

**MOONBURN**

Podcast Pilot

CHAPTER ONE

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CHAPTER ONE

1 EXT. BOURBON ST. BOARDING - ROOFTOP - NIGHT (90S)

1

SOUNDS of NEW YORK CITY in the BACKGROUND.

SOMEONE moves up to the ROOF. Takes a DEEP BREATH, preparing themselves...

CARTER  
(softly)  
Okay.

The SOUND of a CASSETTE TAPE being INSERTED into its PLAYER.

CLICK. The CASSETTE PLAYER is RECORDING...

CARTER (CONT'D)  
Hi. I guess I should start by saying: I'm Carter. If you're listening to this, you're probably in my old room. The boarding home on Bourbon Street, right? Third floor, room on the left. Either that or maybe you found this in a dumpster somewhere or it's just... gone. Kinda the risk we run, I guess. We all aim to leave something of ourselves behind-- some *legacy*-- but you never really know what's gonna come of it after you... well... after you're gone.

--  
I guess my hope is that if you-- whoever you are-- find this cassette player under the loose floorboard by the closet... maybe you're meant to hear it. Maybe... it'll help.

--  
I just moved to New York. A new city. No friends or family, no money, no prospects, no support. Just... me. But-- With a plan. One year. To *finally* find myself, be myself, and... live. *Really live*.

(tearing up)  
One year to record this-- this diary. And share that journey... my story. Because even though I've already made up my mind on how my story ends, maybe I can change someone else's.

(MORE)

CARTER (CONT'D)

Maybe, in leaving this piece of myself behind for you to find, I can show you some of the mistakes, the lessons, the triumphs and failures. Everything to give you a leg up as you embark on your own journey. Your own story. Maybe I can help you succeed where I already know I can't. Maybe, my story can make a difference.

--

It's not heartbreaking. It's *hopeful*. That's the promise I'm making to myself. And to you. This is all the strength I have left to give. It's my way of leaving a lasting mark-- of finding some... any meaning in my life-- and hoping it makes all the difference in yours. It's my way of surviving.

--

Because... after this one year, these recordings will be all that's left of me. I'll be dead.

CLICK.

A *MUSICAL INTERLUDE* takes us to --

TITLE SEQUENCE:

## MOONBURN

SMASH TO:

2 EXT. BOURBON ST. BOARDING - FRONT STEPS - DAY (PRESENT) 2

The *SOUNDS* of *EVENING* on a CITY STREET.

A CAR DOOR *SLAMS*. *SUITCASES TAP DOWN* against the PAVEMENT.

LUCAS

This is it?

DRIVER

You put the address in the app.  
It's 2023. Check your phone.

LUCAS

Yeah, okay. I guess I just thought it would be less...

A CAR WINDOW *ROLLS UP* before **LUCAS (18)** can finish.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Dated.

The CAR SPEEDS AWAY, BLARING MUSIC, leaving SILENCE behind --

LUCAS (18) stands outside of BOURBON ST. BOARDING.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Right, thanks.

A DEEP, STEADYING BREATH.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Alright Lucas. Here we go. You got this.

The CLICKING of his HEAVY SUITCASES being DRAGGED UP the FRONT STEPS. GRUNTING as he goes, Lucas continues:

LUCAS (CONT'D)

(to himself)

You packed your whole life into two suitcases and a backpack. Bussed yourself halfway across the country. Fought off that one particularly insistent cougar. This is the easy part. The only thing standing between you and starting your new life is--

Suddenly -- the DOOR SWINGS OPEN. SADIE (22) stands inside.

SADIE

Do you always talk to yourself?

LUCAS

You heard all that?!

SADIE

Mhm. From one of the many windows.

LUCAS

Right.

A LONG BEAT. *Too long...*

SADIE

So can I help you?

LUCAS

Um, yeah. I'm looking for... Sorry my phone's in my bag. Is it Carrie? Catrina? I'm the new boarder.

SADIE

Mmm... We don't have a new boarder,  
sorry. Good luck to you, though.  
And your whole sad life in bags.

LUCAS

Wait.

Lucas stops the CLOSING DOOR with his HAND.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

This *isn't* Bourbon St. Boarding?

SADIE

No.

CARINA

(from inside)

Sadie!

SADIE

Oh why bother.

(faux-upbeat)

Hi Carina.

LUCAS

Carina! That's it.

**CARINA (40s)** steps up.

CARINA

And you must be Lucas. I'm the  
house mom here.

LUCAS

Nice to meet you, ma'am.

