

RESET

By

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EXT. ST. CATHERINE'S INT. BOARDING SCHOOL - MORNING

We fly over the ocean towards a mysterious island, shrouded in patches of fog off the coast of Maine. We dip down to reveal a small, picturesque fishing village before heading towards the towering massive Victorian campus of Saint Catherine's International Boarding School.

The campus bustles with activity on this busy morning. Uniformed STUDENTS swarm the grounds, representing a diverse mix of looks and languages.

This is no ordinary school. Saint Catherine's International Boarding School boasts the prestige and security that comes with educating the descendants of the world's wealthiest, most important politicians, artists & celebrities.

We move up the side of a huge ornate Victorian building, offering glimpses into the hallways and classrooms inside. At last, we reach the CLOCK TOWER, where a beautiful girl named NATALIA GUTIERREZ (17) stands poised to take her own life.

Tormented and lost, Natalia gazes out into the horizon as the skies shift and a solar eclipse begins. The moon passes and the sky changes color, eliciting an "Ooooooh" from the people below.

As the eclipse reaches its climax, a brief expression of solace flickers across Natalia's face. She knows that she's making the right decision. And then, without hesitation, she falls.

The sun re-emerges, casting a harsh light on the sea of bodies below as Natalia's graceful descent comes to an end.

On the messy SMASH of her landing, we CUT TO:

MAIN TITLES

Noir disturbing images of everyday college life flicker across the screen. The innocence of first love, secret societies, and camaraderie mix with gritty, true-crime-at-a-school scenarios. Yearbooks, blackboards, a solar eclipse, Natalia's jump, crime scene tape, and hateful words on cold digital screens all flash by in a jittery montage.

EXT. ST. CATHERINE'S PRIVATE FERRYBOAT - DAY

It's Fall. Helicopters buzz overhead as a luxurious ferry boat glides across the water, carrying a handful of uniformed students. Some of the students chat and laugh while others

remain reserved, lost in their own thoughts.

ALICE MCCAIN (18), a pretty, serious and smart-looking girl, stands apart from the rest, her eyes fixed on the island looming in the distance. She observes the people around her, taking in their behaviors and reactions with keen interest. The island, intimidating in its stark grandeur, draws closer and closer with each passing moment.

ALICE (V.O.)

As I gazed out at Misty Falls, the sight of the island alone makes my blood run cold. It may look like the perfect escape, a place where one could unwind and bask in luxury, but appearances can be deceiving. This is no paradise. This is a fortress, a prison of the most prestigious kind, where the elite sent their offspring to sharpen their claws and hone their manipulative skills... and I'm about to let myself in freely.

A group of BULLY STUDENTS lead by SCOTT ROGERS saunter towards the railing, their laughter echoing across the deck. Suddenly, they push a young guy overboard, who hits the water with a splash. As the group cackles and walks away from the scene, other students scream for help.

ROSEMARY WOODS and PARK JHEON add their voices to the chorus, screaming for the BOAT ASSISTANTS to stop the ferry. The rest of the students, including Alice, remain silent and indifferent.

INT. MISTY FALLS DOCK - DAY

The ferry has docked. All the students walk toward the pier. A few helicopters fly over the town.

MONITOR

Hey guys! Please gather around!

The students approach to the MONITOR.

MONITOR

Great! Hi! My name is Ethan Russell. Welcome to Saint Catherine's! And as you can see, your daddy's are not around anymore... A few remainders. This is the last time you will see this ferry boat for a while, so me,

you (to Alice) and the rest will be stuck together for the next two semesters. FYI, to protect you, there is a group of military soldiers that...(ad lib)

ALICE (V.O.)

You can observe a lot by watching.

IZAD MISHDAR, the young guy that was thrown overboard, walks drenched helped by Rosemary. Scott passes by grinning, surrounded by the rest of his pack of bullies.

EXT. ST. CATHERINE'S ACADEMY GATES - MORNING

Drop-off is in full swing at the gates, with kids of every race and background spilling out from ferries, private yachts and helicopters. Amidst the morning chatter, a myriad of languages can be heard.

Alice joins the group arriving from the ferry. As they make their way through the sea of people, the crowd parts to let CHARLOTTE KINGSTON, the resident queen bee, strut past. Alice follows a step behind, watching with a mix of curiosity and contempt. Walking one step behind is HELENA COSTARELLI.

Charlotte flashes an insincere smile at ABASI FADEL, a shy girl in a headscarf.

CHARLOTTE

Hey! Are you doing something new with your skin? 'Cause it looks so much cleaner than before!

ABASI

Thanks!--

Abasi realizes that that was a stealth insult, and withdraws into herself once more.

Charlotte flips her hair and walks on past. Helena follows.

ALICE (V.O.)

Okay. First impressions: Everyone here is somebody. Or at least somebody's kid. Truth is, if you weren't the right kind of person to begin with, you wouldn't be here.

She walks through the gates...

EXT. ST. CATHERINE'S ACADEMY GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

... and looks around the gardens, commenting on the people she sees.

MICHAEL CARTER, sleeping on the grass, barefoot and carefree, hair a little messy.

