

CHAMBERLAINE
"PILOT: FOR SIMONE"

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FADE IN:

1 **EXT. CHAMBERLAINE UNIVERSITY - DAY (2025)**

May at an Ivy League School. It's "reunions." Every class year returns at once. We're at a PARADE of class years, all decked out in purple. Alumni who aren't marching line either side of the parade route, day-drinking. Above, FIREWORKS.

CHYRON: **Spring 2025**

The CLASS OF 2020 marches down the route, carrying posters bearing a BLACK-AND-WHITE PHOTOGRAPH of a young man, who we will later find out is HENRY HODGSEN (22). A LITTLE GIRL (6) and her FATHER (30s) watch from the sidelines.

LITTLE GIRL

Daddy, what are the posters with the boy's picture for?

FATHER

Those are for a classmate who's passed away. We march with their picture so we never forget them.

2 **EXT. END OF PARADE ROUTE, CHAMBERLAINE UNIVERSITY - DAY (2025)**

Among the marchers is ADULT ELLIS (28) - a spindly Jewish man with dark curls. He wears sunglasses and doesn't emote, contrasting the revelers on either side.

REVELERS/CROWD

Rah Rah Rah, Viper Viper Viper, Sis
Sis Sis, Boom Boom Boom, Ah.
Twenty! Twenty! Twenty!

The crowd reaches the end of the route, where a PAVILION is set up. A sign marks it as the Presidential Pavilion.

Ellis freezes in place while the rest of the marchers move past.

Ellis climbs a STATUE that faces the presidential pavilion, pulls out a GUN. He makes eye contact with UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT HEILBRONNER (50s). Ellis points the gun at his own head.

We turn away from him to the parade below as a SHOT rings out. Ellis' bloody body falls to the ground.

Other marchers in the vicinity notice and SCREAM. A clearing forms as people SCATTER in all directions.

ADULT SIMONE (O.S.)
 (in pre-lap)
 Okay, yeah, I'll just have a
 preliminary report for you on
 Monday.

3 **INT. MOUNT WILSON OBSERVATORY, PASADENA, CA - DAY (2025)**

The STAFF ONLY part of the observatory reserved for
 scientists. A mail cubby, stack of mail inside, bears a taped
 label: **Simone DiBari, UCLA.**

ADULT SIMONE (O.S.)
 I'm heading back to campus for one
 lecture at 4:30 but otherwise no
 plans.

COWORKER (O.S.)
 Have a nice weekend, Simone!

ADULT SIMONE (O.S.)
 Yeah, you too.

ADULT SIMONE DIBARI (27) - extremely short, brunette, with a
 round face and rosy cheeks, reaches inside her cubby and
 pulls out **CHAMBERLAINE ALUMNI WEEKLY** magazine, "Reunions"
 edition. The cover is a gaggle of purple-clad alumni with
 blinding smiles. The headline is "GOING BACK."

Simone leaves the building with her mail, face composed.

4 **EXT. MOUNT WILSON OBSERVATORY / CA-2 WEST HIGHWAY, LA -
 CONTINUOUS (2025)**

Simone walks to an outdoor TRASH CAN and rips the magazine
 into shreds, violently.

ADULT SIMONE
 How the fuck did they find me here?

She mounts a motorcycle. Unclips the helmet, puts it on.

Rides down the highway toward LA in the distance.

TITLE CARD: CHAMBERLAINE

ACT ONE

5 **INT. ADULT SIMONE'S ACADEMIC BUILDING/OFFICE, UCLA - DAY
 (2025)**

Simone walks down a corridor to her office. Waiting at the
 door is KATIE MCKINLEY (27) - a freckled redhead born to wear
 "business casual."

ADULT KATIE
Simone, hi!

Simone fumbles with her keys and faces Katie.

ADULT SIMONE
Hi, can I help you?

ADULT KATIE
Wait, you don't recognize me? It's
Katie!

Nothing registers on Simone's face.

ADULT KATIE (CONT'D)
Katie McKinley, from Chamberlaine?

ADULT SIMONE
I'm sorry, did we overlap?

ADULT KATIE
We were in Arch Club together? I
was a SHARE peer?

ADULT SIMONE
Oh my God, yes, Katie. I'm so
sorry.

ADULT KATIE
I apologize for being a bit of a
cunt in college.

ADULT SIMONE
(laughing)
It's okay. Me, too. Wow, Katie,
it's been a long time.

ADULT KATIE
Five years, can you believe it? I
just got back from reunions. I
mean, as you know.

Simone unlocks her office door, goes inside. Katie follows
her.

ADULT KATIE (CONT'D)
I noticed you don't go.

ADULT SIMONE
Well, I don't really have anything
to do with that school.

There's an awkward pause.

ADULT KATIE

I'm so sorry. I was wondering if I could get a quote from you. I'm a reporter now for the LA Times. I'm writing a story about... It would be awesome if I could just ask you a couple questions.

ADULT SIMONE

Wait, what is this for?

ADULT KATIE

Oh, just... I'm sorry, I know this must be so hard. I don't need much. Just a short conversation would be more than enough. And I want you to only say what you're comfortable with. I'm turning this on, but if there's something you don't want said, you can just let me know.

Katie turns on her tape recorder.

ADULT SIMONE

Comfortable with what? I'm not really comfortable with being interviewed and I still don't know what this is about.

ADULT KATIE

Okay, sure. Of course. I'm writing an LA Times piece about, you know. I just thought since you and Ellis were so close in college, you might want to be part of the story.

ADULT SIMONE

Ellis and I actually don't talk anymore. And I'm not interested in doing a story about him, or really, anyone else. Sorry.

ADULT KATIE

Wait, I'm not the first to contact you... am I?

ADULT SIMONE

Contact me about what?

ADULT KATIE

About Ellis?

Simone stands.

ADULT KATIE (CONT'D)
 Okay, maybe I can come back another
 time, we can just play it by ear.

ADULT SIMONE
 Katie, I really don't feel
 comfortable with this.

Simone takes Katie's tape recorder and puts it in Katie's hands. Katie gets up and Simone backs her toward the open door.

ADULT KATIE
 Oh, my God. You don't know yet.

ADULT SIMONE
 No, I don't know, but I would also
 prefer not to know. I'm actually
 very intentional about not
 discussing or even looking at
 anything from that school. I'm
 sorry I couldn't help you.

Simone slams the door in Katie's face.

ADULT KATIE (O.S.)
 (through the door)
 If you do change your mind and want
 to talk, just let me know. It was
 nice to see you! I'm really sorry
 for your loss, Simone!

Katie slides an LA Times business card with her name under the door. Simone takes it and throws it in her garbage can immediately.

Off Simone, confused, anxious --

6 **INT. ADULT SIMONE'S APARTMENT, LA - NIGHT (2025)**

Adult Simone rides her fuck-buddy, ERRICK (25) - a tall drink of water with an easy smile and clean cornrows.

Adult Simone starts to climax and pushes Errick away.

ADULT SIMONE
 I'm close. I'm close.

ERRICK
 I am, too.

Simone tries to dismount but Errick pleads with her.

ERRICK (CONT'D)
Come on. Do you have to?

ADULT SIMONE
Yes. I told you about this the
first time.

She gets off of him and faces away.

ERRICK
Okay, word. Do your trauma thing.

After a pause -

ERRICK (CONT'D)
Can I watch you though? You can
trust me by now.

ADULT SIMONE
(considering)
Okay.

Simone turns to face him.

ADULT SIMONE (CONT'D)
Just don't touch me.

ERRICK
Okay.

Adult Simone smiles mischievously and reaches her hand down to finger herself and Errick licks his lips.

7 **INT. ADULT SIMONE'S APARTMENT, LA - MOMENTS LATER (2025)**

Post-coital. Adult Simone rests her head on Errick's chest. He scrolls on his iPhone.

