



**FRESH BLOOD SELECT**

ATROPHY

Written by

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"The mind of man is capable of anything."

-Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness

OVER BLACK WE HEAR--

The rush of a shower head sputtering out water. A MOAN of pain. Then, a deep breath.

TAREN (V.O.)

Close your eyes. Picture your very worst memory. I bet you can't even remember what you were wearing, right? But there's that feeling. That sense of dread...it chokes you. Tightens your lungs until you think you'll collapse.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

The rusty shape of the shower head comes into focus. Water slowly slides down the tiles to circle the drain. Long strands of dark hair sink down into the cracks.

TAREN (V.O.)

Now open your eyes. The memory fades, but the dread lingers. It gnaws at you. The mind is funny that way. It won't let you remember. But it wouldn't dare let you forget...

The water bubbles around the drain and becomes a MURKY REDDISH COLOR.

CUT TO BLACK.

The running water of the shower CUTS OFF. A SOB. Then--

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - DAY

The hazy yellow light of early morning filters through the bright blue curtains of a sparsely decorated apartment. Each piece of furniture looks as if it were nonchalantly plucked straight from an IKEA catalogue.

Reflecting in the sunlight are differently colored POST-IT NOTES that label everything in the room-- "books here, scissors in here, etc."

The chatter of the TV blares loudly throughout the room.

On the counter top: a GUN and BADGE rest next to a neatly stacked pile of unopened bills and receipts.

TAREN SAINT, (32) stands behind this counter, calmly drinking a glass of milk.

NEWS ANCHOR (ON TV)  
Members of the Lower East Side community are desperately crying for help as one of their own has reportedly gone missing.

Taren abruptly stops sipping on her milk and stares with hollow eyes at the picture of a happy young woman, KAYLA DAVIS (34), that flashes in the corner of the TV screen.

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)  
Authorities were notified Monday afternoon after 34 year old teacher Kayla Davis did not show up to teach her third grade class at PS41. Her sister, who joins me here, last saw Kayla on Friday night.

The anchor hands SHAILENE DAVIS (26), a once-radiant young woman with desperate eyes, the microphone.

SHAILENE  
I haven't seen or heard from my sister in over three days. Please, if you know anything, anything at all, call in. I just want to know that Kayla is safe. Please.

Taren is transfixed on the girl. In the background, there's the smallest glimpse of a BLOODY BUNDLE OF CLOTHES wrapped in an OPAQUE TRASH BAG resting on the counter next to the sink.

The news segment ends and Taren robotically switches off the television. With a snap of her neck, like she forgot something important, she stares at the clock on the wall.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

In the bullpen, phones RING incessantly as officers frantically rush around.

Numb to the chaos, Taren walks slowly down the hall, and as OFFICERS pass her by they give her a double-take.

Finally she reaches a cluster of CUBICLES in the corner of the precinct. She nears her desk and unbundles her coat. In the adjacent cubicles Detectives CAMDEN (30s) and MAHONEY (40s) stop mid-conversation to look over to her.

AT HER DESK

Taren leafs through the assorted folders. Her fingers stop shuffling as she looks at one file in particular.

There's a picture of a MAN paper clipped to his MEDICAL RECORDS. One word stands out amongst them: DECEASED.

MAHONEY

Hey, rookie let me introduce you to a legend round here: "The Machine."

Taren looks up from the file, catching the tail end of Mahoney's words.

MAHONEY (CONT'D)

Make anyone cry while you were gone Taren? Ask your the FedEx guy uncomfortable questions like your witnesses?

Taren turns in her chair, her face revealing no frustration.

TAREN

Depends, did you make any arrests Mahoney?

A slow smile spreads over Mahoney's face as his jaw works.

MAHONEY

You know, I've been a little distracted with IID pressing me for anecdotes about your behavior. Had to really dig deep to think about all the fun times we've had.

TAREN

You don't like how I work? That's fine. But I hope you know anything that you say about me comes back around to everyone here. And I don't know how anyone's going to feel when IID's got the arrest records in their hands and my name's the only one that shows up.

Wordless, Mahoney grabs his coffee and exits the cubicle, leaving Camden staring awkwardly at Taren.

CAMDEN

Should've seen the welcome he had for me. Made me fix him that coffee while he pointed at things around the office.

(MORE)

CAMDEN (CONT'D)  
(thinking)  
I should've spit in it.

TAREN  
Welcome to the Land of Embittered  
Males with a False Sense of  
Entitlement.

Camden smiles and sticks out his hand-- the two shake.

CAMDEN  
I'm Detective Camden. Just  
transferred over from Connecticut.

VOICE (O.S.)  
Detective Saint!

The booming voice tears her attention toward CHIEF DAVID JACKSON (55), a sharp-witted man armed with a cold demeanor, as he walks by. He's bundled in a large jacket, snow falling off his shoulders and glares toward Taren.

JACKSON  
IID's already here. I want you in  
the interrogation room in ten. Not  
a minute later.

TAREN  
Yes, sir.

Jackson continues on, leaving Taren without another word. Taren stares after him a frown forming on her face.

CAMDEN  
Hey-- don't be nervous. IID's  
always trying to make something out  
of nothing. I think they get bored  
over there.

Her head whips around to Camden.

TAREN  
Why the fuck would I be nervous?

She pushes away from her chair and follows after the Chief.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Visibly on edge, Taren and Jackson sit across from a LAWYER and a member from the Internal Investigations Division (IID), staring at group of PHOTOS splayed across the table.

IID

Now, we've gathered thirteen witness testimonies, the incident report and the coroner's final notes.

He spreads out a group of PHOTOS across the table. They depict a DECEASED MAN with a bullet hole across his shoulder.

IID (CONT'D)

We'd like you to walk us through the incident Ms. Saint, step-by-step, to corroborate.

JACKSON

And what? She forgets the color of the sky and you take her badge? You shut us down?

LAWYER

The department could potentially be held liable if the testimony isn't in tact.

JACKSON

And while you dot your i's and cross your t's, someone's getting murdered...wait...someone else just got shot-

IID

-A person is dead, Chief Jackson. I need to make sure I don't let someone walk away if they've got on their hands.

TAREN

I'll tell you anything you want to know. Anything.

IID pushes a photo closer to Taren.

IID

Why don't you start with the events that led up to the shooting?

TAREN

Of course.

A beat. Taren stares ahead, blinking rapidly. To the casual eye, it's almost unnoticeable. The room becomes OUT OF FOCUS, like rain on a windshield, as Taren tries to recall a memory...

FLASH TO:

*A man with a gun, the same one from the picture in Taren's file, he's wearing a bright blue shirt, the sun glaring off of it and then nothing but DARKNESS---*

IID

Ms. Saint? The shooting?

WE'RE BACK as her head snaps up and all in the room is clear again.

TAREN

I was off duty, and was on my way home. At eleven hundred hours, all available units were called to a scene where a robbery was in progress. At this point the suspect, male, had already engaged officers in fire. I exited my vehicle and proceeded to the hood of the car. From this angle I was able to get a clear shot of the suspect. I took the shot that was most readily available as per my training dictates.

IID

Which was?

JACKSON

This is fucking ridiculous--

IID

Ms. Saint?

TAREN

I aimed at the suspect's right shoulder. Training dictates that you take the shot most readily available.

At this, the Lawyer who had been scribbling notes on a legal pad, quips up.

LAWYER

And if it was his shoulder, Ms. Saint, then how was it that the suspect died so suddenly? The medical examiner reported an extremely rapid amount of blood loss.

TAREN

He was distracted by something--  
most likely a sound or a reflection--  
- it turned his attention toward me  
as I fired my weapon and the bullet  
went through his heart. He turned.

Silence hangs in the air as Taren's matter-of-fact account  
ends. The Lawyer cuts the silence as he clears his throat.

TAREN (CONT'D)

Can I just say one more thing?

IID

The testimony was enough--

TAREN

John Farkas hadn't been paying  
child support for a year and a half.  
He'd been in and out of jail for the  
past five years. We can sit and  
talk about how much of a tragedy  
this was, but let's be honest: he  
was a criminal.

JACKSON

Taren--

TAREN

This is my job. I want to know  
where you draw the line?

JACKSON

Are we done here? Do you have what  
you need?

The investigator and lawyer eye each other for a brief moment  
and then nod, reaching the same consensus.

IID

Yes, Chief we're done. Ms. Saint's  
testimony was in line with the  
evidence and testimony we've  
gathered. She did, in fact, do what  
protocol dictated. Barring some  
paperwork, of course, we'll be  
clearing you for duty.

The IID reaches across the table and shakes Taren's hand.

IID (CONT'D)

Thank you for your cooperation  
Detective.

Taren releases his hand, letting it fall away limply through the air.

INT. POLICE PRECINT - HALLWAY - DAY

Jackson and Taren exit the interrogation room. He grips her forearm hard, like a child needing scolding, and pulls her aside as the lawyer and IID walk down the hall, away from them.

JACKSON

Are you good?

TAREN

Chief?

JACKSON

Are you good? Are you feeling all right? Are you sick? Or dying? Or maybe a relative is? Because that's the only reason I can think of to explain how you could be so careless.

TAREN

I'm fine.

JACKSON

Good. Then you need to get it together, Taren. Seriously, botching a routine shooting?

TAREN

I know--

JACKSON

--I need you out there. Got it? I've had two closed cases in the last few weeks. Two.

TAREN

I did what I supposed to do in there! What more do you want from me?

JACKSON

Do you know what they're going to do when they get back? Do you?

She shakes her head, angry and reluctant to answer.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

They're going to sit on their asses with that paperwork and wait for you to trip again so they can gut you before they've got a lawsuit on their hands. They'll sooner feed you to the sharks than admit they were wrong.

TAREN

I won't give them that chance. Just let me prove it.

In midst of their fight, a young DESK SERGEANT strides toward Jackson and Taren fast and out of breath.

DESK SERGEANT

Hey Chief! You're gonna want to get some suits out to the Lower East Side, fast. We've got a body.

Taren gives Jackson a sidelong glance.

TAREN

If I don't go back now, I'll never get back in it.

The Desk Sergeant quizzically looks between Taren and Jackson as the Chief debates.

JACKSON

I can't have you pulling rookie-training-school-shit like that again. Understood?

TAREN

Yes, sir.

JACKSON

(To the Desk Sergeant)  
Round up Camden, tell him he and Taren are on it.  
(Sardonically, to Taren)  
Welcome back.

INT. SQUAD CAR - DAY

Taren leans her forehead against the window, watching the gray, snow littered city pass by. Silence hangs between them. Camden nervously fiddles with the radio.

CAMDEN  
Oh sorry, do you want this on or  
off?

TAREN  
Either way is fine.

CAMDEN  
Thank God. Chief's been sticking me  
with newbies since Spring to teach  
them the ropes. Last trainee was so  
jittery I could barely talk in the  
car let alone play music.

A beat. Camden waits for her to react, but Taren says  
nothing.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)  
Your old partner was Gomez, wasn't  
he?

Again, she doesn't answer. Instead, she begins to draw a  
circle into the frosted glass.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)  
Taren?

TAREN  
Yeah...He switched during the whole  
IID thing.

CAMDEN  
Prick. Let me guess-- he'd drive  
the car but you'd make all the  
arrests?

She draws in two eyes and a frown line into the circle.

TAREN  
Something like that.

CAMDEN  
You don't have to pretend. Everyone  
knows how many closed cases you've  
got. It's impressive, really.

TAREN  
It's my job.

CAMDEN

But it's more than that, isn't it? Most guys can tuck themselves into bed at night comfortably knowing that they "tried." They can go home and kiss their wives and fall asleep without any trouble because they "tried" today. But you...you can't sit still until you see things through.

She brutally smudges out the face and turns toward Camden.

TAREN

The world only has so much room for all that bad shit. If all that stuff is left out there to fester, we'd rot. Somebody has to put the bad people away.

Silence ensues after her mini-speech. Taren takes a deep breath in.

TAREN (CONT'D)

Sorry, I'm just...

CAMDEN

No, I get it. If I'm being honest, I'm glad we're partnered up.

Taren flashes him a skeptical look.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

No, I mean it. I remember back when you first started. You must've been what-- 25?

TAREN

24, actually.

CAMDEN

You kept your head down, made your arrests. It's like you eat, sleep, and breathe this.

TAREN

Is that so terrible?

CAMDEN

No, it's refreshing. I've been at this for, Jesus, eleven years now. When I started I was like you. Diligent and all that.

(MORE)

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

But then something happens and your wheels stop turning. You suddenly start eating out of the same lazy trough as the rest of them.

TAREN

What happens?

CAMDEN

Hmm?

TAREN

To make you stop caring? What is it?

