

THE WILDS

Written by

Sarah Streicher

©2018, ABC Signature Studios, Inc. All rights reserved.
This material is the exclusive property of ABC Signature Studios and is intended solely for the use of its personnel. Distribution to unauthorized persons or reproduction, in whole or in part, without the written consent of ABC Signature Studios is strictly prohibite

"We want to have fun. And we want to be rescued."

-Lord of the Flies, 1954

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY - THE PRESENT

A stark room with cinderblock walls. Antiseptic lighting.

At the end of a long table, an FBI AGENT (50s) studies a CASE FILE. A yearbook photo of a TEENAGE GIRL stares out at him. She has bright eyes, bob-length hair. Not quite pretty per se... More like arthouse pretty. A strange, stirring appeal.

The agent looks up from the file...

The GIRL FROM THE PHOTO is seated across from him. Her eyes shine with the same intelligence, but in every other way she is a girl transformed. Now she is emaciated, a hospital gown hanging on her frail body. Her hair wild, her skin weathered.

This is LEAH RILKE (17). Our heroine and eventual narrator.

The agent checks his watch --

LEAD AGENT

We'll start as soon as he's back.

As if on cue, a JUNIOR AGENT (30s, male, "good cop") enters with an armful of cold convenience-store beverages.

JUNIOR AGENT

Wasn't sure what you liked, so I got plenty of options... Coke, Sprite, Gatorade, fizzy water...

He sets down the drinks. Takes a seat next to his partner.

JUNIOR AGENT

Anything look good? Or did I strike out? Because I can always run back.

Leah stares at the beverages, nostalgia filling her eyes. She reaches for a **MANGO JARRITOS**. Turns it over in her hand.

LEAH

I used to drink these all the time.

JUNIOR AGENT

Have as many as you like, we can get more. Oh, and start thinking about what you'd like for lunch. I know they've reintroduced starches into your diet, so we could do pasta, pizza, maybe a sub sandwich--

LEAH

Stop. Please stop. The coddling, the kid gloves... It's too much.

LEAD AGENT

We just want you to be comfortable, Leah. Surely you understand that. After what you've been through...

LEAH

What have the others told you?

LEAD AGENT

Well. Nothing as yet. You're the first one we've brought in.

LEAH

Then you don't *know* what I've been through, do you? You're just assuming the worst. You're just assuming it was a living hell.

LEAD AGENT

No one's assuming anything. It's just...you *have* presented some fairly classic signs of trauma.

Leah breathes deeply. Focuses. Eager to make herself clear.

LEAH

Look. I don't mean to say that what happened wasn't *traumatic*.

QUICK FLASH TO:

THE ENDLESS BLUE OCEAN

Where LEAH is floating on a CRUDE RAFT of some kind. Her clothes shredded. Her legs tangled in kelp. *Unconscious*.

LEAH'S VOICE

Obviously it was traumatic. To end up where we did, in the middle of nowhere... Completely cut off from the lives we left behind...

BACK IN THE INTERROGATION ROOM

Leah gazes at the Jarritos bottle, losing herself in it.

LEAH

But that brings us to the big question, doesn't it? The question that informs everything that happened out there...
(looks up at the agents)
What was so *fucking* great about the lives we left behind?

INT. MARTHA'S BEDROOM - RED LAKE RESERVATION - "BEFORE"

MARTHA BLACKBURN (16) watches YouTube on her janky laptop. Martha is a plump, doe-eyed Ojibwe caught between traditional rez culture and regular teendom -- on her walls, tribal artwork hangs next to boyband posters, a horse calendar.

LEAH'S VOICE

*Because here's what I remember of
all that...*

ANGLE ON Martha's laptop -- She's watching a DIY TUTORIAL on how to pin back unsightly ears.

LEAH'S VOICE

*I remember the constant contempt
for the face in the mirror.*

Martha swoops up her hair, revealing HUGE PROTRUDING EARS.

Per the video, she squeezes SUPER GLUE behind one ear and presses down hard. But when she lets go, the lobe lurches forward. Martha WINCES IN PAIN as skin unsticks from skin.

INT. CASINO RESTAURANT - RED LAKE RESERVATION - "BEFORE"

TONI SHALIFOE (16, also Ojibwe) clears a table at the restaurant where she works, a budget steakhouse inside the tribal casino. Toni is small and wiry, with the feral energy of a boy raised by wolves.

LEAH'S VOICE

*I remember the dark moods. The
violent moods. Moods that nobody
had any patience for.*

Toni picks up the check left by her last customer -- on the tip line, they've drawn a big fat ZERO with a note scrawled next to it: "Waitress needs to lose the poopy attitude."

Toni snarls. We can practically see the bull stamping within her. In a fit of rage, she FLIPS the table clear over.

INT. XAVIER PREPARATORY HIGH SCHOOL - NYC - "BEFORE"

A group of CONVENTIONALLY HOT GIRLS glide down the hallway of an elite Manhattan prep school. Gossiping. Drinking boba.

LEAH'S VOICE

*I remember the social scene, with
all of its cruel Catch-22s. For
instance, you certainly didn't want
to be one of the populars. They
were just pure hot trash.*

The hot girls FLIP THEIR HAIR in unison. Like assholes.

LEAH'S VOICE

*So you'd set yourself apart. You'd
embrace your outsider brand...*

NORA REID (16, black) sits on the floor nearby, chewing on her hair, her face buried in a book. ("The Audubon Guide to American Birds.") Nora is uninterested in fitting in. And quite possibly on the high-functioning end of the spectrum.

LEAH'S VOICE

*Only to realize that deep down, you
still wanted the trash to like you.*

The hot girls SNICKER at Nora. We see her FLINCH, ever so subtly. *She cannot help but care a little.* Closing her book, she gathers her things and crosses the hall, entering the --

GYMNASIUM

Where RACHEL REID, her fraternal twin, is perched on a balance beam. Rachel's concentration shows all over her face...which is also covered in red mounds of cystic acne. Yes, she is conspicuously unattractive -- a burden she's overcome by turning herself into a gymnastics powerhouse.

LEAH'S VOICE

*I remember the ridiculous
expectations they had for us. Like,
we were supposed to be these
perfect golden gods, 24/7.*

Rachel begins a tumbling pass. After two amazing leaps, she SLIPS OFF. Her domineering coach ELLEN ROSE (55) picks up a stray yoga ball and hurls it angrily, à la Bobby Knight.

Hopping back on the beam, Rachel sees her sister watching. She shoots Nora a defiant look, its message as clear as day:

Don't pity me, bitch. I chose this life.

INT. SUSHI RESTAURANT - SAN FRANCISCO - "BEFORE"

JEANETTE NAKAJIMA (16, happy-go-lucky) hovers over a cutting board in the back of her family's sushi restaurant. Earbuds in, bopping along to some poppy beat.

LEAH'S VOICE

*I remember all of the terrible
responsibilities...*

REVEAL what she's doing -- butchering a LIVE LOBSTER. She hacks off the CLAWS and TAIL, tosses them on ice.

Jeanette places her hand over the torso, the legs wriggling between her fingers. She frowns. What a bummer of a chore.

LEAH'S VOICE

*The very adult responsibilities,
forced on us before our time...*

She shakes off her misgivings. Lifts her knife and brings it down swiftly, SEVERING the lobster's head.

EXT. DOT'S HOUSE - FORT TRAVIS, TEXAS - "BEFORE"

DOT GRINNELL (16, full-figured hardass) smokes a cigarette on her rickety front porch, the Texas sunset glowing behind her. She takes one last drag, crushes the cig, then heads into...

THE HOUSE

Where her sick father ABE GRINNELL dozes in a hospital bed.

LEAH'S VOICE

*The kind of responsibility that
made you think "Oh yeah. This is
definitely fucking me up
developmentally right now."*

Dot sits at his bedside, snaps on a pair of gloves. With a swab of gauze, she cleans his crusty TRACHEOSTOMY HOLE. This is clearly a routine thing, and it's wearing on her.

INT. SHELBY'S BEDROOM - FORT TRAVIS, TEXAS - "BEFORE"

SHELBY GOODKIND (16, evangelical pageant princess) stands in the center of her room, radiant in a floral-print bikini. Her lapdog boyfriend ANDREW kneels on the floor beside her, spray-tanning her legs with an AIRBRUSH TOOL.

LEAH'S VOICE

*And don't get me started on the
impossible problem of sex. If you
were terrified of it -- which, by
the way, you had every reason to
be -- you'd be deemed a frigid
chastity bitch...*

Andrew stares worshipfully at Shelby's crotch. He reaches a hand toward her inner thigh... But she deftly swats it away.

INT. DORM ROOM - UC BERKELEY - "BEFORE"

FATIN JADMANI (16, Pakistani-American) seduces a COLLEGE ATHLETE in his extra-long twin bed. She's straddling him, removing her shirt in a playful strip-tease. (FYI, her shirt is a pink tank-top that says "Feed Me & Tell Me I'm Pretty.")

LEAH'S VOICE

But if you were unafraid... Like if it somehow came naturally to you... Then god help you. The world is a dangerous place for a sexually evolved girl.

There's an apparatus on the nightstand: a GO-PRO CAM attached to a lycra headband. Fatin WINKS at her partner as she pulls the camera onto her forehead and presses record. ACTION!

INT. LEAH'S BEDROOM - BERKELEY, CA - "BEFORE"

We see Leah at 16 -- an earlier time, though not necessarily a happier one. She's lying in her bed. Eyes raw from crying.

LEAH'S VOICE

And here's the kicker. The miserable fucking kicker. On top of all that, we found ourselves, for the very first time, in the degrading position of wanting to love, and to be loved back.

The phone in her hand BUZZES. It's text from a 917 (NYC) area code: "I'm blocking your number. Goodbye."

LEAH'S VOICE

Which as you know, never ends well.

Leah erupts into sobs. The hideous animal sobs of heartbreak.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY - THE PRESENT

Leah takes her first sip of Jarritos. She winces -- perhaps from the cool liquid, but more likely from the aching memory.

LEAH

Basically what I'm saying is this:
If we're talking about what happened out there, then sure, there was trauma. But being sixteen and female in normal-ass America?
(beat)
That was the living hell.

EXT. THE OCEAN - DAY

We return to Leah, marooned and unconscious on the ocean.

We PULL OUT to get a broader look at the water around her... It's littered with telltale debris: suitcases, seat cushions, a beverage cart... And we clock that the raft beneath her is actually a SHARD OF FUSELAGE. Clearly a plane has gone down.

And then -- Leah's eyes SNAP OPEN.

MAIN TITLES

EXT. THE OCEAN - DAY - OUR PRIMARY TIMELINE

Leah struggles to sit up. Blinks away wooziness.

Only when she scans the debris-strewn water does it dawn on her what must've happened. She doesn't freak out. Not yet.

LEAH
Hello! Anyone?
(louder now)
Fatin?! Anybody?!

