

THE LOCKDOWN

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. EMILIA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The modern, minimalist interior is flooded with soft, natural light. Shelves overflow with books, but the space feels too sterile to be cozy.

EMILIA (early 30s, elegant but unkempt) sits at her desk, surrounded by crumpled papers. Her fingers hover over her laptop keyboard, trembling slightly. She types a few words, reads them, groans, and deletes everything.

She leans back, exhaling sharply, staring at a half-full glass of red wine on the desk.

Close-up: The laptop screen. The cursor blinks on an empty page. A title looms above: Untitled Manuscript.

Montage sequence to establish Emilia's routine.

- INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Emilia pours herself coffee in a sleek, high-end kitchen. Her reflection in the window looks distant, ghostly.

- INT. STUDY - DAY

She types furiously, but stops. She rubs her temples, a headache creeping in.

- INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Emilia stares at herself in the mirror. Her eyes are tired, her face pale. She traces the faint scar on her shoulder.

- INT. BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Unable to sleep, Emilia scrolls through old photos on her phone. She pauses at one of a man, smiling. Her face clouds with a mix of longing and pain.

The montage ends with her staring at her laptop, still empty, as morning light streams in.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Emilia sits at the counter, absently picking at a bagel. The sound of the wind outside breaks the silence.

Suddenly, there's a loud CLICK. Then another. And another.

Close-up: The locks on the doors engage, one by one, followed by the sound of the windows sealing shut. Emilia freezes, heart pounding.

EMILIA
What the hell?

She rushes to the front door and tries the handle. It doesn't budge. She tries the windows—sealed tight.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Hello? Is someone there?

Her voice echoes back, swallowed by the silence.

She grabs her phone from the counter, but the screen flashes a message: "NO SIGNAL."

Panic begins to set in. She rushes to her landline—it's dead.

INT. STUDY - LATE NIGHT

The house is eerily quiet. Emilia paces the room, muttering to herself. She clutches a kitchen knife in one hand, her phone in the other. A faint whispering sound comes from the wall.

Close-up: Emilia's face as she freezes, her eyes darting toward the noise.

EMILIA
...Hello?

She steps closer to the wall, pressing her ear against it. The whispering grows louder, but the words are unintelligible.

Suddenly, she notices something scrawled on the wall. The faint outline of a message, written in what looks like charcoal:

"STOP HIDING."
Emilia stumbles back, her breath quickening. She looks around the room, her paranoia growing.

EMILIA
Who's doing this?!

The whispers stop. Silence. She spins toward the door, knife trembling in her hand. The tension is palpable as the camera lingers on her shaking fingers...

INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY MORNING

The sun rises, casting long shadows through the windows. Emilia sits on the couch, exhausted and dishevelled, clutching the knife. A new message is written on the mirror across the room. This one is clearer, more deliberate:

"REMEMBER."
Emilia stares at it, frozen.

Cue eerie music as the camera zooms in on her wide, terrified eyes.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MIDDAY

Emilia sits at the edge of her couch, her eyes darting toward every creak and shadow in the room. The message on the mirror, "REMEMBER," looms in the background.

She flips through her old notebooks, frantically searching for a clue. Pages are filled with fragmented ideas for her manuscript, some crossed out, others hastily scrawled. Her breathing grows heavier as she lands on a page that feels familiar.

The page contains a rough outline for a story: A woman trapped in her own home, haunted by her past. Emilia drops the notebook, her hands trembling. She pushes it away and rises, pacing the room.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Emilia opens every drawer and cupboard, searching for anything that might explain what is happening. She grabs a hammer from under the sink and makes her way to a window.

She swings the hammer against the glass. It doesn't even crack. The sound reverberates through the house, leaving an eerie silence in its wake.

Suddenly, her phone vibrates on the counter. Emilia rushes to it, hope flashing across her face. The screen lights up with a notification: "One New Message."

Her hands tremble as she opens it. The message reads:

"LOOK BEHIND YOU."

She freezes, her breath caught in her throat. Slowly, she turns around. No one is there.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The house feels darker than before. Emilia sits on the edge of her bed, the hammer resting in her lap. Her gaze is fixed on the shadows in the far corner of the room. Her laptop chimes. She looks toward her desk, hesitant. Slowly, she walks over and opens the screen.

A new document has appeared on her desktop, titled "Confession."

