

HEAD CASE

Written by

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FADE IN:

SCENE 1 INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - MORNING

SARA enters the theater, goes behind the front desk, and sets her things down. She pulls a spray bottle and a rag out from under the desk as TORI enters behind her and clocks in. On the wall next to her we see:

Anderson Film Presents

SARA sprays the counter in front of her and wipes it down. BIRDS-EYE VIEW shot of SARA wiping down the counter, as she wipes it down, the title appears:

A Chad Weddle Production

TORI walks over to the snack area and puts popcorn kernels into the machine. As she closes the door, the words are placed on the glass:

A Chrisanthi Burch Film

TORI restocks water bottles and other drinks in the fridge. As she does so, words appear vertically on the fridge door.

Starring __ __ and __

She leans under the counter to get napkins and refill the napkin dispenser. SARA walks behind her holding a sign. On the back of the sign we see:

Technical Directors __ and Nick Howrey

TORI is now finished restocking the napkins. She pushes the napkin dispenser toward the front of the counter and the words:

Director of Photography Kailee Poston,

Are printed onto the metal. She flips it around to show:

Cinematographer JD McManus

SARA is finished hanging up a promotional sign and turns to go back to the front desk. B-Roll of the lobby as words are shown on a chair:

Production Designer __

TORI sits behind the counter and pulls out her phone, bored already. SARA side-eyes her as a POV shot of her giving the lobby one last look and heading toward the front door. On the back of the entrance, words are shown:

Original Score by Josh Yamaguchi

SARA grabs the sign and flips the "Closed" sign to "Open".

CUT TO: BLACK

TITLE CARD

SCENE 2 INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - MORNING

TORI finishes selling tickets to a teenage couple. They enter the movie theater as ETHAN rushes through the front door in a frenzy, his shirt wrinkled and hair unkempt. He is holding textbooks and flashcards. He goes behind the counter to clock in as SARA enters from the supply closet. TORI sits back knowing what is about to happen.

ETHAN

I am so, so sorry, Sara! I forgot to set my alarm and my parents left for work before I got up and I-

SARA

That's the second time this month. I know you're under a lot of stress, but I will have to be your boss before your friend if this continues to happen.

ETHAN

I know. I was just up late last night studying and I-

TORI

Boring!

ETHAN

Tori? (hurt) Anyway, I'm sorry. It-it won't happen again.

SARA

It's okay. Just make sure it doesn't or I'll have to suspend you.

ETHAN

Again, I'm-

TORI

Dude, save it for your followers.

SARA gives TORI an annoyed look and re-enters the supply closet. ETHAN runs his hands through his hair and lets out a deep breath.

TORI (CONT'D)

So what were you really doing last night?

ETHAN

I had another fight with my parents.

He looks into the desk computer to barely see his reflection and attempts to smooth out his wrinkled shirt. TORI takes out her phone and snaps a photo of him. ETHAN gives her a look and continues talking.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

I got home a bit past curfew and they went ballistic.

TORI

Ooooooo, rule breaker! What were you doing?

ETHAN

(avoidantly)

Nothing.

(beat)

My parents just keep pressing me about college and-

TORI groans.

TORI

You've posted about this sob story a million times. When are you going to complain about something original.

ETHAN

Yeah, you unfollowed me, remember?

TORI

Look, scholarships and studying are great and all- but the more you worry about them, the more you'll be late to work and if you get fired, Sara will be up my butt.

ETHAN makes a face. The two look at each other then burst out laughing. SARA enters the room again, shutting the door behind her.

SARA

What's so funny?

TORI puts up her thumb and raises it. TORI and ETHAN laugh again and SARA gets upset, walking over to the ticket counter.

FADE TO:

SCENE 3A INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - MORNING

GRACE and LIAM enter the lobby holding a camera facing themselves mid-video introduction.

CAMERA POV

LIAM is holding raw meats and vegetables while GRACE holds the camera and multiple lighters.

GRACE
 (enthusiastically)
 Ight, Liam. You ready to see if we
 can cook a steak dinner in a
 theater using only these lighters?
 (holds the lighter up to
 the camera)

LIAM
 I just hope we get passed security.

GRACE
 Don't worry 'bout it.
 (looks into the camera)
 We tight with the crew.

