

Protect and Serve

written by

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FADE IN:

INT. TANI'S HOME - BEDROOM - DAY

A BUZZING alarm clock awakes TANISHA GREEN, 30s, African-American, workout body build.

She hits the clock and sits up on the side of the bed. She stretches and rolls her shoulder, cracking her neck.

She grabs her phone, a voicemail awaits. She plays the voicemail. A FEMALE VOICE comes on.

FEMALE VOICE

Hey Tani! It's Sherri. I just wanted to wish you good luck on your first day back on the force. I'm sure the guys will be glad to see you. I'm proud of you for getting through therapy. It's been a long road, but you did it. I know it's bad to talk ill of the dead, but personally, I think it was God's will someone hit your husband. Hell, if I knew who it was, I'd kiss him or her right on the lips. Anyway, have a good day, love. Let's grab lunch some time. Okay, I gotta go. Bye. Mwah!

Tani shakes her head chuckling. She tosses the phone on the bed and heads into the RESTROOM.

INT. TANI'S HOME - BEDROOM - LATER

Tani is fully dressed in her officer uniform. She tugs on her collar.

TANI

Hello, I am Officer Green and I am here to Serve and Protect.

She takes a deep breath, gives her reflection a smile and nod then leaves.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Tani goes to her car in all smiles.

She looks over at her closed garage door. Her smiles fades, her face expressionless.

She shakes it off and climbs into her car.

INT. PRECINCT LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Tani and her partner OFFICER CHANCE FLOORING, 40s, Caucasian, bald, CLING their soda cans together.

CHANCE
Cheers to your return!

TANI
It feels good to be back.

CHANCE
I'm surprised you wanted to come back. You sure you want to come back to criminals and corruption?

Tani laughs.

TANI
It's fine. It'll be a great distraction.

Chance raise his can again before he takes a drag.

CHANCE
Well, welcome back partner.

Chance sets aside his soda and hands Tani her gun and badge.

Tani snaps on her badge and holsters her gun with a huge smile on her face.

CHANCE (CONT'D)
Perfect.

TANI
Thanks.

Chance gives her a smack on her arm.

CHANCE
Hey listen, we're still looking for the suspect who hit your husband.

Tani shakes her head.

TANI
Don't bother, he wasn't a good man anyway.

Chance nods.

CHANCE
Well, we already have our first
case. You ready?

TANI
Ready.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

Chance and Tani study a BLONDE WOMAN cuffed to a table. She gazes at the wall with an emotionless face.

TANI
Why is she here?

CHANCE
Attempted murder. Tried to kill her
husband after he supposedly tried
to attack her.

Chance hands Tani the woman's file.

TANI
Allison Brooker. It says here she
tried to report domestic abuse
several times.

Chance shrugs.

CHANCE
Yeah, but she kept dropping the
charges.

Tani blinks. Chance notices.

CHANCE (CONT'D)
Hey, listen, we don't have to take
this case if you don't want. I know
this is a sensitive subje--

TANI
I'm fine. I got it.

Tani leaves.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Tani enters the room.

ALLISON BROOKER, 30s, blonde, heavy, tired eyes continue to gaze at the wall.

TANI

Mrs. Brooker? I am Officer Green.

Allison doesn't budge.

TANI (CONT'D)

Do you know why you're here?

Allison head turns slowly toward Tani. Her eyes are burning.

ALLISON

For defending myself.

TANI

You were arrested for attempted murder and assault toward your husband, Joshua Brooker. You want to tell me what happened?

ALLISON

Why? What difference will it make? Why not just lock me up?

TANI

That's coming soon enough. For right now, I want to know what happened.

Allison chuckles.

ALLISON

I spent all day cleaning. I cooked dinner. He came home mad about God knows what and decided to try and take it out on me. I grabbed a bat and the rest is history.

TANI

Has he attacked you before?

ALLISON

I know you've read my file, what do you think?

TANI

You filed multiple domestic abuse reports but never went through with the charges.

ALLISON

Because the police refused to help. I never even got a visit from the cops for help.

Tani flips through the files.

TANI

Why didn't you just leave?

ALLISON

Because it's just that simple,
right? You sound just like them.

TANI

Trust me, I'm not. I know your
situation better than most.

Allison gazes at Tani, it's written on her face.

ALLISON

Then you know why I can't go back.

Allison shuffles in her chair.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

I was two days away from leaving. I
bought a ticket to California. My
things were packed. It took months
to plan and then...

