

Innocents

written by

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START OF TEASER

FADE IN: CHICAGO COURTROOM

INT. CHICAGO COURTROOM - MORNING

An early summer morning in Chicago, 2 years earlier. There are more than 200 people, reporters and spectators alike, packed into the busy courtroom. Colin, Ophelia, Bella, Luke, and Sofi all sit off to the side near the front of the peanut gallery. Ryder and his defense sit on one side near the witness stand, the prosecution on the other.

RYDER

D-Do you think I'll really be found guilty?

His lawyer, EPHRIAM PRINCE, shrugs.

EPHRIAM

Who knows, m' boy? They had some pretty good arguments to back it up. Still find it harder to believe by the day though.

Ryder stares at the ground, unmoving. The bailiff unlocks his handcuffs.

RYDER

It just seems unlikely. Like...why would I have any reason to murder Ana?

EPHRIAM

I don't know, m' boy. Prosecution can always find a way to twist a story.

(pause)

This is why I never became a DA.

A reporter, HELENA OSWALD, shoves her way through the guards and other reporters to reach Ryder.

EPHRIAM (CONT'D)

Security!

Several of the guards start to drag her away.

HELENA

Ryder! Helena Oswald. Is this considered a shock to you, considering your brother Chris, also known as the infamous Bloody Gentleman, was sentenced to prison only a few years prior?

(beat)

Do you think you'll be sentenced like he was?

Ryder opens his mouth to reply, as the reporter is dragged away, but is cut off by the sound of a gavel banging. JUDGE NORMAN has ascended the bench.

JUDGE NORMAN

Order, order, order in the court!

Everyone shockingly quickly settles down. Colin and Bella share an uneasy look, while Ophelia fidgets with her hands.

JUDGE NORMAN (CONT'D)

Based on the evidence, I have no choice but to charge the defendant, Ryder Shepard, guilty on all counts.

Outrage goes up in the court. Ryder simply appears calm, maybe a bit upset, but if so, he doesn't show it. The bailiff soon snaps the handcuffs back on Ryder and escorts him away.

COLIN

Come on! They can't just do that, can they!?

OPHELIA

(deadpan)

Isn't your dad the U.S. Attorney General? Shouldn't he know the answer to that?

Colin sighs.

LUKE

Colin. I'm sure he'll appeal or they'll overturn the sentence sooner or later.

(Beat)

Wait. What is the sentence?

Everyone shrugs. None of them had a clue.

BELLA

You could go down there and show them a piece of your mind.

Ophelia facepalms, motioning for him NOT to do that.

OPHELIA

Please don't do that, Colin. I don't think I want another friend sent to prison.

Colin shoves past Ophelia and Bella, down past the spectator box, past the streams of reporters and people trying to leave. He eventually catches wind of Ryder.

BELLA

What is he going to try to do?

OPHELIA

If you ask me, he's going to absolutely screw himself over.

Colin finally meets eye-to-eye with Ryder, whose gaze is mostly downcast.

COLIN

Th-They can't do this to you, right?

RYDER

Legally, yes. Reality, no. You've been here the past few days, Col. They have the evidence. It was only a matter of time.

Colin turns to the bailiff.

COLIN

What's his sentence going to be? 20, 30 years?

The guard shrugs.

BAILIFF

Probably life. Maybe no parole. I know as much about the case as your grandmother with dementia.

Both wince. Probably because Colin's grandmother did indeed have dementia.

COLIN

Uh...weren't you here the past few days?

The bailiff just appears agitated.

BAILIFF

I was playing Candy Crush the  
entire time, give me a break. I  
have a wife and three kids.

Both boys roll their eyes, before Colin starts to walk away.

COLIN

I-I-I promise I'll figure this out.  
For you.

BELLA (V.O.)

And that, my friends, is how  
Anastasia Anton died. Ryder Shepard  
pled not guilty and was sentenced  
to life with no parole, barely  
saved from death row. Or so they  
say. And that was that...until now.  
I'm Bella Cox, and welcome to  
Innocents.

END TEASER

START ACT 1

INT. CHICAGO RADY CHILDREN'S - TWO YEARS LATER

Back in the present, we see Colin, slowly but surely recovering from the attempt on his life. It's been a few weeks. He's staring at his phone in absolute shock...or horror.

COLIN

What...the...fuck...

Two small raps at the door. He sighs, placing the phone on the nightstand.

COLIN (CONT'D)

Come in.

Luke and Bella both enter, Luke with flowers, and Bella with several cards. They set it down by his bedside, before sitting in the chairs provided.

LUKE

How's it going?

COLIN

Fine. Really not. But otherwise fine.

Both Luke and Bella stare at each other confusedly.

BELLA

What are you talking about? Are you fine or not?

COLIN

Physically, I'm better. Mentally, really fucked up.

He passes his phone over to Luke and Bella, who only need one look at it to have their mouths drop.

LUKE

This has to be forged or something.

COLIN

We walked out before they delivered the sentence, remember? And it's not like any of us wanted to look at the news.

LUKE

But wouldn't it have been a much bigger deal?

COLIN

My dad said they might have still not been totally sure when they handed down the sentence if it was too little for him.

Clearly, Luke nor Bella understand legal jargon.

BELLA

You're basically saying that...they're not totally sure if they wanted to give him either life no parole...or the death penalty?

