

A SUBURBAN TRAGEDY

by

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EXT. SUBURBAN AVENUE - NIGHT

A car whizzes through a green traffic signal.

The car passes a bank sign with a large digital clock flashing: 2:56 AM

DANIEL

(o.s.)

If she was so hot, why didn't you say anything?

ALEX

(o.s)

Are you kidding me? A girl that hot? No way in hell.

DANIEL

(chuckling)

Why not?

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - NIGHT

DANIEL DAVIS, 22, is behind the wheel. His brother, ALEX DAVIS, 17, is in the passenger seat.

ALEX

I had no shot.

DANIEL

Not with that attitude.

ALEX

She had to be at least twenty-four. I'm sure she falls all over herself for high school guys.

DANIEL

So you lie. You could've gotten away with twenty. I mean, I would buy twenty.

Alex pulls out a pack of gum and pops a piece into his mouth.

DANIEL

(glancing over)

You should probably toss me a piece of that.

ALEX

You had like two drinks an hour ago.

DANIEL
Who cares?

ALEX
It's my last piece.

Daniel shoots his brother an annoyed look.

Alex hands over his last piece of gum.

DANIEL
I'm starving.
(to Alex)
You hungry?

ALEX
Nah.

DANIEL
You sure?

ALEX
Yeah. I'm beat. Could care less
about food.

DANIEL
Well, I'm gonna stop and grab a
bite.

ALEX
Knock yourself out.

EXT. SUBURBAN AVENUE - NIGHT

Daniel's car turns into a restaurant drive-thru lane.

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - NIGHT

He pulls up to the speaker and rolls the window down.

DRIVE-THRU ATTENDANT
(over speaker)
Thank you for stopping at Cozy's,
can I interest you in a dollar dog
combo?

DANIEL
No, thanks.

Alex turns the radio up.

DANIEL
(to Alex)
Turn that down, fool.

ALEX
Sorry.

Alex turns down the radio as Daniel addresses the menu board.

DANIEL
I'll have a bacon cheeseburger, no
tomato, a large fry, and a medium
Sprite.

DRIVE-THRU ATTENDANT
Will that be all for you, sir?

DANIEL
That's about--

BANG! An SUV runs right into the rear of Daniel's car. The
two brothers jolt forward.

ALEX
(startled)
What the hell?

Daniel looks in his rearview mirror.

DANIEL
Didn't this guy see me here?

ALEX
Apparently not.

Daniel turns to look out the rear window. The DRIVER is yet
to exit his vehicle.

DANIEL
(opens door)
Wait here.

He gets out of the car.

EXT. DRIVE-THRU - NIGHT

Daniel approaches the SUV shielding his eyes from the bright
headlights.

The DRIVER and PASSENGER both get out.

DANIEL
You fella's alright?

The driver, a rugged beast of a man, walks around the front of his SUV and up to Daniel.

DRIVER

What the fuck? I thought you were pulling up.

DANIEL

I never even took my foot off the brake.

The passenger, shaved head with forearms like tree trunks, walks up.

PASSENGER

(to Daniel)

The fuck's a matter with you?

DANIEL

Dude, you guys ran into me!

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - NIGHT

Alex watches the confrontation from the passenger seat.

ALEX

Shit.

EXT. DRIVE-THRU - NIGHT

Alex jumps out of the car and approaches the group. They are now in a heated argument.

DANIEL

...that's what insurance is for.
It's no big deal.

The passenger lunges toward Daniel and shoves him.

PASSENGER

Gettin' smart, motherfucker!

Alex dashes toward the passenger.

ALEX

(shoving passenger)

What the fuck is your problem, man?

PASSENGER

Oh, what the fuck are you gonna do?

DRIVER
(to Alex)
Oh, you a tough guy?

Daniel gets between his brother and the passenger.

DANIEL
Look! It's a goddamn bumper! Lets
exchange info and move on. The
police don't even have to get
involved. Okay?

DRIVER
(glaring at Alex)
Fine.

Employees from within the restaurant are now watching from
the windows.

DRIVER
(to passenger)
It's in the glove box.

The passenger heads toward the SUV.

DANIEL
(to driver)
Thank you.

Alex and Daniel walk back toward their car.

ALEX
Assholes.

DANIEL
Shut up. I don't really feel like
getting stabbed tonight.

Alex opens the passenger door and fishes through the glove
box.

Suddenly, the passenger sprints toward Daniel with an
aluminum baseball bat.

CRACK! The bat meets Daniel's face.

He falls to the pavement.

ALEX
WHAT THE FUCK?!

He rushes the passenger in an attempt to tackle him.

The driver runs over and pulls Alex off the passenger.

DRIVER

FUCKER!

He punches Alex in the face.

Alex falls backward and cracks his temple on the edge of the passenger door before falling to the ground, unconscious.

Daniel fights to get up, but is dazed. Blood dripping down his face, he manages to get to his feet.

PASSENGER

(to Alex on the ground)

Look at you now, hardass! Ain't so fuckin' tough now, you little piece a shit!

The driver looks at the people watching from inside the restaurant.

DRIVER

(to passenger)

SHIT, MAN, WE GOTTA HIT THE FUCKIN' ROAD!

Out of nowhere, Daniel rushes the driver and pushes him against the bumper of the SUV. He punches him in the face repeatedly.

The passenger comes up behind Daniel and hits him in the back of his head with the bat.

Daniel keels over and falls to the ground. The passenger continues wailing on him.

Police sirens are heard from a distance.

Terrified employees scream and holler, pounding on the windows.

DRIVER

FUCK! COME ON!

PASSENGER

(to Daniel)

MOTHERFUCKER!

The driver and passenger jump back into the SUV and speed away.

Alex opens his eyes and wobbles to his feet. He walks to the rear of Daniel's car.

ALEX
 (chin quivering)
 Oh Shit...

Daniel's lifeless body is laying on the pavement. His face is covered in blood. His eyes are frozen and fixed on his brother.

Alex falls to the ground. He picks up his dead brother and cradles him in his arms.

ALEX
 (sobbing hysterically)
 NO...GOD...SOMEONE HELP
 US....GOD...WAKE
 UP...DANNY...PLEASE...

Police cars pull up in the parking lot.

Several stunned employees move out of the restaurant and toward Alex.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

SUPER: "One Year Later."

Alex jogs around the neighborhood with headphones in.

He looks pale and disheveled. The dark shadows around his eyes suggest sleep doesn't come easy.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Alex enters the kitchen, wiping sweat from his face with a towel.

MARIA DAVIS, 44, is sitting at the kitchen table. She's pale, drained, drinking a cup of coffee and looking out the window.

Alex walks over to the fridge and gets a bottle of water.

ALEX
 (out of breath)
 Morning.

MARIA
 Good morning, dear.

She doesn't take her eyes off the window.

ALEX
 Get any sleep?

MARIA
Not so much.

ALEX
Me either.

MARIA
Your doctor called. He wanted to
see if you can come a bit earlier.

ALEX
Shit.

MARIA
(faces Alex)
What?

ALEX
I completely forgot about that.

MARIA
Are you busy?

ALEX
Nah, it just seems like an enormous
waste of time.

MARIA
I don't want you to give up on
this.

ALEX
I won't. Don't worry about it.

Alex sits down at the table.

MARIA
I'm gonna stay at your
grandmother's tonight so you're on
your own for dinner.

ALEX
No problem.

He glances out the window.

ALEX
Mom?

She doesn't answer.

ALEX
(touches her hand)
Mom.

MARIA
(looking at him)
Yeah, dear?

He turns away.

ALEX
Nevermind.

He rises and kisses her on the forehead. She forces a smile.

MARIA
I love you, sweetie.

ALEX
You too.

He exits.

INT. DR. PRUITT'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. MARK PRUITT sits in a chair facing Alex, who is on the couch.

Pruitt is a clean cut middle-aged man with intense eyes. He sports a five o'clock shadow and has a relatively upscale dress sense.

PRUITT
Your mother tells me she is
worrying about you lately.

Alex gazes out the window behind him.

PRUITT
Any particular reason?

ALEX
She's a mom. They worry.

PRUITT
Understandable.

ALEX
I really think she should be
sitting here.

PRUITT
Why is that?

ALEX
You've spoken to her. Can't you
tell she's somewhere else?

PRUITT
I haven't gathered that.

ALEX
She does a really good job of
hiding it from everyone else, but I
know she's--

PRUITT
Going through changes?

ALEX
I was gonna say, "fucked up".

PRUITT
Losing a son will do that to a
person.

ALEX
So will losing a brother.

PRUITT
Is there something you wanna talk
about?

ALEX
We've been over this a thousand
times. Nothing ever changes. It's
pointless to keep dancing around
it.

PRUITT
Well, that could be because you
aren't allowing changes to take
effect.

ALEX
What the hell is that supposed to
mean?

PRUITT
Have you started the journal I
suggested?

ALEX
No.

PRUITT
I rest my case.

ALEX
You think writing my thoughts in a
goddamn notebook is gonna make me
feel better about this? It's not.

PRUITT

What else are you doing, Alex?

He glares at Pruitt.

PRUITT

You see what I mean? I can give you all the advice in the world, but as long as you ignore it--

ALEX

I'm not ignoring it.

PRUITT

What do you call this? You come here every week and we have a staring contest for an hour. You have taken every suggestion I've given you with a grain of salt.

ALEX

What the hell do you want me to do?

PRUITT

I want you to apply yourself. I want you to care about getting better...

ALEX

(overlapping)
I don't.

PRUITT

...I want you to come in here and open up so I have the slightest opportunity to help you.

Alex shakes his head in anger.

ALEX

What do you think you're gonna do? You think you're gonna figure me out?

PRUITT

You have to work with me here, kid.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex lays in bed writing in a notebook.

ALEX

(v.o)

I constantly find myself
questioning the existence of God...

QUICK FLASH: A crucifix rotates until it's inverted.

BACK TO SCENE.

ALEX

(v.o)

Why did He allow this to happen to
us?

BUZZ! His cell phone vibrates on the dresser beside his bed.
He shuts the notebook quickly and answers it.

ALEX

What's up?

KEVIN

(over phone)

What's happening, dude?

ALEX

Not much. Looking for an excuse to--

KEVIN

(interrupting)

I'm havin' people over tonight.
Folks are in Tampa. You should get
off your ass and head over.

