

Awaken

By

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OVER BLACK

FEMALE(V.O.)
What else can I do?

FADE IN:

INT. BATHROOM

SOMEONE'S POV

A cupped palm. Pills rain down and SPLASH into the hand.
Time slows. They settle.

FEMALE(V.O.)
This is the only thing left...The
only way to make it end.

The handful of pills approach. Head tilts back and --

EXT. DRIVEWAY -DAY

A school bus drives away and reveals JACOB MILLER(11). He's
a bit small for his age, wears thick framed glasses and has
spiky blond hair.

He runs toward a cottage. Backpack strapped over his
shoulder. Struggles with the weight of it.

A test paper in his hand. It FLAPS with each step to reveal
an "A+" written in red ink.

He reaches the front porch. Grabs the door handle and
crosses the threshold into the--

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

JACOB
Mom, mom! I got the best grade in
the --

Room empty. It's quiet. Door shuts behind him.

JACOB(CONT'D)
(muffled)
class.

He scans the room. All seems normal. Wait. An open jar on
the counter. Lid on the floor next to a broken dish.

He makes a beeline for her bedroom door. Opens it and
enters--

MARIE'S BEDROOM

His entire body droops. Test paper glides to the floor.
Lands face down.

Against the back wall is a dresser with a large mirror. In
the reflection --

MARIE MILLER, a young 40, has sweatpants and an over-sized
white t-shirt on. Lays across the bed, over the covers.
SNORES. A purse and opened pill bottles by her side.

He shakes her.

JACOB
Mom, you ok?

Nothing. He shakes harder.

JACOB(CONT'D)
Can you hear me? Wake up!

A mumble. She's alive. A SIGH of relief.

JACOB(CONT'D)
I got the best grade in the class!

She raises her eyebrows high but her eyes don't open. Brows
fall back to a relaxed position. SNORES resume.

Jacob snatches the straggler pills on the bed. Reaches under
the bed. Pulls out a small pouch. Opens it. A mixture of
pills.

He DARTS around the room. A drawer opens. More pills.

Moves to the next spot. Jackpot! He's done this before. With
both hands full he enters the

BATHROOM

Over the toilet. Checks behind him. All clear. He dumps the
pills into the toilet. Checks over his shoulder and FLUSHES.

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOURS LATER

Jacob eats cereal. Watches T.V.

A door CREAKS open. Marie stumbles in. She squints. Blocks
the light with her hand. She's coherent now.

MARIE
Hey Baby, you hungry?

Spoon at his mouth, he turns to her --

JACOB
I made cereal.

MARIE
Oh okay. Sorry I didn't cook, mommy
was tired.

She digs in the cabinet. Jacob glances over at her. She
pulls out a pill bottle.

JACOB
Please don't take anymore.

MARIE
More? I'm eight days sober.

JACOB
You were messed up yesterday, all
my friends saw and you were messed
up when I got home today.

MARIE
No I wasn't.

JACOB
I'm not little anymore, I can tell.

MARIE
I didn't take anything bad, Jacob.
It was just a bad reaction to my
bladder medicine.

JACOB
(whispers)
You always say that.

Jacob takes another bite, frowns, and turns his attention
back toward the TV.

Marie digs through the cabinet. Pill bottles RATTLE. She
pulls them out one by one. Examines the label. Not
satisfied. Continues her search.

The RATTLE gets louder.

Jacob puts the spoon down, shuts his eyes tight, and rubs
his temples.

The RATTLE is deafening now. A lid POPS open. He snaps!

JACOB
What are you taking now?

MARIE

Nothing!

He points toward a bottle in her hand.

JACOB

Then what's that?

MARIE

It's non-narcotic, The doctor gave
it to me.

JACOB

He gives you all of them!

MARIE

That's enough, you don't tell me
what I can take. I'm the parent --

JACOB

Then act like it.

She points to the hallway.

MARIE

GO TO YOUR ROOM, NOW!

JACOB

Fine.

Jacob marches to his room and shuts the door.

Marie throws a few pills in her mouth. Crouches down and
opens another cabinet. She reaches way in the back and pulls
out a bottle of whiskey.

Takes a big SWIG. GULP.

INT. JACOB'S BEDROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Jacob plays with action figures.

There's a picture on the wall of Marie, a younger Jacob, and
a man. All smiles.

In the reflection of the picture the door FLIES open and
Marie stumbles in snarling. Belt high in the air and HAMMERS
down on Jacob. WHACK. He winces in pain.

She slurs her speech.

MARIE
Where are they!

She lifts the belt high. He covers up.

JACOB
Please..dont--

WHACK.

MARIE
Tell me where they are!

JACOB
(sobs)
It hurts...

WHACK.

MARIE
You threw them, didn't you?

JACOB
I won't do it again...

WHACK! She stumbles. The drug effects become amplified. Speech nearly incoherent now.

MARIE(CONT'D)
Don't ever touch my pills.

Her work here is done. She stumbles away. SLAMS the door. The picture falls and shatters.

Jacob wipes the blood from his face. He picks up the broken picture. Stares at it. Tears fill his eyes.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Jacob is at the table. Eats a pop tart. Backpack propped up against the opened door. He keeps checking outside.

Marie enters. She notices the marks on his face. Grabs his head. Her hands maneuver his face toward the light.

MARIE
Oh my goodness! What happened?

Jacob peers at her through the corner of his eyes.

JACOB
You don't remem--

MARIE

Are they bullying you at school again? I'll go down there today and have a talk with the principal!

JACOB

No, Mom. It was...an accident.

MARIE

Accident? How?

JACOB

We were ...playing ball.

