

Trojan Horse

By Senuri Wasalathanthri

ALEXANDRA BLACKWOOD, 22, 5'4", a girl who has long brown hair and brown eyes. She has a strong work ethic, is goal oriented and fearless. At 22, she has a high position in the advertising agency she works for. She lives with her mother, in New York and is romantically involved with Julian Westbrook; two of the people she loves most.

DETECTIVE OLIVER CAMPBELL, 40, 6'5", one of the best homicide detectives in the New York Police Department. He is caucasian, built and he is very professional looking. He takes his work seriously and is career driven.

JULIAN WESTBROOK, 29, 6'2", a very handsome, young man. He is caucasian with light grey eyes and dark brown hair. He works at a marketing consultant company and he is Alexandra Blackwood's neighbour. He is romantically involved with Alexandra Blackwood.

JEANNINE, 21, 5'2", a shy girl who is Alexandra Blackwood's assistant.

1. INT. ALEXANDRA'S HOME, ALEXANDRA'S BEDROOM: LATE EVENING

She heard the loud bang that generated from the hard, silver handgun in his hand. Before she could blink, she felt the piercing pain that was penetrating through her chest. In sheer disbelief mixed with a tinge of fear, she looked down at her chest to see blood seeping through her crimson white shirt as if a red rose was blooming out of her chest. She felt a chill run down her spine as the numbness in her chest was spreading through her body. Tears started flooding her eyes as she looked up at him. Her vision of him was blurry and she started to see black spots in front of her. The numbness has spread to her feet now and she knew that her feet can't carry her weight anymore. She lost balance, fell to her knees and slumped on the floor. A throbbing pain ran through her entire body as her body hit the floor, sharp and sickening. Her breathing is slower now, blood flowing out of her body like a red river. This is it, She told herself.

Seconds later, she sees Detective Campbell's face full of fear over hers, trying to talk to her. He says something, but she can't understand. All she hears is a muffled voice. He keeps his hands on her chest and starts CPR, trying to retain some life inside her but she knows that it won't work. She knows that her time has come. With all the strength she has left, she moves her hand on top of his and clenches his wrist. When he looks at her, she shakes her head ever so slightly, indicating him to stop. He moves closer to her face, holds her hand and starts crying, helplessly. She looks up at the ceiling and tries to remember everything that has happened up to now, for the past five days. As she was taking her last few breaths, she let her life flash in front of her eyes.

2. INT. MEETING ROOM: AFTERNOON

Alexandra looked down at her grey pant-suit and her black pump heels to make sure everything is neat and tidy. She ran her fingers through her dark, chocolate brown hair to smooth it out while letting out a long sigh, trying to calm herself down. She had memorised everything she has to say during her presentation. She was the creative director of the advertising agency she worked for and was ready to present her client with the new ad campaign that herself and her team had designed.

She walked into the meeting room, a confident smile on her face. As the youngsters would say, she was going to nail this presentation. She shook hands with her clients, exchanged brief pleasantries and took her seat next to her boss, at the long table. Her boss gave a brief introduction regarding the ad campaign and addressed her to speak more in-detail about it. This was it. This was her time to shine.

ALEXANDRA

(Talking in a confident, poised manner)

Thank you, Sir. My team and I designed two types of print advertisements, three types of social media advertisements, the product packaging and a thirty-second TV advertisement, all within the set limitations of the budget. The -

She was interrupted by the sudden vibration of her phone, which was on the table in front of her. She glanced at her phone swiftly to see who was calling her but it was too far away from her, for her to read the caller ID on her phone. She forced herself to ignore her phone for the next 15 minutes and focus on the presentation.

ALEXANDRA

(Clearing her throat)

My apologies. As I was saying earlier, the focus of the whole Ad campaign will be to promote the unique selling proposition of the company, that is -

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She was again interrupted, but this time, by her assistant Jeannine. She opened the glass door to the meeting room and walked in, a quite alarmed look on her face.

JEANNINE

(stammers)

Um.. uh.. I'm very sorry to in-interrupt, Ms. Alexandra, but..
but you have an urgent phone call.

Alexandra's heart started beating faster with curiosity of what the phone call might possibly be. She smiled nervously at her clients and at her boss, sitting impatiently in front of her, frowns evident on their faces, clearly annoyed by the interruptions.

ALEXANDRA

(nervously)

Sorry, excuse me for a second.

She walked towards Jeannine, took her hand by her wrist and pulled Jeannine with her as she walked out of the meeting room.

ALEXANDRA

(sternly)

What is it? Can't it wait?

JEANNINE

(in an alarmed tone)

I don't think it can, Ms. Alex. I wouldn't have interrupted your meeting if I didn't think it was important.

ALEXANDRA

(in an impatient tone)

Did you ask who called?

Jeannine nodded, ever so slightly.

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JEANNINE

(in an alarmed yet timid tone)

Mmhmm.. It was the New York Police Department. Said they needed to speak to you, urgently. They're on hold.

It took her a couple of seconds to process this information. Shock mixed with a tinge of fear started seeping into her, every atom of her body yearning to know what's going on. She was all the way in Toronto to lead this advertising campaign and the only people she knew, who was in New York was her mother, Cynthia and her boyfriend Julian. Knowing that there was no way she was continuing with her presentation without knowing what's happening, she went back inside the meeting room, knelt beside her boss's chair, told him about the phone call and politely asked him if he could carry on with the presentation. She hurried back to the little desk that was assigned to her temporarily and picked up the phone.

ALEXANDRA

(nervously)

Hello?

A bold, rough voice answered from the other end of the call.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Am I speaking to Ms. Alexandra Blackwood?

ALEXANDRA

Yes, this is she.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Ms. Alexandra, I am Detective Oliver Campbell speaking from the New York Police Department. I'm sorry to interrupt your meeting, but I'm afraid I have some urgent news to tell you.

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ALEXANDRA
(nervously)
What is it, detective?

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL
Well, we got a 911 distress call this morning. It was a woman named Rose who I believe, is your neighbour. She found your mother deceased at around 9.45 this morning.

She stumbled in shock, her feet went numb suddenly and she leaned on the desk in front of her for support. Alexandra didn't know what to say. She felt as if her heart stopped beating for a split second. Her hands went cold. She didn't respond for a few seconds.

ALEXANDRA
(Stammering and whispering)
Oh my god.. Oh my god.. w-what?

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL
(unhappily)
I'm sorry, Ms. Alexandra.

Tears started filling up her eyes and she started shivering.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL
Ms. Alexandra, there is one more thing. Your mother did not pass away from natural causes. We have reason to believe that she was murdered.

Alexandra felt as if someone stabbed her heart with a sharp knife. Her hands didn't stop shaking and she felt tears running down her face, one by one.

ALEXANDRA
(stammering and crying)
M-Murdered? What do you mean, Murdered? W-Who did this to her?

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DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(concerned)

Ms. Alexandra, I am the lead detective assigned to your mother's case and I will assure you that I will do everything in my power to bring justice to your mother. I will explain everything to you in detail, but right now, as crazy as this sounds, I want you to calm down. Would you be able to come to New York today? It's procedure to interview the deceased's next-of-kin.

Alexandra knew that Detective Campbell was right. Throwing a tantrum right now, wouldn't benefit her in any way. She took a few deep breaths to calm herself down and wiped her tears off from the sleeve of her blazer before speaking to Detective Campbell.

ALEXANDRA

(voice shaking)

Yes, yes. I'll take the first flight available back to New York, Detective.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Okay, Ms. Alexandra. Come to the New York Police Department, when you're here. I will be working late.

ALEXANDRA

Okay, Detective. Thank you.

She hung up and slumped on the chair near her desk, feeling lightheaded. She brought her hands to her face and cried so hard, everything and everyone around her faded away from her mind slowly.

3. INT. HOTEL ROOM: EVENING

Alexandra started packing whatever clothes she needed to go to New York. Her eyes were dry and aching, from all the crying. After crying for what felt like ages to her, she had booked her flight tickets back to New York while she was at the office. Her mind was blank, as if she didn't know what to do. As if she was lost. While packing, she picked up her phone and dialed her boyfriend Julian's number and stuck her phone between her ear and her shoulder and waited for him to pick up. After around 4 rings, she heard his soft, yet a somewhat husky voice from the other end.

JULIAN

(softly)

Hey babe. How're you feeling?

A tinge of relief washed over her when she heard his voice.

ALEXANDRA

(in a brittle tone)

I don't know.. I don't know how to describe what I'm feeling. I feel empty inside..

