WHAT LIES BENEATH

by

Rachel Brubacher

 2077 Lobsinger Line

 Waterloo, Ontario N2J 4G8

 519 503 3025

 rachel.brubacher@gmail.com

FADE IN: HOOK

A police station in New York City. Dark, empty hallways. A YOUNG MAN is typing fiercely on his computer in the moonlight in a small room. Posters of a car accident from two years ago are surrounding the room. Headlines read: “CAR UP IN FLAMES, NO BODY FOUND”.

The young man is MILES BROOKS. He stares at his computer screen with dark bags under his deep blue eyes. His boss, OFFICER JACOBS, walks up behind him and rests his hands on the back of Miles’s chair. Officer Jacobs looks up at the poster stapled to the wall.

 OFFICER JACOBS

 So are you going to find his wife

tomorrow and ask about the case?

She’s our last option.

Miles whirls around and looks up at Officer Jacobs.

 MILES

Her name is Scarlett, and she just

moved back home last night. I think

I should probably give her some space

before I ask questions.

Officer Jacobs walks around the front of the desk and shakes his head.

 OFFICER JACOBS

 Typical Miles...always ignoring

 my questions.

 MILES

 She’s not exactly the easiest

 person to talk to after Ryan died.

 She moved away because she couldn’t

 handle the publicity about him. She

 finally came back home for a fresh

start, I can’t just ruin that for her.

Officer Jacobs drops his hands onto the desk and learns in towards Miles.

 OFFICER JACOBS

Look Miles, do you want this

promotion or not? Find her tomorrow

at 8 and tell me what you know. Can

you at *least* do that?

 MILES

 Okay, fine, I’ll do it. But what

do I even say to her? I can’t just

randomly bring up Ryan.

 OFFICER JACOBS

 Have you ever talked to a girl

 before? Just make some small talk

 and then bring up Ryan. Easy.

 MILES

 I don’t know if that will wor--

 OFFICER JACOBS

 See you tomorrow afternoon

Mr. Brooks. Oh and don’t forget

to show her this.

Officer Jacobs chucks a piece of metal in a plastic bag at Miles. He leaves the room.

Miles looks at the object in his hands. He feels the curves of the shape and the burnt marks on the edges. He shoves it into his coat pocket.

Miles collects his papers and places them in his brief case. He leaves the room and turns off the light.

INT. SMALL COFFEE SHOP – DAY INCITING INCIDENT

SCARLETT DAWSON is sitting by herself at a small round table near a window. The sun gleaming on her pale skin. She is reading a book with her glasses sitting on the tip of her nose. Her blonde sun-kissed hair falls gently onto her face.

Miles walks into the coffee shop and orders a large latte. He leaves a tip for the spunky waitress. She smiles at Miles. Miles walks towards the door. He see’s Scarlett sitting by herself. Miles stops in his tracks. He turns around trying to hide his face.

FLASHBACK – THE POLICE STATION

 OFFICER JACOBS

 Look Miles, do you want this promotion

 or not?

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Miles shakes his head. He continues to walk towards the door.

FLASHBACK – A SMALL GROCERY STORE

A much younger Miles is holding his mother’s hand while walking through the isles of the grocery store. Miles smiles and reaches for a lollypop on a shelf. He looks up at his mother and tugs on her yellow sundress. She bends down.

 MILES’S MOTHER

 No sweetie, we don’t have enough

 money for that.

Miles frowns and nods. He places the shiny red lollypop back on the shelf.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Miles is holding the door handle. Miles lets go of the handle. He turns around and walks to the small round table. There is sweat on his forehead. He wipes it off. He stands in front of Scarlett and CLEARS his throat. Scarlett looks up and smiles.

 SCARLETT

 Hey! What are you doing here?

Miles nervously smiles.

 MILES

 I was gonna ask you the same thing.

 SCARLETT

 Yeah, I missed New York. Especially

 this place. They make the best coffee

 and their stones are to die for!

Scarlett takes a big bite of her scone.

 MILES

 They do have pretty good coffee.

They both laugh.