GRACE turns the camera off and puts it, along with the lighters in her pockets. LIAM attempts to hide the food in his pockets as well as under his shirt. They walk up to the counter. The trio, with ETHAN still looking disheveled, stare at the two, confused.

GRACE (CONT'D)
 Sup, fam?

TORI
 You know we can see what you're
 doing, right?

GRACE and LIAM look at each other innocently.

TORI (CONT'D)
 We're not stupid. I watched you
 walk in with an ear of corn.

LIAM
 (scoffs)
 What?

SARA
 Look, policy says "no outside food
 or drink".
 (she points to a nearby
 sign)

LIAM takes the ear of corn out of his pocket and sets it on the counter top, however, he leaves the meats on him.

SARA (CONT'D)
 Though I've got to hand it to you,
 these pranks are getting more and
 more creative.

LIAM	GRACE
Thanks!	We try!

They attempt a high five and miss. They try again.

SARA (CONT'D)
 I'll ring you up. What movie would
 you like to see?

TORI
 What haven't they seen? They come
 in here almost every day.

ETHAN
 Yeah, why do you keep letting them
 in, Sara?

SARA
 Some days they're the only business
 we get.

SLOW MOTION

GRACE and LIAM point to what they want to watch and SARA gives them tickets. We hear the front doorbell ring and see TORI's demeanor change ultimately. Everyone notices and looks toward the door to see CHRISTIAN spraying a cologne cloud, and walking through it, toward them. Once he reaches the counter, LIAM grabs the corn.

LIAM
 Thanks for the ticket, Sara!

GRACE

Catch you on the flipside, yo!

LIAM bolts into the theater with GRACE not far behind. As they run away, SARA yells out:

SARA

Don't make a mess!

CHRISTIAN

Hey, babe.

He pops his collar as he meets TORI for a hug and kisses her on the cheek, then wipes his mouth.

TORI

Hey. What have you been up to today?

CHRISTIAN

Taking care of business. Missed you.

CHRISTIAN kisses the air. ETHAN scoffs.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

(walking over to Ethan)

What's your problem, dweeb?

ETHAN slightly shrinks into himself and their size difference is a dead giveaway of the power they have over each other, and TORI.

ETHAN

Um, I- I don't think you should be behind the counter.

(beat)

You don't work here.

TORI

He's an honorary employee. Right, babe?

CHRISTIAN

No, I actually think the little man's right. For once. I shouldn't be behind the counter if I'm not looking professional.

(to ETHAN)

And neither should you.

ETHAN balls his fists at this comment, SARA notices.

SARA
What are you doing here, Christian?

CHRISTIAN
I just wanted to see my girl.

CHRISTIAN snakes his hand around TORI's waist.

SARA
You can see her after her shift.

CHRISTIAN
Whatever, brah.

CHRISTIAN throws his hands up in frustration, re-pops his collar and winks at TORI, then exits the theater.

TORI
(frustrated)
What'd you do that for?

SARA
This is your job, Tori. You have a theater to clean.

TORI groans, loudly, as she walks down the hall. SARA and ETHAN are left behind the counter. ETHAN is still visibly angry.

SARA (CONT'D)
Don't take him seriously, okay?
He's just trying to get a rise out of you because you're friends with Tori. And because he's an overprotective, ego-maniac, not to mention a total loser.

ETHAN
(takes a deep breath) True.

SARA
You go fix yourself, okay?

ETHAN
Okay.

ETHAN walks out from behind the counter and hurries to the bathroom.

CUT TO:

SCENE 4A INT. MOVIE THEATER - DAY

TORI, annoyed, is mopping the concrete floors of the theater. The lighting is dim and she cannot see very well. She goes up and down the rows of seats making sure to get underneath each seat as well enough to pass through her boss's inspections. Once she reaches the back of the theater, she hits something hard. TORI kneels down to inspect what she has hit. She pulls out a clean, briefcase-looking item. She grazes her thumb over the letters: C.C. engraved on the front.

CUT TO:

SCENE 4B INT. BATHROOM - DAY

ETHAN looks at himself in the mirror. He slowly fixes his shirt then turns the faucet on and wets his face.