Eerie silence. And then...a TINNY JINGLE cuts through...

So raise your glass if you are wrong in all the right ways...

It's P!nk... A P!nk ringtone... Which means a phone.

Wasting no time, Leah slides into the water, pushes through cargo-hold debris. She zeroes in on the source of the sound --

A HELLO KITTY SUITCASE, bobbing nearby.

Leah swims over, unzips it. She rummages through clothing until she unearths a CELL PHONE, just as it stops ringing.

She's about to hit the EMERGENCY CALL button when an OCEAN SWELL rolls in, and the phone SLIPS from her hand. *Fuck.*

Leah dives under, but the phone is too far gone. She watches, despairing, as it twirls down into the deep.

Leah resurfaces into a scatter of INFORMATIONAL BROCHURES. She picks one up. Eyes the text on the cover --

"Dawn of Eve: A Young Women's Empowerment Retreat"
Kona, Hawaii - August 10-13

Staring at the trifold brochure, Leah FLASHES BACK TO:

INT. BUICK - EN ROUTE TO SFO - EARLIER THAT DAY

The morning ride to the airport. Leah sits in the backseat of her parents' Buick, the "DAWN OF EVE" brochure in hand. She scowls at it like it's diseased.

LEAH'S VOICE
*The retreat. It was my mother's
idea.*

(MORE)

LEAH'S VOICE (CONT'D)
*When she found out my high school
 was sending two delegates, she
 scrambled to get me a spot.*

Leah puts down the brochure. Stares morosely out the window.

LEAH'S VOICE
*I wasn't eating. I wasn't
 showering. I smelled like the dead.
 I told my mom there'd been a break-
 up, but it was pointless to say
 more. She wouldn't have understood.
 My parents... They aren't exactly
 people of depth.*

Leah's parents KURT and MARYANN (truly bland white people)
 ride up front. Kurt's driving. Maryann admires the blue sky.

MARYANN
 Look at those gorgeous clouds. If I
 could paint I'd paint those clouds.

KURT
 Good day to treat the lawn. The
 crabgrass is getting out of hand.

Maryann turns to Leah.

MARYANN
 You're going to have *such* a lovely
 flight, Sweetie.
 (nods at the brochure)
 Did you see any seminars you'd like
 to take? They've got some writing
 workshops that might suit you.

Leah doesn't answer. Kurt flusters as he approaches SFO.

KURT
 Where am I going? Which airline?

MARYANN
 Shoot, I don't know. It's a private
 charter...
 (back to Leah)
 A private plane, hun! How exciting
 is that? Direct to the Big Island.

Still no reaction from Leah. Maryann grows frustrated.

MARYANN
 Leah. I know you're not wild about
 this...

(MORE)

MARYANN (CONT'D)

But you're going to be in a beautiful place, meeting all kinds of neat girls... I think it'll really boost you out of your funk.

LEAH

Please don't refer to my total emotional devastation as "a funk."

MARYANN

(frowns, then:)

Just remember, we arranged for this because we care. Because we love you. And when you hurt, we hurt.
(squeezes Leah's knee)
This is gonna be so good for you.

Off Maryann, trying to buoy Leah's spirit, we RETURN TO:

EXT. THE OCEAN - DAY

...Leah, still treading water. Tormented by the memory.

LEAH

Good for me? Good for me!?!

Desperation finally sinks in. She SCREAMS into the void.

In the silence that follows, she hears someone MOANING. She cranes an ear, swims a few yards. Pushes aside a suitcase...

There she finds a GIRL, barely conscious, draped over a floatational seat cushion. (Leah doesn't know her, but we do. It's JEANETTE NAKAJIMA. The Japanese girl from the teaser.)

LEAH

Hey. Hi. Are you all right?

Jeanette MUMBLES incoherently, exposure taking its toll.

LEAH

What are you saying? Are you hurt?

Leah listens harder, realizes that Jeanette is SINGING. Her voice is feeble and halting, but she's definitely singing.

JEANETTE

...Raise a glass... If you are wrong... All the right ways...

LEAH

P!nk, right? Is that your ringtone?

Jeanette starts to pass out, nearly slips off the cushion...

...But Leah catches her. Pats her on the cheek to revive her.

LEAH

Hey-hey, stay with me. Where are you from? Which school?

On Leah, trying to keep Jeanette lucid, we FLASHBACK TO:

INT. AIRPLANE CABIN - EARLIER THAT DAY

A spacious private jet. Twenty seats at least. Scattered throughout, we see all NINE GIRLS we met in the teaser.

LEAH'S VOICE

There were four schools represented on our flight, but she wasn't from any of them. She'd come alone. Which is something I might've learned earlier if I'd been paying any kind of attention.

Leah sits at the back of the plane, hiding behind dark sunglasses. So ensconced in her own anguish, she doesn't notice the ORIENTATION VIDEO playing on her seatback monitor.

ON SCREEN: A tall, slender WOMAN delivers a welcome message. She can't be older than 45, but her long hair is COMPLETELY WHITE, à la Julian Assange. Her voice is syrupy, salesman-y:

WHITE-HAIRED WOMAN

Right now, hundreds of girls like yourselves, aboard charters just like this one, are en route to our retreat center in Kona, Hawaii for a long weekend of female-centric learning and growth. And while you've got a lot of networking ahead of you, why not get to know the amazing young women around you right now? The Dawn of Eve *quite literally* waits for no man. Here are the delegations aboard *your* shuttle... And provided that the seatbelt sign is off, please stand when your school is called...

The SCHOOL NAMES swish onto the screen in fun star-wipes...

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN (O.S.)

The Red Lake Nation Ojibwe School, from Red Lake, Minnesota...

MARTHA BLACKBURN (our big-eared sweetheart) gets to her feet, dragging TONI SHALIFOE (our hot-tempered tomboy) up with her.

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN (O.S.)
The Fort Travis Baptist Academy,
from Fort Travis, Texas...

SHELBY GOODKIND (pageant queen) stands proudly, waving like she's on a parade float. DOT GRINNELL (our husky chainsmoker) rises about an inch, putting in the bare minimum effort.

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN (O.S.)
Xavier Preparatory, from New York
City, New York...

Fraternal twins RACHEL and NORA REID stand briefly. They're at opposite ends of the plane. Clear evidence of some rift between them.

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN (O.S.)
East Bay Academy of Art, from
Berkeley, California.

FATIN JADMANI rises, boob game strong in a skin-tight tank that says "GIRL, BYE." She motions for Leah to stand.

But Leah just sinks lower. She reaches for a DOG-EARED NOVEL titled "The Life and Times of Ashley S." The jacket photo shows the author, **JEFFREY GALANIS**, a Jonathan Franzen type.

Leah opens the book, her hands trembling, as we FLASHBACK TO:

INT. EAST BAY ACADEMY OF ART - DAY - 137 DAYS "BEFORE"

Leah, sitting alone in her school courtyard, reading the same novel we just glimpsed. Although here it's brand new.

The STUDENTS around her are tatted and pierced, carrying sketchpads, musical instruments. An arts school, no doubt.

Leah's friend IAN MURNEN (pencil-thin, gauges in his ears) slumps down across from her.

IAN
So I had this dream last night...
I was going to school in Iowa or
somewhere, and all the kids wore
Wrangler Jeans, and they didn't
talk about bullshit the way kids
around here do. They talked about
real shit, like the price of wheat.
And I found the whole scene very
soothing. What do you make of that?

LEAH
Why don't you ask Topaz Kowalski.
She does dream readings.

IAN

See. That's what's wrong with this school. There's a girl named *Topaz* who reads dreams!? Everyone's just too fucking interesting around here. I've got interesting fatigue and it's impacting my subconscious.

LEAH

Is that why you hang out with me? As a nice-and-boring break from so much "interesting"?

Ian frowns. This is the last thing he wants her to think.

LEAH

I get it. My hair is all one color. I'm a virgin who still drinks dairy milk. Shit, I really am boring.

IAN

Nah... Actually, by being the most normcore person in a sea of freaks, you've low-key turned the tables. You've become the freakiest freak of all. Well, either you or Fatin.

Fatin rounds the corner, wearing Uggs and a tee that says "Fries Before Guys." Applying lip gloss while Face-timing.

IAN

The Ur-Basic-Bitch. A walking, talking Grey's Anatomy gif. God, I love her.

LEAH

Why would she even go to this school?

IAN

You seriously don't know? Fatin has perfect pitch. She's like a shoe-in at Juilliard. Let's just hope she doesn't get waylaid by a baby. I heard she's fucking the entire Cal wrestling team. Why she chose wrestlers, I have no idea. You get all the downsides of fucking a jock, like bad smells and physical violence, with none of the football prestige.

(sees that she's drifting)

Hey. You wanna hang out later? Maybe play some pool at The Rack?

LEAH

I gotta finish this book. Ms. Wolfe is really on my ass this year.

IAN

'Cause she knows what a good writer you are. She probably wants to "foster your talent" or whatever.

LEAH

Ew. I can't with teachers who care.

IAN

You don't *have* to read that book, you know. She only assigned it because Galanis used to go here. It's shameless alumni promotion.
(takes the book from her)
Look at this guy's photo. Every try-hard white-dude novelist has this same headshot. It's like, "Ooo, I'm not smiling because I'm enigmatic, and I'm wearing a scarf because I'm spiritually French!" Also, does he have a flavor-saver? Disgusting.

LEAH

I don't know. I kind of like it?

IAN

The flavor-saver?!?

LEAH

The book! Jesus.

IAN

Did you know he's coming next week? Some kind of school-wide literary event. Ms. Wolfe's definitely gonna make us go, so brace yourself for that circle jerk.

Ian tosses the book back to her. Off Leah, gazing raptly at the photo of Galanis, we RETURN TO:

EXT. THE OCEAN - DAY

Open water. Leah looks weary, struggling to keep herself and Jeanette afloat. The waves have gotten choppier.

Suddenly Jeanette clutches her side, GROANING in pain. Leah lifts her shirt, finds a GIANT PURPLE BRUISE over her belly.

Leah immediately reaches up, takes Jeanette's pulse...

...which is still strong. A look of relief comes over Leah.

LEAH

If you were bleeding internally
your heart rate would be shot. I
think you're just banged up.

Jeanette WHIMPERS. Leah tries to reassure her.

LEAH

I'm not totally talking out of my
ass. I took First Aid.

Leah finds another seat cushion, shimmies it under Jeanette's legs for more buoyancy. Leah's winded, but rambles on between breaths, keeping Jeanette -- and herself -- awake.

LEAH

My mother...She got me a Red Cross
Certification class... for my
birthday... It's like every year,
she sees my birthday as a chance...
To show how little she knows me...

She notices Jeanette nodding off again --

LEAH

Keep talking, okay? Talk about
anything. Do you play a sport? Do
you have any special hobbies?

