no trace at the
scene except for his eerie calling
card: a small silver hand bell...
the kind used to summon a butler.

The INSET PHOTO on screen of a SILVER HAND BELL at a crime
scene. Channel change...

NEWS REPORTER #3
... Nine victims from 1998-2006,
before the murders abruptly stopped
and the case went cold...

REVEAL Alison watching, taking it in, and we MATCH CUT TO:

INT. ALISON'S CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Alison at the dais, addressing the press. She's confident,
polished, a born public speaker.

ALISON
... My team is committed to
addressing any safety concerns on
our public roadways, and we're
wishing Eva Taylor a speedy
recovery from her injuries...

Off to the side, her family watches: Madeline, Cam, Jack,
Tessa, Grady, Tom and the twins, all camera-ready...

ALISON (CONT'D)

... And we're also buoyed by the fact that this incident has provided police with a monumental breakthrough in a cold case that has haunted Boston for years.

... and then we find Edward, who looks unwell. Beads of sweat on his forehead.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Many of you remember the terror that gripped the city during that time. I certainly do. Though the murders stopped, the fear has never gone away. It won't, until the Silver Bells Killer is behind bars. Unfortunately, we haven't gotten any closer to that under Mayor Conley's watch.

Back to Edward, clutching his chest, clearly in distress. Something's wrong.

ALISON (CONT'D)

But if I am your mayor, I will make it my mission to work with law enforcement to crack this case once and for all, so that the citizens of Boston can sleep easy, knowing that --

She stops as Edward HITS THE FLOOR. Unconscious.

END OF TEASER

ACT IINT. HARBOR HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

In the waiting room of an upscale hospital. Everybody's tense.

ALISON

He was worried about the tunnel collapse --

MADELINE

We don't know that --

ALISON

(guilt-ridden)

He was -- I should have emphasized that it was just the bolts, nothing to do with the concrete --

CAM

(gently)

Okay, Ali, I know the world typically revolves around you --

She gives him a look.

CAM (CONT'D)

-- but it's not like your press conference caused his heart attack. Come on. It was going to happen. No matter what you said, no matter where he was --

JACK

Actually, extreme stress can trigger cardiac arrest.

Cam turns to him.

CAM

Hey, buddy, why don't you play with the twins?

Jack looks over at Poppy and Willow, sliding around the floor on their backs.

POPPY

We're playing Sliders.

WILLOW

It's where you slide on the floor without using your hands.

JACK

Do you know how many different microbes are probably on that floor? Rotavirus, shigella bacteria, salmonella...

POPPY

Salmonella, dressed in yella!

WILLOW

Went upstairs to kiss her fella!

Back with the adults...

TESSA

We should tell Patrick.

Silence. Clearly this is not a popular idea.

TESSA (CONT'D)

It's his father too. He should know what's going on.

ALISON

If he gave a shit, he would have given us a forwarding address.

(to Madeline)

You don't have a number for him, do you?

Madeline shakes her head. Cam looks up at the entrance.

CAM

Oh, no.

SOPHIE HAWTHORNE, 28, manic pixie dream girl-gone awry, enters. She's just a tiny hot mess.

CAM (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

ALISON

This is a waste of your time, Sophie -- the drugs here are all locked up in cabinets.

SOPHIE

You know, for a public figure, you're pretty nasty.

ALISON

Tell you what. I'll stop being nasty, you stop ruining my brother's life.

CAM
Alison, let me handle this.

Cam pulls Sophie aside.

CAM (CONT'D)
You shouldn't be here.

SOPHIE
I saw on the news that he had a
heart attack...
(sweet)
... and I just wanted to be here
for you. Supporting you. This is
really scary...

It's a manipulation. And it's working. He's got a major
soft spot for her...

Meanwhile, Tessa makes a decision. Gets up, heads outside,
past Sophie and Cam.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
We'll get through this, okay?
(hopeful smile)
And then maybe we can talk about
giving us another shot.

And Cam's expression changes, the spell broken. He shakes
his head.

CAM
This is over, Soph. It has to be.

And as Sophie protests...

EXT. HARBOR HOSPITAL - DAY

Outside, Tessa dials her cell --

EXT. TINY MAINE TOWN - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

As the PHONE RINGS... and rings...

INT. THE HUNTING HUT - NIGHT - INTERCUT WITH TESSA

A BURLY GUY finally answers:

BURLY GUY
Hunting Hut.

TESSA
Hi... This is Patrick Hawthorne's
sister, Tessa. Is he around?

BURLY GUY

I remember you. You called once before.

Tessa watches as a teary Sophie leaves. Huh -- Cam kicked her out. Good for him. Then, back to the phone --

TESSA

Yeah -- have you seen him? Do you know where he is?

BURLY GUY

Let me ask you something. You as hot as you sound on the phone?

Tessa cuts him off, edgy.

TESSA

Our father had a massive heart attack and we don't know if he's going to make it. Give Patrick the message.

She hangs up, glances back inside. The CARDIOLOGIST is approaching. The family members all look up, tense, wondering... what's the verdict?

Through the glass, Tessa reads their reactions: Cam's relieved, Madeline hugs the doctor.

Edward's alive.

INT. HARBOR HOSPITAL - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY

A huge hospital room; the best money can buy. Edward is awake, hooked to monitors, the Cardiologist confers with a NURSE nearby.

Edward looks at his family gathered around him... and tries to speak. But his throat's dry... Finally, he gets out a halting:

EDWARD

I'm... I'm sorry...

MADELINE

No, sweetheart, nothing to be sorry for...

Edward is trying to say more... Groggy, confused --

EDWARD

The tunnel...

Alison's upset; this is exactly what she was afraid of.

ALISON

That wasn't your fault. Defective bolt anchors, looks like.

As Edward strains to talk --

MADELINE

Shh, honey, don't talk. You need your rest.

