

(Name of Project)

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FADE IN:

EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

Darkness. Crickets chirp. The moonlight glistens against a boat, which floats in the middle of a calm lake.

EXT. SHORE - NIGHT

Three attractive, giggly 18 year-old's -- ERIC, TOM, and ERICA -- are sitting barefoot along the beach below Eric's house. They are drinking beers and smoking pot.

ERICA

I'm gonna miss you both so much.

ERIC

I'm pretty sure Yale has plenty of suitable replacements for us.

TOM

Screw that, you better miss me.

ERICA

(bookishly)

You know I will. Without you, for *whom* will I write English papers?

TOM

Whoa, whoa, whoa. Just because we won't be neighbors doesn't mean you have an excuse to stop writing my papers. I'm pretty sure Yale has email.

ERICA

Does that mean you decided to enroll at RCC?

TOM

After some parental prodding...yeah.

EXT. BOAT - NIGHT

A mild breeze begins to blow the boat in the direction of Eric's house.

EXT. SHORE - NIGHT

Some time has elapsed.

ERICA

Don't tell me you never once had a crush on me.

TOM

You're not my type.

ERICA

And why is that?

TOM

You're smart. I could never be in a relationship with someone smarter than me.

ERIC

Then prepare for a long life of celibacy.

ERICA

Who said anything about a relationship? I spoke of attraction.

TOM

You see, you just cut through the logic of my answer. That's what I'm talking about.

ERICA

Well I know *Eric* still loves me.

ERIC

Don't be presumptuous. It'll never help you when you're Erica Schrader, attorney at law.

ERICA

Me, presumptuous? You're already predicting that I'll forget about you (pinching his cheek) - my first love.

EXT. BOAT - NIGHT

The wind accelerates to a moderate pace and blows the boat in the direction of the beach house. A quiet but eerie female whisper emanates from the boat, which glows slightly.

EXT. SHORE - NIGHT

Some time has elapsed.

ERICA

Now don't blame that on me. I asked you to the prom and you turned me down.

ERIC

Yea, you asked me. I'm supposed to ask you.

ERICA

Oh how can you be so formal with me! Before we dated in tenth grade, people used to think we were brother and sister.

TOM

Aren't you?

ERIC

What is that supposed to mean?

TOM

When parents have children of different sexes...

ERIC

I'm talking to Erica.

ERICA

I'm just saying, who cares about formalities. I've known you forever.

ERIC

Then why didn't you tell me about Tom?

ERICA

What?

ERIC

I said, why didn't you tell me about Tom?

ERICA

I don't know what you're talking about.

ERIC

Tom?

TOM

Not that I usually know what's going on, but I have no idea what you're talking about.

ERIC

Whatever, you're both full of shit.

EXT. BOAT - NIGHT

The wind whips the boat toward the beach house at a vigorous pace, creating a slight wake that reaches the shore. The whispers grow louder but remain indecipherable. The boat's glow has brightened.

EXT. SHORE - NIGHT

Silence. The three of them sit reflectively. A small wave washes over their feet, then another, then another.

ERICA

Who's on their boat at 3 in the morning?

TOM

I don't know, but the water is nice.

ERIC

And it only took all summer to get that way.

ERICA

Lets go skinny dipping.

ERIC

You outta your mind?

ERICA

C'mon brother.

ERIC

Don't call me that.

ERICA

I'll stop when you come in.

ERIC

Nah, go with Tom; you'll like it more.

TOM

C'mon bro.

ERIC

Both of you, stop with the bro.  
The people on that boat are gonna  
see us anyway.

TOM

Fuck it, I'm going in

ERICA

Me too.

They both denude and run into the lake, which is choppy from the boat, shaped like a house, which is fast encroaching upon the shore.

ERICA (CONT'D)

Oh my God. The water is so nice.  
Eric, I'm not kidding anymore.  
We're not ending the summer like  
this. Strip down and get in here.

TOM

If she ever talked to me like that  
and I disobeyed, I think I'd  
deserve a spanking.

Eric forces a smile, stands up and removes his shirt when he notices the bow of the boat is mere feet from Erica's head. She doesn't hear it because she is doing the backstroke and her ears are underwater. Tom is also doing the backstroke; his feet rub against Erica's.