CUT TO:

SCENE 4C INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - DAY

SARA grabs a movie ticket and hands it to a child customer. She has a smile on her face as she turns to get popcorn for the parents.

CUT quickly between the five characters. TORI slowly opens the package, SARA restocks miscellaneous items as GRACE and LIAM are seen behind her, exiting the theater blowing on their charred hands and vlogging. ETHAN looks at himself in the mirror, picking at his hair over and over again, making sure it is *perfect* for the day's work. TORI has now fully opened the package and stares at it in awe. It glows a faint light. She is frightened, angry, and alone in this moment. She quickly shuts the case and stands.

CUT TO: BLACK

SCENE 5 INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - DAY

SARA is in the back room as business is slow. Suddenly, TORI sprints down the hallway into the lobby. ETHAN, behind the counter, looks up at her and does a double take, she is holding a case in her hands. He shuts his book and turns his chair to face her.

ETHAN

What's going on?

TORI

Ethan. Look at this.

ETHAN rushes to his friend's side as she opens the case. A small light glows from within. The two are so entranced by what they see that they do not realize SARA has entered the room.

SARA
What is that?

TORI quickly shuts the case.

TORI
Uh-

SARA marches toward her.

SARA
Let me see it.

TORI
(scoffs)
No!

ETHAN
(wide eyed) Tori.

TORI takes a breath then opens the package for SARA to see.

SARA
(stunned)
Is that-

TORI
Yeah. But you can't-

ETHAN
(nervously)
Oh my God.

SARA
How the hell-

TORI
I don't know! I was cleaning
Theater 2 and-

SARA
Wait- this was in the theater?

TORI
Keep your voice down! Can we just
keep this between us until we
figure out what to do with it?

SARA

We need to turn this into
authorities.

SARA grabs the package. Then, all of a sudden, GRACE and LIAM, now in childish pajamas, enter the front doors mid-video introduction. We see CHRISTIAN talking and trading items with a few people in the background, outside the theater. SARA quickly puts the briefcase behind her back, accidentally hitting ETHAN in the arm.

GRACE

Comment down below if you think we
can stay in the theater for twenty-
four hours!

SARA

I can guarantee you will not.

GRACE

C'mon! You could've at least waited
until I turned the camera off.

The trio makes their way back behind the counter.

SARA

Look, guys. We've got a lot going
on right now and we can't really
have-

LIAM

Are you pushing away business?
Because last I checked, this place
was deserted.

(beat)

Well, minus Christian "working" out
front.

SARA

Fine. What do you want to see?

TORI

What do you mean "working"?

GRACE and LIAM gesture toward the window where CHRISTIAN is still talking with the people.

SARA

That's it, I'm calling the cops!

TORI

NO! No, let me go talk to him.

TORI heads toward CHRISTIAN. SARA and ETHAN give each other knowing looks. GRACE and LIAM ADLIB what movie they would like to see and give off inside jokes. Behind them, we see TORI and CHRISTIAN get into a heated argument outside. Soon after, CHRISTIAN enters the lobby, determined, a less determined TORI follows shortly after. CHRISTIAN gets as close as he can to ETHAN while still in front of the counter. GRACE and LIAM huddle into each other for safety.

CHRISTIAN
Where is it?

ETHAN
(shrinks into himself)
What- what are you talking about?

CHRISTIAN
You know what I'm talking about,
dude.
(turns to SARA)
Where is it?

GRACE gets her camera out to record. CHRISTIAN puts a little more distance between him and the counter. He looks directly at TORI.

ETHAN
(disappointingly)
Really, Tor?

CHRISTIAN
(beat)
Fine. Don't tell me. It's whatever,
man.

CHRISTIAN glares at TORI then storms out of the complex slamming the door on his way out. ETHAN and TORI stare at each other. SARA clutches the package under the counter. And GRACE and LIAM filming the entire thing.

TORI
I'm sorry. I just-

ETHAN
No, you're not! You do this all the
time.

SARA
(calming) Ethan.

ETHAN

No! "Keep it between us" does NOT mean roping in people who make this situation possibly life-threatening. God, what do you even see in him!

TORI

I-

ETHAN

No, Tor. I don't want to hear it.

