

LAST SEASON ON

"When There's Smoke..."

Written by

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INT. SOUND STAGE #1 - DAY

HALEY GEORGIA, flannel, jeans, and a cowboy hat, walks across the set to NOAH, turning the heads of PAs.

HALEY GEORGIA  
Hiya, Mr. Miller! My kids just adore your show. Could I get a selfie for them?

NOAH  
Sure! But call me Noah, "mister" sounds too adult.

LEO watches them across the sound stage. Next to him, MADELYN reads a SCRIPT aloud and eats CHIPS by the craft services table, on which lay a PUNCH BOWL, CHICKEN, SALAD, CHIPS, etc.

LEO observes Noah's laughing, cheery face.

MADELYN  
(looking up)  
Wow, Haley Georgia is getting HIS picture. Noah's really in the big leagues, huh.

LEO  
God, he doesn't even have to try.

A SHADOWY FIGURE RUSHES by the table, shaking it, leaving smoke in its path. Finishing her chips, Madelyn turns around.

MADELYN  
Aw, what!?

The table is now empty, aside from the punch bowl and salad.

MADELYN (CONT'D)  
Who's taking all the food!?

Leo is distracted by Noah & Ms. Georgia exchanging contacts.

LEO  
I gotta introduce myself. Can't let Noah be the only networker here.

Leo leaves. Coast is clear. Madelyn pulls out ADDERALL PILLS.

NOAH shakes Haley Georgia's hand.

HALEY GEORGIA  
Thank you for the photos!

As Leo approaches, his mother, SAMANTHA, intercepts him.

SAMANTHA

Leo!

LEO

Wait! I'm trying to meet -

SAMANTHA

Noah! Madelyn!

The announcement startles Madelyn, making her SPILL the full bottle of adderall pills into the PUNCH BOWL.

MADELYN

Shit!

Pretending to read her script, she awkwardly joins them.

SAMANTHA

I have a surprise! A veteran star will be re-joining our production.

LEO

Haley Georgia?!

MADELYN

Haley Georgia?!

SAMANTHA

What? No, it's Charles Polanski.

Noah groans. The shadowy figure rushes by the craft services table again, taking the PUNCH BOWL, leaving smoke.

MADELYN

Wasn't he fired for drug problems?

NOAH

He was fired for a lot of things.

SAMANTHA

It's all in the past.

MADELYN

Well where is he?

Samantha checks her watch. She takes out a Walkie-Talkie.

SAMANTHA

You'd think someone living on set could be on time.

(into Walkie-Talkie)

Polanski! Get out here!

CHARLES POLANSKI (WALKIE-TALKIE)

(coughing and wheezing)

Noah could care less. Leo looks at Madelyn, concerned.

LEO  
Living on set?

CHARLES POLANSKI (WALKIE-TALKIE)  
Coming!

A door SLAMS open, CHARLES POLANSKI, '50s, ENTERING in a crumple suit with a loose tie, unshaven beard. He's waving a hand in the air behind him, which Noah raises an eyebrow to.

CHARLES POLANSKI (CONT'D)  
Hey gang! Lonely without me?

NOAH  
Some people like alone time.

Leo, aware of Noah's frustration, sees an opportunity.

As Charles extends a hand to Noah, Leo cuts in and grabs it.

LEO  
Nice to see you again, Charles.

CHARLES POLANSKI  
And you, Leo!

He extends a hand to Madelyn. She looks up from pretending to read and shakes it.

MADELYN  
Hey Charles.

CHARLES POLANSKI  
Hello Madelyn!

Charles extends a hand to Noah. He doesn't take it. He saves the awkward extension by taking Madelyn's script from her.

CHARLES POLANSKI (CONT'D)  
May I see this?

MADELYN  
Sure, you already have it, I guess.

Charles isn't listening. He squints at the page, taking out a pen and scribbling.

CHARLES POLANSKI  
You're having trouble memorizing lines like the old days, huh? Try underlining the important words, ignoring the filler.