ALICE (V.O.)

Okay, this guy. Nice shoes, but he's kicked them off. Ma ybe he's the heir to some big corporation but deep down he just wants to backpack across Europe.

Charlotte, with Helena practically simpering at her hand like some sort of Girl Friday. Standing across from them is INA SADANGI. They are chatting.

ALICE (V.O.)

No surprise here, who's the understudy and who's just a follower. One's confident, one's deferential. Question is, who has more money or Royal blood?

NADINE VOGL, wealthy and blonde, confers with a tight clique of other WHITE KIDS.

ALICE (V.O.)

It's not all sunshine and kumbaya here racially. These European types stick together. I think someone's got a future in politics.

KUN TSUI and LYNN WEI, as high-fashion as you can get in a school uniform.

ALICE (V.O.)

These two. They're alone together. All the same, still hoping that someone will notice them.

ROSEMARY WOODS. A redheaded Brit. Head in the clouds, but with a confident stride.

ALICE (V.O.)

I can't get a reading on this one. She's... different somehow. She's--

ROSEMARY

Hey there. You new?

ALICE  
She's nice.

She covers her mouth. Didn't mean to say that aloud.

ALICE  
Yeah. Sorry. Hey. I'm Alice McCain,  
Hi...

Suddenly, Charlotte grabs Rosemary by the hand and pulls her away.

CHARLOTTE  
C'mon, Rosemary, you gotta hear what  
Helena's got planned...

Rosemary is swiftly absorbed into the fold with Helena, Ina, Charlotte. Rosemary waves an apologetic goodbye to Alice.

ALICE (V.O.)  
Well. Nobody's perfect.

A BELL RINGS, and people start to sweep into the building.

INT. ADMINISTRATIVE CORRIDOR - MORNING

MRS. LEVIN, heavysset, pleasant, leads Alice down a hall.

MRS. LEVIN  
We'll get you all set up soon enough.  
And don't you fret about those first  
day jitters.

ALICE  
I didn't realize I was giving off  
jitters.

MRS. LEVIN  
Hm! I've been teaching long enough to  
recognize them. You kids can't hide  
your little secrets from me!

She CHUCKLES amiably. Alice nods and fake-grins just to play along.

INT. HEADMASTER'S OFFICE - MORNING

Alice sits before MR. GRAY. Cordial enough, but in a reserved, polished, straitlaced way; he's like a butler in a grand old manor who knows how to appear warm toward people he has never met.

MR. GRAY

Alice McCain! May I say that we're exceptionally pleased to have you here at St. Catherine's.

ALICE

Thanks. I'm... happy to be here.

MR. GRAY

I'm sure the transition may seem a little daunting.

ALICE

It can't be any worse than what happened at Lovelock.

Mr. Gray's eyes shift.

ALICE

Come on. You've read my file.

MR. GRAY

Your old school is your old school. Nothing more to it than that. Rest assured, we'll take ample measures to ensure it.

(rifling through a folder)

We'll be setting you up with a student your age... she'll show you to your dormitory... I think you'll really benefit more from this type of environment, Alice.

(toothy smile)

Like Alice in Wonderland! Hey! Anyone ever call you that before?

Alice forces a grin.

ALICE

No. Hardly ever.

EXT. ST. CATHERINE'S ACADEMY GROUNDS - MORNING

SAMANTHA KERRY leads Alice out the main door and through the gardens. They are heading for an outbuilding.

Samantha is poised and personable. And quite pretty. The uniform just seems to work on her, like she could be a catalog for brochures about fancy private schools.

SAMANTHA

Good morning! Welcome to St. Catherine's! Did Mr. Gray tell you you'd be getting a guide?

ALICE

Among other things, yes.

SAMANTHA

Okay, great. The girls' dorms are right down there. As far from the boys' dorms as they could build them, right?

She gives a chipper laugh and nudges Alice in the ribs. Alice smiles politely.

SAMANTHA

I'm Samantha, by the way. Samantha Kerry.

(lowers her voice)

And yes. Let's have it out now. Yes, my father IS Lucas Kerry, and NO, I don't want to talk about it.

ALICE

Then why'd you bring it up?

Samantha blinks.

SAMANTHA

You know, Alice, you seem a little different from the other girls around this place.

Alice gets the sense that she is being read, and doesn't like it, and tries to brush it off.

ALICE

Stands to reason. I'm the first new person you've met in a year.

Samantha smiles.

SAMANTHA

I hear ya! It's like being a bug on a microscope slide around here. Aaaanyway, these are the gardens, the dining hall's down there...

We don't hear the rest of the tour.



ALICE (V.O.)

I looked Lucas Kerry up later. Seems her daddy's a big Hollywood type. So's her mom. And her stepmom. I'd tell you more about the Kerrys but I don't get out to the movies much.

Samantha shows Alice around the gardens with graceful hand motions, like a real tour guide. She is beautifully backlit by the morning; Alice is continually squinting into the sun.

ALICE (V.O.)

I told you everybody here was somebody. Except for Samantha. I don't get a very strong sense of who she is. Take away the name and the money and the legs and she's just a desperate collection of smiles and couture. And the only thing you know about her is that she's probably the one they all want to be.