ERIC

Erica!

No response.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Tom! Erica!

Erica's head floats inches from the bow, which hits her in the chest and sends her body lopping to the side, where it collides with Tom.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Erica!

Eric jumps into the lake and swims over to Erica. He hoists her limp body above his shoulders and trudges back to shore. Tom follows behind.

Once there, Eric places her tenderly across the dry sand. The upper portion of her chest is cut open and bleeding.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
Erica?

ERICA  
(faintly) Eric?

ERIC  
Yea, are you alright? Are you in pain?

ERICA  
I don't know; I feel okay. I think I had the wind knocked out of me.

Eric takes off his shirt and uses it to apply pressure upon her cut. He also places a towel over her waist. Tom gets dressed.

ERIC  
I don't think it's too bad.

ERICA  
Eric.

ERIC  
Yea.

Erica smiles at him. She attempts to sit up and kiss him but recoils in pain.

A small thud occurs behind them. The mysterious boat has landed on shore.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
What the hell.

Eric stands up.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
Tom, keep applying pressure. I'm gonna go check it out.

Tom crouches next to Erica. He wraps the shirt tighter, decreasing its surface area, which exposes her nipple.

ERICA  
I can do this myself, thank you very much.

TOM  
But we were just skinny dipping.

ERICA

Yea, well see how that panned out.

ERIC

(yelling back to them) Does that mean you two never hooked up?

ERICA

I hope you didn't stage this accident just to see how I'd respond if he made a pass at me.

Eric reaches the boat and opens a door that leads inside. He steps in.

ERICA (CONT'D)

Now why did he do that?

TOM

To go spy on us?

INT. BOAT - NIGHT

Blinding light pours down upon Eric. There are no visible sources of this light.

ERIC

What the hell?

The interior is unadorned except for a mahogany bar, on top of which sits a half full bottle of Absolute Vodka next to three martini glasses. Sandwiched under the bottle is an envelope.

Eric walks to the bar. As he approaches the bottle, the boat's door clamps shut. The resulting vibrations cause his hand to knock over the bottle, which knocks over the glasses, whose liquid soaks the envelope.

EXT. SHORE - NIGHT

A strong wind emerges and the boat undocks from land. It begins drifting back toward the center of the lake. The wind grows stronger and stronger and the wake that trails the boat grows higher and higher.

ERICA

What the hell?

Erica looks at Tom, who immediately dives into the lake and begins swimming toward the boat.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
Tom...Tom! God damn it.

Erica puts on Eric's tee shirt and her panties and follows Tom.

The two swim vigorously toward the ship which increases its distance from them by the second. After a few minutes, they stop swimming and tread water for a while.

TOM  
(Exasperatedly)  
Who the hell is captaining that boat?

ERICA  
(Gargling her words)  
I don't know. This whole thing makes no sense.

Tom swims toward a nearby buoy and brings it back to Erica.

TOM  
Hold on to this. You're too hurt to continue.

Erica holds onto it.

ERICA  
Just give me a second to catch my breath.

As Tom is about to resume swimming, the wind dies down completely and the waves slacken.

TOM  
Okay, what the fuck is going on?

ERICA  
Where did the boat go?

INT. BOAT - NIGHT

Eric lays sprawled on the ground. Shards of broken glass stick out of his skin. His clothes are soaked. Whispers of can be heard around him but nobody is there.

EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

ERICA  
Where are we swimming? We can't even see the boat.

TOM  
I told you to stay back there.

ERICA  
What, and lose you too.

TOM  
So what, we're supposed to just stay here and let Eric die.

ERICA  
Why the hell would he die?

TOM  
I don't know. I've got a bad feeling.

ERICA  
I do too, but why make such a morbid assumption...God...think before you speak next time.

Silence...then they hear it. Both the light and whispers from the boat transmit across the water.

Immediately, both resume swimming toward the boat's direction. The whispers and light both intensify with each stroke until...the sounds die completely after a long swim.

TOM  
Erica?

Erica swims into the boat and climbs up a ladder on its side. Tom sees her and trails behind. Behind them, plastered on the stern, is the name of the boat: **ANGELA'S ABSOLUTION.**

TOM (CONT'D)  
What?

