

#TSMGO

"Pilot"

written by

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ACT ONE

EXT. CROSSROADS HIGH - DAY

A picture-perfect high school campus bustles with life. Designer backpacks, AirPods, and the latest iPhones are as ubiquitous as the sound of laughter and gossip. Through this teenage tableau walks ANNA, 16, a fish out of water trying desperately not to look like one.

ANNA (V.O.)

I know, I know. You're thinking: 'Great, another teen drama opener with the new kid at a new school in a new town.' And you're right. But trust me, this cliché is about to take a hard left turn into Weirdville.

CUT TO:

INT. LUXURY SUV - SAME TIME

EMILY, 16, going for "effortlessly cool" and nailing it, is taking a small transparent bag of pills from the hands of an older man, before sending him money and walking out of the car.

BACK TO:

EXT. CROSSROADS HIGH - CONTINUOUS

Anna catches Emily's eye as she exits the SUV. There's a moment of unspoken understanding - or is it?

ANNA (V.O.)

Clearly, everyone here's already got their clique, their routine, their secrets. And me? I'm just trying not to trip over my own shoelaces... this is gonna be fun.

As Anna approaches the entrance, we see a group of girls standing nearby, whispering and giggling, she can feel their eyes on her.

INT. CROSSROADS HIGH - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The hallway is a sea of Gen Z fashion and millennial nostalgia. Anna, clutching a wrinkled schedule, navigates through it like a lost child at Ikea.

ANNA (V.O.)

So, backstory time. I'm Anna, recently relocated with my mom after my dad decided to pursue a thrilling career in white-collar crime. Big city life? Out. Small town drama? Apparently, very much in. I thought-

EMILY

(interrupting Anna's V.O.)  
You look more lost than my mom trying to use TikTok.

ANNA

(surprised, then  
sarcastic)  
What gave it away? The map, or the deer-in-headlights expression?

EMILY

Both. I'm Emily.

ANNA

Anna. You guys still have lockers? I thought those went extinct with dial-up internet.

EMILY

I know, vintage. Come on, I'll be your personal GPS.

They start walking together.

EMILY (CONT'D)

So, about what you might've seen in the parking lot...

ANNA

(confused)  
Oh. Your dad dropping you off?

EMILY

Right. My dad. Total helicopter parent. So embarrassing.

ANNA

My dad's in jail. I win the embarrassing parent Olympics.

Emily's eyes widen, impressed by Anna's bluntness.

ETHAN, 16, a walking Marc Jacobs ad with a smile that could melt ice caps, approaches.

EMILY

This is Ethan. He's almost too gay to function.

Anna chuckles and smiles at him.

ETHAN

Alright, Mean Girls.

EMILY

Sorry, been dying to use that line.

ANNA

Is sexuality still considered a personality trait around here?

ETHAN

Finally! Someone who speaks my language!

EMILY

She's feisty, I like it.

They keep walking.

ETHAN

So where are you from new girl?

ANNA

It's Anna. I'm from the big city.

ETHAN

Ah, I dream of the big city, I feel like I've been in high school forever.

Their banter is interrupted by a shout:

RANDOM JOCK (O.S.)

INCOMING!

A football spirals towards Anna's face. Just before impact, a hand snatches it out of the air. Enter TYLER, 17, the kind of guy even straight men have a crush on.

TYLER  
Gotcha!

EMILY  
Dumbass.

TYLER  
Hey Em.

Tyler's eyes lock with Anna's. One look, that's all it takes.

As Tyler walks away:

EMILY  
So, that's Tyler, Quarterback,  
heartthrob, and living proof that  
the gods do play favorites.

Anna's still staring after Tyler.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
And this, is your locker.

ANNA  
(snapping back)  
Ah, thanks!

ETHAN  
We have chem, but find us at lunch.

EMILY  
(pointing at the jocks)  
We'll be sitting as far as possible  
from them.

ANNA  
Sweet!

Ethan grabs something from his backpack.

ETHAN  
And here, have a Pepsi.  
'Any time is Pepsi time'

Winks. Hands her a can of Pepsi.

ANNA  
(baffled)  
Uh, what?

