

(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

# TEXAS SWITCH

by

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**INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY**

We OPEN from behind a large audience of high school students and their teachers. The auditorium screen shows the end title card of a film.

OZ, a young woman, stands in the back. She stands still, but her eyes flick over the audience. She wears a white button up shirt, red school vest and khakis, shirt sleeves rolled up.

There is an absence of applause. The audience's expressions, lit by the glow of the scene, are mixed. Shocked. Aghast. Awe-struck. Mind-blown.

Students whisper excitedly to each other, astonished by what they've just seen. Teachers do the same, though not with excitement.

A CLOSE UP of a middle-aged woman in the center of the first row, MRS. PRICHARDSON. Unlike the rest of the audience, her face is emotionless.

She raises an eyebrow.

**INT. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE - DAY**

Match cut on Mrs. Prichardson's eyebrow raise as the film's soundtrack cuts to a stark and deathly quiet room.

The camera pulls back, revealing four other teachers - two sit to her left and two sit to her right. All five stare towards the camera. A pen clicks.

The camera cuts between the teachers and Oz. Teachers. Oz. Teachers. Oz. The teachers start to shift, uncomfortable. Mrs. Prichardson remains as still as a gargoyle.

MR. BARLOWE, seated next to Diane, breaks the silence.

MR. BARLOWE

(with authority)

Well, Osanna. Do you have anything to say for yourself before we get started?

Oz sits calmly at a different table, the subject of their attention.

OZ

Oz.

MR. BARLOWE

What?

OZ

I go by Oz.

Mrs. Prichardson's mouth turns up ever-so-slightly at the corners. It's a little menacing.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Noted. Now, Oz, why don't you tell us what happened?

Oz returns the grin - she only deals with the top dog. Mr. Barlowe tries to hide his annoyance.

Oz makes a show of getting ready to talk: stretching one arm over her head, then the other. She windmills her shoulders, following that by cracking her back on her chair.

Diane's eyebrow twitches up in mild bemusement.

Oz cracks her neck to each side, then takes a sip of water from the glass next to her. Finished with her display, she leans forward with a grin.

Mr. Barlowe and all the other teachers - except Diane - lean forward in anticipation.

Oz's eyes flick between all of them. Time to begin.

She opens her mouth to speak as we CUT TO:

**TITLE CARD: TEXAS SWITCH**

FADE TO:

**EXT. BRENTWOOD MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY**

We see an ornate red and gold sign that reads "Brentwood Private Academy". We pull away from the sign to reveal a wrought iron fence and a sprawling campus of large brick buildings.

Cars pull up to the Brentwood entrance and students say goodbye to their parents and enter.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Eight Months Ago..."

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

The camera moves through a crowded school hallway, maneuvering around GROUPS OF STUDENTS as they get ready for the day. Snippets of conversation can be heard as we pass different groups.

STUDENT GROUP 1

Are you guys excited for the new year? I heard that Mr. Bradley's class...

STUDENT GROUP 2

... went to Switzerland this summer? Well, my family went to Amsterdam, and...

FOOTBALL JOCKS

... this year is gonna be different, Chelmsford's coach got fired because of a scandal between him and...

RICH KIDS

... my dad let me work at his firm all summer, if you could see the deals he made you would be so...

The camera lingers on a sign posted on a cork board on the wall:

SENIOR CAPSTONE APPLICATIONS TODAY

The camera continues through the students for a few moments until settling on an open locker covered in sticky notes.

It slams shut to reveal CHLOE. She wears a uniform kilt and a varsity jacket and is on the taller side.

CHLOE

I'm forgetting something.

Her face scrunches as she scans the sticky notes. Rack focus on one that says OZ. Chloe remembers.

CHLOE (cont'd)

Shit!

She whirls to the cork board and the application sign.

CHLOE (cont'd)

Shit!

She checks her watch, a Hello Kitty Timex.

CHLOE (cont'd)

Fuck!

Chloe sprints down the hall, almost barging through THREE MUSIC STUDENTS.

MUSIC STUDENT

Hey! Watch the bassoon!

CHLOE

Sorry!

**INT. CAFETERIA - DAY**

Chloe sprints through the cafeteria as students grab breakfast from a large and extravagant buffet. Chloe snags a pre-prepared breakfast sandwich as she continues running.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

We see the capstone application sign again. A student council member (indicated by the large "student council" pin on their shirt) approaches it and tacks a piece of paper under it. The paper reads:

Notice:

Location moved from Alfonse Auditorium to Wickens Gymnasium.

**INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY**

Chloe sprints down the aisle of the auditorium from earlier, now empty. She vaults onto the stage, holding the sandwich in her mouth.

Behind the curtains, several students work on painting set pieces. They look up at Chloe, and she waves.

MRS. COOK, the theater teacher, leans out from behind a rolling wall.

MRS. COOK

Hi Chloe! Coming to auditions today?

CHLOE

Sorry Mrs. Cook, I have soccer tryouts this afternoon.

MRS. COOK

Hmmph. I guess not everyone can be a singing athlete. Roy, paint faster!

A student that looks like a Walmart version of Troy Baker from High School Musical yelps and resumes painting.

Chloe waves apologetically and dodges a stage curtain. Her pace slows as she nears a set of double doors.

**INT. THEATER AND ARTS HALLWAY - DAY**

Chloe exits the second set of double doors into a long hallway. A variety of student artwork lines the walls.

Chloe passes class doors, and we get glimpses inside: figure painting, pottery, metalworking, drawing, graffiti. Brentwood has invested some serious money in the arts.

Chloe stops in front of the last door on the left. A large red light is embedded in the wall above the door. It's off.

She checks her watch and exhales heavily, chomps the last bite of her sandwich, then enters.

**INT. FILM STUDIO - DAY**

Compared to the rest of the art departments Chloe passed, the film studio is... underfunded. The room is small, ringed by large metal shelves. The shelves are sparsely populated, the lack of gear emphasized by the open space.

Chloe fumbles for the lights, turning them on.

Oz is sprawled in the middle of the floor, facedown in a pile of art supplies.

CHLOE

Oz!

Chloe rushes over, pulling Oz out of the pile. Oz's face is half-covered in glitter.

OZ

Hmm? I'm awake.

CHLOE

What are you doing on the ground?

OZ

(yawns)

Was just finishing up for today. What time is it?

Chloe checks her watch.

CHLOE

It's "you're gonna be late if you don't move your ass right now" o'clock.

Oz peeks over Chloe's arm at the watch, then yelps.

OZ

Shit! You said you would make sure I was up!

Lunging at a poster tube on the ground, Oz scrambles to her feet. Chloe tries to fix Oz's clothes, but it's futile - half of what Oz is wearing isn't up to code.

CHLOE

What do you think I'm doing? Why are you wearing sweatpants?!

OZ

I needed to be comfortable!

CHLOE

This is like the *worst* day to be wearing sweatpants!

OZ

I can't create if I'm not comfortable! You know that!

Chloe throws an extra uniform skirt at Oz that she pulled from her school bag.

CHLOE

You know, for someone who thinks they're so smart you can be a real idiot sometimes!

**INT. THEATER AND ARTS HALLWAY - DAY**

The film studio door bursts open as Oz practically tumbles into the hall. She recovers and sprints in the direction Chloe came from, clutching the poster tube.

Chloe exits the studio, yelling after Oz.

CHLOE  
You have three minutes to get there!

OZ  
(not looking back)  
I owe you!

CHLOE  
I'm a lifesaver!

**INT. BACKSTAGE - DAY**

Oz sprints through the backstage, dodging a ladder being moved by a student.

A costume rack rolls in front of Oz, and she artfully maneuvers through the open space underneath it.

**INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY**

The double doors leading backstage open and Oz skids out. She adjusts her tie, her hair, and tries to rub some more glitter off her face.

Collected now, Oz strides confidently towards the front of the stage.

MRS. COOK  
Oz? What are you doing back here?

Mrs. Cook emerges from behind a different set piece, hair frazzled.

OZ  
Hey Mrs. Cook, how are you?

MRS. COOK  
Overworked and stressed, as usual.  
Too much to do, not enough time to do  
it. I wanted to build--

OZ  
Sorry Mrs. Cook, pressed for time.  
Need to get to the capstone  
applications!

Oz turns to run, then stops.

OZ (cont'd)  
Actually... I'm here already.



Oz looks out into the empty auditorium. Where is everyone?

OZ (cont'd)  
(to herself)  
I didn't miss it, did I? No, I know I  
made it in time...

MRS. COOK  
You didn't hear? The capstone  
applications got moved to Wickens  
Gymnasium. I needed the auditorium  
for set building!

Oz whirls and strides to Mrs. Cook.

OZ  
Wickens?

MRS. COOK  
Yes.

OZ  
The *Wickens* gymnasium?! The one all  
the way across campus!?

MRS. COOK  
(flustered)  
Yes, Oz. We're building sets in here  
and the gym --

Oz's lips tighten into a thin, stressed smile. She doesn't  
have time for this!

OZ  
Thank you Mrs. Cook! I'll stop by  
later to help out with the sets, I  
promise!

Before Mrs. Cook can respond Oz is off the stage and  
sprinting up the aisle.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - DAY**

Oz races across campus, clutching the poster tube. Her run  
is reminiscent of the T1000 in Terminator 2.

As she passes the camera, SUPERIMPOSE: "The Pitch"

**INT. WICKENS GYMNASIUM - DAY**

A student stands in the middle of the gym, spotlight on them. They point to a poster board with images.

STUDENT PRESENTER

So you see, the twist of my film  
where the second man *also* has a gun  
is what exposes the failures of our  
society as a whole.

A hand with crimson red nail polish writes something on the student's application, then sets the pen down with a sigh.

We pan up to see Mrs. Prichardson, bored. Seated next to her are Mr. Barlowe and another teacher who might be asleep.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

That sounds very interesting. And  
what is the name of your film again?

STUDENT PRESENTER

I'm calling it "Two Men and a Gun".

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Original.

In front of her are two stamps. She picks one up and stamps the application: approved.

Mr. Barlowe leans in to her.

MR. BARLOWE

(whispering)

Remind me again why we save the film  
proposals for last?

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Film budgets are too high. If we let  
them go first, there won't be any  
money left for the other projects.  
Next applicant, please.

The student leaves with their poster board, and another student takes their place.

At the far end of the gym, the door opens quietly and Oz slips in. She sneaks up to a line of students and sits at the end of it next to CHESTER.

He turns around, and we instantly feel the snobbiness radiating off him.

CHESTER  
You're late, Oz.

OZ  
So what Chester?

CHESTER  
Tardiness gives you an unfair  
advantage due to extra time to  
prepare. The rules clearly state that  
late students aren't allowed to apply  
and that--

Oz hands him a folded up \$10 bill.

OZ  
Here.

CHESTER  
What's this?  
(looks at her)  
You know you can't bribe me, right?  
My father is a shareholder in Ebay.

Oz winks.

OZ  
Look inside.

Chester opens it. Inside is a folded up note; written on the  
top is "Annie's phone number".

Chester blushes.

OZ (cont'd)  
Open it, Chester.

Chester obliges. Inside the note is not Annie's phone  
number, but the words: "I know what you did in Switzerland  
in 2007."

Oz leans in, and gone is the nice demeanor.

OZ (cont'd)  
Keep your mouth shut about me being  
late, or the whole school will know.

Chester nods, pale as a ghost.

**STUDENT PRESENTATION MONTAGE:**

A quick montage of students presenting a variety of films. Early 2000's rock music scores the montage.

Titles include "A Day in My Shoes", "The Meaning of Life", "Party Scene 4", and "Adults, but Children".

Between each of these titles, Mrs. Prichardson stamps approved.

Oz rolls her eyes and checks the clock.

Two students who look an awful lot like Bill and Ted present "William & Theodore's Marvelous Escapade"

WILLIAM AND THEODORE  
(at same time)  
Marvelous!

Mr. Barlowe looks at Mrs. Prichardson.

MR. BARLOWE  
A little derivative.

Mrs. Prichardson nods and raises an eyebrow, then stamps approved.

Chester presents second to last, a film titled "The Answer."

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Answer to what?

CHESTER  
(smugly)  
Everything.

The teachers nod, impressed. Approved.

Oz is the last one left. She grins, then leaves her seat.

**END OF MONTAGE**

The score ends on a drawn out guitar note as Oz stands in front of her poster, a crazy mess of glitter and ribbons and pictures of... cowboys and knights? She's sweaty and breathing hard.

All three teachers are fully awake and staring at her, eyes wide.

MR. BARLOWE  
(under his breath)  
My... god.

Oz smiles widely, proud of herself. She knows she blew their pants off.

Mrs. Prichardson's eyebrow is arched higher than ever. Even her mouth is agape.

The three teachers look at each other, then back at Oz. Mrs. Prichardson stamps something on Oz's application, but we don't see what.

**EXT. SOCCER FIELD - DAY**

Oz sits on a set of metal bleachers, watching the girls soccer team practice. Chloe scores a goal and celebrates.

Oz looks down at her application, and we see what Diane stamped: Denied.

Oz folds the application in half as Chloe runs up.

CHLOE  
Hey! How'd it go, Oz?

OZ  
Eh.

Chloe sits. She knows her best friend and what this means.

CHLOE  
They denied you?

OZ  
Mrs. Prichardson said it was "too fantastical". Like Chester having an answer for literally *everything* isn't crazy either.

CHLOE  
Wait, that's what his was?

Oz nods, watching the practice.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
What a dick. So what are you gonna do now?

OZ

I guess I'll just make it on my own.  
It would've been nice to have the  
financial aid from the capstone fund,  
but I can figure things out.

Oz crumples up the application. The two of them sit in  
silence for a bit.

OZ (cont'd)

You thought about college yet?

CHLOE

Yeah, I want to go somewhere on the  
East Coast. Northeastern, maybe?

OZ

Not Harvard?

CHLOE

Nah, I know my limits.

Chloe and Oz chuckle.

CHLOE (cont'd)

What about you, have you thought  
about it?

OZ

If I could have it my way, this would  
be the end of my school life. Just go  
out to California and make movies  
after this.

CHLOE

... But?

OZ

But my parents want me to get a  
degree. I'll probably go to Columbia  
or NYU, get a bachelor's from a city  
school before heading west.

CHLOE

What are you, a pioneer?

Oz stands up and pretends to survey the land from the  
bleachers.

OZ

Avast, gold ahead! Onwards men!

CHLOE  
(laughing)  
You sound like a pirate.

OZ  
Same thing, really.

Oz plops back down onto the bleachers.

OZ (cont'd)  
I'm honestly not too worried about it. I know my grades aren't amazing but I feel like I could get into any college I want to go to.

**INT. COLLEGE COUNSELING OFFICE - DAY**

MR. MURPHY, a large balding man, stares at Oz in frustration.

MR. MURPHY  
Oz, with your grades, you aren't going to get into any college you say you want to go to.

OZ  
What?

Mr. Murphy sits back in his chair and massages his temple. The walls of his small office are covered in small college banners.

MR. MURPHY  
Your grades, to put it bluntly, are terrible. I don't think you've gotten more than three A's in your time at Brentwood.

OZ  
Come on, I have to have gotten more than *three*, that's ridiculous!

MR. MURPHY  
Believe me, I checked. And they're all in home room. You may very well be the first student I've advised that doesn't get in anywhere.

Oz slumps in her chair. A beat passes, and Mr. Murphy feels bad - mostly for himself.

MR. MURPHY (cont'd)  
Look, grades aren't always the way into college. Sometimes a well-rounded student involved in a variety of extracurriculars can rise above poor scores.

Mr. Murphy pulls out a small notebook and flips to a blank page, clicking a pen.

MR. MURPHY (cont'd)  
You list what you're involved in, and I'll write it down.

Oz sits and looks at him.

MR. MURPHY (cont'd)  
Ready when you are.

Oz looks up and thinks, squinching her eyebrows in concentration.

After some silence, Mr. Murphy slowly looks up. He looks even more concerned.

OZ  
Can't think of anything?

MR. MURPHY  
What? No sports teams? Clubs? Jobs? Committees?

OZ  
Well, there was... actually no, nevermind.

Mr. Murphy's head drops onto his desk.

MR. MURPHY  
Oh my. Is there *anything* you do?

OZ  
Well, I make movies, but--

Mr. Murphy is back to life and excited.

MR. MURPHY  
Movies!! That's great! Do you have a portfolio? Anything to show an admissions committee?

OZ  
Well, sort of... here, take a look.



Oz passes Mr. Murphy her phone. He taps on a video and watches it. We hear lots of strange sound effects and the Wilhelm scream.

MR. MURPHY

I'm... not sure what I'm looking at.  
Is there anything more, uh, normal?

Oz takes her phone back, a little annoyed.

OZ

That *is* normal.

MR. MURPHY

Yes, of course! It's just not really presentable to an admissions team... it's, uh, too short. And stuff. Do you have anything more developed?

OZ

Well, I applied to do a film for my senior capstone project--

MR. MURPHY

I see!

Oz gives him a look for interrupting her.

OZ

-- *but* it got denied.

Mr. Murphy's face falls.

MR. MURPHY

Ah, I see.

Both of them sit in silence for a while. We watch Oz's face as an idea slowly blossoms in her head.

OZ

Mr. Murphy, do you think Mrs. Prichardson would let me apply again if I wanted to?

MR. MURPHY

Uh, well...

OZ

What if you explained my situation to her and I presented something more... "normal"?

Mr. Murphy leans forward, stroking his chin.

MR. MURPHY

Hmm...

OZ

Think about it Mr. Murphy - it might just be my ticket into college.

Mr. Murphy sees the vision.

MR. MURPHY

Which would mean my record stays unbroken!

Oz looks a little annoyed.

OZ

Yes, your record would still be perfect. What do you say?

MR. MURPHY

Alright, I'll try to get you a second chance.

Oz stands up and salutes him, then leaves. Mr. Murphy sighs and slumps in his chair, then picks up his phone.

MR. MURPHY (cont'd)

(into phone)

Hi Diane, do you have a moment?

**INT. OZ'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Oz sits at her desk, typing quickly. We see a glimpse of the screen - she's writing a new script.

OZ

(to herself)

God this script is *Citizen Kane* level boring.

On her walls are posters of famous movies, all very popular. One poster is of the heist crew in *Ocean's 11*.

Oz leans back from the laptop and inhales from a cigarette, which devolves into a coughing fit. We see a cigarette tin next to her, labeled "prop cigarettes."

She looks at the *Ocean's 11* poster. Close up of George Clooney's roguish smile. Oz smiles back.

OZ (cont'd)

I'll make you proud, Danny.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - DAY**

Mrs. Prichardson reads something in her office. The room is large and neatly organized. A nameplate on her desk, matching the Brentwood colors, reads:

Diane Prichardson

Dean of Students

Mrs. Prichardson finishes reading and looks up. Oz sits across the desk from her, twiddling her thumbs.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Well, Oz. It's very different from your proposal yesterday.

OZ

Yeah.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

It fits the Brentwood image...

Mrs. Prichardson raises an eyebrow slightly.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Though I am concerned you aren't as invested in it as someone making a capstone film should be.

The thumb twiddling stops.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Are you certain that this is a project you want to commit to? I'm only going to approve it if you really intend on giving this your all.

Oz leans forward.

OZ

I've never been more certain in my life. I really, *really* want to make this movie.

Under the table, Oz digs her fingernails into her knees - she's lying

Mrs. Prichardson flips back to the cover page. The title reads "Something Ordinary"

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
I like the title choice. Subtle and  
nuanced.

Oz smiles thinly, trying to maintain her image.