They sit in silence for a moment until TORI walks down the hallway to the theaters. GRACE points the camera toward herself.

GRACE

OHHHHH! Who would've expected that?

LIAM

Subscribe to see how this heated argument ends.

CUT TO: BLACK

SCENE 6A INT. SIDE HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

TORI exits a theater, still blowing off steam from her recent argument and pushing a cleaning cart with bottles of disinfectant and towels. She pushes the cart across the hall and begins to wipe down the door handle when she is interrupted by the ding of her phone. She pulls it out of her pocket to see that her father texted her: "I messed up." TORI looks both confused and concerned at the same time, however, she places her phone down on the cart and enters the theater.

SCENE 6B INT. DIFFERENT MOVIE THEATER

TORI enters the theater and stops the cart while she cleans the seat nearest to her with disinfectant and a rag. Her phone begins to buzz. She tries to ignore it knowing who will be on the other end but ultimately gives in, answering the call with the ID name of DAD.

TORI

What can I do for you this time, Dad?

TORI'S FATHER is breathing heavily through the phone and when he speaks he sounds as though he is hiding fear.

TORI'S FATHER (V.O.)

I messed up, Tori. I messed up real bad. I don't think I'll be home tonight and I need you to take care of your mother. Can you do that for me?

TORI

(scoffs)

Are you serious? Again?

TORI'S FATHER (V.O.)

Yeah... I got into- I-
(he takes a deep breath then bursts with anger)
I just need you to do this, okay?

TORI

What? Take care of mom? All because you made ANOTHER mistake.

TORI'S FATHER (V.O.)

I am doing everything I can to help your mother.

TORI

SHE HAS TERMINAL LUNG CANCER! And you're never home. I'm the one who takes her to treatments. I make sure she takes her medication before going to bed, and I make all of her meals. Meanwhile, you're calling me every night telling me you 'won't be able to make it home'. Don't tell me you're doing everything you can when you're clearly doing nothing.

TORI'S FATHER (V.O.)

I won't let you antagonize me. I am your father and you will treat me as such!

TORI

Then why don't you act like it.

TORI'S FATHER (V.O.)

Don't-

TORI hangs up the phone and places it back in her pocket. She is angry and doesn't know what to do with herself based on the whirl of emotions her father has given her. She grabs her head in disbelief as she tries to control herself.

When she no longer can, she harshly grabs the theater door and storms into the lobby.

SCENE 7A INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - AFTERNOON

SARA is helping ETHAN review biology flash cards as TORI rushes into the lobby angrily. She goes behind the front desk and searches for the package in drawers and cabinets while her eyes glaze over in tears. Her coworkers look confused.

SARA
What are you doing?

ETHAN
Tori, are you okay?

TORI
(to herself)
Why now? You're making my life a living hell while I'm here trying my hardest to keep our family afloat. It's not that hard- just come home at night and BE and husband and father. And now Mom's low on medication and I'M the one who has to get the money for it. Only this stupid job doesn't pay shi-

SARA
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

TORI looks over to ETHAN with tears in her eyes.

TORI
Taking care of my family.

ETHAN and SARA rush to comfort TORI.

ETHAN
I'm so sorry, Tor.

TORI
He's making up terrible excuses. I have to be the parent while also taking care of myself.

SARA
What did your therapist say?

TORI

(beat)

Ugh. Do you think I listen to anything that stupid shrink has to say?

SARA

You should. Mine has helped me a ton.

ETHAN

(self-conscious)

You have a therapist?

TORI

I'm sorry but who are you to be commenting on my situation- you know nothing about me!

SARA

Tori, you and I are more alike than you think.

ETHAN

Are we talking about the same person?

TORI

Just by the two sentences you've heard you're jumping to that conclusion? Save it for someone who cares.

TORI breaks away from the trio. And goes back to looking behind the desk.

SARA

I think you're the last person who should be trusted with the package right now.

ETHAN

Yeah, Tor, maybe you should think this through.

TORI faces SARA directly. The tears in her eyes are immediately replaced with anger.

TORI

(condescendingly)

You know damn well that I need this more than you do.

(MORE)

TORI (CONT'D)

And even though you're "my boss" I don't need to explain myself to you. So, tell me where you put it.

SARA

No.