She sits by his side, clutching his hand, and we...

INT. HARBOR HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - LATER

Tessa regroups with Grady, Cam, Alison and Tom.

TESSA

Mom wants to spend the night here, with him...

(to Grady)

I think we should stay at the house for a few days. She'll need some support when she gets back.

GRADY

(nods)

I'll be there late. This Silver Bells case is huge...

TESSA

And you're on it?

Grady nods. A grateful glance to Alison, who smiles: you're welcome.

CAM

Jack and I are staying at the house, too. Until Sophie finds a new place.

TESSA

Great. Maybe we'll all be together...

They look to Alison, who could not be less interested.

ALISON

Oh... I'll be at my house. But thanks.

INT. ALISON'S BACK BAY BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

A stately, impressive home, not unlike Edward and Madeline's; clearly, Tom and Alison aren't hurting for money either. As they try to corral the twins upstairs...

ALISON

Come on, my beautiful girls, time for bed.

They're sliding up the stairs on their backs.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Poppy, sweetie, please stand up and walk upstairs like a person.

POPPY

I'm a slug.

WILLOW

I'm a slug, too!

Alison looks to Tom. Light-hearted:

ALISON

Feel free to step in here.

He's about to respond, when -- the DOORBELL RINGS. As Alison heads toward the front door, STAY with Tom. He sits on the stairs, slides up, playing along.

POPPY (O.S.)

You're a slug too, Daddy!

EXT. ALISON'S BACK BAY BROWNSTONE - PORCH - NIGHT

A Newt Gingrich-type stands at the doorstep. This is BILL CONLEY, 55, a good old boy with a Santa face.

ALISON

Mayor Conley.

MAYOR CONLEY

Alison. I heard the news about your father. I'm so sorry. It's times like these we have to put aside the fact that we're opponents and try to relate, just one human to another.

ALISON

Plus the press.

REVEAL news vans, photographers in the driveway. Conley shrugs.

MAYOR CONLEY
They tend to find me.

ALISON
(smiles)
It's almost like they know where
you're going before you get there.

Conley smiles.

MAYOR CONLEY
Perhaps we could speak in private?

INT. ALISON'S BACK BAY BROWNSTONE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

As soon as the door is shut --

ALISON
What can I do for you?

MAYOR CONLEY
Drop out of the race.

ALISON
What?

MAYOR CONLEY
I've got something on you...

ALISON
The tunnel collapse had nothing to
do with the concrete or anything
connected to my family's company --

MAYOR CONLEY
It's not that.

ALISON
What is it?

MAYOR CONLEY
Now where's the fun in that?
(then)
Look, I understand the deal here:
the plucky young City Councilor
who's got something to say, who's
trying to make history, kick out
the old stodgy guy. And normally
I'd root for you. I love a good
underdog story. But you're in way
over your head.

(MORE)

MAYOR CONLEY (CONT'D)

(then)

So I'm giving you a chance to bow out now. Nice and clean. Perfect time to say you need to be with your family. But you will want to bow out, before the public knows what I know.

A beat as Alison takes it all in. Then, calmly:

ALISON

It's not that you're stodgy, exactly. It's that you're... simple. A simple thinker. In an incredibly complex society. Every job initiative you announce, every task force... it's rehashed, ineffectual bullshit from a previous regime. You're a figurehead. Empty, uninspiring. There's no vision. No innovation. No creativity. And when this starts to dawn on you, when the sad truth starts to creep into your consciousness -- the truth that you and your circle-jerk of useless cronies are about to be unemployed -- your only strategy to is to show up at my home with some vague threat intended to intimidate me?

(then)

What a profound miscalculation.

She opens the front door. All smiles for the press:

ALISON (CONT'D)

Thanks again for stopping by.

(hand on heart)

I'm so touched by your humanity.

And she shuts the door.

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - CAM'S OLD ROOM - NIGHT

As Cam tucks in Jack, who's holding a sketch pad --

JACK

Can I show you my drawings?

CAM

Sure, buddy.

Jack opens the sketch pad eagerly.

JACK

This is someone with a heart
attack, like grandpa. If he died.

A sketch of an old man on a gurney, dead. Cam, trying to be
supportive...

CAM

Wow. That's really detailed. I'm
impressed...

Jack flips the page.

JACK

This one's a stabbing victim...

A sketch of a younger man, neck slashed open. And now Cam is
little uneasy...

CAM

Wow, yeah.

Trying to switch Jack's focus --

CAM (CONT'D)

What if you drew one of a man who
grew wings and could fly?

JACK

But people can't fly. That's not
real.

CAM

Well, Roger's not real, but he's
still fun to draw.

Jack stares at him a beat. Boring. He flips the page.

JACK

This one got disemboweled. That's
where all the guts come out.

On Cam, unnerved...

INT./EXT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - HALLWAY/TESSA'S OLD ROOM - NIGHT

Tessa turns out the bathroom light, heads into her room. She
looks out the window -- there's a light on in the tool shed
out back. She frowns. Weird.

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - STORAGE SHED - NIGHT

It's dark and dusty; rarely used. But we FIND Cam rooting
around, searching for something, when --

TESSA

Hey.

Cam startles.

CAM

Jesus, you scared me.

TESSA

What are you doing out here?

CAM

Just looking around...

TESSA

For what?

CAM

You know, old pictures and stuff...

She stares at him.

TESSA

You have a stash out here?

CAM

What? No.

But she sees right through him and he knows it.

CAM (CONT'D)

It's just weed.

TESSA

Don't lie to me.

CAM

It's not just weed.

Tessa looks at him, disappointed.

TESSA

Why would you -- you've made it a year --

CAM

Yeah, surprise, Tess, I'm a huge screwup! And the hilarious thing is, I'm the stable parent! No wonder Jack is so...

