

# I AM YOURS

Screenplay

by

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PARAMOUNT PICTURES  
Platinum Dunes  
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*ELVIS (V.O.)*  
*You look like an angel...*

SLAM IN ON:

A SHOWER. Blasting hot water over curvy, smooth skin. The sexy SILHOUETTE rubs her hands through her hair as...

*ELVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)*  
*Talk like an angel... but I got wise!*

CUT TO:

A BLOCK OF KNIVES. Japanese and expensive. We're in...

**INT. 1369 HOOPER ST. - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

A FIGURE -- a shadow, really -- approaches. We hear rain.

In the silver reflection of a tea kettle, the figure -- wet, shrouded in black -- extracts the longest, sharpest knife.

It catches what little light spills in from outside.

**INT. MASTER BATH - SAME**

Candles ring the room in soft light. By the sink, a SMART HOME SPEAKER echoes music off the tile walls:

*ELVIS (V.O.)*  
*You fooled me with your kisses...*

SAMANTHA HAWTHORNE, late 30s, rinses soap off her long legs.

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF FRAMED PHOTOS. The story of a perfect marriage...

**INT. ENTRY HALL - CONTINUOUS**

They hang over the stairwell. TOM HAWTHORNE, a professorial type in his forties, smiles beside his wife SAMANTHA...

*ELVIS (V.O.)*  
*...You cheated and you schemed...*

The figure with the knife ascends the stairs. Past photos of the Hawthornes at their WEDDING... TRAVELING THE WORLD...

*ELVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)*  
*Heaven knows how you lied to me.*  
*You're not the way you seemed*

In his other hand, the figure holds a METAL CAN upside down--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A line of gasoline streams up the stairwell. And still... \*

Mr. & Mrs. Hawthorne smile from above. \*

**INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT** \*

The door CREAKS OPEN. Samantha can't hear over the music: \*

*ELVIS (V.O.)*  
*You look like an angel...*

She shuts off the shower. Opens the glass door and grabs her towel. She wraps her glistening body, stepping onto the tile. \*

*ELVIS (V.O.)*  
*Walk like an angel...*

The air is thick with steam. Samantha grabs a silk robe. \*

*ELVIS (V.O.)*  
*Talk like an angel...*

Samantha steps to the sink. A shadow waits in the doorway.

*ELVIS (V.O.)*  
*But I got wise...*

She wipes her hand down the fogged up mirror, revealing--  
NOTHING. Just the open door leading to her MASTER BEDROOM.

*ELVIS (V.O.)*  
*You're the...*

SAMANTHA  
--Alexa. Stop.

The speaker BEEPS... The song ends. Samantha admires her face.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

She steps into the bedroom, also filled with candles and--

THE KNIFE WIELDING FIGURE ATTACKS... Violently pushing her  
onto the bed. Samantha SCREAMS, until she sees the attacker-- \*

SAMANTHA  
*FUCK! You scared me.*

And we reveal the attacker is THE MAN FROM THE PHOTOS. He is  
Tom Hawthorne. Her husband. He holds the knife overhead. \*

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Oh... I see. Is that what this is?

Her hands move up to the silk robe. She opens it, revealing: \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HER BREASTS. The beginning of some very kinky role-play... \*

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Are you gonna tie me up? Huh? Are  
you gonna hurt me?

Tom stares down at her smooth body underneath his with equal parts fear, madness, lust and desire. Samantha grins, her red lips brushing against his cheek as she moves in to whisper:

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
It's been so long since we've played  
rough... *professor*.

She leans in, moaning, and BITES HIS EAR. Suddenly--

Tom yanks back. Her spell broken. He staggers from the bed over to a dresser, dropping the knife, grabbing his temple. \*

TOM  
It's not you. It's not you. \*

Samantha sits up, cinching her robe. She looks confused--

SAMANTHA  
I thought this is what you wanted. \*  
(then)  
What's that smell?

And that's when Samantha notices the GAS CAN on the floor.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Tom... What-- have you done?

Tom stares into the eyes of the woman from his WEDDING PHOTOS, from ten years of VACATION SHOTS, from a LIFE SHARED. \*

Despite all these memories...

TOM  
I figured it out. \*

He sweeps a single candle onto the floor. IT IGNITES.

**EXT. 1369 HOOPER ST. - EVENING**

Inside, safe from the rain, the fire burns and burns.

**BLACK.**

"THREE YEARS LATER"

HEAVY BREATHING. Rhythmic and hard. In, out, deep, full...

**EXT. INNER CITY STREET - DAY**

Running shoes pound the cracked pavement. CALEB DIXON, early 30s, wears blue jogging pants and a gray hoodie. His stride is serious, practiced, and as smooth as the music in his ears.

He passes a "WELCOME TO EAST POINT" pillar tagged in rivolrous bouts of graffiti. It marks the entrance to a playground, devoid of young laughter. Caleb stays on the street, noting--

A DRUG DEAL, nothing big-time, going down by the rusty swings.

Caleb speeds up.

**INT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY**

Dripping with sweat, Caleb loses himself to the music from his headphones. Enters a world of zen-like forward momentu--

BOOP-BOOP... Caleb startles. A SQUAD CAR inches along beside him. Caleb slows his pace to match, drops his hoodie.

THE WHITE COPS eyeball him. Caleb waits, guilty of jogging while being black. After a few moments, the cops drive off.

Caleb watches them go. Tired, not from running. Tired... Of all this. \*

**INT. BEDROOM - DAY** \*

A WOMAN wears a black thong and a bra. She steps into a sexy dress, UNAWARE OF A BLACK MAN reflected in her mirror.

THE MAN GRABS HER. The woman cries out as he spins her around. Caleb is laughing. ALICIA DIXON shoves her husband...

ALICIA

You know I don't like being scared!

CALEB

Problem is... I like scaring you.

Alicia shakes her head. She tries to zip her dress, but it's TOO TIGHT. Caleb moves behind her to help get it zipped.

ALICIA

Ugh... I'll need new clothes if you're gonna keep writing hit songs.

CALEB

I think you look beautiful no matter what you wear.

She looks at his reflection in the mirror.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICIA  
You're a good liar.

Caleb kisses her neck, mumbling agreement.

ALICIA (CONT'D)  
What are you--? We don't have time!

CALEB  
Aw, you used to love sneakin' it in.

He lifts the hem of her skirt. Alicia fights it at first, rolling her eyes, then gives in to his hand as it slides--

A CAR PULLS INTO THE DRIVEWAY. The moment is shattered.

ALICIA  
I told you!

Caleb sighs. Story of his life.

**INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER**

A four year-old boy, SHAWN, bursts through the front door holding a STUFFED PENGUIN. He spots Caleb and runs to him.

SHAWN  
Daddy! Look what Grandma K got me.

Caleb examines his son's new toy. He squeezes it-- IT SQUAWKS!

CALEB  
Wow! It talks! What's his name?

Sarah. SHAWN

Caleb smirks. Glances at GRANDMA K, mid 50s, in the doorway.

CALEB  
That's an-- interesting name, buddy.  
How was the zoo?

GRANDMA K

Crowded. Far too crowded.

SHAWN

--I'm gonna show Mommy!

Shawn rushes off, down a hall of framed photos. The story of a different marriage... Caleb & Alicia...

HIGH SCHOOL SWEETHEARTS building a life. Shots of Caleb as a young musician... Their wedding... Alicia cradling baby Shawn.

Maybe it's coincidence, but in each photo, they seem to be growing... *Further apart.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRANDMA K

He got so excited 'bout the penguins,  
he didn't wanna see nothin' else.

CALEB

That sounds like Shawn. You still  
good to babysit tonight?

GRANDMA K

What else am I gonna do? Only got  
one grandchild. Now go get ready,  
you smell like that damn zoo.

CALEB

Real harsh, Grandma K.  
(smelling his underarms)  
Wooh! And so is that.

#### INT. SHOWER - LATER

Anxious about something, Caleb leans into the anemic shower. \*  
Alicia comes in to fix her makeup, back in just her underwear. \*

Caleb draws the shower curtain to secretly watch her. Aroused, \*  
he looks down. Sighs... and turns the shower dial to COLD. \*

#### INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Caleb and Alicia come out dressed for a fashionable party.  
Shawn watches cartoons with Grandma K and Sarah-the-Penguin.

GRANDMA K

Oh, child, you look beautiful!

ALICIA

Thank you, Momma.

CALEB

You know that's what I said and she  
called me names.

Alicia gives Shawn a calming kiss on the forehead. Caleb \*  
looks out the window -- covered with security bars -- and  
spots an incongruous LIMOUSINE arriving at the curb.

#### EXT. CALEB'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The house is old, not quite run down. A serious "fixer upper." \*

Caleb follows Alicia to the sidewalk, where the LIMO DRIVER, \*  
Caucasian, nervously looks across the street at-- \*

TWO NEIGHBORS SMOKING WEED on their overgrown front lawn. The  
two men give Caleb a cursory nod. He gets into the limo.

**EXT. FREEWAY - EVENING**

DOWNTOWN ATLANTA rises in the distance as the limo passes.

**INT. LIMO - SAME**

Caleb and Alicia are halfway into their flutes of Champagne.

ALICIA

You don't think it's weird he gave the penguin a girl's name? And do you know the one thing he wants for his birthday? A Princess Palace!

CALEB

Have you seen those things? It's got a drawbridge and, like, each Princess comes with her own bow-and-arrow. These are some bad-ass royals.

ALICIA

I guess-- I'm just glad you'll be spending more time with him, is all.

(looks outside)

Huh... This isn't the right exit.

\*  
\*  
\*

She reaches to open the DIVIDER but Caleb grabs her hand--

CALEB

We're making a quick stop first.

**EXT/INT. LIMO - 1369 HOOPER ST. - EVENING**

\*

The limo pulls past a sign denoting the street as a landmark:

\*

WEST END HISTORIC DISTRICT ❖ ATLANTA'S OLDEST NEIGHBORHOOD

\*

The car stops in front of a TWO-STORY SOUTHERN GOTHIC HOME in this picturesque area a million-miles away from before.

\*  
\*

EVEN REMODELED AND REBUILT WE RECOGNIZE THIS HOUSE. Through the window, Alicia clocks a SOLD SIGN on the lawn.

\*

ALICIA

Caleb...?

CALEB

Say goodbye to bars on the windows!

He holds up a KEY RING. Alicia is speechless.

CUT TO:

\*

THE KEY SLIDES INTO A LOCK. The pins rise into place. *Click.*

\*

**INT. 1369 HOOPER ST. - ENTRY HALL - MOMENTS LATER**

Caleb opens the door and leads Alicia into their NEW HOME. \*

Hardwood floors lead to a FAMILIAR STAIRWELL connecting up to a second story BALCONY/HALLWAY protected by a wood banister. \*

ALICIA

I can't believe-- We can afford this? \*

It's large, open, with arches leading to the dining room and kitchen on the right, and a generous living room to the left.

CALEB

And people say the music business is dead.

(off Alicia's skepticism) \*

It was on the market for awhile. We got a good deal, okay?

**INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

As they tour the modernized and spacious first floor--

CALEB

Look at that. We can finally fit a table big enough for guests!

Alicia rubs her hand along the kitchen island. Caleb watches her, worried that she isn't more excited. Alicia notices:

ALICIA

I'm just stunned. It's-- perfect.

**EXT. SECOND FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER**

Alicia takes the steps slowly, savoring the feel of the railing because they're now the owners of a multi-story home.

CALEB

The agent told me there was a fire up here... a fluke lightning strike, or something. Everything on this floor was totally rebuilt based on the original blueprints. \*

At the top, she turns left, taking in TWO SMALLER BEDROOMS.

ALICIA

It's like we always talked about. This can be Shawn's room. And you can build a little studio in this one. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB  
The studio's going in the basement.

ALICIA  
How many rooms does this place have?

CALEB  
Well if Shawn's getting a Princess  
Palace... you deserve one too.

Alicia laughs. Caleb pulls her in for a kiss just as-- HIS  
PHONE RINGS: **TRAYCE CALLING**. He sighs in frustration.

ALICIA  
Go. Take it. I know he gets mad when  
you don't.

There's a world of meaning to her words. Caleb forces a half-  
smile, turning toward the stairs, taking them one at a time.

CALEB (INTO PHONE)  
Hey, what's up? We're on our way...  
Yes, Trayce, the limo is baller.

STAY ON ALICIA. She moves into the gorgeously remodeled...

#### **INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

They could fit their old living room and kitchen in here.

A LINE OF WINDOWS cover the wall overlooking the backyard.  
Alicia takes in a VERY OLD OAK TREE overshadowing their land.

A ROPE SWING sways in the dying daylight. She steps into...

#### **INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Luxurious, with white and black tiles, his and her sinks, a  
large Victorian-style BATHTUB and a separate RAINFALL SHOWER.

*Despite the remodel, we've been in this bathroom before.*

She walks toward the ELEGANT MIRROR hanging over the sinks.  
Alicia stares at her reflection, her guard dropping.

She is clearly overwhelmed by this house and what it means.

A COLD DRAFT rustles across her hair, like an invisible hand,  
causing her to shiver. She quickly moves away from the mirror.

#### **INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Alicia steps back into the bedroom, Caleb's muffled call  
still going on downstairs. The sun drips into the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alicia quickly spots the reason for the draft. ONE WINDOW IS WIDE OPEN... Alicia steps over and presses down softly--

THE WINDOW SLAMS DOWN SHUT... Violently, even. Alicia jumps back. Shocked and unnerved. \*

**INT. ENTRY HALL - SAME**

Caleb walks around the ground floor, phone to his ear as he meanders UNDER THE SECOND-STORY HALLWAY...

CALEB  
They wanna hear *Breaking Chains*. It's your most personal song. Trust your--

BEEP BEEP BEEP... THE CALL GETS DROPPED. Caleb looks down at his phone: NO SIGNAL.

ALICIA (O.S.)  
Hey. Look at this.

Caleb looks straight up. Alicia motions to the wood railing.

**UPSTAIRS**

Caleb joins Alicia. She points to a CARVING in the banister:

I AM YOURS

Caleb rubs his hand over the hastily filed chicken scratch.

ALICIA  
I thought you said everything up here was new?

CALEB  
Maybe some kids snuck in? I kinda like it. It's romantic... 'cause I am yours!

He pulls her close. She gives in, kissing him. Caleb leans back into the banister and it loudly CREAKS... They jump--

ALICIA  
So let's not do that again.

Caleb nods... as his gaze falls again to the carving.

**EXT. CLUB SIREN - NIGHT**

A LINE snakes up to the curtained door of Atlanta's hottest club. The limo stops at a red carpet. A MASSIVE HANGING BANNER covers the building, a blow-up of TRAYCE PORTER'S ALBUM COVER: \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

**"HUMBLE"**

THE BEST SELLING ALBUM OF THE YEAR

The Driver opens the door and Caleb exits, smoothly buttoning his jacket and extending his hand to Alicia. She looks up--

ALICIA

Real humble.

**INT. CLUB SIREN - CONTINUOUS**

A CLUB HOST leads them through the crowd-- a sensory overload of surgically enhanced women. Alicia clocks a gaggle of SEXY GIRLS in their twenties. She suddenly feels self-conscious.

**INT. VIP SECTION - MOMENTS LATER**

The Host leads Caleb and Alicia upstairs to a raised platform guarded by a MUSCULAR BOUNCER. He lifts the velvet rope.

Caleb spots a sexy Brazilian, GABRIELA. He kisses her on the cheek. Alicia can't help but stare at Gabriela's skimpy dress.

CALEB

Alicia! This is Trayce's girlfriend, Gabriela.

GABRIELA

It is nice to meet you. You are here just in time!

Caleb turns, letting them chat. HE SURVEYS THE CROWD BELOW.

His eye is drawn to a YOUNG WOMAN, dancing in her own world, ignoring everyone around her and FEELING THE MUSIC. Her hands flow through her shock of RED HAIR as she glances up--

RIGHT AT CALEB. AN INSTANT, MAGICAL CONNECTION.

Caleb can't tear his eyes away-- until the BLASTING BEAT scratches to a halt and he loses her as the LIGHTS GO OUT.

TV NEWS ANCHORS (V.O.)

*The biggest hip-hop... artist in the world... Is going to jail.*

LIGHTS SPARKLE as a PLATFORM emerges from the ceiling. On it: A SILHOUETTE, head bowed. A microphone raised to his lips...

TRAYCE (IN DARKNESS)

*I learned a lot in prison. We are all beings of light. I simply shine the brightest.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPARKLERS FIRE along the edge of the platform. A beat builds, in concert with VARIOUS VOICES laid over the song. \*

VARIOUS VOICES (V.O.)  
*The best reviewed album of the...  
 The Grammy is in the bag... Holy  
 (bleep)! Trayce Porter is back!* \*

THE PLATFORM stops, hanging just over the crowd. LASERS shoot out, projecting: "4,000,000 ALBUMS SOLD" onto the wall. \*

LIGHTS EXPLODE with the music as TRAYCE PORTER (31) performs "Breaking Chains" from his album. A SLIGHTLY saner Kanye West. \*

THE CROWD GOES WILD. Trayce steps over their heads as he jumps over to a raised DJ STAGE. When he hits the CHORUS, Trayce points his mic downward for the audience to sing along. \*

IN THE VIP SECTION. Caleb feels pride of ownership for the song. His glance falls back to the Redhead. BUT SHE'S GONE.

Trayce finishes the song and the CROWD ROARS over the outro.

TRAYCE  
 You know, two years ago... I was  
 done. Locked up. And no matter what  
 I did I couldn't get my mind free to  
 find epiphanies. So my boy Cal, my  
 best friend since we was five, he  
 visits me. Shows up with a beat, a  
 hook, and an idea. Cal made me see  
 that captivity -- and all the chains  
 holdin' us back -- are just a state  
 of mind. So... Caleb Dixon! Get the  
 fuck down here. Everyone, make room  
 for the man who saved me... and  
 helped turn my genius into song.

The Club Host waves to Caleb. He looks to Alicia. She gives an approving nod. Caleb goes down to the floor. THE CROWD PARTS.

TRAYCE (CONT'D)  
 Last year Cal was a high school  
 music teacher. Now he's gone  
 platinum four times over!

Trayce grabs Caleb's hand, pulling him up onto the stage. He holds the mic out to Caleb, who's completely overwhelmed. \*

TRAYCE (CONT'D)  
 Say "what's up" to your fans.

CALEB  
 What's up. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TRAYCE

What this modest motherfucker don't mention is he's gonna be a huge star too... because my boy's coming wit' me on tour! Before he wrote songs, he sang 'em. Didn't work out then... But this time, he'll be my opening act!

Caleb spins. TOTALLY STUNNED. Trayce pulls Caleb in close. \*

TRAYCE (CONT'D)

I should have given you this chance a long time ago. You never asked me for anything, Caleb. You deserve this.

(into mic)

NOW LET'S TURN THE MUSIC UP!

Trayce starts in on an older hit. Caleb basks in the glow of Trayce's offer... until he catches sight of Alicia. \*

SHE'S NOT HAPPY. Caleb hops off stage, pushing his way past-- \*

RANDOM GIRL

Hey... you're cute. Come here.

