

# BIG LITTLE LIES

Episode #2

“Serious Mothering”

Written By

David E. Kelley

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Based on the book: “Big Little Lies” by Liane Moriarty.

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PRODUCTION DRAFT – 01/04/16

FULL BLUE - 01/07/16

PINK REVISION – 01/12/16

YELLOW REVISION – 01/23/16

CAST LIST

MADELINE MARTHA MACKENZIE  
CELESTE WRIGHT  
JANE CHAPMAN  
PERRY WRIGHT  
ED MACKENZIE  
NATHAN CARLSON  
BONNIE CARLSON

Renata Klein  
Gordon Klein

Ziggy Chapman (minor)  
Chloe Mackenzie (minor)  
Amabella Klein (minor)  
Max Wright (minor)  
Josh Wright (minor)  
Abigail Carlson (minor)

Skye Carlson (minor) (non-speaking)

Detective Adrienne Quinlan

Principal Warren Nippal  
Ms. Emily Barnes

\*

Brent

Tom

Joseph Bachman  
Stacey  
Kelly

Gabrielle  
Harper Stimson  
Melissa  
Samantha  
Stu  
Thea Cunningham

Singers

**SETS LIST**

**INTERIORS:**

OTTER BAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY
- LIBRARY - MORNING
- CLASSROOM - DAY

MADELINE'S HOUSE

- LIVING ROOM - MORNING
- FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT
- KITCHEN - MORNING, SUNSET & NIGHT
- MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT
- STAIRCASE - NIGHT

CELESTE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

- MASTER BEDROOM - DAY & NIGHT
- FAMILY ROOM - SUNSET

JANE'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

- ZIGGY'S BEDROOM - MORNING
- LIVING ROOM - DAY

RENATA'S HOUSE - HALL - DAY

JANE'S PRIUS - MORNING AND DAY

MADELINE'S SUV - DAY & SUNSET

PERRY'S AUDI Q7 - MORNING

BLUE BLUES CAFÉ - SUNSET

MONTEREY HOT YOGA - DAY

- WELLNESS AREA - DAY

CREST COMMUNITY THEATER - DAY

**(MORE)**

**EXTERIORS:**

OTTER BAY ELEMENTARY - MORNING  
- DROP-OFF AREA - MORNING  
- HALLWAY - DAY

MADELINE'S HOUSE  
- BACKYARD/BEACH - EVENING

CELESTE'S HOUSE - NIGHT  
- BACKYARD/DECK - SUNSET

RENATA'S HOUSE, DECK - NIGHT

FISHERMAN'S WHARF - PARKING LOT - MORNING  
MONTEREY - PARK - MORNING

BLUE BLUES CAFÉ, DECK - MORNING

SIDE DOOR CAFE - NIGHT

CREST COMMUNITY THEATER - DAY

MONTEREY - BIXBY BRIDGE - MORNING & SUNSET

**SONG LIST:**

"WHAT HAVE YOU DONE MY BROTHER?"  
(NAOMI SHELTON & THE GOSPEL QUEENS)

"FAIRLY ODDPARENTS" THEME (MAX AND JOSH)

"HEARTACHE AND PAIN" (CHARLES BRADLEY)

"NEVER SMILE AT A CROCODILE" ("PETER PAN" CARTOON)

\*

"RIVER" (LEON BRIDGES)

BIG LITTLE LIES

"Serious Mothering"

CLOSE ON MADELINE

Staring.

200

INT. MADELINE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - MORNING

200

Madeline stares at the ocean, lost in thought. Maybe some wonder. Until--

CHLOE (O.S.)

What's out there?

Madeline jumps with a start, turns to SEE CHLOE.

MADELINE

So help me, god. I will tie a bell around your neck if you keep sneaking up on me.

CHLOE

What do you look at? In the ocean.

MADELINE

Nothing.

CHLOE

You spend a lot of time staring at nothing.

MADELINE

Well, I take it back. There is something; it's the big "out there." The ocean is beautiful, it's powerful, mostly it's vast. Full of life. Full of mystery. Who knows what lies out there beneath the surface.

CHLOE

Monsters?

MADELINE

Monsters, perhaps. Dreams. A shipwreck -- full of treasure. It's the great unknown, that's what the ocean is.

(CONTINUED)

200 CONTINUED:

200

They both stare out.

CHLOE

What kind of dreams you think are out there?

MADELINE

I'm not sure. But I know they're out there.

ZIGGY (O.S.)

I don't want to go.

201 INT. JANE'S TOWNHOUSE, ZIGGY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

201

JANE sits on the edge of his bed. Ziggy is sitting upright, tense.

JANE

Honey. It's going to be fine.

ZIGGY

It won't. They think I choked that girl.

JANE

Look at me. You know in your heart that you did not choke that girl. That's good enough for me. It should be good enough for you. And it will be good enough for everybody else.

Ziggy stares back: "Do you actually expect me to fall for that?"

JANE (CONT'D)

Hey, what's our mantra, you and me?

Ziggy rolls his eyes, doesn't answer.

JANE (CONT'D)

We're gonna be...

ZIGGY

... brave.

JANE

Yes. We're going to be very brave. Every day.

(CONTINUED)

201 CONTINUED:

201

ZIGGY

Mom. Why did we move here?

CLOSE ON GABRIELLE

GABRIELLE

You have to ask yourself "what's she's running from?"

202 INT. MADELINE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

202

MADELINE and ED in the kitchen; Madeline is pacing, on the phone. CHLOE and ABIGAIL at the table having breakfast to the sound of Naomi Shelton & The Gospel Queens: *"What Have You Done My Brother"*.

MADELINE

You cannot be serious.

(then)

This makes us cowards, Joseph, you cannot just roll over on this, what kind of precedent--

AS WE HEAR YELLING THROUGH THE PHONE

MADELINE (CONT'D)

Please don't you yell at me.

Madeline signals Chloe to lower the music.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

It was you who said we need to fight for our creative freedom. If not now, when?

AND WE HEAR MORE YELLING THROUGH THE PHONE

MADELINE (CONT'D)

Do not yell at me!!!

Madeline's yelling freezes Ed and the girls. She notices and walks out of the kitchen as we stay with the others who can still hear Madeline, whispering now. They share a smile.

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

You know what? I am a lady and I've never said this to anybody before in my entire life, but I'm going to say it now: You can just go fuck yourself right on the head, that's what you can do.

(CONTINUED)

202 CONTINUED:

202

Madeline comes back in. Sucks air in deeply through her nostrils.

ABIGAIL

Right on the head?

She shoots her a "not funny" glare. Everyone else thinks it is but says nothing. Then--

MADELINE

(to Ed)

He's thinking of dumping 'Avenue Q.' Not worth the controversy.

ED

What's he want to replace it with?

CHLOE

(deadpan)

Not "Cats"?

Madeline drops her head into her hands... as we hear Abigail chuckling. Madeline jerks her head back up, but the smile on Abigail's face is gone.

203 EXT. MONTEREY - BIXBY BRIDGE - MORNING

203

AN AUDI Q7 ENTERS FRAME AND CROSSES A BRIDGE THAT LEADS TO A ROAD BY THE OCEAN WITH A SPECTACULAR VIEW. WE HEAR THE THEME SONG FROM "THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS" fading out as the car drives away; KIDS sporadically humming and singing over it:

*"Timmy is an average kid/ That no-one understands/ Doom and gloom up in his room/ Is broken instantly/ By his magic little fish/ Who grant his every wish/..."*

204 INT. PERRY'S AUDI Q7 - ROAD BY THE OCEAN - MORNING

204

ON PERRY. Driving. He looks in the rearview mirror:

THE TWINS ARE WATCHING THE PROGRAM ON AN IPAD. THE VOLUME IS LOUD.

