

BLANK

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT

A sign is slightly off-kilter on the side of the road. The sign reads, 'Speed Limit' but with no numbers below.

Oncoming HEADLIGHTS slowly light up the sign. An engine roars closer.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

ALLEN PHILLIP BLANK, late 40's, sits behind the wheel, driving.

TRISHA BLANK, early 40's, is asleep in the passenger seat.

Allen looks over at Trisha, does a double-take.

ALLEN

Have you been sleeping this whole time?

Trisha stirs awake.

TRISHA

No, I'm up. I was listening.

ALLEN

No you weren't. I was talking to you for like five minutes.

TRISHA

I heard you.

ALLEN

Yeah? What did I say?

Trisha stretches out, still waking up. She pats Allen on the leg.

TRISHA

Oh you know, this and that. Let's not get bogged down by the insignificant details of things.

Allen shoves her hand away, can't help but smile.

ALLEN

Smart ass.

TRISHA

Don't worry, even when I'm not listening I'm always listening.

ALLEN

What's that supposed to mean?

TRISHA

It means I can multi-task.

ALLEN

Oh yeah?

Allen takes his hands off the steering wheel and sits back causally.

TRISHA

What are you doing?

ALLEN

Even when I'm not driving I'm still driving.

TRISHA

Okay okay, point taken. Hands on the wheel please.

ALLEN

What like at ten and two?

TRISHA

Allen...

ALLEN

I'm practising my five and seven approach.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The car slowly drifts into the oncoming lane.

The driver's side rear tire runs over a NAIL on the road; It's rotation hiccups slightly, but continues on.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Trisha leans over Allen's lap and steadies the wheel.

TRISHA
Enough. Take the wheel.

ALLEN
Alright, alright.

Allen takes over control of the steering wheel and straightens the car back on track.

Trisha sits back in her seat.

TRISHA
Asshole.

ALLEN
That's why you love me, let's be honest.

Trisha punches Allen in the arm.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Hey, no hitting the driver.

Trisha shakes her head and rolls her eyes, smiling.

Allen protrudes his lips out, mimicking a kiss. Trisha sighs and gives him a kiss on the lips.

Allen rubs his hand on Trisha's leg.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
You have fun tonight?

TRISHA
I did. I love our date nights. It's just nice to get out of the house every once and awhile. Being stuck in there all day... It starts to feel like you're in a shell.

ALLEN
We really should get out more. And we will, when I can.

TRISHA
It's okay, hazards of your job. Just makes it more special when we do. Besides, not every girl can say they are married to a heroic, life saving Doctor.

Trisha grabs a folded newspaper from the dashboard in front of her.

Allen shakes his head.

ALLEN

Not again.

TRISHA

Just one more time.

Trisha opens up the newspaper to an article.

TRISHA (CONT'D)

Where is it? Here. "Surgeon Allen Phillip Blank performed the emergency gallbladder surgery, saving the girl's life."

ALLEN

I wish they wrote doctor instead of surgeon.

TRISHA

I like surgeon better. How's it feel to be famous?

Allen laughs.

ALLEN

I'm on page five. The article below mine is about two boys who robbed a vending machine. Not exactly elite company.

TRISHA

I don't know why they would include your middle name though.

ALLEN

Guy doing the article, he asked what my middle name was. Said he liked the play on words.

TRISHA

Oh, Phillip Blank, fill-a-blank.

ALLEN

Exactly.

TRISHA

Well, I like it regardless.

Trisha folds up the newspaper and places it back on the dashboard.

TRISHA (CONT'D)
So, I was thinking...

ALLEN
Oh God, this never ends well.

Trisha laughs, turns to face Allen in her seat.

TRISHA
I was *thinking*... what about I get a part-time job or something?

ALLEN
Why?

TRISHA
Get me out of the house. I just want to contribute more. You know, be more helpful.

ALLEN
Why though? I make more money than we need. And I'd rather you be home with Payeton for when she needs you.

TRISHA
She's fourteen now, she never needs me.

ALLEN
I told you I don't want you working. I need you home. I don't want to come home to an empty house after I've worked a long day.

Trisha looks slightly disappointed, she sits back in her seat.

TRISHA
I understand.

Allen quickly glances at Trisha.

ALLEN
Maybe down the line, okay?

TRISHA
Okay. Oh shit! I forgot to check if Payeton texted me back.

Trisha grabs her purse off the floor and rummages through it. She pulls out her cell phone and swipes the screen.

TRISHA (CONT'D)
Nothing. Shocking.

ALLEN
She's with Samantha and her parents are gone for the night, I'd be more surprised if she *had* texted you back.

TRISHA
I know, but like, I'm a cool Mom... right?

ALLEN
You definitely are. But you remember what it was like at her age, nothing really- -

A loud POPPING sound. The car jerks to the side.

Trisha gasps.

Allen grips the steering wheel tight, keeping the car under control.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Fuck.

TRISHA
Tire?

ALLEN
Tire.

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT

The car slowly pulls to the side of the road and stops. The driver's side rear tire is flat.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Allen shifts the car into park. He looks at Trisha.

ALLEN
Well that sucks.

TRISHA
Still have the spare in the trunk?

ALLEN
Yeah, I'll change it. Gimme a sec'.

Allen goes to unbuckle his seat belt, Trisha stops him.

TRISHA
I'll do it.

ALLEN
What?

TRISHA
You showed me. I can do it.

ALLEN
Trish if you want to help I'll let you watch but I'm not looking to be out here all night.

TRISHA
It won't take me all night, and I don't need your help. Just let me do it. It's good practice for me. Please.

Allen considers this for a moment.

ALLEN
You sure?

Trisha grins excitedly, unbuckles her seat belt.

TRISHA
Yup.

ALLEN
If you get stuck...

Trisha kisses Allen on the cheek.

TRISHA
I'll ask you, I know. In the meantime, just sit here and look pretty. I got this. Pop the trunk.

Allen laughs to himself and pops the trunk.

ALLEN
Okay. Good luck.

Trisha exits the car and shuts the door behind her.

REARVIEW MIRROR POV

Trisha opens the trunk, disappearing behind it. She rummages through the contents.

Allen pulls out his cell phone, checks it. He grabs the newspaper off the dashboard, unfolding it, reading his article. He snickers.

SIDE MIRROR POV

Trisha leans the spare tire against the car.

Allen goes back to his paper.

SIDE MIRROR POV

Trisha places the jack down by the flat tire. HEADLIGHTS appear as another vehicle approaches rapidly.

Allen's cell phone BUZZES. He looks at the screen, it reads; '1 New Text Message: Payeton'. He swipes through his phone...

A loud THUD of metal on metal. Glass SHATTERS. Allen is torqued violently, held in place by his seat belt. The car shifts forward and to the left before coming to an abrupt stop.

Allen looks around, disoriented. His eyes lock on something out in front of him on the road. He quickly unbuckles the seat belt and exits the car.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Trisha lies in a bloody heap in the middle of the road.

Allen rushes to her side, kneeling down beside her. He takes her hand and wipes the blood from her face.

ALLEN

Oh God. Trisha, can you hear me?

Trisha moves slightly, groaning, her face strained with pain.

Allen moves her hair out of her face; It is caked with blood.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

I'm right here. I'm here.

Allen looks up the road, desperate; A vehicle has stopped up ahead, a dent in it's right side.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

HEY! We need some help here!

After a moment the vehicle kicks into gear and speeds off, tires squealing.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
HEY!! Please!

Allen looks back down at Trisha.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
That motherfucker.

Trisha struggles to breathe, coughing up blood onto her face. She stares up at Allen, confused, scared.

Allen wipes away the blood.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Just hold on honey, okay? I got to get my bag from the car and call for some help. And I may have to get something to clear your airway. I'll be right back, you just breathe.

Trisha squeezes Allen's hand tightly, stopping him. They stare into each other's eyes.

Allen shakes his head, tearing up.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Don't...

Trisha twitches ever so slightly, then is still, no longer breathing.

Allen takes a hold of her face.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
No, no, no, no. Wake up.

He shakes her gently.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Wake up...

Tears fall from his eyes.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Don't you do this...

He checks her pulse, begins administering CPR.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Come on...

Each unsuccessful attempt creates more desperation.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Wake up!

EXT. ROAD (LATER) - NIGHT

Police and ambulance vehicles light up the scene in a flashing red and blue hue.

Allen's car is badly dented on its left side. The side mirror is missing. The rear window is shattered.

There is a spare tire and a car jack on the side of the road.

The sirens grow louder and louder...

CUT TO BLACK.

Darkness. Silence. Then...

Heavy Breathing. A sniff. Someone is crying quietly.

FADE IN:

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Allen, dressed in a black suit and tie, is kneeling down beside an open casket. He wipes away tears.

Inside the open casket is Trisha, dressed and heavily made up to hide the damage.

Allen tucks a strand of Trisha's hair behind her ear.

ALLEN

Everyone is waiting to come in. I just wanted a few more seconds with you to tell you some things. Maybe some things I forgot to tell you. Or maybe I don't have anything else to say... I don't know anymore.

He sniffs and wipes his nose, brushes some tears away.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

But... I wanted you to know that I'm going to take care of Payeton the best I can. I don't want you to worry about her.

(MORE)

ALLEN (CONT'D)

I know how you always do. I got this, Trish. I'll get her through this. I'm going to make you proud, you will see. You just got to promise me that you will watch. Wherever you are now, just promise me that you will watch. And if you want to come down and say Hi every once in awhile... that will be okay too.

Allen smiles sadly for a moment.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Just know... that I love you. I've always loved you, and I always will. I'll carry you with me wherever I go.

He nods, reassuring himself.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Okay. That's it, babe. That's it.

Allen leans in and kisses Trisha's forehead before leaving.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

A casket is lowered into the ground.

ALLEN (V.O.)

Even as she was lowered into the ground I thought, what if? What if she could still wake up. What if there was a chance I could revive her somehow? I couldn't help but feel haunted by the idea that I was giving up on her.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST OFFICE - DAY

Allen is seated on a leather couch near a large window.

DR. DEBORAH MARCHMIN sits across from him, her legs crossed, making notes on a pad of paper.

ALLEN

Everything just seems to be going too quick. And I don't know if that's how I'm supposed to be feeling or not.

(MORE)

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Death is final but it comes with no answers. Only more questions...

Dr. Marchmin looks up from her notes.

DR. MARCHMIN

No matter what your opinion about death, Allen, you are free to say anything you want about it. It's basically an open forum; Everybody has an opinion and nobody is wrong. But that also means nobody is right. There's only one way to find out, and once you do, you can't tell anybody. Death is the mother of all secrets; Hence it will always give birth to rampant speculation. But that, in and of itself, can be healing.

Allen considers something.

ALLEN

I wonder what my patience would think if they knew their surgeon talked to a shrink.

Dr. Marchmin smiles.

DR. MARCHMIN

They would probably think, 'Good, he talks to a shrink'. Hate to see the surgeon that doesn't.

Allen smiles a little, nods.

ALLEN

You know, I often find myself... talking to her. Just random chats I have with her, in my head. I don't know, maybe it's a comfort thing. I can still hear her voice, and a lot of times I hear her saying things I never heard her say while she was alive. But... it's her. Definitely.

DR. MARCHMIN

That's normal, Allen. You know that. That's what we do, as human beings. That's how we deal with grief. It was a sudden shock to your system when you lost your wife and we don't accept loss that easily, or that quickly.

(MORE)

DR. MARCHMIN (CONT'D)

If you jump into an ice cold swimming pool you are going to surface sputtering and flailing and just a mess. But after a few seconds, a minute maybe, your body starts to adjust. You start to calm down, regain your senses. That's all this is. We are just waiting for the water to feel like it's warming up a bit.