ADULT SIMONE
The weirdest thing happened today.
A journalist came by my office.

ERRICK
Oh, yeah?

ADULT SIMONE
She wanted to talk to me about my
college best friend.

ERRICK
Oh, shit.

SIMONE
What?

ERRICK

Simone, you went to Chamberlaine or something?

ADULT SIMONE

I did. I don't talk about it though. And that's part of what made it so weird. It's like she wanted to do a story about stuff that happened in college, and she was really insistent.

ERRICK

(reading)

Public suicide raises link to 2018 disappearance of Chamberlaine student and questions about possible motive.

(looking up)

Some dude just killed himself there in like a whole crowd of people.

ADULT SIMONE

Can I see that?

Erick hands Simone the phone, which we now see. The instagram account of the Washington Post.

A headline reads: **Maryland Man, 28, Kills Self at Chamberlaine Reunion; "Nightmare" for School, Community.**

She scrolls from the headline to the next page, a PICTURE OF ELLIS.

ADULT SIMONE (CONT'D)

No. Oh, my God.

ERRICK

Did you know him?

(a beat)

Simone, you good?

Simone freezes and says nothing. It looks like she's lost in thought.

8

EXT./INT. ARCH CLUB (ONE OF CHAMBERLAINE'S 'EATING CLUBS': CO-ED SOCIAL HOUSES FOR UPPERCLASSMEN), CHAMBERLAINE UNIVERSITY - SUNSET (2018)

COLLEGE SIMONE (20) - a young version of the woman we just saw, more insecure, hair an unstudied shoulder-length, bounds across the front yard of a former mansion, practically skipping. The light is perfect East Coast September.

CHYRON: 6 Years Earlier

She surprises COLLEGE ELLIS (21) from behind, where he is talking (inaudibly) to another student, and jumps into a predator's stance, forms claws with her hands, yells --

COLLEGE SIMONE

Raaaawr!

It visibly startles Ellis, whose expression then morphs into one of elation. He SQUEALS with excitement and they BEAR HUG.

COLLEGE ELLIS

Aaaaaah! MY LOVE!

COLLEGE SIMONE

My love!

COLLEGE ELLIS

I missed you so much!

COLLEGE SIMONE

I missed you so much. Also, I got you.

COLLEGE ELLIS

Oh, yeah. Yeah, fuck you. I just shat my best pants, great start to junior year.

Simone giggles.

Simone and Ellis walk inside Arch Club: a dark wood-paneled space. This is the druggy, artsy eating club at Chamberlaine.

They scan prox (ID) cards at a desk and get in a food line, where they ladle food items onto plates on their trays.

COLLEGE SIMONE

I can't believe we're juniors!
We're not babies anymore.

COLLEGE ELLIS

It's surreal. How do you feel?

COLLEGE SIMONE

Well, the meeting with my advisor went amazing. He told me my research is the most interesting of any of the students he's advising.

COLLEGE ELLIS

Wow, Simone! He didn't mention anything about, like, freshman year, or anything?

COLLEGE SIMONE

He said I went from one of his worst students to his best.

Food gotten, Simone and Ellis walk into the dining room and take their trays to a table with COLLEGE MICHELLE (21) - tight curls, tattoo of a cockroach on her collarbone, and COLLEGE JASWINDER (21) - heart shaped face, chatty to disguise raging ADHD.

Jas and Michelle stand and exchange hugs with Ellis and Simone before everyone sits down.

COLLEGE KATIE (21) - the younger version of the tightly-wound reporter we've seen, only, more preppy, if that's even possible - emerges from the buffet line. The four look away, pretending to be immersed in conversation. Katie sits down next to them.

COLLEGE ELLIS

Hey.

COLLEGE KATIE

Eddie?

COLLEGE ELLIS

Ellis. And you're Katie?

COLLEGE KATIE

Mmhmm.

COLLEGE ELLIS

You remember Simone.

COLLEGE KATIE

Hi.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Hi.

COLLEGE JAS

(to table)

You'll never guess who they paired with me for my philosophy junior seminar. Fucking Sam Maxwell.

Off Simone -- her happy expression drops completely at his name. She stops eating.

COLLEGE ELLIS

I don't know who that is.

COLLEGE JAS

He's this rower, I think? With the biggest attitude. Our projects aren't even remotely similar. His is like "interrogating the aesthetics of athletic intramural organizations" or some such utter hogwash. It's hogwash!

COLLEGE MICHELLE

(grinning sardonically)

Oh, Sam Maxwell stalked me freshman year. I have a no-contact order against him.

COLLEGE ELLIS

What?

COLLEGE MICHELLE

Oh, yeah. We were both working at ViperCall. He would follow me back to my dorm every day and ask me out, even after I said 'no', repeatedly, and got my desk moved. He would call me the n-word at work and take my computer and not give it back. At one point he slipped something in my drink and I literally saw and reported it.

COLLEGE ELLIS

What happened?

COLLEGE MICHELLE

Oh, nothing.

COLLEGE JAS

I wonder if I can switch partners.

COLLEGE ELLIS

(to Michelle)

Did you have to file a Title IX?

COLLEGE MICHELLE

Oh, no. The no-contact order was through my res college. Title IXs don't work at Chamberlaine. They had a bunch of serial assaults in the 90s and got national press, and since then they just crush any cases.

COLLEGE KATIE

It doesn't surprise me. We get a lot of cases like that in SHARE.

Everyone stares at Katie.

COLLEGE KATIE (CONT'D)

I'm a SHARE peer.

Simone gets up from the table abruptly, very upset. Her chair SCREECHES back. She dumps her tray's contents in the trash chute and leaves the dining hall.

Katie gives the table a bemused look.

Ellis runs after Simone --

9

EXT. ARCH CLUB - MOMENTS LATER (2018)

College Simone paces at an angry clip toward campus.

COLLEGE ELLIS

Simone! Simone!

She stops and turns around.

COLLEGE ELLIS (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

COLLEGE SIMONE

Yeah, I'm fine.

She keeps walking. Ellis runs to keep up.

COLLEGE ELLIS

Was it something I said?

COLLEGE SIMONE

No, it wasn't something you said.

They walk a bit in silence.

COLLEGE SIMONE (CONT'D)

Do you remember that thing I told you about my freshman year? How I stopped concentrating on my classes? I started failing?

COLLEGE ELLIS

Yeah, you told me you got really depressed freshman year.

COLLEGE SIMONE

I got really depressed because I was assaulted freshman fall.

COLLEGE ELLIS

Oh shit, I'm so sorry. That's horrible.

COLLEGE SIMONE

By Sam Maxwell. He drugged me and beat me up. I woke up the next morning with bruises all over my body and couldn't remember what happened. And the problem with people like Katie is that they just don't understand that. If they did, they wouldn't talk about it like that.

COLLEGE ELLIS

Like what?

COLLEGE SIMONE

Like it's a badge of honor to be involved with. Like she's helping people.

COLLEGE ELLIS

Didn't Jas bring it up? Michelle talked about it, too.

COLLEGE SIMONE

It's different, Ellis. Michelle knows what it's like.

They walk a few more paces in silence.

COLLEGE SIMONE (CONT'D)

It's not you. I'm just really upset. It doesn't happen to people like Katie. It happens to people like me, and then she gets to talk about it like it like it's just another extracurricular activity. And everything people tell her is supposed to be fucking confidential.

COLLEGE ELLIS

Did you ever think about filing a Title IX case? Or going to police?

COLLEGE SIMONE

Definitely not police. And... you heard what Michelle said. Title IX is just a waste of time.

They stop in front of Ellis' DORM. Another pause.

COLLEGE ELLIS

I don't think justice is a waste of time.