EXT. GIRLS' DORMITORY - MORNING

Samantha drops Alice off.

SAMANTHA

Okay, real quick, 'cause I gotta meet someone. You said you had your baggage shipped ahead?

ALICE

Yeah. I mean, it wasn't much.

SAMANTHA

Well, it should all be waiting for you in your room. Good luck!

ALICE

You're not coming with me?

SAMANTHA

Ffft! I'd just cramp your style.

ALICE

I don't really know how to navigate a place like this.

SAMANTHA

Like I said...  
(points)

Dining hall's over there.

ALICE

No, I mean...

SAMANTHA

(not listening)

Here, gimme your phone, any problems,  
you just call me.

Alice reluctantly hands over her phone. Samantha punches in her number, talking in SINGSONG on the pushes of the buttons.

SAMANTHA

I am here... to answer any...  
questions you might have!

ALICE

Okay, here's one.

Samantha looks up as she hands the phone back. Alice, shifting her weight, decides to speak her mind.

ALICE

This is a school for superficial, rich  
brats. Confirm or deny?

Samantha looks at her, almost through her, wondering what's going on. Really wondering.

Then she laughs, hard. It's all a big joke to her.

SAMANTHA

Confirm. But you'll get used to it!

She turns on her heel and takes off wherever she's going.

ALICE

Well, there's a scary thought.

She turns and goes inside.

INT. GIRLS' DORMITORY - MORNING

The corridor is a mess of girls moving in. Alice quietly navigates.

INT. ALICE AND BETH'S ROOM - MORNING

Alice enters. One half of the room is already set up, more or less. The other half is her boxes on the bed.

ALICE (V.O.)

My roommate's name is Beth MacIntyre.  
Her father owns a chain of five-star  
hotels. I didn't figure that out--Mr.  
Gray told me. I can't really fault  
Beth for having parents who bought her  
way in. Why do you think I'M in here.

She looks out the window.

ALICE (V.O.)

At least I have a nice view. Gardens.  
My old school didn't have gardens, I  
promise you that.

She squints. She sees something odd.

ALICE'S POV

There's a silhouette moving between the trees--running-  
crying--she can hear the crying-- --it looks like Rosemary--  
but maybe--

BETH (O.S.)

You must be Alice.

BACK TO SCENE

Alice turns. BETH MACINTYRE is at the door. Bookish and  
refined.

ALICE

Beth?

BETH

Uh-huh.

She pushes her glasses up on her nose.

BETH

Look, let's cut to the chase on  
something. Would you say you have an  
active sexual life?

ALICE

(taken aback, laughing)  
What?

BETH

Look, it's quite immaterial to me who  
you let into your drawers or why. But

I came here to learn and I intend to,  
and until they install sound-proof  
study carrels in our dump of a  
library, this is my space, and I don't  
intend to leave it just so you can  
satisfy your urges.

ALICE (V.O.)

Observation: My roommate needs to get  
laid far more badly than I do.

BETH

Is that perfectly understood?

ALICE

Perfectly.

BETH

Dandy.

Beth pushes her glasses up on her nose again and starts  
taking her books out of a box, lining them up on a shelf.

ALICE

I'm new here, y'know.

BETH

So I've been informed.

She doesn't turn around. Alice tries again.

ALICE

They said the weekend before classes  
was for R&R time. Maybe you could show  
me around. Introduce me to your  
friends. I dunno.

BETH

I don't have friends.

(beat)

WE don't need to be friends either.

She's still setting up her books.

ALICE

(thumbs-up)

Oooooh-kay.

EXT. CHURCH - MORNING

TILT DOWN from the cross to STUDENTS filing into mass. BELLS

are ringing.

ALICE (V.O.)

It's the last weekend before school starts. All the guilty Catholic kids are doing one last mass. The calm before the storm. Don't get me wrong! Even though the school has the name of a catholic Saint, there is a Mosque, a Synagogue and a Hindu temple in campus... even a Shinto shrine somewhere in the woods... Crazy right?

EXT. ST. CATHERINE'S ACADEMY GROUNDS - DAY

Alice sits on a bench. An AMOROUS COUPLE is making out on the bench across from her.

ALICE (V.O.)

There's all sorts of things going on. Drama club tryouts. Day trips to Misty Falls... Touching reunions.

She makes an "ugh" face and pointedly turns her face away. Michael, wearing sunglasses, is passing by just where she's happened to look. He throws her a tentative wave as he passes. She takes it in, too stunned to wave back.

INT. ALICE AND BETH'S ROOM - DAY

Beth is somehow already studying. Alice checks her e-mail. No messages.

ALICE (V.O.)

As usual, I'm burning up the social scene.

EXT. CLIFFSIDE - DAY

Alice surveys the de facto edge of campus: a great cliff looking out over the world. Behind her, in the far distance, we can see the school complex.

ALICE (V.O.)

I've been doing a lot of exploring. I'll give the campus this much credit: there are places to be alone.

INT. GIRLS' DORMITORY COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

The place is packed for a little pajama party, but no one's