Perry looks back on the road, then to:

CELESTE, IN THE PASSENGER SEAT. She doesn't turn. Stays silent. Then--

PERRY (O.S.)

Remember your first day of school?

(CONTINUED)



204 CONTINUED:

204

CELESTE

I actually do. I got asked out on a date. By a second-grader, no less.

PERRY (O.S.)

And did we accept?

CELESTE

(shaking 'no')

He wore white Docksidors.

She turns, finally, and offers him a smile. He smiles back. Has she forgiven him, or is she simply intent on making this a nice day for the boys? Celeste guards her secrets well. Another look at the twins in the mirror from Perry, and back on the road.

PERRY

I'm sorry for last night. The idea of a bully being at large in the class, I just...

CELESTE

I don't think he's a bully. But you're probably right, we should err on the side of safety.

She reaches over and takes Perry's hand.

CELESTE (CONT'D)

I'm glad that you came back.

PERRY

Wish I didn't have to fly right out tonight.

A beat. Celeste seems to wish the same.

CELESTE

I was thinking... after you get back from Vienna, maybe we could try a new counselor.

PERRY

Okay.

Really? She seems surprised.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Yes. I think it's a good idea.  
(then)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

204 CONTINUED: (2)

204

PERRY (CONT'D)

I think this is going to be a really good year for us. I'm going to make sure of it.

And just like that, when she thinks there's no real hope... she's swept off her feet all over again.

205 INT. PERRY'S AUDI Q7 - SCHOOL STREET - LATER

205

HIS POV THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD: A LONG LINE OF CARS LEADING UP TO THE SCHOOL.

PERRY

Wow. Bit of a line.

CELESTE

It'll move quickly, we just drop and go, they've got it down to a science.

PERRY

We don't go in?

CELESTE

No, just drop. They can't be bothered with the parents now.

PERRY

We don't even meet the teachers or anything?

CELESTE

That all happened yesterday at Orientation. They start right in with class today.

PERRY

That's not something that you might have mentioned to me?

CELESTE

I think we did discuss it.

Silence. Uh oh. She can see it, and she can feel it. He's going dark. PERRY CLICKS OFF THE CARTOON.

JOSH/MAX

Hey.../What...

PERRY

School time.

(CONTINUED)

205 CONTINUED:

205

The boys know the tone. There's no argument. Suddenly, there's a morning frost. Finally--

PERRY (CONT'D)  
 You might have let me know that  
 Orientation Day was when we--

CELESTE  
 (not in front of the boys)  
 Don't.

Silence. Both stare straight ahead. It's icy now. Sharp contrast to...

206 EXT. OTTER BAY ELEMENTARY - LATER

206

ENERGY, EXUBERANCE, KIDS WALKING AND RUNNING AROUND WITH FIRST DAY JOY/JITTERS/ANXIETIES. MOSTLY IT'S FUN AND FROLIC. THIS IS CHLOE'S POV as she's welcoming Ziggy who walks towards her.

CHLOE  
 We may have assigned seats. But if  
 not, you can plop right next to me.

As SKYE approaches--

CHLOE (CONT'D)  
 Hi, Skye. This is my friend,  
 Ziggy.

Skye waves hi to Ziggy.

CHLOE (CONT'D)  
 She's my half-sister. Sort of. My  
 mom was married to her dad.

AMABELLA ARRIVES.

AMABELLA  
 (to Skye)  
 Hello. What's your name?

We now see Amabella from a distant POV. We can't hear her nor the kids anymore. We're inside a car parked further away from the drop-off: Jane's.

As she's watching, wondering, hoping, Madeline's car pulls up next to hers.

(CONTINUED)

206 CONTINUED:

206

MADELINE

Hey, mama bear, yoga class this morning, you up for it?

We hear a car honking at Madeline.

JANE

I would love to, but I actually have a job interview.

MADELINE

Wow. That's fantastic.

Jane nods and shoots a look back to the school.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

He'll be fine, don't worry.

Madeline is being honked at again. A LONGER HONK; Madeline drives off.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

(to the rearview mirror)  
Get laid, bitch.

She waves to Jane who watches her go and then turns to look back at the kids among which Amabella is flipping through a stack of pink envelopes. Hands one to Skye, to Chloe, turns to Ziggy. Freezes.

CLOSE ON GABRIELLE

GABRIELLE

It was inappropriate. Handing out party invites on the first day.

CLOSE ON STU

STU

Renata was sending a message.

207 INT. MONTEREY HOT YOGA - DAY

207

A yoga studio. Dimly-lit, about twenty people, session in progress. WE FIND MADELINE AND CELESTE; Celeste bends like Gumby; with Madeline, it seems like her joints are fused. Both are dripping with sweat.

MADELINE

I was thinking... you could do it.

(CONTINUED)

207 CONTINUED:

207

CELESTE

I don't practice law anymore.

MADELINE

But you could come out of retirement for this one case, to safeguard the arts for all of Monterey. I would kind of like be your client, how fun would that be? "Drinks with the client."

Upon which, STACEY, thirty, yoga instructor, arrives, pushes down really gently on Madeline's back to help with the stretches.

STACEY

(a reminder)  
Yoga is a time for quiet reflection.

MADELINE

I don't like to be touched.

STACEY

Breathe into it. There you go.

As Stacey moves off--

CELESTE

Look over there, eleven o'clock.

Madeline squints to see... NATHAN AND BONNIE.

MADELINE

(a little too loud)  
You gotta be kidding me.

She's SHUSHED BY SOMEONE.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

Don't you "shush" me,  
(to Celeste)  
She has her own studio, for god's sake.

A BIGGER CHORUS OF "SHUSH."

208 INT. MONTEREY HOT YOGA, WELLNESS AREA - MINUTES LATER

208

Madeline with Stacey; who's just admonished her. OTHER SWEATY PARTICIPANTS MULL ABOUT.

(CONTINUED)

208

CONTINUED:

208

MADELINE

I've just had a stressful few days.  
I'm fine.

STACEY

We do have a session where the  
rules are more relaxed. A peri-  
menopausal class.

MADELINE

That won't be necessary.  
(then)  
I promise to behave.

STACEY

Thank you.

And Stacey heads off; Madeline can't help but check out Stacey's perfectly sculpted buttocks; looks to the mirror to regard her own. As Celeste steps in, holding up her phone, she takes a photo of Madeline.

MADELINE

Oh, no, you don't. I better not  
show up on your Facebook page,  
looking like this.

As Nathan and Bonnie arrive

NATHAN

Hey, Maddie. Celeste.

MADELINE

Hey, guys. Nathan, yoga, wow.

NATHAN

Bonnie got me into it.

MADELINE

Ah.

BONNIE

Sweat is the new miracle cure.  
Gets all the toxins out.

MADELINE

Mmmm.

BONNIE

I've got Abby signed up for my  
piloxing class, she's really  
excited about it.

(CONTINUED)

208 CONTINUED: (2)

208

MADLINE  
 (it's killing her)  
 That's... more fantastic.

CLOSE ON THEA

THEA  
 Ticking bomb, I'll leave it at  
 that. Tick, tick, tick.

208A OMITTED

208A

208B OMITTED

208B

209 INT. OTTER BAY ELEMENTARY, LIBRARY - MORNING

209

THE CHILDREN ARE ALL SEATED IN A GIANT CIRCLE, TWENTY-  
 ONE IN ALL.

MS. BARNES  
 Our very first project will be for  
 each of you to do a "family tree,"  
 where you get to talk about your  
 wonderful family. Isn't that  
 great. But, before that, I'm going  
 to introduce you to a very special  
 friend to our class.