Silence. Bella might've said the wrong thing at the wrong time.

COLIN

There is one way...but Ryder wouldn't be that messed up to do it. He's said to me that he never murdered her. Why would he want to die?

LUKE

Huh? Col, what are you talking about?

Colin runs his hands through his hair, realizing he said too much.

COLIN

Uh...basically, the only other way Ryder would have received an execution warrant is one of two ways: there's more to the story we don't know about, which I find hard to believe. Or...

(pause)

He requested it.

You can probably imagine their reaction.

LUKE

YOU CAN DO THAT!?

BELLA

WHAT!?

COLIN

Y-Yeah. You can. If you're fucked up enough, and you really want to die, you can request to get murdered by the goddamn state.

Bella stares at Colin's phone, lifting it up so that we can see what it is: a photocopy of Ryder's execution warrant.

BELLA

Wow. Th-There's no way. Ryder would not...want to die. He wasn't suicidal. He hated the thought of dying.

COLIN

Pretty sure I knew him better than you did.

Luke cringes, probably because he knows Colin's right.

LUKE

Do you have any idea why Ryder would want to do this?

Colin runs his hands through his hair again, staring at his phone, then back at his friends.

COLIN

My honest guess?  
(beat)  
It's probably a bit of both.

FADE TO: ST. CHRISTOPHER'S HALLWAY

INT. ST. CHRISTOPHER'S HALLWAY - LATER

Bell rings. Bella and Luke barely barge through the door, knowing fully well that they'll be late otherwise.

BELLA

Damnit, I'm blaming this on you.

LUKE

Why me?

BELLA

Because you're the one to suggest visiting Colin.



LUKE

Because he's currently in the hospital recovering from a assassination attempt? Is that wrong?

Bella rolls her eyes.

BELLA

I'm just saying...

BARRY WHITMORE, their homeroom teacher, pokes his head out the door.

WHITMORE

Ferrari and Cox, you're late.

The duo quickly rushes inside without another word.

BELLA

(whispering to Luke)

I'm chucking your ass under the bus for this.

Bella sits down next to Ophelia near the left-front side of the classroom, while Luke goes and sits by himself near the back.

WHITMORE

Well, now that the rest of our class is here-

TRISTAN

Is it time for my entrance?

(beat)

Oh, and before you ask, I ditched the old geezer on the way in.

A boy, tall but still muscular, TRISTAN QUADE, strides in. He slides down next to Bella and winks. She gives him the bird. Sighing, he gets up and forces himself next to Luke.

WHITMORE

Excuse me, Mr. Quade?

TRISTAN

You heard me right. I ditched the secretary in the office. Sure she's asleep right now.

Everyone's mouths are wide open.

WHITMORE

O-Okay then. Anyways, class, please welcome Tristan. He shall be joining your class this year.

TRISTAN

Yeah, yeah. Can you get back on with the morning announcements now?

His eyes start to glow an eerie orange as he says this, which then reflect in the teacher's eyes. Cue Luke starting to question his sanity.

WHITMORE

Yes.

(pause)

Class, today we will be...

He drones on for about another 15-20 minutes. After, Bella, Luke, and Ophelia are walking out.

OPHELIA

So, the new guy likes Bella. Calling it now.

BELLA

What!? No.

OPHELIA

Girl, did you see the way he looked at you?

BELLA

Oh, shut up!

She gives Ophelia a death glare, before walking off.

LUKE

Give her some time.

(pause)

Did you see Tristan back there?

Ophelia pauses, eyes wide.

OPHELIA

Wh-What do you mean?

LUKE

With his eyes. They were glowing, and I think he hypnotized Whitmore.

She laughs.

OPHELIA

Are you crazy, Luke!? Magic doesn't exist here. And we aren't in the 1690s for God's sake!

She snorts, before sprinting after Bella.

LUKE

A-Am I being crazy?! Or did I really see him do that?

He stares at his hands in shock, before shaking his head and heading off.

FADE TO: ST. CHRISTOPHER'S COURTYARD

INT. ST. CHRISTOPHER'S COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

At the same time that Luke was busy questioning his sanity, Sofi was hanging out in the courtyard, chatting with her friends MIRABELLE and FIONA.

MIRABELLE

You should've showed him who's boss, Fi!

SOFI

Yeah, don't be a chicken like that. Cowardice gets you nowhere.

FIONA

I know, I know. But calling the police is better than letting him steal the damn car!

Both Mirabelle and Sofi stare at each other knowingly.

SOFI

All I'm saying is next time, stand up for yourself.

She huffs, before grabbing her purse and sashaying away. Both Mirabelle and Fiona are massively confused.

FIONA

Is that girl sociopathic or what?

MIRABELLE

Guess we'll never know...

Meanwhile, Tristan and a few of his new-found buddies are busy passing the football nearby. Sofi starts to stalk over.'

SOFI

Hey, guys!

All of them look over, Sofi waves sheepishly.

TRISTAN

Oh, hello.

SOFI

I'm Sofia Cox. Nice to meet you.

TRISTAN

Tristan.

Camera on Luke walking over to the laboratory, who sees this entire exchange go down. He initially says nothing.

SOFI

Hm. Interesting.

(pause)

Can we talk?

