

a psychic investigation into
the death of someone
i once knew

draft 4.2
will vance jr

i often sit amongst my friends and feel absolutely alone.

i can be around so many people i love but still feel as though i'm the outsider. like the space i occupy is radically different from everyone else's.

my dreams at night involve me being in the woods alone. separated from everyone i have ever know. i wake up some days with the desire to delete every account i have. to destroy my phone and only use a burner phone.

i wonder if anyone would miss me if i disappeared.

i wonder if i would miss them back.

Characters

AUGUST: (they/them), amab. an estranged blue haired private investigator.

KRIS: (she/her), cis. a mourning school teacher. someone august once knew.

TALON: (he/him), cis. a photographer. august is investigating his death.

CAMPBELL: (he/him), cis. a top detective. august doesn't remember him.

ENSEMBLE: MOM, TERRI, SHERIFF SCOTT, Y AUGUST, Y TALON, Y KRIS, Y CAMPBELL, KILLER, BJ, RORY, WAITER,

SETTING

Fall 2021. Devittstown, NJ. A fictional town in Bergen County, NJ.

Fragments of 2011. The same place.

NOTES

TW: Talks and depictions of physical, emotional, and sexual violence and death.

There are spectacular moments in this play, but that doesn't make it a spectacle.

[VO] stands for Voice over. The actor does not speak these lines live.

The world moves around August when they travel, until it doesn't.

Anything colored blue should be only associated with August. IE: their hair, lighting, etc.

It always feels as though someone is watching.

This is not an all white play. Cast queer actors queer characters.

The ensemble's role should be fluid and should act in helping with scene transitions. The main cast can also be part of the ensemble when needed.

/ denotes a break in the text

PROLOGUE

[Young Kris, and Talon at Kris's house. They are young and careless.]

Y KRIS

God I wish I had some champagne!

Y TALON

Your mom doesn't have any?

Y KRIS

There's never any alch here. She can't take them with her meds.

Y TALON

Well we don't need champagne to celebrate because...

Y KRIS & TALON

We got in!

[Laughter and joy and happiness fills.]

[Y August enters through the front door, as if this is their house.]

Y AUGUST

I could hear you guys from the street. What are you guys so excited about?

Y TALON

Oh shut up August!

Y KRIS

Exactly! You know what this is about!

Y AUGUST

??? Do I ???

Y KRIS

Did you not get your letter?

Y TALON

Everyone got their letters already! They must have all sent them out together.

Y KRIS

Yeah I know Campbell, Eli, May, and BJ got there's too, so you should've gotten yours too Auggie.

Y AUGUST

Letter for what though guys?

Y KRIS

From Felician?

Y TALON

For our trio continuation for the next four years and beyond!

Y AUGUST

Oh.

Y TALON
Did you not get yours?

Y KRIS
Did you get rejected? There's no way you could've gotten rejected you're too smart!

Y AUGUST
I never told you guys.

Y TALON
Told us what?

Y KRIS
Yeah August you're starting to scare us...

Y AUGUST
I didn't apply to Felician.

[Y Kris & Talon look at each other. They then immediately start laughing.]

Y KRIS
Oh Auggie you really had us there!

Y TALON
That was a good one.

Y AUGUST
It wasn't a joke.

I'm not going to Felician.

I'm leaving the state for college.

[The laughs slow and stop. The realization that this is not a joke.]

Y KRIS
Oh.

Y TALON
...

Y AUGUST
Yeah.

[They are young, but full of worry.]

[A zoom into Y August until there is only darkness.]

[The sound of complete silence.]

[Then the dribble of a basketball. It's quiet at first, but then it becomes more fast paced. They know how to play basketball.]

[Lights on AUGUST on the basketball court. They know this half court like the back of their hand.]

[There is a joy in the movement of playing. It is an escape and a release, but also joy. We are happy in this moment.]

[The sounds of dribbling and panting and net swishing and backboard hitting create a symphony of sounds that narrate the moment.]

[A cell phone rings. It ruins things. August looks to their phone.]

AUGUST [VO]

My mother called. haven't called her in a few days. My mistake, I've been busy with cases. I try to make sure to call her at least once a week to check in, but it got the best of me. I pick up the phone to answer.

MOM [VO]

Did you forget you have a mother?

AUGUST

You sound your mother now. How many times has she told you that?

MOM [VO]

I know. That's why I said it. Funny right?

AUGUST

You're hilarious mom.

MOM [VO]

Are you busy? I have something important to tell you. It might upset you.

AUGUST

Go on.

AUGUST [VO]

She begins to tell me about Devittstown, NJ. My home town. Whenever she brings up that Bergen County town I feel cold. When you make the choice to leave a place forever, hearing about it always feels awkward. I haven't been to Devittstown in ten years, but hearing about it still gets me every time.

MOM [VO]

Talon has been murdered.

[An awkward silence, then, a great silence.]

AUGUST

Do they know who did it?

MOM [VO]

No.

AUGUST

They'll figure it out. It's a small town. Something will come up eventually.

MOM [VO]
Are you okay?

[The world moves around August, from the basketball court to a small office.]

AUGUST [VO]
Yes. Of course I'm okay. Talon is someone I don't think about often. It's complicated. We used to be close. Almost too close sometimes.

AUGUST
It's been ten years since I've seen him. Mom. I'm okay.

MOM [VO]
There's more.

AUGUST [VO]
And there's so much more. Talon is the second gay man murdered in Devittstown within the last month. For a town that isn't partial to murders, this is out of the ordinary. Along with the two murders, Talon's boyfriend Campbell is missing.

MOM [VO]
The police aren't equipped for this. I've been talking to Terri. She's destroyed over this.

AUGUST
I mean yeah. You would be too if your kid died.

MOM [VO]
She also knows that you're an investigator.

AUGUST [VO]
I have a guttural instinct. I know what she'll ask me.

MOM [VO]
Can you please go back?

AUGUST [VO]
See. Didn't even need to use my powers.

AUGUST
I don't know how much help I would be to a murder case.

AUGUST [VO]
That's a boldface lie.

MOM [VO]
That's a lie.

AUGUST [VO]
Fuck.

MOM [VO]
I know it's uncomfortable.

AUGUST

Very.

[The beginning of a great change within August. It is reality bending.]

MOM [VO]

But you have experience has an investigator. You've worked with the police before.

AUGUST

You know what you're asking me to do.

MOM [VO]

Yes I know. And I'm sorry. But please.

AUGUST [VO]

I want to say no so badly. Every neurotransmitter in my brain wants me to scream no and hang up the phone.

AUGUST

Is it paid?

AUGUST [VO]

But I can't. I'm a sucker for my mom.

MOM [VO]

Yes.

AUGUST

Fine.

MOM [VO]

Thank you. The wake is this afternoon.

AUGUST

Okay.

MOM [VO]

Thank you.

AUGUST

Yeah.

MOM [VO]

I love you.

AUGUST

I love you too mom. Let me go. I have a bus to catch.

MOM [VO]

Okay. Talk to you soon.

[The phone hangs up.]

AUGUST [VO]

Fuck.

[August changes, leaves the office, and goes to the bus. They sit. The bus travels.]

AUGUST [VO]

The bus ride from Philly to Devittstown is just under two hours. I barely had time to pack before leaving.

I want this to be a get in get out situation. The less time I'm in Devittstown, the better for everyone. I'll go to the wake first and see what I can gather from there. See what the police have figured out. Everyone should be there. Its a small town wake and Talon was a town staple.

I'll do what I can. They should just call another local police department. Get a detective from a bigger town over.

[August gets off the bus. They stand in front of the funeral home. They take in this town. They enter.]

AUGUST [VO]

It looks the same.

Let's get this over with.

[August enters the funeral home. It's somber. TERRI and SHERIFF SCOTT are present. Ensemble members interact. The casket is in the back of the funeral home. When the door closes behind August, it makes a noise. Everyone is very aware that August is here.]

TERRI

August. You came?

[She goes towards August. She breaks down crying into them. It's a spectacle that we don't want to see. The ensemble attempts to look away.]

AUGUST [VO]

Not the waterworks.

AUGUST

I'm sorry for your loss Terri.

TERRI

Talon would've been happy to know that you came back for his wake.

AUGUST

I know.

TERRI

Did your mom tell you?

AUGUST

Yes.

TERRI

Bless her.

SHERIFF SCOTT

I thought I told you not to ask that boy to come back here.

AUGUST [VO]

I would correct him on misgendering me, but that's time I don't care to waste.

Talon's dad is the head of the Devittstown Police Department. You would think that he would like that someone is here to help him solve his son's death.

SHERIFF SCOTT

Bold of you to come back here after what you did to my boy.

AUGUST

I was told you needed assistance.

SHERIFF SCOTT

We don't need your assistance. The force has it under control.

AUGUST

...

SHERIFF SCOTT

Oh so you're one of those ACABers? You're better than the police.

TERRI

Scott, enough! We need him.

SHERIFF SCOTT

The hell we do.

TERRI

Watch your mouth. It's our son's wake for God's sake.

[SHERIFF SCOTT and Terri continue to argue. It's a wake so it's not yelling but it is an argument nonetheless.]

AUGUST [VO]

Just as turbulent as ever. I'm still surprised they're still together.

I'm not gonna get very far with talking to them.

[August scans the people in the room. Listening for thoughts. It's quiet, hollow. This is not normal.]

AUGUST [VO]

That's strange to say the least. I should be able to hear/

TERRI

August? Can you hear us?

[August snaps out of their thoughts.]

AUGUST

Yes. Sorry. I got distracted. What were you guys saying?

TERRI

It's a lot, for all of us.

SHERIFF SCOTT

What makes you so qualified to help us?

AUGUST

I'm a private investigator. I have worked with the Philadelphia Police and Pennsylvania State Police to locate and recover missing persons.

I mainly am outsourced by local attorneys for criminal cases and to serve subpoenas and other documents. I do take business and individual cases as well. In total, I have about 5 years of experience, but good experience nonetheless..

TERRI

Great to know how well you did after you ditched this place.

AUGUST

Thank you(?)

SHERIFF SCOTT

You ever try to be a cop?

AUGUST

No.

SHERIFF SCOTT

Then why play detective?

AUGUST

It fell into my lap.

SHERIFF SCOTT

Private investigation "fell into your lap?"

AUGUST

It's a long story.

SHERIFF SCOTT

Make it short then.

AUGUST

I knew a guy. I worked with him. He saw that I was good, kept letting me work with him. Became his right hand. He retired and now I'm here.

SHERIFF SCOTT

If you would've stayed, maybe you could have been my right hand man.

AUGUST [VO]

I hate "ifs."

AUGUST

Maybe so.

TERRI

There would've been nothing for him to investigate here anyways Scott.

[A weird silence.]

AUGUST

I'm going to need half by tomorrow.

SHERIFF SCOTT

Direct are you.

AUGUST

I had to put other cases on hold. I'm assuming my mom let know how much it would be.

TERRI

She did.

AUGUST

I will like to see your case files. Autopsy reports, evidence, notes.

SHERIFF SCOTT

No.

AUGUST

What?

SHERIFF SCOTT

We begin tomorrow.

AUGUST

In all due respect, don't we have somebody to find?

TERRI

...

SHERIFF SCOTT

You're asking me for money and murder evidence at my sons wake.

AUGUST

Oh. Sorry.

TERRI

...

AUGUST

Another thought.

SHERIFF SCOTT

What?

AUGUST

Where's Kris.

SHERIFF SCOTT

Kris is...

TERRI

She hasn't come. I think she needs to process. First her mom and now Talon...Do you want see his body with me?

AUGUST
I don't.

I.

I should talk to Kris.

Where would I find her?

TERRI
Probably the house. That's where I left her.

[August has to leave. They leave.]

ISSUE #1

[AUGUST walks from the wake to Kris's.]

AUGUST [VO]

It's undoubtedly strange that Kris wasn't at the wake for two reasons.

First, Kris is the local girl. She always was. She loves this place. Her family has been here for generations. Her grandmother's grandfather built this house in the early 1900s, and they've been here ever since. They've been to every town fair, Santa village, elementary school choir performance, the whole nine yards. Everyone in town knows her. With knowing everyone comes seeing everyone eventually die. Every time someone died at town, her family was always there to support the community, the people they shared their town with. I always found it strange. To each their own.

Second, Kris and Talon were inseparable. Mom has told me too much about them: their vacations together, their career progressions, what they did at the yearly Groundhog Day celebration. Everything. Even their problems with the other people from home. The Facebook arguments, the subtweets, all of it. I think if I wasn't me, I would love the gossip of the town that I left. What's been going on since I've been gone, how it's worse without me there.