She holds up a stuffed animal.

MS. BARNES (CONT'D)  
 This is Harry The Hippo.

Some KIDS CHEER, SOME LAUGH, OTHERS DON'T SEEM TO CARE.  
 Harry looks a little odd.

MS. BARNES (CONT'D)  
 Harry has been a beloved member of  
 the first grade for almost ten  
 years. I know, you're not in  
 kindergarten anymore, and you're  
 about to find out that the  
 transition to first grade is not  
 always easy, but with Harry, you  
 won't even notice it. And the best  
 part: You will all have your turn  
 to take Harry home for sleep-overs.

Some kids cheer again. Chloe and Ziggy share a look:  
*is this a joke?*

(CONTINUED)

209 CONTINUED:

209

MS. BARNES (CONT'D)  
I'm going to start the day by  
passing Harry around, so you can  
all greet him with a hug.

Amabella's hand shoots up.

MS. BARNES (CONT'D)  
Yes, Amabella.

AMABELLA  
(making sure)  
Does Harry want to be hugged?

MS. BARNES  
Why yes. He loves hugs.

Ziggy then catches Amabella staring at him. She looks  
a little wary.

CLOSE ON SAMANTHA

SAMANTHA  
Look, let's face it. Amabella  
picked that Ziggy out of a line-up.  
And she was unwavering.

CLOSE ON STU

STU  
The kid was off, I'll leave it at  
that.

210 INT. CELESTE'S HOUSE, MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

210

Perry is packing his Louis Vuitton suitcase, he does so  
meticulously -- a man of precision and order. We can  
also feel him powder-kegging, his movements are  
militaristically crisp. Celeste enters, observes, sees  
he's making haste.

CELESTE  
I thought your flight was at five.

PERRY  
(no eye contact)  
Best to get there early.

CELESTE  
It's eleven-thirty.

(CONTINUED)



210 CONTINUED:

210

PERRY

(clipped)

Thank you. Good to know.

Okay. Enough is enough.

CELESTE

Are you serious?

PERRY

I flew back to be here. I don't even get to go in the building--

CELESTE

I understand, but that doesn't--

PERRY

And for you to just dismiss my being upset about--

CELESTE

I dismissed nothing, I just refused to be blamed for--

PERRY

You know what I think? You didn't want me at Orientation.

What?

PERRY (CONT'D)

You decided to have that moment all to yourself, just Mommy and her boys--

CELESTE

You are such a child.

A SLAP. It happens so fast -- like a reflex. Celeste wastes no time slapping him back; he reflexively gives her a violent two-handed shove; her body smashes back against the wall. She winces in pain. A beat.

PERRY

(what have I done?)

Oh my god --

He goes to hug her.

CELESTE

Don't.

(CONTINUED)

210 CONTINUED: (2)

210

PERRY

I'm so sorry.

He pulls her in to him.

PERRY (CONT'D)

(gently)

Hey...

As she struggles against it, he takes hold of her arm. Suddenly, it's a struggle, SHE'S PUSHING THE HEEL OF HER HAND INTO HIS CHIN, HE PULLS HER HAND OFF, PUSHES HER AGAINST THE WALL, GETS CONTROL OF HER. IT'S PHYSICAL, BORDER-LINE VIOLENT. THEN, LIKE A WRESTLER, HE PUSHES HIS FOREHEAD AGAINST HERS, CONTROLS HER HEAD, PUSHES IT UP. NOW THEY'RE EYE TO EYE. ANGER. HEAT. Then, out of nowhere... a kiss between them. Then, a more passionate one. As hands start to grab and grope--

211 INT./EXT. JANE'S PRIUS - DAY

211

A DRIVING POV, THROUGH A WINDSHIELD: KIDS ARE SPILLING OUT, their day is done; CARS ARE WAITING IN THE DROP-OFF LINE.

JANE DRIVES; Madeline is the passenger.

MADELINE

Truth be told, part-time jobs can be harder. 'Cause in addition to having to do the work, you have to constantly be scouring for new jobs.

JANE

Are you looking for other work?

MADELINE

No, no, twenty hours a week is my max. Between you and me, I like to preserve my full-time mother status, gives me something to lord over Renata and all those other career Cruellas.

(then; sing-songy)

Here they come. Our little future world leaders.

JANE

Do you see Ziggy?

(CONTINUED)

211 CONTINUED:

211

MADELINE

(pointing)  
There he is. Right with Chloe, did I not tell you, she's like a guard dog.

(climbing out)  
Chloe!!!

BRENT, thirties, the uniformed parking monitor, BLOWS A WHISTLE.

BRENT

(to Madeline)  
Ma'am, please.

Brent runs a chaos-free operation.

MADELINE

What, I can't call for my child?

BRENT

Please re-board your vehicle, ma'am.

As Chloe arrives--

CHLOE

(to Madeline)  
Are you causing trouble, woman?

MADELINE

Get in.  
(to Brent)  
Do not ever blow that whistle at me again.  
(off his stare)  
You're new here, I'm not.

Madeline re-boards as Ziggy and Chloe climb in the back.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

So how was the first day, guys?

CHLOE

Fine. We got to meet Harry the Hippo.

Chloe rolls her eyes: *How stupid.*

JANE

Zig?

(CONTINUED)

211 CONTINUED: (2)

211

ZIGGY

Good.

JANE

(hopeful)  
Yeah?

ZIGGY

Mm hmm. The teacher's nice.

JANE

That's so great.

Madeline spots a pink card in Chloe's bag and takes it.

MADELINE

What's that?

Chloe shakes her head: nothing. She tries to take it back but it's too late.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

Amabella's birthday party. How nice!

Chloe shoots her mom a look.

ZIGGY

I didn't get invited.

A punch to Jane's stomach. The mothers share a look.

JANE

(covering, to Ziggy)  
Well. You don't really know her that well, sweetheart.

MADELINE

(helpful, to Jane)  
Plus, she thinks he tried to kill her.

CHLOE

(diverting)  
Ok, what are we listening to?

Chloe takes her phone and goes through her music library.

MADELINE

(to Chloe, mouthing)  
Was he the only one?

(CONTINUED)

211 CONTINUED: (3)

211

Of course, Jane noticed. Her chest is tightening all over again as Chloe shoots her mom another look.

CLOSE ON THEA

AS CHARLES BRADLEY'S SOUL MUSIC EXPLODES...

THEA

The shit is never terribly far from Madeline's fan.

MELISSA

But that party thing created a vortex.

\*  
\*

212 INT. MADELINE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - SUNSET

212

CLOSE ON MADELINE

Shaking her head as she walks to the table to join Ed, Chloe, and ABIGAIL, eating supper, and as Bradley starts to sing and scream "*Heartaches and Pain*".

MADELINE

Outrageous... is what it is. For the whole class to get invited with the exception of Ziggy. I mean, come on.

ED

This is the kid that...

He puts his hands to his throat, eyes bulging.

MADELINE

Will you please.

She sits. Looks at Chloe's IPOD, and shoots her daughter a look. She doesn't need to say anything. Chloe lowers the volume of the music. Then--

MADELINE (CONT'D)

That is so Renata. First day of school...

ED

Well, if she's convinced that this Ziggy poses a threat to her daughter's safety, of course he's not going to get invited.

(CONTINUED)

212 CONTINUED:

212

MADELINE

I'm just saying invitations should  
not have been distributed in class.  
Not to the exclusion of one.

(CONTINUED)

212 CONTINUED: (2)

212

They eat in silence. Then--

MADELINE (CONT'D)  
I've set up a play-date for you and  
Ziggy, Chloe. On Thursdays.

CHLOE  
Cool.

A beat.

ED  
Are we sure that's a good idea?