COLLEGE SIMONE

I think Michelle's right. It could just bring out all those feelings that I'm just now... It took me two years to be able to get up in the morning, Ellis. I don't want to go through that again.

COLLEGE ELLIS

I get that.

(pause)

But also, Michelle believes the moon landing was staged.

College Simone ekes out a laugh.

COLLEGE ELLIS (CONT'D)

Maybe the reason Title IX doesn't work is because everyone is too scared by what Michelle said to even try.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Maybe.

COLLEGE ELLIS

Okay, I'm late for rehearsal. I'll see you tomorrow.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Okay, bye.

Ellis starts running toward another corner of campus.

Off Simone -- tired, deep in contemplation.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

10 **INT./EXT. ADULT SIMONE'S APARTMENT & APARTMENT BUILDING, LA - DAY (2025)**

Adult Simone peeks out from her window at a LINE OF COP CARS on her street.

POLICE walk up to the building's front door. Adult Simone grabs a bag, tosses stuff into it frantically, and runs out her apartment door, fiddling with the lock.

Simone dashes down her hallway and opens the fire escape just as officers exit the elevator on her floor.

A POLICE OFFICER knocks on her apartment door once, twice, three times. Hearing no answer, he sticks a SLIP OF PAPER underneath.

11 **INT. ADULT SIMONE'S OFFICE, UCLA - DAY (2025)**

Safely in her office, Simone closes the blinds and locks the door.

She pulls up FACEBOOK and hesitates before the login screen.

A screen prompts her with a message: **do you want to reactivate your account?**

She does. Her screen fills with notifications. Her profile picture is blank. She has three friends: Ellis, Michelle, and Henry.

She pulls up Ellis' WALL and stares, transfixed and horrified. It's been turned into a "memorialized account." She scrolls past "tributes." Someone's pinned a link:

A Celebration of the Life of Ellis Chazen will be held June 2, 2025 at the UU Congregation of Chamberlaine. To RSVP, click here: [link].

Simone scrolls past and pulls up a private album on Ellis' page. She clicks on a PICTURE of COLLEGE SIMONE AND ELLIS BEAMING AT A COLLEGE PARTY.

Cut to:

12 **EXT. CHAMBERLAINE GATEWAY CLUB (AN EATING CLUB KNOWN FOR ROWERS, SWIMMERS, ETC.) "FROSH WEEK" PARTY - NIGHT (2018)**

College Simone and Ellis pose for the picture we just saw. HENRY (22, deceased class member from opening) - flat straight hair, mischievous grin, the picture of New England health - snaps the photo.

Around them, HORDES of drunk freshmen in their orientation T-shirts and lanyards and jaded upperclassmen hugging each other, drinking, doing drugs, smoking cigars in Hawaiian shirts...

HENRY

Yasss. Simone is trashy but she owns it.

SIMONE

You're trashy.

HENRY

Oh, hundred percent.

ELLIS

We're elevated trash. We're refuse.

HENRY

Oh my God, shut up.

Henry hands the phone back to Ellis.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Let me know if these are good.

SIMONE

I'm getting another beer.

HENRY

Simoneyyyy....

SIMONE

Mm?

HENRY

Can you get me one, too?

ELLIS

Wait, Simone. Me too?

SIMONE

Only because I love you. Okay, be right back. Don't move.

Simone walks away. Henry immediately runs over to greet a gaggle of SKINNY GIRLS in tennis skirts and Van Cleef & Arpels necklaces.

GIRL 1

Oh my God, Henry!

Henry poses, sending up a "deuces!" peace sign diagonally in the air.

HENRY

Biiitch! What the fuck is up?

Simone dodges tall ATHLETES and SHORT FRAT BOYS, AMAZON WOMEN, blotto STUDENTS in espadrilles falling down muddy embankments. Simone sidles up to the BEER TABLE.

BEER TABLE GIRL

How many?

SIMONE

Three.

As Beer Table Girl fills the first glass, Simone turns to see SAM MAXWELL (21) - a lanky brunette with a prominent beauty mark on his face and too much vigor, his arm around a STUMBLING FRESHMAN GIRL (18).

STUMBLING FRESHMAN GIRL

Did you say *Sam*?

One of Sam's BROS/TEAMMATES (20) chimes in between their heads.

BRO/TEAMMATE

Sam Maxwell. Two fuckin' first names. Gotta love this kid.

SAM

Ha ha, bro. Get out of here.

CUT TO:

13 **INT. CHAMBERLAINE KEY & SEAL CLUB (THE 'POSH' EATING CLUB, KNOWN FOR OLD MONEY AND CELEBRITY CHILDREN) - NIGHT (2016, FLASHBACK)**

A short blurry sequence:

Sam puts a drink in Freshman Simone's hand.

14 **INT. SAM'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT (2016, FLASHBACK)**

Quick cuts:

- A dorm room door SLAMS.

- Sam's face comes in and out of focus in repetitive motion.

- The fan on the bedside table whirs, catching each time in the same place.

ELLIS

I'll talk to you tomorrow.

Simone walks fast down "The Street": Eating Club row. Groups of freshman and upperclassmen, walking quickly, downing roadies, go by. Simone tries to steady her breathing.

16 **INT. CHAMBERLAINE "SHARE" (SEXUAL HEALTH ADVISING, RESOURCES & EDUCATION) OFFICE ATRIUM - DAY (2018)**

A very expensive campus "women's center." SHARE is located in a corner of it. There's a large suite of offices arranged around a central atrium. The space is adorned with plush chairs and stenciled quotes by illustrious alumnae.

College Simone pauses before one of the doors.

CARINA (O.S.)

(in pre-lap)

I don't want to talk to a SHARE peer.

16A **INT. CARINA'S OFFICE, CHAMBERLAINE SHARE - MOMENTS LATER (2018)**

College Simone sits across from CARINA RUIZ-KING (38) - a faculty member with a clean face, shoulder-length black curly hair, and felt cartoonish museum gift store earrings.

Carina reads Simone's INTAKE EMAIL off her desktop computer screen.

CARINA

(reading)

I'm unsure how it works but was hoping you could provide more information about filing a Title IX case.

(to Simone)

Okay, we can definitely cover that. You came to the right place. But first...

Carina puts her hands down on the desk between them.

CARINA (CONT'D)

Whatever you say in here is completely confidential. With one exception. If you say you're going to harm yourself, I'm obligated to report it. But I can tell the difference between *I'm in distress* and *I'm planning when, where, and how to kill myself*, okay?

COLLEGE SIMONE

Okay.

CARINA

This is a safe space.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Okay.

KNOCK on the door.

CARINA

Come in!

A SHARE PEER #2 (21) pokes her head in with a tray of COOKIES AND TEA.

Carina takes the tray. Simone steepes a chamomile teabag.

CARINA (CONT'D)

We can go at your pace, but generally what I do is I'll have you start with what you remember from your experience. Just go in order, and we can take this as slowly or as quickly as you want. And if you want to take a break, you can just say "break."

COLLEGE SIMONE

Oh, okay. Um, it's not that complicated. I was assaulted by a classmate freshman year. He put drugs in my drink and I woke up the next morning in his dorm room with bruises all over my body. I want to file a Title IX case against him.

CARINA

Okay. I understand. I am so sorry this was done to you.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Thank you. Yeah, it was shitty. He's apparently done it to so many other people. I just want it to stop. I want what happened to me to not happen to anyone else.

CARINA

If you feel comfortable, what do you remember of that night?

COLLEGE SIMONE

I remember being hit on. I remember Sam getting me a drink. And then drinking like two sips and being hit with a feeling of intense drowsiness. And then losing consciousness. And waking up in his bed in a lot of pain, with bruises on my torso and abdomen and arms. And my face.

Simone says all this with great seriousness. She doesn't cry or emote.