Tristan looks at his friends hesitantly, then sees Luke, and his eyes narrow.

TRISTAN

Y-Yeah. Let's talk just behind the trees here.

He guides her behind the set of oak trees nearby the football field. They sit down on old stumps opposite each other.

SOFI

I'm assuming you're new here?

TRISTAN

Just came here from London, actually. Born in Rhode Island, though.

SOFI

Explains the non-existent accent.

Tristan raises an eyebrow.

TRISTAN

Not like I ever wanted one in the first place.

(beat)

I thought you were Bella's sister.

Sofi's eyes widen, more in confusion than shock.

SOFI  
How would you know?

TRISTAN  
I...hear things.

We see the same slasher-smile that Sofi had at the end of the pilot. It's clear she knows something.

SOFI  
Of course you can. Just like you  
can levitate, use telekinesis,  
telepathy, control lightning, do I  
need continue?

Tristan's eyes almost bulge out of his head. He gets up and  
backs away from her slowly.

TRISTAN  
L-Listen, I don't know what you  
heard, but I'm not a witch.

SOFI  
I beg to differ. Don't know if you  
saw me watching during homeroom.  
Luke's onto you.

A moment. Tristan rubs his neck awkwardly.

TRISTAN  
Who's that?

SOFI  
Never mind. Someone's onto you,  
let's just say that.  
(beat)  
And I want to fix that.

Tristan cracks his knuckles, looking ever so slightly  
interested.

TRISTAN  
What's in it...for both of us?

SOFI  
Simple. I use my-  
(coughs)  
Superior manipulation skills to  
convince Luke that you are indeed  
not a witch.  
(pause)  
(MORE)

SOFI (CONT'D)

And in return...you give me  
everything your father has  
discovered on the Anton case. And I  
mean everything.

END ACT 1

START ACT 2

FADE TO: CHICAGO RADY CHILDREN'S

INT. CHICAGO RADY CHILDREN'S - LATER

Colin is watching a Twitch livestream on his laptop, clearly not as interested in it as he is in texting with Ophelia.

OPHELIA

(text)

It's just weird that he'd suddenly become a hypocrite like that.

COLIN

(text)

Wrong use of the word, Ophie.

OPHELIA

(text)

Really?

COLIN

(text)

Has Luke proven himself to be absolutely sane and/or believe in the supernatural?

(pauses)

Nope.

OPHELIA

(text)

You might have a point. But no one else picked up on anything. That includes me.

COLIN

(text)

And as far as I know, they don't know each other, right?

OPHELIA

(text)

He's some sort of foreign exchange student. Think he's from Britain or something. Dude DOES NOT sound like it though.

A loud knock at the door interrupts Colin's thumbs. He bolts up to see a nurse walk in with a card, then place it on the nightstand, then walk out.

COLIN  
Hey, what about my pain meds-

Slam. He goes back to texting, before setting the phone down as he tries his best to roll over. And accidentally clicks the FaceTime button.

OPHELIA  
Did you just belly-dial me?

Colin's eyes widen as he realizes what he did.

COLIN  
Damn it. Sorry.

OPHELIA  
It's fine. I like seeing your face anyways.  
(beat)  
It's cute in a platonic way.

He smiles, as he notes the Siamese cat climbing all over Ophelia in the background.

COLIN  
Seems Piglet really wants to play, huh?

OPHELIA  
Boy, stupid cat just won't get off me.

Piglet loudly meows as she forces him off-camera.

COLIN  
He's obnoxiously cute though.  
(pause)  
Too bad I'm allergic to cats.

His screen freezes as a text pops up from an unknown number.

COLIN (CONT'D)  
"I suggest you look at that card.  
It isn't a nicety, I'll say that."  
(to Ophelia)  
Huh?

OPHELIA  
You say something?

COLIN  
No. Isabelle just dropped off a card from me.

(MORE)



COLIN (CONT'D)

I got this weird text from an unknown number. Probably the person who sent the damn thing.

He props his phone on a pillow so that Ophelia can still see him as he grabs the card. It's white, no decorations, no return address, nothing. It's also more of an envelope than a card, and it feels like it has plenty of light-weight items inside.

OPHELIA

Damn, who sent you your parents' anniversary photo?

Colin struggles to contain his laughter as he rips open the envelope. That all disappears in the matter of three seconds when he sees what's inside.

COLIN

What...the...FUCK!?

Camera zooms in on a single piece of paper that he's holding in his hand.

OPHELIA

What happened!? Did Grandma Tootsie die?

COLIN

Ophelia, SHUT YOUR ASS!  
 (reading the paper)  
 "Don't ask who I am. Don't ask where I live. All I'll say is that you and me will get to know each other very well in the future. And in case you don't believe me, I've got the proof."

OPHELIA

Huh? I didn't realize you had future stalkers.

Colin gulps as he takes out the first laminated photocopy.

COLIN

I think this person, whoever they are, has been stalking me for...a while.

He flips the photo copy over and gasps, angry tears in his eyes: it's a picture of Colin and...someone getting into it. Hard. The timestamp on the photo says December 13th, 2011.

OPHELIA

Colin? You look like you've seen a ghost. Or someone just tried to blackmail you.

(off no response)

Colin?

COLIN

Damnit, wh-who is this guy?

OPHELIA

Colin, WHAT is going on!?