Leah's not pulling these questions out of nowhere. *She's heard them before.* A memory activates, and we FLASHBACK TO:

INT. AIRPLANE CABIN - EARLIER THAT DAY

Shelby, standing near the bulkhead, leading the girls in an icebreaker. *Very comfortable in front of an audience.*

SHELBY

...Do you play a sport, do you have
any special hobbies, what's your
favorite Bible verse, what do you
get at Chipotle... That's the kind
of question you might wanna ask.
Now how this works is, you'll
partner with someone you don't
know, you'll pow-wow for a minute--

ON TONI AND MARTHA. Toni is scowling.

TONI

This white girl said "pow-wow."

MARTHA

Don't start, Toni. You don't even go to the pow-wows.

TONI

So? I can still feel *triggered*.

Toni grins mischievously, makes little "guns" with her hands and pretends to fire them. Martha can't help but smile as she shakes her head. Off their friendship, PIVOT BACK TO SHELBY --

SHELBY

...Then afterwards you'll introduce your partner to the rest of us. So if y'all are ready, have at it!

Nobody moves. Least of all LEAH, who looks up from her book only briefly, then returns to her grim isolation.

SHELBY

C'mon, now. I'm so excited to hear y'all's amazing stories.

Shelby nudges DOT. A *little help*? Dot rolls her eyes but relents. She trudges over, takes a seat next to FATIN.

BACK ON SHELBY --

SHELBY

Guess I'll have to play matchmaker.

Shelby guides a passive NORA into the seat beside JEANETTE.

Next, Shelby yanks a grumbling Toni by the basketball jersey, plonks her down next to RACHEL.

SHELBY

And it looks like we'll need one group of three...

Shelby waltzes up to LEAH, but quickly clocks her dark mood. Even the indomitable Shelby can tell this one's a lost cause.

SHELBY

...Or you can sit this one out.

Shelby backs off. She sits next to Martha, extends her hand.

SHELBY

Shelby. And you are?

MARTHA

(awkwardly hand-shaking)
Martha?

SHELBY

Martha, it's a pleasure. So here's a bit about me... I do real. I do family. I do Jesus. I do pageants. And I'm doing this conference to offset the pageants. Some colleges might see them as retrograde where female empowerment is concerned. Has anyone ever told you you've got the most drop-dead gorgeous eyes?

MARTHA

Ummm, no.

SHELBY

I'd kill for your lashes. If you did pageants, you wouldn't even have to wear fakes.

Martha is loving this kind of attention; it's rare for her.

ON DOT AND FATIN. Dot watches, fascinated, as Fatin applies mascara. So much dumb femininity on display. The glittery nails, the messy bun. The "GIRL, BYE" tank top.

DOT

I got a question about your shirt.

FATIN

I've got a few questions about your camo cargo shorts.

DOT

Man, I'm not a lesbian. I just like storage.

Fatin raises a dubious eyebrow, then returns to her mascara.

DOT

Anyway. I see shirts like that everywhere. Shirts that say something real salty on the front.

FATIN

So what's your question?

DOT

I guess just, why are they a thing?

FATIN

Um, because they're super cut and super hilarious?

Dot grimaces. Agree to disagree.

DOT

Kinda funny, though. You wearing that to a feminist retreat. Your shirt is literally telling women to get out of your face.

FATIN

Oh, I'm not here for *that* bullshit. I don't even get feminism. I mean, I get called a "girly girl," like it's a bad thing? I'm like, *double* the amount of girl, and that's somehow not feminist? Ridiculous.

DOT

Then why are you here?

FATIN

Wasn't *my* decision.

Just then, a FLIGHT ATTENDANT rolls up with a FOOD CART. He's 30ish, muscular, with a high-and-tight military haircut.

Fatin gives him a kittenish smile as he sets plates of CHOCOLATE CAKE on their tray-tables.

FATIN

Mmm. Thank you sooooo much.

Dot shakes her head. *This girl is a piece of work.*

ON TONI AND RACHEL. Toni wolfs down her cake, Rachel cuts hers into small pieces. Conversation not coming easily here.

Rachel eyes Toni's jersey. Finally breaks the silence.

RACHEL

So. You play basketball?

TONI

Used to. Got cut from the team for "unsportsmanlike conduct."
(with a little laugh)
This fat chick from our rival school kept fouling me, so I pissed in my hand and threw it at her.

Toni grins, proud of this story. Rachel isn't impressed.

RACHEL

Were you good?

TONI

Oh, I was a beast on the court.

RACHEL

Clearly. I'm asking if you were good. Like, did you put up points.

TONI

Hell yeah. Triple-doubles all day.

RACHEL

(shakes her head)

People who throw away talent make me crazy. If I missed even one meet 'cause of some foolishness on my part, I would never forgive myself.

Toni has stopped listening. She watches closely as Rachel takes a fragment of cut-up cake and sets it on her phone.

TONI

What are you doing?

RACHEL

I have an app that turns my phone into a digital scale.

Rachel eats the lone piece, covers the rest with a napkin.

OFF TONI, staring at her like she's insane, we PIVOT TO --

NORA AND JEANETTE. Nora's eyes are glued on Rachel while Jeanette breezily yammers on...

JEANETTE

I used to say I was into rap and hip-hop, but I looked at my Spotify history, and guess who I listen to most? P!nk! It was like a reckoning for me. Honestly, we should all check our history before we pop off about what kind of music we're into, because after all, isn't play count, like, the true measure?

Jeanette finally realizes that Nora's attention is elsewhere.

JEANETTE

Who do you keep looking at?

NORA

My sister.

JEANETTE

Oh. The African-American?

Nora nods, visibly annoyed by the stilted reference to race.

JEANETTE

You weren't sitting together
before. Are you guys in a fight?

NORA

I don't want to talk about it.

JEANETTE

Sorry, jeez. Touchy touchy.
(irritated)
So did you hear anything I said?

Nora turns. Finally meets Jeanette's eyes.

NORA

You live in San Francisco, you work
in your family's restaurant, you
hate being homeschooled, you have
two pugs and you are existentially
prepared to admit you like P!nk.

Jeanette's taken aback. Turns out Nora was listening.

BACK ON SHELBY AND MARTHA, still getting along famously.

MARTHA

No... Boys aren't really into me...

SHELBY

At least none that you KNOW of.

MARTHA

Oh, I've got a pretty good lay of
the land. It's just none, period.

SHELBY

Well, all you need is one good one.
Andrew, he's my rock. Like with a
lowercase "r." Obviously Jesus is
my Rock with a capital--

MARTHA

Uh, Shelby-- Sorry-- I think you've
got cake in your teeth?

Shelby gets up, covering her mouth.

SHELBY

Would you excuse me?

LEAH'S VOICE

*Shelby. She was the only one I
really registered on the plane.*

(MORE)

LEAH'S VOICE (CONT'D)
*The only one shiny enough to cut
 through the fog of my misery.*

BACK ON LEAH. Morosely nibbling on cake. But she does look up at the luminous Shelby as she makes her way to the bathroom.

LEAH'S VOICE
*Beauty is power, isn't it? Some
 deluded adults tried to convince us
 otherwise... They'd show us Nat-Geo
 photos of women with plates in
 their lips and tell us that beauty
 was subjective. They'd show us the
 Dove Real Bodies Campaign and tell
 us that beauty was in all of us...*

ON RACHEL. Rachel of the severe cystic acne. She's staring at Shelby, something like envy stirring behind her eyes.

LEAH'S VOICE
*Screw that. Beauty is power. Beauty
 is objective. And beauty gets
 distributed hella unevenly.*
 (beat)
Also, beauty is fragile as fuck.

IN THE AIRPLANE BATHROOM

Shelby duck-faces into the mirror, smooths her hair. Then she reaches in her mouth... and pulls out a DENTAL PROSTHETIC. A retainer-like appliance with TWO ARTIFICIAL TEETH attached.

Shelby's eye-teeth are fake.

She runs the prosthetic under water, rinsing off cake crumbs.

Suddenly, A WAVE OF TURBULENCE ROCKS THE BATHROOM. Shelby plants a hand on either wall for balance as we CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY - THE PRESENT

LEAH
 This part is hard to talk about.

JUNIOR AGENT
 Of course. It must have been
 absolutely terrifying.

LEAH
 No -- it was *embarrassing*.

INT. AIRPLANE CABIN - DAY

CHIMES reverb through the cabin. SEATBELT LIGHTS blink on.

Leah watches the fork RATTLING on her empty cake plate.

LEAH'S VOICE

The thought did cross my mind. This could be my final moment alive. And how do you think I spent it?

ANOTHER JOLT. The main cabin lights cut out.

LEAH'S VOICE

I didn't reach out for comfort.

ON TONI, scrambling back to her original seat, throwing her arms around a frightened Martha.

LEAH'S VOICE

I didn't cry.

ON FATIN, tears of terror welling in her eyes. Gone is her coquettish vitality. Now there's only white-hot fear.

LEAH'S VOICE

I didn't shut everything out.

ON JEANETTE, eyes closed tight, hands clapped over her ears.

LEAH'S VOICE

I didn't, like, "carpe diem" or anything.

ON DOT, lighting a cigarette.

LEAH'S VOICE

I didn't indulge.

ON RACHEL, inhaling her cake like there's no tomorrow.

LEAH'S VOICE

I took no measures to protect myself.

ON NORA, stoically looping her arms through a seat cushion.

LEAH'S VOICE

I didn't pray for my mortal soul.

ON SHELBY, stumbling out of the bathroom. She drops to her knees and prays.

LEAH'S VOICE

Here's what I did...

BACK ON LEAH, absorbed in her book.

And now we notice little LOVE NOTES in the book's margins. Things like "*You are so this character. Did I write you into life?*" and "*I miss your smell.*" Clearly a man's handwriting.

LEAH'S VOICE

I sat there in my fucking love puddle and thought about a guy.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL THEATER - NIGHT - 129 DAYS "BEFORE"

Leah and Ian are seated in their school's crowded theater. Their teacher MS. WOLFE (60s, butch hippie, problematic white-woman dreads) is on stage giving an introduction.

MS. WOLFE

...And now for our special guest. While the world may know him as the Pulitzer Prize winner for fiction, I will only ever know him as the little shit who sat in the back of my class making paper-clip chains and ignoring my every word. Please welcome... Jeffrey Galanis.

Leah watches JEFFREY GALANIS (40) as he takes the stage. He's less suave than in his headshot. More endearingly awkward. He struggles to bend up the microphone, which makes Leah smile.

JEFFREY

Thank you, Ms. Wolfe, for going with the paper-clip detail. She could've mentioned my robust B.O., or the copious amounts of CK-One I slathered on my body to mask it. Anyway. I'll start with a reading.
(clears his throat, then:)
"Ashley's wish was simple; for something to finally happen to her. Something that would add color to the bland desert of her life..."

Leah marvels at his maturity, his language, his stubble. (The flavor-saver is gone.) Ian can tell she's bewitched.