She clicks it open. The document is blank except for a single sentence:

"You know why you're here."

Her pulse races as she stares at the words, trying to make sense of them.

A faint knock echoes through the house.

Emilia grabs the hammer and steps cautiously into the hallway. The knock grows louder, more insistent. She follows the sound, her heart pounding.

INT. FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

She approaches the front door. The knocking stops abruptly. Emilia hesitates, her hand hovering over the handle. A voice whispers faintly from the other side of the door.

VOICE

Why are you hiding?

Emilia backs away, shaking her head.

EMILIA

Leave me alone!

The whisper grows louder, repeating the same question over and over: "Why are you hiding?" She drops the hammer and covers her ears, sinking to the floor. The sound abruptly stops. Silence falls over the house once again.

INT. STUDY - DAWN

Emilia hasn't slept. She sits at her desk, staring blankly at her laptop. Her gaze shifts to the cryptic message still scrawled on the wall: STOP HIDING. The sun rises, casting harsh light through the window. Emilia looks pale and fragile, her hair unkempt. She grips her wine glass, staring into the deep red liquid as though searching for answers.

Suddenly, she notices something else on the wall, hidden in the sunlight. New words have appeared beneath the first message.

"IT'S TIME TO REMEMBER."

Her face hardens. For the first time, she looks determined instead of afraid.

EMILIA

Fine. Let's do this.

The camera lingers on her steely gaze as she rises, prepared to confront whatever—or whoever—is behind her torment.

INT. BASEMENT - MORNING

Emilia descends the narrow, creaking stairs to the basement. Her flashlight flickers against the cold cement walls. She never liked this part of the house; it always felt unfinished, forgotten. She scans the room and notices an old trunk tucked away in the corner, partially hidden beneath a dusty tarp.

She kneels and yanks the tarp away, coughing as a cloud of dust rises. She hesitates before opening the trunk. Inside are faded photographs, handwritten letters, and a single leather-bound journal. She flips through the journal. The pages are filled with dates and strange symbols. Scribbled in the margins are phrases like:

"I can't escape."

"It wasn't my fault."

"Remember the woods."

A photograph falls from the journal. Emilia picks it up and freezes. The photo shows a group of people standing in the woods, smiling. In the centre is Emilia, much younger, with an arm around a man whose face has been burned out of the picture. Her breathing quickens. She clutches the journal and photo, her knuckles white.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Emilia spreads the contents of the trunk across the coffee table. Her mind races as she pieces together fragments of her past. The letters are addressed to her, signed by someone named "Alex."

One letter reads:

"You can run, but you'll never outrun the truth. The woods will always remember." Her eyes dart to the photo again.

EMILIA

Alex...

A loud thud echoes from upstairs. She jumps, clutching the journal to her chest.

INT. STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Emilia creeps up the stairs, her hammer in hand. The thudding continues, rhythmic and deliberate, coming from her bedroom. Her hand trembles as she pushes the door open.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is empty, but the closet door is ajar. Something inside is banging against the wall. She tightens her grip on the hammer and approaches the closet. The thudding stops.

EMILIA

Who's there?

She flings the closet door open. Inside, she finds a tape recorder, its play button jammed. The tape is old, the label faded. She presses stop, and silence fills the room again. Curiosity overtakes her fear. She presses play. A distorted voice crackles through the speakers.

VOICE

(distorted)

Do you remember the woods, Emilia?

Her knees buckle. She drops the tape recorder, and it clatters to the floor, the voice still repeating the question.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Emilia splashes cold water on her face. Her reflection in the mirror looks foreign, unrecognizable.

The whispers start again, faint but insistent.

WHISPER

It's your fault.

She grips the edges of the sink, her knuckles white. The whispers grow louder, overlapping, filling the small bathroom.

EMILIA

No... stop it!

She looks up at the mirror. Her reflection smiles at her.

But Emilia isn't smiling. Her chest tightens as her reflection mouths the words:

"You can't hide forever."

The lightbulb above her flickers and shatters, plunging the bathroom into darkness.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Emilia stumbles into the hallway, her breathing uneven. She clutches her chest, trying to steady herself.

The whispers are gone, but the silence feels heavier than before.

Her phone vibrates again. This time, it's on the floor where she dropped it earlier. She picks it up and sees another message:

"REMEMBER THE WOODS."