He shakes his head. Tessa sees he's upset with himself.

TESSA

Look. I'm not Alison. I'm not going to judge you, I'm not going to yell at you... I'm going to help you find the drugs, and we're going to throw them out.

Cam exhales. Fair enough.

CAM

Thanks.

(then)

One small point. I have no idea where I put them.

Tessa smiles. They start digging through shelves, opening boxes... Old photos, mementos, VHS tapes... But no drugs.

She moves to the back of the room... old shelving cluttered with Edward's stuff. As Cam notices...

CAM (CONT'D)

I don't think I would have put it with Dad's stuff...

TESSA

You never know.

Cam shrugs, goes over to help her look. Tessa pulls down a box, dusty and forgotten. She opens it, and... no luck. Just old issues of National Geographic.

CAM

Maybe I'm thinking of the tool shed at the house down the Cape...

TESSA

If you think I'm going to give up and go to bed so you can find the drugs and use them, dream on.

And as she shoves the box back toward the corner of the shelf, she feels resistance. The shelf goes back farther than she thought. There's one more box back there.

She pushes the other box aside, reaches for the one in the corner. An awkward angle. She slips, scraping her hand on the edge of the shelf.

She winces, puts the cut to her mouth. Then steadies herself and reaches for the hidden box again.

And as she pulls it out... there's a little JINGLE. Odd.
It gets Cam's attention. He comes over as she opens the box
to find...

It's full of little SILVER HAND BELLS...

... and YELLOWED NEWS ARTICLES documenting the crimes of the
Silver Bells Killer.

As Tessa takes it in, stunned, horrified --

TESSA (CONT'D)

Oh my God...

And as a sick confusion washes over her...

END OF ACT I

ACT IIINT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - STORAGE SHED - NIGHT

Tessa and Cam stare at the box of bells.

TESSA

This can't be... what it looks like.

CAM

No. Of course not.

An overwhelmed, strangled laugh from Tessa.

TESSA

Of course not.

(then)

So what -- what's the explanation?

Cam shakes his head. Trying to think. And then, an idea...

CAM

The box looks old; it could have been here before we even moved in --

TESSA

So, what -- we bought the house from the Silver Bells Killer?

It's a horrifying thought. And yet it's better than the other horrifying thought.

TESSA (CONT'D)

I should tell Grady -- he's on the case. They should be investigating the previous owner --

As Cam sifts through the NEWSPAPER ARTICLES about Silver Bells... dating back to 1998... Cam flips one of them over.

CAM

Wait. Oh my God.

On the back side of one of the news articles... the COMICS. And sketched there, per Cam's old habit, a hand-drawn "Roger That" cartoon.

CAM (CONT'D)

This was our newspaper. I drew this.

Tessa freezes. Then looks. He's right.

TESSA

Why... why would Dad cut these out...?

Cam shakes his head, grasping...

CAM

Okay, look. The Silver Bells case was everywhere. All over the news, right? Some people got fixated on it, became amateur sleuths and tried to crack the case... It was like Serial before Serial.

Tessa nods. Wants to believe this...

TESSA

So maybe that explains the news articles. But the bells?

A beat. Cam exhales.

CAM

I don't know, Tess. Maybe it was just some misguided dark joke, who knows. We'll talk to Mom tomorrow morning, Dad if he's up to it. Okay?

Tessa rubs her face. Nods. Cam, trying to lighten the mood:

CAM (CONT'D)

Now I really want those drugs.

TESSA

You and me both.

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - CAM'S OLD ROOM - NIGHT

A peaceful Jack sleeps next to his father... but we see Cam's eyes are wide open; he's much more uneasy than he let on...

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - TESSA'S OLD ROOM - NIGHT

Find Grady, getting into bed carefully, trying not to wake Tessa, whose back is to him.

But we see she's wide awake as well... though she doesn't let on. Just stares at the wall...

DAVIS (PRE-LAP)

So what do you think Conley has on her?

INT. ALISON'S CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Next morning. Young campaign staffers (DAVIS, KIMMIE AND TRENT) stand over a stacks of campaign signs: ALISON HAWTHORNE-PRICE FOR MAYOR. Kimmie frowns at Davis -- what is he talking about?

DAVIS

You didn't hear? Rumor has it he's got some big piece of oppo research on her. Any theories?

KIMMIE

Who knows...
(worried)
Are the new signs too blue?

TRENT

What does "too blue" mean?

KIMMIE

I don't know, like... garish.

DAVIS

They're perfectly blue.
(more importantly...)
Maybe her dad has some secret illness just discovered in the hospital...

TRENT

The little sister seems like the secret-porn-star type to me...

DAVIS

Tell you what. I'll watch all the porn on the internet to see if she's in it somewhere. That's how much this campaign means to me.

KIMMIE

Such a team player.

DAVIS

Least I can do.

Alison emerges from her office. Staffers quiet down.

ALISON

Okay, listen, everybody.
(they do)
I know the mud is being slung so fast it's hard to see straight...
(MORE)

ALISON (CONT'D)

I've heard the same rumors you have. It's all standard B.S. spouted by a panicking opponent. So don't engage, don't get distracted. Let's just focus on beating the shit out of him.

(then)

Metaphorically. In the polls.

Staffers nod, buoyed. Alison heads back into her office. A beat of quiet before --

DAVIS

Maybe it's something with the druggie brother.

TRENT

Or the M.I.A. brother...

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

On a remote stretch of highway, find a LANKY HITCHHIKER with a backpack. Could this be the long-lost Patrick?

A beat-up old pickup truck stops. The bearded TRUCK DRIVER calls out the window.

TRUCK DRIVER

Where you headed?

LANKY HITCHHIKER

Boston.

TRUCK DRIVER

Hop in.

And the Lanky Hitchhiker opens the door...

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

Back with the Truck Driver as he smiles at Lanky Hitchhiker.