IAN

Wring out your panties.

Leah turns to Ian, shocked and offended.

LEAH

That was a shitty thing to say.

Ian is ashamed. He's about to apologize when Ms. Wolfe sneaks down the aisle, takes a knee next to Leah.

MS. WOLFE

Psst. Rilke. You've got a car, right? I was supposed to drive Jeff back to his hotel after, but I've got 63 papers to grade and four letters of recommendation to crap out. Can you give him a ride?

LEAH

Wait, like *Jeff* Jeff?

MS. WOLFE

Thanks, kiddo.

Ms. Wolfe scurries off. Ian turns to Leah, hoping again to apologize, but she's already refocused, raptly, on Galanis --

JEFFREY

"...And so she prayed every night, that fate would lift her out of the dreary realm of the ordinary."

EXT. THE OCEAN - DAY

CLOSE ON LEAH, bobbing listlessly in the water. Dry lips, heavy eyelids. Reaching the end of her rope.

Jeanette floats beside her, motionless. Suddenly she stirs, points to the sky, murmuring in raspy Japanese --

JEANETTE

Kamome... Kamome...

Leah looks up -- a bird flies overhead. Leah follows its path, until she spots it: a SHORELINE, hazy in the distance.

Leah blinks to make sure it's real. A weak smile breaks across her face, her eyes glistening with incredulous tears.

LEAH'S VOICE

It's funny, in retrospect. The relief I felt, knowing I might survive... When just a few hours earlier I was stone-cold suicidal.

As she grips Jeanette and starts paddling, we CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY - THE PRESENT

Leah gazes off, still mired in the memory.

LEAH

The will to live is a fickle fucking thing.

The truth of that hangs there for a beat. Then --

LEAD AGENT

A few hours -- is that roughly how long you'd been in the water?

LEAH

I don't know. No one knew the full timeline. Once the plane started to dive, there was a black-out period no one could account for. Not even the ones who came to on dry land...

TONI (PRE-LAP)

Maaaaartha! Maaaaarty!

EXT. MAIN BEACH - SAME TIME

Toni stands on the shore of a small island, SCREAMING for her best friend. Suddenly she clutches her stomach...

...and PUKES into the tide, splattering bits of chocolate cake around her ankles.

Toni grits her teeth. Gives herself two seconds to recover, then tenaciously resumes her desperate SCREAMING.

A FEW YARDS BEHIND HER --

Fatin sits near the shady tree-line of a dense inland forest. Hugging her knees, teeth chattering. A deer in headlights.

Dot lumbers over, stoops down beside her.

DOT

You gotta move into the sun, all right? You're in shock.

Fatin doesn't budge. She stares off, mumbling to herself:

FATIN

They made me come. I'm not supposed to be here. They made me come.

DOT

Your parents?

Fatin manages a shaky nod.

DOT

It might be cold comfort, but think how they feel right now. Must be up to their assholes in regret.

(MORE)

DOT (CONT'D)

(then)

C'mon. Scooch on out of the shade.

FATIN

(still mumbling)

They made me come. They wanted to
fix me...

Dot heaves an "OH-FOR-FUCKS-SAKE" sigh. She slides her arms beneath Fatin, lifts her up, and carries her into the sun.

In the light, Dot gets a better look at Fatin's messy face. The streaked mascara, the sticky crumbs of barfed-up cake.

Dot shakes her head, like she can't believe what she's about to do. She spits into her t-shirt, then uses it to wipe the dreck from Fatin's cheeks.

NEARBY, NEXT TO A GIANT BOULDER --

Rachel is doubled over, also puking up cake.

Nora approaches. Offers her a can of DIET SPRITE.

NORA

Here. Must have washed in from the
wreck. It's diet.

Rachel reaches for the can, but a new wave of nausea rolls in. She pukes again, even harder.

Nora inches closer. She extends a trembling hand, rests it on her sister's back. And to her surprise, Rachel lets her.

NORA

You're not making yourself do this,
are you?

Rachel straightens up angrily, shoving Nora's hand off.

RACHEL

Yeah, okay. 'Cause it couldn't be
sunstroke, or motion sickness, or
the fact that we just woke up in a
dead-ass nightmare!

NORA

I was just asking--

RACHEL

You were treating me like a child.
Like you always do.

Anger and hurt swirl in Rachel's eyes. She steps toward Nora.

RACHEL

It's why I'm here, isn't it? 'Cause
you ran your mouth off to Mom and
Dad about how I "needed a break."
(grits her teeth)

Determination is not a disease. Get
that through your fucking head.

(then, verging on tears)

I swear to god, Nora... If I miss
the Tokyo trials...

Rachel is too addled to finish the threat. She grabs the soda
out of her sister's hand and storms away.

Off Nora, hurting beneath her stoicism, we CUT TO:

EXT. REMOTE BEACH - SAME TIME

Shelby, standing alone on a different stretch of beach. She
holds her DENTAL PROSTHETIC up to the sun, inspecting it.

The light glints off the pearlized plastic, revealing a
SIGNIFICANT CRACK near one of the teeth.

SHELBY

Motherfucker!

Shelby looks skyward, silently repenting for the curse word.

MARTHA (O.S.)

Shelby!?

Shelby slides her flipper back in. She turns, lets out a
small CRY of relief...

...Martha is fifty yards away, winded and limping.

Shelby SPRINTS over. Martha buckles into her arms.

SHELBY

It's all right. You're all right.

MARTHA

I was getting scared I wouldn't
find anybody. My ankle --

Shelby lowers Martha down, inspects her hugely swollen ankle.

SHELBY

This is no bueno. We're gonna have
to wrap this sucker up.

Shelby quickly takes off her romper, stripping down to her
bikini. She tears the romper into a long strip of fabric.

SHELBY

I got you, girl. You're looking at
Lake Whitney's most valuable
lifeguard, three seasons in a row.
I once splinted the mayor's wrist.

Shelby uses the makeshift bandage to wrap the ankle. Martha gawks at Shelby's perfect body while she works.

MARTHA

Aren't you gonna get a sunburn?

SHELBY

Oh no. I've been laying out since
May. I've got a really good base.

Suddenly Shelby stops wrapping. She turns her ear to the sky.

SHELBY

Hear that? Somebody's calling you.

Martha listens. Her eyes light up as she registers the faint sound of TONI'S VOICE, wafting on a breeze. She's speechless.

Shelby smiles at her. Finishes the wrap, ties it off tight.

SHELBY

Not too shabby for a rush job.
Might not totally bear weight, but
that's where I come in.

Shelby helps her up, swoops Martha's arm over her shoulders.

SHELBY

Let's go find her.

They tread forward, Shelby supporting Martha's every step.

Off Martha, staring gratefully, almost *adoringly* at Shelby --

LEAH'S VOICE

*And that's how it begins, I guess.
How someone slowly becomes "your
person."*

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY - PRESENT

LEAH

...A little halo descends over
their head, and in the Church of
You, they start to become a saint.

Leah closes her eyes, and we FLASHBACK TO:

INT. LEAH'S CRAPPY 2003 CAMRY - NIGHT - 129 DAYS "BEFORE"

Jeff Galanis, riding shotgun. Leah drives, white-knuckling the wheel, not quite believing that he's in her fucking car.

JEFFREY

I don't have a smartphone. In case you're wondering why I didn't just call an Uber.

LEAH

Is that like a lifestyle decision?

JEFFREY

Hmm. I detect a top-note of judgment in that question.

LEAH

No no no-- No judgment, believe me--

JEFFREY

It's totally okay. I lost my iPhone once and had to revert to an old flip-phone, and I liked the luddite image I was projecting so much, I stuck with it. We can call it what it is. An affectation.

LEAH

My friend Ian will love that. He already thinks you're a try-hard.

JEFFREY

Oh, I don't deny it.

He reaches for an old CD wallet in the footwell. Leah panics.

LEAH

Oh god. Don't. I honestly haven't listened to those in forever. I have an AUX cord now.

JEFFREY

(inspects a select CD)
 "Now That's What I Call Music 63!"
 Such a confident statement. Wow, this is a pretty tragic lineup. Panic at the Disco? And who could forget the inimitable Fountains of Wayne? *Everyone*, it turns out.

(then)

Oh! P!nk is on here. I do like P!nk. Her videos in particular.

(MORE)

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

She's always in a man's undershirt, swinging a chainsaw around. There's a beautiful anarchic energy to her.

He returns the wallet to the trash-filled footwell.

LEAH

I'm sorry the car's so messy. If I'd known I'd be driving you--

JEFFREY

Don't apologize. It's actually quite nice, you know... To get an authentic insight into someone's world. A lot of times, I'll go back to a woman's apartment, and it's obvious she staged it a little. Like, some women will curate certain elements to appeal to my tastes, which they've read about in a profile or an interview. They put on Elvis Costello, or Dylan, and they'll set some highbrow books on the coffee table. Or my own book! One woman had a novel of mine on top of her toilet, with the receipt showing that she'd bought it *that* day. So not only had she *not* read me, if and when she did plan to read me, she intended to do it while shitting. Which is fine? But in the moment it was a turn-off.

(beat)

Anyway. This is nice. This is you.

It occurs to Leah that Galanis has just casually compared her to other women he's dated. It all feels so adult -- which is equal parts thrilling and terrifying. And right now, the terrifying part compels her to STEP ON THE GAS. *Hard.*

LEAH

Unfortunately, I'm not all that interesting.

JEFFREY

You've got a lead foot. That's an interesting quality.

LEAH

That's like one of only three. I figure if I drive fast and list them out slowly, I can get you back to your hotel before you realize how blah I am.

JEFFREY
 (ornery glint)
 I'm not sure I'm ready to call it a
 night. Mind if we take the scenic
 route?

OFF JEFF, enjoying making her squirm, we CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN BEACH - DAY

Leah, GASPING for air. Pulling herself onto the island. Her
 lips purple. Her eyes rolling back in her head.

It's DOT who spots her first. She rushes over, with Toni
 following suit. They work together to haul her onto shore.

LEAH
 (barely coherent)
 I had her... She was with me...

TONI
 Who was with you?! Who did you see?

Toni doesn't wait for an answer. She bolts into the water,
 scanning for Martha. Soon she spots a DARK-HAIRED FIGURE,
 floating face-down... Toni moves closer, terrified...

But it's JEANETTE.

Dot splashes up. She clocks Jeanette, dives to assess her.

DOT
 She's not breathing. Toni, help!

Dot grabs Jeanette by the arms. Toni takes her legs.

TONI
 This is so, sooo fucked. People are
 missing, bodies are floating in--

MARTHA (O.S.)
 Toni!

Toni freezes. Hoping she isn't hearing things. She turns...

There's MARTHA, limping down the beach. Propped up by Shelby.

Toni drops Jeanette's legs, leaving Dot out there alone.

DOT
 Unbelievable.

ON TONI, bounding toward Martha. She shoves Shelby aside,
 embraces her best friend. A ravenous, needy hug.