His brush with fame has doused him with powerful pheromones. AND ALICIA NOTICES. She looks around at all the women eye-fucking her husband. Gabriela puts a hand on Alicia's arm. \*

GABRIELA

Do not worry. You get used to it.

Clearly this is something Alicia will not get used to. She grabs her purse and stands. Rushes out of the VIP AREA...

Caleb reaches the bottom of the stairs as Alicia comes down.

ALICIA

So is that why you bought the house?  
So I'd agree to you leaving on tour?

CALEB

No! No, Al, he just threw that at me. That's-- that's the first time he's ever mentioned it. I never thought he'd give me a shot at this.

ALICIA

Wait. You're actually considering it?

CALEB

You mean am I considering finally getting to perform my own work? That's been my dream since we met.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ALICIA

And what about my dream? We agreed,  
now that we had some money, I'd  
finally go back to school. I've spent  
years raising our son, now it's your  
turn to help. That's what you said.  
And you already got a great gig lined  
up, here, in Atlanta!

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Caleb rubs the bridge of his nose. He's growing frustrated.

CALEB

Songwriting, Al. Behind the scenes.  
This would finally be a chance for  
people to hear me be me. My songs...  
and my voice. I don't know, maybe  
there's a way to do both?

ALICIA

Yeah? You gonna bring our four year-  
old son on a concert tour bus?

(Caleb looks down)

When you started up with Trayce, you  
promised me our son would have his  
father around. That you'd be there  
to tuck him in. Now if you go off,  
it's gonna be like this...

(motions to the party)

--Every night. It'll change you.

\*  
  
\*

CALEB

What's so bad about that? I could  
use a little change!

Wrong answer. Her eyes start tearing up.

ALICIA

You need to decide if this is what  
you want... or if you can be happy  
with the life we've built together.

She storms off. Caleb is torn. The party calls to him... but  
his wife is more important. He rushes after her and--

KNOCKS INTO THE REDHEAD. She grabs Caleb to steady herself.

CALEB

Whoa. Sorry 'bout that.

REDHEAD

Where are you off to in such a rush?  
Isn't this night all about you?

He looks past her red hair as Alicia disappears out the exit.

\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CALEB

I'm-- um... what'd you say?

REDHEAD

I said isn't this night all about  
you? You should be celebrating!

Caleb is enamored... *her attitude is the opposite of Alicia's.*  
She smiles and grabs his hand, dragging him toward the dance--

TRAYCE (O.S.)

HEY! Cal!

Caleb yanks his hand back. Turns to Trayce and his BODYGUARD.

TRAYCE

Just saw Alicia leave. I take it she  
didn't like my business proposition?

CALEB

It... was a surprise. To both of us.

TRAYCE

I didn't do it for you. I don't want  
you here writing songs for that  
*Black Like Me* wannabe Curtis Story!  
Motherfucker had the temerity to walk  
out'a the Grammy's during my speech--

CALEB

He says he had to use the bathroom.

TRAYCE

He's a pretender to the throne who  
hijacked my style and now he's  
hijacking you... but not tonight!

Trayce throws an arm over Caleb, corralling him to the VIP  
section. Caleb goes, but not before looking back--

But the redhead has disappeared into the crowd.

POP!

**INT. CLUB SIREN - VIP SECTION - MONTAGE**

A BOTTLE OF CRISTAL flows into a tray of glasses... THEY ALL  
TOAST to Trayce as the DJ plays rhythmic, illusory music.

A WAITRESS in a short skirt brings two bottles of Don Julio  
and bends over right in Trayce's face. He slaps dat ass.

A MODEL sits on Caleb's lap. Tequila in hand, lime in her  
mouth. Caleb declines the offer-- it's too intimate. A *FLASH*:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And we're DANCING. *Flash*. DRINKING. *Flash*. DEBAUCHERY. *Flash*--

THE REDHEAD. Right in front of Caleb on the dance floor. She's moving, swaying in time, ignoring everyone around her... Until she looks at Caleb -- at us -- and gestures with her finger:

COME HITHER. We move closer. She beckons... like a fantasy...

SLAM TO:

CALEB WAKING UP WITH A START. He's on the sofa in his...

# **INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING**

Sunlight streams through the windows. The bars cast their shadows across Caleb as he blinks, grimacing from last night.

# **INT. KITCHEN - SAME**

Caleb finds Alicia prepping pancakes. She points to coffee. He pours himself a cup. She opens the fridge to hand him Coffee-mate. A morning routine. He finds a drawer with Advil.

ALICIA

What time did you get home?

CALEB

Too late. I'm not twenty anymore.  
(then; his head throbbing)  
Maybe I'm too old for that life.

Alicia stops whisking to read his face. He downs three pills.

ALICIA

You mean that touring life?

CALEB

You were right. We had a deal. You got school, and now we got a big new house. So... I'm gonna try and write some songs for Curtis Story -- *God help me* -- and, you know, hell... Trayce gets mad, Trayce gets mad.

ALICIA

Are you gonna hold this against me?

CALEB

What?

ALICIA

Is this what you really want? Or are you going to blame me for holding you back?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON CALEB. Taking in her words... *and telling his first lie:*

CALEB  
You're not holding me back. This is  
the life I want. With you and Shawn.

Alicia sets down the bowl of batter.

ALICIA  
I just want us both to be happy.

Caleb dips a finger into the batter and dabs it on her nose.

CALEB  
Me too.

\*

Alicia laughs, kissing him, smearing batter over his face.

ALICIA  
You love me?

CALEB  
More than Marvin Gaye. You love me?

ALICIA  
More than... Beyonce.

CALEB  
More than Queen B?

ALICIA  
Hmmm... let's call it a tie.

Caleb laughs. Alicia goes back to her pancakes. As she turns--

\*

Caleb's smile falters... *Is he making the right choice?*

\*

**EXT. CALEB'S HOUSE - MORNING - WEEKS LATER**

\*

Caleb, Alicia and Shawn -- in their Sunday best -- exit the house in a rush. Through the door we see PACKED MOVING BOXES.

**INT. FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH - DAY**

A REVEREND pats sweat off his brow as he firmly preaches:

REVEREND  
...We mustn't forget evil is as real  
as the person sittin' beside you!

FIND THE DIXON FAMILY. Grandma K sits off the aisle in a bright blue hat, Shawn beside her, Alicia and then Caleb.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REVEREND (CONT'D)  
But you gotta know how to spot it...  
because evil comes in many forms. *Can*  
*I get an amen!*

Caleb's cellphone vibrates. He casually checks the text:

**when can I see u?**

The sender's name is: **MONICA**. Caleb is stunned. *Who is that?*

BZZZZ. A PHOTO TEXT brings the answer... It's a SEXY SELFIE of the REDHEAD FROM THE PARTY, her arm covering her chest. Behind her we can see half an OLD PAINTING OF A SOUTHERN GENTLEMAN.

Alicia sees Caleb on the phone. She gives him a stern glare.

Admonished, Caleb returns to listening. But now he can't help feel like the STAINED GLASS VIRGIN MARY is glaring at him too.

**EXT. FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH - DAY**

Caleb waits in the parking lot, staring at the sexy photo on his phone. The church spires tower behind him.

ALICIA (O.S.)  
Who was texting you in church?

CALEB  
(pockets the phone)  
Uh-- just Trayce. One of our songs  
is in that new Transformers movie.  
He's got my check.

He swings Shawn into his arms and impersonates the Reverend:

CALEB (CONT'D)  
*Now we can fiiiiinnnally afford*  
*new furniture. Praise Jesus!*

Grandma K frowns. Alicia and her mother share a look as Caleb carries Shawn piggyback over to Grandma K's car.

SHAWN  
I wanna see Uncle Tray!

Caleb opens the back and buckles Shawn into his child seat.

CALEB  
Not today. You're going to Grandma's  
house while I make sure the movers  
don't steal any of your toys.  
(off Shawn's dejection)  
You'll see him soon, I promise.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He closes the door and leans into the passenger window. \*

ALICIA  
You sure I can't help with the move?

CALEB  
Nah. You'd just get in the way of us  
big, strong men. \*

He flexes and smirks. Alicia rolls her eyes and they kiss  
goodbye. Caleb steps away and waves as the car drives off. \*

**EXT. TRAYCE'S MANSION - DAY**

White, modern and gated, full of gleaming glass. Caleb types  
a code into a KEYPAD -- *Click* -- and the front door unlocks.

**EXT. TRAYCE'S BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER**

Several SEXY WOMEN in bikinis lounge, including Gabriela. She  
waves to Caleb. He awkwardly smiles back on his way to...

**INT. POOL HOUSE - CONVERTED RECORDING STUDIO - CONTINUOUS**

Trayce and a small ENTOURAGE hot-box the CONTROL ROOM,  
laughing at the latest MUSIC VIDEO for CURTIS STORY (*think  
Justin Bieber in fifteen years*). Caleb walks in and coughs.

TRAYCE  
Ah. There he is! The most whipped  
man in hip hop! Fellas... Caleb here  
passed on touring with me to go  
write for this poser...  
(beat; stands)  
Come on, Cal, I got your check.

Caleb clocks the music video. Even he cringes a little.

**INT. TRAYCE'S MANSION - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Trayce hands an ENVELOPE to Caleb. A hefty check is inside.

TRAYCE  
So, Mr. Dixon, what will you be  
purchasing with these funds? Perhaps  
a lovely divan... or some curtains?

CALEB  
Yeah. And I'm gonna build my own  
studio so I don't need to come here. \*

TRAYCE  
You're the only brother I know who  
wouldn't blow this on pussy. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB

Aren't you friends with Obama?

TRAYCE

Alright. You and Barack.

(then, pointing outside)

They don't tempt you at all?

By the pool, the girls now have their tops off, tanning.  
Caleb looks outside... *He's a man. Of course he's tempted.*

CALEB

Do you remember the party a few  
weeks ago?

TRAYCE

Fuck no! 'Cause it was a great party.

CALEB

I think-- I gave my number to  
someone. I mean, I must have because  
I put her name in my phone.

TRAYCE

For real?

CALEB

I got a text out of the blue. She  
wants to see me.

TRAYCE

Ah... shit! She hot?

Caleb nods. Something about his nod makes Trayce look askance.

TRAYCE (CONT'D)

Wait. She white?

Caleb sighs. Trayce's eyes light up and he starts laughing.

TRAYCE (CONT'D)

Damn. It all makes sense now! So  
what are you gonna do?

CALEB

What am I gonna do? Nothing. I'm  
married.

Trayce brushes him off and tries to grab for his phone.

TRAYCE

No, no. You text Snow White right  
now to meet at Akuma Sushi. Best  
place in town for a side piece.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CALEB  
But I don't like sushi.

TRAYCE  
The fuck is wrong with you? It ain't  
about the food!

The sliding door opens as Gabriela comes in from the pool.

GABRIELA  
Trayce! It is 2:30. Time for airport.

CALEB  
Airport? Where you going?

TRAYCE  
We added some tour dates. Too bad  
you're not comin' with.  
(a wink; then)  
Oh. And when you text this smoke  
show... make sure you tell her "no  
panties." Keeps the emotion out of  
it. Lets her know where she stands.

CALEB  
Yeah, I'm not gonna do that.

TRAYCE  
It's not right for an artist to hold  
out on new experiences. What are you  
gonna write about? Pre-school and  
Pottery Barn don't sell records!

CALEB  
Forget it. I don't know why I even  
brought it up.

TRAYCE  
Yeah, you do. You brought it up  
'cause I'm that friend.

CALEB  
What friend?

TRAYCE  
The friend who'll tell you it's okay.

OFF CALEB. Realizing Trayce is right...

**INT. CALEB'S HOUSE - EVENING**

Caleb adds sheets to a moving box then tapes it shut. He  
writes "BEDROOM CLOSET" with a Sharpie. Moves to the next,  
trying to keep his mind off this mysterious Monica...

**INT. CALEB'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Caleb comes out in just a towel. He grabs his phone. Notices--

A PHOTO TEXT: Trayce on his PRIVATE JET. A FLIGHT ATTENDANT -- not Gabriela -- sits in his lap. **"This could be you."**

Caleb diminishes the text, bringing him to a screen with all his old messages. And there, like a beacon: **when can I see u?**

His fingers hover over the phone. Debating... until Caleb shakes his head, tossing the phone on the sofa. He paces...

CALEB (TO HIMSELF)  
Don't-- just don't do it...

It doesn't work. Caleb grabs the phone and types: **AKUMA SUSHI. ONE HOUR. NO PANTIES.** He's about to hit send...

...but something makes him delete "NO PANTIES" right before sending. The *whoosh* sound brings with it INSTANT REGRET.

**BING!** It's from Monica: **CAN'T. BUSY.**

Caleb lets out a huge sigh of relief. But then...

**BING: JK C U THERE.** 😊

CALEB  
Shit.

**INT/EXT. CALEB'S CAR - NIGHT**

Caleb stares out the window at AKUMA SUSHI, rubbing his wedding ring. He takes it off his finger and stares guiltily at the gold band. Suddenly, there's a TAP on the window...

VALET  
Sir?

Caleb startles, opening the car door for the smiling VALET.

CALEB  
Keep it close.  
(slides his ring back on)  
I'm coming right back.

**INT. AKUMA SUSHI - NIGHT**

Sleek and sexy. Dark booths, top shelf sake, waiters in black. Caleb smiles to the fashionable Japanese HOSTESS.

HOSTESS  
Can I help you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB

Can you give a message to someone?  
Young woman, red hair. Tell her--

A waiter moves from behind the hostess, revealing LUSH RED  
HAIR already seated in a back booth. The head turns...

CALEB (CONT'D)

Never mind.

...And the very sexy MONICA spots him. Her lips curl up in  
the slightest smile as Caleb approaches the secluded table.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Hi. Monica. Hi.

MONICA

Hi... You gonna sit down?

Caleb takes a moment, then sits. Unable to get comfortable.

CALEB

Yeah, um. Listen, look, I...

He is quickly hypnotized by her revealing neckline... Between  
her breasts is a NECKLACE with a silver HEART SHAPED PENDANT.

MONICA

I know... it's distracting.

Caleb's eyes shoot up. Caught. She laughs, saving him with--

MONICA (CONT'D)

It was a gift from my ex. You were  
staring at my necklace, right?

CALEB

Right. Yeah. Um... I-- don't know  
how else to say this so I'm just  
gonna say it. I shouldn't be here.

MONICA

...Because you're married?

Beat. Caleb is about to speak when the BUSBOY appears to fill  
the one water glass on the table. As the busboy leaves--

CALEB

Look. I don't know what came over me.  
I was tellin' my friend about you and  
he's always pushing me to... I don't  
know, be more like him. He got in my  
head. So I'm real sorry for making  
you get all dressed up but-- I...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MONICA

(grabs his arm)

Did you really come all the way out  
here to apologize? You know, you  
could have just texted.

Caleb looks at her hand still on his arm.

CALEB

I mean-- yeah... you're right... I  
guess the least I can do is-- buy you  
dinner, right? For making you come  
out. There's nothing wrong with that.

Caleb grabs the menu, nervously looking around the restaurant.

MONICA

Hey, Caleb. It's okay. Nobody here  
cares. All they see is some guy at a  
table, they don't even know I exist.

CALEB

The way you look I think it's the  
other way around.

Monica blushes. Even Caleb is surprised by his comment. He  
tries to hide his nerves by drinking the water.

MONICA

If you're not comfortable, we can  
get out of here. Go somewhere else.  
(leans forward)  
Can I tell you my deep, dark secret?

Leaning forward, in the dim light, she almost seems to glow.

MONICA (CONT'D)

I hate sushi.

OFF CALEB. Feeling the connection...

**EXT. DOWNTOWN - LATER**

They turn a corner along a dark drag of the city. It's spooky.

CALEB

Where are you taking me?

MONICA

Why? You scared?  
(a sly smile)  
Hey. I've been meaning to ask. Aren't  
you supposed to be out on tour?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She's found a sore subject.

CALEB

With Trayce? Yeah, well. My wife  
wasn't on board. So I didn't go.

MONICA

But you want to be a singer-  
songwriter, don't you? Isn't that  
like a huge opportunity?

CALEB

The timing's just off and I gotta do  
what's best for my son. So for now  
I'll just be a songwriter. My bigger  
dreams can wait.

MONICA

Why are the good ones always taken?  
Do you have a picture of him? Your  
son?

Caleb unlocks his phone. He opens his photo library and  
swipes back past PHOTOS OF THE NEW HOUSE -- *which Monica*  
*takes clear note of* -- before arriving at pictures of Shawn.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Wow. Ladies better watch out! I hope  
I have a kid someday. Just like him.

CALEB

I'm sure you will.

They stop for a moment, staring into each others eyes. Just  
before it gets too uncomfortably sexual, she breaks away--

MONICA

Come on... We're almost there.

She draws him by the hand around the corner... where TWO HOT  
GIRLS are allowed past an unassuming metal door by a BOUNCER.

CALEB

What is this place?

The Bouncer looks up from his phone as Monica trots past him.

BOUNCER

Do I really have to explain?

MONICA

You still owe me that dance.

She motions for Caleb to come hither. JUST LIKE IN HIS DREAM.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CALEB  
Alright... One dance.

Caleb walks toward Monica. The Bouncer throws out his arm--

BOUNCER  
Twenty-dollar cover.

CALEB  
What about...

He motions toward Monica and the two other girls just let in.

BOUNCER  
You're not a hot chick.

Caleb rolls his eyes and takes out his wallet. \*

# **INT. UNDERGROUND CLUB - NIGHT**

Monica leads Caleb to an empty space near a STEEL PILLAR. She dances with abandon, teasing her skirt to the pulsing beat.

Caleb joins in but feels overwhelmed being so close to her. He tries to lose himself to the music... To her smile... But he can't quite do it. Something holds him back. Until-- \*

A REMIX of the song "Breaking Chains" comes on. Monica holds Caleb's gaze, staring deep into his soul. *This is a sign.*

Monica backs up against the pillar. Her hands glide over Caleb's body, intoxicating him. Enveloping him to her charms. \*

Monica drapes her arms around Caleb's neck. Breathing hard, breathing each other. Eyes locked. She moves to his ear... \*

MONICA  
I would never ask you to give up  
your dreams. You want to do your own  
music? You want to be on a stage?  
(fuck me eyes)  
Do it. \*

OFF CALEB. It's like she's spoken some magic spell. \*

# **INT. TRAYCE'S MANSION - NIGHT**

*BEEP-BEEP-BEEP.* A keypad unlocks the front door. Caleb leads Monica inside, like kids sneaking into a joint. \*

CALEB  
It's back here. I want to play you  
something. \*

**INT. POOL HOUSE - CONVERTED RECORDING STUDIO - NIGHT**

Caleb slides into a seat at the CONTROL BOARD. In the glass reflection, he can see Monica exploring the lounge area.