ALLEN

Time heals all wounds, as they say.

DR. MARCHMIN

It does.

Allen gazes out the window.

ALLEN

But what heals time?

Dr. Marchmin brings the pen to the pad of paper.

DR. MARCHMIN

That's interesting. Do you think time is your enemy, Allen?

ALLEN

No, not my enemy. It's just slow. Wish it was faster sometimes. Hell, put a scalpel in my hand and I can heal people a lot faster than time can.

DR. MARCHMIN

In a way. I suppose I could agree with that, given the nature of your job. Speaking of which, how's the leave of absence from work coming along? How are you taking to the time off?

ALLEN

I mean, it's tough but... in the end it's good for me and Payeton. We need this time together. It's helping.

DR. MARCHMIN

That's good. I know you don't like to discuss Payeton a lot while you're here, but how is she doing?

ALLEN

She's doing the best she can. And you're right, I don't like to discuss her here.

DR. MARCHMIN

You're protective of her.

Allen nods.

ALLEN

She's all I have left.

DR. MARCHMIN

I understand.

ALLEN

Sometimes I think she's the only thing holding me together. The one string tethering me to this place and keeping me from just... floating away.

DR. MARCHMIN

Floating away to where exactly?

ALLEN

Who knows.

Dr. Marchmin makes a note on her pad.

DR. MARCHMIN

How are you sleeping?

ALLEN

Sporadically.

DR. MARCHMIN

Any dreams you want to tell me about? Anything stand out?

Allen contemplates this.

ALLEN

I had the same dream two nights in a row. Well, same-ish.

DR. MARCHMIN

Can you remember the specifics of it?

ALLEN

I can.

DR. MARCHMIN

Go on.

Allen shifts in his seat.

ALLEN

I don't know if I prescribe to the whole dream-a-therapy idea. Just don't see the point.

DR. MARCHMIN

I prescribe to it, and I see the point. Especially with recurring dreams. They usually signal that there is something in your life that you have yet to acknowledge to yourself. Some truth you're not facing. So if you don't mind...

Dr. Marchmin waits with her pen on the pad, eyes locked on Allen, her eye browse arched.

Allen exhales a breath.

ALLEN

Fine, fair enough. So in my dream I was at some crowded coffee shop, reading a paper. Then I noticed it had gotten quiet... really quiet. There wasn't a sound. I looked up and everyone was just... gone. Not only in the coffee shop but out on the street too. Everywhere. So I went out on the street and I walked, calling out to anybody that might be able to hear me. All I heard in response was the wind as it tunneled between the towering skyscrapers above me. In my mind, everyone had been abducted and taken away but me. I was the only one left behind. I was terrified at that thought. Terrified of being alone. I panicked and I ran. Ran for what seemed like forever until I felt something wrap around my leg and stay there, held there by the wind. I reached down and grabbed it, looked at it... It was my face on a missing poster. And the missing poster was speaking to me and it was telling me I had been missing for years. Years.

(MORE)

ALLEN (CONT'D)

And right then I realized it wasn't everyone else who had been abducted... It was me. I was the only one taken. And they had made a world for me just like the one I knew, except this world was empty. It was just me in it. And I had no idea where to go next...

Dr. Marchmin finishes her note on the pad.

DR. MARCHMIN

Wow.

ALLEN

Yeah.

DR. MARCHMIN

When you said 'they had made a world for me just like the one I knew', who was they?

ALLEN

I don't know. I never got a sense of that.

DR. MARCHMIN

Yet you kept using the word 'abducted'.

ALLEN

I realize that.

Dr. Marchmin considers something, nods to herself.

DR. MARCHMIN

Food for thought.

ALLEN

Aren't you going to ask if I believe in aliens, doctor?

DR. MARCHMIN

Nope.

ALLEN

Why not? I know you're dying to.

DR. MARCHMIN

Because I don't want to have to relieve you of your medical licence.

Allen manages a laugh.

ALLEN

Well, I appreciate that.

Dr. Marchmin looks up at the clock then back to Allen.

DR. MARCHMIN

I found it interesting that you were missing for years in your dream before you even realized your circumstances.

Allen looks up at the clock.

ALLEN

Time is never on my side, is it?

Dr. Marchmin grins and shrugs.

DR. MARCHMIN

It's on no one's.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Legend: 2 Years Later

A framed picture of Trisha sits on a hallway table surrounded by two candles.

One candle is lit, the other has burnt out.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

PAYETON BLANK, 16, sits on her bed staring at her phone. She has ear buds in her ears, nodding her head along to the music. She sings to herself in a soft, quiet voice.

A BEEP from her laptop. Payeton removes one earbud. The laptop screen shows an incoming call from Sammy D.

Payeton hits 'Accept' and moves the computer to her lap.

SAMANTHA, 17, pops up on screen smiling.

SAMANTHA

Hey loser.

PAYETON

What's up idiot.

SAMANTHA
What cha doooooinnnnn?

PAYETON
Getting ready. Almost done. You?

SAMANTHA
I'm ready and waiting. You still
good to pick me up?

PAYETON
Yup. I won't be much longer.

SAMANTHA
Awesome. It's so cool of your Dad
to let you take the car finally.
Big step for him.

PAYETON
Yeah, it is. I'm proud of him.

SAMANTHA
I bet your Dad is looking all hot
for his date tonight. Doctor Blank,
mmmmmm.

PAYETON
Here, why don't you tell him. He'd
love to hear it.

Payeton looks away from the screen.

PAYETON (CONT'D)
Dad, Sam wants to tell you
something.

SAMANTHA
No!

Sam quickly ducks away from the camera on screen.

Payeton looks back at the screen.

PAYETON
Relax, I'm joking. He's not here.

Sam brings her head up slowly.

SAMANTHA
Not funny, toupee. Not funny.

PAYETON

Hilarious. Look at you all blushing and shit. And don't call me toupee, Sam and cheese.

SAMANTHA

Ew, I hate that name.

Samantha sips from a coffee cup.

PAYETON

Well...

SAMANTHA

You excited for the party tonight?

PAYETON

Sure.

SAMANTHA

Brandon will be there...

PAYETON

Cool.

SAMANTHA

Puhleeze bitch, you know you excited.

PAYETON

Okay calm down there, Laquisha.

Sam laughs.

SAMANTHA

I need to get some liquor in me. I appreciate you being the double D tonight babe. I'll drive to the next one so you can drink.

PAYETON

I don't mind, I'm excited to drive. I don't drink as much as you anyway.

SAMANTHA

Not yet, you're still a baby.

Payeton holds up her middle finger.

PAYETON

One year on me, that's all you got.

Samantha holds up her middle finger on one hand and four fingers on the other hand.

SAMANTHA

One year and four months, thank you.

PAYETON

Yet I'll be driving your drunk ass home. Go figure.

Samantha winks. She stands up, modeling her clothes.

SAMANTHA

How do I look?

PAYETON

Hot.

SAMANTHA

I agree. I need to be witnessed.

Payeton rolls her eyes and smiles.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Hurry your ass up.

PAYETON

I'm coming, I'm coming.

SAMANTHA

Love ya gurlllll.

PAYETON

Love you.

Samantha blows a kiss.

Payeton ends the call and closes the laptop. She puts the earbud back in her ear and heads to a mirror across the room.

A PICTURE of Trisha holding Payeton as a baby is wedged into the mirror frame.

Payeton stares at herself in the mirror, fixing her hair. She connects her phone to a phone charger.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Allen is seated at the granite-top island, scrolling through his phone. His hair is different, fashionable, he looks well put-together. His cell phone RINGS.

Allen stares at the screen, it reads, 'Andrea'. He answers it.

ALLEN

Hello?

ANDREA (O.S.)

Hi, Allen?

ALLEN

Hey how's it going, Andrea? Nice to finally hear your voice in person. Well, sort of.

Andrea laughs.

ANDREA (O.S.)

Yeah, we've been playing phone tag with our answering machines for awhile it seems. Guess we are both busy people.

ALLEN

That isn't necessarily a bad thing.

ANDREA (O.S.)

Not at all. Kind of a nice change for me actually.

ALLEN

Good, I'm glad. We still on for tonight?

ANDREA (O.S.)

Sure are. Just confirmed with the baby sitter. What time do you want to meet?

ALLEN

I'm good to go in about an hour if you want me to pick you up? Or we can just meet at the restaurant.

ANDREA (O.S.)

Meeting works for me. But give me closer to an hour and a half.

ALLEN

Sounds good. Looking forward to meeting you.

ANDREA (O.S.)

Me as well. I'm still a newb at this whole online dating thing, kind of nervous honestly. But I figure I can't go wrong with a good looking doctor.

Allen smiles.

ALLEN

Well now the pressure's on for me. Thanks.

Andrea laughs.

ANDREA (O.S.)

I heard doctor's perform well under pressure...

ALLEN

That's what you heard, huh?

ANDREA (O.S.)

Is it just a rumor?

ALLEN

Some rumors have legs.

Andrea laughs.

ANDREA (O.S.)

Okay, I'm going to start getting ready. I'll give you a text when I'm about to leave.

ALLEN

Sounds good. Nice talking to you, Andrea. Looking forward to tonight.

ANDREA (O.S.)

Me too! See ya soon.

ALLEN

Yup, see ya soon.

ANDREA (O.S.)

Bye.

ALLEN

Bye.

Allen swipes the phone and breathes a sigh of relief. He smiles.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Allen lights the burnt out candle with a lighter and slightly adjusts the angle of Trisha's picture.

He stares at it for a moment before leaving.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Allen is standing near the island, on the phone. He is making notes as he listens to a message.

Payeton enters holding her purse, her earbuds still in her ears.

PAYETON

Dad.

Allen holds up his index finger and mouths "one second".

Payeton goes to the fridge and grabs a water bottle, she takes a sip and places it in her purse.

Allen hangs up and makes a note.

ALLEN

Sorry Payt. What's up?

PAYETON

Work?

ALLEN

Work.

Payeton moves to the island and places her purse down.

PAYETON

Tonight isn't about work, Dad. I told you that. Did you call her?

ALLEN

She called me actually.

PAYETON

Oooo, I like it. How was the convo?

ALLEN

Great, thought it flowed well actually.

PAYETON

Love it. Let me see a picture of her again?

Allen scrolls through his phone and brings up a dating site app.

Andrea's profile is on screen: Andrea looks to be mid 30's, beautiful.

Payeton nods to herself.

PAYETON (CONT'D)

I got a good feeling about this one.

ALLEN

You do?

PAYETON

Yeah, I like her.

Allen wraps an arm around Payeton and kisses her forehead.

ALLEN

That's what matters.

PAYETON

I'm actually very proud of you for giving it a shot.

ALLEN

Yeah, I think it's time.

PAYETON

It is. And charge your phone or it's guna die.

Allen looks down at his screen.

ALLEN

What? I'm at forty percent. It's almost half full.

PAYETON

It's half dead. Charge it before you go.

ALLEN

Yes ma'am.

Payeton sighs and adjusts her clothing.

PAYETON

I don't know if I like this outfit.

ALLEN

You look great, honey. But where are you going?

Payeton looks up, confused.

PAYETON

Out with Sam...? I told you already.

ALLEN

You did? When? Is Sam picking you up?

Payeton looks lost.

Allen flips a set of car keys up into the air. Payeton catches them.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Just kidding.

Payeton smiles.

PAYETON

Don't scare me like that. These for the SUV?

ALLEN

You wish.

PAYETON

Hey, I'm a good driver. Remember my test scores? Besides, I need to practise driving it for our cross-country road trip you promised me.

