

THE HIDDEN PEOPLE

Episode 1.07

"Deal"

Written by

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TEASER

77. RAIN on pavement. THUNDER in the distance.

THOMAS
Bye, Mom. Bye, Dad. I'll come back
soon.

Thomas WALKING on wet pavement (CENTER).

Dog SNARLING (panned LEFT).

THOMAS (CONT'D)
(under breath)
Oh boy.
(inhale, exhale)
Good dog. Good doggie.

Thomas BACKS AWAY from the Dog. FOOTSTEPS continue with
SNARLING following.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Where's your owner? Don't you want to
go find your owner? Your pack?

Dog SNARLS on left and is now joined by SNARLING on right.

Thomas BACKS AWAY between SNARLS.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Uhh...I take it back. I didn't mean
your pack. Shit. I mean good doggies?
(beat)
Sit? Stay. Shoo! Shit. Shit.
(beat)
You don't want to eat me. I'm not very
tasty. Just skin and bones.
(beat)
(realizing)
Mom and Dad...
(louder)
Where's your master?

As GROWLING continues, distant CAN KICK / FOOTSTEPS.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

(calling out)
Hey, who's out there? Come out here.
Call off your dogs.

Dogs SNARLING, getting closer. Thomas FUMBLES for his keys.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Please work. Please work.

CAR ALARM blares in distance. SNARLING pauses.

Thomas RUNS. Dogs CHASE.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Dammit. Why did I have to park so far
away?

More RUNNING and CHASING. Thomas reaches the truck and
OPENS the door. Dogs CLOSE IN, SNARLING.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Get back!

WHOOSH of iron rod swinging. THUMP. Dog WHIMPERS.

Truck door SLAMS.

Dogs SNARL and BARK outside. Dogs SLAM into truck door and
window.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Jesus.

78. Truck engine STARTS. In a MOVING TRUCK. RAIN on
windshield. WINDSHIELD WIPERS on medium.

Digital BEEP from hands-free phone system.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Call Mackenna.

CAR
Calling Mack-enna.

Phone RINGING.

THOMAS
Come on.

PHONE

Hi. This is an automated voice message system. You've reached--

MACKENNA

Mackenna Thorne.

PHONE

At the tone, please record your message.

Voicemail BEEP.

THOMAS

Shit! I know you don't check your voicemail, Mackenna, but call me. Right away.

Phone HANGS UP. Digital BEEP from hands-free phone system.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Call Nissa.

CAR

Calling Neesa.

Phone RINGING.

ALFIE

(through speakers)
Baby Thorne!

NISSA

(through speakers)
I'm sorry, Thomas. He insists on answering my--

THOMAS

I need to talk to Mackenna. Now.

ALFIE

(through speakers)
Uh. She's not here--

NISSA

(through speakers)

What's wrong?

THOMAS

Where is she? Wasn't she out all day with you?

ALFIE

(through speakers)

Not all day, but we hung out a bit this evening. Frivolity was had. She left just a bit ago.

THOMAS

You let her bike home in this storm?! By herself?

NISSA

(through speakers)

We weather-app'd it to find a clearing in the radar. What's going on, Thomas? You sound--

THOMAS

When did she leave? Was she going straight home?

ALFIE

(through speakers)

Like five minutes ago and probably. What's go--

Phone HANGS UP. Digital BEEP from hands-free phone system.

THOMAS

Send a message to Mackenna. Call me as soon as you receive this.

PHONE

Ready to send?

THOMAS

(under breath)

Dear lord.

(louder)

Yes.

RAIN against windshield intensifies. WINDSHIELD WIPERS go to max speed.

Thomas is DRIVING erratically. Truck SWERVING. Tires SQUEALING. Other drivers HONK at him.

Thomas SLAMS on the brakes, and the truck SKIDS through water.

PEDESTRIAN

(yelling from outside the car)
Maniac! Watch it!

THOMAS

Deep breaths.
(inhale, exhale)
She is fine. She is fine. Oh God, what
if she's not fine?

Truck REVS again. More HONKS along the road. Water SPLASH from tires.

END TEASER

79. In a MOVING TRUCK.

NARRATOR

Some people are dealt a bad hand in
life, and some are dealt worse.
Mackenna and her dutiful brother
Thomas...well, let's just say that they
don't deal with their hands very well.