Mrs. Prichardson reaches into her desk and pulls out a  
stamp, then stamps Oz's new application. Approved.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - DAY**

Oz and Chloe jump up and down in joy on a section of grass.

CHLOE  
You did it! That's amazing! I'm so  
proud of you!

OZ  
Thank you! The script sucks so much!

Chloe doesn't fully process this for a second.

CHLOE  
I'm so happy for y-- what?

Oz sits down, still laughing

OZ  
It's so bad! Genuinely the worst  
thing I've ever written!

Chloe sits down with Oz.

CHLOE  
I know it's not your first idea,  
but...

OZ  
Don't worry Chloe, it's a good thing.  
I *wanted* it to be bad.

CHLOE  
Okay. Explain.

OZ  
Okay, I figured - why not flip the  
script? If Mrs. Prichardson wouldn't  
approve what I do like, then she'd  
probably approve something I don't  
like.

(MORE)

OZ (cont'd)  
So I wrote the most basic,  
uninteresting, psuedo-philosophical  
screenplay and guess what, I was  
right!

Chloe frowns.

CHLOE  
Alright so you got it approved, yay.  
But now you have to make this, right?

The chapel bells tolls. Oz stands up and brushes dirt off of her.

OZ  
I'm not gonna make it.

CHLOE  
What the hell do you mean?

OZ  
I gotta go, gonna be late for class!  
I'll explain later!

Chloe is still sitting down.

CHLOE  
(calling after Oz)  
You better explain later!

Oz is already gone. Chloe shakes her head.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
She's actually lost her mind.

Chloe's phone dings as texts come in from Oz:

*btw - need a crew. reliable crew  
help me find one pretty please? meeting tomorrow*

### **CREW ASSEMBLY MONTAGE**

Quick montage of Oz and Chloe finding students to be on their crew.

Oz pins up fliers all over the art and theater department. Mrs. Cook and the theater students find several taped to their set pieces.

Chloe's fingers fly over her phone keyboard as she blasts people with texts.

We see students in a wide variety of Brentwood settings (classes, gym, sports, cafeteria, bathroom) receive texts.

Oz and Chloe shop in a convenience store for snacks.

The two of them draw up plans and write lists, of what we aren't quite sure.

**INT. PLANNING CLASSROOM - DAY**

A group of fifteen or so students sit in a classroom, facing the board. Oz is writing on the chalkboard. Chloe stands next to her, arms crossed.

STEVEN, a sophomore, leans forward.

STEVEN

Uh, am I the only one wondering what's going on?

Mumbles of agreement from the other students. Oz finishes writing and turns around.

OZ

Steven, right? Sophomore?

STEVEN

Yeah.

OZ

Don't worry, I'm going to explain in a second. First things first though, how many of you have any experience with filmmaking?

The seated students look around at each other. A few hands go up.

Oz smiles.

OZ (cont'd)

Well, some is better than none. Not to worry, though - it's not rocket science. So, about why I asked you all to meet me.

**INT. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE - DAY**

Back to the present. Papers rustle as all five teachers finish looking through the script for "Something Ordinary."

Mrs. Prichardson looks up from the script to Oz.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
You say you wrote this in a single  
night?

OZ  
Yes, I did.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Hmmm.

**INT. PLANNING CLASSROOM - DAY**

OZ  
For those of you who don't know me  
personally, I'm Oz, and I need your  
help.

Oz starts pacing slowly, looking at all of the students.

OZ (cont'd)  
Looking around, everyone here is very  
different. There's athletes,  
mathletes, theater kids, art kids,  
day students, boarding students. On a  
surface level, there's nothing tying  
us together.

Oz clasps her hands in front of her.

OZ (cont'd)  
Except one thing: at one point or  
another during your time at  
Brentwood, each and every one of you  
have been dangerously close to  
flunking out. Except Chloe, but she's  
okay.

The students all look at each other, murmuring. Chloe grins.

OZ (cont'd)  
(to all)  
I'm the worst offender. Every year  
here I've barely passed, and now it  
looks like I won't be going to  
college unless I can make this film  
happen. I can't make a film without a  
crew, and you all are the people I  
can trust the most.

**INT. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE - DAY**

Mr. Barlowe looks over a list of students.

MR. BARLOWE

So, Oz, I have here a list of students who worked on your film. I have to say, I don't get how you picked them.

OZ

I just found a lot of people that hadn't realized they were filmmakers yet.

Mr. Barlowe grunts.

**INT. PLANNING CLASSROOM - DAY**

Jonathan, a student athlete, raises his hand.

JONATHAN

I have a question. Why are we being so secretive about meeting? All the other capstone crews have met in public places with a faculty adviser.

OZ

Good question, Jonathan. The reason why we're meeting off the books is because I have a special plan.

Oz turns back to the chalkboard, writing.

**INT. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE - DAY**

MR. BARLOWE

From what you're telling us, it appears as though you lied to the capstone committee and Mrs. Prichardson herself?

Oz shakes her head.

OZ

I never lied to anyone.

Mr. Barlowe scoffs and crosses his arms in disbelief.

MR. BARLOWE

So, what, you made two films?



He looks at the other teachers, amused at the thought of such a notion.

**INT. PLANNING CLASSROOM - DAY**

OZ  
We're going to make two films.

The classroom is silent for a moment. Oz and Chloe watch the reactions of the other students.

STEVEN  
Sorry, what?

OZ  
We're going to be making two films instead of one. Granted, one will be so bad that calling it a film seems generous.

The students all look at each other and start to murmur. Chloe gives Oz a look - get to the point.

OZ (cont'd)  
Okay, who here knows what a Texas Switch is?

Nobody raises their hand except for Chloe.

OZ (cont'd)  
Chloe, care to help me demonstrate?

Chloe steps forward and stretches her arms.

OZ (cont'd)  
(to the group)  
For those who don't know, the Texas switch is an old filmmaking technique where the stunt person --

Oz gestures to Chloe.

OZ (cont'd)  
-- secretly switches place with an actor at the beginning or end of a stunt so it looks like the actor performed the stunt. No cuts, no CGI. Just good framing and timing.

Oz pulls two identical baseball hats out of a bag and hands one to Chloe.

They both put the hats on. Oz takes a step away from her and crouches on the ground, hidden behind a desk.

OZ (cont'd)  
(slightly muffled)  
If Chloe walks towards me, then falls  
when she gets here...

Chloe does what Oz describes, pretending to comically fall when she reaches where she's hiding. She disappears behind the desk and Oz pops up, brushing herself off.

OZ (cont'd)  
... I can pop up and, if Chloe looked  
like me, it would look like I had  
been acting the entire scene.

Chloe stands up next to Oz, dirty. She gives a thumbs up and a wide smile.

STEVEN  
So... we're going to Texas switch  
these two films we're making?

Oz points the extended pointer at him.

OZ  
Bingo. The capstone committee denied  
my first idea - this one is the  
"actor". I submitted a second, much  
worse idea, which they greenlit -  
that's the "stunt double".

Oz taps the blackboard as she talks, emphasizing "actor" and "stunt double".

OZ (cont'd)  
We're going to make both films,  
shooting the stunt double under the  
supervision of the capstone committee  
and the actor when the committee has  
their backs to us.

She turns back to the students, who are all looking at her.

OZ (cont'd)  
It's going to take a lot of time and  
effort, and it definitely won't be  
easy. If this doesn't sound like your  
cup of tea, feel free to help  
yourself to as many snacks as you  
like and head out, no hard feelings.

Everyone looks towards the table of snacks, then back at Oz. Several students grab food, then stand and leave. Oz watches them, then turns to the remaining students.

OZ (cont'd)  
Everyone else on board? Good. Now here's what has to happen...

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - DAY**

Mrs. Prichardson sits at her desk, elbows on the table and hands clasped in front of her mouth.

In front of her are both of Oz's scripts. She looks between the two of them.

Mrs. Prichardson leans back and looks out her office window. She can see Oz and Chloe, accompanied by a group of students, walking across campus.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Hmm...

Her gaze returns to the two scripts. Her eyebrow raises and she frowns - something isn't right.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - DAY**

Outside, Oz and Chloe stride across campus with their new crew in tow. The chapel bell tolls and students begin exiting class buildings, heading home for the day.

Oz and crew walk in confident slow motion, and the camera pans up as we SUPERIMPOSE: "Pre-Production"

**EXT. BRENTWOOD MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY**

Oz and her crew exit Brentwood's front gate.

OZ  
Alright, you all know your tasks, right?

CREW  
(in varying forms)  
Yes.

OZ  
Amazing. Let's make it happen.

**INT. THRIFT STORE - EVENING**

Oz and Chloe stop by the local thrift store.

OZ

Remember, the crazier the better.

Chloe nods. They walk around, pulling the craziest items they can find - leopard print suits, a wedding dress, a cowboy shirt, etc.

**INT. SPIRIT HALLOWEEN - NIGHT**

Steven and AALIYAH, a junior, enter a Spirit Halloween store.

STEVEN

Woah.

AALIYAH

Come on Steven, we've got a job to do.

Steven gets dragged to the back by Aaliyah. They stop in front of the props section.

AALIYAH (cont'd)

Woah.

STEVEN

You said it.

Cut to them walking out of the Spirit with several bags of props.

**EXT. TOWN - DAY**

Jonathan and CRAIG, another athlete, sprint around town and take pictures of a wide variety of locations with a big camera.

They shoot under a bridge, at the local bar, in the park, at the bank, outside local businesses, etc. They're wearing shades and look *super* suspicious.

A police officer stops them.

POLICE OFFICER

You boys are taking pictures of an awful lot of businesses around here...

Jonathan and Craig look at each other nervously.

JONATHAN  
We're location scouting!

CRAIG  
For a movie we're making, not a robbery!

Jonathan elbows Craig.

JONATHAN  
Dude! You're making it sound like we are criminals!

The policeman crosses his arms and shakes his head.

POLICE OFFICER  
I've got my eye on you two...

**INT. TWINS' MANSION - DAY**

HADLEY and HARLEY, rich twins, approach their parents in their massive living room.

HADLEY  
Mom, Dad, we were wondering if we could get an advance on our allowances.

HARLEY  
We're interested in learning about stocks.

HADLEY  
Yes, day trading has been calling our names all of a sudden.

HARLEY  
Please?

Their parents look at each other. Their father pulls out his wallet and hands them a giant wad of cash.

HADLEY  
Thank you!

HARLEY  
Thank you!

**INT. HARDWARE STORE - NIGHT**

CALDWELL and EMILY, two more crew members, walk through the store with a cart loaded with supplies.

Wooden planks, hammers, drills, nails and screws, handsaws, etc. You name it, it's on the cart.

They load giant bundles of extension cords onto the cart, then head to the front.

Hadley and Harley enter the store and find Caldwell and Emily at checkout, subtracting items.

Caldwell holds up a smoking debit card.

CALDWELL

I literally just burned through all my money trying to pay for this.

Hadley holds up the wad of cash.

HADLEY

This should cover the rest.

Harley holds up a credit card - his father's.

HARLEY

And if not, I snatched a backup plan from my father.

**INT. FILM STUDIO - DAY**

Oz takes equipment from the film studio, leaving the already sparse shelves bare.

She wheels it out while Chloe distracts a student wearing a hall monitor sash.

CHLOE

I just learned how to juggle last night actually, so I'm not the best yet. Let me try one more time, it's gonna blow your mind!

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - DAY**

The entire crew sits in a semicircle of couches and chairs in Oz's garage.

Oz stands in the middle of the semicircle at a folding table. On it are a camera and several cords, lenses, a mic and a directors monitor.

Like she's assembling a gun, Oz shows them how to put the camera together.

OZ

It's incredibly important that we assemble the camera flawlessly every time. Everyone needs to know how to build it out and break it down, you never know when a teacher is going to come along and we're gonna have to hide it.

Oz demonstrates how to assemble and use more gear like the boom and lighting equipment.

**INT. PLANNING CLASSROOM - DAY**

Oz and the rest of the crew sit in the planning classroom, watching the projector screen.

The projector displays a series of YouTube videos on filmmaking tips, Masterclasses from industry professionals, and diy how-tos for practical effects.

There are also snippets from heist movies, most notably *Ocean's 11*. Close up of George Clooney's grinning face again.

**INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY**

Oz approaches Roy and the other set-building students, who are still working on painting.

She slips money to Roy and the two shake hands.

**EXT. OZ'S HOUSE - DAY**

We see Roy and the other set builders behind Oz's house, assembling set pieces. Oz and crew watch, satisfied.

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - NIGHT**

The crew laugh and eat snacks while hanging out. Chloe and Oz talk in the corner.

CHLOE

Listen, Oz. If the faculty find out about this, we're all gonna get in big trouble. You especially.

OZ

And?

CHLOE

We need to have a rule. If someone gets caught, we cut all ties with them. No communication. They pretend they have no idea what your film is, and we act like we've never worked with them. We protect them that way, and they protect us.

OZ

I don't know... you really think it would help?

CHLOE

Let's say I got caught. What would you do if Mrs. Prichardson was threatening to suspend me?

OZ

I'd immediately go to her office and tell her everything was my fault.

CHLOE

Exactly, and I'm not gonna let you do that. I need you to *promise* that if I get in trouble you'll drop contact until everything blows over.

Oz thinks.

CHLOE (cont'd)

Promise, Oz.

OZ

Okay, fine. I promise.

CHLOE

Great! I do too.

They look at the entire crew.

CHLOE (cont'd)

Now we just need to get the rest of the crew to do the same.

**INT. PLANNING CLASSROOM - DAY**

Oz is sitting with Steven and Chloe.



OZ

I heard that there are going to be scouts from Columbia and NYU at the capstone showcase.

STEVEN

Scouts?

OZ

Yeah. They're like the scouts that watch Chloe play soccer, except for film students.

CHLOE

Film scouts are a thing?

OZ

Apparently. Guys, I *need* to get this film into that showcase.

Chloe and Steven nod in agreement.

**INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY**

OZ

And that's why I'm going to color grade "Something Ordinary" in a sepia tone.

Oz stands in front of the capstone committee, presenting fake updates on "Something Ordinary."

Mr. Barlowe aimlessly twirls his coffee cup, bored. Another teacher is trying not to fall asleep.

Mrs. Prichardson's eyebrow stays raised as she regards Oz, still suspicious. Oz tries her best not to look guilty.

**INT. BACKSTAGE - DAY**

Oz and Steven hang out backstage, handing out audition information to student actors.

THEATER KID 1

Sorry, I've already got a lead role.

THEATER KID 2

You expect me to just drop Hamlet?  
*Hamlet??*

THEATER KID 3  
I'm not an actor, I'm just a costume  
designer.

Oz and Steven step away, stumped.

OZ  
We gotta figure out a way to get some  
actors.

STEVEN  
I have an idea.

**INT. STEVEN'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING**

Steven, Oz, and Chloe huddle around a laptop. Steven is  
posting audition calls on a variety of websites.

CHLOE  
Steven, how do you know about this  
stuff?

STEVEN  
My older brother is an actor.

The three of them look over at STEVEN'S BROTHER, who is  
asleep on the couch with a bowl of cheese balls in his lap.

STEVEN (cont'd)  
Work is kinda scarce right now.

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - DAY**

Oz holds auditions for potential actors in her garage.

All sorts of actors, ranging from Brentwood students to  
random adults, show up.

Mrs. Cook even arrives, surprising most of the students. Oz  
notices her and tries to hide, but fails.

MRS. COOK  
Oh, Oz! What a nice surprise!

OZ  
(under breath)  
Fuck fuck fuck.  
(to Mrs. Cook)  
Hi Mrs. Cook! Crazy seeing you here!

MRS. COOK

So what's all this for then? A fun personal project?

Oz nods vigorously. Mrs. Cook is oblivious to the nature of the project, auditioning like nothing is weird.

After Mrs. Cook leaves, Oz leans into Steven and Chloe.

OZ

I think we need to be a little more judicious about who we invite to audition.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Mrs. Prichardson sits in her office, staring at the title of Oz's script. Something Ordinary.

Mrs. Prichardson looks to her computer, where an older video of Oz's is playing on mute. We see the title, "Space Race to Save Face!", as a green-screen explosion plays on the screen.

Mrs. Prichardson looks back at Oz's new script. Something isn't adding up.

**INT. SCHOOL LIBRARY - DAY**

Steven, Emily, and Caldwell enter the library, with Diane following behind them.

They walk normally for a bit, then suddenly duck into the shelving units. Diane tries to find them, but can't. She leaves, frustrated.

Crouched in an aisle, they watch her go.

STEVEN

That was close.

The three grab some books on filmmaking before sneaking out.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY**

Mr. Barlowe is standing at the front gate, drinking coffee and monitoring what students come in.

Oz approaches in a panic.

OZ

Mr. Barlowe! Did you see what happened down there?!

MR. BARLOWE

What? What happened?

While Oz keeps Mr. Barlowe's back to the entrance, the rest of the crew moves set pieces, costuming, and gear into the school. Emphasis on how obvious what they're doing is, but Mr. Barlowe doesn't notice.

**INT. BRENTWOOD MAINTENANCE - DAY**

Two grounds crew workers for the school stand inside the maintenance shed, chatting.

Chloe pokes her head in the open door and, having not been noticed, sneaks in.

She approaches one of maintenance's golf carts and takes the keys out of the ignition, pocketing them.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - DAY**

Finishing up the montage, the entirety of the crew walk in slow motion in a V formation across campus while wearing sunglasses. Oz pulls out a tin labeled "prop cigarettes" and puts one in her mouth, then lights it while walking. All that's missing is an explosion in the background.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - DAY**

Mrs. Prichardson watches Oz's crew walk across the quad. Mr. Barlowe is in her office, sipping coffee and reading the paper.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

That's suspicious.

MR. BARLOWE

What is?

Mrs. Prichardson gestures at Oz's crew. Mr. Barlowe peers out the window with her.

MR. BARLOWE

Hmm. Maybe they're finally comfortable in their own skins? A real coming-of-age moment?

Mrs. Prichardson gives him the raised eyebrow, stink-eye version.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Doubtful.

**INT. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE - DAY**

MR. BARLOWE  
You know, you were right. That's on me.

Mrs. Prichardson rolls her eyes.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
(to Oz)  
So not only did you go behind the capstone committee's backs to make your film, you spent all of your capstone budget as well as the money of other students' parents on this? Not to mention roping even more students into this plan?

OZ  
Well, we didn't spend *all* the money on this. A portion of the money did go to "Something Ordinary."

Quick insert of Oz printing the decoy script and paying for it.

Mrs. Prichardson sighs, then takes her glasses off.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Alright, let's continue.

**INT. DANCE STUDIO - EVENING**

Mr. Barlowe stands by the door, nursing a coffee cup. He checks his watch, bored.

Oz, Chloe, and Steven are in the middle of shooting a conventionally boring scene for "Something Ordinary." Craig and Emily pretend to be the actors. The rest of the crew are in the back, tending to various small tasks.

Above Oz and the camera, SUPERIMPOSE: "Production"

Mr. Barlowe impatiently checks his watch again, then decides it's time to leave.

MR. BARLOWE  
Good night and good luck.

Oz doesn't look up from the camera as she waves goodbye.

The door closes, and the studio is silent for a moment. Then, everyone whips into action.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - EVENING**

Mr. Barlowe exits the studio building and takes a long sip from his coffee cup. He inhales the fresh air, then walks away.

As he leaves the frame, a group of five people wearing concealing clothing enter the frame and walk in the door he just used.

**INT. DANCE STUDIO - EVENING**

The doors swing open and the group of five, the actual actors, walk into the studio.