CAMDEN

Fear. It becomes real to you.

Taren opens her mouth to respond, maybe even to refute, but her cellphone BUZZES loudly. She scrambles to pull it from her pocket. Camden glances over at the phone number on the screen.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

816? Who do you know in Missouri?

Taren scowls as she shuts down her phone, cutting off the incessant buzzing for good.

TAREN

No one. Must be a wrong number.

EXT. LOWER EAST SIDE - DAY

Camden and Taren exit the squad car to a road laden with snow. Paces away, bright police tape blocks off the haunting crime.

As Camden and Taren approach, OFFICER DANHOE (male, late 20s), a uniformed P.O. appears.

CAMDEN

You the first responder?

DANHOE

Yeah, Officer Danhoe. You are?

Both flash their badges.

CAMDEN

Detective Camden and Detective Saint. What've we got?

Danhoe lifts the tape and he and Camden step inside the crime scene. Taren's attention drifts toward THREE CHILDREN who meticulously work to build a snowman near the adjacent sidewalk.

DANHOE

Neighbor called it in when they  
went to go shovel the sidewalk.  
Said she didn't see anybody else on  
the street at the time.

Camden and Danhoe stop short as they finally stand in front of the body.

Camden crouches down next to the body to get a better look.

CAMDEN

You get an M.E.?

DANHOE

Dawson from county is making his  
way over.

AT THE SIDEWALK

Taren walks toward a WOMAN, the witness, sitting on the steps near the children. She wears an oversized puffer jacket, but her legs are bare.

TAREN

Good morning ma'am, my name is  
Detective Saint.

The woman laughs, takes a drag from her cigarette.

WOMAN

Well isn't that ironic.

TAREN

Your name is?

WOMAN

Elizabeth. Elizabeth Holmes.

TAREN

How long have you been living here  
Ms. Holmes?

WOMAN

Three, four years almost.

TAREN

And it's just you as the guardian  
in your household?

ELIZABETH (WOMAN)

(eyes narrowing)

If you're asking if I'm a single mother, the answer is yes. I do what I can to raise them right but...but sometimes things fold under you.

TAREN

You were the first on the scene, correct?

ELIZABETH

I guess so. Woke up early to check the school closings. And I wanted to get the snow off the sidewalk in case more came and it got too heavy.

TAREN

Was anyone with you?

ELIZABETH

Mikey. The oldest. I got him up to help.

TAREN

And you saw nothing? Nobody was out here?

ELIZABETH

No. The snow was still fresh. That's how I saw it. There was a lump in the snow, kind of looked like a camel's hump. But worse. Mikey wanted to touch it. You know how kids are. They don't know enough to be terrified of things.

Taren and Elizabeth now focus on the three children as they fight over who gets to adorn the snowman with the carrot nose.

In their struggle, they accidentally knock the FIGURE'S HEAD to the ground. The head hits the sidewalk with an unsettling thud and the snow dissipates back from whence it came.

CAMDEN (O.S.)

Hey Taren!

At Camden's call, Taren turns back to Elizabeth and gives her a tight smile.

TAREN

Thank you for your help Ms. Holmes.  
We may reach out again if we need  
any further information. In the  
meantime, why don't you gather your  
boys and take them inside?

Elizabeth stubs out her cigarette and gathers her coat  
tighter.

ELIZABETH

Trust me-- living in this city?  
That's not the worst they've seen.

This visibly upsets Taren.

TAREN

It's a dead body, Ms. Holmes.  
Please.

Elizabeth shrugs and stands.

ELIZABETH

Fellas-- who wants hot cocoa?

AT THE CRIME SCENE

Taren reenters the crime scene scowling. She draws close to  
Camden who now wears gloves.

CAMDEN

Anything?

TAREN

No.

CAMDEN

Thought not. Look over here.

Taren follows his finger as he points to the snow below. TIRE  
TRACKS lead down the road.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

Danhoe says he checked all the cars  
on the street. None of them have  
been shoveled out yet. These tracks  
start from the edge of the block  
and go further down the road.

TAREN

An outside job then. Was the vic a  
resident?

Camden flashes her the victim's wallet. The name on the front license reads "ALLISON CLARKE."

CAMDEN

No. She lives in the Village. My guess? She was being followed.

TAREN

Or she was meeting someone here.

CAMDEN

A meeting?

TAREN

Could've been drugs. Or maybe a date.

CAMDEN

Great thought. I always say every date should end with brutal murder.

TAREN

What do you mean?

CAMDEN

Take a look for yourself.

Taren follows a trail of blood to the body.

TAREN

Lots of secondary spatter here. Definitely a quick killing. Maybe a hasty decision...

Taren crouches down next to the body.

TAREN (CONT'D)

They used something small like a club...or a...

She trails off as she finally sees the full impact of the woman's injury. Her neck is SLIT in a gruesome semicircle--trailing from one ear to the other.

A look of horror, with a hint of recognition, pass over Taren's face as Camden finishes her sentence.

CAMDEN

A knife.

Taren's vision goes blurry, like it did in the interrogation room. Time seems to slow down as her knees give out and she begins to sink to the ground.

Suddenly, she's retching into an undisturbed white patch of snow.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)  
Jesus, not here!

Taren sits back, her sickness apparently passed. Camden stares wildly at her-- torn between wanting to kick her ass and wanting to help. He decides on the latter.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)  
Are you good?

That question again. Taren's eyes grow dark.

TAREN  
I'm good.

CAMDEN  
Why don't you go sit in the car?  
Catch your breath while we wait for  
Dawson.

Taren stands up quickly, shaking her head.

TAREN  
No, no. I'm good. Let Danhoe wait  
for the M.E. and forensics. We need  
to go canvass the area. Find out if  
anyone saw her.

She doesn't wait for Camden's approval, and begins to trudge back to the squad car. Camden stands still behind her, face scrunched up in confusion at Taren's back.

INT./EXT. SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

Camden parks the car in the near-empty precinct parking lot. The two exit, looking weary and worn.

CAMDEN  
Unbelievable. Running around the  
neighborhood all day and nobody's  
seen this chick before?

Taren remains silent. She watches as flurries begin to start again.

Camden kicks at the old snow, his wheels turning in overdrive.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

Somebody has to be lying. That's what it always is. They get a splash of blood on their hands but they still want to think they're clean.

He stops, mid-rant, noticing Taren staring at her hands as snowflakes melt into her palms.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

Hey, you all right? It's weird, I know. Getting back into this stuff after awhile. Our brains aren't wired to deal with all this shit.

She whispers, almost as if she was reassuring herself.

TAREN

I'm ok...I'm ok.

CAMDEN

Where do you want to start next?

TAREN

Let's get some sleep. I'm sure you've got someone waiting for you.

CAMDEN

Nah, not me. People don't like it much when you become the "I tried" guy.

He comes around to her side of the car, but Taren takes a step back. He gives her a coy smile, trying to persuade her.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

We could grab some coffee and try to run a background check? Or maybe go search her home?

TAREN

Let's take the night. Clear our heads at least.

His face falls, but he nods in agreement.

CAMDEN

Yeah ok...I'll see you.

Taren stands beside the squad car watching Camden's every move as he enters his own vehicle and finally vacates the parking lot.

When she is sure that he is long gone, the facade cracks and her breathing quickens, until she's near hyperventilating.

She puts her head in her hands as snow melts into her hair.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Taren sits curled in her bed, scribbling furiously. She stops for a moment and turns back the pages. The dates go JANUARY 12th, JANUARY 13th, JANUARY 14th, JANUARY 15th-- All of the pages are blank.

Stressed, Taren closes her eyes and rests her head back on the headboard.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - THICKET - DAY

Eyes open to see a HAND crumpled into the frosted grass below. Slowly it unclenches and its owner begins to get up. The owner's arm is bare and badly bruised.

When we finally get to her face it hits us: This is Taren and her face is covered in blood. A drop of it spills onto her arm and she takes it in stoically.

Her eyes catch the glimpse of something pale off to her left. As Taren twists her body she sees, laying in the grass next to her, is the dead body of KAYLA DAVIS.

The corpse's throat is slit in the same brash way as the earlier body.

Taren makes a guttural noise of distress and digs the heels of her palms into her eyes.

TAREN

No...God...

And then it hits her- she doubles over and vomits right next to the corpse. This disgusting and impossibly human act is enough to push her over the edge, as a sob rips through her chest.

Taren's tears quiet immediately as she hears the harsh sounds of a CELL PHONE vibrating. With some hesitation she carefully reaches into the corpse's jacket pocket and retrieves the phone.

IT READS: SHAILENE - TWO MISSED CALLS

Without a second thought, Taren scrambles to her feet and hastily turns the phone off. She then puts her hands to her head.

TAREN (CONT'D)

Fuck.

Through the dense trees Taren can see another pair of joggers. They haven't found her. Not yet at least.

She looks back down at the body, nodding slowly.

TAREN (CONT'D)

Ok.

Bypassing delicacy, Taren crouches down and begins to strip the corpse naked.

She then uses the corpse's shirt to wipe off most of the blood. With a stoic face, she drags the body further into the cover of the snow and trees. She wipes it down once more and then folds the rest of the clothes into her arms, before walking away.

She joins the land of the living, with no one the wiser.

INT. SUBWAY - DAY

Taren sits calmly on the subway with the clothes folded in her lap. A small smudge of blood is just barely visible under the cover of her bangs.

Over the scene we can hear Taren in voice over talking to someone...

VOICE (V.O.)

Do you oftentimes find that you're not able to speak your mind?

TAREN (V.O.)

What do you mean? Like censorship?

VOICE (V.O.)

More along the lines of telling people how you're feeling- Do you think you tend to keep that to yourself?

TAREN (V.O.)

Who am I going to tell? Who really wants to hear that shit?

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Taren enters her home and rummages under the sink, pulling out a garbage bag. She immediately smashes the clothes into it and then strips herself of her own clothes and tosses them into the bag as well.

VOICE (V.O.)

What makes you think that nobody  
wants to hear about what's going on  
with you?

Naked and shivering she runs to her bathroom.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY

TAREN (V.O.)

Telling people all the messed up  
stuff that's going in you...it's  
like staring at a car crash...why  
remind yourself of something so  
ugly?

She sits curled under the jet stream of the water, scrubbing hard at her body. The dirt and grime circle the drain.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Taren stands fully clothed and opens the refrigerator. She pours herself a glass of milk to calm her nerves. As she sips on it, she switches the television on. We've come full circle as the earlier news report blares.

Her neck snaps to the clock just as it did before. She adorns herself with her badge and gun and gets the garbage bag of bloody clothes.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY

Blocks away, Taren throws the garbage bag into a large DUMPSTER. She reaches her hand inside, with a lighter curled around her fingers.

She flicks on the flame and watches as the trash begins to burn.

VOICE (V.O.)

You think what's going on inside of  
you is ugly?

She pulls out a cigarette and lights it, walking away as the dumpster melts away. Sirens begin to wail...

TAREN (V.O.)

We all are. We're disgusting. Why would anyone care for somebody when they're all cut up like this?

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

The siren's become the sound of an ALARM CLOCK RINGING. Taren jolts awake, dissipating the dream of the earlier scene. She sits in bed for a moment, cradling her head in her hands.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE

Taren sits in a large loveseat, her feet curled up next to her. A young psychiatrist, ZACH (30s) sits across from her in an identical seat. As he speaks, we realize this is the voice we had been hearing talking to Taren in the earlier V.O.

ZACH (VOICE)

Have you been feeling this negative a lot lately?

Taren takes a moment before she answers. In this silence, we go to--

A QUICK JUMPCUT

*Taren's eyes linger over the dead body from earlier. Noticing things she hadn't before-- flies circling near the head, the fingers of the corpse slowly turning blue, the murky color of the blood...*

WE'RE BACK and Taren whips her head around to Zach. Her words are sharp, and *mean*.

TAREN

It's a little hard to be all bright and shiny when everyone thinks you're losing your mind.

ZACH

You feel that way?

TAREN

That's why I'm here aren't, I? IID, the Chief, you-- they want me to meet with you to make sure I still work.

ZACH

This is a routine meeting, Taren. Any time something like this happens, officers are required to have a psych evaluation.

TAREN

Tell me, what exactly is "something like this?"

Zach leans forward in his seat.

ZACH

This is a tough job. You are experiencing things that eat away at the psyche. Nobody can blame you for that. We just want to help you get a handle on things.

Taren considers this for a moment. She gets up from her chair and moves to the window, pressing her cheek against the cool glass.

TAREN

It makes you feel like a different person, you know? The "things" I've seen.

ZACH

Explain that to me.

She frowns, not sure how to continue.

ZACH (CONT'D)

I'm not here to pass or fail you Taren. I just want to talk.