EMILY  
(smiles)  
See ya.

Anna looks perplexed while holding the Pepsi can.

As Emily and Ethan leave, Anna takes a step and feels something under her shoe. She lifts it to find yellow gaffer tape stuck to the sole.

ANNA (V.O.)

Two new friends, a meet-cute with the school hottie, and a free soda? Either I've stumbled into the best day ever, or something very weird is going on.

INT. CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Anna stands at the front of the class, finishing her introduction. MICHAEL, 37, the obligatory "hot teacher" every teen drama needs, and the rest of the class stare at her with varying degrees of interest.

ANNA

...and that's how I ended up here in Springfield. Any questions? No? Great, I'll just go sit in the back and try to become one with the wall.

MICHAEL

Thanks, Anna.

Suddenly, ASHLEY JANSEN, 16, cheerleading captain, struts in like she's walking a Milan runway instead of entering a high school classroom.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Ms. Jansen, thanks for gracing us with your presence... 10 minutes late.

ASHLEY

(shrugs)

TikTok followers were having a meltdown. Couldn't leave them hanging, you know how it is.

MICHAEL

Of course, how inconsiderate of me to prioritize education over your budding influencer career.

(beat)

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Tell you what, you can make it up by showing our new student, Anna, around after class. Consider it your good deed for the day.

ANNA

(quickly)

Oh, that's really not necessary. I'm sure Ashley has better things to do, like... filming more TikToks or... whatever.

Ashley gives Anna a quick side eye, then fakes a smile.

ASHLEY

No, it's fine. I suppose some charity work will look good on my college apps.

Ashley's mouth curves into a fake smile. Great.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER

The bell rings, unleashing a flood of students into the hallway. Ashley breezes out of the classroom, with Anna struggling to keep up.

ANNA

Ashley? Ashley, wait up!

Ashley hears Anna behind her and rolls her eyes before turning around with a big fake smile.

ASHLEY

Yes. You can follow me around and I'll point out the sights.

ANNA

Look, you really don't have to show me around. I'm sure I can figure it out.

ASHLEY

No, no. I see you, Dana.

ANNA

It's Anna.

ASHLEY

You're hot, and I don't know what your deal is yet, but it's probably best if you quickly learn how things work around here.

(MORE)

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

(beat)

And who better to learn from than  
moi, the most beloved girl in  
school?

Anna blinks, processing this backhanded compliment sandwich.

ANNA

Did... did you just say I'm hot?

They walk.

INT. CAFETERIA - CONTINUOUS

Emily, finishing a conversation with another student,  
navigates the crowded cafeteria with her tray. MARCUS, 17,  
built like a Greek god with the face to match, approaches her  
with barely concealed irritation.

MARCUS

(in a hushed tone)

Where'd you vanish to this morning?

EMILY

Chill, Marcus. I'm not one of your  
footballs you can keep tabs on.

MARCUS

Mom was freaking out. And, shocker,  
so was I. Is a little heads up too  
much to ask?

EMILY

I came in early to show the new  
girl around. Happy now, Detective  
Marcus?

MARCUS

I'm worried too Em, I just want you  
to be safe.

EMILY

I'm fine. Seriously. Drop it.

Enter ETHAN, arriving like a fabulous, well-timed  
distraction.

ETHAN

What's the tea, sisters?



EMILY

Nothing. Marcus was just leaving to go bench press a small car or whatever it is you jocks do.

Marcus gives Emily a look that says this isn't over, then forces a smile at Ethan.

MARCUS

(to Emily)

See you at home.

He walks away while MIA, 16, hot cheerleader, wraps her arms around him and kisses him.

ETHAN

Gosh... why is your brother carved by Michelangelo himself? Are we absolutely, positively sure he's not even a little bit bi-curious?

EMILY

(shrugs)

Try him, I'd much rather see you dating him than Malibu Barbie over there.

ETHAN

Don't tease me.

They giggle as they sit down, the tension from earlier momentarily forgotten.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA - AT THE SAME TIME

Anna and Ashley make their grand entrance. Anna's jaw nearly hits the floor as she takes in the scene.