MADELINE  
Why wouldn't it be?

ED  
We don't know for a fact that he's  
innocent.

Madeline tries to stare Ed down, but he holds his  
position.

ED (CONT'D)  
Maybe the benefit of the doubt  
should run to Chloe's favor instead  
of Ziggy's.

MADELINE  
Are you suggesting I might put my  
daughter in harm's way?

ED  
Our daughter.

CHLOE  
(settle)  
Team.

MADELINE  
(to Chloe)  
You should've called or texted me  
as soon as Ziggy was snubbed.  
Maybe I could've intervened.

ED  
How would she call you?

MADELINE  
She's got a phone in her doll,  
don't start with me.

(CONTINUED)

212 CONTINUED: (3)

212

A beat.

ABIGAIL

You really shouldn't encourage her to play with dolls.

MADELINE

Oh, really, and why is that?

ABIGAIL

Well. It's a little 1960's. Not to mention sexist, is it a Barbie doll?

CHLOE

Barbies aren't allowed. Sylvie Adelstein's gave Joey Proccacini a boner.

MADELINE

Y'know, Abigail, I am super impressed with your emerging social conscience, I really am.

Madeline checks herself, but Abigail reads her.

ABIGAIL

Shall we leave it at that or is now the time to pile on Bonnie?

Madeline bites her tongue. Rises, exits. A beat. Ed rises, exits. Chloe looks at her sister, shakes her head.

213 EXT. MADELINE'S HOUSE, BACKYARD/BEACH - MOMENTS LATER

213

Ed walks towards the picnic table where Madeline sits, looking at the ocean. He joins her. Silence. Finally--

MADELINE

I have a low tolerance when it comes to injustice, which is exactly what's happening to this Ziggy and his mother.

ED

You fled the table when Abby brought up Bonnie. I'd ask you what's the deal with Bonnie, except we both know it's really about Nathan.

(CONTINUED)



213 CONTINUED:

213

MADELINE

That is not true.

ED

It is true.

A beat. Some admission by silence.

MADELINE

I shouldn't have to constantly run into him, that's all. Monterey has thirty thousand people, for god's sake, I can't even go to a goddamn yoga class without...

(then)

And yoga, give me a break. When he was married to me, he couldn't so much as go for a walk, and when he finally did, he never came back.

Ed's turn to bite his lip.

ED

Remember that big fight I promised? Now would be a good time.

(then)

Is Nathan the one?

MADELINE

What?

ED

For every person, there's "the one," case in point, you are my one. But for you...

(a beat; it's hard to even say it aloud)

... he's the one you fell irreparably in love with, who irreparably broke your heart, who you apparently can't get over, fifteen years later.

MADELINE

Are you out of your mind?

ED

No. I'm never out of my mind. I don't get to be crazy. I'm stable, I'm grounded. Good ol' steady Eddie, that's me.

(CONTINUED)

213 CONTINUED: (2)

213

MADELINE

Where is this coming from?

ED

(coming uncorked)

It's coming from the fact that you don't really seem to adore me, that you are rarely interested in having sex, but specifically today it's coming from your constant carrying on about Nathan's seemingly perfect life, which tells me you're far from satisfied with your own. And I'm fucking sick of it.

(a beat; fighting his anger)

I may not be the good-looking adventure ride, but there's something to be said for being there, for being truthful, for being somebody you can steadfastly count on.

She's a bit poleaxed. A beat.

ED (CONT'D)

(quaking with quiet rage)

I won't be anybody's runner-up. You need to hear that.

OFF Madeline, stunned.

CLOSE ON THEA

THEA

Scratch the surface of any Jimmy Stewart... Charlie Manson.

214 EXT. CELESTE'S HOUSE, BACKYARD DECK - SUNSET

214

A FULL AND LOW MOON OVER THE OCEAN ON A SUNSET SKY. That is Celeste's POV...

... as she sits on the deck, contemplating the view, hot tea in hand, UNDER--

SINGERS (O.S.)

Never smile at a crocodile/ No, you can't get friendly with a crocodile/...

THE SONG CONTINUES AS SHE TURNS TO LOOK AT...

(CONTINUED)

214 CONTINUED: 214

... THE BOYS, INSIDE THE HOUSE, WATCHING TV. In the background, KELLY, the nanny, twenty-six, is tidying up the living room from all of the boys' toys.

215 INT. CELESTE'S HOUSE, FAMILY ROOM - SUNSET 215

"PETER PAN", THE ANIMATED MOVIE IS ON;

CELESTE SITS WITH THE TWINS, A LITTLE TREPIDATION ON THEIR FACES, APPROPRIATELY OCCASIONED BY CROCODILES. Harry the Hippo sits between them. Josh burrows into his mother for a little extra safety.

CELESTE

You okay?

MAX

He's scared of the crocodile.

JOSH

I'm not.

Josh takes Harry and covers his eyes.

JOSH (CONT'D)

He is. We need to protect him.

Max rolls his eyes and takes Harry from his brother.

CELESTE

That's right, the innocent need protecting, don't they?

(then)

How's Amabella doing?

JOSH

Good.

MAX

For a girl.

She gives Max a look: silly. Then--

CELESTE

Do you think Ziggy Chapman was the one who choked her at Orientation?

MAX

No.

JOSH

Ziggy's really nice.

(CONTINUED)

215 CONTINUED:

215

MAX

Can he come over?

CELESTE

Maybe, we'll ask Daddy.

\*  
\*

CELESTE'S CELLPHONE CHIMES: CALLER I.D. "MADELINE."

\*

INTERCUT WITH MADELINE, on her back porch.

MADELINE

"Side Door?"

CELESTE

Now?

MADELINE

I've decided to swap my family out  
for a vodka.

(then)

The nanny there?

CLOSE ON STU

STU

I think they both had drinking  
problems. I do.

215A INT. BLUE BLUES - SUNSET

215A

Jane is sitting with TOM, the barista. Ziggy is at the  
next table, playing a game on Jane's iPad. Tom holds a  
flyer.

TOM

I'm happy to let you post it, but  
nobody really reads flyers. You  
want to get work these days, you  
need a website.

JANE

That costs money.

TOM

Less than you think. Madeline's  
husband Ed is in web design. He  
could put something together. I  
already have an accountant,  
otherwise... do you have any  
clients?

(CONTINUED)

215A CONTINUED:

215A

JANE

A few portables I brought from Santa Cruz.

Tom measures her.

TOM

Can I ask... what brought you here?

ZIGGY

The schools are great, to build a better life for her son... that's all you'll get.

Jane and Tom are surprised to find out that Ziggy was listening. The kid quickly glances at them with a smirk and dives back into his game.

JANE

(to Ziggy)

I came here with dreams of a certain life, yes.

(to Tom)

In hope of a better one...

Tom nods. Seems to agree. And to like these two.

216

EXT. MONTEREY - BIXBY BRIDGE - SUNSET

216

THAT SPECTACULAR VIEW AGAIN... OF THAT BRIDGE BY THE OCEAN WITH MADELINE'S CAR DRIVING TOWARDS US, AS WE HEAR, THROUGH THE WAVES, A DISTANT UPBEAT MUSIC COMING FROM THE CAR, ALONG WITH...

DET. QUINLAN (V.O.)

We're looking at the victim's relationships with every parent...

CLOSE ON DET. QUINLAN

DET. QUINLAN

... who attended Trivia Night.

A LOUD FEEDBACK SOUND annoys Quinlan.

217

INT. MADELINE'S SUV - ROAD BY THE OCEAN - SUNSET

217

(CONTINUED)

217 CONTINUED:

217

ON MADELINE

Driving, over loud music coming from the car radio:  
*"There's a fire inside, even in you, we all got the  
 fire, we all know what to do".*

218 EXT. SIDE DOOR CAFE - NIGHT

218

Madeline and Celeste sit on the back patio around a  
 fire pit.

