

A Lost Time

by

Alicia M. McClendon

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mcclendon.alicia@gmail.com

"A LOST TIME"

FADE IN:

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-OFFICE - NIGHT

WASHINGTON (late 50s, black, nonchalant) sits behind his executive style desk and sips on a glass of scotch.

Behind him is an open window.

He writes in a journal, pauses, then starts again. Then he puts the journal into a drawer. He opens a second drawer, then pulls out a black, metal object.

It's a gun. He closes the drawer and leans back in his seat.

Washington puts the gun into his mouth.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - NIGHT

Reddish orange foliage tumbles to the terrain. A vehicle tours around a curve before its silhouette vanishes.

A FEW STUDENTS saunter on campus under the faint streetlights, some pass the frog baby statue, a statue of a toddler who holds a frog in each hand.

TAYLOR (early 20s, Black, determined) scurries across the street toward a brick building dressed in a duffel coat, her book bag clutched over her shoulder.

She wears a diamond accent cross necklace that she wears faithfully.

INT. CAMPUS BUILDING - NIGHT

Taylor and SAMANTHA (early 20s) stride down the dim-lit hall, passing cinder blocks with message boards full of campus organization advertisements.

TAYLOR

I don't know about this test.

SAMANTHA

Stop that, honey. You got this so relax.

As Taylor and Samantha reach the computer lab entrance,

Taylor takes out her phone, surprised to see her father calling.

TAYLOR
(in phone)
Hi, Dad.

WASHINGTON's voice emerges as a faint murmur with slurred speech.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)
(from phone)
Taylor, are you still on campus?

SAMANTHA
(mouths)
I'll meet you inside.

Samantha exits into the computer lab.

TAYLOR
Yeah. I'm about to take my test, and I'm in it to win it.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Washington sits behind his desk sipping on a glass of whiskey.

WASHINGTON
Hm...

TAYLOR (V.O.)
Dad, are you there?

INT. CAMPUS BUILDING-CONTINUOUS

Back to Taylor...

WASHINGTON (V.O.)
Hm. What class is it?

TAYLOR
Biochemistry.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)
Did you study?

TAYLOR
Anymore, and I would discover the cure for cancer.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)
That's my girl. I know you'll do well.
You always have. Now you're all grown
up. I didn't do so bad, did I?

TAYLOR
Of course not.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)
I haven't been the best to you. I know
that now.

Taylor gets out of the way of students trying to get into the
computer lab.

TAYLOR
Dad, is something wrong?

WASHINGTON
Nothing, sweetheart. Nothing is wrong.

TAYLOR
Listen, I'll come home tonight.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)
What? No, stay on campus.

TAYLOR
But-

WASHINGTON (V.O.)
Stay on campus.

TAYLOR
Are you sure you're okay?

WASHINGTON (V.O.)
I'm sure. Just looking over journals.
As you say, I'm in it to win it.

Taylor snickers.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)
Good luck on your exam. Even if you
fail, if you tried your best, then
that's good enough. I'm proud of you,
Taylor.

Taylor furrows her eyebrows.

TAYLOR

Thank you, Dad.

Time itself has stopped for Taylor even as students pass her by. She gazes at her trembling hand.

Samantha peeks her head out.

SAMANTHA

Everything okay?

TAYLOR

I don't know.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

In the corner is a grand piano made out of fine wood.

The only light that illuminates the room is the moonlight that filters through the drapes.

The front door opens. Taylor enters and flips the light switch on. She closes the door behind her, takes her coat off and book bag, and puts them on the beige sofa.

She looks through the mail on the marble coffee table then tosses it back down.

TAYLOR

Dad?

She climbs the stairs.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-HALL - CONTINUOUS

Taylor's low-heeled boots hit against the hickory hardwood floor as she passes rooms.

At the end of the hall is an open door where a glint of light protrudes out.

TAYLOR

Dad, You up here?

She looks inside the room then backtracks downstairs.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Taylor climbs down the stairs and heads toward the dim corridor as she passes the piano.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Taylor walks the eerily dim corridor and passes a wall draped with framed pictures of her from various ages that are shaped in a cross.

The photo at the peak is a TEEN TAYLOR dressed in a harvest gold cap and gown, holding her diploma high.

With an arm around her shoulder beaming like a proud father is WASHINGTON dressed in a two button charcoal suit.

At the end of the corridor is an ajar door where a hint of light protrudes from the room.

BANG.

Taylor hears a GUNSHOT. Startled, she steps back, her eyes widen, she fights to breathe.

TAYLOR

Dad?

Taylor rushes toward the room with the ajar door. The door CREAKS open.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The window to the office is wide open.

On one side of the office is a built-in bookcase filled with science publications and textbooks.

In the back is a executive style office desk, and on it is a laptop, an empty glass with a speck of dark liquid in it, and a nearly empty bottle of dark liquor.

But it is the sight behind the desk that causes Taylor's legs to nearly give out.

TAYLOR

D-Dad?

An arm hangs over the chair as the gun remains in his hand.

Taylor shields her mouth from the shrieking that tries to escape only to have muffled CRIES come out; ultimately her emotions overpower her.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Taylor gazes forward, eyes puffy, face stained with tears. Her unkempt, black hair is pulled back, her caramel cheeks flushed. Around her neck is the cross necklace.

SEVERAL POLICE are scattered about.

TWO PARAMEDICS enter from a corridor and push an occupied stretcher with a sheet covering said occupant. Two detectives face her: TRUMAN (mid 40s, black, stern) and WORTH (mid 30s, white, follower).

Truman stands with her hair tied back, not a strand out of place, as she writes on a notepad. Worth follows the lead of his partner.

Truman peeks into Taylor's face.

TRUMAN

Taylor?

TAYLOR

Y-Yes?

TRUMAN

I know this is tough-

TAYLOR

You think?

TRUMAN

But I need you to tell me what happened.

TAYLOR

I came home after my exam. My father called-

TRUMAN

What time was that?

TAYLOR

Nine.

Truman jots down the time.

TRUMAN

That's pretty late for an exam.

TAYLOR
That's when I scheduled it.

TRUMAN
How did he sound?

TAYLOR
He sounded-He sounded...

Truman stops writing on the notepad.

TRUMAN
Taylor?

TAYLOR
Yes?

TRUMAN
What was your father's line of work?

TAYLOR
Scientist.

WORTH
'Scientist'? William Washington of
Omega Chem Laboratories?

Taylor nods, yes.

TRUMAN
You've heard of him?

WORTH
It's William Washington! He just
announced he discovered a way for
animal organs to...to-

TAYLOR
Be more compatible with humans.

A FORENSIC SCIENTIST enters from the corridor and carries the
gun inside a zipper storage bag and exits the home.

TRUMAN
Is there anyone who may have wanted to
hurt him?

TAYLOR
No! Of course not!

TRUMAN

Was he going through anything? Maybe something happened at work or at home?

TAYLOR

We got into a fight the day before, but that's not unusual. We're always fighting.

TRUMAN

What did you fight about?

TAYLOR

He was upset I got a B minus on my exam. He always wanted me to do better than I could so I lashed out.

Truman jots down notes.

TRUMAN

Is there someone you can stay with tonight? Maybe you can stay with a family member.

She nods, yes, though glances away.

Truman hands Taylor a BUSINESS CARD.

TRUMAN

If you need anything, don't hesitate to reach out.

With a nod Truman and Worth exit.

Taylor stands stagnant in a daze, surrounded by the buzz of the foot traffic.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-TAYLOR'S BEDROOM - DAY

Taylor sobs in bed under the rosy pink comforter in a ball as she watches the golden leaves of a lone tree waltz to the flow of the wind.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - DAY

Taylor in her disheveled pajamas stands in the center of the room facing the front door.

Samantha is planted on the edge of the sofa.

TAYLOR
This isn't happening.

SAMANTHA
He's gone, honey.

TAYLOR
No. No. This can't be happening.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-TAYLOR'S BEDROOM - DAY

Taylor eyes shoot open. She sits up and clutches her chest as she tries to breathe.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-OFFICE - NIGHT

Taylor flips the light switch on. No one sits behind the desk.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - DAY

Taylor paces back and forth as Samantha watches. She's in a different set of pajamas. Taylor drinks red wine straight from the bottle. Her face is flushed. Speech is slurred.

TAYLOR
He didn't do this on his own.

SAMANTHA
What do you mean?

TAYLOR
I don't know. Something happened.

SAMANTHA
Like what?

TAYLOR
The police are still-

Taylor staggers.

Samantha rise from the couch and takes the nearly empty bottle of wine from Taylor.

SAMANTHA
Why are you doing this? Get out of
this house. None of this is healthy!

Taylor sits on the floor.

SAMANTHA

And don't you think it's odd that you're staying in this house all by yourself after finding your dad?

TAYLOR

Something happened, Sam.

INT. NURSING HOME ROOM - DAY

The room is meant for an ELDERLY WOMAN.

The woman (white, early 90s) in the photos sits in a rocking chair dressed in bathrobe being fed oatmeal by BRANDON (white, early 20s, nerdy).

Brandon wipes the woman's mouth with a napkin.

REPORTER (ON TV)

Up next, known as the Steve Jobs of Science, William Washington claims to have made a major discovery in organ transplantation. So what drew him to suicide? Coming up next.

Brandon's ears perk up.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-BATHROOM - DAY

Taylor hurls into the toilet. She pulls back the few strands of hair from her face then hurls again.

DING-DONG.

Taylor lays her head on the toilet seat.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - DAY

Taylor makes her way toward the door, annoyed at the persistent knocking. She looks out the peephole as she fixes her robe.

TAYLOR

Who is it?

BRANDON (O.S.)

Hi-It's Brandon! Brandon Thompson. I'm looking for Taylor Washington.

TAYLOR

For what?

BRANDON (O.S.)
Um-Is this Taylor?

TAYLOR
Maybe.

BRANDON (O.S.)
I'm in your Biology lecture. You
haven't been in class so I thought I'd
drop off the lecture notes for the
exam.

TAYLOR
(to self)
'Exam'?

She opens the front door to find Brandon with a book bag over his shoulder. He wears slacks and a buttoned up shirt.

BRANDON
Charmed to meet you.

TAYLOR
How do you know where I live?

BRANDON
It's not difficult to find the
residence of a renowned scientist.

TAYLOR
Oh?

BRANDON
Um-These are the notes.

Brandon haphazardly digs into his book bag and takes out a notebook. He hands it to Taylor.

TAYLOR
When do you need it back?

BRANDON
It is yours.

TAYLOR
Thank you.

BRANDON
You are most certainly welcome.

Taylor takes in the awkward silence as Brandon stands there

not quite ready to leave.

TAYLOR
Would you like to come in for some hot
chocolate?

Brandon grins and nods yes.

EXT. WASHINGTON HOME-PORCH - DAY

Taylor enters with two mugs of hot chocolate then hands a mug to Brandon. She sits beside him on the top step and pours the wine into her hot chocolate.

Brandon clears his throat.

BRANDON
I'm sorry about your father.

TAYLOR
What?

BRANDON
Your father-I'm very sorry.

TAYLOR
Oh. Thank you.

BRANDON
I'm sorry.

TAYLOR
This time for what?

BRANDON
For mentioning him.

Taylor nods.

BRANDON
Do you know what happened?

TAYLOR
He killed himself.

BRANDON
I'm so sorry.

Taylor shrugs.

BRANDON
We're all just so shocked.

TAYLOR
Yeah. Me too.

BRANDON
Were you two close?

Taylor bursts into a fit of laughter.

BRANDON
I shouldn't have asked-

TAYLOR
Are you close to your father?

BRANDON
I didn't know him. My mother remarried before she passed away. I live with my stepfather, but-you know.

TAYLOR
I'm sorry about your mother.

BRANDON
Thanks...He seemed despondent the last time I saw him.

TAYLOR
Excuse me?

BRANDON
I intern at Omega Chem. I worked closely with him sometimes.

Taylor shifts in her seat.

TAYLOR
How did you get an internship there?