TRUCK DRIVER

Didn't your mom teach you not to hitchhike? I could be a serial killer.

LANKY HITCHHIKER

(smiles)

So could I.

Truck Driver smiles.

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - BATHROOM - DAY

Cam stands in the shower, mind racing. As he turns off the water, HOLD on the showerhead... the shape of a silver bell... And off Cam, clocking this, haunted...

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - TESSA'S OLD ROOM - DAY

Find Tessa on her laptop, staring intently at the screen, and we see what she's reading about: the crimes of the Silver Bells Killer... And as she pores over the articles, stricken...

EXT. STREET - DAY

The old pickup rumbles through an upscale neighborhood, as we REVEAL: it's approaching the Hawthorne house. The truck slows down -- about to let out its passenger? And we're --

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - TESSA'S OLD ROOM - DAY

Back with Tessa, studying a PHOTO of a silver hand bell found at a crime scene -- does it match the ones in the shed? And as she peers closer...

BELLS CHIME -- Tessa jumps -- it's the DOORBELL.

Tessa exhales, heads to the door. As she pulls it open, we're sure it's going to be Lanky Hitchhiker...

EXT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

OLD WOMAN (O.S.)
Have you seen Caramel?

REVEAL an OLD WOMAN, grumpy, upset. Tessa's thrown, mind still on those haunting news articles...

TESSA
What?

OLD WOMAN
My cat, Caramel. He's missing.
Have you seen him?
(then)
He's the color of caramel.

TESSA
Oh -- no, I'm sorry. But I'll keep
an eye out, okay? Good luck.

Old Woman nods, turns to go. Stay with her as she crosses a dark figure standing at the end of the walkway, staring up at the house. Tessa sees the figure. Creepy. As he moves closer...

TESSA (CONT'D)
(calls out)
Can I help you?

REVEAL: the Truck Driver. A beat. He calls out:

TRUCK DRIVER
Hey, little sister.

And it dawns on Tessa that this bearded, rugged stranger is her long-lost brother PATRICK, 33.

TESSA
Patrick?

PATRICK (TRUCK DRIVER)
How's it going, Tess?

TESSA
(softening)
Oh my God...

Tessa moves toward him, emotional, overwhelmed. She hugs him... he pats her back awkwardly, a little rusty on human interaction... Tessa pulls away, looks at him:

TESSA (CONT'D)
How are you?

PATRICK
I'm okay. How are you?

TESSA
You know...
(can't think of anything)
So you got my message...

PATRICK
(nods)
How's he doing?

TESSA
Holding up...

She shakes her head, a little stunned, but happy.

TESSA (CONT'D)
I'm so glad you made it.

CAM (O.S.)

Holy shit.

Cam, fresh from the shower, stands in the doorway.

PATRICK

How you doing, Cam?

Cam just stares at him, speechless. Neither makes a move to embrace. Tessa, cutting through the awkwardness...

TESSA

We were just on our way to the hospital to see Dad...

PATRICK

I'll give you a ride.

INT. PATRICK'S PICKUP TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

Tessa sits between Cam and Patrick in the old pickup. Awkward silence as Patrick takes in the neighborhood.

PATRICK

Mrs. Packard still live over there?

TESSA

No.

PATRICK

She moved?

TESSA

No...

PATRICK

Ah.

CAM

So what've you been up to, Pat?

There's an edge to Cam's voice.

PATRICK

Been living in Maine. Reading a lot of books.

CAM

Missed you at my wedding.

Unmistakably hostile. Tessa's uncomfortable, caught in the middle both literally and figuratively.

PATRICK

Did you marry that little crazy girl, looked like a wood elf?

CAM

Sophie. We had a son...

Tessa, trying to keep it upbeat:

TESSA

I got married, too.

PATRICK

You gotta be kidding me. How old are you?

TESSA

Twenty-seven.

PATRICK

Huh. Where'd the time go?

CAM

Where did you go?

A beat. And then there's suddenly a coldness to Patrick:

PATRICK

I already told you.

Okay... And as they ride on in silence...

INT. HARBOR HOSPITAL - HALLWAY/EDWARD'S ROOM - NIGHT

Madeline and Alison look up to see Cam and Tessa approaching with some unknown man...

TESSA

Picked somebody up on the way over...

Madeline looks over and sees: it's Patrick. She's stunned...

MADELINE

You're here...

(then)

I can't believe... you're here...

She hugs him. He gives her the same rigid back-pat that Tessa got. And then his eyes drift over to... Alison. Staring at him in her business suit, her blown-out hair.

PATRICK

Ali. Wow. You're... fancy.

Alison regards him, chilly.

ALISON
What are you doing here?

PATRICK
You know, just picking up a
prescription.

Alison just holds a look. Then, a formality:

ALISON
This is my husband, Tom.

Tom's about to say hello when Alison cuts him off --

ALISON (CONT'D)
Our daughters, Poppy and Willow.

WILLOW
Hi.

POPPY
You have a big beard.

Willow abruptly drops out of frame. Back to playing Sliders or Slugs or whatever their latest fixation is, the importance of this moment lost on them.

Patrick looks over toward Edward, who's groggy, but awake... and stunned to see his long-lost son. A tense, nervous moment for both of them. And then Patrick moves toward his father to say hello.

PATRICK
Hey, old man...

Patrick leans over and speaks softly into his father's ear. Across the room, Alison leans over to Madeline.

ALISON
He just shows up here like it's
nothing?

Meanwhile, Tessa pulls Cam aside. He's still reeling.

CAM
(re: Patrick)
Nine years...

But Tessa has more pressing concerns.

TESSA
We have to talk to Mom about what
we found. I can't get it out of my
head --

Before Cam can respond -- URGENT BEEPING from Edward's HEART MONITOR. Faster. An ALARM.