MADELINE

That he doubts my love for him?  
 Ed's not even a neurotic guy, maybe  
 it is me, maybe I do a lousy job of  
 conveying how much... I don't know.

CELESTE

You once said you two don't have  
 sex very often.

MADELINE

That's only because I'm tired most  
 of the time -- between school  
 stuff, and the play, and...

Celeste sips her drink.

CELESTE

How was Nathan in bed?

MADELINE

I don't want to talk about Nathan.

CELESTE

But we are talking about him.

MADELINE

No, we're talking about Ed.

CELESTE

Okay.

MADELINE

Okay, what?

CELESTE

Possible that you had a little more  
 passion for Nathan than you have  
 for Ed? Maybe Ed might sense that?

(off Madeline)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

218

CONTINUED:

218

CELESTE (CONT'D)

Men can sometimes be more intuitive  
than we give them credit for.

A beat.

CELESTE (CONT'D)

Have you considered seeing a  
counselor?

MADELINE

Oh, please, we don't need a  
counselor. Couples fight. You  
telling me you and Perry never  
fight?

CELESTE

(covering)  
Sometimes we do.

MADELINE

And you just whoosh off to therapy  
after?

CELESTE

No. More times than not, we  
have... y'know.

MADELINE

What, 'y'know'?  
(off Celeste)  
Sex?

CELESTE

One emotion gets confused for  
another...  
(covertly)  
Sometimes I wonder if he likes to  
fight 'cause it'll lead to...  
(then)  
Sometimes I wonder if I like it, too.

MADELINE

The fighting part? Or the sex?

Madeline stares back, fascinated.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

Does this happen a lot?

CELESTE

Happens enough.

Madeline studies her.

(CONTINUED)

218 CONTINUED: (2)

218

MADELINE

I have to be honest, Celeste, that strikes me as a little twisted.

(then, admitting)

And wonderful.

Then--

MADELINE (CONT'D)

The sex you two have is really...

She makes a primal grunt sound.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

Isn't it?

CELESTE

It's pretty good.

MADELINE

Does Perry ever feel... not loved enough by you?

Before Celeste can answer--

RENATA (O.S.)

(brightly)

Celeste. Madeline.

REVEAL Renata has arrived.

RENATA (CONT'D)

Hi. I'm over there with friends, and I saw you two.

(to Celeste)

I don't mean to intrude, but do you have a second?

CELESTE

Sure.

RENATA

I won't bother you with the whole saga, but basically the local V.A. hospital is being shuttered, which means patients will have to drive all the way to Sacramento for services. I'm very involved with the Vets, specifically PTSD, I'm hosting a small fundraising dinner to help defray costs and keep the facility open. We would love to have you and Perry.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



218 CONTINUED: (3)

218

RENATA (CONT'D)

(then to Madeline)

And you and Ed as well, of course.

MADELINE

You're a very kind person, Renata.  
By the way, that was so sweet of  
you to invite Chloe to Amabella's  
birthday party.

RENATA

(modestly)

Oh, well...

MADELINE

(sweetly)

Might have been more sweet if you  
hadn't singled out and excluded  
little Ziggy.

RENATA

(sweetly)

Well, you can understand.

MADELINE

(sweetly)

I actually can't.

RENATA

Okay. It might just spoil things  
for Amabella if she were strangled.  
I could be wrong.

MADELINE

If Ziggy doesn't go, Chloe doesn't  
go.

CELESTE

(peacemaker)

Maybe that isn't the best--

MADELINE

(to Renata)

And if Chloe's out, the brigade  
will follow. She's like the pied  
piper.

CELESTE

(so much for making peace)

Okay.

Renata takes a breath, smiles.

(CONTINUED)

218 CONTINUED: (4)

218

RENATA

Madeline. I like you. And I actually admire you standing up for your unapologetic friend. But let me offer this as objectively and constructively as I can: Do not fuck with my daughter's birthday.

MADELINE

(rising; to Renata)  
Don't you threaten me.

As the two women look each other in the eye...

CLOSE ON MELISSA

MELISSA

I was in that bar, I saw them from afar. And I distinctly saw Madeline glance towards a steak knife.

219 INT. MADELINE'S HOUSE, MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT

219

Madeline aggressively brushes her teeth; Ed is there.

MADELINE

(mouthful of toothpaste)  
The war is on.

And she spits.

ED

This really isn't fair to Chloe.

MADELINE

Excuse me?

ED

Last year Amabella had a jumping castle, and a magician. And this year only figures to be better!

MADELINE

Oh, please.

ED

And for you to summarily say she can't go, and then to use her as a tool to get other kids to not go,--

MADELINE

I'm not doing that.

(CONTINUED)

219 CONTINUED:

219

ED

One minute it's Nathan, or Bonnie, now Renata, not to mention the parking monitor, the girls in the car, I can't even keep track of all the fights you start, somebody needs to invent an app.

MADELINE

How 'bout you have my back for one of them? Would that be too much?

ED

What is it about this Jane? Is she like your lost little sister or something, is this just a cause in lieu of...

MADELINE

Of what? A life?

Ed holds a hand up, he didn't say that. Then--

MADELINE (CONT'D)

Jane is a single mom. Do you need an app to put two and two together? When Abigail was a baby, Nathan was never around. I was a single mother. And yes, I'm still angry about it. It's not my love for Nathan that lingers fifteen years later, but my resentment. Big difference.

Madeline stares. Then aggressively spits the remaining bit of toothpaste into the sink. Exits in a huff.

CLOSE ON DETECTIVE QUINLAN; PRESS CONFERENCE

DET. QUINLAN

There's clearly a lot of bad blood in this community.

220 EXT. CELESTE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

220

CELESTE'S AUDI A8 DRIVES THROUGH THE GATE, PULLS INTO THE DRIVEWAY, PARKS IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE. SHE STAYS BEHIND THE WHEEL FOR A MOMENT. HER FACE IS EXPRESSIONLESS.

221 INT. CELESTE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

221

A spectacular floral arrangement sits on the table in the living room where Kelly is reading as Celeste enters.

CELESTE (O.S.)

Wow.

KELLY

They arrived just after you left.  
Double the price, I think, for  
night-time deliveries.

Celeste joins Kelly and opens a card that was left on the table:

"You make me. Perry."

\*

She smiles and SNAPS A PICTURE OF THE FLOWERS WITH HER CELLPHONE.

KELLY (CONT'D)

On a less-positive note... I  
believe I've failed you miserably.

222 INT. CELESTE'S HOUSE, MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

222

Josh and Max are in the master bed, still awake, Harry The Hippo between them. They immediately pretend to sleep when Celeste enters. She walks to them.

CELESTE

I thought Harry was just a stupid  
stuffed animal for babies.

Max pushes Harry on his brother's side.

MAX

He is.

They push each other back. Then--

JOSH

Can we sleep with you tonight?

CELESTE

Again?

They nod yes, and wait patiently for a response. How can she resist? She slides in next to them.

(CONTINUED)

222 CONTINUED:

222

CELESTE (CONT'D)

Harry doesn't snore, does he? I hear it's a problem with hippos.

MAX

Daddy snores.

Max pretends to snore.

CELESTE

No, like this.

She joins in. And then Josh. It's a snoring impression contest. When they stop...

JOSH

I wish Daddy was here.

A beat. It changes her mood.

CELESTE

Me, too. But the four of us all together, we'll be okay.

The boys don't have a clue of what she's referring to. They just stare at their mom as she lies next to them, and suddenly notices that Harry... is missing a leg.