Colin sets the envelope inside, staring at the image long and hard.

COLIN

Ophelia, I have a question for you.

OPHELIA

Hit me, boyo.

COLIN

What are the laws for two underage minors getting into it in Illinois?

Ophelia's face falls.

OPHELIA

Colin, why are you asking this?

COLIN

Don't ask. Answer my damn question.

OPHELIA

Well, if you paid attention in sex ed, it's one, illegal. For the record, it counts as statutory rape and you're gonna spend 3-7 years of your life in prison, and you're permanently on the sex offenders list. Why?

Colin looks about ready to rip that photo into shreds.

COLIN

No, no, nononono!

OPHELIA

COLIN MICHAEL ASTOR. What is going on!?

He bangs his head against his bed, his neck cramping.

COLIN

Ophelia. If I tell you this, you have to promise not to tell anyone. I mean NO ONE. Not your parents, not the police-

OPHELIA

Why are you mentioning the police?

COLIN

Not Bella, not Luke, especially not Luke. Not Sofi. No one. You hear me?

OPHELIA

(meekly)

Y-Yes.

COLIN

Um...I had sex with Ryder, while he was still dating Ana obviously, at 15. Multiple times.

A moment of silence. Ophelia is trying to process what he just said.

OPHELIA

The legal age of consent in Illinois is 17, Colin. You should know that. And PLEASE, for the love of God, don't tell me you were on crack or anything when that happened.

COLIN

Nope.

OPHELIA

Okay, good.

She takes a deep breath in.

OPHELIA (CONT'D)

BUT I REALLY WANT TO PUNCH YOU RIGHT NOW!

COLIN

Fine, fine. I get it.

OPHELIA

Colin, do you want to spend 7 years of your life in prison?

COLIN

No.

OPHELIA

Okay. Then burn those photos with a goddamn lighter, toss the ashes in Lake Michigan, and then call me back.

She hangs up. Colin still stares at the photos in mortified shock.

COLIN

Wh-What have I done?!

FADE TO: COX HOUSE

INT. COX HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

It didn't take long for Ophelia to sprint straight over to Bella's house. She rings on the doorbell at least eight times, before a groggy Bella finally opens the door, cucumbers still half on her eyes.

BELLA

I was enjoying my beauty rest and Webtoons. This better be good.

While Ophelia is trying to ponder how she could do both at the same time, Bella lets her pass, taking off the cucumbers before patting the seat next to her.

OPHELIA

This day has gone real shitty.

BELLA

Well, there's Mr. Hot Hypnosis Guy.

Ophelia facepalms.

OPHELIA

Now you AND Luke?

BELLA

You couldn't see him literally mind controlling the teacher?

OPHELIA

Nope.

BELLA

Okay, so me and Luke are senile. What else?

The next five words out of Ophelia's mouth come as fast as they could.

OPHELIA  
 (almost slurring)  
 Colin had sex with Ryder.  
 (realizes what she said)  
 DAMNIT, OPHELIA! He told you not to  
 tell anyone!

Bella tries to replay what she said in her head, but fails.

BELLA  
 I'm going to need you to repeat  
 that again, girl.

OPHELIA  
 Colin Astor had sex with Ryder  
 Shepard. While he was still with  
 Ana. No, this is not some massive  
 prank.

Bella's jaw practically metaphorically drops to the floor. At that point, her father pokes his head in the room, wearing a "KISS THE COOK" apron.

ADRIAN  
 Did someone scream?

OPHELIA  
 NO, MR. COX!

BELLA  
 NO, DAD!

He shrugs, before disappearing back outside.

OPHELIA (CONT'D)  
 Phew. That was close.  
 (pause)  
 Sofi isn't home, right?

Bella shakes her head.

BELLA  
 She's at softball practice till  
 6:30. We have time.

OPHELIA  
 I don't know everything though.

BELLA  
 Of course, you don't! Colin's in  
 the hospital, and Ryder's  
 apparently on death row now?

Now it's Ophelia's turn to have her jaw drop.

OPHELIA

What did you just say?

BELLA

Colin got a text this morning from one of his dad's friends with a photocopy of Ryder's execution warrant. It's in a month.

OPHELIA

My god.

BELLA

Exactly. And shit just got a whole lot harder if one of Ryder's friends, as well as Ryder himself, could technically be a sex offender!

OPHELIA

They don't know, right? The police, I mean.

BELLA

Not that I'm aware of. But we can't tell Jones. She'll spill immediately.

The sound of shoes on paneled wood is audible from nearby the entryway, as both of the girls whip around to see...speak of the devil, Katrina Jones herself.

JONES

Hello, girls.

Both of them jump back in surprise.

BELLA

AH!

OPHELIA

AH!

OPHELIA (CONT'D)

What are you doing here!?

Bella leans over.

BELLA

(whispering)

She's our dog walker.

(to Jones)

But I thought you were out of town this week.

JONES

Plans changed. Friend of mine canceled, so no Cabo trip for me after all.

All three of them laugh awkwardly.

OPHELIA

You didn't just hear that entire conversation, did you?

JONES

Nope. Heard everything.  
(off their aghast looks)  
But I'm not going to spill. Not yet.

Bella narrows her eyes.

BELLA

What do you mean "not yet"?

OPHELIA

Aren't you technically working with the police on the Anton case?

