

The Memorial Visitor

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Jr.

EXT. SCHOOL-DAY

COLIN (17, thin) walks up to the school building. He stops for a moment staring at the doors. After a few seconds, he draws a deep breath like he's about to go into battle before entering the building.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY-DAY

Colin quietly walks down the hallway not meeting anyone's eyes. A few STUDENTS look at him as he walks by. Some of them point and laugh while others just give him dirty looks.

A JOCK steps in front of Colin bringing him to a stop.

JOCK

Hey fag!

The Jock throws a punch into Colin's gut. As Colin collapses to the floor holding his stomach, the Jock keeps walking down the hall.

LUCY (17, pretty) walks over to Colin and helps him to his feet.

LILY

You okay?

COLIN

Yeah, I'm fine.

Colin walks down the hall with Lily at his side.

LILY

You don't have to put up with this.

COLIN

Really? The principal seems to think I do. I can't keep going there. They're going to suspend me.

LILY

That's bullshit. I'll talk to him, then.

COLIN

You can't. He'll suspend you, too.

LILY

I don't care. If it keeps this from happening--

Colin stops and takes Lily's arm.

COLIN
Lily, I appreciate what you're
trying to do, but there's nothing
you can do.

LILY
Nothing? Colin, we've got to stop
this.

Colin smiles and pats Lily on her shoulder.

COLIN
Don't worry. This will end soon.

Colin walks away leaving Lily staring at him while holding
herself.

INT. LOCKER-DAY

Colin opens the locker and exchanges a few books and
folders. Quietly, CALVIN (17, bulky) and VICTOR (17, tall,
thin) walk up behind him. They smile at each other for a
few seconds before pushing Colin into the locker.

COLIN
Hey!

Calvin slams the locker shut.

COLIN (cont'd)
Hey! Let me out!

Colin beats on the locker door.

COLIN (cont'd)
Let me out! Somebody! Please!

Colin breaks into sobbing.

COLIN (cont'd)
Let me out!

RAY (OS)
Colin?

COLIN
Ray?

RAY (OS)
Colin, what are you doing in there?

COLIN
I got pushed in. Open the door.

RAY (OS)
What's the combination?

COLIN
Eight, thirty, ten.

After a few moments, the locker door opens. Standing outside are RAY (16) and CHUCK (16, chubby). Both of them help Colin out of the locker.

CHUCK
Do I want to know what happened?

COLIN
Don't worry about it, Chuck.

Colin walks a short distance away and stops.

COLIN (cont'd)
Ray, Chuck, thank you...for
everything you tried to do.

Colin walks away from Ray and Chuck who watch him as he goes.

RAY
For everything we tried to do?

CHUCK
He got stuffed into a locker. He
probably needs a few minutes.

INT. COLIN'S BEDROOM-NIGHT

Colin lays in bed staring up at the ceiling no even close to sleep. A tear runs down his cheek. He rolls to his side and grabs a notepad from his nightstand.

COLIN (VO)
To my friends and family, thank
you. You did everything you could
do to help me.

INT. KITCHEN-DAY

HELEN (50's, motherly) puts a breakfast plate in front of Colin as he sits at the table, he smiles at her before he starts eating.

COLIN (VO)

Mom, you did what you thought was right. I don't blame you for what happened. I see now how things looked, and I understand why you reacted the way you did.

MELISSA (14) walks into the room and gives Colin a hug before moving next to Helen.

COLIN (VO) (cont'd)

Melissa, don't let what people say keep you from being yourself. You're cool the way you are, Mel. Don't change for someone else.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY-DAY

STUDENTS move through the hallway as Ray and Chuck stand next to their lockers.

COLIN (VO)

Ray, your spirit is inspiring. You should keep up the fight--

Calvin and Victor walk past them. Calvin stops long enough to push Ray into the locker. Ray moves toward him, but Chuck stops him by grabbing his arm. Ray looks at him, and Chuck shakes his head.

COLIN (VO) (cont'd)

--but don't let them win. If you stoop to their level, you've lost. Listen to Chuck. He's the most grounded person I've ever met.

Lily glares at Calvin and Victor as she passes them.

COLIN (VO) (cont'd)

Lily, you're the best friend anyone could have. Thank you.

Calvin and Victor continue to walk down the hallway.

COLIN (VO) (cont'd)
 No one should feel that they're
 responsible...except for Calvin and
 Victor. They pushed me to this.

EXT. SCENIC OVERLOOK-DAY

Colin stands at the edge of the cliff looking down at ground below.

COLIN (VO)
 Someone should take them down, but
 I no longer have the will or the
 energy. The school didn't
 help. The police didn't help. I
 couldn't do it alone, and they
 wouldn't let me go without trying
 to punish me. I've had enough.

Colin looks straight ahead at the horizon.

COLIN
 I've had enough.

Colin takes two steps and leaps from the cliff like a diver into a pool.

EXT. CEMETERY-DAY

A funeral is in progress around an open grave with a coffin on a platform next to the hole. About 50 MOURNERS sit in folding chairs facing the coffin.

Standing next to a large picture of Colin is a MINISTER.

MINISTER
 Colin Masterson left this world,
 left our lives too soon. We don't
 know what caused him to end his
 life, but we shouldn't dwell on his
 final day.

Helen, Melissa, DARREN (17), and ALICE (40's) sit in the front row.

MINISTER (OS)
 Colin was loved by his family, his
 friends.

Ray and Chuck, looking distraught and confused, sit in one row.

MINISTER (OS) (cont'd)
 We need to remember his life, not
 how it ended.

Near the back, Calvin and Victor, less distressed than most in attendance, look on. Lily, with anger covering her face, stands a fair distance away.

MINISTER (OS) (cont'd)
 So, dearly beloved, remember Colin
 as that teenager that loved life.

Lily walks away from the grave site drawing Calvin's attention. After a moment, he follows.

At the grave, Helen, sobbing uncontrollably, puts her head and arms around the coffin. Alice, Melissa, and Darren eventually pull her away.

As the people at the funeral move toward their cars, Darren sees Lily pushing Calvin away from her. Then, she rushes away from him.

EXT. CRYPT-DAY

Lily, sobbing, moves around the crypt and leans against the wall.

CALVIN (OS)
 Come on, Lily. I just want to
 talk.

With hate in her eyes, Lily looks up at Calvin who stops a respectful distance from her.

LILY
 Leave me alone. What the hell are
 you doing here, anyway? You have
 no right--

DARREN (OS)
 Is something wrong?

Both Lily and Calvin look over at Darren.

LILY
 No, nothing's wrong. I was just
 leaving.

Lily rushes away leaving Darren and Calvin looking at each other.

CALVIN
I'm sorry for your loss.

INT. DARREN'S BEDROOM-NIGHT

S.O. a ringing telephone in the darkness.

SUPER: Ten Years Later

Darren, now ten years older, slowly awakens and turns on a light on the nightstand. He grabs the phone, also on the nightstand, and slowly puts it to his ear.

DARREN
Hello...Marty...Marty, calm
down. What's going on?...Again?

Darren looks at the alarm clock which reads 2:03.

DARREN (cont'd)
Alright, I'll be there in a half
hour...Yes, I'll be there. 'Bye.

Darren hangs up the phone and takes a deep breath. After a few seconds, he climbs from the bed.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING-NIGHT

Darren, dressed casually, slowly walks toward the building. There are few cars in the parking lot. Pausing long enough to take a deep breath, he enters the building.

INT. LOBBY-NIGHT

A SECURITY GUARD sits at a desk just within the lobby. Darren slowly walks by.

SECURITY GUARD
Another long night, Mr. Spence?

DARREN
I really hope not.

Darren walks over to the elevators.

INT. SERVER FARM-NIGHT

At a terminal, MARTY (early 20s, nerdy), surrounded by computer manuals with a logo for JoePat Software, frantically taps on the keyboard. Alarms ring throughout the room.

Darren opens the door to the room and stops just inside.

DARREN

Great.

Darren closes the door drawing Marty's attention.

DARREN (cont'd)

Marty.

MARTY

Darren, thank God you're here!

Darren walks behind Marty.

DARREN

Okay.

Marty tries to get out of the chair, but Darren pushes him back into the seat.

DARREN (cont'd)

Go to the settings menu.

Marty clicks on the computer with the mouse.

DARREN (cont'd)

Click on the alarm tab. Click never.

MARTY

Okay.

DARREN

Hit refresh.

In moments, the alarms stop.

MARTY

That's it?

DARREN

That's it.

MARTY

Seriously? What the hell? The alarms have been going off for the last hour. That's all it took?

DARREN

Yeah. Make sure you leave a note to tell people not to change the alarm settings.

Darren walks toward the door.

MARTY

Thank you.

DARREN

No problem.

MARTY

What causes those alarms?

DARREN

Overzealous sales people trying to get us to buy software we don't need.

Darren reaches the door.

MARTY

Wait, aren't you going to help me with the report?

DARREN

Marty, I've got to be at my mom's place in six hours. I had trouble going to sleep. I haven't had nearly enough. I'm going back to bed.

MARTY

But--

Darren opens the door.

DARREN

Marty, I have faith in you.

Marty sighs.

MARTY

Okay.

DARREN
I'll see you Monday. Good night.

MARTY
Good night, Darren.

Darren leaves the room closing the door behind him.

EXT. ALICE'S HOUSE-DAY

Children play in the neighborhood of houses of differing shapes and sizes. Darren pulls up to Alice's multistory house. He gets out of the car and walks up to the front door of the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM-DAY

Darren walks into the house.

DARREN
Mom?

ALICE (OS)
Up here.

Darren closes the door and walks out of the room toward a flight of stairs.

INT. ATTIC-DAY

Alice, ten years older, stacks various objects along a wall. Darren walks in and smiles at her.

DARREN
Mom.

ALICE
Hey, Darren. How are you?

They hug.

DARREN
Good.

ALICE
The stuff in those boxes there are yours. Whatever you don't want goes into my yard sale next month.

DARREN

Okay.

Darren walks over to the boxes and opens the one on the top. He pulls out a picture of him over ten years younger standing with Colin. Darren sighs with remembrance before gently setting the picture on a nearby table. As he goes back to the box, he yawns.

ALICE

Getting enough sleep?

DARREN

Not lately, not with work calling at all hours. If they had serious problems, then I wouldn't mind as much, but they've been calling me for some stupid software that triggers alarms if we don't have another piece of software loaded.

ALICE

Pretend I don't know what you're talking about.

Darren smirks.

DARREN

The company we bought this software from normally sells it as a package with something else, but we don't need the other stuff.

ALICE

But they still want you to buy it.

DARREN

Exactly. So, unless we buy it, or we disable their alarms, they scare the crap out of us. I think I took care of it last night...this morning...whatever.

ALICE

You've got some vacation time saved up, right?

DARREN

Yeah, but where would I go? I'm not going to sit around doing nothing.

ALICE
There's a lot of places you might
like. Find some beach, have a few
beers...say hi to some pretty girl.

DARREN
Okay, Mom. The beach isn't me.

ALICE
Some place in the mountains then.

DARREN
I don't know. I'll have to think
about it.

ALICE
The important thing is to get out
and do something.

Alice turns to an old linen chest while Darren continues to dig through the boxes. He finds a bundle of envelopes buried at the bottom of one of the boxes. All of them are from Colin and addressed to Alice. Darren opens the one on the top.

DARREN
I'll be back.

ALICE
Okay, sweetie.

Darren walks out of the room.

INT. HALLWAY-DAY

Darren stops at a table and pulls out the letter inside. He reads it for a few moments before staring down the hallway. Shock covers his face.

DARREN
She knew.

INT. ATTIC-DAY

Alice continues to clean as Darren, dazed, slowly walks into the room. Alice looks up at him and smiles, but her smile fades as she sees what is in his hand.

ALICE
Darren.

DARREN
He told you. He told you
everything that was happening.

ALICE
You weren't supposed to see those.

DARREN
Mom, you could've stopped him. You
could've done something.

ALICE
I tried.

Alice finds a chair and sits.

ALICE (cont'd)
I told your aunt that something was
wrong, that he was going to do
something drastic, but she didn't
believe me. She wouldn't, she
couldn't believe that her son, her
child, would do something like
that.

Alice sighs and looks down at the floor.

ALICE (cont'd)
I'm going to need those back.

DARREN
No.

Alice, surprised, looks up at Darren.

ALICE
You weren't meant to see those.

DARREN
Mom, these are from Colin. I miss
him.

ALICE
I know you two were close, but
those letters weren't written by
the same Colin that you knew. He
was in bad shape. I tried to get
Helen to help him, but she thought
he was fine.