CARINA

(charmed)

Carina's fine. And this is-- where  
did she go? Well, that was Sadie,  
anyway. I'm sure you two'll end up  
being very close. Now come in, come  
in. Let me show you up to your  
room. You're on the third floor.  
Room on the left.

3

**INT. BOURBON ST. BOARDING - STAIRCASE - DAY**

3

The STAIRS *CREAK* as they make their way upstairs.

LUCAS

I can come back down for my other  
suitcase, really.

CARINA

Don't be--

(GRUNTS under the weight)

--silly. It's a light load compared to some of the others. Come to think of it, Sadie brought a whole van with her when she showed up a couple years back. Though, if I recall, she also somehow already had three young men helping her move in.

Lucas LAUGHS.

CARINA (CONT'D)

Well, anyway. I'm glad you found us Lucas. I know we're not the fanciest choice in NYC boarding, but there's a lot of heart in this place.

LUCAS

Honestly, I'm lucky I found it.

CARINA

I have'ta say, I didn't expect the room to be rented within a couple hours of listing it. Much less having you move in the next day.

LUCAS

Yeah, uh... I was kinda already on a greyhound out here without any place to go.

CARINA

You don't know anyone in the city?

LUCAS

No. I know I must sound crazy, but--

They stop.

CARINA

You sound brave, Lucas.

4A

**INT. BOURBON ST. BOARDING - LUCAS' ROOM - DAY**

4A

The BEDROOM DOOR *CREAKS* open. *SUITCASES ROLL* in.

CARINA

Here we are. Your new room. It's nothing much, and we still have to finish some of the deep cleaning...

(MORE)

CARINA (CONT'D)

Last tenant moved out less than a week ago, but I think we got it back into some shape for ya.

LUCAS

It's... *perfect*.

CARINA

Well it's yours now, anyway.

Lucas lets out a small expression of EXCITEMENT at that. Carina picks up on the heavy truth behind it:

CARINA (CONT'D)

Well, since it's getting late already, how 'bout I leave you to get settled in tonight, and we can do a full house tour tomorrow after you've gotten some rest?

LUCAS

Yeah. Thank you, ma-- *Carina*.

CARINA

Mhm. Ah, but also-- before I go, I just want to make sure you see...

(grabs a PAPER)

Yes, here they are. With your welcome basket.

Lucas takes the PAPER from her.

CARINA (CONT'D)

Our house rules. Just some things to remember in order to succeed here. Nothing too crazy, of course. No smoking. No drugs. No alcohol or weed unless of age. Noise to a minimum after 10PM and before 7AM.

LUCAS

(reading)

Keep my room clean and the communal spaces cleaner. Check the collective chore wheel every week. No visitors without permission.

CARINA

And no overnight guests, ever. That even goes for friends and family visiting from back home.

LUCAS

Oh, I don't think anybody from back home will ever... *Got it.*

CARINA

Mm. Listen, Lucas-- A lot can be said for making a fresh start. Many young people have come through this house over the years... through this room... on their path to bigger and better things. I have good a feeling you might be one of those people too. It just takes a little time. A little adjustment.

(half-joking)

And following a few simple rules.

(then)

Okay? I'm down in the maisonette if you need anything. There's a door in the kitchen.

LUCAS

Thank you. Carina.

The FRONT DOOR *OPENS* and *CLOSES* in the distance. *MUFFLED CHEERS* and *LAUGHTER* echo through the HOUSE.

CARINA

Sounds like the rest of your housemates just got home if you wanna meet them.

LUCAS

Oh, uh... I think I just... should get ready for bed tonight, if that's alright? Been a long couple days.

CARINA

Okay. Shared bathroom's just outside in the hall. Get some good rest. Goodnight, Lucas.

LUCAS

Night.

4B The BEDROOM DOOR *CREAKS* shut. Lucas *SIGHS*.

4B

After a moment, he *UNZIPS* his SUITCASE.

Lucas *MOVES* across the ROOM. A FLOORBOARD *SQUEAKS*. He ignores it, *SLIDING OPEN* his CLOSET. We hear *RUSTLING* as he hangs up CLOTHES & puts some of his THINGS away.

*SOUNDS* of Lucas *UNDRESSING*.

He *LISTENS* to more *LAUGHTER* and *TALKING* through the *HOUSE*, *BARELY AUDIBLE...* but friendly and fun.

*PLUMP!* Lucas *DROPS* his *SWEATER*.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Shit.

*RIIIIIPPPP!*

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Seriously?! My favorite sweater.  
How janky is this place that  
there're random floorboards  
sticking--

*SQUUUUUUUAAAK.*

LUCAS (CONT'D)

What the...

