

# Winchester

1x02: "THE AUTOPSY OF SHANE WISE"

Written by

ALEX M. P. MATTHEWS and MATTHEW JAMES

## STARRING

JAKE FARRELL .....	Cody Christian
TRACY VARGAS .....	Camila Mendes
CHARLIE MATTHEWS .....	Dylan Minette
LUCY HILL .....	Grace Phipps
PETE JENSEN .....	Franz Drameh
EVE WISE .....	Sarah Hyland
MELISSA CARLYLE .....	Maddie Hasson
MAYA RAYMOND .....	Lindsey Morgan
and	
ANNIE FARRELL .....	Liza Weil

## GUEST STARRING

SHERIFF CONRAD HILL .....	Denis Leary
DR. RACHEL VARGAS .....	Morena Baccarin
PRINCIPAL ARTHUR WALLACE .....	David Ramsey
MADELAINS REES-WISE .....	Susan Walters
STUART REES .....	Clark Gregg
MIRANDA TSING .....	Kelly Hu
SHANE WISE .....	Tom Maden
BETTY HART .....	Candice King
STUDENT #1 .....	

Executive Producers  
Alex Matthews & Matthew James

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. WINCHESTER BAY MEMORIAL - NIGHT

Establishing shot of the several story building, with gleaming windows and it's name in bright lights.

INT. MORGUE, WINCHESTER BAY MEMORIAL - CONTINUOUS

On top of a autopsy table, under a WHITE SHEET, lays a BODY. We slowly approach the still form.

The body of SHANE WISE.

MADELAINE (O.C.)  
(shaky, in disbelief)  
Are-- are you sure? I mean, you  
didn't find his--?

SHERIFF HILL (O.C.)  
(interrupts, softly)  
I'm so sorry, Madelaine. It's true we  
didn't find any personal effects, but  
Dr. Vargas has confirmed it.  
(beat)  
It's definitely Shane.

INT. WAITING AREA, MORGUE - CONTINUOUS

MADELAINE REES-WISE, normally a woman of elegance, now a mother who has lost a child, buries her head into the shoulder of the man beside her - her husband, STUART.

She lets out a pitiful SOB of despair, as Stuart, a man of quiet dignity and restraint, keeps himself together, for his wife's benefit, if nothing more.

STUART  
(choked with emotion)  
When can we--  
(clears throat)  
--can we take him home?

SHERIFF HILL  
We can't release the--  
(MORE)

SHERIFF HILL (cont'd)  
 (stops, ashamed)  
 We can't release him until we confirm  
 the cause of death, and finish  
 collecting evidence.

STUART  
 (nodding)  
 Of course, of course. I understand.

Madelaine's SOBS grow quieter, as Stuart slowly maneuvers  
 her towards the exit. He looks over his shoulder at Hill.

STUART (cont'd)  
 You'll keep us apprised of when we  
 can begin making arrangements?

SHERIFF HILL  
 I will.  
 (beat, determined)  
 I promise you, Stuart, Madelaine, I  
 won't stop until I find out what  
 happened to him.

Stuart, eyes glistening with tears, swallows hard, before  
 nodding in acknowledgment, and pushing the doors open, and  
 gently helping his wife through them.

Hill watches them go, a mixture of emotions playing over his  
 own world-weary features. He sighs, running his hands  
 vigorously over his face and through his hair, before he  
 turns and walks into the morgue proper...

INT. MORGUE, WINCHESTER BAY MEMORIAL - CONTINUOUS

Standing next to the autopsy table now is DR. RACHEL VARGAS,  
 Brazilian born, late 30s, with the steely resolve necessary  
 to deal with the things she sees on her table.

She looks up from the written report she is working on as  
 Hill enters, eyes drawn to the body in front of him. They  
 exchange a brief look before Rachel puts her clipboard, and  
 gently, with great care, lifts the sheet--

--to reveal SHANE, half his face blackened, burnt. The other  
 half is intact, smudged with soot and dirt, but sporting a  
 LARGE BLOODY WOUND. The wound that killed him?

Hill steps closer, surveying the wounds for himself. Rachel  
 studies him for a moment.

RACHEL  
 We did the right thing, you know.  
 They don't need to see him like this.

SHERIFF HILL  
 I know. Still, when I took this job,  
 I never figured I'd be dealing with  
 something like this.

RACHEL  
 (resigned)  
 Bad things happen, Conrad. Even in  
 towns like ours.  
 (beat)  
 I'm just so glad Tracy didn't see him  
 like this.

Hill steps back, allowing Rachel to slowly lower the sheet  
 over Shane once again...

EXT. WINCHESTER WOODS - NIGHT

The darkness of the dense woods. For a moment there is  
 stillness--

SHERIFF HILL (V.O.)  
 How is she?

RACHEL (V.O.)  
 She wouldn't say, just went to her  
 room. I can't imagine what she must  
 be feeling right now.

--until TRACY VARGAS stumbles into frame.

Still wearing the same clothes as the previous episode, she  
 is the picture of unkempt. Her hair is a mess, and she is  
 covered in dirt and twigs. She looks around, over her  
 shoulder at something off-screen, face twisted in TERROR.

ANGLE ON: Through the trees, a dark male silhouette, just  
 about visible thanks to what little light reaches through  
 the trees. The silhouette waits. Watches. Stalking his prey.

BACK ON TRACY - She starts moving, her pacing picking up as  
 adrenaline begins to kick in. Turning into a run, she shoots  
 one final look over her shoulder--

WHAM!

--only to SMACK into *something*. She bounces off and hits the ground, HARD. Looking up, her eyes widen in horror at what she sees.

SHANE. Horrifically burned. Clad in the tattered, flaking remains of clothing. Blood seeps from his wound. Hair singed away, smoke trailing from what's left. He bares his teeth, a macabre sight of gleaming white against blacked flesh.

SHANE

Why didn't you come looking for me?  
You left me to die!

As he LUNGES at her, Tracy throws up her arms in a futile defensive gesture, as she let's out a desperate SCREAM--

INT. TRACY'S BEDROOM, VARGAS RESIDENCE - EARLY MORNING

--as Tracy SNAPS AWAKE, bolting upright, clinging the sweat-drenched bed covers in a death grip. She GASPS for breath, her scream still echoing slightly, as she looks around, realizes where she is. It was all a DREAM...

SHERIFF HILL (V.O.)

She's a tough one, just like her  
mother. She'll be fine.