DARREN
I want to read these.

ALICE

Okay.

Alice stands and walks over to Darren.

ALICE (cont'd)

Okay, you want to read them. I'll let you, but not today. Let me hold on to them for a few days.

DARREN

Mom--

ALICE

You need to be prepared for what's in there. You've seen some of it. It gets much worse. Your cousin was in a very dark place. What's in those letters might scare you.

Darren nods.

DARREN

Okay.

Darren gives the letters to Alice.

INT. DARREN'S BEDROOM-NIGHT

Darren lays in bed, his eyes wide open. The clock on the nightstand reads 2:30.

COLIN (OS)

So, you really want to see what's in those letters even though your mom said it's a bad idea.

Darren looks over to see Colin leaning against the wall.

DARREN

Wouldn't you want to know?

COLIN

I don't know. I'm just a figment of your imagination.

DARREN

I want to know what happened.

COLIN
I jumped off a cliff. I think everyone knows that.

DARREN
No, I want to know why.

Darren sits up in the bed.

DARREN (cont'd)
Whenever I saw you, you were happy. Nothing ever seemed to get to you. Then, one day, you killed yourself. No one just wakes up one day and does that. Something pushed you to do that.

COLIN
Well, you read that one letter.

DARREN
All I saw was that you were telling Mom about ending it all. You told her how bad things were. I want to know how it got to that point.

COLIN
And you think you can do that if you read those letters?

DARREN
I hope so.

Colin sits on the end of the bed.

COLIN
Yeah, maybe you can, but think about this. Aunt Alice can read people. She's really good at it. You know if she thought things had gone as far as they did, she would've been at that cliff long before I thought about it. She knew something bad was going to happen, but she didn't know what. If she couldn't do anything, what do you think you can do?

DARREN
Is that why you wrote to her?

COLIN
Again, I'm just a figment of your
imagination. I don't know.

Darren lays back and stares at the ceiling.

INT. LIVING ROOM-DAY

Darren sits on the sofa while Alice stares out of a window with her back to him. In her hand are the letters Colin sent her.

ALICE
Are you sure about this?

DARREN
Very sure.

ALICE
Nothing in those letters were meant
for you. Colin was a very
disturbed kid.

DARREN
Why didn't you say anything?

Alice turns to Darren, anger on her face.

ALICE
I did. I did what I could. I
talked to your aunt, tried to warn
her, but...

Alice relaxes.

ALICE (cont'd)
...but I guess it wasn't enough.

Alice walks over to Darren and sits on the couch next to him.

ALICE (cont'd)
Are you sure you want to do this?

DARREN
Mom, I need to know.

ALICE
It's not going to be an easy read.

DARREN
I know. I'm ready.

Alice hands Darren the letters.

ALICE
Let me know if you want to talk
about them.

DARREN
Thank you.

Darren and Alice hug.

INT. DARREN'S BEDROOM-NIGHT

Darren sits on the bed, the envelopes from the letters
around him. His face is cover with fear and horror as he is
focused on the letter in his hands.

DARREN
Oh my god. They were beating you
up daily.

COLIN (OS)
Sometimes twice a day.

Colin leans against a wall watching Darren.

COLIN
And I didn't take it, either. Read
on.

Darren turns to a second page where he reads for a moment.

DARREN
They knew.

COLIN
Oh yeah. The school, the cops,
they all knew. They just didn't
care.

DARREN
And Aunt Helen knew, too.

Colin lets out an uncomfortable laugh.

COLIN
Yeah, Mom. I told her
everything. I told her everything
until I was telling her

COLIN
everyday. She called the school,
and they said that it was
normal. She called the cops, and
they said it was a school
problem. She told them it wasn't
just happening at school, and they
told her it was kids being kids. I
was there when they said that.

DARREN
Yeah, I read that.

COLIN
So, now you know. Now you know
that I wasn't the happy kid you
remember. So, what are you going
to do? What was the point of all
of this?

Darren looks up at Colin, but his eyes are focused on
something far away.

INT. BREAK ROOM-DAY

Darren and Marty sit around a table eating lunch.

MARTY
What would I do? I don't
know. I've never had that
happen. I'd be pissed, I guess.

DARREN
Yeah.

MARTY
You never knew any of this was
happening?

DARREN
No clue. He was always happy when
I saw him.

MARTY
Well, I guess I'd want to know what
the hell was going on and why no
one told me. Also, if everyone
knew this crap was happening, why
didn't someone step up and do
something?

DARREN

Mom tried to tell Aunt Helen, but I guess she didn't think things were that bad.

MARTY

I find that hard to believe. She saw it, saw what it was doing to her son. She knew. She either couldn't or wouldn't do something.

Darren nods.

MARTY (cont'd)

What else was in the letters? Did he give any names or anything like that?

DARREN

Yeah, actually. He named a few of his friends. Other names popped up here and there.

MARTY

You could call them. That would be a good start.

INT. LOBBY-NIGHT

Darren slowly walks through the lobby while the security guard looks at the monitors behind his desk. When Darren gets close, the guard looks up and smiles.

SECURITY GUARD

Good night, Mr. Spence.

DARREN

Good night.

Darren leaves the building.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING-NIGHT

Darren slowly walks to his car. As he pulls out his keys, a THIEF comes up behind him with a knife. The thief grabs Darren and puts the knife to Darren's throat.

THIEF

Give me the keys, or--

Darren elbows the thief in the gut, and, before the thief can recover, Darren flips him over his shoulder and disarms him.

DARREN

Okay, I'm going to let go, and you're going to walk away. Okay?

The thief nods.

DARREN (cont'd)

Good.

Darren releases the thief who immediately grabs the knife and rises to his feet. Darren sighs with annoyance.

DARREN (cont'd)

I don't want to hurt you.

THIEF

You got me, but I know what you're going to try now.

DARREN

Really.

THIEF

So, hand over the keys, or--

Darren fakes a punch which distracts the thief long enough for Darren to kick him in the groin. With the thief on the ground, Darren kicks him in the face, and the knife lands at Darren's feet. Darren picks up the knife and stares at the thief.

DARREN

Let's try this again. You're going to get up and do your best to walk away. I know it's going to be hard now, but that's your own damn fault. So, you're leaving now, right?

The thief nods.

DARREN (cont'd)

Good.

The thief struggles to his feet and, holding himself, stumbles away. Darren watches for a moment before climbing into his car.

INT. CAR-CONTINUOUS

Darren grips the wheel while taking a deep breath.

COLIN (OS)
You enjoyed that.

Darren looks over to see Colin sitting in the passenger seat smiling.

COLIN
You can't hide it from me. You enjoyed kicking his ass.

DARREN
I did it because I had to. He wasn't going to go if I asked nicely.

COLIN
Okay, yeah, you did it because you had to, but you liked it.

DARREN
Oh please.

COLIN
You've always gone after bullies. That's why you took karate.

DARREN
No, I took karate because this town's dangerous.

COLIN
Yeah right.

DARREN
Did you not see that guy that just tried to steal my car?

COLIN
Aside from this one time, this one time in the six years since you've been here, have you ever had to defend yourself?

Darren, annoyed, stares out of the windshield.

DARREN
That's not the point.

COLIN

Right, of course not. Darren, you've used your supposed self-defense skills a lot for someone who doesn't get attacked. Remember that guy in your old apartment complex?

DARREN

Hey, he was beating his wife.

COLIN

Okay, I'll give you that. What about the drunk in your dorm back in college? What was he doing that made you break his nose, other than being drunk?

Darren stares silently out of the windshield.

COLIN (cont'd)

Uh-huh.

DARREN

Do you have a point?

COLIN

Of course I have a point. Why are you going after answers about me? Are you doing it because you want to know or because you want to punish people?

DARREN

All I want is to know what drove you to...

COLIN

Kill myself?

DARREN

And, if I have to punish a few people on the way, so be it.

Colin sighs and shakes his head.

COLIN

I hope you know what you're doing.

DARREN

Yeah, so do I.

INT. LILY'S BEDROOM-DAY

Lily, ten years older, walks in and sits on her bed. She grabs a nearby pair of shoes. As she puts them on, the phone on the nightstand rings. Lily finishes with her shoes and answers the phone.

LILY

Hello?

DARREN (VO)

Hi, my name is Darren Spence. Is this Lily Freeman?

LILY

Yes?

DARREN (VO)

I'm Colin Masterson's cousin. Do you have a few minutes? I'd like to ask you a few questions.

Lily looks like she's going to cry.

DARREN (VO) (cont'd)

Hello? Hello?

Lily slams the phone down on the base then pulls the phone off the nightstand. She flings the phone across the room then collapses to the floor in tears.

INT. BAR-DAY

The bar is slowly filling as the day comes to an end. Ray and Chuck, ten years older, sit at a table nursing beers.

RAY

Man, ten years. Doesn't seem that long.

CHUCK

Yeah. It seems like it was yesterday.

Chuck takes a swig of his beer.

CHUCK (cont'd)

Did you know that things were that bad with Colin?

RAY
No, not really. I mean, I knew
things were bad, but they were
pretty bad for us, too.

CHUCK
Yeah. I feel like there was
something we could've done to keep
him from...

RAY
Yeah.

The two remain silent for a moment studying their beers.

CHUCK
When did...um...Colin's cousin--

RAY
Darren. Darren Spence.

CHUCK
When did Darren say he was coming?

RAY
Friday. He said he was going to
stay with Mrs. Masterson.

CHUCK
I wonder how she's taking it.

RAY
I wonder how Melissa's taking
it. She's home from college for
the summer.

CHUCK
She took it rough.

RAY
As expected.

The door opens, and Lily walks into the bar. Ray and Chuck
watch her walk up to the counter.

RAY (cont'd)
Wow.

CHUCK
Haven't seen her in a few weeks.

Ray stands.

CHUCK (cont'd)
Careful, Ray.

RAY
I'm just going to say hi.

CHUCK
I don't want to have to take you to
the hospital. Maria is expecting
me home for dinner.

RAY
I'll be fine.

Lily takes a stool at the end of the bar. Ray grabs his
beer and sits next to her.

RAY (cont'd)
Lily.

Lily looks at Ray for a moment before turning to the
BARTENDER who gives her a beer.

LILY
Thanks.

Lily takes a sip of the beer as the bartender leaves.

RAY
How are you?

LILY
Oh, I was just fine until I got a
call from someone wanting to ask
questions about the past.

RAY
Ah, Darren. He called me,
too. Seems like a nice guy.

LILY
He shouldn't come here. All he's
going to do is stir up bad
memories.

RAY
He wants answers.

Lily turns to Ray with anger in her eyes.

LILY
He shouldn't come here!

Ray sighs and slides off of the bar stool.

RAY

He just wants to know what happened to Colin.

LILY

He gave up. That's all he needs to know.

RAY

Nice talking to you, Lily.

Ray walks back to the table where Chuck sits.

CHUCK

Looks like that went well.

RAY

Hey, she didn't punch me.

INT. SERVER FARM-DAY

Marty sits at a monitor studying it carefully. Darren walks into the room over to Marty.

DARREN

Well, it's been approved.

MARTY

What?

DARREN

My leave. Starting tomorrow, I'm on vacation for two weeks.

MARTY

That's great.

Marty suddenly looks up at Darren, a look of horror on his face.

MARTY

What? Vacation?

DARREN

Yeah. I'm taking your advice.

MARTY

My advice? I never said anything like that.

DARREN

You said that you'd want answers, and I have to agree with that. You also said that the people in Colin's letters wouldn't want to talk over the phone. So, I called my aunt and asked if I could stay with her for a while. I also called a few of Colin's friends, and some of them are willing to meet with me.

MARTY

Darren, I'm not sure I can run this place without you.

DARREN

That's sweet, Marty.

MARTY

I'm serious. What if something happens?

DARREN

Then you'll fix it.

MARTY

Darren--

DARREN

Marty, you have to have confidence in yourself. I have confidence in you. You can do it.

Marty smiles.

MARTY

Good luck.

EXT. ROAD-DAY

A faded sign that reads "Welcome to Jackson Springs" is planted on the side of the road leaning to one side. Darren's car passes.

INT. DARREN'S CAR-DAY

Darren drives, focused on the road.

EXT. HELEN'S HOUSE-DAY

Darren's car pulls up to the house. Helen opens the door and leans against the door frame. Darren climbs out of his car and grabs his suitcase from the back seat.

HELEN

You know, I almost told your Mom not to let you come. I know why you're here. I don't know what you expect to do here.

Darren walks up to the door.

DARREN

I just want to ask some questions. I don't know what to expect, either. I just want to know.

