WHAT LIES BENEATH

by

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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.