*SQUUUUUUUAAAK.*

Lucas *PRYS* the *FLOORBOARD OPEN*. *SLICE*. He *CUTS* his finger.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Ah!

(beat)

Damn. Of course I cut myself now  
too.

He *HISSES*, sucking up the *PAIN*. Then --

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Leave it to the ancient boarding  
home to have a whole secret  
compartment under a loose  
floorboard...

He *PULLS OUT* the *TAPE RECORDER*.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

With an equally ancient... *tape  
recorder?* Like the beginning of a  
spy movie.

(imitating *MISSION  
IMPOSSIBLE*)

Your mission, Lucas... should you  
choose to accept it...

*CLICK.*

\*\*\*\*\*

CARTER (RECORDING)

Hi.

CLICK.

LUCAS

WHAT THE FU--. Okay. It's talking.  
Huh.

After a moment -- CLICK.

CARTER (RECORDING)

I guess I should start by saying:  
I'm Carter. If you're listening to  
this, you're probably in my old  
room. The boarding home on Bourbon  
Street, right? Third floor, room on  
the left. Either that or maybe you  
found this in a dumpster somewhere  
or it's just... gone.

LUCAS

Holy crap...

NOTE: SECTIONS of the RECORDING start to FADE INTO those  
proceeding them, indicating the PASSAGE of TIME as LUCAS  
listens to CARTER'S MESSAGE that we've already heard in full.

CARTER (RECORDING)

Kinda the risk we run, I guess. We  
all aim to leave something of  
ourselves behind, but you never  
really know what's gonna come of it  
after you... well, you know. I  
guess my hope is that if you--  
whoever you are-- find this  
cassette player under the loose  
floorboard by the closet... maybe  
you're meant to hear it. Maybe...  
it'll help.

--

I just moved to New York. A new  
city. No friends or family, no  
money, no prospects, no support.  
Just... me. But-- With a plan...  
One year. To *finally* find myself,  
be myself, and... live. Really  
live. One year to record this--  
this diary. And share that  
journey... my story.

(MORE)

CARTER (RECORDING) (CONT'D)

Because even though I've already made up my mind on how my story ends, maybe I can change someone else's. Maybe, in leaving this piece of myself behind for you to find, I can show you all the mistakes, the lessons, the triumphs and failures. Everything to give you a leg up as you embark on your own journey. Your own story. Maybe I can help you succeed where I already know I can't. Maybe, my story can make a difference.

--

It's not heartbreaking. It's *hopeful*. That's the promise I'm making to myself. This is all the strength I have left to give. It's my way of leaving a lasting mark-- of finding some... *any* meaning in my life-- and hoping it makes all the difference in yours. It's my way of surviving...

The RECORDING PAUSES. Then, CARTER'S FINAL LINE plays:

CARTER (RECORDING) (CONT'D)

One year. And then... at the end... these recordings will be all that's left of me. I'll be dead.

\*\*\*\*\*

The TAPE keeps RUNNING, but ONLY with *STATIC*... Then--  
*CLICK*.

Lucas *REWINDS* the TAPE RECORDER. *CLICK*.

CARTER (RECORDING) (CONT'D)

I'll be dead.

LUCAS

What the hell?

The TAPE keeps RUNNING with *STATIC* again...

LUCAS (CONT'D)

How is that where the tape ends??

Lucas sets the RECORDER down, *RUMMAGING* back through the FLOORBOARD COMPARTMENT.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
 C'mon Carter. There have to be more  
 tapes, right? There haveta--  
 (pausing)  
 Wait. A key? To where??  
 (then)  
 Nope. No. Pull yourself together,  
 Lucas. You're half-nude digging  
 into a disgusting floor crevice for  
 some random dude's 13 Reasons Why.

Lucas drops the KEY with a *TINGGGG*. He *POPS* the LOOSE  
 FLOORBOARD back in.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
 God, first night couldn't possibly  
 get any more--

4C BOOM! His BEDROOM DOOR bursts open.

4C

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
 Hey!!!

SADIE, **OLIVIA (21)** and **RYAN (20)** SHUFFLE through his ROOM.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
 What're...

SADIE  
 But you can't be sure, Olivia.

A WINDOW *SLIDES* OPEN. One by one, they climb through it to  
 the FIRE ESCAPE, ignoring Lucas.

LUCAS  
 Who're...

OLIVIA  
 I saw it with my own eyes, Sadie.  
 I'm very observant, yanno.

LUCAS  
 I don't have any...