JOSH

It was Max.

MAX

It was Josh.

As they go on and fight, we CUT TO...

223

INT. JANE'S PRIUS - ROAD BY THE OCEAN - MORNING

223

AN UNDEREXPOSED MOVING POV: THE SUN, THE OCEAN, THE COASTLINE... A FURTHER REMINDER: NATURE IS BEAUTIFUL BUT MAN-MADE. THE IMAGE BECOMES PERFECTLY EXPOSED WHEN THE TAINTED WINDOW THROUGH WHICH WE WERE LOOKING COMES DOWN, THEN UP AGAIN... AND DOWN...

CLOSE ON

Ziggy, enjoying the wind on his face, as he's playing with the electric window...

JANE (O.S.)

I think that's a bad idea. As much as I appreciate it...

(CONTINUED)

223 CONTINUED:

223

He looks at his mom...

She's on her cell, talking and driving.

JANE (CONT'D)

If the birthday party is ruined and Ziggy's the root cause, it'll just make things worse for him.

INTERCUT WITH MADELINE on her cell IN THE HALLWAY, hurrying about, getting ready to rush out the door with Chloe as ABIGAIL WALKS DOWN THE STAIRS.

MADELINE

Sweetie, people here just assume me to be the root cause of everything, you need not worry.

(to Chloe)

Hurry up.

JANE (O.S.)

I'd really prefer you just let Chloe go to the party--

ABIGAIL DROPS HER PURSE TO THE FLOOR; ALL KINDS OF SHIT FALLS OUT, INCLUDING AN UNMISTAKABLE LITTLE BOX. MADELINE FREEZES, as Abigail quickly scoops it all up.

MADELINE

(to Jane)

Call you back.

(abruptly)

Chloe, to the car. Now!

The tone... They all know something's up.

224 INT. MADELINE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - LATER

224

ABIGAIL

I'm not having sex, I promise you.

MADELINE

Then why the pill?

ABIGAIL

Because... if the day ever comes... not that it's coming soon... but...

MADELINE

You are sixteen years old. How did you even get this?

(CONTINUED)

224 CONTINUED:

224

ABIGAIL

From a doctor.

MADELINE

Dr. Ennis, our doctor, she prescribed this without--

ABIGAIL

Not her. I went to Planned Parenthood.

Madeline just stares.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Please do not make a big deal of this, I am not sexually active...

MADELINE

How'd you get there?

ABIGAIL

What?

MADELINE

Planned Parenthood. You took a cab, uber, Planned Parenthood is way out in Seaside, how'd you get there?

ABIGAIL

Um.

Madeline is suddenly looking a bit psychotic. Uh oh.

225 EXT. OTTER BAY ELEMENTARY, DROP-OFF AREA - MORNING

225

BRENT, the Monitor, spots Madeline who gets out of her car; BLOWS HARD ON HIS WHISTLE.

MADELINE

(to Brent)

Don't even think about it.

Madeline wastes no time, she's right in Bonnie's face, who is dropping off SKYE.

(CONTINUED)

225 CONTINUED:

225

MADELINE (CONT'D)

Bonnie, hey, hi, good to see you again, coupla things: happy to hear Abby has bonded with your mother, thrilled that the communal potato-peel thing worked out, but when it comes to my daughter's social recreational life, together with medications that might affect her reproductive organs, I'd appreciate you kicking that can of worms to me, would that be okay? Oh, and should Skye come to me ten years down the road, asking for a lift to Planned Parenthood, I will be sure to give you that courtesy call.

Bonnie looks a little shell-shocked. BRENT is approaching fast, BLOWING ON THE WHISTLE.

226 EXT. FISHERMAN'S WHARF - PARKING LOT - MORNING

226

A CAR DOOR GETS SLAMMED SHUT. Madeline's.

227 EXT. DECK - BLUE BLUES CAFE - MORNING

227

Madeline, Celeste, and Jane, seated at Blue Blues Cafe.

MADELINE

Why couldn't she have come to me?

JANE

I could never talk to my mother about birth control.

CELESTE

I wouldn't be too hard on either Abby or Bonnie here.

Madeline takes a deep breath.

MADELINE

You know how I like my grudges.  
(to Jane)  
I tend to them -- like little pets.

JANE

Me too. I'm not much into forgiveness either.

(CONTINUED)



227 CONTINUED:

227

MADELINE

Really, and who do you have not to forgive?

JANE

(covering)

Nobody. Just y'know, in general.

She's hiding something. Celeste and Madeline see it.

CELESTE

(taking her off the hook)

Never forgive. Never forget.

As Tom arrives with coffee--

TOM

That sure sounds like a motto to live by.

CLOSE ON HARPER

HARPER

More like a motto to die by.

RESUME

TOM

(to Jane)

Marv Herman runs the muffler shop on Kentner, I'm told he's in need of some bookkeeping assistance.

(to Celeste)

And maybe some legal assistance, too, if the zoning board...

CELESTE

I'm retired.

MADELINE

Except when it comes to defending the First Amendment.

TOM

Oh, yeah, I heard Shakespeare got it wrong. "The play's the thing," unless it has puppets.

Tom shoots a wink, heads off.

MADELINE

(re: Tom)

So cute, tell me about it.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

227 CONTINUED: (2) 227

MADELINE (CONT'D)

(to Jane)  
Unfortunately, gay.

\*

JANE

\*

Really?

MADELINE

The best ones always are.

228 EXT. MONTEREY - PARK - MORNING 228

ED IS ON HIS BICYCLE with all the brightly-colored gear: the helmet with rear-view mirrors, the shoes, the shorts, the jersey; he looks ridiculous. That is Nathan's POV as he sits on a bench. Ed pedals up to him.

NATHAN

Ed.  
(re: the gear)  
Love the look. Especially the mirrors, got to respect a man who has his own back.

ED

Oh, well. Standard stuff.

NATHAN

Yeah. How's the computer business going?

ED

Great. Kinda like landscaping, I guess. "Growth" industry.

NATHAN

Clever.  
(then)  
Listen, thanks for meeting me.

Ed gets off his bike.

229 EXT. MONTEREY - PARK - MINUTES LATER 229

Ed and Nathan are now standing next to each other, facing the ocean.

(CONTINUED)

229 CONTINUED:

229

NATHAN

As far as I know, there was no undue influence or interference. Abby had some questions about Planned Parenthood, Bonnie answered them, Abby then asked if Bonnie would take her there. There was no parental usurping of any kind, I promise you. I will discuss all of this with Maddie. But what I'd like to take up with you -- I'm sure you can appreciate... it's a bit of a delicate dance for me with my ex-wife.

He pauses: "How do I say this?"

NATHAN (CONT'D)

I expect her to be a little rough on me. But to punish Bonnie --

ED

I believe she's being nice to Bonnie, or at least trying, under the circumstances.

A half-beat.

NATHAN

What circumstances would those be?

ED

Nathan, c'mon. It was pretty tough when you left.

NATHAN

That was almost fifteen years ago.

ED

It's difficult for Madeline to see you at every school function, so involved, when you weren't there for Abigail. Difficult to run into you at Yoga when you never...

(backtracking)

... maybe I'm talking out of turn.

A beat.

NATHAN

I was young. And maybe a bit of a shit. I made a lot of mistakes both with Maddie and Abby.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

229

CONTINUED: (2)

229

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Should I be required to repeat those mistakes with Bonnie and Skye?

ED

No. But it wouldn't hurt to be mindful of other people's feelings sometimes.

NATHAN

Ah. Mr. Sensitive.

ED

I'm sorry?

NATHAN

That was actually a compliment. You're the standard bearer for today's evolved man. You work at home. Pitch in almost fifty-fifty with child care, you even cook.