They dramatically rip off their coats to reveal utterly insane costumes that seem to be a mix of sci-fi and medieval fantasy.

OZ  
Amazing, right on time! Alright everyone, let's do this!

Craig and Emily stand up from their spots, losing their costumes. The rest of the crew drop their charade of being busy and move in a well-coordinated pattern.

Aaliyah rips a tarp away from the wall, revealing a large stockpile of film equipment. She and the twins grab the gear and start setting it up.

Roy and his setbuilders wheel in set pieces. Steven hands the actors their props while Chloe makes sure everyone is in their places.

Craig changes the lighting from natural to crazy, completely changing the dynamic of the studio.

Oz paces around, keeping an eye on all the crew. She smiles - everything is going according to plan.

Chloe grabs the slate and steps in front of the camera.

CHLOE  
Sound?

Jonathan hoists the boom.

JONATHAN  
Speeding.

CHLOE  
Camera?

Aaliyah presses record and gives a thumbs-up

AALIYAH  
Rolling.

CHLOE  
Scene one, take one. Mark!

Chloe claps the slate. It's begun.

A moment of quiet.

OZ  
Action!

War cries erupt from the actors as they charge at each other, prop weapons raised.

**EXT. BRIDGE - DAY**

Underneath the town bridge, Oz and crew film two actors as they pretend to fish.

ACTOR 1  
Calm water, eh?

Oz watches from the side.

OZ  
(calling instructions)  
Sneak attack... now!

An actor erupts from the water, brandishing a sword. The two fishing actors drop their fishing poles and brandish swords of their own.

**INT. BAR - NIGHT**

An actor sits at the local bar, drinking a glass of orange juice. They're wearing a cowboy hat and a space suit.

Oz and crew are behind the bar, filming the actor.

ACTOR 2  
My life will never be the same  
without him.

The actor pulls out a harmonica and begins playing a bluesy song.

**INT. CAFETERIA - DAY**

The entire crew sit at one lunch table. They laugh loudly and joke around with each other. Someone throws a fry, causing everyone to laugh again.

Oz looks at the entire crew. They're almost like one big family. She beams.

Chloe is looking at Oz, smiling. Oz notices her.

OZ  
What?

CHLOE  
Just happy to see you living the life  
you wanted.

OZ  
Oh come on.

CHLOE  
Seriously! It's like you were made  
for this. Look at all of them.

They watch the rest of the crew, who are still laughing and joking around.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
Pretty damn cool if you ask me.

Oz smiles.

OZ  
Yeah, it is.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - DAY**

Mrs. Prichardson stands at the window, looking out at the campus. She can see Oz and her crew moving camera gear and props.



MRS. PRICHARDSON  
What are you up to?

**EXT. BANK - DAY**

Oz and crew film the actors walking towards the bank wearing suits and sunglasses, *Reservoir Dogs* style.

The actors stop, then pull out comical squirt guns.

ACTOR 3  
Let's do this.

Oz walks onto set.

OZ  
I like it. Let's try it again and make it a little more suave this time around. Think George Clooney.

**EXT. PARK - DAY**

One actor climbs up a tree after another.

ACTOR 4  
You killed my father and mother too!  
Prepare to be mortally wounded!

We see that Oz and Aaliyah, still on camera, are already situated in a tree.

One of the actors falls, plummeting past them. They land on a giant mat below.

Jump cut to the actor getting treated with an ice pack.

OZ  
Hmm, we'll use a thicker mat next time. Sorry about that.

ACTOR 4  
It's all right, that's showbiz.

**INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY**

Oz presents rough footage from "Something Ordinary." It looks incredibly bland.

OZ  
As you can see, filming for  
"Something Ordinary" is going great.

Mrs. Prichardson raises an eyebrow. She knows something is up. Oz notices and is a little disconcerted.

**INT. WICKENS GYMNASIUM - DAY**

The actors perform a choreographed dance, each a whirlwind of flailing arms and shaking hips. "Footloose" by Kenny Loggins plays on a portable radio.

STEVEN  
Do we even have the rights to use  
this?

CHLOE  
Absolutely not.

**INT. WICKENS GYMNASIUM HALLWAY - DAY**

Mrs. Prichardson watches from outside the gymnasium. She's writing down names on a piece of paper - the names of the crew she can see. Oz, Chloe, Steven, and Aaliyah are absent from the list.

**INT. CLASSROOM - DAY**

A classroom has been transformed into a war room. The actors stand around the makeshift table, yelling at each other.

ACTOR 2  
Dr. Weirdlove, how could you?

ACTOR 1  
I've learned to love the bomb! Mole  
people!

The crew all look at Oz and wince. It's a bad scene.

OZ  
Alright, cut! We're gonna cut this  
scene.

Everyone sighs in relief.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

Mr. Barlowe twirls his keys on one finger and sips from a coffee cup. Mrs. Prichardson approaches him.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Mr. Barlowe.

Mr. Barlowe yelps and almost loses his keys.

MR. BARLOWE  
Mrs. Prichardson! How can I help you?

Mrs. Prichardson hands him the list of handwritten names.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Please bring these students to my office, they're in trouble.

Mr. Barlowe looks at the list.

MR. BARLOWE  
All at once, or...?

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
One at a time, please. I don't work in an auditorium.

**SUSPENSION MONTAGE**

We see Mr. Barlowe rounding up the crew - Jonathan, Craig, Hadley and Harley, Caldwell, and Emily - from different locations on campus.

We then see them, one by one, in Mrs. Prichardson's office. She writes up forms for each of them, then stamps them with a big red stamp that says "Suspended".

Mrs. Prichardson smiles, satisfied with herself.

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - DAY**

Oz, Chloe, Steven, and Aaliyah sit in Oz's garage.

CHLOE  
I can't believe they all got suspended, just like that.

AALIYAH  
At least nothing worse happened. We should consider ourselves lucky.

STEVEN

I'm gonna reach out and see how they're all doing.

OZ

Remember the rule, Steven. If you get caught, you go no contact. We can't jeopardize the film.

Steven looks to Chloe and Aaliyah for support. They look away, not giving it.

STEVEN

(pissed)

Fine.

OZ

I'm sorry, but it's the rule.

(to all)

Come on, we're almost done. We can still finish shooting!

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - DAY**

The actors race across the campus, weapons brandished. Aaliyah drives the golf cart ahead of them with Steven in the back. The camera is mounted on a tripod attached to the back of the cart, and the boom pole and recorder are secured to the side.

Oz and Chloe watch from a hedge, holding a monitor. Oz keys a radio.

OZ

We got it, good to move to the next shot.

MR. BARLOWE

Just what the hell are you all doing?

All eyes turn to Mr. Barlowe, who is striding furiously towards the golf cart.

MR. BARLOWE (cont'd)

Is that a god damn golf cart?!

AALIYAH

Scatter!

The actors take off. Oz and Chloe duck further into the bush.

Aaliyah stomps the gas pedal and the cart tears away. Mr. Barlowe breaks into a sprint, trying to keep up.

**EXT. BUILDING SIDE - DAY**

Easily outpacing Mr. Barlowe, Aaliyah pulls the golf cart around the side of a building. She brakes hard.

STEVEN

Aaliyah, what are you doing?! Keep driving!

AALIYAH

Mr. Barlowe isn't gonna give up until he catches someone.

STEVEN

What?

Aaliyah jumps out of the cart and pulls Steven out.

STEVEN (cont'd)

Aaliyah, what are you doing?!

AALIYAH

As long as he catches one of us he'll be satisfied.

Aaliyah drags Steven to the nearby bushes. She tries to push him in.

STEVEN

Aaliyah, stop! What the hell, stop!!!

He swipes her arms away.

STEVEN (cont'd)

We can both get away!

She clamps her hands onto his shoulders and holds him still.

AALIYAH

No. We. Can't. But you can.

A tear rolls down Steven's cheek.

STEVEN

Aaliyah, no...

AALIYAH

It'll be okay, Steven. Remember me.

She pushes Steven down into the bush, backing away. Steven starts to say something but she shakes her head.

Suddenly Mr. Barlowe runs around the side of the building, skidding to a stop. He's panting.

Aaliyah turns around, raising her hands in surrender.

AALIYAH (cont'd)  
Out of gas?

MR. BARLOWE  
Words cannot *begin* to describe how  
much trouble you're in, young lady.

He strides forward and grabs the shoulder of her uniform. Steven watches from the bushes, hand over his mouth and teary eyed.

MR. BARLOWE (cont'd)  
We're going to see Mrs. Prichardson  
and we're going to tell her about  
your little stunt. Now.

He drags Aaliyah away. She turns one last time, making eye contact with Steven. She shakes her head no and gives a tiny smile, then turns back towards her doom.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - DAY**

Oz and Chloe watch Mr. Barlowe lead Aaliyah away in the distance.

CHLOE  
Fuck! Fucking fuck!

Oz says nothing, but she looks devastated.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
That's the whole crew! They got  
everyone - and today's footage!

Chloe starts pacing.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
I can't believe this, *Jesus Christ*.  
How did they catch us? We were so  
careful!

Oz's lip quivers ever so slightly, but she stays silent. Chloe grips her own hair, trying to think.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
There's no way to reshoot - without a crew, without the cart - without the camera.

Oz notices a student walking towards them. It's Steven.

Chloe looks up, noticing him too.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
Holy shit, Steven!

Oz and Chloe run to him. Steven is walking like he's shellshocked, head down.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
Steven! Are you okay?

OZ  
Are you alright? Did they see you?

Steven looks up at the two of them. His eyes are red and watery - he's been crying.

STEVEN  
(mumbling to himself)  
They got Aaliyah. They got her.

OZ  
Steven. Are you okay?

STEVEN  
They got Aaliyah, Oz.

He holds out his hand - in it are the SD cards from the camera and zoom recorder. He drops them into Oz's hands.

STEVEN (cont'd)  
I managed to save the footage. She didn't get in trouble for nothing.

Chloe puts a hand over her mouth, then hugs Steven. He stands there, still shellshocked.

Oz looks down at the SD cards in her hand.

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - NIGHT**

Oz, Chloe, and Steven sit on a couch in the garage. They're the last three left. There's a heavy emptiness to the room.

The SD cards sit on a little fold-out table. Oz stares at them, her face a complex mix of emotions.

Chloe slumps further into the couch. Steven stares at the ceiling.

Oz stands slowly. Chloe and Steven watch her walk to the garage door.

Oz stands at the door, staring at it. Her face contorts into anger against her will as her emotions explode.

Oz's foot connects with the door incredibly hard, the metallic *clang* echoing around the room.

OZ  
FUUUUUCK!

She kicks again, and again, and again.

OZ (cont'd)  
Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!

Chloe jumps up to pull her away. Steven watches, unsure what to do.

CHLOE  
Oz, stop! Stop!

Chloe pulls her away. Oz stumbles back, falling back down onto the couch.

OZ  
They're all gone, because of me.

CHLOE  
Just breathe, Oz. Focus on the film.

Chloe looks into Oz's eyes.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
Remember the rule. They knew the risks. Right Steven?

Steven is quiet. Chloe looks at him pointedly.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
*Right*, Steven?

STEVEN  
Uh, yeah. Right.

He scooches closer to Chloe and Oz.



STEVEN (cont'd)  
Aaliyah... Aaliyah would've wanted us  
to finish the film.

Oz nods. She sits up, fixing her posture, and breathes  
deeply. She's back.

OZ  
Right.

CHLOE  
So... what's the situation.

OZ  
Thanks to Aaliyah and Steven, we got  
the last of the footage we needed  
today.

Oz picks up the SD cards, then looks at Chloe and Steven.  
They look back expectantly.

OZ (cont'd)  
It's time to edit. It's what our crew  
would have wanted.

**INT. FILM STUDIO - DAY**

Oz, Chloe, and Steven stand in the film studio. They stare  
at the editing station, an older desktop buried under a  
mountain of junk. It hasn't been touched in a while.

OZ  
Let's get to work.

Chloe presses play on a portable speaker. A badass score  
starts to play.

Oz sweeps piles of papers and crap off the desk. They fall  
onto the floor, pencils and plastic cups clattering away.

Chloe picks up the keyboard and blows dust off it. She  
coughs, waving her hand through the dust cloud.

CHLOE  
Jesus.

Steven opens a drawer (camera inside drawer) and rummages  
through an assortment of cords. He finds what he's looking  
for - a card reader. He shuts the drawer.

Oz is under the table like a car mechanic, reaching up and  
plugging wires into the desktop and monitor.

Chloe locks the studio door and dims the lights.

The three gather around the desktop. Oz pushes the power button and a loud startup sound plays.

OZ  
And we're live.

The screen boots up, casting their faces in a blueish glow.

Oz plugs in her hard drive and logs into the computer.

STEVEN  
How are we gonna do this?

OZ  
We can only have one person editing at a time, so we'll have to take shifts. Who wants to--

The studio door shuts. Chloe and Steven are gone.

OZ (cont'd)  
... Okay, I'll take first crack at it.

Oz keys a command into the desktop and boots up an editing program. The camera pans up.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Post-Production"

### **EDITING MONTAGE**

Oz begins by merging clips. Sped-up footage of merging and binning clips intercuts with a loading bar slowly filling on the computer screen that says "Clips merging."

Timelapse of Oz editing. Coffee cups appear on the table, quickly piling up.

The hands of a clock on the wall spin. Time is passing quickly.

Chloe and Steven are sitting in the hall in comfy chairs. Steven is working on homework and Chloe is on her phone. Oz exits the studio and collapses into a chair.

Closeup shot of Oz's hand tagging Chloe in like in wrestling.

Timelapse of Chloe editing. Closeup of her face, tongue sticking out the side of her mouth in concentration.

The clock on the wall spins more. More coffee cups pile up on the desk in a messy pyramid.

The editing software crashes! Chloe sweeps the coffee cups off the desk in frustration, cursing.

Outside the studio, Oz and Steven look at each other and wince.

Chloe reboots the program and keeps editing. The clock spins more, eventually settling on 9:37pm.

A custodian passes Oz and Steven outside. Chloe emerges from the studio, exhausted.

STEVEN

My turn?

CHLOE

Desktop overheated, gotta come back tomorrow.

Oz and Steven frown.

#### **INT. FILM STUDIO - THE NEXT DAY**

The bell rings the next day as all three meet at the studio carrying fans. Steven has a bag of ice.

They point the fans at the desktop and set up ice buckets behind the fans to make the air colder.

OZ

Hopefully that does the trick. I'll start us off.

Steven frowns again.

Quick timelapse of Oz editing. She falls asleep at the computer. The clock hands are spinning.

Outside, Chloe checks her watch.

CHLOE

I'm gonna go check on her.

Steven, eyes closed, gives a thumbs up.

Chloe rouses Oz, then takes over. Even shorter timelapse, then she falls asleep too.

Outside, Steven looks at the time. Oz is passed out in the chair next to him.

STEVEN  
My turn to check, I guess.

He enters the studio and wakes Chloe up.

CHLOE  
Shit, sorry.

STEVEN  
Don't worry about it. Let me take a crack at it.

Chloe nods while rubbing her eyes and leaves. Steven sits down in the chair and cracks his knuckles.

STEVEN (cont'd)  
Okay, editing... I can do this.

The computer monitor seems to loom over him. What are all these controls and tools for??

Steven gulps.

STEVEN (cont'd)  
Probably.

He's tentative at first, but soon gets the hang of it. He starts clicking faster, using keyboard commands. He leans forward.

Dolly zoom in on Steven's face as a rainbow of colors light up his features. His hair starts to blow around in wind. He's in THE ZONE.

Steven's fingers fly over the keyboard. His mouse darts back and forth, clicking impossibly fast. The arms on the clock spin faster than ever. His movements are almost a blur.

One final click. "Export." The hands on the clock return to a normal ticking in an instant.

Steven stares at the screen in a daze. He's still in THE ZONE. His phone alarm goes off, startling him.

**INT. THEATER AND ARTS HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Oz and Chloe are passed out in the chairs outside the film studio, draped over each other.

The door slowly opens, and Steven steps out. His hair is messy like Kramer from *Seinfeld* and there are bags under his eyes.

STEVEN  
Hey guys? Oz? Chloe?

No response.

STEVEN (cont'd)  
Hey!

They both sit up with a jolt, still half-asleep.

STEVEN (cont'd)  
I think I'm done.

He holds up the hard drive. His hand is shaking a bit.

It takes Oz and Chloe a second to process what Steven is saying.

CHLOE  
(yawning)  
You... what?

OZ  
Holy shit. You finished it?

STEVEN  
Yeah... I mean it's a rough cut...

CHLOE  
Woo!

Chloe throws her arms in the air and hugs Oz. Oz grins.

OZ  
Did you have fun, Steven?

Steven looks at her. He seems a little scared.

STEVEN  
I think I want to be an editor.

**INT. BRENTWOOD MUSIC ROOM - DAY**

Oz, Chloe, and Steven stand in the music room. Instruments in and out of their cases surround the trio.

OZ

Okay, we're in here for two reasons.  
First, this is the only soundproof  
room at Brentwood.

Oz points to the noise reduction paneling on the walls. She starts walking towards one wall.

CHLOE

What do we need a soundproof room  
for?

Oz leans behind a giant tuba case and hoists a giant duffel bag. She opens it, spilling a massive amount of random junk onto the ground. Coconuts, carrots, celery, bags of sand, pieces of metal, wood blocks, shoes, etc.

OZ

We need foley work. The film may look  
great, but it's lacking in the audio  
department.

STEVEN

Foley?

OZ

Let me demonstrate. Steven, close  
your eyes.

A little confused, he obliges. Oz grabs a piece of celery and begins to twist it.

OZ (cont'd)

Okay, imagine you're watching a  
horror movie. Someone just got their  
leg caught in a trap, and in a moment  
it's going to--

Oz twists and snaps the celery, making a sickening crunch sound.

OZ (cont'd)

Break.

Steven gags.

STEVEN

Oh my god that sounded so real.

Chloe picks up a carrot and snaps it. Steven winces.

CHLOE

Ooh, that was a good one.

STEVEN

Okay, enough! Gross.

Oz is looking at her watch.

OZ

You'll see in a second.

The doors to the music room open. Over a dozen students walk in, wearing all black.

Steven and Chloe involuntarily step back, looking for a place to hide or run.

OZ (cont'd)

It's okay guys, they're with us.

One of the students, RUTH, steps forward. She's wearing thick glasses and has super frizzy hair.

RUTH

Hey Oz!

OZ

Hey Ruth, how're you doing?

RUTH

Great! Excited to conduct today.

Chloe and Steven look at each other.

CHLOE

Conduct?

Oz holds up the hard drive.

Two of the band students wheel in a projector. The rest set up a semicircle of chairs.

OZ

(to Ruth)

Chloe and Steven, the last crew standing.

RUTH

I heard about all the suspensions - you okay?

OZ

We'll survive. I'm gonna put the scenes up on the projector, have the band play through what you wrote up and we'll figure it out as we go.

RUTH  
Sounds good!

**BRIEF SCORING MONTAGE**

Ruth conducts the band. The camera pans around as they play a variety of music.

Oz, Chloe, and Steven stand in the back. All they can really do is watch.

Ruth is having the time of her life. Sweat glistens on her brow as she conducts.

Brief inserts of Oz and Ruth talking.

OZ  
What if we have the music swell sooner?

RUTH  
Do you want more or less violin?

OZ  
Can we make it more ominous?

RUTH  
Where do you want the theme to end?

**END MONTAGE**

The band students are packing up their instruments. Ruth wipes sweat off her forehead.