ERICA  
SHH!

TOM  
(whispering)  
What happened to the voices?

Erica gestures silently with anxious uncertainty.

Suddenly light from within the boat spills out of the windows. It illuminates every house on the lake and then flickers out to darkness.

TOM (CONT'D)  
 (anxious whisper)  
 I want to go home.

ERICA  
 (whispering)  
 Me too.

Erica then walks toward the door and opens it.

INT. BOAT - NIGHT

Erica looks down and sees Eric sprawled on the ground. She sits. Tears dribble down her eyes while she caresses his head on her bosom while gently removing the glass from his skin.

ERICA  
 (sobbing)  
 How did this happen?

No answer. After removing the remaining pieces of glass from his skin, she notices the Absolut Vodka bottle lying on its side. She applies a dollop of vodka to Eric's cuts and then lifts the bottle to her mouth when a soggy envelope, stuck to its side, falls off. She opens it and reads the contents of a letter:

To whom this may concern:

Erica gasps as she begins reading. Every word she scans is reiterated by the ghastly whisper of some unseen female apparition. She darts up and apprehensively searches the quarters of the boat for the voice. Every door she opens is empty, and no longer does she hear any whispering. Dejected and petrified, she collapses on a bed in one of the adjoining rooms and cries loudly .

After a moment of emotional catharsis, she picks up the letter and continues reading. The ghastly voice resumes.

If you receive this letter it means you have been chosen to save the one you love. Doing so will not be simple and you may very well lose your life in the undertaking. I'd hate for two young, promising kids to die in vain - I really would - but then again, that hasn't stopped me in the past.

Erica scans down further to begin reading the next paragraph but it has been blotched out from the spilled vodka.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
 Well!

Silence.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
What the hell is this? If this is  
some kind of game, you need to  
finish explaining the rules.

More silence.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
Fuck it.

Erica crumples the letter and stammers to the door. As she  
approaches it, a half-muted voice paralyzes her.

TOM  
Erica.

Erica slowly opens the door.

ERICA  
Where the hell were you?

Tom shudders to answer.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
C'mon, I need your help.

Erica walks back into the bedroom.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
Help me pick up this mattress.

The two pick up the mattress.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
Now help me carry it over there.

They carry the mattress to the boat's main quarters, where  
they rest it against the wall.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
Now I saw some rope on top of the  
cabinet when I was in that bedroom  
before.  
(Points to the bedroom)  
Go get it.

While Tom fetches the rope, Erica crouches down to Eric and  
gently slaps his face.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
Wake up.

Eric grumbles but doesn't regain consciousness.

TOM

Here.

Erica takes the rope.

ERICA

Now I need you to help me with the mattress again. We need to throw it into the lake and tie it to the top of the stern.

TOM

That's insane. Why?

ERICA

I can't tell you. Just trust me.

TOM

(Sarcastically)  
Of course.

ERICA

Now take off your shirt.

TOM

Listen, I've had my doomsday daydreams - a mattress, some rope, a ship, on the water - but this is no time.

ERICA

Give me your shirt!

Tom removes his shirt and hands it to Erica. She tucks it into the back of her panties.

ERICA (CONT'D)

Now, let's dump the mattress in the lake.

They pick up the mattress and laboriously shove it through the boat's entrance door. From there, they gently nudge it over the boat's protective railing.

ERICA (CONT'D)

Now for the crazy part.

TOM

(flummoxed)  
That wasn't the crazy part.

ERICA

I am going to jump in and swim to the mattress. When I get there, throw Eric on top of it and await my orders.

Erica jumps into the lake and swims to the mattress. She looks up to see Tom cradling Eric over the railing of the boat, directly above the mattress.

ERICA (CONT'D)

Now drop him.

Eric lands plush on the mattress. Erica wades to the back of the boat, guiding the mattress there. Tom walks to the stern.

ERICA (CONT'D)

Now throw me one end of the rope and hold on to the other.

Tom complies. Erica takes the rope and ties a noose around Eric's waist.

ERICA (CONT'D)

Now tie the other end to the stern.

Tom ties the other end of rope to the upper tier of the stern.