ANNA

(in awe)

My gosh, what is this place?

ASHLEY

Um, it's where we eat? Did they not have food at your old school?

ANNA

No, I meant it looks so-

ASHLEY

(cutting her off)

Anyways, I see you haven't finished unpacking your clothes yet, but after you do you're welcome to sit at my table.

(beat)

For now just try not to embarrass yourself by befriending the wrong crowd.

Emily catches Anna's eye and waves. Anna, grateful for a friendly face, waves back. Ashley looks like she just bit into a lemon.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Oh, honey, no. Not Emily Smith.

ANNA

What's wrong with her? At least she didn't refer to me as her 'charity case.'

ASHLEY

Fair point. But trust me, she has a lot going on, you don't want to get sucked into that mess.

ANNA

Care to elaborate on that cryptic comment?

ASHLEY

Let's just say last summer was... intense for everyone. But Emily? Total train wreck. Girl OD'd. We thought she was headed for the big cheer squad in the sky.

ANNA

Oh my God, that's horrible!

ASHLEY

(shrugging)

I know, right? I had to kick her out of the group chat. Bad vibes, you know?

(beat)

But anyways, those are the jocks, you'll probably want to date one of them to become more... appealing.

Right on cue, Tyler appears behind Ashley, planting a kiss on her neck. Ashley's smile is equal parts satisfaction and smugness.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)  
And this fine specimen is my  
personal jock. Tyler, meet Hannah.

ANNA  
Anna.

ASHLEY  
Potato, po-tah-to.

Tyler moves his gaze over to Anna and recognizes her from earlier.

TYLER  
Oh, hey! Football girl.

ANNA  
Hi there, football savior.

ASHLEY  
(annoyed)  
You guys met?

Tyler can't seem to take his eyes off Anna, which doesn't go unnoticed by Ashley.

TYLER  
Uh, not really. Just a near-death  
experience in the hallway.

ASHLEY  
(to Tyler, irritated)  
Speaking of near-death experiences,  
have you sorted out the booze  
situation for Friday?

TYLER  
Working on it. My contact's being a  
bit... difficult.

ANNA  
What's happening Friday?

TYLER  
Only the social event of the  
season. Ashley's back-to-school  
bash.

ANNA

Ah yes, because nothing says  
'welcome back to education' like  
underage drinking.

TYLER

You should come!

ASHLEY

(malicious)

Oh yes, you simply must attend.

ANNA

(sensing the underlying  
tension)

Wouldn't miss it for the world.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. KITCHEN OF ANNA'S HOME - NIGHT

The kitchen is a maze of cardboard boxes, evidence of a recent move. Anna and her mom, SOFIA, 40, looking more like Anna's older sister than her mother, are engaged in the mundane task of unpacking dishes.

ANNA (V.O.)

My mom got over dad faster than you  
can say "white-collar crime." But  
the woman's a hopeless romantic.  
And I mean hopeless.

MONTAGE - SOFIA'S DATING ADVENTURES

A) INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Sofia stands in the doorway, a mysterious man lurking behind her.

SOFIA

(excited)

There's someone I'd like you to  
meet!

B) INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Anna and Sofia sit at a table for three. A suave-looking man approaches.

SOFIA

This is Nicholas.

C) INT. HOME ENTRY HALL - EVENING

Anna faces yet another man as Sofia closes the door behind him.

SOFIA

Francesco is from Italy. Isn't that  
exotic?

END MONTAGE

BACK TO:

## INT. KITCHEN OF ANNA'S HOME - NIGHT

SOFIA

So, I met a really handsome guy today.

ANNA

Mom!

SOFIA

It was an accident!

ANNA

What, you tripped and fell on his tongue?

SOFIA

Oh, please. We barely used any tongue.

ANNA

You already kissed?! We've literally been here for 48 hours!

SOFIA

(flipping her hair)

It's not my fault if I'm a bombshell.

Anna shakes her head, laughing despite herself.

ANNA

Alright, Bombshell. What's this one's deal?

SOFIA

His name is Craig.

ANNA

Yikes. We've gone from  
(she does Italian hands  
and accent)  
"Francesco" to Craig? That's like trading in your Vespa for a minivan.