Ryan suddenly stops.

RYAN  
 Wait. Are we missing something?

LUCAS  
 Clothes...

RYAN  
 Pizza. We should order pizza.

SADIE  
Focus, please, Ryan. But also yes.

LUCAS  
...On.

A *HANGING SILENCE*. Then--

KALEB  
Sorry about them.

*CRASH!* Lucas JOLTS into the CLOSET, *KNOCKING* things around.

LUCAS  
Dammit. Where do you all keep  
coming from?

**KALEB (21)** can't help but *LAUGH*.

KALEB  
Here. Let me help you...  
(Pulls him up w/ a *GRUNT*)  
Up.

LUCAS  
Thanks.

KALEB  
Damn. First night and you already  
sliced your finger open, too?

LUCAS  
Oh, uh... Just a little bit. More  
of a scratch really. With... *blood*.

KALEB  
(teasing)  
So brave.  
(then)  
One sec.

Kaleb hurries out of the room.

LUCAS  
(*DEEP BREATH*, softly)  
Be cool, Lucas. Be--

Kaleb comes back.

KALEB  
You say something?

LUCAS  
Nope.

KALEB

(*LAUGHS* it off)

Okay. Here. Hold out your hand. Let me. Gotta be careful. It's an old house. Lots of "danger". No matter how brave you are.

LUCAS

(charmed, teasing)

Oh yeah? Think I should find a new place?

KALEB

Nah, you're trapped here with us now. No escape!

LUCAS

I'll have to be more careful then.

They *CHUCKLE* together.

KALEB

First aid kit's in the hall bathroom, anyway. Just in case...

LUCAS

Thanks. *Again*.

A BEAT of EMOTIONAL TENSION. *How do we know?* We FOCUS just the slightest bit in on their *BREATHS*, their *HEARTBEATS*.

KALEB

(covering)

Don' mention it, New Kid.

LUCAS

New Kid?

KALEB

Well, maybe before you tell me your actual name, you should put on some pants.

LUCAS

Shit.

KALEB

Not that I mind meeting this way.

LUCAS

I was getting ready for bed.

Kaleb *LAUGHS* again. Lucas slides on *SWEATPANTS*.

KALEB

Okay so...

LUCAS

Lucas.

KALEB

Nice to meet ya, Lucas. I'm Kaleb.

LUCAS

Likewise Kaleb.

A BREAT of ROMANTIC TENSION. We FOCUS a little bit MORE on their BREATHS, their HEARTBEATS. But it's quick because --

Kaleb *CLEARs* his throat.

KALEB

So, yeah. Well, now that we're properly introduced and I've saved you from bleeding out-- to answer your earlier question...

(reminding him)

"Where're we all coming from?"

LUCAS

Ah...

KALEB

Olivia's the beauty with the wavy black hair and soft voice. She's the room across the hall from you.

(yelling)

Hey Liv!

OLIVIA (FROM ROOF)

Yeah?

KALEB

(moving on)

Then there's Sadie, spitfire with the freckles and the perfect smile. She's the room directly below ya.

LUCAS

We actually already--

KALEB

(yelling)

Sadie!

SADIE (FROM ROOF)

What?!

LUCAS

...met.

KALEB

And Ryan, the bro-ey one... well  
and the only other guy with them.  
He's the room directly below Liv.

LUCAS

You really don' need to...

KALEB

(yelling)  
Ry!!

RYAN (FROM ROOF)

Bro! You comin' up or what?!

KALEB

(yelling)  
Yeah, one sec!  
(then)  
And that leaves me. Charming,  
handsome, smart... Any descriptor  
you so choose, really. I'm on the  
floor below ya, too. Second room on  
the right. That catch ya up?

LUCAS

I guess so.

KALEB

I can start again...  
(yelling)  
Hey--

Lucas *QUIETS* him back down, still charmed.

LUCAS

I got all that. But, uh... Maybe  
you wanna tell me why everyone just  
piled through my room and out  
through my window onto the fire  
escape?

KALEB

Ah, yes. Another good question, New  
Kid.

LUCAS

Lucas.

KALEB

Well, *lucky* for you... that fire escape there is the only way to get up to the roof. Everyone's favorite spot. And to answer your next question. Yes. There was another way. Stairwell at the end of the hall. But it caved in a hella long time ago. Maybe even killed a kid. Or something like that. Anyway-- that door's been sealed up for years. Nothing even our amazing house mother, Carina, can seem to do about it. Though, between us, I'm not sure she's really tried.

LUCAS

Got it. So everyone coming in and out through my room happens...

