

Sierra Burgess is a Loser

by

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Inspired by the play Cyrano de Bergerac by Edmond Rostand

A play is kinda like Netflix, for old people.

INTREPID PICTURES (310) 566-5000

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S BATHROOM - MORNING

Something out of focus, magnified. Orange and black. What is this?

SIERRA BURGESS draws back from a magnifying mirror. She's 17 with a slightly unfortunate shnoz, at least by LA standards.

She painstakingly examines her profile: the kind of face enlightened adults call interesting and kids call ugly.

Juts her chin. With a finger, pushes up her nose, giving us a glimpse almost up her nostrils. Sexy time.

She stands back. Her body isn't exactly model material either. Here it comes, the adolescent self-loathing, the insecurity, the self-pity. The--

Sierra smiles at herself in the mirror. Centered. Unthinkably comfortable in her own skin.

SIERRA

You are a magnificent beast.

Well, that was unexpected...

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

MR. STEPHEN BURGESS (with a professorial air and a nose even bigger than Sierra's) and MRS. JULES OSBORN-BURGESS (a self-composed, natural beauty) sip coffee at a table. Jules types furiously on a laptop, as Stephen scribbles on a note pad, old school. They're a power couple, LA style.

Sierra slumps in. The parents look up.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

Morning, Sierra. How'd you sleep, honey?

Sierra peruses an impressively stocked pantry cabinet.

SIERRA

Dreamt my socks ate my feet again.

Gives up, sits down with her parents.

MR. BURGESS

"Dreams are the bright creatures of poem and legend, who sport on earth in the night season, and melt away in the first beam of the sun..."

Sierra looks to her mom first, who shifts a little uncomfortably in her seat. This is their thing, not hers.

SIERRA
Dickens. Too obvious.

Mr. Burgess tries to hide a proud smile as he goes back to writing notes.

Her mom looks up briefly from her work.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
You have toothpaste on your face again.

Sierra smears some toothpaste from her mouth. Now it's across her cheek. So much worse. She doesn't care. Her mom looks up, trying not to be bothered. But she is.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS (CONT'D)
It's worse now.

SIERRA
(snapping fingers)
Honey Badger don't care.
(off her look)
It's a meme. From the Internet?
Like two years ago. Nevermind.

Sierra stares at her parents, noses buried in their work...

SIERRA (CONT'D)
(her best June Cleaver)
Sierra, can I make you some bacon, honey? How about juice? Fresh-squeezed? I know orange is your favorite.

Mrs. Osborn-Burgess turns to her husband with mock concern.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
Our teenager has lost the use of her limbs. I fear she's paralyzed.

Good natured, playing along, holds up a butter knife:

MR. BURGESS
We might have to amputate.

Sierra pushes away from the table, giving in.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
Wait--

Sierra's mom licks her finger, wipes the smudge of toothpaste off Sierra's face. Swatting her away--

SIERRA

MOM. Won't you sell more books to people with crippling insecurities if you have the one teenage daughter in Beverly Hills who doesn't obsess over looks?

Her mom throws her a look as Sierra walks away.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

I'll pretend I didn't hear an insult in there.

As Sierra pours herself some cereal--

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS (CONT'D)

I want to run the new mantras by you for my seminar. Finding L-O-V-E: "L" is for "Leave your insecurities with the bathroom mirror..."

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

SIERRA

"O" is for "Open yourself up to the risk of rejection." V, just slit a vein before I die of E, Embarrassment...

Sierra huddles with her best friend DAN by a cork announcement board. He's an intellectual, cute in a way girls overlook.

DAN

Boohoo, your parents are too supportive. This morning, my mom told me she's adopting an Asian so her next kid isn't such a crushing disappointment. And I don't think she meant a baby. We should probably warn Kenny Chan.

Sierra and Dan watch KENNY CHAN stumble down the hall, and spill an impossibly high stack of MacBook Pro, Air, iPad, iPhone, graphing calculator at the feet of...

VERONICA, 17, crazy gorgeous. She's not the queen of mean; she's the Goddamn empress.

Flanked by her hot minions MELANIE (British and sharper than her "friends") and CHRISSY (a follower). They hang at their lockers, whose exteriors have been wallpapered in designer fabrics. This is against school code, but they don't care.

Dan films from his iPhone. HIS CAMERA'S POV, WE SEE:

STUDENTS step over Kenny, staring at Veronica as they pass.

DAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Check out that body. She looks like
she drinks the blood of virgins.

Dan pans to Sierra, who pounds a flyer into the corkboard.

SIERRA
You should chat her up next time at
the donation bank.

Back to normal perspective, ON DAN'S LOOK: "Screw you." The flyer says "Tutor Available" with her number and a comically unflattering pic of her.

DAN
What's with America's Most
Unwanted?

SIERRA
For the French club trip. Pimping
myself out the only way I can.

DOWN THE HALL

CHRISSY
Do you think blue contacts give me
constipated face?

Chrissy gives Veronica an exaggeratedly blank, steely stare.

MELANIE
(proper English accent)
I think your constipated brain
gives you verbal diarrhea.

Veronica watches Dan and Sierra at the board, fascinated. The way a scientist studies a lab rat, except home girl ain't no scientist. As Sierra and Dan walk off...

VERONICA
What do you think life is like for
ugly people?

Veronica, Melanie and Chrissy walk down the hall.

CHRISSY

Slit my wrists alert! That's like that game, "Wanna be blind and deaf or take it up the butt for the rest of your life?"

MELANIE

Would You Rather.

CHRISSY

Up the butt! You'd have to do way worse to score a guy if you're all Hellen Kellared.

MELANIE

I meant the name of the game!

Veronica stops and rips Sierra's number from her tutoring sheet. The girls laugh at the picture.

VERONICA

Sometimes it's better to be blind.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - BIOLOGY CLASSROOM - DAY

Students are paired up at lab stations. Sierra, with Dan. Dan looks into a microscope.

SIERRA

What stage is it?

A BLOB of a cell in prophase under a microscope.

NEARBY

Chrissy looks into her microscope. Melanie and Veronica watch, perplexed.

CHRISSY

It's a blob. It looks like that monster zit I popped on your--

Veronica grabs Chrissy's arm, silencing her--

VERONICA

(whispering)

You mean that nipple hair of yours I plucked?

(off Chrissy's horror)

Oh yeah, don't make me go there.

SIERRA'S STATION

Sierra looks into the microscope.

DAN

(as if pitching a story)

Prophase: what you don't know about microtubules could split you in two.

(off her look)

I have to find the perfect story for my site. A viral post is my only shred of hope for college.

SIERRA

(laughing)

What? You get straight A's.

DAN

What is this, the 90's? Sorry, Blossom, that won't get me and Zach Morris into the Ivies. I have to start Google 2.0, or play the violin while swimming backstroke at the Olympics...or perform surgery on a new species of kitten I discover and then rescue from a tree while on a relief mission in a third world country.

Sierra frowns, concerned at her own college prospects. Her mind wanders, but she still manages to correct him--

SIERRA

Breed. Breed of kitten.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - COUNSELOR STEVENS'S OFFICE - DAY

COUNSELOR SHIELA STEVENS (a severe, uptight woman) looks concerned as she reviews Sierra's transcript.

COUNSELOR STEVENS

And you want to go to Stanford?

SIERRA

I got a perfect score on my SATs...

COUNSELOR STEVENS

A perfect--ha! You're very humorous. I'll write that down--
(writing notes)

Hu-mor-ous. Have you invented anything?

SIERRA

A turbrownkey, it's a turkey
stuffed with a brownie in the shape
of a cupcake, with frosting--
(off her stern look)
No, ma'am.

Counselor Stevens doesn't crack a smile, as she makes notes--

COUNSELOR STEVENS

Have you started a social media
movement that inspired social
change? Arab Spring, yadda yadda?

SIERRA

You just yadda yadda Arab Spring?

Counselor Stevens makes more notes. Sierra tries to peek--

SIERRA (CONT'D)

What are you writing?

COUNSELOR STEVENS

So what are you? Other than a
legacy student?

SIERRA

Excuse me?

COUNSELOR STEVENS

What's your sell?
(off her blank look)
May I be frank with you?

SIERRA

What were you before??

COUNSELOR STEVENS

Sierra, yes, you're a good student,
but there's nothing special about
your resume. The best thing you
have going for you is your famous
father. Work that angle--
(aha!)
Co-write a book with him!

Sierra stands up, visibly deflated.

SIERRA

Thanks, but I'll find my own thing.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - LAWN - DAY

Sierra and Dan sit on the grass and eat their lunches. Dan surveys the posses on the lawn, films from his phone.

DAN
There's a story somewhere in this school, waiting to be broken.

DAN'S CAMERA'S POV: a GRANOLA STONER POSSE playing hackie sack nearby.

DAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
The dangers of patchouli: the gateway smell.

A posse of fashionable GAY BOYS strut by.

DAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Fiercely fashionable: nature or nurture?

Back to normal POV.

SIERRA
Where do I get one of those? I want a sassy gay friend.

DAN
Yeah, right. So you can go shopping and get pedicures together? You hate normal girl stuff.

The look on her face says she actually doesn't.

Dressed as sexy tigers, Veronica, Melanie, Chrissy and the rest of their cheerleading SQUAD run on the grass, shaking pom poms: Normal girl stuff?

SQUAD
THE EAST TIGERS CAN'T BE TAMED! YOU
BETTER COME TO THE BIG GAME!
(shimmying)
GRRRRRRRRRRRR!

Fake licking their hands like cats cleaning themselves--

SQUAD (CONT'D)
PURRRRRRRRR!

CUE DANCE TO MUSIC. Football Players and DOUCHE MIKE (always adding something uninventive) join, alternating between dance moves and air-humping the girls from behind.

SIERRA
Normal girl stuff?

EVERYONE on the lawn SNAPS PHONE PICS of the display.

DOUCHE MIKE
 INSTA that shit!

While the rest of the school stares wantingly at Veronica,
 Dan's eyes are still on Sierra.

DAN
 Meant it in a good way. Believe me.

Dan gives a subtle, self-conscious half-smile that Sierra
 doesn't catch. He's definitely into her.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - BATHROOM - DAY

Sierra is the only one actually washing her hands alongside
 other STUDENTS, all SNAPPING MIRROR SELFIES. Every sink is
 taken. Veronica exits a stall, and bumps into Sierra.

VERONICA
 Move it, Frodo, before you break
 the mirror.

SIERRA
 (almost mumbling)
 You mean Quasimodo.

Students stop their works of photographic genius and STARE:

VERONICA
 What did you say?

A silent showdown. Are they really going to do this?

Okay, Sierra's in. Without a hint of insecurity:

SIERRA
 Frodo is the hero-adventurer in
 Lord of the Rings. You're thinking
 of Quasimodo, the Hunchback of
 Notre Dame...who is persecuted for
 his ogreish looks and represents
 the inequalities of a stratified
 class structure, not unlike our own
 hierarchy of high school
 popularity.

NAILED IT. Veronica looks around as the Students snicker. A
 flash of insecurity, then an even bitchier tone to hide it:

VERONICA
I meant looking at you makes me
want to gouge my eyes out.

The Students snicker again.

SIERRA
As I said, I knew what you meant.

Sierra turns on her heels, walks out confidently.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

But as she reaches the hallway, a brief look belies her
steely composure. Two hot FOOTBALL PLAYERS bash into her--

FOOTBALL PLAYER 1
Sorry, didn't see you there!

The hot jocks keep walking. Sierra grimaces, visibly
deflated. Not nearly as invincible as she projects.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - ENTRY WAY - AFTERNOON

Upset, Sierra closes her front door and heads up the stairs.

MR. BURGESS (O.S.)
"I shall take the heart,...for
brains do not make one happy, and
happiness is the best thing in the
world!"

Sierra turns: sees her parents downstairs from the waist-up.

SIERRA
(to her mom)
What do you think?
(off her pause)
Hint: It's not Deepak Chopra.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
(waves her off)
This is your guys' thing.

SIERRA
L. Frank Baum, Wizard of Oz.

MR. BURGESS
That's my girl!

Her parents step into full view. Wearing almost-matching
biking shorts.

MR. BURGESS (CONT'D)
 Take a ride with us.
 (off her reluctance)
 I picked up Sprinkles cupcakes...

Sierra stops on the steps, turning to her dad.

SIERRA
 Your bribery tactics border on
 criminal.

EXT. SANTA MONICA BOARDWALK - AFTERNOON

The glow of Southern California skies in the afternoon. The Santa Monica Pier ferris wheel turns, waves lap on the beach.

Looking especially nerdy in matching family helmets, Sierra and her parents ride bikes along a beach path.

EXT. VENICE MUSCLE BEACH - SUNSET

The surreal pinks and blues of Venice sunset. Sierra and her parents sit on a picnic blanket. Behind them, BODY BUILDERS and other STRANGE MEN work out on the outdoor gym of equipment of Muscle Beach.

MR. BURGESS
 How was your day?

SIERRA
 (mouthful of cupcake)
 Copacetic.

Mr. Burgess looks half amused, half skeptical.

MR. BURGESS
 Why don't I believe you?

Sierra sadly watches some COLLEGE BABES IN BIKINIS run by. HOT GUYS CHASE THEM and flirtatiously SPRAY THEM WITH BEER.

BODY BUILDER (O.S.)
 (to Sierra)
 Hey, dude, could you spot me--

As Sierra fully turns to him, he's instantly apologetic--

BODY BUILDER (CONT'D)
 Sorry--thought you--nevermind.

The Body Builder walks off. Grumbles to herself:

SIERRA

All those steroids, my penis is probably bigger than yours.

Sierra's mom hits her. Sierra's PHONE RINGS--

SIERRA (CONT'D)

Again?! This guy keeps leaving messages for some girl named "sweet cheeks" he's supposed to have a date with.

(answers phone)

This isn't your sweet cheeks. Which is why my voice mail says "You've reached Sierra!" Stop calling me. Idiot.

Sierra hangs up. Sierra's parents look at her, dumbfounded.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

You realize that poor boy got stood up by one girl, and then another one called him an idiot.

SIERRA

(texting)

Sorry for calling you an idiot...Still...not...sweet cheeks.

(looks up)

Better?

MR. BURGESS

He did sound like kind of an idiot.

Mrs. Burgess hits him.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - NEXT DAY

Sierra sits in the front row, with Melanie and Chrissy sitting nearby. MR. THOMSON holds court over his English class. A total hard ass, but in a caring way.

MR. THOMSON

Last unit, we analyzed the finest poetry ever written...at which most of you failed so miserably you must have been using the pages as rolling paper.

Mr. Thomson mimes smoking a joint, "flicks it" at a student.

DOUCHE MIKE

Nice pointer, teach!

MR. THOMSON

Now, I want you to focus on writing
your own original poetry.

(off their GROANS)

You'll perform your favorite in
class for ten percent of your grade-

(off their BOOS)

And the best poem will win a
special secret prize.

MELANIE

(to Sierra)

Maybe it's a new face.

MR. THOMSON

It's not a new personality, so you
probably shouldn't bother.

CHRISSY

You can't talk to her like that!
I'm telling--

MR. THOMSON

The principal? Great! We can
discuss your innovative use of a
birth control dispenser to hide the
answers to yesterday's quiz.

(off her look)

What? You thought when you kept
opening it, I'd just assume you're
extra fertile?

LAUGHS. A bell RINGS. The class empties, except Sierra.

SIERRA

Thanks. But I don't need you to
fight my battles.

MR. THOMSON

Oh believe me, everyone knows that.
I just really enjoy it.