TONI

That's the last time you ghost on me, bitch. The last time.

MARTHA

I'm okay, Ton. For real. Shelby's been amazing.

Toni, still in the hug, glowers at Shelby in her bikini.

TONI

What the fuck are you wearing?

AT THE OTHER END OF THE BEACH --

A COMMOTION is erupting around the unconscious Jeanette. Dot administers CPR. Rachel and Nora hover above, scrutinizing.

RACHEL

Those compressions are too fast. You're pumping like double-time.

DOT

There's no such thing as too fast, only too slow.

NORA

Compressions can be too fast. If they're not going deep enough.

Shelby rushes up, soon followed by Toni and Martha.

SHELBY

Ease up Dottie. You're going way too fast.

Dot gets to her feet, throws up her hands.

DOT

Hell. If you're all such experts, somebody else tap in.

Multiple voices kick up.

DOT

Jesus. Who all knows CPR?

Hands shoot up. Even Fatin, seated nearby, still catatonic, shakily raises hers.

ON LEAH, lying on her back. Heart still racing, chest still heaving. She tries to lift a hand too, but can't summon the strength. She stares at the sky. Unconsciousness looming...

LEAD AGENT (PRE-LAP)
 So it turned out that *everyone* had
 a working knowledge of CPR and
 First Aid protocols?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY - THE PRESENT

LEAH
 (nods, then)
 Is that important?

LEAD AGENT
 Well... "Important" is a moving
 target at this point. Hard to know
 what is and what isn't.

JUNIOR AGENT
 Which is why we appreciate how much
 you're sharing. About the flight,
 your family, your relationship with
 Mr. Galanis--

LEAH
That's important. He's important.
 (a sorrowful pause)
 I keep wishing that he weren't, you
 know. And yet he continues,
 stubbornly, to be.

Off her troubled look, we FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. INSPIRATION POINT - BERKELEY - NIGHT - 129 DAYS "BEFORE"

Leah and Jeff, parked at a scenic overlook, drinking JARRITOS
 on the hood of her car. The San Fran lights glittering below.

LEAH
 ...Writing's my track at school,
 but I'm not like a *writer* writer.

JEFFREY
 Well. What have you written?

LEAH
 Just some weird short stories. One
 about an Amish wedding, one about
 the Civil War. One about Uganda...

JEFFREY
 Those don't sound very personal.

LEAH
 We've established that my life is
 boring. Why would I write about it?

JEFFREY

Tell me what you did yesterday.

LEAH

Yesterday?

JEFFREY

Yes. Sunday. What'd you do?

LEAH

This is only gonna prove my point, you know... Yesterday I helped my dad re-paint the mud room. I mean, is there anything more stupidly white bread than having a *mud room*?

(then, with a sad laugh)

He accidentally painted over the marks they made to track my height over the years. When he realized it, he just drew some new ones.

Like, he just *guessed*.

(sighs)

Feel free to glean from that just how "seen" I feel at my house.

Jeff smiles. He's charmed by her story. Charmed by *her*.

JEFFREY

There are things I'd like to say to you right now, but I'm running them through a filter in my head, and they're all sounding predictably creepy. You know what? I'll just try one on for size... I think you're really special.

LEAH

That was full creeper.

JEFFREY

Yep. Nope. Creepy as hell.

JEFFREY

(thinks for a beat, then)

You know, there are a lot of slippery people in my life. Agents, journalists, fans. They come and go. They want things. At the end of the day, I don't have anyone real and guileless to talk to. And you-- You're this old soul, trapped in a young body, trapped in high school. I imagine you're looking for someone to talk to, as well.

He gently touches her face, pushes back a strand of her hair. Leah's entirely in his thrall.

JEFFREY

What I'm saying, rather
inelegantly, is that I'd like for
us to keep in touch.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Leah smiles, still caught up in the warmth of that moment...

LEAH

So here's a secret of the coven...
If a girl really likes someone, she
won't put their name in her phone.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY - 121 DAYS "BEFORE"

Leah weaves through the hallway between bells.

She takes out her phone, sees a text from a 917 number:
"Establishing contact."

A follow-up text comes in: "Please refrain from sending GIFs
or links. My affectation is not equipped to receive them."

LEAH'S VOICE

*Your crush is sacred. You can't
just file him in your contacts
between your cousin and your chem-
lab partner. That would make him
common.*

Leah beams. Opens a contact card for Jeff, but deletes it.

EXT. SCHOOL COURTYARD - DAY - 101 DAYS "BEFORE"

Leah, studying during her lunch break. Her phone BUZZES on
the picnic table. She glances at it over the top of her book.

LEAH'S VOICE

*So you learn his number. Every
contour of every digit. You carve
those little hieroglyphs onto your
heart.*

A text from the 917 number: "Little old lady just gave me the
finger. Only in NYC!"

Leah grins. Across the table, Ian watches her warily.

EXT. FRONT YARD - LEAH'S HOUSE - DAY - 88 DAYS "BEFORE"

Spring has turned to summer, and Leah is pulling weeds in the
hot sun. A bored, passionless look in her eye.

LEAH'S VOICE

*And so you sleepwalk through the
rest of your life, waiting for
dispatches from that magic number.*

A text from Jeff comes in: "What u doin boo?" Seconds later, a follow-up: "Sorry. Trying out 'boo.' Obviously a no-go."

Leah smiles wide. She turns to her dad, who's spreading mulch nearby, and snaps a photo of his buttcrack. She sends the pic to Jeff and types "Just livin the suburban dream over here."

INT. LEAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 65 DAYS "BEFORE"

Leah lies awake, watching the ceiling fan whirl overhead.

LEAH'S VOICE

*And then there's the pivotal text.
It will likely come between 3 and 4
AM. And it will change everything.*

She sees her phone light up on the nightstand.

Galanis has texted: "Full disclosure, I'm drunk. And I'll probably regret this in the morning..." A pause, then another text: "I think about kissing you all the time."

Leah looks like she might liquefy. She mulls her response, then types: "I turn eighteen in two weeks, you know."

EXT. MAIN BEACH - ENCAMPMENT - DAY

Leah wakes up on the beach. Unsure how long she's been out.

The area around her has become a makeshift "camp." The others have begun piling salvaged items here: a couple of suitcases and seat-cushions, small bags of pretzels, peanuts.

JEANETTE (O.S.)

You're awake.

Leah turns, eyes widening... Jeanette is there, miraculously recovered. The only sign of trauma is her pained expression.

JEANETTE

Can I hug you?

Jeanette doesn't wait for the nod. She hugs Leah hard.

JEANETTE

I'm so sorry.

LEAH

What do you have to be sorry about?

Jeanette doesn't answer. Off Leah, confused, we CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN BEACH/FLAT ROCK - LATER

A meeting of sorts. All nine girls gather on a vast FLAT ROCK that juts out into the water like a jetty.

Rachel is on her feet. Struggling to command attention.

RACHEL

...So does anyone have a phone?

TONI

For real?! Don't you think we would've said something by now?

MARTHA

Somebody could've forgot, Toni. It's easy to forget things when you're stressed.

DOT

Not sure how many bars we'd get out here.

NORA

None. Unless for some reason there's a cell tower around. *

RACHEL

I'm just trying to think *lifelines*, all right? They're gonna find us ASAP, but we can't be stupid. We can't sleep on shit.

DOT

Air traffic's our best bet. Getting spotted by a flyover.

NORA

Depending on their altitude, they might not see us.

We oughta make a big-ass sign on the ground. Like in that movie *28 Days Later*.

I don't know that reference. *

MARTHA

What happened to the guy?

TONI

Who?

The flight attendant. And there had to be a pilot...

Oh shit. Right. They must be floaters by now. *

Rachel loses patience with the chatter. She sits back down.

SHELBY stands, taking the helm. Somewhere she's found a pair of coverall shorts that hang on her perfectly.

ON LEAH, watching the others go quiet, coalescing around Shelby's blonde magnetism. *Beauty is power indeed.*

SHELBY

Rachel's right. It's the 21st century, we're gonna get found. But in the meantime, we gotta keep tabs on our resources.

Shelby sets EIGHT CANS OF DIET SODA on a rock, like props in some corporate presentation. It's very dramatic.

SHELBY

Eight cokes. Right now that's all we got to drink. Just eight.

Martha GASPS a little. Shelby's gravitas is working on her.

SHELBY

But don't worry. If God brought us to it, God can bring us through it.

TONI

Oh. Okay. So we just sit on our asses and pray up?

SHELBY

No, Toni. The Lord saves those who save themselves. Which is why I'm gonna take a look in the woods, see if there's a fresh water source. Maybe you oughta come with. I bet you'd be a *big* help.

TONI

Yeah? You think I'm good in nature, huh? That I've got some kinda special connection to the land!? We're not all Sacajawea, bitch.

MARTHA

Toni, stop.

Martha un-velcroes her TEVA SANDALS, offers them to Shelby.

MARTHA

If you're for real going, take these. They'll be better than your flip-flops.

Toni frowns, clocking Martha's ardent affection for Shelby.

DOT

Guys--

They turn to Dot, who's digging in her cargo-shorts pocket. She pulls out wet cigarettes. A lighter. AND HER CELL PHONE.

Off Rachel, aggressively rolling her eyes, we CUT TO:

THE ENCAMPMENT - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Dot drops both PHONE and LIGHTER in a shallow hole.

She covers them with dry sand. Nora stands by, watching.

DOT

It got real wet. You honestly think sand will dry it out?

NORA

I read an article about it on the internet. About alternatives to rice in a bag. Sand was mentioned.

DOT

Good enough for me.

Dot plunges a TWIG in the sand to mark the spot.

SHELBY (PRE-LAP)

Keep your ears peeled. You'll hear moving water before you see it.

EXT. THE INLAND FOREST - LATER

Shelby and Toni trek through dense undergrowth. Shelby leads, bold and undaunted. Toni, who only came along so as not to be out-shined, follows nervously, loathing every second.

TONI

How come you know all this?

SHELBY

This may come as a surprise, but I'm not just some delicate indoor princess. I go hunting with my dad all the time.

Toni glowers. She doesn't want her idea of Shelby disrupted.

TONI

So you do one hardcore thing. That doesn't mean you're not *mostly* an indoor princess. How many pillows do you have on your bed? I bet you've got one of those mega-beds with like fifty pillows. And your maid Lupe has to keep taking 'em off and putting 'em back on, and it's making her wanna off herself. Am I right? You know I'm right.

Shelby looks ruffled. Clearly, Toni wasn't far off.

SHELBY

Our housekeeper's name is Brigita. She's Lithuanian.

TONI

I knew it! I read you to *filth*.

SHELBY

I've also shot down a 10-point, 300-pound buck, snapped his neck to finish the job, then butchered him in the field all by myself. God built us to contain multitudes, Toni. Now could you please turn around? I have to tinkle.