Nurses rush in, ushering the family out.

They all stand in the hallway, looking in through the glass. Doctors scrambling. He's coding. A defibrillator comes out... And off this frantic effort to save his life...

END OF ACT II

ACT IIIINT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - DINING ROOM - MORNING

Heavy silence as Alison, Tessa, Cam, Patrick and Madeline sit around the imposing oak table. Alison looks at Patrick:

ALISON

Did it occur to you that it might not be the best idea to show up unexpectedly and give a coronary patient a huge shock?

Tessa jumps to Patrick's defense --

TESSA

He came because I called --

ALISON

(to Patrick)

What did you say to him?

PATRICK

What... What do you mean?

ALISON

Right before the alarms started beeping, you whispered to him.

(then)

What was it?

PATRICK

I told him I was glad to see him, and I loved him.

TESSA

I'm glad you got a chance to say that.

MADELINE

You're talking like he's dead. He's not dead.

CAM

Vegetative state is pretty close.

MADELINE

Nobody ever said those words. They said coma.

A beat, and then: BELLS CHIME. The doorbell again. Creepier than ever. Madeline goes to answer --

EXT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS

... And it's the Old Woman again.

OLD WOMAN
There's still no sign of Caramel.

And Madeline has no idea what she's talking about.

OLD WOMAN (CONT'D)
So I made fliers.

She holds up a stack of photocopies: LOST CAT - CAMEL. A reward, a phone number.

OLD WOMAN (CONT'D)
You can help by distributing these around the neighborhood.

She shoves the fliers into Madeline's hand.

OLD WOMAN (CONT'D)
I appreciate your help. This is a very traumatic time for me.

Madeline stares at her.

MADELINE
My condolences.

She shuts the door, tosses the fliers aside.

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Back with the siblings. Tessa looks at Patrick:

TESSA
Are you staying here? I'm sure you could have your old room...

PATRICK
Nah, I'll sleep out back.

ALISON
In the shed?

Cam and Tessa share a look.

CAM
Not a good idea.

TESSA
Nah.

PATRICK
Why not?

CAM

There's no heat back there, no
running water...

PATRICK

That's what I'm used to.

TESSA

Well, there's tons of boxes
everywhere. There's just no room.

As Madeline re-enters...

CAM

(to Patrick)

You can sleep on a cot down cellar
if you really need to deprive
yourself.

MADELINE

(to Patrick)

Don't be ridiculous. I'll make up
your old room.

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - PATRICK'S OLD ROOM - DAY

Patrick sits alone in his old room. It's filled with SPORTS
TROPHIES, PHOTOS of him and Cam as goofy teenagers. Relics
of an old life. Strange.

Jack enters, regards him for a beat, then announces:

JACK

You're weird.

PATRICK

... Alright.

JACK

It's okay. I'm weird too.

Jack sits down next to his uncle.

JACK (CONT'D)

Did you know cicadas spend
seventeen years underground and
then emerge and immediately shed
their shells? They spend all that
time making the shell and then they
just leave it behind.

PATRICK

Did you know that if you cut a worm
in half, both sides are alive?

Jack looks at him, impressed. Game respect game. And then Madeline enters, smiles at Jack:

MADELINE

Let me talk to your Uncle Patrick
for a minute, okay?

Jack exits. Madeline shuts the door. Turns around. All of her warmth gone.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

We had a deal.

PATRICK

And yet here I am.

And as they stare at each other...

EXT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

As Grady gets home, Tessa's waiting on the porch.

TESSA

I'm so glad you're back...

GRADY

Everything okay?

TESSA

Just... tense. How are you?

Grady sits down next to her.

GRADY

Can you keep a secret?

A beat. Well, yeah. She already is.

TESSA

Sure...

GRADY

We found unknown DNA on the belt.
If it matches someone in the
system, we have our Silver Bells
suspect.

TESSA

Wow. That's huge.

She clears her throat, trying to be casual...

TESSA (CONT'D)

So what are these serial killer types like, usually?

GRADY

What do you mean?

TESSA

Do they look like... you know, like the movie version of a madman? Or do they seem like regular people?

GRADY

It varies. A lot of them look the part. Creepy, anti-social types...

He stops. Because it sounds a little familiar...

GRADY (CONT'D)

But there are always guys like BTK.

(off Tessa's look)

Bind, Torture, Kill. His M.O.

(then)

The crazy thing is, he was deacon in his church, a Boy Scout leader... Just a regular family man. Nobody ever would've guessed...

On Tessa, who can't hide the horror on her face...

TESSA

So Silver Bells could be... anyone.

GRADY

Hey, don't worry. We're gonna catch this guy. I promise.

And off Tessa, nauseated...

EXT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - BACK PATIO - DAY

We're with Patrick as he walks the back garden, looking for something... There. He picks up a large, flat rock. Hoses it off... What the hell is he doing?

And then he pulls something out of his back pocket. A large KITCHEN KNIFE. Presses the blade against the wet rock.

And we realize: he's sharpening a knife...

INT. ALISON'S CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - BULLPEN - DAY

Young campaign staffers Kimmie and Davis, mid-debate.

KIMMIE

Someone has to tell her --

DAVIS

She probably already knows --

KIMMIE

What if she doesn't?

Kimie marches over to Alison's door --

INT. ALISON'S CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - ALISON'S OFFICE - DAY

Alison and Renee.

RENEE

Any news on your dad?

ALISON

(shakes her head)

Still hasn't woken up. My mom's there...

RENEE

I'm so sorry...

Alison nods thanks, trying not to get emotional, just as --
Kimie pokes her head in.

KIMMIE

Sorry to interrupt, but... we just heard Conley's about to make a statement to the press...

Alison and Renee share a look. This is it. And we SMASH TO:

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE - DAY

Mayor Conley at the dais, a gaggle of REPORTERS hanging on to his every word.

