

k i n  m a k e r s

"Pilot"

Written by
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Kingmakers

"Pilot"

CAST

JACOB DARLOW (ELI HENNESSY)	Gus Halper
DEAN VANDERMEER	Colm Feore
SENATOR WALDEN	Adrian Pasdar
MAEVE VANDERMEER	Kristen Bauer van Straten
ANNA VANDERMEER	Megan West
PHOEBE CROSS	Tracey Fairaway
TOMMY WALDEN	Michael Trevino
JULIA HENNESSY	Amy Forsyth
TAYLOR COLLINS	Colin Woodell
BEN WHEELER	Khary Payton
PETE GREER	Kendrick Sampson
RADHA PATEL	Parminder Nagra
YOUNG JULIA	Elizabeth Hunter
ALEX LEANDROS	Paul Ben Victor
RUBY LEANDROS	Ainsley Bailey
SYLVIA WALDEN	Mayte Garcia
WOMAN (SOCIAL WORKER)	Selena Anduze
GEENA	Sasha Ramos
LORRAINE BRADLEY	Jeryl Prescott
GUARD 1	Zero Kazama
*(PRISON GUARD - OMITTED)	
INTERVIEWER	Charmin Lee
ANCHOR	Michael Hill

Kingmakers

"Pilot"

SETS

INTERIORS

BUCK ISLAND
- STONE LODGE
BLACKSMITH BARN
JACOB'S SUITE
- LIVING ROOM
- BEDROOM
DEAN'S HOUSE
- DEAN'S STUDY
- BEDROOM
- LIVING ROOM
WALDEN CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS
- BULLPEN
- CONFERENCE ROOM
- WALDEN'S OFFICE
BRADDOCK CLASSROOM HALLWAY
GREEK CIVILIZATIONS CLASSROOM
SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT
- DEAN'S OFFICE
BRADDOCK STUDENT CENTER
ART STUDIO
MASS. CORRECTIONAL FACILITY
MOTEL ROOM
STONEBRIDGE TAVERN
SKULL & KEY TOMB
- HALLWAY

EXTERIORS

LAKE
BUCK ISLAND
- TOMB
- STONE LODGE
BRADDOCK BOATHOUSE
- HOOSIC RIVER
BLACKSMITH BARN
BRADDOCK COLLEGE
- MAIN QUAD
- SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT
WALDEN CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS
DEAN'S HOUSE
- BACKYARD
- LIVING ROOM
BUS STATION
WINDING COUNTRY ROAD
ROAD
WOODS
MASS. CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

ACT ONE

OVER BLACK:

"Whether poor or rich, all's the same in death." - Anonymous

1 **EXT. LAKE - NIGHT**

1

As we fly low over the water, its stillness proves this is not the Atlantic. We're not in the Hamptons anymore...

A paddle's blade SLICES the surface, splintering the reflection of a crescent MOON. It belongs to a small ROWBOAT, stealthily and urgently propelled by an unidentified ROWER (in an identifiable CREW JACKET) heading to a private island.

YOUNG MAN (V.O.)

It always begins the same way. With a choice: do we forgive and forget the people who've wronged us? Or do we strike them down in vengeance?

The Rower pulls his boat ashore, then grabs an AXE out of the boat... A couple hundred feet away, there's an upscale PARTY (glasses CLINKING, lights twinkling) but the Rower runs in the opposite direction, into the woods.

2 **OMITTED**

2

3 **EXT. BUCK ISLAND - TOMB - MOMENTS LATER**

3

Out of breath, the Rower arrives at his destination: a 5 by 8 foot stone crypt protected by a series of intricate locks...

YOUNG MAN (V.O.)

I've been told by those who've tasted it, revenge is not only sweet, but it ruins the palate for anything else...

He clears some moss, revealing a skull and crossbones engraved upon the arch -- but upon closer look, the skull is that of a DEER and the bones are actually KEYS. As the Rower holds up the AXE, readying to SMASH the LOCKS --

YOUNG MAN (V.O.)

So before I made my choice, I knew: there is no going back. Because this is not a story of forgiveness.

...when somewhere behind him, the crisp SNAP of a twig causes the Rower to spin around as an eerie, crescendoing SWISH RIPS TOWARDS HIM THROUGH THE SILENCE, SMASHING US TO:

4 **EXT./INT. BUCK ISLAND - STONE LODGE - NIGHT**

4

That inviting party we glimpsed down-shore. **LEGEND: NEW YEARS EVE, THE BERKSHIRES, MASSACHUSETTS.** We float past GUESTS in black and white attire, spilling out of the rustic lodge into a courtyard where a YOUNG MAN is just arriving...

This is JACOB DARLOW (26, British, the confidence of a royal, completely in his element). A nearby SIGN reads: "Happy New Year 2016."

MAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

Jacob?

Jacob turns to find SENATOR ADAM WALDEN (50's, strikingly handsome, fit, salt of the earth). He shakes Jacob's hand.

JACOB

Senator Walden. Sorry I'm late.

SENATOR WALDEN

At least you made it. Can't say the same for my son. You seen Tommy?

JACOB

Afraid I haven't, no.

SENATOR WALDEN

(disappointed, moving on)
Wish you'd reconsider my offer, Jacob. Take a semester off, join my campaign. Eighteen days until the Iowa Caucus...

JACOB

Very tempting. When do you need to know by?

SENATOR WALDEN

How 'bout I give you 'til next year.
(they trade a smile)
In the meantime, let's introduce you around, shall we?

As Walden leads him into the house, move off of them to find: ANNA VANDERMEER (20's, a girl who's recently discovered the power of seduction, and isn't afraid to use it). She watches Jacob across the room with a coy smile. She tries to cross to him but is intercepted by MAEVE VANDERMEER (40's, headstrong, and as stunning as her daughter, if not more so).

MAEVE

Why is it while your pledge-mates
are landing their dream jobs,
you're lining up your next screw?

ANNA

Monkey see, monkey do, Mother.

MAEVE

Don't. Any one of these people can
help salvage your future.

Maeve exchanges a look with the Senator, who excuses himself
from his conversation with Jacob and GUESTS...

ANNA

But you've worked so hard to
destroy it...

MAEVE

Anna, please. Prove to me something
good can come out of all this.

ANNA

Whatever helps you sleep at night.
Or *whoever*...

Anna walks off, shooting a look at the approaching Senator to
prove her point. As he lands, Senator Walden subtly strokes
the small of Maeve's back:

SENATOR WALDEN

Thank God I only had boys.

MAEVE

Do all girls turn into their mothers?

SENATOR WALDEN

She should be so lucky.

Maeve smiles at him, charmed.

MAEVE

Where's your wife?

SENATOR WALDEN

Gone, soon as you say the word.

Maeve follows his gaze to SYLVIA WALDEN (late 40's, tipsy).
He strokes her arm, but she plays coy, indicating the party:

MAEVE

These people have eyes, Adam.

SENATOR WALDEN

If they couldn't keep a secret,
I'd've been ruined a long time ago.

(then)

C'mon, what do you say? I know an
empty cabin just through the woods...

Off her smile, PAN OVER TO FIND: Anna finally reaches Jacob and pulls a small silver brooch out of her pocket: it's of the same Skull & Key symbol that was engraved on the tomb. As she pins it to his lapel:

ANNA

You left it at my place. Don't tell
Tommy.

Before he can object, she kisses his lips to seal them. As she does, we hear the CLINKING of a knife on glass... It's DEAN SIMON VANDERMEER (55, whip-smart, king of this world) who eyes Jacob as he prepares to make his toast...

DEAN VANDERMEER

Before we fall victim to our
revelry, I wanted to say a few
words. And I'll keep it short, much
to my wife's relief...

He raises a glass to Maeve, who was seconds away from leaving with Senator Walden. She forces a smile. The Dean resumes:

DEAN VANDERMEER (CONT'D)

As the clock approaches midnight,
we bid adieu to this year, its
successes, as well as adversities.
Just as we must say farewell to
Jacob Darlow...

All eyes land on Jacob, who wasn't expecting this. He watches cautiously as the Dean continues, relishing every word:

DEAN VANDERMEER (CONT'D)

It's come to my attention this
evening that Jacob will be returning
home to London. Just as he so
suddenly dropped into our lives --
(locking eyes with Jacob)
It's time for him to move on. So
let us raise a glass to his future.

JACOB

And may we never forget our past.
(raising his glass)
Auld Lang Syne, Dean Vandermeer.

Anna turns to Jacob, bewildered:

ANNA
What was that about?

JACOB
Ask your father.

As she crosses off towards the Dean, Jacob puts down his glass, casually making his way outside -- where his pace then accelerates... As he walks, PHOEBE CROSS (20's, cute, slightly disheveled) appears next to him.

PHOEBE
Something's wrong.

JACOB
Tell me about it... Don't let them see you.

PHOEBE
Trust me, in a few moments, I'm the last thing they'll notice...
(off his look)
Let me just lead with, you were right.

A GUARD in a tux, with a Secret Service style headset, approaches Phoebe:

GUARD
How did you get here, Miss?

PHOEBE
How did I get here, let's see...
One night 19 years ago my mother and father were feeling amorous, one thing led to another...

