

ECHO

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"ECHO"ACT ONE

EXT. LOS ANGELES SUBURB - DAY

A bright, endless pastiche of Starbucks, shopping malls, frozen yogurt shops, and moms jogging in bright green parks crawling with happy children. This is a safe place.

PRE-LAP the sound of a KEYBOARD clacking...

INT. ECHO'S OLD ROOM - DAY

Packed up BOXES and bare walls, dusty outlines where posters used to hang. A STANFORD FLAG still pinned to the wall.

REVEAL our heroine ECHO ROJAS (17), a half white, half Mexican straight-laced teenager who looks super white, laying on a bare mattress typing on her LAPTOP. She's blogging.

ECHO (V.O.)

These are the final moments I'll be in the house where I grew up and it's weird. Like I'm a ghost in my own room. My dad is coming to pick me up at noon and I guess that's when my life changes forever.

As Echo types, we get a glimpse at her blog: ECHO'S ECHO. Tumblr-esque. A mixture of text, GIFs, memes -- homages to One Direction and the Jolie-Pitts.

INT. CONDO - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A nearly empty living room with high ceilings, covered in beige carpet. Echo throws a LAMP into a box. She finds a stack of GOSSIP MAGAZINES. She leafs through them, they're old and dusty.

ECHO (V.O.)

I haven't seen my dad since my fourteenth birthday when he and my mom got into a fight at Outback Steakhouse. Before that, I only saw him once or twice a year. At best, he's been like a cool uncle who brings me gifts on most of my birthdays, but not all of them.

Echo stuffs the magazines into the box.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - POOL - DAY

A small pool with LOUNGE CHAIRS and PATIO UMBRELLAS surrounding it. Echo, in her bathing suit, stands by the pool looking down at the perfectly still water.

ECHO (V.O.)

I've never been to his house or spent more than three hours with him except that one time he took me to Six Flags and disappeared when he made me ride a roller coaster alone.

She takes a step back to get a running start and JUMPS IN -- full cannonball, making a huge SPLASH.

ECHO (V.O.)

Oh, and I have brothers now. Two half-brothers which makes one whole brother. One of them is my age. We played at a park together once when we were kids and he threw dirt in my face.

Echo lays back in the water and lets herself float, savoring the moment.

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - MAIL ROOM - DAY

Echo empties out the MAILBOX. She throws away JUNK MAIL and sifts through the LETTERS.

ECHO (V.O.)

And you, strangers on the internet, get to follow along as I settle into the big city with other strangers who have the same last name as I do. My family, I guess.

A PINK ENVELOPE catches her eye -- it's addressed to Echo in distinctive, curvy handwriting. She stashes it away without opening it.

INT. CONDO - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Echo sits on the floor among all of her things. She checks the time. 1:14pm. The doorbell RINGS. Echo scrambles to the door, anxious.

She opens the door. Reveal RIGO ROJAS (late 30s), first generation Mexican-American, stubborn with good intentions, at the door.

ECHO
Hi, Dad.

Rigo smiles.

ECHO (V.O.)
But wait.

The image FREEZES on Rigo.

ECHO (V.O.)
There's more you need to know.

We REWIND back through what we just saw. The pool. The packed up room. The suburbs. All the way back to --

PRE-LAP ONE DIRECTION...

INT. CONDO - KITCHEN - NIGHT - **FLASHBACK**

A pot of boiling PASTA. Music blares from an IPHONE on the counter. Echo and GIGI FREDRICKSON (late 30s), Echo's gentle yet kickass single mom, cook in the kitchen -- they dance and sing along as they add ingredients to a bowl.

ECHO (V.O.)
This is my mom. Isn't she gorgeous?
She was the coolest mom on the
planet and my best friend.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - POOL - DAY - **FLASHBACK**

Echo swims in the community pool as Gigi sits under an umbrella, flipping through PEOPLE MAGAZINE. Echo SPLASHES her. Gigi laughs.

ECHO (V.O.)
It was always me and her against
the world until the world finally
won.

The image FREEZES on Gigi's smile. Then the splashing action repeats itself like a GIF -- Gigi's LAUGH overlapping.

INT. CONDO - LIVING ROOM - DAY - **FLASHBACK**

Echo enters toting her backpack, smiling. Gigi waits on the couch, tears filling her eyes. Echo's smile fades.

ECHO (V.O.)

My mom got breast cancer. It was supposed to be treatable. It was supposed to be easy to beat. She was supposed to be my mom forever.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Gigi lays in a hospital bed, her hair is gone. She's skinny, weak. Echo sits by her side, reading from a magazine MOS.

ECHO (V.O.)

Nine months after her diagnosis, she was gone. Her life was short like this sentence. And now I'm about to start my senior year of high school in a new place with a new family and no mom to tell me what to do and what not to do.

Gigi takes Echo's hand and kisses it. Then holds it in her hands as if it's the last time. Gigi smiles. That same smile in the worst moment.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. CONDO - DAY

Where we left off. The frozen image of Rigo -- big white text, like a MEME, appears:

SHAKE DAD'S HAND

OR NO?

Hold for a beat. The text disappears and the image unfreezes.

RIGO

Ready to go home, mi hija?

Echo awkwardly smiles at her dad, unsure of what to do.

TITLE CARD: ECHO

INT. EXECUTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

A sleek lawyer's office. Echo and Rigo sit across from Gigi's ESTATE EXECUTOR who looks over PAPER WORK.

EXECUTOR

Echo. What an interesting name.

RIGO

It was my idea.

Rigo smiles proudly. Echo rolls her eyes, embarrassed.

EXECUTOR

Let's see. Your mother had a decent insurance policy to take care of living expenses. Nothing extravagant, but you'll be fine.

ECHO

Is it enough for Stanford? It was my mom's dream school, but she never got to go.

The Executor shifts in his seat.

EXECUTOR

I'm not a college tuition guru, but I'd say not quite. Don't worry, there are plenty of affordable schools out there. I went to Cal State Long Beach and turned out fine.

RIGO

I never even went to college. Maybe we can find a happy medium.

Echo nods, overwhelmed. The Executor presents them with CONTRACTS.

EXECUTOR

When you're eighteen, you'll receive the full amount and you can decide from there. If I can have you both sign these documents, we'll be on our way. Terribly sorry for your loss.

As Rigo and Echo sign the contracts --

INT./EXT. RIGO'S CAR/LOS ANGELES - DAY

Rigo's car is small, full of Echo's boxes. Rigo talks on the phone as he drives --

RIGO

We're getting the shipment in on Monday. I need you to be there... Why? Because you're my employee and I pay you to do things.

Echo drowns it all out as she takes in the images of the city -- in stark contrast to the suburbs. The downtown skyline in the distance, it's dark, smog-filled, hopeless.

RIGO (CONT'D)

Look, my daughter is here in the car with me. I'll have to call you back.

Rigo hangs up. Echo turns up the MUSIC, not having it.

INT. ASHER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A hip, sparse house straight out of Pinterest. A PORCELAIN KOALA FIGURINE sits on a shelf among other PORCELAIN ANIMALS.