BRANDON
Networking. It can get you any job.

TAYLOR
And he seemed despondent? What else? Do you remember anything else?

BRANDON
He was fine the day before, but then on the day-um-well, he kept his office

door closed and didn't say a word to anyone.

TAYLOR
Was that the last time you saw him?

BRANDON
Yeah. That was the day.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-OFFICE - NIGHT

Taylor flips the light switch on and walks behind the desk. She rummages through the top drawer and finds a work badge and a set of keys.

EXT. OMEGA CHEM-END OF DAY

Different news organizations stand outside the six story building that is Omega Chem reporting live. Mixed in with them are ANIMAL RIGHTS PROTESTORS with signs that hang high.

PROTESTOR
You're murdering animals! Save the animals!

SECURITY GUARDS try to keep them at bay as employees exit.

Taylor makes her way to the entrance as one REPORTER spots her. Her hair is thrown into a messy ponytail, and she wears jeans that haven't seen an iron in weeks.

REPORTER
Is that Taylor Washington? Get a shot of her! Taylor-Taylor! Ms. Washington!

Taylor rushes inside as reporters try to get her attention.

INT. OMEGA LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

The building is nearly empty except for security guards and the receptionist, Veronica (40s), who types away behind the front desk.

The entrance is enclosed by silver walls and a charcoal black surface, at the center an effulgent Omega symbol. At each side of the main entrance is a corridor.

Taylor enters and approaches the front desk.

VERONICA
Welcome to Omega Chem-Oh Taylor! How

are you? I'm so so sorry about Dr. Washington.

TAYLOR
Thank you so much, Veronica.

VERONICA
If there is anything I can do.

TAYLOR
Thank you. Is Brandon Thompson here?

VERONICA
Lets see.

Veronica types away then calls him on the phone. No answer.

VERONICA
He must be at lunch.

Veronica glances behind Taylor.

VERONICA
Oh-Brandon!

Brandon enters from one of the corridors dressed in a slim-fit black suit, and no glasses today.

BRANDON
What are you doing here?

TAYLOR
Surprise.

BRANDON
I get off in ten minutes. Want to wait in my office?

TAYLOR
Look at you having your own office.

Brandon nervously chuckles.

BRANDON
This way.

Brandon leads Taylor down a corridor...

WHEN...

DR. RICHARDS (O.S.)

There you are.

DR. RICHARDS (white, late 50s, tidy) strides toward the couple. He's dressed in a slim-fit suit with an indigo color tie.

Brandon wipes the sweat from his brow.

BRANDON

D-Doctor Richards? Were you looking for me?

DR. RICHARDS

Were you able to finish the lit search?

BRANDON

Y-Yes, sir. I emailed you just a few minutes ago.

DR. RICHARDS

Great.

Brandon flushes red, though Dr. Richards probably notices, his attention falls on Taylor. He's taken aback.

DR. RICHARDS

Taylor. Hi.

TAYLOR

Hello, Dr. Richards.

BRANDON

You two know each other?

DR. RICHARDS

Of course. The lab was her second home. How are you?

TAYLOR

Good, thank you for asking.

DR. RICHARDS

I am so sorry. I still can't believe it. Your father was a brilliant man.

TAYLOR

Thank you. Um-Since I'm here, did my father leave any personal belongings in his office? I'd like to get them.

DR. RICHARDS

I'm sorry, but the offices are off limits to non-employees. Maybe you can come back after we-

TAYLOR

Please! The police already checked his office, yeah? So it won't hurt. Please let me get his things. I just-I just need them now more than ever.

Dr. Richards hesitates, though nods, yes.

DR. RICHARDS

I'll have Veronica help you.

Dr. Richards strolls to Veronica and says something to her as Taylor and Brandon wait. He returns to the couple.

DR. RICHARDS

I have a meeting to get to. It was a pleasure to see you again, Taylor.

TAYLOR

You too.

Dr. Richards, with a nod, is off.

TAYLOR

It's always nice to see him.

BRANDON

If you say so.

Veronica ambles around the desk to Taylor and Brandon.

VERONICA

Dr. Richards wanted me to show you up, but I believe Dr. Washington left some things in his lab too.

(to Brandon)

Can you show her up while I go get them?

Taylor and Brandon exchange glances.

INT. OMEGA ELEVATOR - DAY

Taylor and Brandon enter from the elevators.

INT. OMEGA-WASHINGTON'S OFFICE - DAY

Brandon unlocks the double glass doors and enters with Taylor.

The office has a similar feeling to the one in Washington's home. On the desk at the edge are several journals, a personal computer, and a framed picture of Washington and Taylor.

Taylor heads behind the desk and hops on the computer.

BRANDON
What are you doing?

As the computer loads, Taylor opens drawer after drawer and gathers Washington's belongings. She glances at the blank computer screen, which waits idly for the password.

BRANDON
Try Omega Washington. That's the default password.

The screen goes black then gold.

TAYLOR
I'm in!

Taylor starts clicking on folders.

BRANDON
Looks like it's just literature references for research papers. Go to the Omega Drive.

The computer screen reads, "PASSWORD".

TAYLOR
Oh no.

Taylor types in a password. No luck. She gives up and goes to another folder, which opens up to reveal a research paper. The word "CLONING" stands out.

Brandon raises a brow as he reads.

BRANDON
(to self)
'Cloning'? Hm..That's interesting. I didn't know Omega did that.

TAYLOR
He never mentioned it.

As they skim through the files, both look up as they hear the clicking of heels outside the office.

BRANDON
Someone's coming.

Taylor continues to read the paper.

CLICK CLACK. CLICK CLACK.

BRANDON
Taylor.

TAYLOR
Hold on.

BRANDON
We're going to get caught.

TAYLOR
Hold on.

Taylor locks the computer screen and steps back as Veronica enters.

VERONICA
Are you done in here?

Veronica stands at the door with a box of Washington's things.

TAYLOR
I am.

Taylor gathers Washington's belongings.

TAYLOR
Thanks for saving me a trip.

VERONICA
It's no problem at all. It's the least I can do.

Taylor takes the box from her.

BRANDON
Let me help you.

Brandon takes the box from Taylor, and they both scurry off.

Veronica looks over the office, steps into the hall, and closes the office doors.

EXT. OMEGA-STAIRCASE-END OF DAY

Taylor and Brandon head down the empty staircase.

BRANDON

That was close!

TAYLOR

Cloning.

Taylor takes the box from Brandon.

TAYLOR

Why would he research that?

BRANDON

What are you thinking?

INT. OMEGA LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Taylor and Brandon exit the staircase and tread the empty, narrow corridor.

BRANDON

Where are you going?

TAYLOR

His lab. No harm in that.

BRANDON

A lot of harm in that. That's trespassing.

TAYLOR

Not if I have this.

Taylor flashes Washington's work badge.

BRANDON

Especially if you have that. Is that not deactivated?

Taylor and Brandon hear the JIGGLING of a set of keys and hide around the corner.

First a few employees then A SECURITY GUARD stroll down the

hall in different directions. The security guard exits, and Taylor leads Brandon down the hall.

INT. OMEGA CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The hall light flickers on once Taylor and Brandon enter from the elevators.

They walk to the end of the dismal hall, heels clicking on the flooring as they reach the end and approach a windowless door.

Taylor uses the keypad and work badge to unlock the door.

TAYLOR
Watch for anyone.

BRANDON
Taylor-

Taylor exits inside.

Brandon deeply sighs.

INT. OMEGA LAB-WASHINGTON LAB - CONTINUOUS

Taylor enters and puts the box down. She looks over the simple lab with workbenches aligned, microscopes on the surface for use. In the back corner is a lone door.

INT. OMEGA STORAGE LAB - NIGHT

The door creaks open, and Taylor enters.

Wired cages are aligned against walls with cages stacked on cages.

Heavy-duty cages are aligned in the back. A meager bulb is overhead and gives off what light it can as BUZZING emits from it.

Taylor peeks inside one of the cages and finds a lone PIGLET, its sweet face stares right back. In the corner is a bowl of water.

Taylor looks over the other heavy-duty cages and stops as she finds a CHIMPANZEE gripping the metal bars.

From some of the other cages, Taylor hears faint PANT-HOOTS.

Taylor walks to the end of the row and finds that one cage is

quiet. She peeks in and finds a chimp with its back to her.

TAYLOR
Hey, little guy.

It doesn't move, doesn't stir.

Taylor taps the bar.

The chimp lifts its head, though doesn't face Taylor. It just sits there.

TAYLOR
It's okay.

Taylor gets closer to the cage as her face closes in...

WHEN...

...The chimp plunges into the metal door and thrusts its disfigured hand at Taylor.

Taylor stumbles back as her face is nearly ripped apart.

The cage RATTLES as the chimp bangs its head against the door over and over again.

The OTHER CHIMPANZEES become disturbed, PANT-HOOTS permeating throughout the lab.

One side of the chimp's face droops—an eye hanging from a socket. Strands of blonde hair are scattered on its head.

Brandon, entering, says:

BRANDON
Taylor-

Brandon sees the chimp.

BRANDON
What the-

Taylor scrambles to her feet as she hears a metal bar break.

BRANDON
Hey...

Taylor and Brandon backtrack to the door as the chimp thrusts itself against the cage.

Brandon raises his camera and takes pictures of it.

Taylor grabs Brandon's hand and makes a run for the door.

INT. OMEGA LAB-WASHINGTON LAB - CONTINUOUS

Taylor and Brandon back away from the door as the chimp rams itself over and over again from the other side.

Brandon bolts out the door...

When...

DR. RICHARDS (O.S.)

Brandon?

Brandon comes to a halt.

Taylor steps back frozen in place.

BRANDON

S-Sir!

DR. RICHARDS

What are you doing down here?

BRANDON

I...am...looking for a notebook.

DR. RICHARDS

Why don't you go ahead and clock out.
I'll see if it's down here.

BRANDON

Yes, sir.

Brandon half-heartedly heads down the hall as he looks back. He stops and waits as he bites down on his fingernails.

Dr. Richards enters the lab and glances around. Nothing seems to be out of place except for the PANT-HOOTS.

Taylor hides under one of the lab tables with bated breath.

Dr. Richards uses his badge and rushes into the lab with the chimps. Taylor scrambles to her feet and rushes out of Washington's Lab.

EXT. OMEGA-LOBBY - DAY

Brandon glances down the corridor and sees A COUPLE EMPLOYEES

chatting away. He raises an eyebrow.

INT. OMEGA LAB - DAY

The door CREAKS open.

Taylor, startled, sees only Brandon at the entrance. She adjusts herself on the office stool and goes back to typing away on the computer.

At her dangling feet are Washington's box of belongings.

BRANDON

What are you doing?

TAYLOR

I think Omega was cloning animals. You intern here. You tell me if I'm wrong.

Taylor points to the computer screen, which displays a normal looking chimpanzee's photo.

TAYLOR

Did that chimpanzee look like this one?

BRANDON

No.

TAYLOR

Exactly, yeah?

BRANDON

So why did it look like that?

TAYLOR

Gene engineering? Altering the genetic make up? That's what they're known for, right?

Taylor logs off and picks up the box of belongings.

BRANDON

Wait-Want to go get a burger or something and talk more about this?

TAYLOR

I don't eat beef. See ya.

Taylor rushes out.

Brandon deeply sighs.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Journalists come and go as a phone rings in the background. In the office are at least twenty occupied cubicles planted on the carpeted floor.

Taylor sits across from a journalist. Both gaze at one another. The journalist leans back from his desk.

JOURNALIST

And you don't have proof?

TAYLOR

Have you been listening to me? How are you not in your car headed to Omega Chem?

The journalist fiddles with the toothpick between his lips.

JOURNALIST

There's no story.

TAYLOR

Yes! Yes, there is!

JOURNALIST

Look, maybe you did see something, but Omega is a big company. Without proof, we can't just blindly accuse them of- of-

TAYLOR

Changing the genome of animals!
Cloning animals!