Sierra smiles a little in appreciation, starts to leave.

MR. THOMSON (CONT'D)

Your last paper wowed me, Sierra. I
know yours will blow the other
poems out of the water. It's in
your blood! You're a natural.

SIERRA

Is there something else I could do
for ten per cent of my grade? A
video, maybe?

MR. THOMSON

You're aware this is an English class, right? We deal mostly with the words here. The English words. ...Is there a problem?

Sierra smiles a little, wistfully.

SIERRA

Not one you can solve. But thanks for asking.

Sierra slumps out, leaving Mr. Thomson confused.

INT. A MALL - FOOD COURT - AFTERNOON

Veronica, Melanie and Chrissy sit at a table and sip smoothies. Chrissy sits with her back to the other girls.

VERONICA

What are you doing?

CHRISSY

If I drink it backwards, the calories reverse. That's why I do reverse cowgirl.
(whispers)
You can't get pregnant.

MELANIE

American school has failed you in so many ways.

Veronica receives a TEXT from her "boyfriend" Spence, and smiles at her phone. All it says is...

INSERT TEXT: **Hey.**

VERONICA

(gushing)
"Hey." College guys like Spence don't have time to waste words. It's totally sexy.

Veronica beams, showing her friends her phone. Their faces reveal they're not so into Spence.

Wearing a Varsity jacket, JAMEY (soulful, ridiculously cute) sits at a nearby table with his friends RISHI ("dirty British" accent, Indian, perpetually disinterested) and TOPHER (a virgin ginger). All 17, hormonal, and staring at Veronica. Well, except Rishi. He looks bored.

MELANIE

Stare alert. Beverly West boys.

Jamey stands up, still looking at Veronica.

CHRISSY

I think he's coming over here!

VERONICA

(disgusted)

Ugh. He looks like he's gonna jizz
his pants before he gets here.

Jamey arrives at the table, friendly but nervous. Adorably nervous.

Veronica smiles coolly and rifles through her purse.

JAMEY

Hey. Uh...I mean, hi. Hey. My
name's Jamey. Hey. Shit, I said
that already...

CHRISSY

Hey.

MELANIE

Hey.

Chrissy waves without turning around to face the table. Jamey gives her a brief odd look.

Veronica barely looks up from her purse...

VERONICA

Veronica. I guess you want my
number.

JAMEY

Um...sure? Yeah. Just like that?
Wow. That'd be great.

Veronica reads off a piece of paper in her bag: Sierra's ad she stole from the cork board.

VERONICA

310-949-8856.

MELANIE

That's not--

Veronica kicks her under the table.

ON VERONICA: A flirtatious smile that could almost eat you.

VERONICA

Text me sometime.

JAMEY

Okay. Sweet. I definitely will.

Jamey turns from the table and gives a thumbs up to disbelieving friends. Luckiest day of his fucking life. Rishi gives a disinterested thumb sideways: Meh.

MELANIE

Whose number is that?

VERONICA

Sierra Burgess's.

MELANIE

You're so bad!

CHRISSY

Are you crazy? He's flash-your-boobs-in-Cancun hot!

VERONICA

You flashed your tits to our ancient taxi driver in Cancun.

CHRISSY

Juan Diego needed a tip! He has a family to support.

VERONICA

See his friends?

Veronica coyly waves as Jamey and Topher eagerly wave back.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Only losers hang out with losers.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Classic books and walls covered in post-it notes with famous literary quotes. What kind of teenager is this?

Sierra picks up a book. Stares at it. It seems intangibly heavy in her hand. Flips it over: HER FATHER on the back.

SIERRA

(to father's pic)

Bet you never have writer's block.

Sierra sighs, and puts the book down. She lays on her bed, pen to notebook, struggling to write her own poem for class.

SIERRA (CONT'D)
 Roses are red. I'm crap outta
 luck...I have nothing to
 write...and this poem is--

Her phone BUZZES: a text from an unknown number. Staring--

INSERT TEXT: **HI** :)

SIERRA (CONT'D)
 Hi?
 (texting)
 Who...is...this?

INT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - JAMEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jamey takes a selfie, trying to look tough. He looks at the picture. He looks like a constipated, drugged mafia thug.

JAMEY
 (horrificed)
 That's a special kind of awful.

Jamey takes another, this time smiling too hard. Examines it:

JAMEY (CONT'D)
 Uggghhh I'm such a freakin' loser.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sierra does her homework. The phone BUZZES again. She stares at Jamey's selfie, instantly smitten.

SIERRA
 Holy Sh...awshank Redemption.
 (up to God)
 Is this a test?
 (texting)
 Um...hi.

Sierra types a smiley face.

INT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - JAMEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jamey smiles self-consciously as he texts--

JAMEY
 Too...soon?

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Wistful as she contemplates her up-till-now boy-free life:

SIERRA
Way overdue, actually. (Sigh.)

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - COURTYARD - DAY

Students are scattered at different booths for various school clubs. A CHEERLEADING BOOTH says "Care 4 Cleavage." Melanie breaks a fun size candy bar three ways for Veronica and Chrissy. Veronica curiously eyes Sierra, nearby selling baked goods with Dan at an AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL booth.

VERONICA
What's Amnesty International?

CHRISSY
It's like American Apparel, in Europe.

Melanie looks at them like they're crazy--

NEARBY

DAN'S CAMERA'S POV as he watches Melanie hand her friends a third of a candy bar.

DAN (O.S.)
Bulimia and your teeth: what your dentist wants you to know.

A KID IN A RED STRIPED SHIRT walks by.

DAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
The question isn't Where's Waldo:
it's why doesn't he want to be found?
(looks to Sierra)
Come on. That was a good one!

BACK TO NORMAL POV. But Sierra isn't paying attention.

DAN (CONT'D)
Earth life forms paging Sierra!
Paging? Why do people still say that--Hello? Sierra? Calling you from my--

Sierra turns to Dan, dreamily, shyly--

SIERRA

I met a guy.

Dan's face falls, instantly deflated--

DAN

Rotary phone.

SIERRA

Well, not met-met. We texted. All night. By mistake. He may or may not still think I'm someone else. And by may I mean he does... Definitely think I'm someone else.

Dan suddenly perks up.

DAN

That sounds like the perfect guy for you. You should run with that. Never mind that he could be a serial killer. Or a rapist. Or rape serial killers--Or would that be a good thing?

(films himself, to camera)

Complex ethical dilemma--

Nearby, Chrissy squeezes her boobs together for a PACK OF GUYS now in line to donate to the Cheer Squad--

CHRISSY

That's twenty each--

(squeezes boob)

Twenty five--

DAN FILMS the guys rip out money from their wallets--

SIERRA

Could you focus?

DAN

On the insane plan to text-date some stranger who thinks you're someone else? There's a word for that. Catfishing. And it's illegal.

SIERRA

Actually, dunno if that's true. Law is woefully behind technology-- But I meant focus on buying time. I have to figure out something better to say than "Hey, I've been texting you for hours under false pretenses. Wanna go out?"

Some VEGAN ACTIVIST STUDENTS suddenly run around SPRAYING AEROSOL PAINT on purses, shoes. As Students SCREAM--

VEGAN ACTIVIST STUDENTS
LEATHER KILLS! LEATHER KILLS!

DAN FILMS as a girl sprays Veronica--

VERONICA
I'M GONNA RIP OUT YOUR PIT HAIR,
YOU VEGAN FREAK!

DAN
AND YOUR AEROSOL CANS ARE KILLING
THE OZONE, WHICH KILLS THE ANIMALS!
CIRCLE OF LIFE!

Dan and Veronica share a quick look. Hmmm, similar styles.

Turning back to Sierra, Sierra shows Dan her phone--the picture of Jamey looking dreamy as hell.

DAN (CONT'D)
Who wouldn't want a pretty boy
douche who goes around sending
selfies to girls he just met?

SIERRA
Dan, when you wanted to do an
investigative piece on Mr. Mackner
because you thought he was cooking
meth, who hid with you in the chem
lab overnight?
(off his look)
And when you thought the cafeteria
was using expired food, who helped
you break in and almost died in a
freezer? In a freezer, Dan!

DAN
Fine! Well, have you changed your
voice mail at least? For when
things escalate?

SIERRA
Escalate?

DAN
Yes, escalate: to increase in
intensity or magnitude. To ascend,
as with an escalator.
(off her look)
(MORE)

DAN (CONT'D)
 For when texts lead to calls, and
 calls lead to...hand holding...and
 hand holding leads to teenage
 pregnancy...which leads to
 unemployment, obesity and female-
 pattern baldness.

SIERRA
 I see you attended Mrs. Kelch's sex
 ed class.

DAN'S CAMERA'S POV, CLOSEUP VIDEO SELFIE SHOT:

DAN
 (smiling sarcastically)
 A-plus! What what!

Sierra visibly deflates.

SIERRA
 I was kind of just relying on our
 generation's total disregard for
 basic human interaction.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sierra plays her current voice mail on speakerphone.

SIERRA (O.S.)
 This is Sierra, leave a message.

BEEP.

VOICEMAIL COMPUTER
 To record a new message, press 1.

Sierra presses 1 and records a new message.

SIERRA
 (too monotone)
 You've...reached 310-949-8856.

VOICEMAIL COMPUTER
 If you are satisfied with your
 message, press 1--

MONTAGE

1) Sierra records new voice mail messages. Too perky--

SIERRA
 You've reached 310-949-8856!

2) Trying to sound sexy but instead sounds like a man--

SIERRA (CONT'D)
You've reached 310-949-8856--

3) In a strange accent--

SIERRA (CONT'D)
You've reached 310-949-8856--

END MONTAGE

Frazzled, Sierra throws her cell phone onto her bed.

SIERRA (CONT'D)
AHH! I suck at this!

BUZZ. Sierra jumps a little, the sound of a text message now sends her heart into a-fib. She checks the message:

JAMEY (O.S.)
Made me think of you.

INSERT TEXT: A PIC OF SNAILS KISSING.

It's adorable, and disgusting. Sierra laughs.

SIERRA (O.S.)
I usually do it more like...

INSERT TEXT: A PIC OF BABOONS SUCKING FACE.

INTERCUT

INT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - JAMEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jamey lies on his bed, laughing at the photo. Texts:

JAMEY (O.S.)
Good technique. Excellent suction.

Sierra types back...

SIERRA (O.S.)
It's all in the lips, and the nose position.

Jamey hesitates...Should he escalate? Goes for it.

BUZZ. Sierra grabs for the phone eagerly. Sees the text.

JAMEY (O.S.)
And yours are perfect.

Sierra's face falls. She touches her very imperfect nose, then her lips. Catches her reflection in a window. And for the first time...frowns.

INT. JAMEY'S HIGH SCHOOL - GYM CLASS - DAY

GYM STUDENTS below watch Jamey and his two friends Rishi and Topher climb ropes hanging from the ceiling:

JAMEY

So you know that girl Veronica--?

RISHI

(dirty British accent)

Do we know a girl called Veronica?

TOPHER

Do we remember the hottest girl
I've ever seen up close?

RISHI

Who you won't stop yapping about?

TOPHER

Yeah, do we remember that girl?

JAMEY

We made major progress last night.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - DEBATE CLUB - DAY

Having the same conversation, Sierra and Dan stand at a podium at debate club, opposite their opponents.

DAN

(whisper-yells)

A textversation! Are you pregnant?!

SIERRA

(whispers)

You're not taking me seriously.

Douche Mike speaks like an auctioneer, spouting off words so fast it's actually impossible to know what he said.

DOUCHE MIKE

Thepoliciesputinplacethatheretofore
wereagreeduponlimitthescopeofthe--

DAN

You're not taking this seriously--
(to Douche Mike)

(MORE)

DAN (CONT'D)
That's an interesting point...BUT
NOW AIDS HAS GONE AIR-BORN AND
WE'LL ALL DIE WITHIN ONE MONTH,
MAKING EVERYTHING YOU JUST SAID A
MOOT POINT!

Sierra gives Dan a look like: "uh huh."

INT. JAMEY'S HIGH SCHOOL - GYM CLASS - DAY

Topher slips several feet down his rope, catches himself with his legs, hangs upside down--

TOPHER
Did you tell her all your dirty
secrets, like how you're a raging
loser with virgins for friends?

RISHI
Speak for yourself. I'm a bloody
Muslim bisexual with a veritable
string of conquests. And I'm very
interesting.

Rishi SHAKES HIS ASS. Some GIRLS below CATCALL, the GUYS
shake their heads, used to his shtick.

RISHI (CONT'D)
Prudes.

Nearly reaching the top of his rope--

JAMEY
I kinda worried she might be one of
those "pretty girls"...but she's
really smart, and really funny.

Topher and Rishi exchange a laugh: Yeah right.

Jamey's super cute EX-GIRLFRIEND walks into the gym, giving
Jamey a pointed look.

TOPHER
The dreaded ex. Ever talk to her?

Jamey grips his rope tighter, clearly annoyed--

JAMEY
After she told the whole school
about my brother, then denied it?

TOPHER
That's the lie you care about?

Ex-Girlfriend throws her arms around a particularly hunky NEW BOYFRIEND. Jamey looks away. Ouch.

RISHI

Hey skank! Why don't you take your stinky vag and your lying, cheating arse to the other side of the gym? You're breaking my mate's heart here!

Everyone looks at Jamey, who hangs there, nowhere to hide...

EX-GIRLFRIEND

(flips him off)
Screw you, Rishi!

Dying of embarrassment:

JAMEY

Thanks. Thanks a lot, guys.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Sierra again painstakingly examines her imperfect profile in the mirror. This time, doubt brewing...

Mrs. Osborn-Burgess sneaks up behind her and puts a comforting, maternal hand on her shoulder.

Contemplating this aloud for perhaps the first time:

SIERRA

Mom, do you think I'm pretty?

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

Where is this coming from? I've always been so proud of your self-confidence. You're like...a young Barbra Streisand.

SIERRA

Really? Referencing a face that only The Gays could love?

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

Cleopatra, then. She's history's most famous seductress, and yet new artifacts reveal she pretty much looked like a transvestite.

Disbelief. Did she really think that would help?

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS (CONT'D)

Sierra, I can't imagine being a girl growing up now. The models, the social media, constantly being under a microscope. Wasn't like that for my generation.

Sierra stares at her mother's face, perfectly beautiful by all measures. Nothing like Sierra's.

SIERRA

Nevermind. You're right. You wouldn't get it.

Sierra brushes past her mom...

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sierra and Dan flip through magazines on her bed, cutting out pictures that relate to France: French perfume, etc. Beside them, a collage is mid-progress.

Sierra stops on an ad. The model's perfect, tiny nose...

SIERRA

Is that really what guys want?

DAN

(peeks)

Most guys? Uh, duh. Are you really just figuring that out?

He's not most guys.

SIERRA

I guess I never really had to think about it before...

A BUZZ of Sierra's phone. Dan's face falls as he sees Sierra snatch for her phone. That look on her face. She's never had that look for him.

JAMEY (O.S.)

Just thinking of you.

INSERT TEXT: Pic of EXTREME CLOSEUP of a crazy-ass looking Zebra's face.

DAN

Let's focus. Our French club quiche isn't going to quiche itself.

Sierra texts.

SIERRA (O.S.)
What a coincidence. I was just
thinking of you.

INTERCUT

INT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - MEDIA ROOM - SAME TIME

Jamey plays video games with his adorable brother TY (8).
BUZZ. Jamey DROPS his controller. Ty shoots him a look.