JOEY ROJAS (17), charming, but rough around the edges and severely out of place in this moment, stares at the figurines. He picks up the koala and pockets it. As he does --

ASHER BROWNSTEIN (30s), effeminate white hipster, enters from the other room pulling money from his wallet.

ASHER

Sorry for the delay, bud. My husband put my wallet next to the kitchen sink. God knows why.

JOEY

All good, man.

Joey hands over a zip-loc bag -- inside are five ECSTACY PILLS. Molly to be exact.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Got big plans for these babies?

ASHER

Birthday weekend in Joshua Tree with friends.

JOEY
That's adorable.

Asher hands over a stack of 20s, Joey pockets it.

ASHER
I really hope you're putting this
money into a college fund.

JOEY
That way I can graduate, get a job,
and afford to buy molly from a
seventeen-year-old?

ASHER
You're funny.
(then)
Does Rigo know you're doing this?

JOEY
Does it matter?

Asher shakes his head no.

JOEY (CONT'D)
Hit me up for future business.
Referrals are appreciated.

As Joey turns, he sees RIGO'S CAR pulling into the house
across the street. He watches as --

EXT. ROJAS HOUSE/BRITTANIA STREET - DAY

Rigo and Echo get out of the car in front of a small, green
house. Craftsman style, barred-up windows. Old, but loved.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - HALLWAY/DIEGO'S ROOM - DAY

Rigo walks Echo through the house. It's cramped and homey,
decorated with bright Mexican art and family photos.

RIGO
We're gonna put you in Diego's
room. It has a nice window and some
curtains. You'll see.

Rigo points at a door.

RIGO (CONT'D)
Bathroom is on your left. There's
only one in the house, okay?

ECHO

Okay.

RIGO

I think you're really gonna like it here. So much culture and action and family. You'll meet Joey later, he's at work.

ECHO

Are there gangs here?

RIGO

They won't mess with you if you don't mess with them.

ECHO

Do people get shot? I tried to google some statistics to see what I'm up against --

RIGO

Echo, you're not gonna get shot.
(then)
But, yes, it happens sometimes. People get in car accidents, too. Life happens.

Echo soaks that in as they approach Diego's room --

Reveal DIEGO ROJAS (10), still a kid, slightly chubby, laying on his bed reading a COMIC BOOK. Rigo and Echo stand in the doorway.

RIGO (CONT'D)

Ay, Diego. What's the deal? You were supposed to pack up your room.

DIEGO

I told you, I need my own space. I'm an introvert and other people make me anxious.

Diego continues to read.

RIGO

Aren't you gonna say hi to your sister?

Diego peers over the comic book.

DIEGO

Hi.
 (then)
 You're really white.

ECHO

Thanks?

Rigo leads Echo back down the hallway.

RIGO

He's having a hard time letting go.
 (then)
 Victoria? ¿Dónde estás? Your son is
 being a little shit.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

VICTORIA ROJAS (late 30s), closed off, still hanging onto her youth, obsessively scrubs dishes in the sink.

RIGO (O.S.)

Victoria?

Rigo and Echo enter the kitchen. Echo looks hopeful. Victoria wipes a bead of sweat from her brow and turns to greet Echo -- a smile so fake it's painful.

VICTORIA

Echo. Welcome.

ECHO

It's nice to meet you.

Rigo's phone RINGS. He turns to answer.

RIGO

Hello?

Echo and Victoria are left alone.

VICTORIA

¿Hablas español?

ECHO

I took French at my old school.

VICTORIA

Spanish is only spoken by half the people in this state. So, of course, French is the obvious choice.

Victoria continues scrubbing dishes. Echo scrambles to make conversation --

ECHO

So, what do you do? Like, for work?

VICTORIA

I help Rigo with the store and take care of the home. We like to keep things simple around here.

Rigo returns from his phone call, sensing the tension.

RIGO

There's a leak at the store, I have to go down there. Echo, you should come with me. See what your pops does for a living.

Off Echo, relieved.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY

Echo wanders down the aisles of a cramped, overstocked liquor store. She's captivated by a section of MEXICAN CANDIES.

In the background, a massive leak in the roof splashes into a bucket, almost overflowing. Rigo argues with his EMPLOYEE in SPANISH, but Echo drowns it out, taking in the vivid colors.

Someone COUGHS loudly. Echo snaps out of her daze. Reveal DIANA DORANTES (17), edgy, feminist teenager.

DIANA

'Scuse me.

Echo moves out of the way as Diana grabs a TARRITO (lollipop shaped like a beer stein) off the shelf.

ECHO

What's that?

Diana stops, looks Echo up and down.

DIANA

Are you lost?

Diana pulls the wrapper off the candy and licks it.

ECHO

My dad owns this place.

DIANA
I don't get it. You're, like,
really white.

The image FREEZES on Echo. White text appears over her:

YOU'RE TOO WHITE
TO BE A ROJAS

The text disappears and the image unfreezes.

ECHO
That's what people keep telling me.

DIANA
So, Joey is your brother?

ECHO
Half-brother.

DIANA
Are you older?

ECHO
Younger. We're four months apart --
different moms. We're both
seniors... which I only know
because I stalked his Facebook.

DIANA
I can't believe he never told me he
has a Mexican twin.

ECHO
I haven't seen him since we were
kids so I guess there's no reason
he'd mention me. Are you friends
with him?

DIANA
More or less. So, I'll see you at
school? Roosevelt?

ECHO
Yeah. Roosevelt.

Diana turns to leave.

ECHO (CONT'D)
Are you gonna pay for that candy?

DIANA

Tell your old man to put it on my
tab.

Diana waves to Rigo as she slips out -- he waves back. Echo
takes a Tarrito for herself.

INT. ECHO PARK RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Upscale diner type of place full of YOUNG HIPSTERS. Rigo and
Echo eat burgers in a booth.

RIGO

Our neighbors are trying to build a
fence across the street. One with
those horizontal panels.

ECHO

Maybe they like privacy.

RIGO

Our street has always been a
community. People going in and out
of each other's yards and all that.
We don't "do" fences.

Echo eats her burger, disinterested. A painful silence
between two people who don't know each other.

RIGO (CONT'D)

This is the restaurant where I met
your mom. I thought you might want
to see it.

Echo looks around, nods.

ECHO

It's nice.

RIGO

Do you want to talk about it?

ECHO

No.

RIGO

We can if you want to.

ECHO

I really don't want to.

Rigo steals FRIES from Echo's plate.

RIGO

Joey and Diego are so easy. I know exactly what they want and what they're thinking at all times.

ECHO

You don't really know me so I think that's okay.

Rigo eats a fry, taking that in.

RIGO

We should order dessert.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - LIVING - NIGHT

Diego intensely plays a video game as Victoria tries to get his attention. Echo sits on the couch with her laptop.

VICTORIA

(in Spanish, subtitled)

Diego, if you don't give your room to Echo, no more video games.

DIEGO

I can live without video games, but I can't live without my room.

Echo tries to ignore them, but the yelling swirls around her.

VICTORIA

(in Spanish, subtitled)

I'm burning all of your comic books to the ground.

DIEGO

I dare you. I know you love me too much.

VICTORIA

(in Spanish, subtitled)

Don't test me, Diego.