Helen sighs before giving Darren a hug and guiding him into the house.

HELEN

You know where the guest room is.

INT. DINING ROOM-NIGHT

With the remains of dinner in front of them, Darren and Helen sit at the table looking at each other.

HELEN

I play that day over and over in my head. He got up at his normal time, had breakfast like normal, and left. He even said, "see you later," as if he didn't know he was going to do it.

Helen wipes a tear from her face.

HELEN (cont'd)

I wonder, every day, I wonder if there was something, anything, I could've done to stop him.

DARREN

I don't think there was anything you or anyone else could've done.

HELEN

Your mom told me about the letters
and about you finding them.

DARREN

I never knew he was going through
that. He never said anything to
me.

HELEN

He told me. I did what I
could. It wasn't enough.

Helen stands and clears the table.

HELEN

Melissa should be here in the
morning. She went out of town for
a concert.

DARREN

How is she? I haven't talked to
her since she left for college.

HELEN

She's doing okay. She's loving the
college life...and being away from
me.

Darren stands and walks over to the sink.

DARREN

I've got the dishes.

HELEN

Thanks.

Helen pats Darren on the shoulder and leaves the
room. Darren stacks some of the dishes before taking a deep
breath.

INT. BAR-NIGHT

Lily sits in the now crowded bar drinking a beer. After a
few sips of the bottle, she takes a shot glass filled with a
clear liquid and drinks it on one gulp. She slams the glass
down on the bar.

LILY

Bartender, one more shot.

The bartender walks over to Lily.

BARTENDER
I don't think so.

LILY
What?

BARTENDER
You're cut off.

LILY
Cut off? You can't do that.

BARTENDER
I can, and, if I don't, the state's
going to take my license. I'll
call you a cab when you're ready to
go.

LILY
Whatever.

The bartender walks away, and Lily rests her head on her hands.

CALVIN (OS)
Lily? Lily Freeman?

Lily looks up to see Calvin, now older, walking toward her.

LILY
What do you want, Calvin?

CALVIN
You look like you need a friend.

LILY
What I need is another drink.

CALVIN
I can do that.

LILY
How? You going to beat a drink out
of the bartender?

CALVIN
No, I was thinking we head back to
my place.

LILY
Calvin, I've been here since three,
and I'm nowhere near that drunk.

CALVIN
Come on, Lily. Why won't--

LILY
You know exactly why, you
bastard. Stay away from me.

Calvin gets closer to Lily.

CALVIN
At least let me take you--

Lily jumps off of the bar stool and knees Calvin in the crotch. Calvin drops to the floor in pain. Lily lines up to kick Calvin in the head but falls over and hits the floor. With a sigh, the bartender helps Lily to her feet.

BARTENDER
Okay, you're going home.

RAY (OS)
I'll take her.

Everyone looks to see Ray walking into the bar.

LILY
Hey, Ray, how's it going?

BARTENDER
Is she going to kick you in the
balls, too?

LILY
No, Ray's a good guy.

CALVIN
Ray, help a guy out.

RAY
Go fuck yourself, Calvin. Lily,
ready?

INT. RAY'S CAR-NIGHT

Ray drives while Lily, who is mostly conscious, rides in the passenger seat.

RAY
So, you were in the bar yesterday,
and you were there tonight.

LILY
So were you.

RAY
Yeah, for a couple of hours. Then
I went home. You've suddenly taken
up heavy drinking.

Lily leans her head against the glass.

RAY (cont'd)
You want to tell me what's
bothering you?

LILY
There's not enough alcohol in this
town.

RAY
Lily.

Lily slowly looks over at Ray.

LILY
You came back.

RAY
Well, I thought you might need a
ride. I heard you left your car
there the night before.

LILY
Then you probably know why I was
there.

Ray sighs.

RAY
You might feel better if you just
talked to him.

LILY
No, what would make me feel better
is if you pulled over.

RAY
Huh?

LILY
Like, now.

Ray looks at Lily for a moment before his eyes widen.

RAY

Oh!

Ray pulls the car to a stop. Lily opens the door and vomits onto the road. After a few moments she closes the door and rests her head against the back of the seat. Ray puts the car in motion.

LILY

Thank you.

RAY

You're welcome.

LILY

I thought we were good friends to him, you, me, and Chuck. What kind of friends were we if he thought that was the best thing he could do? We were supposed to be there for him, and he just left, just left us here like it was nothing.

RAY

We did what we could. We tried to help him. We tried to do what we could.

Lily closes her eyes and rests her head against the window.

RAY (cont'd)

I tried to keep the bullies away myself, but I couldn't do it. I think, if we knew what he was going to do, we would've done anything, anything in our power to stop him.

Ray looks over to see that Lily has fallen asleep.

RAY (cont'd)

I know you would've.

INT. COLIN'S BEDROOM-DAY

The room looks almost exactly the way it did the day Colin killed himself. Darren walks into the room and stops in the center. He takes a look around like he's trying to absorb everything.

Melissa, ten years older, walks into the room and stops behind Darren. After a moment, with a look of anger on her face, she slaps Darren on his shoulder bringing him out of his trance. He winces and grabs his shoulder.

DARREN
What the hell, Melissa?

MELISSA
You know damn well why I did
that. What the hell do you think
you're going to do here?

DARREN
Nice to see you, too, Mel.

MELISSA
Darren, we don't need the problems
this is going to cause. I know why
you're here. I heard Mom talking
about the letters with Aunt Alice.

DARREN
Don't you want to know why?

MELISSA
Of course I want to know! He was
my brother, damn it!

Helen walks into the room.

HELEN
What's going on?

Darren and Melissa look at Helen.

HELEN (cont'd)
What's with the screaming, Melissa?

DARREN
We were just discussing the plan
for today.

HELEN
Loudly.

DARREN
She disagreed with what I had in
mind.

Melissa scoffs.

MELISSA
That's putting it mildly. Mom, I
can't believe you're going along
with this.

Melissa leaves the room.

DARREN

Did something happen that I should know about?

Helen sighs and carefully sits on the bed.

HELEN

Colin was the first person to commit suicide in Jackson Springs in fifty years. The town didn't take it well.

DARREN

What did they do?

HELEN

They assumed that something was seriously wrong with him, something involving his family, and especially his mother. We were harassed. They claimed that I was a bad parent for raising a kid that would do that.

DARREN

What the hell is wrong with this town?

HELEN

Good question. Of course, that was the past. Nobody here likes to talk about that.

DARREN

Well, maybe it's time for that to change.

EXT. HELEN'S HOUSE-DAY

Darren leaves the house and stops a short distance from his car. Leaning against the driver's side door is Melissa.

DARREN

Are you going to slap me again?

Melissa smirks.

MELISSA

I'm sorry for that. I...it's still a little painful to think about it.

DARREN

Yeah.

MELISSA

I want to come with you.

DARREN

Oh?

MELISSA

Two reasons. One, we haven't seen each other in a few years. I'd like to hang out with you.

DARREN

Good enough right there.

MELISSA

And two, I don't want you to get your ass kicked.

DARREN

I've reached the second dan in karate. I can protect myself.

MELISSA

I'm sure the second dan is something really good, but I'd like to keep you out of fights.

Darren nods.

DARREN

Fair enough. After all, the best fight is the one you're not in.

MELISSA

One rule, though. No Mr. Miyagi crap, okay?

Darren smirks.

DARREN

Okay.

INT. LILY'S BEDROOM-DAY

Lily, wearing the clothes she wore the night before and in the midst of a nasty hangover, lays across the bed, a washcloth over her eyes. The doorbell rings, and Lily moans in pain.

LILY

Why?

Slowly, Lily pulls herself from the bed.

EXT. LILY'S HOUSE-DAY

Darren and Melissa wait outside of the front door.

DARREN

So, what's she like?

MELISSA

You didn't talk to her?

DARREN

I tried. I think we got cut off.

MELISSA

Well, I haven't seen her in a few years, but, from what I remember, she was sweet. Very pretty, too.

Lily opens the door and winces at the sunlight.

LILY

Can I help you?

DARREN

I'm Darren Spence. I tried calling you the other day, but I think something happened to the line. I was wondering if you had some time to talk about Colin Masterson.

LILY

No.

Lily closes the door. Darren and Melissa continue to look at the door.

MELISSA

Well, people can change.

EXT. BAR-DAY

Darren's car pulls to a stop in the parking lot of the bar. Darren and Melissa get out and head for the door to the building.

MELISSA

Did you at least talk to them?

DARREN

Yeah, I talked to Ray. Seemed like a nice guy.

MELISSA

Yeah, he is.

Darren suddenly stops causing Melissa to do the same.

DARREN

Are you even old enough to go in there?

MELISSA

Um...well...

DARREN

Wait for me in the car.

MELISSA

You could vouch for me.

DARREN

I don't think so. By the way, I don't know how Aunt Helen couldn't smell it, but I know what that smell is on your clothes.

Melissa looks nervous.

MELISSA

What smell?

DARREN

That very distinct smell I haven't smelled since college. How long have you been smoking pot?

Melissa looks annoyed.

MELISSA

Since high school. How do you think I survived this town?

Darren sighs then tosses the car keys to Melissa.

DARREN

Just don't let Aunt Helen find out.

MELISSA
Yeah, I know.

DARREN
Wait here for me. I won't be long.

Darren walks toward the bar as Melissa opens the door to the car.

DARREN (cont'd)
And don't change my presets.

MELISSA
Yeah, yeah.

INT. BAR-DAY

The bar is nearly empty. At a table Ray and Chuck nurse beers. Darren, carrying a soda, walks over to the table.

DARREN
Are you Ray and Chuck?

Ray and Chuck look up at him.

RAY
Yeah. Darren?

Darren shakes their hands before sitting down.

DARREN
Thanks for meeting me.

CHUCK
Hey, no problem. We were talking about how long it's been the other day.

DARREN
Ten years.

RAY
What got you to call us?

DARREN
Colin sent a bunch of letters to my Mom. He called you two good friends.

RAY
We were friends, yeah, but I don't know how good we were. I think we should've known.

DARREN
No one did.

CHUCK
At least we didn't treat him like
shit like everyone else here.

DARREN
I didn't know things were that bad
until the letters.

RAY
The thing about Colin was that he
was, um...

DARREN
Weird? Strange?

RAY
Different.

DARREN
Yeah, I know. That's why he was my
favorite cousin.

Ray and Chuck smile.

CHUCK
Yeah, I think that's why we liked
him, too.

Ray and Chuck get serious again.

RAY
The thing about this town is that
being different is seen...like a
sin, really. You're supposed to be
like everybody else. Don't step
out of line. Don't try to change
anything. If you're a guy, you're
supposed to like
football. Violence is
good. Reading is bad.

DARREN
Fun town.

RAY
Colin hated football and really
didn't want to hit anything.

DARREN
And he loved to read.

RAY
Yeah. People thought he was some
sort of freak.

CHUCK
Because of that, they thought it
was okay to pick on him.

DARREN
I'm not seeing the logic there.

CHUCK
Yeah, what logic? Anyway, they
did...horrible things to him.

DARREN
He was bullied.

RAY
Oh, he was more than bullied.

Ray turns to Chuck.

RAY (cont'd)
You remember that day in the park?

CHUCK
Oh yes. We were talking about the
game that Friday and how we weren't
going to go. Then we saw him. He
was bleeding, limping...it looked
like he went ten rounds with Rocky.

RAY
We asked him what happened. He
said he fell down a hill.

CHUCK
I asked him who was waiting at the
bottom for him.

RAY
We thought we knew who did it, but
he refused to tell us. We called
the cops because he'd got his ass
kicked that badly.

DARREN
What happened?

CHUCK

We don't know. He didn't say anything to them.

RAY

A few days later, I heard a few of the football players talking about how they beat him up. I told the principal and he did nothing.

DARREN

Why wouldn't Colin say anything?

RAY

I don't know. I guess, by that point, he didn't think anyone would help. All he had to do was ask, though. I would've been there. Chuck would've been there.

CHUCK

Don't forget Lily.

DARREN

Lily Freeman?

CHUCK

Yeah. You've met her?

DARREN

Not quite. She slammed her door in my face.

Ray and Chuck share a glance.

DARREN (cont'd)

What?

RAY

In those letters, what did they say about Lily?

DARREN

That she was his friend, his closest friend actually.

RAY

The feeling was mutual. They spent a lot of time together. She took it really hard when he died. She hasn't said his name since then.

CHUCK

Ten years.

Darren leans back in the chair.

DARREN

I've probably stirred up some really bad feelings.