She heard Julian let out a long, helpless sigh.

JULIAN

(Reassuringly)

Alex, I know that this is hard for you. Just hang in there, okay? You'll be home soon and I'll be here to take care of you.

She felt a tear roll down her cheek, and she wiped it from the palm of her hand. She took her phone to her hand and sat on the King sized hotel bed. She tried to feel reassured by the fact that Julian is here for her, and that she's not really alone. She craved for affection, for someone to hold her tight and tell her that everything is going to be alright now more than ever.. But she couldn't shake off this emptiness inside of her, this

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part of her that feels like nothing's going to be alright anymore.

ALEXANDRA

(her voice raising)

I don't know, Julian. I'll be home, but it won't feel like home anymore. It's never home without her.

JULIAN

(softly)

Alex, please. I'm trying my best to help you, here. I'm sure that the police are doing everything they can to find who did this to her. And I'm sure that whoever it is will suffer.

A part of Alexandra wanted to be lulled by Julian's faith that her mother's death will be brought to justice. But a part of her just wanted to be alone right now. She wanted to grieve alone.

ALEXANDRA

(her voice breaking)

I know, Jules. I know. But- But finding her killer won't bring her back. Nothing can bring her back. I just... I just want her back.

Julian was quiet on the other end. She knew that he didn't know what to say to that. She hated knowing that he was so helpless. Usually, he'd know just the right thing to say to lighten the mood when she's down. Today, there's nothing that he could say to make her feel better.

ALEXANDRA

(softly)

Let's just.. Let's talk when i get back, okay? I just want to be alone right now.

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JULIAN

(softly)

Okay.. Call me when you land. Maybe I can come and pick you up?
So we can both head to the Police Department, together?

ALEXANDRA

Okay, I will. Bye.

JULIAN

(quietly)

Have a safe flight, babe. I love you.

ALEXANDRA

(quietly)

Love you, too.

She hung up and lied down on the bed, feeling lightheaded. She wanted to cry again, to relieve this empty, lost feeling that's haunting her but her eyes couldn't take it anymore. They couldn't generate any more tears. She closed her sore eyes and let the darkness behind her eyelids engulf her for a while.

4. EXT. OUTSIDE THE AIRPORT: MIDNIGHT

Alexandra came out of the airport and stood, looking around for Julian. She had called Julian before, and he had told her to stay near the gate 5 double door entrance. The JFK International airport is always so crowded and busy, people running around with bags and trolleys. She took her phone out of her jean pocket and dialed Julian's number to ask him where he was. After a few rings, it went to voicemail. She put her phone back into her jean pocket and started looking around. Just then, she noticed a little girl pulling a little pink 'My Little Pony' bag from one hand and clutching her mom's hand tightly from the other hand, walking happily with her mom. Her heart immediately sank and she felt her dry eyes itching for more tears. She was

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taken aback to a memory of her and her mom singing in the car, while driving in the little red pick up truck her mom used to own when she was eight years old. The happiness of that memory washed over her, but only for a brief moment.

She jolted and came out of her flashback when she heard a familiar voice calling her name. Her cheeks felt wet from a few tears that had fallen while she was reminiscing her memory. She quickly wiped her tears from her sleeve and looked at Julian walking towards her. There was something about Julian that made her feel so peaceful and relaxed, but she didn't show it, simply because she didn't want to feel that way. Specially now that she has lost the person she loved the most. She walked towards him and waited for him to embrace her. When he did, she felt so tired, like she just wanted to crash in his arms. But she couldn't. She couldn't afford to feel that way.

JULIAN

(softly)

Hi, my love. Oh.. It's so good to see you.

She kept her head on his chest and closed her eyes. She could hear his steady heartbeat thumping through his rib cage. Something about his steady and strong heartbeat gave her a sense of confidence. He was there with her and a part of her felt safe. Like everything will be okay in time. She slightly pulled away from him and looked up at his face. He looked down at her, his light grey eyes, surrounded by his beautiful long lashes searching her face, concerned. He planted a light kiss on her forehead.

ALEXANDRA

(softly)

Hey..

Julian pulls away from her and reached for her travelling bags.

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JULIAN

Come on, let's go. I can't keep the car parked for long. Let's go.

He dragged her travelling bags and lead the way towards the car. The silver Toyota Camry was parked at the side of the road as they rushed towards the car. He lifted her travelling bags and put them in the trunk of the car as quickly as possible, because of the blaring horns from other cars trying to move as quickly as possible towards the exit. They both got into the car and Julian started the engine. They were both quiet, while he was driving as she wasn't in the mood to talk. But Julian decided to break the silence. He reached for her hand resting on her lap, briefly taking his eyes off the road.

JULIAN

You okay?

His eyes were full of concern and helplessness. She clutched his hand tightly to reassure him that she's hanging in there.

ALEXANDRA

I'll be fine, Jules. I'm just.. Not in the mood to talk.

Julian understood that she didn't really want to talk even though she knew that he wanted to talk to her so badly, but he kept clutching her hand and driving. They drove in silence for a few minutes and her mind started wondering. Julian was also her neighbour, he lived opposite her house. That's how she met him, he moved into the house around 2 and a half years ago. She told him to take care of her mom while she wasn't around and a small part of her wondered if he saw her mom the day she was murdered.

ALEXANDRA

Jules.. Did you see my mom that day? The day she was murdered?

Julian kept his eyes on the road.

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JULIAN

No, Alex. I didn't see her that day. I dropped off some cupcakes I bought from the Magnolia bakery the night before and that's the last time I saw her.

Alexandra let out a long sigh. She wished that her mom would have seen Julian that day. Ever since she started dating Julian, her mom loved the way he treated her. The way he respected her and loved her. It was all she wanted for her, to be with someone who loves her for her. If she would have seen Jules that day, she would have at least seen someone she trusts before she passed. Before whoever took her mom away from her.

ALEXANDRA

Where were you when it happened?

JULIAN

My boss called me in for an early morning meeting, babe. I left home at 'bout 8.00 am.

Julian worked at a firm that consults multinational companies on Marketing plans and proposals. They create marketing proposals and come up with marketing campaigns for their clients. Julian was one of the directors, so he would be spontaneously called in for work sometimes. Julian noticed that she was silent again. He caressed her hand that he was clutching with his thumb, lightly.

JULIAN

(sadly)

I'm sorry, Alex.

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She squeezed his hand lightly again and kept her head on the window of the passenger side door, looking at the trees and cars disappear behind her as they raced ahead.

5. INT. POLICE STATION: EARLY MORNING

She walked inside the New York Police Department with Julian by her side. As soon as she walked in, she heard the soft murmurs of people talking, the phones ringing and the radio voices from walkie talkies. She looked at her phone to check the time and saw that it was almost 2.00 in the morning. She reached a table where a bald, plump police officer was sitting, staring at a computer screen intently. She cleared her throat politely, before speaking.

ALEXANDRA

Hello, officer. I'm here to see Detective Oliver Campbell.

He looked at her from the computer screen for a couple of seconds and then looked at Julian.

POLICE OFFICER

Your name, Ma'am?

ALEXANDRA

I'm Alexandra Blackwood.

He took the black telephone that was sitting next to him and pressed a button. After a few seconds he spoke.

POLICE OFFICER

There's an Alexandra Blackwood here to see you, Sir.

Soon after he mentioned her name to who she believed was Detective Campbell on the receiving end, he nodded and kept the phone.

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POLICE OFFICER

You can go in through here, Ma'am.

He got out of his seat and walked towards the wooden double doors with two glass panels on them, behind him and opened one for her and Julian. She smiled at him politely as she walked in with Julian behind her. There were so many desks, some empty while some occupied with police officers still working. Just then, a tall, built, caucasian police officer came out of one of the rooms lined up on both the sides. He had a firm, professional look on his face. He was wearing black pants, a black blazer, a white shirt and a blue tie underneath the blazer.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Ms. Alexandra?

He asked her as he approached her and Julian. She smiled, politely.

ALEXANDRA

Yes, Detective. And this is my boyfriend, Julian.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Hello, Ms. Alexandra. Mr. Julian.

He shook her hand firmly, and then turned to Julian to shake his. He asked for her and Julian to follow him.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Come in and take a seat.

He led Julian and her into his room and motioned for them to take a seat on the long, brown couch in the corner of the room. A large, wooden table stood in the middle of the room, two chairs in front of it and one chair behind it. A small copper nameplate with his name "Det. Campbell" engraved was kept, in the corner of his desk. He took out a file, notepad and a pen

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from a drawer, walked towards them, dragged one of the chairs in front of the table and sat down.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(softly)

First of all, I know that this is hard for you, Ms. Alexandra.
My deepest sympathies. How are you holding up?