Charles returns it. Every word other than "a" is underlined.

MADELYN

Uh, thanks.

CHARLES POLANSKI

Leo, as I've learned over these years, my biggest piece of advice is to stay catatonic with the media. Those fuckers will call you "washed up", "irrelevant", and "a pig smelling of expired milk" the second you aren't of value to them.

Noah sniffs the air and immediately covers his nose.

LEO.

Stay superficial with the media.  
Got it.

CHARLES POLANSKI

Noah. Uh, keep up the good work!

SAMANTHA

Thank you, Charles.

Charles EXITS out the door he came through.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Charles has a lot to share. Use his experience!

LEO

I think I will!

Madeline returns her focus to the punch bowl, now missing.

MADELYN

(under her breath)

Oh fuck.

THEN - the FIRE ALARM rings. The Director, JULES, tries to establish order to the feral PAs aimlessly running around.

JULES

Alright, everyone - out!

EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

Noah, Leo, and Madelyn stand outside as a FIRE TRUCK arrives.

NOAH

Leo, I get you're trying to meet people, but forget Charles. You remember how he screwed me?

LEO  
 ALMOST screwed you. Look at you  
 now! Besides, we can't all get  
 Haley Georgia's number.

Madelyn nervously looks around and grabs a passing PA's arm.

MADELYN  
 (manic)  
 Have you seen the punch bowl?!

The PA retracts in fear.

Across the lot, TRAILERS are visible, where Noah notices  
 SMOKE coming out one of the windows.

NOAH  
 I'll be right back.

Noah runs off. Leo shouts at the running Noah.

LEO  
 Off to get more numbers?  
 (to Madelyn)  
 Do you know where Haley Georgia is?

Leo turns. Madelyn is no where to be found.

LEO (CONT'D)  
 Madelyn?

EXT. TRAILER - DAY

Noah BANGS on the trailer. COUGHING is heard, smoke ceases.

CHARLES POLANSKI (O.S.)  
 (slurring)  
 Whazat - who - what, who's there?  
 Am I there! Arzs anys of us there?!

NOAH  
 It's Noah, Charles.

The door opens. A smiling Charles sticks his head out.

CHARLES POLANSKI  
 Oops! I thought you were a PA  
 seeing through my nifty disguise.

Charles points to the HALEY GEORGIA name plate on his door.

NOAH  
 Wait, so you acted drunk?

CHARLES POLANSKI  
Lesson one: only sober people -

NOAH  
Are called to set, yeah. Actually,  
I'm here to give YOU some advice.

Noah points to a BONG through the door. Charles' smile fades.

CHARLES POLANSKI  
Noah -

NOAH  
You better watch it. If you smoke  
on set again, I'm reporting you. I  
will NOT let you slow us down.

CHARLES POLANSKI  
Noah I -

NOAH  
I can't decide what's more  
surprising, whether you had the  
balls to return, or that Madelyn  
and Leo aren't furious with you!

CHARLES POLANSKI  
Noah!

NOAH  
What!

CHARLES POLANSKI  
I sincerely want to apologize.  
Would you please come in?

Leo looks back at the firefighters and Jules before ENTERING.

JULES (FAINT)  
It's gonna be awhile, folks!

INT. TRAILER - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Clothes, bongs strewn about, trash, wrappers, and SO MUCH  
FOOD, including the CHICKEN, CHIPS, and a PUNCH BOWL lay.

NOAH  
Oh, so this is where our food's  
been disappearing to. Of course.

CHARLES POLANSKI  
Man's gotta eat!

NOAH

You mean - you're surviving off of  
craft services?

CHARLES POLANSKI

Not "surviving", Noah, Jesus.  
Thriving!

Charles throws his hands out at "thriving", slips on a BONG,  
and falls in a pile of trash. Noah looks at the bong.

NOAH

Right. This is a waste of time.

Noah heads for the door. Charles scrambles to his feet.

CHARLES POLANSKI

Wait!

He takes a FOLDED NOTE from his jacket and hands it over.

