

MODEL MINORITY

Pilot: "Better Off Ed"

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TEASER

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - DAY

Cars zip by on busy PCH near Malibu Canyon Road on another perfect Southern California day.

A light turns green and the crosswalk blinks on. But SARAH SHINN, late 20s, makes no motion to move. Looking Wednesday Addams in all black, Sarah stands at the crossroad, stricken. A bleak shadow in an otherwise sunny setting.

Which is why she doesn't catch the annoyed AUDI DRIVER waiting impatiently to turn.

AUDI DRIVER

... I said are you going or not?

Startled, Sarah looks at Audi Driver, then at the crossing sign: Only, the walk sign has turned into a blinking red hand. She steps back. Which incenses the driver even more.

AUDI DRIVER (CONT'D)

This is America. Learn English.

Audi Driver angrily peels away, because he can. And as the situation finally sinks in for Sarah --

SARAH

Get fucked and die. I was born here, asshole!

SMASH TO TITLE CARD: MODEL MINORITY

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

But of course, Audi's long gone. Sarah's shouting into the wind. And stricken again when she realizes what she said. Sarah looks at the time. Shit. She's going to be late.

INT. FANCY WESTSIDE RESTAURANT, KITCHEN - DAY

Sarah's coworkers regard her curiously as she walks through her workplace. Unsure what she's doing here on her day off.

Sarah distracts herself with purpose. Adjusts the week's schedule. Oversees various stages of meal prep. Smooths out her dress before knocking on the door of the --

INT. FANCY WESTSIDE RESTAURANT - OFFICES - CONTINUOUS

The door gives way to executive chef MARK, 37, quickly moving away from a HOT HOSTESS. No social distancing here.

SARAH

Surprise.

MARK (PRELAP)

I was just showing her around.

EXT. FANCY WESTSIDE RESTAURANT - LATER

Sure. Sarah joins Mark outside. Mark's blowing cigarette smoke her way. It bothers Sarah. But she pretends it doesn't.

MARK

What are you even doing here? I thought you were with your family.

SARAH

Just wanted to see a friendly face before going into enemy territory. Did you ask?

MARK

I didn't have time.

SARAH

The manager thing would have given me some cred at least. Proof that not all my choices were bad.

MARK

Everyone knows you're one already.

SARAH

Everyone *here*. The only thing that matters to my family is the title.

MARK

It's not a great time, Sarah.

SARAH

(it never is)

Yet you can still afford to hire new hostesses and show them around.

MARK

What do you want from me?

SARAH

To know if we're still doing this? If we're still us? The way things have been going, this and the Great British Bake-Off are the only things I have right now.

MARK

Of course we're still doing this.  
But the restaurant's not in a great  
place. I'm not going to be able to  
cover the deposit.

SARAH

I gave you everything I have.

MARK

What about your family ...?

SARAH

My family? Oh, yeah. That'll be ...  
"Mom, Dad, Father Richard: This is  
Mark. He's a chef! Yep, those are  
real tattoos and no, they're not  
just on his arms. I know because  
we're fucking. But you don't have  
to start on me whoring myself out  
and not amounting to anything,  
because we're moving in together!  
Can I have some money?"

MARK

Wow. Kind of wish I can be there to  
see this.

SARAH

(beat, then)  
Do you want to come?

MARK

I should work.

SARAH

Right.

ICYMI: This isn't the best relationship. But Sarah insists.

EXT./INT. SARAH'S CAMRY - LATER

Sarah lingers in her 2003 Camry, back seat stuffed with her  
things. Realizes she reeks of smoke. Digs out a Bath & Body  
Works mini hand sanitizer from her glove compartment: Wipes  
it over herself. Slams it back in. Something flutters down.

Sarah picks it up. There's something written on it: "S- Don't  
cry that you didn't get in. Smile that you don't have my  
raging debt. :) - E"

She flips it over: It's a photo of her brother, EDWARD SHINN.  
Beaming in the crimson gown of a Harvard Law School grad. The  
Model Son. Sarah sighs. Finally starts the engine to go ...

EXT. PORTER RANCH NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Establish affluent Porter Ranch looking down on the rest of the San Fernando Valley. At the top of the hill, a pair of walking buddies in visors and vests nudge each other as they stride past the SHINN HOME: the grandest house on the block.

INT. SHINN HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Inside, Ed's same face is smiling in a family photo on the wall. Mother GRACE, late 50s - always dignity - sits at her vanity as father JAE, 60, more nervous than his usual stoic self, finishes a call. [*Korean in italics*]

GRACE

*Was that the flowers again? I've told them a million times --*

JAE

*It's Sarah. She's going to meet us at the church.*

GRACE

*(scoffs)*

*Disappears for weeks on end, only to ask for money or to say she's running late. If she shows at all. What is she doing with her life?*

*(stares at her reflection)*

*When did I get so old?*

JAE

*(not looking)*

*You look fine.*

GRACE

*I can't be "fine." Not today. Not in front of everyone. God is punishing us.*

JAE

*No he's not.*

GRACE

*What do you know. You don't even go to church anymore. Everything was set. It was all taken care of.*

JAE

*We can't think about that. C'mon.*

GRACE

*(gets up, then)*

*Where's Jessica?*

PRELAP: Moaning/deep breathing

INT. VALLEY KOREAN CATHOLIC CHURCH - FAMILY BATHROOM - DAY

PETE, 32, perennial also-ran, and JESSICA, 30, quintessential Korean American beauty, are defiling the church bathroom. More on them later.

EXT. VALLEY KOREAN CATHOLIC CHURCH - PARKING LOT - LATER

Sarah gets a text alert as she pulls into the parking lot: It's her bank, warning her she is low on funds. *Ugh*. Add that to the dread of returning to her childhood church.

INT. VALLEY KOREAN CATHOLIC CHURCH - FAMILY BATHROOM - SAME

Jessica avoids Pete's adoring gaze as she gets dressed.

JESSICA  
Stop looking at me --

PETE  
I love you Jessica.

JESSICA  
I said stop.

Jessica sees a snag in her black lace dress.

JESSICA (CONT'D)  
Shit. This was a mistake.

PETE  
Or it was meant to be. You want this. I know you do.

Jessica smooths out her dress. Looks at Pete.

JESSICA  
It doesn't matter what I want.

EXT. VALLEY KOREAN CATHOLIC CHURCH - LATER

A Mercedes E-class sedan pulls up next to Sarah's sad Camry. Grace steps out. Clocks all the stuff in Sarah's car. Stops a GROUNDSKEEPER arranging a traditional wreath. Who bows deeply upon her arrival as a sign of respect.

GRACE  
*Is this what you call a flower arrangement?*

INT. VALLEY KOREAN CATHOLIC CHURCH - FAMILY BATHROOM - DAY

Pete watches Jessica check herself in the mirror: not a hair out of place. She readjusts her blinged-out wedding ring and walks out without so much as a second glance --

INT. VALLEY KOREAN CATHOLIC CHURCH - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

-- nearly running into Sarah in the hall.

JESSICA

Sarah!

SARAH

Jessica.

... Sarah catches Pete trying to slip away incognito.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Pete. Your shirt's untucked.

A beat as everyone tries to figure out how to proceed.

GRACE (O.S.)

*There you are. Sarah, why didn't you tell me Jessica was here?*

Jessica is grateful for the diversion.

JESSICA

*Uhmonim [mother in law]. I see this stressful time has not taken away from your beauty.*

GRACE

*Yours as well, our Jessica.*

*(sniffs at Sarah)*

*Can you do something about your sister-in-law? Shows up late, smells like ash tray ...*

SARAH

*Hello to you, too, Mom. I was going to freshen up, but the bathroom was taken. I don't know why --*

Grace looks at Jessica, whose eyes flash with panic.

GRACE

*(disgusted)*

*Don't make a scene, Sarah. Who brings up bathrooms in a church?*

SARAH

Oh, please, Mom. We're Korean.  
We're obsessed with poop.

GRACE

*Why can't you be like Jessica? Why  
do you always have to be so  
contrary. So vulgar?*

SARAH

Oh my God. I wasn't even --

GRACE

*And taking the Lord's name in vain!  
Father, control your daughter.*

But Jae's nervously looking at his phone, barely paying attention.

JAE

*Listen to your mother. We're  
starting soon.*

SARAH

(under her breath)  
You're all full of shit.

GRACE

*What did you say?*

SARAH

(louder)  
You heard me. More bathroom talk. I  
said you're all full of shit!