Mom is afraid of what happens to me after she dies. She doesn't want me to be alone. I want to say that I appreciate the gesture, but I know I'll be okay. I rather be alone by myself than alone with others. I've always been better alone anyway. It's lasted me 28 years, I think I can last 28 more.

[At this point, August is outside Kris's house. The house isn't as pretty as it used to be. There is a wooden pig mailbox outside the front gate. It's old, but the newest thing about this house. The pig has " 2011 K" on it. There used to be more writing, but it's been (poorly) painted over. August looks at it. Touches it. This is an object that is familiar.]

AUGUST

I remember when we painted this pig together.

[A blue energy fills the space. It takes over. August is gone, and so is the pig mailbox. We're taken back to a time where the house used to be pretty. A time before Kris was left in the dust, before August's blue hair, before they/them, before they were adults. There is something painfully sentimental about this memory.

There is a shift to something real. The memory begins.]

[Young August and Young Kris come from behind the house, holding supplies for the pig mailbox. Wood, hardware, paint, brushes, etc. Throughout this, they are building, painting, etc. They take breaks in between.]

Y KRIS

Thanks for the help Auggie.

Y AUGUST

It's no problem. It sounded like fun.

Y KRIS

You think physical labor is fun?

Y AUGUST

How much physical labor is included in putting together a pig-shaped mailbox?

Y KRIS

A lot! I had to draw the shape and then trace it onto the wood and then cut the wood/

Y AUGUST

Okay yeah I get it. Well this final part will be fun. It's crafty.

Y KRIS

You like crafts?

Y AUGUST

I don't think so usually. But I don't know. It's a fun change of pace. Doing things with my hands instead of my head feels different.

Y KRIS

Mmmm.

Y AUGUST

What?

Y KRIS

You act like you don't use your hands often.

Y AUGUST

I don't?

Y KRIS

Mmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm.

Y AUGUST

What are you getting at K.

Y KRIS

I'm just saying....you sure know how to use your hands when you're with that boyfriend of yours.

Y AUGUST

You're a disgusting creature.

Y KRIS

So you admit it. You use your hands often.

Y AUGUST

That's different. You can't compare sex to building this mailbox.

Y KRIS

I mean.

Y AUGUST

You mean?

Y KRIS

You're still handling wood right?

[If August is holding wood at this moment, they should let go of it immediately.]

Y AUGUST

Your mom is going to hear you. She wouldn't want to hear you talking like this.

Y KRIS

Please, everyone knows about you and Talon.

Y AUGUST

Everyone?

Y KRIS

He's kinda crazy for you.

Y AUGUST

I know.

Y KRIS

He told BJ that he was going to marry you.

Y AUGUST

He's joking right?

Y KRIS

Mostly. I think part of it is for the joke.

Y AUGUST

Jesus I hope. He's not my boyfriend.

Y KRIS

I knowwww.

Y AUGUST

Have you told anyone that he's not my boyfriend?

Y KRIS

Mmmm Hmmm.

Y AUGUST

You hmmm?!

Y KRIS

Yes Auggie, I've told people.

Y AUGUST

Thanks.

Y KRIS

Does he know that he's not your boyfriend?

Y AUGUST

Of course he does. We talk about it all the time. We're close but not like that you know? And the sex is fun. He's good. It makes me feel?

Y KRIS

You feel?

[The memory gets cold. The blue begins to inch its way back in. Slowly, slowly, slowly, as Y August stays silent. It feels like it will take over until-]

Y AUGUST

Ah nothing. It's weird, stupid even.

Y KRIS

No yeah. I think I get it. When I used to do it with Eli it felt weird. He might have just been bad?

Y AUGUST

[Hushed.]

Are you not concerned about your mom listening?

Y KRIS

She just took her meds, she's gonna be knocked out for a while.

Y AUGUST

Okay good.

Good.

Okay so, why a pig mailbox. Out of every animal? Why a squealer?

Y KRIS

So you know this town right?

Y AUGUST

A little too well.

Y KRIS

So Devittstown wasn't always our town.

Y AUGUST

Well obviously Kris.

Y KRIS

This all used to be pig farms. All of Devittstown and some of the neighboring towns used to make their money raising pigs, and selling them, or cutting them up, or putting them in fattest pig contests. The center of town has that stage because there used to be an annual pig contest and the stage they used to use would be put there. The stage we have now honors this tradition.

Y AUGUST

Wow.

Y KRIS

What?

Y AUGUST

You really love it here.

Y KRIS

Yeah? I mean my mom and my grandma and generations before her grew up here. It's a special place.

Y AUGUST

I mean, it's just Devittstown, NJ.

Y KRIS

It's not just Devittstown.

Y AUGUST

What makes this town different from every other small town? They all have their traditions, their local celebrities, their strange and usually racist histories. It's just average? There's so many places like Devittstown. I don't understand how you like it so much. It's where I'm from and where I grew up, but like that's it.

Y KRIS

Devittstown is special Auggie. You should know that.

Y AUGUST

I should?

Y KRIS

You go to the events! You're part of the community. You should know how special it is.

Y AUGUST

Maybe.

Y KRIS

[Whispered.]

I guess that's why it's so easy for you to just leave us.

Y AUGUST

Speak up.

Y KRIS

It's nothing.

Y AUGUST

Are you seriously still upset Kris.

Y KRIS

How could I not be? You could be going to Felician with me and Talon and the rest of us.

Y AUGUST

I don't want to go to Felician University.

Y KRIS

It's that easy for you to leave all of your friends and family and town and everyone here you know?

Y AUGUST

This isn't about you. You're taking this personally.

Y KRIS

You don't want to be in Devittstown. Me, Talon, the rest of the people here are Devittstown. How can I not take it personally that you want to leave everything that makes you you?

Y AUGUST

I'm not like you Kris. My whole perception of the whole fucking world isn't limited to the limits of this god damn town!

[A terrible enveloping silence. The birds chirp. The world spins.]

Y AUGUST

I'm sorry.

Y KRIS

I don't want you to go.

Y AUGUST

I know.

Y KRIS

Please stay.

Y AUGUST

I can't.

Y KRIS

I don't want you to forget about me.

Y AUGUST

I won't.

Y KRIS

Can you promise me that?

Y AUGUST

Yes.

[They hug. A strong embrace. Y August has their fingers crossed. The blue light takes over. The memory continues. They finish the pig mailbox. They paint "2011 K & A" on it. They triumphantly put it up. Y August leaves. August enters and watches.]

[A flash of memories. They're rapid and overlap and happen at once. Y August and Y Kris the moments before they leave Devittstown for ten years. Y Kris talking on the phone. Y Kris waiting for August. Y Talon coming over. Y Talon leaving. Y Kris coming home drunk. Y Kris waiting for August. Talon and Campbell coming over. The paramedics coming in. Kris's mom being rolled out in a body bag. Kris waiting for August. People in black comforting Kris. The house slowly turning to shit. Kris crying. Talon and Campbell leaving. Kris yelling. Kris waiting for August. Kris looking at the mailbox. Kris covering the A with paint angrily.]

[Kris is waiting for August.]

[Kris has been staring at August.]

[Kris is here with August.]

[August isn't here yet.]

KRIS
Auggie?

[August is here. They stand their ground throughout.]

AUGUST
Hello.

KRIS
Shit. It's really you.

AUGUST
It is.

KRIS
You look different Auggie.

AUGUST
Could say the same about you.

KRIS
Your hair is blue now.

AUGUST
It is.

KRIS
And you look taller.

AUGUST
I am.

KRIS
How have you been?

AUGUST
Good.

[A silence.]

KRIS
Are you going to ask me?

[A silence.]

AUGUST [VO]

I know what she wants to say. I don't have to read her mind to know. I'm not giving her what she wants.

AUGUST

You weren't at the wake.

KRIS

Are you going to ask me?

AUGUST

Why weren't you at the wake?

KRIS

If I died would you have come?

AUGUST [VO]

I don't have time for this.

AUGUST

It's not like you to not be at a town wake Kris.

KRIS

Oh fuck you.

AUGUST [VO]

Here we go.

KRIS

Ten fucking years go by August? You leave for ten fucking years and you can't even do the basic human thing and ask how I've been?

AUGUST [VO]

I shouldn't have come here.

AUGUST

...

How have you been?

KRIS

Fantastic! My best friend left me and never came back and then my mom died and I have no money or time or energy to care for this house and it looks like shit. And now my other best friend is dead and his boyfriend is never where to be found.

AUGUST

I'm sorry.

KRIS

For which part August?

AUGUST

Your mom. She was a good woman.

[This isn't what Kris wanted to hear.]

KRIS

Did you know that she died?

AUGUST

Yes.

KRIS

Who told you? You don't have a Facebook or an Instagram but if you do you've definitely blocked me and every other person from Devittstown!

AUGUST

My mom.

KRIS

Surprised you still even talk to her.

[A silence.]

AUGUST

Can you tell me why you weren't at the wake?

KRIS

Why weren't you at my moms?

AUGUST

...

AUGUST [VO]

I can't tell her I didn't want to go.

KRIS

You've known her since you were 7 years old. Did you not feel compelled to show up? How do you just....Erase that whole part of our life?

AUGUST

Just say what you actually want to say.

KRIS

No, answer me.

AUGUST

You answer me first.

KRIS

I deserve an answer.

AUGUST

Then ask me what you really want to say.

KRIS

Why didn't you come to my mom's funeral?

AUGUST

No. Ask me why I didn't check up on you. Ask me why I left you alone. This isn't about your mom Kris.

KRIS

Don't be cruel.

AUGUST

Don't back down on it now. Come on, this isn't about your mom. You want to know why I didn't come back and didn't check up on you.

KRIS

Yes.

AUGUST

Okay.

KRIS

You lied to me.

AUGUST

I did.

KRIS

And you're not sorry about it?

AUGUST

I'm not.

KRIS

And you don't regret it?

AUGUST

I don't.

KRIS

Wow.

[Kris leans back on something. She can't believe the situation.]

KRIS

I didn't think this is how we would reunite. This isn't the way it's supposed to happen.

AUGUST

Sorry to disappoint.

KRIS

You're supposed to come back to the town unexpectedly.

AUGUST

I did.

KRIS

No. You were supposed to come back and be happy to be back. We would've had a celebration. An August is back party in the center of town. You would come to me and Talon and you would apologize. And be real sorry about it. And ask for forgiveness. And Talon would cry. Then I would cry. And lastly you would cry. And we would all hug and make up. You would tell us stories about Philadelphia and then we would tell you about what's happened in the town. It would be like the last 10 years never happened. And at the end of the party, you would tell us that you would be staying in town. You would be moving back. And then me and Talon and Campbell would all drive down to Philadelphia and get a UHaul to move all of your stuff. You would be able to stay with me, since I'm alone in the house now. You could've shown us your favorite places in the city and then we would have closed that chapter for you and started a new one, with us back in your story again. .

AUGUST

You really thought it all out.

KRIS

I did. And you ruined it.

AUGUST

It never would've worked out that way.

KRIS

I know.

But it would've be so much better that way.

[Kris sits. August takes out a lighter and a small blunt. They sit next to Kris. They light the blunt and take a hit.]

KRIS

You smoke now August?

AUGUST

Doesn't everyone now?

KRIS

You're so different.

AUGUST

You said that earlier.

KRIS

It's like you're a whole new person.

AUGUST

It's because I am. [Another hit.] Aren't you?

[They pass the blunt to Kris. She takes a deep hit.]

KRIS

I like to think I'm still the old Kris. Just updated.

KRIS

Are you happy? In Philadelphia.

AUGUST

[A truth.]

I am.

KRIS

That's good. Do you work?

AUGUST

I'm an Investigator.

KRIS

Is that why you're here?

AUGUST

Yes.

KRIS

Is that why you were interrogating me?

AUGUST

Yes.

KRIS

This another job?

AUGUST

It's more like a favor.

KRIS

For who?

AUGUST

Terri. My mom. The town.

KRIS

And when you're done with whatever you're doing here, you're gone again.

AUGUST

Just like what it was before.

KRIS

I figured.

The police have been cold.

AUGUST

It'll work out.

KRIS

Do you ever use it when you investigate?

AUGUST

It?

KRIS

Your powers.

AUGUST

Yes, but that doesn't help usually. You need proof to close a case. There's only so much you can do with a thought.

KRIS

You sound like Campbell. Mr. Big Cop.

AUGUST

Where did Campbell spring up from? When my mom talks about him/

KRIS

Your mom talks about him?

AUGUST

About him. About you, Talon this whole town. It's like I never left.

KRIS

Must be weird to fully be back then.

AUGUST

Incredibly.