Tracy slowly lays back down, turning onto her side, pulling the covers even closer against herself, as she stares out into the star-filled dark of night, eyes wide.

As her resolve fails, and the tears slowly make a path down her cheeks...

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. FARRELL RESIDENCE, WINCHESTER BAY - NIGHT

Establishing shot of the house, where most of the lights are out, in deference to the late hour. One of the second floor lights - Jake's bedroom - is still on.

KNOCK, KNOCK!

ANNIE (PRE-LAP)  
Honey, are you still awake?

INT. JAKE'S ROOM, FARRELL RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

JAKE FARRELL, looking just as we left him in the previous episode, sits at his desk. He's typing furiously at his laptop, working hard, a man on a mission, as ANNIE FARRELL slowly opens the door, and peers in.

ANNIE  
(cautious)  
Jake? What are you doing?

JAKE  
(doesn't look around)  
Working on a story. For the school paper.

ANNIE  
You joined? That's good, I'm glad.  
(curious)  
What's the article about?

JAKE  
Just something I noticed today. I'm thinking a new guy's perspective could be something my new editor might like.  
(beat)  
I couldn't sleep, anyway. Not after everything...

Annie's smile fades, as she moves to stand beside her son.

ANNIE  
Look, I know you've seen some things tonight that are awful, but I think we need to talk about--  
(MORE)

ANNIE (cont'd)  
 (nervous, upset)  
 Look, you shouldn't have run off like that. I had no idea where you'd gone!

JAKE  
 (sincere)  
 Yeah, I'm sorry about that. Really. It was just, Tracy was curious, and I didn't want her going off alone and--

ANNIE  
 (confused)  
 Whoa, back up. Tracy? The girl from earlier? She seemed nice.

Jake simply NODS. Annie looks at him, *curious*, a knowing smile forming. Jake quickly notices, blushing.

JAKE  
 (uncomfortable)  
 Mom! Enough already, okay?  
 (sighs)  
 Besides, I think I just need to focus on getting my life in order. New town, new rules, new friends, right?

ANNIE  
 Yeah, well. Hell of a start, Jake.

JAKE  
 (smiles)  
 Uncle Conrad said something similar.

ANNIE  
 (teasing)  
 Ah, well, you know what they say about great minds, huh?  
 (pauses, hesitant)  
 Just, please, be careful. I really don't need you getting into trouble.

JAKE  
 I promise, Mom.

ANNIE  
 Good. Try to get some sleep.  
 (beat, serious)  
 You're still grounded, though, dude.

JAKE  
 (accepting)  
 Yeah, I figured. Night, Mom.

Annie gives him a soft smile in return, before closing the door. Jake's smile fades quickly, as he reaches over and opens a drawer on his desk, pulling out THE CELLPHONE. It's screen is cracked, covered in dirt--

QUICK CUT: Jake comforts Tracy. He spots the CELLPHONE on the ground in front of him. Reaches out. Pockets it quickly.

--Jake carefully clears off some of the detritus covering the phone, examining it intently, looking for any answers it might give him in the moment...

BETTY HART (PRE-LAP)  
It's been two days since the shocking  
discovery of the body of missing  
local teen Shane Wise...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KITCHEN, HILL RESIDENCE - MORNING

LUCY HILL stands at the small table island in the middle of the kitchen. She slowly mixes pancake mix in a bowl, but her attention is on the TV SCREEN up on the counter.

On it, BETTY HART, in all her young, blonde vivaciousness, stands in front of the charred remains of the cabin, the harsh light of day showing just how badly damaged it is.

BETTY HART  
(through television)  
The cause of death has yet to be  
announced, and so far, Sheriff Conrad  
Hill has done little to ease the  
worries of townsfolk.

Betty is then replaced by a prerecorded segment, as the camera bounces and shakes as the person holding it quickly approaches Sheriff Hill as he exits a building. He does not look happy when the camera is thrust in his face.

BETTY HART (O.S.)  
(through television)  
Sheriff, Sheriff!! KWBI-TV News! Can  
you give us any information about  
what happened in the woods?

SHERIFF HILL  
 (through television,  
 irate)

Look, I've told you, we'll release  
 any and all pertinent information as  
 and when we have it. Right now, just  
 let the family mourn in peace, okay?

With a shake of his head, Hill continues walking, leaving  
 the reporters behind, before the TV turns OFF.

Lucy, now holding the TV remote, sighs before dropping it to  
 the table top. She wipes away tears, absently playing with  
 her cereal, as CHARLIE MATTHEWS, wearing sweatpants and a  
 "Star Wars" t-shirt, walks in, yawning widely.

LUCY  
 Morning, sleepyhead.

CHARLIE  
 Morning. Where's your dad?

LUCY  
 Already left for work. It's going to  
 be a lot of early starts for a while,  
 I guess. How are you feeling?

CHARLIE  
 (shrugs)  
 It's still kinda sinking in.

Lucy puts the mixing bowl down, before heading to the  
 fridge. Opens it, pulling out some orange juice.

LUCY  
 Take a seat, I'm making my mom's  
 patented 'cures all ills' pancakes,  
 you're in for a treat.

A slow smile spreads across Charlie's face, as he moves to  
 sit at the table...

INT. TRACY'S BEDROOM, VARGAS RESIDENCE - MORNING (LATER)

Tracy sits in front of her dressing table, running a brush  
 through her hair, studying her tired features - she's not  
 sleeping well. She puts the brush down, and starts dabbing  
 some make up on the cover the bags.

RACHEL (O.S.)  
 Tracy? Can I come in?

TRACY

Sure, Mom.

Rachel, wearing casual pajamas, a dressing gown, and (of all things) bunny slippers, walks in, cup of coffee in hand.

RACHEL

Breakfast is ready.

TRACY

(distant)

Thanks.

Rachel slowly approaches, sitting on the nearby bed, as she studies her daughter. Tracy feels her gaze, uncomfortable with the scrutiny.

TRACY (cont'd)

What?

RACHEL

I heard you last night. You couldn't have gotten more than a couple of hours sleep.

TRACY

Neither did you, I'm guessing?

RACHEL

(smiles)

Yeah, but I'm used to it, I went to medical school, remember. I don't think I've had a full night's sleep since college.

(concerned)

You, on the other hand, need a decent night's sleep.

TRACY

(sighs)

Yeah, that pretty much hasn't been happening. Not since 'that night'.