KALEB

Constantly, yeah.

LUCAS

(under his breath)  
Great.

KALEB

My turn to ask a question then.

LUCAS

Why not.

KALEB

What's with the prehistoric tape recorder on the floor playing static?

We hear the *STATIC* now, however subtle.

LUCAS

Hey, don't just grab--

Kaleb *SWIPES* the RECORDER. *CLICKS* it OFF. Flips it over.

KALEB

And all these initials scraped into the back...

LUCAS

Initials?

KALEB

C.L. K.D. A.K...

LUCAS

Let me see.

KALEB

That news to you or something?  
(moving quickly on)  
Does this thing even work?

*CLICK. STATIC. CLICK. OFF.*

KALEB (CONT'D)

Just the static. Got it.

LUCAS

Yup. Just static. Can I have it  
back now, please?

Kaleb *CHUCKLES*.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Sorry it's just...

KALEB

A 1900's heirloom of some kind?

LUCAS

Yeah. I mean. No. I dunno. Not even  
sure why I care so much, to be  
honest.

A BEAT. Kaleb softens:

KALEB

Listen, sometimes we don't have to  
know why something's important to  
us. It's just...

LUCAS

A feeling.

KALEB

Exactly. Well, I was gonna say a  
*sense*, but... exactly.  
(then)  
Plus, you just moved to the city.  
It's weird unpacking all your  
things and starting over. We've all  
been there.

LUCAS

Really?

KALEB

Course.

ONE FINAL MOMENT between them. We FOCUS EVER MORE on their BREATHS, their HEARTBEATS. And this time, we LINGER. Until --

OLIVIA (FROM ROOF)  
Kaleb, what's taking you so long?!

A BEAT.

LUCAS  
Guess you should get up there.

KALEB  
Uh... yeah. Yeah, proolly.

Kaleb moves to the WINDOW.

KALEB (CONT'D)  
You wanna come?

LUCAS  
Oh, uh... No. That's okay.

KALEB  
C'mon. I know they can be... a lot.  
But they're good people once you  
get to know 'em.

LUCAS  
Yeah, no. It's just-- I gotta get  
an early start looking for jobs  
tomorrow. And uh, I should really  
just get some rest.

KALEB  
Got it. Next time.  
(beat)  
Oh and listen-- You should check  
out "B-Side".

LUCAS  
Huh?

KALEB  
Record store a few blocks down.  
They've got a bunch of classics.  
Old tech. Vinyls. Cassettes too.  
Maybe they can fix your little half-  
working heirloom slash not-heirloom  
recorder.

LUCAS  
Yeah, thanks Kaleb.

KALEB  
You got it. Lucas.

Kaleb climbs out.

KALEB (CONT'D)  
Nah, I can't. I'm sticking with New Kid.

LUCAS  
Goodnight, Kaleb.

Lucas closes the WINDOW.

KALEB  
(muffled behind WINDOW)  
It just has a ring to it.

Lucas *LAUGHS*, then drops back onto his bed. *DEEP SIGH*.

LUCAS  
B-side. B-side, huh.

Distant *CHEERING* & *WHOOPING* erupt from the ROOF on Kaleb's arrival. Lucas *POPS* open the RECORDER. Takes out the TAPE. Flips it to its B-SIDE. *SLIDES* it back in.

*CLICK*. A moment. Then --

\*\*\*\*\*

CARTER (RECORDING)  
You wanna know the hardest part about all this? It's the start. There's so much expected of you. So much you expect of yourself. The city. The people. And really... what *could* be. Versus what is. And I guess... *what was*...

--  
This is supposed to be my chance at building something new, but the truth is I've only been in New York a week, and so far... everything's sucked. Already, I'm consumed with anxiety. Around finding a job, making friends... figuring out what I really want here. Even if its just for a year. Maybe that's how you're feeling too. Maybe it's how everyone feels when they come here, regardless what they're trying to do. I dunno.

(MORE)

CARTER (RECORDING) (CONT'D)

I guess I thought leaving the past behind would be the challenging part. And it is hard to let all that go. But... damn. Starting over is a hell of it's own.

--

So what's my first advice? How do you do it? Start over... That's kinda the whole point of all this, right?

(SIGHS, thinking)

Settle in. Create a foundation. Start small and build out to all those other things. All those other pieces of the puzzle that is your new life.