Victoria rushes down the hall towards the bedrooms.

DIEGO

Mom. Wait. That's not fair.

Diego chases after her. Rigo walks through the living room and into the kitchen -- Echo watches as he does. He emerges from the kitchen with a carton of eggs.

ECHO
What are you doing?

RIGO
I'm gonna teach our fence-building
neighbor a little lesson.

Rigo exits the house. Off Echo, overwhelmed --

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Echo sits on the toilet, fully clothed, typing on her laptop with the Tarrito in her mouth. Finally a bit of quiet.

ECHO (V.O.)
My dad is exactly how I remember
him. Like he wants to do nice
things, but he has no idea how.

She stops typing and shuts her eyes. We FLASH TO the GIF of Gigi smiling. Echo's comfort.

ECHO (V.O.)
Tomorrow is my first day of school
and I don't know how I'm gonna get
through it. I need a distraction.

Joey barges in on Echo. Blank stares.

JOEY
Do you think this is an office or
what? I gotta take a piss.

Echo pulls the Tarrito out of her mouth.

ECHO
Nice to meet you, too.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

The sounds of BARKING and CARS RACING down the street. Echo tosses and turns on the couch.

Echo gets up, frustrated. She turns on a light. She moves towards her BOXES which are neatly stacked in the corner of the room, but she's distracted by the PHOTOS on the wall -- a happy family of four, a mom and her boys, a husband and wife.

She sifts through her things and pulls out the PINK ENVELOPE and traces her finger over the handwriting. She considers opening it, but doesn't.

EXT. STREET/ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

The next day. Echo, exhausted and high on first-day-of-school jitters, walks with Joey.

JOEY

Since I'm your brother now, do I have to talk to all your boyfriends and make sure you get home safe and all that?

ECHO

You walked in on me in the bathroom and we're suddenly supposed to be siblings? It's weird.

JOEY

We probably have something in common. Do you like hip hop?

ECHO

I like David Bowie, Billie Holiday, Willie Nelson. And One Direction... secretly because my mom does. Did.

JOEY

Oh, yeah. Your mom. Sorry about that.

ECHO

Yeah, thanks.

Echo and Joey approach school, overflowing with students -- cool kids, jocks, nerds, weirdos. But they're 95% Latino.

ECHO (CONT'D)

Whoa, this school is ancient.

JOEY

Did your high school have private drivers, iPads, and a juice bar?

ECHO

I lived in the suburbs. I wasn't a princess.

JOEY

Have you ever had a job before?

ECHO

I used to babysit. It's good money and kids like me.

Joey laughs.

JOEY

That's so suburban. Have you ever had to worry about money?

ECHO

I'm applying to Stanford and I don't think I can afford it.

JOEY

Stanford? You're worried about affording that? Ever gone without food? Or clothes? Or hot water?

ECHO

No.

Joey points to a JOCK who walks by.

JOEY

That guy has seven younger brothers and sisters and no dad. He has to work after school and on weekends to help his mom pay for food.

Another FEMALE STUDENT walks by.

JOEY (CONT'D)

That girl missed class all last week because she and her family got evicted from their apartment.

ECHO

I get it.

JOEY

You're in for a wake up call living here. I hope you're ready for it.

Echo stops walking, annoyed.

ECHO

Why are you being such an ass?

JOEY

You definitely sound like a Rojas even if you don't look like one.

Joey slips into the crowd, leaving Echo behind. Echo looks up at the big, looming building as if it might collapse on her.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL - ENTRANCE - DAY

Echo stands in line at the entrance of the school. STUDENTS pass through a METAL DETECTOR. Standard operating procedure.

Echo is freaked as she passes through the detector. A heavy-set security guard, RUBEN, looks Echo up and down.

RUBEN
Visiting?

ECHO
No, it's my first day. I'm new.

RUBEN
Backpack, please.

ECHO
I don't have anything.

RUBEN
Our searches are random.

Echo hands over her backpack. Ruben pulls out her laptop.

RUBEN (CONT'D)
It's not smart to carry this around
with you.

Echo watches as he searches every inch of the backpack, running his hands along the lining. He finishes and hands it back to her.

RUBEN (CONT'D)
Have a nice day.

Echo walks into school, uneasy.

INT. ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Echo walks down the hall -- she's the only white student in sight. STUDENTS whisper, staring. It's overcrowded, the ceilings have holes, the lockers are falling apart.

The bell RINGS. Echo rushes down the hallway checking her class schedule as the crowd moves in all directions. Echo bumps into a TRASH CAN and drops her backpack, the contents spilling everywhere.

Echo kneels down on the floor to collect her things. A student, FRANKIE, snaps a photo of her as he laughs -- he keeps walking.

Diana, from the liquor store, approaches.

DIANA
Frankie is gonna Instagram that photo real quick.

ECHO
Seriously?

Diana helps her pick up her things.

ECHO (CONT'D)
I just wanna disappear.

DIANA
School started three weeks ago. People are gonna notice the new girl.

Diana is probably still talking, but Echo stops listening as XAVIER (pronounced like Javier, but an X is more dangerous) (17), mysteriously irresistible, moves through the hallway towards them. Long-ish unruly hair, wearing all black, piercing brown eyes.

Xavier acknowledges Echo's presence, but doesn't stop to investigate. As he passes the trash can, he tosses a crumpled up FLIER, but misses completely. It lands at Echo's feet.

ECHO
Who's that?

DIANA
Xavier. He's a douche. Don't bother.

Echo picks up the discarded flier. It reads "THE BACKYARD" across the top. A GRIM REAPER with a MOHAWK. Nonsensical punk band names listed below it.

ECHO
What's the backyard? Is it like a pool party?

DIANA
A pool party? Girl, please. It's a punk show. Every Thursday.

ECHO
Tonight? Will Xavier be there?

DIANA
We go to all of them.

ECHO
We? You're friends with him?

DIANA
We run in the same circles.
(then; skeptical)
You wanna go?

ECHO
It seems like a good distraction.

Diana checks her phone.

DIANA
Look, Frankie already put up your
photo.

She shows it to Echo. The photo is terrible. The caption
reads -- "WHITE GIRL FAIL."

ECHO
Perfect.

DIANA
People will get over it.

Echo picks up the last of her things. Diana leads Echo down
the hallway, hooking her arm in hers.

ECHO
Why are you being so nice to me?

DIANA
You're like a lost puppy. I feel
bad for you.

ACROSS THE HALL, Joey watches as Echo and Diana walk down the
hallway, both suspicious and worried.

EXT. ASHER'S HOUSE - DAY

Latino WORKERS clean EGG YOLK off Asher's half-built fence.
Rigo smiles to himself as he makes his way through the
construction.

RIGO
Asher?

Asher emerges from the side of the house.

RIGO (CONT'D)

I can't believe the neighborhood kids egged your fence.

ASHER

It's not stopping me from finishing it, so don't look so pleased.

RIGO

Look around, no one else has a fence. You're ruining the history of our block. Do you even know who used to live here? Imelda Jalisco. The neighborhood psychic. People came from all over California to receive her blessings.