 MILES

 I’m sure you’ve heard this about

 a hundred times, but I’m really

 sorry about Ryan.

Scarlett stares at her bare ring finger. She clears her throat and looks out the window.

 SCARLETT

 Not a day goes by where I don’t

 think about him.

 MILES

 Have you ever thought that maybe

 there’s more to the story?

 SCARLETT

 Wow. Just wow. I never thought I’d

 hear this from you. I should get

 going.

Scarlett stands up and frantically collects her things and accidently spills her cup of coffee. It SPLATTERS all over the old wooden floor. People turn their heads. Miles grabs Scarlett’s arm.

 MILES

 Oh so you’re just going to run away

like you always do? Scar, please just

listen to me.

 SCARLETT

 Give me one reason why I should.

 MILES

 Just please. I was his best friend.

Scarlett looks down and notices that Miles is holding her hand. She pulls away.

 SCARLETT

 Fine, let’s go for a walk.

Miles and Scarlett stand up and walk over the spilt coffee and make their way to the door. He opens the door for her and she steps out. Scarlett puts on her designer sunglasses to hide her face.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Miles and Scarlett are walking down Central Park. They are laughing. Scarlett gives Miles a friendly punch in the arm. They sit down on a bench. Scarlett looks at an old couple walking past, holding hands. She glances at her bare ring finger again and frowns. Miles notices.

 MILES

 I remember one time Ryan and I

 jumped in that fountain right there.

Miles points at a fountain in the distance. Scarlett giggles.

 SCARLETT

 What are you talking about?

 MILES

 I think we were like 10 years

old or something.

Scarlett doesn’t answer. She shuffles her feet.

 MILES

 Then the cops came looking all

 official with their badges and

 ties.

Miles makes a goofy face and wiggles his tie. Scarlett laughs again.

 MILES

 Actually, I think that was

 the moment we wanted to be

 cops.

 SCARLETT

 You guys were two peas in a

pod.

Miles smiles and then looks down at his hands. Scarlett puts her hands on his shoulder.

 SCARLETT

 Hey, you doin’ okay?

Miles takes a deep breath.

 MILES

Scar, I’m almost positive that

Ryan’s death wasn’t an accident.

Scarlett laughs. She studies the look on Miles’s face and crosses her arms.

 SCARLETT

 You’re serious about this aren’t

 you?

 MILES

 No one has seen this, but there was

 something left on the crime scene.

 SCARLETT

 I thought everything burnt down?

Miles reaches into his leather jacket and pulls out a metal red X. Scarlett rips it out of his hands.

 SCARLETT

 So you’re telling me you think Ryan

 was murdered? Just because of this

 stupid piece of metal?

Scarlett rolls her eyes and shoves the piece of metal into Miles’s chest.

 SCARLETT

 Sorry Miles, I think this was

 a mistake. I should probably get

 going, I got a lot of stuff I

 gotta take care of. So, see ya.

Scarlett looks away from Miles. She walks away with her heels CLICKING. The CLICKING slowly fades. Miles GROWLS and places his hands on his head, pulling his hair. He WHIPS his phone out of his pocket and quickly dials a number.

INTERCUT TELEPHONE CONVERSATION – MILES AND OFFICER JACOBS

 MILES

 Hey boss, so your *brilliant* plan

 didn’t really work. In fact, it didn’t work at all! Scarlett walked away, and thanks to you she probably hates me now and is

 about to catch the next train to

 Michigan!

Officer Jacobs laughs as he chomps on a donut. Miles rolls his eyes.

 OFFICER JACOBS

 You better get your shit together,

 kid. I gave you one job and of

 course you screw it up! Would you

 like me to assign someone else to

 get answers out of Sarah?

 MILES

 Her name is Scarlett, not Sarah. And I’ll do it. Just give it some

 time.

 OFFICER JACOBS

 Goodbye, Mr. Brooks.

Miles shoves his phone into his pocket and walks away from the park.

INT. MILES’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Miles is SNORING on his leather couch. There are a few beer bottles on the table. The lights from the TV reflect onto his face.