Taren looks back at him and nods.

TAREN

It all gets loud and then suddenly it's just this violent quiet space and you don't know what to do with yourself. You don't remember who you are.

ZACH

How long have you been feeling this disconnect, Taren?

TAREN

I don't know...I thought I was doing good. It's the winter. I'm good when it gets cold like this.

(MORE)

TAREN (CONT'D)

You have to remember about heating bills and coats and gloves and shit like that.

ZACH

Explain that to me. You think your memory depends on the weather?

TAREN

No, I'm just saying that it's harder to forget things in the cold. Don't you feel that way?

ZACH

I can't say that I do. But if you do--

TAREN

--Well just fuck it then.

A beat. Taren picks at her nails, faking like his comment doesn't sting.

ZACH

Tell me about your personal life Taren. What do you do, when you're not on the clock? When you're trying to be "yourself."

Taren gives Zach the smirk of the Devil.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. BAR - DAY

Clad in a skin tight black dress and her hair sweeping across her bare shoulders, Taren sits at the bar toying with the salt rim of her margarita.

TAREN (V.O.)

You know sometimes, when you get all dressed up, you feel like you can do anything? Well for me, it's like I'm tipping the balance.

Patrons enter and exit the bar, all seemingly light-years away from Taren and her spot at the counter.

TAREN (V.O.)

I feel like if I lie the universe might come untethered...but I do it anyway.

Just then, a MAN (30s) sits down next to Taren and orders a drink. For a moment, Taren studies him-- he's wild hair but a cocky half-smile. Her choice has been made and she takes a large gulp from her tumbler.

Taren shifts her legs, crossing them so her right foot grazes the man's calf. He looks over, at first out of politeness, but then his gaze lingers.

MAN

I'd offer you a drink but, you seem to be able to take care of yourself.

TAREN

What else do you have to offer then?

MAN

How about my name? I'm Jason.

He extends his hand. Taren smiles, it's radiant and showy-- not like the somber girl we've seen before.

TAREN

Taren. Do you live around here?

JASON (MAN)

Live in Brooklyn. I work in Manhattan-- I like to come here afterwards.

TAREN

Lucky for you then.

JASON

My thoughts exactly.

INT. PSYCHATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Zach scribbles in his notebook.

TAREN

Nobody notices it though. They think that it's the real me.

ZACH

Have you considered the possibility that this could be the "real" you? Or at least a part of you?

TAREN

I mean we're all hiding something, aren't we? Show me any one person that claims to know the entire truth about someone and I'll show you a liar.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Empty glasses are scattered in front of Taren and Jason as they laugh over a joke.

JASON

I kid you not. Everyone was staring.

TAREN

Well can you blame them, when the majority of the people you work with are women?

The smile Jason's face starts to slip.

JASON

What do you mean?

TAREN

You're a teacher, right?

JASON

I don't think I said that.

Taren giggles, obviously drunk. Her buzz is driving her words.

TAREN

Sorry. You've got chalk around the edges of your sweater. And I saw the quizzes when you opened your bag. I just assumed.

JASON

Wow, that's really perceptive. What do you do again?

TAREN

I uh--

Something to Taren's right catches her eye and she trails off.

JASON

Taren?

TAREN

I'll just be a second.

Looking haunted, she descends from her barstool and nearly runs to the exit of the bar.

EXT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

Taren bursts through the door and out on the sidewalk. Standing in front of her is an older woman, dressed in a hospital gown and taking a drag on a cigarette. This is her mother, ANNE (60s).

TAREN

What the fuck are you doing here?

Anne takes the cigarette from between her teeth. When she speaks its with a slight drawl.

ANNE

Sweetie, come over here. Give your momma some sugar.

TAREN

You stay away from me.

ANNE

Don't be like that.

TAREN

I washed my hands of you.

ANNE

How can you be so unloving? I birthed you Taren. Raised you. Gave you everything you needed.

TAREN

And I've kept you alive! Isn't that enough?

ANNE

No, I want my daughter.

TAREN

You don't get this. You don't get to see me.

ANNE

When are you going to stop pretending that you aren't capable of the things I've done?

TAREN

I am nothing like you!

ANNE

Yeah? Who are you talking to  
sweetie?

Suddenly Taren stands alone on the sidewalk. A cigarette burns in her hand. She looks at it, stricken as the realization dawns-- she had only been talking to herself.

She turns back to the bar and Jason is nowhere to be seen.

INT. PSYCHATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Zach notices the shift in Taren's demeanor. He gets up and sits on his desk, nearer to her.

ZACH

So the date, how would you say it  
went?

Practiced in the art now, Taren easily slaps on a smile.

TAREN

It went well. Happiest I've been in  
weeks.

ZACH

Yeah?

TAREN

Mhm. I finally feel like  
everything's under control.

BACK TO PRESENT:

INT. POLICE PRECINT - CUBICLES - DAY

Taren approaches her desk pulling out her hat and gloves, as Camden appears.

CAMDEN

I've been trying to reach you all  
morning.

TAREN

Rough night. Where'd you get it?

CAMDEN

I couldn't sleep last night so I came in early and started a small board.

He points to the WHITEBOARD on his wall that has a picture of ALLISON CLARKE and her birth certificate. Next to it is a heading that reads: TIMELINE.

Underneath is a LARGE QUESTION MARK.

TAREN

I see.

CAMDEN

She's clean-- nothing in our records.

A YOUNGER OFFICER pops his head in and hands over a file, across Taren, to Camden.

YOUNG P.O.

Got the casts for the tire tracks you wanted. 1992 Volvo 850.

CAMDEN

Thanks, kid. Put out an ABP will you?

YOUNG P.O.

Copy.

The younger officer leaves and Taren moves closer to the board.

TAREN

What about family? Friends?

At this, Camden smiles.

CAMDEN

Thought you'd never ask.

He takes opens a file on his desk and holds up a picture.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

Monica and David Clarke. They live on the Upper East Side. He's in real estate.

TAREN

Why didn't you start with that? Let's get moving.

This clearly isn't the reaction Camden had anticipated.

CAMDEN

I didn't know where you were Taren.

TAREN

So?

CAMDEN

So, this is big shit. AKA the kind of shit you don't try to go after alone.

They hold one another's gaze for a long moment. Taren breaks first, looking away.

TAREN

Then let's go.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Camden hands MONICA CLARKE, tear-stained face and still dressed in her pajamas, a hot cup of tea. DAVID CLARKE sits stoically next to her, looking shell-shocked.

Taren stands paces away, staring at pictures on the fireplace mantle.

MONICA

She was our only child. Our baby...

Taren lifts up a picture of ALLISON and MONICA wearing matching tennis outfits.

CAMDEN

Do you have any idea where was she going that night?

MONICA

She'd been gushing about some guy she met at a bar. Said they were going on a date.

Taren turns her attention toward Monica and narrows her eyes.

TAREN

You let her meet up with a stranger on her own? Why didn't you alert anyone when you didn't hear from her?

Monica looks like she's been slapped.

MONICA

I didn't...I didn't know!

Monica starts to break down. Camden places a hand on her back in solidarity and comfort. Richard doesn't move a muscle.

Taren sets the picture facedown on the mantle and begins to look at the others once more.

TAREN

Did she tell you the name of the bar?

This time it's Richard to speak up.

RICHARD

She's a grown woman! What were we supposed to do? Watch her like a hawk?

CAMDEN

No, of course not. But anything she might have told you could help.

Taren picks up another picture. This time its of a younger Allison in a cap and gown, sitting on the hood of a 1992 Volvo 850.

Taren whips around holding the picture uncomfortably close to Monica and Richard's faces.

TAREN

Is this Allison's car?

RICHARD

Y-yes.

TAREN

Who got it for her? How long has she had it?

Camden throws his hands up at Taren's uncouth questions. Monica slowly lifts her head from her hands and stares at Taren with absolute murder in her eyes.

MONICA

It was her graduation present. She's been driving it since high school. And if that's all, I think it's time for you all to get the hell out of our house.

Taren's face drains of all color.

INT. SQUAD CAR - DAY

Taren cradles the photograph of Allison in her lap while Camden barks into the car's walkie talkie system.

CAMDEN

All available units we've got a 10-28 for the 1992 Volvo 850. The license plate number is 813723. I repeat license plate number is 813723. Over.

He sets the walkie talkie down and looks over to Taren. Opens his mouth, but the words escape him. Taren notices and it ticks her off.

TAREN

What? What is it?

CAMDEN

It's just...you don't have to be so combative. Nobody's going to fault you if you show some compassion.

TAREN

Don't tell me how "be".

CAMDEN

I'm not. I'm just saying that people have a right to be broken every now and then.

TAREN

That doesn't solve cases.

CAMDEN

But you're allowed to give people a break. Yourself included.

TAREN

Listen, let's not do this. This isn't group therapy.

CAMDEN

Right. Got it.

BRIEFLY WE FLASH BACK TO:

*We hear no sound over this scene, but we see Taren grabbing at her mother outside the bar.*

BACK IN THE CAR

Taren rubs her eyes, trying to dislodge the memory. The scanner crackles, cutting through the silence.

RADIO

Possible match to 2009 Chevy,  
license plate 813723 at the East  
River Park. 10-67.

Taren picks up the walkie talkie this time.

TAREN

10-4. ETA 15 minutes.

She flicks on the sirens and Camden pumps the gas pedal.

EXT. EAST RIVER PARK - DAY

Taren and Camden arrive and exit their car, approach the officers on scene. The Volvo sits parked on the side of the road, doors splayed open.

TAREN (V.O.)

I feel wrong when I'm in the dress  
and heels because it's like my  
subconscious knows that catching  
killers and solving murders-- it's  
where I belong.

Both rush to the car and take in the sight of yet another  
DEAD BODY, throat slit like the last two.

TAREN (V.O.)

But I don't think I realized, that  
even I could add to the murk.

Neither detective can meet each other's eyes. Camden softly  
speaks up--

CAMDEN

I think it's a serial killer.

Taren begins to walk away from the car, realization dawning  
on her face.

TAREN

I live here. I live here.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - LATER

Dark has fallen across New York, but Taren is wide awake.  
From her window she can see the spot of the car, now vacated.  
She closes her shutters and dashes to the kitchen area.

## IN THE KITCHEN

She dumps the contents of her silverware drawer across the counter, frantically counting her knives.

## INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

With a sudden rush of urgency, Taren tears through boxes in medicine cabinet. She empties them into the sink and, dissatisfied, moves her search to the cupboard below.

TAREN (V.O.)

It's like I put on the dress and pretend because I don't want to admit that I'm just as capable of doing the bad things that I put people away for.

ZACH (V.O.)

You're allowed to make mistakes, Taren. We're not wired to be self-correcting.

She unearths several more boxes until she finally finds the one she was looking for-- a bottle of antidepressants. She throws some back and chokes them down without any liquid aid.

## INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

She moves to her side table and picks out the PHONE she took from Kayla Davis' corpse. Small bits of blood are flecked around the edges of screen.

TAREN (V.O.)

Even if...even if you've done something horrible?

Taren's finger hovers over the power button, debating and wondering. But then she snaps, throwing the phone to the floor.

ZACH (V.O.)

Even then.

She begins to manically stomp on the phone until it's nothing but CRUDE SHARDS of glass littering the lonely floor.

INT. POLICE PRECINT - JACKSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Jackson shuts the door to his office and goes to sit down at his desk. Across from him are Taren and Camden, both looking like sleep has evaded them.

JACKSON

At what point were either of you going to notify me that we were dealing with a serial killer?

CAMDEN

We had no reason to believe that the first body--

JACKSON

--No reason? Did you get a profiler to look at those slash marks? Jesus, a ten-year-old could've seen that kill was planned.

CAMDEN

There wasn't much to go on, sir.

JACKSON

Yeah, well now you've got a shitstorm to deal with. I want you to do a briefing as soon as you can. I'm not dealing with the IID again.

TAREN

I want off the case.

CAMDEN

What?

TAREN

I don't want to be on this. Give it to someone else. Another precinct, even.

CAMDEN

Whoa wait-- You're not the only one who gets to make that decision. Why didn't you say anything to me?

TAREN

I'm telling you now.

CAMDEN

This could be huge for us. Hell, it's probably the biggest thing I've gotten in years.

JACKSON

Camden--

TAREN

Really? And have you stopped to ask yourself why that is?

Camden looks away from her, stung.

JACKSON

Camden, get out.

CAMDEN

Chief?

JACKSON

Out. Now.

Camden rises and slams the door behind him.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Was it me? Did I put too much on you by relying on you too much?

TAREN

No...I don't know. I just don't think it's the right fit for me anymore.