About Campbell/

KRIS

He graduated high school with us.

AUGUST

What?

KRIS

You don't remember him?

AUGUST

Not at all no.

KRIS

Our class was only 90 kids. How don't you remember him?

AUGUST

I don't know.

I don't know.

I just know that him and Talon are a thing. Were, better said.

KRIS

He went to Felician with me and Talon. We got to know him. Talon reaaaalllllyyyy got to know him. Now he's a cop. Second in command.

AUGUST

That quickly?

KRIS

It is a small town. Easy ladder to climb. Nothing ever happens here. Equally small police force.

Figuring out something like this isn't in their capability.

Guess that's why you're here.

AUGUST

You know, for someone who's best friend has been murdered, you're surprisingly calm.

KRIS

Suspicious?

AUGUST

A little bit Kris.

KRIS

Read my mind, tell me what I'm thinking.

[They try. They can't.]

AUGUST

You're the third person in town I haven't been able to read.

KRIS

You don't remember? What you did to me? To my mind.

AUGUST

Your psychic block. I can't come in unless you let me. It should've worn off by now.

KRIS

Well it hasn't/

AUGUST

But this still doesn't explain why I couldn't read/

KRIS

Something weird is happening in town Auggie.

[For a moment we take in the town. All of it. The cars that pass by. The birds chirping. The kids laughing. There is something so normal about it. This is just like every other town to anyone who hasn't lived here before.]

[Kris and August grew up here. Kris lives here. August has left memories here.]

[There is something different about this town. They can feel it.]

AUGUST

When did this start?

KRIS

When BJ first was found. Or maybe right before.

AUGUST

Who else has noticed?

KRIS

I don't know. You know the feeling you get where you feel like you're on the outside looking in? Like you're just watching things operate? Like you can see the mechanisms and how things work?

AUGUST

Is that why you weren't at the wake?

KRIS

Part of it?

AUGUST

Your best friend is having his wake and you're not there. Why Kris?

KRIS

You didn't see it?

AUGUST

See what?

KRIS

The body?

AUGUST

Talon's body? What about it was weird Kris.

KRIS [VO]

It wasn't Talon's body!

[Kris has allowed August to enter.]

AUGUST [VO]

Kris, it was.

KRIS [VO]

Everyone in town is crying over Talon. When I went to help Talon's mom prepare the body, it wasn't him. But it's him to everyone else. I don't know how to explain it. Something's happening. It's either me or its everyone else. Did you not see it?

AUGUST [VO]

...

I didn't.

KRIS

Why not August.

AUGUST

I need to see it.

[August gets their things together. A personal thought.]

AUGUST [VO]

Asking Kris to come along is the last thing I want to do. She will only slow me down. But, Kris is the only person I can “trust” in Devittstown, and she knows this town better than I do. For right now, I need her.

AUGUST

Are you coming?

[A choice for Kris.]

KRIS

Only for Talon.

[The two leave. The sounds of a car going off.]

[Kris parks her car, they are in front of the crematorium, they walk in.]

KRIS

Have you ever been to one of these places before?

AUGUST

Well, not in this context.

KRIS

Where would we even find the body?

AUGUST

I don't know, I don't know shit about crematoriums.

KRIS

Shouldn't there be more people here?

AUGUST

That's what I've been thinking...

[Crying is heard from around the corner.]

AUGUST

Let me go first.

KRIS

No.

AUGUST

What?

[We see that Terri is crying. She is holding a photograph of Talon. The audience should be able to see this photo.]

KRIS

(An act) Terri!

TERRI

Kris?

[TERRI tries to compose herself.]

TERRI

What are you doing here Kris?

KRIS

I heard that you were here.

TERRI

How'd you know what?

KRIS

It's me, I know everything about this town.

TERRI

That's true.

...

I wanted to get one last look at him before he turned into ash.

KRIS

Oh Terri.

[Kris embraces Terri. Kris signals to August to go past them, into the room Talon is in. August goes forward.]

TERRI

You weren't at the wake.

KRIS

You know. It's hard. It's really hard for me.

TERRI

I'm sorry Kris.

KRIS

No, I'm sorry too. Let's go outside, get some fresh air.

TERRI

That would be nice.

KRIS

One last look?

TERRI

If I look one more time I won't be able to stop crying again.

KRIS

Okay, let's go.

[They go. Shift to the room holding Talon's body.]

AUGUST [VO]

This is weird. I shouldn't feel this weird about seeing this body. This is fucking stupid. It's just going to be Talon.

[August moves forward.]

AUGUST [VO]

Just do it. Fuck.

[August goes to the body, and looks at it.]

AUGUST [VO]

She's joking. It's just Talon. It's just Talon.

Wait.

[August places their hands on the body. They try to read it. They're met with a strong decibel ringing. It shocks them and sends them back.]

AUGUST

What the hell? This is just Talon.

Right?

AUGUST [VO]

Is this Talon?

[August goes back to the body. And looks into it. We are transformed into a blue psychic world. August begins to step away from the body. The body begins to sit up. It looks at August.]

AUGUST

You're not Talon.

[The body releases a guttural scream. A scream of pain, then a cold laugh. The lights snap out. We're back into the real world. The body never moved. August is startled, and runs out of the crematorium, and back outside. Kris is there, alone]

KRIS

Did you look at him?

AUGUST

Yes.

KRIS

So you believe me?

AUGUST

Yes.

KRIS

What are we going to do?

AUGUST

What are you doing tomorrow?

KRIS

Nothing. How the fuck am I supposed to go back to teaching kids with all of this shit.

AUGUST

Meet me tomorrow at the police station at ten.

KRIS

Ten?

AUGUST

Yes, and bring your car.

[August begins to walk away.]

KRIS

Where are you going?!

AUGUST

To my motel.

KRIS

I can drive you.

AUGUST.

No, I need to clear my head.

ISSUE #2

[The next day. August is in their motel room. They get out of bed and get ready for the day.]

AUGUST [VO]

I couldn't sleep last night. Being back here is throwing me off. I don't like it. I feel both alone but also watched. I feel eighteen again. I thought I was over this stage of my life. I thought I moved past this. Is this what regressing feels like?

After the events at the crematorium, I know that something bigger than what it seems is happening in Devittstown. I have never been in a position where I had to deal with psychic interference on a case. I've never had to deal with another psychic period.

I'm left with several questions:

One, why is a psychic going through such great lengths to cover their tracks? Psychic's aren't exactly popping up by the dozen. It seems like there is too much work in putting mental blocks on dead bodies. I'm to assume that there might be a third psychic in this investigation. Me, the killer, and a third that the killer knows of.

Two, since that body was not Talon's, where is Talon? Is he with Campbell? Are one of them the third psychic? Or is one of them the second? Are they both the second and third? Could Talon have faked his death and kidnapped Campbell? What is the motive? Could Campbell be missing after killing gay men?

Three, who did that body belong to? Is there a reason why that person was killed. Was it random? Along with that, how is someone powerful enough to convince an entire town that this body is somebody that it isn't. I mean, it's ingenious. You're convinced that that's Talon until you tell yourself that it's not, but how much strength is needed to create a facade that elaborate?

Four, how much worse is this going to get?

There is much to think about.

[At this point, August is dressed and ready to head out to the police station. They carry a bag with them. They enter the station. There is a photograph of Sheriff Scott on the wall. A photograph of Campbell as well. Detective Campbell to be exact. August stares at the photo. They swear they have never seen this person before, so how did they go to high school with him? August is transfixed.]

SHERIFF SCOTT

August! Come on, we don't have all day.

AUGUST

Sorry.

[August follows Sheriff Scott to his office.]

SHERIFF SCOTT

You act like you've never seen Campbell before.

AUGUST

I don't remember him.

SHERIFF SCOTT

What? How do you not remember Campbell! He was a top athlete in your graduation year. You graduated him for Christ's sake!

AUGUST

Yeah, no still.

SHERIFF SCOTT

Talon said you guys knew him.

AUGUST

How are you doing?

SHERIFF SCOTT

It's not everyday you cremate your only son.

AUGUST

...

SHERIFF SCOTT

There's work to do.

[Sheriff Scott produces multiple evidence boxes.]

SHERIFF SCOTT

Here is evidence from BJ's case.

AUGUST

And Talon's.

SHERIFF SCOTT

We're still collecting evidence.

AUGUST [VO]

Still?

AUGUST

When will it be ready?

SHERIFF SCOTT

Soon.

AUGUST

Okay well, I'll see where BJ takes me.

SHERIFF SCOTT

I was surprised when BJ came out. Who would have thought?

AUGUST

Would have thought?

SHERIFF SCOTT

Well you know. When he was growing up he was the real sports type. Captain of the Devittstown wrestling team, state athlete. He doesn't fit the type.

AUGUST

Depends on what your definition of "type" is.

SHERIFF SCOTT

BJ was a man's man. You and Talon, it made sense that you two were gay. You had certain quirks.

AUGUST

Like?

SHERIFF SCOTT

Well for one you guys were always more friendly with the girls. You weren't afraid to be one of them. And Talon was always so sensitive.

AUGUST

Mmmm.

SHERIFF SCOTT

And there's nothing wrong with that. You two were just. Different.

AUGUST [VO]

It sounds like he's trying to convince himself. So nothing has changed around here.

AUGUST

Right, right. And Campbell.

SHERIFF SCOTT

What about him?

AUGUST

Is his faggotry surprising?

SHERIFF SCOTT

I don't know. It just makes sense. In a different way from you and Talon though.

AUGUST [VO]

What's with Scott's hard on for Campbell?

SHERIFF SCOTT

You know, he's just special. There's something about him.

AUGUST

He must be special if he worked his way up to detective so quickly.

SHERIFF SCOTT

Natural talent for the job!

AUGUST

Right

SHERIFF SCOTT

And him dating my son? Talon couldn't have done better.

AUGUST

Sure. What evidence do we have on his case?

SHERIFF SCOTT

Take a look.

[Sheriff Scott hands August a pair of latex gloves. August puts them on and opens the box. They take out:]

[Bloody clothes.]

SHERIFF SCOTT

There are several puncture wounds on the sides and belly button area.

[A wallet.]

SHERIFF SCOTT

All of the money and cards were left. Nothing appears to be stolen.

[A cellphone.]

SHERIFF SCOTT

We can't open it.

AUGUST

You don't have the password?

SHERIFF SCOTT

Nope.

AUGUST

You don't have...people who can hack into it?

SHERIFF SCOTT

It's a small town.

AUGUST

Yeah. Right.

[August takes out a laptop and a chord from their bag. They connect the phone to it. August opens the laptop and turns it on.]

SHERIFF SCOTT

What are you doing?

AUGUST

Opening the phone.

[They do some clicks on the computer.]

AUGUST

The phone's dead. I can't do anything until it has power.

SHERIFF SCOTT

Well you better go to the back room. There's a table set up for you. I have other work to take care of.

AUGUST

Great. I'll be back there.

[August takes the box to the back room. It's just a storage closet with a shitty table.]

AUGUST [VO]

Great.

[They sit down and open BJ's case file. They read. ?As they read, the case file is visualized?]

AUGUST

At 1:15 am on Monday August 30th, 2021, police dispatch received a call about a body in Baseben Park. When the responding office arrived on the scene, there was

AUGUST [CONTD]

no caller. The victim was identified to be BJ Somerson. Mr. Somerson was pronounced dead at the scene.

Mr. Somerson had multiple stab wounds on his sides, and lower stomach region. His autopsy revealed that the loss of blood and internal bleeding from the wounds are the cause of his death. The autopsy also indicates no signs of a struggle.

AUGUST [VO]

No signs of a struggle? The man was being murdered. How does that make sense? Who doesn't struggle when being stabbed to death.

[The phone makes a sound. It turns on.]

AUGUST

To be answered later. Time to open this shit up.

[August begins typing on the computer.]

AUGUST

Got it, Let's see what's hiding in here. What were his last notifications? Instagram. Gmail. Gmail. Instagram again. Pinterest. You get notifications for that? Here we go.

Grindr.

Last conversation.

KILLER

Yo.

BJ

Hey. Looking?

KILLER

Yeah. Can you host?

BJ

No. You?

KILLER

Yes. Are you into public play?

BJ

Yeah. It has been a while though. Meet at Baseben?

KILLER

Sounds good.

BJ
Face?

KILLER
No. DL. You'll see in person.

BJ
Okay T or B?

KILLER
Vers.

BJ
Can you top?

KILLER
Sure. Pics?

BJ
Ass pic.

KILLER
Hot.
Dick pic.

BJ
Can you meet in 15?

KILLER
Yeah. Where?

BJ
By bushes near the park service building?