Rachel stands, and hugs her daughter gently, Tracy melting into the embrace.

RACHEL

You know I'm here if you need to talk?

TRACY

I do, but honestly, Mom, what's to talk about?

(MORE)

TRACY (cont'd)  
 My friend is dead, I can't change  
 that. I just have to accept that.  
 I'll deal. I always do.

Rachel kisses Tracy's hair before pulling away, allowing  
 Tracy to finish her make-up. She slowly grins.

TRACY (cont'd)  
 (playfully)  
 If you really want to help, you could  
 prescribe me some sleeping pills, of  
 course.

Rachel, sipping on her coffee, almost CHOKES on it.

As Tracy gleefully smiles back at the mock-irritated glare  
 Rachel shoots her...

EXT. MAIN QUAD, WINCHESTER BAY HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Students of all descriptions either head through the main  
 doors, or mill about waiting for the first bell. Sitting on  
 a bench on the ground are LUCY and CHARLIE, who both look up  
 as a familiar red CORVETTE pulls up to the nearby curb.

At the wheel is Annie, and she tosses a quick wave towards  
 her niece, who returns it with a smile. Charlie, next to  
 her, unsure what to do, hesitantly raises his own hand in a  
 halfhearted wave of his own. Jake, in the front passenger  
 seat, can't help but grin at Charlie's obvious awkwardness.

ANNIE  
 Who's the kid in the hoodie?

JAKE  
 Charlie. He was the one I was trying  
 to help when I-- well, you know.

ANNIE  
 Ah, yes, right. He's in your grade?  
 He looks a little young.

JAKE  
 Lucy told me he's pretty smart, got  
 skipped ahead a couple of grades.

ANNIE  
 Cool, I guess. Right, get out, go  
 make me proud.  
 (beat, pleads)  
 Please try not to get suspended  
 again.

JAKE  
 (grinning)  
 I'll try. No promises.

He snaps off a quick salute, before jumping out of the corvette, and heading over to the waiting Lucy and Charlie, who stand and together, they head into the school.

ANNIE  
 (smiling)  
 Smart-ass. That's my boy.

She guns the ignition, and with a turn of the wheel, heads back off down the street. As the corvette disappears from view, another car - a new model town car, gleaming dark blue surface and a vanity plate that reads CARLYLE 1 - pulls up.

From the rear passenger side, steps out a YOUNG WOMAN - blonde curls, designer clothes, large expensive sunglasses covering her eyes and D&G handbag hanging from her elbow.

She lowers the sunglasses, allowing a peek at a pair of BLUE EYES, that twinkle with mischief that enhances her confident smile. Closing the door behind her, she head towards the school, her Louboutin heels click sharply with each step...

INT. CORRIDOR, WINCHESTER BAY HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

One of the lockers has become decorated with arrangements of flowers and photographs, each of them showing Shane Wise involved in some kind of 'moment'. Playing football, laughing with friends, happier times. Full of life.

Jake, Lucy and Charlie stand across the corridor at an open locker, as Charlie pulls out some books. Lucy watches as various people come and go, adding to the growing memorial.

LUCY  
 (distant)  
 Eve hasn't been in school since...

JAKE  
 His sister? I met her, she was putting up fliers, she didn't look like she was handling it well.

CHARLIE  
 They're pretty close, but totally opposite. Eve's like, the Queen Bee of Winchester Bay High, her mom rules the PTA. But Shane, he's a good guy, always looks out for people.

(MORE)

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
(sadly)  
Or at least, he did.

Charlie closes his locker, and as Lucy looks down the corridor, her eyes go *wide in shock*, her mouth opening and closing like a gasping fish for a couple of seconds.

LUCY  
(aghast)  
You've got to be kidding me?!

Both Jake and Charlie follow her gaze to see the YOUNG WOMAN from earlier walking their way. Charlie pulls his books closer, on the defensive, as Lucy shoots daggers at her.

JAKE  
Who is that?

Jake, though, can't help but give her a long, lingering appraisal, as she walks past. She notices, and grins slightly at the attention, lowering her sunglasses enough to give Jake a playful wink.

LUCY (O.C.)  
(venomous)  
Melissa Carlyle, or as I like to call her..?  
(beat)  
The Anti-Christ in Heels.

She stops at the memorial, and with surprising care and reverence, takes a small photo from her handbag, and places it on the pile.

CLOSE ON: The photo shows Shane and the blonde in a tight embrace, taking a selfie as they fight a fit of giggles.

The blonde gently kisses her fingers then pressing them to the image, before standing, and turning to face the silent crowd that is watching her. She returns their gaze with an easy smile as she pulls her sunglasses off.

MELISSA  
(preening)  
Guess who's back, bitches!

A crowd of nearby girls in CHEER-LEADING OUTFITS squeal in delight, and pretty much rush at a laughing MELISSA, exchanging air-kisses and hugs, before walking off.

CHARLIE  
(panicked)  
I thought she'd been expelled?!

LUCY

(scoffs)

When your parents own half the town and pretty much rule over every decision made by the School Board, I guess you can get away with anything.

JAKE

(exasperated)

Could someone fill in the new guy?

LUCY

She's in our grade, and some of us thought we'd seen the last of her last year after she got shipped off to rehab after her--

(makes air quotes)

'partying' got out of hand, and she came to school piss-ass drunk.

CHARLIE

Her and Eve are, or were, BFFs, they used to rule the school. After she got sent away, Eve wasn't so bad on her own. But together, they're a *nightmare*.

JAKE

(impressed)

Good to know.

He looks over at the gaggle of wannabes now surrounding Melissa, her entourage growing - including PETE JENSEN and his cronies.

She turns away from them and looks straight back at Jake - who GRINS when she blows him a big kiss.

LUCY

(warning)

Uh-uh, don't go there! So don't go there! She's evil, period.

JAKE

(faux-innocent)

What?! I'm not doing anything!

Lucy shakes her head in disgust, before turning on her heel and stalking away, Charlie quickly trailing after her, with an apologetic shrug to Jake as a farewell. Amused, Jake heads off his own way...

INT. TRIBUNE OFFICE, WINCHESTER BAY HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Maya sits at one of the desks, it's computer off, a few scattered photos pinned to the wall behind it, all have Shane in - it's his desk.

With a tear trickling down her cheek, Maya reaches up and pulls one of the photos down, studying it - it's Shane, Pete and Maya herself, younger, more innocent. Happier times.