JACKSON

You know what I think? I think you're finally scared.

TAREN

Yeah? Well, that's the fucking breaking point isn't it?

JACKSON

The IID won't let you come back if they find out you dropped the case. You know that, don't you? Are you willing to risk that?

TAREN

(grasping at straws)

I'm not asking you to take me off the force. I just don't want this. A serial killer? The minute this gets it out, it's going to be huge. I don't need that kind of spotlight on me right now.

JACKSON

All those years of work  
Taren...you'll never recover if you  
quit now. It'll never get  
easier...You'll stay on the case,  
understood?

Taren bites her lip and nods, not trusting herself to speak.

INT. POLICE PRECINT - DAY

Taren exits Jackson's office to find Camden leaning against the adjacent wall, waiting for her. Abashed, she leans on the wall next to him, prolonging meeting his eyes.

CAMDEN

I'm not like you. Ok? I haven't  
seen the gory things you've seen.  
And I see you work and now that I  
can never come close to doing what  
you do.

He takes a deep breath in, trying to steady himself, trying to find the right words.

TAREN

Look let's just--

CAMDEN

No, please. Let me finish. I know  
you've got your own things and I've  
got mine. But you've had me flayed  
on the cross since day one Taren. I  
know I'm not a white knight, but  
doing this, solving this case, it's  
the only way I'm going to learn.

TAR

It's just not that simple.

CAMDEN

That car wasn't hidden, not even  
close. Whoever did this, knows  
we're looking for them. We're in it  
now.

TAREN

No--

CAMDEN

We can't stop now...it's  
like...it's like a hunger.

(MORE)

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

Like when you burn your tongue, and  
you can't stop yourself from  
feeling all the little bumps over  
and over again...I have to find  
this guy, don't you feel the same?

Taren gives herself a sidelong glance in the reflection of  
the Chief office's windows. She continues to stare as she  
answers--

TAREN

Yes...yes I do.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - BRIEF ROOM - DAY

Camden stands at the front of the room, packed with officers,  
leading the briefing. Taren sits next to the podium, taking  
notes.

CAMDEN

There have been two victims that we  
know so of far. ID'd as Allison  
Clarke and Jade Hoechlin.

He clicks the pointer and the screen changes. Two pictures  
appear-- one of Allison Clarke and the second of Jade  
Hoechlin.

EXT. POLICE PRECINCT - GARAGE - DAY

Taren and Camden stand with a FORENSICS EXPERT, pouring over  
the Volvo. With gloved hands, he reaches into the car and  
pulls out fuzzy fiber.

FORENSICS

Looks like they scrubbed down  
pretty well. But we found this  
stuck in the seat belt holder.

He holds up something trapped between his fingers--

CAMDEN

What is it?

FORENSICS

Couldn't tell you 100%, but my  
guess is a jacket fiber.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Taren rifles through her closet, thumbing through her jackets. She stops on one, pulls it from the closet.

She flops down on her bed and scribbles "POSSIBLE MATCH" in the notebook that's sprawled out on her covers.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - BRIEF ROOM - DAY

Another click. The picture of the street where Allison was found flashes on the screen. Another click. The car with it's doors splayed open fills the screen.

CAMDEN

Neither woman live in the area that they were found. However, both were found within a two mile radius of each other. We have reason to believe the killer is local.

Taren flinches at this.

INT./EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Camden and Taren are subtly parked on the side of the road, surveying the night scene. Taren frantically rubs her hands together for warmth, while Camden peeks through a set of binoculars.

There's no one on the street. Camden sighs and throws the binoculars in the backseat.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Taren pins up her receipts from the last few days to the wall. She dots the locations accordingly on a cheap, tourist map, that's been crudely taped to the wall.

When she finishes, she literally connects the dots, creating a box around the SAME RADIUS that Camden mentioned.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - OFFICE - DAY

Taren sits on a desk, picking out of a Chinese food container, watching as her partner pins up more pictures on the board.

CAMDEN (V.O.)

Via reports from both forensics and the medical examiner we can confirm that Allison's time of death was sometime early in the morning of January 15th, with Jade's death following shortly after.

He steps back to look at his work-- it's in-cohesive and incomplete. They've got nothing, but the brutal work of the killer staring back at them.

He fists his hands in his hair from frustration. Taren offers him the container. He takes the olive branch, wearily leaning next to her.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - CAMDEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Taren sits curled on her floor, pages of her diary ripped out and strewn next to her feet. She looks utterly defeated.

Next to her finger, something glints. She picks it up and we see that it's one of the SHARDS from the phone that she destroyed.

She grips the piece hard, trying to hold back tears. A dribble of blood, wells up and slowly slides down her wrist.

As she bleeds, we drift to her open notebook. The page has one stark sentence written across it: "WHAT HAVE I DONE?"

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - BRIEF ROOM - DA

The last click. It holds on the SLASH MARKS on the necks of the victims.

CAMDEN

Our profiler has described the nature of these marks aren't reverent like serial killers. This person, whomever we're looking for, he's violently unstable.

That's it for Taren. She can no longer sit still and listen to Camden's words. She slides from her seat and exits the briefing room.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Outside of the room, Taren pulls at her collar, unbuttoning the top so she can take a large gulp of air.

From here, she can see the Chief standing in his office, barking into his phone.

JACKSON

The minute we go to the press with this, we blow our anonymity. My guys have it.

She steps toward the Chief

TAREN

Chief, I need to tell you--

Suddenly the sound of SHOUTING fills the hall, catching both the Chief and Taren's attention.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S)

Listen to me!

DESK SERGEANT (O.S.)

Ma'am, I need you to calm down.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S)

You're not listening! All you're doing is sitting there.

The Chief takes off down the hall and Taren follows after.

AT THE BULLPEN

Jackson and Taren enter just as the hysterical Shailene Davis shoves all the contents of the Desk Sergeant's desk onto the floor.

At this he stands and approaches Shailene, palms up.

DESK SERGEANT

Ma'am, you have to take a deep breath. You're are in a police station.

SHAILENE

I've been calling you for days now. Why aren't you looking for my sister! I know something's happened to her.

Jackson looks to Taren and nods toward Shailene.

JACKSON

Cuff her until she calms down.

Taren begins to move toward Shailene, but this only sets her off.

SHAILENE

Don't fucking touch me. I haven't done anything wrong. It's you people. It's all you.

TAREN

I understand that you're upset, but you have to calm down so we can talk about this.

SHAILENE

Wait a minute...I know you. You were there that night. I remember.

As Taren keeps Shailene distracted the Desk Sergeant comes from behind her and slaps handcuffs on her.

SHAILENE (CONT'D)

Hey wait! Get these off of me! Hey!

JACKSON

Get her out of here.

The Desk Sergeant forcibly pulls Shailene out of the station, as she shouts toward Taren.

SHAILENE

You know something. I know you do! What happened that night? What happened to my sister?

Taren stares, terrified, after Shailene as exits.

JACKSON

Things are starting to unravel...You and Camden need to work faster or we'll all be underwater soon.

TAREN

I tried to step back. Keep this from happening.

JACKSON

No, you didn't Taren. You tried to run away and leave us all in the lurch.

TAREN

And now your pride's got us in this.

JACKSON

Maybe so...Finish it Taren and  
that's the last I'll ask of you.

EXT. PS41 - PARKING LOT - DAY

Taren stands next to a light post, a baseball cap covering her hair and face. A gust of wind picks up and she huddles closer to her jacket.

A flyer on the post flaps and she sees a HOMEMADE MISSING POSTER of Kayla Davis staring back at her. With force, she rips it down and crumples it, just as students begin to file out of the school.

Taren eyes a woman, directing children toward their respective buses.

WOMAN

Ok Jeremy, make sure you don't miss the bus. We don't want to have to call your mom again!

TAREN

Excuse me, miss?

WOMAN

Yes, hi. Are you looking for your child? You can go to the front office if they knew to expect you-

TAREN

I'm here about a teacher actually, Kayla Davis?

The woman's sweet demeanor falls.

WOMAN

How do you know her?

TAREN

She works here, right?

WOMAN

She hasn't been here in a long time. Haven't you been watching the news?

TAREN

Did she seem distressed when she was here? Like she knew that she was in trouble?

WOMAN

Look I don't want to keep talking about this. I think you need to leave.

TAREN

I need to know if she saw this coming!

WOMAN

Saw what coming? I'm going to have call the police if you don't get off the property--

Taren violently shoves her badge in the woman's face.

TAREN

I am the police. Now answer my fucking questions!

The woman steps back, horrified at Taren's ferocity. Taren herself seems a little taken aback at her unhinged state.

TAREN (CONT'D)

Go...just go.

The woman scampers off, but not without looking back every so often. Taren whips off her ball cap to wipe her brow, just as Jason enters into her line of sight.

JASON

Taren?

TAREN

Oh, hi.

JASON

I thought that was you. What are you doing out here?

TAREN

Work.

Jason's eyes fall to the badge balled in her hand.

JASON (CONT'D)

A cop...wow. You never said.

TAREN

Yeah. Listen, I've got to head out.

JASON

You know you never called? You said you would.

TAREN  
I said that?

JASON  
It was that bad, huh?

Taren lets out a shaky laugh.

TAREN  
Sorry. I think I was a little more  
tipsy than I thought. I didn't  
retain much from that night.

The wind picks up again, brushing Taren's hair across her collarbone. Jason smiles as he reaches out to brush it back.

JASON  
Well I did, and I'd love to see you  
again Taren. We had fun at the  
bar...anyway, You have my number.

As he walks away, Taren pulls out her phone dials.

TAREN  
Hey, I need you to try and get  
footage from a bar called The Yard.  
I'll explain later.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Taren toys with the books on Zach's bookshelf.

ZACH  
You go there frequently?

TAREN  
Huh?

ZACH  
The bar? Was that your first time  
being there or do you go often?

She stops on one and smiles to herself-- HEART OF DARKNESS by Joseph Conrad.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Picking up after we last saw her screaming at her mother, Taren enters the bar.

TAREN (V.O.)

No, it's around the corner from my apartment. I like to go there and pretend that I haven't been staring at dead bodies all day.

ZACH (V.O.)

But this time was different.

TAREN (V.O.)

Yeah. Most of the time I try to keep my distance, give a fake name. But he...he seemed interested.

She looks toward the bartender and we realize that it's the late Allison Clarke, washing glasses.

TAREN

Hey, have you seen the guy that was here?

ALLISON

Yeah, he's over there.

Taren turns to see Jason leaning on the table of Kayla and Shailene Davis. Her falls and she begins to pack up her belongings.

TAREN

Can I close my tab?

ALLISON

Sure thing.

As Allison turns to the register, Jason's voice sounds behind Taren.

JASON

You running out on me twice in one night?

TAREN

I don't think this is my night. Besides, they're much prettier.

JASON

Them? One of them's my coworker.

TAREN

Oh.

JASON

Yeah. Come on, what do you say? Stay a while.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Taren flips through Heart of Darkness.

ZACH  
Why'd you stay?

TAREN  
I thought...I thought that I had earned it. That I had worked this hard to bottle it up for this moment.

Taren slides the book back into the bookshelf.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Taren sits on her bed, clad in an oversized t-shirt, her phone in hand. She stares at Jason's phone number. Her fingers hovers over the phone icon.

TAREN (V.O.)  
But I think it was a self-fulfilling prophecy. I know that I don't get that. I'm not entitled to all of that.

And then she clicks off her phone and then leans over to turn off her beside lamp.

BACK TO PRESENT.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER

A LOUD POUNDING outside her door startles Taren awake. She frowns toward the front door, listening as the pounding continues, but the words are indiscernible.

She scrambles to the edge of her bed, just as a loud CRASH sounds in the main room. The sound of BOOTS stomping across the hardwood floors draw closer and closer.

Terrified, Taren backs up until she hits the edge of her bed and falls down-- just as the door of her room bursts open. A SWAT team encircle her, led by Jackson and Shailene.

JACKSON  
Hands where we can see them, Taren!

SHAILENE  
I told you. I told you it was her.

TAREN

Wait! Wait, please. I can explain.

JACKSON

Put your hands up now or we will shoot.

SHAILENE

Shoot her! Shoot her for what she did to my sister.

TAREN

Please, I can't remember. It's not my fault. I have this problem, please!

JACKSON

Put your hands up now!

Taren raises her hands slowly, a sob ripping through her chest.

TAREN

Chief, you have to believe me. I can't remember any of it. I need help.

SHAILENE

Don't listen to her lies. Look at where's she's gotten you.

A member of the SWAT team steps toward Taren and handcuffs.

JACKSON

Take her out.

Two swat members take Taren by her elbows and forcibly drag her out of the apartment.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Taren stumbles out into the cold, snowy sidewalk, still clad in only her t-shirt. Tears stream down her face.