--

I think... That's kinda what the Bourbon House has become for me in such a short amount of time. Well, the rooftop to be exact. It's my safe place. A refuge. A start... so that no matter what comes, no matter what I have to face, I can always come back here. Sit under the moon and the stars. Record myself. Even, just reset. The best part is, I have easy access. My window-- well our window-- opens to a fire escape that leads directly up. You should check it out, if you haven't already. Maybe even listen to the rest of the tapes up there whenever you can. But... okay. My point is: Before anything else... before facing all the anxiety and the new stress and the what if's and could be's. Find that safe space. That refuge. That place to build from. Whatever, wherever, whoever it may be. And settle in.

\*\*\*\*\*

CLICK.

A DEEP SIGH. The TAPE RECORDER REWINDING. CLICK.

CARTER (RECORDING) (CONT'D)

Whatever, wherever, whoever it may be.

CLICK. Lucas hears MUFFLED LAUGHTER from the roof again. We FOCUS on KALEB'S LAUGHTER in particular. It TRANSFORMS into --

KALEB (MEMORY)  
 (distant, soft)  
 Sometimes we don't have to know why  
 something's important to us. It's  
 just...

LUCAS  
 A feeling.  
 (charmed)  
 Hm.

More *MUFFLED TALKING* and *LAUGHTER*.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
 No. Nope. Another time, Lucas. They  
 don't even know you. Maybe they  
 don't even wanna know you.

A BEAT.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
 Yeah, no.

A longer BEAT. Lucas listens closely. Hears KALEB'S *MUFFLED, DISTANT LAUGHTER*.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
 Screw it.

Lucas jumps out of BED. *SLIDES* open the WINDOW.

5

**EXT. BOURBON ST. BOARDING - FIRE ESCAPE - NIGHT**

5

We hear the *TAP-TAP-TAP* of Lucas climbing up the FIRE ESCAPE to the roof. The *VOICES* are getting louder as he nears the ROOF. He stops, listening in --

OLIVIA  
 Nobody's gonna replace him.

RYAN  
 Course not.

Kaleb *SCOFFS*.

KALEB  
 But he's not here anymore. So...

SADIE  
 We have to move on, is that it?

KALEB

No. I... I just... I think we don't have to ice the new kid out just cuz he took over a vacant room.

SADIE

We're not icing him out.

OLIVIA

We don't know him, Kaleb.

RYAN

He could be a serial killer. Or worse, hate Tom Brady.

KALEB

What is it with you Bostonians and your obsession with Tom Brady??

OLIVIA

Is it Bostonians?

KALEB

Bostonites?

SADIE

We're losing the thread here.

OLIVIA

Google says Bostonians. Good for you, K.

KALEB

Thank you.

SADIE

Enough, alright. Who cares about Tom Brady-- sorry Ry. And who gives a crap about the new kid.

Lucas sinks back.

LUCAS

(to himself)

Okay. Bad idea after all.

*TINGGG!* Lucas *SLIPS* trying to sneak back down.

KALEB

Lucas?

LUCAS

(to himself)

Shit.

(MORE)

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
 (to everyone)  
 Hey... y'all.  
 (horrified, to himself)  
 Oh God.

Lucas *CLEARs* his throat.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
 Uh, I was gonna... but... it's  
 alright. I'm heading to bed.

RYAN  
 Serial Killer vibes.

SADIE  
 Seriously.

OLIVIA  
 Shut up. Both of you.  
 (louder)  
 Lucas, is it? Come up!

SADIE  
 Liv!

OLIVIA  
 Maybe Kaleb's onto something, okay?

LUCAS  
 It's alright. Really.

Kaleb *STEPS OVER* to Lucas:

KALEB  
 C'mon.  
 (softer)  
 I gotchu.

6

**EXT. BOURBON ST. BOARDING - ROOFTOP - NIGHT**

6

Lucas *CLIMBS* onto the roof. Sits in a particularly *SQUEAKY* CHAIR. *SILENCE* follows. Lucas *SHIFTS*, struggling to get comfortable. Followed by more *SILENCE*.

KALEB  
 So, drink?

SADIE  
 (*SCOFFS*, interjecting)  
 Where're you from, New Kid?

LUCAS  
 Um, Wisconsin. And no to the drink.  
 I'm not 21. Thanks, though.

Sadie *SNORTS*. Ryan *LAUGHS*.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Sorry.

KALEB

Don't worry.

SADIE

So. Midwestern boy. How charming. What brought you out here then? To the mean streets of New York.

LUCAS

Uh. Just turned 18 and... Well I needed to get away from home.  
(trailing off)  
*Far away.*

SADIE

So you just... packed up all your things and caught a plane out here without any sort of plan or--

KALEB

Sadie, give the third degree a rest.