CONLEY

(relishing this)

I'm sorry to have to say this, but the people of Boston deserve to know.

(then)

From 2008 to 2010, City Councilor Alison Hawthorne-Price knowingly and illegally employed an undocumented alien, Rosa Diaz, as a housekeeper. This is an outrageous, brazen flouting of our country's immigration laws.

(MORE)

CONLEY (CONT'D)

(savoring this)

My question for my opponent is: how can you look the good people of this state in the eye and tell them you're on their side when at the same time you're giving jobs and handouts to illegals? It's the height of hypocrisy. And we deserve better.

WHIP PAN TO:

INT. ALISON'S CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Alison at a dais, holding a press conference of her own.

ALISON

It's true: Rosa Diaz was not a legal citizen when I hired her in 2008. That's because she was a refugee here seeking political asylum from her home in El Salvador, where extreme violence and corruption robbed her of her family and her well-being. I learned of her plight and was fortunately in a position to help her get a fresh start. Rosa is a strong, proud, brave woman, a survivor, and, since being granted asylum in 2010, a tax-payer.

From the sidelines, Renee smiles.

ALISON (CONT'D)

As your mayor, I can promise to continue to prioritize compassion for those in need. I'm afraid Mayor Conley just can't say the same. Baseless, irresponsible mudslinging is his priority, and I won't sink to that level.

INT. CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - ALISON'S OFFICE - DAY

Alison sits down, stretching her arms out. Victory. Renee smiles.

RENEE

He walked right into it.

ALISON

Thank God for drug addicts. They're so predictable.

RENEE

How much do you think Sophie got
for selling him that story?

ALISON

Hopefully enough to O.D.
(then)
That was a smart play.
(smiles)
Glad you're on my side...

Renee smiles at her. The moment suddenly charged. There's chemistry here...

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - KITCHEN - DAY

Cam enters to see Patrick at the sink, the now-sharpened KNIFE to his throat.

CAM

Are you... shaving?

PATRICK

Yeah. Beard's getting a little
bushy.

On Cam -- what the fuck?

CAM

Would you like a razor?

PATRICK

Nah. I'm used to this.

He resumes his work. Cam walks away, unnerved... something occurring to him...

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - CAM'S OLD ROOM - DAY

Cam's on his laptop, researching Silver Bells. There's a timeline of the murders... the last one in 2006. Cam closes his eyes. Just what he was afraid of...

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - HALLWAY - DAY

Cam has pulled Tessa aside.

CAM

The Silver Bells murders suddenly
stopped nine years ago.
(off her confusion)
Remember what else happened nine
years ago?

Tessa nods slowly:

TESSA
Patrick left.

A loaded beat.

CAM
What if that's why he marooned
himself out in the middle of
nowhere? To stop himself.

Tessa takes this in. Shakes her head. It's all just too insane.

TESSA
No. There has to be some other
explanation. We're not some family
of psychopaths...
(unraveling a little)
When we were kids, Patrick was the
sweetest... the best guy --
homecoming king, remember? I
mean... it doesn't...

CAM
Tessa. He's in the kitchen right
now shaving with a butcher knife.

Tessa takes this in. She can't wrap her head around it...

CAM (CONT'D)
I don't know what to do at this
point.
(then)
We need a strategic thinker...

Off Tessa, knowing what that means...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON a CELL PHONE RINGING on a nightstand -- Cam calling.
Alison pops up into frame, breathing heavily, her hair messy.

ALISON
Cam? Everything okay?

As she listens, Renee pops up behind her and we see: they're
in bed together.

ALISON (CONT'D)
What do you mean?
(then)
Okay. Okay, see you soon.

She hangs up. Gets up to start getting dressed...

RENEE

Is it your dad?

ALISON

(shakes her head)

Something's going on with Cam and Tessa. They said they'd explain when I got there...

Alison shrugs, baffled.

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - STORAGE SHED - NIGHT

Cam and Tessa now stand with Alison, who's staring down at the box of silver hand bells... the news articles... She shakes her head.

ALISON

Has to be some kind of sick joke.

TESSA

God, I hope so. But either way, we need to come forward with this.

On Alison, wheels turning...

ALISON

Unless coming forward is the whole point...

CAM

What do you mean?

ALISON

Think about it. This hits the press, it destroys Dad's legacy -- which destroys me in the process --

CAM

Oh come on -- you think Conley did this? Some elaborate set-up?

ALISON

It's outrageous, but this is politics. Nothing's out of the question.

TESSA

No, but look...

She points out Cam's drawing on the back of the news article.

TESSA (CONT'D)

This is our newspaper from twelve years ago.

And now Alison is really spooked.

ALISON

Jesus...

Alison, immediately thinking damage control, turns to Tessa --

ALISON (CONT'D)

Have you talked to Grady about this?

Tessa shakes her head.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Don't.

TESSA

What if it's true? What if Dad...

Alison shakes her head. No way.

ALISON

Listen to yourself. Our dad? The guy who dressed up as the Chicken Soup Fairy to cheer us up when we were sick?

Cam knows there's another explanation.

CAM

What if it's Patrick?

A beat.

ALISON

I mean, he fits the profile more, but...

TESSA

No, he doesn't. He just -- he rejected this lifestyle in favor of a simpler one. That doesn't make him a murderer...

ALISON

You know what this is? It's a November 6th problem.

(resolute)

Put the box back.

(MORE)

ALISON (CONT'D)

Don't destroy it, don't move it,
don't mention it, just leave it
here and we'll find it again on
November 6th and handle it then.

TESSA

Hang on a second. If we know
something, we have a moral
obligation to come forward -- this
is a serial killer --

ALISON

No. It's a weird box of bells. We
don't know what it means.

She can see Tessa's not convinced. Driving it home:

ALISON (CONT'D)

This isn't just about my campaign.
If we don't control this story, it
will ruin all of us.