KILLER
Okay. Will meet you there.

BJ
Bet.

AUGUST
Knowing this, I'm to assume that BJ was there before the killer.

[These scenarios play out as August narrates. They reset when needed. BJ gets bloodier and bloodier as they play out.]

There are a few scenarios that could have played out.

AUGUST [CONTD]

BJ is waiting by the bushes near the park service building. The killer approaches BJ from behind. BJ doesn't know what hit him. The killer stands behind him, wraps his arms around him and stabs him in the lower stomach, then to the sides. The initial stabs to the stomach leave BJ vulnerable to the next stabs. This would require it to have been completely silent and BJ can't hear for shit.

Or.

BJ waits the same way, but the killer approaches BJ from head on. The begin to get intimate. During this, the killer sneaks a knife and stabs BJ on the sides first. He holds himself in pain, and then is stabbed in the stomach. This is possible but sounds more so like a fan fiction more than anything.

Okay or.

BJ waits the same way. If I take the psychic element of this into consideration, let's say BJ is standing there. The killer comes up to him, takes control of him mentally. BJ is has no control over his mind or body. He opens up his body to receive his stabbings. The Killer does what he needs to do. He walks away, no fuss.

[End of scenario reenactments. BJ stays on the ground, bloody and dead.]

Then again, what if the killer was there first? We still have to ask ourselves, who called in BJ's body? Did the killer, or another person?

This is the best place to start. I need to track this Grindr profile.

[August gets up from the chair and takes the phone. They leave the police station.
Kris is outside.]

AUGUST

Great, you're here.

KRIS

You good?

AUGUST

Yeah, get in your car. We got work to do

[They go into the car.]

[...]

[In the car. Kris is driving. They've been driving for a while]

KRIS

You really think that happened to BJ?

AUGUST

Something like that.

KRIS

Why didn't you tell Sheriff Scott? He is/

AUGUST

/I would then have to explain grindr/

KRIS

/That's tru/e.

AUGUST

/And how this might be connected to the second mur/der.

KRIS

Right, b/ut.

AUGUST

/And how the person they cremated isn't the/ir son.

KRIS

/I see the p/oint.

AUGUST

And give them the false hope that their son might be out there, but could also just be dead.

KRIS

...

AUGUST

What.

KRIS

You didn't have to say it like that.

AUGUST.

Like how?

KRIS

When you talk about this you're cold.

AUGUST

It's work.

KRIS

People died.

AUGUST

They did, yeah. But it's my job to figure it out.

KRIS

You don't feel? Emotional about it though? Like you are investigating people who are gone forever. They can never come back. Don't you think about.

AUGUST

Do you feel emotional after grading a test?

KRIS

Not really. I mean when they don't do well it's disappointing.

AUGUST

How many times have you felt exhausted afterwards?

KRIS

My hands get cramped up.

AUGUST

No, emotionally.

KRIS

There is a weight there I suppose.

AUGUST

And how many students have you taught.

KRIS

I've been teaching for maybe 4 years or so now so I guess over 70.

AUGUST

Imagine grading 70 tests and how tired you would be afterwards. You sat there and taught them for hours on the subject and how they could succeed, but they don't. I think I would be exhausted. I would feel as though I'm not working hard enough for the students. I would become obsessed with trying harder until I'm dragged through the mud and unable to work.

I work several cases a week. Everything from petty relationship investigations to looking into cases of serial rape. If I were to put my emotions into each one of these cases, I would be dead by now. There needs to be a separation between yourself and the work. It keeps you sane. It keeps you from interfering from the work as well.

KRIS

Thanks for the metaphor. Reminds me how dead end I am.

AUGUST

You're not/

KRIS

/I get the salary of a public school teacher, my mom is dead, and I'm 28 going 30 in two years and single.

AUGUST

When you say it that way.

KRIS

Maybe that's why you left. You knew what you would turn into.

AUGUST

You really changed.

KRIS

No, just updated.

AUGUST

Old Kris wouldn't be degrading herself. Like it's her job.

KRIS

...

AUGUST

...

KRIS

So this grindr profile-

AUGUST

Do you know if Campbell or Talon use grindr?

KRIS

How could they?! They're together.

AUGUST

I mean a lot of people in relationships use grindr to spice things up.

KRIS

Talon isn't spicy.

AUGUST

So you think Campbell might have used it?

KRIS

You're interrogating me. Again.

AUGUST

Yes, for the case.

KRIS

I don't think Campbell would use grindr.

AUGUST

Why?

KRIS

Well he's very. Territorial.

AUGUST

Oh no.

KRIS

It's like Talon is this thing he imprinted on. Almost as if he owns Talon.

AUGUST

Like in Twilight? And to everyone or just men?

KRIS

You think it's fun third wheeling all the time?

AUGUST

So everyone.

KRIS

It's fucking annoying.

AUGUST

That bad?

KRIS

When you and Talon were... "together," I guess, it wasn't like you two and then me on the side. It was always us three. We were equal.

Now. Talon can hardly come over without Campbell tagging along. Can't go to the Bath and Body Works semi annual sale without him driving us the whole way there and trying to rush us out of the store. We could try to book a couples massage and Campbell would wiggle his way into it. I think it's a combination of a few things. Talon is Campbell's first...everything. First kiss, first time, first love. You would want to be protective of that, to make sure you're stable, to protect the memory of what was, you know.

KRIS [CONTD]

I also think it's because Campbell is a cop. He wants to watch out for crime.

AUGUST

Watch out for crime. In Devittstown. That's a good one.

KRIS

You know how cops are.

AUGUST

ACAB.

KRIS

You work for them.

AUGUST

Doesn't mean I like them.

...

KRIS

Are you on grindr?

AUGUST

Absolutely not.

KRIS

Oh.

AUGUST

The very situation we're in.

KRIS

Murder?

AUGUST

Yeah.

KRIS

You have psychic powers.

AUGUST

Yes I do.

KRIS

You could stop them. Take over their heads or control their bodies.

AUGUST

I can't if I'm drugged. Have you heard of Stephen Port?

KRIS

No.

AUGUST

British serial killer and rapist, sentenced to life in prison in 2016. Found his young male victims on grindr and gay dating apps. Drugged and raped them, and murdered three of them. Convicted of three counts of murder, six counts of rape, ten accounts of administering a substance with intent, and four sexual assaults. He has eleven known victims. He would also plant suicide notes at scenes to make it seem like his victims did everything to themselves.

[KRIS stops the car, abruptly.]

KRIS

Is that what's happening here?

AUGUST

Couldn't tell you, not enough information.

KRIS

But do you think?

AUGUST

Is it similar? Yes. I can objectively see why things look similar, but Stephen Port wasn't, for what we know, wasn't a psychic. Not everything that looks connected is connected.

KRIS

...

AUGUST

Don't let your mind run wild. Theories are only theories because they can't be proven.

KRIS

Okay. Okay.

[Kris begins driving again.]

KRIS

How far away is the profile now?

AUGUST

Only a thousand feet so it should be here somewhere. Keep driving.

KRIS

You shouldn't be able to know how faraway someone is from you. That's kinda gross. All of this tracking and spying and watching in. There's no privacy.

AUGUST

But then how are the gays supposed to know how far their trade is?

KRIS

Communication?

AUGUST

Not it 2021.

Twenty feet. That diner.

KRIS

This phone is at a diner?

AUGUST

I guess.

KRIS

Should I come in?

AUGUST

Well I'm eating.

[They get out of the car and enter the diner. It's not very full. They go to the counter.]

WAITER

Menu?

AUGUST

Yes please.

[The waiter gives them menus.]

KRIS

We have a phone to find.

AUGUST

Yes.

KRIS

So ask for it?

AUGUST

I'm hungry.

KRIS

You're working a case August.

AUGUST

If I'm hungry I can't use my abilities and I can't use my abilities I'm useless. Pick your order. Watch this.

[The waiter comes back.]

WAITER

Ready?

AUGUST

[A dramatic code switch.]

Hi yeah! So I'm going to have French onion soup with a side of fries. How big are your portions of your fries?

WAITER

Kinda small if I'm being honest.

AUGUST

Wow, so the exact opposite of you.

WAITER

Oh yeah. You might want two orders of fries if you want something bigger.

AUGUST

Most definitely!

WAITER

And for your friend?

KRIS

Uh a water would be fine.

WAITER

[To Kris] Heard.

[To August] I'll make sure that comes out asap.

[The waiter goes to the kitchen. August reverts back.]

KRIS

What the absolute fuck was that.

AUGUST

You attract more flies with honey than vinegar.

KRIS

I don't understand you.

AUGUST

You don't have to.

KRIS

That isn't the real you.

AUGUST

Obviously.

KRIS

Is that what you used to do?

AUGUST

Do what?

KRIS

Play pretend?

AUGUST

Hmp.

KRIS

So yes.

AUGUST

Not entirely. Not the whole time I think.

KRIS

So when did it start.

AUGUST

I don't know. Maybe when I was sixteen or seventeen. Our junior year for sure. I just sort of realized that. This isn't for me anymore.

KRIS

A whole town wasn't for you?

AUGUST

Are we going to fight? Or are you going to listen.

KRIS

I'll drop it.

AUGUST
Thank you.

[The waiter comes back with the food.]

AUGUST
And thank youuu handsome.

WAITER
Of course.

[They eat...they finish.]

WAITER
Anything else?

AUGUST
Yeah. This might be a little blunt but, do you happen to have a phone that was lost here?

WAITER
Well there is one. Can you prove that it's yours?

AUGUST
Well I can't, but how about I give you my number for it?

WAITER
Well...Okay.

AUGUST
Thanks cutie.

[The waiter goes to get the phone.]

KRIS
Couldn't you just have? Made him do it?

AUGUST
I have morals. All because I can make him do it doesn't mean I should.

[The waiter comes back with the phone, gives it to August.]

AUGUST
You got a paper and pen?

WAITER
Here ya go.

[August writes a number on a piece of paper. Puts it in the waiter's apron.]

AUGUST

I'll see you soon.

WAITER

:)

[The waiter leaves.]

KRIS

Did you actually?

AUGUST

Absolutely not. I gave him the Hogwarts Hotline.

[August leaves money on the table. August and Kris return to the car.]

KRIS

Can you open it?

AUGUST

Weird. No passcode. Only app here is grindr.

KRIS

A burner phone?

AUGUST

Definitely.

KRIS

So?

AUGUST

It's the phone. Someone sent this phone an address. We need to go now.

[Kris hits the gas pedal. They're off.]

ISSUE #3

[Driving. Moments before the arrive at the location.]

AUGUST [VO]

I wonder if I'm anywhere closer to figuring out this case. Right now I can surmise that this is a serial killer working off of grindr. All because I have a phone that the killer used, doesn't mean that the killer isn't using multiple. I bet this shit phone was fifteen dollars at Walmart. The killer could buy more.

If I can locate Talon and Campbell's phones, I might be able to incriminate or vindicate them. If one of them has the app on their phone but the other doesn't that one is probably guilty of something. Cheating at the bare minimum, killing at the max.

There is still no real motive yet. Crimes of passion? Maybe one is cheating on the other and the other is taking revenge? Maybe the killer is a third party, grew jealous of their relationship, and then decided to take matters into their own hands. But there is no real reason as to why there was a psychic block on that body. There's no reason why everyone was manipulated into believing that body was Talon's. So many possible roads but no end in sight.

And then of course, where are they? If I'm being fully honest with myself, I don't believe that I'm going to find Campbell or Talon alive. This feels like a game, but for who. I wonder if this is what it feels like to be in Criminal Minds.

What are we going to find at this location? Will it be a wear house? Another public location? Are all of these locations tied to something? What if/

KRIS

We're here.

AUGUST

Where are we?

KRIS

Right outside of Jersey. Very bottom of New York State.

AUGUST

Gross.

[August and Kris exit the car. It's an apartment. They go outside the door.]

KRIS

Should we knock?

[She goes to touch the door.]

AUGUST

Don't touch it. Don't touch anything. I'm going to open it.

[August walks up to the door and looks at the knob. It begins to jitter and shake.]

KRIS

What are yo/u

AUGUST

/Shut up. I need to/

[The door now twists and opens.]

AUGUST

Concentrate.

Come on.

[They enter the apartment. The door closes.]

KRIS

We can't see anything. That smell. It's familiar.

AUGUST

I'm trying to find a light.

KRIS

I thought you said not to touch anything.

AUGUST

I'm trying to feel out the space telekinetically for a switch..

KRIS

I thought you could only do like. Mind stuff?

AUGUST

Isn't this mind stuff?

KRIS

I thought you could only read minds. Be in people's heads.