(beat)

They didn't have to go through a fence to get to her

ASHER

I appreciate your point of view, but frankly, that's in the past. We need it for security purposes.

RIGO

Security? I can jump over this fence in one leap. I'm sure Silver Lake would welcome you with open arms. Have you considered it?

ASHER

Let it go, Rigo. The fence isn't going anywhere.

Off Rigo who definitely won't let it go.

INT. ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL - JOURNALISM - DAY

Echo walks in on a rowdy classroom. The STUDENTS fall silent as Echo enters. The teacher, MS. BARTLET, young but jaded, follows her students' gaze.

MS. BARTLET

Can I help you?

ECHO

I'm new.

Ms. Bartlet pulls out the attendance sheet. REVEAL Frankie among the students.

FRANKIE
(in Spanish)
Hey, it's the white girl.

MS. BARTLET
Quiet down. Rojas?

ECHO
Yes.

MS. BARTLET
Are you sure?

The class snickers.

ECHO
Definitely sure, thanks.

Echo moves through the overcrowded classroom and sits in the only empty seat in the middle -- the desk is broken. REVEAL Xavier sitting in the back corner, Echo notices.

INT. ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Joey waits outside the WOMEN'S BATHROOM. The halls are empty. Diana walks out of the bathroom in a hurry. She notices Joey - - there's an obvious history here. She keeps walking.

DIANA
Stalking me, Jose?

Joey walks alongside her, trying to keep up.

JOEY
I know you're trying to be late to history so you don't have to sit next to Arturo.

DIANA
What do you want?

JOEY
I don't like you hanging out with Echo.

DIANA
You've known her for five minutes -- I don't think you can claim brotherly rights yet.

JOEY
She seems like a good girl.

DIANA

What are you saying? I'm not a good girl?

Diana pushes Joey up against the lockers, seductively. And for a moment, it works -- but Joey brushes her off.

JOEY

Stop. I'm saying don't get her into trouble.

DIANA

I'm not gonna get her into trouble.
(then)
Now that I think about it, does she know about your after school activities?

JOEY

No. And I'm not planning on telling her. If you say anything --

DIANA

Relax.

JOEY

Don't befriend her to get back at me, okay?

DIANA

You're the one who cheated on me so I dunno why you think you can tell me what to do.

Diana rushes off, not letting him respond.

INT. ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL - JOURNALISM - DAY

Ms. Bartlet wheels a TV in front of the classroom. She puts a DVD into the DVD player.

MS. BARTLET

Today we'll learn a little bit about broadcast journalism by watching Newsroom starring Jeff Daniels.

Xavier raises his hand.

XAVIER

Excuse me, Ms. Bartlet? Is there anyway we could discuss media's portrayal of recent tragedies.

(MORE)

XAVIER (CONT'D)

It seems important and relevant to this class.

Echo turns and stares at Xavier. Those eyes. Those cheek bones.

MS. BARTLET

I'd love that, but no one else seems to care about this class so we're going to watch Newsroom.

FRANKIE

Shut it, Xavier. Play the DVD, Ms. Bartlet. I'm excited to learn from this.

XAVIER

I feel like we're wasting our time.

MS. BARTLET

You and me both, Xavier.

Ms. Bartlet presses play. Xavier notices Echo staring. She turns around, blushing.

INT. ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL - JOURNALISM - LATER

The class has cleared out. Echo slowly packs up her backpack as Xavier talks to Ms. Bartlet.

XAVIER

I don't feel like I'm learning anything in this class.

MS. BARTLET

I love your enthusiasm, Xavier. I really do. But I've tried and I'm exhausted.

Echo walks out, Xavier follows closely behind her and Echo feels it... Echo rushes away, awkward, almost to the door --

XAVIER

Hey. I think you dropped this.

Echo turns to face Xavier. He holds a pencil out towards her and smiles a killer smile as he pushes the hair out of his eyes.

The image FREEZES -- it plays as a GIF over and over and over. The image unfreezes.

ECHO

No, I don't think that's mine. You should probably go find the owner.

Xavier turns away, confused. Echo thinks better of it.

ECHO (CONT'D)

Wait. Sorry. Yeah, it's mine.

Xavier hands her the pencil. Weird.

ECHO (CONT'D)

I like what you said in there. Do we watch TV everyday?

XAVIER

Almost. Are you into journalism?

ECHO

I want to write for magazines someday.

XAVIER

That's tight. Why magazines?

ECHO

They're a nice distraction.

Xavier nods.

XAVIER

Cool.

Echo smiles. Cool. He's so cool.

EXT. ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Echo rushes out of school, overwhelmed. Joey sits on the steps, waiting -- it stops Echo in her tracks.

JOEY

School has been out for a million years. Why are you still here?

ECHO

I'd ask you the same thing.

JOEY

I was waiting in case you forgot how to get home. You seems like that kinda girl.

ECHO

You could've just texted me the address. And that's rude. I have a really good sense of direction.

Joey checks his phone. A text from OSCAR: "Come to the garage."

JOEY

C'mon. Let's go. I have to make a pit stop at work.

INT. MECHANIC GARAGE - DAY

Joey walks into a huge garage. Cars up on lifts. Greasy MECHANICS are at work. Joey looks into the pits, searching.

EXT. MECHANIC GARAGE - DAY

Echo stands outside the garage on the sidewalk, taking in the bustling surroundings. A CREEPY MAN walks by and looks her up and down.

CREEPY MAN

You should smile. Boys'll wanna to talk to you more.

The man walks away, leaving Echo disturbed.

ECHO

Gross.

Echo moves closer to the garage and watches as --

INT. MECHANIC GARAGE - DAY

Near a BLUE SAAB, Joey finds OSCAR (40s) -- tattooed and intense.

OSCAR

'Bout time, man.

JOEY

I got held up. I'm here now.

Joey pulls a stack of 20s out of his pocket and hands it to Oscar. Oscar counts it.

OSCAR

You're fast. I like that. I'll get you more product tomorrow.

Oscar hands Joey a cut of the money, Joey counts it.

ON ECHO, scandalized by the deal.

JOEY

I thought we said three hundred? I
need that money. I can't go home
with so little.

Joey moves towards Oscar -- asserting himself.

JOEY (CONT'D)

C'mon, man.

Oscar laughs. He puts his hand on Joey's shoulder and pulls
him closer, threatening.

OSCAR

You take what I give you and you'll
be grateful. Get outta here before
I make you, got it?

Oscar lets Joey go, pushing him away. Off Echo as she takes
it all in. Holy shit.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. MARIACHI PLAZA - DAY

Joey and Echo walk by Mariachi Plaza. A metro stop, farmer's market, an empty stage.

ECHO

What was that all about at the garage?

JOEY

I had to pick up my paycheck.

Joey pulls out his phone --

JOEY (CONT'D)

Dude, your white girl photo is blowing up.

ECHO

I couldn't be prouder.

A pregnant pause.

ECHO (CONT'D)

I don't think your mom likes me very much.

JOEY

Talk to her about Grey's Anatomy and she'll love you.

ECHO

Do you have any other tips?

JOEY

If you can deal with dad, you'll be fine. He'll drive you crazy and you'll think about murdering him eventually.