RAY

I wouldn't worry about it. She's tough. If it would help, I could talk to her.

DARREN

If you think you could help.

INT. DARREN'S CAR-DAY

Melissa sits in the passenger seat playing on her cell phone. Darren climbs into the car and takes a deep breath. Melissa looks up at him and puts away her phone.

MELISSA

Everything okay?

DARREN

Let's get lunch.

MELISSA

That bad?

DARREN

That heavy.

INT. RESTAURANT-DAY

The afternoon lunch crowd fills the restaurant. In a corner, Darren and Melissa slowly eat.

MELISSA

Yeah, I remember that. Mom got a call from the emergency room. We got there, and he looked terrible. Mom kept asking him who did it, but he didn't say anything. Ray and Chuck were there, and they were pissed.

DARREN

Yeah, they didn't seem very happy. I have a feeling that, if they could, they'd go after the guys who went after Colin.

MELISSA

Oh, they were mad at them, but they were mad at Colin, too. Mom knew that he was tired of talking. He wanted something to get done, and he couldn't do it himself.

Darren sighs and looks down at the table for a moment.

DARREN

Are you okay with me doing this? I mean, I know now how bad things got, and I know it's tough on you.

MELISSA

Don't worry about that. I'm fine.

DARREN

Do you want me to keep doing this?

MELISSA

Darren, I've wanted to ask the questions you've been asking for years. We needed someone with the balls to do this. I'm with you all the way.

DARREN

Even if they come after you?

MELISSA

Let them. I'm tired of being quiet about this.

INT. LILY'S BEDROOM-DAY

Lily, now in a long nightgown, lays on her bed staring at the ceiling. The doorbell rings, and she glares toward the front of the house. Slowly, she rises from the bed and heads out of the room.

EXT. LILY'S HOUSE-DAY

Ray waits patiently outside. Lily opens the door.

LILY

Ray.

RAY

Hey, Lily. How's it going?

LILY

Not bad. Thank you for the rescue from the bar.

RAY

No problem. Can I come in?

LILY

That depends. Have you been visited by a stranger? A man named Darren?

RAY

Yeah, not too long ago.

LILY

Then, no.

Lily moves behind the door.

RAY

Lily wait!

Lily closes the door.

RAY (cont'd)

Lily, come on!

Ray pounds on the door.

LILY (OS)

Go away!

RAY

I'm not leaving until we talk.

Ray leans against the wall next to the door.

RAY (cont'd)

Lily, he just wants answers. He wants to know what happened to his cousin.

Lily, with tears in her eyes, opens the door.

LILY

You know what happened? His cousin, that selfish coward, threw himself off of a cliff without even a goodbye. He just said, "fuck all of you! I'm done!"

RAY

You really think he was a selfish coward?

LILY

Isn't that what they say about suicide? It's the coward's way out, right?

RAY

Maybe that's what they say, but you're not the kind of person that would be friends with a coward.

Lily wipes the tears from her eyes.

RAY (cont'd)

Darren just wants answers. He wants to know why his cousin, his favorite cousin, killed himself. It wouldn't hurt to talk to him.

Ray turns to leave.

LILY

Wait, that's it? You come here and make me cry, and then you're just going to leave?

Ray stops and faces Lily.

RAY

I don't think I can say any more.

LILY

Well, you could at least ask me out to dinner.

Ray smiles.

RAY

You wouldn't go out with me way back when. Why would I think you would now?

LILY
I'd like to think I've changed a
little bit in ten years. Pick me
up Friday at six.

Lily closes the door. With a smirk on his face, Ray walks
away from the house.

EXT. SUPERMARKET-DAY

Darren and Melissa walk toward the store. A few cars are
parked nearby in the parking lot.

MELISSA
Oh, I need to pick up some flour.

DARREN
Flour?

MELISSA
For baking.

DARREN
When did you start baking?

MELISSA
A while ago. You know those
oatmeal cookies you love so
much? I make them.

DARREN
I always thought there was
something missing from them.

Darren laughs as Melissa playfully slaps him on the
shoulder.

MELISSA
So, why are we here? I think
you've met, or at least tried to
meet, all of Colin's friends.

DARREN
I think the guy here wasn't a
friend. His name is Calvin
Jefferson.

Melissa stops Darren.

MELISSA
Have you talked to him? Did you
call him?

DARREN
No, I didn't think he'd talk.

MELISSA
Darren, he's not exactly a friendly
guy.

DARREN
Yeah?

MELISSA
Well, to put it nicely, he's a
total asshole.

DARREN
I'm glad you put it nicely.

MELISSA
He was supposed to go to college on
a football scholarship. This town
might not care about what he did to
Colin, but that college did. He
lost the scholarship.

DARREN
I bet he's not too happy about
that.

Melissa shakes her head.

MELISSA
Be careful with him.

Darren nods.

DARREN
Okay.

INT. SUPERMARKET-DAY

Calvin, now older, stacks products from a box on a
shelf. Darren comes around the corner and slowly walks over
to him.

DARREN
Excuse me, are you Calvin
Jefferson?

CALVIN
Yeah. Who wants to know?

DARREN
My name is Darren Spence. Do you
have time to answer a few
questions?

Calvin looks up at Darren.

CALVIN
Depends on the questions.

DARREN
Fair enough.

CALVIN
Mind if I keep working?

DARREN
Go ahead.

Calvin goes back to his stacking.

DARREN (cont'd)
I'm Colin Masterson's cousin.

CALVIN
God damn it.

Calvin stands.

CALVIN (cont'd)
I didn't kill him, alright? It's
not my fault. What the hell is it
going to take to get you people off
my back?

DARREN
Whoa, whoa, whoa, calm down. All I
want to do is ask some
questions. I'm not accusing you of
anything.

CALVIN
You here for revenge?

DARREN
No, no revenge. He mentioned you
in some letters he wrote to my mom.

Calvin returns to his stacking.

CALVIN
What did he say about me?

DARREN
Not very nice things.

CALVIN
Not surprised. He was easy to pick on. He was a scrawny little weirdo.

Calvin looks up at Darren.

CALVIN (cont'd)
No offense.

DARREN
Sure.

Calvin goes back to his stacking.

CALVIN
A lot of people picked on him, not just me. He was just that weird.

DARREN
So, that made it right?

CALVIN
Hey, it's not my fault. It's just the way he was. He stood out. He was kind of goofy, but it's not my fault.

Colin finishes his stacking and stands.

CALVIN (cont'd)
I've always thought he offed himself when that old guy, um, Echevaria, broke up with him.

DARREN
Broke up?

CALVIN
Oh, you didn't know? He played for the same team, if you know what I mean.

DARREN
You think he was gay?

CALVIN
Think? I watched him go into Echevaria's house. He was into old guys I guess. Echevaria still

CALVIN
lives by Bailey Park. I bet, if
you went there, he'd tell you he
broke up with him.

DARREN
Nice talking to you.

Darren walks away as Calvin pulls out a phone. Calvin dials
a number as Darren rounds the corner.

CALVIN
Yeah, Victor, it's Calvin. I just
got a visit from someone asking
questions about Masterson...Darren
Spence...yeah, I think he needs to
go home.

EXT. SUPERMARKET-DAY

Melissa waits outside with a grocery bag. Darren, with an
annoyed look on his face, walks out of the store. Melissa
falls in step with him.

MELISSA
How'd it go?

DARREN
He's a fucking dumbass.

MELISSA
That well, huh?

INT. GUEST ROOM-NIGHT

Darren lays in bed staring up at the ceiling not even close
to sleep.

COLIN (OS)
So, how's it going?

DARREN
Good.

COLIN (OS)
Good?

Darren looks over at Colin who leans against the wall.

DARREN

The meeting with Ray and Chuck went very well.

COLIN

Of course.

DARREN

Okay, so things with Lily didn't go well.

COLIN

She slammed the door in your face.

DARREN

Well, yeah, there's that.

COLIN

Then there's Calvin.

DARREN

Calvin, yes. What a jackass. So, it could've gone better, but he did give me a lead.

COLIN

Echevaria. Do you know anything about him?

DARREN

Nope.

COLIN

Should be fun.

EXT. ECHEVARIA'S HOUSE-DAY

Darren and Melissa climb out of Darren's car and look up at the large house. Across the street is a large park.

DARREN

Wow.

MELISSA

Nice place.

Darren and Melissa walk toward the front door.

DARREN

Do you anything about this guy?

MELISSA
Only that he's the only Echevaria
in town. Luis Echevaria.

DARREN
Wonder what he does for a
living. This is a great house.

Darren and Melissa reach the door, and Darren rings the doorbell. After a few moments, LUIS (60's, overweight) stands in the doorway.

LUIS
Can I help you?

DARREN
Hi, I'm Darren. This is
Melissa. Are you Luis Echevaria?

LUIS
Yes, yes I am.

DARREN
I was hoping you could answer a few
questions about Colin Masterson.

Luis looks at Darren and Melissa for a few moments.

LUIS
No.

Luis closes the door leaving Darren and Melissa staring stunned.

DARREN
Huh.

MELISSA
Are you okay?

DARREN
Oh yeah. I'm getting used to
having doors slammed in my face.

INT. DARREN'S CAR-DAY

Darren drives while Melissa rides in the passenger seat.

DARREN
I don't get it. Why wouldn't he
want to talk if he knew Colin?

MELISSA

The town took what happened pretty hard. Maybe they don't want to drag up old memories.

DARREN

I just don't get it.

MELISSA

I can't help you with that.

Melissa looks out of the window for a moment.

MELISSA (cont'd)

You know, you've been going almost nonstop since you've been here. Have you thought about taking a break?

DARREN

I don't have very long.

MELISSA

Yeah, but a little rest wouldn't hurt. There's a carnival tonight at the high school.

DARREN

A carnival?

MELISSA

Yeah. Should be a lot of fun. There's going to be rides, food, games...girls.

DARREN

Melissa, really? You want me to hook up?

MELISSA

Okay, Aunt Alice called this morning while you were in the shower. She wanted me and Mom to get you to have fun. She also said you need some lovin'.

DARREN

Oh dear God! She did not say that.

MELISSA

Not those exact words, no. She thinks you're a little uptight.

Darren looks like he's going to object but stops.

DARREN

I haven't really tried to have fun since I've been here. Maybe the carnival would be fun.

MELISSA

Yeah. I think you're going to like it.

EXT. HELEN'S HOUSE-DAY

Victor, older and in a police uniform, stands in front of an annoyed Helen. A police car blocks the driveway.

HELEN

What is this really about?

VICTOR

Ma'am?

HELEN

I remember you. Do you want us to suffer more?

VICTOR

Ma'am, your nephew has had a few complaints against him for harassment.

Helen laughs.

HELEN

Harassment? I find that hard to believe.

Darren's car pulls to a stop behind the police car.

HELEN (cont'd)

There he is. You can ask him yourself.

Darren and Melissa climb out of the car and walk over to Helen and Victor.

MELISSA

Everything okay, Mom?

HELEN

For the most part.

VICTOR
Are you Darren?

DARREN
Yes.

VICTOR
There have been reports of you
harassing people.

DARREN
Harassing?

HELEN
Officer...

VICTOR
Kaufman, Victor Kaufman.

Melissa's eyes widen.

HELEN
Officer Kaufman, all that Darren's
been doing is asking questions.

DARREN
That's right. If no one wants to
answer them, they don't have
to. I've had several doors slammed
in my face already.

VICTOR
Well, just be careful. I don't
want to have this conversation
again.

Victor walks toward the police car while Darren, Helen, and
Melissa watch him.

MELISSA
I know him. He was one of the
bastards who went after Colin.

Darren and Helen nod.

DARREN
Colin wrote about him in his
letters. They're trying to
intimidate me.

HELEN
Darren, they've pissed me off
now. Do what you need to do.

DARREN

I think I need to ask questions at
the carnival tonight.

EXT. FAIRGROUND-NIGHT

The carnival is well attended with many people moving
through the Midway. A Ferris Wheel spins at the far side of
the carnival.

Darren and Melissa walk onto the fairgrounds.

MELISSA

So, you'll follow me, and you'll
wait for me to point out someone.

DARREN

Then I go up, introduce myself, and
go from there.

MELISSA

Sounds good.

DARREN

You know, we make a good team.

MELISSA

Well, I can be pretty good when I'm
motivated.

PATTY (OS)

Melissa!

Melissa and Darren stops as PATTY (early 20's, pretty) runs
up to them.

PATTY

Melissa, how's it going?

Patty gives Melissa a warm hug.

PATTY (cont'd)

It's been so long. How have you
been?

MELISSA

Good, very good. You?