(beat)

It's getting exciting, isn't it? For
the benefit of the court and your
scribe, I'll have to explain some of
what you're hearing in greater detail,
so you can at least follow along.

Truck PARKS. Engine TURNS OFF.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Thomas leaps from the car like the hero he thinks he is and races up to the unnervingly dark Thorne residence. Mayhap the storm took out their lights, but he doesn't bother to check the neighborhood as he races to the front of the house. As he throws open the door...

Dog GROWLS.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The moonlight reflects off of the dog's raised hackles. Thomas readies himself as it leaps.

THUNDER.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The lightning's illumination reveals Thomas and Murphy, the family dog. Mid-air, the mangy creature recognizes his owner, but his hefty body slams into Thomas. Both oaf and mutt tumble to the ground.

THOMAS

Oh my god. I'm so sorry, Murphy. Are you okay?

Dog HAPPY NOISES. Dog KISSES.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Good boy. Good boy. At least I know we have a trusty guard dog. Let's try to do a better job of recognizing each other next time, okay?

Dog HAPPY NOISES.

NARRATOR

How touching. A boy and his dog.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Okay, okay... Where's Mackenna?
(beat)
Is the power out?

Light switch REPEATEDLY FLIPS on and off.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Must be. Murphy, go get Mackenna.

Dog BARKS and RUNS away, FOLLOWED by Thomas.

Dog SCRATCHES at door. Door OPENS. THUNDER.

NARRATOR
The lightning reveals his precious
Mackenna at the bottom of the basement
stairs, drenched and winded.

Thomas and dog RUN downstairs.

THOMAS
Mackenna! Thank god.

MACKENNA
(startled scream)
What the--

THOMAS
Thank god you're safe. You are okay,
aren't you? Did you see them, too?

MACKENNA
You scared the shit out of me, Thomas.
Of course I'm safe. Why is everyone
always worried about me?
(beat)
It's just a little thunderstorm, which
by the way wasn't supposed to be here
right now. Stupid weather app.
(beat)
Thomas. Get off me. I'm drenched.
(beat)
Seriously. Let go. Your heart is
pounding. What's going on?

THOMAS

They came after me.

MACKENNA

Who?

THOMAS

The things that attacked mom and dad.

MACKENNA

What?

THOMAS

Two huge monster dogs--if you can call them dogs--surrounded me as I was leaving the cemetery.

MACKENNA

Huh? Monster dogs? What?

THOMAS

I know this sounds crazy. I swear that they were trying to kill me. I barely made it to my truck. I thought they might have gotten you...or were going to come after you...I don't know. I'm just glad you're safe.

MACKENNA

Did you see anybody? Was there anyone with the dogs?

THOMAS

I don't know. Maybe? I think I saw someone in the distance, but I'm not sure if they were involved or--

MACKENNA

What does this mean? Are they after us, too? Why?

THOMAS

I don't know, but I don't think we're safe. I'm just so glad that you're okay, and that Murphy was good ole Murphy.

MACKENNA

Huh?

THOMAS

I'll tell you my embarrassing story after I call Sam. We need her help. We need to find these monsters. Can you check the breakers? Get our lights back on?

NARRATOR

Poor Thomas. So much trauma. In the past. In the future. Nighttime and storms will haunt him for the rest of his life. He was just dealt a worse hand than most, and no one to commiserate with because his sister doesn't really act like a sister. Watch your back, Thomas. But maybe also watch your front.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

80. Light retail MUSIC. Bell RINGS.

ALFIE

(to customer)

Welcome to Soundscapes, where music is our forte!

(to Nissa)

Did you see what I did there? Forte? I'm having a good run.

NISSA

A run. Really? You've had nothing truly note-worthy. Now, give it a rest.

ALFIE

I am unworthy.

(beat)

So, Mack, rewind. Give us the scoop. Your brother was not his usual perfect-human-being self on the phone last night.

NISSA

Is everything okay?

MACKENNA

Yeah. I mean no. Something really strange happened. Thomas was attacked by what he is calling monster dogs. It really freaked him out.

NISSA
Monster dogs?