INSERT PIC: A CRINKLY-EYED OLD MAN smiling as he takes his
dentures out

Jamey laughs.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Dan does all the work making quiche. The kitchen is covered
in ingredients. So is he. Sierra stares at her phone. Still.

DAN
(squints at recipe)
"Fold an egg?" How do you fold an
egg? That defies physics. Sierra?
Sierra. SIERRA.

Dan lunges for her phone, knocking over Sierra's notebook.

SIERRA
Hey!

Sierra and Dan simultaneously crouch to the floor and reach
for Sierra's open notebook--

DAN
What's this?

Sierra snatches it away.

SIERRA
Nothing...

Inches apart, they share a brief moment of tension -- sexual?

Sierra's phone BUZZES AGAIN. Dan and Sierra shoot up.

Dan grabs for the phone--

SIERRA (CONT'D)
Give it back!

DAN
 (reads)
 So I have something to admit.
 (looks up)
 Interesting! Maybe he's gay.

INTERCUT

INT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - MEDIA ROOM - SAME TIME

Jamey texts, as Ty throws popcorn at him to get his attention. He ignores him.

JAMEY (O.S.)
 I didn't want to scare you off, but
 I know who you are.

Dan and Sierra exchange a look: HE DOES?

Jamey throws popcorn back at Ty with one hand, while using the other hand to keep typing...

JAMEY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Come on. Veronica? The legendary
 head cheerleader? I see you every
 time we play Beverly East.

Turns to Ty, admitting:

JAMEY (CONT'D)
 (cringing)
 I think she might be the reason we
 lost a few of those games.

Ty looks back at him blankly, not understanding.

Sierra and Dan look at each other, simultaneous shock:

SIERRA
 Oh my God.

DAN
 Veronica-Veronica??

SIERRA
 That's what I have to live up to?

Texting:

DAN
 This is out of control. I'm telling
 him the truth!

Dan twists and turns to keep the phone away from her, as Sierra struggles to snatch it back.

SIERRA

DAN!

DAN

Gotta find out sometime, might as well be now--

SIERRA

(swiping for phone)

DAN, DAN...

DAN

(talking as texts)

Dear Douche Face, sorry I'm a lying sack of shit. Attaching a real pic of me--

Tears almost in her eyes, brutally desperate:

SIERRA

DAN!!!

Dan stops, shocked. Looks up to see her deep distress. He's never even seen her upset before. She pleads calmly, which almost makes it worse. This isn't a hot-headed overreaction.

SIERRA (CONT'D)

Please. Please don't.

(quiet admission)

We both know he'll never...

Dan is entirely unsettled. This isn't the normal Sierra we all know, full of bravado. Dan hands the phone back to Sierra with a look of guilt, but mostly sadness for his friend.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - BIOLOGY CLASSROOM - DAY

Dan stares into a microscope as Sierra schemes.

SIERRA

Theoretically, I can still make it work until Big Game, when Beverly East plays Beverly West. So...when's that?

Dan shrugs but doesn't look up--

DAN
Traditionally, the nerds of the
species aren't as preoccupied with
the sports.

Types note to self on phone--

SIERRA
Check Big Game. Obviously I can't
have him going up to Veronica. Then
it's game over. Figuratively. Well,
and probably literally...
(off skeptical side glance)
You think I'm crazy. I'm not
stupid, I know it's her face he
imagines when we talk. But it's my
words. He's falling for me. And of
the billions of numbers in the
world, he texted mine. It all seems
like a cosmic sign--

Dan stands up, sympathetic but firmly skeptical:

DAN
You're really not the zombie
cheerleader he's looking for?

ANGLE ON Veronica, her back to them, Melanie and Chrissie
gathered around her. Something is wrong. DAN FILMS HER:

DAN (CONT'D)
Maybe she broke a nail.
(nudges Sierra)
Your turn.

Sierra looks into the microscope:

A BLOB of a cell in metaphase, with the chromosomes lined
tauntingly in pairs.

SIERRA
Even chromosomes can find their
mates.

DAN
(mocking her)
Yeah, metaphase looks like a super
hot date.

Suddenly, they turn as--

NEARBY STATION

VERONICA

I don't know! I don't get it! He's right. I'm stupid. I'm just stupid!

CHRISSY

Who? You say stupid like it's a--

CHRISSY (CONT'D)

...bad thing.

MELANIE

...surprise.

VERONICA

Spence! It's over. He said I'm just a stupid high school girl. I'm not smart enough to be all Goodwill Hunting with his college friends or whatever.

Chrissy and Melanie pat her back with confused detachment. Self-conscious as everyone is staring, including Sierra.

MELANIE

Ronny, this is better. You should be with someone more...like you.

VERONICA

I don't want someone more like me!
I want Spence!

The BIOLOGY TEACHER looks exhausted. Teenage girls, Christ.

BIOLOGY TEACHER

Ladies, I'd hate for my class to interrupt the gab session, but save the theatrics for your lunch break.

Veronica runs out of the room, with all eyes on her.

Dan turns to Sierra, she's having a light bulb moment.

DAN

No. I know that face. What are you thinking? Step off the ledge--

A mischievous smile from Sierra: her bravado back.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

The hallways are empty. Veronica sits crying on the floor next to her locker, her head resting on her tucked up knees. Even Emperesses of Mean can be reduced to little girls.

Sierra walks up. Veronica looks up, scoffs, the last person she wants to see. Veronica wipes snot and tears on her hand.

SIERRA

You should really wipe that on your elbow. Viral transmission rates of hand to hand--

VERONICA

What do you want??

SIERRA

I know you've been giving my number out to random guys.

VERONICA

(laughs bitterly)
Yeah? So?

SIERRA

I think we can help each other.

VERONICA

If you think I'm going to host a pity party with a reject like you, you've added crazy pills to your ugly pills.

(looks her up and down)
When you really need diet pills.

Ouch. Sierra swallows, steeling herself, pressing on.

SIERRA

Are you done yet?

Veronica isn't used to being called on her bullshit...

VERONICA

...Maybe.

SIERRA

Good. Because I'm really smart. I can help you be...well, I can help you seem smarter...to get back that guy.

VERONICA

How?

SIERRA

I tutor people all the time. It'll be elementary.

(off her look)
Easy? I just need one minor favor in return.

VERONICA

(rolls eyes)

No, psycho stalker. You can't be friends with me. Do you know how many pathetic losers have come along begging to let them do my homework in exchange for following them on InstaGram?

(looks proudly at phone)

Followers, 20,000, Following: Zero.

Veronica proudly displays her phone as proof.

SIERRA

Yeah, that's really impressive, but I don't want to be your friend, on social media or otherwise.

VERONICA

(chorts)

Liar. Everyone does.

Sierra extends a hand to help Veronica up.

SIERRA

Yeah, not me. Sorry.

Veronica stares at Sierra in disbelief as she reaches up for Sierra's hand. Remembering the snot, Sierra quickly retracts her hand, and Veronica falls to her ass.

As Sierra walks away--

SIERRA (CONT'D)

See you after school. Text me your address. You evidently have my number.

I/E. CAR - AFTERNOON

A working-class neighborhood. Sierra drives, looks lost. Looks at her phone:

SIERRA

This can't be right.

Pulls up to a depressing little home in ill repair. Sierra double-checks the address in her text. The address matches.

Looks up at the house again. Pity rises as the realization settles: This is Veronica's house.

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - ENTRYWAY - EVENING

Sierra looks around, shocked. Veronica's house is small and crowded: temporary housing packed tight with furniture that used to fill a larger space. Not at all what Sierra expected.

VERONICA

Pick your jaw off the floor, mouth
breather. My room's upstairs.

STAIRWELL

Veronica charges upstairs and Sierra follows. Sierra is about to put her hand on the cheap shellacked bannister --

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Oh, and keep your man hands off the
railing. Mom hates fingerprints.

SIERRA

...Because she's a criminal?

Veronica gives Sierra a brief look, not used to back-talk.

As soon as Veronica turns around:

Sierra examines her hands as she keeps walking up the stairs.
Are they man hands?

VERONICA'S ROOM

Trophies, pictures and memorabilia that "popular girls" like to keep. Awkward tension in the room. Veronica and Sierra sit on her floor and stare at each other uncomfortably. Papers and books are sprawled between them.

VERONICA

Well, hurry up. Teach me your
voodoo mind tricks or whatever.

SIERRA

(amused)

No tricks. We have to study.

VERONICA

Study?? What do I need you for? If
I wanted to study, I could just--

SIERRA

I'm going to teach you the right
things to study so you know how to
impress Spence. He's a freshman in
college, right? What's his major?

VERONICA

English and Psychology. Philosophy?
Which is the one with all the dead
old creeps with the mustaches?

SIERRA

Philosophy. So we study the basics.
Nietzsche. Plato. All his 101
classes that make him think he's an
expert when really he's just
another teenage moron with more
expensive teachers, passing off
watered down analysis of classics
as original thought.

VERONICA

I need a translator for loserese
'cause I have no idea what you
said. But if you tell anyone about
this I'll put Nair in your shampoo.
(looking her up and down)
Not that it would make a
difference. What do you use for
conditioner? Crisco?

Sierra pats her hair self-consciously.

VERONICA'S MOM (40s, plus-sized) bursts in the room.

VERONICA'S MOM

(panicked)

Veronica? What are you doing home?
Why aren't you at practice? Did
they cut you from the squad?

Veronica looks guilty and annoyed.

VERONICA

No, mom. I skipped today. I had
some studying to do.

VERONICA'S MOM

Studying? That will get you far
with the boys.
(eyeing Sierra)
Unless you switched teams...

SIERRA

Oh, I'm not a lesbian...?

VERONICA

She just has no taste.

VERONICA'S MOM
 Oh good. Your father would die...if
 he hadn't already died in that
 plane crash.

Veronica's sister SCOOTER (8) and brother Brody (8) bounce
 into the room, with full stage make up. Pageant twins!

SCOOTER
 Mooom, we're gonna be late!

BRODY
 And my eyeliner's smudged. Hiiii
 Mooorooooonica.

Veronica chucks a pillow at Brody, knocking him over.

VERONICA'S MOM
 (to Veronica)
 No more skipping practice. You know
 what happens to gymnasts when they
 stop practicing. One day, they're
 cute little firecrackers and the
 next day, they've exploded out of
 their lycra.

Veronica's Mom and the twins exit, leaving Sierra stunned.

INT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - JAMEY'S ROOM - DAY

Jamey lies on his bed, staring at his phone, waiting. Getting
 a creepy feeling, he turns and...JUMPS!

Ty stares from the door.

TY
 (in sign language)
 What are you doing??

This is the first time we realize...Ty is deaf.

JAMEY
 What am I doing? What am I doing??
 That's a really good question.
 (aloud and in sign)
 I am being pathetic.

TY
 (in sign language)
 Why?

JAMEY
 (aloud and in sign)
 Another good question. Because I'm
 really good at it.

Ty laughs, looking at his brother strangely.

TY
 (in sign)
 You're weird.

JAMEY
 Maybe. But you can't prove it.
 You're home schooled.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - ENGLISH CLASS - NEXT DAY

Disappointed, Sierra sneaks a look at her phone...Still no text from Jamey...as a chubby black student BRANDY recites her poem in front of class. With each line, her words get quicker and more intense.

BRANDY
 Who makes 'n illustrates The Way it
 Is, the book whose words 'n
 pictures never fade? Who writes the
 same edition for every decade,
 plagiarizes 'n disguises the Same
 Old Story under the cover of
 Change?

The Granola Stoner Posse from earlier start to tap their desks, playing an accompanying drum beat. The poem transforms into a musical experience--

BRANDY (CONT'D)
 Chapter One: People Come in All
 Colors, Sizes 'n Shapes; but The
 Right Ones can color Others
Different to keep them within their
 lines, erase or white-out
 "Mistakes" they can't tolerate or
 understand, whip them into shape
 and cut a fellow man down to a size
 fit to look down on. Chapter Two:
 You Have To Claim a Shape or
 They'll Name One For You: Gay,
 Straight, Black, White. Are you the
 type of girl who's a Friend, a
 Fling, or Wife? Check the boxes
 that apply and don't think your way
 outside.

(MORE)

BRANDY (CONT'D)

Replace your legs with pegs 'n dig a hole to spend your remaining days fitting in. Then you're livin' it right--at least 3 feet deep, takin' shallow breaths at best--'cause your air isn't your own and you're heir to your own life.

The class is mesmerized.

MR. THOMSON

Wow! The gauntlet has been thrown! Needless to say, the bar has been set high. Let this be a challenge to all you little Robbie Frosts.

Mr. Thomson scans the room, then settles directly on Sierra.

MR. THOMSON (CONT'D)

Believe me. Even the most disaffected of you delinquents are going to want that secret prize.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - COUNSELOR STEVENS'S OFFICE - DAY

Class still on her mind, Sierra looks nervous as she talks to the Counselor.

SIERRA

So I was thinking about what you said...And I was wondering if you had any suggestions on ways to bolster my resume.

COUNSELOR STEVENS

What languages do you speak?

SIERRA

French, Italian, a little Mandarin--

COUNSELOR STEVENS

Do you know how many people speak Mandarin? A billion Chinese. You're not getting it. Think different. Try sign language. Or braille!

SIERRA

(flatly)

I could blind myself. Disabilities make for great underdog essays.

COUNSELOR STEVENS
That's!--You were joking. I can see
now that you were joking.
(points to Sierra)
See? You're humorous.

Sierra looks at her, incredulous.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - MUSIC ROOM - AFTERNOON

Sierra and Dan play instruments poorly among NERDY STUDENTS.

SIERRA
What am I to you?

Dan almost drops his sax, caught off guard. He STAMMERS.

SIERRA (CONT'D)
A science geek, a literary
afficianado...for my college
applications.

An inexplicable mix of disappointment and relief:

DAN
Oh. I dunno. General nerdmaster of
the liberal arts? And I'm a musical
impresario.

Dan blows a particularly off-key note.

DAN (CONT'D)
(checks music sheet)
Shit, I thought I had it that time.

SIERRA
But what's my most defining
feature?...other than my nose? What
makes me...special?

DAN
You're super cool, scary smart...A
culinary genius--you did invent the
turbrownkey. You're pretty much the
perfect girl...
(off her increasing smile)
...Oh, and your dad is famous.

Sierra blows an OBOE into Dan's ear that sounds like BOOOOO.

DAN (CONT'D)
What'd I say??

OBOE TO THE EAR again: BOOOOOOO. He playfully swats her away.

DAN (CONT'D)
Quit! Stop! Doing! That!

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Veronica's Mom sits at the kitchen table sewing pageant uniforms. Brody practices some odd march, saluting an imaginary audience.

Veronica and Sierra study at an island. Afraid to ask:

SIERRA
(re: Brody)
He isn't...special, right?

VERONICA
His IQ is actually crazy high.
Shocking, right?

Sierra shrugs. They turn back to their studies. Sierra picks at a rice cake.

SIERRA
Plato believed in physical Beauty
as both a form and sensory
experience. He felt while other
qualities provoke abstract
reflection, physical Beauty
facilitates Platonic recollection
and affects everyone the same way--

Veronica's brain is breaking, the pain worn on her face.

VERONICA
Reco-whation?

SIERRA
(eyeing the rice cake)
Sure you don't have any real food?

VERONICA'S MOM
(eating a Twinkie)
No junk at your age. You'll make
life-long fat cells that will ride
your hips like a cowboy rides a
bucking bronco.

Brody lassoes Scooter, who pretends to be a bucking bronco.

Sierra gums her rice cake.