CARINA

Hmm. That must have been really tough.

COLLEGE SIMONE

It was really disorienting.

CARINA

Hmm, okay. Well, we're almost out of time. Maybe we can continue this conversation next week?

COLLEGE SIMONE

Wait, I... Sorry. I didn't want to talk about what happened. How do I file a Title IX? I just wanted more guidance with that process.

CARINA

Simone, let's discuss that next week. When is good for you?

COLLEGE SIMONE

We still have ten minutes, I thought? Until 10:15, it said online?

CARINA

Okay, sure, we can start that conversation. What makes you want to file a Title IX?

COLLEGE SIMONE

I want justice. I want it not to happen to anyone else.

CARINA

Okay. There are a lot of other options available to you, you know. Like talking with me is a good one.

(MORE)

CARINA (CONT'D)

Another is getting a no-contact order.

COLLEGE SIMONE

I know, I looked them up. I don't have contact with him now, though. I want to file a Title IX case.

CARINA

And you know that this is a long and arduous process?

COLLEGE SIMONE

I don't care how long it takes. It was in public. There are witnesses. It happened.

CARINA

I'm not doubting that it happened.

Carina hands Simone a sheet of paper with a campus map with the administration building circled.

CARINA (CONT'D)

You need to see Bridget Krugger. She's our Title IX officer. And let's keep a weekly appointment. It will be helpful to have someone in your corner.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Thank you, Carina. It was nice meeting you.

CARINA

You too, Simone. Of course.

18

INT. UCLA LECTURE HALL, DAY (2025)

Adult Simone walks into a crowded lecture hall of students. She pulls down the projector at the back of the room and waits as the projector takes a moment to warm up.

When it does, Simone projects onto it a slide: **PHYSICS OF THE COSMIC MICROWAVE BACKGROUND LECTURE VI: CHALLENGES OF THE COSMOLOGICAL MODEL**

She takes out notecards and SPILLS them on the ground. She fumbles for them and places them back on the lectern.

ADULT SIMONE

Welcome to the final lecture of Physics of the Cosmic Microwave Background. Thanks for bearing with me up to this point.

She advances to a slide with a lot of equations.

ADULT SIMONE (CONT'D)

(reading from notes,
shakily)

Since this is a class on the standard challenge of the cosmological model, there's a huge such challenge hiding in the name, which is C-D-M. As I explained a little bit, from the measurements of the CMB power spectrum, because the evolution of perturbations depend on the amount of this dark matter, which is basically just some ideal fluid with no pressure and which we assume is not interacting with the rest of the matter, then you can measure the abundance of dark matter very accurately.

A STUDENT (22) raises his hand.

STUDENT

Are you reading from the right slide?

Simone looks at her notecard and at the slide and realizes she is not.

ADULT SIMONE

Um, no, I'm so sorry. Hold on.

She sorts through her notes and DROPS THEM AGAIN.

ADULT SIMONE (CONT'D)

Hi, I'm going to give you guys free study space. Feel free to stay if you want, or you can use this time however you like. I'll post the slides on Blackboard, but this material won't show up on your exam.

The students rustle their belongings and start to move around.

Simone gathers her notes and sits at her desk. She opens her laptop and on it is ELLIS' FACEBOOK WALL. She clicks into the memorial and RSVPS. Then BUYS A PLANE TICKET TO CHAMBERLAINE.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

19 **INT./EXT. ERRICK'S CAR, LA HIGHWAYS AND LAX - DAY (2025)**

Errick drives. Simone rides shotgun.

ADULT SIMONE

Thanks for letting me crash at your place last night.

ERRICK

No problem.

ADULT SIMONE

And for the ride to the airport. I really appreciate it.

ERRICK

Yeah, sure.

ADULT SIMONE

I figured I wouldn't get any sleep if I stayed at mine. The letter from the cops scared me.

ERRICK

Mmhmm. You just wanted to cuddle.

(smiling)

Why are the cops so interested in you anyway? Like, you and that guy were friends in college, I got that. But like, beyond a simple interview, I don't really get why they'd be swarming your street.

Adult Simone doesn't answer him.

ERRICK (CONT'D)

Are you a murderer or some shit? Is there something I need to know about you?

Errick laughs. They enter the departures lane.

ERRICK (CONT'D)

Am I gonna be charged with assisting your getaway?

Simone doesn't laugh. She looks out the window.

ERRICK (CONT'D)

You're going to the funeral, you said. To Chamberlaine. Does any of this have to do with the "events in 2018" in that article?

Adult Simone opens the door while they're moving. Errick STOPS SHORT.

ERRICK (CONT'D)

What the hell are you doing?

ADULT SIMONE

I will leave this car right now.

ERRICK

Without your luggage?

Errick keeps driving while other cars honk and pass. A silent beat.

ERRICK (CONT'D)

I was kidding.

ADULT SIMONE

I'm not.

They drive along in silence for a long moment. As they're pulling up to the curb -

ADULT SIMONE (CONT'D)

Okay, Errick, I don't know why I'm telling you this. You're not my boyfriend. We're just friends who occasionally fuck. But yes, I'm going to Ellis' funeral. Even though I said I would never set foot on that campus again. I was assaulted at Chamberlaine, but there are other things I did afterward, things related to the disappearance of my friend, Henry... that only Ellis and I know about. Knew about.

Tears come to Simone's eyes. Errick stops the car at the curb.

ADULT SIMONE (CONT'D)

And if you tell anyone I said even this much, I will actually kill you.

Errick laughs. Simone gets out of the car, stone-faced. Errick follows a second behind. Gets her suitcase out of the trunk.

ADULT SIMONE (CONT'D)
 (sorry I lost my temper)
 Thank you.

ERRICK
 Have a good trip.

He gets back in the car. She takes a deep breath and faces the airport.

BRIDGET (O.S.)
 (pre-lap)
 Simone DiBari?

20 **INT. CHAMBERLAINE TITLE IX OFFICE - DAY (2018)**

A clinical (read: depressing) legal office suite.

BRIDGET KRUGGER (41), a beautiful, dour woman in a royal blue pantsuit, opens her office door.

College Simone stands and takes a deep breath, enters the office. Bridget closes the door after her.

BRIDGET
 Have a seat.

College Simone does.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
 Okay, you'd like to file a Title IX case against classmate Sam Maxwell for an incident that happened October 20, 2016, is that correct?

COLLEGE SIMONE
 Um, yes. That's correct.

BRIDGET
 Alright.

Bridget types quickly on her computer. Simone's eyes drift to a FRAMED PICTURE on the desk of Bridget and a man (43), presumably her boyfriend (who we will later recognize as COACH MICHAEL.)

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
 Please tell me briefly, if you can, the events of October 20th as you remember them.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Okay, Sam drugged me on the night of the 20th at Key and Seal Club.

BRIDGET

Approximately what time?

COLLEGE SIMONE

Um, probably between 10 and 12. I think.

BRIDGET

Go on.

COLLEGE SIMONE

I don't remember what happened until the next morning, when I woke up in his dorm room.

BRIDGET

What residential college was his dorm room, what building, and what room?

COLLEGE SIMONE

Um, I'm not sure. Talbot, I think. I don't remember the exact dorm or room number, though.

BRIDGET

Talbot college. Do you have any witnesses that saw you either at Key & Seal or the next morning coming out of his dorm room in Talbot college? If you can just give me their names, first and last. They will be contacted by our office.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Okay, um, Ellis Chazen.

Bridget types at lightning speed.

COLLEGE SIMONE (CONT'D)

Michelle LeFebvre. L-E-F-E-B-V-R-E.
And Jas, Jaswinder Balasubramanian.
B-A-L-A.

BRIDGET

Found them. The date for your hearing will be next week, Thursday.

College Simone takes out her phone calendar.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Oh my God, I think that's the date of my astronomy placement exam.