JONES

Yes. But last time I checked, this...story you've described would be entirely different from the Anton case. Ryder Shepard has already requested and received the highest status of punishment you can in this country.

OPHELIA

Are you assuming we're lying?

JONES

It's pretty hard to believe that Colin Astor would have intercourse with Ryder Shepard, who was technically committing adultery, and knew they were both underage.

OPHELIA

And according to him, he wasn't on crack. Or any other shit.

Jones shakes her head. Like Ophelia when she heard, she was still trying to process this.

JONES

Listen. I won't tell the CPD or anybody else about Colin and Ryder if you do me one favor.

Both of them look at each other hesitantly.

OPHELIA

What is it?

JONES

Back out of investigating the Anton case.

(Pause)

I know you were going to. Even if you haven't started yet.

BELLA

And if we don't?

JONES

Then I'll steal the photos from Colin's hospital room and fax them straight to the CPD. Who will then GLADLY lock Colin up in a nice prison cell for...

(pause)

How many times did they?

OPHELIA

From what I could see, probably close to 4 or 5?

JONES

Okay. Then they can lock him up for anywhere from 12 to 35 years. They'll try him as an adult. He'll be put on probation for months, maybe years after. He'll be put on the National Sex Offenders List. How's employment, a livelihood, even a damned wife-

OPHELIA

He's gay.

JONES

Okay, husband. How's a damned husband going to work if he believes that Colin had sex with another boy underage, knowing it was wrong?

Both girls finally crack under the pressure. They nod slowly.



BELLA

What about Luke? Or Sofi?

JONES

I'm assuming you won't tell them the truth. Considering Luke has a massive crush on Colin, and Sofi is a bit young to care.

BELLA

My sister is not-

Jones waves a hand, cutting her off.

JONES

You just need to tell them to lay off playing pretend detective, and no one gets hurt. Alright?

Both girls nod once more.

OPHELIA

Fine. But you better not be lying to us about this.

BELLA

Agreed.

JONES

I'm not.

She leaves out the front door as quickly as she came.

FADE TO: FERRARI HOUSE

INT. FERRARI HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

At the same time that Bella and Ophelia were getting blackmailed by a private detective, Luke had decided to invite Tristan over to his house. They were passing around the football in his backyard.

LUKE

You work out on a regular basis?

TRISTAN

Nah. About twice a week with a personal trainer. That's it.

LUKE

Really?

He's too caught up for a second that the football hits him right in the nose, causing a small trickle of blood to form.

TRISTAN

Are you okay?

LUKE

Y-Yeah I'll be fine. Let me go get some bandages.

He starts to head back inside the house.

TRISTAN

Here. Damnit, let me fix it for you.

LUKE

Huh? What do you-

Tristan places his hand over Luke's nose, as the wound heals up as quickly as it had began.

TRISTAN

Now do you think you're senile?

LUKE

W-Wait. So you really have abilities.

TRISTAN

Eh, never really used them much. They just come and go. Though when they come...they get really out of control.

He shudders.

LUKE

I get you. Seems like all of us lose our temper a bit sometimes.

Tristan smiles.

TRISTAN

You're right. But for me and him...it's always been different.

Luke raises an eyebrow.

LUKE

What do you mean?

TRISTAN  
Who's that boy who's in the  
hospital right now, Colin Astor?

LUKE  
You don't mean...

TRISTAN  
I could be wrong.

He winks, before starting to go back inside.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)  
You ponder this while I get Takis,  
alright?

END ACT 2

START ACT 3

FADE TO: ASTOR HOUSE

INT./EXT. ASTOR HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Terrance stands out on the balcony, mirroring Colin previously. Except this time, he's just staring out there.

TERRANCE

Damn, if only you could see him now, Aurora. You'd be so proud of him.

A ring sounds from the panel near the door. Terrance sighs, slowly heaving himself up, and walking over.

TERRANCE (CONT'D)

Who is it? I was just about to take my nap.

He opens the door to reveal Adrian, still wearing his "KISS THE COOK" Apron from earlier.

ADRIAN

Terrance, how have you been?

TERRANCE

Alright. Yourself?

The other man squirms in place uncomfortably.

ADRIAN

So far, so good. Unless I really heard what I heard right.

Terrance plops down on his recliner and leans back, as if he was meeting with a client.

TERRANCE

What are you talking about, Adrian? Your hearing's great as a dog whistle.

Adrian runs his hands through his hair, groaning.

ADRIAN

I heard Bells and Ophelia talking just earlier. And what I heard...may shock you.

TERRANCE

What does it have to do with me or my son?

ADRIAN

Terrance, in all seriousness, don't tell anyone. Don't let Colin know you know. Don't tell any of the other parents. Don't tell Grandma Tootsie over the phone. You hear me?

Terrance shakes his head slowly, grabbing a beer from the fridge.

TERRANCE

Again. What are you talking about? You never get worked up like this.

He takes a deep breath in.

ADRIAN

I think your son's a sex offender, Terrance.

FADE TO: COX HOUSE

INT. COX HOUSE - LATER

Sofi lets the door shut loudly behind her as she walks in. Bella and Ophelia are upstairs.

SOFI

Hello? Bells? Ophie?