ALEX

Didn't know your old man was much
for the tropics.

KEVIN

Dude, it's hardly the tropics.
Anything to get away from writing
tickets.

ALEX

Either way. I don't really feel
like doing anything.

KEVIN

Come on, man, there's gonna be some
hotties over here. Don't be such a
fag.

ALEX

I don't know, dude, I'm really
tired.

KEVIN

Bitch.

Alex is quiet for a moment, pondering.

ALEX

Shit. What time?

INT. BAXTER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Teenagers are scattered around the modern living room. Rock music blasts from the stereo.

Alex is sitting on the couch beside a DRUNK GIRL. He looks tired and bored.

DRUNK GIRL

(shouting over music)

Hey! Aren't you in my Chemistry class?

ALEX

I'm not really sure.

DRUNK GIRL

Yeah! I think you are!

ALEX

What hour?

DRUNK GIRL

Fourth.

Just then, THEO, 17, approaches the drunk girl. He is dressed to the nines with more than enough product in his hair.

THEO

Hey hottie! We're doing shots in the kitchen. You down?

DRUNK GIRL

Hell yeah!

THEO

(turns to Alex)

Sorry, bro. You snooze, you lose.

ALEX

(light sarcasm)

What a total disappointment.

Theo takes the drunk girl's hand and leads her away.

Alex gets up and walks over to KEVIN BAXTER, 18, who is chatting with MALLORY BANYON, 17, and KAITLIN TINSEL, 17.

Kevin is the guy who definitely went through puberty way too early. He wears a tight fitting t-shirt and is built like a linebacker.

Mallory is a traditionally pretty girl. She can probably pull off wearing no makeup although she has eyeliner and blush on tonight.

The leggy blonde known as Kaitlin is bubbly and flirtatious with a sexy stare, suggesting she is on the prowl.

ALEX
(to Kevin)
I think I'm gonna split.

KEVIN
Man, you're a fag. You just got here.

ALEX
I'm not really feelin' it.

MALLORY
(to Alex)
You don't say "hi"?

ALEX
(smiling)
Hi Mal.

MALLORY
Have you met Kaitlin? She goes to North.

Alex smiles at Kaitlin.

ALEX
(to Kaitlin)
How's it going?

KAITLIN
(smiling)
Pretty good.

MALLORY
You're not leaving already, are you?

ALEX
I was thinkin' about it.

KEVIN
Of course he is. He's a bitch.

MALLORY
Why do you always have to be such
an ass, Kevin?

KEVIN
(putting his arm around
Alex)
He knows I'm just fuckin' around.

Alex forces an irritated smile as Kevin messes up his hair.

KAITLIN
(to Alex)
I think we should get you another
drink.

ALEX
I didn't have a first one.

KEVIN
All the more reason to have
another.

Kaitlin smiles and grabs Alex's arm.

KAITLIN
Shall we?

ALEX
(smiles)
I guess.

KEVIN
(slapping Alex's back)
Alright then.

Alex throws him a nervous smirk.

EXT. BAXTER HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Alex and Kaitlin sit at a table drinking beers. They are on a deck surrounded by tiki torches. No one else in sight.

KAITLIN
It's so nice out here. I can't
believe those morons are still
inside.

ALEX

I guess they didn't want to miss
the action.

Their attention shifts to the kitchen window where Kevin taps
the top of a girl's beer bottle with his own. She quickly
puts her mouth over it, but is too late.

Kaitlin laughs.

Back in the kitchen, the girl shoots beer out of her nose.

ALEX

(re: window)

Nice.

KAITLIN

So, how do you and Kevin know each
other?

ALEX

We've been friends since like
fourth grade. We actually hated
each other at first.

KAITLIN

That's not hard to believe.

ALEX

How so?

KAITLIN

He's kind of a dick, but you didn't
hear that from me.

ALEX

An acquired taste.

KAITLIN

I don't know what Mal sees in him.

ALEX

He's a good guy. He means well. He
does. Just has a different way of
expressing himself.

KAITLIN

I just don't like him.

ALEX

Everyone's entitled to their own
opinion, I guess.

KAITLIN
What about you?

ALEX
What about me?

KAITLIN
What's your story?

ALEX
My story? I don't have much of a
story. I actually...

KAITLIN
...have a girlfriend?

Alex smiles.

ALEX
No, that is one thing I don't have.

Kaitlin moves her chair closer to Alex. Her bedroom eyes
stare him down as she bites her bottom lip.

KAITLIN
That's a nice surprise.

ALEX
Is it?

She moves in and kisses him.

ALEX
You don't waste any time.

KAITLIN
When I see something I want, I take
it.

INT. BAXTER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin is hunched over on the couch with Mallory beside him.
He is drunk and his face is beet red. She offers him a bottle
of water.

MALLORY
You should have some of this. It'll
make you feel better.

KEVIN
That shit doesn't work.

MALLORY
How do you know?

KEVIN
I just do.

MALLORY
Just drink it. Stop being an ass.

She puts the bottle to his face and he swats it away, knocking it to the floor.

MALLORY
You're such a dick when you're drunk!

Across the room, Theo is chatting with a group of his buddies. One of them does the infamous beer bottle tap and knocks Theo's bottle to the floor.

CRASH! The bottle shatters and coats the hardwood in beer.

KEVIN
(jumps up)
WHAT THE FUCK!

Theo's attention turns to him quickly.

KEVIN
What the fuck is wrong with you?

THEO
I'm sorry, man, it was an accident.
We were just messing around.

Theo's buddies back away leaving the stunned teenager to hold his own.

KEVIN
Well, it's not fuckin' funny. Who the hell invited you anyway?

THEO
I...I...came with some friends...dude...I'm totally sorry.
Just chill out.

Kevin moves closer to him.

KEVIN
Get a towel, motherfucker, start cleaning this shit up.

THEO
I will, man. No problem at all.

The party has silenced and everyone has their attention on the confrontation.

KEVIN
You better get something to take care of that glass too.

THEO
Fine. Where can I get--

Suddenly, Kevin lunges at Theo and grabs him by the neck. He slams the teenager's face to the floor.

The crowd gasps and backs away.

MALLORY
KEVIN! LET HIM UP!

KEVIN
Now, clean the shit up with your fuckin' tongue!

Kevin presses Theo's face into the floor. Little pieces of glass are embedding themselves into his skin.

KEVIN
Go ahead, you pussy, lick that shit up!

Tears roll down Theo's face as blood seeps from his cuts.

Alex comes out of nowhere and pulls Kevin off the helpless teen.

ALEX
DUDE, LEAVE HIM ALONE! WHAT THE FUCK?!

Kevin struggles to get free, but Alex has a tight bear hug on him.

KEVIN
(yelling at Theo)
GET THE FUCK OUT OF MY HOUSE, YOU FUCKING FAGGOT!

Theo jumps up and bolts out the front door. His buddies follow close behind.

The remaining guests stare at Kevin in fear.

Mallory glares at him and walks out of the room.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - NIGHT

Alex is behind the wheel with Kaitlin riding in the passenger seat.

KAITLIN

I can't believe he did that. That kid is a psychopath. He definitely has issues. What a total asshole!

Alex remains silent.

KAITLIN

He seriously could've killed that kid.

ALEX

Aren't you being a little dramatic?

KAITLIN

How can you be taking this so lightly?

ALEX

I'm not. That kid was a prick anyway.

KAITLIN

Does that make it right?

ALEX

Yeah...a little...I don't know.

KAITLIN

Whatever.

ALEX

Look, the guy's my best friend.

KAITLIN

You should get a new one.

ALEX

He's a little psychotic when he drinks.

KAITLIN

That's pretty damn scary.

ALEX

I know. You see, his dad...

He stops himself.

KAITLIN
What?

ALEX
Nevermind.

KAITLIN
His dad what?

ALEX
It's irrelevant.

Kaitlin gazes out the window for a moment.

KAITLIN
Thanks for driving me home.

ALEX
Not a problem.

Alex yawns.

KAITLIN
You tired?

ALEX
Not really. I haven't been sleeping
well lately.

KAITLIN
Wanna go somewhere and hang out?

ALEX
Sure, what did you have in mind?

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex and Kaitlin are making out heavily on his bed. She takes her shirt off and throws it on the floor. Alex gets on top of her. She pulls his shirt off and starts undoing his pants.

ALEX
Are you sure?

She nods in approval. He leans in and kisses her.

EXT. DAVIS HOUSE - NIGHT

BOOM! The sound of thunder.

Lightning strikes and rain cascades to the pavement.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex and Kaitlin are asleep beneath the covers.

A flash of lightning brightens the room for a split second.

Alex opens his eyes.

Thunder crashes.

Kaitlin's head is resting on his bare chest. He slips out of bed.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Alex creeps down the hallway in his boxers.

At the end of the hall, he sees that his mother's bedroom door is open a crack. The lights are on.

Alex walks slowly toward the door and stops in front of it. He knocks softly.

No answer.

ALEX
(whispering)
Mom? You home?

Thunder.

ALEX
Mom.

He pushes the door open.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - MARIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex's eyes widen in terror.

Maria is hanging from a rope. Her eyes are glazed over in white.

ALEX
(bloodcurdling scream)
MOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex jolts up in bed. He's drenched in sweat.

Kaitlin wakes up as well.

KAITLIN
Jesus! Are you okay?

Alex is out of breath.

KAITLIN
What happened?

ALEX
Nightmare....just a nightmare.

Tears stream down his face.

KAITLIN
Must have been some nightmare.

ALEX
I....I haven't really been sleeping
well.

KAITLIN
Should I go?

EXT. DAVIS HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

MICHAEL DAVIS, 45, is on a ladder cleaning leaves out of the gutters. He is a good looking older man with salt and pepper hair.

He scoops a pile of leaves out of the gutter and throws them in a trash barrel below.

Alex appears at the foot of the ladder.

ALEX
What are you doing here?

MICHAEL
Taking care of my house. Somebody's
gotta do it. When was the last time
you took a peek at these gutters?

Alex doesn't answer.

Michael looks down at him.

MICHAEL
(off look)
Exactly.

He drops another pile into the trash barrel and steps down the ladder.

MICHAEL
Where's your mother?

ALEX
Grandma's.