SIERRA

Plato was kind of a jerk, but in his optimistic moments, he revered Beauty for reminding souls of their mystery.

VERONICA'S MOM

Your father was a mystery. Up until the day he died from that heart attack.

SIERRA

I thought he died in a plane crash--

Frustration builds on Veronica's face.

VERONICA

Is there like a Cliff's notes version of the Cliff's notes version?

BRODY

Moronica! Moronica!

Sierra looks beyond confused. These people are nuts.

SIERRA

So, Plato--

VERONICA

Plato is the butt sex guy?

SIERRA

Um he was from Ancient Greece...but so was Aristotle, Socrates--

VERONICA

Those aren't all the same guy?

SIERRA

(laughing)
...Oh, you weren't joking...

VERONICA

I can't do this. I'll never get it.

Veronica hurries out of the kitchen. Sierra follows.

LIVING ROOM (CONTINUOUS)

SIERRA

Wait, Veronica--

Emotion rising, the tease are about to fall again...

VERONICA

It's pointless! They're right. I'm Moronica. You know I am.

(wipes tears)

My eight-year-old brother is practicing salutes for perverts, and even he's smarter than me.

SIERRA

Smarter than I--Not important. You're not a moron. So you're not a Rhodes Scholar, but it's not like you've got fetal alcohol syndrome or anything.

(off her look)

Oh no, you don't actually--I mean, your mom, alcoholism would explain--

VERONICA

No! What??

SIERRA

Veronica...You come up with some seriously mean crap. You've gotta have a little going on upstairs to think of those insults.

Veronica mulls this over, relieved. She dries her tears, careful not to smudge her makeup.

VERONICA

Yeah, you're right...

Veronica turns on her heels and skips toward the stairs.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Come on, let's go to my room. My mom is such a drag.

(stops)

But try to be lighter on your feet so you don't scuff up the stairs.

Sierra looks down at her feet...WTF?

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - ENTRY WAY - NIGHT

The house is dark. It's late. Sierra quietly closes the front door behind her. The glow of a computer screen comes from the kitchen. Sierra walks toward the light.

MR. BURGESS (O.S.)

Where you been, kid wonder?

KITCHEN

Sierra turns on the light. Mr. Burgess sits at the kitchen table with his laptop.

SIERRA

Studying. Trying to turn a hopeless cheerleader and unapologetically terrible human being into a walking cheat sheet with pom poms.

MR. BURGESS

"Reeling and Writhing, of course, to begin with,...and then the different branches of Arithmetic--Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision."

SIERRA

Lewis Carroll. How's the latest opus?

MR. BURGESS

Almost all opussed. Right in time for my book tour.

Sierra half smiles--half proud, half wistful.

SIERRA

Show-off.

MR. BURGESS

What's a synonym for onomatopoeia?

SIERRA

Goodnight, dad.

Smiling and shakes her head, Sierra turns out the light.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sierra studies a sign language book on her bed. Her phone BUZZES. She smiles -- finally!

JAMEY (O.S.)

Still awake?

INSERT TEXT: :)

Sierra types back...

INTERCUT

INT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - JAMEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Homework spread around him, Jamey checks his phone:

SIERRA (O.S.)
Now I am.

Jamey smiles...Typing back...

JAMEY (O.S.)
Wanna talk-talk tonight?

Sierra texts:

SIERRA (O.S.)
Like on the phone??

Jamey smiles a little, texting back:

JAMEY (O.S.)
Yeah. Like in olden times.

INSERT TEXT: A PIC OF A DROOLING CAVEMAN.

We STAY ON JAMEY. He smiles at his own clever text, but...No response. A long beat. Jamey smacks himself in the forehead.

JAMEY (CONT'D)
Jackass. Way to play it cool.

Sierra stares at her phone: Holy shit. Finally, she responds.

SIERRA
(texting)
OK...

Almost the instant she sends it, THE PHONE STARTS RINGING.

Sierra jumps back in horror.

SIERRA (CONT'D)
I didn't think you meant now!

She puts the phone down, then picks it up. Then puts it down. At the last possible moment, she picks up.

SIERRA (CONT'D)
...Bonsoir?

WHY THE HELL DID SHE JUST SAY THAT?

Jamey laughs a little.

JAMEY

Bonsoir, mademoiselle. Good day
fair maiden, what yonder breaks--
We're doing olden-timey stuff,
right?

Sierra buries her face in her hands, trying to recover.

SIERRA

...exactly...right...

JAMEY

I'm just glad you picked up. I was
scared for a minute I had to think
up some hilarious, charming voice
mail to impress you with...

Smacks his forehead again for that admission--

SIERRA

(laughing, on phone)

Don't you hate that pressure? Then
if you fail miserably, you can re-
record, but if you take too long,
you indubitably practiced several
times before you got it right...

JAMEY

(laughing)

I can't believe anyone has over-
analyzed that but me...or said the
word indubitably.

Tension broken.

JAMEY (CONT'D)

You know, your voice sounds
different than I remember it.

SIERRA

...In a bad way?

JAMEY

...No, actually. In a good way. Not
louder, but...fuller, maybe? Like
there's more to it.

Sierra smiles self-consciously, relaxing on her bed...

SIERRA

(flirtatiously)

You're just calling my voice fat.

JAMEY

I would never do that. I was a
super fat baby.
(cringes)
Christ, why'd I just tell you that?

SIERRA

(laughing)
No, no, I want to hear more about
what's wrong with you.

JAMEY

That was my one and only flaw. You
somehow got it out of me. What
about you? Any dark secrets I
should know about?

SIERRA

(grimacing)
None immediately come to mind...

JAMEY

Good. Honesty is really important
to me. Nevermind. Just good.

Sierra smacks herself in the forehead. They're meant to be.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Sierra spreads chocolate frosting on pickles as they talk:

SIERRA

I don't really know anything about
you yet. You're very mysterious.

INTERCUT

INT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - JAMEY'S KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Jamey makes a late-night healthy sandwich on wheat bread.

JAMEY

Well, tell me what you want to
know. Ask away.

SIERRA

What's your favorite movie?

JAMEY

Die Hard. Just kidding. I thought
that made me sound more manly. It's
probably Ratatouille.

Eating her disgusting creation:

SIERRA
Any movie that centers around food
is solid in my book.

EXT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - LATER

A little bohemian paradise of a backyard. Now swinging on a tree swing, Sierra looks more relaxed, twirls her hair:

SIERRA
Dickens over Dostoevsky?

EXT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - SAME TIME

Jamey swings from a child's swing set.

JAMEY
Yeah, what am I, a communist?

EXT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - LATER

Smiling, laying in a hammock, looking at the stars:

SIERRA
I'd be a bird. So I could fly. And
take a dump on every mean person's
car.

EXT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - SAME TIME

Laying on a chaise lounge, looking at the stars:

JAMEY
(laughing, on phone)
A bear. They're bad ass. And the
sleep to work ratio sounds really
appealing.

SIERRA
What kind of flower would you be?

Eyeing a very phallic cactus nearby--

JAMEY
Is a cactus a flower? A really,
really big cactus?
(more serious)
And you'd be a red rose, of course.
(MORE)

JAMEY (CONT'D)
The flower all the flowers are
jealous of.

SIERRA
Of which all the flowers are--
Nevermind.

INT. SIERRA'S ROOM/JAMEY'S ROOM - LATER

Sierra smiles but her eyes are half closed as she still talks
to Jamey on the phone.

Jamey falls off his bed, falling asleep. Startled, he picks
the phone back up...

JAMEY
(yawning)
I guess it's about that time.
(then)
After four hours on the phone, I
could pick your voice out of a
lineup.

Well shit, that's gonna be a problem.

JAMEY (CONT'D)
Maybe this is moving a little fast,
but...Skype tomorrow...? It would
be nice to see you for once.

SIERRA
Would it, though?

JAMEY
(laughs nervously)
Maybe more for me than for you?

SIERRA
Kidding...kidding...Of
course...there's...no...logical...r
eason not to that...would make
any...logical...sense...so
logically...my answer is...yes.

Jamey smiles at her weirdness.

JAMEY
Great. Logically.
(then)
Can't wait to see you.

Great. Sierra's face falls. She's so screwed.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Sierra and Dan walk and talk. Dan eats Sour Patch Kids.

DAN

Where are all the Sour Patch
parents?

Sierra gives him a dubious look.

SIERRA

Dan, seriously. I have no idea how
we're going to execute this. And
did I tell you about her mom? A
total stage mom fascist.

DAN

You told me. Twice. For the record,
this idea is an epic fail for the
history books. Vietnam will come
out looking like a better idea.
Internment camps. Water boarding.
Perms. Hammer pants. Boy bands.

Sierra is about to turn up a stair way.

DAN (CONT'D)

Where are you going? We have a free
period...

Sierra stops short, shrugging guiltily.

SIERRA

Going to talk to the coach about
trying out for track.

DAN

Why? The girls team is ranked last
in the state...

SIERRA

(guiltily)

I'm trying out for the men's team.

(off Dan's look)

I need something to stand out on my
resume! Like Susan B. Anthony,
standing up for women's rights,
going against the grain. That's the
kind of thing people remember.

DAN

Now you're Susan B. Anthony? Know
what else differentiates a resume?
Schizophrenia.

Veronica walks by with Melanie and Chrissy. Sierra and Veronica make brief eye contact, before Veronica turns her head and pretends not to know her.

DAN (CONT'D)
Nice! You're already B double F's!!

Sierra runs up the stairs, avoidant.

A crew of FUTURE INVESTMENT BANKERS (M, 17, in ties) type furiously on their smartphones.

Dan films them. DAN'S CAMERA'S POV:

DAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(to Future Bankers)
Could I quote you for a piece on--

We draw back. Dan's eyes bulge, seeing the Banker's text--

DAN (CONT'D)
Dude, you should really use
Snapchat for that.

EXT. HIGHSCHOOL - TRACK FIELD - AFTERNOON

ANGLE UP on Chrissy's crotch as the cheerleading Squad throws her up in the air, practicing routines.

Nearby, Sierra stands at her mark, ready to race some TRACK GUYS, who do not look happy, for a spot on the team.

TRACK DUDE
I still don't get why she's
allowed.

The track COACH JOHNSON looks just as unhappy.

COACH JOHNSON
Pretty much so we don't get sued.
God bless America!

Dan jogs toward the field in impressively short shorts--

DAN
Coach, I want to try out--

Coach Johnson looks to the heavens, cursing God--

COACH JOHNSON
Anything else you wanna throw at
me?

Dan jogs up next to Sierra--

SIERRA
What are you doing here??

COACH JOHNSON
And....go!

The Coach blows a WHISTLE! The runners are off! The other Track Guys blow past Sierra and Dan...

Struggling to run, Sierra and Dan argue--

DAN
(out of breath)
Seriously...Sierra...there's resume padding...and then there's being President...of the Throw Shit...At A Wall And See...What Sticks Club.

Sierra tries to run faster, surpassing Dan--

SIERRA
Then why...are you...here?!

Dan runs faster, neck and neck with Sierra--

DAN
To save you...from...yourself.

Dan and Sierra struggle to jump over HURDLES, barely passing--

DAN (CONT'D)
...and because--
(jumping)
You're my biggest--
(jumping)
Competition for college--
(jumping)
If you do it, I feel like I have to!

They look at each other--the race is on! Running as fast as they can, Sierra and Dan race to the finish line--

Sierra pulls ahead, tying the third to last Track Guy--

The Track Guys break out in APPLAUSE for Sierra--

A moment of triumph, then she...THROWS UP.

Dan looks at her, and THROWS UP.

THE ENTIRE TEAM THROWS UP!

COACH JOHNSON
That's it! Sue me all you want! Get
off my track!

Sierra nods in guilty acceptance, head between her ankles.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Veronica and Sierra sit on Sierra's bed and study.

SIERRA
No, you're not getting it--

VERONICA
Why do you smell worse than normal?

Sierra smells her breath. Veronica stares at Sierra's brows--

VERONICA (CONT'D)
You have to let me pluck your
brows. I can't concentrate staring
into the eyes of a sasquatch.

Sierra touches her brows self-consciously--

SIERRA
Back to Nietzsche--

Veronica looks in awed disgust at Sierra's books.

VERONICA
Why don't you just watch movies
like normal people?

SIERRA
(aha!)
Nietzsche is comparable to that
vampire from Twilight! He whines a
lot and thinks everything is
pointless.

Veronica face lights up as she writes that down.

VERONICA
I'm totally team Nietzsche. But
totally over Twilight. That was
like a hundred years ago.

They've found a way to communicate. Sierra's phone BUZZES.

JAMEY (O.S.)
You ready?

INSERT TEXT: **You ready?**

SIERRA
(nervously)
I guess it's time.

VERONICA
Time-time?? Are you sure this is
going to work?

SIERRA
Not even a little bit.

INT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - JAMEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jamey sits with his laptop on his lap, in bed. He looks equally nervous. He takes a deep breath, then clicks on Veronica's name in his Skype contacts. IT RINGS. Jamey's heart pounds out of his chest.

INTERCUT

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sierra's heart races as she stares facing Veronica, who stares at the intimidating, RINGING laptop screen.

SIERRA
Answer it. You have to answer it.

Veronica presses "Accept" on the screen. And says...nothing.

On screen, Jamey laughs and smiles nervously.

JAMEY
(on Skype)
Um...hello?

A beat of awkward silence.

SIERRA
(mouthing to Veronica)
What are you doing??

Veronica tips sideways, out of shot of the laptop camera. Sierra yells to Jamey, who can't see her.

SIERRA (CONT'D)
Hello!

Smiling strangely, Jamey looks at his computer screen, which just shows Sierra's pillow behind Veronica.

JAMEY

Can you adjust the camera? I can
hear you but I can't see you...

Sierra and Veronica give each other a worried look.

SIERRA

Coming!

Sierra gestures for Veronica to sit up. Veronica sits up and
looks into the camera.

JAMEY

(on Skype)
Much better.

Veronica looks up at Sierra and shrugs. They're winging this.

JAMEY (CONT'D)

(on Skype)
Is there someone else there?

Sierra talks, and Veronica does her best to mouth the words.

SIERRA

Nope! Sorry!

On the laptop screen, Veronica mouths the words out of
alignment with Sierra's words.

SIERRA (CONT'D)

(on Skype)
Just you and me. How was your day?

Jamey looks confused by this terrible ventriloquist act.

JAMEY

I think the connection is off. The
sound isn't synced with the video.

Sierra and Veronica look at each other and try not to laugh.

SIERRA

(laughing)
Yeah, my Internet's the worst...

Veronica and Sierra collapse into almost-silent laughter.
Sierra frantically gestures for Veronica to sit up again.

SIERRA (CONT'D)

Sorry. Maybe we should try again
another time.

JAMEY
Yeah, okay. Phone later?

SIERRA
(on Skype)
Definitely.

JAMEY
But Veronica?

SIERRA
(on Skype)
...Yeah?

JAMEY
It's really nice to see your face.
You're even more beautiful than I
remember. Even the roses would be
jealous.

SIERRA
(less excited)
Yeah, phone later.

Sierra all but slaps Veronica's laptop closed.

Jamey stares at the abruptly ended Skype call on his screen.

JAMEY
Well, okay, then.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sierra and Veronica sit on Sierra's bed studying. Veronica
looks cross-eyed at a book.

VERONICA
I don't get A Picture of Dorian
Gray. Why does everyone like Dorian
when he does such bitchy things?