JOURNALIST

There's no federal law that prohibits cloning.

TAYLOR

You didn't see what I saw! I know my dad saw something too, and-

JOURNALIST

I'm sorry about your father. I really am, but you need proof. Get proof and you'll have a story. You just need proof.

EXT. WASHINGTON HOME - DAY

The Washington residence is a two-story, chestnut brick home with beautiful, sepia shingles and Craftsman accents.

Taylor ambles toward it only to discover several news vehicles occupying her driveway, and in her yard, hungry NEWS REPORTERS.

The reporters spot her, eyes gleaming like a predator spotting its prey, and the stampede begins.

REPORTERS

Taylor! Taylor! Ms. Washington!

Microphones are thrown her way.

Flashes of light from the cameras cause Taylor to cover her eyes.

FEMALE REPORTER

Taylor! Why did Dr. Washington commit suicide after making such a breakthrough in science?

MALE REPORTER

Why isn't Omega Chem releasing the details of his research?

TAYLOR

I-I don't know. I-

A patrol car parks across the street, and Truman and Worth jump out.

Question after question is launched at Taylor.

FEMALE REPORTER

Taylor, is it true that Mr. Washington adopted you?

The detectives approach Taylor from behind.

TRUMAN

That's enough. Make way.

The detectives guide Taylor to the residence as the swarm besieges Taylor with questions.

WORTH
Step aside!

The trio flees inside the residence, leaving the reporters scavenging for answers.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - DAY

Taylor sits across the room from the detectives.

TRUMAN
How are you feeling?

Taylor bursts into a laughter fit.

Truman and Worth exchange glances.

TAYLOR
How am I feeling. What a question.

Taylor chuckles.

TAYLOR
Why would they ask if I was adopted?

TRUMAN
The media's looking into his death.
People want to know how something like
this could have happened. The
adoption, it isn't news, right?

TAYLOR
No. What did they mean his research
won't be released?

TRUMAN
Omega put out a statement.

TAYLOR
Of course.

TRUMAN
But the reason we're here is we wanted
to take another look in his office.

TAYLOR
Why would he do it?

TRUMAN
Hm?

TAYLOR

Why would he kill himself?

TRUMAN

I don't have the answer to that.

Taylor deeply sighs and gazes at the ceiling.

TRUMAN

Listen, Those reporters are going to start camping on your front lawn so be careful. In the meantime, let me know if you need anything.

With one last nod, the detectives head to Washington's office.

INT. NURSING HOME ROOM - DAY

The elderly woman sits in front of the television.

Brandon feeds her oatmeal then takes out his phone and steps to the side. He goes to Taylor's number and badly wants to hit "CALL".

He catches the woman struggling to eat the oatmeal with her spoon. He puts his phone away and goes back to feeding her.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-KITCHEN - DAY

Taylor stirs the tomato stew in the pot.

The oven starts to smoke. She rushes to take out the burnt cornbread.

She then chops up carrots that look like blocks nearly chopping off her own fingers.

Taylor heads to the double glass, bar counter that houses different types of alcohol.

It's full, though a couple of bottles are missing. Taylor takes out a bottle of wine and pours herself a glass then gulps it down. She pours a second glass.

She slides to the floor and gulps down the drink.

INT. CAMPUS-GYM-MORNING

Taylor and Samantha play racquetball in a glass case inside the gym. While Samantha plays lightly, Taylor plays as if she

has something to prove.

SAMANTHA

You're playing hard today!

Taylor whacks the ball.

Samantha misses the ball.

They both take a sip of water from their water bottles.

SAMANTHA

Honey, you look like you got something on your mind.

TAYLOR

Do I?

SAMANTHA

Yeah. I'm just happy you're back into the groove of things. Are you going back to classes?

TAYLOR

Yeah. I really have no choice now do I?

SAMANTHA

Why not take a semester off?

TAYLOR

My dad wouldn't want that. Would he?

INT. LAB CLASSROOM - DAY

Student workbenches are in rows facing the front of the classroom. Embedded beneath the tables are drawers that are secured with combination padlocks.

A CROWD OF STUDENTS enter and head to their station as they take out their lab manuals.

A PROFESSOR enters and heads to the instructor desk while and carries a lab manual and notebook.

PROFESSOR

(to class)

Turn to page seventy-eight and read the introduction to the lab.

At the front of class is Brandon, who reads his lab manual. A

digital camera sits on the table in front of him.

WHEN...

Taylor enters.

All conversation comes to a halt.

Taylor walks to her station, cognizant of the many eyes on her.

Brandon notices the silence and looks up to find Taylor, who now has to ignore the murmurs that are on her behalf as she sits.

The professor looks up from the desk and finds the so-called distraction.

PROFESSOR

(to class)

If you're all talking, I can assume
you're done reading about today's lab?

The class springs back into their lab manuals.

PROFESSOR

I want to remind you that you need a
research topic today. Take five
minutes to discuss with your partner.

Students stand and stride to their pre-chosen partners.

Taylor takes out her manual from her bag and skims it.
Brandon approaches Taylor, notebook in hand, camera around
neck.

The professor hands out graded quizzes.

BRANDON

Good morning.

TAYLOR

Morning.

BRANDON

Want to be partners?

TAYLOR

Sure. Hey, you took pictures of when
we were at Omega, right?

BRANDON

Um-

TAYLOR

We can take that to a reporter. I know someone who-

PROFESSOR

Ms. Washington, I hope you're talking about the assignment.

TAYLOR

I am!

Brandon sits beside her and opens his notebook.

BRANDON

We'll talk after class. Is there a topic you had in mind?

TAYLOR

To be honest, I didn't give this much thought.

The professor hands Taylor her graded quiz. "C+". She sighs.

BRANDON

That's okay. I have a list we can choose from. Tell me what piques your interest. It can be anything.

TAYLOR

Lets hear this list then.

BRANDON

All right. I have fossil fuels, evolutionism and creationism, Darwinism, nanotechnology and medicine, nanotechnology and DNA. Does any of this interest you?

TAYLOR

Not one bit.

BRANDON

Let's see.

Brandon looks through his notes.

TAYLOR

What was on that page?

BRANDON
Nothing you'd be interested in.

TAYLOR
Let's find out.

Brandon turns the page reluctant to show what's on it.

TAYLOR
What? What's on that page?

Taylor turns the page back. Her fingers brush against Brandon's. He flushes red, though Taylor doesn't react.

BRANDON
I'm sorry. I made this list before-

TAYLOR
Before what?

Taylor reads off the page.

TAYLOR
'Infectious diseases', 'organ
failure', 'xenotransplantation'.

Then she sees an article from Washington with a picture of him. Taylor's breathing quickens, and she clutches her chest.

BRANDON
We don't have to do any of these-Hey
are you okay?

Taylor grabs her belongings and rushes out the classroom.

INT. CAMPUS-RESTROOM - DAY

Taylor rushes into a stall and takes deep breaths. She crumbles to the ground.

Her breathing returns to normal.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-OFFICE - DAY

On Washington's desk is what he left: documents scattered about, a laptop in the middle of the desk, a framed picture of a younger Taylor on a swing set, and bottle of whiskey.

Taylor stands outside his office, takes a deep breathe, and makes her way inside as her heels hit against the hardwood floor.

She gets on his computer.

The computer screen illuminates and reveals a golden cross behind a beige background. In the center is a blank box for the password.

Taylor pauses from scrubbing then puts down the bucket and sponge. She types in a password.

"INCORRECT PASSWORD"

Taylor tries another password.

"INCORRECT PASSWORD"

Taylor tires another password.

"INCORRECT PASSWORD"

Taylor glances at the desk drawer then gazes at the top drawer. She rummages through the drawers and finds FIVE HARDCOVER, BATTERED JOURNALS in different colors.

She spreads them on the desk and picks up the thickest one. Taylor opens it and starts to read.

A male voice rings out.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

I don't think I'm a terrible person.
I've done terrible things, but I don't
think I'm a terrible person.

BEGIN FLASHBACK.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-KITCHEN - NIGHT

WASHINGTON (early 30s) sits at the head of the kitchen table loosening his tie.

AMY (early 30s, black, pretty) puts down two plates of roast smothered in gravy. She is an adorable, petite woman-the type of woman you'd want to take home to mama. Around her neck is a cross necklace that might've inspired Taylor's.

Even though we hear no dialogue, we can tell the two are in sync with each other.

Washington starts on his dinner, a meal that brings heaven to his mouth.

Amy steps away then returns with a chocolate icing cake with the words "CONGRATULATIONS ON THE NEW JOB!" written on it.

This catches Washington off guard; nonetheless, he's grateful.

Amy grabs two saucers from the cabinet, puts them on the table, and sits beside Washington as they chat away.

We see a diamond ring that shimmers on her left ring finger.

Washington places his left hand on the table, which shows his wedding band.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

I use to be a good person. Perhaps Amy was the reason for that. From the moment I met her, I just wanted to be a good person. Do the right thing.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Amy lies in the hospital bed and clutches her necklace as she hangs on to every word of the PHYSICIAN. Whatever news is being given, Washington takes it worse.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

Of course, all moments come to an end.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-OFFICE - DAY

Washington sits at his desk, eyes downcast, mind elsewhere.

A perky Amy knocks at the door and walks in as she carries a steamy mug. She puts it down on the desk, walks behind Washington, and wraps her arms around him.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

Even when everything was crumbling, Amy never showed it. She would tell me she was hopeful. She'd tell me she had faith, and I should too. Where did that faith go?

INT. PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Amy and Washington sit side by side, hands clasped together as they listen to the physician, who has some much deserved good news. You can just see the tension leave their body.

INT. HOSPITAL-CORRIDOR - DAY

Amy is pushed on a stretcher down the hall by MEDICAL STAFF, Washington following along side as he grips her hand.

He's more worried than she is. She gives his hand one last squeeze just before the staff roll her through double doors.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

I still remembering praying as hard as
I could for her. As hard as one man
can pray. Then I would stop.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-WASHINGTON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amy stands in front of the floor length mirror and applies lotion to her arms as she gazes at the deep scar that runs down her chest.

Washington walks in and leans against the door as he admires the beauty that is his wife. He walks behind her and wraps his arms around her as she falls back into his embrace.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Amy lies in a hospital bed. Her caramel complexion is now a sickly white, her body so frail, she can barely keep her head elevated on the pillow.

The physician speaks to Washington, and no good news is being given. Washington goes limp, his eyes widen in desperation as he pleads with the doctor.

Amy takes Washington's hand, and he looks down at her.

Though her eyes are moist, she smiles.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

I started having dreams about Amy when
she was in the hospital. Over and over
again, she says, "it's fate". "It's
fate." How is that fate?

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-WASHINGTON'S BEDROOM-CLOSET - DAY

Washington, lost and alone, gazes at Amy's side of the closet. Blouses, dresses, and skirts that are never to be worn again.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

Part of me died along with Amy. I just

knew from that day forward, I would never be the same man she married. Now I'm a monster.

He leaves the closet and closes the door behind him.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-OFFICE - DAY

Washington sits behind his desk and looks over documents with lifeless eyes.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)
I've come to realize that I immerse myself in my studies, and for what? Because I don't want anyone to go through what she did?

INT. OMEGA LAB - NIGHT

Washington looks under a microscope and examines a slide and takes notes.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)
Today I started looking into genetic engineering. Maybe once I pitch my proposal to Omega, I can get Dr. Richards on board.

INT. OMEGA STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT

Washington examines cages that are aligned in a row.

TWO COLLEAGUES dressed in lab coats follow behind him as they jot down notes on clipboards.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)
Today I looked in each cage saw failures. Study after study has been a failure, and I'm running out of time.

Washington stops at a cage on the end and peeks inside.

INT. HEALTHCARE FACILITY CORRIDOR - DAY

Washington treads down the corridor as he chats with a DOCTOR.

They pass a window that leads to a room covered with toys and flower-patterned walls.

In the center of the room is a TWO YEAR OLD TAYLOR in a

hospital gown with her back to the window. She plays with a doll.