Just then, the double doors swing open and the packed church swivels and gasps at Sarah's "shit" sling.

The *Shit* still hangs in the air. Sarah, feeling exposed, turns toward Grace and Jessica for help. But as quickly as you can say "Korean smoothing mask," they've got their black lace veils on, faces the perfect pictures of grief.

Sarah, left hanging, turns back to the front of the church. Sees Ed's smiling picture and a coffin up by the altar. Sarah hangs her head in disgrace. Welcome to ED SHINN'S FUNERAL.

END OF TEASER



ACT ONE

INT. VALLEY KOREAN CATHOLIC CHURCH - CHAPEL - DAY

FATHER RICHARD, 30s, presides over the funeral mass as Ed smiles brightly in his funeral portrait: The goddamn personification of the Korean American dream, gone.

FATHER RICHARD

Ed was the guy every guy wanted to be. As a man of the cloth I'm supposed to be better than this, but God forgive me, I was so jealous of him growing up. He had it all: Smarts. Stanford undergrad. Obedient son: He wanted to go to Harvard Business School, but went to Harvard Law instead at his parents' request. A man of God: This guy was always praying, man. Think he would have been a priest, but he liked the girls too much.

The church members chuckle sadly at this.

FATHER RICHARD (CONT'D)

Turned out to be a blessing in disguise for me, because he definitely would have been a better priest than I was. That was just the kind of guy Ed was. And his parents never would have forgiven him if he didn't carry on the Shinn family line. Both with the family restaurant, and with his beautiful wife, Jessica. Ed's future was so bright. He had everything going for him. Which makes it so hard to fathom why God would take him now.

Grace stifles a sob. Sarah shifts uneasily.

FLASHBACK: INT. CORONER - LOBBY

Grace stifles a sob into her handkerchief as Jae stoically takes the charred remains of Ed's Rolex - engraved with his name on it - from POLICE OFFICER BRIAN ESTRADA, 30s. Who motions for an aside with a shocked Sarah, then --

ESTRADA

Maybe I should wait for his wife.

SARAH

Is something wrong, Officer?

ESTRADA

Was Ed unhappy in any way?

SARAH

No. I mean, we haven't seen each other in a while. But he was - no. I'm sorry, I don't get what you're -

ESTRADA

Your brother was the sole occupant of a vehicle in a single-car crash.  
(off Sarah's confusion)  
Lots of cars veer off Malibu Canyon Road for lots of different reasons. But the ones that are unintentional tend to survive.

SARAH

What are you saying? That he *wanted* this to happen? No. Ed wouldn't do that. He had the perfect life. He was perfect.

ESTRADA

We're still waiting for the full report. Maybe we should get the translator for your parents.

SARAH

It's OK. I'll tell them.

Estrada walks away. Sarah sees her parents drowning in grief.

JAE

*What did he say? What about Ed?*

SARAH

*It's nothing.*

BACK TO PRESENT - INT. CHURCH - SAME

Sarah sits uneasy as Father Richard continues --

FATHER RICHARD

Ed was always the guy to turn to if you needed help out of a bind. A couple bucks to tide you over. And he could always drink everyone under the table. But then he would text to make sure you got home safely. He was only 33. The same age Jesus was when he died.

(MORE)

FATHER RICHARD (CONT'D)

It seems unfair that he would be taken when his life was so laid out for years to come. Away from those he had loved so much.

Pan across the congregation at stoic Jae --

FATHER RICHARD (O.S.) (CONT'D)

His father, who moved here to create a better life for his family. Who he had gone into business with. A beautiful wife with whom he was about to start a family.

Grace sniffs she pats her daughter-in-law's model-like hand.

FATHER RICHARD (O.S.) (CONT'D)

A mother – grace personified – who now has to bury her prized first-born child.

Another stifled sob from Grace. Sarah waits for her name --

FATHER RICHARD (O.S.) (CONT'D)

His sister, and so many other friends who were like family.

Off Sarah: figures. A few rows back, Pete sits glumly, also firmly relegated to the friend zone.

FATHER RICHARD (CONT'D)

None of it makes sense. But we have to believe God had his reasons.

INT. VALLEY KOREAN CATHOLIC CHURCH – COMMUNION – LATER

Sarah absorbs the judgment of parishioners as she sits during communion service (meaning she's in a state of mortal sin). Then throws side eye at Jessica when she goes to receive.

FATHER RICHARD (O.S.)

Maybe God needed someone to look at his finances. Felt like he needed a better golfing buddy. Or someone who would just lend him an ear. But even as we struggle with how to go on without him in this life, let us take comfort that Ed has received his reward in the next. And that all will be revealed in His time.

Beat. Then Father Richard starts the whole homily again, this time in Korean.

INT. VALLEY KOREAN CATHOLIC CHURCH - HALL - LATER

Sarah looks on in horror as hordes of "mourning" churchgoers glom on the spread of Korean food laid out for the reception.

SARAH

Here, let me --

Sarah tries to arrange some order out of the chaos but is quickly brushed aside by the hangry crowd.

MINA (O.S.)

It's useless to try and fight them.

Sarah turns to see childhood friend MINA PARK, 30.

MINA (CONT'D)

Don't you remember? It's the first rule of being Korean: Never get between food and hungry Koreans.

SARAH

Oh shoot. I think I let my Korean membership expire.

MINA

You've been away too long, Sar-bear.

SARAH

I know, Mina. I'm sorry.

They hug wholeheartedly.

MINA

I heard you're like, catering the Golden Globes and stuff.

SARAH

I've served some Hollywood Foreign Press people, so yeah, pretty much.

A TEENAGE GIRL hugs Sarah from behind, sobbing.

YOUNG GIRL

Sarah unnie! I can't believe Ed Oppa is gone! He was like my favorite Sunday School teacher and camp counselor. Of all time.

MINA

(to Sarah)

We all loved him.

SARAH

He was the best person we knew.

AUNT (PRELAP)

*Too bad. First son of the first son. Now there's no one to carry on the name.*

INT. SHINN HOUSE - LATER

And we're into the real reception at the family home. Which also serves as a showcase of the Shinns' showy yet not ostentatious wealth.

Guests eye the Steinway grand, the works of art, the full-size aquarium, the overflowing money plant as they mingle.

We pop in on various conversations happening all over the house. On Sarah, serving food, swarmed by Tiger "AUNTS" --

AUNT

*Hurry up and get married so you can ease your mother's grief.*

-- We move to Jessica with a plate of food on the other side of the room, surrounded by more pushy "aunts" --

AUNT #1

*Keep eating. You have to keep your strength up. Support your in-laws.*

-- Pete with his friends EUGENE (the clown), MIKE (the leader), TOM (the frat boy), all 30s, conferring over beers --

TOM

What was he even doing in Malibu anyway?

MIKE

Knowing Ed, he was probably out rescuing puppies or something.

-- Back to Jessica, scarfing down her food --

AUNT #2

*Not too much. Your face already looks like it's gained weight.*

-- Back on Sarah and the Aunts --

AUNT

*Moms won't want you marrying their sons after you turn 30.*

-- Back on Pete and his crew --

EUGENE

You don't think there was another girl, do you?

-- Back to Jessica, who gets a once-over from a creepy UNCLE -

UNCLE

*Shame you didn't get pregnant.*

Jessica's face, which had been the picture of stoicism up until now, twitches ever so slightly at this. As she fiddles with her engagement ring --

FLASHBACK - INT. JESSICA'S MOM'S HOUSE - DAY

Jessica proudly shows off her engagement ring to her MOTHER, 60s, in a townhouse several tax brackets below the Shinns'.

JESSICA'S MOTHER

It's pretty.

JESSICA

Two carats, *Umma*. And I'm going to work for the company, and --

JESSICA'S MOTHER

*This is going to change everything.*

JESSICA

I know. I'll finally have a job with insurance. You can finally get your treatment.

JESSICA'S MOTHER

*That's not what I meant.*

JESSICA

Ed's a good guy.

JESSICA'S MOTHER

*Ed's not the one I worry about. You should know from your dad: You don't just marry the man. You marry the family. And the Shinns are not an easy family.*

JESSICA

We're not in Korea, *Umma*. It's not like that anymore. Mrs. Shinn hugged me: I'm gonna be a part of the business! Isn't this what you want?

JESSICA'S MOTHER  
*Do you love him?*

JESSICA  
 It's going to be fine. We're going  
 to be taken care of.

Back to PRESENT. Jessica still trapped with the uncle.