SOFIA

Oh, hush. He seems lovely. And get this - he has a daughter at your school!

ANNA

Mom, do hear yourself? You met this guy ONCE. Bye.

SOFIA

I know, I know. But I have a good feeling about this one.

ANNA

(walking away)

I'm ending this conversation right now.

SOFIA

His daughter's name is Ashley!

Anna shrugs, she starts walking away. Sofia checks her phone.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

Their last name is Jansen.

Anna freezes in horror.

ANNA

Hell. No.

INT. HALLWAY TYLER'S HOME - EVENING

Tyler opens the door for Ashley, who's on her way out.

ASHLEY

(calling into the house,  
saccharine sweet)

Goodnight Alyssa! Goodnight Daniel!

ALYSSA, 42, looking like she stepped out of a Real Housewives casting call, waves from the living room.

ALYSSA

Bye, sweetie!

(under her breath)

Don't forget your emotional baggage on your way out!

Tyler kisses Ashley goodbye.

TYLER

Night, babe.

He closes the door and walks past the living room. Alyssa is sprawled on the couch, iPad in hand, reality TV blaring.

DANIEL, 48, is the man who was selling drugs to Emily earlier, and is pouring a generous helping of Jack Daniel's.

ALYSSA  
 (to Tyler)  
 So, when's it gonna end?

TYLER  
 Are you talking to your husband?  
 When's the drinking gonna end, Dad?

DANIEL  
 Watch your mouth, kid.

Alyssa rolls her eyes so hard they might get stuck.

ALYSSA  
 I'm talking about Ashley. You know  
 she's not good for you. How many  
 more times are you gonna let her  
 break your heart?

TYLER  
 Shut up, mom.

DANIEL  
 (attempting authority)  
 Don't disrespect your mother.

ALYSSA  
 Shut up, Dan.

Daniel takes a large, pointed sip.

ALYSSA (CONT'D)  
 You should date someone like Emily.  
 She was so good to your brother.

Tyler tenses visibly, pain flashing across his face.

TYLER  
 Don't. Just... don't.

He walks away, passing a family photo featuring Alyssa, Daniel, Tyler, and his twin brother. The happiness in the photo is a stark contrast to the current atmosphere.

INT. DINER - AFTERNOON

Anna sits across from Emily and Ethan in a booth that screams '50s nostalgia. Emily and Ethan are demolishing a spread of fries, milkshakes, and Pepsi. Anna stares at her sad glass of water.



ANNA  
 (appalled)  
 You eat this cardiac arrest on a  
 plate every day after school?

ETHAN  
 (confused)  
 It's our afternoon snack. You know,  
 to tide us over until dinner?

ANNA  
 How are you not breaking out or...  
 I don't know, spontaneously  
 combusting?

Emily shakes her head, amused.

EMILY  
 What planet are you from again?

ETHAN  
 (to Emily)  
 She's hilarious. Can we keep her?

Anna looks utterly baffled.

ETHAN (CONT'D)  
 (to Anna)  
 So, spill. Seen any eye candy yet?

ANNA  
 I guess that Tyler, quarterback  
 guy, is kind of... you know.

ETHAN  
 I knew it! My gaydar might be  
 broken, but my hot-straight-guy-dar  
 is impeccable.

ANNA  
 But he's with Ashley, so...  
 whatever.

EMILY  
 Oh please, she's a bitch. Trust me.

ANNA  
 Do tell. I smell drama.

EMILY  
 Let's just say when Tyler needed  
 her most, she decided to audition  
 for the role of 'Worst Girlfriend  
 Ever.' And got the part.

ETHAN

That's basically a tactful way to put it.

ANNA

(to Emily)

How do you know all this? You guys don't seem... close.

EMILY

(with a hint of sadness)

We used to be. By proximity.

Beat.

ETHAN

(gently)

Emily used to date Tyler's brother.

ANNA

Oh, I didn't realize he had a brother.

EMILY

(quietly)

He doesn't. Not anymore.

ANNA

Oh... oh shit. I'm so sorry.

Ethan wraps his arms around Emily protectively.