Ed stares. Feels a dig in that.

ED

You're the guy who likes to fish and hunt. I'm Mr. Girly-man. That it?

NATHAN

That's not what I said. Look. It would be a little indelicate for me to take all this up with Maddie.

(pointed)

So I'm taking it up with you.

ED

That sounded like a threat, Nathan. Are you threatening me?

A beat. This is getting tense.

ED (CONT'D)

You know this thing with that Ziggy kid... and all the talk of bullying.

(then)

I was bullied. Sixth grade. And I always turned the other cheek, thinking that was the more mature thing to do.

(a beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

229 CONTINUED: (3)

229

ED (CONT'D)

Some thirty years later it still haunts me that I didn't beat the shit out of that kid. So much so... I find myself fantasizing... that somebody will come along one day and say or do something to me... that'll offer me the chance to redeem myself for...

(a beat)

You've always treated me quite well, Nathan. Too bad.

OFF Nathan, a look of 'holy shit,' on his face,

CLOSE ON GABRIELLE

GABRIELLE

The first thing I said, the very first thing: it wasn't just the mothers.

230 EXT. CREST COMMUNITY THEATER - DAY

230

LOW ANGLE on the tall staircase of the theater as Madeline starts running up the stairs, stopped in the middle by some work being done. She looks around, pulls up her dress, walks over a work banner and continues her way up the stairs.

231 EXT. CREST COMMUNITY THEATER - DAY

231

Madeline crosses the plaza to the theater entrance: a small moving figure among dozens of still, mature, north pacific trees.

232 INT. CREST COMMUNITY THEATER - DAY

232

JOSEPH BACHMAN, thirty-three, good-looking, smart, a little J-Crew is staring almost straight into camera at something that soon brings a subtle smile to his lips.

JOSEPH

It's not really a legal matter Madeline. If the Mayor refuses to authorize funding--

MADELINE

But we can make it a legal matter, it should be a legal matter.

(CONTINUED)

232 CONTINUED:

232

JOSEPH

The funding is discretionary, he could deny it on whatever grounds he wants, and--

MADELINE

Is he denying it?

JOSEPH

He's strongly suggesting we pick something more community-centric.

MADELINE

Joseph, we've worked hard on this. We're being victimized here by small-mindedness, led by the likes of Renata Klein.

JOSEPH

Understood, but we need to pick our battles. And--

MADELINE

Sometimes the battles pick us.  
(off Joseph)  
We can't quit. We just can't.

JOSEPH

Is this about the play, or winning?

MADELINE

Maybe both.  
(off Joseph)  
Sometimes I get tired of the snitches with stars stepping on the rest of us.

He smiles softly. Clearly these two are friends.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

You wanted to be brave with your artistic direction, that's all I'm asking for here. That you be brave.

JOSEPH

You told me to go fuck myself on the head.

MADELINE

You know how I get.  
(then)  
Please.

(CONTINUED)

232 CONTINUED: (2)

232

He stares back, consent by silence. He's putty in her hands.

JOSEPH  
I'll talk to the Mayor.

MADELINE  
Thank you. You won't regret this.

As she turns to go, she spots something on Joseph's table and stops on her tracks--

MADELINE (CONT'D)  
What's that?

JOSEPH  
Tickets to "Disney On Ice".  
"Frozen."

MADELINE'S POV: CLOSE ON THE TICKETS on which we can clearly read the date: September 17th, 2:00P.M.

OFF Madeline, wheels spinning:

CLOSE ON GABRIELLE

GABRIELLE  
Amabella passed out her invitations on Wednesday morning. Madeline was calling parents, offering free tickets to "Disney On Ice" by Thursday noon.

232A INT. RENATA'S HOUSE - HALL - DAY

232A

The door opens on Harper as she walks in, breathless.

HARPER (V.O.)  
The two events were scheduled for the same day, same time.

CLOSE ON HARPER (in the interrogation room).

HARPER  
A vicious shot over the bow.

RESUME

We see Renata from behind as she stares through the window at the distant ocean, Harper waiting for her reaction... that never comes.

(CONTINUED)

232A CONTINUED: 232A

A soft, beautiful MELODY is played by an ACOUSTIC GUITAR. Nothing vicious, on the contrary.

232B INT. OTTER BAY ELEMENTARY - CLASSROOM - DAY 232B

CLOSE ON CHLOE as the music continues.

CLOSE ON ZIGGY

CLOSE ON AMABELLA

233 INT. JANE'S TOWNHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 233

CLOSE ON JANE as she answers the RINGING phone, stunned by what the caller says. The MUSIC abruptly STOPS.

234 INT. OTTER BAY ELEMENTARY - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY 234

Nippal, at his desk.

JANE (O.S.)

Sexual assault?

REVEAL Jane, on the other side of the desk.

NIPPAL

Technically speaking, look, it's not a big deal. But school policy demands that we take--

JANE

What exactly happened?

NIPPAL

It appears that Ziggy kissed Amabella, and that the advance was unwelcome. And a little aggressive.

JANE

What?

NIPPAL

Amabella was not hurt, but given our strict zero-tolerance policy when it comes to these sorts of transgressions...

He picks up the phone. Jane is dumbstruck.

(CONTINUED)



234 CONTINUED:

234

NIPPAL (CONT'D)

Are the others here?

CLOSE ON DETECTIVE QUINLAN

DET. QUINLAN

In addition to the murder investigation, we're investigating others on assault and conspiracy to incite violence.

235 INT. OTTER BAY ELEMENTARY - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

235

Now joining Jane and Nippal are Nathan, Bonnie, Renata and Madeline, at opposite ends. Renata stares at Madeline. If looks could kill.

NIPPAL

The intent, by all accounts, was to simply make peace with Amabella.

RENATA

Which is an admission then that he did try to choke her.

NIPPAL

Hold on. Zigfield still maintains his innocence on the choking front. The idea of brandishing affection upon Amabella was first proffered by Chloe in an attempt to ameliorate the birthday party brouhaha.

MADELINE

It was Chloe's idea?

NIPPAL

She played a song, invited Zigfield and Amabella to dance, and... it seems your daughter has inherited the "let's-solve-everyone-else's-problems" gene.

Madeline's eyes narrow as she digs into Nippal with a glare. Renata enjoys the moment. Madeline notices.

NIPPAL (CONT'D)

The motion was then seconded by Skye.

(CONTINUED)

235 CONTINUED:

235

BONNIE

I don't believe my daughter would ever sanction a non-consensual touching.

Madeline throws her glare from Renata to Bonnie.

NATHAN

I'm sorry, but isn't this a big pile of hooey over a whole lot of nothing?

NIPPAL

We have a policy, sir.

236 EXT. OTTER BAY ELEMENTARY - HALLWAY - DAY

236

Nippal's door opens; Renata bee-lines out first, followed by Bonnie and Nathan, who also head off rather briskly. Jane, still looking shell-shocked, moves more slowly; Madeline sees as much and stays close to her.

MADELINE

Jane?

Jane just keeps walking.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

Look at me, honey.

Jane stops, does so, she looks almost dazed.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

It's nothing. They're kids. My god, if I had a nickel for every time I tried to kiss a boy when I was six years old... this is nothing, you do know that.

Jane nods. A beat. And then it's just all too much. Her face contorts with grief, she slowly sinks to the floor, as she gives in to her tears.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

Hey, hey, hey. By this time tomorrow we'll be laughing about this. Come on.

As Madeline tends to Jane...

WE NOW SEE THEM FROM A DISTANT POV, FROM THE FAR END OF THE CORRIDOR... Ziggy's.