UNCLE  
*... after everything the family did  
 for you.*

Jessica sees Grace pat the seat next to her, inviting Jessica  
 to sit. It is not fine.

-- Back on Sarah, also not fine --

AUNT  
*After you turn 30 you'll be too old  
 to give them grandchildren.*

AUNT #3  
*Leave her alone, Theresa! Clearly,  
 Sarah isn't looking to get married.*

Sarah is surprised at this. Finally, someone who understands  
 her! As she looks at Aunt #3 gratefully --

AUNT #3 (CONT'D)  
*Not after you broke off your  
 engagement to that Berkeley  
 engineer.*

Aaaand the other shoe drops. Aunt Theresa nods sagely at Aunt  
 #3: *Of course.* They both turn to Sarah.

AUNT THERESA  
*At this point, daughters like you  
 are better off taking care of your  
 parents.*

AUNTS (TOGETHER)  
 You should move back in with your  
 family.

SARAH  
 No. Absolutely not.

AUNT THERESA  
 (aghast)  
 Don't be selfish. Haven't you  
 caused enough suffering?

AUNT #3  
 (aghast)  
 It's what any good daughter  
 would do.

This lands on Sarah. And so does the guilt.

INT. SHINN HOME - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Sarah, trying to be the good and dutiful daughter, sits next to Grace with some food. Tries to think of the perfect thing to comfort/get her mother to love her.

SARAH

You sure you don't want any? These wings still got it.

But like her math SATs, she comes up short. Awkward pause --

GRACE

*Go make sure your father isn't drinking too much, huh?*

Oh. OK. But as Sarah gets up to walk away -

GRACE (CONT'D)

*Jessica! Come here.*

Sarah turns to see her mom patting the very seat Sarah was just sitting in. Sarah's face burns.

-- On Jessica, who now has no choice.

-- Back on Pete and the guys. Who eye Jessica across the way.

EUGENE

A widow at 30. Talk about damaged goods.

TOM

(rueful)

She used to be so hot.

Pete abruptly takes off. The other guys exchange looks. Pete's been acting weird.

MIKE

His best friend just Paul Walkered to the bottom of Malibu Canyon. Give him a break.

TOM

Yeah, man. This shit is sad.

EUGENE

(beat, then)

When shit gets sad, do you think it turns into diarrhea? Because it's runny and stuff.



The guys shake their heads.

-- On Pete, edging his way through the crowd to Jae, drink in hand, as guests bow their condolences.

JAE

Peter. Your dad auto shop is okay?

PETE

Yes, sir. But I was wondering if Ed brought our restaurant plan to you?

A blank stare. Then Pete's forgotten altogether when MR. CHO walks in, flanked by side men. Imposing Mr. Cho is not someone who should be kept waiting. Or unattended. Jae immediately puts his drink down. Now it's his turn to bow.

JAE

*Sabonim [master].*

MR. CHO

*Mr. Shinn. I'm sorry for your loss.*

JAE

*Thank you. We are so honored by your presence. Please. Make yourself comfortable.*

MR. CHO

*(does once-over on house)  
What a comfortable life you've lived.*

Off Jae, nervous. Pete clocks this. Then looks upstairs.

INT. SHINN HOME - LATER

Sarah hides on the steps with a plate of food, texts Mark: "Save me" as Mina sits next to her.

MINA

Not really your scene, is it?

SARAH

Ed always worked the crowd so I could hide at things like this. Man, I miss him. Especially now that it's so clear how much I am not him.

MINA

Will says this is what's going to ruin us: That whole Confucian mind set where other people's evaluations matter more than what you think about yourself.

SARAH

Will doesn't sound very Korean.

MINA

First white guy who didn't ask if I knew that Jen Park he met that one time in Toledo.

SARAH

He doesn't have a brother, does he?

MINA

No, but Christina's still having her birthday at Arena on Thursday. You should come.

SARAH

Ugh, a Korean club? I'd rather be eaten alive by my relatives.

MINA

Oh, come on. You can earn that Korean membership back.

AUNT #2 (O.S.)

Sarah, come here!

UNCLE (O.S.)

You're out of toilet paper.

SARAH

(getting up)

Duty calls. Ha. Get it? "Doody."

MINA

You can always tell them no.

Sarah and Mina look at each other: Then start cracking up.

SARAH

Yeah, right.

(then)

I can't believe you don't know Jen Park.

-- Back on Grace and Jessica, in between guests.

Jessica sees Grace looking at the unraveled lace on her dress. Quickly puts a hand on Grace's.

JESSICA  
*Umohnim.* You've endured so much.

Grace puts her hand on Jessica, and Jessica relaxes: *It's working.* Then leans over to whisper --

GRACE  
*Guh-gee* [beggar].

Jessica's blood runs cold.

INT. SHINN HOME - UPSTAIRS - LATER

Sarah emerges from the bathroom, notices the light on in --

INT. SHINN HOME - JAE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sees Pete rifling through some files. He stands up, guilty.

SARAH  
 How dare you.

PETE  
 You're not going to believe me. But Ed and I had a proposal. For the restaurants. To cut costs. He was supposed to show it to your dad --

SARAH  
 Cut costs? What are you talking about? Everyone knows my family has the best *tong dak* in K-town.

PETE  
 If you'd been around you would've known the restaurants were in trouble. Sales were down. Ed was freaking out about it. He asked me to help.

This throws Sarah. FLASH to Officer Estrada who asked if Ed was troubled.

PETE (CONT'D)  
 There's a lot going on that you don't know about, Sarah.

SARAH  
 You're right. I don't believe you.

Sarah steps aside, waits for Pete to leave.

SARAH (CONT'D)

So maybe you shouldn't go sticking  
your thing in places it shouldn't  
be.

-- Back on: Jessica, politely excusing herself from Grace,  
horror registering on her face as she walks away.

-- Pete sees Jessica make a beeline for the hallway.

-- Jessica tries to enter the DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM. It's  
locked. Shaken, Jessica just looks for any way out. Ducks  
into the -

INT. SHINN HOME - LAUNDRY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jessica tries to get ahold of herself. But her ring gets  
caught on her already-mangled dress lace and it rips, and  
Jessica unravels along with it. She crumbles to the floor in  
tears - but whether they're for Ed or herself is unclear.

The door rattles. Jessica quickly dries her eyes --

JESSICA

Just a minute!

The door opens anyway. It's Pete, concerned.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Go away.

PETE

Not until you tell me what's wrong.

He puts his arm on her, and she pulls away. He does it again,  
and she can't help but to give in.

JESSICA

Everything.

He holds her tight. Jessica doesn't resist.

PETE

I'm gonna get us out of this.

INT. SHINN HOME - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Most of the guests have left. Sarah is with her cousin,  
NANCY, 37, trying to parlay the SLS camera she bought for her  
honeymoon into a career as a baby photographer.

SARAH

A family picture? Now? Here?

NANCY

Who knows the next time we'll all  
be together? You'll thank me later.

Sarah looks out at her family as they gather in various levels of distress: Jae, upset, red-faced from the drinking. Grace, countenance grim, is handed an envelope.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Can you find Jessica?

Off Sarah: *for fuck's sake.*

NANCY (CONT'D)

Just do it.

INT. SHINN HOME - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Sarah opens the laundry room door, revealing Jessica in a heap in the corner. Sarah intends to confront her -

... but as Jessica quickly stands up, sees her dress unraveled. Her spirit broken. Sarah knows that look. She takes off her cardigan and hands it to Jessica.

SARAH

Here. Tie this around your waist.

Jessica takes it gratefully. Then can't help but hug Sarah. Sarah, surprised, hugs her back despite herself.

SARAH (CONT'D)

This is such a shitshow, isn't it?

JESSICA

(crying)

I miss him. He always knew what to do.

SARAH

I miss him, too.

Jessica and Sarah share a moment. Both women bound to a world where they are accessories or marginalized altogether.

JESSICA

He envied you, you know.

SARAH

Me? I'm nothing.

JESSICA

You were free.

Sarah considers this. Is about to say something when a collective GASP comes from the other room. Sarah and Jessica hurry over ... to find Grace collapsed on the floor. People try and rush to her aid, but Jae motions them away.

JAE

It's OK. Just give her some space.

(then)

Sarah.

Off Sarah: He wants her to help? She kneels next to him.

SARAH

I'll call the doctor.

JAE

No. She'll be fine.

GRACE

*My little boy.*

SARAH

I know you don't trust American doctors, but if she's sick -

JAE

(sotto)

The death certificate came.