There is a frantic KNOCK at the door. Miles continues to SNORE. The KNOCKING continues. His eyes burst open and he rolls off the couch towards the door. He opens it. The door SQUEAKS. Miles looks confused.

 MILES

 What are you doing here?

 SCARLETT

 Well hello to you too.

Scarlett pushes Miles against the door and walks into his apartment.

 SCARLETT

 Stop looking at me like that!

 You’re starting to creep me out.

 MILES

 Sorry, sorry. I guess I just thought thought I’d never see you again.

 SCARLETT

 Do you have a computer or something?

 MILES

 Over there.

Miles points to a small black desk with an old laptop sitting on it. There are stacks of papers all over the desk. Scarlett looks at Miles and then walks over to the desk and sits down. She TYPES and stares at the screen with wide eyes.

 MILES

 What is this?

 SCARLETT

 Well I was talking to my friend

 Ann on the phone, she’s from

 my hometown in Michigan where I

was living.

Scarlett stops talking. Miles leans in closer.

 MILES

 So how is this relevant?

 SCARLETT

 We were talking about what’s going

 on back home. The things that have

 changed, the things that haven’t

 changed.

 MILES

 I don’t get what you’re saying...

 SCARLETT

 She said a car accident similar

 to Ryan’s happened in Michigan.

There was a red X left 2 feet away

from the scene.

 MILES

Was there any remains of the body?

Scarlett looks at Miles and her lip begins to quiver. Miles gently rubs Scarlett’s back and brings her in close. She pulls away.

 SCARLETT

 I’m sick of pretending everything

 is okay! It’s not okay! I’m sick of

 not knowing, I just need--

She SNIFFLES and wipes away her tears. Miles looks at the computer screen and scrolls through the pages.

 MILES

 Closure. You need closure. I’m going

 to give you that.

 SCARLETT

 But how? What’s done is done.

 MILES

 We’re going to find who’s behind

 this.

 SCARLETT

 We? As in me?

 MILES

 Scar, it’s the only way for

 you to feel okay again. I want

 to do this for you.

Scarlett grabs Miles’s hand and shakes it firmly.

 SCARLETT

 You got yourself a deal.

Miles leads Scarlett out the door.

 MILES

 I’ll do anything for you, Scar.

Scarlett smiles and walks out the door.

EXT. MECHANIC SHOP – DAY BEGINNING OF CLIMAX (M.O.T)

Miles and Scarlett step out of the black truck. Scarlett looks around examining the area.

The music BLARES throughout the garage. There is a man working under an old Camaro. He stares at Miles and Scarlett. He ignores them and continues to work on the rusty car.

 SCARLETT

 Are you sure this is the place?

 MILES

 I sure hope so.

 SCARLETT

 I’m just scared of what might

happen. I don’t know if I can

face him. He destroyed my life.

Miles lifts Scarlett’s chin up and looks into her eyes.

 MILES

 We’re going to be okay.

 Just remember our plan and everything will be fine.

Miles grabs Scarlett and pulls her in close.

A MAN is starring at Miles and Scarlett through a broken window. He is wearing a black hoodie, shielding his face.

Miles looks up and notices the figure on the other side of the window. Miles pretends not to notice. The MAN moves away from the window.

 MILES

 There’s no one here, I think

we should go.

 SCARLETT

 We came all this way we can’t just

 leave!

 MILES

 Just trust me.

They walk back to the truck.

INT. Truck – Day

Miles slowly pulls out of the driveway. Miles doesn’t say anything. He blankly looks out the window. Scarlett puts her hand on his. Miles stops the car on a dirt road.

 MILES

 I saw him.

 SCARLETT

 How do you know it was him?

 MILES

 I just know. We have to go

 back.

 SCARLETT

 I don’t think I can do this.

 What if we get killed! That guy

 has killed about a dozen people

 I’m sure he’d have no problem

 Getting rid of us!

 MILES

 We need to come back later tonight

 and put this guy behind bars. For

 good.

 SCARLETT

 And risk our lives?

 MILES

 Do this for Ryan.