SIERRA
(laughs)
It's Oscar Wilde's commentary on
society. People assume Dorian must
be perfect because he looks
perfect. They value appearance
above all else and in the end,
Dorian pays the highest price for
it: his soul.

VERONICA
Lame.

SIERRA
Let's try some Shakespeare.

MONTAGE

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sierra and Veronica study on her bed.

VERONICA
(reading from book)
"To thine own self be true..."
(looking up at Sierra)
Well, yeah. Obviously! Unless you
suck...

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica (wearing a mud mask) and Sierra study on her bed.

SIERRA
(disgusted)
What is that smell?

Veronica touches her mask.

VERONICA
I think it's made of dead babies...

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Veronica and Sierra lay on Sierra's bed. Veronica stares at Sierra in deep contemplation, then gently takes off Sierra's glasses. We think this is one of those beast becomes a beauty moments, when...Veronica puts the glasses on herself!

VERONICA
How do I look? Like a nerd?

SIERRA
(squinting, disappointed)
No...like a blurry porn star.

Veronica pins her hair up and takes out her phone--

VERONICA
Perfect.

Filming herself with her camera phone, Veronica pouts and lets her hair down, shaking it out--

VERONICA (CONT'D)
(to camera, breathy voice)
The Lion King is totally just
Hamlet.
(stops recording)
Post! Maybe Spence will see it.

Veronica hands a confused Sierra back her glasses--

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - ENTRY WAY - LATER

Sierra is about to show Veronica out.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
Girls! Just in time for dinner.
Veronica, aren't you staying?

SIERRA
No, mom--

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
We have way too much food. Stay!

The girls look at each other, unsure. Sierra shrugs.

SIERRA
If you want--

VERONICA
(too quickly)
Okay, I'll stay!

Sierra looks as shocked as Veronica at her choice.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Veronica stares with wide, greedy eyes as she spoons a more than healthy portion of lasagna on her plate.

MR. BURGESS
"If you exercise your mind, George,
it will get hungry just as your
body does."

Veronica looks up, smiling with half-sad nostalgia.

VERONICA
Little Women. Loved that book.

Sierra looks at Veronica, incredulous. Who is this girl?

VERONICA (CONT'D)

You guys must be really proud of
Sierra, huh? She's like if Einstein
and Juno had a frumpy love child.

Sierra gives her confused parents a look: just go with it.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

We are very proud of her, yes.

MR. BURGESS

I'll be even prouder when she goes
to Yale, just like her dad.

SIERRA

Stanford.

MR. BURGESS

You can't be an English major at
Stanford. That's like...being an
engineer at Yale!

SIERRA

Maybe I don't want to be an English
major.

MR. BURGESS

Yeah, right...Since when?

Sierra shrugs guiltily. Her mom changes the subject...

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

(to Veronica)

I'm glad I have a new audience.
These two are sick of me practicing
my mantras on them.

SIERRA

(embarrassed)

Please. Mom. Don't.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

She's embarrassed by what I do for
a living. She and her father are
snobs.

SIERRA

(not convincing)
What?

MR. BURGESS

Of course not.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

But does fine literature pay the
bills?

MR. BURGESS
 (adoringly)
 My highly successful wife is a
 patron of the arts.

Veronica smiles, thoroughly enjoying this family.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
 I have a big seminar at UCLA in a
 couple weeks. My biggest yet.
 (to Sierra)
 Don't forget.
 (to Veronica)
 You should come! Lots of cute
 college boys...

Veronica smiles and nods with her mouth full as she eats. Was
 the hottest girl in school just almost gross?

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sierra talks to Jamey on the phone. Sierra adjusts her
 cleavage, lets down her hair, imitating Veronica--

SIERRA
 (breathy voice)
 Glad you called--

JAMEY
 Are you sick? What's wrong with
 your voice?

Sierra makes a face. So much for that.

INTERCUT

INT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - JAMEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jamey looks palpably nervous.

JAMEY
 I have a question. And it's okay if
 you say no. I mean, I'll be
 crushed. Actually, I won't be okay.
 (charmingly playful)
 I'll die if you say no.

SIERRA
 (closes eyes, mouths words)
 Don't ask.

JAMEY

Go on a date with me. A real date.

Sierra opens her eyes, wish not granted. Fuck.

JAMEY (CONT'D)

I have a family thing
tomorrow...So, Friday?

SIERRA

Me, too, actually. A family thing
tomorrow. But let me get back to
you about Friday. I have to
clear...something...first.

(mustering playfulness)

Don't die before then.

Sierra hangs up, doomed. Looks down at her sign book:

SIERRA (CONT'D)

(in sign and aloud)

I'm in deep sh--

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Sierra and Dan stand in a line.

Veronica, Chrissy and Melanie ahead at a booth selling
tickets for prom.

SIERRA

I'm in way over my head. But
seriously, you should have seen her
at dinner. She was this bizarro
alien version of herself.

AT BOOTH

Two butch LESBIAN STUDENTS (white, 17) stand arm-in-arm at
the front of the line.

LESBIAN STUDENT 1

Two tickets.

Melanie coughs and elbows Chrissy.

CHRISSY

We don't sell to Mexicans.

MELANIE

(to Chrissy)

Taco bumpers! I told you to say
taco bumpers!

CHRISSY
(crushed)
But I really like tacos.

Veronica looks away with slight embarrassment. Not so sure about this bitchy girl thing anymore.

IN LINE

DAN
You aren't really buying your own ticket to prom, are you?

SIERRA
Ha. Like anyone's asking me.

DAN
(fake "casual")
I'll go with you, if you want. I don't really care who I go with.

SIERRA
Wow, that's the prom invite chick lit is made of. Think I'll pass on the pity date, thanks!

Dan looks disappointed. Sierra doesn't notice.

Dan and Sierra are up next to buy tickets.

MELANIE
No. Just, no.

DAN FILMS Veronica. She's pretty bare-faced, for her. Sierra's style is rubbing off on her.

DAN
(to Veronica)
You're wearing a lot less crap on your face.

Chrissy and Melanie let out a huge sigh of relief: someone finally said it. Turning with concern:

CHRISSY
Did someone die?

DAN
You look better.

A little look on Veronica's face. Appreciation?

Melanie hands Dan two tickets:

MELANIE

Here, for your PSA. Now get lost.

Dan and Sierra turn to leave, but Sierra turns back and nods to Veronica: I need to talk to you.

VERONICA

I have to pee. This Master Cleanse went straight through me.

CHRISSY

(more to self)

Sometimes I pee when I'm tickled.

Veronica sneaks away from her booth.

INT. HIGHSCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

Veronica and Sierra huddle.

SIERRA

Please. One date. I'm begging you.

Ugh. Veronica knows she's trapped.

VERONICA

Fine! But a group date. Alone is too weird.

INT. BOOKSTORE - AFTERNOON

Bored, Sierra sits at a table with her parents as Mr. Burgess signs books for a line full of enthusiastic FANS.

FAN

I don't mean to sound like one of those fawning fans, but I think you're easily the best writer of this century.

Sierra rolls her eyes. Her mom pats Mr. Burgess' arm proudly. Mr. Burgess hands Fan 1 a signed book.

MR. BURGESS

That's hyperbole. But I'll take it!

Smiling, the Fan walks off, revealing none other than Jamey and Ty next in line. Sierra's eyes bulge. Her heart leaps.

MR. BURGESS (CONT'D)

Who can I make this out to?

JAMEY

To Ty here. He's your biggest fan.
Don't let his size fool you. He's
really advanced.

TY

(in sign language)
Is it really him?

SIERRA

(signs)
He's better looking in pictures.

Ty laughs. Jamey smiles, his eyes suddenly fixed on Sierra.

JAMEY

(signs)
You sign?

SIERRA

(signs)
A little.

JAMEY

(signs)
Awesome.

They can't keep their eyes off each other. Mr. and Mrs.
Burgess look at the two silently flirting teenagers and then
to each other, confused. Handing the book to Ty--

MR. BURGESS

Here you go, young man.

Ty smiles at his prize. Eyes fixed on Sierra--

JAMEY

Thank you, sir.

Jamey holds out his hand to shake Mr. Burgess' hand, all the
while looking at Sierra. Mr. Burgess gives him an odd look.

JAMEY (CONT'D)

And you, too.

Jamey shakes Sierra's hand. Zing! Instant sparks. Jamey pulls
away, shocked. He walks away with Ty, as if in a daze.

MR. BURGESS

What was that? And you sign now??

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
 (to Mr. Burgess)
 That's your fault. Those genius
 genes aren't mine.

EXT. ROMANTIC RESTAURANT PATIO - NIGHT

A romantic restaurant patio with PATRONS young and old.
 Melanie and Chrissie sit at an otherwise empty table.

Wearing skinny jeans, Rishi struggles to look back at his own
 ass as he walks with Topher.

RISHI
 Do these knickers make my arse look
 fat?

TOPHER
 No.
 (checks again, thoughtful)
 Maybe.

They take seats across from the girls. Melanie takes one look
 at them: she and Rishi simultaneously SCOFF in disgust.

NEARBY, out of sight

Veronica and Sierra conspire.

VERONICA
 Really? For sure?

SIERRA
 Yes. I'm telling you, we had a
 moment. We're going to tell him the
 truth together. Tonight.

INT. ROMANTIC RESTAURANT - WOMEN'S ROOM - EVENING

Sierra stares in the mirror.

SIERRA
 You are a strong, sexy woman. Ew,
 no. "Strong women" wear too much
 perfume and perform in the Vagina
 Monologues. You are a strong,
 perhaps not physically ideal but in
 some ways attractive girl, and--

A toilet FLUSHES.

SIERRA (CONT'D)
(now whispering)
He likes you for you. You're you.
You can do this.

INT. ROMANTIC RESTAURANT - HALLWAY - EVENING

Sierra exits the women's room, next to the men's room, just as Jamey heads toward the men's room and Jamey's Ex-Girlfriend is entering the women's room.

Jamey's Ex-Girlfriend blocks his view of Sierra, and he gives her a disgusted look.

Sierra retreats back into the women's room, mistaking this look of disgust for her.

WOMEN'S ROOM

SIERRA
What was that?

HALLWAY

Jamey's Ex-Girlfriend smiles tauntingly at Jamey.

EX-GIRLFRIEND
Jamey.

Jamey just shakes his head in disapproval--

WOMEN'S ROOM

Jamey's Ex-Girlfriend enters and walks past, as Sierra talks on the phone to Veronica.

SIERRA
(on phone)
He looked at me like I'm a troll.
Maybe I just imagined our moment.
Same plan as before, I guess...

Sierra hangs up, crushed, giving herself a moment. Maybe she should call this whole thing off.

EXT. ROMANTIC RESTAURANT PATIO - EVENING

Looking nervous, Jamey walks toward Veronica. Goes to hug her-
Veronica catches a glimpse of Sierra watching her, and

Veronica ducks out of the way of the hug, sending Jamey...
Awkwardly into a half-hug with the WAITER who was behind her.

JAMEY
Sorry, man.

The Waiter walks off, shaking his head.

VERONICA
Sorry. That was...Wow, I was
totally awkward.

Veronica seems almost amused by her own capacity to be awkward. It's a new feeling. That's Sierra's territory.

JAMEY
Wow. I know you get sick of me
saying this, but you look amazing.

They share an awkward hug and sit down with the rest of their group.

NEARBY

Sierra creeps around the patio, watching Jamey and Veronica's interaction as she struggles to stay out of his eye line.

Sierra slumps down at a neighboring table, her back to Jamey.

JAMEY (CONT'D)
(laughing nervously)
It's weird...your voice sounds so
different in person.
(self-consciously)
Sounds "skinny" again.

Veronica doesn't get the inside joke. Melanie turns toward Sierra,

And Sierra ducks, folding forward in her chair. Now watching the events unfold sideways, Sierra sees under the table:

Topher inches his hand closer to Melanie's knee, and Melanie SMACKS IT AWAY.

MELANIE (O.S.)
No.

Melanie turns to Veronica, patience waning.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
What are we doing here? I thought
you were trying to get back with
Spence.

Floored, taken aback...

JAMEY
Who's Spence?

CHRISY
(spacily)
Who's Spence?

Chrissy turns enthusiastically to Jamey.

CHRissy (CONT'D)
Same wavelength.

VERONICA
Nobody. Some guy I dated forever
ago.

RISHI
I smooched a boy called Spence
once. Real wanker, actually.

Melanie laughs a little, in spite of herself.

MELANIE
Probably the same Spence.

EXT. ROMANTIC RESTAURANT - LATER

The group stands outside the restaurant, ready to disperse. Melanie and Rishi make SMALL TALK about England. Veronica couldn't look more antsy to get out of there.

VERONICA
Well that was...different. See you
again soon, on the texty text!

Veronica turns to leave, and Jamey grabs her arm.

JAMEY
Not so fast. I have something
special planned next. For just the
two of us.

Oh God. Veronica starts to text...

VERONICA
Let me just...Check with...my mom.

HIDING BEHIND A NEARBY CAR

Sierra checks her phone.

VERONICA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
He wants to change location!!!

INSERT: SCARED EMOTICON. ANGRY EMOTICON. EMOTICON. EMOTICON.
EMOTICON.

Veronica looks up from her phone, grimacing to her friends.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
I'll meet up with you guys later.

INT. PLANETARIUM - NIGHT

Fake planets and stars twinkle romantically overhead.

Jamey and Veronica's knees touch, their hands millimeters apart. A chain saw couldn't cut the sexual tension.

Sierra crouches on the floor a row behind them, easily concealed in the dark.

JAMEY
I'm kind of obsessed with
astronomy. Stars, mostly.

VERONICA
(playful)
Nerd. Why?

JAMEY
To us, they're so beautiful. But
they're mostly made of hydrogen...
which means up close, they're
really big balls of gas. Not that
much separates a star from a fart.
Except perspective.

Sierra begins to text from the floor:

SIERRA (O.S.)
I wonder if a star knows that it
shines.

BUZZ. Veronica tries to play the text off as her words.

VERONICA
I wonder if a star knows that it
shins.
(checks again)
Shines.

Jamey smiles a smile to end all smiles.

JAMEY

What do you want to be when you
grow up?

Veronica's face falls. She types a text to Sierra:

INSERT TEXT: ?

JAMEY (CONT'D)

Was that a stupid question?

Sierra stares at her phone. What does she want to be?

In the absence of an answer, Veronica thinks. Honestly.

VERONICA

No, I guess I never really thought
about life after highschool. I
think if I'm honest, I was afraid
to. Until I met Sierra.

ANGLE ON: Sierra's face. Sweet recognition of the friendship
blossoming between them.

JAMEY

Who's Sierra?

VERONICA

Just a...friend. You'd like her a
lot. I mean, not at first. You'd
think she was kinda a loser, but--

Sierra rolls her eyes in amused appreciation.

JAMEY

So are we, aren't we? Sure, I'm a
jock and you're a cheerleader, but
underneath all that, you're
so...different, so special.

Jamey leans in to Veronica. He's going to go in for a kiss...

Veronica looks away, something weighing on her.

Sierra pokes her head up, giving Veronica her cue. She CLEARS
her throat, trying to get her attention. Off Jamey's look,
Veronica CLEARS her throat louder, masking the sound...

VERONICA

Close your eyes for a sec. My pores
are huge up close or something...

Jamey closes his eyes. A loud shuffle -- Sierra struggles to climb over the seat to exchange places with Veronica.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Keep them closed!

JAMEY
Um...hello?

SIERRA
(sitting down, breathless)
Sorry, I'm here now.

Sierra covers Jamey's eyes with her hands.

JAMEY
Worth the wait.