MARIE

Ball? They need to keep a better eye on you!

He nods. Hands his test paper to her.

JACOB

I need you to sign this for Mrs. Sarah.

MARIE

An A+, way to go!

Marie reaches for a pen and initials the paper. Hands it back.

MARIE

Be careful today, I don't want you to come home with any new marks!

Through the doorway, a school bus comes to a halt.

Jacob grabs his backpack. He WADDLES out the house and --

MARIE(O.S.)

Remember, I'll be a little late tonight!

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Bell RINGS. Kids rush out a classroom. From behind a desk, MRS. SARAH (30s) motions to Jacob to come see.

She watches the door. The last kid exits.

She turns to Jacob and studies his face.

MRS. SARAH
How did you get that mark?

He touches the bruise.

JACOB
From a Ba--

MRS. SARAH
Bully? I was bullied growing up,
too.

He shakes in head.

JACOB
It's not a bully.

MRS. SARAH (CONT'D)
What do you mean, who was it?

Jacob squints his eyes. Ponders a minute.

JACOB
They didn't mean to, Mrs. Sarah.

With a half-smile she leans in.

MRS. SARAH
Sometimes they don't realize how
bad they're hurting you. You have
to tell them.

JACOB
I told them.

She points to his face.

MRS. SARAH (CONT'D)
Maybe you need to show them, too.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAWN

Red and blue lights flicker on the cottage. Jacob presses his face against the window.

A COP helps Marie up the stairs. He places her in a chair on the porch.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jacob opens the front door. The Cop towers over him.

MARIE(O.S.)
(Incoherent mumbles)

JACOB
What happened?

COP
Is your father around?

JACOB
No, sir.

COP
Will he be back soon?

JACOB
He past away when I was little.

COP
Oh, sorry about that, kid. Is there anyone else here?

JACOB
Just me. Did she hurt anyone?

The Cop squints and shakes his head.

COP
No, She didn't hurt anyone...Found her stumbling around the mall parking lot confused. She said she had a bad reaction to her medication and I didn't want her driv--.

JACOB
It's not a bad reaction, she takes too many!

COP
(condescending)
I understand how it seems like that, but that's for a Doctor to decide.

Jacob stares at him a moment. An epiphany!

JACOB
That's it!

He turns and runs away. The Cop furrows a brow.

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOURS LATER

Dozens of pill bottles on the counter. Jacob scans the label of a bottle. He flips through pages of a phone book.

A finger runs down the page. He takes a quick sip from a coffee mug. Up a few lines. Then rests on a specific number.

Glances toward a clock. He dials. Phone to his ear.

JACOB(INTO PHONE)
Hi, I'm Jacob. My Mom is Marie
Miller...Well, she gets her
medicine from you and...Hippo?
Wha--

DIAL TONE.

Frustrated. SLAMS the phone down.

In one sweeping motion he knocks all the bottles off the counter. Pills SOAR in all directions. They're scattered everywhere.

He BARGES into the--

BATHROOM

Locks the door. Wipes the tears away. SNIFFLES. Fights to hold it all in.

It's too much, WEEPS. Grimaces at his reflection.

JACOB
Why? What did I do?...

He looks toward the ceiling, interlocks his fingers. Tears roll down his cheeks.

JACOB(CONT'D)
Dad, if you can hear me...please
help. I don't know what to do.

LIVING ROOM

Marie stumbles. She reaches for anything to help steady her balance. Misses everything. Falls.

MARIE'S POV

Vision blurry. Tries hard to focus on the pink and white dots everywhere. The blurry dots merge in and out of focus. They're pills. She reaches for one.

BACK TO SCENE

She crawls across the floor. Picks up a pill, throws it in her mouth, and moves on to the next.

She grabs the back of a nearby stool. Attempts to stand. CRASH. The stool falls. Crawling resumes.

BATHROOM

Jacob hears the CRASH and looks into the--

HALLWAY

His view obstructed by furniture. As he moves closer, he gets a glimpse of Marie through the reflection in the storm door.

Repulsed, He turns away. Bottles. He turns the other way. Pills. Heavy PANTING. There is no safe direction, he's trapped.

He drops his head. A capped pill bottle at his feet.

A calmness comes over him as he wipes his face dry. Breathing steadies. Grabs the bottle and goes back into the--

BATHROOM

He locks the door and faces the mirror.

JACOB'S POV

Stares at his reflection.

MARIE (V.O.)

I don't remember much from that
night. But the words coming from my
Son's mouth as I laid there
paralyzed will forever haunt me.

The cupped palm.

MARIE (V.O.)

What else can I do?

JACOB

What else can I do?

Pills rain down and SPLASH into the cupped hand. Time slows. They settle.

MARIE (V.O.)
This is the only thing
left...The only way to make
it end.

JACOB
This is the only thing
left...The only way to make
it end.

LIVING ROOM

Marie stretches for the bathroom door. She's can't reach.

JACOB'S POV

The handful of pills approach. Head tilts back. GULP. It's done.

MARIE (V.O.)
I have to show her.

JACOB
I have to show her.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

SUPER: ONE YEAR LATER

Marie passes through rows of headstones. She stops. Kneels next to a grave. The headstone reads, "JACOB MILLER".

She fiddles with something in her hand. She sobs.

MARIE (V.O.)
Every day I think about ending it.
But, that'd be the easy way out and
I'm not looking for the easy way
out anymore.

She sets down a large bronze coin on the grave.

MARIE (V.O.)
I'm seeking something else.
Something I don't deserve...

INSERT COIN

It reads, "Narcotics Anonymous, 1 year Sobriety"

MARIE (V.O.)
Forgiveness.

FADE OUT: