

LEADER (CONT'D)
So, anybody new - if it's your
first or second time with us: the
floor is open.

Annie looks very torn. She starts to lift up her hand, but
stops short.

LEADER (CONT'D)
(gesturing to Annie)
Yes?

Annie looks panicked.

LEADER (CONT'D)
Would you like to...?

ANNIE
...Maybe not.

LEADER
Okay. No pressure.

Annie nods, takes a long moment, and then forces herself:

ANNIE
My name's Annie.

THE GROUP
Hi Annie.

Annie strains a smile. She continues tensely, as if against
her will:

ANNIE
My mom died a week ago, so I'm just
here for - trying it. I have a lot
of resistance to things like this,
but I went to these a couple years
ago - I was pressured to come - but
it *did* help, so...

(long pause)
My mom was old and she wasn't all
together at the end - and we were
pretty much *estranged* before that -
so it wasn't a huge blow. But I *did*
love her. And she didn't have an
easy life... She had D.I.D., which
became extreme in the last year,
and *dementia*...! My dad died of
starvation when I was a baby. He
had psychotic depression and he
starved himself. Which I'm sure was
as pleasant as it sounds. And then
my *older* brother - he was
schizophrenic - and when he was
sixteen, he hanged himself in my
mom's bedroom.

(MORE)

ANNIE (CONT'D)
Of course his suicide note blamed her. Accusing her of putting *people* inside of him.
(throws hands up)
So that was my *mom's* life!

Annie looks to the group. They allow her time to continue. She reluctantly proceeds.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
...She finally lived in our house at the end. Before hospice. We weren't talking before that -- or we *were* and then we weren't and then we *were* - she was *completely* manipulative - until finally my husband enforced a No Contact rule, which lasted until I was pregnant with my daughter. I didn't let her near me when I had my first - my son - which is why I gave her my daughter, who she *immediately* stabbed her hooks into. And of course I felt guilty *again* when she got sick... Not that she was even my *mom* at the end. And not that she ever felt guilty. About *anything*.

Annie has worked herself up. A charged pause as she calms back down.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
And I don't wanna put any *more* stress on my family. Not even sure if they could give me that support.

She gets stuck here. Tears begin to well. She struggles to squeeze out the following:

ANNIE (CONT'D)
It just all sometimes feels ruined. And then I realize *I'm* to blame. Or not that I'm to blame, but that I'm...*blamed*.

Beat.

LEADER
And what do you think you feel blamed for?

Annie looks to the leader. Pauses.

ANNIE
I apparently acted a certain way - according to them - I *did things*, in my sleep, a couple years ago. Or *almost* did them...

Annie looks like she's going to continue, but then she abruptly cuts herself off. That's it.

We reveal the mystified GROUP. They struggle to remain sympathetic, despite their confusion.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
So anyway. Everything's
disappointing. So here I am.

She forces a laugh, but also cries a bit. She wipes away the tears and makes an embarrassed "bah" face. She then motions to the group: "Who's next?"

23 **INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT** 23

At the end of the hall, a very depleted Annie has just finished scaling the stairs.

In the f.g., Peter's door eases shut.

24 **INT. PETER'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME** 24

Peter's laptop is open. The browser displays BRIDGET'S FACEBOOK PAGE. (Peter has been going through her photos.) Behind that, another page displays "POPULAR CAREER INTERESTS."

Peter walks from the door (which he just closed) to his desk. He grabs a small water pipe, packed with marijuana, and walks to the window.

As Peter takes a hit from his pipe, his smartphone vibrates with a TEXT. He checks it.

From "Brendan":

Holy shit. Huge party tomorrow at Aaron's house. Bring your dick!

25 **EXT. GRAHAM HOUSE - CONTINUOUS** 25

A WIDE of the house. In the foreground seems to be someone's SHOULDER.

Pot smoke is blown out of Peter's window, followed by a brief fit of COUGHING.

26 **INT. CHARLIE'S BEDROOM - THE NEXT DAY** 26

Charlie, dressed in her pajamas and munching on M&Ms, sits at her desk. She's finishing the torso for another small human manikin. The limbs are made of different scraps.

To the side of Charlie's sculpture-in-progress is the SEVERED PIGEON HEAD. Beside that is Charlie's drawing pad, open to an unfinished STILL LIFE of the pigeon head. And on the far side of the desk: a crude, bare stage for an unfinished DIORAMA.