TAREN

I didn't mean to please...

Suddenly the men stop short, as Anne stands in front of Taren. A KITCHEN KNIFE is in her hand.

ANNE

You wanna know what it feels like?

Anne steps toward Taren, the knife's edge aimed for her stomach.

TAREN  
Please, no, no!

ANNE  
You've been bad Taren. Now, are you going to take what you deserve?

TAREN  
No!

Anne THRUSTS THE KNIFE into Taren's gut and twists it hard. BLOOD begins to pool at Taren's mouth until--

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM

Taren's eyes burst open. She's still in her bed, unharmed. Just a nightmare. She rubs the sleep from her eyes as her CELLPHONE buzzes next to her in bed. She reaches over and presses answer.

TAREN  
Hello?

CAMDEN (ON PHONE)  
Hey, sorry it's me. I know it's late, but I got the footage.

Taren stares at the ceiling for a long moment, pressing her hand against her stomach where her mother stabbed her in the dream. She pulls up her shirt and there's a LONG SCAR that decorates her stomach.

TAREN  
Are you close to your parents?

CAMDEN (ON PHONE)  
Huh?

TAREN  
Your parents. Are you close to them?

CAMDEN  
My parents are dead.

TAREN  
Oh.

CAMDEN

What's going on? Is this your way  
of saying you're not coming?

TAREN

No, no. I'll be over in twenty.

She hangs up the phone.

INT. POLICE PRECINT - CAMDEN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Camden and Taren sit side by side looking sleep deprived,  
despite the coffee cups stewing in front of them. They watch  
as the footage drones on, nothing happening.

Camden's head begins to tip onto Taren's shoulder as he  
starts to doze off. She looks at him for a moment, in awe of  
his peaceful sleep. It's too much for her and she shifts  
slightly, jolting him awake.

CAMDEN

Sorry.

TAREN

It's fine.

The tape continues to play. Camden, feeling awkward, toys  
with the rim of his mug.

CAMDEN

You're sure this is what we need?

TAREN

Both girls were at that bar at some  
point before they were killed. It's  
our only connection.

CAMDEN

Ok.

The footage continues. Taren turns to Camden a quizzical look  
in her eye.

TAREN

Ok?

CAMDEN

Yeah. I trust you. If this is what  
you think we need to look at then  
we'll look at it.

For the first time, she gives him a small smile.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

Oh my God is that--

On the screen, Allison Clarke enters the bar. She sees shakes hand with the manager and he hands her an apron. He points at various things behind the bar.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

She worked there? We've got nothing on her there. No payroll, no uniform, nothing.

TAREN

Can you fast forward?

Camden clicks the mouse and the image speeds up as they watch the manager train her. During this, a MAN comes up to the counter and Allison leans close to him.

TAREN (CONT'D)

Wait, stop--

Camden slows the footage back down and they watch as the man slips Allison a package. She stares after him as he exits.

TAREN (CONT'D)

What was that? Drug money?

CAMDEN

Could be. Or hush-money. I'd bet my life that's the guy.

TAREN

Let's get these images blown up so we run him through the system.

Camden drags the mouse back and takes a screenshot of the guy. He prints it out off and grabs the copies from the printer in the corner of the room. When he returns back to Taren at the desk, he's all smiles.

CAMDEN

We fucking did it.

Camden claps Taren on the shoulder and gives her an amicable shake, his hand lingering...

However, the footage on the screen continues playing and out of the corner of her eye, Taren can see HERSELF saunter up to the bar.

As Camden's head turns to see what's caught her attention, Taren lunges toward him and the two begin to KISS. Camden revels in it, drawing her close.

Meanwhile, Taren keeps one eye open and drags the mouse until the footage past her being in the bar, past everything, until the screen is finally BLACK.

Camden pulls back to look at her. Taren's face reveals nothing to him.

TAREN  
We should probably get going.

CAMDEN  
Yeah...yeah you're right.

Camden stands first, running a weary hand through his hair.  
Taren

INT. BAR - DAWN

As the night wears on, stragglers stumble out of the bar, trying to find their way home. Taren and Camden enter the near-packed bar, searching through the crowd until they see the MANAGER at the bar.

MANAGER  
You guys again? I told you the first time I didn't know anything.

CAMDEN  
We have evidence that shows Allison was working here. Or at least she started the day before she died.

MANAGER  
I don't know what you're talking about--

TAREN  
--There was no payroll done. No I-9, nothing. See, my guess is you hired her under the table. Bartending is a cash business, right? Easy enough to get away with.

CAMDEN  
Until she gets murdered.

MANAGER  
I had nothing to do with that. She said she didn't want to do the paperwork ok? Sometimes I get ones like that, they don't want no fuss.

CAMDEN

Yeah? And where do you get 'em? Are they lot-lizards? You have their pimps on speed dial?

MANAGER

What the fuck are you talking about?

Taren pounds the picture of the man on the footage down onto the bar.

TAREN

This man, is he her pimp?

MANAGER

I don't know, I've never seen him--

TAREN

Obstruction of justice is considered a felony in the state of New York. Punishable for up to twenty years...and by the looks of you...I'm thinking that might be all you have left. How'd you like to spend your last few breaths in prison?

The manager's face turns cold. Taren and Camden wait patiently for his response.

MANAGER

His name is Tony Danvers. Lives on Canal St. He...he brings them here when they owe him money. Makes them work it back. I don't know nothing else about him, got it?

CAMDEN

Thank you.

They begin to walk away from the bar, as they reach the door, the manager calls after Taren.

MANAGER

You like my bar well enough to get your fix, don't you? Fucking cops.

Camden looks toward Taren with a question in his eyes.

TAREN

He's a joke. Pathetic.

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - HALLWAY - DAY

Guns drawn, Taren and Camden slowly, stalk down the deserted hallway. From the end of the hallway LOUD MUSIC thuds, shaking the floor beneath them.

They stop outside the door, listening.

TAREN  
You'll cover me?

CAMDEN  
I don't think--

TAREN  
We don't have time to argue about  
it. Cover me?

Camden nods. Taren counts off silently. 1...2...3

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - TONY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Taren kicks in the door and immediately, she and Camden are engulfed in the blacklight room.

In the living room, a GROUP OF MEN doing blow stand up, drawing firearms with no hesitation.

MAN #1  
What the hell is this?

TAREN  
Drop your weapons, now!

MAN #1  
Who the fuck do you think you are?

CAMDEN  
NYPD! Put your hands in the air and  
get on the ground, now.

Another man, clearly high, starts toward Taren, gun in hand.

MAN #2  
You think we give a fuck about some  
dumbass cops?

Camden strides toward him in one step, bringing his gun up to the man's temple.

CAMDEN  
What you think because I got a  
badge I won't fucking do it?  
(MORE)

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

Go head and get yours up here. We  
can shoot at the same time.

The man considers the wild look in Camden's eyes for a moment and then sinks to the ground, hands behind his head. The others follow in suit. Taren doesn't miss a beat.

TAREN

We're looking for a Tony Danvers.  
Anyone seen him?

The men are silent, all staring at the ground. Taren takes this moment to unload her shell casing and then reload her gun, one by one. All eyes are on the bullets she stocks up.

TAREN (CONT'D)

Am I really going to have to ask  
twice?

Suddenly, a man in the back, reaches for his gun and bolts, Taren shoots toward him, but her bullet isn't fast enough.

Taren takes off after him, yelling at Camden over her shoulder.

TAREN (CONT'D)

Stay here!

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - HALLWAY - DAY

Taren rushes into the hallway to find it empty, however she hears the SLAM of the emergency exit door. She dashes to it, throwing open the door.

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - STAIRWELL - DAY

From above, Taren can see Tony jumping down the steps, five at a time. He looks up to her as she aims her gun down to him.

TAREN

You really going to make me shoot  
you, Tony?

TONY

Fuck you!

He aims his gun and fires toward her. It misses and a scowl grows on Taren's face. Without a second thought she follows after him.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Taren bursts through the exit door to find Tony nowhere in sight. Suddenly, she hears the CLICK of the gun and Tony reveals himself from behind her.

TONY

Got you.

TAREN

You think this ends with me Tony?  
We know where you live now, we've  
got your guys.

TONY

So?

TAREN

So, you're going to answer for what  
you've done. With me here or not.  
Somebody will come 'round for you.

TONY

I haven't done jack shit.

TAREN

Oh yeah, what about Allison Clarke?  
Huh? She didn't give you your money  
fast enough so you slit her throat?

TONY

Shut the fuck up. You shut the fuck  
up right now.

TAREN

What happened with Jade, huh? Was  
it the same deal?

TONY

Shut up!

He raises his hand, his finger inching on the trigger, but suddenly a blow comes to the back of his head. Camden appears, having hit Tony with the butt of his gun.

He doesn't stop there. He kicks Tony hard in the ribs. He then drags Tony up by his hair and crouches down to look at him.

CAMDEN

You like hurting women, huh?

He hits him again with his gun. BLOOD GUSHES from Tony's broken nose.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)  
You get off on that?

Another hit, this time Tony has trouble opening his eye.

TONY  
P-please.

CAMDEN  
What's the matter? You don't like  
it?

He yanks Tony's head back further.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)  
And what about those girls? Do you  
think they liked it?

Taren places a tentative hand on Taren's shoulder.

TAREN  
Camden. That's enough. We got him.

Now shaking, Camden release Tony, who's nothing more than a bloody pulp. He begins to pace away from Taren, hands fisted in his hair, trying to process what he's just done.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

Leaving Tony behind, Taren enters the observation room where Camden stares at the plexiglass with hollow eyes.

TAREN  
His alibi's airtight. He's not a  
killer, just a lowlife pusher.

They don't speak for a long moment. Finally Camden sighs.

CAMDEN  
I wanted it to be him.

TAREN  
It's fine. We'll just have to  
restart. Lets go over the boards  
again--

CAMDEN  
We have nothing, Taren.

TAREN  
So...we go back to the bar, start  
interrogating the regulars.

CAMDEN

Do you ever think about the way that we found that car? It was like he was presenting it to us. This guy, whoever he is, we're not finding him until he wants us to.

Taren bites her lip down and then proceeds.

TAREN

But what if its too late?

Camden slips a smile on.

CAMDEN

Come on, let's get you home. We both could use a breather.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF TAREN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Taren walks in front of Camden and stops outside of her door.

TAREN

You really didn't have to come up.

CAMDEN

I know. I guess I'm still wired. I keep checking corners expecting one of Tony's boys to show up.

TAREN

Not the first time I've had to deal with a death threat.

She smiles while saying this, but Camden looks as if he's been slapped.

TAREN (CONT'D)

Look, you don't have to worry about me.

Camden stares down as he clenches and unclenches his bruised fist.

CAMDEN

I don't know if...I don't know if I have the sensibility for any of this...

TAREN

Camden?

CAMDEN

I used to ask myself what kind of person can do something so sick. But today, god, when I saw you at gunpoint...I think I realized that darkness lingers around. Just waiting for it's moment to get out.

Taren looks away, not wanting to give herself away.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

Maybe to catch a monster you have to become one...and I just don't think I'm willing to do that.

Taren reaches out to him.

TAREN

Hey--

CAMDEN

Let me stay. I can't leave you alone tonight. I won't.

Taren doesn't answer. Instead she unlocks the front door and steps inside, waiting for Camden to come in after her.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - SAME TIME

A RUNNER pounds hard on the pavement, dodging. She deters off the path and starts to sprint through the trees.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Camden lowers Taren onto her bed, kissing every inch of her skin he can get to. They both begin shedding their clothes.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

In her stride, her foot gets caught on something and she tumbles down.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Fully undressed now, Taren moves on top of Camden. She smiles slightly and then lowers herself to him and then everything goes BLACK.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

The woman brushes herself off and looks around to see what caused her fall. Something sticks out of the snow. She begins to use her gloved hand to brush away the snow.

When the snow is cleared the woman gives a loud SCREAM.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Taren lies curled up next to Camden as the light of morning filters through her blinds. She stares at Camden, confused. She rubs her temples, trying to remember what happened: It seems she had another episode.

TAREN  
Fuck. Not again...

Suddenly her phone BUZZES. She sits up, answering, as Camden stirs awake.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

The Chief stands paces away as he watches OFFICERS block off a crime scene that now includes ELIZABETH DAVIS' newly uncovered body.

JACKSON  
We've got another one. A jogger  
found her in Central Park.

TAREN (O.S.)  
Wait. What?

JACKSON  
I can't wait anymore Taren, I have  
to go public.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM

Taren ends the call and rests her head against her knees.

CAMDEN  
Who was it?