Caleb boots up the lights inside the recording studio. He logs into his CLOUD ACCOUNT, scrolling through music folders:

"TRAYCE PORTER" ... "CURTIS STORY" ... "EARLY DEMOS" ...  
Caleb finally clicks on a special folder labeled: "SOMEDAY"

CALEB

Now, this is the one song I didn't  
give Trayce. This one-- I'm saving.

He glances over at the black sofa but Monica isn't there...

SHE'S INSIDE THE LIVE ROOM, BEHIND THE MICROPHONE.

MONICA

I'm ready.

Caleb laughs. He plays along, clicking the intercom.

CALEB

Okay. Quiet in the studio. This is  
*Don't Look Now*. Take one.

He hits play. Speakers judder with the legato strums of an electric guitar. Caleb's own RECORDED VOICE comes in...

*The lyrics tell the story of a boy, the girl he's fallen for--  
and a secret she doesn't want him to find out.*

There's something sultry about CALEB'S SINGING. Raw and alive.

AS THE CHORUS COMES IN, MONICA CLOSES HER EYES AND SINGS IN HARMONY WITH THE RECORDING. IT'S ANGELIC AND PERFECT.

Caleb's mouth opens in astonishment... Monica opens her eyes.

*And gives Caleb the sexiest look of all time...*

HARD CUT TO:

CALEB'S EYES POP OPEN. Sunlight pours across his face--

**INT. TRAYCE'S MANSION - GUEST BEDROOM - MORNING**

Caleb shoots up... *Where am I?* As he gathers his bearings, he notices his clothes in a haphazard pile. The bed is a wreck.

But there's no sign of MONICA. Caleb sighs and slowly stands--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

*A FLASH: CALEB PUSHES MONICA AGAINST THE WALL OF THE STUDIO, PASSIONATELY ATTACKING EACH OTHER AS HE REMOVES HER TOP...*

Caleb flinches, fighting a pain behind his eyes.

CALEB

Fuck.

Caleb grabs his phone: "MISSED CALL: **KING MOVERS**"

CALEB (CONT'D)

FUCK!

**INT. TRAYCE'S MANSION - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Caleb, hastily dressed, paces past the sofa, on the phone:

CALEB (ON THE PHONE)

Tomorrow? There's no way-- Come on, man, it was an emergency.

(hangs his head)

Yeah. Okay. 8AM tomorrow. Thanks.

Caleb ends the call. Sighs with frustration as--

*A FLASH: MONICA PULLS DOWN HER PANTIES AS CALEB UNZIPS HIS PANTS. LIKE A RAVENOUS ANIMAL, HE THRUSTS INSIDE HER...*

The MEMORY seems to hit him out nowhere. He teeters against the sofa, overwhelmed, giving him a view of the pristine pool.

**INT. GRANDMA K'S APARTMENT - MORNING**

Alicia and Grandma K are cooking breakfast. Shawn sits at the table, playing with his penguin as Alicia's PHONE RINGS.

ALICIA

You got this?

GRANDMA K

'Didn't need your help in the first place.

Alicia towels her hands and rushes to the LIVING ROOM, filled with RELIGIOUS RELICS. She fishes the phone from her purse...

**EXT. TRAYCE'S MANSION - BACKYARD - SAME**

Caleb has the pool to his back. He takes a deep breath.

ALICIA (O.S.)

Hey, honey.

Just the sound of her voice causes him to wince with guilt.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB  
Hi... hi.

ALICIA (O.S.)  
What's wrong?

CALEB  
There was a problem. With the  
movers. A tire went flat.

ALICIA (O.S.)  
Really? And they can't fix a tire?

CALEB (MUFFLED)  
Uh, yeah, I don't know, it's  
something else too. So it's gonna be  
tomorrow now. You okay staying with  
your mom another--

*SPLASH.* Caleb spins to the pool but he doesn't see anything.

ALICIA (O.S.)  
Caleb, did I lose you?

He looks down into the pool as a face emerges from underwater.

IT'S MONICA.

**INT. GRANDMA K'S HOUSE - SAME**

Alicia hears silence. She moves to get better reception, in  
front of a shelf filled with a PORCELAIN LAST SUPPER.

ALICIA  
What's going on?

CALEB (O.S.)  
Uh-- someone's here. It's... those  
donation people to take our boxes.

ALICIA  
Okay. I love--

--But the call ends. Alicia stares at her phone: *That was odd.*

**EXT. TRAYCE'S MANSION - BACKYARD - SAME**

Caleb pockets his cellphone, turning to Monica as she rises  
from the pool in nothing but her sexy underwear.

CALEB  
You're still here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MONICA

You were asleep, so I thought I'd get  
some exercise.

(beat)

What? You thought I'd leave without  
thanking you for last night? Cal...  
I'm not that kind of girl.

She kisses him on the cheek then walks insides. Caleb watches  
her go... *she's so hot her wet footprints are already dry.*

Caleb turns to the pool house. The scene of the crime--

*A FLASH: CALEB AND MONICA'S BODIES INTERTWINE. MONICA  
ORGASMS, GRABBING CALEB'S SHOULDER AND SCRATCHING HIM HARD...*

SLAM TO:

**INT. TRAYCE'S MANSION - BATHROOM - SECONDS LATER**

The lights flip on and Caleb gets close to the mirror. He  
pulls down his shirt and checks his left shoulder...

There's nothing there. No marks. Nothing to give him away. He  
heaves a sigh of relief as he stares at his reflection.

**INT. TRAYCE'S MANSION - KITCHEN - LATER**

Caleb sets a mug under a fancy, built-in espresso maker.

CALEB (SOTTO)

She knows you're married. Just-- Get  
her in the Uber and... that's that.

He rubs his temple. Steam shoots out of the coffee machine,  
the SSSSSSSSSSS drawing his attention. When he turns around--

MONICA IS RIGHT THERE. Dressed in last night's clothes, her  
damp hair pulled into a pony tail. Caleb steps back.

CALEB

Sorry, you startled me. Would you  
like some coffee?

MONICA

I prefer tea.

(then)

I couldn't help overhearing that you  
missed your movers. So are you moving  
out of your house... or is your wife?

CALEB

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MONICA

I mean after the night we had, I  
just figured your marriage was over.

Caleb's mouth drops open. Beat.

MONICA (CONT'D)

I'm kidding, Caleb. You should see  
your face.

CALEB

Oh. Yeah. You-- uh-- you got me.

MONICA

But... look, if your day freed up,  
why don't we do something? Together.

CALEB

I still have a ton of stuff to take  
care of. So I-- uh-- I already  
called you an Uber. It's on its way.

Monica scoffs. She shakes her head, annoyed.

MONICA

Oh. Okay. So nothing that happened  
last night matters now that you got  
what you wanted?

CALEB

Wait... what does that mean? You  
knew what this was.

MONICA

A one night stand?

CALEB

Well... yeah.

(beat)

Listen. Monica. You're wonderful,  
really, and I'm flattered you want  
to spend more time with me but...  
I'm married. I have a family.

Monica tries to hold back tears but she can't help it.

MONICA

You're right. I'm sorry, I just, I  
thought we had a connection. I'm  
such an idiot.

She turns so he can't see her cry. Caleb steps over and rubs  
her arm. Unseen to him, the touch means the world to her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CALEB

No. You're not. It was nice. And  
look, if I wasn't married, I'd love  
to see you again. You're-- I mean,  
look at you. It's just...

MONICA

What?

CALEB

I love my wife.

MONICA

You have a funny way of showing it.

Caleb nods in agreement. He's not proud of himself. Monica  
keeps wiping her eyes, trying to pull herself together.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Can you at least drive me home? I  
don't want some stranger seeing me  
like this. Please?

Beat. Caleb really doesn't want to... *but what can he do?*

CALEB

Yeah. Of course.

**INT. CALEB'S CAR - MOVING - MORNING**

Caleb drives. Monica pouts beside him, biting her nails.

MONICA

Turn left up there...  
(the silence broken)  
Hey. Are you mad at me?

CALEB

No.

MONICA

Well you seem... upset.

CALEB

Not with you. I'm upset with myself.

MONICA

Well, if it makes you feel any  
better, you're not the first married  
man I've done this with.

CALEB

Why would that make me feel better?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MONICA

I don't know. No reason. It's funny,  
he was a lot like you. That first  
morning, couldn't get me out of his  
house fast enough. Didn't want his  
wife to catch his new *girlfriend*.

Caleb blanches a little at the word "girlfriend."

MONICA (CONT'D)

He said the same things too. *We  
can't do this again... it was a  
mistake. I love my wife.*

(she chuckles)

Then four days later I get a one-  
A.M. text begging me to come over  
and suck his dick.

CALEB

Monica. It sounds like you think--

(motions between them)

This is gonna keep going. But it's  
not. I'm not gonna text you in four  
days at one-A.M. You understand?

Monica turns to him. A smirk grows on her face. Her hand  
reaches out for his crotch...

CALEB (CONT'D)

Stop it. What are you doing?

MONICA

Proving you wrong.

The look on her face says it all... she knows he can't  
resist. Caleb is suddenly torn-- He gulps in pleasure...

MONICA (CONT'D)

Does this feel good?

ZZZZzzz... Caleb's fly is unzipped. Monica pulls her dress to  
the side, revealing her breast. Caleb can't help but look.

MONICA

Oh, yeah, there he is.

CALEB

...Don't.

Monica licks her lips and leans down into his crotch.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Fuck. Please...

(a groan of pleasure)

Stop. Please... STOP!

Caleb looks up and realizes he's about to SLAM INTO A CAR.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He breaks just in time. Breathless with adrenaline, he turns to Monica, sitting up with a Cheshire grin on her face.

**INT/EXT. CALEB'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER**

Caleb parks the car along the red curb in front of a row of beaten down TOWNHOUSES. The tension inside is high. Beat.

MONICA

I thought you'd like it. I'm sorry.

CALEB

Monica... Just get out of the car.

MONICA

No. Not until you tell me what I did wrong.

Caleb tries to hold in his growing anger.

CALEB

You didn't do anything wrong. I did. Okay? But that's it. This can't happen again.

MONICA

I don't understand-- What does your wife have that I don't? Does Alicia even fuck you anymore?

Caleb's head snaps in surprise, her words like a bullet.

CALEB

How do you know my wife's name? I didn't tell you her name.

MONICA

You think I slept with you without knowing everything about you?

This might be the scariest thing he's ever heard.

CALEB

I... Get out of my car.

She doesn't budge. Caleb exhales, and throws opens his door. He storms around to the passenger side, grabbing the handle:

CALEB (CONT'D)

I tried to be nice. Now I want you out of my car... We're done talking.

Caleb holds the door open for Monica. She takes an angry beat, then gets out of the car. She stares daggers...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MONICA

It's guys like you who make girls  
like me feel small. Like we're the  
crazy ones. Someday... you'll know  
what it's like to feel crazy.

\*

She storms off toward the first TOWNHOUSE... Caleb gets in the  
car and SPEEDS AWAY, eyeing the REAR-VIEW MIRROR where...

\*

MONICA RECEDES FROM VIEW. Caleb turns a corner and like that--

\*

Monica is gone. *But her words still ring in his ears.*

\*

**EXT. 1369 HOOPER ST. ("THE NEW DIXON HOUSE") - DAY**

Grandma K's car turns onto Hooper St. It's clear the neighbors  
here take great pride in their lawns. She pulls up behind...

MOVERS carrying a dresser off their nearly empty truck. Alicia  
unbuckles Shawn as Grandma K gets out to admire the NEW HOUSE.

But right away something doesn't sit well with her:

ALICIA

Isn't it great, Momma?

GRANDMA K

It's-- lovely, child.

\*

Alicia sets Shawn on the ground and he runs across the lawn--

ALICIA

Shawn, be careful! Don't run!

ON GRANDMA K. As her gaze settles on the second floor...

Alicia grabs her bags and turns to the moving truck. She  
notices the only items still left inside are boxes marked  
"DONATE" on the side. *Huh. That's strange. Didn't Caleb say--*

She shakes the thought off as the movers, clipboard in hand,  
come out to the lawn with Caleb, who's now carrying Shawn.

Caleb sets Shawn down and signs the forms. He spots Alicia.  
His FLASH OF GUILT is quickly replaced with a smile. He hands  
back the forms and the movers nod to Alicia as they leave...

CALEB

Welcome home, baby.

They kiss. Alicia smiles, shuffling her mom and Shawn inside--

Caleb stays on the stoop, taking in the neighborhood. A deep  
breath. A new beginning. Free of his previous mistakes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He spots an OLD WHITE LADY walking her dog down the street-- \*

Caleb waves, neighborly. THE LADY NERVOUSLY YANKS HER DOG AND  
RUSHES ALONG THE SIDEWALK AWAY FROM THE HOUSE... FRIGHTENED. \*

Caleb is shocked... *maybe he's not so free after all.*

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT** \*

Alicia and Caleb eat CHINESE FOOD straight from the cartons.

CALEB

This-- not as good as the old place.

ALICIA

Well, we're gonna have to  
experiment. Find all new places.

Caleb nods, popping a dumpling in his mouth with a fork.

ALICIA (CONT'D)

Cheater!

(his head snaps up)

You're using a fork.

Caleb gulps. Hides the flash of guilt as best he can.

CALEB

You caught me.

(changing subject)

Um. You excited for school to start?

ALICIA

I'm a little nervous, to tell you  
the truth. I'm gonna be the oldest  
person in class. \*

CALEB

Oh, I doubt that.

(then)

You know what you should do? To get  
ready? You should do something  
artistic. Get back in that mindset.

ALICIA

Like what?

CALEB

How about you paint a mural on that  
open wall in Shawn's room.

ALICIA

Really? You think I should?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB

Yeah. This is our house now. I'm  
turning the basement into my studio.  
You should put your stamp on it too.

OFF ALICIA. She smiles as Caleb goes back to his food. She  
watches him, sensing for the first time something is... *off*.

**INT. SHAWN'S BEDROOM - LATER**

A GIGANTIC SPIDER dances along one of those empty walls.

CALEB (O.S.)

*The itsy bitsy spider climbed up the  
water spout. Down came the rain...*

Shawn stares at the SHADOW PUPPET, eyes clouding over. He  
clutches Sarah-the-penguin tightly as his breathing mellows.  
Caleb quiets. He unclasps his hands, splitting the arachnid.

**INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Caleb wipes steam from the mirror above his sink. In the  
swiped reflection, he can see Alicia lathering in the shower.  
He turns, watching his wet, naked wife behind frosted glass.

A smile crosses his face. Caleb unbuttons his shirt, yanks it  
off. He steps toward the shower, unbuttoning his pants when--

*Bzzz. Bzzz.* Caleb pulls his vibrating phone from the pocket:

**"MONICA CALLING"**

All excitement drains from Caleb's face as he hits the red  
button for **DECLINE**.

ALICIA

Caleb? I didn't hear you come in.  
I'm almost done.

CALEB

Uh... no rush.

Any desire to join his wife in the shower has evaporated. He  
sighs, turns, catching a glimpse of his back in the mirror.

He twists around... and discovers a SCRATCH MARK, unseen  
before. He's stunned-- until his phone vibrates again.

It's her. **MONICA CALLING**. Caleb curses, declines the call.  
Then, for good measure, he clicks through and **BLOCKS CALLER**.

WE PULL BACK: Behind Caleb, holding his phone, revealing his  
back... *completely covered in passionate scratches*.

**EXT. STORY-TIME RECORDS - PARKING LOT - DAY**

Caleb pulls into a spot TEMPORARILY LABELED with his name.

He stifles a laugh as he passes an EMPTY SPOT by the entrance reserved for, humbly: "THE VOICE OF A GENERATION"

**INT. STORY-TIME RECORDS - CONTINUOUS**

Attractive ASSISTANTS move about. The lobby is decorated with hundreds of photos of Curtis Story. Understated, this is not.

CURTIS (PRE-LAP)  
Hold up, Cal. I missed that. Go again.

PRE-LAP: A BRIEF MELODY played on an electronic keyboard.

CALEB (PRE-LAP)  
*Dom dom dee da. And then we bring it around again. Dom dom dee da dee.*

**INT. STORY-TIME RECORDS - WORKSHOP STUDIO - DAY**

CURTIS STORY is 35 and white. Twenty years of fame, three public divorces and a total disconnect from everyday reality have created a hurricane of ego. \*

Curtis manically bounces around while Caleb sits glumly at a keyboard/Roland TR-808 Rhythm Composer combo. \*

CURTIS  
Okay-okay. I'm on the train wit' you. Now how we gonna bring it into the station?

CALEB  
The station? \*

CURTIS  
Come on dawg, the motherfuckin' station!  
(off Caleb's confusion)  
The chorus! Lemme hear the chorus!

CALEB  
...That was the chorus.

CURTIS  
You straight up trippin'? You must be, 'cause there ain't no way you'd show up with that basic-ass hook and these wack lyrics and pretend you know what the fuck you doin'.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Curtis holds up a page of LYRICS for a song: "RUNG BY RUNG."  
He melodramatically tears the lyric sheet. Caleb blanches.

CALEB

Well... let me... let me play with  
it a bit. I actually think there's a  
world where the chorus...

CURTIS

--Caleb. Caleb. Who the fuck you  
talkin' to? There is no world where  
this is up to my standards. *Shit*.  
Are you just a one-hit wonder?

Caleb bites back his true feelings... and it's not easy.

CALEB

Curtis, you told me you wanted to  
try something new-- I'm trying to do  
that. But that means... we gotta  
*find our way*. A new sound takes  
time. It's a process, ya know?

Curtis pulls out a blunt. He lights it up...

CURTIS

I don't have time for your process,  
you feel me? Stop fucking around.  
Dig in the crates or somethin'.  
(a big drag)  
Just-- write me a hit song. It's not  
that fucking hard!

**INT. STORY-TIME RECORDS - BREAK ROOM - LATER**

Caleb opens a cabinet to get a snack when his phone rings:

CALEB (INTO PHONE)

Hello?  
(grabs a granola bar)  
Oh, yeah. Thanks for getting back.  
It's 1369 Hooper Street... yeah...  
Someone'll be there to sign. Okay.

He hangs up the phone and closes the cabinet.

MONICA (O.S.)

So your phone isn't dead.

Caleb spins, practically choking on his granola bar.

CALEB

What-- what are you doing here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MONICA

I work here. Why do you think I was  
at that party?

CALEB

I-- I haven't seen you around and...  
How come you didn't tell me?

MONICA

How come you didn't ask? Oh, I know.  
Because you're a selfish asshole  
who's ignored all my calls and texts.  
Or did you just block my number?

Caleb doesn't know what to say.

CALEB

Monica... uh, this is... I didn't  
know. I didn't think I'd see you  
again.

MONICA

Right. You thought I'd just go away.  
Let you use me, toy with my  
feelings. And I'd just be a good,  
quiet little girl.

CALEB

I wouldn't have done anything if I'd  
known you worked here. But-- we have  
to keep this professional.

MONICA

Always what you want. Fuck you.  
(then)  
I've lost my appetite.

She turns and leaves the break room, leaving Caleb stunned.

**INT. STORY-TIME RECORDS - RECEPTION - LATER**

Caleb approaches the RECEPTIONIST protecting the front door.