MICHAEL
What's she doing there?

ALEX
Don't know.

MICHAEL
You really should get on this lawn,
too. The weather's starting to get
nice and--

ALEX
(interrupting)
You know, I really could care less.

Michael says nothing and stares at his son.

MICHAEL
Well, I'm not gonna be stopping by
to do little bullshit chores
forever. You're gonna have to take
the initiative sometime.

ALEX
I'll get right on that.

Alex walks back inside the house.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - TRACK - DAY

Alex and Kevin are jogging.

KEVIN
....think she was pretty freaked
out?

ALEX
Wouldn't you be?

KEVIN

Not really. People do a lot of stupid shit in their sleep. Mal has conversations with herself, but you didn't hear that from me.

ALEX

Probably thinks I'm out of my fuckin' mind.

KEVIN

Why do you care? At least you got laid.

ALEX

I definitely waived "bye-bye" to that for a long time.

KEVIN

You'll be fine, man.

ALEX

Any word on that guy you went Patrick Bateman on?

KEVIN

Nope. Why do you keep bringing that up?

ALEX

Well, it was pretty fucked up. What you did.

KEVIN

Yeah, I've been thinking a lot about it. I feel really bad.

ALEX

Really?

KEVIN

(laughs)
Nah!

ALEX

You're such a dick, man. You didn't even know that kid.

KEVIN

Fuck him! That kid was a fag anyway!

ALEX

You fucked him up pretty bad. Did you see the glass stuck in his face?

KEVIN

Hysterical.

ALEX

What if he reports you or something?

KEVIN

(rolling his eyes)

Come on, man, do you even have to ask?

ALEX

I guess not.

KEVIN

It'll all work out.

ALEX

You're gonna do whatever you want regardless of what I say. There's no point in wasting my breath.

KEVIN

So, why do you try?

ALEX

I have no idea.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Alex rummages through his locker for books. He locates his Psychology book, shoves it in his backpack, and slams the locker door.

As he walks down the hallway toward his next class, he notices a young woman standing at the door.

She is very attractive in a sophisticated fashion. Her outfit consists of a skirt that ends right above her knees and a dress shirt buttoned to show only the slightest bit of cleavage. This is KATHERINE TAYLOR, 25.

Alex approaches the door and Katherine shoots him a smile that would stop traffic.

KATHERINE

Good afternoon.

He smiles nervously and scurries into the classroom.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Alex takes a seat in the front row.

The bell rings and students take their seats as Katherine enters.

KATHERINE

Alright, everyone, get settled so we can begin.

Alex stares at her as she moves to the center of the classroom.

KATHERINE

I am Miss Taylor and I will be taking over this class for Mister Walker for the remainder of the semester.

A STUDENT raises his hand.

KATHERINE

(pointing at student)
Yes?

STUDENT

Where's Mister Walker?

KATHERINE

I believe he has some sort of medical condition.

STUDENT

Is it serious?

KATHERINE

I really don't know.

STUDENT

(disappointed)
Drag.

KATHERINE

Any other questions?

No answer.

KATHERINE

Okay, then. Let's get started.

Katherine's voice fades to a muffle as Alex continues to study her. She has the kind of eyes that look right through you. Her smile is far too comforting.

MALLORY

(o.s.)

Alex?

Alex snaps out of his spell and notices Mallory in the desk behind him.

ALEX

(turns)

Oh....hey....what's up?

MALLORY

(smirking)

Have fun Saturday night?

ALEX

Aside from that unfortunate incident.

MALLORY

I can't believe you.

ALEX

What?

MALLORY

Kaitlin?

ALEX

Who cares?

MALLORY

That's so not you.

KATHERINE

(calling out to Alex and
Mallory)

Can you two save the conversation
for after class?

They exchange embarrassed looks.

ALEX

Yeah....sorry.

KATHERINE

Thank you.

She shoots that warm smile again.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Class has ended. Students spill into the hallway from every which way.

Alex and Mallory exit the classroom.

MALLORY

I can't believe you slept with her.

ALEX

What's the big deal?

MALLORY

I don't know. She's a little on the....

ALEX

....slutty side?

MALLORY

Promiscuous.

ALEX

I gathered that.

MALLORY

Doesn't that scare you?

ALEX

I guess. I don't know. Who cares?

MALLORY

You should be more careful. I don't want you to catch anything. Were you safe?

ALEX

Of course.

MALLORY

That's a plus.

INT. DR. PRUITT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Second session with Alex and Pruitt.

ALEX

I've been having these nightmares.

PRUITT

Again?

ALEX

Yeah. Only this time they are very real. I mean, they are about specific things.

PRUITT

Explain.

Alex sits silently, remembering.

ALEX

Okay. I wake up in the middle of the night and find my mother hanging in her bedroom.

INT. MARIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Maria hangs from a rope around her neck. Her eyes are glazed over white.

INT. DR. PRUITT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

PRUITT

Hanging....what....by a rope?

ALEX

Yeah.

PRUITT

What do you think this means?

ALEX

I don't believe dreams really have a meaning. That's stupid.

PRUITT

I wouldn't write off the possibility completely. Say they did have a meaning. Just entertain the idea. What would you say about this one.

ALEX

I don't know. I would say it's probably a combination of a bunch of things.

PRUITT

Like what?

ALEX

Well, fear that my mom will eventually kill herself and I won't be able to stop it.

PRUITT

Having no control in that situation?

ALEX

Exactly.

PRUITT

Has she shown any evidence that she's suicidal?

ALEX

Not really. Do they ever?

PRUITT

Well, some do and some don't. I would say that most show some sort of sign.

ALEX

Like I said before, we hardly ever talk. It's hard to hold a conversation with her for more than a few minutes.

PRUITT

Do you ever talk about your brother?

ALEX

No. She can't do it. It's too much for her.

PRUITT

What about you?

ALEX

What do you want to know?

PRUITT

I want to know if you've been able to forgive yourself.

ALEX

I don't think I ever will.

PRUITT

Why is that?

ALEX

I feel like I could've done something.

PRUITT

You said yourself that you were out cold.

ALEX

I know.

PRUITT

There's not really much you could do in that state.

ALEX

I can't help but feel responsible. Like I failed.

PRUITT

Do you believe in fate, Alex?

ALEX

I don't know.

PRUITT

Is it possible that Daniel was meant to die that night regardless of what you or anyone else did?

ALEX

It's possible.

PRUITT

I'm not saying that it's a certainty. Speaking hypothetically here.

ALEX

I can't answer that. I mean, what's the difference between fate and God's ultimate plan?

PRUITT

Some people believe that fate is God's ultimate plan. That each and everyone of us have our lives completely mapped out by God.

ALEX

I don't buy that. There isn't any proof of that.

(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)

I think it's another stupid
scapegoat so people don't have to
take responsibility for their own
lives.

PRUITT

It could be, but as you said,
there's no proof of that either.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Maria is sitting at the table again. There are piles of old
photos scattered all over.

She is holding one of Daniel as a child.

ALEX

(o.s.)

Hey.

She looks up to see Alex standing beside her.

MARIA

(re: photo)

Look at this one. Would you look at
the smile on my boy?

Alex peers over her shoulder at the photo and smiles.

ALEX

(sitting down)

Why are you doing this to yourself?

MARIA

Doing what?

ALEX

Sitting around here all day with
the pictures and the videos? You're
not gonna get any better if you
keep doing this.

MARIA

(tears welling)

I need to remember. I need to
remember him.

ALEX

Your not gonna forget. None of us
are.

MARIA
(dropping photo)
I can't talk about this right now.
It's not a good time.

ALEX
(raising his voice)
Well, when is a good time, mom?
It's never a good time for you. I'm
still here. I'm still alive. Why
don't you try not to forget me?

MARIA
I'm sorry, sweetie. I'm so sorry.

Maria is sobbing now with her hands on her head.

Tears well in Alex's eyes as he looks at his tortured mother.

MARIA
I'm gonna try harder, baby. I
promise.

Alex falls into her arms and they both cry.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - NIGHT

Alex is on his cell phone, driving.

MICHAEL
(over phone)
....what do you want me to do?

ALEX
Something. It's getting worse.

MICHAEL
I've told you I don't want to get
involved, son.

ALEX
Do you think it's just gonna go
away if you ignore it long enough?

MICHAEL
Of course not.

ALEX
This is your responsibility too. I
can't do it alone.

MICHAEL

Can we please talk about this
another time?

ALEX

No, I'm gonna be at your place in
five minutes.

INT. MICHAEL'S CONDO - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

From the leather sofa and love seat to the 50-inch plasma on
the wall, the decor screams upscale contemporary.

Alex slouches on the sofa.

MICHAEL

(o.s.)

Something to drink? A beer?

ALEX

I guess.

Michael enters.

MICHAEL

(handing the beer bottle)

Don't tell your mother.

ALEX

It's the least of her worries.
Trust me.

MICHAEL

That bad?

ALEX

That bad.

Michael sits on the love seat facing his son.

MICHAEL

What the hell do you want me to do?

ALEX

You need to come back home. She's
not well.

MICHAEL

You know I can't do that, son. I
left the situation because it was
killing me. It was killing us both.
What good is it to have two
completely miserable people-

ALEX

Ya know, that makes you sound like a total dick.

MICHAEL

I know and I know it all happened so fast, but after six months of--

ALEX

Six months of what? Mourning? Depression? She lost her fuckin' son. What the hell did you expect? Did you think she was gonna be sad for a few weeks and be fine.

MICHAEL

Of course not. Listen, I kill myself everyday just thinking about what I've done to you guys, but you haven't a clue what it feels like to wake up every morning and realize that things are never gonna be the same.

ALEX

How can you say that shit to me with a straight face? You don't think I know what it feels like? Am I not going through this too?

MICHAEL

Maybe that came out wrong. What I meant to say is that your mother is not the same person anymore. She's not even there. She's like a hollow shell. I can't live like that.

ALEX

Did you even care?

MICHAEL

How can you ask me that?

ALEX

Just answer the question, Dad. Did you even give a shit?

MICHAEL

Of course I did. How can you say that?

ALEX

Look, I know you two weren't the best of friends, but he was your son. You're acting like this had no effect on you whatsoever.

MICHAEL

It does effect me, son, but I still need to keep going. The bills still have to get paid and the beat goes on.