Putting the photo back with care, she then picks up a copy of the *Tribune* laying on the desk. The headline reads: "PEP RALLY PERSEVERES IN POURING RAIN!" Underneath is the name of the article's writer: *Shane Wise*.

MAYA  
 (to herself, sadly)  
 Not exactly Pulitzer worthy, but you  
 did make some great headline puns.  
 (sobs)  
 I'm so, so sorry, Shane.

TRACY  
 (curious)  
 Sorry about what?

Maya JOLTS around to see Tracy in the doorway of the *Tribune* office, bags successfully masked under a light layer of make-up, dressed as casually and understated as ever.

MAYA  
 (surprised, covering)  
 Hey, Tracy. Oh, nothing, just sorry I  
 never gave him any real stories to  
 cover.

TRACY  
 Saving the best for yourself, huh?

MAYA  
 Something like that, yeah.

She stands and quickly wipes the tears away. Tracy pays her the dignity of pretending not to notice, as she starts sorting through several photo layouts on the main table.

MAYA (cont'd)  
 (trying to be casual)  
 So, have you seen Eve yet?

TRACY  
 (sighs)  
 No, I wasn't sure if I should.  
 (MORE)

TRACY (cont'd)

(beat)

We haven't been friends for a while.

MAYA

She doesn't exactly have that many right now. Besides, with Melissa back, maybe you should--

TRACY

(shocked, appalled)

Wait, what the hell? Melissa's *back*?!

MAYA

You hadn't heard?

Off Tracy's clearly disgusted look...

INT. CLASSROOM, WINCHESTER BAY HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Students sit at every desk, but there is one visible absence. Tracy sits in the middle of the class, next to the empty desk, which she keeps glancing towards at times, despite trying to concentrate on the book in front of her.

At the front of the class, after wiping the board clear, then writing a quote from "Of Mice & Men" on the white board, stands MS. MIRANDA TSING (Asian-American, mid-40s, slim and attractive, long dark hair).

She walks around her desk, and perches on the edge, facing her students.

MIRANDA

So, let's talk now about the relationship between George and Lennie, and the eventual end of their friendship. Was George truly doing what was best for Lennie in the end?

(pauses, waits)

Anyone like to start?

(spots Tracy)

Tracy?

TRACY

(caught off-guard)

Huh? What?

MIRANDA

(impatient)

Lennie and George. The end of their friendship.

TRACY

You mean the fact he shoots him dead?

STUDENT #1

Uh, hashtag spoiler alert much!

MIRANDA

(unimpressed)

Yes, thank you, Jordan. You *should* have finished the book by now on your own time.

She looks around the class again, sees that clearly "*Of Mice & Men*" is in no-one's thoughts at the moment. She removes her thin-rimmed glasses, and squeezes the bridge of her nose, letting out a tired breath as she them back on.

MIRANDA (cont'd)

Okay, new topic. Maybe we should all talk about what's really on everyone's mind.

(looks to students)

Mr Wise.

(beat)

I understand you may all have different feeling about his-- about him being gone.

Tracy's gaze is once again drawn to the empty desk, and as we RACK IN on her dark eyes...

EVE (PRE-LAP)

(laughing)

Hurry up and talk the photo, I can't stand like this all day!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. POOL AREA, WISE RESIDENCE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

EVE WISE, full of life, vitality and a devilish sense of humor, hair in pristine condition, and showing a killer body in a skimpy two-piece bikini, strikes a 'sexy' one-legged pose on the diving board.

Across from her, safely ensconced between some sun-loungers is TRACY, her DIGITAL CAMERA held up to her face, as she focuses on her subject until--

CLICK!

TRACY

Perfect! You can get off there now, you know, unless you wanna go for a swim.

EVE

(faux-horrified)

And ruin my hair?! As if!

With another laugh, she quickly and easily scampers off the board and onto solid decking.

EVE (cont'd)

I'll go change into that next outfit, if you want?

TRACY

Yeah, we can move inside for a bit.

With a nod and a flash of pearly whites, Eve vanishes inside the house. Tracy carefully places her camera down, plugging in a USB cord, connecting it to her LAPTOP on the lounge.

With a few quick clicks, she COPIES AND PASTES the photos onto the laptop, and runs through them on a VIEWING APPLICATION. She can't help but smile at her work.

SHANE (O.S.)

She's a good subject.

Tracy looks up, to find Shane Wise, in shorts, t-shirt and sunglasses, eyeing the photos, an easy and friendly smile gracing his handsome features.

TRACY

She makes it easy.

SHANE

Yeah, but anyone can take a picture these days. An artist appreciates and captures the heart of the subject.

(indicates photos)

Your work. It's really good.

Tracy looks away, blushing in embarrassment and pride.

SHANE (cont'd)

You know the school paper, the *Tribune*, needs a decent photographer. I could put in a good word for you.

TRACY  
 (grimaces)  
 Yeah, I've heard the horror stories  
 about your so-called editor-in-chief.  
 I think I'll pass.

SHANE  
 (defensive)  
 Maya's... *intense*.

TRACY  
 'Intense', that's being a little too  
 kind. From what I've heard,  
 'coldhearted bitch' might be more  
 appropriate.

Shane narrows his eyes. Considers her words.

SHANE  
 That...  
 (shrugs, surrenders)  
 is kinda true.

He laughs. It's infectious, Tracy soon joins him.

SHANE (cont'd)  
 She's also passionate, focused and  
 driven. She wants the *Tribune* to be  
 more than a glorified lunch menu.  
 (beat)  
 Like I said, your photos have heart.  
 It's something the paper could use a  
 little more of.  
 (pauses)  
 Just think about it, okay?

He smiles at her once more, before heading into the house  
 himself. Tracy watches, considers his words...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLASSROOM, WINCHESTER BAY HIGH SCHOOL - AS BEFORE

Tracy BLINKS back to the present, smiling slightly at the  
 memory, before turning back to the ongoing discussion

STUDENT #1 (O.S.)  
 It sucks but I mean, it happens  
 right?

TRACY

(sadly)

Bad things happen to good people.

At the back of the classroom, Pete SCOFFS, unimpressed with what he's hearing.

PETE (O.S.)

Who says he was a good person?

All eyes turn to look at Pete. It's then we notice he looks disheveled, tired and pissed off. He glares back, defiant.

MIRANDA

What would make you say that? Weren't you and he best friends?

Pete takes a moment. Considering. His face darkens, his eyes flash with anger.