CALEB

Excuse me.

The Receptionist begrudgingly pulls her eyes off the monitor.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Can you tell me... what exactly does  
Monica do here?

RECEPTIONIST

Who?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB  
Monica. I don't know her last name.

RECEPTIONIST  
No one named Monica works here.

CALEB  
Really? Long red hair.

RECEPTIONIST  
No one. Named. Monica. Works here.

Beat. Caleb realizes what this means. *Monica stalked him here.*  
He turns to the front door, annoyed at the rude Receptionist:

CALEB  
Are you fucking-- You're just letting  
anyone in now? Do your job!

The Receptionist just rolls her eyes as Caleb storms off--

*Bzzz... Bzzz...* CALEB FREEZES. He reaches into his pocket,  
frightened of his phone-- but it's just a text from Alicia.

He full-screens the PHOTO TEXT: a PAINTED MURAL of the AFRICAN  
SERENGETI covering half a wall in Shawn's room. Caleb smiles.

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - SHAWN'S BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON**

Alicia, dressed in rags, finishes painting a herd of Zebras.

She glances out the window. OUTSIDE, Shawn is surrounded by  
toys, playing near the tree swing. She smiles. Dips her brush.

**INT. MASTER BATH - LATER**

Alicia washes paint off her hands. She grabs a towel.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

The room is coming together. Most of the boxes are unpacked.

Alicia tosses the towel in the hamper and glances out the  
wall of windows... She freezes... *WHERE'S SHAWN?*

**EXT. BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER**

Alicia bursts through the back door...

ALICIA  
Shawn!? SHAWN!!!!???

She rushes down the raised patio to the yard, toward the  
toys... She reaches the swing and... there... she hears--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAUGHTER. She rushes to the other side of the tree and spots:

SHAWN, standing at the far wooden fence, talking to someone between the crack. She starts toward him...

ALICIA (CONT'D)

Shawn! Who are you talking to?

Shawn giggles. He whispers something... then finally turns. \*

SHAWN

She says not to tell. \*

Beat. Alicia rushes over to two stacked bags of FERTILIZER. She bounds on top and LOOKS OVER THE FENCE... FFFFFFFTTTTT... \*

THE SPRINKLERS SHOOT ON in her neighbor's yard. \*

Alicia startles... even though the adjacent backyard is COMPLETELY EMPTY. She steps down, kneeling beside Shawn. \*

ALICIA

Who were you talking to? You need to tell Mommy.

SHAWN

The princess.

ALICIA

Princess?

SHAWN

Princess Penny!

Beat. Alicia laughs. Stands back up.

ALICIA

Okay. Did she have red hair... and a white dress?

(Shawn nods)

Just like on TV! Well, now it's time for your bath. Go get ready.

Shawn pouts. He trudges into the house as a COLD WIND compels Alicia to turn back and check the yard for intruders again--

*Squeak. Squeak.* The tree swing has begun rocking back and forth in the wind. Alicia walks over, only to get distracted by something CARVED INTO THE TREE BARK long ago: \*



(CONTINUED) \*

CONTINUED: (2)

She leans in close, reaching out to rub the symbol. Suddenly-- \*

The tree swing STOPS. Dead still. Alicia shivers. \*

**INT. CALEB'S CAR - EVENING**

ON CALEB -- Lost in thought. Monica's appearance rattling around in his brain. *HOOOOONK!!!* The sound rouses him-- \*

He accelerates through the green light. Shakes off the moment, taking in the sounds of the car and the neighborhood outside.

He taps the steering wheel, seeking inspiration in the *bump-bump-bump* of his tires on the asphalt when...

*BING*. A TEXT draws his attention: **UNKNOWN NUMBER**. Caleb pulls his phone from the cup holder...

**Seeing you today made me so wet** \*

Caleb's eyes go wide. \*

*BING*: **Why u ignoring me?**

*BING*: **We're meant for each other**

TEXTS continue at an inhuman speed. Caleb's foot accelerates. \*

*BING*: **Please come fuck me now** \*

Caleb has had enough. With one hand on the wheel, he texts:

**LEAVE ME ALONE. NO MORE CONTACT.**

THREE DOTS appear in response. She's typing. Caleb nervously glances between the road and the phone, waiting for a--

*BING*: **I'm going to tell your fucking wife**

All oxygen leaves the car just as...

*HOOOOONK!!!*... CALEB SPED THROUGH A RED LIGHT. HE DROPS THE PHONE AND SWERVES AT THE LAST SECOND AROUND TWO CARS-- \*

*Somehow he makes it through the intersection unscathed.* \*

**EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD - MOMENTS LATER**

Caleb pulls over and stumbles out of the car, heart racing. \*

He tries to calm his nerves, his mind spinning out of-- *BING*. \*

Caleb freezes. He spots his phone LIT UP in the car footwell. He reaches for it, like it were radioactive: \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

**U get what you deserve**

*How the hell could she know? Caleb whirls around, everything a blur as he searches for Monica... She could be anywhere.*

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - NIGHT**

Pictures hung. Furniture arranged. Moving boxes emptied.

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - BASEMENT - SAME**

The walls on all sides are OLD RED BRICK. The heating/AC unit hums along under the stairs. Boxes -- SPEAKER EQUIPMENT, MICROPHONES, SOUND DAMPENING -- litter the ground.

Caleb listens to music through his wireless headphones as he uses ADHESIVE SPRAY to stick thick, gray FOAM along the wall.

He applies the last square in a row and steps back, admiring--

*A FLASH: MONICA'S HANDS DIG INTO THE SAME GRAY FOAM IN TRAYCE'S STUDIO AS CALEB FUCKS HER FROM BEHIND.*

Caleb shakes his head, dizzy. He rubs his eyes and leans up against the bare brick wall just to the left of the stairs (*is it just us, or do these bricks here seem somewhat older?*).

MUSIC BUILDS IN HIS HEADPHONES. It hides the sounds of an approaching FIGURE reaching for his shoulder-- STARTLING HIM!

ALICIA

Are you okay?

He yanks off his headphones. The music still faintly plays.

CALEB

What?

ALICIA

Are you okay?

CALEB

Oh. Yeah, yeah. I think the fumes from this spray are getting to me.

ALICIA

Take a break. Come tuck Shawn in.

Caleb looks around at his still-in-progress basement studio. His hands are covered in dust and his shirt is dirty.

CALEB

I should clean up. You mind taking this one?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICIA  
Sure. He just wanted to tell you  
about his new friend.

\*  
\*

She turns, starts back up the stairs to the entry hall--

CALEB  
New friend? Kid in the neighborhood?

\*

ALICIA  
No. A woman with red hair.  
(beat; Caleb spins)  
He called her Princess Penny. 'Was  
talking to her in the backyard.

Caleb steps over to the base of the stairs.

\*

CALEB  
Did you see her?

ALICIA  
I... *what?*

CALEB  
Did you see who Shawn was talking to?

ALICIA  
(confused)  
No, Caleb... she's *imaginary*. Shawn  
has an imaginary girlfriend.

\*  
\*

CALEB  
Were you with him?

ALICIA  
I was painting his room, he was never  
out of my sight. What are you saying?

CALEB  
Just because I moved us to a good  
neighborhood doesn't mean there  
aren't people who want to hurt us!

ALICIA  
Hurt us? What has gotten into you?

Caleb can't answer-- not truthfully. He rubs his eyes.

CALEB  
I don't know. I'm just tired.

Alicia studies his face, then turns and heads up the stairs.

OFF CALEB. Watching her go... Thinking, again, of Monica...

**EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT**

The rope swing under the oak tree pendulates in the breeze. \*

UPSTAIRS, THE LIGHT IN SHAWN'S ROOM CLICKS OFF AS WE...

MATCH CUT TO:

AN ART SLIDE, clicking over in a projector, of a PLANTATION where dozens of slaves are depicted in a caricatured manner. \*

VOICE (O.S.)

For obvious reasons, there is little  
in the way of African American art  
prior to the Civil War. \*

**INT. CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY - CLASSROOM - NIGHT**

A nearly full ART HISTORY CLASS glances between their cellphones and PROFESSOR ALEX BROWN, late 30s and handsome. \*

PROFESSOR BROWN

So we're forced to view depictions  
of the South through the prism of  
white men. \*

*Click.* Another painting of women picking cotton. \*

PROFESSOR BROWN (CONT'D) \*

It almost looks like they're  
enjoying themselves. \*

The class can't help but laugh a little. In the third row, Alicia takes notes as Professor Brown clicks forward... \*

PROFESSOR BROWN (CONT'D) \*

For the lucky artists who escaped  
slavery, like portraitist Joshua  
Johnston or Edward Bannister... \*

(*click*) \*

...these free men, in order to make  
a living, were forced to paint works  
appealing exclusively to Northern  
sensibilities. Which means the only  
depictions of slavery from this  
period were crude drawings for  
newspapers and such. \*

*Click. Click.* He moves through some of these old NEWSPAPER  
DRAWINGS, many of them used to incite Northerner's rage. \*

PROFESSOR BROWN (CONT'D) \*

Now, there was one type of art  
southern blacks were able to \*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR BROWN (CONT'D)  
practice, even under the watchful  
eyes of their slave masters.

*Click.* Professor Brown displays a photo of a very old QUILT,  
covered in beautiful patterns.

PROFESSOR BROWN (CONT'D)  
It looks like a simple quilt, right?  
But in reality, it's a message.  
(*click; zooms in*)  
You see, each of these symbols is  
part of a secret code, a message  
between slaves and their allies  
along the underground railroad.

*Click.* A painting of a LOG CABIN with a quilt hanging on the  
porch. Alicia leans forward... *the symbols seem so familiar.*

PROFESSOR BROWN (CONT'D)  
This is how directions were given.  
This is how slaves learned whether a  
house was safe or... dangerous.  
(spots a raised hand)  
You have a question?

The whole class turns to Alicia. She's suddenly nervous...

ALICIA  
Um. Yes. Uh-- these symbols, were  
they only used on quilts?

PROFESSOR BROWN  
No. They could be painted on the  
side of a barn or, in fact, there's  
a church in Wilmington that hid them  
in stained glass windows.

ALICIA  
What about carved into a tree?

PROFESSOR BROWN  
Sure. That too. Excellent  
question... Alicia.

Professor Brown smiles at Alicia... holding her gaze just a  
little longer than he should. Alicia blushes as... *Click...*

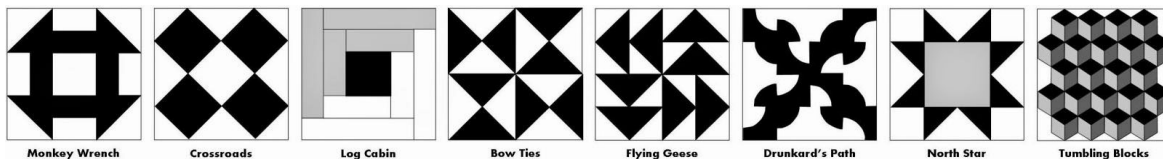
**INT. CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY - LIBRARY - DAY**

Alicia consults a torn sheet of paper, searching the stacks  
until she finds the book she's seeking: ART OF THE CIVIL WAR

She pulls it down and casually flips through pages and pages  
until she comes to a codex of SECRET SLAVE SYMBOLS:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:



\*

PROFESSOR BROWN (O.S.)

\*

I see you've taken a real interest  
in today's lecture.

\*

\*

She startles. Looks up and spots her art history professor.

ALICIA

Professor Brown. Hi. Yeah. That part  
about the coded symbols... I wanted  
to see what they looked like.

\*

\*

\*

PROFESSOR BROWN

\*

You thinking of doing some quilting?

\*

ALICIA

\*

No. Not quite. There's a tree in my  
backyard, must be two-hundred years  
old and there's something carved in  
it. Thought it might mean something.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

Professor Brown moves closer. Alicia doesn't seem to mind.

\*

PROFESSOR BROWN

\*

You must live over in the West End.

\*

ALICIA

\*

How'd you know?

\*

PROFESSOR BROWN

\*

It's the oldest neighborhood in  
Atlanta. Though the original houses  
are all gone, a lot of them still  
retain portions of the original  
foundation. So I wouldn't be  
surprised if your tree was marked.  
Which symbol is it?

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

ALICIA

\*

That's the thing. It's none of these.

\*

PROFESSOR BROWN

\*

Well I'd love to come take a look  
sometime. Maybe I can decode it?

\*

\*

\*

ALICIA

\*

(flustered)

\*

Actually, there's a party. We're  
having a house warming, my husband

\*

\*

(MORE)

\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALICIA (CONT'D)  
and I. At the house. If you'd like  
to come.

PROFESSOR BROWN  
That sounds great. Email me the  
address.

ALICIA  
Okay.

He gives her a wink and turns, walking down the aisle as  
Alicia tries to hide her slight, school-girl crush...

### INT. MALL - DAY

An expansive, enclosed promenade, filled with shoppers. Alicia  
drinks an ICED COFFEE while Caleb holds her bags.

ALICIA  
I can't believe they didn't have any  
tablecloths. Like there's a run on  
tablecloths or something.

CALEB  
Do we need them?

ALICIA  
It's our first house warming party.  
I want everything to look perfect.

Alicia turns and is distracted by the window display of a  
BEAUTIFUL DRESS, dark green with black stripes.

ALICIA (CONT'D)  
Caleb! What do you think? Maybe I'll  
get it for the party?

CALEB  
The dress? Yeah, it's good. Ask if  
they sell a matching tablecloth.

### INT. CLOTHING STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Waiting for Alicia, Caleb flips through a clothes rack when...

HE SPOTS RED HAIR! From behind, it looks just like Monica. Red  
Hair examines the same dress as Alicia. Caleb freezes as she--

STEPS IN FRONT OF A MIRROR. It is her. She's here. Monica  
holds the GREEN DRESS up in the reflection. Her eyes glance  
over and meet Caleb's. He's shaking, praying for an escape.

Because this bright, crowded mall has instantly become the  
most frightening place in the world... And then Monica...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Turns around... But... It's not Monica. \*

It's just some random girl with red hair. Caleb blinks. He's sweating. Confused... *his guilt is making him see things.* \*

ALICIA (O.S.)  
What do you think? \*

Caleb turns to his wife, radiant in the dress. Too quickly--

CALEB  
Get it. That's the one.

ALICIA  
It's almost three-hundred dollars. \*

CALEB  
I don't care. I love it. \*

He digs out his wallet. Hands it to a nearby SALES ASSOCIATE.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
We'll take it.

DING-DONG:

ALICIA -- in her new dress -- opens the front door of...

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - DAY**

The door opens on Professor Brown, holding a bottle of wine.

ALICIA  
I'm so glad you could make it. \*

PROFESSOR BROWN  
Wouldn't miss it. 'House is lovely! \*

**INT. KITCHEN - SAME**

A CATERER, Alicia's age, restocks a serving tray. She wears an apron with a logo for TANYA'S TASTIES. Grandma K hovers--

GRANDMA K  
...You learned to cook in my kitchen, least you can do is let me give you a hand.

CATERER (TANYA)  
Mrs. Kemp, Alicia asked me to cater this event. Go have fun!

Alicia walks toward the back door with Professor Brown-- \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICIA  
Ma, leave Tanya alone.  
(then; pointing)  
This is Dr. Alex Brown, my art  
history professor. Go show him where  
the bartender is. I made sure he has  
sweet tea for you.

THE DOORBELL RINGS. Alicia boomerangs for the entry hall.

GRANDMA K  
A bartender? It's ostentatious.

PROFESSOR BROWN  
I agree!

Grandma K smiles. She leads Professor Brown outside...

**EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS**

...As they head over to a well-stocked bar for the adults.  
Down on the grass the kids enjoy a MAGIC SHOW.

WE PICK UP CALEB -- Patting a FRIEND on the arm:

\*

CALEB  
Dee, you good?

Caleb clocks the magic show -- A NEEDLE PIERCES A BALLOON  
THAT DOESN'T POP -- then turns at a minor commotion:

TRAYCE AND GABRIELA STEP ONTO THE PORCH

Conversation stops. Trayce proudly holds up a bottle of PAPPY  
VAN WINKLE. A few COHORTS from the old neighborhood CALL OUT.

Trayce shakes a few hands, gives a few hugs, finally reaching  
Caleb, standing at the foot of the rear steps in shock:

CALEB  
What are you doin' here?

Caleb hugs Gabriela, dressed in a white Chanel jacket.

TRAYCE  
Well good to see you too, man! They  
got me back in town for a few days  
to shoot a video. Thought I'd drop  
by, see what my money bought y'all.

CALEB  
My money. I earned it putting up  
with you all these years.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TRAYCE

Nah, you earned it writing some dope songs. I'm proud of you, man. Now whaddya say we sample my house warming gift. Cost me two-grand!

(to Gabriela)

Bae. Go grab us some cups.

Gabriela rolls her eyes, then heads for the bar.

CALEB

Ask Alicia for the Riedel tumblers.

TRAYCE

Ohhhh... it's official. Curtis Story has made you white. Speaking of white... what happened with that broad you wanted to fuck?

\*  
\*

Caleb fakes a smile, pulls Trayce further from the crowd.

CALEB

Come on. Alicia's friends are here. I never texted her back, okay?

\*  
\*

Trayce sticks a finger in Caleb's face--

TRAYCE

I... respect your fidelity.

CALEB

Really?

TRAYCE

No! You're a total--

SHAWN (O.S.)

Uncle Tray!

Shawn runs over to Trayce, who genuinely lights up.

TRAYCE

Hey, big man!

SHAWN

You wanna see some magic?

TRAYCE

'Course I wanna see some magic.

Shawn grabs Trayce's hand and drags him over to the MAGIC SHOW. A MAGICIAN in heavy makeup welcomes Trayce with:

MAGICIAN

Excuse me, sir! Perfect timing. May I borrow your watch?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Trayce, egged on by the children, hands over his gold watch.

MAGICIAN (CONT'D)  
Oh! How nice. Maybe I'll keep it? No?  
Now, kids. Remember what I said?  
Magic is about expecting...

He places the watch in a TOP HAT and waves his wand.

MAGICIAN (CONT'D)  
The unexpected!

The magician shows the hat -- EMPTY -- Then flips it over his head and is DOUSED WITH CONFETTI. Shawn laughs the loudest. \*

TRAYCE  
Okay, okay. Very impressive. But  
let's bring my watch back... Now. \*

Caleb looks at his son. He looks at all his friends. At this house. Taking it all in. And that's when he notices Alicia--

She's with Professor Brown studying the SYMBOL ON THE TREE. \*  
Brown casually touches her arm in a too-familiar way. \*

OFF CALEB. Taking a long sip of his drink...

#### **EXT. BACKYARD - SUNSET**

STREAMS OF LIGHT counteract the sky growing darker and redder.