PATTY

Oh, can't complain.

MELISSA
Darren, this is Patty, a friend
from high school. Patty, this is
my cousin, Darren.

DARREN
Hello.

Darren and Patty shake hands.

PATTY
Hi. You mind if I steal Melissa
for a while?

MELISSA
Well, actually--

DARREN
Oh, no, go ahead. I'll be fine.

MELISSA
But--

DARREN
You two catch up. I'll be by the
food stand.

MELISSA
You're sure?

DARREN
Yeah, I'll be fine.

PATTY
Come on. I've got something I
think you'll like.

Patty pulls Melissa away leaving Darren by himself.

DARREN
Well, at least somebody's going to
have fun tonight.

EXT. CARNIVAL MIDWAY-NIGHT

Melissa and Patty, holding hands, walk through the
Midway. Calvin and Victor, leaning against one of the
games, watches them pass before they smile at each other.

CALVIN
Her cousin is probably around here
somewhere.

VICTOR
Let's say hi.

Calvin and Victor head into the Midway.

EXT. WOODS-NIGHT

The lights of the carnival flash behind Melissa and Patty as they move into the woods.

PATTY
College going okay?

MELISSA
Yeah. I've finally settled on a major. I'm going to be a playwright.

PATTY
You always could write.

Patty casually pulls out a joint from her pocket and lights it. After a few puffs, she passes it to Melissa.

MELISSA
How are things with you?

PATTY
Accounting couldn't be more boring. I think I'm going to change my major soon.

Melissa takes a few puffs on the joint and passes it back.

PATTY (cont'd)
So, your cousin, Darren, what's he like?

MELISSA
I think you'd like him. Right now, he's got a lot of stuff on his mind, though. He's here talking to people about Colin.

PATTY
Were they close?

MELISSA
Very close. I don't think Darren every got over what happened.

EXT. FOOD STAND-NIGHT

Darren sits at a table munching on nachos and sipping a soda. Chuck and MARIA (late 20's-early 30's) walks up to the table.

CHUCK

Darren.

Darren wipes his hands on a napkin then shakes Chuck's hand.

DARREN

Chuck, hi.

CHUCK

This is my wife, Maria.

MARIA

Hi.

DARREN

Hello.

Darren and Maria shake hands.

CHUCK

So, you heard about the carnival.

DARREN

Yeah, Mel brought me here, then someone named Patty grabbed her and took her away.

MARIA

Ah yes, Patty. I remember they were always close in high school.

DARREN

They probably haven't seen each other for a while.

CHUCK

Well, if we see them, we'll remind Melissa that you're here.

Darren laughs.

DARREN

Thanks. Oh, by the way, have you ever heard of Luis Echevaria?

CHUCK
No, I don't so.

MARIA
The name sounds familiar, but I
don't know where.

DARREN
Ah. Okay.

CHUCK
We'll send Melissa back your
way. See you later.

MARIA
Nice meeting you.

DARREN
You, too.

Chuck and Maria walk away. Darren sighs the finishes the last of his nachos. He tosses the nacho tray into the nearest trash can. Before he can walk away, Calvin and Victor grab his arms.

CALVIN
Hello, Darren.

VICTOR
Let's take a walk.

Calvin and Victor lead Darren through the Midway.

EXT. CARNIVAL MIDWAY-NIGHT

Ray and Lily, both nicely dressed, hold hands and walk through the Midway.

LILY
Dinner was good.

RAY
Yeah.

LILY
It's been so long since I've been
to Georgio's.

RAY
Best lasagna in town.

Lily smirks.

RAY (cont'd)
Haven't seen that in a while.

LILY
What?

RAY
You smiling. I wasn't sure you
still knew how to do that.

LILY
I guess I've been closed off for a
while.

Lily looks down at the ground for a moment.

LILY (cont'd)
Have you heard from, um, Darren
lately?

RAY
No, not for a couple of day.

Ray puts his arm around Lily's shoulders.

RAY (cont'd)
I know why you don't want to talk
to him.

LILY
I'm not ready.

RAY
I'm okay with that.

LILY
No, you're not.

Ray smirks.

RAY
No, I'm not, but I'm not going to
push you. I'm not going to say any
more about him.

In front of them, Calvin and Victor pull Darren through the
Midway.

RAY (cont'd)
Except I think we should follow
them.

Ray and Lily rush after them.

EXT. WOODS-NIGHT

Melissa and Patty lay on the ground in a warm embrace with their lips locked passionately. A noise grabs Melissa's attention, and she looks up.

PATTY
Relax. No one's here.

MELISSA
I heard something.

PATTY
Probably just an animal.

Melissa and Patty go back to their kissing.

CALVIN (OS)
So, you been asking questions
again?

Melissa and Patty look up quickly.

MELISSA
(whispering)
Tell me you heard that.

VICTOR (OS)
Well?

Calvin and Victor lead Darren into the woods.

DARREN
Not recently, but since you're
here--

VICTOR
Now, what did I say earlier? Stop
harassing people.

DARREN
Oh, like you're doing now?

CALVIN
That's not very nice, Darren. He's
a law enforcement officer.

Melissa and Patty quietly move closer.

DARREN
And abusing your power. You know,
judging by what Colin said in his
letters, you two haven't changed at

DARREN
all. You're just the same
worthless bullies now that you were
then.

Calvin looks like he's going to throw a punch at Darren.

RAY (OS)
Hey guys!

The three men turn to see Ray and Lily running up to them.

RAY
What's up? Everything okay?

CALVIN
Everything's fine.

VICTOR
We're having a private conversation
here, so--

DARREN
So, why don't you join us?

VICTOR
Or go away. You don't need to be
here.

DARREN
What's wrong? Don't want an
audience?

Melissa walks up to Calvin and kicks him in the back of the
knee. Patty stops just behind Melissa.

Calvin lays on the ground holding his knee.

CALVIN
Son of a bitch!

VICTOR
I saw that. That's assault.

DARREN
What's it called when you take
someone somewhere against their
will?

Victor glares at Darren.

MELISSA

You need to go before I do more to Calvin.

LILY

Go for the balls. They're probably still a little tender from when I kicked him the other night.

Calvin winces.

RAY

I think it's time for you to go.

Victor helps Calvin to his feet, and they limp away toward the carnival.

RAY (cont'd)

What did you do?

DARREN

Just asked a few questions.

LILY

I can understand how they feel.

Lily walks away.

RAY

Give her time, Darren. She'll come around.

Ray follows Lily.

DARREN

Well, that was fun.

Patty looks at Darren and shakes her head.

DARREN (cont'd)

If you two are done making out, I'd like to go home.

Melissa flinches.

MELISSA

What?

DARREN

Unless you've suddenly switched shades of lipstick, you've been kissing each other.

MELISSA
Darren, please don't tell Mom.

DARREN
What? That you're a
lesbian? Look, if she doesn't know
by now, she's never going to figure
it out.

PATTY
It's been fun, Mel.

Patty kisses Melissa on the cheek.

PATTY (cont'd)
Give me a call. I'm going to be in
town for a while.

Patty moves toward the carnival. Darren smiles and looks at
Melissa.

DARREN
I like her.

INT. DARREN'S CAR-NIGHT

Darren drives while Melissa sits in the passenger seat.

MELISSA
I don't know what to say to her. I
mean, I've thought about it, but I
don't know how to put it.

DARREN
How to put it? Just be honest.

MELISSA
Honest, right. Hey Mom. Yeah, the
carnival was fun. Patty says
hi. Oh, by the way, I'm a
lesbian. Goodnight.

Darren chuckles.

DARREN
Well, maybe a little gentler. Mel,
this is your life. This is who you
are. Don't hide it. Be
yourself. Besides, Aunt Helen
seems to be open minded.

MELISSA
Yeah, right.

Darren glances at Melissa for a moment.

DARREN
Huh?

MELISSA
I overheard Mom and Colin talking about something about a month before he died. At the time, I didn't know what was going on, but, as I got older, things made more sense.

DARREN
Okay, what was it about?

MELISSA
I think Colin came out to Mom, and she didn't like it.

Darren laughs.

MELISSA (cont'd)
What the hell's so funny?

DARREN
Mel, Colin wasn't gay.

MELISSA
How do you know?

DARREN
I kind of got the feeling that there was a girl in his life.

MELISSA
Did you meet her?

DARREN
No, but there were times, when I was staying with you guys, that he'd sneak out and asked me to cover for him. He'd come back an hour or two later with lipstick on his face or shirt.

MELISSA
Well, that doesn't necessarily mean anything.

DARREN

Really?

MELISSA

Okay, so maybe he wasn't gay. Who was the girl?

DARREN

I never met her.

MELISSA

As far as I knew, there was only one girl in his life, and that was Lily.

DARREN

Lily?

A look of horror crosses Darren's face.

DARREN (cont'd)

Ah shit.

MELISSA

What?

DARREN

Maybe that's why she's so pissed with me. The guy she was with killed himself, and now his idiot cousin comes into town dragging up old memories.

MELISSA

I think she'll be okay.

DARREN

What made you think Colin was gay?

MELISSA

Mom was yelling at him one day, something about the police telling her about him visiting some guy, some old guy. She was heavily implying that they were doing, um, something together.

DARREN

Did Colin deny it?

MELISSA

Colin was acting like he didn't know what she was saying. He

MELISSA
admitted that he was visiting this
old guy, but, beyond that, he
didn't seem to understand what she
was saying. Of course, Colin
wouldn't talk about it, and Mom
wouldn't admit that the
conversation ever happened.

DARREN
Whatever he was doing with this
guy, I doubt it was anything like
that.

MELISSA
Well, if something was happening,
I'm not sure I want to bring Mom
down on me like that.

INT. GUEST ROOM-NIGHT

Darren lays in bed staring up at the ceiling.

DARREN
So, what were you doing with this
mysterious old guy?

COLIN (OS)
Darren, you're a smart guy.

Colin sits on the end of the bed looking at Darren.

COLIN
What did I like to do in my spare
time?

DARREN
Read. You read a lot, way more
than I did, and I read a lot of
books.

COLIN
Okay, start from there.

DARREN
Your room doesn't look like it's
been touched.

COLIN
It probably hasn't.

Darren climbs from the bed and leaves the room.

INT. COLIN'S BEDROOM-NIGHT

Darren walks into the room and stops in the center.

DARREN
Okay, now what?

Darren walks over to the desk and picks up a well worn notepad. He opens it to the first page.

INSERT: NOTEPAD PAGE

At the top of the page are the words "Man of Mystery." The rest of the page is covered in text.

Darren puts the notepad back on the desk. Nearby is a novel written by Louis Ecks and starring a character named Houston McKnight.

DARREN (cont'd)
Ah, Houston McKnight, crusader of
justice, defender of the
helpless...

Darren picks up the novel and flips it over to the back page. His eyes widen with shock.

DARREN (cont'd)
Oh my God.

EXT. ECHEVARIA'S HOUSE-DAY

Luis opens the door as Darren stands outside.

DARREN
You're Louis Ecks.

Luis recoils in shock.

DARREN (cont'd)
You wrote the Houston McKnight
series. I love those books.

Luis smiles.

LUIS
Well, thank you.

DARREN
So did Colin. I bet he figured it
out the way I did.

Luis nods and sighs.

LUIS
Let's take a walk.

EXT. BAILEY PARK-DAY

A few joggers run through the park. A few people play with dogs nearby. Darren and Luis walk down a path.

LUIS
Colin was a great kid, and he was turning into a brilliant writer.

DARREN
I read some of his work last night. He was good.

LUIS
Very good.

Luis stops and sits on a bench. Darren follows a moment later.

LUIS
I guess he saw me around town and realized that the man looking at him from the back of those novels was me. He knocked on my door, introduced himself, and asked for writing help. I'm a private person. I'd rather be left alone. So, when he came by, I just wanted to send him away. I decided that I'd read one of his stories thinking that he was just some young wannabe. I'd tear it apart, and he'd leave and never come back.

DARREN
What happened?

LUIS
He was actually good. I mean, he was still young and had some work ahead of him, but he was in better shape than I was at his age. He was going to be a great writer. I had to help him.

DARREN
Did you know he was being bullied?

LUIS

Know? I saw him after one of his, um, meetings with his tormentors. I urged him to talk to the school. He said he had, and they didn't do anything. I would've said something to his mother, but he said that she wouldn't approve of him coming over.

DARREN

It didn't look good.

LUIS

I know, I know. At the time, I just saw a writer in need of help. I forgot that I was close to being an old man with a teenager.

Luis sighs and shakes his head.