OZ  
Ruth, you're amazing.

CHLOE  
That was fucking incredible!

RUTH  
I'm planning on going to college for music, Berkeley maybe... see where it takes me!

Ruth beams, gives a wave, and runs out the door after the other band students.

CHLOE  
Foley time?



OZ  
Foley time.

**QUICK FOLEY MONTAGE**

Oz, Steven, and Chloe use an insane variety of props to make foley noises.

Vegetables crunch and snap! Wood blocks tap cutely! Sheets of metal crumple and clang loudly! Coconuts clap and clop! Different fabrics are shaken roughly and rustled! Sand and dirt crunch as shoes stomp on them!

There is a brief pause where the room is totally quiet and the shot lingers on Chloe making wind noises. Steven and Oz try not to laugh.

The chaos resumes as more props are used.

**END MONTAGE**

OZ  
I think we got everything.

The three sit on the floor, exhausted. Props are strewn around them.

CHLOE  
Thank *god*.

STEVEN  
If I hear one more vegetable break I think I'm gonna lose my mind.

He flops onto his back. Chloe follows suit, then Oz. They lay there for a bit.

CHLOE  
... So, who's gonna clean all this up?

**INT. FILM STUDIO - DAY**

Oz and Chloe watch Steven as he clicks around rapidly on the desktop. He types quickly, hits enter, then sits back.

A loading bar slides across the screen. Reaches the end. A ding sounds. Silence.

CHLOE  
Is... that it?

STEVEN  
Yeah.

CHLOE  
We just finished the film?

OZ  
Yeah.

They stand in silence for a beat. Oz looks numb.

CHLOE  
Cool.

**INT. PLANNING CLASSROOM - DAY**

Oz, Chloe, and Steven sit around a table and silently stare at the hard drive. It sits there, sucking the air out of the room.

Chloe breaks the silence.

CHLOE  
Oz, how are we gonna get this into the showcase?

Oz doesn't break her stare at the hard drive.

OZ  
I have no idea.

STEVEN  
What?

OZ  
Not a clue. I was hoping to have come up with something by now, but I'm flat out of ideas.

The three of them sit in silence for a few moments. The hard drive stares back at them.

CHLOE  
Okay, let's break down the problem.

OZ  
We need to get our film onto the hard drive with all the other films.

CHLOE  
And where is that kept?

OZ  
Mrs. Prichardson's office.

Chloe flashes a wide grin.

CHLOE  
Who's down for a little B&E?

Oz grins back.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

Oz, Chloe, and Steven walk down the hallway.

OZ  
Okay, we meet in the studio tomorrow  
and figure out how to get into Mrs.  
Prichardson's office.

CHLOE  
Awesome!

STEVEN  
Terrifying.

Oz grins. They reach Chloe's locker.

CHLOE  
This is me!

OZ  
Bye!

STEVEN  
See ya!

Oz and Steven keep walking, chatting with each other.

Chloe undoes her lock and opens the locker. She hums a  
little tune while grabbing her backpack and belongings.

She closes the door, revealing Mr. Barlowe standing there  
with his arms crossed.

CHLOE  
Ah!

MR. BARLOWE

Chloe, would you mind coming with me?  
Mrs. Prichardson would like to speak  
with you.

CHLOE

With me? Why?

If looks could kill, Mr. Barlowe would've just murdered  
Chloe.

MR. BARLOWE

She'd like to speak with you *now*,  
Chloe.

Mr. Barlowe leads Chloe down the hall. She follows, nervous.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - DAY**

Mrs. Prichardson types on her computer. Chloe sits across  
the desk from her, fidgeting nervously.

Mr. Barlowe stands by the door like a bodyguard. Chloe looks  
at him. He glares back.

Mrs. Prichardson finishes typing. She finally looks at  
Chloe, lowering her head to peer over her glasses.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Miss Lanzinger, do you have anything  
you would like to say for yourself?

Chloe is confused. She quickly glances at Mr. Barlowe again,  
then looks back at Diane.

CHLOE

Uh, about what?

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Yes or no, Miss Lanzinger?

CHLOE

No, I guess.

Mrs. Prichardson purses her lips.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Very well, then. Miss Lanzinger, I  
want to talk to you about an incident  
last week involving a joyride with  
one of maintenance's golf carts.

Chloe tries to maintain a poker face.

CHLOE  
Golf cart? Oh yeah, I heard about that! Didn't some girl named Allison steal it?

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Her name is Aaliyah Thornton, though I think you knew that already.

Mrs. Prichardson leans forward.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Miss Lanzinger, did you know that when Mr. Barlowe caught Miss Thornton, he discovered something quite strange about the golf cart?

Chloe fidgets and shakes her head, unsure of what to do.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
He found a camera and a, what was it, boom pole attached to the back of the cart. Both pieces of Brentwood rental equipment that apparently went missing earlier in the school year.

CHLOE  
That's... crazy.

Mrs. Prichardson raises an eyebrow.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Yes, quite.

She sits back up.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Miss Lanzinger, did you have anything to do with this... incident?

Chloe adjusts her skirt nervously. Mr. Barlowe notices.

CHLOE  
No, Mrs. Prichardson.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Are you certain?

CHLOE  
Yes.

A beat. Mrs. Prichardson stares at her.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
All right. Is there any chance you  
are aware of who may have helped Miss  
Thornton accomplish this? Any rumors  
you've heard from fellow students,  
perhaps?

Chloe pretends to think a little too hard.

CHLOE  
No, I can't say I can think of  
anyone.

Mrs. Prichardson raises an eyebrow.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Okay, I believe you.

CHLOE  
Great! So... am I free to go?

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Yes, I suppose so. Thank you for your  
help, Chloe.

Chloe starts to get up. She actually did it!

MRS. PRICHARDSON (cont'd)  
Oh, one more thing before you leave,  
Chloe.

CHLOE  
Yes?

Mrs. Prichardson turns her computer monitor and Chloe's face  
sinks.

On the monitor is a loop of a security camera video from the  
maintenance shed that clearly shows Chloe stealing the keys  
to the golf cart.

Mrs. Prichardson stares at Chloe coldly, one eyebrow raised.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Care to tell me why you're on my  
screen?

Chloe's legs give out and she falls back into her seat.

**INT. FILM STUDIO - DAY**

Oz and Steven sit in the film studio, fiddling with their uniforms and tapping their fingers.

STEVEN

What's taking her so long? Chloe's usually on time.

Oz checks her watch.

OZ

She's over thirty minutes late, this isn't like her.

Oz checks her messages to Chloe. Her last text reads:

*hey, where are u?*

No response from Chloe. It hasn't even been read.

Oz stands up.

OZ (cont'd)

Something's wrong. You wait here, I'll go see if I can figure out where she is.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

Oz strides through the halls, looking for Chloe. She passes many students, none of them Chloe.

Oz stops at Chloe's locker. It's closed, and Chloe isn't there.

OZ

Where the hell are you, Chloe?

She checks her phone again. No messages.

Oz sees a girl in a soccer uniform and approaches her.

OZ (cont'd)

Hey, have you seen Chloe?

SOCCER GIRL

Chloe Lanzinger or Chloe Applegate? Because I do not want to deal with Chloe Applegate again today.

OZ

Chloe Lanzinger. I don't even know who Chloe Applegate is.

SOCCER GIRL

God, I wish I didn't either. And no, I haven't seen Chloe. She wasn't at practice.

OZ

Shit. Okay, thank you.

Oz continues down the hall. Further down she sees COACH FARLEY, the girls soccer coach.

OZ (cont'd)

Coach!

Coach Farley is flipping through papers on a clipboard. He barely looks up.

COACH FARLEY

Oh, hi. I don't think I know you.

OZ

Have you seen Chloe at all?

COACH FARLEY

Lanzinger or Applegate?

OZ

Lanzinger.

Coach Farley finally looks up.

COACH FARLEY

Haven't seen her, but don't expect to for a while. Heard from up top that she got suspended yesterday. Damn shame too, she was our best striker.

OZ

Suspended?!

Coach Farley nods.

OZ (cont'd)

Fuck!

COACH FARLEY

That's what I said too.



**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - DAY**

Mrs. Prichardson sits in her office chair, filling out paperwork. The room is silent.

The door BANGS open as Oz practically leaps into the room. Mrs. Prichardson calmly looks up.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Can I help you, Oz?

OZ  
Where's Chloe?

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Pardon?

Oz realizes how frantic she's being and tries to relax. She stands up straighter and fiddles with her uniform.

OZ  
Uh, I... I heard Chloe, Chloe Lanzinger, got in trouble earlier?

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
And?

OZ  
And, well, I just wanted to see if that.. if that was true?

Mrs. Prichardson sighs, taking off her glasses.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Normally I don't discuss private academic affairs with students, but I know you two are friends. Have a seat.

Oz sits.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
As you may have heard, there was an incident involving the theft of a golf cart from maintenance.

Oz shifts uncomfortably. Mrs. Prichardson pauses, then continues.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

We recently received the security footage of the theft and discovered that Miss Lanzinger is the one who initially stole the cart.

Oz is horrified - Chloe got caught!?

OZ

Are you serious?!

Mrs. Prichardson raises an eyebrow - will Oz reveal herself?

OZ (cont'd)

Sorry, I just - I've known Chloe for years, and I can't see her doing that.

Mrs. Prichardson regards Oz, then sighs. It appears she won't catch Oz just yet.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Well, whether you believe it or not, facts are facts. Normally an infraction of this scale calls for serious disciplinary action, but due to Miss Lanzinger's stellar academic record I've decided to go easy on her.

Oz perks up. Maybe things will be okay?

MRS. PRICHARDSON

I've given Miss Lanzinger two weeks suspension and notified both her parents and her prospective universities. This infraction will also go on her academic record, but I haven't yet decided whether I'll allow her to remain on the soccer team. We do need a competent striker, after all.

Oz's jaw hangs open. That's going easy?!?

OZ

Mrs. Prichardson, you can't do that to her!

Mrs. Prichardson leans forward, a hint of anger showing.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Excuse me?

OZ

I mean... Mrs. Prichardson, Chloe is one of the best students at Brentwood. She doesn't deserve this!

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Miss Lanzinger was one of the best students at Brentwood. Until she stole a golf cart from maintenance and lied to me about it.

The two stare each other down, Oz in barely-contained rage and Mrs. Prichardson in barely-concealed smugness.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Now, is there anything else? I'm rather busy.

OZ

... no.

Oz gets up to leave. As she reaches the door, Mrs. Prichardson speaks again.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Maybe if Miss Lanzinger kept better company, she wouldn't be in her current position.

Oz clenches her fists. How dare she?!

MRS. PRICHARDSON (cont'd)

You'd do well to consider the company you keep too. Goodbye.

Oz leaves, slamming the door.

Mrs. Prichardson smiles. She's won this round.

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - DAY**

Oz and Steven are slumped on the couches in the garage. They look absolutely defeated.

Oz has her head in her hands.

STEVEN

I can't believe they got Chloe.

Oz stays silent.

STEVEN (cont'd)  
I should've been the one to steal the  
keys, not her.

OZ  
(quietly)  
There's nothing we could have done.

STEVEN  
But Oz...

OZ  
No, Steven. Chloe knew the rules as  
well as the rest of us. If you get  
caught, you cut ties.

STEVEN  
So we're just gonna let her stay in  
trouble?

Oz's mouth twists in discomfort.

STEVEN (cont'd)  
We're just going to give up and let  
Chloe take the brunt of the  
punishment?

Steven gets to his feet, looking at Oz.

STEVEN (cont'd)  
Oz, you of all people know how strict  
Mrs. Prichardson can be. You've been  
dealing with her for years.  
Prichardson believes in rules above  
all else.

Oz doesn't look him in the eye.

STEVEN (cont'd)  
You're really gonna let your best  
friend take the punishment for you?

OZ  
She knew the rules.

Steven strides angrily towards Oz.

STEVEN  
Fuck the rules! Isn't that the whole  
point of this thing? You didn't like  
the rules and said fuck them! Chloe  
did too!

Oz still doesn't look up.

STEVEN (cont'd)  
She put everything on the line,  
including college, because she  
believed in you. She supported you,  
and now you don't want to help her  
back. Because of a rule.

He throws his hands up and walks away.

STEVEN (cont'd)  
You're gonna let one rule stand  
between you and your best friend?  
That's not what I thought of you, Oz.

Oz stares down. She grips the fabric of her pants to try and stop her hands from shaking. A tear drops onto them.

STEVEN (cont'd)  
Do you even want to help her?

Oz finally looks up, tears streaking down her cheeks.

OZ  
(crying)  
I do want to help her! I do! But I  
made a promise! I promised I wouldn't  
break the rule, even if it was Chloe  
that got caught. I can't break my  
promise.

Oz is sobbing. Steven is silent - he's never seen Oz weak before.

Steven clenches his teeth, about to give in. But he doesn't.

STEVEN  
I'm sorry, Oz. But I didn't promise  
anything to Chloe. I'm gonna go help.  
Let me know when you're ready to  
help. Until then, I'm not sure I can  
be around you Oz.

He takes a step back, unsure. Then another. Then turns around and leaves the garage.

Oz sits on the floor, still crying.

**INT. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE - DAY**

Silence. Oz sits in her chair, looking at the table.

The committee are also silent.

TEACHER

Wow.

More silence. Even Mrs. Prichardson looks a little uncomfortable. She shuffles her papers, then clears her throat.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Well, that was moving.

Oz looks up at her, then back down.

MRS. PRICHARDSON (cont'd)

I do empathize with you, Oz. Keeping a promise to a friend is one of the most noble things you can do.

A beat.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Though I wish we could end on this note, I'm afraid we have to keep moving. After all, we wouldn't be sitting here if you and your colleagues had given up so easily.

Oz looks at Mrs. Prichardson. There's a glimmer of something in Oz's eye - defiance? Confidence? Victory?

MRS. PRICHARDSON

So, let's talk about what happened after you split up.

**INT. FILM STUDIO - DAY**

Oz sits alone in the film studio, lights off. The shelves are still practically empty. The vibe of the room matches her mood.

The lights suddenly flick on as Chester walks in.

CHESTER

Oh! Uh... Sorry, didn't know anyone was in here.

Oz shrugs weakly. She doesn't even give a shit that annoying Chester is here.

CHESTER (cont'd)  
Hey, did you happen to see any extra  
lights in here? Seems like we're  
really sparse on gear.

Oz shakes her head.

Even Chester knows something is wrong. He's silent for a  
moment.

CHESTER (cont'd)  
So, uh, I heard about Chloe. Sucks.

OZ  
Yeah, sucks.

Beat of silence.

CHESTER  
How's the film going?

OZ  
Bad.

CHESTER  
Damn. That sucks.

Oz is starting to get annoyed.

CHESTER (cont'd)  
Do you think you'll finish it?

OZ  
(turning around)  
Honestly, Chester? Probably not. But  
I'm sure you're glad to hear that,  
right?

CHESTER  
Woah, no dude. I thought what you  
were doing was super cool.

Oz rolls her eyes.

OZ  
No you didn't, stop lying. "Something  
Ordinary" was garbage and you know  
it.

CHESTER  
No, not that. Well, yeah. It was. But  
I was talking about your other film,  
the first one.

Oz freezes. What?

OZ

What?

(a beat)

You know about that?

CHESTER

Everyone does! Kinda hard to keep something like that a secret, especially with everyone getting suspended.

Oz puts her head in her hands.

OZ

Shit!

CHESTER

Don't worry, nobody told the teachers. At least I don't think anyone did. We were all rooting for you guys.

Oz doesn't believe him.

OZ

Seriously?

CHESTER

Yeah! We all wish we could do what you were doing.

OZ

Liar.

CHESTER

Honest!

Chester sits next to her.

CHESTER (cont'd)

Mrs. Prichardson *terrifies* me. You know, the only reason I'm doing the film I'm doing is because I was afraid she would reject what I really wanted to make.

OZ

What's that?



CHESTER

(gestures with hands)

Think M. Night Shyamalan, but better.  
Take his *Old* movie and reverse it,  
but it's also a comedy.

OZ

So... Benjamin Button?

CHESTER

... Well, yeah I guess. But a comedy.  
Think about it, a bunch of adults  
getting younger. Having to deal with  
puberty and high school and stuff all  
over again. It would be great!

Oz chuckles.

OZ

That does sound kinda good, yeah.

Chester smiles.

CHESTER

I know we don't exactly get along,  
and you probably won't listen to me,  
but I think you should keep trying.  
Imagine the look on Mrs.  
Prichardson's face when she sees your  
real film.

Oz nods. The two are silent for a beat.

OZ

Maybe.

CHESTER

Cool.

(stands up)

Okay, I'm gonna keep looking for  
lights. Still gonna try and make a  
better movie than you.

Oz laughs. Chester is about to leave when she speaks again.

OZ

Hey Chester?

CHESTER

Yeah?

OZ  
I won't tell anyone about  
Switzerland. Promise.

His eyes bug out of his head a bit.

CHESTER  
(grumbling)  
I still can't believe you know about  
that.

Chester leaves, turning the lights off.

In the dark, Oz smiles a little.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

Oz walks through the hall. Her energy and motivation are low even after speaking with Chester.

She spots Aaliyah at her locker and perks up.

OZ  
Aaliyah!

Aaliyah looks up, a little startled.

AALIYAH  
Oz, hey.

OZ  
You're back from your suspension! How  
are you doing? Are you okay?

Aaliyah looks down. She seems uncomfortable.

AALIYAH  
I'm good, thanks Oz.

She closes her locker, looking anywhere but at Oz.

OZ  
Aaliyah, what's wrong?

AALIYAH  
(sighs)  
It's just... look, Oz, getting  
suspended really sucked... And you  
didn't even check in to see how I was  
doing. Do you know how that made me  
feel?

OZ

I know, and I'm super sorry. We had the rule and I was just trying to be careful--

AALIYAH

You still could've checked in! I know we're supposed to go all "no contact" but honestly, Oz, we're friends. A text asking how I'm doing wouldn't fucking hurt anyone.

Aaliyah and Oz stand in silence for a moment.

OZ

I'm sorry, Aaliyah. I got wrapped up in the film... I feel terrible.

AALIYAH

You should!

Another moment.

AALIYAH (cont'd)

I get it, though. I got pretty wrapped up in the film too.

They smile at each other.

OZ

Have you heard from anyone else?

AALIYAH

Yeah, I stayed in touch with pretty much everyone else. We're all back today.

OZ

That's great! We still have one last thing to do for the film and-

AALIYAH

Oz, everyone is pretty pissed at you.

Oz looks down, ashamed.

OZ

Yeah, I bet they are. I was pretty shitty to everyone.

AALIYAH

Yeahhh, you kinda were.

The bell rings and Aaliyah starts to walk away.

Oz suddenly has an idea.

OZ  
Aaliyah, wait!

She runs up to her.

OZ (cont'd)  
Would you get the rest of the crew  
together at lunch today for me?

AALIYAH  
I don't know, Oz, they-

OZ  
Please, Aaliyah. I want to apologize  
to everyone and make amends. Plus, we  
have to figure out a way to help  
Chloe.

Aaliyah thinks for a moment, then sighs.

AALIYAH  
I'll see what I can do. I don't think  
Steven will be willing though, he's  
*really* pissed at you.

OZ  
Thanks Aaliyah. Let me worry about  
Steven.

**INT. CAFETERIA - DAY**

Aaliyah, Jonathan, Craig, Caldwell, Emily, Hadley, and  
Harley sit at a lunch table. Steven is noticeably missing.