UNDER THE OAK TREE. Trayce sits on the swing, Pappy in his glass, with Caleb, Alicia, Gabriela and Professor Brown. \*

TRAYCE  
Hold up. You're telling me this house  
was on the underground railroad? \*

PROFESSOR BROWN  
No, not this house. This would have  
been a 150 years ago or more. \*

TRAYCE  
Well, goddamn! \*  
(to Caleb & Alicia) \*  
Guess you two ain't the first black \*  
folk to sneak into the neighborhood. \*

Everyone laughs except Caleb, focused instead on Dr. Brown. \*

CALEB  
So, Professor. You're the expert. \*  
What does this symbol mean? \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR BROWN

Well, I must confess, I've never  
seen this one before. Alicia and I  
will have to do some digging.

Caleb forces a smile. He sees the way this man is glancing at  
his wife. Or maybe it's just the whiskey he's finished.

WAITRESS (O.S.)

Mr. Dixon, can I get you a refill?

Caleb turns to say "yes"-- only to find himself facing...

MONICA. INVADING HIS HOUSE. INCHES AWAY FROM HIS WIFE.

She's wearing a white shirt and black pants, just like all the  
other waiters. Her red hair is pulled into a tight bun.

SPEECHLESS, Caleb glances at his wife, right beside him. She  
smiles, no idea anything is wrong. Caleb turns to Monica:

CALEB

I'm... I'm good.

ALICIA

What?

Alicia thinks Caleb was talking to her. He quickly covers.

CALEB

I-- this. The Pappy. It's good.

He glances back. Monica is already walking away. Behind him,  
Trayce is busy studying the symbol carved in the tree:

TRAYCE (O.S.)

This ain't no Da Vinci Code! It's  
vandalism. They still got that in  
white neighborhoods, don't they!?

More laughter. Caleb's eyes are locked onto Monica... She  
heads into the house. Without a word, Caleb steps away.

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - ENTRY HALL - MOMENTS LATER**

In the living room, Caleb sees Grandma K and the kids  
enjoying a movie. He looks up... Monica's legs head for his--

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Caleb enters. BUT IT'S EMPTY. Confused -- *Did he drink too  
much?* -- he turns to go but then-- THE DOOR SLAMS SHUT.

Caleb spins... Monica is blocking the doorway...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB

Are you insane, coming here? Get the fuck out of my house.

MONICA

It's our house now.

Caleb almost laughs. *You cheat on your wife one time.*

CALEB

Monica, I swear to God, you-- You need to leave. You can't keep stalking me like this. First you sneak into my work... Now-- Now, get out or I'm calling the cops.

MONICA

The police? Call them. You'll be the one who sounds insane.

CALEB

Is it money? Christ, we spent one night together! What do you want?

MONICA

Isn't it obvious?

(beat)

I want to be your wife.

ON CALEB. *What the fuck?* He tries to make his voice forceful:

CALEB

Get out. Get the fuck out.

Monica starts unbuttoning her shirt. Caleb backs away...

CALEB (CONT'D)

What are you doing? Don't do that.

...and stumbles onto the bed. Monica removes her shirt, then her bra. Caleb distances himself as she approaches the bed.

MONICA

I'm going to take her place. Because that is what I am owed.

CALEB

Jesus Christ, what the fuck did your last boyfriend do to you?

She's climbing up on the bed now, half naked, snaking toward Caleb until he's against the headboard with nowhere to go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MONICA

He lied to me. He took everything  
from me. He took away my life. And  
now I won't stop until I'm lying  
here, in this bed, beside you.

He's shaking now. Her eyes seem almost possessed.

CALEB

You stay away from my wife. If you  
even think of hurting her...

Monica's hands slowly move up Caleb's body, like two snakes.

MONICA

Oh, honey, nothing I can do can ever  
hurt Alicia as much as you. Your  
love, your spiritual bond... is too  
strong. Only you can break it. Then  
we can be together as man and wife.

Monica's face is beside his. Her breath tingles his neck.

CALEB

Stop. Get off me. Please just go.

MONICA

*Shhhh...* You wouldn't want me to  
scream. You remember how loud I can  
be, don't you?

CALEB

Why-- why are you doing this to me?

MONICA

Because... *I am yours* now.

Caleb freezes at those THREE WORDS. *Is it a coincidence?*

**INT. KITCHEN - SAME**

Tanya, the caterer, pulls cookies from the oven. Alicia  
enters from the backyard... worried about Caleb's absence.

TANYA

Everything okay, Al?

Alicia nods... absentmindedly walking into the ENTRY HALL.

She glances upstairs when... SHE'S GRABBED BY TINY HANDS!

SHAWN

Mommy! I saw Princess Penny!

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - SAME**

Monica's tongue moves up Caleb's cheek. He's frozen, hoping this monster -- this creature -- doesn't bite. She reaches for his hand and brings it to her breast... *and that does it.*

Caleb pushes her off, scrambling away. He rushes to the door.

Throws it open to find.. ALICIA COMING UP THE STAIRS. And she's... *shit... shit...* she's carrying Shawn. To Monica:

CALEB

Be quiet. Put your clothes on now.

Monica grabs her shirt and throws it on just as Alicia takes the last step and turns down the hallway to the bedroom...

CALEB (CONT'D)

Uh. The guest bathroom is downstairs.

Monica steps into the doorway, her shirt back on. She glances from Caleb to Alicia, debating whether to play along.

MONICA

My mistake. Sorry, sir.

She steps around Alicia, her hand gliding over the banister. Alicia plays it off as a joke, not giving her a second glance.

ALICIA

I didn't think any of the bathrooms were off limits. Should I make signs?

Caleb nervously glances at Monica heading down the stairs... *She won't take her eyes off Shawn.*

ALICIA (CONT'D)

You okay? Too much fancy whiskey?

CALEB

No-- Maybe. I just needed a...

He glances back into the bedroom, where he spots Monica's WHITE BRA beside the bed. Caleb holds in his panic.

ALICIA

Why does it look like you're not telling me something?

Caleb turns. He can't let her into the bedroom.

CALEB

I don't know. Why did you invite a professor who clearly wants to--  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB (CONT'D)  
 (he lowers his voice)  
 --Fuck you.

Alicia is stunned. She bites back her anger.

ALICIA  
 Shawn, go downstairs.

\*

Shawn stays in the hall, gripping the railing, giggling.

ALICIA (CONT'D)  
 Now!  
 (to Caleb)  
 I'm not having this fight with you.  
 Not while you're drunk and all our  
 friends are here. Get it together.

She defiantly turns and pushes Shawn away from the bedroom, shooting a glance back at Caleb, who heaves a guilty sigh. His eyes fall to the banister, where "*I AM YOURS*" is carved.

\*

Caleb shivers, then turns into the bedroom. He throws Monica's bra into his nightstand and slams the drawer shut with a *BANG*.

\*

\*

#### INT. SOUND STAGE - DAY

Caleb comes onto the set -- DECORATED LIKE A BAYOU SWAMP -- as TWO ZOMBIES brush by on their way out to smoke. Caleb beelines for Trayce, busy with a makeup adjustment near VIDEO VILLAGE.

CALEB  
 Wow. This... has nothing to do with  
 the song we wrote.

TRAYCE  
 It's allegorical. Also, we got a deal  
 'cause they film *Walking Dead* here.

Caleb nervously glances at the MAKEUP ARTIST.

CALEB  
 Hey... Can we talk in private?

#### INT. TRAYCE'S TRAILER - DAY

Caleb sits on the leather sofa in the decked-out double wide.

\*

TRAYCE  
 So what's up, Cal?

CALEB  
 I... lied.  
 (beat)  
 I texted that girl. And I, uh--

\*

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TRAYCE

*Oh my god... You fucked her!? What!?*  
 Welcome to the dark side, brother!  
 Feelin' guilty? This too shall pass.

CALEB

No-- I mean, yes. That's not the  
 problem. There's something wrong  
 with her. I can't quite-- She's...  
 crazy. And she's making me paranoid.  
 (beat)  
 Trayce... she came to the house.

TRAYCE

For real? Was Alicia there?

CALEB

So were you. She pretended to be one  
 of the waiters at the party.

TRAYCE

--Wait... 'You text her no panties?

CALEB

What?

TRAYCE

Damnit, I told you, you gotta let  
 them know where they stand before  
 you hit the pussy.

Caleb rolls his eyes.

CALEB

Yeah, that's the fuckin' problem. I  
 didn't listen to you *enough*.

TRAYCE

You got a picture? I gotta see the  
 booty that broke you.

Caleb sighs and digs out his phone. He scrolls through his  
 texts... but he can't find anything from Monica.

CALEB

Fuck. When I blocked her number the  
 phone deleted everything.  
 (beat)  
 What do I do, Trayce?

TRAYCE

With a crazy stalker? Usually, I get  
 one of my boys to find out where she  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TRAYCE (CONT'D)  
lives. Then they kindly ask her to  
leave me be. If that doesn't work...

\*

He pops over to a CABINET and pulls out a GLOCK G43.

\*

TRAYCE (CONT'D)  
My boys ask, less kindly.

Trayce offers the gun to Caleb. Beat. Caleb shakes his head:

CALEB  
No-- I'll figure something else out.

TRAYCE  
Then in the meantime, all I can  
suggest... is lock your doors, son.  
Lock your doors.

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - ENTRY HALL - DAY**

Alicia, wearing a Clark Atlanta University sweatshirt, uses her foot to open the front door. Her arms are full of groceries and her cellphone is held in the crook of her neck.

ALICIA (INTO PHONE)  
...Everyone loved your cooking! Even  
Caleb. He told me so.  
(beat)  
No. He's just been acting strange  
lately, is all.

THE CALL DROPS just as Alicia walks into the KITCHEN.

ALICIA (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)  
Hello? Tanya?

Alicia shrugs, setting her groceries on the counter. She looks up and notices... THE BACK DOOR IS UNLOCKED AND OPEN.

\*

ALICIA  
Caleb? You home?

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - VARIOUS ROOMS - DAY**

Alicia pops her head into the LIVING ROOM. The STUDY. The LAUNDRY ROOM. She looks upstairs. Decides to then check...

\*

**INT. BASEMENT - DAY**

Alicia flips the LIGHTS but -- oddly -- they won't turn on.

\*

She carefully comes down the stairs, the light from above creating a thin shaft as she enters the shadowy basement.

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICIA  
Caleb? Hello?

A draft SLAMS the basement door, leaving Alicia in darkness.  
Silence, too. The soundproofing makes her feel underwater.

ALICIA (CONT'D)  
This damn house.

Beat. Alicia fumbles for her cellphone, the screen  
illuminating her face as she taps the FLASHLIGHT APP...

Alicia sweeps the basement with light. Caleb's studio is now  
complete. From what we see, it's impressively do-it-yourself.

She swings her flashlight around as-- *fuck... did something  
just move past that shelf full of records...?*

Alicia spins. There's nothing there. She steps forward--

*SQUAWK!!!* ALICIA SCREAMS... She points the flashlight down...

Sarah-the-Penguin sits lopsided on the concrete floor.

ALICIA (CONT'D)  
What is wrong with me?

# **INT. SHAWN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

We hear Alicia coming up the stairs, back on the phone--

ALICIA (O.S.)  
Yeah, sorry 'bout that, Tanya.  
There's a dead zone in the house...  
(enters the bedroom)  
...I let my imagination run wild, I  
guess. Caleb's got me on edge.

Alicia replaces the penguin on Shawn's bed. Her FINISHED MURAL  
takes up an entire wall. Animals roam the African plain.

ALICIA (INTO PHONE)  
I don't know why-- There's a  
distance between us that just keeps  
growing. Maybe it's work or...

She freezes. She's noticed something in her mural...

A TREE looms in the corner, modeled after the oak outside.  
Under the leaves, out of place in both style and substance--

A WOMAN IS *SCRATCHED* INTO THE WALL IN A CHILDLIKE MANNER.

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - SHAWN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Shawn sits on his bed...

SHAWN  
But I didn't do it!

Reveal Alicia and Caleb are standing over him.

CALEB  
Don't lie to us, Shawn.

SHAWN  
I'm not! It was Princess Penny! She  
did it. \*

Alicia shakes her head, angry. She looks at Caleb... but he's  
not angry... he seems more... concerned. \*

ALICIA  
We need to punish him. This took me  
a long time.

CALEB  
Shawn, apologize to your mother.

SHAWN  
I DIDN'T DO IT!

CALEB  
APOLOGIZE! And no TV for... a month.

SHAWN  
NO! NO NO!

He pounds the bed, screaming. Alicia and Caleb take a step  
back. They've never seen Shawn get so angry before.

ALICIA  
This is your fault.

CALEB  
My fault?

ALICIA  
You're supposed to be home with him.  
You're supposed to be teaching him.  
Instead you're always at Curtis's  
studio or down in that basement but  
I don't know what you're doing down  
there because you haven't played me  
any new songs in weeks and--

Shawn let's out a LOUD SCREAM. It's all too much for Caleb.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB

Okay, ENOUGH! You're staying in this room until you apologize!

Shawn shakes his head and let's out a childish SCREAM. \*

Alicia sighs. She heads for the door. \*

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Caleb closes Shawn's door and follows Alicia downstairs.

CALEB

I don't see why you're blaming me for this. This only started once you went back to school.

ALICIA

No. It started once we moved into this house.

CALEB

You're blaming the house now?

ALICIA

I'm saying from the day we moved in, you've been acting strange. Distant. And Shawn can sense it. Wasn't the whole point of moving here to bring this family closer together?

They reach the ENTRY HALL.

CALEB

You want the truth? I moved us here to shake things up in our marriage!

ALICIA

What?

CALEB

We're complacent! We're boring. We've become like every married couple. Hell, when was the last time we just had sex without asking the other person for... *permission*.

ALICIA

Is that why you got so mad I asked my professor here? You think I want him more than I want you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB

I don't know what you want anymore...  
But it sure doesn't seem to be me.

\*

He brushes past Alicia, toward the garage. She watches him go.

**EXT. DIXON HOUSE - NIGHT**

Caleb rolls a TRASHCAN to the sidewalk. He turns to head inside-- but spots that OLD WHITE LADY again walking her dog.

\*

As soon as the old lady sees Caleb, she immediately yanks her dog and crosses to the other side of the street...

\*

CALEB

Hey! You! What's your problem, huh?

\*

The lady looks over, nervous, and then quickly turns to walk back the way she came. Caleb starts after her...

\*

\*

CALEB (CONT'D)

What? You don't like black people?

\*

The woman keeps walking. Caleb speeds up.

\*

CALEB (CONT'D)

Yo! I'm talking to you. You think we don't belong here?

The dog notices Caleb and suddenly lunges for him. Caleb backs off. The lady now has no choice but confrontation.

\*

\*

CALEB (CONT'D)

Get your dog away from me! He got a problem with black people too?

OLD WHITE LADY

\*

It's not you. *It's your house!*

Beat. Caleb is thrown. He realizes this woman is... scared.

\*

CALEB

My house?

OLD WHITE LADY

\*

It's cursed!

The lady yanks her dog away, leaving Caleb in the street. He turns to his house. From here, it looks almost... *sinister*.

\*

\*

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Caleb sits at his MUSIC STATION, fully set-up. His neighbor's words rattle around in his head. He opens GOOGLE and types:

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

**1369 HOOPER ST. ATLANTA.** A map appears of the WEST END. \*

Caleb clicks STREET VIEW. Instead of seeing a pristine house, the entire second floor is a BURNT SHELL covered in tarps. \*

CALEB  
Right. The fire. \*

He goes back to the search bar and types "WEST END FIRE." The most recent link is a newspaper report from three years ago: \*

### ONE DEAD, ONE IN CRITICAL CONDITION AFTER MYSTERIOUS FIRE

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Someone died? \*

Caleb clicks on the article. A picture of TOM AND SAMANTHA HAWTHORNE (**remember them, from the opening?**) appears. \*

He skims the article -- "*authorities suspect foul play*" -- "*Tom Hawthorne remains in a coma*" -- then clicks a new link-- \*

### AUTHORITIES DECLINE TO PROSECUTE HUSBAND IN WIFE'S FIERY DEATH

This article comes with VIDEO. Caleb clicks on the FOOTAGE:

**B-ROLL.** FIREMEN at night put out the last embers of the fire that engulfed the top floor of Caleb's house. \*

REPORTER (V.O.)  
*Despite the discovery of a gasoline can in the home's wreckage, arson investigators have declined to charge university professor Tom Hawthorne in the murder of his wife, Samantha Hawthorne.* \*

THE REPORT cuts to outside an ATLANTA COURTHOUSE where: \*

LOCAL PROSECUTOR  
*Even if we had all the evidence, considering his current medical state, there's simply no way a judge would ever allow Mr. Hawthorne to stand trial. Trust me, folks... Based on what his doctors have told me, justice has already been served.*

Caleb clicks STOP on the video, just as it jumps to an image of TOM AND SAMANTHA in happier times. \*

CALEB  
Great. So my house is cursed. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The house seems to GROAN as it settles for the night. Caleb looks around, suddenly finding his own home to be a mystery.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Caleb crawls into bed beside Alicia, already asleep. He takes a deep breath. A long night of fitful sleeping ahead...

FADE TO BLACK.

Until a COMPUTER SCREEN TURNS ON and we realize we're back in:

**INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT**

PUSH IN ON Caleb's computer monitor as it resolves into the last page opened... *still showing Tom and Samantha Hawthorne.*

*THE SCREEN GLITCHES... and for an instant, the Hawthornes are replaced by CALEB AND ALICIA... same clothes, same background.*

Another glitch and the image RETURNS TO NORMAL. We're now so close that Tom and Samantha's faces take up the entire frame.

And that's when we see the MOUSE CURSOR START TO MOVE.

*Someone is on the computer.*

SLAM BACK TO:

**CALEB IN BED.** His eyes open with a start. He turns and looks at the bedside clock. The time, in bright red numbers: **5:03AM**

**EXT. STORY-TIME RECORDS - PARKING LOT - MORNING**

Caleb parks in his spot only to find his once temporary sign is NOW PERMANENT. He's taken by surprise as he exits his car.

Caleb is even more shocked to see a brand new TESLA ROADSTER parked in Curtis Story's spot. He looks at his watch.

**INT. STORY-TIME RECORDS - MOMENTS LATER**

Caleb walks into the lobby. The rude RECEPTIONIST spots him:

RECEPTIONIST  
Good morning, Mr. Dixon. Can I get  
you a coffee or tea?

Caleb pauses. She's being far too nice.

**INT. RECORDING STUDIO - MOMENTS LATER**

Caleb finds the door open. Curtis Story and FOUR STAFFERS are listening to *Don't Look Now...* CALEB'S MOST PERSONAL SONG.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Curtis spots Caleb. He bounds forward with joyful energy. \*

CURTIS  
Motherfuckin' conductor pullin' his  
big swingin' dick into the station!  
This! This song is what I'm talkin'  
about. Why I hired you! Man, I see  
the whole album now, every song just  
like this. About shit that haunts us.  
What'chu think? Like a concept album!

CALEB  
How did you get my song?

CURTIS  
You trippin'? You emailed it to me.

CALEB  
I-- I didn't send you anything.

CURTIS  
(unlocking his phone)  
You high right now? That why this  
shit is so good? Here... Right  
there. This morning. 5:03 AM. \*

Caleb stares at an email. FROM HIS OWN EMAIL ACCOUNT. \*

CALEB  
Curtis. Listen to me. This-- this  
crazy woman... she must have hacked  
my computer. This is the wrong song.