LUIS (cont'd)

After one of the beatings, I had enough. I told the school what was happening thinking that, if an adult not connected to the school or in any other city position saw what was happening to him, the school might do something to stop it. Instead, they called his mother to see if she knew me. Obviously, she didn't, so the school called the police. They opened an investigation which became publicly known. What is less known is when they quietly closed the investigation citing a lack of evidence.

DARREN

You tried to help him, and they made you look like...like...

LUIS

A pedophile? Child rapist? An evil that must be avoided at all cost? You know, it has become a right of passage for the school's football team to paint a homosexual slur on my front door every year around homecoming.

DARREN
Did you tell the cops?

LUIS
Of course, but it seems that I
deserve less protection due to my
past.

Darren shakes his head with disgust.

LUIS (cont'd)
Have you asked others about Colin?

DARREN
A few.

LUIS
Be careful. This town feels that
Colin's death is a story from the
past, one that should remain hidden
from the public. Push too hard in
trying to get answers--

DARREN
And I might get pushed somewhere.

Luis nods.

INT. KITCHEN-DAY

Helen makes eggs on the stove. Three plates with bacon sit
nearby.

HELEN
Ah, Darren, good morning. You went
out early. Want some eggs?

DARREN
Thanks, no. I had something before
I left.

HELEN
Well, if you change your mind,
there's plenty here.

DARREN
I talked to Luis Echevaria.

Helen glances at Darren before removing the pan of eggs from
the burner.

HELEN

Yes.

DARREN

He said Colin was going to be a great writer.

Helen turns to Darren, anger in her eyes.

HELEN

Okay, stop right there. I didn't know who he was or what his plans were with my child. I didn't even know that Colin was visiting him.

Helen turns back to the eggs and plates them.

HELEN (cont'd)

I got a call from the school asking about Mr. Echevaria. They wanted to know his relationship to us. I didn't know who he was, but they told me Colin was over there nearly everyday. I told Colin he couldn't see him.

Helen turns back to Darren.

HELEN (cont'd)

I didn't know he was trying help him. I just knew that this old man was having my teenage son over to his house. I was just trying to protect him.

Darren slides into one of the chairs at the table.

HELEN (cont'd)

Fat lot of good that did. I got him away from the one person who could've gotten out of this hellhole of a town. This is not the place to raise children.

DARREN

You were doing what you thought was right.

Helen takes a deep breath.

HELEN

I'll be back. I want to show you something.

Helen leaves the room. A few moments later, Melissa enters and sits next to Darren.

MELISSA
Good morning.

DARREN
Morning.

MELISSA
Well, I know what I'm going to say to Mom.

DARREN
Good.

MELISSA
When she comes back, I'm just going to jump into it.

DARREN
Mel, this might not be the best time.

MELISSA
It's the perfect time.

Helen returns to the room with a folder.

HELEN
Read this.

Helen gives the folder to Darren. He opens it, and, after a few seconds, his eyes widen.

MELISSA
Mom, there's something I need to tell you.

HELEN
You're not going to change majors again, are you?

Helen serves the plates.

MELISSA
No, not that. Um, remember, back in high school, you were always asking me when I'd bring my boyfriends home. Well, there's a reason why. I'm...I'm a lesbian.

Helen looks at Melissa.

HELEN

And?

MELISSA

And what?

HELEN

Oh, that's it? I knew that.

MELISSA

What?

HELEN

Well, I suspected it. Really, when I was asking about your boyfriends, I was giving you a hard time.

Darren drops the folder to the table and rubs his head. Melissa and Helen look at him.

HELEN (cont'd)

Darren?

Darren rises to his feet.

DARREN

Excuse me.

Darren moves toward the back of the house. After a few moments, Helen follows him.

EXT. BACKYARD-DAY

Darren storms out of the house and over to a tree. Helen walks out just as Darren pounds on the tree. Helen slowly walks over to him.

DARREN

He left a note.

HELEN

I found it on his bed.

Darren has tears in his eyes.

DARREN

He named names! He called these people out! The people who drove him to kill himself!

HELEN

I gave the note to the police.

DARREN

What the hell did they do about it?

HELEN

Nothing.

DARREN

Nothing? Nothing at all? Calvin Jefferson beat him until he couldn't stand. Victor Kaufman punched him in the back so hard, Colin was pissing blood. They shoved him into a locker and locked it. No one did anything to these people?

HELEN

No, nothing. Nothing at all.

DARREN

What the hell is wrong with this town?

HELEN

Now you know how I feel.

Darren breaks down in tears, and Helen holds him.

DARREN

Why did they do this to him?

HELEN

I've been asking that for ten years.

INT. LILY'S BEDROOM-DAY

Lily lays quietly under the sheets looking toward a window. She smiles and turns over. Next to her is Ray also smiling but looking up at the ceiling.

LILY

Morning.

Ray faces Lily.

RAY

Good morning.

LILY
How'd you sleep?

RAY
Good. Very good.

The pair kiss. The doorbell rings, and they both groan. Lily pulls back the sheets.

RAY (cont'd)
Don't answer that.

The doorbell rings again.

LILY
They're just going to keep going until I do.

Lily grabs a robe as the doorbell rings again.

LILY (cont'd)
I'm coming.

EXT. LILY'S HOUSE-DAY

Lily opens the door and frowns. Calvin, smiling, waits for her.

CALVIN
Good morning, Lily.

Lily tries to close the door, but Calvin puts his foot in the way.

CALVIN (cont'd)
I just want to talk.

LILY
If you want to keep that, move it.

CALVIN
Just give me five minutes, and I'll leave you alone.

Lily stomps on Calvin's foot.

CALVIN (cont'd)
Ow! I swear, just give me five minutes--

Lily stomps on his foot again.

CALVIN (cont'd)
--ow! Two minutes, and I'll leave.

Lily raises her foot.

CALVIN (cont'd)
Please don't do that again!

LILY
Calvin, you're not wanted here.

CALVIN
I just want to talk, Lily. I'll
make it fast.

Lily puts her foot down on the floor.

LILY
Fine. Start talking.

CALVIN
Thank you. You haven't talked to
Darren Spence yet, right?

LILY
Why do you care?

CALVIN
I don't think you should.

Lily smiles.

LILY
Really.

CALVIN
He's a trouble maker. All he's
doing is bringing up bad memories
and old feelings. Nothing he's
doing is good. I think, if he
comes looking for you, you should
tell him where to go.

LILY
Thank you, Calvin. I'll keep that
in mind.

Lily closes the door.

INT. LILY'S BEDROOM-DAY

Ray sits on the end of the bed putting on his clothes. Lily walks in and sits next to him.

RAY
Everything okay?

LILY
Oh, yeah, everything's fine.

RAY
Who was that?

LILY
Nobody important.

Lily looks down at the floor for a moment.

LILY (cont'd)
Where's Darren staying?

INT. BAR-DAY

A few people sit in the bar. Darren, angry, sips on a beer. Across from him, Chuck drinks a beer and munches on french fries.

DARREN
I can't believe this shit was going on for so long.

CHUCK
I know. I lived it. We did what we could, but we were suffering, too.

DARREN
Why did they come after you guys? Why go after anybody?

CHUCK
Who knows? Maybe they saw something in us that they didn't like. Maybe they had personal problems at home.

DARREN
That's no excuse. I don't care what's going on, there's no reason to do what they did. Why didn't the school or the police step in?

CHUCK

Darren, you're not from around here. You don't understand the mentality of the people here. They don't like outliers. Calvin and Victor fit in, and the town accepted them. We didn't.

DARREN

So, that meant it was okay to beat the shit out of you guys?

Chuck sighs.

DARREN (cont'd)

I'm going to do something about this.

Darren stands.

CHUCK

Darren, wait. Nothing's going to change if you go yelling at people.

DARREN

Something has to happen.

Darren rushes out of the bar just as Ray enters. After a moment, Ray sits at the table across from Chuck.

RAY

What was that about?

CHUCK

I think he's going to do something stupid.

RAY

Oh, I don't think he's going to get very far. Melissa's outside waiting for him.

CHUCK

So, how was your date last night?

Ray smiles.

CHUCK (cont'd)

That good?

EXT. BAR-DAY

Darren walks over to his car where Melissa waits for him.

DARREN
What are you doing here?

MELISSA
Keeping you from doing something
stupid.

DARREN
Did you walk here?

MELISSA
Yeah. My feet are killing me.

Darren looks surprised.

MELISSA (cont'd)
No, I didn't walk here. Mom
dropped me off. Give me your keys.

DARREN
No, you're not driving my car.

MELISSA
Darren, give me your keys.

Darren shakes his head. Melissa walks over and give him a hug.

MELISSA (cont'd)
I know you're hurting.

Melissa knees him in the crotch dropping him to the ground.

DARREN
Oh!

MELISSA
Now, if you want to be in more
pain, don't give me the keys.

INT. DARREN'S CAR-DAY

Melissa drives while Darren, holding his groin and resting his head against the window, sits in the passenger seat. Darren speaks with a slightly strained voice.

DARREN
That wasn't necessary.

MELISSA
It worked, didn't it?

Darren moans and moves his head to the seat rest.

MELISSA (cont'd)
I would've thought you would've
been ready for something like that,
Mr. Second Dan in Karate.

DARREN
Yeah, sure. They went over getting
kicked in the balls by your cousin
as she hugs you when I got my black
belt. That wasn't right.

MELISSA
Thank you.

DARREN
That really hurts.

MELISSA
Oh, you'll be fine. It's not that
bad.

DARREN
How would you know?

Darren looks at Melissa.

DARREN (cont'd)
Where are we going?

MELISSA
I want to show you why the town is
so unwilling to deal with Colin's
death.

EXT. SCENIC OVERLOOK-DAY

Darren's car pulls to a stop a short distance from a gazebo overlooking a cliff. Melissa and Darren climb out of the car and walk toward the gazebo.

DARREN
What is this?

MELISSA

You'll see.

Darren and Melissa enter the gazebo. On the rail closest to the cliff is a plaque reading "In Memory of Colin Masterson" and the dates of his birth and death.

DARREN

I don't understand.

MELISSA

This is where he jumped.

Darren moves closer to the plaque.

MELISSA (cont'd)

I found out about all of the bullying after the funeral. Colin kept it to himself, and Mom never said anything. The town and the school chipped in for this stupid little monument. They invited us to a ceremony after they built this thing, but Mom refused to go. She told me about all of the stuff Colin went through and what was done about it.

DARREN

Nothing.

MELISSA

This is to hide their guilt. They treated him like he was absolutely worthless until he died, then they built this like it would make up for it. To them, this is a closed case. He died, they say they honored him, so there's no need to ever mention him again.

Melissa moves next to Darren.

MELISSA (cont'd)

Darren, I want you to get this town to do the right thing.

Darren hugs her.

MELISSA (cont'd)

Just don't do anything stupid.

EXT. BURGER STAND-DAY

The place looks like a 1950's drive-in with a walk-up window. Many customers are in cars and sitting at picnic tables around the stand. Ray and Maria sit at one of the tables. Chuck is at the window picking up food.

RAY

I didn't know this place was still open. I haven't been here since high school.

MARIA

I forgot about it, too. I drove by the other day and saw it. Chuck forgot about it, too. He said he hadn't thought about it.

RAY

That might not be the only reason. This was the last place we saw Colin before school the next day and...

MARIA

Oh, oh no. I'm sorry. I didn't know.

RAY

No, it's fine. We just stopped thinking about this place after that. The food's good, though.

MARIA

If I had known--

RAY

Maria, don't worry about it. We had a lot of good memories here.

Chuck comes to the table with three baskets of food on a tray. He passes out the baskets before sitting.

MARIA

Thank you, sweetie.

RAY

Thank you.

CHUCK

It's been a while since I've been here.

RAY

We were just talking about that. Remember the night of the prom?

CHUCK

Oh yeah. We didn't want to go.

MARIA

Really?

CHUCK

Well, we knew we wouldn't have fun. We were at a dance the year before, and we just stood around talking. We could've done that anywhere. So, for the prom, we came here, us, Colin, and Lily.

RAY

It was oddly relaxing, probably because the people who made our lives hell were at the prom. We ate here, went to Colin's place for a movie, then sat outside talking and looking at the stars.

MARIA

That does sound like more fun.

Maria takes a bite of her food.

MARIA (cont'd)

Is Darren still in town?

CHUCK

Yeah. He was in the bar earlier. He...was not happy.

RAY

But two bits of good news. Melissa was waiting for him, so I don't think he did anything wrong. Two, Lily asked about him.

CHUCK

It might've helped if you told him.

RAY

He looked pretty mad. I didn't want to get in his way.