Jamey puts his hands over Sierra's hands on his eyes. Zing!
There are those sparks again.

JAMEY (CONT'D)
(whispers, laughs a little)
Funny...we've spent so long on the
phone, it actually feels more
normal when I can't see you.

Jamey leans in, hovers for just a moment, then: An epic kiss!

JAMEY (CONT'D)
Wow.

Jamey pulls back, opening his--

SIERRA
I SAID KEEP YOUR EYES CLOSED!

Sierra all but smacks him in the face, covering his eyes.

JAMEY
Okay, okay, sorry--Jeez.

Sierra struggles to stand up while keeping her hands over Jamey's eyes...

JAMEY (CONT'D)
Where are you going??

SIERRA
Nowhere...What?

Jamey tries to pry Sierra's hands away--

JAMEY
What's going on??

Sierra and Veronica exchange desperate looks as the girls awkwardly try to exchange places again--

Veronica tries to duck under Sierra's arms--

JAMEY (CONT'D)
Veronica, this is ridiculous, I
just want to see you--

Jamey rips Sierra's hands off his eyes--

Sierra DROPS TO THE FLOOR, as Veronica SITS DOWN VIOLENTLY in Sierra's seat.

VERONICA
Now you see me.

Veronica looks down to meet Jamey's wide-eyed stare: her hand is on his crotch! Retracting her hand--

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Sorry!

Nearby, on her stomach, Sierra crawls on the disgustingly dirty floor of the planetarium. She sticks her hand in GUM.

SIERRA
(whispers)
Ohhh grooosss.

Jamey tries to look toward the noise--Veronica pushes his face back toward her--

VERONICA
You wanted to see me, and now
you're not even looking at me!

JAMEY
I thought I heard...

Sierra crawls out on her hands and knees...

JAMEY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You're being super weird, you know
that, right?

OUT OF THE PLANETARIUM THEATER DOORS...

Sierra stops at the feet of an USHER, looking up. She looks crazy, covered in dirt and in disarray--

SIERRA

I just had my first kiss.

The Usher looks in shock at Sierra and what he assumes is her imaginary boyfriend--

USHER

Congratulations to the two of you.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - BIOLOGY CLASS - DAY

Sierra beams as Dan stares into his microscope.

SIERRA

It was incredible. Like the kind of kiss you read about, but never believe could actually happen.

DAN

(jaw tightening)

Do you maybe want to hang out later and rehearse our debate platform?

SIERRA

I actually already have plans...

Sierra looks over at Veronica, at a nearby station. Veronica looks over and half smiles, subtly nodding to her new friend. Chrissy and Melanie gab.

DAN

Anaphase.

(accusatory)

The chromosomes are on opposite sides, being pulled apart.

Sierra looks in the microscope:

A CELL in anaphase, chromosomes pulled in opposite ways.

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Books surround them on the bed, as Veronica plucks Sierra's eyebrows. Sierra flinches, glaring at Veronica--

VERONICA

Your mom is like supermodel hot.

SIERRA

(grumbles)

Yeah, I know...OW!

VERONICA
 (then, smiles)
 Your dad must have a huge dick.

Sierra makes a face. Veronica looks at her watch.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
 Okay, I gotta go. Going to a party.
 (sudden idea)
 Want to come?

SIERRA
 Like...in public?

VERONICA
 (eyes Sierra)
 But you can't wear that.

Veronica gets up and rifles through her over-stuffed closet.
 She throws heaps of clothes out left and right.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
 (holding up a dress)
 You'd look good in this...for you.
 (holding up a shirt)
 This will make your boring brown
 eyes pop.
 (holding up jeans)
 These should lift whatever that
 flat space is you call a butt.
 (eyeing the pile)
 You should just keep all these.
 Seriously, I'm so sick of wearing
 'em I could just puke.

Sierra smiles at Veronica's veiled brand of generosity.

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - STAIRS - NIGHT

Veronica and Sierra descend the stairs in slow motion. Sierra
 is all dolled up. She looks hot. Well, for her.

Veronica's Mom walks into the entryway, smiling at the girls.

Twirling a baton, Brody charges by Scooter, who covertly
 wipes a tear away. Veronica notices.

BRODY
 I'm not doing batons unless they're
 on fire!

VERONICA'S MOM
 Don't you two grandmas look hot!

VERONICA

Push your chest out, and swing your
legs like scissors. You walk like
you have kotex shoved up your twat.

Sierra struggles to walk in heels.

SIERRA

(to herself)

Like scissors...?

Veronica steals one more look at an obviously sad Scooter,
before running out the door...

VERONICA'S MOM

(calling after them)

Buckle up. And no drugs! You don't
want to die of an overdose, like
your father!

Sierra looks at Veronica, again confused.

INT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - NIGHT

A party full of RICH KIDS, peppered with familiar faces. The
kind whose Prius or Porsche tires one might want to slash.

Veronica chugs a beer. Sierra takes a reluctant gulp. She
COUGHS. Oh God! That taste!

BUZZ. Sierra checks her phone.

JAMEY (O.S.)

My night--

INSERT TEXT: A SELFIE of JAMEY and TY in FEET PAJAMAS.

Sierra is about to text back, but BUZZ of another text.

DAN (O.S.)

Slasher movie marathon? I'll even
let you call out all the fake boobs
before I do.

Suddenly, Chrissy and Melanie strut toward them...flanked by
the high school FOOTBALL PLAYERS. Dozens of HIGH SCHOOL KIDS
CARRYING CASES OF CHEAP BEER trail in behind them.

FOOTBALL PLAYER

Who's ready to get this bitch
started?!

Chrissy and Melanie stop in front of Veronica, eye Sierra.

MELANIE

Hey, Ronny. I thought you were
"sick." I need to talk to you, now.
(off her look)
Like, alone? Outside?

VERONICA

Yeah, fine. Whatever.

Veronica and Chrissy and Melanie head for the backyard.

Sierra looks around. Totally alone. Awkward. Texts Dan back:

INT. DAN'S HOUSE - DAN'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Dan watches a HORROR FLICK. Gets a text:

SIERRA (O.S.)

Sorry, early night.

ON SCREEN, a FAKE BREASTED GIRL GETS STABBED. Sarcastic:

DAN

(re: girl)

Let's face it. You probably ditched
your best friend and deserved it.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

HIGH SCHOOL KIDS run and CANNON BALL into the pool. Mayhem.

Melanie bitches out Veronica while Chrissy watches.

MELANIE

What are you doing here with that
freak? You trying to embarrass us?

Chrissy picks up a CONDOM from the grass.

CHRISSY

(nostalgic)

Secret Fun Time Balloons! I used to
play with these!

ANGLE ON Veronica: Right, Sierra is the embarrassing one...

INT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - NIGHT

Sierra chugs her beer, wandering, looking for someone to talk
to...She passes TWO GUYS who look even douchier than the
others. This is SPENCE (19) and his SNOBBY FRIEND.

SNOBBY FRIEND

So what's the real story?

Spence looks around.

SPENCE
(in Mandarin)
In Mandarin. Her friends are
everywhere.

SIERRA
(surprised, to herself)
Maybe everyone really does speak
Mandarin...

Football Player 1 suddenly grabs Sierra's hand.

FOOTBALL PLAYER 1
Come on, keg stand!

What??

Sierra follows, just happy to be noticed.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Chrissy and Melanie and Veronica continue to stand off.

VERONICA
OMG, you're being such a drama
queen. She's not that bad...She's
kind of cool, actually...In a
totally unfortunate way.

CHRISSY
Toootally unfortunate...

MELANIE

You wanna commit social suicide?
Fine. But Sierra Burgess is a
loser.

(glares at Veronica)

And only losers hang out with
losers.

Melanie turns on her heels and Chrissy, torn, looks from Veronica to Melanie and reluctantly follows Melanie.

INT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - NIGHT

Sierra does a keg stand while the Football Players chant.

FOOTBALL PLAYER 1 AND 2
Chug! Chug! Chug!

Sierra finishes...and almost throws up. Everyone stares, as she swallows back the vomit...and BUUUURRPPPS. Victory!

FOOTBALL PLAYER 1 AND 2 (CONT'D)
Yeah!

FOOTBALL PLAYER 2
You tamed the beast! My turn.

Sierra stumbles back toward Spence.

SPENCE
(in Mandarin)
I just told Veronica she's dumb to make her insecure. Guaranteed she puts out tonight. I have her right where I want her, trying to prove something to me.

Sierra's eyes bulge.

SNOBBY FRIEND
(in Mandarin, laughing)
You're such a dick. But you're the master. I bow down to you, sir.

Spence and Snobby Friend head toward the backyard.

Sierra tries to beeline after them, but the room is crowded. She staggers, a casualty of booze and heels. Trips and falls.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Veronica stands alone in the backyard, dejected. She looks around at the people she's the queen of, for the first time truly seeing them as they are:

PARTY GIRLS swim in the pool, trying to turns guys on. Ugh.
PARTY GUYS in neon Ray-Bans having a dance-off. Ugh again. A
STONED KID shuffles by with a joint in his hand.

STONED KID
I can't find my joint.

Veronica's face says she's questioning how she ever cared about the opinion of these people.

Douche Mike stands on the roof, about to jump in the pool--

DOUCHE MIKE
I'm the King of the Pool!

Douche Mike JUMPS...AND MISSES THE POOL by a good three feet,
landing at Veronica's feet with a HUGE THUD.

DOUCHE MIKE (CONT'D)
Uhhh, did I just diieeee--
(looks up her skirt)
I went to heeeaven--

Veronica KICKS Mike, as Spence swoops in and puts a seemingly
warm arm around her. She shrugs him off. She's outgrown him.

VERONICA
Spence? What are you doing here?

SPENCE
I saw your post. I had to see you.

VERONICA
My Hamlet video?

SPENCE
Uh, sure. And the one about the
party. You want to get out of here?
This place is crawling with dudes.

VERONICA
I can't ditch my friend.

Spence leans in, sucking her back in.

SPENCE
We need some time alone to talk
things through. Just you and me.
Just for a minute in the car.

Reluctantly, she nods. They walk off around the side yard.

Sierra stumbles into the backyard. No Veronica.

SIERRA
Crap!

Frantic, Sierra pulls out her phone and struggles to dial
Veronica. The numbers blur together.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - STREETSIDE - NIGHT

Veronica slips into the front seat of Spence's BMW.

INT. A CAB - NIGHT

Sierra stumbles into a cab.

SIERRA
(drunk)
To home, trusty steed!

The CABBY gives her an odd look.

CABBY
Address, kid?

SIERRA
Oh...1353 Crestway.

Sierra dials Veronica again.

INT. SPENCE'S BMW - NIGHT

Veronica and Spence make out in a parked car. She struggles to show off her new knowledge between kisses--

VERONICA
...and...Plato believed
in...physical Beauty...as both a
form...and sensory experience.

Spence puts a finger over her lips to shush her--

SPENCE
Shhh. I'm enjoying this sensory
experience.

Veronica's phone lights up blue and BUZZES at the bottom of her purse. Veronica doesn't notice.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - ENTRY WAY - NIGHT

Sierra "sneaks" into her house. Loudly. Really loudly. All but falling into the room.

Her parents stand arms crossed, ready and waiting.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
Sierra, where have you been?

MR. BURGESS
Are you drunk?

SIERRA
(serious male voice)
My name is Stephen Burgess and I'm
a famous writer. I'm soooo
important. You should take me very
seriously right now.

They shake their heads in disappointment.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
Sierra, go to bed. We'll talk about
this in the morning.

Sierra stumbles up the stairs.

SIERRA
(high female voice)
I'm a self-help guru and I'm such a
good parent! Let's talk level-
headed in the morning!

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Veronica buttons her top shirt button and straightens her
hair. She obviously did the deed. She looks through her bag
and sees her phone: Sierra Burgess -- 25 missed calls.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sierra lies in bed. She picks up her phone and calls Jamey.

INTERCUT

INT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - JAMEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

In his feet pajamas, Jamey sleeps in his bed, cuddling with
his RINGING phone. Jamey jolts awake.

JAMEY
(still half asleep)
Hello?!

Jamey looks at the ringing phone. His face lights up.

JAMEY (CONT'D)
(on phone)
Hey there.

SIERRA
(on phone)
I like you.
(MORE)

SIERRA (CONT'D)
 I really, really like you. Because
 you're good. You're so good. And
 you would never lie or speak
 Chinese or--

Jamey rubs the sleep out of his eyes, amused.

JAMEY
 What? Are you drunk?

SIERRA
 I have to tell you something. I
 have to tell you, and you're going
 to hate me...

JAMEY
 I doubt that, Veronica. I could
 never hate you.
 (beat)
 Hello?...Jeez, what is it? Is it
 really that bad?

SNORING from the phone. Jamey smiles to himself.

Sierra is passed out with her phone in hand, her mouth agape.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Sierra looks hung over and miserable, sitting on a couch as
 her parents lecture her.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
 You know what kind of kids go to
 parties and get drunk? Ones with
 low self-esteem. Do you have low
 self-esteem?

SIERRA
 Mooooom--

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
 I thought we taught you self R-E-S-
 P-E-C-T: Reign in Every Self--

SIERRA
 Reign in Every Self-Doubt, Peer
 Expectation and Competitive
 Thought. Yeah, mom, I know.

Sierra stands up, frustrated.

MR. BURGESS

Before you try to argue your way out of this, which we all know you can do with exceptional talent, you're grounded.

SIERRA

Daaaad...

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

Stephen, we've talked about--

MR. BURGESS

No, Jules, you've talked about it. Sure it was some motto that spelled f-r-e-e to f-l-y, but this is my house, too, where there are actions and consequences. And this drunk birdie needs her wings clipped.

Mr. Burgess storms out of the room.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

(hurt)

He'll calm down. Give it a day.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Sierra again confides to Dan as they walk in the hallway. Sierra now dresses better, in Veronica's clothes.

DAN FILMS: Amidst a GOTH POSSE, a GOTH GIRL in black lipstick itches her infected nose ring.

DAN

(to Goth Girl)

They say it's silver but it's mostly nickel...pretty much everyone's allergic to it.

(to self)

Wait, is that a story?

SIERRA

So I passed out but I have no idea if I told him the truth. And then when Ronny finally called me back, she had already done it, and I didn't have the heart to tell her the truth anymore...

DAN
 (with distaste)
 Ronny? I thought you said you
 weren't going out.

Busted.

Veronica runs up to Sierra, completely ignoring Dan.

VERONICA
 There you are! Are you ignoring me?
 Why is everyone ignoring me? Spence
 hasn't returned my texts this
 morning...Not even the...
 (muffles)
Dirty...ones....

Dan shoots Sierra a pointed look.

SIERRA
 No, not at all! I've just been
 dealing with parental fall-out...

VERONICA
 Oh! What happened with the jocks,
 you slut?! You have to tell me
everything.

DAN
 Yeah, slutty whore skank, what
 happened with those jocks?

VERONICA
 Beat it, shadow, the girls are
 talking--

Veronica literally pushes Dan's face away as they walk off...

DAN
 Sierra!

Veronica pulls Sierra down the hall, leaving Dan standing
 confused and alone.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - ENGLISH CLASS - DAY

Looking nervous, Sierra texts Jamey...

SIERRA (O.S.)
 Hey?

INSERT TEXT: ...**hey?**

Chrissy reads the end of her veritable masterpiece.

CHRISSY

We hop in the car. It's a super
fast ride. And we dance on the bar.
And have a sweet time.

MR. THOMSON

Inspired, Chrissy. You should co-
write for Kesha.