TAREN  
The Chief. They found another one.

Camden sits up and kisses her shoulder. Taren hurriedly begins to scramble out of bed.

She shoves her legs into the nearest pair of pants she can find. In the morning light, Camden can see the sticky notes that decorate her bedroom.

CAMDEN

Don't brush me off Taren. Let me help.

TAREN

We're in the spotlight now. It's all over.

She finishes getting dressed and throws her back into a ponytail. She leaves the room, not bothering to wait for Camden to get his clothes on.

INT. POLICE PRECINT - DAY

Cameras flash and mics are switched on as the Chief stands at the podium at the front of the room, reading off his speech. Taren and Camden stand on either side of him, both of their faces expressionless.

JACKSON

...And as far as we know the suspect is still at large. Are there any further questions?

A REPORTER stands.

REPORTER

Sounds like you have a whole lot of nothing Chief. What exactly do you know about the killer?

JACKSON

As I have already review, our investigators have gathered that the suspect has a penchant for killing women and resides somewhere in the Lower East Side--

REPORTER

--I'm talking about something useful. Age? Height? Tattoos? Address? From what you're giving us, it could be anyone!

Several other reporters stand at this. Jackson shakes at his head at the uproar.

JACKSON

Thank you, there's no longer time  
for any further questions.

SHOUTS follow him as he, Taren, and Camden rush to the hallway.

INT. POLICE PRECINT - HALLWAY - DAY

The Chief tears off his cap.

JACKSON

Damnit!

He strides toward his office. Camden rushes off after him.

CAMDEN

Chief. Chief, wait!

Instead, Taren walks in the opposite direction, toward her desk.

INT. POLICE PRECINT - CUBLICES - DAY

Approaching her desk, Taren unclips her gun and badge. Without a second thought, she tosses both into the corner of her desk.

When she looks up, she sees Shailene Davis sitting at the front desk, sobbing uncontrollably. Taren can longer watch and she exits the office.

EXT. POLICE PRECINT - DAY

Taren breaks down on the front steps.

TAREN (V.O.)

The problem is, I known all along  
that something is wrong with me.

ZACH (V.O.)

You don't have to be so hard on  
yourself Taren.

TAREN (V.O.)

No, I mean it. There's something,  
deep inside of me that's  
just...wrong.

I/E. TAREN'S CAR - NIGHT

Taren speeds down the highway passing signs that point toward MISSOURI.

LATER

She pulls to the side of the road and sleeps.

IN THE MORNING

She pulls off the highway to eat at a small truck-stop diner.

INT. DINER - DAY

Face hidden under a baseball cap, Taren sits in a booth hidden from the rest of the diner. She picks at the pancakes in front of her, but can't seem to find her appetite.

Her phone, resting on the table, vibrates with a call. CAMDEN'S CALLER ID flashes across the screen. Taren stares at it until the buzzing finally ceases.

A WAITRESS enters Taren's line of sight, refilling her coffee cup. Her attention, however, is focused on the TV screen above the counter.

WAITRESS

That's just sick. Sometimes I just can't understand this world.

Taren looks over to see that its playing highlights of the "New York Serial Killer"...

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

Can I get you anything else?

TAREN

No.

As the waitress leaves, Taren throws a crumpled bill on the table and darts, leaving her pancakes and coffee behind.

I/E. TAREN'S CAR - NIGHT

Night has fallen once more and Taren parks her car outside a large brown building that reads "KANSAS CITY PSYCHIATRIC FACILITY."

With a deep breath, she steels herself and exits the car, heading toward the building.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC FACILITY - FRONT DESK - NIGHT

A nurse sits filing her nails and watching Spanish soaps on the small TV that rests on her desk. Taren taps loudly on the glass that separates them.

TAREN

Hi, I need to see Anne Evans.

NURSE

I'm sorry, are you family?

TAREN

Yes, I'm her daughter. Which room is she in?

NURSE

It's after hours. Your mother is probably asleep.

TAREN

Then wake her up.

NURSE

If you'd like you can come back at an later hour when it will be more convenient for us--

Taren pounds on the glass again.

TAREN

I'm with the NYPD. I need to speak with her now. 255-45-89's my badge number. You can run it, but in the meantime, which room is my mother in?

INT. PSYCHIATRIC FACILITY - ANNE'S ROOM - NIGHT

A nurse helps a groggy Anne sit up in her bed.

NURSE

I'm sorry Anne, can I get you anything?

ANNE

A glass a milk? My daughter will have one too.

TAREN

No, thank you.

The nurse nods and exits the room.

ANNE

I've been waiting for you Ellie.

TAREN

No, it's Taren now. I left that name a long time ago.

ANNE

Why would you do something like that?

TAREN

I didn't want to risk the chance of somebody linking me to you and all your crazy.

The nurse returns and sets down a glass of milk for Anne.

NURSE

I'll just be outside Annie.

She looks between mother and daughter and then exits once more.

ANNE

It's cruel what you've done to me Ellie.

TAREN

Really? I think it's justifiable.

ANNE

I gave you life. I birthed you. I fed you. And now you've left me to rot with these strangers.

TAREN

And maybe that's what you deserve!

ANNE

I never asked for any of this, sweetie. But God saw fit to--

TAREN

Stop it. Bring up God again and I'll leave. Right fucking now. God has nothing to do with you and your fucked up mind.

Anne bites her tongue and instead sips from her glass of milk.

ANNE

So why are you here? If you don't want to talk to me, or hell even look at me, why'd you come all this way hon?

TAREN

I needed to see for myself...

ANNE

See what?

TAREN

What I could become.

Realization passes over Anne's weathered face.

ANNE

Ah, it's happening to you too, isn't it?

TAREN

I left you. I left all of this behind because I thought it would help.

Taren stands and goes by the window. She tries to crack it open to get some air, but the locks keep it from moving up more than a couple of centimeters.

ANNE

So we won't try to jump. Come back on over here, and let me give you your answers.

TAREN

I'm fine here.

ANNE

God, you look so much like your father.

Taren starts on her, anger flashing in her eyes.

TAREN

How dare you!

ANNE

What?

TAREN

How dare you mention him to me.

ANNE

He was my husband, Ellie.

TAREN

And you murdered him. You ran him right through and when that wasn't enough you went after me.

She lifts up her shirt to reveal the scar that we've seen before. Anne looks away, but Taren moves closer, forcing her mother to look.

TAREN (CONT'D)

And you know what's worse? You should be in jail right now. You should be on death row. But instead they threw you up here because you couldn't remember what happened. Because somehow you weren't "mentally sound."

ANNE

I have a disease Taren.

TAREN

Oh, please.

ANNE

Dissociative Identity Disorder affects the mind--

TAREN

Screw you. And screw your disease. You think that you talk to a shrink for a few sessions and suddenly every bad thing you've ever done is erased? No-- you wanted to kill him, admit it!

ANNE

I fell out of love with your father that's true, but I never wished harm on him or you. You're my family.

TAREN

And look what that's gotten us: Dad's dead. You've lost it. And I've spent the last ten years hunting down people like you because I can't wrap my hands around your own neck.

ANNE

Do it then! Right here, Taren. If you can't live with what we struggle with, then end it now. Oh, but be sure to make it look real good, because I doubt the Nurses will let you leave unquestioned.

TAREN

That's just what you'd like isn't it? To see me pick up where you left off?

ANNE

Why does this abhor you so much Taren? Have you been so brainwashed that you think that you're damaged goods the minute your brain isn't fully under your control?

TAREN

No, mother, what abhors me is that you're still alive.

Silence hangs in the air at this.

ANNE

I never pretended to be a good mother. I did what I could. Worked to keep you fed, loved your father as best I could. But sometimes things slip...

Taren turns from the window at this.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I know enough now to discern the bad things that I've done and things I had no control over. But sometimes the mind...sometimes it takes control and you can't fight it. You just have to live with it.

TAREN

And what? You become comfortable with killing? You become O.K. with losing your mind?

ANNE

My disease didn't make me crazy Taren, trying to run from it did.

Taren moves back to the chair opposite her mother. She sits down and reaches for the glass of milk. Anne watches with a slight smile as Taren finishes the glass.

ANNE (CONT'D)

It always did calm you down.

TAREN

I don't understand how you can be so still. I feel like nothing makes sense anymore.

ANNE

That's fear talking. You've got to listen to it.

TAREN

Yeah? And what am I supposed to hear?

ANNE

You have to quit fighting it. Accept it and move forward.

TAREN

How did we end up like this?

ANNE

Genetics is a bitch, hon. If you listened to nothin' else, take that piece of advice to heart.

TAREN

I don't...I don't think I can be a cop anymore. Not like this.

ANNE

Good. Come back home, Ellie. We can move back into your grandmother's house.

Anne reaches a hand to Taren, but she sits up.

TAREN

I told you. It's Taren now.

ANNE

Ell-Taren. Why won't you stay? We can work on this-- the both of us. I need you.

TAREN

And I needed Dad. I understand now,  
but it's one thing the disease  
won't let me forget.

ANNE

Ellie don't leave me in here!

Taren goes to the door, the Nurse rushes in after her at  
Anne's screams.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Ellie you can't leave me here to  
die! Ellie!

The door to Anne's room shuts.

EXT. PSYCHIATRIC FACILITY - NIGHT

Taren sits on the hood of her car, watching as snow flurries  
build up again. She digs her phone out of her pocket, takes a  
deep breath, and finally dials Camden.

CAMDEN

Taren? Where the hell are you? I've  
been trying to call.

TAREN

Hey...uh...I'm not in New York.

CAMDEN

You picked a great time to go AWOL.

TAREN

I know. Listen, there's something I  
need to tell you.

CAMDEN

Yeah, me too.

TAREN

Look this case, I need to get off  
of it.

CAMDEN

Wait until I tell you--

TAREN

No, Camden you don't understand. I  
think...I think all of this is my  
fault. And I didn't want to think  
about that possibility, but I have  
to come clean--

CAMDEN

--These cases happen. Bodies but no clues. But Taren I'm telling you I found a clue.

TAREN

What?

CAMDEN

Jade Hoechlin's ID? It was fake.

TAREN

Then who is she?

CAMDEN

She's a runaway. Don't know why we didn't run her prints. She's been in and out of the system.

TAREN

She was right there for us...

CAMDEN

Yeah, get this. We have an address for her. I went and checked her place-- there's nothing there.

TAREN

Great.

CAMDEN

I go around talking to the neighbors and one guys saying how he's been hearing his upstairs neighbor coming in at all hours of the night.

TAREN

Oh my god.

CAMDEN

I'm getting the warrant. Are you...are you coming back anytime soon? I know it's none of my business, but I saw your gun and badge, Taren and I think...I think it'd be a waste.

Taren puts down the phone for a brief moment. She breathes a sigh.

TAREN

If it's not him, will you promise me something?

CAMDEN  
Sure, anything.

TAREN  
Don't make me stay.

A beat, then--

CAMDEN  
Done.

TAREN  
Then, I'm on my way.

Taren shuts down the phone and gives one last look to the psych ward. Shaking her head, she opens her car door and slides in the front seat.

TAREN (V.O.)  
It's selfish, really, but I  
couldn't let myself lose like that.  
I have too much pride. I didn't  
want to admit defeat. Maybe that's  
what started me down this path.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Taren's smiling at Zach who looks up from his notepad.

ZACH  
Defeat?

TAREN  
Yeah. I saw her face. The girl he  
had been talking to at the bar. I  
know that look. It's the look I  
wish I didn't have to fake.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Taren and Jason arm and arm are exiting the bar. Taren takes one last look over her shoulder. She locks eyes with Elizabeth who stares dejectedly as she watches Jason leave with another girl.

TAREN (V.O.)  
I didn't even really want him. And  
I knew she did. And that made  
me...happy.

INT. PSYCHATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Taren's smile widens.

TAREN

It made me happy to know that she was losing everything while I got what I wanted.

ZACH

Because you felt superior?

TAREN

Yes. Because I was in control.

BACK TO PRESENT:

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Camden, putting his all his weight on the door, bursts into the room. He drops the warrant that's crumpled in his hand as he enters.

CAMDEN

What the hell?

Taren's not far behind him and flicks on the light switch, illuminating the room in a harsh yellow light.

She takes a step back as her eyes take in the sights around the room: Hundreds of blown up pictures are scattered across the walls of BRUTALLY CLOSE PORTRAITS OF WOMEN, only taken from the neck up.

Taren draws closer to a nearby set of photos and she sees that each have a RED SEMICIRCLE drawn haphazardly across their necks. The picture she stares at is one of Elizabeth Holmes.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

He labeled them.