CURTIS  
Wrong song? Wrong song? This is the  
only right song you've done in a  
month! What'chu sayin', Dixon? This  
some negotiation tactic?

CALEB  
No. That song... I'm saving it.

Curtis sees the conviction in Caleb. He laughs, realizing:

CURTIS  
Wait... For you? You think you can do  
what Curtis Story do? You record  
this, nobody hears it. Nobody cares.

A shadow crosses over Caleb's face. He's had enough.

CALEB  
I care. The song is mine. And you're  
a fucking fake.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CURTIS

And you're fuckin' fired, bitch! You gone. And I'll tell you what else... I'm gonna record this song *without* your sorry ass. You got a problem with that? Sue me. 'Cause I eat crazy ass niggas like you for breakfast.

CALEB PUNCHES CURTIS IN THE JAW. Curtis falls to the ground.

Caleb moves to hit him again but a burly ASSOCIATE grabs him.

**EXT. STORY-TIME RECORDS - PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER**

IT'S RAINING. Caleb rubs his bruised fist as he storms out.

**INT. CALEB'S CAR - CONTINUOUS**

He gets in the driver seat. Angry at Curtis. Angry at himself. But most of all, angry at Monica...

WHO SITS UP IN THE BACKSEAT. Caleb spots her in the REAR-VIEW and SCREAMS. He spins around. Monica's eyes are bloodshot.

\*  
\*

CALEB

How did you get in here?

\*

MONICA

What's wrong? Did Curtis not like our song?

\*  
\*

CALEB

*Our song?* Our... How did you do it? Did you break into my house again?

\*  
\*

MONICA

You're upset. I see that. But Caleb, you have to understand... after we hung out last time, I realized I've been going about this all wrong. I have been acting way, way too nice.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(beat)

I had to find a way to get through to you. To show you I'm serious. Now, if you want me to fix this, I'm gonna need to start seeing some more effort on your part.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Caleb is at wits end. He looks at Monica in the REAR VIEW.

\*

CALEB

Monica... I don't know why you're obsessed with me or in love with me

\*  
\*  
\*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB (CONT'D)  
or whatever this is but I will  
never... never love you.

MONICA  
Yes, you will. And so will Shawn.

Monica takes Caleb's silence as an opening to lean forward  
and kiss his neck. Her fingernails, gnawed down, grasp his  
shoulder... The surprise snaps him out of his paralysis--

CALEB REACTS LIKE A FRIGHTENED ANIMAL, flinging his elbow--

MONICA (CONT'D)  
You... you fucking hit me?  
(licks her bleeding lip)  
Do it again.

Caleb turns around. Monica has a huge smile. Beat.

#### **EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS**

Caleb gets out of the car and throws open the back door.

Monica lays down across the seat, spreading her legs wide...

MONICA  
I want it harder.

Caleb grabs Monica, yanks her outside. He grabs her under the  
arms and PUSHES HER AWAY FROM THE CAR. Away from him.

CALEB  
If you ever come near me or my  
family again I will kill you.

Caleb slams the back door. He gets in the car, leaving Monica  
standing out there in the rain...

MONICA  
Goddammit, Caleb! I CAN'T DO  
EVERYTHING IN THIS RELATIONSHIP!

Caleb peels out of the parking spot. He never looks back.

#### **INT. GRANDMA K'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON**

Grandma K opens the door for Alicia, who's carrying Shawn. He  
clutches Sarah-the-Penguin to his chest.

ALICIA  
He's already had lunch.

She sets Shawn down and he runs to Grandma K for a hug.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRANDMA K  
Is Caleb picking him up or...

ALICIA  
I don't know. He's not answering his  
phone. \*

Alicia digs in her purse. Grandma K's intuition kicks in: \*

GRANDMA K  
Everything okay with you two?

ALICIA  
Everything's fine, mom. \*  
(sighs; looks up) \*  
That's not true. Something's going \*  
on. I think he's angry I didn't let \*  
him go on tour. \*

Grandma K tilts her head and gives Alicia a look. \*

GRANDMA K  
Then what are you doin' about it? \*

ALICIA  
What do you mean? \*

GRANDMA K  
You got a problem with your husband, \*  
what are you doin' to fix it? \*

Beat. Alicia doesn't know how to respond. \*

GRANDMA K (CONT'D) \*  
Honey... Your father and I never \*  
kept secrets. Not one, 'til the day \*  
he died. It's the only way a \*  
marriage works. But you two start \*  
havin' problems and instead of \*  
talkin' them through like adults you \*  
go and buy a house so big you never \*  
have to see each other. \*

ALICIA  
I don't have time for a lecture on \*  
marriage. I have to get to class. \*

GRANDMA K  
With that professor? \*

ALICIA  
What professor? \*

Grandma K gives her a sideways glance. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALICIA (CONT'D) \*  
Momma, he's just friendly! \*

GRANDMA K \*  
Okay. Okay. \*

ALICIA \*  
Trust me, there are plenty of \*  
younger girls in class who aren't \*  
married and aren't mothers who, I'm \*  
sure, would love to sleep with him. \*

GRANDMA K \*  
Maybe he doesn't like younger girls. \*

ALICIA \*  
I already get this at home. You and \*  
Caleb are seeing things that aren't \*  
there. There is nothing-- \*

Shawn bursts back in, interrupting: \*

SHAWN  
Grandma! The TV won't work.

ALICIA \*  
I gotta go. And he's not supposed to \*  
be watchin' T.V. He's grounded. \*

Alicia leaves. Grandma K's eyes narrow in concern. \*

# **INT. POLICE STATION - DAY**

OFFICER DEARDON (white, late 50s) fills out a form. He glances toward the BREAK ROOM, then finally across his desk to Caleb.

OFFICER DEARDON  
She broke into your car, you say?

CALEB \*  
She's stalking me. I need a \*  
restraining order or something.

OFFICER DEARDON \*  
But you have no evidence of this. \*  
'You at least have a photo of this \*  
woman-- uh-- Monica? \*

Caleb rubs the bridge of his nose from the stress. \*

CALEB \*  
No. Just her home address. Like I \*  
said, I don't know her well. \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OFFICER DEARDON  
Uh-huh. How 'bout a description then?

CALEB  
She's five-five, five-six. Thin...

--An OFFICER walks by. Deardon grabs his EMPTY THERMOS--

OFFICER DEARDON  
Randall, come on, you drink the last  
cup of coffee, you brew another pot!

OFFICER RANDALL  
Well whaddya think I'm doin'?

Deardon shakes his head, annoyed. Suddenly remembers Caleb.

OFFICER DEARDON  
Now what were you sayin'? She was  
five-six or thereabouts?

CALEB  
Yes. She's thin. Attractive. And she  
has long red hair.

Deardon looks up, surprised. And finally interested.

OFFICER DEARDON  
Caucasian?

A LOADED BEAT.

CALEB  
Does that matter? She came into my  
house! She threatened my family!

\*

He pounds the desk with his BRUISED FIST. Deardon notices  
Caleb's swollen knuckles. Now he's concerned.

OFFICER DEARDON  
Son. You get into a fight recently?

CALEB  
What? No. Jesus, no.  
(rubs his knuckles)  
This was from-- It's nothing.

OFFICER DEARDON  
Uh-huh. I'm gonna go get a refill.  
'Meantime, you might wanna  
reconsider taking things further.  
See-- Someone like you... *new to the*  
*neighborhood*. And someone like her.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OFFICER DEARDON (CONT'D)  
 Boy, I'm just not so sure you want  
us takin' a closer look into this.

Caleb stares at the PAPERWORK. Fuming, he swipes the form.

**INT. CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY - CLASSROOM - EVENING**

Alicia glances between her notes and Professor Brown, standing  
 under a slide of Hans Holbein's THE AMBASSADORS (1533), a  
 painting of TWO MEN flanking a shelf of STILL LIFE OBJECTS...

PROFESSOR BROWN  
 But what's most interesting about  
 this painting is how Holbein forces  
 us to view it from a new perspective.  
 See this strange object here?

He points to a DISTORTED WHITE SHAPE near the bottom.

PROFESSOR BROWN (CONT'D)  
 Using a process known as  
 anamorphosis, the artist is able to  
 hide a *memento mori* in plain sight.

A young and very PRETTY STUDENT calls out:

PRETTY STUDENT  
 What's a *memento mori*?

PROFESSOR BROWN  
 In Latin it means... "Remember you  
 will die." But in art, it's--

He clicks to the next slide, showing the painting from a new  
 angle, up close and from below. The object magically forms:

PROFESSOR BROWN (CONT'D)  
A skull.

The class murmurs in surprise. Professor Brown smiles,  
 finding Alicia off to the side. He gives her a telling smile.

PROFESSOR BROWN (CONT'D)  
 So I guess you could call this the  
 first painting with a twist.

**EXT. CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY - THAYER HALL - NIGHT**

Alicia waves goodbye to fellow students and heads off alone.

A fog rolls over campus, diffusing orange light from the lines  
 of old lamp posts. Alicia pulls her bag closer to her body.

**INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT**

Alicia exits a stairwell and walks through the empty lot. Her shoes clack over cement. They are the only sound.

She looks over her shoulder, checking her surroundings as she reaches her car. She digs for her keys as...

SOMEONE APPROACHES QUICKLY, SILENTLY. She spins, holding her keys out like a weapon--

PROFESSOR BROWN

Whoa! Whoa! Didn't mean to scare you.

Alicia takes a deep breath. Sighs with relief.

ALICIA

It's okay.

PROFESSOR BROWN

You heading home?

ALICIA

Yeah. I've got a lot of homework.

PROFESSOR BROWN

Not too much from me, I hope!

She smiles, shaking her head. Beat.

PROFESSOR BROWN (CONT'D)

I was hoping to talk to you after class but you just rushed off. I cracked the case.

ALICIA

The symbol?

He nods, self-satisfied, and opens his messenger bag. He removes a book on SECRET CODES that dates back to the 1950s.

PROFESSOR BROWN

Do you remember how the quilt squares had names like "Monkey Wrench" and "North Star"? Well this one is really rare. It's called...

He flips to a bookmarked page and points out the symbol we saw carved in Alicia's tree:

PROFESSOR BROWN (CONT'D)

"Buried Secrets."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICIA  
Buried secrets?

PROFESSOR BROWN  
It means the house has a secret  
room. Like an attic or a crawl space  
under the floorboards.

ALICIA  
Wow. That's a little... creepy.

PROFESSOR BROWN  
But hey, that house is long gone.  
You haven't found any secret rooms,  
have you?

Alicia can't help but laugh a little as she shakes her head.

PROFESSOR BROWN (CONT'D)  
So I was thinking of heading to this  
bar the younger students like  
nearby. Bit of a dive. I'd love some  
company. Celebrate a job well done.

ALICIA  
I-- really can't.

Professor Brown steps closer. A little too close.

PROFESSOR BROWN  
You sure? Because I know that a lot  
of married women come back to school  
with certain... school girl  
fantasies. You not one of them?

Beat. For a second, she's transfixed by his eyes. Until--

ALICIA  
Fuck.

She laughs, quickly gets into her car and slams the door. The  
car peels off, leaving the professor standing there, confused.

# **INT. DIXON HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT**

A HAND shuts off the hot water to the BATHTUB. Caleb leans  
back in the spacious tub. He sips from a Heineken, then sets  
it on the tile floor and closes his eyes. Trying to relax.

*Trying to forget the mistakes he's made. Today and every day.*

TWO LEGS STEP INTO THE WATER. Caleb slowly opens his eyes.

Alicia climbs into the bathtub and straddles him--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB  
What are you...?

ALICIA  
--Just shut up.

She kisses him, passionately. Needing him inside her. \*

She wraps her arms around him -- gasping -- as they begin to feverishly make love, water splashing onto the floor. \*

PAN TO: THE MIRROR. Alicia's gyrating body reflected until--  
THE MIRROR OMINOUSLY FOGS OVER.

MATCH CUT TO:

A WINDSHIELD WIPER whips back-and-forth against the rain...

**INT/EXT. TESLA ROADSTER - MOVING - NIGHT**

Curtis Story luxuriates in the black leather driver seat.

The stereo blasts a rough recording of Curtis singing *Don't Look Now*. We know this because it says so on the display. \*

The song lacks feeling. The magic Caleb brought is gone. But don't tell Curtis that. He bops his head to the beat as... \*

The car -- on AUTODRIVE -- takes a turn as the song seems to GLITCH, repeating over and over, like a digital record skip...

Curtis takes his eyes off the road. Checks the MEDIA DISPLAY. The indicator for AUTODRIVE inexplicably flashes off... \*

HOOOONNKKK! Curtis looks up. HE VEEERED INTO THE WRONG LANE.

He grabs the wheel and manually swerves. He hits the button for AUTODRIVE and suddenly the computer again takes over. \*

CURTIS  
Fucking autodrive.

He hits play again on his song but instead of his voice a BURST OF PAINFUL STATIC shoots from the speakers. Curtis quickly hits buttons until the car switches over to RADIO: \*

ELVIS (VIA RADIO)  
...Walk like an angel / Talk like an  
angel / But I got wise...

CURTIS  
Yeah. I dig this.

Suddenly, the steering wheel SPINS HARD TO THE LEFT and the center screen goes HAYWIRE... a ghost in the machine... \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELVIS (VIA RADIO)  
*You're the devil in disguise / Oh  
 yes you are / The devil in disguise.*

Curtis tries turning the wheel but the computer has control.  
 Everything across the console is SHORTING OUT as...

\*

**EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME**

THE TESLA HYDROPLANES OVER THE WET ROAD, SPINNING SIDEWAYS  
 INTO THE GUARD RAIL... SLAMMING THROUGH THE METAL....

ELVIS (V.O.)  
*You fooled me with your kisses / You  
 cheated and you schemed...*

\*

FLIPPING END-OVER-END DOWN AN EMBANKMENT. CURTIS SCREAMS--  
 BECAUSE THROUGH THE WINDOW THE SLOPING GROUND TERMINATES...

ELVIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
*Heaven knows how you lied to me /  
 You're not the way you--*

\*

...AND THE CAR FLIES OFF A RIDGE INTO THE CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVER.

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Caleb wipes the steam off the mirror. He puts his hands on  
 the sink and stares at his reflection. Behind him he sees:

\*

\*

ALICIA'S NAKED BACK as she slides into a nightgown. His eyes  
 shut, the guilt overpowering. *Caleb makes a big decision.*

\*

\*

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

\*

Caleb walks out, towel wrapped around his waste. Alicia is  
 taking throw pillows off the bed. She turns to her husband.

\*

\*

Beat. The two take each other in across the bedroom's expanse.

\*

CALEB  
 We need to talk.

\*

\*

ALICIA  
 I know.

\*

\*

Beat. Caleb takes a deep breath, trying to find strength--

\*

ALICIA (CONT'D)  
 I'll go first.

\*

\*

Caleb snaps up, surprised. Alicia walks over to him.

\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICIA (CONT'D)

I haven't shown you the appreciation  
you deserve. For everything. For this  
house. For the sacrifices you made  
for this family. I promise, from now  
on, to make sure you never...

CALEB

--I had an affair.

It just slips out. Alicia has trouble processing.

ALICIA

What?

CALEB

I slept with someone.

He waits for Alicia to say something. She doesn't. She just  
backs away, bumping into the dresser. So Caleb continues:

CALEB (CONT'D)

I met her at the album party. I got  
drunk and gave her my number... and  
it doesn't matter. It was just one  
night.

ALICIA

When?

CALEB

Right before the move.

For Alicia, it suddenly explains so much.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Al, it was the biggest mistake of my  
life. It won't stop haunting me.

Alicia seems to shrink. The news like a punch to the gut.

ALICIA

Who is she?

CALEB

She's nobody. She's just-- she's  
nobody. It meant nothing.

Caleb comes over to comfort her but she lashes out...

ALICIA

Don't fucking touch me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CALEB

Alicia. Please. I've just been dealing with a lot. If I could take it back, I would. I would give anything to go back in time!

ALICIA

Keep your voice down.

Caleb stops. Stares at her. Her neck muscles strain.

ALICIA (CONT'D)

Do not wake our son. I want you out.

CALEB

Alicia. You don't understand. It's not safe. This woman-- she's become obsessed. She's been stalking me.

Alicia steps forward, hissing through gritted teeth.

ALICIA

I don't care. Get the fuck out of this house.

CALEB

I don't want you and Shawn here alone. This woman is dangerous!

ALICIA

So am I.

Beat. Her stare could stop a charging rhino. But then-- it instantly softens as her focus shifts to the door...

Shawn stands in the door-frame, holding his penguin. Alicia wipes the tears from her eyes and rushes over to pick him up.

ALICIA (CONT'D)

What are you doing up, sweetie?  
Let's get you back to bed.

(beat)

Say goodnight to Daddy.

She glances back at Caleb with a death stare.

SHAWN

Goodnight, daddy!

Caleb can barely get out the words as he chokes back tears:

CALEB

Goodnight, Shawn.

**INT. TRAYCE'S MANSION - NIGHT**

Trayce answers the door in silk pajamas. Caleb stands outside, wet from the rain, holding a gym bag.

**INT. TRAYCE'S MANSION - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT**

THE SCENE OF THE CRIME. Caleb lies in bed with his cellphone, watching an OLD VIDEO of Alicia from when she was pregnant:

**BACK IN THEIR OLD BEDROOM:** *Alicia is sitting on the edge of the bed, looking up lovingly at Caleb (O.S.) filming her.*

CALEB (O.S.)  
You love me?

ALICIA (ONSCREEN)  
More than Tina Turner. You love me?

CALEB (O.S.)  
More than... James Brown.

ALICIA  
More than the Godfather of Soul?  
You're a good liar, Caleb Dixon.

*She leans and plants a kiss on Caleb's cheek. He holds the camera one arm out, selfie-style, so he can film them both.*

BACK IN THE POOL HOUSE, Caleb wipes tears from his cheek.

**INT. TRAYCE'S MANSION - LIVING ROOM - MORNING**

Trayce has his eyes glued to the T.V. as Caleb enters in his sweatpants. He glances over at...

NEWS REPORTER (ONSCREEN)  
Yes, Russ, they do believe weather  
was the underlying factor.

LIVE NEWS REPORT: *The telegenic NEWS REPORTER is on the side of a curvy road where POLICE CARS AND FIRE TRUCKS block an embankment. The Reporter talks to a NEWS ANCHOR in studio...*

NEWS ANCHOR  
Do we know if Mr. Story was under  
the influence of alcohol or drugs?

NEWS REPORTER  
Not at this time. The only  
information we have is that at around  
11:15 last night, Curtis Story's  
Tesla Roadster veered off the  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEWS REPORTER (CONT'D)  
*embankment you see behind me and  
 plummeted into the river.*

\*

ON CALEB. Collapsing into the nearest chair, appalled.