BRIDGET

Unfortunately that's the only date we have until January. Unless you'd prefer to schedule for after winter break? We have February 12th, 13th.

COLLEGE SIMONE

(gulping)

No, Thursday is fine. I'll try to move my exam.

Bridget stands.

BRIDGET

That's all, then. Your hearing will be in Thomas College common room on Thursday at 10 AM. You can bring an advisor with you.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Wait, I have more questions. What's the structure of the hearing?

Bridget ushers Simone out.

BRIDGET

You can talk to Carina at SHARE. She'll go over more details with you.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Okay, thank you.

College Simone exits. The door shuts.

21 **EXT./INT. CHAMBERLAINE TOWN BREWERY - LATE AFTERNOON (2018)**

College Simone checks her phone as she walks through the cute [fictional] college town that is Chamberlaine, Maryland.

She looks up and around to see Ellis waving happily by the entrance to the TOWN BREWERY, guarded by a BOUNCER (30s).

COLLEGE ELLIS

You set a date?

COLLEGE SIMONE

I set a date. It was so weird.

BOUNCER

ID.

College Ellis and Simone show their IDs in turn. He takes a long moment on Simone's.

COLLEGE ELLIS

When?

COLLEGE SIMONE

Next Thursday.

COLLEGE ELLIS

So soon.

The bouncer waves them in.

COLLEGE SIMONE

(as soon as they're past)

Oh, my God, it worked. We're legal!

COLLEGE ELLIS

Now we can mingle with graduate students in the *humanities*.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Professor, I found the course material in this chapter particularly interpenetrating.

COLLEGE ELLIS

That's not how you use that word.

They sit at the bar counter.

COLLEGE ELLIS (CONT'D)

What do you want?

COLLEGE SIMONE

Something that says *I'm in a turtleneck. I'm writing a PhD on the Hegelian Dialectic.*

Ellis flags down a BARTENDER (28).

COLLEGE ELLIS

Two dark beers please.

BARTENDER

The pumpkin-citrus or the mahogany?

Ellis and Simone shoot each other a look; *we're in the belly of the beast, now...*

COLLEGE ELLIS
Dealer's choice.

The Bartender turns away.

COLLEGE SIMONE
By the way, they're going to
contact you to be a witness. I'm
not sure what that means, but just
so you know.

He comes back with two Blue Moons.

COLLEGE ELLIS
Okay. Simone?
(they hold up their beers)
A toast.

COLLEGE SIMONE
Oh no. Not yet.

COLLEGE ELLIS
Yes. A toast to you. To your
bravery. To a hearing date. And to
justice.

COLLEGE SIMONE
To justice.

They drink. Off Simone - tentatively, the slightest bit
satisfied.

22 **EXT. CHAMBERLAINE BOATHOUSE ON LAKE WALTON - SUNSET (2018)**

Bridget pulls up to the boathouse in her TOYOTA COROLLA.

By the boathouse entrance, COACH MICHAEL (43) - sandy hair,
ready smile, talks to a student. We get closer and realize
the student is SAM MAXWELL, dressed in spandex rowing "uni."

Bridget rolls down her window and idles the car.

COACH MICHAEL
Oh, Bridget's here. Give me one
second, Sam.

BRIDGET
You about ready to head out?

SAM
Hi, Bridget!

BRIDGET
Hey, Sam.

COACH MICHAEL

Yeah, we were just wrapping up.
Okay, bud, I'll see you tomorrow
for morning practice.

SAM

See ya.

Michael picks up a duffel bag off the ground and gets in the passenger seat.

23

INT. BRIDGET'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER (2018)

Michael and Bridget kiss.

MICHAEL

Hey, hon.

She drives away.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Men's lightweight is shaping up so well. That Sam Maxwell boy is a fucking powerhouse. He ERGed better than anyone today. If he can keep even somewhat in the range he did today, the meet's going to be fuckin' insane. Anyway, what's up? You seem stressed.

BRIDGET

Mike, Sam has an accusation against him.

MICHAEL

By who? What?

BRIDGET

Doesn't matter.

MICHAEL

Then who cares? These things always blow over.

Michael laughs and puts his arm around Bridget's shoulder. Bridget doesn't laugh.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Come on, this happens once a week.

BRIDGET

This time is different, though. She's actually going through with a case.

MICHAEL

(joking)

Not so good for her that the coordinator is dating the complainant's coach, then.

Michael laughs and canoodles her, kisses under her chin.

BRIDGET

Michael, stop. This time there's an actual hearing. Sam won't be able to compete in the meet.

MICHAEL

What?

BRIDGET

This girl seems serious.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

24 **EXT. CHAMBERLAINE JUNCTION TRAIN STATION - DAY (2025)**

TRAIN ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

(muffled)

Chamberlaine Junction.

The commercial train from Dulles airport pulls into the station. Adult Simone hustles her suitcase onto the platform.

She gets her bearings and brings it over to a smaller train station docked there: a sign marks it as the "Jetty" train to Chamberlaine University, written in indigo letters.

Adult Simone boards. It's an older train, circa 1971, with khaki-colored leather seats. She sits.

The car is empty except for two grad students. One wears a SHARE T-shirt printed with a message: **1 in 6 Chamberlaine Students reported being assaulted in 2025.*** The 1 and 6 are printed in huge font.

Simone begins HYPERVENTILATING. The train lurches forward.

25 **INT. THOMAS RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE, CHAMBERLAINE UNIVERSITY - MORNING (2018)**

Carina enters a well-lit lounge area in that same SHARE T-SHIRT, but this one has **2018** instead of **2025**. Carina holds two coffees and a takeout container.

College Simone sits, bouncing her leg. She wears an ill-fitting business casual outfit.

CARINA
Here, I brought you coffee.

COLLEGE SIMONE
Thanks.

CARINA
And some breakfast.

Carina opens the container: cafeteria eggs, sausage, bacon, and a container of oatmeal.

COLLEGE SIMONE
That's okay. I'm not hungry.

CARINA
Simone, I thought you might say that. But trust me. You don't want to do this on an empty stomach.

COLLEGE SIMONE
Okay, thank you.

College Simone opens the container and picks at some of the food.

CARINA
How are you feeling? Are you glad we did that late night review session? I think your statement is looking much better.

COLLEGE SIMONE
I hope so.

CARINA
(looking at Simone's empty plate)
Just eat the eggs, then. Simone. You need fuel.
(after a beat)
You've got this.

COLLEGE SIMONE
As long as I don't have to see Sam's face. Or do cross-examination. Then, I'll be good.

CARINA
You won't.

COLLEGE SIMONE
 (exhaling)
 Okay.

26 **INT. THOMAS RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS
 LATER (2018)**

College Simone and Carina enter the conference room space. Chairs are set up: four at the front, for the HEARING OFFICER (40s), Bridget, and TWO PEER PANELISTS, one of whom is COLLEGE KATIE. Perpendicular to them, two aisles of chairs.

Sam Maxwell enters, dressed like an angel baby in innocuous finery. He's flanked by his two well-dressed PARENTS. Beside them, an intimidating woman in heels and pantsuit who we later find out is Sam's DEFENSE ATTORNEY (36). In his posse, Sam's two female PEER WITNESSES (20,21).

Across from Sam's side are two chairs: one for Simone and one for Carina.

Simone averts her eyes, seeing Sam.

CARINA
 (mouthing)
I didn't know.

27 **INT. THOMAS RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER
 (2018)**

Simone stands and finishes reading her statement.

COLLEGE SIMONE
 (reading)
 I hope you'll find Sam responsible for violating policy for his actions on the night of October 20, 2016.

HEARING OFFICER
 Thank you, Simone. Next we'll move on to cross-examination by the respondent's advisor. Jennifer, are you ready?