Echo smiles.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Dad'll always talk about all the sacrifices he's made to make you feel guilty. How his family came here...

ECHO

From Mexico with nothing but the clothes on their backs?

JOEY

(Rigo impression)

We basically run this city. We make the food, we clean the houses, we keep the lawns pretty. Without us, everything would collapse. And we do it all for the sake...

ECHO

Of the next generation.

They both laugh, reluctantly. A small moment that only siblings can share.

ECHO (CONT'D)

I didn't see him much growing up, but he always made sure I knew where we came from.

JOEY

That's just who he is. A proud guy.

INT./EXT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY

Rigo rips a RECEIPT from the register and hands it to a CUSTOMER. The Customer takes his things.

RIGO

Hasta mañana.

Rigo looks up at the leak that's been patched up and then at the empty store. No customers.

He walks up to the window and watches as people walk by. He flicks the OPEN SIGN on and off. Works fine.

Victoria emerges from the back.

VICTORIA

Why did I get a phone call from Modelo about a bounced check? Are you not answering your phone or what?

RIGO

They're being shitty.

Rigo is distracted by the people on the streets walking by the store.

VICTORIA

If something is going on, I want to know.

(MORE)

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

We have another mouth to feed at home that we have to think about.

RIGO

Don't think of her like that. She's my daughter. Your step-daughter.

VICTORIA

I'm trying to think practically. Even with two kids, it was never easy.

RIGO

I'll take care of the family, okay?
(then)
Maybe we should get one of those tall inflatable guys to attract customers.

VICTORIA

(defeated)
That's a terrible idea.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Echo sits in the empty bathtub, blogging.

ECHO (V.O.)

If my mom were still alive, this is what I would tell her. I met a boy who seems dangerous. He has a smile that made me feel things that I can't explain -- I don't think there are words for it. He seems like he'd wear a leather jacket no matter how hot it is and write poetry for no one but me. Or maybe he drives a truck and has a German shepherd or a snake.

The faint sound of a GUITAR O.S. gives Echo pause.

ECHO (V.O.)

It was a nice distraction. Because for one tiny moment, I was excited about being alive without my mom around.

The guitar gets louder.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/HALLWAY - NIGHT

Echo tip-toes down the hallway. She looks into Diego's room -- it's blocked off with a DRESSER and CAUTION TAPE and piles of COMIC BOOKS.

She peeks into the living room and sees Rigo and Joey each playing a GUITAR. Rigo teaches him a new song.

RIGO

Now G.

Joey mimics Rigo's strumming.

RIGO (CONT'D)

And then D minor.

They strum.

RIGO (CONT'D)

Now all together.

They play a few chords in unison. Echo walks through the living room unnoticed and into...

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The kitchen. Victoria stands at the stove with Diego. She puts a TORTILLA directly on the BURNER as Echo enters.

VICTORIA

You want to burn pieces of it for the crunch and the flavor, but not too much otherwise it'll over power. It's a balance.

ECHO

Can I help with anything?

VICTORIA

We're almost done.

Victoria looks at Echo like she's an intruder. Echo lingers, awkwardly.

ECHO

So, uh, what'd you think of Patrick Dempsey's death?

A blank stare.

ECHO (CONT'D)

On Grey's Anatomy.

VICTORIA
Diego, go set the table.

Diego takes a stack of PLATES from the counter and exits.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)
To be honest, I was livid. He was
my favorite.
(then)
Do you know how to warm tortillas?

Victoria pulls the tortilla off the burner. Echo smiles,
she's getting somewhere.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The first family dinner. Echo takes in the elaborate meal --
CARNE ASADA, BEANS, TORTILLAS, etc. Rigo clears his throat
and raises his glass.

RIGO
I'd like to offer a toast. My
grandparents immigrated to this
country only with what they could
carry on their backs.

Echo and Joey make eye contact and share a smile.

RIGO (CONT'D)
It's been my goal to provide for a
family that they would be proud of.
Family is all we have in this
world. And now I feel complete with
my daughter sitting at this table.
To Echo --

Everyone clinks glasses. Echo isn't buying the speech.

VICTORIA
Joey, how did your math quiz go?

JOEY
I probably passed.

VICTORIA
Probably? Did you study?

Joey stares at his food, disinterested. Echo eats as the
family talks -- not sure how to contribute.

JOEY
You know I don't care about that
shit.

VICTORIA
Don't say shit near the food I
cooked.

Diego holds out his empty plate.

DIEGO
Can I have seconds?

RIGO
Not unless you move out of your
room, mi hijo.

Diego hangs his head, defeated. Echo notices, sympathetic.
Diego gets up from the table. The door SLAMS O.S.

VICTORIA
He isn't even a teenager yet and he
has this attitude. Worse than you,
Jose.

JOEY
But, admit it, I was much cuter.

VICTORIA
Oh, hush.

Victoria is charmed by her oldest son.

RIGO
Joey, did you see that hideous
fence that Asher is building?

JOEY
I think it looks kinda cool.

RIGO
Cool? History is cool. Modern
architecture is bullshit.

JOEY
Things are gonna change whether
you're on board with it or not,
pops.

RIGO
Who are you? Mr. Philosophy?

Echo clears her throat, drawing the attention to her. As the
family turns, the image FREEZES on the rest of the family:

CHILL TO SPEAK

OR NO?

The text disappears and the image unfreezes.

ECHO

I was wondering if it'd be okay if
I hung out with a friend after
dinner.

RIGO

A friend, already? You're just like
your dad.

Echo rolls her eyes, instinctively.

RIGO (CONT'D)

Who is she? At least it'd better be
a she.

ECHO

Her name is Diana. She seems nice.
And it's not like I'll be out late
or anything.

RIGO

Diana Dorantes?

Rigo and Victoria look to Joey. Echo notices.

ECHO

What?

JOEY

Diana is cool.

Rigo looks to Victoria.

VICTORIA

I don't think it's a good idea for
you to go out. It's already late.
Right, Rigo?

RIGO

It's a school night. Let's leave it
at that.

Off Echo, defeated.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - HALLWAY - LATER

Echo, holding a plate of food, knocks on Diego's door.

DIEGO (O.S.)

Go away.

ECHO

It's Echo.

Silence. Then the door creaks open. Diego pokes his head out.

ECHO (CONT'D)

(whisper)

I brought you seconds.

Diego opens the door and takes the food.

ECHO (CONT'D)

It'll be our secret.

DIEGO

Okay.

Diego closes the door. Echo turns to walk away when --

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

Thanks, Echo.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - JOEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Joey sits on his bed reading a book about car engines. Rigo knocks and enters. He closes the door behind him deliberately.

RIGO

Do you have what I need?

Joey puts the book down and opens up his dresser drawer. He pulls out a wad of CASH and hands it to Rigo.

JOEY

I didn't make as much at the garage this week.

RIGO

As long as they're letting you work on cars to get some experience, that's all that matters. And if they're not giving you hours, man-up and ask. You gotta stand up for what you deserve. You're a hard worker. Prove it to them.

JOEY

I did. I tried.

RIGO

Well, try harder next time, okay? It's for the family.

(MORE)

RIGO (CONT'D)
Only until the store is back on its
feet. I promise.