*HELICOPTER FOOTAGE of the crash sight. Police boats with  
 divers wait while a TRUCK-MOUNTED CRANE hauls up the Tesla.*

TRAYCE  
 Damn. Hated the guy, but...

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.)  
*Could this have something to do with  
 the car's autodrive function?*

\*

NEWS REPORTER (O.S.)  
*We haven't been able to confirm or  
 deny that just yet. To recap...*

\*

\*

\*

CALEB  
 This is her. I know it.

\*

\*

Trayce looks over at Caleb, thinking he's joking. He's not.  
 Caleb turns to his friend with a newfound determination.

\*

\*

CALEB (CONT'D)  
 Remember when I said I didn't want  
 the gun?

\*

\*

TRAYCE  
 Yeah.

CALEB  
 I want the gun.

#### **INT. TRAYCE'S BEDROOM - MORNING**

Trayce opens a drawer and pulls out one of his many GLOCKS.

\*

TRAYCE  
 Unregistered, untraceable. You sure  
 about this?

Caleb nods. His shaky hand takes the gun from Trayce.

#### **EXT. VARIOUS STREETS - MORNING**

Caleb's car speeds along. From FREEWAY to SIDE STREET... until  
 Caleb stops outside the TOWNHOUSE where he dropped off Monica.

\*

\*

#### **INT. CALEB'S CAR - MORNING**

Caleb grabs the gun. Sweating. He takes deep breaths to calm  
 his nerves. He turns to look at Monica's door. Go time...

**EXT. TOWNHOUSE - MORNING**

Caleb BANGS LOUDLY on Monica's front door, his free hand gripping the handgun. No response. Caleb bangs again. \*

CALEB  
MONICA! OPEN THE FUCKING DOOR.

Nothing. Caleb tries the doorknob. Oddly... IT'S UNLOCKED.

**INT. TOWNHOUSE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS**

GUN DRAWN, Caleb enters. But something isn't right. The house is too barren. No photos. Nothing that makes it feel LIVED IN.

Until-- VOICES. Soft. Coming from another room. Caleb quietly creeps around the corner, spins into the...

**INT. TOWNHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

A DISFIGURED MAN IN A WHEELCHAIR watches *The Price Is Right*. \*

He does not move. \*

Caleb takes in the tousled hospital bed. The medical supplies. \*

He moves in front of the TV, next to a cart filled with PRESCRIPTIONS. Caleb faces the silent man. THEIR EYES MEET. \*

Caleb doesn't recognize him. But we might. TOM HAWTHORNE'S face is HORRIBLY BURNED AND SCARRED. One eye is glassy white.

CALEB  
Who are you?

Behind Caleb-- SOMEONE WITH A BASEBALL BAT APPROACHES-- \*

Caleb notices a slight SHADOW reflected in the blank, white eye, betraying the would-be attacker... WHO SWINGS THE BAT...

JUST AS CALEB DUCKS. He turns. Face-to-face with a MALE NURSE. \*

The Nurse sees the gun and immediately drops the baseball bat. \*

MALE NURSE  
Oh, fuck. Oh, fuck. Take whatever  
you want. Please don't hurt me.

Caleb looks at the Glock. Realizes how this looks. He points the gun at the ground. Holds out his other hand to stay back.

CALEB  
I-- This is-- This is not a robbery.  
I'm looking for someone. Monica.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MALE NURSE

Who?

CALEB

Monica! Tell me where the fuck she is! I know she's here!

MALE NURSE

I don't-- It's just us. We're not hiding anyone. My name is Gabe. I'm-- This is Tom Hawthorne.

The Nurse points to the man in the wheelchair. Caleb recognizes the name. He wipes his face. Nervous and confused.

CALEB

Did you say... Tom Hawthorne?

MALE NURSE

I take care of him. I'm his nurse.

Caleb sways. He has to sit down. He puts the gun on his lap.

CALEB

I think... he used to live in my house.

\*

MALE NURSE

The one that caught fire?

CALEB

(nodding)

What the fuck is going on? You're certain you don't know Monica? Redhead, very... attractive?

NURSE

Never heard of her.

CALEB

Why would she bring me here?

(beat; to nurse)

Can I ask him?

MALE NURSE

Do I have a choice?

Caleb looks down at the gun. Then back up.

CALEB

I guess not.

The Nurse kneels beside Tom. He flips up a DIGITAL TOUCHPAD built in the chair's armrest. The pad has 3 COLORED CIRCLES:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)



\*

MALE NURSE

It's best to stick with yes or no  
questions. I don't know if he'll  
answer. Please understand, he might--

\*

\*

CALEB

--I got it... Dr. Hawthorne, I'm  
sorry I came in uninvited. But I  
need your help.

\*

Tom's head sways. He just keeps watching T.V.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Do you know a woman named Monica? I  
dropped her off here. I really need  
to find her. She's... stalking me.

Nothing. Tom's eyes notice the gun. Lock onto it.

CALEB (CONT'D)

This? Is this... the gun? Look. I'll  
put it over here. Okay?

He sets the gun down on the medical cart several feet away.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Do you know Monica?

Still nothing. Caleb sighs and stands... he balls his fist  
and hits himself in the hip, frustrated at this dead end.

\*

\*

MALE NURSE

Don't hurt him. I told you, his mind  
isn't all there.

\*

\*

\*

Caleb stares at the old hardwood floor, covered in deep  
SCRATCHES from all the medical equipment. He turns...

\*

\*

CALEB

Does *I am yours* mean anything to you?

\*

\*

Tom stares straight ahead. Then-- his ONE GOOD EYE snaps over  
to Caleb. His finger slowly moves to the GREEN BUTTON...

\*

\*

TOM (VIA VOICEBOX)

Yes.

\*

\*

CALEB

It does? Okay. Does it have  
something to do with Monica?

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TOM (VIA VOICEBOX)  
Yes.

CALEB  
Does she live here?

Tom's finger struggles over to the RED BUTTON:

TOM (VIA VOICEBOX)  
No.

CALEB  
Do you know where I can find her?

TOM (VIA VOICEBOX)  
No.

Caleb realizes he's going down the wrong path.

CALEB  
Did you... have an affair with her?

TOM (VIA VOICEBOX)  
Yes.

CALEB  
Did you murder your wife?

NURSE  
Hey! You can't ask him...

TOM (VIA VOICEBOX)  
No. No. No. No.

Tom hits the RED BUTTON emphatically. *But this makes no sense... didn't we see Tom kill his wife?*

Caleb pauses. Looks Tom dead in the eyes.

CALEB  
Did Monica kill your wife?

A BEAT, then...

TOM (VIA VOICEBOX)  
Yes.

A tear forms in Tom's good eye. A truth off his chest.

Caleb is stunned. He looks to the Nurse for answers when...  
*BLOOP.* The Nurse looks down in surprise at the droplet sound.

CALEB  
What's that noise?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MALE NURSE

It's the "type" option. But he...  
almost never uses it. He doesn't  
have the, um, motor skills...

\*  
\*  
\*

They both lean down and watch as Tom -- his face contorted in  
agony -- struggles to tap out a message on the KEYBOARD:

\*  
\*

## BLURPNT

\*

CALEB

What does that mean?

\*

MALE NURSE

I don't- Is it *blueprint*? Is that it?

\*  
\*

Tom's hand collapses, his labored breathing calms.

\*

CALEB

What does a blueprint have to do  
with any of this?

\*  
\*  
\*

MALE NURSE

I don't know. But I'll be right back.

\*

CALEB

Wait. WAIT! I'm coming with you.

Caleb goes for the gun. The Nurse freezes.

MALE NURSE

Leave it. You want answers, leave  
the gun.

\*

A BEAT. Slowly, Caleb retracts his hand. Nods agreement. They  
leave the room. TOM'S EYES STAY FOCUSED ON THE GLOCK.

CUT TO:

A PRINCESS PENNY CARTOON. Penny flies on a friendly dragon--

## INT. DIXON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Shawn watches the TV with rapt attention. Off to the side,  
ALICIA WATCHES SHAWN. She has the look of a woman drained.

Shawn giggles and suddenly Caleb's betrayal -- the loss of  
their family -- becomes too much to handle. She rushes off.

## INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Alicia leans against the wall and finds more tears. Angry  
ones. The kind you cry when you learn the world is harsh and  
cruel and nothing will ever be the same. Her anger grows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHE LOOKS AT HER WEDDING RING. *Like it were suddenly cursed.* \*

She twists it, left, right, until it finally comes off. FREED. \*

She wipes her face with a dish towel, then opens her fist, staring at the ring. Alicia flings open a DRAWER full of tea and spices. She throws the ring in. THEN SLAMS IT SHUT...

CUT TO **BLACK**. THEN:

A NAKED LIGHTBULB SPARKS TO LIFE. Dangling from the ceiling...

**INT. TOWNHOUSE - ATTIC - MORNING**

Caleb climbs up the attic ladder right behind the Nurse. The room is full of sheet-covered furniture and long shadows.

MALE NURSE

I mean.... I always assumed he killed her. I just never asked. What do we do? Should we call the police? \*

CALEB

They're no help. Trust me.

Caleb notes a PAINTING stowed against the wall. Walks closer. \*

It's an oil-on-canvas of a SOUTHERN GENTLEMAN AND HIS WIFE, charred along the edges from fire. It takes a moment, but... \*

CALEB (CONT'D)

I've seen this before. \*

(beat; remembering) \*

She took the selfie in my house. \*

The Nurse is busy searching through the clutter. \*

MALE NURSE \*

What's that? \*

CALEB \*

She sent me a picture. This painting was in it. Which means... \*

(realizing) \*

Oh my God. She's doing to me what she did to him. \*

MALE NURSE (O.S.) \*

Don't know 'bout that but it's a miracle it survived the fire. That's Mr. Hawthorne's great-great-grandparents. His family's lived in Atlanta since before the Civil-- \*

(finds something) \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MALE NURSE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Here it is!

The Nurse pulls down a CARDBOARD TUBE. He hands it to Caleb,  
who blows a film of dust off into the lone hanging light bulb.

Carefully, Caleb opens the tube and pulls out old (like one-  
hundred year old) blueprints. Ironically, the paper is yellow.

He notices something hand written at the top: 1369 HOOPER ST.

CALEB  
Why the hell would he want me to  
have blueprints of my house?

MALE NURSE  
You'll have to ask Dr. Hawthorne.

CRASH... a loud noise downstairs draws their attention.

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME**

Alicia stares at her cellphone resting on the kitchen island.  
With a deep breath-- She clicks on the contact for **MOM**.

The phone rings. Alicia closes her eyes as the soft murmur of  
a "Hello" comes from the speaker. She rubs her finger --  
where her wedding ring used to be -- AS WE SLOWLY PUSH IN...

ALICIA (INTO PHONE)  
Momma. I--  
("What's the matter, baby?")  
You always know when something's  
wrong. Mom. It's Caleb...  
("What!? What happened?")  
He cheated on me. He had an affair.  
("With who?")  
Some woman. He said it was just one  
night but... I think he's lying.  
("Oh, child. I'm coming over.")  
I should have seen the signs. I just  
feel so... broken. I-- haven't  
figured out what to do. Oh God...  
what do I tell Shawn?

She trails off and -- in the silence -- hears a *LOUD SCRATCH*.

ALICIA  
What was that?

*SCRATCH. SCRATCH. HARD. METHODICAL.* Alicia stands. Moves  
toward the sound. It's coming from the ENTRY HALL.

ALICIA (INTO PHONE)  
Hold on one second, Momma.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alicia walks out of the kitchen and, like every time before--  
BEEP... BEEP... BEEP. Alicia looks at her phone: "NO SIGNAL." \*

Her phone just cut out in the same spot... again. \*

SCRATCH. SCRATCH. The sound is coming from right above her.

ALICIA  
Hello? Who's there?

WOOD DUST DRIFTS DOWN. As if someone... *oh Jesus...* were  
carving something into the railing. Alicia looks up...

THERE'S NOBODY THERE.

She glances off to the living room. Shawn is still engrossed  
in his cartoon. With growing unease, she moves to the stairs.

**INT. TOWNHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME**

The Nurse and Caleb rush in with the blueprints. The JOYFUL  
THEME of the *Showcase Showdown* a stark counterpoint to-- \*

TOM HAWTHORNE WITH THE GLOCK IN HAND. POINTED AT HIS HEAD.

MALE NURSE  
Mr. Hawthorne, what are you doing? \*

Caleb points to the tipped-over medical cart -- the source of  
the loud crash -- several feet away. \*

CALEB  
The gun was all the way over there!  
I thought he couldn't move? \*

MALE NURSE  
He can't! I don't-- understand...  
Tom. Mr. Hawthorne! Put down the gun.

Tom's paralyzed body strains with inhuman effort. VEINS THROB  
IN HIS NECK. His sweaty finger tugs against the trigger... \*

MALE NURSE (CONT'D)  
No. Tom! STOP!

...PULLING... PULLING... AND...

*Click.* THE GUN FAILS TO FIRE. Anguish washes over Tom's face  
as he drops the gun. *This man wanted desperately to die.*

Caleb rushes to the gun. The Nurse rushes to Tom. \*

MALE NURSE (CONT'D)  
What happened?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB  
I must have left the safety on.

MALE NURSE  
No. How did he reach the gun?

They stare at Tom. HIS EYES FILLED WITH PAIN AND ANGUISH.

MALE NURSE (CONT'D)  
You need to leave.

Caleb nods. Doesn't need to be told twice.

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - SAME**

Alicia finds the balcony hallway EMPTY... but there are fresh WOOD SHAVINGS on the floor by the master bedroom. Her hand tightly clutches the banister as she drifts over toward--

THE CARVING. The one that read I AM YOURS. Alicia leans in:

I AM YOURS TO TAKE

ALICIA  
*I am yours... to take?*

A gust of air -- from the bedroom -- causes her hair to blow. \*

ALICIA SENSES A PRESENCE. TURNS. HER EYES GO WIDE IN SHOCK-- \*

SHE SCREAMS AND STUMBLES BACKWARD-- \*

HITTING THE RAILING HARD ENOUGH TO SPLIT IT APART. \*

ALICIA FALLS FROM THE SECOND FLOOR. FACE FILLED WITH FEAR. \*

...CRACK. HER HEAD SNAPS INTO THE BEAUTIFUL HARDWOOD. Then-- \*

A shadow approaches, blanketing her body in darkness. \*

ALICIA (V.O.)  
You've reached Alicia...

**INT/EXT. CALEB'S CAR - MOVING - MORNING**

The cardboard tube sits on the passenger seat. Caleb speeds around a sharp turn, tires squealing, PHONE TO HIS EAR... \*

ALICIA (V.O.)  
I'm not available. Leave a message.

Caleb pounds the dashboard in frustration. BEEEEEP.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB (INTO PHONE)  
 Damnit. Look, Alicia, I know you don't want to talk to me but just listen, okay? Just listen. That woman, she's not obsessed with me. She's obsessed with the house! She's been stalking us since that first night... I'm not the first! She-- had an affair with the last owner. I know that's crazy, it's okay to think I'm crazy, but get Shawn and get the hell out of the house!

He ends the call as he speeds up an ON RAMP only to find--

TRAFFIC IS STOPPED. Caleb SLAMS THE BRAKES hard, sending the blueprints bouncing under the passenger seat. \*

CALEB  
 No, dammit! \*

He honks, just as his PHONE RINGS: **ALICIA CALLING.** He answers. \*

CALEB (INTO PHONE)  
 Alicia, baby, thank God, I need--

He freezes. The voice on the other end is not Alicia. BEAT.

CALEB  
 Wh-- What hospital?

# **INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - DAY**

Caleb rushes down a long, antiseptic hall. Spots Grandma K, who stands to confront him with fire in her eyes.

CALEB  
 How is she?

GRANDMA K  
 She's alive. Thank heavens for that. Paramedics say she tripped and fell off the balcony. \*

CALEB  
 Oh, God... Shawn... *Where's Shawn?*

GRANDMA K  
 Tanya's house.  
 (then)  
 He found her. You understand me? Your son! 'Cause you weren't there. You had us all fooled. But you're just like all the rest of 'em.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OFF CALEB. Feeling the full weight of his bad decisions.

**INT. HOSPITAL - ALICIA'S ROOM - DAY**

ALICIA IS IN A COMA. A brace wraps around her head and neck.

Caleb approaches. Tears fill his eyes. He did this. He failed to protect her. Everything he worked for... gone. He grabs Alicia's hand, needing something to hold. Notices--

SHE'S NOT WEARING HER WEDDING RING. And this crushes him.

DR. CANNON (PRE-LAP)  
Right now, your wife is stable.

**INT. HALLWAY - LATER**

Caleb is standing outside his wife's room with DR. CANNON, the on-call Neurologist. He holds Alicia's chart.

DR. CANNON (CONT'D)  
But the fall was pretty severe. The next few hours will be critical.

CALEB  
I can't lose her, Doctor. We'd just had an argument... I can't let that be the last time we spoke. I can't.

DR. CANNON  
Whatever's happening inside her, she's fighting the good fight.

OFF CALEB. Wiping away his tears.

**INT. FAMILY LOUNGE - EVENING**

Caleb, eyes bloodshot, face puffy, stands in front of a VENDING MACHINE, debating what to order. His mind is a fog--

MONICA APPEARS REFLECTED IN THE GLASS. Caleb spins...

But the room is empty. The stress is getting to him.

**INT. HALLWAY - LATER**

Caleb walks back to Alicia's room mindlessly eating chips. A nurse spots Caleb and points him out to TWO SUITS...

DETECTIVE FULLER  
Excuse me. Caleb Dixon?

Caleb slows down at the sight of BADGES, held by DETECTIVE FULLER (50s, white) and DETECTIVE KIM (30s, Asian).

**INT. CAFETERIA - NIGHT**

Everyone has paper cups of coffee. The detectives take notes.

DETECTIVE FULLER  
...See, here's where you lose me.  
You don't even know her last name!

CALEB  
It was a one night stand! I'm  
telling you, Monica -- *Whatever-her-*  
*last-name-is* -- she did this.

DETECTIVE FULLER  
*Uh-huh*. And how are you so certain?

CALEB  
Because I just found out she's done  
this before. Samantha Hawthorne.  
Does that name ring a bell?

Detective Kim writes it down. Detective Fuller laughs.

DETECTIVE FULLER  
The professor's wife that got torched?

CALEB  
I live in the same house. 1369  
Hooper Street. Monica killed  
Samantha Hawthorne just like she  
tried to kill my wife!

Fuller glances at his partner... *Can you believe this guy?*

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Listen, I get it. I cheated on my  
wife and now she's in the hospital.  
I've seen enough TV to know how this  
looks. But you need to believe me.

The detectives share a look and gather their things.

DETECTIVE KIM  
Sir, we're going to run down  
everything you've told us. Okay?  
We'll check out your alibi and we'll  
look into this woman... Monica.

DETECTIVE FULLER  
'Meantime, don't leave the area.

CALEB  
Oh. I won't. Someone's got to  
protect my wife.

**INT. HOSPITAL - ALICIA'S ROOM - NIGHT**

*BEEP. BEEP.* The EKG lulls Caleb to sleep in a nearby chair.