Jacob looks back towards the party, sees Anna arguing with the Dean, who now looks up to see this situation... As a second GUARD approaches:

JACOB
Don't mind her, she's drunk. I'll escort her home.

GUARD
I don't think so.

The Guard GRABS Phoebe's arm. The second Guard grabs the other arm, and they start to pull her away. Clearly, whoever these people are, they don't abide crashers.

JACOB
Let go of her!

Phoebe tries to wrestle away, but the Guards become more forceful. It's about to get ugly. Inside, the COUNTDOWN to the New Year begins (TEN! NINE! EIGHT!)...

Jacob looks back to the door to see Anna coming outside, Anna locks eyes with him, looking hurt, before her gaze shifts past him (towards Phoebe) -- as it does, her expression turns to fear, and she SCREAMS. The countdown STOPS. Jacob follows her gaze to see --

A newly arrived guest emerging from the woods, the mystery Rower: THOMAS WALDEN (20's), the Senator's missing son, a beautiful boy who could've taken over the world...

Concerned Guests spill out, straining to see what's going on. We finally REVEAL: Thomas has been shot with an ARROW in the chest. Blood BLOOMS from the wound...

As Tommy crumples to the ground, the SOUND DROPS OUT, SCORE RISING. The crowd CIRCLES around him, as the Senator and Sylvia break through, crying out their son's name, taking his lifeless body in their arms... As the Dean LOCKS EYES with Jacob, PUSH IN as Jacob holds the gaze, unwavering...

5 **EXT. BRADDOCK BOATHOUSE - HOOSIC RIVER - DAY**

5

The sun rises. Across the water, a deer walks the bank. A chyron reads **FOUR MONTHS EARLIER**. The serenity is dissected by a rowboat (a single scull), powered by Tommy, alive and well. His strokes are steady, in control.

But then, out of the corner of his eye, he clocks another boat: a SECOND SET OF OARS cutting into the water with equal force. Better, actually. Stronger. Puzzled, Tommy slows as the boat approaches. It's Jacob Darlow (who Tommy doesn't yet know).

JACOB

Morning!

As Jacob passes, Tommy quickens his pace to catch up with Jacob, yelling between strokes:

TOMMY

What are you doing?

JACOB

At the moment, trying to keep up.

TOMMY

What year are you?

JACOB

Junior.

TOMMY

Then you should know better.

Tommy suddenly pulls ahead. Jacob digs into his strokes, pursuing him like a shark, and the two sculls are suddenly racing side-by-side towards the Boathouse - the finish line.

Jacob quickens his pace and closes the gap, despite Tommy's herculean efforts. As they near the dock, Jacob kicks it up a notch, WINNING the race with a 10-foot lead. Tommy seems impressed. As they lean back, catching their breath:

TOMMY (CONT'D)

If you're a junior, why haven't I seen you before?

JACOB

I just transferred a week ago. From Oxford.

TOMMY

So you probably didn't realize these boats are for team only.

JACOB

(noting his tone)

My mistake... I was simply warming up before meeting with the coach.

That lands on Tommy, as he docks his boat. In the b.g., a few CREW KIDS are heading into the Boathouse.

TOMMY

What position are you?

JACOB

Seventh, generally. However --

TOMMY

Too bad. We're good on powerhouses.

JACOB

Are you?

(off Tommy's look)

It's just -- I heard you had a rough season last year, lost your reign as national champions.

TOMMY

So you thought you'd jump aboard and help us out? What a nice bloke.

JACOB

I think we're getting off on the wrong foot... My name's Jacob.

Tommy extends his oar. Jacob looks at him, wary, then takes it, allowing Tommy to pull him towards the dock.

TOMMY

No matter what your position at Oxford, Jacob, I'm afraid you won't make the team once the coach hears you stole a boat. And dented it.

JACOB

But I didn't --

Tommy suddenly SMASHES his oar into Jacob's stern, the force of the blow sending Jacob OVERBOARD. As he plunges beneath the surface, TIME SLOWS, and INTERCUT JARRING ECU IMAGES (a LITTLE GIRL's face, blades of grass, a welding mask...) FILL THE FRAME at a quickening pace until we finally SMASH TO:

6

INT./EXT. BLACKSMITH BARN - DAY - 2008 - FLASHBACK

6

CLOSE ON A BOY'S FACE, staring through a window. This is ELI (18, same actor as Jacob). Behind him, a MAN loads suitcases in the trunk of a car, parked in front of the modest main house. A SOCIAL WORKER holding an umbrella walks up behind Jacob, gently nudging:

WOMAN

Should I get her?

Eli shakes his head. Reverse to see he's watching JULIA (12, wild curly hair), inside the barn by a coal forge, holding a welding mask. Eli moves away from the window and enters (a sign over the door reads HENNESSY & SON BLACKSMITH).

The blacksmith shop juxtaposes old and new: antique anvils and hammers set beside modern stamping machines. Past projects hang on the walls. Eli walks over to his sister.

ELI

Julia... It's time.

JULIA

What about all of Dad's stuff?

ELI

They're gonna put it in storage.

Julia throws a look at the Woman and Man waiting outside...

JULIA

I'm not going with them.

ELI

We don't have a choice.

JULIA

How is that fair?

She stares up at him, as he struggles with the weight of this.

ELI

It's not.

(then)

*But once I prove I can support us,
I'm gonna get custody of you. Dad
and I planned for all of this, when
he first went into the hospital...*

(then)

*I swore to him I'd do everything I
can to make your life good, and
happy --*

JULIA

And fair?

ELI

And fair.

*She concedes, putting down her father's welding mask. But she
then picks up an ORNATE KEY, one that he made, and pockets it
-- a souvenir. As they leave the shop...*

7 **EXT. BRADDOCK BOATHOUSE - HOOSIC RIVER - DAY (PRESENT)** 7

Jacob breaks through the surface, shaking off the memory, pulling himself up onto the dock. Tommy is already walking away. On a hill, in the distance, we can see BRADDOCK COLLEGE. Tommy turns back, shouting over his shoulder:

TOMMY

Oh, and Jacob? Welcome to Braddock.

As Tommy walks off to the Boathouse, glimpse around his neck, hanging from a leather cord, that same ORNATE KEY...

Off Jacob, his expression changing completely, calming, then darkening into a look we recognize as the desire for revenge.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

8 **EXT. BRADDOCK COLLEGE - MAIN QUAD - DAY**

8

The campus is starting to wake up as STUDENTS trickle out of their dorms, heading to class. The camera GLIDES alongside them, past two centuries of Gothic-Revival architecture, immaculately manicured gardens, all indicative of the college's 28 billion dollar endowment.

Join Jacob, still damp, walking back from the boathouse.

GIRL'S VOICE (O.C.)

Heads up!

Jacob turns, then ducks, just avoiding a FRISBEE -- which lands on the stone steps of a white marble TOMB: a pharaonic, windowless building, Greek Doric pillars protect 50 by 50 by 80 feet of pure marble, the only entrance a bronze door marked with the Skull and Key emblem. Jacob looks up at it, curious, then starts towards the frisbee when:

GIRL'S VOICE (O.C) (CONT'D)

I got it.

The frisbee thrower jogs up to retrieve her disc. It's Phoebe Cross, who we recognize from the opening.

PHOEBE

It's bad luck to touch the tomb if you're not a member...

Phoebe proceeds to march up the tomb's stairs, undeterred.

JACOB

So... you're a member then?

PHOEBE

God no. I just don't give a rat's ass.

Jacob likes her honest, un-stuffy vibe. A rarity at Braddock.

JACOB

You're in my Greek Civ class.

PHOEBE

(coy)
Am I?

JACOB

My name's Jacob.

PHOEBE

Phoebe. You're new here, right?
Still wet behind the ears. And everywhere else it seems.

JACOB
I just went for a row, and...

PHOEBE
Maybe you should stick to land sports.

JACOB
Like frisbee?

PHOEBE
Like frisbee.

Phoebe salutes him with the disc, then trots off. Jacob takes her in for a beat, then continues to his dormitory...

9 INT. JACOB'S SUITE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 9

Not your average dorm: crown molding, mahogany desks, stained-glass windows, all relics of a finer era. Two ample bedrooms, one belonging to Jacob, the other to TAYLOR COLLINS (20's, well-bred over-achiever), connect to a living room where Taylor now sits by the window, sketching with charcoal.

TAYLOR
(taking in wet Jacob)
Do they not use boats at Oxford?

JACOB
I ran into Thomas Walden. Who wasn't in the mood for a race, evidently...

TAYLOR
So you won.
(explaining)
No doubt Tommy saw you as competition.
(off Jacob's look)
Pretentious jock. All rowers are.

Jacob smiles, appreciating the joke. As he hangs his wet clothes near the radiator, casually:

JACOB
If that's your opinion, I take it you won't be at the alumni regatta.

TAYLOR
Oh I will. But not to watch the race.

JACOB
Girls?

TAYLOR
Politics.
(then)
(MORE)

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Tomorrow's one of those days we'll look back on, 20 years from now, and be able to say we saw President Walden row at our alma mater.

JACOB

By President Walden, you mean --

TAYLOR

Tommy's father. The Senator. He's running in 2016...? You don't vote here, so I'll give you a pass.

JACOB

The current President is alumni as well, isn't he?