Taren turns to see what he means. He points to a makeshift corkboard above an old desk. It harbors a list of names and across from them the nicknames that Camden mentioned.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

He planned them. Each one, he knew when exactly he wanted them revealed and when. He wants everyone to see the work he's done.

Something inside of Taren snaps, she begins racing toward the walls and tears down the photos one by one. Camden comes from behind her, restraining her arms until she can calm down.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

Hey, hey. I'm just as pissed as you are, but that's evidence.

TAREN

Don't you get it? It's a taunt. We're not pulling any fucking strings here. We never have been.

CAMDEN

Taren--

TAREN

No, fuck it. Fuck it all. I'm one of them now Camden. I tried, ok? I tried, but it's enough. I need to go to the station.

CAMDEN

Taren, look.

He points to the ground at one of the pictures that Taren had torn down. He crouches low to the ground and picks it up, handling it with feather-light care.

Taren looks down to see what the picture holds: It's a photograph of her, neck and shoulders, asleep in her bed. Across the top it's labeled as "THE ANOMALY" and slashes are marked along her throat.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

I think he wants us to know where he's going next...

TAREN

This whole time...he's been making me think...

CAMDEN

What do you want to do?

TAREN

I'm going to gut him.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Taren calmly on her bed as she watches UNIFORMED COPS flit across her room, checking for wires and cameras.

The last of them turns to Camden, who stands off in a corner watching the uniforms work.

UNIFORM #1

It's clear. He didn't bug it.

CAMDEN

Thanks. You can and your crew can go.

UNIFORM #1

Do you want us to standby?

CAMDEN

No, I'll stay with her tonight.

The uniform leaves and it's just Taren and Camden alone in the room. He takes a step forward, shedding his coat.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

Filed the apartment under a fake name. Paid in cash, of course. The bastard's really starting to get under my skin.

TAREN

You didn't have to.

Camden stands inches away from her. He tilts her head toward him and kisses her deeply.

CAMDEN

Yes I did.

TAREN

Why? Just because I'm your partner?

CAMDEN

No, because I admire you. Because I want you. Is that so crazy?

TAREN

Yes.

He bends to kiss her again.

CAMDEN

Then I'm crazy.

Taren jolts away.

TAREN

You don't know anything about being crazy, Camden. You're the most cookie-cutter person I've ever met.

CAMDEN

Oh what now you've got the market on crazy? I'm a cop, Taren same as you. I've seen the same messed up shit that you've seen.

TAREN

And you ran.

CAMDEN

What?

TAREN

You ran. You left Connecticut because you got scared, didn't you? And then you came to New York to prove to yourself that you could do it again.

CAMDEN

I know what you're doing and it's not working, so quit while you're ahead.

TAREN

What am I doing besides telling the truth?

CAMDEN

They all gave up on you-- the Chief, IID, hell even Mahoney left you in the dust. And you think you've got some fucking chip on your shoulder now, but you don't because I know beneath all the steely exterior, is a person who actually cares.

TAREN

How would you even begin to assume that?

CAMDEN

Because if anybody that I knew reviewed by the IID, they would have never come back. But you did Taren. You did. You care about this job. You care about putting the bad people away.

TAREN

I don't--

Taren's words are cutoff by a the sound of a knock at the front door. Camden steels at the sound, his hand going instantly to his gun. He puts a finger to his lips. Taren nods, understanding, and draws her own gun.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The two stalk quietly into the foyer as another KNOCK sounds. Slowly Camden turns the knob and then, flings the door open pointing his gun at the visitor.

CAMDEN

Freeze. Hands in the air, now.

Taren comes next to Camden to see Jason standing still with his hands up, staring at Camden with a look to kill.

TAREN

Jason?

JASON

Taren, what is this?

TAREN

Put your gun down, I know him.

Camden lowers his gun, but looks at Jason with an intent to kill.

TAREN (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

JASON

You never called so uh...I just wanted to see you again. This is weird, isn't it? I didn't expect you to be here with someone else.

Camden looks back and forth between Jason and Taren, shaking his head.

CAMDEN

That makes two of us.

He clips his gun back to his holster and then shoves past Jason, striding down the hall. Taren takes off after him, sliding past him to stand in his way.

TAREN

I thought you were staying.

CAMDEN  
I changed my mind.

TAREN  
Because another man showed up at my door? You were never my boyfriend Camden, you're my partner.

CAMDEN  
I lied before-- what you were doing, what you've done, it worked. So I'm going just liked you wanted.

TAREN  
I never said that's what I wanted, I just said I didn't understand why you were sticking around.

Camden makes a move to go around her and she holds onto his forearm, trying to make herself.

TAREN (CONT'D)  
But I...I appreciate it, ok? I had all this shit going on and but you stuck around and I just...

Camden grimaces.

CAMDEN  
It's worse because you can't even see yourself.

He brushes past her, without another word. Taren glares after him, tears filling in her eyes.

JASON  
He's wrong. I think you know exactly who you are.

Taren turns back toward him, suddenly remembering that he's still standing outside her door.

JASON (CONT'D)  
It's why I came. You're the realest person I've ever met Taren. No decorations. No frills.

TAREN  
No...he's right. You know how I spend my Friday nights. I dress up and pretend I'm happy so I can get guys like you to think I'm normal. But I'm not.

JASON  
Just let me come in--

TAREN  
I'm sorry, I think I just need to  
be alone.

She steps inside the door and watches as Jason's face becomes smaller and smaller as the door shuts.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Taren enters her bedroom and sees Camden's jacket still laying on the floor. She bends down and picks it up, adorning it.

She lays down on the floor and closes her eyes, a tear sliding down her cheek.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

In an out of body experience, Taren watches as her past self and Jason begin to exit the bar.

In slow motion, she sees Jason turn back to glance at Elizabeth. The past Taren notices and looks back at Elizabeth, to see Elizabeth getting up and paying her tab.

As they begin to exit Taren can hear Elizabeth and Shailene arguing.

SHAILENE  
Just forget him, ok?

ELIZABETH  
Let me go Shai.

SHAILENE  
Why are you letting some guy get  
your panties in a twist. Jesus.  
It's the city, there's a ton of men  
here.

ELIZABETH  
I just don't feel like being out  
anymore.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Taren watches as her past self and Jason walk hand in hand down the street. Inside the bar, Elizabeth packs her things to go. Then it all goes BLACK.

BACK TO PRESENT:

EXT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - FIRE ESCAPE - NIGHT

Taren wakes up, huddled in Camden's jacket, on her fire escape. She cradles her head, digging her nails into her temples, trying to force herself to remember the rest.

But nothing comes.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Baseball cap low over her eyes, Taren exits her apartment. She locks eyes with the COPS in the PATROL CAR across the street, watching her apartment for suspicious activity.

Taren pulls the cap lower and jams her hands in her pockets, walking quickly down the street now. The car pulls out of its space to follow her.

She gives a glance behind her shoulder at it and then quickly darts into a back alley. The car picks up speed, going down the next street to cut her off.

She stops and turns the other way, sprinting back the way she came. The car can't turn around fast enough and she's bolting down another alley.

After a moment she stops-- the patrol car is nowhere to be seen.

EXT. BANK - DAY

Taren stands across the street, staring into the glass windows of a bank. Inside of the bank, she watches Shailene slowly pack up her belongings. She waves goodbye to her coworkers and exits. Taren makes her move.

She walks in step with Shailene across the street, before she crosses onto the other side.

Taren follows behind her for a long time, just watching as the young woman walks.

And then suddenly she pounces, dragging her down an narrow, empty street. She covers Shailene's mouth, not allowing her to scream.

TAREN

I've been thinking about it  
Shailene and it doesn't make sense  
to me.

SHAILENE

What are you talking about?

TAREN

Your sister. You're right. I was  
there that night. And so were you.  
She wanted to leave early, isn't  
that right.

SHAILENE

So what? What the hell are you  
trying to say?

TAREN

You were there together, Shailene.  
She went out with you, she should  
have left with you. So where did  
she go?

SHAILENE

I don't know!

Taren shoves the other girl roughly against the brick wall behind them.

TAREN

I've been up and down the last few  
weeks, thinking about what I'm  
missing, but all this time, it was  
you. You were the last piece. Where  
did you your sister go Shailene?

SHAILENE

She left without me!

TAREN

Stop lying! I want to catch who did  
this. I need to know where she  
went.

SHAILENE

I wanted to stay and she was  
jealous about that guy you were  
with. She didn't wait for me.

Taren rattles her hard.

TAREN  
Stop lying!

SHAILENE  
You have to believe me! Please!

At the top of the street, the patrol car that had been tailing Taren finally pulls up. An uniformed officer gets out of the car, running toward Taren.

UNIFORM #1  
Detective Saint!

Taren shakes Shailene too hard this time and the young girl's head hits the brick wall with a loud CRACK. Taren watches as the girl slips through her hands and crumples to the ground below.

Taren looks on in horror as the girl lays unconscious, with a stream of blood pouring down her nose.

UNIFORM #1 (CONT'D)  
What the hell are you did you do?

Taren looks down at her hands as they shake with adrenaline.

TAREN  
I need to know...I need to know...

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. POLICE PRECINT - JACKSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Taren stares at her hands while, across the desk, Jackson sits with his head in hands.

JACKSON  
I don't see how IID will overlook this.

TAREN  
She's alive. It was just a concussion.

JACKSON  
No, it was assault. She could press charges against you.

The Chief gets up and sits on the edge of his desk, looking wearily down at Taren.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

I think what would be best for everyone if you take a minute while we take care of this. Lay low and let our guys get this guy before he gets to you.

TAREN

Oh come on, weeks ago I wanted off and now when we're actually close to finishing this you're going to kick me out? That's bullshit Chief and you know it. I'm this close. This close.

JACKSON

Camden requested a new partner. That's happened twice now Taren.

Taren blanches, blindsided by this news.

TAREN

When did he--

JACKSON

--I've never doubted that you were a good cop, Taren. But I'm starting to wonder if you've forgotten how to be a good person.

This stings harder than anything anyone has ever said. Taren can't even meet his eyes.

TAREN

I was messed up before. Ok? I didn't think I had things together, but I do now. I do. And I need to get this finished.

JACKSON

It's just until this killer's gone, Taren. You need to get away from this grime before it eats you alive.

TAREN

But who'll finish the case? Camden can't do it by himself--

JACKSON

I put Mahoney on it. Now go Taren, I don't want to see you back in here until this is done. For your sake.

TAREN

You know damn well this isn't for me.

Taren bolts from the room, leaving Jackson looking stricken.

INT. PSYCHATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Zach places a hand on Taren's shoulder. It's the first time they gotten this close. Taren notes it.

ZACH

Why are you so afraid of being out of control?

TAREN

Because then people turn you into their own version of you. You can never be yourself.

ZACH

Don't you think that's overly pessimistic? Nobody can control who you or what you do, but you.

Taren's eyes lingers on his hand on her shoulder. Then she looks up at Zach with a grimace.

TAREN

That's not true.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY

Taren stands in front of the sink, looking down at a days of the week pill container. She looks back up at the mirror-- her face looks worn out and gaunt.

TAREN (V.O.)

It's a subtle change at first. You start doing little favors for them. Then suddenly you're picking up the words that they use. You find yourself waking up every morning in a bad mood, but you can never remember why...

She picks up the pills for Monday and then throws them back.

INT. TAREN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Taren sits curled on her couch in sweatpants, her hair astray. In her lap she has the daily newspaper spread out across her legs. The headline reads: "KILLER STILL AT LARGE." Taren jots down notes across the paper.

TAREN (V.O.)

They make you retract and reshape,  
so you can fit into their little  
bubble.

Across from her the TV blares a news report relaying the same, tired information.

NEWS ANCHOR

Upon the discovery of new  
information, local authorities have  
discovered the remains of at least  
six women who were perceived to be  
missing.

Faces of HAPPY WOMEN flash across the scene.

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Precinct Chief Jackson declined to  
comment on the new discoveries.

Frustrated, Taren throws the remote at it and shoves the newspapers to the floor as she rises from the couch.

EXT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

Taren stands against a telephone pole, patiently waiting. Suddenly her face perks up as she sees Camden and Mahoney exit the precinct. She hurries across the street, calling to Camden.

TAREN

Camden! I need to talk to you.

Camden sees her but keeps walking toward the precinct parking lot, brushing past her as if she were an apparition.

TAREN (CONT'D)

Really? We're doing this now?

Taren turns to pursue him, but Mahoney blocks her path.

TAREN (CONT'D)

This is none of your business.

MAHONEY

He's my partner now, so it is.  
Instead of chasing after him, how  
about you do us a favor and lay  
low? If that killer sees you  
hanging around the precinct he's  
never going to show his face again.

TAREN

Why? So you can make the arrest and  
take the credit for something you  
had nothing to do with?