LUCAS

No, it's okay. Uh, yeah. Things weren't great back home. I thought it was time to try something *new*. And I don't have much on me, really. Took a few greyhounds. Planned a bit as I went. And found this place. Luckily.

SADIE

Yeah-- Lucky us.

OLIVIA

Honestly, good for you.

LUCAS

Thanks, Olivia.

*SILENCE* falls again.

RYAN

K. Cool. Cool, cool... Can we get some music or something now?!

*MUSIC PLAYS*. After a moment, Kaleb slides up to Lucas.

KALEB  
You wanna see the view, New Kid?

LUCAS  
Sure.

Their FOOTSTEPS move away.

SADIE  
So... Kaleb and Lucas are just gonna sit over there on the edge of the roof all buddy-buddy after meeting like literal minutes ago?

OLIVIA  
Sadie, they're just getting to know one another.

RYAN  
Intimately.

OLIVIA  
My God. You guys don't know that.

SADIE  
Oh, sweet sweet naive Olivia. Even you don't believe that.

OLIVIA  
I... Fine. But what're we supposed to do. Go over there, interrupt and force them out of becoming friends?

SADIE  
Oh, don't worry. I already texted Joshua.

OLIVIA  
Sadie. You didn't.

SADIE  
I *didddd*. The second this Lucas guy creeped up to the roof.

Olivia *SIGHS*.

*DING!* A TEXT on SADIE'S PHONE. We PULL AWAY FROM THEM...

7

**EXT. BOURBON ST. BOARDING - ROOFTOP - ROOF'S EDGE - NIGHT** 7

The *MUSIC* FADES BACK. *STREET NOISES* get a touch louder as we HONE IN on LUCAS and KALEB'S CONVERSATION:

LUCAS

The others don't like me very much.

KALEB

They just take a sec to... warm up,  
is all.

LUCAS

It's more than that, though, isn't  
it? You guys were close with the  
guy who lived in my room before me.

KALEB

(suddenly uncomfortable)  
Oh, um. I guess you could say that.

LUCAS

What happened to him?

KALEB

Nothing. He moved out. Next topic,  
please.

A BEAT.

LUCAS

Did he ever mention anything about  
a Carter?

KALEB

What? Who's Carter?

LUCAS

Oh, uh. Nobody.

Kaleb *SCOFFS*, stung by this for some reason.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

(covering)

I think it was someone else who  
used to live in the room before us.

KALEB

Far as I know, he didn't know  
anybody in the room before him. But  
maybe he just never mentioned him.

(throwaway)

He tended to leave a lot of things  
out.

LUCAS

Did I say something wrong?

KALEB  
 (warming again)  
 No. I'm sorry. Josh just kinda...  
 Well he didn't exactly leave on  
 great terms. I guess it just...  
 still doesn't sit right.

LUCAS  
 I'm sorry.

KALEB  
 Josh's the old--

LUCAS  
 I got that--

KALEB  
 Okay.

They *CHUCKLE* uncomfortably.

KALEB (CONT'D)  
 You said you didn't exactly leave  
 home on great terms, either?

LUCAS  
 (swallowing hard)  
 I came out to my parents over the  
 summer. It didn't go well.

KALEB  
 I'm sorry. I know the feeling. When  
 I moved out here, I was still  
 coming to terms with being  
 bisexual. And... my family doesn't  
 really understand, either. They  
 think its some "college-age phase".

LUCAS  
 You mean this is who we are,  
permanently??

KALEB  
 I'm afraid so.

A BEAT. Then, *LAUGHTER*--

It *FADES* to ROMANTIC TENSION. And this time...

We *FOCUS SOLEY IN ON* their *BREATHS*. Then *EVEN MORE IN ON*  
 their *HEARTBEATS*. *Are they going to kiss?*

JOSHUA  
 EHEM!

8

**EXT. BOURBON ST. BOARDING - ROOFTOP - NIGHT**

8

RECORD SCRATCH. JOSHUA (22) steps onto the ROOF.

JOSHUA

So. Hey guys.

Everyone processes. Especially Kaleb, who rounds on Sadie:

KALEB

Really, Sadie?! You texted him to come to the roof?

SADIE

He's our friend.

RYAN

And don't come for her when you're the one being a douche.

KALEB

A douche? What're we in 5th grade?

RYAN

Might as well be, the way you've been acting with Lucas.

LUCAS

Can someone please explain what's going on?

SADIE

You think you can just show up here and swoop in on Kaleb because, what? He's hot and you're lonely.