SAM'S DEFENSE ATTORNEY/JENNIFER
 I am.

Sam's defense attorney gets up and walks into the space.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY/JENNIFER
 Simone, what amount would you say you drink on a typical night out? Like, one drink?

COLLEGE SIMONE

It depends.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY/JENNIFER

But, if you were to ballpark, how many drinks, usually?

COLLEGE SIMONE

I'm not sure. Maybe two or three.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY/JENNIFER

Is it possible you drank more than two total drinks that evening?

COLLEGE SIMONE

No, it's not. I remember having only one before Sam's drink.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY/JENNIFER

Okay. Some of the actions that were described when you were characterized as being drunk were maybe giggling more, and hanging onto Sam. And you had said in your statement that Sam knew that you were incapacitated. Would you characterize that as your being giggly and laughing?

COLLEGE SIMONE

No, I would say he knew I was incapacitated due to my being unable to stand on my own.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY/JENNIFER

Would you maybe characterize your actions as similar to that of a drunk person?

COLLEGE SIMONE

Similar, yes, but I wasn't drunk.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY/JENNIFER

Okay, how would he have known that you were incapacitated after leaving the club?

COLLEGE SIMONE

I mean it's hard for me to tell you because I have no memory of what happened after leaving the club...

(MORE)

COLLEGE SIMONE (CONT'D)
 until the next morning, as it says
 in the report, like the brief
 moments in between, waking up to
 the sexual activity.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY/JENNIFER
 I don't think I have any other
 questions.

HEARING OFFICER
 Okay. Next will be witnesses for
 the complainant. Simone, are there
 any witnesses you'd like to call?

COLLEGE SIMONE
 I was told there were no witnesses
 in the hearing.

CARINA
 Is it not possible to call
 witnesses who are not physically
 present?

HEARING OFFICER
 Unfortunately it's not possible to
 hear testimony from witnesses who
 are not physically present. That
 also means their testimony cannot
 be considered in this
 investigation. Seeing no witnesses,
 we'll go on to the respondent's
 statement. Sam, are you ready?

SAM
 I am.
 (sam clears his throat)
 I first met Simone a day before the
 night of the 20th, at a study group
 at the Cowgill center. Though she
 says she doesn't remember, ...

Sam's voice becomes faint.

FLASH BACK TO:

14 INT. SAM'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT (2016, FLASHBACK)

Quick cuts:

- Sam's face comes in and out of focus in repetitive motion.
- The fan on the bedside table whirs, catching each time in the same place.

15 **INT. SAM'S DORM ROOM - DAY (2016, FLASHBACK)**

College Simone wakes up and GROANS. Looks down to see bruises on her arms and stomach.

RETURN TO:

27 **INT. THOMAS RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING (2018)**

Carina winks at Simone and stands.

CARINA

You say in your statement in the report that you met Simone in an English tutoring session. So when you mention a math problem you were working on together that you approached her about on the night of the 19th, what are you referring to?

Simone grits her teeth.

SAM

Um, I might be mistaken about the exact subject we were getting tutoring for.

28 **INT. ARCH CLUB - NIGHT (2018)**

College Simone and College Ellis play "Balls" (like pool without a cue) on a well-loved Billiards table.

COLLEGE ELLIS

I mean, if Carina really poked holes in his case at the last second and his story about knowing you fell apart that quickly...

COLLEGE SIMONE

I just don't know, Ellis. None of the questions were about what actually happened. They just kept going over how many drinks I had. And everything you and Michelle corroborated got thrown out because we didn't know you had to actually be there physically.

COLLEGE ELLIS

I still think it sounds like Sam fell apart. And I'm not sure much of what we said was that new.

(MORE)

COLLEGE ELLIS (CONT'D)

We just attested to what you looked like that night. And the next morning.

COLLEGE SIMONE

I know. Let's stop talking about this. I won't know until tomorrow, probably.

College Michelle pokes her head into the tap room.

COLLEGE MICHELLE

So, I have to warn you guys that Key semis just let out. So there's about to be like a million
(mouths)
Drunk frat boys and sorority girls
(back to normal volume)
in here. What can I say? As Michelle I can't stand it but as Arch club VP... they pay really well. Gotta keep the lights on.

COLLEGE ELLIS

(ironically saluting)
Thanks, officer.

Just as Michelle warned -- a horde of drunk, formally dressed BLUEBLOODS ascend the stairs, yelling.

DRUNK BRITISH VOICE (O.S.)

Oi! Should I just get us a keg?

COLLEGE SIMONE

Let's just go.

COLLEGE ELLIS

Okay.

COLLEGE SIMONE

I'm gonna go to the bathroom. Meet you at the entrance.

Simone weaves her way, unsmiling, through tall guys and swaying girls in silk.

She makes her way to the

UNISEX BATHROOM

...in which women check their makeup in the mirror. Men pee at urinals. Simone opens a stall and a group of guys does a fat LINE OF COCAINE off the TOILET SEAT.

COLLEGE SIMONE (CONT'D)

Oh, sorry.

She opens another stall. It's SAM, in Tux and Tails, with a woozy but mostly conscious SOPHOMORE GIRL (19).

COLLEGE SIMONE (CONT'D)

(yelling)

Oh no. What the fuck?

The boys from the adjacent stall and the make-up applying girls turn their heads. Sam is shitfaced and mad.

SAM

What, bitch? You're still talking?

COLLEGE SIMONE

Was today not enough for you? You wanna go another round? You can't do this anymore. Do you understand? You can't get away with THIS -- anymore.

Simone gestures to the girl. She starts walking out of the bathroom, tentatively triumphant --

Sam leaves the sophomore to follow Simone. He looks awful, sick, maybe ready to puke.

SAM

Oh, really? Can't do what? I didn't fucking do anything.

College Simone walks faster, trying to get away from him, but he follows and gets in her way. A little crowd gathers.

Sam pulls out his phone, an eerie smile spreading across his face.

He pulls up an E-MAIL.

SAM (CONT'D)

I didn't do shit! Fucking bitch.

Sam spits.

SAM (CONT'D)

Read it. Verdict came out. 7:30 PM.

COLLEGE SIMONE

(hurrying to get away from Sam)

No.

SAM

(reading aloud, mockingly)
 Chamberlaine University finds that the evidence does not support a finding that Respondent has violated the sexual harassment policy. Chamberlaine University makes the following findings of fact supporting its determination: on October 19th, 2016, respondent and complainant met in math tutoring at the Cowgill center, as witnesses to the respondent verbally corroborated. On October 20th, 2016, Respondent did offer Complainant an Alcoholic Drink. On October 20th, 2016, Complainant was found to be inebriated and therefore her testimony was found to be less than credible. Chamberlaine University finds that the preponderance of evidence suggests that the Respondent did not violate any University policy.

A frat bro comes behind Sam as he yells this at her.

FRAT BRO

Yo, bro, you won. Chill.

We follow Simone as she runs outside. She steadies herself against the stoop. Ellis is there with Michelle, who's smoking a cigarette. They don't see her at first.

Simone pulls up the verdict email on her iPhone. She tries to read but the words go blurry. Tears fall onto the screen. She begins hyperventilating again.

College Ellis and Michelle hear her and notice.

COLLEGE MICHELLE

Oh, shit. Dude, Simone, what's wrong?

COLLEGE ELLIS

Are you okay?

Simone can't really get her words out.

COLLEGE SIMONE

I lost.

Ellis hugs her. She sobs into his chest. Michelle blows smoke and puts out her cigarette, holds Simone's hand.

COLLEGE MICHELLE
Wait, you filed a Title IX?

COLLEGE ELLIS
Now is not the time to gloat.

COLLEGE MICHELLE
I'm not. I'm so sorry, Simone.