A NURSE watches her.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

There was a breakthrough today! I was at the hospital to meet with a doctor about a case of mine.

The doctor talks away.

Washington stops at the window when he sees Taylor play with the ball and giggle to herself.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

I saw Taylor playing alone in a hospital room. There was this little girl in a room full of toys yet it felt so empty. Looking at her today for just that one moment, I felt something for the first time in years.

END FLASHBACK.

WASHINGTON HOME-BEDROOM - NIGHT

Taylor pours herself a glass of wine from the nearly empty bottle then gulps it down.

She sits in bed and reads one of the journals. She flips a page.

TAYLOR

(to self)

Tell me something, Dad.

INT. CAMPUS DORM - NIGHT

Brandon knocks on the dorm door.

Samantha opens the door dressed in pajamas with a toothbrush in her mouth. Behind her, looks like a tornado came through. Clothes are scattered everywhere.

BRANDON

Is Taylor home?

SAMANTHA

Who are you?

BRANDON

I'm Brandon. Pleasure to meet your acquaintance.

Brandon extends his hand to Samantha to shake.

Samantha glances down at his hand and shakes it.

SAMANTHA

Never heard of you.

BRANDON

Taylor and I are in the same class.

SAMANTHA

I see. You must have her phone number then.

BRANDON

I do, but she's not answering, and I drove by her house, but her car isn't there.

SAMANTHA

I'd take that as a sign then.

BRANDON

Okay. Thanks.

Brandon walks away.

EXT. WASHINGTON HOME - NIGHT

Reporters have set up camp.

A vehicle parks across the residence. The license plate reads, "INDIANA". Behind the wheel is Brandon. He peeks out the windshield as he bites down on his fingernails.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

On the piano, Taylor plays a soft melody. A sad one, and she plays it well.

DING DONG

DING DONG

REPORTERS (O.S.)

Are you friends with Ms. Washington?
What's your relationship? Do you know

how she's holding up?

Taylor heads to the door and peeps out the peephole.

She opens it and finds Samantha with furrowed eyebrows as reporters snap pictures of the two. Taylor hauls Samantha inside and acquaints the reporters with the door.

Taylor lies back down on the couch.

SAMANTHA

That Brandon character came to the dorm looking for you. How does he know where you stay?

TAYLOR

I'm sure I told him.

SAMANTHA

You don't tell anyone where your dorm is. It's where you find peace.

TAYLOR

Yeah-Yeah.

SAMANTHA

Honey, be careful, and please come back to the room. I wouldn't be surprised if they broke in. Also-

Samantha looks around at the journals scattered on the coffee table and loose paper and photos scattered on the floor.

SAMANTHA

What's this now?

TAYLOR

I found journals from my father.

SAMANTHA

From work?

TAYLOR

Nope.

SAMANTHA

Taylor-

TAYLOR

These journals talk about everything except what I'm looking for.

SAMANTHA

So what?

TAYLOR

Maybe he was being blackmailed-I don't know! Would he jot it down though?

SAMANTHA

This isn't healthy. Come back to the dorm. I'll feel better.

Taylor glances at the journals then nods, okay.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-BATHROOM - DUSK

Water blasts from the shower head.

Taylor just gazes at her hands. She then turns off the water and from behind the shower curtain, reaches for a towel. She steps out of the shower and wraps the towel around her.

Taylor walks up to the bathroom mirror and wipes away the moist from it. In the center of her chest is a deep scar that runs down. She runs a finger along the deep tissue.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

THREE POLICE OFFICERS gather around a television absorbed in a news program. The CHUBBY OFFICER stuffs his mouth with his lunch while the others eat with some dignity.

On the left side of the TV is a LEAD REPORTER, and on the other side is the GUEST, a middle-aged man in business attire.

LEAD REPORTER(ON TV)

Xenotransplantation isn't anything new. Interest emerged back in the nineteen sixties, correct?

GUEST(ON TV)

Yes. Chimpanzee kidneys were transplanted into people with kidney failure, and in the nineteen eighties, a baby received a baboon heart.

LEAD REPORTER(ON TV)

So what's different this time?

GUEST(ON TV)

Omega Chem transplanted a pig's heart

into a chimpanzee two years ago, and the chimpanzee's body hasn't rejected it. This is phenomenal news for people waiting for an organ donor.

Truman enters carrying change and heads to the vending machine in the corner. She buys a bag of chips.

CHUBBY OFFICER

Hey, Truman. Weren't you on that case with that scientist?

TRUMAN

Yeah, why?

CHUBBY OFFICER

(with a mouth full)

They're talking about him on TV.

LEAD REPORTER(ON TV)

And Dr. William Washington was the lead scientist. He had high hopes for this, correct?

GUEST(ON TV)

Yes, he did.

INT. NURSING ROOM - NIGHT

The elderly woman sits in her same spot gazing at the television.

Brandon watches the news program intently not missing a beat.

ON TELEVISION:

LEAD REPORTER (ON TV)

Now some of the data has been released to the public, and it seems many animals have died.

The guest nods.

GUEST (ON TV)

Which is expected when dealing with this type of research.

LEAD REPORTER (ON TV)

Many organizations are coming out, condemning Omega for caging and experimenting on animals, especially

chimpanzees, which are an endangered species.

GUEST(ON TV)

Chimpanzees were meant to be a substitution for humans. Omega doesn't plan to use chimpanzees forever.

BACK AT THE STATION

The chubby officer scratches his belly, says:

CHUBBY OFFICER

You know, ever since that scientist died, they've been talking about nothing but this.

LEAD REPORTER(ON TV)

The Omega project was almost suspended indefinitely, correct? For animal abuse?

GUEST(ON TV)

That's incorrect.

CHUBBY OFFICER

I don't know if I'd want to be that guy right now. Well, I guess I wouldn't since-you know.

The news program shows a picture of Washington in his lab coat giving a talk to an audience.

The elderly woman's eyes squint.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Washington.

Brandon raises a brow.

ELDERLY WOMAN

That poor girl. That poor, poor girl. He named her Taylor.

Brandon goes back to the news program.

INT. DORM - NIGHT

Taylor sits on a twin size bed in pajamas as she reads the bible.

In the background is the same news program on the TV. She looks up to listen.

The door opens. Samantha walks in dressed in yoga pants, her disheveled hair tied up, her earbuds in. She sees what's on the television.

SAMANTHA

Turn this off.

Samantha turns off the television. She sits beside Taylor and embraces her.

SAMANTHA

How are you?

TAYLOR

Who knows?

SAMANTHA

I'm sorry. Is there anything you need?

TAYLOR

Um-Yeah.

SAMANTHA

Oh, honey. Sometimes we can't see the pain people are in.

TAYLOR

I keep telling myself, I should've went home after that call.

SAMANTHA

I know church is your thing. Why not go? I'd go with you.

TAYLOR

I know you would.

INT. OMEGA-DR. RICHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Behind the executive style desk deep in thought is Richards as he reads over a document.

On the desk are scattered papers and notebooks. In the corner is a picture frame of Richards with his arm around a MRS. RICHARDS (late 40s, white, pretty).

In the background, classical music plays.

There's a knock at the door.

DR. RICHARDS

Come in.

The door opens, and Brandon walks in with a folder in hand and his camera around his neck.

BRANDON

You called for me?

DR. RICHARDS

Yeah, can I have a word before you leave?

BRANDON

Yes, sir.

DR. RICHARDS

Close the door for me.

Brandon closes the door oblivious to what's about to come.

DR. RICHARDS

Lets talk.

BRANDON

Okay.

DR. RICHARDS

Tell me about your relationship with Taylor Washington.

BRANDON

There is nothing to tell.

DR. RICHARDS

Only classmates, huh?

BRANDON

Yes.

Richards leans back in his seat.

DR. RICHARDS

But she is a pretty thing. You must think so.

Brandon flushes red.

BRANDON
E-Excuse me?

DR. RICHARDS
I understand that being around someone
for so long can cause feelings.

BRANDON
I'm not sure where this is going.

DR. RICHARDS
Lets get to it then. She was in Dr.
Washington's lab, and don't tell me
she wasn't. You were right there with
her.

The blood vanishes from Brandon's face; the air in the room
stiffens like a board.

BRANDON
Sir-

DR. RICHARDS
I know after losing her father the way
she did, she might be lost, and I'm
sure you want to do whatever you can
for her.

Dr. Richards stands up from his seat and sits on the edge of
his desk directly in front of Brandon.

DR. RICHARDS
What did she see?

BRANDON
I didn't help her. She-

DR. RICHARDS
What did she see?

BRANDON
Nothing. Just the lab.

Richards stares down Brandon.

DR. RICHARDS
Let me see your camera.

BRANDON
Why?

DR. RICHARDS

Let me see it.

Brandon hands him his camera.

Dr. Richards goes through the camera, though finds nothing. He hands the camera back to Brandon.

DR. RICHARDS

You can leave.

Brandon can't get out of the office fast enough.

Dr. Richards throws a hand into his hair. He loosens his tie.

INT. OMEGA LAB - DAY

Dr. Richards with his hands behind his back walks up and down the rows as he peeks inside the cages.

The cages rattle. The chimpanzees PANT-HOOT.

Dr. Richards stands in front of a cage, and behind his back, he takes out a pistol.

The CEO takes a deep breath, points the gun at the disfigured chimpanzee behind the cage, and pulls the trigger.

BANG.

Dr. Richards walks up and down the rows and stops at each cage, pulling the trigger until no cage is left rattling.

Dr. Richards bends down and peeks inside the cage then hurls.

EXT. CAMPUS-MORNING

The morning bus drives off.

Taylor jogs through campus dodging the students. Some pass her as they jog too.

INT. DORM - DAY

Samantha on the other side of the dorm is asleep too. A knock at the door awakens her.

Samantha climbs out of bed and opens the door anyway.

SAMANTHA

It's you.

BRANDON
Hello. Is Taylor here?

SAMANTHA
Why don't you come back-

Taylor enters from the hall.

TAYLOR
I'm here.

Samantha goes back to her bed.

TAYLOR
(hush tone)
Where have you been?

BRANDON
(hush tone)
Here I am.

TAYLOR
I need those pictures you took at
Omega. You did take a few, right?

BRANDON
Yeah, but-

TAYLOR
Let me see.

BRANDON
It didn't come out right. It was a
blur.

TAYLOR
Oh no.

BRANDON
Why?

TAYLOR
I'm trying to do something.

Taylor looks through her journals and chooses one.

TAYLOR
This one. What we saw in the lab was
more than just inserting genes into
embryos.

BRANDON

What? Taylor-

TAYLOR

They are creating a new species. I know it!

BRANDON

Lets say you're right.

TAYLOR

I am!

BRANDON

Why? What do you have to gain? What is this for?

TAYLOR

Maybe there are answers in this.

BRANDON

Is that it? Because you're not going to find what you're looking for.

Taylor tosses the journal onto the desk and slumps into the desk chair.

Brandon glances at Samantha.

BRANDON

Lets go for a walk.

EXT. RECREATIONAL PARK - DAY

The golden leaves of a lone tree waltz to the flow of the wind.

SEVERAL JOGGERS make their way through the park, mostly college-aged.

Taylor and Brandon take a stroll, around his neck the digital camera as he takes pictures of various parts of nature.

TAYLOR

I keep digging.

BRANDON

We leave it alone.

TAYLOR

No. I dig deeper, I find out-

BRANDON
There's nothing to find out.

TAYLOR
Excuse me?

BRANDON
Think about it.

TAYLOR
What do you think I've been doing?

Brandon snaps a picture of a COUPLE JOGGERS.

TAYLOR
Omega isn't even reporting any of
this.

Taylor and Brandon walk in silence. He teasingly points his camera at her.

Taylor, covering her face, shouts:

TAYLOR
I'm not in the mood!

BRANDON
I just want a picture!

TAYLOR
I don't even look my best.

BRANDON
I think you look stunning as always.

Taylor's face flushes red as she fiddles with her cross necklace.