KALEB

He didn't swoop in on anything.

SADIE

You're right. He just fell under you're charming little spell.

KALEB

Screw you, Sadie.

SADIE

Yeah. Screw the rest of us. When Kaleb has a shiny new toy show up at the house.

OLIVIA

Enough!

(quieter, to Sadie)

That's crossing a line, Sadie.

A BEAT.

LUCAS

Maybe I should just go.

RYAN

Yeah, maybe you should.

KALEB

No...

LUCAS

S'okay. It was a mistake coming up here. Sorry, everybody.

OLIVIA

Lucas...

JOSHUA

Wait. Shouldn't we be properly introduced? Lucas, is it?

LUCAS

Uh, yeah.

KALEB

Don't.

JOSHUA

Lucas. I'm Joshua.

LUCAS

The old housemate?

JOSHUA

Yeah.

(beat)

And Kaleb's boyfriend.

*SILENCE.* Lucas struggles for words.

LUCAS

I... Excuse me.

We hear the *TAPPING* of LUCAS hurrying down the FIRE ESCAPE.

KALEB  
 Lucas, wait.  
 (then)  
 Seriously, Josh?

Kaleb heads after Lucas.

SADIE  
 You're really going after Lucas?

KALEB  
 (voice trailing)  
 He didn't do anything wrong.

9

**INT. BOURBON ST. BOARDING - LUCAS' ROOM - NIGHT**

9

The WINDOW *SLIDES* OPEN. Lucas *CLIMBS IN*. Behind him:

KALEB  
 (getting closer)  
 Lucas, please. Let me explain.

Lucas tries to *PULL* the WINDOW shut. Kaleb blocks it.

LUCAS  
 No, Kaleb. Leave me alone.

KALEB  
 Please.

LUCAS  
 Back away from the window.  
 (beat)  
 This is the last thing I need right now. Do you know how alone I am out here? Sadie's right about that. I just... I needed someone. A safe place.

KALEB  
 A what?

LUCAS  
 Nothing. That's obviously not you. So. Goodnight.

KALEB  
 Luc--

*SLAM!* Lucas shuts the WINDOW. He moves back to the BED. *PUNCHES* the PILLOW. A few more times... *a few too many...*

LUCAS  
 (to himself, tearing up)  
 Stupid. You're so stupid, Lucas.

He *FALLS BACK* onto the BED. Suddenly --

OLIVIA  
 (muffled behind window)  
 Lucas. Sorry, I know you probs  
 wanna be alone right now. But they  
 wanted me to come down here to make  
 sure you didn't lock the window.  
 We'll need to get back in later.

LUCAS  
 (sniffles)  
 I didn't lock it, Olivia.

OLIVIA  
 (still muffled)  
 Okay... Are you okay?

Lucas lays there staring at the ceiling.

LUCAS  
 (beat, then to himself)  
 No. I'm not okay.

Another BEAT. Lucas grabs the TAPE RECORDER.

*CLICK.*

\*\*\*\*\*

CARTER (RECORDING)  
 Have you ever heard of Moonburn?  
 It's this imaginary burn you get  
 from too much time outside at night  
 in the moonlight. I've been  
 spending a lot of time outside at  
 night. Like I said, the roof is my  
 safe place. My place to get away  
 when things get... overwhelming.  
 Which, if I'm being honest, feels  
 like most of the time these days.

--  
 I dunno. I thought I'd be able to  
 tell you this was getting easier,  
 but I'm still feeling... lost and  
 alone and... God you're probably at  
 the end of the first tape thinking  
 what a hopeless mess I am. I'm  
 sorry I haven't been more help.

(MORE)

CARTER (RECORDING) (CONT'D)  
 Maybe I should just quit while I'm  
 behind. Give up. Let this plan fade  
 into obscurity and end everything  
 here and now.

(Climbs to ROOF'S EDGE)  
 Stand up on the edge of the roof  
 and just...

CARTER takes *DEEP BREATHS*.

LUCAS  
 Carter... no. Please no. You're all  
 I have right now.

CARTER (RECORDING)  
 And just... step--

\*\*\*\*\*

*SCRAAAATTTTCCCCHHHH-CRCH!*

LUCAS  
 No! No, c'mon. Don't break on me  
 now!

*CLICK*. Nothing happens. *CLICK-CLICK*. Still nothing.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
 Seriously??

Lucas shakes the CASSETTE PLAYER, but it's no use --

The CASSETTE PLAYER is BROKEN.

Fu--  
 LUCAS (CONT'D)

**END OF CHAPTER ONE**