ETHAN

My poor angel's had quite a year. First her dad, then her boo. It's like sad country song come to life.

Anna's brow furrows, remembering seeing Emily with her "dad" that morning.

ANNA

Your dad?

Emily shoots Anna a look that could freeze lava.

ANNA (V.O.)

Note to self: That was definitely NOT her dad. File under 'Mysteries of Emily Smith.'

EMILY

(to Anna)

Ethan's been my rock lately.

(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)

Truly the best supporting role in  
the drama that is my life.

ANNA

A supportive role?

EMILY

Like a supportive friend.  
Obviously.

Anna looks between Emily and Ethan, sensing there's more to  
this story.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Marcus, looking like he just stepped out of a teen heartthrob  
magazine, is changing alone. Tyler approaches, an air of  
tension between them.

TYLER

Dude, what's going on? I need you  
focused for the game. You were all  
over the place.

MARCUS

I'm sorry man. I still can't sleep.  
These freaking nightmares.

TYLER

Again? You need to get a grip.

MARCUS

What the heck, it's not like I want  
this. We screwed up.

Tyler nervously glances around, making sure they're alone.

TYLER

(hushed)

Keep your voice down! It was an  
accident.

MARCUS

I know, I know.

TYLER

We've got this under control. As  
long as we keep it between us, it  
won't be an issue. We can move on.

MARCUS  
 (bitter laugh)  
 Move on? I'd settle for a decent  
 night's sleep.

TYLER  
 (softening)  
 It'll get better with time, I  
 promise.  
 (beat)  
 Look, I know it's tough, but we've  
 got each other's backs. That's all  
 that matters.

Marcus manages a weak smile.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
 I'm sorry if I was a little harsh.  
 I love you, man, and you can always  
 talk to me. I'm just... I'm  
 terrified it'll slip out somehow,  
 and we'll be screwed. I can't  
 handle any more drama.

MARCUS  
 It won't slip out. We're in this  
 together, remember?

TYLER  
 I know. We'll be fine.

They share a bro hug, the weight of their secret hanging  
 between them.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY - DAY

The library is eerily empty, save for Anna sitting at a desk,  
 laptop open but eyes glued to TikTok on her phone, wired  
 earphones in.

ANNA (V.O.)  
 I'm not sure why schools still have  
 libraries, but I've alwa-

Anna suddenly yanks out one earphone as the narration stops.  
 She begins looking around. She heard something.

ANNA  
 Hello?

Shakes her ear.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Hello?

Nothing. She's suspicious. Puts her earphone back on.

ANNA (V.O.)

I'm not sure why schools still have  
libraries, but I've always loved  
the peace and quiet that co-

Anna rips out both earphones, as the narration stops.

She stands, cautiously exploring the empty library.

ANNA

(loud)

Hello?

The librarian, looking like she stepped out of a Stephen King novel, glares from her desk.

LIBRARIAN

Shhh!

Anna is appalled. She heard something.

She walks back to her laptop.

Quickly googles 'hearing voices in your head.'

The first result: "Signs of psychosis."

ANNA

(under her breath)

Oh. Shit.

EXT. CROSSROADS HIGH - LATER

Emily's walking out as Anna catches up, slightly out of breath.

ANNA

Emily!

EMILY

Hey! Call me Em. Only my mother and  
the voices in my head call me  
Emily.

ANNA

Right. Sure. Headed to the diner?

EMILY

Where else? It's basically our second home.

Anna smiles.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Hey, thanks for being cool earlier. You know, when Ethan mentioned my dad.

ANNA

Oh. Of course.

EMILY

It makes me feel like I can trust you, you know? Like you won't judge me.

ANNA (V.O.)

I could try.

Anna looks around, startled, as if she heard something.

EMILY

Like Ethan said, it's been one hell of a year. I was finally doing better after my dad passed, and then... Jason's death. Tyler's twin.

(beat)

Let's just say I hit rock bottom. Then I found a shovel and kept digging.

ANNA (V.O.)

Right, the overdose Ashley mentioned.

ANNA

Seems pretty understandable, given everything you've been through.