(off Sarah's confusion)

It says Ed committed suicide.

Off this bombshell --

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. SHINN HOME - OFFICE - LATER

The party's long over, and the living members of the Shinn clan retreat to their own corners to process the latest news. Jae stares out into space at his desk.

INT. SHINN HOME - ED'S BEDROOM - SAME

Sarah walks in on Ed's old life, undisturbed since he left for college, his absence keenly felt.

Looks at pictures of him palling around with his buddies, as a counselor at church camp, from prom. One of Sarah and him as kids, with his arm protectively around her. Though it was hard to see him beyond all his accolades and awards: Science. Speech club. Water polo. With his trumpet in the band.

Sarah gets a text back from Mark. "Hang in there" Then: "Found some cool apts but theyre \$\$\$"

INT. SHINN HOME - KITCHEN - LATER

Grace at the table, poring through documents. Even at home with reading glasses on she looks perfectly put together.

FLASHBACK to Ed also at the table, going through forms. Takes a sip of water and carefully puts it on a coaster.

ED

These are just your standard insurance forms.

GRACE

So you'll take care of it? I don't have to worry? You know how bad your dad is at this.

ED

You don't have to worry.

Grace beams. Her prized son.

BACK TO PRESENT: Grace sighs. Sarah comes downstairs.

SARAH

Where's Appa?

GRACE

(startled)

*What are you doing, skulking around like that? He went out. As usual.*





GRACE

*Imagine if this got out. What people would say. Go to the medical examiner's office. Tell them it was a mistake. This was an accident.*

SARAH

You can't just -- what if Oppa really did --

GRACE

*Is this how you want your brother to be remembered? After how well he treated you? You need money, right?  
(off Sarah's silence)  
We're all the family we have now.  
Let's take care of each other, hm?*

Grace nods at the document. Sarah considers. Maybe this will be the way she can get her mom's approval.

EXT. COUNTRY CLUB GOLF COURSE - DAY

THWACK. Pete and Father Richard watch Pete's golf ball shank into the bunker.

PETE

God dammit. Sorry.

FATHER RICHARD

Hell if I'm to judge.

PETE

Or as Ed would have said it, Shanks for nothing.

FATHER RICHARD

(beat, then)

Do you ever talk to Jessica?

PETE

What? No. I mean. Not more than usual. The usual amount. Why?

FATHER RICHARD

See how she's doing. And, the timing sucks, but Ed was overseeing funding for the new annex. We were supposed to start construction next week. Now half the money is gone.

PETE

Knowing Ed he probably has it stashed in different places like some squirrel.

FATHER RICHARD

You're probably right. For a guy who had his hands in everything, Ed sure kept things close to the vest.

INT. MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE - DAY

Sarah is getting nowhere with the CLERK on duty.

SARAH

Maybe his car computer malfunctioned, or was hacked -- I've read those things happen.

CLERK

I can't speak to report details --

SARAH

I'm just saying he would never do this.

CLERK

I'm sorry. But unless you have documented evidence we cannot re-open this investigation.

Sarah turns away, frustrated. Almost runs into Officer Estrada from Act One.

ESTRADA

I know you.

INT. PRECINCT - BULLPEN - LATER

Officer Estrada sits with Sarah to explain the findings.

SARAH

Okay, so the traffic cameras show nothing. What about the car's computer system?

ESTRADA

Tesla's safety board said the system's computer performed as designed. But while drivers usually slow down to take the curb, the logs showed your brother was actually speeding toward it.

SARAH

He must have been distracted. I know we're not supposed to phone and drive, but ...

ESTRADA

There were no records of a phone call taking place at the time.

SARAH

He could have been off his bluetooth. Or texting. Maybe if we check his cell phone records -- There's no way he could commit suicide. That's like so AD.

ESTRADA

AD?

SARAH

Asian Disgrace. Reflecting badly on family. For Koreans, that's the worst thing you can be. Ed was the opposite of that. He was golden. The one who made everything better.

ESTRADA

Sounds like a lot to take on.

SARAH

Ed could handle it. He also knew what something like this would do to our parents.

ESTRADA

Your family means a lot to you. I can tell.

SARAH

No they don't.

ESTRADA

But sometimes the hardest thing for families is to admit something was wrong in the first place.

INT. SHINN HOUSE - SARAH'S BEDROOM - LATER

Sarah is at her computer looking at apartments for rent. Beat. Googles "how to look up cell phone records." Sees "contact your cell phone provider" and "check your bill online."

Beat. Sarah pulls up Facebook. Scrolls through Jessica's social media page. Not even sure what she's looking for.

But of course, Jessica on social media is perfectly curated picture of grief. Filled with friends posting condolences. Jessica's last post was of her and Ed looking out into the sunset. They really look like the perfect couple.

Sarah goes deep in her social media dive. Sees a post where Jessica compliments Ed on his cooking skills.

FLASHBACK - EXT. CHICKEN KITCHEN RESTAURANT - DAY

Jae yells after YOUNG SARAH as she chases YOUNG ED past a storefront with a banner announcing: "NEW CHICKEN KITCHEN: OPENING SOON!" The soon-to-be-opened second restaurant.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

Jae is working in the office while Young Sarah is at the desk, examining the new menus. Jae's head is still down --

JAE  
*Ed, come look at these figures.*  
 (looks up)  
*Where's your brother?*

Jae goes out into the KITCHEN to see Ed in an apron "fencing" with tongs with COOK CARLOS. A tasty batch of chicken wings beside them.

Sarah watches as Jae quickly, silently grabs the tongs from Ed and smacks him on the head with it.

JAE (CONT'D)  
*How many times do I have to tell you. Where are you supposed to be?*

YOUNG ED  
 In the office.

Jae hands the tongs to Sarah. Looks at Carlos --

JAE  
 Carlos. You teach.

-- and hustles Ed into the office. But as soon as they're out of the picture, Carlos ignores Sarah and goes back to work.

PRESENT DAY - INT. SHINN HOUSE - SARAH'S BEDROOM - LATER

Sarah looks at the comments from Jessica's post. The guys chide Ed for his cooking skills, say they can lend him their mom's aprons, tell him to give up his man card, etc. Archaic.

Sarah hovers her mouse over the "thumbs up" on every emasculating comment. Jessica has "liked" every one of them.

INT. JESSICA'S MOM'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

An iPhone buzzes. Jessica is back in her old bed, trying to burrow to a time she can never go back to. Her phone buzzes again. She checks her screen: Another missed call from Pete.

Jessica burrows deeper, unwilling to face the world.

Until she hears the refrigerator door shut in the kitchen.

INT. JESSICA'S MOM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Jessica finds her mother cutting up an insane amount of fruit into perfect edible slices.

JESSICA

You're supposed to be resting.

Jessica brings her a chair. There's real love between them.

JESSICA'S MOTHER

*This is to take to your in-laws when you go back. As an apology for my not being at the funeral.*

JESSICA

Umma --

JESSICA'S MOTHER

*Jessica-ya. You knew the obligations. They're your family now. Their business is your business.*

JESSICA

It's not like they have me doing anything. I never should have stopped working at the store.

JESSICA'S MOTHER

*I wouldn't have my treatment without them.*

Jessica blinks back tears. She knows her mother's right, but -

JESSICA

I wish we had our own money. Our own insurance. It wasn't supposed to be this way.

JESSICA'S MOTHER

*What can we do? This is how things  
are now.*

Jessica's phone buzzes again and Jessica quickly turns it over, hoping her mother didn't see the Caller ID say Pete. Her mother puts a hand on hers. Grips it tight.

JESSICA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

*You're an adult. It's time to stop  
this nonsense. Go back where you  
belong.*

INT. PETE'S APARTMENT - SAME

A modest one-bedroom rental in Koreatown. Pete hangs up the phone, frustrated that Jessica won't pick up. Decides he's not going to wait around any longer.

INT. SHINN RESIDENCE - OFFICE - DAY

Jae is also on the phone, a thread away from snapping.

JAE

*No. I don't have the payment  
because there was no deal. Do you  
hear me? No deal!*

Jae hangs up in frustration, then palms a pack of Hwatu cards (small laminated Korean playing cards with pictures on them, used to play a gambling game called Go-Stop) on his desk.

GRACE (O.C.)

*Husband?*

Grace sees Jae jump as she appears at the door. Quickly hiding the cards away in his drawer.