The two continue their walk, and their fingers brush against each other. Brandon goes for Taylor's hand, though stops himself.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Taylor and Brandon sit in a booth near a window with the street view. A hamburger and fries are on a tray sit in front of Brandon, a chicken sandwich in front of Taylor.

TAYLOR
You think Dr. Richards got rid of the
evidence?

BRANDON

I'm sure.

Taylor glances at the camera sitting on the table.

TAYLOR

Why photography?

BRANDON

I don't know. I guess I like to capture the moment before it vanishes.

TAYLOR

How poetic.

BRANDON

Ha. Yeah, my grandmother suffers from dementia so I take pictures to help her memory.

TAYLOR

Does it work?

BRANDON

I'd like to think so. And you're studying BioChem and zoology, yes?

Taylor takes a sip of her drink and nods.

BRANDON

Why?

TAYLOR

My dad. I wanted to be just like him 'til I realized I couldn't. I wanted to study t-com, but he didn't see why he had to pay for a useless degree.

BRANDON

It's not useless.

Taylor notices a BLACK, LUXURY CAR with tinted windows pull up. Though it parks, no one comes out.

TAYLOR

You couldn't tell him that. Then I switched to General Biology, and he just made up his mind that I would study Bio Chemistry.

BRANDON

You know you don't have to, yes? If that's not what you want to do. You're not his shadow.

TAYLOR

Ha-I'm not?

BRANDON

No, you're not. Do what makes you happy.

TAYLOR

So you say.

BRANDON

Maybe your dad was like my mom. She wanted me to study something that would result in a good paying job after I graduated.

TAYLOR

I chose Biology!

BRANDON

Maybe he didn't want you getting stuck with some entry level lab position.

TAYLOR

Oh?

BRANDON

At least with Bio Chemistry, you can get into entry level research.

TAYLOR

True words.

Taylor can't help but notice that the same car still sits idly.

EXT. DORM - DUSK

Taylor and Brandon walk up toward the dorm entryway.

BRANDON

Thanks for coming out.

TAYLOR

Did I have a choice?

BRANDON

We should do it again soon. Next time under better circumstances.

TAYLOR

Yeah. We should. Until again.

BRANDON

Until again.

Taylor waves goodbye and exits inside.

Brandon walks away with a wide grin. He does a little skip.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Taylor leans against the front door, deep in thought.

INT. BRANDON'S DORM - DUSK

In the windowsill are house plants Brandon sprays with light water with a spray bottle.

He sits at his neat and sturdy desk and goes through pictures on his laptop. Pictures of plants in the woodlands to Taylor at the lab to finally the disfigured chimpanzee.

Brandon looks over the chimp intently.

INT. OMEGA CHEM LOT - NIGHT

The back parking lot is empty except for Taylor's car that's parked underneath a shady tree. She heads to the back entrance.

At the door is a keycard reader. She presses Washington's badge against it. The keycard reader BEEPS then stays red.

His card has been deactivated.

She puts in the code and the keypad goes green.

INT. OMEGA CHEM-HALL - NIGHT

Taylor tip toes through the hall and at the corner, stops as she hears footsteps and the JINGLE of keys that move away from her.

They vanish.

Taylor moves toward a staircase and takes them up.

INT. OMEGA-WASHINGTON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Taylor takes a set of keys and unlocks the double glass doors then enters.

It's pitch black.

She goes behind the executive style desk and types away on the computer, which gives off some light. When she clicks on a folder, it reads, "RESTRICTED".

Taylor clicks on another folder. It reads the same thing.

Taylor slams both hands onto the desk in frustration.

TAYLOR

Dammit.

Every folder she clicks on reads, "RESTRICTED".

Outside the office, she hears FOOTSTEPS and a set of keys JINGLING. They're getting close.

Taylor ducks under the desk and holds her breath.

The security guard enters after seeing the door ajar.

SECURITY GUARD

Anyone in here?

Taylor waits underneath the desk with bated breath.

JINGLE. JINGLE.

THUD. THUD.

Taylor sees the legs of the security guard from underneath the desk. Then the legs retreat.

CLICK.

Taylor hears the office door lock. She deeply sighs.

INT. OMEGA CHEM HALL - NIGHT

Taylor treads through the hall and comes to a stop. The door reads "RESTRICTED ACCESS", and the key reader is turned red.

Taylor presses Washington's work badge against the key reader. It stays red.

Taylor uses every key in her set of keys until she hears CLICK.

INT. OMEGA CHEM HALL-CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Taylor enters and finds herself in a narrow, lengthy hall.

A bulb overhead BUZZES on.

Taylor tip toes down the narrow corridor. On each side are several rooms behind double glass doors. She can't see inside them due to them being pitch black.

At one of the glass doors is a bloody handprint.

Taylor makes her way to the end of the hall where a dim light protrudes out. She peeks her inside.

In inside the containment room, TWO SURGEONS in green scrubs, are doing an autopsy, though Taylor can only guess as she can not see what they are operating on.

To the side are surgery utensils on the counter next to the sink.

WHEN...

...the surgeon at the head of the operating room table moves to the counter.

Taylor gasps as she holds her hand to her mouth.

On the table is a woman, motionless.

Taylor rushes to the exit as a doctor turns to where she just stood. She uses nearly every key for the door until...

CLICK.

The surgeon enters.

SURGEON

Hey!

Taylor rushes out the door.

The surgeon walks to the end of the hall and peeks his head out of the door.

No one is there.

EXT. WASHINGTON HOME - NIGHT

Taylor parks in the driveway as exits the car. She is on her phone.

TAYLOR

Meet me at my house...You're on campus? I'll come to you. Give me a minute.

Taylor puts the phone away and starts on her walk to the campus.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Taylor ambles in a rush under the somber streetlights. She looks around. Not a body in sight.

Headlights from a distance down the road appear. Taylor doesn't think too much of this. That's when a black luxury car with tinted windows drives slow a distance away.

Taylor speeds up.

The car speeds up.

Taylor stops and looks back at the car.

The car stops and sits idly. Taylor breaks into a sprint. The vehicle picks up speed behind her. It tries to run her down, though Taylor jumps out of the way.

Taylor cuts through a yard and into an alley.

She ducks behind a trash can and waits with bated breath.

Nothing. No sound of tires SKIDDING on the road. No ROARING of the engine. No car.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Truman enters hearing a commotion as she finds...

...Taylor at the front desk distraught, hair disheveled.

The chubby officer at the front desk tries to calm her down.

CHUBBY OFFICER

Calm down and-

TAYLOR
Calm down? You calm down!

TRUMAN
Here I am.

INT. POLICE STATION-TRUMAN'S DESK - DAY

Desks are scattered about with DETECTIVES behind them. A COUPLE OFFICERS bring in A PERP and sit him down at one of the folded chairs against the wall by a water fountain.

Taylor sips on a cup of coffee across from Truman.

TRUMAN
You think someone tried to run you down?

TAYLOR
Hello! I know someone tried to run me down!

TRUMAN
Did the driver see you? Why would someone try to hit you?

Taylor ponders, and a light bulb comes on.

TAYLOR
I don't know.

TRUMAN
Just asking questions, Taylor.

TAYLOR
It was the same car from the restaurant.

TRUMAN
What kind of car was it?

TAYLOR
I don't know. Black. Expensive.

TRUMAN
Listen, it could've been a reporter, just trying to get a scoop. They been around lately?

TAYLOR
Not as much.

TRUMAN

How 'bout I drive by a few times this week to see if anything strange is going on? Would that help?

TAYLOR

Better than nothing.

TRUMAN

For the time being, try not to go out by yourself at night. That's a given, but I know how you kids are.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Taylor is on the sofa engrossed in her textbook highlighting away. A glass of wine and the bottle is on the coffee table.

Outside, headlights filter through the OPEN BLINDS.

She peeks out the window, finding A DARK COLORED CAR in the driveway.

Taylor peeks out the window again and sees a silhouette coming up to the front door. The garage light isn't on, the porch light is off...Who is this?

KNOCK KNOCK.

Taylor steps to the door, flips on the light switch to the front porch, and looks out the peephole finding Dr. Richards.

TAYLOR

Who is it?

DR. RICHARDS (O.S.)

Good evening, Taylor. It's Dr. Richards.

Taylor opens the door.

TAYLOR

Dr. Richards, hi.

DR. RICHARDS

I'm sorry for intruding so late. It wasn't until I was in my car that I realized what time it was. May I come in?

Dr. Richards enters carrying a briefcase.

DR. RICHARDS

I wanted to check on you. How are you?

TAYLOR

Fine. Thank you.

DR. RICHARDS

That's certainly good to hear given the circumstances.

Dr. Richards puts his briefcase on the table, glances at the bottle of wine, then opens the briefcase.

DR. RICHARDS

Your father's publication will be out tomorrow, and I wanted you to be the first to read it.

Dr. Richards takes out a manila folder, inside is a journal. He hands it to Taylor.

DR. RICHARDS

I wanted you to see how dedicated your father was. We truly lost a gifted man.

TAYLOR

Thank you.

DR. RICHARDS

If you ever need anything, you know where to find me.

TAYLOR

That I do.

DR. RICHARDS

I'll be going.

Dr. Richards takes his briefcase and heads to the door.

DR. RICHARDS

Oh.

He opens his briefcase and takes a crystal globe with Jesus and scripture on it. He then hands it to Taylor.

Taylor reads the scripture.

TAYLOR

'God is our refuge and strength, and

ever-present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the
earth give way, and the mountains fall
into the heart of the sea, though its
waters roar and foam and the mountains
quake with their surging.'

DR. RICHARDS

I thought you'd find comfort in it.

TAYLOR

You read the scripture, Dr. Richards?

DR. RICHARDS

Not necessarily.

TAYLOR

Thank you, sir. For everything.

DR. RICHARDS

Good night, Taylor.

On that note, he exits. Taylor watches him get into his
vehicle and drive off.

CUT TO:

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Taylor is reading the publication.

Outside in the driveway an INCONSPICUOUS MAN AND WOMAN lurk
about peeping through the front room window observing Taylor.
One holds a digital camera, the other holds a tape recorder.

Taylor glances up out the window and rises to her feet. She
goes to the living room closet.

EXT. WASHINGTON HOME-DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

The photographer takes pictures of the house while the
reporter tells him what to snap...

WHEN...

...The front door opens.

Taylor sees the reporter and photographer.

The reporter takes a step toward Taylor with a tape recorder
in her hand.

REPORTER

Ms. Washington, can I ask a few-

Taylor leaps from the patio with a bat and sprints toward the photographer and reporter. The photographer and reporter scream out and before they can flee...

TRUMAN (O.S.)

Freeze!

Truman and Worth jump out of a black sedan and tread to the three. Taylor drops the bat like a deer in headlights.

TRUMAN

What's going on? Trespassing?

Truman takes out a pair of handcuffs.

CUT TO:

The reporter and photographer are handcuffed in the backseat of Truman's vehicle.

Taylor stands in the driveway. Truman walks up to her.

TRUMAN

You and me need to have a talk.

Taylor picks up the bat.

TRUMAN

Always keep your blinds closed. We get more peeping tom calls than you think.

TAYLOR

Yeah, this is my fault.

TRUMAN

Anyway, I think these are the two that's been following you. There's a black vehicle parked at the corner. I bet it belongs to them.

TAYLOR

Wow. Thank you.

TRUMAN

Yeah. Close your blinds.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Taylor jogs toward a black vehicle that matches the one that tried to hit her. She looks inside and at the license plate. This one doesn't have tinted windows...

INT. POLICE STATION-BREAK ROOM - DAY

Truman digs deep into her pockets and fetches for change for the vending machine.

Worth walks in with a brown paper bag. He sees Truman digging for change, digs into his own pocket, and hands her a few quarters.

TRUMAN

Ah, thanks.

Worth sits at one of the tables as Truman buys her favorite bag of chips.

WORTH

I heard you've been working overtime.