Scarlett sighs and nods.

 MILES

 Thanks for always being there for

 me, Scar. I’m sorry I used you in

 the beginning for a promotion. I

 was stupid. I shouldn’t have done it,

 I don’t know why I did that to yo—

Scarlett leans in and kisses Miles passionately.

 MILES

 Were you even listening to me?

 SCARLETT

 It’s okay. It’s all okay. That’s

 something I love about you, you

 never stop apologizing.

Miles rolls his eyes.

 MILES

 Oh shut up.

 SCARLETT

 We have to think of a plan.

EXT. MECHANIC SHOP – NIGHT

Miles and Scarlett walk up to the Mechanic Shop. It is dark. The crickets CHIRP. The wind HOWLS. Miles hands Scarlett a gun. Scarlett steps back.

 SCARLETT

 Are you serious?

Miles nods. They walk closer to the mechanic shop. As they walk they hear a GUNSHOT. Scarlett SHRIEKS.

 MILES

 Go back in the car and lock

 the doors! Now!

 SCARLETT

 I can’t just leave yo—

 MILES

 Go!

Scarlett runs towards the truck. She jumps in and locks the doors.

Miles runs towards the mechanic shop. He twists the handle of the closest door. It’s locked. He creeps around the back of the building. Miles finds a small window and climbs through it.

INT. MECHANIC SHOP – NIGHT

Miles holds his gun firmly in his hand. Miles stands up and looks around. He slowly walks through the room.

There are 5 cars lined up. Tools are scattered around each car. The room is dark. The moonlight creeps through the broken window.

Miles tip toes across the room. His eyes are wide open. The sound of footsteps are in the distance. Miles hides behind a filing cabinet.

A man walks into the room whistling as he plays with his keys. He heads for the door when he notices the broken window. The MAN is wearing a black hoodie. Miles holds his breath.

 MAN’S VOICE (VO)

 Come out come out where ever you are.

The voice belongs to ROBERT STEIN, Ryan’s killer.

Miles slowly steps out from behind the filing cabinet.

 ROBERT

 Hello Miles.

 MILES

 You’re under arrest for the

 murder of Ryan Dawson.

 ROBERT

 Ryan’s told me all about you.

 MILES

 Ryan’s alive?

Robert nods and bursts into a hysterical laughter. Miles aimes his gun at Robert. Robert smiles. He pulls a gun from his back pocket and SHOOTS at Miles. Miles falls to the ground. Robert continues to laugh insanely.

INT. TRUCK – NIGHT

Scarlett bites down on her nails. She jumps at the sound of the gunshot.

EXT. MECHANIC SHOP – NIGHT

Scarlett runs to the side of the building. She opens an unlocked door and slowly steps in.

INT. MECHANIC SHOP OFFICE – NIGHT

It is dark. Papers are scattered all over the room. All he doors are locked. An owl HOOTS.

Scarlett slowly walks around the room. She looks down at the floor and sees a rug is lifted up. She walks closer to it. She bends down to the rug; underneath a trap door is revealed.

Scarlett removes the rug. The trap door creaks as she opens it.

INT. ROBERTS LAIR – NIGHT

Scarlett climbs down the old wooden stairs. The room lightens up with florescent lights. They flicker. The walls are covered with photographs of car accidents. A giant red X is painted on a white brick wall.

Scarlett steps back. She looks around There is a BODY tied to a chair.

 SCARLETT

 Miles!

Scarlett runs towards the BODY. Scarlett’s face turns white. The body is RYAN.

Ryan looks up at Scarlett. He has a beard. His hair is long and there is blood on his face. Scarlett brings her hands to her face. Ryan’s eyes widen.

 RYAN

 Hi.

 SCARLETT

 You’re not dead.

 RYAN

 No.

 SCARLETT

 You’ve been alive this whole

 time.

 RYAN

 Yes.

 SCARLETT

 This whole time! I have to get

 you out of here.

Scarlett runs towards Ryan. They both hear footsteps.

 RYAN

 Hide.

Ryan COUGHS.

 RYAN

 Or he’ll kill you.