ALLEN

And you assume I'm going to let you drive?

PAYETON

Well, you have to sleep eventually.

ALLEN

This is true.

PAYETON

Sooooo...

ALLEN

Don't push your luck, young lady. Drive slow and carefully please.

(MORE)

ALLEN (CONT'D)

High test scores or not, you're still a probationary driver.

PAYETON

I know, I know.

ALLEN

No drinking. No texting while driving.

PAYETON

Obviously.

ALLEN

Home at a reasonable hour.

PAYETON

I know Dad, I know.

ALLEN

Seriously, I'll ground you for life.

PAYETON

I don't doubt that for a second. And it's not like you won't be able to track me down.

Payeton shows her phone's GPS app; She taps the screen.

PAYETON (CONT'D)

GPS up and running.

ALLEN

Good girl. But I won't need to track you down, will I?

PAYETON

No, Dad. It's overkill, but I understand it.

ALLEN

Well to me GPS stands for... 'Getting Payeton Safely', um, home. Get used to it.

Payeton rolls her eyes.

PAYETON

Good one. Didn't quite work though.

Allen takes a step back.

ALLEN
How do I look?

PAYETON
You look good. Sam still thinks
you're hot.

ALLEN
She's trouble that one.

Payeton adjusts Allen's collar to her liking.

PAYETON
You're going to have a kick ass
night.

Payeton's head starts nodding along to the music in her
earbuds.

ALLEN
Wait... Have you been listening to
music this whole conversation?

PAYETON
Of course. Why?

Allen shakes his head.

ALLEN
I don't understand you kids.

PAYETON
It's called multi-tasking. Even
when I'm not listening I'm always
listening.

Allen stares at Payeton.

ALLEN
Wow. Did you really just say that?

PAYETON
Why?

ALLEN
No reason. You just reminded me of
your Mom.

PAYETON
Oh.

A quiet moment passes between Father and Daughter.

Allen hugs Payeton and kisses her on the cheek.

ALLEN
I love you, Payt.

PAYETON
Love you too.

ALLEN
We got this.

PAYETON
We got this.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Payeton backs the car out of the driveway. She waves goodbye.

Allen waves and watches the car drive away until it is out of sight.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Allen sits alone at a table with two chairs. The restaurant is crowded with many PEOPLE, talking, laughing, drinking.

Allen swipes through his phone. The screen displays a text message history with Andrea. The last few messages read, *'I'm here now, text me when you're here'*; *'Busy place tonight, I'm getting us a table'*; *'Waiting...'*; *'Are you coming?'*

He brings the phone to his ear. RINGING...

ANDREA (O.S.)
Hey you've reached Andrea. I'm away
from the phone right now but if--

Allen hangs up. He sighs. He drinks some water and stands up to leave.

RINGING.

Allen quickly sits and answers the phone.

ALLEN
Hey.

ANDREA (O.S.)
Hey.

ALLEN

Everything okay? I've been texting you. I'm here now, I got us a table.

ANDREA (O.S.)

I know, I'm outside.

ALLEN

Oh... Do you want me to come meet you out there?

There is a lengthy pause.

ANDREA (O.S.)

No. I'm not coming in.

ALLEN

Okay...? Is something wrong?

ANDREA (O.S.)

I just don't think I can go through with it.

ALLEN

Really?

ANDREA (O.S.)

Look, I got here before you. I saw you park and go inside. I came in and saw you sitting there and... you looked even better than your pictures. I guess I just... panicked.

ALLEN

That's okay, it happens. I can come meet you outside and we can go for a walk or something more casual if you want?

ANDREA (O.S.)

No... Allen, I- -I think I'm just going to go home. I don't think I'm ready for this.

ALLEN

You sure? I mean, I'm just human. I'm not going to bite.

ANDREA (O.S.)

I know, I know, just... I'm not saying no forever I'm just saying no for tonight.

(MORE)

ANDREA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 I feel like I overstepped my
 comfort zone for some reason.

Allen nods, accepting but disappointed.

ALLEN
 Okay, I understand.

ANDREA (O.S.)
 I'm so sorry for standing you up
 like this.

ALLEN
 You didn't stand me up, you
 literally just sat me down.

Andrea laughs.

ANDREA
 Thank you for being so
 understanding, Allen. I hope we
 will talk again.

ALLEN
 We will for sure, Andrea.

ANDREA
 Take care. Enjoy your night.

ALLEN
 You as well.

The phone disconnects.

Allen pockets his cell phone and finishes the water, clearly
 disappointed.

He stands and tucks the chair back close to the table before
 leaving.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

Samantha stands on her front porch smoking a cigarette. She
 presses a button on her cell phone and brings it to her ear.

SAMANTHA
 Come on, Payeton. Answer.

The phone RINGS with no response. The answering machine
 clicks on.

PAYETON (O.S.)

This is Payeton. I always have my cell phone on me so I'm probably ignoring you. Unless I'm not. Wouldn't you like to know. Anyway, hang up and leave a text message. I never check these.

A single BEEP.

SAMANTHA

Payeton I've been texting you forever. Like five in a row with no response. Unprecedented. Now I'm reduced to voice mail. Where are you? I'm out on my porch waiting. Don't leave me hanging.

Samantha presses a button on the phone and finishes her cigarette. She flicks the butt away and looks down the road, waiting.

INT. RESTAURANT BAR - NIGHT

A DRUNK MAN, 60's, finishes off a beer. He pours another glass from his pitcher.

Allen approaches and leans against the bar counter. He gets the BARTENDER's attention, points to a bottle of liquor, signals for a small amount, gives a thumbs up.

DRUNK MAN

That was pretty smooth.

Allen glances sideways at the Drunk Man.

DRUNK MAN (CONT'D)

Ordered without saying a word.

Allen nods.

DRUNK MAN (CONT'D)

And he answers questions silently as well. Talented man.

Allen motions to the pitcher of beer.

ALLEN

I heard a pitcher's worth a thousand words.

The Drunk Man looks at his pitcher of beer, then back to Allen; He slaps the bar with his hand and laughs.

DRUNK MAN

That was good! You made me laugh so
I owe you a beer. That's the rules,
I don't make them up.

ALLEN

No, I'm okay. But thank you.

The Bartender places Allen's shot glass in front of him and leaves. Allen drinks it quickly, grimaces.

DRUNK MAN

Doesn't go down quite as smooth as
you, huh?

ALLEN

Guess not.

Allen looks down the bar, awaiting the Bartender.

DRUNK MAN

Seems to me you could use a laugh.
Used to be a comedian back in the
day. I got a good one for ya. Wanna
hear it?

Allen turns back to the Drunk Man, studies him.

ALLEN

Why not?

DRUNK MAN

That's the spirit.

The Drunk Man takes a sip of beer.

DRUNK MAN (CONT'D)

So... A little Girl, she's about
five years old, sneaks into the
bathroom while her Mom is taking a
shower. She whips open the shower
door and says, "Hey! What are you
doing?". The Mother, a little
startled, composes herself and
says, "I'm having a shower, honey."
The little Girl looks at her
Mother's breasts and asks, "What
are those?". The Mother says,
"These are my breasts, honey."
"When will I get those?", the
little Girl asks. "When you are
older", the Mom replies. The little
Girl then looks down at her Mom's
bush. She asks "What is that?".

(MORE)

DRUNK MAN (CONT'D)

The Mom goes, "That's my bush, honey." The little Girl asks, "When will I get one of those?" "When you're older" the Mom replies. So the Mother finishes her shower and goes downstairs. The little Girl follows her around as the Mother gets dressed and puts on make-up to get ready to go to bingo.

Allen gets the Bartender's attention and orders another shot.

DRUNK MAN (CONT'D)

Then the step Father gets home from work. He goes right upstairs and jumps in the shower. The little girl does the same thing she did before, sneaks upstairs into the bathroom and whips open the shower door. She looks at her step Father's penis and goes, "What's that?". And the step Father says, "That's my penis, honey." The little Girl says, "When will I get one of those?" And the step Father looks at her and says... "In about fifteen minutes when your Mother leaves for bingo...".

Allen turns away from the Drunk Man, not amused.

DRUNK MAN (CONT'D)

What? You don't find that funny?

ALLEN

No, I don't.

The Bartender places another shot glass down on the counter.

Allen takes the shot down easier this time, no grimace. He places some money on the bar and leaves.

The Drunk Man watches Allen leave the bar area.

DRUNK MAN

Come on, it was just a joke. Geez. Some people need to lighten up.

He pours some more beer from the pitcher and giggles.

DRUNK MAN (CONT'D)

A pitcher's worth a thousand words... I gotta remember that one.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Allen unlocks the doors for his SUV.

He notices a piece of paper has been slipped between one of the windshield wipers. He removes it. The paper reads, 'I'm sorry :(Andrea'.

Allen looks around the parking lot, finding nobody.

His phone RINGS. He looks at the screen, it reads, 'Unknown Number'. He presses a button on the phone, the ringing stops.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Allen is driving. He turns on the overhead light and looks at the piece of paper Andrea left him. He crumples it up into a ball and tosses it aside.

ALLEN

I don't know why I bother, Trish.

After a moment, Allen lets his hands drop from the steering wheel. He stares ahead at the road, driving hands-free.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

I know, I know...

Allen grips the wheel and steadies the car. The cell phone RINGS.

Allen looks at the screen, it reads, 'Unknown Number'. He presses a button on the phone, the ringing stops.

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

Allen walks passed the various rows of tombstones. He stops at one and kneels down.

The tombstone reads, 'Trisha Blank October 8, 1972 - September 14, 2014. Beloved Wife & Mother.' The tombstone is adorned with various heavenly designs and angels. There are numerous flowers leaning against the tombstone.

ALLEN

I see you've had some visitors.

Allen adjusts the flowers, positioning them just right.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

You're missed. You're definitely missed.

(MORE)

ALLEN (CONT'D)

And I know I'm out here like a creep at night again, but I just had to see you. Talk to you. I'm still waiting on that Hi by the way...

Allen shivers in the night air.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Was that it?

Allen smiles sadly, running his fingers along Trisha's name.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Payeton reminds me so much of you. It's crazy to see. I told you I would take care of her but it seems she's taking care of me. You did well with her with the time you had. But you know that.

Allen gazes around the cemetery.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

I don't know... I find it peaceful here. Probably because I'm with you. I just... man... I still lose sleep thinking about that night. It should have been me out there changing that tire. That car should've hit me, not you. It should've been me.

Allen nods to himself, fighting tears.

ALLAN

Police still never found the person that hit you, in case you're wondering. I try not to hold revenge in my heart but it's hard sometimes. Accident or not, I shutter at what I'd do to that person if I ever found them. Some people just need to feel the pain they inflict on others... But I guess life doesn't work that way, does it?

Allen bows his head for a long while, talking to himself silently. He looks back up to the tombstone.

ALLEN

Was supposed to have a date tonight. She didn't show.

(MORE)

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Don't think it would've mattered much, I just would have been comparing her to you the whole time anyway. But I'm trying to take Payeton's advice and get out there. She's so strong, our girl. And I know she's right and is only looking out for me, but she can't see I'm still broken inside. I think we both are. We put on brave faces for each other, but you're the huge piece that's missing. But we are okay, we got this, as Payt would say. You were the best wife a man could ask for. And don't worry, far as Mom's go... you couldn't get any cooler.

Allen's cell phone RINGS. He removes the phone from his pocket, the screen reads, 'Payeton'.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Looks like that's my cue, babe. I got to go be a Dad. Love you, see you soon.