AUGUST

I can look at the memories associated with an object. I can read minds and manipulate them too. When I was younger I could only do these more mental things, but as I got older, I learnt I can do physical things. I'm not very good at them. It requires a lot more focus. I need to be specific when moving an object,

AUGUST (CONTD)

and be consistent with the way I move it. It's not like I'm growing my hands out and touching these things. I still can't fully explain it.

Right now I'm trying to feel the space. I can feel a sofa in the middle of the room. There is another door across from me. And I can now feel some art on the wall. And as I travel further I'm looking for a- Got it. Be ready for me to turn on the light.

Three. Two. One.

[The light turns on. It's a massacre. Light colored furniture and accessories caked with dry blood. It's been here for days. It smells too. This is an untouched crime scene.]

KRIS

Oh my god August.

AUGUST

Interesting.

[Kris stares out into the mess of blood. Her layers begin to peel.]

AUGUST [VO]

Dried blood. Based on the color and the smell, I can say this blood has been here for at least between one to two weeks. If I had a black light, I might be able to see what other fluids might be here. Urine, semen, etc.

Why kill someone and not try to clean the crime scene? A lazy killer, or an intentional one? If the latter, what's the purpose for not cleaning? A calling card?

AUGUST

Do you see anything I'm not seeing?

KRIS

There is blood all over the place.

AUGUST

Yes I see, but do you see anything else? A weapon a?

KRIS

And it smells. The blood smells. It smells/ familiar.

AUGUST

/Yes Kris, welcome to your first crime scene. Blood smells. There is work to be done.

KRIS

Has blood ever smelt familiar to you?

AUGUST

No(?)

KRIS

There! In front of the wall.

[August telekinetically feels underneath the furniture piece that Kris is pointing to.]

AUGUST

Oh hello.

[A knife rushes from underneath the furniture piece. It is caked with dry blood.]

AUGUST

Well now we know what they did it with.

KRIS

It's covered in it.

AUGUST

I wonder what it knows.

[August takes out a glove from their bag and puts it on. They pick up the knife.]

KRIS

What happened to don't touch anything?

AUGUST

That was before I knew this a crime scene. And I need to touch it to use it.

KRIS

Use it?

AUGUST

To see. Would you like to see too?

KRIS

[Instantly.]

Yes. Show me.

AUGUST

Just be ready to see something you might not like.

[August concentrates on the knife. Blue energy begins to emit the space. RORY comes out of the bedroom. August and Kris watch.]

KRIS [VO]

Does he look like?

AUGUST [VO]

Similar to Talon, but not exact? Yes.

[There is a doorbell ring. Rory goes to it.]

AUGUST [VO]

Here we go.

[Rory goes to the door but stops. The doorbell rings. And rings. And rings and rings and rings. The light changes. It isn't stable.]

AUGUST [VO]

The memory isn't/

[The memory becomes loud. Rory opens the door. Killer walks in. Lights flicker. We see vignettes of what happens. Kissing against the door. Rubbing on the sofa. Shirts coming off. Rory going to the kitchen. Rory returning with a knife. Rory stabbing himself, smiling. Rory dead. Killer putting the knife under the furniture piece. Killer going into the bedroom, Killer returning. Killer picking up Rory, opens the front door with his mind. The door closing. The memory ends.]

[August is unfazed. Kris is numb. There is a difference.]

AUGUST

The person who was murdered here definitely is the person who was used as Talon's decoy. All of the evidence points to it. The manipulated memory, the ability to open the door, Rory stabbing himself. No one just stabs themselves for kink. And we know that this psychic also has a telekinetic reach which isn't good. This person is gearing up to be a really powerful psychic. And then. The bedroom-

[August goes to the bedroom.]

[Kris walks around the apartment. She takes in every moment and inch of the room, as if skipping back from the end of a hopscotch court.]

[August reenters the living room.]

AUGUST

Kris look what I/

[August watches Kris continue to retrace steps.]

AUGUST

We should go. Wait for me in the car.

[She nods August opens the door telekinetically. She exits.]

[This next section is done with investigative integrity. August takes out an evidence bag. They put the knife in it. They swab up some of the dry blood. August then puts what they found in the bedroom in their pocket. Personal safe keeping.]

[August leaves the apartment. They walk. August slowly fades away.]

AUGUST [VO]

I knew Kris wasn't going to be able to handle this mess. Hopefully she's scared off for good now. She saved me money on renting a car but besides that she was pretty useless.

I do feel bad that she had to see that. It wasn't pleasant. If I'm being honest, it was hard for me to see too. I hide it well. Don't let people know what you're feeling. It gives them a power over you.

People handle trauma in different ways. Some people have to continue to revisit the past in order to make sense of it. I think she was doing something like that. She was transfixed, as she was trying to make sense of it all. It was overwhelming. The death of her mother, then the false death of Talon, and now seeing someone get killed. I wish I didn't ask he rip she wanted to see.

Regardless, I have never see anything like that. When a murder kills their victim, at least the victim can try to fight back. Can at least have the hope in their mind that they can survive what's going to happen to them. Of course, they wouldn't, but the thought that they could survive is reassuring.

I found Rory's drivers license in his room. Rory Forrest. Fun name. Rory was age 25 at the time of his death. There was a work ID, he worked at an office for some business. Pencil pusher type.

I wonder what Rory though right before he was taken over. Was he excited to have sex with his killer? Did he know that he was taken over? Like feel it? What did he think before he stabbed himself? Did he want to frown? Did he feel the pain of it? In the seconds right before he died, did he regain his mind and think, "It's all going to be okay?"

That will keep me up at night.

But what I want to know is: why was there a picture of me in Rory's room?

[A memory. We are in Y Talon's room. There is a bed and clothes on the floor. Y Talon and Y August emerge from the covers. Y August lays on their back.]

Y TALON

Wow.

Y AUGUST

Yeah.

Y TALON

You only get better.

Y AUGUST

So I've heard.

Y TALON

What?

Y AUGUST

Hm?

Y TALON

From who?

Y AUGUST

People.

Y TALON

What people?

Y AUGUST

Gay people.

Y TALON

Other gay people are telling you that you're getting better at sex?

Y AUGUST

Of course.

Y TALON

And why are they telling you that?

Y AUGUST

Because I'm getting better at sex Talon.

Y TALON

Fuck you August.

[Y Talon looks towards the opposite side of the bed.]

Y AUGUST

I'm joking.
Honestly.
I'm kidding.
I'm not having sex with other people.

Y TALON

Sure.

Y AUGUST

Talon I'm kidding, joking, honest.

Y TALON

August it isn't funny. You shouldn't be fucking other boys.

Y AUGUST

What about girls?

[Y Talon puts the cover over himself, defiantly.]

Y AUGUST

You're so sensitive!

Y TALON

You sound like my dad!

Y AUGUST

Maybe he has a point.

Y TALON

Go home.

Y AUGUST

Okay.

[Y August begins to get out of bed, wearing underwear. They begin to get dressed.]

Y TALON

You're not supposed to go moron!

Y AUGUST

You just told me to go home.

Y TALON

But you're not supposed to go.

Y AUGUST

Then why tell me to go?

Y TALON

No you're supposed to be like, "No Talon! I can't leave you! How could I leave you! I'm sorry for making you upset!"

Y AUGUST

Oh and you would go, "No August! It's my fault for taking a silly joke personally! I knew you were joking and shouldn't have taken you so seriously!"

Y TALON

Are you really going?

Y AUGUST

If I'm here when your dad gets here he's gonna be pissed.

Y TALON

Mom won't care.

Y AUGUST

"Oh hey Terri! Yeah I just rammed your son! See you tomorrow!"

Y TALON

Touché...

Y AUGUST

Mmm hmm.

Y TALON

But uh, you're not actually having sex with other people, right?

Y AUGUST

Who would I be having sex with? Who else here is gay?

Y TALON

That guy Campbell.

Y AUGUST

Who?

Y TALON

He's that guy on one of the teams.

Y AUGUST

Beats me. I couldn't point him out in a crowd.

Y TALON

Well anyway. You know it would hurt me if you did this with someone else, right?

Y AUGUST

It would hurt you if I fucked other people?

Y TALON

That's what I said.

Y AUGUST

Talon we aren't dating.

Y TALON

I know that.

Y AUGUST

Then lay off.

Y TALON

It wouldn't be fair of you to fuck other people when you're fucking me.

Y AUGUST

You have no right over my body.

Y TALON

It's only common courtesy!

Y AUGUST

Common courtesy is saying please and thank you, not regulating my sex life to find your standards.

Y TALON

Well what if you get an STD from someone else! And then you give it to me. Personally I wouldn't have sex with people other than you, because I wouldn't want to risk giving you an STD.

Y AUGUST

I understand the validity of that statement.

Y TALON

So you agr/ee.

Y AUGUST

/No.

Y TALON

But you understand my issue.

Y AUGUST

I understand but don't agree.

Y TALON

Enlighten me.

Y AUGUST

I have not slept with anyone besides you. I wasn't planning on it either. Fucking anything that with a penis that walks isn't on my to-do list currently. Although I

Y AUGUST (CONTD.)

have no intention of having sex with anyone else, I have the freedom to do so if I wanted to. What you are trying to do, is stop me from doing as I please, before even doing it, only to make you happy. That's not okay with me. No one has the right to make choices for me.

Y TALON

That's kind of selfish.

Y AUGUST

Then call me selfish.

Y TALON

Are you mad?

Y AUGUST

Yes I'm mad!

Y TALON

Please don't be mad.

Y AUGUST

You made me mad.

Y TALON

I didn't mean to!

Y AUGUST

Whatever Talon.

Y TALON

I'm sorry.

Y AUGUST

Are you?

Y TALON

Yes. Okay?

Y AUGUST

I still need to go.

Y TALON

Stay for a little longer?

Y AUGUST

For what.

Y TALON

Look at these photos I took.

[Y Talon gets out of the bed, wearing underwear. He goes to a bookshelf and takes out a photo album and brings a camera. He goes back to the bed, and motions to Y August to come to the bed. Y August complies.]

Y TALON

I just developed them the other day. I feel like I've basically lived in the dark room.

Y AUGUST

These are really good.

Y TALON

Thank you.

Y AUGUST

You really talented Talon.

Y TALON

...

Thank you.

Y AUGUST

I'm not saying that to say it. You could really do something big with photography.

Y TALON

I don't know if that's true.

Y AUGUST

Sure it is. These pictures could get you into a really great school for photo.

Y TALON

I'm still set on Felician.

Y AUGUST

All of you guys and this fucking college.

Y TALON

What's wrong with a local university?

Y AUGUST

Nothing you're just. Lowering the bar for yourself. There's nothing wrong with going there, but there is a whole world out there and you're choosing the option that keeps you in this bubble. Don't you want to pop it?

Y TALON

I don't know.

Y AUGUST

[A sigh.]

Y TALON

This place isn't the best and there are things out there but this for right now is what I love. Maybe one day I'll see the world and photograph it but I don't know. I feel like my life is in Devittstown.

Y AUGUST

But it could be more.

Y TALON

It could, if I wanted it.

[A shared silence.]

Y TALON

What I want to do, right now, is to go to Felician University. Get a degree in photography and minor in journalism. Join the town's newspaper and report on the things happening in Devittstown. Take photos of the memories people had in this town and document them in writing. Update the community on the happenings. Who died, who's having a birthday, when the next town celebration is. I would like to have some hand in the preservation of our home.

Y AUGUST

It's noble.

Y TALON

I haven't told anyone about that.

Y AUGUST

Why not?

Y TALON

It feels silly.

Y AUGUST

It's not.

Y TALON

No like. It feels silly to explain it to others because I think that's what they expect of me. That I'm going to get this photography degree to photograph the town be the official town photographer. It feels silly to explain something that everyone already knows is what I'm supposed to do.

Y AUGUST

You're not supposed to do anything.

Y TALON

You're telling that to the son of the town police department.

Y AUGUST

Very true.

...

I should get going.

[Y August begins to get up. Y Talon snaps a picture of him. There's a flash.]

Y AUGUST

Ugh why.

Y TALON

I like to capture beautiful things in photos.

Y AUGUST

Shut up.

[Y August goes to the door.]

Y TALON

Hey?

Y AUGUST

What?

Y TALON

Kiss me?

[Y August rolls their eyes. They go to Y Talon and kisses him. Y August walks out of the door.]

[We are back to the present day. August is in their motel room. They're restless. This is an energy from August we haven't seen before. Its...nervousness? They go to their phone. They dial. Ringing. Ringing. Ringing]

AUGUST

Hey mom.

I'm not great.

I miss you.

ISSUE #4

[August walks into the police station. They are wearing sunglasses.]