ALFIE
Like the dogs that attacked your parents? So, is it an Omen or Lost Boys thing with evil dogs that are sent to protect something dark and sinister? Or like good dog turned rabid a la Cujo?

MACKENNA
Yeah, I don't know. He was really shaken up. Even scared me at first. But after my whole 4 hours of sleep, I'm thinking they were just run-of-the-mill dogs getting territorial about one of those homes near the cemetery.

ALFIE
Cemetery?! Definitely Omen vibes.
(beat)
Or are there pets buried at that cemetery?

NISSA
It was dark and storming. Very easy to get confused about what you're seeing. Were there any people? Witnesses?

MACKENNA
Thomas said maybe someone in the distance, so I'm not sure. I think it was just a misunderstanding. With what happened, I'm surprised he can even be around our dog.

NISSA
He doesn't have funeral plans to distract him, anymore. He's just in that big house all day. Lots of memories. Might not be good for him.

MACKENNA

I'm fine with whenever he wants to get back to his life.

ALFIE

I'm sure he just wants to help you out. How are you Handel-ing things?

NISSA

Serious time, Alfie. Put the puns away.

ALFIE

Noted.

(beat)

Okay. Okay.

NISSA

Are you okay, though? I mean with grief or with last night or with staying in your family's house? Ugh, this feels like a very special episode. I'm sorry.

MACKENNA

I'm meh.

ALFIE

Now you're singing a familiar tune.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

81. Recorder CLICK. Background recorder FUZZ. Sam WALKS the cemetery parking lot as she talks.

SAM

Detective Mulligan. Audio log. I'm walking the scene of the dog attack against Thomas Thorne. Thomas called me last night and said that two, large black dogs flanked him near his truck in the cemetery parking lot. He fortunately got away unharmed. There is a row of houses across the street. Maybe the dogs live there? In today's light, the scene looks warm and inviting, with some branches down on the ground from last night's storm. I think I see some animal prints near where--

THOMAS

Sam.

Recorder CLICK.

SAM

Thomas. How are you? Were you able to get some sleep after last night?

THOMAS

Not really. Murphy and I sat together and binge watched Friday Night Lights for the umpteenth time. Well, for me, anyway. I don't know how many times he's watched it.

SAM

Reliving your glory days on the field? I don't remember your football coach being as dedicated...or handsome.

THOMAS

Hey, now. Coach Watson was dedicated.

SAM

That man was difficult to look at.

THOMAS

So unfortunate.

SAM

(laugh, beat)

Thanks for coming back out here. I know it's not pleasant, but I was hoping you can walk me through what happened.

THOMAS

Whatever will help to catch my parents' killers.

SAM

Let's not get ahead of ourselves. We'll focus for now on what happened to you.

THOMAS

Okay. After I dropped you off last night, I hoped to squeeze in a visit to my parents before the storm. When the thunder started, I began heading to my truck...this way.

Thomas and Sam WALK.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

It was here when I heard the first one. It was growling at me.

SAM

Which way did it come from?

(beat)

Uh huh. East. Continue.

THOMAS

I was backing up slowly, trying to talk calmly to it. Maybe get it to leave. Then I heard growling from my other side. Uh. From the west?

SAM

Yep. That would be the west. What did you do?

THOMAS

The two--I don't know what to call them. Monsters? Beasts? They were so much bigger than normal dogs.

SAM

Maybe just a large breed? Or wolves?

THOMAS

Whatever they were snarled the whole time they came at me. I kept backing up. Then, when I got just a bit closer to my truck, I remembered my panic button on the key fob. The name is appropriate.

SAM

So you pushed the panic button.

THOMAS

It startled them just enough for me to make a break for the truck. I have an iron fence post in the bed of the truck, and I used it to hold them off. I think I hit one of them with it as I was swinging. When they backed up, I jumped in the cab and slammed the door. They hit the truck really hard. Shook the whole thing. I thought they might flip it. I just slammed the gas and got out of there.

SAM

On the door of your truck...is this a paw print?

THOMAS

Holy shit. Yes. Do you see how big it is? The claws were twice that size.

SAM

Here's a dollar bill. Can you hold it up next to the paw print while I snap a picture?

Digital CAMERA.

SAM (CONT'D)

Thanks. Can you describe the dogs?