Allen touches the tombstone and stands up. He answers the phone smiling.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Your ears must have been burning.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Dad, something is really wrong.

Allen's smile immediately fades.

ALLEN

What happened?

PAYETON (O.S.)

I got in an accident.

Allen quickly looks back at Trisha's tombstone and moves away from it.

ALLEN

What?

PAYETON (O.S.)

Someone crashed into me. Or I crashed into someone, I don't remember.

ALLEN
Jesus. Are you okay?

PAYETON (O.S.)
I don't know.

ALLEN
Are you hurt?

PAYETON (O.S.)
I don't think so.

ALLEN
Where are you?

PAYETON (O.S.)
I don't know. I can't see anything,
it's all dark.

ALLEN
What do you mean it's all dark?

PAYETON (O.S.)
I mean all I see is black! I'm
scared, Dad.

ALLEN
Okay, it's okay. Can you move?

PAYETON (O.S.)
Yeah, feels like I can move. But I
can't see anything.

ALLEN
Okay, Payeton listen to me. Put
your hand in front of your face,
can you do that? Can you see your
hand?

PAYETON (O.S.)
No. Nothing.

ALLEN
Can you see your phone?

PAYETON (O.S.)
No!

Payeton starts crying.

ALLEN
You need to calm down for me, okay?
Don't panic. Are you alone or with
Sam?

PAYETON (O.S.)

Alone.

ALLEN

Okay. Listen to me, I want you to hang up right now and call nine-one-one.

PAYETON (O.S.)

I can't see my phone, Dad!

ALLEN

How did you call me then, Payeton?

PAYETON (O.S.)

I don't know! I just am talking to you, that's all I know. Come get me. Please.

ALLEN

I will. But what was the last thing you remember about where you were before the accident?

PAYETON (O.S.)

I don't remember anything.

ALLEN

You remember nothing?

PAYETON (O.S.)

I can't think straight, Dad. I'm confused. Nothing makes sense and it's all dark. I don't know why I can't remember anything but I'm scared. You need to come and get me.

ALLEN

I'll find you. Just stay on the line and I'll track you with the GPS, okay?

PAYETON (O.S.)

Okay.

ALLEN

I'm on my way.

Allen breaks out into a run.

He switches the call to speaker phone and brings up the GPS app. He taps it. The app reads, 'Finding Phone...'

The cell phone's charge reads, '20%'. Allen shakes his head.

The GPS app pops up a location.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
I have your location, Payt. Stay
with me and keep talking.

PAYETON (O.S.)
I will. Please hurry.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The SUV speeds down the empty road and into the night.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Allen, driving frantically, looks between the screen and the road ahead of him. He is still on the speaker phone.

ALLEN
Following GPS signal now. Still
with me?

PAYETON (O.S.)
I'm here.

ALLEN
Okay. Do me a favor and try to move
just a little bit. Not too much,
but see if you can maybe see
something from a different angle.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Okay.

Allen waits a moment.

ALLEN
Anything?

PAYETON (O.S.)
No.

ALLEN
Any changes? See anything at all?

PAYETON (O.S.)
No, I said.

ALLEN

Okay, reach out around you. Can you feel anything?

PAYETON (O.S.)

I have. There's nothing.

ALLEN

Payeton... can you touch your body? Anywhere? Press your hands together.

PAYETON (O.S.)

It's just... nothing, Dad. What is happening to me?

ALLEN

That's what I'm trying to figure out.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Have you called nine-one-one?

ALLEN

I need to find you first. But I will. How long ago was the accident? Do you remember?

PAYETON (O.S.)

I can't... think. Nothing makes sense.

ALLEN

Okay. What's your last name?

PAYETON (O.S.)

Blank.

ALLEN

That's good, honey. What is your Mother's name?

PAYETON (O.S.)

Trisha.

ALLEN

And your birthday?

PAYETON (O.S.)

June twelfth, two thousand.

ALLEN

Perfect. That's a good sign.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Are you getting close to me?

Allen checks the phone and makes a sharp turn.

ALLEN
Yup, a few more minutes. Just hold on.

PAYETON (O.S.)
I feel cold, Dad.

ALLEN
Where do you feel cold?

PAYETON (O.S.)
Everywhere.

Allen shakes his head, concerned.

ALLEN
What can you hear, Payeton?

PAYETON (O.S.)
Just your voice.

ALLEN
Nothing else?

A long pause.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Payeton?

PAYETON (O.S.)
No, nothing else. I'm so cold.

ALLEN
I want you to do me a favor. Can you do that for me?

PAYETON (O.S.)
Yeah.

ALLEN
I want you to scream.

A long pause.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
You need to scream for help. Do you understand? Maybe someone will hear you.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Okay.

ALLEN

That's my girl. Give it everything you've got.

PAYETON (O.S.)

HELP! PLEASE SOMEBODY HELP ME!
ANYONE! PLEASE! I'M RIGHT HERE!
HELP ME!

Payeton's breathing has turned rapid.

ALLEN

That was good. Now do you hear anything?

PAYETON (O.S.)

No. Dad, there is no one. I'm alone.

Payeton cries quietly.

PAYETON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

There's no one.

ALLEN

That's alright. I'm almost there. Two minutes.

PAYETON (O.S.)

What if you can't find me?

ALLEN

I'm tracking the phone you're talking on. I will find you. You just got to hold on.

PAYETON (O.S.)

It's so cold and dark. What if I'm blind?

ALLEN

Don't make assumptions. You're probably just a little out of it after the crash. It's normal.

PAYETON (O.S.)

It is?

ALLEN

Yes. Are you forgetting your Dad's
a Doctor? Nothing's going to happen
to you if I'm around.

PAYETON (O.S.)

You promise?

ALLEN

I promise.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Okay.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The SUV runs a stop sign and speeds around a corner.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Allen's eyes are locked on the screen.

ALLEN

I'm almost there.

The familiar red and blue hues of police sirens light up the
interior of the SUV.

Allen slowly looks up ahead of him.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Oh God...

PAYETON (O.S.)

Dad? What's wrong?

ALLEN

I... don't know yet, baby. Hold on.

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT

The SUV pulls to a stop.

Various police cars surround the area, the sirens flashing
with no sound.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Allen looks down at the phone's screen. It reads, 'Arrived'.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Dad?

Allen switches the speaker phone off, brings the phone to his ear.

ALLEN

I'm here now.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Thank God.

ALLEN

Still can't hear or see anything?

PAYETON (O.S.)

Still nothing.

Allen shakes his head, confused.

ALLEN

Okay, I'm coming.

He exits the SUV.

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT

Allen jogs passed various police cars.

ALLEN

I'm just going to put you on mute, okay? Give me a second here.

PAYETON (O.S.)

What? Why, Dad? What is happening?

ALLEN

One second. I'll be right back.

Allen mutes the call.

OFFICER DENTON, stocky, early 30's, notices Allen and steps in front of him.

OFFICER DENTON

Stop right there please. No one's allowed passed this point.

ALLEN

What happened here?

OFFICER DENTON

You with the media?

ALLEN

What? No. My Daughter has been in an accident. I tracked her phone to this location.

Officer Denton suddenly realizes something.

OFFICER DENTON

Oh, you're the Father. We've been trying to reach you.

Allen's face goes stoic.

ALLEN

What the fuck do you mean you've been trying to reach me?

OFFICER DENTON

A cell phone was recovered at the scene. We have been trying to call you.

ALLEN

Why would you need to call me?

OFFICER DENTON

Would you like to come have a seat, sir?

ALLEN

No, I wouldn't. Tell me what happened.

OFFICER DENTON

Is your Daughter Payeton? Payeton Blank?

ALLEN

Yes.

Officer Denton sighs.

OFFICER DENTON

Okay. I regret to inform you, sir, that your Daughter has in fact been in an accident. It was fatal. She didn't make it.

Allen stares a hole through Officer Denton, angry, confused.

ALLEN

What are you talking about?

OFFICER DENTON
She collided head on with another
driver. Both were killed instantly.

ALLEN
You've got the wrong fucking girl,
pal.

Allen quickly unmutes his cell phone, brings it to his ear.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Payeton?

PAYETON (O.S.)
Yeah?

ALLEN
Looking for you now, honey. Hold
on.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Okay.

OFFICER DENTON
Sir?

ALLEN
She's on the phone with me right
now, moron. Help me find her.

Allen pushes his way passed Officer Denton.

He reaches the middle of the road, drawing attention from the
other COPS.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
I need help finding my daughter!

The Cops stare at Allen blankly.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Hey! Did you hear me?! Why are you--

Allen's eyes lock on the twisted metal of two cars in a
ditch. One of the car's is Payeton's.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
... not helping.

He slowly brings the phone to his ear.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Payeton?

PAYETON (O.S.)

Yeah?

Allen breaks out into a full run towards the cars. He jumps down into the ditch and works through the metal.

ALLEN

I'm here at the car. Where are you?

PAYETON (O.S.)

I don't know. Can't you see me?

ALLEN

No. Scream for me.

PAYETON (O.S.)

DAD!

Allen searches through the metal.

ALLEN

I... can't hear you.

PAYETON (O.S.)

DAD!!... You can't hear that?!

ALLEN

Only through the phone. You're not here.

PAYETON (O.S.)

What?

Allen desperately pushes himself around a metal piece of the car and sticks his head inside.

ALLEN

You're not fucking here!

PAYETON (O.S.)

How can I not be there, Dad! Find me!

ALLEN

I'm trying!

Allen moves the rear of the car and looks at the license plate.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Fuck!

Two of the Cops appear behind Allen and grab his arms, pulling him away from the car.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Hey! Let go of me! This is my
Daughter's car! Where is she?

COP #1
Easy, buddy. Your Daughter's not in
there.

Allen kicks at the ground, trying to break free.

COP #2
Relax!

ALLEN
She's nearby! I tracked her phone
here! Let go of me!

The two Cops bring Allen out of the ditch and onto the road.
They release him.

OFFICER DENTON (O.S.)
You mean this phone?

Allen turns around.

Officer Denton is holding Payeton's phone. The screen is
cracked but otherwise in tact.

OFFICER DENTON (CONT'D)
As I said, we were trying to call
you.

He holds the phone out toward Allen.

OFFICER DENTON (CONT'D)
I'm sorry for your loss.

Allen stares at the phone in Officer Denton's hand.

ALLEN
That can't be her phone.

Officer Denton hits a button; A picture of Trisha and Payeton
when she was fourteen appear on screen.

OFFICER DENTON
Is this not your Daughter?

ALLEN
Yeah, that's her but...

Allen quickly brings his phone to his ear.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Payeton, whose phone are you using?

PAYETON (O.S.)
Dad what the fuck is going on? All
I hear is you and these guys--

ALLEN
Payeton! Where. Is. Your. Phone?

PAYETON (O.S.)
I told you, I don't know! I can't
see anything.

Allen turns on the speaker phone and holds out the phone
towards Officer Denton.

ALLEN
You're on speaker with the police,
Payeton. Tell them who you are and
what you see.

PAYETON (O.S.)
The police? Dad, why are you with
the police? What has happened to
me?

Officer Denton exchange confused looks with the Cops.

ALLEN
Tell them who you are and what
happened to you, Payeton.

PAYETON (O.S.)
My name is Payeton Blank. I was in
a car accident. There, happy? Just
come fucking get me! Please! I'm
scared!

Allen throws his arms in the air.

ALLEN
So you going to help me find her or
not?

Officer Denton steps closer to Allan.

OFFICER DENTON

Sir... I don't know who that is on the line, but if this picture on this phone is your Daughter as you said it was, and that is in fact your Daughter's car in the ditch, then I can confirm that she is dead. I saw the body myself.