Both girls peak their heads out from downstairs. Bella looks like she just took a shower, with a towel wrapped around her head. Ophelia has her cell on speakerphone.

OPHELIA

Colin, we're going to have to call you back.

COLIN (O.S.)

Is Sofi home?

SOFI

Bingo.  
(to Colin)  
Hi, Colin.

COLIN (O.S.)

Hey, Sof.

Sofi looks to Bella, then Ophelia, then back at the phone.

SOFI  
What were you guys talking about?

COLIN (O.S.)  
Uh...nothing. Just about the new kid here. He's over at Luke's house right now I think.

SOFI  
Tristan?

Bella stares up.

BELLA  
You know him?

SOFI  
Saw him once. Had a brief conversation.  
(beat)  
Are you saying seniors can't talk with sophomores?

COLIN (O.S.)  
It's uncommon.  
(off yelling audible in the background)  
Hi, Dad!  
(to the girls)  
I got to go.

He hangs up, leaving a slightly upset Sofi with Bella and Ophelia.

SOFI  
Were you guys really talking about Tristan?

Ophelia's disappeared. Bella doesn't even want to look her sister in the eyes.

BELLA  
An eye for an eye.  
(pause)  
Sofi, how good are you at voice impressions?

Sofi's face instantly changes from confusion to suspicion and back again.

SOFI  
Why do you ask?

BELLA

Don't need to know. Just...can you impersonate Mom?

SOFI

WHAT!? WHY!?

Ophelia comes back outside, rubbing her eyebrows.

OPHELIA

We need to make a call to the prison. Bells will pay you back later.

(glares at Bella)

Won't you?

SOFI

Fine. Give me the phone.

Bella types in the prison's number, or what she thinks is it, before passing it over to Sofi.

PRESTON

Hello, this is Preston. Welcome to Pizza Hu-

(beat)

Wait. This is the Four Seasons Rome. How may I help you?

Both Ophelia and Bella struggle not to laugh, before freezing on him saying the name of a hotel.

SOFI

(impersonating Selena)

Hello, this is Selena Cox.

PRESTON

Oh, Selena! Your husband and I were roommates at NYU. Don't you remember?

Sofi blanks, looking to Bella and Ophelia, who both shrug.

SOFI

(mouthing)

What am I supposed to say?

OPHELIA

(mouthing)

Just nod along and then ask him about Ryder.

SOFI  
 (mouthing)  
 Ryder!?  
 (out-loud)  
 Yeah, yeah, I remember that.  
 (laughs awkwardly)  
 Anyways, can we get ahold of Ryder  
 Shepard by any chance?

A pause on the other end of the line. Preston can be heard talking to his supervisor.

OPHELIA  
 (whispering)  
 Is he ever gonna get back to us?

More than a few minutes pass, old jazz music playing on hold. Then, finally:

PRESTON  
 Well, took a lot of begging and  
 some other shit. But fine. You've  
 got 10 minutes.

Rustling is heard as he passes the phone over.

OPHELIA  
 (to Sofi)  
 You can go now.

Sofi sighs, before walking away. She's still just around the corner, listening.

BELLA  
 (to the phone)  
 Hello? Ryder?

RYDER  
 (overly depressed/deadpan)  
 Hello, Bella.

Ophelia takes a deep breath in.

OPHELIA  
 REALLY, RYDER!?

RYDER  
 Wh-What did I do?

OPHELIA  
 Do I need to list it off?

BELLA  
 Ophie, let him talk.



OPHELIA

Oh, no. I'm just letting him talk.  
 (pause)  
 First off, how exactly did you get  
 upgraded from a life sentence to  
 the death penalty?

Ryder groans.

RYDER

I may or may not have accidentally  
 killed two of the other inmates.  
 They were after my butts though, it  
 was me or them.  
 (beat)  
 And then I asked to get upgraded to  
 the death penalty.

Ophelia scrunches her eyebrows.

BELLA

At least that aligns with what  
 Colin showed us.

RYDER

Heard that he got shot or something  
 at a party. How is he doing?

Bella is making the "cut it out" expression as Ophelia  
 continues ranting.

BELLA

He's doing fine.

OPHELIA

Except for the fact that because of  
 you, he might be a known sex  
 offender.

RYDER

Huh!? What the FUCK are you talking  
 about!?

OPHELIA

Don't play dumb with me. You and  
 Colin had sex when you were 15.  
 Multiple times.

RYDER

H-How would you know!?

OPHELIA

I was FaceTiming with Colin when he got an envelope as blackmail...with photos of you two getting into it.

The sound of a toilet flushing nearby drowns out Ryder's cussing.

RYDER

That's fucked up.

OPHELIA

Either way, we've both provided a motive for you to murder Ana, AND get Colin sent to prison for more than a few years.

BELLA

Why would he have motive to murder-

OPHELIA

To be with Colin, duh.

RYDER

Ophie, I swear. It was once-

OPHELIA

It was 4 or 5 times.

RYDER

Okay, fine. But we didn't really care much for it at the time.

OPHELIA

The main reason I'm angry is that you would cheat on Ana like that.

Ryder's eyes turn wide, before putting them on mute.

CUT TO: FOUR SEASONS ROME

INT. FOUR SEASON ROME - CONTINUOUS

Ryder is banging his head against the wall while sobbing.