TAYLOR

It's true. Braddock produces the kings of this country.
(puts away his sketchbook)
Someday you'll be able to say your old roommate is one of them.

JACOB

And you say rowers are pretentious...

Taylor smiles slyly, then exits with his satchel for class. Off a slyer Jacob, taking all of this in...

10 **OMITTED** 10

11 **INT. DEAN'S HOUSE - DEAN'S STUDY - DAY** 11

A spare, well-appointed room. Dean Vandermeer is ON HIS CELL, as he gathers his things, preparing for the day...

DEAN VANDERMEER (ON PHONE)

This could only happen to you...
(then)
Not 24 hours before a vote on the largest appropriations bill in US history, and you're suddenly best friends with your Senate nemesis --

SENATOR WALDEN (PRELAP)

What can I say?

A12 **EXT. WALDEN CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY - INTERCUT** A12

The quaint storefronts of downtown Stonebridge (Main St. USA). Find Senator Walden stepping out of his car (assisted by his DRIVER), talking ON HIS CELL:

SENATOR WALDEN (ON PHONE)
I was at Union Station, getting my shoes shined, and he just sat right down. Most productive 15 minutes Congress has had all year.

The Senator greets a few TOWN FOLK, walking past them into:

12 INT. WALDEN CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - BULLPEN - DAY - INTERCUT 12

In every direction there's WALDEN 2016 paraphernalia. It's even painted across the ping-pong table in the corner, but the VOLUNTEERS are too busy to play.

DEAN VANDERMEER (ON PHONE)
You're the luckiest bastard I know.

SENATOR WALDEN (ON PHONE)
You know what Lincoln said about luck: "The harder I work, the more I have of it."

DEAN VANDERMEER (ON PHONE)
That was Jefferson. You should know your Presidential quotes; they'll nail you for that on the campaign trail.

Walden chuckles, unfazed, unflappable -- you can see why he succeeds in politics. Stuff just rolls off his back.

SENATOR WALDEN (ON PHONE)
Let's just hope my good fortune holds out for the regatta. My PR team's counting on a victory.

DEAN VANDERMEER (ON PHONE)
Then you shouldn't tell them it's tradition to let the alumni win.

SENATOR WALDEN (ON PHONE)
Does my son realize that? You know how he is.

Maeve leans against the door of the study, peering in...

DEAN VANDERMEER (ON PHONE)
I do. In fact, I used to have a roommate just like him.
(smiles, as he hangs up)
See you tomorrow.

MAEVE
Was that Adam?

DEAN VANDERMEER
It was.

MAEVE
Did you ask him?

As Maeve grabs her bag and keys from the den, the Dean joins her, walking and talking on the way to the front door.

DEAN VANDERMEER
I told you. It's delicate.

MAEVE
Why? He needs a running mate, and you're a solid choice...

DEAN VANDERMEER
A single term in the House hardly qualifies me for the Vice-Presidency--

MAEVE
It's not about qualifications, it's about connections. You know that.
(then)
You have to take what you want, Simon.

DEAN VANDERMEER
Does that include you?

He caresses her shoulder, catching her off-guard. With a smile, she avoids his advances:

MAEVE
Save it for the inauguration.

Maeve gives him a sterile peck, then opens the door...

A13 **EXT. DEAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

A13

As Maeve walks out, the Dean behind her, reveal the stately mansion on its sprawling estate. Anna is jogging up the driveway, taking out her earbuds. Maeve smiles to see her:

MAEVE
I thought you were still in bed.

ANNA
I was tossing since five, so I ran the trails.

DEAN VANDERMEER
Wake me next time. I'll join you.

MAEVE
Anna, sweetheart, if you're not sleeping, you should see your therapist --

ANNA

You promised if I moved back in,
you wouldn't nag.

DEAN VANDERMEER

It's true, you did.

MAEVE

I know. But if you're this stressed
so early in the year, maybe you
should drop an extracurricular...
Or step down from the society --

DEAN VANDERMEER

That's unnecessary. Not to mention
unprecedented. She's a senior. She
can handle it.

ANNA

And I promise to speak up this time
if I can't.

As Anna escapes inside, Maeve shoots a look at the Dean,
pulling out her keys. As they go to their separate cars...

13 **OMITTED** 13

14 **INT. BRADDOCK CLASSROOM HALLWAY - DAY** 14

Jacob walks to class, passing a few STUDENTS and TAs, milling
about. He stops when he notices a wall of PAINTINGS. One in
particular catches his eye: a still life of various
objects... Jacob sees a typed card under the painting: **Julia
Hennessy**. The name lands on him, *triggering*:

15 **EXT. BUS STATION - MORNING - FLASHBACK** 15

*Late summer. A few COMMUTERS, as well as KIDS heading to
college, a couple FAMILIES linger saying goodbyes. Entering
the station, find JULIA (18, that same wild, curly hair), a
Braddock sweatshirt underneath her coat, the ORNATE KEY
around her neck. She smiles at ELI (25, the actor who plays
Jacob, hard to recognize underneath scruffy hair and beard).*

ELI

Julia, wait, do you have your ticket?

JULIA

Right here.

Eli checks his pockets, he seems anxious.

ELI

And what about the baggage ticket.
Did they give that to me, or --?

JULIA

*I have it. I have everything, Eli.
I'm all set.*

ELI

Alright, well I'm not...

Eli smiles sadly, then glances at a nearby family. A normal one with parents and siblings. A reminder of what's missing.

ELI (CONT'D)

*Dad would've been better at this...
He'd probably want me to remind you
you're the first Hennessy to go to
college.*

JULIA

*Ha. No pressure.
(Eli laughs; emotions are welling)
None of this happens without you.*

ELI

*You're the one who earned a full ride to
Braddock. Hell, I barely saved enough
for you to do two years at State.*

JULIA

*Maybe now you can enroll.
(off Eli, skeptical)
You're twice the artist I am, and
you have time now that you don't
have me to worry about anymore.*

ELI

*You kidding? Until you graduate, get
married, and your paintings are hanging
in the Met, I'm not taking my eyes off
you.*

JULIA

I love you, Eli.

She hugs Eli tight, and long. Trying to keep it together:

ELI

*Love you, too.
(then)
Stay outta trouble, alright? Go.*

*Julia climbs up onto the bus, giving Eli a last wave before
disappearing inside. Off Eli, filled with pride --*

Jacob stares at the painting, lost in the memory, when:

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
I couldn't bring myself to take it
down.

He turns to see Maeve, just arriving for work...

MAEVE
Did you know her?

It's so difficult for him to deny a connection to his own
sister... He manages to cover enough to shake his head "no."

JACOB
No...but I read about her murder.

MAEVE
It affected all of us. Deeply...
And how unexpectedly profound that
this was her last work.

Jacob looks at the painting again: a Mark Ryden-esque STILL
LIFE littered with various objects in realistic detail: a toy
skull, a dollar bill, a few soap bubbles flying about, and
that familiar IRON KEY hanging in the background.

MAEVE (CONT'D)
Her modern take on a vanitas.

JACOB
I see that. Allegories for the
fleeting nature of time, the
triviality of earthly pursuits.
(he subtly fishes)
But the key seems anachronistic, no?

Upon mention of the key, worry flashes across her face, but
Maeve manages to cover with a smile:

MAEVE
I didn't catch your name.

JACOB
Jacob Darlow. Pleased to meet you.

MAEVE
Well, Jacob, if you're trying to
impress me, you've succeeded.
(off his look)
But unfortunately, my class is
full. Try the waitlist.

Off that, she retreats into her studio. Jacob watches after
her for a beat, then goes into:

17 INT. GREEK CIVILIZATIONS CLASSROOM - DAY

17

A small seminar taught by PROFESSOR BEN WHEELER (30's, his appearance is decidedly more casual than most at Braddock). A PROJECTION of the PARTHENON illuminates the wall. As he flips through images of other temples, Jacob slips in, taking a seat near Phoebe (frisbee girl). She ignores him. Sort of.

BEN

The Doric columns of these temples communicated strength, their massive size commanded attention, making the outsider desperate to know: *What happens in there?*

PHOEBE

(a dry joke)
Human sacrifice?

Ben smiles. That's the kind of class this is -- free flowing, lots of back and forth.

BEN

Not on the inside. Don't slay where you pray, Ms. Cross.

After Ben Wheeler switches the slide --

JACOB

That one looks quite similar to the tomb by Eckert Hall, doesn't it?

Ben looks at Jacob, curious. Jacob explains:

JACOB (CONT'D)

It was one of the first things I noticed when I arrived on campus.

BEN

And I'll bet it made you wonder.
(off Jacob's nod)
Exactly. The architects of collegiate "secret" societies followed the Ancient Greek playbook. By placing their "temples" in plain sight, they draw attention to the elite few allowed to enter. Isn't that right, Mr. Greer?

He levels his gaze at a student, PETE GREER (20's), who smirks at being singled out. Takes a kind of pride in it.

BEN (CONT'D)

Because exclusivity breeds curiosity. And curiosity is the mightiest tool of any cult.

That word lands on Greer, who plays it off with a smile:

GREER

There are a lot of attorneys in that "cult," Mr. Wheeler. I'd be careful with your categorizations.

Ben smiles, knowing he's gotten under the kid's skin.

BEN

Withdrawn... I just tend to distrust any group which conceals their proceedings so vigorously.