THOMAS

They weren't dogs. I mean, they vaguely resembled dogs in the dark, but when the lightning lit them up, I could see their faces. They were like a kid's nightmare of a wolf or something. Their eyes. Dogs have kind, mostly brown eyes, right? Their eyes were black with a flicker of red. And their teeth--all sharp, not just their canines. Sam?

SAM

Yes?

THOMAS

I've never seen anything like them. I would say they were twice the size of Murphy, so I'm thinking 150 pounds each.

SAM

That's really big.

(beat)

I know that you mentioned it was dark and storming. Is there a chance that your view of them might have been obstructed? It can be scary when dogs are posturing and threatening. They can make themselves appear bigger.

THOMAS

Listen, I know it sounds unbelievable. But these weren't normal dogs. You can see the print on my car. These beasts were huge.

SAM

Yes. Those paws definitely belong to some big dogs.

THOMAS

Claws. Trust me, Sam. They were after me.

SAM

I believe you, Thomas. I do. The dogs attacked you. But couldn't it be just that? Maybe territorial of a local house?

THOMAS

I'm not projecting because of my parents. These things targeted me. And after what happened to my parents...I'm scared they'll come after me again. Or worse...hunt Mackenna.

SAM

I cannot imagine how horrible last night had to have been, but the attack on your parents was a little different.

There was a person involved. Someone who may have been controlling the dogs.

THOMAS

I thought I saw a person last night.

SAM

What? Where were they?

THOMAS

About halfway back between running into the first dog and my car, I heard someone. I thought I saw a person down the alley--that alley over there. Or at least, the outline of a person.

SAM

Okay. Can you tell me anything else? Did they say anything? Or acknowledge you or the dogs?

THOMAS

Well...no. I thought it might have been the killer on account of the dogs. But the dogs kept me from getting closer, and the person never approached or said anything.

SAM

So you thought the person was connected to the dogs.

THOMAS

Yes.

(beat)

Maybe.

(beat)

I don't know. It just felt really odd. Like clearly someone is getting attacked by these monster dogs. You'd think they would help or even run away. But they were just...there. Once I really saw what those dogs were, I knew.

SAM

You knew what?

THOMAS

Sam, those were the things that attacked my parents. This is the key to solving their murders.

SAM

This is a lot to process, but I promise you that we will figure it out. I'll revisit both scenes tonight. Sometimes, perpetrators return. Maybe I'll see something. For now, I'm going to take some more pictures and check the alley. Do you mind if I have someone from the lab come and look at your truck?

THOMAS

Yeah, sure. I need to take a walk to clear my head, anyway.

SAM

Are you okay to be alone? If you wait, I can join. Or I can call Mackenna?

THOMAS

No. I'm fine. I don't want Mackenna to worry about me. Thanks, Sam. I know you'll figure this out.

82. Light retail MUSIC. Bell RINGS.

MACKENNA

Welcome to Soundscapes.

NISSA

Oh, look. It's piano lady. Alfie, wasn't I supposed to give her a message for you?

ALFIE

That was only in the case of my untimely death. Which hasn't happened yet.

Piano MUSIC. Same haunting tune from 101.

MACKENNA

Y'know, I'm sure she has a name. You could always ask for it.

ALFIE

Nah. I'm fine being Mr. Piano Lady.

NISSA

You'd think we would know her name given how often she comes in.

MACKENNA

Has she ever bought anything?

NISSA

Nope.

ALFIE

Maybe she comes in to see me.

MACKENNA

I've seen her here when you aren't working. Sorry, Romeo.

NISSA

That's true. But you know what? I've never seen her here when Mack has the day off.

MACKENNA

That's ridiculous. How would she know my schedule? And why?

ALFIE

Don't steal my piano lady, Mack.

MACKENNA

Good lord.

NISSA

Are we doing anything after our shift ends?

ALFIE

Have either of you checked out that new boba tea place?

NISSA

Ah, you mean the tea that you drink and eat? No, thank you. Either you're a drink, or you're a food. There shouldn't be an in-between. Also, so overpriced.

ALFIE

I heard it was tasty. Thinking about checking it out. Wanna come?

MACKENNA

Sure. I'm down for a walk with some overpriced chewy tea on the side. I cannot promise to like it or be good company if it stinks, though.