ON ALICIA. Her eyelids dance. Something is happening. Then--

THE EKG FLATLINES. Caleb's eyes shoot open. He leaps up.

CALEB

Alicia? Baby-- HELP!!!

The door bursts open and TWO NURSES rush in. The first nurse hits a BLUE BUTTON on the wall then turns to Caleb:

NURSE #1

Sir, we need you to wait outside.

CALEB

What's happening? Why is-- What's going on?

The Nurse escorts Caleb from the room while the SECOND NURSE begins CHEST COMPRESSIONS on Alicia. *One...Two...One...Two...*

Slowly, the door closes on Caleb.

**INT. DR. CANNON'S OFFICE - MORNING**

Caleb is sorely in need of a shave. It looks like he hasn't slept. He sits, stoic, across from Dr. Cannon.

DR. CANNON

The cardiac event last night... it's not a good sign. I need you to prepare for the possibility your wife may not recover.

CALEB

No. She'll wake up. She's a fighter.

DR. CANNON

I'm sure she is. But understand, Mr. Dixon, even if she does wake up, your wife-- might not be the same person.

CALEB

What are you saying? She may have permanent brain damage?

DR. CANNON

I'm saying hope for the best. But prepare for the worst.

**INT. HOSPITAL - ALICIA'S ROOM - LATER**

Caleb sits beside Alicia, rubbing her hand, staring at her sleeping face. He wipes tears from his eyes.

CALEB

Al... I'm so sorry. This is all my fault. I wish I'd never written that record. I wish I'd never moved us out of East Point. I need you to wake up, baby. I know you can hear me. So I need you you to wake up. Because I love you. I love you more than...

(beat)

The Beatles... Elvis... even Tupac.

He breaks down, sobbing. THE EKG HIS ONLY RESPONSE.

BEEP... BEEP... BEEP... BEEP... BEEP... BEEP... BEEP...

Caleb looks up. *What was that?* He turns to the EKG machine.

Then looks back to Alicia and startles. His eyes go wide.

ALICIA IS AWAKE. Caleb grabs his chest in shock.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Alicia? Can you hear me?

She blinks.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Thank god. I thought I'd lost you.

Her eyes seem drugged and she can't speak. BUT SHE CAN HEAR.

CALEB (CONT'D)

I need you to forgive me. Can you do that? I love you so much. Can you please forgive me, Alicia?

Alicia raises her hand and places it against Caleb's cheek. For him... *a profound moment of forgiveness.*

**INT. HOSPITAL - MRI - DAY**

Alicia, awake, slides into the gaping maw of the white portal, the MRI powering up with a rumbling *click CLICK click*.

**INT. ALICIA'S ROOM - LATER**

Dr. Cannon reviews the MRI REPORT. Alicia, still in bed, holds Caleb's hand as they await the result.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. CANNON

Mrs. Dixon, I have to say you've made a miraculous recovery. Your husband must have prayed very hard.

Alicia turns to Caleb. Squeezes his hand.

DR. CANNON (CONT'D)

I'll begin your discharge paperwork. But you'll need to see a neurologist in about a week for a check-up.

CALEB

What about the memory loss?

DR. CANNON

You still can't remember the morning of your accident?

ALICIA

No. And I'm trying. It's all hazy.

DR. CANNON

Well, I'll tell you the same thing I told the police. Transient amnesia from a head trauma is common.

CALEB

Did the police say anything about catching the woman who did this?

DR. CANNON

No. They just wanted to know if they could question your wife. I told them to give her a few more days.

CALEB

Thank you, doctor.

**INT. HOSPITAL - LOBBY - DAY**

AN ORDERLY pushes Alicia's wheelchair toward the exit. Shawn sits in her lap, holding a balloon. Caleb walks beside them.

SHAWN

And then the blue fish forgot again!

ALICIA

It did?

SHAWN

It was so funny. Daddy said that's like you. You're like Dory.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICIA  
I guess I am.

**EXT. HOSPITAL - ROUNDABOUT - MOMENTS LATER**

Alicia, Caleb, Shawn and the Orderly wait at pick-up. Caleb is on edge, always checking behind him for something.

ALICIA  
What's wrong?

CALEB  
I'm just... Nothing. It's nothing.

Beat. Alicia knows him too well. He's looking out for Monica.

ALICIA  
Caleb... I'm sure she's long gone.

Caleb nods. Grateful for Alicia's strength and forgiveness.

Grandma K pulls the car around. Alicia sets down Shawn so the Orderly can help her stand.

ALICIA (CONT'D)  
Thank you.

ORDERLY  
Take care, now. Remember... plenty of rest. Doctor's orders.

Grandma K's car stops beside them. She gets out.

GRANDMA K (O.S.)  
Oh, Lord, I asked Jesus for this moment over and over.

Caleb helps Alicia into the passenger seat. Grandma K buckles up Shawn, leaving her and Caleb alone outside the car. Beat.

GRANDMA K  
Looks like you get a second chance.  
Don't you dare hurt my baby again.

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - DAY**

The door unlocks and Caleb leads Alicia inside. Grandma K carries Shawn in behind them. *BEEP, BEEP, BEEP...*

Caleb turns to a newly installed ALARM SYSTEM beside the door. He types in the disarm code. *Beep.*

ALICIA  
You got an alarm system?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB  
Had it installed the day after you  
woke up. I'm not taking any chances.

\*  
\*  
\*

He shuts the door and throws the BRAND NEW DEADBOLT.

\*

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - SHAWN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

\*

Caleb tucks Shawn in. He now cradles a STUFFED CLOWNFISH.

CALEB  
Are you glad to be home?

Shawn nods. Pulls his sheets up. Eyes already at half mast.

SHAWN  
Auntie Tanya's house smells funny.

CALEB  
That's because she cooks with lots  
of funny ingredients.

SHAWN  
Why can't Mommy tuck me in?

CALEB  
Mommy still needs to rest. So she  
can get better.

Caleb kisses Shawn on the head, then steps to the door. He  
turns off the lamp. A NIGHTLIGHT automatically switches on.  
It's faint RED GLOW shines on the mural of animals...

\*

UNDER THE TREE, the carving of the sinister woman still  
watches over the sleeping child. Her hair glows BLOOD RED.

\*

**INT. MASTER BATHROOM - SAME**

Alicia stands in front of the mirror in a white t-shirt. Her  
hands move over her neck, down to her chest, examining.

CALEB (O.S.)  
What are you doing up!?

Caleb appears in the doorway. She speaks to his reflection:

ALICIA  
I just needed some Vicodin.

Caleb wraps his arms around Alicia.

CALEB  
You're supposed to be in bed. I  
don't want you overdoing it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICIA  
Caleb... I can walk! I just had a  
headache. Honestly, I'm starting to  
feel like my old self again.

Caleb and Alicia lock eyes in the mirror. He kisses her neck.  
Alicia closes her eyes and smiles. Turns around to face him:

ALICIA (CONT'D)  
But I would love some tea. You mind?

**INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT**

It's begun to rain. Caleb sets a TEA KETTLE on the burner  
then opens the drawer of loose tea bags, only to discover--

ALICIA'S WEDDING RING. Discarded the day of the fall.

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Alicia is back in bed, propped up by pillows. She's studying a  
PHOTO ALBUM as Caleb enters...

CALEB  
Is that our wedding album?

ALICIA  
Oh. Yeah. Just reminding myself.

\*

Caleb smiles. He walks over to the edge of the bed--

CALEB  
Then I need to ask you something.

Caleb gets down on one knee. He moves aside the wedding album.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Alicia Darlene Dixon, will you...  
(reveals the ring)  
...Stay married to me?

ALICIA  
Oh my god! You found it! I couldn't  
remember where I put it... Um.. YES!  
Oh, Caleb. Of course.

\*

Caleb puts the ring back on Alicia. He leans over and kisses  
her passionately, both hands on her cheeks.

CALEB  
Do you love me?

ALICIA  
...Of course I do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Beat. Caleb seems stung. *Maybe it's just her memory loss.*

CALEB  
More than...?

ALICIA  
More than... anything!

Slight concern appears on Caleb's face as he examines his wife. He looks into her eyes. He goes to say something when--

THE TEA KETTLE BELLOWS. Caleb shoots up.

CALEB  
I'll be right back.

#### INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Caleb pulls the whining kettle off the stove. For the first time in awhile, a small smile creeps across his face.

His family is back together. His one true love is safe. His--

RING! RING! Caleb jumps out of his skin. He grabs his phone:

UNKNOWN NUMBER. Caleb doesn't move. *That number again... It couldn't possibly be her. Or could it?*

He answers, silently...

DETECTIVE KIM (ON PHONE)  
Mr. Dixon? This is Detective Kim.  
(Caleb relaxes)  
I'm sorry to call so late. How's  
your wife doing?

CALEB  
Uh, she's fine.

#### INT. POLICE STATION - INTERCUT

Detective Kim sits in her cubicle.

DETECTIVE KIM  
I'm glad to hear that. When she's able, we'd still love to talk to her. In the meantime, I wanted to call because I may have identified the woman you spoke of. I believe her name is Monica McMahon. Her description is an exact match.

Caleb perks up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALEB  
Have you found her?

\*

DETECTIVE KIM  
That's the thing. Monica McMahon  
vanished without a trace...  
(beat)  
*Three years ago.*

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

ON CALEB. Pulling the phone away from his ear to see if he  
heard her right... *did she say three years?*

\*

CALEB  
What? What does that mean?

ON KIM. She's reading Monica McMahon's POLICE REPORT.

DETECTIVE KIM  
Well... as far as the police were  
concerned, her disappearance was  
being treated as a homicide.

\*

ON CALEB. He can't help himself. He starts laughing.

CALEB  
Homicide?

DETECTIVE KIM  
Yes. Obviously your report...  
changes things.

Caleb grabs a kitchen chair and falls into the seat.

CALEB  
I mean... I just... I saw her...  
Many times.

ON KIM. Reading the MP FILE, filled with photos and documents  
from an exhaustive investigation, including DIARY ENTRIES.

DETECTIVE KIM  
I believe you, Mr. Dixon. But  
there's more to the story. Monica  
left behind a diary. It details an  
affair she had with a married man.  
And in one of the last entries, it  
claims... she was pregnant.

ON CALEB. Slumping in his seat.

CALEB  
Monica was... who was the father?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DETECTIVE KIM

She never mentions him by name, but one of the possibilities... and I know this is going to sound like a big coincidence... But one of her professors at school was...

CALEB

--Tom Hawthorne.

DETECTIVE KIM

Yes. Samantha Hawthorne's husband.

Caleb turns, remembering Tom gave him something: BLUEPRINTS. \*

**INT. DIXON HOUSE - GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER**

Caleb opens the passenger door of his car. He no longer holds his cellphone, but we hear the rest of his conversation:

DETECTIVE KIM (V.O.) \*

*The reason we suspected foul play was  
her final entry. It said she was  
going to confront the father.* \*

He kneels and finds Tom Hawthorne's CARDBOARD TUBE under the seat. He takes it to a workbench and removes THREE SHEETS. He unrolls them, the blueprints creaking like the house itself. \*

DETECTIVE KIM (V.O.) \*

*She wrote that if he didn't leave  
his wife, she would tell her all  
about the affair. And the child.* \*

Caleb scans the layout of the second floor, then the first, then the BASEMENT. Here, beside the basement stairs, is a room that doesn't exist. A SECRET ROOM marked with a symbol: \*



DETECTIVE KIM (V.O.) \*

*Our department never had any proof  
but we believe -- or believed, I  
should say -- that this man, whoever  
he was...* \*

Caleb's eyes move to the open door into his house. \*

DETECTIVE KIM (V.O.) (CONT'D) \*

*...murdered Monica to silence her.* \*

RRRRRIIIIPPPP: \*

Caleb tears the SOUND DAMPENING FOAM from a wall in the... \*

**INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT** \*

WE TILT UP from the blueprints of the basement to Caleb,  
TEARING GREY FOAM from the brick wall directly beside the  
stairs. According to the blueprints, this is the spot... \*

*DETECTIVE KIM (V.O.)* \*  
*Of course, if what you say is true,* \*  
*then she's still alive. Unless...* \*

Caleb rips off the last piece of dampening and steps back. As  
he scans the wall, he notices a tiny engraving in one brick-- \*

*CALEB (V.O.)* \*  
*Unless what?* \*

THE SAME SECRET ROOM SYMBOL. Caleb kneels down and rubs his  
finger over the mark. Carefully, he PUSHES IN and the brick... \*

ROTATES NINETY DEGREES. It forms a rudimentary handle with a  
finger groove on the back. Caleb stumbles in surprise. \*

*DETECTIVE KIM (V.O.)* \*  
*...Unless you saw a ghost.* \*

His breath tightening, Caleb crawls back up along the wall,  
noticing for the first time a FINE LINE zig-zagging between  
the bricks, forming an imperfect, ridged RECTANGULAR DOOR. \*

Carefully, he tries pushing the door in. It moves a bit but  
age has made the hidden hinges rusty. Caleb turns and... \*

SLAMS HIS SHOULDER INTO THE DOOR. It moves a little. He steps  
back and... SCREECH. It moves a little more. He goes again... \*

SCREECH. Again. SCREECH. Again. SC-- \*

**EXT. ENTRY HALL - SAME** \*

--Outside the basement, we don't hear a thing. The studio's  
sound dampening does its job as... \*

**INT. BASEMENT - SAME** \*

--REECH. Caleb slams the door one last time and it gives,  
swinging on antebellum joints to finally reveal the... \*

**SECRET ROOM** \*

It's so very, very dark inside. He grabs a flashlight and  
walks in, clicking on the beam... \*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCRATCH MARKS COVER THE STONE WALLS. In certain places it looks like a ravenous animal tried to claw it's way out.

And then there are the messages -- so many -- all very old:

*SAVE ME    BOON WUZ HERE 1858    HELP*

LIKE IN SHAWN'S ROOM. Where a FLASH of the woman carved into the wall mural seems -- now -- to be crying out in agony...

Caleb studies them with confusion and mounting dread until at last, his flashlight falls to the back corner, illuminating:

### A BODY

Mostly bones-- but there's the slightest remnants of RED HAIR. Caleb covers his mouth in horror at the CRACKED SKULL--

MONICA (V.O.)

All they see is some guy at a table.

THE SUSHI RESTAURANT. We FLASH to Monica across from Caleb... A waiter walks past -- wiping the frame -- Monica is gone.

MONICA (V.O.)

They don't even know I exist.

BACK ON CALEB. His light reflects off a SHATTERED IPHONE in the skeleton's hand. A last attempt at calling for help...

THE MASTER BATHROOM. We FLASH to Caleb, shirt off -- his back covered in scratches -- looking at his cell: **MONICA CALLING**

ON CALEB. He approaches the body. Wrapped around the exposed spine is a SILVER NECKLACE SHAPED LIKE A HEART...

Choking back bile, Caleb reaches out for the pendant. He pulls it closer -- into focus -- to reveal an inscription:

*"I Am Yours"*

MONICA (V.O.)

It was a gift from my ex.

SLAM TO:

**INT. 1369 HOOPER ST. - SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - 3 YEARS EARLIER**

Monica runs out of the bedroom on the second floor... Tom Hawthorne grabs her from behind. He spins her around--

MONICA (V.O.)

He lied to me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Tom screams at Monica... shaking her. She tries to get away by  
SCRATCHING HIS FACE! Furious, feral, he pushes her--

MONICA (V.O.)  
He took everything from me.

OVER THE RAILING. She falls toward what will soon become the  
cell phone DEAD ZONE. And as her body hits the ground...

MONICA (V.O.)  
He took away my life.

The CRACK OF HER SKULL seems to echo like a bullet.

**INT. BASEMENT - THREE YEARS EARLIER**

Overwhelmed and frightened, Tom carries Monica's limp body  
down the stairs. The basement looks radically different now.

CALEB (V.O.)  
What do you want?

Tom drops Monica near the brick wall, pulls the secret latch  
and pushes the hidden door. His face is sweaty with panic.

MONICA (V.O.)  
I want to be your wife.

Tom drags Monica into the SECRET ROOM feet first, her head  
wound staining the ground with blood. He takes one last look--

MONICA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I'm going to take her place.

And grabs the hidden latch. AS HE PULLS THE DOOR CLOSED...

MONICA  
Because that is what I am owed.

MONICA'S EYES OPEN. But Tom doesn't see-- and Monica can't cry  
out in time as the BRICK DOOR SHUTS with a THUNDEROUS BANG...

AS A FLASH OF LIGHTNING:

Outside the bedroom window returns us to THE OPENING SCENE--

**INT. 1369 HOOPER ST. - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Tom Hawthorne swipes the candle onto the floor, setting the  
gasoline soaked carpet ablaze as the fire races out...

ENCIRCLING SAMANTHA HAWTHORNE IN FLAMES

Her robe catches fire as the heat grows in intensity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

*Tom backs against the wall. THE FIRE GROWS, ensnaring the drapes, engulfing the bed, licking the walls...*

*SAMANTHA HAWTHORNE  
You fucking coward! You fucking  
cheater! You can't stop me. I'll  
make you suffer... and the next  
fucker... and the next...*

*She laughs, until her laughs turn to OTHERWORLDLY SCREAMS. Tom watches his WIFE'S BODY BURN, her voice rising octaves as...*

*A BLACK SHADOW WHIPS AND TORNADOES OUT OF SAMANTHA'S EYES...*

*It writhes in furious agony, FORMING THE FACE OF MONICA. Tom crawls for the hall. For escape. He screams and screams and...*

SLAM BACK TO:

# **PRESENT DAY**

Caleb scrambles out of the secret room, necklace in hand. He pulls himself off the floor. Turns to the basement stairs.

PUSH IN ON CALEB. Totally. Completely. Fucked.

## **INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

THE DOOR CREAKS OPEN. Caleb hears his wife gently singing...

*ALICIA  
...Out came the sun and dried up all  
the rain...*

Caleb stands in the doorway. Mortified by what he sees:

ALICIA CRADLES SHAWN. She strokes his hair as he falls asleep.

*ALICIA (CONT'D)  
...and the itsy bitsy spider went up  
the spout again.*

*CALEB  
What-- what are you doing!?*

*ALICIA  
Shhhh. Shawny couldn't sleep. He  
wanted his mother. Now come to bed...  
(holds up her wedding ring)  
Husband.*

Beat. Caleb slowly comes to the bed, watched closely by Alicia the entire time. She pats the space next to her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Caleb lays down, stiff and uncomfortable. Alicia moves Shawn between them and their son instinctively finds his position.

ALICIA (CONT'D)

Caleb?

He tears his eyes from the ceiling.

ALICIA (CONT'D)

This is all I ever wanted.

She smiles, a hideous, horrible smile, then leans over and kisses Caleb on the cheek. He almost winces from her touch.

And so we hold, on this tableau. A PERFECT FAMILY.

Until Alicia reaches over...

MONICA (V.O.)

Someday...

AND TURNS OUT THE LIGHT.

MONICA (V.O.)

You'll know what it's like to feel  
crazy.

THE END