JONATHAN  
What's the deal with asking us all to  
meet, Aaliyah?

AALIYAH  
What, we can't have lunch together?

Some of the crew look at each other.

CALDWELL  
Well, yeah we can have lunch  
together... but the way you phrased  
your text made it sound like we were  
meeting for something.

HADLEY

Yeah, is everything okay?

AALIYAH

For the most part. Just give me a sec.

Aaliyah pulls out her phone and texts Oz.

*Everyone is here except for Steven.*

Across the cafeteria, Oz reads Aaliyah's text and sighs. She opens her text thread to Steven. We see the last text she sent him:

*hey, can we talk? it's important*

He's read her message but hasn't responded. She sighs.

OZ

Here goes nothing.

Oz approaches the crew table and sits down. Everyone reacts negatively except Aaliyah.

CRAIG

Come on, Aaliyah, this is why you asked us to meet?

Harley and Hadley start to stand up to leave.

HARLEY

Sorry, we just can't deal with this right now.

Oz holds up her hands.

OZ

Wait, please! I know you all don't really want to talk to me right now, and I get it.

JONATHAN

We haven't heard from you at all after being suspended, dude. That's really shitty.

OZ

I know, it was super shitty. I want to apologize to all of you from the bottom of my heart.

(MORE)

OZ (cont'd)

You all gave so much to me and my--  
our film, and I treated you as if you  
were expendable.

Hadley and Harley look at each other, then slowly sit back  
down. Everyone wants to hear what Oz has to say.

OZ (cont'd)

I got so invested in making the film  
that I lost sight of what really made  
it special, which was all of you. I  
was worried too much about keeping it  
a secret from the faculty and not  
worried enough about everyone that  
was making it happen.

A pause. Nobody has left yet, a good sign.

OZ (cont'd)

I know you're all mad at me, and I'm  
mad at me too. It's no way for a  
director and a friend to act. I don't  
expect it anytime soon but I hope you  
all can come to forgive me.

Aaliyah and several other crew members nod.

OZ (cont'd)

I do have something to ask you all,  
though. I need your help clearing  
Chloe's name.

Everyone murmurs in surprise - they got Chloe?

CRAIG

Sooo... no more cutting contact with  
people, right?

OZ

Nope. From now on, we're a crew no  
matter what.

Oz leans in.

OZ (cont'd)

If you want to cut ties or lay low  
after this, I completely understand.  
Honestly, I encourage it. We don't  
need anyone else getting in trouble.  
But I do need each and every one of  
you to help me save Chloe.

HARLEY

We're gonna get her un-suspended?

OZ

Unfortunately she's gonna have to ride out the suspension, but there might be a way to scrub it off her record.

Everyone looks at each other - holy shit.

AALIYAH

Oz, isn't that an actual crime?

OZ

Not if we don't get caught, it isn't. And we won't get caught, not if we stick to the plan. And on the off chance we do get caught--

Oz points both thumbs at herself.

OZ (cont'd)

I'll be the one to take the fall. It's the least I can do.

The crew nod in agreement. Looks like everyone is ready to get back in business.

Oz stands to leave.

OZ (cont'd)

Lunch is going to end soon, so everyone make sure to eat - you'll need the energy. Oh, and there's one more thing I need help with.

**INT. BRENTWOOD LIBRARY - DAY**

Steven sits alone at a large table in the library. Several textbooks are open in front of him.

STEVEN

Jeez, I don't understand this at all.

He puts his head in his hands.

After a moment, the sound of a chair moving at his table makes him sit up. He sees Oz sitting across from him.

STEVEN (cont'd)

Damn it Oz, I told you I --

OZ

Wait, Steven. Just wait.

One by one, the rest of the crew enters and sits down at the table. They all look at Steven.

STEVEN

What's going on?

OZ

I should've listened to you earlier, Steven. I want to apologize to you, just like I've apologized to everyone else.

Steven looks around the table.

OZ (cont'd)

I should've been there for them then, and I should be there for Chloe now. I'm done making the same mistake over and over again.

STEVEN

So, you're breaking your promise?

OZ

Yup. If it means helping a friend, I'll do anything.

STEVEN

I don't know...

AALIYAH

Come on, Steven. We need you.

HADLEY

Crew isn't complete without you, buddy.

Steven looks around the table once more. Everyone is smiling like they were before things got bad.

Steven thinks for a minute.

STEVEN

Alright, I'm in. But Oz, if anyone gets in trouble--

OZ

I'm taking the blame. Gotcha.



JONATHAN

Covered that base already at lunch.

STEVEN

Okay, cool, just wanted to make sure!

Oz grins mischievously.

OZ

So, who's ready to get to work?

Cue teenage punk music.

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - DAY**

The entire crew, minus Chloe, are crowded around a folding table. On it are the floor plans for a Brentwood building.

OZ

Okay, listen up. This is the blueprint for the floor that Mrs. Prichardson's office is on.

She marks a room with a white X.

OZ (cont'd)

There's only two ways to get onto this floor: the staircase here, and the window here.

Oz marks both entrances.

**EXT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - DAY**

As Oz talks, we cut to outside the building that Mrs. Prichardson's office is in.

OZ (V.O.)

Her office is on the second floor, so the window isn't entirely out of the question. Unfortunately, the side it's on faces out into campus. If anyone climbed in, they'd get caught.

We see a visual of Oz climbing a ladder. Teachers swarm it, yelling at her.

OZ (V.O.) (cont'd)

So, we're gonna have to take the stairs, at least for phase one.

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - DAY**

STEVEN

Hold on, there's more than one phase?

OZ

There's three. The building gets locked after 5pm, which means we can't get in there after hours.

EMILY

So we just break in during the day?

OZ

Not so fast.

**INT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - DAY**

OZ (V.O.)

Mrs. Prichardson's office isn't exactly a piece of cake to get into when the building is open, especially if we're trying to avoid being seen.

The camera swoops through the halls.

OZ (V.O.) (cont'd)

Our first obstacle is the receptionist.

The camera lingers on her for a moment while she seals an envelope.

OZ (V.O.) (cont'd)

Despite her cheery attitude, she has eyes like an eagle. She can spot a troublesome student a mile away.

A student walks by, nervous. The receptionist looks up and her eyes narrow. An eagle screech can be heard.

RECEPTIONIST

Excuse me, young man. What's in your pocket?

TROUBLEMAKER

Uh, what?

RECEPTIONIST

Your right pocket. What is that?

OZ (V.O.)  
Paired with the receptionist is the  
security officer.

A portly man wearing a security uniform stands up from a  
folding chair.

SECURITY  
Empty your pockets, kid.

TROUBLEMAKER  
But there's nothing in there!

SECURITY  
I said empty 'em.

OZ (V.O.)  
If he gets ahold of you there's no  
chance of getting away. He may look  
slow, but he's very dangerous over  
short distances.

The troublemaker tries to run for it. The security guard  
grabs the back of his blazer, keeping the student in place  
no matter how hard they try to get away.

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - DAY**

CALDWELL  
Lord of the Rings?

Oz winks.

OZ  
You know it.

**INT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - DAY**

OZ (V.O.)  
If you manage to make it past those  
two, there's a security camera that  
catches everyone who walks down the  
hall.

The camera lingers on the security camera.

OZ (V.O.) (cont'd)  
Thanks to Chloe, we know how  
important it is to avoid being seen  
by that.

The red dot on the camera blinks. We move on.

OZ (V.O.) (cont'd)  
And even if you somehow manage to get  
past the camera without being seen,  
you end up in a dead-end hallway with  
Mrs. Prichardson's office.

We stop on Mrs. Prichardson's door. Her nameplate, red and  
white, shines on the door.

JONATHAN (V.O.)  
Okay, so once we make it to her  
office we're home free?

OZ (V.O.)  
Not really. You see, Mrs. Prichardson  
is in there all the time.

The camera pushes through the door. We see Mrs. Prichardson  
sitting at her desk, looking through files.

OZ (V.O.) (cont'd)  
She's gotta have a bathroom in there  
or something, I don't think she ever  
leaves.

We push in on Mrs. Prichardson.

OZ (V.O.) (cont'd)  
Even worse is that she's the first to  
arrive and the last to leave, so  
she's the one to lock up. Which means  
there's never a moment where the  
building is open and she's not in her  
office.

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - DAY**

The entire crew stands around the blueprint table in  
silence.

STEVEN  
So how the fuck are we going to pull  
this off?

OZ  
Remember how I said there are two  
other phases?

**INT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - NIGHT**

We see the receptionist's desk. The clock shows the time as 6:04 PM.

OZ (V.O.)

Fortunately, there's one night every semester where the building stays open later than usual. Parent-teacher conference night. Lucky for us, this year it's two nights before the showcase.

The receptionist turns off her computer and stretches.

OZ (V.O.) (cont'd)

The receptionist doesn't ever stay late for those, she's always gone by 6:05.

The receptionist grabs her bag and leaves. The clock changes to 6:05 PM.

OZ (V.O.) (cont'd)

Security officer barely gets paid enough as is, so he takes those nights off too.

The security guard's folding chair sits empty.

OZ (V.O.) (cont'd)

We'd still have to get past the security camera, but Mrs. Prichardson's office would be easy pickings. The building is open for other teachers who have offices there, and she'll be tied down in the conference room on the first floor because we have a surplus of students who just got suspended this semester. You all.

We see Mrs. Prichardson's office door. The lights are off inside.

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - DAY**

OZ

It's the best shot we have at pulling this thing off.

The crew thinks it over. Oz's plan sounds like it makes sense.

EMILY

Okay, but how are we going to get into her office? Did you hear the rumor that she installed her own deadbolt on the door?

OZ

That's phase two.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

We see Mr. Barlowe walking down the hall, twirling a set of keys on his fingers.

OZ (V.O.)

All administrative teachers carry a master key on their keyring so they can access any room if they need to.

The keys fly off Mr. Barlowe's finger.

MR. BARLOWE

Oh, shoot.

OZ (V.O.)

Mr. Barlowe is notorious for losing his keys, to the point where maintenance has several sets on standby for him.

Mr. Barlowe's keyring has launched under lockers where he can't reach them. He stands up, dusting himself off.

MR. BARLOWE

(shrugs)

Oh well.

He continues to walk away.

OZ (V.O.)

I don't want to risk anyone stealing from maintenance again and getting caught, but if we can get ahold of his set of keys he'll just pick up another ring. Then we'll have our own masterkey and nobody will know.

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - DAY**

Everyone is incredibly impressed with the plan.

STEVEN

Woah.

EMILY

Wait, what about Mrs. Prichardson's personal deadbolt?

OZ

I've thought of that. Phase one will be making sure that bolt doesn't lock, phase two is getting the keys from Mr. Barlowe, and phase three is getting into the office after hours.

Emily nods, impressed.

OZ (cont'd)

As long as we can accomplish these three things, we'll be able to get into Mrs. Prichardson's files and erase Chloe's suspension from her record. Also, and I didn't tell you all this, I plan on erasing all of yours too. Go big or go home.

The crew gets excited. Holy shit!

STEVEN

Actually, there's one more thing we should do while we're there.

Oz turns to him, confused. Steven holds up her hard drive.

STEVEN (cont'd)

We should get your film into the showcase lineup while we have a chance.

OZ

Steven, no, it's okay.

STEVEN

No, Oz, it's not. We've all worked so hard to make this film a reality, and we're gonna be in her office anyways. The hard drive for the event is kept in her office, so as long as we're in there we should finish this thing.

The biggest smile Oz has ever smiled blooms on her face. She pulls Steven into a giant bear hug. The crew laughs.

OZ  
(quietly)  
Thank you, Steven. You're a great friend.

They separate. Steven grins, hair a mess.

STEVEN  
Hey, friends gotta stick together.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY**

We see the main gate to Brentwood. A car pulls up to the curb.

The door opens and Chloe steps out, looking up at Brentwood. She doesn't have her usual vigor.

Text appears:

Two Weeks Later

Chloe exhales, then enters campus.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

Chloe approaches her locker, opening it up. Even putting her bag in the locker doesn't have the same energy it used to.

She closes the locker door, revealing a grinning Oz.

OZ  
Hey!

CHLOE  
(flinches)  
Ah! Don't do that, jeez.

OZ  
Can we talk?

Oz gestures over her shoulder with her thumb.

**INT. GIRLS BATHROOM - DAY**

Oz walks into the empty bathroom, followed by Chloe. As soon as the door shuts Oz whirls around, her cool facade dropped.



OZ

Oh my god Chloe I'm so sorry, are you okay? I haven't heard from you since you got suspended and when I found out I was such a mess and I didn't even know until the next day and I really tried to reach out I did I sent you so many texts and called a lot but you never responded and there was a whole thing with the crew and--

Chloe holds up her hand. Oz falls silent, tears welling in her eyes.

CHLOE

First, breathe. You're gonna pass out Oz.

Oz inhales, then exhales.

OZ

Thanks.

CHLOE

Second. I didn't call or text you because...

She pauses. Oz looms.

A grin creeps across Chloe's face.

CHLOE (cont'd)

My parents grounded me, you dummy! I didn't have my phone! You know them, locking me away like Rapunzel.

Oz chokes out a laugh.

CHLOE (cont'd)

Of course I would've responded if I wasn't a prisoner! Relax, Oz, it's okay.

OZ

You aren't mad?

CHLOE

Of course I'm not mad! Dude, I'm the one who signed up for this.

OZ

Oh thank GOD!

Oz throws herself at Chloe and gives her a giant hug. Chloe hugs back. They grapple each other like wrestlers.

OZ (cont'd)  
I was so afraid you were like plotting my death or writing me out of your will or something.

CHLOE  
Well, I don't have a will, but if I did you're getting everything. And we're still on to die on the beaches of Uruguay at the ripe old age of 93, right?

OZ  
You know it.

They high five, laughing. Chloe crosses her arms.

CHLOE  
Though I am worried that this suspension is gonna hurt my chances at college. I'm lucky they didn't charge me, but suspension for theft doesn't exactly make me sound like the perfect student I am.

OZ  
Actually, about that...

**INT. FILM STUDIO - DAY**

Oz and Chloe stand with the entire crew, looking at the blueprint again. This is the most packed the studio has ever been.

CHLOE  
Holy. Shit. You guys are incredible.

OZ  
I know this is breaking our little rule, but I don't care. We help each other.

CHLOE  
Don't sweat it, it was a dumb rule. I kinda got caught up in making the film and sounding cool.

OZ  
You weren't alone in that.

CHLOE

Okay, so what happens if--

OZ

Someone gets caught? I take full responsibility. Probably say I blackmailed you into it.

CHLOE

Okay, cool! The last thing I need is two suspensions.

Steven steps forward.

STEVEN

So, parent teacher conferences are tonight. We've got everything ready, just have to wait for the right moment.

The crew cheers. Shit's getting real!

OZ

Great! Unless there's nothing else to add, let Operation "Save Chloe's Ass And Everyone Else's Too" commence!

CHLOE

Let's do this!

More cheering!

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - DAY**

Hadley walks up to Mrs. Prichardson's building, looking up at it. She stares for a moment.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Distribution"

She rolls her shoulders a couple times, then keeps walking.

**INT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - DAY**

Hadley enters the building. The receptionist looks up, eyes beginning to narrow. Hadley looks directly at her.

HADLEY

Hello! How are you doing?

The receptionist is taken aback - direct confrontation? Her mean demeanor vanishes.

RECEPTIONIST

Uh, I - I'm doing well, thank you very much.

HADLEY

Great!

Hadley keeps walking. The security guard doesn't even look up as Hadley passes.

She continues down the hall, waving to the security camera as she passes. The red dot blinks.

Hadley stops at the doorway to Mrs. Prichardson's office.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - DAY**

Mrs. Prichardson is sitting at her desk when someone knocks on the door.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Enter.

The door opens, and Hadley pokes her head in.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

What can I do for you?

HADLEY

Hi Mrs. Prichardson! Have you seen my twin around? I can't find Harley anywhere.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

I can't say I have. You should check in with reception, they would know better than I.

HADLEY

Okay, great! Thank you!

The door starts to close, then opens again.

HADLEY (cont'd)

Oh, one more thing!

Mrs. Prichardson looks back up, annoyed.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Yes?

HADLEY

Are my parents meeting with you tonight? You know, about the whole suspension thing?

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Yes, they are.

HADLEY

What time are they slated for again? They can't remember and wanted me to ask.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

I sent them several emails, but I suppose I can look it up for you. One moment.

While Mrs. Prichardson looks at her calendar, Hadley wedges a paperclip into the deadbolt. She finishes right before Mrs. Prichardson looks up.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Your parents are meeting with me at eight tonight.

HADLEY

Amazing, I'll be sure to let them know! Thank you!

She leaves, sweaty from nerves. Mrs. Prichardson regards the closed door, eyebrow raised.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Hmm.

**INT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - DAY**

Hadley walks back out the way she came, waving goodbye to the receptionist.

HADLEY

Have a great day!

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - DAY**

Hadley exits the building. Harley stands next to the door, waiting for her. He matches her stride as they walk away.

Hadley texts Oz.

*Phase 1 complete! <3*

**INT. PLANNING CLASSROOM - DAY**

Oz receive's Hadley's text.

OZ  
Alright, time to move on to Phase 2.

She looks at the rest of the crew. Everyone except Chloe and Steven hold up air horns and silly string containers and grin.

Steven and Chloe are busy changing into all-black outfits.

OZ (cont'd)  
Ready to get in trouble one more time?

AALIYAH  
At least we won't get suspended for this.

HARLEY  
Hopefully.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - DAY**

Mr. Barlowe walks down the path, twirling his keys on his finger. Steven watches him from a bush.

STEVEN  
(into radio)  
The turkey has landed. I repeat, the turkey has landed. Over.

In another location, Jonathan keys his radio.

JONATHAN  
Copy, over.

Jonathan turns to face the disruption crew.

JONATHAN (cont'd)  
Let's put these weapons of mass disruption to good use!

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - DAY**

We're back at the heist plan.

OZ

We have to isolate Mr. Barlowe to get his keys. That means no teachers, no students, and no cameras.

She points at another blueprint, this one of a hallway.

OZ (cont'd)

The hallway outside his office is perfect. You know how he likes to play with his key ring?

### **BRIEF KEY MONTAGE**

We see rapid fire shots of Mr. Barlowe all across campus - his office, a classroom, the gymnasium, the bathroom, the cafeteria - twirling his keys.

OZ (V.O.)

He also gets scared easily.

We cycle through the locations again. In each of them, something loud happens and Mr. Barlowe jumps, the keys flying off his finger

### **INT. OZ'S GARAGE - DAY**

OZ

If we can startle him in that hallway, we can snatch the keys before he finds them. As long as we can distract him immediately after losing the keys he'll forget about them. At least, I hope he will.

STEVEN

Are you sure about this?

OZ

The jumpier he is, the less likely he is to keep track of the keys. That's why we'll give him something to think about first.

### **EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS**

We're back at Mr. Barlowe. The lunch bell tolls.

MR. BARLOWE

Ah, lunch. Finally.

He smiles in anticipation.

A faint commotion can be heard coming towards him. Mr. Barlowe strains to hear it.

MR. BARLOWE (cont'd)  
What the hell?

The noises get louder - children yelling.

Mr. Barlowe slowly turns, dreading whatever he may see. His eyes go wide.

MR. BARLOWE (cont'd)  
Oh. My. God.

Barreling towards him are the crew members armed with silly string and air horns. One of them chirps their horn, and Mr. Barlowe visibly flinches.

MR. BARLOWE (cont'd)  
Nooooo, no! You stay away!