JAE

*Damn cruise operator. Trying to get  
our deposit back.*

GRACE

*I'm going to tell Maria to take the  
leftovers when she comes to clean.  
Unless you want some.*

JAE

*No.*

GRACE

*Maybe we should just sell.*

JAE

*What?*

GRACE

*What are we going to do, run it until we die?*

*(then)*

*I don't have the heart for it anymore. You never did. If we cut our losses now we can start new. Go on the cruise. Back to Korea.*

JAE

*Everything is tied up in the restaurants. We can't do anything until we get the insurance payment and Ed's cash reserve. And what about Sarah?*

GRACE

*What about Sarah? Did you see her come in with all those bags, like a homeless person? This is what happens when you raise kids in America. They get ideas for themselves. Then it all goes wrong.*

Ed's death falls on them once more.

GRACE (CONT'D)

*We didn't go in on that third restaurant, did we?*

JAE

*Of course not. You said not to.*

GRACE

*At least we did one thing right.*

Jae picks up his keys to leave.

GRACE (CONT'D)

*Now where are you going?*

Jae walks away, and Grace looks after him. Then catches her reflection in a mirror. *This is no way to look.* Immediately straightens up.

INT. SHINN HOME - SARAH'S ROOM - SAME

From her room, Sarah's heard the whole exchange.

EXT./INT. JAE'S CAR - NIGHT

Jae speeds out of Porter Ranch and into the bright lights of Los Angeles.

FLASHBACK: EXT. STOREFRONT - DAY

Ed and Jae check out the property for lease.

JAE

Not even Mr. Noh has this many shops --

ED

I've crunched the numbers. We're going to do ten times the business of Mr. Noh's Noodles. You and Umma will never have to work again.

Jae smiles. He likes the sound of that.

ED (CONT'D)

But it is more than we budgeted.

JAE

*Higher price, higher reward, right? I'll take care of the money.*

ED

Appa, are you sure? I don't want what happened last time -

JAE

*Listen to your father. He knows what's best. Look out, Mr. Noh. With you on board, Chicken Kitchen is a true family business.*

Ed nods. Off Jae, proud.

PRESENT DAY: Jae increases his grip on the steering wheel as he speeds to his destination.

EXT. STOREFRONT - LATER

Jae drives up to the same storefront, and his worst fears revealed. A new sign on top of the property, announcing the building has been leased.

END OF ACT TWO



ACT THREE

INT. SHINN HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Grace has her black veil on, clutching her rosary beads and her Magnificat daily prayer book (Korean language edition), her mouth moving fervently in devout prayer.

INT. INSURANCE COMPANY - DAY

Jae sits across from an INSURANCE AGENT.

AGENT

I'm so sorry for your loss, Mr. Shinn. But your son did the right thing, taking out life insurance.

JAE

He was a good son.

AGENT

We're going to get this process started right away. Help put that to ease at least.

(types on computer)

Says here he took out a policy for, wow, a very good son: Ten million.

Jae breathes a sigh of relief.

EXT. ED'S HOME - DAY

Sarah pulls up to a very nice, upwardly mobile Hancock Park-adjacent condo. Ed's house. Sarah rings the doorbell a couple times. No one answers. She looks around. Takes out a hairpin and picks the lock. The door opens --

SARAH

Jessica?

PRELAP: An elevator door ding.

INT. SHINN CITY CORPORATION - DAY

The elevator doors open to a lobby announcing SHINN CITY CORPORATION headquarters. Home of L.A.'s famous Chicken Kitchen! Jessica emerges in all black, sunglasses on: mourning chic, startling the RECEPTIONIST, 20s, in the midst of snapping her latest IG story.

RECEPTIONIST

Unni! What are you doing here?

JESSICA  
I brought fruit.

INT. ED'S HOUSE - FOYER - LATER

Sarah wanders the halls, trying to get a sense of who her brother was before he left her behind. But the home looks barely lived in. No pictures besides the standard wedding photo of him and Jessica.

INT. SHINN HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - LATER

Prayers done, Grace opens her eyes. Looks up at a framed picture of Ed smiling down at her.

INT. SHINN CITY CORPORATION - DAY

Jessica walks in on MANAGER MR. BAE, 50s, toothpick in mouth and feet up on the desk, playing Korean game *baduk* online.

MR. BAE  
Jessica-shi. We didn't think you'd be back so soon.

JESSICA  
Aren't there deliveries coming in today? Inventory to go through?

MR. BAE  
That's Mr. Shinn's job.

JESSICA  
I'm part of the company, too. Let me help take care of my husband's affairs.

MR. BAE  
Don't be silly. That's for me and your father-in-law. You should really be at home.

Mr. Bae takes the toothpick from his mouth to spear a piece of fruit from Jessica's plate. Stuffs it into his face.

INT. SHINN HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - SAME

At home, Grace takes down the picture of Ed. Checks her reflection in the glass. Then SMASHES the picture to the ground. Glass shattering everywhere.

INT. INSURANCE COMPANY - LATER

Jae waits across from the Agent, who now looks concerned --

AGENT

Oh.

(off Jae's concern)

The death certificate -- there's a clause that states no death benefit will be paid if the insured commits suicide within two years of taking out a policy. This was taken out ... 23 months ago.

JAE

No. That was a mistake. It was an accident.

The agent gets on the phone with her supervisor.

CUT TO:

AGENT

(on phone)

23 months, 17 days. So there's no way ...

The agent looks at Jae and shakes her head sadly. Off Jae, panicking --

SARAH (PRELAP)

Wait. Appa. What's going on?

INT. ED'S HOME - LATER

Sarah is on the phone as she sifts through Ed's mail. No phone bill in sight.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. BANK - SAME

Jae, waiting for a teller.

JAE

It has to be an accident. Or the insurance won't pay. And then we can't --

SARAH

Does this have to do with the restaurants? Appa, are we okay?

A TELLER approaches Jae.

JAE

Just make sure it's an accident.

-- and hangs up. But now Sarah's not so sure.

INT. SHINN HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - LATER

Grace stares at her son's broken image. Then starts to pick through the broken glass. Reveals an envelope filled with crisp \$100 bills. And a key.

INT. ED'S HOME - OFFICE - LATER

Sarah roots through Ed's desk, unearths some papers about a ... food truck?

FLASH to her conversation with Pete. She puts the papers aside. Finds a random postcard of a beach locale which catches her eye. She flips it over. Just his address and the letter "C". She adds it to her bag.

Her eyes fall on a pack of Hwatu playing cards; it's like a bad omen. And then on Ed's computer.

Sarah tries to open Ed's computer. Of course, the screen is locked. Tries a couple passwords. "Jessica." "Tesla." "Harvard Law." "HarvardLawCumLaude." "imaperfectpersonsoopensaysme." Nothing works.

INT. BANK - LATER

Jae is not getting anywhere with the BANK TELLER.

JAE

How could the account be closed?  
What about the money? At least  
fifteen thousand.

TELLER

I'm not at liberty to disclose the  
details, sir.

JAE

The account was under both names.

TELLER

It looks like your name was taken  
off prior to its closing.

JAE

That's impossible. When was this?

TELLER

Again, I'm not at liberty to say.

INT. ED'S HOME - OFFICE - LATER

Sarah's still going through Ed's office when she hears the FRONT DOOR opens. Crap.

She runs to the BEDROOM, where Sarah then sees it: A couch pulled out to a bed. Were Ed and Jessica sleeping in separate beds? And then she hears the voice.

PETE (O.S.)

Jessica?

INT. ED'S HOME - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

Pete tenses when he sees Sarah.

PETE

Let me explain --  
(sees file in her hand)  
You found the proposal.

SARAH

You're sick. You know that?

PETE

I wasn't --

SARAH

My brother's dead not three days  
and you're coming to his house to  
fuck his wife.

PETE

I wasn't --

SARAH

Calling yourselves good Catholics.  
Good friends. This is why he killed  
himself.

This hits Pete deeply.

PETE

I thought it was an accident.

SARAH

And now his blood is on your hands.

PETE

It's not what you think, Sarah.

SARAH

They were sleeping in different beds! God. How do you live with yourself?

PETE

Ed was gay, Sarah.

SARAH

Shut up.

PETE

This marriage. This life. Was all a way to hide who he really was.

SARAH

I said shut up. You want my brother's life so badly you'd stoop so low to drag his name through the mud -

PETE

You're so content to stay in his shadow you'd rather turn a blind eye than face the truth. Wake up.

Pete makes another move for the file. But Sarah holds onto it and leaves.