EMILY

I think Tyler's dad gets it. He's grieving too, you know? Sometimes he... helps me get stuff that makes me feel more like myself again.

ANNA

Oh... Have you thought about maybe working with a therapist?

Emily gives her a sad smile and keeps walking.

ANNA (V.O.)  
Was that such a weird suggestion?

EMILY  
Anyway, after last summer's epic  
meltdown, I promised everyone I'd  
stay clean. But yeah...  
(beat)  
This stays between us, right? I'd  
hate to disappoint them. Again.

ANNA (V.O.)  
I hated secrets, but Emily was my  
only real friend here, so...

ANNA  
Of course, you can trust me.

INT. DINER - EVENING

Ethan and Emily are leaving their booth, while Anna remains  
seated.

EMILY  
(to Anna)  
Are you staying?

Anna pulls out her laptop.

ANNA  
Yeah, gonna finish some homework  
here. Can't deal with the cardboard  
maze at home right now.

ETHAN  
Ah, the trials of being the new  
girl. Don't study too hard,  
darling!

They leave. Anna sighs, opening her laptop.

ANNA (V.O.)  
It felt good to have some real  
friends in th..

Anna whips around, genuinely freaked out now.

ANNA  
(whispers to herself)  
You've got to be kidding me.

She scans the diner nervously, searching for the source of  
the voice. Her eyes briefly meet the camera.

She does a double-take.

**She looks directly into the camera.** eyes widening in shock and disbelief.

ANNA (CONT'D)

What. The. Actual. F—

INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anna bursts into her room, a woman on a mission. She flings open her laptop, frantically typing:

"Am I in a TV show?"

Results: "Quiz: Which TV character are you?" "Best new shows to watch 2024"

ANNA

(frustrated)

Ugh, useless.

She tries again: "high school drama plot"

Results: "new girl moves to town" "single mom" "drug abuse" "dead twin"

Anna slams the laptop shut, her breathing ragged. She looks around her room, mind racing.

She reopens the laptop, takes a deep breath, and starts working on something we can't see.

Anna picks up her phone, firing off a text to Emily: "We need to talk."

END OF ACT TWO



ACT THREE

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anna bursts into Emily's room like she's on a mission from God, laptop clutched to her chest. Emily closes the door behind them, eyebrows raised.

EMILY

Okay, what's with the drama? You look like you've seen a ghost.

Anna wordlessly opens her laptop on the floor, revealing a chart that would make conspiracy theorists proud. It's a web of relationships connecting Emily, Tyler, Ashley, Ethan, and others, with labels like 'gay BFF', 'secret crush', 'sells drugs'.

Emily's eyes widen, equal parts impressed and concerned.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Where did you get those pics? And why do I look like I just rolled out of bed in mine?

ANNA

Instagram. The algorithm knows all.

EMILY

Ok. And what the heck is this?

ANNA

(taking a deep breath)  
It's a plot.

EMILY

(confused)  
What are you plotting?

ANNA

No, No. Umm...

ANNA (V.O.)

I was trying to find a way to say something really crazy without sounding crazy. Spoiler alert: There isn't one.

ANNA

(to her voice over)  
SHH!!!

EMILY  
 (startled)  
 I didn't say anything.

ANNA  
 Okay, here goes. Earlier something really weird happened, and I just... saw it. This town, our lives, it's all a TV show!

Beat. Emily stares at Anna.

EMILY  
 Did you take some Special K?

ANNA  
 The cereal? See, product placement!

EMILY  
 What? No, not the— Never mind. What are you talking about?

ANNA  
 (pointing at the chart)  
 Look, I know how it sounds. But just look at this chart. It's all there!

Emily leans in, squinting at the laptop screen, clearly skeptical but she's trying.

EMILY  
 Ok, so like, "The Truman Show"?

ANNA  
 No, ugh, but thank you! No, it's more like our universe, you know?

Emily grimaces, concern growing.

ANNA (CONT'D)  
 I'm the new girl in town, randomly assigned the Queen Bee as my personal tour guide. She's dating the hot jock with a conveniently dead twin that YOU used to date. I'm already invited to her party, and where are all the parents? Oh, and don't get me started on the weird Pepsi placements and how you all eat like trash compactors but look like runway models. It's textbook high school drama!