COLLEGE SIMONE
(through sobs)
They made me sound like a drunk.
And a liar. Like a fucking lunatic.

COLLEGE MICHELLE
Fuck this school.

COLLEGE ELLIS
Fuck this school.

College Simone cries uncontrollably.

29 **INT. WARREN INN, CHAMBERLAINE TOWN - NIGHT (2025)**

A fancy hotel room for one. Adult Simone stands over a suitcase, picks up a Black A-line dress. The local Chamberlaine news channel plays on the TV.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)
University and community members still in shock after suicide of Chamberlaine alum Ellis Chazen Sunday. A new development in the case links his death to a series of 2018 events which students dubbed "the inferno" and the 2018 disappearance and death of Chazen's classmate, Henry Hodgsen.

A RHYTHMIC KNOCKING.

Simone shuts the TV off and answers the door.

Simone reaches into her pocket and pulls out pepper spray. She tucks it behind her back and with the other hand, opens the door to reveal -- Carina, 6 years older and more pompous, with a new 'do.

CARINA
Hi, Simone. I'm so sorry to bother you so late. I- Is it okay if I come in?

ADULT SIMONE
I'd actually rather you not.

CARINA
I just wanted to see how you're
doing.

Carina walks in the door.

ADULT SIMONE
I'm doing fine. How did you find
me, Carina?

CARINA
Oh, it's Dr. Ruiz-King.
(she lets loose a Kamala
Harris cackle)
I got my doctorate. I became a res
college dean this past year. Oh my
gosh, were you in Talbot?

Carina touches her heart.

CARINA (CONT'D)
Or, you were in Thomas, right? You
have to come by and see the new
construction.

ADULT SIMONE
What do you want?

CARINA
They're building a new dance
studio, squash court, new practice
rooms. And there's a safe room,
where students can go if they feel
overwhelmed, isn't that wonderful?

ADULT SIMONE
Carina, what do you want?

CARINA
You may have been approached by a
journalist recently. She wanted an
interview about Ellis' passing? I'm
so sorry, by the way.
(a beat; Simone doesn't
budge)
I wanted to let you know we don't
think it would be in your best
interest to speak to reporters.

A beat.

CARINA (CONT'D)

A Christopher Frisch op-ed will come out in the Atlantic tomorrow. We both know that Ellis' death has nothing to do with the... events... of your junior year. So, the article just shows that. It surfaces some of Ellis' mental health records. As you know, he suffered a lot.

SIMONE

We all suffered a lot.

CARINA

If you'd be willing to just sign this.

Carina takes out a thick paper form from an envelope in her purse. It's some sort of NDA. She hands it to Simone and produces another, smaller envelope, which she holds at Simone's eye level.

CARINA (CONT'D)

And for you, I have this. Just to tide you over. It will be an enormous help to us what you're doing.

Simone takes the smaller envelope and opens it. It's a check.

ADULT SIMONE

My silence is worth \$30,000 to you?

CARINA

A token of our appreciation.

ADULT SIMONE

Carina, I need you to leave my room right now.

Adult Simone grips the pepper spray.

CARINA

Simone, I wouldn't be so confident. We both know you could go to prison for up to thirty years for - I think you know. I'm being very nice here.

Simone backs Carina out.

SIMONE

I'm actually just here to grieve.

Adult Simone SLAMS the door in Carina's face.

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

30 **EXT./INT. CHAMBERLAINE SHARE OFFICE - SUNSET (2018)**

College Ellis and Simone walk to the entrance of the SHARE office.

COLLEGE ELLIS
I'm proud of you for appealing.

COLLEGE SIMONE
I can't believe I'm doing this.

COLLEGE ELLIS
I'll wait for you outside?

COLLEGE SIMONE
Okay.

Ellis stops and Simone crosses

INSIDE THE SUITE

The door to Carina's office is slightly ajar. Simone walks slowly toward it.

From inside Carina's office, Carina and Bridget's voices carry.

BRIDGET (O.S.)
I just hate this part. This is,
hands down, the worst part of my
job.

CARINA (O.S.)
Which part, writing the
determination letter?

BRIDGET (O.S.)
No, you know what I mean.

We shift from seeing Simone in the hallway to seeing Carina and Bridget inside the office. Carina and Bridget don't know they're being overheard.

CARINA
Oh, throwing out the witnesses?

BRIDGET
You told her that alcohol wouldn't
count against her?

CARINA
Of course.

BRIDGET
You told her she wouldn't be cross-
examined?

Carina rolls her eyes.

CARINA
Come on, Bridget, what would you
rather do? This is the hardest part
of our jobs. I didn't want to tell
that girl alcohol wouldn't count
against her.

BRIDGET
Why can't you just tell them
they're going to lose? Never mind,
don't answer that.

CARINA
I do. I try. I tried to get her to
open up to me so she wouldn't even
get to you. But this bitch was
stubborn. She really wanted to
(air quotes)
"file a Title IX." Anyway, what's
the alternative? You and I would
both lose our jobs like *that*.

Carina snaps her fingers.

BRIDGET
Or I'd have nothing all day but
assault cases.

Outside the door, we see this information LAND on SIMONE'S
FACE.

She starts to back away from the door quickly, stumbling.

Simone gets outside, sees Ellis.

ELLIS
How did it go?

We see panic on her face, quickly hardening into a glimpse of
the resolve Simone will have as an adult.

31 INT./EXT. UU CHURCH, CHAMBERLAINE - DAY (2025)

An organ plays. Rows of mourners exit their seats and walk outside to a small patio.

Adult Simone smooths her dress and walks over to a woman bidding goodbye to some mourners. This is ESTHER ARMENTO-CHAZEN (65), Ellis' mother. She's a beautiful, skinny woman with long brown and gray curls, wearing a brown dress that would befit a fortune-teller more than a grieving mother.

ADULT SIMONE

Mrs. Chazen, hi. I'm so sorry.

ESTHER

(I don't know who you are)

Thank you so much.

(then, double take)

Wait, I recognize you! You're Simone. Right?

ADULT SIMONE

Yeah, I think I met you once, junior year. After one of Ellis' dance performances.

Esther envelops Simone in an EXCRUCIATINGLY LONG HUG. Esther is stoic and strong, like it's Simone who really needs it, and Simone does. She starts to break down and Esther doesn't let go.

ESTHER

I'm so glad you're here.

Esther releases Simone.

ESTHER (CONT'D)

Ellis really loved you. I know you two had your differences of opinion toward the end, but he always cared. And talked about you with reverence.

Esther wipes Simone's eyes.

ADULT SIMONE

I'm gonna go get a drink.

(laughs nervously)

I need something strong.

ESTHER

Really good to see you here.

Esther turns to greet another group of mourners. Simone sidles up to a drink table. No alcohol. Some kind of hippie pressed juice. Simone grabs a pre-spread cream cheese bagel and starts snarfing it when Katie walks directly to her.

ADULT KATIE

Hey, Simone. I was just about to call you.

ADULT SIMONE

Why? I don't think I have anything to say to you.

ADULT KATIE

The New York Times and Serial Productions picked up my story.

A beat. Katie pauses, as if expecting a congratulations. Simone opens the Uber app on her phone and types quickly, stonewalling Katie. She tries to walk toward the exit, but Katie gets in Simone's way.

ADULT KATIE (CONT'D)

They're interested in the events in 2018 that led to Henry's disappearance and Ellis'

(whispering)
death.

(back to normal voice)

They're most interested in your part in them. The rumors that circulated about you at the time.

ADULT SIMONE

Katie, I'm not interested in participating in your story. Or talking.

Simone tries to distance herself but Katie speaks loudly.

ADULT KATIE

You don't have a choice whether the article and podcast come out. The only choice you have is whether you cooperate, or you let me and the evidence speak for you.