Before Greer can retort, Jacob steps up in his defense:

JACOB

But you can't deny the importance of secrecy. Georg Simmel defined it as the basis for all relationships. Without secrets there is no trust.

This lands on Pete Greer, who seems impressed. Ben isn't.

BEN

Welcome to the conversation, Oxford. Sounds like you're perfect material for Tap Night. For the rest of you, at least the juniors who find yourselves caught up in the bacchanalia, just remember: fools rush in.

As Ben flips to the next slide, RACK FOCUS from Jacob to Phoebe, who's taking in this new boy with great curiosity...

18

EXT. BRADDOCK COLLEGE - MAIN QUAD - DAY

18

Tommy walks across the quad with Anna.

TOMMY

I thought you'd be living on campus this year.

ANNA

You know my mother... She just wants to make sure I'm okay.

TOMMY

Are you?

Just then, Greer approaches, already talking to Anna:

GREER

Before you say no, just hear me out. I've been watching this guy in Wheeler's class... He's a transfer. From Oxford.

Greer presents his iPHONE, pulling up a PHOTO of Jacob: he's flashing his winning smile, in front of Christ Church, wearing an Oxford crew sweater.

ANNA

He's cute...

TOMMY

Yeah, I met him. Not impressed.

Tommy's phone RINGS. The caller ID reads: Dean Vandermeer. Tommy holds it up so she can see.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Why's your dad calling me?

Anna shrugs. Tommy steps away to answer it. Greer continues, swiping through his phone, past other students' bios, photos.

GREER

Anna, I need you to second this guy. He could replace one of our subpar nominations -- like Collins.

Greer pulls up Taylor's PHOTO (Jacob's roommate).

ANNA

Wait -- Why Collins?

GREER

There's just something about him, I dunno... He's too eager.

(then)

But this guy Darlow? I looked into him. His transcript's immaculate, and his pedigree -- the guy's actually descended from British royalty.

ANNA

So is Prince Harry. Look, we already voted. And we had a hard enough time finding people that met all the requirements --

GREER

But this guy does, I just need someone to second him...

As Anna walks off towards the Skull & Key tomb, Pete on her tail, reveal an OMINOUS POV watching...

ANNA

Well, it won't be me.

As Anna and Greer disappear inside the tomb, reveal the POV belongs to Jacob, who's eavesdropping with the help of a small directional mic from the open window of his suite...

19 OMITTED 19

A20 INT. JACOB'S SUITE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS A20

Jacob's cell buzzes next to him with the mysterious CALLER ID: "DOC-585." He turns away from the window, putting away the mic, as he answers the phone in his American accent.

JACOB
Just got some news you might be interested in.

BRITISH WOMAN (THROUGH PHONE)
Really. Made some friends, I take it?

Jacob takes out a small black book... Embossed in gold are the words: SKULL AND KEY CLASS OF 2017. Inside are black and white portraits, the first is of Tommy ("Actaeon"). Then Greer ("Achilles"), Anna ("Echo")...

JACOB
One, at least...

He looks at Greer's photo in the book, then:

JACOB (CONT'D)
One more, I'm good to go.

BRITISH WOMAN (THROUGH PHONE)
Thomas Walden?

Jacob taps Tommy Walden's photo in the book with his pen.

JACOB
...That's the idea.

BRITISH WOMAN (THROUGH PHONE)
You sound uncertain.

JACOB
Just haven't figured out how to land him.

BRITISH WOMAN (THROUGH PHONE)
Once you do, you're in. If not, if you miss your shot at this, Eli, everything you've worked for --

JACOB
I know. But first things first...

Jacob hears the door open to the suite. He peeks through his cracked door and sees Taylor entering and searching the room.

JACOB (CONT'D)

I need to eliminate the competition.

Jacob hangs up the phone, as Taylor approaches.

TAYLOR

Hey -- you haven't seen my sketchbook, have you?

JACOB

No... Want me to help look?

TAYLOR

That's alright. I swear I threw it in my bag this morning...

After Taylor moves on, Jacob tosses the book into his duffle, where it lands next to Taylor's sketchpad. Off Jacob, zipping up the duffle...

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

20 **EXT. BRADDOCK COLLEGE - SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT - DAY** 20

One of the older buildings on campus that houses the Political Science department, as well as the Dean's office...

21 **INT. SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT - DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY** 21

The Dean sits at his desk, flipping through an APPLICATION and transcripts. Across from him sits RUBY LEANDROS (17) and her dad, ALEX LEANDROS (45). Ruby is overly made-up. Alex is tan and shares his daughter's affinity for hair product. They wear expensive, albeit tasteless, clothes.

DEAN VANDERMEER

It's certainly clear from Ruby's application that she's a very well-rounded young lady. Poetry, horseback riding, your own fashion line --

RUBY

And I create my own make-up.

DEAN VANDERMEER

I see that.

(smiles, closing the file)

Mr. Leandros, I know you're an old friend of my wife's --

ALEX

We grew up two blocks away from each other. In Medford.

DEAN VANDERMEER

And I do respect the ties that bind. Unfortunately, this is about numbers, and while Ruby's extracurriculars are... impressive, 98% of our freshmen were in the top 10% of their high school class.

Alex takes this in, impassive.

ALEX

Sweetheart, give us a minute.

Ruby smiles politely at the Dean, then leaves.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Something you should know about me...

He takes a pen from his coat and grabs a buckslip from the Dean's desk. He writes on it as he talks.

ALEX (CONT'D)
I'm an optimist. I believe where
there's a will, there's a way...
(slides the buckslip across)
...and I have a lot of will.

The Dean looks down at the buckslip. Considers it.

DEAN VANDERMEER
Actually, I do know that about you.
(picking up the note)
I also know how you've earned it...
Your list of "extracurriculars" is
as long as your daughter's.

Alex's smile fades; Dean just stepped onto dangerous terrain.

ALEX
Maevie seemed to think we could work
something out...

DEAN VANDERMEER
(takes that in, then)
Like you, she's inclined to
optimism. But the fact is I have to
protect the reputation of this
college, and you present a risk we
can't afford to take... no matter
what the price.

ALEX
That's unfortunate.

A KNOCK on the door as Tommy enters. The Dean stands, to
Alex:

DEAN VANDERMEER
I'll tell my wife you said hello.

Alex leaves, indignant. The Dean waves Tommy in.

DEAN VANDERMEER (CONT'D)
Come in, Tommy. Are you ready for
the regatta?

TOMMY
Been shaving off minutes all summer.

DEAN VANDERMEER
But you know tomorrow isn't about
winning...
(off his look)
It's about the alumni.

TOMMY
And you want me to throw the race.

DEAN VANDERMEER
It's tradition.

TOMMY
Well, my team and I think we should
start a new one.

DEAN VANDERMEER

Thomas. Maybe you don't realize this, or perhaps it's your intent, but if you break a one-hundred-and-twenty-year-old tradition, in a race that happens to be against your father, people will see it as you trying to humiliate him.

(off Tommy's look)

Is that what you really want?

Off a brooding Tommy, considering how to best answer that...

22

INT. JACOB'S SUITE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

22

Jacob throws his duffle over his shoulder as he walks towards the door, but right when he gets there, it opens. He's startled to see Anna, letting herself in with a key. She's equally surprised to see him, recognizing him from his photo.

ANNA

Oh. I'm sorry, I was looking for --

JACOB

Sorry, who are you, and why do you have a key to this room?

Taylor rushes out of his bedroom, introducing Jacob:

TAYLOR

Jacob, Anna. I gave her the key. She lives off campus, so she needs a place to hang --

JACOB

I'm not really comfortable with that.
(clocking her look to Taylor)
You understand, I'm sure.

Anna eyes Taylor. Okay... Annoyed, she hands over her key.

ANNA

It's all yours.

JACOB

Thanks. Cheers.

And off that, Jacob goes. Taylor closes the door behind him.

TAYLOR

So that's my roommate.

ANNA

I thought you were rooming with Dave?

TAYLOR

Housing claimed they never got my request. Dave didn't mind, he got a single. And I got Harry Potter.

ANNA

I have news at least. We chose the new members...

(off Taylor's look)

You're in.

TAYLOR

And you're absolutely amazing...

He pulls her close, KISSING her. Evidently they're a thing. A hot, messy thing. As clothes are shed, heading to his room:

ANNA

What about Jacob? Think he bought your lie? Because if the other members knew we were dating --

TAYLOR

That's not the only reason you nominated me, is it? Not that I mind being objectified...

ANNA

You just have to do one thing for me when they tap you tomorrow night.

(off his look)

Act surprised.

Off Taylor's smile, as he closes them inside his room...

23

INT. WALDEN CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

23

An INTERVIEWER (30's) records Walden as she asks questions, his Personal Aide, GEENA (20's), seated nearby.

INTERVIEWER

And for your headquarters, you chose The Berkshires...

SENATOR WALDEN

It's peaceful here, allows us to focus on the task at hand. Plus, it's where my son attends school. Nothing's more important to me than family. How's Samantha getting on at Vassar?

The Interviewer nods, impressed by his recall.

INTERVIEWER

Well. Thank you... Rumor has it you gave the appropriations bill a little spit and polish with Senator Goring yesterday. Strange bedfellows.