SHERIFF SCOTT

Where the hell have you been?

AUGUST

Doing my job.

SHERIFF SCOTT

Aren't you supposed to report to your employer when doing your "job?"

AUGUST

I'm a private investigator. I report when I have something to share.

SHERIFF SCOTT

You got a real attitude on yourself there.

AUGUST

You learn to get used to it.

SHERIFF SCOTT

Do you also care to explain why you took evidence without letting anyone know.

AUGUST

I said I would work on the phone. I had to work on the phone outside.

SHERIFF SCOTT

Are you drunk?

AUGUST

It's 9:30 in the morning.

SHERIFF SCOTT

It's five o'clock somewhere.

AUGUST

Well I'm not drunk. I don't drink this early. I'm hungover.

SHERIFF SCOTT

The town isn't paying you to get drunk.

AUGUST

I know. The town is paying me to figure out a murder.

SHERIFF SCOTT

Exactly.

AUGUST

I have a list of people to interrogate in regards to this case.

SHERIFF SCOTT

Good. Go interrogate.

AUGUST

Okay. I'll start right now.

SHERIFF SCOTT

What?

AUGUST

How many hours do you work in a day Sheriff Scott?

SHERIFF SCOTT

Is this supposed to be a joke?

AUGUST

You're the victim's father, it's routine. Should I restate the question?

SHERIFF SCOTT

I always wear the badge.

AUGUST

So that's to say you're always working?

SHERIFF SCOTT

Yes.

AUGUST

Today is September 18th, 2021. So, you've had BJ's phone since the night of his death, and did nothing about it. Did not open into it, did not find the information needed to further the investigation/

SHERIFF SCOTT

/Now hol/d on.

AUGUST

Talon was found on September 10, 2021. When I asked for his evidence, you said that it wasn't ready yet. You have had a week to document the crime scene and evidence, but it's still not over, especially when you're hiring a private investigator from out of state, who would need this evidence to complete their investigation. Why is that?

SHERIFF SCOTT

This is a small po/lice.

AUGUST

Bullshit. It's 2021. You call a bigger town or local city to outsource. You don't hire a private investigator who ditched this town a decade ago to solve local murders.

SHERIFF SCOTT

I would watch your mouth if I was you.

AUGUST

And I would watch your next move.

[August takes out the photo of them. Places it in front of Sheriff Scott.]

AUGUST

Do you know what this is a photo of?

[Sheriff Scott looks at the photo. Then at August.]

SHERIFF SCOTT

Is this you?

AUGUST

From ten years ago.

SHERIFF SCOTT

...

AUGUST

Do you know who took this photo?

SHERIFF SCOTT

...

AUGUST

Talon.

SHERIFF SCOTT

...

AUGUST

What I would love to know is, why is there a photo of me in [VO]lived in this case? What do I have to do with any of what's happening here in this town? Who wants to involve me in this murder spree?

SHERIFF SCOTT (Killer)

...

...

SHERIFF SCOTT (Killer)

Welcome to the party, August!

[The lights go out. Orange energy emits. Flickers of light come in and out. Panic. Things fly from across the room. Psychic and telekinetic warfare. It's chaos for a moment. Then it's not.]

AUGUST

Who are you?

SHERIFF SCOTT (Killer)

The one you're looking for.

AUGUST

Don't you now it's rude to take over people's bodies without consent?

SHERIFF SCOTT (Killer)

Then how would I know how you're advancing in our game?

AUGUST

You're hurting him.

SHERIFF SCOTT (Killer)

No I'm not! See.

SHERIFF SCOTT

August! What's happening! Something is in me! It feels- It feels- It feels-

[Sheriff Scott begins to bang his head on his desk. Then:]

SHERIFF SCOTT (Killer)

He was gonna say it feels good.

AUGUST

Fuck you.

SHERIFF SCOTT (Killer)

Well that's not very nice of you.

AUGUST

Where do you have them?

SHERIFF SCOTT (Killer)

Who?

AUGUST

You know who.

SHERIFF SCOTT (Killer)

Say their names.

AUGUST

Talon. And Campbell

SHERIFF SCOTT (Killer)

See! You can remember the ones you left behind.

AUGUST

For better or for worse.

SHERIFF SCOTT (Killer)

Oh you wouldn't want them to know that you talk about them like that...

AUGUST

...

SHERIFF SCOTT (Killer)

Hold on. Someone has a message for you!

SHERIFF SCOTT (Campbell or Talon)

HELP! AUGUST! [Insert yelling or pleading here]

[Sheriff Scott begins to hit himself. Then:]

SHERIFF SCOTT (Killer)

We'll that's all the time I have for now!

AUGUST

The hell its not!

SHERIFF SCOTT (Killer)

Find the photographs August!

[Sheriff Scott lets out a shriek in pain. It's like something's being exercised from his body. August grabs him by the shirt. Sheriff Scott is still in a panic.]

AUGUST

Where would I find Talon's albums?

SHERIFF SCOTT

[Unrecognizable panicked gibberish.]

AUGUST

His house? Are there keys?

SHERIFF SCOTT

[The same]

AUGUST

Useless.

[August throws Sheriff Scott onto his chair. Sheriff Scott is still making noises. August places their hands on Sheriff Scott's head. A blue light shines. There is a shriek, and then Sheriff Scott knocks out.]

AUGUST

That should keep him quiet. For a while at least.

[August scans the office. They search for a key or evidence or something. Nothing. They go to Sheriff Scott. They read his mind.]

AUGUST [VO]

I'm not thrilled have had to read Scott's mind. I already think it's an invasion of privacy. He already has been through enough psychic torture. After I read his mind, I put a block in his head. No other psychics will be able to enter his mind unless he wants them to.

I find keys to Talon's apartment on Scott's person, and the address from his mind. I guess daddy still has a spare key just for emergencies. I can't help but to feel bad for Talon. His dad is protective, and so his man. I would feel suffocated, and not in a fun way.

Off to a crime scene.

[We shift from the police station to Talon's apartment. August stands outside the door. They insert the key and open the door. They turn on the light. The apartment is littered with photographs. There are big ones and small ones. Odd shapes and regular ones. A sea of photographs. On the walls, the floor, the furniture.]

[So many of the photos are of Y August. Y August at the park. Y August at school. Y August shirtless. Y August in the dark. So many photographs, not one of them the same.]

[August attempts to process the room. There is so much. An overload. They begin to get extremely overwhelmed. Their breath is heavy. It's like they're being drowned in this sea of memory. Orange pierces in.]

[Y Augusts and Y Talons fill the space. The Y Talons take pictures of the Y Augusts with flash as the Y Augusts pose. Some are happy to, some rather not.]

[So much is happening.]

[August collapses into the sea of photographs. They flail around, as if they are drowning. They grasp for air. They're being pulled down.]

[A slight decibel ringing begins. It saves August. It's something to cling to.]

[The ringing is coming from a picture. The sea of photographs becomes a sand box of photos.]

[August begins to dig for this photograph. They're searching. The Y Augusts begin posing in the sand box of photos, the Y Talons continues photographing.]

[August has to push and claw their way through the Y Augusts. They have to block their eyes from the flashes.]

[August is getting closer to finding the photograph. As they do, the decibel ringings becomes louder.]

[...]

[They're louder, louder, louder, until...]

[August finds the photograph and raises it to the air. The lights flicker. The Y Talons and Y Augusts disappear. The lights are on, stable. The ringing continues.]

[August catch's their breath. They pant heavily. They're trying to reclaim themselves.]

[They take a moment and look at the photos again. Then they look at the photo their holding. It's not of them. It's of a green house.]

[The ringing is calling August. August begins following the ringing until/]

[RING RING, August's cellphone goes off. They pick it up.]

AUGUST

[In pain.]

Hello?

TERRI [VO]

August!?! Where are you? They found Campbell! Come to the hospital!

[August arrives at the hospital. There is still a ringing in the air. It eats at August, at us too. When August enters, there is a swarm of people outside of Campbell's hospital door. Terri is here.]

AUGUST [VO]

Holy shit that's a lot of people.

TERRI

August! August! They found him.

AUGUST

I see that, but why is everyone here?

TERRI

It's Campbell, people want to see him!

AUGUST

Terri, where is Scott?

TERRI

I wanted to ask you, he hasn't been picking up his calls.

AUGUST

That's strange, don't you think?

TERRI

Now that you mention it...

AUGUST

Terri, I'm going to talk to Campbell. Go see if Scott's alright. Check the station. That's where I saw him last. Call me if anything happens.

TERRI

Okay.

AUGUST

And one more thing?

TERRI

Yes?

AUGUST

Get everyone out of here please.

[Terri nods, she manages to get the crowd out of hospital hallway. They aren't happy about it. Kris is left behind. We couldn't see her until now.]

AUGUST

Hey.

KRIS

Hey.

AUGUST

I didn't think you would be here.

KRIS

Terri called. I had to see it if it was true.

AUGUST

And everyone else?

KRIS

Shit spreads.

AUGUST

...

How are you feeling

KRIS

Fine.

Do you think he knows anything?

AUGUST

Want to find out with me?

[A moment.]

KRIS

No.

[She leaves the hospital.]

[August enters CAMPBELL's room quietly. Campbell is in the hospital bed, asleep. His face has bruises and cuts that have been cared for. His belongings are laid out on the chair.]

[August goes to the belongings. They go through his wallet, searching for an ID. They find it, and compares the faces. They look deeply.]

AUGUST [VO]

Well that's Campbell, for sure.

AUGUST [VO] (CONTD.)

Time for procedure.

[They attempt to power through the ringing, to look into Campbell's mind. They focus. The lights try to shift. We might get there for a moment, but then the ringing spikes. It pierces through our ears, and causes them to fall back, making a noise.]

AUGUST

Ow fuck.

[Campbell awakes. There is a wince of pain.]

CAMPBELL

August?

AUGUST [VO]

If one more person says my name like that/

AUGUST

Sorry to wake you.

CAMPBELL

No, it's fine.

AUGUST

You've been through a lot.

CAMPBELL

Yeah.

...

CAMPBELL [Contd.]

Here to steal my man? He's not here right now.

AUGUST

Is that supposed to be a joke?...

CAMPBELL

Yeah.

...

CAMPBELL

Sorry, I only know how to be funny in the face of tragedy at my great grandma's funeral a few years ago I laughed at a Khloe Kardashian meme so loud that

CAMPBELL (CONTD.)

everyone at the wake went silent. It's my way of coping with overwhelming situations I'm sorry if that was extremely uncomfortable. And uncalled for.

AUGUST

Uhhhh. It's fine. Don't sweat it.

CAMPBELL

So why are you here.

AUGUST

Yeah, right. I'm investigating the last string of murders. And now you're here so/

CAMPBELL

/I'm both evidence and your prime suspect.

AUGUST

Yeah. Do you remember anything.

CAMPBELL

I remember being home and then

...

Oh shit.

AUGUST

What?

CAMPBELL

I'm going to have to say something extremely TMI.

AUGUST

Go on.

CAMPBELL

So recently, Talon and I have been...experimenting. He uses Grindr to try to find us a third.

AUGUST

And then the third ended up being/

CAMPBELL

/A psychopathic murderer? Yes.

AUGUST

So. Where have you been these past few days?

CAMPBELL

I couldn't tell you.

AUGUST

So no recollection of the past week or so.

CAMPBELL

Only walking, then falling. Then waking up here.

AUGUST

So nothing useful

CAMPBELL

No. It's frustrating as detective to not fucking know shit about your case.

AUGUST

A true role reversal.

CAMPBELL

It feels like shit.

AUGUST

I bet.

I know this is a crapshoot, but any idea on Talon.

CAMPBELL

I think he's alive.

AUGUST

Think?

CAMPBELL

There are fragments of him in my memory. They're not great but. I just know he was there.

AUGUST

So you do remember something? Where is there?

CAMPBELL

I don't know. I don't think I remember. It's like someone scrambled up my brain like eggs.

AUGUST

Talon is dead.

CAMPBELL

What?

AUGUST

That's what the town believes. If you see anyone and if they wish you condolences, just take them.

CAMPBELL

You're not making any sense.

AUGUST

I know. The town had a funeral for Talon.

CAMPBELL

But he's not...Is he?

AUGUST

Not by their accounts no. Just keep up an act.

CAMPBELL

Okay...

AUGUST

If you say they he's alive, its only going to make things more complicated. Keep others stupid and in the dark to keep them from panic.

CAMPBELL

Sounds very PD of you.

AUGUST

Never. And I have to ask,

CAMPBELL,

Yes?

AUGUST

How did you get out?

CAMPBELL

Well.

AUGUST

Right. You don't remember. I thought so.