(then)

You think the public schools are
going to keep a teacher possibly
related to the Silver Bells Killer?

(to Cam)

Or all those newspapers are going
to keep running your comic with
this albatross around your neck?
This will become toxic to all of us
-- even if it turns out to be
baseless. Once the suspicion is
out there, you can't ever unring
that bell.

A beat as her unfortunate word choice lands on them. But she
plows on, forceful:

ALISON (CONT'D)

Do we agree? We leave it alone for
now.

TESSA

... Yeah.

Cam's eyes have drifted to a CIGAR BOX on the corner of a
shelf. He's remembering something...

ALISON

Cam? Do you agree?

CAM

Yeah.

Alison nods, satisfied.

ALISON

Okay. Let's get out of here.
(under her breath)
It's creepy as hell.

She walks out, followed by Tessa, and then Cam...

... But a moment later, Cam pops back in and goes to that cigar box he'd been eyeing. He opens it. The long-lost stash -- a baggie of heroin. And he sticks it in his pocket...

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - TESSA'S OLD ROOM - DAY

Tessa closes the door, dials Grady...

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - GRADY'S OFFICE - DAY - INTERCUT

Grady, on the phone at his desk.

GRADY

Everything okay?

TESSA

Um... I don't know.

GRADY

(concerned)
What's going on?

TESSA

Can I just talk to you as my husband? Not as a cop?

GRADY

Talk to me about what?

TESSA

Like if I knew something about a case, maybe. And I told you...

GRADY

(thrown)
What are you talking about?
Something about a case under investigation?

Tessa hesitates.

TESSA

Yeah.
(repeating)
(MORE)

TESSA (CONT'D)

Could I just talk to you about it
as my husband?

Grady hesitates. The honest answer --

GRADY

No, not really...

Tessa exhales.

GRADY (CONT'D)

If you know something, and you tell
me... I'm obligated to report it.
It becomes evidence.

Tessa takes this in, overwhelmed, conflicted... Then:

TESSA

Okay. Then... pretend we never had
this conversation.

Grady's totally thrown by all this.

GRADY

Tessa... what in the world...?

TESSA

You just said we can't have this
conversation. So... we aren't. We
didn't.

(trying for casual)

So, I'm gonna go grab a bite. See
you tonight.

She hangs up. Off Grady, unnerved...

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - BATHROOM - DAY

A hand shuts the door. Locks it. REVEAL Cam, taking the
baggie from the shed out of his pocket.

He puts it on the counter. Stares at it. Torturing himself.
And then...

A HIGH-PITCHED SHRIEK from the basement... Jack?

Cam pockets the baggie and sprints out of the bathroom...

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - BASEMENT - DAY

Cam rushes into the basement to find... Jack, holding a two-
inch long PIECE of a CAT'S TAIL. Caramel-colored.

REVEAL Caramel, the missing cat, restrained nearby. Cam, horrified, rushes toward Jack.

CAM

What did you do?

JACK

An experiment.

(excited)

These garden shears can cut through bone.

And off Cam's horror...

END OF ACT III

ACT IVINT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - KITCHEN - DAY

Cam bursts into the kitchen, grabs a mixing bowl, throws open the freezer, as --

TESSA (O.S.)
Everything okay?

Cam looks over to see Tessa entering.

TESSA (CONT'D)
Thought I heard a scream.

CAM
Yeah, yeah. Just Jack being dramatic.

He turns back to the freezer, loading the bowl with ice.

CAM (CONT'D)
He and I are working on a science project, it's a little time-sensitive. We just need a bowl of ice...

INT. CAM'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Cam races to the vet. Jack's in the passenger seat; in his lap, the tail on ice. Caramel hisses in the backseat.

JACK
Why are you so mad at me? It was just an experiment. That's what scientists do.

CAM
You hurt Caramel, and that's not nice. Do you understand that?

Jack frowns, upset that he doesn't feel the guilt he's clearly supposed to feel...

JACK
I wasn't trying to be mean.

A long beat. Finally, Jack breaks the silence --

JACK (CONT'D)
Dad...

CAM
Yeah?

JACK

Can I watch them sew the tail back on?

INT. VETERINARY WAITING ROOM - DAY

Cam and Jack wait in silence... and then the VET appears.

VET

We were able to reattach the tail.

CAM

Thank God.

VET

So he should recover quickly...
Though he may have permanently lost
some feeling and function where it
was severed...

Cam takes this in, nods.

CAM

Thank you very much for taking care
of him.

The Vet nods. He glances over at Jack, checking out an
animal poster, out of earshot.

VET

Listen, I have to ask: how did this
happen?

Cam hesitates, then:

CAM

His tail got caught in the front
door as I was pulling it shut. I
feel awful.

The Vet nods. Relieved.

VET

Sometimes we see this kind of
injury as a result of animal
mutilation.

CAM

Oh, geez, really?

VET

(nods)
So I just had to check.

CAM

I get it. Thanks again.

INT. CAM'S CAR/EXT. OLD WOMAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Cam lets Caramel out of the car. The cat heads for the porch... Home sweet home. Cam turns to his son.

CAM

Hey, Jack. Let's just keep this whole thing between me and you, okay?

JACK

Okay.
(then, reassuring)
The nerves in the tail could still regenerate...

Off Cam, spooked...

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - TESSA'S OLD ROOM - NIGHT

Tessa hears a knock, opens the door to see: Cam.

CAM

Could you do me a favor?

TESSA

Sure...

CAM

Jack's already in bed, but could you just keep an eye on him?

TESSA

Okay... why?
(suspicious)
Where are you going?

Cam gives her a look, insulted by her suspicion.

CAM

I just want to go see Dad.

TESSA

You do?

CAM

Yeah, I don't know. It might help to just... I don't know.