Allison drifts.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

I can't go back.

TANI

I'm going to the hospital to check
on your husband's condition.

ALLISON

Don't bother, I heard he's in
critical. Most likely he won't make
it. Good riddance.

TANI

If he dies, that's murder. You'll
be in prison for life.

Allison leans on the table.

ALLISON

When you wear black eyes everyday
and eat pain killers like skittles
to numb the pain from a broken jaw
and fractured ribs or you
constantly mourn the loss of your
two dead babies from being slammed
against walls at six or eight
months pregnant, life in prison is
freedom.

Tani closes the file. Her breathing hitches. The story obviously got to her. She stands and leaves the room.

EXT. INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Outside the room, Tani tries to calm herself with deep breaths. Chance bends the corner.

CHANCE

Are you okay?

TANI

Yes, I'm fine. I'm going to the hospital to check on her husband.

CHANCE

I'll go with you.

TANI

No, it's fine. I got it. I'll be right back.

EXT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Tani walks up to a glass window. She peeps in at a physically fit JOSHUA BROKER, 30s, lying still as zombie. His head wrapped in thick bandages, but blood soaks through.

Tani is stunned at the sight of the body-builder. She huffs.

A VOICE comes behind her.

VOICE

Hello.

Tani spins around. It is a MALE NURSE, late 20s, blonde highlights. He scribbles on his notepad.

MALE NURSE

Hello, I am Nurse Thompson. What can I do for you, Officer?

TANI

I wanted to check up on Mr. Broker,
for his wife.

The nurse looks over at Joshua and shakes his head.

NURSE THOMPSON

It's a shame isn't it? Nearly
killed the guy and she wants to
know how he's doing.

TANI

For good reason. He beat on her.

NURSE THOMPSON

Did she ever report it?

TANI

Of course, but never went through
with the charges.

Nurse Thompson chuckles.

NURSE THOMPSON

Figures.

Tani's jaw tighten.

TANI

What is his status?

NURSE THOMPSON

Well they had to cut his skull open
to allow room for the swelling.
He's still in critical. We just
have to see what happens.

TANI

Good. I understand. Thank you.

Tani begins to leave when the nurse calls to her.

NURSE THOMPSON

Will the wife do time?

TANI

Most likely, it was attempted
murder.

NURSE THOMPSON

Good. Lock her away forever.

INT. HOME - NIGHT

A door CREAKS open.

Tani enters the dark home quietly. She searches for a light switch.

She creeps over to a lamp, she turns it on.

Furniture is shuffled, papers everywhere, broken glass from a beer bottle is scattered about the floor.

She tip toes over the mess and surveys the mess.

She notices a indented hole in the wall. She runs her gloved fingers inside the indentation.

The image of Allison's head being smashed into the wall runs across her mind.

Her jaw tightens.

She studies photos of Allison and Joshua together. One photo shows Allison far along in pregnancy.

TANI

Pregnant?

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tani creeps down the hallway.

She is stunned to silence as she gaze over more images of Allison and Joshua. This time, Allison's face is clearly bruised but she poses as if nothing is wrong.

TANI

Allison...

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tani flips on the light of the bedroom. The room is just as much of a mess as the living room.

Tani goes to the dresser drawers, she flips through Allison's clothing.

She comes across two crochet bunnies. Each with a name sewn into the tummy. One reads CONNOR, the other KENNA.

Tani has had enough. She slams the drawer shut and leaves.

INT. PRECINCT - DAY

Tani enters. Chance meets her.

CHANCE

Hey, good news. The guy Joshua
Brooker, he's going to live.

Tani halts and turns to Chance.

TANI

What?

CHANCE

Yeah, the Doc said his swelling has
decreased and he awoke this
morning, asking for his wife.

TANI

He's going to live?

CHANCE

Yeah. The Doc says at this point he
should be released at the end of
the week. Brooker says he's not
pressing charges. I guess Allison
got lucky.

Tani huffs. She turns away from Chance.

CHANCE (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

Tani straightens.

TANI

No, Chance. She wanted to be locked
up. She was safe here.

Tani walks off.

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Allison is frozen. She gazes as Tani.

ALLISON

He's going to kill me.

Tani shakes her head.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

You know it's true. Men don't let
stuff like that go.

(MORE)

ALLISON (CONT'D)

I outwitted him, I weakened him. He hates weakness. He'll kill me for this.