NOAH

What's this?

CHARLES POLANSKI

Names, famous people, who are...

Charles waves his hand across the air.

CHARLES POLANSKI (CONT'D)

...thriving differently. They'll do  
a better a job preparing you for  
your futures than I ever could.

Noah puts the note in his pocket and opens the door.

NOAH

That was paper, not an apology.

Noah takes a step out.

CHARLES POLANSKI

I am so sorry for endangering your  
career back then.

He stops.

Noah, please know I would never do  
anything like that again. I can  
only hope you'll let me help now,  
but, I get it if not. I would leave  
too.

Noah looks in his eyes. He IS sorry. Beat.



Noah shuts the door, staying.

NOAH  
So. You're living here?

CHARLES POLANSKI  
Best I can do for now, I'm afraid.

NOAH  
Well then. We better get to work!  
This is no way for a star to live.

Charles smiles. BANG BANG BANG interrupts the moment.

LEO (O.S.)  
Hello? Ms. Georgia? My name's Leo  
Andersen, and I was wondering if -

EXT. TRAILER - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Charles opens the door. Leo looks from the Haley Georgia name plate to Charles.

LEO  
Oh, Charles! Are you with Ms. Geor -

Leo sees Noah and frowns.

LEO (CONT'D)  
Beat me to her, huh?

NOAH  
Relax. This is Charles' place.  
Wanna come in?

LEO  
Haley Georgia lives with Charles?!

CHARLES POLANSKI  
God, if I was three decades  
younger!

INT. TRAILER - DAY

NOAH  
We were just getting ready to clean  
the place.

LEO  
How fun. Cleaning.

Noah takes out the folded note.

NOAH  
If you're done being a grouch, you  
should have this.

LEO  
What is it?

He unfolds it. On it, dozens of names and phone numbers.

NOAH  
It's a bit more than Haley  
Georgia's number.

LEO  
(in awe at the note)  
Not gonna hog it to yourself?

EXT. TRAILER - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Madelyn sees Charles pouring cups from the punch bowl.

NOAH (O.S.)  
Oh, I'll hog it as much as I want.  
Right after you get first dibs.

Her eyes widen.

INT. TRAILER - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Charles approaches them with cups full of punch.

CHARLES POLANSKI  
Before we begin, how about a toast?

LEO  
(accepting the cup)  
Isn't this from craft services?

CHARLES POLANSKI  
To your futures!

Noah and Leo repeat the toast, sipping as Madelyn ENTERS.

MADELYN  
Wait!

It's too late. They've already downed most of their cups.

MADELYN (CONT'D)  
For me!

She gets a cup of her own. The four cheers again.

INT. TRAILER - DAY - MONTAGE

The four pick up trash, furiously scrub down surfaces, and sort the bongs. The power of amphetamines is in full swing.

INT. TRAILER - AFTERNOON

They sit back, exhausted. As they catch their breath, their satisfaction fades; only a quarter of the interior is clean.

NOAH

Huh. I thought we did a lot more.

LEO

Yeah, I was, like, really in the zone there. What time is it even?

CHARLES POLANSKI

I know this feeling. And I just wanna keep cleaning.

Madelyn watches them, carefully imitating their reactions.

MADELYN

Yeah, I was really focused there!

CHARLES POLANSKI

Focused huh?

Charles' walkie-talkie goes off.

SAMANTHA (WALKIE-TALKIE)

Charles! Are you with the kids?  
We're back on in five!

MADELYN

Shit!

Leo and Madelyn EXIT promptly. Before Noah exits, he turns to Charles, who stands halfway between trash and cleanliness.

NOAH

Thank you for apologizing, Charles.  
I understand things are tough for you right now. If it's any consolation, you'll always have a home with us.

Charles smiles.

CHARLES POLANSKI

Thank you, Noah.

Noah swings open the door and EXITS.

CHARLES POLANSKI (CONT'D)  
You still live on Phipps street?

The trailer door swings shut and -

CUT TO BLACK.