Tessa nods. Okay...

TESSA

I'm sure Mom would like the company.

INT. HARBOR HOSPITAL - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON knitting needles at work, a scarf in progress. Madeline sits at Edward's bedside. He's still unresponsive, OXYGEN TUBES in his nose, a PULSE MONITOR on his finger, as a NURSE tends to him. The Nurse turns to Madeline, smiles.

NURSE

What are you knitting?

MADELINE

A scarf. For my grandson.

The Nurse smiles. Madeline watches as she takes Edward's vitals... and then can't help herself. Just blurts out:

MADELINE (CONT'D)

Is he ever going to wake up?

The Nurse turns to her, gentle.

NURSE

There's just no way to know.

Madeline nods. Goes back to knitting the scarf...

EXT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - CAM'S OLD ROOM/HALLWAY - SAME

Tessa cracks the door to Jack's room to check on him -- he's in bed in his pajamas, bedside lamp on, drawing quietly.

TESSA

Ten more minutes and then lights out, okay?

Jack turns to her and smiles.

JACK

Okay.

He turns back to his sketchpad.

She closes the door, heads down the hallway, turning the corner and -- Patrick's there -- Tessa JUMPS.

PATRICK

Hey...

TESSA

You scared me. Barely recognized you.

With his facial hair now just patchy stubble, he looks completely different.

PATRICK

Sorry. I just... I just wanted to say thanks... For keeping tabs on me, never letting me slip away from this family completely.

TESSA

Yeah... of course...

Then, she just has to ask --

TESSA (CONT'D)

Why'd you leave for so long?

Patrick takes a beat, weighing how to answer. Then:

PATRICK

I don't know... I felt like the Big Dig money changed things. The whole family dynamic. I didn't like who I was becoming.

On Tessa, a little unsettled by that...

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Honestly, if it weren't for you, I might never have come back here.

TESSA

(a little nervous)

Oh, we're not so bad, are we?

A beat.

PATRICK

You're not.

And as Tessa takes that in...

INT. ALISON'S BACK BAY BROWNSTONE - TWINS' ROOM - NIGHT

Alison is tucking in Poppy and Willow for the night.

POPPY

Mommy, how old is Uncle Patrick?

ALISON

Let's see... thirty-three.

POPPY

Does he have a girlfriend?

ALISON

I don't know.

A beat. Willow speaks up, troubled:

WILLOW

Why was he mean to Grandpa at the hospital?

Alison frowns, confused.

ALISON

He wasn't being mean. He was telling Grandpa he loved him.

Willow shakes her head.

WILLOW

That's not what he said.

INT. HARBOR HOSPITAL - EDWARD'S ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

With everyone out of earshot, Patrick leans in to speak quietly to his father.

PATRICK

Hey, old man...

And we SEE Willow sliding around on the floor, unseen by Patrick, and she can hear everything...

INT. ALISON'S BROWNSTONE - TWINS' ROOM - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Alison frowns, unnerved.

ALISON

What did you hear him say?

WILLOW

He said, "I'm gonna tell them it was you."

And off Alison, thrown...

INT. HARBOR HOSPITAL - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON knitting needles at work; Jack's scarf is coming along, when --

EDWARD (O.S.)

Maddie...

The knitting needles stop. A stunned beat... and then Madeline moves closer to him.

MADELINE

I'm here.

And on Edward, conscious...

INT. CAM AND SOPHIE'S LOFT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Cam, glassy eyed... naked... in bed with Sophie. The baggie from the shed next to them, empty. In the haze, he turns to her...

CAM

I think there's something wrong with Jack.

SOPHIE

Of course there is. He's half me and half you.

And off the two of them, fucked up...

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Grady at work, a giant file on the Silver Bells case spread out in front of him. And then his gaze drifts to a framed photo on his desk. He's bear-hugging Tessa from behind, she's laughing... both of them carefree, in love...

And off Grady, worried...

INT. HARBOR HOSPITAL - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY

Edward looks right at Madeline:

EDWARD

We have to tell the truth.

A sharp intake of breath. Madeline shakes her head.

MADELINE

Shh, Eddie, stop...

EDWARD

(resolute)

We have to.

Madeline looks at him, the oxygen tubes in his nose...

MADELINE

You need your rest.

She reaches out to hold his hand. She looks down at their clasped hands, her eyes drifting to the pulse monitor on his finger...

INT. ALISON'S BACK BAY BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Alison in bed, wide awake next to a sleeping Tom. She rolls over, pulls out her phone. Texts Renee: *I can't sleep...* and we're --

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - PATRICK'S OLD ROOM - NIGHT

With Patrick, trying to get comfortable on the plush bed. But he just can't. And as he lies down on the floor instead...

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Tessa creeps back down the hall to check on --

INT. HAWTHORNE ESTATE - CAM'S OLD ROOM - NIGHT

Jack, now asleep. As Tessa pulls the covers across him, she finds one of his sketches.

A DIAGRAM of a caramel-colored cat... cut into a dozen pieces. And we realize: cutting the tail was only his first step. And off Tessa, haunted...

INT. CAM AND SOPHIE'S LOFT - NIGHT

Back with Cam, now barely conscious, breath ragged, as we
MATCH CUT TO:

INT. HARBOR HOSPITAL - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY

Edward, whose own breath has grown ragged, labored.

Madeline's still holding his hand... and then she slips the PULSE MONITOR off his finger. He looks at her, confused...

EDWARD

Maddie...

MADELINE

Just close your eyes and relax.

EDWARD

I can't... breathe...

And we REVEAL... Madeline is PINCHING his OXYGEN TUBE, no air getting through.

And as the PULSE MONITOR BEEPS with a normal heartbeat -- Madeline's heartbeat -- she watches her husband struggle to breathe... until, finally... the breathing stops. And we --

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF PILOT