ALEX

So that's it? The beat goes on? Where did you get that? On a goddamn bumper sticker?

MICHAEL

Son, you know what I mean.

ALEX

You know what? Just fuckin' stop.

Alex rises.

MICHAEL

Alex!

ALEX

Thanks for the beer.

He storms out.

MICHAEL

ALEX! I LOVED HIM TOO, GODDAMNIT!

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Alex is at his locker with Kevin.

ALEX

I so don't want to be here today.

KEVIN

Tell me about it. That's pretty much how I feel everyday.

Alex rummages through his backpack.

ALEX

FUCK! I can't find my goddamn Psych book!

He slams the locker door backward and it swings back shut.

ALEX

FUCK!

KEVIN

Dude, calm down, you can borrow mine.

Katherine walks by grabbing Alex's attention.

KATHERINE

Everything alright there....

ALEX

....Alex.

KATHERINE

Of course, Alex, the town gossip.

He smiles.

KATHERINE

Better hurry. You're gonna be late.

Alex and Kevin exchange looks as she passes.

KEVIN

(impressed)

Who the fuck was that?

ALEX

She's my sub for Psych.

KEVIN

Get the fuck out! She's hot!

ALEX

(deep breath)

Tell me about it.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM

Katherine stands at the front and addresses the class.

Alex sits at his desk. He never takes his eyes off her. The words leaving her lips might as well be light years away.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Alex walks to his car.

Mallory appears behind him and taps his shoulder.

MALLORY

Hey.

ALEX

(turns)

Hey, you.

MALLORY

Can you do me a huge favor?

ALEX

Sure.

MALLORY

I need a ride home.

ALEX

Where's Kevin?

MALLORY

He has wrestling.

ALEX

I never understood the appeal of rubbing up against other guys for sport.

MALLORY

To each his own.

She laughs.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - DAY

Alex drives and Mallory sits shotgun.

MALLORY

So....have you talked to Kaitlin?

ALEX

Nope. She called me a few nights ago but I never got back to her.

MALLORY

If you don't like her, you should probably just tell her.

ALEX

No, it's not that. I've just had a lot going on.

MALLORY
Are you okay?

ALEX
Yeah....well....yeah....I'll be
fine.

MALLORY
(light sarcasm)
That was convincing.

ALEX
What?

MALLORY
Do you want to talk about it?

ALEX
Not really....just....ya
know....family issues and whatnot.

MALLORY
I can be a pretty good listener.

ALEX
(hesitant)
Yeah....I'll handle it....but
thanks.

MALLORY
You'll be alright, Alex.

She puts her hand on his leg. He glances down at her hand.

ALEX
Which house is yours again?

MALLORY
(pointing out the window)
I'm right there.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Alex's car pulls into Mallory's driveway.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - DAY

MALLORY
Here we are.

ALEX
Yep.

MALLORY

Thanks again for the ride.

She leans in and kisses him on the cheek. He smiles nervously.

MALLORY

If you ever need to talk, I'm here.

She gets out.

INT. BOOKSTORE - NIGHT

Could be a BARNES & NOBLE or a BORDERS from the look of the layout.

Alex sits at a table in the coffee shop area watching a solo acoustic guitarist perform.

He glances up and sees Katherine browsing the magazines. He swallows hard.

ALEX

(to himself)

Shit.

He taps his fingers anxiously on the table.

TAP, TAP, TAP

Katherine picks up a magazine and flips through it.

TAP, TAP, TAP

She adjusts her black framed eye-glasses.

TAP, TAP, TAP

Alex rises from his seat and approaches the magazines. He enters the same aisle as her turning to the opposite side.

He pretends to be browsing as well and floats in her direction.

She doesn't notice at first, but then....

KATHERINE

Alex, right?

ALEX

(falsely surprised)

Oh Hey! What are you doing here?

KATHERINE
(indifferent)
I live around here. Are you
stalking me or something?

ALEX
(frazzled)
What...Of course not...I...

KATHERINE
Can't take a joke, there, kid?

He laughs.

ALEX
That's funny. So rare that you see
a teacher....

KATHERINE
....outside the classroom. I know.
They don't let us out much. We're
usually grading papers, making
lesson plans, plotting against our
students.

He laughs again.

KATHERINE
Well, what brings you here?

ALEX
Uh....nothing....well....I just
came to see
(pointing to guitarist)
This guy play.

KATHERINE
Into music?

ALEX
Yeah, I'd probably go insane
without it.

KATHERINE
Do you play anything?

ALEX
I play guitar, but not very well.
I'm better at the recorder. It's
easier.

Katherine smiles.

ALEX
That was a....uh....joke.

KATHERINE
Yeah, I know.

ALEX
Good.

KATHERINE
Are you in a band or anything?

ALEX
Nah.

Awkward silence.

ALEX
So, you live around here?

KATHERINE
Yep. A few blocks down. I don't get out too much since I just moved here. I don't really know anyone. I figured I might as well hang out at the good ol' bookstore.

ALEX
Sounds exciting.

KATHERINE
It is really. To be honest....
(whispering)
I really hate reading.

ALEX
But, you're a teacher.

KATHERINE
I know. Don't tell anyone.

Just then, the guitarist walks passed.

GUITARIST
(waiving)
Alex!

ALEX
Nice set.

KATHERINE
(to Alex)
Aren't we popular?

INT. BOOKSTORE - LATER

MONTAGE - ALEX AND KATHERINE HANGING OUT

They talk, they laugh, they drink coffee.

EXT. BOOKSTORE - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Alex and Katherine walk to their cars.

KATHERINE

Thanks for keeping me company. A definite change of pace. Good times.

ALEX

Yep.

KATHERINE

Probably better you didn't share this with anyone. Might raise some eyebrows.

ALEX

Don't worry. I won't.

They stop at her car.

KATHERINE

Here's me.

ALEX

Well, I guess....

KATHERINE

....I will see ya in class? That sounded weird.

He laughs.

ALEX

Yeah, see ya in class.

Silence.

KATHERINE

Goodnight Alex.

ALEX

Night.

She gets into her car and drives away.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Alex enters to Maria asleep on the couch. The television is on.

ON TV: Daniel as a child

MARIA
(o.s.)
Say "Hi Daddy".

Little Daniel shakes his head.

MARIA
C'mon say it. Say "hi" to your
daddy.

DANIEL
Hi Daddy!

BACK TO SCENE

Alex frowns at the television. He grabs the remote and switches it off.

He throws a blanket over his mother and kisses her on the forehead.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Alex brushes his teeth. He takes a sip of water, swooshes it around, and spits.

He opens the medicine cabinet over the sink to put his toothbrush away. He shuts the cabinet and studies his reflection in the mirror.

He turns to exit and sees....

YOUNG DANIEL from the video. His face is covered in blood with a smile stretched from ear to ear.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex opens his eyes. He's drenched in sweat.

INT. DR. PRUITT'S OFFICE - DAY

Alex rubs his eyes in exhaustion.

ALEX

Is there something you can give me?
Some pills or something?

PRUITT

Alex, you know I can't prescribe
medication.

ALEX

I know, but I'm sure you know
people who do.

PRUITT

Like a drug dealer?

ALEX

You know what I mean. I haven't had
a decent night's sleep in fucking
months. Just refer me to someone
else.

PRUITT

I don't think meds are the answer.

ALEX

What is it with you? You don't know
what this is like?

PRUITT

Alex, we need to get to the root of
these problems in order to fully
understand them.

ALEX

I don't care about that. I want to
stop having these fucking
nightmares. I can't take it
anymore.

PRUITT

Listen to me, kid. They are only
dreams. They cannot hurt you. You
need to understand--

ALEX

What is there to understand? You
want to get to the root of my
problems? Here's an outline. My
brother's dead, my father could
care less, my mother's going
insane, I can't sleep, I can't
think--

PRUITT
Calm down a minute.

ALEX
(head in hands)
FUCK!

Pruitt walks over and puts his hand on Alex's shoulder.

PRUITT
Listen to me, kid. You're gonna get
through this. It can't last
forever. I promise. We will get
through this.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Alex exits the bathroom and sees Kevin and Mallory down the hall. They're arguing. He cannot hear what they're saying. Kevin grabs Mallory's arm violently.

Alex approaches his friends.

MALLORY
(to Kevin)
DON'T TOUCH ME!

KEVIN
Would you just hear me out?

She yanks her arm from his grasp and storms off.

Alex walks up.

KEVIN
Is it me or are all chicks out of
their fucking minds?

ALEX
What is it now?

KEVIN
I guess she heard that I was
fucking around with some sophomore.

ALEX
Who?

KEVIN
Jenny...uh...dude...I don't know.
Her last name sounds nothing like
it's spelled.

ALEX
I think I know who you're talking
about. Doesn't she have herpes?

KEVIN
(startled)
Does she?

ALEX
Does it matter?

KEVIN
No...I was just--

ALEX
You totally did mess around with
her!

KEVIN
Dude, I couldn't help myself. She
gives like the most amazing head.

ALEX
You asshole!

KEVIN
What?

ALEX
What about Mallory?

KEVIN
Well, if I knew she was gonna find
out, I would've never done it.

ALEX
It's high school, man. Your brain
is leaking if you didn't think she
would find out.

Kevin gazes down the hall in regret.

KEVIN
(shaking his head)
Shit. You think I should go after
her?

ALEX
(shrugs)
I don't know, dude. Give her some
time.

KEVIN
Right.

They walk.

KEVIN

How's things going with you? You look like shit runover twice.

ALEX

Thanks for that. I haven't slept in like six years.

KEVIN

Drag. Take some sleeping pills.

ALEX

I've tried. They don't work.

KEVIN

Drink a bottle of whiskey. Duffy can get you some.

ALEX

Then I'll have to add alcoholism to the long list of bullshit I have to deal with.

KEVIN

Just trying to help.

ALEX

I guess.

KEVIN

How's your mom?

ALEX

Long story. Not good. She's out of her damn mind.

KEVIN

Sorry, bro. Can't help you there.

ALEX

(light sarcasm)

Thanks for your concern. I do have a bit of interesting information, but you can't say shit to anyone.

KEVIN

Come on, man, who would I tell?

ALEX

Just saying. So you remember that new sub?

KEVIN
The hot one?