Alexandra felt chills running down her spine. She was tired. Tired from the lack of sleep, tired from the crying, tired from thinking about how empty she feels.. Just tired. Even though every part of her body ached for her to shed tears, ached for her to scream and shout, she stood still. Her eyes were itching to shed more tears but she didn't let them. She concealed her pain to her best before answering his question, with a straight face.

ALEXANDRA

I'm.. uh.. hanging in there, Detective.

She felt Detective Campbell scan her face, as if he was trying to look through her. As if he was trying to understand what she's really going through but she didn't give in. She maintained her straight face.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Well.. we still haven't gotten the full autopsy test back but what we can tell you for now is that we believe your mother's cause of death is strangulation. Based on lividity, we believe that she was killed during 8.00 and 9.00 am in the morning and based on the strangulation marks around her neck, she was most likely strangled by a thin wire. We found other visible bruises on her back, around her wrist and a small crack on the back of her skull, suggesting signs of a struggle.

Alexandra felt her heart racing. Sweat trickled down her face as she tried so hard to keep herself from crying. But she failed to

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do so. A tear ran down her cheek and she wiped it with her palm swiftly and looked down. She took a few deep breaths to calm herself down. She felt Julian move close to her on the couch and felt his arm go around her shoulder, protectively. She composed herself and silently told herself to stay strong.

ALEXANDRA

(voice breaking)

When will the autopsy results be back?

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Latest today afternoon. We will know more, then.

She nodded silently. Detective campbell scanned through the file and looked at Alexandra again.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

I've understood that your mother was single. Has she mentioned anything about your father to you?

ALEXANDRA

No, she didn't really talk about my father. She met my father when she was back in Florida. She told me that she was only 16 years old when she got pregnant with me and after she told him about the pregnancy, my father left us. So she moved to New York to start over, with me.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

And you were never curious to know more about your father?

ALEXANDRA

I was, but then I forced myself to forget about my father when I saw how much my mother struggled being a single parent. What's the point of getting to know about someone who doesn't care about me? What's the point of finding someone who doesn't want to be found?

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Detective Campbell started jotting what she said down on his black notepad. She has never really talked about her father before, the only other person who knew about her father was Julian. She looked at Julian to see him looking at her, concerned. He knows that these were the topics that she doesn't bring up during conversations and he knows that it makes her uncomfortable. She took his hand in hers and forced a smile to reassure him that she was okay even though she didn't feel okay at all.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

How would you describe your relationship with your mother, Ms. Alexandra?

Alexandra took a long, deep breath as she knew that this was going to be another hard question to answer without breaking down.

ALEXANDRA

(voice breaking)

She.. She is-was my best friend. I have always looked up to her as my role model ever since I was young, because I saw first-hand the hardships that she had to go through with raising me and taking on a full-time job to support us. Even with all the work on her shoulders, she never neglected me, she never stopped being a mother to me. Sometimes, I felt like I was a mistake. Because, technically, I am. She didn't plan on being pregnant with me at 16 years of age. Sometimes, I felt like she wouldn't have to go through all this pain if I wasn't here. But every time I felt like that she kept telling me that her decision to raise me was the best she decision she ever made.. She was an inspiration to me..

She felt Julian's hand tightening around her shoulder. Detective Campbell's face softened as he wrote on his notepad. 'You're doing good, just hang in there.', she told herself silently as Detective Campbell looked at her again.

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DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Okay.. Can you think of anyone who wanted to hurt your mother?

ALEXANDRA

No, detective. My mother was the kindest, sweetest person I knew. There was no one who hated her. There might have been some ladies at work who envied her because of her beauty and her work ethic, but I can't think of anyone who'd want her dead.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

We got the 911 distress call yesterday morning from your neighbour, Rose. Was she taking care of her while you were gone?

ALEXANDRA

Rose has been living next to us for around 8 years now and she loved my mother very much, treated her like she was her daughter. So yes, I told Rose to look after her while I was gone and I told Julian as well. Julian moved into the house in front of ours around two and a half years ago.

Detective Campbell wrote on his notebook again and looked at Julian.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Where did you move from?

JULIAN

I moved from New Jersey, Sir.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

I'm sorry, but it's procedure to ask this question, Mr. Julian.
Where were you the morning Cynthia was killed?

JULIAN

It's alright, sir. I understand. I was at work, Sir. I work at the Boucher and Co. Marketing agency and I get called in for

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work by my boss sometimes apart from the regular working hours.
I got called in yesterday at around 8.00 a.m., Sir.

Detective Campbell nodded and wrote down on his notepad.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

And when was the last time you saw her?

JULIAN

I saw her the night before, at around 8.30 p.m. I had just come back from work and I bought home some cupcakes from the Magnolia bakery, so I stopped by the house to give her some cupcakes.

Detective Campbell wrote on his notepad again. Alexandra wondered if she could see her mother, if she could see her for one last time so she would be able to give her a proper goodbye, for closure. She dreaded seeing her mother's body, but she knew she was going to no matter how scary it will be. She deserved to see her.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Okay.. I think that should be it, for now. I will keep you posted on new information about your mother's case and I will call you if I have any follow up questions.

Detective Campbell stood up while speaking and left the file and the notepad on his desk. Julian and Alexandra stood up as well, but Alexandra wasn't ready to go home just yet.

ALEXANDRA

I have one request before I go, Detective. I want to see my mother's body.

Both Julian and Detective Campbell went silent, for a while. They both looked at her, concerned. Detective Campbell cleared his throat.

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DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

I'm sorry, Ms. Alexandra but we don't allow the victim's body to be viewed before the autopsy results come back. Besides, the morgue is closed now.

Alexandra felt her heart sink and she felt the rebellious part of her waking up. She cared about her mother so much and she wasn't even in the country when her mother passed away in such a horrible way, the least she could do is give her mother a proper goodbye, even though she knew her mother couldn't see her or hear her.

ALEXANDRA

(firmly and voice raising)

Detective, I wasn't even in the country when the person I cared about the most passed away. I just want to say goodbye. Even though the morgue is closed, you still have access to the morgue, don't you? 5 minutes with her is all I ask for. Don't you think I deserve to say goodbye to her?

Detective Campbell looked at her for a while, not knowing how to respond to her reply. After a while, he nodded and sighed.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(voice lowering)

I don't usually agree to this, Ms. Alexandra. But for you, I'll make an exception. Follow me.

6. INT. MORGUE: EARLY MORNING

They walked silently towards the Morgue, just two or three lights flickering in the dark. This part of the police station was empty and lonely and their footsteps echoed when they

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walked. When they reached the door of the morgue, Detective Campbell scanned his card on the metallic card scanner attached to the wall on the side of the door and punched in a code on the keypad. The door to the morgue opened, they went inside and Detective Campbell switched the lights on.

A rustic, surgical smell hung in the air and huge silver surgical tables stood in the middle of the room. The walls of the morgue were lined with silver morgue refrigerators where they preserve bodies. Her stomach twisted with nervous tension and a shiver ran through her body. Little nametags of the victim's names were attached in front of every refrigerator. Detective Campbell searched for her mother's refrigerator, stood in front of it, turned around and looked back at her.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Are you ready?

She took a long breath and nodded. She felt Julian's hand take hers and squeeze hers for support. Detective Campbell opened the refrigerator door and pulled out a long tray with a body on it. He then looked back and Alexandra and Julian and motioned for them to come with a nod of his head towards the body.

Her body froze and she felt like her body didn't respond to the actions her mind was telling her body to do. She took a few deep breaths and forced her legs to move. She walked towards the table with Julian next to her and suddenly sucked in her breath. She felt herself squeezing Julian's hand tightly while staring at her mother's corpse, lying there, lifeless. Her body was covered in a white sheet, just her neck and her face out of the sheet. Her mother's face looked peaceful, her eyes closed but her neck suggests otherwise. The strangulation marks around her neck were mixture of red, purple and blue and her neck was dented in the middle, suggesting that her trachea was broken from the middle.

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Her whole body was shivering now and she knew that she couldn't keep herself together anymore. Her entire body was telling her to break down, to cry, to scream. Without taking her eyes off of her mother's corpse, she spoke.

ALEXANDRA

(shivering and voice breaking)

Can I pl-please have the room to myself for a few minutes?