RYDER

C'MON, SHEPARD! YOU'RE SUCH AN IDIOT!

He continues crying. Irene glances at him with a concerned look.

BACK TO: COX HOUSE

INT. COX HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The two girls get taken off mute.

BELLA

R-Ryder?

RYDER

Sorry about that.

(beat)

You know about me and Colin. You know about me requesting the death penalty.

(pause)

Did you call me solely to yell at me?

OPHELIA

Yep.

RYDER

How did you exactly get the prison to let you call me?

OPHELIA

Sofi impersonated her mom.

RYDER

What!?

BELLA

Don't worry, she doesn't know. Neither does Luke.

Ryder exhales, slightly relieved.

RYDER

That's good.

(pause)

Talk to you guys later. Bye.

He hangs up abruptly. Both girls stare at each other in surprise.

BELLA

Well...that could've gone worse.

OPHELIA

Way worse.

Camera shift to Sofi, who's watching this with a look of sinister...shock.

SOFI  
 (whispering)  
 It's clear there's something up  
 here.

FADE TO: FERRARI HOUSE

INT. FERRARI HOUSE - NIGHT

Long after Tristan left, Luke flips through old photos on his Nokia, trying to delete it for storage.

LUKE  
 Hm.  
 (pause)  
 Damn, so many old photos of me and  
 Colin.

He looks like he's about ready to fall asleep deleting all of those photos. Then, a knock on the door.

LUKE (CONT'D)  
 Come in.

Luke's father, Edward, walks in with an envelope, similar to the one we saw Colin receive earlier in the episode.

EDWARD  
 This is for you, son.

He passes it over. Also similar to Colin, it's at this time that he [Luke] receives a text message. Edward quickly leaves.

LUKE  
 (reading the text)  
 "Thought I'd send this to you,  
 since your friends are too scared  
 to show you. Course, this isn't  
 exactly what they got. Know you and  
 Colin aren't dating, but this is  
 bound to wind him up in some hot  
 water with you. But...it's the  
 gospel truth. Keep this between us,  
 okay?"

Luke's eyes widen when he sees the signature at the end.

LUKE (CONT'D)  
 "XOXO, AA?"  
 (pause)  
 As in...Anastasia Anton?

He hesitantly glances at the envelope, before reaching over and ripping it open. Inside are both the photos Colin received of him and Ryder getting into it, as well as...

LUKE (CONT'D)

Wh-What is this!?

A rap at the door. Luke quickly shoves the pictures back in the envelope.

LUKE (CONT'D)

DAD, I'M FINE!

Whoever it was immediately barged in.

COLIN

Luke.

(sees the envelope)

Luke. I swear, it's not what you think.

Luke swings his legs off the bed, before opening the rest of the envelope and rummaging through the rest of the contents.

LUKE

Well, there's photos of you and Ryder getting into it. And they're timestamped about 2 years ago. When Ryder was with Ana, and you were BOTH UNDERAGE.

Colin rolls his eyes.

COLIN

Captain Obvious. The others know.

Luke shuts up for a moment. That's not the end of it though.

LUKE

Colin, were you going to orgies?

He pulls out photos of his aforementioned best friend getting into it with, thankfully, older teenage boys in various locations.

COLIN

Luke, I-

LUKE

You got treated behind your dad's back for STDs!?

He shoves invoice after invoice of STD treatment at Colin, every single STD you could think of, even AIDS/HIV.

COLIN

It's not that hard. Old man can't hear or remember a damn thing half of the time.

LUKE

And...OH. MY. GOD.

He finally yanks out all other sorts of evidence, drug receipts, more photos...screenshots of Colin potentially asking to hook up with boys.

COLIN

Wait, hold up there-

LUKE

I'm not holding up, Colin.

(beat)

You have crossed the line. Crossed.

The. Line. I mean it.

(pause)

Do the others know about this?

Colin rubs his neck, it's obvious he's ashamed of himself.

COLIN

No. They know about me and Ryder, because I got the envelope when me and Ophelia were Facetiming. Then Ophelia told Bella. But they don't know about anything else in that envelope.

Luke throws his hands up. The rest of the envelope spills out to reveal, among many things, drug deal orders, more and more photos, and...a picture of Colin standing over a dead body with a knife?

LUKE

Okay, ignoring everything else here, this provides a very clear motive for why Ryder would want to murder Ana. To be with you. And honestly, I don't know if that's the case, but I...

He honestly looks like he's about to cry.

LUKE (CONT'D)

I feel betrayed. I'm sorry. It's bad enough to hide it from me, but from Ophie, Bells, damnit, Ryder? What the FUCK, Colin?!

With some hesitation, he grabs his phone off of his dresser.

COLIN

P-Please. Don't do this.

LUKE

I'm sorry, Colin. I really am. But we can't just let a criminal run amok, can we?

He dials the police station's number. A few rings, then someone picks up.

PERCY

Hello, this is Percy from the Chicago Police Department. How may I help you?

LUKE

Hi. I'd like to speak to a Ms. Katrina Jones.

PERCY

O-Okay. Hold on one second.

Taylor Swift starts playing as the hold music starts playing VERY loudly. Colin sighs.

COLIN

For the record, the second-degree murder does not have anything to do with this. And by this, I mean the Anton case.

Luke whips back around, having been deleting emails on his phone.