ALFIE

Your terms are acceptable. Nissa?

NISSA

Fine, but I'm not going for the boba. I'm going to make sure the shop is culturally appropriate and not appropriating culture.

ALFIE

Yes, ma'am.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

83. Mackenna, Nissa, Alfie WALKING down the street.

ALFIE

Ahh. Fresh air. Perfect weather for a walk and some boba.

NISSA

Yep. It is only half-gray today.

MACKENNA

This is a drink...and food. Strange, off-putting, but kinda refreshing.

NISSA

Just like Alfie.

ALFIE

Hey! I take any comparison to boba as a compliment. Ha. Boba. That reminds me of Boba Fish. What a great pet...

NISSA

Yes. It swam. As fish do.

MACKENNA

Yeah. I remember Boba Fish. No real personality. Just fish.

ALFIE

And your ants in your ant farm? They have personality?

MACKENNA

Well, no. Not personality per se, but they are survivors. Remember that big asteroid that killed the dinosaurs? Well, the ants survived that.

NISSA

I didn't realize that you actually cared about ants or science.

ALFIE

Okay, Mack, you got me. Ants are amazing. Hence: Antman.

MACKENNA

And it's just cool to watch all of the individual ants find their place in their ant world. Fun fact: ants steal ants from other colonies and put them to work for them.

NISSA

So basically ant trafficking? That's awful.

ALFIE

Actually, it sounds like a live game of thrones: ants working for their queens, attacking each other, taking prisoners. I'm thinking a live-stream. People would pay for that. You just need to come up with some clever names...like Targ-ant-yens versus the L-ant-istairs...

(beat)

Give me some time to work on this.

MACKENNA

I'm rooting for my Arya Stark ant right now. She's trying to take out some nasty army ants.

ALFIE

This is the nerdiest thing we've ever shared. Nissa, did you know Mack is kind of an evil genius?

MACKENNA

(deadpan)

Mwahaha.

NISSA

Yeah. I'm not sure that I'm okay with the ant farm. There is a reason we don't talk about it.

ALFIE

No ants. Check. And okay, so Boba Fish was kinda lame. All flash and no substance, but I too had an epic pet in my life: my hamster. She was my whole world when I was 11. Do you remember Fizgig?

MACKENNA

Oh my gosh. Yes. And by yes, I mean no. I remember the idea of Fizgig, but I don't believe it ever existed. Every time I came over, it was nowhere to be seen.

ALFIE

Fizgig was just a little shy that's all. Not a people person--er, people... hamster? Uh. Anyway, she--not it--was an amazing companion.

NISSA

Companion? Your hamster?

ALFIE

Why yes, Nissa. Fizgig got me through middle school--and all of the evil soul-sucking classes and classmates. But when I was away at camp, she died. My parents found her after a freak accident with the vacuum cleaner, and they buried her in our backyard.

NISSA

Up next, Alfie tells you about the time his old dog went to live on a farm.

ALFIE

They told me the truth, Nissa. It was really hard for me to deal. Until I finally built up the courage to go out to her shady little plot on the back of our property.

MACKENNA

You mean the little hole they dug for it by your tree. I remember you insisting I come to its funeral.

ALFIE

Her funeral. Fizgig was a great hamster. I was so thankful that you supported me. You enabled me to get up the courage to say goodbye to Fizgig.

MACKENNA

You forced me to come to the funeral.
(beat)
Wait a second.

NISSA

Oh. Ohhh.

MACKENNA

Alfie. Why does your drink choice today just happen to be close to the cemetery where my parents are buried?

ALFIE

Whaaat?

MACKENNA

From the boba tea, to Boba Fish, to Fizgig's funeral? To we just so happen to be walking to my parents' gravesite?

NISSA

I think we're seeing who the real evil genius is.

ALFIE

Okay. Okay. You got me. I know that you're handling your parents' deaths differently than your brother, and that's totally valid, but I also know that you have to deal with what happened in order to move on. You don't want it to fester. Festering is bad. Festering leads to infection, which leads to amputation...which leads to...the dark side?

(beat)

I didn't practice this part. But can I be your Mack? Your supportive best friend?

NISSA

I want to barf and mock him, but he actually--I can't believe I'm saying this--he actually has a point.

