

CALLER UNKNOWN

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. EMERGENCY CALL CENTRE - CUBICLE - NIGHT

A small space, tones of beige and lackluster.

ADAM, 28, his neat and tidy appearance echoed by his well-kept cubicle, everything has its place. Pens aligned, ruler and eraser at perfect right angles to the rest of the stationery.

He wears a headset and mindlessly doodles geometric shapes on a piece of paper.

The only noise filling the room is the indistinct chatter from the few other occupied cubicles on this graveyard shift.

ADAM
Sir, that doesn't constitute an
emergency --

Adam clicks a button on the side of his headset, cutting the call short.

ADAM
(under his breath)
Idiot.

A moment passes and a red light on Adam's phone starts to flicker. He clicks the button on the side of his headset.

ADAM
9-1-1, what's your emergency?

Adam types the information into his computer.

ADAM
Is the intruder still in the area?
(listens)
Okay, that's good, and you're alone
at the property now?
(listens)
Address please?

He continues to type.

ADAM
Authorities will be there shortly,
ma'am.

Adam ends the call and stares intently at the address on the screen.

He thinks for the briefest of moments then rhythmically taps the backspace key, erasing what he had typed. The letters disappear one at a time.

He quickly jots the address down on the piece of paper he was drawing on and folds it neatly three times before sliding it into his shirt pocket.

Adam removes the headset and turns off the computer monitor.

He gets up out of the chair and grabs his coat which hangs from the backrest.

As Adam turns to leave, the red light on the phone flickers once again.

The frustration evident as eyes roll and jaws clench.

ADAM

Fuck sake.

He hops back onto the chair, turns on the computer, and replaces the headset, clicking the button on the side as he does.

ADAM

9-1-1, what's your emergency?

(listens)

Hello, anyone there?

A YOUNG WOMAN finally answers, her voice is calm and relatively monotone.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

It's such a beautiful night.

ADAM

What's your emergency please?

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

I swear every star came out for this very occasion, I can feel them watching me, waiting in anticipation.

ADAM

Ma'am --

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

It's so windy up here, can you hear it?

ADAM

Listen, lady, if you haven't got an emergency I'm going to hang up.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

And if you hang up... I'll jump.

Adam's eyes go wide and he begins to type on the keyboard.

ADAM

Sorry, ma'am, can you tell me where you are?

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

Stop with the "ma'am", my name's Kate.

ADAM

Okay, Kate, can you tell me your location?

KATE (V.O.)

Not yet, I just want someone to enjoy this night with before...

Adam listens closely but the statement only lingers unfinished.

On his computer screen he activates a "Track Number" icon.

ADAM

Believe me when I say that whatever is going on, you can pull through it, and I'm sure there are people that care very deeply for you. There's no reason to do anything --

KATE (V.O.)

-- Crazy?

ADAM

I was gonna say rash.

Kate laughs at this.

ADAM

That's funny?

KATE (V.O.)

I can't tell if you're the type of person that acts with or without careful consideration, so I don't know if I should be taking any advice from you.

Adam realigns his perfectly aligned stationery.

ADAM

You did call me.

KATE (V.O.)

Then tell me... do you think you're someone that considers his actions fully, or are you more of an impulsive type?

ADAM

Kate, I really think you should tell me where you are so I can send some help.

KATE (V.O.)

And I think you should answer the question, remember I'm the one on the ledge.

(after a moment)

When I hang one leg over the edge it feels like gravity is trying to pull me down, like it wants it to happen.

ADAM

Stop! Okay... Ah... I guess I like to think things through, weigh up the positives and negatives, just like you should be doing now

On the computer screen the track is eighty percent complete.

KATE (V.O.)

I can do that. Let's see...
Positive... I'm seven months pregnant with my first child.
Negative... I'm seven months pregnant with my first child.

Adam types something else on the keyboard.

ADAM

How would the father feel about all of this?

KATE (V.O.)

No idea, he's not really in the picture.

ADAM

Right, and that's why it's come to this?

KATE (V.O.)

Yes and no... But I wanna get back to you. How do you weigh up the positives and negatives of your actions? I mean, you seem quite caring and considerate and I think we're all impulsive to a certain degree, but if you've found that through careful reflection that your actions are mostly positive and justifiable, does that make you a monster if you act on your deep-seated desires?

On the screen, the trace locks onto Kate's position and reads: "Apartment building, corner of Bell View Way and Lawson Street".

Adam takes this in, a look of concerned confusion crosses his face.

FLASHBACK - INT. EMERGENCY CALL CENTRE - CUBICLE - NIGHT

Adam sits at his desk, mid-conversation as he writes an address down on a piece of paper, half of it is obscured but "Lawson Street" is visible.

He clicks the button on the side of his headset, folds the paper neatly three times and then places it in his pocket.

BACK TO PRESENT

A light sweat has broken out on Adam's forehead.

KATE (V.O.)

As traumatic as the events that took place all those months ago were, the things that really stuck with me were how you made my bed after --

ADAM

I'm going to hang up now, goodb --

KATE (V.O.)

-- You hang up and I jump. I know you're a monster but I didn't pick you for a murderer as well.

ADAM

What do you want from me?

KATE (V.O.)

I was just saying how you made my bed, so precisely, hospital corners and all, and then brushed my hair, gently, not a strand out of place.

ADAM

I have no idea what you're talking about.

KATE (V.O.)

I think we're beyond that now, don't you? Just admit what you did... admit it or I'm going over the edge.

ADAM

Look, I'm sorry things are bad for you, but I think you've mistaken me for someone else.

KATE (V.O.)

Wrong answer --

The sound of rushing wind can be heard through the phone line, followed by a crash and then deafening silence that seems to drag on for an eternity.

ADAM

Hello...?

Tears well in Adam's eyes.

ADAM

Hello?! No, no... oh God no! I did it! I fucking did it, okay!

Silence for a moment longer, then --

KATE (V.O.)

I know, Adam.

The call ends abruptly.

Adam jumps up, throws the headset down, disrupting his perfectly aligned stationery.

He rushes towards the nearest --

ELEVATOR

-- and slams his finger repeatedly on the down button.

The doors open to reveal --

A POLICE OFFICER, cuffs in his hand at the ready.

POLICE OFFICER
Adam Dawson?

ADAM
Ye -- yes?

POLICE OFFICER
Put your hands behind your back,
son.

The Police Officer spins Adam around by the shoulder.

Adam does as instructed and the Officer cuffs him.

POLICE OFFICER
You have the right to remain
silent...

Adam hangs his head in shame as he resigns himself to his predicament, the tears now flowing freely as the Officer leads him away.

FADE OUT.