TRUMAN

Yeah. Taylor Washington came to me and said someone was following her. I thought she was being paranoid until I caught a reporter outside her house.

WORTH

She was looking for a story or somethin'?

TRUMAN

Yeah, and she swore up and down that she's never followed her.

WORTH

So you caught her?

TRUMAN

Her alibi checks out. She was out of town covering another story.

WORTH

I know you don't want to get her worked up, but maybe you should tell her.

TRUMAN

Yeah. I think I can give the neighborhood another sweep through first.

Truman tosses a chip into her mouth.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

The cafeteria is packed with students getting their lunch, Samantha and Taylor included. Behind the counters are servers helping the students get their food.

SAMANTHA

You did not.

TAYLOR

I saw what I saw, Sam!

SAMANTHA

Maybe it was an animal. You said yourself you didn't have the best view.

TAYLOR

I also said I know what I saw, and how do you explain the car?

SAMANTHA

I'm just glad you're okay!

TAYLOR

Someone hurt him.

SAMANTHA

Honey, if that's anywhere close to being true, you need to be careful then. You're treading on water.

In her pocket, Taylor's cell phone starts to ring. She answers.

TAYLOR

(In phone)

This is Taylor...Really? That's wonderful! Thank you. Keep me posted.

Taylor hangs up.

SAMANTHA

Who was that?

TAYLOR

The reporter I went to about Omega is looking for a story.

INT. OMEGA CHEM - DUSK

Taylor ambles toward reception.

There is no one behind the desk.

She finds Dr. Richards from afar coming down the stairs. He sees her in the middle of a gang of employees and steps towards her. Taylor heads toward a corridor.

CUT TO:

Taylor treads down the corridor. She gets on the elevator. As the elevator doors close, she gets a glimpse of Dr. Richards standing on the other side. This catches her off guard.

INT. OMEGA CHEM-CORRIDOR - DAY

Taylor walks down the empty hall as she glances behind her. One could hear her heels click clacking down the corridor.

On each side of the corridor are empty offices with their doors closed. Name tags in gold plates hang outside the door.

At the end of the hall, the white plate reads, "BRANDON THOMPSON". Just as she reaches it...

...Dr. Richards appears in front of her.

TAYLOR

Dr. Richards-

DR. RICHARDS

(low tone)

You think you can just come into my lab and destroy everything my mother and I have built?

Taylor's eyes widen in shock. She tries to walk past Richards.

Richards steps in front of her. His words are so vicious, he spits as he talks.

DR. RICHARDS

Well, do you? I will sue you! I will sue you for whatever your father left

you! Do you understand me?

Taylor tries to back away.

Dr. Richards grabs her arm.

DR. RICHARDS
Do you understand me?

TAYLOR
Yes!

Brandon's office door opens. He stands there stunned.

Dr. Richards releases her and exits down the hall.

Taylor leans against the wall, holding her chest. Her eyes water as she crumbles to the floor.

BRANDON
Taylor? Are you all right?

Taylor gives a feeble nod.

BRANDON
What happened?

TAYLOR
Nothing.

Brandon bends down to her level.

BRANDON
Something happened.

TAYLOR
I think I got caught.

BRANDON
Doing what?

Taylor glances down at her hands that quiver.

INT. OMEGA CHEM-HALL - DAY

Brandon goes to knock on the office door. To the side of it reads, "STEPHEN RICHARDS, PHD, CEO". Dr. Richards voice emerges from the office.

INT. OMEGA-DR. RICHARD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dr. Richards sits behind his desk with his head in his hands. His hair is disheveled, and his tie is loose. He's no longer that polished man.

Coming from the speaker phone, a deep male voice rings out.

MAN (V.O.)

They'll end it.

DR. RICHARDS

No. No, they can't. They won't.

MAN (V.O.)

The media is killing us. The public doesn't know what to think!

WOMAN (V.O.)

Not only the media, but the stock market-

Richards slams his hand on the desk.

DR. RICHARDS

What we're doing is saving lives!

MAN (V.O.)

If the media goes against us, the government is sure to step in.

DR. RICHARDS

Hey, we're the good guys.

MAN (V.O.)

And the animal supporters on strike?

DR. RICHARDS

They aren't hurting anyone.

There is a knock at the door, and it CREAK opens. Brandon enters.

BRANDON

You wanted to see me?

DR. RICHARDS

(into phone)

My next meeting is here. Lets schedule this again a week from tomorrow-Same time.

Dr. Richards hangs up the phone.

DR. RICHARDS
Close the door.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Taylor and Brandon enter.

Scattered on the coffee table and sofa are photos, journals, and loose sheets of paper.

Brandon's face is flushed red in anger. He deeply scowls and paces back and forth as Taylor takes off her jacket and observes him.

TAYLOR
What are you going to do?

BRANDON
I don't know! How could he kick me out of my internship?

TAYLOR
I'm so sorry. It's my fault.

BRANDON
He's terrified. What did you see?

Taylor shakes her head, nothing.

BRANDON
What if my career is over? How could he...?

TAYLOR
Brandon?

Brandon glances at her.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Taylor reads a journal while Brandon sits deep in thought.

TAYLOR
What am I looking for?

BRANDON
Something to force Richards out. There has to be evidence that we can use to show what they're doing.

TAYLOR
Good riddance to him and Omega.

BRANDON
Omega Chem is doing good things
because of your father. Remember that.

Taylor takes up another journal and skims it.

TAYLOR
It's this one.

Taylor hands Brandon the journal.

TAYLOR
He proposed the Omega Project right
after his wife died from a bad organ
transplant. Then I remembered.

BRANDON
What?

TAYLOR
Just like Amy, I had a heart
operation. It's probably why he
adopted me, but anyway.

BRANDON
I didn't know that.

TAYLOR
You weren't supposed to, but he was
obsessed with finding a way to end the
organ donor shortage, and so was Dr.
Richards. What if there's more to it?

Taylor bites on her lower lip.

TAYLOR
I saw them operating on someone.

BRANDON
What?

TAYLOR
I did!

BRANDON
You must be mistaken. They do clinical
trials, but-

TAYLOR
I saw what I saw.

Brandon is deep in thought.

BRANDON
Don't say anything.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

The sun is bold in the sky. Not a cloud in sight.

Taylor ambles down the street, a book bag strapped to her. She scans the area, though some people are around.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - DAY

Taylor walks through the door and tosses off her shoes and jacket. She takes out her phone. There's a text. It reads from Brandon, "CAN WE MEET TONIGHT? MEET AT MY HOUSE"

Taylor replies then tosses the phone on the sofa and rolls up her sleeves.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-KITCHEN - DAY

Taylor throws out all the bottles of alcohol and nods in approval.

EXT. RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Taylor looks up at the three-story, grand house. A meager lit bulb hovers over the porch. There are no neighbors; just a lot of land.

TAYLOR
Fancy.

Taylor walks up the drive-way and passes a navy blue car that looks familiar and behind it a black, luxury car, which too, looks familiar.

No light comes from the house. Taylor steps onto the porch and rings the doorbell then knocks on the door.

The door creaks slightly open.

TAYLOR
Hello?

Taylor enters the residence.

INT. RESIDENCE-LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Taylor enters.

TAYLOR
Brandon? Hello?

Light from a room upstairs pours into the hall.

EXT. WASHINGTON HOME - NIGHT

Brandon parks his car and climbs out checking his jacket pockets for something.

Not a single light is on in the residence. Brandon sees the driveway is empty and peeks inside the garage when he hears FOOTSTEPS behind him.

TRUMAN
Are you looking for something?

Brandon sees the badge on her hip.

BRANDON
Um-Taylor.

TRUMAN
Who are you?

BRANDON
I'm a classmate.

TRUMAN
You nervous?

BRANDON
Quite.

TRUMAN
What do you want with Taylor?

BRANDON
We were supposed to meet up for homework. Time got away from me, and I was seeing if her car was here.

TRUMAN
Then call her.

BRANDON
I seem to have lost my phone.

INT. RESIDENCE-HALL - NIGHT

Taylor climbs the stairs, hearing the CREAKING of the floorboards.

TAYLOR

Brandon? Stop messing with me. I'm not in the mood.

EXT. WASHINGTON HOME - NIGHT

Truman digs her hands into her dress pants.

TRUMAN

Well, she isn't here. Why don't you try calling her when you get home.

BRANDON

Okay.

Brandon heads to his car. Truman watches.

INT. RESIDENCE-HALL - NIGHT

Taylor pushes the door open, peeks inside, and enters.

TAYLOR

Brandon?

INT. RESIDENCE-BRANDON'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Taylor walks inside, and her legs nearly give out.

Scattered on the walls are photos of Taylor from her late teens until the present, on the computer desk a photo of her taped on the laptop, the one taken at the park.

DR. RICHARDS (O.S.)

What a sight to see.

Taylor whirls around to find Dr. Richards, hands in both pockets, his usual polite grin plastered on his face. His hair is out of place, and his tie is crooked.

DR. RICHARDS

My stepson has always been very fond of you.

TAYLOR

'Stepson'?

DR. RICHARDS

Brandon.

TAYLOR

He-He's your stepson?

DR. RICHARDS

He is. You know, I'm pretty sure you're the reason he took up photography.

TAYLOR

Where is he?

DR. RICHARDS

I don't know.

TAYLOR

He texted me.

Dr. Richards takes out the same phone Brandon pulled out in Omega and holds it up for her to see.

TAYLOR

Why?

DR. RICHARDS

I want to talk.

TAYLOR

I think you made yourself real clear the other day.

DR. RICHARDS

Did I?

Taylor glances around the room and takes it all in when she sees...

...Brandon, a deer in headlights, his legs ready to give out.

DR. RICHARDS

Welcome home.

BRANDON

(to Taylor)

What are you doing here?

DR. RICHARDS

I invited her.

Dr. Richards waves to Brandon his phone.

BRANDON

Why?

DR. RICHARDS

You first. Why don't you explain to Taylor why you have a room full of photos of her.

TAYLOR

Brandon. What is this?

BRANDON

I'm sorry.

TAYLOR

You're sorry?

BRANDON

Taylor, I-

DR. RICHARDS

My stepson's been very fond of you since the first time he saw you.

TAYLOR

We just met this year!

DR. RICHARDS

You've met before.

TAYLOR

What?

Brandon, who steps toward Taylor, say:

BRANDON

Taylor-

TAYLOR

Don't come near me!

BRANDON

Please.

TAYLOR

Have you been following me? Watching me?

BRANDON

Taylor-

TAYLOR

I'm so stupid! Of course!

BRANDON

None of this matters.

TAYLOR

How does it not matter?

BRANDON

I love you.

Taylor twitches at the mere words.

TAYLOR

You're infatuated with me, Brandon,
and you're crazy for that too.

BRANDON

Don't call it an infatuation. It's
nothing of the sort.

TAYLOR

How did you find me? Why me?

BRANDON

I first saw you in the lab. We were
just fourteen, but I knew right then I
loved you.

TAYLOR

You're crazy. Why am I listening to
this? Why am I even here?

Dr. Richards steps forward, hands deep in his pocket.

DR. RICHARDS

You saw something in my lab.

TAYLOR

Yeah. I did.

BRANDON

Please don't do this.

DR. RICHARDS

We are working on something that could
change science forever. It was your

father's initial project.

TAYLOR

So?

DR. RICHARDS

Did Brandon not tell you this?

BRANDON

Why are you doing this? She doesn't know anything.

DR. RICHARDS

If she pieces it together, she'll know.

TAYLOR

What are you two talking about?

BRANDON

Don't.

Dr. Richards hushes Brandon.

DR. RICHARDS

Our initial project was to create a species that embodied similar characteristics to humans. As you could see, it was a failure. You saw for yourself.

TAYLOR

Okay?

DR. RICHARDS

After a while your father came up with an alternative project to produce similar results, and that's when I decided to end the initial Omega Project.

TAYLOR

So you torture animals. You perform autopsies on people. Why?

DR. RICHARDS

What do you think contributes to the discovery of treatments and medicines?