CAMPBELL

Logically there are only two good explanations, either I somehow managed to escaped in a drug induced episode and passed out when it got too much, leaving me be found, or. I was purposefully planted to be found.

AUGUST

Or a third.

CAMPBELL

A third?

AUGUST

Or you could be the killer and planted yourself there.

...

Was that not funny? I thought you liked jokes.

CAMPBELL

Not the right time. There's an art to it.

AUGUST

Right.

CAMPBELL

Also to insinuate that I'm my boyfriend's kidnapper as he's actively missing...Doesn't feel great.

AUGUST

Yeah...

One more thing.

[August takes out the picture of the green house. They show it to Campbell.]

AUGUST

Do you know where this house is? Have you seen it before?

CAMPBELL

Let me look at it.

Oh.

Oh.

O/

[Campbell lets out a prolonged shriek. Orange fills the air. A sudden change. The decibel ringing pierces.]

CAMPBELL (Killer)

Did you like my little gift I left for you August? He'll show you the way.

[We snap back. Campbell hyperventilates. The ringing lingers.]

AUGUST

[Very in pain.]

Fucking hell.

[Campbell gets out from the bed.]

AUGUST

Get back in bed what are you-

[August grabs Campbell. They look into his eyes. They are hollow. Nobody is home. Campbell's legs still attempt to go to their intended destination as August holds them.]

AUGUST

What the fuck.

[August lets go. Campbell continues to walk. August follows.]

ISSUE #5

[The decibels get louder and louder as August follows Campbell. The louder the decibels get, the more August struggles.]

[Finally, they reach the house. Campbell collapses, and August check on him. He's out cold. They hold up the photo to compare it to the house. This is it.]

[August goes to the door and attempts to break it down. They kick, punch, and push into it. They desperately try to break through with their body.]

[No hope. They stand back and stares at the door. It's intense. This is a moment.]

[We are waiting.]

[The decibels disappear.]

[The door swings open. The decibels return with the mixture of added layers. Conversations from earlier in the play. Memories. August's favorite song. A random podcast. Light emits from the door. Orange energy is around us. They run to it.]

[They run into their highschool. Faded memories of what once was. This is overstimulating. August attempts to take it in. To push through.

[A memory of Y August, Y Kris, and Y Talon eating lunch together. They're laughing. There is a feeling of yearning, Killer is watching.]

KILLER [VO]

Do you remember me?

[August notices the KILLER and attempts to go near the KILLER. They run to them through a door.]

[A new part of the house, a new memory. A drunken rager. Lots of teen drinking and dancing too. Y August stands in the back to themself. They are watching the action. A drunk Y Talon approaches. It's flirty. It's fun. They're kissing.]

[Someone is angry. Killer watches Y August and Y Talon make out. August watches them make out. Everyone at the party is watching them make out. Killer is watching August. The party is watching August. August notices. Y August and Y Talon continue.]

KILLER [VO]

Do you ever miss what it felt like?

[August darts to the KILLER. Killer runs up the stairs with August behind them. August runs up the stairs. They are endless. August looks down to see collages of memory that are being upheaved.]

[A memory: Y August attempting to throw darts with their mind.]

[Each memory plays out all at once. We hear them all at once. Each one has their own lens of emotion. Pride, sadness, gluttony, jealous, courage, etc. Interpret as you will.]

KILLER [VO]

When you think about the almost two decade's worth of memories you had in this town, how do you feel? Are you sad when you think about them? Do they make you feel as though you're just a little kid alone?

Are you angry when you remember them, that these fragments can still creep up into your mind and force you to relive then things you wanted to forget? Do you hate yourself when you remember?

How many hours a year do you spend looking up at your ceiling in the middle of the night, analyzing all of the things you did and have done. Do you regret anything? Would you change anything?

How was it being back in this little town? Did you enjoy your stay? Did you enjoy the sites?

[A memory: The pig mailbox scene.]

[A memory: Y August, Y Kris, Y Talon, and someone else on Halloween.]

[A memory: Highschool Graduation.]

[A memory: A town Groundhog Day Festival.]

[A memory: Y August ignore phone calls.]

[A memory: prom night.]

[Memories of BJ and Rory being killed.]

[The stairs end. This is the attic. The final room. The door respectfully opens, and creeks when it does. August enters. They close the door behind them. It is quiet.]

[A memory begins instantaneously. Talon appears from the darkness. August and Talon are the memory. It slowly but surely disintegrates.]

TALON

Do you know when you'll be coming back?

AUGUST

Probably around Thanksgiving.

TALON

That long?

AUGUST

It's only three months away from now.

TALON

But it'll be August without August.

AUGUST

We have Mays without May Gonzalez.

TALON

It's not the same.

AUGUST

It won't be that bad.

TALON

But?

AUGUST

I'll be back. You and Kris worry that I'm running off and never looking back.

TALON

I know but/

AUGUST

/But?

TALON

It's different.

AUGUST

You guys will be fine. You'll be busy in the dark room.

TALON

You'll be the only thing on my mind.

AUGUST

Replace it.

TALON

No

AUGUST

Maybe forget about me.

TALON

Don't joke August.

AUGUST

Would it be that bad?

TALON

How could you just expect me to forget about you?

AUGUST

I don't know? Maybe you'll find someone better at Felician.

TALON

I have everything I need right here.

[August kisses Talon.]

AUGUST

What happens when I'm gone and you can't kiss me?

[August covers Talon's ears.]

AUGUST

What do you do if you don't hear from me?

[August covers Talon's eyes.]

AUGUST

If you don't see me?

[August covers Talon's mouth.]

AUGUST

Can't speak to me. I won't be here forever.

TALON

Why are you saying all of this?

AUGUST

To prepare you.

TALON

I don't understand you August, you say that you're coming back but then want to prepare me for the worst. What do you want me to think?

AUGUST

I want you to know how to be on your own.

TALON

I'm not. Kris is here.

AUGUST

Relying on me and other people isn't sustainable. Learn how to rely on yourself.

TALON

...

AUGUST

People aren't forever.

TALON

They are if you want them to be.

AUGUST

But what if they don't want to be forever?

TALON

You make it work. Figure it out.

AUGUST

Doesn't that mean both people want to make it work? One person can't decide a relationship.

TALON

...

Are you coming back August?

AUGUST

Yes.

TALON

Are you sure?

AUGUST

Yes.

TALON

When?

AUGUST

In November.

TALON

And if you don't?

AUGUST

You can visit me in Philly.

TALON

And let me stay there?

AUGUST

For a weekend.

TALON

A long weekend?

AUGUST

Sure.

TALON

And you promise me this?

AUGUST

Yes.

TALON

All of this?

AUGUST

Yes I promise you. All of this.

[August crosses their figures behind their back.]

TALON

Can I take a photo of you before you go?

AUGUST

Of course.

[Talon takes a photo, with flash.]

KILLER

Show him.

AUGUST

No.

KILLER

Show him your fingers.

TALON.

Show me your fingers.

AUGUST

No.

[Decible torture.]

KILLER

Show him your fingers August.

TALON

Show me your fingers August.

[August shows him their crossed fingers. We are crumbling. The memory around them is crumbling.]

KILLER

August lied to you.

TALON

You're a liar.

AUGUST

I am a liar.

KILLER

August didn't want you.

TALON

You didn't want me.

AUGUST

I didn't want you.

KILLER

August didn't love you.

TALON

You didn't love me.

AUGUST

I didn't love you.

KILLER

You don't feel bad?

TALON

You don't feel bad?

AUGUST

I don't feel bad.

KILLER

We want you back

TALON

We want you back

[Decible torture.]

AUGUST

You want me back.

KILLER

You want to be back.

TALON

You want to be back.

AUGUST

I want to...

[Decible torture.]

AUGUST

I want to...

[Decible torture.]

KILLER

Say it August!

[Decible torture.]

AUGUST

No!

[August releases a psychic pulse. It pushes Killer and Talon back.]

AUGUST.

Who the fuck are you?

[August goes to Killer. Killer pushes August back telekinetically.]

KILLER

You know who I am.

[Killer reveals herself to be Kris.]

KRIS

You couldn't tell this whole fucking time August?

AUGUST.

I didn't want to believe it Kris.

KRIS

All of the fucking signs were right there.

AUGUST

I know.

KRIS

Do you know how fucking hard it is August, to be the girl everyone knows in town. The girl who's family used to do everything. Be part of everyone's lives, only for her to be abandoned by all of her friends. Her best fucking friends. It used to be the three of us, a trio.

And then you left and we broke up. And in came Campbell. He's great fine whatever but it isn't the same. He could never fill the void you left August. But now your back.

AUGUST

So all of this. Just to get me back.

KRIS

You wouldn't even go to my mom's wake.

AUGUST

...

KRIS

But I knew you would come back to Talon's wake.

AUGUST

It's not because/

KRIS

Not because what? Because of your feelings? Don't try to say that it's for a favor or for the money because it's a like August. I don't need to read your mind to know that deep down in that cold fucking exterior you still care. You care about this town. You care about Talon. You care about me.

AUGUST

This isn't going to end the way you think it is Kris.

KRIS

I think it will.

[Kris pulls out a gun.]

KRIS

Things are going to go back to the way they were. It's going to be us three once again. No Campbell or Philadelphia or psychic bullshit can stop us. Get up Talon.

[Talon gets up, goes to Kris.]

KRIS

You see August, you can't take over my mind. You gave me a block and you're not allowed in. If you try anything, I shoot Talon, and I think he wouldn't mind that. Rory sure as hell didn't. Right bestie?

[Talon nods his head.]

KRIS

And we will be back to the way things should be. Before your blue hair, before I changed. Fine, I changed. The old Kris would never do this, but I guess in order to get what we want we need to kill our old selves. Now sit down August. We have a lot of catching up to do.

[A zoom in on August, like from earlier in the play. There is nothing for them to do. They have lost. There is a realization that there is no way out. They can not escape Devittstown, New Jersey. There is no returning into the life they once had, only returning to the life they once knew.]

[It starts to get dark.]

[Everything is dark.]

[It's quiet.]

[Not a sound is heard.]

[Douche bag clapping. The slow and sarcastic type.]

CAMPBELL

A fantastic showing.

[Every light turns on, like this is a huge soundstage.]

CAMPBELL

It was an amazing movie. It had everything. Mystery, death, love triangles, the wholllllle nine yards.

AUGUST

What?

CAMPBELL

You don't see August? We're making a movie! We have our lovely femme fatale.

[Kris gets up, stands near Campbell.]

CAMPBELL

Our adorable damsel in distress.

[Talon gets up, stands near Campbell.]

CAMPBELL

Our anti-hero private detective.

[August gets up.]

AUGUST

And you?

CAMPBELL

Oh August, I'm a dirty, dirty cop.

[A glorious psychic showing. We go back into the darkness but are illuminated with Campbell's orange psychic energy. It is all encompassing. The energy sounds like decibels mixed with grinding gears and industrial life. It's hardened and metallic.]

AUGUST

How come I don't remember you?

CAMPBELL

That's funny, it's almost as if we lived in this town together for eighteen years.

AUGUST

How do I know that this isn't a mental trick. That you implanted in my head?

CAMPBELL

Let's compare memories then, shall we? You were never the only psychic in Devittstown. I was too. I always was. You were always so...loud. I wasn't as powerful as a psychic you were. Your abilities drowned me when I was in your presence. The shrieking of your psychic frequencies kept my head in a consistent state of pain. I couldn't focus. I couldn't hear myself think. I couldn't grow my powers. When I would finally be away from you, I would still have headache that lingered and cause me to be so fatigue. You over powered me so much that your brain blocked you from even recognizing me, from being worth a spot in your memory. You unknowingly removed my existence. You made me feel weak and unimportant and stupid. And I hate you for that.

[The return to past memories that we had just seen. Graduation, the Ground Hog Day Celebration, Prom, etc. The memories begin in August's perspective but then shifts to Campbell's. Y Campbell is reinserted into the narrative from his perspective. The decibels return. Only Y Campbell can feel the pain, but August and Campbell can still hear it. In every memory, there is an overwhelming amount of pain, the overbearing weight of someone else's pressure put onto you.]

And then I fucking got my wish. The absolute disappearance of one August. Never to return back to the town that knew them so well. I could finally not be in the shadow. I could finally be the person I was meant to be. Not the watered down, hollowed out version of myself that you made me be. And yeah, maybe I did insert some lies into people's head. Maybe I wasn't a star quarterback, but I could've been. I could have been if you didn't ruin any chance I had.

I then I got with Talon. And he needed me. You left him wounded and alone and I'm the one who held him when he missed you. I'm the one who loved him when you didn't. I'm the one who made him love his life again but you.