SKINNY KID (OS)
Let go!

BURLY TEEN (OS)
Come here!

RAY
What the hell?

The group looks at the side of the building. A BURLY TEEN has a SKINNY KID by the shirt and has pinned him to the wall.

RAY (cont'd)
Damn it.

Ray jumps to his feet and walks toward the two kids.

CHUCK
I should probably--

MARIA
Go.

Chuck follows Ray.

Ray reaches the kids and pulls the burly teen away from the skinny kid.

RAY
Get away from him! What the hell
do you think you're doing?

BURLY TEEN
Mind your own business.

The burly teen moves toward the skinny kid, but Ray pushes him away.

BURLY TEEN (cont'd)
Hey!

Ray turns to the skinny kid.

RAY
Get out of here. You're safe now.

BURLY TEEN
Yeah, see you tomorrow.

Ray turns back to the burly teen as the skinny kid walks away.

RAY

So, this is what you do for fun? Pick on people who you know you can beat? Is your life that pathetic?

BURLY TEEN

Maybe I should kick your ass.

RAY

Go ahead and try, you little shit. Nothing would make me happier than you giving me a reason to fuck you up.

The burly teen backs away and looks like he wants to run.

RAY (cont'd)

What's wrong? Afraid I'm going to fight back? Afraid that I might be able to beat you? You think you might actually get your ass kicked?

Ray pushes the burly teen into a wall.

RAY (cont'd)

Come on, you fucking bastard! Do something!

CHUCK (OS)

Ray!

Ray turns to see Chuck standing a short distance away.

CHUCK

Ray, let him go.

RAY

Why? Why should I? Somebody should teach this little bastard a lesson.

CHUCK

This won't help.

RAY

Chuck, I've got to do something! Ten years, Chuck! Ten years, and this shit keeps happening! No one here learned a damn thing, so they keep doing the same shit over and over again!

Ray turns back to the burly teen.

RAY (cont'd)

Ten years ago this town lost Colin Masterson, a great person, my friend. People like you bullied him, tormented him, made his life a living hell, and he killed himself to get away from it. Is that what you want? Is that what you were trying to do to that kid?

BURLY TEEN

No, no, I just was having some fun.

RAY

Fun? Did he look like he was having fun?

Victor, in his police uniform, walks up behind Chuck.

VICTOR

Ray, stop. Let him go.

Chuck and Ray look at Victor. After a moment, Ray turns back to the burly teen and releases him.

RAY

That cop over there, he was one of the ones who tortured my friend. Take a good look at him. He was going to go to college on a football scholarship. He had a girlfriend. When they found out what he did, what his part was in Colin's death, the college took away his scholarship. His girlfriend left him. They wanted nothing to do with him. Now, he uses his powers as a cop to keep bullying people. He's alone and bitter, and he takes it out on other people.

Ray steps out of the way, and the burly teen, wide eyed, walks toward Victor.

VICTOR

Do you want to press charges?

The burly teen shakes his head and keep walking.

VICTOR (cont'd)

Ray, you can't go around doing what you just did.

Ray walks toward Victor.

RAY

Where were you when he was throwing
around another kid?

VICTOR

I didn't see that.

RAY

Yeah, of course not. You just want
another little bastard just like
you. Not enough blood on your
hands?

VICTOR

I'm not responsible for your coward
friend doing the world a favor.

Ray charges Victor, but Chuck stops him before he can get
close.

RAY

You son of a bitch!

Victor recoils with surprise.

CHUCK

Calm down, Ray! He's not worth it!

Chuck faces Victor.

CHUCK (cont'd)

He's never been worth it.

Chuck guides Ray around Victor who looks annoyed. They
return to the table where Maria waits.

MARIA

Everything okay?

RAY

Ten years. Ten years and not a
damn thing has changed. They just
tried to sweep it under the rug and
pretend nothing bad happened. They
saw it. They just didn't want to
know why.

Ray walks toward the parking lot.

CHUCK
Where are you going?

RAY
To help Darren.

Chuck sighs and looks at Maria.

CHUCK
I think we need to call Lily.

EXT. HELEN'S HOUSE-DAY

Darren's car pulls to a stop outside of the house. Melissa climbs from the driver's seat, and Darren steps out of the passenger seat. Both walk toward the house.

MELISSA
So, you're okay now? No flying off
the handle?

DARREN
No flying off the handle. I'm
fine.

Darren puts his arm around Melissa's shoulders, and she gives him the keys to the car.

MELISSA
Sorry about the nut
shot. Everything okay down there?

DARREN
It'll be okay, once the swelling
goes down.

INT. KITCHEN-DAY

Melissa leads Darren into the house and into the kitchen. Both freeze at the doorway. Sitting at the table looking at them is Lily and Helen.

HELEN
Darren, I think you've met Lily
Freeman.

DARREN
Nice to see you again.

LILY
I was wondering if you still want
to talk.

DARREN
Yes, yes please.

HELEN
The backyard is free.

Darren gestures to the back door, and he follows Lily from
the room. Melissa sits at the table.

HELEN (cont'd)
I guess whatever you did worked.

MELISSA
You know me. I'm good at
persuading people.

HELEN
You didn't hurt him too badly, did
you?

MELISSA
He'll live.

EXT. BACKYARD-DAY

Darren and Lily sit in two lawn chairs near the house facing
the far side of the yard.

LILY
I got a visit from Calvin this
morning. He said I should
encourage you to go home.

DARREN
How nice of him.

LILY
If he doesn't like you, you can't
be bad.

Darren grins.

LILY (cont'd)
I don't have a problem with
you. It's just...it took me a long
time. It was a long time before I
could even think about him without
crying.

DARREN

I gathered from Colin's letters that you two were close.

LILY

Yeah, close. I was closer to him than anyone else in this town. I saw him getting beat up everyday, and I saw the people who were supposed to do something about it not giving a damn. I went to the principal three times myself telling him what was happening to him, and you know what he said? 'You come back here about this again, and I'll suspend you.'

DARREN

Why wouldn't the school do something?

LILY

He was all about learning. He wrote, played video games. He couldn't care less about sports. Meanwhile, Calvin and Victor were stand out football stars.

DARREN

They didn't want to punish them because that would keep them from playing.

Lily nods.

LILY

You know the one thing that really made me angry about them is when they came to the funeral. The principal, the police chief, and the mayor were there. Calvin and Victor were there, too. All of them were acting like they had lost a good friend.

Lily rises to her feet and takes a few steps away from Darren.

LILY (cont'd)

Calvin and Victor stuffed him into a locker the day before he killed himself. There was someone there

LILY
who punched him in the stomach
every time they ran into each
other. They were all there
grieving like they were going to
miss him. I think they were mad
that they'd have one less person to
push around.

Lily faces Darren.

LILY (cont'd)
But what I did, there's no excuse.

DARREN
What do you mean?

LILY
I hated him. I hated the way he
just ended it without a goodbye or
anything. I mean, I knew things
were bad, but I didn't know it was
that bad.

Tears stream down her face.

LILY (cont'd)
I never got the chance to tell
him...tell him how...I really felt
about him.

DARREN
You two were together, I mean,
dating?

LILY
I loved him. I loved Colin.

Darren's eyes widened in surprise.

LILY (cont'd)
I never got the chance to tell
Colin that I loved him. I'd do
anything to get him away from
everything he had to deal with.

Darren rises to his feet as Lily wipes the tears from her
eyes.

DARREN
I was mad at him for a while, too,
but I missed him more. I think you
do, too.

LILY
I should've said something sooner.

DARREN
You needed time. I'm sorry for opening those wounds. I didn't know.

LILY
Somebody had to. I was being an insufferable bitch.

Darren smirks, and, after a moment, Lily does the same.

DARREN
That sounds like something Colin would've said.

LILY
We had a lot in common.

Lily's cellphone rings.

LILY (cont'd)
Sorry.

DARREN
No, it's fine.

Lily looks at the phone.

LILY
It's Chuck.

Lily answers it.

LILY (cont'd)
Hey Chuck...When?...Oh, god, that's not good...I can take a guess...Yeah that's what I was thinking. I'll meet you there. 'Bye.

Lily hangs up and looks at Darren.

LILY (cont'd)
I think Ray's going to do something bad.

EXT. SUPERMARKET-NIGHT

Calvin walks out of the store while talking on his phone.

CALVIN

Victor, he's not going to do anything. He's the same scared person he was back in high school...So he went after a kid. Big deal. Give him a day or two, and he'll calm down.

Calvin laughs.

CALVIN (cont'd)

Victor, what do I have to worry about from--

Ray comes up behind him and hits him in the back of the head with a pipe. Calvin falls to the ground unconscious. The phone falls out of his hand.

VICTOR (OS)

Calvin? Calvin, you still there?

Ray drags Calvin away from his car.

INT. DARREN'S CAR-NIGHT

Darren drives while Lily sits in the passenger seat. Melissa sits in the back. Lily speaks to her phone.

LILY

Hey Ray, it's Lily again. I'm worried about you. Please call me as soon as you can.

Lily hangs up her phone.

LILY (cont'd)

This isn't like him.

Lily rests her head against the head rest.

LILY (cont'd)

I remember when they had the ceremony for that monument. Calvin told me he and Victor would be there. I told him they weren't wanted, but I heard they were there.

DARREN

Heard?

LILY

I was still in a bad place.

MELISSA

Yeah, I heard about that, too. From what I was told, Calvin said something stupid, and Ray decked him.

DARREN

Ray? Ray Jones?

LILY

Colin's death changed all of us, but Ray didn't have far to go to throw punches. He was always the high strung one.

DARREN

What makes you think he's going there?

LILY

Call it a hunch.

EXT. SCENIC OVERLOOK-NIGHT

Ray stands over an awaking Calvin near the edge of the cliff. Ray holds the pipe he used earlier. Calvin moans in pain and grabs his head.

RAY

Welcome back.

CALVIN

You really hurt me, Ray. I think I need to go to the hospital.

RAY

You're telling me this...why?

Ray moves to the other side of Calvin.

RAY (cont'd)

You know why I brought you here?

CALVIN

Yeah, I know. You can't get over how your friend jumped from

CALVIN
here. Everyone else got over
it. Why can't you?

Ray slams the pipe into Calvin's ankle.

CALVIN (cont'd)
Ahhh! Jesus Christ, Ray!

RAY
Oh, did that hurt?

CALVIN
My fucking ankle! Holy shit that
hurts!

RAY
You deserve it! You deserve more!

Ray pulls Calvin up and throws him closer to the edge.

Darren's car slides to a stop, and Darren, Lily, and Melissa
pile out and run over to Ray and Calvin.

LILY
Ray!

DARREN
Ray, stop!

Ray looks at the approaching group.

RAY
Why should I?

DARREN
Because, if you do this, you'll be
just like him. You be a murderer.

CALVIN
I didn't kill anybody!

MELISSA
Calvin, do yourself a favor. Stop
trying to help your cause.

Lily moves next to Ray and gently removes the pipe from his
hand.

DARREN
Calvin, Victor, and all of the
other bullies hit the high point of
their lives back in high

DARREN
 school. They aren't going to do anything else. They're stuck in this town because it's the only place that doesn't care what they did to Colin. They're losers, and everyone knows it.

CALVIN
 Nice pep talk.

RAY
 Shut up!

Ray kicks Calvin in the ribs.

DARREN
 Ray, go home.

RAY
 He never paid for what he did.

CALVIN
 I never paid? What the hell are you talking about? You think I wanted to spend my life stocking shelves? I was supposed to go to college and play football. Your little friend offing himself changed that. I didn't do anything.

Ray kicks Calvin in the ribs again. Calvin grabs Ray's foot then pulls Ray to the ground. Calvin stands and kicks Ray in the ribs.

CALVIN (cont'd)
 How do you like that, fucker?

Calvin kicks Ray again. Lily hits Calvin in the back with the pipe driving him toward the edge of the cliff.

LILY
 Oh!

DARREN
 No!

Darren grabs Calvin just as Calvin stumbles and falls over the edge of the cliff. Darren hits the ground still holding onto Calvin.

CALVIN (OS)
Darren, nice catch. You can let go
now.

Darren looks over the cliff to see that Calvin is standing
on a very wide ledge. He is in no danger.

DARREN
Damn it.

Darren releases Calvin, and Calvin climbs back up the cliff.

CALVIN
I knew you were too much of a
goodie-goodie to let something bad
to happen.

DARREN
Calvin, you need to stop talking.

Chuck and Maria arrive in their car. As they climb out and
run over to the group, a police car pulls to a stop, and
Victor steps out of the car and walks over to the scene.