SENATOR WALDEN

You know me, I detest these partisan stalemates. So I crossed the aisle and shook hands.

INTERVIEWER

Word is a \$34 million pet project, the building of an asphalt reclamation plant, snuck its way into the bill after that handshake.

Senator Walden blanches slightly, but recovers well --

SENATOR WALDEN

My state needs that plant. With it, we'll build better, safer roads for decades to come. That's taxpayer money well spent.

INTERVIEWER

I wonder if the President will agree with you.

Outside the hall window, Tommy arrives. Walden takes the out:

SENATOR WALDEN

I'll give you his number. You can ask him. If you'll excuse me, my son's here. Like I said, family first.

The Senator blasts out of the conference room, his Aide struggling to keep up pace.

SENATOR WALDEN (CONT'D)

I need you to find a replacement.

GEENA

For who?

SENATOR WALDEN

You. Preferably someone who can keep their mouth shut.

(off the Aide's surprise)
You were the only staffer within spitting distance of that deal.

GEENA

Sir --

SENATOR WALDEN

If the President vetoes that project, 20,000 jobs go with it. Lives are at stake, including yours if you don't get out of my sight.
(walking past Tommy)
What do you want?

The Senator continues into his office without stopping...

24 INT. WALDEN CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - WALDEN'S OFFICE - DAY 24

Tommy follows his father inside, closing the door.

TOMMY

Bad time?

SENATOR WALDEN

Glorious. What brings you here?

It's not like Tommy expected a warm welcome, but still.

TOMMY

Thought I'd cut out the middleman. Vandermeer said I'm supposed to lose the race tomorrow.

SENATOR WALDEN

I didn't ask him to do that...

TOMMY

Of course not. You like to keep your hands clean.

SENATOR WALDEN

Listen. I don't know what Vandy said, but if you want to win, go ahead. I couldn't care less.

Sadly, that answer's worse than the one Tommy expected.

TOMMY

Would you care if we wagered on it? Keysmen are gamblers, right?
(off his look)
If you win, I'll donate half of my trust to your campaign. No strings.

That lands on the Senator, who we think will say no way, but:

SENATOR WALDEN

And if I lose?

TOMMY

You'll hire me onto your staff. Seems you need some help.

SENATOR WALDEN

Do you know how much my staffers make?

TOMMY

I wouldn't be doing it for the money. I want to go into politics.

SENATOR WALDEN

Follow in the old man's footsteps?

Tommy nods, thinks he's getting traction. With mild disdain:

SENATOR WALDEN (CONT'D)

You remind me of your grandfather. He preferred the path of least resistance. When I was your age he insisted I take a job at his bank. I quit after a month.

TOMMY

Why?

SENATOR WALDEN

Because everyone treated me like the boss's son. Including the boss. I chose the hard road, Tommy. Now I'm taking it straight to the White House. I'm telling you, there's nothing more satisfying than carving out your own path.

TOMMY

This is my path. You just happen to be standing on it.

(then)

See you at the races.

Tommy exits. Off the Senator as he takes a moment to steel himself before heading out to the bullpen...

25 **OMITTED**

25

A26 **INT. BRADDOCK STUDENT CENTER - NIGHT**

A26

A grand room with exposed wooden beams. STUDENTS are grouped together, some studying, some hooking up, but one sits alone by a window: Jacob, books splayed out in front of him, a guise for what he's really studying -- outside, across the quad, Maeve stands by the library, waiting for someone...

BEN

Hey, Oxford. If you're trying to avail yourself for tap night, you realize it's tomorrow.

JACOB
Thanks for that, Professor
Wheeler...

BEN

It's Ben... Not every day someone drops a Georg Simmel reference. I take it you studied sociology across the pond?

JACOB

A bit. And I read. Voraciously.

BEN

Well, I have a soft spot for Simmel. One of my colleagues published extensively on his work; in fact, there's an article you might enjoy --

JACOB

Who was your colleague?

BEN

(tentative, then)
Radha Nayar.

JACOB

Ah. I've certainly heard of *her*...

BEN

(a bit defensive)
Too bad you didn't get to take her class. She's brilliant.

JACOB

Psychopaths usually are.

Jacob gauges how this lands on Ben, whose hackles rise.

BEN

Don't believe everything you hear. I'll send you that article.

Ben turns to go. Jacob stops him:

JACOB

Professor Wheeler... Ben.
(as Ben turns back)
You don't think she killed Julia Hennessy?

BEN

That's not a popular opinion around here. So I keep it to myself.

JACOB

I thought you didn't believe in secrecy?

They exchange a small smile. A thaw. After Ben clears, Jacob looks back to Maeve looking at her phone, headed to the art studio. Jacob packs up his books, follows at a distance. As she disappears, Jacob quickens his pace. A figure in a BLACK HOODIE comes SPRINTING around the corner, running into Jacob, the collision sending Hoodie to the ground.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

He extends his hand, realizing it's Phoebe, her curls falling out of her hoodie.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Phoebe, isn't it?

She rejects his hand, scurrying to stand.

PHOEBE
Watch where you're going.

She takes off. He looks down to see she dropped A CAN OF SPRAYPAINT. He picks it up, wondering what it means, until he sees the TOMB, GRAFFITIED with vaguely Satanistic images and the words: SKULL & KRIMINALS. Off Jacob, realizing he's not the only one with a bone to pick, as he slides the spraypaint can into his bag...

26 INT. ART STUDIO - NIGHT

26

The normally light-filled space is cast in shadow, a single lamp near the door the only glow. Find Taylor digging around in drawers, through shelves, looking for something, when:

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
Can I help you?

He turns to see Maeve, surprised he's not alone.

TAYLOR
Did you get my text? I can't find my sketchbook...

MAEVE
I thought I gave it back after class.

TAYLOR
Me too...

Taylor stops at a shelf where a newly fired Grecian Amphora (handled vase) sits. He runs his finger over the glaze...

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
These are new...

MAEVE

Not my best.

TAYLOR

No one sees how talented you are.
Including you.

His sincerity melts her... but she tries to hide it.

MAEVE

Why did you really call me here,
Taylor?

He looks at her, wary, but compelled to admit:

TAYLOR

I think I'm getting selected for
Skull and Key.

MAEVE

(a beat, concerned)
What makes you think that?

TAYLOR

A friend let it slip...

MAEVE

You know once you're in, they'll
pressure you to divulge everything.
No secrets between you and your
pledge mates...

TAYLOR

I get it. You're worried. Your
daughter's a member, isn't she? I
know your husband is. I can promise
you: I'll never tell them.

He reaches out, caressing her shoulder. And we realize Anna
isn't the only Vandermeer he's sleeping with...

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Or if it makes you uneasy, we can
finally end this...

She looks at him sadly, pulling away, then goes to the door.
But instead of leaving, she locks it. She turns out the lamp,
plunging the room into shadow, returning to Taylor:

MAEVE

Not tonight.

She unzips her dress. As it falls to the ground, he leans her against the table -- and the CAMERA PULLS BACK, into the hallway, to REVEAL Jacob, capturing this torrid affair on his iPHONE, through a slit in the blinds...

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

27 **EXT. BRADDOCK BOATHOUSE - HOOSIC RIVER - DAY**

27

The first regatta of the year. A banner reads: Welcome Alumni Crew! The camera glides along the banks, through the crowd of STUDENTS, FACULTY, and ALUMS reuniting. Find Jacob kneeling by the water, washing off his hand to remove what looks like black soot... After a beat, he hears Taylor:

TAYLOR

Considering another swim?

JACOB

(stands, drying his hands)
I'm good, Mate. Where are you standing?

TAYLOR

We're just over there. C'mon.

Taylor leads Jacob through the crowd to a group of his buddies, Anna among them.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

You remember my friend Anna...

JACOB

Yes, sorry if I came off a bit uptight. About the room key.

ANNA

I get it. It's your space, and you don't know me from a psycho-killer.

JACOB

Not yet, anyway.

He flashes his smile. She returns it, missing the innuendo.

TAYLOR

Some turnout, huh?

JACOB

Did I just see Blake Wells walk by?

TAYLOR

Two-time Olympian and today's powerhouse in the alumni boat.

Just then, the crowd starts to CHEER and APPLAUD. Jacob turns to see Senator Walden, followed by SECURITY, arriving at the boathouse in crew uniform, waving to the crowd, ever the politician. Through Jacob's POV, we watch as the Dean approaches Walden, clasping his hand to welcome him home. Jacob points to the Dean:

JACOB

Adam Walden, I take it. And who's that with him? Is he important?

ANNA

I wouldn't go that far...

TAYLOR

That's her dad. Dean of the college. You haven't met him yet?

Off Jacob eyeing the Dean, ANGLE ON: Adam waving to REPORTERS and CAMERAS, Simon beside him, relishing the spotlight.

DEAN VANDERMEER

All this just for a scrimmage. Hats off to your PR team.

SENATOR WALDEN

(re: all the students)

Feels like yesterday, doesn't it? We thought we were kings, irreverent, yet secretly terrified we'd never make anything of ourselves, that we'd never get out of this place...

DEAN VANDERMEER

(still feeling that way)

And look at you now.

ANNA (O.C.)

Dad, can I introduce you to someone?

The Dean turns to see Anna with Jacob in tow.