But you.

But fucking you August.

All he ever missed was you.

All Kris ever missed was you.

Long nights the three of us would be together, they would wonder where you were. How you were doing. If you would come back.

All of that when I was right there. You weren't there, but I was. I filled the gap that you left by leaving. Abandoning. Choosing to be selfish.

But I was never enough. I couldn't be enough before you left, and I can't be enough now.

But I was able to live it. Live with this knowledge until...

[A memory in Talon's apartment. A photography setup. Talon is taking photos of Campbell. Campbell is shirtless.]

TALON
Hm.

[Talon adjusts the lights and looks into the camera.]

TALON
Can you shift your body a little bit.

[Campbell shifts.]

CAMPBELL
Isn't there anything you need me to do?

TALON
No just stay there. I just need to figure something out.

CAMPBELL
This position hurts.

TALON
Do you want to model for me or do you want to bitch the whole time?

CAMPBELL
...

[Talon plays with the lens.]

TALON
Got it

CAMPBELL
Shoot away Mr. Photographer.

[Talon begins taking shots. Snap, pose. Snap, pose. Snap, pose.]

TALON

Something isn't right.

CAMPBELL

Is it the lights?

TALON

No. Fuck. The shots need to be perfect.

CAMPBELL

They don't need to be perfect, they need to be good.

TALON

Good isn't gonna get me into grad school.

CAMPBELL

You'll get in.

TALON

Not with bad photos. Fuck. I used to be so good at this.

CAMPBELL

You're still so good at it.

[Campbell kisses Talon.]

TALON

I need to look at some of my old stuff.

[Talon looks to a shelf. They take out a photo album.]

CAMPBELL

Which album is that.

TALON

It's from highschool.

CAMPBELL

Let me see.

TALON

I don't know if you should.

CAMPBELL

Don't be embarrassed, let me see.

TALON

It's fine Campbell I just need some inspiration.

CAMPBELL

Come on, let me see!

[Campbell takes the album.]

CAMPBELL

Of fucking course.

TALON

It's not that serious Campbell.

[Campbell shows it out.]

CAMPBELL

It's all about him!!! Isn't it.

TALON

It's not about him, it's about the photos!

CAMPBELL

Bullshit.

TALON

You're acting childish.

CAMPBELL

Everything is always about August. It's all you and Kris ever fucking think about. If you want to take photos of August so bad, why don't you try t/o find him.

TALON

/Shut /up.

CAMPBELL

/Oh wait, you've tried! And you couldn't!

TALON

Campbell. Shut. Up.

CAMPBELL

Why am I never good enough for you!

TALON

You are!

CAMPBELL
Obviously not!

TALON
Campbell, you're so important to me. I love you. Please I'm looking at the photos for the angles I used to use.

CAMPBELL
The angles of his body.

TALON
You're so hyper fixated on it being August. Why don't you pretend it's someone else.

CAMPBELL
But I will always know that it's about him.

And how he left.

And how he abandoned you.

TALON
I'm sorry. But I will always care about August. Just a little bit.

CAMPBELL
And that little bit will always make you love him more than me.

TALON
That's not true.

TALON [VO]
I'm sorry that it's true.

CAMPBELL
You're a liar.

I know what you're thinking.

August will never love you.

And I will prove it to you.

[Campbell is out of the memory. Talon is not.]

CAMPBELL
And prove it, I did.

AUGUST

So all of this killing. Just to get Talon to love you more.

CAMPBELL

It's more than just that. To show Talon that you don't care. To show Kris that you never want to come back for her unless you're dragged all the way out here. To show you what you have done to the people you left. I had to get you here, and the only way you come if it was for work. If someone asked your mom to ask you. I know everything about everyone in this town. I knew how to play them to get to you.

I especially knew how to play Kris. She's so angry at you. Always will be, and that makes her oh so easy to control, with or without a silly psychic block. If you really wanted to protect her, you would've made it a lot harder to crack.

And Talon...He's pretty easy if I say so myself.

AUGUST

...

CAMPBELL

And now/

[Talon breaks from the memory and lunges to August, with a knife.]

CAMPBELL

When we kill you August, they will be free. The movie will end, and I finally will be able the hero of my own fucking story.

[August is able to evade the knife.]

CAMPBELL

You will no longer have to think about what August is doing, when they're buried 6 feet deep.

[Kris shoots at August. August is able to avoid it but only so slightly.]

CAMPBELL

You will only be able to rely on me.

[Talon runs at August, screaming. He gets one good slice at August.]

AUGUST

Fuck!

CAMPBELL

Kill them.

CAMPBELL [CONTD]

When they're dead you can take beautiful photos of them Talon. One last memory before they're gone for good.

AUGUST

Enough!

[A blue pulse. August enters Talon and Kris's mind. A psychic battle over their minds. The energy is pulsating. Talon shrieks from the pain of invasion. He drops the knife. He falls to the floor. His body and mind are overwhelmed. Kris shrieks out, screaming to the sky.]

AUGUST

You're going to kill them!

CAMPBELL

Then let them kill you!

[The psychic clash for Talon's mind gets more violent. He is screaming. Campbell puts himself into overdrive. His pulse takes over August's control. August is pushed back, Talon collapses again.]

CAMPBELL

Talon, Kris, kill August.

TALON & KRIS

[Struggling.]

No.

CAMPBELL

Fine, I'll do it myself.

[The return of decibel torture. It fills the space, infecting August.]

CAMPBELL

I'll kill you, the way you were killing me for years.

TALON

Stop!

CAMPBELL

Don't get in my way!

[Campbell telekinetically pushes Talon away.]

[The decibels get louder and louder.]

CAMPBELL

Finally, a world rid of August. Devittstown will finally stop caring about the piece of shit who left it!

[August, with any power they have, crawls to Talon, inching in pain. Their moves are so weak. Their brain is slowly getting fried. The inch to Talon. They arrive at Talon]

CAMPBELL

Final time to say goodbye! Come on August! Got anything to say?

[August gets close to Talon.]

AUGUST

[Weakly.]

Yes.

AUGUST [VO]

I'm sorry for this.

[August kisses Talon. The two embrace. A longing years in the making.]

CAMPBELL

Stop!

Kris! Shoot them now!

[A faint blue light prevails. Y Augusts and Y Talons appear, coupled. Memories of intimate encounters: kissing, caressing, biting, sucking. Sensual bliss, in different positions, moments, etc.]

CAMPBELL

ENOUGH ENOUGH ENOUGH!

[The memories are overwhelming visually. The decibels are overwhelming sonically. It is a cluster fuck of psychic energy. There is a rumble. There is shrieking.]

[Kris is shaking and pulsating and screams.]

[Darkness, BANG, silence.]

[There is nothing.]

EPILOGUE

[August with their head and arm in bandages. A large bandage over their cut. We are outside the bus station. Kris and Talon are with them. Talon and Kris also pretty beaten up.]

AUGUST

Thank you for driving me.

KRIS

It's no problem.

AUGUST

I'm sorry for

KRIS

We're still alive, aren't I?

AUGUST

Very true.

TALON

Is everyone in town going to be alright?

AUGUST

There will be questions. I tried to alter as much of Campbell's manipulation as possible but, there will be gaps. There are somethings only we will remember.

KRIS

At least they know Rory died, and not you, Talon..

TALON

I'm sorry that his family could not bury him.

AUGUST

They will have his ashes. It will have to be enough.

[...]

KRIS

This fucking weird.

AUGUST

Definitely.

TALON

I'm glad someone said it because I didn't want to.

AUGUST

I'm sorry for kissing you.

TALON

You had to do it. It's okay.

KRIS

I'm sorry for shooting you.

TALON

You're such a bad shot dude.

KRIS

Yeah well...

AUGUST

It's okay. Think of it as karmic justice or something.

KRIS

I shot my ex-best friend after ten years.

AUGUST

A memoir by Kris.

KRIS

Nobody would read that.

TALON

Maybe I would.

[They laugh. It feels like the past for a moment]

TALON

August, I'm finally taking your advice.

AUGUST

My advice?

TALON

Yeah. I'm going to try a graduate program, leave this town for a little bit. Finally discover the world.

AUGUST

Oh, I think that sounds great! I'm happy for you.

TALON

Thank you.

KRIS

And I'm selling that fucking house!

TALON

Woah Kris.

AUGUST

Are you sure?

KRIS

That house has been in my family for years. I think it's time for something new. If I'm really this new Kris, then maybe I should commit to it.

TALON

And you August?

AUGUST

Back to Philly for me.

TALON

Is it nice there? I've never been.

AUGUST

Well, the city can't pick up the garbage on time so the streets always smells like shit and SEPTA stoped doing 24 hour train service on the weekends, so that sucks, but...It's home.

KRIS

God you sound like 18 year old me.

AUGUST

Maybe I finally understand her.

TALON

This is fun. Maybe a reunion every 10 years should be a new thing we do.

KRIS

I think that's a bad idea.

TALON

I know...

I wouldn't forgive myself if I didn't at least say it.

AUGUST

I understand.

TALON

One more thing?

AUGUST

Why did I go?

KRIS

So you'll tell Talon but not me?

AUGUST & TALON

...

KRIS

It's a joke.

I'm joking.

Promise.

Go on...

AUGUST

I try to justify that everyday. This is just a town in Northern New Jersey. This shouldn't be something that weighs so heavily onto me. I can say that it doesn't as much as I would like to, but it's one of those things that rings in the back of my ear. I might not be thinking about, but it'll always be something that was never closed.

When you grow up in the same place for eighteen years, you feel a certain level of comfortability, even if you hate it. There is comfort in sameness. The same trees down the street, the same faces next door, the same seasonal festivals. It's all fine until you notice it. You can choose to notice and accept it, and notice and detest it.

When you notice it, detest it, and realize that people love and accept it, it's horrifying.

When I moved to Philadelphia, I learnt that there can be alterations. A car fire on Broad Street. Random construction. A marching band down the street. I learnt that I could fight sameness. I could change. When I knew that I changed into this new person, I knew I never wanted to go back. One out of fear of the comfortability and reverting back, two for the explanations I would have to give. I don't want to explain why things have changed. I've done a lot of that these past few days.

It wasn't as bad as I thought, but it doesn't mean I still want to do it.

I hope that's an answer.

[Kris and Talon stand there. They take it in.]

[An acceptance.]

KRIS

I think that's a great answer.

TALON

Maybe 10 years late for someone [points at Kris] but. Yeah.

[The honking of the bus horn.]

AUGUST

That's my cue.

KRIS

Goodbye Auggie.

TALON

Do good August.

[It feels as though there should be a big hug here, but there can't be. This is the end of this chapter for all of them. Talon and Kris exit, and August gets on the bus.]

AUGUST [VO]

This is it for me and Devittstown, NJ. I used to not want to look back, but now that I have, I don't feel a reason to. What's happened has happened. Time move forward, life goes on.

There was not enough evidence to point any of these crimes to Campbell. BJ and Rory's deaths will always on paper be unsolved. I know this to not be true, but their family's won't. As an investigator, this breaks my heart. They will never have the closure they need. They will ask themselves, "Why our son," "Could I have done anything to have stopped this?" And sadly, the answer is no. They are a victims of an emotionally unstable man with psychic abilities. It feels silly to say that out loud. That makes this even sadder.

As for Campbell, he's currently in a coma. His brain waves are faint, but still there. There are no signs as to when he will wake up, if he ever does.

The psychic energies were overstimulating him emotionally. I thought that my only move to save us would to be to overwhelm him. If he wasn't as strong as a psychic as me in high school, I don't think he got exponentially better through the years. My theory is, the memory he showed me was his breaking point. A man for over 20 years was in mental and emotional turmoil, and all it took was one instance to unleash hell. I think his emotional break caused a sudden and extremely powerful

growth in his abilities. He was running on emotions, and when he couldn't control those emotions, they would take over and run him ragged, and that's what I did.

If Campbell ever wakes up, Talon and Kris know how to contact me. I'll deal with him. I don't know what I'll do, but we'll get there when we get there.

Case closed.

[AUGUST dials their cell phone. Ringing. Ringing.]

AUGUST

Hey mom, I'm on my way home to Philly. I have a lot to tell you.

End of Play

at night i wonder if it was worth it:

the running and leaving,

the chasing something better,

the contemplation of ending it all,

but living with the knowledge that nothing is forever.

i look at everything that's happened to me,

the good and the bad,

and i say to myself:

“i might not be the me today if i didn't make those
choices, experience those things.”

and then suddenly everything is okay.

and i fall asleep, and dream of what's to come,

for i can't change the past,

but i can live the fuck out of the future.