FLASHBACK - EXT. SHINN HOME - DAY

A young Sarah returns home from school in triumph - clutching her violin in one hand, and a piece of sheet music with the SOLO highlighted in the other.

On her way in, she passes Carlos the cook leaving. Which is weird. But if he's upset, she barely registers it.

YOUNG SARAH

Carlos! What are you doing here?

But Carlos hurries by without a word.

Okayyy. Whatevs. Sarah makes a beeline into the --

INT. SHINN HOME - FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Where Sarah proudly yells out her accomplishment.

YOUNG SARAH

I got the solo!

No answer.

INT. SHINN HOME - UPSTAIRS - LATER

Sarah goes up to her room. Where is everyone? Finally sees Jae coming out of the master bedroom. It's a little weird to see him home during the day, but whatever. She holds up her sheet music.

YOUNG SARAH

Appa! Look!

But Jae looks right through her. Puts his hand on her head.

GRACE

Not now, Sarah.

Sarah watches as Jae joins Grace in Ed's room, where Ed is sitting on a mused bed, upset, and close the door behind them with a click ...

PRESENT DAY - INT. SHINN HOME - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - LATER

... bringing Sarah back to present day, in the same place, staring at her brother's old room from the hallway.

She gets a text from Mark: "The place looks great. Let's do this."

Sarah hears the front door open.

GRACE (O.S.)

Sarah-ya!

INT. SHINN HOME - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Sarah sits with her mom. Trying to see what she knew.

GRACE

*Eddie must have been on his work phone then. Ask Mr. Bae.*

SARAH

Umma, there's no proof --

GRACE

*Says who? The Mexican?*

SARAH

His name is Brian Estrada. And he's a police officer.

GRACE

*I don't trust the police. Where were they during the L.A. Riots?*

SARAH

Ugh, Mom. When are you going to stop using the L.A. Riots?

GRACE

Why are you always take other side.

SARAH

Umma, I'm not - I'm just trying to understand. That time Oppa went away in high school. Was that for science camp?

GRACE

*What are you talking about?*

SARAH

Did Ed really love Jessica? Was he happy?

GRACE

*Why does it matter if they were happy? They were married.*

SARAH

But if --

GRACE

*I'm sick of this. Here.*

Grace slides over an envelope. Sarah opens it to find a stack of \$100 bills.

SARAH

But I thought we didn't have --

GRACE

*I try to include you in the family. But all you do is second-guess and criticize. Nothing we do is right. So go. Live your own life. That's what you want, isn't it?*

Suddenly Sarah doesn't know what she wants anymore.

END OF ACT THREE



ACT FOUR

INT. SHINN HOME - SARAH'S ROOM - DAY

Sarah processes all of this. She stares at the money. Then at Mark's latest text: "R we still doing this?"

Beat. She gets up. Grabs the money.

INT. SHINN CITY CORPORATION - OFFICE - DAY

A helpless Jessica at her desk with nothing to do. Googles "how to deal with death of spouse." Also coming up as search phrases: "how to deal with in laws after death of spouse" and "how to deal with toxic in laws after death of spouse"

She clicks on the last one when the Receptionist sounds the intercom:

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)  
Unni, there's a call for you.

INT. BANK - DAY

Sarah stands at the window of a BANK TELLER.

SARAH  
Look. The address on my driver's license matches the one on the account. I just need to know how much is in it. You can't even give me a ballpark amount?

TELLER  
Your name isn't on the account.

SARAH  
I shouldn't have been taken off in the first place. It's a family business. I'm part of the family.

TELLER  
Not the business. I'm sorry. But unless your name is Jae, Ed or Jessica Shinn --

SARAH  
Jessica? When was she added?

The teller can't say. But Sarah's heard enough.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
The money's all going to her.

INT. SHINN CITY CORPORATION - OFFICE - LATER

Jessica is on the phone.

JESSICA

But I didn't ... He put the  
accounts in my name? ... All the -  
how many accounts are we talking  
about here? ... Wait. How much? --

Jessica hangs up. Processes all of this. Does that mean --

Hears Mr. Bae trying to prevent someone from coming in.

MR. BAE (O.S.)

I told you --

PETE (O.S.)

I know he's not here. If I can just--

Jessica starts at the sound of Pete's voice.

INT. SHINN CITY CORPORATION - LOBBY - SAME

Pete grows increasingly frustrated at Mr. Bae.

MR. BAE

Mr. Shinn never say anything about  
this.

PETE

Because he never had a chance to  
look it over. I'm telling you. This  
could help the company.

MR. BAE

*What you know about business?  
You're just the son of a mechanic.  
Who got arrested for drugs.*

PETE

That was one time in high school. I  
have an MBA now. Ed and I ...

MR. BAE

Ed not here anymore. Whatever you  
had with him ... no more.

Pete resists, but Mr. Bae starts to push his weight. Pete  
spots Jessica. Hopeful --

PETE

She knows. Tell him, Jessica.

Mr. Bae looks at Jessica questioningly. Jessica looks away.  
Mr. Bae ushers Pete along --

MR. BAE  
*She knows better than to talk to  
you.*

PETE  
(betrayed, shrugs him off)  
I can find my own way out.

Off Jessica, feeling terrible. But then her phone pings.

MAN'S VOICE (PRELAP)  
*We've given you more than enough  
time.*

INT. SHINN HOME - OFFICE - LATER

Jae is on the phone; hurriedly opens the safe. Flips through envelopes looking for cash.

JAE  
*I've got the money here. I'll get  
the payment to you, no problem.*

It's not nearly enough. Anxious, desperate, Jae's eyes fall on his pack of Hwatu playing cards. And Ed's Rolex.

INT. SOMISOMI ICE CREAM PARLOR - LATER

Sarah holds up her ice cream in a fish-shaped cones just so, so Mina can take a photo for the 'Gram.

MINA  
Wait, what?

SARAH  
(sotto)  
She married Ed so she could get our  
money. And then drove him to kill  
himself so she could get his.

MINA  
Is she even capable of doing  
something like that? I know  
Jessica's not your favorite person,  
but I could have sworn she and Ed  
were in love.

Sarah's not ready to admit Ed's truth just yet.

SARAH  
We see what we want to see.

MINA

So what're you going to do?

SARAH

Confront her. As soon as I find out where she is.

MINA

I know where she is. Or will be.  
(off Sarah's "tell me")  
Christina's birthday?

SARAH

Oh no.

PRELAP: Electronic Dance Music.

INT. ARENA KTOWN CLUB - NIGHT

EDM pulsing. Waiters dressed in black bringing bottle service to booths of guys or girls eyeing each other in the cloak of night. Smokers everywhere (forget it, Jake, it's Koreatown).

Jessica and friend ANGELA arrive and survey the scene.

JESSICA

I shouldn't be here.

ANGELA

You're being a good friend. This will help get your mind off things.

A waiter eyes them up and down as they approach.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

We're here for Batman.

The waiter nods; motions for them to follow.

JESSICA

Aren't we getting a little old for this?

ANGELA

You only turn 30 once. What else are we going to do.

INT. ARENA KTOWN CLUB - ANOTHER BOOTH - LATER

On the other side of the club, Eugene returns from the men's room to rejoin Pete, Tom, and Mike at a booth.

EUGENE

Jessica's here, guys.

Tom pours another round of Crown Royal shots as Pete does his best to pretend he wasn't burned by the love of his life.

TOM

She showed up? That's hardcore.  
 (raises his glass)  
 To Ed.

THE GUYS

To Ed.

MIKE

Best guy we knew.

INT. OB BEAR CAFÉ - NIGHT

Another dark smoky Koreatown cavern: More food, less EDM.

Jae, hat in proverbial hand, passes by the booths of mostly older men, their speaking volume commensurate to the amount of empty bottles of Chamisul soju and Hite beer on the table.

Jae reaches the BACK ROOM, where he finds Mr. Cho - the same guy from the reception - presiding over a large table like a K-town mafia don.

JAE

(bowing deeply)  
*Mr. Cho. Thank you for agreeing to see me on such short notice.*

MR. CHO

*My table is always open, Mr. Shinn. Though I didn't think it would be so soon.*

EXT. ARENA KTOWN CLUB - LATER

Sarah, dressed sloppily in black, meets resistance from the hulking BOUNCER at the front door.

SARAH

C'mon. I just need to go in and talk to someone. I'm a girl, aren't I? That alone should get me in.

Bouncer frowns. Points at her up and down and shakes his head. Sarah's going nowhere fast.

MINA (O.S.)

She's with me.