TAYLOR

That's not how the public will see it.

You don't want me to go public, do you? Is that why I'm here?

BRANDON
Taylor, please.

Taylor rushes out the room.

BRANDON
Taylor, wait!

INT. RESIDENCE-HALL - CONTINUOUS

Taylor rushes toward the stairs.

BRANDON (O.S.)
Taylor!

Taylor is pushed, or so it seems, down the stairs and tumbles to the bottom, head flailing against the hardwood floor.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. TRUMAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Truman is parked a little ways away from Washington's residence. She pulls out her phone like she expects it to ring any minute.

INT. OMEGA-HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

It's dark. A bulb overhead flickers. Taylor is pushed on a stretcher down the hall dressed in a hospital gown. Her arms are fastened to the stretcher.

INT. OMEGA-DR. RICHARD'S - NIGHT

Brandon enters flustered.

Dr. Richards sits behind his desk like he's been waiting for him.

In the background classical music plays.

DR. RICHARDS
Go home.

BRANDON
Why are you doing this?

DR. RICHARDS

I'm sorry, Brandon. I really am, but this is about saving lives.

BRANDON

What? Let her go! She doesn't know anything!

DR. RICHARDS

It's not about her knowing anything! Don't you see? With her, we can save thousands of lives.

Dr. Richards moves steadily toward Brandon.

BRANDON

What are you talking about? Just let her go! You don't need her!

Brandon is frantic at this point. With one big swoop, Richards slaps him.

DR. RICHARDS

Calm down. Think about your mother! If we had these possibilities then, she would still be alive!

Brandon holds his cheek unable to fathom what just happened.

KNOCK KNOCK.

INT. OMEGA-HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Taylor tries to wiggle her arms free; she's desperate. A PHYSICIAN pulls out a couple syringes from the cabinet.

TAYLOR

Please. Please. Let me go!

Dr. Richards enters.

TAYLOR

Why are you doing this?

DR. RICHARDS

I'm sorry I have to do this, Taylor. I really am.

TAYLOR

Do what?

DR. RICHARDS
I'll tell you what. Brandon told me
about the journals. If you want
answers, I'll give them to you.

The physician takes a syringe from the counter and tries to
poke Taylor, who puts up a struggle.

TAYLOR
What are you doing? Stop!

The physician draws her blood and puts it into one of the
vials on the counter.

Dr. Richards leaves the room.

The physician then fills the syringe with a liquid from
another vial unbeknownst to Taylor then pokes her again.

TAYLOR
What did you give me?

Her eyes close.

TAYLOR
What did you give me?

She goes motionless.

INT. OMEGA-CONTAINMENT ROOM - NIGHT

Taylor lies on the cold, bare ground unconscious in an empty
room with double glass doors. Her eyes flicker open, and she
takes a look.

Dr. Richards listening to classical music that blares
throughout the room.

Her body feels stiff. Weak. She can barely keep her head up.

DR. RICHARDS
You're awake.

TAYLOR
Why are you doing this?

DR. RICHARDS
You think I want to do this to you? I
don't, but this is to save as many
lives as possible, and because of your
DNA-

TAYLOR
(to self)

No.

Richards sighs.

DR. RICHARDS
There were journals. Did it mention
his wife, Amy?

Taylor nods, yes as she quivers.

DR. RICHARDS
Tell me what else.

TAYLOR
He-He went into xenotransplantation
research because of-of Amy and he
wanted to see how animal organs could
be-be more compatible with humans.

DR. RICHARDS
That's true! We had failure after
failure until one day, there was
progress!

Dr. Richards steps aside from the glass door and motions for Taylor to look out.

DR. RICHARDS
Why don't you see how your father
contributed to the advancement of
science with your own eyes!

Taylor is hesitant, stands and limps to the glass doors. She peeks out, squints her eyes to adjust to the void beyond the glass, across the hall, beyond double glass doors,

WHEN...

...a DISFIGURED HUMAN with ears of a chimpanzee, an eye that hangs from its socket, his nude body covered in thick, black hair.

He sees Taylor and bashes its fur covered hands against the glass doors.

Whatever's behind the other glass doors, they begin to mimic the disfigured being, who opens his mouth, and a CRY invades her ears.

DR. RICHARDS
And with progress, there's success!

TAYLOR
How is that success?

DR. RICHARDS
Oh, no. Those are failures. Complete failures. I'm keeping them to study what when wrong. The success is you.

TAYLOR
W-What?

DR. RICHARDS
The initial Omega Project was a success! You are proof of that!

TAYLOR
What are you saying?

DR. RICHARDS
I simply wanted to show you how you're the success.

TAYLOR
Why am I here?

DR. RICHARDS
Oh. Right. I need your DNA. Because you're giving me what I want, I'll reciprocate. You have a scar that runs down your chest. How did he explain that?

TAYLOR
Heart surgery-Let me go!

DR. RICHARDS
What else? You read his journals. Put it together.

TAYLOR
I didn't read them all.

DR. RICHARDS
Then tell me what you know.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. WASHINGTON ROOM-TAYLOR'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

An EIGHT YEAR OLD TAYLOR plays with dolls in the center of a pink room, toys scattered around. Washington enters and sits on the floor in front of her picking up a doll.

EIGHT YEAR OLD TAYLOR
Daddy, you want to play?

WASHINGTON
Sure. What are we playing?

EIGHT YEAR OLD TAYLOR
House! You can be the husband!

Taylor hands him the Ken doll. Washington mimics Taylor and pretends his doll is walking.

WASHINGTON
Taylor, do you know what 'adopted' means?

EIGHT YEAR OLD TAYLOR
Um...no.

WASHINGTON
It means that you had a daddy and mommy before me, and we do not have the same blood, but you are my daughter.

Taylor tilts her head.

WASHINGTON
You and me are different.

EIGHT YEAR OLD TAYLOR
I had a mommy?

WASHINGTON
Yes, but she could not take care of you. So she gave you to me to take care of you. So I could raise you to be the best girl.

EIGHT YEAR OLD TAYLOR
I don't get it, but I had a mommy and daddy before you, and we are not the same, but you are still my daddy.

WASHINGTON

Good girl.

Washington chuckles as he watches his daughter get back to her dolls.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

On the couch, an adult Taylor reads Washington's journals.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

We had to think about what animals were compatible enough for this project. We used certain embryos extracting genes from chimps and inserting them into the embryos. But what I saw were abominations, and none survived for more than two years. That's until...

CUT TO:

Inside the cages in baby beds are crying infants, eyes drooping out of their sockets.

Washington stops at the cage on the end and peeks inside to find Taylor as A BROWN-SKINNED INFANT. She appears to be a normal baby.

INT. HEALTHCARE FACILITY CORRIDOR - DAY

It's the scene where Washington walks down the corridor with the doctor as they pass HEALTH CARE EMPLOYEES. They're passing the window of the room with Taylor.

Washington stops and peeks inside.

A SURGEON TECHNICIAN passes a scalpel to the LEAD SURGEON, who begins the incision on a two-year old Taylor.

Washington's palms are sweaty. He becomes fidgety. He bangs on the window, drawing the SURGICAL TEAM'S attention to him.

INT. OMEGA-DR. RICHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Washington speaks to Dr. Richards, who sits behind his desk. He desperately tries to get his point across.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

I've become fond of Taylor adopted her. She is now my daughter. Now, if I

can just replicate the experiment, Dr. Richards will leave her alone.

Dr. Richards nods and shakes Washington's hand.

INT. OMEGA LAB - NIGHT

Washington examines each cage and finds deformed babies until he gets to the end of the row.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

This damn experiment is a waste of time! I can't replicate it, and if I don't, I don't know what Richards will do. The son of a bitch can go to hell for all I care. This is mine. This is my project.

INT. OMEGA-HALL - DAY

Footsteps echo within the hall.

Washington and Dr. Richards tread the hall toward double doors, Dr. Richards with an arm around Washington as he speaks like he's a man who has found the cure to cancer.

Washington listens, hands in pocket.

Dr. Richards stops at the door, grins at Washington, takes out his key card, and...

DING

The double doors open.

INT. OMEGA-CONTAINMENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Washington and Dr. Richards enter the dim lit containment hall. The lights flicker on.

Dr. Richards leads the way, his arms spread out as he welcomes Washington to take a peak at what is behind glass double doors on both sides of the corridor.

Washington peeks inside one of the glass double doors, his eyes squint and as a foot steps into the light, his face goes ghostly white.

Stepping into the light is a DEFORMED PERSON (human) with eyes that droop, arms covered in fur, and a nose similar to a chimpanzee.

Washington closes in on the deformed person, and he nearly loses his balance.

This deformed person looks familiar. This deformed person looks like Taylor. Washington quivers in fear as he glances at Dr. Richardson with his smug look.

From behind each glass double doors, a deformed person steps into the light. Similar in appearance, they all appear to look like Taylor.

Dr. Richards grins and clasps his hands together. Washington, quivering, staggers out of the containment hall.

Behind the glass doors, Washington can hear the murmurs of "HELP ME", "PLEASE" and PANT-HOOTS.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. CONTAINMENT ROOM-OMEGA - NIGHT

Taylor weeps curled in a ball.

Dr. Richards grins and claps his hands together.

DR. RICHARDS

You got it.

TAYLOR

No. No. No. No!

DR. RICHARDS

I'll finish for you. We inserted chimpanzee DNA into human embryos to make a similar species to harvest their organs, but we kept getting hybrids. In the end, we got you.

TAYLOR

Omigod.

DR. RICHARDS

I wanted to continue his research, and go public. Shout to the world what we had accomplished.

TAYLOR

Omigod.

DR. RICHARDS

He didn't want to do that because you

would find out what he did to you.

TAYLOR
I can't breathe.

Taylor struggles to breathe. Dr. Richards bends down to her and grabs hold of her shoulder.

DR. RICHARDS
Taylor, just breathe.

Taylor hurls a wad of spit into Dr. Richards's face.

He wipes the spit from his cheek, appalled. He goes to leave the room.

Taylor watches Richards as he ambles to the end of the hall and approaches an intercom. He peaks into it.

DR. RICHARDS
(into intercom)
Time to perform the autopsies.
(to Taylor)
I'm sorry.

Dr. Richards exits.

Taylor watches a gas enter behind the double glass doors as the deformed humans choke on the air.

The deformed humans try to find oxygen in the corners of their rooms, but to no avail. They each collapse to the surface.

Taylor bangs on the glass double doors to try to get them up. To no avail.

INT. OMEGA-HALL - NIGHT

Brandon hides around a corner when he sees Dr. Richards and TWO SCIENTISTS head off in the opposite direction. He takes out Truman's card.

INT. POLICE STATION-TRUMAN'S DESK - NIGHT

Truman's phone vibrates on her desk. Truman enters, coffee in hand.

TRUMAN
(in phone)
Truman...Slow down. Slow down. Who is

this?...You're Taylor's friend, right?
Is she hurt?

She takes out a pen and pad from the drawer and scribbles down an address.

TRUMAN
(in phone)
Stay put. Don't do anything. I'll be
right there.

Truman shoves her phone in her pocket and takes out keys from the drawer. Worth enters.

WORTH
What was that about?

TRUMAN
I'll explain in the car.

INT. OMEGA-CONTAINMENT ROOM - NIGHT

Taylor lies in the fetal position, face stained with tears.

From the hall she hears FOOTSTEPS coming her way. They stop, the door clicks from the key fob being used, and it opens.

A shadow emerges over Taylor.

A DOCTOR (50s) stands over her.

DOCTOR
Get up.

Just as the doctor grabs her, Taylor takes her fingers and thrusts them forward into his eyes. The doctor whimpers and crumbles to the floor.

Taylor climbs to her feet and scrambles out of the cell and into the hall. She tries to open the door, though it won't budge. She notices the keycard reader.

Taylor returns to the doctor and thrusts her knee into his chin. She takes the keycard from his shirt, rushes out the cell to the door, and uses the keycard.

DING.

The double doors open.