She removes Tom's shirt from her panties and uses it to tie two knots: one around Eric's left wrist and the other around the left handle of the mattress. She then takes off her shirt and does the same for his right wrist and the right side of the mattress.

ERICA (CONT'D)

Sorry I never tied you up to a bed before tonight.

She kisses him.

ERICA (CONT'D)

Tom!

TOM

Yeah.

ERICA

Jump off the boat and start swimming to shore.

Tom dives off the boat and starts swimming. After a few moments, the lake begins to curdle and foam but the boat remains idle.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
Come on...Shit.

Erica kisses Eric.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
In case you can hear me, Tom and I never hooked up. I've only loved one boy my whole life - and he's tied to a mattress on the back of a haunted boat.

She gives him one more kiss - then starts swimming to shore. Immediately, the blinding light reemerges from the boat and casts a luminescence across the lake. She can see Eric's house along the shore about a mile away. The wind starts whipping and the boat moves fast, tailing her every stroke. She continues...halfway there...two third's the way there...three quarter's the way there. With every passing moment the wind howls greater, the boat's speed intensifies and the wake that spits from the hull slams the mattress up and down. Finally, Erica arrives at shore. The boat misses slamming her in the head by inches. She runs up the beach to stairs that lead to a dock. She runs to the end of the dock and looks behind the boat to see if Eric made it. The mattress is inverted and his silhouette can be seen beneath the water.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
No!

Erica dives in and wrestles the knots off of Eric's wrists. She hoists him on her back and collapses along the fringe of the beach, crying.

She starts applying mouth to mouth and C.P.R. Tears mixed with water flow down her cheeks. After many moments, Eric regains consciousness, spitting up blood, water and phlegm.

Erica clutches him tightly without saying a word. Her peace is interrupted by the sound of a faint whisper.

Erica vigilantly spins around. Laying on the beach, choking and bleeding, is Tom.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
(sighing)  
You scared the shit out of me.

ERIC  
Erica?

ERICA  
Eric!

ERIC  
Do you have absolute?

ERICA  
What?

ERIC  
The vodka bottle...It was inside  
the boat.

ERICA  
Forget about that. What do you  
want it for...the cuts? I'm sure  
we've got med...

ERIC  
Please, do you have it?

ERICA  
No, why?

ERIC  
Because I need it to destroy the  
boat.

ERICA  
Fuck the boat. We survived. We  
survived - and we leave for college  
tomorrow. Forget about the boat.

Eric is already halfway to the beached boat. Erica chases  
after him.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
Wait.

INT. BOAT - DAWN

Eric finds the bottle. It's still half full. He reaches  
into his jeans and pulls out a lighter. As he flickers it,  
the boat's illumination grows blinding and the apparition's  
squeal, deafening. Blinded, he knocks over the Absolute  
bottle, which is loosely sealed.

ERIC  
Where did you go?

He continues to flicker the lighter until a flame erupts, which he applies to every article he stumbles across: the table, the doors, the coat rack and the haunted letter that's soaked in vodka.

ANGELA  
(weakened and squealing)  
Thank you.

Flames fully encircle Eric. He maneuvers through them, escapes the ship and grabs hold of Erica.

INT. BOAT - MORNING

Flames grow denser. Walls peel off. The fire spreads, burning everything in its wake until it contacts the Absolute bottle, which prompts the boat to explode.

EXT. SHORE - MORNING

The backlash from the explosion thrusts Eric and Erica through the air, where they summersault before landing on the shore. A glass shard that says, "ABSOL," lands next to them - as do the scorched remains of the haunted letter. The strained sound of a ghostly whisper extinguishes. The blinding light escalates toward the sky before fading into the distance. The words, "**Angela's Absolution**," melt off the boat, upwards, like wisps of smoke. The two lovers kiss.

Erica nods deliriously to the side in exhaustion. Her face skims the haunted letter, which materializes anew. An angelic voice reads:

The true love you two demonstrated has absolved me of my sin and freed me of my curse. I didn't deserve you. Had you wavered in the waves, tired in the terror or forfeited to fear, I would continue to kill - and the three of you would be among my victims. Bless you and know that I will forever shine my light upon you.

Sincerely,

Angela

FADE OUT.