Chrissy sits down, feeling proud she rocked it.

MR. THOMSON (CONT'D)

And last but not least, we have our
resident progeny of literary
greatness, Sierra Burgess.

Sierra stares at her notebook.

SIERRA

...I forgot to do it.

MR. THOMSON

You forgot to do it, or you were
trying to prove a point?

SIERRA

I forgot. I'm sorry. I've had so
much going on--

MR. THOMSON

(extremely disappointed)

You realize this cost you an A in
the class, right?

(to Brandy)

Brandy, the prize is yours. It's an
audition with Russell Simmons for a
series on rap and slam poetry.

CLASS

No fair!

MR. THOMSON

I told you delinquents you'd want
the prize!

(to Sierra)

You still have to do the
assignment. But for no credit.

Sierra nods, deeply embarrassed. Avoiding eye contact--

SIERRA
 (choking up)
 I'm sorry. I'm really sorry.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sierra lies in bed staring at her phone. Still no response to her text message. Nervous, she dials...

INTERCUT

I/E. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT

In football gear, Jamey rides with his TEAMMATES. He answers--

SIERRA
 About last night...Did I
 say...something weird?

JAMEY
 Uhhh...weird would be an
 understatement.

SIERRA
 What'd I tell you??

JAMEY
 ...What do you think you told me?

SIERRA
 What do you think that I think that
 you think I told you?

Jamey looks around self-consciously, then whispers--

JAMEY
 Are you afraid you told me you love
 me?

SIERRA
 No!

JAMEY
 No??

SIERRA
 I mean yes! I mean no...I
 mean...let's not say it over the
 phone. Not like this.

Jamey can't help but smile, as his teammates do gross things around him like pull off sweaty socks.

JAMEY

Okay, this silence is me, not
telling you I love you.

A moment of silence. Sierra looks like she wants to cry.

JAMEY (CONT'D)

Sweet dreams, Veronica.

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica sobs as Sierra cradles her on her bed.

VERONICA

He said he doesn't like me anymore,
that I should date someone my own
age. I don't get it. I learned all
those smart things. And I look
like...like me.

SIERRA

Sometimes people just suck. If he
doesn't like you for you, then
screw him, anyway.

Veronica laughs a little through tears, and sits up.

VERONICA

Whoa. Did Miss SAT Words just say
suck and screw? Maybe you could be
normal.

SIERRA

And the same holds true for me. I
have to tell Jamey. In person. I'll
set up a date?

VERONICA

About time. I mean, if I can learn
to stand you, anyone can.

Sierra smiles at the "compliment." A KNOCK at the door.

VERONICA'S MOM (O.S.)

Ronny, I got you some Spanx, honey!
I'm slipping them under the door.

INT. UCLA - AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

A full auditorium. Mrs. Osborn-Burgess stands nervously at a
podium. A projector screen behind her says "Believing in You:
From Self-Acceptance to Life Success."

Her hands shake as she flips through her note cards. Her eyes search the audience, looking for her family.

She sees Mr. Burgess in the front row next to Dan, with Sierra's empty seat beside him. The parents exchange a sad look. He mouths the words: "You can do it."

She steels her nerves, swallowing her insecurity. Confident:

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
Thank you all for coming.

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica paints Sierra's nails.

SIERRA
Can I ask you a question? It's okay
if you say no...

VERONICA
Not gonna lez out with you, if
that's the question. I only do that
at parties.

SIERRA
What? No...What's with your mom?
What really happened to your dad?

VERONICA
Dad left her for a twenty-two year
old...and left us with all this
furniture and crap and no way to
pay for our old house. She's been
batty about fading youth stuff ever
since.

Deep pity and understanding washes over Sierra's face.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Sierra walks in to her parents at the kitchen table. No morning greetings this time. Sierra feels the chill.

SIERRA
What's with you guys?
(off their looks)
Oh, crap! Your seminar. I
completely forgot! I'm so sorry--

MR. BURGESS

And where were you? I told you
you're grounded.

SIERRA

Sorry.

MR. BURGESS

We seem to be hearing the word
"sorry" a lot lately.

SIERRA

I know. I'm just a...

MR. BURGESS

Little too focused on yourself?

SIERRA

(suddenly annoyed)

Yeah. A little too focused on
myself. So sorry that I finally
have a life outside you guys. Hope
it's not a major inconvenience.

Sierra turns on her heels and storms out.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Sierra and Veronica walk arm in arm down the hallway, both
dressed in CHEERLEADER UNIFORMS. They walk right by DAN
FILMING, and don't even notice him. DAN'S CAMERA'S POV:

DAN (O.S.)

Oh good, cheer leading is your
latest extra-curricular! Give me an
S! Give me a T! Give me a D!

SIERRA

(hurt, to camera)

Stop being so competitive with me.
It's a little stalkerish.

VERONICA

Yeah, shadow, beat it!

We pull back. Dan puts down his camera, hurt.

DAN

I'd rather be nobody than you.

VERONICA

Yeah?

DAN

Yeah.

They glare at each other with intensity--

VERONICA

Well good thing I don't care what
some nobody thinks. Neither does
Sierra.

Torn for a second, Sierra continues down the hall with
Veronica...

Dan goes to speak, but his VOICE CRACKS. Hurt rises.
Silently, he watches them go...sadness turns to anger.

INT. DAN'S HOUSE - DAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Dan settles comfortably into a chair as he opens his laptop,
turns on his laptop camera. PRESSES RECORD, to film a vlog.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS COURT YARD - NIGHT

Sierra and Veronica huddle a few yards away from a bench
overlooking a fountain.

SIERRA

I'll be behind that tree, waiting.
Say you have something to tell him,
but you'll be right back. Then I'll
walk over and confess everything.

VERONICA

Okay, got it. I'm proud of you.

The girls see Jamey walking toward them.

SIERRA

Break a leg.

VERONICA

Mean!

SIERRA

It's an expression...nevermind.

INT. BEHIND TREE - LATER

Sierra watches Jamey and Veronica from afar, impatient.

SIERRA
What is taking her so long?

Sierra watches, as...

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS COURTYARD - SAME TIME

Veronica and Jamey sit laughing, suspiciously close on the bench. Jamey couldn't look more puppy dog eyed to see her. The fountain, the courtyard, crazy romantic.

JAMEY
So I'll finally get to show you off
at the football game this weekend.

VERONICA
(guilty)
Ummm...I don't...the game?

Jamey puts his hand on hers.

JAMEY
This is going to sound lame, but I
really missed you these last couple
days. Like a lot.

Jamey leans in, and kisses Veronica.

BEHIND TREE

Sierra's eyes fill with tears as she sees them kiss. She turns on her heels and runs out of the restaurant.

EXT. ROMANTIC RESTAURANT PATIO - NIGHT

Veronica pulls back from Jamey.

JAMEY
(whispers)
I love you.

VERONICA
Don't say that! Not to me.

Emotion building...

VERONICA (CONT'D)
You're in love with someone else. I
wish...I wish for even one day,
someone would look at me the way
that you look at her.

JAMEY

What? Who?? Wait, is this about
that Spence guy?

Veronica pauses, a bitter smile at how far off base he is.

VERONICA

That's how it started. Not how it
ends.

Then she charges off, disappearing. Jamey stands up.

JAMEY

Veronica!

Jamey is left alone and bewildered.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - ENTRY WAY - NIGHT

Sierra bursts into her house, heaving with sobs and tears
streaming down her face. Her parents stare, stunned--

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

Sierra? What's wrong, honey??

SIERRA

(through sobs)

Don't Sierra, honey, me! This is
your fault! Why'd you have to marry
someone so impressively,
exceptionally, epic level ugly?!

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

(shocked)

Sierra!

SIERRA

It's easy for you to spout your
self-esteem b.s. But look at me!
Know what it's like to be a teenage
girl in Beverly Hills and look like
this? Of course you don't. Because
you're beautiful. You've always
been beautiful. And this is what
you stuck me with!

Sierra darts up the stairs.

Mr. Burgess looks crushed.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Sierra walks through the halls alone. She looks around in confusion as she sees every Student's nose buried in their cell phones. Smirks all around.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - BATHROOM - DAY

Veronica exits a stall and sees her picture on the front of a flyer with Dan's URL that is discarded on the floor. She hurriedly snatches it up and starts reading.

VERONICA

"Picture Imperfect: the down and dirty truth about the Queen of Mean...at dannicholls dot com?"

MONTAGE OF MULTI-MEDIA SHOTS, Dan's confessional recording, spliced with FOOTAGE WE'VE SEEN HIM FILM FROM AROUND SCHOOL.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Football Players watch the video on their iPhones:

DAN

(on video)

Ever heard of a placenta facial?

FOOTBALL PLAYER 2

What's a placenta?

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - LAWN - DAY

Melanie smiles as she watches with Chrissy:

DAN

(on video)

Her laughable insecurity is the kind that can only come from...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Horrified, Sierra watches on her phone.

DAN

(on video)

...years of psychological manipulation from a mother so obsessed with her own poor lot in life, she conjures images...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - BATHROOM - DAY

Veronica watches on her phone, tears welling in her eyes.

DAN
(on video)
...of Mrs. Havisham from Dickens'
Great Expectations.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - COUNSELOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Both shaking their heads, Counselor Stevens and Mr. Thomson watch on her laptop.

VIDEO FOOTAGE of SPENCE WAVING OFF A CAMERA, denying comment.

DAN
(on video)
This college boy, Spence, preyed on
her insecurities and convinced her--

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Sierra watches on her phone, head hanging.

DAN
(on video)
She wasn't smart enough, just so--

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - BATHROOM - DAY

Veronica watches, can't stop herself. Repeating:

VERONICA
...he could get her in the sack
once she had something to prove?

SIERRA
(on video)
When Ronny finally called me back,
she had already done it...

Veronica charges out of the bathroom, into the...

HALLWAY

Flyers are scattered. Students glued to their devices:

VERONICA

(video)

I'M GONNA RIP OUT YOUR PIT HAIR YOU
VEGAN FREAK!!

DAN

(on video)

And now you know the down and dirty
truth about the Queen of Mean.

The video ends with a series of INVASIVE SHOTS OF VERONICA.
At the prom booth; on the school lawn; cheer leading, etc.

Students stop and whisper, seeing Veronica. What starts as
whispers...

DOUCHE MIKE

Moronica.

STUDENT 2

Moronica!

Turns into laughter and chants--

STUDENTS

MORONICA! MORONICA!

Veronica runs down the hall--

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Sierra stares at her phone in disbelief. Dan approaches--

SIERRA

How could you post something like
this about one of my friends? Great
investigative reporting! Is a
stupid viral post really that
important to you?

DAN

I thought we were friends! All you
care about is Veronica and Jamey,
Jamey, Jamey! Seriously, Sierra, I
don't even know who you are
anymore. When did you become the
kind of girl who puts on a show for
a guy? You pretend to be an
intellectual, when you like pretty
boys, just like every other stupid
girl in the world.

SIERRA

Sure, at first I just thought he was cute. But that's not why I like him. He gets me! He gets me more than anyone ever has--

DAN

I get you! I've always gotten you...for you. Maybe I don't play football, or have abs designed on a Macbook Pro--

Sierra's face falls, finally realizing Dan's crush.

SIERRA

Dan...

Dan sits down, on strike. Sierra sits down with him.

SIERRA (CONT'D)

You never said anything.

DAN

Right. Who ever heard of someone sensitive enough to intuit their best friend's feelings?

SIERRA

...I don't know what to say.

Dan moves further away from Sierra, looking away...

Veronica approaches, her eyes full of tears. Every student in the hallway smirks as she passes.

VERONICA

You knew Spence was just using me and you didn't tell me? What, was this all a set up? I'm just some big joke to you?

SIERRA

Right, I'm the back-stabber. You kissed him, I saw you kiss him!

VERONICA

He kissed me! He thinks I'm you, remember?! I stopped it right away. But you ran away and won't call me back--

DOUCHE MIKE

Hey, Placenta Face!

Students laugh.

VERONICA

You whine about your looks. But you have no idea what it's like to be me. You see everyone right now? When you're pretty and popular, people can't wait for you to trip and fall on your face. When you grow up looking like this...
(tears now streaming)
People think you're stupid, or you're mean...

Standing up, Dan looks genuinely remorseful, now getting it.

DAN

(suddenly realizing)
...until one day you wake up and you actually are...Shit...Veronica. I'm really sorry...

VERONICA

(quieter, more steely)
I told you stuff I've never told anyone. I thought you were different. You think I'm mean? Take a look in the mirror. Your face is the least ugly thing about you.

Veronica turns on her heels to walk away, then turns--

SLAPS DAN'S CHEEK. She walks away, all eyes on her.

Sierra looks at Dan and shakes her head, then walks away.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - ENTRY WAY - EVENING

Sierra walks by her dad, silent. No quote this time.

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Veronica sits on her bed on the phone.

VERONICA

Yeah, new number. Sorry for my freak out. I'm just a spaz. Totally PMSing. See you at the game.

Veronica hangs up. She suddenly hears a STRANGE RUMMAGING.

Veronica wanders over to her closet...and opens the door--

Tears in her eyes, Scooter crouches in Veronica's closet, face covered in chocolate crumbs, scarfing Ding Dongs--

SCOOTER
Please don't tell Mom.

VERONICA
(heart sinking)
This has to end.

Veronica sits down next to her sister, and grabs a Ding Dong. Scooter rests her head on Veronica's shoulder.

EXT. JAMEY'S HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

A crowded football game. A BAND PLAYS. Sierra and Veronica glare at each other as they do a CHEER on the football field with the rest of their SQUAD.

SQUAD
Who's the best? West? That was a
test!--

Veronica "accidentally" hits Sierra with a pom pom--

SQUAD (CONT'D)
We'll eat your whole team for a
feast chanting--
(Sierra hits Veronica)
EAST!
(Veronica hits Sierra)
EAST!

Both hitting each other with their pom poms--

SQUAD (CONT'D)
EAST!

The ball is in play. Jamey looks up, and waves at Veronica. Sierra forgets herself and waves back, along with Veronica.

ON THE FIELD

The ball is coming his way. Jamey catches it, but looks confused as he looks from Veronica, then to Sierra. Suddenly, he gets clobbered by the other team. A human pile.

SIDELINES

SIERRA
Jamey!

Sierra and Veronica freeze, nervous--

The FOOTBALL PLAYERS get off Jamey. He lies unconscious.

FOOTBALL PLAYER 3
Hey, J, you okay? Call a medic!

SIDELINES

SIERRA
This is your fault. You distracted him.

VERONICA
How do you know it was me he was looking at?...Well, who are we kidding?

FIELD

A MEDIC crouches over Jamey, whose eyes flutter open.

MEDIC
Can you wiggle your toes son?

JAMEY
I'm fine. Seriously, I'm fine...but why are there two of you?

MEDIC
Let's have you checked out for a concussion.

SIDELINES

SIERRA
Please stand up, please stand up.

Relief washes over the girls as they see Jamey stand up.

A MEDIC and Football Player 3 help a confused Jamey walk off the field. They limp towards Sierra and Veronica at the sidelines.

SIERRA (CONT'D)	VERONICA
Jamey!	Jamey!

Jamey's disoriented eyes focus on Sierra first.

JAMEY
Girl from the book signing...Is this another dream about you?

Veronica's face falls. Sierra smiles and shakes her head no. Game on. Veronica puts a comforting hand on Jamey.

VERONICA
Nice catch, babe. Keep your eyes on
the field next time.

Jamey laughs. His eyes are locked to Veronica now.