Shelby grabs Toni's shoulders, turns her around, then squats.

We stay on Toni's incredulous face, trying to process Shelby's "multitudes." *This girl is a lot.*

SHELBY

Plug your ears. Plug your ears or I'll have to sing.

TONI

You've gotta be kidding.

SHELBY

(warbling, badly)
 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet...

OFF TONI, shaking her head --

EXT. MAIN BEACH - ENCAMPMENT - DUSK

Back at "camp," Leah takes a waterlogged shirt from one of the few salvaged suitcases, hangs it on a branch to dry. She pauses for a reflective beat, surveying the girls around her:

LEAH'S VOICE

It didn't happen consciously, but I was finally starting to notice the others. My eyes were opening...

ANGLE ON NORA AND DOT, standing in the distance. They're waist-deep in the ocean, trawling for valuable plane debris.

LEAH'S VOICE

I was awakening to who they were.

ON FATIN, sleeping fitfully, twitching with PTSD dreams.

LEAH'S VOICE

Because that's what happens when the veil of obsession is lifted...

ON JEANETTE, high on a rock. Staring at the water, brooding.

LEAH'S VOICE

*The world you had whittled down to
one begins to repopulate.*

ON RACHEL, feverishly doing bicycle-crunches on the sand.

LEAH'S VOICE

*Rachel. I was drawn to her even
then. She was all fire and no quit.
A relentless girl.*

MARTHA (O.S.)

"There's no better place to grow
into yourself."

Martha sits nearby, reading a soggy "DAWN OF EVE" brochure. The photo inside shows the **TALL WHITE-HAIRED WOMAN** from the in-flight video, hugging some HAPPY GIRLS under a palm tree.

MARTHA

What does "grow into yourself" even
mean? It sounds gross. Like an
ingrown hair.

Just then, a breeze blows in. Martha shivers.

MARTHA

I didn't think it'd be so chilly.

LEAH

I know. I'm not so sure we're
anywhere near Hawaii.

Leah turns to hang another shirt, drops it by accident. She stoops to get it, but spots something in the salvage pile --

HER BOOK. Soaked through. Jeff's headshot staring up at her.

LEAH'S VOICE

*But of course he floated back. A
stubborn ghost, tapping me on the
shoulder with a gentle reminder...
That my heart? Was still his bitch.*

Off Leah as she pulls it from the heap, we FLASHBACK TO:

INT. THE FAIRMONT HOTEL - SAN FRANCISCO - EVENING

Leah treads down a hotel corridor, the BOOK under her arm. She's made conspicuous efforts with her look -- a pretty shift dress, a bright red lip. And her heart is HAMMERING.

Her phone BUZZES. It's a text from Jeff: "I'm struggling to believe this is finally happening."

She stops in front of a suite, takes a deep breath. Knocks.
Jeff opens up. He stares at Leah for a long beat.

JEFFREY
Get in here.

IN THE ROOM --

The tension crackles between them. The months of texting have been a long, excruciating, pleasurable tease.

JEFFREY
I am about to utter something truly horrific. A platitude of the most embarrassing kind.

LEAH
I might not mind. I don't think my critical faculties are, like, super sharp right now.

He pulls her toward him. Whispers in her ear.

JEFFREY
I forgot how lovely you are.

He kisses her lightly on the neck, then down her shoulder.

JEFFREY
Happy belated birthday.

They kiss, deep and hungry, as we TIME CUT TO:

THE BED - LATER

Where Jeff is passionately making love to her. His eyes are closed, losing himself in the feeling.

But hers are wide open. This only happens once, after all. She doesn't want to miss it.

LEAH'S VOICE
Every girl has a vision for how she wants to lose it. The unimaginative ones will dream about prom night, an adoring boyfriend, a bedspread strewn with rose petals. As for me, I figured it would play out like the rest of my life -- in brutally ordinary fashion. On someone's old couch. In someone's damp basement, with lots of condom fumbling and apologies...

LATER STILL --

Leah sits in bed, gazing at Jeff as he opens a bottle of Veuve Clicquot. Pours two glasses, hands one to her.

LEAH'S VOICE

If you had told me it would happen the way it did. And with whom... Honestly? I would've told you to get the fuck out.

Leah pulls her copy of his novel off the nightstand.

LEAH

Will you sign it?

JEFFREY

I'll do you one better. I'll annotate it, just for you.

He finds a pen, climbs in bed with the book. He flips to a certain page, underlining as he reads:

JEFFREY

"...The sun drew out plumes of freckles on her shoulders. Nebulas of pigmentation that would fade by summer's end..."

(scribbling in the margin)

Dear Leah, this passage would've been much better and way less purple if I had known your truly exemplary freckles at the time.

LEAH

Oh my god. I don't know who this exercise is going to be more embarrassing for, you or me.

The strangeness of everything that's happened suddenly scratches at Leah's mind and heart. She turns to him.

LEAH

I want to ask you something. And I promise I'll only ask it once... This is real, isn't it?

He stares at her, quite solemn.

JEFFREY

If you're asking about my feelings, I'm afraid the answer is yes.

OFF LEAH, basking in his eyes --

EXT. MAIN BEACH - THE SURF - DUSK

A DIET COKE bobs on the ocean's surface. A hand scoops it up.

POP WIDE to reveal DOT with the can, NORA standing nearby. They're still waist-deep in the water, searching for debris.

DOT

That makes sixteen. Why do you think we're only finding diets?

NORA

Anything with real sugar would sink. Sugar having a greater density than water.

DOT

And how long can the nine of us survive on sixteen cokes?

NORA

Depends on the weather. How hot it gets. A week and a half, maybe.

That hangs there for a moment. The portent of it.

DOT

You're smart, huh. Like a savant.

NORA

I just read a lot.

DOT

Books, man. Can't get into 'em.

NORA

Try having an elite athlete for a sibling. You'll spend most of your life sitting. On planes. In gyms. In the stands. Reading will happen.

DOT

Hm. Yeah... But like, your phone's right there. And TV's so good.

Suddenly, Nora spots a bloated ZIPLOCK BAG floating nearby -- Inside we see medications, vitamins. She grabs it discreetly.

DOT

They said graphic novels would be like the gateway drug to books, but I tried 'em. Not for me--
(suddenly doubles over)
Shit! Stubbed my fuckin' toe.

Dot reaches underwater, dredges up the offending object: a PINK HARD-SHELL SUITCASE. Dot checks the name on the tag -- FATIN KAMILA JADMANI. Hearts instead of dots above the i's.

EXT. INLAND FOREST - DUSK

Shelby leads Toni along a STEEP RIDGE. Both girls are tiring.

TONI

We should go back. It's getting dark as shit and I'm starving.

SHELBY

Let's press a little farther. I'd rest a lot easier if we found a stream, or even a glorified puddle.

They trek in silence for a few beats.

TONI

I bet we'll get rich once they find us. Suing for damages and whatnot. Not that your ass needs the money--

SHELBY

Shhhhhhh! Keep listening for water.

Toni rolls her eyes. She tries to be quiet. But no dice.

TONI

Man am I sick of looking at your ponytail. I feel like it thinks it's better than me.

SHELBY

Then how 'bout you go in front?

TONI

(hiding her nerves)
Fine by me.

Shelby pauses on the ridge-line, lets Toni pass.

They hike in silence again. We live in their fatigue for a spell. Their sweat, their fear. The whiplash of the day.

Shelby closes her eyes. Begins to MURMUR a soft prayer:

SHELBY

Lord, in your mercy, grant us water so that we may drink. Lord, in your mercy, grant us water--

TONI

Weren't you *just* telling me to shut up and listen?

SHELBY

It's different. When you pray, God opens your senses.

TONI

Psht. God's such a joke. Didn't you know he's just a brainwashing tool designed to enslave the masses?

SHELBY

He loves you too, Toni.

(then)

But even if He were a just brainwashing tool... which He isn't... Did you ever think maybe your brain could use a good scrub?

TONI

Oh fuck off.

They continue on. Shelby resumes PRAYING.

Toni's irritation mounts. An impulse seizes her... She grabs a thin TREE BRANCH, bends it back, and releases --

It SWATS Shelby in the face. (The intended effect.) But it also knocks her off-balance. She wobbles, slips, then slides down the ridge. About seven feet, to the forest floor below.

Toni freezes in horror. *What has she done?* She hustles down the ridge. Reaches Shelby's inert body. Shakes her...

TONI

Fuck. Fuck. Shelby!

Finally Shelby stirs. She sits up, gets her bearings. Touches her fingers to her temple. It's bleeding.

TONI

Shit-- I swear, I didn't mean--

SHELBY

It's all right.

Toni watches, stricken, as Shelby climbs shakily to her feet.

TONI

Shelby--

Shelby cuts her off with a cold look.

SHELBY

Go ahead and go on back. I will too, but you should get a head start. I'd prefer to walk alone.

Off Toni, reeling with shame --

EXT. MAIN BEACH - ENCAMPMENT - NIGHTFALL

THUD! Dot drops the pink suitcase at Fatin's feet.

Fatin gapes at it for a long beat. Touches it to make sure it's real, then glances up at Dot. Her gratitude palpable.

Dot gives her a wink, then moves off.

Fatin returns her attention to the suitcase. Clicks it open.

LEAH'S VOICE

Hard to say exactly what brought Fatin out of the dark that day. Touching the things that belonged to her, maybe. Returning to the rituals she believed in...

Fatin runs her hands lovingly over the contents, then takes out a HUGE make-up case. Like a weapons-grade Caboodle.

LEAH'S VOICE

It was less like coming out of shock, and more like emerging from amnesia. She was remembering who she was.

She finds a lip gloss, puts some on. Her serenity returning.

ON DOT, kneeling beside Leah and the others, unloading the items she collected. More diet sodas, a few airplane meals.

DOT

Not a bad haul. Not great, either.
(infomercial voice)
But wait, there's more...

Dot pulls a bunch of LIQUOR MINIS from her cargo pockets.

DOT

I'd be a lot more excited if alcohol wasn't dehydrating.

Martha opens one, sniffs it, just as TONI rounds the corner.

TONI

Martha. You partying without me?

MARTHA

You're back! Where's Shelby?

TONI

She's coming.

NORA

Were you able to find water?

Toni shakes her head, then recoils awkwardly from the group. She's spotted SHELBY making her way over, a wadded-up shirt pressed to her temple. And she's SMILING. A full-glitz smile.

The smile chills Toni more than any scowl ever could.

MARTHA

Shelby, your head. What happened?

SHELBY

(locking eyes with Toni)

Oh, you know... Wasn't looking where I was going. Really silly.

Then, from off-screen, we hear a TRILL OF LAUGHTER. It's controlled at first, but builds...

IT'S RACHEL. Elation in her eyes. Kneeling next to the TWIG that marked the buried phone. She's just dug it up, and now she's staring at the illuminated screen. *It's working.*

RACHEL (PRE-LAP)

We have to be strategic.