Allen looks lost, on the verge of a breakdown.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Dad, what are they saying? What did they just say?

ALLEN

Hold on, baby.

Allen clicks off the speaker phone. He leans in towards Officer Denton.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

I know that's my Daughter's phone, and I know that's her car over there, but I also know my Daughter's voice. And she's right here on the line with me. So no matter what you may think you know, I need you to back the fuck away from me and do your fucking job. Help me find her. And call a fucking ambulance because all I see is the police around here.

OFFICER DENTON

There was two ambulances here sir, not more than an hour ago. They both left with bodies in them.

ALLEN

Yeah?

OFFICER DENTON

I'm afraid so.

ALLEN

Where did they take them?

OFFICER DENTON

Coroner's office. I can take you there if you want. In fact, I'd prefer to.

Allen steps away from the Officers, exasperated.

He looks down at his cell phone, the charge reads, '15%'. He brings the phone to his ear.

ALLAN

Payeton...

PAYETON (O.S.)

Stop cutting me off, Dad! I can't be alone. Please.

ALLEN

Okay, I'm sorry. I won't anymore.

Payeton starts crying.

PAYETON (O.S.)

I feel so... empty. I can't feel much. I need you here. I need Mom.

Allen tears up.

ALLEN

I know. I'm not giving up. I will find you.

PAYETON (O.S.)

You need to look harder.

ALLEN

I know.

PAYETON (O.S.)

And you need to come hug me and kiss my forehead and tell me it's going to be okay.

ALLEN

I will.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Do we got this?

Allen fights the tears back.

PAYETON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Dad?

ALLEN

Yeah baby, we got this.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Allen gets in and closes the door.

Officer Denton and the Cops are watching. Officer Denton turns away and begins talking to someone on his radio.

Allen starts the ignition. He turns on the speaker phone.

ALLEN

So here's the thing, Payt. I can't track you down with the GPS anymore.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Why?

ALLEN

Because you're not using your phone.

PAYETON (O.S.)

I don't understand. What am I using then?

ALLEN

I have no idea.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Well when I called you, what number showed up?

ALLEN

Yours. It just said 'Payeton'.

PAYETON (O.S.)

That doesn't make any sense.

ALLEN

None of this does. But if you can't find something start eliminating places where it could be. So that's my next step.

PAYETON (O.S.)

What about the Cops? Are they helping?

Allen glances at the Cops out his window.

ALLEN

I'm your Father so I'm going to find you myself. That's my job, not theirs.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Okay. Just whatever you do, don't hang up.

Allen quickly glances at the phone's charge, it reads, '14%'.

ALLEN

I won't.

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT

The SUV does a U-turn away from the various police cars and speeds away.

TRISHA (V.O.)

You look for reasons to wake up.
You try to find a purpose hidden
somewhere in the lining of your
life, some hidden pocket that you
might have forgot to check. You can
lose yourself in the insignificant
details of it all but in the end
you always come back to the same
questions. Why are we here? And
what happens after we die?

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Allen is driving with one hand on the wheel, his cell phone on his lap. He is talking.

TRISHA (V.O.)

It's really our own ego that bring
up these questions. What makes us
think we are special and deserve
any sort of afterlife? Maybe we are
just scared of what it really means
to be dead. A total loss of
consciousness. Can you picture
that? Go ahead, try to imagine
nothing. Try to imagine no
conscious thought. Can't do it, can
you? Our brains won't allow us to
imagine nothing. It's like a
defense mechanism for the truth.

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT

Officer Denton looks at the picture of Trisha and Payeton on the phone with the cracked screen.

TRISHA (V.O.)

Because if we become nothing when we die, then what we do when we are alive doesn't really matter, does it? Or is that the purpose? To leave a legacy behind...

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The SUV speeds toward a lit up area in the distance. A building on a hill comes into view.

TRISHA (V.O.)

I think the purpose of life is to realize that there is no answers. There is no right or wrong way to live. You exist. You are here now. That's all that matters. But while you're here, if you decide to follow an uncharted path and leave a trail behind you, be prepared to do it alone. No one may follow you, but who knows, you may discover something that has never been touched before.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The SUV pulls into a parking space. There are two other vehicles parked.

The building's sign reads, 'Coroner's Office'.

TRISHA (V.O.)

You may just stumble upon something that changes everything. A new way of looking at life and death and everything in between.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Allen turns off the ignition. He presses a button on his phone and brings it to his ear. He talks.

TRISHA (V.O.)

But, I must warn you, there's always that chance that you realize you never should have laid a hand on it. You may come to the horrifying realization that you messed up.

(MORE)

TRISHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

You may just have to turn around
and go back, fast. Because this
thing you thought you found...
really it just found you.

Allen exits the vehicle.

TRISHA (V.O.)

Now, for the love of God... run.

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Allen bursts through the front doors, phone pressed to his
ear.

ALLEN

I understand that. But I want you
to keep trying, Payeton. You can't
give up.

PAYETON (O.S.)

I just need to see some light, Dad.
Something. I can't take this
darkness anymore. I'm freaking out.

ALLEN

Just keep looking.

PAYETON (O.S.)

It's so cold here. Where are you?

ALLEN

I'm crossing something off the
list. Hold on.

A Coroner's ASSISTANT, early 30's, is stirring a coffee in
front of stairs leading downward. She stops stirring her cup
as Allen approaches.

ASSISTANT

Welcome to our slumber party.

ALLAN

I need some information from you.

ASSISTANT

Okay...

ALLEN

Have you guys had anybody come in
tonight?

ASSISTANT
And who are you?

ALLEN
I'm Doctor Allen Blank.

ASSISTANT
Okay, Doctor. What's this about?

ALLEN
I just need you to answer my
question please.

ASSISTANT
Well we've had three so far, but
night's young.

ALLEN
Can I see them?

The Assistant gives Allen a sideways look.

ASSISTANT
Why? Kind of late in the process,
Doc. Not much you can do for them.

ALLEN
The three that came in. Men? Women?
Give me something, it's an
emergency.

The Assistant sips from her coffee cup.

ASSISTANT
Heard you Doctors make a lot of
money. Must be nice. We get paid
like shit here.

Allen and the Assistant stare at each other for a moment.
Allen takes the hint.

ALLEN
I don't have time for this.

He pulls out his wallet and removes some bills. He hands them
to the Assistant. She pockets the bills.

ASSISTANT
Two older Men and one teenage Girl.

Allen's breath catches in his throat.

ALLEN
I need to see the Girl.

The Assistant shrugs and steps aside, clearing a path for the stairs.

ASSISTANT
I just work here, pal.

Allen takes a step towards the stairs, stops.

ALLEN
Do you get a cell phone signal down there?

ASSISTANT
Yeah, there's outdoor access for when the ambulances roll in. I would lose my mind down there if there wasn't.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Allen heads downward, phone to his ear.

ALLEN
How we doing?

PAYETON (O.S.)
I feel like I'm passing out and waking up over and over.

ALLEN
Try to stay awake, Payeton. It's important.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Who was that girl, Dad?

ALLEN
She was just trying to help.

PAYETON (O.S.)
What did she say about losing her mind?

ALLEN
Don't worry about that. I was just making sure I wasn't going to lose the signal.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Why would you lose the signal?
Where are you going?

Allen steps onto the landing, stopping at a closed door in front of him.

ALLEN

Payeton, you're going to have to trust me, okay? Can you do that for me?

PAYETON (O.S.)

Yeah.

ALLEN

That's my girl. Give me a minute.

Allen hits the mute button on the phone and slowly opens the door in front of him.

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE BASEMENT - NIGHT

Allen steps into a blue-gray loading and receiving zone. There is an open garage-sized door at the back leading outside.

Various DEAD BODIES wrapped in plastic are lying on refrigerated shelves.

There are three BODIES on tables in the middle of the floor. Two are under white sheets.

The CORONER, mid 50's, thin, is working with one of the bodies. He holds a blue light of a bug zapper over the body while taking fingerprints of the dead Man's hand.

CORONER

You're not supposed to be down here.

Allen approaches closer.

ALLEN

I just need to take a look at the girl that arrived tonight.

CORONER

And who are you exactly?

ALLEN

I'm a Doctor.

The Coroner looks up from his work.

CORONER

Do you have credentials on your person?

ALLEN

I don't carry my hospital I.D. with me, no.

CORONER

So you want me to just, what, take your word for it?

ALLEN

I have money.

CORONER

Oh, good. So does the bum on the corner that I give my loose change to. Now get the fuck out of here. I've got work to do.

Allen's jaw clenches, angered, impatient.

ALLEN

How do you want me to prove it?

CORONER

I don't know you from a hole in the wall buddy. Tell me something only a doctor would know.

Allen steps closer.

ALLEN

I *could* do that. Or, maybe I'll just come over there and close off your upper airway. You'll already be where you need to be. Emergency responders will think it's just laryngospasm, which is a sudden, sustained contracting of muscles of the larynx. And you should know, in advance, that any attempt to force a breath will only worsen the problem as this just closes the epiglottis more tightly. Should I continue?

The Coroner considers something, a little intimidated.

CORONER

It's not necessary. But just out of curiosity, why do you need to see the cadaver?

ALLEN
That's not your concern.

The Coroner looks at the phone in Allen's hand.

CORONER
We frown on cell phone usage down here.

Allen gives him a look.

CORONER (CONT'D)
No touching, *Doctor*. Make it quick.

ALLEN
I just need a second.

CORONER
She's on the end, fully clothed. I haven't got to her yet.

Allen approaches the body under the white sheet on the end. He unmutes the phone and brings it to his ear.

ALLEN
Payeton?

PAYETON (O.S.)
I'm here. What's going on?

ALLEN
Just stay with me.

PAYETON (O.S.)
I'm not going anywhere.

Allen slowly brings his hand to the top of the white sheet near the head. He takes a hold of sheet, exhales a deep breath, and pulls it back.

Payeton's blue face. She has various cuts and bruises on her face from the accident.

Allen gasps and recoils back, almost losing his footing.

The Coroner looks surprised by this reaction.

CORONER
What's wrong?

Allen takes hold of the white sheet and rips it off. Payeton is wearing the same outfit as earlier that night.

ALLEN

That's... my Daughter. That's my
Daughter...

Allen brings the phone to his ear, in shock.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

I... don't understand.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Dad, what's wrong?

Allen cries at the sound of Payeton's voice.

ALLEN

I don't understand, baby.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Dad, you're scaring me. What
happened?

CORONER

Do you need me to call someone?

Allen brings his hand over his mouth, silencing a whimper. He leans in close to Payeton's body and touches her face with his hand.

ALLEN

My baby...

PAYETON (O.S.)

Dad, I feel something. My face is
getting warm.

Allen freezes.

ALLEN

What did you say?

PAYETON (O.S.)

My face... it feels warm.

Allen places two fingers on her neck, checking for a pulse.

A look of concern crosses the Coroner's face.

CORONER

Why are you checking for a pulse?

ALLEN

What about now?

PAYETON (O.S.)
A small place on my neck is warm.

Allen's hands begin to shake.

ALLEN
Oh Jesus Christ...

He takes a hold of Payeton's right arm.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
And now?

PAYETON (O.S.)
My arm. What's happening to me,
Dad?

ALLEN
Which arm, Payeton?

PAYETON (O.S.)
My right.

ALLEN
Fuck! Hang on, baby. Hang on.

Allen places the phone down on the table. He pinches Payeton's nose closes and begins breathing into her mouth.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Dad?

The Coroner grabs Allen by the shirt.

CORONER
Hey! What are you doing!? She's
gone!

Allen shoves him away.

