

How far are you willing to go to be seen?

EXT. BALKER ACADEMY, AUTUMN, 2017 - NIGHT

Leaves blow in the wind outside the dorm building at Balcker Academy. It's dark out, almost 9:00. The glow of the streetlights casts a nostalgic feeling across campus.

INT. DORMATORY LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

A group of girls sit in a loose circle on the wooden floor. There are takeout containers spread among them. The warm lobby lights shine overhead.

EMY (17) takes the middle seat as the others gather around her, naturally leaning in close.

Just outside the circle, BRYNN (16) sits stiffly, slightly separated from the group.

EMY

He even walked me back to the
dorms!

KATIE

Omg, I knew Daniel liked you!

Laughter ripples through the group.

Knees brush and shoulders touch as the group closes in, quietly closing Brynn out of the circle.

She adjusts her posture slightly, clutching the drink in her hands.

She opens her mouth to speak but is interrupted as another wave of laughter cuts her off.

Brynn forces a small smile that quickly fades.

She quietly stands up and gathers her things.

BRYNN

Okay guys, I think I'm gonna go to
bed.

No one really reacts. Katie gives a distracted nod, eyes still on Emy.

The girls start talking about something else.

BRYNN

So, do you guys think Mr. Adams is
hot?

Brynn lingers there for a second longer than necessary. Her eyes start to water.

She turns and leaves.

INT. BRYNN'S DORM - MOMENTS LATER

Brynn closes the door, grabs her phone, and calls her mom.

BRYNN'S MOM (O.S.)
Brynn I'm pretty busy right now.

BRYNN
Can you talk for a second?

BRYNN'S MOM (O.S.)
Yeah, I guess I can for two minutes.

Brynn almost says something then shakes her head.

BRYNN
You know what? Nevermind, it's fine.

Brynn hangs up the phone and flops onto her bed.

Her room is dark, cold, and small. She stares at the door, listening to the laughter persist outside her door.

INT. BRYNN'S DORM, AUTUMN, 2017 - THE NEXT DAY

Brynn wakes up with puffy eyes. She looks hopeful as she walks to brush her teeth.

EXT. BALKER ACADEMY - DAY

Katie waits outside the dorms, checking her watch.

Emy strolls out of the building, unhurried. Katie immediately brightens.

KATIE
There she is.

They fall into easy conversation.

A beat later, the dorm doors burst open.

Brynn hurries out, backpack half zipped, struggling to pull on her jacket as she jogs toward them.

BRYNN
OMG so sorry I was running late this morning.

EMY
We waited.

KATIE
Not long.

They laugh to each other.

INT. BALKER ACADEMY HALLWAY - DAY

The girls walk to class. Emy holds her head high. Katie is talking her ear off. Brynn follows close behind.

Students pass. Some glance at the group.

Brynn watches them.

She tries to speed up and close the gap.

It doesn't work.

INT. SCIENCE CLASS - DAY

The science tabletops only seat two. Brynn and Katie sit together. Emy sits at the one next to them with DANIEL.

The bell rings.

PROFESSOR ADAMS

Alright class! Today we are going to be starting our next lab. Please pair up and find a table to work on.

Emy looks at Daniel, who is actively pulling out the wrong notebook. She rolls her eyes and turns to Katie.

EMY

Katie, do you wanna be partners?

KATIE

Of course!

Katie moves immediately to sit next to Emy as Daniel finds another partner.

Brynn watches her go. The empty stool next to her goes untouched. She begins the lab.

Brynn adds solutions to the beaker and it starts to bubble.

She watches it very carefully.

CUT TO:

INT. BRYNN'S DORM - NIGHT

Brynn is sitting at her desk. Her lab notebook is open and there's a small capped vial beside it.

She picks it up and turns it slowly between her fingers. Thinking.

Her expression is unreadable, almost uncanny.

She slides the vial into her pocket.

INT. DORMATORY LOBBY - NIGHT

The girls sit in the same circle as the night before. The girls sit closely with Brynn just outside again. They play music softly as the warm light above brightens the room.

BRYNN
Did you guys start the history
outline?

KATIE
Oh. Yeah.

Emy and Katie look at each other.

EMY
We did it earlier.

BRYNN
Oh.
(pause)
Well I brought sodas!

She sets them down.

EMY
Ooo!

The girls each reach quickly.

Brynn subtly slides one can closer to Katie.

BRYNN
This one's yours. I know you like
grape.

Katie barely notices the gesture as she takes it.

KATIE
Thanks.

Cans crack open.

The conversation quickly pulls back toward Emy, leaving Brynn on the edge of the circle again.

CLOSE UP: Katie's hands as she drinks her soda.

She watches closely as they drink, staring at their hands instead of their faces.

EXT. BALKER ACADEMY - DAY

The girls walk to class. Emy looks around.

EMY

Has anyone seen Katie?

Brynn shrugs.

BRYNN

She probably doesn't feel well.

Emy nods. Brynn keeps walking.

EMY

Yeah.

INT. SCIENCE CLASS - DAY

There's an empty seat where Katie used to sit.

PROFESSOR ADAMS

Hello class. Today we will be starting a new lab focused on tectonic plates. Please find partners.

Emy hesitates, then turns.

EMY

Brynn?

Brynn looks up.

Beat.

BRYNN

Sure.

She moves to Katie's old seat.

She relaxes in the hard wood of the chair.

INT. SCIENCE CLASS - A WHILE LATER

The lab is almost finished.

Emy leans into Brynn.

EMY

Do you get this part?

Brynn smiles slightly.

BRYNN

Yea, I'll show you.

Emy attentively listens as Brynn explains. She is almost glowing as she speaks.

BRYNN
Well first you...

CUT TO:

INT. BALKER ACADEMY HALLWAY - DAY

The bell rings as the girls walk through the hall.

Brynn starts to walk behind Emy.

Emy turns back towards Brynn.

EMY
I texted Katie again. She's not answering.

Brynn catches up towards her.

BRYNN
Maybe she just needs to rest today.

Emy looks at her for a second, then accepts it.

EMY
Yea, you're right.

They keep walking, side by side.

Brynn smiles.

INT. DORMATORY LOBBY - NIGHT

Same space as before. Same circle, but now smaller. Katie's spot is empty.

Brynn smiles and without hesitation she fills the empty spot.

Now she sits *inside* the circle.

EMY
Everyone keeps asking if we are together!

There's light laughter among the girls.

Brynn leans just as the laughter fades.

BRYNN
What did he say?

Emy turns to her.

EMY

He said maybe we should be.

They laugh together naturally.

Brynn sits back, her eyes sparkling.

INT. BRYNN'S DORM - NIGHT

Brynn sits at her desk.

A small vial rests in her hand. Uncapped and empty.

She studies it like it means something.

She turns it slowly before setting it down carefully.

She hears the laughter from outside her door.

She smiles and hops into bed.

She reaches over and turns off the light.

CUT TO BLACK.