PETE

I thought we *were*.

The BELL RINGS. Everyone rises from their seats, Pete just that little bit quicker, to escape the scrutiny that Ms Tsing has him under. Finally she looks away and stands. eyes Pete for another moment, and turns to her students.

MIRANDA

I expect everyone to have finished "*Of Mice & Men*" by our next class, be ready for a quiz and discussion into the thematic influences on Steinbeck's characters.

As the students pour out of the class, Pete barely exchanges a glance with Tracy, who watches him go, curiosity piqued...

FADE TO BLACK:

**END OF ACT ONE**

**ACT TWO**

FADE IN:

INT. CORRIDOR, WINCHESTER BAY HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Students mill about, moving between lockers and classrooms. JAKE walks down the corridor, thoughts a million miles away, as he leafs through a thick TEXT BOOK he's holding, not paying any attention to the world around him until--

SMACK!

The DOOR to the girl's bathroom practically slaps him in the face, causing him to stumble back, as from it, MELISSA emerges. She's absently playing with her curls until she notices Jake, and bursts into a huge smile.

MELISSA

Oh, hey there, new boy. Jake, isn't it?

(holds out hand)

Melissa Carlyle, good to meet some fresh blood in this old halls.

JAKE

(shakes hand)

Uh, yeah, I guess. Nice to meet you.

MELISSA

So, I hear you're from New York, huh? California must be a lot to get used to after the East Coast, I'm betting?

JAKE

I'm dealing with it.

(playfully)

It's getting better by the minute, though.

MELISSA

(flirty)

We aim to please. Any questions, problems, I'm happy to help you.

(huskily)

In any way I can.

Jake easily gets her clear meaning, his grin widening.

TRACY (O.S.)

(clears throat)

Well, look what the cat dragged in.

They both turn to find an unimpressed TRACY standing just behind them, arms crossed, not looking at all happy with what she sees. Both flushes with embarrassment, but Melissa tries to cover it with a smile.

MELISSA

(over the top)

Oh! Hey there, Tracy! Long time, no see, right? You're looking good.

TRACY

(not buying it)

You too. Rehab must have done you some good, I take it?

Jake frowns - he's not see this side of Tracy yet. The disdain and anger radiates off her in waves. Melissa's smile falters just a little, before she lets out a small laugh, and waves her hand, absently.

MELISSA

(faux-nonchalant)

A minor issue, all taken care of now.

TRACY

I just read in today's online Herald that Carlyle Holdings made a substantial donation to the school.

(beat, coldly)

So Daddy bought your way back in?

MELISSA

(getting annoyed)

Look, I made some mistakes last year, I'll admit. I've been given another chance, though, so I intend to make the best of it.

She steps closer to Tracy, their eyes burning into the other, neither backing down.

MELISSA (cont'd)

Let's just agree to stay out of each others way, okay.

TRACY

Sounds good to me.

They stare each other down for a moment. Finally Melissa looks away, turning back to Jake, smile back in place.

MELISSA

See you around, handsome.

Then, with a casual toss of her curls, she saunters off down the corridor, Jake watching with interest, Tracy with disgust. Once she disappears into another classroom, Jake glares at Tracy, who matches it with one of her own.

JAKE

What the hell was that all about?

TRACY

Long story, one I'm not in the mood to tell you right now.

(beat, pleads)

Just, be careful with her, okay. She's a viper, you don't need to get caught up in her little games.

JAKE

(shakes his head)

Fine, whatever. You free now?

TRACY

Yeah, I was looking for you, Maya wants to talk about the next issue.

JAKE

Forget that. I have something you need to see.

Off Tracy's growing curiosity...

EXT. TRIBUNE OFFICE, WINCHESTER BAY HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

The door to the office, labeled with "WINCHESTER TRIBUNE, EDITOR: MAYA RAYMOND" is closed.

MAYA (PRE-LAP)

(unimpressed)

So... what are we looking at?

INT. TRIBUNE OFFICE, WINCHESTER BAY HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON: The now-clean CELL PHONE lays on the layout table, broken screen facing up. Jake, Tracy and MAYA stare at it.

JAKE

(impatient)

I found it. That night in the woods.

Maya's expression changes from monumentally bored to one of scary intensity.

She hesitantly reaches over and turns the phone over. On the case cover is an odd image of a MAN, holding an X-RAY of his skeleton over himself.

MAYA

(gasps)

It's Shane's.

(sees their looks)

I bought him that cover. "*Theory of a Deadman*", a band he liked.

She hands it to Tracy, who studies it, for a moment, eyes narrowed. She presses the power button - *nothing happens*.

JAKE

I tried charging it, but got nowhere. It's busted, wouldn't even connect to my computer.

TRACY

(angrily)

Dammit! It might have told us something, anything about why he was in that cabin. Who he called last.

Maya, clearly nervous, swallows the lump in her throat, her guilty conscience wrestling with her desire to get answers. She lets out a ragged breath.

MAYA

I know a guy, I'll give him a call, see what he can do.

She holds out her hand for the cell, which after a moment of indecision, Tracy puts on the open palm. *Trusting her...*

EXT. BLEACHERS, PLAYING FIELD - DAY

Underneath the darkened bleachers, PETE JENSEN stands, a CIGARETTE held between his lips, smoke trailing from it, as he takes a drag from it.

He holds up a PHOTOGRAPH - identical to the one Maya cried over earlier. His eyes, raw with emotion, study it for a long moment, before rage twists his handsome features.

Pulling out a LIGHTER from his Letterman jacket pocket, he ignites it easily with a quick flick, before holding the photograph over the sputtering flame.

Once the photo is aflame, Pete throws it to the muddy ground to avoid being burned. He watches it burn for a moment, eyes filled with cold fury before walking away...

ANGLE ON PHOTO as the flames eat away at it...

RACHEL (PRE-LAP)  
Shane died from smoke inhalation.

INT. MORGUE, WINCHESTER BAY MEMORIAL - DAY (LATER)

RACHEL VARGAS is stood at the now-empty autopsy table, holding a MANILA FOLDER to her chest, standing across from SHERIFF CONRAD HILL, as he studies some papers on a clipboard, frowning deeply.

SHERIFF HILL  
(doubtful)  
I hear a 'but' coming...

RACHEL  
(sighs, nods)  
You could say that.

She opens the folder, placing it on the table, and lays some PHOTOGRAPHS out. They show CLOSE-UPS of Shane's wounds.