TORI bolts away from SARA into the back room.

SCENE 7B INT. BREAK ROOM

TORI enters the room and looks around frantically. TORI sits at the desk in the room opening the drawers attached to it. She opens the drawer that says "MANAGER" on it and begins rummaging through. She pulls out a plastic bag, a sweatshirt, and other miscellaneous items until she reaches the bottom of the drawer. Finally, TORI gives up. She sits in defeat as her gaze wanders around the room. She has a moment of realization as we follow her gaze up to the ceiling tiles.

SCENE 7A INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - AFTERNOON

SARA is recovering from the verbal attack she just encountered as ETHAN stands by her, with mixing emotions.

ETHAN

Why did you let her go?

SARA

What else was I supposed to do? She won't be able to find it. Let's be real here, Tori isn't that smart.

ETHAN

You know, she reminds me of my aunt. Driven but poor at decision making. She went to Coachella this past year and got kicked out because she was trying to get into the pants of all the guys that worked there while intoxicated. She's now banned.

The bell on the front door rings and SARA and ETHAN look up expecting to see one of the regulars but instead are faced with a police officer with a flyer in hand. ETHAN'S heart races.

SARA

What can we help you with, sir.

OFFICER

Have either of you seen something
that looks like this?
(he holds up the flyer,
showing the briefcase)

ETHAN and SARA look at each other then back at the officer.

ETHAN

Uh, no. I don't think so. Right,
Sara?

SARA takes a moment, wondering if she should tell the truth
or protect her friend.

SCENE 7B INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY

TILT DOWN FROM (NOW) REMOVED CEILING TILE

TORI sits at the desk and opens the package. She realizes
that she is being irrational. She still wants to keep the
package for herself but no longer wishes to cause a
commotion. She takes a deep breath, closes the package, and
enters the lobby area.

SCENE 7A INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - AFTERNOON

SARA and ETHAN are still chatting with the cop as TORI
reenters the room with the package at her side. She sees the
officer and quickly hides it behind her back before he
notices.

SARA

We will let you know if anything
suspicious happens around here,
officer. I'm sorry for the
inconvenience.

TORI subtly walks over to the snack area of the lobby,
unlocks the candy section, and places the package under the
candy. She stands to see the officer peering down at her.

TORI

Can I help you?

OFFICER

(flashes the flyer)
Have you seen this briefcase? It's
engraved so it's kind of hard to
missplace.

TORI
(coldly)
I have not... sir.

As the officer turns to leave, CHRISTIAN exits the break room to the lobby area. The officer eyes him and sticks around for a bit longer. SARA turns to ETHAN.

SARA
What is he doing here?

ETHAN
Well, we keep the back door unlocked while working. I guess he thinks it's okay to trespass.

CHRISTIAN immediately eyes the cop and puts his hands in his pockets. He nods TORI over to him. She obliges and goes to cover him.

OFFICER
Do you work here, sir?

CHRISTIAN
100%

SARA
Uh, 0%. By the way he barges in here unannounced, you would think he does, though.

OFFICER
Sir, will you step out from behind the counter, I have a few questions to ask you.

CHRISTIAN
(to SARA)
Snitch.

CHRISTIAN walks over to the police officer while TORI joins her friends behind the counter.

TORI
Why did you call the cops? I thought we figured it out.

SARA
I didn't.

ETHAN
He just showed up. I guess this package is worth more than we thought.

SARA

Yeah, we better do something about it or we're going to get in serious trouble.

ETHAN goes pale.

ETHAN

What do you think they'll do?

SARA

If he finds out we lied, he could take us in, question us, maybe jail.

TORI

Probably go on our permanent record too.

(TORI flashes her hands in front of her as if showing off important words)

Withholding evidence, possession-

ETHAN

Oh, no.

TORI

Okay, relax, Ethan. You'll be fine.

ETHAN wipes his hands on his shirt in attempt to calm himself down.

PAN TO:

The wall near the front door where the police officer is now giving CHRISTIAN a pat-down search. He is sweating and is more nervous than we have ever seen him. CHRISTIAN makes eye contact with TORI behind the desk and rolls his eyes. The cop stands and forces CHRISTIAN against the wall- backside out. The officer reaches into CHRISTIAN'S coat pocket and pulls out a roll of cash. CHRISTIAN turns around, defiantly. The officer flicks through the money, concerned. The trio stands behind the counter wide-eyed. TORI grows upset. The officer tosses the cash back to CHRISTIAN.