Anna finishes, breathless and triumphant. Emily just stares.  
Beat.

EMILY

Anna, I OD'd and almost died last summer, I don't think that's very high school drama.

ANNA

Uh, hello? That's Euphoria 101.

EMILY

Okay, that's a bit insensitive, but... you made a point.

(beat)

So we're not in some cookie cutter teen soap, it's like some HBO shit?

ANNA

I'm not sure yet. But something's definitely up.

Emily ponders this, wheels turning.

EMILY

But like.. and now what? What do WE do about it?

ANNA

I think we have to spread the word.

EMILY

Oh boy. 'The addict and the crazy new girl.' That'll go over well.

ANNA

I don't know how this works, but someone else will have ideas. I just know that if we don't do anything, we'll be stuck in predictable storylines and tired clichés forever.

Emily shrugs.

ANNA (CONT'D)

My mom's already dating Ashley's dad. I will NOT become her stepsister!

EMILY

We're calling Ethan!

INT. HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY - NIGHT

Anna, Ethan, and Emily huddle around Anna's laptop like they're planning a heist.

ETHAN

I think the legal term for this is  
'insane delusion'

ANNA

Dude, look around. Like how are we  
even in the high school library at  
night?

ETHAN

(glancing around,  
confused)

Uh...

ANNA

See what I mean.

ETHAN

Ok, well, let's suppose you're  
actually right. Which, by the way  
is an absolutely preposterous idea.  
But let's just say we are indeed in  
a tv show. The first thing we  
should do is understand who the  
lead is.

ANNA

I mean...

ETHAN

(cutting her off)

Girl, you just got here.

EMILY

II'm pretty sure it's an ensemble  
show. Think "Gossip Girl" meets  
"Riverdale" with a dash of "The  
OC".

ANNA

Okay, fine.

ETHAN

(pointing at Anna)

our true colors are showing. Main  
Character Syndrome is real.

EMILY

(to Anna)

You just arrived, so this must be the pilot or something.

ETHAN

Tragic! They better dig into our backstories at some point. I have layers, dammit!

ANNA

So are we thinking this is like a series?

EMILY

Definitely. Eight or ten episodes is the sweet spot.

ANNA

I've seen enough shows to know something big's about to happen.

EMILY

How do we stop this?

ETHAN

There's only one way to free ourselves from this narrative...

Anna and Emily lean in, hanging on his every word.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Getting the show canceled!

EXT. ASHLEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ashley's house is a teenage dream, decked out for a party that would make MTV weep with envy. Music blares, red cups abound, and hormones are practically visible in the air.

Anna approaches the entrance, phone in hand. She glances at a text from Emily: "Going to Ashley's is a bad idea. Have you learned nothing from teen dramas?"

Anna types back: 'a little party never hurt nobody'

ANNA (V.O.)

Boy, was I wrong.

Anna hears her own voice-over, hesitates for a moment, then squares her shoulders and marches in anyway.

EXT. ASHLEY'S HOUSE - LATER

Anna timidly approaches Ashley and her entourage by the pool, looking like a gazelle wandering into a pride of lions.

ASHLEY  
(with fake enthusiasm)  
Oh my god, you came!

ASHLEY (CONT'D)  
(whispers to her friends)  
Operation 'Get the New Girl Wasted'  
is a go.

She welcomes Anna with open arms.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)  
Let me introduce you to the boys!

INT. ASHLEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The party is in full swing. Tyler's pouring a shot directly into Anna's mouth as the crowd chants "New girl! New girl!"

ANNA  
(slurring)  
Where's Ashley? Isn't this her  
party?

TYLER  
It doesn't matter. She's not here  
right now.

ANNA  
You know, I'm not like the other  
girls around here. I'm real. Like,  
really real.

TYLER  
I knew you were special from the  
moment I saw you.

Anna smiles, her gaze soft and unfocused.

ANNA  
Of course you did. That's how these  
things work, right?

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Ethan's doing Emily's makeup as she scrolls through Instagram stories of the party.