TANI

Alli--

ALLISON

Why can't I still be locked up. I assaulted him. Is there anything you can use against me? I confessed, that should get me a charge.

Allison's eyes swell and run.

TANI

(shakes head)

Josh isn't pressing charges. There's nothing we can do. I--

Tani's voice cracks.

ALLISON

So that's it then?

Tani doesn't respond. Her face reflecting a deep hurt.

Allison forces a smile.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Can you do me one favor then?

TANI

What is it?

Allison grips onto the bars and stares Tani dead in her face.

ALLISON

I bought a plot of land next to my mother's grave at Herington Cemetery. My two babies are buried on the other side. I want to be right next to my mother. We'll have a lot to talk about once I'm gone.

Tani forces away tears. She blinks and nods her head fast.

TANI

I will.

Tani leaves before Allison could see her face.

EXT. PRECINCT - NIGHT

Tani and Chance watch as Joshua pulls up to the precinct to collect Allison.

He hops out of the car and goes to Allison. He embraces her as if he hasn't seen her in years.

He opens the door for Allison, she climbs inside.

Allison gazes out the window at Tani as Josh runs to the other side.

Allison forces a smiles as they drive away.

INT. TANI'S HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tani sits on the edge of the bed.

She rocks on her bed, biting her fists. She gazes at her badge and gun on her dresser.

She hops up, crosses the room to her closet and retrieves her personal gun.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Tani races to her car.

She halts and looks toward her closed garage. Her jaw tightens, she grits her teeth.

With a huff, she jumps into her car and speeds away.

INT. ALLISON'S HOME - NIGHT

Allison is on the living room floor with a bloody face.

Josh towers over her, his large fist covered in blood.

He leans down and grabs her hair. Allison screams.

He forces her to her feet. He plows her face into the wall.

EXT. ALLISON'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Tani pulls up to the house.

She runs up the walkway to the door.

She hears Allison SCREAMS from within.

Tani looks down her small gun. She looks toward the car.

INT. ALLISON'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Joshua has Allison down on the floor curled in a ball. She spits blood from her mouth. He kicks her in the stomach. Allison WAILS in pain.

SUDDENLY, the door FLIES OPEN.

Tani is at the door with a sawed off double-barrel shotgun.

Without hesitation, she blasts a round into Joshua's chest.

And then another.

Josh tumbles onto the floor.

Tani sprint to Josh's body and checks his pulse.

She turns to Allison.

TANI
Are you okay?

Allison gives a weak nod.

TANI (CONT'D)
We have to hurry. Grab all the meat
you can from your freezer.

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

Tani and Allison stand on the river bank covered in blood and mud.

They watch as something devour what appears to be Josh's body in the water.

Tani reaches into her pocket. She retrieves a band of cash. She pushes it into Allison's hand.

Allison looks at the money.

TANI
Take it. You need to leave tonight.
Start over.

Allison is speechless.

TANI (CONT'D)
 You need to lay low for a while.
 Get some kind of crappy job paying
 enough to live on, but live.

Allison grips the money in her hand.

ALLISON
 Thank You.

TANI
 Go. When you settle somewhere, I'll
 send only what's most important to
 you.

Allison looks at her with concern.

ALLISON
 You could get in a lot of trouble
 for this.

Tani smirks.

TANI
 This isn't my first rodeo.

Allison stares at her sinful smile.

TANI (CONT'D)
 Go.

Allison leaves.

INT. TANI'S BEDROOM - DAY

Tani dresses for the day.

TANI
 Hello, I am Officer Green. I am
 here to serv--

Tani's smile drop. Her eyes harden.

TANI (CONT'D)
 Hello, I am Officer Green. I am
 here to
 (pause)
 Protect.

A smile returns to her face. She winks at herself and leaves.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Tani opens the door to her car when she looks over at the garage.

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

Tani push up the door.

She surveys a car with a busted windshield, front grill and dented hood.

She flashbacks.

INT. PRECINT LOCKER ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Chance gives her a smack on her arm.

CHANCE

Hey listen, we're still looking for the suspect who hit your husband.

Tani shakes her head.

TANI

Don't bother, he wasn't a good man anyway.

Chance nods.

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Allison looks at her with concern.

ALLISON

You could get in a lot of trouble for this.

Tani smirks.

TANI

This isn't my first rodeo.

Allison stares at her sinful smile.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

A devious smiles spreads across Tani's face.

She whistles as she pulls the garage door down to close.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.