OFFICER

I hope you're not doing what I think you are. But, I have no evidence against you.

(pats CHRISTIAN on the shoulder)

Be smart, kid.

(MORE)

OFFICER (CONT'D)

(turns to the trio)

As for the rest of you, thank you
for your time. If you hear
anything, call us.

The police officer leaves the establishment. ETHAN is more anxious than we have ever seen him, SARA is already reorganizing the drawers in the lobby that TORI messed up, while TORI storms over to CHRISTIAN.

TORI

Are you serious?! A wad of cash on
you?

CHRISTIAN

It's no big, shnockems.

TORI

God, it's one thing that you do
your "business" on this property,
but getting the cops involved-
that's insane.

CHRISTIAN

Tori, he wasn't here for me. He was
looking for that case. Speaking of-
(gets defensive)
Where is it?

TORI

Stop it. Okay? You don't get to
barge in here and expect us to drop
everything to protect you.

CHRISTIAN

You wouldn't protect me?

TORI

(beat)

Of course I would. That's not what
I meant.

CHRISTIAN

That's what I heard.

The two continue arguing manipulatively as we CUT TO: ETHAN and SARA behind the desk. ETHAN's leg is bouncing and tapping a pen on the counter. The awkward silence is eventually broken by SARA's irritation toward the pen.

SARA

(suddenly)

(MORE)

SARA (CONT'D)
Will you stop that!

SARA looks over to ETHAN who is staring intently at nothing in particular.

ETHAN
Sorry...
(beat)
Did you really mean what you said?
About us getting into trouble and
going to jail.

SARA
Yes and no. It's possible something
like that could happen but it's
also possible Tori takes it off our
hands.
(beat)
Do you know why she doesn't listen
to her therapist?

ETHAN
What do you mean?

SARA
She has the help she needs. She
refuses it. Then she acts out. The
only way therapy will help is if
you actually put in the work.

ETHAN
Did it help you?

SARA
I put in the work and got the help
I needed. Now I know how to cope
with things out of my control. Do
you want the number for my
therapist?

There is inaudible arguing between TORI and CHRISTIAN which causes CHRISTIAN to storm over to SARA and ETHAN.

CHRISTIAN
You ratted me out.

SARA
You don't work here.

CHRISTIAN
Practically.

SARA

Oh, please. I don't need to do anything. In fact, if you continue to come here unannounced, I will ban you from this establishment.

CHRISTIAN looks at TORI, hoping she'll stand up for him but she sinks into herself and walks behind the counter.

CHRISTIAN

I hope you know that if I go down for any of this shit, you will too.
 (points to ETHAN)
 You ain't going to college.
 (eyes SARA)
 You're done managing this dump.
 (looks at TORI)
 And you- I don't even know what you'll be.

CHRISTIAN pops his collar, turns, and exits the theater. The trio is taken aback. ETHAN stands, beginning to hyperventilate, and runs to the bathroom.

SCENE 8 INT. BATHROOM - EVENING

ETHAN forces the bathroom door open. He rushes over to the sink and grips it tightly, his world spinning. He is having a panic attack. He looks down at his knuckles which are turning white from how tightly he is holding on. He then looks at himself in the mirror, breathing quickly and tears forming in his eyes. His hands find his hair and he begins to try to get his breathing back to normal as the bathroom door bursts open. TORI enters and joins ETHAN at the sink. ETHAN pays no attention to her as he attempts to mask his panic.

TORI

Hey, I came to apologize for Christian. He doesn't know what he's saying, he gets angry and blames others.

ETHAN slowly loses control over himself and breathes between nearly every word escaping his mouth.

ETHAN

He said- if I get busted I- could lose my- scholarship.

TORI finally realizes her friend is not okay.

TORI

Hey, Ethan, breathe.

She moves closer to ETHAN and he begins uncontrollably crying.

ETHAN

My parents are basically drowning me in the responsibility to be a successful, first-generation college student who has a full ride to MIT.