Alex nods.

ALEX
Well, I sorta hung out with her.

KEVIN
Fuck off!

ALEX
I'm serious. I ran into her at the bookstore. I guess she lives around there.

KEVIN
Get the fuck out! Are you serious?

ALEX
Have you known me to be a liar?

KEVIN
That is unbelievable. You lucky bastard.

ALEX
You're tellin' me.

KEVIN
Did anything happen?

ALEX
What? No way, dude. Are you kidding me? She just moved out here. Doesn't know anyone, I guess.

KEVIN
Think you have a shot?

ALEX
It's so not like that.

KEVIN
That kid in Florida did it. And people wanna know how teachers can reach out to their students. I think we found the answer.

ALEX
I told you it's not like that. She was just bored, man. No more no less.

They stop outside a classroom.

KEVIN
That's badass, bro. I guess I'll
catch ya later.

Alex keeps walking and stops.

ALEX
(turning back)
Dude!

Kevin looks out the doorway.

ALEX
Don't say anything.

KEVIN
I won't.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

The bell rings to end class. Students hurry out the door.

Alex follows.

KATHERINE
(o.s.)
Alex!

He turns.

ALEX
What's up?

KATHERINE
You mind closing that door?

He walks over and pulls the door shut then makes his way to her desk. Katherine glances down, nervously.

KATHERINE
Now, this might come off
weird....but....

Alex bites his bottom lip in anticipation.

KATHERINE
....ya know....forget it.

ALEX
No...come on...what did you have to
say?

KATHERINE
It's nothing...really...nevermind.

ALEX
(smiling)
Come on, I can take it. Which test
did I fail?

Katherine rubs her forehead, embarrassed.

KATHERINE
It's not that...here it goes...Are
you busy tonight?

INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

The decor is modern with classical music sweeping throughout.
Alex and Katherine sit at a table in the far back corner of
the shop.

KATHERINE
I'm serious. My cousin had to take
me to prom.

ALEX
(laughing)
No way in hell. If you're trying to
sell the "ugly duckling" story, I
ain't buying it.

KATHERINE
You don't believe me? Wanna see a
picture?

ALEX
Maybe we should take a raincheck on
that one.

KATHERINE
(taken aback)
Why?

ALEX
Well, I would rather remember you
like this.

KATHERINE
Remember me? Going somewhere?

ALEX
Nah.

KATHERINE
(offended)
You ass!

He smiles.

ALEX
I'm messing with you. Of course I
want to see a picture. I'm sure you
were cute.

KATHERINE
Aren't you charming.

ALEX
It certainly appears so.

They both laugh.

KATHERINE
So, what's your story?

ALEX
Not much of one to tell.

KATHERINE
Come on, there has to be something.
Quiet in class, but super outgoing
outside? What's the mystery?

ALEX
Maybe another time.

KATHERINE
What? Are you embarrassed?

ALEX
No....no....I would rather keep
certain things to myself.

They fall silent.

Katherine swallows, glancing down at the table.

KATHERINE
I didn't mean to pry.

ALEX
Don't worry about it. There's just
some things I'd rather not talk
about.

Alex turns his gloomy gaze to the window.

KATHERINE
You alright?

ALEX
Yeah.

She puts her hand on his. He looks at her with a reluctant smile.

KATHERINE
You can trust me.

Alex's phone vibrates in his pocket.

ALEX
Hold that thought.

He answers it.

ALEX
Hello?

INT. BAXTER HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Kevin paces around the room. Alex sits on the sofa.

KEVIN
What the fuck am I gonna do?

ALEX
I don't know what to say, man. I'm sorry.

KEVIN
You're not helping.

ALEX
What do you want me to say? You'll be fine? She's a fucking bitch and you don't need her?

KEVIN
Do you think there's someone else?

ALEX
What? No, of course not. She doesn't strike me as that kind of girl.

KEVIN
FUCK! It's gonna be okay, right? Just level with me.

ALEX

It's not gonna be okay right now.
It hurts and that sucks, but you'll
get over it. That's life, man.

KEVIN

I have to call her.

He takes his phone out.

ALEX

No. You have to leave it alone for
now. Calling her is just gonna make
you look psychotic.

KEVIN

Should I e-mail her?

ALEX

Dude, don't contact her at all.

KEVIN

There has to be something I can
say.

ALEX

Trust me. There isn't.

KEVIN

Why?

ALEX

Well, she broke it off. She
obviously doesn't wanna be with
you.

KEVIN

That's a fucked up thing to say.

ALEX

I didn't say it. She did.

KEVIN

Asshole! I already know that.

ALEX

What is it with you? You asked for
my help.

KEVIN

Well, you're not helping.

ALEX

Do you wanna make things worse?
That's exactly what you're gonna do
if you call her.

KEVIN

This sucks!

ALEX

I know, man.

KEVIN

Goddamnit!

Kevin sits on the couch.

KEVIN

Fuck, dude, where the hell were you
anyway?

ALEX

You wouldn't believe me if I told
you.

KEVIN

The teacher?

Alex nods.

KEVIN

You lucky son of a bitch.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - DAY

The faint sound of a door bell. Alex opens his eyes.

The doorbell chimes again.

He grabs his cell to see the time.

ALEX

(yelling)

Mom! You gonna get that?

The doorbell rings again.

He gets out of bed.

EXT. DAVIS HOUSE - DAY

Michael stands outside on the front porch. Alex opens the
door.

MICHAEL
I forgot my key.

ALEX
Strange how you keep showing up
here.

MICHAEL
Is she up?

Alex stands for a moment glaring at his father.

MICHAEL
Can I come in?

ALEX
(steps aside)
It's your house.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Alex and Michael stand at the foot of the stairway.

ALEX
I think she's still in bed.

MICHAEL
It's eleven.

ALEX
Guess there ain't much to wake up
for.

MICHAEL
(frustrated)
Can you please just wake her up?

Alex runs up the steps.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Alex approaches Maria's bedroom door.

He knocks.

ALEX
Mom?

No answer.

He knocks again.

ALEX
Mom, you up?

He opens the door and enters.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - MARIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Maria is in bed with the covers pulled up to her chest. Alex walks across the room to the open window and shuts it.

ALEX
It's freezing in here.

He walks over to Maria.

ALEX
Dad's downstairs and I....

She stares at him. Mouth slightly open. Nothing more than a frozen statue.

ALEX
Mom?

He steps closer.

CRACK!

ALEX
(looks down)
Shit.

He lifts his bare foot. Beneath it lies a broken medicine container.

He goes pale.

ALEX
(eyes wide)
Oh shit....mom....mom....Oh god!

He falls to the floor in tears.

ALEX
(sobbing hysterically)
Mom....oh God....Mommy....I wasn't ready for this.

He shakes her.

ALEX
MOOOOOM! PLEASE! MOM! DON'T DO THIS TO ME!

She lies there lifeless.

ALEX
DAAAAAAAAAAD!

Michael rushes into the room and sees his dead wife. Alex remains on the floor sobbing.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A large group of people have gathered to pay their respects. Among them are Kevin, Mallory, Michael, and various others.

Alex stares at the coffin as it's lowered into the ground.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Alex sits at the table staring out the window. Michael leans against the counter.

MICHAEL
You can stay with me for a while if
you want to.

Alex rolls his eyes.

MICHAEL
You're not staying here by
yourself.

ALEX
I've managed for the last six
months.

MICHAEL
I don't think you should--

ALEX
Look who decided to step up and do
some parenting.

MICHAEL
You better watch your fucking
mouth, you little shit. Have some
fucking respect.

ALEX
(under his breath)
For who?

Suddenly, Michael grabs Alex by his shirt and pushes him up against the wall.

MICHAEL

Listen to me, goddamnit. I am your father and you will respect me. I understand that you're upset--

Alex pulls away.

ALEX

What the fuck are you gonna do?

MICHAEL

You're coming home with me!

ALEX

The hell I am. I'm staying right here!

MICHAEL

How do you plan on supporting yourself? Answer me that!

ALEX

What is this your moment to be the cliché deadbeat dad? You gonna preach on about how much I need you?

MICHAEL

This is not my fault.

ALEX

Then whose fault is it? Mine? Danny's? Mom's? You may as well have pulled the fucking trigger.

MICHAEL

YOU MOTHERFUCKER!

Michael lunges at his son, once again. Alex backs away.

ALEX

I am not going anywhere with you. The least you can do is walk away and accept that.

MICHAEL

You can't blame me forever.

ALEX

For as long as you live.

MICHAEL

You might not want to admit it, but you need me.

ALEX

I don't need anything from you. I can split whenever I want to. I lost my mother. Do you think anyone in their right mind is gonna deny me a place to stay?

Michael is speechless.

ALEX

See you in hell.

He leaves.

INT. KATHERINE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Katherine is seated on the sofa sipping a glass of wine. Alex is on the floor beside her.

KATHERINE

I'm no good in these situations. I never know what to say.

ALEX

You don't have to say anything.

KATHERINE

I feel pretty useless.

ALEX

Don't worry about it. Thanks for being here.

KATHERINE

No problem at all.

ALEX

I feel like this is all a dream. Like all of this is happening in my head and I'll wake up, eventually.

KATHERINE

I'm so sorry, Alex.

ALEX

The funny thing is, I don't feel that upset about it. I almost feel relieved.

KATHERINE

Relieved?

ALEX

I mean, I feel like she was suffering so much that this might....well....this might be better for her.

Katherine is silent.

KATHERINE

What are you gonna do?

ALEX

I don't know. I haven't had much time to think about it.

KATHERINE

Where are you gonna live?

ALEX

I think I'm gonna stay at my house.

KATHERINE

Alone?

ALEX

Why not? I've pretty much been alone for the last year.

KATHERINE

What are you talking about?

Alex turns to her and takes a deep breath.

ALEX

I never told you this....

KATHERINE

What?

ALEX

Remember when I said there were things about my past that I don't really like to talk about?

KATHERINE

Yes.

ALEX

Well, the reason I never told you what those things were is because I didn't want you to feel sorry for me.

KATHERINE

I'm confused.

ALEX

Well...last year...my...my brother was murdered.

KATHERINE

Oh my God!

ALEX

I was there when it happened. Well, I was knocked out cold. He was dead by the time I came to.