ALLEN
Get the fuck off me!

The Coroner stumbles back and falls.

Allen continues CPR on Payeton.

CORONER
Fuck this. I'm calling the cops.

The Coroner gets up and runs toward the stairs.

Allen instinctively chases after him and catches him, grabbing him by the shirt. His eyes are wild, frantic.

ALLEN

What the fuck are you doing?

CORONER

Let go of me!

ALLEN

Just wait. You need to help me. My Daughter is on the phone with me right now. She's talking to me even though I'm staring at her body and feeling no pulse. How is that possible? How?

The Coroner struggles to get himself out of Allen's grasp.

CORONER

You're fucking crazy!

ALLEN

I'm not, that's the problem.

The Coroner stops struggling and locks eyes with Allen.

CORONER

That girl over there is dead. If she is your Daughter then I am sorry for your loss but she is dead.

Allen shakes his head vehemently.

ALLEN

No. You said it yourself, you hadn't gotten to her yet. And she's - she's on the phone. She's reacting to my touch.

CORONER

Sir, I don't know who is on the phone with you but I can guarantee you it's not that girl lying on the table.

Allen looks over his shoulder at Payeton's body, relaxing his grip.

ALLEN

You're just like everyone else. You don't listen. The cops don't listen. No one listens.

The Coroner shoves Allen away and turns to run.

CORONER

HELP!

Allen quickly catches the Coroner, grips the back of his head, and smashes it into the wall. The Coroner drops in an unconscious heap.

Allen stands over him, breathing heavily, shocked by his combativeness.

ALLEN

Okay, okay... Think.

Allen takes the Coroner's arms and drags him away from the stairs and into a corner.

He rushes back to Payeton's body and grabs the phone.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

I'm back. I'm back.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Tell me what's happening! Please!

ALLEN

Payeton, I need you to answer me a question.

PAYETON (O.S.)

What?

ALLEN

What were you looking forward to us doing together?

PAYETON (O.S.)

What? What do you mean?

ALLEN

What were you looking forward to the most that we had planned to do together?

PAYETON (O.S.)

Our um, road trip across the country?

ALLEN

Good, that's good.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Why?

Allen looks over at the Coroner's unconscious body.

ALLEN

I uh... I got to do a little test, okay? I'm going to put you on mute for a few seconds, I want you to tell me if you can still hear me.

PAYETON (O.S.)

No, don't leave again!

ALLEN

I'll come back on the line in a few seconds. I promise.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Dad!

ALLEN

Please, Payeton. Just listen and tell me if you hear anything, okay? It's important.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Okay.

Allan hits mute on the phone. He cups Payeton's left shoulder with his hand.

ALLEN

I'm right here. Can you feel me? Can you feel this? If you can hear me say something.

Silence.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Say something if you hear me Payeton.

Silence. He unmutes it.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

You didn't hear me at all?

PAYETON (O.S.)

No, nothing.

ALLEN

Anything get warm?

PAYETON (O.S.)

My left shoulder a little. Is that you? Did you find me, Dad?

ALLEN
Jesus fucking Christ.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Dad! Did. You. Find me?

Allen looks at his Daughter's body, helpless.

ALLEN
Yeah. Yeah, I think I did.

Allen rubs Payeton's head, lost for words.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Dad... am I dead?

Allen shakes his head.

ALLEN
No... no, you can't be. We are
talking Payeton, you can't be. This
doesn't make any sense.

Payeton starts crying.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Are you looking at my body right
now? Tell me the truth.

Tears fall from Allen's eyes. He wipes them away.

ALLEN
I don't know what's happening.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Answer me!

Allen begins to nod.

ALLEN
Yes.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Oh my God...

Allen sits with Payeton's body, phone pressed to his ear, not
a word spoken for a long while.

He looks at the Coroner's unconscious body in the corner.

ALLEN
I need to get you out of here.

Low sobs emit from the phone.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
I can't leave you here. I can't
leave you, period.

Allen checks the phone charge, it reads, '5%'.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
I have to get you home.

ASSISTANT (O.S.)
What's going on here? I heard
screaming.

Allen spins around.

The Assistant is at the bottom of the stairs. She looks over
at the Coroner's unconscious body and slowly looks back at
Allen, realizing.

She turns and runs up the stairs.

ALLEN
Wait!

Allen chases her.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Allen catches up with the Assistant and grabs her ankle. She
trips and hits her head on the stairs and rolls down to the
landing.

The Assistant moans in pain while holding her head.

Allen leans over her, his eyes wide.

ALLEN
I'm sorry. I'm sorry. But you can't
call the cops they will take her
away from me. Do you understand?

The Assistant screams and starts punching and flailing. Allen
attempts to restrain her.

ASSISTANT
Get the fuck off me!

ALLEN
Just calm down, I can explain this.

ASSISTANT
HELP! HELP ME!

ALLEN
Be quiet. You're not listening.

ASSISTANT
HELP!

ALLEN
Quiet! You're not listening!

Allen picks her up by the collar and slams the back of her head into the floor. The Assistant is still.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Shit, shit, shit, shit...

Allen stands up and listens. It is silent. He picks up the Assistant's unconscious body and brings her down the stairs.

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE BASEMENT - NIGHT

Allen places the Assistant's unconscious body on the floor.

He goes over to Payeton's body and wraps her up in the white sheet. He picks her up and places her gently on the floor.

Allen picks up the phone. Payeton is crying.

ALLEN
One second, Payeton.

He pockets the phone.

Allen returns to the Assistant and picks her up. He carries her to the table where Payeton was and places her down on it.

Looking around the room, Allen spots a pile of white sheets. He grabs two sheets and drapes one over the Assistant.

He heads over to the Coroner and drapes a sheet over him.

Allen goes back to Payeton's body, picks her up, and heads toward the open garage-sized door in the back.

EXT. CORONER'S OFFICE REAR ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Allen carries Payeton's wrapped body around the building and up a hill. He looks around, breathing heavily.

SURVEILLANCE CAMERA POV

A camera follows Allen as he carries the body to the parking lot.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Allen carries Payeton's body toward the SUV. He looks around, no one in sight.

ALLEN
We're going home, Payt. Dad's got you.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Allen lays Payeton's body gently down in the back seat. He flips the white sheet off of her and takes the phone from his pocket. He turns on the speaker phone.

ALLEN
You still feel cold?

Silence.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Payeton?

PAYETON (O.S.)
Yeah, I do.

Allen begins rubbing her arms, legs and chest.

ALLEN
Feel better?

PAYETON (O.S.)
I guess.

Allen keeps rubbing. He scans the area around him.

PAYETON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
What happens now, Dad?

ALLEN
I don't know. But I'm going to figure that out.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Is this what death is?

ALLEN
I don't know, baby. I don't think it can be. But we really need to get going or--

PAYETON (O.S.)
Is this what happened to Mom?

Allen stops rubbing.

PAYETON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Was she trapped here like me?

Allen shakes his head.

ALLEN
I really have no idea, Payeton...

PAYETON (O.S.)
We buried her, Dad. Underground.
With the worms. And... and we
cremated Grandma and Grandpa.

ALLEN
Payeton, you need to stop this.

PAYETON (O.S.)
But it's true. It's what we did. We
cremated them. And if I can feel
warmth...

ALLEN
Enough!

Payeton starts sobbing.

PAYETON (O.S.)
I'm sorry.

Allen collects his thoughts for a moment.

ALLEN
No, I'm sorry. I just need to get
you home, okay? I have to think. I
have to figure things out.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Don't give up on me, okay?

ALLEN
Never.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Keep me. I don't want to go
underground or be burned.

ALLEN
That's not going to happen to you.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Promise?

ALLEN

I promise. But I got to get you home so I don't lose you.

PAYETON (O.S.)

What do you mean?

Allen checks the phone charge, it reads, '3%'.

ALLEN

I'm at three percent.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Three percent!? I told you to charge your phone!

ALLEN

I know... I forgot, I'm sorry.

PAYETON (O.S.)

I can't lose you! If you have the charger you can plug it into the USB in the car.

ALLEN

I don't have it on me. It's at home.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Dad!

ALLEN

We should have enough left to get back if I hurry.

PAYETON (O.S.)

You need to go. Now! Yo don't understand how quick phones can die. We can't disconnect. I don't know if I'll ever get you back. I can't be by myself here. I can't!

ALLEN

I'm going now.

Allen slams the door closed. He opens the driver's side door and hops in, starting the ignition.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The SUV peels out of the parking lot, tires squealing.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Allen grips the wheel tight. The scenery outside whips passed in a blur. The cell phone is on his lap.

He quickly checks on Payeton's body in the backseat.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Are you hurrying?

ALLEN
I'm hurrying.

PAYETON (O.S.)
What are you at?

ALLEN
Two percent. Fuck.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Dad...

ALLEN
I know.

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT

The SUV speeds passed a speed limit sign with no numbers.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Allen picks up the phone and checks the screen. It reads, 'Battery Low'. He picks up speed.

PAYETON (O.S.)
Are we almost home?

ALLEN
Almost.

PAYETON (O.S.)
You can't lose me!

ALLEN
I'm going as fast as I can!

PAYETON (O.S.)
If I cut out, you need to find a way to get me back. Without your voice I have nothing.

ALLEN

I will get you back. But you're going to have to call me. The cops have your phone.

PAYETON (O.S.)

I don't know how I called you. I'm scared, Dad.

ALLEN

I know, I am too.

The phone makes a couple BEEPS.

PAYETON (O.S.)

Do we got this?

ALLEN

Fuck, don't do this...

PAYETON (O.S.)

Tell me we got this!

ALLEN

We got this.

The phone dies.

Silence.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Payeton?

Allen looks at the black phone screen.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Payeton!

He throws the phone against the passenger door.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Fuck!

He reaches back with his free hand and takes hold of Payeton's arm.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

I'm still here. Feel my warmth. I'm still here.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

The SUV speeds into the driveway and parks.

Allen gets out and looks around, seeing no one.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Allen opens the rear door. He wraps Payeton's body in the white sheet and picks her up in his arms.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Allen carries Payeton's body passed Trisha's picture. Both the candles have burnt out.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Allen lays Payeton down gently on the couch. He unwraps the white sheet and strokes her face with his hand.

ALLEN

We're home now, Payt. I'm right here. I'm going to charge my phone so whatever you did before to reach me, do it again, okay? I'll be right back.

Allen rushes out of the living room.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Allen heads to the island and connects the charger to his phone.

The phone's screen lights up, showing a blinking battery being charged.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Allen lights the two candles by Trisha's picture and quickly leaves.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Allen kneels down beside Payeton's body. He rubs her arm.

ALLEN

The phone's charging in the kitchen, honey. Call me. Please.

He touches the side of Payeton's face.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry I didn't listen to
you. But you got to call me now.

He presses his index finger into her arm.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Call.

Allen writes the word 'CALL' in capital letters on Payeton's
arm with his index finger.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
C. A. L. L. Call.

He takes hold of Payeton's arms and shakes her gently.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Come on, Payeton.

A phone RINGS in the kitchen.

Allen jumps up and runs out of the living room.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Allen rushes to the island and looks at the screen. It reads,
'Payeton'. He smiles, relieved.

Allen swipes the screen and brings the phone to his ear.

ALLEN
You did it, baby. You did it.

OFFICER DENTON (O.S.)
Hello?

Allen's smile fades.

ALLEN
Who is this?

OFFICER DENTON (O.S.)
This is Officer Denton. Is this
mister Allen Blank?

Allen's face turns white. He looks as if he's about say
something.

OFFICER DENTON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Hello?

ALLEN

Yes. Yes, this is me.