ANNA (CONT'D)

This is Jacob Darlow. New junior, by way of Oxford.

JACOB

Dean Vandermeer.

Jacob extends his hand and the Dean takes it, dismissing Jacob's overly firm grip as ambitious...

DEAN VANDERMEER

Jacob, I remember your transfer request. Top of your class, member of the Oxford Union -- yet you left it all behind to come here. I'm curious why you chose us?

JACOB

Short answer?

(then)

I wasn't satisfied.

Before the Dean can follow up, an irate Tommy comes barreling out of the Boathouse straight over to the Dean...

ANNA

Tommy? What's wrong?

TOMMY

(to the Dean)

Did you put our powerhouse on probation?

(off his look)

Mike Cianfrani. He said you accused him of vandalizing school property.

DEAN VANDERMEER

He defaced the tomb last night.

TOMMY

He says he didn't --

DEAN VANDERMEER

His RA found the paint-can in his room.

On Jacob, whose very small smile indicates he's responsible.

TOMMY

You set him up to sabotage my team, didn't you?

SENATOR WALDEN

That's ridiculous, Tommy --

DEAN VANDERMEER

Take solace in the fact that today isn't about winning. As we discussed. Good thing too since you'll be hard pressed to find an alt.

Tommy's eyes land on Jacob. Reluctantly:

TOMMY

You said you rowed 7th at Oxford?

Jacob nods, feigning surprise: *what are the odds?*

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Consider this your tryout then.

Tommy turns to the Dean: It's on. Then to his father:

TOMMY (CONT'D)

May the best man win.

The Senator shakes his head at his son's irreverence. As Tommy heads to the boathouse, off Jacob, following a step behind...

SMASH TO:

28 **EXT. BRADDOCK BOATHOUSE - HOOSIC RIVER - DAY** 28

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW floats down the river to find the two 8-men boats in position, ready to race. The Senator (8th) is in the alumni boat, while Tommy is 8th in the student's boat, Jacob in front of him (7th). We clock Taylor, Anna, and the Dean watching on from their spots. Jacob steels himself as:

The GUN FIRES, and the two boats shoot off from the dock, accelerating quickly. As the COXSWAINS YELL commands and the rowers row, Jacob focuses, determined to win the race and win over Tommy. As the din of the CHEERING CROWD crescendos, Jacob closes his eyes, concentrating, remembering, as we INTERCUT the first few moments of this race with --

29 **EXT. WINDING COUNTRY ROAD - DAY - FLASHBACK - INTERCUT** 29

Eli (his beard more unkempt now) races down the road in his beat up truck, concentrating, disturbed. It's clear something is very wrong... He jumps when his cell rings, answering:

ELI

Hello?

BRITISH WOMAN (THROUGH PHONE)

Is this Eli?

ELI

Yeah, who's this?

BRITISH WOMAN (THROUGH PHONE)

My name is Radha Nayar. Your sister was my student. Are you at the river?

ELI

(confused)

*Not yet... they just called me --
What's going on? Did they find her?*

BRITISH WOMAN (THROUGH PHONE)

I need you to trust me... I didn't do it --

ELI

Didn't do what --

BRITISH WOMAN (THROUGH PHONE)

And I know who was with her the night she disappeared --

ELI

Who? What do you know?

BRITISH WOMAN (THROUGH PHONE)
More than I have time to tell you.
I'm sending you something. Keep it
safe. No one can know we spoke --

ELI
I don't understand --

BRITISH WOMAN (THROUGH PHONE)
I know. And I'm sorry.
(then)
I'm so sorry, Eli.

Just then, Eli arrives at his destination --

30 **EXT. BRADDOCK BOATHOUSE - CONTINUOUS - FLASHBACK** 30

The same familiar stretch of river by Braddock. Police cars are gathered, LIGHTS flashing, yellow tape sectioning off an area by the bank, holding back curious STUDENTS and FACULTY. Eli jumps out of his car, pushing through the crowd to see the OFFICERS inspecting a BODY at the river's edge...

Eli's world crashes down as he sees it's Julia; as he breaks through the tape, several COPS rush to hold him back.

ELI

Let me go! Let me go, that's my sister!!

Eli's WORLD GOES INTO SLOW MOTION as he looks around the crowd, paranoid, wondering if what the mysterious caller said was true -- did one of these people do this? He clocks the Dean, walking towards him; Anna in the crowd of students, on the verge of her own breakdown; Tommy by her side, consoling her; a steely-eyed Maeve watching her husband's every move. Eli clocks an FBI AGENT leaning over his sister, subtly inspecting something around her neck... Just then, the Dean steps in front of Eli, offering a brief condolence:

DEAN VANDERMEER

I'm sorry for your loss. Let us know if there's anything we can do.

Over the Dean's shoulder, Eli sees the FBI Agent signal the CORONER to inspect the body. As the Dean rejoins them, the Agent furtively hands him the pilfered object. From a distance, it looks like a necklace: Julia's key. As a devastated, reeling Eli eyes the Dean...

31 **EXT. BRADDOCK BOATHOUSE - HOOSIC RIVER - DAY (PRESENT)** 31

As the memory fades, tears of anger roll down Jacob's cheeks, or maybe it's sweat from the struggle of the race... As they reach the finish line, he looks across to see they've beaten the alumni boat by a good six feet.

Tommy tries to catch his father's eye, but the Senator doesn't look over. The other ALUM ROWERS, however, cast a few scornful glances, wondering why the students broke tradition. Tommy claps Jacob on the back, relishing the moment. Off Jacob, trying to reconcile his past with his present, as he closes his eyes... The sound of APPLAUSE transitions us to:

32 **EXT./INT. DEAN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

32

Jacob opens his eyes, and we reverse to see a private reception for the rowers (cleaned up and in their crew blazers). The student rowers walk down a receiving line, shaking hands with the Alumni.

As Jacob and Tommy make their way down the line:

TOMMY

Thanks for helping me buck
tradition.

JACOB

Of course. "Customs curtsy to great
kings."

Tommy smiles. As they continue down the line, we go to Maeve,
as Sylvia (the Senator's wife) sidles up to her:

SYLVIA

Thanks for hosting, Maeve. I don't
know how you pull it off every
year. I've already gone through
three different planners for New
Year's at Buck Island. You'll be
there, won't you?

MAEVE

It's on my calendar.

Sylvia continues down the steps as Tommy reaches his dad. She
kisses his cheek, then moves on. The Senator extends his hand
to Tommy, who warily takes it.

SENATOR WALDEN

Congratulations.

TOMMY

Thanks... Guess I won our bet.

SENATOR WALDEN

(sincerely)

You did. We'll talk about it.

(Tommy grins, satisfied)

And -- Jacob, was it? Jumping in
last minute and keeping that pace --
I bet Oxford misses you.

JACOB

I doubt they'll even notice I'm gone.

Jacob flashes a smile. The Senator shakes his hand, then
moves on to greet the Dean.

DEAN VANDERMEER

Well, if you were going to lose a race, I'd rather it be that one.

SENATOR WALDEN

(smiles, then)

You don't happen to know anyone available to be my Personal Aide?

DEAN VANDERMEER

What happened to Geena?

SENATOR WALDEN

I think she was a tracker. Probably working for Campbell.

LORRAINE BRADLEY (50's, Alum) crosses through, greeting Adam.

LORRAINE

Adam. I was just telling my husband I might vote Democratic next year. Just so I can say I knew you when.

SENATOR WALDEN

You don't already?

LORRAINE

Good luck. To both of you.

The Senator looks over at Vandermeer, the cat who ate the canary. Lorraine clocks this, explaining:

LORRAINE (CONT'D)

Maeve said Simon may join your ticket.

SENATOR WALDEN

(smiles politely, then)

Thanks for your support, Lorraine.

As she goes, the Senator turns to Vandermeer, baffled:

SENATOR WALDEN (CONT'D)

Is that what you two are telling people?

DEAN VANDERMEER

I'm not. But it isn't the most outlandish idea...

SENATOR WALDEN

Isn't it? You're... unseasoned.
(before Dean can retort)

Not to mention, we're from the same state --

DEAN VANDERMEER

Well, I still have a house in Virginia.
I could relocate. Cheney did.

SENATOR WALDEN

So you have thought this through...

DEAN VANDERMEER

You need someone to watch your back,
Adam. And no one does that better than
me. We used to make quite a team...

Adam assesses the situation and diplomatically addresses it:

SENATOR WALDEN

There's six months before I have to
make a decision. So let's not dress
the deer before we shoot it.

(starts to walk away, then
turns back)

And thank Maeve for inviting her
friend... Alex Leandros?

The Dean follows the Senator's gaze to see Leandros and Ruby,
mingling. Leandros shoots a small smile at the Dean.

SENATOR WALDEN (CONT'D)

He just promised me a contribution
that'll cover my entire ad budget.

Adam walks away. Off an irked Simon, afraid he knows what
that's about... Pan to find Jacob, meandering towards:

JACOB

Anna. So, funny thing. I think I
locked myself out of my room...

(off her look)

Ironic, isn't it?

ANNA

Because if you hadn't taken my --

JACOB

Key. I know.

ANNA

Good thing Taylor has his.

JACOB

I think he left...

Jacob shoots a look down the hall, towards the mudroom --
leading Anna to follow his gaze, spotting Taylor's satchel.