RACHEL (cont'd)  
Severe blunt force head trauma, probably from a shovel, judging from measuring the wound. That would have killed him if not for the fire.

SHERIFF HILL  
(realizing)  
Someone attacked him. He wasn't just in the wrong place at the wrong time.  
(shakes head)  
This is now a murder investigation.

RACHEL  
What about the fire? You think they set that to cover their tracks?

SHERIFF HILL  
(shakes head)  
According to the arson investigator, the fire started on the cabin's roof. Weird ass way to burn down a crime scene. Plus there was no accelerant evident.

(MORE)

SHERIFF HILL (cont'd)

(sighs)

Just add it to the pile of confusion.  
Anything else you got?

Rachel nods, pulling out several small EVIDENCE COLLECTION BAGS, handing them over.

RACHEL

Just these - trace evidence I recovered from his hair, under his fingernails and his throat. Nothing jumps out, but it could do with further analysis.

SHERIFF HILL

(disbelieving)

I can't wrap my head around this. A murder, here? This isn't what I signed on for when I took this job.

RACHEL

Tell me about it. I thought I was done with cases like this when I left San Francisco.

(beat)

I can't imagine what his parents are going through right now. To lose a child, especially like this. What will you tell them?

SHERIFF HILL

The truth. They deserve that, don't you think?

(doubtful)

I just hope I can catch the son-of-a-bitch who did this.

Rachel, seeing the pain and doubt in Hill's eyes, reaches over and puts a comforting hand on his shoulder.

RACHEL

Hey. You'll do your best, and that's what counts, got it.

He slowly nods, offering a reassured smile...

INT. LIBRARY, WINCHESTER BAY HIGH SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

Jake and Tracy sit at one of the tables. Jake watches her as she reads through some papers, anxiously waiting.

TRACY  
 (impressed)  
 This... this is good, Jake.

JAKE  
 You think Maya will print it?

TRACY  
 (smile fades)  
 I-- I'm not sure. I mean, with  
 everything going on right now, maybe  
 this isn't the best time.

JAKE  
 (points to article)  
 Is there ever a 'best time' to show  
 people things like this?

BANG! BANG! They look over at the noise to see PRINCIPAL  
 ARTHUR WALLACE watching carefully as a school CUSTODIAN  
 carefully hammers two PICTURE HOOKS into one of the walls.

JAKE (cont'd)  
 What are they doing?

Tracy's expression slackens, a solemn look coming over her.  
 She watches as they carefully place two FRAMED PICTURES on  
 the hooks. One is of SHANE, the other is a YOUNG GIRL - dark  
 haired, big soulful eyes, an open smile.

TRACY  
 (sadly, emotional)  
 That's Grace. Grace McKenzie.

Off Tracy's far-away look...

MAYA (PRE-LAP)  
 Grace deserves better!

INT. TRIBUNE OFFICE, WINCHESTER BAY HIGH SCHOOL - FLASHBACK

Maya and Shane stand at the central layout table on opposite  
 sides, in the middle of a fierce argument. Off to one side,  
 at one of the smaller desks, sits Tracy, sorting through  
 hard copies of photos she's taken - trying to ignore them.

*Unsuccessfully.*

SHANE  
 The *Tribune* is a school paper, Maya!  
 Not your own personal crusade for  
 justice!

(MORE)

SHANE (cont'd)

We just can't take over a police investigation because you don't like what they did.

MAYA

The *Tribune* won't be around for much longer if we don't start focusing on real news, real stories, real people! You know the School Board has been looking for every excuse to cut what little funding we do have!

SHANE

(incredulous)

And you really think chasing a missing persons case will convince them not to? If my Mom finds out, she'll shut us down like that!

MAYA

I couldn't care less what your Mom may or may not do. I'm concerned about the *right thing* to do.

SLAM! Tracy slaps her hand onto her desk, and stands up, anger and frustration exuding from every pore.

TRACY

Oh my God! Listen to yourselves. Maya, you're acting like all you care about is 'getting the scoop'! Grace was a flesh-and-blood person with a family, they deserve answers a lot more than you deserve a damn Pulitzer!

(turns to Shane)

And you?! Why are you so concerned about playing it safe? Wasn't Grace one of Eve's friends? Of Melissa's? Don't you want to know what happened?!

Shane and Maya are dumbstruck. They simply staring at Tracy, her cheeks flushed in embarrassment as she calms down.

TRACY (cont'd)

(shakes head, calmer)

Look, I know I'm new to all this, I still have a lot to learn, but shouldn't you both be more concerned with finding the truth just for the sake of it? Don't Grace's friends and family deserve closure?

(MORE)

TRACY (cont'd)  
 (beat, deciding)  
 If the police can't give it, then  
 maybe that means it's up to us.

Maya slowly smiles, looking at Shane.

MAYA  
 Now I'm starting to see what you saw  
 in her, Wise. I'm convinced. You?

Shane simply grins, looking at Tracy without something akin  
 to pride. As Tracy slowly returns the smile...

INT. LIBRARY, WINCHESTER BAY HIGH SCHOOL - AS BEFORE

Tracy BLINKS, coming back to reality, as she looks away,  
 overcome for a moment.

TRACY  
 She disappeared a couple of months  
 before the end of sophomore year.  
 (beat)  
 They found her a few months later.

Jake frowns, not sure what to make of it, until he notices  
 the elaborate banner above the pictures: "*In Memory...*"

JAKE  
 (realizing)  
 Oh. Damn.

TRACY  
 It got to a lot of people. Especially  
 Melissa. Messed her up bad.  
 (off Jake's look)  
 She was really close with Grace. Eve,  
 too. Her going missing, it's what  
 made Melissa go all 'Party Hard'.

Jake nods, absorbing all this, as the bell RINGS...

INT. CAFETERIA, WINCHESTER BAY HIGH SCHOOL - LATER

Students mill about, some getting food, others already  
 eating. Most tables are occupied, people sitting in the  
 various groups.

At one sits LUCY and CHARLIE. Lucy absently plays with a  
 salad, picking at it with her fork, while Charlie multi-  
 tasks, in one hand he holds a sandwich, taking a bite out of  
 it, as he works a CUSTOM-MADE LAPTOP with the other.

Tracy and Jake walk in, joining the lunch queue, quickly spotting Lucy, who waves at them. Charlie, oblivious, continues with whatever geek-tech wizardry he's working on--

--until a LARGE GYM BAG smacks into him hard, throwing him backwards. He falls off his stool. Hits the ground, *dazed*.