The screaming crew reaches him. They spray him with silly string and chirp the air horns.

MR. BARLOWE (cont'd)  
Aaaahhhh! You're all horrible  
horrible little devils! I hate you!!!

They dance around him, still spraying. The cans finally run out.

Mr. Barlowe wipes a layer of silly string off his face. He's absolutely fuming.

MR. BARLOWE (cont'd)  
Detention, all of you!! NOW!!!

Oz, Chloe, and Steven watch from the bushes, waiting. They pull on balaclavas.

**INT. MR. BARLOWE'S HALLWAY - LATER**

We see Emily step out of a door, holding a pink detention slip.

MR. BARLOWE  
(from inside the room)  
And I don't wanna see your face for  
at least a *week*, Emily!



EMILY

Yes sir!

She pulls out a radio and keys it.

EMILY (cont'd)

Oz, I'm the last one out. Mr. Barlowe should be coming soon. Over.

At the other end of the hallway, Oz responds.

OZ

Great, thanks Emily. Get into position. Over.

EMILY

Copy, over.

Emily pulls out an airhorn and ducks into an open classroom. As she disappears, Mr. Barlowe emerges from his office.

He wipes the last of the silly string off his shirt.

MR. BARLOWE

I cannot wait until summer vacation.

Mr. Barlowe starts to hum as he walks down the hall. His finger dips into his pocket, and out comes the key ring.

Oz peeks around the corner she's hiding in. Chloe and Steven stack up behind her. Their stealth outfits sharply contrast the white walls.

OZ

Okay, here he comes.

The three of them duck back, waiting.

Mr. Barlowe passes the room Emily is in, whistling now. The key ring is in full twirl.

Emily peeks out, readying the air horn. Mr. Barlowe approaches the open classroom.

He enters the target zone. Emily presses down on the air horn. Nothing happens.

EMILY

(quietly)

Shit!

She presses again and again, shaking the can. Nothing.

Mr. Barlowe passes the room - they've failed.

CHLOE  
(whispering)  
Why is he still walking towards us?  
Where's the horn?

OZ  
(whispering)  
I don't know!

STEVEN  
(whispering)  
Fuck!

Mr. Barlowe approaches their hiding spot.

Then, providence strikes. The key ring slips off his fingers in slow motion, arcing towards the trio's hiding spot.

MR. BARLOWE  
Oh, shoot.

Oz looks down. The keys are right there. Stupidly, she lunges for them.

MR. BARLOWE (cont'd)  
What the hell?!

Oz snatches the keys away and tucks them in her pocket in one fluid motion. She steps to the other side and rips her balaclava off, all before Mr. Barlowe has time to stand up.

MR. BARLOWE (cont'd)  
Oz?!? What are you doing here? What the hell is going on? And where did my keys go?

OZ  
Oh, *hiiii* Mr. Barlowe! What are you doing here?

MR. BARLOWE  
My office is in here, and-- no wait, I'm asking the questions here!

Steven and Chloe hug the wall right next to him. He still hasn't noticed them.

OZ  
Your office is in here? I never knew!  
I, uh, wow! That's crazy!

She's struggling to figure out what to do. Steven and Chloe look at each other, panicked.

Mr. Barlowe tries to do Diane's trademark eyebrow raise and fails.

MR. BARLOWE

Oz, what are you doing in here?  
You're supposed to be in the  
cafeteria right now.

OZ

Oh, yeah, well I was just in the bio  
lab, and...

Steven pulls off his balaclava. Chloe grabs him and tries to stop him.

He shrugs her off and jumps out in front of Mr. Barlowe, waving his hands and screaming!

STEVEN

Mr. Barlowe! Mr. Barlowe!! There's  
students vandalizing the cafeteria!

Mr. Barlowe's eyes narrow and his posture straightens.

MR. BARLOWE

Excuse me?

STEVEN

There's a huge group of students with  
air horns in the cafeteria spraying  
silly string everywhere! The walls  
are covered and they're going after  
the lunch ladies!

A switch clicks in Mr. Barlowe's brain. His face morphs into a mask of pure anger. He turns and sprints away, shoes squeaking on the tile.

MR. BARLOWE

(yelling to nobody in  
particular)

I swear if I catch any of you it's  
detention for life!

He sprints by Emily's hiding spot, completely missing her.

Chloe steps out of hiding. Steven looks proud that his tactic worked.

OZ

Thanks, Steven. You saved my ass.

STEVEN

Saved *our* asses, you mean.

Oz pulls out a radio and keys it.

OZ

Phase two is complete. Over.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - EVENING**

Mrs. Prichardson finishes up some paperwork and clicks her pen closed. She gathers her belongings.

As she leaves her office, she locks the bottom lock. It clicks shut. She moves to the top lock, the one Hadley jammed.

Her key inserts and turns, then gets stuck. She jiggles it, but no click.

Opening the door, Mrs. Prichardson starts to bend down and inspect the lock when the bell rings.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Hmm.

She stands up, sighs, then closes her door and locks the bottom lock again.

**INT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - EVENING**

Mrs. Prichardson walks by the empty receptionist's desk and the security guard's chair. The lights are off, save for a lamp or two.

She drops a note on the receptionist's desk:

*Please have maintenance fix my lock tomorrow morning.*

*- Diane*

**INT. PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCE ROOM - EVENING**

Mrs. Prichardson enters a stark room with ugly overhead lighting and sits down. Several more teachers enter and sit at different tables, prepping materials.

A sign inside the room says:

"Parent Teacher Conferences Here!"

Mrs. Prichardson sighs.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Let's get this over with.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD MAIN ENTRANCE - EVENING**

Oz approaches the front gate with her MOM and DAD. She sees her crew waiting inside.

OZ  
Mom, Dad, I'm just gonna go say hi to my friends.

OZ'S MOM  
Okay! We're going to check out the art museum while we wait, see you in a bit.

Oz approaches the crew.

OZ  
Alright, everyone ready?

Everyone nods their heads and says yes.

OZ (cont'd)  
Okay, great. Remember, everyone has to make it back to the parent teacher conference room before your meeting starts or Mrs. Prichardson will get suspicious. She's just waiting for us to slip up.

Oz puts her hand in, and everyone follows.

OZ (cont'd)  
Let phase three commence. Break!

They all throw their hands up. Phase three is in action.

**INT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - EVENING**

Steven and his parents enter the building, heading into the parent teacher conference room. After a moment, Oz and Chloe enter as well.

They duck behind the reception desk, waiting.

OZ  
(into radio)  
We're in place, over.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD MAIN ENTRANCE - EVENING**

Aaliyah, Hadley, and Harley click off their radio, then walk over to a work van. They start undoing the straps securing a ladder on top of it.

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - DAY**

We flashback to the garage planning session.

OZ  
We're going to need a ladder, does anyone have one?

AALIYAH  
My dad usually has one on top of his work van.

OZ  
Is there any way you can get him to drive the van to the parent teacher conference?

Aaliyah nods.

OZ (cont'd)  
Perfect.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - EVENING**

Aaliyah and the twins carry the ladder to the side of the building that the window in Mrs. Prichardson's hallway is on.

AALIYAH  
(into radio)  
Ladder is in position, over.

**INT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - EVENING**

Steven and his parents exit the conference room as Caldwell and his parents enter. The two don't make eye contact.

STEVEN  
(to his parents)  
Hey, I'm gonna use the bathroom. I'll  
meet you guys at the car?

Steven's dad nods and Steven's parents leave.

Steven flashes Oz and Chloe a subtle thumbs-up as he walks directly towards the security camera.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - EVENING**

Outside the building, the ladder is set up right near the window. Hadley and Harley hold it and Aaliyah prepares to scale it.

The window opens, and Steven pokes his head out.

STEVEN  
Come on!

Aaliyah rockets up the ladder.

**INT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - EVENING**

Aaliyah climbs through the window. She opens her backpack and pulls out a thick black cloth and some duct tape.

AALIYAH  
Ready when you are.

Steven nods. He walks back towards the front end, passing the security camera.

A beat after he passes, Aaliyah stands on a chair and slides the black cloth over the security camera. She tapes it down with duct tape.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - EVENING**

Aaliyah climbs out the window and back down the ladder. She runs back to the front of the building while Hadley and Harley stash the ladder in a bush.

**INT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - EVENING**

Aaliyah enters the building and stands near the reception desk.

AALIYAH  
(whispering)  
Camera is covered.

OZ  
(whispering)  
Great, thanks Aaliyah.

Aaliyah looks down, realizing something.

AALIYAH  
Shit!

OZ  
(whispering)  
What?

AALIYAH  
I didn't give the twins the key to  
securing the ladder back on the van,  
and my parents are gonna want to  
leave right away.

CHLOE  
(whispering)  
Caldwell is coming out soon, pass it  
to him.

Aaliyah's parents enter the building.

AALIYAH'S MOM  
Wow, Aaliyah, you were right! The  
flowers on the other side of campus  
do look great this time of year!

AALIYAH  
Right? They're my favorite part!

Aaliyah and her parents enter the conference room as  
Caldwell and his parents exit. Aaliyah passes him the key.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - EVENING**

Caldwell and his parents exit the building.

CALDWELL  
Hey, is that Harley? I'm gonna go say  
hi!

Caldwell races away from his parents before they can say  
anything.



He rounds the corner and finds the twins. He gives the key to Harley.

CALDWELL (cont'd)  
You guys gotta get this ladder back on the van before Aaliyah's conference is over. You better hurry too, Mrs. Prichardson is moving fast.

Caldwell runs back to his parents and the twins grab the ladder.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD MAIN ENTRANCE - EVENING**

The twins race out of the gate with the ladder, stopping at Aaliyah's dad's van. They struggle to get the ladder onto the car.

**INT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - EVENING**

Oz checks her watch under the desk.

OZ  
Okay, Chloe you're up next, and then when you're done we'll move in on the office. Got it?

CHLOE  
Got it.

Chloe stands up and brushes herself off, then stands by the door.

Her parents walk in.

CHLOE'S DAD  
Sorry we're late, Chloe, traffic was just terrible.

CHLOE  
Don't worry about it! We still have time.

Aaliyah and her parents exit the conference room. Aaliyah waves to Chloe.

AALIYAH  
Hi Chloe!

CHLOE  
Hi Aaliyah! See you tomorrow?

AALIYAH  
You know it!

**EXT. BRENTWOOD MAIN ENTRANCE - EVENING**

The twins have the ladder on the van, but one of the ratchets won't tighten. They struggle harder.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - EVENING**

Aaliyah and her parents walk towards the front gate. She can see Hadley and Harley trying to secure the ladder. Her parents haven't noticed yet.

AALIYAH  
(under her breath)  
Come on, come on...

**EXT. BRENTWOOD MAIN ENTRANCE - EVENING**

A hand appears and tugs incredibly hard on the strap, finally tightening the ratchet. The twins look down and see Jonathan.

JONATHAN  
The cavalry has arrived!

Hadley and Harley jump off the van and the three move away from it towards the gate right as Aaliyah and her parents exit.

Aaliyah pretends not to know them as Jonathan kicks a pebble and the twins look up at the sky. Aaliyah's family get in their van and drive away.

**INT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - EVENING**

Jonathan and his parents, both of whom are immersed in their phones, enter the building. Jonathan casually sidles up to the reception desk.

JONATHAN  
(quietly)  
Hey guys, I'm here.

OZ  
(quietly)  
Amazing. Jonathan, when you go in we're gonna hit the office.  
(MORE)

OZ (cont'd)  
I need some time, so distract Mrs.  
Prichardson somehow. Just don't get  
in trouble.

JONATHAN  
How much time?

OZ  
As much as you can get us.

Chloe and her parents come out. She waves at Jonathan.

CHLOE  
Mom, Dad, I'm gonna hang out here  
until Oz is done. I'll catch a ride  
home with her, okay?

Chloe's parents look at each other, hesitant.

CHLOE'S MOM  
No, Chloe. You're coming home with  
us.

Chloe freezes - this isn't part of the plan.

CHLOE  
Please Mom? I haven't seen Oz in two  
weeks!

CHLOE'S DAD  
I don't know, Chloe...

CHLOE  
I just want to say hi! I promise I'll  
come straight home afterwards.

Chloe's parents look at each other again, then relent.

CHLOE'S MOM  
Okay, *fine*. But you're coming  
*straight home*, you understand?

CHLOE  
I will! Love you both!

Her parents wave goodbye then leave. Chloe exhales.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
Coast is clear, guys.

Oz and Steven stand up, brushing themselves off.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
Oh, Oz, my mom and dad say hi.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Inside Mrs. Prichardson's office, low moonlight lights up her desk. Her two beloved stamps, Approved and Denied, stand at the ready.

The lock jiggles, then opens with a click as Oz, Chloe, and Steven step inside. They stop for a moment, taking in the office.

STEVEN  
It looks ... different at night.

CHLOE  
Creepier.

Steven picks up a sleek black hard drive. He turns it over, revealing a label:

Capstone Showcase - Films

STEVEN  
Here's the hard drive!

Oz sits at Mrs. Prichardson's computer. She taps the space key and the screen turns on.

There's an on-screen prompt for the password.

**INT. OZ'S GARAGE - DAY**

Back to the garage.

CRAIG  
How are we going to get into Mrs. Prichardson's computer? If she has an extra lock on her door she definitely has a password on her account.

OZ  
Craig, I've been getting in trouble ever since I got accepted here. One thing I've paid attention to more than anything else in Mrs. Prichardson's office is trying to figure out her password.

EMILY

Why?

OZ

Never know when you might need it.  
Good thing I did, too.

Oz puts a piece of paper on the table. On it are ten password variations, each a nearly identical string of random characters and numbers.

STEVEN

They're all gibberish.

OZ

Exactly, that way nobody would be able to guess them. I was able to decipher every single character except for this one.

Oz points at one character, the only thing different in each password. A few variations are numbers, the rest nearby letters

OZ (cont'd)

The way she sits when she punches in the password, I can't see this one. It's something from near the 7 on a keyboard, but I can't figure out what. So we'll just have to try all of them.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Oz pulls out her password list and starts typing in the first one.

OZ

Hopefully we have beginner's luck.

She finishes entering it and punches it in. Incorrect.

A new line of text pops up underneath the entry window.

STEVEN

(reading out loud)  
Two tries left until lockout. Shit!

Oz is stunned.

CHLOE

What are we gonna do, Oz?

OZ  
I don't know, I didn't think of this!

She looks at the password list again.

OZ (cont'd)  
We're just gonna have to keep trying.  
Fuck!

She punches in another one - incorrect. One try left.

Oz types in a third attempt. Her finger lingers over the enter button.

OZ (cont'd)  
Here goes nothing.

She hits enter.

Incorrect. The screen dims as a lock symbol appears.

STEVEN  
Shit! What do we do?

OZ  
I don't know!

CHLOE  
Guys, wait!

A timer is counting down underneath the lock symbol. 4:57, 4:56, 4:55.

CHLOE (cont'd)  
It's gonna give us more tries in five minutes.

OZ  
Come on, Jonathan - delay!

**INT. PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT**

Jonathan sits in front of Mrs. Prichardson and next to his parents.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
As captain of the football team, I'm very disappointed at your lack of leadership.

Jonathan's dad leans forward. He seems like he's used to having influence at Brentwood.

JONATHAN'S DAD

Now, Diane, take it easy on the boy.  
His great grandfather passed recently  
and it's been a hard time.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

I'm sorry, I didn't know. Your son  
never communicated that to me.

She looks pointedly at Jonathan.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Jonathan, is the passing of your  
great grandfather the reason why  
you've been acting out this semester?

Jonathan sneaks the tiniest glance at his watch - he needs  
to buy more time. He looks up at Mrs. Prichardson, then his  
lip quivers.

Jonathan burst into a mixture of real and fake tears, really  
hamming up the performance.

JONATHAN

(sobbing)

I-I-I just m-m-miss him is all!

His parents hand him tissues. Mrs. Prichardson looks  
uncomfortable and tries to comfort him.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

OZ

Come on, come on...

0:03, 0:02, 0:01...

The lock symbol disappears.

OZ (cont'd)

Finally!

She punches in another password. Chloe catches Oz's hand  
before she can hit enter.

CHLOE

What if it locks us out again?

OZ

We're out of time. If we don't get it  
this go around, we're screwed.

Oz hits enter. Incorrect.

OZ (cont'd)

Fuck!!

**INT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - NIGHT**

Jonathan, still crying, is led out of the conference room by his parents. Jonathan looks around. Oz, Chloe, and Steven aren't out yet. Shit!

Craig enters the building with his parents. He sees Jonathan and is concerned.

CRAIG

Jon, you okay?

Jonathan rushes forward and hugs him.

JONATHAN

(whispering)

You gotta buy some more time, Craig.  
Distract Mrs. Prichardson.

CRAIG

(whispers)

Got it.

The two separate and Craig pats Jonathan on the back. He enters the conference room.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Incorrect flashes across the screen again. Only one chance left.

STEVEN

Oh my god we're so screwed.

CHLOE

Which one are you gonna pick, Oz?

Oz types the password again up to the point of the mystery character. Her finger hovers over the keyboard as she tries to decide.



**MRS. PRICHARDSON TYPING MONTAGE**

We see a very brief montage of different angles of Mrs. Prichardson typing in her password. Her finger keep hitting the mystery key.

Oz tries to determine what key it might be. More typing.

Mrs. Prichardson looks directly at the audience - we are Oz.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Everything depends on *you*. *You* are  
the key, *you* are the answer. Only *you*  
can decide what happens next.

We finally see the mystery key - the letter "U".

**END MONTAGE**

Oz confidently presses the "U" key moments after the montage ends and hits enter.

The computer thinks for a moment, then makes a *bing* sound as the account is successfully logged in.

Oz throws her hands up in relief.

OZ  
Whoo!

She plugs Mrs. Prichardson's hard drive into the computer as well as her own. Oz drags the film from her own hard drive to Mrs. Prichardson's, starting the transfer process.

OZ  
Okay, now let's see about these  
student records.

Oz opens up the program. She browses by name and finds Chloe's account.

STEVEN  
Three minutes left before your  
meeting is supposed to start.

OZ  
Plenty of time.

She cracks her knuckles, then her fingers fly across the keyboard.

**INT. PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT**

Craig is standing on his chair, not taking his role lightly.

CRAIG

(loudly)

I'm sorry I'm such a fuckup! God, you make one mistake and the world treats you like shit!

His parents try, unsuccessfully, to pull him down. Mrs. Prichardson remains seated, staring up at him.

Craig points his finger directly at her.

CRAIG (cont'd)

You'll never understand me!!

She raises her eyebrow.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Oz hits the delete button.

OZ

Okay, I think we got everyone.

CHLOE

Yeah, you just gotta do yourself and then we should be good.

The computer *bings*. The file transfer is complete.

OZ

No time. Plus, it would be really suspicious if everyone had clean slates. Mrs. Prichardson suspects anything, first person she's gonna check is me. If my record is clean, she'll know something is up.

Oz unplugs the hard drives.

STEVEN

We still have some time, you can--

OZ

Steven. Remember what we agreed on? If anyone gets in trouble, I take the blame for it. This is my way of apologizing to you all.

(MORE)

OZ (cont'd)

Besides, everything on here is from other incidents.

CHLOE

You sure?

OZ

Positive. Let's get out of here.

Oz shuts down the computer and the trio leave the office. Mrs. Prichardson's hard drive sits near her computer, very much not where it's supposed to be.

**INT. PRICHARDSON'S BUILDING - NIGHT**

The trio moves carefully down the hall. Chloe shuts the window while Oz grabs the chair Aaliyah used.