MACKENNA

(sigh)

Okay. I will take your support and walk it over to the gravesite, but I'm not promising tears. Also, I'm not going to say thank you.

(beat)

I want to go over there alone. Okay?
And neither of you look at me. Stream
something on your phones. Over there.

ALFIE

Yes. Yes. Take your time.

NISSA

Is this like a scroll through my
Twitter feed or an episode of *Buffy*
duration?

ALFIE

Nissa! She can take however long she
needs. Go on, Mack.

MACKENNA

Uh huh. Now get! Shoo!

ALFIE

(fading)

What season are you on?

NISSA

(fading)

It's my eighth time watching season
five.

84.

NARRATOR

And so begins another experiment, where
her friends put Mackenna into a
scenario to see if she can finally act
like a person. Yes. Walk up to your
parents' headstones. Touch them.
They're as cold and lifeless as your
feelings toward them.

MACKENNA

Uh...so I'm here. At the gravesite. I
think Alfie is trying to watch through
the reflection of the shop's window.
Cheater.

(beat)

This stone is cool for how warm it is
today.

(beat)

(MORE)

MACKENNA (CONT'D)

Do they hand-carve these letters, or is it like a laser that etches them? I bet we'll 3D print tombstones in the next ten years.

(beat)

Look. This wasn't my idea. I don't know what Alfie expects me to be saying right now, but whatever it is, it's probably something I never would have said when you were alive. I mean, when was the last time any of us ever said "I love you"?

(beat)

Can love be a scale? Like, can you love someone but still know that it's the barest minimum, that you could hypothetically love someone else a lot more?

(beat)

I'm pretty sure I'm doing this wrong. I don't know. You were my parents. I kinda always felt you didn't really want me. That's why Thomas is just a year younger. Reboot and try again. Thanks for making me, I guess. It does suck that you're dead.

(beat)

This, though? This talky thing where I'm supposed to be all moved and get closure? Not working. Honestly, I'm only even still talking because if I stand here long enough and then act sad, Alfie won't bring it up again. Okay. Squeezing my eyes shut. Willing some tears. Any second now--

THOMAS

(calling out)

Mackenna?

(beat, approaching)

Mackenna! What are you...? I'm so happy to see you here.

MACKENNA

Thomas...oh. Hi. Did Alfie call you?

THOMAS

What? No. I was in the area. Is this the first time you've visited them?

MACKENNA

(muttering)

You know they're dead, right?

THOMAS

(cutting in)

You and I, Mackenna. We're the only ones that can really understand what this is like. It's been so hard.

MACKENNA

Yep.

THOMAS

Hey, do you think mom would have liked these flowers? On this gray day, I was thinking some colorful daisies would be appropriate.

MACKENNA

Yes. The flowers are nice.

THOMAS

Here.

MACKENNA

Oh. Thanks.

(beat)

What am I supposed to do with it? Keep it? Put it on the headstone?

THOMAS

Do what feels right for you.

NARRATOR

Oh, Thomas, what feels right for Mackenna would be so foreign to you. Trust me. You'll be happier to have her keep playing her part, at least for a little while longer.

MACKENNA

Okay. I'm going to put it...uh...here.
So, um, they can enjoy the...purple?

THOMAS

I'm glad you're here. Especially today.
Maybe we can come back together
sometime? I come by almost every day.
I'd love the company.

MACKENNA

Yeah. Nissa and Alfie are waiting for
me, so--

THOMAS

Can we do dinner tonight?

MACKENNA

I...I think I have to do something
tonight. How about brunch tomorrow? I
know how much you like pancakes.

THOMAS

Yes. Pancakes sound great. Be careful
tonight. Don't go anywhere by yourself,
okay? Text me often so I know that you
are safe.

MACKENNA

Yes. Younger, big brother.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

85.

MACKENNA

Hey, Shaylee. Thanks for coming out
tonight. These last few weeks have been
really strange, and I needed to get out
the house. Out of my head.

SHAYLEE

Of course. Happy to accompany your out-
of-head experience.

Mackenna's cell VIBRATES.

SHAYLEE (CONT'D)

Ah, I think you're buzzing.