Her grip tightens on the phone.

EMILIA

What do you want from me?

The phone vibrates again. A new message appears:

"Look in the study."

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

Emilia hesitates at the doorway. The air feels colder here, the shadows deeper.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Emilia paces back and forth, her phone in one hand, the torn photo in the other. The kitchen is dimly lit, the hum of the refrigerator the only sound. She takes a long sip from a glass of wine, her nerves frayed.

EMILIA

This isn't real. It's just... it's just stress.

She sets the glass down, but her hand is trembling. The phone buzzes again. Another message.

TEXT

(reads)

Time's running out.

She stares at the screen, her pulse pounding in her ears.

EMILIA

What does that even mean?

The wine glass slides across the counter on its own, shattering against the floor. Emilia stumbles back, gasping.

INT. FOYER - LATER

Emilia drags a heavy chair toward the front door. She jams it beneath the handle and wedges a kitchen knife into the gap between the door and the frame. She mutters to herself as she works, her voice unsteady.

EMILIA

I'll block every door, every window. You won't get in.

The lights flicker above her. She freezes, glancing up. The hallway plunges into darkness. Only the faint glow from her phone lights her face. A faint knock comes from the other side of the door. It's slow and deliberate, echoing through the quiet house.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

Who's there?

No answer. The knock comes again, harder this time. The chair beneath the handle creaks as the door rattles.

EMILIA (CONT'D)

Leave me alone!

She grabs the hammer from the table near the door and raises it defensively. The knocking stops. Silence. Her phone buzzes again. This time, it's a video call. The caller ID simply reads:

UNKNOWN, Her thumb hovers over the answer button, her breathing shallow. She swipes to accept. The screen flickers, revealing a live feed of her own living room.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
What the hell...

She spins around, her eyes darting to the corners of the room. No one is there, but the video feed shows a shadow moving across the floor behind her. She whirls around again, but the shadow is gone.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Stop messing with me!

The video cuts out abruptly, replaced by another text message.

TEXT
(reads)
You can't hide from yourself.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Emilia has barricaded herself in the bedroom, furniture piled against the door. She sits on the floor, the hammer clutched in her lap, her phone beside her. She scrolls through old photos on her phone, searching for answers. She stops on an image of her and a man—Alex—standing in front of a cabin in the woods. She stares at his face, her jaw tightening.

EMILIA
What did you do?

Her mind flashes back to the photo from the trunk, the burned-out face, the ominous messages. The whispers return, louder this time, surrounding her.

WHISPER
You can't escape the truth.

The air grows heavier. She feels it pressing down on her chest. Suddenly, the whispers stop. Her phone buzzes. Another message:

TEXT
 (reads)
 Check the basement.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Emilia descends the stairs again, her hammer in hand. The air is colder now, each breath visible in the dim light. The basement is unchanged, but something feels different. She scans the room, her eyes landing on the trunk. It's been moved, now positioned in the centre of the room.

EMILIA
 No...

She approaches it cautiously, every muscle in her body tense. The trunk creaks as she opens it. Inside, the contents have changed. The journal is gone, replaced by a stack of old cassette tapes. Each one is labelled with a date. The top tape reads:

"The Night in the Woods."

Her hands shake as she picks up the tape. A small recorder sits at the bottom of the trunk. She loads the tape and presses play. A man's voice fills the basement, calm but chilling.

MAN'S VOICE
 (on tape)
 Do you remember, Emilia? Do you remember what you did to me?

Her knees buckle, and she sinks to the floor, the recorder slipping from her hands. The voice continues, growing colder.

MAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)
 (on tape)
 You can try to bury the past, but it always finds its way back.

The recording stops abruptly. The basement door slams shut behind her, plunging the room into darkness.

INT. BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Emilia pounds on the door, screaming.

EMILIA
 Let me out!

Her voice echoes, but no one answers.

The whispers return, louder than ever, overlapping and filling the small space. She sinks to the floor, clutching her head.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Stop it! Just stop!

The whispers stop. In the silence, she hears footsteps on the floor above her. Slow, deliberate. She looks up at the ceiling, her breath catching in her throat.

EMILIA (CONT'D)
Who's there?

The footsteps stop directly above her. The lightbulb in the basement flickers, and a single word appears on the wall in dripping red letters:

"CONFESS."

To be continue...

FADE TO BLACK.