OFFICER DENTON (O.S.)

Mister Blank, glad I reached you. I just wanted to get in touch with you regarding the events of earlier tonight. I was wondering if you could come in and--

ALLEN

Why are you calling me from my Daughter's phone?

OFFICER DENTON (O.S.)

Excuse me?

ALLEN

My Daughter Payeton's phone. Why are you calling me from her phone?

OFFICER DENTON (O.S.)

I'm... not sure I understand.

ALLEN

You don't understand? You called me.

OFFICER DENTON (O.S.)

Look, I know you've been through a traumatic event tonight and I can't pretend to know how you're feeling, but I have some serious concerns about your behavior from earlier tonight and I just wanted to offer my assistance in any way I could.

ALLEN

I don't need your assistance. I'm fine. I'm okay.

OFFICER DENTON (O.S.)

You're okay?

ALLEN

Yes.

OFFICER DENTON (O.S.)

Can you see how that might worry me considering all that's happened tonight?

ALLEN

Now you're just talking me into a corner. I don't know what you want from me.

OFFICER DENTON (O.S.)

And now I call you and you say I'm calling you from your Daughter's phone when I'm in fact calling you from my office? It's cause for concern.

ALLEN

I... I can't talk right now. I have to keep the line open. Please don't call back here.

OFFICER DENTON (O.S.)

Mister Blank I just--

Allen quickly hangs up.

He scrolls to the recent calls section. The screen reads, 'Unknown Number'. He rubs his eyes.

ALLEN

What the fuck is going on?

FOOTSTEPS.

Allen looks up. FEET SHUFFLING coming from the hallway. They stop.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Hello?

Silence.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Who's there?

Silence.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Payeton?

Allen edges himself closer to the sound, He peeks into the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Allen takes a couple steps into the hallway and stops.

Trisha, clothes covered in dirt, stands beside her picture. Parts of her skin have begun to rot and peel.

TRISHA

Hi.

FLASHCUT:

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Allen is kneeling down beside Trisha's open casket. He sniffs and wipes his nose, brushes some tears away.

ALLEN

And if you want to come down and say Hi every once in awhile... that will be okay too.

BACK TO:

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Allen's breath catches in his throat.

Trisha hunches over and vomits up chunks of soil and worms onto the floor.

ALLEN

Trisha?

Trisha slowly looks up at Allen.

TRISHA

Were you asleep this whole time? I was talking to you.

Allen stares at her in disbelief, lost for words.

TRISHA (CONT'D)

They are coming for Payeton. You have to protect her above all else. They will take her away from you. They don't understand. No one understands until it is too late.

Allen takes a couple slow steps toward Trisha.

ALLEN

I know...

TRISHA

And you know the truth. Your Daughter has given you a gift. And she's given me hope. I'm so alone down here. The bugs, the worms... they just won't leave me alone.

ALLEN

What do you want, Trish? Tell me what you want.

TRISHA

You already know. Hurry.

Trisha leans toward the candles and blows them out.

She is gone. A small amount of dirt remains on the floor.

Allen scrambles toward the dirt and touches it. He picks it up in his hands and lets it fall through his fingers. He breaks down crying.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Allen leans down and wraps Payeton's body up in the white sheet. He picks her up in his arms.

ALLEN

Time to go, baby. Time to go.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

It is raining lightly.

Allen places Payeton's body into the back of the SUV. He pats his empty pockets. He shuts the door and runs back into the house.

A NEIGHBOR walking a dog watches suspiciously. The Neighbor turns and walks away in the opposite direction.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Allen grabs the phone and unplugs the charger, bringing both with him.

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

Allen grabs a shovel.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Allen gets in and slams the door. He starts the ignition and plugs the charger into the USB port. He connects the phone to the charger.

He looks into the backseat and checks on Payeton. He reaches through the white sheet and touches her arm.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

The SUV backs out of the driveway and speeds away.

EXT. CEMETARY ENTRANCE - NIGHT

The SUV pulls up to the cemetery gates and parks.

It is raining heavily.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Allen turns off the ignition and checks the cell phone. The charge reads, '19%'. He unplugs the phone and pockets it.

He turns towards Payeton's body and touches her arm.

ALLEN

Do you know where we are, Payt?
This is where we buried your
Mother.

Allen looks out the front, scanning the area. The rain pelts down on the windshield.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

It's time I right that wrong. When
I come back, I'll have your Mother
with me. And this rain... it will
soften the dirt. It was meant to
be.

Allen turns around to face Payeton's body; A sad, hopeful smile on his face.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

We're going to be a family again.

He pats Payeton's shoulder and exits the SUV.

The door shuts.

SIDE MIRROR POV

Allen makes his way to the back of the SUV and opens the trunk. He removes something, shuts the trunk.

He reappears holding the shovel.

EXT. CEMETARY - NIGHT

Allen, soaking wet, walks along the rows of tombstones, dragging the shovel behind him.

He stops at Trisha's grave and plunges the shovel into the moistened soil. He kneels down, holding the base of the shovel.

ALLEN

I was listening, honey. And I'm
sorry for not hearing you sooner.
Now what do you say we get you out
of there?

Allen stands and begins digging.

EXT. CEMETERY (LATER) - NIGHT

Allen digs frantically into the dirt, the rain a torrential downpour now.

EXT. CEMETERY (LATER) - NIGHT

Allen has dug a hole about two feet deep and six feet wide. He wipes the water from his brow and continues.

A CEMETERY WORKER, mid 20's, approaches.

CEMETERY WORKER

What do you think you're doing?

Allen stops digging, slowly looks up.

ALLEN

I work here.

CEMETERY WORKER

No, you don't. I do.

Allen pushes the shovel into the soil and leans on it.

ALLEN

Okay... Look, this is my wife's grave. She was murdered two years ago and there have been recent developments in her case that could possibly link her killer through DNA. We just need to exhume her body to run some tests.

CEMETERY WORKER

There's proper avenues to go down if that is in fact the case. But I'm afraid having the husband dig up the body in the middle of the night with a shovel isn't one of them.

Allen exhales a deep breath.

ALLEN

I'm a Doctor.

The Cemetery Worker shrugs.

CEMETERY WORKER

I'm a grave digger.

ALLEN

Then do your job and help me. Please. You don't understand what's going on here.

CEMETERY WORKER

Try me.

Allen thinks this over.

ALLEN

I can pay you.

CEMETERY WORKER

How much are we talking?

ALLEN

How much do you want?

CEMETERY WORKER

For some fucked up illegal shit like this? I wouldn't take anything less than a blank check.

ALLEN

Fine. Just help me.

The Cemetery Worker nods to himself.

CEMETERY WORKER

Sure. Why not. Let me just grab
some equipment from the shed.

Allen grabs the shovel and goes back to digging.

ALLEN

Thank you... Thank you...

INT. EQUIPMENT SHED - NIGHT

The Cemetery Worker enters the shed and closes the door. He locks it behind him.

Various excavating equipment hangs on the walls. A small TV, empty pizza boxes, wrappers, bags, are scattered everywhere.

The Cemetery Worker picks up a phone and dials a number. He waits, phone pressed to his ear, looking out the window.

CEMETERY WORKER

Hi, yes, I'd like to report a
disturbance... I got a guy out here
violating a grave. Says it's his
wife's...

EXT. CEMETARY - NIGHT

Allen continues frantically digging in the hole, which is about four feet deep now. He is covered in mud.

ALLEN

Almost there, honey. I'm almost
there.

He looks around the cemetery, continues digging.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

I don't think this kid is coming
back. Looks like we are on our own.
Not a good sign... I know, I
know... I can't expect him to
understand. I need to get you out
as quick as possible... I got
Payeton with me. She's waiting...

Police SIRENS in the distance.

Allen digs faster.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
They're coming. Just like you said.
How much further is it? How much
further... Am I getting close,
Trish? Can you hear me?

The police SIRENS grow closer.

Allen digs furiously, throwing mud and soil over his shoulder
and out of the hole.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Come on...

The rain calms down, pouring lightly now.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
I should've never done this to you.
It always felt wrong. Watching you
lower into the dirt... I should
have listened. Why don't we listen?
Why do we give up so easily after
it's over? This isn't right. It
isn't right and never was. We got
it wrong.

The police SIRENS are closer. The rain stops.

Allen stops digging, breathing heavily. He looks up into the
night sky.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Is that it?

He hangs his head and closes his eyes.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry.

He looks up at Trisha's tombstone that is four feet above
him. 'Trisha Blank October 8, 1972 - September 14, 2014.
Beloved Wife & Mother.'

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Protect her above all else... I
know. I hear you.

Allen kneels down and touches the dirt. He picks it up and
lets it fall through his fingers.

The Police SIRENS are closer.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

I'll see you again. I love you, you
hear me? I love you.

Allen grabs the shovel and reaches above him. He plunges it into the grass above and grabs hold, using it as a stake to climb out of the hole.

Above ground now, he looks back at the tombstone before running off into the night.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

The Police SIRENS are near.

Allen quickly gets into the car and starts the ignition. He is soaked. He turns around and touches Payeton's arm.

ALLEN

How about that cross-country road
trip?

EXT. CEMETARY ENTRANCE - NIGHT

The SUV speeds away and disappears just as three police cruisers round the corner towards the cemetery.

EXT. CEMETARY - NIGHT

Officer Denton, holding a flashlight, approaches Trisha's tombstone surrounded by various COPS. He is escorted by the Cemetery Worker.

CEMETERY WORKER

Here it is.

Officer Denton shines the flashlight at the tombstone and down into the hole.

OFFICER DENTON

Dear God. Did he get her out and
refill the hole?

CEMETERY WORKER

Doesn't look deep enough. And no
way he'd have time to refill it.

OFFICER DENTON

Well we will have to check anyway.

Officer Denton's radio comes to life with a burst of static. He leans his ear toward it.

DISPATCHER (O.S.)
Officer Denton, come in. Over.

Officer Denton brings the radio to his mouth.

OFFICER DENTON
This is Officer Denton. Go ahead.

DISPATCHER (O.S.)
We have multiple two-four-zero's at the Coroner's Office not far from your location. Victim's are one Man, one Woman. Said they were assaulted, knocked unconscious. A corpse was also taken from the scene. Assailant identified as an Allen Phillip Blank. Considered dangerous. Please acknowledge. Over.

OFFICER DENTON
Yeah, I'm on it. Over.

DISPATCHER (O.S.)
Copy that.

Officer Denton stares down into the hole.

OFFICER DENTON
This is guna be a long night...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

Blue skies. Birds chirp.

A small excavator sits unmanned near Trisha's tombstone. The hole has been filled back in.

A LANDSCAPER lays grass down on the dirt.

TRISHA (V.O.)
I mean, in retrospect, maybe I shouldn't have said anything. Maybe that's my job now; To embrace the silence. But I just couldn't let what happened to me happen to my Daughter. Do I want out of here? Absolutely.

(MORE)

TRISHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But I'll lie here rotting for a century if it means Payeton can find some semblance of peace in her darkness. Some light at the end of an endless tunnel leading nowhere. But if I could offer one piece of advice to anyone out there who may be able to listen, it would be this: Stay alive. For as long as you can. Life truly is a blessing, especially with the Hell you have waiting for you. But on the day when death comes to shake your hand, that day that seemed like every other day that came before it, on *that* day, do not go gently. Fight, if you can. Because you have no other choice. He *is* coming. Can you hear him? Can you hear his footsteps? He's right behind you. And one day when you are not ready, he is going to decide to catch up. Now, for the love of God... run.

FADE OUT.

FOOTSTEPS.

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Insert: 3 Months Later. 1,500 Miles Away...