237 INT. MADELINE'S SUV - DAY

237

We hear the soft, beautiful MELODY again, played by an ACOUSTIC GUITAR. Chloe is in the back, moving her head to the music that comes from the car speakers, as Madeline drives.

CHLOE

How can you not wanna make up on this song? Come on!

MADELINE

Make up, yes, not make out, dummy.

CHLOE

It's what you guys do, when you get mad at each other, big hug, kiss, bang! Everything's better again.

MADELINE

It's different with married people.

CHLOE

Why?

MADELINE

Because it just is, that's why. Don't start with me.

They both shake their heads and look away. These two are so much the same. A long beat. Madeline looks from the rearview mirror to the road, to the car navigation screen which displays Chloe's music playing: LEON BRIDGES, *RIVER*.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

This is a beautiful song, honey.

PERRY (V.O.)

Hey, baby.

238 INT. CELESTE'S HOUSE, MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

238

Celeste has just had a bath; she's wearing a bathrobe as she sips some tea in front of her COMPUTER SCREEN; SKYPING WITH PERRY. INTERCUT BETWEEN THEM.

CELESTE

Isn't it like the middle of the night there?

(CONTINUED)

238

CONTINUED:

238

PERRY

It is. I'm having the usual insomnia adjusting to the time-zone. Is that the bathrobe I bought you?

CELESTE

It is. And thank you for the flowers, they're beautiful.

He smiles; it's an admiring smile.

PERRY

I miss you.

CELESTE

Miss you, too. And the boys miss you.

PERRY

How was their second day?

CELESTE

Fine, but a little more drama; that Ziggy boy tried to kiss Amabella Klein.

PERRY

What is wrong with that kid?

CELESTE

I think he was just trying to make friends with her. You know how school is, it's all about being popular.

(off his silence)

Can you hear me?

PERRY

I can hear you. I'm just looking at you, beautiful.

CELESTE

You're sweet.

PERRY

Do me a favor. Take that robe off for a second.

CELESTE

Perry.

(CONTINUED)

238 CONTINUED: (2)

238

PERRY

Come on, I need to help myself go to sleep, and you need to help me help myself.

She just stares back. Naughty boy. But he does make her feel beautiful -- constantly, in fact.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Just let me look at my gorgeous wife for a second. Ten seconds.

CELESTE

I'll give you five. The boys are waiting for me downstairs.

PERRY

Make it a nice five.

And she lowers her robe. He smiles... but we see a flicker of... something. His smile looks tempered. She looks up, SEES HERSELF IN THE MIRROR, SEES WHAT HE SEES: that bruise on her ribs. Neither make mention of it; finally, as she re-covers herself--

CELESTE

Okay. That's all you get, naughty boy, you'll have to come home sooner if you want more.

PERRY

Sit for a second, come closer.

She sits in front of the COMPUTER.

PERRY (CONT'D)

I love you. Call me when you wake up?

CELESTE

I will.

He kisses his index finger, touches the camera with it. Celeste kisses her index finger, does the same.

238A EXT. RENATA'S HOUSE, DECK - NIGHT

238A

Renata sits with GORDON. She is still livid. A beat.

GORDON

We could take her out of the school if you're that concerned.

(CONTINUED)

238A CONTINUED:

238A

RENATA

Why should she have to leave? She did nothing wrong.

GORDON

I just don't think legal action is the answer. Let's see how things go. I'm guessing it'll all sort itself out.

RENATA

I'm not feeling supported.

Shit. The 'I don't feel supported' card.

GORDON

Well. I suppose I can't argue your feelings.

Her head slowly turns. She punishes him with a look.

239

INT. JANE'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

239

A door is being cracked open to reveal Ziggy in bed, appearing to be asleep. That is Jane's POV.

She quietly enters, approaches... Ziggy's eyes are wide open, staring back at her; it nearly gives her a start.

JANE

Hey. Thought you were asleep.

He just stares.

ZIGGY

I saw you crying.  
(then)  
At school.

JANE

Oh. I... I think stress just got the better of me, baby. I'm fine now. Don't worry.

A long beat. Then--

ZIGGY

At pick-up, I heard one of the mothers say I was a little monster.

(CONTINUED)

239 CONTINUED:

239

JANE

Hey. You are not a monster! You hear me? You are not a monster.

A little scary, the way she barked that. He just stares back. She strokes his hair.

JANE (CONT'D)

(softening)

There is nothing wrong with you.

But she wonders. She cannot help but wonder. She pulls him tight.

240 INT. MADELINE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

240

Abigail is getting a late-night snack, a pickle out of the fridge as Madeline enters. She's in her pajamas. They haven't much yet talked. It's a tiny bit awkward.

MADELINE

A pickle?

ABIGAIL

I'm not pregnant.

That gets a bit of a soft smile from Maddie.

MADELINE

If the day does come, the day you alluded to earlier...

ABIGAIL

You mean when I decide to have sex? That day?

MADELINE

Yeah, that one.

(then)

Can we talk about it first?

ABIGAIL

Sure.

MADELINE

I might actually be of help, y'know.

ABIGAIL

Got it.

A beat.

(CONTINUED)

240 CONTINUED:

240

MADELINE

I actually have a lot of women friends, as you know. Never once have I ever heard any of them say, "gee, if only I'd had sex sooner in life.

ABIGAIL

This is awkward now.

MADELINE

Sorry. Got it.

And Madeline exits.

241 INT. MADELINE'S HOUSE, FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

241

ED, on the sofa, is WATCHING TELEVISION on mute, his computer on his lap, half working, half watching when suddenly Leon Bridges' *River* melody starts to play again. Madeline just put it on as she enters, sits on the sofa.

MADELINE

Nathan told me you threatened to beat him up.

ED

Of course not. He wanted me to get you to back off Bonnie a little, it led to a discussion, and... I never threatened to beat him up. I did let him know I wouldn't be intimidated by him, which I think was his intent.

She considers that.

MADELINE

So how'd you two leave it?

ED

We left it... he's got Bonnie's back. And I've got yours.

She holds a look, smiles a bit.

MADELINE

Such a he-man.

He just shoots her a look.

(CONTINUED)



241 CONTINUED:

241

MADELINE (CONT'D)

Can I just say one thing?

ED

You never leave it at one thing.

MADELINE

You're the one, okay? My one and only.

242 INT. CELESTE'S HOUSE, MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

242

CLOSE ON CELESTE'S COMPUTER WHICH FEATURES THE PHOTO OF THE FLOWERS. SHE CLICKS ON THE IMAGE, DRAGS IT ONTO HER INSTAGRAM PAGE, A NICE COMPLEMENT TO THE OTHER BLISSFUL IMAGES. PERRY, THE BOYS, JANE AND MADELINE FROM BLUE BLUES. A FINE NARRATIVE... AS LEON BRIDGES' MUSIC CONTINUES TO PLAY.

243 INT. MADELINE'S HOUSE, STAIRCASE - NIGHT

243

Abigail walks up the stairs and stops when she sees something. She walks one step down to peek into the...

FAMILY ROOM

... where Ed and Madeline are dancing to LEON BRIDGES' SONG. Like teenagers dancing on a slow. That music does seem to help people to make up.

CLOSE ON Abigail, seeming to agree.

RESUME

CELESTE'S COMPUTER SCREEN

AS THE MUSIC CONTINUES, PERRY'S IMAGE POPS UP on Skype. He wonders why for a second and gets it. That puts a smile on his face. He brings one hand down, out of frame. Now we get it. As he starts touching himself, we see glimpses of Celeste's reflection on the screen. She dances for him as she, too, pleasures herself.

Another way... of making up.

OFF this, we SMASH TO BLACK

AS LEON BRIDGES' MUSIC KEEPS ON PLAYING OVER THE END CREDITS.

TO BE CONTINUED