JAMEY
You're here. That beats a win.

Sierra's face falls. She hangs back, as Veronica walks off
with Jamey, the Medic and Football Player.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - BIOLOGY CLASS - DAY

Sierra is at one station, and Dan at another. Veronica is
back with her Melanie and Chrissy.

BIOLOGY TEACHER
This is telophase, with the cell
that about to cleave apart forever
into two distinct cells.

DOUCHE MIKE
Cleavage! Niiiiiice.

Sierra and Dan share a glance, then Sierra and Veronica share
a glance. Sierra looks in the microscope--

A BLOB of a cell almost irreparably split in two.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sierra walks into the kitchen. Mr. Burgess is at his usual
spot at the table with his laptop.

SIERRA
Dad, can we talk?

MR. BURGESS
"Family likeness has often a deep
sadness in it. Nature, that great
tragic dramatist, knits us together
by bone and muscle, and divides us
by the subtler web of our
brains..."

SIERRA
Dunno. You finally stumped me.

MR. BURGESS
George Eliot.

SIERRA

Dad, I'm really sorry. I didn't mean it. Not really--

MR. BURGESS

Sierra, you are beautiful, and that's your mother's doing. But you're so much more than that. I like to think we had other gifts to bring, like that big brain of yours. All that writing talent--

SIERRA

Think I don't get how amazing you are? Of course I do. It's terrifying, growing up in the shadow of a Nobel Prize-winning author. How can I top that?

MR. BURGESS

It's not a competition, Sierra. And your mother and I aren't perfect. My first novel was so bad, I still can't even get someone to publish it as a free e-book.

Mrs. Osborn-Burgess, watching in the sidelines, comes in...

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

And how do you think it is for me, living in a house with two geniuses? You have your special father-daughter things that I'm just not a part of.

(off their looks)

I just made that sound like incest, didn't I?

Off both their head nods. Sierra laughs.

SIERRA

Sorry. I shouldn't laugh at that...

MR. BURGESS

Just do you. So far, you're pretty good at finding your own way.

Mr. Burgess shares a look with his wife. They agree.

MR. BURGESS (CONT'D)

Hug, from one big nose to another?

Sierra hugs her father. She melts into him, emotion taking over. Everything feels right again.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sierra scribbles furiously in her notebook, writing the poem she finally has the guts to complete.

SIERRA
Without you, I've no thorns,
love...

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NEXT NIGHT

Sierra is dressed in sweatpants. She looks in the mirror. Smiles, remembering she used to like what she saw.

The DOORBELL rings.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - ENTRY WAY - NIGHT

Sierra opens the door. Dan stands at the door, looking handsome in a tux. He hands her a bouquet of yellow roses.

DAN
Don't worry. They're yellow, for
friendship.

SIERRA
What are you doing here?

DAN
No best friend of mine is skipping
prom. It's...prom. How are the
popular kids going to feel popular
if the losers don't show up?

SIERRA
I'm not going. I don't have a date.
I don't even have a dress.

DAN
Um, hello. I'm your date. And I
don't care. Go dressed like that.

Sierra tries not to smile. After a beat:

SIERRA
Okay. But I'll borrow something
from my mom. I'm not going in
sweats.

DAN
Thank God. You look pretty gross.

FLASH! Mr. and Mrs. Burgess enter, taking pictures.

SIERRA

This is where I draw the line!

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS

But we have to be annoying. We signed it in your birth contract.

INT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - ENTRY WAY - NIGHT

Veronica is dressed for prom. More gorgeous than ever. Jamey walks in hesitantly, presenting Ty for the first time.

VERONICA

(comically loudly)

HI, TY! NICE. TO. MEET. YOU!

Jamey gives her an odd look...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM - NIGHT

Students dance or mingle in a gym decorated lavishly.

Mr. Thomson grabs and smells a plastic cup from Douche Mike.

MR. THOMSON

Contraband? Crazy juice? I can smell your fear.

ACROSS THE ROOM

Dan and Sierra dance to a slow song. Sierra looks beautiful, all dressed up. She looks around for someone...

Chrissy and Melanie dance with Football Players 1 and 2. The Lesbians slow dance nearby, and Lesbian 1 wiggles her tongue between two fingers at Melanie.

Sierra spots Jamey and Veronica dancing across the room.

Sierra catches Dan watching her watch Jamey. Off her guilt--

DAN

It's okay. I'll be fine. Seriously. Can you imagine if we really dated? We'd kill each other.

SIERRA

Dan, I'm sorry. For everything.

DAN

I know. Me too. Now's your chance.
No backing down.

SIERRA

Wait. You're not gonna film me,
right?

Dan holds up two hands, proving his empty-handedness.

STAGE

Sierra stands on a stage, looking nervous. She leans in to the mic.

SIERRA (CONT'D)

This thing on?

The music stops. Everyone looks at Sierra.

DANCE FLOOR

Jamey stops dancing and looks at Sierra, incredulous that it's her.

STAGE

SIERRA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. Jeez, why do I keep
saying that word? But I've got a
lot more sorries to say. And then
you can carry on with your gateway
drugs and your teen pregnancy.

DOUCHE MIKE

Sierra for Prom King!

SIERRA

I've hurt a lot of people lately,
and some of them don't even know it
yet. I wanted to start with
Veronica.

(locks eyes with Veronica)

I never meant to hurt you. I only
told Dan all that stuff because I
was so wrapped up in our friendship
I couldn't stop talking about you.
You're one of the biggest surprises
of my life. And I miss you. I
really do.

DOUCHE MIKE

Dykes!

Veronica's eyes soften. She misses her, too.

SIERRA

And to Mr. Thomson. I'm sorry for not believing in myself when you believed in me. I hope the poem I'm about to read will make you know I do take your class seriously. I just...felt like I could never live up to what you expected. But I'm past that now. I wrote a longer version, but I figured, you know, brevity for this particular venue--

Dan gestures for her to hurry it along. Sierra pulls out a piece of paper from her purse. She looks directly at Jamey.

Sierra clears her throat, nervous.

SIERRA (CONT'D)

Without you, I still grow, Love.
Without you, I stand strong.
Without you, my veins pump thick,
my leaves span wide, my stem shoots long. Without you, life still flows, Love: new sources spring when water's run. Without you, I'm no lone rose, Love: A sunflower, I still tower with my patch, stretched toward the sun.

DANCE FLOOR

Mr. Thomson nods his head along in approval. Jamey is staring intently but confusedly at Sierra. He knows this voice.

ON STAGE

SIERRA (CONT'D)

Without you, I've no thorns, Love:
all self-defenses can repose.
Without you, no sentiment draws
threat of blood when near-exposed.
Without you, I've no bud, Love; No
secret care to safe enclose.
Without you, I don't wait, my love
to be picked with a loving hold.
(looking intensely at
Jamey)
Because without you, I'm just a
sunflower. And I cannot be a rose.

DANCE FLOOR

Jamey's eyes burn with hurt. He knows.

Veronica looks from Sierra to Jamey, and takes a small step back. She knows they belong together.

Silence. No one knows what the hell is going on, but they sense a gravity to it.

Mr. Thomson claps. Scattered clapping. Others BOO.

ON STAGE

SIERRA (CONT'D)

Jamey. You hear my voice. I know you know it's me. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry everything got out of hand.

(looks at Veronica)

A certain someone's favorite author, Louisa May Alcott, said love is a great beautifier.

(looks at Jamey)

I hope that's true. Because then maybe you can see inside to my good intentions and forgive me. I just never thought you'd go for...a loser like me.

DANCE FLOOR

Jamey looks at Sierra, then at Veronica. Starts to walk away:

VERONICA

Jamey...

Jamey stops and turns around, emotion overtaking him.

JAMEY

You two deserve each other.

Jamey hurries out. Sierra and Veronica stand alone.

DOUCHE MIKE

Get off the stage, loser!

The music starts again. People awkwardly start to dance.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Angsty teenage music. She takes her phone, goes to Jamey's contact information. She hovers over his contact, and then presses DELETE.

EXT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - NIGHT

Jamey sits in a swing tossing a football. Ty walks out.

TY
(in sign language)
Are you okay?

JAMEY
(in sign language and
aloud)
I'm fine, buddy.

TY
(with deaf accent)
I'm deaf, not blind.

Jamey laughs as he tosses the ball gently to Ty.

TY (CONT'D)
(in sign language)
Just call her.

JAMEY
It's not that simple...

Jamey's face says maybe it is that simple. Jamey hops off the swing with renewed conviction. He's not going to wallow.

JAMEY (CONT'D)
(in sign and aloud)
Come on, let's go run the drills.
I'm gonna make you the first four
foot quarterback.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - LAWN - DAY

Sierra and Dan eat lunch amidst the other CLIQUES. Veronica and Chrissy and Melanie eat lunch nearby. A school paper beside them says "Dan Nicholl issues retraction, claims story all lies" on the cover.

SIERRA
How'd your meeting with Principal Morton go? I can't believe you threw yourself under the bus for Veronica. I'm proud of you. That was really selfless.

DAN

Well, you know, I walked in there and told him everything I said was a lie...and I really expected to be expelled. I almost was. But when I pointed out the ridiculous pressure on kids to get into college...I dunno, I guess he felt bad for me. So he's sending me to counseling...and trying to get me an internship studying ethics for journalists.

(beat)

Wait, is that a story?

(convinced)

Wow. That's a really good story.

SIERRA

(laughing)

Well, at least you're back in the game. Maybe I can find a nice community college next to wherever you get in.

Dan texts something to Veronica:

DAN (O.S.)

A re-edit of my video. Take a look.

BUZZ. Veronica looks up from her phone at Dan, then over at Sierra. Veronica half-smiles. Hi, old friend. Sierra half-smiles and waves back. Things will be good again.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - ENGLISH CLASS - DAY

A BELL RINGS. Students file out. Sierra hangs back.

SIERRA

About the poem--

MR. THOMSON

Your poem was late, which was lazy, insulting and disrespectful.

Sierra nods in resignation. She starts to walk out.

MR. THOMSON (CONT'D)

But Sierra, it took so much guts to get on that stage, and speak from the heart. That's the mark of a true writer, a true artist... So I made a few calls.

(beat)

(MORE)

MR. THOMSON (CONT'D)

I got you a summer internship as the writer's assistant for the head of Stanford's writing department.

SIERRA

What?! That means--

MR. THOMSON

A recommendation letter from a faculty member will give you a serious edge. So don't screw it up.

SIERRA

I could just hug you!

MR. THOMSON

Yeah, don't. Half the school already thinks you dedicated a love poem to me, so...thanks for that!

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Veronica walks into her kitchen with armfuls of grocery bags-- all full of junk food. Veronica's Mom eyes bulge with horror. Scooter's and Brody's eyes go wide with hunger.

VERONICA'S MOM

You can't bring that junk in here. What if Scooter eats it?

VERONICA

That's the hope! Unless your hospital patient craziness can't be erased.

VERONICA'S MOM

Don't talk to me like that. Your father would roll over in his grave--

VERONICA

Dad's not dead, mom.

VERONICA'S MOM

(stung)

I know...but he should be.

VERONICA

I'm sorry for what happened to you. But dad's a level ten loser. You can't live your life like every man'll screw you over. You can't make us, either. The twins need a real mom back. We all do.

Veronica's Mom looks remorseful. Things are going to change.

INT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - JAMEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jamey sits on his bed, stares at his phone.

JAMEY
Forget her.

A DOORBELL RINGS. Jamey's eyes light up...Sierra??

INT. JAMEY'S HOUSE - ENTRY WAY - MOMENTS LATER

Jamey rustles his hair, trying to smooth it out, and opens the door...

It's Veronica.

INT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sierra sits eating at the table with Mr. and Mrs. Osborn-Burgess.

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
How about happy? H. A. P. P. Y.
Harbor All...Positive...Hmmm...

SIERRA
Harbor All Positive People...YOLO!

MRS. OSBORN-BURGESS
What's a yolo?

BUZZ. Sierra sees a text from an unknown number.

INSERT TEXT: **HI.**

SIERRA
(reading as she types)
Who...is...this?

The phone BUZZES again. It's a picture of Jamey. Sierra smiles, her heart leaps.

INSERT TEXT: **Go to your window.**

ENTRYWAY

Sierra runs to look out her front window: Jamey on her lawn.

EXT. SIERRA'S HOUSE - FRONT LAWN - NIGHT

Sierra tentatively but excitedly walks out on her front lawn.

SIERRA

What are you doing here?...How do you even know where I live?

JAMEY

Veronica dropped by tonight.

SIERRA

Oh.

JAMEY

She had some pretty convincing arguments in your favor. I didn't know you trained her in the Socratic method.

(off her laugh)

What you did was terrible. Like, really, really bad.

Sierra looks down, ashamed.

SIERRA

I know. But sometimes it feels like the world is conspiring against you to tell you you're not good enough.

JAMEY

I get why you did it. And the truth is, had we not met the way we did, maybe I wouldn't have noticed you. You're not everyone's type--

SIERRA

Okay, you can stop now. I get it.

JAMEY

But you're my type. Exactly my type. And I think you're beautiful.

Jamey pulls out a single sunflower from behind his back.

JAMEY (CONT'D)

And for the record, I'll take a sunflower over a rose any day.

Jamey hands her the flower. He leans in and kisses her. Another epic kiss. Jamey touches his lips...familiar.

JAMEY (CONT'D)

Have we done that before?

Sierra shrugs guiltily.

FADE TO:

INT. BOOKSTORE - NIGHT

Something blurred, magnified. Red and shrivelled.

RISHI (O.S.)
Let's take a look.

Melanie draws back from her contact mirror, checking her lipstick.

RISHI (CONT'D)
(smacky kissy face)
Give me a little smack.

Melanie purses her lips. Then: PLANTS ONE ON HIM. They're really going at it in the background, as...

Dozens of chairs arranged for a book reading. Ty, Jamey, Topher, Dan, Veronica, Chrissy, Sierra's parents, Counselor Stevens, and Mr. Thomson sit in the audience. A poster reads "Shakespeare High: by Sierra Burgess."

COUNSELOR STEVENS
(to Mr. Thomson)
I always told her she'd be a writer.

MR. THOMSON
(dismissive)
Yeah, you're a real psychic.

VERONICA
I can't believe my best friend is reading from a book she wrote.

DAN
I'm her best friend.

VERONICA
I'm her best friend...

Melanie pulls her tongue outta Rishi's mouth just long enough to chime in:

MELANIE
Uggh, get a room.

VERONICA

Don't need a room. I'm sworn off
boys for a while. Working on some
me time with the fam.

We realize Scooter and Brody are there too. Dan and Veronica
share a look that says her time off boys might not last long.

Topher stares at Chrissy.

CHRISSY

(shrugs)
If I'm drunk enough.

Topher's eyes go wide. Reading Sierra's book poster--

CHRISSY (CONT'D)

Is William Shakespeare that way old
guy from Star Trek?

DAN

Captain Kirk? That's exactly right!

Chrissy looks seriously pleased with herself.

JAMEY

Shhh, here she comes!

MELANIE

Ugh, Sierra Burgess is...

Beautiful and confident, Sierra heads to a podium.

VERONICA

A total rockstar.

CREDITS ROLL OVER MONTAGE OF DAN'S RE-EDITED VIDEO

Veronica, beautiful, bare-faced at a prom booth; Sierra and
Veronica cheering together; Veronica sneaking prom tickets to
the Lesbian Students; Sierra and Veronica, asleep on a
library table. Portraits of friendship and growth.

FADE OUT.