Rigo pats Joey on the shoulder and leaves the room. Off
Joey's disappointment.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - LIVING - LATER

It's late. Everyone is in their respective rooms. Echo is
alone, typing on her computer.

ECHO (V.O.)
I think I'm about to do something
really stupid.

She gets a text from DIANA: "I'm outside."

Echo fashions a bulk of BLANKETS on the couch to make it look
like she's underneath them.

EXT. ROJAS HOUSE - NIGHT

Diana waits outside the house. She checks the time on her
phone, anxious. Echo emerges from the house, quietly shutting
the door behind her.

DIANA
Why didn't you sneak out your
bedroom window?

Echo grabs Diana by the arm and starts to run.

ECHO
Because I don't have one.

Off the girls running down the street --

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. BOYLE HEIGHTS - NIGHT

Echo and Diana walk down a dark street lined with small houses.

DIANA

What's the deal with your name anyway?

ECHO

I'm named after Echo Park. It's where my parents met.

DIANA

That's chill. Where's your mom now? Did she take off?

ECHO

She died. Cancer.

DIANA

Oh, shit. I'm sorry. If it makes you feel any better, I never knew my mom. I've lived with my abuela since I was tiny.

ECHO

I'm sorry you never knew yours. Moms are the best.

A CAR ALARM goes off in the distance. Echo looks around, paranoid.

DIANA

Relax, Rigo won't even notice you're gone.

ECHO

I don't really care about that. I'm worried about getting shot.

DIANA

Jesus, you're not gonna get shot. Who told you that?

ECHO

Everyone.

DIANA

People don't go around shooting
strangers like all those crazy
white dudes on the news. Carry
pepper spray and you're good.

They approach a house that's crawling with YOUNG PEOPLE. Loud PUNK MUSIC blares from behind the house. A TEENAGER jumps off the roof and into a pile of TRASH.

ECHO

That's where we're going??

DIANA

Welcome to The Backyard.

Off Echo slightly horrified --

EXT. ASHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rigo, carrying a DRILL, sneaks up to Asher's house. The house is dark, the driveway is empty. No one is home.

Rigo unscrews a SCREW from the fence and pockets it. He moves onto the next one, determined --

EXT. THE BACKYARD - NIGHT

A backyard punk show. The patio is packed with YOUNG PEOPLE -- punks and anarchists and weirdos. A BBQ is grilling. BEER CANS and bottles of WHISKEY are being passed around.

There's a stage with a FEMALE PUNK BAND performing. The bass is loud, the singing is terrible.

Echo and Diana enter, yelling over the music.

ECHO

Who are all these people?

DIANA

Mi familia. You like punk and anime? You're welcome here. You like hip hop and football? You're still welcome here. You get kicked out of your house and have no place to go? You come to The Backyard.

Echo gets it. REVEAL Xavier across the mosh pit, nodding his head to the music.

The singer MONTY (16), vegan girl with purple hair, flails on stage. She screams into the microphone, laying on the ground.

ECHO

That girl doesn't look... healthy.

DIANA

That's Monty. It's part of her persona.

The song ends and the band walks off stage. The crowd is reduced to a low roar. Diana grabs two beers from a cooler.

DIANA (CONT'D)

Want a beer?

Echo takes the beer and opens it, reluctantly.

DIANA (CONT'D)

You've had beer, right?

ECHO

Of course.

Echo sips the beer -- it's disgusting.

ECHO (CONT'D)

I lied. I've never had a beer before. That's so gross. Why do people drink that?

DIANA

Your brother told me I'd be a bad influence on you.

(re: the beer)

I think I'm okay with that.

ECHO

Why was Joey talking about me?

DIANA

Casual conversation.

(then)

Actually, I should probably tell you that Joey is my ex.

ECHO

Is that weird? Should I be weirded out by that?

DIANA

You can feel whatever you want to feel. But... I thought I should tell you before he did.

Echo and Xavier make eye contact and then not. And then they do. He smiles at her. She smiles at him. He pushes his way through the crowd towards them.

ECHO

Oh my god, I think he's coming over here.

DIANA

Don't get your hopes up with this guy, okay?

Xavier approaches them.

XAVIER

Sup, Di?

DIANA

Hey. I'm gonna go say hi to some friends.

Diana disappears into the crowd as Echo panics.

XAVIER

I didn't catch your name earlier.

ECHO

Echo.

XAVIER

Xavier. You're basically famous on Frankie's insta.

ECHO

I'm hoping people get to know me as more than just the white girl.

But before Xavier can respond --

A DRUNK WEIRDO stumbles into them and PUKES on Echo's shoes.

ECHO (CONT'D)

Oh my god.

XAVIER

Sick.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A parking lot filled with souped-up cars. Engines are REVVING, HIP HOP is blasting. Joey makes his way through the cars, looking for someone.

He spots Oscar's BLUE SAAB. Oscar shows a HOT GIRL his engine. Two BIG GUYS stand nearby. Joey approaches them.

OSCAR

Little Jose. ¿Qué pasa?

Joey takes a deep breath.

JOEY

I'm here for the rest of my money.

Oscar laughs.

OSCAR

Oh, you're serious?

JOEY

I sold the drugs you gave me and we agreed on a cut. I want that cut. I might be young, but I'm not stupid.

OSCAR

Look, I like you, but you're getting annoying and I don't like annoying. I can easily cut you off and this'll be the last time you work for me. It'd be a shame since I know you need the money.

JOEY

Then you know why I can't leave without it.

OSCAR

Entiendo chico. But life isn't fair. So, we're gonna teach you a little lesson.

(with a smirk)

Don't be mad. Come see me when you're ready to work under my terms.

Oscar nods to one of his GUYS who moves towards Joey.

EXT. PARKING LOT - ALLEY - NIGHT

Oscar's guy drags Joey around the corner into an alley. He throws Joey on the ground. The guy kicks him in the RIBS. Joey gets up -- trying to put up a fight, landing a couple PUNCHES to the body.

The guy PUNCHES him square in the JAW -- it lands hard, Joey falls back onto the ground. Joey tries to recover, but the guy walks away.

JOEY

Pendejo.

Joey slinks away.

EXT. THE BACKYARD - SIDE YARD - NIGHT

Echo cleans puke off her SHOE with a HOSE. Another band plays, the mosh pit moving like ocean waves. Xavier approaches her, a bottle of Jack in hand.

XAVIER

I thought you might need this.

Reluctant, Echo takes the bottle and swallows a huge swig with hopes of looking cool -- she doesn't.

Xavier takes her other shoe and the hose to clean it off. He leans in closer, talking over the music.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

You know your name is weird, right?

ECHO

Totally. I hate explaining it. It reminds me that I have two parents who made bad decisions.

XAVIER

Okay, I won't ask then.

She takes another sip of whiskey. Xavier stares at Echo.

ECHO

What?

XAVIER

You seem like you don't belong here.

ECHO

Because I look white?

XAVIER

No. You're just misplaced. In a good way.

Echo likes that answer. Xavier finishes hosing off Echo's shoe.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
So, what's your story?

ECHO
I guess it's still being written.

But before Xavier can respond --

MONTY, the singer, walks up to Xavier and kisses him. Ugh, the heartbreak. Echo tries to conceal her disappointment.

MONTY
Babe, can I bum a cigarette?

Xavier pulls a pack of cigarettes out of his pocket. Monty lights the cigarette. She leans into Xavier. In a puff of smoke --

MONTY (CONT'D)
Who's your new friend?

The music stops suddenly. COPS aggressively filter into the backyard, attempting to break up the party. The crowd turns into a drunken stampede.

Monty grabs Xavier's hand and pulls him away as --

XAVIER
Echo. We have to go.

ECHO
Wait. I have to find Diana.

XAVIER
You have to run.

ECHO
I can't leave without her.

EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Echo, shoeless, pushes her way through the backyard, scanning the crowd, still holding the bottle of Jack.

ECHO
Diana?

People scatter left and right. Diana is across the yard -- she spots Echo.

DIANA
Echo, what are you doing? Run.

Echo turns and runs straight into a COP -- the image freezes on his sour face. White text appears:

BUSTED

EXT. BRITANNIA ST. - NIGHT

Rigo is halfway through dismantling the fence when the LIGHTS come on in the house.

RIGO

Ah, shit.

Rigo jumps into nearby bushes. SIRENS roll down the street, lights flashing.

A spotlight washes over Rigo. Caught. He climbs out of the bushes, surrendering. Asher emerges from the house, smug. He waves at Rigo.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Echo waits at the police station among DRUNK TEENAGERS from the party, defeated.

Echo watches as Rigo walks in. Instant relief and then -- she notices the handcuffs. Rigo notices Echo -- a look of worry and then shame.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. BOYLE HEIGHTS - NIGHT

Joey walks along the dark streets, pissed, on the verge of tears. His phone vibrates. It's DIANA. He answers --

JOEY

What?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

Diana grabs a WATER BOTTLE from the fridge.

DIANA

Don't be mad, but Echo got arrested. I don't know where she is.

JOEY

You're joking.

DIANA

I'm sorry. She wanted to go out so we went out. She didn't even drink that much.

JOEY

You let her get arrested?

DIANA

I didn't let her do anything. She chose to do it.

JOEY

I told you not to hang out with her.

DIANA

Jesus, Joey. I'm doing you a favor by letting you know. Bye.

Diana hangs up, weirdly satisfied.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Rigo and Echo sit side-by-side in the police station. Rigo notices Echo's bare feet.

RIGO
Where are your shoes?

ECHO
A drunk guy puked on them.
(then)
I only had a couple sips of beer.

RIGO
I don't care about that. Are you
okay?

Echo turns away from her father.

ECHO
Is this the first time you've ever
been worried about me?

RIGO
Of course not.

ECHO
Then why haven't I seen you since
you and mom fought at that Outback
Steakhouse in Northridge?

RIGO
It's complicated.

ECHO
You think I don't understand
complicated?

Rigo turns to Echo.

RIGO
When we met, I was working as a
busboy and your mom was a waitress.
We were never in a relationship
because I was married to Victoria.

ECHO
Mom told me all that.

RIGO
Then can't you see why I couldn't
leave Victoria? I made vows.
(beat)
It was a mistake.

ECHO
I was a mistake?

RIGO

Not being a part of your life was a mistake. Your mom... she didn't want me around after a certain point. She thought I was toxic and I tried to respect that.

ECHO

She asked you stay away?

Rigo nods, then shrugs it off.

RIGO

And she was probably right. I wanted you to have a good life and I knew Gigi could give that to you.

Echo, pained by this new information.

RIGO (CONT'D)

I thought about you all the time, Echo. What you were doing. What sports you were playing. What books you were reading.

(then)

Your life was good without me. I know that. You can hate me, but I did it to protect you and I'm never gonna stop trying to protect you.

Echo is moved, inching towards some semblance of forgiveness when -- Victoria enters the police station, looking pissed. They're in so much trouble.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - NIGHT

Rigo and Echo sit on the couch as Victoria paces.

VICTORIA

Rigo, I don't understand where this is coming from. Just let the man build his damn fence.

RIGO

That's besides the point, Victoria. Look at Silver Lake. Echo Park. Highland Park. One white person comes in and changes things and suddenly our house will be a coffee shop that sells artisan tote bags that cost two hundred dollars. I can't let that happen.

ECHO
But I'm a white person.

RIGO
That's not what I mean. People who
don't belong here.

ECHO
I don't belong here.

Rigo and Victoria consider this. Then --

RIGO
You have roots here. It's
different.

VICTORIA
Echo, we have to ground you.

RIGO
We don't need to ground her,
Victoria. It was mistake.

VICTORIA
(in Spanish, subtitled)
We're grounding her.

RIGO
We'll talk about it.

The two parents are in a stand-off when Joey enters, a BLACK
EYE forming.

JOEY
I went to the police station, but
they said they already let you go.
Are you okay?

ECHO
I'm fine. I wasn't alone because
Dad got arrested, too.

RIGO
Like father, like daughter, huh?

Echo and Rigo laugh, finding the humor in the ridiculousness.

VICTORIA
What happened to your face?

JOEY
It was a stupid fight and I don't
wanna talk about it.

Echo knows he's lying. Victoria takes Joey into her arms. He lets it happen because he needs it.

Off Echo taking in this image.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rigo and Victoria lay in bed.

VICTORIA

I know this is about more than the fence.

RIGO

Victoria, please. Not tonight.

VICTORIA

I went through the books. I know the store is under water. Why didn't you tell me?

RIGO

I can take care of the family. That's why I'm here.

VICTORIA

This is my family, too. Don't pretend like I'm just some clueless housewife. We're a team.

Rigo resigns.

RIGO

I didn't want to make a big deal out of it and now it'll get blown outta proportion.

VICTORIA

We'll get through this. We always do, but you have to let me help.

(then)

Even with Echo, we'll get through it.

RIGO

Can you please give her a damn break? Her mother died. Just... be nice.

This weighs on Victoria.

VICTORIA

She's a living, breathing reminder of everything that went wrong with us at the start. We worked so hard to fix it and create this life that I love and now it's all I can think about.

RIGO

I fucked up a long time ago and I'm sorry. Echo living here isn't going to make me be that guy again.

(then)

I love my daughter. I want you to love her, too.

Victoria pulls away from Rigo, tears filling her eyes.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It's late. Echo lays on the couch, tucked into her blankets, typing on her laptop.

ECHO (V.O.)

Today, I found out that I don't like cheap beer or whiskey and my mom hated my dad so much that she told him to stay away from me. I wonder if it's because she loved him so much and was so heartbroken that she couldn't stand the sight of his face. Or he was simply a shitty dad and now he's trying to make up for it. I guess there's nothing wrong with a dad who's trying hard to be a dad.

Joey enters, making himself comfortable on the couch.

JOEY

What are you always typing on that thing?

ECHO

I'll tell you what I'm typing if you tell me what happened to your face and what drugs you were buying at the garage.

JOEY

I wasn't --

ECHO
I'm not stupid. I've seen movies
with drugs in them.

A smile from Joey.

JOEY
I don't buy them. I sell them. But
dad thinks I work at the garage for
real.