LUKE

Did you say second-degree murder?

It takes a second for Colin to realize what he said.

COLIN

Uh...nothing!

(pause)

Fine. It was in self-defense. Th- This guy and I knew each other, family friends. His family isn't like any of ours though, one of my dad's work colleagues. Long story short, he started spreading rumors about me, then sending me death threats after I tried to dispute those rumors.

(MORE)

COLIN (CONT'D)

Then...things got nasty, and you can guess what happened next.

Luke gapes. They're still not off hold yet.

LUKE

Damn.

(beat)

But did you really have to murder the guy?

COLIN

H-He was gonna go after Ryder and Ana next, if he didn't murder me.

(pause)

That's all I know about that.

Luke bites his lip, unsure of whether to ask the final question.

LUKE

D-Do you know the guy's name?

COLIN

Yeah, his name was-

The hold music abruptly ends.

JONES

Hello, Mr. Ferrari. You wanted to talk to me?

With a sigh, Luke puts the phone on mute.

LUKE

Everything in that envelope is going to be between you and me. Well, besides the others knowing about you and Ryder. But they can keep a secret.

(beat)

Even the STDs, even the drug dealing. I'm sorry. I overreacted there.

The two hug.

COLIN

It's okay. We all get angry sometimes. Even if you were about to send me to 40+ years in prison.

He snorts.



LUKE

Now, what was that guy's name again?

COLIN

Oh, yeah. His name was-

Funnily enough, neither of the two could hear the window opening during that entire conversation with the loud hold music. But now, they could hear the cock of two guns behind both of their heads.

LUKE

Why do I have a terrifying feeling I shouldn't turn around?

COLIN

And why do I have a feeling that I should know this guy?

A laugh. Neither one of the two boys dares to turn around.

TRISTAN

Don't worry, boys. I already served two years in jail. And my dad was able to pay off the 25,000 dollar fine. Thanks to your father for that, Colin.

COLIN

YOU'RE ALIVE!?

LUKE

TRISTAN!?

TRISTAN

Yes, yes, it's me. Tristan Quade.  
(deadpan)  
You know me, you idiots.

Luke looks to Colin fearfully.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

Also, I flunked last year. So in case you're wondering, yes, I'm an 19-year-old in a senior class. And I bought these two bad boys when I was 16.

(pause)

Does that answer your questions?

Colin raises an eyebrow, cursing Tristan for being a Smart-Alec.

LUKE  
One more actually.

COLIN  
Are you gonna kidnap us?

Tristan laughs, pressing the guns closer to their heads.

TRISTAN  
No, idiots.

While keeping one of the guns trained of them, Tristan pulls out his phone with the other hand, tapping SEND on an email. Luke, during this time, realizes that he never hung up on the call. Tristan sees this too.

LUKE  
Wait, don't-

Tristan picks up the phone and takes it off of mute.

COLIN  
Shit. Tristan, don't do this.

TRISTAN  
I'm sorry, Mrs. Jones, to keep you waiting.

JONES  
For the record, I am Ms. Jones, and Detective Jones to you.  
(pause)  
And who is this? You don't sound like Luke Ferrari.

Luke and Colin exchange an uneasy look.

TRISTAN  
Well, I suggest you check your emails, Detective Jones. I believe it's...vital.

JONES  
Please note I only work with the CPD on a freelance basis for the Anton case.

TRISTAN

I know, but this is necessary. If you'd kindly check your emails, I'd like to report Luke Ferrari for 2 counts of embezzlement, and 1 count of accessory to first-degree murder I've kindly included all of the evidence. Thank you, and have a good day.

END OF ACT 3

START OF TEASER

INT. FOUR SEASONS ROME - AFTERNOON

Ryder and Irene are lounging in their hotel room, Irene is reading an Italian-translated version of Vogue, and Ryder is taking photos on his Instagram.

IRENE

For the love of God, Ry, how many filters have you tried?

RYDER

Pretty much all of them.  
(turns to look at her)  
Why?

IRENE

It's been three hours since we've got here.  
(sets down the magazine)  
We need a plan.

Ryder sighs, dropping his phone and sitting up.

RYDER

We need a day to relax. The mafia aren't after our butts.

IRENE

Not yet at least.

RYDER

Stop being so dramatic. You chose to come with me here.

IRENE

Because I believe you didn't murder my sister. If you did...now's the time to own it up.

RYDER

I didn't. But...

IRENE

Are you gonna burst into song?

Ryder gets up and pulls a Manila folder from his backpack.

RYDER  
 (sing-songy)  
 I've started to track down the  
 facts. Connected it all together,  
 just like that.

Irene plugs her ears.

IRENE  
 Please stop singing.

RYDER  
 (pouty)  
 Fine.  
 (normal)  
 Well, if my research is right, a  
 certain family has been giving  
 money to the mafia. And it isn't  
 mine. Two actually. One's the  
 Coxes, and the others the-

A loud bang. The door is quickly kicked down. Both Ryder and Irene's eyes widen as several armed officers enter.

IRENE  
 Twenty bucks that isn't police?

ITALIAN MAFIA HITMAN  
 Polizia Stradale! Mani in alto e  
 sul pavimento!

IRENE  
 Ryder. What is he saying?

RYDER  
 Police. Hands up...and on the floor.

END OF EPISODE