KATHERINE

Jesus! What happened?

ALEX

These guys...we were in a restaurant parking lot late at night. We got in a fight with these guys. They never stopped hitting him.

Katherine remains quiet.

ALEX

I don't like talking about it because I'm still having trouble. I still feel like I could've done something.

KATHERINE

I had no idea. That's awful. Did they ever catch the guys who did it?

ALEX

Yeah, they caught 'em, but it doesn't make things any less painful.

KATHERINE

I can imagine.

ALEX

Ever since he died, my family has never been the same. I mean, my dad split six months later. He couldn't take it. He just left us at the house.

Katherine puts her hands on his shoulders as he cries.

ALEX
God, what am I gonna do?

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Still dressed in a shirt and tie, Alex lays on his bed staring blankly at the ceiling.

The room is dark with the exception of a bedside lamp.

Alex widens his eyes, fighting sleep.

The eerie creak of the bedroom door opening slowly.

Fear washes over Alex's face as he rises in bed.

His eyes focus in disbelief at the sight of....

Maria, donning a black gown, beckoning him. She looks radiant, beautiful, and full of life. A completely different person than before.

ALEX
Mom?

She smiles.

MARIA
(angelic tone)
Don't be afraid.

Alex remains frozen as his mother continues to beckon him.

MARIA
There's nothing to be afraid of
anymore.

Tears roll down his cheeks as he gets out of bed and approaches the apparation.

MARIA
I want to show you something.

She turns and glides out of the room.

Alex follows closely behind.

A faint growl is heard.

Alex glances back at his bed to see himself asleep with a horned demon-like creature perched on his chest. The creature stares back at him with a slight twist of its neck.

Alex exits the room completely unaffected.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Maria floats down the hall with Alex closely behind.

MARIA
It's not too far now.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - DANIEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Maria makes her way across the room to the window.

Alex stops in the doorway.

Daniel stands across from him with a sinister smile.

DANIEL
We've been waiting....

ALEX
Danny?

DANIEL
....we've both been waiting for
you.

Maria appears behind Daniel, placing her hands softly on his shoulders.

ALEX
I don't understand.

BANG! The door slams shut behind Alex.

MARIA
Why so sad?

ALEX
What the hell is going on?

DANIEL
Aren't you happy to see us?

ALEX
Of course I am.

MARIA
Stay with us, son, stay with us.

ALEX

I can't. I can't stay here. It's not time yet.

Alex turns to the door and twists the knob, but it's locked.

He looks back at Maria and Daniel. Their eyes are glazed over in white. They are both pale and zombie-like. Big grins stretch across their faces.

DANIEL

Stay with us, Alex, stay with us.

Alex is panting. His breath turns to vapor. He violently shakes the doorknob.

ALEX

I can't. I have to go. Why are you doing this?

DANIEL

It should've been you.

Alex lets out a horrific scream.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The loud ringing of a cell phone. Alex jumps up in bed.

ALEX

(to himself)
Jesus.

The cell continues to ring. The illuminated caller ID reads:
MALLORY

EXT. DAVIS HOUSE - NIGHT

Mallory's car sits in the driveway with the engine running.

Alex steps out the front door and walks over.

INT. MALLORY'S CAR - NIGHT

Alex gets in. Mallory smiles.

MALLORY

Sorry for just stopping by like this.

ALEX

No worries. I was having trouble sleeping.

MALLORY

I can imagine.

Alex stares out the passenger window.

MALLORY

I'm really sorry about, well, your mom and everything.

He forces a smile.

MALLORY

What are you gonna do now?

ALEX

My plan is to make it through graduation and get as far away from this place as possible.

MALLORY

Tell me about it. Where you planning on going?

ALEX

Don't know. Anywhere.

MALLORY

(giggling)

Wanna take me with you?

Alex chuckles.

ALEX

Sure. If you don't mind living out of seedy motels and pulling armed robberies to make ends meet.

They both laugh.

ALEX

(sighs)

What a fucking day.

Mallory frowns.

ALEX

What's on your mind, kiddo?

MALLORY

Geez, where to begin. Have you talked to Kevin?

ALEX

Not since earlier.

MALLORY

He's really starting to worry me.

ALEX

How so?

MALLORY

Do you think he would do something? I mean, to hurt himself?

ALEX

If you asked me a few years ago, I would've said not a chance in hell. With the way things are going these days, your guess is as good as mine.

MALLORY

Not exactly the answer I was looking for.

ALEX

I'm sorry to come off so cynical, but it just feels like anything is possible lately. Things are falling apart.

MALLORY

He's been saying some really weird things lately. Scary things.

ALEX

I didn't know you two were on speaking terms.

MALLORY

Only through text.

ALEX

What's he been saying?

MALLORY

I don't know. Just weird things.

ALEX

Like?

MALLORY

Well, he's been hinting around the idea that he isn't gonna make it.

Alex rubs his forehead in frustration.

ALEX

Great....well....I don't know what to say to that.

MALLORY

Me either. It's just really starting to scare me, ya know. I don't want him to hurt himself over me. It's so not worth it. Maybe I shouldn't have broken up with him.

ALEX

That's stupid. Why?

MALLORY

He would be fine if we were still together.

ALEX

But, you wouldn't. What's the point?

MALLORY

If it's ultimately gonna save his life. Why should I care?

ALEX

You can't live a lie to make someone else happy.

MALLORY

I guess you're right, but I don't want to be responsible for taking one either.

ALEX

Look, I'll talk to him to see where he's at.

MALLORY

Don't tell him I was here or told you any of this.

ALEX

I won't.

MALLORY

Thanks. It really means a lot.

Alex smiles.

ALEX
I'm gonna go back in and attempt to
get some sleep.

MALLORY
Okay.

He opens the door to get out.

MALLORY
Alex?

He turns back.

MALLORY
Thanks for everything.

ALEX
No problem.

EXT. BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

Alex's car pulls into the driveway. He gets out and walks
toward the front door.

INT. BAXTER HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY

Loud rock music fills the basement.

Kevin is doing bench presses.

Alex shuffles down the stairs.

ALEX
(shouting)
Hey!

Kevin continues doing reps.

Alex walks over to a stereo beside the bench and turns the
volume down.

Kevin drops the pole on the metal stands.

KEVIN
(sitting up)
What are you doing here?

ALEX

Bored. Figured I'd see what you were up to.

Kevin wipes the sweat from his red face with a towel.

KEVIN

When you coming back to school?

ALEX

Who knows. That's the last thing on my mind.

KEVIN

How you been?

Alex shrugs.

ALEX

You?

KEVIN

Been better. We don't have to talk about it, man. I'm sure you're sick of telling the story.

ALEX

I guess. Everyone expects me to say something, ya know.

KEVIN

No point in that unless you wanna pour salt in the wound.

Alex nods in agreement.

ALEX

It's exhausting.

KEVIN

I'm sure it is, dude, I'm sure it is.

ALEX

How's your situation?

KEVIN

I don't know, man. I fucked up. I finally fucked it all up. She ain't comin' back.

ALEX

You don't really know that.

KEVIN
I'm pretty sure.

Alex sighs.

KEVIN
What? She won't return my calls or texts. She can't even return a fucking email. How easy is that? A fucking email?

ALEX
Like I said, man, you need to give her some time to miss you. If it's meant to be, it's meant to be.

KEVIN
That's what everyone keeps telling me.

ALEX
Look at it this way. If you let her go now and move on, you will never have to go through any new pain because of her again. If you decide to work things out, you run the risk of being back in the same place.

Kevin looks shocked.

KEVIN
Is that supposed to be comforting.

ALEX
I guess. What else do you want me to say?

KEVIN
Nothing. I'd rather you just shut the fuck up.

ALEX
Why are you being a dick?

KEVIN
How the fuck is that cunt just gonna change the way she feels like that?

ALEX
It happens. That's life.

KEVIN

Bullshit. What the hell are you? An inspirational speaker?

ALEX

I can't talk to you.

Alex turns to leave.

KEVIN

You don't know how this feels.

He stops in his tracks.

ALEX

Look at you. You're bitching about a fucking girl. What the fuck is the matter with you? You think you have it that bad? You think you have issues? My mother is dead. My brother, dead. And you want sympathy for a fucking breakup? You have a fucking family and you take it for granted, you selfish prick. You're eighteen. There will be other girls and other opportunities. My family is fucking destroyed and nothing is gonna change that.

KEVIN

Dude, you know I didn't mean it that way.

ALEX

Well, it sure as hell came off that way.

KEVIN

Alex, I'm sorry.

Kevin looks to the ceiling.

ALEX

Grow the fuck up, man.

Alex storms out.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

The bell rings. Students rush out of classrooms.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Katherine is cleaning the dry-erase board.

ALEX

(o.s.)

Hey.

She turns to the doorway.

KATHERINE

(surprised)

I didn't expect you back so soon.

ALEX

Sitting around my house alone? Not the best idea.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY

Isolated. Classes have ended for the day.

Alex and Katherine walk, oddly separated.

KATHERINE

How are things?

ALEX

Pretty much the same. I guess I can't really expect any dramatic changes in a few weeks.

KATHERINE

I see.

ALEX

Look, I'm gonna be brutally honest with you. The only reason I came back here was to see you.

KATHERINE

Okay.

ALEX

I know that sounds really weird, but I can't stop thinking about you.

KATHERINE

Do you really think this is the best place to be talking about this?

ALEX
I know, but I had to say something.

KATHERINE
Can we discuss this later?

INT. KATHERINE'S BUILDING - MAIN HALLWAY - NIGHT

Alex walks down the long corridor with his hands in his pockets.

He stops outside #202.

He knocks. The door opens and Katherine stands there.

They look at each other for a moment.

KATHERINE
Find the place okay?

ALEX
I have been here before.

KATHERINE
I know. Just wanted to break the
silence. Come on in.

INT. KATHERINE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Katherine moves into the kitchen as Alex follows behind her.

KATHERINE
Want something to drink?

ALEX
I'm good.

Alex makes his way into the living area and sits down on the couch.

ALEX
(surveying the scene)
You renting or....

KATHERINE
(o.s.)
....you know you don't have to be
so awkward. You're starting to
freak me out a little.

ALEX
Sorry.

Katherine enters with a glass of wine in hand. She takes a seat beside him.