ANNA

No, his bag's still here.

Anna crosses to it, digging around inside for the keys.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Just don't lose them.

As she hands the keys to Jacob, something in the bag catches her eye. Taylor's SKETCHBOOK...

It's partially opened to a drawing. A NUDE. Anna smiles, thinking it's her, but as she pulls it out, her smile fades. Just then, a cheerful Taylor appears, seeing this:

TAYLOR

Hey. Where the hell d'ya find that?

Anna looks up at him, disgusted, unable to speak. She takes the book, blowing past him to the backyard...

33

EXT. DEAN'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

33

Anna rushes to Maeve who, seeing her distress, excuses herself from her conversation. Anna thrusts the sketchbook into Maeve's hands. As the Dean joins them...

MAEVE

What's wrong? What is this?

ANNA

You tell me. Independent study?

Maeve opens it. REVEAL the sketches are clearly of her...

DEAN VANDERMEER

Who drew these?

Maeve pales, closing the book quickly, revealing the name on the cover: Taylor Collins.

ANNA

My boyfriend.

This is news to Maeve who looks ashen...

MAEVE

You're dating Taylor Collins? Since when?

ANNA

This summer.

DEAN VANDERMEER

Tell me this isn't happening...

ANNA

Did he ask you to pose for these?
Or was it your idea?

MAEVE

Anna, I had no idea...

ANNA

Oh my god. You slept with him.

Maeve looks down, unable to lie, her face burning in shame as curious onlookers begin to notice the drama, whispering...

DEAN VANDERMEER
Let's take this inside, shall we?

Just then, Taylor enters, searching for Anna. He stops in his tracks when he sees Maeve's sorrowful expression.

As Maeve flees into the house, followed by the Dean, a livid Anna rushes over to Taylor, grabbing a FORK off a nearby table, and before anyone can react --

ANNA
You son-of-a-bitch!

She plunges it towards Taylor's chest -- when a lightning-quick hand SHOOTS OUT and grabs her wrist, stopping the fork an inch from its target... She looks up to see Jacob, protecting his roommate, and Anna from doing something she might regret. Jacob defuses with James Bondian humor --

JACOB
I don't think he's quite done.

With a final, furious glance at Taylor, Anna drops the fork and exits, as Taylor mutters to Jacob:

TAYLOR
Thanks.

As Taylor walks away, off Jacob, wearing a small, satisfied smile as he picks up the fork, replacing it on the table...

34

INT. DEAN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

34

The Dean closes the door, but the party is still seen in the deep b.g. through a window. He turns to a spiraling Maeve:

DEAN VANDERMEER
You swore to me you ended it.

MAEVE
She never told me she had a boyfriend...

DEAN VANDERMEER
Would it have mattered?

MAEVE
Of course.

DEAN VANDERMEER
Why? I didn't.

MAEVE

Simon... You know I love you...

In a flash of rage the Dean picks up one of Maeve's Grecian amphoras (vase) and throws it across the room, SHATTERING it. Clock Jacob outside seeing this, just before Maeve closes the curtain, blocking out the party completely...

DEAN VANDERMEER

I don't know what's more ridiculous, seducing a kid half your age or having Alex Leandros write a check to Adam's presidential campaign!

Maeve takes a beat, happy to have changed subjects.

MAEVE

I didn't want his money to go to waste. And Ruby's a lovely girl, she deserves a chance --

DEAN VANDERMEER

That's not your decision to make. You know how Leandros makes his money. If the press finds out Adam took a contribution from him --

MAEVE

They won't. Unless we want them to.

Dean looks at her: *what are you up to..?*

MAEVE (CONT'D)

You'll never become his running mate without leverage.

DEAN VANDERMEER

That isn't the way to play this --

MAEVE

You can act like the ethical Dean all you want, but I know you. I know what you and your Keysmen do at night --

DEAN VANDERMEER

Just stop --

MAEVE

I may have slept with a student. But you *buried* one.

After a beat, Simon looks up, a murderous glint in his eye.

DEAN VANDERMEER

Too bad it wasn't Taylor Collins.

Off Maeve, eying her husband, worrying what he might do...

35

EXT/INT. DEAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

35

Jacob heads inside, but pauses when he sees Tom arguing with Senator Walden down the hall, heated but quiet. After a beat, the Senator exits, and Jacob crosses to a distraught Tommy:

JACOB

Everything okay?

TOMMY

Yeah... All good.

(then)

You know... Vandermeer told me the only reason I wanted to win today was to humiliate my father.

(then)

He wasn't wrong.

Tommy eyes Jacob, deciding to trust him.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

You've heard of Skull and Key, right?

JACOB

Sure. Who hasn't.

TOMMY

Last year, something happened, I broke a rule, and then --

JACOB

What did you do?

TOMMY

Doesn't matter, the point is my Dad made it his agenda to get me kicked out. Just another way of making sure I can't step out of his shadow.

(then)

Of course, he said it was for my own protection, but...

Jacob takes this in, reeling, then finally:

JACOB

They kicked you out. But what about...

He gestures to Tommy's neck, where only the chain is visible, the key hidden beneath his shirt. Tommy touches it, wary.

TOMMY

I kept it. For...sentimental reasons.

JACOB
(trying not to act crestfallen)
So you're not a member anymore.

TOMMY
You wanted in, didn't you... That
why you were playing up to me?
(off Jacob's wary look)
I'm used to it. But it's too bad.
You would've had my vote tonight.

Tommy claps Jacob's shoulder then goes. Off Jacob, coming to realize this entire journey has been for naught...

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

36 **EXT. ROAD - DUSK**

36

Taylor sits in his car, parked off the road at the edge of the woods. He checks the clock, waiting for something... In the distance behind him, another car approaches, parking behind him. Taylor checks himself in the rearview as the driver exits the second car... But when he sees it's the Dean, his face falls. This was not who he was expecting.

TAYLOR

Crap...

Taylor watches the reflection in his side view mirror, as the Dean reaches back inside his car and pulls out a RIFLE.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

What the hell...

Taylor panics, quickly fishes his keys out of his pocket, but fumbles as he tries to get them to the ignition. They fall to the floor. He goes to retrieve them, then --

DEAN VANDERMEER (O.S.)

Hello, Mr. Collins.

Taylor looks up. The Dean is standing outside his window, the rifle slung over his shoulder.

TAYLOR

Dean Vandermeer, hi, I was just --

DEAN VANDERMEER

Waiting for Maeve?

Taylor looks confused; what is happening?

DEAN VANDERMEER (CONT'D)

I figured you'd be reluctant to meet if I made the request myself, so she made the call.

TAYLOR

I swear I didn't draw those sketches.

DEAN VANDERMEER

This isn't about your artistry, Mr. Collins. You screwed my wife.

TAYLOR

It's not like that, Maeve and I --

DEAN VANDERMEER

Are what? In love? Get out of the car, you idiot.

As Taylor does...

DEAN VANDERMEER (CONT'D)
Do you hunt?

TAYLOR
Um... Ducks...? Once.

DEAN VANDERMEER

Well, I prefer more substantial prey.

The Dean takes the rifle in his hands now, not aiming, just holding. But it's enough...

37 **EXT. WOODS - MOMENTS LATER - DUSK**

37

Taylor walks in front of the Dean, who holds the rifle, scanning the woods as he walks. Taylor pleads --

TAYLOR

I'll never see her again. Or your daughter. And I'll drop out of art.

DEAN VANDERMEER

You'll be dropping all your classes.

TAYLOR

Please, Dean Vandermeer --

The Dean raises a finger to his lips, *whispering*:

DEAN VANDERMEER

Shhhh.

Dean raises his rifle and aims it at Taylor.

TAYLOR

Don't do this --

DEAN VANDERMEER

On your knees.

TAYLOR

(as he does, quivering)
Please, I'll do anything...
(quickly melting, babbling)
I'm begging you, Dean Vandermeer --

BANG. The shot RINGS out. Taylor opens his eyes, miraculously unharmed. He looks up to see the Dean was aiming *over him*. Without glancing at Taylor, the Dean walks through some trees towards a felled DEER. Quite conversationally:

DEAN VANDERMEER

So, Mr. Collins. You're a poli-sci major? You have political aspirations?

TAYLOR

Uh...yeah...?

The Dean inspects the deer. It's been shot in the stomach. Its breathing is labored. It is suffering.

DEAN VANDERMEER

You're going to take a semester off, and in that time, you'll work on Adam Walden's campaign as his personal aide.

Taylor slowly gets off his knees, wiping tears from his eyes.

TAYLOR

I don't understand.

DEAN VANDERMEER

When you return to Braddock in the spring, I'll see to it you have full credits. You'll reap all the rewards without paying the dues. Sounds right up your alley.

TAYLOR

But...why?

DEAN VANDERMEER

So you can keep me apprised of what Walden's up to. Quietly.

TAYLOR

...And he'll give me the job, just like that?

DEAN VANDERMEER

I'll tell him you're a close...
"friend" of the family.
(off Taylor's look)
Do we have a deal?

Taylor slowly nods. The Dean smiles, returning his gaze to the writhing deer.

DEAN VANDERMEER (CONT'D)

Good.

TAYLOR

...Aren't you going to put it out of its misery?