EMILY

I don't know, I have a really bad feeling about this.

ETHAN

Relax, honey. It's not like anyone at a party would actually listen to her rambling about TV shows.

EMILY

I think we should go check on her.

ETHAN

(admiring his work)

Well, my art does deserve to be seen, so why not.

INT. ASHLEY'S HOUSE - LATER

Emily and Ethan enter, searching for Anna. It doesn't take long to spot her - she's standing on a table, drunkenly shouting her TV show theory to a bewildered crowd.

ANNA

(slurring)

And get this - there was probably like a hit and run that I don't even know about yet!

Marcus and Tyler take a quick look at each other.

ANNA (CONT'D)

...And now the dead twin's ex-girlfriend relapsed. It's a classic tale, people! We're living in a CW wet dream!

She spots Emily in the crowd, their eyes locking. The color drains from Anna's face as Emily turns and storms out.

Anna sobers up in an instant, stumbling off the table to follow.

EXT. ASHLEY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

ANNA

Em, wait!

Emily whirls around, fury radiating off her.

EMILY  
 (furious)  
 How could you?

Without warning, Emily's fist connects with Anna's face. A sickening crunch echoes in the night air.

ETHAN  
 Oh lord!

ANNA  
 What the shit?!

Blood trickles between Anna's fingers as the shock sobers her completely.

ANNA (CONT'D)  
 I'm sorry, I'm so sorry. I don't  
 know what I was thinking.

EMILY  
 Was this the big drama you wanted  
 for your stupid show?  
 You're crazy! You're crazy and I  
 hope everyone sees it now.

Emily turns, storming off into the dark streets. Marcus bursts out of the house, calling after her.

MARCUS  
 (shouting)  
 Em! Is it true?... Em!

EMILY  
 Leave me alone!

Ethan, torn between shock and concern, hurries after Emily.

INT. ASHLEY'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Tyler's pressing ice to Anna's swollen nose.

TYLER  
 Here. It'll help with the swelling.

Marcus appears, dragging Tyler away from prying ears.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
 Dude, what was that about?

MARCUS  
 I don't know, man. But this is bad.



TYLER

That was way too accurate for a random guess.

MARCUS

There's no way she knows. We were alone that night.

TYLER

She did make some good points, but the whole theory is just insane... right?

MARCUS

You can't be serious. She's wasted!

TYLER

Yeah, but the thing about Em?

MARCUS

Leave her out of this.

TYLER

I'm just saying, something's up with this new girl... And she's hot, too.

Marcus shakes his head, worry etched on his face.

CUT TO:

INT. ASHLEY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ashley, Mia, and their clique huddle together, gossiping.

ASHLEY

And as planned, a little booze, and she made a fool of herself.

MIA

I mean, even if she was right, look at our lives. Why would we ever want the series to be canceled?

ASHLEY

I know, right? We'd do anything to get it renewed.

They laugh, clinking their cups together.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

It's the Monday after the party. The bell rings, hallways are flooded with students. Everyone's in that hall, Ashley, Tyler, Mia, Marcus, Ethan and Anna, who sees Emily walking, and rushes to get to her.

ANNA

Em!

EMILY

You can call me Emily.

Anna stops her from walking.

ANNA

I'm truly sorry. I should have never talked about you. I told you you could trust me, and I screwed up. I hope one day you'll be able to forgive me.

Emily shakes her head, unmoved.

ANNA (CONT'D)

It worked though. People are starting to notice. They're talking about it. I think we—

A deafening BANG echoes through the halls. Time seems to slow as Anna and Emily turn in horror.

Chaos erupts. Students duck and scramble as a figure with a gun stalks down the hallway. More shots ring out.

Ethan covers his mouth, stifling a scream. Ashley gasps, eyes wide with terror. Tyler instinctively shields her, pushing her towards a classroom.

Marcus's gaze locks onto Emily. He leaps towards her, but the panicked crowd separates them.

Another shot. Anna doesn't think, she just acts. She throws herself in front of Emily as a human shield.

A bullet finds its mark. Anna crumples to the ground, Emily falling with her.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: "THE SHOW MUST GO ON"

END OF EPISODE