Simone frantically looks at her Uber app. It shows a driver **one minute away**.

ADULT KATIE (CONT'D)

(calling after Simone)
We'll talk soon.

(MORE)

ADULT KATIE (CONT'D)
 You can call me at my LA Times
 Number or at my personal number. I
 just called you so you have it.

Simone walks away, furious, through the funeral hall,

OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

And meets her Uber.

UBER DRIVER (O.S.)
 For Simone?

32 **EXT. CHAMBERLAINE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING/TITLE IX OFFICE - DAY (2025)**

Adult Simone gets out of the Uber and slams the door. Walks to the door of the admin building and looks down, then crouches, getting a closer look at a FLAGSTONE beneath her.

She traces the faintest outline of a black letter "C", now just a SMUDGE.

33 **EXT. CHAMBERLAINE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - NIGHT (2018)**

College Simone bends down over the same FLAGSTONE.

Hair swinging in her face, she WRITES in big letters in permanent marker:

CHAMBERLAINE PROTECTS RAPISTS

And then,

LIST OF RAPISTS:

1. **SAM MAXWELL (2020)**

Simone's phone buzzes. She looks up and sees, from across the quad -- Ellis. She lightens just a tiny bit, tacitly glad for the support. He raises his fist, inside which is a BLACK PERMANENT MARKER.

Simone swivels her head around. Sees MICHELLE AND JAS. Markers in their hands.

34 **INT./EXT. UU CHURCH, CHAMBERLAINE - DAY (2025)**

The funeral is over. Esther and a few MEN FROM THE CHURCH dismantle tables and bring them outside.

Adult Katie helps Esther bring a table from the Sanctuary into the reception area and fold it against the wall.

ESTHER

Thanks for all your help. You know, you don't need to stay. We're almost done.

ADULT KATIE

No problem. I was actually wondering if I could talk to you for a few minutes. On the record. My name is Katie McKinley, I knew your son at Chamberlaine. I'm doing an investigative article on his death for the New York Times and Serial.

ESTHER

Um, alright.

Adult Katie and Esther walk into the sanctuary. As the men dismantle the last of the tables, Esther and Katie sit in a pew. Katie turns on her recorder.

KATIE

Anything that you don't want to talk about, you don't have to. I'm just getting general information about the circumstances surrounding... what happened. So maybe we can start with why. Do you know?

ESTHER

Why did my son kill himself?

KATIE

Well, yes.

ESTHER

Ellis was very sensitive. I mean, I'm sure you know. He struggled a lot with feelings beyond him, that he tried to control, but... he struggled with the feeling that he just couldn't measure up.

KATIE

Was there any kind of inflection point, like after which it got worse? When I knew him you couldn't really tell. I guess you'd have had to be closer.

ESTHER

Ellis really struggled with being gay. Not being gay internally. But being around other gay men. He used to get really upset, after he came out, about how he thought other gay men saw him. Henry, in particular. And then it got much worse after Simone's trial. Her bomb threats.

KATIE

Wait, *Simone's* bomb threats?

ESTHER

Ellis would call me so excited, as if he were addicted to the energy of the protest. It was a crazy time. It began with the graffiti. But then it morphed into something so much bigger. I never quite knew, but it seemed like Ellis was ready to do unspeakable things. They became radicalized.

35

EXT./INT. CHAMBERLAINE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING/TITLE IX OFFICE - DAY (2025)

Adult Simone enters the administration building and barges into Bridget's office. Bridget sits alone at the desk.

BRIDGET

Simone? Carina's been trying to get in touch with you. She's actually on her way here.

A knock at the door.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Come in!

Carina opens the door and sees Simone.

CARINA

Simone?

With the back of her hand, Simone sweeps all of Bridget's desk decorations -- picture frames, papers, folders, books, paperweights -- onto the floor with a movement so propulsive that some of them SLAM against the wall.

She takes a long time before she speaks.

SIMONE

Bridget, Carina, I've never hated anyone more than I've hated the two of you. You really deserve to die. I've been working every moment of the past five years to forget what happened here.. I promised myself I would never, never set foot on this campus again. I wish everyone could see how fucking depraved you are.

Simone bends down and picks up the picture of Bridget and Michael. She **THROWS IT** at the wall, a loud **CRACK**.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

But the only thing I want more than that you two suffer as much as possible -- is that I never have to think about this place again. So I will work with you. I will do whatever it takes to bury Katie's article. And then I never, ever want to hear from you vultures again. Is that clear?

CARINA

(sotto; terrified)
So glad you came around.

Carina leaves the room.

BRIDGET

It's clear.

SIMONE

So, how can I help?

Off Adult Simone, drunk on her resolve.

END ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

36 **INT. COLLEGE SIMONE'S DORM ROOM/DORM - MORNING (2018)**

College Simone sleeps deeply, if not soundly, in the same hoodie from the night (of graffiti) before.

A continuous, held BUZZ issues from the charging iPhone on her bedside table: a WIRELESS EMERGENCY ALERT.

Simone tries to turn off the buzz, and reads:

PUBLIC SAFETY ALERT: A threat of possible bomb attack was received this morning on Chamberlaine University campus. Evacuate the building and follow fire drill egress route.

FIRE ALARMS start to go off. College Simone rolls over and groggily slips on a pair of slides.

A KNOCK.

Simone shuffles to the door, answers it. It's College Ellis.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Hi.

COLLEGE ELLIS

Do you have clothes on? You need to follow me.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Shouldn't you be evacuating?

COLLEGE ELLIS

Come on!

COLLEGE SIMONE

Yeah, give me a second.

College Simone grabs her phone and prox and follows Ellis.

The scene in the

DORM HALLWAY

... is pure pandemonium. Students evacuating to the doors. A silent fire drill procession.

37

EXT. CHAMBERLAINE UNIVERSITY - MOMENTS LATER (2018)

Students, faculty, staff all rush toward the evacuation fields while Ellis leads Simone in the OPPOSITE DIRECTION.

They dodge clumps of evacuating people. Make their way toward the center of campus, the administration building, the central quad.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Where are we going?

COLLEGE ELLIS

You'll see.

COLLEGE SIMONE

Can you slow down?

Simone shuffles after Ellis. A few sharp turns later, they arrive at the CENTRAL QUAD.

In front of the administration building is an enormous WICKER STRUCTURE. It's ON FIRE. SMOKE plumes from it. It spells out words: **CHAMBERLAINE PROTECTS RAPISTS**

COLLEGE ELLIS
Did you do this?

COLLEGE SIMONE
No!

COLLEGE ELLIS
(grave)
Seriously, Simone. You can tell me anything. Did you do this? What about the bomb threat?

COLLEGE SIMONE
Ellis, I didn't do this.

They take in the inferno for a second in silence. MAINTENANCE WORKERS spray this enormous blazing message with FIRE HOSES.

COLLEGE ELLIS
Then who?

COLLEGE SIMONE
(quietly; in awe)
There must be others.

38 **EXT. LAKE WALTON - MORNING (2025)**

MAINTENANCE WORKERS drive golf carts carrying bundles of refuse to a DUMPING GROUND near the edge of Lake Walton.

CHYRON: Spring 2025, Two Days Post-Reunions

They unload taken-apart fences, trash bags, recycling, empty water stations, and CHAMBERLAINIANA: "CLASS OF ____!" signs, purple mascot costumes, foam fingers.

A WORKER (50) unloads a bin of trash bags close to the edge of the lake and sees, poking out on the shore -- a BLOATED, WATER-LOGGED ARM.

He stops and moves closer, tries to get a closer look. We see A WHOLE TORSO, WHITE AND WATERLOGGED, being swept gradually up on the small strip of dirt and sand. It's the BODY of SAM MAXWELL.

Carved into the chest is a message: **FOR SIMONE.**

END PILOT