A TEENAGER, 18, wearing a black hood, walks briskly through the sterile white hallway.

A NURSE pushing a PATIENT in a wheelchair passes by.

The Teenager looks over his shoulder quickly. He reaches out and pulls a fire alarm and keeps walking.

The ALARM echoes throughout the Hospital.

NURSES run into various rooms and remove PATIENTS. Other PATIENTS casually walk to the nearest exit.

The Teenager approaches the unattended front desk and pulls out an external hard drive from his pocket. He places the hard drive in a laptop computer and presses a couple buttons.

The Teenager watches the screen, ignoring the commotion around him.

After a few moments he removes the hard drive and pockets it. He makes his way to the front door, casually leaving the building.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

The hooded Teenager approaches a DARK FIGURE holding something under its arm. The Figure is standing just outside an overhead light.

The Teenager pulls out the external hard drive and offers it to the Figure.

TEENAGER

There ya go.

The Figure steps into the light. Allen. His head is shaved. He is wearing black horn-rimmed glasses. He is holding a laptop under his arm.

Allen grabs the hard drive, flips open the laptop, and places it into a slot. He presses a button.

TEENAGER (CONT'D)

That what you needed?

Allen examines the screen, his eyes darting back and forth.

ALLEN

It's perfect.

He pulls out an envelope and hands it to the Teenager.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Something extra for you in there.
You never saw me.

The Teenager opens the envelope, it is full of money. He looks up at Allen.

TEENAGER

Fucking right, man.

Allen nods.

The Teenager takes off running.

Allen tucks the laptop under his arm and walks in the opposite direction.

INT. BASEMENT - UNKNOWN TIME

A dark, dingy basement with no windows.

Various jars filled with liquids line the shelves. They are labelled, 'Formaldehyde', 'Glutaraldehyde', 'Ethanol'.

Syringes, scalpels, and various medical equipment is scattered about on tables. The laptop sits open, the screen blank.

Payeton's body lies on a bed, half covered by a blanket. She is wearing a black bra. Her veins are bulging and dark. Her eyes have plastic eye caps over them. Various tubes are connected to her body.

Several portable heaters are plugged in and facing her body.

Allen saunters into the room and sits on a chair beside the bed. He has ear buds in his ears, music emitting that he hums along to.

He puts plastic medical gloves on his hands. He rubs his index finger into a jar of creme and gently rubs the creme on the plastic eye caps.

ALLEN

Got to keep those eyes hydrated,
don't we?

Allen grabs a syringe from a table. He finds an artery on Payeton and injects her with the contents.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

This is just the regular old
embalming fluid, baby. It's going
to help maintain those good looks
of yours. And your makeup looks
great today, by the way.

Allen looks at one of the tubes from Payeton's body that runs down off the bed and into a drain in the floor. Blood runs down the tube and into the drain.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Into the sewer you go.

Allen moves the blanket down to Payeton's feet. She is wearing black underwear. The veins in her legs are dark. There are trace lines made from black marker that form a square shape on Payeton's stomach.

Allen puts the syringe back and grabs a trocar off the table. He proceeds to puncture Payeton's stomach, bladder, large intestines, and lungs. Gas and fluids are withdrawn into the trocar tube.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

That feels better, doesn't it?

Allen replaces the trocar with a larger syringe. He injects it into Payeton's torso.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

There you go. All done.

Allen removes his plastic medical gloves and tosses them into the trash bin. He checks his cell phone.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

I know you still can't reach me.
But if you ever want to come say
Hi, I'll give you my new number.
You're always welcome. Just like
your mother.

Allen rests his head on Payeton's chest.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

And I should tell you that I gave
up on dating. Have I told you that
before? I don't remember. Anyway, I
don't think that's in the cards for
me anymore. But I do get lonely. I
found another way to meet nice
girls though, it's been working for
me fairly well. Maybe you wouldn't
approve but... anyway. Let's not
get bogged down by the
insignificant details of things.

Allen sits up and looks at the trace lines on Payeton's stomach. He grabs a black marker and touches up the lines.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

This though, right here, is of the
upmost importance, so listen close.
When the time comes, and it will,
one day... Daddy is going to open
you up here, and here. It won't
take long, you're already prepped.
But this will be your window. Your
way out. But don't you worry, I'm
going to keep you as long as I can,
as I promised. For the foreseeable
future, you're not going anywhere.

Allen puts the marker away and rubs Payeton's head, running his fingers through her hair.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Now then... let's wash that hair of yours.

INT. BASEMENT (LATER) - UNKNOWN TIME

Payeton's body rests on a stainless steel table. Allen lathers shampoo into her hair and rinses it off with a shower head. The water and soap drip onto the floor near the drain.

ALLEN

Such a lucky girl you are. Your Dad is very smart, isn't he? To learn all this just for you. I wish I could do this for everyone after they died, I really do. But of course that's unrealistic, isn't it baby?

Allen finishes the wash and begins drying her hair with a towel.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

But the good news is, I don't have to wait. I'm now certain preemptive measures can be taken. And I've already begun.

Allen leans down and kisses Payeton on the forehead. He smiles.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DAY

Various police cars fill the parking lot. A large area has been sectioned off with yellow tape. Various COPS mull about the scene.

DETECTIVE FULLER, late 30's, approaches the crime scene. He ducks under the yellow tape and approaches a BODY. He grimaces at the sight.

The body is that of a young Woman, mid 20's, she is wearing a hospital gown. She has been ripped open in the stomach area. Several vital organs are protruding out of her body. Blood stains the pavement around her.

Various numbered yellow stepping plates have been placed around the body, marking evidence.

Crime scene investigator JULIA CLAYTEN, mid 30's, snaps pictures of the body with her camera.

Detective Fuller stops at her side.

DETECTIVE FULLER
Hey, Julia.

Julia continues to snap pictures.

JULIA
Jason. How'd I know they'd send you down here?

DETECTIVE FULLER
Heard you CSI's are psychic nowadays.

JULIA
Wish I was for this one.

DETECTIVE FULLER
Give me the rundown.

Julia stops taking pictures, the camera hangs from her neck.

JULIA
Victim is Carmen Mangold. Twenty six. Diagnosed with stage four lymphoma. Terminal. Victim left her room late last night to have a smoke, she would do this often according to staff, and this is how her night ended.

DETECTIVE FULLER
So she comes out, has a few puffs and runs into Jack the Ripper? Any eyewitnesses?

JULIA
None. Which is strange considering the amount of people here.

DETECTIVE FULLER
Any cameras in the parking lot?

JULIA
None, apparently. Only in the hospital itself. But funny you should say Jack the Ripper...

Detective Fuller stares down at the body.

DETECTIVE FULLER
Certainly looks like his M.O.

JULIA
Seems like this person wants the
same attention. There was this note
left behind.

Julia hands Detective Fuller a note sealed in plastic.

DETECTIVE FULLER
Handwritten. That's good.

JULIA
This one wants to be caught.

DETECTIVE FULLER
Or he's trying to tell the world
something he feels is personal.

JULIA
Assuming it's a 'he'.

DETECTIVE FULLER
Assuming.

Detective Fuller reads the note.

DETECTIVE FULLER (CONT'D)
"Now she has a way out. Now she is
free. Wherever she is now, she is
thanking me... APB."

Detective Fuller passes the note back to Julia.

DETECTIVE FULLER (CONT'D)
Well, send out an APB for an APB.
Looks like we have ourselves a
serial killer.

JULIA
You think there's others like this?

DETECTIVE FULLER
If there's not, there will be.

JULIA
I guess if he's already leaving
notes...

DETECTIVE FULLER
Got to start somewhere. It rhymes
though, guy thinks he's clever.

JULIA

He believes he saved her.

DETECTIVE FULLER

Well the victim was terminal. How long did she have left?

JULIA

Six months, they said. But she was receiving treatment.

DETECTIVE FULLER

This guy knew about her condition. I want all the staff questioned and all security cameras checked.

JULIA

Think it was an inside job?

DETECTIVE FULLER

Inside or not, the perp went in the hospital at some point.

Julia shakes her head.

JULIA

Ever wonder where these freaks come from?

DETECTIVE FULLER

I try not to think about it. But I'm more concerned about where he's going.

JULIA

Yup. Follow the bread crumbs...

Detective Fuller nods slowly, thinking. He leans down, examining the body.

DETECTIVE FULLER

Okay Carmen, what happened to you? Tell me your story...

INT. BASEMENT - UNKNOWN TIME

Allen is on the laptop. He has one hand on the touch pad, the other hand plays with a large scalpel.

Payeton's body is on the bed surrounded by portable heaters.

Allen clicks on a tab reading, 'Patient List'. Carmen Mangold's file is on screen along with a picture of her. It details her condition underneath.

Allen scrolls through the list. He stops at a file with a picture of a gaunt young Woman. The name reads, 'Alicia Banks'. He leans in closer to the screen, studying.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Allen briskly walks down the hallway and stops at a door. The number on the door is '217'. He knocks three times.

The door opens. No one is there. A head pops out the side and smiles at Allen. ALICIA BANKS.

ALICIA

Come on in.

Allen steps into the room. Alicia disappears back behind the door, leaving only Allen in view.

ALICIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I have to collect the money first, baby. Business before pleasure.

ALLEN

What is your name again?

ALICIA (O.S.)

Destiny, baby. It's on the website.

ALLEN

I meant your real name.

There is a pause.

ALICIA (O.S.)

I don't give out my real name, sorry.

ALLEN

Alicia, right? Alicia Banks?

Another pause.

ALICIA (O.S.)

How did you know that? Who are you?

ALLEN

You're Alicia Banks, twenty nine years old. You have acute myeloid leukemia, which, unfortunately for you, isn't that cute at all. So why are you doing what you're doing?

ALICIA (O.S.)

I think you should leave.

ALLEN

I'll leave when you answer the question.

A long pause.

ALICIA (O.S.)

I need the money, okay? Medical bills don't pay themselves.

ALLEN

I have money. But you're not going to get better doing this. In fact, you're not going to get better at all, are you?

ALICIA (O.S.)

Get out. Now.

ALLEN

I can help you. And you can help me. You can help me teach the rest of the world the truth. I'm not sure you're going to like how, but I promise you, the end will justify the means.

Allen grabs the door and slams it shut.

A scream. Another muffled scream. Stabbing sounds. Grunting. Moaning. Stabbing sounds into wet tissue, over and over.

The stabbing sounds stop. Heavy breathing.

A body is dragged away from the door...

Silence.

CUT TO WHITE:

Insert: **BLANK**

FADE IN:

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Detective Fuller sits at his desk, phone pressed to his ear.

DETECTIVE FULLER
So you're telling me all security
cameras on the second floor were
off at the time...

He shakes his head.

DETECTIVE FULLER (CONT'D)
Of course they were... No no,
that's it for now... Yup, thank
you.

Detective Fuller hangs up the phone and sighs. He sifts through various PHOTOS of Alicia's body in a hotel room, her stomach ripped open, organs protruding.

Someone has approached his desk and is standing over him, waiting.

Detective Fuller looks up.

DETECTIVE FULLER (CONT'D)
Can I help you?

Officer Denton, dressed in street clothes, extends a hand.

OFFICER DENTON
Detective Fuller?

Detective Fuller shakes his hand.

DETECTIVE FULLER
In the flesh. And you are?

OFFICER DENTON
Officer Blake Denton. I read about
the case you're working on in the
paper last week. The killer they're
calling APB?

DETECTIVE FULLER
Okay. What about it?

Officer Denton grins.

OFFICER DENTON
I think I have some information
that could be useful to you...

CUT TO BLACK.