She looked up and looked at both Detective Campbell and Julian. She saw Detective Campbell nodding and looking down. Julian took two steps closer to her.

JULIAN

(softly)

Alex, are you sure?

ALEXANDRA

(firmly)

Yes. Just.. go. Please..

Julian nodded and walked out of the morgue, Detective Campbell behind him. She looked at her mother again. Her long red hair was combed neatly behind her head. Even though her face was so pale, her lips were light blue and her eyes were dark and discoloured, she still looked beautiful to her. Her feet couldn't carry her weight anymore and she collapsed. She held onto the tray of the refrigerator for support and looked around if there was anything that she can sit on. She saw a small wooden stool around two feet next to her. She leaned forward and reached the stool, dragged it towards her and sat on it. She started crying. All the tears she held back for the past three to four hours just came rushing out. She caressed her mother's lifeless head and cried so loudly that at this point, she didn't care if Julian or Detective Campbell heard her cry. After crying for what felt like hours to her, she took a few deep breaths to calm herself down and started talking to her mom.

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ALEXANDRA

(crying and voice breaking)

Hi Mom.. I'm sorry for so many things. First off, I'm sorry that I wasn't here in New York to take care of you. This wouldn't have happened if I was here. I'm sorry I gave you so much trouble when I was growing up. Even though you didn't show it, I know that you struggled so much. I'm sorry that I was such a rebellious teenager and I'm sorry for the days that I picked fights with you over little things like cleaning dishes. I'm sorry I got mad at you for not approving my boyfriends back then. There are so many other things I'm sorry for but I'm mostly sorry for taking your life away from you twice. You were just 16 when I took your entire future away from you. It's because of me, you couldn't pursue your dreams of being in the tourist industry, of owning a hotel. And now, at 38 years.. I took your entire future away from you.. again. It should have been me, Mom. It should have been me on this table right now, not you.

She felt like someone was squeezing her heart so tightly. She felt this dark, depressing side of her sucking her in, like a black hole was sucking the life out of her. She took a few more deep breaths to calm herself down before she spoke again.

ALEXANDRA

(softly. whispering)

Mom.. I might not have said this enough to you for everything you have done for me and I know that it's too late to tell you this but I love you so much. You mean the world to me, mom and even though you're not here with me physically, you will be here with me, in my heart. I promise you, mom. I promise you that I'm going to find whoever did this to you. I will avenge your death. You didn't deserve this. You were taken away from me, too soon.

I had a whole future planned for you. I wanted to make you happy. And I will promise you that I'll suck all the happiness out of the person who did this to you. I promise.

[CONTINUED]

She heard the door to the morgue open again and Detective Campbell walked in with Julian behind him. Detective Campbell walked and stood opposite of her and looked at her mom's corpse while Julian walked and stood next to her and put his arm around her shoulder. When she looked up at him, his face was full of concern. Detective Campbell cleared his throat and both Alexandra and Julian looked at him.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

I'm sorry Ms. Alexandra but how much more time do you need?

Alexandra wiped the remaining tears on her cheeks from the palm of her hands and stood up from the stool that she was sitting on.

ALEXANDRA

It's okay, Detective. I'm done. Thank you.

Detective Campbell nodded, and pushed the tray that her mother's body was on back into the cold chamber of the refrigerator and closed the door. He turned around, walked towards the door of the morgue, opened it and waited for them to go outside. Afterwards, he closed the morgue door and locked it, and turned around towards them.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

You should probably head home, Ms. Alexandra and get some rest. I will be sure to call you as soon as I get the autopsy results back.

Alexandra nodded but she still wasn't ready to go home yet. She took a deep breath and steadied herself.

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA

Detective Campbell, I know that you're going to disagree what I'm about to say next, but I would like to aid you in this investigation. So I would really appreciate it if you would fill me in on all the details of my mother's investigation.

Both Detective Campbell and Julian looked at her again, but this time, in surprise. Julian moved closer to her.

JULIAN

Alex, what are you doing?

She ignored Julian's question for a while. Just as Julian asked her that question, Detective Campbell spoke.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Look, Ms. Alexandra. I know that this is hard for you and I appreciate that you're trying to help but please, let the police do their job. This is not the first murder case I've solved and I do my job well, Ms. Alexandra. I will catch your mother's killer but I will not risk your life in the process. It's against police policy to involve the deceased's family members in the investigation.

Alexandra wasn't ready to give up. She wasn't going to just sit at home doing nothing while her mother's killer was roaming around the streets freely. She had to do something. She promised her that she'll do something.

ALEXANDRA

Detective, I'm not implying that you don't know how to do your job or that you don't do your job properly. You have solved other murder cases and I salute you for that but I can't just sit at home doing nothing, while my mother's killer is out there. She meant the world to me, Detective. The least I can do is help you solve her case.

[CONTINUED]

Detective Campbell shook his head in frustration.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(firmly)

I'm sorry, Ms. Alexandra but again, it's against the policy and it's risky for you to be helping me look for a killer. If anything happens to you, I'll be held responsible for it. I could even lose my badge.

ALEXANDRA

(calmly)

Detective, please. I know that it's against policy but please, at least ask your captain and let me know. I know that I'm risking my life but I'm willing to take that risk. For my mother, I'm willing to take that risk. Or I'll just conduct an investigation on my own, but that'll just put me in more risk because I won't be having police protection. Your choice, Detective. But whatever decision you make, I will still try to find my mother's killer.

Detective Campbell thought for a while. Alex prayed for him to say something positive. To say something that she really wants to hear right now. Detective Campbell started pacing back and forth while looking down, trying to think of an answer to give her. After a few seconds, he came to a stop and looked up at her.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Okay.. okay.. Let me ask the captain and let you know tomorrow?

A tinge of relief flooded over her, even though she wasn't entirely sure that she'll be allowed to help in the investigation.

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA

(nodding her head)

Yes, that's fine with me. Thank you, Detective. I really appreciate it.

7. INT. ALEXANDRA'S CHILDHOOD HOME: EARLY MORNING

Alex walked inside the empty house she called home and flicked the lights on. Her house wasn't big, just small and cozy. The air smelled of the sweet lavender air freshener her mom loved. She took a deep breath and let it out. She was so tired, she felt like she was going to collapse any minute now. Julian followed her inside and closed the front door. He brought her bags inside and kept them near the sofa.

She walked to the kitchen and switched on the kitchen lights. She looked around, nostalgia kicking in. Whenever she used to walk in through the front door, she would see her mom cooking in the kitchen, humming a happy tune. Her mom was a good cook. She loved to cook and bake. She would always welcome her with a warm smile and embrace her. Now, the kitchen was empty.. It felt as if the happiness that remained in this house just disappeared with her mother. She turned around to face Julian.

ALEXANDRA

You wanna stay for a nightcap? I'm making hot chocolate.

Julian walked towards the dining table in the kitchen, dragged a chair and sat down.

JULIAN

Yeah, sure. Are you sure you don't want me to stay over? I don't want you to be alone, babe.

Alexandra took two mugs and started washing them.

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA

Yes, I'm sure. I'll be fine, Jules. Besides, it's not like you're living far away. If there's anything, I'll call.

Alexandra filled the electric kettle with water, switched it on, and let the water boil. She put the chocolate powder into the mugs and opened the fridge to see if there are any vegetables left. She noticed a box of cupcakes from the Magnolia Bakery sitting in the fridge next to the butter. She took it out and peered inside. There were two full cupcakes and one which was half eaten. She showed Julian the box of cupcakes and kept it on the counter while letting out a long sigh.

ALEXANDRA

Look, the cupcakes you bought for her are still here.

Julian's face softened. He stood up from the chair he was sitting at the dining table and walked towards her. He took both of her hands in his and looked directly at her eyes.

JULIAN

Alex, you look exhausted. Why don't you take a seat and I'll make the hot chocolate.

Julain pulled her closer and planted a kiss on her forehead. She nodded and walked towards the dining table and sat down on the chair Julian was sitting on earlier. Julian poured the hot water into the mugs and started stirring. After making the hot chocolate, he walked towards the dining table, kept her mug in front of her and sat down next to her. He reached out and took her hand in his.

JULIAN

Babe, can we talk about what you said to Detective Campbell at the police station?

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA

Are you talking about when I asked Detective Campbell if I can help in the investigation?

JULIAN

Yes, I'm talking about that.

Alexandra didn't want to talk about it but she knew that Julian deserved an explanation.

ALEXANDRA

What about it?

Julian moved closer to her, his hands still enclosed around hers. He always moves closer to her when he's going to talk to her about something serious.