CRUEL LAUGHTER echoes across the lunch room, as Lucy spins around in shock, hands across her mouth.

LUCY  
Oh my God, Charlie!

Charlie pushes the bag off himself, and manages to sit himself up, as it's contents fall across him.

PETE (O.C.)  
(snidely)  
Hey, Matthews, Coach Harmon said you might need these.

Pete saunters over, enjoying lording it over his 'prey, as Charlie fumbles to put away the various clothing that has fallen out of the bag. The jock wears a cruel smile, enjoying the torment he's inflicting.

PETE  
Not surprised the Coach kicked you out. Who wants a loser like you living with them?  
(to Lucy)  
Seriously, are you looking for a charity case, or is it just being the Sheriff's daughter that makes you want to help the helpless?

Jake, eyes narrowed with fury, starts to move forward, but Tracy grabs his arm. Shakes her head. *Stay out of it.*

Lucy, angrier than we've seen her thus far, stands up, her eyes burning holes at Pete.

LUCY  
Shut your mouth, Pete Jensen. Don't want to get your detention extended.

PETE  
(unimpressed)  
What detention? Wallace let me off as soon as that loser Farrell came back.  
(scoffs)  
You think I'm scared of you, little girl? You or your dad?  
(MORE)

PETE (cont'd)

(scoffs)

Calls himself a 'Sheriff', but he hasn't done much to keep this town safe lately, has he? First Grace, now Shane?

Lucy remains silent, lip quivering, eyes tearing up. Pete notices, and goes in for the kill.

PETE (cont'd)

Aww, you gonna cry, now, Little Lucy? Didn't know you cared that much about Shane.

(beat)

Maybe those rumors in the locker room were true, huh? Maybe you're not a little girl anymore, huh? Did Shane go and make you a woman?

Lucy blushes a fierce red. Jake's face darkens, and Tracy looks appalled. Pete just crossed a line. They exchange looks, then nod. As one, they make their way over, as Charlie, face red with rage, jumps to his feet.

CHARLIE

(furious)

Shut the hell up! Don't talk to her like that!

PETE

Woo! Touch a nerve, did I? Maybe you've got a hard-on here for Lucy. You want Shane's 'sloppy seconds'?

Charlie, with an inarticulate roar of fury, LUNGES toward Pete-- only to stop dead as Jake throws his arms around him, keeping him from moving.

CHARLIE

(furious)

Let me go!

JAKE

Cool it, Charlie!

Tracy interposes herself between Charlie and Pete, hands on hips. She's itching for a fight of her own, her way.

TRACY

Back off, Pete. Right now.

PETE

Stay out of this, Vargas, this is between me and Matthews, it's a long time coming.

TRACY

Look, I'm so not interested in your alpha male posturing right now. I'm asking you nicely, out of respect to the friendship we once had.

(beat, firmly)

Back. The Hell. Off.

Their eyes lock. They stare deep into each other. Tracy frowns, seeing a hint of the pain and hurt Pete is desperately masking. In her, he sees fierce determination - she won't back down, no matter what.

PETE

(deflates, subdued)

Whatever. He ain't worth the trouble.

He slowly backs away, before heading back to his table of fellow jocks. NOISE slowly starts to return to normal levels, as Charlie finally breaks out of Jake's grip. He spins on him, furious.

CHARLIE

You should have let me at him! I'm not some project, someone you have to keep saving!

JAKE

And let you get yourself killed?  
Sorry, not today. Not ever.

Shaking his head, frustrated and upset, Charlie slams his laptop closed, throwing it into his school bag, before grabbing the gym bag, and walking away.

LUCY

Charlie, where are you going?

CHARLIE

Just leave me the hell alone!

As he storms out, all the others can do is watch as we:

FADE TO BLACK:

**END OF ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE**

FADE IN:

INT. TRIBUNE OFFICE, WINCHESTER BAY HIGH SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

Maya stands at the main layout table, reading Jake's article. Jake and Tracy watch her, waiting.

MAYA

You're spelling sucks. Seriously, use a spell-check or something, okay?

JAKE

Is that all you have to say?

MAYA

(looks up, sighs)

So... you want me to declare war on the jocks?

TRACY

You should have heard Pete, Maya. He was flaunting the fact that Wallace, Harmon, so many of our teachers, has pretty much turned a blind eye to the way he treats Charlie.

JAKE

Not just Charlie. I asked around, and there's a lot of kids scared of these assholes. We should do something.

MAYA

Guys, we're not the "Daily Planet" or some social crusader of justice.

JAKE

No. We're a school paper, so we should focus on school issues, and this is a school issue. We have an obligation to do this!

Maya can't be grin at Jake's clear passion and enthusiasm. She nods slowly.

MAYA

How am I kidding? This is a great story, and it's will really stir things up. I'm just pissed I didn't think of it myself.

TRACY  
 (grin, nudges Jake)  
 Told you.

Maya holds out her hand. Off Tracy's encouragement, he takes it. Shakes it.

MAYA  
 Welcome to the *Tribune*, Farrell. I  
 think you'll fit right in here.

Off Jake's grin, as he embraces the welcome...

EXT. WISE RESIDENCE, WINCHESTER BAY - AFTERNOON

Establishing shot of the house, which is like something that has been transplanted out of Beverly Hills. Opulent, large and refined. Several cars are parked in the large driveway.

YOUNGER MADELAINE (PRE-LAP)  
 (laughing, happy)  
 Careful, Evie, you'll get your  
 clothes all dirty!

YOUNG EVE  
 (put out, upset)  
 But Mom! Shane's doing it! It's not  
 fair!

INT. EVE'S BEDROOM, WISE RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

EVE WISE, in well-worn pajamas, her hair unwashed and held up in a high pony, sits on her bed, clutching a pillow tightly to her chest. Tears trickle down her cheeks, a sad little smile on her lips.

YOUNGER MADELAINE (O.S.)  
 (resigned, amused)  
 Okay, okay, just be careful! Shane,  
 take care of your sister!

Across the room, a TELEVISION is on, and HOME MOVIES play on it - a younger Eve (AGE 9) and Shane (AGE 10) are running around a PARK, chasing after a small dog, both laughing with the glee only a child at play exudes.

The camera, as wobbly as any amateur video, watches them run and fall around in the grass, as a woman - MADELAINE - keeps a watchful eye on them, a delighted smile illuminating her attractive features. She looks back at the camera, an eyebrow arched curiously.