Mina steps forward, looking like a radiant K-town beauty out for a night on the town. Bouncer still frowns at Sarah, but lets them both in. Mina looks at Sarah: *I told you so.*

MINA (CONT'D)

If you don't look the part you  
can't play the game.

This lands on Sarah.

SARAH

Your arms do look hot in that top.

INT. ARENA KTOWN CLUB - CONTINUOUS

Sarah stops when she's hit with the wall of smoke and sheeple. Sees waiters "dragging" giggly drunk women to guys' tables, where they're plied with shots and fed sliced fruit (it's called "booking," and it's for real).

SARAH

Oh, the humanity.

INT. ARENA KTOWN CLUB - GUYS' BOOTH

Pete and the guys are well on their way to getting soused. Another \$300 bottle of Crown Royal and a plate of fruit arrives at the table. Pete gulps at the cost. But the other guys barely blink at the price. Besides, they're on a roll --

TOM

You know what always got me? The  
way he used to post up when we  
played pick-up basketball.

EUGENE

I hated how he always had to have  
final say on everything. Because  
he's a lawyer.

TOM

Not just any lawyer.

EUGENE/TOM

Harvard Law.

PETE

C'mon, guys.

MIKE

And that damn Tesla. Drove it  
around like he was goddamn Jesus  
taking the wheel.

The guys all nod. Damn Tesla. Damn Jesus. Damn Ed.

INT. OB BEAR - LATER

Jae continues to explain his situation to Mr. Cho.

JAE

*It's Mrs. Shinn, really. She got so used to living a certain lifestyle. I don't want to make her more upset than she is. This was supposed to be a sure deal. Ed was supposed to recoup the money. This was my son's dream. I cannot let it be in vain.*

Mr. Cho palms the Hwatu cards. Levels his gaze at Jae.

MR. CHO

*Fulfilling our obligations to the dead is important, Mr. Shinn. But are you sure you want back into this world? The conditions have changed since the last time.*

Jae nods. This is why he is here, after all. Mr. Cho eyes the Rolex in Jae's hand.

MR. CHO (CONT'D)

*This time you won't have your prized son to bail you out.*

Jae gulps ...

INT. ARENA KTOWN - LATER

Techno music is on blast, as Sarah searches for Jessica. Sarah watches a WAITER (nametag reads: SUPERMAN) drag CLUBBER JULIE WHANG to a guys' table. Only, her strappy heels make it hard to keep pace.

CLUBBER WHANG

Stop!

Sarah has seen enough. Grabs Clubber Whang away.

SUPERMAN/CLUBBER WHANG

Hey! What are you doing?

SARAH

She said no, weenus!  
(to Clubber Whang)  
Look.

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

Getting dragged to a random group of guys and force-fed fruit and shots is archaic and misogynist and prostitution. You don't have to do this. You can say no.

CLUBBER WHANG

Bitch, you think I don't know that? You just lost me some free drinks.

Clubber Whang is about to say more. But then New Order's "Bizarre Love Triangle" -- a.k.a. the Ktown club rally anthem -- starts up its synth pop intro.

An excited squeal ripples through the crowd. Clubber Whang starts jumping up and down in her strappy heels and raises her off-the-shoulder top-clad arm in a --

CLUBBER WHANG (CONT'D)

Wooooo! Sunny! It's our song!

- Jessica takes advantage of the bum-rushing crowd to make her exit. Is almost at the door when someone grabs her arm.

SARAH

Not so fast.

- Back at Pete's table: All the guys are sloppy drunk at this point.

MIKE

I would say this to his face: Ed could be a real bitch.

PETE

You guys don't know what you're talking about.

MIKE

Naw, man. That's you. You're the one who wanted to be him so bad.

TOM

You were so far up his ass you didn't know where his *donkko* (asshole) ended and you began.

EUGENE

Maybe he was gay for him.

TOM

No. They were gay for each other.



PETE  
I said shut up!

Throws a drunken punch.

INTERCUT WITH:

Jessica and Sarah, who sense agitation in the already raucous crowd.

SARAH  
You knew he was gay, and you married him anyway.  
(off Jessica's shock)  
What did you do, shame him into killing himself so you can get all his money? His blood is on your ombre gel manicured hands.

JESSICA  
I shouldn't have gone through with the wedding. I almost called it off. But your mom insisted.

Now it's Sarah's turn to be incredulous. Chaka Demus & Pliers' "Murder She Wrote" starts up.

- Thanks to his UCSD Lambda frat days, Tom's got 40 pounds on Pete, and easily holds him at bay. But Pete is on a tear --

PETE  
Ed was better than any of you could ever hope to be.

- Back on Sarah and Jessica.

SARAH  
My mom?

JESSICA  
She was convinced it was just a quirk that needed to be fixed. She arranged everything.

Sarah FLASHES to her mom in the kitchen: *"Who cares if they were happy? They were married."*

JESSICA (CONT'D)  
I bought into it, too. He was Ed. He was going to take care of me. But it was like the more he tried to be perfect, the more he realized he couldn't.

- Back on Pete and Tom --

PETE

You guys don't know what it's like.  
You've never had to struggle.

TOM

Ed? Struggle? He's just a pansy-ass  
mama's boy.

Pete takes another swing. Tom's fed up with this. Clocks him  
in the face and Pete falls. Tom stands over him.

TOM (CONT'D)

You know what your problem is? You  
don't know your place.

Suddenly, from the crowd -

CLUBBER 2

The ABC is here!

The music stops and the crowd quickly starts to disperse as  
Alcohol and Beverage Control agents force their way in.

TOM

Let's go.

Tom steps over Pete as everyone makes their way out. As the  
house lights go on, we see a girl passed out on a booth. Guys  
red-faced with the Asian glow. A guy telling his sobbing,  
mascara-streamed girlfriend, "You're better than this."

INT. SARAH'S CAMRY - LATER

Sarah is on the phone with Mark as she speeds from the club.

MARK (O.S.)

I've been trying to reach you.

SARAH

So we're doing this, right? Getting  
out of here? Because everything is  
bullshit. And I have the money --

MARK (O.S.)

Awesome. Yeah, let's blow this  
joint.

SARAH

Wait, Mark. Are you being serious  
right now? Because I am ready to  
take off. Like right now.

MARK

Totally. Let's start a new life.

SARAH

I swear, you are the only person in my life who's keeping it real.

MARK (O.S.)

You too, babe. And once this sexual harassment thing blows over --

SARAH

Wait. What sexual harassment thing.

MARK (O.S.)

Didn't you get my messages?

SARAH

(growing horror)

What messages? Is someone suing you for sexual harassment?

MARK (O.S.)

It's just a complaint. Totally her word against mine - but of course I'm the one who got suspended. Like, how was I supposed to know she was under 21? But because it happened at the restaurant --

SARAH

It happened at the restaurant --

MARK (O.S.)

And I was technically the one in charge, so. It's total #MeToo witch hunt. Lawyers even said it was going to blow over. So should I meet you at your place?

SARAH

No.

INT. SHINN HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

A squeal of tires onto the driveway wakes Grace up from her sleep. She looks at the time: 2:13 am. Also: No Jae.

She looks outside - sees Sarah's car parked halfway on the lawn. Grace puts on her robe and heads downstairs.

INT. SHINN HOME - ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

Grace meets Sarah as she comes in with a vengeance, reeking of smoke and bad juju.

SARAH

This is your fault.

GRACE

*What is the meaning of this?  
Clanging in at all hours of the  
night --*

SARAH

Oh, right. I should keep quiet "for the good of the family." Because "we're all we've got." Right?

GRACE

*Go to bed. You're a mess.*

SARAH

Yeah I am. Did you know I was dating a married man? He's basically a red flag with a penis. But I stuck with it. Was even going to move in with him - well, until he got dinged for the sexual harassment. You know why? Because I knew I was never going to be good enough. So why even bother trying?

GRACE

*You were dating a married man?!*

SARAH

Except I did care. I wanted you to be proud of me. Just once look at me the way you looked at Ed. Until I realized that was a lie, too.

GRACE

*What is this nonsense.*

SARAH

You made Ed marry Jessica. To hide the fact that he was gay.

GRACE

Did that *guhgee* tell you that?

SARAH

You were pulling the strings to make Ed perfect so it wouldn't look badly on you. And made him miserable.

GRACE

*That slut is a poison to our family.*

SARAH

It's always someone else's fault, isn't it. But the cat's out the bag, Moms. It is all on you. Ed was too good to go against you, but I'm not. I'm done.