DEAN VANDERMEER

Now where's the fun in that?

As Taylor wonders what the hell he has gotten himself into, we go off the Dean, watching the deer slowing dying...

38 **EXT. MASSACHUSETTS CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DUSK** 38

The sun hangs low in the sky, casting long shadows over the medium-security prison, 22 miles outside Boston.

39 **INT. MASSACHUSETTS CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DUSK** 39

The visitation room is full of PARTNERS and FAMILIES reuniting with CONVICTS. Jacob (incognito, dark-rimmed glasses, baseball hat, etc.) is patted down by an OFFICER before taking a seat to wait... After a beat, he hears:

PRISON GUARD (O.S.)
Radha Nayar...

Jacob looks up to see RADHA (40's, British accent, still beautiful despite the harsh lights and conditions) enter. She sits across from Jacob, taking him in... After a beat:

RADHA
Rough first week, huh?

JACOB
(dropping his accent)
Better than yours, I bet.
(then)
I'm getting my own suite. My roommate
decided to take a semester off.

RADHA
Did he. Well done.

She smiles at the good news. He glances around. We realize it's a carefully crafted conversation to avoid exposure...

JACOB
He's going to work for the Senator.
But he wants to keep in touch.

RADHA
You should.

JACOB
Classes are fine. I don't care for
the faculty much.

RADHA
Didn't think you would.

JACOB
One seems decent. Wheeler?

That name land on Radha, putting her on edge... Quietly:

RADHA

No. You can't trust him.
(looks around, resuming:)
Or anyone. That's doubly important
once they select you tonight --

JACOB

I don't think that's going to
happen...
(off her look)
I was wrong about Tommy.

RADHA

How could that be?

JACOB

(shrugs, then)
The whole thing was a long shot. I
wasn't ready.

Radha looks down, a glint of disappointment, before smiling:

RADHA

You're learning. That's what
college is for, right?

JACOB

But what if I already failed?

RADHA

She'll forgive you.

As Radha takes his hand, Jacob looks down, *remembering...*

40

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

40

*Light peaks in through shabby curtains. A broken Eli sits at
the end of the made-up bed, as an ANCHOR reports:*

ANCHOR (ON TV)

*Braddock Professor Radha Nayar has been
arrested for the murder of Julia
Hennessy, whose body was found
yesterday in The Hoosic River...*

*A loud POUNDING on the door startles Jacob. Wary, he goes to
open it... No one's there. Just a small cardboard box. He
picks it up, closes the door, and starts to open it...*

ANCHOR (ON TV) (CONT'D)

*Sources allege Nayar disposed of the
student's body after Hennessy overdosed
in Nayar's home. Nayar is facing
charges of reckless homicide, drug
trafficking, and obstruction of
justice...*

Inside the box, Eli finds the Skull and Key yearbook; books filled with scrawlings; surveillance photos of our various players: the Waldens, the Vandermeers... Eli looks up to the TV to see Dean Vandermeer, flanked by Maeve and Anna...

DEAN VANDERMEER (ON TV)
*Julia touched many people's lives
during her short time here. Our
hearts go out to her family...*

*Jacob looks back at the box, finding a buckslip that reads:
"Start Here -- Jacob Darlow +44 7351121278". Curious, Eli
dials on his cell. After a beat, a MAN'S VOICE answers,
speaking in that now familiar British dialect:*

MAN'S VOICE (THROUGH PHONE)
Hello?

ELI (ON PHONE)
*Hi... Sorry... This may sound
strange, but I just got a note from
Radha Nayar that said I should --*

MAN'S VOICE (THROUGH PHONE)
*Eli. I've been expecting your call.
How soon can you be in London?*

Off Eli, as he wonders who Jacob Darlow is... PRELAP MUSIC:

41 **OMITTED** 41

42 **INT. STONEBRIDGE TAVERN - NIGHT** 42

*A local college-town haunt. The JUKEBOX blares, Red Sox
paraphernalia decks the walls. It's happy hour, but not for
Anna, who sits with Tommy at the bar, nursing a beer.*

ANNA
I'm an idiot.

TOMMY
How could you have known?

ANNA
*Well, the first clue was that he
liked me...*

TOMMY
A lot of guys like you.

ANNA
Evidently they like my mom, too.

TOMMY

You know why this happened... You both want the same thing.

ANNA

Gross.

TOMMY

That's not what -- I meant love. The difference is, you deserve it.

ANNA

(smiles sadly, then)

You know, I never told you, but -- when you used to visit me, after my mother had me declared "mentally incompetent," the nurses all thought you were my boyfriend. I went along with it.

She kisses his cheek, then stands to go.

TOMMY

Hey Anna... What are you gonna do about tap tonight?

ANNA

I guess I have to find a replacement.

TOMMY

Can I make a suggestion?

Off Anna, wondering whose name he's going to propose...

43

INT. DEAN'S HOUSE - DEAN'S STUDY - NIGHT

43

The Dean sits at his desk looking at Taylor's SKETCHBOOK, at the nudes of his wife... After a beat, Maeve enters.

DEAN VANDERMEER

He certainly captured you.
(off her look)
I took care of it.

Maeve nods, looks at the drawing.

MAEVE

It's better than his usual work... The shadowing, the contours --

DEAN VANDERMEER

How do I respond to that? "I guess he was inspired."

The Dean shuts the book. After a beat.

MAEVE

Anna won't speak to me.

DEAN VANDERMEER

Good for her.

She looks at him, hurt, but knowing she deserves it...

MAEVE

I'm going to bed... But I meant to tell you, before all this happened: there was a painting outside my classroom. By Julia Hennessy. I'd passed by it so many times I stopped seeing it. I didn't realize... She painted the key.

DEAN VANDERMEER

Take it down.

MAEVE

I already did. As soon as that boy from Oxford pointed it out.

Maeve exits as we stay with the Dean, those words resonating...

44

EXT. BRADDOCK COLLEGE - MAIN QUAD - NIGHT

44

Find Jacob walking past blazing BONFIRES, students drinking, partying; a full-on bacchanalia otherwise known as Tap Night. Various costumed characters run around, a girl dressed as a DEER, a guy dressed as MOSES... ANGLE ON a WHITE-ROBED FIGURE in a WHITE MASK as he taps a GIRL thrilled to be chosen.

Jacob clocks Phoebe on the outskirts. He approaches her.

JACOB

Back to the scene of the crime?

PHOEBE

I don't know what you're talking about.

She walks away. He follows by her side.

JACOB

No? But you heard some kid was suspended for defacing the tomb.

PHOEBE

You think I framed him? Not my style.

JACOB
(as he stops)
Phoebe. What did they do to you?

His sincere tone halts her... but she's still wary.

PHOEBE
Only what they've done to a dozen
other girls.
(diffusing)
I'm not that special.

He looks at Phoebe, feeling for her, wondering if his sister was one of those girls...

PHOEBE (CONT'D)
So now what. You going to turn me
in for what I did?

JACOB
Me? No. What was it --?
(recalling)
"I don't give a rat's ass."

PHOEBE
(a small smile, then)
Then why all the questions?

JACOB
How else would I get to know you?

He smiles warmly, then walks away. Off Phoebe, watching after him, a little bit taken...

JACOB (V.O.)
A renowned sociologist once said if
humanity's greatest trait is
speech, its greatest power is
silence...

45 **INT. JACOB'S SUITE - BEDROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK** 45

Behind closed doors, Jacob sketches the nudes of Maeve, referencing the photos he snapped outside the art studio...

JACOB (V.O.)
I've discovered a world that
thrives in that silence. A place
where secrets breed like rabbits...

46 **EXT. BRADDOCK BOATHOUSE - HOOSIC RIVER - DAY - FLASHBACK** 46

Pre-regatta, Jacob slyly slips the sketchbook into Taylor's bag. He clocks charcoal on his hand, then washes it off...

JACOB (V.O.)
And while some may be easy to expose...

47 **EXT. BRADDOCK COLLEGE - MAIN QUAD - NIGHT (PRESENT)** 47

As Jacob nears his dorm, he sees a BLACK-CLOAKED, DEATH-LIKE FIGURE lurking in the shadows. Jacob stops...

JACOB (V.O.)
Others are much more shrouded...

The Figure approaches, handing him a black velvet box before disappearing towards the tomb of Skull and Key. Reveal a crestfallen Phoebe across the quad having witnessed this...

48 **INT. SKULL AND KEY TOMB - HALLWAY - NIGHT** 48

The Cloaked Figure walks through the marble hall, descending down a shadowy staircase. After a beat, another figure enters and descends. And then another...

JACOB (V.O.)
For the greater the secret, the
larger the army needed to protect it.

The CAMERA pans up to the club's motto, carved into the wall in Ancient Attic Greek. Above it hangs an antique BOW AND ARROW, reminding us of Thomas' imminent death...

JACOB (V.O.)
One I look forward to fighting...

49 **INT. JACOB'S SUITE - BEDROOM - NIGHT** 49

Alone in his room, Jacob opens the velvet box to reveal a note marked with a wax seal -- the Skull and Keys emblem. The note reads simply: "Be ready."

JACOB (V.O.)
...in the name of revenge.

Off a resolute Jacob, looking out his window to the secret tomb, wondering what awaits him inside...

END OF PILOT