JULIAN

Alex, why did you ask him if you can aid in the investigation? Do you know how dangerous this is? You're putting your life at risk. There's a killer on the loose, and you're trying to find him without any training in martial arts or handling firearms or something. I-

Julian was about to say something else but she cut him short.

ALEXANDRA

Julian, stop. I'm not hearing anything I didn't hear before. You know why I want to do this and I very well know that it's risky but I'm willing to take the risk.

Julian rubbed his eyes in frustration. She took a sip out of her hot chocolate.

[CONTINUED]

JULIAN

(voice raising)

How am I going to protect you when you don't even want to protect yourself?

ALEXANDRA

(frustrated and voice raising)

Well, I don't need your protection. I can take care of myself. Besides, if the captain accepts my request, I'll be having police protection so you don't have to worry about me.

She could see that Julian was angry now. Sure, she shouldn't have said what she said but she wasn't going to stop trying to find her mom's killer, no matter how much Julian wants her to.

JULIAN

(angrily)

So, what? You're trying to tell me that I have to just sit here and watch you go on a suicide mission? What if something happens to you?

Alex sensed that this fight was going no-where. She knew that they're just going to go on and on. She took a few deep breaths to calm her down, stood up, walked over to Julian and sat on his lap. She cupped his face with her hands and planted a kiss on his right cheek.

ALEXANDRA

(calmly)

Jules, I love you. And I get that you're worried about me but please understand that I have to do this. I won't be able to live with myself if I don't. I promise you, I'll keep you updated on what's happening with the investigation and I won't be going to find the killer physically. I'll just help them with the evidence and try to figure out the story behind what happened to my mother.

[CONTINUED]

Julian looked at her for a while, then nodded. She embraced him tightly, leaned in and kissed him lightly on his big, soft lips.

ALEXANDRA

Thank you for understanding, babe.

8. INT. ALEXANDRA'S CHILDHOOD HOME, BEDROOM: MORNING

Alexandra woke up slowly to her phone ringing on the bedside cupboard. The morning light beamed in through the windows and it took a few seconds for her eyes to adapt to the light. She was tired, her entire body felt numb and her eyes were throbbing from all the crying. She reached out for her phone and checked the caller ID to see Detective Campbell on the screen. Despite all the pain she was feeling, she jolted up straight and answered the phone.

ALEXANDRA

Good Morning, Detective.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Good morning, Ms. Alexandra. I'm sorry, did I wake you up?

ALEXANDRA

(clearing her throat)

Oh, It's okay, Detective. Did you get the autopsy results back?

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Yes, I did. And the captain and I have made a decision regarding your request. But I'd prefer talking to you in person. Do you think you can meet me at the police department, whenever you're free to stop by?

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA

Yes, yes Detective. Of course. I'll be there in about an hour, tops. Thank you.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Okay, Ms. Alexandra. Good day.

Just as Detective Campbell hung up, a wave of nervous energy flooded over Alexandra. She had been worried that they wouldn't let her help in the investigation but she was going to find out soon. She picked up her phone and texted Julian that she would be going to meet Detective Campbell and started getting dressed.

9. INT. POLICE STATION: AFTERNOON

Alexandra went in through the double doors and noticed that this time, the police station was thrice as busy as it was earlier that morning. She stood still for a while, looking around, taking it all in. Phones were blaring, people were walking around everywhere and the sound of people talking through walkie talkies hummed in her mind. She composed herself and started walking towards Detective Campbell's office. She stood in front of the closed door and knocked.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Come in!

Alexandra pushed the door open halfway and peered inside. Detective Campbell was seated in his chair, looking through some files. His posture was perfectly poised and straight, confidence radiating through him. He looked up at Alexandra and gave her a crooked yet pleasant smile.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(pleasantly)

Ah, Ms. Alexandra. Please, come in and take a seat.

[CONTINUED]

Alexandra walked in and closed the door behind her. She walked to the chairs in front of his desk, dragged a chair and sat down.

ALEXANDRA

Thank you, Detective.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Hope you're feeling better, Ms. Alexandra?

ALEXANDRA

Yes, Detective. I feel better, thank you.

Detective Campbell nodded. He reached out for a few A4 sized papers that were pinned together, that was sitting on the side of his table and kept it in front of her.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Now, after much negotiation and discussion with the captain, we've come to a conclusion that we'd let you help out in the investigation. But you have to sign this non-disclosure agreement in order to ensure that none of the details of the investigation will be disclosed to anyone and that no one will know that you helped out in this investigation. Not even, Mr. Julian. It's in everyone's best interest that this is crucial, Ms. Alexandra. The police department will be sued if word goes out that we allowed a civilian to help out in an investigation. We only agreed to this because of your safety; because we didn't want you conducting investigations alone.

Relief washed through Alexandra's body and she could feel herself smiling at Detective Campbell. She was going to keep the promise she made to her mother and that made her feel more satisfied with herself.

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to avenge my mother's death, Detective. Please thank the captain for me too.

Where should I sign?

Detective Campbell leaned forward, ruffled the pages of the agreement and pointed out the places where Alexandra should sign. She leaned forward and signed where she was asked to.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Don't thank me yet, Ms. Alexandra. You can thank me after we catch your mother's killer. But please understand that I am responsible for your safety so please, whatever you do, make sure you run by me first.

ALEXANDRA

Yes I understand, Detective. Just one question, I can't tell anything to Julian? He's the only person that I consider family, Detective. And he wasn't too happy with the fact that I asked to help out with the investigation so I told him that I'll keep him in the loop.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(shaking his head)

There will be some details that you can tell Mr. Julian, but not everything. Most details will have to be kept out, for his safety as well, Ms. Alexandra. I hope you understand.

ALEXANDRA

(nodding her head)

Yes, sir. I understand.

Detective Campbell took the non-disclosure agreement back and put it inside the right drawer of his table. He then looked at the file in front of him for a few seconds and looked back up at Alexandra.

[CONTINUED]

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Now, we can discuss the autopsy results. We identified the killer to be male because according to the bruise marks, the force that was used on your mother couldn't possibly have come from woman. It shows that your mother suffered concussion just before she was strangled, which explains the small crack behind her head. The bruises also show ligature marks which were most likely made by a hand, indicating that the killer had to pin her down to the floor tightly before strangling her. Her bruises are fresh, so that explains that she put up one hell of a fight.

Alexandra felt her face go pale. Knowing about what her mother possibly went through just before she died was so much harder than she thought it would be. She felt sick to her gut, and she felt bile rise up to her throat. She swallowed hard. Knowing her mother suffered through so much just boosted her drive to find her killer. Detective Campbell noticed that she was finding it hard to keep it together.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(softly, concerned)

Ms. Alexandra? Do you need a minute?

Alexandra simply nodded. She clenched her fists with all the strength she has left and forced herself to calm down. She looked down for a few seconds then looked back up at Detective Campbell. He was looking at her, concern evident in his face.

ALEXANDRA

I'm fine, Detective. I'm fine. Go on.

Detective Campbell looked at her for a couple of seconds and sighed.

[CONTINUED]

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(clearing his throat)

Um.. According to the angle of the bruises on her neck and the angle of the dent in the trachea, we estimate that the killer was at least 6 foot 2 tall. Do you know anyone your mother associated who was around that height?

Despite her throbbing head, she thought long and hard. No one really came to mind. Her mother was shy and didn't really associate men often. When I used to ask her why she isn't looking for anyone to date, she would always say that she was never really interested in dating after her father left her.

ALEXANDRA

(shaking her head)

No, Detective. No one that tall comes to mind at the moment. The only people I know who are that tall is Julian and the man who owns the salon my mom used to work in. But she never associated him.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Hmm.. Okay.. Just let me know if someone comes to mind. One more thing, Ms. Alexandra. We noticed a thin, long, vertical bruise that is most likely caused from something like a string on your mother's left hand. Did your mother wear any jewellery?

ALEXANDRA

Actually, yes. My mother didn't usually wear any jewellery but there was this charm bracelet she always wore because it was her 35th birthday gift from me.

Detective Campbell furrowed his brows and started fumbling some papers around. Seconds later, he took a paper in his hand and started reading it, a baffled look on his face. Alexandra was curious to know what was going on.

[CONTINUED]

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(baffled)

Hmm...

ALEXANDRA

What is it, Detective?

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(baffled)

The evidence report doesn't mention that a bracelet or parts of a bracelet was found...

Alexandra was confused now, as well.

ALEXANDRA

Do you think it's possible for the bracelet to be back at my place?