MAHONEY

You can be as bitter as you like,  
but it doesn't change the fact that  
he's done with you, and as soon as  
we bag this guy, everyone else will  
be too.

TAREN

What's that supposed to mean?

Mahoney grimaces and instead of answering her, turns to  
follow Camden.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Taren has squeezed herself in a tight black dress and shiny  
pumps to match. As she enters the bar, she waves to a person  
at a table and walks over.

Jason sits, already sipping on a beer. Like a good-manner  
gentleman, he rises as Taren sits, and then returns to his  
seat.

JASON

You look stunning.

TAREN

Thanks.

JASON

To be honest, I'm really surprised  
you finally called. The last time I  
thought I'd crossed a line...

TAREN

Well, you know what they say:  
Timing is everything.

JASON

It is. Can I get you something?

TAREN

Whatever you have is good.

Jason smiles, signaling the waiter. He continues talking to her, but Taren isn't listening to a word he says. Instead, her eyes are trained on Anne, who sits with her hands folded neatly across from Taren.

ANNE

A date? Really? Answer this: Do you even remember the last time you had an original thought? Or have you always operated like you were under someone's thumb?

Taren balls her hand into a fist, biting back a response. In her movement, a piece of her hair falls across her shoulders. Jason smiles, and sweeps it back, fingers lightly brushing against her neck.

Their eyes catch.

ANNE (CONT'D)

When are you going to wake up?

EXT. BAR - LATER

Jason and Taren are locked in an embrace against the side of the bar. Next to them, Anne leans against the wall, apathetically smoking a cigarette.

Jason steps back, lightly caressing her neck.

JASON

Come back to my place.

ANNE

Are you going to stop acting like a child? Two wrongs...you've heard that expression haven't you?

Taren runs her hand through her hair.

TAREN

Just stop.

JASON

Come on, Taren. Just come back with me.

TAREN

I--I can't.

He continues kissing her and Taren gets caught up in it. Jason starts to lead her down the street and Taren steps back, coming to her senses.

TAREN (CONT'D)  
Not tonight.

A dark look passes over Jason's face and his voice is low and haunting.

JASON  
You seriously aren't making this  
easy.

Taren stares at him, contemplative as the wheels in her head start to turn.

TAREN  
Maybe some other time?

He smiles with feigned enthusiasm.

JASON  
Yeah. Maybe.

Hands stuffed in his pockets, Jason turns and walks down the street.

BRIEFLY WE FLASH TO:

*The pictures of the girls-- Jade, Elizabeth, Allison and the countless others. Their necks SEVERED. And Jason's fingers lightly brushing across Taren's neck, his lips on her collarbone...*

WE'RE BACK and after a few beats, Taren begins to follow after him, murder written in her eyes.

INT. STORAGE FACILITY - NIGHT

Taren hides in the shadows as she watches Jason approach a storage block. He crouches, placing the key in the lock, and steps back as the door slides upwards.

Taren cautiously waits as he disappears inside for a few brief moments and then exits carrying a large bag. He closes the door once more and makes his way down the hall.

After a few moments, Taren slips from her cover and moves toward the lock. She rolls up her dress to her thigh and uncovers out her gun.

She shoots at the lock through her oversized purse, attempting to muffle the sound. The lock tumbles to the ground and the door springs open.

INSIDE THE ROOM

Are several PICTURES like the ones found in the apartment. In the center there's a small table with an assortment of different weapons-- axes, knives, wrenches...

As the realization floods over her, Taren runs out of the room. She digs out her phone and hastily dials Camden. He picks up on the second ring.

CAMDEN

I don't know what else I have to do to get you to understand that--

TAREN

I found him.

CAMDEN

What?

TAREN

I fucking found him Camden. It's that slimeball that you saw at my door the other night.

CAMDEN

Who?

In her frenzied horror, she starts to manically laugh.

TAREN

He was fucking with me. This whole time!

CAMDEN

Slow down, Taren. I don't understand what you're--

TAREN

--I'm going after him Camden. Please don't make me do it alone.

CAMDEN

Taren wait--

She ends the call and sinks to the floor, trying to calm her breath.

Finally composed, she dials another number.

TAREN

Hey Jason, look I'm sorry about earlier. I just...I was just overthinking things. Could I still come over? Yeah? Ok. Great, I'll be there soon.

Taren ends the call and the first genuine smile we've seen from her breaks across her face.

EXT. JASON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Taren stands outside the door with her cellphone in hand. She texts the address to Camden and then puts her phone away, finally knocking.

Jason opens the door smiling, any signs of his earlier frustration gone.

JASON

Hey, come in.

INT. JASON'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jason leads the way into the studio apartment-- lavish for a school teacher's salary. As Taren walks deeper into the apartment, Jason darts behind the kitchen counter, opening the fridge.

JASON

Can I get you something to drink?  
Wine?

TAREN

Whatever's fine.

Taren walks around the apartment, visually logging everything she sees. Jason appears by her side and hands her a glass.

JASON

Cheers.

He tips his drink back, but Taren doesn't move her glass at all.

TAREN

It's different than I thought it'd be.

JASON

What?

TAREN

Your apartment. Where are the pictures?

JASON

I don't think I understand.

Taren slowly begins to dump the contents of her drink onto the floor.

TAREN

The pictures of the women you want to kill. Where are they?

Jason's face turns ice cold. In an instant, he drops his glass and LUNGES toward Taren. Her glass falls too and she pulls out her gun and points it directly at Jason's face.

JASON

So you do remember? You little bitch! You made me believe that you had no clue--

TAREN

--No clue? That night with Elizabeth, you did do something to me?

Jason stays silent. Taren cocks her pistol at his face, placing her gun right between his eyes.

TAREN (CONT'D)

Tell me what happened that night.

JASON

You came back with me. I have to say, it was a lot easier the first time around.

FLASH TO:

INT. JASON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Taren and Jason stumble into his apartment, mouths pressed together. They break apart briefly as Jason goes around the counter to pour her a drink.

JASON

Here, have a little wine.

TAREN

Are you trying to get me drunk?

JASON

Maybe.

They take a few sips, staring at one another. Finally it's too much, Taren lunges at Jason and they begin tearing at one another's clothes.

INT. JASON'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

They're in Jason's bed, naked and entwined. Taren's head rests on his chest, as she pretends to be asleep.

Suddenly a LOUD POUNDING comes from the front door. Jason wakes as it continues. He slides out from underneath Taren as he goes to answer the door.

Taren sits up as she listens in to the voices in the foyer.

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

Hey, Lizze-- what are you doing here?

ELIZABETH (O.S.)

I'm sorry, I just...I saw you at the bar with that girl and I just...I really need to let you know how I feel.

JASON (O.S.)

Lizzie, I don't--

ELIZABETH (O.S.)

Oh my god, I'm so stupid. She's here, isn't she? Shit, just forget what I said. Ok? I'll see you Monday.

JASON (O.S.)

No, wait.

There's no sound and Taren leaves the bed, slipping on her t-shirt. As she approaches the door, she opens it a crack and sees Jason and Elizabeth tangled in an embrace.

He takes Elizabeth and dips her onto the couch. Taren begins to avert her eyes, maybe go back and get the rest of her clothes, until she hears LOUD CHOKING sounds.

ELIZABETH

St--stop. What...what...are...

She nudges the door open a little wider and sees Jason with one hand on Elizabeth's neck and the other fishing through her pockets. Finally he finds what he's looking for and withdraws her keys.

INT. JASON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Taren bursts through the door, running to aid Elizabeth.

TAREN

What the fuck are you doing?

She goes to stop him, but she's not fast enough-- he PLUNGES a key haphazardly across Elizabeth's neck. Instantly the blood begins to bubble and spill over.

Taren makes it to Jason and she flings a punch at him. It connects and Jason goes tumbling backward off the couch and hits the floor with a loud CRACK. Taren looks over to Elizabeth, who's trying to cover the blood rush.

TAREN (CONT'D)

I'm going to get you some help.

INT. JASON'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

She dashes back into the bedroom, trying to find her phone. She crouches to her pants and finally gets her cellphone, when there's a loud THUD against the back of her head.

Everything goes dark.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. JASON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Taren stares at Jason, completely stricken.

JASON

I meant it to be you. I drugged your wine. Got you good and tired...it was set. But then the more I spent with you, I realized there was something wrong with you...

TAREN

And what? Elizabeth came and you just changed your mind?

JASON

I have to say, that was a pleasant surprise. But her...I've been planning for her for a while now. She's good like the others. Hopeful, clean, bright.

TAREN

You're disgusting.

JASON

Am I? And yet, you came back here that night. You wanted me.

TAREN

Because I thought you were...

JASON

And I thought you were too. But you're not. There's something cold in you. You don't deserve to be revered like my other girls. So I left you there, hoping someone would find you and get rid of you.

TAREN

You didn't know I was a cop.

JASON

No I didn't. But the minute I learned you didn't know what I had done, I knew I needed to finish it.

TAREN

Why? You could've gotten away with it. Nobody suspected you.

JASON

Isn't that obvious?

TAREN

Not to me.

JASON

You're cold and you pretend to be warm, just like me. And well, there can't be two of us.

TAREN

Don't you dare lump us together.

JASON

But you are. That's why you haven't pulled the trigger yet. Because you're interested.

TAREN

Shut the fuck up.

JASON

Just admit it, Taren.

TAREN

Shut up!

As she gets riled up, Jason jumps at her, knocking her to the ground. Her gun goes SPRAWLING out of her hand. Above her now, Jason lands a hard blow across her face. Taren's head snaps back and hits the hardwood floor below.

While she clears the stars from her eyes, Jason scrambles over to her gun. But Taren's faster and she jumps on Jason's back, locking him in a chokehold. Grasping for air, Jason claws hard at Taren's face behind him.

Suddenly he jabs his arm back hard and as the breath leaves Taren, she releases Jason. He reaches for the gun once more, but this time the sound of a pistol cocking stops him.

Taren and Jason turn to see Camden standing in the doorway.

CAMDEN

Hands in the air. Now.

TAREN

You're here.

CAMDEN

Yeah. Thanks for leaving the door unlocked.

Gun still raised, Camden approaches Jason. He kicks Taren's gun back toward her. With force, Camden yanks Jason's hands back and restrains them in handcuffs. As he does this, he looks to Taren for answers.

CAMDEN (CONT'D)

How...?

TAREN

He goes to the bar where Allison worked. That's he met her. Jade was his neighbor. Elizabeth...he worked with her.

Camden sets Jason down on the floor and moves to Taren. He takes her by the shoulders and gives her an affectionate shake.

CAMDEN

Hey, you got him. That's all that matters now.

JASON

She saw what happened to Elizabeth, did she tell you that?

CAMDEN

You don't get to talk.

JASON

This whole time she was too much of a coward to tell you what she knew, because she was a afraid of being locked up like me.

TAREN

Stop...

JASON

It's kind of funny, really. You string her up and hold her at these high places, but she's really just a fucking horrible person.

Without a word, Taren slips from underneath Camden's grasp and begins to move toward Jason. Suddenly, ANNE APPEARS next to Taren as she picks up her gun from the floor.

ANNE

It's choosing time honeybee.

JASON

Look at your insides Taren, you'll see. They're painted pitch black.

TAREN

You're right.

She raises the gun and SHOTS HIM straight through the forehead.

CAMDEN

Fuck, Taren!

Taren wipes away the blood splattered on her face and she holds her hand out to Camden.

TAREN

I need the key for the cuffs.

CAMDEN

Why the hell did you do that? We had him.

TAREN

The key Camden!

He fishes for it and then hands it over to her. She uncuffs Jason and then gets to work, staging his body.

Camden watches as she does this, sinking down against a nearby wall.

CAMDEN

This is insane...

INT. POLICE PRECINT - DAY

FLASHING LIGHTS fill the room as the Chief holds yet another press conference.

Taren stands by his side, beaming. Next to her is Camden, who looks ill.

JACKSON

While we knew that Detective Saint was a potential target for the suspect, suspicions were proven to be true when Detective Saint was kidnapped by the suspect. Upon her abduction, she managed to get word out to her partner Detective Camden. While she was apprehended, the suspect became violent with her and Detective Saint was forced to use her weapon to end his life and protect her own.

Camden looks over at Taren, a hard look in his eyes.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

I think I speak for the precinct when I saw that we are grateful for Detective Camden's diligence and that Detective Saint made it out of the situation unharmed.

The room erupts in APPLAUSE. Taren smiles at the appreciative faces in the crowd. Camden can't stand to watch anymore and exits.

The lingering smile on Taren's face slowly dissipates as he becomes nothing but a dot in the distance.

FADE OUT.

THE END.