EXT. MAIN BEACH/FLAT ROCK - LATER

Rachel has the phone in hand. Seven others gather round, and Fatin joins last, looking renewed. Eye-liner on point.

RACHEL

We've got one bar and almost zero battery life. Every second counts.

SHELBY

May I just say, I am ready to make the call. My aunt's a 911 operator, and I shadowed her for a week last year, so I know the protocols, I know what they need to hear--

RACHEL

No. 911 is out. It doesn't work in every country, and we don't even know where we are. If we're closer to, like, Japan, 911 is useless.

NORA
Japan's emergency number is 119.

Rachel shoots her sister a look -- *Thanks, but I got this.*

RACHEL
Look. We only need to connect with one person. That's it. So I want you all to have somebody in mind. Just make sure you know their number, and make sure they love you enough to be waiting by the phone right now.

Among the group, we land on Leah. Anguish washing over her.

LEAH'S VOICE
I only knew one number by heart.

INT. LEAH'S BEDROOM - DAY - 21 DAYS "BEFORE"

Leah lies on her bed. Languid. Happy. Her phone on her chest.

...It BUZZES with an incoming text. She checks, and of course it's from that ICONIC 917 number: "I'm outside your house."

Leah's jaw drops. She bounces up, exuberant. Gives herself a quick look in the mirror, then bolts out the door.

OUTSIDE --

Jeff's rental car is parked on her cul-de-sac. Leah races toward it as he rolls down his window.

LEAH
What are you doing here? I thought the San Jose reading didn't end--

JEFFREY
December 5th.

Leah freezes. His expression is ice-cold.

JEFFREY
December 5th is your birthday. That's when you turn seventeen.

LEAH
Wait. *What?*

JEFFREY
Don't play dumb, Leah. Do you have any idea how much trouble I could get in? I'm a *public* figure.
(MORE)

JEFFREY (CONT'D)
 (even more shrill)
 A public figure for fuck's sake!

Another car wheels around the cul-de-sac. Jeff ducks a little, watching it warily. He puts his own car in Drive.

LEAH
 (choking back tears)
 Wait-- How-- How did you even--

JEFFREY
 Someone sent me a copy of your birth certificate via certified fucking mail. Which means someone knows, and they're watching. So this...us...is done.

LEAH
 Jeff, don't-- Listen--

JEFFREY
 It's over, Leah.

He closes his eyes. This isn't easy for him.

JEFFREY
 And I'm going to say this so that you don't entertain any ideas about trying to repair this situation... I was bound to get bored with you.

He inhales sharply. Rolls up the window. And pulls away.

Off Leah, crushed, her knees giving way beneath her --

EXT. MAIN BEACH/FLAT ROCK - NIGHT

Leah stands among the others. Thoughts of Jeff swirling...

ON RACHEL now, as she starts to dial a number.

Nora peers over her shoulder. Suddenly she goes ashen --

NORA
 You're not calling Mom and Dad?

RACHEL
 They're on assignment, aren't they?
 They might not even know yet.
 (downplaying this:)
 I'm calling Coach.

NORA
 No. Not her.

Nora SNATCHES the phone from Rachel, ends the call. Rachel LUNGES to get it back, but Nora is already dialing someone.

NORA
I'm calling Dad's cell.

Rachel stands down. The call connects. The RINGS are audible, terrible... Each one carrying such high stakes. Then --

AN OPERATOR MESSAGE: "We're sorry. The number you've called has been disconnected or is no longer in service. Goodbye."

MARTHA
Did you dial it right?

NORA
Of course I dialed it right.

SHELBY
Would you mind? If I know Dave and JoBeth Goodkind, they are pacing holes in the carpet right now.

Shelby dials her parents. She gets the same operator message.

SHELBY
Well, that's just strange. Let me real quick try my boyfriend--

DOT
Don't waste your time. Andrew's probably dick-deep in Christa Findlay by now.

SHELBY
Excuse me?!

Dot gives her a look that says "Don't shoot the messenger."

LEAH
Maybe someone else should go. Dot?

DOT
Pass.

Leah looks at her, baffled, then turns to Toni --

LEAH
Toni?

TONI
Nah. I'm good.

Martha gives Toni an empathetic squeeze. Leah clocks it.

Martha takes the phone from Shelby. Bites her lip, nervously.

MARTHA
I'll try mine.

As Martha dials, Leah notices JEANETTE, who's receded from the group. She's clutching her belly. Her brow knit in pain.

LEAH
(sotto, to Jeanette)
You feeling all right?

Martha gets the operator, too. Finally Fatin takes the cell.

FATIN
As much as I don't want to call
those assholes...

ANGLE ON JEANETTE. Her eyes glazed, a TRICKLE OF BLOOD dripping from the corner of her mouth...

And then she slumps over.

Leah moves in fast, takes her pulse. She spots the BRUISE on Jeanette's abdomen, lifts her shirt to get a better look --

The bruise has EXPLODED in size. Engulfing her whole stomach.

LEAH	FATIN
Oh my god.	Fuck!

LEAH	FATIN
She's dead.	It's dead.

OFF the girls, abject horror washing over them, we CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN BEACH - NIGHT

Jeanette's stiffening body, lying in a shallow sandy grave.

LEAH'S VOICE
*I didn't know rigor mortis set in
so fast. Face-first, too. Starting
with the eyelids, then the jaw...
The air around us hardened as well.
Gravity got somehow heavier.
(beat)
Basically, shit got real.*

Dot pushes sand over Jeanette. The others look on, shaken.

RACHEL
They're coming for us any minute, I
don't see why we have to bury her.

DOT

It's not deep. Just enough to keep
the critters away.

SHELBY

Dottie, hold up. Shouldn't somebody
should say a few words?

DOT

Sounds like you're volunteering.

SHELBY

Well. I *am* an officially deputized
youth minister.

Shelby waits a beat. Clasps her hands. Then goes for it.

SHELBY

Lord, thank You for the gift of
Jeanette. We didn't know her real
well, but as she was made in your
Image and such, we can be sure she
was beautiful. Amen.

Leah stares mournfully at the body... This girl she kept
afloat, now dead and cold in this nowhere place. An impulse
moves within her, and she steps forward, softly SINGING --

LEAH

Right, right, turn off the lights,
we're gonna lose our minds
tonight... What's the dealio?

The others turn, baffled.

LEAH

I think she liked P!nk.

NORA

She did.

LEAH

(resumes, feebly)
...Party crasher, panty snatcher.
Call me up if you a gangsta...

A few others sing too. And when they reach the chorus, FATIN
joins in. The Juilliard shoe-in. Her voice hauntingly
beautiful. The others go quiet so they can listen.

FATIN

So raise your glass if you are
wrong, in all the right ways...

(MORE)

FATIN (CONT'D)
 All my underdogs, we will never be
 anything but loud and nitty-gritty
 dirty little freaks...

One by one, the others lend their voices again. They sing together, scooping sand over Jeanette's corpse.

EXT. MAIN BEACH - ENCAMPMENT - LATER

A CAMPFIRE burns weakly, thanks to Dot's lighter. It casts a glow on their MEAGER FOOD STOCKPILE -- the few airplane meals they found, various snacks, and only 21 soda cans.

The girls sit mutely around the fire. Rattled and worried.

Rachel -- seated apart, stretching -- breaks the silence.

RACHEL
 I'm gonna swim out to the wreck
 tomorrow. There might be like a
 radio or a callbox or something.

Leah stares at Rachel with reverence. She raises her hand.

LEAH
 I'll come with you.

The two girls lock eyes for a moment. Rachel nods.

SHELBY
 And I'll head back inland. Maybe
 you'll come along again, Toni? You
 were *such* a great partner today.

Shelby gives Toni an odd smile, then wraps her arm around Martha. It seems like a territorial gesture. A *challenge*.

TONI
 (defiant)
 Yeah. Why not.

Martha, shivering despite the fire, notices Fatin pulling a sweater from her suitcase.

MARTHA
 Your stuff is dry?

FATIN
 My parents got me this ridiculous
 thousand-dollar suitcase? It's like
 watertight or something.

Fatin blinks at her dumbly for a beat. Finally etiquette dawns on her, and she offers Martha a sweatshirt.

DOT

Hey. Let me get one.

Fatin tosses Dot a hoodie. She pulls it on, only to realize that it says "MORE ISSUES THAN VOGUE" on the chest.

DOT

This is my rock bottom.

Dot reaches into the stockpile, grabs some LIQUOR MINIS.

DOT

Fuck dehydration. I'm not wearing a *sassy shirt* without a drink. And I'm *not* drinking alone.

Dot tosses bottles to the others. The mood lightens a bit.

SHELBY

This might sound bananas... But in the interest of blowing off some steam, maybe we do another little icebreaker?

(the others GROAN)

Oh come on, now. I mean a fun one.

(wags her liquor mini)

Maybe a little 'Never Have I Ever'?

TONI

Only if you go first. And none of those bullshit lightweight answers. Give us the real.

SHELBY

(up to the challenge)

Fine. Never have I ever...had vaginal penetrative intercourse.

TONI

So that's why your boyfriend is creeping.

SHELBY

He is not "creeping." I don't know where Dottie heard that.

Everyone takes a drink except Martha.

Fatin clocks that Leah has taken a sip.

MARTHA

(to Shelby)

I'm glad I'm not the only one. I would've felt so stupid.

SHELBY

Get outta here. You know how much guts it takes to stay pure?

Shelby gives her an even tighter hug. Toni silently fumes.

ON LEAH, smiling faintly as she takes them all in.

LEAH'S VOICE

I'm sure you think those games are dumb. That they're just a way for a bunch of catty, horny girls to size each other up sexually. And sure, that's part of it. We all wanna know who's lagging. And we're dying to know who's leading the charge.

DOT

Hmmm... Never have I ever... Had a threesome.

Only Fatin drinks. Dot's impressed. Decides to press on.

DOT

...With two guys, not two girls.

Fatin drinks again. Matter-of-factly. Like it's nbd.

DOT

...In a public place?

Fatin takes yet another drink. The others stare in awe.

DOT

...On my period?

A collective hush as Fatin *almost* drinks, but stops short.

FATIN

I mean, I'm not a freak.

LEAH'S VOICE

But there's power in the gameplay. Here you have a chance to own your narrative. To get out in front of your own shitty life story...

ON TONI, rolling her mini between her palms.

TONI

I have one that'll get you bougie bitches drinking... Never have I ever been on a plane before today.

The others drink quietly. Unsure what to make of this.

TONI

And honestly? Not that into it.

This gets a chuckle. The mood continuing to lift.

LEAH'S VOICE

*Here you can show that you've
listened. That you've remembered.*

ON RACHEL, who had been abstaining, as she opens a mini rum.

RACHEL

Never have I ever thrown my own
piss at somebody.

The others look around. Who was this targeted at?