As they pass the camera, Oz stands on the chair and loosens the tape. She attaches a piece of fishing line to the cloth, then follows Chloe and Steven.

When they get far enough away, Oz turns around and yanks on the fishing line. The black cloth flies off the security camera. We see camera feed of it disappearing in a flash, nobody around.

OZ

A clean getaway, if I do say so myself.

STEVEN

It's just about time for you to go in. I gotta get to my parents, they're probably freaking out right now.

Oz hands the hard drive to him.

OZ

Here, you take the drive and stash it.

Steven nods and sprints out the door.

CHLOE

I'll hang out until after your meeting in case anything goes wrong. I do need that ride home, after all.

Oz's parents enter the building.

OZ'S MOM

Oz, have you been in the museum lately? The work in there is phenomenal!

OZ

I haven't, I'll have to check it out. Oh, can we give Chloe a ride home?

OZ'S MOM

Sure! How are you, Chloe?

CHLOE

Doing great, thanks!

Craig and his parents exit the conference room. He looks dejected, but brightens up when he sees that the trio made it out of the office.

CRAIG'S DAD

Honestly, Craig, what has gotten into you? That was embarrassing.

CRAIG

Sorry, Dad.

He winks at Oz. She smiles back.

OZ

(to her parents)  
Well, time for us I think.

**INT. PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT**

Oz and her parents sit down at Mrs. Prichardson's table.

OZ

Hi Mrs. Prichardson.

Mrs. Prichardson eyes her.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Hello. Are you feeling well tonight?

The question catches Oz off-guard.

OZ

As far as I know, yeah.

DIANE

Good. The last two students acted quite uncharacteristically and were rather disruptive. I'm hoping *you* will be on your best behavior.

Mrs. Prichardson stares at Oz like she knows something. Oz tries to stay cool.

OZ

Don't worry, I don't have anything crazy planned tonight.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Good.

(to Oz's parents)

So, let's get started.

The faintest of smiles touches Oz's face.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD CAMPUS - NIGHT**

Oz, Chloe, and Oz's parents exit the building onto the campus. Oz's parents walk ahead, chatting and looking at a form. Oz and Chloe hang back.

When there's a little distance, they break out into a silent celebration dance. It's honestly more thrashing than dancing.

CHLOE

I can't believe we did it!

OZ

Me neither!! Ahhhh!

They jump up and down.

CHLOE

Holy shit, if we get found out we're done for.

OZ

We'll never get into college. Especially me, since I'm the one that'll take the blame for everything.

Chloe laughs.

CHLOE

You could kiss film school goodbye!  
Or maybe they'd really respect it -  
shows some real commitment!

OZ

Imagine me getting *into* school  
because of breaking the law.

CHLOE

Honestly, it's more plausible than  
you getting in regularly.

They laugh and keep walking.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - DAY**

We see the clock on Mrs. Prichardson's desk. It reads 7:29 AM.

The lock clicks on her door and it opens right as the clock changes to 7:30. Mrs. Prichardson walks in and sits down at her desk.

She sets her bag down and begins preparing for the day, but stops when she notices something - the hard drive is on her desk.

She picks it up, regarding it for a second. She looks over at where it had been left the day before.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Odd...

We hear whistling from the hall. A maintenance worker pokes his head in.

MAINTENANCE

Hey, Diane, just gonna get your lock  
fixed for you.

Mrs. Prichardson keeps staring at the hard drive. Her brow furrows. She looks up at the door.

Mrs. Prichardson gets up and goes to the door.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Hold on a second, please.

MAINTENANCE

Sure, no problem.

The maintenance worker pulls out his phone. Mrs. Prichardson bends down and inspects her deadbolt.

Not seeing any evidence of tampering, she opens the door more and peers into the locking mechanism. There - a paperclip.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Hmm...

She wrests the paperclip out of the deadbolt, then turns the lock. It opens and closes unobstructed.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

It appears the lock is working again.  
Apologies for the inconvenience.

MAINTENANCE

Hey, no problem! Less work for me.

The maintenance worker chuckles and leaves.

Mrs. Prichardson walks back to her desk and sits down, picking up the hard drive again.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Interesting.

**EXT. BRENTWOOD MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY**

Oz gets out of her mom's car and waves goodbye, then walks towards the gate. Chloe meets her at the entrance.

CHLOE

Capstone film showcase is today, you excited?

Oz's smile in response looks forced.

OZ

Very.

CHLOE

I know you hate people seeing your work, but no point in making a film if people aren't gonna watch it!

OZ

(sighs)

Yeah, you're right. But what if it's bad?

CHLOE

It's not, and you know it. We all worked incredibly hard, and everyone is gonna love it! Except Mrs. Prichardson.

Oz laughs.

OZ

Yeah, she's gonna hate it.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - DAY**

Mrs. Prichardson plugs the hard drive into her computer. She looks through the drive, examining all the submissions.

Her cursor stops on Oz's, the only one that hadn't been there before.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

What do we have here?

She clicks on the film and begins watching it.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

Oz stands in front of a sign on the wall. It reads: "Capstone Screening Tomorrow!"

Oz grins.

**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S OFFICE - DAY**

Mrs. Prichardson sits at her computer, stunned. On the screen is the ending title card of Oz's film.

Mrs. Prichardson slowly stands up and walks over to her window. She looks out at all the students walking around.

She sees Oz and watches her for a bit. Oz walks with Chloe, and we see Steven approach. More members of the crew walk up, saying hi and laughing.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Hmm.

She exits the frame.



**INT. MRS. PRICHARDSON'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING**

We can see the setting sun through a window as Mrs. Prichardson takes off her suit jacket.

She walks over to the mantle over the fireplace, looking at old pictures of herself. A photo of her as a child with her parents. Her on the playground. Her high school graduation. Her with collegiate friends. Her first job.

In each photo, Mrs. Prichardson looks less and less happy.

She frowns.

**INT. DIANE PRICHARDSON'S BEDROOM - EVENING**

Mrs. Prichardson opens a closet in her room. Inside is a set of drawers. She hesitates, then opens the top drawer.

She pulls out a stack of old papers. They're paintings done by a child. We see a crude signature in the bottom of each - Diane.

She pulls out a paintbrush kit. Engraved on the lid is her name. She opens it and pulls out a note from her mother. It reads:

Dear Diane,

May you always embrace your creativity as  
eagerly as you do now.

Love,

Mom

Mrs. Prichardson stares at the note for a few moments. Her mouth quivers.

Mrs. Prichardson sits on her bed, her laptop open with the hard drive plugged in.

ON SCREEN, her cursor hovers over Oz's film. She right clicks and hovers over the "Move to Trash" button. We see Mrs. Prichardson's eyes. She's thinking.

From her briefcase, Mrs. Prichardson pulls out Oz's "Something Ordinary" script. She regards it, then the video file. Her eyes flick back and forth between the two.

Her eyes settle on the video file - there's determination in them.

We see her mouse over the "Move to Trash" button again, and a RACK FOCUS reveals her finger hovering over the trackpad.

After a tense moment, she clicks away from the trash option. She ejects and unplugs the hard drive, taking it with her as she leaves the room.

**INT. AUDITORIUM HALLWAY - DAY**

Oz nervously fidgets outside the auditorium. A sign next to the door reads "Capstone Screening Today". Students stream into the auditorium, chatting with each other.

SUPERIMPOSE: "The Premiere"

A few adults dressed like Wes Anderson wannabes stand outside the nearby window, smoking cigarettes and chatting with teachers. They must be the film scouts

Chloe and Steven walk up to Oz.

STEVEN

I smuggled in some snacks. Want any?

He opens his bag to reveal an assortment of movie theater snacks. Chloe takes a box of Raisinets.

OZ

I'm all set, thanks Steven.

Steven closes the bag, then gestures at the adults smoking outside.

STEVEN

Who are they?

Oz looks at the adults. One of them pulls out a director's viewfinder and looks around campus.

OZ

Those are the scouts. They're the ones that are gonna watch my film and decide whether or not I've got a future in film. If they don't like it, I can kiss my chances of a good school goodbye.

CHLOE

You know you can have a successful career even if you don't go to a top film school, right? You don't even have to go to school to make it big.

(MORE)

CHLOE (cont'd)  
Also, who made their opinions so important?

STEVEN  
Yeah, can't you just be a PA and work your way up the ladder?

The scouts put out their cigarettes and walk inside the auditorium with the teachers. They all have clipboards tucked under their arms.

They nod at Oz as they pass her, and now Oz looks like she's seen a ghost. They enter the auditorium, closing the door behind themselves.

Oz snaps herself out of it. She pulls out her tin of fake cigarettes and opens it, pulling one out.

OZ  
(mumbling)  
Yeah, well, who the hell has the time for that?

She enters the auditorium.

**INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY**

Oz stands in the back of the auditorium, staring at the backs of the teachers and scouts who are loudly chatting. She pats her pockets, looking for a lighter.

Mrs. Prichardson steps up next to Oz out of nowhere and yanks the cigarette out of her mouth. Oz yelps in surprise.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
No smoking.

OZ  
It's fake.

Mrs. Prichardson regards the cigarette for a moment.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
I know.

She turns away from Oz and looks towards the other adults. Oz glances at her a couple times, unnerved, but eventually looks back in the same direction. The two stand there for a moment.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
I saw your film.

Oz winces, expecting all hell to break loose. Mrs. Prichardson doesn't look at her, and Oz doesn't look either.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

It was ... interesting. Not my preference, personally, but it's very true to you.

OZ

Am I in trouble?

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Of course you are. Breaking and entering clearly goes against the values of this school.

OZ

And my film?

Mrs. Prichardson holds up the hard drive. Oz finally looks at her.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Normally you would be suspended immediately and your film would be removed from the showcase... but... work made with this much passion deserves to at least be seen, right?

Oz stares dumbfounded. Mrs. Prichardson finally looks at her, and after a moment smiles softly.

#### **INT. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE - DAY**

MRS. PRICHARDSON

I vote we move to suspend Oz for two weeks time as punishment for her actions this year.

MR. BARLOWE

Breaking and entering is very serious, Diane, and I think that two weeks is--

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Two weeks is quite enough time, I assure you Mr. Barlowe. She'll have plenty of time to reflect on her actions.

Oz stares dumbfounded, like in the auditorium.

TEACHER

I second the motion. Despite Oz's many escapades this is the first offense of any severity, so anything more would be somewhat unwarranted.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Does anyone oppose the proposed disciplinary action?

No one responds. Mr. Barlowe crosses his arms and grumbles.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Wonderful.

(to Oz)

Your two week suspension will begin at the end of the regular school day today. Your parents will receive a letter concerning this incident, though I recommend you have a talk with them before the letter reaches them. Thank you for your time, Oz, you're dismissed.

Oz stands up, still not quite believing it. She nods, then heads towards the door.

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Oh, and one more thing.

Oz turns.

OZ

Yes?

MRS. PRICHARDSON

Please return the camera gear you borrowed before your suspension. We're light on gear until we can free up some more funding for the film department.

Oz smiles, then leaves.

**INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY**

MRS. PRICHARDSON

My mother was an artist, and I wanted to be just like her when I grew up.

Mrs. Prichardson pauses.

MRS. PRICHARDSON (cont'd)  
But as I got older, I saw how  
difficult the life was. There wasn't  
much money, and no matter how hard  
she worked she never got the  
recognition she deserved. So I told  
myself my life would be different.

Mrs. Prichardson turns to Oz.

MRS. PRICHARDSON (cont'd)  
I put my paints away and focused on a  
"real" career. And now I'm here,  
having achieved my goals.

Oz looks at her sympathetically. Mrs. Prichardson turns  
away, voice cracking ever so slightly.

MRS. PRICHARDSON (cont'd)  
I miss my mother.

Mrs. Prichardson pulls out the note from her mother, staring  
at it for a second.

MRS. PRICHARDSON (cont'd)  
I think I'm going to start painting  
again.

OZ  
Eh.. thank you, too, Mrs.  
Prichardson. You really pushed me to  
do my best.

They face each other. Mrs. Prichardson holds out her hand to  
shake, and Oz shakes it. They see each other as people.

MRS. PRICHARDSON  
Well, time for the screening. Can't  
keep the colleges waiting.

Mrs. Prichardson begins walking towards the projectionist.  
She hands the hard drive to them and they plug it in.

We see Oz's crew sitting together near the front of the  
auditorium. They're sharing Steven's snacks and whispering  
to each other.

Mrs. Prichardson sits down in her chair. The teachers and  
professors greet her, but her stony personality has  
returned. The lights dim, and Mrs. Prichardson looks down at  
the note from her mother one more time. She looks back up,  
and the corners of her mouth turn up in a soft smile.

**INT. AUDITORIUM - LATER**

We're back at the first scene of the film. The audience sits in silence, processing what they've just seen. The teachers and scouts mouths hang open. Mrs. Prichardson stares, eyebrow raised.

Silence.

Then Chloe stands! She rises out of the sea of faces.

CHLOE  
WHOO-HOO!! Yeah Oz!!

A split-second, then the crowd erupt from their seats and burst into cheers! We briefly see shots of Chloe's crew as they yell and celebrate.

A small smile forms on Mrs. Prichardson's face. Mr. Barlowe and the other teachers argue in the background with each other about Oz's film. The scouts scribble furiously in their notebooks.

Oz stands in the back, watching the crowd cheer. A small smile creeps onto her face too, then grows larger and larger until she's beaming. Off her face we CUT TO:

**TITLE CARD: TEXAS SWITCH**

THE END

Anderson, Wes, director. *Rushmore*. Touchstone Pictures, 1998.

*Rushmore* is a film about the sophomore year of Max Fischer, a private school student who is heavily involved in intramurals and in love with Rosemary Cross, a new teacher. Max ends up befriending Herman Blume, the father of two of his classmates, and tries to use his friendship to get an aquarium built on the baseball field to show his love for Rosemary. After being expelled for his attempted aquarium, Max transfers to a nearby public school; he soon learns that Blume has started to court Rosemary and sees it as a betrayal from both of them. Max initiates a war against Blume, eventually becoming disheartened and giving up. Max works for a while at his father's barbershop before learning from Blume that he and Rosemary broke up. Max puts on one of his famous plays, which originally got him enrolled at private school, to bring Blume and Rosemary together again, finally surpassing his selfishness and ego to help his friends.

*Rushmore* is a very helpful resource as I switch my script from a college setting to private high school. A typical Wes Anderson film, it embraces a slightly zanier side of life and leans into the quiriness of characters without making them or the plot entirely outlandish. One of the biggest suggestions about my first draft of the script was that I should lean into the crazier and more comedic side of it, as I had too much conflict between the comedic tones and the serious tones, and it was confusing. The cinematography is also something I am looking to replicate. Wes Anderson uses colors and angles very well to emphasize character moments – instead of focusing on flashy visuals, Anderson focuses on characters' reactions and how they interact with each other. The craziness of the plays that Max directs are also inspiring for Oz's secret film; the largely comedic pieces also have a serious tone to them that make you respect his dedication to the work. I'm pulling a large amount of inspiration from *Rushmore*, though I will be making Oz much more likeable than Max.

Crichton, Charles, director. *A Fish Called Wanda*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1988.

*A Fish Called Wanda* is a comedy heist film about four criminals stealing diamonds and their attempts to betray one another. Wanda and Otto, two of the criminals, betray the other two (George and Ken) and plan to make off with the jewels, but they are outsmarted, and the



diamonds are stashed where they can't reach them. Wanda attempts to seduce George's lawyer Archie, and it works a little too well; Archie falls madly for Wanda, further complicating her and Otto's retrieval of the diamonds. Through countless blunders and distractions, Wanda attempts to secure the score for herself – incriminating George, betraying Otto, and working with Archie – and she eventually falls for Archie. The two manage to escape a furious Otto and the ire of George and Ken and get on a plane to Rio de Janeiro, ending the movie with their loot and love for each other.

This film is very helpful in determining the tone of “Texas Switch”, especially in the level of craziness I am aiming for. *A Fish Called Wanda* is a very comedic and satirical approach to the heist film, and it often sets aside serious scenes and motifs in favor of satire and parody of heist tropes. While the heist is the driving plot point of the film, it appears much more as a catalyst for comedic situations than a serious topic. One of the most difficult things in writing “Texas Switch” is determining how much of the film should be serious and how much should be comedy; I don't want to sacrifice the heist aspect of the film for humorous moments and vice versa. *A Fish Called Wanda* demonstrates that a heist film can hold up to the genre's expectations while largely being a comedy film and that heists don't necessarily need to be serious or have dramatic stakes. It shows that sometimes blundering fun is more important to the enjoyability of a heist film than flawless execution of the perfect crime.

Greene, Brian. “The Big Grab of a Heist: Any Number Can Win, from Page to Screen.” *Film International* (16516826), vol. 19, no. 3, Sept. 2021, pp. 46–48.

This article looks at the differences between the American heist novel *The Big Grab* and its French film adaptation *Any Number Can Win*. It begins by examining the story beats of the novel, noting the classic “one last heist” story model and the noir inevitability that Karl, the main character, will fail. The novel is “atmospheric and evocative at the same time that it is suspenseful” and is a tragic character examination of Karl and the other characters. *Any Number Can Win*, in contrast, adopts a much flashier atmosphere; instead of mundane locations like Karl's home where character is the sole focus, the film takes place in Cannes' resort region and features upbeat jazz and flashy visuals. Karl, renamed Mister Charles for the film, has lively arguments with his partner in the film that never occurred in the novel, further altering the final

image of the film. While the plot remains virtually the same, the tonal shift from novel to screen goes a long way in capturing the audience's attention and completely changes the message of the film and the audience's initial feelings and subsequent reactions for the better.

This article is helpful because it highlights the importance of tone, clearly presenting an important piece of information that has appeared in many other sources: heist films should be flashy. Whether the film is flashy in the stoic suaveness of its thieves or takes a more lighthearted and comedic approach, the heist film must present itself as larger than life. It reinforces the idea that the heist film must make the impossible seem effortless by comparing two directly related works, one that is foreboding and realistic and another that is glamorous and more eccentric. *Any Number Can Win* largely benefited from the changes to the tone of *The Big Grab*, an important lesson that a successful heist film should focus just as much (if not more) on captivating the audience as being a character study.

Hanich, Julian. "On Pros and Cons and Bills and Gates: The Heist Film as Pleasure." *Film-Philosophy*, no. 3, Oct. 2020, pp. 304–20. *EBSCOhost*.

This article examines commonalities of the heist film genre and attempts to discern what makes the genre compelling to audiences. It argues that a combination of fluid and precisely executed action combined with strong editing and cinematography are essential components for a successful heist film; an effective combination of the two will captivate the audience because it allows them to experience flawless execution and action without needing to participate. The article further argues that the appeal of a heist film comes from an elegant attack on antagonistic and capitalistic institutions, usually those related to money or the arts. It states that the genre allows for a wide variety of original content, even encourages it, as long as the original work upholds the expected elegance of the heist genre.

This article is very helpful to me as I edit and rewrite parts of my screenplay. It breaks down the standard plot devices of heist films and analyzes them from a philosophical standpoint, assessing why specific aspects of the heist/caper genre are so compelling. It addresses the structure of the heist crew, the execution of the heist, the target of the heist, social commentary and modern Robin Hoods, the differences between heist films and slapstick and other crime

movies, and more. It also briefly touches upon the lack of central female characters in heist films, describing the heist genre as “male obsessed” – something I aim to avoid with my short film. I am using this article to make sure my screenplay hits the right notes and captures the essence of the heist/caper genre; since my film is slightly meta, having a guidebook to the structure of the heist film is invaluable.