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(baffled)

CSU usually finds things like these in crime scenes when they sweep the place.. But there have been a few times that they have missed certain things as well. I'm just baffled at the fact that the killer didn't take anything else in the house, so it can't possibly be a robbery. So if it was with the killer, what would he want with a bracelet?

ALEXANDRA

(thoughtfully)

Hmm.. Would you like to go back to my place with me and search again?

Detective Cambell took a few minutes to think about her request.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

That would be helpful. Are you sure that's okay with you?

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA

Yes, of course, Detective. I didn't sign up for this to not be helpful. Let's go.

10. INT. ALEXANDRA'S CHILDHOOD HOME: AFTERNOON

Alexandra dreaded opening her mother's room door. Knowing just the fact that her mother was killed right in this very room, sent shivers through her body. She knew that she was going to start imagining the way her mother died, now that she knows what happened in detail. Detective Campbell was standing right next to her. She took a deep breath, put her hand on the doorknob and looked at Detective Campbell for confirmation. When he nodded, she turned the doorknob and pushed the door open. Her mother's room looked the same, but smelled like chemicals. Bleach, to be exact. Detective Campbell had told her that the light blood splatter in the room and the floors have been cleaned by CSU before she got back to New York. She looked around the room and noticed that her mother's bed was still crumpled. Her heart sank and she started shivering again. Detective Campbell walked around the room, looking around. Alexandra bent down and looked under the bed but there was nothing there. She stood up and started looking around again. She walked towards her mother's dressing table and started opening the drawers. No sign of the bracelet there as well. Detective Campbell was searching her mother's closet. She was about to give up when she noticed something like a string glistening behind the bedside cupboard. She knelt and reached out for it. Her fingers enclosed around it and she pulled it out to find the bracelet there.

ALEXANDRA

(calling out)

Detective, I found it.

Detective Campbell walked towards her. She stood up and gave it to him. He examined the bracelet closely.

[CONTINUED]

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Hmm.. It looks like there are no fingerprints on it.

ALEXANDRA

Wait.. I think one of the charms are missing.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(inquisitively)

What do you mean?

Alexandra took the bracelet and examined it again, making sure that her observation was correct. And it was.

ALEXANDRA

(surprisingly)

Yes, one of the charms are missing! When I got the bracelet customized, I told them to include a charm with the letter 'A' and the letter 'C', which are the initials of mine and my mom's names. The charm with the letter 'A' is missing.

Detective Campbell opened his mouth to speak but was interrupted by the sound of the front door opening and closing. Seconds later, she heard Julian calling out her name. She looked at Detective Campbell and he motioned for us to go outside of the room. They both went out of my mother's bedroom and she closed the door behind her.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(whispering)

Not a word of this to Julian.

He reminded her of the agreement and she nodded at him. She didn't like keeping secrets from Julian but she had to, for the sake of finding her mother's killer.

[CONTINUED]

JULIAN

(calling out)

Alex? Babe, you home?

Alexandra walked towards the living room with Detective Campbell next to her and met Julian face-to-face, in front of her. Julian looked at Detective Campbell, surprise evident in his face.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(confidently)

Good afternoon, Mr. Julian.

JULIAN

(suspiciously)

Good afternoon, Detective. Surprised to see you here.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Well, CSU claimed that they had left a piece of evidence in the room while they were here so I just came to see if it was here.

JULIAN

Oh, and did you find it?

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(voice fading)

No, I should go back to the police station and tell them to re-check the evidence list.

Detective Campbell suddenly furrowed his brows and stared at Julian's arm. Alexandra followed Detective Campbell's gaze and saw that Julian had a big bruise seeping through the sleeve of his shirt.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(inquisitively)

You hurt yourself, Mr. Julian?

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA

(shocked)

Oh my god babe, that's a pretty big bruise, what happened?

Julian looked at the bruise that Detective Campbell and Alexandra was looking at.

JULIAN

(shrugging and chuckling)

Oh, this old thing. I was at the gym the other day and was challenged for a boxing match. No big deal.

ALEXANDRA

(shocked)

Jules! Why didn't you tell me?

She walked over to Julian and examined the bruise. Julian put his arm around her waist and pulled her closer.

JULIAN

(shrugging)

Don't worry about it, babe. It doesn't even hurt anymore.

Detective Campbell took two steps forward.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Well, I better get going. Ms. Alexandra, thank you for your assistance. I'll be in touch. Take care of yourself.

ALEXANDRA

No, thank you, Detective. Please do.

Detective Campbell nodded at her, then nodded at Julian politely and left. Julian walked towards her and hugged her.

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA
(softly)
You're back early.

Julian planted a soft kiss on her head and looked down at her.

JULIAN
(softly)
I came to see how you're doing. So, any news regarding the investigation? Are you helping with the case?

Alexandra hated that she had to lie to Julian. She crafted her words and facial expressions carefully in order to make her act realistic.

ALEXANDRA
(sadly)
Well, the Captain didn't really accept my request of helping out with the investigation since there is a risk that the police department will be sued, if word got out.

Julian took her hand and pulled her with him. He sat down on the sofa and made her sit next to him. She leaned on his shoulder and he put one arm around her while the other was enclosed around her palm.

JULIAN
(softly)
I'm sorry, babe. I know how badly you wanted to help out.

ALEXANDRA
(sadly)
Hmm.. yeah.. I guess I just have to move on and have faith on Detective Campbell to do his job.

Julian kept his head on hers.

[CONTINUED]

JULIAN

(softly)

Hmm.. do you wanna watch a movie? It'll help get your mind off things.

ALEXANDRA

Yeah, that'd be nice.

Julian held her chin and lifted her head up for him to kiss her softly. After he pulled away, he smiled at her sweetly. At that moment, Alexandra felt lucky to have him by her side.

11. INT. POLICE STATION, DETECTIVE CAMPBELL'S OFFICE: MORNING

For the past hour, Detective Campbell was staring at the murder board. He had a gut feeling that something didn't add up. The murder of Cynthia Blackwood was more tangled up than he thought it would be. He shook his head and kept the marker pen on his table. He was distracted by the photo frame that was seeping through the half-closed drawer of his table. He sat down on his chair, opened the drawer fully and took the photo frame out. He stared at her picture. Caitlyn Campbell, his wife, was the most beautiful woman he ever came accross. He let out a deep, long sigh. He missed her, so much. She was taken away from her 4 years ago by one of the most dangerous serial killers. He used to be in forensics before but her death was what drove him to be a homicide detective. He fought to be on her case.

He shook his head, put the photo back into the drawer and closed it shut. He wondered how Alexandra was doing. Alexandra reminded him so much about who he was, 4 years ago when he had to fight to be on his wife's case. To solve her case. Alexandra reminded him of how much he had to conceal the pain of losing her. He had a future planned for them, they had just talked about having kids, he had just moved into a new house with her. But she was

[CONTINUED]

taken away from him, before he could experience any of that with her. Whenever he saw Alexandra trying to keep herself together without falling apart, he instantly goes back to who he was 4 years ago.

Just then, his phone rang, pulling him out of his thoughts. He answered the phone to hear one of his associates on the other side of the line, wanting him to confirm a request that he sent them a few minutes ago.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Yes, run a full background check. Thank you.

He kept the phone and sighed. He turned around and looked at the murder board again.

12. INT. ALEXANDRA'S CHILDHOOD HOME: MORNING

Alexandra was getting dressed to go to the police station. After 3 long days of anticipation, Detective Campbell had called her to tell her that he had something to tell her. She put on a pencil skirt, purple blouse and combed her hair neatly into a ponytail.

She went to the kitchen to grab a quick bite to eat when she saw Julian opening the front door. Julian was wearing the grey suit she gifted him for their first year anniversary. Julian closed the front door and walked to the kitchen.

JULIAN

Hey babe, you going somewhere?

Alexandra walked towards Julian and started fixing his crooked, red tie.

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA

Ah yes, babe. I thought of stopping by the police station to see if there's any progress with the investigation. It has been so long and I haven't heard from Detective Campbell.

Detective Campbell has been keeping in touch with her but Julian didn't know. For the past 3 days, the investigation has been stagnant. Detective Campbell said that they didn't find any leads. She had been handling some business matters at home to get her mind off the investigation, since her team was still in Toronto for the campaign.

JULIAN

Oh... Did Detective Campbell call?

She had to lie to Julian again.

ALEXANDRA

No, I just thought of stopping by to ask him if there's any progress. I mean, it's been what 5 days already and we haven't heard anything

JULIAN

(thoughtfully)

Do you want me to come with you? I could postpone my meeting..