MARTHA

Drink up, Toni.

LEAH'S VOICE

*Here you can laugh at your
checkered past.*

TONI

With pride, motherfuckers.

Toni glugs. The others bust up laughing.

LEAH'S VOICE

*Here you can laugh yourself back to
life.*

ON LEAH, laughing heartily. Her eyes finally brightening as the veil of heartache lifts again. A quiet catharsis.

EXT. SAND DUNE - LATER

Rachel sits on a remote dune. Cheeks wet from crying.

Nora approaches cautiously. Waits for an acknowledgement from Rachel, but none comes. Finally she sits, a few feet away.

A SHORE BIRD skitters across the beach. Nora studies it.

NORA

A black-bellied plover. In the
summer they breed on the rock
beaches of central California.

(then)

I don't think we're too far from
the coast. They'll find us soon.

Nora's version of a pep talk. Rachel doesn't react, so Nora tries a new overture. She reaches into her pocket...

And produces a PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE. She hands it to Rachel.

NORA

I found them in the water.

Rachel is floored. Gapes at the bottle, then turns to Nora.

RACHEL

I'm surprised you didn't throw them out.

NORA

Me too.

Rachel's eyes are glassy, her gratitude immense. She looks like she might even hug Nora -- but she's just not there yet.

RACHEL

Thank you.

Nora nods. Climbs to her feet, then pads away.

EXT. MAIN BEACH - ENCAMPMENT - SAME TIME

Leah sits by the fire with Jeff's book in her lap. *But she's not reading it.* She's SKETCHING on one of the blank pages --

We glimpse her handiwork: a rough DOODLE OF SHELBY, with the words "Vaginal Penetrative Intercourse" in a speech balloon.

FATIN (O.S.)

So who'd you fuck?

Leah looks up, finds Fatin taking a seat beside her.

FATIN

I mean, I always thought you were like some weird art prude. But I saw you drink. You've had sex.

(beat)

So who was it?

Leah grimaces. She holds up the jacket photo on the book.

LEAH

Him.

FATIN

Snap. I had no idea you were such a bad bitch.

LEAH

Well. In your defense, we've never actually talked before.

FATIN

True story.

(with some insecurity)

Honestly? I don't really hang out with girls that much. Or like ever.

Leah gives her a supportive smile. They're quiet for a beat.

FATIN

(nods at the book)

So was it hot?

LEAH

Yeah... But maybe in a burning building kind of way? Like, it's probably really good I got out.

Leah smiles. Wanting desperately to believe her own words.

EXT. BEACH - TIDE POOL - LATER

Shelby kneels by a placid tide pool, mid-prayer.

SHELBY

...I'm sure that by Your Grace, rescue is just around the corner. But once we're saved here, we'll have to face real salvation. Like of our *souls*. Help me show these women that You and only You can offer that.

(then, sheepishly)

And I know this is petty, but if You could please watch over my flipper? It is touch and go. Amen.

Shelby takes out the appliance, frowns at the widening crack.

Suddenly, she spots a LIGHT down the shore, GLINTING amid the rocks. She ambles over to inspect -- but it's not an actual light -- it's a REFLECTION -- the moonlight, dancing on --

FIVE CASES OF WATER. 24 bottles each, shrink-wrapped in shiny plastic. Neatly stacked amongst the crags. *What. The. Fuck.*

But Shelby doesn't question them. She drops to her knees, touches them, lifts her head skyward in ecstatic devotion...

SHELBY

Lord Jesus. I am not worthy.

LEAD AGENT (PRE-LAP)
Where did the water come from?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY - PRESENT

LEAH
God, obviously.
(beat)
At least that's what she told us in
the morning.

The agents share a look, then scribble notes on their pads.
Leah gazes off, her face clouding. Something weighing on her.

LEAH
The burning building...

The Lead Agent looks up. He notices that she's shaking.

LEAD AGENT
Sorry?

LEAH
The burning building... I hadn't
made it out. Not even close.

LEAD AGENT
I'm not sure what you mean.

Leah swallows hard. Girds herself for what she must say next.

LEAH
There's an end to this beginning.
One I haven't shared with anyone.
(closes her eyes)
That night, in the dark... I was
the only one who heard it...

EXT. MAIN BEACH - ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

Back on the island, Leah lies awake near the dead fire. The others, save Shelby, are curled up around her, sleeping.

Suddenly, Leah hears something. She bolts up, turns an ear...

It's the FAINT JINGLE OF A RINGTONE. And again, it's P!nk.
"So so what, I am a rock star, I got my rock moves..."

Leah rushes over to Jeanette's grave. Puts her ear to the sand. *Holy shit*. The ringtone is coming from beneath.

Leah digs fast. Unearths a cold, gray hand. Keeps digging.

Finally she digs up a RINGING PHONE, extracts it from Jeanette's shorts pocket. *Must've been on her the whole time.* It's a hi-tech, waterproof model. Almost military-looking.

LEAH'S VOICE

I thought I had evolved. That the day had somehow made me stronger. Just a little. Just enough.

She declines the incoming call, dials a new number: 9..1..7..

Leah lifts the phone to her ear, TREMBLING like a manic leaf.

LEAH'S VOICE

What a fucking delusion.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - DAY

Jeff is trying to hail a cab when his phone BUZZES. He checks the screen -- NO CALLER ID. Warily he picks up.

JEFFREY

Hello?

Leah winces. His voice is a GUT-PUNCH. Every word she eeks out is shaky, rasped, gagged -- like she's just been impaled.

LEAH

Jeff--

JEFFREY

Leah? Jesus Christ.

LEAH

Please. I need-- I need you to--

JEFFREY

Calling from an unknown number so I might pick up? God, that's low.

Leah tries to speak, but she chokes on her cries for help.

JEFFREY

Leah. Listen. I'd be lying if I said I didn't miss you. But we can't talk like this. I'm sorry--

The phone CUTS OUT. Leah stares in horror at the DEAD SCREEN. Unclear what came first: Jeff hanging up, or the phone dying.

Leah crumples. Buries her face in the sand. *Shattered.*

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY - PRESENT

Tears well in Leah's eyes. The agents stare at her, stunned.

LEAD AGENT

So you never told the others you made outside contact that night?

LEAH

What would I have said? That I was too strung out on the sound of his voice to send up an SOS?

She shakes her head, lowers her eyes for a beat. But when she looks back up, there's a new hunger in them. A *desperation*.

LEAH

Did he... Did he reach out?

LEAD AGENT

Excuse me?

LEAH

When the news broke. Did he call anyone to say he'd heard from me?

The Lead Agent goes to speak, but suddenly the door swings open, and a NURSE enters with a wheelchair.

LEAD AGENT

Leah. I'm afraid that means our time is up. The doctors have got you on a tight schedule--

LEAH

No, wait-- Tell me-- Did he care enough to do anything? Anything at all?

LEAD AGENT

I'm sorry. I really am. But we can't comment on the leads we may or may not have received.

She stands, eyes blazing. Her brittle form in full view now.

LEAH

Answer. My. Question.

(then, weakening)

Please. It's the only one I have... You don't need to tell me what went wrong in the air that day. Or where we actually were. Or who the fucking president is now.

(MORE)

LEAH (CONT'D)
 After all this time... *I just want
 to know if he tried for me.*

She hovers over the table, shivering, for a long beat. Finally, her strength escapes her. She staggers to the wheelchair, lowers herself in. Hangs her head low.

LEAH
 Pathetic, I know. I expected more
 from me, too.

The agents watch, bewildered, as the nurse wheels her off...
 ...But at the door, Leah turns back. Stares straight at them.

LEAH
 Remember this, when you see the
 others... There is no "crazy."
 There is only damage. And when you
 go looking for what caused it?
 Don't waste your time on that
 island.
 (beat)
 It'll get you fucking nowhere.

Leah disappears with the nurse into the corridor beyond.

In the hollow silence that follows, the agents stew for a moment. Finally, the Junior Agent lets out a wry whistle, shaking his head. The implication: "Whew. She was crazy."

After a beat:

JUNIOR AGENT
 So. Who do you want to bring in
 tomorrow?

The lead agent opens a case file. Flashes it to his partner.

LEAD AGENT
 This one.

Off the photo of TONI SHALIFOE clipped to the file, we...

CUT TO BLACK.

When we COME BACK UP, we enter a radically different world:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING BATHROOM - DAY

A sad, generic restroom. Fluorescent bulbs buzzing overhead.

A stall door opens, and MARGARET KETTLEMAN (43) emerges. We recognize her immediately. The tall frame. The white hair...

She's the woman from the "Dawn of Eve" orientation video.

At the sink, she straightens her blazer. Wipes lipstick off her teeth. Then frowns at her reflection.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Margaret sits in front of a computer in a drab office. We notice that she's wearing DUMPY SWEATPANTS with her smart blazer. A classic combination for professionals who Skype.

ANGLE ON HER LAPTOP, and sure enough, she's on a video conference call. Six other FEMALE FACES appear on-screen.

MARGARET

It's *your* donor, Ava. How about *you* convince them not to pull funding?!

Margaret listens to a response. She's wearing earbuds so we can't hear the talking heads, but it seems to infuriate her.

MARGARET

I have parental compensation packages to issue, like *yesterday*.
(listens, then)
Come the fuck on. You know how to address safety concerns... Remote supervision, compulsory first aid--

There's a KNOCK on the door. Her assistant THOM (27, neo-hippie) peeks in. His face ashen with alarm.

Margaret clocks it. Swallows dryly, then turns back to the screen, plastering on a fake smile.

MARGARET

I'm sorry. I have to excuse myself.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING CORRIDOR - DAY

Margaret and Thom stride with urgency down a long hallway.

Thom's face is creased with worry. Margaret's with anger.

MARGARET

Which operative did we lose?

THOM

Ginsu.

Margaret winces. Viscerally pained by this news.

MARGARET
And the other?

THOM
She's fine.

They approach a POWDER-PINK door. Hanging on it, a quaint CROSS-STITCHED SAMPLER, featuring a delicately embroidered daisy and the following words: "**IN THE FLOWER OF HER YOUTH.**"

Margaret swipes an access badge, and they enter into --

INT. "IN THE FLOWER OF HER YOUTH" HQ - CONTINUOUS

A hi-tech control room. Research assistant SUSAN (30s) sits before a WALL OF MONITORS. Seeing Margaret, she jumps up.

MARGARET
Tell me what happened to her. Now.

SUSAN
We're still piecing it together,
but it looks like there was some
mishandling by the transition team.

MARGARET
Did you cut her phones?

SUSAN
We'll do that straight away.

Margaret closes her eyes. Takes a deep breath. Refocuses.

MARGARET
All right. Show me.

Susan brings up a feed on the MAIN MONITOR... ON SCREEN, a grainy image of THE ISLAND appears...

We see our EIGHT GIRLS. Singing around Jeanette's grave.

Holy shit. *They're being watched.*

END.