Hennefeld, Maggie. “The Problem of Film Comedy in the Twenty-First Century.” *New Review of Film & Television Studies*, vol. 20, no. 1, Mar. 2022 pp. 101–18. *EBSCOhost*.

This article discusses the importance of the “hybrid” comedy, a type of comedy in cinema that avoids following exclusively cine-comedy conventions, instead opting to borrow from other forms of media (theater, literature, social media) to retain value in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It discusses the prevalence and infiltration of comedy in all other media and argues that, in order to retain value in a world where media is so varied and constant, cine-comedy must embrace the hybrid model. Breaking down and melding multiple genres is often a recipe to uniqueness and success, though it is important to remember the roots of cinema – while competent genre-switching is very versatile and more often than not results in success, forgoing too many practical cinematic conventions (camera intent, framing, mise-en-scène, etc.) can create more problems than it solves. The article largely focuses on dark comedies and how they switch from comedic to serious in a matter of moments without disrupting the story.

Even though the article focuses on dark comedies and “Texas Switch” is a heist comedy, there is still valuable information to be pulled from it. By breaking down films like *Parasite* and *Joker* and elaborating on exactly when and how they jump between comedic and serious, I can take their findings and employ them in creating a less-severe tonal switch. The article supports my decision to combine genres with different tones (comedy and the suspense of heist), since it argues that the serious and unserious play off each other quite well and only need a “hinge”, something to connect the two tones, in order to work. My hinge is twofold: first I have the heist itself, which provides opportunity for comedic moments as well as tense and suspenseful ones, but I also have the private high school setting. Private high schools are known for being both rigorous and ludicrous in their rules and are often portrayed as such, providing me with my second hinge.

Hughes, John, director. *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*. Paramount Pictures, 1986.

*Ferris Bueller's Day Off* is the story of a high school student (Ferris Bueller) who devises an incredibly elaborate plan so that he can skip school and enjoy life. Included in his plan are Ferris's best friend Cameron and Ferris's girlfriend Sloane, who he convinces to join in his shenanigans. The trio are forced to dodge Dean Ed Rooney, Ferris's spiteful sister Jeannie, and Ferris's dad as they engage in a wide variety of experiences, good and bad, that add up to one of the most memorable days in their lives; the high of performing in the Von Steuben Parade, for example, is contrasted with the low of wrecking Cameron's dad's Ferrari. The trio manage to foil their adversaries and Ferris's parents are none the wiser at the end of the school day, cementing his victory over Ed Rooney and Jeannie.

*Ferris Bueller's Day Off* is crucial to my writing process for several reasons. Firstly, it is actually a heist film, though many people wouldn't initially think it to be one; instead of stealing money or other valuables, Ferris crafts a very complicated plan and executes it almost flawlessly to steal himself and his friends away from the institution that is high school. It is a well-known comedy film that pushes the line of reality and edges into the surreal at several points, presenting a lighthearted and unserious story about a teen who does what he wants despite being told otherwise. Oz's character was partially inspired by Ferris, especially his ingenuity and his need to do what he wants no matter the obstacle. The film also takes place in a high school setting with high school levels of discipline, and as I transition my first draft from a collegiate setting to a private high school, having a source that deals with a similar setting is very helpful for comparison and inspiration. Lastly, *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* breaks the fourth wall fairly often. While I don't plan on having Oz or other characters do the same, "Texas Switch" is a meta film in that it is a satirical take on the heist genre and is structured around making a movie. Understanding how and when Ferris breaks the fourth wall is very helpful in learning when I should embrace the meta aspect of my film and when I should leave it more grounded.

Lee, Darryl. *The Heist Film: Stealing with Style*. Columbia University Press, 2014.

*The Heist Film: Stealing With Style* is an examination of the heist genre over time, from early entries in the noir era (*The Killers*, *Asphalt Jungle*, etc.) to heist films of the 21st century (*The Italian Job*, *Ocean's Eleven*, etc.). It looks at how the heist film functions as both a dramatic and comedic piece and how the genre has evolved over the decades, attempting to discern why heist films are so compelling to both audiences and directors. Lee analyzes a variety of heist films, discussing what works for each film, how the older films pave the way for newer heists, and how the newer films take the genres in unexpected and unique directions.

A purely historical source, this text is very helpful for understanding the origins of the genre and the development of its conventions and clichés. It discusses tie-ins with the noir genre, the failures of early heist and caper films, and why, despite the appeal of heist films, the genre is not as durable as it may seem. It also clarifies the conventional and thematic differences between a heist and a caper and gives examples of each, providing me with dozens of additional resources to research for my thesis. Lee's work reinforces the lessons and takeaways from other films and articles in this bibliography, providing a backbone for the investigative and theoretical content of other texts. Lee shows through the analysis of a wide range of heist films that, despite shifting aspects and constant growth in the genre, the main goal of the heist film is to create a thrilling and entertaining experience for the audience.

Mann, Michael, director. *Heat*. Warner Bros., 1995.

*Heat* is a heist film about a crew of criminals, led by experienced criminal Neil McCauley, attempting a multitude of robberies while evading Vincent Hanna, a Lieutenant in the LAPD. Vincent respects Neil's intelligence and tenacity, vowing to catch him no matter what. In addition to evading Vincent, Neil has to worry about Waingro, a white supremacist who unnecessarily murdered a transport guard in a job and put the entire crew on Vincent's radar, then disappeared and continued to cause trouble. Neil and his crew are double-crossed by a client named Van Zant, and they engage in several shootouts with Vincent and the LAPD. Neil also develops a relationship with Eady, a bookstore worker who doesn't realize he is a criminal until she's already in love. The film follows the cat and mouse relationship between Neil and Vincent as well as Neil's efforts to secure a future for himself as the LAPD closes in, ending with Neil tying up all his loose ends and getting shot to death by Vincent.

*Heat* is helpful to me because it depicts a more realistic heist crew, one that doesn't always have the upper hand or succeed in their goals. Neil and his crew are the typical suave, perfectly coordinated crew that audiences are used to seeing in heist films, but their foils are much more capable than those in the majority of heist films. Most heist protagonists walk all over their antagonists, having intricate and elaborate plans that allow them to effortlessly sidestep any obstacle the soon-to-be-robbed try to throw at them. *Heat* is more of a grounded film; there are no suspension wires or laser alarms, just guns and rivalries. Neil's crew isn't dressing in elaborate costumes and sneaking around luxurious casinos; they wear old hockey masks and use violence to get what they want. It is a different, grittier formula than what is seen in most popular heist films, and it focuses more on character interactions and issues than complex heists that play out like dances. It shows how a heist film can focus on character development just as much as, if not more than, the actual robberies and still be an effective heist film.

Singer, Bryan, director. *The Usual Suspects*. Bad Hat Harry Productions, 1995.

*The Usual Suspects* is a film about law enforcement trying to piece together the events of a dockside heist gone wrong with the little evidence they have and a testimony from the only surviving heist member, a man named Roger "Verbal" Kint. Verbal tells his interrogators that he and a crew of other experienced criminals were assembled by a crime boss named Keyser Söze, a man feared across the globe, to raid a rival drug shipment and destroy everything onboard. The plan goes awry, with one of the crew members dying before the hit even occurs and the rest being killed by a mysterious assassin. In the present, the only other survivor, one of the crew of the ship, is stabilized in the hospital and the FBI interrogates him while Verbal tells his story. Verbal makes bail after he finishes recounting the lead up to the heist, and after he leaves the station a police sketch of Söze – given by the other survivor – reveals that Verbal was actually Söze and was right in front of the police and his crew the entire time.

*The Usual Suspects* is important to my thesis because of how the film uses flashbacks to tell its story. The film begins after the hit occurs and the crew is killed, so the audience knows the outcome from the beginning. The intrigue comes not from finding out whether the crew will succeed, but from learning how events led up to them all being at the dock and from discovering

how they were killed. The other major hook for the audience is the question of who Keyser Söze is, since the character is raised to a legendary status by hearsay alone and no character knows his identity. My short film is told in a similar fashion, with the main story being told in flashbacks as Oz is questioned by a disciplinary committee. I am using *The Usual Suspects* to better understand how to tell a heist film that begins after the heist occurred, while still capturing the attention of the audience and keeping events and plot points hidden.

Smuts, Aaron. "The Desire-Frustration Theory of Suspense." *Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism*, vol. 66, no. 3, Summer 2008, pp. 281–90.

This article focuses on Alfred Hitchcock's suspense-building techniques in his films, most importantly the distribution of information. It argues that Hitchcock's mastery of suspense stems from him giving more information to the audience than to his characters, then leaving the audience to wait with anticipation until the characters discover the same information. The article also questions the role of uncertainty in suspense and explores why suspense is still created in instances where the outcome is already known, citing this as the "paradox of suspense". Smuts argues that uncertainty actually has no role in the creation of suspense, only the intensity, and uses the argument that films retain suspense after knowing the outcome, citing examples from the documentary *Touching the Void* to prove his point. The desire-frustration theory of suspense is much more accurate than the uncertainty theory; this theory states that audience investment in a situation and desire to affect an outcome is what creates suspense, which makes sense and applies to a broader range of films, not just ones with uncertain outcomes being viewed for the first time. A scene from Hitchcock's *Rear Window* is used as an example, where the character Lisa is investigating a suspect's apartment; the audience sees the suspected killer enter the apartment (as does the protagonist Jeff), but neither the audience nor Jeff are able to warn Lisa of his approach. Both must watch and wait for Lisa to notice herself while desperately wishing they could warn her, and thus suspense is created. Uncertainty is most certainly a factor in enhancing suspense, but Smuts explains that it is not a factor in the creation of suspense.

This article is incredibly useful to my thesis, specifically the screenplay. The end result of Oz's heist – success – is known from the very beginning of the film, yet heist films are known for their suspense during the process of the heist. A large issue for me when writing the

screenplay was figuring out how to generate suspense without the factor of uncertainty, and Smuts' examination of suspense completely changed my perspective on my writing. By writing scenes that employ the desire-frustration theory, I am able to make the recount of Oz's heist suspenseful for viewers, despite their knowing that he and his crew succeed. Using this information, I plan on shifting my attempts to build suspense from whether or not they succeed to how they succeed – I can build frustration in his crew being foiled and things going wrong with smaller, more localized effects in the story that don't affect the final outcome but influence smaller plot lines and individual characters.

Soderbergh, Steven, director. *Logan Lucky*. Bleecker Street, 2017.

*Logan Lucky* is a heist film centered around two brothers, Jimmy and Clyde Logan, who attempt to steal a fortune from the Charlotte Motor Speedway. The two brothers, one a recently-fired construction worker at the racetrack and the other a one-armed bartender, decide to recruit an infamous criminal named Joe Bang who is known for his safecracking abilities. They also recruit their sister Mellie Logan and Joe's two brothers, and with their crew they develop an elaborate heist – there's a massive hitch, however, when they discover the construction site they were relying on is wrapping early and their heist date gets pushed to the day of one of the Speedway's largest races. Despite several setbacks the crew manages to secure their money and to get Joe Bang back into prison after breaking him out for the heist the same day. The crew thinks they got away scot-free, but a tenacious FBI agent that has been following their heist in its aftermath isn't about to let them off that easy.

*Logan Lucky* is helpful to my thesis research because it is a heist film that successfully uses comedy to enhance the heist formula. The film has many meta moments, making light of many typical heist tropes while still using them to advance the plot. The film also gives each character a sympathetic and relatable backstory; unlike other heist films where all of the characters are experienced criminals, *Logan Lucky* focuses on a group of ordinary people who are down on their luck and decide to pull off a heist with no prior criminal experience. The characters in my thesis film are a group of students with a similar lack of heist know-how. Analyzing how *Logan Lucky* deals with inexperienced heist members and how the story thus differs from other heist films will help me revise my screenplay.



Soderbergh, Steven, director. *Ocean's Eleven*. Village Roadshow Productions, 2001.

*Ocean's Eleven* follows Danny Ocean, a criminal recently released from prison, as he assembles a crew of other criminals in a plan to rob three major casinos in Las Vegas in a single night. Danny's plan is incredibly intricate and requires perfect execution from all of his crew; any slipup and they'll be caught by Terry Benedict, the owner of the casinos that Danny is trying to rob. To make matters more complicated, Danny's ex-wife Tess is now dating Terry, which messes with Danny's head and makes it hard for him to focus on the heist. Despite several instances where the plan almost goes wrong and Terry's interference whenever he has an opportunity, Danny manages to pull off the heist without incriminating himself and tricks Terry into saying that he cares more about money than Tess, which makes Tess break up with him. Danny is arrested for violating parole, but the rest of his crew gets away with the money, leaving Terry furious and short over \$150,000,000.

*Ocean's Eleven* is one of the most well-known heist films to be released in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and the complicated heist plan is a large inspiration for my film. It was the first heist film I saw that relied on an overcomplicated and insane plan to steal from a supposedly impenetrable location – the ludicrous and over-the-top plan is what makes the film interesting. *Ocean's Eleven* acts like it tells the audience the entirety of Danny's plan, leading them to believe multiple times that something has gone wrong or that the plan has changed. Only after a harrowing confrontation or tense moment is it revealed that Danny had intended for the “mishap” to happen, which is something I want to include in my script. *Ocean's Eleven* also has a roster of unique characters, another aspect of a heist film that grabs the audience's attention. The more interesting and convoluted the heist team is, the more compelling it is to watch them beat the system.

Tarantino, Quentin, director. *Reservoir Dogs*. Miramax Films, 1992.

The film *Reservoir Dogs* is about the aftermath of a heist gone awry involving six criminals. After a shootout with the police during a robbery, the surviving members of the crew meet at an abandoned warehouse – one is badly wounded, and the others are trying to decide

what to do with the take. Between flashbacks to before the heist and vicious arguments with each other, the survivors determine that there is a traitor among them. The only question is who? As the police close in the arguments escalate drastically, culminating in the murder of one of the criminals by the wounded Mr. Orange, who is defending a police officer who has been captured. Mr. Orange is revealed to be an undercover officer, and shortly afterwards a shootout between the surviving heist members and the organizers of the job leaves everyone dead or mortally wounded as the police gather outside the warehouse.

*Reservoir Dogs* is a helpful film because it takes place after the events of the heist, periodically flashing back to crucial planning moments before the heist. My story will be told in a similar fashion (albeit with more emphasis on moments before the heist), and my writing process benefits from seeing how another film manages to maintain suspense after the heist is complete. *Reservoir Dogs* also avoids showing the audience what happened during the heist, only revealing a few details about how it went wrong and leaving the bulk of it up to the imagination of the audience. In my film, Oz's secret production will never be shown to my audience beyond brief glimpses of the set and the ending title card, but the lengths Oz and his crew go to for their filming and discussion of the secret film in the disciplinary committee meeting are what I'm going to use to give an idea of Oz's film. I am looking to *Reservoir Dogs* to understand how to better do this while weaving character motivations and backstories into my screenplay.

Thomas, Deborah J. "Framing the 'Melancomie': Character, Aesthetics and Affect in Wes Anderson's *Rushmore*." *New Review of Film & Television Studies*, vol. 10, no. 1, Mar. 2012, pp. 97–117. *EBSCOhost*.

Deborah Thomas's journal article on Wes Anderson's *Rushmore* examines how Anderson's choices in the construction of his characters and the technicalities of the film itself affect the tone of his work. Anderson intentionally shows the audience that his works are fictional and not meant to be seen as reality by using eccentric costuming, by refusing to do any type of transition that would require visual editing (he avoids dissolves in particular), and by carefully crafting his mise-en-scène to evoke feelings of nostalgia and relatability despite the uniqueness of each scene. Thomas discusses the character of Max Fischer and his ambiguity in

likeableness; she argues that Anderson intended for Max to be a character with redeeming traits as well as several unfavorable ones, making him a complex character who viewers understand and sympathize with, while not completely agreeing with his approach to life and his relationships, both romantic and friendly. Thomas makes note of the contrast between Max and his friend Mr. Blume, the father of two classmates – Max is a child with adultlike tendencies who is unable to understand why he cannot be romantically involved with a teacher at his school, and Mr. Blume is an adult who “suffers from a form of ‘arrested development’” and often engages in childlike spats with Max when their interests in Ms. Cross lead to conflict. The two, despite their age differences, are friends because Max operates on an adult-like spectrum and Mr. Blume operates on a child-like one, leading the two to find a similitude in each other. Thomas notes Anderson’s repeated use of wide-angle lenses that warp characters and distance the audience from the characters, adding to the fictionality of the film and reinforcing the eccentricity of the characters and the story. Continuity in editing angles and composition is not a priority in *Rushmore*, as Anderson uses visuals to emphasize character relations rather than to establish a world that feels real and accurate. Anderson does not linger on emotional moments, instead choosing to show them briefly – Thomas cites Anderson’s own words when making this point: “whatever emotions you’re dealing with, you just show enough, you don’t linger on it”. Overall, Thomas characterizes *Rushmore* and Anderson’s filmography as anti-realist and non-naturalistic with an emphasis on character and the creation of a discernable fictionality.

Since my film is influenced in part by the world and characters of *Rushmore*, Deborah Thomas’s breakdown of why the film and characters are unique and interesting is invaluable. “Texas Switch”, similar to *Rushmore*, is not a film based in reality but one that aims to embrace a fictional and almost satirical outlook on private high school, so taking cues from Anderson’s second feature film and learning how he effectively made such a movie helps me determine the structure, filming, and editing of my own short film. Understanding how Max and Mr. Blume play off each other’s flaws to create a complex and believable dynamic is helpful for Oz’s interactions with his teachers, especially the more childish Mr. Barlowe. Most importantly, understanding how and why Anderson chose to make *Rushmore* less naturalistic and more like a fantasy story, despite the naturalistic setting of private high school, helps me bring a similar energy to my own work.

Ward, Sarah. "Ferris Bueller's Day Off and the History of the Teen Film." *Screen Education*, no. 76, Summer 2015, pp. 116–21. *EBSCOhost*.

In this article Sarah Ward discusses the differences between *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* and other high school movies of its time, most notably the difference in tone between the more lighthearted and carefree *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* and the more serious and angsty renditions of high school life found in films such as *The Breakfast Club*, *Lady Bird*, and *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*. She discusses how the film addresses the issues of teenage boredom and identity like most teen films, yet it avoids heavy and hedonistic escapes like sex or drugs and opts instead for skipping school in an effort to create a lighter tone. Ferris, Cameron, and Sloane are still bound by devices such as time and authority, similar to more serious teen films, and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* still shows the power struggle between adults who have power and teenagers who covet control over their own lives. The film achieves its lightheartedness while still maintaining serious aspects by confining the entire story to a limited timeline (one school day), which enables Ferris and crew – as well as their antagonists – to get up to their shenanigans without being too fantastical.

This article is helpful to the writing process of "Texas Switch" because it accurately explains why *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* feels so different from other teen movies, especially those from its time. By analyzing how the film successfully embraces a lighter atmosphere while still tackling serious teen issues, it helps me understand how my own script can be better tailored to a crazy-but-believable experience. *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* never goes so far as to be totally unbelievable. By incorporating a set time limit as well as a real threat from the antagonists, I can easily raise the stakes of my own script while still allowing Oz and his friends to engage in wacky and enjoyable ventures. I don't need to include any dark plotlines or classic teen movies tropes like drugs, sexual intercourse, or depression into the script to effectively demonstrate the toll that high school takes on the teens; if the antagonist holds actual authority and makes it difficult for Oz to do what he wants, the stakes are high enough.