Echo sets her laptop aside, wheels turning.

ECHO
Why? It's so dangerous. You could
get arrested or murdered and thrown
in a ditch.

JOEY
It's a job. You can't tell dad that
I told you... But the store isn't
doing so good and we're trying to
save it. It's all we have, ya know?

ECHO
Is there anything I can do to help?

JOEY
We'll get through it as long as we
stick together. We always do.

This weighs on Echo as Diego enters, playing it cool.

DIEGO
I've decided to move out of my
room. Not because you're here, but
because I think I should be
spending more quality time with my
big brother.

Echo smiles.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
Would it be okay if I had one more
night with it?

ECHO
You do what you gotta do, Diego.

Off Echo, thrilled.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

INT. ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

The next day. Echo looks like a wreck, everything is a blur... She passes Xavier in the hallway, she tries to avoid him but --

XAVIER

Hey. Are you okay?

ECHO

I'm fine. Just went to prison. No big deal. I feel like I have some sort of street cred now.

XAVIER

The cops usually leave us alone, I swear. You should come to another show. Maybe next week?

ECHO

If my dad and step-mom don't murder me, I'll be there.

XAVIER

If you start coming regularly, I was thinking maybe we could start our own 'zine... if you want to. Like, Riot Grrrl style. You could get practice writing.

ECHO

I'm not exactly Riot Grrrl material.

XAVIER

That's where I come in. I'll teach you about our world and we'll write stuff together. Sound good?

He smiles that killer smile and Echo melts.

ECHO

Maybe. That could be cool.

Frankie walks by, Echo follows him.

ECHO (CONT'D)

(to Xavier)

Talk to you later.

As she catches up with Frankie --

ECHO (CONT'D)
Hey Frankie, can I ask you a favor?

FRANKIE
Anything for my white girl.

Echo walks with Frankie, leaving Xavier with a smile on his face.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY

A crowd of TEENAGERS filter into the store. Rigo walks in, spotting Echo.

RIGO
What's going on here?

ECHO
I asked a friend to post an insta that said we're having a sale on Red Bull and Tarritos. It tingles when you eat and drink them at the same time.

RIGO
Insta?

ECHO
A photo. On the internet.

RIGO
Yes, thank you. I'm not eighty-years-old. Call it Instagram. This is great, but we aren't having a sale.

ECHO
(whisper)
I know. It's the same price, but we made it look like we marked it down with the tags.

(then)
I think we could make this a spot for high schoolers to hang out. A place where they can buy drinks and stuff. Just an idea.

Rigo smiles at his daughter, proud.

INT. MECHANIC GARAGE - DAY

Joey walks into the garage, looking defeated. Oscar walks out from the back.

OSCAR

That eye makes you look like more of a man. Are you back for more?

JOEY

I'll do whatever you need.

OSCAR

That's what I like to hear.

Oscar puts his arm around Joey, brotherly.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - ECHO'S ROOM - DAY

Echo unpacks BOXES, thrilled to be in her own space. She sets a PHOTO of her mom on the night stand. There's a KNOCK at the door.

ECHO

Come in.

Victoria stands at the door, holding BLANKETS.

VICTORIA

Are you settling in okay?

ECHO

I think so.

VICTORIA

I brought you extra blankets. This room can get drafty at night.

Victoria places the blankets on Echo's bed with a smile. She turns to leave but --

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

I'm very sorry about your mom. I can't imagine what you're going through.

ECHO

Yeah, I'm sorry, too.

VICTORIA

If you ever want to watch Grey's Anatomy together, let me know.

(MORE)

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

I have the collectible box set of
DVDs.

Echo smiles. Victoria leaves, shutting the door behind her.

Echo sits on her bed, everything is in order. She pulls the PINK LETTER from her things, runs her finger over the handwriting. She opens it -- it's from Gigi.

GIGI (V.O.)

My dear little Echo. If you're
reading this, it means I'm gone.
I'm so sorry I had to leave you,
but I wanted to tell you a few
things before I go.

As tears fill her eyes, we BEGIN INTERCUTTING:

INT. ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Echo moves through the halls with a little more ease, the
stares have dissipated.

GIGI (V.O.)

I want you to live fearlessly.
Don't be afraid of things that
might scare you. Like cancer or
guns or airplanes. Don't let it
keep you from living because you
only get to do it once.

Joey and Echo nod as they pass each other in the hallway.

INT. ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL - BATHROOM - DAY

Echo finds Diana in the school bathroom. She's smoking a
cigarette by the window.

DIANA

Your photo has, like, three-
thousand likes on Instagram. That's
a record.

ECHO

I guess I'll be the white girl
forever.

DIANA

There's no changing who you are,
right?

EXT./INT. APARTMENT - DAY

An apartment door opens to reveal Joey -- he's holding a bag of GROCERIES. Inside the apartment is KAYLA (17), feisty yet sweet and SEVEN MONTHS PREGNANT.

GIGI (V.O.)
 I know you didn't want me to, but
 I've been reading your blog and
 you're going to be okay without me.

Joey pulls the PORCELAIN KOALA out of his pocket and gives it to her. He kisses her and then kisses her stomach.

EXT. BRITANNIA ST. - DAY

Rigo stares out at Asher's fully built, totally hipster fence. Asher emerges from the house, Rigo waves. A temporary detente.

GIGI (V.O.)
 You've always been strong and
 independent, but everyone needs
 help from time to time. Promise me
 you'll let your dad help you.

INT. ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL - JOURNALISM - DAY

Ms. Bartlet reads from a list. Echo coolly tries to ignore Xavier who's sitting behind her, but she's failing.

MS. BARTLET
 Echo, let's have you cover the
 sports beat to start out.

Echo writes SPORTS on her note pad.

GIGI (V.O.)
 You are my everything, Echo. I'm so
 happy that I got to see you grow up
 into the beautiful girl that you
 are. I know you'll make whatever
 you do amazing. You are amazing.
 Don't let anyone tell you
 differently.

Xavier passes her a note --

It reads, "Sports are the devil :)". She smiles.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - ECHO'S ROOM - DAY

Echo finishes reading the letter, wiping away tears.

GIGI (V.O.)

I'll always be with you because I'm
a part of you. I still want you to
come home every day and tell me
your stories. I promise I'll hear
them and love them and love you
until the end of time. Love, Mom.

Echo looks at the bottom of the letter. It reads: "P.S.
You'll be receiving a letter from me every now and then. Look
out for them."

We see the MOM GIF repeat itself. Her smile. That smile. And
then -- we see Echo smile.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - ECHO'S ROOM - LATER

Echo's room is all put together -- finally a space to
herself. She pins the STANFORD FLAG on her wall. She hears
GUITAR from the living room.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Echo walks into the living room -- Joey and Diego watch as
Rigo plays guitar.

ECHO

Can I try?

Rigo smiles wide.

INT. ROJAS HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The family eats a huge meal, smiling and laughing. But this
time, Echo is in on the jokes.

The image freezes and white text appears:

THAT PERFECT MOMENT WHEN

YOU MAYBE, POSSIBLY

BELONG SOMEWHERE

END OF PILOT