YOUNGER MADELAINE

You're supposed to be videoing the kids, Stu, not me!

YOUNGER STUART

I'll get back to them, I can't help it if you're a gorgeous subject, can I? You keep distracting me!

Madelaine LAUGHS with embarrassment, waving away his attention, as the camera pans around again to watch as Shane and Eve continue their playing with the dog, throwing sticks and chasing after it.

TAP, TAP.

MADELAINE (O.S.)

(cautious, ragged)

Eve, honey, can I come in?

Eve, her smile vanishing, quickly grabs a nearby REMOTE and pauses the video playback, before pulling the pillow a little bit tighter.

EVE

(frustrated)

Whatever.

Slowly, the door opens, and MADELINE WISE, dressed as elegantly as ever, but with red-rimmed eyes from crying, timidly walks in. She is carrying a half-drunk glass of wine, that Eve takes note of with disdain.

MADELAINE

(forced smile)

I thought you might like to talk, sweetie.

EVE

About what?

MADELAINE

(gives a look)

Don't be like that, Eve. We're all hurting right now.

(beat)

I just want you to know that I'm here if you need to talk. You shouldn't be alone at a time like this.

EVE  
 (rolls eyes,  
 unimpressed)  
 Uh, yeah, sure. Is that why 'Dad'  
 left you alone and went to work?

MADELAINE  
 (defensive)  
 That's not fair, Eve. Life-- it goes  
 on, no matter what we're feeling.  
 Your father has very important work  
 to do for this town, you know that.

EVE  
 (angrily)  
 A), he's my 'step-father', and B) so  
 damned what?! He can't take a couple  
 of frigging days off to mourn the  
 death of his son?  
 (beat, snide)  
 Sorry, I mean, 'step-son'.

MADELAINE  
 (shakes head, upset)  
 I-- I can't talk to you when you're  
 like this.

She turns on her heel, and exits, not closing the door  
 behind her. Eve, an angry grimace ruining her attractive  
 features, a tear slipping down her cheek, turns back to the  
 television, starting the video again.

YOUNG SHANE (O.S.)  
 Come on, Evie, he like's it when you  
 rub his tummy!

YOUNG EVE (O.S.)  
 OK, I'm coming!  
 (squeals with delight)  
 Ha! He's licking me, he's licking me!

As Eve slowly smiles, immersing herself in time gone by...

INT. 1ST FLOOR HALLWAY, WISE RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

Madelaine, leaning against the wall outside Eve's bedroom,  
 tears streaming down her face, clutches her wine glass in  
 both hands, her body racked with silent sobs.

YOUNGER MADELAINE (O.S.)  
 Shane, sweetie, be careful!  
 (beat, disgusted)  
 No, don't let him eat your food!

As she slowly slips down the wall, consumed by her grief,  
 all alone...

EXT. BLEACHERS, PLAYING FIELD - AFTERNOON (LATER)

CHARLIE, earphones in, blasting LOUD ROCK MUSIC, and hood up, is the picture of 'leave me alone!', as he sits on the ground underneath the bleachers. He glares out from his hood, angry at the world in general--

--until a SHADOW falls across his face. He looks up, to see MAYA standing in front of him, hands on hips, looking annoyed. She points to her ear. Charlie quickly gets the message, and removes his earphones.

MAYA  
 Finally! I've been calling your name  
 for like a minute.

CHARLIE  
 (not in the mood)  
 What do you want, Maya.

MAYA  
 I need your help.  
 (beat)  
 The tech-nerd kind.

CHARLIE  
 (not surprised)  
 Figured.

MAYA  
 (curious)  
 I heard what happened in the  
 cafeteria. You okay?

CHARLIE  
 You really care?

MAYA  
 Hey, we may not be best buds, but I  
 think of you as a friend, at least.  
 (beat, softly)  
 You shouldn't have to deal with all  
 that crap from Pete alone.

CHARLIE

(morosely)

Why should my life change now?

(beat, impatient)

What do you need help with?

Maya sits down next to him, and hands him the CELL PHONE. He looks at it in surprise.

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Shane's phone? How did you--?

MAYA

Jake, the new guy, he found it at the cabin where-- well, you know.

CHARLIE

(curious, inspects it)

It's pretty badly banged up. What do you need me to do?

MAYA

Find out what you can from it. Give me a copy of anything juicy on it.

(smiles, sexily)

I'll make it worth your while.

CHARLIE

(unimpressed)

If we're 'friends', you don't need to bribe me with one of your 'special pictures', you know?

(sees Maya's look)

I've heard the rumors, about what you give people who tell you things, who help you out.

(disappointed)

You really shouldn't sell yourself out like that. Not for stories and gossip. It's... it's not right.

Maya's smile fades. She looks at Charlie in surprise. No one's ever said that to her before. She's not sure how to take it.

MAYA

(coldly)

It's worked so far. Especially with those dumb-ass jocks.

(annoyed)

You gonna do it or not?

CHARLIE

(nods)

I might need to either repair the damage, or--

MAYA

(holds hand up)

I don't need technobabble, just a yes or no.

CHARLIE

Give me a couple of days. I'll have something for you then.

They SHAKE HANDS, before Charlie climbs to his feet. Neither of them notice a SHADOW standing just outside the bleachers. It moves away quickly as Charlie heads out from underneath.

MAYA

Charlie?

He stops, looking over his shoulder at her.

MAYA (cont'd)

It will get better. One day.

CHARLIE

(stoic, resigned)

I hope so. I really do.

As he trudges off out from the bleachers. Maya shakes her head in pity--

--but stops when she notices a pile of ashes nearby. She reaches over, and brushes them away, curiosity giving way to surprise when she finds the remains of a Pete's PHOTOGRAPH.

She holds it up to the light, examining the damage, how little of the image remains, but clearly recognizing it. Her eyes narrow with barely controlled anger.

MAYA

Asshole.

She abruptly stands, cramming the remains into a jacket pocket, before storming out from under the bleachers. As she heads across the field back into the school building, a FIGURE comes out from behind the bleachers.

COACH ERIC HARMON.

He stands there, watching Maya go, a sinister look in his eyes, a sneer on his lips. *How much did he overhear? Why was he eavesdropping in the first place?*

Off his cold, dark eyes...

FADE TO BLACK:

**END OF ACT THREE**

**END OF EPISODE**