CHUCK
Everybody okay?

DARREN
Oh yeah, fine.

CALVIN
I think I might have a concussion.

CHUCK
Wasn't asking you.

VICTOR
What's going on? Calvin?

CALVIN
Well, Ray attacked me first. Then,
Lily knocked me over the cliff.

VICTOR
Ray, Lily, I'm going to have to
take you in.

DARREN
On what evidence?

VICTOR
A victim said they did it.

DARREN

And six other people say something else. You want that nightmare on your shoulders? By the way, do your bosses know how much you've been abusing your power?

VICTOR

Abusing my power?

DARREN

Do they know that you visited my aunt for no reason?

MELISSA

Or that you essentially kidnapped Darren and threatened to kick his ass?

DARREN

But, if you want us to tell them what's going on, go ahead. We'll be at the station before you.

VICTOR

Not if I arrest you, too.

Darren laughs.

DARREN

For what? Daring to point out how bad you are at your job? Yeah, we'll be sure to mention that, too.

Victor glares at Darren.

VICTOR

Calvin, need a ride?

Calvin nods and follows Victor to the police car. When they climb in, Victor speeds away.

MARIA

Well, that took some balls.

DARREN

I'm just treating him like dumb bully he is.

INT. GUEST ROOM-NIGHT

Darren lays in bed staring at the ceiling.

COLIN (OS)
Feeling good about yourself?

Darren sighs and looks over at Colin who leans against the wall.

COLIN
You beat them. They had you dead to rights. You could've gone to jail, but you scared them off. Nothing's going to happen to you or anyone else. You won. Now, you can go home happy.

DARREN
It's not over.

COLIN
(sarcastic)
Really? No way.

DARREN
They weren't scared off. They're just trying to spin this in a way that doesn't make them look bad. They're going to keep pushing until I leave.

COLIN
Then leave.

DARREN
I'm not done yet.

COLIN
Your goal was to find out why I killed myself, right? Are you saying that you haven't figured that out?

DARREN
Oh, I get it. You had to put up with this shit all of the time, and you finally had enough and didn't think you could do anything about it. What I don't get is why the town thought the best way of dealing with it was to forget about it.

COLIN

Why do you think they'd do that?

DARREN

I don't know. Maybe they're ashamed of letting people like Calvin and Victor run free. They were told what they were doing, and no one cared. Now, they realize that someone from the outside might call them out on it.

COLIN

So, call them out.

DARREN

They're not going to listen to me. They'd only listen to someone from here.

COLIN

And how do you plan on getting that to happen?

Darren stares up at the ceiling.

COLIN (cont'd)

Yeah. Well, you need to figure it out soon, because you've managed to piss off a cop and a known bully.

Darren glances at Colin for a few seconds before returning his gaze to the ceiling.

INT. LILY'S BEDROOM-DAY

Lily sleeps soundly. Someone pounds on the front door awakening her. She glances at the clock which reads six-thirty.

LILY

Really?

Lily pulls herself out of bed.

EXT. LILY'S HOUSE-DAY

Lily opens the door where THREE POLICE OFFICERS wait for her outside.

POLICE OFFICER
Lily Freeman?

LILY
Yes? What's going on? Is
everything alright?

POLICE OFFICER
We're looking for Ray Jones. Have
you seen him?

LILY
Not since last night. Why?

POLICE OFFICER
Were you at the cliff last night?

LILY
Briefly. Are you going to tell me
what this is about?

POLICE OFFICER
You sure you haven't seen him?

LILY
No.

POLICE OFFICER
Mind if we search your house?

LILY
Do you have a warrant?

POLICE OFFICER
Ms. Freeman, you don't want to be
seen as part of the problem.

LILY
And you don't want to see me with a
lawyer. Now, you can get a warrant
and come back, and I will step out
of the way and let you in, you can
leave, or you can do something
stupid, barge in here, and get your
ass sued off. Your choice.

The police officers leave without another word. Lily takes
a deep breath and closes the door.

INT. BAR-DAY

Ray and Chuck sit at their normal table munching on lunch and drinking beers. Darren walks in and sits at the table.

DARREN

Hey guys.

RAY

Darren.

CHUCK

Hey Darren. What's up?

DARREN

Not much. Ray, how are you?

RAY

Better, thanks.

Ray takes a swig of his beer.

RAY (cont'd)

I thought what I was going to do--

CHUCK

Yeah, what was that?

RAY

I don't know. I was mad. I wanted to do something to change things around here, and, for some reason, I thought doing...something to Calvin would help. It didn't.

DARREN

Nope.

RAY

I thought I would feel better after smacking him around, but I didn't. It felt wrong.

DARREN

I think that's a good thing. At least that means you're still a good person.

CHUCK

Well, we knew that.

Ray grins.

DARREN

You know, I've wondered something since I've been here. Every time I see you guys, you're in here. What do you do for a living?

CHUCK

We own a software design company.

DARREN

Really? I'm a sys admin back home.

RAY

Then you've probably used some of our software.

DARREN

What's the name of your company?

RAY

Joe Pat Software.

Darren smiles.

DARREN

You bastards.

CHUCK

What?

DARREN

The alarms going off when some software isn't loaded? Not cool.

RAY

Well, it's important that everything is loaded. All of the software works together, and if any piece is missing--

DARREN

That's bullshit, and you know it.

RAY

Yeah, I guess you're right.

CHUCK

Got to make money somehow.

DARREN

I guess I can't complain too much. It has given me some job security.

RAY

There's a new version coming out in about three months. We can take out the alarms if you want.

Darren rubs his head.

CHUCK

Well?

DARREN

I'm thinking.

Victor walks into the bar and over to the table.

VICTOR

Ray, I need you to come with me.

DARREN

Why?

VICTOR

That's none of your business.

RAY

What about me? Is it my business?

VICTOR

Ray, do you want to do this in here?

RAY

All I want is to know why you want me to come with you.

VICTOR

Ray--

CHUCK

No, he's got the right to know.

VICTOR

Ray, come with me, now.

RAY

Are you arresting me?

CHUCK

And, if so, for what?

Victor glares at Darren.

VICTOR
You did this.

DARREN
Did what?

RAY
If you're arresting me, I'd like to
know why. Then, I'll go
peacefully.

VICTOR
That's it.

Victor grabs Ray's arm and yanks him to his feet.

RAY
Hey!

Victor pulls Ray out of the bar. Chuck and Darren follow
along with the few patrons in the bar.

EXT. BAR-DAY

Calvin waits next to a parked police car. Victor drags Ray
over to him and throws him to the ground. Calvin kicks Ray
in the ribs.

Chuck walks over to Calvin and Victor with Darren just
behind him.

DARREN
I think Ray needs a hand.

CHUCK
What?

DARREN
Help him.

Chuck moves closer to Calvin and Ray.

CHUCK
Calvin, stop.

CALVIN
Or what? What are you going to do,
Chuck? You're not going to do
anything. You've never done
anything. You're just going to
stay back and try not to get hurt.

CHUCK

Not anymore.

Chuck walks over and punches Calvin in the face knocking him to the ground.

CHUCK (cont'd)

I tried to keep everyone from stooping to your level in high school, and it cost me a friend. I'm not going to lose another one.

Chuck kicks Calvin in the face.

VICTOR

Chuck, you're under arrest.

Chuck glares at Victor who recoils.

CHUCK

For what?

VICTOR

Assault.

DARREN

Really? How are you going to explain that one? He assaulted the guy you allowed to beat up on someone else?

VICTOR

I could arrest you, too.

Darren puts out his wrists.

DARREN

Go ahead. I'm ready to talk. Arrest me, dumbass. I'll make sure they take your badge.

LILY (OS)

And I'll make sure of that, too.

Everyone turns to see Lily walking up to Darren.

LILY

Some of your friends dropped by this morning. When you arrest me, too, I'll tell everyone about that.

VICTOR
You haven't done anything, Lily.

Lily kicks Calvin in the groin.

LILY
How about now?

CALVIN
Do something!

VICTOR
Darren Spence, you have twelve
hours to leave town.

DARREN
Or what? You'll keep harassing
people? That's all you've been
doing anyway. You'll keep doing it
after I leave. You're just on one
big power trip, and me leaving
isn't going to change that.

Ray and Calvin pull themselves to their feet.

CALVIN
Why the hell are you so sweet on
Colin anyway? He was just a
coward.

Ray turns to Calvin with hate in his eyes.

RAY
A coward? Colin made what he
thought was the only choice he had
left. Now, I didn't like
it. Hell, I still don't like
it. It was stupid, but it was his
choice. It was all he thought he
had left. He couldn't take all of
the shit you threw at him
anymore. He dealt with it, not in
the best way, but he dealt with
it. You, you are just a bully,
just a small, small person who
likes to pick on the weak, or the
friendly, or someone you think
might be happier than you. You go
after the weak and defenseless
because you don't think you could
win against someone who could take
you on in a fair fight.

Ray takes a step toward Calvin.

RAY (cont'd)
You know what a coward is? You
are.

CALVIN
Shut up.

RAY
Make me, asshole. You don't have
the balls to do anything. Unless
your toady over there--

VICTOR
Hey!

RAY
--does something to help, you don't
want to be in a real fight. Well,
guess what? If you want me to shut
up, you're going to have to get
into a real fight, a fair fight, on
your own.

VICTOR
I've heard enough.

CHUCK
(calmly)
Victor, leave now, or, badge or
not, I will kick your ass.

Victor freezes as Chuck slowly looks over at him.

CHUCK (cont'd)
I said get your fucking ass out of
here now!

Victor backs away before getting into his car and driving
away. Calvin watches him leave before turning to Ray.

RAY
What's it going to be?

The crowd of bar patrons moves closer to Ray and Calvin
until they form a circle around them.

CALVIN
So what? You want to fight?

RAY
The question is, do you?

Calvin looks at the crowd for a few seconds.

CALVIN

Oh fuck you!

Calvin pushes his way through the crowd and walks away. Darren leans over to Lily.

DARREN

I think I'll be heading home now.

LILY

Don't get too smug. You still have to come back here and visit.

DARREN

I think it's going to be better now.

EXT. BACKYARD-NIGHT

Darren and Melissa sit in the chairs facing the yard.

MELISSA

So, you didn't throw a punch?

DARREN

And I didn't get punched.

MELISSA

I don't know if I could hold back like that.

DARREN

Well, I realized that it wasn't about anything I could do. Yeah, I could kick Calvin's ass, and everyone would see that. It wouldn't matter. Everyone knew I would be leaving sometime. Calvin and Victor would just go back to what they were doing before I came here. Somebody here had to do something.

MELISSA

Chuck always seemed like the peaceful one.

DARREN

If you push someone too far, they might react. All Ray needed was a bit of a hand. Chuck stepped up and gave it to him.

MELISSA

So, do you think things are going to change?

DARREN

I think things are on the way. A lot of work still needs to be done, but I think things are going to be better.

EXT. SCENIC OVERLOOK-DAWN

Darren walks up to the railing of the gazebo and stares out at the sunrise. A few moments later, Colin joins him.

DARREN

You didn't have to do it. You were surrounded by people who cared, and still care, about you.

COLIN

They couldn't do anything.

DARREN

How would you know? You never really tried to get them to help.

COLIN

Seriously, Darren?

DARREN

Yeah, you told Aunt Helen what was going on, and you sent those letters to Mom, but no one thought you'd do this.

Darren gestures to the cliff face.

DARREN (cont'd)

You kept a brave face, but, at some point, you just have to tell someone you need help.

COLIN

Yeah, sure. Who was I supposed to ask for that?

DARREN

Did you think about telling me?

Colin sighs.

COLIN
I didn't want to bother you.

DARREN
Bother me? Colin, you know I would've helped if you said something. You also had Lily.

COLIN
Yeah, Lily. I really hurt her, didn't I?

DARREN
Yeah, I'd say so.

COLIN
I wish I could say sorry.

DARREN
She's more mad at the fact that you never said anything. She had no idea things were so bad.

COLIN
Yeah.

DARREN
She's nice, once you get to know her.

COLIN
Yeah, she is.

Darren and Colin look out at the sunrise.

COLIN (cont'd)
Did you find what you were looking for?

DARREN
Well, I came here for answers. I wanted to know what drove you off this cliff. Once I found out, I realized it didn't matter anymore. What matters is that this doesn't happen again. I think me coming here did that. I think that's more important than anything I was looking for. I think--

Darren turns to find that Colin is gone. Darren smiles and turns back to the sunrise.

DARREN (cont'd)
Rest in peace, Colin.

Darren continues to watch the sun rise.

FADE OUT