(beat)

Do you know what it's like to fear failing your senior year because you can't pass a simple biology test? Or what it's like for your parents to keep you up all night worrying about what may or may not happen in the future. Or to have to watch your every move to not lose a scholarship? And now, it could fall through due to a mistake at work. And I can't even go home because my dad might pick another fight about me taking his work items.

(quick beat)

I- I didn't realize it would be such a big deal. I didn't know the cops would get involved. I- I-

ETHAN collapses onto the ground. TORI quickly sits next to him, comforting him in any way she can. She grabs his hand and squeezes it.

TORI

(beat)

You won't lose your scholarship. Everything's going to be okay. I'll make sure of it.

ETHAN falls into her and they hold each other as we:

CUT TO: BLACK

SCENE 9 INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - EVENING

An elderly couple exits the theater and we PAN over to the front desk showing SARA helping a middle-aged customer. They ADLIB what movie they are seeing. ETHAN enters behind the desk with his eyes still puffy from crying. The customer leaves the desk and enters their theater as SARA turns to ETHAN.

SARA

You okay?

ETHAN shrugs.

SARA (CONT'D)
 You're going to get through this.
 You know that, right?

ETHAN nods. SARA stops when she sees the look on ETHAN'S face.

SARA (CONT'D)
 Tori cares for you. I know she does. But when her boyfriend comes around, it's a different story. You need to stand up for yourself.

(beat)
 Look, I know I'm not as close with you as Tori, but I can still see you're struggling. I know you're working hard, but I also know that you've been late to work a couple of times this month- You're going through a lot right now and it's okay to take time for yourself.

(beat)
 I mean, your parents might think differently but you need therapy or medication or a day off. Not a day to study, an actual day off. Stay in bed, watch movies, do whatever you want. I think it'll do you some good.

FADE TO:

SCENE 10 EXT. BACK ALLEYWAY - AFTERNOON

TORI sits on the curb, scrolling through her phone while on her break. OTS shots of her scrolling through her camera roll. There are many ridiculous photos of her and CHRISTIAN in various scenarios. They are in class, getting ice cream, hugging, etc. She then comes across a photo of ETHAN. It is from earlier that day when ETHAN was trying to better his appearance through the darkened computer screen. She goes back and forth between the picture of CHRISTIAN and ETHAN, finally landing on ETHAN'S. There is a CLOSEUP on TORI as she mentally contemplates the events of the past day. There are V.O.s and flashbacks of moments that stuck with her playing in her head:

-- ETHAN rushes through the front door in a frenzy, his shirt wrinkled and his hair unkempt.

-- CHRISTIAN meets TORI for a hug and kisses her on the cheek.

-- TORI walks up behind the package and lets out:

TORI
Woah...

-- We see CHRISTIAN talking and trading items with a few people in the background.

TORI (CONT'D)
What do you mean "working"?

-- CHRISTIAN enters the lobby, determined, a less determined TORI follows shortly after.

ETHAN
(disappointingly)
Really, Tor?

-- TORI goes behind the front desk and searches for the package in drawers and cabinets while her eyes glaze over in tears

TORI'S FATHER (V.O.)
I messed up, Tori. I messed up real bad. I don't think I'll be home tonight and I need you to take care of your mother.

-- The officer reaches into CHRISTIAN'S coat pocket and pulls out a roll of cash.

ETHAN
I- I didn't realize it would be such a big deal. I didn't know the cops would get involved. I- I-

-- ETHAN and TORI hold each other on the bathroom floor.

TORI stands up, snapping out of her trance-like state. Her eyes well with tears as she hurries inside.

SCENE 11A INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - AFTERNOON

SARA and ETHAN sit behind the desk chatting. There are a few customers in the lobby. TORI enters and goes behind the desk, pulling her key to the candy section out of her pocket. She unlocks it as a teenage customer asks:

CUSTOMER
Can I get the-

TORI
Not now!

TORI grabs the briefcase and rushes into the kitchen area/back room. SARA and ETHAN notice and ETHAN follows SARA stays to help the customer.

SARA
Sorry about that. What would you like?

CUSTOMER
Sour Patch Kids, please.

SARA grabs them and hands them to the customer. Immediately after, GRACE peaks her head through the front door and looks at SARA.