MACKENNA

Yep. That's my brother checking in on me for the 100th time today. He can wait a few more minutes. But this is exactly it...my brother. My friends. They mean well. They're always asking if I'm okay. I tell them yeah, but they're right. I'm not okay. But what they're offering won't help. You know?

SHAYLEE

I lost my parents, too. So, I get that piece for sure. I...went internal until reality hit me...pretty hard.

MACKENNA

Everyone has suggestions, ideas, advice. None of it makes a difference.
(beat)

I think I need to talk to someone to make sure I'm not going crazy, but I need someone who won't smother me or think about my baggage.

SHAYLEE

Okay. Shoot. Baggage free.

MACKENNA

My parents took care of me--always had the basics: food, shelter, safety. When they died, I thought I would grow up and understand how I fit in--like I'd be forced into my own new reality. But no. Nothing. I am no closer to feeling like any of this is right.

SHAYLEE

I get that. No one feels one hundred percent right, though.

MACKENNA

That's surprising. With how you dress and how you carry yourself, it looks like you really know you.

SHAYLEE

Well, yes. I do. I just mean: I was there--where you are now. I was wandering through life aimless, out-of-place...

(beat)

I'm still wandering...but with a purpose, now. With an understanding of who I am and how I fit in the grander scheme. Everyone has a role to play. I found mine, and it feels right. Well, more right, anyway.

MACKENNA

I've always felt like where I belong is nearby, a glimpse out of the corner of my mind's eye. But I can't get it into focus.

(beat)

This sounds crazy. Maybe I'm going crazy.

SHAYLEE

No. It sounds like something you need to go through. What do you think it will take to get you there? Into focus?

MACKENNA

I dunno, but I think that I have to deal with something first.

SHAYLEE

What?

MACKENNA

The murder of my parents.

SHAYLEE

I thought you weren't that close with them.

MACKENNA

Not the loss of them or the mourning of them, but the actual murder of my parents. I cannot get it out of my head that the murder itself is important. I need to understand it.

SHAYLEE

Okay. So, how do you deal with the murder?

MACKENNA

For starters? Well, look around. We have just walked to the literal scene of the crime.

SHAYLEE

This parking lot? This is where they died?

MACKENNA

Yeah. Somewhere around here, anyway.

NARRATOR

Mackenna and Shaylee keep carefully poking around the Thornes, unaware of a certain detective nearby, waiting for the killer to foolishly return to the scene of her crimes.

Recorder CLICK. Background recorder FUZZ.

SAM

After last night's attack on Thomas, I'm returning to the scene of the Thorne double homicide. I'm hoping to walk the scene and surrounding areas to see if there is anything that stands out, maybe connects the two. If the attack on Thomas is part of a string of attacks, this completely rules out a random killer. I just hope to get a crumb of evidence or insight to help me with the--

(beat, quieter)

I see someone...no...two people visiting the scene of the crime.

(beat)

I think that's Mackenna and...someone I don't know. A woman. I can't see much from here. Are her pockets hanging out? Her coat may be on inside-out. Strange. I'm going to try to get a little bit closer to listen in...

SHAYLEE

(distant, through recorder)
This parking lot? This is where they
died?

MACKENNA

(distant, through recorder)
Yeah. Somewhere around here, anyway.

SHAYLEE

(distant, through recorder)
And this is...helpful?

Back to Mackenna and Shaylee's perspective.

MACKENNA

Maybe? I've been thinking about coming
here since that night. It's been in my
dreams almost nonstop. I've tried to
push it to the side, but I knew I
needed to see. Now that I'm here, I'm
not sure what to do.

SHAYLEE

This is your gravesite.

MACKENNA

Huh?

SHAYLEE

Thomas visits the gravesite for
closure. This is your closure. Maybe we
just stand here. Reflect. Deal with
what happened. Move on.

MACKENNA

That sounds like a plan. Thanks,
Shaylee. I don't know why you're so
easy to talk to, but I appreciate it.

SHAYLEE

Happy to help. Now get to reflecting.
And then find your real self.

MACKENNA

Yeah. Sure. My real self.

NARRATOR

Yes, Mackenna, it is nearly time to
reveal your hand. Are you ready to see
the real world--the one you've been
ignoring? Get ready to wake up,
Mackenna. Soon.

THE END