KATHERINE
(smiling)
You okay?

ALEX
Fine.

She places her glass down on a nearby table.

KATHERINE
So....what did you have to tell me?

ALEX
You know, it's really not a big deal. We can just talk about it later. It was more of an impulse thing than anyth--

Katherine leans in and kisses him softly. She makes it last forever.

INT. KATHERINE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

They move into the bedroom and continue making out heavily.

Katherine pulls her shirt over her head, revealing a black bra. She falls back onto the bed.

Alex gets on top of her as she pulls his shirt off.

They continue to kiss passionately.

Alex unzips her jeans and pulls them off. She wraps her bare legs around his waist.

He softly kisses her neck as she lets out shrieks of pleasure.

INT. PRUITT'S OFFICE - DAY

Pruitt sits in a chair with his legs crossed. His hands are folded and resting on his lap.

Alex looks at him with a smirk.

PRUITT
Let me see if I can get this
straight in my head.
(MORE)

PRUITT (CONT'D)
You are sleeping with a teacher
from your high school.

Alex continues to smirk.

ALEX
Yes.

PRUITT
I'm speechless. I, honestly, don't
know what to say. Are you crazy?

ALEX
I thought therapists weren't
supposed to use that word.

PRUITT
I'm sorry, but I don't know what
else to say.

ALEX
Well, she's actually a sub.

PRUITT
Oh, in that case, congratulations.
Give yourself a round of applause.

Pruitt stands up and paces around the room. Alex remains
silent.

PRUITT
Now, let me ask you this. Do you
think that's a good idea?

Alex shrugs.

PRUITT
How old are you?

ALEX
Eighteen.

PRUITT
I guess you've got that covered.

ALEX
If I wasn't, what would you do?
Report us?

PRUITT
To be honest, I probably wouldn't,
given your current situation. I
think we both know you have enough
on your plate.

(MORE)

PRUITT (CONT'D)

I don't, however, think this is a good idea. As a matter of fact, this is a terrible idea.

ALEX

What? Why?

PRUITT

Well, first thing is that she can lose her job and never be hired as a teacher in this or any other state.

ALEX

That's only if someone finds out.

PRUITT

Someone always finds out.

ALEX

Not always.

PRUITT

Most of the time. Don't you watch the news, kid? It happens more than you think.

ALEX

So if no one finds out, we should be fine, right?

PRUITT

You're playing with fire. Have you told anyone else about this?

ALEX

No.

PRUITT

Good....Good....keep it that way.

Pruitt take his seat.

PRUITT

How are things at home?

ALEX

Getting by. I don't spend too much time there since this whole thing happened.

PRUITT

How convenient.

ALEX
You gonna let me finish?

PRUITT
Sorry. Go ahead.

ALEX
I haven't had much time to think about things. It's a nice break.

PRUITT
What about your father? Have you spoken to him?

ALEX
Not since the funeral.

PRUITT
Any plans to make amends?

ALEX
I really don't know. I guess we'll see.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - DAY

Alex drives with Mallory in the passenger seat.

MALLORY
This sucks. I have a huge test today and I'm not even close to prepared.

ALEX
That does suck.

MALLORY
Thanks for the support.

ALEX
I was just agreeing with you. Cut the class. Take it tomorrow.

MALLORY
Are you kidding me? I would so get caught.

ALEX
Pretend your sick. I got it! Tell the teacher you are having your period and it's soaking through your jeans. He'll definitely let you go then.

MALLORY
That's gross.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Alex and Mallory approach the building.

MALLORY
I have a really weird favor to ask
you.

ALEX
Weird like the Twilight Zone or
weird like you caught your folks
having sex?

MALLORY
What are you talking about?

ALEX
Nothing.

MALLORY
Just regular weird, I guess.

ALEX
Shoot.

MALLORY
Okay, well, my parents are going to
Ithaca for the weekend to visit my
sister and I was wondering if you
can stay the night at my house
while they're gone.

ALEX
You're right. That is weird.

MALLORY
Shut up! Why?

ALEX
Just an odd request.

MALLORY
Look, it's not like I'm gonna rape
you. I just get really freaked out
when I stay in my house alone at
night. Kevin used to do it, but-

ALEX
I know. Yeah, fine, I'll stay.

MALLORY
You will?

ALEX
Yeah.

She kisses him on the cheek.

MALLORY
You're the best!

INT. KATHERINE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex and Katherine lay in bed beneath the covers.

ALEX
I feel like this is a dream. Being here with you. How did this happen?

KATHERINE
I keep asking myself the same thing. It's easier not to think about it. No point in trying to wrap your head around something that makes no sense.

ALEX
No sense?

KATHERINE
Do you think it does?

ALEX
What?

KATHERINE
Make sense.

ALEX
Can't say I do.

KATHERINE
I guess this is what happens when you feel lost. You open yourself up to anything. No matter how crazy it might seem.

They fall silent for a moment.

ALEX
You feel lost?

KATHERINE

Not anymore. I did. When I first got here. It's a long way from home. No familiar faces, no family, no friends. You wander from day to day in search of something meaningful.

ALEX

Would you say you found it?
Something meaningful.

KATHERINE

You're such a sweetheart.

ALEX

I know how you feel. It's like that everyday for me. Just waiting for something to happen to make all of this worthwhile.

KATHERINE

You know we can get in a lot of trouble for this? I can lose my job. Be shunned from society.

ALEX

I know, but I don't see it panning out that way. I think we'll be fine.

KATHERINE

Do you?

ALEX

Yes. We'll be okay.

KATHERINE

I hope you're right.

They kiss.

EXT. BANYON HOUSE - DUSK

The sun is just starting to set behind Mallory's house when Alex's car pulls into the driveway.

INT. BANYON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Alex sits on the floor while Mallory lays on the couch.

The television illuminates them in the otherwise dark room.

Alex looks like he's fighting sleep.

MALLORY

You tired?

ALEX

A little. You?

MALLORY

Not really. The weekend is my time to shine.

ALEX

Looks like we're pretty lame. Being a Friday night and all. We should be partying.

MALLORY

I got some wine. Wanna get ripped?

ALEX

Could be a bad idea. We'd end up sleeping in the same bed, people would start talking, not good for keeping up appearances.

She smiles.

MALLORY

Starting to sound like fun.

ALEX

(changing the subject)
Any word from your estranged ex-boyfriend?

MALLORY

Nope. Thank God. I was starting to make myself sick over it.

ALEX

Yeah, we haven't really been on speaking terms lately either.

MALLORY

Probably a good thing. He has a lot of issues to straighten out.

ALEX

I guess I should probably give him a call to see how he's doing. That would be the right thing to do.

MALLORY
Suit yourself.

EXT. BANYON HOUSE - NIGHT

A car rolls by slowly and stops.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Kevin is in the driver's seat. He glares at Alex's car in the driveway.

He speeds off.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Alex is sitting on the sofa with an old photo album.

He flips through the dozens of old family photos. He stops on a page with a shot of his entire family.

He studies the photo for a moment.

He shuts the album and hangs his head.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Katherine sits at her desk tending to papers.

The students are focused on the exams in front of them.

Alex cannot keep his eyes open. His head keeps falling as he drifts in and out of sleep.

There is a loud knock at the door.

Startled, Katherine looks up.

KATHERINE
(to class)
Excuse me for a moment.

She rises and approaches the door.

Alex watches her leave the classroom. He gets up from his desk and walks over to the door.

He can see Katherine and the principal speaking to each other through a small window.

Katherine shakes her head in disagreement at the principal. Her eyes meet Alex's for a moment.

He drops his head.

EXT. KATHERINE'S BUILDING - NIGHT

Katherine sits on the stoop at the foot of her building. Her eyes are red and she looks exhausted.

When she sees Alex coming, she stands.

ALEX
(off look)
What are we gonna do?

She looks down at the pavement trying to fight back tears.

ALEX
Say something.

KATHERINE
What do you want me to say?
Everything is fine?

ALEX
How did they find out?

KATHERINE
I don't know. Don't you think I've
went over that a million times in
my head? I thought you said it was
gonna be okay. I thought we were
gonna be fine.

ALEX
I'm sorry, I--

KATHERINE
Sorry, Alex? Sorry? Being sorry
isn't gonna fix this. They want to
investigate me. I could lose my
job.

ALEX
How could they have found out? I
mean, I thought we were being safe.

KATHERINE
Not safe enough, I guess.

ALEX

It's impossible. I mean, do they have any evidence? Anyone who might have seen us together?

KATHERINE

I don't know. As far as I know, it's a rumor.

ALEX

A rumor? So they don't have anything to pin on us?

KATHERINE

I said I don't know. From what I was told, they don't.

Alex sits down beside her.

KATHERINE

Who did you tell?

ALEX

Are you kidding? I didn't tell anyone.

KATHERINE

Well somebody found out!

ALEX

Somebody? Who?

KATHERINE

I said I don't know.

ALEX

Well, let's not get ahead of ourselves. Like you said, it's just a rumor. We have to be more careful. Maybe we should go inside.

KATHERINE

No.

ALEX

Why?

KATHERINE

(cries)
I can't do this.

ALEX

What are you talking about?

KATHERINE

I can't see you anymore, Alex. It's too risky.

ALEX

What? We can get through this.

KATHERINE

What are you talking about? Get through this? My God, this was all a huge mistake.

ALEX

How can you say that?

KATHERINE

I'm so sorry. I didn't mean for any of this to happen. Things just got way out of control. I don't know what else to--

ALEX

Don't say it. Just forget it. I don't want to hear how sorry you are. What the fuck did you think was gonna happen?

KATHERINE

I don't know. Not this.

ALEX

I guess we were both wrong.

Alex gets up and walks away.

KATHERINE

(calling out)

I never meant to hurt you!

He doesn't turn around.

EXT. BAXTER HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Alex stands outside the front door, hesitating. He rings the doorbell.

The porch light comes on and the door opens revealing Kevin. He looks sickly. His eyes are red and droopy. He hasn't shaved in weeks.

They stare at each other without saying a single word.

Kevin moves aside and motions for Alex to come in.

INT. BAXTER HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Kevin comes down the creaking steps with Alex close behind. He walks over to an old refrigerator and pulls the door open.

KEVIN
Wanna beer?

Alex glares at him.