INT. OMEGA CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Taylor tiptoes through the corridor holding herself up using the walls when she hear FOOTSTEPS on the move coming her way. She waits...

Voices from a distance emerge.

Taylor uses the keycard to an adjacent door and exits inside.

EXT. OMEGA LOBBY - NIGHT

Truman tries to open the main entrance door; it doesn't budge.

 WORTH
Should we try calling?

 TRUMAN
No need.

Truman sees Brandon through the glass doors rushing toward them. Brandon pushes a door open.

 BRANODN
Hurry!

Brandon rushes toward a hall, Worth and Truman follow behind.

INT. OMEGA-CONTAINMENT ROOM - NIGHT

Brandon, Worth, and Truman enter.

 TRUMAN
 (to Brandon)
Where is she?

 BRANDON
She was just here.

Worth glances inside another containment room, though it's pitch black.

INT. OMEGA-CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

Taylor presses her ear against the door. She looks through the window of the door.

INT. OMEGA-LOBBY - DAY

Taylor enters.

The double doors are straight ahead. Just as Taylor darts toward the exit...

BANG.

Taylor screams out and collapses to the floor. She looks at her left calf muscle. She's been shot. Dr. Richards enters with the gun pointed at her.

FIVE SCIENTISTS in lab coats enter from behind him.

TAYLOR

Why are you doing this? You have what you want! You don't need me!

Dr. Richards ambles toward Taylor and goes to pick her up.

DR. RICHARDS

Taylor, I'm sorry for this, but I do need you.

As he goes for her, Taylor kicks him in the crotch with her good leg.

He whimpers and drops the gun. Taylor grabs the gun and aims it at him as she rises to her feet as best as she can.

TRUMAN (O.S.)

Hey!

Truman, Worth, and Brandon enter from an adjacent hall.

WORTH

Put it down.

BRANDON

Taylor..

Taylor struggles to stand on one leg as she holds up the gun.

DR. RICHARDS

Taylor-Please. Please.

Taylor clenches the gun.

DR. RICHARDS

Don't shoot me.

Dr. Richards gets down on his knees and cries. He wipes the snot from his nose.

DR. RICHARDS

I never meant for this to go so far.

TRUMAN

Taylor, put it down. You don't want to do this.

Taylor wipes away a tear then takes hold of the gun with both hands again.

TRUMAN

This isn't the road you want to take.
Put it down.

Taylor's face is stained with tears, her face tenses, her grip tightens just as she lets out a scream.

WHEN...

...She pulls the trigger.

BLACK.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Taylor is asleep in a hospital bed.

Her eyes flicker open, and the first thing she sees is Brandon hovering over her. Taylor opens her mouth to scream, and Brandon rushes to cover her mouth.

BRANDON

Detective Truman is in the hall. She's going to ask you what happened. Tell her everything, but leave Omega Chem out of it. With my father gone, the lab is mine. Do whatever you have to do, but let me make things right.

TRUMAN (O.S.)

I'm going to check on her.

FOOTSTEPS come their way. Brandon backs away from Taylor just as Truman and Worth enter. Truman eyes them both suspiciously.

TRUMAN

Everything okay?

TAYLOR

Everything's fine.

TRUMAN

Good. How are you feeling?

TAYLOR

Okay.

TRUMAN

I don't mean to jump into things, Taylor. I know you've been through a lot, but I need to know what happened. Why was Dr. Richards holding you against your will?

TAYLOR

Is he...?

TRUMAN

No. He's very much alive.

TAYLOR

Am I arrested?

Truman and Worth exchange glances.

TRUMAN

Taylor, you could have easily thrown the gun down.

TAYLOR

I was in shock.

TRUMAN

But no. You're not arrested.

Taylor glances at Brandon, though he doesn't meet her gaze.

TRUMAN

What happened? Can you start from the beginning?

TAYLOR

I'm still in a bit of shock.

TRUMAN

Do the best you can.

WORTH

(to Brandon)

If you can step outside.

Brandon glances at Taylor, though she doesn't meet his gaze.

He exits.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL - DAY

Brandon stands outside Taylor's door as he bites on his fingernails. The hospital room door opens, and Worth and Truman exit.

TRUMAN

I suggest you stay away from Taylor.

BRANDON

W-What?

TRUMAN

After what Dr. Richards did-

BRANDON

I am not my father, and I called you!

TRUMAN

We'll be seeing you.

Truman and Worth exit.

Brandon rushes inside Taylor's room and closes the door behind him.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

BRANDON

What did you tell them?

TAYLOR

What am I?

BRANDON

What?

TAYLOR

What am I?

BRANDON

You're human. You're human. They used a human embryo and inserted different genes into you. Taylor, what did you tell them?

Taylor's eyes widen in disbelief, and her body quivers.

TAYLOR
My father was going to harvest me?

BRANDON
He didn't though. What did you tell them?

TAYLOR
Enough not to hurt him.

BRANDON
Good. Taylor-

Brandon goes to touch her.

TAYLOR
Don't touch me!

BRANDON
Okay.

TAYLOR
I want you out!

BRANDON
Wait. Let me say this, and if you never want to see me again, I will understand.

TAYLOR
Say it. Then get out.

Brandon nods, okay.

BRANDON
I love you.

With everything she has, Taylor slaps Brandon. The sound echoes in the room.

BRANDON
I deserved that, but Taylor, I love you. You might not believe it, but I love you, and I don't think I would be able to live anymore if you hated me.

EXT. RICHARDS RESIDENCE - DAY

The sun hangs high in the cloudy, blue sky.

INT. BRANDON'S ROOM - DAY

Brandon is asleep in bed. On the nightstand, his phone rings. Brandon reaches for his phone.

BRANDON
(in phone)
Hello?

RECEPTIONIST (V.O.)
(from phone)
Brandon! What is happening?! Where is
Dr. Richards?!

Brandon's eyes flicker open.

BRANDON
(in phone)
What's wrong?

RECEPTIONIST (V.O.)
(from phone)
The police are here!

Brandon springs up from bed, his face going ghastly pale.

CUT TO:

INT. OMEGA CHEM - DAY

Detectives in FBI jackets and SWAT make their way inside the building, the employees distraught as they allow them to invade.

INT. BRANDON'S ROOM - DAY

Brandon hangs up on the receptionist and dials for Taylor. It rings...and rings...and...

TAYLOR (V.O.)
(from phone)
This is Taylor. Leave a name and-

Brandon tosses his phone against the wall.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Brandon rushes down the stairs, grabs his jacket from the couch, and heads to the front door.

Outside he can hear murmurs. He opens the door, and

microphones are thrust his way.

REPORTER

Mr. Thompson! Is it true Omega Chem is being investigated?

BRANDON

What?

Reporters shout out question after question.

REPORTER

Is it true the police are investigating you for the kidnapping of Taylor Washington?

Brandon shuts the door and rushes upstairs to his room.

INT. BRANDON'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Brandon rushes to take down photos of Taylor as quickly as he can.

DING DONG

He looks toward the hall.

TRUMAN (O.S.)

Police!

Brandon's face goes as white as a sheet of ice.

INT. WASHINGTON HOME-CORRIDOR - DAY

Taylor sits with her knees pressed against her chest as she gazes at the photos of her and Washington together on the wall.

Beside Taylor is a sky blue, battered journal.

BEGIN FLASHBACK.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

SEVERAL CHURCH GOERS dressed in their Sunday finest as the church choir sets it off on stage.

A teen Taylor and Washington enter and take a seat at the end of the row. It's obvious Taylor doesn't want to be there.

TEEN TAYLOR
Are we staying the whole time?

WASHINGTON
Yes. Do you have somewhere to be?

Petulant Taylor sinks into her seat.

LEAD CHOIR SINGER, in the microphone, says:

LEAD CHOIR SINGER
And now for the man who will lead us
in our praise to God, Pastor Gabriel!

PASTOR GABRIEL (black, late 40s, nicely trimmed) rises from the front row seat dressed in jeans and a suit jacket. He approaches the podium.

The lead choir SINGER hands him the microphone.

GABRIEL
Good morning, everyone. It's nice
outside today, right? Not too hot. Not
too cool.

The church goes nod in agreement, an amen thrown out from the crowd.

GABRIEL
Now I'm seeing some new faces here
today. I love that as a church, we're
open to anyone and everyone. I pride
myself in that. Lets see who's new. If
you're new here, please stand. Don't
be shy.

A HANDFUL OF CHURCH GOERS rise from their seats. Washington looks over the room then stands. The pastor looks over the church.

GABRIEL
It's nice to have you all here.
Welcome! If you need any information,
please stay after, and our volunteers
can give you some brochures and
answers any questions. You can take
your seats now. I promise I won't
embarrass you anymore.

The audience chuckles. Those standing sit back down.

GABRIEL

Today I would like to talk about fate. Certain aspects of our life are out of our control, right? Such as what family we're born into, losing a job. Losing a loved one.

The audience amens.

GABRIEL

Sometimes in spite of our actions, our fate is already preordained. We can't change it. However, there are times when we can. Man was created with the ability to make moral decisions. We were instilled with free will. Therefore, we can choose where the course of our life is headed, right?

Washington nods.

GABRIEL

We have the ability to change our fate. When life hits us and it hits us hard and we hit rock bottom, we can choose whether or not to climb back up. If you have faith, you will be able to tell a mountain to move, and if you do not doubt, it will move.

Washington nods his head, mouthing "AMEN".

INT. VEHICLE - DAY

Taylor and Washington climb inside the car in the parking lot of the church.

TEEN TAYLOR

Thank God that's over.

WASHINGTON

I'm guessing you took nothing from that sermon, huh?

Washington retrieves something in the glove compartment. It's a navy blue jewelry box. He hands it to Taylor. She opens the box to find the cross necklace.

TAYLOR

Wow. For me? It's pretty.

WASHINGTON

You like it?

TAYLOR

Yeah. I like it.

WASHINGTON

I'm glad.

TAYLOR

What's it for?

WASHINGTON

To remember when you hit rock bottom,
I'll always have your back.

TAYLOR

Thanks, Dad.

Washington happily turns over the ignition.

end flashback.

PRESENT-INT. WASHINGTON HOME-CORRIDOR - DAY

Taylor is in the same position reading the battered journal.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

'And whatever you ask in prayer, you
will receive, if you have faith.' I
pray that Taylor lives a normal and
long life doing what she loves.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Taylor jogs through the community with so much lifted off her
chest.

EXT. OMEGA CHEM - DAY

There is a big protest going on, and in the middle of it is
Taylor with her sign that reads, "MY FATHER DESERVES
JUSTICE!"

Other protesters hold signs that read, "ANIMALS HAVE RIGHTS!"
or "CLOSE OMEGA DOWN!"

Next to Taylor is Samantha with her sign.

INT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

Taylor in shabby jeans and a t-shirt goes cage to cage with a bag of dog food feeding each dog inside.

She takes out her phone from her pocket and answers it.

EXT. OMEGA CHEM - DAY

Taylor dressed professionally in a black, sleek skirt and blouse peeks up at the previous Omega Chem sign. It now reads "WASHINGTON CHEM".

She grins and adjusts the strap of her bag on her shoulder.

She enters the building.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

Sometimes I think I was too hard on her, but she turned out all right. I did okay. Can I believe that?

INT. OMEGA CHEM BOARDROOM - DAY

Taylor sits around the conference table with SEVERAL WHITE MEN as one PRESENTER presents the earnings on a chart in front of the room.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Taylor makes her way toward a gravesite carrying a lone peony. She brushes away the lone leaves on the tombstone and lays the flower down on the grave.

The following dialogue continues with the scene followed by a montage of the flashbacks we've seen that start with Washington and Amy, leading up to his life with Taylor.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)

I usually find myself praying never for myself, but for Taylor. Please let this little woman grow to be the very best that she can be. If I could tell Taylor one thing: it would be to live your life. No matter what happens, just live your life.

A flock of birds fly against the clear, blue sky. What a sight to see.

FADE OUT.

THE END.