Sarah throws the money at her mother's face. This is the ultimate AD.

GRACE

*You little --*

SARAH

And you know what? That death certificate was right: Ed did kill himself. Because it's the only way he could finally get away from you.

Grace slaps Sarah.

GRACE

*Ungrateful shit.*

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. LOS ANGELES - DAY

Early morning in the city. That odd hour when the last of the K-town partiers overlap with the early work shift.

INT. SHINN HOME - SARAH'S ROOM - DAY

Sarah, having barely slept, turns over in her bed. Wondering if she did the right thing. Her eyes fall on Pete's proposal. She takes a glance. There might be something to this ...

INT. HODORI RESTAURANT - DAY

A 24-hour joint that's been feeding the K-town club crowd since 1989. Pete is alone, nursing his bloody lip and bruised ego with a hot towel and a plate of *omurice* (omelet rice).

Someone takes a seat across from him. Pete looks with surprise to see it's Jessica. How did she find him?

JESSICA

SnapChat map. Does it hurt?

Pete shrugs. He knows he should hold a grudge. But things actually feel better now that she's here.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

What am I going to do with you?

PETE

(shrugs again)

Doesn't matter. It's over.

JESSICA

Not necessarily.

Pete looks up: *Oh?*

INT. SHINN HOME - HALLWAY - DAY

Sarah overhears her mother in the master bedroom, on the phone with an aunt in Korea.

GRACE (O.S.)

*You were too busy with the shop, of course.*

INT. SHINN HOME - OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Sarah finds Jae also looking like he hasn't slept a wink. Jae just looks at her, small, defeated. As if the loss had finally hit him. Sarah shows him the file --

SARAH

Appa --

JAE

We're cleaned out.

SARAH

No. We can recoup the losses if we just let go of the lease and do this food truck instead.

Jae looks at her, as if for the first time.

JAE

Our Sarah. We never paid much attention to you.

SARAH

This proposal from Pete. It's good.

JAE

You were always so self-sufficient. Your brother needed us. But you never did.

Sarah sees Hwatu cards in his hand. Gently takes them away.

SARAH

No gambling, okay?

JAE

No-kay.

SARAH

No no-kay, Appa. If I can come home and cut the crap, you can, too.

JAE

No Sarah. It's too late.

Jae puts his face in his hands in shame.

INT. SHINN HOME - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Stepping back into the hallway, Sarah hears her mother still on the phone.

GRACE (O.S.)

*Put her on.*

*(brighter)*

*Mom, it's Sunghee. Your third daughter. Everything is great. The children are great, too, of course. Ed. Sarah too.*

Sarah looks at her mother's counter. All the concealers. The hairpiece to cover the bald spot on the back of her head.

GRACE (CONT'D)

*My voice? Must be the connection.  
Mom, you have to listen to what the  
doctors tell you, OK? Take all your  
medicine and eat all your food.  
That's the only way your mind will  
get better. Then we'll all come  
visit. OK?*

Sarah takes this in. Appearances are everything.

EXT. PETE'S APARTMENT - LATER

Pete goes outside to take out the trash; is surprised to see Sarah out front.

PETE (PRELAP)

If you liked it then you should  
have put a wing on it.

SARAH (PRELAP)

For a food truck?

INT. PETE'S APARTMENT - LATER

Sarah sits with Pete at the table. Sarah looks for a coaster to put under her drink. Pete waves it off --

PETE

The maid will take care of it.

Pete's place has clearly never seen a professional cleaner.

SARAH

I kind of like Just Wing It. I'd go  
to that food truck.

PETE

Ed liked that, too. That, and Lord  
of the Wings.

SARAH

Well. We should do it for him then.  
(off Pete's nod)  
I wish I'd known. Everything.

PETE

Ed was afraid what everyone would  
think.



SARAH  
You know that term, model minority?

PETE  
That's a government construct.

SARAH  
I know. Used to disparage African Americans. But now it's like this expectation. That we have to be perfect all the time. That we're not allowed to fail. Or else.

(then)  
Anyway. I can get my dad to sign off on this food truck idea. Make it official.

PETE  
You could. Except he's not the one controlling the accounts.

Off Sarah: huh?

INT. SHINN CITY CORPORATION - DAY

Jessica walks into Mr. Bae's office.

JESSICA  
I want a rundown of all three of the restaurant properties.

MR. BAE  
I told you, Jessica-shi. Mr. Shinn takes care of that.

JESSICA  
Not anymore.

Mr. Bae looks at the sheet of paper Jessica hands him. Blinks. Nods. Looks at the receptionist.

MR. BAE  
You heard her.

The receptionist runs off and the manager bows deeply, and gives Jessica his seat. Jessica settles in, taking her place. And then sprints to the --

INT. SHINN CITY CORPORATION - RESTROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The toilet flushes. Jessica comes out of a stall, wiping her mouth. Feeling queasy again ...

She roots into her purse, looks through her phone calendar. Counts the weeks back. Oh no.

INT. SHINN HOME - KITCHEN - LATER

Sarah comes in to see Grace at the stove. Sits down as Grace brings her soup. Then sits down with her.

SARAH

*Ggoli guk [ox-tail soup]. You remembered.*

GRACE

Of course I remember.

Grace puts the money Sarah threw back on the table.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Take it.

Sarah pushes the envelope back to her.

SARAH

No. Put it back into the restaurant. Pete's plan is a good one. We can make it work.

*(off Grace, conflicted)*

Why don't you want me to be part of this?

GRACE

*I don't know why you want to be. This is an immigrant job. Long hours. Thankless. Your father has no sense for business. He just gambles it all away. Your brother seemed to. And he wanted to do it. Until --*

*(then)*

*I wanted to free you from this.*

SARAH

Maybe you can go visit *Eemo* and *Halmoni* (grandmother) in Korea.

GRACE

My life is here. Besides. Who will take care of you?

Har har. Sarah takes her mother's hand. It's a start. Then -

GRACE (CONT'D)

Who's going to marry someone with hands like this?

Sarah pulls her hand away.

INT. MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE - DAY

Officer Estrada runs into Sarah filling out forms.

ESTRADA

Did you find what you were looking for?

SARAH

Not really. But that's okay. I think we just need to move on.

ESTRADA

Closure.

SARAH

Yeah. Though if I knew all the forms you had to fill to opt out. This is like worse than quitting the gym. But all your help was really helpful. So thanks.

Groan. Why does she have to be so awkward? Estrada pulls out a card. Writes something on it.

ESTRADA

Well, if you have any more questions, let me know - it's also got my personal number, in case.

He hands her his card, and their fingers touch. Goosebumps. Sarah starts to walk away --

ESTRADA (CONT'D)

Your brother's not the only one who's golden.

Sarah blushes despite herself.

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - DAY

Sarah stands once more at the intersection on PCH near Malibu Canyon Road. Staring across the way toward the ocean.

Once again, the light turns green; the walk sign blinks on. But this time, Sarah steps forward. One foot after another. Until she reaches a sharp curve with the mangled steel barrier. Going into a steep drop off. The site of Ed's crash.

SARAH

You were always there as a buffer  
for me. I wish I could have done  
the same for you.

Sarah looks up as a breeze rustles through the trees. There's something about this particular view --

INT. SHINN HOME - SARAH'S ROOM - LATER

Sarah quickly digs out the postcard she picked up from Ed's house. It matches the view from PCH almost exactly.

FLASHBACK - INT. SHINN HOME - SARAH'S ROOM - DAY

Young Sarah watches as her parents leave Ed's room, the breeze from the door swinging open blowing her violin solo sheet music further into the forgotten. Sarah goes to Ed's door.

YOUNG ED

Leave me alone.

But Sarah comes in, sits next to him anyway. And leans into him when he puts his arm around her.

YOUNG SARAH

Why were they so mad?

YOUNG ED

I've been doing it all wrong. They want me to do what they want? I'll give them what they want.

Sarah looks up at her big brother, confused. But the Korean smoothing mask had taken effect: Ed's face shows no emotion.

BACK TO PRESENT. Sarah's mind is scrambling to put it all together. Ed's bank account depleted. Money going to Jessica. He put the house in his wife's name so the family couldn't benefit.

Ed wasn't who Sarah thought he was. Sarah returns to his computer. Really considers who Ed is. Turns the postcard over. Sees the "C" written on it. Tries "Carlos" as a password. Nothing.

Notices a "725" written underneath. What the hell. Types "Carlos725".

The computer opens.

END OF PILOT