ALEXANDRA

No babe, you should go to work. I don't want you to change your schedules because of the investigation. I'll call you if I hear anything.

Julian looked at her for a few seconds. He pulled her closer and scanned her face closely.

JULIAN

Hmm.. Okay babe, I'll see you in the evening?

[CONTINUED]

Alexandra tiptoed and planted a kiss on his left cheek.

ALEXANDRA

Yes, I'll see you in the evening.

13. INT. POLICE STATION, DETECTIVE CAMPBELL'S OFFICE: MORNING

Alexandra walked into Detective Campbell's office with two cappuccinos in her hand. Detective Campbell was writing something on a file, when she went in. He looked up at her and smiled.

ALEXANDRA

Good morning, Detective. I got you a nice, warm cup of cappuccino from the coffee shop right outside.

She handed the cup to Detective Campbell

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Good morning, Ms. Alexandra. Thank you, I appreciate it.

ALEXANDRA

(smiling politely)

You told me that you have news?

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Yes, I do. So, we questioned the other employees that worked at the hair salon that your mother used to and they mentioned that there was a guy named Billy Brown who was interested to be involved a romantic relationship with your mother. Did your mother ever tell you something like that?

Alex did remember her mother telling her about Billy who never gave up on asking her to date him. She did insist her mother should give it a try, but she just wasn't interested.

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA

Ah, yes. Billy. My mother did talk to me about him, once or twice. Why?

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Hmm.. One of the employees mentioned that Billy kept asking your mom to date him for around 6 months and when she kept refusing, he got pretty furious. So we brought Billy in for questioning.

ALEXANDRA

And?

Detective Campbell rubbed his eyes.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(tiredly and sighing)

He has a solid alibi.. He was at his cousin's wedding and multiple sources confirmed his alibi.

Alexandra looked down in disappointment. They are no where close to knowing the killer's identity. It's been 5 days now, since her mother passed away and they're progressing very slowly. Detective Campbell noticed her sad face.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Don't worry, Ms. Alexandra. This is normal, having false suspects. I promised you that we'll catch this killer, and I intend to keep that promise.

Alexandra looked up at him and smiled wearily.

ALEXANDRA

I know. I'm not giving up. I'm just.. Tired.

Detective Campbell reached for the cup of cappuccino on his table and took a sip out of it.

[CONTINUED]

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Why don't you head home and get some rest? I'll give you a call if I find anything.

Alexandra nodded and smiled again. But this time, the smile was more of a 'thank you'.

ALEXANDRA

Alright, detective. Good day.

Detective Campbell nodded once at her as she turned around to the door and opened it. Right before she went out, Detective Campbell spoke again.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Ms. Alexandra?

Alexandra stood where she was, her hand on the door knob of the door and turned her head to look at him.

ALEXANDRA

Yes, detective?

Detective Campbell walked around his desk, opened the bottom drawer and took out something metallic. He walked over to her and she saw that he had a silver coloured gun in his hand. She looked at it in surprise.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Have you ever shot a firearm before?

Alexandra was dumbfounded for a second. She turned around to face him and shook her head.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

Well, it's already loaded. You just have to pull this part here, aim, keep your finger on the trigger and press it.

[CONTINUED]

He demonstrated how to use the gun while talking. She just stared at the demonstration, not knowing what to say.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

I want you to have it, for now. Until we solve this case.

Alexandra looked at the gun in astonishment, then looked at Detective Campbell. She couldn't believe that he was actually giving her a gun.

ALEXANDRA

(surprisingly)

But.. why?

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

We're catching a killer here, Ms. Alexandra. Killers don't hesitate to kill. You need to have something to rely on for protection, if something goes wrong. Take it.

She looked at the silver gun for a few seconds before taking it. When she did, it felt cold in her hands. She slid it into her bag.

ALEXANDRA

Thank you, detective.

INT. ALEXANDRA'S CHILDHOOD HOME, ALEXANDRA'S BEDROOM: EVENING

Alexandra was in bed, listening to music and trying her best to get some work done. She had to kickstart her life again, and work is the best way to do that. The music helped to get her mind off things too, but it was only for a while. Her mother's favourite song 'I wanna dance with somebody' by Whitney Houston came on and she couldn't stop the nostalgia that ran through her

veins. She was taken aback to one of her favourite memories of her mom, how she'd put this song on and dance with her whenever
[CONTINUED]

she was feeling down. She felt hot tears running down her cheeks.

From the corner of her eye, she saw a figure standing by the doorway. She jolted and looked at the figure to see that it was Julian. She let out a breath of relief. She took her earphones out of her ears.

JULIAN

Did I scare you?

ALEXANDRA

Sorry, babe. I didn't hear you come in.

She waved the earphones slightly, indicating that she was listening to music. Julian smiled slightly.

JULIAN

It's okay, babe.

He had already changed from his office clothes into his favourite black sweater, white T shirt and his gray sweatpants.

ALEXANDRA

How was work?

Julian got onto the bed and slid next to her.

JULIAN

(shrugging)

Nothing special. I just wished I was with you the whole time.

Alexandra smiled sheepishly and blushed. Julian slid closer to her, cupped her cheek from one hand and started kissing her. The kiss was soft at first but it deepened within a matter of

seconds. Her heart started racing, but in a good way this time. Her entire body was responsive to his touch and she couldn't
[CONTINUED]

stop her hands from wondering. She put her hands into the pockets of his sweater to pull him closer to her, but felt something metallic in his right sweater pocket. Her first thought was that it was a ring and her mind was wondering if he was going to propose but it wasn't shaped like a ring. She gripped the metallic thing in the palm of her hand and kept kissing Julian. After a few seconds, he pulled away.

JULIAN

It's been forever since we kissed like that

Alexandra smiled sheepishly.

ALEXANDRA

I know, babe. I've been.. distracted.

JULIAN

What do you say, we open a bottle of wine?

ALEXANDRA

That sounds nice

Julian kissed her again softly and slid out of the bed. As soon as he was out of the door, she loosened her fist, a tinge of nervous energy seeping into her. When she saw what she was resting on the middle of her palm, her heart stopped beating for a second. She felt her take in a sharp breath because she wanted to scream, but she had to stop herself. On her palm was the exact same charm with the letter 'A' that was missing from her mother's bracelet. Realisation flooded over her and for a few seconds, she felt her body go numb.

She fumbled around the bedsheets looking for her phone. As soon as she found it, she started dialing Detective Campbell's number. Just as she was about to hit the call button, the screen

of her phone changed and she saw that Detective Campbell was calling her. She picked up the phone on the first ring.
[CONTINUED]

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(alarmed)

Oh, thank god. Where are you?

ALEXANDRA

(alarmed and whispering)

I'm at my house. I have something to tell you.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(alarmed and shocked)

YOU NEED TO GET OUT OF THE HOUSE, NOW! Julian is not who we thought he was. I had a gut feeling that there was something off about him, so I ran a full background check on him. His real name is Marco Rodriguez and he works for one of the most dangerous contract killers in America, Jack Fernandez. I'm on my way there with backup. You need to get out of the house, NOW!

Alexandra tried so hard to take all the information in. Her body was cold as ice and she felt goosebumps rise up on her arms and legs. She was shivering, in fear.

ALEXANDRA

(whispering and alarmed)

I found it. I found the missing charm. It was in his sweater pocket.

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(angrily)

Son of a bitch!

ALEXANDRA

(whispering)

He's in the house. I can't get out.

[CONTINUED]

DETECTIVE CAMPBELL

(alarmed)

Okay, okay. Calm down. Just act like nothing's wrong. I'll be there soon.

As soon as Detective Campbell hung up, she opened the bedside cupboard drawer and put the charm inside. The gun that Detective Campbell gave her was shining from inside the drawer. Without thinking twice, she took the gun from inside the drawer and slid it into the back pocket of her white sweatpants. She turned around to go to the bathroom and compose herself for the biggest act of her life when she saw him standing by the door, two wine glasses in one hand and the bottle in the other. She froze on the spot. As soon as she looked at him, she knew that he knew. He knew that she knew, as well. He was looking at her in a way that she has never seen him look at her before. He was looking at her as if she was a prey that he was waiting so long to catch. It's like she doesn't even know him anymore.

He walked into the room and kept the wine glasses on her dressing table. She was still frozen, adrenaline mixed with fear buzzing through her veins. Her hand slowly reached for the gun in her back pocket. Her hand enclosed around the handle of the gun, but she didn't take it out just yet.