Kevin shrugs and gets one for himself. He slams the door shut and makes his way to a dirty old couch.

KEVIN
(sitting)
So do you have something to say or
are you gonna stare at me all
night?

ALEX
Why did you do it?

Kevin lights a cigarette and takes a drag.

KEVIN
That's a very good question. Let me
ask you this. Why were you at
Mallory's house at three in the
morning?

ALEX
What difference does it make?

KEVIN
Well, last I checked, friends don't
fuck around with other friend's
girlfriends.

ALEX
She's not your girlfriend anymore.

KEVIN
Dually noted.

ALEX
Nothing happened.

KEVIN
Now that there almost sounded
convincing.

He takes a long swig off his beer.

ALEX
Have I ever lied to you?

KEVIN
People change.

ALEX
Apparently.

KEVIN
Don't gimme that bullhit, man. You know what you did. Don't try to come off like a victim.

ALEX
I told you nothing happened. If you don't believe me--

KEVIN
I don't fucking believe you. What do you think? I'm an idiot? I know she's always had some little crush on you.

Alex is quiet.

KEVIN
(off look)
See, you knew it too. Don't think for a second I haven't picked up on that shit.

ALEX
What the hell do you want me to do?

KEVIN
Stay the hell away from her!

ALEX
I can't do that. She's my friend.

KEVIN
I don't give a shit!

ALEX
I don't need this right now, man. If you want to hate me, that's fine. I just want you to know that I never did anything with her.

KEVIN
What happened to you, dude?

ALEX

To me? What the hell are you talking about?

KEVIN

I thought I could trust you, man.

ALEX

Have you been listening to a single word I've said?

KEVIN

Just get out, man. Nothing you say is going to convince me. I can't fuckin' believe you.

ALEX

Do whatever it is you want to do. Just know this; you never deserved someone as great as Mallory. You had the chance to make things work and you didn't. That is and will always be your fault.

He turns and walks up the steps.

INT. PRUITT'S OFFICE - DAY

The last session.

ALEX

I don't know what else to say.

PRUITT

I don't expect you to have an answer for everything. That's why we have this time. To figure things out together.

ALEX

I go over this in my head. Over and over again. All day. Everyday. I want to know why all of this happened. I want to know what the hell I am here for. What purpose do I serve? There has to be a reason, right? There has to be some kind of answer.

PRUITT

I like to think there is, but I don't see you figuring it all out right now.

ALEX

What did I do? I know it sounds stupid, but I can't think of anything else. What the hell did I do to deserve this?

PRUITT

There isn't anything you did, Alex. If you think there is an outside force that's against you, there isn't.

ALEX

Then why is this happening to me? Why did this happen to our family?

PRUITT

I can't answer that. I wish I could. Sometimes these things happen to make people stronger. On the other hand, there could be a deeper and more complex meaning.

ALEX

Like what?

PRUITT

Maybe this was all part of the plan we spoke about. Maybe all this did, in fact, happen for reason. I can't tell you what that reason is, but one day it will become clearer to you.

ALEX

(chuckling)

For someone who is supposed to help, you don't have many answers.

PRUITT

Well, I think some of the questions you are asking are rhetorical.

ALEX

I know. They are.

Alex cries.

ALEX

It hurts....God....it hurts.

PRUITT

I know, son, I know.

INT. DAVIS HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex lays in bed with his face buried in a pillow.

A knock at the door.

MALLORY

(o.s.)

Alex? You there? Your front door
was open.

He gets out of bed and opens the door.

MALLORY

Hey.

ALEX

Hey.

MALLORY

You feel like some company?

ALEX

Sure.

Alex jumps back into bed. Mallory sits at the edge.

MALLORY

How've you been?

He shrugs.

MALLORY

Did I come at a bad time? I can
leave.

ALEX

No. Stay.

MALLORY

Look, I'm sorry I got you mixed up
in all this. I never wanted
anything to come between you and
Kevin.

ALEX

It's okay. I think it was probably
meant to happen a long time ago.

MALLORY

Maybe.

ALEX

Have you heard from him?

MALLORY

No.

ALEX

Probably better that way.

MALLORY

You know, I don't even understand why I was with him for so long. He wasn't really that great of a guy.

ALEX

Security. Comfort. I mean you guys were together for a long time.

MALLORY

I guess.

ALEX

I don't know. Maybe feelings are all bullshit.

MALLORY

What makes you say that?

ALEX

Feelings? What's the point? I can understand happiness, but sorrow and pain? What the hell is that?

MALLORY

If there wasn't sorrow and pain, we wouldn't know what it feels like to be happy. Would we?

ALEX

I guess not.

MALLORY

Sorry. I guess I'm the wrong person to get intellectual with.

ALEX

You're not an idiot.

MALLORY

I never said I was.

ALEX

But you think it. I can tell. Probably why you stayed with Kevin for so long. You thought you were worthless and couldn't do any better.

Mallory is silent for a moment.

ALEX

What do you think?

MALLORY

I didn't ever see it that way.

ALEX

It's just my observation. You should think about that and get back to me.

MALLORY

What makes you so smart?

ALEX

I'm not.

MALLORY

You seem like you have it all figured out.

ALEX

I don't, believe me, I wish I did.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Michael stands at the foot of his wife's grave. Beside it, is Daniel's.

Alex walks up and stands beside him.

MICHAEL

You know, I've been here so many times and never ran into you.

ALEX

Dumb luck.

MICHAEL

Nope. I always wanted to.

Alex squints as he gazes at the sunset in the distance.

MICHAEL

I would've done a million things different.

Tears well in his eyes.

MICHAEL

Your mother and you guys. I would've been around more, you know. I would've spent more time with you kids. Been there for you. I would've made her so happy. I wouldn't have given up until she was as happy as she could possibly be. It would've been perfect.

Michael cries.

Alex puts his arm around his father.

ALEX

I know. I know.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Alex and Mallory walk side by side.

MALLORY

There is no way I'm gonna pass that exam. It's gonna take a miracle.

ALEX

You know, you always say that and it always ends up fine. When was the last time you even got a "B"?

MALLORY

I can't remember, but I know it wasn't too long ago.

ALEX

I doubt that.

MALLORY

For real. I'm not as smart as I look.

ALEX

Who said you look smart? Hot? Maybe. Not smart.

MALLORY

You ass.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

They walk to Alex's car.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - DAY

MALLORY

So what's the plan for the weekend?

ALEX

No idea. Isn't it a little early to be thinking about the weekend?

MALLORY

I don't know. Thursday. Seems like the right time.

ALEX

Wanna have dinner?

MALLORY

Are you asking me out on a date?

ALEX

What? No.

MALLORY

Such a disappointment.

They laugh.

MALLORY

Oh my god! Did you hear there was a rumor going around that Miss Taylor was messing around with one of her students?

ALEX

Yeah, I think I did hear something about that.

MALLORY

Isn't that absolutely crazy?

ALEX

Pretty strange.

MALLORY

I know. She's absolutely gorgeous. She can have anyone. Why settle for a high school guy?

Alex smiles.

EXT. BANYON HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Alex's car stops in the driveway.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - DAY

MALLORY
Wanna come in for a bit?

ALEX
I really should take off. These
exams are gonna kill me.

MALLORY
Bummer.

ALEX
I'll give you a call later though.
Maybe we can grab some coffee.

MALLORY
Is *that* a date?

ALEX
Sure.

MALLORY
Ha! I knew I'd get one someday.

She exits the car.

Alex waits till she gets inside.

He starts backing out of the driveway, but notices she left
her handbag in the car.

He parks, grabs the bag, and gets out.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Alex walks up the driveway.

INT. BANYON HOUSE - FRONT ENTRYWAY - DAY

Alex enters.

ALEX
You left your....

He looks up and his mouth falls open.

Kevin stands facing him with a gun.

Mallory is beside Alex against the wall. She is crying.

MALLORY
(sobbing)
Please.

ALEX
Don't do this. It's not worth it,
man.

KEVIN
(crying)
I'm so sorry. It hurts so bad. I
can't take it...it hurts too
fucking bad.

MALLORY
Kevin...please...don't--

He fires a single shot hitting Mallory in the head. She falls backwards.

Alex dives to the floor to catch her.

Another shot is heard.

The gun falls out of Kevin's hand and hits the floor. His body follows.

Alex cradles Mallory in his arms as he bursts into tears.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

A graduation ceremony. Students give speeches.

Alex sits in his seat as the students rise and throw their caps in the air.

Michael watches from the stands and smiles.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Several students hurry to their family members.

Alex and Michael walk.

Alex notices Katherine leaning against his car.

ALEX
(to Michael)
I'll catch up to you.

MICHAEL
You sure?

ALEX
Yeah, I'll walk.

MICHAEL
See you at home, son.

Katherine approaches Alex.

Michael gets into Alex's car and drives off.

KATHERINE
You made it.

ALEX
It appears so.

KATHERINE
Congratulations.

ALEX
Thanks. It means a lot.

KATHERINE
So what next?

ALEX
I don't know. I guess we'll have to wait and see.

KATHERINE
No big university in your future?

ALEX
Don't think so. Not really my thing.

She smiles.

ALEX
What about you? Any chance of a permanent job here?

KATHERINE
They offered once the smoke cleared.

ALEX
Really?

KATHERINE
I didn't take it. I don't think teaching is really my thing.

He stares at Katherine, refreshed.

ALEX
Well, I gotta get....

KATHERINE
....going? Yeah, me too.

ALEX
My dad's waiting.

KATHERINE
It was really nice seeing you,
Alex.

ALEX
Great seeing you too.

She kisses him on the cheek.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Alex packs boxes into his car. Michael walks up and drops
another box in the backseat.

MICHAEL
That's all of it?

ALEX
All I'm gonna need.

He pats his son on the back.

MICHAEL
Sure you don't want me to meet you
in a couple days?

ALEX
I think I'm gonna be okay. I'll
call you.

MICHAEL
I'll be there in a flash.

ALEX
I know. Thanks.

They hug.

MICHAEL
Take care of yourself, son.

ALEX
I will. You do the same.

He takes one last look at his neighborhood and gets in his car.

EXT. SUBURBAN HIGHWAY - DUSK

Alex's car drives as the sun is starting to set.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - DUSK

He focuses on the road ahead.

FADE TO BLACK.