SARA
(annoyed)
What do you want?

GRACE
I think we're gonna go viral, brah.

SARA
Whatever, I've got to take care of something so just don't burn the place down.

GRACE
No promises.

GRACE winks and exits. SARA is confused but enters the back room.

SCENE 11B INT. BREAKROOM

SARA is met by TORI who is holding the package. ETHAN is sitting in a nearby chair.

SARA
I think Grace and Liam are planning something again.

TORI
Let 'em.

ETHAN
Wait, if you're back here, who's at the front desk?

SARA
No one. We're not getting business anyway.

TORI places the package on the counter and turns on the faucet.

CUT TO:

SCENE 11A INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - AFTERNOON

It is quiet in the lobby. There are a few customers spread out either waiting for the bathroom or the rest of their party to join. Suddenly, there is a loud BOOM from not far in the distance. SARA and ETHAN jump as the BOOM occurs again. Fireworks. People run to the windows to see the show as GRACE enters holding a sparkler. LIAM is not far behind, videotaping with the camera. Chaos has started in the lobby. One old, female customer calls the police on their phone. CAMERA POV: LIAM speaks into the camera:

LIAM

This is BY FAR the craziest prank we've pulled!

GRACE

Too bad our friends aren't here to see.

LIAM flips the camera around to show an empty front desk. He turns the camera back to himself and we see CHRISTIAN enter behind him. CHRISTIAN looks confused but hurries behind the counter and into the back room. He bumps shoulders with ETHAN and SARA who are exiting the back room. The three give each other dirty looks but continue their path. The door remains open.

SCENE 11B INT. BREAKROOM

CHRISTIAN enters the break room to see TORI turning off the faucet and closing up the briefcase.

CHRISTIAN

TORI! What did you do?

TORI

I got rid of it.

CHRISTIAN

You what?!

TORI

It was doing more harm than good. It could've gotten into the wrong hands and who knows what would've happened then.

CHRISTIAN
 (furious)
 You stupid-

He slaps her across the face. In that moment, everything in the lobby stops. The POLICE OFFICER who was handling GRACE and LIAM turns his head to see the abuse. She begins uncontrollably crying, SARA and ETHAN rush into the break room and to her side. TORI holds her face, sobbing.

CUT TO:

SCENE 12 EXT. MOVIE THEATER - LATE AFTERNOON

PAN around ETHAN, SARA, and TORI talking to the police, explaining what happened. TORI is leaning on ETHAN who has his arm around her. GRACE and LIAM are nearby. They are being scolded by another police officer. They both look ashamed until LIAM holds up the camera to show that he has been recording the whole time. On the street next to the theater, CHRISTIAN is being handcuffed and loaded into the police car. Before he gets in, he takes one last look at the trio. The trio looks closer than ever, even though TORI is a bit bloody and bruised. CHRISTIAN is carted off as the three watch.

SCENE 13 EXT. MOVIE THEATER - LATE AFTERNOON

The three walk out of the theater with their coats on, ready to go home. ETHAN carries his books in hand. SARA locks up and they begin walking down the street.

SARA
 Why don't we get some ice cream?

She points across the street.

TORI
 I think I'm just going to head home
 and ice
 (gestures to her face)
 This. Thanks, though.

ETHAN hugs her goodbye and whispers in her ear:

ETHAN
 Text me when you get home, okay?

TORI nods in agreement and continues walking down the street.

SARA
 Well, today's been a day.

ETHAN

I'm ready to sleep it off. For the first time, I'm not going home to study.

SARA

Still wanna get ice cream?

ETHAN

Yeah, let me put this in my car.

They walk a few steps to ETHAN's car, he opens the passengers door and a company card falls out. ETHAN places his things in the car as SARA picks it up. She skims the card out of curiosity.

SARA

What's this?

ETHAN

A card for my dad's business. I've been driving his car and there's a lot in here.

SARA turns the card over to see the same CC symbol as pictured on the briefcase. She goes cold.

SARA

(hesitating)

Mind if I keep it?

ETHAN

Uh, sure.

The two rejoin on the sidewalk and begin to cross the street. We stay with SARA as she begins to rethink the day and who is worthy of her trust.

FADE OUT.