JULIAN

So "babe", you wanna carry on with our perfect evening?

Alexandra just prayed and hoped that this was all just a dream. But when she heard him say that, she knew that it wasn't a dream. That all of this was actually happening. Before, her veins were full of fear. But now, she can feel the rage creeping in. She can feel the anger in her bones.

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA
You're sick.

JULIAN
(low chuckle)
Oh honey, you're just getting a taste of how sick I really am.

Alexandra tasted the bile in her throat. His light grey eyes were shining in the dim light. But this shine was not the shine he had when he used to look at her, when he used to kiss her. No. This shine was the kind of shine that was prominent in one's eyes when they see someone else suffer. He smirked, the corner of his lips puckering up.

ALEXANDRA
(whispering)
Who are you?

JULIAN
(sarcastically and in a mocking tone)
What do you mean? You know who I am. I'm Julian. YOUR Julian.

She stared at him in disgust. He looked at her so casually, as if he did nothing wrong and it disgusted her even more.

ALEXANDRA
(screaming)
WHO ARE YOU?

JULIAN
(chuckling)
My real name is Marco Rodriguez.

ALEXANDRA
(angrily)
What do you want from me?

[CONTINUED]

JULIAN

(sarcastically)

Not much, I just wanted your mother.

Alexandra felt sick. Her whole body started shivering in anger and disgust.

ALEXANDRA

(angrily)

Why?

JULIAN

(chucking and sarcastic)

It's a looong story.. Do you wanna hear the long version or the short version?

ALEXANDRA

(boldly)

TELL. ME. THE. TRUTH.

Julian put his hands up in surrender. He dragged the chair that was kept next to my dressing table and sat down.

JULIAN

(chuckling)

Well, your mother crossed my boss. So, my boss ordered me to eliminate your mother.

Alexandra just stared at him, puzzled and confused. He understood the look on her face and sighed.

JULIAN

You see, I work for a very special person. He took me in at 4 years old, when I was an orphan and he has given me a home for the past 25 years. So, I do what he tells me to do. He knows you very well, even though he doesn't really care about you.

Alexandra was more confused than ever.

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA

(confused)

What do you mean? I don't understand!

JULIAN

See, my boss is your father.

Alexandra's eyes opened wide. Thoughts were burning in her mind like wildfire and she didn't know if she should believe what Julian was saying or not.

ALEXANDRA

(stammering)

M-My father?

JULIAN

Mhmm.. Your father. Your mother was his first love. He loved her very much, but after she got pregnant with you, she decided to keep the baby for herself. She changed her identity, changed how she looked and fled to New York, with you in her belly and raised you on her own. That's a little selfish, now don't you think?

Alexandra felt weak. She felt like her whole life was a lie. She was torn between believing a phsycopath or her own mother. She felt her gut twisting inside her. So, her father wasn't the one who left, but her mother. Tears started falling down her cheeks, one by one.

ALEXANDRA

(voice breaking)

Why would my mom do that?

Julian leaned forward in his chair and rested his elbows on his lap.

[CONTINUED]

JULIAN

Well, you see, your father doesn't really have the best job in the world. He makes money and he was ready to make your mom his queen. Your mom felt differently. She really didn't know about your dad's business when she was involved with him. After she got to know, she decided to take his baby away from him.

Alexandra was aghast. She could hear Detective Campbell's words playing in her mind over and over again, that Julian or Marco, she didn't know what to call him anymore, was working for one of the most dangerous serial killers. Her body was shaking with rage. Tears were falling down her cheeks, faster now.

ALEXANDRA

(screaming)

MY MOTHER TRIED TO PROTECT ME FROM A MONSTER AND YOU TOOK HER
AWAY FROM ME?!

Julian's face changed at the word 'Monster'. He stood up from his chair immediately, rage prominent in his face. His brows were furrowed and his jaw was clenched. He looked at her with such rage, like a raging bull ready to attack. She felt weak. Her entire body felt weak. But she didn't budge. She didn't show him how weak she felt.

JULIAN

(angrily)

He isn't a monster! He's like a father to me! He loved your mother so much! He provided for her! He was ready to ask her to marry him! SHE WAS THE BITCH WHO WANTED EVERYTHING TO HERSELF! So what if his job isn't the best job in the world?

Alexandra gripped the handle of the gun behind her tightly.

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA

(firmly)

Why now? Why wait 22 years to kill her? Why did you pretend to be my boyfriend for 2 years to kill her?

JULIAN

(sarcastically)

Well, your father found her a few months after your mother fled.

I mean, did the bitch really think that she could hide from a professional killer? He was hurt and he wanted to take revenge from her, but when he found her, she had just given birth to you. That changed things because your father didn't know that she was pregnant. He didn't want you to grow up without a mother, so he let her raise you until you were old enough to take care of yourself. He kept tabs on you and your mother for the past 22 years, waiting for the perfect time. Now that your all grown up, he sent me to kill her. I waited for 2 years because I wanted to gain your mother's trust before killing her, I wanted to kill her in the most unexpected way possible. I wanted her to suffer.

Alexandra felt lightheaded. She felt sick to her gut. He reached for the bottle of wine that was on the bedside cupboard, kept the tip of the bottle to his mouth and chugged a few sips of wine from the bottle.

ALEXANDRA

(whispering)

But, what about your alibi?

JULIAN

(chuckling)

What alibi? My "boss" at work is one of your father's most trusted clients. Your father has killed a lot of people for him. I just told him to tell the police I was there.

[CONTINUED]

Alexandra was drowning in a pool of emotions. Rage, betrayal and fear was sucking all the light inside of her. All the happiness inside of her. For a couple of minutes, Alexandra was silent. She didn't know what to say or what to do. She couldn't think straight. He threw the bottle of wine that he was holding on the floor, the rest of the wine in the bottle splashing everywhere.

JULIAN

(sarcastically)

Now that you don't have any more questions, I'm going to have to ask you to come with me.

Julian took a step towards her and Alexandra reacted immediately. She took the gun out of her back pocket, pulled the latch back just like Detective Campbell taught her and pointed it at Julian.

ALEXANDRA

(firmly)

Do not come close to me. Don't you dare move.

Julian stopped where he was and put his hands up in the air again, surrendering to her.

JULIAN

Woah, woah.. Calm down. You know that we can't stay here for long. You opened your big fat mouth to Detective Campbell before, so I'm sure his on his way now.

Alexandra kept pointing the gun at him. He looked at her as if she was a fool, his lips puckered up from the corner of his mouth, chuckling in a mocking way.

[CONTINUED]

ALEXANDRA

(angrily)

I'm not going anywhere. You, however. You're going to jail. You,
your precious boss and everyone who works for him.

JULIAN

(laughing loudly)

You really think that everything's going to go your way, do you?
Cute.

ALEXANDRA

(screaming)

SHUT UP!

JULIAN

(sarcastically)

How do you wanna do this, baby girl? The easy way? Or the hard
way?

ALEXANDRA

(screaming)

I SAID, SHUT UP!

JULIAN

(low growl)

Hard way, it is.

Julian lunged forward and before Alexandra could pull the trigger, he clenched her wrist and shoved her hand away from him. She could feel her grip on the gun loosening and she tried so hard to tighten her grip. He pushed her on the wall and she kicked him in his shin as hard as she could. He crouched down for a couple of seconds, and just as she was pointing the gun back at him, he got a hold of her neck with one hand and started gripping her neck tightly. She choked and felt as if she couldn't breathe. Her throat started burning, his finger nails cutting into her skin. He pulled her from her neck and pushed

[CONTINUED]

her back onto the wall. Her head knocked hard on the wall and she her vision started becoming blurry. Her ears were ringing and she couldn't hear properly because of the concussion. She closed her eyes tightly and opened them to see where Julian was. He was looking out of the window, an alarmed look on his face. She knew that the police were here, she just had to stall him for a couple of more minutes. She made a run towards Julian, attempting to jump on him to slow him down but halfway through, she heard the bang from the loud, silver handgun in his hand.

Blood seeped through her shirt and she felt her entire body going numb. Her legs could not carry her weight anymore and she fell hard on the floor. She knew that this was the end for her, that she was going to die. Detective Campbell rushed by her side and checked her pulse. He then started CPR on her but she knew that it was too late. That she could not be saved. With all the strength that she has left, she clenched Detective Campbell's wrist and when he looked at her, she slightly shook her head. She said a silent prayer and remembered her mother's face while she closed her eyes and let her soul abandon her body.

